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by David Brown & Rev. A.R. Faussett

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE ROMANS

Commentary by **DAVID BROWN**

INTRODUCTION

THE GENUINENESS of the Epistle to the Romans has never been questioned. It has the unbroken testimony of all antiquity, up to CLEMENT OF ROME, the apostle's "fellow laborer in the Gospel, whose name was in the Book of Life" (^{400B}Philippians 4:3), and who quotes from it in his undoubted Epistle to the Corinthians, written before the close of the first century. The most searching investigations of modern criticism have left it untouched.

WHEN and WHERE this Epistle was written we have the means of determining with great precision, from the Epistle itself compared with the Acts of the Apostles. Up to the date of it the apostle had never been at Rome (^{401B}Romans 1:11,13,15). He was then on the eve of visiting Jerusalem with a pecuniary contribution for its Christian poor from the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, after which his purpose was to pay a visit to Rome on his way to Spain (^{405B}Romans 15:23-28). Now this contribution we know that he carried with him from Corinth, at the close of his third visit to that city, which lasted three months (^{400B}Acts 20:2,3 24:17). On this occasion there accompanied him from Corinth certain persons whose names are given by the historian of the Acts (^{400B}Acts 20:4), and four of these are expressly mentioned in our Epistle as being with the apostle when he wrote it — Timotheus, Sosipater, Gaius, and Erastus (^{406B}Romans 16:21,23). Of these four, the third, Gaius, was an inhabitant of Corinth (^{401B}1 Corinthians 1:14), and the fourth, Erastus, was "chamberlain of the city" (^{406B}Romans 16:23), which can hardly be supposed to be other than Corinth. Finally, Phoebe, the bearer, as appears, of this Epistle, was a deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea, the eastern port of Corinth

(~~601~~Romans 16:1). Putting these facts together, it is impossible to resist the conviction, in which all critics agree, that Corinth was the place from which the Epistle was written, and that it was despatched about the close of the visit above mentioned, probably in the early spring of the year 58.

The FOUNDER of this celebrated church is unknown. That it owed its origin to the apostle Peter, and that he was its first bishop, though an ancient tradition and taught in the Church of Rome as a fact not to be doubted, is refuted by the clearest evidence, and is given up even by candid Romanists. On that supposition, how are we to account for so important a circumstance being passed by in silence by the historian of the Acts, not only in the narrative of Peter's labors, but in that of Paul's approach to the metropolis, of the deputations of Roman "brethren" that came as far as Appii Forum and the Three Taverns to meet him, and of his two years' labors there (~~405~~Acts 28:15,30)? And how, consistently with his declared principle — not to build on another man's foundation (~~619~~Romans 15:20) — could he express his anxious desire to come to them that he might have some fruit among them also, even as among other Gentiles (~~619~~Romans 1:13), if all the while he knew that they had the apostle of the circumcision for their spiritual father? And how, if so, is there no salutation to Peter among the many in this Epistle? or, if it may be thought that he was known to be elsewhere at that particular time, how does there occur in all the Epistles which our apostle afterwards wrote from Rome not one allusion to such an origin of the church at Rome? The same considerations would seem to prove that this church owed its origin to no prominent Christian laborer; and this brings us to the much-litigated question.

For WHAT CLASS of Christians was this Epistle principally designed — Jewish or Gentile? That a large number of Jews and Jewish proselytes resided at this time at Rome is known to all who are familiar with the classical and Jewish writers of that and the immediately subsequent periods; and that those of them who were at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (~~410~~Acts 2:10), and formed probably part of the three thousand converts of that day, would on their return to Rome carry the glad tidings with them, there can be no doubt. Nor are indications wanting that some of those embraced in the salutations of this Epistle were Christians already of long standing, if not among the earliest converts to the Christian faith. Others of them who had made the apostle's acquaintance elsewhere, and

who, if not indebted to him for their first knowledge of Christ, probably owed much to his ministrations, seemed to have charged themselves with the duty of cherishing and consolidating the work of the Lord in the capital. And thus it is not improbable that up to the time of the apostle's arrival the Christian community at Rome had been dependent upon subordinate agency for the increase of its numbers, aided by occasional visits of stated preachers from the provinces; and perhaps it may be gathered from the salutations of the last chapter that it was up to that time in a less organized, though far from less flourishing state, than some other churches to whom the apostle had already addressed Epistles. Certain it is, that the apostle writes to them expressly as a Gentile Church (Romans 1:13,15 15:15,16); and though it is plain that there were Jewish Christians among them, and the whole argument presupposes an intimate acquaintance on the part of his readers with the leading principles of the Old Testament, this will be sufficiently explained by supposing that the bulk of them, having before they knew the Lord been Gentile proselytes to the Jewish faith, had entered the pale of the Christian Church through the gate of the ancient economy.

It remains only to speak briefly of the PLAN and CHARACTER Of this Epistle. Of all the undoubted Epistles of our apostle, this is the most elaborate, and at the same time the most glowing. It has just as much in common with a theological treatise as is consistent with the freedom and warmth of a real letter. Referring to the headings which we have prefixed to its successive sections, as best exhibiting the progress of the argument and the connection of its points, we here merely note that its first great topic is what may be termed *the legal relation of man to God* as a violator of His holy law, whether as merely written on the heart, as in the case of the heathen, or, as in the case of the Chosen People, as further known by external revelation; that it next treats of that legal relation as wholly *reversed* through believing connection with the Lord Jesus Christ; and that its third and last great topic is *the new life* which accompanies this change of relation, embracing at once a blessedness and a consecration to God which, rudimentally complete already, will open, in the future world, into the bliss of immediate and stainless fellowship with God. The bearing of these wonderful truths upon the condition and destiny of the Chosen People, to which the apostle next comes, though it seem but the practical

application of them to his kinsmen according to the flesh, is in some respects the deepest and most difficult part of the whole Epistle, carrying us directly to the eternal springs of Grace to the guilty in the sovereign love and inscrutable purposes of God; after which, however, we are brought back to the historical platform of the visible Church, in the calling of the Gentiles, the preservation of a faithful Israelitish remnant amidst the general unbelief and fall of the nation, and the ultimate recovery of all Israel to constitute, with the Gentiles in the latter day, one catholic Church of God upon earth. The remainder of the Epistle is devoted to sundry practical topics, winding up with salutations and outpourings of heart delightfully suggestive.

CHAPTER 1

ROMANS 1:1-17.

INTRODUCTION.

1. Paul — (See on Acts 13:9).

a servant of Jesus Christ — The word here rendered “servant” means “bond-servant,” or one subject to the will and wholly at the disposal of another. In this sense it is applied to the disciples of Christ at large (1 Corinthians 7:21-23), as in the Old Testament to all the people of God (Isaiah 66:14). But as, in addition to this, the prophets and kings of Israel were *officially* “the servants of the Lord” (Joshua 1:1 Psalm 18:1, title), the apostles call themselves, in the same official sense, “the servants of Christ” (as here, and Philippians 1:1 James 1:1 2 Peter 1:1 Jude 1:1), expressing such absolute subjection and devotion to the Lord Jesus as they would never have yielded to a mere creature. (See on Romans 1:7; John 5:22,23).

called to be an apostle — when first he “saw the Lord”; the indispensable qualification for apostleship. (See on Acts 9:5; Acts 22:14; 1 Corinthians 9:1).

separated unto the — preaching of the

gospel — neither so late as when “the Holy Ghost said, *Separate* me Barnabas and Saul” (Acts 13:2), nor so early as when “*separated* from his mother’s womb” (see on Galatians 1:15). He was called at one and the same time to the faith and the apostleship of Christ (Acts 26:16-18).

of God — that is, the Gospel of which God is the glorious Author. (Song of Solomon Romans 15:16 1 Thessalonians 2:2,8,9 1 Peter 4:17).

2. Which he had promised afore ... in the holy scriptures — Though the Roman Church was Gentile by nation (see on Romans 1:13), yet as it consisted mostly of proselytes to the Jewish faith (see on *Introduction*

to this Epistle), they are here reminded that in embracing Christ they had not cast off, but only the more profoundly yielded themselves to, Moses and the prophets (^{<413>}Acts 13:32,33).

3, 4. Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord — the grand burden of this “Gospel of God.”

made of the seed of David — as, according to “the holy scriptures,” He behooved to be. (See on ^{<400>}Matthew 1:1).

according to the flesh — that is, in His *human* nature (compare ^{<405>}Romans 9:5 ^{<404>}John 1:14); implying, of course, that He had *another* nature, of which the apostle immediately proceeds to speak.

4. And declared — literally, “marked off,” “defined,” “determined,” that is, “shown,” or “proved.”

to be the Son of God — Observe how studiously the language changes here. He “*was* MADE [says the apostle] of the seed of David, according to the flesh” (^{<400>}Romans 1:3); but He was *not* made, He was only “*declared* [or proved] *to BE* the Son of God.” So ^{<401>}John 1:1,14, “In the beginning *WAS* the Word ... and the Word *was* MADE flesh”; and ^{<400>}Isaiah 9:6, “Unto us *a Child* is BORN, unto us *a Son* is GIVEN.” Thus the Sonship of Christ is in no proper sense a *born* relationship to the Father, as some, otherwise sound divines, conceive of it. By His birth in the flesh, that Sonship, which was essential and uncreated, merely effloresced into palpable manifestation. (See on ^{<405>}Luke 1:35; ^{<413>}Acts 13:32,33).

with power — This may either be connected with “declared,” and then the meaning will be “powerfully declared” [LUTHER, BEZA, BENDEL, FRITZSCHE, ALFORD, etc.]; or (as in our version, and as we think rightly) with “the Son of God,” and then the sense is, “declared to be the Son of God” in possession of that “power” which belonged to Him as the only-begotten of the Father, no longer shrouded as in the days of His flesh, but “by His resurrection from the dead” gloriously displayed and henceforth to be for ever exerted in this nature of ours [*Vulgate*, CALVIN, HODGE, PHILIPPI, MEHRING, etc.].

according to the spirit of holiness — If “according to the flesh” means here, “in His human nature,” this uncommon expression must mean “in

His *other* nature,” which we have seen to be that “of the Son of God” — an eternal, uncreated nature. This is here styled the “*spirit*,” as an impalpable and immaterial nature (◊¹⁰²John 4:24), and “the spirit of holiness,” probably in absolute contrast with that “likeness, of sinful flesh” which He assumed. One is apt to wonder that if this be the meaning, it was not expressed more simply. But if the apostle had said “He was declared to be the Son of God according to *the Holy Spirit*,” the reader would have thought he meant “*the Holy Ghost*”; and it seems to have been just to avoid this misapprehension that he used the rare expression, “the spirit of holiness.”

5. By whom — as the ordained channel.

we have received grace — the whole “grace that bringeth salvation” (◊¹⁰¹Titus 2:11).

and apostleship — for the publication of that “grace,” and the organization of as many as receive it into churches of visible discipleship. (We prefer thus taking them as two distinct things, and not, with some good interpreters, as one — “the grace of apostleship”).

for obedience to the faith — rather, “for the obedience of faith” — that is, in order to men’s yielding themselves to the belief of God’s saving message, which is the highest of all obedience.

for his name — that He might be glorified.

6. Among whom are ye also — that is, along with others; for the apostle ascribes nothing special to the Church of Rome (compare ◊¹³⁸1 Corinthians 14:36) [BENGEL].

the called — (See on ◊¹⁸⁰Romans 8:30).

of Christ Jesus — that is, either called “*by Him*” (◊¹⁰⁵John 5:25), or the called “*belonging to Him*”; “Christ’s called ones.” Perhaps this latter sense is best supported, but one hardly knows which to prefer.

7. beloved of God — (Compare ◊¹⁵⁰Deuteronomy 33:12 ◊¹⁰²Colossians 3:12).

Grace, etc. — (See on ◊¹¹⁴John 1:14).

and peace — the peace which Christ made through the blood of His cross (^{<500>}Colossians 1:20), and which reflects into the believing bosom “the peace of God which passeth all understanding” (^{<500>}Philippians 4:7).

from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ — “Nothing speaks more decisively for the divinity of Christ than these juxtapositions of Christ with the eternal God, which run through the whole language of Scripture, and the derivation of purely divine influences from Him also. The name of no man can be placed by the side of the Almighty. He only, in whom the Word of the Father who is Himself God became flesh, may be named beside Him; for men are commanded to honor Him even as they honor the Father (^{<462>}John 5:23)” [OLSHAUSEN].

8. your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world — This was quite practicable through the frequent visits paid to the capital from all the provinces; and the apostle, having an eye to the influence they would exercise upon others, as well as their own blessedness, given thanks for such faith to “his God through Jesus Christ,” as being the source, according to his theology of faith, as of all grace in men.

9. For God ... whom I serve — the word denotes religious service.

with my spirit — from my inmost soul.

in the gospel of his Son — to which Paul’s whole religious life and official activity were consecrated.

is my witness, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers — so for the Ephesians (^{<4015>}Ephesians 1:15,15); so for the Philippians (^{<500>}Philippians 1:3,4); so for the Colossians (^{<500>}Colossians 1:3,4); so for the Thessalonians (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:2,3). What catholic love, what all-absorbing spirituality, what impassioned devotion to the glory of Christ among men!

10. Making request, if by any means now at length I may have a prosperous journey by the will of God, to come to you — Though long anxious to visit the capital, he met with a number of providential hindrances (^{<4113>}Romans 1:13 ^{<4522>}Romans 15:22; and see on ^{<4421>}Acts 19:21; ^{<4231>}Acts 23:11; ^{<4285>}Acts 28:15); insomuch that *nearly a quarter of a century* elapsed, after his conversion, ere his desire was accomplished, and that

only as “a prisoner of Jesus Christ.” Thus taught that his whole future was in the hands of God, he makes it his continual prayer that at length the obstacles to a happy and prosperous meeting might be removed.

11, 12. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift — not any supernatural gift, as the next clause shows, and compare ~~1~~1 Corinthians 1:7.

to the end that ye may be established.

12. That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me — “Not wishing to “lord it over their faith,” but rather to be a “helper of their joy,” the apostle corrects his former expressions: my desire is to instruct you and do you good, that is, for us to instruct and do one another good: in giving I shall also receive” [JOWETT]. “Nor is he insincere in so speaking, for there is none so poor in the Church of Christ who may not impart to us something of value: it is only our malignity and pride that hinder us from gathering such fruit from every quarter” [CALVIN]. How “widely different is the apostolic style from that of the court of Papal Rome!” [BENGEL].

13. oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, but was let — hindered.

hitherto — chiefly by his desire to go first to places where Christ was not known (~~15~~Romans 15:20-24).

that I might have some fruit — of my ministry

among you also, even as among other Gentiles — The GENTILE origin of the Church at Rome is here so explicitly stated, that those who conclude, merely from the Jewish strain of the argument, that they must have been mostly Israelites, decide in opposition to the apostle himself. (But see on *Introduction* to this Epistle.)

14, 15. I am debtor both to the Greeks — cultivated

and to the Barbarians — rude.

15. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also — He feels himself under an all-subduing

obligation to carry the gospel to all classes of mankind, as adapted to and ordained equally for all (~~496~~ 1 Corinthians 9:16).

16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel — (The words, “of Christ,” which follow here, are not found in the oldest and best manuscripts). This language implies that it required some courage to bring to “the mistress of the world” what “to the Jews was a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness” (~~402~~ 1 Corinthians 1:23). But its inherent glory, as God’s life-giving message to a dying world, so filled his soul, that, like his blessed Master, he “despised the shame.”

for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth — Here and in ~~417~~ Romans 1:17 the apostle announces the great theme of his ensuing argument; SALVATION, the one overwhelming necessity of perishing men; this revealed IN THE GOSPEL MESSAGE; and that message *so owned and honored of God as to carry*, in the proclamation of it, GOD’S OWN POWER TO SAVE EVERY SOUL THAT EMBRACES IT, Greek and Barbarian, wise and unwise alike.

17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed — that is (as the whole argument of the Epistle shows), GOD’S JUSTIFYING RIGHTEOUSNESS.

from faith to faith — a difficult clause. Most interpreters (judging from the sense of such phrases elsewhere) take it to mean, “from one degree of faith to another.” But this agrees ill with the apostle’s design, which has nothing to do with the progressive stages of faith, but solely with faith itself as the appointed way of receiving God’s “righteousness.” We prefer, therefore, to understand it thus: “The righteousness of God is in the gospel message, revealed (to be) from (or ‘by’) faith to (or ‘for’) faith,” that is, “in order to be by faith received.” (Song of Solomon substantially, MELVILLE, MEYER, STUART, BLOOMFIELD, etc.).

as it is written — (~~380~~ Habakkuk 2:4).

The just shall live by faith — This golden maxim of the Old Testament is thrice quoted in the New Testament — here; ~~481~~ Galatians 3:11

~~303~~ Hebrews 10:38 — showing that the gospel way of “LIFE BY FAITH,” so far from disturbing, only continued and developed the ancient method.

On the foregoing verses, *Note*

(1) What manner of persons ought the ministers of Christ to be, according to the pattern here set up: absolutely subject and officially dedicated to the Lord Jesus; separated unto the gospel of God, which contemplates the subjugation of all nations to the faith of Christ: debtors to all classes, the refined and the rude, to bring the gospel to them all alike, all shame in the presence of the one, as well as pride before the other, sinking before the glory which they feel to be in their message; yearning over all faithful churches, not lording it over them, but rejoicing in their prosperity, and finding refreshment and strength in their fellowship!

(2) The peculiar features of the gospel here brought prominently forward should be the devout study of all who preach it, and guide the views and the taste of all who are privileged statedly to hear it: that it is “the gospel of God,” as a message from heaven, yet not absolutely new, but on the contrary, only the fulfillment of Old Testament promise, that not only is Christ the great theme of it, but Christ in the very nature of God as His own Son, and in the nature of men as partaker of their flesh — the Son of God now in resurrection — power and invested with authority to dispense all grace to men, and all gifts for the establishment and edification of the Church, Christ the righteousness provided of God for the justification of all that believe in His name; and that in this glorious Gospel, when preached as such, there resides the very power of God to save Jew and Gentile alike who embrace it.

(3) While Christ is to be regarded as the ordained *Channel* of all grace from God to men (☞ Romans 1:8), let none imagine that His proper divinity is in any respect compromised by this arrangement, since He is here expressly associated with “God the Father,” in prayer for “grace and peace” (including all spiritual blessings) to rest upon this Church (☞ Romans 1:7).

(4) While this Epistle teaches, in conformity with the teaching of our Lord Himself, that all salvation is suspended upon *faith*, this is but half a truth, and will certainly minister to self-righteousness, if dissociated from another feature of the same truth, here explicitly taught, that this faith in *God’s own gift* — for which accordingly in the case of the

Roman believers, he “thanks his God through Jesus Christ” (✠ Romans 1:8).

(5) Christian fellowship, as indeed all real fellowship, is a mutual benefit; and as it is not possible for the most eminent saints and servants of Christ to impart any refreshment and profit to the meanest of their brethren without experiencing a rich return into their bosoms, so just in proportion to their humility and love will they feel their need of it and rejoice in it.

✠ ROMANS 1:18.

WHY THIS DIVINELY PROVIDED RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NEEDED BY ALL MEN.

18. For the wrath of God — His holy displeasure and righteous vengeance against sin.

is revealed from heaven — in the consciences of men, and attested by innumerable outward evidences of a moral government.

against all ungodliness — that is, their whole *irreligiousness*, or their living without any conscious reference to God, and proper feelings towards Him.

and unrighteousness of men — that is, all their *deviations from moral rectitude* in heart, speech, and behavior. (Song of Solomon these terms must be distinguished when used together, though, when standing alone, either of them includes the other).

✠ ROMANS 1:18-32.

THIS WRATH OF GOD, REVEALED AGAINST ALL INIQUITY, OVERHANGS THE WHOLE HEATHEN WORLD.

18. who hold — rather, “hold down,” “hinder,” or “keep back.”

the truth in unrighteousness — The apostle, though he began this verse with a comprehensive proposition regarding men in general, takes up in the end of it only one of the two great divisions of mankind, to whom he meant to apply it; thus gently sliding into his argument. But before enumerating their actual iniquities, he goes back to the origin of them all, their stifling the light which still remained to them. As darkness overspreads the mind, so impotence takes possession of the heart, when the “still small voice” of conscience is first disregarded, next thwarted, and then systematically deadened. Thus “the truth” which God left with and in men, instead of having free scope and developing itself, as it otherwise would, was obstructed (compare ^{<A162>}Matthew 6:22,23 ^{<A167>}Ephesians 4:17,18).

19. Because that which may be — rather, “which is.”

known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them — The sense of this pregnant statement the apostle proceeds to unfold in ^{<A162>}Romans 1:20.

20. For the invisible things of him from — or “since”

the creation of the world are clearly seen — the mind brightly beholding what the eye cannot discern.

being understood by the things that are made — Thus, the outward creation is not the *parent* but the *interpreter* of our faith in God. That faith has its primary sources within our own breast (^{<A162>}Romans 1:19); but it becomes *an intelligible and articulate conviction* only through what we observe around us (“by the things which are made,” ^{<A162>}Romans 1:20). And thus are the inner and the outer revelation of God the complement of each other, making up between them one universal and immovable conviction *that God is*. (With this striking apostolic statement agree the latest conclusions of the most profound speculative students of Theism).

even his eternal power and Godhead — both that there *is* an Eternal Power, and that this is not a mere blind force, or pantheistic “spirit of nature,” but the power of a living *Godhead*.

so that they are without excuse — all their degeneracy being a voluntary departure from truth thus brightly revealed to the unsophisticated spirit.

21. Because that, when they knew God — that is, while still retaining some real knowledge of Him, and ere they sank down into the state next to be described.

they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful — neither yielded the *adoration* due to Himself, nor rendered the *gratitude* which His beneficence demanded.

but became vain — (compare ^{<418>}Jeremiah 2:5).

in their imaginations — thoughts, notions, speculations, regarding God; compare ^{<419>}Matthew 15:19 ^{<425>}Luke 2:35 ^{<418>}1 Corinthians 3:20, *Greek*.

and their foolish — “senseless,” “stupid.”

heart — that is, their whole inner man.

was darkened — How instructively is the downward progress of the human soul here traced!

22, 23. Professing themselves — “boasting,” or “pretending to be”

wise, they became fools — “It is the invariable property of error in morals and religion, that men take credit to themselves for it and extol it as wisdom. So the heathen” (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 1:21) [THOLUCK].

23. And changed — or “exchanged.”

the glory of the uncorruptible God into — or “for”

an image ... like to corruptible man — The allusion here is doubtless to the *Greek* worship, and the apostle may have had in his mind those exquisite chisellings of the human form which lay so profusely beneath and around him as he stood on Mars’ Hill; and “beheld their devotions.” (See on ^{<417>}Acts 17:29). But as if that had not been a deep enough degradation of the living God, there was found “a lower deep” still.

and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and to creeping things — referring now to the *Egyptian* and *Oriental* worship. In the face of these plain declarations of the *descent* of man’s religious belief from loftier to ever lower and more debasing conceptions of the Supreme Being, there are expositors of this very Epistle (as REICHE and JOWETT), who, believing

neither in any fall from primeval innocence, nor in the noble traces of that innocence which lingered even after the fall and were only by degrees obliterated by wilful violence to the dictates of conscience, maintain that man's religious history has been all along a struggle to *rise*, from the lowest forms of nature worship, suited to the childhood of our race, into that which is more rational and spiritual.

24. Wherefore God also — in righteous retribution.

gave them up — This divine abandonment of men is here strikingly traced in three successive stages, at each of which the same word is used (^{<112>}Romans 1:24 26; and ^{<112>}Romans 1:28, where the word is rendered “gave over”). “As they deserted God, God in turn deserted them; not giving them divine (that is, supernatural) laws, and suffering them to corrupt those which were human; not sending them prophets, and allowing the philosophers to run into absurdities. He let them do what they pleased, even what was in the last degree vile, that those who had not honored God, might dishonor themselves” [GROTIUS].

25. Who changed the truth of God into a lie — that is, the truth concerning God into idol falsehood.

and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator — Professing merely to worship the Creator *by means* of the creature, they soon came to lose sight of the Creator *in* the creature. How aggravated is the guilt of the Church of Rome, which, under the same flimsy pretext, does shamelessly what the heathen are here condemned for doing, and with light which the heathen never had!

who is blessed for ever! Amen — By this doxology the apostle instinctively relieves the horror which the penning of such things excited within his breast; an example to such as are called to expose like dishonor done to the blessed God.

26, 27. For this cause God gave them up — (See on ^{<112>}Romans 1:24).

for even their women — that sex whose priceless jewel and fairest ornament is modesty, and which, when that is once lost, not only becomes more shameless than the other sex, but lives henceforth only to drag the other sex down to its level.

did change, etc. — The practices here referred to, though too abundantly attested by classic authors, cannot be further illustrated, without trenching on things which “ought not to be named among us as become the saints.” But observe how vice is here seen consuming and exhausting itself. When the passions, scourged by violent and continued indulgence in *natural* vices, became impotent to yield the craved enjoyment, resort was had to artificial stimulants by the practice of *unnatural* and monstrous vices. How early these were in full career, in the history of the world, the case of Sodom affectingly shows; and because of such abominations, centuries after that, the land of Canaan “spued out” its old inhabitants. Long before this chapter was penned, the Lesbians and others throughout refined Greece had been luxuriating in such debasements; and as for the Romans, TACITUS, speaking of the emperor Tiberius, tells us that new words had then to be coined to express the newly invented stimulants to jaded passion. No wonder that, thus sick and dying as was this poor humanity of ours under the highest earthly culture, its many-voiced cry for the balm in Gilead, and the Physician there, “Come over and help us,” pierced the hearts of the missionaries of the Cross, and made them “not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ!”

27. and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet — alluding to the many physical and moral ways in which, under the righteous government of God, vice was made self-avenging.

28-31. gave them over — or “up” (see on ^{<8124>}Romans 1:24).

to do those things which are not convenient — in the old sense of that word, that is, “not becoming,” “indecorous,” “shameful.”

30. haters of God — The word usually signifies “God-hated,” which some here prefer, in the sense of “abhorred of the Lord”; expressing the detestableness of their character in His sight (compare ^{<2124>}Proverbs 22:14 ^{<4733>}Psalms 73:20). But the active sense of the word, adopted in our version and by the majority of expositors, though rarer, agrees perhaps better with the context.

32. Who knowing — from the voice of conscience, ^{<8124>}Romans 2:14,15
the judgment of God — the stern law of divine procedure.

that they which commit such things are worthy of death — here used in its widest known sense, as the uttermost of divine vengeance against sin: see ~~Acts~~ Acts 28:4.

not only do the same — which they might do under the pressure of temptation and in the heat of passion.

but have pleasure in them that do them — deliberately set their seal to such actions by encouraging and applauding the doing of them in others. This is the climax of our apostle's charges against the heathen; and certainly, if the things are in themselves as black as possible, this settled and unblushing satisfaction at the practice of them, apart from all the blinding effects of present passion, must be regarded as the darkest feature of human depravity.

On this section, *Note*

(1) “The wrath of God” against sin has all the dread reality of a “revelation from heaven” sounding in the consciences of men, in the self-inflicted miseries of the wicked, and in the vengeance which God's moral government, sooner or later, takes upon all who outrage it; so this “wrath of God” is not confined to high-handed crimes, or the grosser manifestations of human depravity, but is “revealed” against all violations of divine law of whatever nature — “against all ungodliness” as well as “unrighteousness of men,” against all disregard of God in the conduct of life as well as against all deviations from moral rectitude; and therefore, since no child of Adam can plead guiltless either of “ungodliness” or of “unrighteousness,” to a greater or less extent, it follows that every human being is involved in the awful sweep of “the wrath of God” (~~Acts~~ Romans 1:18). The apostle places this terrible truth in the forefront of his argument on justification by faith, that upon the basis of *universal condemnation* he might rear the edifice of a free, world-wide salvation; nor can the Gospel be scripturally preached or embraced, save as the good news of salvation to those that are all equally “lost.”

(2) We must not magnify the supernatural revelation which God has been pleased to make of Himself, through Abraham's family to the human race, at the expense of that older, and, in itself, lustrous

revelation which He has made to the whole family of man through the medium of their own nature and the creation around them. Without the latter, the former would have been impossible, and those who have not been favored with the former will be without excuse, if they are deaf to the voice and blind to the glory of the latter (^{<B19>}Romans 1:19,20).

(3) Wilful resistance of light has a retributive tendency to blunt the moral perceptions and weaken the capacity to apprehend and approve of truth and goodness; and thus is the soul prepared to surrender itself, to an indefinite extent, to error and sin (^{<B21>}Romans 1:21, etc.).

(4) Pride of wisdom, as it is a convincing evidence of the want of it, so it makes the attainment of it impossible (^{<B22>}Romans 1:22; and compare ^{<B15>}Matthew 11:25 ^{<B18>}1 Corinthians 3:18-20).

(5) As idolatry, even in its most plausible forms, is the fruit of unworthy views of the Godhead, so its natural effect is to vitiate and debase still further the religious conceptions; nor is there any depth of degradation too low and too revolting for men's ideas of the Godhead to sink to, if only their natural temperament and the circumstances they are placed in be favorable to their unrestrained development (^{<B23>}Romans 1:23,25). The apostle had Greece and Egypt in his eye when he penned this description. But all the paganisms of the East at this day attest its accuracy, from the more elaborate idolatry of India and the simpler and more stupid idolatry of China down to the childish rudiments of nature worship prevalent among the savage tribes. Alas! Christendom itself furnishes a melancholy illustration of this truth; the constant use of material images in the Church of Rome and the materialistic and sensuous character of its entire service (to say nothing of the less offensive but more stupid service of the Greek Church,) debasing the religious ideas of millions of nominal Christians, and lowering the whole character and tone of Christianity as represented within their immense pale.

(6) Moral corruption invariably follows religious debasement. The grossness of pagan idolatry is only equalled by the revolting character and frightful extent of the immoralities which it fostered and consecrated (^{<B24>}Romans 1:24,26,27). And so strikingly is this to be seen in all its essential features in the East at this day, that (as HODGE

says) the missionaries have frequently been accused by the natives of having forged the whole of the latter part of this chapter, as they could not believe that so accurate a description of themselves could have been written eighteen centuries ago. The kingdoms of Israel and Judah furnish a striking illustration of the inseparable connection between religion and morals. Israel corrupted and debased the worship of Jehovah, and the sins with which they were charged were mostly of the grosser kind — intemperance and sensuality: the people of Judah, remaining faithful to the pure worship, were for a long time charged mostly with formality and hypocrisy; and only as they fell into the idolatries of the heathen around them, did they sink into their vices. And may not a like distinction be observed between the two great divisions of Christendom, the Popish and the Protestant? To test this, we must not look to Popery, surrounded with, and more or less influenced by, the presence and power of Protestantism; nor to Protestantism under every sort of disadvantage, internal and external. But look at Romanism where it has unrestrained liberty to develop its true character, and see whether impurity does not there taint society to its core, pervading alike the highest and the lowest classes; and then look at Protestantism where it enjoys the same advantages, and see whether it be not marked by a comparatively high standard of social virtue.

(7) To take pleasure in what is sinful and vicious for its own sake, and knowing it to be such, is the last and lowest stage of human recklessness (~~REC~~ Romans 1:32). But

(8) this knowledge can never be wholly extinguished in the breast of men. So long as reason remains to them, there is still a small voice in the worst of men, protesting, in the name of the Power that implanted it, “that they which do such things are worthy of death” (~~REC~~ Romans 1:32).

CHAPTER 2

◀III ROMANS 2:1-29.

THE JEW UNDER LIKE CONDEMNATION WITH THE GENTILE.

From those *without*, the apostle now turns to those *within* the pale of revealed religion, the self-righteous Jews, who looked down upon the uncovenanted heathen as beyond the pale of God's mercies, within which they deemed themselves secure, however inconsistent their life may be. Alas! what multitudes wrap themselves up in like fatal confidence, who occupy the corresponding position in the Christian Church!

4. the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance — that is, is designed and adapted to do so.

5. treasurest up unto thyself wrath against — rather “in.”

the day of wrath — that is wrath to come on thee in the day of wrath. What an awful idea is here expressed — that the sinner himself is amassing, like hoarded treasure, an ever accumulating stock of divine wrath, to burst upon him in “the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God!” And this is said not of the reckless, but of those who boasted of their purity of faith and life.

7-10. To them who, etc. — The substance of these verses is that the final judgment will turn upon *character* alone.

by patient continuance in well-doing, etc. — Compare ◀IVS Luke 8:15: “That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit *with patience*”; denoting the *enduring* and *progressive* character of the new life.

8. But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, etc. — referring to such keen and determined resistance to the Gospel as he himself had too painfully witnessed on the part of his own countrymen.

(See ^{<434>}Acts 13:44-46 17:5,13 18:6,12; and compare ^{<525>}1 Thessalonians 2:15,16).

indignation and wrath — in the bosom of a sin-avenging God.

9. Tribulation and anguish — the *effect* of these in the sinner himself.

10. to the Jew first — first in perdition if unfaithful; but if obedient to the truth, first in salvation (^{<410>}Romans 2:10).

12. For as many as have sinned — not “as many as have sinned *at all*,” but, “as many as are *found in sin*” at the judgment of the great day (as the whole context shows).

without law — that is, without the advantage of a positive Revelation.

shall also perish without law — exempt from the charge of rejecting or disregarding it.

and as many as have sinned in the law — within the pale of a positive, written Revelation.

shall be judged by the law — tried and condemned by the higher standard of that written Revelation.

13-15. For not the hearers, etc. — As touching the Jews, in whose ears the written law is continually resounding, the condemnation of as many of them as are found sinners at the last involves no difficulty; but even as respects the heathen, who are strangers to the law in its positive and written form — since they show how deeply it is engraven on their moral nature, which witnesses within them for righteousness and against iniquity, accusing or condemning them according as they violate or obey its stern dictates — their condemnation also for all the sin in which they live and die will carry its dreadful echo in their own breasts.

15. their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing — that is, perhaps by turns doing both.

16. In the day, etc. — Here the unfinished statement of ^{<410>}Romans 2:12 is resumed and closed.

shall judge the secrets of men — here specially referring to the unfathomed depths of hypocrisy in the self-righteous whom the apostle had to deal with. (See ^{<212>}Ecclesiastes 12:14 ^{<404>}1 Corinthians 4:5).

according to my gospel — to my teaching as a preacher of the Gospel.

17-24. Behold — “But if” is, beyond doubt, the true reading here. (It differs but in a single letter from the received reading, and the sense is the same).

18. approvest the things that are excellent — “triest the things that differ” (*Margin*). Both senses are good, and indeed the former is but the result of the latter action. (See on ^{<301>}Philippians 1:10).

20. hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law — not being left, as the heathen are, to vague conjecture on divine things, but favored with definite and precise information from heaven.

22. thou that abhorrest idols — as the Jews did ever after their captivity, though bent on them before.

dost thou commit sacrilege? — not, as some excellent interpreters, “dost thou rob idol temples?” but more generally, as we take it, “dost thou profane holy things?” (as in ^{<411>}Matthew 21:12,13, and in other ways).

24. as it is written — (See ^{<251>}Isaiah 52:5, *Marginal reference*).

25-29. For circumcision — that is, One’s being within the covenant of which circumcision was the outward sign and seal.

verily profiteth, if thou keep the law — if the inward reality correspond to the outward sign.

but if, etc. — that is, “Otherwise, thou art no better than the uncircumcised heathen.”

26. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the ... law, etc. — Two mistaken interpretations, we think, are given of these words: *First*, that the case here supposed is an impossible one, and put merely for illustration [HALDANE, CHALMERS, HODGE]; *second* that it is the case of the heathen who may and do please God when they act, as has been and is done, up to the light of nature [GROTIUS, OLSHAUSEN, etc.]. The first interpretation is,

in our judgment, unnatural; the second, opposed to the apostle's own teaching. But the case here put is, we think, such as that of Cornelius (~~400~~ Acts 10:1-48), who, though outside the *external* pale of God's covenant, yet having come to the knowledge of the truths contained in it, do manifest the grace of the covenant without the seal of it, and exemplify the character and walk of Abraham's children, though not called by the name of Abraham. Thus, this is but another way of announcing that God was about to show the insufficiency of the mere badge of the Abrahamic covenant, by calling from among the Gentiles a seed of Abraham that had never received the seal of circumcision (see on ~~400~~ Galatians 5:6); and this interpretation is confirmed by all that follows.

28. he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, etc. — In other words, the name of “Jew” and the rite of “circumcision” were designed but as outward symbols of a separation from the irreligious and ungodly world unto holy devotedness in heart and life to the God of salvation. Where this is realized, the signs are full of significance; but where it is not, they are worse than useless.

Note,

(1) It is a sad mark of depravity when all that is designed and fitted to melt only hardens the heart (~~400~~ Romans 2:4, and compare ~~400~~ 2 Peter 3:9 ~~400~~ Ecclesiastes 8:11).

(2) Amidst all the inequalities of religious opportunity measured out to men, and the mysterious bearing of this upon their character and destiny for eternity, the same great principles of judgment, in a form suited to their respective discipline, will be applied to all, and perfect equity will be seen to reign throughout every stage of the divine administration (~~400~~ Romans 2:11-16).

(3) “The law written on the heart” (~~400~~ Romans 2:14,15) — or the Ethics of Natural Theology — may be said to be the one deep foundation on which all revealed religion reposes; and see on ~~400~~ Romans 1:19,20, where we have what we may call its other foundation — the Physics and Metaphysics of Natural Theology. The testimony of these two passages is to the theologian invaluable, while

in the breast of every teachable Christian it wakens such deep echoes as are inexpressibly solemn and precious.

(4) High religious professions are a fearful aggravation of the inconsistencies of such as make them (~~1017~~ Romans 2:17-24). See ~~1014~~ 2 Samuel 12:14.

(5) As no external privileges, or badge of discipleship, will shield the unholy from the wrath of God, so neither will the want of them shut out from the kingdom of heaven such as have experienced without them that change of heart which the seals of God's covenant were designed to mark. In the sight of the great Searcher of hearts, the Judge of quick and dead, the renovation of the character in heart and life is all in all. In view of this, have not all baptized, sacramented disciples of the Lord Jesus, who "profess that they know God, but in works deny Him," need to tremble — who, under the guise of friends, are "the enemies of the cross of Christ?"

CHAPTER 3

ROMANS 3:1-8.

JEWISH OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

1, 2. What advantage then hath the Jew? — that is, “If the final judgment will turn solely on the state of the heart, and this may be as good in the Gentile *without*, as in the Jew *within*, the sacred enclosure of God’s covenant, what better are we Jews for all our advantages?”

Answer:

2. Much every way; chiefly, because — rather, “first, that.”

unto them were committed the oracles of God — This remarkable expression, denoting “divine communications” in general, is transferred to the Scriptures to express their *oracular*, divine, authoritative character.

3, 4. For what if some did not believe? — It is the unbelief of the great body of the nation which the apostle points at; but as it sufficed for his argument to put the supposition thus gently, he uses this word “some” to soften prejudice.

shall their unbelief make the faith of God — or, “faithfulness of God.”

of none effect? — “nullify,” “invalidate” it.

4. God forbid — literally, “*Let it not be*,” that is, “Away with such a thought” — a favorite expression of our apostle, when he would not only repudiate a supposed consequence of his doctrine, but express his abhorrence of it. “The Scriptures do not authorize such a use of God’s name as must have been common among the English translators of the Bible” [HODGE].

yea, let God be — held

true, and every man a liar — that is, even though it should follow from this that every man is a liar.

when thou art judged — so in ^{AV}Psalm 51:4, according to the *Septuagint*; but in the *Hebrew* and in our version, “when thou judgest.” The general sentiment, however, is the same in both — that we are to vindicate the righteousness of God, at whatever expense to ourselves.

5, 6. But if, etc. — Another objection: “It would appear, then, that the more faithless we are, so much the more illustrious will the fidelity of God appear; and in that case, for Him to take vengeance on us for our unfaithfulness would be (to speak as men profanely do) unrighteousness in God.”

Answer:

6. God forbid; for then how shall God judge the world? — that is, “Far from us be such a thought; for that would strike down all future judgment.

7, 8. For if the truth of God, etc. — A further illustration of the same sentiment: that is, “Such reasoning amounts to this — which indeed we who preach salvation by free grace are slanderously accused of teaching — that the more evil we do, the more glory will redound to God; a damnable principle.” (Thus the apostle, instead of refuting this principle, thinks it enough to hold it up to execration, as one that shocks the moral sense).

On this brief section, *Note*

(1) Mark the place here assigned to the Scriptures. In answer to the question, “What advantage hath the Jew?” or, “What profit is there of circumcision?” (^{AV}Romans 3:1) those holding Romish views would undoubtedly have laid the stress upon the *priesthood*, as the glory of the Jewish economy. But in the apostle’s esteem, “the oracles of God” were the jewel of the ancient Church (^{AV}Romans 3:1,2).

(2) God’s eternal purposes and man’s free agency, as also the doctrine of salvation by grace and the unchanging obligations of God’s law, have ever been subjected to the charge of inconsistency by those who will bow to no truth which their own reason cannot fathom. But amidst all the clouds and darkness which in this present state envelop the divine

administration and many of the truths of the Bible, such broad and deep principles as are here laid down, and which shine in their own luster, will be found the sheet-anchor of our faith. “Let God be true, and every man a liar” (~~ⲉⲣⲓⲙ~~ Romans 3:4); and as many advocates of salvation by grace as say, “Let us do evil that good may come,” “their damnation is just” (~~ⲉⲣⲓⲙ~~ Romans 3:8).

~~ⲉⲣⲓⲙ~~ ROMANS 3:9-20.

THAT THE JEW IS SHUT UP UNDER LIKE CONDEMNATION WITH THE GENTILE IS PROVED BY HIS OWN SCRIPTURE.

9. are we better than they? — “do we excel them?”

No, in no wise — Better off the Jews certainly were, for having the oracles of God to *teach* them better; but as they *were* no better, that only aggravated their guilt.

10-12. As it is written, etc. — (~~ⲉⲣⲓⲙ~~ Psalm 14:1-3 53:1-3). These statements of the Psalmist were indeed suggested by particular manifestations of human depravity occurring under his own eye; but as this only showed what man, when unrestrained, is in his present condition, they were quite pertinent to the apostle’s purpose.

13-18. Their, etc. — From generals, the apostle here comes to particulars, culling from different parts of Scripture passages which speak of depravity as it affects *the different members of the body*; as if to show more affectingly how “from the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness” in us.

throat is an open sepulcher — (~~ⲉⲣⲓⲙ~~ Psalm 5:9); that is, “What proceeds out of their heart, and finds vent in speech and action through the throat, is like the pestilential breath of an open grave.”

with their tongues they have used deceit — (~~ⲉⲣⲓⲙ~~ Psalm 5:9); that is, “That tongue which is man’s glory (~~ⲉⲣⲓⲙ~~ Psalm 16:9 57:8) is prostituted to the purposes of deception.”

the poison of asps is under their lips — (^{<HEB>}Psalm 140:3): that is, “Those lips which should ‘drop as an honeycomb,’ and ‘feed many,’ and ‘give thanks unto His name’” (^{<2041>}Song of Solomon 4:11 ^{<1002>}Proverbs 10:21 ^{<8335>}Hebrews 13:15), are employed to secrete and to dart deadly poison.”

14. Whose mouth, etc. — (^{<9007>}Psalm 10:7): that is, “That mouth which should be ‘most sweet’” (^{<2156>}Song of Solomon 5:16), being ‘set on fire of hell’” (^{<5006>}James 3:6), is filled with burning wrath against those whom it should only bless.”

15. Their feet are swift to shed blood — (^{<2016>}Proverbs 1:16 ^{<2807>}Isaiah 59:7): that is, “Those feet, which should ‘run the way of God’s commandments’” (^{<488>}Psalm 119:32), are employed to conduct men to deeds of darkest crime.”

16, 17. Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known — This is a supplementary statement about men’s *ways*, suggested by what had been said about the “feet,” and expresses the mischief and misery which men scatter in their path, instead of that peace which, as strangers to it themselves, they cannot diffuse.

18. There is no fear of God before their eyes — (^{<3301>}Psalm 36:1): that is, “Did the eyes but ‘see Him who is invisible’” (^{<8127>}Hebrews 11:27), a reverential awe of Him with whom we have to do would chasten every joy and lift the soul out of its deepest depressions; but to all this the natural man is a stranger.” How graphic is this picture of human depravity, finding its way through each several organ of the body into the life (^{<8183>}Romans 3:13-17):but how small a part of the “desperate wickedness” that is *within* (^{<2479>}Jeremiah 17:9) “proceedeth *out* of the heart of man!” (^{<4172>}Mark 7:21-23 ^{<5902>}Psalm 19:12).

19. Now we know that what ... the law — that is, the Scriptures, considered as a law of duty.

saith, it saith to them that are under the law — of course, therefore, to the Jews.

that every mouth — opened in self-justification.

may be stopped, and all the world may become — that is, be seen to be, and own itself.

guilty — and so condemned

before God.

20. Therefore by the deeds of — obedience to

the law there shall no flesh be justified — that is, be held and treated as righteous; as is plain from the whole scope and strain of the argument.

in his sight — at His bar (^{<HEB>}Psalm 143:2).

for by the law is the knowledge of sin — (See on ^{<ROM>}Romans 4:15; ^{<ROM>}Romans 7:7; and ^{<ROM>}1 John 3:4).

Note, How broad and deep does the apostle in this section lay the foundations of his great doctrine of Justification by free grace — in the disorder of man's whole nature, the consequent universality of human guilt, the condemnation, by reason of the breach of divine law, of the whole world, and the impossibility of justification before God by obedience to that violated law! Only when these humiliating conclusions are accepted and felt, are we in a condition to appreciate and embrace the grace of the Gospel, next to be opened up.

^{<ROM>}ROMANS 3:21-26.

GOD'S JUSTIFYING RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, ALIKE ADAPTED TO OUR NECESSITIES AND WORTHY OF HIMSELF.

21-23. But now the righteousness of God — (See on ^{<ROM>}Romans 1:17).

without the law — that is, a righteousness to which our obedience to the law contributes nothing whatever (^{<ROM>}Romans 3:28 ^{<ROM>}Galatians 2:16).

is manifested, being witnessed — attested.

by the law and the prophets — the Old Testament Scriptures. Thus this justifying righteousness, though *new*, as only now fully disclosed, is an *old* righteousness, predicted and foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

22. by faith of — that is, “in”

Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe — that is, perhaps, brought nigh “*unto* all” men the Gospel, and actually “*upon* all” believing men, as theirs in possession [LUTHER and others]; but most interpreters understand both statements” of believers as only a more emphatic way of saying that all believers, without distinction or exception, are put in possession of this gratuitous justification, purely by faith in Christ Jesus.

for there is no difference.

23. for all have sinned — Though men differ greatly in the *nature* and *extent* of their sinfulness, there is absolutely no difference between the best and the worst of men, in the *fact* that “all have sinned,” and so underlie the wrath of God.

and come short of the glory — or “praise”

of God — that is, “have failed to earn His approbation” (compare ⁴⁰²⁸ John 12:43, *Greek*). So the best interpreters.

24. justified freely — without anything done on our part to deserve.

by his grace — His free love.

through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus — a most important clause; teaching us that though justification is quite gratuitous, it is not a mere *fiat* of the divine will, but based on a “Redemption,” that is, “the payment of a Ransom,” in Christ’s death. That this is the sense of the word “redemption,” when applied to Christ’s death, will appear clear to any impartial student of the passages where it occurs.

25, 26. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation — or “propitiatory sacrifice.”

through faith in his blood — Some of the best interpreters, observing that “*faith upon*” is the usual phrase in *Greek*, not “*faith in*” Christ, would

place a “comma” after “faith,” and understand the words as if written thus: “to be a propitiation, in His blood, through faith.” But “faith *in* Christ” is used in ^{<KJB>}Galatians 3:26 and ^{<HIS>}Ephesians 1:15; and “faith in His blood” is the natural and appropriate meaning here.

to declare his righteousness for the remission — rather, “pretermision” or “passing by.”

of sins — “the sins.”

that are past — not the sins committed by the believer before he embraces Christ, but the sins committed under the old economy, before Christ came to “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”

through the forbearance of God — God not *remitting* but only *forbearing* to punish them, or passing them by, until an adequate atonement for them should be made. In thus not imputing them, God *was* righteous, but He was not *seen* to be so; there was no “manifestation of His righteousness” in doing so under the. ancient economy. But now that God can “set forth” Christ as a “propitiation for sin through faith in His blood,” the righteousness of His procedure in passing by the sins of believers before, and in now remitting them, is “manifested,” declared, brought fully out to the view of the whole world. (Our translators have unfortunately missed this glorious truth, taking “the sins that are past” to mean the past sins of believers — committed before faith — and rendering, by the word “remission,” what means only a “passing by”; thus making it appear that “remission of sins” is “through the forbearance of God,” which it certainly is not).

26. To declare ... at this time — now for the first time, under the Gospel.

his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus — Glorious paradox! “Just in punishing,” and “merciful in pardoning,” men can understand; but “just in justifying the guilty,” startles them. But the propitiation through faith in Christ’s blood resolves the paradox and harmonizes the discordant elements. For in that “God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin,” *justice* has full

satisfaction; and in that “we are made the righteousness of God in Him,” *mercy* has her heart’s delight!

Note,

(1) One way of a sinner’s justification is taught in the Old Testament and in the New alike: only more dimly during the twilight of Revelation; in unclouded light under “its perfect day” (~~4182~~ Romans 3:21).

(2) As there is no difference in the *need*, so is there none in the *liberty to appropriate* the provided salvation. The best need to be saved by faith in Jesus Christ; and the worst only need that. On this common ground all saved sinners meet here, and will stand for ever (~~4182~~ Romans 3:22-24).

(3) It is on the atoning blood of Christ, as the one propitiatory sacrifice which God hath set forth to the eye of the guilty, that the faith of the convinced and trembling sinner fastens for deliverance from wrath. Though he knows that he is “justified freely, by God’s grace,” it is only because it is “through the *redemption* that is in Christ Jesus” that he is able to find peace and rest even in this (~~4185~~ Romans 3:25).

(4) The strictly accurate view of believers under the Old Testament is not that of a company of *pardoned* men, but of men whose sins, put up with and passed by in the meantime, awaited a *future expiation* in the fullness of time (~~4185~~ Romans 3:25,26; see on ~~4188~~ Luke 9:31; ~~4195~~ Hebrews 9:15; ~~4113~~ Hebrews 11:39,40).

~~4127~~ ROMANS 3:27-31.

INFERENCES FROM THE FOREGOING DOCTRINES AND AN OBJECTION ANSWERED.

Inference first: *Boasting is excluded by this, and no other way of justification.*

27, 28. Where is boasting then? ... excluded. By what law? — on what principle or scheme?.

of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.

28. Therefore we conclude, etc. — It is the unavoidable tendency of dependence upon our own works, less or more, for acceptance with God, to beget a spirit of “boasting.” But that God should encourage such a spirit in sinners, by any procedure of His, is incredible. This therefore stamps falsehood upon every form of “justification by works,” whereas the doctrine that.

Our faith *receives* a righteousness That makes the sinner just, manifestly and entirely excludes “boasting”; and this is the best evidence of its truth.

Inference second: *This and no other way of salvation is adapted alike to Jew and Gentile.*

29. Is he the God of the Jews only? etc. — The way of salvation must be one equally suited to the whole family of fallen man: but the doctrine of justification by faith is the only one that lays the basis of a Universal Religion; this therefore is another mark of its truth.

30. it is one God who shall justify — “has unchangeably fixed that He shall justify.”

the circumcision by — “of”

faith, and the uncircumcision through faith — probably this is but a varied statement of the same truth for greater emphasis (see ~~412~~ Romans 3:22); though BENGEL thinks that the justification of the Jews, as the born heirs of the promise, may be here purposely said to be “*of* faith,” while that of the Gentiles, previously “strangers to the covenants of promise,” may be said to be “*through* faith,” as thus admitted into a new family.

Objection:

31. Do we then make void the law through faith? — “Does this doctrine of justification by faith, then, dissolve the obligation of the law? If so, it cannot be of God. But away with such a thought, for it does just the reverse.”

God forbid: yea, we establish the law — It will be observed here, that, important as was this objection, and opening up as it did so noble a field

for the illustration of the peculiar glory of the Gospel, the apostle does no more here than indignantly repel it, intending at a subsequent stage of his argument (^{<8181}Romans 6:1-23) to resume and discuss it at length.

Note,

(1) It is a fundamental requisite of all true religion that it tend to humble the sinner and exalt God; and every system which breeds self-righteousness, or cherishes boasting, bears falsehood on its face (^{<8182}Romans 3:27,28).

(2) The fitness of the Gospel to be a universal religion, beneath which the guilty of every name and degree are invited and warranted to take shelter and repose, is a glorious evidence of its truth (^{<8183}Romans 3:29,30).

(3) The glory of God's law, in its eternal and immutable obligations, is then only fully apprehended by the sinner, and then only is it enthroned in the depths of his soul, when, believing that "He was made sin for him who knew no sin," he sees himself "made the righteousness of God in Him" (^{<8184}2 Corinthians 5:21). Thus do we not make void the law through faith: yea, we establish the law.

(4) This chapter, and particularly the latter part of it, "is the proper seat of the Pauline doctrine of Justification, and the grand proof-passage of the Protestant doctrine of the Imputation of Christ's righteousness and of Justification not on account of, but through faith alone" [PHILIPPI]. To make good this doctrine, and reseat it in the faith and affection of the Church, was worth all the bloody struggles that it cost our fathers, and it will be the wisdom and safety, the life and vigor of the churches, to "stand fast in this liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and not be again entangled" — in the very least degree — "with the yoke of bondage" (^{<8185}Galatians 5:1).

CHAPTER 4

ROMANS 4:1-25.

THE FOREGOING DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ILLUSTRATED FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

First: *Abraham was justified by faith.*

1-3. What shall we say then that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? — that is, (as the order in the original shows), “hath found, as pertaining to (‘according to,’ or ‘through’) the flesh”; meaning, “by all his natural efforts or legal obedience.”

2. For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God — “If works were the ground of Abraham’s justification, he would have matter for boasting; but as it is perfectly certain that he hath none in the sight of God, it follows that Abraham could not have been justified by works.” And to this agree the words of Scripture.

3. For what saith the, Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it — his faith.

was counted to him for righteousness — (^{GEN}Genesis 15:6). Romish expositors and Arminian Protestants make this to mean that God accepted Abraham’s act of believing as a substitute for complete obedience. But this is at variance with the whole spirit and letter of the apostle’s teaching. Throughout this whole argument, *faith* is set in direct opposition to *works*, in the matter of justification — and even in ^{ROM}Romans 4:4,5. The meaning, therefore, cannot possibly be that the mere act of believing — which is as much a work as any other piece of commanded duty (^{JOH}John 6:29 ^{JOH}1 John 3:23) — was counted to Abraham for all obedience. The meaning plainly is that Abraham believed in the promises which embraced Christ (^{GEN}Genesis 12:3 15:5, etc.), as we believe in Christ Himself; and in both

cases, faith is merely the instrument that puts us in possession of the blessing gratuitously bestowed.

4, 5. Now to him that worketh — as a servant for wages.

is the reward not reckoned of grace — as a matter of favor.

but of debt — as a matter of right.

5. But to him that worketh not — who, despairing of acceptance with God by “working” for it the work of obedience, does not attempt it.

but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly — casts himself upon the mercy of Him that justifieth those who deserve only condemnation.

his faith, etc. — (See on ~~ROM~~ Romans 4:3).

Second: *David sings of the same justification.*

6-8. David also describeth — “speaketh,” “pronounceth.”

the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works — whom, though void of all good works, He, nevertheless, regards and treats as righteous.

7, 8. Saying, Blessed, etc. — (~~PSM~~ Psalm 32:1,2). David here sings in express terms only of “transgression forgiven, sin covered, iniquity not imputed”; but as the negative blessing necessarily includes the positive, the passage is strictly in point.

9-12. Cometh this blessedness then, etc. — that is, “Say not, All this is spoken of the *circumcised*, and is therefore no evidence of God’s *general* way of justifying men; for Abraham’s justification took place long before he was circumcised, and so could have no dependence upon that rite: nay, ‘the sign of circumcision’ was given to Abraham as ‘a seal’ (or token) of the (justifying) righteousness which he had *before* he was circumcised; in order that he might stand forth to every age as *the parent believer* — the model man of justification by faith — after whose type, as the first public example of it, all were to be moulded, whether Jew or Gentile, who should thereafter believe to life everlasting.”

13-15. For the promise, etc. — This is merely an enlargement of the foregoing reasoning, applying to the *law* what had just been said of *circumcision*.

that he should be the heir of the world — or, that “all the families of the earth should be blessed in him.”

was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law — in virtue of obedience to the law.

but through the righteousness of faith — in virtue of his simple faith in the divine promises.

14. For if they which are of the law be heirs — If the blessing is to be earned by obedience to the law.

faith is made void — the whole divine method is subverted.

15. Because the law worketh wrath — has nothing to give to those who break it but condemnation and vengeance.

for where there is no law, there is no transgression — It is just the law that makes transgression, in the case of those who break it; nor can the one exist without the other.

16, 17. Therefore, etc. — A general summary: “Thus justification is by *faith*, in order that its purely *gracious* character may be seen, and that all who follow in the steps of Abraham’s faith — whether of his natural seed or no — may be assured of the like justification with the parent believer.”

17. As it is written, etc. — (^{quoting} Genesis 17:5). This is quoted to justify his calling Abraham the “father of us all,” and is to be viewed as a parenthesis.

before — that is, “in the reckoning of.”

him whom he believed — that is, “Thus Abraham, in the reckoning of Him whom he believed, is the father of us all, in order that all may be assured, that doing as he did, they shall be treated as he was.”

even God, quickeneth the dead — The nature and greatness of that faith of Abraham which we are to copy is here strikingly described. What he was required to believe being above nature, his faith had to fasten upon

God's power to surmount physical incapacity, and call into being what did not then exist. But God having made the promise, Abraham believed Him in spite of those obstacles. This is still further illustrated in what follows.

18-22. Who against hope — when no ground for hope appeared.

believed in hope — that is, cherished the believing expectation.

that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be — that is, Such “as the stars of heaven,” ^{GEN}Genesis 15:5.

19. he considered not, etc. — paid no attention to those physical obstacles, both in himself and in Sarah, which might seem to render the fulfillment hopeless.

20. He staggered — hesitated

not ... but was strong in faith, giving glory to God — as able to make good His own word in spite of all obstacles.

21. And being fully persuaded, etc. — that is, the glory which Abraham's faith gave to God consisted in this, that, firm in the persuasion of God's ability to fulfill his promise, no difficulties shook him.

22. And therefore it was imputed, etc. — “Let all then take notice that this was not because of anything meritorious in Abraham, but merely because he so *believed*.”

23-25. Now, etc. — Here is the application of this whole argument about Abraham: These things were not recorded as mere historical facts, but as illustrations for all time of God's method of justification by faith.

24. to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe in him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead — in Him that *hath* done this, even as Abraham believed that God *would* raise up a seed in whom all nations should be blessed.

25. Who was delivered for — “on account of.”

our offenses — that is, in order to expiate them by His blood.

and raised again for — “on account of,” that is, in order to.

our justification — As His resurrection was the divine assurance that He had “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,” and the crowning of His whole work, our justification is fitly connected with that glorious act.

Note,

(1) The doctrine of justification by works, as it generates self-exaltation, is contrary to the first principles of all true religion (~~ROM~~ Romans 4:2; and see on ~~ROM~~ Romans 3:21-26, *Note 1*).

(2) The way of a sinner’s justification has been the same in all time, and the testimony of the Old Testament on this subject is one with that of the New (~~ROM~~ Romans 4:3, etc., and see on ~~ROM~~ Romans 3:27-31, *Note 1*).

(3) Faith and works, in the matter of justification, are opposite and irreconcilable, even as grace and debt (~~ROM~~ Romans 4:4,5; and see on ~~ROM~~ Romans 11:6). If God “justifies the ungodly,” works cannot be, in any sense or to any degree, the ground of justification. For the same reason, the first requisite, in order to justification, must be (under the conviction that we are “ungodly”) to despair of it by works; and the next, to “believe in Him that justifieth the ungodly” — that hath a justifying righteousness to bestow, and is ready to bestow it upon those who deserve none, and to embrace it accordingly.

(4) The sacraments of the Church were never intended, and are not adapted, to *confer* grace, or the blessings of salvation, upon men. Their proper use is to set a divine *seal* upon *a state already existing*, and so, they *presuppose*, and do not *create* it (~~ROM~~ Romans 4:8-12). As circumcision merely “sealed” Abraham’s already existing acceptance with God, so with the sacraments of the New Testament.

(5) As Abraham is “the heir of the world,” all nations being blessed in him, through his Seed Christ Jesus, and justified solely according to the pattern of his faith, so the transmission of the true religion and all the salvation which the world will ever experience shall yet be traced back with wonder, gratitude, and joy, to that morning dawn when “the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in

Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,” ^{<407>}Acts 7:2 (^{<408>}Romans 4:13).

(6) Nothing gives more glory to God than simple faith in His word, especially when all things seem to render the fulfillment of it hopeless (^{<409>}Romans 4:18-21).

(7) All the Scripture examples of faith were recorded on purpose to beget and encourage the like faith in every succeeding age (^{<410>}Romans 4:23,24; and compare ^{<411>}Romans 15:4).

(8) *Justification*, in this argument, cannot be taken — as Romanists and other errorists insist — to mean a change upon men’s *character*; for besides that this is to confound it with *Sanctification*, which has its appropriate place in this Epistle, the whole argument of the present chapter — and nearly all its more important clauses, expressions, and words — would in that case be unsuitable, and fitted only to mislead. Beyond all doubt it means exclusively a change upon men’s *state* or *relation to God*; or, in scientific language, it is an *objective*, not a *subjective* change — a change from guilt and condemnation to acquittal and acceptance. And the best evidence that this is the key to the whole argument is, that it opens all the wards of the many-chambered lock with which the apostle has enriched us in this Epistle.

CHAPTER 5

ROMANS 5:1-11.

THE BLESSED EFFECTS OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

The *proof* of this doctrine being now concluded, the apostle comes here to treat of its *fruits*, reserving the full consideration of this topic to another stage of the argument (~~ROM~~ Romans 8:1-39).

1. **Therefore being** — “having been.”

justified by faith, we have peace with God, etc. — If we are to be guided by manuscript authority, the true reading here, beyond doubt, is, “Let us have peace”; a reading, however, which most reject, because they think it unnatural to exhort men to *have* what it belongs to God to *give*, because the apostle is not here giving exhortations, but stating matters of fact. But as it seems hazardous to set aside the decisive testimony of manuscripts, as to what the apostle *did* write, in favor of what we merely think he *ought* to have written, let us pause and ask — If it be the privilege of the justified to “*have* peace with God,” why might not the apostle begin his enumeration of the fruits of justification by calling on believers to “realize” this peace as belonged to them, or cherish the joyful consciousness of it as their own? And if this is what he has done, it would not be necessary to continue in the same style, and the other fruits of justification might be set down, simply as matters of fact. This “peace” is first a change in God’s relation to us; and next, as the consequence of this, a change on our part towards Him. God, on the one hand, has “reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ” (~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 5:18); and we, on the other hand, setting our seal to this, “are reconciled to God” (~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 5:20). The “propitiation” is the meeting-place; there the controversy on both sides terminates in an honorable and eternal “peace.”

2. **By whom also we have** — “have had”

access by faith into this grace — favor with God.

wherein we stand — that is “To that same faith which *first* gave us ‘peace with God’ we owe our introduction into that *permanent standing* in the favor of God which the justified enjoy.” As it is difficult to distinguish this from the peace first mentioned, we regard it as merely an additional phase of the same [MEYER, PHILIPPI, MEHRING], rather than something new [BEZA, THOLUCK, HODGE].

and rejoice — “glory,” “boast,” “triumph” — “rejoice” is not strong enough.

in hope of the glory of God — On “hope,” see on ^{<1818>}Romans 5:4.

3, 4. we glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience — Patience is the quiet endurance of what we cannot but wish removed, whether it be the withholding of promised good (^{<1818>}Romans 8:25), or the continued experience of positive ill (as here). There is indeed a patience of unrenewed nature, which has something noble in it, though in many cases the offspring of pride, if not of something lower. Men have been known to endure every form of privation, torture, and death, without a murmur and without even visible emotion, merely because they deemed it unworthy of them to sink under unavoidable ill. But this proud, stoical hardihood has nothing in common with the *grace* of patience — which is either the meek endurance of ill because it is of God (^{<1818>}Job 1:21,22 2:10), or the calm waiting for promised good till His time to dispense it come (^{<1818>}Hebrews 10:36); in the full persuasion that such trials are divinely appointed, are the needed discipline of God’s children, are but for a definite period, and are not sent without abundant promises of “songs in the night.” If such be the “patience” which “tribulation worketh,” no wonder that

4. patience worketh experience — rather, “proof,” as the same word is rendered in ^{<1818>}2 Corinthians 2:9 13:3 ^{<1818>}Philippians 2:22; that is, experimental *evidence* that we have “believed through grace.”

and experience — “proof.”

hope — “of the glory of God,” as prepared for us. Thus have we hope in two distinct ways, and at two successive stages of the Christian life: *first*, immediately on believing, along with the sense of peace and abiding access

to God (⁴⁸¹Romans 5:1); *next*, after the reality of this faith has been “proved,” particularly by the patient endurance of trials sent to test it. We first get it by looking *away from ourselves* to the Lamb of God; next by looking *into or upon ourselves* as transformed by that “looking unto Jesus.” In the one case, the mind acts (as they say) *objectively*; in the other, *subjectively*. The one is (as divines say) the *assurance of faith*; the other, the *assurance of sense*.

5. And hope maketh not ashamed — putteth not to shame, as empty hopes do.

became the love of God — that is, not “our love to God,” as the Romish and some Protestant expositors (following some of the Fathers) represent it; but clearly “God’s love to us” — as most expositors agree.

is shed abroad — literally, “poured forth,” that is, copiously diffused (compare ⁴⁸²John 7:38 ⁴⁸³Titus 3:6).

by the Holy Ghost which is — rather, “was.”

given unto us — that is, at the great Pentecostal effusion, which is viewed as the formal donation of the Spirit to the Church of God, for all time and for each believer. (*The Holy Ghost is here first introduced in this Epistle.*) It is as if the apostle had said, “And how can this hope of glory, which as believers we cherish, put us to shame, when we feel God Himself, by His Spirit given to us, drenching our hearts in sweet, all-subduing sensations of His wondrous love to us in Christ Jesus?” This leads the apostle to expatiate on the amazing character of that love.

6-8. For when we were yet without strength — that is, powerless to deliver ourselves, and so ready to perish.

in due time — at the appointed season.

Christ died for the ungodly — Three signal properties of God’s love are here given: First, “Christ died *for the ungodly*,” whose character, so far from meriting any interposition in their behalf, was altogether repulsive to the eye of God; second, He did this “when they were *without strength*” — with nothing between them and perdition but that self-originating divine compassion; third, He did this “*at the due time*,” when it was most fitting

that it should take place (compare ^{<800>}Galatians 4:4), The two former of these properties the apostle now proceeds to illustrate.

7. For scarcely for a righteous man — a man of simply *unexceptionable* character.

will one — “any one”

die: yet peradventure for a good man — a man who, besides being unexceptionable, is *distinguished for goodness*, a benefactor to society.

some — “some one.”

would — rather, “doth.”

even dare to die — “Scarce an instance occurs of self-sacrifice for one merely upright; though for one who makes himself a blessing to society there *may* be found an example of such noble surrender of life” (Song of Solomon BENGEL, OLSHAUSEN, THOLUCK, ALFORD, PHILIPPI). (To make the “righteous” and the “good” man here to mean the same person, and the whole sense to be that “though rare, the case may occur, of one making a sacrifice of life for a worthy character” [as CALVIN, BEZA, FRITZSCHE, JOWETT], is extremely flat.)

8. But God commendeth — “setteth off,” “displayeth” — in glorious contrast with all that men will do for each other.

his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners — that is, in a state not of positive “goodness,” nor even of negative “righteousness,” but on the contrary, “sinners,” a state which His soul hateth.

Christ died for us — Now comes the overpowering inference, emphatically redoubled.

9, 10. Much more then, being — “having been”

now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being now — “having now been”

reconciled, we shall be saved by his life — that is “If that part of the Savior’s work which cost Him His blood, and which had to be wrought for persons incapable of the least sympathy either with His love or His labors in their behalf — even our ‘justification,’ our ‘reconciliation’ — is already completed; how much more will He do all that remains to be done, since He has it to do, not by death agonies any more, but in untroubled ‘life,’ and no longer for enemies, but for friends — from whom, at every stage of it, He receives the grateful response of redeemed and adoring souls?” To be “saved from wrath through Him,” denotes here the whole work of Christ towards *believers*, from the moment of justification, when the wrath of God is turned away from them, till the Judge on the great white throne shall discharge that wrath upon them that “obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ”; and that work may all be summed up in “keeping them from falling, and presenting them faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (^{REF}Jude 1:24): thus are they “saved from wrath through Him.”

11. And not only so, but we also joy — rather, “glory.”

in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by — “through”

whom we have now received the atonement — rather, “the reconciliation” (*Margin*), as the same word is rendered in ^{REF}Romans 5:10 and in ^{REF}2 Corinthians 5:18,19. (In fact, the earlier meaning of the English word “atonement” was “the *reconciliation* of two estranged parties”) [TRENCH]. The foregoing effects of justification were all benefits to ourselves, calling for gratitude; this last may be termed a purely disinterested one. Our first feeling towards God, after we have found peace with Him, is that of clinging gratitude for so costly a salvation; but no sooner have we learned to cry, Abba, Father, under the sweet sense of reconciliation, than “gloriation” in Him takes the place of dread of Him, and now He appears to us “altogether lovely!”

On this section, *Note*,

- (1) How gloriously does the Gospel evince its divine origin by basing all acceptable obedience on “peace with God,” laying the foundations of this peace in a righteous “justification” of the sinner “through our Lord Jesus Christ,” and making this the entrance to a permanent

standing in the divine favor, and a triumphant expectation of future glory! (**☞** Romans 5:1,2). Other peace, worthy of the name, there is none; and as those who are strangers to it rise not to the enjoyment of such high fellowship with God, so they have neither any taste for it nor desire after it.

(2) As only believers possess the true secret of patience under trials, so, although “not joyous but grievous” in themselves (**☞** Hebrews 12:17), when trials divinely sent afford them the opportunity of evidencing their faith by the grace of patience under them, they should “count it all joy” (**☞** Romans 5:3,4; and see **☞** James 1:2,3).

(3) “Hope,” in the New Testament sense of the term, is not a lower degree of faith or assurance (as many now say, I *hope* for heaven, but am not *sure* of it); but invariably means “the confident expectation of future good.” It presupposes faith; and what faith *assures* us will be ours, hope accordingly *expects*. In the nourishment of this hope, the soul’s look *outward* to Christ for the ground of it, and *inward* upon ourselves for evidence of its reality, must act and react upon each other (**☞** Romans 5:2 and **☞** Romans 5:4 compared).

(4) It is the proper office of the Holy Ghost to beget in the soul the full conviction and joyful consciousness of the love of God in Christ Jesus to sinners of mankind, and to ourselves in particular; and where this exists, it carries with it such an assurance of final salvation as cannot deceive (**☞** Romans 5:5).

(5) The *justification* of sinful men is not in virtue of their amendment, but of “the *blood* of God’s Son”; and while this is expressly affirmed in **☞** Romans 5:9, our *reconciliation* to God by the “*death* of His Son,” affirmed in **☞** Romans 5:10, is but a variety of the same statement. In both, the blessing meant is the *restoration of the sinner to a righteous standing* in the sight of God; and in both, the meritorious ground of this, which is intended to be conveyed, is the *expiatory sacrifice* of God’s Son.

(6) Gratitude to God for redeeming love, if it could exist without delight in God Himself, would be a selfish and worthless feeling; but when the one rises into the other — the transporting sense of eternal

“reconciliation” passing into “gloriation in God” Himself — then the lower is sanctified and sustained by the higher, and each feeling is perfective of the other (Romans 5:11).

ROMANS 5:12-21.

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST BETWEEN ADAM AND CHRIST IN THEIR RELATION TO THE HUMAN FAMILY.

(This profound and most weighty section has occasioned an immense deal of critical and theological discussion, in which every point, and almost every clause, has been contested. We can here but set down what appears to us to be the only tenable view of it as a whole and of its successive clauses, with some slight indication of the grounds of our judgment).

12. Wherefore — that is, Things being so; referring back to the whole preceding argument.

as by one man — Adam.

sin — considered here in its guilt, criminality, penal desert.

entered into the world, and death by sin — as the penalty of sin.

and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned — rather, “all sinned,” that is, in that one man’s first sin. Thus death reaches every individual of the human family, as the penalty due to *himself*. (So, in substance, BENGEL, HODGE, PHILIPPI). Here we should have expected the apostle to finish his sentence, in some such way as this: “Even so, by one man righteousness has entered into the world, and life by righteousness.” But, instead of this, we have a digression, extending to five verses, to illustrate the important statement of Romans 5:12; and it is only at Romans 5:18 that the comparison is resumed and finished.

13, 14. For until the law sin was in the world — that is during all the period from Adam “until the law” of Moses was given, God continued to treat men as sinners.

but sin is not imputed where there is no law — “There must therefore have been a law during that period, because sin *was* then imputed”; as is now to be shown.

14. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression —

But who are they? — a much contested question. *Infants* (say some), who being guiltless of *actual sin*, may be said not to have sinned in the way that Adam did [AUGUSTINE, BEZA, HODGE]. But why should infants be specially connected with the period “from Adam to Moses,” since they die alike in every period? And if the apostle meant to express here the death of infants, why has he done it so enigmatically? Besides, the death of infants is comprehended in the universal mortality on account of the first sin, so emphatically expressed in ^{<5B>}Romans 5:12; what need then to specify it here? and why, if not necessary, should we presume it to be meant here, unless the language unmistakably point to it — which it certainly does not? The meaning then must be, that “death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those that had not, like Adam, transgressed against a positive commandment, threatening death to the disobedient.” (Song of Solomon most interpreters). In this case, the particle “even,” instead of specifying one particular class of those who lived “from Adam to Moses” (as the other interpretation supposes), merely explains what it was that made the case of those who died from Adam to Moses worthy of special notice — namely, that “though unlike Adam and all since Moses, those who lived between the two had no positive threatening of death for transgression, nevertheless, death reigned *even over them*.”

who is the figure — or, “a type.”

of him that was to come — Christ. “This clause is inserted on the first mention of the name “Adam,” the *one man* of whom he is speaking, to recall the purpose for which he is treating of him, as *the figure of Christ*” [ALFORD]. The point of analogy intended here is plainly the *public character* which both sustained, neither of the two being regarded in the divine procedure towards men as mere *individual* men, but both alike as *representative* men. (Some take the proper supplement here to be “Him [that is] to come”; understanding the apostle to speak from his own time, and to refer to Christ’s second coming [FRITZSCHE, DE WETTE, ALFORD].

But this is unnatural, since the analogy of the second Adam to the first has been in full development ever since “God exalted Him to be a Prince and a Savior,” and it will only remain to be consummated at His second coming. The simple meaning is, as nearly all interpreters agree, that Adam is a type of Him who was to come after him in the same public character, and so to be “the second Adam”).

15. But — “Yet,” “Howbeit.”

not as the offense — “trespass.”

so also is the free gift — or “the gracious gift,” “the gift of grace.” The two cases present points of contrast as well as resemblance.

For if, etc. — rather, “For if through the offense of the one the many died (that is, in that one man’s first sin), much more did the grace of God, and the free gift by grace, even that of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many.” By “the many” is meant the *mass* of mankind represented respectively by Adam and Christ, as opposed, not to *few*, but to “the one” who represented them. By “the free gift” is meant (as in ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:17) the glorious gift of *justifying righteousness*; this is expressly distinguished from “the grace of God,” as the *effect* from the *cause*; and both are said to “abound” towards us in Christ — in what sense will appear in ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:16,17. And the “much more,” of the one case than the other, does not mean that we get much more of good by Christ than of evil by Adam (for it is not a case of quantity at all); but that we have much more reason to expect, or it is much more agreeable to our ideas of God, that the many should be benefited by the merit of one, than that they should suffer for the sin of one; and if the latter has happened, *much more* may we assure ourselves of the former [PHILIPPI, HODGE].

16. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift — “Another point of contrast may be mentioned.”

for the judgment — “sentence.”

was by one — rather, “was of one,” meaning not “one man,” but, as appears from the next clause, “one offense.”

to condemnation, but the free gift — “gift of grace.”

is of many offenses unto justification — a glorious point of contrast. “The condemnation by Adam was for *one sin*; but the justification by Christ is an absolution not only from the guilt of that first offense, mysteriously attaching to every individual of the race, but from the *countless offenses* it, to which, as a germ lodged in the bosom of every child of Adam, it unfolds itself in his life.” This is the meaning of “*grace abounding towards us in the abundance of the gift of righteousness*.” It is a grace not only rich in its *character*, but rich in *detail*; it is a “righteousness” not only rich in a *complete justification* of the guilty, condemned sinner; but rich in the *amplitude of the ground* which it covers, leaving no one sin of any of the justified uncanceled, but making him, though loaded with the guilt of myriads of offenses, “the righteousness of God in Christ.”

17. For if by — “the”

one man’s offense death reigned by one — “through the one.”

much more shall they which receive — “the”

abundance of grace and of the gift of — justifying

righteousness ... reign in life by one Jesus Christ — “through the one.” We have here the two ideas of ^{◀R1615}Romans 5:15 and ^{◀R1616}Romans 5:16 sublimely combined into one, as if the subject had grown upon the apostle as he advanced in his comparison of the two cases. Here, for the first time in this section, he speaks of that LIFE which springs out of justification, in contrast with the death which springs from sin and follows condemnation. The proper idea of it therefore is, “Right to live” — “Righteous life” — life possessed and enjoyed with the good will, and in conformity with the eternal law, of “Him that sitteth on the Throne”; life therefore in its widest sense — life in the whole man and throughout the whole duration of human existence, the life of blissful and loving relationship to God in soul and body, for ever and ever. It is worthy of note, too, that while he says death “reigned over” us through Adam, he does not say Life “reigns over us” through Christ; lest he should seem to invest this new life with the very attribute of death — that of fell and malignant tyranny, of which we were the hapless victims. Nor does he say Life reigns *in us*, which would have been a scriptural enough idea; but, which is much more pregnant, “*We*

shall reign in life.” While *freedom* and *might* are implied in the figure of “reigning,” “life” is represented as the glorious territory or atmosphere of that reign. And by recurring to the idea of ◀BND Romans 5:16, as to the “many offenses” whose complete pardon shows “the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness,” the whole statement is to this effect: “If one man’s one offense let loose against us the tyrant power of Death, to hold us as its victims in helpless bondage, ‘much more,’ when we stand forth enriched with God’s ‘abounding grace’ and in the beauty of a complete absolution from countless offenses, shall we expatiate in a life divinely owned and legally secured, ‘reigning’ in exultant freedom and unchallenged might, through that other matchless ‘One,’ Jesus Christ!” (On the import of the *future* tense in this last clause, see on ◀BND Romans 5:19, and ◀BND Romans 6:5).

18. Therefore — now at length resuming the unfinished comparison of ◀BND Romans 5:12, in order to give *formally* the concluding member of it, which had been done once and again *substantially*, in the intermediate verses.

as by the offense of one judgment came — or, more simply, “it came.”

upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came — rather, “it came.”

upon all men to justification of life — (Song of Solomon CALVIN, BENGEL, OLSHAUSEN, THOLUCK, HODGE, PHILIPPI). But better, as we judge: “As through one offense it [came] upon all men to condemnation; even so through one righteousness [it came] upon all men to justification of life” — (Song of Solomon BEZA, GROTIUS, FERME, MEYER, DE WETTE, ALFORD, *Revised Version*). In this case, the apostle, resuming the statement of ◀BND Romans 5:12, expresses it in a more concentrated and vivid form — suggested no doubt by the expression in ◀BND Romans 5:16, “through one offense,” representing Christ’s whole work, considered as the ground of our justification, as “ONE RIGHTEOUSNESS.” (Some would render the peculiar word here employed, “one righteous act” [ALFORD, etc.]; understanding by it Christ’s *death* as the one redeeming act which reversed the one undoing act of Adam. But this is to limit the apostle’s idea too much; for as the same word is properly rendered “righteousness” in ◀BND Romans 8:4, where it means “the righteousness of the law as fulfilled

by us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,” so here it denotes Christ’s whole “obedience unto death,” considered as the one meritorious ground of the reversal of the condemnation which came by Adam. But on this, and on the expression, “all men,” see on ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:19. The expression “justification of life,” is a vivid combination of two ideas already expatiated upon, meaning “justification entitling to and issuing in the rightful possession and enjoyment of life”).

19. For, etc. — better, “For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so by the obedience of the One shall the many be made righteous.” On this great verse observe: *First*, By the “obedience” of Christ here is plainly not meant more than what divines call His *active* obedience, as distinguished from His sufferings and death; it is the entire work of Christ in its *obediential* character. Our Lord Himself represents even His death as His great act of obedience to the Father: “This commandment (that is, to lay down and resume His life) have I received of My Father” (~~ROM~~ John 10:8). *Second*, The significant word twice rendered *made*, does not signify to *work a change upon* a person or thing, but to *constitute* or *ordain*, as will be seen from all the places where it is used. Here, accordingly, it is intended to express that *judicial act* which holds men, in virtue of their connection with Adam, as sinners; and, in connection with Christ, as righteous. *Third*, The change of *tense* from the past to the future — “as through Adam we *were* made sinners, so through Christ we *shall be* made righteous” — delightfully expresses the enduring character of the act, and of the economy to which such acts belong, in contrast with the for-ever-past ruin of believers in Adam. (See on ~~ROM~~ Romans 6:5). *Fourth*, The “all men” of ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:18 and the “many” of ~~ROM~~ Romans 5:19 are the same party, though under a slightly different aspect. In the latter case, the contrast is between the *one* representative (Adam — Christ) and the *many* whom he represented; in the former case, it is between the one *head* (Adam — Christ) and the *human race*, affected for death and life respectively by the actings of that one. Only in this latter case it is the redeemed family of man that is alone in view; it is *humanity* as actually lost, but also as actually saved, as ruined and recovered. Such as refuse to fall in with the high purpose of God to constitute His Son a “second Adam,” the Head of a new race, and as impenitent and unbelieving finally perish, have no place in this section of the Epistle, whose sole

object is to show how God repairs in the second Adam the evil done by the first. (Thus the doctrine of *universal restoration* has no place here. Thus too the forced interpretation by which the “justification of all” is made to mean a justification merely in *possibility* and *offer* to all, and the “justification of the many” to mean the *actual* justification of as many as believe [ALFORD, etc.], is completely avoided. And thus the harshness of comparing a *whole* fallen family with a recovered *part* is got rid of. However true it be in *fact* that part of mankind is not saved, this is not the *aspect* in which the subject is here presented. It is *totals* that are compared and contrasted; and it is the *same total* in two successive conditions — namely, *the human race* as ruined in Adam and recovered in Christ).

20, 21. Moreover the law — “The law, however.” The Jew might say, If the whole purposes of God towards men center in Adam and Christ, where does “the law” come in, and what was the use of it? *Answer:* It

entered — But the word expresses an important idea besides “entering.” It signifies, “entered incidentally,” or “parenthetically.” (In ^{<K&U>}Galatians 2:4 the same word is rendered, “came in *privily*.”) The meaning is, that the promulgation of the law at Sinai was no primary or essential feature of the divine plan, but it was “added” (^{<K&U>}Galatians 3:19) for a subordinate purpose — the more fully to reveal the evil occasioned by Adam, and the need and glory of the remedy by Christ.

that the offense might abound — or, “be multiplied.” But what offense? Throughout all this section “the offense” (four times repeated besides here) has one definite meaning, namely, “the one first offense of Adam”; and this, in our judgment, is its meaning here also: “All our multitudinous breaches of the law are nothing but *that one first offense*, lodged mysteriously in the bosom of every child of Adam as an *offending principal*, and *multiplying itself* into myriads of particular offenses in the life of each.” What was one *act* of disobedience in the head has been converted into a vital and virulent *principle* of disobedience in all the members of the human family, whose every act of wilful rebellion proclaims itself the child of the original transgression.

But where sin abounded — or, “was multiplied.”

grace did much more abound — rather, “did exceedingly abound,” or “superabound.” The comparison here is between the multiplication of one offense into countless transgressions, and such an overflow of grace as more than meets that appalling case.

21. That as sin — Observe, the word “offense” is no more used, as that had been sufficiently illustrated; but — what better befitted this comprehensive summation of the whole matter — the great general term *sin*.

hath reigned unto death — rather, “in death,” triumphing and (as it were) revelling in that complete destruction of its victims.

even so might grace reign — In ^{<RSH>}Romans 5:14,17 we had the reign of *death* over the guilty and condemned in Adam; here it is the reign of the mighty *causes* of these — of SIN which clothes Death a Sovereign with venomous *power* (^{<RSH>}1 Corinthians 15:56) and with awful *authority* (^{<RSH>}Romans 6:23), and of GRACE, the grace which originated the scheme of salvation, the grace which “sent the Son to be the Savior of the world,” the grace which “made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin,” the grace which “makes us to be the righteousness of God in Him,” so that “we who receive *the abundance of grace* and of the gift of righteousness do reign in life by One, Jesus Christ!”

through righteousness — not *ours* certainly (“the obedience of Christians,” to use the wretched language of GROTIUS) nor yet exactly “justification” [STUART, HODGE]; but rather, “the (justifying) righteousness of Christ” [BEZA, ALFORD, and in substance, OLSHAUSEN, MEYER]; the same which in ^{<RSH>}Romans 5:19 is called His “obedience,” meaning His whole mediatorial work in the flesh. This is here represented as the *righteous medium* through which grace reaches its objects and attains all its ends, the stable throne from which Grace as a Sovereign dispenses its saving benefits to as many as are brought under its benign sway.

unto eternal life — which is salvation in its highest form and fullest development for ever.

by Jesus Christ our Lord — Thus, on that “Name which is above every name,” the echoes of this hymn to the glory of “Grace” die away, and “Jesus is left alone.”

On reviewing this golden section of our Epistle, the following additional remarks occur:

(1) If this section does not teach that the whole race of Adam, standing in him as their federal head, “sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression,” we may despair of any intelligible exposition of it. The apostle, after saying that Adam’s sin introduced death into the world, does not say “and so death passed upon all men for that *Adam* “sinned,” but “for that *all sinned*.” Thus, according to the teaching of the apostle, “the death of all is for the sin of all”; and as this cannot mean the personal sins of each individual, but some sin of which unconscious infants are guilty equally with adults, it can mean nothing but the one “first transgression” of their common head, regarded as *the sin of each* of his race, and punished, as such, with death. It is vain to start back from this imputation to all of the guilt of Adam’s first sin, as wearing the appearance of *injustice*. For not only are all other theories liable to the same objection, in some other form — besides being inconsistent with the text — but the actual *facts of human nature*, which none dispute, and which cannot be explained away, involve essentially the same difficulties as the great *principle* on which the apostle here explains them. If we admit this principle, on the authority of our apostle, a flood of light is at once thrown upon certain features of the divine procedure, and certain portions of the divine oracles, which otherwise are involved in much darkness; and if the principle itself seem hard to digest, it is not harder than the *existence of evil*, which, as a fact, admits of no dispute, but, as a feature in the divine administration, admits of no explanation in the present state.

(2) What is called *original sin* — or that depraved tendency to evil with which every child of Adam comes into the world — is not formally treated of in this section (and even in the seventh chapter, it is rather its nature and operation than its connection with the first sin which is handled). But indirectly, this section bears testimony to it; representing the one original offense, unlike every other, as having an

enduring vitality in the bosom of every child of Adam, as a principle of disobedience, whose virulence has gotten it the familiar name of “original sin.”

(3) In what sense is the word “*death*” used throughout this section? Not certainly as mere *temporal* death, as Arminian commentators affirm. For as Christ came to undo what Adam did, which is all comprehended in the word “death,” it would hence follow that Christ has merely dissolved the sentence by which soul and body are parted in death; in other words, merely procured the resurrection of the body. But the New Testament throughout teaches that the salvation of Christ is from a vastly more comprehensive “death” than that. But neither is death here used merely in the sense of *penal evil*, that is, “any evil inflicted in punishment of sin and for the support of law” [HODGE]. This is too indefinite, making death a mere figure of speech to denote “penal evil” in general — an idea foreign to the simplicity of Scripture — or at least making death, strictly so called, only one part of the thing meant b.y it, which ought not to be resorted to if a more simple and natural explanation can be found. By “death” then, in this section, we understand the sinner’s *destruction*, in the only sense in which he is capable of it. Even temporal death is called “destruction” (^{DEUT}Deuteronomy 7:23 ^{1SAM}1 Samuel 5:11, etc.), as extinguishing all that men regard as life. But a destruction extending to the *soul* as well as the body, and *into the future world*, is clearly expressed in ^{MAT}Matthew 7:13 ^{2THESS}2 Thessalonians 1:9 ^{2PET}2 Peter 3:16, etc. This is the penal “death” of our section, and in this view of it we retain its proper sense. Life — as a state of enjoyment of the favor of God, of pure fellowship with Him, and voluntary subjection to Him — is a blighted thing from the moment that sin is found in the creature’s skirts; in that sense, the threatening, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” was carried into immediate effect in the case of Adam when he fell; who was thenceforward “dead while he lived.” Such are all his posterity from their birth. The separation of soul and body in temporal death carries the sinner’s destruction” a stage farther; dissolving his connection with that world out of which he extracted a pleasurable, though unblest, existence, and ushering him into the presence of his Judge — first as a disembodied spirit, but ultimately in the body too,

in an enduring condition — “to be punished (and this is the final state) with *everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.” This final extinction in soul and body of all that constitutes life, but yet eternal consciousness of a blighted existence — this, in its amplest and most awful sense, is “DEATH”! Not that Adam understood all that. It is enough that he understood “the day” of his disobedience to be the terminating period of his blissful “life.” In that simple idea was wrapt up all the rest. But that he should comprehend its *details* was not necessary. Nor is it necessary to suppose all that to be intended in every passage of Scripture where the word occurs. Enough that all we have described is in the bosom of the *thing*, and will be realized in as many as are not the happy subjects of the Reign of Grace. Beyond doubt, the whole of this is intended in such sublime and comprehensive passages as this: “God ... gave His ... Son that whosoever believeth in Him *might not PERISH, but have everlasting LIFE*” (✠ John 3:16). And should not the untold horrors of that “DEATH” — already “reigning over” all that are not in Christ, and hastening to its consummation — quicken our flight into “the second Adam,” that having “received the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, we may reign in LIFE by the One, Jesus Christ?”

CHAPTER 6

ROMANS 6:1-11.

THE BEARING OF JUSTIFICATION BY GRACE UPON A HOLY LIFE.

1. What, etc. — The subject of this *third* division of our Epistle announces itself at once in the opening question, “Shall we (or, as the true reading is, “May we,” “Are we to”) continue in sin, that grace may abound?” Had the apostle’s doctrine been that salvation depends *in any degree* upon our good works, no such objection to it could have been made. Against the doctrine of a purely gratuitous justification, the objection is plausible; nor has there ever been an age in which it has not been urged. That it *was* brought against the apostles, we know from ^{<R18>}Romans 3:8; and we gather from ^{<R18>}Galatians 5:13 ^{<R12>}1 Peter 2:16 ^{<R10>}Jude 1:4, that some did give occasion to the charge; but that it was a total perversion of the doctrine of Grace the apostle here proceeds to show.

2. God forbid — “That be far from us”; the instincts of the new creature revolting at the thought.

How shall we, that are dead, etc. — literally, and more forcibly, “We who died to sin (as presently to be explained), how shall we live any longer therein?”

3. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ — compare ^{<R10>}1 Corinthians 10:2.

were baptized into his death? — sealed with the seal of heaven, and as it were formally entered and articulated, to all the *benefits* and all the *obligations* of Christian discipleship in general, and of His *death* in particular. And since He was “made sin” and “a curse for us” (^{<R12>}2 Corinthians 5:21 ^{<R18>}Galatians 5:13), “bearing our sins in His own body on the tree,” and “rising again for our justification” (^{<R10>}Romans 4:25 ^{<R12>}1 Peter 2:24), our whole sinful case and condition, thus taken up into His Person, has been

brought to an end in His death. Whoso, then, has been baptized into Christ's death has formally surrendered the whole state and life of sin, as in Christ a dead thing. He has sealed himself to be not only "the righteousness of God in Him," but "a new creature"; and as he cannot be in Christ to the one effect and not to the other, for they are one thing, he has bidden farewell, by baptism into Christ's death, to his entire connection with sin. "How," then, "can he live any longer therein?" The two things are as contradictory in the fact as they are in the terms.

4. Therefore we are — rather, "were" (it being a past act, completed at once).

buried with him, by baptism into death — (The *comma* we have placed after "him" will show what the sense is. It is not, "By baptism we are buried with Him into death," which makes no sense at all; but, "By *baptism with Him into death* we are buried with Him"; in other words, "By the same baptism which publicly enters us into His *death*, we are made partakers of His *burial* also"). To leave a dead body unburied is represented, alike in heathen authors as in Scripture, as the greatest indignity (^{491B} Revelation 11:8,9). It was fitting, therefore, that Christ, after "dying for our sins according to the Scriptures," should "descend into the lower parts of the earth" (^{491B} Ephesians 4:9). As this was the last and lowest step of His humiliation, so it was the honorable dissolution of His last link of connection with that life which He laid down for us; and we, in being "buried with Him by our baptism into His death," have by this public act severed our last link of connection with that whole sinful condition and life which Christ brought to an end in His death.

that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father — that is, by such a forth-putting of the Father's *power* as was the effulgence of His whole glory.

even so we also — as risen to a new life with Him.

should walk in newness of life — But what is that "newness?" Surely if our *old* life, now dead and buried with Christ, was wholly sinful, the *new*, to which we rise with the risen Savior, must be altogether a holy life; so that every time we go back to "those things whereof we are now ashamed" (^{491B} Romans 6:21), we belie our resurrection with Christ to newness of life,

and “forget that we have been purged from our old sins” (^{GRB}2 Peter 1:9). (Whether the mode of baptism by immersion be alluded to in this verse, as a kind of symbolical burial and resurrection, does not seem to us of much consequence. Many interpreters think it is, and it may be so. But as it is not clear that baptism in apostolic times was exclusively by immersion [see on ^{GRB}Acts 2:41], so *sprinkling* and *washing* are indifferently used in the New Testament to express the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Jesus. And just as the woman with the issue of blood got virtue out of Christ by simply *touching* Him, so the essence of baptism seems to lie in the simple *contact* of the element with the body, symbolizing living contact with Christ crucified; the mode and extent of suffusion being indifferent and variable with climate and circumstances).

5. For if we have been planted together — literally, “have become formed together.” (The word is used here only).

in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection — that is, “Since Christ’s death and resurrection are inseparable in their efficacy, union with Him in the one carries with it participation in the other, for privilege and for duty alike.” The *future* tense is used of participation in His resurrection, because this is but partially realized in the present state. (See on ^{GRB}Romans 5:19).

6, 7. Knowing this, etc. — The apostle now grows more definite and vivid in expressing the sin-destroying efficacy of our union with the crucified Savior.

that our old man — “our old selves”; that is, “*all that we were* in our old unregenerate condition, before union with Christ” (compare ^{GRB}Colossians 3:9,10 ^{GRB}Ephesians 4:22-24 ^{GRB}Galatians 2:20 5:24 6:14).

is — rather, “was.”

crucified with him — in order.

that the body of sin — not a figure for “the *mass* of sin”; nor the “*material body*,” considered as the seat of sin, which it is not; but (as we judge) for “sin as it dwells in us in our present *embodied* state, under the law of the fall.”

might be destroyed — (in Christ's death) — to the end.

that henceforth we should not serve sin — “be in bondage to sin.”

7. For he that is dead — rather, “hath died.”

is freed — “hath been set free.”

from sin — literally, “justified,” “acquitted,” “got his discharge from sin.” As death dissolves all claims, so the whole claim of sin, not only to “reign unto death,” but to keep its victims in sinful bondage, has been discharged once for all, by the believer's penal death in the death of Christ; so that he is no longer a “*debtor* to the flesh to live after the flesh” (^{<6182>}Romans 8:12).

8. Now if we be dead — “if we died.”

with Christ, etc. — See on ^{<6185>}Romans 6:5.

9-11. Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him — Though Christ's death was in the most absolute sense a voluntary act (^{<6187>}John 10:17,18 ^{<4124>}Acts 2:24), that voluntary surrender gave death such rightful “dominion over *Him*” as dissolved its dominion over *us*. But this once past, “death hath,” even in that sense, “dominion over Him no more.”

10. For in that he died, he died unto — that is, in obedience to the claims of

sin once — for all.

but in that he liveth, he liveth unto — in obedience to the claims of God.

God — There never, indeed, was a time when Christ did not “live unto God.” But in the days of His flesh He did so under the continual burden of sin “laid on Him” (^{<2506>}Isaiah 53:6 ^{<4121>}2 Corinthians 5:21); whereas, now that He has “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,” He “liveth unto God,” the acquitted and accepted Surety, unchallenged and unclouded by the claims of sin.

11. Likewise — even as your Lord Himself.

reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed — “dead on the one hand”

unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord — (The words, “our Lord,” at the close of this verse, are wanting in the best manuscripts.)

Note,

(1) “Antinomianism is not only an error; it is a falsehood and a slander” [HODGE]. That “we should continue in sin that grace may abound,” not only is never the deliberate sentiment of any real believer in the doctrine of Grace, but is abhorrent to every Christian mind, as a monstrous abuse of the most glorious of all truths (⌘ROMANS 6:1).

(2) As the death of Christ is not only the expiation of guilt, but the death of sin itself in all who are vitally united to Him; so the resurrection of Christ is the resurrection of believers, not only to acceptance with God, but to newness of life (⌘ROMANS 6:2-11).

(3) In the light of these two truths, let all who name the name of Christ “examine themselves whether they be in the faith.”

⌘ROMANS 6:12-23.

WHAT PRACTICAL USE BELIEVERS SHOULD MAKE OF THEIR DEATH TO SIN AND LIFE TO GOD THROUGH UNION TO THE CRUCIFIED SAVIOUR.

Not content with showing that his doctrine has no tendency to relax the obligations to a holy life, the apostle here proceeds to enforce these obligations.

12. Let not sin therefore — as a Master

reign — (The reader will observe that wherever in this section the words “Sin,” “Obedience,” “Righteousness,” “Uncleanness,” “Iniquity,” are figuratively used, to represent a *Master*, they are here printed in capitals, to make this manifest to the eye, and so save explanation).

in your mortal body, that ye should obey it — sin.

in the lusts thereof — “the lusts of the body,” as the *Greek* makes evident. (The other reading, perhaps the true one, “that ye should obey the lusts thereof,” comes to the same thing). The “body” is here viewed as the instrument by which all the sins of the heart become facts of the outward life, and as itself the seat of the lower appetites; and it is called “our *mortal* body,” probably to remind us how unsuitable is this reign of sin in those who are “alive from the dead.” But the reign here meant is the unchecked dominion of sin *within* us. Its outward acts are next referred to.

13. Neither yield ye your members instruments of unrighteousness unto Sin, but yield yourselves — this is the great surrender.

unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and — as the fruit of this.

your members — till now prostituted to sin.

instruments of righteousness unto God — But what if indwelling sin should prove too strong for us? The reply is: But it will not.

14. For Sin shall not have dominion over you — as the slaves of a tyrant lord.

for ye are not under the law, but under grace — The force of this glorious assurance can only be felt by observing the grounds on which it rests. To be “under the law” is, first, to be under its claim to entire obedience; and so, next under its curse for the breach of these. And as all power to obey can reach the sinner only through *Grace*, of which the law knows nothing, it follows that to be “under the law” is, finally, to be shut up under an *inability to keep it*, and consequently to be the *helpless slave of sin*. On the other hand, to be “under grace,” is to be under the glorious canopy and saving effects of that “grace which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (see on ~~Rom~~ Romans 5:20,21). The curse of the law has been completely lifted from off them; they are made “the righteousness of God in Him”; and they are “alive unto God through Jesus Christ.” So that, as when they were “under the law,” Sin *could not but* have dominion over them, so now that they are “under grace,” Sin *cannot* but be subdued under them. If before, Sin resistlessly triumphed, Grace will now be more than conqueror.

15, 16. What then? ... Know ye not — it is a dictate of common sense.

16. that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey — with the view of obeying him.

his servants ye are to whom ye obey — to whom ye yield that obedience.

whether of Sin unto death — that is, “issuing in death,” in the awful sense of ^{<410>}Romans 8:6, as the sinner’s final condition.

or of Obedience unto righteousness — that is, obedience resulting in a righteous character, as the enduring condition of the servant of new Obedience (^{<417>}1 John 2:17 ^{<433>}John 8:34 ^{<409>}2 Peter 2:19 ^{<402>}Matthew 6:24).

17. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of Sin — that is, that this is a state of things now past and gone.

but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you — rather, “whereunto ye were delivered” (*Margin*), or cast, as in a mould. The idea is, that the teaching to which they had heartily yielded themselves had stamped its own impress upon them.

18. Being then — “And being”; it is the continuation and conclusion of the preceding sentence; not a new one.

made free from Sin, ye became the servants of — “servants to”

Righteousness — The case is one of emancipation from entire servitude to one Master to entire servitude to another, whose property we are (see on ^{<400>}Romans 1:1). There is no middle state of personal independence; for which we were never made, and to which we have no claim. When we would not that God should reign over us, we were in righteous judgment “sold under Sin”; now being through grace “made free from Sin,” it is only to become “servants to Righteousness,” which is our true freedom.

19. I speak after the manner of men — descending, for illustration, to the level of common affairs.

because of the infirmity of your flesh — the weakness of your spiritual apprehension.

for as ye have yielded — “as ye yielded,” the thing being viewed as now past.

your members servants to Uncleaness and to Iniquity unto — the practice of

iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to Righteousness unto holiness — rather, “unto (the attainment of) sanctification,” as the same word is rendered in ²2 Thessalonians 2:13 ¹1 Corinthians 1:30 ¹1 Peter 1:2: — that is, “Looking back upon the *heartiness* with which ye served Sin, and the *lengths* ye went to be stimulated now to like zeal and like exuberance in the service of a better Master.”

20. For when ye were the servants — “were servants”

of Sin, ye were free from — rather, “in respect of”

Righteousness — Difficulties have been made about this clause where none exist. The import of it seems clearly to be this: — “Since no servant can serve two masters, much less where their interests come into deadly collision, and each demands the whole man, so, while ye were in the service of Sin ye were in no proper sense the servants of Righteousness, and never did it one act of real service: whatever might be your conviction of the claims of Righteousness, your real services were all and always given to Sin: Thus had ye full proof of the nature and advantages of Sin’s service.” The searching question with which this is followed up, shows that this is the meaning.

21. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death — What permanent *advantage*, and what abiding *satisfaction*, have those things yielded? The apostle answers his own question: — “Abiding satisfaction, did I ask? They have left only a sense of ‘*shame*.’ Permanent advantage? ‘The end of them is *death*.’” By saying they were “*now* ashamed,” he makes it plain that he is not referring to that disgust at themselves, and remorse of conscience by which those who are the most helplessly “sold under sin” are often stung to the quick; but that ingenuous feeling of self-reproach, which pierces and weighs down the children of God, as they think of the dishonor which their past life did to His name, the ingratitude it displayed,

the violence it did to their own conscience, its deadening and degrading effects, and the death — “the second death” — to which it was dragging them down, when mere Grace arrested them. (On the sense of “death” here, see on ~~the~~ Romans 5:12-21, *Note 3*, and ~~the~~ Romans 6:16: see also ~~the~~ Revelation 21:8 — The change proposed in the pointing of this verse: “What fruit had ye then? things whereof ye are now ashamed” [LUTHER, THOLUCK, DE WETTE, PHILIPPI, ALFORD, etc.], seems unnatural and uncalled for. The ordinary pointing has at least powerful support [CHRYSTOSTOM, CALVIN, BEZA, GROTIUS, BENDEL, STUART, FRITZSCHE]).

22. But now — as if to get away from such a subject were unspeakable relief.

being made free from Sin, and become servants to God — in the absolute sense intended throughout all this passage.

ye have — not “ought to have,” but “do have,” in point of fact.

your fruit unto holiness — “sanctification,” as in ~~the~~ Romans 6:19; meaning that *permanently holy state and character* which is built up out of the whole “fruits of righteousness,” which believers successively bring forth. They “have their fruit” *unto* this, that is, all *going towards* this blessed result.

and the end everlasting life — as the final state of the justified believer; the beatific experience not only of complete exemption from the fall with all its effects, but of the perfect life of acceptance with God, and conformity to His likeness, of unveiled access to Him, and ineffable fellowship with Him through all duration.

23. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through — “in”

Jesus Christ our Lord — This concluding verse — as pointed as it is brief — contains the marrow, the most fine gold, of the Gospel. As the laborer is worthy of his hire, and feels it to be his due — his own of right — so is death the due of sin, the wages the sinner has well wrought for, his own. But “eternal life” is in no sense or degree the wages of our righteousness; we do nothing whatever to earn or become entitled to it, and never can: it is therefore, in the most absolute sense, “THE GIFT OF GOD.”

Grace reigns in the bestowal of it in every case, and that “in Jesus Christ our Lord,” as the righteous Channel of it. In view of this, who that hath tasted that the Lord is gracious can refrain from saying, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!” (~~Rev~~ Revelation 1:5,6).

Note,

(1) As the most effectual refutation of the oft-repeated calumny, that the doctrine of Salvation by grace encourages to continue in sin, is the holy life of those who profess it, let such ever feel that the highest service they can render to that Grace which is all their hope, is to “yield themselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and their members instruments of righteousness unto God” (~~Rom~~ Romans 6:12,13). By so doing they will “put to silence the ignorance of foolish men,” secure their own peace, carry out the end of their calling, and give substantial glory to Him that loved them.

(2) The fundamental principle of Gospel obedience is as original as it is divinely rational; that “we are set free from the law in order to keep it, and are brought graciously under servitude to the law in order to be free” (~~Rom~~ Romans 6:14,15,18). So long as we know no principle of obedience but the terrors of the law, which condemns all the breakers of it, and knows nothing whatever of grace, either to pardon the guilty or to purify the stained, we are shut up under a moral impossibility of genuine and acceptable obedience: whereas when Grace lifts us out of this state, and through union to a righteous Surety, brings us into a state of conscious reconciliation, and loving surrender of heart to a God of salvation, we immediately feel the glorious *liberty to be holy*, and the assurance that “Sin shall not have dominion over us” is as sweet to our renewed tastes and aspirations as the ground of it is felt to be firm, “because we are not under the Law, but under Grace.”

(3) As this most momentous of all transitions in the history of a man is wholly of God’s free grace, the change should never be thought, spoken, or written of but with lively thanksgiving to Him who so loved us (~~Rom~~ Romans 6:17).

(4) Christians, in the service of God, should emulate their former selves in the zeal and steadiness with which they served sin, and the length to which they went in it (~~818~~ Romans 6:19).

(5) To stimulate this holy rivalry, let us often “look back to the rock whence we were hewn, the hole of the pit whence we were digged,” in search of the enduring advantages and permanent satisfactions which the service of Sin yielded; and when we find to our “shame” only gall and wormwood, let us follow a godless life to its proper “end,” until, finding ourselves in the territories of “death,” we are fain to hasten back to survey the service of Righteousness, that new Master of all believers, and find Him leading us sweetly into abiding “holiness,” and landing us at length in “everlasting life” (~~819~~ Romans 6:20-22).

(6) Death and life are before all men who hear the Gospel: the one, the natural issue and proper reward of sin; the other, the absolutely free “GIFT OF GOD” to sinners, “in Jesus Christ our Lord.” And as the one is the *conscious* sense of the hopeless loss of all blissful existence, so the other is the conscious possession and enjoyment of all that constitutes a rational creature’s highest “life” for evermore (~~812~~ Romans 6:23). Ye that read or hear these words, “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live!” (~~816~~ Deuteronomy 30:19).

CHAPTER 7

ROMANS 7:1-25.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Relation of Believers to the Law and to Christ (ROMANS 7:1-6).

Recurring to the statement of ROMANS 6:14, that believers are “not under the law but under grace,” the apostle here shows *how* this change is brought about, and what holy consequences follow from it.

1. I speak to them that know the law — of Moses to whom, though not themselves Jews (see on ROMANS 1:13), the Old Testament was familiar.

2, 3. if her husband be dead — “die.” So ROMANS 7:3.

3. she be married — “joined.” So ROMANS 7:4.

4. Wherefore ... ye also are become dead — rather, “were slain.”

to the law by the body of Christ — through His slain body. The apostle here departs from his usual word “died,” using the more expressive phrase “were slain,” to make it clear that he meant their being “crucified with Christ” (as expressed in ROMANS 6:3-6, and GALATIANS 2:20).

that ye should be married to another, even to him that is — “was.”

raised from the dead — to the intent.

that we should bring forth fruit unto God — It has been thought that the apostle should here have said that “the *law* died to us,” not “we to the law,” but that purposely inverted the figure, to avoid the harshness to Jewish ears of *the death of the law* [CHRYSOSTOM, CALVIN, HODGE, PHILIPPI, etc.]. But this is to mistake the apostle’s design in employing this figure, which was merely to illustrate the general principle that “*death dissolves legal obligation*.” It was essential to his argument that *we*, not

the law, should be the dying party, since it is we that are “crucified with Christ,” and not the law. This death dissolves our marriage obligation to the law, leaving us at liberty to contract a new relation — to be joined to the Risen One, in order to spiritual fruitfulness, to the glory of God [BEZA, OLSHAUSEN, MEYER, ALFORD, etc.]. The confusion, then, is in the expositors, not the text; and it has arisen from not observing that, like Jesus Himself, believers are here viewed as having a double life — the old sin-condemned life, which they lay down with Christ, and the new life of acceptance and holiness to which they rise with their Surety and Head; and all the issues of this new life, in Christian obedience, are regarded as the “fruit” of this blessed union to the Risen One. How such holy fruitfulness was impossible before our union to Christ, is next declared.

5. For when we were in the flesh — in our unregenerate state, as we came into the world. See on ^{<886}John 3:6 and ^{<886}Romans 8:5-9.

the motions — “passions” (*Margin*), “affections” (as in ^{<884}Galatians 5:24), or “stirrings.”

of sins — that is, “prompting to the commission of sins.”

which were by the law — by occasion of the law, which fretted, irritated our inward corruption by its prohibitions. See on ^{<880}Romans 7:7-9.

did work in our members — the members of the body, as the instruments by which these inward stirrings find vent in action, and become facts of the life. See on ^{<880}Romans 6:6.

to bring forth fruit unto death — death in the sense of ^{<882}Romans 6:21. Thus hopeless is all holy fruit before union to Christ.

6. But now — On the same expression, see on ^{<882}Romans 6:22, and compare ^{<805}James 1:15.

we are delivered from the law — The word is the same which, in ^{<886}Romans 6:6 and elsewhere, is rendered “destroyed,” and is but another way of saying (as in ^{<880}Romans 7:4) that “we were *slain* to the law by the body of Christ”; language which, though harsh to the ear, is designed and fitted to impress upon the reader the *violence* of that death of the Cross, by which, as by a deadly wrench, we are “delivered from the law.”

that being dead wherein we were held — It is now universally agreed that the true reading here is, “being dead to that wherein we were held.” The received reading has no authority whatever, and is inconsistent with the strain of the argument; for the death spoken of, as we have seen, is not the *law*’s, but ours, through union with the crucified Savior.

that we should — “so as to” or “so that we.”

serve in newness of spirit — “in the newness of the spirit.”

and not in the oldness of the letter — not in our old way of literal, mechanical obedience to the divine law, as a set of external rules of conduct, and without any reference to the state of our hearts; but in that new way of spiritual obedience which, through union to the risen Savior, we have learned to render (compare ^{Ⓡ122}Romans 2:29 ^{Ⓡ122}2 Corinthians 3:6).

False Inferences regarding the Law Repelled (^{Ⓡ122}Romans 7:7-25).

And first, ^{Ⓡ122}Romans 7:7-13, in the case of the UNREGENERATE.

7, 8. What ... then? Is the law sin? God forbid! — “I have said that when we were in the flesh the law stirred our inward corruption, and was thus the occasion of deadly fruit: Is then the law *to blame* for this? Far from us be such a thought.”

Nay — “On the contrary” (as in ^{Ⓡ122}Romans 8:37 ^{Ⓡ122}1 Corinthians 12:22; *Greek*).

I had not known sin but by the law — It is important to fix what is meant by “sin” here. It certainly is not “the general nature of sin” [ALFORD, etc.], though it be true that this is learned from the law; for such a sense will not suit what is said of it in the following verses, where the meaning is the same as here. The only meaning which suits all that is said of it in this place is “the *principle* of sin in the heart of fallen man.” The sense, then, is this: “It was by means of the law that I came to know what a virulence and strength of sinful propensity I had within me.” The *existence* of this it did not need the law to reveal to him; for even the heathens recognized and wrote of it. But the dreadful nature and desperate power of it the law alone discovered — in the way now to be described.

for I had not known lust, except, etc. — Here the same *Greek* word is unfortunately rendered by three different English ones — “lust”; “covet”; “concupiscence” (Romans 7:8) — which obscures the meaning. By using the word “lust” only, in the wide sense of all “irregular desire,” or every outgoing of the heart towards anything forbidden, the sense will best be brought out; thus, “For I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not lust; But sin, taking (‘having taken’) occasion by the commandment (that one which forbids it), wrought in me all manner of lusting.” This gives a deeper view of the tenth commandment than the mere words suggest. The apostle saw in it the prohibition not only of desire after *certain things there specified*, \ but of “desire after *everything divinely forbidden*”; in other words, all “lusting” or “irregular desire.” It was this which “he had not known but by the law.” The law forbidding all such desire so stirred his corruption that it wrought in him “all manner of lusting” — desire of every sort after what was forbidden.

8. For without the law — that is, before its extensive demands and prohibitions come to operate upon our corrupt nature.

sin was — rather, “is”

dead — that is, the sinful principle of our nature lies so dormant, so torpid, that its virulence and power are unknown, and to our feeling it is as good as “dead.”

9. For I was alive without the law once — “In the days of my ignorance, when, in this sense, a stranger to the law, I deemed myself a righteous man, and, as such, entitled to life at the hand of God.”

but when the commandment came — forbidding all irregular desire; for the apostle sees in this the spirit of the whole law.

sin revived — “came to life”; in its malignity and strength it unexpectedly revealed itself, as if sprung from the dead.

and I died — “saw myself, in the eye of a law never kept and not to be kept, a dead man.”

10, 11. And — thus.

the commandment, which was, etc. — designed

to — give

life — through the keeping of it.

I found to be unto death — through breaking it.

For sin — my sinful nature.

taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me — or “seduced me” — drew me aside into the very thing which the commandment forbade.

and by it slew me — “discovered me to myself to be a condemned and gone man” (compare ~~ROM~~ Romans 7:9, “I *died*”).

12, 13. Wherefore — “So that.”

the law is — “is indeed”

good, and the commandment — that one so often referred to, which forbids all lusting.

holy, and just, and good.

13. Was then that which is good made — “Hath then that which is good become”

death unto me? God forbid — that is, “Does the *blame* of my death lie with the good law? Away with such a thought.”

But sin — became death unto me, to the end.

that it might appear sin — that it might be seen in its true light.

working death in — rather, “to”

me by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful — “that its enormous turpitude might stand out to view, through its turning God’s holy, just, and good law into a provocative to the very things which is forbids.” So much for *the law in relation to the unregenerate*, of whom the apostle takes himself as the example; first, in his ignorant, self-satisfied condition; next, under humbling discoveries of his inability to keep the law, through inward contrariety to it; finally, as self-condemned, and already, in law, a dead man. Some

inquire to what period of his recorded history these circumstances relate. But there is no reason to think they were wrought into such conscious and explicit discovery at any period of his history before he “met the Lord in the way”; and though, “amidst the multitude of his thoughts within him” during his memorable three day’s blindness immediately after that, such views of the law and of himself would doubtless be tossed up and down till they *took shape* much as they are here described (see on ^{<499>}Acts 9:9) we regard this whole description of his inward struggles and progress rather as the *finished result* of all his past recollections and subsequent reflections on his unregenerate state, which he throws into historical form only for greater vividness. But now the apostle proceeds to repel false inferences *regarding the law*, secondly: ^{<574>}Romans 7:14-25, In the case of the REGENERATE; taking himself here also as the example.

14. For we know that the law is spiritual — in its demands.

but I am carnal — fleshly (see on ^{<575>}Romans 7:5), and as such, incapable of yielding spiritual obedience.

sold under sin — enslaved to it. The “I” here, though of course not the *regenerate*, is neither the *unregenerate*, but the sinful principle of the renewed man, as is expressly stated in ^{<576>}Romans 7:18.

15, 16. For, etc. — better, “For that which I do I know not”; that is, “In obeying the impulses of my carnal nature I act the slave of another will than my own as a renewed man?”

for, etc. — rather, “for not what I would (wish, desire) that do I, but what I hate that I do.”

16. If then I do that which I would not — “But if what I would not that I do,”

I consent unto the law that it is good — “the judgment of my inner man going along with the law.”

17. Now then it is no more I — *my renewed self*.

that do it — “that work it.”

but sin which dwelleth in me — that principle of sin that still has its abode in me. To explain this and the following statements, as many do (even BENGEL and THOLUCK), of the sins of unrenewed men against their better convictions, is to do painful violence to the apostle's language, and to affirm of the unregenerate what is untrue. That coexistence and mutual hostility of "flesh" and "spirit" in the same renewed man, which is so clearly taught in ^{<R18>}Romans 8:4, etc., and in ^{<R19>}Galatians 5:16, etc., is the true and only key to the language of this and the following verses. (It is hardly necessary to say that the apostle means not to disown the blame of yielding to his corruptions, by saying, "it is not he that does it, but sin that dwelleth in him." Early heretics thus abused his language; but the whole strain of the passage shows that his sole object in thus expressing himself was to bring more vividly before his readers the conflict of two opposite principles, and how entirely, as a new man — honoring from his inmost soul the law of God — he condemned and renounced his corrupt nature, with its affections and lusts, its stirrings and its outgoings, root and branch).

18. For, etc. — better, "For I know that there dwelleth not in me, that is in my flesh, any good."

for to will — "desire."

is present with me; but how to perform that which is good — the supplement "how," in our version, weakens the statement.

I find not — Here, again, we have the *double self* of the renewed man; "In me dwelleth no good; but this corrupt self is not my true self; it is but sin dwelling in my real self, as a renewed man."

19, 21. For, etc. — The conflict here graphically described between a self that "desires" to do good and a self that in spite of this does evil, cannot be the struggles between conscience and passion in the *unregenerate*, because the description given of this "desire to do good" in ^{<R122>}Romans 7:22 is such as cannot be ascribed, with the least show of truth, to any but the *renewed*.

22. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man — "from the bottom of my heart." The word here rendered "delight" is indeed stronger

than “consent” in ^{<817>}Romans 7:16; but both express a state of mind and heart to which the unregenerate man is a stranger.

23. But I see another — it should be “a different”

law in my members — (See on ^{<818>}Romans 7:5).

warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members — In this important verse, observe, first, that the word “law” means *an inward principle of action, good or evil, operating with the fixedness and regularity of a law*. The apostle found two such laws within him; the one “the law of sin in his members,” called (in ^{<817>}Galatians 5:17,24) “the flesh which lusteth against the spirit,” “the flesh with the affections and lusts,” that is, the sinful principle in the regenerate; the other, “the law of the mind,” or the holy principle of the renewed nature. Second, when the apostle says he “sees” the one of these principles “warring against” the other, and “bringing him into captivity” to itself, *he is not referring to any actual rebellion going on within him while he was writing, or to any captivity to his own lusts then existing*. He is simply describing the two conflicting principles, and pointing out what it was the inherent property of each to aim at bringing about. Third, when the apostle describes himself as “*brought into captivity*” by the triumph of the sinful principle of his nature, he clearly speaks in the person of a *renewed man*. Men do not feel themselves to be in captivity in the territories of their own sovereign and associated with their own friends, breathing a congenial atmosphere, and acting quite spontaneously. But here the apostle describes himself, when drawn under the power of his sinful nature, as forcibly seized and reluctantly dragged to his enemy’s camp, from which he would gladly make his escape. This ought to settle the question, whether he is here speaking as a regenerate man or the reverse.

24. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? — The apostle speaks of the “body” here with reference to “the law of sin” which he had said was “in his members,” but merely as the instrument by which the sin of the heart finds vent in action, and as itself the seat of the lower appetites (see on ^{<818>}Romans 6:6, and ^{<819>}Romans 7:5); and he calls it “the body of *this* death,” as feeling, at the moment when he wrote, the horrors of that death (^{<820>}Romans 6:21, and

⌚ Romans 7:5) into which it dragged him down. But the language is not that of a sinner newly awakened to the sight of his lost state; it is the cry of a living but agonized believer, weighed down under a burden which is not himself, but which he longs to shake off from his renewed self. Nor does the question imply ignorance of the way of relief at the time referred to. It was designed only to prepare the way for that outburst of thankfulness for the divinely provided remedy which immediately follows.

25. I thank God — the Source.

through Jesus Christ — the Channel of deliverance.

So then — to sum up the whole matter.

with the mind — the mind indeed.

I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin —

“Such then is the unchanging character of these two principles within me. God’s holy law is dear to my renewed mind, and has the willing service of my new man; although that corrupt nature which still remains in me listens to the dictates of sin.”

Note,

(1) This whole chapter was of essential service to the Reformers in their contendings with the Church of Rome. When the divines of that corrupt church, in a Pelagian spirit, denied that the sinful principle in our fallen nature, which they called “Concupiscence,” and which is commonly called “Original Sin,” had the nature of *sin* at all, they were triumphantly answered from this chapter, where — both in the first section of it, which speaks of it in the unregenerate, and in the second, which treats of its presence and actings in believers — it is explicitly, emphatically, and repeatedly called “*sin*.” As such, they held it to be *damnable*. (See the Confessions both of the Lutheran and Reformed churches). In the following century, the orthodox in Holland had the same controversy to wage with “the Remonstrants” (the followers of Arminius), and they waged it on the field of this chapter.

(2) Here we see that *Inability* is consistent with *Accountability*. (See

⌚ Romans 7:18 ⌚ Galatians 5:17). “As the Scriptures constantly

recognize the truth of these two things, so are they constantly united in Christian experience. Everyone feels that he cannot do the things that he would, yet is sensible that he is guilty for not doing them. Let any man test his power by the requisition to love God perfectly at all times. Alas! how entire our inability! Yet how deep our self-loathing and self-condemnation!" [HODGE].

(3) If the first sight of the Cross by the eye of faith kindles feelings never to be forgotten, and in one sense never to be repeated — like the first view of an enchanting landscape — the experimental discovery, in the latter stages of the Christian life, of its power to beat down and mortify inveterate corruption, to cleanse and heal from long-continued backslidings and frightful inconsistencies, and so to triumph over all that threatens to destroy those for whom Christ died, as to bring them safe over the tempestuous seas of this life into the haven of eternal rest — is attended with yet more heart — affecting wonder draws forth deeper thankfulness, and issues in more exalted adoration of Him whose work Salvation is from first to last (~~cf~~ Romans 7:24,25).

(4) It is sad when such topics as these are handled as mere questions of biblical interpretation or systematic theology. Our great apostle could not treat of them apart from personal experience, of which the facts of his own life and the feelings of his own soul furnished him with illustrations as lively as they were apposite. When one is unable to go far into the investigation of indwelling sin, without breaking out into an, "O wretched man that I am!" and cannot enter on the way of relief without exclaiming "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," he will find his meditations rich in fruit to his own soul, and may expect, through Him who presides in all such matters, to kindle in his readers or hearers the like blessed emotions (~~cf~~ Romans 7:24,25). So be it even now, O Lord!

CHAPTER 8

◀NEXT ROMANS 8:1-39.

CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE ARGUMENT - THE GLORIOUS COMPLETENESS OF THEM THAT ARE IN CHRIST JESUS.

In this surpassing chapter the several streams of the preceding argument meet and flow in one “river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,” until it seems to lose itself in the ocean of a blissful eternity.

First: The Sanctification of Believers (◀NEXT Romans 8:1-13).

1. There is therefore now, etc. — referring to the immediately preceding context [OLSHAUSEN, PHILIPPI, MEYER, ALFORD, etc.]. The subject with which the seventh chapter concludes is still under consideration. The scope of ◀NEXT Romans 8:1-4 is to show how “the law of sin and death” is deprived of its power to bring believers again into bondage, and how the holy law of God receives in them the homage of a living obedience [CALVIN, FRASER, PHILIPPI, MEYER, ALFORD, etc.].

no condemnation: to them which are in Christ Jesus — As Christ, who “knew no sin,” was, to all legal effects, “made sin for us,” so are we, who believe in Him, to all legal effects, “made the righteousness of God in Him” (◀NEXT 2 Corinthians 5:21); and thus, one with Him in the divine reckoning. there is to such “NO CONDEMNATION.” (Compare ◀NEXT John 3:18 5:24 ◀NEXT Romans 5:18,19). But this is no mere legal *arrangement*: it is a union in *life*; believers, through the indwelling of Christ’s Spirit in them, having one life with Him, as truly as the head and the members of the same body have one life.

who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit — The evidence of manuscripts seems to show that this clause formed no part of the original text of this verse, but that the first part of it was early introduced, and the

second later, from ^{<R14>}Romans 8:4, probably as an explanatory comment, and to make the transition to ^{<R12>}Romans 8:2 easier.

2. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free

— rather, “freed me” — referring to the time of his conversion, when first he believed.

from the law of sin and death — It is the Holy Ghost who is here called “the Spirit of *life*,” as opening up in the souls of believers a fountain of spiritual life (see on ^{<R13>}John 7:38,39); just as He is called “the Spirit of truth,” as “guiding them into all truth” (^{<R13>}John 16:13), and “the Spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord” (^{<R11>}Isaiah 11:2), as the inspirer of these qualities. And He is called “the Spirit of life *in Christ Jesus*,” because it is as members of Christ that He takes up His abode in believers, who in consequence of this have one life with their Head. And as the word “*law*” here has the same meaning as in ^{<R12>}Romans 7:23, namely, “an inward principle of action, operating with the fixedness and regularity of a law,” it thus appears that “*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*” here means, “that new principle of action which the Spirit of Christ has opened up within us — the law of our new being.” This “*sets us free*,” as soon as it takes possession of our inner man, “from the law of sin and death” that is, from the enslaving power of that corrupt principle which carries death in its bosom. The “strong man armed” is overpowered by the “stronger than he”; the weaker principle is dethroned and expelled by the more powerful; the principle of spiritual life prevails against and brings into captivity the principle of spiritual death — “leading captivity captive.” If this be the apostle’s meaning, the whole verse is to this effect: That the triumph of believers over their inward corruption, through the power of Christ’s Spirit in them, *proves* them to be in Christ Jesus, and as such absolved from condemnation. But this is now explained more fully.

3, 4. For what the law could not do, etc. — a difficult and much controverted verse. But it is clearly, we think, the law’s inability to *free us from the dominion of sin* that the apostle has in view; as has partly appeared already (see on ^{<R12>}Romans 8:2), and will more fully appear presently. The law could irritate our sinful nature into more virulent

action, as we have seen in ^{<R1B>}Romans 7:5, but it could not secure its own fulfillment. How that is accomplished comes now to be shown.

in that it was weak through the flesh — that is, having to address itself to us through a corrupt nature, too strong to be influenced by mere commands and threatenings.

God, etc. — The sentence is somewhat imperfect in its structure, which occasions a certain obscurity. The meaning is, that *whereas* the law was powerless to secure its own fulfillment for the reason given, God took the method now to be described for attaining that end.

sending — “having sent”

his own Son — This and similar expressions plainly imply that Christ was God’s “OWN SON” *before* He was sent — that is, in His own proper Person, and independently of His mission and appearance in the flesh (see on ^{<R1B>}Romans 8:32 and ^{<R1B>}Galatians 4:4); and if so, He not only has the *very nature* of God, even as a son of his father, but is essentially *of* the Father, though in a sense too mysterious for any language of ours properly to define (see on the first through fourth chapters). And this peculiar relationship is put forward here to *enhance the greatness* and *define the nature* of the relief provided, as coming *from beyond the precincts of sinful humanity altogether*, yea, *immediately from the Godhead itself*.

in the likeness of sinful flesh — literally, “of the flesh of sin”; a very remarkable and pregnant expression. He was made in the reality of our flesh, but only in the *likeness* of its sinful condition. He took our nature as it is in us, compassed with infirmities, with nothing to distinguish Him as man from sinful men, save that He was without sin. Nor does this mean that He took our nature with all its properties save one; for sin is *no property of humanity at all*, but only the disordered state of our souls, as the fallen family of Adam; a disorder affecting, indeed, and overspreading our entire nature, but still purely *our own*.

and for sin — literally, “and about sin”; that is, “on the business of sin.” The expression is purposely a general one, because the design was not to speak of Christ’s mission to *atone* for sin, but in virtue of that atonement to *destroy its dominion* and *extirpate it altogether* from believers. We think

it wrong, therefore, to render the words (as in the *Margin*) “by a sacrifice for sin” (suggested by the language of the *Septuagint* and approved by CALVIN, etc.); for this sense is too definite, and makes the idea of *expiation* more prominent than it is.

condemned sin — “condemned it to *lose its power* over men” [BEZA, BENGEL, FRASER, MEYER, THOLUCK, PHILIPPI, ALFORD]. In this glorious sense our Lord says of His approaching death (^{<423>}John 12:31), “Now is the *judgment* of this world; now shall the prince of this world be *cast out*,” and again (see on ^{<421>}John 16:11), “When He (the Spirit) shall come, He shall convince the world of ... judgment, because the prince of this world is *judged*,” that is, condemned to let go his hold of men, who, through the Cross, shall be emancipated into the liberty and power to be holy.

in the flesh — that is, in human nature, henceforth set free from the grasp of sin.

4. That the righteousness of the law — “the righteous demand,” “the requirement” [ALFORD], Or “the precept” of the law; for it is not precisely the word so often used in this Epistle to denote “the righteousness which justifies” (^{<417>}Romans 1:17 3:21 4:5,6 5:17,18,21), but another form of the same word, intended to express the *enactment* of the law, meaning here, we believe, the practical obedience which the law calls for.

might be fulfilled in us — or, as we say, “*realized* in us.”

who walk — the most ancient expression of *the bent of one’s life*, whether in the direction of good or of evil (^{<415>}Genesis 48:15 ^{<400>}Psalms 1:1 ^{<405>}Isaiah 2:5 ^{<405>}Micah 4:5 ^{<417>}Ephesians 4:17 ^{<406>}1 John 1:6,7).

not after — that is, according to the dictates of

the flesh, but after the spirit — From ^{<420>}Romans 8:9 it would seem that what is more immediately intended by “the spirit” here is *our own mind* as renewed and actuated by the Holy Ghost.

5. For they that are after the flesh — that is, under the influence of the fleshly principle.

do mind — give their attention to (^{<408>}Philippians 3:19).

the things of the flesh, etc. — Men must be under the predominating influence of one or other of these two principles, and, according as the one or the other has the mastery, will be the complexion of their life, the character of their actions.

6. For — a mere particle of transition here [THOLUCK], like “but” or “now.”

to be carnally minded — literally, “the mind” or “minding of the flesh” (*Margin*); that is, the pursuit of fleshly ends.

is death — not only “ends in” [ALFORD, etc.], but even now “is”; carrying death into its bosom, so that such are “dead while they live” (^{STRB}1 Timothy 5:6 ^{STRB}Ephesians 2:1,5) [PHILIPPI].

but to be spiritually minded — “the mind” or “minding of the spirit”; that is, the pursuit of spiritual objects.

is life and peace — not “life” only, in contrast with the “death” that is in the other pursuit, but “peace”; it is the very element of the soul’s deepest repose and true bliss.

7. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God — The desire and pursuit of carnal ends is a state of enmity to God, wholly incompatible with true life and peace in the soul.

for it is not subject — “doth not submit itself.”

to the law of God, neither indeed can be — In such a state of mind there neither is nor can be the least subjection to the law of God. Many things may be done which the law requires, but nothing either is or can be done *because* God’s law requires it, or purely to please God.

8. So then — nearly equivalent to “And so.”

they that are in — and, therefore, under the government of

the flesh cannot please God — having no obediential principle, no desire to please Him.

9. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you — This does not mean, “if the *disposition* or *mind* of

God dwell in you”; but “if *the Holy Ghost* dwell in you” (see ¹1 Corinthians 6:11, 19 3:16, etc.). (It thus appears that to be “in the spirit” means here to be under the dominion of *our own renewed mind*; because the indwelling of God’s Spirit is given as the evidence that we are “in the spirit”).

Now — “But.”

if any man have not the Spirit of Christ — Again, this does not mean “the *disposition* or *mind* of Christ,” but the Holy Ghost; here called “the Spirit of Christ,” just as He is called “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (see on ²2 Romans 8:2). It is as “the Spirit of Christ” that the Holy Ghost takes possession of believers, introducing into them all the gracious, dove-like disposition which dwelt in Him (³3 Matthew 3:16 ⁴4 John 3:34). Now if any man’s heart be void, not of such dispositions, but of the blessed Author of them, “the Spirit of Christ.”

he is none of his — even though intellectually convinced of the truth of Christianity, and in a general sense influence by its spirit. Sharp, solemn statement this!

10, 11. And if Christ be in you — by His indwelling Spirit in virtue of which we have *one life* with him.

the body — “the body indeed.”

is dead because of — “by reason of”

sin; but the spirit is life because — or, “by reason”

of righteousness — The word “indeed,” which the original requires, is of the nature of a concession — “I grant you that the body is dead ... and so far redemption is incomplete, *but*,” etc.; that is, “If Christ be in you by His indwelling Spirit, though your ‘bodies’ have to pass through the stage of ‘death’ in consequence of the first Adam’s ‘sin,’ your spirit is instinct with new and undying ‘life,’ brought in by the ‘righteousness’ of the second Adam” [THOLUCK, MEYER, and ALFORD in part, but only HODGE entirely].

11. But — “And.”

if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you — that is, “If He dwell in you as the Spirit of the Christ-raising One,” or, “in all the *resurrection-power* which He put forth in raising Jesus.”

he that raised up Christ from the dead — Observe the change of name from Jesus, as the historical Individual whom God raised from the dead, to CHRIST, the same Individual, considered as the Lord and Head of all His members, or of redeemed Humanity [ALFORD].

shall also quicken — rather, “shall quicken even”

your mortal bodies by — the true reading appears to be “by reason of.”

his Spirit that dwelleth in you — “Your bodies indeed are not exempt from the death which sin brought in; but your spirits even now have in them an undying life, and if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, even these bodies of yours, though they yield to the last enemy and the dust of them return to the dust as it was, shall yet experience the same resurrection as that of their living Head, in virtue of the indwelling of same Spirit in you that quickened Him.”

12, 13. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh — “Once we were sold under sin (^{<8174>}Romans 7:14); but now that we have been set free from that hard master and become servants to Righteousness (^{<8172>}Romans 6:22), we owe nothing to the flesh, we disown its unrighteous claims and are deaf to its imperious demands.” Glorious sentiment!

13. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die — in the sense of ^{<8173>}Romans 6:21.

but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body — (See on ^{<8173>}Romans 7:23).

ye shall live — in the sense of ^{<8172>}Romans 6:22. The apostle is not satisfied with assuring them that they are under no *obligations* to the flesh, to hearken to its suggestions, without reminding them where it will end if they do; and he uses the word “mortify” (put to death) as a kind of play upon the word “die” just before. “If ye do not kill sin, *it* will kill you.” But he tempers this by the bright alternative, that if they do, through the

Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, such a course will infallibly terminate in “life” everlasting. And this leads the apostle into a new line of thought, opening into his final subject, the “glory” awaiting the justified believer.

Note,

- (1) “There can be no *safety*, no holiness, no happiness, to those who are out of Christ: No “safety,” because all such are under the condemnation of the law (~~✠~~ Romans 8:1); no *holiness*, because such only as are united to Christ have the spirit of Christ (~~✠~~ Romans 8:9); no *happiness*, because to be “carnally minded is death” (~~✠~~ Romans 8:6)” [HODGE].
- (2) The sanctification of believers, as it has its whole foundation in the atoning death, so it has its living spring in the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ (~~✠~~ Romans 8:2-4).
- (3) “The bent of the thoughts, affections, and pursuits, is the only decisive test of character (~~✠~~ Romans 8:5)” [HODGE].
- (4) No human refinement of the carnal mind will make it spiritual, or compensate for the absence of spirituality. “Flesh” and “spirit” are essentially and unchangeably opposed; nor can the carnal mind, as such, be brought into real subjection to the law of God (~~✠~~ Romans 8:5-7). Hence
- (5) the estrangement of God and the sinner is mutual. For as the sinner’s state of mind is “enmity against God” (~~✠~~ Romans 8:7), so in this state he “cannot please God” (~~✠~~ Romans 8:8).
- (6) Since the Holy Ghost is, in the same breath, called indiscriminately “the Spirit of God,” “the Spirit of Christ,” and “Christ” Himself (as an indwelling life in believers), the *essential unity* and yet Personal *distinctness* of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the one adorable Godhead must be believed, as the only consistent explanation of such language (~~✠~~ Romans 8:9-11).
- (7) The consciousness of spiritual life in our renewed souls is a glorious assurance of resurrection life in the body also, in virtue of the

same quickening Spirit whose inhabitation we already enjoy (~~ABR~~ Romans 8:11).

(8) Whatever professions of spiritual life men may make, it remains eternally true that “if we live after the flesh we shall die,” and only “if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body we shall live” (~~ABR~~ Romans 8:13, and compare ~~ABR~~ Galatians 6:7,8 ~~ABR~~ Ephesians 5:6 ~~ABR~~ Philippians 3:18,19 ~~ABR~~ 1 John 3:7,8).

Second: *The Sonship of Believers — Their Future Inheritance — The Intercession of the Spirit for Them* (~~ABR~~ Romans 8:14-27).

14. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, they, etc. — “these are sons of God.” Hitherto the apostle has spoken of the Spirit simply as a *power* through which believers mortify sin: now he speaks of Him as a gracious, loving *Guide*, whose “leading” — enjoyed by all in whom is the Spirit of God’s dear Son — shows that they also are “sons of God.”

15. For, etc. — “For ye received not (at the time of your conversion) the spirit of bondage,” that is, “The spirit ye received was not a spirit of bondage.”

again — gendering.

to fear — as under the law which “worketh wrath,” that is, “Such was your condition before ye believed, living in legal bondage, haunted with incessant forebodings under a sense of unpardoned sin. But it was not to perpetuate that wretched state that ye received the Spirit.”

but ye have received — “ye received.”

the spirit of adoption, whereby — rather, “wherein.”

we cry, Abba, Father — The word “cry” is emphatic, expressing the spontaneousness, the strength, and the exuberance of the final emotions. In ~~ABR~~ Galatians 4:6 this cry is said to proceed from *the Spirit* in us, drawing forth the filial exclamation in our hearts. Here, it is said to proceed from *our own hearts* under the vitalizing energy of the Spirit, as the very element of the new life in believers (compare ~~ABR~~ Matthew 10:19,20; and see on ~~ABR~~ Romans 8:4). “Abba” is the *Syro-Chaldaic* word for “Father”; and

the *Greek* word for that is added, not surely to tell the reader that both mean the same thing, but for the same reason which drew both words from the lips of Christ Himself during his agony in the garden (^{<414>}Mark 14:36). He, doubtless, loved to utter His Father's name in both the accustomed forms; beginning with His cherished mother tongue, and adding that of the learned. In this view the use of both words here has a charming simplicity and warmth.

16. The Spirit itself — It should be “Himself” (see on ^{<415>}Romans 8:26).

beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children — “are children”

of God — The testimony of our own spirit is borne in that cry of *conscious sonship*, “Abba, Father”; but we are not therein alone; for the Holy Ghost within us, yea, even in that very cry which it is His to draw forth, sets His own distinct seal to ours; and thus, “in the mouth of two witnesses” the thing is established. The apostle had before called us “*sons of God*,” referring to our *adoption*; here the word changes to “children,” referring to our *new birth*. The one expresses the *dignity* to which we are *admitted*; the other the new *life* which we *receive*. The latter is more suitable here; because a son by *adoption* might not be heir of the property, whereas a son by *birth* certainly is, and this is what the apostle is now coming to.

17. And if children, then heirs — “heirs also.”

heirs of God — of our Father's kingdom.

and joint-heirs with Christ — as the “First-born among many brethren” (^{<416>}Romans 8:29), and as “Heir of all things” (^{<417>}Hebrews 1:2).

if so be that we suffer — “provided we be suffering with Him.”

that we may be also glorified together — with Him. This necessity of conformity to Christ in suffering in order to participate in His glory, is taught alike by Christ Himself and by His apostles (^{<418>}John 12:24-26 ^{<419>}Matthew 16:24,25 ^{<420>}2 Timothy 2:12).

18. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us

— that is, “True, we must suffer with Christ, if we would partake of His glory; but what of that? For if such sufferings are set over against the coming glory, they sink into insignificance.”

19-22. For, etc. — “The apostle, fired with the thought of the future glory of the saints, pours forth this splendid passage, in which he represents the whole creation groaning under its present degradation, and looking and longing for the revelation of this glory as the end and consummation of its existence” [HODGE].

the earnest expectation — (compare ^{<602>}Philippians 1:20).

of the creature — rather, “the creation.”

waiteth for the manifestation — “is waiting for the revelation”

of the sons of God — that is, “for the redemption of their bodies” from the grave (^{<612>}Romans 8:23), which will reveal their sonship, now hidden (compare ^{<628>}Luke 20:36 ^{<620>}Revelation 21:7).

20. For the creature — “the creation.”

was made subject to vanity, not willingly — that is, through no natural principle of decay. The apostle, personifying creation, represents it as only submitting to the vanity with which it was smitten, on man’s account, in obedience to that superior power which had mysteriously linked its destinies with man’s. And so he adds

but by reason of him who hath subjected the same — “who subjected it.”

in hope — or “in hope that.”

21. Because the creature itself also — “even the creation itself.”

shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption — its bondage to the principle of decay.

into the glorious liberty — rather, “the liberty of the glory.”

of the children of God — that is, the creation itself shall, in a glorious sense, be delivered into that freedom from debility and decay in which the children of God, when raised up in glory, shall expatiate: into this freedom

from corruptibility the creation itself shall, in a glorious sense, be delivered (Song of Solomon CALVIN, BEZA, BENGEL, THOLUCK, OLSHAUSEN, DE WETTE, MEYER, PHILIPPI, HODGE, ALFORD, etc.).

22. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now — If for man's sake alone the earth was cursed, it cannot surprise us that it should share in his recovery. And if so, to represent it as sympathizing with man's miseries, and as looking forward to his complete redemption as the period of its own emancipation from its present sin-blighted condition, is a beautiful thought, and in harmony with the general teaching of Scripture on the subject. (See on ~~GEN~~ 2 Peter 3:13).

23. And not only they, but ourselves also — or “not only [so], but even we ourselves” — that is, besides the inanimate creation.

which have the first-fruits of the Spirit — or, “the Spirit as the first-fruits” of our full redemption (compare ~~4012~~ 2 Corinthians 1:22), moulding the heart to a heavenly frame and attemping it to its future element.

even we ourselves — though we have so much of heaven already within us.

groan within ourselves — under this “body of sin and death,” and under the manifold “vanity and vexation of spirit” that are written upon every object and every pursuit and every enjoyment under the sun.

waiting for the — manifestation of our

adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body — from the grave: “not (be it observed) the deliverance of ourselves from the body, but the redemption of the body itself from the grave” [BENGEL].

24. For we are saved by hope — rather, “For in hope we are saved”; that is, it is more a salvation in hope than as yet in actual possession.

but hope that is seen is not hope — for the very meaning of hope is, the expectation that something now *future* will become *present*.

for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? — the latter ending when the other comes.

25. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it — that is, then, patient waiting for it is our fitting attitude.

26, 27. Likewise the Spirit also, etc. — or, “But after the like manner doth the Spirit also help.

our infirmities — rather (according to the true reading), “our infirmity”; not merely the one infirmity here specified, but *the general weakness of the spiritual life* in its present state, of which one example is here given.

for we know not what we should pray for as we ought — It is not the proper *matter* of prayer that believers are at so much loss about, for the fullest directions are given them on this head: but to ask for the right things “as they ought” is the difficulty. This arises partly from the dimness of our spiritual vision in the present veiled state, while we have to “walk by faith, not by sight” (see on ^{433B}1 Corinthians 13:9 and ^{434B}2 Corinthians 5:7), and the large admixture of the ideas and feelings which spring from the fleeting objects of sense that there is in the very best views and affections of our renewed nature; partly also from the necessary imperfection of all human language as a vehicle for expressing the subtle spiritual feelings of the heart. In these circumstances, how can it be but that much uncertainty should surround all our spiritual exercises, and that in our nearest approaches and in the freest outpourings of our hearts to our Father in heaven, doubts should spring up within us whether our *frame* of mind in such exercises is altogether befitting and well pleasing to God? Nor do these anxieties subside, but rather deepen, with the depth and ripeness of our spiritual experience.

but the Spirit itself — rather, “Himself.” (See end of ^{435B}Romans 8:27).

maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered — that is, which cannot be expressed in articulate language. Sublime and affecting ideas, for which we are indebted to this passage alone! “As we struggle to express in articulate language the desires of our hearts and find that our deepest emotions are the most inexpressible, we ‘groan’ under this felt inability. But not in vain are these groanings. For ‘the Spirit Himself’ is in them, giving to the emotions which He Himself has kindled the only language of which they are capable; so that though on our part they are the

fruit of impotence to utter what we feel, they are at the same time the intercession of the Spirit Himself in our behalf.”

27. And — rather, “But,” inarticulate though these groanings be.

he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he — the Spirit

maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God — As the Searcher of hearts, He watches the surging emotions of them in prayer, and knows perfectly what the Spirit means by the groanings which He draws forth within us, because that blessed Intercessor pleads by them only for what God Himself designs to bestow.

Note,

(1) Are believers “led by the Spirit of God” (^{<8184>}Romans 8:14)? How careful then should they be not to “grieve the Holy Spirit of God” (^{<8184>}Ephesians 4:30)! Compare ^{<8184>}Psalms 32:8,9: “I will ... *guide* thee with Mine eye. *Be not* (then) *as the horse, or as the mule,*” etc.

(2) “The spirit of bondage,” to which many Protestants are “all their lifetime subject,” and the “doubtful faith” which the Popish Church systematically inculcates, are both rebuked here, being in direct and painful contrast to that “spirit of adoption,” and that witness of the Spirit, along with our own spirit, to the fact of our sonship, which it is here said the children of God, as such, enjoy (^{<8184>}Romans 8:15,16).

(3) As suffering with Christ is the ordained preparation for participating in this glory, so the insignificance of the one as compared with the other cannot fail to lighten the sense of it, however bitter and protracted (^{<8184>}Romans 8:17,18).

(4) It cannot but swell the heart of every intelligent Christian to think that if external nature has been mysteriously affected for evil by the fall of man, it only awaits his completed recovery, at the resurrection, to experience a corresponding emancipation from its blighted condition into undecaying life and unfading beauty (^{<8184>}Romans 8:19-23).

(5) It is not when believers, through sinful “quenching of the Spirit,” have the fewest and faintest glimpses of heaven, that they sigh most

fervently to be there; but, on the contrary, when through the unobstructed working of the Spirit in their hearts, “the first-fruits” of the glory to be revealed are most largely and frequently tasted, then, and just for that reason, is it that they “groan within themselves” for full redemption (⁴¹⁰²Romans 8:23). For thus they reason: If such be the drops, what will the ocean be? If thus “to see through a glass darkly” be so very sweet, what will it be to “see face to face?” If when “my Beloved stands behind our wall, looking forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice” (²¹⁸⁹Song of Solomon 2:9) — that thin veil which parts the seen from the unseen — if He is even thus to me “Fairer than the children of men,” what shall He be when He stands confessed before my undazzled vision, the Only-begotten of the Father in my own nature, and I shall be like Him, for I shall see Him as He is?

(6) “The patience of hope” (⁵⁰⁰⁸1 Thessalonians 1:3) is the fitting attitude for those who with the joyful consciousness that they are already “*saved*” (⁵⁰⁰⁹2 Timothy 1:9 ⁵⁰¹⁰Titus 3:5), have yet the painful consciousness that they are saved but *in part*: or, “that being justified by His grace, they are made (in the present state) heirs according to the hope (only) of eternal life,” ⁵⁰¹¹Titus 3:7 (⁴¹⁰³Romans 8:24,25).

(7) As prayer is the breath of the spiritual life, and the believer’s only effectual relief under the “infirmity” which attaches to his whole condition here below, how cheering is it to be assured that the blessed Spirit, cognizant of it all, comes in aid of it all; and in particular, that when believers, unable to articulate their case before God, can at times do nothing but lie “groaning” before the Lord, these inarticulate groanings are the Spirit’s own vehicle for conveying into “the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth” their whole case; and come up before the Hearer of prayer as the Spirit’s own intercession in their behalf, and that they are recognized by Him that sitteth on the Throne, as embodying only what His own “will” determined before to bestow upon them (⁴¹⁰⁴Romans 8:26,27)!

(8) What a view do these two verses (⁴¹⁰⁵Romans 8:26,27) give of the relations subsisting between the Divine Persons in the economy of redemption, and the harmony of their respective operations in the case of each of the redeemed!

Third: *Triumphant Summary of the Whole Argument* (^{<818>}Romans 8:28-39).

28. And — or, “Moreover,” or “Now”; noting a transition to a new particular.

we know, etc. — The order in the original is more striking: “We know that to them that love God” (compare ^{<819>}1 Corinthians 2:9 ^{<819>}Ephesians 6:24 ^{<812>}James 1:12 2:5) “all things work together for good [even] to them who are the called (rather, ‘who are called’) according to His (eternal) purpose.” Glorious assurance! And this, it seems, was a “household word,” a “known” thing, among believers. This working of all things for good is done quite naturally to “them that love God,” because such souls, persuaded that He who gave His own Son for them cannot but mean them well in all His procedure, learn thus to take in good part whatever He sends them, however trying to flesh and blood: and to them who are the called, according to “His purpose,” all things do in the same intelligible way “work together for good”; for, even when “He hath His way in the whirlwind,” they see “His chariot paved with love” (^{<2180>}Song of Solomon 3:10). And knowing that it is in pursuance of an eternal “*purpose*” of love that they have been “*called* into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ” (^{<819>}1 Corinthians 1:9), they naturally say within themselves, “It cannot be that He ‘of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things,’ should suffer that purpose to be thwarted by anything really adverse to us, or that He should not make all things, dark as well as light, crooked as well as straight, to co-operate to the furtherance and final completion of His high design.”

29. For — as touching this “calling according to his purpose” (^{<818>}Romans 8:28).

whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate — foreordain. In what sense are we to take the word “foreknow” here? “Those who He foreknew would repent and believe,” say *Pelagians* of every age and every hue. But this is to thrust into the text what is contrary to the whole spirit, and even letter, of the apostle’s teaching (see ^{<819>}Romans 9:11 ^{<819>}2 Timothy 1:9). In ^{<819>}Romans 11:2, and ^{<819>}Psalms 1:6, God’s “knowledge” of His people cannot be restricted to a mere foresight of future events, or acquaintance with what is passing here below. Does “whom He did foreknow,” then,

mean “whom He foreordained?” Scarcely, because both “foreknowledge” and “foreordination” are here mentioned, and the one as the *cause* of the other. It is difficult indeed for our limited minds to distinguish them as states of the Divine Mind towards men; especially since in ⁴⁰²³Acts 2:23 “the counsel” is put *before* “the foreknowledge of God,” while in ⁴⁰¹²1 Peter 1:2 “election” is said to be “*according to* the foreknowledge of God.” But probably God’s foreknowledge of His own people means His “*peculiar, gracious, complacency in them,*” while His “predestinating” or “foreordaining” them signifies His fixed *purpose*, flowing from this, to “save them and call them with an holy calling” (⁵⁰⁰2 Timothy 1:9).

to be conformed to the image of his Son — that is, to be His sons after the pattern, model, or image of *His* Sonship in our nature.

that he might be the first-born among many brethren — “The First-born,” the Son by nature; His “many brethren,” sons by adoption: He, in the Humanity of the Only-begotten of the Father, bearing our sins on the accursed tree; they in that of mere men ready to perish by reason of sin, but redeemed by His blood from condemnation and wrath, and transformed into His likeness: He “the First-born from the dead”; they “that sleep in Jesus,” to be in due time “brought with Him”; “The First-born,” now “crowned with glory and honor”; His “many brethren,” “when He shall appear, to be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is.”

30. Moreover — “And,” or “Now”; explanatory of ⁵⁰⁰Romans 8:29 — In “predestinating us to be conformed to the image of His Son” in final glory, He settled all the successive steps of it. Thus

whom he did predestinate, them he also called — The word “called” (as HODGE and others truly observe) is never in the Epistles of the New Testament applied to those who have only the *outward invitation* of the Gospel (as in ⁴⁰⁰Matthew 20:16 22:14). It always means “*internally, effectually, savingly called.*” It denotes the *first great step* in personal salvation and answers to “conversion.” Only the word *conversion* expresses the *change of character* which then takes place, whereas this “calling” expresses the *divine authorship* of the change, and the *sovereign power* by which we are summoned, Matthew-like, Zaccheus-like, out of our old, wretched, perishing condition, into a new, safe, blessed life.

and whom he called — thus.

them he also justified — brought into the definite state of reconciliation already so fully described.

and whom he justified, them he also glorified — brought to final glory (^{<187}Romans 8:17,18). Noble climax, and so rhythmically expressed! And all this is viewed as past; because, starting from the past decree of “predestination to be conformed to the image of God’s Son” of which the other steps are but the successive unfoldings — all is beheld as one entire, eternally completed salvation.

31. What shall we then say to these things? — “We can no farther go, think, wish” [BENGEL]. This whole passage, to ^{<188}Romans 8:34, and even to the end of the chapter, strikes all thoughtful interpreters and readers, as transcending almost every thing in language, while OLSHAUSEN notices the “profound and colossal” character of the thought.

If God be for us, who can be against us? — If God be *resolved* and *engaged* to bring us through, all *our* enemies must be *His*; and “Who would set the briers and thorns against Him in battle? He would go through them. He would burn them together” (^{<270}Isaiah 27:4). What strong consolation is here! Nay, but the great Pledge of all has already been given; for,

32. He — rather, “He surely.” (It is a pity to lose the emphatic particle of the original).

that spared not — “withheld not,” “kept not back.” This expressive phrase, as well as the whole thought, is suggested by ^{<127}Genesis 22:12, where Jehovah’s touching commendation of Abraham’s conduct regarding his son Isaac seems designed to furnish something like a glimpse into the spirit of His own act in *surrendering* His own Son. “Take now (said the Lord to Abraham) thy *son*, thine *only*, whom thou lovest, and ... offer him for a burnt offering” (^{<127}Genesis 22:2); and only when Abraham had all but performed that loftiest act of self-sacrifice, the Lord interposed, saying, “Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou HAST NOT WITHHELD THY SON, THINE ONLY SON, from Me.” In the light of this incident, then, and of this language, our apostle can mean to convey nothing less than this,

that in “not sparing His own Son, but delivering Him up,” or surrendering Him, God exercised, in His *Paternal* character, a mysterious act of *Self-sacrifice*, which, though involving none of the *pain* and none of the *loss* which are inseparable from the very idea of self-sacrifice on our part, was not less real, but, on the contrary, as far transcended any such acts of ours as His nature is above the creature’s. But this is inconceivable if Christ be not God’s “own (or proper) Son,” partaker of His very nature, as really as Isaac was of his father Abraham’s. In that sense, certainly, the Jews charged our Lord with making Himself “equal with God” (see on [Ⓢ]John 5:18), which He in reply forthwith proceeded, not to disown, but to illustrate and confirm. Understand Christ’s Sonship thus, and the language of Scripture regarding it is intelligible and harmonious; but take it to be an *artificial* relationship, ascribed to Him in virtue either of His miraculous birth, or His resurrection from the dead, or the grandeur of His works, or all of these together — and the passages which speak of it neither explain of themselves nor harmonize with each other.

delivered him up — not to *death* merely (as many take it), for that is too narrow an idea here, but “surrendered Him” in the most comprehensive sense; compare [Ⓢ]John 3:16, “God so loved the world that He GAVE His only-begotten Son.”

for us all — that is, for all believers alike; as nearly every good interpreter admits must be the meaning here.

how shall he not — how can we conceive that He should not.

with him also — rather, “also with Him.” (The word “also” is often so placed in our version as to obscure the sense; see on [Ⓢ]Hebrews 12:1).

freely give us all things? — all other gifts being not only immeasurably *less* than this Gift of gifts, but virtually *included in it*.

33, 34. Who shall lay anything to the charge of — or, “bring any charge against.”

God’s elect? — the first place in this Epistle where believers are styled “the *elect*.” In what sense this is meant will appear in next chapter.

34. yea rather, that is risen again — to make good the purposes of His death. Here, as in some other cases, the apostle delightfully corrects himself (see ^{<809>}Galatians 4:9; and see on ^{<812>}Romans 1:12); not meaning that the resurrection of Christ was of more saving value than His death, but that having “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” — which though precious to us was to Him of unmingled bitterness — it was incomparably more delightful to think that He was again *alive*, and living to see to the efficacy of His death in our behalf.

who is even — “also”

at the right hand of God — The right hand of the king was anciently the seat of honor (compare ^{<815>}1 Samuel 20:25 ^{<819>}1 Kings 2:19 ^{<849>}Psalms 45:9), and denoted participation in the royal power and glory (^{<811>}Matthew 20:21). The classical writings contain similar allusions. Accordingly Christ’s sitting at the right hand of God — predicted in ^{<840>}Psalms 110:1, and historically referred to in ^{<816>}Mark 16:19 ^{<813>}Acts 2:33 7:56 ^{<812>}Ephesians 1:20 ^{<800>}Colossians 3:1 ^{<812>}1 Peter 3:22 ^{<813>}Revelation 3:21 — signifies the *glory* of the exalted Son of man, and the *power* in the government of the world in which He participates. Hence it is called “sitting on the right hand of *Power*” (^{<816>}Matthew 26:64), and “sitting on the right hand of the *Majesty* on high” (^{<813>}Hebrews 1:3) [PHILIPPI].

who also maketh intercession for us — using all His boundless *interest* with God in our behalf. This is the top of the climax. “His *Session* at God’s right hand denotes His *power* to save us; His *Intercession*, His *will* to do it” [BENGEL]. But how are we to conceive of this intercession? Not certainly as of one pleading “on bended knees and with outstretched arms,” to use the expressive language of CALVIN. But yet, neither is it merely a figurative intimation that the power of Christ’s redemption is continually operative [THOLUCK], or merely to show the fervor and vehemence of His love for us [CHRYSOSTOM]. It cannot be taken to mean less than this: that the glorified Redeemer, conscious of His claims, expressly *signifies His will* that the efficacy of His death should be made good to the uttermost, and signifies it in some such royal style as we find Him employing in that wonderful Intercessory Prayer which He spoke *as from within the veil* (see on ^{<871>}John 17:11,12): “Father, I WILL that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am” (see on ^{<872>}John

17:24). But *in what form* this will is expressed is as undiscoverable as it is unimportant.

35, 36. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? — This does not mean “our love to Christ,” as if, Who shall hinder us from loving Christ? but “Christ’s love to us,” as is clear from the closing words of the chapter, which refer to the same subject. Nor would the other sense harmonize with the scope of the chapter, which is to exhibit the ample ground of the believer’s confidence in Christ. “It is no ground of confidence to assert, or even to feel, that we will never forsake Christ; but it is the strongest ground of assurance to be convinced that His love will never change” [HODGE].

shall tribulation, etc. — “None of these, nor all together, how terrible soever to the flesh, are tokens of God’s wrath, or the least ground for doubt of His love. From whom could such a question come better than from one who had himself for Christ’s sake endured so much? (See ^{<4111>}2 Corinthians 11:11-33 ^{<4110>}1 Corinthians 4:10-13). The apostle says not (remarks CALVIN nobly) “What,” but “Who,” just as if all creatures and all afflictions were so many gladiators taking arms against the Christians [THOLUCK].

36. As it is written, For thy sake, etc. — (^{<4142>}Psalm 44:22) — quoted as descriptive of what God’s faithful people may expect from their enemies *at any period* when their hatred of righteousness is roused, and there is nothing to restrain it (see ^{<4103>}Galatians 4:29).

37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us — not, “We are so far from being conquered by them, that they do us much good” [HODGE]; for though this be true, the word means simply, “We are pre-eminently conquerors.” See on ^{<4110>}Romans 5:20. And so far are they from “separating us from Christ’s love,” that it is just “through Him that loved us” that we are victorious over them.

38, 39. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers — whether good or bad. But as the bad are not called “angels,” or “principalities,” or “powers,” save with some addition to show that such are meant (^{<4154>}Matthew 25:41 ^{<5105>}Colossians 2:15 ^{<4110>}Ephesians 6:12 ^{<4110>}2 Peter 2:4 — except perhaps ^{<4111>}1 Corinthians

6:3), probably the *good* are meant here, but merely as the same apostle *supposes* an angel from heaven to preach a false gospel. (Song of Solomon the best interpreters).

nor things present, nor things to come — no condition of the present life and none of the unknown possibilities of the life to come.

39. nor any other creature — rather, “created thing” — any other thing in the whole created universe of God

shall be able to separate us, etc. — “All the terms here are to be taken in their most general sense, and need no closer definition. The indefinite expressions are meant to denote all that can be thought of, and are only a rhetorical paraphrase of the conception of *allness*” [OLSHAUSEN].

from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord — Thus does this wonderful chapter, with which the argument of the Epistle properly closes, leave us who are “justified by faith” in the arms of everlasting Love, whence no hostile power or conceivable event can ever tear us. “Behold what manner of love is this?” And “what manner of persons ought we to be,” who are thus “blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ?”

Note,

- (1) There is a glorious consistency between the eternal purposes of God and the free agency of men, though the link of connection is beyond human, perhaps created, apprehension (☞ Romans 8:28).
- (2) How ennobling is the thought that the complicated movements of the divine government of the world are all arranged in expressed furtherance of the “good” of God’s chosen (☞ Romans 8:28)!
- (3) To whatever conformity to the Son of God in dignity and glory, believers are or shall hereafter be raised, it will be the joy of everyone of them, as it is most fitting, “that in all things He should have the pre-eminence” (☞ Colossians 1:18), (☞ Romans 8:29).
- (4) “As there is a beautiful harmony and necessary connection between the several doctrines of grace, so must there be a like harmony in the character of the Christian. He cannot experience the joy and confidence

flowing from his election without the humility which” the consideration of its being gratuitous must produce; nor can he have the peace of one who is justified without the holiness of one who is saved” (✠Romans 8:29,30) [HODGE].

(5) However difficult it may be for finite minds to comprehend the emotions of the Divine Mind, let us never for a moment doubt that in “not sparing His own Son, but delivering Him up for us all,” God made a real sacrifice of all that was dearest to His heart, and that in so doing He meant for ever to assure His people that all other things which they need — inasmuch as they are nothing to this stupendous gift, and indeed but the necessary sequel of it — will in due time be forthcoming (✠Romans 8:32).

(6) In return for such a sacrifice on God’s part, what can be considered too great on ours?

(7) If there could be any doubt as to the meaning of the all-important word “JUSTIFICATION” in this Epistle — whether, as the Church of Rome teaches, and many others affirm, it means “*infusing* righteousness into the unholy, so as to *make* them righteous,” or, according to Protestant teaching, “*absolving, acquitting, or pronouncing righteous* the guilty” ✠Romans 8:33 ought to set such doubt entirely at rest. For the apostle’s question in this verse is, “Who shall *bring a charge against* God’s elect?” In other words, “Who shall *pronounce*” or “*hold them guilty?*” seeing that “God *justifies*” them: showing beyond all doubt, that to “justify” was intended to express precisely the opposite of “holding guilty”; and consequently (as CALVIN triumphantly argues) that it means “*to absolve from the charge of guilt.*”

(8) If there could be any reasonable doubt in what light the *death* of Christ is to be regarded in this Epistle, ✠Romans 8:34 ought to set that doubt entirely at rest. For there the apostle’s question is, Who shall “*condemn*” God’s elect, since “Christ *died*” for them; showing beyond all doubt (as PHILIPPI justly argues) that it was the *expiatory* (character of that death which the apostle had in view).

(9) What an affecting view of the love of Christ does it give us to learn that His greatest *nearness* to God and most powerful *interest* with Him — as “seated on His right hand” — is employed in behalf of His people here below (✠ Romans 8:34)!

(10) “The whole universe, with all that it contains, so far as it is good, is the friend and ally of the Christian; and, so far as it is evil, is more than a conquered foe” (✠ Romans 8:35-39) [HODGE].

(11) Are we who “have tasted that the Lord is gracious,” both “kept by the *power* of God through faith unto salvation” (✠ 1 Peter 1:5), and embraced in the arms of Invincible *Love*? Then surely, while “building ourselves up on our most holy faith,” and “praying in the Holy Ghost,” only the more should we feel constrained to “*keep ourselves in the love of God*, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (✠ Jude 1:20,21).

CHAPTER 9

ROMANS 9:1-33.

THE BEARING OF THE FOREGOING TRUTHS UPON THE CONDITION AND DESTINY OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE — ELECTION — THE CALLING OF THE GENTILES.

Too well aware that he was regarded as a traitor to the dearest interests of his people (⁴⁰²³Acts 21:33 22:22 25:24), the apostle opens this division of his subject by giving vent to his real feelings with extraordinary vehemence of protestation.

1, 2. I say the truth in Christ — as if steeped in the spirit of Him who wept over impenitent and doomed Jerusalem (compare ⁴⁰⁰⁹Romans 1:9 ⁴⁰²³2 Corinthians 12:19 ⁵⁰⁰⁹Philippians 1:8).

my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost — “my conscience as quickened, illuminated, and even now under the direct operation of the Holy Ghost.”

2. That I have, etc. — “That I have great grief (or, sorrow) and unceasing anguish in my heart” — the bitter hostility of his nation to the glorious Gospel, and the awful consequences of their unbelief, weighing heavily and incessantly upon his spirit.

3. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for — “in behalf of”

my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh — In proportion as he felt himself severed from his nation, he seems to have realized all the more vividly their natural relationship. To explain away the wish here expressed, as too strong for any Christian to utter or conceive, some have rendered the opening words, “I *did* wish,” referring it to his former unenlightened state; a sense of the words too tame to be endured: others unwarrantably soften the sense of the word “accursed.” But our version

gives the true import of the original; and if it be understood as the language rather of “strong and indistinct emotions than of definite ideas” [HODGE], expressing passionately how he felt his whole being swallowed up in the salvation of his people, the difficulty will vanish, and we shall be reminded of the similar idea so nobly expressed by Moses (^{<1000>}Exodus 32:32).

4. Who are Israelites — See ^{<6100>}Romans 11:1 ^{<4712>}2 Corinthians 11:22 ^{<1005>}Philippians 3:5.

to whom pertaineth — “whose is”

the adoption — It is true that, compared with the new economy, the old was a state of minority and pupilage, and so far that of a bond-servant (^{<800>}Galatians 4:1-3); yet, compared with the state of the surrounding heathen, the choice of Abraham and his seed was a real separation of them to be a *Family of God* (^{<1002>}Exodus 4:22 ^{<6300>}Deuteronomy 32:6 ^{<2000>}Isaiah 1:2 ^{<2600>}Jeremiah 31:9 ^{<2800>}Hosea 11:1 ^{<3000>}Malachi 1:6).

and the glory — that “glory of the Lord,” or “visible token of the Divine Presence in the midst of them,” which rested on the ark and filled the tabernacle during all their wanderings in the wilderness; which in Jerusalem continued to be seen in the tabernacle and temple, and only disappeared when, at the Captivity, the temple was demolished, and the sun of the ancient economy began to go down. This was what the Jews called the “*Shekinah*.”

and the covenants — “the covenants of promise” to which the Gentiles before Christ were “strangers” (^{<4100>}Ephesians 2:12); meaning the *one covenant* with Abraham in its successive *renewals* (see ^{<8006>}Galatians 3:16,17).

and the giving of the law — from Mount Sinai, and the possession of it thereafter, which the Jews justly deemed their peculiar honor (^{<6308>}Deuteronomy 26:18,19 ^{<4570>}Psalms 147:19,20 ^{<6100>}Romans 2:17).

and the service of God — or, of the sanctuary, meaning the whole divinely instituted religious service, in the celebration of which they were brought so nigh unto God.

and the promises — the great Abrahamic promises, successively unfolded, and which had their fulfillment only in Christ; (see ^{<800>}Hebrews 7:6 ^{<816>}Galatians 3:16,21 ^{<406>}Acts 26:6,7).

5. Whose are the fathers — here, probably, the three great fathers of the covenant — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — by whom God condescended to name Himself (^{<080>}Exodus 8:6,13 ^{<016>}Luke 20:37).

and — most exalted privilege of all, and as such, reserved to the last.

of whom as concerning the flesh — (See on ^{<800>}Romans 1:3).

Christ came — or, “is Christ”

who is over all, God — rather, “God over all.”

blessed for ever. Amen — To get rid of the bright testimony here borne to the supreme divinity of Christ, various expedients have been adopted:

(1) To place a period, either after the words “concerning the flesh Christ came,” rendering the next clause as a doxology to the Father — “God who is over all be blessed for ever”; or after the word “all” — thus, “Christ came, who is over all: God be blessed.”, etc. [ERASMUS, LOCKE, FRITZSCHE, MEYER, JOWETT, etc.]. But it is fatal to this view, as even *Socinus* admits, that in other Scripture doxologies the word “Blessed” *precedes* the name of God on whom the blessing is invoked (thus: “Blessed be God,” ^{<488>}Psalms 68:35; “Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel,” ^{<572>}Psalms 72:18). Besides, any such doxology here would be “unmeaning and frigid in the extreme”; the sad subject on which he was entering suggesting anything but a doxology, even in connection with Christ’s Incarnation [ALFORD].

(2) To transpose the words rendered “who is”; in which case the rendering would be, “whose (that is, the fathers’) is Christ according to the flesh” [CRELLIUS, WHISTON, TAYLOR, WHITBY]. But this is a desperate expedient, in the face of all manuscript authority; as is also the conjecture of GROTIUS and others, that the word “God” should be omitted from the text. It remains then, that we have here no doxology at all, but a naked statement of fact, that while Christ is “of” the Israelitish nation “*as concerning the flesh*,” He is, *in another respect*,

“God over all, blessed for ever.” (In ^{<4113>}2 Corinthians 11:31 the very *Greek* phrase which is here rendered “who is,” is used in the same sense; and compare ^{<4125>}Romans 1:25, *Greek*). In this view of the passage, as a testimony to the supreme divinity of Christ, besides all the orthodox fathers, some of the ablest modern critics concur [BENGEL, THOLUCK, STUART, OLSHAUSEN, PHILIPPI, ALFORD, etc.]

6. Not as though the word of God had taken none effect — “hath fallen to the ground,” that is, failed: compare ^{<4167>}Luke 16:17, *Greek*.

for they are not all Israel which are of Israel — better, “for not all they which are of Israel are Israel.” *Here the apostle enters upon the profound subject of ELECTION*, the treatment of which extends to the end of the eleventh chapter — “Think not that I mourn over the total loss of Israel; for that would involve the failure of God’s word to Abraham; but not all that belong to the natural seed, and go under the name of ‘Israel,’ are *the* Israel of God’s irrevocable choice.” The difficulties which encompass this subject lie not in the apostle’s teaching, which is plain enough, but in the truths themselves, the evidence for which, taken by themselves, is overwhelming, but whose perfect harmony is beyond human comprehension in the present state. The great source of error here lies in hastily inferring (as THOLUCK and others), from the apostle’s taking tip, at the close of this chapter, the calling of the Gentiles in connection with the rejection of Israel, and continuing this subject through the two next chapters, that the Election treated of in the body of this chapter is *national*, not *personal* Election, and consequently is Election merely to *religious advantages*, not to *eternal salvation*. In that case, the argument of ^{<4189>}Romans 9:6, with which the subject of Election opens, would be this: “The choice of Abraham and his seed has not failed; because though Israel has been rejected, *the Gentiles* have taken their place; and God has a right to choose what nation He will to the privileges of His visible kingdom.” But so far from this, the Gentiles are not so much as mentioned at all till towards the close of the chapter; and the argument of this verse is, that “all Israel *is not* rejected, but only a portion of it, the remainder being *the* ‘Israel’ whom God has chosen in the exercise of His sovereign right.” And that this is a choice not to mere external privileges, but to eternal salvation, will abundantly appear from what follows.

7-9. Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children — “Not in the line of mere fleshly descent from Abraham does the election run; else Ishmael, Hagar’s child, and even Keturah’s children, would be included, which they were not.”

but — the true election are such of Abraham’s seed as God unconditionally chooses, as exemplified in that promise.

in Isaac shall thy seed be called — (^{<1212>}Genesis 21:12).

10-13. And not only this; but when Rebecca, etc. — It might be thought that there was a natural reason for preferring the child of Sarah, as being Abraham’s true and first wife, both to the child of Hagar, Sarah’s maid, and to the children of Keturah, his second wife. But there could be no such reason in the case of Rebecca, Isaac’s only wife; for the choice of her son Jacob was the choice of one of two sons by the same mother and of the younger in preference to the elder, and before either of them was born, and consequently before either had done good or evil to be a ground of preference: and all to show that the sole ground of distinction lay in the unconditional choice of God — “*not of works, but of Him that calleth.*”

14. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid — This is the first of two objections to the foregoing doctrine, that God chooses one and rejects another, not on account of their works, but purely in the exercise of His own good pleasure: “*This doctrine is inconsistent with the justice of God.*” The answer to this objection extends to ^{<1212>}Romans 9:19, where we have the second objection.

15. For he saith to Moses — (^{<1212>}Exodus 33:19).

I will have mercy on whom I will have — “on whom I have”

mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have — “on whom I have”

compassion — “There can be no unrighteousness in God’s choosing whom He will, for to Moses He expressly claims the right to do so.” Yet it is worthy of notice that this is expressed in the positive rather than the negative form: not, “I will have mercy on *none but* whom I will”; but, “I will have mercy on *whomsoever* I will.”

16. So then it is not of him that willeth — hath the inward *desire*

nor of him that runneth — maketh active *effort* (compare ¹1 Corinthians 9:24,26 ²Philippians 2:16 3:14). Both these are indispensable to salvation, yet salvation is owing to neither, but is purely “of God that sheweth mercy.” See on ³Philippians 2:12,13, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which, *out of His own good pleasure*, worketh in you both to *will* and to *do*.”

17. For the scripture saith to Pharaoh — observe here the light in which the Scripture is viewed by the apostle.

Even for this same — “this very”

purpose have I raised — “raised I”

thee up, etc. — The apostle had shown that God claims the right to choose whom He will: here he shows by an example that God punishes whom He will. But “God did not make Pharaoh wicked; He only forbore to make him good, by the exercise of special and altogether unmerited grace” [HODGE].

that I might — “may”

show my power in thee — It was not that Pharaoh was worse than others that he was so dealt with, but “in order that he might become a monument of the penal justice of God, and it was with a view to this that God provided that the evil which was in him should be manifested in this definite form” [OLSHAUSEN].

and that my name might — “may”

be declared — “proclaimed”

in all the earth — “This is the principle on which all punishment is inflicted, that the true character of the Divine Lawgiver should be known. This is of all objects, where God is concerned, the highest and most important; in itself the most worthy, and in its results the most beneficent” [HODGE].

18. Therefore hath he — “So then he hath.” The result then is that He hath

mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth — by judicially abandoning them to the hardening influence of sin itself (^{<3811>}Psalm 81:11,12 ^{<412>}Romans 1:24,26,28 ^{<307>}Hebrews 3:8,13), and of the surrounding incentives to it (^{<1312>}Matthew 24:12 ^{<458>}1 Corinthians 15:38 ^{<517>}2 Thessalonians 2:17).

Second objection to the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty:

19. Thou shalt say then unto me, Why — “Why then” is the true reading.

doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted — “Who resisteth”

his will? — that is, “*This doctrine is incompatible with human responsibility*”; If God chooses and rejects, pardons and punishes, whom He pleases, why are those blamed who, if rejected by Him, cannot help sinning and perishing? This objection shows quite as conclusively as the former the real nature of the doctrine objected to — that it is Election and Non-election to eternal salvation prior to any difference of personal character; this is the only doctrine that could suggest the objection here stated, and to this doctrine the objection *is* plausible. What now is the apostle’s answer? It is twofold. *First*: “It is irreverence and presumption in the creature to arraign the Creator.”

20, 21. Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made — “didst thou make”

me thus? — (^{<3819>}Isaiah 45:9).

21. Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? — “The objection is founded on ignorance or misapprehension of the relation between God and His sinful creatures; supposing that He is under obligation to extend His grace to all, whereas He is under obligation to none. All are sinners, and have forfeited every claim to His mercy; it is therefore perfectly competent to God to spare one and not another, to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor. But it is to be borne in mind that Paul does not here speak of God’s right over His creatures *as creatures*, but *as sinful creatures*: as he himself clearly intimates in the

next verses. It is the cavil of a sinful creature against his Creator that he is answering, and he does so by showing that God is under no obligation to give His grace to any, but is as sovereign as in fashioning the clay” [HODGE]. But, *Second*: “There is nothing unjust in such sovereignty.”

22, 23. What if God, willing to show — “designing to manifest”

his wrath — His holy displeasure against sin.

and to make his power — to punish it

known endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath — that is, “destined to wrath”; just as “vessels of mercy,” in ^{◀102}Romans 9:23, mean “vessels destined to mercy”; compare ^{◀103}Ephesians 2:3, “children of wrath.”

fitted for destruction — It is well remarked by STUART that the “difficulties which such statements involve are not to be got rid of by softening the language of one text, while so many others meet us which are of the same tenor; and even if we give up the Bible itself, so long as we acknowledge an omnipotent and omniscient God we cannot abate in the least degree from any of the difficulties which such texts make.” Be it observed, however, that if God, as the apostle teaches, expressly “designed to manifest His wrath, and to make His power (in the way of wrath) known,” it could only be by punishing some, while He pardons others; and if the choice between the two classes was not to be founded, as our apostle also teaches, on their own doings but on God’s good pleasure, the decision behooved ultimately to rest with God. Yet, even in the necessary punishment of the wicked, as HODGE observes, so far from proceeding with undue severity, the apostle would have it remarked that God “endures with much long-suffering” those objects of His righteous displeasure.

23. And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy — that “glorious exuberance of Divine mercy” which “was manifested in choosing and eternally arranging for the salvation of sinners.”

24. even us, whom he hath called, etc. — rather, “Whom he hath also called, even us,” etc. in not only “*afore preparing*,” but in due time effectually “*calling* us.”

not of the Jews, etc. — better, “not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.” *Here for the first time in this chapter the calling of the Gentiles is introduced*; all before having respect, not to the substitution of the called Gentiles for the rejected Jews, but to the choice of one portion and the rejection of another of the same Israel. Had Israel’s rejection been total, God’s promise to Abraham would *not* have been fulfilled by the substitution of the Gentiles in their room; but Israel’s rejection being only partial, the preservation of a “remnant,” in which the promise was made good, was but “according to the election of grace.” And now, for the first time, the apostle tells us that along with this elect remnant of *Israel*, it is God’s purpose to “take out of the *Gentiles* a people for His name” (⁴⁰⁸⁴Acts 28:14); and that subject, thus introduced, is now continued to the end of the eleventh chapter.

25. As he saith also in Osee — “Hosea.”

I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved — quoted, though not quite to the letter, from ⁴⁰²³Hosea 2:23, a passage relating immediately, not to the heathen, but to the kingdom of the ten tribes; but since they had sunk to the level of the heathen, who were “not God’s people,” and in that sense “not beloved,” the apostle legitimately applies it to the heathen, as “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise” (so ⁴⁰²⁰1 Peter 2:10).

26. And — another quotation from ⁴⁰¹⁰Hosea 1:10.

it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children — “called sons”

of the living God — The expression, “in the place where ... there,” seems designed only to give greater emphasis to the gracious change here announced, from divine exclusion to divine admission to the privileges of the people of God.

27-29. Esaias also crieth — “But Isaiah crieth” — an expression denoting a solemn testimony openly borne (^{<4015>}John 1:15 7:28,37 12:44 ^{<4216>}Acts 23:6 24:21).

concerning Israel, Though the number of the children — “sons”

of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a — “the”

remnant — that is, the elect remnant *only* shall be saved.

28. For he will finish the work, and cut — “is finishing the reckoning, and cutting it”

it short in righteousness; because a short work — “reckoning”

will the Lord make upon the earth — (^{<2912>}Isaiah 10:22,23), as in the *Septuagint*. The sense given to these words by the apostle may seem to differ from that intended by the prophet. But the sameness of sentiment in both places will at once appear, if we understand those words of the prophet, “the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness,” to mean that while a remnant of Israel should be graciously spared to return from captivity, “the decreed consumption” of the impenitent majority should be “replete with righteousness,” or illustriously display God’s righteous vengeance against sin. The “short reckoning” seems to mean the speedy completing of His word, both in cutting off the one portion and saving the other.

29. And as Esaias said — “hath said”

before — that is, probably in an earlier part of his book, namely, ^{<2919>}Isaiah 1:9.

Except the Lord of Sabaoth — that is, “The Lord of Hosts”: the word is *Hebrew*, but occurs so in the Epistle of James (^{<3069>}James 5:4), and has thence become naturalized in our Christian phraseology.

had left us a seed — meaning a “remnant”; small at first, but in due time to be a seed of plenty (compare ^{<4221>}Psalms 22:30,31 ^{<2912>}Isaiah 6:12,13).

we had been — “become”

as Sodom, etc. — But for this precious seed, the chosen people would have resembled the cities of the plain, both in degeneracy of character and in merited doom.

30, 31. What shall we say then? — “What now is the result of the whole?” The result is this — very different from what one would have expected.

That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained — “attained”

to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith — As we have seen that “the righteousness of faith” is the righteousness which *justifies* (see on ^{<R12>}Romans 3:22, etc.), this verse must mean that “the Gentiles, who while strangers to Christ were quite indifferent about acceptance with God, having embraced the Gospel as soon as it was preached to them, experienced the blessedness of a justified state.”

31. But Israel, which followed — “following”

after the law of righteousness, hath not attained — “attained not”

unto the law of righteousness — The word “law” is used here, we think, in the same sense as in ^{<R12>}Romans 7:23, to denote “a principle of action”; that is, “Israel, though sincerely and steadily aiming at acceptance with God, nevertheless missed it.”

32, 33. Wherefore? Because they sought *it* not by faith, but as it were — rather simply, “as”

by the works of the law — as if it were thus attainable, which justification is not: Since, therefore, it is attainable only by faith, they missed it.

for — it is doubtful if this particle was originally in the text.

they stumbled at that stumbling-stone — better, “against the stone of stumbling,” meaning *Christ*. But in this they only did.

33. As it is written — (^{<R14>}Isaiah 8:14 28:16).

Behold, etc. — Two Messianic predictions are here combined, as is not unusual in quotations from the Old Testament. Thus combined, the prediction brings together both the classes of whom the apostle is treating: those to whom Messiah should be only a stone of stumbling, and those who were to regard Him as the Cornerstone of all their hopes. Thus expounded, this chapter presents no serious difficulties, none which do not arise out of the subject itself, whose depths are unfathomable; whereas on every other view of it the difficulty of giving it any consistent and worthy interpretation is in our judgment insuperable.

Note,

- (1) To speak and act “in Christ,” with a conscience not only illuminated, but under the present operation of the Holy Ghost, is not peculiar to the supernaturally inspired, but is the privilege, and ought to be the aim, of every believer (~~ROM~~ Romans 9:1).
- (2) Grace does not destroy, but only intensify and elevate, the feelings of nature; and Christians should study to show this (~~ROM~~ Romans 9:2,3).
- (3) To belong to the visible Church of God, and enjoy its high and holy distinctions, is of the sovereign mercy of God, and should be regarded with devout thankfulness (~~ROM~~ Romans 9:4,5).
- (4) Yet the most sacred external distinctions and privileges will avail nothing to salvation without the heart’s submission to the righteousness of God (~~ROM~~ Romans 9:31-33).
- (5) What manner of persons ought “God’s elect” to be — in *humility*, when they remember that He hath saved them and called them, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace, given them in Christ Jesus before the world began (~~ROM~~ 2 Timothy 1:9); in *thankfulness*, for “Who maketh thee to differ, and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?” (~~ROM~~ 1 Corinthians 4:7); in *godly jealousy* over themselves; remembering that “God is not mocked,” but “whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap” (~~ROM~~ Galatians 6:7); in *diligence* “to make our calling and election sure” (~~ROM~~ 2 Peter 1:10); and yet in calm *confidence* that “whom God predestinates, and calls, and justifies, them (in due time) He also glorifies” (~~ROM~~ Romans 8:30).

(6) On all subjects which from their very nature lie beyond human comprehension, it will be our wisdom to set down what God says in His word, and has actually done in His procedure towards men, as indisputable, even though it contradict the results at which in the best exercise of our limited judgment we may have arrived (~~<418>~~ Romans 9:14-23).

(7) Sincerity in religion, or a general desire to be saved, with assiduous efforts to do right, will prove fatal as a ground of confidence before God, if unaccompanied by implicit submission to His revealed method of salvation (~~<418>~~ Romans 9:31-33).

(8) In the rejection of the great mass of the chosen people, and the inbringing of multitudes of estranged Gentiles, God would have men to see a law of His procedure, which the judgment of the great day will more vividly reveal that “the last shall be first and the first last” (~~<418>~~ Matthew 20:16).

CHAPTER 10

ROMANS 10:1-21.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED — HOW ISRAEL CAME TO MISS SALVATION, AND THE GENTILES TO FIND IT.

1. Brethren, my heart's desire — The word here expresses “entire complacency,” that in which the heart would experience full satisfaction.

and prayer — “supplication.”

to God for Israel — “for them” is the true reading; the subject being continued from the close of the preceding chapter.

is, that they may be saved — “for their salvation.” Having before poured forth the anguish of his soul at the general unbelief of his nation and its dreadful consequences (~~490~~Romans 9:1-3), he here expresses in the most emphatic terms his desire and prayer for their salvation.

2. For I bear them record — or, “witness,” as he well could from his own sad experience.

that they have a zeal of — “for”

God, but not according to knowledge — (Compare ~~4218~~Acts 22:3 26:9-11 ~~4013~~Galatians 1:13,14). He alludes to this well-meaning of his people, notwithstanding their spiritual blindness, not certainly to excuse their rejection of Christ and rage against His saints, but as some ground of hope regarding them. (See ~~5013~~1 Timothy 1:13).

3. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness — that is, for the justification of the guilty (see on ~~8017~~Romans 1:17).

and going about — “seeking”

to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God — The apostle views the general rejection of Christ by the nation as one act.

4. For Christ is the end — the object or aim.

of the law for — justifying

righteousness to every one that believeth — that is, contains within Himself all that the law demands for the justification of such as embrace Him, whether Jew or Gentile (^{<K1>}Galatians 3:24).

5-10. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man that doeth — “hath done”

those things — which it commands.

shall live in them — (^{<K1>}Leviticus 18:5). This is the one way of justification and life — by “the righteousness which is of (or, by our own obedience to) the law.”

6. But the — justifying

righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise — “speaketh thus” — its language or import is to this effect (quoting in substance ^{<K1>}Deuteronomy 30:13,14).

Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down, etc. — that is, “Ye have not to sigh over the impossibility of attaining to justification; as if one should say, oh! if I could but get someone to mount up to heaven and fetch me down Christ, there might be some hope, but since that cannot be, mine is a desperate case.”

7. Or, Who shall descend, etc. — another case of impossibility, suggested by ^{<K1>}Proverbs 30:4, and perhaps also ^{<K1>}Amos 9:2 — probably proverbial expressions of impossibility (compare ^{<K1>}Psalms 139:7-10 ^{<K1>}Proverbs 24:7, etc.).

8. But what saith it? It saith — continuing the quotation from ^{<K1>}Deuteronomy 30:14.

The word is nigh thee — easily accessible.

in thy mouth — when thou confessest Him.

and in thine heart — when thou believest on Him. Though it is of *the law* which Moses more immediately speaks in the passage quoted, yet it is of the law as Israel shall be brought to look upon it when the Lord their God shall circumcise their heart “to love the Lord their God with all their heart” (^{<500>}Romans 10:6); and thus, in applying it, the apostle (as OLSHAUSEN truly observes) is not merely appropriating the language of Moses, but keeping in the line of his deeper thought.

that is, the word of faith, which we preach — that is, the word which men have to believe for salvation (compare ^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:6).

9. That if thou shalt, etc. — So understanding the words, the apostle is here giving the language of the true method of justification; and this sense we prefer (with CALVIN, BEZA, FERME, LOCKE, JOWETT). But able interpreters render the words, “For,” or “Because if thou shalt,” etc. [*Vulgate*, LUTHER, DE WETTE, STUART, PHILIPPI, ALFORD, *Revised Version*]. In this case, these are the apostle’s own remarks, confirming the foregoing statements as to the simplicity of the gospel method of salvation.

confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus — that is, probably, “If thou shalt confess Jesus [to be] the Lord,” which is the proper manifestation or evidence of faith (^{<000>}Matthew 10:32 ^{<600>}1 John 4:15). This is put first merely to correspond with the foregoing quotation — “in thy mouth and in thine heart.” So in ^{<000>}1 Peter 1:10 the “calling of believers” is put before their “election,” as that which is first “made sure,” although in point of time it comes after it.

and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised — “that God raised”

him from the dead, etc. — (See on ^{<600>}Romans 4:25). In ^{<500>}Romans 10:10 the two things are placed in their natural order.

10. For with the heart man believeth unto — justifying

righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation

— This confession of Christ's name, especially in times of persecution, and whenever obloquy is attached to the Christian profession, is an indispensable test of discipleship.

11-13. For the scripture saith — in ^{<2306>}Isaiah 28:16, a glorious Messianic passage.

Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed — Here, as in ^{<608>}Romans 9:33, the quotation is from the *Septuagint*, which renders those words of the original, “shall not make haste” (that is, fly for escape, as from conscious danger), “shall not be put to shame,” which comes to the same thing.

12. For there is no difference — or “distinction”

between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord over all — that is, not *God* (as CALVIN, GROTIUS, OLSHAUSEN, HODGE), but *Christ*, as will be seen, we think, by comparing ^{<609>}Romans 10:9,12,13 and observing the apostle's usual style on such subjects. (Song of Solomon CHRYSOSTOM, MELVILLE, BENDEL, MEYER, DE WETTE, FRITZSCHE, THOLUCK, STUART, ALFORD, PHILIPPI).

is rich — a favorite Pauline term to express the exuberance of that saving grace which is in Christ Jesus.

unto all that call upon him — This confirms the application of the preceding words to *Christ*; since to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus is a customary expression. (See ^{<405>}Acts 7:59,60 9:14,21 22:16 ^{<406>}1 Corinthians 1:2 ^{<512>}2 Timothy 2:22).

13. For — saith the scripture

whosoever — The expression is emphatic, “Everyone whosoever”

shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved — (^{<213>}Joel 2:32); quoted also by Peter, in his great Pentecostal sermon (^{<401>}Acts 2:21), with evident application to Christ.

14, 15. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and ... believe in him of whom they have not heard? and ...

hear without a preacher? and ... preach except ... sent? — that is, “True, the same Lord over all is rich unto all alike that call upon Him. But this calling implies believing, and believing hearing, and hearing preaching, and preaching *a mission to preach*: Why, then, take ye it so ill, O children of Abraham, that in obedience to our heavenly mission (⁴⁰¹⁶Acts 26:16-18) we preach among *the Gentiles* the unsearchable riches of Christ?”

15. as it is written — (²⁵¹⁰Isaiah 52:7).

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, etc. — The whole chapter of Isaiah from which this is taken, and the three that follow, are so richly Messianic, that there can be no doubt “the glad tidings” there spoken of announce a more glorious release than of Judah from the Babylonish captivity, and the very feet of its preachers are called “beautiful” for the sake of their message.

16, 17. But they have not all obeyed the gospel — that is, the Scripture hath prepared us to expect this sad result.

For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? — that is, “Where shall one find a believer?” The prophet speaks as if next to none would believe: The apostle softens this into “They have not all believed.”

17. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God — “This is another confirmation of the truth that faith supposes the hearing of the Word, and this a commission to preach it.”

18. But I say, Have they not heard? — “Did they not hear?” Can Israel, through any region of his dispersion, plead ignorance of these glad tidings?

Yes, verily, their sound went — “their voice went out”

into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world — These beautiful words are from ⁴⁰⁰¹Psalms 19:4. Whether the apostle quoted them as in their primary intention applicable to his subject (as OLSHAUSEN, ALFORD, etc.), or only “used scriptural language to express his own ideas, as is done involuntarily almost by every preacher in every sermon” [HODGE], expositors are not agreed. But though the latter may seem the more natural since “the rising of the Sun of righteousness upon the world” (^{304B}Malachi 4:2), “the Dayspring from on high visiting us, giving light to

them that sat in darkness, and guiding our feet into the way of peace” (^{<1078>}Luke 1:78,79), must have been familiar and delightful to the apostle’s ear, we cannot doubt that the irradiation of the world with the beams of a better Sun by the universal diffusion of the Gospel of Christ, must have a mode of speaking quite natural, and to him scarcely figurative.

19. But I say, Did not Israel know? — know, from their own Scriptures, of God’s intention to bring in the Gentiles?

First — that is First in the prophetic line [DE WETTE].

Moses saith, etc. — “I will provoke you to jealousy (‘against’) [them that are] not a nation, and against a nation without understanding will I anger you” (^{<1521>}Deuteronomy 32:21). In this verse God warns His ancient people that because they had (that is, in aftertimes would) moved Him to jealousy with their “no-gods,” and provoked Him to anger with their vanities, He in requital would move them to jealousy by receiving into His favor a “no-people,” and provoke them to anger by adopting a nation void of understanding.

20. But Esaias is very bold, and saith — that is, is still plainer, and goes even the length of saying.

I was found of them that sought me not — until I sought them.

I was made — “became”

manifest unto them that asked not after me — until the invitation from Me came to them. That the calling of the Gentiles was meant by these words of the prophet (^{<2381>}Isaiah 65:1) is manifest from what immediately follows, “I said, Behold Me, behold Me, unto a nation that was not called by My name.”

21. But to — rather, “with regard to”

Israel he saith, All day — “All the day”

long I have stretched out my hands — “did I stretch forth”

my hands — the attitude of gracious entreaty.

unto a disobedient and gainsaying people — These words, which immediately follow the announcement just quoted of the calling of the Gentiles, were enough to forewarn the Jews both of God's purpose to eject them from their privileges, in favor of the Gentiles, and of the cause of it on their own part.

Note,

(1) Mere sincerity, and even earnestness in religion — though it may be some ground of hope for a merciful recovery from error — is no excuse, and will not compensate, for the deliberate rejection of saving truth, when in the providence of God presented for acceptance (⁶⁰⁰Romans 10:1-3; and see on ⁶⁰⁰Romans 9:7, *Note* 7).

(2) The true cause of such rejection of saving truth, by the otherwise sincere, is the prepossession of the mind by some false notions of its own. So long as the Jews "sought to set up their own righteousness," it was in the nature of things impossible that they should "submit themselves to the righteousness of God"; the one of these two methods of acceptance being in the teeth of the other (⁶⁰⁰Romans 10:3).

(3) The essential terms of salvation have in every age been the same: "Whosoever will" is invited to "take of the water of life freely," ⁶²⁰Revelation 22:17 (⁶⁰⁰Romans 10:13).

(4) How will the remembrance of the simplicity, reasonableness, and absolute freeness of God's plan of salvation overwhelm those that perish from under the sound of it (⁶⁰⁰Romans 10:4-13).

(5) How piercingly and perpetually should that question — "How SHALL THEY HEAR WITHOUT A PREACHER?" — sound in the ears of all churches, as but the apostolic echo of their Lord's parting injunction, "PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE" (⁴⁰³⁵Mark 16:15), and how far below the proper standard of love, zeal, and self-sacrifice must the churches as yet be, when with so plenteous a harvest the laborers are yet so few (⁴⁰³⁵Matthew 9:37,38), and that cry from the lips of pardoned, gifted, consecrated men — "Here am I, send me" (²⁰⁰⁸Isaiah 6:8), is not heard everywhere (⁶⁰⁰Romans 10:14,15)!

(6) The blessing of a covenant relation to God is the irrevocable privilege of no people and no Church; it can be preserved only by fidelity, on our part, to the covenant itself (☞ Romans 10:19).

(7) God is often found by those who apparently are the farthest from Him, while He remains undiscovered by those who think themselves the nearest (☞ Romans 10:20,21).

(8) God's dealings even with reprobate sinners are full of tenderness and compassion; all the day long extending the arms of His mercy even to the disobedient and gainsaying. This will be felt and acknowledged at last by all who perish, to the glory of God's forbearance and to their own confusion (☞ Romans 10:21).

CHAPTER 11

ROMANS 11:1-36.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED AND CONCLUDED — THE ULTIMATE INBRINGING OF ALL ISRAEL, TO BE, WITH THE GENTILES, ONE KINGDOM OF GOD ON THE EARTH.

1. I say then, Hath — “Did”

God cast away his people? God forbid — Our Lord did indeed announce that “the kingdom of God should be *taken from* Israel” (^{<424>}Matthew 21:41); and when asked by the Eleven, after His resurrection, if He would at that time “*restore* the kingdom to Israel,” His reply is a virtual admission that Israel was in some sense already out of covenant (^{<409>}Acts 1:9). Yet here the apostle teaches that, in two respects, Israel was *not* “cast away”; First, Not *totally*; Second, Not *finally*. FIRST, Israel is not *wholly* cast away.

for I also am an Israelite — See ^{<508>}Philippians 3:5, and so a living witness to the contrary.

of the seed of Abraham — of pure descent from the father of the faithful.

of the tribe of Benjamin — (^{<508>}Philippians 3:5), that tribe which, on the revolt of the ten tribes, constituted, with Judah, the one faithful kingdom of God (^{<1121>}1 Kings 12:21), and after the captivity was, along with Judah, the kernel of the Jewish nation (^{<504>}Ezra 4:1 10:9).

2-4. God hath — “did”

not cast away his people — that is, *wholly*

which he foreknew — On the word “foreknew,” see on ^{<512>}Romans 8:29.

Wot — that is, “Know”

ye not that the scripture saith of — literally, “in,” that is, in the section which relates to

Elias? how he maketh intercession — “pleadeth”

against Israel — (The word “saying,” which follows, as also the particle “and” before “digged down,” should be omitted, as without manuscript authority).

3. and I am left alone — “I only am left.”

4. seven thousand, that have not bowed the knee to Baal — not “the image of Baal,” according to the supplement of our version.

5. Even so at this present time — “in this present season”; this period of Israel’s rejection. (See ⁴⁰⁰Acts 1:7, *Greek*).

there is — “there obtains,” or “hath remained”

a remnant according to the election of grace — “As in Elijah’s time the apostasy of Israel was not so universal as it seemed to be, and as he in his despondency concluded it to be, so now, the rejection of Christ by Israel is not so appalling in extent as one would be apt to think: There is now, as there was then, a faithful remnant; not however of persons naturally better than the unbelieving mass, but of persons graciously chosen to salvation.” (See ⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 4:7 ⁴⁰³2 Thessalonians 2:13). This establishes our view of the argument on Election in ⁴⁰¹Romans 9:1-29, as not being an election of Gentiles in the place of Jews, and merely to religious advantages, but a sovereign choice of some of Israel itself, from among others, to believe and be saved. (See on ⁴⁰⁰Romans 9:6.)

6. And, etc. — better, “Now if it (the election) be by grace, it is no more of works; for [then] grace becomes no more grace: but if it be of works,” etc. (The authority of ancient manuscripts against this latter clause, as superfluous and not originally in the text, though strong, is not sufficient, we think, to justify its exclusion. Such seeming redundancies are not unusual with our apostle). The general position here laid down is of vital importance: That there are but two possible sources of salvation — men’s works, and God’s grace; and that these are so essentially distinct and opposite, that salvation cannot be of any combination or mixture of both,

but must be wholly either of the one or of the other. (See on ^{<ROM>}Romans 4:3, *Note 3*.)

7-10. What then? — How stands the fact?

Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for — better, “What Israel is in search of (that is, Justification, or acceptance with God — see on ^{<ROM>}Romans 9:31); this he found not; but the election (the elect remnant of Israel) found it, and the rest were hardened,” or judicially given over to the “hardness of their own hearts.”

8. as it is written — (^{<ISA>}Isaiah 29:10 ^{<DEU>}Deuteronomy 29:4).

God hath given — “gave”

them the spirit of slumber — “stupor”

unto this day — “this present day.”

9. And David saith — (^{<PSA>}Psalm 69:23), which in such a Messianic psalm must be meant of the rejecters of Christ.

Let their table, etc. — that is, Let their very blessings prove a curse to them, and their enjoyments only sting and take vengeance on them.

10. Let their eyes be darkened ... and bow down their back alway — expressive either of the *decrepitude*, or of the *servile condition*, to come on the nation through the just judgment of God. The apostle’s object in making these quotations is to show that what he had been compelled to say of the then condition and prospects of his nation was more than borne out by their own Scriptures. But, **SECONDLY**, God has not cast away His people *finally*. The illustration of this point extends, ^{<ROM>}Romans 11:11-31.

11. I say then, Have they stumbled — “Did they stumble”

that they should fall? God forbid; but — the supplement “rather” is better omitted.

through their fall — literally, “trespass,” but here best rendered “false step” [DE WETTE]; not “fall,” as in our version.

salvation is come to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy —

Here, as also in ^{<610>}Romans 10:19 (quoted from ^{<620>}Deuteronomy 32:21), we see that emulation is a legitimate stimulus to what is good.

12. Now if the fall of them — “But if their trespass,” or “false step”

be the riches of the — Gentile

world — as being the occasion of their accession to Christ.

and the diminishing of them — that is, the reduction of the *true* Israel to so small a remnant.

the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness! — that is, their full recovery (see on ^{<610>}Romans 11:26); that is, “If an event so untoward as Israel’s fall was the occasion of such unspeakable good to the Gentile world, of how much greater good may we expect an event so blessed as their full recovery to be productive?”

13, 14. I speak — “am speaking”

to you Gentiles — another proof that this Epistle was addressed to Gentile believers. (See on ^{<610>}Romans 1:13).

I magnify — “glorify”

mine office — The clause beginning with “inasmuch” should be read as a parenthesis.

14. If ... I may provoke, etc. (See on ^{<610>}Romans 11:11.)

my flesh — Compare ^{<280>}Isaiah 58:7.

15. For if the casting away of them — The apostle had denied that they were east away (^{<610>}Romans 11:1); here he affirms it. But both are true; they *were* cast away, though neither totally nor finally, and it is of this partial and temporary rejection that the apostle here speaks.

be the reconciling of the — Gentile

world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? — The reception of the whole family of Israel, scattered as they are among all nations under heaven, and the most inveterate enemies of the Lord Jesus,

will be such a stupendous manifestation of the power of God upon the spirits of men, and of His glorious presence with the heralds of the Cross, as will not only kindle devout astonishment far and wide, but so change the dominant mode of thinking and feeling on all spiritual things as to seem like a *resurrection from the dead*.

16. **For** — “But”

if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root ... so the branches — The Israelites were required to offer to God the first-fruits of the earth — both in their raw state, in a sheaf of newly reaped grain (^{LEB}Leviticus 23:10,11), and in their prepared state, made into cakes of dough (^{HEB}Numbers 15:19-21) — by which the whole produce of that season was regarded as *hallowed*. It is probable that the latter of these offerings is here intended, as to it the word “lump” best applies; and the argument of the apostle is, that as the separation unto God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from the rest of mankind, as the parent stem of their race, was as real an offering of first-fruits as that which hallowed the produce of the earth, so, in the divine estimation, it was as real a separation of the mass or “lump” of that nation in all time to God. The figure of the “root” and its “branches” is of like import — the consecration of the one of them extending to the other.

17, 18. And if — rather, “But if”; that is, “If notwithstanding this consecration of Abraham’s race to God.

some of the branches — The mass of the unbelieving and rejected Israelites are here called “some,” not, as before, to meet Jewish prejudice (see on ^{LEB}Romans 3:3, and on “not all” in ^{LEB}Romans 10:16), but with the opposite view of checking Gentile pride.

and thou, being a wild olive, wert — “wast”

grafted in among them — Though it is more usual to graft the superior cutting upon the inferior stem, the opposite method, which is intended here, is not without example.

and with them partakest — “wast made partaker,” along with the branches left, the believing remnant.

of the root and fatness of the olive tree — the rich grace secured by covenant to the true seed of Abraham.

18. Boast not against the — rejected

branches. But if thou — “do”

boast — remember that

thou bearest not — “it is not thou that bearest”

the root, but the root thee — “If the branches may not boast over the root that bears them, then may not the Gentile boast over the seed of Abraham; for what is thy standing, O Gentile, in relation to Israel, but that of a branch in relation to the root? From Israel hath come all that thou art and hast in the family of God; for “salvation is of the Jews” (^{<4002>}John 4:22).

19-21. Thou wilt say then — as a plea for boasting.

The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20. Well — “Be it so, but remember that”

because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest — not as a Gentile, but solely

by faith — But as faith cannot live in those “whose soul is lifted up” (^{<3004>}Habakkuk 2:4).

Be not high-minded, but fear — (^{<1884>}Proverbs 28:14 ^{<1850>}Philippians 2:12):

21. For if God spared not the natural branches — sprung from the parent stem.

take heed lest he also spare not thee — a mere wild graft. The former might, beforehand, have been thought very improbable; but, after that, no one can wonder at the latter.

22, 23. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them that fell, severity — in rejecting the chosen seed.

but toward thee, goodness — “God’s goodness” is the true reading, that is, His sovereign goodness in admitting thee to a covenant standing who

before wert a “stranger to the covenants of promise” (^{<400>}Ephesians 2:12-20).

if thou continue in his goodness — in believing dependence on that pure goodness which made thee what thou art.

23. And they also — “Yea, and they”

if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again — This appeal to the *power* of God to effect the recovery of His ancient people implies the vast difficulty of it — which all who have ever labored for the conversion of the Jews are made depressingly to feel. That intelligent expositors should think that this was meant of *individual* Jews, reintroduced from time to time into the family of God on their believing on the Lord Jesus, is surprising; and yet those who deny the *national* recovery of Israel must and do so interpret the apostle. But this is to confound the two things which the apostle carefully distinguishes. Individual Jews have been at all times admissible, and have been admitted, to the Church through the gate of faith in the Lord Jesus. This is the “remnant, *even at this present time*, according to the election of grace,” of which the apostle, in the first part of the chapter, had cited himself as one. But here he manifestly speaks of something *not* then existing, but to be looked forward to as a great future event in the economy of God, the reingrafting of *the nation as such*, when they “abide not in unbelief.” And though this is here spoken of merely as a supposition (if their unbelief shall cease) — in order to set it over against the other supposition, of what will happen to the Gentiles if they shall not abide in the faith — the supposition is turned into an explicit prediction in the verses following.

24. For if thou wert cut — “wert cut off”

from the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, etc. — This is just the converse of ^{<512>}Romans 11:21: “As the excision of the merely *engrafted* Gentiles through unbelief is a thing much more to be expected than was the excision of the *natural* Israel, before it happened; so the restoration of Israel, when they shall be brought to believe in Jesus, is a

thing far more in the line of what we should expect, than the admission of the Gentiles to a standing which they never before enjoyed.”

25. For I would not ... that ye should be ignorant of this mystery —

The word “mystery,” so often used by our apostle, does not mean (as with us) something incomprehensible, but “something before kept secret, either wholly or for the most part, and now only fully disclosed” (compare ⁵¹⁶Romans 16:25 ⁴⁸¹1 Corinthians 2:7-10 ⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 1:9,10 3:3-6,9,10).

lest ye should be wise in your own conceits — as if ye alone were in all time coming to be the family of God.

that blindness — “hardness”

in part is happened to — “hath come upon”

Israel — that is, hath come partially, or upon a portion of Israel.

until the fullness of the Gentiles be — “have”

come in — that is, not the general conversion of the world to Christ, as many take it; for this would seem to contradict the latter part of this chapter, and throw the national recovery of Israel too far into the future: besides, in ⁵¹⁵Romans 11:15, the apostle seems to speak of the receiving of Israel, not as following, but as contributing largely to bring about the general conversion of the world — but, “until the Gentiles have had their *full* time of the visible Church all to themselves while the Jews are out, which the Jews had till the Gentiles were brought in.” (See ⁴⁷⁴Luke 21:24).

26, 27. And so all Israel shall be saved — To understand this great statement, as some still do, merely of such a gradual inbringing of *individual* Jews, that there shall at length remain none in unbelief, is to do manifest violence both to it and to the whole context. It can only mean the ultimate ingathering of Israel as a *nation*, in contrast with the present “remnant.” (Song of Solomon THOLUCK, MEYER, DE WETTE, PHILIPPI, ALFORD, HODGE). Three confirmations of this now follow: two from the prophets, and a third from the Abrahamic covenant itself. *First*, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and

shall — or, according to what seems the true reading, without the “and” — “He shall”

turn away ungodliness from Jacob — The apostle, having drawn his illustrations of man's *sinfulness* chiefly from ^{<141>}Psalm 14:1-7 and ^{<281>}Isaiah 59:1-21, now seems to combine the language of the same two places regarding Israel's *salvation* from it [BENGEL]. In the one place the Psalmist longs to see the "salvation of Israel coming *out of Zion*" (^{<141>}Psalm 14:7); in the other, the prophet announces that "the Redeemer (or, 'Deliverer') shall come *to* (or '*for*') Zion" (^{<281>}Isaiah 59:20). But as all the glorious manifestations of Israel's God were regarded as issuing out of Zion, as the seat of His manifested glory (^{<110>}Psalm 20:2 110:2 ^{<231>}Isaiah 31:9), the turn which the apostle gives to the words merely adds to them that familiar idea. And whereas the prophet announces that He "shall come *to* (or, '*for*') them that turn from transgression in Jacob," while the apostle makes Him say that He shall come "to turn away ungodliness *from Jacob*," this is taken from the *Septuagint* version, and seems to indicate a different reading of the original text. The sense, however, is substantially the same in both. *Second*,

27. For — rather, "and" (again); introducing a new quotation.

this is my covenant with them — literally, "this is the covenant from me unto them."

when I shall take away their sins — This, we believe, is rather a brief summary of ^{<281>}Jeremiah 31:31-34 than the express words of any prediction, Those who believe that there are no predictions regarding the literal Israel in the Old Testament, that stretch beyond the end of the Jewish economy, are obliged to view these quotations by the apostle as mere adaptations of Old Testament language to express his own predictions [ALEXANDER on Isaiah, etc.]. But how forced this is, we shall presently see.

28, 29. As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes — that is, they are regarded and treated as enemies (in a state of exclusion through unbelief, from the family of God) for the benefit of you Gentiles; in the sense of ^{<6111>}Romans 11:11,15.

but as touching, the election — of Abraham and his seed.

they are beloved — *even in their state of exclusion* for the fathers' sakes.

29. For the gifts and calling — “and the calling”

of God are without repentance — “not to be,” or “cannot be repented of.” By the “*calling* of God,” in this case, is meant that sovereign act by which God, in the exercise of His free choice, “called” Abraham to be the father of a peculiar people; while “the *gifts* of God” here denote the articles of the covenant which God made with Abraham, and which constituted the real distinction between his and all other families of the earth. Both these, says the apostle, are irrevocable; and as the point for which he refers to this at all is the *final destiny* of the Israelitish nation, it is clear that *the perpetuity through all time of the Abrahamic covenant* is the thing here affirmed. And lest any should say that though Israel, *as a nation*, has no destiny at all under the Gospel, but as a people disappeared from the stage when the middle wall of partition was broken down, yet the Abrahamic covenant still endures in the *spiritual* seed of Abraham, made up of Jews and Gentiles in one undistinguished mass of redeemed men under the Gospel — the apostle, as if to preclude that supposition, expressly states that the very Israel who, as concerning the Gospel, are regarded as “enemies for the Gentiles’ sakes,” are “*beloved for the fathers’ sakes*”; and it is in proof of this that he adds, “For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance.” But in what sense are the now unbelieving and excluded children of Israel “beloved for the fathers’ sakes?” Not merely from ancestral *recollections*, as one looks with fond interest on the child of a dear friend for that friend’s sake [DR. ARNOLD] — a beautiful thought, and not foreign to Scripture, in this very matter (see ~~2~~ 2 Chronicles 20:7 ~~Isaiah~~ ^{Isaiah} 41:8) — but it is from ancestral *connections* and *obligations*, or their lineal descent from and oneness in covenant with the fathers with whom God originally established it. In other words, the natural Israel — not “the *remnant* of them according to the election of grace,” but THE NATION, sprung from Abraham according to the flesh — are still an elect people, and as such, “beloved.” The very same love which chose the fathers, and rested on the fathers as a parent stem of the nation, still rests on their descendants at large, and will yet recover them from unbelief, and reinstate them in the family of God.

30, 31. For as ye in times past have not believed — or, “obeyed”

God — that is, yielded not to God “the obedience of faith,” while strangers to Christ.

yet now have obtained mercy through — by occasion of

their unbelief — (See on [¶]Romans 11:11; [¶]Romans 11:15; [¶]Romans 11:28).

31. Even so have these — the Jews.

now not believed — or, “now been disobedient”

that through your mercy — the mercy shown to you.

they also may obtain mercy — Here is an entirely new idea. The apostle has hitherto dwelt upon the unbelief of the Jews as making way for the faith of the Gentiles — the exclusion of the one occasioning the reception of the other; a truth yielding to generous, believing Gentiles but mingled satisfaction. Now, opening a more cheering prospect, he speaks of the mercy shown to the Gentiles as a means of Israel’s recovery; which seems to mean that it will be by the instrumentality of believing Gentiles that Israel as a nation is at length to “look on Him whom they have pierced and mourn for Him,” and so to “obtain mercy.” (See [¶]2 Corinthians 3:15,16).

32. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief — “hath shut them all up to unbelief”

that he might have mercy upon all — that is, those “all” of whom he had been discoursing; the Gentiles first, and after them the Jews [FRITZSCHE, THOLUCK, OLSHAUSEN, DE WETTE, PHILIPPI, STUART, HODGE]. Certainly it is not “all mankind individually” [MEYER, ALFORD]; for the apostle is not here dealing with individuals, but with those great divisions of mankind, Jew and Gentile. And what he here says is that God’s purpose was to shut each of these divisions of men to the experience first of an humbled, condemned state, without Christ, and then to the experience of His mercy in Christ.

33. Oh, the depth, etc. — The apostle now yields himself up to the admiring contemplation of the grandeur of that divine plan which he had sketched out.

of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God — Many able expositors render this, “of the riches and wisdom and knowledge,” etc.

[ERASMUS, GROTIUS, BENDEL, MEYER, DE WETTE, THOLUCK, OLSHAUSEN, FRITZSCHE, PHILIPPI, ALFORD, *Revised Version*]. The words will certainly bear this sense, “the depth of God’s riches.” But “the riches of God” is a much rarer expression with our apostle than the riches of this or that perfection of God; and the words immediately following limit our attention to the unsearchableness of God’s “*judgments*,” which probably means His decrees or plans (¹³⁷⁵Psalm 119:75), and of “His *ways*,” or the method by which He carries these into effect. (Song of Solomon LUTHER, CALVIN, BEZA, HODGE, etc.). Besides, all that follows to the end of the chapter seems to show that while the *Grace* of God to guilty men in Christ Jesus is presupposed to be the whole theme of this chapter, that which called forth the special admiration of the apostle, after sketching at some length the divine purposes and methods in the bestowment of this grace, was “the depth of the riches of God’s *wisdom and knowledge*” in these purposes and methods. The “knowledge,” then, points probably to the vast sweep of divine comprehension herein displayed; the “wisdom” to that fitness to accomplish the ends intended, which is stamped on all this procedure.

34, 35. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? — See ¹³⁸⁵Job 15:8
¹³⁸⁶Jeremiah 23:18.

or who hath been his counsellor — See ¹³⁸⁷Isaiah 40:13,14.

35. Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him — “and shall have recompense made to him”

again — see ¹³⁸⁸Job 35:7 41:11. These questions, it will thus be seen, are just quotations from the Old Testament, as if to show how familiar to God’s ancient people was the great truth which the apostle himself had just uttered, that God’s plans and methods in the dispensation of His Grace have a reach of comprehension and wisdom stamped upon them which finite mortals cannot fathom, much less could ever have imagined, before they were disclosed.

36. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom — “to Him”

be glory for ever. Amen — Thus worthily — with a brevity only equalled by its sublimity — does the apostle here sum up this whole matter. “OF Him are all things,” as their eternal Source: “THROUGH HIM are all things,” inasmuch as He brings all to pass which in His eternal counsels He purposed: “To Him are all things,” as being His own last End; the manifestation of the glory of His own perfections being the ultimate, because the highest possible, design of all His procedure from first to last.

On this rich chapter, *Note*,

- (1) It is an unspeakable consolation to know that in times of deepest religious declension and most extensive defection from the truth, the lamp of God has never been permitted to go out, and that a faithful remnant has ever existed — a remnant larger than their own drooping spirits could easily believe (⁶¹⁰Romans 11:1-5).
- (2) The preservation of this remnant, even as their separation at the first, is all of mere grace (⁶¹¹Romans 11:5,6).
- (3) When individuals and communities, after many fruitless warnings, are abandoned of God, they go from bad to worse (⁶¹²Romans 11:7-10).
- (4) God has so ordered His dealings with the great divisions of mankind, “that no flesh should glory in His presence.” Gentile and Jew have each in turn been “shut up to unbelief,” that each in turn may experience the “mercy” which saves the chief of sinners (⁶¹³Romans 11:11-32).
- (5) As we are “justified by faith,” so are we “kept by the power of God through faith” — faith alone — unto salvation (⁶¹⁴Romans 11:20-32).
- (6) God’s covenant with Abraham and his natural seed is a perpetual covenant, in equal force under the Gospel as before it. Therefore it is, that the Jews as a nation still survive, in spite of all the laws which, in similar circumstances, have either extinguished or destroyed the identity of other nations. And therefore it is that the Jews as a nation will yet be restored to the family of God, through the subjection of their proud hearts to Him whom they have pierced. And as believing

Gentiles will be honored to be the instruments of this stupendous change, so shall the vast Gentile world reap such benefit from it, that it shall be like the communication of life to them from the dead.

(7) Thus has the Christian Church the highest motive to the establishment and vigorous prosecution of *missions to the Jews*; God having not only promised that there shall be a remnant of them gathered in every age, but pledged Himself to the final ingathering of the whole nation assigned the honor of that ingathering to the Gentile Church, and assured them that the event, when it does arrive, shall have a life-giving effect upon the whole world (^{<6112>}Romans 11:12-16,26-31).

(8) Those who think that in all the evangelical prophecies of the Old Testament the terms “Jacob,” “Israel,” etc., are to be understood solely of *the Christian Church*, would appear to read the Old Testament differently from the apostle, who, from the use of those very terms in Old Testament prophecy, draws arguments to prove that God has mercy in store for *the natural Israel* (^{<6112>}Romans 11:26,27).

(9) Mere intellectual investigations into divine truth in general, and the sense of the living oracles in particular, as they have a hardening effect, so they are a great contrast to the spirit of our apostle, whose lengthened sketch of God’s majestic procedure towards men in Christ Jesus ends here in a burst of *admiration*, which loses itself in the still loftier frame of *adoration* (^{<6113>}Romans 11:33-36).

CHAPTER 12

ROMANS 12:1-21.

DUTIES OF BELIEVERS, GENERAL AND PARTICULAR.

The doctrinal teaching of this Epistle is now followed up by a series of exhortations to practical duty. And *first*, the all-comprehensive duty.

1. I beseech you therefore — in view of all that has been advanced in the foregoing part of this Epistle.

by the mercies of God — those mercies, whose free and unmerited nature, glorious Channel, and saving fruits have been opened up at such length.

that ye present — See on ^{<5113>}Romans 6:13, where we have the same exhortation and the same word there rendered “yield” (as also in ^{<5126>}Romans 12:16,19).

your bodies — that is, “yourselves in the body,” considered as the organ of the inner life. As it is through the body that all the evil that is in the unrenewed heart comes forth into palpable manifestation and action, so it is through the body that all the gracious principles and affections of believers reveal themselves in the outward life. Sanctification extends to the whole man (^{<5123>}1 Thessalonians 5:23,24).

a living sacrifice — in glorious contrast to the legal sacrifices, which, save as they were *slain*, were no sacrifices at all. The death of the one “Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world,” has swept all dead victims from off the altar of God, to make room for the redeemed themselves as “living sacrifices” to Him who made “Him to be sin for us”; while every outgoing of their grateful hearts in praise, and every act prompted by the love of Christ, is itself a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savor (^{<5135>}Hebrews 13:15,16).

holy — As the Levitical victims, when offered without blemish to God, were regarded as holy, so believers, “yielding themselves to God as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness unto God,” are, in His estimation, not ritually but really “holy,” and so

acceptable — “well-pleasing”

unto God — not as the Levitical offerings, merely as appointed symbols of spiritual ideas, but objects, intrinsically, of divine complacency, in their renewed character, and endeared relationship to Him through His Son Jesus Christ.

which is your reasonable — rather, “rational”

service — in contrast, not to the senselessness of idol-worship, but to the offering of irrational victims under the law. In this view the presentation of ourselves, as living monuments of redeeming mercy, is here called “our rational service”; and surely it is the most rational and exalted occupation of God’s reasonable creatures. So ^{<600>}2 Peter 1:5, “to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

2. And be ye not conformed to this world — Compare ^{<400>}Ephesians 2:2 ^{<600>}Galatians 1:4, *Greek*.

but be ye transformed — or, “transfigured” (as in ^{<400>}Matthew 17:2; and ^{<600>}2 Corinthians 3:18, *Greek*).

by the renewing of your mind — not by a mere outward disconformity to the ungodly world, many of whose actions in themselves may be virtuous and praiseworthy; but by such an inward spiritual transformation as makes the whole life new — new in its motives and ends, even where the actions differ in nothing from those of the world — new, considered as a whole, and in such a sense as to be wholly unattainable save through the constraining power of the love of Christ.

that ye may prove — that is, experimentally. (On the word “experience” see on ^{<600>}Romans 5:4, and compare ^{<400>}1 Thessalonians 5:10, where the sentiment is the same).

what is that — “the”

good and acceptable — “well-pleasing”

and perfect, will of God — We prefer this rendering (with CALVIN) to that which many able critics [THOLUCK, MEYER, DE WETTE, FRITZSCHE, PHILIPPI, ALFORD, HODGE] adopt — “that ye may prove,” or “discern the will of God, [even] what is good, and acceptable, and perfect.” God’s will is “*good*,” as it demands only what is essentially and unchangeably good (~~407~~ Romans 7:10); it is “*well pleasing*,” in contrast with all that is arbitrary, as demanding only what God has eternal complacency in (compare ~~308~~ Micah 6:8, with ~~408~~ Jeremiah 9:24); and it is “*perfect*,” as it required nothing else than the perfection of God’s reasonable creature, who, in proportion as he attains to it, reflects God’s own perfection. Such then is the great general duty of the redeemed — SELF-CONSECRATION, in our whole spirit and soul and body to Him who hath called us into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ. Next follow specific duties, chiefly social; beginning with Humility, the chiefest of all the graces — but here with special reference to spiritual gifts.

3. For I say — authoritatively

through the grace given unto me — as an apostle of Jesus Christ; thus exemplifying his own precept by modestly falling back on that office which both warranted and required such plainness towards all classes.

to every man that is among you, not to think, etc. — It is impossible to convey in good English the emphatic play, so to speak, which each word here has upon another: “not to be high-minded above what he ought to be minded, but so to be minded as to be sober-minded” [CALVIN, ALFORD]. This is merely a strong way of characterizing all undue self-elevation.

according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith — Faith is here viewed as the inlet to all the other graces, and so, as the receptive faculty of the renewed soul — that is, “as God hath given to each his particular capacity to take in the gifts and graces which He designs for the general good.”

4, 5. For as we have many members, etc. — The same diversity and yet unity obtains in the body of Christ, whereof all believers are the several members, as in the natural body.

6-8. Having then gifts differing according to the grace given to us —

Here, let it be observed, all the gifts of believers alike are viewed as communications of mere *grace*.

whether — we have the gift of

prophecy — that is, of inspired teaching (as in ^{<4152>}Acts 15:32). Anyone speaking with divine authority — whether with reference to the past, the present, or the future — was termed a prophet (^{<4100>}Exodus 7:1).

let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith — rather, “of our faith.” Many Romish expositors and some Protestant (as CALVIN and BENGEL, and, though, hesitatingly, BEZA AND HODGE), render this “the analogy of faith,” understanding by it “the general tenor” or “rule of faith,” divinely delivered to men for their guidance. But this is against the context, whose object is to show that, as all the gifts of believers are according to their respective capacity for them, they are not to be puffed up on account of them, but to use them purely for their proper ends.

7. Or ministry, let us wait on — “be occupied with.”

our ministering — The word here used imports any kind of service, from the dispensing of the word of life (^{<4100>}Acts 6:4) to the administering of the temporal affairs of the Church (^{<4100>}Acts 6:1-3). The latter seems intended here, being distinguished from “prophesying,” “teaching,” and “exhorting.”

or he that teacheth — Teachers are expressly distinguished from prophets, and put after them, as exercising a lower function (^{<4100>}Acts 13:1 ^{<4128>}1 Corinthians 12:28,29). Probably it consisted mainly in opening up the evangelical bearings of Old Testament Scripture; and it was in this department apparently that Apollos showed his power and eloquence (^{<4100>}Acts 18:24).

8. Or he that exhorteth — Since all preaching, whether by apostles, prophets, or teachers, was followed up by exhortation (^{<4100>}Acts 11:23 14:22 15:32, etc.), many think that no specific class is here in view. But if liberty was given to others to exercise themselves occasionally in exhorting the brethren, generally, or small parties of the less instructed, the reference may be to them.

he that giveth — in the exercise of private benevolence probably, rather than in the discharge of diaconal duty.

with simplicity — so the word probably means. But as simplicity seems enjoined in the next clause but one of this same verse, perhaps the meaning here is, “with liberality,” as the same word is rendered in ⁴⁰⁸⁰2 Corinthians 8:2 9:11.

he that ruleth — whether in the Church or his own household. See ⁵¹⁰⁴1 Timothy 3:4,5, where the same word is applied to both.

with diligence — with earnest purpose.

he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness — not only without grudging either trouble or pecuniary relief, but feeling it to be “more blessed to give than to receive,” and to help than be helped.

9. Let love be without dissimulation — “Let your love be unfeigned” (as in ⁴⁰⁸⁶2 Corinthians 6:6 ⁴⁰²²1 Peter 2:22; and see ⁴¹⁸⁸1 John 3:18).

Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good — What a lofty tone of moral principle and feeling is here inculcated! It is not, Abstain from the one, and do the other; nor, Turn away from the one, and draw to the other; but, Abhor the one, and cling, with deepest sympathy, to the other.

10. *Be*, etc. — better, “In brotherly love be affectionate one to another; in [giving, or showing] honor, outdoing each other.” The word rendered “prefer” means rather “to go before,” “take the lead,” that is, “show an example.” How opposite is this to the reigning morality of the heathen world! and though Christianity has so changed the spirit of society, that a certain beautiful disinterestedness and self-sacrifice shines in the character of not a few who are but partially, if at all under the transforming power of the Gospel, it is only those whom “the love of Christ constrains to live not unto themselves,” who are capable of thoroughly acting in the spirit of this precept.

11. not slothful in business — The word rendered “business” means “zeal,” “diligence,” “purpose”; denoting the energy of action.

serving the Lord — that is, the Lord Jesus (see ~~and~~ Ephesians 6:5-8). Another reading — “serving the time,” or “the occasion” — which differs in form but very slightly from the received reading, has been adopted by good critics [LUTHER, OLSHAUSEN, FRITZSCHE, MEYER]. But as manuscript authority is decidedly against it, so is internal evidence; and comparatively few favor it. Nor is the sense which it yields a very Christian one.

12. Rejoicing, etc. — Here it is more lively to retain the order and the verbs of the original: “In hope, rejoicing; in tribulation, enduring; in prayer, persevering.” Each of these exercises helps the other. If our “hope” of glory is so assured that it is a rejoicing hope, we shall find the spirit of “endurance in tribulation” natural and easy; but since it is “prayer” which strengthens the faith that begets hope and lifts it up into an assured and joyful expectancy, and since our patience in tribulation is fed by this, it will be seen that all depends on our “perseverance in prayer.”

13. given to hospitality — that is, the entertainment of strangers. In times of persecution, and before the general institution of houses of entertainment, the importance of this precept would be at once felt. In the East, where such houses are still rare, this duty is regarded as of the most sacred character [HODGE].

14. Bless — that is, Call down by prayer a blessing on.

them which persecute you, etc. — This is taken from the Sermon on the Mount (~~and~~ Matthew 5:44), which, from the allusions made to it, seems to have been the storehouse of Christian morality among the churches.

15. Rejoice with them that rejoice; and weep — the “and” should probably be omitted.

with them that weep — What a beautiful spirit of sympathy with the joys and sorrows of others is here inculcated! But it is only one charming phase of the unselfish character which belongs to all living Christianity. What a world will ours be when this shall become its reigning spirit! Of the two, however, it is more easy to sympathize with another’s sorrows than his joys, because in the one case he *needs* us; in the other not. But just for this reason the latter is the more disinterested, and so the nobler.

16. **Be** — “Being”

of the same mind one toward another — The feeling of the common bond which binds all Christians to each other, whatever diversity of station, cultivation, temperament, or gifts may obtain among them, is the thing here enjoined. This is next taken up in detail.

Mind not — “not minding”

high things — that is, Cherish not ambitious or aspiring purposes and desires. As this springs from selfish severance of our own interests and objects from those of our brethren, so it is quite incompatible with the spirit inculcated in the preceding clause.

but condescend — “condescending”

to men of low estate — or (as some render the words), “inclining unto the things that be lowly.” But we prefer the former.

Be not wise in your own conceits — This is just the application of the caution against high-mindedness to the estimate we form of our own mental character.

17. **Recompense** — “Recompensing,” etc. — (See on ⁶²⁴Romans 12:14).

Provide — “Providing”

things honest — “honorable”

in the sight of all men — The idea (which is from ³¹⁰⁸Proverbs 3:4) is the care which Christians should take so to demean themselves as to command the respect of all men.

18. **If it be possible** — that is, If others will let you.

as much as lieth in you — or, “dependeth on you.”

live peaceably — or, “be at peace.”

with all men — The impossibility of this in some cases is hinted at, to keep up the hearts of those who, having done their best unsuccessfully to live in peace, might be tempted to think the failure was *necessarily* owing to themselves. But how emphatically expressed is the injunction to let

nothing on our part prevent it! Would that Christians were guiltless in this respect!

19-21. *avenge not*, etc. — (See on ^{<6124>}Romans 12:14).

but rather give place unto wrath — This is usually taken to mean, “but give room or space for wrath to spend itself.” But as the context shows that the injunction is to leave vengeance to God, “wrath” here seems to mean, not the *offense*, which we are tempted to avenge, but the *avenging wrath* of God (see ^{<4248>}2 Chronicles 24:18), which we are enjoined to await, or give room for. (Song of Solomon the best interpreters).

20. if thine enemy hunger, etc. — This is taken from ^{<4153>}Proverbs 25:21,22, which without doubt supplied the basis of those lofty precepts on that subject which form the culminating point of the Sermon on the Mount.

in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head — As the heaping of “coals of fire” is in the Old Testament the figurative expression of divine vengeance (^{<4810>}Psalms 140:10 11:6, etc.), the true sense of these words seems to be, “That will be the most effectual vengeance — a vengeance under which he will be fain to bend” (Song of Solomon ALFORD, HODGE, etc.). ^{<6121>}Romans 12:21 confirms this.

21. Be not overcome of evil — for then you are the conquered party.

but overcome evil with good — and then the victory is yours; you have subdued your enemy in the noblest sense.

Note,

(1) The redeeming mercy of God in Christ is, in the souls of believers, the living spring of all holy obedience (^{<6117>}Romans 12:1).

(2) As redemption under the Gospel is not by irrational victims, as under the law, but “by the precious blood of Christ” (^{<4018>}1 Peter 1:18,19), and, consequently, is not ritual but real, so the sacrifices which believers are now called to offer are all “living sacrifices”; and these — summed up in self-consecration to the service of God — are “holy and acceptable to God,” making up together “our rational service” (^{<6111>}Romans 12:1).

(3) In this light, what are we to think of the so-called “unbloody sacrifice of the mass, continually offered to God as a propitiation for the sins both of the living and the dead,” which the adherents of Rome’s corrupt faith have been taught for ages to believe is the highest and holiest act of Christian worship — in direct opposition to the sublimely simple teaching which the Christians of Rome first received (~~611~~ Romans 12:1) —

(4) Christians should not feel themselves at liberty to be conformed to the world, if only they avoid what is manifestly sinful; but rather, yielding themselves to the transforming power of the truth as it is in Jesus, they should strive to exhibit before the world an entire renovation of heart and life (~~611~~ Romans 12:2).

(5) What God would have men to be, in all its beauty and grandeur, is for the first time really apprehended, when “written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of the heart,” ~~408B~~ 2 Corinthians 3:3 (~~611~~ Romans 12:2).

(6) Self-sufficiency and lust of power are peculiarly unlovely in the vessels of mercy, whose respective graces and gifts are all a divine trust for the benefit of the common body and of mankind at large (~~611B~~ Romans 12:3,4).

(7) As forgetfulness of this has been the source of innumerable and unspeakable evils in the Church of Christ, so the faithful exercise by every Christian of his own peculiar office and gifts, and the loving recognition of those of his brethren, as all of equal importance in their own place, would put a new face upon the visible Church, to the vast benefit and comfort of Christians themselves and to the admiration of the world around them (~~611B~~ Romans 12:6-8).

(8) What would the world be, if it were filled with Christians having but one object in life, high above every other — to “serve the Lord” — and throwing into this service “alacrity” in the discharge of all duties, and abiding “warmth of spirit” (~~621~~ Romans 12:11)!

(9) Oh, how far is even the living Church from exhibiting the whole character and spirit, so beautifully portrayed in the latter verses of this

chapter (~~6120~~ Romans 12:12-21)! What need of a fresh baptism of the Spirit in order to this! And how “fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,” will the Church become, when at length instinct with this Spirit! The Lord hasten it in its time!

CHAPTER 13

ROMANS 13:1-14.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED — POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONS — MOTIVES.

1, 2. Let every soul — every man of you

be subject unto the higher powers — or, “submit himself to the authorities that are above him.”

For there is no power — “no authority”

but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God — “have been ordained of God.”

2. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power — “So that he that setteth himself against the authority.”

resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation — or, “condemnation,” according to the old sense of that word; that is, not from the magistrate, but from God, whose authority in the magistrate’s is resisted.

3, 4. For rulers are not a terror to good works — “to the good work,” as the true reading appears to be

but to the evil.

4. he beareth not the sword in vain — that is, the symbol of the magistrate’s authority to punish.

5. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath — for fear of the magistrate’s vengeance.

but also for conscience’ sake — from reverence for God’s authority. It is of *Magistracy in general*, considered as a divine ordinance, that this is spoken: and the statement applies equally to all forms of government,

from an unchecked despotism — such as flourished when this was written, under the Emperor Nero — to a pure democracy. The inalienable right of all subjects to endeavor to alter or improve the form of government under which they live is left untouched here. But since Christians were constantly charged with turning the world upside down, and since there certainly were elements enough in Christianity of moral and social revolution to give plausibility to the charge, and tempt noble spirits, crushed under misgovernment, to take redress into their own hands, it was of special importance that the pacific, submissive, loyal spirit of those Christians who resided at the great seat of political power, should furnish a visible refutation of this charge.

6, 7. For, for this cause pay ye — rather, “ye pay”

tribute also — that is, “This is the reason why ye pay the contributions requisite for maintaining the civil government.”

for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing — “to this very thing.”

7. Render therefore to all their dues — From magistrates the apostle now comes to other officials, and from them to men related to us by whatever tie.

tribute — land tax.

custom — mercantile tax.

fear — reverence for superiors.

honor — the respect due to persons of distinction.

8. Owe no man anything, but to love one another — “Acquit yourselves of all obligations except love, which is a debt that must remain ever due” [HODGE].

for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law — for the law itself is but love in manifold action, regarded as matter of duty.

9. For this, etc. — better thus: “For the [commandments], Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and whatever other commandment [there may be], it is summed

up,” etc. (The clause, “Thou shalt not bear false witness,” is wanting in all the most ancient manuscripts). The apostle refers here only to the second table of the law, as love to our neighbor is what he is treating of.

10. Love worketh no ill to his — or, “one’s”

neighbor; therefore, etc. — As love, from its very nature, studies and delights to please its objects, its very existence is an effectual security against our wilfully injuring him. Next follow some general motives to the faithful discharge of all these duties.

11. And that — rather, “And this [do]”

knowing the time, that now it is high time — literally, “the hour has already come.”

to awake out of sleep — of stupid, fatal indifference to eternal things.

for now is our salvation — rather, “the salvation,” or simply “salvation.”

nearer than when we — first

believed — This is in the line of all our Lord’s teaching, which represents the decisive day of Christ’s second appearing as at hand, to keep believers ever in the attitude of wakeful expectancy, but without reference to the *chronological* nearness or distance of that event.

12. The night — of evil

is far spent, the day — of consummated triumph over it

is at hand: let us therefore cast off — as a dress

the works of darkness — all works holding of the kingdom and period of darkness, with which, as followers of the risen Savior, our connection has been dissolved.

and let us put on the armor of light — described at length in ⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 6:11-18.

13. Let us walk honestly — “becomingly,” “seemingly”

as in the day — “Men choose the night for their revels, but our night is past, for we are all the children of the light and of the day (⁴⁰¹1

Thessalonians 5:5): let us therefore only do what is fit to be exposed to the light of such a day.”

not in rioting and drunkenness — varied forms of intemperance; denoting revels in general, usually ending in intoxication.

not in chambering and wantonness — varied forms of impurity; the one pointing to definite acts, the other more general.

not in strife and envying — varied forms of that venomous feeling between man and man which reverses the law of love.

14. But — to sum up all in one word.

put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ — in such wise that Christ only may be seen in you (see ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 3:3 ^{<407>}Galatians 3:27 ^{<402>}Ephesians 4:24).

and make no provision — “take no forethought.”

for the flesh, to fulfill the lust *thereof* — “Direct none of your attention to the cravings of your corrupt nature, how you may provide for their gratification.”

Note,

(1) How gloriously adapted is Christianity for human society in all conditions! As it makes war directly against no specific forms of government, so it directly recommends none. While its holy and benign principles secure the ultimate abolition of all iniquitous government, the reverence which it teaches for magistracy, under whatever form, as a divine institution, secures the loyalty and peaceableness of its disciples, amid all the turbulence and distractions of civil society, and makes it the highest interest of all states to welcome it within their pale, as in this as well as every other sense — “the salt of the earth, the light of the world” (^{<401>}Romans 13:1-5).

(2) Christianity is the grand specific for the purification and elevation of all the social relations; inspiring a readiness to discharge all obligations, and most of all, implanting in its disciples that love which secures all men against injury from them, inasmuch as it is the fulfilling of the law (^{<406>}Romans 13:6-10).

(3) The rapid march of the kingdom of God, the advanced stage of it at which we have arrived, and the ever-nearing approach of the perfect day — nearer to every believer the longer he lives — should quicken all the children of light to redeem the time, and, seeing that they look for such things, to be diligent, that they may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless (~~6084~~ 2 Peter 3:14).

(4) In virtue of “the expulsive power of a new and more powerful affection,” the great secret of persevering holiness in all manner of conversation will be found to be “Christ IN US, the hope of glory” (~~5102~~ Colossians 1:27), and Christ ON US, as the character in which alone we shall be able to shine before men (~~4088~~ 2 Corinthians 3:8) (~~5134~~ Romans 13:14).

CHAPTER 14

ROMANS 14:1-23.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED — CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE.

The subject here, and on to ^{<515>}Romans 15:13, *is the consideration due from stronger Christians to their weaker brethren*; which is but the great law of love (treated of in the thirteenth chapter) in one particular form.

1. Him that is weak in the faith — rather, “in faith”; that is, not “him that is weak in the truth believed” [CALVIN, BEZA, ALFORD, etc.], but (as most interpreters agree), “him whose faith wants that firmness and breadth which would raise him above small scruples.” (See on ^{<512>}Romans 14:22,23).

receive ye — to cordial Christian fellowship.

but not to doubtful disputations — rather, perhaps, “not to the deciding of doubts,” or “scruples;” that is, not for the purpose of arguing him out of them: which indeed usually does the reverse; whereas to receive him to full brotherly confidence and cordial interchange of Christian affection is the most effectual way of drawing them off. Two examples of such scruples are here specified, touching Jewish *meats* and *days*. “The strong,” it will be observed, are those who knew these to be abolished under the Gospel; “the weak” are those who had scruples on this point.

2. one believeth that he may eat all things — See ^{<416>}Acts 10:16.

another, who is weak, eateth herbs — restricting himself probably to a vegetable diet, for fear of eating what might have been offered to idols, and so would be unclean. (See ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 8:1-13).

3. Let not him that eateth despise — look down superciliously upon “him that eateth not.”

and let not him that eateth not judge — sit in judgment censoriously upon “him that eateth.”

for God hath received him — as one of His dear children, who in this matter acts not from laxity, but religious principle.

4. Who art thou that judges another man’s — rather, “another’s”

servant? — that is, CHRIST’s, as the whole context shows, especially ⁶⁴⁸Romans 14:8,9.

Yea, etc. — “But he shall be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand”; that is, to make good his standing, not at the day of judgment, of which the apostle treats in ⁶⁴⁰Romans 14:10, but in the true fellowship of the Church *here*, in spite of thy censures.

5. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day — The supplement “alike” should be omitted, as injuring the sense.

Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind — be guided in such matters by conscientious conviction.

6. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord — the Lord CHRIST, as before.

and he ... not, to the Lord he doth not — each doing what he believes to be the Lord’s will.

He that eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks — The one gave thanks to God for the flesh which the other scrupled to use; the other did the same for the herbs to which, for conscience’ sake, he restricted himself. From this passage about the observance of days, ALFORD unhappily infers that such language could not have been used if the *sabbath law* had been in force under the Gospel in any form. Certainly it could not, if the sabbath were merely one of the Jewish festival days; but it will not do to take this for granted merely because it was observed *under* the Mosaic economy. And certainly, if the sabbath was more ancient than Judaism; if, even under Judaism, it was enshrined among the eternal sanctities of the Decalogue, uttered, as no other parts of Judaism

were, amidst the terrors of Sinai; and if the Lawgiver Himself said of it when on earth, “The Son of man is LORD EVEN OF THE SABBATH DAY” (see ^{<4128>}Mark 2:28) — it will be hard to show that the apostle must have meant it to be ranked by his readers among those vanished Jewish festival days, which only “weakness” could imagine to be still in force — a weakness which those who had more light ought, out of love, merely to bear with.

7, 8. For none of us — Christians

liveth to himself — (See ^{<4154>}2 Corinthians 5:14,15), to dispose of himself or shape his conduct after his own ideas and inclinations.

and no man — “and none” of us Christians “dieth to himself.”

8. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord — the Lord CHRIST; see ^{<6140>}Romans 14:9.

and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s — Nothing but the most vivid explanation of these remarkable words could make them endurable to any Christian ear, if Christ were a *mere creature*. For Christ is here — in the most emphatic terms, and yet in the most unimpassioned tone — held up as the supreme Object of the Christian’s life, and of his death too; and that by the man whose horror of creature worship was such, that when the poor Lycaonians would have worshipped him, he rushed forth to arrest the deed, directing them to “the living God,” as the only legitimate Object of worship (^{<4445>}Acts 14:15). Nor does Paul *teach* this here, but rather *appeals* to it as a known and recognized fact, of which he had only to remind his readers. And since the apostle, when he wrote these words, had never been at Rome, he could only know that the Roman Christians would assent to this view of Christ, because it was *the common teaching of all the accredited preachers of Christianity, and the common faith of all Christians*.

9. For to this end Christ both, etc. — The true reading here is, To this end Christ died and lived (“again”).

that he might be Lord both of the dead and — “and of the”

living — The grand object of His death was to *acquire* this absolute Lordship over His redeemed, both in their living and in their dying, as His of right.

10. But why, etc. — The original is more lively: — “But thou (the weaker believer), why judgest thou thy brother? And thou again (the stronger), why despisest thou thy brother?”

for we shall all — the strong and the weak together.

stand before the judgment-seat of Christ — All the most ancient and best manuscripts read here, “the judgment-seat of God.” The present reading doubtless crept in from ⁴⁰⁰2 Corinthians 5:10, where “the judgment-seat of *Christ*” occurs. But here “the judgment-seat of *God*” seems to have been used, with reference to the quotation and the inference in ⁴¹¹Romans 14:11,12.

11, 12. For it is written — (²⁸²³Isaiah 45:23).

As I live, saith the Lord — *Hebrew*, JEHOVAH.

every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God — consequently, shall bow to the award of God upon their character and actions.

12. So then — infers the apostle.

every one of us shall give account of himself to God — Now, if it be remembered that all this is adduced quite incidentally, to show that CHRIST is the absolute Master of all Christians, to rule their judgments and feelings towards each other while “living,” and to dispose of them “dying,” the testimony which it bears to the absolute Divinity of Christ will appear remarkable. On any other view, the quotation to show that we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of *God* would be a strange proof that Christians are all amenable to *Christ*.

13. Let us not therefore judge — “assume the office of judge over”

one another; but judge this rather, etc. — a beautiful sort of play upon the word “judge,” meaning, “But let this be your judgment, not to put a stumbling-block,” etc.

14, 15. I know, and am persuaded by — or rather, “in”

the Lord Jesus — as “having the mind of Christ” (^{<416>}1 Corinthians 2:16).

that there is nothing unclean of itself — Hence it is that he calls those “the strong” who believed in the abolition of all ritual distinctions under the Gospel. (See ^{<415>}Acts 10:15).

but — “save that”

to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean — “and therefore, though *you* can eat of it with out sin, *he cannot*.”

15. But if thy brother be grieved — has his weak conscience hurt

with thy meat — rather, “because of meat.” The word “meat” is purposely selected as something contemptible in contrast with the tremendous risk run for its sake. Accordingly, in the next clause, that idea is brought out with great strength.

Destroy not him with — “by”

thy meat for whom Christ died — “The worth of even the poorest and weakest brother cannot be more emphatically expressed than by the words, ‘for whom Christ died’” [OLSHAUSEN]. The same sentiment is expressed with equal sharpness in ^{<411>}1 Corinthians 8:11. *Whatever tends to make anyone violate his conscience tends to the destruction of his soul; and he who helps, whether wittingly or no, to bring about the one is guilty of aiding to accomplish the other.*

16, 17. Let not then your good — that is, this liberty of yours as to Jewish meats and days, well founded though it be.

be evil spoken of — for the evil it does to others.

17. For the kingdom of God — or, as we should say, Religion; that is, the proper business and blessedness for which Christians are formed into a community of renewed men in thorough subjection to God (compare ^{<410>}1 Corinthians 4:20).

is not meat and drink — “eating and drinking”

but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost — a beautiful and comprehensive division of living Christianity. The first — “righteousness” — has respect to *God*, denoting here “rectitude,” in its widest sense (as in ^{<406>}Matthew 6:33); the second — “peace” — has respect to *our neighbors*, denoting “concord” among brethren (as is plain from ^{<544>}Romans 14:19; compare ^{<400>}Ephesians 4:3 ^{<504>}Colossians 3:14,15); the third — “joy in the Holy Ghost” — has respect to *ourselves*. This phrase, “joy in the Holy Ghost,” represents Christians as so thinking and feeling under the workings of the Holy Ghost, that their joy may be viewed rather as that of the blessed Agent who inspires it than their own (compare ^{<100>}1 Thessalonians 1:6).

18. For he that in these things — “in this,” meaning this threefold life.

serveth Christ — Here again observe how, though we do these three things as a “kingdom of *God*,” yet it is “*Christ*” that we serve in so doing; the apostle passing here from God to Christ as naturally as before from Christ to God — in a way to us inconceivable, if Christ had been viewed as a mere creature (compare ^{<402>}2 Corinthians 8:21).

is acceptable to God, and approved of men — these being the things which God delights in, and men are constrained to approve. (Compare ^{<100>}Proverbs 3:4 ^{<405>}Luke 2:52 ^{<400>}Acts 2:47 19:20).

19. the things, etc. — more simply, “the things of peace, and the things of mutual edification.”

20. For — “For the sake of”

meat destroy not the work of God — (See on ^{<545>}Romans 14:15). The apostle sees in whatever tends to violate a brother’s conscience the *incipient* destruction of God’s work (for every converted man is such) — on the same principle as “he that hateth his brother is a murderer” (^{<405>}1 John 3:15).

All things indeed are pure — “clean”; the ritual distinctions being at an end.

but it is evil to that man — there is criminality in the man

who eateth with offense — that is, so as to stumble a weak brother.

21. It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing — “nor to do any thing”

whereby — “wherein”

thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak — rather, “is weak.” These three words, it has been remarked, are each intentionally weaker than the other: — “Which may cause a brother to stumble, or even be obstructed in his Christian course, nay — though neither of these may follow — wherein he continues weak; unable wholly to disregard the example, and yet unprepared to follow it.” But this injunction to abstain from *flesh*, from *wine*, and from *whatsoever* may hurt the conscience of a brother, must be properly understood. Manifestly, the apostle is treating of the regulation of the Christian’s conduct with reference simply to the prejudices of the weak in faith; and his directions are to be considered not as *prescriptions for one’s entire lifetime*, even to promote the good of men on a large scale, but simply as cautions against the too free use of Christian liberty in matters where other Christians, through weakness, are not persuaded that such liberty is divinely allowed. How far the *principle* involved in this may be legitimately extended, we do not inquire here; but ere we consider that question, it is of great importance to fix how far it is here actually expressed, and what is the precise nature of the illustrations given of it.

22. Hast thou faith — on such matters?

have it to thyself — within thine own breast

before God — a most important clause. It is not mere *sincerity*, or a private *opinion*, of which the apostle speaks; it is conviction as to what is the truth and will of God. If thou hast formed this conviction in the sight of God, keep thyself in this frame before Him. Of course, this is not to be over-pressed, as if it were wrong to discuss such points at all with our weaker brethren. All that is here condemned is such a zeal for small points as endangers Christian love.

Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth — allows himself to do nothing, about the lawfulness of which he has scruples; does only what he neither knows nor fears to be sinful.

23. And — rather, “But”

he that doubteth is damned — On the word “damnation,” see on ^{<613>}Romans 13:2.

if he eat, because he eateth not of faith — On the meaning of “faith” here, see on ^{<614>}Romans 14:22.

for whatsoever is not of faith is sin — a maxim of unspeakable importance in the Christian life.

Note,

(1) Some points in Christianity are unessential to Christian fellowship; so that though one may be in error upon them, he is not on that account to be excluded either from the communion of the Church or from the full confidence of those who have more light. This distinction between essential and non-essential truths is denied by some who affect more than ordinary zeal for the honor and truth of God. But they must settle the question with our apostle.

(2) Acceptance with God is the only proper criterion of right to Christian fellowship. Whom God receives, men cannot lawfully reject (^{<614>}Romans 14:3,4).

(3) As there is much self-pleasing in setting up narrow standards of Christian fellowship, so one of the best preservatives against the temptation to do this will be found in the continual remembrance that CHRIST is the one Object for whom all Christians live, and to whom all Christians die; this will be such a living and exalted bond of union between the strong and the weak as will overshadow all their lesser differences and gradually absorb them (^{<614>}Romans 14:7-9).

(4) The consideration of the common judgment-seat at which the strong and the weak shall stand together will be found another preservative against the unlovely disposition to sit in judgment one on another (^{<614>}Romans 14:10-12).

(5) How brightly does the supreme Divinity of Christ shine out in this chapter! The exposition itself supersedes further illustration here.

(6) Though forbearance be a great Christian duty, indifference to the distinction between truth and error is not thereby encouraged. The former is, by the text, made an excuse for the latter. But our apostle, while teaching “the strong” to bear with “the weak,” repeatedly intimates in this chapter where the truth really lay on the points in question, and takes care to call those who took the wrong side “the weak” (⁶¹⁴¹Romans 14:1,2,14).

(7) With what holy jealousy ought the purity of the conscience to be guarded, since every deliberate violation of it is incipient perdition (⁶¹⁴⁵Romans 14:15,20)! Some, who seem to be more jealous for the honor of certain doctrines than for the souls of men, enervate this terrific truth by asking how it bears upon the “perseverance of the saints”; the advocates of that doctrine thinking it necessary to explain away what is meant by “destroying the work of God” (⁶¹⁴⁰Romans 14:20), and “destroying him for whom Christ died” (⁶¹⁴⁶Romans 14:15), for fear of the doctrinal consequences of taking it nakedly; while the opponents of that doctrine are ready to ask, How could the apostle have used such language if he had believed that such a catastrophe was impossible? The true answer to both lies in dismissing the question as impertinent. The apostle is enunciating a great and eternal principle in Christian Ethics — that *the wilful violation of conscience contains within itself a seed of destruction*; or, to express it otherwise, that the total destruction of the work of God in the renewed soul, and, consequently, the loss of that soul for eternity, needs only the carrying out to its full effect of such violation of the conscience. Whether such effects *do* take place, in point of fact, the apostle gives not the most distant hint here; and therefore that point must be settled elsewhere. But, beyond all doubt, as the position we have laid down is emphatically expressed by the apostle, so the interests of all who call themselves Christians require to be proclaimed and pressed on every suitable occasion.

(8) Zeal for comparatively small points of truth is a poor substitute for the substantial and catholic and abiding realities of the Christian life (⁶¹⁴⁷Romans 14:17,18).

(9) “Peace” among the followers of Christ is a blessing too precious to themselves, and, as a testimony to them that are without, too important, to be ruptured for trifles, even though some lesser truths be involved in these (~~61419~~ Romans 14:19,20). Nor are those truths themselves disparaged or endangered thereby, but the reverse.

(10) Many things which are lawful are not expedient. In the use of any liberty, therefore, our question should be, not simply, Is this lawful? but even if so, Can it be used with safety to a brother’s conscience? — How will it affect my brother’s soul (~~61421~~ Romans 14:21)? It is permitted to no Christian to say with Cain, “Amos I my brother’s keeper?” (~~0009~~ Genesis 4:9).

(11) Whenever we are in doubt as to a point of duty — where abstinence is manifestly sinless, but compliance not clearly lawful — the safe course is ever to be preferred, for to do otherwise is itself sinful.

(12) How exalted and beautiful is the Ethics of Christianity — by a few great principles teaching us how to steer our course amidst practical difficulties, with equal regard to Christian liberty, love, and confidence!

CHAPTER 15

ROMANS 15:1-13.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED AND CONCLUDED.

1. We then that are strong — on such points as have been discussed, the abolition of the Jewish distinction of meats and days under the Gospel.

See on ^{<644>}Romans 14:14; ^{<640>}Romans 14:20.

ought ... not to please ourselves — ought to think less of what we may lawfully do than of how our conduct will affect others.

2, 3. Let every one of us — lay himself out to

please his neighbor — not indeed for his mere gratification, but

for his good — with a view

to his edification.

3. For even Christ pleased not — lived not to please

himself; but, as it is written — (^{<650>}Psalms 69:9).

The reproaches, etc. — see ^{<400>}Mark 10:42-45.

4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning — “instruction”

through, etc. — “through the comfort and the patience of the Scriptures”

might have hope — that is, “Think not that because such portions of Scripture relate immediately to Christ, they are inapplicable to you; for though Christ’s sufferings, as a Savior, were exclusively His own, the *motives* that prompted them, the *spirit* in which they were endured, and the *general principle* involved in His whole work — self-sacrifice for the good of others — furnish our most perfect and beautiful model; and so all Scripture relating to these is for our instruction; and since the duty of

forbearance, the strong with the weak, requires ‘patience,’ and this again needs ‘comfort,’ all those Scriptures which tell of *patience* and *consolation*, particularly of the patience of Christ, and of the consolation which sustained Him under it, are our appointed and appropriate nutriment, ministering to us ‘*hope*’ of that blessed day when these shall no more be needed.” See on ^{<640>}Romans 4:7, *Note 7*. (For the same connection between “patience and hope” see on ^{<622>}Romans 12:12, and ^{<510>}1 Thessalonians 1:3).

5, 6. Now the God of patience and consolation — Such beautiful names of God are taken from the graces which He inspires: as “the God of hope” (^{<652>}Romans 15:13), “the God of peace” (^{<653>}Romans 15:33).

grant you to be likeminded — “of the same mind”

according to Christ Jesus — It is not mere unanimity which the apostle seeks for them; for unanimity in evil is to be deprecated. But it is “*according to Christ Jesus*” — after the sublimest model of Him whose all-absorbing desire was to do, “not His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him” (^{<658>}John 6:38).

6. That, etc. — rather, “that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”; the mind and the mouth of all giving harmonious glory to His name. What a prayer! And shall this never be realized on earth?

7. Wherefore — returning to the point

receive ye one another ... to the glory of God — If Christ received us, and bears with all our weaknesses, well may we receive and compassionate one with another, and by so doing God will be glorified.

8-12. Now — “For” is the true reading: the apostle is merely assigning an additional motive to Christian forbearance.

I say that Jesus Christ was — “hath become”

a minister of the circumcision — a remarkable expression, meaning “the Father’s Servant for the salvation of the circumcision (or, of Israel).”

for the truth of God — to make good the veracity of God towards His ancient people.

to confirm the — Messianic

promises made unto the fathers — To cheer the Jewish believers, whom he might seem to have been disparaging, and to keep down Gentile pride, the apostle holds up Israel's salvation as the primary end of Christ's mission. But next after this, Christ was sent.

9. that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy — A number of quotations from the Old Testament here follow, to show that God's plan of mercy embraced, from the first, the Gentiles along with the Jews.

as it is written — (^{<1989>}Psalm 18:49).

I will confess to — that is, glorify

thee among the Gentiles.

10. And again — (^{<6526>}Deuteronomy 32:43, though there is some difficulty in the *Hebrew*).

Rejoice, ye Gentiles — along

with his people — Israel.

11. And again — (^{<4970>}Psalm 117:1).

Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people — "peoples" — the various nations outside the pale of Judaism.

12. And again, Esaias saith — (^{<23110>}Isaiah 11:10).

There shall be a — "the"

root of Jesse — meaning, not "He from whom Jesse sprang," but "He that is sprung from Jesse" (that is, Jesse's son David))see (^{<67216>}Revelation 22:16.

and he that shall rise, etc. — So the *Septuagint* in substantial, though not verbal, agreement with the original.

13. Now, etc. — This seems a concluding prayer, suggested by the whole preceding subject matter of the epistle.

the God of hope — (See on ^{<61515>}Romans 15:5).

fill you with all joy and peace in believing — the native truth of that *faith* which is the great theme of this epistle (compare [Ⓜ]Galatians 5:22).

that ye may abound in hope — “of the glory of God.” (See on [Ⓜ]Romans 5:1).

through the power of the Holy Ghost — to whom, in the economy of redemption, it belongs to inspire believers with all gracious affections.

On the foregoing portion, *Note*,

(1) No Christian is at liberty to regard himself as an isolated disciple of the Lord Jesus, having to decide questions of duty and liberty solely with reference to himself. As Christians are one body in Christ, so the great law of love binds them to act in all things with tenderness and consideration for their brethren in “the common salvation” ([Ⓜ]Romans 15:1,2).

(2) Of this unselfishness CHRIST is the perfect model of all Christians ([Ⓜ]Romans 15:3).

(3) Holy Scripture is the divine storehouse of all furniture for the Christian life, even in its most trying and delicate features ([Ⓜ]Romans 15:4).

(4) The harmonious glorification of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ by the whole body of the redeemed, as it is the most exalted fruit of the scheme of redemption, so it is the last end of God in it ([Ⓜ]Romans 15:5-7).

ROMANS 15:14-33.

**CONCLUSION: IN WHICH THE APOSTLE APOLOGIZES FOR
THUS WRITING TO THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS, EXPLAINS WHY
HE HAD NOT YET VISITED THEM, ANNOUNCES HIS FUTURE
PLANS, AND ASKS THEIR PRAYERS FOR THE COMPLETION
OF THEM.**

14, 15. And, etc. — rather, “Now I am persuaded, my brethren, even I myself, concerning you”

that ye also yourselves are full of goodness — of inclination to all I have been enjoining on you

filled with all knowledge — of the truth expounded

and able — without my intervention.

to admonish one another.

15. Nevertheless, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort — “measure”

as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God — as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

16. that I should be the — rather, “a”

minister — The word here used is commonly employed to express the office of the priesthood, from which accordingly the figurative language of the rest of the verse is taken.

of Jesus Christ — “Christ Jesus,” according to the true reading.

to the Gentiles — a further proof that the Epistle was addressed to a *Gentile* church. (See on ~~15~~ Romans 1:13).

ministering the gospel of God — As the word here is a still more priestly one, it should be rendered, “ministering as a priest in the Gospel of God.”

that the offering up of the Gentiles — as an oblation to God, in their converted character.

might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost — the end to which the ancient offerings typically looked.

17. I have therefore whereof I may glory — or (adding the article, as the reading seems to be), “I have my glorying.”

through — “in”

Christ Jesus in those things which pertain to God — the things of the ministry committed to me of God.

18-22. For I will not dare to speak of any — “to speak aught”

of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me — a modest, though somewhat obscure form of expression, meaning, “I will not dare to go beyond what Christ *hath* wrought by me” — in which form accordingly the rest of the passage is expressed. Observe here how Paul ascribes all the success of his labors to the activity of the living Redeemer, working in and by him.

by word and deed — by preaching and working; which latter he explains in the next clause.

19. Through mighty — literally, “in the power of”

signs and wonders — that is, glorious miracles.

by the power of the Spirit of God — “the Holy Ghost,” as the true reading seems to be. This seems intended to explain the efficacy of the word preached, as well as the working of the miracles which attested it.

so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto — “as far as”

Illyricum — to the extreme northwestern boundary of Greece. It corresponds to the modern Croatia and Dalmatia (² Timothy 4:10). See ⁴⁰¹Acts 20:1,2.

I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20, 21. Yea, etc. — rather, “Yet making it my study (compare ² Corinthians 5:9 ¹ Thessalonians 4:11, *Greek*) so to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was [already] named, that I might not build upon another man’s foundation: but (might act) as it is written, To whom no tidings of Him came, they shall see,” etc.

22. For which cause — “Being so long occupied with this missionary work, I have been much (or, ‘for the most part’) hindered,” etc. (See on ¹ Romans 1:9-11.)

23, 24. But now having no more place — “no longer having place” — that is, unbroken ground, where Christ has not been preached.

and having a great desire — “a longing”

these many years to come unto you — (as before, see on ¹ Romans 1:9-11).

24. whensoever I take my journey into Spain — Whether this purpose was ever accomplished has been much disputed, as no record of it nor allusion to it anywhere occurs. Those who think our apostle was never at large after his first imprisonment at Rome will of course hold that it never was; while those who are persuaded, as we are, that he underwent a second imprisonment, prior to which he was at large for a considerable time after his first, incline naturally to the other opinion.

I will come to you — If these words were not originally in the text, and there is weighty evidence against them, they must at least be inserted as a necessary supplement.

in my journey, etc. — “as I pass through by you, to be set forward on my journey thither, if first I be somewhat filled with your company”: that is, “I should indeed like to stay longer with you than I can hope to do, but I must, to some extent at least, have my fill of your company.”

25-27. But now I go to Jerusalem to minister — “ministering”

to the saints — in the sense immediately to be explained.

26. For, etc. — better, “For Macedonia and Achaia have thought good to make a certain contribution for the poor of the saints which are at

Jerusalem.” (See ⁴⁰⁴⁷Acts 24:17). “They have thought it good; and their debtors verily they are”; that is, “And well they may, considering what the Gentile believers owe to their Jewish brethren.”

27. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also — “they owe it also”

to minister unto them in carnal things — (Compare ⁴⁰⁴⁸1 Corinthians 9:11 ⁴⁰⁴⁹Galatians 6:6; and see ⁴⁰⁵⁰Luke 7:4 ⁴⁰⁵¹Acts 10:2).

28, 29. When therefore I have ... sealed — that is, delivered over safely
to them this fruit — of the faith and love of the Gentile converts

I will come — “come back,” or “return”

by you into Spain — (See on ⁴⁰⁵²Romans 15:24).

29. And I am sure — “I know”

that ... I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ — Such, beyond all doubts, is the true reading, the words “of the gospel” being in hardly any manuscripts of antiquity and authority. Nor was the apostle mistaken in this confidence, though his visit to Rome was in very different circumstances from what he expected. See ⁴⁰⁵³Acts 28:16-31.

30. Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit — or, “by the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit” — not the love which the Spirit bears to us, but that love which He kindles in the hearts of believers towards each other; that is “By that Savior whose name is alike dear to all of us and whose unsearchable riches I live only to proclaim, and by that love one to another which the blessed Spirit diffuses through all the brotherhood, making the labors of Christ’s servants a matter of common interest to all — I beseech you.”

that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me — implying that he had his grounds for anxious fear in this matter.

31. That I may be delivered from them that do not believe — “that do not obey,” that is, the truth, by believing it; as in ⁴⁰⁵⁴Romans 2:8.

in Judea — He saw the storm that was gathering over him in Judea, which, if at all, would certainly burst upon his head when he reached the capital; and the event too clearly showed the correctness of these apprehensions.

and that my service which I have for Jerusalem — (See on ^{<652>}Romans 15:25-28).

may be accepted of — “prove acceptable to”

the saints — Nor was he without apprehension lest the opposition he had made to the narrow jealousy of the Jewish converts against the free reception of their Gentile brethren, should make this gift of theirs to the poor saints at Jerusalem less welcome than it ought to be. He would have the Romans therefore to join him in wrestling with God that this gift might be gratefully received, and prove a cement between the two parties. But further.

32. That I may come unto you with — “in”

joy by the will of God — (^{<482>}Acts 18:21 ^{<409>}1 Corinthians 4:19 16:7 ^{<808>}Hebrews 6:3 ^{<5015>}James 4:15)

and may with you be refreshed — rather, “with you refresh myself,” after all his labors and anxieties, and so be refitted for future service.

33. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen — The peace here sought is to be taken in its widest sense: the peace of reconciliation to God, first, “through the blood of the everlasting covenant” (^{<833>}Hebrews 13:20 ^{<163>}1 Thessalonians 5:23 ^{<506>}2 Thessalonians 3:16 ^{<500>}Philippians 4:9); then the peace which that reconciliation diffuses among all the partakers of it (^{<443>}1 Corinthians 14:33 ^{<731>}2 Corinthians 13:11; and see on ^{<651>}Romans 16:20); more widely still, that peace which the children of God, in beautiful imitation of their Father in Heaven, are called and privileged to diffuse far and wide through this sin-distracted and divided world (^{<528>}Romans 12:18 ^{<189>}Matthew 5:9 ^{<824>}Hebrews 12:14 ^{<508>}James 3:18).

Note,

(1) Did “the chiefest of the apostles” apologize for writing to a Christian church which he had never seen, and a church that he was

persuaded was above the need of it, save to “stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance” (2 Peter 1:13 3:1); and did he put even this upon the sole plea of apostolic responsibility (Romans 15:14-16)? What a contrast is thus presented to hierarchical pride, and in particular to the affected humility of the bishop of this very Rome! How close the bond which the one spirit draws between ministers and people — how wide the separation produced by the other!

(2) There is in the Christian Church no real priesthood, and none but figurative sacrifices. Had it been otherwise, it is inconceivable that Romans 15:16 should have been expressed as it is. Paul’s only priesthood and sacrificial offerings lay, first, in ministering to them as “the apostle of the Gentiles,” not the sacrament with the “real presence” of Christ in it, or the sacrifice of the mass, but “the Gospel of God,” and then, when gathered under the wing of Christ, presenting them to God as a grateful offering, “being sanctified [not by sacrificial gifts, but] by the Holy Ghost.” (See Hebrews 13:9-16).

(3) Though the debt we owe to those by whom we have been brought to Christ can never be discharged, we should feel it a privilege when we render them any lower benefit in return (Romans 15:26,27).

(4) Formidable designs against the truth and the servants of Christ should, above all other ways of counteracting them, be met by combined prayer to Him who rules all hearts and controls all events; and the darker the cloud, the more resolutely should all to whom Christ’s cause is dear “strive together in their prayers to God” for the removal of it (Romans 15:30,31).

(5) Christian fellowship is so precious that the most eminent servants of Christ, amid the toils and trials of their work, find it refreshing and invigorating; and it is no good sign of any ecclesiastic, that he deems it beneath him to seek and enjoy it even amongst the humblest saints in the Church of Christ (Romans 15:24,32).

CHAPTER 16

ROMANS 16:1-27.

CONCLUSION, EMBRACING SUNDRY SALUTATIONS AND DIRECTIONS, AND A CLOSING PRAYER.

1. I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant — or “deaconess”

of the church which is at Cenchrea — The word is “Cenchreae,” the eastern part of Corinth (⁴¹⁸⁸Acts 18:18). That in the earliest churches there were deaconesses, to attend to the wants of the female members, there is no good reason to doubt. So early at least as the reign of Trajan, we learn from PLINY’S celebrated letter to that emperor — A.D. 110, or 111 — that they existed in the Eastern churches. Indeed, from the relation in which the sexes then stood to each other, something of this sort would seem to have been a necessity. Modern attempts, however, to revive this office have seldom found favor; either from the altered state of society, or the abuse of the office, or both.

2. Receive her in the Lord — that is, as a genuine disciple of the Lord Jesus.

as — “so as”

becometh saints — so as saints should receive saints.

assist her in whatsoever business she hath — “may have”

need of you — some private business of her own.

for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also — (See ⁴¹⁸⁹Psalm 41:1-3 ⁴¹⁹⁰2 Timothy 1:16-18).

3-5. Salute Priscilla — The true reading here is “Prisca” (as in ⁴¹⁹¹2 Timothy 4:19), a contracted form of Priscilla, as “Silas” of “Silvanus.”

and Aquila my helpers — The wife is here named before the husband (as in ^{<4188>}Acts 18:18, and ^{<6161>}Romans 16:26, according to the true reading; also in ^{<5049>}2 Timothy 4:19), probably as being the more prominent and helpful to the Church.

4. who have for my life laid down — “who did for my life lay down”

their own necks — that is, risked their lives; either at Corinth (^{<4186>}Acts 18:6,9,10), or more probably at Ephesus (^{<4190>}Acts 19:30,31; and compare ^{<6152>}1 Corinthians 15:32). They must have returned from Ephesus (where we last find them in the history of the Acts) to Rome, whence the edict of Claudius had banished them (^{<4182>}Acts 18:2); and doubtless, if not the principal members of that Christian community, they were at least the most endeared to our apostle.

unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles — whose special apostle this dear couple had rescued from imminent danger.

5. Likewise the church that is in their house — The Christian assembly that statedly met there for worship. “From his occupation as tent-maker, he had probably better accommodations for the meetings of the church than most other Christians” [HODGE]. Probably this devoted couple had written to the apostle such an account of the stated meetings at their house, as made him feel at home with them, and include them in this salutation, which doubtless would be read at their meetings with peculiar interest.

Salute my well beloved Epænetus, who is the first-fruits — that is, the first convert

of Achaia unto Christ — The true reading here, as appears by the manuscripts, is, “the first-fruits of Asia unto Christ” — that is, Proconsular Asia (see ^{<4106>}Acts 16:6). In ^{<6165>}1 Corinthians 16:15 it is said that “the household of Stephanas was the first-fruit of Achaia”; and though if Epænetus was one of that family, the two statements might be reconciled according to the received text, there is no need to resort to this supposition, as that text is in this instance without authority. Epænetus, as the first believer in that region called Proconsular Asia, was dear to the

apostle. (See ^{<390>}Hosea 9:10 ^{<300>}Micah 7:1). None of the names mentioned from ^{<340>}Romans 16:5-15 are otherwise known. One wonders at the number of them, considering that the writer had never been at Rome. But as Rome was then the center of the civilized world, to and from which journeys were continually taken to the remotest parts, there is no great difficulty in supposing that so active a travelling missionary as Paul would, in course of time, make the acquaintance of a considerable number of the Christians then residing at Rome.

6. Greet — or “salute”

Mary, who bestowed much labor on us — labor, no doubt, of a womanly kind.

7. Andronicus and Junia — or, as it might be, “Junias,” a contracted form of “Junianus”; in this case, it is a man’s name. But if, as is more probable, the word be, as in our version, “Junia,” the person meant was no doubt either the wife or the sister of Andronicus.

my kinsmen — or, “relatives.”

and my fellow prisoners — on what occasion, it is impossible to say, as the apostle elsewhere tells us that he was “in prisons more frequent” (^{<412>}2 Corinthians 11:23).

which are of note among the apostles — Those who think the word “apostle” is used in a lax sense, in the Acts and Epistles, take this to mean “noted apostles” [CHRYSOSTOM, LUTHER, CALVIN, BENIGEL, OLSHAUSEN, THOLUCK, ALFORD, JOWETT]; others, who are not clear that the word “apostle” is applied to any without the circle of the Twelve, save where the connection or some qualifying words show that the literal meaning of “one sent” is the thing intended, understand by the expression used here, “persons esteemed by the apostles” [BEZA, GROTIUS, DE WETTE, MEYER, FRITZSCHE, STUART, PHILIPPI, HODGE]. And of course, if “Junia” is to be taken for a woman, this latter must be the meaning.

who also were in Christ before me — The apostle writes as if he envied them this priority in the faith. And, indeed, if to be “in Christ” be the most enviable human condition, the earlier the date of this blessed translation, the greater the grace of it. This latter statement about Andronicus and

Junia seems to throw some light on the preceding one. Very possibly they may have been among the first-fruits of Peter's labors, gained to Christ either on the day of Pentecost or on some of the succeeding days. In that case they may have attracted the special esteem of those apostles who for some time resided chiefly at Jerusalem and its neighborhood; and our apostle, though he came late in contact with the other apostles, if he was aware of this fact, would have pleasure in alluding to it.

8. Amplias — a contracted form of "Ampliatius."

my beloved in the Lord — an expression of dear Christian affection.

9, 10. Urbane — rather, "Urbanus." It is a man's name.

our helper — "fellow laborer"

in Christ.

10. Salute Appelles approved — "the approved"

in Christ — or, as we should say, "that tried Christian"; a noble commendation.

Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household — It would seem, from what is said of Narcissus in ^{<614>}Romans 16:11, that this Aristobulus himself had not been a Christian; but that the Christians of his household simply were meant; very possibly some of his slaves.

11. Salute Herodion, my kinsman — (See on ^{<615>}Romans 16:7).

Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord — which implies that others in his house, including probably himself, were not Christians.

12. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord — two active women.

Salute the beloved Persis — another woman.

which labored much in the Lord — referring probably, not to official services, such as would fall to the deaconesses, but to such higher Christian labors — yet within the sphere competent to woman — as Priscilla bestowed on Apollos and others (^{<616>}Acts 18:18).

13. Salute Rufus, chosen — “the chosen”

in the Lord — meaning, not “who is one of the elect,” as every believer is, but “the choice” or “precious one” in the Lord. (See ⁴¹¹⁴1 Peter 2:4 ⁴¹¹⁵2 John 1:13). We read in ⁴¹⁵²Mark 15:21 that Simon of Cyrene, who was compelled to bear our Lord’s cross, was “the father of Alexander and Rufus.” From this we naturally conclude that when Mark wrote his Gospel, Alexander and Rufus must have been well known as Christians among those by whom he expected his Gospel to be first read; and, in all likelihood, this was that very “Rufus”; in which case our interest is deepened by what immediately follows about his mother.

and — salute.

his mother and mine — The apostle calls her “his own mother,” not so much as our Lord calls every elderly woman believer His mother (⁴¹²⁴Matthew 12:49,50), but in grateful acknowledgment of her motherly attentions to himself, bestowed no doubt for his Master’s sake, and the love she bore to his honored servants. To us it seems altogether likely that the conversion of Simon the Cyrenian dated from that memorable day when “passing [casually] by, as he came from the country” (⁴¹⁵²Mark 15:21), “they compelled him to bear the” Savior’s cross. Sweet compulsion, if what he thus beheld issued in his *voluntarily* taking up his own cross! Through him it is natural to suppose that his wife would be brought in, and that this believing couple, now “heirs together of the grace of life” (⁴¹¹⁶1 Peter 3:7), as they told their two sons, Alexander and Rufus, what honor had unwittingly been put upon their father at that hour of deepest and dearest moment to all Christians, might be blessed to the inbringing of both of them to Christ. In this case, supposing the elder of the two to have departed to be with Christ ere this letter was written, or to have been residing in some other place, and Rufus left alone with his mother, how instructive and beautiful is the testimony here borne to her!

14, 15. Salute Asyncritus, etc. — These have been thought to be the names of ten less notable Christians than those already named. But this will hardly be supposed if it be observed that they are divided into two pairs of five each, and that after the first of these pairs it is added, “and the brethren which are with them,” while after the second pair we have the words, “and all the saints which are with them.” This perhaps hardly

means that each of the five in both pairs had “a church at his house,” else probably this would have been more expressly said. But at least it would seem to indicate that they were each a center of some few Christians who met at his house — it may be for further instruction, for prayer, for missionary purposes, or for some other Christian objects. These little peeps into the rudimental forms which Christian fellowship first took in the great cities, though too indistinct for more than conjecture, are singularly interesting. Our apostle would seem to have been kept minutely informed as to the state of the church at Rome, both as to its membership and its varied activities, probably by Priscilla and Aquila.

16. Salute one another with an holy kiss — So ⁴⁶¹1 Corinthians 16:20 ⁴⁶²1 Thessalonians 5:26 ⁴⁶³1 Peter 5:14. The custom prevailed among the Jews, and doubtless came from the East, where it still obtains. Its adoption into the Christian churches, as the symbol of a higher fellowship than it had ever expressed before, was probably as immediate as it was natural. In this case the apostle’s desire seems to be that on receipt of his epistle, with its salutations, they should in this manner expressly testify their Christian affection. It afterwards came to have a fixed place in the church service, immediately after the celebration of the Supper, and continued long in use. In such matters, however, the state of society and the peculiarities of different places require to be studied.

The churches of Christ salute you — The true reading is, “All the churches”; the word “all” gradually falling out, as seeming probably to express more than the apostle would venture to affirm. But no more seems meant than to assure the Romans in what affectionate esteem they were held by the churches generally; all that knew he was writing to Rome having expressly asked their own salutations to be sent to them. (See ⁴⁶⁴Romans 16:19).

17. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned — “which ye learned.”

and avoid them — The fomentors of “divisions” here referred to are probably those who were unfriendly to the truths taught in this epistle, while those who caused “offenses” were probably those referred to in ⁴⁶⁵Romans 14:15 as haughtily disregarding the prejudices of the weak. The

direction as to both is, first, to “mark” such, lest the evil should be done ere it was fully discovered; and next, to “avoid” them (compare ^{<5012>}2 Thessalonians 3:6,14), so as neither to bear any responsibility for their procedure, nor seem to give them the least countenance.

18. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ — “our Lord Christ” appears to be the true reading.

but their own belly — not in the grosset sense, but as “living for low ends of their own” (compare ^{<5015>}Philippians 3:19).

and by good words and fair speeches deceive the simple — the unwary, the unsuspecting. (See ^{<5015>}Proverbs 14:15).

19. For your obedience — that is, tractableness

is come abroad unto all. I am glad therefore on your behalf — “I rejoice therefore over you,” seems the true reading.

but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple — “harmless,” as in ^{<5016>}Matthew 10:16, from which the warning is taken.

concerning — “unto”

evil — “Your reputation among the churches for subjection to the teaching ye have received is to me sufficient ground of confidence in you; but ye need the serpent’s wisdom to discriminate between transparent truth and plausible error, with that guileless simplicity which instinctively cleaves to the one and rejects the other.”

20. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly — The apostle encourages the Romans to persevere in resisting the wiles of the devil with the assurance that, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, they are “shortly” to receive their discharge, and have the satisfaction of “putting their feet upon the neck” of that formidable enemy — symbol familiar, probably, in all languages to express not only the completeness of the defeat, but the abject humiliation of the conquered foe. (See ^{<5017>}Joshua 10:24 ^{<5018>}2 Samuel 22:41 ^{<5019>}Ezekiel 21:29 ^{<5020>}Psalms 91:13). Though the apostle here styles Him who is thus to bruise Satan, the God of peace,” with special reference to the “divisions” (^{<5021>}Romans 16:17) by which the church at Rome was in danger of being disturbed, this sublime appellation

of God has here a wider sense, pointing to the whole “purpose for which the Son of God was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil” (^{<GR8>}1 John 3:8); and indeed this assurance is but a reproduction of the first great promise, that the Seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent’s head (^{<GR5>}Genesis 3:15).

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen — The “Amen” here has no manuscript authority. What comes after this, where one would have expected the epistle to close, has its parallel in ^{<GR8>}Philippians 4:20, etc., and being in fact common in epistolary writings, is simply a mark of genuineness.

21. Timotheus, my work-fellow — “my fellow laborer”; see ^{<GR8>}Acts 16:1-5. The apostle mentions him here rather than in the opening address to this church, as he had not been at Rome [BENGEL].

and Lucius — not Luke, for the fuller form of “Lucas” is not “Lucius” but “Lucanus.” The person meant seems to be “Lucius of Cyrene,” who was among the “prophets and teachers” at Antioch with our apostle, before he was summoned into the missionary field (^{<GR8>}Acts 13:1).

and Jason — See ^{<GR5>}Acts 17:5. He had probably accompanied or followed the apostle from Thessalonica to Corinth.

Sosipater — See ^{<GR8>}Acts 20:4.

22. I, Tertius, who wrote this — “the”

epistle — as the apostle’s amanuensis, or penman.

salute you in the Lord — So usually did the apostle dictate his epistles, that he calls the attention of the Galatians to the fact that to them he wrote with his own hand (^{<GR8>}Galatians 6:11). But this Tertius would have the Romans to know that, far from being a mere scribe, his heart went out to them in Christian affection; and the apostle, by giving his salutation a place here, would show what sort of assistants he employed.

23. Gaius mine host, and — the host

of the whole church — (See ^{<GR8>}Acts 20:4). It would appear that he was one of only two persons whom Paul baptized with his own hand (compare

^{<600>}3 John 1:1). His Christian hospitality appears to have been something uncommon.

Erastus the chamberlain — “treasurer.”

of the city — doubtless of Corinth. (See ^{<482>}Acts 19:22 ^{<500>}2 Timothy 4:20).

and Quartus a brother — rather, “the” or “our brother”; as Sosthenes and Timothy are called (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 1:1 ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:1, *Greek*). Nothing more is known of this Quartus.

24. The grace, etc. — a repetition of the benediction precisely as in ^{<610>}Romans 16:20, save that it is here invoked on them “all.”

25. Now to him that is of power — more simply, as in ^{<614>}Jude 1:24, “to Him that is able.”

to stablish — confirm, or uphold

you, according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ — that is, in conformity with the truths of that Gospel which I preach, and not I only, but all to whom has been committed “the preaching of Jesus Christ.”

according to the revelation of the mystery — (See on ^{<612>}Romans 11:25).

which was kept secret since the world began — literally, “which hath been kept in silence during eternal ages.”

26. But is now made manifest — The reference here is to that peculiar feature of the Gospel economy which Paul himself was specially employed to carry into practical effect and to unfold by his teaching — the introduction of the Gentile believers to an equality with their Jewish brethren, and the new, and, to the Jews, quite unexpected form which this gave to the whole Kingdom of God (compare ^{<481>}Ephesians 3:1-10, etc.). This the apostle calls here a mystery hitherto undisclosed, in what sense ^{<610>}Romans 16:27 will show, but now fully unfolded; and his prayer for the Roman Christians, in the form of a doxology to Him who was able to do what he asked, is that they might be established in the truth of the Gospel,

not only in its essential character, but specially in that feature of it which gave themselves, as Gentile believers, their whole standing among the people of God.


and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for — in order to



the obedience of faith — Lest they should think, from what he had just said, that God had brought in upon his people so vast a change on their condition without giving them any previous notice, the apostle here adds that, on the contrary, “the Scriptures of the prophets” contain all that he and other preachers of the Gospel had to declare on these topics, and indeed that the same “everlasting God,” who “from eternal ages” had kept these things hid, had given “commandment” that they should now, according to the tenor of those prophetic Scriptures, be imparted to every nation for their believing acceptance.


27. To God, etc. — “To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, be” — literally, “to whom be”; that is, “to Him, I say, be the glory for ever. Amen.” At its outset, this is an ascription of glory to the *power* that could do all this; at its close it ascribes glory to the *wisdom* that planned and that presides over the gathering of a redeemed people out of all nations. The apostle adds his devout “Amen,” which the reader — if he has followed him with the astonishment and delight of him who pens these words — will fervently echo.

On this concluding section of the Epistle, *Note*,

(1) In the minute and delicate manifestations of Christian feeling, and lively interest in the smallest movements of Christian life, love, and zeal, which are here exemplified, combined with the grasp of thought and elevation of soul which this whole Epistle displays, as indeed all the writings of our apostle, we have the secret of much of that grandeur of character which has made the name of Paul stand on an elevation of its own in the estimation of enlightened Christendom in every age, and of that influence which under God, beyond all the other apostles, he has already exercised, and is yet destined to exert, over the religious thinking and feeling of men. Nor can any approach him in these

peculiarities without exercising corresponding influence on all with whom they come in contact ( Romans 16:1-16).

(2) “The wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove” — in enjoining which our apostle here only echoes the teaching of his Lord ( Matthew 10:16) — is a combination of properties the rarity of which among Christians is only equalled by its vast importance. In every age of the Church there have been real Christians whose excessive study of the serpent’s wisdom has so sadly trenched upon their guileless simplicity, as at times to excite the distressing apprehension that they were no better than wolves in sheep’s clothing. Nor is it to be denied, on the other hand, that, either from inaptitude or indisposition to judge with manly discrimination of character and of measures, many eminently simple, spiritual, devoted Christians, have throughout life exercised little or no influence on any section of society around them. Let the apostle’s counsel on this head ( Romans 16:19) be taken as a study, especially by young Christians, whose character has yet to be formed, and whose permanent sphere in life is but partially fixed; and let them prayerfully set themselves to the combined exercise of both those qualities. So will their Christian character acquire solidity and elevation, and their influence for good be proportionably extended.

(3) Christians should cheer their own and each other’s hearts, amidst the toils and trials of their protracted warfare, with the assurance that it will have a speedy and glorious end; they should accustom themselves to regard all opposition to the progress and prosperity of Christ’s cause — whether in their own souls, in the churches with which they are connected, or in the world at large — as just “Satan” in conflict, as ever, with Christ their Lord; and they should never allow themselves to doubt that “the God of peace” will “shortly” give them the neck of their Enemy, and make them to bruise the Serpent’s head ( Romans 16:20).

(4) As Christians are held up and carried through solely by divine power, working through the glorious Gospel, so to that power, and to the wisdom that brought that Gospel nigh to them, they should ascribe

all the glory of their stability now, as they certainly will of their victory at last (~~612~~ Romans 16:25-27).

(5) “Has the everlasting God ... commanded” that the Gospel “mystery,” so long kept hid but now fully disclosed, shall be “made known to all nations for the obedience of faith” (~~612~~ Romans 16:26)? Then, what “necessity is laid upon” all the churches and every Christian, to send the Gospel “to every creature!” And we may rest well assured that the prosperity or decline of churches, and of individual Christians, will have not a little to do with their faithfulness or indifference to this imperative duty.

The ancient subscription at the end of this epistle — though of course of no authority — appears to be in this case quite correct.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO

THE CORINTHIANS

Commentary by A. R. FAUSSETT

INTRODUCTION

The AUTHENTICITY of this Epistle is attested by CLEMENT OF ROME [*First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 47], POLYCARP [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 11], and IRENÆUS [*Against Heresies*, 4.27.3]. The city to which it was sent was famed for its wealth and commerce, which were chiefly due to its situation between the Ionian and ægean Seas on the isthmus connecting the Peloponnesus with Greece. In Paul's time it was the capital of the province Achaia and the seat of the Roman proconsul (^{<4182>}Acts 18:12). The state of morals in it was notorious for debauchery, even in the profligate heathen world; so much so that "to Corinthianize" was a proverbial phrase for "to play the wanton"; hence arose dangers to the purity of the Christian Church at Corinth. That Church was founded by Paul on his first visit (^{<4181>}Acts 18:1-17).

He had been the instrument of converting many Gentiles (^{<4112>}1 Corinthians 12:2), and some Jews (^{<4183>}Acts 18:8), notwithstanding the vehement opposition of the countrymen of the latter (^{<4185>}Acts 18:5), during the year and a half in which he sojourned there. The converts were chiefly of the humbler classes (^{<4113>}1 Corinthians 1:26, etc.). Crispus (^{<4114>}1 Corinthians 1:14 ^{<4183>}Acts 18:8), Erastus, and Gaius (Caius) were, however, men of rank (^{<4182>}Romans 16:23). A variety of classes is also implied in ^{<4112>}1 Corinthians 11:22. The risk of contamination by contact with the surrounding corruptions, and the temptation to a craving for Greek philosophy and rhetoric (which Apollonius' eloquent style rather tended to foster, ^{<4183>}Acts 18:24, etc.) in contrast to Paul's simple preaching of Christ crucified (^{<4111>}1 Corinthians 2:1, etc.), as well as the opposition of certain teachers to him, naturally caused him anxiety. Emissaries from the Judaizers of Palestine

boasted of “letters of commendation” from Jerusalem, the metropolis of the faith. They did not, it is true, insist on circumcision in refined Corinth, where the attempt would have been hopeless, as they did among the simpler people of Galatia; but they attacked the apostolic authority of Paul (⁴⁰¹1 Corinthians 9:1,2 ⁴⁰²2 Corinthians 10:1,7,8), some of them declaring themselves followers of Cephas, the chief apostle, others boasting that they belonged to Christ Himself (⁴⁰¹1 Corinthians 1:12 ⁴⁰²2 Corinthians 10:7), while they haughtily repudiated all subordinate teaching. Those persons gave out themselves for apostles (⁴⁰²2 Corinthians 11:5,13). The ground taken by them was that Paul was not one of the Twelve, and not an eye-witness of the Gospel facts, and durst not prove his apostleship by claiming sustenance from the Christian Church. Another section avowed themselves followers of Paul himself, but did so in a party spirit, exalting the minister rather than Christ. The followers of Apollos, again, unduly prized his Alexandrian learning and eloquence, to the disparagement of the apostle, who studiously avoided any deviation from Christian simplicity (⁴⁰¹1 Corinthians 2:1-5). In some of this last philosophizing party there may have arisen the Antinomian tendency which tried to defend theoretically their own practical immorality: hence their denial of the future resurrection, and their adoption of the Epicurean motto, prevalent in heathen Corinth, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die” (⁴⁰²1 Corinthians 15:32). Hence, perhaps, arose their connivance at the incestuous intercourse kept up by one of the so-called Christian body with his stepmother during his father’s life. The household of Chloe informed Paul of many other evils: such as contentions, divisions, and lawsuits brought against brethren in heathen law courts by professing Christians; the abuse of their spiritual gifts into occasions of display and fanaticism; the interruption of public worship by simultaneous and disorderly ministrations, and decorum violated by women speaking unveiled (contrary to Oriental usage), and so usurping the office of men, and even the holy communion desecrated by greediness and revelling on the part of the communicants. Other messengers, also, came from Corinth, consulting him on the subject of

- (1) the controversy about meats offered to idols;
- (2) the disputes about celibacy and marriage;

(3) the due exercise of spiritual gifts in public worship;

(4) the best mode of making the collection which he had requested for the saints at Jerusalem (⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 16:1, etc.). Such were the circumstances which called forth the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the most varied in its topics of all the Epistles.

In ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 5:9, "I wrote unto you in an Epistle not to company with fornicators," it is implied that Paul had written a previous letter to the Corinthians (now lost). Probably in it he had also enjoined them to make a contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem, whereupon they seem to have asked directions as to the mode of doing so, to which he now replies (⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 16:2). It also probably announced his intention of visiting them on way to Macedonia, and again on his return from Macedonia (⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 1:15,16), which purpose he changed hearing the unfavorable report from Chloe's household (⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 16:5-7), for which he was charged with (⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 1:17). In the first Epistle which we have, the subject of fornication is alluded to only in a way, as if he were rather replying to an excuse set up after rebuke in the matter, than introducing for the first time [ALFORD]. Preceding this former letter, he seems to have paid a *second* visit to Corinth. For in ⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 12:4 ⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 13:1, he speaks of his intention of paying them a *third* visit, implying he had already *twice* visited them. See on ⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 2:1; ⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 13:2; also see on ⁴⁰⁰⁵2 Corinthians 1:15; ⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 1:16. It is hardly likely that during his three years' sojourn at Ephesus he would have failed to revisit his Corinthian converts, which he could so readily do by sea, there being constant maritime intercourse between the two cities. This *second* visit was probably a short one (compare ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 16:7); and attended with pain and humiliation (⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 2:1 12:21), occasioned by the scandalous conduct of so many of his own converts. His milder censures having then failed to produce reformation, he wrote briefly directing them "not to company with fornicators." On their misapprehending this injunction, he explained it more fully in the Epistle, the first of the two extant (⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 5:9,12). That the second visit is not mentioned in Acts is no objection to its having really taken place, as that book is fragmentary and omits other leading incidents in Paul's life; for example, his visit to Arabia, Syria, and Cilicia (⁴⁰⁰⁷Galatians 1:17-21).

The PLACE OF WRITING is fixed to be Ephesus (⁴⁶⁶⁸1 Corinthians 16:8). The subscription in *English Version*, "From Philippi," has no authority whatever, and probably arose from a mistaken translation of ⁴⁶⁶⁵1 Corinthians 16:5, "For *I am passing through* Macedonia." At the time of writing Paul implies (⁴⁶⁶⁸1 Corinthians 16:8) that he intended to leave Ephesus after Pentecost *of that year*. He really did leave it about Pentecost (A.D. 57). Compare ⁴⁶⁶⁹Acts 19:20. The allusion to Passover imagery in connection with our Christian Passover, Easter (⁴⁶⁶⁷1 Corinthians 5:7), makes it likely that the season was about Easter. Thus the date of the Epistle is fixed with tolerable accuracy, about Easter, certainly before Pentecost, in the third year of his residence at Ephesus, A.D. 57. For other arguments, see CONYBEARE and HOWSON'S *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*.

The Epistle is written in the name of Sosthenes "[our] brother." BIRKS supposes he is the same as the Sosthenes, ⁴⁶⁸⁷Acts 18:17, who, he thinks, was converted subsequently to that occurrence. He bears no part in the Epistle itself, the apostle in the very next verses (⁴⁶⁰⁴1 Corinthians 1:4, etc.) using the first person: so Timothy is introduced, ⁴⁶⁰⁶2 Corinthians 1:1. The bearers of the Epistle were probably Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (see the subscription, ⁴⁶²⁴1 Corinthians 16:24), whom he mentions (⁴⁶⁶⁷1 Corinthians 16:17,18) as with him then, but who he implies are about to return back to Corinth; and therefore he commends them to the regard of the Corinthians.

CHAPTER 1

✠ 1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-31.

THE INSCRIPTION; THANKSGIVING FOR THE SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH; REPROOF OF PARTY DIVISIONS: HIS OWN METHOD OF PREACHING ONLY CHRIST.

1. called to be — Found in some, not in others, of the oldest manuscripts Possibly inserted from ✠ Romans 1:1; but as likely to be genuine. Translate, literally, “a called apostle” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

through the will of God — not because of my own merit. Thus Paul’s call as “an apostle by the will of God,” while constituting the ground of the authority he claims in the Corinthian Church (compare ✠ Galatians 1:1), is a reason for humility on his own part (✠ 1 Corinthians 15:8,10) [BENGEL]. In assuming the ministerial office a man should see he does so not of his own impulse, but by the will of God (✠ Jeremiah 23:21); Paul if left to his own will would never have been an apostle (✠ Romans 9:16).

Sosthenes — See my *Introduction*. Associated by Paul with himself in the inscription, either in modesty, Sosthenes being his inferior [CHRYSTOSTOM], or in order that the name of a “brother” of note in Corinth (✠ Acts 18:17) might give weight to his Epistle and might show, in opposition to his detractors that he was supported by leading *brethren*. Gallio had driven the Jews who accused Paul from the judgment-seat. The Greek mob, who disliked Jews, took the opportunity then of beating Sosthenes the ruler of the Jewish synagogue, while Gallio looked on and refused to interfere, being secretly pleased that the mob should second his own contempt for the Jews. Paul probably at this time had showed sympathy for an adversary in distress, which issued in the conversion of the latter. So Crispus also, the previous chief ruler of the synagogue had been converted. Saul the persecutor turned into Paul the apostle, and Sosthenes the leader in persecution against that apostle, were two trophies

of divine grace that, side by side, would appeal with double power to the Church at Corinth [BIRKS].

2. the church of God — He calls it so notwithstanding its many blots. Fanatics and sectaries vainly think to anticipate the final sifting of the wheat and tares (⁴¹³⁷Matthew 13:27-30). It is a dangerous temptation to think there is no church where there is not apparent perfect purity. He who thinks so, must at last separate from all others and think himself the only holy man in the world, or establish a peculiar sect with a few hypocrites. It was enough for Paul in recognizing the Corinthians as a church, that he saw among them evangelical doctrine, baptism, and the Lord's Supper" [CALVIN]. It was the Church of God, not of this or of that favorite leader [CHRYSOSTOM].

at Corinth — a church at dissolute Corinth — what a paradox of grace!

sanctified — *consecrated, or set apart as holy to God in* (by union with) *Christ Jesus*. In the *Greek* there are no words "to them that are"; translate simply, "men sanctified."

called to be saints — rather, "called saints"; saints by calling: applied by Paul to *all* professing members of the Church. As "sanctified in Christ" implies the fountain sources of holiness, the believer's original sanctification in Christ (⁴¹⁶¹1 Corinthians 6:11 ⁴³⁰⁰Hebrews 10:10,14 ⁴¹⁰²1 Peter 1:2) in the purposes of God's grace, so "called saints" refers to their actual *call* (⁴¹⁸⁰Romans 8:30), and the end of that call that they should be holy (⁴¹¹⁵1 Peter 1:15).

with all that in every place call upon ... Christ — The Epistle is intended for these also, as well as for the Corinthians. The true CATHOLIC CHURCH (a term first used by IGNATIUS [*Epistle to the Smyraeans*, 8]): not consisting of those who call themselves from Paul, Cephas, or any other eminent leader (⁴¹¹²1 Corinthians 1:12), but of all, wherever they be, who call on Jesus as their Savior in sincerity (compare ⁴¹²²2 Timothy 2:22). Still a general unity of discipline and doctrine in the several churches is implied in ⁴¹¹⁷1 Corinthians 4:17 7:17 11-16 14-33,36. The worship due to God is here attributed to Jesus (compare ⁴¹²²Joel 2:32 ⁴¹¹¹Matthew 4:10 ⁴¹¹⁴Acts 9:14).

both theirs and ours — “in every place which is their home ... and our home also”; this is added to include the Christians throughout Achaia, not residing in Corinth, the capital (^{<500b>}2 Corinthians 1:1). Paul feels the home of his converts to be also his own. Compare a similar phrase in ^{<693>}Romans 16:13 [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. “Ours” refers to Paul and Sosthenes, and the Corinthians’ home [ALFORD]. BEZA better explains, “Both their Lord and our Lord.” All believers have one and the same Lord (^{<486>}1 Corinthians 8:6 ^{<404>}Ephesians 4:5); a virtual reproof of the divisions of the Corinthians, as if Christ were divided (^{<4013>}1 Corinthians 1:13).

3. peace — peculiarly needed in the Corinthian church, on account of its dissensions. On this verse see on ^{<600>}Romans 1:7.

4. He puts the causes for praise and hope among them in the foreground, not to discourage them by the succeeding reproof, and in order to appeal to their better selves.

my God — (^{<500b>}Romans 1:8 ^{<500b>}Philippians 1:3).

always — (Compare ^{<500b>}Philippians 1:4).

the grace ... given you — (Compare ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 1:7).

by ... Christ — literally, “IN *Jesus Christ*” given you as members in Christ.

5. utterance — ALFORD from MENOCHIVS translates, “doctrine.” Ye are rich in *preachers* or the *preaching* of the word, and rich in *knowledge* or *apprehension* of it: literally “(the) *word* (preached).” *English Version* (as in ^{<400b>}2 Corinthians 8:7) is better: for Paul, purposing presently to dwell on the *abuse* of the two gifts on which the Corinthians most prided themselves, *utterance* (speech) and *knowledge* (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 1:20 3:18 4:19 ^{<4011>}1 Corinthians 13:1-14:40), previously gains their goodwill by congratulating them on *having* those gifts.

6. According as the testimony of (of, and concerning) Christ (who is both the object and author of this testimony [BENGEL]; ^{<4011>}1 Corinthians 2:1 ^{<500b>}1 Timothy 2:6 ^{<500b>}2 Timothy 1:8) was confirmed *among* [ALFORD] you; that is, by God, through my preaching and through the miracles accompanying it (^{<4013>}1 Corinthians 12:3 ^{<4011>}Mark 16:20 ^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 1:21,22

^{<888>}Galatians 3:2,5 ^{<888>}Ephesians 4:7,8 ^{<888>}Hebrews 2:4). God *confirmed* (compare ^{<888>}Philippians 1:7 ^{<888>}Hebrews 2:3), or gave effect to the Gospel among (or better as *English Version*, “in”) the Corinthians *by their accepting it* and setting their seal to its truth, through the inward power of His Spirit, and the outward gifts and miracles accompanying it [CALVIN].

7. ye come behind — are inferior to other Christians elsewhere [GROTIUS].

in no gift — not that all had all gifts, but different persons among them had different gifts (^{<888>}1 Corinthians 12:4, etc.).

waiting for ... coming of ... Christ — The crowning proof of their “coming behind in no gift.” *Faith, hope, and love*, are all exercised herein (compare ^{<888>}2 Timothy 4:8 ^{<888>}Titus 2:13). “Leaving to others their MEMENTO MORI (remember death), do thou earnestly cherish this joyous expectation of the Lord’s coming” [BENGEL]. The *Greek* verb implies, “to expect constantly, not only for a certain time, but even to the end till the expected event happens” (^{<888>}Romans 8:19, [TITTMANN, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*]).

8. Who — God, ^{<888>}1 Corinthians 1:4 (not Jesus Christ, ^{<888>}1 Corinthians 1:7, in which case it would be “in *His* day”).

unto the end — namely, “the coming of Christ.”

blameless in the day of ... Christ — (^{<888>}1 Thessalonians 5:23). After that day there is no danger (^{<888>}Ephesians 4:30 ^{<888>}Philippians 1:6). Now is our day to work, and the day of our enemies to try us: then will be the day of Christ, and of His glory in the saints [BENGEL].

9. faithful — to His promises (^{<888>}Philippians 1:6 ^{<888>}1 Thessalonians 5:24).

called — according to His purpose (^{<888>}Romans 8:28).

unto ... fellowship of ... Jesus — to be fellow heirs with Christ (^{<888>}Romans 8:17-28), like Him sons of God and heirs of glory (^{<888>}Romans 8:30 ^{<888>}2 Thessalonians 2:14 ^{<888>}1 Peter 5:10 ^{<888>}1 John 1:3). CHRYSOSTOM remarks that the name of Christ is oftener mentioned in this than in any

other Epistle, the apostle designing thereby to draw them away from their party admiration of particular teachers to Christ alone.

10. Now — Ye already have *knowledge, utterance, and hope*, maintain also *love*.

brethren — The very title is an argument for *love*.

by ... Christ — whom Paul wishes to be all in all to the Corinthians, and therefore names Him so often in this chapter.

speak ... same thing — not speaking different things as ye do (^{and}1 Corinthians 1:12), in a spirit of variance.

divisions — literally, “splits,” “breaches.”

but — “but rather.”

perfectly joined together — the opposite word to “divisions.” It is applied to *healing a wound, or making whole a rent*.

mind ... judgment — the view taken by the *understanding*, and the *practical decision* arrived at [CONYBEARE and HOWSON], as to what is to be done. The *mind*, within, refers to things to be believed: the *judgment* is displayed outwardly in things to be done [BENGEL]. *Disposition* — *opinion* [ALFORD].

11. (^{and}1 Corinthians 11:18).

by them ... of ... house of Chloe — They seem to have been alike in the confidence of Paul and of the Corinthians. The Corinthians “wrote” to the apostle (^{and}1 Corinthians 7:1), consulting him concerning certain points; marriage, the eating of things offered to idols, the decorum to be observed by women in religious assemblies. But they said not a syllable about the enormities and disorders that had crept in among them. *That* information reached Paul by other quarters. Hence his language about those evils is, “It hath been declared unto me,” etc.; “It is reported commonly” (^{and}1 Corinthians 5:1,2). All this he says *before* he refers to their *letter*, which shows that the latter did not give him any intimation of those evils. An undesigned proof of genuineness [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*]. Observe his prudence: He names the family, to let it be seen that he made his allegation

not without authority: he does not name the individuals, not to excite odium against them. He tacitly implies that the information ought rather to have come to him directly from their presbyters, as they had consulted him about matters of less moment.

contentions — not so severe a word as “divisions,” literally, “schisms” (⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 1:10, *Margin*).

12. this I say — this is what *I mean* in saying “contentions” (⁴⁰¹1 Corinthians 1:11).

every one of you saith — Ye say severally, “glorying in men” (⁴⁰²1 Corinthians 1:31 ⁴⁰³1 Corinthians 3:21,22), one, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos, etc. Not that they formed *definite* parties, but they individually betrayed the *spirit* of party in contentions under the name of different favorite teachers. Paul will not allow himself to be flattered even by those who made his name their party cry, so as to connive at the dishonor thereby done to Christ. These probably were converted under his ministry. Those alleging the name of Apollos, Paul’s successor at Corinth (⁴⁰⁴Acts 18:24, etc.), were persons attracted by his rhetorical style (probably acquired in Alexandria, ⁴⁰⁵1 Corinthians 3:6), as contrasted with the “weak bodily presence” and “contemptible speech” of the apostle. Apollos, doubtless, did not willingly foster this spirit of undue preference (⁴⁰⁶1 Corinthians 4:6,8); nay, to discourage it, he would not repeat his visit just then (⁴⁰⁷1 Corinthians 16:12).

I of Cephas — probably Judaizers, who sheltered themselves under the name of Peter, the apostle of the circumcision (“Cephas” is the *Hebrew*, “Peter” the *Greek* name; ⁴⁰⁸John 1:42 ⁴⁰⁹Galatians 2:11, etc.): the subjects handled in the seventh through ninth chapters were probably suggested as matters of doubt by them. The church there began from the Jewish synagogue, Crispus the chief ruler, and Sosthenes his successor (probably), being converts. Hence some Jewish leaven, though not so much as elsewhere, is traceable (⁴¹⁰2 Corinthians 11:22). *Petrism* afterwards sprang up much more rankly at Rome. If it be wrong to boast “I am of Peter,” how much more so to boast I am of the Pope!” [BENGEL].

I of Christ — A fair pretext used to slight the ministry of Paul and their other teachers (⁴¹¹1 Corinthians 4:8 ⁴¹²2 Corinthians 10:7-11).

13. Is Christ divided? — into various parts (one under one leader, another under another) [ALFORD]. The unity of His body is not to be cut in pieces, as if all did not belong to Him, the One Head.

was Paul crucified for you? — In the *Greek* the interrogation implies that a strong negative answer is expected: “Was it Paul (*surely you will not say so*) that was crucified for you?” In the former question the majesty of “CHRIST” (the Anointed One of God) implies the impossibility of His being “divided.” in the latter, *Paul’s* insignificance implies the impossibility of his being the head of redemption, “crucified for” them, and giving his name to the redeemed. This, which is true of Paul the *founder* of the Church of Corinth, holds equally good of Cephas and Apollos, who had not such a claim as Paul in the Corinthian Church.

crucified ... baptized — The cross claims us for Christ, as redeemed by Him; baptism, as dedicated to Him.

in the name — rather, “*into* the name” (^{<4187>}Galatians 3:27), implying the *incorporation* involved in the idea of baptism.

14. I thank God’s providence now, who so ordered it that I baptized none of you but Crispus (the former ruler of the synagogue, ^{<4188>}Acts 18:8) and Gaius (written by the Romans *Caius*, the host of Paul at Corinth, and of the church, ^{<4162>}Romans 16:23; a person therefore in good circumstances). Baptizing was the office of the deacons (^{<4108>}Acts 10:48) rather than of the apostles, whose office was that of establishing and superintending generally the churches. The deacons had a better opportunity of giving the necessary *course of instruction preparatory to baptism*. Crispus and Gaius were probably among the first converts, and hence were baptized by Paul himself, who founded the church.

15. Lest — not that Paul had this reason at the time, but God so arranged it that none might say [ALFORD].

16. household of Stephanas — “The first-fruits of Achaia,” that is, among the first converted there (^{<4165>}1 Corinthians 16:15,17). It is likely that such “households” included infants (^{<4163>}Acts 16:33). The history of the Church favors this view, as infant baptism was the usage from the earliest ages.

17. Paul says this not to depreciate baptism; for he exalts it most highly (^{<416>}Romans 6:3). He baptized some first converts; and would have baptized more, but that his and the apostles' peculiar work was to preach the Gospel, to found by their autoptic testimony particular churches, and then to superintend the churches in general.

sent me — literally, “as an apostle.”

not to baptize — even in Christ's name, much less in my own.

not with wisdom of words — or *speech*; *philosophical reasoning* set off with *oratorical language* and secular learning, which the Corinthians set so undue a value upon (^{<416>}1 Corinthians 1:5 2:1,4) in Apollos, and the want of which in Paul they were dissatisfied with (^{<410>}2 Corinthians 10:10).

cross of Christ — the sum and substance of the Gospel (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 1:23 2:2), Christ crucified.

be made of none effect — literally, “be made void” (^{<404>}Romans 4:14); namely, by men thinking more of the human reasonings and eloquence in which the Gospel was set forth, than of the Gospel itself of Christ crucified, the sinner's only remedy, and God's highest exhibition of love.

18. preaching, etc. — literally, “the word,” or speech as to the cross; in contrast to the “wisdom of *words*” (so called), ^{<417>}1 Corinthians 1:17.

them that perish — rather, “them that are perishing,” namely, by preferring human “wisdom of words” to the doctrine of the “cross of Christ.” It is not the final state that is referred to; but, “them that are in the way of perishing.” So also in ^{<415>}2 Corinthians 2:15,16.

us which are saved — In the *Greek* the collocation is more modest, “to them that are being saved (that are in the way of salvation) as,” that is, to which class *we* belong.

power of God — which includes in it that it is the wisdom of God” (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 1:24). God's powerful instrument of salvation; the highest exhibition of God's power (^{<416>}Romans 1:16). What seems to the world “weakness” in God's plan of salvation (^{<415>}1 Corinthians 1:25), and in its mode of delivery by His apostle (^{<413>}1 Corinthians 2:3) is really His mighty “power.” What seems “foolishness” because wanting man's “wisdom of

words” (^{<4017>}1 Corinthians 1:17), is really the highest “wisdom of God” (^{<4024>}1 Corinthians 1:24).

19. I will destroy — slightly altered from the *Septuagint*, ^{<2934>}Isaiah 29:14. The *Hebrew* is, “The wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.” Paul by inspiration gives the sense of the Spirit, by making GOD the cause of their *wisdom perishing*, etc., “I will destroy,” etc.

understanding of the prudent — literally, “of the understanding ones.”

20. Where — nowhere; for God “brings them to naught” (^{<4019>}1 Corinthians 1:19).

the wise — generally.

the scribe — Jewish [ALFORD].

the disputer — Greek [ALFORD]. Compare the Jew and Greek of this world contrasted with the godly wise, ^{<4022>}1 Corinthians 1:22,23. VITRINGA thinks the reference is to the Jewish discourses in the synagogue, *daraschoth*, from a *Hebrew* root “to dispute.” Compare “questions,” ^{<4018>}Acts 26:3 ^{<3009>}Titus 3:9. If so, “wise” refers to *Greek* wisdom (compare ^{<4012>}1 Corinthians 1:22). Paul applies ^{<2938>}Isaiah 33:18 here in a higher sense; there the primary reference was to temporal deliverance, here to external; ^{<4012>}1 Corinthians 1:22, which is in threefold opposition to ^{<4018>}1 Corinthians 1:18 there, sanctions this higher application; the Lord in the threefold character being the sole ground of glorying to His people.

of this world ... of this world — rather, “dispensation (or *age*) ... world”; the *Greek* words are distinct. The former is here *this age* or *worldly order of things* in a moral point of view, as opposed to the Christian dispensation or order of things. The latter is the *world* viewed externally and cosmically.

made foolish — shown the world’s philosophy to be folly, because it lacks faith in Christ crucified [CHRYSOSTOM]. Has treated it as folly, and not used its help in converting and saving men (^{<4015>}1 Corinthians 1:26,27) [ESTIUS].

21. after that — rather, “whereas.”

in the wisdom of God — in the wise arrangement of God.

world by wisdom — rather, “by *its* wisdom,” or “*its philosophy*” (^{<810>}John 1:10 ^{<812>}Romans 1:28).

knew not God — whatever other knowledge it attained (^{<472>}Acts 17:23,27). The deistic theory that man can by the light of nature discover his duty to God, is disproved by the fact that man *has* never discovered it without revelation. All the stars and moon cannot make it day; that is the prerogative of the sun. Nor can nature’s highest gifts make the moral day arise; that is the office of Christ. Even the Jew missed this knowledge, in so far as he followed after mere carnal *world* wisdom.

it pleased God — Paul refers to Jesus’ words (^{<21>}Luke 10:21).

by the foolishness of preaching — by that preaching which the world (unbelieving Jews and Gentiles alike) deem *foolishness*.

save them that believe — (^{<816>}Romans 1:16).

22. For — literally, “Since,” seeing that. This verse illustrates how the “preaching” of Christ crucified came to be deemed “foolishness” (^{<81>}1 Corinthians 1:21).

a sign — The oldest manuscripts read “signs.” The *singular* was a later correction from ^{<12>}Matthew 12:38 16: ^{<128>}1 John 2:18. The signs the Jews craved for were not mere miracles, but direct tokens from heaven that Jesus was Messiah (^{<216>}Luke 11:16).

Greeks seek ... wisdom — namely, a philosophic demonstration of Christianity. Whereas Christ, instead of *demonstrative* proof, demands *faith* on the ground of *His word*, and of a reasonable amount of evidence that the alleged revelation is His word. Christianity begins not with solving intellectual difficulties, but with satisfying the heart that longs for forgiveness. Hence not the refined Greeks, but the theocratic Jews were the chosen organ for propagating revelation. Again, intellectual Athens (^{<478>}Acts 17:18-21, etc.). received the Gospel less readily than commercial Corinth.

23. we — Paul and Apollos.

Christ crucified — The *Greek* expresses not the mere fact of His crucifixion, but the *permanent character* acquired by the transaction, whereby He is now a Savior (^{<4001}Galatians 3:1) crucified was the stone on which the Jews stumbled (^{<4044}Matthew 21:44). The opposition of Jew and Gentile alike shows that a religion so seemingly contemptible in its origin could not have succeeded if it had not been divine.

unto the Greeks — the oldest manuscripts read “unto the *Gentiles*.”

24. called — (compare ^{<4012}1 Corinthians 1:26). The same class as the “us which are (being) saved” (^{<4018}1 Corinthians 1:18); the elect, who have obeyed the call; called effectually (^{<4038}Romans 8:28,30).

Christ — “Crucified” is not here added, because when the offense of the cross is overcome, “Christ” is received in all His relations, not only in His cross, but in His life and His future kingdom.

power — so meeting all the reasonable requirements of the Jews who sought “a sign.” The cross (the death of a slave), which to the Jews (looking for a temporal Messiah) was a “stumbling-block,” is really “the power of God” to the salvation of all who believe.

wisdom of God — so really exhibiting, and in the highest degree (if they would but see it), that which the Greeks sought after — *wisdom* (^{<4038}Colossians 2:3).

25. foolishness of God — that is, God’s plan of salvation which men deem “foolishness.”

weakness of God — Christ “crucified through weakness” (^{<4030}2 Corinthians 13:4, the great *stumbling-block* of the Jews), yet “living by the power of God.” So He *perfects strength* out of the *weakness* of His servants (^{<4018}1 Corinthians 2:3 ^{<4020}2 Corinthians 12:9).

26. ye see — rather, from the prominence of the verb in the *Greek*, “see” or “consider” (imperative) [ALFORD from *Vulgate* and IRENAEUS].

your calling ... *are called* — Instead of the words in italics, supplied by *English Version*, supply, “were your callers.” What Paul is dwelling on (compare ^{<4012}1 Corinthians 1:27,28) is the weakness of the instrumentality which the Lord employed to convert the world [HINDS and WHATELY; so

ANSELM]. However, *English Version* accords well with ^{<402>}1 Corinthians 1:24. “The whole history of the expansion of the Church is a progressive victory of the ignorant over the learned, the lowly over the lofty, until the emperor himself laid down his crown before the cross of Christ” [OLSHAUSEN].

wise ... after the flesh — the wisdom of this world acquired by human study without the Spirit. (Contrast ^{<4067>}Matthew 16:17).

27. the foolish things — a general phrase for *all persons and things foolish*. Even *things* (and those, too, *foolish things*) are chosen by God to confound *persons*, (and those too persons who are *wise*). This seems to me the force of the change from neuter to masculine.

to confound — The *Greek* is stronger, “*that* He might confound (or put to shame).” God confounds the wise by effecting through His instruments, without human wisdom, that the worldly wise, with it, cannot effect, namely, to bring men to salvation.

chosen ... chosen — The repetition indicates the gracious deliberateness of God’s purpose (^{<3086>}James 2:5).

28. *yea*, and things which are not — *Yea* is not in the *Greek*. Also some of the oldest manuscripts omit “and.” Thus the clause, “things which are not” (are regarded as naught), is in apposition with “foolish ... weak ... base (that is, lowborn) and despised things.” God has chosen all four, though regarded as *things that are not*, to bring to naught things that are.

29. no flesh ... glory — For they who try to glory (boast) because of human greatness and wisdom, are “confounded” or *put to shame* (^{<402>}1 Corinthians 1:27). Flesh, like “the flower of the field,” is beautiful, but frail (^{<2406>}Isaiah 40:6).

in his presence — We are to glory not *before* Him, but in Him [BENGEL].

30. But ... ye — in contrast to them that “glory” in worldly wisdom and greatness.

of him are — not of yourselves (^{<4008>}Ephesians 2:8), but of Him (^{<413>}Romans 11:36). *From* Him ye are (that is, have spiritual life, who once were spiritually among the “things which are not.” ^{<402>}1 Corinthians 1:28).

in Christ — by living union with Him. Not “in the flesh” (^{<4025>}1 Corinthians 1:26,29).

of God — *from* God; emanating *from* Him and sent by Him.

is made unto us — *has been made* to us, to our eternal gain.

wisdom — unattainable by the worldly mode of seeking it (^{<4019>}1 Corinthians 1:19,20; contrast ^{<4010>}Colossians 2:3 ^{<4001>}Proverbs 8:1-36 ^{<4006>}Isaiah 9:6). By it we become “wise unto salvation,” owing to His *wisdom* in originating and executing the plan, whereas once we were “fools.”

righteousness — the ground of our justification (^{<4025>}Jeremiah 23:5,6 ^{<4025>}Romans 4:25 ^{<4052>}2 Corinthians 5:21); whereas once we were “weak” (^{<4006>}Romans 5:6). ^{<4021>}Isaiah 42:21 45:24.

sanctification — by His Spirit; whereas formerly we were “base.” Hereafter our righteousness and sanctification alike shall be both perfect and inherent. Now the righteousness wherewith we are justified is perfect, but not inherent; that wherewith we are sanctified is inherent, but not perfect [HOOKER]. Now sanctification is perfect in principle, but not in attainment. These two are joined in the *Greek* as forming essentially but *one* thing, as distinguished from the “wisdom” in *devising* and executing the plan for us (“abounded toward us in all wisdom,” ^{<4008>}Ephesians 1:8), and “redemption,” the *final completion* of the scheme in the deliverance of the body (the position of “redemption” last shows that this limited sense is the one intended here). ^{<4028>}Luke 21:28 ^{<4023>}Romans 8:23 ^{<4014>}Ephesians 1:14 4:30.

redemption — whereas once we were “despised.”

31. glory in ... Lord — (^{<4023>}Jeremiah 9:23,24) — in opposition to “flesh glorying in His presence” (^{<4021>}1 Corinthians 1:29). In contrast to morbid slavish self-abasement, Paul joins with humility the elevating consciousness of our true dignity in Christ. He who glories is to glory in the Lord, not in the flesh, nor in the world.

CHAPTER 2

1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-16.

PAUL'S SUBJECT OF PREACHING, CHRIST CRUCIFIED, NOT IN WORLDLY, BUT IN HEAVENLY, WISDOM AMONG THE PERFECT.

1. And I — “So I” [CONYBEARE] as one of the “foolish, weak, and despised” instruments employed by God (^{<402>}1 Corinthians 1:27,28); “glorying in the Lord,” not in man’s wisdom (^{<403>}1 Corinthians 1:31). Compare ^{<402>}1 Corinthians 1:23, “We.”

when I came — (^{<401>}Acts 18:1, etc.). Paul might, had he pleased, have used an ornate style, having studied secular learning at Tarsus of Cilicia, which STRABO preferred as a school of learning to Athens or Alexandria; here, doubtless, he read the *Cilician Aratus’* poems (which he quotes, ^{<402>}Acts 17:28), and Epimenides (^{<402>}Titus 1:12), and MENANDER (^{<403>}1 Corinthians 15:33). Grecian intellectual development was an important element in preparing the way for the Gospel, but it failed to regenerate the world, showing that for this a superhuman power is needed. Hellenistic (Grecizing) Judaism at Tarsus and Alexandria was the connecting link between the schools of Athens and those of the Rabbis. No more fitting birthplace could there have been for the apostle of the Gentiles than Tarsus, free as it was from the warping influences of Rome, Alexandria, and Athens. He had at the same time *Roman citizenship*, which protected him from sudden violence. Again, he was reared in the *Hebrew divine law* at Jerusalem. Thus, as the three elements, Greek cultivation, Roman polity (^{<401>}Luke 2:1), and the divine law given to the Jews, combined just at Christ’s time, to prepare the world for the Gospel, so the same three, by God’s marvellous providence, met together in the apostle to the Gentiles [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

testimony of God — “the testimony of Christ” (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 1:6); therefore Christ is God.

2. The *Greek* implies, “The only definite thing that I made it my business to know among you, was to know Jesus Christ (His person) and Him crucified (His office)” [ALFORD], not exalted on the earthly throne of David, but executed as the vilest malefactor. The historical fact of Christ’s crucifixion had probably been put less prominently forward by the seekers after human wisdom in the Corinthian church, to avoid offending learned heathens and Jews. Christ’s *person* and Christ’s *office* constitute the sum of the Gospel.

3. **I** — the *preacher*: as ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 2:2 describes the *subject*, “Christ crucified,” and ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 2:4 the *mode* of preaching: “my speech ... not with enticing words,” “but in demonstration of the Spirit.”

weakness — personal and bodily (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 10:10 12:7,9 ^{<400>}Galatians 4:13).

trembling — (compare ^{<400>}Philippians 2:12). Not *personal fear*, but a *trembling anxiety to perform a duty*; anxious conscientiousness, as proved by the contrast to “eye service” (^{<400>}Ephesians 6:5) [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

4. **my speech** — in private.

preaching — in public [BENGEL]. ALFORD explains it, *My discourse* on doctrines, and *my preaching* or announcement of facts.

enticing — rather, “persuasive.”

man’s wisdom — *man’s* is omitted in the oldest authorities. Still “wisdom” does refer to “man’s” wisdom.

in demonstration of ... Spirit, etc. — *Persuasion* is man’s means of moving his fellow man. God’s means is *demonstration*, leaving no doubt, and inspiring implicit faith, by the powerful working of the Spirit (then exhibited both outwardly by miracles, and inwardly by working on the heart, now in the latter and the more important way only, ^{<400>}Matthew 7:29 ^{<400>}Acts 6:10 ^{<400>}Hebrews 4:12; compare also ^{<400>}Romans 15:19). The same simple power accompanies divine truth now, producing certain persuasion and conversion, when the Spirit demonstrates by it.

5. stand in ... wisdom of men — rest on it, owe its origin and continuance to it.

6, 7. Yet the Gospel preaching, so far from being at variance with true “wisdom,” is a wisdom infinitely higher than that of the wise of the world.

we speak — resuming “we” (preachers, I, Apollos, etc.). from “we preach” (^{<403>}1 Corinthians 1:28), only that here, “we speak” refers to something less public (compare ^{<407>}1 Corinthians 2:7,13, “mystery ... hidden”) than “we preach,” which is public. For “wisdom” here denotes not the whole of Christian doctrine, but its sublimer and deeper principles.

perfect — Those *matured in Christian experience and knowledge* alone can understand the true superiority of the Christian wisdom which Paul preached. Distinguished not only from *worldly* and *natural* men, but also from *babes*, who though “in Christ” retain much that is “carnal” (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 3:1,2), and cannot therefore understand the deeper truths of Christianity (^{<404>}1 Corinthians 14:20 ^{<405>}Philippians 3:15 ^{<404>}Hebrews 5:14). Paul does not mean by the “mystery” or “hidden wisdom” (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 2:7) some *hidden tradition distinct from the Gospel* (like the Church of Rome’s *disciplina arcani* and doctrine of reserve), but the *unfolding* of the treasures of knowledge, once hidden in God’s counsels, but *now* announced to all, which would be intelligently comprehended in proportion as the hearer’s inner life became perfectly transformed into the image of Christ. Compare instances of such “mysteries,” that is, deeper Christian truths, not preached at Paul’s first coming to Corinth, when he confined himself to the fundamental elements (^{<402>}1 Corinthians 2:2), but now spoken to the “perfect” (^{<403>}1 Corinthians 15:51 ^{<402>}Romans 11:25 ^{<403>}Ephesians 3:5,6). “Perfect” is used not of *absolute perfection*, but relatively to “babes,” or those less ripe in Christian growth (compare ^{<402>}Philippians 3:12,15, with ^{<402>}1 John 2:12-14). “God” (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 2:7) is opposed to the world, the apostles to “the princes [great and learned men] of this world” (^{<403>}1 Corinthians 2:8; compare ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 1:20) [BENGEL].

come to naught — nothingness (^{<403>}1 Corinthians 1:28). They are transient, not immortal. Therefore, their wisdom is not real [BENGEL]. Rather, translate with ALFORD, “Which *are being brought* to naught,” namely, by God’s choosing the “things which are not (the *weak and*

despised things of the Gospel), to bring to naught (the same verb as here) things that are” (ⲁⲓⲃⲱ 1 Corinthians 1:28).

7. wisdom of God — emphatically contrasted with the wisdom *of men* and *of this world* (ⲁⲓⲃⲱ 1 Corinthians 2:5,6).

in a mystery — connected in construction with “we speak”: We speak as dealing with a mystery; that is not something *to be kept hidden*, but what heretofore was so, but is *now revealed*. Whereas the pagan mysteries were revealed only to a chosen few, the Gospel mysteries were made known to all who would obey the truth. “If our Gospel be *hid*, it is hid to them that are *lost*” (ⲁⲓⲃⲱ 2 Corinthians 4:3), “whom the God of this world hath *blinded*.” Ordinarily we use “mystery” in reference to those from whom the knowledge is *withheld*; the apostles, in reference to those to whom it is *revealed* [WHATELY]. It is hidden before it is brought forward, and when it is brought forward it still remains hidden to those that are imperfect [BENGEL].

ordained — literally, “foreordained” (compare ⲁⲓⲃⲱ 1 Corinthians 2:9), “prepared for them that love Him.”

before the world — rather, “before *the ages*” (of time), that is, from eternity. This infinitely antedates worldly wisdom in antiquity. It was before not only the wisdom of the world, but eternally before the world itself and its ages.

to our glory — ours both now and hereafter, from “the Lord of *glory*” (ⲁⲓⲃⲱ 1 Corinthians 2:8), who *brings to naught* “the princes of this world.”

8. Which — wisdom. The strongest proof of the natural man’s destitution of heavenly wisdom.

crucified ... Lord of glory — implying the inseparable connection of Christ’s humanity and His divinity. The Lord of glory (which He had in His own right before the world was, ⲁⲓⲃⲱ John 17:4,24) was crucified.

9. But — (it has happened) as it is written.

Eye hath not seen, etc. — ALFORD translates, “The things which eye saw not ... the things which God prepared ... to us God revealed through His Spirit.” Thus, however, the “but” of ⲁⲓⲃⲱ 1 Corinthians 2:10 is ignored.

Rather construe, as ESTIUS, “(‘We speak,’ supplied from ⁴¹⁸1 Corinthians 2:8), things which eye saw not (heretofore), ... things which God prepared ... But God revealed them to us,” etc. The quotation is not a verbatim one, but an inspired *exposition* of the “wisdom” (⁴¹⁶1 Corinthians 2:6, from ²⁶⁰Isaiah 64:4). The exceptive words, “O God, *beside* (that is, except) Thee,” are not quoted directly, but are virtually expressed in the exposition of them (⁴¹⁰1 Corinthians 2:10), “None *but thou*, O God, seest these mysteries, and *God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit.*”

entered — literally, “come up into the heart.” A Hebraism (compare, ⁴¹⁸Jeremiah 3:16, *Margin*). In ²⁶⁰Isaiah 64:4 it is “Prepared (literally, ‘will do’) for him that *waiteth for Him*”; here, “for them that *love Him*.” For Isaiah spake to them who *waited for* Messiah’s appearance as future; Paul, to them *who love Him* as having actually appeared (⁶⁰⁹1 John 4:19); compare ⁴¹²1 Corinthians 2:12, “the things that are freely given to us of God”

10. revealed ... by ... Spirit — The inspiration of thoughts (so far as truth essential to salvation is concerned) makes the *Christian* (⁴¹⁸1 Corinthians 3:16 ^{12:3} ⁴¹⁶Matthew 16:17 ⁴¹⁸John 16:13 ⁴¹²1 John 2:20,27); that of *words*, the *PROPHET* (⁴¹²2 Samuel 23:1,2 ⁴¹³1 Kings 13:1,5), “by the *word of the Lord*” (⁴¹³1 Corinthians 2:13 ⁴¹⁸John 20:30,31 ⁴¹²2 Peter 1:21). The secrets of revelation are secret to some, not because those who know them will not reveal them (for indeed, the very notion of *revelation* implies an unveiling of what had been veiled), but because those to whom they are announced have not the will or power to comprehend them. Hence the Spirit-taught alone know these secrets (⁴¹⁴Psalms 25:14 ⁴¹⁸Proverbs 3:32 ⁴¹⁷John 7:17 15:15).

unto us — the “perfect” or fully matured in Christian experience (⁴¹⁶1 Corinthians 2:6). Intelligent men may understand the outline of doctrines; but without the Holy Spirit’s revelation to the heart, these will be to them a mere outline — a skeleton, correct perhaps, but wanting life [WHATLEY, *Cautions for the Times*, 14], (⁴¹²Luke 10:21).

the Spirit searcheth — working in us and with our spirits (compare ⁴¹⁸Romans 8:16,26,27). The Old Testament shows us God (the Father) for us. The Gospels, God (the Son) with us. The Acts and Epistles, God (the Holy Ghost) in us [MONOD], (⁴¹⁴Galatians 3:14).

deep things of God — (^{<B1B>}Psalm 92:5). His divine nature, attributes, and counsels. The Spirit delights to explore the infinite depths of His own divine mind, and then reveal them to us, according as we are capable of understanding them (^{<B1B>}Deuteronomy 29:29). This proves the personality and Godhead of the Holy Ghost. Godhead cannot be separated from the Spirit of God, as manhood cannot be separated from the Spirit of man [BENGEL].

11. what man, etc. — literally, “who of *men* knoweth the things of a *man*, save the spirit of that man?”

things of God knoweth no man — rather, “*none* knoweth,” not angel or man. This proves the impossibility of any knowing the things of God, save by the Spirit of God (who alone knows them, since even in the case of man, so infinitely inferior in mind to God, none of his fellow men, but his own spirit alone knows the things hidden within him).

12. we ... received, not ... spirit of ... world — the personal evil “spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (^{<B1B>}Ephesians 2:2). This spirit is natural in the unregenerate, and needs not to be *received*.

Spirit which is of God — that is, which comes from God. We have received it only by the *gift* of God, whose Spirit it is, whereas our own spirit is the spirit that is in us men (^{<B1B>}1 Corinthians 2:11).

that we might know ... things ... freely given ... of God — present experimental knowledge, to our unspeakable comfort, of His deep mysteries of wisdom, and of our future possession of the good “things which God hath prepared for them that love Him” (^{<B1B>}1 Corinthians 2:9).

13. also — We not only *know* by the Holy Ghost, but *we also speak* the “things freely given to us of God” (^{<B1B>}1 Corinthians 2:12).

which the Holy Ghost teacheth — The old manuscripts read “the Spirit” simply, without “Holy.”

comparing spiritual things with spiritual — expounding the Spirit-inspired Old Testament Scripture, by comparison with the Gospel which Jesus by the same Spirit revealed [GROTIUS]; and conversely illustrating the Gospel mysteries by comparing them with the Old Testament types

[CHRYSTOSTOM]. So the *Greek* word is translated, “comparing” (^{<402}2 Corinthians 10:12). WAHL (*Key of the New Testament*) translates, “*explaining* (as the *Greek* is translated, ^{<408}Genesis 40:8, the *Septuagint*) to spiritual (that is, Spirit-taught) men, spiritual things (the things which we ourselves are taught by the Spirit).” Spirit-taught men alone can comprehend spiritual truths. This accords with ^{<406}1 Corinthians 2:6,9,10,14,15 ^{<401}1 Corinthians 3:1. ALFORD translates, “Putting together (combining) spirituals with spirituals”; that is, attaching spiritual *words* to spiritual *things*, which we should not do, if we were to use words of worldly wisdom to expound spiritual things (so ^{<401}1 Corinthians 2:1,4 ^{<601}1 Peter 4:11). Perhaps the generality of the neuters is designed to comprehend these several notions by implication. Comparing, or combining, spirituals with spirituals; implying both that spiritual things are only suited to spiritual persons (so “things” comprehended *persons*, ^{<402}1 Corinthians 1:27), and also that spiritual truths can only be combined with spiritual (not worldly-wise) words; and lastly, spirituals of the Old and New Testaments can only be understood by mutual comparison or combination, not by combination with worldly “wisdom,” or natural perceptions (^{<402}1 Corinthians 1:21,22 2:1,4-9; compare ^{<406}Psalm 119:18).

14. natural man — literally, “a man of animal soul.” As contrasted with the *spiritual* man, he is governed by the animal soul, which overbears his *spirit*, which latter is without the Spirit of God (^{<419}Jude 1:19). So the *animal* (*English Version*, “natural”) body, or body led by the lower animal nature (including both the mere human fallen *reason* and *heart*), is contrasted with the Spirit-quickenened body (^{<454}1 Corinthians 15:44-46). The *carnal* man (the man led by bodily appetites, and also by a self-exalting spirit, estranged from the divine life) is closely akin; so too the “earthly.” “Devilish,” or “demon-like”; “led by an evil spirit,” is the awful character of such a one, in its worst type (^{<485}James 3:15).

receiveth not — though they are offered to him, and are “worthy of being received by all men” (^{<505}1 Timothy 1:15).

they are foolishness unto him — whereas he seeks “wisdom” (^{<402}1 Corinthians 1:22).

neither can he — Not only *does* he not, but he *cannot* know them, and therefore has no wish to “receive” them (^{<480}Romans 8:7).

15. He that is spiritual — literally, “*the* spiritual (man).” In ^{<4124>}1 Corinthians 2:14, it is “A [not ‘*the*,’ as *English Version*] natural man.” *The spiritual* is *the* man distinguished above his fellow men, as he in whom the Spirit rules. In the unregenerate, the spirit which ought to be the organ of the Holy Spirit (and which is so in the regenerate), is overridden by the animal soul, and is in abeyance, so that such a one is never called “spiritual.”

judgeth all things — and persons, by their true standard (compare ^{<4124>}1 Corinthians 6:2-4 ^{<4101>}1 John 4:1), in so far as he is spiritual. “Discerneth ... is discerned,” would better accord with the translation of the same *Greek* (^{<4124>}1 Corinthians 2:14). Otherwise for “discerned,” in ^{<4124>}1 Corinthians 2:14, translate, “judged of,” to accord with the translation, “judgeth ... is judged” in this fifteenth verse. He has a practical insight into the verities of the Gospel, though he is not infallible on all theoretical points. If an individual may have the Spirit without being infallible, why may not the Church have the Spirit, and yet not be infallible (a refutation of the plea of Rome for the Church’s infallibility, from ^{<4124>}Matthew 28:20 ^{<4103>}John 16:13)? As the believer and the Church have the Spirit, and are yet not therefore impeccable, so he and the Church have the Spirit, and yet are not infallible or impeccable. He and the Church are both infallible and impeccable, only in proportion to the *degree* in which they are led by the Spirit. The Spirit leads into all truth and holiness; but His influence on believers and on the Church is as yet partial. Jesus alone, who had the Spirit without measure (^{<4124>}John 3:34), is both infallible and impeccable. Scripture, because it was written by men, who while writing were infallibly inspired, is unmixed truth (^{<4105>}Proverbs 28:5 ^{<4122>}1 John 2:27).

16. For — proof of ^{<4125>}1 Corinthians 2:15, that the spiritual man “is judged of no man.” In order to judge the spiritual man, the ordinary man must “know the mind of the Lord.” But “who of ordinary men knows” that?

that he may instruct him — that is, so as to be able to set Him right as His counsellor (quoted from ^{<3012>}Isaiah 40:13,14). So the *Septuagint* translates the *Greek* verb, which means to “prove,” in ^{<4122>}Acts 9:22. Natural men who judge spiritual men, living according to the mind of God (“We have the mind of Christ”), are virtually wishing to instruct God, and bring Him to another mind, as counsellors setting to right their king.

we have the mind of Christ — in our degree of capability to apprehend it. ²⁰¹⁵Isaiah 40:13,14 refers to JEHOVAH: therefore, as it is applied here to *Christ*, He is Jehovah.

CHAPTER 3

1 CORINTHIANS 3:1-23.

PAUL COULD NOT SPEAK TO THEM OF DEEP SPIRITUAL TRUTHS, AS THEY WERE CARNAL, CONTENDING FOR THEIR SEVERAL TEACHERS; THESE ARE NOTHING BUT WORKERS FOR GOD, TO WHOM THEY MUST GIVE ACCOUNT IN THE DAY OF FIERY JUDGMENT. THE HEARERS ARE GOD'S TEMPLE, WHICH THEY MUST NOT DEFILE BY CONTENTIONS FOR TEACHERS, WHO, AS WELL AS ALL THINGS, ARE THEIRS, BEING CHRIST'S.

1. And I — that is, as the natural (animal) man cannot receive, so *I also could not speak unto you* the deep things of God, *as I would to the spiritual; but I was compelled to speak to you as I would to MEN OF FLESH.* The oldest manuscripts read this for “carnal.” The former (literally, “fleshy”) implies men wholly *of flesh*, or *natural*. *Carnal*, or *fleshly*, implies not they were *wholly natural* or unregenerate (^{<4014>}1 Corinthians 2:14), but that they had much of a *carnal tendency*; for example their divisions. Paul had to speak to them as he would to men *wholly natural*, inasmuch as they are *still carnal* (^{<4018>}1 Corinthians 3:3) in many respects, notwithstanding their conversion (^{<4004>}1 Corinthians 1:4-9).

babes — contrasted with the *perfect* (fully matured) *in Christ* (^{<5003>}Colossians 1:28; compare ^{<5013>}Hebrews 5:13,14). This implies they were not men wholly *of flesh*, though carnal in tendencies. They had life in Christ, but it was weak. He blames them for being still in a degree (not *altogether*, compare ^{<4015>}1 Corinthians 1:5,7; therefore he says *as babes* in Christ, when by this time they ought to have “come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (^{<4013>}Ephesians 4:13). In ^{<4014>}Romans 7:14, also the oldest manuscripts read, “I am a man *of flesh*.”

2. (^{<5012>}Hebrews 5:12).

milk — the elementary “principles of the doctrine of Christ.”

3. envying — jealousy, *rivalry*. As this refers to their *feelings*, “strife” refers to their *words*, and “divisions” to their *actions* [BENGEL]. There is a gradation, or ascending climax: *envying* had produced *strife*, and *strife divisions* (factional parties) [GROTIUS]. His language becomes severer now as He proceeds; in ^{<4011>}1 Corinthians 1:11 he had only said “contentions,” he now multiplies the words (compare the stronger term, ^{<4006>}1 Corinthians 4:6, than in ^{<4023>}1 Corinthians 3:21).

carnal — For “strife” is a “work of the flesh” (^{<4021>}Galatians 5:20). The “flesh” includes all feelings that aim not at the glory of God, and the good of our neighbor, but at gratifying self.

walk as men — as unregenerate men (compare ^{<4023>}Matthew 16:23). “After the flesh, not after the Spirit” of God, as becomes you as regenerate by the Spirit (^{<4004>}Romans 8:4 ^{<4025>}Galatians 5:25,26).

4. (^{<4012>}1 Corinthians 1:12).

are ye not carnal — The oldest manuscripts read, “Are ye not *men*?” that is, “walking as men” unregenerate (^{<4021>}1 Corinthians 3:3).

5. Who then — Seeing then that ye severally strive so for your favorite teachers, “Who is (of what intrinsic power and dignity) Paul?” If so great an apostle reasons so of himself, how much more does humility, rather than self-seeking, become ordinary ministers!

Paul ... Apollos — The oldest manuscripts read in the reverse order, “Apollos,” etc. Paul.” He puts Apollos before himself in humility.

but ministers, etc. — The oldest manuscripts have no “but.” “Who is Apollos ... Paul? (mere) ministers (a lowly word appropriate here, *servants*), by whom (not “*in whom*”; *by whose ministrations*) ye believed.”

as ... Lord gave to every man — that is, to the several hearers, for it was GOD that “gave the increase” (^{<4021>}1 Corinthians 3:6).

6. I ... planted, Apollos watered — (^{<4012>}Acts 18:1 19:1). Apollos at his own desire (^{<4027>}Acts 18:27) was sent by the brethren to Corinth, and there followed up the work which Paul had begun.

God gave the increase — that is, the growth (⁴⁸⁰1 Corinthians 3:10 ⁴⁸⁷Acts 18:27). “Believed through *grace*.” Though ministers are nothing, and God all in all, yet God works by instruments, and promises the Holy Spirit in the faithful use of means. This is the dispensation of the Spirit, and ours is the ministry of the Spirit.

7. neither is he that ... anything ... but God — namely, is all in all. “God” is emphatically last in the *Greek*, “He that giveth the increase (namely), GOD.” Here follows a parenthesis, ⁴⁸⁸1 Corinthians 3:8-21, where “Let no man glory in men” stands in antithetic contrast to “God” here.

8. one — essentially in their aim they are *one*, engaged in one and the same ministry; therefore they ought not to be made by you the occasion of forming separate parties.

and every man — rather “*but every man*.” Though in their service or ministry, they are essentially “one,” yet every minister is separately responsible in “*his own*” work, and “shall receive *his own* (emphatically repeated) reward, according to *his own* labor.” The *reward* is something over and above personal salvation (⁴⁸⁴1 Corinthians 3:14,15 ⁶⁰⁰2 John 1:8). He shall be rewarded according to, not his success or the amount of work done, but “according to his own labor.” It shall be said to him, “Well done, thou good and (not *successful*, but) *faithful* servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (⁴⁸³Matthew 25:23).

9. Translate, as the *Greek* collocation of words, and the emphasis on “God” thrice repeated, requires, “For (in proof that “each shall receive reward according to his own labor,” namely, from God) it is of God that we are the fellow workers (laboring *with*, but *under*, and *belonging* to Him as His servants, ⁴⁸⁹2 Corinthians 5:20 6:1; compare ⁴⁸⁶Acts 15:4; see on ⁴⁸⁰1 Thessalonians 3:2) of God that ye are the field (or tillage), of God that ye are the building” [ALFORD]. “Building” is a new image introduced here, as suited better than that of husbandry, to set forth the different kinds of teaching and their results, which he is now about to discuss. “To edify” or “build up” the Church of Christ is similarly used (⁴⁸²Ephesians 2:21,22 4:29).

10. grace ... given unto me — Paul puts this first, to guard against seeming to want humility, in pronouncing himself “a WISE master builder,” in the clause following [CHRYSOSTOM]. The “grace” is that “given” to him in common with all Christians (◊1 Corinthians 3:5), only proportioned to the work which God had for him to do [ALFORD].

wise — that is, skillful. His *skill* is shown in his *laying a foundation*. The unskilful builder lays none (◊Luke 6:49). Christ is the foundation (◊1 Corinthians 3:11).

another — who ever comes after me. He does not name *Apollos*; for he speaks generally of *all successors*, whoever they be. His warning, “Let every man (every *teacher*) take heed how,” etc. refers to other successors rather than *Apollos*, who doubtless did not, as they, build wood, hay, etc., on the foundation (compare ◊1 Corinthians 4:15). “I have done my part, let them who follow me see (so the *Greek* for ‘take heed’) to theirs” [BENGEL].

how — with what material [ALFORD]. How far *wisely*, and in builder-like style (◊1 Peter 4:11).

buildeth thereupon — Here the *building* or *superstructure* raised on Christ the “foundation,” laid by Paul (◊1 Corinthians 2:2) is not, as in ◊Ephesians 2:20,21, the Christian Church made up of believers, the “lively stones” (◊1 Peter 2:5), but *the doctrinal and practical teaching* which the teachers who succeeded Paul, superadded to his first teaching; not that they taught what was false, but their teaching was subtle and speculative reasoning, rather than solid and simple truth.

11. (◊Isaiah 28:16 ◊Acts 4:12 ◊Ephesians 2:20).

For — my warning (“take heed,” etc. ◊1 Corinthians 3:10) is as to the superstructure (“buildeth *thereupon*”), not as to *the foundation*: “For other *foundation* can no man lay, than that which has (already) been laid (by God) Jesus Christ,” the person, not the mere abstract doctrine about Him, though the latter also is included; *Jesus*, GOD-SAVIOR; *Christ*, MESSIAH or ANOINTED.

can — A man *can* not lay any other, since the only one recognized by God has been already laid.

12. Now — rather, “But.” The image is that of a building on a solid foundation, and partly composed of durable and precious, partly of perishable, materials. The “gold, silver, precious stones,” which all can withstand fire (⁶²¹⁸Revelation 21:18,19), are *teachings* that will stand the fiery test of judgment; “wood, hay, stubble,” are those which cannot stand it; not positive heresy, for that would destroy the foundation, but teaching mixed up with human philosophy and Judaism, curious rather than useful. Besides the *teachings*, the superstructure represents also the *persons* cemented to the Church by them, the reality of whose conversion, through the teachers’ instrumentality, will be tested at the last day. Where there is the least grain of real gold of faith, it shall never be lost (⁴⁰⁰¹1 Peter 1:7; compare ⁴⁰⁰²1 Corinthians 4:12). On the other hand, the lightest straw feeds the fire [BENGEL] (⁴⁰⁰³Matthew 5:19).

13. Every man’s work — each teacher’s superstructure on the foundation.

the day — of the Lord (⁴⁰⁰⁸1 Corinthians 1:8 ³⁹⁰⁵Hebrews 10:25 ⁵⁰⁰⁴1 Thessalonians 5:4). The article is emphatic, “*The* day,” that is, the great day of days, the long expected day.

declare it — old English for “make it clear” (⁴⁰⁰⁴1 Corinthians 4:4).

it shall be revealed by fire — it, that is, “every man’s work.” Rather, “*He*,” the Lord, whose day it is (⁵⁰⁰²2 Thessalonians 1:7,8). Translate literally, “*is being revealed* (the present in the *Greek* implies the *certainty* and *nearness* of the event, ⁶⁶²⁰Revelation 22:10,20) in fire” (³⁹⁰⁶Malachi 3:3 4:1). The *fire* (probably *figurative* here, as the *gold, hay*, etc.). is not *purgatory* (as Rome teaches, that is, *purificatory* and *punitive*), but *probatory*, not restricted to those dying in “venial sin”; the supposed *intermediate class* between those entering heaven at once, and those dying in mortal sin who go to hell, but *universal*, testing the godly and ungodly alike (⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 5:10; compare ⁴⁰⁰⁴Mark 9:49). This fire is not till the last day, the supposed fire of purgatory begins *at death*. The fire of Paul is to try the *works*, the fire of purgatory the *persons*, of men. Paul’s fire causes “loss” to the sufferers; Rome’s purgatory, great gain, namely, heaven at last to those purged by it, if only it were true. Thus this passage, quoted by Rome for, is altogether against, purgatory. “It was not this doctrine that gave rise to prayers for the dead; but the practice of praying

for the dead [which crept in from the affectionate but mistaken solicitude of survivors] gave rise to the doctrine” [WHATELY].

14. abide — abide the testing fire (^{<4081b>} Matthew 3:11,12).

which he hath built thereupon — which he built *on the foundation*.

reward — *wages*, as a builder, that is, teacher. His converts built on Christ the foundation, through his faithful teaching, shall be his “crown of rejoicing” (^{<4014>} 2 Corinthians 1:14 ^{<4076>} Philippians 2:16 ^{<409>} 1 Thessalonians 2:19).

15. If ... be burnt — if any *teacher’s* work consist of such materials as the fire will destroy [ALFORD].

suffer loss — that is, forfeit the special “reward”; not that he shall lose salvation (which is altogether a *free gift*, not a “reward” or wages), for he remains still on the foundation (^{<4082>} 1 Corinthians 3:12 ^{<600>} 2 John 1:6).

saved; yet so as by fire — rather, “so as *through* fire” (^{<308>} Zechariah 3:2 ^{<4011>} Amos 4:11 ^{<612>} Jude 1:23). “Saved, yet *not without* fire” (^{<407>} Romans 2:27) [BENGEL]. As a builder whose building, not the foundation, is consumed by fire, escapes, but with the loss of his work [ALFORD]; as the shipwrecked merchant, though he has lost his merchandise, is saved, though having to pass *through* the waves [BENGEL]; ^{<3081>} Malachi 3:1,2 4:1, give the key to explain the imagery. The “Lord suddenly coming to His temple” in flaming “fire,” all the parts of the building which will not stand that fire will be consumed; the builders will escape with personal salvation, but with the loss of their work, through the midst of the conflagration [ALFORD]. Again, a distinction is recognized between minor and fundamental doctrines (if we regard the superstructure as representing the *doctrines* superadded to the elementary essentials); a man may err as to the former, and yet be saved, but not so as to the latter (compare ^{<4085>} Philippians 3:15).

16. Know ye not — It is no new thing I tell you, in calling you “God’s building”; ye know and ought to remember, ye are the noblest kind of building, “the temple of God.”

ye — all Christians form together one vast temple. The expression is not, “ye are *temples*,” but “ye are *the temple*” collectively, and “lively stones” (⁴⁰¹⁵1 Peter 2:5) individually.

God ... Spirit — God’s indwelling, and that of the Holy Spirit, are one; therefore the Holy Spirit is God. No literal “temple” is recognized by the New Testament in the Christian Church. The only one is the spiritual temple, the whole body of believing worshippers in which the Holy Spirit dwells (⁴¹¹⁹1 Corinthians 6:19 ⁴¹⁰²John 4:23,24). The *synagogue*, not the temple, was the model of the Christian house of worship. The temple was the *house of sacrifice*, rather than of prayer. Prayers in the temple were silent and individual (⁴¹¹⁰Luke 1:10 18:10-13), not joint and public, nor with reading of Scripture, as in the synagogue. The temple, as the name means (from a *Greek* root “to dwell”), was the earthly *dwelling-place of God*, where alone He put His name. The synagogue (as the name means an *assembly*) was the place for assembling men. God now too has His earthly temple, not one of wood and stone, but the congregation of believers, the “living stones” on the “spiritual house.” Believers are all spiritual priests in it. Jesus Christ, our High Priest, has the only literal priesthood (⁴³⁰¹Malachi 1:11 ⁴¹⁸¹Matthew 18:20 ⁴⁰¹⁵1 Peter 2:5) [VITRINGA].

17. If any ... defile ... destroy — rather as the *Greek* verb is the same in both cases, “*destroy ... destroy.*” God repays in kind by a righteous retaliation. The destroyer shall himself be destroyed. As temporal death was the penalty of marring the material temple (⁴³⁴²Leviticus 16:2 ⁴⁷¹²Daniel 5:2,3,30), so eternal death is the penalty of marring the spiritual temple — the Church. The *destroyers* here (⁴⁴¹⁶1 Corinthians 3:16,17), are distinct from the *unwise* or unskilful builders (⁴¹⁸²1 Corinthians 3:12,15); the latter held fast the “foundation” (⁴¹⁸¹1 Corinthians 3:11), and, therefore, though they lose their work of superstructure and the special reward, yet they are themselves saved; the destroyers, on the contrary, assailed with false teaching the foundation, and so subvert the temple itself, and shall therefore be destroyed. (See on ⁴¹⁸¹1 Corinthians 3:10), [ESTIUS and NEANDER]. I think Paul passes here from the teachers to all the members of the Church, who, by profession, are “priests unto God” (⁴²⁹¹Exodus 19:6 ⁴⁰¹⁵1 Peter 2:9 ⁴⁰¹⁶Revelation 1:6). As the Aaronic priests were doomed to die if they violated the old temple (⁴²⁸³Exodus 28:43), so any Christian who

violates the sanctity of the spiritual temple, shall perish eternally (^{<324}Hebrews 12:14 10:26,31).

holy — inviolable (^{<321}Habakkuk 2:20).

which temple ye are — rather, “the which (that is, holy) are ye” [ALFORD], and, therefore, want of holiness on the part of any of you (or, as ESTIUS, “to tamper with *the foundation in teaching you*”) is a violation of the temple, which cannot be let to pass with impunity. GROTIUS supports *English Version*.

18. seemeth — that is, *is, and is regarded by himself and others*.

wise in this world — wise in mere worldly wisdom (^{<411}1 Corinthians 1:20).

let him become a fool — by receiving the Gospel in its unworldly simplicity, and so *becoming a fool in the world’s sight* [ALFORD]. Let him *no longer think himself wise*, but seek the true wisdom from God, bringing his understanding into captivity to the obedience of faith [ESTIUS].

19. with God — *in the judgment of God*.

it is written — in ^{<383}Job 5:13. The formula of quoting SCRIPTURE used here, establishes the canonicity of Job.

He taketh ... wise in ... own craftiness — proving the “foolishness” of the world’s wisdom, since it is made by God the very snare to catch those who think themselves so wise. Literally, “He who taketh ... the whole of the sentence not being quoted, but only the part which suited Paul’s purpose.

20. Quotation from ^{<3911}Psalms 94:11. There it is *of men*; here it is “of the wise.” Paul by inspiration states the class of men whose “thoughts” (or rather, “reasonings,” as suits the *Greek* and the sense of the context) the Spirit designated in the Psalm, “vanity,” namely, the “proud” (^{<3912}Psalms 94:2) and worldly-wise, whom God in ^{<3913}Psalms 94:8 calls “fools,” though they “boast themselves” of their *wisdom* in pushing their interests (^{<3914}Psalms 94:4).

21. let no man glory in men — resuming the subject from ^{<604>}1 Corinthians 3:4; compare ^{<612>}1 Corinthians 1:12,31, where the true object of glorying is stated: “He that glorieth, let him glory in THE LORD.” Also ^{<606>}1 Corinthians 4:6, “That no one of you be puffed up for one against another.”

For all things — not only *all men*. For you to glory thus in men, is lowering yourselves from your high position as heirs of *all things*. All men (including your teachers) belong to Christ, and therefore to you, by your union with Him; He makes them and all things work together for your good (^{<608>}Romans 8:28). Ye are not for the sake of them, but they for the sake of you (^{<605>}2 Corinthians 4:5,15). They belong to you, not you to them.

22. Enumeration of some of the “all things.” The teachers, in whom they gloried, he puts first (^{<612>}1 Corinthians 1:12). He omits after “Cephas” *or Christ* (to whom exclusively some at Corinth, ^{<612>}1 Corinthians 1:12, professed to belong); but, instead, substitutes “ye are Christ’s” (^{<603>}1 Corinthians 3:23).

world ... life ... death ... things present ... things to come — Not only shall they not “separate you from the love of God in Christ” (^{<608>}Romans 8:38,39), but they “all are yours,” that is, are for you (^{<608>}Romans 8:28), and belong to you, as they belong to Christ your Head (^{<600>}Hebrews 1:2).

things present — “things *actually* present” [ALFORD].

23. ye are Christ’s — not Paul’s, or Apollos,’ or Cephas’ (^{<610>}1 Corinthians 11:3 ^{<618>}Matthew 23:8-10). “Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ” (^{<610>}Romans 14:8). Not merely a particular section of you, but ye all are Christ’s (^{<612>}1 Corinthians 1:12).

Christ is God’s — (^{<610>}1 Corinthians 11:3). God is the ultimate end of all, even of Christ, His co-equal Son (^{<613>}1 Corinthians 15:28 ^{<607>}Philippians 2:6-11).

CHAPTER 4

1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-21.

TRUE VIEW OF MINISTERS: THE JUDGMENT IS NOT TO BE FORESTALLED; MEANWHILE THE APOSTLES' LOW STATE CONTRASTS WITH THE CORINTHIANS' PARTY PRIDE, NOT THAT PAUL WOULD SHAME THEM, BUT AS A FATHER WARN THEM; FOR WHICH END HE SENT TIMOTHY, AND WILL SOON COME HIMSELF.

1. account ... us — Paul and Apollos.

ministers of Christ — not heads of the Church in whom ye are severally to glory (⁴⁰¹²1 Corinthians 1:12); the headship belongs to Christ alone; we are but His servants ministering to you (⁴⁰¹³1 Corinthians 1:13 3:5,22).

stewards — (⁴⁰²⁰Luke 12:42 ⁴⁰¹⁰1 Peter 4:10). Not the depositories of grace, but dispensers of it (“rightly dividing” or *dispensing* it), so far as God gives us it, to others. The *chazan*, or “overseer,” in the synagogue answered to the *bishop* or “angel” of the Church, who called seven of the synagogue to read the law every sabbath, and *oversaw* them. The *parnasin* of the synagogue, like the ancient “deacon” of the Church, took care of the poor (⁴⁰¹⁶Acts 6:1-7) and subsequently preached in subordination to the presbyters or bishops, as Stephen and Philip did. The Church is not the appendage to the priesthood; but the minister is the steward of God to the Church. Man shrinks from too close contact with God; hence he willingly puts a priesthood between, and would serve God by deputy. The pagan (like the modern Romish) priest was rather to conceal than to explain “the mysteries of God.” The minister’s office is to “preach” (literally, “proclaim as a herald,” ⁴⁰¹⁷Matthew 10:27) the deep truths of God (“mysteries,” heavenly truths, only known by revelation), so far as they have been revealed, and so far as his hearers are disposed to receive them. JOSEPHUS says that the Jewish religion made known to all the people the

mysteries of their religion, while the pagans concealed from all but the “initiated” few, the mysteries of theirs.

2. Moreover — The oldest manuscripts read, “Moreover here” (that is, on earth). The contrast thus is between man’s usage as to stewards (⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 4:2), and God’s way (⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 4:3). Though *here* below, *in the case of stewards, inquiry is made, that one man be found* (that is, proved to be) faithful; yet God’s steward awaits no such *judgment* of man, in man’s day, but the Lord’s judgment in His great day. Another argument against the Corinthians for their partial preferences of certain teachers for their gifts: whereas what God requires in His stewards is *faithfulness* (⁴⁰⁰1 Samuel 3:20, *Margin*; ⁴⁰⁰Hebrews 3:5); as indeed is required in earthly stewards, but with this difference (⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 4:3), that God’s stewards await not man’s judgment to test them, but the testing which shall be in the day of the Lord.

3. it is a very small thing — literally, “it amounts to a very small matter”; not that I despise *your* judgment, but as compared with God’s, it almost comes to nothing.

judged ... of man’s judgment — literally, “man’s day,” contrasted with the day (⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 3:13) of the Lord (⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 4:5 ⁴⁰⁰1 Thessalonians 5:4). “The day of man” is here put before us as a *person* [WAHL]. All days previous to the day of the Lord *are man’s days*. EMESTI translates the thrice recurring *Greek* for “judged ... judge ... judgeth” (⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 4:4), thus: To me for my part (though capable of being found faithful) it is a very small matter that I should *be approved of* by man’s judgment; yea, I do not even *assume the right of judgment and approving* myself — but He that *has the right, and is able to judge* on my case (the Dijudicator), is the Lord.

4. by myself — Translate, “I am conscious to myself of no (ministerial) unfaithfulness.” BENIGEL explains the *Greek* compound, “*to decide in judgments on* one in relation to others,” not simply to *judge*.

am I not hereby justified — Therefore conscience is not an infallible guide. Paul did not consider his so. This verse is directly against the judicial power claimed by the priests of Rome.

5. Disproving the judicial power claimed by the Romish priesthood in the confessional.

Therefore — as the Lord is the sole Decider or Dijudicator.

judge — not the same *Greek* word as in ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 4:3,4, where the meaning is to *approve of* or *decide on*, the merits of one's case. Here all *judgments* in general are forbidden, which would, on our part, presumptuously forestall God's prerogative of final *judgment*.

Lord — Jesus Christ, whose “ministers” we are (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 4:1), and who is to be the judge (^{<410>}John 5:22,27 ^{<410>}Acts 10:42 17:31).

manifest ... hearts — Our judgments now (as those of the Corinthians respecting their teachers) are necessarily defective; as we only see the outward *act*, we cannot see the *motives* of “hearts.” “Faithfulness” (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 4:2) will hereby be estimated, and the “Lord” will “justify,” or the reverse (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 4:4), according to the state of the *heart*.

then shall every man have praise — (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 3:8 ^{<400>}1 Samuel 26:23 ^{<400>}Matthew 25:21,23 28). Rather, “*his due* praise,” not exaggerated praise, such as the Corinthians heaped on favorite teachers; “the praise” (so the *Greek*) due for acts estimated by the motives. “Then,” not before: therefore wait till *then* (^{<400>}James 5:7).

6. And — “Now,” marking transition.

in a figure transferred to myself — that is, I have represented under the persons of Apollos and myself what really holds good of all teachers, making us two a *figure* or *type* of all the others. I have mentioned us two, whose names have been used as a party cry; but under our names I mean others to be understood, whom I do not name, in order not to shame you [ESTIUS].

not to think, etc. — The best manuscripts omit “think.” Translate, “That in us (as your example) ye might learn (this), not (to go) beyond what is written.” Revere the *silence* of Holy Writ, as much as its *declarations*: so you will less dogmatize on what is not expressly revealed (^{<400>}Deuteronomy 29:29).

puffed up for one — namely, “for one (favorite minister) against another.” The *Greek* indicative implies, “That ye be not puffed up *as ye are*.”

7. Translate, “Who distinguisheth thee (above another)?” Not thyself, but God.

glory, as if thou hadst not received it — as if it was to thyself, not to God, thou owest the receiving of it.

8. Irony. Translate, “*Already* ye are filled full (with spiritual food), *already* ye are rich, ye have seated yourselves upon your throne as kings, without us.” The emphasis is on “already” and “without us”; ye act as if ye needed no more to “hunger and thirst after righteousness,” and as if already ye had reached the “kingdom” for which Christians have to strive and suffer. Ye are so puffed up with your favorite teachers, and your own fancied spiritual attainments in knowledge through them, that ye feel like those “filled full” at a feast, or as a “rich” man priding himself in his riches: so ye feel ye can now do “without us,” your first spiritual fathers (^{<4015>}1 Corinthians 4:15). They forgot that before the “kingdom” and the “fullness of joy,” at the marriage feast of the Lamb, must come the cross, and suffering, to every true believer (^{<4016>}2 Timothy 2:5,11,12). They were like the self-complacent Laodiceans (^{<4017>}Revelation 3:17; compare ^{<4018>}Hosea 12:8). *Temporal* fullness and riches doubtless *tended* in some cases at Corinth, to generate this spiritual self-sufficiency; the contrast to the apostle’s literal “hunger and thirst” (^{<4019>}1 Corinthians 4:11) proves this.

I would ... ye did reign — Translate, “I would *indeed*,” etc. I would truly it were so, and that your kingdom had really begun.

that we also might reign with you — (^{<4024>}2 Corinthians 12:14). “I seek not yours, but you.” Your spiritual prosperity would redound to that of us, your fathers in Christ (^{<4023>}1 Corinthians 9:23). When you reach the kingdom, you shall be our “crown of rejoicing, in the presence of our Lord Jesus” (^{<4025>}1 Thessalonians 2:19).

9. **For** — assigning the reason for desiring that the “reign” of himself and his fellow apostles with the Corinthians were come; namely, the present afflictions of the former.

I think — The Corinthians (<468>1 Corinthians 3:18) “seemed” to (literally, as here, “thought”) themselves “wise in this world.” Paul, in contrast, “thinks” that God has sent forth him and his fellow ministers “last,” that is, the lowest in this world. The apostles fared worse than even the prophets, who, though sometimes afflicted, were often honored (<411>2 Kings 1:10 5:9 8:9,12).

set forth — as a spectacle or gazing-stock.

us the apostles — Paul includes Apollos with the apostles, in the broader sense of the word; so <461>Romans 16:7 <402>2 Corinthians 8:23 (*Greek* for “messengers,” *apostles*).

as it were appointed to death — as criminals condemned to die.

made a spectacle — literally, “a theatrical spectacle.” So the *Greek* in <307>Hebrews 10:33, “made a *gazing-stock* by reproaches and afflictions.” Criminals “condemned to die,” in Paul’s time, were exhibited as a gazing-stock to amuse the populace in the amphitheater. They were “set forth last” in the show, to fight with wild beasts. This explains the imagery of Paul here. (Compare TERTULLIAN [*On Modesty*, 14]).

the world — to the whole world, including “both angels and men”; “the whole family in heaven and earth” (<405>Ephesians 3:15). As Jesus was “seen of angels” (<416>1 Timothy 3:16), so His followers are a spectacle to the holy angels who take a deep interest in all the progressive steps of redemption (<480>Ephesians 3:10 <402>1 Peter 1:12). Paul tacitly implies that though “last” and lowest in the world’s judgment, Christ’s servants are deemed by angels a spectacle worthy of their most intense regard [CHRYSOSTOM]. However, since “the world” is a comprehensive expression, and is applied in this Epistle to the evil especially (<402>1 Corinthians 1:27,28), and since the spectators (in the image drawn from the amphitheater) gaze at the show with savage delight, rather than with sympathy for the sufferers, I think *bad* angels are included, besides *good* angels. ESTIUS makes the *bad alone* to be meant. But the generality of the term “angels,” and its frequent use in a good sense, as well as <480>Ephesians 3:10 <402>1 Peter 1:12, incline me to include *good* as well as *bad* angels, though, for the reasons stated above, the bad may be principally meant.

10. Irony. How much your lot (*supposing it real*) is to be envied, and ours to be pitied.

fools — (⁴¹²1 Corinthians 1:21 3:18; compare ⁴⁴⁷⁸Acts 17:18 26:24).

for Christ's sake ... in Christ — Our connection with Christ only entails on us the lowest ignominy, "ON ACCOUNT OF," or, "FOR THE SAKE OF" Him, as "fools"; yours gives you full fellowship IN Him as "wise" (that is, *supposing you really are all you seem*, ⁴⁸⁸1 Corinthians 3:18).

we ... weak ... ye ... strong — (⁴¹²1 Corinthians 2:3 ⁴⁷³⁹2 Corinthians 13:9).

we ... despised — (⁴⁷⁰⁰2 Corinthians 10:10) because of our "weakness," and our not using worldly philosophy and rhetoric, on account of which ye Corinthians and your teachers are (seemingly) so "honorable." Contrast with "despised" the "ye (*Galatians*) despised not my temptation ... in my flesh" (⁴⁰⁴⁴Galatians 4:14).

11. (⁴⁷¹²2 Corinthians 11:23-27).

naked — that is, insufficiently clad (⁴⁸⁸⁵Romans 8:35).

buffeted — as a *slave* (⁴¹²³1 Peter 2:20), the reverse of the state of the Corinthians, "reigning as *kings*" (⁴²¹²Acts 23:2). So Paul's master before him was "buffeted" as a slave, when about to die a slave's death (⁴²⁶⁷Matthew 26:67).

12. working with our own hands — namely, "even unto this present hour" (⁴¹¹¹1 Corinthians 4:11). This is not stated in the *narrative* of Paul's proceedings at *Ephesus*, from which city he wrote this Epistle (though it is expressly stated of him *at Corinth*, compare ⁴⁴⁸³Acts 18:3,19). But in his *address* to the Ephesian elders at Miletus (⁴⁴⁸⁴Acts 20:34), he says, "Ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities," etc. The undesignedness of the coincidence thus indirectly brought out is incompatible with forgery.

13. defamed, we entreat — namely, God for our defamers, as Christ enjoined (⁴¹⁸¹Matthew 5:10,44) [GROTIUS]. We reply gently [ESTIUS].

filth — "the refuse" [CONYBEARE and HOWSON], the *sweepings* or *rubbish* thrown out after a cleaning.

of all things — not of the “World” only.

14. warn — rather, “admonish” as a father uses “admonition” to “beloved sons,” not provoking them to wrath (^{<400>}Ephesians 6:4). The Corinthians might well be “ashamed” at the disparity of state between the father, Paul, and his spiritual children themselves.

15. ten thousand — implying that the Corinthians had more of them than was desirable.

instructors — *tutors* who had the care of rearing, but had not the rights, or peculiar affection, of the father, who alone had begotten them spiritually.

in Christ — Paul admits that these “instructors” were not mere legalists, but *evangelical* teachers. He uses, however, a stronger phrase of himself in begetting them spiritually, “In Christ Jesus,” implying both the Savior’s *office and person*. As Paul was the means of spiritually *regenerating* them, and yet “baptized none of them save Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanas,” regeneration cannot be inseparably *in* and *by* baptism (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 1:14-17).

16. be ye followers of me — literally, “imitators,” namely, in my ways, which be in Christ (^{<407>}1 Corinthians 4:17 ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 11:1), not in my crosses (^{<408>}1 Corinthians 4:8-13 ^{<409>}Acts 26:29 ^{<402>}Galatians 4:12).

17. For this came — that ye may the better “be followers of me” (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 4:16), through his admonitions.

sent ... Timotheus — (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 16:10 ^{<402>}Acts 19:21,22). “Paul purposed ... when he had passed through Macedonia and *Achaia*, to go to Jerusalem. So he sent into Macedonia Timotheus and Erastus.” Here it is not expressly said that he sent Timothy into Achaia (of which Corinth was the capital), but it is *implied*, for he sent him with Erastus *before him*. As he therefore purposed to go into Achaia himself, there is every probability they were to go thither also. They are said only to have been sent into Macedonia, because it was the country to which they went immediately from Ephesus. The undesignedness of the coincidence establishes the genuineness of both the Epistle and the history. In both, Timothy’s journey is closely connected with Paul’s own (compare ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 4:19). Erastus is not specified in the Epistle, probably because

it was Timothy who was charged with Paul's orders, and possibly Erastus was a Corinthian, who, in accompanying Timothy, was only returning home. The seeming discrepancy at least shows that the passages were not taken from one another [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*].

son — that is, converted by me (compare ⁴⁰⁴⁴1 Corinthians 4:14,15 ⁴⁴⁴⁶Acts 14:6,7 with ⁴⁴⁴⁶Acts 16:1,2 ⁵⁰⁰²1 Timothy 1:2,18 ⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 1:2). Translate, "My son, beloved and faithful in the Lord."

bring you into remembrance — Timothy, from his spiritual connection with Paul, as converted by him, was best suited to *remind* them of the apostle's walk and teaching (⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 3:10), which they in some respects, though not altogether (⁴⁴⁴⁶1 Corinthians 11:2), had forgotten.

as I teach ... in every church — an argument implying that what the Spirit directed Paul to teach "everywhere" else, must be necessary at Corinth also (⁴⁴⁴⁶1 Corinthians 7:17).

18. some ... as though I would not come — He guards against some misconstruing (as by the Spirit he foresees they will, when his letter shall have arrived) his sending Timothy, "as though" he "would not come" (or, "were not coming") himself. A *puffed-up* spirit was the besetting sin of the Corinthians (compare ⁴⁴⁴⁶1 Corinthians 1:11 5:2).

19. ALFORD translates, "But come I will"; an emphatical negation of their supposition (⁴⁴⁴⁶1 Corinthians 4:18).

shortly — after Pentecost (⁴⁴⁴⁶1 Corinthians 16:8).

if the Lord will — a wise proviso (⁵⁰⁰²James 4:15). He does not seem to have been able to go as soon as he intended.

and will know — take cognizance of.

but the power — I care not for their high-sounding "speech," "but" what I desire to know is "their power," whether they be really powerful in the Spirit, or not. The predominant feature of Grecian character, a love for power of *discourse*, rather than that of godliness, showed itself at Corinth.

20. kingdom of God is not in word — Translate, as in ⁴⁴⁴⁶1 Corinthians 4:19, to which the reference is "speech." Not empty "speeches," but the

manifest “power” of the Spirit attests the presence of “the kingdom of God” (the *reign of the Gospel* spiritually), in a church or in an individual (compare ~~4011~~ 1 Corinthians 2:1,4 ~~5005~~ 1 Thessalonians 1:5).

21. with a rod, or in love — The *Greek* preposition is used in both clauses; must I come IN displeasure to exercise the *rod*, or IN love, and the Spirit of meekness (~~2304~~ Isaiah 11:4 ~~4733~~ 2 Corinthians 13:3)?

CHAPTER 5

1 CORINTHIANS 5:1-13.

THE INCESTUOUS PERSON AT CORINTH: THE CORINTHIANS REPROVED FOR CONNIVANCE, AND WARNED TO PURGE OUT THE BAD LEAVEN. QUALIFICATION OF HIS FORMER COMMAND AS TO ASSOCIATION WITH SINNERS OF THE WORLD.

1. commonly — rather, “actually” [ALFORD]. Absolutely [BENGEL]. “It is reported,” implies, that the Corinthians, though they “wrote” (~~1~~1 Corinthians 7:1) to Paul on other points, gave him no information on those things which bore against themselves. These latter matters reached the apostle indirectly (~~1~~1 Corinthians 1:11).

so much as named — The oldest manuscripts and authorities omit “named”: “Fornication of such a gross kind as (exists) not even among the heathen, so that one (of you) hath (in concubinage) his father’s wife,” that is, his stepmother, while his father is still alive (~~2~~2 Corinthians 7:12; compare ~~18~~Leviticus 18:8). She was perhaps a heathen, for which reason he does not direct his rebuke against her (compare ~~1~~1 Corinthians 5:12,13). ALFORD thinks “have” means *have in marriage*: but the connection is called “fornication,” and neither Christian nor Gentile *law* would have sanctioned such a *marriage*, however Corinth’s notorious profligacy might wink at the concubinage.

2. puffed up — with your own wisdom and knowledge, and the eloquence of your favorite teachers: at a time when ye ought to be “mourning” at the scandal caused to religion by the incest. Paul *mourned* because they did not mourn (~~2~~2 Corinthians 2:4). We ought to *mourn* over the transgressions of others, and *repent* of our own (~~12~~2 Corinthians 12:21) [BENGEL].

that — ye have not felt such mourning as would lead to the result *that*, etc.

taken away from among you — by excommunication. The incestuous person was hereby brought to bitter repentance, in the interval between the sending of the first and second Epistles (⁴¹⁰⁵2 Corinthians 2:5-10). Excommunication in the Christian Church corresponded to that in the Jewish synagogue, in there being a lighter and heavier form: the latter an utter separation from church fellowship and the Lord's house, the former exclusion from the Lord's Supper only but not from the Church.

3. as absent — The best manuscripts read, "being absent."

present in spirit — (⁴¹⁰⁵2 Kings 5:26 ⁵¹⁰⁵Colossians 2:5).

so done — rather, "perpetrated," as the *Greek* word here is stronger than that for "done" in ⁴¹⁰⁵1 Corinthians 5:2. "So," that is, so scandalously while called a brother.

4. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ — By His authority and as representing His *person* and will (⁴¹⁰⁵2 Corinthians 2:10). Join this with "to deliver such a one unto Satan" (⁴¹⁰⁵1 Corinthians 5:5). The clause, "When ye have been gathered together and my spirit (wherein I am 'present,' though 'absent in body,' ⁴¹⁰⁵1 Corinthians 5:3), with the power of our Lord Jesus," stands in a parenthesis between. Paul speaking of himself uses the word "spirit"; of Christ, "power." Christ's power was promised to be present with HIS Church "gathered together in His name" (⁴¹⁰⁵Matthew 18:18-20): and here Paul by inspiration gives a special promise of his apostolic spirit, which in such cases was guided by the Holy Spirit, ratifying their decree passed according to his *judgment* ("I have judged," ⁴¹⁰⁵1 Corinthians 5:3), as though he were present in person (⁴¹⁰⁵John 20:21-23 ⁴¹⁰⁵2 Corinthians 13:3-10). This power of infallible judgment was limited to the apostles; for they alone had the power of working miracles as their credentials to attest their infallibility. Their successors, to establish their claim to the latter, must produce the former (⁴¹⁰⁵2 Corinthians 12:2). Even the apostles in ordinary cases, and where not specially and consciously inspired, were fallible (⁴¹⁰⁵Acts 8:13,23 ⁴¹⁰⁵Galatians 2:11-14).

5. Besides excommunication (of which the Corinthians themselves had the power), Paul delegates here to the Corinthian Church *his own* special power as an apostle, of inflicting corporeal disease or death in punishment for sin ("to deliver to Satan such an one," that is, so heinous a sinner). For

instances of this power, see ⁽⁴⁸¹⁾Acts 5:1-11 13:11 ⁽⁵⁰⁰⁾1 Timothy 1:20. As Satan receives power at times to try the godly, as Job (⁽⁴⁸⁴⁾Job 2:4-7) and Paul (⁽⁴⁷²⁾2 Corinthians 12:7; compare also as to Peter, ⁽⁴²²⁾Luke 22:31), much more the ungodly. Satan, the “accuser of the brethren” (⁽⁶²⁰⁾Revelation 12:10) and the “adversary” (⁽⁴⁸⁸⁾1 Peter 5:8), demands the sinner for punishment on account of sin (⁽³⁰⁷⁾Zechariah 3:1). When God lets Satan have his way, He is said to “deliver the sinner unto Satan” (compare ⁽⁴⁹⁰⁾Psalms 109:6). Here it is not finally; but for the affliction of the body with disease, and even *death* (⁽⁴¹³⁾1 Corinthians 11:30,32), so as to *destroy fleshly lust*. He does not say, “for the destruction of the *body*,” for *it* shall share in redemption (⁽⁴⁸²⁾Romans 8:23); but of the corrupt “flesh” which “cannot inherit the kingdom of God,” and the lusts of which had prompted this offender to incest (⁽⁴¹⁰⁾Romans 7:5 8:9,10). The “destruction of the flesh” answers to “*mortify the deeds of the body*” (⁽⁴⁸³⁾Romans 8:13), only that the latter is done by one’s self, the former is effected by chastisement from God (compare ⁽⁴⁰⁶⁾1 Peter 4:6):

the spirit ... saved — the spiritual part of man, in the believer the organ of the Holy Spirit. Temporary affliction often leads to permanent salvation (⁽⁴³⁹⁾Psalms 83:16).

6. Your glorying in your own attainments and those of your favorite teachers (⁽⁴⁸²⁾1 Corinthians 3:21 4:19 5:2), while all the while ye connive at such a scandal, is quite unseemly.

a little leaven leaveth ... whole lump — (⁽⁴⁸⁹⁾Galatians 5:9), namely, with *present* complicity in the guilt, and the danger of future contagion (⁽⁴⁵³⁾1 Corinthians 15:33 ⁽⁵⁰⁷⁾2 Timothy 2:17).

7. old leaven — The remnant of the “old” (⁽⁴⁰²⁾Ephesians 4:22-24) heathenish and natural corruption. The image is taken from the extreme care of the Jews in searching every corner of their houses, and “purging out” every particle of leaven from the time of killing the lamb before the Passover (⁽⁴⁵⁰⁾Deuteronomy 16:3,4). So Christians are continually to search and purify their hearts (⁽⁴⁰⁸⁾Psalms 139:23,24).

as ye are unleavened — normally, and as far as your Christian calling is concerned: free from the leaven of sin and death (⁽⁴⁸¹⁾1 Corinthians 6:11). Paul often grounds exhortations on the assumption of Christian

professors' *normal* state as realized (^{<R6B}Romans 6:3,4) [ALFORD]. Regarding the Corinthian Church as the Passover “unleavened lump” or mass, he entreats them to correspond in fact with this their normal state. “For Christ our Passover (^{<R7B}Exodus 12:5-11,21-23 ^{<R12}John 1:29) *has been* (*English Version*, “is”) sacrificed for us”; that is, as the Jews *began* the days of unleavened bread with the slaying of the Passover lamb, so, Christ our Passover *having been already slain*, let there be no leaven of evil in you who are the “unleavened lump.” Doubtless he alludes to the Passover which had been two or three weeks before kept by the Jewish Christians (^{<R6B}1 Corinthians 16:8): the Gentile Christians probably also refraining from leavened bread at the love-feasts. Thus the Jewish Passover naturally gave place to our Christian Easter. The time however, of *keeping feast* (metaphorical; that is, *leading the Christian life of joy* in Christ’s finished work, compare ^{<R5C}Proverbs 15:15) among us Christians, corresponding to the Jewish Passover, is not limited, as the latter, to one season, but is ALL our time; for the transcendent benefits of the once-for-all completed sacrifice of *our* Passover Lamb extends to all the time of our lives and of this Christian dispensation; in no part of our time is the leaven of evil to be admitted.

For even — an additional reason, besides that in ^{<R6B}1 Corinthians 5:6, and a more cogent one for purging out every leaven of evil; namely, that Christ has been already sacrificed, whereas the old leaven is yet unremoved, which ought to have been long ago purged out.

8. not ... old leaven — of our unconverted state as Jews or heathen.

malice — the opposite of “sincerity,” which allows no leaven of evil to be mixed up with good (^{<R6B}Matthew 16:6).

wickedness — the opposite of “truth,” which allows not evil to be mistaken for good. The *Greek* for “malice” means the evil *habit* of mind; “wickedness,” the *outcoming* of the same in word and deed. The *Greek* for “sincerity” expresses literally, a thing which, when examined *by the sun’s light*, is found pure and unadulterated.

9. I wrote ... in an epistle — rather, “in the Epistle”: a former one not now extant. That Paul does not refer to the *present* letter is proved by the fact that no direction “not to company with fornicators” occurs in the

previous part of it; also the words, “in an (or, *the*) epistle,” could not have been added if he meant, “I have just written” (~~4700~~ 2 Corinthians 10:10). “*His letters*” (*plural*; not applying to merely *one*) confirm this. ~~4708~~ 2 Corinthians 7:8 also refers to our *first* Epistle, just as here a *former* letter is referred to by the same phrase. Paul probably wrote a former brief reply to inquiries of the Corinthians: *our* first Epistle, as it enters more fully into the same subject, has superseded the former, which the Holy Spirit did not design for the guidance of the Church in general, and which therefore has not been preserved. See my *Introduction*.

10. Limitation of the prohibition alluded to in ~~4819~~ 1 Corinthians 5:9. As in dissolute Corinth to “company with no fornicators,” etc. would be almost to company with none in the (unbelieving) world; ye need not *utterly* (“altogether”) forego intercourse with fornicators, etc., of the unbelieving world (compare ~~4817~~ 1 Corinthians 10:27 ~~4875~~ John 17:15 ~~4888~~ 1 John 5:18,19). As “fornicators” sin against themselves, so “extortioners” against their neighbors, and “idolaters” against God. The attempt to get “out of the world,” in violation of God’s will that believers should remain in it but keep themselves from its evil, led to monasticism and its consequent evils.

11. But now — “Now” does not express *time*, but “*the case being so*,” namely, that to avoid fornicators, etc., *of the world*, you would have to leave the world altogether, which would be absurd. So “now” is used in ~~4816~~ Hebrews 11:16. Thus we avoid making the apostle *now* retract a command which he had before given.

I have written — that is, my meaning in the letter I wrote was “not to keep company,” etc.

a brother — contrasted with a “fornicator ... *of the world*” (~~4850~~ 1 Corinthians 5:10). There is less danger in associating with open worldlings than with carnal professors. Here, as in ~~4889~~ Ephesians 5:3,5, “covetousness” is joined with “fornication”: the common fount of both being “the fierce and ever fiercer longing of the creature, which has turned from God, to fill itself with the inferior objects of sense” [TRENCH, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*]. Hence “idolatry” is associated with them: and the covetous man is termed an “idolater” (~~4928~~ Numbers 25:1,2). The Corinthians did not fall into open idolatry, but ate things offered to idols, so making a compromise with the heathen; just as they connived at

fornication. Thus this verse prepares for the precepts in ^{<K&A>}1 Corinthians 8:4, etc. Compare the similar case of fornication, combined with a similar idolatrous compromise, after the pattern of Israel with the Midianites (^{<B&A>}Revelation 2:14).

no not to eat — not to sit at the same table with such; whether at the love-feasts (*agapae*) or in private intercourse, much more at the Lord's table: at the last, too often now the guests "are not as children in one family, but like a heterogeneous crowd of strangers in an inn" [BENGEL] (compare ^{<K&A>}Galatians 2:12 ^{<B&A>}2 John 1:10:11).

12. what have I to do — You might have easily understood that my concern is not with unbelievers *outside* the Church, but that I referred to those within it.

also — Implying, *Those within* give me enough to do without those outside.

do not ye, etc. — Ye judge your fellow citizens, not strangers: much more should I [BENGEL]. Rather, Is it not *your duty* to judge them that are within? *God* shall judge them that are without: do you look at home [GROTIUS]. God is the Judge of the salvation of the heathen, not we (^{<B&A>}Romans 2:12-16). Paul here gives an anticipatory censure of their going to law with saints before heathen tribunals, instead of judging such causes among themselves within.

13. put away from among yourselves that wicked — Sentence of excommunication in language taken from ^{<B&A>}Deuteronomy 24:7.

CHAPTER 6

1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-11.

LITIGATION OF CHRISTIANS IN HEATHEN COURTS CENSURED: ITS VERY EXISTENCE BETRAYS A WRONG SPIRIT: BETTER TO BEAR WRONG NOW, AND HEREAFTER THE DOERS OF WRONG SHALL BE SHUT OUT OF HEAVEN.

1. Dare — This word implies treason against Christian brotherhood [BENGEL].

before the unjust — The Gentile judges are here so termed by an epithet appropriate to the subject in question, namely, one concerning *justice*. Though all Gentiles were not altogether *unjust*, yet in the highest view of justice which has regard to God as the Supreme Judge, they are so: Christians, on the other hand, as regarding God as the only Fountain of justice, should not expect justice from them.

before ... saints — The Jews abroad were permitted to refer their disputes to Jewish *arbitrators* [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 14.10,17]. So the Christians were allowed to have Christian arbitrators.

2. Do ye not know — as a truth universally recognized by Christians. Notwithstanding all your glorying in your “knowledge,” ye are acting contrary to it (1 Corinthians 1:4,5 8:1). The oldest manuscripts have “Or” before “know ye not”; that is, “What! (expressing surprise) know ye not,” etc.

saints ... judge — that is, “rule,” including *judgment*: as assessors of Christ. Matthew 19:28, “judging,” that is, “ruling over.” (Compare Psalm 49:14 Daniel 7:22,27 Revelation 2:26 3:21 20:4). There is a distinction drawn by able expositors between the saints who *judge* or *rule*, and the world which is ruled by them: as there is between the elected (Matthew 20:23) twelve apostles who sit on thrones judging, and the twelve tribes of Israel that are judged by them. To *reign*, and to be *saved*,

are not necessarily synonymous. As Jehovah employed angels to carry the law into effect when He descended on Sinai to establish His throne in Israel, so at His coming the saints shall administer the kingdom for, and under, Him. The nations of the earth, and Israel the foremost, in the flesh, shall, in this view, be the *subjects* of the rule of the Lord and His saints in glorified bodies. The mistake of the Chiliasts was that they took the merely carnal view, restricting the kingdom to the terrestrial part. This part shall have place with the accession of spiritual and temporal blessings such as Christ's presence must produce. Besides this earthly glory, there shall be the heavenly glory of the saints reigning in transfigured bodies, and holding such blessed intercourse with mortal men, as angels had with men of old, and as Christ, Moses, and Elias, in glory had with Peter, James, and John, in the flesh at the transfiguration (⁴⁰¹²2 Timothy 2:12 ⁴⁰¹⁶2 Peter 1:16-18). But here the "world" seems to be the unbelieving world that is to be "condemned" (⁴⁰¹²1 Corinthians 11:22), rather than the whole world, including the subject nations which are to be brought under Christ's sway; however, it may include *both* those to be condemned, with the bad angels, and those about to be brought into obedience to the sway of Christ with His saints. Compare ⁴⁰¹⁵Matthew 25:32,40, "all nations," "these my brethren" on the thrones with Him. The event will decide the truth of this view.

judged by you — or, *before* you (compare ⁴⁰¹²1 Corinthians 3:22).

smallest matters — The weightiest of earthly questions at issue are infinitely *small* compared with those to be decided on the judgment-day.

3. judge angels — namely, *bad* angels. We who are now "a spectacle to angels" shall then "judge angels." The saints shall join in approving the final sentence of the Judge on them (⁴⁰⁰⁶Jude 1:6). Believers shall, as administrators of the kingdom under Jesus, put down all rule that is hostile to God. Perhaps, too, *good* angels shall then receive from the Judge, with the approval of the saints, higher honors.

4. judgments — that is, cases for judgment.

least esteemed — literally, "those of no esteem." Any, however low in the Church, rather than the heathen (⁴⁰¹³1 Corinthians 1:28). Questions of earthly property are of secondary consequence in the eyes of true

Christians, and are therefore delegated to those in a secondary position in the Church.

5. your shame — Thus he checks their *puffed-up* spirit (⁴⁰⁸²1 Corinthians 5:2; compare ⁴⁰⁵⁸1 Corinthians 15:34). To shame you out of your present unworthy course of litigation before the heathen, I have said (⁴⁰⁶⁴1 Corinthians 6:4), “Set the least esteemed in the Church to judge.” Better even this, than your present course.

Is it so? — Are you in such a helpless state that, etc.?

not a wise man — though ye admire “wisdom” so much on other occasions (⁴⁰⁰⁵1 Corinthians 1:5,22). Paul alludes probably to the title, “cachain,” or *wise man*, applied to each Rabbi in Jewish councils.

no, not one — not even one, amidst so many reputed among you for wisdom (⁴⁰⁸⁸1 Corinthians 3:18 4:6).

shall be able — when applied to.

brethren — literally, “brother”; that is, judge between brother and brother. As each case should arise, the arbitrator was to be chosen from the body of the church, such a wise person as had the charism, or gift, of church government.

6. But — emphatically answering the question in the end of ⁴⁰⁰⁵1 Corinthians 6:5 in the negative. Translate, “Nay,” etc.

7. utterly a fault — literally, “a shortcoming” (not so strong as *sin*). Your going to law at all is a falling short of your high privileges, not to say your doing so *before unbelievers*, which aggravates it.

rather take wrong — (⁴⁰⁰²Proverbs 20:22 ⁴⁰⁵⁹Matthew 5:39,40); that is, “suffer yourselves to be wronged.”

8. ye — emphatic. *Ye*, whom your Lord commanded to return good for evil, *on the contrary*, “do wrong (by taking away) and defraud” (by retaining what is entrusted to you; or “defraud” marks the *effect* of the “wrong” done, namely, the loss inflicted). Not only do ye not bear, but ye inflict wrongs.

9. unrighteous — Translate, “Doers of wrong”: referring to ^{<408>}1 Corinthians 6:8 (compare ^{<402>}Galatians 5:21).

kingdom of God — which is a kingdom of *righteousness* (^{<407>}Romans 14:17).

fornicators — alluding to ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 5:1-13; also below, ^{<402>}1 Corinthians 6:12-18.

effeminate — self-polluters, who submit to unnatural lusts.

11. ye are washed — The *Greek* middle voice expresses, “Ye have had yourselves washed.” This washing implies the admission to the *benefits of Christ’s salvation* generally; of which the parts are;

(1) *Sanctification*, or the setting apart from the world, and adoption into the Church: so “sanctified” is used ^{<404>}1 Corinthians 7:14 ^{<407>}John 17:19. Compare ^{<400>}1 Peter 1:2, where it rather seems to mean the *setting apart* of one as *consecrated by the Spirit in the eternal purpose God*.

(2) *Justification* from condemnation through the righteousness of God in Christ by faith (^{<401>}Romans 1:17). So PARaeUS. The order of *sanctification* before *justification* shows that it must be so taken, and not in the sense of *progressive* sanctification. “Washed” precedes both, and so must refer to the Christian’s outward new birth of water, the sign of the inward setting apart to the Lord by the inspiration of the Spirit as the seed of new life (^{<405>}John 3:5 ^{<405>}Ephesians 5:26 ^{<405>}Titus 3:5 ^{<402>}Hebrews 10:22). Paul (compare the Church of England Baptismal Service), in charity, and faith in the ideal of the Church, presumes that baptism realizes its original design, and that those outwardly baptized inwardly enter into vital communion with Christ (^{<402>}Galatians 3:27). He presents the grand ideal which those alone realized in whom the inward and the outward baptism coalesced. At the same time he recognizes the fact that this in many cases does not hold good (^{<408>}1 Corinthians 6:8-10), leaving it to God to decide who are the really “washed,” while he only decides on broad general principles.

in the name of ... Jesus, and by the Spirit — rather, “in the Spirit,” that is, by His *in*-dwelling. Both clauses belong to the three — “washed, sanctified, justified.”

our God — The “our” reminds them. that amidst all his reproofs God is still the common God of himself and them.

~~4112~~ 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-20.

REFUTATION OF THE ANTINOMIAN DEFENSE OF FORNICATION AS IF IT WAS LAWFUL BECAUSE MEATS ARE SO.

12. All things are lawful unto me — These, which were Paul’s own words on a former occasion (to the Corinthians, compare ~~4113~~ 1 Corinthians 10:23, and ~~4115~~ Galatians 5:23), were made a pretext for excusing the eating of meats offered to idols, and so of what was generally connected with idolatry (~~4119~~ Acts 15:29), “fornication” (perhaps in the letter of the Corinthians to Paul, ~~4101~~ 1 Corinthians 7:1). Paul’s remark had referred only to things *indifferent*: but they wished to treat fornication as such, on the ground that the existence of bodily appetites proved the *lawfulness* of their gratification.

me — Paul giving himself as a sample of Christians in general.

but I — whatever others do, *I will not*, etc.

lawful ... brought under the power — The *Greek* words are from the same root, whence there is a play on the words: All things *are in* my power, but I will not be *brought under the power of* any of them (the “all things”). He who commits “fornication,” steps aside from his own legitimate power or liberty, and is “brought under the power” of an harlot (~~4115~~ 1 Corinthians 6:15; compare ~~4101~~ 1 Corinthians 7:4). The “power” ought to be in the hands of the *believer*, not in the *things which he uses* [BENGEL]; else his liberty is forfeited; he ceases to be his own master (~~4118~~ John 8:34-36 ~~4115~~ Galatians 5:13 ~~4121~~ 1 Peter 2:16 ~~4122~~ 2 Peter 2:19). Unlawful things ruin thousands; “lawful” things (unlawfully used), ten thousands.

13. The argument drawn from the indifference of meats (^{<4088>}1 Corinthians 8:8 ^{<544>}Romans 14:14,17; compare ^{<4078>}Mark 7:18 ^{<5021>}Colossians 2:20-22) to that of fornication does not hold good. Meats doubtless are indifferent, since both they and the “belly” for which they are created are to be “destroyed” in the future state. But “the body is not (created) for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body” (as its Redeemer, who hath Himself assumed the body): “And God hath raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us” (that is our bodies): therefore the “body” is not, like the “belly,” after having served a temporary use, to be destroyed: Now “he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body” (^{<4088>}1 Corinthians 6:18). Therefore fornication is not indifferent, since it is a sin against one’s own body, which, like the Lord for whom it is created, is not to be destroyed, but to be raised to eternal existence. Thus Paul gives here the germ of the three subjects handled in subsequent sections:

- (1) The relation between the sexes.
- (2) The question of meats offered to idols.
- (3) The resurrection of the body.

shall destroy — at the Lord’s coming to change the natural bodies of believers into spiritual bodies (^{<4084>}1 Corinthians 15:44,52). There is a real essence underlying the superficial phenomena of the present temporary organization of the body, and this essential germ, when all the particles are scattered, involves the future resurrection of the body incorruptible.

14. (^{<4081>}Romans 8:11).

raised up — rather, “raised,” to distinguish it from “will raise *up* us”; the *Greek* of the latter being a compound, the former a simple verb. Believers shall be raised up *out of* the rest of the dead (see on ^{<5081>}Philippians 3:11); the first resurrection (^{<4015>}Revelation 20:5).

us — Here he speaks of the possibility of his being found in the grave when Christ comes; elsewhere, of his being possibly found alive (^{<5047>}1 Thessalonians 4:17). In either event, the Lord’s coming rather than death is the great object of the Christian’s expectation (^{<4089>}Romans 8:19).

15. Resuming the thought in ^{<4663>}1 Corinthians 6:13, “the body is for the Lord” (^{<4677>}1 Corinthians 12:27 ^{<4042>}Ephesians 4:12,15,16 5:30).

shall I then — such being the case.

take — spontaneously alienating them from Christ. For they cannot be at the same time “the members of an harlot,” and “of Christ” [BENGEL]. It is a fact no less certain than mysterious, that moral and spiritual ruin is caused by such sins; which human wisdom (when untaught by revelation) held to be actions as blameless as eating and drinking [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

16. Justification of his having called fornicators “members of an harlot” (^{<4045>}1 Corinthians 6:15).

joined — by carnal intercourse; literally, “cemented to”: cleaving to.

one body — with her.

saith he — God speaking by Adam (^{<0024>}Genesis 2:24 ^{<4045>}Matthew 19:5). “He which made them at the beginning said,” etc. (^{<4045>}Ephesians 5:31).

17. one spirit — with Him. In the case of union with a harlot, the fornicator becomes one “body” with her (not one “spirit,” for the spirit which is normally the organ of the Holy Spirit in man, is in the carnal so overlaid with what is sensual that it is ignored altogether). But the believer not only has his body sanctified by union with Christ’s body, but also becomes “one spirit” with Him (^{<4661>}John 15:1-7 17:21 ^{<4046>}2 Peter 1:4; compare ^{<4045>}Ephesians 5:23-32 ^{<4046>}John 3:6).

18. Flee — The only safety in such temptations is *flight* (^{<4630>}Genesis 39:12 ^{<4631>}Job 31:1).

Every sin — The *Greek* is forcible. “*Every sin whatsoever* that a man doeth.” Every *other* sin; even gluttony, drunkenness, and self-murder are “without,” that is, comparatively external to the body (^{<4078>}Mark 7:18; compare ^{<4060>}Proverbs 6:30-32). He certainly injures, but he does not alienate the body itself; the sin is not terminated in the body; he rather sins against the perishing accidents of the body (as the “belly,” and the body’s present temporary organization), and against the soul than against the body in its permanent essence, designed “for the Lord.” “But” the

fornicator alienates that body which is the Lord's, and makes it one with a harlot's body, and so "sinneth against his own body," that is, against the *verity* and *nature* of his body; not a mere *effect* on the body from without, but a *contradiction* of the truth of the body, wrought *within itself* [ALFORD].

19. What? know ye not? etc. — Proof that "he that fornicates sinneth against his own body" (^{<468>}1 Corinthians 6:18).

your body — not "bodies." As in ^{<467>}1 Corinthians 3:17, he represented the whole company of believers (souls and bodies), that is, the Church, as "the temple of God," the Spirit; so here, the *body* of each individual of the Church is viewed as the ideal "temple of the Holy Ghost." So ^{<472>}John 17:23, which proves that not only the Church, but also each member of it, is "the temple of the Holy Ghost." Still though many the several members form one temple, the whole collectively being that which each is in miniature individually. Just as the Jews had one temple only, so in the fullest sense all Christian churches and individual believers form one temple only. Thus "YOUR [*plural*] body" is distinguished here from "HIS OWN [*particular or individual*] body" (^{<468>}1 Corinthians 6:18). In sinning against the latter, the fornicator sins against "your (ideal) body," that of "Christ," whose "members your bodies" are (^{<465>}1 Corinthians 6:15). In this consists the sin of fornication, that it is a sacrilegious desecration of God's temple to profane uses. The unseen, but much more efficient, Spirit of God in the spiritual temple now takes the place of the visible Shekinah in the old material temple. The whole man is the temple; the soul is the inmost shrine; the understanding and heart, the holy place; and the body, the porch and exterior of the edifice. Chastity is the guardian of the temple to prevent anything unclean entering which might provoke the indwelling God to abandon it as defiled [TERTULLIAN, *On the Apparel of Women*]. None but God can claim a temple; here the Holy Ghost is assigned one; therefore the Holy Ghost is God.

not your own — The fornicator treats his body as if it were "his own," to give to a harlot if he pleases (^{<468>}1 Corinthians 6:18; compare ^{<469>}1 Corinthians 6:20). But we have no right to alienate our body which is the Lord's. In ancient servitude the person of the servant was wholly the property of the master, not his own. *Purchase* was one of the ways of

acquiring a slave. Man has *sold himself* to sin (^{<1210>}1 Kings 21:20 ^{<8714>}Romans 7:14). Christ buys him to Himself, to serve Him (^{<8160>}Romans 6:16-22).

20. bought with a price — Therefore Christ's blood is strictly a ransom paid to God's justice by the love of God in Christ for our redemption (^{<4018>}Matthew 20:28 ^{<4018>}Acts 20:28 ^{<4083>}Galatians 3:13 ^{<3992>}Hebrews 9:12 ^{<4018>}1 Peter 1:18,19 ^{<3011>}2 Peter 2:1 ^{<6181>}Revelation 5:9). While He thus took off our obligation to punishment, He laid upon us a new obligation to obedience (^{<4072>}1 Corinthians 7:22,23). If we accept Him as our Prophet to reveal God to us, and our Priest to atone for us, we must also accept Him as our King to rule over us as wholly His, presenting every token of our fealty (^{<2383>}Isaiah 26:13).

in your body — as “in” a temple (compare ^{<6132>}John 13:32 ^{<6211>}Romans 12:1 ^{<1022>}Philippians 1:20).

and in your spirit, which are God's — not in the oldest manuscripts and versions, and not needed for the sense, as the context refers *mainly* to the “body” (^{<4016>}1 Corinthians 6:16,18,19). The “spirit” is *incidentally* mentioned in ^{<4017>}1 Corinthians 6:17, which perhaps gave rise to the interpolation, at first written in the *Margin*, afterwards inserted in the text.

CHAPTER 7

1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-40.

REPLY TO THEIR INQUIRIES AS TO MARRIAGE; THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE IN OTHER THINGS IS, ABIDE IN YOUR STATION, FOR THE TIME IS SHORT.

1. The Corinthians in their letter had probably asked questions which tended to disparage marriage, and had implied that it was better to break it off when contracted with an unbeliever.

good — that is, “expedient,” because of “the present distress”; that is, the unsettled state of the world, and the likelihood of persecutions tearing rudely asunder those bound by marriage ties. ^{HEB}Hebrews 13:4, in opposition to ascetic and Romish notions of superior *sanctity* in celibacy, declares, “Marriage is HONORABLE IN ALL.” Another reason why in some cases celibacy may be a matter of Christian *expediency* is stated in ¹1 Corinthians 7:34,35, “that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.” But these are exceptional cases, and in exceptional times, such as those of Paul.

2. Here the general rule is given

to avoid fornication — More literally, “*on account of fornications*,” to which as being very prevalent at Corinth, and not even counted sins among the heathen, unmarried persons might be tempted. The *plural*, “fornications,” marks irregular lusts, as contrasted with the *unity* of the marriage relation [BENGEL].

let every man have — a positive command to all who have not the gift of continency, in fact to the great majority of the world (¹1 Corinthians 7:5). The dignity of marriage is set forth by Paul (^{EPH}Ephesians 5:25-32), in the fact that it signifies the mystical union between Christ and the Church.

3, 4. *The duty of cohabitation on the part of the married.*

due benevolence — The oldest manuscripts read simply, “her due”; that is, the conjugal cohabitation *due* by the marriage contract (compare ^{<404>}1 Corinthians 7:4).

4. A paradox. She *hath not power over* her body, and yet it is *her own*. The *oneness of body* in which marriage places husband and wife explains this. The one complements the other. Neither without the other realizes the perfect ideal of man.

5. Defraud ... not — namely, of the conjugal duty “due” (^{<407>}1 Corinthians 7:3; compare the *Septuagint*, ^{<2210>}Exodus 21:10).

except it be — “unless perchance” [ALFORD].

give yourselves to — literally, “be at leisure for”; be *free from interruptions for*; namely, on some *special “season,”* as the *Greek* for “time” means (compare ^{<1235>}Exodus 19:15 ^{<2026>}Joel 2:16 ^{<3007>}Zechariah 7:3).

fasting and prayer — The oldest manuscripts omit “fasting and”; an interpolation, evidently, of ascetics.

come together — The oldest manuscripts read, “be together,” namely, in the regular state of the married.

Satan — who often thrusts in his temptations to unholy thoughts amidst the holiest exercises.

for your incontinency — *because of* your inability to “contain” (^{<4071>}1 Corinthians 7:9) your natural propensities, which Satan would take advantage of.

6. by permission ... not of commandment — not *by God’s permission to me to say it*; but, “by way of permission to you, not as a commandment.” “This” refers to the directions, ^{<4072>}1 Corinthians 7:2-5.

7. even as I — having the gift of continence (^{<4091>}Matthew 19:11,12). This wish does not hold good absolutely, else the extension of mankind and of the Church would cease; but relatively to “the present distress” (^{<4073>}1 Corinthians 7:26).

8. to the unmarried — in general, of both sexes (^{<4074>}1 Corinthians 7:10,11).

and widows — in particular.

even as I — unmarried (⁴⁹⁵1 Corinthians 9:5).

9. if they cannot contain — that is, “have not continency.”

burn — with the secret flame of lust, which lays waste the whole inner man. (Compare AUGUSTINE [*Holy Virginity*]). The dew of God’s grace is needed to stifle the flame, which otherwise would thrust men at last into hell-fire.

10. not I, but the Lord — (Compare ⁴⁷²1 Corinthians 7:12,25,40). In ordinary cases he writes on *inspired apostolic authority* (⁴⁴⁵1 Corinthians 14:37); but here on the *direct* authority of the *Lord Himself* (⁴¹¹Mark 10:11,12). In both cases alike the things written are inspired by the Spirit of God “but not all for all time, nor all on the primary truths of the faith” [ALFORD].

Let not the wife depart — literally, “be separated from.” Probably the separation on either side, whether owing to the husband or to the wife, is forbidden.

11. But and if she depart — or “be separated.” If the sin of separation has been committed, that of a new marriage is not to be added (⁴⁵⁵Matthew 5:32).

be reconciled — by appeasing her husband’s displeasure, and recovering his good will.

let not ... husband put away ... wife — In ⁴⁵⁵Matthew 5:32 the only exception allowed is, “saving for the cause of fornication.”

12. to the rest — the other classes (besides “the married,” ⁴⁷⁰1 Corinthians 7:10, where both husband and wife are believers) about whom the Corinthians had inquired, namely, those involved in mixed marriages with unbelievers.

not the Lord — by any direct command spoken by Him.

she be pleased — *Greek*, “consents”: implying his wish in the first instance, with which hers *concurs*.

13. **the woman** — a believer.

let her not leave him — “her husband,” instead of “him,” is the reading of the oldest manuscripts. The *Greek* for “leave” is the same as in ^{<4072>}1 Corinthians 7:12, “put away”; translate, “Let her not *put away* [that is, part with] her husband.” The wife had the power of effecting a divorce by Greek and Roman law.

14. sanctified — Those inseparably connected with the people of God are *hallowed* thereby, so that the latter may retain the connection without impairing their own sanctity (compare ^{<5045>}1 Timothy 4:5); nay, rather imparting to the former externally some degree of their own hallowed character, and so preparing the way for the unbeliever becoming at last sanctified inwardly by faith.

by ... by — rather, “in ... in”; that is, in virtue of the marriage tie between them.

by the husband — The oldest manuscripts read, “by the brother.” It is the fact of the husband being a “brother,” that is, a *Christian*, though the wife is not so, that sanctifies or hallows the union.

else ... children unclean — that is, beyond the hallowed pale of God’s people: in contrast to “holy,” that is, all that is within the consecrated limits [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. The phraseology accords with that of the Jews, who regarded the heathen as “unclean,” and all of the elect nation as “holy,” that is, partakers of the holy covenant. Children were included in the covenant, as God made it not only with Abraham, but with his “seed after” him (^{<4170>}Genesis 17:7). So the faith of one Christian parent gives to the children a near relationship to the Church, just as if both parents were Christians (compare ^{<5116>}Romans 11:16). Timothy, the bearer of this Epistle, is an instance in point (^{<4161>}Acts 16:1). Paul appeals to the Corinthians as recognizing the principle, that the infants of heathen parents would not be admissible to Christian baptism, because there is no faith on the part of the parents; but where one parent is a believer, the children are regarded as not aliens from, but admissible even in infancy as sharers in, the Christian covenant: for the Church presumes that the believing parent will rear the child in the Christian faith. Infant baptism tacitly superseded infant circumcision, just as the Christian Lord’s day

gradually superseded the Jewish sabbath, without our having any express command for, or record of, transference. The setting aside of circumcision and of sabbaths in the case of the Gentiles was indeed expressly commanded by the apostles and Paul, but the substitution of infant baptism and of the Lord's day were tacitly adopted, not expressly enacted. No explicit mention of it occurs till IRENAEUS in the third century; but no society of Christians that we read of disputed its propriety till fifteen hundred years after Christ. Anabaptists would have us defer baptism till maturity as the child cannot understand the nature of it. But a child may be made heir of an estate: it is his, though incapable at the time of using or comprehending its advantage; he is not hereafter *to acquire the title and claim* to it. he will hereafter understand his claim, and be capable of employing his wealth: he will then, moreover, become responsible for the use he makes of it [ARCHBISHOP WHATELY].

15. if ... depart — that is, wishes for separation. Translate, “separateth himself”: offended with her Christianity, and refusing to live with her unless she renounce it.

brother or a sister is not under bondage — is not bound to renounce the faith for the sake of retaining her unbelieving husband [HAMMOND]. So ^{<5130>}Deuteronomy 13:6 ^{<4185>}Matthew 10:35-37 ^{<4141>}Luke 14:26. The believer does not lie under the same obligation in the case of a union with an unbeliever, as in the case of one with a believer. In the former case he is not bound not to separate, if the unbeliever separate or “depart,” in the latter nothing but “fornication” justifies separation [PHOTIUS in *aecumenius*].

but God hath called us to peace — Our Christian calling is one that tends to “peace” (^{<5128>}Romans 12:18), not quarrelling; therefore the believer should not ordinarily depart from the unbelieving consort (^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:12-14), on the one hand; and on the other, in the exceptional case of the unbeliever desiring to depart, the believer is not bound to force the other party to stay in a state of continual discord (^{<4152>}Matthew 5:32). Better still it would be not to enter into such unequal alliances at all (^{<4141>}1 Corinthians 7:40 ^{<4184>}2 Corinthians 6:14).

16. What knowest thou but that by staying with thy unbelieving partner thou mayest save him or her? Enforcing the precept to stay with the unbelieving consort (^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:12-14). So Ruth the Moabitess

became a convert to her husband's faith: and Joseph and Moses probably gained over their wives. So conversely the unbelieving husband may be won by the believing wife (^{<4081>}1 Peter 3:1) [CALVIN]. Or else (^{<4075>}1 Corinthians 7:15), if thy unbelieving consort wishes to depart, let him go, so that thou mayest live "in peace": for *thou canst not be sure of converting him*, so as to make it obligatory on thee at all costs to stay with him against his will [MENOCHIUS and ALFORD].

save — be the instrument of salvation to (^{<5061>}James 5:20).

17. But — *Greek*, "If not." "Only." Caution that believers should not make this direction (^{<4076>}1 Corinthians 7:16; as ALFORD explains it) a ground for separating "of themselves" (^{<4072>}1 Corinthians 7:12-14). Or, *But if* there be *no* hope of gaining over the unbeliever, still let the general principle be maintained, "As *the Lord* hath allotted to each, as *God* hath called each, so let him walk" (so the *Greek* in the oldest reading); let him walk in the path allotted to him and wherein he was called. The heavenly calling does not set aside our earthly callings.

so ordain I in all churches — Ye also therefore should obey.

18. not become uncircumcised — by surgical operation (1 Maccabees 1:15; JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 12.5.1]). Some Christians in excess of anti-Jewish feeling might be tempted to this.

let him not be circumcised — as the Judaizing Christians would have him (^{<4051>}Acts 15:1,5,24 ^{<4060>}Galatians 5:2).

19. Circumcision ... nothing, but ... keeping of ... commandments of God — namely, is all in all. In ^{<4060>}Galatians 5:6 this "keeping of the commandments of God" is defined to be "faith which worketh by love"; and in ^{<4065>}Galatians 6:15, "a new creature." Circumcision was a commandment of God: but not for ever, as "love."

20. the same calling — that is, the *condition* from which he is called a Jew, a Greek, a slave, or a freeman.

21. care not for it — Let it not be a trouble to thee that thou art a servant or slave.

use it rather — Continue rather in thy state as a servant (^{<4171}1 Corinthians 7:20 ^{<488}Galatians 3:28 ^{<541}1 Timothy 6:2). The *Greek*, “But if *even* thou mayest be made free, *use* it,” and the context (^{<4171}1 Corinthians 7:20,22) favors this view [CHRYSOSTOM, BENGEL, and ALFORD]. This advice (if this translation be right) is not absolute, as the spirit of the Gospel is against slavery. What is advised here is, contentment under one’s existing condition (^{<4172}1 Corinthians 7:24), though an undesirable one, since in our union with Christ all outward disparities of condition are compensated (^{<4172}1 Corinthians 7:22). Be not unduly impatient to cast off “*even*” thy condition as a servant *by unlawful means* (^{<4173}1 Peter 2:13-18); as, for example, Onesimus did by fleeing (^{<5010}Philemon 1:10-18). The precept (^{<4173}1 Corinthians 7:23), “Become not (so the *Greek*) the servants of men,” implies plainly that slavery is abnormal (compare ^{<4350}Leviticus 25:42). “Men stealers,” or slave dealers, are classed in ^{<5010}1 Timothy 1:10, with “murderers” and “perjurers.” NEANDER, GROTIUS, etc., explain, “If called, being a slave, to Christianity, be content — but yet, if *also* thou canst be free (as a still *additional* good, which if thou canst not attain, be satisfied without it; but which, if offered to thee, is not to be despised), *make use of the opportunity of becoming free, rather than* by neglecting it to remain a slave.” I prefer this latter view, as more according to the tenor of the Gospel, and fully justified by the *Greek*.

22. the Lord’s freeman — (^{<5010}Philemon 1:16) — rather, “freedman.” Though a slave externally, spiritually *made free* by the Lord: from sin, ^{<4885}John 8:36; from the law, ^{<4880}Romans 8:2; from “circumcision,” ^{<4173}1 Corinthians 7:19 ^{<4880}Galatians 5:1.

Christ’s servant — (^{<4171}1 Corinthians 9:21). Love makes Christ’s service perfect freedom (^{<4171}Matthew 11:29,30 ^{<4885}Galatians 5:13 ^{<4176}1 Peter 2:16).

23. be not ye — *Greek*, “become not ye.” Paul here changes from “thou” (^{<4171}1 Corinthians 7:21) to “ye.” YE ALL are “bought” with the blood of Christ, whatever be your earthly state (^{<4171}1 Corinthians 6:20). “Become not servants to men,” either externally, or spiritually; the former sense applying to the free alone: the latter to Christian freemen and slaves alike, that they should not be servile adherents to their party leaders at Corinth (^{<4171}1 Corinthians 3:21,22 ^{<4178}Matthew 23:8-10 ^{<4172}2 Corinthians 11:20); nor indeed slaves to men generally, so far as their condition admits. The

external and internal conditions, so far as is attainable, should correspond, and the former be subservient to the latter (compare ^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:21,32-35).

24. abide with God — being chiefly careful of the footing on which he stands towards God rather than that towards men. This clause, “with God,” limits the similar precept in ^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:20. A man may cease to “abide in the calling wherein he was called,” and yet not violate the precept here. If a man’s calling be not favorable to his “abiding with God” (retaining holy fellowship with Him), he may use lawful means to change from it (compare *Note*, see on ^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:21).

25. no commandment of the Lord: yet ... my judgment — I have no *express revelation* from the Lord *commanding* it, but I give my *judgment* (opinion); namely, under the ordinary inspiration which accompanied the apostles in all their canonical writings (compare ^{<4174>}1 Corinthians 7:40 ^{<4167>}1 Corinthians 14:37 ^{<5045>}1 Thessalonians 4:15). The Lord inspires me in this case to give you only a *recommendation*, which you are free to adopt or reject — not a positive *command*. In the second case (^{<4171>}1 Corinthians 7:10,11) it was a positive command; for the Lord had already made known His will (^{<3124>}Malachi 2:14,15 ^{<4153>}Matthew 5:31,32). In the third case (^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:12), the Old Testament commandment of God to put away strange wives (^{<5018>}Ezra 10:3), Paul by the Spirit revokes.

mercy of the Lord — (^{<5013>}1 Timothy 1:13). He attributes his apostleship and the gifts accompanying it (including inspiration) to God’s grace alone.

faithful — in dispensing to you the inspired directions received by me from the Lord.

26. I suppose — “I consider.”

this — namely, “for a man so to be,” that is, in the same state in which he is (^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:27).

for — by reason of.

the present distress — the distresses to which believers were then beginning to be subjected, making the married state less desirable than the single; and which would prevail throughout the world before the

destruction of Jerusalem, according to Christ's prophecy (⁴¹⁰⁸Matthew 24:8-21; compare ⁴¹¹⁸Acts 11:28).

27. Illustrating the meaning of "so to be," ⁴¹²⁶1 Corinthians 7:26. Neither the married (those "bound to a wife") nor the unmarried (those "loosed from a wife") are to "seek" a change of state (compare ⁴¹⁷²1 Corinthians 7:20,24).

28. trouble in the flesh — Those who marry, he says, shall incur "trouble in the flesh" (that is, in their outward state, by reason of the present distress), not *sin*, which is the trouble of the *spirit*.

but I spare you — The emphasis in the *Greek* is on "I." *My* motive in advising you so is, to "spare you" such trouble in the flesh. So ALFORD after CALVIN, BENIGEL, and others. ESTIUS from AUGUSTINE explains it, "I spare you further details of the inconveniences of matrimony, lest even the incontinent may at the peril of lust be deterred from matrimony: thus I have regard for your infirmity." The antithesis in the *Greek* of "I ... you" and "such" favors the former.

29. this I say — A summing up of the whole, wherein he draws the practical inference from what precedes (⁴¹⁵⁰1 Corinthians 15:50).

the time — the *season* (so the *Greek*) of this present dispensation up to the coming of the Lord (⁴¹³¹Romans 13:11). He uses the *Greek* expression which the Lord used in ⁴²⁰⁸Luke 21:8 ⁴¹³³Mark 13:33.

short — literally, "contracted."

it remaineth — The oldest manuscripts read, "The time (season) is shortened *as to what remains*, in order that both they," etc.; that is, the effect which the shortening of the time ought to have is, "that for the remaining time (henceforth), both they," etc. The clause, "as to what remains," though in *construction* belonging to the previous clause, in *sense* belongs to the following. However, CYPRIAN and *Vulgate* support *English Version*.

as though they had none — We ought to consider nothing as our own in real or permanent possession.

30. they that weep ... wept not — (Compare ⁴¹⁶⁰2 Corinthians 6:10).

they that buy ... possessed not — (Compare ^{<3341>}Isaiah 24:1,2). Christ specifies as the condemning sin of the men of Sodom not merely their open profligacy, but that “they bought, they sold,” etc., as men whose all was in this world (^{<2728>}Luke 17:28). “Possessed” in the *Greek* implies a *holding fast of a possession*; this the Christian will not do, for his “enduring substance” is elsewhere (^{<3034>}Hebrews 10:34).

31. not abusing it — not abusing it by an *overmuch using* of it. The meaning of “abusing” here is, not so much *perverting*, as *using it to the full* [BENGEL]. We are to use it, “not to *take our fill*” of its pursuits as our chief aim (compare ^{<2704>}Luke 10:40-42). As the planets while turning on their own axis, yet revolve round the sun; so while we do our part in our own worldly sphere, God is to be the center of all our desires.

fashion — the present fleeting *form*. Compare ^{<3341>}Psalms 39:6, “vain show”; ^{<2720>}Psalms 73:20, “a dream”; ^{<3044>}James 4:14, “a vapor.”

passeth away — not merely *shall pass away*, but *is now actually passing away*. The image is drawn from a *shifting scene* in a play represented on the stage (^{<2617>}1 John 2:17). Paul inculcates not so much the outward denial of earthly things, as the inward spirit whereby the married and the rich, as well as the unmarried and the poor, would be ready to sacrifice all for Christ’s sake.

32. without carefulness — I would have you to be not merely “without trouble,” but “without distracting cares” (so the *Greek*).

careth — if he uses aright the advantages of his condition.

34. difference also — Not merely the unmarried and the married *man* differ in their respective duties, but *also* the *wife* and the *virgin*. Indeed a woman undergoes a greater change of condition than a man in contracting marriage.

35. for your own profit — not to display *my* apostolic authority.

not ... cast a snare upon you — image from *throwing a noose* over an animal in hunting. Not that by hard injunctions I may entangle you with the fear of committing sin where there is no sin.

comely — *befitting* under present circumstances.

attend upon — literally, “assiduously wait on”; *sitting down* to the duty. Compare ^{<118>}Luke 10:39, Mary; ^{<119>}Luke 2:37, “Anna ... a widow, who departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day” (^{<108>}1 Timothy 5:5).

distraction — the same *Greek* as “cumbered” (^{<100>}Luke 10:40, Martha).

36. behaveth ... uncomely — is not treating his daughter well in leaving her unmarried beyond the flower of her age, and thus debarring her from the lawful gratification of her natural feeling as a marriageable woman.

need so require — if the exigencies of the case require it; namely, regard to the feelings and welfare of his daughter. Opposed to “having no necessity” (^{<105>}1 Corinthians 7:37).

let them marry — the daughter and her suitor.

37. steadfast — not to be turned from his purpose by the obloquy of the world.

having no necessity — arising from the natural inclinations of the daughter.

power over his ... will — when, owing to his daughter’s will not opposing his will, he has power to carry into effect his will or wish.

decreed — determined.

38. her — The oldest manuscripts have “his own virgin daughter.”

but — The oldest manuscripts have “and.”

39. bound by the law — The oldest manuscripts omit “by the law.”

only in the Lord — Let her marry *only a Christian* (^{<104>}2 Corinthians 6:14).

40. happier — (^{<101>}1 Corinthians 7:1,28,34,35).

I think also — “I also think”; just as you Corinthians and your teachers *think* much of your opinions, *so I also give my opinion* by inspiration; so in ^{<102>}1 Corinthians 7:25, “my judgment” or opinion. *Think* does not imply doubt, but often a matter of well-grounded assurance (^{<103>}John 5:39).

CHAPTER 8

1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-13.

ON PARTAKING OF MEATS OFFERED TO IDOLS.

1. Though to those knowing that an idol has no existence, the question of eating meats offered to idols (referred to in the letter of the Corinthians, compare ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 7:1) might seem unimportant, it is not so with some, and the infirmities of such should be respected. The portions of the victims not offered on the altars belonged partly to the priests, partly to the offerers; and were eaten at feasts in the temples and in private houses and were often sold in the markets; so that Christians were constantly exposed to the temptation of receiving them, which was forbidden (⁴⁰⁰²Numbers 25:2 ⁴⁰⁰³Psalms 106:28). The apostles forbade it in their decree issued from Jerusalem (⁴⁰⁰⁴Acts 15:1-29 21:25); but Paul does not allude here to that decree, as he rests his precepts rather on his own independent apostolic authority.

we know that we all have knowledge — The Corinthians doubtless had referred to their “knowledge” (namely, of the indifference of meats, as in themselves having no sanctity or pollution). Paul replies, “We are aware that we all have [speaking *generally*, and so far as Christian *theory* goes; for in ⁴⁰⁰⁵1 Corinthians 8:7 he speaks of some who *practically* have *not*] this knowledge.”

Knowledge puffeth up — when without “love.” Here a parenthesis begins; and the main subject is resumed in the same words, ⁴⁰⁰⁶1 Corinthians 8:4. “As concerning [touching] therefore the eating,” etc. “Puffing up” is to please self. “Edifying” is to please one’s neighbor; Knowledge only says, All things are lawful for me; Love adds, But all things do not edify [BENGEL], (⁴⁰⁰⁷1 Corinthians 10:23 ⁴⁰⁰⁸Romans 14:15).

edifieth — tends to *build up* the spiritual temple (⁴⁰⁰⁹1 Corinthians 3:9 6:19).

2. And — omitted in the oldest manuscripts The absence of the connecting particle gives an emphatical sententiousness to the style, suitable to the subject. The first step to knowledge is to know our own ignorance. Without love there is only the *appearance* of knowledge.

knoweth — The oldest manuscripts read a *Greek* word implying *personal experimental acquaintance*, not merely *knowledge of a fact*, which the *Greek* of “we know” or *are aware* (~~400~~1 Corinthians 8:1) means.

as he ought to know — experimentally and in the way of “love.”

3. love God — the source of love to our neighbor (~~400~~1 John 4:11,12,20 5:2).

the same — literally, “this man”; he who loves, not he who “thinks that he knows,” not having “charity” or love (~~400~~1 Corinthians 8:1,2).

is known of him — is known with the knowledge of approval and is acknowledged by God as His (~~400~~Psalm 1:6 ~~400~~Galatians 4:9 ~~400~~2 Timothy 2:19). Contrast, “I never knew you” (~~400~~Matthew 7:23). To love God is to know God; and he who thus knows God has been first known by God (compare ~~400~~1 Corinthians 13:12 ~~400~~1 Peter 1:2).

4. As concerning, etc. — resuming the subject begun in ~~400~~1 Corinthians 8:1, “As touching,” etc.

idol is nothing — has no true being at all, the god it represents is not a living reality. This does not contradict ~~400~~1 Corinthians 10:20, which states that they who worship idols, worship devils; for here it is the GODS *believed by the worshippers to be represented by the idols* which are denied to have any existence, not the devils which really under the idols delude the worshippers.

none other God — The oldest manuscripts omit the word “other”; which gives a clearer sense.

5. “For even supposing there are (exist) gods so called (~~400~~2 Thessalonians 2:4), whether in heaven (as the sun, moon, and stars) or in earth (as deified kings, beasts, etc.), as there be (a recognized fact, ~~400~~Deuteronomy 10:17 ~~400~~Psalm 135:5 136:2) gods many and lords many.” Angels and men in authority are termed *gods* in Scripture, as exercising a divinely delegated

power under God (compare ^{<121>}Exodus 22:9, with ^{<122>}Exodus 22:28 ^{<131>}Psalms 82:1,6 ^{<134>}John 10:34,35).

6. to us — believers.

of whom — from whom as Creator all things derive their existence.

we in him — rather, “we *for* Him,” or “*unto* Him.” God the FATHER is the end *for* whom and for whose glory believers live. In ^{<501>}Colossians 1:16 all things are said to be created (not only “*by*” Christ, but also) “*for* Him” (CHRIST). *So entirely are the Father and Son one* (compare ^{<613>}Romans 11:36 ^{<820>}Hebrews 2:10).

one Lord — contrasted with the “many lords” of heathendom (^{<481>}1 Corinthians 8:5).

by whom — (^{<403>}John 1:3 ^{<800>}Hebrews 1:2).

we by him — as all things are “*of*” the Father by creation, so they (we believers especially) are restored *to* Him by the new creation (^{<501>}Colossians 1:20 ^{<626>}Revelation 21:5). Also, as all things are *by* Christ by creation, so they (we especially) are restored *by* Him by the new creation.

7. Howbeit — Though to us who “have knowledge” (^{<481>}1 Corinthians 8:1,4-6) all meats are indifferent, yet “this knowledge is not in all” in the same degree as we have it. Paul had admitted to the Corinthians that “we all have knowledge” (^{<481>}1 Corinthians 8:1), that is, so far as Christian *theory* goes; but *practically* some have it not in the same degree.

with conscience — an ancient reading; but other very old manuscripts read “association” or “habit.” In either reading the meaning is: Some Gentile Christians, whether from old *association* of ideas or misdirected *conscience*, when they ate such meats, ate them with some feeling as if the idol were something real (^{<481>}1 Corinthians 8:4), and had changed the meats by the fact of the consecration into something either holy or else polluted.

unto this hour — after they have embraced Christianity; an implied censure, that they are not further advanced by this time in Christian “knowledge.”

their conscience ... is defiled — by their eating it “as a thing offered to idols.” If they ate it unconscious at the time that it had been offered to idols, there would be no defilement of conscience. But conscious of what it was, and not having such knowledge as other Corinthians boasted of, namely, that an idol is nothing and can therefore neither pollute nor sanctify meats, they by eating them sin against conscience (compare ^{<6415>}Romans 14:15-23). It was on the ground of Christian expediency, not to cause a stumbling-block to “weak” brethren, that the Jerusalem decree against partaking of such meats (though indifferent *in themselves*) was passed (^{<4151>}Acts 15:1-29). Hence he here vindicates it against the Corinthian asserters of an inexpedient liberty.

8. Other old manuscripts read, “Neither if we do not eat, are we the better: neither if we eat are we the worse”: the language of the eaters who justified their eating thus [LACHMANN]. In *English Version* Paul admits that “meat neither *presents* [so the *Greek* for ‘commendeth’] us as commended nor as disapproved before God”: it does not affect our standing before God (^{<6416>}Romans 14:6).

9. **this liberty of yours** — the watchword for lax Corinthians. The very indifference of meats, which I concede, is the reason why ye should “take heed” not to tempt weak brethren *to act against their conscience* (which constitutes sin, ^{<6417>}Romans 14:22,23).

10. **if any man** — being weak.

which hast knowledge — The very knowledge which thou primest thyself on (^{<4181>}1 Corinthians 8:1), will lead the weak after thy example to do that against his conscience, which thou doest without any scruple of conscience; namely, to eat meats offered to idols.

conscience of him which is weak — rather, “His conscience, *seeing he is weak*” [ALFORD and others].

emboldened — literally, “built up.” You ought to have *built up* your brother in good: but by your example your *building him up* is the emboldening him to violate his conscience.

11. **shall ... perish** — The oldest manuscripts read “perisheth.” A single act seemingly unimportant may produce everlasting consequences. The

weak brother loses his faith, and if he do not recover it, his salvation [BENGEL] (⁴¹²³Romans 14:23).

for whom Christ died — and for whose sake we too ought to be willing to die (⁴¹¹⁶1 John 3:16). And yet professing Christians at Corinth virtually tempted their brethren to their damnation, so far were they from sacrificing, aught for their salvation. Note here, that it is no argument against the dogma that *Christ died for all, even for those who perish*, to say that thus He would have died *in vain* for many. Scripture is our rule, not our suppositions as to consequences. More is involved in redemption than the salvation of man: the *character of God* as at once just and loving is vindicated even in the case of the lost for they might have been saved, and so even in their case Christ has not died in vain. So the mercies of God's providence are not in vain, though many abuse them. Even the condemned shall manifest God's love in the great day, in that they too had the offer of God's mercy. It shall be the most awful ingredient in their cup that they might have been saved but would not: Christ died to redeem even them.

12. wound their weak conscience — literally, “*smite* their conscience, being (as yet) *in a weak state*.” It aggravates the cruelty of the act that it is committed on the weak, just as if one were to *strike an invalid*.

against Christ — on account of the sympathy between Christ and His members (⁴¹²⁴Matthew 25:40 ⁴¹⁰⁶Acts 9:4,5).

13. meat — *Old English* for “food” in general.

make ... to offend — *Greek*, “is a stumbling-block to.”

no flesh — In order to ensure my avoiding flesh offered to idols, I would abstain from *all kinds of flesh*, in order not *to be a stumbling-block* to my brother.

CHAPTER 9

1 CORINTHIANS 9:1-27.

HE CONFIRMS HIS TEACHING AS TO NOT PUTTING A STUMBLING-BLOCK IN A BROTHER'S WAY (^{<4183>}1 CORINTHIANS 8:13) BY HIS OWN EXAMPLE IN NOT USING HIS UNDOUBTED RIGHTS AS AN APOSTLE, SO AS TO WIN MEN TO CHRIST.

1. Amos I not an apostle? am I not free? — The oldest manuscripts read the order thus, “Amos I not free? am I not an apostle?” He alludes to ^{<4180>}1 Corinthians 8:9, “this liberty of yours”: If you claim it, I appeal to yourselves as the witnesses, have not I also it? “Amos I not free?” If you be so, much more I. For “am I not an apostle?” so that I can claim not only Christian, but also apostolic, liberty.

have I not seen Jesus — *corporeally*, not in a mere vision: compare ^{<4188>}1 Corinthians 15:8, where the fact of the resurrection, which he wishes to prove, could only be established by an actual bodily appearance, such as was vouchsafed to Peter and the other apostles. In ^{<4197>}Acts 9:7,17 the contrast between “the men with him seeing *no man*,” and “Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way,” shows that Jesus actually appeared to him in going to Damascus. His vision of Christ in the temple (^{<4217>}Acts 22:17) was “in a trance.” To be a witness of Christ’s resurrection was a leading function of an apostle (^{<4122>}Acts 1:22). The best manuscripts omit “Christ.”

ye my work in the Lord — Your conversion is His workmanship (^{<4191>}Ephesians 2:10) through my instrumentality: the “seal of mine apostleship” (^{<4192>}1 Corinthians 9:2).

2. yet doubtless — *yet at least* I am such to you.

seal of mine apostleship — Your conversion by my preaching, accompanied with miracles (“the signs of an apostle,” ^{<4158>}Romans 15:18,19

2 Corinthians 12:12), and your gifts conferred by me (1 Corinthians 1:7), vouch for the reality of my apostleship, just as a seal set to a document attests its genuineness (John 3:33 Romans 4:11).

3. to them that ... examine me — that is, who call in question mine apostleship.

is this — namely, that you are the seal of mine apostleship.

4. Have we not power — *Greek*, “right,” or lawful power, equivalent to “liberty” claimed by the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 8:9). The “we” includes with himself his colleagues in the apostleship. The *Greek* interrogative expresses, “You surely *won’t* say (will you?) that we have *not* the power or right,” etc.

eat and drink — without laboring with our hands (1 Corinthians 9:11,13,14). Paul’s not exercising this right was made a plea by his opponents for insinuating that he was himself conscious he was no true apostle (2 Corinthians 12:13-16).

5. lead about a sister, a wife — that is, “a sister *as a wife*”; “a sister” by faith, which makes all believers brethren and sisters in the one family of God: “a wife” by marriage covenant. Paul implies he did not exercise his undoubted right to marry and “lead about” a believer, for the sake of Christian expediency, as well to save the Church the expense of maintaining her in his wide circuits, as also that he might give himself more undistractedly to building up the Church of Christ (1 Corinthians 7:26,32,35). Contrast the Corinthians’ want of self-sacrifice in the exercise of their “liberty” at the cost of destroying, instead of edifying, the Church (1 Corinthians 8:9, *Margin*; 1 Corinthians 8:10-13).

as other apostles — implying that some of them had availed themselves of the power which they all had, of marrying. We know from Matthew 8:14, that Cephas (Peter) was a married man. A confutation of Peter’s self-styled followers, the Romanists, who exclude the clergy from marriage. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 7.63] records a tradition that he encouraged his wife when being led to death by saying, “Remember, my dear one, the Lord.” Compare EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.30].

brethren of the Lord — held in especial esteem on account of their relationship to Jesus (⁴¹¹⁴Acts 1:14 ⁴⁰⁰⁹Galatians 1:9). James, Josés, Simon, and Judas. Probably *cousins* of Jesus: as cousins were termed by the Jews “brethren.” ALFORD makes them literally *brothers* of Jesus by Joseph and Mary.

Cephas — probably singled out as being a name carrying weight with one partisan section at Corinth. “If your favorite leader does so, surely so may I” (⁴¹¹²1 Corinthians 1:12 3:22).

6. Barnabas — long the associate of Paul, and, like him, in the habit of self-denyingly forbearing to claim the maintenance which is a minister’s right. So Paul supported himself by tent-making (⁴⁴⁸⁸Acts 18:3 20:34 ⁵⁰⁹⁹1 Thessalonians 2:9 ⁵⁰⁹⁹2 Thessalonians 3:8).

7. The minister is spiritually a soldier (⁵⁰⁹⁹2 Timothy 2:3), a vine-dresser (⁴⁴⁸⁸1 Corinthians 3:6-8 So 1:6), and a shepherd (⁴⁰⁰⁹1 Peter 5:2,4).

of the fruit — The oldest manuscripts omit “of.”

8. as a man — I speak thus not merely *according to human judgment*, but with the sanction of the divine law also.

9. ox ... treadeth ... corn — (⁴²⁰⁴Deuteronomy 25:4). In the East to the present day they do not after reaping carry the sheaves home to barns as we do, but take them to an area under the open air to be threshed by the oxen treading them with their feet, or else drawing a threshing instrument over them (compare ⁵⁰⁹⁹Micah 4:13).

Doth God ... care for oxen? — rather, “Is it for the oxen that God careth?” Is the animal the ultimate object for whose sake this law was given? No. God does care for the lower animal (⁴⁸⁹⁸Psalms 36:6 ⁴⁰⁰⁹Matthew 10:29), but it is with the ultimate aim of the welfare of *man*, the head of animal creation. In the humane consideration shown for the lower animal, we are to learn that still more ought it to be exercised in the case of man, the ultimate object of the law; and that the human (spiritual as well as temporal) laborer is worthy of his hire.

10. altogether — Join this with “saith.” “Does he (the divine lawgiver) by all means say it for our sakes?” It would be untrue, that God saith it

altogether (in the sense of solely) for *our* sakes. But it is true, that He *by all means saith it* for our sakes as the ultimate object in the lower world. GROTIUS, however, translates, “mainly” or “especially,” instead of *altogether*.

that — “meaning that” [ALFORD]; literally, “because.”

should plough — *ought* to plough in hope. The obligation rests with the people not to let their minister labor without remuneration.

he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope — The oldest manuscript versions and Fathers read, “He that thresheth (*should or ought to thresh*) in the hope of partaking” (namely, *of the fruit of his threshing*). “He that plougheth,” spiritually, is the first planter of a church in a place (compare ⁴⁸⁸⁶1 Corinthians 3:6,9); “he that thresheth,” the minister who tends a church already planted.

11. we ... we — emphatical in the *Greek*. WE, the same persons who have sown to you the infinitely more precious treasures of the *Spirit*, may at least claim in return what is the only thing you have to give, namely, the goods that nourish the *flesh* (“*your carnal things*”).

12. others — whether true apostles (⁴⁸⁹⁵1 Corinthians 9:5) or false ones (⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 11:20).

we rather — considering our greater labors for you (⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 11:23).

suffer all things — without complaining of it. We desire to *conceal* (literally, “hold as a water-tight vessel”) any distress we suffer from straitened circumstances. The same *Greek* is in ⁴⁸³⁷1 Corinthians 13:7.

lest we ... hinder ... gospel — not to *cause a hindrance* to its progress by giving a handle for the imputation of self-seeking, if we received support from our flock. The less of incumbrance and expense caused to the Church, and the more of work done, the better for the cause of the Gospel (⁴⁸⁰⁴2 Timothy 2:4).

13. minister about holy things — the Jewish priests and Levites. The *Greek* especially applies to the former, the priests *offering sacrifices*.

partakers with the altar — a part of the victims going to the service of the altar, and the rest being shared by the priests (~~<4000>~~Leviticus 7:6 ~~<4000>~~Numbers 18:6, etc. ~~<4000>~~Deuteronomy 18:1, etc.).

14. Even so — The only inference to be drawn from this passage is, not that the Christian ministry is of a sacrificial character as the Jewish priesthood, but simply, that as the latter was supported by the contributions of the people, so should the former. The stipends of the clergy were at first from voluntary offerings at the Lord's Supper. At the love-feast preceding it every believer, according to his ability, offered a gift; and when the expense of the table had been defrayed, the bishop laid aside a portion for himself, the presbyters, and deacons; and with the rest relieved widows, orphans, confessors, and the poor generally [TERTULLIAN, *Apology*, 39]. The stipend was in proportion to the dignity and merits of the several bishops, presbyters, and deacons [CYPRIAN, c. 4, ep. 6].

preach ... gospel — plainly marked as the duty of the Christian minister, in contrast to the *ministering about sacrifices (Greek) and waiting at the altar* of the Jewish priesthood and Levites (~~<4000>~~1 Corinthians 9:13). If the Lord's Supper were a *sacrifice* (as the Mass is supposed to be), this fourteenth verse would certainly have been worded so, to answer to ~~<4000>~~1 Corinthians 9:13. Note the same Lord Christ "ordains" the ordinances in the Old and in the New Testaments (~~<4000>~~Matthew 10:10 ~~<4000>~~Luke 10:7).

15. Paul's special gift of continency, which enabled him to abstain from marriage, and his ability to maintain himself without interrupting seriously his ministry, made that expedient to him which is ordinarily inexpedient; namely, that the ministry should not be supported by the people. What to him was a duty, would be the opposite to one, for instance, to whom God had committed a family, without other means of support.

I have used none of these things — none of these "powers" or rights which I might have used (~~<4000>~~1 Corinthians 9:4-6,12).

neither — rather, "Yet I have *not* written."

so done unto me — literally, “in my case”: as is done in the case of a soldier, a planter, a shepherd, a ploughman, and a sacrificing priest (^{<4097>}1 Corinthians 9:7,10,13).

make my glorying void — deprive me of my privilege of preaching the Gospel without remuneration (^{<4710>}2 Corinthians 11:7-10). Rather than hinder the progress of the Gospel by giving any pretext for a charge of interested motives (^{<4727>}2 Corinthians 12:17,18), Paul would “die” of hunger. Compare Abraham’s similar disinterestedness (^{<4102>}Genesis 14:22,23).

16. though I preach ... I have nothing to glory of — that is, If I preach the Gospel, and do so not gratuitously, I have no matter for “glorying.” For the “necessity” that is laid on me to preach (compare ^{<3409>}Jeremiah 20:9, and the case of Jonah) does away with ground for “glorying.” The sole ground for the latter that I have, is my preaching *without charge* (^{<4098>}1 Corinthians 9:18): since there is no necessity laid on me as to the latter, it is my voluntary act for the Gospel’s sake.

17. Translate, “If I be doing this (that is, preaching) of my own accord (which I am not, for the ‘necessity’ is laid on me which binds a servant to obey his master), I have a reward; but if (as is the case) involuntarily (^{<4095>}Acts 9:15 22:15 26:16); not of my own natural will, but by the constraining grace of God; (^{<4096>}Romans 9:16 ^{<5013>}1 Timothy 1:13-16), I have had a dispensation (of the Gospel) entrusted to me” (and so can claim no “reward,” seeing that I only “have done that which was my duty to do,” ^{<2770>}Luke 17:10, but incur the “woe,” ^{<4096>}1 Corinthians 9:16, if I fail in it).

18. What is my reward? — The answer is in ^{<4099>}1 Corinthians 9:19; namely, that by making the Gospel without charge, where I might have rightfully claimed maintenance, I might “win the more.”

of Christ — The oldest manuscripts and versions omit these words.

abuse — rather “that *I use not to the full* my power.” This is his matter for “*glorying*”; the “*reward*” ultimately aimed at is the gaining of the more (^{<4099>}1 Corinthians 9:19). The former, as involving the latter, is verbally made the answer to the question, “What is my reward?” But really the “reward” is that which is the ultimate aim of his preaching without charge,

namely, that he may gain the more; it was for this end, not to have matter of glorying, that he did so.

19. free from all men — that is, from the power of all men.

gain the more — that is, *as many of them* (“all men”) *as possible*. “Gain” is an appropriate expression in relation to a “reward” (⁴¹⁷⁹1 Thessalonians 2:19,20); he therefore repeats it frequently (⁴¹⁸⁰1 Corinthians 9:20-22).

20. I became as a Jew — in things not defined by the *law*, but by Jewish usage. Not Judaizing in essentials, but in matters where there was no compromise of principle (compare ⁴¹⁸¹Acts 16:3 21:20-26); an undesigned coincidence between the history and the Epistle, and so a sure proof of genuineness.

to them that are under the law, as under the law — in things defined by *the law*; such as ceremonies not then repugnant to Christianity. Perhaps the reason for distinguishing this class from the former is that Paul himself belonged *nationally* to “the Jews,” but did not in *creed* belong to the class of “them that are under the law.” This view is confirmed by the reading inserted here by the oldest manuscripts, versions, and Fathers, “not being (that is, parenthetically, ‘not that I am’) myself under the law.”

21. To them ... without law — that is, without *revealed* law: the heathen (compare ⁴¹⁸²Romans 2:12 with ⁴¹⁸⁵1 Corinthians 9:15).

as without law — not urging on them the ceremonies and “works of the law,” but “the hearing of faith” (⁴¹⁸⁶Galatians 3:2). Also discoursing in their own manner, as at Athens, with arguments from their own poets (⁴¹⁸⁷Acts 17:28).

being not without law to God — “While thus conforming to others in matters indifferent, taking care not to be *without law* in relation to God, but *responsible to law* (literally, “IN LAW”) in relation to Christ.” This is the Christian’s true position in relation to the world, to himself, and to God. Everything develops itself according to its proper law. So the Christian, though no longer subject to the literal law as constraining him from without, is subject to an inward principle or law, the spirit of faith in Christ acting from within as the germ of a new life. He does not in the *Greek* (as in *English Version*) say “*under the law* (as he does in ⁴¹⁸⁸1

Corinthians 9:20) to Christ”; but uses the milder term, “in ... law,” *responsible to law*. Christ was responsible to the law for us, so that we are no longer responsible to it (⋈Galatians 3:13,24), but to Him, as the members to the Head (⋈1 Corinthians 7:22 ⋈Romans 8:1-4 ⋈1 Peter 2:16). Christians serve Christ in newness of spirit, no longer in oldness of the letter (that is, the old *external law as such*), ⋈Romans 7:4-6. To Christ, as man’s Head, the Father has properly delegated His authority (⋈John 5:22,27); whence here he substitutes “Christ” for “God” in the second clause, “not without law *to God*, but under the law *to Christ*.” The law of Christ is the law of love (⋈Galatians 6:2; compare ⋈Galatians 5:13).

22. gain the weak — that is, establish, instead of being a stumbling-block to inexperienced Christians (⋈1 Corinthians 8:7) ⋈Romans 14:1, “Weak in the faith.” ALFORD thinks the “weak” are not Christians at all, for these have been already “won”; but those outside the Church, who are yet “without strength” to believe (⋈Romans 5:6). But when “weak” *Christians* are by the condescending love of stronger brethren kept from falling from faith, they are well said to be “gained” or won.

by all means ... some — The gain of even “*some*” is worth the expenditure of “all means.” He conformed himself to the feelings of each in the several classes, that out of them all he might *gain some*.

23. partaker thereof — *Greek*, “*fellow partaker*”: of the Gospel blessings promised at Christ’s coming: “with” (not as *English Version*, “you”: but) *them*, namely, with those thus “gained” by me to the Gospel.

24. Know ye not — The Isthmian games, in which the foot race was a leading one, were of course well known, and a subject of patriotic pride to the Corinthians, who lived in the immediate neighborhood. These periodical games were to the Greeks rather a passion than a mere amusement: hence their suitableness as an image of Christian earnestness.

in a race — *Greek*, “in a race course.”

all ... one — Although we knew that one alone could be saved, still it Would be well worth our while to run [BENGEL]. Even in the Christian race not “all” who enter on the race win (⋈1 Corinthians 10:1-5).

So run, that ye may obtain — said parenthetically. These are the words in which the instructors of the young in the exercise schools (*gymnasia*) and the spectators on the race course exhorted their pupils to stimulate them to put forth all exertions. The *gymnasium* was a prominent feature in every Greek city. Every candidate had to take an oath that he had been ten months in training, and that he would violate none of the regulations (^{<A05>}2 Timothy 2:5; compare ^{<S00>}1 Timothy 4:7,8). He lived on a strict self-denying diet, refraining from wine and pleasant foods, and enduring cold and heat and most laborious discipline. The “prize” awarded by the judge or umpire was a chaplet of green leaves; at the Isthmus, those of the indigenous pine, for which parsley leaves were temporarily substituted (^{<A05>}1 Corinthians 9:25). The *Greek* for “obtain” is *fully obtain*. It is in vain to begin, unless we persevere to the end (^{<A05>}Matthew 10:22 24:13 ^{<A05>}Revelation 2:10). The “so” expresses, *Run with such perseverance* in the heavenly course, as “all” the runners exhibit in the earthly “race” just spoken of: *to the end that ye may attain the prize*.

25. striveth — in wrestling: a still more severe contest than the foot race.

is temperate — So Paul exercised self-denial, abstaining from claiming sustenance for the sake of the “reward,” namely, to “gain the more” (^{<A05>}1 Corinthians 9:18,19).

corruptible — *soon withering*, as being only of fir leaves taken from the fir groves which surrounded the Isthmian race course or stadium.

incorruptible — (^{<A05>}1 Peter 1:4 5:4 ^{<A05>}Revelation 2:10). “Crown” here is not that of a king (which is expressed by a different *Greek* word, namely, “diadem”), but a *wreath* or *garland*.

26. I — Paul returns to his main subject, *his own* self-denial, and his motive in it.

run, not as uncertainly — not as a runner uncertain of the goal. Ye Corinthians gain no end in your entering idol temples or eating idol meats. But *I*, for my part, in all my acts, whether in my becoming “all things to all men,” or in receiving no sustenance from my converts, have a definite end in view, namely, to “gain the more.” I know what I aim at, and how to aim at it. He who runs with a clear aim, looks straightforward to the goal,

makes it his sole aim, casts away every encumbrance (^{<3011}Hebrews 12:1,2), is indifferent to what the by-standers say, and sometimes even a fall only serves to rouse him the more [BENGEL].

not as one that beateth the air — instead of beating the adversary.

Alluding to the *sciamachia* or *sparring in the school in sham-fight* (compare ^{<349}1 Corinthians 14:9), wherein they struck out into the air as if at an imaginary adversary. The real adversary is Satan acting on us through the flesh.

27. keep under — literally, “bruise the face under the eyes,” so as to render it black and blue; so, to *chastise* in the most sensitive part. Compare “*mortify* the deeds of the body,” ^{<483}Romans 8:13; also ^{<4011}1 Peter 2:11. It is not ascetic fasts or macerations of the body which are here recommended, but the *keeping under* of our natural self-seeking, so as, like Paul, to lay ourselves out entirely for the great work.

my body — the old man and the remainders of lust in my flesh. “My body,” so far as by the *flesh* it opposes the *spirit* [ESTIUS] (^{<487}Galatians 5:17). Men may be severe to their bodies and yet indulge their lust. Ascetic “neglect of the body” may be all the while a more subtle “satisfying of the flesh” (^{<5023}Colossians 2:23). Unless the soul keep the body under, the body will get above the soul. The body may be made a good servant, but is a bad master.

bring it into subjection — or bondage, as a *slave* or servant *led away captive*; so the *Greek*.

preached — literally, “heralded.” He keeps up the image from the races. The *heralds* summoned the candidates for the foot race into the race course [PLATO, *Laws*, 8.833], and placed the crowns on the brows of the conquerors, announcing their names [BENGEL]. They probably proclaimed also the laws of the combat; answering to the *preaching* of the apostles [ALFORD]. The *The Christian* herald is also a *combatant*, in which respect he is distinguished from the herald at the games.

a castaway — failing shamefully of the prize myself, after I have *called* others to the contest. *Rejected* by God, the Judge of the Christian race, notwithstanding my having, by my preaching, led others to be accepted.

Compare the equivalent term, “reprobate,” ²⁴⁸Jeremiah 6:30 ²⁴⁹2 Corinthians 13:6. Paul implies, if such earnest, self-denying watchfulness over himself be needed still, with all his labors for others, to make his own calling sure, much more is the same needed by the Corinthians, instead of their going, as they do, to the extreme limit of Christian liberty.

CHAPTER 10

1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-33.

DANGER OF FELLOWSHIP WITH IDOLATRY ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL: SUCH FELLOWSHIP INCOMPATIBLE WITH FELLOWSHIP IN THE LORD'S SUPPER. EVEN LAWFUL THINGS ARE TO BE FORBORN, SO AS NOT TO HURT WEAK BRETHREN.

1. Moreover — The oldest manuscripts read “for.” Thus the connection with the foregoing chapter is expressed. Ye need to exercise self-denying watchfulness notwithstanding all your privileges, lest ye be castaways. For the Israelites with all their privileges were most of them castaways through want of it.

ignorant — with all your boasted “knowledge.”

our fathers — The Jewish Church stands in the relation of parent to the Christian Church.

all — Arrange as the *Greek*, “Our fathers were *all* under the *cloud*”; giving the “all” its proper emphasis. Not so much as one of so great a multitude was detained by force or disease (^{<B57>}Psalm 105:37) [BENGEL]. Five times the “all” is repeated, in the enumeration of the five favors which God bestowed on Israel (^{<B1>}1 Corinthians 10:1-4). Five times, correspondingly, they sinned (^{<B6>}1 Corinthians 10:6-10). In contrast to the “all” stands “many (rather, ‘the most’) of them” (^{<B5>}1 Corinthians 10:5). *All* of them had great privileges, yet *most* of them were castaways through lust. Beware you, having greater privileges, of sharing the same doom through a similar sin. Continuing the reasoning (^{<B4>}1 Corinthians 9:24), “They which run in a race, run *all*, but *one* receiveth the prize.”

under the cloud — were continually *under the defense* of the pillar of cloud, the symbol of the divine presence (^{<B21>}Exodus 13:21,22 ^{<B53>}Psalm 105:39; compare ^{<B45>}Isaiah 4:5).

passed through the sea — by God’s miraculous interposition for them (^{<14:3>}Exodus 14:29).

2. And — “And so” [BENGEL].

baptized unto Moses — the servant of God and representative of the Old Testament covenant of the law: as Jesus, the Son of God, is of the Gospel covenant (^{<10:17>}John 1:17 ^{<3:5,6>}Hebrews 3:5,6). The people were led to believe in Moses as God’s servant by the miracle of the cloud protecting them, and by their being conducted under him safely through the Red Sea; therefore they are said to be “baptized unto” him (^{<14:31>}Exodus 14:31).

“Baptized” is here equivalent to “*initiated*”: it is used in accommodation to Paul’s argument to the Corinthians; they, it is true, have been “baptized,” but so also virtually were the Israelites of old; if the virtual baptism of the latter availed not to save them from the doom of lust, neither will the actual baptism of the former save them. There is a resemblance between the symbols also: for the cloud and sea consist of water, and as these took the Israelites out of sight, and then restored them again to view, so the water does to the baptized [BENGEL]. OLSHAUSEN understands “the cloud” and “the sea” as symbolizing the *Spirit* and *water* respectively (^{<3:5>}John 3:5 ^{<10:44-47>}Acts 10:44-47). Christ is the pillar cloud that screens us from the heat of God’s wrath. Christ as “the light of the world” is our “pillar of fire” to guide us in the darkness of the world. As the rock when smitten sent forth the waters, so Christ, having been once for all smitten, sends forth the waters of the Spirit. As the manna bruised in mills fed Israel, so Christ, when “it pleased the Lord to bruise Him,” has become our spiritual food. A strong proof of inspiration is given in this fact, that the *historical* parts of Scripture, without the consciousness even of the authors, are covert prophecies of the future.

3. same spiritual meat — As the Israelites had the water from the rock, which answered to *baptism*, so they had the manna which corresponded to the other of the two Christian sacraments, the Lord’s Supper. Paul plainly implies the *importance* which was attached to these two sacraments by all Christians in those days: “an inspired protest against those who lower their dignity, or deny their necessity” [ALFORD]. Still he guards against the other extreme of thinking the mere external possession of such privileges will ensure salvation. Moreover, had there been seven sacraments, as Rome

teaches, Paul would have alluded to them, whereas he refers to only the two. He does not mean by “the same” that *the Israelites and we Christians* have the “same” sacrament; but that *believing and unbelieving* Israelites alike had “the same” spiritual privilege of the manna (compare ^{<607>}1 Corinthians 10:17). It was “*spiritual* meat” or food; because given by the power of God’s spirit, not by human labor [GROTIUS and ALFORD] ^{<608>}Galatians 4:29, “born after the Spirit,” that is, supernaturally. ^{<609>}Psalm 78:24, “corn of heaven” (^{<610>}Psalm 105:40). Rather, “spiritual” in its *typical* signification, Christ, the true Bread of heaven, being signified (^{<611>}John 6:32). Not that the Israelites clearly understood the signification; but believers among them would feel that in the type something more was meant; and their implicit and reverent, though indistinct, faith was counted to them for justification, of which the manna was a kind of sacramental seal. “They are not to be heard which feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises” [Article VII, Church of England], as appears from this passage (compare ^{<612>}Hebrews 4:2).

4. drink — (^{<613>}Exodus 17:6). In ^{<614>}Numbers 20:8, “the beasts” also are mentioned as having drunk. The literal water typified “*spiritual* drink,” and is therefore so called.

spiritual Rock that followed them — rather, “*accompanied* them.” Not the literal rock (or its water) “followed” them, as ALFORD explains, as if Paul sanctioned the Jews’ tradition (Rabbi Solomon on ^{<615>}Numbers 20:2) that the rock itself, or at least the stream from it, followed the Israelites from place to place (compare ^{<616>}Deuteronomy 9:21). But Christ, the “Spiritual Rock” (^{<617>}Psalm 78:20,35 ^{<618>}Deuteronomy 32:4,15,18,30,31,37 ^{<619>}Isaiah 28:16 ^{<620>}1 Peter 2:6), accompanied them (^{<621>}Exodus 33:15). “Followed” implies His *attending on* them to *minister to* them; thus, though mostly going *before* them, He, when occasion required it, *followed* “*behind*” (^{<622>}Exodus 14:19). He satisfied all alike as to their bodily thirst whenever they needed it; as on three occasions is expressly recorded (^{<623>}Exodus 15:24,25 17:6 ^{<624>}Numbers 20:8); and this drink for the body symbolized the spiritual drink from the Spiritual Rock (compare ^{<625>}John 4:13,14; see on ^{<626>}1 Corinthians 10:3).

5. But — though they had so many tokens of God’s presence.

many of them — rather, “the majority of them”; “the whole part.” All except Joshua and Caleb of the first generation.

not — in the *Greek* emphatically standing in the beginning of the sentence: “Not,” as one might have naturally expected, “with the more part of them was,” etc.

God — whose judgment alone is valid.

for — the event showed, they had not pleased God.

overthrown — literally, “strewn in heaps.”

in the wilderness — far from the land of promise.

6. were — *Greek*, “came to pass as.”

our examples — samples to us of what will befall us, if we also with all our privileges walk carelessly.

lust — the fountain of all the four other offenses enumerated, and therefore put first (^{SMH}James 1:14,15; compare ^{PAGH}Psalm 106:14). A particular case of lust was that after flesh, when they pined for the fish, leeks, etc., of Egypt, which they had left (^{CHH}Numbers 11:4,33,34). These are included in the “evil things,” not that they are so in themselves, but they became so to the Israelites when they lusted after what God withheld, and were discontented with what God provided.

7. idolaters — A case in point. As the Israelites *sat down* (a deliberate act), *ate*, and *drank* at the idol feast to the calves in Horeb, so the Corinthians were in danger of idolatry by a like act, though not professedly worshipping an idol as the Israelites (^{ABD}1 Corinthians 8:10,11 10:14,20,21 ^{ESB}Exodus 32:6). He passes here from the first to the second person, as they alone (not he also) were in danger of idolatry, etc. He resumes the first person appropriately at ^{BOG}1 Corinthians 10:16.

some — The multitude follow the lead of some bad men.

play — with lascivious dancing, singing, and drumming round the calf (compare “rejoiced,” ^{HEB}Acts 7:41).

8. fornication — literally, Fornication was generally, as in this case (^{<0251}Numbers 25:1-18), associated at the idol feasts with spiritual fornication, that is, idolatry. This all applied to the Corinthians (^{<0011}1 Corinthians 5:1,9 6:9,15,18 ^{<0010}1 Corinthians 8:10). Balaam tempted Israel to both sins with Midian (^{<0014}Revelation 2:14). Compare ^{<0011}1 Corinthians 8:7,9, “stumbling-block,” “eat ... thing offered unto ... idol.”

three and twenty thousand — in ^{<0020}Numbers 25:9 “twenty and four thousand.” If this were a real discrepancy, it would militate rather against inspiration of the *subject matter* and *thought*, than against *verbal* inspiration. The solution is: Moses in Numbers includes all who died “in the plague”; Paul, all who died “in *one day*”; one thousand more may have fallen the next day [KITTO, *Biblical Cyclopaedia*]. Or, the real number may have been between twenty-three thousand and twenty-four thousand, say twenty-three thousand five hundred, or twenty-three thousand six hundred; when writing generally where the exact figures were not needed, one writer might quite veraciously give one of the two round numbers near the exact one, and the other writer the other [BENGEL]. Whichever be the true way of reconciling the seeming discrepant statements, at least the ways given above prove they are not really irreconcilable.

9. tempt Christ — So the oldest *versions*, IRENAEUS (264), and *good* manuscripts read. Some of the *oldest* manuscripts read “Lord”; and one manuscript only “God.” If “Lord” be read, it will mean *Christ*. As “Christ” was referred to in one of the five privileges of Israel (^{<0014}1 Corinthians 10:4), so it is natural that He should be mentioned here in one of the five corresponding sins of that people. In ^{<0015}Numbers 21:5 it is “spake against *God*” (whence probably arose the alteration in the one manuscript, ^{<0010}1 Corinthians 10:9, “God,” to harmonize it with ^{<0015}Numbers 21:5). As either “Christ” or “Lord” is the genuine reading, “Christ” must be “God.” Compare “Why do ye tempt the Lord?” (^{<0017}Exodus 17:2,7. Compare ^{<0011}Romans 14:11, with ^{<0012}Isaiah 45:22,23). Israel’s discontented complainings were temptings of Christ especially, the “Angel” of the covenant (^{<0020}Exodus 23:20,21 32:34 ^{<0010}Isaiah 63:9). Though they drank of “that Rock ... Christ” (^{<0014}1 Corinthians 10:4), they yet complained for want of water (^{<0017}Exodus 17:2,7). Though also eating the same spiritual meat (Christ, “the true manna,” “the bread of life”), they yet murmured, “Our soul loatheth this light bread.” In this case, being

punished by the fiery serpents, they were saved by the brazen serpent, the emblem of *Christ* (compare ^{<488>}John 8:56 ^{<512>}Hebrews 11:26). The *Greek* for “tempt” means, *tempt* or *try*, *so as to wear out* the long-suffering of Christ (compare ^{<498>}Psalms 95:8,9 ^{<442>}Numbers 14:22). The Corinthians were in danger of provoking God’s long-suffering by walking on the verge of idolatry, through overweening confidence in their knowledge.

10. some of them ... murmured — upon the death of Korah and his company, who themselves were murmurers (^{<466>}Numbers 16:41,49). Their murmurs against Moses and Aaron were virtually murmurs against God (compare ^{<448>}Exodus 16:8,10). Paul herein glances at the Corinthian murmurs against himself, the apostle of Christ.

destroyed — fourteen thousand seven hundred perished.

the destroyer — THE same destroying angel sent by God as in ^{<472>}Exodus 12:23, and ^{<444>}2 Samuel 24:16.

11. Now ... these things ... ensamples — resuming the thread of ^{<406>}1 Corinthians 10:6. The oldest manuscripts read, “by way of example.”

the ends of the world — literally, “of the ages”; the New Testament dispensation in its successive phases (*plural*, “ends”) being the winding up of all former “ages.” No new dispensation shall appear till Christ comes as Avenger and Judge; till then the “ends,” being many, include various successive periods (compare ^{<502>}Hebrews 9:26). As we live in the last dispensation, which is the consummation of all that went before, our responsibilities are the greater; and the greater is the guilt, Paul implies, to the Corinthians, which they incur if they fall short of their privileges.

12. thinketh he standeth — stands and thinks that he stands [BENGEL]; that is, stands “by faith ... well pleasing” to God; in contrast to ^{<404>}1 Corinthians 10:5, “with many of them God was not well pleased” (^{<512>}Romans 11:20).

fall — from his place in the Church of God (compare ^{<408>}1 Corinthians 10:8, “fell”). Both temporally and spiritually (^{<544>}Romans 14:4). Our security, so far as relates to God, consists in faith; so far as relates to ourselves, it consists in fear.

13. Consolation to them, under their temptation; it is none but such as is “common to man,” or “such as man can bear,” “adapted to man’s powers of endurance” [WAHL].

faithful — (^{BCB} Psalm 125:3 ^{207B} Isaiah 27:3,8 ^{68B} Revelation 3:10). “God is faithful” to the covenant which He made with you in calling you (^{51B} 1 Thessalonians 5:24). To be *led into* temptation is distinct from *running* into it, which would be “tempting God” (^{60B} 1 Corinthians 10:9 ^{40B} Matthew 4:7).

way to escape — (^{29B} Jeremiah 29:11 ^{60B} 2 Peter 2:9). The *Greek* is, “the way of escape”; the appropriate way of escape in each particular temptation; not an immediate escape, but one in due time, after patience has had her perfect work (^{50B} James 1:2-4,12). He “makes” the way of escape simultaneously with the temptation which His providence permissively arranges for His people.

to bear it — *Greek*, “to bear up under it,” or “against it.” Not, He will take it away (^{47B} 2 Corinthians 12:7-9).

14. Resuming the argument, ^{60B} 1 Corinthians 10:7 ^{60B} 1 Corinthians 8:9,10.

flee — Do not tamper with it by doubtful acts, such as eating idol meats on the plea of Christian liberty. The only safety is in *wholly shunning* whatever borders on idolatry (^{60B} 2 Corinthians 6:16,17). The Holy Spirit herein also presciently warned the Church against the idolatry, subsequently transferred from the idol feast to the Lord’s Supper itself, in the figment of transubstantiation.

15. Appeal to their own powers of *judgment* to weigh the force of the argument that follows: namely, that as the partaking of the Lord’s Supper involves a partaking of the Lord Himself, and the partaking of the Jewish sacrificial meats involved a partaking of the altar of God, and, as the heathens sacrifice to devils, to partake of an idol feast is to have fellowship with devils. We cannot divest ourselves of the responsibility of “judging” for ourselves. The weakness of private judgment is not an argument against its use, but its abuse. We should the more take pains in searching the infallible word, with every aid within our reach, and above all with humble prayer for the Spirit’s teaching (^{47B} Acts 17:11). If Paul, an inspired

apostle, not only permits, but urges, men to *judge* his sayings by Scripture, much more should the fallible ministers of the present visible Church do so.

To wise men — refers with a mixture of irony to the Corinthian boast of “wisdom” (⋈1 Corinthians 4:10 ⋈2 Corinthians 11:19). Here you have an opportunity of exercising your “wisdom” in judging “what I say.”

16. The cup of blessing — answering to the Jewish “cup of blessing,” over which thanks were offered in the Passover. It was in doing so that Christ instituted this part of the Lord’s Supper (⋈Matthew 26:27 ⋈Luke 22:17,20).

we bless — “we,” not merely ministers, but also the congregation. The minister “blesses” (that is, *consecrates with blessing*) the cup, not by any priestly transmitted authority of his own, but as representative of the congregation, who virtually through him bless the cup. The consecration is the corporate act of the whole Church. The act of *joint blessing* by him and them (not “the cup” itself, which, as also “the bread,” in the *Greek* is in the accusative), and the consequent drinking of it together, constitute the communion, that is, the joint participation “of the blood of Christ.” Compare ⋈1 Corinthians 10:18, “They who eat ... are partakers” (joint communicants). “Is” in both cases in this verse is literal, not *represents*. He who with faith partakes of the cup and the bread, partakes really but spiritually of the blood and body of Christ (⋈Ephesians 5:30,32), and of the benefits of His sacrifice on the cross (compare ⋈1 Corinthians 10:18). In contrast to this is to have “fellowship with devils” (⋈1 Corinthians 10:20). ALFORD explains, “The cup ... is the [joint] participation (that is, that whereby the act of participation takes place) of the blood,” etc. It is the seal of our living union with, and a means of our partaking of, Christ as our Savior (⋈John 6:53-57). It is not said, “The cup ... is *the blood*,” or “the bread ... is *the body*,” but “is the *communion* [joint-participation] of the blood ... body.” If the bread be changed into the literal body of Christ, where is the sign of the sacrament? Romanists eat Christ “*in remembrance* of Himself.” To drink literal *blood* would have been an abomination to Jews, which the first Christians were (⋈Leviticus 17:11,12). *Breaking the bread* was part of the act of consecrating it, for thus was represented the crucifixion of Christ’s body (⋈1 Corinthians 11:24). The distinct

specification of the bread and the wine disproves the Romish doctrine of concomitancy, and exclusion of the laity from the cup.

17. one bread — rather, “loaf.” One loaf alone seems to have been used in each celebration.

and one body — Omit “and”; “one loaf [that is], one body.” “We, *the many* (namely, believers assembled; so the *Greek*), are one bread (by our partaking of the same loaf, which becomes assimilated to the substance of all our bodies; and so we become), one body” (with Christ, and so with one another).

we ... all — *Greek*, “the whole of us.”

18. Israel after the flesh — the literal, as distinguished from the spiritual, Israel (^{487D}Romans 2:29 4:1 9:3 ^{487D}Galatians 4:29).

partakers of the altar — and so *of God*, whose is the altar; they have fellowship in God and His worship, of which the altar is the symbol.

19, 20. What say I then? — The inference might be drawn from the analogies of the Lord’s Supper and Jewish sacrifices, that an idol is *really what the heathen thought it to be, a god*, and that in eating idol-meats they had fellowship with the god. This verse guards against such an inference: “What would I say then? that a thing sacrificed to an idol is any real thing (in the sense that the heathen regard it), or that an idol is any real thing?” (The oldest manuscripts read the words in this order. Supply “*Nay*”) “But [I say] that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils (demons).” Paul here introduces a new fact. It is true that, as I said, an idol has no reality in the sense that the heathen regard it, but it has a reality in another sense; heathendom being under Satan’s dominion as “prince of this world,” *he* and *his demons* are in fact the powers worshipped by the heathen, whether they are or are not conscious of it (^{487D}Deuteronomy 32:17 ^{487D}Leviticus 17:7 ⁴⁴¹¹⁵2 Chronicles 11:15 ^{4965D}Psalms 106:37

^{487D}Revelation 9:20). “Devil” is in the *Greek* restricted to Satan; “demons” is the term applied to his subordinate evil spirits. Fear, rather than love, is the motive of heathen worship (compare the English word “panic,” from PAN, whose human form with horns and cloven hoofs gave rise to the

vulgar representations of Satan which prevail now); just as fear is the spirit of Satan and his demons (^{<418>}James 2:19).

20. I would not that ye ... have fellowship with devils — by partaking of idol feasts (^{<418>}1 Corinthians 8:10).

21. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord — really and spiritually; though ye may outwardly (^{<418>}1 Kings 18:21).

cup of devils — in contrast to *the cup of the Lord*. At idol feasts libations were usually made from the cup to the idol first, and then the guests drank; so that in drinking they had fellowship with the idol.

the Lord's table — The Lord's Supper is a feast on a *table*, not a sacrifice on an altar. Our only altar is the cross, our only sacrifice that of Christ once for all. The Lord's Supper stands, however, in the same relation, analogically, to Christ's sacrifice, as the Jews' sacrificial feasts did to their sacrifices (compare ^{<300>}Malachi 1:7, "altar ... table of the Lord"), and the heathen idol feasts to their idolatrous sacrifices (^{<251>}Isaiah 65:11). The heathen sacrifices were offered to idol nonentities, behind which Satan lurked. The Jews' sacrifice was but a shadow of the substance which was to come. Our one sacrifice of Christ is the only substantial reality; therefore, while the partaker of the Jew's sacrificial feast partook rather "of the altar" (^{<418>}1 Corinthians 10:18) than of GOD manifested fully, and the heathen idol-feaster had fellowship really with demons, the communicant in the Lord's Supper has in it a real communion of, or fellowship in, the body of Christ once sacrificed, and now exalted as the Head of redeemed humanity.

22. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? — by dividing our fellowship between Him and idols (^{<238>}Ezekiel 20:39). Is it our wish to provoke Him to assert His power? ^{<152>}Deuteronomy 32:21 is before the apostle's mind [ALFORD], (^{<420>}Exodus 20:5).

are we stronger? — that we can risk a contest with Him.

23. All things are lawful for me, etc. — Recurring to the Corinthian plea (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 6:12), he repeats his qualification of it. The oldest manuscripts omit both times "for me."

edify not — tend not to *build up* the spiritual temple, the Church, in faith and love. Paul does not appeal to the apostolic decision (^{<491>}Acts 15:1-29), which seems to have been not so much regarded outside of Palestine, but rather to the broad principle of true Christian freedom, which does not allow us to be governed by external things, as though, because we *can* use them, we *must* use them (^{<462>}1 Corinthians 6:12). Their use or non-use is to be regulated by regard to *edification*.

24. (^{<493>}1 Corinthians 10:33 ^{<435>}1 Corinthians 13:5 ^{<51>}Romans 15:1,2).

25. **shambles** — butchers' stalls; the flesh market.

asking no question — whether it has been offered to an idol or not.

for conscience' sake — If on asking you should hear it had been offered to idols, a scruple would arise in your conscience which was needless, and never would have arisen had you asked no questions.

26. The ground on which such eating without questioning is justified is, the earth and all its contents ("the fullness thereof," ^{<501>}Psalms 20:1 50:12), including all meats, belong to the Lord, and are appointed for our use; and where conscience suggests no scruple, all are to be eaten (^{<544>}Romans 14:14,20 ^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:4,5; compare ^{<405>}Acts 10:15).

27. **ye be disposed to go** — tacitly implying, they would be as well not to go, but yet not forbidding them to go (^{<509>}1 Corinthians 10:9) [GROTIUS]. The feast is not an idol feast, but a general entertainment, at which, however, there might be meat that had been offered to an idol.

for conscience' sake — (See on ^{<405>}1 Corinthians 10:25).

28. **if any man** — a weak Christian at table, wishing to warn his brother.

offered in sacrifice unto idols — The oldest manuscripts omit "unto idols." At a heathen's table the expression, offensive to him, would naturally be avoided.

for conscience' sake — not to cause a stumbling-block to the conscience of thy weak brother (^{<480>}1 Corinthians 8:10-12).

for the earth is the Lord's, etc. — not in the oldest manuscripts.

29. Conscience ... of the other — the weak brother introduced in ⁴¹⁸1 Corinthians 10:28.

for why is my liberty judged off another man's conscience? — Paul passes to the first person, to teach his converts by putting himself as it were in their position. The *Greek* terms for “the other” and “another” are distinct. “*The other*” is *the one with whom Paul's and his Corinthian converts' concern is*; “*another*” is *any other with whom he and they have no concern*. If a guest know the meat to be idol meat while I know it not, I have “liberty” to eat without being condemned by his “conscience” [GROTIUS]. Thus the “for,” etc. is an argument for ⁴¹⁷1 Corinthians 10:27, “Eat, asking no questions.” Or, Why should I give occasion by the rash use of my liberty that another should condemn it [ESTIUS], or that my liberty should cause the destruction of my weak brother?” [MENOCHIUS]. Or, the words are those of the Corinthian objector (perhaps used in their letter, and so quoted by Paul), “Why is my liberty judged by another's conscience?” Why should not I be judged only by my own, and have liberty to do whatever it sanctions? Paul replies in ⁴¹⁸1 Corinthians 10:31, Your doing so ought always to be limited by regard to what most tends “to the glory of God” [VATABLUS, CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. The first explanation is simplest; the “for,” etc. in it refers to “not thine own” (that is, “not *my* own,” in Paul's change to the first person); I am to abstain only in the case of liability to offend *another's* conscience; in cases where *my own* has no scruple, I am not bound, in God's judgment, by any other conscience than my own.

30. For — The oldest manuscripts omit “For.”

by grace — rather, “thankfully” [ALFORD].

I ... be partaker — I partake of the food set before me.

evil spoken of — by him who does not use his liberty, but will eat nothing without scrupulosity and questioning whence the meat comes.

give thanks — which consecrates all the Christian's acts (⁴¹⁰Romans 14:6 ⁵⁰⁸1 Timothy 4:3,4).

31. Contrast ³⁷⁰Zechariah 7:6; the picture of worldly men. The godly may “eat and drink,” and it shall be well with him (³²⁵Jeremiah 22:15,16).

to the glory of God — (S187 Colossians 3:17 <4041> 1 Peter 4:11) — which involves our having regard to the edification of our neighbor.

32. Give none offense — in things indifferent (<4083> 1 Corinthians 8:13 <5443> Romans 14:13 <4063> 2 Corinthians 6:3); for in all essential things affecting Christian doctrine and practice, even in the smallest *detail*, we must not swerve from principle, whatever offense may be the result (<4023> 1 Corinthians 1:23). Giving offense is unnecessary, if our own spirit cause it; necessary, if it be caused by the truth.

33. I please — I try to please (<4099> 1 Corinthians 9:19,22 <5510> Romans 15:2).

not seeking mine own — (<4004> 1 Corinthians 10:24).

many — rather as *Greek*, “THE many.”

CHAPTER 11

1 CORINTHIANS 11:1-34.

CENSURE ON DISORDERS IN THEIR ASSEMBLIES: THEIR WOMEN NOT BEING VEILED, AND ABUSES AT THE LOVE-FEASTS.

1. Rather belonging to the end of the tenth chapter, than to this chapter.

followers — *Greek*, “imitators.”

of Christ — who did not please Himself (^{<615>}Romans 15:3); but gave Himself, at the cost of laying aside His divine glory, and dying as man, for us (^{<600>}Ephesians 5:2 ^{<610>}Philippians 2:4,5). We are to follow Christ first, and earthly teachers only so far as they follow Christ.

2. Here the chapter ought to begin.

ye remember me in all things — in your *general* practice, though in the *particular* instances which follow ye fail.

ordinances — *Greek*, “traditions,” that is, apostolic directions given by word of mouth or in writing (^{<612>}1 Corinthians 11:23 15:3 ^{<605>}2 Thessalonians 2:15). The reference here is mainly to *ceremonies*: for in ^{<612>}1 Corinthians 11:23, as to the LORD’S SUPPER, which is not a mere ceremony, he says, not merely, “I *delivered* unto you,” but also, “I received of the Lord”; here he says only, “I delivered to you.” Romanists argue hence for oral traditions. But the difficulty is to know *what is a* genuine apostolic tradition intended for all ages. Any that can be *proved* to be such ought to be observed; any that cannot, ought to be rejected (^{<608>}Revelation 22:18). Those preserved in the written word alone can be proved to be such.

3. The Corinthian women, on the ground of the abolition of distinction of sexes in Christ, claimed equality with the male sex, and, overstepping the bounds of propriety, came forward to pray and prophesy without the

customary head-covering of females. The Gospel, doubtless, did raise women from the degradation in which they had been sunk, especially in the East. Yet, while on a level with males as to *the offer of, and standing in grace* (^{<483>}Galatians 3:28), their subjection in point of *order, modesty, and seemliness*, is to be maintained. Paul reproves here their unseemliness as to *dress*: in ^{<494>}1 Corinthians 14:34, as to the retiring *modesty in public* which becomes them. He grounds his reproof here on the subjection of woman to man in the order of creation.

the head — an appropriate expression, when he is about to treat of woman's appropriate *headdress* in public.

of every man ... Christ — (^{<495>}Ephesians 5:23).

of ... woman ... man — (^{<410>}1 Corinthians 11:8 ^{<008>}Genesis 3:16 ^{<5411>}1 Timothy 2:11,12 ^{<001>}1 Peter 3:1,5,6).

head of Christ is God — (^{<483>}1 Corinthians 3:23 15:27,28 ^{<082>}Luke 3:22,38 ^{<448>}John 14:28 20:17 ^{<489>}Ephesians 3:9). "Jesus, therefore, must be of the same essence as God: for, since the man is the head of the woman, and since the head is of the same essence as the body, and God is the head of the Son, it follows the Son is of the same essence as the Father" [CHRYSOSTOM]. "The woman is of the essence of the man, and not made by the man; so, too, the Son is not made by the Father, but of the essence of the Father" [THEODORET, t. 3, p. 171].

4. praying — in public (^{<417>}1 Corinthians 11:17).

prophesying — preaching in the Spirit (^{<420>}1 Corinthians 12:10).

having — that is, if he were to have: a supposed case to illustrate the impropriety in the *woman's* case. It was the Greek custom (and so that at Corinth) for men in worship to be uncovered; whereas the Jews wore the *Talith*, or veil, to show reverence before God, and their unworthiness to look on Him (^{<200>}Isaiah 6:2); however, MAIMONIDES [*Mishna*] excepts cases where (as in Greece) the custom of the place was different.

dishonoreth his head — not as ALFORD, "Christ" (^{<410>}1 Corinthians 11:3); but literally, as "his head" is used in the beginning of the verse. *He dishonoreth his head* (the principal part of the body) by wearing a

covering or veil, which is a mark of subjection, and which makes him look downwards instead of upwards to his Spiritual Head, Christ, to whom alone he owes subjection. Why, then, ought not man to wear the covering in token of his subjection to Christ, as the woman wears it in token of her subjection to man? “Because Christ is not seen: the man is seen; so the covering of him who is under Christ is not seen; of her who is under the man, is seen” [BENGEL]. (Compare ^{<410>}1 Corinthians 11:7).

5. woman ... prayeth ... prophesieth — This instance of women speaking in public worship is an extraordinary case, and justified only by the miraculous gifts which such women possessed as their credentials; for instance, Anna the prophetess and Priscilla (so ^{<4128>}Acts 2:18). The ordinary rule to them is: silence in public (^{<4131>}1 Corinthians 14:34,35 ^{<4121>}1 Timothy 2:11,12). Mental receptivity and activity in family life are recognized in Christianity, as most accordant with the destiny of woman. This passage does not necessarily sanction women speaking in public. even though possessing miraculous gifts; but simply records what took place at Corinth, without expressing an opinion on it, reserving the censure of it till ^{<4131>}1 Corinthians 14:34,35. Even those women endowed with prophecy were designed to exercise their gift, rather in other times and places, than the public congregation.

dishonoreth ... head — in that she acts against the divine ordinance and the modest propriety that becomes her: in putting away the veil, she puts away the badge of her subjection to man, which is her true “honor”; for through him it connects her with Christ, the head of the man. Moreover, as the *head-covering* was the emblem of maiden modesty before man (^{<1245>}Genesis 24:65), and conjugal chastity (^{<1216>}Genesis 20:16); so, to *uncover the head* indicated withdrawal from the *power* of the husband, whence a suspected wife had her head *uncovered* by the priest (^{<1258>}Numbers 5:18). ALFORD takes “her head” to be man, her symbolical, not her literal head; but as it is literal in the former clause, it must be so in the latter one.

all one as if ... shaven — As woman’s hair is given her by nature, as her covering (^{<4115>}1 Corinthians 11:15), to cut it off like a man, all admit, would be indecorous: therefore, to put away the head-covering, too, like a man, would be similarly indecorous. It is *natural* to her to have long hair for her

covering: she ought, therefore, to add the other (the wearing of a head-covering) to show that she does of *her own will* that which *nature* itself teaches she ought to do, in token of her subjection to man.

6. A woman would not like to be “shorn” or (what is worse) “shaven”; but if she chooses to be uncovered (unveiled) in front, let her be so also behind, that is, “shorn.”

a shame — an unbecoming thing (compare ^{<411B>}1 Corinthians 11:13-15). Thus the shaving of nuns is “a shame.”

7-9. Argument, also, from man’s more immediate relation to God, and the woman’s to man.

he is ... image ... glory of God — being created in God’s “image,” *first* and *directly*: the woman, *subsequently*, and *indirectly*, through the mediation of man. Man is the representative of God’s “glory” this ideal of man being realized most fully in the Son of man (^{<400B>}Psalm 8:4,5; compare ^{<402B>}2 Corinthians 8:23). Man is declared in Scripture to be both the “image,” and in the “likeness,” of God (compare ^{<500B>}James 3:9). But “image” alone is applied to the Son of God (^{<501B>}Colossians 1:15; compare ^{<500B>}Hebrews 1:3). “Express image,” *Greek*, “the impress.” The Divine Son is not merely “like” God, He is God of God, “being of one substance (essence) with the Father.” [*Nicene Creed*].

woman ... glory of ... man — He does not say, also, “*the image* of the man.” For the sexes differ: moreover, the woman is created in the *image of God*, as well as the man (^{<400B>}Genesis 1:26,27). But as the moon in relation to the sun (^{<430B>}Genesis 37:9), so woman shines not so much with light direct from God, as with light derived from man, that is, *in her order in creation*; not that she does not *in grace* come individually into *direct* communion with God; but even here much of her knowledge is mediately given her through man, on whom she is naturally dependent.

8. is of ... of — *takes his being from* (“out of”) ... *from*: referring to woman’s original creation, “taken out of man” (compare ^{<400B>}Genesis 2:23). The woman was made by God mediately through the man, who was, as it were, a veil or medium placed between her and God, and therefore, should wear the veil or head-covering in public worship, in acknowledgement of

this subordination to man in the order of creation. The man being made immediately by God as His glory, has no veil between himself and God [FABER STAPULENSIS in BENDEL].

9. Neither — rather, “For also”; *Another argument: The immediate object of woman’s creation.* “The man was not created for the sake of the woman; but the woman for the sake of the man” (^{ORIG}Genesis 2:18,21,22). Just as the Church, the bride, is made for Christ; and yet in both the natural and the spiritual creations, the bride, while made for the bridegroom, in fulfilling that end, attains her own true “glory,” and brings “shame” and “dishonor” on herself by any departure from it (^{ADAM}1 Corinthians 11:4,6).

10. power on her head — the kerchief: French *couvre chef*, *head-covering*, the emblem of “power on her head”; the sign of her being under man’s power, and exercising delegated authority under him. Paul had before his mind the root-connection between the *Hebrew* terms for “veil” (*radid*), and “subjection” (*radad*).

because of the angels — who are present at our Christian assemblies (compare ^{ADAM}Psalms 138:1, “gods,” that is, *angels*), and delight in the orderly subordination of the several ranks of God’s worshippers in their respective places, the outward demeanor and dress of the latter being indicative of that inward humility which angels know to be most pleasing to their common Lord (^{ADAM}1 Corinthians 4:9 ^{ADAM}Ephesians 3:10 ^{ADAM}Ecclesiastes 5:6). HAMMOND quotes CHRYSOSTOM, “Thou standest with angels; thou singest with them; thou hymnest with them; and yet dost thou stand laughing?” BENDEL explains, “As the angels are in relation to God, so the woman is in relation to man. God’s face is uncovered; angels in His presence are veiled (^{ADAM}Isaiah 6:2). Man’s face is uncovered; woman in His presence is to be veiled. For her not to be so, would, by its indecorousness, offend the angels (^{ADAM}Matthew 18:10,31). She, by her weakness, especially needs their ministry; she ought, therefore, to be the more careful not to offend them.”

11. Yet neither sex is insulated and independent of the other in the Christian life [ALFORD]. The one needs the other in the sexual relation; and in respect to Christ (“in the Lord”), the man and the woman together (for

neither can be dispensed with) realize the ideal of redeemed humanity represented by the bride, the Church.

12. As the woman was formed *out of* (from) the man, even so is man born *by means* of woman; but all things (including both man and woman) are *from* God as their source (~~4813~~ Romans 11:36 ~~4818~~ 2 Corinthians 5:18). They depend mutually each on the other, and both on him.

13. Appeal to their own sense of decorum.

a woman ... unto God — By rejecting the emblem of subjection (the head-covering), she passes at one leap in praying publicly beyond both the *man* and *angels* [BENGEL].

14. The fact that nature has provided woman, and not man, with long hair, proves that man was designed to be uncovered, and woman covered. The Nazarite, however, wore long hair lawfully, as being part of a vow sanctioned by God (~~4005~~ Numbers 6:5). Compare as to Absalom, ~~4007~~ 2 Samuel 14:26, and ~~4888~~ Acts 18:18.

15. her hair ... for a covering — Not that she does not need additional covering. Nay, her long hair shows she ought to cover her head as much as possible. The will ought to accord with nature [BENGEL].

16. A summary close to the argument by appeal to the universal custom of the churches.

if any ... seem — The *Greek* also means “*thinks*” (fit) (compare ~~4009~~ Matthew 3:9). If any man *chooses* (still after all my arguments) to be contentious. If any be contentious and *thinks* himself *right* in being so. A reproof of the Corinthians’ self-sufficiency and disputatiousness (~~4001~~ 1 Corinthians 1:20).

we — apostles: or we of the Jewish nation, from whom ye have received the Gospel, and whose usages in all that is good ye ought to follow: Jewish women veiled themselves when in public, according to TERTULLIAN [ESTIUS]. The former explanation is best, as the Jews are not referred to in the context: but he often refers to himself and his fellow apostles, by the expression, “we — us” (~~4009~~ 1 Corinthians 4:9,10).

no such custom — as that of women praying uncovered. Not as CHRYSOSTOM, “that of being contentious.” The *Greek* term implies a *usage*, rather than a *mental habit* (^{<4139>}John 18:39). The usage of true “churches (plural: not, as Rome uses it, ‘the Church,’ as an abstract entity; but ‘*the churches*,’ as a number of *independent witnesses*) of God” (the churches which God Himself recognizes), is a valid argument *in the case of external rites*, especially, *negatively*, for example, Such rites were not received among them, therefore, ought not to be admitted among us: but in questions of *doctrine*, or the *essentials of worship*, the argument is not valid [SCLATER] (^{<4177>}1 Corinthians 7:17 14:33).

neither — nor yet. Catholic usage is not an infallible test of *truth*, but a general test of *decency*.

17. in this — which follows.

I declare — rather, “I enjoin”; as the *Greek* is always so used. The oldest manuscripts read literally “This I enjoin (you) not praising (you).”

that — *inasmuch as; in that* you, etc. Here he qualifies his praise (^{<4119>}1 Corinthians 11:2). “I said that I praised you for keeping. the ordinances delivered to you; but I must now give injunction in the name of the Lord, on a matter in which I praise you not; namely, as to the Lord’s Supper (^{<4123>}1 Corinthians 11:23 ^{<4137>}1 Corinthians 14:37).

not for the better — not so as to progress to what is better.

for the worse — so as to retrograde to what is worse. The result of such “coming together” must be “condemnation” (^{<4134>}1 Corinthians 11:34).

18. first of all — In the first place. The “divisions” (*Greek*, “*schisms*”) meant, are not merely those of opinion (^{<4110>}1 Corinthians 1:10), but in outward acts at the love-feasts (*Agapae*), (^{<4121>}1 Corinthians 11:21). He does not follow up the expression, “in the first place,” by “in the second place.” But though not expressed, a *second* abuse was in his mind when he said, “In the first place,” namely, THE ABUSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS, *which also created disorder in their assemblies* [ALFORD], (^{<4121>}1 Corinthians 12:1 14:23,26,33,40).

in the church — not the place of worship; for ISIDORE OF PELUSIUM denies that there were such places specially set apart for worship in the apostles' times [*Epistle*, 246.2]. But, “in the assembly” or “congregation”; in convocation for worship, where especially love, order, and harmony should prevail. The very ordinance instituted for uniting together believers in one body, was made an occasion of “divisions” (schisms).

partly — He hereby excepts the innocent. “I am unwilling to believe *all* I hear, but *some* I cannot help believing” [ALFORD]: while my love is unaffected by it [BENGEL].

19. heresies — Not merely “schisms” or “divisions” (✠1 Corinthians 11:18), which are “*recent* dissensions of the congregation through differences of opinion” [AUGUSTINE, *Con. Crescon. Don.* 2.7, quoted by TRENCH, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*], but also “heresies,” that is, “schisms which have now become *inveterate*”; “Sects” [CAMPBELL, vol. 2, pp. 126, 127]: so ✠Acts 5:17 15:5 translate the same *Greek*. At present there were dissensions at the love-feasts; but Paul, remembering Jesus' words (✠Matthew 18:7 24:10,12 ✠Luke 17:1) foresees “there must be (come) also” *matured separations*, and established parties in secession, as separatists. The “must be” arises from sin in professors necessarily bearing its natural fruits: these are overruled by God to the probation of character of both the godly and the ungodly, and to the discipline of the former for glory. “Heresies” had not yet its technical sense ecclesiastically, referring to doctrinal errors: it means *confirmed schisms*. ST. AUGUSTINE'S rule is a golden rule as regards questions of heresy and catholicity: “In doubtful questions, liberty; in essentials, unity; in all things, charity.”

that ... approved may be made manifest — through the *disapproved* (reprobates) becoming manifested (✠Luke 2:35 ✠1 John 2:19).

20. When ... therefore — Resuming the thread of discourse from ✠1 Corinthians 11:18.

this is not to — rather, “there is no such thing as eating the LORD'S Supper”; *it is not possible* where each is greedily intent only on devouring “HIS OWN supper,” and some are excluded altogether, not having been waited for (✠1 Corinthians 11:33), where some are “drunken,” while

others are “hungry” (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 11:21). The love-feast usually preceded the Lord’s Supper (as eating the Passover came before the Lord’s Supper at the first institution of the latter). It was a club-feast, where each brought his portion, and the rich, extra portions for the poor; from it the bread and wine were taken for the Eucharist; and it was at it that the excesses took place, which made a *true* celebration of the Lord’s Supper during or after it, with true discernment of its solemnity, out of the question.

21. one taketh before other — the rich “before” the poor, who had no supper of their own. Instead of “tarrying for one another” (^{<413>}1 Corinthians 11:33); hence the precept (^{<421>}1 Corinthians 12:21,25).

his own supper — “His own” belly is his God (^{<518>}Philippians 3:19); “the Lord’s Supper,” the spiritual feast, never enters his thoughts.

drunken — The one has more than is good for him, the other less [BENGEL].

22. What! — *Greek*, “For.”

houses — (compare ^{<414>}1 Corinthians 11:34) — “at home.” That is the place to satiate the appetite, not the assembly of the brethren [ALFORD].

despise ye the church of God — *the congregation* mostly composed of the poor, whom “God hath chosen,” however ye show contempt for them (^{<505>}James 2:5); compare “of God” here, marking the true honor of the Church.

shame them that have not — namely, *houses* to eat and drink in, and who, therefore, ought to have received their portion at the love-feasts from their wealthier brethren.

I praise you not — resuming the words (^{<417>}1 Corinthians 11:17).

23. His object is to show the unworthiness of such conduct from the dignity of the holy supper.

I — Emphatic in the *Greek*. It is not *my own* invention, but the Lord’s institution.

received of the Lord — by immediate revelation (^{<4012>}Galatians 1:12; compare ^{<4027>}Acts 22:17,18 ^{<4011>}2 Corinthians 12:1-4). The renewal of the institution of the Lord's Supper by special revelation to Paul enhances its solemnity. The similarity between Luke's and Paul's account of the institution, favors the supposition that the former drew his information from the apostle, whose companion in travel he was. Thus, the undesigned coincidence is a proof of genuineness.

night — the time fixed for the Passover (^{<0110>}Exodus 12:6): though the time for the Lord's Supper is not fixed.

betrayed — With the traitor at the table, and death present before His eyes, He left this ordinance as His last gift to us, to commemorate His death. Though about to receive such an injury from man, He gave this pledge of His amazing love to man.

24. brake — The *breaking* of the bread involves its *distribution* and reproves the Corinthian mode at the love-feast, of "every one taking before other his own supper."

my body ... broken for you — "given" (^{<0226>}Luke 22:19) for you (*Greek*, "in your behalf"), and "broken," so as to be distributed among you. The oldest manuscripts omit "broken," leaving it to be supplied from "brake." The two old versions, Memphitic and Thebaic, read from Luke, "given." The literal "body" could not have been meant; for Christ was still sensibly present among His disciples when He said, "This is My body." They *could* only have understood Him symbolically and analogically: As this bread is to your bodily health, so My body is to the spiritual health of the believing communicant. The words, "Take, eat," are not in the oldest manuscripts.

in remembrance of me — (See on ^{<4125>}1 Corinthians 11:25).

25. when he had supped — *Greek*, "after the eating of supper," namely, the Passover supper which preceded the Lord's Supper, as the love-feast did subsequently. Therefore, you Corinthians ought to separate common meals from the Lord's Supper [BENGEL].

the new testament — or “covenant.” The cup is the parchment-deed, as it were, on which My new covenant, or last will is written and sealed, making over to you all blessings here and hereafter.

in my blood — ratified by MY blood: “not by the blood of goats and calves” (^{<390>}Hebrews 9:12).

as oft as — *Greek*, “as many times soever”: implying that it is an ordinance *often* to be partaken of.

in remembrance of me — Luke (^{<221>}Luke 22:19) expresses this, which is understood by Matthew and Mark. Paul twice records it (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 11:24 and here) as suiting his purpose. The old sacrifices brought *sins* continually to remembrance (^{<301>}Hebrews 10:1,3). The Lord’s Supper brings to remembrance *Christ* and His sacrifice once for all for the full and final *remission of sins*.

26. For — in proof that the Lord’s Supper is “in remembrance” of Him.

show — *announce publicly*. The *Greek* does not mean to dramatically *represent*, but “ye publicly profess each of you, the Lord has died FOR ME” [WAHL]. This word, as “is” in Christ’s institution (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 11:24,25), implies not *literal* presence, but a *vivid realization, by faith*, of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, as a living person, not a mere abstract dogma, “bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh” (^{<481>}Ephesians 5:30; compare ^{<102>}Genesis 2:23); and ourselves “members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones,” “our sinful bodies made clean by His body (once for all offered), and our souls washed through His most precious blood” [*Church of England Prayer Book*]. “Show,” or “announce,” is an expression applicable to *new* things; compare “show” as to the Passover (^{<133>}Exodus 13:8). So the Lord’s death ought always to be fresh in our memory; compare in heaven, ^{<681>}Revelation 5:6. That the Lord’s Supper is in *remembrance* of Him, implies that He is bodily absent, though spiritually present, for we cannot be said to commemorate one absent. The fact that we not only show the Lord’s death in the supper, but *eat* and *drink* the pledges of it, could only be understood by the Jews, accustomed to such feasts after propitiatory sacrifices, as implying our *personal appropriation* therein of the benefits of that death.

till he come — when there shall be no longer need of symbols of His body, the body itself being manifested. The *Greek* expresses the *certainly* of His coming. Rome teaches that we eat Christ present corporally, “till He come” corporally; a contradiction in terms. The showbread, literally, “bread of the presence,” was in the sanctuary, but not in the Holiest Place (^{<300>}Hebrews 9:1-8); so the Lord’s Supper in heaven, the antitype to the Holiest Place, shall be superseded by Christ’s own bodily presence; then the wine shall be drunk “anew” in the Father’s kingdom, by Christ and His people together, of which heavenly banquet, the Lord’s Supper is a spiritual foretaste and specimen (^{<402>}Matthew 26:29). Meantime, as the showbread was placed *anew*, every sabbath, on the table before the Lord (^{<034>}Leviticus 24:5-8); so the Lord’s death was *shown*, or announced *afresh* at the Lord’s table the first day of every week in the primitive Church. We are now “priests unto God” in the dispensation of Christ’s spiritual presence, antitypical to the HOLY PLACE: the perfect and eternal dispensation, which shall not begin till Christ’s coming, is antitypical to the HOLIEST PLACE, which Christ our High Priest alone in the flesh as yet has entered (^{<300>}Hebrews 9:6,7); but which, at His coming, we, too, who are believers, shall enter (^{<405>}Revelation 7:15 21:22). The supper joins the two closing periods of the Old and the New dispensations. The first and second comings are considered as *one* coming, whence the expression is not “return,” but “come” (compare, however, ^{<348>}John 14:3).

27. eat and drink — So one of the oldest manuscripts reads. But three or four equally old manuscripts, the *Vulgate* and CYPRIAN, read, “or.” Romanists quote this reading in favor of communion in one kind. This consequence does not follow. Paul says, “Whosoever is guilty of unworthy conduct, *either* in eating the bread, *or* in drinking the cup, is guilty of the body and blood of Christ.” Impropropriety in only *one* of the two elements, vitiates true communion in *both*. Therefore, in the end of the verse, he says, not “body *or* blood,” but “body and blood.” Any who takes the bread without the wine, *or* the wine without the bread, “*unworthily*” communicates, and so “is guilty of Christ’s body and blood”; for he disobeys Christ’s express command to partake of both. If we do not partake of the sacramental symbol of the Lord’s death worthily, we share in the guilt of that death. (Compare “crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh,” ^{<300>}Hebrews 6:6). *Unworthiness in the person*, is not what ought to

exclude any, but *unworthily communicating*: However unworthy we be, if we examine ourselves so as to find that we penitently believe in Christ's Gospel, we may worthily communicate.

28. examine — *Greek*, “prove” or “test” his own state of mind in respect to Christ's death, and his capability of “discerning the Lord's body” (⁴¹²⁹1 Corinthians 11:29,31). Not auricular confession to a priest, but self-examination is necessary.

so — after due self-examination.

of ... of — In ⁴¹²⁷1 Corinthians 11:27, where the receiving was *unworthily*, the expression was, “eat this bread, drink ... cup” without “of.” Here the “of” implies due circumspection in communicating [BENGEL].

let him eat — His self-examination is not in order that he may stay away, but that he may eat, that is, communicate.

29. damnation — A mistranslation which has put a stumbling-block in the way of many in respect to communicating. The right translation is “judgment.” The *judgment* is described (⁴¹³⁰1 Corinthians 11:30-32) as temporal.

not discerning — *not duty judging: not distinguishing in judgment* (so the *Greek*: the sin and its punishment thus being marked as corresponding) from common food, the sacramental pledges of the Lord's body. Most of the oldest manuscripts omit “Lord's” (see ⁴¹²⁷1 Corinthians 11:27). Omitting also “unworthily,” with most of the oldest manuscripts, we must translate, “He that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, IF he discern not the body” (⁴¹³¹Hebrews 10:29). The Church is “the body of *Christ*” (⁴¹²⁷1 Corinthians 12:27). The Lord's body is *His literal body* appreciated and discerned by the soul in the faithful receiving, and not present in the elements themselves.

30. weak ... sickly — He is “weak” who has *naturally* no strength: “sickly,” who has *lost his strength* by disease [TITTMANN, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*].

sleep — are being lulled in death: not a violent death; but one the result of sickness, sent as the Lord's chastening for the individual's salvation, the mind being brought to a right state on the sick bed (~~413~~ 1 Corinthians 11:31).

31. if we would judge ourselves — Most of the oldest manuscripts, read "But," not "For." Translate also literally "If we duly judged ourselves, we should not be (or *not have been*) judged," that is, we should escape (or *have escaped*) our present judgments. In order to *duly judge* or "discern [appreciate] the Lord's body," we need to "duly judge ourselves." A prescient warning against the dogma of priestly absolution after full confession, as the necessary preliminary to receiving the Lord's Supper.

32. chastened — (~~418~~ Revelation 3:19).

with the world — who, being bastards, are without chastening (~~518~~ Hebrews 12:8).

33. tarry one for another — In contrast to ~~412~~ 1 Corinthians 11:21. The expression is not, "Give a share to one another," for all the viands brought to the feast were *common* property, and, therefore, they should "tarry" till all were met to partake together of the common feast of fellowship [THEOPHYLACT].

34. if any ... hunger — so as not to be able to "tarry for others," let him take off the edge of his hunger at home [ALFORD] (~~412~~ 1 Corinthians 11:22).

the rest — "the other questions you asked me as to the due celebration of the Lord's Supper." Not other questions in *general*; for he does subsequently set in order other general questions in this Epistle.

CHAPTER 12

1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-31.

THE USE AND THE ABUSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS, ESPECIALLY PROPHESYING AND TONGUES.

This is the *second* subject for correction in the Corinthian assemblies: the “*first*” was discussed (~~4118~~ 1 Corinthians 11:18-34).

1. spiritual gifts — the signs of the Spirit’s continued efficacious presence in the Church, which is Christ’s body, the complement of His incarnation, as the body is the complement of the head. By the love which pervades the whole, the gifts of the several members, forming reciprocal complements to each other, tend to the one object of perfecting the body of Christ. The ordinary and permanent gifts are comprehended together with the extraordinary, without distinction specified, as both alike flow from the divine indwelling Spirit of life. The extraordinary gifts, so far from making professors more peculiarly *saints* than in our day, did not always even *prove* that such persons were in a safe state at all (~~4122~~ Matthew 7:22). They were needed at first in the Church:

(1) as a pledge to Christians themselves who had just passed over from Judaism or heathendom, that God was in the Church;

(2) for the propagation of Christianity in the world;

(3) for the edification of the Church. Now that we have the whole *written* New Testament (which they had not) and Christianity established as the result of the miracles, we need no further miracle to attest the truth. So the pillar of cloud which guided the Israelites was withdrawn when they were sufficiently assured of the Divine Presence, the manifestation of God’s glory being thenceforward enclosed in the Most Holy Place [ARCHBISHOP WHATELY]. Paul sets forth in order:

- (1). The unity of the body (⁴²¹1 Corinthians 12:1-27).
- (2). The variety of its members and functions (⁴²⁷1 Corinthians 12:27-30).
- (3). The grand principle for the right exercise of the gifts, namely, love (⁴²³1 Corinthians 12:31 ⁴³¹1 Corinthians 13:1-13).
- (4) The comparison of the gifts with one another (⁴⁴¹1 Corinthians 14:1-40).

I would not have you ignorant — with all your boasts of “knowledge” at Corinth. If ignorant now, it will be your own fault, not mine (⁴³⁸1 Corinthians 14:38).

2. (⁴⁴¹Ephesians 2:11).

that ye were — The best manuscripts read, “That WHEN ye were”; thus “ye were” must be supplied before “carried away” — Ye were blindly transported hither and thither at the will of your false guides.

these dumb idols — *Greek*, “the idols which are dumb”; contrasted with the living God who “speaks” in the believer by His Spirit (⁴²³1 Corinthians 12:3, etc.). This gives the reason why the Corinthians needed instruction as to spiritual gifts, namely, their past heathen state, wherein they had no experience of intelligent spiritual powers. When blind, ye went to the *dumb*.

as ye were led — The *Greek* is, rather, “as ye might (happen to) be led,” namely, on different occasions. The heathen oracles led their votaries at random, without any definite principle.

3. The negative and positive criteria of inspiration by the Spirit — the rejection or confession of Jesus as Lord [ALFORD] (⁴⁴²1 John 4:2 5:1). Paul gives a test of truth against the Gentiles; John, against the false prophets.

by the Spirit — rather, as *Greek*, “IN the Spirit”; that being the power pervading him, and the element in which he speaks [ALFORD], (⁴⁴⁷Matthew 16:17 ⁴⁵³John 15:26).

of God ... Holy — The same Spirit is called at one time “the Spirit of GOD”; at another, “the HOLY Ghost,” or “Holy Spirit.” Infinite *Holiness* is almost synonymous with *Godhead*.

speaking ... say — “Speak” implies the act of utterance; “say” refers to that which is uttered. Here, “say” means a *spiritual* and *believing* confession of Him.

Jesus — not an abstract doctrine, but the historical, living God-man (^{450B}Romans 10:9).

accursed — as the Jews and Gentiles treated Him (^{488C}Galatians 3:13). Compare “to curse Christ” in the heathen PLINY’s letter [*Epistles*, 10.97]. The spiritual man feels Him to be the Source of all blessings (^{490B}Ephesians 1:3) and to be severed from Him is to be accursed (^{490B}Romans 9:3).

Lord — acknowledging himself as His servant (^{423C}Isaiah 26:13). “Lord” is the *Septuagint translation* for the incommunicable *Hebrew* name JEHOVAH.

4. diversities of gifts — that is, varieties of spiritual endowments peculiar to the several members of the Church: compare “dividing to every man severally” (^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:11).

same Spirit — The Holy Trinity appears here: the *Holy Spirit* in this verse; *Christ* in ^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:5; and *the Father* in ^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:6. The terms “gifts,” “administrations,” and “operations,” respectively correspond to the Divine Three. *The Spirit* is treated of in ^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:7, etc.; *the Lord*, in ^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:12, etc.; *God*, in ^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:28. (Compare ^{460B}Ephesians 4:4-6).

5, 6. “Gifts” (^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:4), “administrations” (the various *functions* and *services* performed by those having the gifts, compare ^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:28), and “operations” (the actual *effects* resulting from both the former, through the universally operative power of the one Father who is “above all, through all, and in us all”), form an ascending climax [HENDERSON, *Inspiration*].

same Lord — whom the Spirit glorifies by these *ministrations* [BENGEL].

6. operations — (Compare ^{462B}1 Corinthians 12:10).

same God ... worketh — by His Spirit working (⁴⁶²¹1 Corinthians 12:11).

all in all — all of them (the “gifts”) in all the persons (who possess them).

7. But — Though all the gifts flow from the *one* God, Lord, and Spirit, the “manifestation” by which the Spirit acts (as He is hidden in Himself), varies in each individual.

to every man — *to each* of the members of the Church *severally*.

to profit withal — *with a view to the profit* of the whole body.

8-10. Three classes of gifts are distinguished by a distinct *Greek* word for “another” (*a distinct class*), marking the three several *genera*: *allo* marks the species, *hetero* the *genera* (compare *Greek*, ⁴⁶³⁹1 Corinthians 15:39-41).

I. GIFTS OF INTELLECT, NAMELY,

(1) wisdom;

(2) knowledge.

II. GIFTS DEPENDENT ON A SPECIAL FAITH, NAMELY, THAT OF MIRACLES (⁴⁶⁷²MATTHEW 17:20):

(1) healings;

(2) workings of miracles;

(3) prophecy of future events;

(4) discerning of spirits, or the divinely given faculty of distinguishing between those really inspired, and those who pretended to inspiration.

III. GIFTS REFERRING TO THE TONGUES:

(1) diverse kinds of tongues;

(2) interpretation of tongues. The catalogue in ⁴⁶²⁸1 Corinthians 12:28 is not meant strictly to harmonize with the one here, though there are some particulars in which they correspond. The three genera are summarily referred to by single instances of each in ⁴⁶³⁸1 Corinthians

13:8. The first genus refers more to believers; the second, to unbelievers.

by ... by ... by — The first in *Greek* is, “By means of,” or “through the operation of”; the second is, “according to” the disposing of (compare ^{<421>}1 Corinthians 12:11); the third is, “in,” that is, *under the influence of* (so the *Greek*, ^{<123>}Matthew 22:43 ^{<127>}Luke 2:27).

word of wisdom — the ready *utterance of* (for imparting to others, ^{<419>}Ephesians 6:19) *wisdom*, namely, new revelations of the divine wisdom in redemption, as contrasted with human philosophy (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 1:24 2:6,7 ^{<418>}Ephesians 1:8 3:10 ^{<518>}Colossians 2:3).

word of knowledge — ready *utterance supernaturally* imparted of truths ALREADY REVEALED (in this it is distinguished from “the word of wisdom,” which related to NEW revelations). Compare ^{<445>}1 Corinthians 14:6, where “revelation” (answering to “wisdom” here) is distinguished from “knowledge” [HENDERSON]. *Wisdom* or *revelation* belonged to the “prophets”; *knowledge*, to the “teachers.” *Wisdom* penetrates deeper than *knowledge*. *Knowledge* relates to things that are to be done. *Wisdom*, to things eternal: hence, *wisdom* is not, like *knowledge*, said to “pass away” (^{<438>}1 Corinthians 13:8), [BENGEL].

9. faith — not of doctrines, but of miracles: confidence in God, by the impulse of His Spirit, that He would enable them to perform any required miracle (compare ^{<432>}1 Corinthians 13:2 ^{<412>}Mark 11:23 ^{<515>}James 5:15). Its nature, or principle, is the same as that of saving faith, namely, reliance on God; the producing cause, also, in the same, namely, a power altogether supernatural (^{<419>}Ephesians 1:19,20). But the objects of faith differ respectively. Hence, we see, saving faith does not save by its intrinsic merit, but by the merits of Him who is the object of it.

healing — *Greek* plural, “healings”; referring to different kinds of disease which need different kinds of healing (^{<400>}Matthew 10:1).

10. working of miracles — As “healings” are miracles, those here meant must refer to miracles of special and extraordinary POWER (so the *Greek* for “miracles” means); for example, healings might be effected by human skill in course of time; but the raising of the dead, the infliction of death by

a word, the innocuous use of poisons, etc., are *miracles of special power*. Compare ^{<416>}Mark 6:5 ^{<416>}Acts 19:11.

prophecy — Here, probably, not in the wider sense of public teaching by the Spirit (^{<410>}1 Corinthians 11:4,5 14:1-5,22-39); but, as its position between “miracles” and a “discerning of spirits” implies, *the inspired disclosure of the future* (^{<417>}Acts 11:27,28 21:11 ^{<508>}1 Timothy 1:18), [HENDERSON]. It depends on “faith” (^{<419>}1 Corinthians 12:9 ^{<601>}Romans 12:6). The *prophets* ranked next to the *apostles* (^{<428>}1 Corinthians 12:28 ^{<488>}Ephesians 3:5 4:11). As *prophecy* is part of the whole scheme of redemption, an inspired insight into the obscurer parts of the existing Scriptures, was the necessary preparation for the miraculous foresight of the future.

discerning of spirits — discerning between the operation of God’s Spirit, and the evil spirit, or unaided human spirit (^{<449>}1 Corinthians 14:29; compare ^{<501>}1 Timothy 4:1 ^{<601>}1 John 4:1).

kinds of tongues — the power of speaking *various languages*: also a *spiritual language unknown to man, uttered in ecstasy* (^{<442>}1 Corinthians 14:2-12). This is marked as a distinct genus in the *Greek*, “To another and a *different* class.”

interpretation of tongues — (^{<443>}1 Corinthians 14:13,26,27).

11. as he will — (^{<428>}1 Corinthians 12:18 ^{<800>}Hebrews 2:4).

12, 13. Unity, not unvarying uniformity, is the law of God in the world of grace, as in that of nature. As the many members of the body compose an organic whole and none can be dispensed with as needless, so those variously gifted by the Spirit, compose a spiritual organic whole, the body of Christ, into which all are baptized by the one Spirit.

of that one body — Most of the oldest manuscripts omit “one.”

so also is Christ — that is, the whole Christ, *the head and body*. So ^{<480>}Psalms 18:50, “His anointed (Messiah or Christ), David (the antitypical David) and His seed.”

13. by ... Spirit ... baptized — literally, “in”; in virtue of; through. The *designed* effect of baptism, which is realized when not frustrated by the unfaithfulness of man.

Gentiles — literally, “Greeks.”

all made to drink into one Spirit — The oldest manuscripts read, “Made to drink of one Spirit,” omitting “into” (^{<4038>}John 7:37). There is an indirect allusion to the Lord’s Supper, as there is a direct allusion to baptism in the beginning of the verse. So the “Spirit, the water, and the blood” (^{<4038>}1 John 5:8), similarly combine the two outward signs with the inward things signified, the Spirit’s grace.

are ... have been — rather as *Greek*, “were ... were” (the past tense).

14. Translate, “For the body *also*.” The analogy of the body, not consisting exclusively of one, but of many members, illustrates the mutual dependence of the various members in the one body, the Church. The well-known fable of the belly and the other members, spoken by Menenius Agrippa, to the seceding commons [LIVY, 2.32], was probably before Paul’s mind, stored as it was with classical literature.

15. The humbler members ought not to disparage themselves, or to be disparaged by others more noble (^{<4021>}1 Corinthians 12:21,22).

foot ... hand — The humble speaks of the more honorable member which most nearly resembles itself: so the “ear” of the “eye” (the nobler and more commanding member, ^{<4038>}Numbers 10:31), (^{<4026>}1 Corinthians 12:16). As in life each compares himself with those whom he approaches nearest in gifts, not those far superior. The *foot* and *hand* represent men of active life; the *ear* and *eye*, those of contemplative life.

17. Superior as the *eye* is, it would not do if it were the sole member to the exclusion of the rest.

18. now — as the case really is.

every one — each severally.

19. where were the body — which, by its very idea, “hath many members” (^{<4022>}1 Corinthians 12:12,14), [ALFORD].

20. now — as the case really is: in contrast to the supposition (⁴²⁹1 Corinthians 12:19; compare ⁴²⁸1 Corinthians 12:18).

many members — mutually dependent.

21. The higher cannot dispense with the lower members.

22. more feeble — more susceptible of injury: for example, the brain, the belly, the eye. Their very feebleness, so far from doing away with the need for them, calls forth our greater care for their preservation, as being felt “necessary.”

23. less honorable — “We think” the feet and the belly “less honorable,” though not really so in the nature of things.

bestow ... honor — *putting shoes on (Margin)* the feet, and clothes to cover the belly.

uncomely parts — the secret parts: the poorest, though unclad in the rest of the body, cover these.

24. tempered ... together — on the principle of mutual compensation.

to that part which lacked — to the deficient part [ALFORD], (⁴²³1 Corinthians 12:23).

25. no schism — (compare ⁴²¹1 Corinthians 12:21) — no disunion; referring to the “divisions” noticed (⁴¹⁸1 Corinthians 11:18).

care one for another — that is, *in behalf of* one another.

26. And — Accordingly.

all ... suffer with it — “When a thorn enters the heel, the whole body feels it, and is concerned: the back bends, the belly and thighs contract themselves, the hands come forward and draw out the thorn, the head stoops, and the eyes regard the affected member with intense gaze” [CHRYSOSTOM].

rejoice with it — “When the head is crowned, the whole man feels honored, the mouth expresses, and the eyes look, gladness” [CHRYSOSTOM].

27. members in particular — that is, severally members of it. Each church is in miniature what the whole aggregate of churches is collectively, “the body of Christ” (compare ^{<4186}1 Corinthians 3:16): and its individual components are members, every one in his assigned place.

28. set ... in the church — as He has “set the members ... in the body” (^{<4128}1 Corinthians 12:18).

first apostles — above even the *prophets*. Not merely the *Twelve*, but others are so called, for example, Barnabas, etc. (^{<5161}Romans 16:7).

teachers — who taught, for the most part, truths already revealed; whereas the *prophets* made new revelations and spoke all their prophesyings under the Spirit’s influence. As the teachers had the “word of knowledge,” so the prophets “the word of wisdom” (^{<4118}1 Corinthians 12:8). Under “teachers” are included “evangelists and pastors.”

miracles — literally, “powers” (^{<4201}1 Corinthians 12:10): ranked below “teachers,” as the function of *teaching* is more edifying, though less dazzling than working miracles.

helps, governments — lower and higher departments of “ministrations” (^{<4115}1 Corinthians 12:5); as instances of the former, deacons whose office it was to *help* in the relief of the poor, and in baptizing and preaching, subordinate to higher ministers (^{<4101}Acts 6:1-10 8:5-17); also, others who *helped* with their time and means, in the Lord’s cause (compare ^{<4133}1 Corinthians 13:13 ^{<0117}Numbers 11:17). The Americans similarly use “helps” for “helpers.” And, as instances of the latter, *presbyters*, or *bishops*, whose office it was to *govern* the Church (^{<5157}1 Timothy 5:17 ^{<5137}Hebrews 13:17,24). These officers, though now ordinary and permanent, were originally specially endowed with the Spirit for their office, whence they are here classified with other functions of an inspired character. Government (literally, “*guiding the helm*” of affairs), as being occupied with external things, notwithstanding the outward status it gives, is ranked by the Spirit with the lower functions. Compare “He that giveth” (answering to “helps”) — “he that ruleth” (answering to “governments”) (^{<5118}Romans 12:8). Translate, literally, “Helpings, governings” [ALFORD].

diversities of tongues — (420 1 Corinthians 12:10). “*Divers* kinds of tongues.”

29. Are all? — Surely not.

31. covet earnestly — *Greek*, “emulously desire.” Not in the spirit of *discontented* “coveting.” The Spirit “divides to every man severally *as He will*” (421 1 Corinthians 12:1); but this does not prevent men *earnestly seeking*, by prayer and watchfulness, and cultivation of their faculties, the *greatest* gifts. BEZA explains, “Hold in the highest estimation”; which accords with the distinction in his view (440 1 Corinthians 14:1) between “*follow after* charity — *zealously esteem* spiritual gifts”; also with (421 1 Corinthians 12:11,18) the sovereign will with which the Spirit distributes the gifts, precluding individuals from desiring gifts not vouchsafed to them. But see on 440 1 Corinthians 14:1.

the best gifts — Most of the oldest manuscripts read, “the *greatest* gifts.”

and yet — *Greek*, “and *moreover*.” Besides recommending your zealous desire for the greatest gifts, I am about to show you a something still more excellent (literally, “a way most way-like”) to desire, “the way of love” (compare 440 1 Corinthians 14:1). This love, or “charity,” includes both “faith” and “hope” (437 1 Corinthians 13:7), and bears the same fruits (431 1 Corinthians 13:1-13) as the ordinary and permanent fruits of the Spirit (452 Galatians 5:22-24). Thus “long-suffering,” compare 424 1 Corinthians 12:4; “faith,” 427 1 Corinthians 12:7; “joy,” 426 1 Corinthians 12:6; “meekness,” 425 1 Corinthians 12:5; “goodness,” 425 1 Corinthians 12:5; “gentleness,” 424 1 Corinthians 12:4 (the *Greek* is the same for “is kind”). It is the work of the Holy Spirit, and consists in love to God, on account of God’s love in Christ to us, and as a consequence, love to man, especially to the brethren in Christ (455 Romans 5:5 15:30). This is more to be desired than gifts (418 Luke 10:20).

CHAPTER 13

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13.

CHARITY OR LOVE SUPERIOR TO ALL GIFTS.

The New Testament psalm of love, as the forty-fifth Psalm (see ^{<45>}Psalm 45:1, title) and the Song of Solomon in the Old Testament.

1. tongues — from these he ascends to “prophecy” (^{<43>}1 Corinthians 13:2); then, to “faith”; then to benevolent and self-sacrificing deeds: a climax. He does not except even himself, and so passes from addressing *them* (“unto you,” ^{<42>}1 Corinthians 12:31) to putting the case in his own person, “Though I,” etc.

speak with the tongues — with the eloquence which was so much admired at Corinth (for example, Apollos, ^{<48>}Acts 18:24; compare ^{<41>}1 Corinthians 1:12 3:21,22), and with the command of various languages, which some at Corinth abused to purposes of mere ostentation (^{<44>}1 Corinthians 14:2, etc.).

of angels — higher than men, and therefore, it is to be supposed, speaking a more exalted language.

charity — the principle of the ordinary and more important gifts of the Spirit, as contrasted with the extraordinary gifts (^{<41>}1 Corinthians 12:1-31).

sounding ... tinkling — *sound* without soul or feeling: such are “tongues” without *charity*.

cymbal — Two kinds are noticed (^{<49>}Psalm 150:5), the loud or *clear*, and the *high-sounding* one: hand cymbals and finger cymbals, or castanets. The sound is sharp and piercing.

2. mysteries — (^{<612>}Romans 11:25 16:25). *Mysteries* refer to the deep counsels of God hitherto secret, but now revealed to His saints. *Knowledge*, to truths long known.

faith ... remove mountains — (^{<471>}Matthew 17:20 21:21). The practical power of the will elevated by faith [NEANDER]; confidence in God that the miraculous result will surely follow the exercise of the will at the secret impulse of His Spirit. Without “love” prophecy, knowledge, and faith, are not what they seem (compare ^{<661>}1 Corinthians 8:1,2 ^{<472>}Matthew 7:22 ^{<504>}James 2:14; compare ^{<661>}1 Corinthians 13:8), and so fail of the heavenly reward (^{<462>}Matthew 6:2). Thus Paul, who teaches justification by faith only (^{<612>}Romans 3:4,5 ^{<626>}Galatians 2:16 3:7-14), is shown to agree with James, who teaches (^{<504>}James 2:24) “by works” (that is, by LOVE, which is the “spirit” of faith, ^{<504>}James 2:26) a man is justified, “and not by faith only.”

3. bestow ... goods ... poor — literally, “dole out in food” all my goods; one of the highest functions of the “helps” (^{<628>}1 Corinthians 12:28).

give ... body to be burned — literally, “to such a degree as that I should be burned.” As the three youths did (^{<283>}Daniel 3:28), “yielded their bodies” (compare ^{<475>}2 Corinthians 12:15). These are most noble exemplifications of love in giving and in suffering. Yet they may be without love; in which case the “goods” and “body” are given, but not the *soul*, which is the sphere of love. Without the soul God rejects all else, and so rejects the man, who is therefore “profited” nothing (^{<465>}Matthew 16:26 ^{<475>}Luke 9:23-25). Men will fight for Christianity, and die for Christianity, but not live in its spirit, which is *love*.

4. suffereth long — under provocations of *evil from* others. The negative side of *love*.

is kind — the positive side. Extending *good* to others. Compare with love’s features here those of the “wisdom from above” (^{<587>}James 3:17).

envieth — The *Greek* includes also *jealousy*.

vaunteth not — in words, even of gifts which it really possesses; an indirect rebuke of those at Corinth who used the gift of tongues for mere display.

not puffed up — with party zeal, as some at Corinth were (^{<406>}1 Corinthians 4:6).

5. not ... unseemly — *is not uncourteous*, or inattentive to civility and propriety.

thinketh no evil — *imputeth not evil* [ALFORD]; literally, “*the evil*” which actually is there (^{<100>}Proverbs 10:12 ^{<608>}1 Peter 4:8). Love makes allowances for the falls of others, and is ready to put on them a charitable construction. Love, so far from devising evil against another, excuses “*the evil*” which another inflicts on her [ESTIUS]; *doth not meditate upon evil* inflicted by another [BENGEL]; and in doubtful cases, takes the more charitable view [GROTIUS].

6. rejoiceth in the truth — rather, “rejoiceth *with* the truth.” Exults not at the perpetration of iniquity (unrighteousness) by others (compare ^{<109>}Genesis 9:22,23), but rejoices when the truth rejoices; sympathizes with it in its triumphs (^{<104>}2 John 1:4). See the opposite (^{<108>}2 Timothy 3:8), “Resist the truth.” So “the truth” and “unrighteousness” are contrasted (^{<118>}Romans 2:8). “The truth” is the Gospel truth, the inseparable ally of love (^{<405>}Ephesians 4:15 ^{<612>}2 John 1:12). The false charity which compromises “the truth” by glossing over “iniquity” or unrighteousness is thus tacitly condemned (^{<175>}Proverbs 17:15).

7. Beareth all things — without speaking of what it has to bear. The same *Greek* verb as in ^{<492>}1 Corinthians 9:12. It *endures without divulging* to the world personal distress. Literally said of *holding fast* like a watertight vessel; so the charitable man *contains himself* in silence from giving vent to what selfishness would prompt under personal hardship.

believeth all things — unsuspectingly believes all that is not palpably false, all that it can with a good conscience believe to the credit of another. Compare ^{<587>}James 3:17, “easy to be entreated”; *Greek*, “easily persuaded.”

hopeth — what is good of another, even when others have ceased to hope.

endureth — persecutions in a patient and loving spirit.

8. never faileth — never is to be out of use; it always holds its place.

shall fail ... vanish away — The same *Greek* verb is used for both; and that different from the *Greek* verb for “faileth.” Translate, “Shall be done away with,” that is, shall be dispensed with at the Lord’s coming, being superseded by their more perfect heavenly analogues; for instance, *knowledge by intuition*. Of “tongues,” which are still more temporary, the verb is “shall *cease*.” A primary fulfillment of Paul’s statement took place when the Church attained its maturity; then “tongues” entirely “ceased,” and “prophesyings” and “knowledge,” so far as they were supernatural gifts of the Spirit, were superseded as no longer required when the ordinary preaching of the word, and the Scriptures of the New Testament collected together, had become established institutions.

9, 10. in part — partially and imperfectly. Compare a similar contrast to the “perfect man,” “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (~~400~~ Ephesians 4:11-13).

10. that which is in part — fragmentary and isolated.

11. When ... a child — (~~400~~ 1 Corinthians 3:1 14:20).

I spake — alluding to “tongues.”

understood — or, “had the sentiments of.” Alluding to “prophecy.”

I thought — *Greek* “reasoned” or “judged”; alluding to “knowledge.”

when I became ... I put away — rather, “now that I am become a man, I have done away with the things of the child.”

12. now — in our present state.

see — an appropriate expression, in connection with the “prophets” of *seers* (~~400~~ 1 Samuel 9:9).

through a glass — that is, in a mirror; the reflection *seeming* to the eye to be behind the mirror, so that we see it *through* the mirror. Ancient mirrors were made of polished brass or other metals. The contrast is between the inadequate knowledge of an object gained by seeing it reflected in a dim mirror (such as ancient mirrors were), compared with the perfect idea we have of it by seeing itself directly.

darkly — literally, “in enigma.” As a “mirror” conveys an image to the *eye*, so an “enigma” to the *ear*. But neither “eye nor ear” can fully represent (though the believer’s soul gets a small revelation now of) “the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him” (⁴¹²⁹1 Corinthians 2:9). Paul alludes to ⁴¹²⁸Numbers 12:8, “not in *dark* speeches”; the *Septuagint*, “not in *enigmas*.” Compared with the *visions* and *dreams* vouchsafed to other prophets, God’s communications with Moses were “not in enigmas.” But compared with the intuitive and direct vision of God hereafter, even the revealed word now is “a dark discourse,” or a shadowing forth *by enigma* of God’s reflected likeness. Compare ⁴¹¹⁹2 Peter 1:19, where the “light” or *candle* in a dark place stands in contrast with the “day” dawning. God’s word is called a *glass* or mirror also in ⁴¹⁸⁸2 Corinthians 3:18.

then — “when that which is perfect is come” (⁴¹³⁰1 Corinthians 13:10).

face to face — not merely “mouth to mouth” (⁴¹²⁸Numbers 12:8).

⁴¹³¹Genesis 32:30 was a type (⁴¹⁵⁷John 1:50,51).

know ... known — rather as *Greek*, “*fully* know ... *fully* known.” Now we *are known by*, rather than *know*, God (⁴¹⁸¹1 Corinthians 8:3 ⁴¹⁰⁹Galatians 4:9).

13. And now — Translate, “*But now*.” “In this present state” [HENDERSON]. Or, “now” does not express time, but *opposition*, as in ⁴¹⁶¹1 Corinthians 5:11, “the case being so” [GROTIUS]; whereas *it is the case that* the *three* gifts, “prophecy,” “tongues,” and “knowledge” (cited as specimens of the whole class of gifts) “fail” (⁴¹³⁸1 Corinthians 13:8), *there abide* permanently only *these three* — *faith, hope, charity*. In one sense *faith* and *hope* shall be done away, faith being superseded by sight, and hope by actual fruition (⁴¹²⁴Romans 8:24 ⁴¹⁰²2 Corinthians 5:7); and charity, or love, alone never faileth (⁴¹³⁸1 Corinthians 13:8). But in another sense, “faith and hope,” as well as “charity,” ABIDE; namely, after the extraordinary gifts have ceased; for those three are *necessary and sufficient for salvation at all times*, whereas the extraordinary gifts are not at all so; compare the use of “abide,” ⁴¹⁶⁴1 Corinthians 3:14. *Charity*, or love, is connected specially with the Holy Spirit, who is the bond of the loving union between the brethren (⁴¹⁵⁰Romans 15:30 ⁴¹⁰⁰Colossians 1:8). *Faith* is towards God. *Hope* is in behalf of ourselves. *Charity* is love to God

creating in us love towards our neighbor. In an unbeliever there is more or less of the three opposites — unbelief, despair, hatred. Even hereafter *faith* in the sense of *trust in God* “abideth”; also “hope,” in relation to ever new joys in prospect, and at the anticipation of ever increasing blessedness, sure never to be disappointed. But love alone in every sense “abideth”; it is therefore “the greatest” of the three, as also because it presupposes “faith,” which without “love” and its consequent “works” is dead (~~REF~~ Galatians 5:6 ~~SUP~~ James 2:17,20).

but — rather, “and”; as there is not so strong opposition between charity and the other two, faith and hope, which like it also “abide.”

CHAPTER 14

1 CORINTHIANS 14:1-25.

SUPERIORITY OF PROPHECY OVER TONGUES.

1. Follow after charity — as your first and chief aim, seeing that it is “the greatest” (⁴³³1 Corinthians 13:13).

and desire — Translate, “Yet (as a *secondary* aim) desire zealously (see on ⁴²⁸1 Corinthians 12:31) spiritual gifts.”

but rather — “*but chiefly* that ye may prophesy” (speak and exhort under inspiration) (⁴³⁸Proverbs 29:18 ⁴³⁸Acts 13:1 ⁴³⁸1 Thessalonians 5:20), whether as to future events, that is, strict *prophecy*, or explaining obscure parts of Scripture, especially the prophetic Scriptures or illustrating and setting forth questions of Christian doctrine and practice. Our modern *preaching* is the successor of *prophecy*, but without the inspiration. Desire zealously this (prophecy) *more* than any other spiritual gift; or *in preference to* “tongues” (⁴⁴⁰1 Corinthians 14:2, etc.) [BENGEL].

2. speaketh ... unto God — who alone understands *all* languages.

no man understandeth — generally speaking; the few who have the gift of interpreting tongues are the exception.

in the spirit — as opposed to “the understanding” (⁴⁴⁴1 Corinthians 14:14).

mysteries — unintelligible to the hearers, exciting their wonder, rather than instructing them. Corinth, being a mart resorted to by merchants from Asia, Africa, and Europe, would give scope amidst its mixed population for the exercise of the gift of tongues; but its legitimate use was in an audience understanding the tongue of the speaker, not, as the Corinthians abused it, in mere display.

3. But — on the other hand.

edification — of which the two principal species given are “exhortation” to remove *sluggishness*, “comfort” or *consolation* to remove *sadness* [BENGEL]. Omit “to.”

4. **edifieth himself** — as he understands the meaning of what the particular “tongue” expresses; but “the church,” that is, the congregation, does not.

5. Translate, “Now I wish you all to speak with tongues (so far am I from thus speaking through having any objection to tongues), but rather IN ORDER THAT (as my ulterior and higher wish for you) ye should prophesy.” Tongues must therefore mean *languages*, not ecstatic, unintelligible rhapsodie (as NEANDER fancied): for Paul could never “wish” for the latter in their behalf.

greater — because *more useful*.

except he interpret — the unknown tongue which he speaks, “that the Church may receive edifying (*building up*).”

6. Translate, “*But now*”; seeing there is no edification without interpretation.

revelation ... prophesying — corresponding one to the other; “revelation” being the supernatural *unveiling* of divine truths to man, “prophesying” the enunciation to men of such revelations. So “knowledge” corresponds to “doctrine,” which is the gift of *teaching* to others our knowledge. As the former pair refers to specially *revealed mysteries*, so the latter pair refers to the *general obvious truths of salvation*, brought from the common storehouse of believers.

7. Translate, “And things without life-giving sound, whether pipe or harp, YET (*notwithstanding their giving sound*) if they give not a distinction in the tones (that is, notes) how?” etc.

what is piped or harped — that is, what tune is played on the pipe or harp.

8. Translate, “For if *also*,” an *additional* step in the argument.

uncertain sound — having no definite meaning: whereas it ought to be so. marked that one succession of notes on the trumpet should summon the soldiers to attack; another, to retreat; another, to some other evolution.

9. So ... ye — who have life; as opposed to “things without life” (^{434E}1 Corinthians 14:7).

by the tongue — the language which ye speak in.

ye shall speak — Ye will be speaking into the air, that is, *in vain* (^{440E}1 Corinthians 9:26).

10. it may be — that is, perhaps, speaking by conjecture. “It may chance” (^{435E}1 Corinthians 15:37).

so many — as may be enumerated by investigators of such matters. Compare “so much,” used generally for a definite number left undefined (^{448E}Acts 5:8; also ^{402E}2 Samuel 12:8).

kinds of voices — kinds of articulate speech.

without signification — *without articulate voice* (that is, distinct meaning). *None is without its own voice*, or mode of speech, *distinct* from the rest.

11. Therefore — seeing that none is without meaning.

a barbarian — a foreigner (^{440E}Acts 28:2). Not in the depreciatory sense as the term is now used, but one *speaking a foreign language*.

12. zealous — emulously desirous.

spiritual *gifts* — literally, “spirits”; that is, emanations from the one Spirit.

seek that ye may excel to — Translate, “Seek *them*, that ye may abound *in them* to the edifying,” etc.

13. Explain, “Let him who speaketh with a tongue [unknown] *in his prayer* (or, *when praying*) *strive* that he may interpret” [ALFORD]. This explanation of “pray” is needed by its logical connection with “prayer in an unknown tongue” (^{434E}1 Corinthians 14:14). Though his words be unintelligible to his hearers, let him in them pray that he may obtain the

gift of interpreting, which will make them “edifying” to “the church” (^{<4342>}1 Corinthians 14:12).

14. spirit — my higher being, the *passive* object of the Holy Spirit’s operations, and the instrument of prayer in the unknown tongue, distinguished from the “understanding,” the *active* instrument of thought and reasoning; which in this case must be “unfruitful” in edifying others, since the vehicle of expression is unintelligible to them. On the distinction of *soul* or *mind* and *spirit*, see ^{<4042>}Ephesians 4:23 ^{<5042>}Hebrews 4:12.

15. What is it then? — What is my determination thereupon?

and — rather as *Greek*, “but”; I will not only pray with my spirit, which (^{<4344>}1 Corinthians 14:14) might leave the understanding unedified, BUT with the understanding also [ALFORD and ELLICOTT].

pray with the understanding also — and, by inference, I will keep silence altogether if I cannot pray with the understanding (so as to make myself understood by others). A prescient warning, *mutatis mutandis*, against the Roman and Greek practice of keeping liturgies in dead languages, which long since have become unintelligible to the masses; though their forefathers spoke them at a time when those liturgies were framed for *general* use.

16. Else ... thou — He changes from the *first* person, as he had just expressed *his own* resolution, “I will pray with the understanding,” whatever “thou” doest.

bless — the highest kind of prayer.

occupieth the room of the unlearned — one who, whatever other gifts he may possess, yet, as wanting the gift of interpretation, is reduced by the speaking in an unknown tongue to the position of one unlearned, or “a private person.”

say Amen — Prayer is not a vicarious duty done by others *for* us; as in Rome’s liturgies and masses. We must join *with* the leader of the prayers and praises of the congregation, and say aloud our responsive “Amen” in assent, as was the usage of the Jewish (^{<4575>}Deuteronomy 27:15-26

^{<680>}Nehemiah 8:6) and Christian primitive churches [JUSTIN MARTYR, *Apology*, 2. 97].

17. givest thanks — The prayers of the synagogue were called “eulogies,” because to each prayer was joined a *thanksgiving*. Hence the prayers of the Christian Church also were called *blessings* and *giving of thanks*. This illustrates ^{<500>}Colossians 4:2 ^{<5157>}1 Thessalonians 5:17,18. So the *Kaddisch* and *Keduscha*, the synagogue formulae of “hallowing” the divine “name” and of prayer for the “coming of God’s kingdom,” answer to the Church’s Lord’s Prayer, repeated often and made the foundation on which the other prayers are built [TERTULLIAN, *Prayer*].

18. tongues — The oldest manuscripts have the singular, “in a tongue [foreign].”

19. I had rather — The *Greek* verb more literally expresses this meaning, “I WISH to speak five words with my understanding (rather) than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue”; even the two thousandth part of ten thousand. The *Greek* for “I would rather,” would be a different verb. Paul would NOT wish at all to speak “ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.”

20. Brethren — an appellation calculated to conciliate their favorable reception of his exhortation.

children in understanding — as preference of gifts abused to nonedification would make you (compare ^{<611>}1 Corinthians 3:1 ^{<606>}Matthew 10:16 ^{<509>}Romans 16:19 ^{<604>}Ephesians 4:14). The *Greek* for “understanding” expresses the will of one’s *spirit*, ^{<600>}Romans 8:6 (it is not found elsewhere); as the “heart” is the will of the “soul.” The same *Greek* is used for “minded” in ^{<610>}Romans 8:6.

men — full-grown. Be childlike, not childish.

21. In the law — as the whole Old Testament is called, being all of it the law of God. Compare the citation of the Psalms as the “law,” ^{<614>}John 10:34. Here the quotation is from ^{<5301>}Isaiah 28:11,12, where God virtually says of Israel, This people hear Me not, though I speak to. them in the language with which they are familiar; I will therefore speak to them in other tongues, namely, those of the foes whom I will send against them;

but even then they will not hearken to Me; which Paul thus applies, Ye see that it is a penalty to be associated with men of a strange tongue, yet ye impose this on the Church [GROTIUS]; they who speak in foreign tongues are like “children” just “weaned from the milk” (²³⁸⁹Isaiah 28:9), “with stammering lips” speaking unintelligibly to the hearers, appearing ridiculous (²³⁸⁴Isaiah 28:14), or as babbling drunkards (⁴¹²³Acts 2:13), or madmen (⁴¹⁴³1 Corinthians 14:23).

22. Thus from Isaiah it appears, reasons Paul, that “tongues” (unknown and uninterpreted) are not a sign mainly intended for believers (though at the conversion of Cornelius and the Gentiles with him, tongues were vouchsafed to him and them to confirm their faith), but mainly to be a *condemnation* to those, the majority, who, like Israel in Isaiah’s day, reject the sign and the accompanying message. Compare “yet ... will they not hear Me” (⁴¹⁴¹1 Corinthians 14:21). “Sign” is often used for a *condemnatory* sign (²⁰⁰³Ezekiel 4:3,4 ⁴¹²³Matthew 12:39-42). Since they *will* not understand, they *shall* not understand.

prophesying ... not for them that believe not, but ... believe — that is, prophesying has no effect on them that are radically and obstinately like Israel (²³⁸¹Isaiah 28:11,12), unbelievers, but on them that are either in receptivity or in fact believers; it makes believers of those not wilfully unbelievers (⁴¹⁴¹1 Corinthians 14:24,25 ⁴⁵¹⁷Romans 10:17), and spiritually nourishes those that already believe.

23. whole ... all ... tongues — The more there are assembled, and the more that speak in unknown tongues, the more will the impression be conveyed to strangers “coming in” from curiosity (“unbelievers”), or even from a better motive (“unlearned”), that the *whole* body of worshippers is a mob of fanatical “madmen”; and that “the Church is like the company of builders of Babel after the confusion of tongues, or like the cause tried between two deaf men before a deaf judge, celebrated in the Greek epigram” [GROTIUS].

unlearned — having some degree of faith, but not gifts [BENGEL].

24. all — one by one (⁴¹⁴¹1 Corinthians 14:31).

prophecy — speak the truth by the Spirit intelligibly, and not in unintelligible tongues.

one — “anyone.” Here *singular*; implying that this effect, namely, *conviction by all*, would be produced on *anyone*, who might happen to enter. In ⁴⁴³1 Corinthians 14:23 the *plural* is used; “unlearned or unbelievers”; implying that however many there might be, not one would profit by the tongues; yea, their being many would confirm them in rejecting the sign, as many unbelieving men together strengthen one another in unbelief; individuals are more easily won [BENGEL].

convinced — convicted in conscience; said of the “one that believeth not” (⁴⁶⁸John 16:8,9).

judged — His secret character is opened out. “Is searched into” [ALFORD]. Said of the “one unlearned” (compare ⁴⁰⁵1 Corinthians 2:15).

25. And thus — omitted in the oldest manuscripts and versions.

secrets of his heart made manifest — He sees his own inner character opened out by the sword of the Spirit (³⁰⁴²Hebrews 4:12 ³⁰²³James 1:23), the word of God, in the hand of him who prophesieth. Compare the same effect produced on Nebuchadnezzar (²⁷²⁴Daniel 2:30 and end of ²⁷²⁵Daniel 2:47). No argument is stronger for the truth of religion than its manifestation of men to themselves in their true character. Hence hearers even now often think the preacher must have aimed his sermon particularly at them.

and so — convicted at last, judged, and manifested to himself. Compare the effect on the woman of Samaria produced by Jesus’ unfolding of her character to herself (⁴⁰⁰⁵John 4:19,29).

and report — to his friends at home, as the woman of Samaria did. Rather, as the *Greek* is, “He will worship God, *announcing*,” that is, openly avowing then and there, “that God is in you of a truth,” and by implication that the God who is in you is of a truth the God.

1 CORINTHIANS 14:26-40.

RULES FOR THE EXERCISE OF GIFTS IN THE CONGREGATION.

26. How is it then? — rather, “*What then* is the true rule to be observed as to the use of gifts?” Compare ^{<445>}1 Corinthians 14:15, where the same *Greek* occurs.

a psalm — extemporary, inspired by the Spirit, as that of Mary, Zechariah, Simeon, and Anna (^{<444>}Luke 1:46-55,67-79 2:34-38).

a doctrine — to impart and set forth to the congregation.

a tongue ... a revelation — The oldest manuscripts transpose the order: “revelation ... tongue”; “interpretation” properly following “tongue” (^{<443>}1 Corinthians 14:13).

Let all things be done unto edifying — The general rule under which this particular case fails; an answer to the question at the beginning of this verse. Each is bound to obey the ordinances of his church not adverse to Scripture. See Article XXXIV, *Church of England Prayer Book*.

27. let it be by two — at each time, in one assembly; not more than two or three might speak with tongues at each meeting.

by course — in turns.

let one interpret — one who has the gift of interpreting tongues; and not more than one.

28. let him — the speaker in unknown tongues.

speak to himself, and to God — (compare ^{<442>}1 Corinthians 14:2,4) — privately and not in the hearing of others.

29. two or three — at one meeting (he does not add “at the most,” as in ^{<442>}1 Corinthians 14:27, lest he should seem to “quench prophesyings,” the most edifying of gifts), and these “one by one,” in turn (^{<442>}1 Corinthians 14:27, “by course,” and ^{<443>}1 Corinthians 14:31). Paul gives here similar

rules to the prophets, as previously to those speaking in unknown tongues.

judge — by their power of “discerning spirits” (⁴³²⁰1 Corinthians 12:10), whether the person prophesying was really speaking under the influence of the Spirit (compare ⁴⁴²³1 Corinthians 12:3 ⁴⁴⁴³1 John 4:13).

30. If any thing — Translate, “*But* if any thing.”

another that sitteth by — a hearer.

let the first hold his peace — Let him who heretofore spoke, and who came to the assembly furnished with a previous ordinary (in those times) revelation from God (⁴⁴⁴⁶1 Corinthians 14:26), give place to him who at the assembly is moved to prophesy by a sudden revelation from the Spirit.

31. For ye may — rather, “For ye *can* [if ye will] all prophesy one by one,” giving way to one another. The “for” justifies the precept (⁴⁴⁴⁸1 Corinthians 14:30), “let the first hold his peace.”

32. And — following up the assertion in ⁴⁴⁴⁹1 Corinthians 14:31, “Ye can (if ye will) prophesy one by one,” that is, restrain yourselves from speaking all together; “and the spirits of the prophets,” that is, their own spirits, acted on by the Holy Spirit, are not so hurried away by His influence, as to cease to be under their own control; they can if they will hear others, and not demand that they alone should be heard uttering communications from God.

33. In all the churches of the saints God is a God of peace; let Him not among you be supposed to be a God of confusion [ALFORD]. Compare the same argument in ⁴⁴¹⁶1 Corinthians 11:16. LACHMANN and others put a full stop at “peace,” and connect the following words thus: “As in all churches of the saints, let your women keep silence in your churches.”

34. (⁴⁵²¹1 Timothy 2:11,12). For women to speak in public would be an act of independence, as if they were not subject to their husbands (compare ⁴⁴¹⁸1 Corinthians 11:3 ⁴⁴²²Ephesians 5:22 ⁴⁴²⁵Titus 2:5 ⁴⁴²¹1 Peter 3:1). For “under obedience,” translate, “in *subjection*” or “*submission*,” as the *Greek* is translated (⁴⁴²²Ephesians 5:21,22,24).

the law — a term applied to the whole Old Testament; here, ^{GEN}Genesis 3:16.

35. Anticipation of an objection. Women may say, “But if we do not understand something, may we not ‘ask’ a question publicly so as to ‘learn’? Nay, replies Paul, if you want information, ‘ask’ not in public, but ‘at home’; ask not other men, but ‘your own particular (so the *Greek*) husbands.’”

shame — indecorous.

36. What! — *Greek*, “Or.” Are you about to obey me? *Or*, if you set up your judgment above that of other churches. I wish to know, do you pretend that your church is the first church FROM which the gospel word came, that you should give the law to all others? Or are you the only persons In, fro whom it has come?

37. prophet — the species.

spiritual — the genus: spiritually endowed. The followers of Apollos prided themselves as “spiritual” (^{1}1 Corinthians 3:1-3; compare ^{GAL}Galatians 6:1). Here *one capable of discerning spirits* is specially meant.

things that I write ... commandments of the Lord — a direct assertion of inspiration. Paul’s words as an apostle are Christ’s words. Paul appeals not merely to one or two, but *to a body of men*, for the reality of three facts about which no body of men could possibly be mistaken:

(1) that his having converted them was not due to mere eloquence, but to the “demonstration of the Spirit and of power”;

(2) that part of this demonstration consisted in the communication of miraculous power, which they were then exercising so generally as to require to be corrected in the irregular employment of it;

(3) that among these miraculous gifts was one which enabled the “prophet” or “spiritual person” to decide whether Paul’s Epistle was Scripture or not. He could not have written so, unless the facts were *notoriously true*: for he takes them for granted, as consciously known by the whole body of men whom he addresses [HINDS, *On Inspiration*].

38. if any man be ignorant — wilfully; not wishing to recognize these ordinances and my apostolic authority in enjoining them.

let him be ignorant — I leave him to his ignorance: it will be at his own peril; I feel it a waste of words to speak anything further to convince him. An argument likely to have weight with the Corinthians, who admired “knowledge” so much.

39. covet — earnestly desire. Stronger than “forbid not”; marking how much higher he esteemed “prophecy” than “tongues.”

40. Let, etc. — The oldest manuscripts read, “*But let*,” etc. This verse is connected with ⁴⁴⁹1 Corinthians 14:39, “But (while *desiring prophecy*, and *not forbidding tongues*) let all things be done decently.” “Church government is the best security for Christian liberty” [J. NEWTON]. (Compare ⁴⁴²1 Corinthians 14:23,26-33).

CHAPTER 15

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-58.

THE RESURRECTION PROVED AGAINST THE DENIERS OF IT AT CORINTH.

Christ's resurrection rests on the evidence of many eye-witnesses, including Paul himself, and is the great fact preached as the groundwork of the Gospel: they who deny the resurrection in general, must deny that of Christ, and the consequence of the latter will be, that Christian preaching and faith are vain.

1. Moreover — “Now” [ALFORD and ELLICOTT].

I declare — literally, “I make known”: it implies some degree of reproach that it should be now necessary to make it known to them afresh, owing to some of them “not having the knowledge of God” (~~451~~ 1 Corinthians 15:34). Compare ~~401~~ Galatians 1:11.

wherein ye stand — wherein ye now take your stand. This is your present actual privilege, if ye suffer not yourselves to fall from your high standing.

2. ye are saved — rather, “ye are being saved.”

if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you — Able critics, BENJEL and others, prefer connecting the words thus, “I declare unto you the Gospel (~~451~~ 1 Corinthians 15:1) in what words I preached it unto you.” Paul reminds them, or rather makes known to them, as if anew, not only the fact of the Gospel, but also *with what words*, and *by what arguments*, he preached it to them. Translate in that case, “if ye hold it fast.” I prefer arranging as *English Version*, “By which ye are saved, if ye hold fast (in memory and personal appropriation) *with what speech* I preached it unto you.”

unless — which is impossible, your faith is vain, in resting on Christ's resurrection as an objective reality.

3. I delivered unto you — A short creed, or summary of articles of faith, was probably even then existing; and a profession in accordance with it was required of candidates for baptism (⁴⁰⁸⁷Acts 8:37).

first of all — literally, “among the foremost points” (³⁸⁰⁰Hebrews 6:2). The atonement is, in Paul's view, of primary importance.

which I ... received — from Christ Himself by special revelation (compare ⁴¹²³1 Corinthians 11:23).

died for our sins — that is, to atone FOR them; *for* taking away *our sins* (⁴⁰⁸⁵1 John 3:5; compare ³⁸⁰⁰Galatians 1:4): “gave Himself for our sins” (²⁸⁰⁰Isaiah 53:5 ⁴⁰⁸⁵2 Corinthians 5:15 ⁴⁰²⁴Titus 2:14). The “for” here does not, as in some passages, imply vicarious substitution, but “in behalf of” (³⁸⁰⁰Hebrews 5:3 ⁴⁰²⁴1 Peter 2:24). It does not, however, mean merely “on account of,” which is expressed by a different *Greek* word (³⁸⁰²Romans 4:25), (though in *English Version* translated similarly, “for”).

according to the scriptures — which “cannot be broken.” Paul puts the testimony of *Scripture* above that of those who saw the Lord after His resurrection [BENGEL]. So our Lord quotes ²⁸⁰⁰Isaiah 53:12, in ⁴⁰²³Luke 22:37; compare ⁴⁰²⁵Psalms 22:15, etc. ²⁹⁰⁰Daniel 9:26.

4. buried ... rose again — His burial is more closely connected with His resurrection than His death. At the moment of His death, the power of His inextinguishable life exerted itself (⁴⁰²⁵Matthew 27:52). The grave was to Him not the destined receptacle of corruption, but an apartment fitted for entering into life (⁴⁰²⁶Acts 2:26-28) [BENGEL].

rose again — *Greek*, “hath risen”: the state thus begun, and its consequences, still continue.

5. seen of Cephas — Peter (⁴⁰²⁸Luke 24:34).

the twelve — The round number for “the Eleven” (⁴⁰²⁸Luke 24:33,36). “The Twelve” was their ordinary appellation, even when their number was not full. However, very possibly Matthias was present (⁴⁰²²Acts 1:22,23).

Some of the oldest manuscripts and versions read, “the Eleven”: but the best on the whole, “the Twelve.”

6. five hundred — This appearance was probably on the mountain (Tabor, according to tradition), in Galilee, when His most solemn and public appearance, according to His special promise, was vouchsafed (⁴⁰⁵Matthew 26:32 28:7,10,16). He “appointed” this place, as one remote from Jerusalem, so that believers might assemble there more freely and securely. ALFORD’S theory of *Jerusalem* being the scene, is improbable; as such a multitude of believers could not, with any safety, have met in one place in the metropolis, after His crucifixion there. The number of disciples (⁴⁰⁵Acts 1:15) at Jerusalem shortly after, was one hundred and twenty, those in Galilee and elsewhere not being reckoned. Andronicus and JUNIUS were, perhaps, of the number (⁴⁰⁶Romans 16:7): they are said to be “among the apostles” (who all were witnesses of the resurrection, ⁴⁰²Acts 1:22).

remain unto this present — and, therefore, may be sifted thoroughly to ascertain the trustworthiness of their testimony.

fallen asleep — in the sure hope of *awaking* at the resurrection (⁴⁰⁶Acts 7:60).

7. seen of James — the Less, the brother of our Lord (⁴⁰⁹Galatians 1:19). The Gospel according to the Hebrews, quoted by JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*, p. 170 D.], records that “James swore he would not eat bread from the hour that he drank the cup of the Lord, till he should see Him rising again from the dead.”

all the apostles — The term here includes many others besides “the Twelve” already enumerated (⁴¹⁵1 Corinthians 15:5): perhaps the seventy disciples (⁴¹¹Luke 10:1) [CHRYSOSTOM].

8. One born out of due time — *Greek*, “the one abortively born”: the abortion in the family of the apostles. As a child *born before the due time* is puny, and though born alive, yet not of the proper size, and scarcely worthy of the name of man, so “I am *the least* of the apostles,” scarcely “meet to be called an apostle”; a supernumerary taken into the college of apostles out of regular course, not led to Christ by long instruction, like a

natural birth, but by a sudden power, as those prematurely born [GROTIUS]. Compare the similar image from childbirth, and by the same spiritual power, the resurrection of Christ (^{<400>}1 Peter 1:3). “*Begotten again* by the *resurrection* of Jesus.” Jesus’ appearance to Paul, on the way to Damascus, is the one here referred to.

9. least — The name, “Paulus,” in *Latin*, means “*least*.”

I persecuted the church — Though God has forgiven him, Paul can hardly forgive himself at the remembrance of his past sin.

10. by ... grace ... and his grace — The repetition implies the prominence which God’s *grace* had in his mind, as the sole cause of his marvellous conversion and subsequent labors. Though “not meet to be called an apostle,” grace has given him, in Christ, the meetness needed for the office. Translate as the *Greek*, “His grace which was (showed) *towards* me.”

what I am — occupying the honorable office of an apostle. Contrast with this the self-sufficient prayer of another Pharisee (^{<401>}Luke 18:11).

but I labored — by God’s grace (^{<406>}Philippians 2:16).

than they all — than any of the apostles (^{<407>}1 Corinthians 15:7).

grace of God ... with me — Compare “the Lord working with them” (^{<408>}Mark 16:20). The oldest manuscripts omit “which was.” The “not I, but grace,” implies, that though the human will concurred *with* God when brought by His Spirit into conformity with His will, yet “grace” so preponderated in the work, that his own co-operation is regarded as nothing, and grace as virtually the sole agent. (Compare ^{<409>}1 Corinthians 3:9 ^{<410>}Matthew 10:20 ^{<411>}2 Corinthians 6:1 ^{<412>}Philippians 2:12,13).

11. whether it were I or they — (the apostles) who “labored more abundantly” (^{<413>}1 Corinthians 15:10) in preaching, such was the substance of our preaching, namely, the truths stated in ^{<414>}1 Corinthians 15:3,4.

12. if — Seeing that it is an admitted fact that Christ is announced by us eye-witnesses as having risen from the dead, how is it that some of you deny that which is a necessary consequence of Christ’s resurrection, namely, the general resurrection?

some — Gentile reasoners (^{<4173>}Acts 17:32 26:8) who would not believe it because they did not see “how” it could be (^{<4355>}1 Corinthians 15:35,36).

13. If there be no general resurrection, which is the consequent, then there can have been no resurrection of Christ, which is the antecedent. The head and the members of the body stand on the same footing: what does not hold good of them, does not hold good of Him either: His resurrection and theirs are inseparably joined (compare ^{<4350>}1 Corinthians 15:20-22 ^{<4349>}John 14:19).

14. your faith ... vain — (^{<4351>}1 Corinthians 15:11). The *Greek* for “vain” here is, *empty, unreal*: in ^{<4357>}1 Corinthians 15:17, on the other hand, it is, *without use, frustrated*. The principal argument of the first preachers in support of Christianity was that God had raised Christ from the dead (^{<4402>}Acts 1:22 2:32 4:10,33 13:37 ^{<4304>}Romans 1:4). If this fact were false, the faith built on it must be false too.

15. testified of God — that is, concerning God. The rendering of others is, “against God” [*Vulgate*, ESTIUS, GROTIUS]: the *Greek* preposition with the genitive implies, not direct antagonism (as the accusative would mean), but *indirect to the dishonor of God*. *English Version* is probably better.

if so be — as they assert. It is not right to tell untrue stories, though they are told and seem for the glory of God (^{<4337>}Job 13:7).

16. The repetition implies the unanswerable force of the argument.

17. vain — Ye are, by the very fact (supposing the case to be as the skeptics maintained), *frustrated* of all which “your faith” appropriates: Ye are still under the everlasting condemnation of your sins (even in the *disembodied* state which is here referred to), from which Christ’s resurrection is our justification (^{<4605>}Romans 4:25): “saved *by his life*” (^{<4650>}Romans 5:10).

18. fallen asleep in Christ — in communion with Christ as His members. “In Christ’s case the term used is *death*, to assure us of the reality of His suffering; in our case, *sleep*, to give us consolation: In His case, His resurrection having actually taken place, Paul shrinks not from the term death; in ours, the resurrection being still only a matter of hope,

he uses the term *falling asleep*” [PHOTIUS, *Quaestiones Amphilochiae*, 197].

perished — Their souls are lost; they are in misery in the unseen world.

19. If our hopes in Christ were limited to this life only, we should be, of all men, most to be pitied; namely, because, while others live unmolested, we are exposed to every trial and persecution, and, after all, are doomed to bitter disappointment in our most cherished hope; for all our hope of salvation, even of the soul (not merely of the body), hangs on the resurrection of Christ, without which His death would be of no avail to us (~~419~~ Ephesians 1:19,20 ~~408~~ 1 Peter 1:3). The heathen are “without hope” (~~407~~ Ephesians 2:12 ~~5043~~ 1 Thessalonians 4:13). We should be even worse, for we should be also without present enjoyment (~~409~~ 1 Corinthians 4:9).

20. now — as the case really is.

and become — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

the first-fruits — the earnest or pledge, that the whole resurrection harvest will follow. so that our faith is not vain, nor our hope limited to this life. The time of writing this Epistle was probably about the Passover (~~419~~ 1 Corinthians 5:7); the day after the Passover sabbath was that for offering *the first-fruits* (~~4280~~ Leviticus 23:10,11), and the same was the day of Christ’s resurrection: whence appears the appropriateness of the image.

21. by man ... by man — The first-fruits are of the same nature as the rest of the harvest; so Christ, the bringer of life, is of the same nature as the race of men to whom He brings it; just as Adam, the bringer of death, was of the same nature as the men on whom he brought it.

22. in Adam all — in union of nature with Adam, as representative head of mankind in their fall.

in Christ ... all — in union of nature with Christ, the representative head of mankind in their recovery. The life brought in by Christ is co-extensive with the death brought in by Adam.

23. But every man in his own order — rather, “rank”: the *Greek* is not in the abstract, but concrete: image from troops, “each in his own regiment.” Though all shall rise again, let not any think all shall be saved;

may, each shall have his proper place, Christ first (^{<5018>}Colossians 1:18), and after Him the godly who die in Christ (^{<5046>}1 Thessalonians 4:16), in a separate band from the ungodly, and then “the end,” that is, the resurrection of the rest of the dead. Christian churches, ministers, and individuals seem about to be judged first “at His coming” (^{<4121>}Matthew 25:1-30); then “all the nations” (^{<4123>}Matthew 25:31-46). Christ’s own flock shall share His glory “at His coming,” which is not to be confounded with “the end,” or general judgment (^{<6104>}Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15). The latter is not in this chapter specially discussed, but only the first resurrection, namely, that of the saints: not even the judgment of Christian hollow professors (^{<4121>}Matthew 25:1-30) at His coming, is handled, but only the glory of them “that are Christ’s,” who alone in the highest sense “obtain the resurrection from the dead” (^{<6144>}Luke 14:14 20:35, 36 ^{<5121>}Philippians 3:11; see on ^{<5121>}Philippians 3:11). The second coming of Christ is not a mere *point* of time, but a *period* beginning with the resurrection of the just at His appearing, and ending with the general judgment. The ground of the universal resurrection is the union of all mankind in nature with Christ, their representative Head, who has done away with death, by His own death in their stead: the ground of the resurrection of believers is not merely this, but their personal union with Him as *their* “Life” (^{<5104>}Colossians 3:4), effected *causatively* by the Holy Spirit, and *instrumentally* by faith as the *subjective*, and by ordinances as the *objective* means.

24. Then — after that: next in the succession of “orders” or “ranks.”

the end — the general resurrection, and final judgment and consummation (^{<4121>}Matthew 25:46).

delivered up ... kingdom to ... Father — (Compare ^{<4123>}John 13:3).

Seeming at variance with ^{<5014>}Daniel 7:14, “His dominion is an *everlasting* dominion which *shall not pass away*.” Really, His giving up of the *mediatorial* kingdom to the Father, when the end for which the mediatorial economy was established has been accomplished, is altogether in harmony with its continuing everlastingly. The change which shall then take place, shall be in the *manner* of administration, not in the *kingdom* itself; God shall then come into *direct* connection with the earth, instead of mediatorially, when Christ shall have fully and finally removed everything

that severs asunder the holy God and a sinful earth (^{<500>}Colossians 1:20). The glory of God is the final end of Christ's mediatorial office (^{<519>}Philippians 2:10,11). His co-equality with the Father is independent of the latter, and prior to it, and shall, therefore, continue when its function shall have ceased. His manhood, too, shall everlastingly continue, though, as now, subordinate to the Father. The *throne of the Lamb* (but no longer mediatorial) as well as of God, shall be in the heavenly city (^{<621>}Revelation 22:3; compare ^{<619>}Revelation 3:21). The unity of the Godhead, and the unity of the Church, shall be simultaneously manifested at Christ's second coming. Compare ^{<313>}Zephaniah 3:9 ^{<340>}Zechariah 14:9 ^{<672>}John 17:21-24. The oldest manuscripts for "*shall have delivered up*," read, "*delivereth up*," which suits the sense better. It is "when He *shall have* put down all rule," that "He *delivereth up* the kingdom to the Father."

shall have put down all rule — the effect produced during the millenary reign of Himself and His saints (^{<310>}Psalms 110:1 8:6 2:6-9), to which passages Paul refers, resting his argument on the two words, "all" and "until," of the Psalmist: a proof of verbal inspiration of Scripture (compare ^{<612>}Revelation 2:26,27). Meanwhile, He "rules in the midst of His enemies" (^{<310>}Psalms 110:2). He is styled "the King" when He takes His great power (^{<153>}Matthew 25:34 ^{<615>}Revelation 11:15,17). The *Greek* for "put down" is, "*done away with*," or "brought to naught." "All" must be subject to Him, whether openly opposed powers, as Satan and his angels, or kings and angelic principalities (^{<402>}Ephesians 1:21).

25. must — because Scripture foretells it.

till — There will be no further need of His mediatorial kingdom, its object having been realized.

enemies under his feet — (^{<627>}Luke 19:27 ^{<402>}Ephesians 1:22).

26. shall be — *Greek*, "*is done away with*" (^{<614>}Revelation 20:14; compare ^{<615>}Revelation 1:18). It is to believers especially this applies (^{<455>}1 Corinthians 15:55-57); even in the case of unbelievers, death is done away with by the general resurrection. Satan brought in *sin*, and *sin* brought in *death*! So they shall be destroyed (rendered utterly powerless) in the same order (^{<455>}1 Corinthians 15:56 ^{<324>}Hebrews 2:14 ^{<621>}Revelation 19:20 20:10,14).

27. all things — including death (compare ^{<402>}Ephesians 1:22 ^{<102>}Philippians 3:21 ^{<3018>}Hebrews 2:8 ^{<4022>}1 Peter 3:22). It is said, “*hath put*,” for what God has said is the same as if it were already done, so sure is it. Paul here quotes ^{<4004>}Psalms 8:6 in proof of his previous declaration, “For (it is written), ‘*He hath put all things under His feet*.’”

under his feet — as His footstool (^{<4001>}Psalms 110:1). In perfect and lasting subjection.

when he — namely, God, who by His Spirit inspired the Psalmist.

28. Son ... himself ... subject — not as the creatures are, but as a Son *voluntarily subordinate* to, though co-equal with, the Father. In the mediatorial kingdom, the Son had been, in a manner, distinct from the Father. Now, His kingdom shall merge in the Father’s, with whom He is one; not that there is thus any derogation from His honor; for the Father Himself wills “that all should honor the Son, as they honor the Father” (^{<4022>}John 5:22,23 ^{<3006>}Hebrews 1:6).

God ... all in all — as Christ is all in all (^{<5011>}Colossians 3:11; compare ^{<3049>}Zerachiah 14:9). *Then*, and not till then, “*all things*,” without the least infringement of the divine prerogative, shall be subject to the Son, and the Son subordinate to the Father, while co-equally sharing His glory. Contrast ^{<4004>}Psalms 10:4 14:1. Even the saints do not fully realize God as their “all” (^{<4725>}Psalms 73:25) now, through desiring it; then each shall feel, *God is all to me*.

29. Else — if there be no resurrection.

what shall they do? — How wretched is their lot!

they ... which are baptized for the dead — third person; a class distinct from that in which the apostle places himself, “we” (^{<4051>}1 Corinthians 15:30); first person. ALFORD thinks there is an allusion to a practice at Corinth of baptizing a living person *in behalf of* a friend who died unbaptized; thus Paul, without giving the least sanction to the practice, uses an *ad hominem* argument from it against its practicers, some of whom, though using it, denied the resurrection: “What account can they give of their practice; why are they at the trouble of it, if the dead rise not?” [So Jesus used an *ad hominem* argument, ^{<4027>}Matthew 12:27]. But if

so, it is strange there is no direct censure of it. Some Marcionites adopted the practice at a later period, probably from taking this passage, as ALFORD does; but, generally, it was unknown in the Church. BENDEL translates, “over (immediately upon) the dead,” that is, who will be gathered to the dead *immediately after* baptism. Compare ⁽⁴⁵³⁾Job 17:1, “the graves are ready for me.” The price they get for their trouble is, that they should be gathered to the dead for ever (⁽⁴⁵³⁾1 Corinthians 15:13,16). Many in the ancient Church put off baptism till near death. This seems the better view; though there may have been some rites of symbolical baptism at Corinth, now unknown, perhaps grounded on Jesus’ words (⁽⁴¹²⁾Matthew 20:22,23), which Paul here alludes to. The best punctuation is, “If the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptized *for them*” (so the oldest manuscripts read the last words, instead of “for the dead”)?

30. we — apostles (⁽⁴⁵⁹⁾1 Corinthians 15:9 ⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾1 Corinthians 4:9). A gradation from those who could only for a little time enjoy this life (that is, those baptized at the point of death), to *us*, who could enjoy it longer, if we had not renounced the world for Christ [BENDEL].

31. by your rejoicing — *by the glorying which I have concerning you*, as the fruit of my labors in the Lord. Some of the earliest manuscripts and fathers read “our,” with the same sense. BENDEL understands “your rejoicing,” to be the *enjoyable state of the Corinthians*, as contrasted with his dying daily to give his converts *rejoicing* or *glorying* (⁽⁴⁰⁸⁾1 Corinthians 4:8 ⁽⁴⁰⁴⁾2 Corinthians 4:12,15 ⁽⁴⁸³⁾Ephesians 3:13 ⁽⁴⁰²⁾Philippians 1:26). But the words, “which I have,” favor the explanation — “*the rejoicing which I have over you*.” Many of the oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* insert “brethren” here.

I die daily — This ought to stand first in the sentence, as it is so put prominently forward in the *Greek*. I am day by day in sight of death, exposed to it, and expecting it (⁽⁴⁰⁴⁾2 Corinthians 4:11,12 1:8,9 11:23).

32. Punctuate thus: “If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me? If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink,” etc. [BENDEL]. If “*merely as a man*” (with the mere human hope of the present life; not with the Christian’s hope of the resurrection; answering to “If the dead rise not,” the parallel clause in the next sentence), I have fought with men resembling savage beasts. Heraclitus, of Ephesus,

had termed his countrymen “wild beasts” four hundred years before. So Epimenides called the Cretians (³⁰¹²Titus 1:12). Paul was still at Ephesus (⁴⁰⁰⁸1 Corinthians 16:8), and there his life was daily in danger (⁴⁰⁰⁹1 Corinthians 4:9; compare ⁴⁰⁰⁸2 Corinthians 1:8). Though the tumult (⁴⁰⁰⁹Acts 19:29,30) had *not yet taken place* (for after it he set out *immediately* for Macedonia), this Epistle was written evidently just before it, when the storm was gathering; “many adversaries” (⁴⁰⁰⁹1 Corinthians 16:9) were already menacing him.

what advantageth it me? — seeing I have renounced all that, “*as a mere man,*” might compensate me for such sufferings, gain, fame, etc.

let us eat, etc. — Quoted from the *Septuagint*, (²⁰²¹Isaiah 22:13), where the prophet describes the reckless self-indulgence of the despisers of God’s call to mourning, Let us enjoy the good things of life now, for it soon will end. Paul imitates the language of such skeptics, to reprove both their theory and practice. “If men but persuade themselves that they shall die like the beasts, they soon will live like beasts too” [SOUTH].

33. evil communications corrupt good manners — a current saying, forming a verse in MENANDER, the comic poet, who probably took it from Euripides [SOCRATES, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.16]. “Evil communications” refer to intercourse with those who deny the resurrection. Their notion seems to have been that the resurrection is merely spiritual, that sin has its seat solely in the body, and will be left behind when the soul leaves it, if, indeed, the soul survive death at all.

good — not only *good-natured*, but *pliant*. Intimacy with the profligate society around was apt to corrupt the principles of the Corinthians.

34. Awake — literally, “*out of the sleep*” of carnal intoxication into which ye are thrown by the influence of these skeptics (⁴⁰⁵⁰1 Corinthians 15:32 ²⁰⁰⁵Joel 1:5).

to righteousness — in contrast with “sin” in this verse, and *corrupt manners* (⁴⁰⁵³1 Corinthians 15:33).

sin not — Do not give yourselves up to sinful pleasures. The *Greek* expresses a continued state of abstinence from sin. Thus, Paul implies that

they who live in sinful pleasures readily persuade themselves of what they wish, namely, that there is to be no resurrection.

some — the same as in ^{<4650>}1 Corinthians 15:12.

have not the knowledge of God — *and so know not His power* in the resurrection (^{<4129>}Matthew 22:29). Stronger than “are ignorant of God.” An habitual *ignorance*: wilful, in that they prefer to keep their sins, rather than part with them, in order to *know God* (compare ^{<4377>}John 7:17 ^{<4125>}1 Peter 2:15).

to your shame — that you Corinthian Christians, who boast of your *knowledge*, should have among you, and maintain intercourse with, those so practically ignorant of God, as to deny the resurrection.

35. How — It is folly to deny a fact of REVELATION, because we do not know the “*how*.” Some measure God’s power by their petty intelligence, and won’t admit, *even on His assurance*, anything which they cannot explain. Ezekiel’s *answer of faith* to the question is the truly wise one (^{<2509>}Ezekiel 37:3). So Jesus argues not on principles of philosophy, but wholly from “the power of God,” as declared by the Word of God (^{<4129>}Matthew 19:26 ^{<4117>}Mark 10:27 12:23 ^{<4187>}Luke 18:27).

come — The dead are said to *depart*, or to be *deceased*: those rising again to *come*. The objector could not understand *how* the dead are to rise, and with *what kind of a body* they are to come. Is it to be the same body? If so, how is this, since the resurrection bodies will not eat or drink, or beget children, as the natural bodies do? Besides, the latter have mouldered into dust. *How* then can they rise again? If it be a different body, how can the personal identity be preserved? Paul answers, In one sense it will be the same body, in another, a distinct body. It will be a body, but a spiritual, not a natural, body.

36. fool — with all thy boasted philosophy (^{<5941>}Psalms 14:1).

that which thou — “thou,” emphatical: appeal to the objector’s *own* experience: “The seed which *thou thyself* sowest.” Paul, in this verse and in ^{<4650>}1 Corinthians 15:42, answers the question of ^{<4655>}1 Corinthians 15:35, “How?” and in ^{<4657>}1 Corinthians 15:37-41,43, the question, “With *what kind of body*?” He converts the very objection (the death of the natural

body) into an argument. Death, so far from preventing *quicken*ing, is the necessary prelude and prognostication of it, just as the seed “is not quickened” into a new sprout with increased produce, “except it die” (except a dissolution of its previous organization takes place). Christ by His death for us has not given us a reprieve from death as to the life which we have from Adam; nay, He permits the law to take its course on our fleshly nature; but He brings from Himself new spiritual and heavenly life out of death (^{<4650>}1 Corinthians 15:37).

37. not that body that shall be — a *body* beautiful and no longer a “bare grain” [BENGEL]. No longer without stalk or ear, but clothed with blade and ears, and yielding many grains instead of only one [GROTIUS]. There is not an identity of all the particles of the old and the new body. For the perpetual transmutation of matter is inconsistent with this. But there is a hidden germ which constitutes the identity of body amidst all outward changes: the outward accretions fall off in its development, while the germ remains the same. Every such germ (“seed,” ^{<4658>}1 Corinthians 15:38) “shall have its own body,” and be instantly recognized, just as each plant now is known from the seed that was sown (see on ^{<4663>}1 Corinthians 6:13). So Christ by the same image illustrated the truth that His death was the necessary prelude of His putting on His glorified body, which is the ground of the regeneration of the many who believe (^{<6124>}John 12:24). Progress is the law of the spiritual, as of the natural world. Death is the avenue not to mere *revivification* or *reanimation*, but to *resurrection* and *regeneration* (^{<4628>}Matthew 19:28 ^{<5021>}Philippians 3:21). Compare “*planted*,” etc., ^{<4665>}Romans 6:5.

38. as it hath pleased him — at creation, when He gave *to each of the* (kinds of) *seeds* (so the *Greek* is for “to every seed”) *a body of its own* (^{<0011>}Genesis 1:11, “after its kind,” suited to its species). So God can and will give to the blessed at the resurrection *their own* appropriate *body*, such *as it pleases Him*, and such as is suitable to their glorified state: a body peculiar to the individual, substantially the same as the body sown.

39-41. Illustrations of the suitability of bodies, however various, to their species: the flesh of the several species of animals; bodies celestial and terrestrial; the various kinds of light in the sun, moon, and stars, respectively.

flesh — animal organism [DE WETTE]. He implies by the word that our resurrection bodies shall be in some sense really flesh, not mere phantoms of air [ESTIUS]. So some of the oldest creeds expressed it, “I believe in the resurrection of the *flesh*.” Compare as to Jesus’ own resurrection body, ^{<124>}Luke 24:39 ^{<107>}John 20:27; to which *ours shall be made like*, and therefore shall be *flesh*, but not of animal organism (^{<102>}Philippians 3:21) and liable to corruption. But ^{<165>}1 Corinthians 15:50 below implies, it is not “flesh and blood” in the animal sense we now understand them; for these “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

not the same — not flesh of the same nature and excellency. As the kinds of flesh, however widely differing from one another, do not cease to be flesh, so the kinds of bodies, however differing from one another, are still bodies. All this is to illustrate the difference of the new celestial body from its terrestrial seed, while retaining a substantial identity.

beasts — quadrupeds.

another of fishes ... another of birds — Most of the oldest manuscripts read thus, “another FLESH of *birds* ... another of *fishes*”: the order of nature.

40. celestial bodies — not the sun, moon, and stars, which are first introduced in ^{<158>}1 Corinthians 15:41, but *the bodies of angels*, as distinguished from the bodies of earthly creatures.

the glory of the celestial — (^{<102>}Luke 9:26).

glory of ... terrestrial — (^{<103>}Matthew 6:28,29 ^{<102>}1 Peter 1:24).

41. one glory of ... sun ... another ... of ... moon — The analogy is not to prove different degrees of glory among the blessed (whether this may be, or not, *indirectly* hinted at), but this: As the various fountains of *light*, which is so similar in its aspect and properties, differ (the sun from the moon, and the moon from the stars; *and even* one star from another star, though all seem so much alike); so there is nothing unreasonable in the doctrine that *our present bodies* differ from *our resurrection bodies*, though still continuing *bodies*. Compare the same simile, appropriate especially in the clear Eastern skies (^{<103>}Daniel 12:3 ^{<103>}Matthew 13:43).

Also that of *seed* in the same parable (^{<413>}Matthew 13:24 ^{<416>}Galatians 6:7,8).

42. sown — Following up the image of *seed*. A delightful word instead of *burial*.

in corruption — *liable to corruption: corruptible*: not merely a prey *when dead* to corruption; as the contrast shows, “raised in incorruption,” that is, *not liable to corruption: incorruptible*.

43. in dishonor — answering to “our *vile* body” (^{<412>}Philippians 3:21); literally, “our body of humiliation”: liable to various humiliations of disease, injury, and decay at last.

in glory — the garment of incorruption (^{<452>}1 Corinthians 15:42,43) like His glorious body (^{<402>}Philippians 4:21), which we shall put on (^{<453>}1 Corinthians 15:49,53 ^{<412>}2 Corinthians 5:2-4).

in weakness — liable to infirmities (^{<413>}2 Corinthians 13:4).

in power — answering to a “spiritual body” (^{<454>}1 Corinthians 15:44; compare ^{<417>}Luke 1:17, “Spirit and power”). Not liable to the weaknesses of our present frail bodies (^{<413>}Isaiah 33:24 ^{<420>}Revelation 21:4).

44. a natural body — literally, “*an animal body*,” a body moulded in its organism of “flesh and blood” (^{<450>}1 Corinthians 15:50) to suit the animal soul which predominates in it. The Holy Spirit *in the spirit* of believers, indeed, is an earnest of a superior state (^{<411>}Romans 8:11), but meanwhile *in the body* the animal soul preponderates; hereafter the Spirit shall predominate, and the animal soul be duly subordinate.

spiritual body — a body wholly moulded by the Spirit, and its organism not conformed to the lower and animal (^{<415>}Luke 20:35,36), but to the higher and spiritual, life (compare ^{<424>}1 Corinthians 2:14 ^{<412>}1 Thessalonians 5:23).

There is, etc. — The oldest manuscripts read, “IF there is a natural (or *animal-souled*) body, there is *also* a spiritual body.” It is no more wonderful a thing, that there should be a body fitted to the capacities and want of man’s highest part, his spirit (which we see to be the case), than

that there should be one fitted to the capacities and wants of his subordinate part, the animal soul [ALFORD].

45. so — in accordance with the distinction just mentioned between the natural or *animal-souled* body and the *spiritual* body.

it is written — (^{<GEN>}Genesis 2:7); “Man became (was made to become) a living soul,” that is, endowed with *an animal soul*, the living principle of his body.

the last Adam — the LAST Head of humanity, who is to be fully manifested in *the last day*, which is *His day* (^{<JOH>}John 6:39). He is so called in ^{<JOB>}Job 19:25; see on ^{<JOB>}Job 19:25 (compare ^{<ROM>}Romans 5:14). In contrast to “the last,” Paul calls “man” (^{<GEN>}Genesis 2:7) “the FIRST Adam.”

quickenings — not only living, but *making alive* (^{<JOH>}John 5:21 6:33,39,40,54,57,62,63 ^{<ROM>}Romans 8:11). As the *natural* or *animal-souled* body (^{<1CO>}1 Corinthians 15:44) is the fruit of our union with the first Adam, an *animal-souled* man, so the *spiritual* body is the fruit of our union with the second Adam, who is the quickening Spirit (^{<2CO>}2 Corinthians 3:17). As He became representative of the whole of humanity in His union of the two natures, He exhausted in His own person the sentence of death passed on all men, and giveth spiritual and everlasting life to whom He will.

46. afterward — Adam had a soul not necessarily mortal, as it afterwards became by sin, but “a *living soul*,” and destined to live for ever, if he had eaten of the tree of life (^{<GEN>}Genesis 3:22); still his body was but an *animal-souled* body, not a *spiritual* body, such as believers shall have; much less was he a “life-giving spirit,” as Christ. His soul had the germ of the Spirit, rather than the fullness of it, such as man shall have when restored “body, soul, and spirit,” by the second Adam (^{<1TH>}1 Thessalonians 5:23). As the first and lower Adam came before the second and heavenly Adam, so the animal-souled body comes first, and must die before it be changed into the spiritual body (that is, that in which the Spirit predominates over the animal soul).

47. of the earth — inasmuch as being sprung from the earth, he is “earthy” (^{<GEN>}Genesis 2:7 3:19, “dust thou art”); that is, not merely earthly

or born *upon* the earth, but *terrene*, or *of earth*; literally, “of *heaped earth*” or clay. “Adam” means *red earth*.

the Lord — omitted in the oldest manuscripts and versions.

from heaven — (◀¹⁸¹³ John 3:13,31). Humanity in Christ is generic. In Him man is impersonated in his true ideal as God originally designed him. Christ is the representative man, the federal head of redeemed man.

48. As is the earthy — namely, Adam.

they ... that are earthy — All Adam’s posterity in their *natural* state (◀¹⁸¹³ John 3:6,7).

the heavenly — Christ.

they ... that are heavenly — His people in their regenerate state (◀¹⁸¹³ Philippians 3:20,21). As the former precedes the latter state, so the *natural bodies* precede the *spiritual bodies*.

49. as — *Greek*, “even as” (see ◀¹⁸¹³ Genesis 5:3).

we shall also bear — or wear as a garment [BENGEL]. The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “We must also bear,” or “let us also bear.” It implies the divine appointment (compare “must,” ◀¹⁸¹³ 1 Corinthians 15:53) and faith assenting to it. An exhortation, and yet implying a promise (so ◀¹⁸¹³ Romans 8:29). The conformity to the image of the heavenly Representative man is to be begun here in our souls, in part, and shall be perfected at the resurrection in both bodies and souls.

50. (See on ◀¹⁸¹³ 1 Corinthians 15:37; ◀¹⁸¹³ 1 Corinthians 15:39). “Flesh and blood” of the same animal and corruptible nature as our present (◀¹⁸¹³ 1 Corinthians 15:44) *animal-souled* bodies, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore the believer acquiesces gladly in the unrepealed sentence of the holy law, which appoints the death of the present body as the necessary preliminary to the resurrection body of glory. Hence he “dies daily” to the flesh and to the world, as the necessary condition to his regeneration here and hereafter (◀¹⁸¹³ John 3:6 ◀¹⁸¹³ Galatians 2:20). As the being *born of the flesh* constitutes a child of Adam, so the being *born of the Spirit* constitutes a child of God.

cannot — Not merely is the change of body *possible*, but it is *necessary*. The spirit extracted from the dregs of wine does not so much differ from them, as the glorified man does from the mortal man [BENGEL] of mere animal flesh and blood (^{<R116>}Galatians 1:16). The resurrection body will be still a body though spiritual, and substantially retaining the personal identity; as is proved by ^{<R119>}Luke 24:39 ^{<R117>}John 20:27, compared with ^{<R121>}Philippians 3:21.

the kingdom of God — which is not at all merely animal, but altogether spiritual. *Corruption* doth not *inherit*, though it is the way to, *incorruption* (^{<R126>}1 Corinthians 15:36,52,53).

51. Behold — Calling attention to the “mystery” heretofore hidden in God’s purposes, but now revealed.

you — emphatical in the *Greek*; I show (*Greek*, “tell,” namely, *by the word of the Lord*, ^{<S145>}1 Thessalonians 4:15) You, who think you have so much knowledge, “a mystery” (compare ^{<S125>}Romans 11:25) which your reason could never have discovered. Many of the old manuscripts and Fathers read, “We shall all sleep, but we shall not all be changed”; but this is plainly a corrupt reading, inconsistent with ^{<S145>}1 Thessalonians 4:15,17, and with the apostle’s argument here, which is that a *change* is necessary (^{<R125>}1 Corinthians 15:53). *English Version* is supported by some of the oldest manuscripts and Fathers. The *Greek* is literally “We all shall not sleep, but,” etc. The putting off of the corruptible body for an incorruptible by an instantaneous *change* will, in the case of “the quick,” stand as equivalent to death, appointed to all men (^{<R127>}Hebrews 9:27); of this Enoch and Elijah are types and forerunners. The “we” implies that Christians in that age and every successive age since and hereafter were designed to stand waiting, as if Christ might come again in their time, and as if they might be found among “the quick.”

52. the last trump — at the sounding of the trumpet *on the last day* [VATABLUS] (^{<R128>}Matthew 24:31 ^{<S146>}1 Thessalonians 4:16). Or the Spirit by Paul hints that the other trumpets mentioned subsequently in the Apocalypse shall precede, and that this shall be the *last* of all (compare ^{<R129>}Isaiah 27:13 ^{<R130>}Zechariah 9:14). As the law was given with the sound of a trumpet, so the final judgment according to it (^{<R131>}Hebrews 12:19; compare ^{<R132>}Exodus 19:16). As the Lord ascended “with the sound of a

trumpet” (⁹⁰⁷Psalm 47:5), so He shall descend (⁶¹¹⁵Revelation 11:15). The trumpet was sounded to convoke the people on solemn feasts, especially on the first day of the seventh month (the type of the *completion* of time; *seven* being the number for *perfection*; on the tenth of the same month was the atonement, and on the fifteenth the feast of tabernacles, commemorative of completed salvation out of the spiritual Egypt, compare ³⁹⁴⁸Zechariah 14:18,19); compare ⁴⁸⁰¹Psalm 50:1-7. Compare His calling forth of Lazarus from the grave “with a loud voice,” ⁶¹¹⁸John 11:43, with ⁴¹²⁵John 5:25,28.

and — immediately, in consequence.

53. this — pointing to *his own* body and that of those whom he addresses.

put on — as a garment (⁴⁰⁸²2 Corinthians 5:2,3).

immortality — Here only, besides ⁵¹⁰⁶1 Timothy 6:16, the word “immortality” is found. Nowhere is the immortality of the *soul*, distinct from the body, taught; a notion which many erroneously have derived from heathen philosophers. Scripture does not contemplate the anomalous state brought about by death, as the consummation to be earnestly looked for (⁴⁰⁸²2 Corinthians 5:4), but the resurrection.

54. then — not before. Death has as yet *a sting* even to the believer, in that his *body* is to be under its power till the resurrection. But then the sting and power of death shall cease for ever.

Death is swallowed up in victory — In *Hebrew* of ²³⁷⁹Isaiah 25:8, from which it is quoted, “*He (Jehovah) will swallow up death in victory*”; that is, *for ever*: as “in victory” often means in *Hebrew* idiom (²⁴⁰⁵Jeremiah 3:5 ²⁵⁸¹Lamentations 5:20). Christ will swallow it up *so altogether victoriously* that it shall never more regain its power (compare ⁴⁸⁰²Hosea 6:2 13:14 ⁴⁰⁸²2 Corinthians 5:4 ⁵⁰¹⁴Hebrews 2:14,15 ⁶¹¹⁴Revelation 20:14 21:4).

55. Quoted from ²⁸³⁴Hosea 13:14, substantially; but freely used by the warrant of the Spirit by which Paul wrote. The *Hebrew* may be translated, “O death, where are thy plagues? Where, O Hades, is thy destruction?” The *Septuagint*, “Where is thy victory (literally, *in a lawsuit*), O death? Where is thy sting, O Hades? ... Sting” answers to the *Hebrew* “plagues,” namely, a poisoned *sting* causing *plagues*. Appropriate, as to the old

serpent (^{<1684}Genesis 3:14,15 ^{<1620}Numbers 21:6). “Victory” answers to the Hebrew “destruction.” Compare ^{<2310}Isaiah 25:7, “*destroy ... veil ... over all nations*,” namely, *victoriously destroy* it; and to “in victory” (^{<4354}1 Corinthians 15:54), which he triumphantly repeats. The “where” implies their past victorious destroying power and sting, now gone for ever; obtained through Satan’s triumph over man in Eden, which enlisted God’s law on the side of Satan and death against man (^{<6162}Romans 5:12,17,21). The souls in Hades being freed by the resurrection, death’s sting and victory are gone. For “O grave,” the oldest manuscripts and versions read, “O death,” the second time.

56. If there were no sin, there would be no death. Man’s transgression of the law gives death its lawful power.

strength of sin is the law — Without the law sin is not perceived or imputed (^{<6161}Romans 3:20 4:15 5:13). The law makes sin the more grievous by making God’s will the clearer (^{<6108}Romans 7:8-10). Christ’s people are no longer “under the law” (^{<6164}Romans 6:14).

57. to God — The victory was in no way due to ourselves (^{<1911}Psalms 98:1). **giveth** — a present certainty.

the victory — which death and Hades (“the grave”) had aimed at, but which, notwithstanding the opposition of them, as well as of the law and sin, we have gained. The repetition of the word (^{<4354}1 Corinthians 15:54,55) is appropriate to the triumph gained.

58. beloved — Sound doctrine kindles Christian *love*.

steadfast — not turning aside from the faith of the resurrection *of yourselves*.

unmovable — not turned aside *by others* (^{<4352}1 Corinthians 15:12 ^{<5023}Colossians 1:23).

the work of the Lord — the promotion of Christ’s kingdom (^{<3488}Philippians 2:30).

not in vain — as the deniers of the resurrection would make it (^{<4354}1 Corinthians 15:14,17).

in the Lord — applying to the whole sentence and its several clauses: Ye, as being in the Lord by faith, know that your labor in the Lord (that is, labor according to His will) is not to be without its reward in the Lord (through His merits and according to His gracious appointment).

CHAPTER 16

1 CORINTHIANS 16:1-24.

DIRECTIONS AS TO THE COLLECTION FOR THE JUDEAN CHRISTIANS: PAUL'S FUTURE PLANS: HE COMMENDS TO THEM TIMOTHY, APOLLOS, &C. SALUTATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

1. collection for the saints — at Jerusalem (^{<613>}Romans 15:26) and in Judea (^{<412>}Acts 11:29,30 24:17; compare ^{<470>}2 Corinthians 8:4 9:1,12). He says “saints” rather than “the poor,” to remind the Corinthians that in giving, it is to *the Lord's people*, their own *brethren in the faith*. Towards the close of the national existence of the Jews, Judea and Jerusalem were harassed with various troubles, which in part affected the Jewish Christians. The community of goods which existed among them for a time gave temporary relief but tended ultimately to impoverish all by paralyzing individual exertion (^{<412>}Acts 2:44), and hence was soon discontinued. A beautiful fruit of grace it was, that he who had by persecutions robbed many of their all (^{<403>}Acts 26:10), should become the foremost in exertions for their relief.

as I have given — rather, “*gave order*,” namely, during my journey through Galatia, that mentioned in ^{<412>}Acts 18:23. The churches of Galatia and Phrygia were the last which Paul visited before writing this Epistle. He was now at Ephesus, and came thither immediately from visiting them (^{<412>}Acts 18:23 19:1). That he had not been silent in Galatia on contributions for the poor, appears from the hint let fall in his Epistle to that church (^{<810>}Galatians 2:10): an undesigned coincidence and mark of genuineness [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*]. He proposes the Galatians as an example to the Corinthians, the Corinthians to the Macedonians, the Corinthians and Macedonians to the Romans (^{<613>}Romans 15:26,27 ^{<412>}2 Corinthians 9:2). There is great force in example.

2. first day of ... week — already kept sacred by Christians as the day of the Lord's resurrection, the beginning day both of the physical and of the new spiritual creations: it gradually superseded the Jewish sabbath on the seventh day (^(~~1882~~)Psalm 118:22-24 ^(~~1809~~)John 20:19,26 ^(~~4107~~)Acts 20:7 ^(~~6010~~)Revelation 1:10). So the beginning of the year was changed from autumn to spring when Israel was brought out of Egypt. Three annual feasts, all typical of Christian truths, were directed to be kept on the first day of the week: the feast of the wave offering of the first sheaf, answering to the Lord's resurrection; Pentecost, or the feast of weeks, typical of the fruits of the resurrection in the Christian Church (^(~~1821~~)Leviticus 23:11,15,16,36); the feast of tabernacles at harvest, typical of the ingathering of the full number of the elect from one end of heaven to the other. Easter was directed to be kept as a holy sabbath (^(~~1826~~)Exodus 12:16). The Christian Sabbath commemorates the respective works of the Three Persons of the Triune God — creation, redemption (the resurrection), and sanctification (on Pentecost the Holy Ghost being poured out). Jesus came to fulfill the Spirit of the Law, not to cancel it, or to lower its standard. The primary object of the sabbath is *holiness*, not merely rest: "Remember that thou keep *holy* the sabbath day." Compare ^(~~1818~~)Genesis 2:3, "God *blessed* and *sanctified* it, because ... in it He had rested," etc. The word "Remember" implies that it was in existence *before* the giving of the law from Sinai, and refers to its institution in Paradise (compare ^(~~1862~~)Exodus 16:22,23,26,30). "Six days shalt thou labor": the *spirit* of the command is fulfilled whether the six days' labor be on the last six days or on the first. A perpetual sabbath would doubtless be the highest Christian ideal; but living in a world of business where the Christian ideal is not yet realized, if a law of definite times was necessary in Paradise, it is still more so now.

every one of yon — even those in limited circumstances.

lay by him — though there be not a weekly *public* collection, each is *privately* to set apart *a definite proportion of his weekly income* for the Lord's cause and charity.

in store — abundantly: the earnest of a better store *laid up* for the giver (^(~~5089~~)1 Timothy 6:19).

as God hath prospered him — literally, “whatsoever he may be prospered in,” or “may by prosperity have acquired” [ALFORD], (⁴²⁵Matthew 25:15-29 ⁴⁷²2 Corinthians 8:12).

that there be no gatherings when I come — that they may not *then* have to be made, when your and my time ought to be employed in more directly spiritual things. When men give once for all, not so much is given. But when each *lays by* something every Lord’s day, more is collected than one would have given at once [BENGEL].

3. approve by your letters — rather translate, “Whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send *with* letters”: namely, letters to several persons at Jerusalem, which would be their credentials. There could be no need of letters *from them* before Paul’s coming, if the persons recommended were *not to be sent off before it*. Literally, “by letters”; an abbreviated expression for “I will send, recommending them by letters” [GROTIUS]. If *English Version* be retained, the sense will be, “When I come, I will send those whom by your letters, *then to be given them*, ye shall approve.” But the antithesis (opposition or contrast) to Paul himself (⁴⁶⁴1 Corinthians 16:4) favors GROTIUS’ view. So “by” means *with* (⁴⁷²Romans 2:27); and the Greek for “by” is translated, *with* (⁴⁷²2 Corinthians 2:4).

liberality — literally, *gracious* or *free gift* (⁴⁷²2 Corinthians 8:4).

4. meet — “worth while.” If your collections be large enough to be *worth* an apostle’s journey (a stimulus to their liberality), I will accompany them *myself* instead of giving them *letters* credential (⁴⁶³1 Corinthians 16:3; compare ⁴⁷¹Acts 20:1-4).

with me — to guard against all possible suspicion of evil (⁴⁷²2 Corinthians 8:4, 19-21).

5-7. His first intention had been (⁴⁷⁵2 Corinthians 1:15, 16) to pass through them (Corinth) to Macedonia, and again return to them from Macedonia, and so to Judea; this he had announced in the lost epistle (⁴⁶³1 Corinthians 5:9); now having laid aside this intention (for which he was charged with levity, ⁴⁷¹2 Corinthians 1:17, etc., whereas it was through lenity, ⁴⁷²2 Corinthians 1:23 2:1), he announces his second plan of “not seeing them now by the way,” but “passing through Macedonia” first on his way to

them, and then “tarrying a while,” and even “abiding and wintering with them.”

for I do pass — as much as to say, “This is what I at last *resolve upon*” (not as the erroneous subscription of the Epistle represents it, as if he was THEN at Philippi, *on his way through* Macedonia); implying that there had been some previous communication upon the subject of the journey, and also that there had been some indecisiveness in the apostle’s plan [PALEY]. In accordance with his second plan, we find him in Macedonia when Second Corinthians was written (ⲁⲓⲓⲛ 2 Corinthians 2:13 8:1 9:2,4), and on his way to Corinth (ⲁⲓⲓⲛ 2 Corinthians 12:14 13:1; compare ⲁⲓⲓⲛ Acts 20:1,2). “Pass through” is opposed to “abide” (ⲁⲓⲓⲛ 1 Corinthians 16:6). He was *not yet* in Macedonia (as ⲁⲓⲓⲛ 1 Corinthians 16:8 shows), but at Ephesus; but he was *thinking of passing through* it (not *abiding* as he purposed to do at Corinth).

6. He did “abide and even winter” for the three WINTER months in Greece (Corinth), ⲁⲓⲓⲛ Acts 20:3,6; from which passage it seems that Paul probably left Corinth about a month before the “days of unleavened bread” or the Passover (so as to allow time to touch at Thessalonica and Berea, from which cities two of his companions were; as we read he did at Philippi); so that thus the three months at Corinth would be December, January, and February [BIRKS, *Horae Apostolicae*].

ye — emphatical in the *Greek*.

whithersoever I go — He purposed to go to Judea (ⲁⲓⲓⲛ 2 Corinthians 1:16) from Corinth, but his plans were not positively fixed as yet (see on ⲁⲓⲓⲛ 1 Corinthians 16:4; compare ⲁⲓⲓⲛ Acts 19:21).

7. **I will not see you now by the way** — literally, “I do not wish to see you this time in passing”; that is, to pay you now what would have to be a merely passing visit as I did in the second visit (ⲁⲓⲓⲛ 2 Corinthians 12:14). In contrast to “a while,” that is, *some time*, as the *Greek* might better be translated.

but — The oldest manuscripts read “for.”

8. **at Ephesus** — whence Paul writes this Epistle. Compare ⲁⲓⲓⲛ 1 Corinthians 16:19, “Asia,” wherein Ephesus was.

until Pentecost — He seems to have stayed as he here purposes: for just when the tumult which drove him away broke out, he was already intending to leave Ephesus (^{<442>}Acts 19:21,22). Combined with ^{<442>}1 Corinthians 5:7,8, this verse fixes the date of this Epistle to a few weeks before Pentecost, and very soon after the Passover.

9. door — (^{<442>}2 Corinthians 2:12). An *opening* for the extension of the Gospel. Wise men are on the watch for, and avail themselves of, *opportunities*. So “*door of hope*,” ^{<442>}Hosea 2:15. “*Door of faith*,” ^{<442>}Acts 14:27. “*An open door*,” ^{<442>}Revelation 3:8. “*A door of utterance*,” ^{<442>}Colossians 4:3. “*Great*,” that is, extensive. “*Effectual*,” that is, *requiring great labors* [ESTIUS]; or *opportune for effecting great results* [BEZA].

many adversaries — who would block up the way and prevent us from entering the open door. Not here false teachers, but open adversaries: both Jews and heathen. After Paul, by his now long-continued labors at Ephesus, had produced effects which threatened the interests of those whose gains were derived from idolatry, “*many adversaries*” arose (^{<442>}Acts 19:9-23). Where great good is, there evil is sure to start up as its antagonist.

10. Now — rather, “*But*.” Therefore Timothy was not the *bearer* of the Epistle; for it would not then be said, “*IF Timothy come*.” He must therefore have been *sent* by Paul from Ephesus *before* this Epistle was written, to accord with ^{<442>}1 Corinthians 4:17-19; and yet the passage here implies that Paul did not expect him to arrive at Corinth till *after* the letter was received. He tells them how to treat him “*if*” he should arrive. ^{<442>}Acts 19:21,22 clears up the difficulty: Timothy, when sent from Ephesus, where this Epistle was written, did not proceed direct to Corinth, but *went first to Macedonia*; thus though sent before the letter, he might not reach Corinth till after it was received in that city. The undesigned coincidence between the Epistle and the history, and the clearing up of the meaning of the former (which does not mention the journey to Macedonia at all) by the latter, is a sure mark of genuineness [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*]. It is not certain that Timothy actually reached Corinth; for in ^{<442>}Acts 19:22 only *Macedonia* is mentioned; but it does not follow that though Macedonia was the immediate object of his mission, Corinth was not the ultimate object. The “*IF Timothy come*,” implies uncertainty. ^{<442>}2 Corinthians 1:1

represents him with Paul in *Macedonia*; and ^{<4728>}2 Corinthians 12:18, speaking of *Titus* and others sent to Corinth, does not mention Timothy, which it would have probably done, had one so closely connected with the apostle as Timothy was, stayed as his delegate at Corinth. The mission of Titus then took place, when it became uncertain whether Timothy could go forward from Macedonia to Corinth, Paul being anxious for *immediate* tidings of the state of the Corinthian Church. ALFORD argues that if so, Paul's adversaries would have charged him with fickleness in this case also (^{<4717>}2 Corinthians 1:17), as in the case of his own change of purpose. But Titus was sent *directly* to Corinth, so as to arrive there before Timothy could by the route through Macedonia. Titus' presence would thus make amends for the disappointment as to the intended visit of Timothy and would disarm adversaries of a charge in this respect (^{<4706>}2 Corinthians 7:6,7).

without fear — Referring perhaps to a nervous timidity in Timothy's character (^{<5085>}1 Timothy 3:15 ^{<5022,24>}). His *youth* would add to this feeling, as well as his country, Lystra, likely to be despised in refined Corinth.

11. despise — This charge is not given concerning any other of the many messengers whom Paul sent. ^{<5042>}1 Timothy 4:12 accounts for it (compare ^{<4944>}Psalms 119:141). He was a *young man*, younger probably than those usually employed in the Christian missions; whence Paul apprehending lest he should, on that account, be exposed to contempt, cautions him, "Let no man despise thy youth" [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*].

conduct — set him on his way with every mark of respect, and with whatever he needs (^{<5083>}Titus 3:13).

in peace — (^{<4858>}Acts 15:33 ^{<5131>}Hebrews 11:31). "Peace" is the salutation of kindness and respect in the East; and so it stands for every blessing. Perhaps here there is too a contrast between "peace" and the "contentions" prevalent at Corinth (^{<4911>}1 Corinthians 1:11).

I look for him — He and Titus were appointed to meet Paul in Troas, whither the apostle purposed proceeding from Ephesus (^{<4702>}2 Corinthians 2:12,13). Paul thus claims their respect for Timothy as one whom he felt so necessary to himself as "look for" to him [THEOPHYLACT].

with the brethren — Others besides Erastus accompanied Timothy to Macedonia (compare ⁴⁶⁹²1 Corinthians 16:12 ⁴⁴⁸²Acts 19:22).

12. Apollos, I greatly desired ... to come unto you — He says this lest they should suspect that he from jealousy prevented Apollos' coming to them; perhaps they had expressly requested Apollos to be sent to them. Apollos was not at Ephesus when Paul wrote (compare ⁴⁶⁹⁹1 Corinthians 16:19, and ⁴⁶⁰⁰1 Corinthians 1:1). Probably Apollos' unwillingness to go to Corinth at this time was because, being aware of the undue admiration of his rhetorical style which led astray many at Corinth, he did not wish to sanction it (⁴⁶¹²1 Corinthians 1:12,3:4). Paul's noble freedom from all selfish jealousy led him to urge Apollos to go; and, on the other hand, Apollos, having heard of the abuse of his name at Corinth to party purposes, perseveringly refused to go. Paul, of course, could not state in his letter particularly these reasons in the existing state of division prevalent there. He calls Apollos "brother" to mark the unity that was between the two.

with the brethren — who bear this letter (⁴⁶⁶⁷1 Corinthians 16:17). (See ⁴⁶²⁴1 Corinthians 16:24, subscription added to the Epistle). CONYBEARE thinks Titus was one of the bearers of this first letter (⁴⁶⁰⁶2 Corinthians 8:6,16-24 12:18). ALFORD thinks "the brethren" here may be the same as in ⁴⁶⁶¹1 Corinthians 16:11.

convenient time — Apollos did return to Corinth when their divisions were moderated [JEROME], and so it was a more seasonable time.

13. He shows that they ought to make their hopes of salvation to depend not on Apollos or any other teacher; that it rests with themselves. "Watch ye": for ye are slumbering. "Stand": for ye are like men tottering. "Quit you like men; be strong": for ye are effeminate (⁴⁶⁶⁴1 Corinthians 16:14). "Let all your things be done with charity" (⁴⁶⁰¹1 Corinthians 8:1 13:1): not with strifes as at present [CHRYSOSTOM]. "In the faith" which was assailed by some (⁴⁶⁵¹1 Corinthians 15:1,2,12-17).

15. first-fruits of Achaia — the first Achaean converts (compare ⁴⁶⁰⁵Romans 16:5). The image is from the *first-fruits* offered to the Lord (⁴⁶²⁰Leviticus 23:10; compare ⁴⁶⁵⁰1 Corinthians 15:20). The members of this family had been baptized by Paul himself (⁴⁶¹⁶1 Corinthians 1:16).

addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints — Translate, “Set themselves, (that is, voluntarily) to minister unto the saints” (compare ~~<400>~~2 Corinthians 8:4).

16. That ye — Translate, “That ye also,” namely, in your turn ... in return for their self-devotion [ALFORD].

helpeth with — them.

laboureth — by himself.

17. Fortunatus ... Achaicus — probably of Stephanas’ household.

that ... lacking on your part — So far as you were unable *yourselves* to “refresh my spirit,” in that you are absent from me, “they have supplied” by coming to me from you, and so supplying the means of intercourse between you and me. They seem to have carried this letter back; see the subscription below: hence the exhortations, ~~<400>~~1 Corinthians 16:16,18, as though they would be at Corinth when the Epistle arrived.

18. refreshed my spirit and yours — “yours” will be refreshed on receiving this letter, by knowing that “my spirit is refreshed” by their having come to me from you; and (perhaps) by the good report they gave of many of you (~~<400>~~1 Corinthians 1:4-8); *my refreshment of spirit* redounds to *yours*, as being my disciples (~~<400>~~2 Corinthians 7:13; compare ~~<400>~~Zechariah 6:8).

acknowledge — render them due acknowledgments by a kind reception of them: ~~<400>~~1 Thessalonians 5:12, “know” them in their true worth and treat them accordingly.

19. Asia — not all Asia Minor, but *Lydian Asia* only, of which Ephesus was the capital.

much — with especial affection.

Aquila ... Priscilla — (Compare ~~<400>~~Acts 18:2 ~~<400>~~Romans 16:3,4). Originally driven out of Italy by Claudius, they had come to Corinth (whence their salutation of the Corinthians is appropriate here), and then had removed with Paul from Corinth to Ephesus (~~<400>~~Acts 18:2,18,19,26); here, as at Rome subsequently, they set up a Church (or assembly of

believers) at their house (^{<616>}Romans 16:3,5). A pattern to Christian husbands and wives. Their Christian self-devoting love appears wherever they were (^{<616>}Romans 16:3,4). Even the gifted Apollos, so highly admired at Corinth, owed much of his knowledge to them (^{<416>}Acts 18:24-26). In ^{<616>}1 Corinthians 16:20, “All the brethren” (that is, the whole Church) seem to be distinguished from “the church that is in their house,” which was but a partial and private assembly out of the general Church at Corinth. NEANDER thinks ^{<616>}Romans 16:23 refers to “*the whole Church*” *meeting at the house of Gaius* (compare ^{<5015>}Colossians 4:15). “Synagogue” implies an assembly in general, without reference to the character or motives of its members. “Church,” like the *Hebrew Kahal*, implies an assembly *legally* convened; as, for instance, the Jews met as a body politic to receive the law (hence Stephen calls it “the *Church* in the wilderness,” ^{<416>}Acts 7:38), and having a legal bond of union. Christ’s followers when dispersed from one another cease to be a *congregation* (synagogue), but still are a *Church*, having the common bond of union to the same Head by the same faith and hope [VITRINGA, *Synagogue and Temple*]. From this we may explain Paul’s entering “*into every house* and haling men and women”: he would in searching for Christians go to their several “houses” of prayer.

in the Lord — They pray for all blessings on you from *the Lord*, the source of every good [GROTIUS]. ALFORD explains, “in a Christian manner,” as mindful of your common Lord. “In the Lord” seems to me to refer to *their union together in Christ*, their prayers for one another’s good being in virtue of that union.

20. holy kiss — the token of the mutual love of Christians, especially at the Lord’s Supper (compare ^{<616>}Romans 16:16 ^{<516>}1 Thessalonians 5:26), “in which all the dissensions of the Corinthians would be swallowed up” [BENGEL].

21. salutation ... with mine own hand — He therefore dictated all the rest of the Epistle.

22. A solemn closing warning added *in his own hand* as in ^{<416>}Ephesians 6:24 ^{<5015>}Colossians 4:18.

the Lord — who ought to be “loved” above Paul, Apollos, and all other teachers. Love to one another is to be in connection with love to Him

above all. IGNATIUS [*Epistle to the Romans*, 7] writes of Christ, “My love, has been crucified” (compare So 2:7).

Jesus Christ — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

let him be Anathema — *accursed* with that curse which the Jews who call Jesus “accursed” (אב 1 Corinthians 12:3) are bringing righteously on their own heads [BENGEL]. So far from “saluting” him, I bid him be *accursed*.

Maranatha — Syriac for, “the Lord cometh.” A motto or watchword to urge them to preparedness for the Lord’s coming; as in אבפ Philippians 4:5, “The Lord is at hand.”

23. The grace, etc. — This is the salutation meant in אב 1 Corinthians 16:21; and from which unbelievers (אב 1 Corinthians 16:22; compare א 2 John 1:10:11) are excluded [BENGEL].

24. My love, etc. — After having administered some severe rebukes, he closes with expressions of “love”: his very rebukes were prompted by *love*, and therefore are altogether in harmony with the profession of love here made: it was *love in Christ Jesus*, and therefore embraced “*all*” who loved Him.

The subscription represents the Epistle as written from *Philippi*. אב 1 Corinthians 16:8 shows it was written *at Ephesus*. BENGEL conjectures that perhaps, however, it was *sent* from Philippi (אב 1 Corinthians 16:5), because the deputies of the Corinthians had accompanied Paul thither. From Ephesus there was a road to Corinth above Philippi.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE CORINTHIANS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

THE following reasons seem to have induced Paul to write this Second Epistle to the Corinthians:

- (1) That he might explain the reasons for his having deferred to pay them his promised visit, by taking Corinth as his way to Macedonia (~~1~~1 Corinthians 4:19 ~~2~~2 Corinthians 1:15,16; compare ~~1~~1 Corinthians 16:5); and so that he might set forth to them his apostolic walk in general (~~2~~2 Corinthians 1:12,24 6:3-13 7:2).
- (2) That he might commend their obedience in reference to the directions in his First Epistle, and at the same time direct them now to forgive the offender, as having been punished sufficiently (~~2~~2 Corinthians 2:1-11 7:6-16).
- (3) That he might urge them to collect for the poor saints at Jerusalem (~~2~~2 Corinthians 8:1-9,15).
- (4) That he might maintain his apostolic authority and reprove gainsayers.

The external testimonies for *its genuineness* are IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 3,7,1]; ATHENAGORAS [*Of the Resurrection of the Dead*]; CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 3, p. 94; 4, p. 101]; TERTULLIAN [*On Modesty*, 13].

The TIME OF WRITING was after Pentecost, A.D. 57, when Paul left Ephesus for Troas. Having stayed in the latter place for some time preaching the Gospel with effect (~~2~~2 Corinthians 2:12), he went on to

Macedonia, being eager to meet Titus there, having been disappointed in his not coming to Troas, as had been agreed on between them. Having heard from him the tidings he so much desired of the good effect produced on the Corinthians by his First Epistle, and after having tested the liberality of the Macedonian churches (~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 8:1), he wrote this Second Epistle, and then went on to Greece, where he abode for three months; and then, after travelling by land, reached Philippi on his return at Passover or Easter, A.D. 58 (~~401~~ Acts 20:1-6). So that this Epistle must have been written about autumn, A.D. 57.

Macedonia was THE PLACE from which it was written (~~400~~ 2 Corinthians 9:2, where the present tense, "I boast," or "am boasting," implies his presence *then* in Macedonia). In Asia (Lydian Asia) he had undergone some great peril of his life (~~400~~ 2 Corinthians 1:8,9), whether the reference be [PALEY] to the tumult at Ephesus (~~402~~ Acts 19:23-41), or, as ALFORD thinks, to a dangerous illness in which he despaired of life. Thence he passed by Troas to Philippi, the first city which would meet him in entering Macedonia. The importance of the Philippian Church would induce him to stay there some time; as also his desire to collect contributions from the Macedonian churches for the poor saints at Jerusalem. His anxiety of mind is recorded (~~402~~ 2 Corinthians 7:5) as occurring *when he came into Macedonia*, and therefore must have been at *Philippi*, which was the first city of Macedonia in coming from Troas; and here, too, from ~~400~~ 2 Corinthians 7:6, compared with ~~400~~ 2 Corinthians 7:5, must have been the scene of his receiving the comforting tidings from Titus. "Macedonia" is used for *Philippi* in ~~400~~ 2 Corinthians 11:9, as is proved by comparison with ~~401~~ Philippians 4:15,16. So it is probably used here (~~400~~ 2 Corinthians 7:5). ALFORD argues from ~~400~~ 2 Corinthians 8:1, where he speaks of the "grace bestowed on the *churches* (plural) of Macedonia," that Paul must have visited *other* churches in Macedonia, besides Philippi, when he wrote, for example, Thessalonica, Berea, etc., and that Philippi, the *first* on his route, is less likely to have been the scene of his writing than the *last* on his route, whichever it was, perhaps Thessalonica. But Philippi, as being the chief town of the province, was probably the place to which all the collections of the churches were sent. Ancient tradition, too (as appears from the subscription to this Epistle), favors the view that Philippi was the place from which this Epistle was

sent by the hands of Titus who received, besides, a charge to prosecute at Corinth the collection which he had begun at his first visit (~~400~~2 Corinthians 8:6).

The STYLE is most varied, and passes rapidly from one phase of feeling to another; now joyous and consolatory, again severe and full of reproof; at one time gentle and affectionate, at another, sternly rebuking opponents and upholding his dignity as an apostle. This variety of style accords with the warm and earnest character of the apostle, which nowhere is manifested more beautifully than in this Epistle. His bodily frailty, and the chronic malady under which he suffered, and which is often alluded to (~~400~~2 Corinthians 4:7 5:1-4 12:7-9; compare *Note*, see on ~~400~~2 Corinthians 1:8), must have been especially trying to one of his ardent temperament. But besides this, was the more pressing anxiety of the “care of all the churches.” At Corinth, as elsewhere, Judaizing emissaries wished to bind legal fetters of letter and form (compare ~~400~~2 Corinthians 3:3-18) on the freedom and catholicity of the Church. On the other hand, there were free thinkers who defended their immorality of practice by infidel theories (~~400~~1 Corinthians 15:12,32-36). These were the “fightings without,” and “fears within” (~~400~~2 Corinthians 7:5,6) which agitated the apostle’s mind until Titus brought him comforting tidings from Corinth. Even then, while the majority at Corinth had testified their repentance, and, as Paul had desired, excommunicated the incestuous person, and contributed for the poor Christians of Judea, there was still a minority who, more contemptuously than ever, resisted the apostle. These accused him of crafty and mercenary motives, as if he had personal gain in view in the collection being made; and this, notwithstanding his scrupulous care to be above the possibility of reasonable suspicion, by having others besides himself to take charge of the money. This insinuation was palpably inconsistent with their other charge, that he could be no true apostle, as he did not claim maintenance from the churches which he founded. Another accusation they brought of cowardly weakness; that he was always threatening severe measures without daring to execute them (~~400~~2 Corinthians 10:8-16 13:2); and that he was vacillating in his teaching and practice, circumcising Timothy, and yet withholding circumcision from Titus; a Jew among the Jews, and a Greek among the Greeks. That most of these opponents were of the Judaizing party in the Church, appears from ~~400~~2 Corinthians 11:22. They seem to

have been headed by an emissary from Judea (“he that cometh,” ⁴⁷⁰⁴2 Corinthians 11:4), who had brought “letters of commendation” (⁴⁷⁰²2 Corinthians 3:1) from members of the Church at Jerusalem, and who boasted of his purity of Hebrew descent, and his close connection with Christ Himself (⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 11:13,23). His partisans contrasted his high pretensions with the timid humility of Paul (⁴⁷¹³1 Corinthians 2:3); and his rhetoric with the apostle’s plain and unadorned style (⁴⁷¹⁰2 Corinthians 11:6,10:10,13). It was this state of things at Corinth, reported by Titus, that caused Paul to send him back forthwith thither with this Second Epistle, which is addressed, not to Corinth only (⁴⁷¹³1 Corinthians 1:2), but to all the churches also in Achaia (⁴⁷⁰²2 Corinthians 1:1), which had in some degree been affected by the same causes as affected the Corinthian Church. The widely different tone in different parts of the Epistle is due to the diversity which existed at Corinth between the penitent majority and the refractory minority. The former he addresses with the warmest affection; the latter with menace and warning. Two deputies, chosen by the churches to take charge of the contribution to be collected at Corinth, accompanied Titus (⁴⁷⁰⁸2 Corinthians 8:18,19,22).

CHAPTER 1

2 CORINTHIANS 1:1-24.

THE HEADING; PAUL'S CONSOLATIONS IN RECENT TRIALS IN ASIA; HIS SINCERITY TOWARDS THE CORINTHIANS; EXPLANATION OF HIS NOT HAVING VISITED THEM AS HE HAD PURPOSED.

1. Timothy our brother — When writing *to* Timothy himself, he calls him “my son” (⁵⁰¹⁸1 Timothy 1:18). Writing *of* him, “brother,” and “my beloved son” (⁴⁰⁴⁷1 Corinthians 4:17). He had been sent before to Macedonia, and had met Paul at Philippi, when the apostle passed over from Troas to Macedonia (compare ⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 2:12,13; see on ⁴⁶⁰1 Corinthians 16:10,11).

in all Achaia — comprising Hellas and the Peloponnese. The Gentiles themselves, and Annaeus Gallio, the proconsul (⁴⁴⁸²Acts 18:12-16), strongly testified their disapproval of the accusation brought by the Jews against Paul. Hence, the apostle was enabled to labor in the whole province of Achaia with such success as to establish several churches there (⁵⁰⁰⁸1 Thessalonians 1:8 ⁵⁰⁰⁹2 Thessalonians 1:4), where, writing from Corinth, he speaks of the “churches,” namely, not only the Corinthian, but others also — Athens, Cenchrea, and, perhaps, Sicyon, Argos, etc. He addresses “the Church in Corinth,” *directly*, and all “the saints” in the province, *indirectly*. In ⁸⁰⁰²Galatians 1:2 all the “churches” are addressed *directly* in the same circular Epistle. Hence, here he does not say, *all the churches*, but “all the saints.”

3. This thanksgiving for his late deliverance forms a suitable introduction for conciliating their favorable reception of his reasons for not having fulfilled his promise of visiting them (⁴⁰¹⁵2 Corinthians 1:15-24).

Father of mercies — that is, the SOURCE of all mercies (compare ⁵⁰¹⁷James 1:17 ⁴⁰¹¹Romans 12:1).

comfort — which flows from His “mercies” experienced. Like a true man of faith, he mentions “mercies” and “comfort,” before he proceeds to speak of *afflictions* (^{<4004>}2 Corinthians 1:4-6). The “tribulation” of believers is not inconsistent with God’s mercy, and does not beget in them suspicion of it; nay, in the end they feel that He is “the God of ALL comfort,” that is, who imparts *the only true and perfect comfort in every instance* (^{<4004>}Psalm 146:3,5,8 ^{<4004>}James 5:11).

4. us — idiomatic for *me* (^{<4004>}1 Thessalonians 2:18).

that we may ... comfort them which are in any trouble — Translate, as the *Greek* is the same as before, “tribulation.” The apostle lived, not to himself, but to the Church; so, whatever graces God conferred on him, he considered granted not for himself alone, but that he might have the greater ability to help others [CALVIN]. So participation in all the afflictions of man peculiarly qualified Jesus to be man’s comforter in all his various afflictions (^{<4004>}Isaiah 50:4-6 ^{<4004>}Hebrews 4:15).

5. sufferings — standing in contrast with “salvation” (^{<4004>}2 Corinthians 1:6); as “tribulation” (distress of mind), with *comfort* or “consolation.”

of Christ — Compare ^{<4004>}Colossians 1:24. The *sufferings* endured, whether by Himself, or by His Church, with which He considers Himself identified (^{<4004>}Matthew 25:40,45 ^{<4004>}Acts 9:4 ^{<4004>}1 John 4:17-21). Christ calls His people’s sufferings His own suffering:

(1) because of the sympathy and mystical union between Him and us (^{<4004>}Romans 8:17 ^{<4004>}1 Corinthians 4:10);

(2) They are borne for His sake;

(3) They tend to His glory (^{<4004>}Ephesians 4:1 ^{<4004>}1 Peter 4:14,16).

abound in us — *Greek*, “abound unto us.” The order of the *Greek* following words is more forcible than in *English Version*, “Even so through Christ aboundeth also our comfort.” The *sufferings* (plural) are many; but the *consolation* (though singular) swallows up them all. Comfort preponderates in this Epistle above that in the first Epistle, as now by the effect of the latter most of the Corinthians had been much impressed.

6. we ... afflicted ... for your consolation — exemplifying the communion of saints. Their hearts were, so to speak, mirrors reflecting the likenesses of each other (^{<372>}Philippians 2:26,27) [BENGEL]. Alike the afflictions and the consolations of the apostle tend, as in him so in them, as having communion with him, to their consolation (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:4 4:15). The *Greek* for “afflicted” is the same as before, and ought to be translated, “Whether we *be in tribulation*.”

which is effectual — literally, “worketh effectually.”

in the enduring, etc. — that is, in enabling you to endure “the same sufferings which we also suffer.” Here follows, in the oldest manuscripts (not as *English Version* in the beginning of ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:7), the clause, “And our hope is steadfast on your behalf.”

7. so shall ye be — rather, “So *are* ye.” He means, there *is* a community of consolation, as of suffering, between me and you.

8, 9. Referring to the imminent risk of life which he ran in Ephesus (^{<402>}Acts 19:23-41) when the whole multitude were wrought up to fury by Demetrius, on the plea of Paul and his associates having assailed the religion of Diana of Ephesus. The words (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:9), “we had the sentence of death in ourselves,” mean, that *he looked upon himself as a man condemned to die* [PALEY]. ALFORD thinks the danger at Ephesus was comparatively so slight that it cannot be supposed to be the subject of reference here, without exposing the apostle to a charge of cowardice, very unlike his fearless character; hence, he supposes Paul refers to some deadly *sickness* which he had suffered under (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:9,10). But there is little doubt that, had Paul been found by the mob in the excitement, he would have been torn in pieces; and probably, besides what Luke in Acts records, there were other dangers of an equally distressing kind, such as, “lyings in wait of the Jews” (^{<400>}Acts 20:19), his ceaseless foes. They, doubtless, had incited the multitude at Ephesus (^{<400>}Acts 19:9), and were the chief of the “many adversaries” and “[wild] beasts,” which he had to fight with there (^{<402>}1 Corinthians 15:32 16:9). His weak state of health at the time combined with all this to make him regard himself as all but dead (^{<412>}2 Corinthians 11:29 12:10). What makes my supposition probable is, that the very cause of his not having visited Corinth directly as he had intended, and for which he proceeds to apologize (^{<405>}2 Corinthians 1:15-

23), was, that there might be time to see whether the evils arising there not only from Greek, but from *Jewish* disturbers of the Church (⁴⁷¹²2 Corinthians 11:29), would be checked by his first Epistle; there not being fully so was what entailed on him the need of writing this second Epistle. His not specifying this here *expressly* is just what we might expect in the outset of this letter; towards the close, when he had won their favorable hearing by a kindly and firm tone, he gives a more distinct reference to Jewish agitators (⁴⁷¹²2 Corinthians 11:22).

above strength — that is, ordinary, natural powers of endurance.

despaired — as far as human help or hope from man was concerned. But in respect to help from God we were “not in despair” (⁴⁰⁰⁸2 Corinthians 4:8).

9. But — “Yea.”

in God which raiseth the dead — We had so given up all thoughts of life, that our only hope was fixed on the coming resurrection; so in ⁴⁶⁵²1 Corinthians 15:32 his hope of the resurrection was what buoyed him up in contending with foes, savage as wild beasts. Here he touches only on the doctrine of the resurrection, taking it for granted that its truth is admitted by the Corinthians, and urging its bearing on their practice.

10. doth deliver — The oldest manuscripts read, “will deliver,” namely, as regards *immediately imminent* dangers. “In whom we trust that He will also (so the *Greek*) yet deliver us,” refers to the *continuance* of God’s delivering help *hereafter*.

11. helping together by prayer for us — rather, “helping together on our behalf by your *supplication*”; the words “for us” in the *Greek* following “helping together,” not “prayer.”

that for the gift, etc. — literally, “That on the part of many persons the gift (literally, ‘gift of grace’; the mercy) bestowed *upon us* by means of (that is, through the prayers of) many may be offered thanks for (may have thanks offered for it) on our behalf.”

12. For — reason why he may confidently look for their prayers for him.

our rejoicing — *Greek*, “our glorying.” Not that he glories in the testimony of his conscience, as something *to boast of*; nay, this testimony is itself the thing *in which* his glorying consists.

in simplicity — Most of the oldest manuscripts read, “in holiness.” *English Version* reading is perhaps a gloss from ^{<400>}Ephesians 6:5 [ALFORD]. Some of the oldest manuscripts and versions, however, support it.

godly sincerity — literally, “sincerity of God”; that is, sincerity as in the presence of God (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 5:8). We *glory* in this in spite of all our adversities. *Sincerity* in *Greek* implies the non-admixture of any foreign element. He had no sinister or selfish aims (as some insinuated) in failing to visit them as he had promised: such aims belonged to his adversaries, not to him (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 2:17). “Fleshly wisdom” suggests tortuous and insincere courses; but the “grace of God,” which influenced him by God’s gifts (^{<400>}Romans 12:3 15:15), suggests holy straightforwardness and sincere faithfulness to promises (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:17-20), even as God is faithful to His promises. The prudence which subserves selfish interests, or employs unchristian means, or relies on human means more than on the Divine Spirit, is “fleshly wisdom.”

in the world — even in relation to the world at large, which is full of disingenuousness.

more abundantly to you-ward — (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 2:4). His greater love to them would lead him to manifest, especially to them, proofs of his sincerity, which his less close connection with *the world* did not admit of his exhibiting towards it.

13. We write none other things (in this Epistle) than what ye read (in my former Epistle [BENGEL]; *present*, because the Epistle *continued still* to be read in the Church as an apostolic rule). CONYBEARE and HOWSON think Paul had been suspected of writing privately to some individuals in the Church in a different strain from that of his public letters; and translates, “I write nothing else to you but what ye read *openly* (the *Greek* meaning, ‘ye *read aloud*,’ namely, when Paul’s Epistles were publicly read in the congregation, ^{<400>}1 Thessalonians 5:27); yea, and what you acknowledge *inwardly*.”

or acknowledge — *Greek*, “or even acknowledge.” The *Greek* for “read” and for “acknowledge” are words kindred in sound and root. I would translate, “None other things than what ye know by reading (by comparing my former Epistle with my present Epistle), or even know as a matter of fact (namely, the consistency of my acts with my words).”

even to the end — of my life. Not excluding reference to *the day of the Lord* (end of ⁴⁰¹⁴2 Corinthians 1:14 ⁴⁰⁰⁵1 Corinthians 4:5).

14. in part — In contrast to “even to the end”: the testimony *of his life* was not yet completed [THEOPHYLACT and BENDEL]. Rather, “in part,” that is, some of you, not all [GROTIUS, ALFORD]. So in ⁴⁰⁰⁵2 Corinthians 2:5 ⁴⁰¹⁵Romans 11:25. The majority at Corinth had shown a willing compliance with Paul’s directions in the first Epistle: but some were still refractory. Hence arises the difference of tone in different parts of this Epistle. See *Introduction*.

your rejoicing — your subject of *glorying* or *boast*. “Are” (not merely *shall be*) implies the present recognition of one another as a subject of mutual *glorying*: that *glorying* being about to be realized in its fullness “in the day (of the coming) of the Lord Jesus.”

15. in this confidence — of my character for sincerity being “acknowledged” by you (⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 1:12-14).

was minded — I was intending.

before — “to come unto you before” visiting Macedonia (where he now was). Compare *Note*, see on ⁴⁰⁰⁵1 Corinthians 16:5; also see on ⁴⁰¹⁵1 Corinthians 4:18, which, combined with the words here, implies that the insinuation of some at Corinth, that he would not come at all, rested on the fact of his having thus *disappointed* them. His change of intention, and ultimate resolution of going through Macedonia first, took place before his sending Timothy from Ephesus into Macedonia, and therefore (⁴⁰¹⁷1 Corinthians 4:17) before his writing the first Epistle. Compare ⁴⁰²¹Acts 19:21,22 (the order there is “Macedonia and Achaia,” not *Achaia*, *Macedonia*); ⁴⁰¹¹Acts 20:1,2.

that ye might have a second benefit — one in going to, the other in returning from, Macedonia. The “benefit” of his visits consisted in the

grace and spiritual gifts which he was the means of imparting (ⲁⲓⲓⲓ Romans 1:11,12).

16. This intention of visiting them *on the way* to Macedonia, as well as after having passed through it, must have reached the ears of the Corinthians in some way or other — perhaps in the lost Epistle (ⲁⲓⲓⲓ 1 Corinthians 4:18 5:9). The sense comes out more clearly in the *Greek* order, “By you to pass into Macedonia, and from Macedonia to come again unto you.”

17. use lightness — Was I guilty of levity? namely, by promising more than I performed.

or ... according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea ... nay, nay? — The “or” expresses a different alternative: Did I act with levity, or (on the other hand) do I purpose what I purpose like worldly (fleshly) men, so that my “yea” must at all costs be yea, and my “nay” nay [BENGEL, WINER, CALVIN], (ⲁⲓⲓⲓ Matthew 14:7,9)? The repetition of the “yea” and “nay” hardly agrees with ALFORD’S view, “What I purpose do I purpose according to the changeable purposes of the fleshly (worldly) man, that there may be with me the yea yea, and the nay nay (that is, both affirmation and negation concerning the same thing)?” The repetition will thus stand for the single yea and nay, as in ⲁⲓⲓⲓ Matthew 5:37 ⲁⲓⲓⲓ James 5:12. But the latter passage implies that the double “yea” here is not equivalent to the single “yea”: BENGEL’S view, therefore, seems preferable.

18. He adds this lest they might think his DOCTRINE was changeable like his *purposes* (the change in which he admitted in ⲁⲓⲓⲓ 2 Corinthians 1:17, while denying that it was due to “lightness,” and at the same time implying that *not* to have changed, where there was good reason, would have been to imitate the *fleshly-minded* who at all costs obstinately hold to their purpose).

true — *Greek*, “faithful” (ⲁⲓⲓⲓ 1 Corinthians 1:9).

our word — the *doctrine* we preach.

was not — The oldest manuscripts read “*is not*.”

yea and nay — that is, inconsistent with itself.

19. Proof of the unchangeableness of the doctrine from the unchangeableness of the subject of it, namely, Jesus Christ. He is called “the Son of God” to show the impossibility of change in One who is co-equal with God himself (compare ⁴⁴⁵²⁹1 Samuel 15:29 ⁴³⁰⁰⁶Malachi 3:6).

by me ... Silvanus and Timotheus — The Son of God, though preached by different preachers, was one and the same, unchangeable. *Silvanus* is contracted into *Silas* (⁴⁴⁵²²Acts 15:22; compare ⁴⁰¹⁵²1 Peter 5:12).

in him was yea — *Greek*, “*is made yea in Him*”; that is, our preaching of the Son of God is confirmed as true in Him (that is, *through Him*; through the miracles wherewith He has confirmed our preaching) [GROTIUS]; or rather, by the witness of the Spirit which He has given (⁴⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 1:21,22) and of which miracles were only one, and that a subordinate manifestation.

20. Rather, How many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the “yea” (“*faithfulness in His word*”: contrasted with the “yea and nay,” ⁴⁰¹¹⁹2 Corinthians 1:19, that is, *inconstancy as to one’s word*).

and in him Amen — The oldest manuscripts read, “*Wherefore through Him is the Amen*”; that is, In Him is *faithfulness* (“yea”) to His word, “wherefore through Him” is the immutable verification of it (“Amen”). As “yea” is His *word*, so “Amen” is His *oath*, which makes our assurance of the fulfillment doubly sure. Compare “two immutable things (namely, His word and His oath) in which it was impossible for God to lie” (⁴⁰¹¹⁸Hebrews 6:18 ⁴⁰¹¹⁴Revelation 3:14). The whole range of Old Testament and New Testament promises are secure in their fulfillment for us in Christ.

unto the glory of God by us — *Greek*, “for glory unto God by us” (compare ⁴⁰¹¹⁵2 Corinthians 4:15), that is, by our ministerial labors; by us His promises, and His unchangeable faithfulness to them, are proclaimed. CONYBEARE takes the “Amen” to be the Amen at the close of thanksgiving; but then “by us” would have to mean what it cannot mean here, “by us *and you*.”

21. stablisheth us ... in Christ — that is, in the faith of Christ — in believing in Christ.

anointed us — As “Christ” is the “Anointed” (which His name means), so “He hath *anointed* (*Greek*, “*chrisas*”) us,” ministers and believing people alike, with the Spirit (⁴⁰²2 Corinthians 1:22 ⁴²¹1 John 2:20,27). Hence we become “a sweet savor of Christ” (⁴⁰⁵2 Corinthians 2:15).

22. sealed — A *seal* is a token assuring the possession of property to one; “sealed” here answers to “stablisheth us” (⁴⁰²2 Corinthians 1:21 ⁴⁰⁹1 Corinthians 9:2).

the earnest of the Spirit — that is, the Spirit as the earnest (that is, money given by a purchaser as a pledge for the full payment of the sum promised). The Holy Spirit is given to the believer now as a first instalment to assure him his full inheritance as a son of God shall be his hereafter (⁴⁰⁵Ephesians 1:13,14). “*Sealed* with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the *earnest* of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession” (⁴⁰²Romans 8:23). The Spirit is the pledge of the fulfillment of “all the promises” (⁴⁰²2 Corinthians 1:20).

23. Moreover I — *Greek*, “But *I* (for my part),” in contrast to GOD who hath assured us of *His* promises being hereafter fulfilled certainly (⁴⁰²2 Corinthians 1:20-22).

call God — the all-knowing One, who avenges wilful unfaithfulness to promises.

for a record upon my soul — As a witness *as to* the secret purposes of my soul, and a witness *against* it, if I lie (⁴⁰⁵Malachi 3:5).

to spare you — in order not to come in a rebuking spirit, as I should have had to come to you, if I had come *then*.

I came not as yet — *Greek*, “no longer”; that is, I *gave up my purpose of then* visiting Corinth. He wished to give them time for repentance, that he might not have to use severity towards them. Hence he sent Titus before him. Compare ⁴⁰⁰2 Corinthians 10:10,11, which shows that his detractors represented him as threatening what he had not courage to perform (⁴⁰⁵1 Corinthians 4:18,19).

24. Not for that — that is, Not that. “*Faith*” is here emphatic. He had “dominion” or a right to control them in matters of *discipline*, but in

matters of “*faith*” he was only a “*fellow helper* of their joy” (namely, in believing, ^{<659>}Romans 15:13 ^{<602>}Philippians 1:25). The *Greek* is, “Not that we *lord* it over your faith.” This he adds to soften the magisterial tone of ^{<602>}2 Corinthians 1:23. His desire is to cause them not *sorrow* (^{<602>}2 Corinthians 2:1,2), but “*joy*.” The *Greek* for “helpers” implies a mutual leaning, one on the other, like the mutually supporting buttresses of a sacred building. “By faith (^{<612>}Romans 11:20) ye stand”; therefore it is that I bestow such pains in “helping” your faith, which is the source of all true “joy” (^{<659>}Romans 15:13). I want nothing more, not to *lord it over your faith*.

CHAPTER 2

2 CORINTHIANS 2:1-17.

REASON WHY HE HAD NOT VISITED THEM ON HIS WAY TO MACEDONIA; THE INCESTUOUS PERSON OUGHT NOW TO BE FORGIVEN; HIS ANXIETY TO HEAR TIDINGS OF THEIR STATE FROM TITUS, AND HIS JOY WHEN AT LAST THE GOOD NEWS REACHES HIM.

1. with myself — in contrast to “you” (2 Corinthians 1:23). The same antithesis between Paul and them appears in 2 Corinthians 2:2.

not come again ... in heaviness — “sorrow”; implying that he had *already* paid them *one* visit *in sorrow* since his coming for the first time to Corinth. At that visit he had warned them “he would not spare if he should come again” (see on 2 Corinthians 13:2; compare 2 Corinthians 12:14 13:1). See *Introduction* to the first Epistle. The “in heaviness” implies *mutual* pain; they grieving him, and he them. Compare 2 Corinthians 2:2, “I make you sorry,” and 2 Corinthians 2:5, “If any have caused grief (sorrow).” In this verse he accounts for having postponed his visit, following up 2 Corinthians 1:23.

2. For — proof that he shrinks from causing them *sorrow* (“heaviness”).

if I — The “I” is emphatic. Some detractor may say that *this* (2 Corinthians 2:1) is not my reason for not coming as I proposed; since I showed no scruple in causing “heaviness,” or *sorrow*, in my Epistle (the first Epistle to the Corinthians). But I answer, If *I* be the one to cause you sorrow, it is not that I have any pleasure in doing so. Nay, my object was that he “who was made sorry by me” (namely, *the Corinthians in general*, 2 Corinthians 2:3; but with tacit reference to *the incestuous person in particular*) should repent, and so “make me glad,” as has actually taken place; “for ... who is he then that?” etc.

3. I wrote this same unto you — namely, that I would not come to you *then* (^{ALF}2 Corinthians 2:1), as, if I were to come then, it would have to be “in heaviness” (causing *sorrow* both to him and them, owing to their impenitent state). He refers to the first Epistle (compare ^{ALF}1 Corinthians 16:7; compare ^{ALF}1 Corinthians 4:19,21 5:2-7,13).

sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice — that is, *sorrow* from their impenitence, when he ought, on the contrary, to have *joy* from their penitent obedience. The latter happy effect was produced by his first Epistle, whereas the former would have been the result, had he *then* visited them as he had originally proposed.

having confidence ... that my joy is the joy of you all — trusting that you, too, would feel that there was sufficient reason for the postponement, if it interfered with our mutual joy [ALFORD]. The communion of saints, he feels confident in them “ALL” (his charity overlooking, for the moment the small section of his detractors at Corinth, ^{ALF}1 Corinthians 13:7), will make *his* joy (^{ALF}2 Corinthians 2:2) *their* joy.

4. So far from my change of purpose being due to “lightness” (^{ALF}2 Corinthians 1:17), I wrote my letter to you (^{ALF}2 Corinthians 2:3) “out of much affliction (*Greek*, ‘trouble’) and anguish of heart, and with many tears.”

not that ye should be grieved — Translate, “be made sorry,” to accord with the translation, ^{ALF}2 Corinthians 2:2. My ultimate and main object was, “not that ye might be made sorry,” but that through sorrow you might be led to repentance, and so to joy, redounding both to you and me (^{ALF}2 Corinthians 2:2,3). I made you sorry before going to you, that when I went it might not be necessary. He is easily made sorry, who is admonished by a friend himself weeping [BENGEL].

that ye might know the love — of which it is a proof to rebuke sins openly and in season [ESTIUS], (^{ALF}Psalm 141:5 ^{ALF}Proverbs 27:6). “Love” is the source from which sincere reproof springs; that the Corinthians might ultimately recognize this as his motive, was the apostle’s aim.

which I have more abundantly unto you — who have been particularly committed to me by God (^{ALF}Acts 18:10 ^{ALF}1 Corinthians 4:15 9:2).

5. grief ... grieved — Translate as before, “sorrow ... made sorry.” The “any” is a delicate way of referring to the incestuous person.

not ... me, but in part — He has grieved me only in part (compare ⁴⁰¹⁴2 Corinthians 1:14 ⁴¹²⁵Romans 11:25), that is, *I am not the sole party aggrieved*; most of *you*, also, were aggrieved.

that I may not overcharge — that I may not unduly lay the weight of the charge on you all, which I should do, if I made myself to be the sole party aggrieved. ALFORD punctuates, “He hath not made sorry me, but in part (that I press not too heavily; namely, on him) you all.” Thus “you all” is in contrast to “me”; and “*in part*” is explained in the parenthetical clause.

6. Sufficient — without increasing it, which would only drive him to despair (⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 2:7), whereas the object of the punishment was, “that (his) spirit might be saved” in the last day.

to such a man — a milder designation of the offender than if he had been *named* [MEYER]. Rather, it expresses estrangement from *such a one* who had caused such grief to the Church, and scandal to religion (⁴⁰²²Acts 22:22 ⁴⁰¹⁵1 Corinthians 5:5).

this punishment — His being “delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh”; not only excommunication, but bodily disease (see on ⁴⁰¹¹1 Corinthians 5:4,5).

inflicted of many — rather, “by the majority” (the more part of you). Not by an individual priest, as in the Church of Rome, nor by the bishops and clergy alone, but by the whole body of the Church.

7. with overmuch sorrow — *Greek*, “with HIS overmuch sorrow.”

8. confirm your love toward him — by giving effect in act, and showing in deeds your love; namely, by restoring him to your fellowship and praying for his recovering from the sickness penally inflicted on him.

9. For — Additional reason why they should restore the offender, namely, as a “proof” of their obedience “in all things”; now in *love*, as previously in *punishing* (⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 2:6), at the apostle’s desire. Besides his other reasons for deferring his visit, he had the further view, though, perhaps, unperceived by them, of making an experiment of their fidelity.

This accounts for his deferring to give, in his Epistle, the *reason* for his change of plan (resolved on before writing it). This full discovery of his motive comes naturally from him now, in the second Epistle, after he had seen the success of his measures, but would not have been a seasonable communication before. All this accords with reality, and is as remote as possible from imposture [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*]. The interchange of feeling is marked (~~4100~~ 2 Corinthians 2:4), “I wrote ... that ye might know the love,” etc.: here, “I did write, that *I* might know the proof of *you*.”

10. Another encouragement to their taking on themselves the responsibility of restoring the offender. They may be assured of Paul’s apostolic sanction to their doing so.

for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it — The oldest manuscripts read, “For even what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything.”

for your sakes *forgave I it* — He uses the past tense, as of a thing already determined on; as in ~~4100~~ 1 Corinthians 5:3, “I have judged already”; or, as speaking generally of forgiveness granted, or to be granted. It is for your sakes I have forgiven, and do forgive, that the Church (of which you are constituent members) may suffer no hurt by the loss of a soul, and that ye may learn leniency as well as faithfulness.

in the person of Christ — representing Christ, and acting by His authority: answering to ~~4100~~ 1 Corinthians 5:4, “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ ... my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

11. Literally, “That we may have no advantage gained over us by Satan,” namely, by letting one of our members be lost to us through despair, we ourselves furnishing Satan with the weapon, by our repulsive harshness to one now penitent. The loss of a single sinner is a common loss; therefore, in ~~4100~~ 2 Corinthians 2:10, he said, “for your sakes.” Paul had “delivered” the offender “to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit might be saved” (~~4100~~ 1 Corinthians 5:5). Satan sought to destroy the spirit also: to let him do so, would be to give him an advantage, and let him *overreach* us.

not ignorant of his devices — “Ignorant” and “devices” are words akin in sound and root in *Greek*: we are not without *knowledge* of his *knowing* schemes.

12. Paul expected to meet Titus at Troas, to receive the tidings as to the effect of his first Epistle on the Corinthian Church; but, disappointed in his expectation *there*, he passed on to Macedonia, where he met him at last (^{400B}2 Corinthians 7:5,6,7) The *history* (Acts) does not record his passing through Troas, in going from Ephesus *to* Macedonia; but it does in coming *from* that country (^{400B}Acts 20:6); also, that he had disciples there (^{400B}Acts 20:7), which accords with the *Epistle* (^{400B}2 Corinthians 2:12, “a door was opened unto me of the Lord”). An undesigned coincidence marking genuineness [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*]. Doubtless Paul had fixed a time with Titus to meet him at Troas; and had desired him, if detained so as not to be able to be at Troas at that time, to proceed at once to Macedonia to Philippi, the next station on his own journey. Hence, though a wide door of Christian usefulness opened to him at Troas, his eagerness to hear from Titus the tidings from Corinth, led him not to stay longer there when the time fixed was past, but he hastened on to Macedonia to meet him there [BIRKS].

to preach — literally, “for the Gospel.” He had been at Troas before, but the vision of a man from Macedonia inviting him to come over, prevented his remaining there (^{400B}Acts 16:8-12). On his return to Asia, after the longer visit mentioned here, he stayed seven days (^{400B}Acts 20:6).

and — that is, *though* Paul would, under ordinary circumstances, have gladly stayed in Troas.

door ... opened ... of the Lord — *Greek*, “*in* the Lord,” that is, in His work, and by His gracious Providence.

13. no rest in my spirit — rather, “no rest *for* my spirit” (^{400B}Genesis 8:9). As here his “spirit” had no rest; so in ^{400B}2 Corinthians 7:5, his “flesh.” His “spirit” under the Holy Spirit, hence, concluded that it was not necessary to avail himself of the “door” of usefulness at Troas any longer.

taking ... leave of them — the disciples at Troas.

14. Now — *Greek*, “But.” Though we left Troas disappointed in not meeting Titus there, and in having to leave so soon so wide a door, “thanks be unto God,” we were triumphantly blessed in both the good news of you from Titus, and in the victories of the Gospel everywhere in our progress. The cause of triumph cannot be restricted (as ALFORD explains) to the former; for “always,” and “in every place,” show that the latter also is intended.

causeth us to triumph — The *Greek*, is rather, as in ^{<5025}Colossians 2:15, “triumphs over us”: “leadeth us in triumph.” Paul regarded himself as a signal trophy of God’s victorious power in Christ. His Almighty Conqueror was leading him about, through all the cities of the Greek and Roman world, as an illustrious example of His power at once to subdue and to save. The foe of Christ was now the servant of Christ. As to be led in triumph by man is the most miserable, so to be led in triumph by God is the most glorious, lot that can befall any [TRENCH]. Our only true triumphs are God’s triumphs over us. His defeats of us are our only true victories [ALFORD]. The image is taken from the triumphal procession of a victorious general. The *additional* idea is perhaps included, which distinguishes God’s triumph from that of a human general, that the captive is brought into *willing* obedience (^{<4015}2 Corinthians 10:5) to Christ, and so *joins in the triumph*: God “leads him in triumph” as one not merely *triumphed over*, but also as one *triumphing over* God’s foes with God (which last will apply to the apostle’s triumphant missionary progress under the leading of God). So BENDEL: “*Who shows us in triumph*, not [merely] as conquered, but as the ministers of His victory. Not only the victory, but the open ‘showing’ of the victory is marked: for there follows, *Who maketh manifest*.”

savor — retaining the image of a triumph. As the approach of the triumphal procession was made known by the *odor* of incense scattered far and wide by the incense-bearers in the train, so God “makes manifest by us” (His now at once triumphed over and triumphing captives, compare ^{<4150}Luke 5:10, “Catch,” literally, “Take captive so as to preserve alive”) the sweet savor of the knowledge of Christ, the triumphant Conqueror (^{<5025}Colossians 2:15), everywhere. As the *triumph* strikes the eyes, so the savor the nostrils; thus every sense feels the power of Christ’s Gospel. This *manifestation* (a word often recurring in his Epistles to the

Corinthians, compare ⁴⁰⁴⁵1 Corinthians 4:5) refutes the Corinthian suspicions of his *dishonestly*, by reserve, *hiding* anything from them (⁴⁰²⁷2 Corinthians 2:17 ⁴⁰⁴⁶2 Corinthians 4:2).

15. The order is in *Greek*, “For (it is) of Christ (that) we are a sweet savor unto God”; thus, the “for” justifies his previous words (⁴⁰⁴⁴2 Corinthians 2:14), “the savor of HIS (Christ’s) knowledge.” We not only scatter the savor; but “we *are* the sweet savor” itself (⁴⁰⁴⁸Song of Solomon 1:3; compare ⁴⁰⁴⁴John 1:14,16 ⁴⁰⁴⁹Ephesians 5:2 ⁴⁰²⁷1 John 2:27).

in them that are saved — rather, “that *are being* saved ... that are perishing” (see on ⁴⁰⁴⁸1 Corinthians 1:18). As the light, though it blinds in darkness the weak, is for all that still light; and honey, though it taste bitter to the sick, is in itself still sweet; so the Gospel is still of a sweet savor, though many perish through unbelief [CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies*, 5.467], (⁴⁰⁴⁸2 Corinthians 4:3,4,6). As some of the conquered foes led in triumph were put to death when the procession reached the capitol, and to them the smell of the incense was the “savor of death unto death,” while to those saved alive, it was the “savor of life,” so the Gospel was to the different classes respectively.

and in them — in the case of them. “Those being saved” (⁴⁰⁴⁸2 Corinthians 3:1-4:2): “Those that are perishing” (⁴⁰⁴⁸2 Corinthians 4:3-5).

16. savor of death unto death ... of life unto life — *an odor* arising *out of death* (a mere announcement of a *dead* Christ, and a virtually lifeless Gospel, in which light unbelievers regard the Gospel message), *ending* (as the just and natural consequence) *in death* (to the unbeliever); (but to the believer) *an odor* arising *out of life* (that is, the announcement of a risen and *living* Savior), *ending in life* (to the believer) (⁴⁰⁴⁴Matthew 21:44 ⁴⁰⁴⁹Luke 2:34 ⁴⁰⁴⁹John 9:39).

who is sufficient for these things? — namely, for diffusing aright everywhere the savor of Christ, so diverse in its effects on believers and unbelievers. He here prepares the way for one purpose of his Epistle, namely, to vindicate his apostolic mission from its detractors at Corinth, who denied his sufficiency. The *Greek* order puts prominently foremost the momentous and difficult task assigned to him, “For these things, who is sufficient?” He answers his own question (⁴⁰⁴⁵2 Corinthians 3:5,6), “Not

that we are *sufficient* of ourselves, but our *sufficiency* is of God, who hath made us *able* (*Greek*, ‘sufficient’) ministers,” etc.

17. not as many — (^{¶118}2 Corinthians 11:18 ^{¶122}Philippians 2:21). Rather, “*the many*,” namely, *the* false teachers of whom he treats (tenth through twelfth chapters, especially ^{¶113}2 Corinthians 11:13 ^{¶118}1 Thessalonians 2:3).

which corrupt — *Greek*, “adulterating, as hucksters do wine for gain” (^{¶112}2 Corinthians 4:2 ^{¶122}Isaiah 1:22 ^{¶108}2 Peter 2:3, “Make *merchandise* of you”).

as of sincerity ... as of God — as one speaking from (out of) sincerity, as from (that is, by the command of, and so in dependence on) God.

in Christ’s — as united to Him in living membership, and doing His work (compare ^{¶123}2 Corinthians 12:19). The *whole* Gospel must be delivered such as it is, without concession to men’s corruptions, and without selfish aims, if it is to be blessed with success (^{¶127}Acts 20:27).

CHAPTER 3

2 CORINTHIANS 3:1-18.

THE SOLE COMMENDATION HE NEEDS TO PROVE GOD'S SANCTION OF HIS MINISTRY HE HAS IN HIS CORINTHIAN CONVERTS: HIS MINISTRY EXCELS THE MOSAIC, AS THE GOSPEL OF LIFE AND LIBERTY EXCELS THE LAW OF CONDEMNATION.

1. Are we beginning again to recommend ourselves (~~418~~2 Corinthians 5:12) (as some of them might say he had done in his first Epistle; or, a reproof to “some” who had *begun* doing so)!

commendation — recommendation. (Compare ~~418~~2 Corinthians 10:18). The “some” refers to particular persons of the “many” (~~417~~2 Corinthians 2:17) teachers who opposed him, and who came to Corinth with letters of recommendation from other churches; and when leaving that city obtained similar letters from the Corinthians to other churches. The thirteenth canon of the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) ordained that “clergymen coming to a city where they were unknown, should not be allowed to officiate without letters commendatory from their own bishop.” The history (~~418~~Acts 18:27) confirms the existence of the custom here alluded to in the Epistle: “When Apollos was disposed to pass into Achaia [Corinth], *the brethren* [of Ephesus] *wrote*, exhorting the disciples to receive him.” This was about two years before the Epistle, and is probably *one* of the instances to which Paul refers, as many at Corinth boasted of their being followers of Apollos (~~412~~1 Corinthians 1:12).

2. **our epistle** — of recommendation.

in our hearts — not letters borne merely *in the hands*. Your conversion through my instrumentality, and your faith which is “known of all men” by widespread report (~~414~~1 Corinthians 1:4-7), and which is written by memory and affection on my inmost heart and is borne about wherever I go, is my letter of recommendation (~~412~~1 Corinthians 9:2).

known and read — words akin in root, sound, and sense (so ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}2 Corinthians 1:13). “Ye are *known* to be my converts by general knowledge: then ye are *known* more particularly by your reflecting my doctrine in your Christian life.” The handwriting is first “known,” then the Epistle is “read” [GROTIUS] (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}2 Corinthians 4:2 ^{ⲁⲓⲁⲟⲩ}1 Corinthians 14:25). There is not so powerful a sermon in the world, as a consistent Christian life. The eye of the world takes in more than the ear. Christians’ lives are the only religious books the world reads. IGNATIUS [*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 10] writes, “Give unbelievers the chance of believing through you. Consider yourselves employed by God; your lives the form of language in which He addresses them. Be mild when they are angry, humble when they are haughty; to their blasphemy oppose prayer without ceasing; to their inconsistency, a steadfast adherence to your faith.”

3. declared — The letter is written so legibly that it can be “read by all men” (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}2 Corinthians 3:2). Translate, “Being manifestly shown to be an Epistle of Christ”; a letter coming manifestly from Christ, and “ministered by us,” that is, carried about and presented by us as its (ministering) bearers to those (the world) for whom it is intended: Christ is the Writer and the Recommender, ye are the letter recommending us.

written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God — Paul was the ministering pen or other instrument of writing, as well as the ministering bearer and presenter of the letter. “Not with ink” stands in contrast to the letters of commendation which “some” at Corinth (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}2 Corinthians 3:1) used. “Ink” is also used here to include all outward materials for writing, such as the Sinaitic tables of stone were. These, however, were not written with ink, but “graven” by “the finger of God” (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}Exodus 31:18 32:16). Christ’s Epistle (His believing members converted by Paul) is better still: it is written not merely with the *finger*, but with the “*Spirit of the living God*”; it is not the “ministration of death” as the law, but of the “*living Spirit*” that “giveth life” (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}2 Corinthians 3:6-8).

not in — not *on* tables (tablets) of stone, as the ten commandments were written (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}2 Corinthians 3:7).

in fleshy tables of the heart — ALL the best manuscripts read, “On [your] *hearts* [which are] tables of flesh.” Once your hearts were

spiritually what the tables of the law were physically, tables of stone, but God has “taken away the stony heart out of your flesh, given you a heart of flesh” (*fleshy*, not *fleshly*, that is, carnal; hence it is written, “out of your *flesh*” that is, your *carnal* nature), ^{<3118>}Ezekiel 11:19 36:26. Compare ^{<408>}2 Corinthians 3:2, “As ye are our Epistle written in our hearts,” so Christ has in the first instance made you “His Epistle written with the Spirit in (on) your hearts.” I bear on my heart, as a testimony to all men, that which Christ has by His Spirit written in your heart [ALFORD]. (Compare ^{<3118>}Proverbs 3:3 7:3 ^{<3131>}Jeremiah 31:31-34). This passage is quoted by PALEY [*Horae Paulinae*] as illustrating one peculiarity of Paul’s style, namely, his *going off at a word into a parenthetic reflection*: here it is on the word “Epistle.” So “savor,” ^{<4024>}2 Corinthians 2:14-17.

4. And — *Greek*, “But.” “Such confidence, however (namely, of our ‘sufficiency,’ ^{<4085>}2 Corinthians 3:5,6 ^{<4026>}2 Corinthians 2:16 — to which he reverts after the parenthesis — as ministers of the New Testament, ‘not hinting,’ ^{<4001>}2 Corinthians 4:1), we have through Christ (not through ourselves, compare ^{<4018>}2 Corinthians 3:18) toward God” (that is, in our relation to God and His work, the ministry committed by Him to us, for which we must render an account to Him). Confidence toward God is solid and real, as looking to Him for the strength needed now, and also for the reward of grace to be given hereafter. Compare ^{<4015>}Acts 24:15, “hope toward God.” Human confidence is unreal in that it looks to man for its help and its reward.

5. The *Greek* is, “Not that we are (even yet after so long experience as ministers) sufficient to think anything OF ourselves as (coming) FROM ourselves; but our sufficiency is (derived) FROM God.” “*From*” more definitely refers to the *source* out of which a thing comes; “of” is more general.

to think — *Greek*, to “reason out” or “devise”; *to attain to* sound preaching *by our reasonings* [THEODORET]. The “we” refers here to *ministers* (^{<4021>}2 Peter 1:21).

anything — even the least. We cannot expect too little from man, or too much from God.

6. able — rather, as the *Greek* is the same, corresponding to ^{<482}2 Corinthians 3:5, translate, “*sufficient* as ministers” (^{<480}Ephesians 3:7 ^{<502}Colossians 1:23).

the new testament — “the new *covenant*” as contrasted with the *Old* Testament or covenant (^{<4125}1 Corinthians 11:25 ^{<402}Galatians 4:24). He reverts here again to the contrast between the law on “tables of stone,” and that “written by the Spirit on fleshly tables of the heart” (^{<402}2 Corinthians 3:3).

not of the letter — joined with “ministers”; ministers not of *the mere literal precept*, in which the old law, as then understood, consisted; “but of the Spirit,” that is, *the spiritual holiness* which lay under the old law, and which the new covenant brings to light (^{<457}Matthew 5:17-48) with new *motives* added, and a new *power* of obedience imparted, namely, the Holy Spirit (^{<400}Romans 7:6). Even in *writing the letter* of the New Testament, Paul and the other sacred writers were ministers *not of the letter, but of the spirit*. No piety of spirit could exempt a man from the yoke of the letter of each legal ordinance under the Old Testament; for God had appointed this as the way in which He chose a devout Jew to express his state of mind towards God. Christianity, on the other hand, makes the spirit of our outward observances everything, and the letter a secondary consideration (^{<402}John 4:24). Still the moral law of the ten commandments, being written by the finger of God, is as obligatory now as ever; but put more on the Gospel spirit of “love,” than on the letter of a servile obedience, and in a deeper and fuller spirituality (^{<457}Matthew 5:17-48 ^{<430}Romans 13:9). No literal precepts could fully comprehend the wide range of holiness which LOVE, the work of the Holy Spirit, under the Gospel, suggests to the believer’s heart instinctively from the word understood in its deep spirituality.

letter killeth — by bringing home the knowledge of guilt and its punishment, *death*; ^{<402}2 Corinthians 3:7, “ministration of death” (^{<400}Romans 7:9).

spirit giveth life — The spirit of the Gospel when brought home to the heart by the Holy Spirit, gives new spiritual life to a man (^{<400}Romans 6:4,11). This “spirit of life” is for us in Christ Jesus (^{<400}Romans 8:2,10), who dwells in the believer as a “quickening” or “life-giving Spirit” (^{<456}1

Corinthians 15:45). Note, the spiritualism of rationalists is very different. It would admit no “stereotyped revelation,” except so much as man’s own inner instrument of revelation, the conscience and reason, can approve of: thus making the conscience judge of the written word, whereas the apostles make the written word the judge of the conscience (⁴⁴⁷¹Acts 17:11 ⁴⁰¹¹1 Peter 4:1). True spirituality rests on the whole written word, applied to the soul by the Holy Spirit as the only infallible interpreter of its far-reaching spirituality. The *letter* is nothing without the *spirit*, in a subject essentially spiritual. The *spirit* is nothing without the *letter*, in a record substantially historical.

7. the ministration of death — the legal dispensation, summed up in the Decalogue, which denounces *death* against man for transgression.

written and engraven in stones — There is no “and” in the *Greek*. The literal translation is, “The ministration of death *in letters*,” of which “engraven on stones” is an explanation. The preponderance of oldest manuscripts is for the *English Version* reading. But one (perhaps the oldest existing manuscript) has “in the letter,” which refers to the preceding words (⁴⁴⁷¹2 Corinthians 3:6), “*the letter killeth*,” and this seems the probable reading. Even if we read as *English Version*, “The ministration of death (written) in letters,” alludes to *the literal precepts* of the law as only bringing us the knowledge of sin and “*death*,” in contrast to “*the Spirit*” in the Gospel bringing us “*life*” (⁴⁴⁷¹2 Corinthians 3:6). The opposition between “the letters” and “the Spirit” (⁴⁴⁷¹2 Corinthians 3:8) confirms this. This explains why the phrase in *Greek* should be “in letters,” instead of the ordinary one which *English Version* has substituted, “written *and*.”

was glorious — literally, “was made (invested) in glory,” glory was the atmosphere with which it was encompassed.

could not steadfastly behold — literally, “fix their eyes on.” ⁴²⁸¹Exodus 34:30, “The skin of his face shone; and they were AFRAID *to come nigh him*.” “Could not,” therefore means here, “for FEAR.” The “glory of Moses’ countenance” on Sinai passed away when the occasion was over: a type of the transitory character of the dispensation which he represented (⁴⁴⁷¹2 Corinthians 3:11), as contrasted with the permanency of the Christian dispensation (⁴⁴⁷¹2 Corinthians 3:11).

8. be rather glorious — literally, “be rather (that is, still more, invested) in glory.” “Shall be,” that is, shall be found to be in part now, but fully when the glory of Christ and His saints shall be revealed.

9. ministration of condemnation — the law regarded in the “letter” which “killeth” (^{491b}2 Corinthians 3:6 ^{490b}Romans 7:9-11). The oldest existing manuscript seems to read as *English Version*. But most of the almost contemporary manuscripts, versions, and Fathers, read, “If to the ministration of condemnation there be glory.”

the ministration of righteousness — the Gospel, which especially reveals the righteousness of God (^{491b}Romans 1:17), and imputes righteousness to men through faith in Christ (^{492b}Romans 3:21-28 4:3,22-25), and imparts righteousness by the Spirit (^{491b}Romans 8:1-4).

exceed — “abound.”

10. *For even* the ministration of condemnation, the law, ^{491b}2 Corinthians 3:7 (*which has been glorified* at Sinai in Moses’ person), *has now* (*English Version* translates less fitly, “*was made ... had*”) *lost its glory in this respect by reason of the surpassing glory* (of the Gospel): as the light of the stars and moon fades in the presence of the sun.

11. was glorious — literally, “was with glory”; or “marked *by glory*.”

that which remaineth — abideth (^{494b}Revelation 14:6). Not “the ministry,” but the Spirit, and His accompaniments, life and righteousness.

is glorious — literally, “is *in glory*.” The *Greek* “with” or “by” is appropriately applied to that of which the glory was *transient*. “In” to that of which the glory is permanent. The contrast of the Old and New Testaments proves that Paul’s chief opponents at Corinth were Judaizers.

12. such hope — of the future glory, which shall result from the ministration of the Gospel (^{493b}2 Corinthians 3:8,9).

plainness of speech — openness; without reserve (^{497b}2 Corinthians 2:17 4:2).

13. We use no disguise, “as Moses put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel might not look steadfastly upon the end of that which

was to be done away” [ELLICOTT and others]. The view of ^{<1883>}Exodus 34:30-35, according to the *Septuagint* is adopted by Paul, that Moses in going in to speak to God *removed the veil till he came out and had spoken to the people*; and then *when he had done speaking*, he put on the veil *that they might not look on the end*, or the fading, *of that transitory glory*. The veil was the symbol of *concealment*, put on directly after Moses’ speaking; so that God’s revelations by him were interrupted by intervals of concealment [ALFORD]. But ALFORD’s view does not accord with ^{<1883>}2 Corinthians 3:7; the Israelites “could not look steadfastly on the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance.” Plainly Moses’ veil was put on *because of* their not having been able to “look steadfastly at him.” Paul here (^{<1883>}2 Corinthians 3:13) passes from the literal fact to the truth symbolized by it, the blindness of Jews and Judaizers to the ultimate end of the law: stating that Moses *put on the veil that they might not look steadfastly at* (Christ, ^{<1883>}Romans 10:4) *the end of that* (law) *which* (like Moses’ glory) *is done away*. Not that *Moses* had this *purpose*; but often God attributes to His prophets the purpose which He has Himself. Because the Jews *would not see*, God judicially gave them up *so as not to see*. The glory of Moses’ face is antitypically Christ’s glory shining behind the veil of legal ordinances. The veil which has been taken off to the believer is left on to the unbelieving Jew, so that he should not see (^{<2100>}Isaiah 6:10 ^{<1883>}Acts 28:26,27). He stops short at the letter of the law, not seeing the end of it. The evangelical glory of the law, like the shining of Moses’ face, cannot be borne by a carnal people, and therefore remains veiled to them until the Spirit comes to take away the veil (^{<1883>}2 Corinthians 3:14-17) [CAMERON].

14-18. Parenthetical: *Of Christians in general*. He resumes the subject of *the ministry*, ^{<1883>}2 Corinthians 4:1.

minds — Greek, “mental perceptions”; “understandings.”

blinded — rather, “hardened.” The opposite to “looking steadfastly at the end” of the law (^{<1883>}2 Corinthians 3:13). *The veil on Moses’ face* is further typical of *the veil that is on their hearts*.

untaken away ... which veil — rather, “the same veil ... remaineth untaken away [literally, *not unveiled*], so that they do not see THAT it (not the veil as *English Version*, but ‘THE OLD TESTAMENT,’ or covenant of

legal ordinances) is done away (⁴⁰⁷2 Corinthians 3:7,11,13) in Christ” or, as BENGEL, “Because it is done away in Christ,” that is, it is not done away save in Christ: the veil *therefore* remains untaken away from them, *because* they will not come to Christ, who does away, with the law as a mere letter. If they once saw that the law is done away in Him, the veil would be no longer on their hearts in reading it publicly in their synagogues (so “reading” means, ⁴¹⁵¹Acts 15:21). I prefer the former.

15. the veil is — rather, “*a veil lieth upon their heart*” (their understanding, affected by the corrupt will, ⁴⁰⁸⁸John 8:43 ⁴⁰⁹⁴1 Corinthians 2:14). The *Tallith* was worn in the synagogue by every worshipper, and to this veil hanging over the breast there may be an indirect allusion here (see on ⁴¹⁰⁴1 Corinthians 11:4): the apostle making it symbolize the spiritual veil on their heart.

16. Moses took off the veil on entering into the presence of the Lord. So as to the Israelites whom Moses represents, “whensoever their heart (it) *turns* (not as *English Version*, ‘shall turn’) to the Lord, the veil is (by the very fact; not as *English Version*, ‘shall be’) taken away.” ⁴⁰⁹⁴Exodus 34:34 is the allusion; not ⁴⁰⁹⁰Exodus 34:30,31, as ALFORD thinks. Whenever the Israelites turn to the Lord, who is the Spirit of the law, the veil is taken off their hearts in the presence of the Lord: as the literal veil was taken off by Moses in going before God: no longer resting on the dead letter, *the veil*, they by the Spirit commune with God and with the inner spirit of the Mosaic covenant (which answers to the glory of *Moses’ face unveiled* in God’s presence).

17. the Lord — Christ (⁴⁰⁹⁴2 Corinthians 3:14,16 ⁴⁰⁹⁵2 Corinthians 4:5).

is that Spirit — is THE Spirit, namely, *that Spirit* spoken of in ⁴⁰⁹²2 Corinthians 3:6, and here resumed after the parenthesis (⁴⁰⁹²2 Corinthians 3:7-16): Christ is the Spirit and “end” of the Old Testament, he giveth life to it, whereas “the letter killeth” (⁴⁰⁵⁵1 Corinthians 15:45 ⁴⁰⁹⁰Revelation 19:10, end).

where the Spirit of the Lord is — in a man’s “heart” (⁴⁰⁹⁵2 Corinthians 3:15 ⁴⁰⁹⁰Romans 8:9,10).

there is liberty — (^{<4186>}John 8:36). “There,” and *there only*. Such cease to be slaves to the letter, which they were while the veil was on their heart. They are free to serve God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus (^{<4188>}Philippians 3:3): they have no longer the spirit of bondage, but of free sonship (^{<4185>}Romans 8:15 ^{<4107>}Galatians 4:7). “Liberty” is opposed to the letter (of the legal ordinances), and to the veil, the badge of slavery: also to the *fear* which the Israelites felt in beholding Moses’ *glory unveiled* (^{<4184>}Exodus 34:30 ^{<4104>}1 John 4:18).

18. But we all — Christians, as contrasted with the Jews who have a veil on their hearts, answering to Moses’ veil on his face. He does not resume reference to *ministers* till ^{<4100>}2 Corinthians 4:1.

with open face — Translate, “with *unveiled* face” (the *veil* being removed at conversion): contrasted with “hid” (^{<4108>}2 Corinthians 4:3).

as in a glass — in a mirror, namely, the Gospel which reflects the glory of God and Christ (^{<4104>}2 Corinthians 4:4 ^{<4132>}1 Corinthians 13:12 ^{<4103>}James 1:23,25).

are changed into the same image — namely, the image of Christ’s glory, spiritually now (^{<4182>}Romans 8:29 ^{<4181>}1 John 3:3); an earnest of the bodily change hereafter (^{<4181>}Philippians 3:21). However many they be, believers all reflect the *same* image of Christ more or less: a proof of the truth of Christianity.

from glory to glory — from one degree of glory to another. As Moses’ face caught a reflection of God’s glory from being in His presence, so believers are changed into His image by beholding Him.

even as, etc. — Just such a transformation “*as*” was to be expected from “the Lord the Spirit” (not as *English Version*, “the Spirit of the Lord”) [ALFORD] (^{<4187>}2 Corinthians 3:17): “who receives of the things of Christ, and shows them to us” (^{<4184>}John 16:14 ^{<4180>}Romans 8:10,11). (Compare as to hereafter, ^{<4175>}Psalms 17:15 ^{<4124>}Revelation 22:4).

CHAPTER 4

2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-18.

HIS PREACHING IS OPEN AND SINCERE, THOUGH TO MANY THE GOSPEL IS HIDDEN.

For he preaches Christ, not himself: the human vessel is frail that God may have the glory; yet, though frail, faith and the hope of future glory sustain him amidst the decay of the outward man.

1. Therefore — *Greek*, “For this cause”: Because we have the liberty-giving Spirit of the Lord, and with unveiled face behold His glory (2 Corinthians 3:17,18).

seeing we have this ministry — “The ministration of the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:8,9): the ministry of such a spiritual, liberty-giving Gospel: resuming 2 Corinthians 3:6,8.

received mercy — from God, in having had *this ministry* conferred on us (2 Corinthians 3:5). The sense of “mercy” received from God, makes men active for God (1 Timothy 1:11-13).

we faint not — in boldness of speech and action, and patience in suffering (2 Corinthians 4:2,8-16, etc.).

2. renounced — literally, “bid farewell to.”

of dishonesty — rather, “of shame.” “I am not *ashamed* of the Gospel of Christ” (Romans 1:16). Shame would lead to *hiding* (2 Corinthians 4:3); whereas “we use great plainness of speech” (2 Corinthians 3:12); “by *manifestation* of the truth.” Compare 2 Corinthians 3:3, “*manifestly declared*.” He refers to the disingenuous artifices of “many” teachers at Corinth (2 Corinthians 2:17 3:1 11:13-15).

handling ... deceitfully — so “corrupt” or *adulterate* “the word of God” (2 Corinthians 2:17; compare 1 Thessalonians 2:3,4).

commending — recommending ourselves: recurring to ^{<401>}2 Corinthians 3:1.

to — to the verdict of.

every man's conscience — (^{<401>}2 Corinthians 5:11). Not to men's carnal judgment, as those alluded to (^{<401>}2 Corinthians 3:1).

in the sight of God — (^{<407>}2 Corinthians 2:17 ^{<400>}Galatians 1:10).

3. But if — Yea, even if (as I grant is the case).

hid — rather (in reference to ^{<403>}2 Corinthians 3:13-18), “veiled.” “Hid” (*Greek*, ^{<500>}Colossians 3:3) is said of that withdrawn from view altogether. “Veiled,” of a thing within reach of the eye, but *covered* over so as not to be seen. So it was in the case of Moses' face.

to them — in the case only of them: for *in itself* the Gospel is quite plain.

that are lost — rather, “that are perishing” (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 1:18). So the same cloud that was “light” to the people of God, was “darkness” to the Egyptian foes of God (^{<040>}Exodus 14:20).

4. In whom — Translate, “In whose case.”

god of this world — The worldly *make him their God* (^{<503>}Philippians 3:19). He is, *in fact*, “the prince of the power of the air, *the spirit that ruleth in the children of disobedience*” (^{<400>}Ephesians 2:2).

minds — “understandings”: “mental perceptions,” as in ^{<404>}2 Corinthians 3:14.

them which believe not — the same as “them that are lost” (or “are perishing”). Compare ^{<500>}2 Thessalonians 2:10-12. SOUTH quaintly says, “when the malefactor's eyes are covered, he is not far from his execution” (^{<400>}Esther 7:8). Those perishing unbelievers are not merely veiled, but blinded (^{<404>}2 Corinthians 3:14,15): *Greek*, not “blinded,” but “*hardened*.”

light of the glorious gospel of Christ — Translate, “The illumination (*enlightening*: the *propagation* from those already enlightened, to others of the light) of the Gospel of the glory of Christ.” “The glory of Christ” is

not a mere *quality* (as “glorious” would express) of the Gospel; it is its very *essence and subject matter*.

image of God — implying identity of nature and essence (^{<4018>}John 1:18 ^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15 ^{<8009>}Hebrews 1:3). He who desires to see “the glory of God,” may see it “in the face of Jesus Christ” (^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 4:6 ^{<5044>}1 Timothy 6:14-16). Paul here recurs to ^{<4018>}2 Corinthians 3:18. Christ is “the image of God,” into which “same image” we, looking on it in the mirror of the Gospel, are changed by the Spirit; but this image is not visible to those blinded by Satan [ALFORD].

5. For — Their blindness is not our fault, as if we had self-seeking aims in our preaching.

preach ... Christ ... the Lord — rather, “Christ *as Lord*,” and ourselves as your servants, etc. “*Lord*,” or “*Master*,” is the correlative term to “servants.”

6. For — proof that we are true servants of Jesus unto you.

commanded the light — *Greek*, “By speaking the word, commanded light” (^{<0009>}Genesis 1:3).

hath shined — rather, as *Greek*, “*is He who shined*.” (It is God) who commanded light, etc., that shined, etc., (^{<3875>}Job 37:15): Himself our Light and Sun, as well as the Creator of light (^{<3002>}Malachi 4:2 ^{<4002>}John 8:12). The physical world answers to the spiritual.

in our hearts — in themselves dark.

to give the light — that is, to propagate *to others* the light, etc., which is in us (compare *Note*, see on ^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 4:4).

the glory of God — answering to “the glory of Christ” (see on ^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 4:4).

in the face of Jesus Christ — Some of the oldest manuscripts retain “Jesus.” Others omit it. Christ is the manifestation of the glory of God, as His image (^{<6049>}John 14:9). The allusion is still to the brightness on Moses’ “face.” The only true and full manifestation of God’s brightness and glory is “in the face of Jesus” (^{<8009>}Hebrews 1:3).

7. “Lest any should say, How then is it that we continue to enjoy *such unspeakable glory* in a mortal body? Paul replies, this very fact is one of the most marvellous proofs of God’s power, that an earthen vessel could bear such splendor and keep *such a treasure*” [CHRYSOSTOM, *Homilies*, 8.496, A]. The treasure or “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.” The fragile “earthen vessel” is the *body*, the “outward man” (2 Corinthians 4:16; compare 2 Corinthians 4:10), liable to afflictions and death. So the light in Gideon’s pitchers, the type (Judges 7:16-20,22). The ancients often kept their treasures in jars or vessels of earthenware. “There are earthen vessels which yet may be clean; whereas a golden vessel may be filthy” [BENGEL].

that the excellency of the power, etc. — that the *power* of the ministry (the Holy Spirit), in respect to its surpassing “excellency,” exhibited in winning souls (1 Corinthians 2:4) and in sustaining us ministers, might be ascribed solely to God, we being weak as earthen vessels. God often allows the vessel to be chipped and broken, that the excellency of the treasure contained, and of the power which that treasure has, may be all His (2 Corinthians 4:10,11 1 John 3:30).

may be of God ... not of us — rather, as *Greek*, “may be *God’s* (may be seen and be thankfully [2 Corinthians 4:15] acknowledged to *belong* to God), and not (to come) *from* us.” The power not merely comes *from* God, but *belongs to* Him continually, and is to be ascribed to him.

8. *Greek*, “BEING hard pressed, yet not inextricably straitened; reduced to inextricable straits” (nominative to “we have,” 2 Corinthians 4:7).

on every side — *Greek*, “in every respect” (compare 2 Corinthians 4:10, “always”; 2 Corinthians 7:5). This verse expresses *inward* distresses; 2 Corinthians 4:9, *outward* distresses (2 Corinthians 7:5). “*Without* were fightings; *within* were fears.” The first clause in each member of the series of contrasted participles, implies the *earthiness* of the *vessels*; the second clause, *the excellency of the power*.

perplexed, but not in despair — *Greek*, “not utterly perplexed.” As *perplexity* refers to the future, so “troubled” or “hard pressed” refers to the present.

9. not forsaken — by God and man. Jesus was forsaken by both; so much do His sufferings exceed those of His people (¹²⁷⁴Matthew 27:46).

cast down — or “struck down”; not only “persecuted,” that is, *chased* as a deer or bird (¹²⁵¹1 Samuel 26:20), but actually *struck* down as with a dart in the chase (¹²¹⁵Hebrews 11:35-38). The *Greek* “always” in this verse means, “throughout the whole time”; in ¹²⁰¹2 Corinthians 4:11 the *Greek* is different, and means, “at every time,” “in every case when the occasion occurs.”

10. bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus — that is, having my body exposed to being put to death in the cause of Jesus (the oldest manuscripts omit “the Lord”), and having in it the marks of such sufferings, I thus bear about wheresoever I go, an image of the suffering Savior in my own person (¹²⁰¹2 Corinthians 4:11 ¹²⁰⁵2 Corinthians 1:5; compare ¹²⁵¹1 Corinthians 15:31). Doubtless, Paul was exposed to more dangers than are recorded in Acts (compare ¹²⁰⁵2 Corinthians 7:5 11:26). The *Greek* for “the dying” is literally, “the being made a *corpse*,” such Paul regarded his body, yet a corpse which shares in the life-giving power of Christ’s resurrection, as it has shared in His dying and death.

that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body — rather, “may be.” The name “Jesus,” by itself is often repeated here as Paul seems, amidst sufferings, peculiarly to have felt its sweetness. In ¹²⁰¹2 Corinthians 4:11 the same words occur with the variation, “in our *mortal flesh*. The fact of a dying, corpse-like body being sustained amidst such trials, manifests that “the (resurrection) life also,” as well as the dying, “of Jesus,” exerts its power in us. I thus bear about in my own person an image of the risen and *living*, as well as of the suffering, Savior. The “our” is added here to “body,” though not in the beginning of the verse. “For the body is *ours* not so much in death, as in life” [BENGEL].

11. we which live — in the power of Christ’s “life” manifested in us, in our whole man body as well as spirit (¹²⁸⁰Romans 8:10,11; see on ¹²⁰²2 Corinthians 4:10; compare ¹²⁵⁵2 Corinthians 5:15). Paul regards his preservation amidst so many exposures to “death,” by which Stephen and James were cut off, as a standing miracle (¹²¹²2 Corinthians 11:23).

delivered unto — not by chance; by the ordering of Providence, who shows “the excellency of His power” (⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 4:7), in *delivering unto* DEATH His living saints, that He may manifest LIFE also in their dying flesh. “Flesh,” the very element of decay (not merely their “body”), is by Him made to manifest *life*.

12. The “*death*” of Christ manifested in the continual “perishing of our outward man” (⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 4:16), works peculiarly in us, and is the means of working *spiritual “life”* in you. The *life* whereof we witness in our bodily *dying*, extends beyond ourselves, and is brought by our very dying to you.

13. Translate as *Greek*, “BUT having,” etc. that is, not withstanding the trials just mentioned, we having, etc.

the same spirit of faith, according as it, etc. — Compare ⁴⁰¹⁵Romans 8:15, on the usage of “spirit of faith.” The Holy Spirit acting on our spirit. Though “death worketh in us, and life in you” (⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 4:12), yet *as we have the same spirit of faith as you*, we therefore [believingly] look for the same immortal *life* as you [ESTIUS], and *speak* as we believe. ALFORD not so well translates, “The *same ... faith with that described* in the Scriptures” (⁴⁰¹⁰Psalms 116:10). The balance of the sentence requires the parallelism to be this, “According to that which is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak,” namely, without fear, amidst “afflictions” and “deaths” (⁴⁰¹⁷2 Corinthians 4:17).

14. Knowing — by faith (⁴⁰¹⁷2 Corinthians 5:1).

shall raise up us also — at the resurrection (⁴⁰¹³1 Corinthians 6:13,14).

by Jesus — The oldest manuscripts have “*with Jesus*.”

present us — vividly picturing the scene before the eyes (⁴⁰¹⁴Jude 1:24).

with you — (⁴⁰¹⁴2 Corinthians 1:14 ⁴⁰¹⁹1 Thessalonians 2:19,20 3:13).

15. For — Confirming his assertion “with you” (⁴⁰¹⁴2 Corinthians 4:14), and “life ... worketh in you” (⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 4:12).

all things — whether the afflictions and labors of us ministers (⁴⁰⁰⁸2 Corinthians 4:8-11), or your prosperity (⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 4:12 ⁴⁰¹¹1 Corinthians 3:21,22 4:8-13).

for your sakes — (⁴⁰¹⁰2 Timothy 2:10).

abundant grace, etc. — rather, “That grace (*the* grace which preserves us in trials and works life in you), being made the greater (multiplied), by means of the greater number (of its recipients), may cause the thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.” [CHRYSOSTOM] (⁴⁰¹¹2 Corinthians 1:11 9:11,12). The *Greek* is susceptible also of this translation, “That grace, being made the greater (multiplied) on account of the thanksgiving of the greater number (for grace already received), may abound (abundantly redound) to,” etc. Thus the *Greek* for “abound” has not to be taken in an active sense, but in its ordinary neuter sense, and so the other *Greek* words. Thanksgiving invites more abundant grace (⁴⁰¹²2 Chronicles 20:19-22 ⁴⁰¹¹Psalms 18:3 50:23).

16. we faint not — notwithstanding our sufferings. Resuming ⁴⁰¹¹2 Corinthians 4:1.

outward man — the body, the flesh.

perish — “is wearing away”; “is wasted away” by afflictions.

inward man — our spiritual and true being, the “life” which even in our mortal bodies (⁴⁰¹¹2 Corinthians 4:11) “manifests the life of Jesus.”

is renewed — “is being renewed,” namely, with fresh “grace” (⁴⁰¹⁵2 Corinthians 4:15), and “faith” (⁴⁰¹³2 Corinthians 4:13), and hope (⁴⁰¹⁷2 Corinthians 4:17,18).

17. which is but for a moment — “Our PRESENT light (burden of) affliction” (so the *Greek*; compare ⁴⁰¹³Matthew 11:30), [ALFORD]. Compare “*now for a season ... in heaviness*” (⁴⁰¹¹1 Peter 1:6). The contrast, however, between this and the “ETERNAL weight of glory” requires, I think, the translation, “Which is but for *the present passing moment*.” So WAHL. “The *lightness* of affliction” (he does not *express* “burden” after “light”; the *Greek* is “the light of affliction”) contrasts beautifully with the “*weight* of the glory.”

worketh — rather, “worketh out.”

a far more exceeding *and* — rather, “in a surpassing and still more surpassing manner” [ALFORD]; “more and more exceedingly” [ELLCOTT, TRENCH, and others]. *Greek*, “in excess and to excess.” The glory exceeds beyond all measure the affliction.

18. look not at — as our aim.

things ... seen — “earthly things” (^{<1089>}Philippians 3:19). We mind not the things seen, whether affliction or refreshment come, so as to be seduced by the latter, or deterred by the former [CHRYSOSTOM].

things ... not seen — not “the invisible things” of ^{<812>}Romans 1:20, but the things which, though not seen now, shall be so hereafter.

temporal — rather, “for a time”; in contrast to eternal. *English Version* uses “temporal” for *temporary*. The *Greek* is rightly translated in the similar passage, “the pleasures of sin *for a season*.”

CHAPTER 5

2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-21.

THE HOPE (2 CORINTHIANS 4:17,18) OF ETERNAL GLORY IN THE RESURRECTION BODY.

Hence arises his ambition to be accepted at the Lord's coming judgment. Hence, too, his endeavor to deal openly with men, as with God, in preaching; thus giving the Corinthians whereof to boast concerning him against his adversaries. His constraining motive is the transforming love of Christ, by whom God has wrought reconciliation between Himself and men, and has committed to the apostle the ministry of reconciliation.

1. For — Assigning the reason for the statement (2 Corinthians 4:17), that *affliction* leads to *exceeding glory*.

we know — assuredly (2 Corinthians 4:14 Job 19:25).

if — For *all* shall not die; many shall be “changed” without “dissolution” (1 Corinthians 15:51-53). If this daily *delivering unto death* (2 Corinthians 3:11) should end in actual death.

earthly — not the same as *earthy* (1 Corinthians 15:47). It stands in contrast to “in the heavens.”

house of *this* tabernacle — rather, “house of the tabernacle.” “House” expresses more *permanency* than belongs to the body; therefore the qualification, “of the tabernacle” (implying that it is *shifting*, not stationary), is added (compare Job 4:19 2 Peter 1:13,14). It thus answers to the tabernacle in the wilderness. Its wooden frame and curtains wore out in course of time when Israel dwelt in Canaan, and a fixed temple was substituted for it. The temple and the tabernacle in all essentials were one; there was the same ark, the same cloud of glory. Such is the relation between the “earthly” body and the resurrection body. The Holy Spirit is enshrined in the believer's body as in a sanctuary (1 Corinthians 3:16).

As the ark went first in taking down the wilderness tabernacle, so the soul (which like the ark is sprinkled with blood of atonement, and is the sacred deposit in the inmost shrine, ^{<4012>}2 Timothy 1:12) in the dissolution of the body; next the coverings were removed, answering to the flesh; lastly, the framework and boards, answering to the bones, which are last to give way (^{<4000>}Numbers 4:1-49). Paul, as a *tent-maker*, uses an image taken from his trade (^{<4183>}Acts 18:3).

dissolved — a mild word for death, in the case of believers.

we have — in *assured* prospect of possession, as certain as if it were in our hands, laid up “in the heavens” for us. The tense is *present* (compare ^{<4335>}John 3:36 6:47, “*hath*”).

a building of God — rather “*from* God.” A solid *building*, not a temporary *tabernacle* or *tent*. “*Our*” body stands in contrast to “*from* God.” For though our present body be also *from* God, yet it is not fresh and perfect from His hands, as our resurrection body shall be.

not made with hands — contrasted with houses erected by *man’s* hands (^{<4354>}1 Corinthians 15:44-49). So Christ’s body is designated, as contrasted with the tabernacle reared by Moses (^{<4143>}Mark 14:58 ^{<4301>}Hebrews 9:11). This “house” can only be the *resurrection body*, in contrast to the “earthly house of the tabernacle,” our present body. The intermediate state is not *directly* taken into account. A comma should separate “eternal,” and “in the heavens.”

2. For in this — *Greek*, “For *also* in this”; “herein” (^{<4180>}2 Corinthians 8:10). ALFORD takes it, “in this” tabernacle. ^{<4184>}2 Corinthians 5:4, which seems parallel, favors this. But the parallelism is sufficiently exact by making “in this we groan” refer generally to what was just said (^{<4182>}2 Corinthians 5:1), namely, that we cannot obtain our “house in the heavens” except our “earthly tabernacle” be first dissolved by death.

we groan — (^{<4182>}Romans 8:23) under the body’s weaknesses now and liability to death.

earnestly desiring to be clothed upon — translate, “earnestly *longing* to *have ourselves clothed upon*,” etc., namely, by being found *alive* at Christ’s coming, and so to escape *dissolution* by death (^{<4182>}2 Corinthians

5:1,4), and to have our heavenly body put on over the earthly. The groans of the saints prove the existence of the longing desire for the heavenly glory, a desire which cannot be planted by God within us in vain, as doomed to disappointment.

our house — different *Greek* from that in ^{<GRK>}2 Corinthians 5:1; translate, “our habitation,” “our domicile”; it has a more distinct reference to the *inhabitant* than the general term “house” (^{<GRK>}2 Corinthians 5:1) [BENGEL].

from heaven — This domicile is “*from heaven*” in its origin, and is to be brought to us by the Lord at His coming again “from heaven” (^{<STR>}1 Thessalonians 4:16). Therefore this “habitation” or “domicile” is not heaven itself.

3. If so be, etc. — Our “desire” holds good, should the Lord’s coming find us alive. Translate, “If so be that having ourselves clothed (with our natural body, compare ^{<GRK>}2 Corinthians 5:4) we shall not be found naked (stripped of our present body).”

4. For — resuming ^{<GRK>}2 Corinthians 5:2.

being burdened: not for that — rather, “*in that* we desire *not* to have ourselves unclothed (of our present body), but clothed upon (with our heavenly body).”

that mortality, etc. — rather, “that what is mortal (our mortal part) may be swallowed up of (absorbed and transformed into) life.” Believers shrink from, not the *consequences*, but the mere *act* of dying; especially as believing in the possibility of their being found alive at the Lord’s coming (^{<STR>}1 Thessalonians 4:15), and so of having their mortal body absorbed into the immortal without death. Faith does not divest us of all natural feeling, but subordinates it to higher feeling. Scripture gives no sanction to the contempt for the body expressed by philosophers.

5. wrought us — framed us by redemption, justification, and sanctification.

for the selfsame thing — “unto” it; namely, unto what is mortal of us being swallowed up in life (^{<GRK>}2 Corinthians 5:4).

who also — The oldest manuscripts omit “also.”

earnest of the Spirit — (See on ^{<402>}2 Corinthians 1:22). It is the Spirit (as “the first-fruits”) who creates in us the groaning desire for our coming deliverance and glory (^{<402>}Romans 8:23).

6. Translate as *Greek*, “Being therefore always confident and knowing,” etc. He had intended to have made the verb to this nominative, “we are willing” (rather, “well content”), but digressing on the word “confident” (^{<406>}2 Corinthians 5:6,7), he resumes the word in a different form, namely, as an assertion: “We are confident and well content.” “Being confident ... we are confident” may be the *Hebraic* idiom of emphasis; as ^{<407>}Acts 7:34, *Greek*, “Having seen, I have seen,” that is, I have *surely seen*.

always — under all trials. BENDEL makes the contrast between “*always* confident” and “confident” especially at the prospect of being “absent from the body.” We are confident as well *at all times*, as also most of all in the hope of a blessed departure.

whilst ... at home ... absent — Translate as *Greek*, “While we sojourn *in our home* in the body, we are *away from our home* in the Lord.” The image from a “house” is retained (compare ^{<408>}Philippians 3:20 ^{<409>}Hebrews 11:13-16 13:14).

7. we walk — in our Christian course here on earth.

not by sight — *Greek*, “not by appearance.” Our life is governed by faith in our immortal hope; not by the outward specious *appearance* of present things [TITTMANN, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*]. Compare “apparently,” the *Septuagint*, “by appearance,” ^{<410>}Numbers 12:8. WAHL supports *English Version*. ^{<411>}2 Corinthians 4:18 also confirms it (compare ^{<412>}Romans 8:24 ^{<413>}1 Corinthians 13:12,13). God has appointed in this life *faith* for our great duty, and in the next, vision for our reward [SOUTH] (^{<414>}1 Peter 1:8).

8. willing — literally, “well content.” Translate also, “To go (literally, *migrate*) from our home in the body, and to come to our home with the Lord.” We should prefer to be found alive at the Lord’s coming, and to be clothed upon with our heavenly body (^{<415>}2 Corinthians 5:2-4). But feeling, as we do, the sojourn in the body to be a separation from our true home “with the Lord,” we prefer even dissolution by death, so that *in the*

intermediate disembodied state we may go to be “with the Lord” (^{<1023>}Philippians 1:23). “To be with Christ” (the disembodied state) is distinguished from Christ’s coming to take us to *be with Him* in soul and body (^{<1044>}1 Thessalonians 4:14-17, “with the Lord”). Perhaps the disembodied spirits of believers have fullness of communion *with Christ* unseen; but not the mutual recognition of one another, until clothed with their visible bodies at the resurrection (compare ^{<1043>}1 Thessalonians 4:13:17), when they shall with joy recognize Christ’s image in each other perfect.

9. Wherefore — with such a sure “confidence” of being blessed, whether we die before, or be found alive at Christ’s coming.

we labor — literally, “make it our ambition”; the only lawful ambition.

whether present or absent — whether we be found at His coming present in the body, or absent from it.

accepted — *Greek*, “well-pleasing.”

10. appear — rather, “be made manifest,” namely, in our true character. So “appear,” *Greek*, “be manifested” (^{<1034>}Colossians 3:4; compare ^{<1005>}1 Corinthians 4:5). We are at all times, even now, manifest to God; *then* we shall be so to the assembled intelligent universe and to ourselves: for the judgment shall be not only in order to assign the everlasting portion to each, but to vindicate God’s righteousness, so that it shall be manifest to all His creatures, and even to the conscience of the sinner himself.

receive — His reward of grace proportioned to “the things done,” etc. (^{<1002>}2 Corinthians 9:6-9 ^{<1008>}2 John 1:8). Though salvation be of grace purely, independent of works, the saved may have a greater or less *reward*, according as he lives to, and labors for, Christ more or less. Hence there is scope for the holy “ambition” (see on ^{<1009>}2 Corinthians 5:9; ^{<1000>}Hebrews 6:10). This verse guards against the Corinthians supposing that *all* share in the house “from heaven” (^{<1002>}2 Corinthians 5:1,2). There shall be a searching judgment which shall sever the bad from the good, according to their respective deeds, the *motive* of the deeds being taken into account, not the mere external act; faith and love to God are the sole motives recognized by God as sound and good (^{<1028>}Matthew 12:36,37 25:35-45),

done in his body — The *Greek* may be, “by the instrumentality of the body”; but *English Version* is legitimate (compare *Greek*, ^{<427>}Romans 2:27). Justice requires that *substantially the same* body which has been the instrument of the unbelievers’ sin, should be the object of punishment. A proof of the essential identity of the natural and the resurrection body.

11. terror of the Lord — the coming judgment, so full of terrors to unbelievers [ESTIUS]. ELLICOTT and ALFORD, after GROTIUS and BENDEL, translate, “The fear of the Lord” (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 7:1 ^{<412>}Ecclesiastes 12:13 ^{<408>}Acts 9:31 ^{<408>}Romans 3:18 ^{<408>}Ephesians 5:21).

persuade — Ministers should use the terrors of the Lord to *persuade* men, not to rouse their enmity (^{<412>}Jude 1:23). BENDEL, ESTIUS, and ALFORD explain: “Persuade men” (by our whole lives, ^{<408>}2 Corinthians 5:13), namely, of our integrity as ministers. But this would have been expressed after “persuade,” had it been the sense. The connection seems as follows: He had been accused of seeking to please and win men, he therefore says (compare ^{<408>}Galatians 1:10), “It is as knowing the terror (or *fear*) of the Lord that we persuade men; but (whether *men* who hear our preaching recognize our sincerity or not) we are made manifest unto God as acting on such motives (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 4:2); and I trust also in your consciences.” Those so “manifested” need have no “terror” as to their being “manifested (*English Version*, ‘appear’) before the judgment-seat” (^{<408>}2 Corinthians 5:10).

12. For — the reason why he leaves the manifestation of his sincerity in preaching to their consciences (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 3:1), namely, his not wishing to “commend” himself again.

occasion to glory — (^{<404>}2 Corinthians 1:14), namely, as to our sincerity.

in appearance — *Greek*, “face” (compare ^{<404>}1 Samuel 16:7). The false teachers gloried in their *outward appearance*, and in external recommendations (^{<408>}2 Corinthians 11:18) their learning, eloquence, wisdom, riches, not in vital religion in their *heart*. Their conscience does not attest their inward sincerity, as mine does (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:12).

13. be — rather as *Greek*, “have been.” The contrast is between the single act implied by the past tense, “If we *have ever been* beside ourselves,” and

the habitual state implied by the present, “Or whether we *be* sober,” that is, *of sound mind*. beside ourselves — The accusation brought by Festus against him (~~401~~ Acts 26:24). The holy enthusiasm with which he spake of what God effected by His apostolic ministry, seemed to many to be *boasting madness*.

sober — humbling myself before you, and not using my apostolic power and privileges.

to God ... for your cause — The glorifying of his office was not for his own, but for God’s glory. The abasing of himself was in adaptation to their infirmity, to gain them to Christ (~~402~~ 1 Corinthians 9:22).

14. For — Accounting for his being “beside himself” with enthusiasm: the love of Christ towards us (in His death for us, the highest proof of it, ~~403~~ Romans 5:6-8), producing in turn love in us to Him, and not mere “terror” (~~404~~ 2 Corinthians 5:11).

constraineth us — with irresistible power *limits* us to the one great object to the exclusion of other considerations. The *Greek* implies *to compress forcibly* the energies into one channel. Love is *jealous* of any rival object engrossing the soul (~~405~~ 2 Corinthians 11:1-3).

because we thus judge — literally, “(as) having judged thus”; implying a judgment formed at conversion, and ever since regarded as a settled truth.

that if — that is, that *since*. But the oldest manuscripts omit “if.” “That one died for all (*Greek*, ‘in behalf of all’).” Thus the following clause will be, “Therefore all (literally, ‘*the* all,’ namely, for whom He ‘died’) died.” *His* dying is just the same as if *they all died*; and in their so dying, they died to sin and self, that they might live to God their Redeemer, whose henceforth they are (~~406~~ Romans 6:2-11 ~~407~~ Galatians 2:20 ~~408~~ Colossians 3:3 ~~409~~ 1 Peter 4:1-3).

15. they which live — in the present life (~~410~~ 2 Corinthians 4:11, “we which live”) [ALFORD]; or, they who are thus indebted to Him for life of soul as well as body [MENOCHIVS].

died for them — He does not add, “rose again for them,” a phrase not found in Paul’s language [BENGEL]. He died *in their stead*, He arose again

for their good, “*for (the effecting of) their justification*” (^{<610>}Romans 4:25), and that He might be their Lord (^{<610>}Romans 14:7-9). ELLICOTT and ALFORD join “for them” with both “died” and “rose again”; as Christ’s death is *our death*, so His resurrection is *our resurrection*; *Greek*, “Who for them died and rose again.”

not henceforth — *Greek*, “no longer”; namely, now that His death for them has taken place, and that they know that His death saves them from death eternal, and His resurrection life brings spiritual and everlasting life to them.

16. Wherefore — because of our settled *judgment* (^{<610>}2 Corinthians 5:14),

henceforth — since our knowing Christ’s constraining love in His death for us.

know we no man after the flesh — that is, according to his mere worldly and external relations (^{<610>}2 Corinthians 11:18 ^{<610>}John 8:15 ^{<610>}Philippians 3:4), as distinguished from what he is *according to the Spirit*, as a “new creature” (^{<610>}2 Corinthians 5:17). For instance, the outward distinctions of Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, slave or free, learned or unlearned, are lost sight of in the higher life of those who are dead in Christ’s death, and alive with Him in the new life of His resurrection (^{<610>}Galatians 2:6 3:28).

yea, though — The oldest manuscripts read, “if even.”

known Christ after the flesh — Paul when a Jew had looked for a temporal reigning, not a spiritual, Messiah. (He says “Christ,” not *Jesus*: for he had not known personally Jesus in the days of His flesh, but he had looked for Christ or the Messiah). When once he was converted he no longer “conferred with flesh and blood” (^{<610>}Galatians 1:16). He had this advantage over the Twelve, that as one born out of due time he had never known Christ save in His heavenly life. To the Twelve it was “expedient that Christ should go away” that the Comforter should come, and so they might know Christ in the higher spiritual aspect and in His new life-giving power, and not merely “after the flesh,” in the carnal aspect of Him (^{<610>}Romans 6:9-11 ^{<610>}1 Corinthians 15:45 ^{<610>}1 Peter 3:18 4:1,2). Doubtless Judaizing Christians at Corinth prided themselves on the mere fleshly (^{<610>}2 Corinthians 11:18) advantage of their belonging to Israel, the nation of

Christ, or on their having seen Him in the flesh, and thence claimed superiority over others as having a nearer connection with Him (⁴¹²2 Corinthians 5:12 ⁴¹⁰2 Corinthians 10:7). Paul here shows the true aim should be to know Him spiritually as new creatures (⁴¹²2 Corinthians 5:15,17), and that outward relations towards Him profit nothing (⁴⁰⁸Luke 18:19-21 ⁴¹⁷John 16:7,22 ⁴⁰⁸Philippians 3:3-10). This is at variance with both Romish Mariolatry and transubstantiation. Two distinct *Greek* verbs are used here for “know”; the first (“*know* we no man”) means “to be personally acquainted with”; the latter (“known Christ ... know ... more”) is to *recognize*, or estimate. Paul’s *estimate* of Christ, or the expected Messiah, was carnal, but is so now no more.

17. Therefore — connected with the words in ⁴¹⁶2 Corinthians 5:16, “We know Christ no more after the flesh.” As Christ has entered on His new heavenly life by His resurrection and ascension, so all who are “in Christ” (that is, united to Him by faith as the branch is In the vine) are new creatures (⁴¹⁸Romans 6:9-11). “New” in the *Greek* implies a new nature quite different from anything previously existing, not merely *recent*, which is expressed by a different *Greek* word (⁴¹⁵Galatians 6:15).

creature — literally, “creation,” and so the *creature* resulting from the creation (compare ⁴¹⁸John 3:3,5 ⁴¹⁰Ephesians 2:10 4:23 ⁴¹⁰Colossians 3:10,11). As we are “in Christ,” so “God was in Christ” (⁴¹²2 Corinthians 5:19):hence He is Mediator between God and us.

old things — selfish, carnal views (compare ⁴¹⁶2 Corinthians 5:16) of ourselves, of other men, and of Christ.

passed away — spontaneously, like the snow of early spring [BENGEL] before the advancing sun.

behold — implying an allusion to ⁴¹⁸Isaiah 43:19 65:17.

18. all — *Greek*, “THE.”

things — all our privileges in this new creation (⁴¹⁴2 Corinthians 5:14,15).

reconciled us — that is, *restored us* (“the world,” ⁴¹²2 Corinthians 5:19) *to His favor* by satisfying the claims of justice against us. Our position judicially considered in the eye of the law is altered, not as though the

mediation of Christ had made a change in God's character, nor as if the love of God was produced by the mediation of Christ; nay, the mediation and sacrifice of Christ was the provision of God's love, not its moving cause (^(~~183~~)Romans 8:32). Christ's blood was the price paid at the expense of God Himself, and was required to reconcile the exercise of mercy with justice, not as separate, but as the eternally harmonious attributes in the one and the same God (^(~~182~~)Romans 3:25,26). The *Greek* "reconcile" is *reciprocally* used as in the *Hebrew* Hithpahel conjugation, *appease*, *obtain the favor of*. ^(~~181~~)Matthew 5:24, "Be reconciled to thy brother"; that is, take measures that he be reconciled to thee, as well as thou to him, as the context proves. *Diallagethi*, however (^(~~181~~)Matthew 5:24), implying *mutual* reconciliation, is distinct from *Katallagethi* here, the latter referring to the *change* of status wrought in *one* of the two parties. The manner of God reconciling the world to Himself is implied (^(~~180~~)2 Corinthians 5:19), namely, by His "not imputing their trespasses to them." God not merely, as subsequently, reconciles the world by inducing them to lay aside their enmity, but in the first instance, does so by satisfying His own justice and righteous enmity against sin (^(~~179~~)Psalms 7:11). Compare ^(~~178~~)1 Samuel 29:4, "Reconcile himself unto his master"; not remove his own anger against his master, but his master's against him [ARCHBISHOP MAGEE, *Atonement*]. The reconciling of *men to God* by their laying aside their enmity is the consequence of God laying aside His just enmity against their sin, and follows at ^(~~177~~)2 Corinthians 5:20.

to us — ministers (^(~~176~~)2 Corinthians 5:19,20).

19. God was in Christ, reconciling — that is, God was BY Christ (*in virtue of Christ's intervention*) reconciling," etc. Was reconciling" implies the time when the act of reconciliation was being carried into effect (^(~~175~~)2 Corinthians 5:21), namely, when "God made Jesus, who knew no sin, to be sin for us." The compound of "was" and the participle "reconciling," instead of the imperfect (*Greek*), may also imply the *continuous* purpose of God, from before the foundation of the world, to reconcile man to Himself, whose fall was foreseen. The expression "IN Christ" for "by Christ" may be used to imply *additionally* that God was IN Christ (^(~~174~~)John 10:38 14:10), and so by Christ (the God-man) was reconciling ... The *Greek* for "by" or "through" Christ (the best manuscripts omit "Jesus"), ^(~~173~~)2 Corinthians 5:18, is different. "In" must mean here *in the*

person of Christ. The *Greek Katallasson* implies “changing” or *altering* the judicial status from one of condemnation to one of justification. The *atonement* (*at-one-ment*), or *reconciliation*, is the removal of the bar to peace and acceptance with a holy God, which His righteousness interposed against our sin. The first step towards restoring peace between us and God was on God’s side (^{<B18>}John 3:16). The *change* therefore *now* to be effected must be on the part of offending man, God the offended One being already reconciled. It is man, not God, who now needs to be reconciled, and to lay aside his enmity against God (^{<B18>}Romans 5:10,11). (“We have *received the atonement*” [*Greek, reconciliation*], cannot mean “We have received the laying aside of *our own* enmity”). Compare ^{<B18>}Romans 3:24,25.

the world — all men (^{<B10>}Colossians 1:20 ^{<B10>}1 John 2:2). The *manner* of the reconciling is by His “not imputing to men their trespasses,” but imputing them to Christ the Sin-bearer. There is no incongruity that a father should be offended with that son whom he loveth, and at that time offended with him when he loveth him. So, though God loved men whom He created, yet He was offended with them when they sinned, and gave His Son to suffer for them, that through that Son’s obedience He might be reconciled to them (reconcile them to Himself, that is, restore them WITH JUSTICE to His favor) [BISHOP PEARSON, *Exposition of the Creed*].

hath committed unto us — *Greek*, “hath put into our hands.” “Us,” that is, ministers.

20. for Christ ... in Christ’s stead — The *Greek* of both is the same: translate in both cases “on Christ’s behalf.”

beseech ... pray — rather, “entreat [plead with you] ... beseech.” Such “beseeching” is uncommon in the case of “ambassadors,” who generally stand on their dignity (compare ^{<B10>}2 Corinthians 10:2 ^{<B10>}1 Thessalonians 2:6,7).

be ye reconciled to God — *English Version* here inserts “ye,” which is not in the original, and which gives the wrong impression, as if it were emphatic thus: *God* is reconciled to you, be ye reconciled to God. The *Greek* expresses rather, God was the RECONCILER in Christ ... let this

reconciliation then have its designed effect. *Be reconciled to God*, that is, let God reconcile you to Himself (^{<458>}2 Corinthians 5:18,19).

21. For — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. The grand reason why they should be reconciled to God, namely, the great atonement in Christ provided by God, is stated without the “for” as being part of *the message of reconciliation* (^{<459>}2 Corinthians 5:19).

he — God.

sin — not *a sin offering*, which would destroy the antithesis to “righteousness,” and would make “sin” be used in different senses in the same sentence: not *a sinful person*, which would be untrue, and would require in the antithesis “righteous men,” not “righteousness”; but “sin,” that is, the representative *Sin-bearer* (vicariously) of *the aggregate sin* of all men past, present, and future. The sin of the world is one, therefore the *singular*, not the *plural*, is used; though its *manifestations* are manifold (^{<460>}John 1:29). “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the SIN of the world.” Compare “made a curse for us,” ^{<461>}Galatians 3:13.

for us — *Greek*, “in our behalf.” Compare ^{<464>}John 3:14, Christ being represented by the brazen *serpent*, the *form*, but not the *substance*, of the old serpent. At His death on the cross the sin-bearing for us was consummated.

knew no sin — by personal experience (^{<486>}John 8:46) [ALFORD].
^{<472>}Hebrews 7:26 ^{<472>}1 Peter 2:22 ^{<475>}1 John 3:5.

might be made — not the same *Greek* as the previous “made.” Rather, “might become.”

the righteousness of God — Not merely righteous, but *righteousness* itself; not merely righteousness, but the *righteousness of God*, because Christ is God, and what He is we are (^{<477>}1 John 4:17), and He is “made of God unto us righteousness.” As our sin is made over to Him, so His righteousness to us (in His having fulfilled all the righteousness of the law for us all, as our representative, ^{<476>}Jeremiah 23:6 ^{<477>}1 Corinthians 1:30). The innocent was punished voluntarily as if guilty, that the guilty might be gratuitously rewarded as if innocent (^{<472>}1 Peter 2:24). “Such are we in the sight of God the Father, as is the very Son of God himself” [HOOKER].

in him — by virtue of our standing in Him, and in union with Him
[ALFORD].

CHAPTER 6

2 CORINTHIANS 6:1-18.

HIS APOSTOLIC MINISTRY IS APPROVED BY FAITHFULNESS IN EXHORTATION, IN SUFFERINGS, IN EXHIBITION OF THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY GHOST: HIS largeness of heart to them calls for enlargement of their heart to him. EXHORTATIONS TO SEPARATION FROM POLLUTION.

1. workers together — with God (⁴⁵⁰⁴Acts 15:4 ⁴⁵⁰¹1 Corinthians 3:9). Not only as “ambassadors.”

beseech — entreat (⁴⁵⁰²2 Corinthians 5:20). He is describing his ministry, not exhorting directly.

you also — rather, “WE ALSO (as well as God, ⁴⁵⁰²2 Corinthians 5:20) beseech” or “entreat you”: ⁴⁵⁰⁴2 Corinthians 6:14,15, on to ⁴⁵⁰²2 Corinthians 7:1, is part of this entreaty or exhortation.

in vain — by making the grace of God a ground for continuance in sin (⁴⁵⁰²2 Corinthians 6:3). By a life of sin, showing that the word of reconciliation has been *in vain*, so far as you are concerned (⁴⁵⁰²Hebrews 12:15 ⁴⁵⁰⁴Jude 1:4). “The grace of God” here, is “the reconciliation” provided by God’s love (⁴⁵⁰²2 Corinthians 5:18,19; compare ⁴⁵⁰²Galatians 2:2).

2. For — God’s own promise is the ground of our exhortation.

he saith — *God the Father* saith to God the Son, and so to all believers who are regarded as one with Him.

heard thee — In the eternal purposes of my love I have hearkened to thy prayer for the salvation of thy people (compare ⁴⁵⁰²John 17:9,15,20,24).

accepted ... accepted — The *Greek* of the latter is more emphatic, “well-accepted.” What was “*an accepted time*” in the prophecy (⁴⁵⁰²Isaiah 49:8,

Hebrew, “in the season of grace”) becomes “*the well-accepted time*” in the fulfillment (compare ^{<5913>}Psalm 69:13). As it is *God’s* time of *receiving* sinners, *receive ye* His grace: *accept* (^{<4001>}2 Corinthians 6:1) the word of reconciliation in His *accepted* time.

in the day of salvation — “in *a* day of salvation” (^{<4005>}Luke 4:18,19,21 19:42 ^{<8007>}Hebrews 3:7).

3. Resuming the connection with ^{<4001>}2 Corinthians 6:1, interrupted by the parenthetical ^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 6:2. “Giving no offense” (compare ^{<6001>}1 Corinthians 10:33), “approving ourselves,” and all the other participles down to ^{<4003>}2 Corinthians 6:10, are nominatives to “we also entreat you” (^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 6:1), to show the pains he took to enforce his exhortation by example, as well as precept [ALFORD]. “Offense” would be given, if we were without “patience” and the other qualifications which he therefore subjoins (compare ^{<6143>}Romans 14:13).

4. Translate, to mark the true order of the *Greek* words, “in everything, as God’s ministers recommending ourselves,” that is, that our hearers may give our *message* a favorable hearing, through our consistency in every respect, not that they may glorify us. Alluding to ^{<4001>}2 Corinthians 3:1, he implies, *We commend ourselves*, not like them by word, but by deed.

patience — (^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 12:12). Put first. “Pure-minded” follows (^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 6:6). Three triplets of trials exercising the “patience” (patient endurance) follow: Afflictions (or “tribulations”), necessities, distresses (or “straits”); stripes, imprisonments, tumults; labors, watchings, fastings. The first triplet expresses afflictions generally; the second, those in particular arising from the violence of men; the third, those *which* he brought on himself directly or indirectly.

5. stripes — (^{<4012>}2 Corinthians 11:23,24 ^{<4013>}Acts 16:23).

imprisonments — (^{<4012>}2 Corinthians 11:23). He had been, doubtless, elsewhere imprisoned besides at Philippi when he wrote this Epistle.

tumults — (^{<4013>}Acts 13:50 14:5,19 16:22; and recently ^{<4013>}Acts 19:23-41).

labors — in the cause of Christ (^{<4012>}2 Corinthians 11:23 ^{<6102>}Romans 16:12).

watchings — (^{<4012>}2 Corinthians 11:27). Sleepless nights.

fastings — The context here refers to his *trials*, rather than *devotional exercises* (compare ^{<412>}2 Corinthians 11:27). Thus “foodlessness” would seem to be the sense (compare ^{<4011>}1 Corinthians 4:11 ^{<4042>}Philippians 4:12). But the usual sense of the *Greek* is *fasts*, in the strict sense; and in ^{<412>}2 Corinthians 11:27 it is spoken of independently of “hunger and thirst.” (Compare ^{<425>}Luke 2:37 ^{<443>}Acts 10:30 14:23). However, ^{<465>}Matthew 15:32 ^{<408>}Mark 8:3, justify the sense, more favored by the context, *foodlessness*, though a rare use of the word. GAUSSEN remarks “The apostles combine the highest offices with the humblest exterior: as everything in the Church was to be cast in the mould of death and resurrection, the cardinal principle throughout Christianity.”

6. By ... by, etc. — rather, as *Greek*, “In ... in,” implying not the instrument, but the sphere or element in which his ministry moved.

knowledge — spiritual: in Gospel mysteries, unattainable by mere reason (^{<406>}1 Corinthians 2:6-16 ^{<406>}2 Corinthians 3:6,17,18).

long-suffering ... kindness — associated with “charity” or “love” (^{<434>}1 Corinthians 13:4), as here.

by the Holy Ghost — in virtue of His influences which produce these graces, and other gifts, “love unfeigned” being the foremost of them.

7. By the word of truth, by the power of God — rather, “IN ... in,” etc. As to “the word of truth” (compare ^{<406>}2 Corinthians 4:2 ^{<406>}Colossians 1:5), and “the (miraculous) power of God” (^{<406>}2 Corinthians 4:7); ^{<404>}1 Corinthians 2:4, “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”

by the armor — *Greek*, “through” or “by means of the armor.” “Righteousness,” which is the *breastplate* alone in ^{<443>}Ephesians 6:13-17, here is made the *whole* Christian panoply (compare ^{<404>}2 Corinthians 10:4).

on ... right ... and ... left — that is, guarding on every side.

8. Translate, “*Through glory and dishonor (disgrace)*,” namely, from *those in authority*, and accruing to us *present*. “By,” or “*through* evil report and good report,” from *the multitude*, and affecting us absent [BENGEL]. Regarded “as deceivers” by those who, *not knowing* (^{<406>}2 Corinthians 6:9), *dishonor* and give us an *evil report*; “as true,” by those who “know” (^{<406>}2

Corinthians 6:9) us in the real “glory” of our ministry. In proportion as one has more or less of *glory* and *good report*, in that degree has he more or less of *dishonor* and *evil report*.

9. unknown ... yet well known — “unknown” in our true character to those who “evil report” of us, “well known” to those who hold us in “good report” (2nd Corinthians 6:8). CONYBEARE explains, “Unknown by men, yet *acknowledged by God*” (1st Corinthians 13:12). Perhaps *both God and men* (believers) are intended as knowing him (2nd Corinthians 5:11 11:6).

dying ... live — (2nd Corinthians 1:9 4:10,11 11:23). Compare GAUSSEN’S remark, see on 2nd Corinthians 6:5. “Behold” calls attention to the fact as something beyond all expectation.

chastened ... not killed — realizing Psalm 118:18.

10. The “as” no longer is used to express the opinion of his adversaries, but the real state of him and his fellow laborers.

making many rich — Spiritually (1st Corinthians 1:5), after the example of our Lord, who “by His poverty made many rich” (2nd Corinthians 8:9).

having nothing — Whatever of earthly goods we have, and these are few, we have as though we had not; as tenants removable at will, not owners (1st Corinthians 7:30).

possessing all things — The *Greek* implies *firm possession, holding fast in possession* (compare 1st Corinthians 3:21,22). The things both of the present and of the future are, in the truest sense, the believer’s in possession, for he possesses them all in Christ, his lasting possession, though the full *fruition* of them is reserved for the future eternity.

11. mouth ... open unto you — I use no concealment, such as some at Corinth have insinuated (2nd Corinthians 4:2). I use all freedom and openness of speech to you as to beloved friends. Hence he introduces here, “O Corinthians” (compare Philippians 4:15). The *enlargement* of his *heart* towards them (2nd Corinthians 7:3) produced his *openness of mouth*, that is, his unreserved expression of his inmost feelings. As an unloving man is *narrow* in heart, so the apostle’s heart is *enlarged* by love,

so as to take in his converts at Corinth, not only with their graces, but with their many shortcomings (compare ^{<100>}1 Kings 4:29 ^{<118>}Psalms 119:32 ^{<205>}Isaiah 60:5).

12. Any constraint ye feel towards me, or narrowness of heart, is not from want of largeness of heart on my part towards you, but from want of it on your part towards me.

bowels — that is, affections (compare ^{<725>}2 Corinthians 12:15).

not straitened in us — that is, for want of room in our hearts to take you in.

13. Translate, “As a recompense in the same kind ... be enlarged also yourselves” [ELLICOTT]. “In the same way” as my heart is enlarged towards you (^{<111>}2 Corinthians 6:11), and “as a recompense” for it (^{<112>}Galatians 4:12).

I speak as unto *my* children — as children would naturally be expected to *recompense* their parents’ love with similar love.

14. Be not — Greek, “*Become not.*”

unequally yoked — “yoked with one alien in spirit.” The image is from the symbolical precept of the law (^{<119>}Leviticus 19:19), “Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind”; or the precept (^{<120>}Deuteronomy 22:10), “Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together.” Compare ^{<100>}Deuteronomy 7:3, forbidding marriages with the heathen; also ^{<119>}1 Corinthians 7:39. The believer and unbeliever are utterly *heterogeneous*. Too close intercourse with unbelievers in other relations also is included (^{<116>}2 Corinthians 6:16 ^{<118>}1 Corinthians 8:10 10:14).

fellowship — literally, “share,” or “participation.”

righteousness — the state of the believer, justified by faith.

unrighteousness — rather, as always translated elsewhere, “iniquity”; the state of the unbeliever, the fruit of unbelief.

light — of which believers are the children (^{<118>}1 Thessalonians 5:5).

15. Belial — *Hebrew*, “worthlessness, unprofitableness, wickedness.” As Satan is opposed to God, and Antichrist to Christ; Belial being here opposed to Christ, must denounce all manner of Antichristian uncleanness [BENGEL].

he that believeth with an infidel — Translate, “a believer with an unbeliever.”

16. agreement — accordance of sentiments (compare ^{<1182>}1 Kings 18:21 ^{<497>}Ephesians 5:7,11).

the temple of God — that is, you believers (^{<4196>}1 Corinthians 3:16 6:19).

with idols — Compare Dagon before the ark (^{<907>}1 Samuel 5:2-4).

as — “*even as* God said.” Quotation from ^{<672>}Leviticus 26:12 ^{<2613>}Jeremiah 31:33 32:38 ^{<572>}Ezekiel 37:26,27; compare ^{<181>}Matthew 28:20 ^{<342>}John 14:23.

walk in them — rather, “*among* them.” As “ *dwell*” implies the divine *presence*, so “*walk*,” the divine *operation*. God’s dwelling in the body and soul of saints may be illustrated by its opposite, demoniacal possession of body and soul.

my people — rather, “they shall be *to me* a people.”

17. Quoted from ^{<251>}Isaiah 52:11, with the freedom of one inspired, who gives variations sanctioned by the Holy Spirit.

be ye separate — “be separated” (^{<3017>}Hosea 4:17).

touch not the unclean thing — rather, “*anything* unclean” (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 7:1 ^{<310>}Micah 2:10). *Touching* is more polluting, as implying participation, than seeing.

receive you — The *Greek* implies, “to myself”; as persons heretofore out of doors, but now admitted *within* (^{<491>}2 Corinthians 5:1-10). With this accords the clause, “Come *out from among* them,” namely, so as to be received to me. So ^{<3404>}Ezekiel 20:41, “I will accept you”; and ^{<369>}Zephaniah 3:19, “gather her that was driven out.” “The intercourse of believers with the world should resemble that of angels, who, when they have been sent a message from heaven, discharge their office with the utmost promptness,

and joyfully fly back home to the presence of God” (~~409~~1 Corinthians 7:31 5:9,10).

18. Translate, “I will be to you *in the relation of* a Father, and ye shall be *to me in the relation of* sons and daughters.” This is a still more endearing relation than (~~416~~2 Corinthians 6:16), “I will be their *God*, and they ... My *people*.” Compare the promise to Solomon (~~430~~1 Chronicles 28:6 ~~238~~Isaiah 43:6 ~~621~~Revelation 21:3,7 ~~280~~Jeremiah 31:1,9).

Lord Almighty — *The Lord the Universal Ruler*: nowhere else found but in Revelation. The greatness of the Promiser enhances the greatness of the promises.

CHAPTER 7

2 CORINTHIANS 7:1-16.

SELF-PURIFICATION THEIR DUTY RESULTING FROM THE FOREGOING. HIS LOVE TO THEM, AND JOY AT THE GOOD EFFECTS ON THEM OF HIS FORMER EPISTLE, AS REPORTED BY TITUS.

1. cleanse ourselves — This is the conclusion of the exhortation (2 Corinthians 6:1,14 1 John 3:3 Revelation 22:11).

filthiness — “the unclean thing” (2 Corinthians 6:17).

of the flesh — for instance, *fornication*, prevalent at Corinth (1 Corinthians 6:15-18).

and spirit — for instance, *idolatry*, direct or indirect (1 Corinthians 6:9 8:1,7 10:7,21,22). The spirit (Psalm 32:2) receives pollution through the flesh, the instrument of uncleanness.

perfecting holiness — The *cleansing away* impurity is a positive step towards holiness (2 Corinthians 6:17). It is not enough to begin; the end crowns the work (Galatians 3:3 5:7 Philippians 1:6).

fear of God — often conjoined with the consideration of the most glorious promises (2 Corinthians 5:11 Hebrews 4:1). Privilege and promise go hand in hand.

2. Receive us — with *enlarged* hearts (2 Corinthians 6:13).

we have wronged ... corrupter ... defrauded no man — (compare 2 Corinthians 7:9). This is the ground on which he asks their reception of (making room for) him in their hearts. We *wronged* none by an undue exercise of apostolic authority; 2 Corinthians 7:13 gives an instance in point. We have corrupted none, namely, by beguilements and flatteries, while preaching “another Gospel,” as the false teachers did (2

Corinthians 11:3,4). We have defrauded none by “making a gain” of you (^{<4127>}2 Corinthians 12:17). Modestly he leaves them to supply the *positive* good which he had done; suffering all things himself that they might be benefited (^{<4009>}2 Corinthians 7:9,12 ^{<4123>}2 Corinthians 12:13).

3. In excusing myself, I do not accuse you, as though you suspected me of such things [MENOCHIUS], or as though you were guilty of such things; for I speak only of the false apostles [ESTIUS and *Greek commentators*]. Rather, “as though you were ungrateful and treacherous” [BEZA].

I have said before — in ^{<4161>}2 Corinthians 6:11,12; compare ^{<5100>}Philippians 1:7.

die and live with you — the height of friendship. I am ready to die and live with you and for you (^{<5100>}Philippians 1:7,20,24 2:17,18). Compare as to Christ, ^{<6011>}John 10:11.

4. boldness of speech — (compare ^{<4161>}2 Corinthians 6:11).

glorying of you — Not only do I speak with unreserved openness *to you*, but I *glory* (boast) *greatly to others in your behalf*, in speaking *of you*.

filled with comfort — at the report of Titus (^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 7:6,7,9,13 ^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 1:4).

exceeding joyful — *Greek*, I *overabound* with joy (^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 7:7,9,16).

our tribulation — described in ^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 7:5; also in ^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 4:7,8 6:4,5.

5. *Greek*, “For also” (for “*even*”). This verse is thus connected with ^{<4123>}2 Corinthians 2:12,13, “When I came to Troas, I had no rest in my *spirit*”; so “*also*” now, when I came to Macedonia, my “*flesh*” had no rest (he, by the term “flesh,” excepts his *spiritual* consolations) from “*fightings*” with adversaries “without” (^{<4162>}1 Corinthians 5:12), and from fears for the Corinthian believers “within” the Church, owing to “false brethren” (^{<4123>}2 Corinthians 11:26). Compare ^{<4008>}2 Corinthians 4:8 ^{<4525>}Deuteronomy 32:25, to which he seems to allude.

6. Translate in the order required by the *Greek*, “But he that comforteth those that are cast down, even God.” Those that are of an high spirit are not susceptible of such comfort.

7. when he told us — *Greek*, “telling us.” We shared in the comfort which Titus felt in recording your desire (⁴⁰⁷³2 Corinthians 7:13). *He* rejoiced in telling the news; *we* in hearing them [ALFORD].

earnest desire — *Greek*, “longing desire,” namely, *to see me* [GROTIUS]; or, in general, *towards me, to please me*.

mourning — over your own remissness in not having immediately punished the sin (⁴⁰⁸¹1 Corinthians 5:1, etc.). which called forth my rebuke.

fervent mind — *Greek*, “zeal” (compare ⁴⁰⁷⁰2 Corinthians 7:1 ⁴¹²⁷1 John 2:17).

toward me — *Greek*, “for me”; for my sake. They *in Paul’s behalf* showed the zeal against the sin which Paul would have shown had he been present.

rejoiced the more — more than before, at the mere coming of Titus.

8. with a letter — *Greek*, “in the letter” namely, the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

I do not repent, though I did repent — Translate, “I do not *regret* it, though I did *regret* it.” The *Greek* words for *regret* and *repent* are distinct. Paul was almost regretting, through parental tenderness, his having used rebukes calculated to grieve the Corinthians; but now that he has learned from Titus the salutary effect produced on them, he no longer regrets it.

for I perceive, etc. — This is explanatory of “I did repent” or “regret it,” and is parenthetical (“for I perceive *that* that Epistle did make you sorry, though it was but for a season”).

9. Now I rejoice — Whereas “I did repent” or regret having made you sorry by my letter, I rejoice NOW, not that ye were caused sorrow, but that your sorrow resulted in your repentance.

ye sorrowed — rather, as before, “ye were made sorry.”

after a godly manner — literally, “according to God,” that is, your sorrow having regard to God, and rendering your mind conformable to God (^{<4142>}Romans 14:22 ^{<4146>}1 Peter 4:6).

that — Translate in *Greek* order, “to the end that (compare ^{<4119>}2 Corinthians 11:9) ye might in nothing receive damage from us,” which ye would have received, had your sorrow been other than that “after a godly manner” (^{<4102>}2 Corinthians 7:10).

10. worketh ... worketh — In the best *Greek* reading the translation is, “worketh (simply) ... worketh out.” “Sorrow” is not repentance, but, where it is “godly,” “worketh” it; that is, *contributes* or *tends to* it (the same *Greek* word is in ^{<4131>}Romans 13:10). The “sorrow of the world” (that is, such as is felt by the worldly) “worketh out,” as its *result at last*, (eternal) death (the same *Greek* verb is in ^{<4107>}2 Corinthians 4:17; also see on ^{<4147>}2 Corinthians 4:17).

repentance ... not to be repented of — There is not in the *Greek* this play on words, so that the word qualified is not “repentance” merely, but “repentance unto salvation”; this, he says, *none will ever regret*, however attended with “sorrow” at the time. “*Repentance*” implies a *coming to a right mind*; “regret” implies merely uneasiness of feeling at the past or present, and is applied even to the *remorse* of Judas (^{<4171>}Matthew 27:3; *Greek*, “stricken with remorse,” not as *English Version*, “repented himself”); so that, though always accompanying repentance, it is not always accompanied by repentance. “Repentance” removes the impediments in the way of “salvation” (to which “death,” namely, of the soul, is opposed). “The sorrow of the world” is not at the *sin* itself, but at its *penal consequences*: so that the tears of pain are no sooner dried up, than the pleasures of ungodliness are renewed. So Pharaoh, ^{<4187>}Exodus 9:27,28-30; and Saul, ^{<4153>}1 Samuel 15:23-30. Compare ^{<4191>}Isaiah 9:13 ^{<4161>}Revelation 16:10,11. Contrast David’s “godly sorrow,” ^{<4123>}2 Samuel 12:13, and Peter’s, ^{<4155>}Matthew 26:75.

11. Confirmation of ^{<4100>}2 Corinthians 7:10 from the Corinthians’ own experience.

carefulness — solicitude, literally, “diligence”; opposed to their past negligence in the matter.

in you — *Greek* “for you.”

yea — not only “carefulness” or *diligence*, but also “clearing of yourselves,” namely, to me by Titus: anxiety to show you disapproved of the deed.

indignation — against the offender.

fear — of the wrath of God, and of sinning any more [SCLATER and CALVIN]; fear of Paul [GROTIUS], (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 4:2,19-21).

vehement desire — longing for restoration to Paul’s approval [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. “Fear” is in spite of one’s self. “Longing desire” is spontaneous, and implies strong love and an aspiration for correction [CALVIN]. “Desire” *for the presence of Paul*, as he had given them the hope of it (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 4:19 16:5) [GROTIUS and ESTIUS].

zeal — for right and for God’s honor against what is wrong. Or, “for the good of the soul of the offender” [BENGEL].

revenge — *Translate*, “Exacting of punishment” (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 5:2,3). Their “carefulness” was exhibited in the six points just specified: “clearing of themselves,” and “indignation” in relation to themselves; “fear” and “vehement desire” in respect to the apostle; “zeal” and “revenge” in respect to the offender [BENGEL]; (compare ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 7:7).

In all — the respects just stated.

clear — *Greek*, “pure,” namely, from complicity in the guilty deed. “Approved yourselves,” *Greek*, “commended yourselves.” Whatever suspicion of complicity rested on you (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 5:2,6) through your former remissness, you have cleared off by your present strenuousness in reprobating the deed.

12. though I wrote unto you — “making you sorry with my letter” (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 7:8).

his cause that suffered wrong — the father of the incestuous person who had his father’s wife (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 5:1). The father, thus it seems, was alive.

that our care for you, etc. — Some of the oldest manuscripts read thus, “That YOUR care for us might be made manifest unto you,” etc. But the words, “unto you,” thus, would be rather obscure; still the obscurity of the genuine reading may have been the very reason for the change being made by correctors into the reading of *English Version*. ALFORD explains the reading: “He wrote in order to bring out their zeal on his behalf (that is, to obey his command), and make it manifest *to themselves* in God’s sight, that is, to bring out *among them* their zeal to regard and obey him.” But some of the oldest manuscripts and versions (including the *Vulgate* and old *Italian*) support *English Version*. And the words, “to you,” suit it better than the other reading. ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 2:4, “I wrote ... that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly *unto you*,” plainly accords with it, and disproves ALFORD’s assertion that *English Version* is *inconsistent with the fact* as to the purpose of his letter. His writing, he says, was not so much for the sake of the individual offender, or the individual offended, but from his “earnest care” or concern for the welfare of the Church.

13. The oldest manuscripts read thus, “Therefore (*Greek*, ‘for this *cause*,’ namely, because our aim has been attained) we have been (*English Version*, ‘were,’ is not so accurate) comforted; yea (*Greek*, ‘but’), in OUR comfort we exceedingly the more joyed for the joy of Titus,” etc. (compare ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 7:7).

14. anything — that is, at all.

I am not ashamed — “I am not put to shame,” namely, by learning from Titus that you did not realize the high character I gave him of you.

as ... all things ... in truth, even so our boasting ... is found a truth — As our speaking *in general* to you was true (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:18), so our particular boasting to Titus *concerning you* is now, by his report, proved to be truth (compare ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 9:2). Some oldest manuscripts read expressly, “concerning you”; this in either reading is the *sense*.

15. his inward affection — literally, “bowels” (compare ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 6:12 ^{<400>}Philippians 1:8 2:1 ^{<400>}Colossians 3:12).

obedience — (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 2:9).

fear and trembling — with trembling anxiety to obey my wishes, and fearful lest there should be aught in yourselves to offend him and me (^{<4771>}2 Corinthians 7:11; compare ^{<4771>}1 Corinthians 2:3).

16. therefore — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. The conclusion is more emphatical without it.

that I have confidence in you in all things — rather, as *Greek*, “that in everything I *am of good courage concerning* (literally, ‘in the case of’) you,” as contrasted with my former doubts concerning you.

CHAPTER 8

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-24.

THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS; THE READINESS OF THE MACEDONIANS A PATTERN TO THE CORINTHIANS; CHRIST THE HIGHEST PATTERN; EACH IS TO GIVE WILLINGLY AFTER HIS ABILITY; TITUS AND TWO OTHERS ARE THE AGENTS ACCREDITED TO COMPLETE THE COLLECTION.

1. we do you to wit — *we make known to you.*

the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia — Their liberality was not of themselves naturally, but of God's grace bestowed on them, and enabling them to be the instrument of God's "grace" to others (⁴¹⁰2 Corinthians 8:6,19). The importance given in this Epistle to the collection, arose as well from Paul's engagement (⁴⁰¹Galatians 2:10), as also chiefly from his hope to conciliate the Judaizing Christians at Jerusalem to himself and the Gentile believers, by such an act of love on the part of the latter towards their Jewish brethren.

2. trial of affliction — The *Greek* expresses, "in affliction (or, 'tribulation') which *tested* them"; literally, "in a great testing of affliction."

abundance of their joy — The greater was the depth of their poverty, the greater was the abundance of their joy. A delightful contrast in terms, and triumph, in fact, of spirit over flesh.

their deep poverty — *Greek*, "their poverty down to the death of it."

abounded unto the riches of their liberality — another beautiful contrast in terms: their *poverty* had the effect, not of producing stinted gifts, but of "abounding in the *riches* of liberality" (not as *Margin*, "simplicity"; though the idea of *singleness* of motive to God's glory and man's good, probably enters into the idea); (compare ⁶¹⁰Romans 12:8, and

Margin; ^{<401>}2 Corinthians 9:11, *Margin*; see on ^{<406>}2 Corinthians 9:13; ^{<405>}James 1:5).

3-5. they were willing — rather, supply from ^{<405>}2 Corinthians 8:5, the ellipsis thus, “According to their power ... yea, and beyond their power, THEY GAVE.”

of themselves — not only not being besought, but themselves beseeching us.

4. that we would receive — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Translate therefore, “Beseeching of us ... the grace and fellowship of (that is, to grant them *the favor of sharing in*) the ministering unto the saints.” The Macedonian contributions must have been from Philippi, because Philippi was the only church that contributed to Paul’s support (^{<400>}Philippians 4:10,15,16).

5. And *this they did*, not as we hoped — Translate, “And not as we hoped (that is, far beyond our hopes), but their own selves gave they first to the Lord.” “First,” not indicating priority of time, but first of all, *above all in importance*. The giving of themselves takes precedence of their other gifts, as being the motive which led them to the latter (^{<451>}Romans 15:16).

by the will of God — not “*according to the will of God*,” but “*moved by the will of God*, who made them willing” (^{<406>}Philippians 2:13). It is therefore called (^{<401>}2 Corinthians 8:1), “the grace of God.”

6. Insomuch that — As we saw the Macedonians’ alacrity in giving, we could not but exhort Titus, that as we collected in Macedonia, so he in Corinth should complete the work of collecting which he had already begun there, lest ye, the wealthy people of Corinth, should be outdone in liberality by the poor Macedonians.

as he had begun — *Greek*, “*previously begun*,” namely, the collection at Corinth, *before* the Macedonians began to contribute, during the visit to Corinth from which he had just returned.

finish in you the same grace — complete among you this act of grace or beneficence on your part.

also — as well as other things which he had to do among them [ALFORD].

7. in faith — (2nd Corinthians 1:24).

utterance — (See on 1st Corinthians 1:5). Not as ALFORD, “doctrine” or “word.”

knowledge — (1st Corinthians 8:1).

diligence — in everything that is good.

your love to us — literally, “love from you (that is, on your part) in us” (that is, which has us for its object; which is felt *in the case of us*).

8. not by commandment — “not by way of commandment.”

but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and etc. — rather, “But by (mention of) the forwardness of others (as an inducement to you), and to prove (literally, ‘proving’) the sincerity of your love.” The *Greek* is “*by means of*,” not “*on account of* the forwardness,” etc. BENDEL, ELLICOTT, and others translate, “*By means of* the forwardness of others, Proving the sincerity of your love ALSO.” The former is the simpler construction in the *Greek*.

9. ye know the grace — the act of gratuitous love whereby the Lord emptied Himself of His previous heavenly glory (Philippians 2:6,7) for your sakes.

became poor — Yet this is not demanded of you (2nd Corinthians 8:14); but merely that, without impoverishing yourselves, you should relieve others with your abundance. If the Lord did so much more, and at so much heavier a cost, for your sakes; much more may you do an act of love to your brethren at so little a sacrifice of self.

might be rich — in the heavenly glory which constitutes His riches, and all other things, so far as is really good for us (compare 1st Corinthians 3:21,22).

10. advice — Herein he does not (as some misinterpret the passage) disclaim inspiration for the advice he gives; but under the Spirit, states that it is his “opinion” [ALFORD] or “judgment” [ELLICOTT, and others], not a *command*, that so their offering might be free and spontaneous.

this — my giving you an *advice*, not a command.

who have begun before — “*seeing that ye have begun before*” the *Macedonian churches*; “a year ago” should be connected with this clause.

not only to do, but also to be forward — There were three steps:

(1) the *forwardness*, more literally, “the will”;

(2) the *setting about* it, literally, “doing it”;

(3) *completion* of it [ALFORD]. In the two former, not only the *act*, but the *intention*, the Corinthians *preceded the Macedonians*. BENDEL explains, “Not only to do” FOR THE PAST YEAR, “but also to be forward” or *willing* FOR THIS YEAR. ELLICOTT translates, “already,” instead of “before”: “Ye began already a year ago, not only to do, but also to be forward.” It appears hence, that something had been done in the matter a year before; other texts, however, show the collection was not yet paid (compare ⁴⁰⁸¹2 Corinthians 8:11 and ⁴⁰⁸⁰2 Corinthians 9:5,7). This agrees with one, and only one supposition, namely, that every man had laid by in store the fund from which he was afterwards to contribute, the very case which is shown by ⁴⁰⁸¹1 Corinthians 16:2 to have existed [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*].

11. perform — “complete the doing also” (see on ⁴⁰⁸⁰2 Corinthians 8:10).

a readiness to will — *Greek*, “the readiness of will”; referring to ⁴⁰⁸⁰2 Corinthians 8:10, where the *Greek* for “to be forward,” ought to be translated as here, “to will.”

performance — “completion” [ALFORD], The godly should show the same zeal to finish, as well as to begin well, which the worldly exhibit in their undertakings (⁴⁰⁸⁵Jeremiah 44:25).

12. For — Following up the rule “out of that which ye have” (⁴⁰⁸¹2 Corinthians 8:11), and no more.

a willing mind — rather, as *Greek*, “the readiness,” namely, to will, referring to ⁴⁰⁸¹2 Corinthians 8:11.

accepted — *Greek* “favorably accepted.”

according to that a man hath — The oldest manuscripts omit “a man.” Translate, “According to whatsoever it have”; the *willing mind*, or

“readiness” to will, is personified [ALFORD]. Or better, as BENGEL, “*He is accepted according to whatsoever he have*”; so ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 9:7, The Lord loveth a cheerful *giver*.” Compare as to David, ^{<108>}1 Kings 8:18. God accepts the will for the deed. He judges not according to what a man has the opportunity to do, but according to what he would do if he had the opportunity (compare ^{<118>}Mark 14:8; and the widow’s mite, ^{<21>}Luke 21:3,4).

13. For — Supply from ^{<408>}2 Corinthians 8:8, “I speak.” My aim is not that others (namely, the saints at Jerusalem) may be relieved at the cost of your being “distressed” (so the *Greek* for “burdened”). The golden rule is, “Love thy neighbor *as thyself*,” not *more* than thyself.

14. by an equality — “by the rule of equality” [ALFORD]: literally, “Out of equality.”

now at this time — *Greek*, “at the present juncture” or season.

that their abundance also — The *Greek* being distinct from the previous “that,” translate, “in order that,” namely, *at another season*, when your relative circumstances may be reversed. The reference is solely to *temporal* wants and supplies. Those, as BENGEL, who quote ^{<517>}Romans 15:27 for interpreting it of spiritual supplies from the Jews to the Gentiles, forget that ^{<517>}Romans 15:27 refers to the *past* benefit spiritually, which the Jews have conferred on the Gentiles, as a motive to *gratitude* on the part of the latter, not to a *prospective* benefit to be looked for from the former, which the text refers to.

15. (^{<108>}Exodus 16:18; *Septuagint*). As God gave an equal portion of manna to all the Israelites, whether they could gather much or little; so Christians should promote by liberality an equality, so that none should need the necessities of life while others have superfluities. “Our luxuries should yield to our neighbor’s comforts; and our comforts to his necessities” [J. HOWARD].

16, 17. Returning to the subject of ^{<408>}2 Corinthians 8:6.

for you — Translate, “Which put the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus,” as was in myself. My care for you led me to “*desire*” him (^{<408>}2 Corinthians 8:6,17, “*exhortation*,” the same *Greek*); but Titus had of

himself the same care, whence he “accepted (gladly) my exhortation” (^{<4087>}2 Corinthians 8:17) to go to you (^{<4086>}2 Corinthians 8:6).

17. being more forward — more earnest than to need such exhortation.

he went — *Greek*, “went forth.” We should say, *he is going forth*; but the ancients put the *past* tense in letter writing, as the things will have been past by the time that the correspondent, receives the letter. “Of his own accord,” that is, it is true he has been exhorted by me to go, but he shows that he has anticipated my desires, and already, “of his own accord,” has desired to go.

18. the brother, whose praise is in the gospel — whose praise is known in connection with the Gospel: *Luke* may be meant; not that “the Gospel” here refers to his *written* Gospel; but the language implies some one well known throughout the churches, and at that time with Paul, as Luke then was (^{<4016>}Acts 20:6). Not a Macedonian, as appears from ^{<4000>}2 Corinthians 9:4. Of all Paul’s “companions in travel” (^{<4089>}2 Corinthians 8:19 ^{<4029>}Acts 19:29), Luke was the most prominent, having been his companion in preaching the Gospel at his first entrance into Europe (^{<4101>}Acts 16:10). The fact that the person here referred to was “chosen of the churches” as their trustee to travel with Paul in conveying the contribution to Jerusalem, implies that he had resided among them some time before: this is true of Luke, who after parting from Paul at Philippi (as he marks by the change from “we” to “they,” ^{<4101>}Acts 16:11) six years before, is now again found in his company in Macedonia. In the interim he had probably become so well known that “his praise was throughout all the churches.” Compare ^{<4128>}2 Corinthians 12:18 ^{<5021>}Philemon 1:24. He who is faithful in the Gospel will be faithful also in matters of inferior importance [BENGEL].

19. not that only — not only praised in all the churches.

chosen — by vote: so the *Greek*.

of the churches — therefore these companions of Paul are called “messengers of the churches” (^{<4023>}2 Corinthians 8:23).

to travel — to Jerusalem.

with this grace — *Greek*, “in the case of this grace,” or “gift.”

to the glory of the same Lord — The oldest manuscripts omit “same.”

declaration of your ready mind — The oldest manuscripts read, “our,” not *your*. This and the previous clause, “to the glory of the same Lord,” do not follow “administered by us,” but “chosen of the churches to travel,” etc. The union of the brother with Paul in this affair of the collection was done to guard against suspicions injurious “to the glory” of the Lord. It was also done in order to produce a “readiness” on the part of Paul and the brother to undertake the office which each, by himself, would have been less ready to undertake, for fear of suspicions arising (⁴⁰⁸⁰2 Corinthians 8:20) as to their appropriation of any of the money.

20. Avoiding — taking precautions against this.

in this abundance — *in the case of this abundance*.

21. The Septuagint (⁴⁰⁸⁰Proverbs 3:4 ⁶¹²⁷Romans 12:17). The oldest manuscripts read, “For we provide.”

honest things — “things honorable.”

22. This *second* brother, BIRKS supposes to be Trophimus: for a Macedonian is not meant (⁴⁰⁹⁴2 Corinthians 9:4) probably the same as was sent before with Titus (⁴⁷²⁸2 Corinthians 12:18); and therefore sent from Ephesus, and probably an Ephesian: all this is true of Trophimus.

oftentimes ... in many things — Join and translate as in the *Greek*, “many times in many things.”

upon the great confidence which I have in you — “through the great confidence WHICH HE HAS towards you” [ALFORD]. BENDEL better supports *English Version*, “We have sent ... through the confidence WHICH WE FEEL in regard to your liberality.”

23. fellow helper concerning you — *Greek*, “fellow worker towards you.”

our brethren — the two mentioned in ⁴⁰⁸⁸2 Corinthians 8:18,22.

messengers — rather, as the *Greek*, “apostles”: in the less strict sense (⁴⁴⁴⁴Acts 14:14).

of the churches — sent by the churches, as we are by the Lord (^{<1125}Philippians 2:25). There was in the synagogue an ecclesiastical officer, called “the angel of the Church,” whence the title seems derived (compare ^{<1111}Revelation 2:1).

24. The oldest manuscripts read “[continue] *manifesting* to them in the face of the churches the manifestation of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.”

CHAPTER 9

2 CORINTHIANS 9:1-15.

REASONS FOR HIS SENDING TITUS. THE GREATER THEIR BOUNTIFULNESS, THE MORE SHALL BE THE RETURN OF BLESSING TO THEM, AND THANKSGIVING TO GOD.

1. For — connected with ~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 8:16: “Show love to the messengers of the churches; for as concerns the ministration for the saints, it is superfluous for me to *write* to you who are so forward already.”

write — emphatical: It is superfluous to “write,” for you will have witnesses present [BENGEL].

2. ready a year ago — to send off the money, owing to the apostle’s former exhortation (~~1~~ 1 Corinthians 16:1,2).

your zeal — *Greek*, “the zeal from you,” that is, on your part; propagated from you to others.

provoked — that is, stimulated.

very many — *Greek*, “the greater number,” namely, of the Macedonians.

3. have I sent — we should say, “I send”; whereas the ancients put it in the past, the time which it would be by the time that the letter arrived.

the brethren — (~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 8:18,22) — Titus and the two others.

should be in vain in this behalf — “should be proved futile *in this particular*,” however true in general (~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 7:4). A tacit compliment, softening the sharp monition.

as I said — as I was saying (~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 9:2).

4. if they of Macedonia — rather as *Greek*, “if Macedonians.”

unprepared — with your collection; see ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 9:2, “ready,” Greek, “prepared.”

we, not to say ye — *Ye* would naturally feel more ashamed for yourselves, than we (who boasted of you) would for you.

confident boasting — The oldest manuscripts read simply “confidence,” namely, in your liberality.

5. that they would go before — Translate, “that they *should*,” etc.

whereof ye had notice before — rather, “promised before”; “long announced by me to the Macedonians” (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 9:2) [BENGEL]. “Your promised bounty” [ELLICOTT and others].

not as *of* covetousness — Translate, “not as matter of covetousness,” which it would be, if you gave niggardly.

6. I say — ELLICOTT and others supply the ellipsis thus: “But *remember* this.”

bountifully — literally, “*with*,” or “*in blessings*.” The word itself implies a *beneficent spirit in the giver* (compare ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 9:7, end), and the plural implies the *abundance* and liberality of the gifts. “The reaping shall correspond to the proportions and spirit of the sowing” [BENGEL]. Compare ^{<400>}Ezekiel 34:26, “Showers of blessing.”

7. according as he purposeth in his heart — Let the full consent of the free will go with the gift [ALFORD]. Opposed to “of necessity,” as “grudgingly” is opposed to “a *cheerful* giver” (^{<400>}Proverbs 22:9 11:25 ^{<400>}Isaiah 32:8).

8. all grace — even in external goods, and even while ye bestow on others [BENGEL].

that — “in order that.” God’s gifts are bestowed on us, not that we may have them to ourselves, but that we may the more “abound in good works” to others.

sufficiency — so as not to need the help of others, having yourselves from God “bread for your food” (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 9:10).

in all things — *Greek*, “in everything.”

every good work — of charity to others, which will be “your seed sown” (^{<490>}2 Corinthians 9:10).

9. As it is written — realizing the highly blessed character portrayed in ^{<490>}Psalms 112:9.

He — the “good man” (^{<490>}Psalms 112:5).

dispersed — as seed sown with full and open hand, without anxious thought in what direction each grain may fall. It is implied also that he *has* always what he may disperse [BENGEL]. So in ^{<490>}Psalms 112:9.

the poor — The *Greek* word is found here only in New Testament, “one in straitened circumstances, who earns his bread by labor.” The word usually employed means “one so poor as to live by begging.”

his righteousness — Here “beneficence”: the evidence of his being *righteous* before God and man. Compare ^{<490>}Deuteronomy 24:13 ^{<490>}Matthew 6:1, “alms”; *Greek*, “righteousness.”

remaineth — unexhausted and unfailing.

10. Translate, as in ^{<250>}Isaiah 55:10, “He that ministereth (supplieth) seed to the sower and bread for food” (literally, “bread for *eating*”).

minister — rather future, as the oldest manuscripts, “*Shall* minister (supply) and multiply.”

your seed — your means for liberality.

the fruits of your righteousness — the heavenly rewards for your Christian charity (^{<490>}Matthew 10:42). Righteousness shall be itself the reward, even as it is the thing rewarded (^{<300>}Hosea 10:12 ^{<490>}Matthew 5:6 6:33).

11. Compare ^{<490>}2 Corinthians 9:8.

bountifulness — *Greek*, “single-minded liberality.” Translated “simplicity,” ^{<500>}Romans 12:8.

causeth through us — literally, “worketh through us”; that is, through our instrumentality as the distributors.

thanksgiving — on the part of the recipients.

12. Greek, “The *ministration* of this *public* service (on your part) is not only *still further* supplying the wants of the saints (besides the supplies from other quarters), but is abounding also (namely, in respect to relieving the necessities of others in poverty) through many thanksgivings to God.”

13. by — through occasion of.

experiment — Translate, “the experience” [ELLICOTT and others]. Or, “the experimental proof” of your Christian character, afforded by “this ministration.”

they — the recipients.

for your professed subjection — *Greek*, “for the subjection of your profession”; that is, your subjection in accordance with your profession, in relation to the Gospel. Ye yield yourselves in willing subjection to the Gospel precepts, evinced in acts, as well as in profession.

your liberal distribution — *Greek*, “the liberality of your contribution in relation to them,” etc.

14. Translate, “Themselves also with prayer for you, longing after you on account of the exceeding grace of God (resting) upon you.” *English Version* is, however, good sense: They glorify God (~~AND~~ 2 Corinthians 9:13) by the experimental proof, etc., “and by their prayer for you.” But the *Greek* favors the former.

15. his unspeakable gift — the gift of His own Son, which includes all other inferior gifts (~~AND~~ 2 Corinthians 8:9 ~~AND~~ Romans 8:32). If we have received from God “His unspeakable gift,” what great thing is it, if we give a few perishing gifts for His sake?

CHAPTER 10

2 CORINTHIANS 10:1-18.

HE VINDICATES HIS APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY AGAINST THOSE WHO DEPRECIATED HIM FOR HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE. HE WILL MAKE HIS POWER FELT WHEN HE COMES. HE BOASTS NOT, AS THEY, BEYOND HIS MEASURE.

1. I Paul myself — no longer “we,” “us,” “our” (~~4701~~ 2 Corinthians 9:11): *I* who am represented by depreciators as “base,” I, the same Paul, *of my own accord* “beseech you”; or rather “entreat,” “exhort” you *for your sake*. As “I beseech you” (a distinct *Greek* verb, ~~4700~~ 2 Corinthians 10:2) *for my sake*.

by the meekness and gentleness of Christ — He mentions these graces of Christ especially (~~988~~ Psalm 18:35 ~~1129~~ Matthew 11:29), as on account of his imitation of them in particular he was despised [GROTIUS]. He entreats them by these, in order to show that though he must have recourse to more severe measures, he is naturally inclined to gentle ones after Christ’s example [MENOCHUIS]. “Meekness” is more in the mind internally; “gentleness” in the external behavior, and in relation to others; for instance, the condescending *yieldingness* of a superior to an inferior, the former not insisting on his strict rights [TRENCH]. BENDEL explains it, “By the meekness and gentleness *derived by me from Christ*,” not from my own nature: he objects to understanding it of *Christ’s* meekness and gentleness, since nowhere else is “gentleness” attributed to Him. But though the exact *Greek* word is not applied to Him, the idea expressed by it is (compare ~~2801~~ Isaiah 40:11 ~~1029~~ Matthew 12:19,20).

in presence — in personal appearance when present with you.

base — *Greek*, “lowly”; timid, humbly diffident: opposed to “bold.” “Am” stands here by ironical concession for “am reputed to be” (compare ~~4700~~ 2 Corinthians 10:10).

2. I beseech you — Intimating that, as he can *beseech* in letters, so he can be severe in their presence.

that I may not be — that I may not *have to* be bold, etc.

with that confidence — *that authoritative sternness.*

I think — *I am minded* to be.

as if we walked according to the flesh — His Corinthian detractors judged of him by themselves, as if he were influenced by fleshly motives, the desire of favor or fear of giving offense, so as not to exercise his authority when present.

3. For — Reason why they should regard him “beseeching” them (^{470B}2 Corinthians 10:2) not to oblige him to have recourse to “bold” and stern exercise of authority. “We walk IN the flesh,” and so *in weakness*: but not “ACCORDING TO the flesh” (^{470B}2 Corinthians 10:2). Moreover, though we WALK in it, we do not WAR according to it. A double contrast or antithesis. “They who accuse us of walking after the flesh, shall find [to their cost] that we do not *war* after the flesh; therefore compel us not to use our weapons” [ALFORD].

4. A confutation of those who try to propagate their creed by force and persecution (compare ^{470B}Luke 9:54-56).

weapons — for punishing offending members (^{470B}2 Corinthians 10:6 ^{470C}1 Corinthians 4:21 5:5,13); boldness of speech, ecclesiastical discipline (^{470B}2 Corinthians 10:8 ^{470C}2 Corinthians 13:10), the power of the word, and of the sacraments, the various extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.

carnal — Translate, “fleshly,” to preserve the allusion to ^{470B}2 Corinthians 10:2,3.

mighty through God — *Greek*, “mighty to God,” that is, mighty before God: not humanly, but divinely powerful. The power is not ours, but God’s. Compare “fair to God,” that is, divinely fair (^{470B}Acts 7:20, *Margin*). Also above (^{470B}2 Corinthians 2:15), “*unto God* a sweet savor.” “The efficacy of the Christian religion proves its truth” [BENGEL].

pulling down — As the *Greek* is the same as in ^{<4715>}2 Corinthians 10:5, translate, “casting down.” Compare ^{<3010>}Jeremiah 1:10: the inspired servants of God inherit the commission of the Old Testament prophets.

strongholds — (^{<3102>}Proverbs 21:22); namely, in which sinners entrench themselves against reproof; all that opposes itself to Christ; the learning, and eloquence, and philosophical subtleties on which the Corinthians prided themselves. So Joshua’s trumpet blast was “mighty” under God to overthrow the walls of Jericho.

5. imaginations — rather, “reasonings.” Whereas “thought” expresses men’s own *purpose* and determination of living after their own pleasure [TITTMANN].

high thing — So it ought to be translated (^{<4839>}Romans 8:39). A distinct *Greek* word from that in ^{<4839>}Ephesians 3:18, “height,” and ^{<6216>}Revelation 21:16, which belongs to God and heaven from whence we receive nothing hurtful. But “high thing” is not so much “height” as *something made high*, and belongs to those regions of air where the powers of darkness ::exalt themselves” against Christ and us (^{<4810>}Ephesians 2:2 6:12 ^{<5104>}2 Thessalonians 2:4).

exalteth itself — ^{<5104>}2 Thessalonians 2:4 supports *English Version* rather than the translation of ELLICOTT, etc., “is lifted up.” Such were the *high towers* of Judaic self-righteousness, philosophic speculations, and rhetorical sophistries, the “knowledge” so much prized by many (opposed to “the knowledge of God”), which endangered a section of the Corinthian Church.

against the knowledge of God — True knowledge makes men humble. Where there is exaltation of self, there knowledge of God is wanting [BENGEL]. Arrange the words following thus: “Bringing every thought (that is, *intent of the mind or will*) into captivity to the obedience of Christ,” that is, to obey Christ. The three steps of the apostle’s spiritual warfare are:

- (1) It demolishes what is opposed to Christ;
- (2) It leads captive;

(3) It brings into obedience to Christ (^{<6015>}Romans 1:5 16:26). The “reasonings” (*English Version*, “imagination”) are utterly “cast down.” The “mental intents” (*English Version*, “thoughts”) are taken willing captives, and tender the voluntary obedience of faith to Christ the Conqueror.

6. Translate, “Having ourselves (that is, *being*) in readiness to exact punishment for all disobedience,” etc. We have this in store for the disobedient: it will be brought into action in due time.

when your obedience, etc. — He charitably assumes that most of the Corinthian Church will act obediently; therefore he says “YOUR obedience.” But perhaps some will act otherwise; in order, therefore, to give all an opportunity of joining the obedient, he will not prematurely exact punishment, but wait until the full number of those gathered out to Christ has been “completed,” and the remainder have been proved incorrigible. He had acted already so at Corinth (^{<4106>}Acts 18:6-11; compare ^{<1234>}Exodus 32:34 ^{<1138>}Matthew 13:28-30).

7. Do ye regard mere outward appearance (mere external recommendations, personal appearance, voice, manner, oratory of teachers *present face to face*, such as they admired in the false teachers to the disparagement of Paul, ^{<7100>}2 Corinthians 10:10; see on ^{<4152>}2 Corinthians 5:12)? Even in *outward bearing* when I shall be *present* with you (in contrast to “by letters,” ^{<4709>}2 Corinthians 10:9) I will show that I am more really armed with the authority of Christ, than those who arrogate to themselves the title of being peculiarly “Christ’s” (^{<4012>}1 Corinthians 1:12). A Jewish emissary seems to have led this party.

let him of himself think this again — He may “of himself,” without needing to be taught it in a more severe manner, by “thinking again,” arrive at “this” conclusion, “that even as,” etc. Paul modestly demands for himself only an equal place with those whom he had begotten in the Gospel [BENGEL].

8. “For even if I were to boast somewhat more exceedingly (than I do, ^{<7018>}2 Corinthians 10:3-6) of our (apostolic) authority (^{<4106>}2 Corinthians 10:6 ^{<4730>}2 Corinthians 13:10) ... I should not be put to shame (by the fact; as I should

be if my authority proved to be without foundation: my threats of punishment not being carried into effect).”

for edification ... not for ... destruction — *Greek*, “for building up ... not for ... CASTING DOWN” (the same *Greek* as in ^{<715>}2 Corinthians 10:5): the image of a building as in ^{<709>}2 Corinthians 10:4,5. Though we “cast down reasonings,” this is not in order to destroy, but really to *build up* (“edify”), by removing those things which are hindrances to edification, and testing what is unsound, and putting together all that is true in the building [CHRYSTOSTOM].

9. I say this lest I should seem to be terrifying you, as children, with empty threats [BENGEL]. ESTIUS explains, “I might boast more of my authority, *but I forbear to do so*, that I may not seem as if,” etc. But this ellipsis is harsh: and ^{<710>}2 Corinthians 10:10,11 confirm BENGEL’s view.

10. letters — implying that there had been already more letters of Paul received by the Corinthians than the one we have, namely, First Corinthians; and that they contained strong reproofs.

say they — *Greek*, “says one,” “such a one” (^{<711>}2 Corinthians 10:11) seems to point to some definite individual. Compare ^{<850>}Galatians 5:10; a similar slanderer was in the Galatian Church.

weak — (^{<712>}2 Corinthians 12:7 ^{<812>}1 Corinthians 2:3). There was nothing of majesty or authority in his manner; he bore himself tremblingly among them, whereas the false teachers spoke with authoritative bearing and language.

11. think this — “consider this.”

such will we be — or “are,” in general, not merely shall we be at our next visit.

12. “We do not presume (irony) to judge ourselves among, or in comparison with, some of them that commend themselves.” The charge falsely brought against him of *commending himself* (^{<713>}2 Corinthians 3:1 5:12), really holds good of the false teachers. The phrase, “judge ourselves of the number,” is drawn from the testing of athletes and senators, the “approved” being set down on the roll [WAHL].

measuring themselves by themselves — “*among* themselves”: to correspond to the previous verb, “judge ourselves *among* them.” Instead of measuring themselves by the public standard, they measure themselves by one made by themselves: they do not compare themselves with others who excel them, but with those like themselves: hence their high self-esteem. The one-eyed is easily king among the blind.

are not wise — with all their boasted “wisdom” (~~409~~ 1 Corinthians 1:19-26), they are anything but “wise.”

13. not boast ... without ... measure — *Greek*, “to unmeasured bounds.” There is no limit to a man’s high opinion of himself, so long as he measures himself by himself (~~408~~ 2 Corinthians 10:13) and his fellows, and does not compare himself with his superiors. It marks the *personal* character of this Epistle that the word “boast” occurs twenty-nine times in it, and only twenty-six times in all the other Epistles put together. Undeterred by the charge of vanity, he felt he must vindicate his apostolic authority by facts [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. It would be to “boast of things without our measure,” were we to boast of conversions made by “other men’s labors” (~~405~~ 2 Corinthians 10:15).

distributed — apportioned [ALFORD].

a measure — as a measure [ALFORD].

to reach — “that we should reach as far as even to you”: not that he meant to go no further (~~406~~ 2 Corinthians 10:16 ~~451~~ Romans 15:20-24). Paul’s “measure” is the *apportionment* of his sphere of Gospel labors *ruled* for him by God. A “rule” among the so-called “apostolic canons” subsequently was, that no bishop should appoint ministers beyond his own limits. At Corinth no minister ought to have been received without Paul’s sanction, as Corinth was *apportioned* to him by God as *his apostolic sphere*. The Epistle here incidentally, and therefore undesignedly, confirms the independent history, the Acts, which represents Corinth as the extreme limit as yet of his preaching, *at which he had stopped*, after he had from Philippi passed southward successively through Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*].

14. “We are not stretching ourselves beyond our measure, *as* (we should be) *if* we did not reach unto you: (but we do), for as far as even to you have we come in preaching the Gospel.”

15. “Not boasting to unmeasured bounds (that is, not exceeding our own bounds by boasting) of (literally, ‘in’) other men’s labors.”

when — “As your faith goes on increasing.” The cause of his not yet reaching with the Gospel the regions beyond Corinth, was the weakness as yet of their faith. He desired not to leave the Corinthians before the proper time, and yet not to put off preaching to others too long.

enlarged by you — *Greek*, “in your case.” Our success in your case will give us an important step towards further progress beyond you (⁴⁰⁶2 Corinthians 10:16).

according to our rule — according to our divinely assigned apportionment of the area or sphere of our work; for “we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure” (⁴⁰⁶2 Corinthians 10:14).

abundantly — *Greek*, “unto exceeding abundance”: so as to exceed the limits we have yet reached (⁴⁰⁶2 Corinthians 10:16).

16. To — that is, *so as to* preach ... beyond you (and) not to boast, etc.

in another man’s line of things made ready to our hand — Do not connect “line of things,” etc.; but “boast of things,” etc. To make this clearer, arrange the words thus, “Not to boast as to things (already made by the preaching of others) ready to our hand in another man’s line (that is, within the line, or sphere of labor, apportioned by God to another).”

17. glorieth — Translate, to accord with ⁴⁰⁶2 Corinthians 10:16, “boasteth.” In contrast to his opponents’ practice of boasting in another’s line or sphere, Paul declares the only true boasting is in the Lord (⁴⁰¹1 Corinthians 1:31 15:10).

18. (⁴⁰⁷Proverbs 27:2).

whom the Lord commendeth — to whom the Lord has given as His “Epistle of commendation,” the believers whom he has been the instrument of converting: as was Paul’s case (⁴⁰¹2 Corinthians 3:1-3).

is approved — can stand the test of the final trial. A metaphor from testing metals (~~6:10~~ Romans 16:10 ~~11:19~~ 1 Corinthians 11:19). So on the other hand those finally rejected by the Lord are termed “*reprobate silver*” (~~24:30~~ Jeremiah 6:30).

CHAPTER 11

2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-33.

THROUGH JEALOUSY OVER THE CORINTHIANS, WHO MADE MORE ACCOUNT OF THE FALSE APOSTLES THAN OF HIM, HE IS OBLIGED TO COMMEND HIMSELF AS IN MANY RESPECTS SUPERIOR.

1. Would to God — Translate as *Greek*, “I would that.”

bear with me — I may ask not unreasonably to be borne with; not so the false apostles (2 Corinthians 11:4,20).

my — not in the oldest manuscripts.

folly — The *Greek* is a milder term than that for “foolishness” in 1 Corinthians 3:19 Matthew 5:22 25:2. The *Greek* for “folly” here implies *imprudence*; the *Greek* for “foolishness” includes the idea of *perversity* and *wickedness*.

and indeed bear — A request (so 2 Corinthians 11:16). But the *Greek* and the sense favor the translation, “But indeed (I need not wish it, for) ye *do* bear with me”; still I wish you to bear with me further, while I enter at large into self-commendations.

2. For I am jealous — The justification of his self-commendations lies in his zealous care lest they should fall from Christ, to whom he, as “the friend of the Bridegroom” (John 3:29), has espoused them; in order to lead them back from the false apostles to Christ, he is obliged to boast as an apostle of Christ, in a way which, but for the motive, would be “folly.”

godly jealousy — literally, “jealousy of God” (compare 2 Corinthians 1:12, “godly sincerity,” literally, “sincerity of God”). “If I am immoderate, I am immoderate to God” [BENGEL]. A jealousy which has God’s honor at heart (1 Kings 19:10).

I ... espoused you — Paul uses a *Greek* term applied properly to *the bridegroom*, just as he ascribes to himself “jealousy,” a feeling properly belonging to the husband; so entirely does he identify himself with Christ.

present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ — at His coming, when the heavenly *marriage* shall take place (ⲁⲓⲙⲁⲧⲧⲉⲙ Matthew 25:6 ⲁⲓⲓⲛⲁⲧⲉⲛ Revelation 19:7,9). What Paul here says he desires to do, namely, “present” the Church as “a chaste virgin” to Christ, *Christ Himself* is said to do in the fuller sense. Whatever ministers do effectively, is really done by Christ (ⲁⲓⲉⲑⲉⲛⲧⲓⲁⲛⲉⲥ Ephesians 5:27-32). The *espousals* are going on now. He does not say “chaste virgins”; for not individual members, but the whole body of believers conjointly constitute the Bride.

3. I fear — (ⲁⲓⲛⲁⲧⲉⲛ 2 Corinthians 12:20); not inconsistent with love. His source of fear was their yielding character.

subtily — the utter foe of the “simplicity” which is intent on ONE object, Jesus, and seeks none “other,” and no “other” and different Spirit (ⲁⲓⲛⲁⲧⲉⲛ 2 Corinthians 11:4); but loves him with tender SINGLENESS OF AFFECTION. Where Eve first gave way, was in mentally harboring for a moment the possibility insinuated by the serpent, of GOD not having her truest interests at heart, and of this “other” professing friend being more concerned for her than God.

corrupted — so as to lose their virgin purity through seducers (ⲁⲓⲛⲁⲧⲉⲛ 2 Corinthians 11:4). The same *Greek* stands for “minds” as for “thoughts” (ⲁⲓⲛⲁⲧⲉⲛ 2 Corinthians 10:5, also see on ⲁⲓⲛⲁⲧⲉⲛ 2 Corinthians 10:5); *intents of the will*, or *mind*. The oldest manuscripts after “simplicity,” add, “and the purity” or “chastity.”

in Christ — rather, “that is *towards* Christ.”

4. if, etc. — which *in fact* is impossible. However, if it were possible, ye might then bear with them (see on ⲁⲓⲛⲁⲧⲉⲛ 2 Corinthians 11:1). But there can be no *new Gospel*; there is but the *one* which I first preached; therefore it ought not to be “borne” by you, that the false teachers should attempt to supersede me.

he that cometh — the high-sounding title assumed by the false teachers, who arrogated Christ’s own peculiar title (*Greek*, ⲁⲓⲙⲁⲧⲧⲉⲙ Matthew 11:3, and

^{<809}Hebrews 10:37), “He that is coming.” Perhaps he was leader of the party which assumed peculiarly to be “Christ’s” (^{<702}2 Corinthians 10:7 ^{<802}1 Corinthians 1:12); hence his assumption of the title.

preacheth ... receive — is preaching ... ye are receiving.

Jesus — the “Jesus” of Gospel *history*. He therefore does not say “Christ,” which refers to the *office*.

another ... another — *Greek*, “another Jesus ... a *different* Spirit ... a *different* Gospel.” *Another* implies a distinct individual of the same kind; *different* implies one quite distinct in kind.

which ye have not received — from us.

spirit ... received ... gospel ... accepted — The will of man is passive in RECEIVING the “Spirit”; but it is actively concurrent with the will of God (which goes before to give the good will) in ACCEPTING the “Gospel.”

ye might well bear with him — There would be an excuse for your conduct, though a bad one (for ye ought to give heed to no Gospel other than what ye have already heard from me, ^{<809}Galatians 1:6,7); but the false teachers do not even pretend they have “another Jesus” and a “different Gospel” to bring before you; they merely try to supplant me, your accredited Teacher. Yet ye not only “bear with” them, but prefer them.

5. For — My claim is superior to that of the false teachers, “For,” etc.

I suppose — I reckon [ALFORD].

I was not — *Greek*, “That I have not been, and am not.”

the very chiefest apostles — James, Peter, and John, the witnesses of Christ’s transfiguration and agony in Gethsemane. Rather, “those overmuch apostles,” those *surpassers of the apostles* in their own esteem. This sense is proved by the fact that the context contains no comparison between him and the apostles, but only between him and the false teachers; ^{<702}2 Corinthians 11:6 also alludes to these, and not to the apostles; compare also the parallel phrase, “false apostles” (see on ^{<713}2 Corinthians 11:13 and ^{<802}2 Corinthians 12:11) [ALFORD].

6. rude — *Greek*, “a common man”; a “laic”; not rhetorically trained; unskilled in finish of diction. ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 2:1-4,13 ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 10:10,11, shows his *words* were not without *weight*, though his “speech” was deficient in oratorical artifice. “Yet I am not so in my knowledge” (^{<402>}2 Corinthians 12:1-5 ^{<401>}Ephesians 3:1-5).

have been ... made manifest — Read with the oldest manuscripts, “We have made things (Gospel truths) manifest,” thus showing our “knowledge.” *English Version* would mean, I leave it to yourselves to decide whether I be rude in speech ... : for we have been thoroughly (literally, “in everything”) made manifest among you (literally, “in respect to you”; “in relation to you”). He had not by reserve kept back his “knowledge” in divine mysteries from them (^{<402>}2 Corinthians 2:17 4:2 ^{<401>}Acts 20:20,27).

in all things — The *Greek* rather favors the translation, “among all men”; the sense then is, we have manifested the whole truth among all men with a view to your benefit [ALFORD]. But the *Greek* in ^{<402>}Philippians 4:12, “In each thing and in all things,” sanctions *English Version*, which gives a clearer sense.

7. Have I — literally, “OR have I?” Connected with ^{<401>}2 Corinthians 11:6, “Or will any of you make it an objection that I have preached to you gratuitously?” He leaves their good feeling to give the answer, that this, so far from being an objection, was a decided superiority in him above the false apostles (^{<401>}1 Corinthians 9:6-15).

abasing myself — in my mode of living, waiving my right of maintenance, and earning it by manual labor; perhaps with slaves as his fellow laborers (^{<401>}Acts 18:3 ^{<402>}Philippians 4:12).

ye ... exalted — spiritually, by your admission to Gospel privileges.

because — “in that.”

gospel of God — “of God” implies its divine glory to which they were admitted.

freely — “without charge.”

8. I robbed — that is, took from them in order to spare you more than what was their fair share of contribution to my maintenance, for example, the Philippian Church (^{<504E>}Philippians 4:15,16).

wages — “subsidy.”

to do you service — *Greek*, “with a view to ministration to you”; compare “supplied” (*Greek*, “in addition”), ^{<471B>}2 Corinthians 11:9, implying, he *brought with him* from the Macedonians, supplies towards his maintenance at Corinth; and (^{<471B>}2 Corinthians 11:9) *when those resources failed* (“when I wanted”) he received *a new supply*, while there, from the same source.

9. wanted — “was in want.”

chargeable — *Greek*, “burdensome,” literally, “to torpify,” and so to oppress. JEROME says it is a Cilician word (^{<4724>}2 Corinthians 12:14,16).

the brethren which came — rather, as *Greek*, “the brethren *when they came*.” Perhaps Timotheus and Silas (^{<480E>}Acts 8:1,5). Compare ^{<504E>}Philippians 4:15,16, which refers to donations received from the Philippians (who were in Macedonia) at two distinct periods (“once and again”), one at Thessalonica, the other after his departure from Macedonia, that is, when he came into Achaia to Corinth (from the church in which city he would receive no help); and this “in the beginning of the Gospel,” that is, at its first preaching in these parts. Thus all three, the two Epistles and history, mutually, and no doubt undesignedly, coincide; a sure test of genuineness.

supplied — *Greek*, “supplied in addition,” namely, in addition to their former contributions; or as BENGEL, in addition to the supply obtained by my own manual labor.

10. *Greek*, “There is (the) truth of Christ in me that,” etc. (^{<480E>}Romans 9:1).

no man shall stop me of — The oldest manuscripts read, “This boasting shall not *be shut* (that is, stopped) *as regards me*.” “Boasting is as it were personified ... shall not have its mouth stopped as regards me” [ALFORD].

11. Love is often offended at its favors being not accepted, as though the party to whom they are offered wished to be under no obligation to the offerer.

12. I will do — I will *continue* to decline help.

occasion — *Greek*, “*the occasion*,” namely, of misrepresenting my motives, which would be afforded to my detractors, if I accepted help.

that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we — BENGEL joins this clause with “*the occasion*,” namely, of *glorying* or *boasting*; the occasion “that they may be found (a point wherein they glory) even as we,” that is, quite as disinterested, or virtually, quite as gain-seeking and self-seeking. It cannot mean that the false teachers taught gratuitously even as Paul (compare ^{<4712>}2 Corinthians 11:20 ^{<4812>}1 Corinthians 9:12). ALFORD less clearly explains by reference to ^{<4718>}2 Corinthians 11:18, etc., where the “glorying” here is taken up and described as “glorying after the flesh”; thus it means, that in the matters of which they boast they may be found even as we, that is, we may be on a fair and equal footing; that there may be no *adventitious* comparisons made between us, arising out of *misrepresentations* of my course of procedure, but that in every matter of boasting we may be fairly compared and judged by *facts*; FOR (^{<4713>}2 Corinthians 11:13) realities they have none, no weapons but misrepresentation, being *false apostles*.

13. For — reason why he is unwilling they should be thought like him [BENGEL].

such — they and those like them.

false apostles — those “overmuch apostles” (see on ^{<4715>}2 Corinthians 11:5) are no apostles at all.

deceitful workers — pretending to be “workmen” for the Lord, and really seeking their own gain.

14. is transformed — rather, “transforms himself” (compare ^{<3806>}Job 1:6); habitually; the first occasion of his doing so was in tempting Eve. “Himself” is emphatical: If their master *himself*, who is the “prince of

darkness,” the most alien to light, does so, it is less marvellous in the case of them who are his servants (^{<025f>}Luke 22:54 ^{<060>}Ephesians 6:12).

15. no great thing — no difficult matter.

if his ministers also — as well as himself.

righteousness — answering to “light” (^{<0114>}2 Corinthians 11:14); the manifestation wherewith God reveals Himself in Christ (^{<063>}Matthew 6:33 ^{<017>}Romans 1:17).

end — The test of things is *the end* which strips off every specious *form* into which Satan’s agents may now “transform” themselves (compare ^{<089>}Philippians 3:19,21).

according to their works — not according to their pretensions.

16. I say again — again taking up from ^{<010>}2 Corinthians 11:1 the anticipatory apology for his boasting.

if otherwise — but if ye will not grant this; if ye will think me a fool.

yet as a fool — “yet even as a fool receive me”; grant me the indulgent hearing conceded even to one suspected of folly. The *Greek* denotes one who does not rightly use his mental powers; not having the idea of blame necessarily attached to it; one deceived by foolish vanities, yet boasting himself [TITTMANN], (^{<017>}2 Corinthians 11:17,19).

that I — The oldest manuscripts read, “that I, *too*,” namely, *as well as they*, may boast myself.

17. not after the Lord — *By inspired guidance* he excepts this “glorying” or “boasting” from the inspired authoritativeness which belongs to all else that he wrote; even this boasting, though undesirable in itself, was permitted by the Spirit, taking into account its aim, namely, to draw off the Corinthians from their false teachers to the apostle. Therefore this passage gives no proof that any portion of Scripture is uninspired. It merely guards against his boasting being made a justification of boasting in general, which is not ordinarily “after the Lord,” that is, consistent with Christian humility.

foolishly — *Greek*, “in foolishness.”

confidence of boasting — (~~400~~2 Corinthians 9:4).

18. many — including the “false teachers.”

after the flesh — as fleshly men are wont to boast, namely, of external advantages, as their birth, doings, etc. (compare ~~4122~~2 Corinthians 11:22).

I will glory also — that is, I also will boast of such fleshly advantages, to show you that even in these I am not their inferiors, and therefore ought not to be supplanted by them in your esteem; though these are not what I desire to glory in (~~4700~~2 Corinthians 10:17).

19. gladly — willingly. Irony. A plea why they should “bear with” (~~4710~~2 Corinthians 11:1) him in his folly, that is, boasting; ye are, in sooth, so “wise” (~~4008~~1 Corinthians 4:8,10; Paul’s real view of their wisdom was very different, ~~4001~~1 Corinthians 3:1-4) yourselves that ye can “bear with” the folly of others more complacently. Not only *can* ye do so, but ye *are actually* doing this and more.

20. For — Ye may well “bear with” fools; for ye even “bear with” oppressors. Translate, “Ye bear with them.”

a man — as the false apostles do.

bring you into bondage — to himself. Translate “brings,” not “bring”; for the case is not merely a supposed case, but a case actually then occurring. Also “devours” (namely, by exactions, ~~4123~~Matthew 23:24 ~~4504~~Psalms 53:4), “takes,” “exalts,” “smites.”

take of you — So the *Greek* for “take” is used for “take away from” (~~4060~~Revelation 6:4). ALFORD translates, as in ~~4726~~2 Corinthians 12:16, “*catches you*.”

exalt himself — under the pretext of apostolic dignity.

smite you on the face — under the pretext of divine zeal. The height of insolence on their part, and of servile endurance on yours (~~4122~~1 Kings 22:24 ~~4335~~Nehemiah 13:25 ~~4226~~Luke 22:64 ~~4212~~Acts 23:2 ~~5003~~1 Timothy 3:3).

21. as concerning reproach — rather, “by way of dishonor (that is, *self-disparagement*) I say it.”

as though we ... weak — in not similarly (^{<4112>}2 Corinthians 11:20) showing our *power* over you. “An ironical reminiscence of his own abstinence when among them from all these acts of self-exaltation at their expense” (as if such abstinence was weakness) [ALFORD]. The “we” is emphatically contrasted with the false teachers who so oppressively displayed their power. I speak so as though WE had been weak when with you, because we did not show our power this way. Howbeit (we are not really weak; for), whereinsoever any is bold ... I am bold also.

22. Hebrews ... Israelites ... the seed of Abraham — A climax.

“Hebrews,” referring to the *language* and *nationality*; “Israelites,” to the *theocracy* and *descent from Israel*, the “prince who prevailed with God” (^{<4100>}Romans 9:4); “the seed of Abraham,” to the *claim to a share in the Messiah* (^{<4100>}Romans 11:1 9:7). Compare ^{<4100>}Philippians 3:5, “An Hebrew of the Hebrews,” not an Hellenist or Greek-speaking Jew, but a Hebrew in tongue, and sprung from Hebrews.

23. I speak as a fool — rather, as *Greek*, “I speak as if *beside myself*”; stronger than “as a fool.”

I am more — namely, in respect to the credentials and manifestations of my ministry, more faithful and self-denying; and richer in tokens of God’s recognition of my ministry. Old authorities read the order thus, “In prisons above measures, in stripes more abundantly” (*English Version*, less accurately, “more frequent”). ^{<4162>}Acts 16:23-40 records one case of his imprisonment with stripes. CLEMENT OF ROME [*First Epistle to the Corinthians*] describes him as having suffered bonds seven times.

in death oft — (^{<4100>}2 Corinthians 4:10 ^{<4123>}Acts 9:23 13:50 14:5,6,19 17:5,13).

24. ^{<4218>}Deuteronomy 25:3 ordained that not more than forty stripes should be inflicted To avoid exceeding this number, they gave one short of it: thirteen strokes with a treble lash [BENGEL]. This is one of those minute agreements with Jewish usage, which a forger would have not been likely to observe.

25. The beating by Roman magistrates at Philippi (^{<4163>}Acts 16:23) is the only one recorded in Acts, which does not profess to give a complete

journal of his life, but only a sketch of it in connection with the design of the book, namely, to give an outline of the history of the Gospel Church from its foundation at Jerusalem, to the period of its reaching Rome, the capital of the Gentile world.

once was I stoned — (^{<4449>}Acts 14:19).

thrice ... shipwreck — before the shipwreck at Melita (^{<4744>}Acts 27:44). Probably in some of his voyages from Tarsus, where he stayed for some time after his conversion, and from which, as being a seafaring place, he was likely to make missionary voyages to adjoining places (^{<4483>}Acts 9:30 11:25 ^{<812>}Galatians 1:21).

a night and a day ... in the deep — probably in part swimming or in an open boat.

26. In — rather, “By”: connected with ^{<7123>}2 Corinthians 11:23, but now not with “in,” as there, and as in ^{<7127>}2 Corinthians 11:27, where again he passes to the idea of surrounding circumstances or environments [ALFORD, ELLICOTT and others].

waters — rather, as *Greek*, “rivers,” namely, perils by the flooding of rivers, as on the road often traversed by Paul between Jerusalem and Antioch, crossed as it is by the torrents rushing down from Lebanon. So the traveler Sport lost his life.

robbers — perhaps in his journey from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia. Pisidia was notorious for robbers; as indeed were all the mountains that divided the high land of Asia from the sea.

the heathen — Gentiles.

in the city — Damascus, ^{<4924>}Acts 9:24,25; Jerusalem, ^{<4929>}Acts 9:29; Ephesus, ^{<4923>}Acts 19:23.

false brethren — (^{<804>}Galatians 2:4).

27. fastings — *voluntary*, in order to kindle devotions (^{<492>}Acts 13:2,3 14:23 ^{<4927>}1 Corinthians 9:27); for they are distinguished from “hunger and thirst,” which were *involuntary* [GROTIUS]. However, see on ^{<4952>}2 Corinthians 6:5. The context refers solely to *hardships*, not to self-

imposed devotional mortification. “Hunger and thirst” are not synonymous with “foodlessness” (as the *Greek* of “fasting” means), but are its consequences.

cold ... nakedness — “cold” resulting from “nakedness,” or insufficient clothing, as the *Greek* often means: as “hunger and thirst” result from “foodlessness.” (Compare ^{<402>}Acts 28:2 ^{<405>}Romans 8:35). “When we remember that he who endured all this was a man constantly suffering from infirm health (^{<404>}2 Corinthians 4:7-12 12:7-10 ^{<403>}Galatians 4:13,14), such heroic self-devotion seems almost superhuman” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

28. without — “Beside” trials falling on me *externally*, just recounted, there is “that which cometh upon me (literally, *the impetuous concourse to me* of business; properly, *a crowd rising up against one again and again, and ready to bear him down*), the care of all the churches” (including those not yet seen in the flesh, ^{<500>}Colossians 2:1): an *internal* and more weighty anxiety. But the oldest manuscripts for “that which cometh,” read, “the pressure”: “the pressing care-taking” or “inspection that is upon me daily.” ALFORD translates, “Omitting what is BESIDES”; namely, those other trials *besides* those recounted. But the *Vulgate*, ESTIUS, and BENGEL, support *English Version*.

the care — The *Greek* implies, “my *anxious solicitude* for all the churches.”

29. I ... weak — in condescending sympathy with the weak (^{<402>}1 Corinthians 9:22). “*Care* generates sympathy, which causes the minister of Christ personally to enter into the feelings of all his people, as if he stood in their position, so as to accommodate himself to all” [CALVIN].

offended — by some stumbling-block put in his way by others: the “weak” is most liable to be “offended.”

I burn not — The “I” in the *Greek* is emphatic, which it is not in the former clause, “I am not weak.” I not only enter into the feeling of the party offended, but *I* burn with indignation at the offender, *I myself* taking up his cause as my own. “Who meets with a stumbling-block and I am not disturbed even more than himself” [NEANDER].

30. glory of ... infirmities — A striking contrast! *Glorying* or *boasting* of what others make matter of shame, namely, *infirmities*; for instance, his humbling mode of escape in a basket (^{<4713>}2 Corinthians 11:33). A character utterly incompatible with that of an enthusiast (compare ^{<4713>}2 Corinthians 12:5,9,10).

31. This solemn asseveration refers to what follows. The persecution at Damascus was one of the first and greatest, and having no human witness of it to adduce to the Corinthians, as being a fact that happened long before and was known to few, he appeals to God for its truth. Luke (^{<4025>}Acts 9:25) afterwards recorded it (compare ^{<4012>}Galatians 1:20), [BENGEL]. It may ALSO refer to the revelation in ^{<4711>}2 Corinthians 12:1, standing in beautiful contrast to his humiliating escape from Damascus.

32. governor — *Greek*, “Ethnarch”: a Jewish officer to whom heathen rulers gave authority over Jews in large cities where they were numerous. He was in this case under Aretas, king of Arabia. Damascus was in a Roman province. But at this time, A.D. 38 or 39, three years after Paul’s conversion, A.D. 36, Aretas, against whom the Emperor Tiberius as the ally of Herod Agrippa had sent an army under Vitellius, had got possession of Damascus on the death of the emperor, and the consequent interruption of Vitellius’ operations. His possession of it was put an end to immediately after by the Romans [NEANDER]. Rather, it was granted by Caligula (A.D. 38) to Aretas, whose predecessors had possessed it. This is proved by our having no Damascus coins of Caligula or Claudius, though we do have of their immediate imperial predecessors and successors [ALFORD].

CHAPTER 12

2 CORINTHIANS 12:1-21.

REVELATIONS IN WHICH HE MIGHT GLORY: BUT HE RATHER GLORIES IN INFIRMITIES, AS CALLING FORTH CHRIST'S POWER: SIGNS OF HIS APOSTLESHIP: HIS DISINTERESTEDNESS: NOT THAT HE IS EXCUSING HIMSELF TO THEM; BUT HE DOES ALL FOR THEIR GOOD, LEST HE SHOULD FIND THEM NOT SUCH AS HE DESIRED, AND SO SHOULD HAVE TO BE SEVERE AT HIS COMING.

1. He proceeds to illustrate the “glorying in infirmities” (⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 11:30). He gave one instance which might expose him to ridicule (⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 11:33); he now gives another, but this one connected with a glorious revelation of which it was the sequel: but he dwells not on the glory done to himself, but on the *infirmity* which followed it, as displaying Christ's power. The oldest manuscripts read, “I MUST NEEDS boast (or glory) though it be not expedient; *for* I will come.” The “for” gives a proof that it is “not expedient to boast”: I will take the case of revelations, in which if anywhere boasting might be thought harmless. “Visions” refers to things *seen*: “revelations,” to things heard (compare ⁴⁹⁴⁵1 Samuel 9:15) or *revealed* in any way. In “visions” their signification was not always vouchsafed; in “revelations” there was always an unveiling of truths before hidden (⁴⁷⁰⁹Daniel 2:19,31). All parts of Scripture alike are matter of *inspiration*; but not all of *revelation*. There are degrees of revelation; but not of inspiration.

of — that is, *from* the Lord; Christ, ⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 12:2.

2. Translate, “I know,” not “I knew.”

a man — meaning *himself*. But he purposely thus distinguishes between the *rapt and glorified* person of ⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 12:2,4, and *himself* the infirmity-laden victim of the “thorn in the flesh” (⁴⁷¹³2 Corinthians 12:7). Such glory belonged not to *him*, but the *weakness* did. Nay, he did not

even know whether he was in or out of the body when the glory was put upon him, so far was the glory from being *his* [ALFORD]. His spiritual self was his highest and truest self: the flesh with its infirmity merely his temporary self (^{<417>}Romans 7:25). Here, however, the latter is the prominent thought.

in Christ — a Christian (^{<510>}Romans 16:7).

above — rather, simply “fourteen years ago.” This Epistle was written A.D. 55-57. Fourteen years before will bring the vision to A.D. 41-43, the time of his second visit to Jerusalem (^{<427>}Acts 22:17). He had long been intimate with the Corinthians, yet had never mentioned this revelation before: it was not a matter lightly to be spoken of.

I cannot tell — rather as *Greek*, “I know not.” If *in the body*, he must have been caught up bodily; if *out of the body*, as seems to be Paul’s *opinion*, his spirit must have been caught up out of the body. At all events he recognizes the possibility of conscious receptivity in disembodied spirits.

caught up — (^{<483>}Acts 8:39).

to the third heaven — *even to*, etc. These *raptures* (note the *plural*, “visions,” “revelations,” ^{<711>}2 Corinthians 12:1) had two degrees: first he was *caught up* “to the third heaven,” and from thence to “Paradise” (^{<427>}2 Corinthians 12:4) [CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Miscellanies*, 5.427], which seems to denote an inner recess of the third heaven [BENGEL] (^{<234>}Luke 23:43 ^{<611>}Revelation 2:7). Paul was permitted not only to “hear” the things of Paradise, but to see also in some degree the things of the third heaven (compare “visions,” ^{<711>}2 Corinthians 12:1). The occurrence TWICE of “whether in the body ... I know not, God knoweth,” and of “lest I should be exalted above measure,” marks two stages in the revelation. “Ignorance of the *mode* does not set aside the certain knowledge of the *fact*. The apostles were ignorant of many things” [BENGEL]. The first heaven is that of the clouds, the *air*; the second, that of the stars, the *sky*; the third is *spiritual* (^{<404>}Ephesians 4:10).

3. Translate, “I know.”

out of — Most of the oldest manuscripts read “apart from.”

4. unspeakable — not in themselves, otherwise Paul could not have heard them; but as the explanation states, “which it is not lawful ... to utter” [ALFORD]. They were designed for Paul’s own consolation, and not for communication to others. Some heavenly words are communicable (^{<408>}Exodus 34:6 ^{<208>}Isaiah 6:3). These were not so. Paul had not the power adequately to utter; nor if he had, would he have been permitted; nor would earthly men comprehend them (^{<402>}John 3:12 ^{<409>}1 Corinthians 2:9). A man may hear and know more than he can speak.

5. of myself — concerning myself. Self is put in the background, except in respect to his infirmities. His glorying in his other self, to which the revelations were vouchsafed, was not in order to give glory to his fleshly self, but to bring out in contrast the “infirmities” of the latter, that Christ might have all the glory.

6. For — Not but that I might glory as to “myself” (^{<415>}2 Corinthians 12:5); “FOR if I should desire to glory, I shall not be a fool”; for I have things to glory, or boast of which are good matter for glorying of (not mere external fleshly advantages which when he gloried in [^{<410>}2 Corinthians 11:1-33] he termed such glorying “folly,” ^{<410>}2 Corinthians 11:1,16,17).

think of me — *Greek*, “form his estimate respecting me.”

heareth of me — *Greek*, “heareth aught from me.” Whatever haply he heareth from me in person. If on account of healing a cripple (^{<442>}Acts 14:12,13), and shaking off a viper (^{<405>}Acts 28:5), the people thought him a god, what would they have not done, if he had disclosed those revelations? [ESTIUS]. I wish each of you to estimate me by “what he sees” my *present* acts and “hears” my teaching to be; not by my boasting of *past* revelations. They who allow themselves to be thought of more highly than is lawful, defraud themselves of the honor which is at God’s disposal [BENGEL] (^{<454>}John 5:44 12:43).

7. exalted above measure — *Greek*, “overmuch uplifted.” How dangerous must self-exaltation be, when even the apostle required so much restraint! [BENGEL].

abundance — *Greek*, “the excess”; exceeding greatness.

given ... me — namely, by God (^{<406>}Job 5:6 ^{<402>}Philippians 1:29).

thorn in the flesh — (^{<1655>}Numbers 33:55 ^{<1324>}Ezekiel 28:24). ALFORD thinks it to be the same bodily affliction as in ^{<1814>}Galatians 4:13,14. It certainly was something personal, affecting him individually, and not as an apostle: causing at once *acute pain* (as “thorn” implies) and *shame* (“buffet”: as slaves are *buffeted*, ^{<1021>}1 Peter 2:20).

messenger of Satan — who is permitted by God to afflict His saints, as Job (^{<1814>}Job 2:7 ^{<1314>}Luke 13:16).

to buffet me — In *Greek, present*: to buffet me even now continuously. After experiencing the state of the blissful angels, he is now exposed to the influence of an evil angel. The chastisement from hell follows soon upon the revelation from heaven. As his *sight* and *hearing* had been ravished with heavenly “revelations,” so his *touch* is pained with the “thorn in the flesh.”

8. For — “concerning this thing.”

thrice — To his first and second prayer no answer came. To his third the answer came, which satisfied his faith and led him to bow his will to God’s will. So Paul’s master, Jesus, *thrice* prayed on the Mount of Olives, in resignation to the Father’s will. The thorn seems (from ^{<1719>}2 Corinthians 12:9, and *Greek*, ^{<1719>}2 Corinthians 12:7, “that he *may* buffet me”) to have continued with Paul when he wrote, lest still he should be “overmuch lifted up.”

the Lord — Christ. Escape from the cross is not to be sought even indirectly from Satan (^{<1417>}Luke 4:7). “Satan is not to be asked to spare us” [BENGEL].

9. said — literally, “He hath said,” implying that His answer is enough [ALFORD].

is sufficient — The trial must endure, but the grace shall also endure and never fail thee [ALFORD], (^{<1525>}Deuteronomy 33:25). The Lord puts the words into Paul’s mouth, that following them up he might say, “O Lord, Thy grace is sufficient for me” [BENGEL].

my strength — *Greek*, “power.”

is made perfect — has its most perfect manifestation.

in weakness — Do not ask for sensible strength, FOR My power is perfected in man's "strengthlessness" (so the *Greek*). The "for" implies, thy "strengthlessness" (the same *Greek* as is translated "weakness"; and in ^{<720>}2 Corinthians 12:10, "infirmities") is the very element in which My "power" (which moves coincident with "My grace") exhibits itself more perfectly. So that Paul instead of desiring the infirmity to "depart," "rather" henceforth "*glories* in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest (*Greek*, 'tabernacle upon,' cover my infirmity all over as with a tabernacle; compare *Greek*, ^{<812>}John 1:12) upon" him. This effect of Christ's assurance on him appears, ^{<700>}2 Corinthians 4:7 ^{<418>}1 Corinthians 2:3,4; compare ^{<704>}1 Peter 4:14. The "My" is omitted in some of the oldest manuscripts; the sense is the same, "power" (referring to God's power) standing absolutely, in contrast to "weakness" (put absolutely, for man's weakness). Paul often repeats the word "weakness" or "infirmity" (the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth chapters) as being Christ's own word. The Lord has more need of our weakness than of our strength: our strength is often His rival; our weakness, His servant, drawing on His resources, and showing forth His glory. Man's extremity is God's opportunity; man's security is Satan's opportunity. God's way is not to take His children out of trial, but to give them strength to bear up against it (^{<380>}Psalms 88:7 ^{<675>}John 17:15).

10. take pleasure in — too strongly. Rather as the *Greek*, "I am well contented in."

infirmities — the *genus*. Two pairs of *species* follow, partly coming from "Satan's messenger," partly from men.

reproaches — "insults."

when — in all the cases just specified.

then — then especially.

strong — "*powerful*" in "*the power of Christ*" (^{<719>}2 Corinthians 12:9 ^{<720>}2 Corinthians 13:4 ^{<813>}Hebrews 11:34).

11. in glorying — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. "I am become a fool." He sounds a retreat [BENGEL].

ye — emphatic. “It is YE who have compelled me; for I ought to have been commended by you,” instead of having to commend myself.

am I behind — rather as *Greek*, “was I behind” when I was with you?

the very chiefest — rather, as in ⁴⁷¹⁰⁵2 Corinthians 11:5, “those overmuch apostles.”

though I be nothing — in myself (⁴⁸⁵⁰1 Corinthians 15:9,10).

12. Truly, etc. — There is understood some such clause as this, “And yet I have not been commended by you.”

in all patience, in signs, etc. — The oldest manuscripts omit “in.” “Patience” is not one of the “signs,” but the element IN which they were wrought: endurance of opposition which did not cause me to leave off working [ALFORD]. Translate, “IN ... patience, BY signs,” etc. His mode of expression is modest, putting himself, the worker, in the background, “were wrought,” not “I wrought.” As the *signs* have not been transmitted to us, neither has the apostleship. The apostles have no literal successors (compare ⁴¹⁰²Acts 1:21,22).

mighty deeds — palpable works of divine omnipotence. The silence of the apostles in fourteen Epistles, as to miracles, arises from the design of those Epistles being hortatory, not controversial. The passing allusions to miracles in seven Epistles prove that the writers were not enthusiasts to whom *miracles* seem the most important thing. *Doctrines* were with them the important matter, save when convincing adversaries. In the seven Epistles the mention of miracles is not *obtrusive*, but marked by a calm air of assurance, as of facts *acknowledged on all hands*, and therefore unnecessary to dwell on. This is a much stronger proof of their reality than if they were formally and obtrusively asserted. Signs and wonders is the regular formula of the Old Testament, which New Testament readers would necessarily understand of supernatural works. Again, in the Gospels the miracles are so inseparably and congruously tied up with the history, that you cannot deny the former without denying the latter also. And then you have a greater difficulty than ever, namely, *to account for the rise of Christianity*; so that the infidel has something infinitely more

difficult to believe than that which he rejects, and which the Christian more rationally accepts.

13. wherein you were inferior — that is, were treated with less consideration by me than were other churches.

I myself — *I made a gain of you* neither myself, nor by those others whom I sent, Titus and others (◊227 2 Corinthians 12:17,18).

wrong — His declining support from the Corinthians might be regarded as the denial to them of a privilege, and a mark of their spiritual inferiority, and of his looking on them with less confidence and love (compare ◊119 2 Corinthians 11:9,11).

14. the third time — See *Introduction* to the first Epistle. His *second* visit was probably a short one (◊1317 1 Corinthians 16:7), and attended with humiliation through the scandalous conduct of some of his converts (compare ◊122 2 Corinthians 12:21 ◊111 2 Corinthians 2:1). It was probably paid during his three years' sojourn at Ephesus, from which he could pass so readily by sea to Corinth (compare ◊115 2 Corinthians 1:15,16 13:1,2). The context here implies nothing of a *third preparation* to come; but, "I am coming, and the third time, and will not burden you this time any more than I did at my *two previous visits*" [ALFORD].

not yours, but you — (◊1047 Philippians 4:17).

children ... parents — Paul was their spiritual father (◊1044 1 Corinthians 4:14,15). He does not, therefore, seek earthly *treasure* from them, but *lays up* the best *treasure* (namely, spiritual) "for their souls" (◊1215 2 Corinthians 12:15).

15. I will ... spend — all I have.

be spent — all that I am. This is more than even natural parents do. They "lay up *treasures* for their children." But I spend not merely my treasures, but *myself*.

for you — *Greek*, "for your souls"; not for your mere bodies.

the less I be loved — Love rather descends than ascends [BENGEL]. Love him as a true friend who seeks your good more than your good will.

16. I did not burden you — The “I” in the *Greek* is emphatic. A possible insinuation of the Corinthians is hereby anticipated and refuted: “But, you may say, granted that *I* did not burden you *myself*; nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you (in my net) with guile”; namely, made a gain of you *by means of others* (ⲥⲓⲛⲁⲓ 1 Thessalonians 2:3).

17. Paul’s reply: You know well I did not. My associates were as distinterested as myself. An important rule to all who would influence others for good.

18. I desired Titus — namely, to go unto you. Not the mission mentioned ⲥⲓⲛⲁⲓ 2 Corinthians 8:6,17,22; but a mission previous to this Epistle, probably that from which he had just returned announcing to Paul their penitence (ⲥⲓⲛⲁⲓ 2 Corinthians 7:6-16).

a brother — rather “OUR (literally, ‘the’) brother”; one well known to the Corinthians, and perhaps a Corinthian; probably one of the two mentioned in ⲥⲓⲛⲁⲓ 2 Corinthians 8:18,22.

same spirit — inwardly.

steps — outwardly.

19. Again — The oldest manuscripts read, “*This long time ye think that we are excusing ourselves unto you? (Nay). It is before God* (as opposed to ‘unto you’) that we speak in Christ” (ⲥⲓⲛⲁⲓ 2 Corinthians 2:17). *English Version Greek* text was a correction from ⲥⲓⲛⲁⲓ 2 Corinthians 3:1 5:12.

20. For — Assigning cause why they needed to be thus spoken to “for their edification”; namely, his fear that at his coming he should find them “not such as he would,” and so he should be found by them “such as they would not” like, namely, severe in punishing misconduct.

debates — *Greek*, “strifes,” “contentions.”

envyings — The oldest manuscripts read “envying,” *singular*.

strifes — “factions,” “intrigues,” “factious schemes” [WAHL]. *Ambitious self-seeking*; from a *Greek* root, “to work for hire.”

backbitings, whisperings — *open* “slandering,” and “whispering backbitings” (ⲥⲓⲛⲁⲓ Galatians 5:20).

swellings — arrogant elation; puffing up of yourselves. ^{<6116>}Jude 1:16, “great swelling words” (^{<6128>}2 Peter 2:18).

21. my God — *his* God, however trying the humiliation that was in store for him.

will humble me — The indicative implies that the supposition *will actually be so*. The faithful pastor is “humbled” at, and “bewails” the falls of his people, as though they were his own.

sinned already — before my last coming [BENGEL], that is, before the second visit which he paid, and in which he had much at Corinth to rebuke.

have not repented — shall not have repented [ALFORD].

uncleanness — for example, of married persons (^{<5041>}1 Thessalonians 4:7).

fornication — among the unmarried.

CHAPTER 13

2 CORINTHIANS 13:1-14.

HE THREATENS A SEVERE PROOF OF HIS APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY, BUT PREFERS THEY WOULD SPARE HIM THE NECESSITY FOR IT.

1. This is the third time I am coming to you — not merely *preparing* to come to you. This proves an *intermediate visit* between the two recorded in ~~4411E~~ Acts 18:1 20:2.

In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established — Quoted from ~~4516E~~ Deuteronomy 19:15, *Septuagint*. “I will judge not without examination, nor will I abstain from punishing upon due evidence” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. I will no longer be among you “in all patience” towards offenders (~~4721D~~ 2 Corinthians 12:12). The apostle in this case, where ordinary testimony was to be had, does not look for an immediate revelation, nor does he order the culprits to be cast out of the church before his arrival. Others understand the “two or three witnesses” to mean *his two or three visits* as establishing either

(1) the truth of the facts alleged against the offenders, or

(2) the reality of his threats. I prefer the first explanation to either of the two latter.

2. Rather, “I have already said (at my second visit), and tell you (now) beforehand, AS (I did) WHEN I WAS PRESENT THE SECOND TIME, SO also NOW in my absence (the oldest manuscripts omit the ‘I write,’ which here wrongly follows in *English Version* Greek text) to them which heretofore have sinned (namely, before my second visit, ~~4721D~~ 2 Corinthians 12:21), and to all others (who have sinned since my second visit, or are in danger of sinning).” The *English Version*, “as if I were present the *second time*,” namely, this next time, is quite inconsistent with ~~4713E~~ 2 Corinthians 13:1, “this is the *third* time I am coming to you,” as Paul could not have called

the same journey at once “the second” and “the third time” of his coming. The antithesis between “the second time” and “now” is palpable.

if I come again, etc. — that is, *whensoever I come again* (^{<400>}Acts 20:2). These were probably the very words of his former threat which he now repeats again.

3. Since — The reason why he will not spare: Since ye challenge me to give a “proof” that Christ speaks in me. It would be better if ye would “*prove your own selves*” (^{<413>}2 Corinthians 13:5). This disproves the assertion of some that Scripture nowhere asserts the infallibility of its writers when writing it.

which — “who” (Christ).

is not weak — in relation to you, by me and in this very Epistle, in exercising upon you strong discipline.

mighty in you — has given many proofs of His power in miracles, and even in punishing offenders (^{<415>}2 Corinthians 5:11,20,21). Ye have no need to put me to the proof in this, as long ago Christ has exhibited great proofs of His power by me among you (^{<420>}2 Corinthians 12:12) [GROTIUS]. It is therefore not me, but Christ, whom ye wrong: it is His patience that ye try in despising my admonitions, and derogating from my authority [CALVIN].

4. though — omitted in some of the oldest manuscripts; then translate, “For He was even crucified,” etc.

through weakness — *Greek*, “from weakness”; that is, His assumption of our weakness was the source, or necessary condition, *from* which the possibility of His crucifixion flowed (^{<504>}Hebrews 2:14 ^{<510>}Philippians 2:7,8).

by — *Greek*, “from”; “owing to.”

the power of God — the Father (^{<600>}Romans 1:4 6:4 ^{<600>}Ephesians 1:20).

weak in him — that is, in virtue of our union with Him, and after His pattern, weakness predominates in us for a time (exhibited in our “infirmities” and weak “bodily presence,” ^{<700>}2 Corinthians 10:10)

12:5,9,10; and also in our not putting into immediate exercise our power of punishing offenders, just as Christ for a time kept in abeyance His power).

we shall live with him — not only hereafter with Him, free from our present infirmities, in the resurrection life (⁴⁰²Philippians 3:21), but presently in the exercise of our apostolic authority against offenders, which flows to us *in respect to you* from *the power of God*, however “weak” we now seem to you. “With Him,” that is, even as He now exercises His power in His glorified resurrection life, after His weakness for a time.

5. Examine — *Greek*, “Try (make trial of) yourselves.”

prove your own selves — This should be your first aim, rather than “seeking a proof of Christ speaking *in me*” (⁴⁷³2 Corinthians 13:3).

your own selves — I need not speak much in proof of Christ being in me, your minister (⁴⁷³2 Corinthians 13:3), for if ye try *your own selves* ye will see that Christ is also in you [CHRYSOSTOM], (⁴⁸¹Romans 8:10). Finding Christ dwelling in yourselves by faith, ye may well believe that He speaks in me, by whose ministry ye have received this faith [ESTIUS]. To doubt it would be the sin of Israel, who, after so many miracles and experimental proofs of God’s presence, still cried (⁴⁷⁷Exodus 17:7), “Is the Lord among us or not?” (Compare ⁴⁸¹Mark 8:11).

except ye be reprobates — The *Greek* softens the expression, “*somewhat* reprobates,” that is, not *abiding the “proof”* (alluding to the same word in the context); failing *when tested*. Image from metals (⁴⁶⁵Jeremiah 6:30 ⁴⁷²Daniel 5:27 ⁴⁸¹Romans 1:28).

6. we ... not reprobates — not *unable to abide the proof* to which ye put us (⁴⁷³2 Corinthians 13:6). “I trust that” your own Christianity will be *recognized* by you (observe, “ye shall *know*,” answers to “*know* your own selves,” ⁴⁷³2 Corinthians 13:5) as sufficient “proof” that ye are not reprobates, but that “Christ speaks in me,” without needing a proof from me more trying to yourselves. If ye doubt my apostleship, ye must doubt your own Christianity, for ye are the fruits of my apostleship.

7. I pray — The oldest manuscripts read, “we pray.”

not that we should appear approved — not to gain credit for ourselves, your ministers, by your Christian conduct; but for your good [ALFORD]. The antithesis to “reprobates” leads me to prefer explaining with BENGEL, “We do *not* pray *that* we may appear *approved*,” by restraining you when ye do evil; “but that ye should do what is *right*” (*English Version*, “honest”).

though we be as reprobates — though we be thereby deprived of the occasion for exercising our apostolic power (namely, in punishing), and so may appear “as reprobates” (*incapable of affording proof* of Christ speaking in us).

8. Our apostolic power is given us that we may use it not against, but for the furtherance of, the truth. Where you are free from fault, there is no scope for its exercise: and this I desire. Far be it from me to use it against the innocent, merely in order to increase my own power (2 Corinthians 13:10).

9. **are glad** — *Greek*, “rejoice.”

when we are weak — having no occasion for displaying our power; and so seeming “weak,” as being compassed with “infirmities” (2 Corinthians 10:10 11:29,30).

ye ... strong — “mighty” in faith and the fruits of the Spirit.

and — not in the oldest manuscripts.

we wish — *Greek*, “pray for.”

your perfection — literally, “perfect restoration”; literally, that of a dislocated limb. Compare 2 Corinthians 13:11, “Be perfect,” the same *Greek* word; also in 1 Corinthians 1:10, “perfectly joined together”; Ephesians 4:12, “the perfecting of the saints.”

10. **Therefore** — because I wish the “sharpness” to be in my *letters* rather than in *deeds* [CHRYSOSTOM].

edification ... not to destruction — *for building up ... not for casting down*. To “use sharpness” would seem to be *casting down*, rather than *building up*; therefore he prefers not to have to use it.

11. farewell — meaning in *Greek* also “rejoice”; thus in bidding farewell he returns to the point with which he set out, “we are helpers of your *joy*” (^{<402>}2 Corinthians 1:24 ^{<504>}Philippians 4:4).

Be perfect — Become perfect by filling up what is lacking in your Christian character (^{<403>}Ephesians 4:13).

be of good comfort — (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:6 7:8-13 ^{<508>}1 Thessalonians 4:18).

14. The benediction which proves the doctrine of the Divine Trinity in unity. “The grace of Christ” comes first, for it is only by it we come to “the love of God” the Father (^{<646>}John 14:6). The variety in the order of Persons proves that “in this Trinity none is afore or after other” [*Athanasian Creed*].

communion — joint fellowship, or participation, in the same Holy Ghost, which joins in one catholic Church, His temple, both Jews and Gentiles. Whoever has “the fellowship of the Holy Ghost,” has also “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and “the love of God”; and vice versa. For the three are inseparable, as the three Persons of the Trinity itself [CHRYSTOM]. The doctrine of the Trinity was not revealed clearly and fully till Christ came, and the whole scheme of our redemption was manifested in Him, and we know the Holy Three in One more *in their relations to us* (as set forth summarily in this benediction), than in their *mutual relations to one another* (^{<629>}Deuteronomy 29:29).

Amen — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Probably added subsequently for the exigencies of public joint worship.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE

GALATIANS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

THE internal and external evidence for *Paul's authorship* is conclusive. The style is characteristically Pauline. The superscription, and allusions to the apostle of the Gentiles in the first person, throughout the Epistle, establish the same truth (~~ROM~~ Galatians 1:1,13-24 2:1-14). His authorship is also upheld by the unanimous testimony of the ancient Church: compare IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 3,7,2] (~~ROM~~ Galatians 3:19); POLYCARP [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 3] quotes ~~ROM~~ Galatians 4:26 6:7; JUSTIN MARTYR, or whoever wrote the *Discourse to the Greeks*, alludes to ~~ROM~~ Galatians 4:12 5:20.

The Epistle was written "TO THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA" (~~ROM~~ Galatians 1:2), a district of Asia Minor, bordering on Phrygia, Pontus, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Paphlagonia. The inhabitants (Gallo-graeci, contracted into Galati, another form of the name Celts) were Gauls in origin, the latter having overrun Asia Minor after they had pillaged Delphi, about 280 B.C. and at last permanently settled in the central parts, thence called Gallo-graecia or Galatia. Their character, as shown in this Epistle, is in entire consonance with that ascribed to the Gallic race by all writers. Caesar [*Commentaries on the Gallic War*, 4,5], "The infirmity of the Gauls is that they are fickle in their resolves and fond of change, and not to be trusted." So Thierry (quoted by ALFORD), "Frank, impetuous, impressible, eminently intelligent, but at the same time extremely changeable, inconstant, fond of show, perpetually quarrelling, the fruit of excessive vanity." They received Paul at first with all joy and kindness; but soon wavered in their allegiance to the Gospel and to him, and hearkened as eagerly now to Judaizing teachers as they had before to him (~~ROM~~ Galatians

4:14-16). The apostle himself had been the first preacher among them (~~4:16~~ Acts 16:6 ~~4:18~~ Galatians 1:8 4:13; see on ~~4:18~~ Galatians 4:13; “*on account of infirmity of flesh I preached unto you at the first*”: implying that sickness detained him among them); and had then probably founded churches, which at his subsequent visit he “strengthened” in the faith (~~4:18~~ Acts 18:23). His first visit was about A.D. 51, during his second missionary journey. JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 16.62] testifies that many Jews resided in Ancyra in Galatia. Among these and their brethren, doubtless, as elsewhere, he began his preaching. And though subsequently the majority in the Galatian churches were Gentiles (~~4:18~~ Galatians 4:8,9), yet these were soon infected by Judaizing teachers, and almost suffered themselves to be persuaded to undergo circumcision (~~4:18~~ Galatians 1:6 3:1,3 5:2,3 6:12,13). Accustomed as the Galatians had been, when heathen, to the mystic worship of Cybele (prevalent in the neighboring region of Phrygia), and the theosophistic doctrines connected with that worship, they were the more readily led to believe that the full privileges of Christianity could only be attained through an elaborate system of ceremonial symbolism (~~4:18~~ Galatians 4:9-11 5:7-12). They even gave ear to the insinuation that Paul himself observed the law among the Jews, though he persuaded the Gentiles to renounce it, and that his motive was to keep his converts in a subordinate state, excluded from the full privileges of Christianity, which were enjoyed by the circumcised alone (~~4:18~~ Galatians 5:11 ~~4:18~~ Galatians 4:16, compare with ~~4:18~~ Galatians 2:17); and that in “becoming all things to all men,” he was an interested flatterer (~~4:18~~ Galatians 1:10), aiming at forming a party for himself: moreover, that he falsely represented himself as an apostle divinely commissioned by Christ, whereas he was but a messenger sent by the Twelve and the Church at Jerusalem, and that his teaching was now at variance with that of Peter and James, “pillars” of the Church, and therefore ought not to be accepted.

His PURPOSE, then, in writing this Epistle was:

- (1) to defend his apostolic authority (~~4:18~~ Galatians 1:11-19 2:1-14);
- (2) to counteract the evil influence of the Judaizers in Galatia (~~4:18~~ Galatians 3:1-4:31), and to show that their doctrine destroyed the very *essence of Christianity*, by lowering its spirituality to an outward ceremonial system;

(3) to give exhortation for the strengthening of Galatian believers in faith towards Christ, and in the fruits of the Spirit (^{<R11>}Galatians 5:1-6:18). He had already, face to face, testified against the Judaizing teachers (^{<R10>}Galatians 1:9 4:16 ^{<R13>}Acts 18:23); and now that he has heard of the continued and increasing prevalence of the evil, he writes *with his own hand* (^{<R11>}Galatians 6:11: a labor which he usually delegated to an amanuensis) this Epistle to oppose it. The sketch he gives in it of his apostolic career confirms and expands the account in Acts and shows his independence of human authority, however exalted. His protest against Peter in ^{<R14>}Galatians 2:14-21, disproves the figment, not merely of papal, but even of that apostle's supremacy; and shows that Peter, save when specially inspired, was fallible like other men.

There is much in common between this Epistle and that to the Romans on the subject of justification by faith only, and not by the law. But the Epistle to the Romans handles the subject in a didactic and logical mode, without any special reference; this Epistle, in a controversial manner, and with special reference to the Judaizers in Galatia.

The STYLE combines the two extremes, sternness. (^{<R11>}Galatians 1:1-24 3:1-5) and tenderness (^{<R10>}Galatians 4:19,20), the characteristics of a man of strong emotions, and both alike well suited for acting on an impressible people such as the Galatians were. The beginning is abrupt, as was suited to the urgency of the question and the greatness of the danger. A tone of sadness, too, is apparent, such as might be expected in the letter of a warm-hearted teacher who had just learned that those whom he loved were forsaking his teachings for those of perverters of the truth, as well as giving ear to calumnies against himself.

The TIME OF WRITING was *after* the visit to Jerusalem recorded in ^{<R15>}Acts 15:1, etc.; that is, A.D. 50, if that visit be, as seems probable, identical with that in ^{<R11>}Galatians 2:1. Further, as ^{<R10>}Galatians 1:9 ("as we said *before*"), and ^{<R10>}Galatians 4:16 ("Have [ALFORD] I become your enemy?" namely, at my second visit, whereas I was welcomed by you at my first visit), refer to his second visit (^{<R13>}Acts 18:23), this Epistle must have been written after the date of that visit (the autumn of A.D. 54). ^{<R13>}Galatians 4:13, "Ye know how ... I preached ... at the first" (*Greek*, "at the former

time”), implies that Paul, at the time of writing, had been *twice* in Galatia; and ~~ROM~~ Galatians 1:6, “I marvel that ye are *so soon* removed,” implies that he wrote not long after having left Galatia for the second time; probably in the early part of *his residence at Ephesus* (~~AKS~~ Acts 18:23 19:1, etc., from A.D. 54, the autumn, to A.D. 57, Pentecost) [ALFORD]. CONYBEARE and HOWSON, from the similarity between this Epistle and that to the Romans, the same line of argument in both occupying the writer’s mind, think it was *not written till his stay at Corinth* (~~AKS~~ Acts 20:2,3), during the winter of 57-58, whence he wrote his Epistle to the Romans; and certainly, in the theory of the earlier writing of it from Ephesus, it does seem unlikely that the two Epistles to the Corinthians, so dissimilar, should intervene between those so similar as the Epistles to the Galatians and Romans; or that the Epistle to the Galatians should intervene between the second to the Thessalonians and the first to the Corinthians. The decision between the two theories rests on the words, “so soon.” If these be not considered inconsistent with little more than three years having elapsed since his second visit to Galatia, the argument, from the similarity to the Epistle to the Romans, seems to me conclusive. This to the Galatians seems written on the urgency of the occasion, tidings having reached him at Corinth from Ephesus of the Judaizing of many of his Galatian converts, in an admonitory and controversial tone, to maintain the great principles of Christian liberty and justification by faith only; that to the Romans is a more deliberate and systematic exposition of the same central truths of theology, subsequently drawn up in writing to a Church with which he was personally unacquainted. See on ~~ROM~~ Galatians 1:6, for BIRKS’S view. PALEY [*Horae Paulinae*] well remarks how perfectly adapted the conduct of the argument is to the historical circumstances under which the Epistle was written! Thus, that to the Galatians, a Church which Paul had founded, he puts mainly upon *authority*; that to the Romans, to whom he was not personally known, entirely upon *argument*.

CHAPTER 1

⌵ GALATIANS 1:1-24.

SUPERScription. GREETINGS. THE CAUSE OF HIS WRITING IS THEIR SPEEDY FALLING AWAY FROM THE GOSPEL HE TAUGHT. DEFENSE OF HIS TEACHING: HIS APOSTOLIC CALL INDEPENDENT OF MAN.

Judaizing teachers had persuaded the Galatians that Paul had taught them the new religion imperfectly, and at second hand; that the founder of their church himself possessed only a deputed commission, the seal of truth and authority being in the apostles at Jerusalem: moreover, that whatever he might profess among them, he had himself at other times, and in other places, given way to the doctrine of circumcision. To refute this, he appeals to the history of his conversion, and to the manner of his conferring with the apostles when he met them at Jerusalem; that so far was his doctrine from being derived from them, or they from exercising any superiority over him, that they had simply assented to what he had already preached among the Gentiles, which preaching was communicated, not by them to him, but by himself to them [PALEY]. Such an apologetic Epistle could not be a later forgery, the objections which it meets only coming out incidentally, not being obtruded as they would be by a forger; and also being such as could only arise in the earliest age of the Church, when Jerusalem and Judaism still held a prominent place.

1. apostle — in the earliest Epistles, the two to the Thessalonians, through humility, he uses no title of authority; but associates with him “Silvanus and Timotheus”; yet here, though “brethren” (⌵ Galatians 1:2) are with him, he does not *name* them but puts his own name and apostleship prominent: evidently because his apostolic commission needs now to be vindicated against deniers of it.

of — *Greek*, “from.” Expressing the *origin* from which his mission came, “not from *men*,” but from Christ and the Father (understood) as the

source. “By” expresses the immediate operating agent in the call. Not only was the call *from* God as its ultimate source, but *by* Christ and the Father as the immediate agent in calling him (^{<425>}Acts 22:15 26:16-18). The laying on of Ananias’ hands (^{<497>}Acts 9:17) is no objection to this; for that was but a sign of the fact, not an assisting cause. So the Holy Ghost calls him specially (^{<412>}Acts 13:2,3); he was an apostle *before* this special mission.

man — singular; to mark the contrast to “Jesus Christ.” The opposition between “Christ” and “man,” and His name being put in closest connection with God the Father, imply His Godhead.

raised him from the dead — implying that, though he had not seen Him in His humiliation as the other apostles (which was made an objection against him), he had seen and been *constituted an apostle by Him in His resurrection power* (^{<138>}Matthew 28:18 ^{<800>}Romans 1:4,5). Compare as to the ascension, the consequence of the resurrection, and the cause of His giving “apostles,” ^{<491>}Ephesians 4:11. He rose again, too, for our *justification* (^{<502>}Romans 4:25); thus Paul prepares the way for the prominent subject of the Epistle, justification in Christ, not by the law.

2. all the brethren — I am not alone in my doctrine; all my colleagues in the Gospel work, travelling with me (^{<429>}Acts 19:29, Gaius and Aristarchus at Ephesus: ^{<406>}Acts 20:4, Sopater, Secundus, Timotheus, Tychicus, Trophimus, some, or all of these), join with me. Not that these were *joint authors* with Paul of the Epistle: but joined him in the *sentiments* and *salutations*. The phrase, “all the brethren,” accords with a date when he had many travelling companions, he and they having to bear jointly the collection to Jerusalem [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

the churches — Pessinus and Ancyra were the principal cities; but doubtless there were many other churches in Galatia (^{<482>}Acts 18:23 ^{<601>}1 Corinthians 16:1). He does not attach any honorable title to the churches here, as elsewhere, being displeased at their Judaizing. See First Corinthians; First Thessalonians, etc. The first Epistle of Peter is addressed to Jewish Christians sojourning in Galatia (^{<1001>}1 Peter 1:1), among other places mentioned. It is interesting thus to find the apostle of the circumcision, as well as the apostle of the uncircumcision, once at issue (^{<817>}Galatians 2:7-15), co-operating to build up the same churches.

3. from ... *from* — Omit the second “from.” The *Greek* joins God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ in closet union, by there being but the one preposition.

4. **gave himself** — (ⲀⲔⲓⲛ Galatians 2:20); unto death, as an offering. Found only in this and the Pastoral Epistles. The *Greek* is different in ⲀⲔⲉⲥ Ephesians 5:25 (see on ⲀⲔⲉⲥ Ephesians 5:25).

for our sins — which enslaved us to the present evil world.

deliver us from this — *Greek*, “out of the,” etc. The Father and Son are each said to “deliver us,” etc. (Ⲁⲓⲓⲛ Colossians 1:13): but the Son, not the Father, *gave Himself for us* in order to do so, and make us citizens of a better world (Ⲁⲓⲓⲛ Philippians 3:20). The Galatians in desiring to return to legal bondage are, he implies, renouncing the *deliverance* which Christ wrought for us. This he more fully repeats in ⲀⲔⲓⲛ Galatians 3:13. “Deliver” is the very word used by the Lord as to His deliverance of Paul himself (ⲀⲔⲓⲛ Acts 26:17): an undesigned coincidence between Paul and Luke.

world — *Greek*, “age”; *system* or *course* of the world, regarded from a religious point of view. The present *age* opposes the “glory” (ⲀⲔⲓⲛ Galatians 1:5) of God, and is under the authority of the Evil One. The “ages of ages” (*Greek*, ⲀⲔⲓⲛ Galatians 1:5) are opposed to “the present evil age.”

according to the will of God and our Father — *Greek*, “of Him who is at once God [the sovereign Creator] and our Father” (ⲀⲔⲓⲛ John 6:38,39 10:18, end). Without merit of ours. His sovereignty as “GOD,” and our filial relation to Him as “OUR FATHER,” ought to keep us from blending our own legal notions (as the Galatians were doing) with His will and plan. This paves the way for his argument.

5. *be* glory — rather, as *Greek*, “be *the* glory”; the glory which is peculiarly and exclusively His. Compare *Note*, see on ⲀⲔⲓⲛ Ephesians 3:21.

6. Without the usual expressions of thanksgiving for their faith, etc., he vehemently plunges into his subject, zealous for “the glory” of God (ⲀⲔⲓⲛ Galatians 1:5), which was being disparaged by the Galatians falling away from the pure Gospel of the “grace” of God.

I marvel — implying that he had hoped better things from them, whence his sorrowful surprise at their turning out so different from his expectations.

so soon — after my last visit; when I hoped and thought you were untainted by the Judaizing teachers. If this Epistle was written from Corinth, the interval would be a little more than three years, which would be “soon” to have fallen away, if they were apparently sound at the time of his visit. ^{<ROM>}Galatians 4:18,20 may imply that he saw no symptom of unsoundness *then*, such as he hears of in them *now*. But *English Version* is probably not correct there. See see on ^{<ROM>}Galatians 4:18; ^{<ROM>}Galatians 4:20; also see *Introduction*. If from Ephesus, the interval would be not more than one year. BIRKS holds the Epistle to have been written from Corinth after his FIRST visit to Galatia; for this agrees best with the “so soon” here: with ^{<ROM>}Galatians 4:18, “It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.” If they had persevered in the faith during three years of his first absence, and only turned aside after his second visit, they could not be charged justly with adhering to the truth only when he was present: for his first absence was longer than both his visits, and they would have obeyed longer in his “*absence*” than in his “*presence*.” But if their decline had begun immediately after he left them, and before his return to them, the reproof will be just. But see on ^{<ROM>}Galatians 4:13.

removed — Translate, “are being removed,” that is, ye are *suffering yourselves so soon* (whether from the time of my last visit, or from the time of the first temptation held out to you) [PARAEUS] *to be removed* by Jewish seducers. Thus he softens the censure by implying that the Galatians were tempted by seducers from without, with whom the chief guilt lay: and the present, “ye are *being* removed,” implies that their seduction was only in process of being effected, not that it was actually effected. WAHL, ALFORD, and others take the *Greek* as middle voice. “ye are removing” or “passing over.” “Shifting your ground” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. But thus the point of Paul’s oblique reference to their misleaders is lost; and in ^{<ROM>}Hebrews 7:12 the *Greek* is used passively, justifying its being taken so here. On the impulsiveness and fickleness of the Gauls (another form of Kel-t-s, the progenitors of the Erse, Gauls,

Cymri, and Belgians), whence the Galatians sprang, see *Introduction* and CAESAR [*Commentaries on the Gallic War*, 3.19].

from him that called you — God the Father (^{<R15}Galatians 1:15 ^{<R8}Galatians 5:8 ^{<R8}Romans 8:30 ^{<R9}1 Corinthians 1:9 ^{<S12}1 Thessalonians 2:12 5:24).

into — rather, as *Greek*, “IN the grace of Christ,” as the *element* in which, and the *instrument* by which, God calls us to salvation. Compare *Note*, see on ^{<R15}1 Corinthians 7:15; ^{<R5}Romans 5:15, “the gift by (*Greek*, ‘in’) grace (*Greek*, ‘the grace’) of (the) one man.” “The grace of Christ,” is Christ’s gratuitously purchased and bestowed justification, reconciliation, and eternal life.

another — rather, as *Greek*, “a second and *different* gospel,” that is, into a *so-called* gospel, different altogether from the only true Gospel.

7. another — A distinct *Greek* word from that in ^{<R16}Galatians 1:6. Though I called it a gospel (^{<R16}Galatians 1:6), it is not really so. There is really but *one* Gospel, and no *other* gospel.

but — Translate, “Only that there are some that trouble you,” etc. (^{<R5}Galatians 5:10,12). All I meant by the “different gospel” was nothing but a perversion by “some” of the one Gospel of Christ.

would pervert — *Greek*, “wish to pervert”; they could not really pervert the Gospel, though they could pervert Gospel professors (compare ^{<R9}Galatians 4:9,17,21 6:12,13 ^{<S18}Colossians 2:18). Though acknowledging Christ, they insisted on circumcision and Jewish ordinances and professed to rest on the authority of other apostles, namely, Peter and James. But Paul recognizes no gospel, save the pure Gospel.

8. But — however weighty they may seem “who trouble you.” Translate as *Greek*, “Even though we,” namely, I and the brethren with me, weighty and many as we are (^{<R1}Galatians 1:1,2). The *Greek* implies a case supposed which never has occurred.

angel — in which light ye at first received me (compare ^{<R14}Galatians 4:14 ^{<R1}1 Corinthians 13:1), and whose authority is the highest possible next to that of God and Christ. A new revelation, even though seemingly

accredited by miracles, is not to be received if it contradict the already existing revelation. For God cannot contradict Himself (^{<513>}Deuteronomy 13:1-3 ^{<1138>}1 Kings 13:18 ^{<429>}Matthew 24:24 ^{<519>}2 Thessalonians 2:9). The Judaizing teachers sheltered themselves under the names of the great apostles, James, John, and Peter: “Do not bring these names up to me, for even if an *angel*,” etc. Not that he means, the apostles really supported the Judaizers: but he wishes to show, when the truth is in question, respect of persons is inadmissible [CHRYSTOSTOM].

preach — that is, “should preach.”

any other gospel ... than — The *Greek* expresses not so much “any other gospel *different* from what we have preached,” as, “any gospel *BESIDE* that which we preached.” This distinctly opposes the traditions of the Church of Rome, which are at once *besides* and *against* (the *Greek* includes both ideas) the written Word, our only “attested rule.”

9. said before — when we were visiting you (so “before” means, ^{<473>}2 Corinthians 13:2). Compare ^{<800>}Galatians 5:2,3,21. Translate, “If any man *preacheth* unto you any gospel *BESIDE* that which,” etc. Observe the indicative, not the subjunctive or conditional mood, is used, “*preacheth*,” literally, “furnisheth you with any gospel.” The *fact* is assumed, not merely supposed as a contingency, as in ^{<800>}Galatians 1:8, “preach,” or “should preach.” This implies that he had already observed (namely, during his last visit) the machinations of the Judaizing teachers: but his *surprise* (^{<800>}Galatians 1:6) *now* at the Galatians being misled by them, implies that they had not apparently been so *then*. As in ^{<800>}Galatians 1:8 he had said, “which we preached,” so here, with an augmentation of the force, “which ye received”; acknowledging that they had truly *accepted it*.

accused — The opposite appears in ^{<800>}Galatians 6:16.

10. For — accounting for the strong language he has just used.

do I now — resuming the “now” of ^{<800>}Galatians 1:9. “Amos I *now* persuading men?” [ALFORD], that is, conciliating. Is what I have *just now* said a sample of men-pleasing, of which I am accused? His adversaries accused him of being an interested flatterer of men, “becoming all things to all men,” to make a party for himself, and so observing the law among the

Jews (for instance, circumcising Timothy), yet persuading the Gentiles to renounce it (^{<851>}Galatians 5:11) (in order to flatter those, really keeping them in a subordinate state, not admitted to the full privileges which the circumcised alone enjoyed). NEANDER explains the “now” thus: Once, when a Pharisee, I was actuated only by a regard to human authority and to please men (^{<265>}Luke 16:15 ^{<854>}John 5:44), but Now I teach as responsible to God alone (^{<403>}1 Corinthians 4:3).

or God? — Regard is to be had to God alone.

for if I yet pleased men — The oldest manuscripts omit “for.” “If I were still pleasing men,” etc. (^{<463>}Luke 6:26 ^{<859>}John 15:19 ^{<5104>}1 Thessalonians 2:4 ^{<5041>}James 4:4 ^{<606>}1 John 4:5). On “yet,” compare ^{<851>}Galatians 5:11.

servant of Christ — and so pleasing Him in all things (^{<5109>}Titus 2:9 ^{<5102>}Colossians 3:22).

11. certify — I made known to you as to the Gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man, that is, not *of, by, or from* man (^{<800>}Galatians 1:1,12). It is *not according* to man; not influenced by mere human considerations, as it would be, if it were of human origin.

brethren — He not till now calls them so.

12. Translate, “For *not even* did I *myself* (any more than the other apostles) receive it from man, *nor* was I taught it (by man).” “Received it,” implies the absence of labor in acquiring it. “Taught it,” implies the labor of learning.

by the revelation of Jesus Christ — Translate, “by revelation of [that is, from] Jesus Christ.” By His revealing it to me. Probably this took place during the three years, in part of which he sojourned in Arabia (^{<8017>}Galatians 1:17,18), in the vicinity of the scene of the giving of the law; a fit place for such a revelation of the Gospel of grace, which supersedes the ceremonial law (^{<8025>}Galatians 4:25). He, like other Pharisees who embraced Christianity, did not at first recognize its independence of the Mosaic law, but combined both together. Ananias, his first instructor, was universally esteemed for his legal piety and so was not likely to have taught him to sever Christianity from the law. This severance was partially recognized after the martyrdom of Stephen. But Paul received it by special

revelation (^{<4123>}1 Corinthians 11:23 15:3 ^{<5045>}1 Thessalonians 4:15). A vision of the Lord Jesus is mentioned (^{<4228>}Acts 22:18), at his first visit to Jerusalem (^{<4018>}Galatians 1:18); but this seems to have been subsequent to the revelation here meant (compare ^{<4015>}Galatians 1:15-18), and to have been confined to giving a particular command. The vision “fourteen years before” (^{<4011>}2 Corinthians 12:1) was in A.D. 43, still later, six years after his conversion. Thus Paul is an independent witness to the Gospel. Though he had received no instruction from the apostles, but from the Holy Ghost, yet when he met them his Gospel exactly agreed with theirs.

13. heard — even before I came among you.

conversation — “my former way of life.”

Jews’ religion — The term, “*Hebrew*,” expresses the *language*; “Jew,” the *nationality*, as distinguished from the Gentiles; “Israelite,” the highest title, the religious privileges, as a member of the theocracy.

the church — Here singular, marking its unity, though constituted of many particular churches, under the one Head, Christ.

of God — added to mark the greatness of his sinful alienation from God (^{<4359>}1 Corinthians 15:19).

wasted — laid it waste: the opposite of “building it up.”

14. profited — *Greek*, “I was becoming a proficient”; “I made progress.”

above — beyond.

my equals — *Greek*, “Of mine own age, among my countrymen.”

traditions of my fathers — namely, those of the Pharisees, Paul being “a Pharisee, and son of a Pharisee” (^{<4026>}Acts 23:6 26:5). “MY fathers,” shows that it is not to be understood generally of the traditions *of the nation*.

15. separated — “set me apart”: in the purposes of His electing love (compare ^{<4035>}Acts 9:15 22:14), in order to show in me *His “pleasure,”* which is the farthest point that any can reach in inquiring the causes of his salvation. The actual “separating” or “setting apart” to the work marked out for him, is mentioned in ^{<4032>}Acts 13:2 ^{<4001>}Romans 1:1. There is an allusion, perhaps, in the way of contrast, to the derivation of Pharisee

from *Hebrew*, “*pharash*,” “separated.” I was once a so-called Pharisee or *Separatist*, but God had *separated* me to something far better.

from ... womb — Thus merit in me was out of the question, in assigning causes for His call from ^{<401>}Acts 9:11. Grace is the sole cause (^{<421>}Psalms 22:9 71:6 ^{<301>}Isaiah 49:1,5 ^{<205>}Jeremiah 1:5 ^{<015>}Luke 1:15).

called me — on the way to Damascus (^{<403>}Acts 9:3-8).

16. reveal his Son in me — within me, in my inmost soul, by the Holy Spirit (^{<421>}Galatians 2:20). Compare ^{<402>}2 Corinthians 4:6, “shined in our hearts.” The revealing of His Son by me to the Gentiles (so translate for “heathen”) was impossible, unless He had first revealed His Son *in me*; at first on my conversion, but especially at the subsequent revelation from Jesus Christ (^{<412>}Galatians 1:12), whereby I learned the Gospel’s independence of the Mosaic law.

that I might preach — the present in the *Greek*, which includes the idea “that I *may* preach Him,” implying an office still *continuing*. This was the main commission. entrusted to him (^{<407>}Galatians 2:7,9).

immediately — connected chiefly with “I went into Arabia” (^{<417>}Galatians 1:17). It denotes the sudden fitness of the apostle. So ^{<403>}Acts 9:20, “*Straightway* he preached Christ in the synagogue.”

I conferred not — *Greek*, “I had not further (namely, in addition to revelation) recourse to ... for the purpose of consulting.” The divine revelation was sufficient for me [BENGEL].

flesh and blood — (^{<407>}Matthew 16:17).

17. went I up — Some of the oldest manuscripts read, “went away.”

to Jerusalem — the seat of the apostles.

into Arabia — This journey (not recorded in Acts) was during the whole period of his stay at Damascus, called by Luke (^{<403>}Acts 9:23), “many [*Greek*, a considerable number of] days.” It is curiously confirmatory of the legitimacy of taking “many days” to stand for “three years,” that the same phrase exactly occurs in the same sense in ^{<103>}1 Kings 2:38,39. This was a country of the *Gentiles*; here doubtless he preached as he did before

and after (^{<418>}Acts 9:20,22) at Damascus: thus he shows the independence of his apostolic commission. He also here had that comparative retirement needed, after the first fervor of his conversion, to prepare him for the great work before him. Compare Moses (^{<417>}Acts 7:29,30). His familiarity with the scene of the giving of the law, and the meditations and revelations which he had there, appear in ^{<404>}Galatians 4:24,25 ^{<5828>}Hebrews 12:18. See on ^{<412>}Galatians 1:12. The Lord from heaven communed with him, as He on earth in the days of His flesh communed with the other apostles.

returned — *Greek* “returned back again.”

18. after three years — dating from my conversion, as appears by the contrast to “immediately” (^{<416>}Galatians 1:16). This is the same visit to Jerusalem as in ^{<418>}Acts 9:26, and at this visit occurred the vision (^{<421>}Acts 22:17,18). The incident which led to his leaving Damascus (^{<415>}Acts 9:25 ^{<413>}2 Corinthians 11:33) was not the main *cause* of his going to *Jerusalem*. So that there is no discrepancy in the statement here that he went “to see Peter”; or rather, as *Greek*, “to make the acquaintance of”; “to become personally acquainted with.” The two oldest manuscripts read, “Cephas,” the name given Peter elsewhere in the Epistle, the *Hebrew* name; as *Peter* is the *Greek* (^{<412>}John 1:42). Appropriate to the view of him here as the apostle especially of the Hebrews. It is remarkable that Peter himself, in his Epistles, uses the *Greek* name *Peter*, perhaps to mark his antagonism to the Judaizers who would cling to the Hebraic form. He was prominent among the apostles, though James, as bishop of Jerusalem, had the chief authority there (^{<413>}Matthew 16:18).

abode — or “tarried” [ELLICOTT].

fifteen days — only fifteen days; contrasting with the long period of *three years*, during which, previously, he had exercised an independent commission in preaching: a fact proving on the face of it, how little he owed to Peter in regard to his apostolical authority or instruction. The *Greek* for “to see,” at the same time implies *visiting a person important to know*, such as Peter was. The plots of the Jews prevented him staying longer (^{<419>}Acts 9:29). Also, the vision directing him to depart to the Gentiles, for that the people of Jerusalem would not receive his testimony (^{<421>}Acts 22:17,18).

19. Compare ^{<492>}Acts 9:27,28, wherein Luke, as an historian, describes more generally what Paul, the subject of the history, himself details more particularly. The history speaks of “apostles”; and Paul’s mention of a *second* apostle, besides Peter, reconciles the Epistle and the history. At Stephen’s martyrdom, and the consequent persecution, the other ten apostles, agreeably to Christ’s directions, seem to have *soon* (though not *immediately*, ^{<494>}Acts 8:14) left Jerusalem to preach elsewhere. James remained in charge of the mother church, as its bishop. Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, was present during Paul’s fifteen days’ stay; but he, too, presently after (^{<492>}Acts 9:32), went on a circuit through Judea.

James, the Lord’s brother — This designation, to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee, was appropriate while that apostle was alive. But before Paul’s second visit to Jerusalem (^{<491>}Galatians 2:1 ^{<491>}Acts 15:1-4), he had been beheaded by Herod (^{<492>}Acts 12:2). Accordingly, in the subsequent mention of James here (^{<491>}Galatians 2:9,12), he is not designated by this distinctive epithet: a minute, undesigned coincidence, and proof of genuineness. James was the Lord’s brother, not in our strict sense, but in the sense, “cousin,” or “kinsman” (^{<493>}Matthew 28:10 ^{<497>}John 20:17). His brethren are never called “sons of Joseph,” which they would have been had they been the Lord’s brothers strictly. However, compare ^{<498>}Psalms 69:8, “I am an alien to *my mother’s children*.” In ^{<498>}John 7:3,5, the “brethren” who believed not in Him may mean His *near relations*, not including the two of His brethren, that is, relatives (James and Jude) who were among the Twelve apostles. ^{<494>}Acts 1:14, “His brethren,” refer to Simon and Joses, and others (^{<495>}Matthew 13:55) of His kinsmen, who were not apostles. It is not likely there would be two pairs of brothers named alike, of such eminence as James and Jude; the likelihood is that the apostles James and Jude are also the writers of the Epistles, and the brethren of Jesus. James and Joses were sons of Alpheus and Mary, sister of the Virgin Mary.

20. Solemn asseveration that his statement is true that his visit was but for fifteen days and that he saw no apostle save Peter and James. Probably it had been reported by Judaizers that he had received a long course of instruction from the apostles in Jerusalem from the first; hence his earnestness in asserting the contrary facts.

21. I came into ... Syria and Cilicia — “preaching the faith”

(^{<402>}Galatians 1:23), and so, no doubt, founding the churches in Syria and Cilicia, which he subsequently confirmed in the faith (^{<4153>}Acts 15:23,41). He probably went first to Caesarea, the main seaport, and thence by sea to Tarsus of Cilicia, his native place (^{<4080>}Acts 9:30), and thence to Syria; Cilicia having its geographical affinities with Syria, rather than with Asia Minor, as the Tarsus mountains separate it from the latter. His placing “Syria” in the order of words before “Cilicia,” is due to Antioch being a more important city than Tarsus, as also to his longer stay in the former city. Also “Syria and Cilicia,” from their close geographical connection, became a generic geographical phrase, the more important district being placed first [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. This sea journey accounts for his being “unknown by face to the churches of Judea” (^{<4012>}Galatians 1:22). He passes by in silence his *second* visit, with alms, to Judea and Jerusalem (^{<4013>}Acts 11:30); doubtless because it was for a limited and special object, and would occupy but a few days (^{<4025>}Acts 12:25), as there raged at Jerusalem at the time a persecution in which James, the brother of John, was martyred, and Peter was in prison, and James seems to have been the only apostle present (^{<4027>}Acts 12:17); so it was needless to mention this visit, seeing that he could not at such a time have received the instructions which the Galatians alleged he had derived from the primary fountains of authority, the apostles.

22. So far was I from being a disciple of the apostles, that I was even *unknown in the churches of Judea* (excepting Jerusalem, ^{<4026>}Acts 9:26-29), which were the chief scene of their labors.

23. Translate as *Greek*, “They were hearing”: tidings were brought them from time to time [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

he which persecuted us in times past — “our former persecutor”

[ALFORD]. The designation by which he was known among Christians still better than by his name “Saul.”

destroyed — *Greek*, “was destroying.”

24. in me — “in my case.” “Having understood the entire change, and that the former wolf is now acting the shepherd’s part, they received occasion

for joyful thanksgiving to God in respect to me” [THEODORET]. How different, he implies to the Galatians, *their* spirit from *yours*!

CHAPTER 2

<K&B GALATIANS 2:1-21.

HIS CO-ORDINATE AUTHORITY AS APOSTLE OF THE CIRCUMCISION RECOGNIZED BY THE APOSTLES. PROVED BY HIS REBUKING PETER FOR TEMPORIZING AT ANTIOCH: HIS REASONING AS TO THE INCONSISTENCY OF JUDAIZING WITH JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

1. Translate, “After fourteen years”; namely, from Paul’s conversion inclusive [ALFORD]. In the fourteenth year from his conversion [BIRKS]. The same visit to Jerusalem as in <K&B Acts 15:1-4 (A.D. 50), when the council of the apostles and Church decided that Gentile Christians need not be circumcised. His omitting allusion to that decree is;

(1) Because his *design* here is to show the Galatians his own independent apostolic authority, whence he was not likely to support himself by their decision. Thus we see that general councils are not above apostles.

(2) Because he argues the point upon principle, not authoritative decisions.

(3) The decree did not go the length of the position maintained here: the council did not impose Mosaic ordinances; the apostle maintains that the Mosaic institution itself is at an end.

(4) The Galatians were Judaizing, not because the Jewish law was imposed by authority of the Church as *necessary to Christianity*, but because they thought it necessary to be observed by those who aspired to *higher perfection* (<K&B Galatians 3:3 4:21). The decree would not at all disprove their view, and therefore would have been useless to quote. Paul meets them by a far more direct confutation, “Christ is of *no effect* unto you whosoever are justified by the law” (<K&B Galatians 5:4), [PALEY].

Titus ... also — specified on account of what follows as to him, in ^{<R1B>}Galatians 2:3. Paul and Barnabas, *and others*, were deputed by the Church of Antioch (^{<H1B>}Acts 15:2) to consult the apostles and elders at Jerusalem on the question of circumcision of Gentile Christians.

2. by revelation — not from being absolutely dependent on the apostles at Jerusalem, but by independent divine “revelation.” Quite consistent with his at the same time, being a deputy from the Church of Antioch, as ^{<H1B>}Acts 15:2 states. He by this *revelation* was led to suggest the sending of the deputation. Compare the case of Peter being led by vision, and at the same time by Cornelius’ messengers, to go to Caesarea, ^{<H1B>}Acts 10:1-22.

I ... communicated unto them — namely, “to the apostles and elders” (^{<H1B>}Acts 15:2): to the apostles in particular (^{<R1B>}Galatians 2:9).

privately — that he and the apostles at Jerusalem might decide previously on the principles to be adopted and set forward before the public council (^{<H1B>}Acts 15:1-29). It was necessary that the Jerusalem apostles should know beforehand that the Gospel Paul preached to the Gentiles was the same as theirs, and had received divine confirmation in the results it wrought on the Gentile converts. He and Barnabas related to the *multitude*, not the nature of the doctrine they preached (as Paul did privately to the apostles), but only the miracles vouchsafed in *proof of* God’s sanctioning their preaching to the Gentiles (^{<H1B>}Acts 15:12).

to them ... of reputation — James, Cephas, and John, and probably some of the “elders”; ^{<R1B>}Galatians 2:6, “those who seemed to be somewhat.”

lest, etc. — “lest I should be running, or have run, in vain”; that is, that they might see that I am not running, and have not run, in vain. Paul does not *himself* fear lest he be running, or had run, in vain; but lest he should, if he gave them no explanation, *seem so to them*. His race was the swift-running proclamation of the Gospel to the Gentiles (compare “run,” *Margin*, for “Word ... have free course,” ^{<S1B>}2 Thessalonians 3:1). His running would have been in vain, had circumcision been necessary, since he did not require it of his converts.

3. But — So far were they from regarding me as running in vain, that “*not even* Titus who was with me, who was a *Greek* (and therefore

uncircumcised), was compelled to be circumcised.” So the *Greek* should be translated. The “false brethren,” ~~(⁴¹⁰¹)~~ Galatians 2:4 (“certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed,” ~~(⁴¹⁰⁵)~~ Acts 15:5), demanded his circumcision. The apostles, however, constrained by the firmness of Paul and Barnabas (~~(⁴¹⁰⁵)~~ Galatians 2:5), did not compel or insist on his being circumcised. Thus they virtually sanctioned Paul’s course among the Gentiles and admitted his independence as an apostle: the point he desires to set forth to the Galatians. Timothy, on the other hand, as being a proselyte of the gate, and son of a Jewess (~~(⁴¹⁰⁵)~~ Acts 16:1), he circumcised (~~(⁴¹⁰⁵)~~ Acts 16:3). Christianity did not interfere with Jewish usages, regarded merely as social ordinances, though no longer having their religious significance, in the case of Jews and proselytes, while the Jewish polity and temple still stood; after the overthrow of the latter, those usages naturally ceased. To have insisted on Jewish usages for *Gentile* converts, would have been to make them essential parts of Christianity. To have rudely violated them at first in the case of *Jews*, would have been inconsistent with that charity which (in matters indifferent) is made all things to all men, that by all means it may win some (~~(⁴¹⁰²)~~ 1 Corinthians 9:22; compare ~~(⁴¹⁰⁵)~~ Romans 14:1-7,13-23). Paul brought Titus about with him as a living example of the power of the Gospel upon the uncircumcised heathen.

4. And that — that is, What I did concerning Titus (namely, by not permitting him to be circumcised) was not from contempt of circumcision, but “on account of the false brethren” (~~(⁴¹⁰⁵)~~ Acts 15:1,24) who, had I yielded to the demand for his being circumcised, would have perverted the case into a proof that I deemed circumcision necessary.

unawares — “in an underhand manner brought in.”

privily — stealthily.

to spy out — as foes in the guise of friends, wishing to destroy and rob us of

our liberty — from the yoke of the ceremonial law. If they had found that we circumcised Titus through fear of the apostles, they would have made that a ground for insisting on imposing the legal yoke on the Gentiles.

bring us into bondage — The *Greek* future implies the *certainty* and *continuance* of the bondage as the result.

5. *Greek*, “To whom not even for an hour did we yield by subjection.” ALFORD renders the *Greek* article, “*with* THE subjection required of us.” The sense rather is, We would willingly have yielded for *love* [BENGEL] (if no principle was at issue), but not in the way of *subjection*, where “the truth of the Gospel” (^{<R14>}Galatians 2:14 ^{<S00F>}Colossians 1:5) was at stake (namely, the fundamental truth of justification by faith only, without the works of the law, contrasted with another Gospel, ^{<R00F>}Galatians 1:6). Truth precise, unaccommodating, abandons nothing that belongs to itself, admits nothing that is inconsistent with it [BENGEL].

might continue with you — Gentiles. We defended for your sakes your true faith and liberties, which *you* are now renouncing.

6. *Greek*, “From those who,” etc. He meant to complete the sentence with “I derived no special advantage”; but he alters it into “they ... added nothing to me.”

accepteth — so as to show any partiality; “respecteth no man’s person” (^{<R00F>}Ephesians 6:9).

seemed *to be somewhat* — that is, not that they *seemed* to be what they *were not*, but “*were reputed as persons of some consequence*”; not insinuating a doubt but that they were justly so reputed.

in conference added — or “imparted”; the same *Greek* as in ^{<R11F>}Galatians 1:16, “I conferred not with flesh and blood.” As I did not by conference impart to them aught at my conversion, so they now did not impart aught additional to me, above what I already knew. This proves to the Galatians his independence as an apostle.

7. **contrariwise** — on the contrary. So far from *adding any* new light to ME, THEY gave in THEIR adhesion to the new path on which Barnabas and I, by independent revelation, had entered. So far from censuring, they gave a hearty approval to my independent course, namely, the innovation of preaching the Gospel without circumcision to the Gentiles.

when they saw — from the effects which I showed them, were “wrought” (~~400~~Galatians 2:8 ~~405~~Acts 15:12).

was committed unto me — *Greek*, “I was entrusted with.”

gospel of the uncircumcision — that is, of the Gentiles, who were to be converted without circumcision being required.

circumcision ... unto Peter — Peter had originally opened the door to the Gentiles (~~400~~Acts 10:1-48 15:7). But in the ultimate apportionment of the spheres of labor, the Jews were assigned to him (compare ~~400~~1 Peter 1:1). So Paul on the other hand wrote to the Hebrews (compare also ~~400~~Colossians 4:11), though his main work was among the Gentiles. The non-mention of Peter in the list of names, presciently through the Spirit, given in the sixteenth chapter of Romans, shows that Peter’s residence at Rome, much more primacy, was *then* unknown. The same is palpable from the sphere here assigned to him.

8. he — God (~~400~~1 Corinthians 12:6).

wrought effectually — that is, made the preached word efficacious to conversion, not only by sensible miracles, but by the secret mighty power of the Holy Ghost.

in Peter — ELLICOTT and others, translate, “*For Peter.*” GROTIUS translates as *English Version*.

to — with a view to.

was mighty — Translate as before, the *Greek* being the same, “wrought effectually.”

in me — “for (or ‘in’) me *also*.”

9. James — placed first in the oldest manuscripts, even before Peter, as being bishop of Jerusalem, and so presiding at the council (~~405~~Acts 15:1-29). He was called “the Just,” from his strict adherence to the law, and so was especially popular among the Jewish party though he did not fall into their extremes; whereas Peter was somewhat estranged from them through his intercourse with the Gentile Christians. To each apostle was assigned the sphere best suited to his temperament: to James, who was tenacious of

the law, the Jerusalem Jews; to Peter, who had opened the door to the Gentiles but who was Judaically disposed, the Jews of the dispersion; to Paul, who, by the miraculous and overwhelming suddenness of his conversion, had the whole current of his early Jewish prejudices turned into an utterly opposite direction, the Gentiles. Not separately and individually, but collectively the apostles together represented Christ, the One Head, in the apostleship. The twelve foundation-stones of various colors are joined together to the one great foundation-stone on which they rest (^{<481>}1 Corinthians 3:11 ^{<614>}Revelation 21:14,19,20). John had got an intimation in Jesus' lifetime of the admission of the Gentiles (^{<620>}John 12:20-24).

seemed — that is, *were reputed to be* (see on ^{<480>}Galatians 2:2 and ^{<480>}Galatians 2:6) pillars, that is, weighty supporters of the Church (compare ^{<100>}Proverbs 9:1 ^{<682>}Revelation 3:12).

perceived the grace ... given unto me — (^{<685>}2 Peter 3:15).

gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship — recognizing me as a *colleague* in the apostleship, and that the Gospel I preached by special revelation to the Gentiles was the same as theirs. Compare the phrase, ^{<2816>}Lamentations 5:6 ^{<378>}Ezekiel 17:18.

heathen — the Gentiles.

10. remember the poor — of the *Jewish* Christians in Judea, then distressed. Paul and Barnabas had already done so (^{<4123>}Acts 11:23-30).

the same — the very thing.

I ... was forward — or “zealous” (^{<4217>}Acts 24:17 ^{<615>}Romans 15:25 ^{<601>}1 Corinthians 16:1 ^{<480>}2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15). Paul was zealous for good works, while denying justification by them.

11. Peter — “Cephas” in the oldest manuscripts Paul's withstanding Peter is the strongest proof that the former gives of the independence of his apostleship in relation to the other apostles, and upsets the Romish doctrine of Peter's supremacy. The apostles were not always inspired; but were so always in *writing* the Scriptures. If then the inspired men who *wrote* them were not invariably at other times infallible, much less were the

uninspired men who kept them. The Christian fathers may be trusted generally as witnesses to facts, but not implicitly followed in matters of opinion.

come to Antioch — then the citadel of the Gentile Church: where first the Gospel was preached to *idolatrous Gentiles*, and where the name “Christians” was first given (^{411D}Acts 11:20,26), and where Peter is said to have been subsequently bishop. The question at Antioch was not whether the Gentiles were admissible to the Christian covenant without becoming circumcised — that was the question settled at the Jerusalem council just before — but whether the Gentile Christians were to be admitted to *social intercourse with the Jewish Christians* without conforming to the Jewish institution. The Judaizers, soon after the council had passed the resolutions recognizing the equal rights of the Gentile Christians, repaired to Antioch, the scene of the gathering in of the Gentiles (^{411D}Acts 11:20-26), to witness, what to Jews would look so extraordinary, the receiving of men to communion of the Church without circumcision. Regarding the proceeding with prejudice, they explained away the force of the Jerusalem decision; and probably also desired to watch whether the *Jewish Christians* among the Gentiles violated the law, which that decision did not verbally sanction *them* in doing, though giving the Gentiles latitude (^{415G}Acts 15:19).

to be blamed — rather, “(self)-condemned”; his act at one time condemning his contrary acting at another time.

12. certain — men: perhaps James’ view (in which he was not infallible, any more than Peter) was that the Jewish converts were still to observe Jewish ordinances, from which he had decided with the council the *Gentiles* should be free (^{415G}Acts 15:19). NEANDER, however, may be right in thinking these self-styled delegates from James were not really from him. ^{415H}Acts 15:24 favors this. “Certain from James,” may mean merely that they came from the Church at Jerusalem under James’ bishopric. Still James’ leanings were to legalism, and this gave him his influence with the Jewish party (^{415B}Acts 21:18-26).

eat with ... Gentiles — as in ^{410D}Acts 10:10-20,48, according to the command of the vision (^{411B}Acts 11:3-17). Yet after all, this same Peter, through fear of man (^{412D}Proverbs 29:25), was faithless to his own so distinctly avowed principles (^{415E}Acts 15:7-11). We recognize the same old

nature in him as led him, after faithfully witnessing for Christ, yet for a brief space, to deny Him. “Ever the first to recognize, and the first to draw back from great truths” [ALFORD]. An undesigned coincidence between the Gospels and the Epistle in the consistency of character as portrayed in both. It is beautiful to see how earthly misunderstandings of Christians are lost in Christ. For in ^{<GRS>}2 Peter 3:15, Peter praises the very Epistles of Paul which he knew contained his own condemnation. Though apart from one another and differing in characteristics, the two apostles were one in Christ.

withdrew — *Greek*, “*began to withdraw*,” etc. This implies a *gradual drawing back*; “*separated*,” *entire severance*.

13. the other — *Greek*, “the rest.”

Jews — Jewish Christians.

dissembled likewise — *Greek*, “*joined in hypocrisy*,” namely, in living as though the law were necessary to justification, through fear of man, though they knew from God their Christian liberty of eating with Gentiles, and had availed themselves of it already (^{<ARD>}Acts 11:2-17). The case was distinct from that in ^{<ARL>}1 Corinthians 8:1-10:33 ^{<SRD>}Romans 14:1-23. It was not a question of liberty, and of bearing with others’ infirmities, but one affecting the essence of the Gospel, whether the Gentiles are to be virtually “*compelled to live as do the Jews*,” in order to be justified (^{<ARD>}Galatians 2:14).

Barnabas also — “*Even Barnabas*”: one least likely to be led into such an error, being with Paul in first preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles: showing the power of bad example and numbers. In Antioch, the capital of Gentile Christianity and the central point of Christian missions, the controversy first arose, and in the same spot it now broke out afresh; and here Paul had first to encounter the party that afterwards persecuted him in every scene of his labors (^{<HSD>}Acts 15:30-35).

14. walked not uprightly — literally, “*straight*”: “*were not walking with straightforward steps*.” Compare ^{<RHC>}Galatians 6:16.

truth of the gospel — which teaches that justification by legal works and observances is inconsistent with redemption by Christ. Paul alone here

maintained the truth against Judaism, as afterwards against heathenism (^{<THU>}2 Timothy 4:16,17).

Peter — “Cephas” in the oldest manuscripts

before ... all — (^{<THU>}1 Timothy 5:20).

If thou, etc. — “If thou, although being a Jew (and therefore one who might seem to be more bound to the law than the Gentiles), livest (habitually, without scruple and from conviction, ^{<THU>}Acts 15:10,11) as a Gentile (freely eating of every food, and living in other respects also as if legal ordinances in no way justify, ^{<THU>}Galatians 2:12), and not as a Jew, *how* (so the oldest manuscripts read, for ‘why’) is it that thou art compelling (virtually, by thine example) the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” (literally, *to Judaize*, that is, to keep the ceremonial customs of the Jews: What had been formerly obedience to the law, is now mere *Judaism*). The high authority of Peter would constrain the Gentile Christians to regard Judaizing as necessary to all, since Jewish Christians could not consort with Gentile converts in communion without it.

15, 16. Connect these verses together, and read with most of the oldest manuscripts “But” in the beginning of ^{<THU>}Galatians 2:16: “We (I and thou, Peter) by nature (not by proselytism), Jews, and not sinners as (Jewish language termed the Gentiles) from among the Gentiles, YET (literally, ‘BUT’) knowing that ... even we (resuming the ‘we’ of ^{<THU>}Galatians 2:15, ‘we also,’ as well as the Gentile sinners; casting away trust in the law), have believed,” etc.

16. not justified by the works of the law — as the GROUND of justification. “The works of the law” are those which have the law for their object — which are wrought to fulfill the law [ALFORD].

but by — Translate, “But only (in no other way save) *through* faith in Jesus Christ,” as the MEAN and instrument of justification.

Jesus Christ — In the second case, read with the oldest manuscripts, “Christ Jesus,” the *Messiahship* coming into prominence in the case of *Jewish* believers, as “Jesus” does in the first case, referring to the general proposition.

justified by the faith of Christ — that is, by Christ, the object of faith, as the ground of our justification.

for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified — He rests his argument on this as an axiom in theology, referring to ^{<HEB>}Psalm 143:2, “Moses and Jesus Christ; The law and the promise; Doing and believing; Works and faith; Wages and the gift; The curse and the blessing — are represented as diametrically opposed” [BENGEL]. The moral law is, in respect to justification, *more legal* than the ceremonial, which was an elementary and preliminary Gospel: So “Sinai” (^{<ROM>}Galatians 4:24), which is more famed for the Decalogue than for the ceremonial law, is made pre-eminently the type of legal bondage. Thus, justification by the law, whether the moral or ceremonial, is excluded (^{<ROM>}Romans 3:20).

17. Greek, “But if, seeking to be justified IN (that is, in believing *union with*) Christ (who has in the Gospel theory fulfilled the law for us), we (you and I) ourselves also *were* found (in *your* and *my former* communion with Gentiles) sinners (such as from the Jewish standpoint that now we resume, we should be regarded, since we have cast aside the law, thus having put ourselves in the same category as the Gentiles, who, being without the law, are, in the Jewish view, “sinners,” ^{<ROM>}Galatians 2:15), is therefore Christ, the minister of sin?” (Are we to admit the conclusion, in this case inevitable, that Christ having failed to justify us by faith, so has become to us the minister of sin, by putting us in the position of “sinners,” as the Judaic theory, if correct, would make us, along with all others who are “without the law,” ^{<ROM>}Romans 2:14 ^{<ROM>}1 Corinthians 9:21; and with whom, by eating with them, we have identified ourselves?) The Christian mind revolts from so shocking a conclusion, and so, from the theory which would result in it. The whole sin lies, not with Christ, but with him who would necessitate such a blasphemous inference. But his false theory, though “*seeking*” from Christ, we have not “found” salvation (in contradiction to Christ’s own words, ^{<MAT>}Matthew 7:7), but “have been ourselves also (like the Gentiles) *found*” to be “sinners,” by having entered into communion with Gentiles (^{<ROM>}Galatians 2:12).

18. Greek, “For if the things which I overthrew (by the faith of Christ), those very things I build up again (namely, legal righteousness, by subjecting myself to the law), I prove myself (literally, ‘I commend

myself”) a transgressor.” Instead of commending yourself as you sought to do (^{<KNT>}Galatians 2:12, end), you merely commend yourself as a transgressor. The “I” is intended by Paul for *Peter* to take to himself, as it is *his* case, not Paul’s own, that is described. A “transgressor” is another word for “sinner” (in ^{<KNT>}Galatians 2:17), for “sin is the *transgression* of the law.” You, Peter, by now asserting the law to be obligatory, are proving yourself a “sinner,” or “transgressor,” in your having set it aside by living as the Gentiles, and with them. Thus you are debarred by transgression from justification by the law, and you debar yourself from justification by Christ, since in your theory He becomes a minister of sin.

19. Here Paul seems to pass from his *exact words* to Peter, to the *general purport* of his argument on the question. However, his direct address to the Galatians seems not to be resumed till ^{<KNT>}Galatians 3:1, “O foolish Galatians,” etc.

For — But I am not a “transgressor” by forsaking the law. “For,” etc. Proving his indignant denial of the consequence that “Christ is the minister of sin” (^{<KNT>}Galatians 2:17), and of the premises from which it would follow. Christ, so far from being the minister of sin and death, is the establisher of righteousness and life. I am entirely in Him [BENGEL].

I — here emphatical. *Paul himself*, not *Peter*, as in the “I” (^{<KNT>}Galatians 2:18).

through the law — which was my “schoolmaster to bring me to Christ” (^{<KNT>}Galatians 3:24); both by its terrors (^{<KNT>}Galatians 3:13 ^{<KNT>}Romans 3:20) driving me to Christ, as the refuge from God’s wrath against sin, and, when spiritually understood, teaching that itself is not permanent, but must give place to Christ, whom it prefigures as its scope and end (^{<KNT>}Romans 10:4); and drawing me to Him by its promises (in the prophecies which form part of the Old Testament law) of a better righteousness, and of God’s law written in the heart (^{<KNT>}Deuteronomy 18:15-19 ^{<KNT>}Jeremiah 31:33 ^{<KNT>}Acts 10:43).

am dead to the law — literally, “I died to the law,” and so *am* dead to it, that is, am passed from under its power, in respect to non-justification or condemnation (^{<KNT>}Colossians 2:20 ^{<KNT>}Romans 6:14 7:4,6); just as a woman, once married and bound to a husband, ceases to be so bound to him when

death interposes, and may be lawfully married to another husband. So by believing union to Christ in His death, we, being considered dead with Him, are severed from the law's past power over us (compare ^{<804>}Galatians 6:14 ^{<817>}1 Corinthians 7:39 ^{<806>}Romans 6:6-11 ^{<6124>}1 Peter 2:24).

live unto God — (^{<804>}Romans 6:11 ^{<815>}2 Corinthians 5:15 ^{<6001>}1 Peter 4:1,2).

20. I am crucified — literally, "I have been crucified with Christ." This more particularizes the foregoing. "I am dead" (^{<819>}Galatians 2:19 ^{<1080>}Philippians 3:10).

nevertheless I live; yet not I — *Greek*, "nevertheless I live, no longer (indeed) I." Though crucified I live; (and this) no longer that old man such as I once was (compare ^{<8171>}Romans 7:17). No longer Saul the Jew (^{<8191>}Galatians 5:24 ^{<5181>}Colossians 3:11, but "another man"; compare ^{<9106>}1 Samuel 10:6). ELLICOTT and others translate, "*And it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me.*" But the plain antithesis between "crucified" and "live," requires the translation, "nevertheless."

the life which I now live — as contrasted with my life before conversion.

in the flesh — My life seems to be a mere animal life "in the flesh," but this is not my true life; "it is but the mask of life under which lives another, namely, Christ, who is my true life" [LUTHER].

I live by the faith, etc. — *Greek*, "IN faith (namely), that of (that is, which rests on) the Son of God." "In faith," answers by contrast to "in the flesh." *Faith*, not *the flesh*, is the real element in which I live. The phrase, "the Son of God," reminds us that His Divine Sonship is the source of His life-giving power.

loved me — His eternal gratuitous love is the link that unites me to the Son of God, and His "giving Himself for me," is the strongest proof of that love.

21. I do not frustrate the grace of God — I do not *make it void*, as thou, Peter, art doing by Judaizing.

for — justifying the strong expression "frustrate," or "make void."

is dead in vain — *Greek*, “Christ died needlessly,” or “without just cause.” Christ’s having died, shows that the law has no power to justify us; for if the law can justify or make us righteous, the death of Christ is superfluous [CHRYSTOSTOM].

CHAPTER 3

◀REF GALATIANS 3:1-29.

REPROOF OF THE GALATIANS FOR ABANDONING FAITH FOR LEGALISM. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH VINDICATED: THE LAW SHOWN TO BE SUBSEQUENT TO THE PROMISE: BELIEVERS ARE THE SPIRITUAL SEED OF ABRAHAM, WHO WAS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH. THE LAW WAS OUR SCHOOLMASTER TO BRING US TO CHRIST, THAT WE MIGHT BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD BY FAITH.

1. that ye should not obey the truth — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

bewitched — fascinated you so that you have lost your wits. THEMISTIUS says the Galatians were naturally very acute in intellect. Hence, Paul wonders they could be so misled in this case.

you — emphatical. “You, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been graphically set forth (literally, *in writing*, namely, by vivid *portraiture* in preaching) among you, crucified” (so the sense and *Greek* order require rather than *English Version*). As Christ was “crucified,” so ye ought to have been by faith “*crucified* with Christ,” and so “dead to the law” (◀REF Galatians 2:19,20). Reference to the “eyes” is appropriate, as *fascination* was supposed to be exercised through the eyes. The sight of Christ crucified ought to have been enough to counteract all fascination.

2. “Was it by the works of the law that ye received the Spirit (manifested by outward miracles, ◀REF Galatians 3:5 ◀HINT Mark 16:17 ◀REF Hebrews 2:4; and by spiritual graces, ◀REF Galatians 3:14 ◀REF Galatians 4:5,6 ◀HINT Ephesians 1:13), or by the hearing of faith?” The “only” implies, “I desire, omitting other arguments, to rest the question on *this alone*”; I who was your *teacher*, desire now to “learn” this one thing from you. The epithet “Holy” is not prefixed to “Spirit” because that epithet is a joyous one, whereas this Epistle is stern and reproving [BENGEL].

hearing of faith — Faith consists not in *working*, but in *receiving* (~~500~~ Romans 10:16,17).

3. begun — the Christian life (~~500~~ Philippians 1:6).

in the Spirit — Not merely was Christ crucified “graphically set forth” in my preaching, but also “the Spirit” confirmed the word preached, by imparting His spiritual gifts. “Having thus begun” with the receiving His *spiritual* gifts, “are ye now *being* made perfect” (so the *Greek*), that is, are ye *seeking* to be made perfect with “fleshly” ordinances of the law? [ESTIUS]. Compare ~~512~~ Romans 2:28 ~~518~~ Philippians 3:3 ~~519~~ Hebrews 9:10. Having begun in the Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit ruling your spiritual life as its “essence and active principle” [ELLICOTT], in contrast to “the flesh,” the element in which the law works [ALFORD]. Having begun your Christianity in the Spirit, that is, in the divine life that proceeds from faith, are ye seeking after something higher still (the perfecting of your Christianity) in the sensuous and the earthly, which cannot possibly elevate the inner life of the Spirit, namely, outward ceremonies? [NEANDER]. No doubt the Galatians thought that they were going more deeply into the Spirit; for the flesh may be easily mistaken for the Spirit, even by those who have made progress, unless they continue to maintain a pure faith [BENGEL].

4. Have ye suffered so many things — namely, persecution from Jews and from unbelieving fellow countrymen, incited by the Jews, at the time of your conversion.

in vain — *fruitlessly, needlessly*, since ye might have avoided them by professing Judaism [GROTIUS]. Or, shall ye, by falling from grace, lose the reward promised for all your sufferings, so that they shall be “in vain” (~~501~~ Galatians 4:11 ~~512~~ 1 Corinthians 15:2,17-19,29-32 ~~519~~ 2 Thessalonians 1:5-7 ~~502~~ John 1:8)?

yet — rather, “If it be *really* (or ‘indeed’) in vain” [ELLICOTT]. “If, as it must be, what I have said, ‘in vain,’ is really the fact” [ALFORD]. I prefer understanding it as a mitigation of the preceding words. I hope better things of you, for I trust you will return from legalism to grace; if *so*, as I confidently expect, you will not have “suffered so many things in vain”

[ESTIUS]. For “God has given you the Spirit and has wrought mighty works among you” (^{<K&F>}Galatians 3:5 ^{<K&F>}Hebrews 10:32-36) [BENGEL].

5. He ... that ministereth — or “supplieth,” God (^{<K&F>}2 Corinthians 9:10). He who *supplied and supplies* to you the Spirit *still*, to the present time. These miracles do not prove grace to be in the heart (^{<K&F>}Mark 9:38,39). He speaks of these miracles as a matter of *unquestioned notoriety* among those addressed; an undesigned proof of their genuineness (compare ^{<K&F>}1 Corinthians 12:1-31).

worketh miracles among you — rather, “IN you,” as ^{<K&F>}Galatians 2:8 ^{<K&F>}Matthew 14:2 ^{<K&F>}Ephesians 2:2 ^{<K&F>}Philippians 2:13; at your conversion and since [ALFORD].

doeth he it by the works of the law — that is, as a consequence *resulting from* (so the *Greek*) the works of the law (compare ^{<K&F>}Galatians 3:2). This cannot be because the law was then unknown to you when you received those gifts of the Spirit.

6. The answer to the question in ^{<K&F>}Galatians 3:5 is here taken for granted, *It was by the hearing of faith*: following this up, he says, “Even as Abraham *believed*,” etc. (^{<K&F>}Genesis 15:4-6 ^{<K&F>}Romans 4:3). God supplies unto you the Spirit as the result of faith, not works, just as Abraham obtained justification by faith, not by works (^{<K&F>}Galatians 3:6,8,16 ^{<K&F>}Galatians 4:22,26,28). Where justification is, there the Spirit is, so that if the former comes *by faith*, the latter must also.

7. they which are of faith — as the source and starting-point of their spiritual life. The same phrase is in the *Greek* of ^{<K&F>}Romans 3:26.

the same — *these, and these alone*, to the exclusion of all the other descendants of Abraham.

children — *Greek*, “sons” (^{<K&F>}Galatians 3:29).

8. And — *Greek*, “Moreover.”

foreseeing — One great excellency of Scripture is, that in it all points liable ever to be controverted, are, with prescient wisdom, decided in the most appropriate language.

would justify — rather, “justifieth.” Present indicative. It is now, and at all times, God’s *one* way of justification.

the heathen — rather, “the Gentiles”; or “the nations,” as the same *Greek* is translated at the end of the verse. God justifieth the *Jews*, too, “by faith, not by works.” But he specifies *the Gentiles* in particular here, as it was *their* case that was in question, the Galatians being Gentiles.

preached before the gospel — “announced beforehand the Gospel.” For the “promise” was substantially the Gospel by anticipation. Compare ^{<1886>}John 8:56 ^{<800>}Hebrews 4:2. A proof that “the old fathers did not look only for transitory promises” [Article VII, Church of England]. Thus the Gospel, in its essential germ, is older than the law though the full development of the former is subsequent to the latter.

In thee — not “in thy seed,” which is a point not here raised; but strictly “in thee,” as followers of thy faith, it having first shown the way to justification before God [ALFORD]; or “in thee,” as Father of the promised seed, namely, Christ (^{<816>}Galatians 3:16), who is the Object of faith (^{<1228>}Genesis 22:18 ^{<9217>}Psalms 72:17), and imitating thy faith (see on ^{<889>}Galatians 3:9).

all nations — or as above, “all *the Gentiles*” (^{<1117>}Genesis 12:3 18:18 22:18).

be blessed — an act of grace, not something earned by works. The blessing of justification was to Abraham by faith in the promise, not by works. So to those who follow Abraham, the father of the faithful, the blessing, that is, justification, comes purely by faith in Him who is the subject of the promise.

9. they — and they alone.

of faith — (See on ^{<889>}Galatians 3:7, beginning).

with — together with.

faithful — implying what it is in which they are “blessed together with him,” namely, faith, the prominent feature of his character, and of which the result to all who like him have it, is justification.

10. Confirmation of ^{<R19>}Galatians 3:9. They who depend on the works of the law cannot share the blessing, for they are under the curse “written,” ^{<R29>}Deuteronomy 27:26, *Septuagint*. PERFECT *obedience* is required by the words, “in all things.” CONTINUAL *obedience* by the word, “continueth.” No man renders this obedience (compare ^{<R19>}Romans 3:19,20). It is observable, Paul quotes Scripture to the Jews who were conversant with it, as in Epistle to the Hebrews, as *said* or *spoken*; but to the Gentiles, as *written*. So Matthew, writing for Jews, quotes it as “said,” or “spoken”; Mark and Luke, writing for Gentiles, as “written” (^{<R12>}Matthew 1:22 ^{<R12>}Mark 1:2 ^{<R22>}Luke 2:22,23) [TOWNSON].

11. by the law — *Greek*, “IN the law.” Both *in* and *by* are included. The syllogism in this verse and ^{<R12>}Galatians 3:12, is, according to Scripture, “The just shall live by faith.” But the law is not of faith, but of doing, or works (that is, does not make faith, but works, the conditional ground of justifying). Therefore “in,” or “by the law, no man is justified before God” (whatever the case may be *before men*, ^{<R12>}Romans 4:2) — not even if he could, which he cannot, keep the law, because the Scripture element and conditional mean of justification is *faith*.

The just shall live by faith — (^{<R17>}Romans 1:17 ^{<R14>}Habakkuk 2:4). Not as BENJEL and ALFORD, “He who is just by faith shall live.” The *Greek* supports *English Version*. Also the contrast is between “live *by faith*” (namely, as the ground and source of his justification), and “live *in them*,” namely, in his doings or works (^{<R12>}Galatians 3:12), as the *conditional element wherein* he is justified.

12. doeth — Many depended on the law although they did not keep it; but without doing, saith Paul, it is of no use to them (^{<R13>}Romans 2:13,17,23 10:5).

13. Abrupt exclamation, as he breaks away impatiently *from* those who would involve us again in the curse of the *law*, by seeking justification in it, *to* “*Christ*,” who “has redeemed us from its curse.” The “us” refers primarily to the Jews, to whom the law principally appertained, in contrast to “the Gentiles” (^{<R14>}Galatians 3:14; compare ^{<R13>}Galatians 4:3,4). But it is not *restricted* solely to the Jews, as ALFORD thinks; for these are the representative people of the world at large, and their “law” is the embodiment of what God requires of the whole world. The curse of its

non-fulfillment affects the Gentiles through the Jews; for the law represents that righteousness which God requires of all, and which, since the Jews failed to fulfill, the Gentiles are equally unable to fulfill.

^{<RB>}Galatians 3:10, “As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse,” refers plainly, not to *the Jews only*, but to all, even Gentiles (as the Galatians), who seek justification by the law. The Jews’ law represents the universal law which condemned the Gentiles, though with less clear consciousness on their part (^{<RB>}Romans 2:1-29). The revelation of God’s “wrath” by the law of conscience, in some degree prepared the Gentiles for appreciating redemption through Christ when revealed. The curse had to be removed from off the heathen, too, as well as the Jews, in order that the blessing, through Abraham, might flow to them. Accordingly, the “we,” in “that *we* might receive the promise of the Spirit,” plainly refers to both Jews and Gentiles.

redeemed us — *bought us off* from our former bondage (^{<RB>}Galatians 4:5), and “from the curse” under which all lie who trust to the law and the works of the law for justification. The Gentile Galatians, by putting themselves under the law, were involving themselves in the curse from which Christ has redeemed the Jews primarily, and through them the Gentiles. The ransom price He paid was His own precious blood (^{<RB>}1 Peter 1:18,19; compare ^{<RB>}Matthew 20:28 ^{<RB>}Acts 20:28 ^{<RB>}1 Corinthians 6:20 7:23 ^{<RB>}1 Timothy 2:6 ^{<RB>}2 Peter 2:1 ^{<RB>}Revelation 5:9).

being made — *Greek*, “having become.”

a curse for us — Having become what we were, *in our behalf*, “a curse,” that we might cease to be a curse. Not merely *accursed* (in the concrete), but *a curse* in the abstract, *bearing the universal curse of the whole human race*. So ^{<RB>}2 Corinthians 5:21, “Sin for us,” not *sinful*, but bearing the whole sin of our race, regarded as *one* vast aggregate of sin. See Note there. “Anathema” means “set apart to God,” to His glory, but to the person’s own destruction. “*Curse*,” an execration.

written — (^{<RB>}Deuteronomy 21:23). Christ’s bearing the *particular* curse of hanging on the tree, is a sample of the “general” curse which He representatively bore. Not that the Jews put to death malefactors by hanging; but *after* having put them to death otherwise, in order to brand them with peculiar ignominy, they *hung* the bodies on a tree, and such

malefactors were accursed by the law (compare ^{<4B1>}Acts 5:30 10:39). God's providence ordered it so that to fulfill the prophecy of the curse and other prophecies, Jesus should be crucified, and so *hang* on the tree, though that death was not a Jewish mode of execution. The Jews accordingly, in contempt, call Him *Tolvi*, "the *hanged* one," and Christians, "worshippers of the hanged one"; and make it their great objection that He died the accursed death [TRYPHO, in *Justin Martyr*, p. 249] (^{<4B2>}1 Peter 2:24). Hung between heaven and earth as though unworthy of either!

14. The intent of "Christ becoming a curse for us"; "To the end that upon the Gentiles the blessing of Abraham (that is, *promised to* Abraham, namely, justification by faith) might come in Christ Jesus" (compare ^{<8B2>}Galatians 3:8).

that we might receive the promise of the Spirit — the promised Spirit (^{<2B2>}Joel 2:28,29 ^{<2B4>}Luke 24:49). This clause follows not the clause immediately preceding (for *our receiving the Spirit* is not the result of the *blessing of Abraham coming on the Gentiles*), but "Christ hath redeemed us," etc.

through faith — not by works. Here he resumes the thought in ^{<8B2>}Galatians 3:2. "The Spirit from without, kindles within us some spark of faith Whereby we lay hold of Christ, and even of the Spirit Himself, that He may dwell within us" [FLACIUS].

15. I speak after the manner of men — I take an illustration from a merely human transaction of everyday occurrence.

but a man's covenant — whose purpose it is far less important to maintain.

if it be confirmed — when once it hath been ratified.

no man disannulleth — "none setteth aside," not even the author himself, much less any second party. None does so who acts in common equity. Much less would the righteous God do so. *The law* is here, by personification, regarded as a second person, distinct from, and subsequent to, *the promise of God*. *The promise* is everlasting, and more peculiarly belongs to God. *The law* is regarded as something extraneous, afterwards introduced, exceptional and temporary (^{<8B2>}Galatians 3:17-19,21-24).

addeth — None addeth new conditions “making” the covenant “of none effect” (^(~~187~~)Galatians 3:17). So legal Judaism could make no alteration in the fundamental relation between God and man, already established by the promises to Abraham; it could not add as a new condition the observance of the law, in which case the fulfillment of the promise would be attached to a condition impossible for man to perform. The “covenant” here is one of free grace, a *promise* afterwards carried into effect in the Gospel.

16. This verse is parenthetical. The covenant of promise was not “spoken” (so *Greek* for “made”) to Abraham alone, but “to Abraham and his seed”; to the latter especially; and this means Christ (and that which is inseparable from Him, the *literal Israel*, and the *spiritual*, His body, the Church). Christ not having come when the law was given, the covenant could not have been then fulfilled, but awaited the coming of Him, the Seed, to whom it was spoken.

promises — plural, because the same promise was often repeated (^(~~128~~)Genesis 12:3,7 15:5,18 17:7 22:18), and because it involved many things; earthly blessings to the literal children of Abraham in Canaan, and spiritual and heavenly blessings to his spiritual children; but both promised to Christ, “the Seed” and representative Head of the literal and spiritual Israel alike. In the spiritual seed there is no distinction of Jew or *Greek*; but to the literal seed, the promises still in part remain to be fulfilled (^(~~512~~)Romans 11:26). The covenant was not made with “many” seeds (which if there had been, a pretext might exist for supposing there was one seed before the law, another under the law; and that those sprung from one seed, say the Jewish, are admitted on different terms, and with a higher degree of acceptability, than those sprung from the Gentile seed), but with the one seed; therefore, the promise that in Him “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (^(~~112~~)Genesis 12:3), joins in this one Seed, Christ, Jew and Gentile, as fellow heirs on the same terms of acceptability, namely, by grace through faith (^(~~816~~)Romans 4:13); not to some by promise, to others by the law, but to all alike, circumcised and uncircumcised, constituting but one seed in Christ (^(~~816~~)Romans 4:16). The law, on the other hand, contemplates the Jews and Gentiles as distinct seeds. God makes a covenant, but it is one of promise; whereas the law is a covenant of works. Whereas the law brings in a mediator, a third party (^(~~816~~)Galatians 3:19,20), God makes His covenant of promise with the one seed, Christ (^(~~112~~)Genesis

17:7), and embraces others only as they are identified with, and represented by, Christ.

one ... Christ — not in the exclusive sense, the man Christ *Jesus*, but “Christ” (*Jesus* is not added, which would limit the meaning), including *His people* who are *part of Himself*, the Second Adam, and Head of redeemed humanity. ^{
}Galatians 3:28,29 prove this, “Ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus” (Jesus is added here as the person is indicated). “And if ye be Christ’s, ye are Abraham’s SEED, heirs according to *the promise*.”

17. this I say — “this is what I mean,” by what I said in ^{
}Galatians 3:15.

continued ... of God — “ratified by God” (^{
}Galatians 3:15).

in Christ — rather, “unto Christ” (compare ^{
}Galatians 3:16). However, *Vulgate* and the old Italian versions translate as *English Version*. But the oldest manuscripts omit the words altogether.

the law which was — *Greek*, “which came into existence four hundred thirty years after” (^{
}Exodus 12:40,41). He does not, as in the case of “the covenant,” add “enacted by God” (^{
}John 1:17). The dispensation of “the promise” began with the call of Abraham from Ur into Canaan, and ended on the last night of his grandson Jacob’s sojourn in Canaan, the *land of promise*. The dispensation of the law, which engenders bondage, was beginning to draw on from the time of his entrance into Egypt, the land of bondage. It was to Christ in him, as in his grandfather Abraham, and his father Isaac, not to him or them as persons, the promise was spoken. On the day following the last repetition of the promise orally (^{
}Genesis 46:1-6), at Beer-sheba, Israel passed into Egypt. It is from the end, not from the beginning of the dispensation of promise, that the interval of four hundred thirty years between it and the law is to be counted. At Beer-sheba, after the covenant with Abimelech, Abraham called on the everlasting God, and the well was confirmed to him and his seed as an everlasting possession. Here God appeared to Isaac. Here Jacob received the promise of the blessing, for which God had called Abraham out of Ur, repeated for the last time, on the last night of his sojourn in the land of promise.

cannot — *Greek*, “doth not disannul.”

make ... of none effect — The promise would become so, if the power of conferring the inheritance be transferred from it to the law (~~ROM~~ Romans 4:14).

18. the inheritance — all the blessings to be inherited by Abraham's literal and spiritual children, according to the promise made to him and to his Seed, Christ, justification and glorification (~~ROM~~ Galatians 4:7 ~~ROM~~ Romans 8:17 ~~1COR~~ 1 Corinthians 6:9).

but God, etc. — The *Greek* order requires rather, “But to Abraham it was by promise that God hath given it.” The conclusion is, *Therefore the inheritance is not of, or from the law* (~~ROM~~ Romans 4:14).

19. “Wherefore then serveth the law?” as it is of no avail for justification, is it either useless, or contrary to the covenant of God? [CALVIN].

added — to the original covenant of promise. This is not inconsistent with ~~KRS~~ Galatians 3:15, “No man addeth thereto”; for there the kind of *addition* meant, and therefore denied, is one that would add *new conditions*, inconsistent with the grace of the covenant of promise. The law, though misunderstood by the Judaizers as doing so, was really added for a different purpose, namely, “because of (or as the *Greek*, ‘for the sake of’) the transgressions,” that is, to bring out into clearer view *the transgressions* of it (~~ROM~~ Romans 7:7-9); to make men more fully conscious of their “sins,” by being perceived as *transgressions of the law*, and so to make them long for the promised Savior. This accords with ~~KRS~~ Galatians 3:23,24 ~~ROM~~ Romans 4:15. The meaning can hardly be “*to check* transgressions,” for the law rather stimulates the corrupt heart to disobey it (~~ROM~~ Romans 5:20 7:13).

till the seed — *during the period up to the time when the seed came*. The law was a preparatory dispensation for the Jewish nation (~~ROM~~ Romans 5:20; *Greek*, “the law came in *additionally* and *incidentally*”), intervening between the promise and its fulfillment in Christ.

come — (Compare “faith *came*,” ~~KRS~~ Galatians 3:23).

the promise — (~~ROM~~ Romans 4:21).

ordained — *Greek*, “constituted” or “disposed.”

by angels — as the *instrumental enactors* of the law [ALFORD] God delegated the law to angels as something rather alien to Him and severe (^{<405>}Acts 7:53 ^{<KRP>}Hebrews 2:2,3; compare ^{<KRP>}Deuteronomy 33:2, “He came with ten thousands of saints,” that is, angels, ^{<KRP>}Psalms 68:17). He reserved “the promise” to Himself and dispensed it according to His own goodness.

in the hand of a mediator — namely, Moses. ^{<KRP>}Deuteronomy 5:5, “I stood *between* the Lord and you”: the very definition of a mediator. Hence the phrase often recurs, “By the hand of Moses.” In the giving of the law, the “angels” were representatives of God; Moses, as mediator, represented the people.

20. “Now a mediator cannot be of one (but must be of *two* parties whom he mediates between); but God is one” (not two: owing to His essential *unity* not admitting of an intervening party between Him and those to be blessed; but as the ONE Sovereign, His own representative, giving the blessing *directly* by *promise* to Abraham, and, in its fulfillment, to Christ, “the Seed,” without new condition, and without a mediator such as the law had). The conclusion understood is, *Therefore a mediator cannot appertain to God*; and consequently, the law, with its inseparable appendage of a mediator, cannot be the normal way of dealing of God, the one, and unchangeable God, who dealt with Abraham by *direct* promise, as a sovereign, not as one forming a compact with another party, with conditions and a mediator attached thereto. God would bring man into immediate communion with Him, and not have man separated from Him by a mediator that keeps back from access, as Moses and the legal priesthood did (^{<1002>}Exodus 19:12,13,17,21-24 ^{<KRP>}Hebrews 12:19-24). The law that thus interposed a mediator and conditions between man and God, was an exceptional state limited to the Jews, and parenthetically preparatory to the Gospel, God’s normal mode of dealing, as He dealt with Abraham, namely, *face to face directly*; by *promise* and *grace*, and not conditions; *to all nations united by faith in the one seed* (^{<404>}Ephesians 2:14,16,18), and not to one people to the exclusion and severance from the ONE common Father, of all other nations. It is no objection to this view, that the Gospel, too, has a mediator (^{<401>}1 Timothy 2:5). For Jesus is not a mediator separating the two parties in the covenant of promise or grace, as Moses did, but ONE in both nature and office with both *God* and *man* (compare “God in Christ,” ^{<KRP>}Galatians 3:17):representing the whole

universal manhood (^{<4652>}1 Corinthians 15:22,45,47), and also bearing in Him “all the fullness of the Godhead.” Even His mediatorial office is to cease when its purpose of reconciling all things to God shall have been accomplished (^{<4654>}1 Corinthians 15:24); and God’s ONENESS (^{<3849>}Zechariah 14:9), as “all in all,” shall be fully manifested. Compare ^{<4817>}John 1:17, where the two mediators — Moses, the severing mediator of legal conditions, and Jesus, the uniting mediator of grace — are contrasted. The Jews began their worship by reciting the *Schemah*, opening thus, “Jehovah our God is ONE Jehovah”; which words their Rabbis (as JARCHIUS) interpret as teaching not only the unity of God, but the future *universality of His Kingdom* on earth (^{<3889>}Zephaniah 3:9). Paul (^{<4881>}Romans 3:30) infers the same truth from the ONENESS of God (compare ^{<4808>}Ephesians 4:4-6). He, as being One, unites all believers, without distinction, to Himself (^{<4888>}Galatians 3:8,16,28 ^{<4811>}Ephesians 1:10 2:14; compare ^{<3811>}Hebrews 2:11) in direct communion. The unity of God involves the unity of the people of God, and also His dealing directly without intervention of a mediator.

21. “Is the *law* (which involves a mediator) against the promises of God (which are without a mediator, and *rest on God* alone and immediately)? God forbid.”

life — The law, as an externally prescribed rule, can never internally impart spiritual life to men naturally dead in sin, and change the disposition. If the law had been a law capable of giving *life*, “verily (in very reality, and not in the mere fancy of legalists) righteousness would have been by the law (for where life is, there righteousness, its *condition*, must also be).” But the law does not *pretend* to give life, and therefore not righteousness; so there is no opposition between the law and the promise. Righteousness can only come through the promise to Abraham, and through its fulfillment in the Gospel of grace.

22. But — as the law cannot give life or righteousness [ALFORD]. Or the “But” means, So far is *righteousness* from being of the law, that the *knowledge of sin* is rather what comes of the law [BENGEL].

the scripture — which began to be written after the time of the promise, at the time when the law was given. The *written* letter was needed So as PERMANENTLY to convict man of disobedience to God’s command.

Therefore he says, “the Scripture,” not the “Law.” Compare ^{<K&R>}Galatians 3:8, “Scripture,” for “the God of the Scripture.”

concluded — “shut up,” under condemnation, as in a prison. Compare ^{<R&D>}Isaiah 24:22, “As prisoners gathered in the pit and shut up in the prison.” Beautifully contrasted with “the liberty wherewith Christ makes free,” which follows, ^{<K&R>}Galatians 3:7,9,25,26 5:1 ^{<R&D>}Isaiah 61:1.

all — *Greek* neuter, “the universe of things”: the whole world, man, and all that appertains to him.

under sin — (^{<K&R>}Romans 3:9,19 11:32).

the promise — *the inheritance promised* (^{<K&R>}Galatians 3:18).

by faith of Jesus Christ — that is which is by faith in Jesus Christ.

might be given — The emphasis is on “given”: that it might be a free *gift*; not something earned by the works of the law (^{<R&D>}Romans 6:23).

to them that believe — to them that have “the faith of (in) Jesus Christ” just spoken of.

23. faith — namely, that just mentioned (^{<K&R>}Galatians 3:22), of which Christ is the object.

kept — *Greek*, “kept in ward”: the effect of the “shutting up” (^{<K&R>}Galatians 3:22 ^{<R&D>}Galatians 4:2 ^{<K&R>}Romans 7:6).

unto — “with a view to the faith,” etc. We were, in a manner, morally forced to it, so that there remained to us no refuge but faith. Compare the phrase, ^{<R&D>}Psalms 78:50, *Margin*; ^{<K&R>}Psalms 31:8.

which should afterwards, etc. — “which was afterwards to be revealed.”

24. “*So that the law hath been* (that is, *hath turned out to be*) our schoolmaster (or “tutor,” literally, “pedagogue”: this term, among the Greeks, meant a faithful servant entrusted with the care of the boy from childhood to puberty, to keep him from evil, physical and moral, and accompany him to his amusements and studies) to guide us unto Christ,” with whom we are no longer “shut up” in bondage, but are freemen. “Children” (literally, *infants*) need such *tutoring* (^{<R&D>}Galatians 4:3).

might be — rather, “that we *may* be justified by faith”; which we could not be till Christ, the object of faith, had come. Meanwhile the law, by outwardly checking the sinful propensity which was constantly giving fresh proof of its refractoriness — as thus the consciousness of the power of the sinful principle became more vivid, and hence the sense of need both of forgiveness of sin and freedom from its bondage was awakened — the law became a “schoolmaster to guide us unto Christ” [NEANDER]. The *moral* law shows us what we ought to do, and so we learn our inability to do it. In the *ceremonial* law we seek, by animal sacrifices, to answer for our not having done it, but find dead victims no satisfaction for the sins of living men, and that outward purifying will not cleanse the soul; and that therefore we need an infinitely better Sacrifice, the antitype of all the legal sacrifices. Thus delivered up to the *judicial* law, we see how awful is the doom we deserve: thus the law at last leads us to Christ, with whom we find righteousness and peace. “*Sin, sin!* is the word heard again and again in the Old Testament. Had it not there for centuries rung in the ear, and fastened on the conscience, the joyful sound, “grace for grace,” would not have been the watchword of the New Testament. This was the end of the whole system of sacrifices” [THOLUCK].

25. “But *now that* faith is come,” etc. Moses the lawgiver cannot bring us into the heavenly Canaan though he can bring us to the border of it. At that point he is superseded by Joshua, the type of Jesus, who leads the true Israel into their inheritance. The law leads us to Christ, and there its office ceases.

26. children — *Greek*, “sons.”

by — *Greek*, “*through* faith.” “Ye all” (Jews and Gentiles alike) are no longer “children” requiring a *tutor*, but SONS emancipated and walking at liberty.

27. baptized into Christ — (✠ Romans 6:3).

have put on Christ — Ye *did*, in that very act of being baptized into Christ, *put on*, or clothe yourselves with, Christ: so the *Greek* expresses. Christ is to you the *toga virilis* (the Roman garment of the full-grown man, assumed when ceasing to be a child) [BENGEL]. GATAKER defines a Christian, “One who has put on Christ.” The argument is, By baptism ye

have put on Christ; and therefore, He being the Son of God, ye become sons by adoption, by virtue of His Sonship by generation. This proves that baptism, *where it answers to its ideal*, is not a mere empty sign, but a means of spiritual transference from the state of legal condemnation to that of living union with Christ, and of sonship through Him in relation to God (^{<634>}Romans 13:14). Christ alone can, by baptizing with His Spirit, make the inward grace correspond to the outward sign. But as He promises the blessing in the faithful use of the means, the Church has rightly presumed, in charity, that such is the case, nothing appearing to the contrary.

28. There is in this sonship by faith in Christ, no class privileged above another, as the Jews under the law had been above the Gentiles (^{<602>}Romans 10:12 ^{<623>}1 Corinthians 12:13 ^{<501>}Colossians 3:11).

bond nor free — Christ alike belongs to both by faith; whence he puts “bond” *before* “free.” Compare *Note*, see on ^{<602>}1 Corinthians 7:21,22; ^{<608>}Ephesians 6:8.

neither male nor female — rather, as *Greek*, “there is *not* male *and* female.” There is no distinction into male and female. Difference of sex makes no difference in Christian privileges. But under the law the male sex had great privileges. Males alone had in their body circumcision, the sign of the covenant (contrast *baptism* applied to male and female alike); they alone were capable of being kings and priests, whereas all of either sex are now “kings and priests unto God” (^{<600>}Revelation 1:6); they had prior right to inheritances. In the resurrection the relation of the sexes shall cease (^{<618>}Luke 20:35).

one — *Greek*, “one man”; masculine, not neuter, namely “one new man” in Christ (^{<605>}Ephesians 2:15).

29. and heirs — The oldest manuscripts omit “and.” Christ is “Abraham’s seed” (^{<606>}Galatians 3:16): ye are “one in Christ” (^{<603>}Galatians 3:28), and one with Christ, as having “put on Christ” (^{<607>}Galatians 3:27); therefore YE are “Abraham’s seed,” which is tantamount to saying (whence the “and” is omitted), ye are “heirs according to the *promise*” (not “by the *law*,” ^{<608>}Galatians 3:18); for it was to Abraham’s seed that the inheritance was promised (^{<606>}Galatians 3:16). Thus he arrives at the same truth which he set out with (^{<607>}Galatians 3:7). But one new “seed” of a

righteous succession could be found. One single faultless grain of human nature was found by God Himself, the source of a new and imperishable seed: “the seed” (^{<1223>}Psalm 22:30) who receive from Him a new nature and name (^{<0085>}Genesis 3:15 ^{<2530>}Isaiah 53:10,11 ^{<4824>}John 12:24). In Him the lineal descent from David becomes extinct. He died without posterity. But He lives and shall reign on David’s throne. No one has a legal claim to sit upon it but Himself, He being the only living direct representative (^{<3927>}Ezekiel 21:27). His spiritual seed derive their birth from the travail of His soul, being born again of His word, which is the incorruptible seed (^{<4112>}John 1:12 ^{<4918>}Romans 9:8 ^{<4123>}1 Peter 1:23).

CHAPTER 4

⚭ GALATIANS 4:1-31.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED: ILLUSTRATION OF OUR SUBJECTION TO THE LAW ONLY TILL CHRIST CAME, FROM THE SUBJECTION OF AN HEIR TO HIS GUARDIAN TILL HE IS OF AGE. PETER’S GOOD WILL TO THE GALATIANS SHOULD LEAD THEM TO THE SAME GOOD WILL TO HIM AS THEY HAD AT FIRST SHOWN. THEIR DESIRE TO BE UNDER THE LAW SHOWN BY THE ALLEGORY OF ISAAC AND ISHMAEL TO BE INCONSISTENT WITH THEIR GOSPEL LIBERTY.

1-7. The fact of God’s sending His Son to redeem us who were under the law (⚭ Galatians 4:4), and sending the Spirit of His Son into our hearts (⚭ Galatians 4:6), confirms the conclusion (⚭ Galatians 3:29) that we are “heirs according to the promise.”

the heir — (⚭ Galatians 3:29). It is not, as in earthly inheritances, the death of the father, but our Father’s sovereign will simply that makes us heirs.

child — *Greek*, “one under age.”

differeth nothing, etc. — that is, has no more freedom than a slave (so the *Greek* for “servant” means). He is not at his own disposal.

lord of all — by title and virtual ownership (compare ⚭ 1 Corinthians 3:21,22).

2. tutors and governors — rather, “guardians (of the person) and stewards (of the property).” Answering to “the law was our schoolmaster” or “tutor” (⚭ Galatians 3:24).

until the time appointed of the father — in His eternal purposes (⚭ Ephesians 1:9-11). The *Greek* is a legal term, expressing *a time defined* by law, or testamentary disposition.

3. we — the Jews primarily, and inclusively the Gentiles also. For the “we” in ^{<R00P>}Galatians 4:5 plainly refers to *both* Jew and Gentile believers. The Jews in their bondage to the law of Moses, as the representative people of the world, include all mankind virtually amenable to God’s law (^{<R00P>}Romans 2:14,15; compare *Note*, see on ^{<R00P>}Galatians 3:13; ^{<R00P>}Galatians 3:23). Even the Gentiles were under “bondage,” and in a state of discipline suitable to nonage, till Christ came as the Emancipator.

were in bondage — as “servants” (^{<R00P>}Galatians 4:1).

under the elements — or “rudiments”; rudimentary religion teaching of a non-Christian character: *the elementary lessons of outward things* (literally, “of the [outward] world”); such as the legal ordinances mentioned, ^{<R00P>}Galatians 4:10 (^{<S00P>}Colossians 2:8,20). Our childhood’s lessons [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. Literally, The *letters* of the alphabet (^{<R00P>}Hebrews 5:12).

4. the fullness of the time — namely, “the time appointed by the Father” (^{<R00P>}Galatians 4:2). Compare *Note*, see on ^{<R00P>}Ephesians 1:10; ^{<R00P>}Luke 1:57 ^{<R00P>}Acts 2:1 ^{<R00P>}Ezekiel 5:2. “The Church has its own ages” [BENGEL]. God does nothing prematurely, but, foreseeing the end from the beginning, waits till all is ripe for the execution of His purpose. Had Christ come directly after the fall, the enormity and deadly fruits of sin would not have been realized fully by man, so as to feel his desperate state and need of a Savior. Sin was fully developed. Man’s inability to save himself by obedience to the law, whether that of Moses, or that of conscience, was completely manifested; all the prophecies of various ages found their common center in *this* particular time: and Providence, by various arrangements in the social and political, as well as the moral world, had fully prepared the way for the coming Redeemer. God often permits physical evil long before he teaches the remedy. The smallpox had for long committed its ravages before inoculation, and then vaccination, was discovered. It was essential to the honor of God’s law to permit evil long before He revealed the full remedy. Compare “the set time” (^{<R00P>}Psalm 102:13).

was come — *Greek*, “came.”

sent forth — *Greek*, “*sent forth out of heaven from Himself*” [ALFORD and BENGEL]. The same verb is used of the Father’s sending forth the Spirit (⁴⁰⁰Galatians 4:6). So in ⁴⁰²Acts 7:12. Compare with this verse, ⁴⁰²John 8:42 ²⁸⁰Isaiah 48:16.

his — emphatical. “*His own Son.*” Not *by adoption*, as we are (⁴⁰⁰Galatians 4:5):nor merely His Son by the anointing of the Spirit which God sends into the heart (⁴⁰⁰Galatians 4:6 ⁴⁰⁸John 1:18).

made of a woman — “made” is used as in ⁴⁵⁵1 Corinthians 15:45, “The first man, Adam, *was made* a living soul,” *Greek*, “made to be (*born*) of a woman.” The expression implies a special interposition of God in His birth as man, namely, causing Him to be conceived by the Holy Ghost. So ESTIUS.

made under the law — “made to be under the law.” Not merely as GROTIUS and ALFORD explain, “Born subject to the law *as a Jew*.” But “made” by His Father’s appointment, and His own free will, “subject to the law,” to keep it all, ceremonial and moral, perfectly for us, as the Representative Man, and to suffer and exhaust the full penalty of our whole race’s violation of it. This constitutes the significance of His circumcision, His being presented in the temple (⁴⁰²Luke 2:21,22,27; compare ⁴⁰⁷Matthew 5:17), and His baptism by John, when He said (⁴⁰⁵Matthew 3:15), “Thus it becometh us to *fulfill all righteousness.*”

5. To — *Greek*, “*That He might redeem.*”

them ... under the law — primarily the Jews: but as these were the representative people of the world, *the Gentiles*, too, are included in the redemption (⁴⁰³Galatians 3:13).

receive — The *Greek* implies the *suitableness* of the thing as long ago predestined by God. “Receive as something destined or due” (⁴²³Luke 23:41 ⁶⁰⁰2 John 1:8). Herein God makes of sons of men sons of God, inasmuch as God made of the Son of God the Son of man [AUGUSTINE on Psalm 52].

6. because ye are sons — The gift of the Spirit of prayer is the consequence of our adoption. The Gentile Galatians might think, as the Jews were under the law before their adoption, that so they, too, must

first be under the law. Paul, by anticipation, meets this objection by saying, YE ARE sons, therefore ye need not be as children (^{<R01>}Galatians 4:1) under the tutorship of the law, as being already in the free state of “sons” of God by faith in Christ (^{<R02>}Galatians 3:26), no longer in your nonage (as “children,” ^{<R03>}Galatians 4:1). The Spirit of God’s only Begotten Son in your hearts, sent from, and leading you to cry to, the Father, attests your sonship by adoption: for the Spirit is the “earnest of your inheritance” (^{<R04>}Romans 8:15,16 ^{<R05>}Ephesians 1:13). “It is because ye are sons that God sent forth” (the *Greek* requires this translation, not “*hath* sent forth”) into OUR (so the oldest manuscripts read for “your,” in *English Version*) hearts the Spirit of His son, crying, “Abba, Father” (^{<R06>}John 1:12). As in ^{<R07>}Galatians 4:5 he changed from “them,” the third person, to “we,” the first person, so here he changes from “ye,” the second person, to “our,” the first person: this he does to identify their case as Gentiles, with his own and that of his believing fellow countrymen, as Jews. In another point of view, though not the immediate one intended by the context, this verse expresses, “Because ye *are* sons (already in God’s electing purpose of love), God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts,” etc.: God thus, by sending His Spirit in due time, actually conferring that sonship which He already regarded as a present reality (“are”) because of His purpose, even before it was actually fulfilled. So ^{<R08>}Hebrews 2:13, where “the children” are spoken of as existing in His purpose, before their actual existence.

the Spirit of his Son — By faith ye are one with the Son, so that what is His is yours; His Sonship ensures your sonship; His Spirit ensures for you a share in the same. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (^{<R09>}Romans 8:9). Moreover, as the Spirit of God proceeds from God the Father, so the Spirit of the Son proceeds from the Son: so that the Holy Ghost, as the Creed says, “proceedeth from the Father and the Son.” The Father was not *begotten*: the Son is *begotten* of the Father; the Holy Ghost *proceeding* from the Father and the Son.

crying — Here the SPIRIT is regarded as the *agent* in praying, and the believer as *His organ*. In ^{<R10>}Romans 8:15, “The Spirit of adoption” is said to be that whereby WE cry, “Abba, Father”; but in ^{<R11>}Romans 8:26, “The SPIRIT ITSELF maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be

uttered.” The believers’ prayer is His prayer: hence arises its acceptability with God.

Abba, Father — The *Hebrew* says, “*Abba*” (a *Hebrew* term), the *Greek*, “*Father*” (“*Pater*,” a *Greek* term in the original), both united together in one Sonship and one cry of faith, “*Abba, Father*.” So “*Even so* (‘*Nai*,’ *Greek*) *Amen* (*Hebrew*),” both meaning the same (ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Revelation 1:7). Christ’s own former cry is the believers’ cry, “*Abba, Father*” (ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Mark 14:36).

7. Wherefore — Conclusion inferred from ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Galatians 4:4-6.

thou — individualizing and applying the truth to each. Such an individual appropriation of this comforting truth God grants in answer to them who cry, “*Abba, Father*.”

heir of God through Christ — The oldest manuscripts read, “an heir through God.” This combines on behalf of man, the whole before-mentioned agency, of THE TRINITY: the Father sent His Son and the Spirit; the Son has freed us from the law; the Spirit has completed our sonship. Thus the redeemed are heirs THROUGH the Triune GOD, not through the law, nor through fleshly descent [WINDISCHMANN in ALFORD]; (ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Galatians 3:18 confirms this). “An heir”)confirming ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Galatians 3:29; compare ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Romans 8:17.

8-11. Appeal to them not to turn back from their privileges as free sons, to legal bondage again.

then — when ye were “servants” (ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Galatians 4:7).

ye knew not God — not opposed to ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Romans 1:21. The heathen *originally knew* God, as ⲕⲉⲗⲗ Romans 1:21 states, but did not choose to retain God in their knowledge, and so corrupted the original truth. They *might* still have known Him, in a measure, from His works, but as a matter of fact they knew Him not, so far as His eternity, His power as the Creator, and His holiness, are concerned.

are no gods — that is, have no existence, such as their worshippers attribute to them, in the nature of things, but only in the corrupt imaginations of their worshippers (see on ⲕⲉⲗⲗ 1 Corinthians 8:4; ⲕⲉⲗⲗ 1

Corinthians 10:19,20; ^{<44B>}2 Chronicles 13:9). Your “service” was a different bondage from that of the Jews, which was a true service. Yet theirs, like yours, was a burdensome yoke; how then is it ye wish to resume the yoke after that God has transferred both Jews and Gentiles to a free service?

9. known God or rather are known of God — *They* did not first know and love God, but *God* first, in His electing love, knew and loved them as His, and therefore attracted them to the saving knowledge of Him (^{<40Z>}Matthew 7:23 ^{<40B>}1 Corinthians 8:3 ^{<50D>}2 Timothy 2:19; compare ^{<E3D>}Exodus 33:12,17 ^{<B5C>}John 15:16 ^{<40D>}Philippians 3:12). God’s great grace in this made their fall from it the more heinous.

how — expressing indignant wonder at such a thing being possible, and even actually occurring (^{<40F>}Galatians 1:6). “How is it that ye turn back again?”

weak — powerless to *justify*: in contrast to the justifying power of faith (^{<40Z>}Galatians 3:24; compare ^{<50B>}Hebrews 7:18).

beggarly — contrasted with the *riches* of the inheritance of believers in Christ (^{<40B>}Ephesians 1:18). The state of the “child” (^{<40D>}Galatians 4:1) is weak, as not having attained manhood; “beggarly,” as not having attained the inheritance.

elements — “rudiments.” It is as if a schoolmaster should go back to learning the A, B, C’S [BENGEL].

again — There are two *Greek* words in the original. “Ye desire again, *beginning afresh*, to be in bondage.” Though the Galatians, as Gentiles, had never been under the Mosaic yoke, yet they had been under “the elements of the world” (^{<40D>}Galatians 4:3): the common designation for the Jewish and Gentile systems alike, in contrast to the Gospel (however superior the Jewish was to the Gentile). Both systems consisted in outward worship and cleaved to sensible forms. Both were in bondage to *the elements of sense*, as though these could give the justification and sanctification which the inner and spiritual power of God alone could bestow.

ye desire — or “will.” *Will-worship* is not acceptable to God (^{<50D>}Colossians 2:18,23).

10. To regard the observance of certain days as in itself meritorious as a work, is alien to the free spirit of Christianity. This is not incompatible with observing the Sabbath or the Christian Lord's day as obligatory, though *not as a work* (which was the Jewish and Gentile error in the observance of days), but as a holy mean appointed by the Lord for attaining the great end, holiness. The whole life alike belongs to the Lord in the Gospel view, just as the whole world, and not the Jews only, belong to Him. But as in Paradise, so now one portion of time is needed wherein to draw off the soul more entirely from secular business to God (<sup>¹Colossians 2:16). "Sabbaths, new moons, and set feasts" (<sup>¹1 Chronicles 23:31 <sup>²2 Chronicles 31:3), answer to "days, months, times." "Months," however, may refer to the *first* and *seventh* months, which were sacred on account of the number of feasts in them.

times — *Greek*, "seasons," namely, those of the three great feasts, the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

years — The sabbatical year was about the time of writing this Epistle, A.D. 48 [BENGEL].

11. lest — *Greek*, "lest haply." My fear is not for my own sake, but for yours.

12. be as I am — "As I have in my life among you cast off Jewish habits, so do. ye; for I am become as ye are," namely, in the non-observance of legal ordinances. "The fact of my laying them aside among Gentiles, shows that I regard them as *not at all contributing to justification or sanctification*. Do you regard them in the same light, and act accordingly." His observing the law among the Jews was not inconsistent with this, for he did so only in order to win them, without compromising principle. On the other hand, the Galatian Gentiles, by adopting legal ordinances, showed that they regarded them as needful for salvation. This Paul combats.

ye have not injured me at all — namely, at the period when I first preached the Gospel among you, and when I made myself as you are, namely, living as a Gentile, not as a Jew. *You at that time did me no wrong; "ye did not despise my temptation in the flesh"* (<sup>¹Galatians 4:14): nay, you "received me as an angel of God." Then in <sup>¹Galatians 4:16, he asks,

“Have I then, *since* that time, become your enemy by telling you the truth?”

13. how through infirmity — rather, as *Greek*, “Ye know that *because* of an infirmity of *my* flesh I preached,” etc. He implies that bodily sickness, having detained him among them, contrary to his original intentions, was the occasion of his preaching the Gospel to them.

at the first — literally, “at the *former* time”; implying that at the time of writing he had been *twice* in Galatia. See my *Introduction*; also see on ~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ Galatians 4:16, and ~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ Galatians 5:21. His sickness was probably the same as recurred more violently afterward, “the thorn in the flesh” (~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ 2 Corinthians 12:7), which also was overruled to good (~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ 2 Corinthians 12:9,10), as the “infirmity of the flesh” here.

14. my temptation — The oldest manuscripts read, “your temptation.” My infirmity, which was, or might have been, a “temptation,” or *trial*, to you, ye despised not, that is, ye were not tempted by it to despise me and my message. Perhaps, however, it is better to punctuate and explain as LACHMANN, connecting it with ~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ Galatians 4:13, “And (ye know) your temptation (that is, the temptation to which ye were exposed through the infirmity) which was in my flesh. Ye despised not (through *natural* pride), nor rejected (through *spiritual* pride), but received me,” etc. “Temptation does not mean here, as we now use the word, *tendency to an evil habit*, but BODILY TRIAL.”

as an angel of God — as a heaven-inspired and sent *messenger* from God: *angel* means “messenger” (~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ Malachi 2:7). Compare the phrase, ~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ 2 Samuel 19:27, a Hebrew and Oriental one for a person to be received with the highest respect (~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ Zechariah 12:8). An angel is free from the *flesh*, *infirmity*, and *temptation*.

as Christ — being Christ’s representative (~~ⲕⲟⲓⲛ~~ Matthew 10:40). Christ is Lord of angels.

15. Where, etc. — *Of what value* was your *congratulation* (so the *Greek* for “blessedness” expresses) of yourselves, on account of your having among you me, the messenger of the Gospel, considering how entirely you

have veered about since? Once you counted yourselves *blessed* in being favored with my ministry.

ye would have plucked out your own eyes — one of the dearest members of the body — so highly did you value me: a proverbial phrase for the greatest self-sacrifice (^{<4159>}Matthew 5:29). CONYBEARE and HOWSON think that this particular form of proverb was used with reference to a weakness in Paul's eyes, connected with a nervous frame, perhaps affected by the brightness of the vision described, ^{<4021>}Acts 22:11 ^{<4701>}2 Corinthians 12:1-7. "You would have torn out your own eyes to supply the lack of mine." The divine power of Paul's words and works, contrasting with the feebleness of his person (^{<4700>}2 Corinthians 10:10), powerfully at first impressed the Galatians, who had all the impulsiveness of the Celtic race from which they sprang. Subsequently they soon changed with the fickleness which is equally characteristic of Celts.

16. Translate, "Amos I *then* become your enemy (an enemy in your eyes) *by telling* you the truth" (^{<4016>}Galatians 2:5,14)? He plainly did not incur their enmity at his *first visit*, and the words here imply that he had *since then*, and *before* his now writing, incurred it: so that the occasion of his *telling* them the unwelcome truth, must have been at his second visit (^{<4023>}Acts 18:23, see my *Introduction*). The fool and sinner hate a reprover. The righteous love faithful reproof (^{<4906>}Psalms 141:5 ^{<4198>}Proverbs 9:8).

17. They — your flatterers: in contrast to Paul himself, who *tells* them *the truth*.

zealously — zeal in proselytism was characteristic especially of the Jews, and so of Judaizers (^{<4014>}Galatians 1:14 ^{<4025>}Matthew 23:15 ^{<4509>}Romans 10:2).

affect you — that is, court you (^{<4702>}2 Corinthians 11:2).

not well — not in a good way, or for a good end. Neither the *cause* of their zealous courting of you, nor the *manner*, is what it ought to be.

they would exclude you — "They wish to shut you out" from the kingdom of God (that is, they wish to persuade you that as uncircumcised Gentiles, you are shut out from it), "that ye *may zealously court them*," that is, become circumcised, as zealous followers of themselves. ALFORD explains it, that their wish was to shut out the Galatians from the general

community, and attract them as a separate clique to their own party. So the English word “exclusive,” is used.

18. good to be zealously affected — rather, to correspond to “zealously court” in ^{<4018>}Galatians 4:18, “to be zealously courted.” I do not find fault with them for zealously courting you, nor with you for being *zealously courted*: provided it be “in a good cause” (translate so), “it is a good thing” (^{<4011>}1 Corinthians 9:20-23). My reason for saying the “not well” (^{<4017>}Galatians 4:17; the *Greek* is the same as that for “good,” and “in a good cause,” in ^{<4018>}Galatians 4:28), is that their *zealous courting of you* is not in a good cause. The older interpreters, however, support *English Version* (compare ^{<4014>}Galatians 1:14).

always — Translate and arrange the words thus, “*At all times*, and not only when I am present with you.” I do not desire that *I* exclusively should have the privilege of zealously courting you. Others may do so in my absence with my full approval, if only it be in a good cause, and if Christ be faithfully preached (^{<4015>}Philippians 1:15-18).

19. My little children — (^{<5018>}1 Timothy 1:18 ^{<5011>}2 Timothy 2:1 ^{<6011>}1 John 2:1). My relation to you is not merely that of one *zealously courting* you (^{<4017>}Galatians 4:17,18), but that of a *father* to his *children* (^{<4015>}1 Corinthians 4:15).

I travail in birth — that is, like a mother in pain till the birth of her child.

again — a second time. The former time was when I was “present with you” (^{<4018>}Galatians 4:18; compare *Note*, see on ^{<4013>}Galatians 4:13).

Christ be formed in you — that you may live nothing but Christ, and think nothing but Christ (^{<4021>}Galatians 2:20), and glory in nothing but Him, and His death, resurrection, and righteousness (^{<3118>}Philippians 3:8-10 ^{<5027>}Colossians 1:27).

20. Translate as *Greek*, “I could wish.” If circumstances permitted (which they do not), I would gladly be with you [M. STUART].

now — as I was twice already. Speaking face to face is so much more effective towards loving persuasion than writing (^{<6012>}2 John 1:12 ^{<6013>}3 John 1:13,14).

change my voice — as a mother (⚡Galatians 4:19):adapting my tone of voice to what I saw in person your case might need. This is possible to one present, but not to one in writing [GROTIUS and ESTIUS].

I stand in doubt of you — rather, “I am perplexed about you,” namely, how to deal with you, what kind of words to use, gentle or severe, to bring you back to the right path.

21. desire — of your own accord madly courting that which must condemn and ruin you.

do ye not hear — do ye not consider the mystic sense of Moses’ words? [GROTIUS]. The law itself sends you away from itself to Christ [ESTIUS]. After having sufficiently maintained his point by argument, the apostle confirms and illustrates it by an inspired allegorical exposition of historical facts, containing in them general laws and types. Perhaps his reason for using allegory was to confute the Judaizers with their own weapons: subtle, mystical, allegorical interpretations, unauthorized by the Spirit, were their favorite arguments, as of the Rabbins in the synagogues. Compare the *Jerusalem Talmud* [*Tractatu Succa, cap. Hechalil*]. Paul meets them with an allegorical exposition, not the work of fancy, but sanctioned by the Holy Spirit. History, if properly understood contains in its complicated phenomena, simple and *continually recurring divine laws*. The history of the elect people, like their legal ordinances, had, besides the literal, a typical meaning (compare ⚡1 Corinthians 10:1-4 15:45,47 ⚡Revelation 11:8). Just as the extra-ordinarily-born Isaac, the gift of grace according to promise, supplanted, beyond all human calculations, the naturally-born Ishmael, so the new theocratic race, the spiritual seed of Abraham by promise, the Gentile, as well as Jewish believers, were about to take the place of the natural seed, who had imagined that to them exclusively belonged the kingdom of God.

22. (⚡Genesis 16:3-16 21:2).

Abraham — whose sons ye wish to be (compare ⚡Romans 9:7-9).

a bond maid ... a free woman — rather, as *Greek*, “the bond maid ... *the* free woman.”

23. after the flesh — born according to the usual course of nature: in contrast to Isaac, who was born “by virtue of *the* promise” (so the *Greek*), as the efficient cause of Sarah’s becoming pregnant out of the course of nature (^{<608>}Romans 4:19). Abraham was to lay aside all confidence in *the flesh* (after which Ishmael was born), and to live by faith alone in *the promise* (according to which Isaac was miraculously born, contrary to all calculations of flesh and blood).

24. are an allegory — rather, “are allegorical,” that is, have *another besides the literal* meaning.

these are the two covenants — “these [women] are (that is, *mean*; omit ‘the’ with all the oldest manuscripts) two covenants.” As among the Jews the bondage of the mother determined that of the child, the children of the free covenant of promise, answering to Sarah, are free; the children of the legal covenant of bondage are not so.

one from — that is, *taking his origin from* Mount Sinai. Hence, it appears, he is treating of the moral law (^{<489>}Galatians 3:19) chiefly (^{<3828>}Hebrews 12:18). Paul was familiar with the district of Sinai in Arabia (^{<4117>}Galatians 1:17), having gone thither after his conversion. At the gloomy scene of the giving of the Law, he learned to appreciate, by contrast, the grace of the Gospel, and so to cast off all his past legal dependencies.

which gendereth — that is, *bringing forth children* unto bondage. Compare the phrase (^{<4025>}Acts 3:25), “*children of the covenant* which God made ... saying unto Abraham.”

Agar — that is, Hagar.

25. Translate, “For this *word*, Hagar, is (imports) Mount Sinai in Arabia (that is, among the Arabians — *in the Arabian tongue*).” So CHRYSOSTOM explains. Haraut, the traveler, says that to this day the Arabians call Sinai, “Hadschar,” that is, *Hagar*, meaning *a rock* or *stone*. Hagar twice fled into the desert of Arabia (^{<4161>}Genesis 16:1-16 21:9-21): from her the mountain and city took its name, and the people were called Hagarenes. Sinai, with its rugged rocks, far removed from the promised land, was well suited to represent the law which inspires with terror, and the spirit of bondage.

answereth — literally, “stands in the same rank with”; “she corresponds to.”

Jerusalem which now is — that is, the Jerusalem of the Jews, having only a present temporary existence, in contrast with the spiritual Jerusalem of the Gospel, which in germ, under the form of the *promise*, existed ages before, and shall be for ever in ages to come.

and — The oldest manuscripts read, “*For* she is in bondage.” As Hagar was in bondage to her mistress, so Jerusalem that now is, is in bondage to the law, and also to the Romans: her civil state thus being in accordance with her spiritual state [BENGEL].

26. This verse stands instead of the sentence which we should expect, to correspond to ^(~~R02~~)Galatians 4:24, “One from Mount Sinai,” namely, *the other covenant* from the heavenly mount above, which is (answers in the allegory to) Sarah.

Jerusalem ... above — (^(~~R02~~)Hebrews 12:22), “the heavenly Jerusalem.” “New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God” (^(~~R02~~)Revelation 3:12 21:2). Here “*the Messianic theocracy*, which before Christ’s second appearing is *the Church*, and after it, Christ’s kingdom of glory” [MEYER].

free — as Sarah was; opposed to “she is in bondage” (^(~~R02~~)Galatians 4:25).

all — omitted in many of the oldest manuscripts, though supported by some. “Mother of us,” namely, *believers* who are already members of the invisible Church, the heavenly Jerusalem, hereafter to be *manifested* (^(~~R02~~)Hebrews 12:22).

27. (^(~~R01~~)Isaiah 54:1).

thou barren — Jerusalem above: the spiritual Church of the Gospel, the fruit of “the promise,” answering to *Sarah*, who bore not “after the flesh”: as contrasted with the law, answering to Hagar, who was fruitful in the ordinary course of nature. Isaiah speaks primarily of Israel’s restoration after her long-continued calamities; but his language is framed by the Holy Spirit so as to reach beyond this to the spiritual Zion: including not only the Jews, the natural descendants of Abraham and children of the law, but

also *the Gentiles*. The spiritual Jerusalem is regarded as “barren” while the law trammelled Israel, for she then had no spiritual children of the Gentiles.

break forth — into crying.

cry — shout for joy.

many more — Translate as *Greek*, “Many are the children of the desolate (the New Testament Church made up in the greater part from the Gentiles, *who once had not the promise*, and so was destitute of God as her husband), more than of her which hath an (*Greek*, ‘THE’) husband (the Jewish Church having GOD for her *husband*, ^{<254B>}Isaiah 54:5 ^{<411B>}Jeremiah 2:2).” Numerous as were the children of the legal covenant, those of the Gospel covenant are more so. The force of the *Greek* article is, “Her who has THE husband of which the other is destitute.”

28. we — The oldest manuscripts and versions are divided between “we” and “ye.” “We” better accords with ^{<402B>}Galatians 4:26, “mother of *us*.”

children of promise — not children *after the flesh*, but through the promise (^{<402B>}Galatians 4:23,29,31). “We *are*” so, and ought to wish to continue so.

29. persecuted — Ishmael “mocked” Isaac, which contained in it the germ and spirit of persecution (^{<121B>}Genesis 21:9). His mocking was probably directed against Isaac’s piety and faith in God’s promises. Being the older by natural birth, he haughtily prided himself above him that was born by promise: as Cain hated Abel’s piety.

him ... born after the Spirit — The language, though referring primarily to Isaac, born in a spiritual way (namely, by the promise or word of God, rendered by His Spirit efficient out of the course of nature, in making Sarah fruitful in old age), is so framed as especially to refer to believers justified by Gospel grace through faith, as opposed to carnal men, Judaizers, and legalists.

even so it is now — (^{<431B>}Galatians 5:11 6:12,17 ^{<411B>}Acts 9:29 13:45,49,50 14:1,2,19 17:5,13 18:5,6). The Jews persecuted Paul, not for preaching Christianity in opposition to heathenism, but for preaching it as distinct from Judaism. Except in the two cases of Philippi and Ephesus (where the

persons beginning the assault were pecuniarily interested in his expulsion), he was nowhere set upon by the Gentiles, unless they were first stirred up by the Jews. The coincidence between Paul's Epistles and Luke's history (the Acts) in this respect, is plainly undesigned, and so a proof of genuineness (see PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*).

30. ^{Q21D}Genesis 21:10,12, where Sarah's words are, "shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." But what was there said literally, is here by inspiration expressed in its allegorical spiritual import, applying to the New Testament believer, who is antitypically "the son of the free woman." In ^{Q88E}John 8:35,36, Jesus refers to this.

Cast out — from the house and inheritance: literally, Ishmael; spiritually, the carnal and legalists.

shall not be heir — The *Greek* is stronger, "*must not be heir,*" or "inherit."

31. So then — The oldest manuscripts read, "Wherefore." This is the conclusion inferred from what precedes. In ^{Q88D}Galatians 3:29 and ^{Q88E}Galatians 4:7, it was established that we, New Testament believers, are "heirs." If, then, we are heirs, "we are not children of the bond woman (whose son, according to Scripture, was 'not to be heir,' ^{Q88E}Galatians 4:30), but of the free woman (whose son was, according to Scripture, to be heir). For we are not "cast out" as Ishmael, but accepted as sons and heirs.

CHAPTER 5

⋈ GALATIANS 5:1-26.

PERORATION. EXHORTATION TO STAND FAST IN THE GOSPEL LIBERTY, JUST SET FORTH, AND NOT TO BE LED BY JUDAIZERS INTO CIRCUMCISION, OR LAW JUSTIFICATION: YET THOUGH FREE, TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER BY LOVE: TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT, BEARING THE FRUIT THEREOF, NOT IN THE WORKS OF THE FLESH.

1. The oldest manuscripts read, “in liberty (so ALFORD, MOBERLEY, HUMPHRY, and ELLICOTT. But as there is no *Greek* for ‘in,’ as there is in translating in ⋈1 Corinthians 16:13 ⋈Philippians 1:27 4:1, I prefer ‘It is FOR freedom that’) Christ hath made us free (not *in*, or *for*, a state of bondage). Stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again *in* a yoke of bondage” (namely, the law, ⋈Galatians 4:24 ⋈Acts 15:10). On “again,” see on ⋈Galatians 4:9.

2. **Behold** — that is, Mark what I say.

I Paul — Though you now think less of my authority, I nevertheless give my name and personal authority as enough by itself to refute all opposition of adversaries.

if ye be circumcised — not as ALFORD, “If you will *go on being* circumcised.” Rather, “If ye suffer yourselves to be circumcised,” namely, under the notion of its being necessary to *justification* (⋈Galatians 5:4 ⋈Acts 15:1). Circumcision here is not regarded simply by itself (for, viewed as a mere *national* rite, it was practiced for conciliation’s sake by Paul himself, ⋈Acts 16:3), but as the symbol of *Judaism* and *legalism in general*. If this be necessary, then the Gospel of grace is at an end. If the latter be the way of justification, then Judaism is in no way so.

Christ ... profit ... nothing — (⋈Galatians 2:21). For righteousness of works and justification by faith cannot co-exist. “He who is circumcised

[for justification] is so as fearing the law, and he who fears, disbelieves the power of grace, and he who disbelieves can profit nothing by that grace which he disbelieves [CHRYSTOSTOM].

3. For — *Greek*, “Yea, more”; “Moreover.”

I testify ... to every man — as well as “unto you” (^{<R1P>}Galatians 5:2).

that is circumcised — that submits to be circumcised. Such a one became a “proselyte of righteousness.”

the whole law — impossible for man to keep even in part, much less *wholly* (^{<S1P>}James 2:10); yet none can be justified by the law, unless he keep it *wholly* (^{<R1P>}Galatians 3:10).

4. Literally, “Ye have become void from Christ,” that is, your connection with Christ has become void (^{<R1P>}Galatians 5:2). ^{<R1P>}Romans 7:2, “*Loosed* from the law,” where the same *Greek* occurs as here.

whosoever of you are justified — “are being justified,” that is, are *endeavoring* to be justified.

by the law — *Greek*, “IN the law,” as the element *in* which justification is to take place.

fallen from grace — Ye no longer “*stand*” in grace (^{<R1P>}Romans 5:2). Grace and legal righteousness cannot co-exist (^{<R1P>}Romans 4:4,5:11:6). Christ, by circumcision (^{<R1P>}Luke 2:21), undertook to obey all the law, and fulfill all righteousness for us: any, therefore, that now seeks to fulfill the law for himself in any degree for justifying righteousness, severs himself from the grace which flows from Christ’s fulfillment of it, and becomes “a debtor to do the whole law” (^{<R1P>}Galatians 5:3). The decree of the Jerusalem council had said nothing so strong as this; it had merely decided that Gentile Christians were not bound to legal observances. But the Galatians, while not pretending to be so *bound*, imagined there was an efficacy in them to merit a higher degree of *perfection* (^{<R1P>}Galatians 3:3). This accounts for Paul not referring to the decree at all. He took much higher ground. See PALEY’S *Horae Paulinae*. The natural mind loves outward fetters, and is apt to forge them for itself, to stand in lieu of holiness of heart.

5. For — proof of the assertion, “fallen from grace,” by contrasting with the case of *legalists*, the “hope” of *Christians*.

through the Spirit — *Greek*, rather, “by the Spirit”: in opposition to *by the flesh* (^{<R03>}Galatians 4:29), or fleshly ways of justification, as circumcision and legal ordinances. “We” is emphatical, and contrasted with “whosoever of you would be justified by the law” (^{<R04>}Galatians 5:4).

the hope of righteousness — “We wait for the (realization of the) hope (which is the fruit) of the righteousness (that is, justification which comes) by (literally, ‘*from — out of*’) faith,” (^{<R05>}Romans 5:1,4,5 8:24,25, “*Hope ... we with patience wait for it.*” This is a farther step than being “justified”; not only are we this, but “wait for the hope” which is connected with it, and is its full consummation. “Righteousness,” in the sense of justification, is by the believer once for all already attained: but the consummation of it in future perfection above is the object of *hope* to be *waited for*: “the crown of righteousness laid up” (^{<R06>}2 Timothy 4:8): “the hope laid up for you in heaven” (^{<R07>}Colossians 1:5 ^{<R08>}1 Peter 1:3).

6. For — confirming the truth that it is “by faith” (^{<R09>}Galatians 5:5).

in Jesus Christ — *Greek*, “in Christ Jesus.” In union with *Christ* (the ANOINTED Savior), that is, *Jesus* of Nazareth.

nor uncircumcision — This is levelled against those who, being not legalists, or Judaizers, think themselves Christians on this ground alone.

faith which worketh by love — *Greek*, “working by love.” This corresponds to “a new creature” (^{<R10>}Galatians 6:15), as its definition. Thus in ^{<R11>}Galatians 5:5,6, we have the three, “faith,” “hope,” and “love.” The *Greek* expresses, “Which effectually worketh”; which exhibits its *energy* by love (so ^{<R12>}1 Thessalonians 2:13). *Love* is not joined with *faith* in justifying, but is the principle of the works which follow after justification by faith. Let not legalists, upholding circumcision, think that the essence of the law is set at naught by the doctrine of justification by faith only. Nay, “all the law is fulfilled in one word — love,” which is the principle on which “faith worketh” (^{<R13>}Galatians 5:14). Let them, therefore, seek this “faith,” which will enable them truly to fulfill the law. Again, let not those who pride themselves on uncircumcision think that, because the law does

not justify, they are free to walk after “the flesh” (^{<K&K>}Galatians 5:13). Let them, then, seek that “love” which is inseparable from true faith (^{<S&S>}James 2:8,12-22). Love is utterly opposed to the enmities which prevailed among the Galatians (^{<K&K>}Galatians 5:15,20). The Spirit (^{<K&K>}Galatians 5:5) is a Spirit of “faith” and “love” (compare ^{<S&A>}Romans 14:17 ^{<A&T>}1 Corinthians 7:19).

7. Translate, “Ye were running well” in the Gospel race (^{<K&A>}1 Corinthians 9:24-26 ^{<A&S>}Philippians 3:13,14).

who, etc. — none whom you ought to have listened to [BENGEL]: alluding to the Judaizers (compare ^{<K&A>}Galatians 3:1).

hinder — The *Greek* means, literally, “hinder by breaking up a road.”

not obey the truth — not submit yourselves to the true Gospel way of justification.

8. **This persuasion** — *Greek*, “*The persuasion*,” namely, to which you are yielding. There is a play on words in the original, the *Greek* for *persuasion* being akin to “obey” (^{<K&A>}Galatians 5:7). This persuasion which ye have *obeyed*.

cometh not of — that is “from.” Does not emanate from Him, but from an enemy.

that calleth you — (^{<K&K>}Galatians 5:13 1:6 ^{<S&A>}Philippians 3:14 ^{<S&A>}1 Thessalonians 5:24). The calling is the rule of the whole race [BENGEL].

9. **A little leaven** — the *false teaching* of the Judaizers. A small portion of legalism, if it be mixed with the Gospel, corrupts its purity. To add legal ordinances and works in the least degree to justification by faith, is to undermine “the whole.” So “leaven” is used of *false doctrine* (^{<A&A>}Matthew 16:12: compare ^{<A&S>}Matthew 13:33). In ^{<K&A>}1 Corinthians 5:6 it means the corrupting influence of one bad *person*; so BENGEL understands it here to refer to the person (^{<K&A>}Galatians 5:7,8,10) who misled them. ^{<A&S>}Ecclesiastes 9:18, “One sinner destroyeth much good” (^{<A&S>}1 Corinthians 15:33). I prefer to refer it to false *doctrine*, answering to “persuasion” (^{<K&A>}Galatians 5:8).

10. *Greek*, “I (emphatical: ‘*I on my part*’) have confidence in the Lord *with regard to you*” (^{<S&A>}2 Thessalonians 3:4), that ye will be none otherwise minded” (than what by this Epistle I desire you to be, ^{<S&A>}Philippians 3:15).

but he that troubleth you — (^{<4007}Galatians 1:7 ^{<4154}Acts 15:24 ^{<4025}Joshua 7:25 ^{<4187}1 Kings 18:17,18). Some one, probably, was prominent among the seducers, though the denunciation applies to them all (^{<4007}Galatians 1:7 4:17).

shall bear — as a heavy burden.

his — *his due and inevitable* judgment from God. Paul distinguishes the case of the seduced, who were misled through thoughtlessness, and who, now that they are set right by him, he confidently hopes, in God's goodness, will return to the right way, from that of the seducer who is doomed to judgment.

whosoever he be — whether great (^{<4008}Galatians 1:8) or small.

11. Translate, "If I am still preaching (as I did before conversion) circumcision, why am I still persecuted?" The Judaizing troubler of the Galatians had said, "Paul himself preaches circumcision," as is shown by his having circumcised Timothy (^{<4018}Acts 16:3; compare also ^{<4016}Acts 20:6:21:24). Paul replies by anticipation of their objection, As regards myself, the fact that I am still persecuted by the Jews shows plainly that I do *not* preach circumcision; for it is just because I preach Christ crucified, and not the Mosaic law, as the sole ground of justification, that they persecute me. If for conciliation he lived as a Jew among the Jews, it was in accordance with his principle enunciated (^{<4018}1 Corinthians 7:18,20 9:20). Circumcision, or uncircumcision, are things indifferent in themselves: their lawfulness or unlawfulness depends on the *animus* of him who uses them. The Gentile Galatians' animus in circumcision could only be their supposition that it influenced favorably their standing before God. Paul's living as a Gentile among Gentiles, plainly showed that, if he lived as a Jew among Jews, it was not that he thought it meritorious before God, but as a matter indifferent, wherein he might lawfully conform as a *Jew by birth* to those with whom he was, in order to put no needless stumbling-block to the Gospel in the way of his countrymen.

then — Presuming that I did so, "then," in that case, "the offense of (stumbling-block, ^{<4023}1 Corinthians 1:23 occasioned to the Jews by) the cross has become done away." Thus the Jews' accusation against Stephen was not that he preached Christ crucified, but that "he spake blasphemous

words against this holy place and *the law*.” They would, in some measure, have borne the former, if he had mixed with it justification in part by circumcision and the law, and if he had, through the medium of Christianity, brought converts to Judaism. But if justification in any degree depended on legal ordinances, Christ’s crucifixion in that degree was unnecessary, and could profit nothing (^{<R1D>}Galatians 5:2,4). Worldly Wiseman, of the town of Carnal Policy, turns Christian out of the narrow way of the Cross, to the house of Legality. But the way to it was up a mountain, which, as Christian advanced, threatened to fall on him and crush him, amidst flashes of lightning from the mountain [BUNYAN, *Pilgrim’s Progress*] (^{<R2D>}Hebrews 12:18-21).

12. they ... which trouble you — Translate, as the *Greek* is different from ^{<R1D>}Galatians 5:10, “they who are *unsettling* you.”

were even cut off — even as they desire your foreskin to be *cut off* and cast away by circumcision, so would that *they were even cut off* from your communion, being worthless as a castaway foreskin (^{<R1D>}Galatians 1:7,8; compare ^{<R1D>}Philippians 3:2). The fathers, JEROME, AMBROSE, AUGUSTINE, and CHRYSOSTOM, explain it, “Would that they would even cut themselves off,” that is, cut off not merely the foreskin, but the whole member: if *circumcision* be not enough for them, then let them have *excision* also; an outburst hardly suitable to the gravity of an apostle. But ^{<R1D>}Galatians 5:9,10 plainly point to *excommunication* as the judgment threatened against the troublers: and danger of the bad “leaven” spreading, as the reason for it.

13. The “ye” is emphatical, from its position in the *Greek*, “Ye brethren”; as opposed to those legalists “who trouble you.”

unto liberty — The *Greek* expresses, “on a footing of liberty.” The *state* or *condition* in which ye have been called to salvation, is one of liberty. Gospel liberty consists in three things, freedom from the Mosaic yoke, from sin, and from slavish fear.

only, etc. — Translate, “Only turn not *your* liberty into an occasion for the flesh.” Do not give the flesh the handle or pretext (^{<R1D>}Romans 7:8, “occasion”) for its indulgence which it eagerly seeks for; do not let it make

Christian “liberty” its pretext for indulgence (^{<816>}Galatians 5:16,17 ^{<126>}1 Peter 2:16 ^{<129>}2 Peter 2:19 ^{<104>}Jude 1:4).

but by love serve one another — *Greek*, “Be servants (be in bondage) to one another.” If ye must be *servants*, then *be servants to one another in love*. While free as to legalism, be *bound* by Love (the article in the *Greek* personifies love in the abstract) to serve one another (^{<109>}1 Corinthians 9:19). Here he hints at their unloving strifes springing out of lust of power. “For the lust of power is the mother of heresies” [CHRYSOSTOM].

14. all the law — *Greek*, “the whole law,” namely, the Mosaic law. *Love to God* is presupposed as the root from which *love to our neighbor* springs; and it is in this tense the latter *precept* (so “word” means here) is said to be the fulfilling of “*all the law*” (^{<898>}Leviticus 19:18). Love is “the law of Christ” (^{<861>}Galatians 6:2 ^{<1072>}Matthew 7:12 22:39,40 ^{<619>}Romans 13:9,10).

is fulfilled — Not as received text “is being fulfilled,” but as the oldest manuscripts read, “has been fulfilled”; and so “receives its full perfection,” as rudimentary teachings are fulfilled by the more perfect doctrine. The law only united Israelites together: the Gospel unites all men, and that in relation to God [GROTIUS].

15. bite — *backbite* the character.

devour — the substance by injuring, extortion, etc. (^{<3119>}Habakkuk 1:13 ^{<1234>}Matthew 23:14 ^{<1112>}2 Corinthians 11:20).

consumed, etc. — Strength of soul, health of body, character, and resources, are all consumed by broils [BENGEL].

16. This I say then — Repeating in other words, and explaining the sentiment in ^{<883>}Galatians 5:13, What I mean is this.”

Walk in the Spirit — *Greek*, “By (the rule of) the (Holy) Spirit.” Compare ^{<816>}Galatians 5:16-18,22,25 ^{<801>}Galatians 6:1-8, with ^{<8122>}Romans 7:22 8:11. The best way to keep tares out of a bushel is to fill it with wheat.

the flesh — the natural man, out of which flow the evils specified (^{<889>}Galatians 5:19-21). The spirit and the flesh mutually exclude one

another. It is promised, not that we should have no evil lusts, but that we should “not *fulfill*” them. If the spirit that is in us can be at ease under sin, it is not a spirit that comes from the Holy Spirit. The gentle dove trembles at the sight even of a hawk’s feather.

17. For — the reason why walking by the Spirit will exclude fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, namely, their mutual contrariety.

the Spirit — not “lusteth,” but “tendeth (or some such word is to be supplied) against the flesh.”

so that ye cannot do the things that ye would — The Spirit strives against the flesh and its evil influence; the flesh against the Spirit and His good influence, *so that neither the one nor the other can be fully carried out into action*. “But” (^{<K&S>}Galatians 5:18) where “the Spirit” prevails, the issue of the struggle no longer continues doubtful (^{<B&N>}Romans 7:15-20) [BENGEL]. The *Greek* is, “that ye may not do the things that ye would.” “The flesh and Spirit are contrary one to the other,” *so that* you must distinguish what proceeds from the Spirit, and what from the flesh; and *you must not fulfill what you desire according to the carnal self*, but what the Spirit within you desires [NEANDER]. But the antithesis of ^{<K&S>}Galatians 5:18 (“But,” etc.), where the conflict is *decided*, shows, I think, that here ^{<B&N>}Galatians 5:17 contemplates the inability both for fully accomplishing the good we “would,” owing to the opposition of the *flesh*, and for doing the *evil* our flesh would desire, owing to the opposition of *the Spirit* in the awakened man (such as the Galatians are assumed to be), until we yield ourselves wholly by the Spirit to “walk by the Spirit” (^{<K&S>}Galatians 5:16,18).

18. “If ye *are* led (give yourselves up to be led) *by* (*Greek*) the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” For ye are not working the works of the flesh (^{<B&S>}Galatians 5:16,19-21) which bring one “under the law” (^{<B&N>}Romans 8:2,14). The “Spirit makes free from the law of sin and death” (^{<B&S>}Galatians 5:23). The law is made for a fleshly man, and for the works of the flesh (^{<S&B>}1 Timothy 1:9), “not for a righteous man” (^{<B&N>}Romans 6:14,15).

19-23. Confirming ^{<K&S>}Galatians 5:18, by showing the contrariety between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.

manifest — The hidden *fleshly* principle betrays itself palpably by its works, so that these are not hard to discover, and leave no doubt that they come not from the Spirit.

which are these — *Greek*, “such as,” for instance.

Adultery — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

lasciviousness — rather, “wantonness” petulance, capricious insolence; it may display itself in “lasciviousness,” but not necessarily or constantly so (^{<4172>}Mark 7:21,22, where it is not associated with fleshly lusts) [TRENCH]. “Works” (in the plural) are attributed to the “flesh,” because they are divided, and often at variance with one another, and even when taken each one by itself, betray their fleshly origin. But the “*fruit of the Spirit*” (^{<4183>}Galatians 5:23) is singular, because, however manifold the results, they form one harmonious whole. The results of the flesh are not dignified by the name “fruit”; they are but *works* (^{<4184>}Ephesians 5:9,11). He enumerates those fleshly “works” (committed against our neighbor, against God, and against ourselves) to which the Galatians were most prone (the Celts have always been prone to disputations and internal strifes): and those manifestations of the *fruit of the Spirit* most needed by them (^{<4185>}Galatians 5:13,15). This passage shows that “the flesh” does not mean merely *sensuality*, as opposed to *spirituality*: for “divisions” in the catalogue here do not flow from sensuality. The identification of “the natural (*Greek*, ‘*animal-souled*’) man,” with the “carnal” or *fleshly* man (^{<4186>}1 Corinthians 2:14), shows that “the flesh” expresses *human nature as estranged from God*. TRENCH observes, as a proof of our fallen state, how much richer is every vocabulary in words for sins, than in those for graces. Paul enumerates *seventeen* “works of the flesh,” only *nine* manifestations of “the fruit of the Spirit” (compare ^{<4187>}Ephesians 4:31).

20. witchcraft — sorcery; prevalent in Asia (^{<4188>}Acts 19:19; compare Revelation 21).

hatred — *Greek*, “hatreds.”

variance — *Greek*, “strife”; singular in the oldest manuscripts.

emulations — in the oldest manuscripts, singular — “emulation,” or rather, “jealousy”; for the sake of one’s own advantage. “Envyings”

(^{<482>}Galatians 5:21) are even without advantage to the person himself [BENGEL].

wrath — *Greek*, plural, “passionate outbreaks” [ALFORD].

strife — rather as *Greek*, “factions,” “cabals”; derived from a *Greek* root, meaning “a worker for hire”: hence, *unworthy means for compassing ends, factious practices*.

seditions — “dissensions,” as to secular matters.

heresies — as to sacred things (see on ^{<418>}1 Corinthians 11:19). Self-constituted *parties*; from a *Greek* root, to *choose*. A *schism* is a more recent split in a congregation from a difference of opinion. *Heresy* is a schism become inveterate [AUGUSTINE, *Con. Crescon. Don.*, 2,7].

21. tell ... before — namely, before the event.

I ... told *you* in time past — when I was with you.

you — who, though maintaining justification by the law, are careless about keeping the law (^{<422>}Romans 2:21-23).

not inherit ... kingdom of God — (^{<418>}1 Corinthians 6:9,10 ^{<418>}Ephesians 5:5).

22. love — the leader of the band of graces (^{<411>}1 Corinthians 13:1-13).

gentleness — *Greek*, “benignity,” conciliatory to others; whereas “goodness,” though ready to do good, has not such *suavity* of manner [JEROME]. ALFORD translates, “kindness.”

faith — “faithfulness”; opposed to “heresies” [BENGEL]. ALFORD refers to ^{<411>}1 Corinthians 13:7, “Believeth all things”: *faith* in the widest sense, toward God and man. “Trustfulness” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

23. temperance — The *Greek* root implies *self-restraint* as to one’s desires and lusts.

against such — not *persons*, but things, as in ^{<482>}Galatians 5:21.

no law — confirming ^{<REF>}Galatians 5:18, “Not under the law” (^{<SID>}1 Timothy 1:9,10). The law itself commands love (^{<REF>}Galatians 5:14); so far is it from being “against such.”

24. The oldest manuscripts read, “They that are of Christ Jesus”; they that belong to Christ Jesus; being “led by (His) Spirit” (^{<REF>}Galatians 5:18).

have crucified the flesh — They nailed it to the cross once for all when they became Christ’s, on believing and being baptized (^{<REF>}Romans 6:3,4): they keep it *now* in a state of crucifixion (^{<REF>}Romans 6:6): so that the Spirit can produce in them, comparatively uninterrupted by it, “the fruit of the Spirit” (^{<REF>}Galatians 5:22). “Man, by faith, is dead to the former standing point of a sinful life, and rises to a new life” (^{<REF>}Galatians 5:25) of communion with Christ (^{<REF>}Colossians 3:3). The act by which *they have crucified the flesh with its lust*, is already accomplished ideally in principle. But the practice, or outward conformation of the life, must harmonize with the tendency given to the inward life” (^{<REF>}Galatians 5:25) [NEANDER]. We are to be executioners, dealing cruelly with the body of sin, which has caused the acting of all cruelties on Christ’s body.

with the affections — Translate, “with its passions.” Thus they are dead to the law’s condemning power, which is only for the fleshly, and their lusts (^{<REF>}Galatians 5:23).

25. in ... in — rather, as *Greek*, “If we live (see on ^{<REF>}Galatians 5:24) BY the Spirit, let us also walk (^{<REF>}Galatians 5:16 6:16) BY the Spirit.” Let our life in practice correspond to the ideal inner principle of our spiritual life, namely, our standing by faith as dead to, and severed from, sin, and the condemnation of the law. “Life by (or ‘in’) the Spirit” is not an occasional influence of the Spirit, but an abiding state, wherein we are continually alive, though sometimes sleeping and inactive.

26. *Greek*, “Let us not BECOME.” While not asserting that the Galatians are “*vainglorious*” now, he says they are liable to *become* so.

provoking one another — an effect of “vaingloriousness” on the *stronger*: as “envying” is its effect on the *weaker*. A danger common both to the orthodox and Judaizing Galatians.

CHAPTER 6

◀RE GALATIANS 6:1-18.

EXHORTATIONS CONTINUED; TO FORBEARANCE AND HUMILITY; LIBERALITY TO TEACHERS AND IN GENERAL. POSTSCRIPT AND BENEDICTION.

1. Brethren — An expression of kindness to conciliate attention.

Translate as *Greek*, “If a man *even* be overtaken” (that is, caught in the very act [ALFORD and ELLICOTT]: BEFORE he expects: unexpectedly). BENGEL explains the “before” in the *Greek* compound verb, “If a man be overtaken in a fault *before ourselves*”: If another has *really* been overtaken in a fault *the first*; for often he who is *first to find fault*, is the very one who has *first transgressed*.

a fault — *Greek*, “a transgression,” “a fall”; such as a falling back into legal bondage. Here he gives monition to those who have not so fallen, “the spiritual,” to be not “vainglorious” (◀RE Galatians 5:26), but forbearing to such (◀RE Romans 15:1).

restore — The *Greek* is used of a dislocated limb, reduced to its place. Such is the tenderness with which we should treat a fallen member of the Church in restoring him to a better state.

the spirit of meekness — *the meekness* which is the gift of *the Holy Spirit* working in our spirit (◀RE Galatians 5:22,25). “Meekness” is that temper of spirit towards God whereby we accept His dealings without disputing; then, towards men, whereby we endure meekly their provocations, and do not withdraw ourselves from the burdens which their sins impose upon us [TRENCH].

considering thyself — Transition from the plural to the singular. When congregations are addressed collectively, each individual should take home the monition *to himself*.

thou also be tempted — as is likely to happen to those who reprove others without meekness (compare ^{<400>}Matthew 7:2-5 ^{<425>}2 Timothy 2:25 ^{<403>}James 2:13).

2. If ye, legalists, must “bear burdens,” then instead of legal burdens (^{<423>}Matthew 23:4), “bear one another’s burdens,” literally, “weights.” Distinguished by BENGEL from “burden,” ^{<404>}Galatians 6:4 (a different *Greek* word, “load”): “weights” exceed the strength of those under them; “burden” is proportioned to the strength.

so fulfill — or as other old manuscripts read, “so ye will fulfill,” *Greek*, “fill up,” “thoroughly fulfill.”

the law of Christ — namely, “love” (^{<454>}Galatians 5:14). Since ye desire “the law,” then fulfill the law of Christ, which is not made up of various minute observances, but whose sole “burden” is “love” (^{<434>}John 13:34 15:12); ^{<453>}Romans 15:3 gives Christ as the example in the particular duty here.

3. Self-conceit, the chief hindrance to forbearance and sympathy towards our fellow men, must be laid aside.

something — possessed of some spiritual pre-eminence, so as to be exempt from the frailty of other men.

when he is nothing — The *Greek* is subjective: “Being, if he would come to himself, and look on the real fact, nothing” [ALFORD] (^{<404>}Galatians 6:2,6 ^{<423>}Romans 12:3 ^{<402>}1 Corinthians 8:2).

deceiveth himself — literally, “he mentally deceives himself.” Compare ^{<402>}James 1:26, “deceiveth his own heart.”

4. **his own work** — not merely his own *opinion* of himself.

have rejoicing in himself alone — Translate, “Have *his* (matter for) glorying in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another (namely, not in regard to his neighbor, by comparing himself with whom, he has fancied he has matter for boasting as that neighbor’s superior).” Not that really a man by looking to “himself alone” is likely to find cause for glorying in himself. Nay, in ^{<405>}Galatians 6:5, he speaks of a “burden” or *load*, not of matter for glorying, as what really belongs to each man. But he

refers to *the idea* those whom he censures *had of themselves*: they thought they had cause for “glorying” in themselves, but it all arose from unjust self-conceited comparison of themselves with others, instead of looking at home. The only true glorying, if glorying it is to be called, is in the testimony of a good conscience, glorying in the cross of Christ.

5. For (by this way, ^{<R10P>}Galatians 6:4, of proving himself, not depreciating his neighbor by comparison) each man shall bear his own “burden,” or rather, “load” (namely, of sin and infirmity), the *Greek* being different from that in ^{<R10P>}Galatians 6:2. This verse does not contradict ^{<R10P>}Galatians 6:2. There he tells them to bear with others’ “burdens” of infirmity in sympathy; here, that self-examination will make a man to feel he has enough to do with “his own load” of sin, without comparing himself boastfully with his neighbor. Compare ^{<R10P>}Galatians 6:3. Instead of “thinking himself to be something,” he shall feel the “load” of his own sin: and this will lead him to bear sympathetically with his neighbor’s burden of infirmity. aeSOP says a man carries two bags over his shoulder, the one with his own sins hanging behind, that with his neighbor’s sins in front.

6. From the mention of bearing one another’s burdens, he passes to one way in which those burdens may be borne — by ministering out of their earthly goods to their spiritual teachers. The “but” in the *Greek*, beginning of this verse, expresses this: I said, Each shall bear his own burden; BUT I do not intend that he should not think of others, and especially of the wants of his ministers.

communicate unto him — “impart a share unto his teacher”: literally, “*him that teacheth catechetically.*”

in all good things — in every kind of the good things *of this life*, according as the case may require (^{<B15Z>}Romans 15:27 ^{<R10P>}1 Corinthians 9:11,14).

7. God is not mocked — The *Greek* verb is, literally, to sneer with the nostrils drawn up in contempt. God does not suffer Himself to be imposed on by empty words: He will judge according to works, which are seeds sown for eternity of either joy or woe. Excuses for illiberality in God’s cause (^{<R10P>}Galatians 6:6) seem valid before men, but are not so before God (^{<R10P>}Psalms 50:21).

soweth — especially of his resources (^{<706>}2 Corinthians 9:6).

that — *Greek*, “this”; this and nothing else.

reap — at the harvest, the end of the world (^{<113>}Matthew 13:39).

8. Translate, “He that soweth *unto his own* flesh,” with a view to fulfilling its desires. He does not say, “*His* spirit,” as he does say, “His flesh.” For in ourselves we are not spiritual, but carnal. The flesh is devoted to *selfishness*.

corruption — that is, destruction (^{<108>}Philippians 3:19). Compare as to the deliverance of believers from “corruption” (^{<881>}Romans 8:21). The use of the term “corruption” instead, implies that *destruction* is not an *arbitrary* punishment of fleshly-mindedness, but is its *natural* fruit; the corrupt flesh producing corruption, which is another word for destruction: corruption is the fault, and corruption the punishment (see on ^{<887>}1 Corinthians 3:17; ^{<102>}2 Peter 2:12). Future life only expands the seed sown here. Men cannot mock God because they can deceive themselves. They who sow tares cannot reap wheat. They alone reap life eternal who sow to the Spirit (^{<808>}Psalms 126:6 ^{<1118>}Proverbs 11:18 22:8 ^{<807>}Hosea 8:7 10:12 ^{<105>}Luke 16:25 ^{<881>}Romans 8:11 ^{<517>}James 5:7).

9. (^{<183>}2 Thessalonians 3:13). And when we do good, let us also persevere in it without fainting.

in due season — in its own proper season, God’s own time (^{<185>}1 Timothy 6:15).

faint not — literally, “be relaxed.” Stronger than “be not weary.” *Weary of well-doing* refers to the will; “faint not” to relaxation of the powers [BENGEL]. No one should faint, as in an earthly harvest sometimes happens.

10. Translate, “*So then, according* as (that is, in proportion as) we have season (that is, opportunity), let us *work* (a distinct *Greek* verb from that for “do,” in ^{<889>}Galatians 6:9) *that which is* (in each case) *good*.” As thou art able, and while thou art able, and when thou art able (^{<100>}Ecclesiastes 9:10). We have now the “season” for *sowing*, as also there will be hereafter the “due season” (^{<889>}Galatians 6:9) for *reaping*. The whole life is, in one sense,

the “seasonable opportunity” to us: and, in a narrower sense, there occur in it more especially convenient seasons. The latter are sometimes lost in looking for still more convenient seasons (^{<4025>}Acts 24:25). We shall not always have the opportunity “we have” now. Satan is sharpened to the greater zeal in injuring us, by the shortness of his time (^{<4020>}Revelation 12:12). Let us be sharpened to the greater zeal in well-doing by the shortness of ours.

them who are of the household — Every right-minded man does well to the members of his own family (^{<5038>}1 Timothy 5:8); so believers are to do to those of the household of faith, that is, those whom *faith* has made members of “the household of God” (^{<4029>}Ephesians 2:19): “the house of God” (^{<5035>}1 Timothy 3:15 ^{<4047>}1 Peter 4:17).

11. Rather, “See in *how large letters* I have written.” The *Greek* is translated “how great” in ^{<5039>}Hebrews 7:4, the only other passage where it occurs in the New Testament. Owing to his weakness of eyes (^{<5045>}Galatians 4:15) he wrote in large letters. So JEROME. All the oldest manuscripts are written in uncial, that is, capital letters, the “cursive,” or small letters, being of more recent date. Paul seems to have had a difficulty in writing, which led him to make the uncial letters larger than ordinary writers did. The mention of these is as a token by which they would know that he wrote the whole Epistle with his own hand; as he did also the pastoral Epistle, which this Epistle resembles in style. He usually dictated his Epistles to an amanuensis, excepting the concluding salutation, which he wrote himself (^{<5022>}Romans 16:22 ^{<4021>}1 Corinthians 16:21). This letter, he tells the Galatians, he writes with his own hand, no doubt in order that they may see what a regard he had for them, in contrast to the Judaizing teachers (^{<4012>}Galatians 6:12), who sought only their own ease. If *English Version* be retained, the words, “how large a letter (literally, ‘in how large letters’),” will not refer to the length of the Epistle *absolutely*, but that it was a large one for *him* to have written with his own hand. NEANDER supports *English Version*, as more appropriate to the earnestness of the apostle and the tone of the Epistle: “How *large*” will thus be put for “how *many*.”

12. Contrast between his zeal in their behalf, implied in ^{<4011>}Galatians 6:11, and the zeal for self on the part of the Judaizers.

make a fair show — (◀¹⁵²2 Corinthians 5:12).

in the flesh — in outward things.

they — it is “these” who

constrain you — by example (◀¹⁵³Galatians 6:13) and importuning.

only lest — “only that they may not,” etc. (compare ◀¹⁵⁴Galatians 5:11).

suffer persecution — They escaped in a great degree the Jews’ bitterness against Christianity and the offense of the cross of Christ, by making the Mosaic law a necessary preliminary; in fact, making Christian converts into Jewish proselytes.

13. Translate, “For not even do they who submit to circumcision, keep the law themselves (◀¹⁵⁵Romans 2:17-23), but they wish you (emphatical) to be circumcised,” etc. They arbitrarily selected circumcision out of the whole law, as though observing it would stand instead of their non-observance of the rest of the law.

that they may glory in your flesh — namely, in the outward change (opposed to *an inward change wrought by the SPIRIT*) which they have effected in bringing you over to their own Jewish-Christian party.

14. Translate, “But *as for me* (in opposition to those gloriers ‘in your flesh,’ ◀¹⁵⁶Galatians 6:13), God forbid that I,” etc.

in the cross — the atoning death on the cross. Compare ◀¹⁵⁷Philippians 3:3,7,8, as a specimen of his glorying. The “cross,” the great object of shame to them, and to all carnal men, is the great object of glorying to me. For by it, the worst of deaths, Christ has destroyed all kinds of death [AUGUSTINE, *Tract 36*, on John, sec. 4]. We are to testify the power of Christ’s death working in us, after the manner of crucifixion (◀¹⁵⁸Galatians 5:24 ◀¹⁵⁹Romans 6:5,6).

our — He reminds the Galatians by this pronoun, that *they* had a share in the “Lord Jesus Christ” (the full name is used for greater solemnity), and therefore ought to glory in Christ’s cross, as he did.

the world — inseparably allied to the “flesh” (^{<R12>}Galatians 6:13). Legal and fleshly ordinances are merely outward, and “elements of the world” (^{<R12>}Galatians 4:3).

is — rather, as *Greek*, “has been crucified to me” (^{<R12>}Galatians 2:20). He used “crucified” for *dead* (^{<R12>}Colossians 2:20, “dead with Christ”), to imply his oneness with Christ *crucified* (^{<R12>}Philippians 3:10): “the fellowship of His sufferings being made conformable unto His death.”

15. availeth — The oldest manuscripts read, “is” (compare ^{<R12>}Galatians 5:6). Not only are they of no *avail*, but they *are nothing*. So far are they from being matter for “glorying,” that they are “nothing.” But Christ’s cross is “all in all,” as a subject for glorying, in “the new creature” (^{<R12>}Ephesians 2:10,15,16).

new creature — (^{<R12>}2 Corinthians 5:17). A *transformation by the renewal of the mind* (^{<R12>}Romans 12:2).

16. as many — contrasting with the “as many,” ^{<R12>}Galatians 6:12.

rule — literally, *a straight rule*, to detect crookedness; so a rule of life.

peace — from God (^{<R12>}Ephesians 2:14-17 6:23).

mercy — (^{<R12>}Romans 15:9).

Israel of God — not the Israel after the flesh, among whom those teachers wish to enrol you; but the spiritual seed of Abraham by faith (^{<R12>}Galatians 3:9,29 ^{<R12>}Romans 2:28,29 ^{<R12>}Philippians 3:3).

17. let no man trouble me — by opposing my apostolic authority, seeing that it is stamped by a sure seal, namely, “I (in contrast to the Judaizing teachers who gloried in the flesh) bear (as a high mark of honor from the King of kings).”

the marks — properly, marks branded on slaves to indicate their owners. So Paul’s scars of wounds received for Christ’s sake, indicate to whom he belongs, and in whose free and glorious service he is (^{<R12>}2 Corinthians 11:23-25). The Judaizing teachers gloried in the circumcision mark in the flesh of *their followers*: Paul glories in the marks of suffering for Christ on

his own body (compare ^{<8164>}Galatians 6:14 ^{<5180>}Philippians 3:10 ^{<5112>}Colossians 1:24).

the Lord — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

18. Brethren — Place it, as *Greek*, “last” in the sentence, before the “Amen.” After much rebuke and monition, he bids them farewell with the loving expression of *brotherhood* as his last parting word (see on ^{<8106>}Galatians 1:6).

be with your spirit — which, I trust, will keep down the *flesh* (^{<5123>}1 Thessalonians 5:23 ^{<5142>}2 Timothy 4:22 Philemon 1: 25).

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

THE headings (~~<400>~~ Ephesians 1:1), and ~~<400>~~ Ephesians 3:1, show that this Epistle claims to be that of Paul. This claim is confirmed by the testimonies of IRENAEUS, [*Against Heresies*, 5.2,3; 1.8,5]; CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, [*Miscellanies*, 4, P. 65, and *The Instructor*, 1.8]; ORIGEN, [*Against Celsus*, 4,211]. It is quoted by VALENTINUS, A.D. 120, namely, ~~<400>~~ Ephesians 3:14-18, as we know from HIPPOLYTUS [*The Refutation of All Heresies*, p. 193]. POLYCARP [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 12], testifies to its canonicity. So TERTULLIAN [*Against Marcion*, 5,17]. IGNATIUS [*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 12], which alludes to the frequent and affectionate mention made by Paul of the Christian state, privileges, and persons of the Ephesians in his Epistle.

Two theories, besides the ordinary one, have been held on the question, *to whom* the Epistle is addressed. GROTIUS, after the heretic Marcion, maintains that it was addressed to the Church at Laodicea, and that it is the Epistle to which Paul refers in ~~<5000>~~ Colossians 4:16. But the Epistle to the Colossians was probably written *before* that to the Ephesians, as appears from the parallel passages in Ephesians bearing marks of being expanded from those in Colossians; and Marcion seems to have drawn his notion, as to our Epistle, from Paul's allusion (~~<5000>~~ Colossians 4:16) to an Epistle addressed by him to the Laodiceans. ORIGEN and CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, and even TERTULLIAN, who refers to Marcion, give no sanction to his notion. No single manuscript contains the heading, "to the saints that are at Laodicea." The very resemblance of the Epistle to the Ephesians, to that to the Colossians, is against the theory; for if the former were really the one addressed to Laodicea (~~<5000>~~ Colossians 4:16), Paul would

not have deemed it necessary that the churches of Colosse and Laodicea should interchange Epistles. The greetings, moreover (^{Colossians 4:15}), which he sends *through the Colossians to the Laodiceans*, are quite incompatible with the idea that Paul wrote an Epistle *to the Laodiceans* at the same time, and by the same bearer, Tychicus (the bearer of our Epistle to the Ephesians, as well as of that to Colosse, ^{Ephesians 6:21} ^{Colossians 4:7}); for who, under such circumstances, would not send the greetings *directly* in the letter to the party saluted? The letter to Laodicea was evidently written some time *before* that to Colosse, Archbishop USHER has advanced the second theory: That it was an *encyclical* letter headed, as in Manuscript B., “to the saints that are ... and to the faithful,” the name of each Church being inserted in the copy sent to it; and that its *being sent to Ephesus first*, occasioned its being entitled, as now, the Epistle to the Ephesians. ALFORD makes the following objections to this theory:

- (1) It is at variance with the spirit of the Epistle, which is clearly addressed to one set of persons throughout, co-existing in one place, and as one body, and under the same circumstances.
- (2) The improbability that the apostle, who in two of his Epistles (Second Corinthians and Galatians) has so plainly specified their encyclical character, should have here omitted such specification.
- (3) The still greater improbability that he should have, as on this hypothesis must be assumed, written a circular Epistle to a district, of which Ephesus was the commercial capital, addressed to various churches within that district, yet from its very contents (as by the opponents’ hypothesis) not admitting of application to the Church of that metropolis, in which he had spent so long a time, and to which he was so affectionately bound.
- (4) The inconsistency of this hypothesis with the address of the Epistle, and the universal testimony of the ancient Church. The absence of personal greetings is not an argument for either of the two theories; for similarly there are none in Galatians, Philippians, First and Second Thessalonians, First Timothy. The better he knows the parties addressed, and the more general and solemn the subject, the less he seems to give of these individual notices. Writing, as he does in this

Epistle, on the constitution and prospects of Christ's universal Church, he refers the Ephesians, as to personal matters, to the bearer of the Epistle, Tychicus (^{<492>}Ephesians 6:21,22). As to the omission of "which are at Ephesus" (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:1), in Manuscript B., so "in Rome" (^{<400>}Romans 1:7) is omitted in some old manuscripts: it was probably done by churches *among whom it was read*, in order to generalize the reference of its contents, and especially where the subject of the Epistle is catholic. The words are found in the margin of Manuscript B, from a first hand; and are found in all the oldest manuscripts and versions.

Paul's first visit to Ephesus (on the seacoast of Lydia, near the river Cayster) is related in ^{<489>}Acts 18:19-21. The work, begun by his disputations with the Jews in his short visit, was carried on by Apollos (^{<482>}Acts 18:24-26), and Aquila and Priscilla (^{<482>}Acts 18:26). At his second visit, after his journey to Jerusalem, and thence to the east regions of Asia Minor, he remained at Ephesus "three years" (^{<490>}Acts 19:10, the "two years" in which verse are only *part* of the time, and ^{<408>}Acts 20:31); so that the founding and rearing of this Church occupied an unusually large portion of the apostle's time and care; whence his language in this Epistle shows a warmth of feeling, and a free outpouring of thought, and a union in spiritual privileges and hope between him and them (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:3, etc.), such as are natural from one so long and so intimately associated with those whom he addresses. On his last journey to Jerusalem, he sailed by Ephesus and summoned the elders of the Ephesian Church to meet him at Miletus, where he delivered his remarkable farewell charge (^{<408>}Acts 20:18-35).

This Epistle was addressed to the Ephesians during the early part of his imprisonment at Rome, immediately after that to the Colossians, to which it bears a close resemblance in many passages, the apostle having in his mind generally the same great truths in writing both. It is an undesigned proof of genuineness that the two Epistles, written about the same date, and under the same circumstances, bear a closer mutual resemblance than those written at distant dates and on different occasions. Compare ^{<400>}Ephesians 1:7 with ^{<504>}Colossians 1:14; ^{<400>}Ephesians 1:10 with ^{<500>}Colossians 1:20; ^{<400>}Ephesians 3:2 with ^{<505>}Colossians 1:25; ^{<400>}Ephesians 5:19 with ^{<506>}Colossians 3:16; ^{<402>}Ephesians 6:22 with ^{<508>}Colossians 4:8;

Ephesians 1:19 2:5 with Colossians 2:12,13; Ephesians 4:2-4 with
 Colossians 3:12-15; Ephesians 4:16 with Colossians 2:19;
 Ephesians 4:32 with Colossians 3:13; Ephesians 4:22-24 with
 Colossians 3:9,10; Ephesians 5:6-8 with Colossians 3:6-8;
 Ephesians 5:15,16 with Colossians 4:5; Ephesians 6:19,20 with
 Colossians 4:3,4; Ephesians 5:22-33 Ephesians 6:1-9 with
 Colossians 3:18; Ephesians 4:24,25 with Colossians 3:9;
 Ephesians 5:20-22 with Colossians 3:17,18. Tychicus and Onesimus
 were being sent to Colosse, the former bearing the two Epistles to the two
 churches respectively, the latter furnished with a letter of recommendation
 to Philemon, his former master, residing at Colosse. The date was
 probably about four years after his parting with the Ephesian elders at
 Miletus (Acts 20:6-38), about A.D. 62, before his imprisonment had
 become of the more severe kind, which appears in his Epistle to the
 Philippians. From Ephesians 6:19,20 it is plain he had at the time,
 though a prisoner, some degree of freedom in preaching, which accords
 with Acts 28:23,30,31, where he is represented as receiving at his
 lodgings all inquirers. His imprisonment began in February A.D. 61 and
 lasted "two whole years" (Acts 28:30) at least, and perhaps longer.

The Church of Ephesus was made up of converts partly from the Jews
 and partly from the Gentiles (Acts 19:8-10). Accordingly, the Epistle so
 addresses a Church constituted (Ephesians 2:14-22). Ephesus was
 famed for its idol temple of Artemis or Diana, which, after its having been
 burnt down by Herostratus on the night that Alexander the Great was born
 (355 B.C), was rebuilt at enormous cost and was one of the wonders of the
 world. Hence, perhaps, have arisen his images in this Epistle drawn from a
 beautiful temple: the Church being in true inner beauty that which the
 temple of the idol tried to realize in outward show (Ephesians 2:19-22).
 The Epistle (Ephesians 4:17 5:1-13) implies the profligacy for which
 the Ephesian heathen were notorious. Many of the same expressions occur
 in the Epistle as in Paul's address to the Ephesian elders. Compare
 Ephesians 1:6,7 2:7, as to "grace," with Acts 20:24,32: this may well
 be called "the Epistle of the grace of God" [ALFORD]. Also, as to his
 "bonds," Ephesians 3:1 4:1 with Acts 20:22,23. Also Ephesians
 1:11, as to "the counsel of God," with Acts 20:27. Also Ephesians
 1:14, as to "the redemption of the purchased possession," with Acts

20:28. Also ^{401H}Ephesians 1:14,18 2:20 5:5, as to “building up” the “inheritance,” with ^{401R}Acts 20:32.

The object of the Epistle is “to set forth the ground, the course, and the aim and end of THE CHURCH OF THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST. He speaks to the Ephesians as a type or sample of the Church universal” [ALFORD]. Hence, “the Church” throughout the Epistle is spoken of in the singular, not in the plural, “churches.” The Church’s foundation, its course, and its end, are his theme alike in the larger and smaller divisions of the whole Epistle. “Everywhere the foundation of the Church is in *the will of the Father*; the course of the Church is by *the satisfaction of the Son*; the end of the Church is the *life in the Holy Spirit*” [ALFORD]. Compare respectively ^{401H}Ephesians 1:11 2:5 3:16. This having been laid down as a matter of doctrine (this part closing with a sublime doxology, ^{401H}Ephesians 3:14-21), is then made the ground of practical exhortations. In these latter also (from ^{401H}Ephesians 4:1, onward), the same threefold division prevails, for the Church is represented as founded on the counsel of “God the Father, who is above all, through all, and in all,” reared by the “one Lord,” Jesus Christ, through the “one Spirit” (^{401H}Ephesians 4:4-6, etc.), who give their respective graces to the several members. These last are therefore to exercise all these graces in the several relations of life, as husbands, wives, servants, children, etc. The conclusion is that we must put on “the whole armor of God” (^{401H}Ephesians 6:13).

The sublimity of the STYLE and LANGUAGE corresponds to the sublimity of the subjects and exceeds almost that of any part of his Epistles. It is appropriate that those to whom he so wrote were Christians long grounded in the faith. The very sublimity is the cause of the difficulty of the style, and of the presence of peculiar expressions occurring, not found elsewhere.

CHAPTER 1

EPHESIANS 1:1-23.

INSCRIPTION: ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH IN THE FATHER’S ETERNAL COUNSEL, AND THE SON’S BLOODSHEDDING: THE SEALING OF IT BY THE SPIRIT. THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER THAT THEY MAY FULLY KNOW GOD’S GRACIOUS POWER IN CHRIST TOWARDS THE SAINTS.

1. by — rather, “*through* the will of God”: called to the apostleship through that same “will” which originated the Church (Ephesians 1:5,9,11; compare Galatians 1:4).

which are at Ephesus — (See *Introduction*.)

to the saints ... and to the faithful — The same persons are referred to by both designations, as the *Greek* proves: “to those who are saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus.” The *sanctification* by God is here put before man’s *faith*. The twofold aspect of salvation is thus presented, God’s grace in the first instance *sanctifying* us, (that is, setting us apart in His eternal purposes as holy unto Himself); and our faith, by God’s gift, laying hold of salvation (2 Thessalonians 2:13 1 Peter 1:2).

2. (Romans 1:7 1 Corinthians 1:3 2 Corinthians 1:2 Galatians 1:3).

3. The doxologies in almost all the Epistles imply the real sense of grace experienced by the writers and their readers (1 Peter 1:3). Ephesians 1:3-14 sets forth summarily the Gospel of the grace of God: the FATHER’S work of love, Ephesians 1:3 (choosing us to *holiness*, Ephesians 1:4; to *sonship*, Ephesians 1:5; to *acceptance*, Ephesians 1:6): the SON’S, Ephesians 1:7 (*redemption*, Ephesians 1:7; *knowledge of the mystery of His will*, Ephesians 1:9; *an inheritance*, Ephesians 1:11); the HOLY SPIRIT’S, Ephesians 1:13 (*sealing*, Ephesians 1:13; giving an *earnest* of the inheritance, Ephesians 1:14).

the God and Father of ... Christ — and so the God and Father of us who are in Him (^{<R17>}John 20:17). God is “the God” of the *man* Jesus, and “the Father” of the *Divine Word*. The *Greek* is, “*Blessed* us,” not “hath blessed us”; referring to the past original counsel of God. As in creation (^{<G12>}Genesis 1:22) so in redemption (^{<G12B>}Genesis 12:3 ^{<A18B>}Matthew 5:3-11 25:34) God “blesses” His children; and that not in mere *words*, but in *acts*.

us — all Christians.

blessings — *Greek*, “blessing.” “All,” that is, “*every possible* blessing for time and eternity, which *the Spirit* has to bestow” (so “spiritual” means; not “spiritual,” as the term is now used, as opposed to *bodily*).

in heavenly places — a phrase five times found in this Epistle, and not elsewhere (^{<A11>}Ephesians 1:20 ^{<A11B>}Ephesians 2:6 3:10 6:12); *Greek*, “*in the heavenly places*.” Christ’s ascension is the means of introducing us into the heavenly places, which by our sin were barred against us. Compare the change made by Christ (^{<S11>}Colossians 1:20 ^{<A11B>}Ephesians 1:20). While Christ in the flesh was in the form of a *servant*, God’s people could not realize fully their heavenly privileges as sons. Now “*our citizenship* (*Greek*) is in heaven” (^{<S11B>}Philippians 3:20), where our High Priest is ever “blessing” us. Our “treasures” are there (^{<A11B>}Matthew 6:20,21); our aims and affections (^{<S11>}Colossians 3:1,2); our hope (^{<S11B>}Colossians 1:5 ^{<S11B>}Titus 2:13); our inheritance (^{<A11B>}1 Peter 1:4). The gift of the Spirit itself, the source of the “spiritual blessing,” is by virtue of Jesus having ascended thither (^{<A11B>}Ephesians 4:8).

in Christ — the center and source of all blessing to us.

4. hath chosen us — *Greek*, “*chose* us out for Himself” (namely, *out of* the world, ^{<A11B>}Galatians 1:4): referring to His original choice, spoken of as *past*.

in him — The repetition of the idea, “in Christ” (^{<A11B>}Ephesians 1:3), implies the paramount importance of the truth that it is *in Him*, and by virtue of union to Him, the Second Adam, the Restorer ordained for us from everlasting, the Head of redeemed humanity, believers have all their blessings (^{<A11B>}Ephesians 3:11).

before the foundation of the world — This assumes the eternity of the Son of God (^{<4075>}John 17:5,24), as of the election of believers in Him (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 1:9 ^{<5003>}2 Thessalonians 2:13).

that we should be holy — positively (^{<6402>}Deuteronomy 14:2).

without blame — negatively (^{<4057>}Ephesians 5:27 ^{<5003>}1 Thessalonians 3:13).

before him — It is to Him the believer looks, walking as in His presence, before whom he looks to be accepted in the judgment (^{<5002>}Colossians 1:22; compare ^{<4075>}Revelation 7:15).

in love — joined by BENGEL and others with ^{<4005>}Ephesians 1:5, “in love having predestinated us,” etc. But *English Version* is better. The words qualify the whole clause, “that we should be holy ... before Him.” Love, lost to man by the fall, but restored by redemption, is the root and fruit and sum of all holiness (^{<4005>}Ephesians 5:2 ^{<5003>}1 Thessalonians 3:12,13).

5. predestinated — more special in respect to the *end* and precise *means*, than “chosen” or *elected*. We are “chosen” *out of the rest of the world*; “predestinated” *to all things that secure the inheritance* for us (^{<4001>}Ephesians 1:11 ^{<4003>}Romans 8:29). “*Foreordained*.”

by Jesus — *Greek*, “*through Jesus*.”

to himself — the Father (^{<5002>}Colossians 1:20). ALFORD explains, “adoption ... *into Himself*,” that is, so that we should be *partakers of the divine nature* (^{<4004>}2 Peter 1:4). LACHMANN reads, “unto *Him*.” The context favors the explanation of CALVIN: God has regard *to Himself* and the glory of His grace (^{<4005>}Ephesians 1:6,12,14) as His ultimate end. He had one only-begotten Son, and He was pleased *for His own glory*, to choose out of a lost world many to become His adopted sons. Translate, “*unto Himself*.”

the good pleasure of his will — So the *Greek* (^{<4006>}Matthew 11:26 ^{<4001>}Luke 10:21). We cannot go beyond “the good pleasure of His will” in searching into the causes of our salvation, or of any of His works (^{<4005>}Ephesians 1:9). (^{<4003>}Job 33:13.) Why needest thou philosophize about an imaginary world of optimism? Thy concern is to take heed that thou be

not bad. There was nothing in us which deserved His love (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:1,9,11) [BENGEL].

6. (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:7,17,18). The end aimed at (^{<400>}Psalms 50:23), that is, that the glory of His grace may be praised by all His creatures, men and angels.

wherein — Some of the oldest manuscripts read, “*which*.” Then translate, “which He graciously bestowed on us.” But *English Version* is supported by good manuscripts and the oldest versions.

us accepted — a kindred *Greek* word to “grace”: *charitos, echaritosen*: translate, “graciously accepted”; “made us subjects of His grace”; “embraced us in the arms of His grace” (^{<400>}Romans 3:24 ^{<400>}5:15).

in the beloved — pre-eminently so called (^{<400>}Matthew 3:17 ^{<400>}17:5 ^{<400>}John 3:35 ^{<400>}Colossians 1:13). *Greek*, “Son of His love.” It is only “IN HIS BELOVED” that He loves us (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:3 ^{<400>}1 John 4:9,10).

7. **In whom** — “the Beloved” (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:6 ^{<400>}Romans 3:24).

we have — as a *present* possession.

redemption — *Greek*, “*our* (literally, ‘*the*’) redemption”; THE redemption which is the grand subject of all revelation, and especially of the New Testament (^{<400>}Romans 3:24), namely, from the power, guilt, and penal consequences of sin (^{<400>}Matthew 1:21). If a man were unable to redeem himself from being a bond-servant, his kinsman might redeem him (^{<400>}Leviticus 25:48). Hence, antitypically the Son of God became the Son of man, that as our kinsman He might redeem us (^{<400>}Matthew 20:28). Another “redemption” follows, namely, that “of the purchased possession” hereafter (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:14).

through his blood — (^{<400>}Ephesians 2:13); as the instrument; the propitiation, that is, the consideration (devised by His own love) for which He, who was justly angry (^{<400>}Isaiah 12:1), becomes propitious to us; the expiation, the price paid to divine justice for our sin (^{<400>}Acts 20:28 ^{<400>}Romans 3:25 ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 6:20 ^{<400>}Colossians 1:20 ^{<400>}1 Peter 1:18,19).

the forgiveness of sins — *Greek*, “the remission of *our transgressions*”: not merely “*pretermision*,” as the *Greek* (^{<400>}Romans 3:25) ought to be

translated. This “remission,” being the explanation of “redemption,” includes not only deliverance from sin’s penalty, but from its pollution and enslaving power, negatively; and the reconciliation of an offended God, and a satisfaction unto a just God, positively.

riches of his grace — (⁴⁰¹¹Ephesians 2:7); “the exceeding riches of His grace.” Compare ⁴⁰¹⁸Ephesians 1:18 ⁴⁰¹⁶Ephesians 3:16, “according to the riches of His glory”: so that “grace” is His “glory.”

8. Rather, “which He made to abound towards us.”

all wisdom and prudence — “wisdom” in devising the plan of redeeming mankind; “prudence” in executing it by the means, and in making all the necessary arrangements of Providence for that purpose. Paul attributes to the Gospel of God’s grace “all” possible “wisdom and prudence,” in opposition to the boasts of wisdom and prudence which the unbelieving Jews and heathen philosophers and false apostles arrogated for their teachings. Christ crucified, though esteemed “foolishness” by the world, is “the wisdom of God” (⁴⁰¹⁸1 Corinthians 1:18-30). Compare ⁴⁰¹⁰Ephesians 3:10, “the *manifold* wisdom of God.”

9. “He hath abounded,” or “made (grace) to abound toward us” (⁴⁰¹⁸Ephesians 1:8), *in that He made known* to us, namely, experimentally, in our hearts.

the mystery — God’s purpose of redemption hidden heretofore in His counsels, but now revealed (⁴⁰¹⁸Ephesians 6:19 ⁴⁰²⁵Romans 16:25 ⁴⁰⁰²Colossians 1:26,27). This “mystery” is not like the heathen mysteries, which were imparted only to the initiated few. All Christians are the initiated. Only unbelievers are the uninitiated.

according to his good pleasure — showing the cause why “He hath made known to us the mystery,” namely, His own loving “good pleasure” toward us; also the *time* and *manner* of His doing so, are according to His good pleasure.

purposed — (⁴⁰¹¹Ephesians 1:11).

in himself — God the Father. BENGE takes it, “in *Him*,” that is, *Christ*, as in ⁴⁰¹⁸Ephesians 1:3,4. But the proper name, “in *Christ*,” ⁴⁰¹⁰Ephesians

1:10, immediately after, is inconsistent with His being here meant by the pronoun.

10. Translate, “*Unto the dispensation of the fullness of the times,*” that is, “which He purposed in Himself” (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:9) *with a view to the economy of (the gracious administration belonging to) the fullness of the times* (*Greek*, “fit times,” “seasons”). More comprehensive than “the fullness of the time” (^{<800>}Galatians 4:4). The whole of the Gospel *times* (plural) is meant, with the benefits to the Church *dispensed* in them severally and successively. Compare “the ages to come” (^{<400>}Ephesians 2:7). “The ends of the ages” (*Greek*, ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 10:11); “the times (same *Greek* as here, ‘the seasons,’ or ‘fitly appointed times’) of the Gentiles” (^{<020>}Luke 21:24); “the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power” (^{<400>}Acts 1:7); “the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the prophets since the world began” (^{<400>}Acts 3:20,21). The coming of Jesus at the first advent, “in the fullness of time,” was *one* of these “times.” The descent of the Holy Ghost, “when Pentecost was *fully come*” (^{<400>}Acts 2:1), was another. The testimony given by the apostles to Him “in due time” (“in its own seasons,” *Greek*) (^{<500>}1 Timothy 2:6) was another. The conversion of the Jews “when the *times* of the Gentiles are fulfilled,” the second coming of Christ, the “restitution of all things,” the millennial kingdom, the new heaven and earth, shall be severally instances of “the dispensation of the fullness of the times,” that is, “the dispensation of” the Gospel events and benefits belonging to their respective “times,” when severally filled up or completed. God the Father, according to His own good pleasure and purpose, is the Dispenser both of the Gospel benefits and of their several fitting times (^{<400>}Acts 1:7).

gather together in one — *Greek*, “sum up under one head”; “recapitulate.” The “good pleasure which He purposed,” was “to sum up all things (*Greek*, ‘THE whole range of things’) in Christ (*Greek*, ‘the Christ,’ that is, *His* Christ)” [ALFORD]. God’s purpose is to sum up the whole creation in Christ, the Head of angels, with whom He is linked by His invisible nature, and of men with whom He is linked by His humanity; of Jews and Gentiles; of the living and the dead (^{<400>}Ephesians 3:15); of animate and inanimate creation. Sin has disarranged the creature’s relation of subordination to God. God means to gather up all together in Christ; or as ^{<500>}Colossians 1:20 says, “By Him to reconcile all things unto Himself,

whether things in earth or things in heaven.” ALFORD well says, “The Church of which the apostle here mainly treats, is subordinated to Him in the highest degree of conscious and joyful union; those who are not His spiritually, in mere subjugation, yet consciously; the inferior tribes of creation unconsciously; but objectively, all are summed up in Him.”

11. In whom — by virtue of union to whom.

obtained an inheritance — literally, “We were made to have an inheritance” [WAHL]. Compare ⁴⁰¹⁸Ephesians 1:18, “*His* inheritance in the saints”: as *His* inheritance is there said to be *in them*, so *theirs* is here said to be *in Him* (⁴⁰³⁸Acts 26:18). However, ⁴⁰¹²Ephesians 1:12, “That we should BE TO ... His glory” (not “that we should *have*”), favors the translation of BENGEL, ELLICOTT, and others, “We were *made* an inheritance.” So the literal Israel (⁴⁰⁰¹Deuteronomy 4:20 9:29 32:9). “Also” does not mean “we also,” nor as *English Version*, “in whom also”; but, besides His having “made known to us His will,” we were also “made His inheritance,” or “we have also obtained an inheritance.”

predestinated — (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 1:5). The foreordination of Israel, as the elect nation, answers to that of the spiritual Israelites, believers, to an eternal inheritance, which is the thing meant here. The “we” here and in ⁴⁰¹²Ephesians 1:12, means *Jewish* believers (whence the reference to the election of Israel nationally arises), as contrasted with “you” (⁴⁰¹³Ephesians 1:13) *Gentile* believers.

purpose — repeated from “purposed” (⁴⁰⁰⁹Ephesians 1:9 ⁴⁰¹¹Ephesians 3:11). The Church existed in the mind of God eternally, before it existed in creation.

counsel of his ... will — (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 1:5), “the good pleasure of His will.” Not arbitrary caprice, but infinite wisdom (“counsel”) joined with sovereign will. Compare his address to the same Ephesians in ⁴⁰²⁷Acts 20:27, “All the counsel of God” (⁴⁰²⁹Isaiah 28:29). Alike in the natural and spiritual creations, God is not an agent constrained by necessity. “Wheresoever counsel is, there is election, or else it is vain; where a will, there must be freedom, or else it is weak” [PEARSON].

12. (⁴⁰⁰⁶Ephesians 1:6,14).

who first trusted in Christ — rather (we Jewish Christians), “who have before hoped in *the* Christ”: who before the Christ came, looked forward to His coming, waiting for the consolation of Israel. Compare ^{<4016>}Acts 26:6,7, “I am judged for *the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which our twelve tribes*, instantly serving God day and night, *hope to come.*” ^{<4020>}Acts 28:20, “*the hope of Israel*” [ALFORD]. Compare ^{<4018>}Ephesians 1:18 2:12 4:4.

13. In whom ye also — Ye Gentiles. Supply as *English Version*, “trusted,” from ^{<4012>}Ephesians 1:12; or “are.” The priority of us Jews does not exclude you Gentiles from sharing in Christ (compare ^{<4016>}Acts 13:46).

the word of truth — the instrument of sanctification, and of the new birth (^{<4017>}John 17:17 ^{<4025>}2 Timothy 2:15 ^{<4018>}James 1:18). Compare ^{<4016>}Colossians 1:5, where also, as here, it is connected with “hope.” Also ^{<4012>}Ephesians 4:21.

sealed — as God’s confirmed children, by the Holy Spirit as the seal (^{<4017>}Acts 19:1-6 ^{<4016>}Romans 8:16,23 ^{<4012>}1 John 3:24). see on ^{<4012>}2 Corinthians 1:22; A seal impressed on a document gives undoubted validity to the contract in it (^{<4013>}John 3:33 6:27; compare ^{<4013>}2 Corinthians 3:3). So the sense of “the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost” (^{<4015>}Romans 5:5), and the sense of adoption given through the Spirit at regeneration (^{<4015>}Romans 8:15,16), assure believers of God’s good will to them. The Spirit, like a seal, impresses on the soul at regeneration the image of our Father. The “sealing” by the Holy Spirit is spoken of as *past* once for all. The witnessing to our hearts that we are the children of God, and heirs (^{<4011>}Ephesians 1:11), is the Spirit’s *present* testimony, the “earnest of the (coming) inheritance” (^{<4016>}Romans 8:16-18).

that Holy Spirit of promise — rather, as the *Greek*, “The Spirit of promise, even the Holy Spirit”: The *Spirit promised* both in the Old and New Testaments (^{<4028>}Joel 2:28 ^{<4020>}Zechariah 12:10 ^{<4013>}John 7:38,39). “The word” *promised* the Holy Spirit. Those who “believed the word of truth” were sealed by the Spirit accordingly.

14. earnest — the first instalment paid as a pledge that the rest will follow (^{<4013>}Romans 8:23 ^{<4012>}2 Corinthians 1:22).

until — rather, “*Unto* the redemption,” etc.; joined thus, “ye were sealed (^{<4013>}Ephesians 1:13) unto,” that is, *for the purpose of and against*, the accomplishment of “the redemption,” namely, not the *redemption* in its first stage, made by the blood of Christ, which secures our *title*, but, in its final completion, when the actual *possession* shall be ours, the full “redemption of the body” (^{<4023>}Romans 8:23), as well as of the soul, from every infirmity (^{<4003>}Ephesians 4:30). The deliverance of the creature (the body, and the whole visible creation) from the bondage of corruption, and from the usurping prince of this world, into the glorious liberty of the children of God (^{<4021>}Romans 8:21-23 ^{<6013>}2 Peter 3:13).

of the purchased possession — God’s people *purchased* (“acquired,” *Greek*) as His *peculiar* (*Greek*) possession by the blood of Christ (^{<4013>}Acts 20:28). We value highly that which we pay a high price for; so God, His Church (^{<4025>}Ephesians 5:25,26 ^{<6018>}1 Peter 1:18 2:9; “my *special* treasure,” ^{<3017>}Malachi 3:17, *Margin*).

15. Wherefore — because ye are in Christ and sealed by His Spirit (^{<4013>}Ephesians 1:13,14).

I also — on my part, in return for God’s so great benefits to *you*.

after I heard — ever since I have heard. Not implying that he had only *heard* of their conversion: an erroneous argument used by some against the address of this Epistle to the Ephesians (see on ^{<4001>}Ephesians 1:1); but referring to the report he had heard *since* he was with them, as to their Christian graces. So in the case of Philemon, his “*beloved fellow laborer*” (^{<5001>}Philemon 1:1), he uses the same words (^{<5004>}Philemon 1:4,5).

your faith — rather, as *Greek*, “the faith among you,” that is, which many (not all) of you have.

love unto all the saints — of whatever name, simply because they are saints. A distinguishing characteristic of true Christianity (^{<4024>}Ephesians 6:24). “*Faith* and *love* he often joins together. A wondrous pair” [CHRYSOSTOM]. *Hope* is added, ^{<4018>}Ephesians 1:18.

16. (^{<5009>}Colossians 1:9).

of you — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Then the translation may be as *English Version* still, or as ALFORD, “making mention of *them*” (your “faith and love”).

17. A fit prayer for all Christians.

the God of our Lord Jesus — appropriate title here; as in ^{<401>}Ephesians 1:20-22 he treats of *God’s* raising *Jesus* to be Head over all things to the Church. Jesus Himself called the Father “My God” (^{<474>}Matthew 27:46).

the Father of glory — (Compare ^{<400>}Acts 7:2). The Father of that infinite glory which shines in the face of Christ, who is “the glory” (the true Shekinah); through whom also “the glory of the inheritance” (^{<408>}Ephesians 1:18) shall be ours (^{<474>}John 17:24 ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 3:7-4:6).

the spirit of wisdom — whose attribute is infinite wisdom and who works wisdom in believers (^{<290>}Isaiah 11:2).

and revelation — whose function it is to *reveal* to believers spiritual mysteries (^{<634>}John 16:14,15 ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 2:10).

in the knowledge — rather, as *Greek* (see on ^{<632>}1 Corinthians 13:12), “in the *full knowledge* of Him,” namely, God.

18. understanding — The oldest manuscripts, versions, and Fathers, read “heart.” Compare the contrary state of unbelieving, the *heart* being in fault (^{<408>}Ephesians 4:18 ^{<435>}Matthew 13:15). Translate, “Having the eyes of your heart enlightened” (^{<454>}Ephesians 5:14 ^{<406>}Matthew 4:16). The first effect of the Spirit moving in the new creation, as in the original physical creation (^{<000>}Genesis 1:3 ^{<406>}2 Corinthians 4:6). So THEOPHILUS to AUTOLYCUS (1.3), “the ears of the heart.” Where spiritual *light* is, there is *life* (^{<404>}John 1:4). The heart is “the core of life” [HARLESS], and the fountain of the thoughts; whence “the heart” in Scripture includes the *mind*, as well as the inclination. Its “eye,” or inward vision, both receives and contemplates the light (^{<462>}Matthew 6:22,23). The eye is the symbol of intelligence (^{<408>}Ezekiel 1:18).

the hope of his calling — the hope appertaining to His having called you; or, to the calling wherewith He has called you.

and — omitted in the oldest manuscripts and versions.

riches of the glory — (Colossians 1:27).

his inheritance in the saints — The inheritance which he has in store in the case of the saints. I prefer explaining, “The inheritance which He has in his saints.” (See on Ephesians 1:11; Deuteronomy 32:9).

19. exceeding — “surpassing.”

power to us-ward who believe — The whole of the working of His grace, which He is carrying on, and will carry on, in us who believe. By the term “saints” (Ephesians 1:18), believers are regarded as *absolutely perfected*, and so as being God’s inheritance; in this verse, as in the course of *fighting* the good fight of faith.

according to — in accordance with, what might be expected from.

working — *Greek*, “the energizing”; translate, “the effectual working” (Ephesians 3:7). The same superhuman power was needed and exerted to make us believe, as was needed and exerted to raise Christ from the dead (Ephesians 1:20). Compare Philippians 3:10, “the power of His resurrection” (Colossians 2:12 1 Peter 1:3-5).

of his mighty power — *Greek*, “of the strength of His might.”

20. in Christ — as our “first-fruits” of the resurrection, and Head, in virtue of God’s mighty working in whom His power to us-ward is made possible and actual [ALFORD].

when he raised him — “in that He raised Him.” The raising of Christ is not only an earnest of our bodies being hereafter raised, but has a spiritual power in it involving (by virtue of our living union with Him, as members with the Head) the resurrection, spiritually of the believer’s soul now, and, consequently, of his body hereafter (Romans 6:8-11 8:11). The Son, too, as God (though not as man), had a share in raising His own human body (John 2:19 10:17,18). Also the Holy Spirit (Romans 1:4 1 Peter 3:18).

set him — *Greek*, “made Him sit.” The glorious spirits *stand* about the throne of God, but they do not *sit at God’s right hand* (Hebrews 1:13).

at his own right hand — (Psalm 110:1). Where He remains till all His enemies have been put under His feet (1 Corinthians 15:24). Being appointed to “rule in the midst of His enemies” during their rebellion (Psalm 110:2), He shall resign His commission after their subjection [PEARSON] (Mark 16:19 Hebrews 1:3 10:12).

in the heavenly places — (Ephesians 1:3). As Christ has a literal body, heaven is not merely a state, but a *place*; and where He is, there His people shall be (John 14:3).

21. Greek, “Far (or high) above all (Ephesians 4:10) principality (or rule, 1 Corinthians 15:24), and authority, and power (Matthew 28:18), and dominion (or lordship).” Compare Philippians 2:9 Colossians 1:16 Hebrews 7:26 1 Peter 3:22. Evil spirits (who are similarly divided into various ranks, Ephesians 6:12), as well as angels of light, and earthly potentates, are included (compare Romans 8:38). Jesus is “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:16). The higher is His honor, the greater is that of His people, who are His members joined to Him, the Head. Some philosophizing teachers of the school of Simon Magus, in Western Asia Minor, had, according to IRENAEUS and EPIPHANIUS, taught their hearers these names of various ranks of angels. Paul shows that the truest wisdom is to know Christ as reigning above them all.

every name — every being whatever. “Any other creature” (Romans 8:39).

in this world — *Greek*, “age,” that is, the present *order of things*. “Things present ... things to come” (Romans 8:38).

that ... to come — “Names which now we know not, but shall know hereafter in heaven. We know that the emperor goes before all, though we cannot enumerate all the satraps and ministers of his court; so we know that Christ is set above all, although we cannot *name* them all” [BENGEL].

22. put ... under — *Greek*, “put in subjection under” (Psalm 8:6 1 Corinthians 15:27).

gave ... to the church — for her special advantage. The *Greek* order is emphatic: “HIM He gave as Head over all things to the Church.” Had it

been anyone save HIM, her Head, it would not have been the boon it is to the Church. But as *He* is Head over all things who is also her Head (and she the body), all things are hers (^{<402>}1 Corinthians 3:21-23). He is OVER (“far above”) all things; in contrast to the words, “TO *the Church*,” namely, *for her advantage*. The former are subject; the latter is joined with Him in His dominion over them. “Head” implies not only His dominion, but our union; therefore, while we look upon Him at the right hand of God, we see ourselves in heaven (^{<402>}Revelation 3:21). For the Head and body are not severed by anything intervening, else the body would cease to be the body, and the Head cease to be the Head [PEARSON from CHRYSOSTOM].

23. his body — His mystical and spiritual, not literal, body. Not, however, merely figurative, or metaphorical. He is really, though spiritually, the Church’s Head. His life is her life. She shares His crucifixion and His consequent glory. He possesses everything, His fellowship with the Father, His fullness of the Spirit, and His glorified manhood, not merely for Himself, but *for her*, who has a membership of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (^{<403>}Ephesians 5:30).

fullness — “the filled-up receptacle” [EADIE]. The Church is *dwelt in and filled by Christ*. She is the receptacle, not of His inherent, but of His *communicated, plenitude* of gifts and graces. As His is the “fullness” (^{<404>}John 1:16 ^{<509>}Colossians 1:19 2:9) inherently, so she is His “fullness” by His impartation of it to her, in virtue of her union to Him (^{<405>}Ephesians 5:18 ^{<500>}Colossians 2:10). “The *full manifestation* of His being, because penetrated by His life” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON]. She is the continued revelation of His divine life in human form; *the fullest representative of His plenitude*. Not the angelic hierarchy, as false teachers taught (^{<510>}Colossians 2:9,10,18), but Christ Himself is the “fullness of the Godhead,” and she represents Him. KOPPE translates less probably, “the whole universal multitude.”

filleth all in all — Christ as the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the world, constituted by God (^{<516>}Colossians 1:16-19), *fills all* the universe of things *with all things*. “Fills all creation with whatever it possesses” [ALFORD]. The *Greek* is, “filleth *for Himself*.”

CHAPTER 2

EPHESIANS 2:1-22.

GOD’S LOVE AND GRACE IN QUICKENING US, ONCE DEAD, THROUGH CHRIST. HIS PURPOSE IN DOING SO: EXHORTATION BASED ON OUR PRIVILEGES AS BUILT TOGETHER, AN HOLY TEMPLE, IN CHRIST, THROUGH THE SPIRIT.

1. And you — “You also,” among those who have experienced His mighty power in enabling them to believe (EPH Ephesians 1:19-23).

hath he quickened — supplied from the *Greek* (EPH Ephesians 2:5).

dead — spiritually. (COL Colossians 2:13). A living corpse: without the gracious presence of God’s Spirit in the soul, and so unable to think, will, or do aught that is holy.

in trespasses ... sins — *in* them, as the element in which the unbeliever is, and through which he is dead to the true life. Sin is the death of the soul.

ISA Isaiah 9:2 JHN John 5:25, “dead” (spiritually), TIM 1 Timothy 5:6.

“Alienated from the *life* of God” (EPH Ephesians 4:18). Translate, as *Greek*, “in your trespasses,” etc. “Trespass” in *Greek*, expresses a FALL or LAPSE, such as the transgression of Adam whereby he fell. “Sin.” (*Greek*, “*hamartia*”) implies innate *corruption* and ALIENATION from God (literally, *erring of the mind from the rule of truth*), exhibited in *acts* of sin (*Greek*, “*hamartemata*”). BENDEL, refers “trespasses” to the Jews who had the law, and yet revolted from it; “sins,” to the Gentiles who know not God.

2. the course of this world — the career (literally, “the age,” compare GAL Galatians 1:4), or present system of *this* world (1 COR 1 Corinthians 2:6,12 3:18,19, as opposed to “the world to come”): alien from God, and lying in the wicked one (1 JHN 1 John 5:19). “The age” (which is something more external and ethical) regulates “the world” (which is something more external).

the prince of the power of the air — the unseen God who lies underneath guiding “the course of this world” (⁴⁰⁰⁴2 Corinthians 4:4); ranging through the *air* around us: compare ⁴⁰⁰⁴Mark 4:4, “fowls of the air” (*Greek*, “heaven”) that is, (⁴⁰²⁵Ephesians 2:15), “Satan” and his demons. Compare ⁴⁰¹²Ephesians 6:12 ⁴⁰²³John 12:31. Christ’s ascension seems to have cast Satan out of heaven (⁴⁰¹⁶Revelation 12:5,9,10,12,13), where he had been heretofore the accuser of the brethren (⁴⁰⁰⁶Job 1:6-11). No longer able to accuse *in heaven* those justified by Christ, the ascended Savior (⁴⁰³³Romans 8:33,34), he assails them on earth with all trials and temptations; and “we live in an atmosphere poisonous and impregnated with deadly elements. But a mighty purification of the air will be effected by Christ’s coming” [AUBERLEN], for Satan shall be bound (⁴⁰²²Revelation 12:12,13,15,17 20:2,3). “The power” is here used collectively for the “powers of the air”; in apposition with which “powers” stand the “spirits,” comprehended in the singular, “the spirit,” taken also collectively: the aggregate of the “seducing spirits” (⁴⁰⁰¹1 Timothy 4:1) which “work now (*still*; not merely, as in your case, ‘in time *past*’) in the sons of disobedience” (a Hebraism: men who are not merely by accident disobedient, but who are essentially *sons of disobedience* itself: compare ⁴⁰¹⁵Matthew 3:7), and of which Satan is here declared to be “the prince.” The *Greek* does not allow “the spirit” to refer to *Satan*, “the prince” himself, but to “*the powers of the air*” of which he is prince. The powers of the air are the embodiment of that evil “spirit” which is the ruling principle of unbelievers, especially the heathen (⁴⁰³⁸Acts 26:18), as opposed to the spirit of the children of God (⁴⁰⁰³Luke 4:33). The potency of that “spirit” is shown in the “disobedience” of the former. Compare ⁴⁰²⁰Deuteronomy 32:20, “children in whom is no faith” (⁴⁰³⁰Isaiah 30:9 57:4). They disobey the Gospel both in faith and practice (⁴⁰⁰⁸2 Thessalonians 1:8 ⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 2:12).

3. also we — that is, *we also*. Paul here joins himself in the same category with them, passing from the second person (⁴⁰¹¹Ephesians 2:1,2) to the first person here.

all — Jews and Gentiles.

our conversation — “our way of life” (⁴⁰¹²2 Corinthians 1:12 ⁴⁰¹⁸1 Peter 1:18). This expression implies an outwardly more *decorous* course, than

the open “walk” in *gross sins* on the part of the majority of Ephesians in times past, the Gentile portion of whom may be specially referred to in ~~AND~~ Ephesians 2:2. Paul and his Jewish countrymen, though outwardly more seemly than the Gentiles (~~AND~~ Acts 26:4,5,18), had been essentially like them in living to the unrenewed flesh, without the Spirit of God.

fulfilling — *Greek*, doing.

mind — *Greek*, “our thoughts.” Mental suggestions and purposes (independent of God), as distinguished from the blind impulses of “the flesh.”

and were by nature — He intentionally breaks off the construction, substituting “and we were” for “and being,” to mark emphatically his and their *past* state by nature, as contrasted with their present state by grace. Not merely is it, we had our way of life fulfilling our fleshly desires, *and so being* children of wrath; but *we were by nature* originally “children of wrath,” and so consequently had our way of life fulfilling our fleshly desires. “Nature,” in *Greek*, implies that which has *grown* in us as the peculiarity of our being, growing with our growth, and strengthening with our strength, as distinguished from that which has been wrought on us by mere external influences: what is inherent, not acquired (~~AND~~ Job 14:4 ~~AND~~ Psalm 51:5). An incidental proof of the doctrine of original sin.

children of wrath — not merely “sons,” as in the *Greek*, “sons of disobedience” (~~AND~~ Ephesians 2:2), but “children” *by generation*; not merely *by adoption*, as “sons” might be. The *Greek* order more emphatically marks this innate corruption: “Those who in their (very) nature are children of wrath”; ~~AND~~ Ephesians 2:5, “grace” is opposed to “nature” here; and *salvation* (implied in ~~AND~~ Ephesians 2:5,8, “saved”) to “wrath.” Compare Article IX, *Church of England Common Prayer Book*. “Original sin (birth-sin), standeth not in the following of Adam, but is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, naturally engendered of Adam [Christ was *supernaturally* conceived by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin], whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil; and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation.” Paul shows that even the Jews, who boasted of their birth from Abraham, were by natural birth equally children of wrath as the Gentiles, whom the Jews despised on

account of their birth from idolaters (^{<B19>}Romans 3:9 5:12-14). “Wrath abideth” on all who disobey the Gospel in faith and practice (^{<B19>}John 3:36). The phrase, “children of wrath,” is a Hebraism, that is, objects of God’s wrath from childhood, in our natural state, as being born in the sin which God hates. So “son of death” (^{<B19>}2 Samuel 12:5, *Marginal*); “son of perdition” (^{<B19>}John 17:12 ^{<B19>}2 Thessalonians 2:3).

as others — *Greek*, “as the rest” of mankind are (^{<B19>}1 Thessalonians 4:13).

4. God, who is rich — *Greek* “(as) being rich in mercy.”

for — that is, “because of His great love.” This was the *special* ground of God’s saving us; as “rich in mercy” (compare ^{<B19>}Ephesians 2:7 1:7 ^{<B19>}Romans 2:4 10:12) was the general ground. “Mercy takes away misery; love confers salvation” [BENGEL].

5. dead in sins — The best reading is in the *Greek*, “dead in *our* (literally, ‘the’) trespasses.”

quickened — “vivified” spiritually, and consequences hereafter, corporally. There must be a spiritual resurrection of the soul before there can be a comfortable resurrection of the body [PEARSON] (^{<B19>}John 11:25,26 ^{<B19>}Romans 8:11).

together with Christ — The Head being seated at God’s right hand, the body also sits there with Him [CHRYSOSTOM]. We are already seated there IN Him (“in Christ Jesus,” ^{<B19>}Ephesians 2:6), and hereafter shall be seated *by* Him; IN Him already as in our Head, which is the ground of our hope; *by* Him hereafter, as by the conferring cause, when hope shall be swallowed up in fruition [PEARSON]. What God wrought in Christ, He wrought (by the very fact) in all united to Christ, and one with Him.

by grace ye are saved — *Greek*, “Ye are in a saved state.” Not merely “ye are being saved,” but ye “are passed from death unto life” (^{<B19>}John 5:24). Salvation is to the Christian not a thing to be waited for hereafter, but already realized (^{<B19>}1 John 3:14). The parenthetical introduction of this clause here (compare ^{<B19>}Ephesians 2:8) is a burst of Paul’s feeling, and in order to make the Ephesians feel that *grace* from first to last is the sole source of salvation; hence, too, he says “ye,” not “we.”

6. raised us up together — with Christ. The “raising up” presupposes previous quickening of Jesus in the tomb, and of us in the grave of our sins.

made us sit together — with Christ, namely, in His ascension. Believers are bodily in heaven in point of right, and virtually so in spirit, and have each their own place assigned there, which in due time they shall take possession of (^{<403>}Philippians 3:20,21). He does not say, “*on the right hand of God*”; a prerogative reserved to Christ peculiarly; though they shall share His throne (^{<403>}Revelation 3:21).

in Christ Jesus — Our union with Him is the ground of our present spiritual, and future bodily, resurrection and ascension. “Christ Jesus” is the phrase mostly used in this Epistle, in which the *office* of the Christ, the Anointed Prophet, Priest and King, is the prominent thought; when the Person is prominent, “Jesus Christ” is the phrase used.

7. Greek, “That He might show forth (middle reflexive voice; for His own glory, ^{<403>}Ephesians 1:6,12,14) in the ages which are coming on,” that is, the blessed *ages* of the Gospel which supersede “the *age* (*Greek*, for ‘course’) of this world” (^{<403>}Ephesians 2:2), and the past “ages” from which the mystery was hidden (^{<503>}Colossians 1:26,27). These good ages, though beginning with the first preaching of the Gospel, *and thenceforth continually succeeding one another*, are not consummated till the Lord’s coming again (compare ^{<403>}Ephesians 1:21 ^{<305>}Hebrews 6:5). The words, “coming on,” do not exclude *the time then present*, but imply simply the *ages following* upon Christ’s “raising them up together” spiritually (^{<403>}Ephesians 2:6).

kindness — “benignity.”

through Christ — rather, as *Greek*, “in Christ”; the same expression as is so often repeated, to mark that all our blessings center “IN HIM.”

8. For — illustrating “the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness.” Translate as in ^{<403>}Ephesians 2:5, “Ye are in a saved state.”

through faith — the effect of the power of Christ’s resurrection (^{<403>}Ephesians 1:19,20 ^{<503>}Philippians 3:10) whereby we are “raised together” with Him (^{<403>}Ephesians 2:6 ^{<503>}Colossians 2:12). Some of the

oldest manuscripts read, “through your (literally, *the*) faith.” The instrument or mean of salvation on the part of the person saved; Christ alone is the *meritorious* agent.

and that — namely, *the act of believing*, or “faith.” “Of yourselves” stands in opposition to, “it is the gift of God” (⁴¹⁰²Philippians 1:29). “That which I have said, ‘through faith,’ I do not wish to be understood so as if I excepted *faith* itself from *grace*” [ESTIUS]. “God justifies the believing man, not for the worthiness of his belief, but for the worthiness of Him in whom he believes” [HOOKER]. The initiation, as well as the increase, of faith, is from the Spirit of God, not only by an external proposal of the word, but by internal illumination in the soul [PEARSON]. Yet “faith” cometh by the means which man must avail himself of, namely, “hearing the word of God” (⁴⁵⁰⁷Romans 10:17), and prayer (⁴²¹³Luke 11:13), though the blessing is wholly of God (⁴⁰⁸⁶1 Corinthians 3:6,7).

9. Not of works — This clause stands in contrast to “by grace,” as is confirmed by ⁴⁰⁰⁸Romans 4:4,5 11:6.

lest — rather, as *Greek*, “that no man should boast” (⁴⁸²⁷Romans 3:27 4:2).

10. workmanship — literally, “a thing of His making”; “handiwork.” Here the spiritual creation, not the physical, is referred to (⁴⁸¹⁸Ephesians 2:8,9).

created — having been created (⁴⁸⁰⁸Ephesians 4:24 ⁴⁹²⁸Psalms 102:18 ⁴⁸⁸¹Isaiah 43:21 ⁴⁸⁸⁵2 Corinthians 5:5,17).

unto good works — “*for* good works.” “Good works” cannot be performed until we are new “created unto” them. Paul never calls the works of the law “good works.” We are not *saved* by, but *created unto*, good works.

before ordained — *Greek*, “before made ready” (compare ⁴⁸⁵⁹John 5:36). God marks out for each in His purposes beforehand, the particular good works, and the time and way which He sees best. God both makes ready by His providence the opportunities *for the works*, and makes us ready for their performance (⁴⁸¹⁶John 15:16 ⁴⁹²²2 Timothy 2:21).

that we should walk in them — not “be saved” by them. Works do not justify, but the justified man works (⁴⁸²²Galatians 5:22-25).

11. The *Greek* order in the oldest manuscripts is, “That in time past (literally, *once*) ye,” etc. Such remembrance sharpens gratitude and strengthens faith (⁴⁰⁹Ephesians 2:19) [BENGEL].

Gentiles in the flesh — that is, Gentiles in respect to circumcision.

called Uncircumcision — The Gentiles were called (in contempt), and *were*, the Uncircumcision; the Jews were called, but were not truly, the Circumcision [ELLICOTT].

in the flesh made by hands — as opposed to the true “circumcision of the heart in the Spirit, and not the letter” (⁴¹⁰Romans 2:29), “made without the hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (⁴¹¹Colossians 2:11).

12. without Christ — *Greek*, “*separate from* Christ”; having no part in Him; far from Him. A different *Greek* word (*aneu*) would be required to express, “Christ was not present with you” [TITTMANN].

aliens — *Greek*, “alienated from,” not merely “separated from.” The Israelites were cut off from the commonwealth of God, but it was as being self-righteous, indolent, and unworthy, not as *aliens* and *strangers* [CHRYSOSTOM]. The expression, “alienated from,” takes it for granted that the Gentiles, before they had apostatized from the primitive truth, had been sharers in light and life (compare ⁴⁰⁸Ephesians 4:18,23). The hope of redemption through the Messiah, on their subsequent apostasy, was embodied into a definite “commonwealth” or *polity*, namely, that “of Israel,” from which the Gentiles were alienated. Contrast ⁴¹²Ephesians 2:13 ⁴¹³Ephesians 3:6 4:4,5, with ⁴¹⁴Psalms 147:20.

covenants of promise — rather, “... of *the* promise,” namely, “to thee and thy seed will I give this land” (⁴¹⁵Romans 9:4 ⁴¹⁶Galatians 3:16). The plural implies the several renewals of the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and with the whole people at Sinai [ALFORD]. “The promise” is singular, to signify that the covenant, in reality, and substantially, is one and the same at all times, but only different in its accidents and external circumstances (compare ⁴¹⁷Hebrews 1:1, “at sundry times and in divers manners”).

having no ... hope — beyond this life (^{<4359>}1 Corinthians 15:19). The CONJECTURES of heathen philosophers as to a future life were at best vague and utterly unsatisfactory. They had no divine “promise,” and therefore no sure ground of “hope.” Epicurus and Aristotle did not believe in it at all. The Platonists believed the soul passed through perpetual changes, now happy, and then again miserable; the Stoics, that it existed no longer than till the time of the general burning up of all things.

without God — *Greek*, “atheists,” that is, they had not “God” in the sense we use the word, the Eternal Being who made and governs all things (compare ^{<4445>}Acts 14:15, “Turn from these vanities unto *the living God* who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things therein”), whereas the Jews had distinct ideas of God and immortality. Compare also ^{<4008>}Galatians 4:8, “Ye knew not God ... ye did service unto them which are no gods” (^{<5005>}1 Thessalonians 4:5). So also pantheists are atheists, for an impersonal God is No GOD, and an ideal immortality no immortality [THOLUCK].

in the world — in contrast to belonging to “the commonwealth of Israel.” Having their portion and their all in this godless vain world (^{<5074>}Psalms 17:14), from which Christ delivers His people (^{<4359>}John 15:19 17:14 ^{<4008>}Galatians 1:4).

13. now — in contrast to “at that time” (^{<4002>}Ephesians 2:12).

in Christ Jesus — “Jesus” is here added, whereas the expression before (^{<4002>}Ephesians 2:12) had been merely “Christ,” to mark that they know Christ as the *personal* Savior, “Jesus.”

sometimes — *Greek*, “aforetime.”

far off — the Jewish description of the Gentiles. Far off from God and from the people of God (^{<4007>}Ephesians 2:17 ^{<2575>}Isaiah 57:19 ^{<4029>}Acts 2:39).

are — *Greek*, “have been.”

by — *Greek*, “in.” Thus “the blood of Christ” is made the seal of a covenant IN which their nearness to God consists. In ^{<4001>}Ephesians 1:7, where the blood is more directly spoken of as the *instrument*, it is “*through* His blood” [ALFORD].

14. he — *Greek*, “Himself” alone, pre-eminently, and none else. Emphatical.

our peace — not merely “Peacemaker,” but “Himself” the price of our (Jews’ and Gentiles’ alike) peace with God, and so the bond of union between “both” in God. He took both into Himself, and reconciled them, united, to God, by His assuming our nature and our penal and legal liabilities (^{<405>}Ephesians 2:15 ^{<390>}Isaiah 9:5,6 53:5 ^{<385>}Micah 5:5 ^{<500>}Colossians 1:20). His title, “Shiloh,” means the same (^{<490>}Genesis 49:10).

the middle wall of partition — *Greek*, “... of the partition” or “fence”; the *middle wall* which *parted* Jew and Gentile. There was a balustrade of stone which separated the court of the Gentiles from the holy place, which it was death for a Gentile to pass. But this, though incidentally alluded to, was but a symbol of the partition itself, namely, “the enmity” *between “both” and God* (^{<405>}Ephesians 2:15), the real cause of separation from God, and so the mediate cause of their separation from one another. Hence there was a twofold wall of partition, one the inner wall, severing the Jewish people from entrance to the holy part of the temple where the priests officiated, the other the outer wall, separating the Gentile proselytes from access to the court of the Jews (compare ^{<540>}Ezekiel 44:7 ^{<405>}Acts 21:28). Thus this twofold wall represented the Sinaitic law, which *both* severed all men, even the Jews, from access to God (through sin, which is the violation of the law), and also separated the Gentiles from the Jews. As the term “wall” implies the *strength* of the partition, so “fence” implies that it was easily removed by God when the due time came.

15. Rather, make “enmity” an apposition to “the middle wall of partition”; “Hath broken down the middle wall of partition (not merely as *English Version*, ‘*between us*,’ but also *between all men and God*), to wit, the enmity (^{<405>}Romans 8:7) by His flesh” (compare ^{<405>}Ephesians 2:16 ^{<405>}Romans 8:3).

the law of commandments contained in — *Greek*, “the law of the commandments (consisting) in ordinances.” This law was “the partition” or “fence,” which embodied the expression of the “enmity” (the “wrath” of God against our sin, and our enmity to Him, ^{<405>}Ephesians 2:3) (^{<405>}Romans 4:15 5:20 7:10,11 8:7). Christ has in, or by, His crucified flesh, abolished it, so far as its condemning and enmity-creating power is

concerned (^{<30B4}Colossians 2:14), substituting for it the law of love, which is the everlasting spirit of the law, and which flows from the realization in the soul of His love in His death for us. Translate what follows, “that He might make the two (Jews and Gentiles) into one new man.” Not that He might merely reconcile the two to each other, but incorporate the two, reconciled in Him to God, into one new man; the old man to which both belonged, the enemy of God, having been slain in His flesh on the cross. Observe, too, ONE new man; we are all in God’s sight but one in Christ, as we are but one in Adam [ALFORD].

making peace — primarily between all and God, secondarily between Jews and Gentiles; He being “our peace.” This “peace-making” precedes its publication (^{<40D7}Ephesians 2:17).

16. Translate, “might altogether reconcile them both in one body (the Church, ^{<30B5}Colossians 3:15) unto God through His cross.” The *Greek* for “reconcile” (*apocatalaxe*), found only here and in ^{<30B1}Colossians 1:20, expresses not only a return to favor with one (*catallage*), but so to lay aside enmity that complete amity follows; to pass *from* enmity to *complete reconciliation* [TITTMANN].

slain the enmity — namely, that had been between man and God; and so that between Jew and Gentile which had resulted from it. By His being *slain*, He *slew* it (compare ^{<30B4}Hebrews 2:14).

thereby — *Greek*, “therein”; “in” or “by the cross,” that is, His crucifixion (^{<30B5}Colossians 2:15).

17. Translate, “He came and announced glad tidings of peace.” “He came” of His own free love, and “announced peace” with His own mouth to the apostles (^{<02B5}Luke 24:36 ^{<01B9}John 20:19,21,26); and by them to others, through His Spirit present in His Church (^{<04B8}John 14:18). ^{<01B3}Acts 26:23 is strictly parallel; after His resurrection “He showed light to the people (‘them that were nigh’) and to the Gentiles (‘you that were afar off’),” by His Spirit in His ministers (compare ^{<01B9}1 Peter 3:19).

and to them — The oldest manuscripts insert “peace” again: “And peace to them.” The repetition implies the joy with which both alike would dwell again and again upon the welcome word “peace.” So ^{<25B9}Isaiah 57:19.

18. Translate, “For it is through Him (^{<B46>}John 14:6; ^{<B19>}Hebrews 10:19) that we have *our* access (^{<B12>}Ephesians 3:12 ^{<B2>}Romans 5:2), both of us, in (that is, united in, that is, “by,” ^{<B13>}1 Corinthians 12:13, *Greek*) one Spirit to the Father,” namely, as our common Father, reconciled to both alike; whence flows the removal of all separation between Jew and Gentile. The *oneness* of “the Spirit,” through which we both have our access, is necessarily followed by *oneness* of the body, the Church (^{<B16>}Ephesians 2:16). The distinctness of persons in the Divine Trinity appears in this verse. It is also fatal to the theory of sacerdotal priests in the Gospel through whom alone the people can approach God. All alike, people and ministers, can draw nigh to God through Christ, their ever living Priest.

19. Now, therefore — rather, “So then” [ALFORD].

foreigners — rather, “sojourners”; opposed to “members of the household,” as “strangers” is to “fellow citizens.” ^{<B19>}Philippians 3:19,20, “conversation,” *Greek*, “citizenship.”

but — The oldest manuscripts add, “are.”

with the saints — “the commonwealth of (spiritual) Israel” (^{<B12>}Ephesians 2:12).

of God — THE FATHER; as JESUS CHRIST appears in ^{<B20>}Ephesians 2:20, and THE SPIRIT in ^{<B22>}Ephesians 2:22.

20. Translate as *Greek*, “Built up upon,” etc. (participle; *having been built up upon*; omit, therefore, “and are”). Compare ^{<B11>}1 Corinthians 3:11,12. The same image in ^{<B18>}Ephesians 3:18, recurs in his address to the Ephesian elders (^{<B32>}Acts 20:32), and in his Epistle to Timothy at Ephesus (^{<B15>}1 Timothy 3:15 ^{<B19>}2 Timothy 2:19), naturally suggested by the splendid architecture of Diana’s temple; the glory of the Christian temple is eternal and real, not mere idolatrous gaud. The image of a building is appropriate also to the Jew-Christians; as the temple at Jerusalem was the stronghold of Judaism; as Diana’s temple, of paganism.

foundation of the apostles, etc. — that is, upon their ministry and living example (compare ^{<B18>}Matthew 16:18). Christ Himself, the only true Foundation, was the grand subject of their ministry, and spring of their life. As one with Him and His fellow workers, they, too, in a secondary

sense, are called “foundations” (⁶²¹⁴Revelation 21:14). The “prophets” are joined with them closely; for the expression is here not “*foundations* of the apostles and *the* prophets,” but “*foundations* of the apostles and *prophets*.” For the doctrine of both was essentially one (⁶¹¹⁰1 Peter 1:10,11 ⁶⁰⁹⁰Revelation 19:10). The apostles take the precedence (⁶¹²⁴Luke 10:24). Thus he appropriately shows regard to the claims of the Jews and Gentiles: “the prophets” representing the old Jewish dispensation, “the apostles” the new. The “prophets” of the new also are included. BENJEL and ALFORD refer the meaning solely to these (⁴⁰¹⁵Ephesians 3:5 4:11). These passages imply, I think, that the New Testament prophets are not excluded; but the apostle’s plain reference to ¹⁸⁸²Psalms 118:22, “the head stone of the corner,” proves that the Old Testament prophets are a prominent thought. David is called a “prophet” in ⁴⁰²¹Acts 2:30. Compare also ²³³⁶Isaiah 28:16; another prophet present to the mind of Paul, which prophecy leans on the earlier one of Jacob (¹⁴²²Genesis 49:24). The sense of the context, too, suits this: Ye were once aliens from the commonwealth of *Israel* (in the time of her *Old Testament prophets*), but now ye are members of the true Israel, built upon the foundation of her New Testament apostles and Old Testament prophets. Paul continually identifies his teaching with that of Israel’s old prophets (⁴⁰²²Acts 26:22 28:23). The costly foundation-stones of the temple (¹⁰⁵⁷1 Kings 5:17) typified the same truth (compare ²⁶¹²Jeremiah 51:26). The same stone is at once the corner-stone and the foundation-stone on which the whole building rests. Paul supposes a stone or rock so large and so fashioned as to be both at once; supporting the whole as the foundation, and in part rising up at the extremities, so as to admit of the side walls meeting in it, and being united in it as the corner-stone [ZANCHIUS]. As the corner-stone, it is conspicuous, as was Christ (⁴⁰¹⁶1 Peter 2:6), and coming in men’s way may be stumbled over, as the Jews did at Christ (⁴¹⁴⁰Matthew 21:42 ⁴⁰¹⁷1 Peter 2:7).

21. In whom — as holding together the whole.

fitly framed — so as exactly to fit together.

groweth — “is growing” continually. Here an additional thought is added to the image; the Church has the *growth* of a living organism, not the mere *increase* of a building. Compare ⁴⁰¹⁸1 Peter 2:5; “*lively* stones ... built up a

spiritual house.” Compare ^{<4016>}Ephesians 4:16 ^{<3062>}Zechariah 6:12, “The *Branch* shall build the *temple* of the Lord,” where similarly the growth of a branch, and the building of a temple, are joined.

holy — as being the “habitation of God” (^{<4022>}Ephesians 2:22). So “in the Lord” (Christ) answers to “through the Spirit” (^{<4022>}Ephesians 2:22; compare ^{<4016>}Ephesians 3:16,17). “Christ is the inclusive Head of all the building, the element in which it has its being and now its growth” [ALFORD].

22. are builded together — Translate, “are being builded together.”

through — *Greek*, “in the Spirit.” God, by His Spirit *in* believers, has them for His habitation (^{<4016>}1 Corinthians 3:16,17 6:19 ^{<4016>}2 Corinthians 6:16).

CHAPTER 3

EPHESIANS 3:1-21.

HIS APOSTOLIC OFFICE TO MAKE KNOWN THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST REVEALED BY THE SPIRIT: PRAYER THAT BY THE SAME SPIRIT THEY MAY COMPREHEND THE VAST LOVE OF CHRIST: DOXOLOGY ENDING THIS DIVISION OF THE EPISTLE.

As the first chapter treated of THE FATHER'S office; and the second, THE SON'S, so this, that of THE SPIRIT.

1. of Jesus Christ — *Greek*, “Christ Jesus.” The *office* is the prominent thought in the latter arrangement; the *person*, in the former. He here marks the *Messiahship* of “Christ,” maintained by him as the origin of his being a “prisoner,” owing to the jealousy of the Jews being roused at his preaching it to *the Gentiles*. His very bonds were profitable to (“for” or “in behalf of you”) Gentiles (EPHESIANS 3:13 2 TIMOTHY 2:10). He digresses at “For this cause,” and does not complete the sentence which he had intended, until EPHESIANS 3:14, where he resumes the words, “For this cause,” namely, because I know this your call of God as Gentiles (EPHESIANS 2:11-22), to be “fellow heirs” with the Jews (EPHESIANS 3:6), “I bow my knees to” the Father of our common Savior (EPHESIANS 3:14,15) to confirm you in the faith by His Spirit. “I Paul,” expresses the agent employed by the Spirit to enlighten them, after he had been first enlightened himself by the same Spirit (EPHESIANS 3:3-5,9).

2. If — The *Greek* does not imply doubt: “Assuming (what I know to be the fact, namely) that ye have heard,” etc. “If, as I presume,” The indicative in the *Greek* shows that no doubt is implied: “Seeing that doubtless,” etc. He by this phrase delicately reminds them of their having heard from himself, and probably from others subsequently, the fact. See *Introduction*, showing that these words do not disprove the address of this Epistle to the *Ephesians*. Compare ACTS 20:17-24.

the dispensation — “The office of dispensing, as a steward, the grace of God which was (not ‘is’) given me to you-ward,” namely, to dispense to you.

3. he made known — The oldest manuscripts read, “That by revelation *was* the mystery (namely, of the admission of the Gentiles, ^{<400>}Ephesians 3:6 1:9) *made known* unto me (^{<402>}Galatians 1:12).”

as I wrote afore — namely, in this Epistle (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:9,10), the words of which he partly repeats.

4. understand my knowledge — “perceive my understanding” [ALFORD], or “intelligence.” “When ye read,” implies that, deep as are the mysteries of this Epistle, the way for all to understand them is to *read* it (^{<405>}2 Timothy 3:15,16). By *perceiving his understanding* of the mysteries, they, too, will be enabled to understand.

the mystery of Christ — The “mystery” is Christ Himself, once hidden, but now revealed (^{<407>}Colossians 1:27).

5. in other ages — *Greek*, “generations.”

not made known — He does not say, “has not been *revealed*.” Making known by *revelation* is the source of making known by preaching [BENGEL]. The former was vouchsafed only to the prophets, in order that they might make known the truth so revealed to men in general.

unto the sons of men — men in their state by birth, as contrasted with those illuminated “by the Spirit” (*Greek*, “IN the Spirit,” compare ^{<400>}Revelation 1:10), ^{<407>}Matthew 16:17.

as — The mystery of the call of the Gentiles (of which Paul speaks here) was not unknown to the Old Testament prophets (^{<401>}Isaiah 56:6,7 49:6). But they did not know it with the same explicit distinctness “As” it has been now known (^{<400>}Acts 10:19,20 11:18-21). They probably did not know that the Gentiles were to be admitted without circumcision or that they were to be on a level with the Jews in partaking of the grace of God. The gift of “the Spirit” in its fullness was reserved for the New Testament that Christ might thereby be glorified. The epithet, “holy,” marks the special consecration of the New Testament “prophets” (who are here

meant) by the Spirit, compared with which even the Old Testament prophets were but “sons of men” (^{<3015>}Ezekiel 2:3, and elsewhere).

6. Translate, “That the Gentiles *are*,” etc. “and *fellow members* of the same body, and *fellow* partakers of *the* (so the oldest manuscripts read, not ‘HIS’) promise, in Christ *Jesus* (added in the oldest manuscripts), *through* the Gospel.” It is “in Christ Jesus” that they are made “fellow heirs” in the inheritance of GOD: “of the same body” under the Head, CHRIST JESUS; and “fellow partakers of the promise” in the communion of THE HOLY SPIRIT (^{<4013>}Ephesians 1:13 ^{<3004>}Hebrews 6:4). The Trinity is thus alluded to, as often elsewhere in this Epistle (^{<4026>}Ephesians 2:19,20,22).

7. Whereof — “of which” Gospel.

according to — in consequence of, and in accordance with, “the gift of the grace of God.”

given — “which (gift of grace) was given to me by (*Greek*, ‘according to,’ as in ^{<4026>}Ephesians 3:20 1:19: as the result of, and in proportion to) the effectual working (*Greek*, ‘energy,’ or ‘in-working’) of His power.”

8. am — Not merely *was* I in times past, but I still am the least worthy of so high an office (compare ^{<5015>}1 Timothy 1:15, end).

least of all saints — not merely “of all *apostles*” (^{<4350>}1 Corinthians 15:9,10).

is — *Greek*, “has been given.”

among — omitted in the oldest manuscripts Translate, “to *announce* to the Gentiles *the glad tidings* of the unsearchable (^{<4350>}Job 5:9) riches,” namely, of Christ’s *grace* (^{<4006>}Ephesians 1:7 2:7). ^{<4113>}Romans 11:33, “unsearchable” as a mine inexhaustible, whose treasures can never be fully explored (^{<4026>}Ephesians 3:18,19).

9. to make all men see — *Greek*, “to enlighten all” (^{<4013>}Ephesians 1:18 ^{<4350>}Psalms 18:28 ^{<3004>}Hebrews 6:4). “All” (compare ^{<5003>}Colossians 1:28).

fellowship — The oldest manuscripts read, “economy,” or “dispensation” (compare ^{<5005>}Colossians 1:25,26; and see on ^{<4006>}Ephesians 1:10, above). “To make all see how it hath seemed good to God at this time to *dispense*

(through me and others, His *stewards*) what heretofore was a mystery.” ELLICOTT explains it, “the arrangement,” or “regulation” of the mystery (the union of Jews and Gentiles in Christ) which was now to be humbly traced and acknowledged in the fact of its having secretly existed in the counsel of God, and now having been revealed to the heavenly powers by means of the Church.

from the beginning of the world — *Greek*, “from (the beginning of) the ages.” Compare ^{<100>}Ephesians 1:4 ^{<516>}Romans 16:25 ^{<411>}1 Corinthians 2:7. The “ages” are the vast successive periods of time, marked by successive stages of creation and orders of beings.

in God — “hidden in” His counsels (^{<409>}Ephesians 1:9).

created all things by Jesus Christ — God’s creation of the world and all things therein is the foundation of the rest of the “economy,” which is freely dispensed according to the universal power of God [BENGEL]. AS God created “the whole range of things” (so the *Greek*), physical and spiritual alike, He must have an absolute right to adjust all things as He will. Hence, we may see His right to keep the mystery of world-wide salvation in Christ “hidden in Himself,” till his own good time for revealing it. The oldest manuscripts omit “by Jesus Christ.”

10. The design of God in giving Paul grace to proclaim to the Gentiles the mystery of salvation heretofore hidden.

now — first: opposed to “hidden from the beginning of the world” (^{<411>}Ephesians 3:5).

unto the principalities and — *Greek* adds “the”

powers — unto the various orders of *good* angels primarily, as these dwell “in the heavenly places” in the highest sense; “known” to their adoring joy (^{<516>}1 Timothy 3:16 ^{<4112>}1 Peter 1:12). Secondly, God’s wisdom in redemption is made known to *evil* angels, who dwell “in heavenly places” in a lower sense, namely, the air (compare ^{<4112>}Ephesians 2:2 with ^{<4112>}Ephesians 6:12); “known” to their dismay (^{<4154>}1 Corinthians 15:24 ^{<5125>}Colossians 2:15).

might be known — Translate, “may be known.”

by the church — “by means of,” or “through the Church,” which is the “theater” for the display of God’s manifold wisdom (²⁵⁰Luke 15:10 ⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 4:9): “a spectacle (*Greek*, ‘theater’) to angels.” Hence, angels are but our “fellow servants” (⁶⁰⁰Revelation 19:10).

manifold wisdom — though essentially one, as Christ is one, yet varying the economy in respect to places, times, and persons (²⁵⁰Isaiah 55:8,9 ³⁰⁰Hebrews 1:1). Compare ⁴⁰⁰1 Peter 4:10, “stewards of the manifold grace of God.” Man cannot understand aright its single acts till he can survey them as a connected whole (⁶⁵⁰1 Corinthians 13:12). The call of the Church is no haphazard remedy, or afterthought, but part of the eternal scheme, which, amidst manifold varieties of dispensation, is one in its end.

11. which he purposed — *Greek*, “made.” ELLICOTT translates, “wrought.”

12. Translate, “*our* boldness and *our* access (⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 2:18) in confidence *through our* faith in Him.” ALFORD quotes as an instance, ⁸⁰⁰Romans 8:38, etc. “THE access” (*Greek*) implies the formal introduction into the presence of a monarch.

13. “I entreat you not to be dispirited.”

for you — in your behalf.

which is — rather, “which *are* your glory,” namely, inasmuch as showing that God loved you so much, as both to give His Son for you, and to permit His apostles to suffer “tribulations” for you [CHRYSOSTOM] in preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. See on ⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 3:1, “prisoner for you Gentiles.” My tribulations are your spiritual “glory,” as your faith is furthered thereby (⁶⁰⁰1 Corinthians 4:10).

14. For this cause — Resuming the thread of ⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 3:1, “For this cause.” Because ye have such a standing in God’s Church [ALFORD].

bow my knees — the proper attitude in humble prayer. Posture affects the mind, and is not therefore unimportant. See Paul’s practice (⁴⁰⁰Acts 20:36); and that of the Lord Himself on earth (²²⁰Luke 22:41).

unto the Father — The oldest manuscripts omit “of our Lord Jesus Christ.” But *Vulgate* and some very old authorities retain them:

^{<4185}Ephesians 3:15, “From whom,” in either case, refers to “the Father” (*Patera*), as “family” (*patria*, akin in sound and etymology) plainly refers to Him. Still the foundation of all sonship is in Jesus Christ.

15. the whole family — ALFORD, MIDDLETON, and others translate, “every family”: alluding to the several *families* in heaven and in earth supposed to exist [THEOPHYLACT, *aecumenius*, in SUICER, 2.633], the apostle thus being supposed to imply that God, in His relation of Father to us His adopted children, is the great prototype of the paternal relation wherever found. But the idea that “the holy angels are bound up in spiritual *families* or *compaternities*,” is nowhere else in Scripture referred to. And ^{<4123}Acts 2:36, where the article is similarly omitted, and yet the translation is, “*All the* house of Israel,” shows that in New Testament *Greek* the translation is justifiable, “*all the* family,” or “*the whole* family”: which accords with Scripture views, that angels and men, the saints militant and those with God, are one holy family joined under the one Father in Christ, the mediator between heaven and earth (^{<4111}Ephesians 1:10 ^{<1240}Philippians 2:10). Hence angels are termed our “brethren” (^{<6900}Revelation 19:10), and “sons of God” by creation, as we are by adoption (^{<8807}Job 38:7). The Church is part of the grand family, or kingdom, which comprehends, besides men, the higher spiritual world, where the archetype, to the realization of which redeemed man is now tending, is already realized. This universal idea of the “kingdom” of God as one divine community, is presented to us in the Lord’s Prayer. By sin men were estranged, not only from God, but from that higher spiritual world in which the kingdom of God is already realized. As Christ when He reconciled men to God, united them to one another in a divine community (joined to Himself, the one Head), breaking down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile (^{<4124}Ephesians 2:14), so also He joins them in communion with all those who have already attained that perfection in the kingdom of God, to which the Church on earth is aspiring (^{<5001}Colossians 1:20) [NEANDER].

is named — derives its *origin* and its *name* as sons of God. To be named, and to be, are one with God. To bear God’s name is to *belong* to God as *His own* peculiar people (^{<0067}Numbers 6:27 ^{<2307}Isaiah 43:7 44:5 ^{<8025}Romans 9:25,26).

16. according to — that is in abundance consonant to the riches of His glory; not “according to” the narrowness of our hearts. ^{<4011>}Colossians 1:11, “Strengthened with *all might according to His glorious power.*”

by — *Greek*, “through”; “by means of His Spirit.”

in — The *Greek* implies, “infused into.”

the inner man — (^{<4022>}Ephesians 4:22,24 ^{<4021>}1 Peter 3:4); “the hidden man of the heart.” Not predicated of unbelievers, whose inward and outward man alike are carnal. But in believers, the “inner (new) man,” their true self, stands in contrast to their old man, which is attached to them as a body of death daily being mortified, but not their true self.

17. That — So that.

dwell — abidingly make His abode (^{<4023>}John 14:23). Where the Spirit is there Christ is (^{<4016>}John 14:16,18).

by faith — *Greek*, “through faith,” which opens the door of the *heart* to Jesus (^{<4020>}John 3:20). It is not enough that He be on the tongue, or flit through the brain: the heart is His proper seat [CALVIN]. “You being rooted and grounded in love” (compare ^{<4019>}Ephesians 3:19), is in the *Greek* connected with this clause, not with the clause, “that ye may be able to comprehend.” “Rooted” is an image from a *tree*; “grounded” (*Greek*, “founder,” “having your foundations resting on”), from a *building* (compare *Notes.*, see on ^{<4021>}Ephesians 2:20,21; ^{<4023>}Colossians 1:23 2:7). Contrast ^{<4017>}Matthew 13:6,21. “Love,” the first-fruit of the Spirit, flowing from Christ’s love realized in the soul, was to be the basis on which should rest their further comprehension of all the vastness of Christ’s love.

18. May be able — even still further. *Greek*, “May be *fully* able.”

breadth ... length ... depth ... height — namely, the full dimensions of the spiritual temple, answering to “the fullness of God” (^{<4019>}Ephesians 3:19), to which the Church, according to its capacity, ought to correspond (compare ^{<4020>}Ephesians 4:10,13) as to “the fullness of *Christ.*” The “breadth” implies Christ’s world-wide love, embracing all men: the “length,” its being extended through all ages (^{<4021>}Ephesians 3:21); the “depth,” its profound wisdom which no creature can fathom (^{<4013>}Romans

11:33); the “height,” its being beyond the reach of any foe to deprive us of (^{<400>}Ephesians 4:8) [BENGEL]. I prefer to understand “the breadth,” etc., to refer to *the whole of the vast mystery of free salvation in Christ for all, Gentile and Jew alike*, of which Paul had been speaking (^{<400>}Ephesians 3:3-9), and of which he now prays they may have a fuller comprehension. As subsidiary to this, and the most essential part of it, he adds, “and to know *the love of Christ*” (^{<400>}Ephesians 3:19). GROTIUS understands *depth* and *height* of God’s goodness raising us from the lowest depression to the greatest height.

19. *passeth* — surpasseth, exceeds. The paradox “to know ... which passeth knowledge,” implies that when he says “know,” he does not mean that we can *adequately* know; all we know is, that His love exceeds far our knowledge of it, and with even our fresh accessions of knowledge hereafter, will still exceed them. Even as God’s power exceeds our thoughts (^{<400>}Ephesians 3:20).

filled with — rather, as *Greek*, “filled even *unto* all the fullness of God” (this is the grand goal), that is, filled, each according to your capacity, with the divine wisdom, knowledge, and love; “*even as God is full*,” and as Christ who dwells in your hearts, hath “all the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily” (^{<400>}Colossians 2:9).

20. *unto him* — contrasted with *ourselves* and *our needs*. Translate, “that is able above all things (what is above all things) to do exceeding abundantly above what we ask or (even) think”: *thought* takes a wider range than *prayers*. The word, *above*, occurs thrice as often in Paul’s writings, as in all the rest of the New Testament, showing the warm exuberance of Paul’s spirit.

according to the power — the indwelling Spirit (^{<400>}Romans 8:26). He appeals to their and his experience.

21. Translate, “Unto Him be *the* glory (that is, the whole glory of the gracious dispensation of salvation just spoken of) in the Church (as the theater for the manifestation of the glory, ^{<400>}Ephesians 3:10) in Christ Jesus (as in Him all the glory centers, ^{<400>}Zechariah 6:13) to all the generations of eternal ages,” literally, “of the age of the ages.” Eternity is

conceived as consisting of “ages” (these again consisting of “generations”) endlessly succeeding one another.

CHAPTER 4

EPHESIANS 4:1-32.

EXHORTATIONS TO CHRISTIAN DUTIES RESTING ON OUR CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES, AS UNITED IN ONE BODY, THOUGH VARYING IN THE GRACES GIVEN TO THE SEVERAL MEMBERS, THAT WE MAY COME UNTO A PERFECT MAN IN CHRIST.

1. Translate, according to the *Greek* order, “I beseech you, therefore (seeing that such is your calling of grace, the first through third chapters) I the prisoner in the Lord (that is, imprisoned in the Lord’s cause).” What the world counted ignominy, he counts the highest honor, and he glories in his bonds for Christ, more than a king in his diadem [THEODORET]. His bonds, too, are an argument which should enforce his exhortation.

vocation — Translate, “calling” to accord, as the *Greek* does, with “called” (Ephesians 4:4 Ephesians 1:18 Romans 8:28,30). Colossians 3:15 similarly grounds Christian duties on our Christian “calling.” *The exhortations of this part of the Epistle are built on the conscious enjoyment of the privileges mentioned in the former part.* Compare Ephesians 4:32 with Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 5:1 with Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 4:30, with Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 5:15, with Ephesians 1:8.

2, 3. lowliness — In classic *Greek*, the meaning is *meanness of spirit*: the Gospel has elevated the word to express a Christian grace, namely, the esteeming of ourselves small, inasmuch as we are so; the thinking truly, and because truly, therefore lowly, of ourselves [TRENCH].

meekness — that spirit in which we accept God’s dealings with us without disputing and resisting; and also the accepting patiently of the injuries done us by men, out of the thought that they are permitted by God for the chastening and purifying of His people (2 Sam. 16:11; compare Galatians 6:1 2 Timothy 2:25 Titus 3:2). It is only the *lowly*, humble heart that is also *meek* (Colossians 3:12). As “lowliness

and meekness” answer to “forbearing one another in love” (compare “love,” ^{<4015>}Ephesians 4:15,16), so “long-suffering” answers to (^{<4008>}Ephesians 4:4) “endeavoring (*Greek, ‘earnestly’ or ‘zealously giving diligence’*) to keep (maintain) the unity of the Spirit (the unity between men of different tempers, which flows from the presence of the Spirit, who is Himself ‘one,’ ^{<4008>}Ephesians 4:4) in (united in) the bond of peace” (the “bond” by which “peace” is maintained, namely, “love,” ^{<4014>}Colossians 3:14,15 [BENGEL]; or, “peace” itself is the “bond” meant, uniting the members of the Church [ALFORD]).

4. In the apostle’s creed, the article as to THE CHURCH properly follows that as to THE HOLY GHOST. To the Trinity naturally is annexed the Church, as the house to its tenant, to God His temple, the state to its founder [AUGUSTINE, *Enchiridion*, c. 15]. There is yet to be a Church, not merely potentially, but actually catholic or world-wide; then the Church and the world will be co-extensive. Rome falls into inextricable error by setting up a mere man as a visible head, antedating that consummation which Christ, the true visible Head, at His appearing shall first realize. As the “SPIRIT” is mentioned here, so the “LORD” (Jesus), ^{<4008>}Ephesians 4:5, and “GOD the Father,” ^{<4008>}Ephesians 4:6. Thus the Trinity is again set forth.

hope — here associated with “the Spirit,” which is the “earnest of our inheritance” (^{<4015>}Ephesians 1:13,14). As “faith” is mentioned, ^{<4008>}Ephesians 4:5, so “hope” here, and “love,” ^{<4008>}Ephesians 4:2. The Holy Spirit, as the common higher principle of life (^{<4008>}Ephesians 2:18,22), gives to the Church its true unity. Outward uniformity is as yet unattainable; but beginning by having one mind, we shall hereafter end by having “one body.” The true “body” of Christ (all believers of every age) is already “one,” as joined to the one Head. But its unity is as yet not visible, even as the Head is not visible; but it shall appear when He shall appear (^{<4012>}John 17:21-23 ^{<4014>}Colossians 3:4). Meanwhile the rule is, “In essentials, unity; in doubtful questions, liberty; in all things, charity.” There is more real unity where both go to heaven under different names than when with the same name one goes to heaven, the other to hell. Truth is the first thing: those who reach it, will at last reach unity, because truth is *one*; while those who seek unity as the first thing, may purchase it at the sacrifice of truth, and so of the soul itself.

of your calling — the one “hope” *flowing from* our “calling,” is the element “IN” which we are “called” to live. Instead of privileged classes, as the Jews under the law, a unity of dispensation was henceforth to be the common privilege of Jew and Gentile alike. Spirituality, universality, and unity, were *designed* to characterize the Church; and it shall be so at last (²¹⁰⁰Isaiah 2:2-4 11:9,13 ³⁶⁸⁹Zephaniah 3:9 ³⁸⁴⁹Zechariah 14:9).

5. Similarly “faith” and “baptism” (the sacramental seal of faith) are connected (¹¹⁹⁶Mark 16:16 ⁵⁰⁰⁰Colossians 2:12). Compare ⁴²³1 Corinthians 12:13, “Faith” is not here *that which we believe*, but the act of *believing*, the mean by which we apprehend the “one Lord.” “Baptism” is specified, being the sacrament whereby we are *incorporated* into the “one body.” Not the Lord’s Supper, which is an act of matured communion on the part of those already incorporate, “a symbol of *union*, not of *unity*” [ELLCOTT]. In ³⁰⁰⁷1 Corinthians 10:17, where a breach of union was in question, it forms the rallying point [ALFORD]. There is not added, “One pope, one council, one form of government” [*Cautions for Times*]. The Church is one in *unity of faith* (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 4:5 ⁴⁰⁰⁸Jude 1:3); *unity of origination* (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 2:19-21); *unity of sacraments* (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 4:5 ³⁰⁰⁷1 Corinthians 10:17 12:13); *unity of “hope”* (⁴⁰⁰⁴Ephesians 4:4 ⁵⁰⁰⁰Titus 1:2); *unity of charity* (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 4:3); *unity (not uniformity) of discipline and government*: for where there is no order, no ministry with Christ as the Head, there is no Church [PEARSON, *Exposition of the Creed*, Article IX].

6. **above** — “over all.” The “one God over all” (in His sovereignty and by His grace) is the grand source and crowning apex of unity (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 2:19, end).

through all — by means of Christ “who filleth all things” (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 4:10 2:20,21), and is “a propitiation” for all men (⁵⁰⁰⁰1 John 2:2).

in you all — The oldest manuscripts omit “you.” Many of the oldest versions and Fathers and old manuscripts read, “in *us* all.” Whether the pronoun be read or not, it must be understood (either from the “ye,” ⁴⁰⁰⁴Ephesians 4:4, or from the “us,” ⁴⁰⁰⁴Ephesians 4:7); for other parts of Scripture prove that the Spirit is not “in all” men, but only in believers (⁴⁰⁰⁸Romans 8:9,14). God is “Father” both by generation (as Creator) and regeneration (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 2:10 ³⁰⁰⁷James 1:17,18 ³⁰⁰¹1 John 5:1).

7. But — Though “one” in our common connection with “one Lord, one faith, etc., one God,” yet “each one of us” has assigned to him his own particular gift, to be used for the good of the whole: none is overlooked; none therefore can be dispensed with for the edifying of the Church (^{<402>}Ephesians 4:12). A motive to unity (^{<402>}Ephesians 4:3). Translate, “Unto *each* one of us was *the* grace (which was bestowed by Christ at His ascension, ^{<408>}Ephesians 4:8) given according to,” etc.

the measure — *the amount* “of the gift of Christ” (^{<510>}Romans 12:3,6).

8. Wherefore — “For which reason,” namely, in order to intimate that Christ, the Head of the Church, is the author of all these different gifts, and that giving of them is an act of His “grace” [ESTIUS].

he saith — God, whose word the Scripture is (^{<488>}Psalms 68:18).

When he ascended — GOD is meant in the Psalm, represented by the ark, which was being brought up to Zion in triumph by David, after that “the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies” (^{<406>}2 Samuel 6:1-7:1 ^{<391>}1 Chronicles 15:1-29). Paul quotes it of CHRIST ascending to heaven, who is therefore GOD.

captivity — that is, a band of captives. In the Psalm, the captive foes of David. In the antitypical meaning, the foes of Christ the Son of David, the devil, death, the curse, and sin (^{<395>}Colossians 2:15 ^{<404>}2 Peter 2:4), led as it were in triumphal procession as a sign of the destruction of the foe.

gave gifts unto men — in the Psalm, “*received gifts for men*,” Hebrew, “among men,” that is, “thou hast received gifts” *to distribute among* men. As a conqueror distributes in token of his triumph the spoils of foes as gifts among his people. The impartation of the gifts and graces of the Spirit depended on Christ’s ascension (^{<403>}John 7:39 14:12). Paul stops short in the middle of the verse, and does not quote “that the Lord God might dwell *among them*.” This, it is true, is partly fulfilled in Christians being an “habitation of God through the Spirit” (^{<402>}Ephesians 2:22). But the Psalm (^{<402>}Ephesians 4:16) refers to “the Lord dwelling in Zion *for ever*”; the ascension amidst attendant angels, having as its counterpart the second advent amidst “thousands of angels” (^{<407>}Ephesians 4:17), accompanied by the restoration of Israel (^{<402>}Ephesians 4:22), the destruction of God’s

enemies and the resurrection (^{<404>}Ephesians 4:20,21,23), the conversion of the kingdoms of the world to the Lord at Jerusalem (^{<405>}Ephesians 4:29-34).

9. Paul reasons that (assuming Him to be God) His *ascent* implies a previous *descent*; and that the language of the Psalm can only refer to *Christ*, who first descended, then ascended. For God the Father does not ascend or descend. Yet the Psalm plainly refers to *God* (^{<406>}Ephesians 4:8,17,18). It must therefore be GOD THE SON (^{<407>}John 6:33,62). As He declares (^{<408>}John 3:13), “No man hath ascended up to heaven, *but He that came down from heaven.*” Others, though they did not previously descend, have ascended; but none save *Christ* can be referred to in the Psalm as having done so; for it is of *God* it speaks.

lower parts of the earth — The antithesis or contrast to “far above all heavens,” is the argument of ALFORD and others, to show that this phrase means more than simply the *earth*, namely, the regions *beneath* it, even as He ascended not merely to the visible heavens, but “far above” them. Moreover, His design “that He might fill *all things*” (^{<409>}Ephesians 4:10, *Greek*, “the whole universe of things”) may imply the same. But see on ^{<410>}Ephesians 4:10 on those words. Also the leading “captive” of the “captive hand” (“captivity”) of satanic powers, may imply that the warfare reached to *their habitation itself* (^{<411>}Psalms 63:9). Christ, as Lord of all, took possession first of the earth the unseen world beneath it (some conjecture that the region of the lost is in the central parts of our globe), then of heaven (^{<412>}Acts 2:27,28). However, all we *surely* know is, that His soul at death descended to Hades, that is, underwent the ordinary condition of departed spirits of men. The leading captive of satanic powers here, is not said to be at His descent, but *at His ascension*; so that no argument can be drawn from it for a descent to the abodes of Satan. ^{<413>}Acts 2:27,28, and ^{<414>}Romans 10:7, favor the view of the reference being simply to His descent to *Hades*. So PEARSON in *Exposition of the Creed* (^{<415>}Philippians 2:10).

10. all heavens — *Greek*, “all *the heavens*” (^{<416>}Hebrews 7:26 4:14), *Greek*, “passed *through* the heavens” to the throne of God itself.

might fill — In *Greek*, the action is continued to the present time, both “*might*” and “may fill,” namely, with His divine presence and Spirit, *not*

with His glorified body. “Christ, as God, is present *everywhere*; as glorified man, He *can* be present *anywhere*” [ELLCOTT].

11. *Greek*, emphatical. “Himself” by His supreme power. “It is HE that gave,” etc.

gave some, apostles — Translate, “some to be apostles, and some to be prophets,” etc. The men who filled the office, no less than the office itself, were a divine gift [EADIE]. Ministers did not give themselves. Compare with the list here, ⁴²⁰1 Corinthians 12:10,28. As the apostles, prophets, and evangelists were special and extraordinary ministers, so “pastors and teachers” are the ordinary stated ministers of a particular flock, including, probably, the bishops, presbyters, and deacons. Evangelists were itinerant preachers like our missionaries, as Philip the deacon (⁴²⁰Acts 21:8); as contrasted with stationary “pastors and teachers” (⁵⁰⁰2 Timothy 4:5). The *evangelist* founded the Church; the *teacher* built it up in the faith already received. The “pastor” had the *outward rule and guidance* of the Church: the bishop. As to revelation, the “evangelist” testified infallibly of the past; the “prophet,” infallibly of the future. The prophet derived all from the Spirit; the evangelist, in the special case of the Four, recorded matter of fact, cognizable to the senses, under the Spirit’s guidance. No one form of Church polity as permanently *unalterable* is laid down in the New Testament though the apostolical order of bishops, or presbyters, and deacons, superintended by higher overseers (called bishops after the apostolic times), has the highest sanction of primitive usage. In the case of the Jews, a fixed model of hierarchy and ceremonial unalterably bound the people, most minutely detailed in the law. In the New Testament, the absence of minute directions for Church government and ceremonies, shows that a fixed model was not designed; the *general* rule is obligatory as to ceremonies, “Let all things be done decently and in order” (compare Article XXXIV, Church of England); and that a succession of ministers be provided, not self-called, but “called to the work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord’s vineyard” [Article XXIII]. That the “pastors” here were the bishops and presbyters of the Church, is evident from ⁴²⁰Acts 20:28 ⁴⁰⁰1 Peter 5:1,2, where the *bishops’* and *presbyters’* office is said to be “to feed” the flock. The term, “shepherd” or “pastor,” is used of guiding and governing and not merely *instructing*, whence it is applied to *kings*, rather

than prophets or priests (^{<382>}Ezekiel 34:23 ^{<3234>}Jeremiah 23:4). Compare the names of princes compounded of “*pharnas*,” Hebrew, “pastor,” Holophernes, Tis-saphernes (compare ^{<2443>}Isaiah 44:28).

12. For — *with a view to*; the ultimate aim. “Unto.”

perfecting — The *Greek* implies *correcting* in all that is deficient, *instructing* and completing in number and all parts.

for — a different *Greek* word; the immediate object. Compare ^{<510>}Romans 15:2, “Let every one ... please his neighbor *for* his good *unto* edification.”

the ministry — *Greek*, “ministration”; without the article. The office of the ministry is stated in this verse. The good aimed at in respect to the Church (^{<4015>}Ephesians 4:13). The way of growth (^{<4044>}Ephesians 4:14-16).

edifying — that is, *building up* as the temple of the Holy Ghost.

13. come in — rather, “attain unto.” ALFORD expresses the *Greek order*, “Until we arrive all of us at the unity,” etc.

faith and ... knowledge — Full unity of *faith* is then found, when all alike thoroughly *know Christ*, the object of faith, and that in His highest dignity as “the Son of God” [DE WETTE] (^{<4037>}Ephesians 3:17,19 ^{<4005>}2 Peter 1:5). Not even Paul counted himself to have fully “attained” (^{<3082>}Philippians 3:12-14). Amidst the variety of the gifts and the multitude of the Church’s members, its “faith” is to be ONE: as contrasted with the state of “children carried about with EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE.” (^{<4044>}Ephesians 4:14).

perfect man — unto the *full-grown man* (^{<4015>}1 Corinthians 2:6 ^{<3085>}Philippians 3:15 ^{<3514>}Hebrews 5:14); the *maturity* of an *adult*; contrasted with children (^{<4044>}Ephesians 4:14). Not “perfect *men*”; for the many members constitute but *one* Church joined to the one Christ.

stature, etc. — The standard of spiritual “stature” is “the fullness of Christ,” that is, which Christ has (^{<4023>}Ephesians 1:23 3:19; compare ^{<4019>}Galatians 4:19); that the body should be worthy of the Head, the perfect Christ.

14. Translate, “To the end that”; the aim of the bestowal of gifts stated negatively, as in ^{<4015>}Ephesians 4:13 it is stated positively.

tossed to and fro — *inwardly*, even without wind; *like billows of the sea*. So the *Greek*. Compare ^{<501b>}James 1:6.

carried about — with every wind *from without*.

doctrine — “teaching.” The various *teachings* are the “winds” which keep them tossed on a sea of doubts (^{<583b>}Hebrews 13:9; compare ^{<411b>}Matthew 11:7).

by — *Greek*, “in”; expressing “the evil atmosphere *in* which the varying currents of doctrine exert their force” [ELLCOTT].

sleight — literally, “dice playing.” The player frames his throws of the dice so that the numbers may turn up which best suit his purpose.

of men — contrasted with *Christ* (^{<401b>}Ephesians 4:13).

and — *Greek*, “in.”

cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive — Translate as *Greek*, “craftiness tending to the methodized system of deceit” (“the schemes of error”) [ALFORD]. BENDEL takes “deceit,” or “error,” to stand for “the parent of error,” Satan (compare ^{<401b>}Ephesians 6:11); referring to his concealed mode of acting.

15. speaking the truth — Translate, “holding the truth”; “following the truth”; opposed to “error” or “deceit” (^{<401b>}Ephesians 4:14).

in love — “Truth” is never to be sacrificed to so-called “charity”; yet it is to be maintained in charity. Truth in word and act, love in manner and spirit, are the Christian’s rule (compare ^{<402>}Ephesians 4:21,24).

grow up — from the state of “children” to that of “full-grown men.” There is growth only in the spiritually alive, not in the dead.

into him — so as to be more and more incorporated with Him, and become one with Him.

the head — (^{<412>}Ephesians 1:22).

16. (^{<502>}Colossians 2:19).

fitly joined together — “being fitly framed together,” as in ^{<412>}Ephesians 2:21; all the parts being in their proper position, and in mutual relation.

compacted — implying *firm consolidation*.

by that which every joint supplieth — *Greek*, “by means of every joint of the supply”; joined with “maketh increase of the body,” not with “compacted.” “By every ministering (supplying) joint.” The joints are the points of union where the supply passes to the different members, furnishing the body with the materials of its growth.

effectual working — (^{<419>}Ephesians 1:19:3:7). According to the effectual *working of grace* in each member (or else, rather, “according to *each several member’s working*”), proportioned to the measure of its need of supply.

every part — *Greek*, “each one part”; each individual part.

maketh increase — Translate, as the *Greek* is the same as ^{<4015>}Ephesians 4:15, “maketh (carrieth on) the *growth* of the body.”

17. therefore — resuming the exhortation which he had begun with, “I *therefore* beseech you that ye *walk* worthy,” etc. (^{<4001>}Ephesians 4:1).

testify in the Lord — in whom (as our element) we do all things pertaining to the ministry (^{<5001>}1 Thessalonians 4:1 [ALFORD]; ^{<4901>}Romans 9:1).

henceforth ... not — *Greek*, “no longer”; resumed from ^{<4044>}Ephesians 4:14.

other — *Greek*, “the *rest* of the Gentiles.”

in the vanity, etc. — as their element: opposed to “in the Lord.” “Vanity of mind” is the *waste* of the rational powers on worthless objects, of which idolatry is one of the more glaring instances. The root of it is departure from the knowledge of the true God (^{<4018>}Ephesians 4:18,19 ^{<4512>}Romans 1:21 ^{<5045>}1 Thessalonians 4:5).

18. More literally, “Being darkened in their understanding,” that is, their *intelligence*, or *perceptions* (compare ^{<4018>}Ephesians 5:8 ^{<4018>}Acts 26:18 ^{<5104>}1 Thessalonians 5:4,5).

alienated — This and “darkened,” imply that before the fall they (in the person of their first father) had been partakers of *life* and *light*: and that they had revolted from the primitive revelation (compare ^{<487>}Ephesians 2:12).

life of God — that life whereby God lives in His own people: as He was the *life* and *light* in Adam before the irruption of death and darkness into human nature; and as He is the life in the regenerate (^{<487>}Galatians 2:20). “Spiritual life in believers is kindled from the life itself of God” [BENGEL].

through — rather as *Greek*, “on account of the ignorance,” namely, of God. Wilful ignorance in the first instance, their fathers not “choosing to retain God in their knowledge.” This is the beginning point of their misery (^{<487>}Acts 17:30 ^{<487>}Romans 1:21,23,28 ^{<487>}1 Peter 1:14).

because of — “on account of.”

blindness — *Greek*, “hardness,” literally, the hardening of the skin so as not to be sensible of touch. Hence a soul’s *callousness to feeling* (^{<487>}Mark 3:5). Where there is spiritual “life” (“the life of God”) there is feeling; where there is not, there is “hardness.”

19. past feeling — senseless, shameless, hopeless; the ultimate result of a long process of “hardening,” or habit of sin (^{<487>}Ephesians 4:18). “Being past hope,” or despairing, is the reading of the *Vulgate*; though not so well supported as *English Version* reading, “past feeling,” which includes the absence of hope (^{<487>}Jeremiah 2:25 18:12).

given themselves over — In ^{<487>}Romans 1:24 it is, “*God* gave them up to uncleanness.” Their giving *themselves* to it was punished in kind, *God* giving them up to it by withdrawing His preventing grace; their sin thus was made their punishment. They gave themselves up of their own accord to the slavery of their lust, to do all its pleasure, as captives who have ceased to strive with the foe. *God* gave them up to it, but not against their will; for *they* give themselves up to it [ZANCHIUS].

lasciviousness — “wantonness” [ALFORD]. So it is translated in ^{<487>}Romans 13:13 ^{<487>}2 Peter 2:18. It does not necessarily include *lasciviousness*; but it means *intemperate*, reckless readiness for it, and for

every self-indulgence. “The first beginnings of unchastity” [GROTIUS].
 “Lawless insolence, and wanton caprice” [TRENCH].

to work all uncleanness — The *Greek* implies, “*with a deliberate view* to the working (as if it were their *work* or *business*, not a mere accidental fall into sin) of uncleanness of every kind.”

with greediness — *Greek*, “in greediness.” *Uncleanness* and *greediness* of gain often go hand in hand (ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Ephesians 5:3,5 ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Colossians 3:5); though “greediness” here includes *all kinds* of *self-seeking*.

20. learned Christ — (ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Philippians 3:10). To know Christ Himself, is the great lesson of the Christian life: this the Ephesians began to learn at their conversion. “Christ,” in reference to His *office*, is here specified as the object of learning. “Jesus,” in ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Ephesians 4:21, as the *person*.

21. If so be that — not implying doubt; assuming what I have no reason to doubt, that

heard him — The “Him” is emphatic: “heard *Himself*,” not merely heard *about* Him.

taught by him — *Greek*, “taught IN HIM,” that is, being in vital union with Him (ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Romans 16:7).

as the truth is in Jesus — Translate in connection with “taught”; “And in Him have been taught, according as is truth in Jesus.” There is no article in the *Greek*. “Truth” is therefore used in the most comprehensive sense, truth in its essence, and highest perfection, in Jesus; “if *according as* it is thus in Him, ye have been so taught in Him”; in contrast to “the *vanity* of mind of the Gentiles” (ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Ephesians 4:17; compare ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ John 1:14,17 18:37). Contrast ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ John 8:44.

22. That ye — following “Ye have been taught” (ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Ephesians 4:21).

concerning the former conversation — “in respect to your former way of life.”

the old man — your old unconverted nature (ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Romans 6:6).

is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts — rather, “which is being corrupted (‘perisheth,’ compare ⲉⲩⲉⲣⲉⲥ Galatians 6:8, ‘corruption,’ that is,

destruction) according to (that is, as might be expected from) the lusts of deceit.” *Deceit* is personified; *lusts* are its servants and tools. In contrast to “the holiness of the truth,” ^{<402>}Ephesians 4:24, and “truth in Jesus,” ^{<402>}Ephesians 4:21; and answering to Gentile “vanity,” ^{<4047>}Ephesians 4:17. Corruption and destruction are inseparably associated together. The man’s old-nature-lusts are his own executioners, fitting him more and more for eternal corruption and death.

23. be renewed — The *Greek* (*ananeousthai*) implies “*the continued renewal in the youth of the new man.*” A different *Greek* word (*anakainousthai*) implies “*renewal from the old state.*”

in the spirit of your mind — As there is no *Greek* for “in,” which there is at ^{<4047>}Ephesians 4:17, “*in the vanity of their mind,*” it is better to translate, “By the Spirit of your mind,” that is, by your new spiritual nature; the restored and divinely informed leading principle of the mind. The “spirit” of man in New Testament is only then used in its proper sense, as worthy of its place and governing functions, when it is one spirit with the Lord. The natural, or animal man, is described as “not having the Spirit” (^{<4019>}Jude 1:19) [ALFORD]. Spirit is not in this sense attributed to the unregenerate (^{<573>}1 Thessalonians 5:23).

24. put on the new man — Opposed to “the old man,” which is to be “put off” (^{<402>}Ephesians 4:22). The *Greek* here (*kainon*) is different from that for “re-new-ed” (^{<402>}Ephesians 4:23). Put on not merely a *renovated* nature, but a new, that is, altogether *different* nature, a changed nature (compare *Note.*, see on ^{<580>}Colossians 3:10).

after God, etc. — Translate, “Which hath been created (once for all: so the *Greek* aorist means: in Christ, ^{<4020>}Ephesians 2:10; so that in each believer it has not to be created again, but to be put on) after (the image of) God” (^{<0027>}Genesis 1:27 ^{<580>}Colossians 3:10 ^{<4015>}1 Peter 1:15), etc. God’s image in which the first Adam was originally created, is restored, to us far more gloriously in the second Adam, the image of the invisible God (^{<4042>}2 Corinthians 4:4 ^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15 ^{<5803>}Hebrews 1:3).

in righteousness — “IN” it as the *element* of the renewed man.

true holiness — rather, as the *Greek*, “holiness of the truth”; holiness flowing from sincere following of “the truth of God” (^{<RTS>}Romans 1:25 3:7 15:8): opposed to “the lusts of deceit” (*Greek*, ^{<HOC>}Ephesians 4:22); compare also ^{<HOC>}Ephesians 4:21, “truth is in Jesus.” “Righteousness” is in relation to our fellow men, the second table of the law; “Holiness,” in relation to God, the first table; the religious observance of offices of piety (compare ^{<RTS>}Luke 1:75). In the parallel (^{<SRD>}Colossians 3:10) it is, “renewed in knowledge after the image,” etc. As at Colosse the danger was from false pretenders to *knowledge*, the true “knowledge” which flows from renewal of the heart is dwelt on; so at Ephesus, the danger being from the corrupt morals prevalent around, the renewal in “holiness,” contrasted with the Gentile “uncleanness” (^{<HOC>}Ephesians 4:19), and “righteousness,” in contrast to “greediness,” is made prominent.

25. Wherefore — From the general character of “the new man,” there will necessarily result the particular features which he now details.

putting away — *Greek*, “having put away” *once for all*.

lying — “falsehood”: the abstract. “Speak ye truth each one with his neighbor,” is quoted, slightly changed, from ^{<RNF>}Zechariah 8:16. For “to,” Paul quotes it “with,” to mark our inner connection *with* one another, as “members *one of another*” [STIER]. Not merely members of *one body*. Union to one another in Christ, not merely the external command, instinctively leads Christians to fulfill mutual duties. One member could not injure or deceive another, without injuring himself, as all have a mutual and common interest.

26. Be ye angry, and sin not — So the *Septuagint*, ^{<HOC>}Psalms 4:4. Should circumstances arise to call for anger on your part, let it be as Christ’s “anger” (^{<HOC>}Mark 3:5), without sin. Our natural feelings are not wrong when directed to their legitimate object, and when not exceeding due bounds. As in the future literal, so in the present spiritual, resurrection, no essential constituent is annihilated, but all that is a perversion of the original design is removed. Thus indignation at dishonor done to God, and wrong to man, is justifiable anger. *Passion* is sinful (derived from “*passio*,” *suffering*: implying that amidst seeming energy, a man is really *passive*, the slave of his anger, instead of ruling it).

let not the sun go down upon your wrath — “wrath” is absolutely forbidden; “anger” not so, though, like poison sometimes used as medicine, it is to be used with extreme caution. The sense is not, Your *anger* shall not be imputed to you if you put it away before nightfall; but “let no *wrath* (that is, as the *Greek*, personal ‘irritation’ or ‘exasperation’) mingle with your ‘anger,’ even though, the latter be righteous, [TRENCH, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*]. “Put it away *before sunset*” (when the Jewish day began), is proverbial for put it away *at once* before *another day begin* (^{CHRIS}Deuteronomy 24:15); also before you part with your brother for the night, perhaps never in this world to meet again. So JONA, “Let not night and anger against anyone sleep with you, but go and conciliate the other party, though he have been the first to commit the offense.” Let not your “anger” at another’s wickedness verge into hatred, or contempt, or revenge [VATABLUS].

27. Neither give place — that is, *occasion*, or *scope*, to the devil, by continuing in “wrath.” The keeping of anger through the darkness of night, is giving place to the devil, the prince of darkness (^{CHRIS}Ephesians 6:12).

28. Greek, “Let him that *stealeth*.” The imperfect or *past* tense is, however, mainly meant, though not to the exclusion of the present. “Let the stealing person steal no more.” *Bandits* frequented the mountains near Ephesus. Such are meant by those called “thieves” in the New Testament.

but rather — For it is not enough to cease from a sin, but the sinner must also enter on the path that is its very opposite [CHRYSOSTOM]. The thief, when repentant, should labor more than he would be called on to do, if he had never stolen.

let him labor — Theft and idleness go together.

the thing which is good — in contrast with theft, the thing which was evil in his past character.

with his hands — in contrast with his former thievish use of his hands.

that he may have to give — “that he may have *wherewith* to *impart*.” He who has stolen should exercise liberality beyond the restitution of what he has taken. Christians in general should make not selfish gain their aim in honest industry, but the acquisition of the means of greater usefulness to

their fellow men; and the being independent of the alms of others. So Paul himself (⁴¹⁵Acts 20:35 ⁵¹⁰2 Thessalonians 3:8) acted as he taught (⁵¹¹1 Thessalonians 4:11).

29. corrupt — literally, “insipid,” without “the salt of grace” (⁵¹⁰Colossians 4:6), so *worthless* and then becoming *corrupt*: included in “foolish talking” (⁴¹⁰Ephesians 5:4). Its opposite is “that which is good to edifying.”

communication — language.

that which, etc. — *Greek*, “*whatever* is good.”

use of edifying — literally, “for edifying of the need,” that is, *for edifying where it is needed*. Seasonably edifying; according as the occasion and present needs of the hearers require, now censure, at another time consolation. Even words good in themselves must be introduced seasonably lest by our fault they prove injurious instead of useful. TRENCH explains, Not vague generalities, which would suit a thousand other cases equally well, and probably equally ill: our words should be as nails fastened in a sure place, words suiting the present time and the present person, being “for the edifying of the occasion” (⁵¹⁰Colossians 4:6).

minister — *Greek*, “give.” The word spoken “gives grace to the hearers” when God uses it as *His* instrument for that purpose.

30. grieve not — A condescension to human modes of thought most touching. Compare “vexed His Holy Spirit” (²⁶¹Isaiah 63:10 ⁹⁸⁰Psalms 78:40); “fretted me” (³⁶⁰Ezekiel 16:43: implying His tender love to us); and of hardened unbelievers, “resist the Holy Ghost” (⁴¹⁵Acts 7:51). This verse refers to *believers*, who grieve the Spirit by inconsistencies such as in the context are spoken of, corrupt or worthless conversation, etc.

whereby ye are sealed — rather, “wherein (or ‘in whom’) ye were sealed.” As in ⁴¹⁵Ephesians 1:13, believers are said to be sealed “in” *Christ*, so here “in the Holy Spirit,” who is one with Christ, and who reveals Christ in the soul: the *Greek* implies that the sealing was done already once for all. It is the *Father* “BY” whom believers, as well as the Son Himself, were sealed (⁴¹⁷John 6:27). The Spirit is represented as itself the

seal (^{<4013} Ephesians 1:13, for the image employed, see on ^{<4013} Ephesians 1:13). Here the Spirit *is the element* IN *which* the believer is sealed, His gracious influences being the seal itself.

unto — kept safely against the day of redemption, namely, of the *completion* of redemption in the deliverance of the body as well as the soul from all sin and sorrow (^{<4014} Ephesians 1:14 ^{<0213} Luke 21:28 ^{<6123} Romans 8:23).

31. bitterness — both of spirit and of speech: opposed to “kind.”

wrath — passion for a time: opposed to “tender-hearted.” Whence BENGEL translates for “wrath,” *harshness*.

anger — lasting resentment: opposed to “forgiving one another.”

clamor — compared by CHRYSOSTOM to a horse carrying anger for its rider: “Bridle the horse, and you dismount its rider.” “Bitterness” begets “wrath”; “wrath,” “anger”; “anger,” “clamor”; and “clamor,” the more chronic “evil-speaking,” slander, insinuations, and surmises of evil. “Malice” is the secret root of all: “fires fed within, and not appearing to by-standers from without, are the most formidable” [CHRYSOSTOM].

32. (^{<4014} Luke 7:42 ^{<0112} Colossians 3:12).

even as — God hath shown Himself “kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving to you”; it is but just that you in turn shall be so to your fellow men, who have not erred against you in the degree that you have erred against God (^{<4033} Matthew 18:33).

God for Christ’s sake — rather as *Greek*, “God in Christ” (^{<4032} Corinthians 5:19). It is *in Christ* that God vouchsafes forgiveness to us. It cost God the death of His Son, as man, to forgive us. It costs us nothing to forgive our fellow man.

hath forgiven — rather as *Greek*, “*forgave* you.” God has, *once for all*, forgiven sin in Christ, as a *past historical fact*.

CHAPTER 5

EPHESIANS 5:1-33.

EXHORTATIONS TO LOVE: AND AGAINST CARNAL LUSTS AND COMMUNICATIONS. CIRCUMSPECTION IN WALK: REDEEMING THE TIME: BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT: SINGING TO THE LORD WITH THANKFULNESS: THE WIFE'S DUTY TO THE HUSBAND RESTS ON THAT OF THE CHURCH TO CHRIST.

1. therefore — seeing that “God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32).

followers — *Greek*, “imitators” of God, in respect to “love” (Ephesians 5:2): God’s essential character (1 John 4:16).

as dear children — *Greek*, “as children *beloved*”; to which Ephesians 5:2 refers, “As Christ also loved us” (1 John 4:19). “We are sons of men, when we do ill; sons of God, when we do well” [AUGUSTINE, on Psalm 52]; (compare Matthew 5:44,45,48). Sonship infers an absolute necessity of *imitation*, it being vain to assume the title of son without any similitude of the Father [PEARSON].

2. And — in proof that you are so.

walk in love — resuming Ephesians 4:1, “*walk* worthy of the vocation.”

as Christ ... loved us — From the love of the Father he passes to the love of the Son, in whom God most endearingly manifests His love to us.

given himself for us — *Greek*, “given Himself *up* (namely, to death, Galatians 2:20) for us,” that is, *in our behalf*: not here vicarious substitution, though that is *indirectly* implied, “in *our* stead.” The offerer, and the offering that He offered, were one and the same (John 15:13 Romans 5:8).

offering and a sacrifice — “Offering” expresses *generally* His presenting Himself to the Father, as the Representative undertaking the cause of the whole of our lost race (^{<900>}Psalm 40:6-8), including His *life* of obedience; though not excluding His offering of His body for us (^{<300>}Hebrews 10:10). It is usually an *unbloody offering*, in the more limited sense. “Sacrifice” refers to His *death* for us exclusively. Christ is here, in reference to ^{<900>}Psalm 40:6 (quoted again in ^{<300>}Hebrews 10:5), represented as the antitype of all the offerings of the law, whether the unbloody or bloody, eucharistical or propitiatory.

for a sweet-smelling savor — *Greek*, “for an odor of a sweet smell,” that is, God is well pleased with the offering on the ground of its sweetness, and so is reconciled to us (^{<900>}Ephesians 1:6 ^{<400>}Matthew 3:17 ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 5:18,19 ^{<300>}Hebrews 10:6-17). The ointment compounded of principal spices, poured upon Aaron’s head, answers to the variety of the graces by which He was enabled to “offer Himself a sacrifice for a sweet-smelling savor.” Another type, or prophecy by figure, was “the sweet savor” (“*savor of rest*,” *Margin*) which God smelled in Noah’s sacrifice (^{<000>}Genesis 8:21). Again, as what Christ is, believers also are (^{<300>}1 John 4:17), and ministers are: Paul says (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 2:17) “we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ.”

3. once named — *Greek*, “Let it not be even named” (^{<400>}Ephesians 5:4,12). “Uncleanness” and “covetousness” are taken up again from ^{<400>}Ephesians 4:19. The two are so closely allied that the *Greek* for “covetousness” (*pleonexia*) is used sometimes in Scripture, and often in the *Greek* Fathers, for sins of impurity. The common principle is the longing to fill one’s desire with material objects of sense, outside of God. The expression, “not be even named,” applies better to impurity, than to “covetousness.”

4. filthiness — obscenity in *act* or *gesture*.

foolish talking — the *talk* of fools, which is folly and sin together. The *Greek* of it, and of “filthiness,” occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

nor — rather, “or” (compare ^{<400>}Ephesians 5:3).

jesting — Greek, “*eutrapelia*”; found nowhere else in the New Testament: implying strictly that *versatility* which turns about and adapts itself, without regard to principle, to the shifting circumstances of the moment, and to the varying moods of those with whom it may deal. Not scurrile buffoonery, but refined “persiflage” and “badinage,” for which Ephesus was famed [PLAUTUS, *A Boastful Soldier*, 3.1,42-52], and which, so far from being censured, was and is thought by the world a pleasant accomplishment. In ^{<S188>}Colossians 3:8, “filthy communication” refers to the *foulness*; “foolish talking,” to the *folly*; “jesting,” to the *false refinement* (and *trifling witticism* [TITTMANN]) Of discourse unseasoned with the salt of grace [TRENCH].

not convenient — “unseemly”; not such “as become saints” (^{<H188>}Ephesians 5:3).

rather giving of thanks — a happy play on sounds in Greek, “*eucharistia*” contrasted with “*eutrapelia*”; refined “jesting” and subtle humor sometimes offend the tender feelings of grace; “giving of thanks” gives that real cheerfulness of spirit to believers which the worldly try to get from “jesting” (^{<H188>}Ephesians 5:19,20 ^{<S183>}James 5:13).

5. this ye know — The oldest manuscripts read, “Of this ye are sure knowing”; or as ALFORD, “This ye know being aware.”

covetous ... idolater — (^{<S188>}Colossians 3:5). The best reading may be translated, That is to say, literally, *which is* (in other words) *an idolater*. Paul himself had forsaken all for Christ (^{<H180>}2 Corinthians 6:10 11:27). Covetousness is worship of the creature instead of the Creator, the highest treason against the King of kings (^{<H183>}1 Samuel 15:3 ^{<H183>}Matthew 6:24 ^{<S188>}Philippians 3:19 ^{<S185>}1 John 2:15).

bath — The *present* implies the fixedness of the exclusion, grounded on the eternal verities of that kingdom [ALFORD].

of Christ and of God — rather, as one Greek article is applied to both, “of Christ and God,” implying their perfect oneness, which is consistent only with the doctrine that Christ is God (compare ^{<S180>}2 Thessalonians 1:12 ^{<S183>}1 Timothy 5:21 6:13).

6. vain — empty, unreal words, namely, palliations of “uncleanness,” ^{<HBB>}Ephesians 5:3,4 ^{<HBI>}Isaiah 5:20 (that it is natural to indulge in love), “covetousness” (that it is useful to society that men should pursue gain), and “jesting” (that it is witty and clever, and that God will not so severely punish for such things).

because of these things — *uncleanness, covetousness*, etc. (^{<HBB>}Ephesians 5:3-5).

cometh — present, not merely “shall come.” Is as sure as if already come.

children — rather, “*sons* of disobedience” (^{<HBB>}Ephesians 2:2,3). The children of unbelief in doctrine (^{<HBI>}Deuteronomy 32:20) are “children of disobedience” in *practice*, and these again are “children of wrath.”

7. Here fellowship with wicked workers is forbidden; in ^{<HBB>}Ephesians 5:11, with their wicked works.

8. sometimes — “once.” The emphasis is on “were.” Ye ought to have no fellowship with sin, which is darkness, for your state as darkness is now PAST. Stronger than “in darkness” (^{<HBB>}Romans 2:19).

light — not merely “enlightened”; but *light* enlightening others (^{<HBI>}Ephesians 5:13).

in — in union with the Lord, who is THE LIGHT.

children of light — not merely “of the light”; just as “children of disobedience” is used on the opposite side; those whose distinguishing characteristic is *light*. PLINY, a heathen writing to Trajan, bears unwilling testimony to the extraordinary purity of Christians’ lives, contrasted with the people around them.

9. fruit of the Spirit — taken by transcribers from ^{<HBB>}Galatians 5:22. The true reading is that of the oldest manuscripts, “The fruit of THE LIGHT”; in contrast with “the unfruitful works of darkness” (^{<HBI>}Ephesians 5:11). This verse is parenthetical. Walk as children of light, that is, in all good works and words, “FOR the fruit of the light is [borne] in [ALFORD; but BENGEL, ‘consists in’] all goodness [opposed to ‘malice,’ ^{<HBB>}Ephesians 4:31], righteousness [opposed to ‘covetousness,’ ^{<HBB>}Ephesians 5:3] and truth [opposed to ‘lying,’ ^{<HBB>}Ephesians 4:25].”

10. Proving — construed with “walk” ([Ⓜ]Ephesians 5:8 [Ⓜ]Romans 12:1,2). As we prove a coin by the eye and the ear, and by using it, so by accurate and continued study, and above all by *practice* and experimental trial, we may prove or test “what is acceptable unto the Lord.” This is the office of “light,” of which believers are “children,” to manifest what each thing is, whether sightly or unsightly.

11. unfruitful works of darkness — Sins are terminated in themselves, and therefore are called “works,” not “fruits” ([Ⓜ]Galatians 5:19,22). Their only fruit is that which is not in a true sense fruit ([Ⓜ]Deuteronomy 32:32), namely, “death” ([Ⓜ]Romans 6:21 [Ⓜ]Galatians 6:8). Plants cannot bear “fruit” in the absence of light. Sin is “darkness,” and its parent is *the prince of darkness* ([Ⓜ]Ephesians 6:12). Graces, on the other hand, as flourishing in “the light,” are reproductive, and abound in fruits; which, as harmoniously combining in *one* whole, are termed (in the singular) “the FRUIT of the Spirit” ([Ⓜ]Ephesians 5:9).

rather, etc. — Translate as *Greek*, “rather *even* reprove them” (compare [Ⓜ]Matthew 5:14-16). Not only “have no fellowship, but *even* reprove them,” namely, in words, and in your deeds, which, shining with “the light,” virtually reprove all that is contrary to light ([Ⓜ]Ephesians 5:13 [Ⓜ]John 3:19-21). “Have no fellowship,” does not imply that we can avoid all intercourse ([Ⓜ]1 Corinthians 5:10), but “avoid such fellowship as will defile yourselves”; just as light, though it touch filth, is not soiled by it; nay, as light *detects* it, so, “*even reprove* sin.”

12. The *Greek* order is, “For the things done in secret by them, it is a shame even to speak of.” The “for” gives his reason for “not naming” (compare [Ⓜ]Ephesians 5:3) in detail the works of darkness, whereas he describes definitely ([Ⓜ]Ephesians 5:9) “the fruit of the light” [BENGEL]. “Speak of,” I think, is used here as “speaking of *without reproving*,” in contrast to “even reprove them.” Thus the “for” expresses this, Reprove them, for to *speak* of them *without reproving* them, is a shame ([Ⓜ]Ephesians 5:3). Thus “works of *darkness*” answers to “things done *in secret*.”

13. that are reprov'd — rather, “when they are reprov'd,” namely, by you ([Ⓜ]Ephesians 5:11).

whatsoever doth make manifest — rather, “everything that is (that is, suffers itself to be) made manifest (or ‘shone upon,’ namely, by your ‘reproving,’ ^{<40B>}Ephesians 5:11) is (thenceforth no longer ‘darkness,’ ^{<40B>}Ephesians 5:8, but) light.” The devil and the wicked will not suffer themselves to be made manifest by the light, but love darkness, though *outwardly* the light shines round them. Therefore, “light” has no transforming effect on *them*, so that they do not become light (^{<40B>}John 3:19,20). But, says the apostle, you being now light yourselves (^{<40B>}Ephesians 5:8), by bringing to light through reproof those who are in darkness, will convert them to light. Your consistent lives and faithful reproofs will be your “armor of light” (^{<61D>}Romans 13:12) in making an inroad on the kingdom of darkness.

14. Wherefore — referring to the whole foregoing argument (^{<40B>}Ephesians 5:8,11,13). Seeing that light (spiritual) dispels the pre-existing darkness, He (God) saith ... (compare the same phrase, ^{<40B>}Ephesians 4:8).

Awake — The reading of all the oldest manuscripts is “Up!” or, “Rouse thee!” a phrase used in stirring men to activity. The words are a paraphrase of ^{<20B>}Isaiah 60:1,2, not an exact quotation. The word “Christ,” shows that in quoting the prophecy, he views it in the light thrown on it by its *Gospel fulfillment*. As Israel is called on to “awake” from its previous state of “darkness” and “death” (^{<25D>}Isaiah 59:10 60:2), for that her Light is come; so the Church, and each individual is similarly called to awake. *Believers* are called on to “awake” out of *sleep*; *unbelievers*, to “arise” from the *dead* (compare ^{<40B>}Matthew 25:5 ^{<61D>}Romans 13:11 ^{<40B>}1 Thessalonians 5:6, with ^{<40B>}Ephesians 2:1).

Christ — “the true light,” “the Sun of righteousness.”

give thee light — rather, as *Greek*, “shall shine upon thee” (so enabling thee by being “made manifest” to become, and be, by the very fact, “light,” ^{<40B>}Ephesians 5:13; then being so “enlightened,” ^{<40B>}Ephesians 1:18, thou shalt be able, by “reproving,” to enlighten others).

15. that — rather as *Greek*, “See *how* ye walk,” etc. The double idea is compressed into one sentence: “See (take heed) *how* ye walk,” and “See *that* ye walk circumspectly.” The *manner*, as well as the *act* itself, is included. See *how* ye are walking, with a view to your *being* circumspect

(literally, *accurate, exact*) in your walk. Compare ^{<5045>}Colossians 4:5, “Walk in *wisdom* (answering to ‘as wise’ here) toward them that are without” (answering to “circumspectly,” that is, *correctly, in relation to the unbelievers around*, not giving occasion of stumbling to any, but edifying all by a consistent walk).

not as fools — *Greek*, “not as unwise, but as wise.”

16. Redeeming the time — (^{<5045>}Colossians 4:5). *Greek*, “Buying up for yourselves the seasonable time” (whenever it occurs) of good to yourselves and to others. Buying *off from* the vanities of “them that are without” (^{<5045>}Colossians 4:5), and of the “unwise” (here in Ephesians), the opportune time afforded to you for the work of God. In a narrower sense, *special favorable seasons for good*, occasionally presenting themselves, are referred to, of which believers ought diligently to avail themselves. This constitutes true “wisdom” (^{<4085>}Ephesians 5:15). In a larger sense, *the whole season from the time that one is spiritually awakened*, is to be “redeemed” from vanity for God (compare ^{<4085>}2 Corinthians 6:2 ^{<4042>}1 Peter 4:2-4). “Redeem” implies the preciousness of the opportune season, a jewel to be bought at any price. WAHL explains, “Redeeming for yourselves (that is, availing yourselves of) the opportunity (offered you of acting aright), and commanding the time as a master does his servant.” TITTMANN, “Watch the time, and make it your own so as to control it; as merchants look out for opportunities, and accurately choose out the best goods; serve not the time, but command it, and it shall do what you approve.” So PINDAR [*Pythia*, 4.509], “The time followed him as his servant, and was not as a runaway slave.”

because the days are evil — The days of life in general are so exposed to evil, as to make it necessary to make the most of the seasonable opportunity so long as it lasts (^{<4085>}Ephesians 6:13 ^{<4040>}Genesis 47:9 ^{<4040>}Psalm 49:5 ^{<4010>}Ecclesiastes 11:2 12:1 ^{<4025>}John 12:35). Besides, there are many *special* evil days (in persecution, sickness, etc.). when the Christian is laid by in silence; therefore he needs the more to improve the seasonable times afforded to him (^{<4053>}Amos 5:13), which Paul perhaps alludes to.

17. Wherefore — seeing that ye need to walk so circumspectly, choosing and using the right opportunity of good.

unwise — a different *Greek* word from that in ^{<408>}Ephesians 5:15. Translate, “foolish,” or “senseless.”

understanding — not merely *knowing* as a matter of fact (^{<404>}Luke 12:47), but *knowing with understanding*.

the will of the Lord — as to how each opportunity is to be used. The Lord’s will, ultimately, is our “sanctification” (^{<5048>}1 Thessalonians 4:3); and that “in every thing,” meantime, we should “give thanks” (^{<5048>}1 Thessalonians 5:18; compare above, ^{<408>}Ephesians 5:10).

18. excess — *worthless*, ruinous, reckless prodigality.

wherein — not in the wine itself when used aright (^{<5053>}1 Timothy 5:23), but in the “excess” as to it.

but be filled with the Spirit — The effect in inspiration was that the person was “filled” with an ecstatic exhilaration, like that caused by wine; hence the two are here connected (compare ^{<4023>}Acts 2:13-18). Hence arose the abstinence from wine of many of the prophets, for example, John the Baptist, namely, in order to keep distinct before the world the ecstasy caused by the Spirit, from that caused by wine. So also in ordinary Christians the Spirit dwells not in the mind that seeks the disturbing influences of excitement, but in the well-balanced prayerful mind. Such a one expresses his joy, not in drunken or worldly songs, but in Christian hymns of thankfulness.

19. (^{<5016>}Colossians 3:16).

to yourselves — “to one another.” Hence soon arose the antiphonal or responsive chanting of which PLINY writes to Trajan: “They are wont on a fixed day to meet before daylight [to avoid persecution] and to recite a hymn *among themselves by turns*, to Christ, as if being God.” The Spirit gives true eloquence; wine, a spurious eloquence.

psalms — generally accompanied by an instrument.

hymns — in direct praise to God (compare ^{<4025>}Acts 16:25 ^{<4905>}1 Corinthians 14:26 ^{<5013>}James 5:13).

songs — the general term for lyric pieces; “spiritual” is added to mark their being here restricted to sacred subjects, though not merely to direct praises of God, but also containing exhortations, prophecies, etc. Contrast the drunken “songs,” ^{<3080>}Amos 8:10.

making melody — *Greek*, “playing and singing with an instrument.”

in your heart — not merely with the tongue; but the serious feeling of the heart accompanying the singing of the lips (compare ^{<6445>}1 Corinthians 14:15 ^{<6407>}Psalms 47:7). The contrast is between the heathen and the Christian practice, “Let your songs be not the drinking songs of heathen feasts, but psalms and hymns; and their accompaniment, *not the music of the lyre, but the melody of the heart*” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

to the Lord — See PLINY’S letter quoted above: “To *Christ* as God.”

20. thanks ... for all things — even for adversities; also for blessings, unknown as well as known (^{<5187>}Colossians 3:17 ^{<5168>}1 Thessalonians 5:18).

unto God and the Father — the Fountain of every blessing in Creation, Providence, Election, and Redemption.

Lord Jesus Christ — by whom all things, even distresses, become ours (^{<4085>}Romans 8:35,37 ^{<4080>}1 Corinthians 3:20-23).

21. (^{<1008>}Philippians 2:3 ^{<4085>}1 Peter 5:5.) Here he passes from our relations to God, to those which concern our fellow men.

in the fear of God — All the oldest manuscripts and authorities read, “in the fear of CHRIST.” The believer passes from under the bondage of the law as a letter, to be “the servant of *Christ*” (^{<4072>}1 Corinthians 7:22), which, through the instinct of love to Him, is really to be “the Lord’s freeman”; for he is “under the law to *Christ*” (^{<4021>}1 Corinthians 9:21; compare ^{<4085>}John 8:36). Christ, not the Father (^{<4022>}John 5:22), is to be our judge. Thus reverential fear of displeasing Him is the motive for discharging our relative duties as Christians (^{<4022>}1 Corinthians 10:22 ^{<4021>}2 Corinthians 5:11 ^{<4023>}1 Peter 2:13).

22. (^{<4009>}Ephesians 6:9.) The Church’s relation to Christ in His everlasting purpose, is the foundation and archetype of the three greatest of earthly relations, that of husband and wife (^{<4022>}Ephesians 5:22-33), parent and

child (⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 6:1-4), master and servant (⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 6:4-9). The oldest manuscripts omit “submit yourselves”; supplying it from ⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 5:21, “Ye wives (submitting yourselves) unto your own husbands.” “Your own” is an argument for submissiveness on the part of the wives; it is not a stranger, but *your own* husbands whom you are called on to submit unto (compare ⁴⁰⁰Genesis 3:16 ⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 7:2 14:34 ⁴⁰⁰Colossians 3:18 ⁴⁰⁰Titus 2:5 ⁴⁰⁰1 Peter 3:1-7). Those subject ought to submit themselves, of whatever kind their superiors are. “Submit” is the term used of *wives*: “obey,” of *children* (⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 6:1), as there is a greater equality between wives and husbands, than between children and parents.

as unto the Lord — Submissiveness is rendered by the wife to the husband under the eye of Christ, and so is rendered to Christ Himself. The husband stands to the wife in the relation that the Lord does to the Church, and this is to be the ground of her submission: though that submission is inferior in kind and degree to that which she owes Christ (⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 5:24).

23. (⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 11:3.)

even as — *Greek*, “as also.”

and he is — The oldest manuscripts read, “Himself (being) Savior,” omitting “and,” and “is.” In Christ’s case, the Headship is united with, nay gained by, His having SAVED the body in the process of redemption; so that (Paul implies) I am not alleging Christ’s Headship as one entirely identical with that other, for He has a claim to it, and office in it, peculiar to Himself [ALFORD]. The husband is not saviour of the wife, in which particular Christ excels; hence, “But” (⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 5:24) follows [BENGEL].

24. Therefore — Translate, as *Greek*, “But,” or “Nevertheless,” that is, though there be the difference of headships mentioned in ⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 5:23, *nevertheless*, thus far they are one, namely, in the subjection or submission (the same *Greek* stands for “is *subject*,” as for “*submit*,” ⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 5:21,22) of the Church to Christ, being the prototype of that of the wife to the husband.

their own — not in most of the oldest manuscripts, and not needed by the argument.

in every thing — appertaining to a husband's legitimate authority; "in the Lord" (^{<1888>}Colossians 3:18); everything not contrary to God.

25. "Thou hast seen the measure of obedience; now hear also the measure of love. Do you wish your wife to obey you, as the Church is to obey Christ? Then have a solicitude for her as Christ had for the Church (^{<482>}Ephesians 5:23, "Himself the Savior of the body"); and "if it be necessary to give thy life for her, or to be cut in ten thousand pieces, or to endure any other suffering whatever, do not refuse it; and if you suffer thus, not even so do you do what Christ has done; for you indeed do so being already united to her, but He did so for one that treated Him with aversion and hatred. As, therefore, He brought to His feet one that so treated Him, and that even wantonly spurned Him, by much tenderness of regard, not by threats, insults, and terror: so also do you act towards your wife, and though you see her disdainful and wantonly wayward, you will be able to bring her to your feet by much thoughtfulness for her, by love, by kindness. For no bound is more sovereign in binding than such bonds, especially in the case of husband and wife. For one may constrain a servant by fear, though not even he is so to be bound to you; for he may readily run away. But the companion of your life, the mother of your children, the basis of all your joy, you ought to bind to you, not by fear and threats, but by love and attachment" [CHRYSTOSTOM].

gave himself — *Greek*, "gave Himself up."

for it — Translate, "for *her*." The relation of the Church to Christ is the ground of Christianity's having raised woman to her due place in the social scale, from which she was, and is, excluded in heathen lands.

26. **sanctify** — that is, consecrate her to God. Compare ^{<479>}John 17:19, meaning, "I *devote* Myself as a *holy* sacrifice, that My disciples also may be devoted or consecrated as holy in (through) the truth" [NEANDER] (^{<821>}Hebrews 2:11 10:10 13:12 see on ^{<800>}Hebrews 10:10).

and cleanse — rather, as *Greek*, "cleansing," without the "and."

with the washing of water — rather as *Greek*, “with,” or “by the *laver of the water*,” namely, *the baptismal water*. So it ought to be translated in ^{<608>}Titus 3:5, the only other passage in the New Testament where it occurs. As the bride passed through a purifying bath before marriage, so the Church (compare ^{<610>}Revelation 21:2). He speaks of baptism according to its high *ideal* and *design*, as if the inward grace accompanied the outward rite; hence he asserts of outward baptism whatever is involved in a believing appropriation of the divine truths it symbolizes, and says that Christ, by baptism, has purified the Church [NEANDER] (^{<612>}1 Peter 3:21).

by the word — *Greek*, “IN the word.” To be joined with “cleansing it,” or “her.” The “word of faith” (^{<618>}Romans 10:8,9,17), of which confession is made in baptism, and which carries the real cleansing (^{<618>}John 15:3 17:17) and regenerating power (^{<612>}1 Peter 1:23 3:21) [ALFORD]. So AUGUSTINE [*Tract 80*, in John], “Take away the word, and what is the water save water? Add the word to the element, and it becomes a sacrament, being itself as it were the visible word.” The regenerating efficacy of baptism is conveyed in, and by, the divine word alone.

27. he — The oldest manuscripts and authorities read, “That He might *Himself* present unto Himself the Church glorious,” namely, as a bride (^{<612>}2 Corinthians 11:2). *Holiness* and *glory* are inseparable. “Cleansing” is the necessary preliminary to both. *Holiness* is *glory* internal; *glory* is *holiness* shining forth outwardly. *The laver of baptism* is the vehicle, but *the word* is the nobler and true instrument of the *cleansing* [BENGEL]. It is Christ that prepares the Church with the necessary ornaments of grace, for presentation to Himself, as the Bridegroom at His coming again (^{<612>}Matthew 25:1, etc. ^{<610>}Revelation 19:7 21:2).

not having spot — (^{<200>}Song of Solomon 4:7). The visible Church now contains clean and unclean together, like Noah’s ark; like the wedding room which contained some that had, and others that had not, the wedding garment (^{<612>}Matthew 22:10-14; compare ^{<612>}2 Timothy 2:20); or as the good and bad fish are taken in the same net because it cannot discern the bad from the good, the fishermen being unable to know what kind of fish the nets have taken under the waves. Still the Church is termed “holy” in the creed, in reference to her ideal and ultimate destination. When the Bridegroom comes, the bride shall be presented to Him wholly without

spot, the evil being cut off from the body for ever (^{<4134>}Matthew 13:47-50). Not that there are two churches, one with bad and good intermingled, another in which there are good alone; but one and the same Church in relation to different times, now with good and evil together, hereafter with good alone [PEARSON].

28. Translate, “So ought husbands *also* (thus the oldest manuscripts read) to love their own (compare *Note*, see on ^{<4052>}Ephesians 5:22) wives as their own bodies.”

He that loveth his wife loveth himself — So there is the same love and the same union of body between Christ and the Church (^{<4050>}Ephesians 5:30,32).

29. For — Supply, and we all love ourselves: “For no man,” etc.

his own flesh — (^{<4051>}Ephesians 5:31, end).

nourisheth — *Greek*, “nourisheth it up,” namely, to maturity. “Nourisheth,” refers to food and internal sustenance; “cherisheth,” to clothing and external fostering.

even as — Translate, “even as also.”

the Lord — The oldest manuscripts read, “Christ.” (^{<0210>}Exodus 21:10 prescribes three duties to the husband. The two former (food and raiment) are here alluded to in a spiritual sense, by “nourisheth and cherisheth”; the third “duty of marriage” is not added in consonance with the holy propriety of Scripture language: its antitype is, “know the Lord” (^{<3029>}Hosea 2:19,20) [BENGEL].

30. For — *Greek*, “Because” (^{<4035>}1 Corinthians 6:15). Christ nourisheth and cherisheth the Church as being of one flesh with Him. Translate, “Because we are members of His body (His literal body), *being* OF His flesh and of His bones” [ALFORD] (^{<0023>}Genesis 2:23,24). The *Greek* expresses, “Being formed *out of*” or “of the substance of His flesh.” Adam’s deep sleep, wherein Eve was formed from out of his opened side, is an emblem of Christ’s death, which was the birth of the Spouse, the Church. (^{<4024>}John 12:24 19:34,35, to which ^{<4055>}Ephesians 5:25-27 allude, as implying atonement by His *blood*, and sanctification by the “water,”

answering to that which flowed from His side (compare also ^{<4178>}John 7:38,39 ^{<4161>}1 Corinthians 6:11). As Adam gave Eve a new name, *Hebrew*, “*Isha*,” “woman,” formed from his own rib, *Ish*, “man,” signifying her formation from him, so Christ, ^{<4127>}Revelation 2:17 3:12. ^{<0022>}Genesis 2:21,23,24 puts the *bones* first because the reference there is to the *natural* structure. But Paul is referring to the *flesh of Christ*. It is not our bones and flesh, but “*we*” that are *spiritually* propagated (in our soul and spirit now, and in the body hereafter, regenerated) from the manhood of Christ which has flesh and bones. We are members of His glorified body (^{<4165>}John 6:53). The two oldest existing manuscripts, and *Coptic* or *Memphitic version*, omit “of His flesh and of His bones”; the words may have crept into the text through the *Margin* from ^{<0023>}Genesis 2:23, *Septuagint*. However, IRENAEUS, 294, and the old *Latin* and *Vulgate versions*, with some good old manuscripts, have them.

31. For — The propagation of the Church from Christ, as that of Eve from Adam, is the foundation of the spiritual marriage. The natural marriage, wherein “a man leaves father and mother (the oldest manuscripts omit ‘his’) and is joined unto his wife,” is not the principal thing meant here, but *the spiritual marriage* represented by it, and on which it rests, whereby Christ left the Father’s bosom to woo to Himself the Church out of a lost world: ^{<4152>}Ephesians 5:32 proves this: His earthly mother *as such*, also, He holds in secondary account as compared with His spiritual Bride (^{<0048>}Luke 2:48,49 8:19-21 11:27,28). He shall again leave His Father’s abode to consummate the union (^{<0251>}Matthew 25:1-10 ^{<6107>}Revelation 19:7).

they two shall be one flesh — So the Samaritan Pentateuch, the *Septuagint*, etc., read (^{<0024>}Genesis 2:24), instead of “they shall be one flesh.” So ^{<0045>}Matthew 19:5. In natural marriage, husband and wife combine the elements of one perfect human being: the one being incomplete without the other. So Christ, as God-man, is pleased to make the Church, the body, a necessary adjunct to Himself, the Head. He is the archetype of the Church, from whom and according to whom, as the pattern, she is formed. He is her Head, as the husband is of the wife (^{<4165>}Romans 6:5 ^{<4118>}1 Corinthians 11:3 15:45). Christ will never allow any power to sever Himself and His bride, indissolubly joined (^{<4116>}Matthew 19:6 ^{<4108>}John 10:28,29 13:1).

32. Rather, “This mystery is a great one.” This *profound truth, beyond man’s power of discovering*, but *now revealed*, namely, of the spiritual union of Christ and the Church, represented by the marriage union, is a great one, of deep import. See on ⁴¹²Ephesians 5:30. So “mystery” is used of a divine truth not to be discovered save by revelation of God (⁴¹²Romans 11:25 ⁴¹⁵1 Corinthians 15:51). The *Vulgate* wrongly translates, “This is a great *sacrament*,” which is made the plea by the Romish Church (in spite of the blunder having been long ago exposed by their own commentators, CAJETAN and ESTIUS) for making marriage a *sacrament*; it is plain not marriage in general, but that of Christ and the Church, is what is pronounced to be a “great mystery,” as the words following prove, “*I* [emphatic] say it in regard to Christ and to the Church” (so the *Greek* is best translated). “I, while I quote these words out of Scripture, use them in a higher sense” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

33. Nevertheless — not to pursue further the mystical meaning of marriage. Translate, as *Greek*, “Do ye also (as Christ does) severally each one so love,” etc. The words, “severally each one,” refer to them in their *individual* capacity, contrasted with the previous *collective view* of the members of the Church as the bride of Christ.

CHAPTER 6

EPHESIANS 6:1-24.

MUTUAL DUTIES OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN: MASTERS AND SERVANTS: OUR LIFE A WARFARE: THE SPIRITUAL ARMOUR NEEDED AGAINST SPIRITUAL FOES. CONCLUSION.

1. obey — stronger than the expression as to wives, “submitting,” or “being subject” (⁴⁸²Ephesians 5:21). *Obedience* is more unreasoning and implicit; *submission* is the willing *subjection* of an inferior in point of order to one who has a right to command.

in the Lord — Both parents and children being Christians “in the Lord,” expresses the *element* in which the obedience is to take place, and the *motive* to obedience. In ⁴⁸³Colossians 3:20, it is, “Children, obey your parents *in all things*.” This clause, “in the Lord,” would suggest the due limitation of the obedience required (⁴⁸⁴Acts 5:29; compare on the other hand, the abuse, ⁴⁸⁵Mark 7:11-13).

right — Even by *natural law* we should render obedience to them from whom we have derived life.

2. Here the authority of *revealed law* is added to that of natural law.

which is ... promise — The “promise” is not made the main motive to obedience, but an incidental one. The main motive is, because it is God’s will (⁴⁸⁶Deuteronomy 5:16, “Honor thy father and mother, *as the Lord thy God hath COMMANDED thee*”); and that it is so peculiarly, is shown by His accompanying it “*with a promise*.”

first — in the decalogue with a *special* promise. The promise in the second commandment is a *general* one. Their duty is more expressly prescribed to children than to parents; for love descends rather than ascends [BENGEL]. This verse proves the law in the Old Testament is not abolished.

3. long on the earth — In ^{<1210>}Exodus 20:12, “long upon *the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*,” which Paul adapts to Gospel times, by taking away the local and limited reference peculiar to the Jews in Canaan. The godly are equally blessed in every land, as the Jews were in the land which God gave them. This promise is always fulfilled, either literally, or by the substitution of a higher blessing, namely, one spiritual and eternal (^{<815>}Job 5:26 ^{<1027>}Proverbs 10:27). The substance and essence of the law are eternally in force: its accidents alone (applying to Israel of old) are abolished (^{<815>}Romans 6:15).

4. fathers — including *mothers*; the fathers are specified as being the fountains of domestic authority. Fathers are more prone to passion in relation to their children than mothers, whose fault is rather over-indulgence.

provoke not — irritate not, by vexatious commands, unreasonable blame, and uncertain temper [ALFORD]. ^{<5121>}Colossians 3:21, “lest they be discouraged.”

nurture — *Greek*, “discipline,” namely, *training* by chastening in *act* where needed (^{<817>}Job 5:17 ^{<817>}Hebrews 12:7).

admonition — training by *words* (^{<817>}Deuteronomy 6:7; “catechise,” ^{<1210>}Proverbs 22:6, *Margin*), whether of encouragement, or remonstrance, or reproof, according as is required [TRENCH]. Contrast ^{<9123>}1 Samuel 3:13, *Margin*.

of the Lord — such as the Lord approves, and by His Spirit dictates.

5. Servants — literally, “slaves.”

masters according to the flesh — in contrast to your true and heavenly Master (^{<4104>}Ephesians 6:4). A consolatory hint that the mastership to which they were subject, was but for a time [CHRYSOSTOM]; and that their real liberty was still their own (^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:22).

fear and trembling — not slavish terror, but (See on ^{<4104>}1 Corinthians 2:3; ^{<4175>}2 Corinthians 7:15) an anxious eagerness to do your duty, and a fear of displeasing, as great as is produced in the ordinary slave by “threatenings” (^{<4104>}Ephesians 6:9).

singleness — without double-mindedness, or “eye service” (^{<490>}Ephesians 6:6), which seeks to please outwardly, without the sincere desire to make the master’s interest at all times the first consideration (^{<1397>}1 Chronicles 29:17 ^{<102>}Matthew 6:22,23 ^{<113>}Luke 11:34). “Simplicity.”

6. (^{<182>}Colossians 3:22). Seeking to please their masters only so long as these have their eyes on them: as Gehazi was a very different man in his master’s presence from what he was in his absence (^{<1101>}2 Kings 5:1-18).

men-pleasers — not Christ-pleasers (compare ^{<811>}Galatians 1:10 ^{<104>}1 Thessalonians 2:4).

doing the will of God — the unseen but ever present Master: the best guarantee for your serving faithfully your earthly master alike when present and when absent.

from the heart — literally, *soul* (^{<811>}Psalms 111:1 ^{<615>}Romans 13:5).

7. **good will** — expressing his feeling towards his master; as “doing the will of God from the heart” expresses the source of that feeling (^{<182>}Colossians 3:23). “Good will” is stated by XENOPHON [*Economics*] to be the principal virtue of a slave towards his master: a real regard to his master’s interest as if his own, a *good will* which not even a master’s severity can extinguish.

8. **any man doeth** — *Greek*, “any man shall have done,” that is, shall be found at the Lord’s coming to have done.

the same — in full payment, in heaven’s currency.

shall ... receive — (^{<150>}2 Corinthians 5:10 ^{<182>}Colossians 3:25; but all of grace, ^{<170>}Luke 17:10).

bond or free — (^{<172>}1 Corinthians 7:22 12:13 ^{<815>}Galatians 3:28 ^{<181>}Colossians 3:11). Christ does not regard such distinctions in His present dealings of grace, or in His future judgment. The slave that has acted faithfully for the Lord’s sake to his master, though the latter may not repay his faithfulness, shall have the Lord for his Paymaster. So the freeman who has done good for the Lord’s sake, though man may not pay him, has the Lord for his Debtor (^{<197>}Proverbs 19:17).

9. the same things — *Mutatis mutandis*. Show the same regard to God's will, and to your servants' well-being, in your relation to them, as they ought to have in their relation to you. Love regulates the duties both of servants and masters, as one and the same light attempers various colors. Equality of nature and faith is superior to distinctions of rank [BENGEL]. Christianity makes all men brothers: compare ^{<4850>}Leviticus 25:42,43 ^{<4850>}Deuteronomy 15:12 ^{<3844>}Jeremiah 34:14 as to how the Hebrews were bound to treat their brethren in service; much more ought Christians to act with love.

threatening — *Greek*, “*the threatening*” which masters commonly use. “Masters” in the *Greek*, is not so strong a term as “despots”: it implies *authority*, but not absolute *domination*.

your Master also — The oldest manuscripts read, “the Master both of them and you”: “their Master and yours.” This more forcibly brings out the equality of slaves and masters in the sight of God. SENECA [*Thyestes*, 607], says, “Whatever an inferior dreads from you, this a superior Master threatens yourselves with: every authority here is under a higher above.” As you treat your servants, so will He treat you.

neither ... respect of persons — He will not, in judging, acquit thee because thou art a master, or condemn him because he is a servant (^{<4084>}Acts 10:34 ^{<4891>}Romans 2:11 ^{<4816>}Galatians 2:6 ^{<5025>}Colossians 3:25 ^{<4017>}1 Peter 1:17). Derived from ^{<4807>}Deuteronomy 10:17 ^{<4490>}2 Chronicles 19:7.

10. my brethren — Some of the oldest manuscripts omit these words. Some with *Vulgate* retain them. The phrase occurs nowhere else in the Epistle (see, however, ^{<4023>}Ephesians 6:23); if genuine, it is appropriate here in the close of the Epistle, where he is urging his fellow soldiers to the good fight in the Christian armor. Most of the oldest manuscripts for “finally,” read, “henceforward,” or “from henceforth” (^{<4867>}Galatians 6:17).

be strong — *Greek*, “be strengthened.”

in the power of his might — *Christ's* might: as in ^{<4019>}Ephesians 1:19, it is *the Father's* might.

11. the whole armor — the armor of light (^{<4830>}Romans 13:12); on the right hand and left (^{<4060>}2 Corinthians 6:7). The panoply offensive and defensive.

An image readily suggested by the Roman armory, Paul being now in Rome. Repeated emphatically, ^{<406>}Ephesians 6:13. In ^{<504>}Romans 13:14 it is, “Put ye on *the Lord Jesus Christ*”; in putting on Him, and the new man in Him, we put on “the whole armor of God.” No opening at the head, the feet, the heart, the belly, the eye, the ear, or the tongue, is to be given to Satan. Believers have once for all overcome him; but on the ground of this fundamental victory gained over him, they are ever again to fight against and overcome him, even as they who once die with Christ have continually to mortify their members upon earth (^{<402>}Romans 6:2-14 ^{<508>}Colossians 3:3,5).

of God — furnished by God; not our own, else it would not stand (^{<581>}Psalms 35:1-3). Spiritual, therefore, and mighty through God, not carnal (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 10:4).

wiles — literally, “*schemes sought out*” for deceiving (compare ^{<414>}2 Corinthians 11:14).

the devil — the ruling chief of the foes (^{<402>}Ephesians 6:12) organized into a kingdom of darkness (^{<412>}Matthew 12:26), opposed to the kingdom of light.

12. *Greek*, “For our wrestling (‘*the wrestling*’ in which we are engaged) is not against flesh,” etc. Flesh and blood foes are Satan’s mere tools, the real foe lurking behind them is Satan himself, with whom our conflict is. “Wrestling” implies that it is a hand-to-hand and foot-to-foot struggle for the mastery: to wrestle successfully with Satan, we must wrestle with GOD in irresistible prayer like Jacob (^{<422>}Genesis 32:24-29 ^{<504>}Hosea 12:4). Translate, “*The principalities ... the powers*” (^{<402>}Ephesians 1:21 ^{<506>}Colossians 1:16; see on ^{<400>}Ephesians 3:10). The same grades of powers are specified in the case of the demons here, as in that of angels there (compare ^{<408>}Romans 8:38 ^{<452>}1 Corinthians 15:24 ^{<505>}Colossians 2:15). The Ephesians had practiced sorcery (^{<409>}Acts 19:19), so that he appropriately treats of evil spirits in addressing them. The more clearly any book of Scripture, as this, treats of the economy of the kingdom of light, the more clearly does it set forth the kingdom of darkness. Hence, nowhere does the satanic kingdom come more clearly into view than in the Gospels which treat of Christ, the true Light.

rulers of the darkness of this world — *Greek*, “age” or “course of the world.” But the oldest manuscripts omit “of world.” Translate, “Against the world rulers of this (present) darkness” (⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 2:2 5:8 ⁴²⁵Luke 22:53 ⁴⁰¹³Colossians 1:13). On Satan and his demons being “world rulers,” compare ⁴⁰²¹John 12:31 14:30 16:11 ⁴⁰⁰⁶Luke 4:6 ⁴⁰⁰²2 Corinthians 4:4 ⁴⁰¹⁹1 John 5:19, *Greek*, “lieth in the wicked one.” Though they be “world rulers,” they are not the ruler of the universe; and their usurped rule of the world is soon to cease, when He shall “come whose right it is” (⁴⁰¹⁷Ezekiel 21:27). Two cases prove Satan not to be a mere subjective fancy:

(1) Christ’s temptation;

(2) the entrance of demons into the swine (for these are incapable of such fancies). Satan tries to parody, or imitate in a perverted way, God’s working (⁴⁰¹³2 Corinthians 11:13,14). So when God became incarnate, Satan, by his demons, took forcible possession of human bodies. Thus the demoniacally possessed were not peculiarly wicked, but miserable, and so fit. subjects for Jesus’ pity. Paul makes no mention of demoniacal possession, so that in the time he wrote, it seems to have ceased; it probably was restricted to the period of the Lord’s incarnation, and of the foundation of His Church.

spiritual wickedness — rather as *Greek*, “*The spiritual hosts of wickedness.*” As three of the clauses describe the *power*, so this fourth, the *wickedness* of our spiritual foes (⁴⁰²⁵Matthew 12:45).

in high places — *Greek*, “heavenly places”: in ⁴⁰⁰⁶Ephesians 2:2, “the air,” see on ⁴⁰⁰⁶Ephesians 2:2. The alteration of expression to “in heavenly places,” is in order to mark the higher range of their powers than ours, they having been, up to the ascension (⁴⁰¹⁵Revelation 12:5,9,10), dwellers “in the heavenly places” (⁴⁰⁰⁷Job 1:7), and being now in the regions of the air which are called the heavens. Moreover, pride and presumption are the sins *in heavenly places* to which they tempt especially, being those by which they themselves fell from heavenly places (⁴⁰⁴⁰Isaiah 14:12-15). But believers have naught to fear, being “blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places” (⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 1:3).

13. take ... of God — not “make,” God has done that: you have only to “take up” and put it on. The Ephesians were familiar with the idea of the

gods giving armor to mythical heroes: thus Paul's allusion would be appropriate.

the evil day — the day of Satan's special assaults (^{<402>}Ephesians 6:12,16) in life and at the dying hour (compare ^{<680>}Revelation 3:10). We must have our armor always on, to be ready against the evil day which may come at any moment, the war being perpetual (^{<500>}Psalm 41:1, *Margin*).

done all — rather, “accomplished all things,” namely, necessary to the fight, and becoming a good soldier.

14. Stand — The repetition in ^{<403>}Ephesians 6:11,14, shows that *standing*, that is, *maintaining our ground*, not yielding or fleeing, is the grand aim of the Christian soldier. Translate as *Greek*, “Having girt about your loins with truth,” that is, with truthfulness, sincerity, a good conscience (^{<402>}2 Corinthians 1:12 ^{<505>}1 Timothy 1:5,18 3:9). Truth is the band that girds up and keeps together the flowing robes, so as that the Christian soldier may be unencumbered for action. So the Passover was eaten with the loins girt, and the shoes on the feet (^{<621>}Exodus 12:11; compare ^{<352>}Isaiah 5:27 ^{<625>}Luke 12:35). *Faithfulness* (*Septuagint*, “truth”) is the girdle of Messiah (^{<305>}Isaiah 11:5): so *truth* of His followers.

having on — *Greek*, “having put on.”

breastplate of righteousness — (^{<397>}Isaiah 59:17), similarly of Messiah. “Righteousness” is here joined with “truth,” as in ^{<403>}Ephesians 5:9: *righteousness* in works, *truth* in words [ESTIUS] (^{<402>}1 John 3:7). Christ's righteousness inwrought in us by the Spirit. “Faith and love,” that is, faith working righteousness by love, are “the breastplate” in ^{<305>}1 Thessalonians 5:8.

15. Translate, “Having shod your feet” (referring to the sandals, or to the military shoes then used).

the preparation — rather, “the preparedness,” or “readiness of,” that is, arising from the “Gospel” (^{<607>}Psalm 10:17). Preparedness to do and suffer all that God wills; readiness for march, as a Christian soldier.

gospel of peace — (compare ^{<Q17>}Luke 1:79 ^{<Q15>}Romans 10:15). The “peace” within forms a beautiful contrast to the raging of the outward conflict (^{<Q18>}Isaiah 26:3 ^{<Q10>}Philippians 4:7).

16. Above all — rather, “Over all”; so as to cover all that has been put on before. Three integuments are specified, the breastplate, girdle, and shoes; two defenses, the helmet and shield; and two offensive weapons, the sword and the spear (prayer). ALFORD translates, “Besides all,” as the *Greek* is translated, ^{<Q19>}Luke 3:20. But if it meant this, it would have come *last* in the list (compare ^{<Q14>}Colossians 3:14).

shield — the large oblong oval door-like shield of the Romans, four feet long by two and a half feet broad; not the small round buckler.

ye shall be able — not *merely*, “ye may.” The shield of faith will *certainly* intercept, and so “quench, all the fiery darts” (an image from the ancient fire-darts, formed of cane, with tow and combustibles ignited on the head of the shaft, so as to set fire to woodwork, tents, etc.).

of the wicked — rather “of the EVIL ONE.” Faith conquers him (^{<Q16>}1 Peter 5:9), and his darts of temptation to wrath, lust, revenge, despair, etc. It overcomes the world (^{<Q11>}1 John 5:4), and so the prince of the world (^{<Q15>}1 John 5:18).

17. take — a different *Greek* word from that in ^{<Q13>}Ephesians 6:13,16; translate, therefore, “receive,” “accept,” namely, the helmet offered by the Lord, namely, “salvation” appropriated, as ^{<Q18>}1 Thessalonians 5:8, “Helmet, the hope of salvation”; not an uncertain hope, but one that brings with it no shame of disappointment (^{<Q18>}Romans 5:5). It is subjoined to the shield of faith, as being its inseparable accompaniment (compare ^{<Q18>}Romans 5:1,5). The head of the soldier was among the principal parts to be defended, as on it the deadliest strokes might fall, and it is the head that commands the whole body. The head is the seat of the *mind*, which, when it has laid hold of the sure Gospel “hope” of eternal life, will not receive false doctrine, or give way to Satan’s temptations to *despair*. God, by this hope, “lifts up the head” (^{<Q18>}Psalms 3:3 ^{<Q13>}Luke 21:28).

sword of the Spirit — that is, furnished by the Spirit, who inspired the writers of the word of God (^{<Q12>}2 Peter 1:21). Again the Trinity is implied:

the Spirit here; and Christ in “salvation” and God the Father, ^{<403>}Ephesians 6:13 (compare ^{<3042>}Hebrews 4:12 ^{<4116>}Revelation 1:16 2:12). The two-edged sword, cutting both ways (^{<4981>}Psalms 45:3,5), striking some with conviction and conversion, and others with condemnation (^{<3104>}Isaiah 11:4 ^{<6915>}Revelation 19:15), is in the *mouth* of Christ (^{<3902>}Isaiah 49:2), in the *hand* of His saints (^{<3909>}Psalms 149:6). Christ’s use of this sword in the temptation is our pattern as to how we are to wield it against Satan (^{<4004>}Matthew 4:4,7,10). There is no armor specified for the back, but only for the front of the body; implying that we must never turn our back to the foe (^{<4195>}Luke 9:62); our only safety is in resisting ceaselessly (^{<4104>}Matthew 4:11 ^{<5007>}James 4:7).

18. always — *Greek*, “in every season”; implying *opportunity* and *exigency* (^{<3002>}Colossians 4:2). Paul uses the very words of Jesus in ^{<4213>}Luke 21:36 (a Gospel which he quotes elsewhere, in undesigned consonance with the fact of Luke being his associate in travel, ^{<4123>}1 Corinthians 11:23, etc. ^{<5158>}1 Timothy 5:18). Compare ^{<4041>}Luke 18:1 ^{<5122>}Romans 12:12 ^{<5157>}1 Thessalonians 5:17.

with all — that is, every kind of.

prayer — a sacred term for *prayer* in general.

supplication — a common term for a special kind of prayer [HARLESS], *an imploring request*. “Prayer” for obtaining blessings, “supplication” for averting evils which we fear [GROTIUS].

in the Spirit — to be joined with “praying.” It is he *in us*, as the Spirit of adoption, who prays, and enables us to pray (^{<4185>}Romans 8:15,26 ^{<4045>}Galatians 4:6 ^{<4121>}Jude 1:20).

watching — not sleeping (^{<4954>}Ephesians 5:14 ^{<4983>}Psalms 88:13 ^{<4154>}Matthew 26:41). So in the temple a perpetual watch was maintained (compare Anna, ^{<4157>}Luke 2:37).

thereunto — “watching unto” (with a view to) prayer and supplication.

with — *Greek*, “in.” *Persevering constancy* (“perseverance”) and (that is, exhibited in) *supplication* are to be the element in which our watchfulness is to be exercised.

for all saints — as none is so perfect as not to need the intercessions of his fellow Christians.

19. for me — a different *Greek* preposition from that in ^{<483>}Ephesians 6:18; translate, therefore, “on my behalf.”

that I may open my mouth boldly — rather, “that there may be given to me ‘utterance,’ or ‘speech’ *in the opening of my mouth* (when I undertake to speak; a formula used in *set and solemn* speech, ^{<481>}Job 3:1 ^{<706>}Daniel 10:16), so as *with boldness to make known*,” etc. Bold plainness of speech was the more needed, as the Gospel is a “mystery” undiscoverable by mere reason, and only known by revelation. Paul looked for utterance to be *given* him; he did not depend on his natural or acquired power. The shortest road to any heart is by way of heaven; pray to God to open the door and to open your mouth, so as to avail yourself of every opening (^{<2107>}Jeremiah 1:7,8 ^{<2108>}Ezekiel 3:8,9,11 ^{<4043>}2 Corinthians 4:13).

20. For — *Greek*, as in ^{<483>}Ephesians 6:19, “*On behalf of which.*”

an ambassador in bonds — a paradox. Ambassadors were held inviolable by the law of nations, and could not, without outrage to every sacred right, be put in chains. Yet Christ’s “ambassador is in *a chain*.” The *Greek* is singular. The Romans used to bind a prisoner to a soldier by *a single chain*, in a kind of free custody. So ^{<4836>}Acts 28:16,20, “I am bound with this *chain*.” The term, “bonds” (plural), on the other hand, is used when the prisoner’s hands or feet were bound together (^{<4039>}Acts 26:29); compare ^{<4126>}Acts 12:6, where the plural marks the distinction. The singular is only used of the particular kind of custody described above; an undesigned coincidence [PALEY].

21. that ye also — as I have been discussing things relating to you, so that ye also may know about me (compare ^{<5007>}Colossians 4:7,8). NEANDER takes it, “Ye also,” as well as the Colossians (^{<5006>}Colossians 4:6).

my affairs — *Greek*, “the things concerning me.”

how I do — how I fare.

Tychicus — an Asiatic, and so a fit messenger bearing the respective Epistles to Ephesus and Colosse (^{<4104>}Acts 20:4 ^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:12).

a beloved brother — *Greek*, “the beloved brother”; the same epithet as in ^{<5049>}Colossians 4:7.

minister — that is, *servant*.

in the Lord — in the Lord’s work.

22. for the same purpose — *Greek*, “for this very purpose.”

^{<5049>}Colossians 4:8 is almost word for word the same as this verse.

our affairs — *Greek*, “the things concerning us,” namely, concerning myself. “Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, and Marcus, sister’s son to Barnabas” (^{<5049>}Colossians 4:10).

23. love with faith — Faith is presupposed as theirs; he prays that love may accompany it (^{<4886>}Galatians 5:6).

24. Contrast the malediction on all who love Him not (^{<4662>}1 Corinthians 16:22).

in sincerity — *Greek*, “in incorruption,” that is, not as *English Version*, but “with an immortal (constant) love” [WAHL]. Compare “that which is not corruptible” (^{<4884>}1 Peter 3:4). Not a fleeting, earthly love, but a spiritual and eternal one [ALFORD]. Contrast ^{<5022>}Colossians 2:22, worldly things “which perish with the using.” Compare ^{<4925>}1 Corinthians 9:25, “corruptible ... *incorruptible* crown.” “Purely,” “holily” [ESTIUS], without the corruption of sin (See on ^{<4687>}1 Corinthians 3:17; ^{<5004>}2 Peter 1:4 ^{<5110>}Jude 1:10). Where the Lord Jesus has a true believer, there I have a brother [BISHOP M’IKWAINE]. He who is good enough for Christ, is good enough for me [R. HALL]. The differences of opinion among real Christians are comparatively small, and show that they are not following one another like silly sheep, each trusting the one before him. Their agreement in the main, while showing their independence as witnesses by differing in non-essentials, can only be accounted for by their being all in the right direction (^{<4958>}Acts 15:8,9 ^{<4902>}1 Corinthians 1:2 12:3).

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

The INTERNAL EVIDENCE for the authenticity of this Epistle is strong. The style, manner of thought, and doctrine, accord with Paul's. The incidental allusions also establish his authorship. PALEY [*Horae Paulinae*, ch. 7] instances the mention of the object of Epaphroditus' journey to Rome, the Philippian contribution to Paul's wants, Epaphroditus' sickness (~~<500P>~~Philippians 1:7 2:25-30 4:10-18), the fact that Timothy had been long with Paul at Philippi (~~<500P>~~Philippians 1:1 2:19), the reference to his being a prisoner at Rome now for a long time (~~<500P>~~Philippians 1:12-14 2:17-28), his willingness to die (compare ~~<500P>~~Philippians 1:23, with ~~<400B>~~2 Corinthians 5:8), the reference to the Philippians having *seen* his maltreatment at Philippi (~~<500P>~~Philippians 1:29,30 2:1,2).

The EXTERNAL EVIDENCE is equally decisive: POLYCARP [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 3; 11]; IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 4.18.4]; CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*The Instructor*, 1.1, p. 107]; EUSEBIUS [*The Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne*, in *Ecclesiastical History*, 5. 2]; TERTULLIAN [*On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, 23]; ORIGEN [*Against Celsus*, 1.3, p. 122]; CYPRIAN [*Testimonies against the Jews*, 3.39].

Philippi was *the first* (that is, the farthest from Rome, and first which met Paul in entering Macedonia) Macedonian *city of the district*, called *Macedonia Prima* (so called as lying *farthest eastward*). The Greek (~~<400P>~~Acts 16:12) should not be translated "the *chief* city," as *English Version*, but as above [ALFORD]. Not it, but Thessalonica, was the *chief* city of the province, and Amphipolis, of the district called Macedonia Prima. It was a *Roman* "colony" (~~<400P>~~Acts 16:12), made so by Augustus, to

commemorate his famous victory over Brutus and Cassius. A *colony* was in fact a portion of Rome itself transplanted to the provinces, an offshoot from Rome, and as it were a portrait of the mother city on a small scale [AULUS GELLIUS, *Attic Nights*, 16.13]. Its inhabitants were Roman citizens, having the right of voting in the Roman tribes, governed by their own senate and magistrates, and not by the governor of the province, with the Roman law and *Latin* language.

Paul, with Silas and Timothy, planted the Gospel there (⁴⁴⁰²Acts 16:12, etc.), in his second missionary journey, A.D. 51. Doubtless he visited it again on his journey from Ephesus into Macedonia (⁴⁴⁰¹Acts 20:1); and ⁴⁴⁰³Acts 20:3,6, expressly mentions his third visit on his return from Greece (Corinth) to Syria by way of Macedonia. His sufferings at Philippi (⁴⁴⁰³Acts 16:19, etc.) strengthened the Christian bond of union between him and his Philippian converts, who also, like him, were exposed to trials for the Gospel's sake (⁵⁰⁰¹1 Thessalonians 2:2). They alone sent supplies for his temporal wants, *twice* shortly after he had left them (⁵⁰⁰⁵Philippians 4:15,16), and again a third time shortly before writing this Epistle (⁵⁰⁰¹Philippians 4:10,18 ⁴⁷⁰²2 Corinthians 11:9). This fervent attachment on their part was, perhaps, also in part due to the fact that few Jews were in Philippi, as in other scenes of his labors, to sow the seeds of distrust and suspicion. There was no synagogue, but merely a Jewish *Proseucha*, or oratory, by the riverside. So that there only do we read of his meeting no opposition from Jews, but only from the masters of the divining damsel, whose gains had been put an end to by her being dispossessed.

Though the Philippian Church was as yet free from Judaizing influence, yet it needed to be forewarned of that danger which might at any time assail it from without (⁵⁰⁰²Philippians 3:2); even as such evil influences had crept into the Galatian churches. In ⁵⁰⁰²Philippians 4:2,3 we find a trace of the fact recorded in the history (⁴⁴⁰³Acts 16:13,14), that *female* converts were among the first to receive the Gospel at Philippi.

As to the state of the Church, we gather from ⁴⁷⁰²2 Corinthians 8:1,2 that its members were *poor*, yet most *liberal*; and from ⁵⁰⁰³Philippians 1:28-30, that they were undergoing persecution. The only blemish referred to in their character was, on the part of some members, a tendency to

dissension. Hence arise his admonitions against disputings (^{<3012>}Philippians 1:27 2:1-4,12,14 4:2).

The OBJECT of the Epistle is general: not only to thank the Philippians for their contribution sent by Epaphroditus, who was now in returning to take back the apostle's letter, but to express his Christian love and sympathy, and to exhort them to a life consonant with that of Christ, and to warn them against existing dissensions and future possible assaults of Judaizers from without. It is remarkable in this Epistle alone, as compared with the others, that, amidst many commendations, there are no express censures of those to whom it is addressed. No doctrinal error, or schism, has as yet sprung up; the only blemish hinted at is, that some of the Philippian Church were somewhat wanting in lowliness of mind, the result of which want was disputation. Two women, Euodias and Syntyche, are mentioned as having erred in this respect (^{<3002>}Philippians 4:2,3). The Epistle may be divided into *three* parts:

(1) Affectionate address to the Philippians; reference to his own state as a prisoner at Rome, and to theirs, and to his mission of Epaphroditus to them (the first and second chapters). Epaphroditus probably held a leading office in the Philippian Church, perhaps as a presbyter. After Tychicus and Onesimus had departed (A.D. 62), carrying the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, Paul was cheered in his imprisonment by the arrival of Epaphroditus with the Philippian contribution. That faithful "brother, companion in labor, and fellow soldier" (^{<3042>}Philippians 2:25), had brought on himself by the fatigues of the journey a dangerous sickness (^{<3072>}Philippians 2:26,30). But now that he was recovered, he "longed" (^{<3072>}Philippians 2:26) to return to his Philippian flock, and in person to relieve their anxiety on his behalf, in respect to his sickness; and the apostle gladly availed himself of the opportunity of writing to them a letter of grateful acknowledgments and Christian exhortations.

(2) Caution against Judaizing teachers, supported by reference to his own former and present feeling towards Jewish legalism (^{<3081>}Philippians 3:1-21).

(3) Admonitions to individuals, and to the Church in general, thanks for their seasonable aid, and concluding benedictions and salutations (⁵⁰⁴Philippians 4:1-23).

This Epistle was written from Rome during the imprisonment, the beginning of which is related in ⁴²⁶Acts 28:16,20,30,31. The reference to “Caesar’s household” (⁵⁰²Philippians 4:22), and to the “palace” (⁵⁰³Philippians 1:13, *Greek*, “*Praetorium*,” probably, *the barrack of the Praetorian bodyguard*, attached to the palace of Nero) confirms this. It must have been during his *first* imprisonment at Rome, for the mention of the Praetorium agrees with the fact that it was during his first imprisonment he was in the custody of the Praetorian Prefect, and his situation, described in ⁵⁰⁵Philippians 1:12-14, agrees with his situation in the first two years of his imprisonment (⁴²⁸Acts 28:30,31). The following reasons show, moreover, that it was written towards *the close* of that imprisonment:

(1) He, in it, expresses his expectation of the immediate decision of his cause (⁵⁰²Philippians 2:23).

(2) Enough time had elapsed for the Philippians to hear of his imprisonment, to send Epaphroditus to him, to hear of Epaphroditus’ arrival and sickness, and send back word to Rome of their distress (⁵⁰⁷Philippians 2:26).

(3) It must have been written after the three other Epistles sent from Rome, namely, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon; for Luke is no longer with him (⁵⁰³Philippians 2:20); otherwise he would have been specified as saluting them, having formerly labored among them, whereas he is mentioned as with him, ⁵⁰⁴Colossians 4:14 ⁵⁰⁵Philemon 1:24. Again, in ⁴⁹³Ephesians 6:19,20, his freedom to preach is implied: but in ⁵⁰³Philippians 1:13-18, his bondage is dwelt on, and it is implied that, *not himself*, but *others*, preached, and made his imprisonment known. Again, in ⁵⁰²Philemon 1:22, he confidently anticipates his release, which contrasts with the more depressed anticipations of this Epistle.

(4) A considerable time had elapsed since the beginning of his imprisonment, for “his bonds” to have become so widely known, and

to have produced such good effects for the Gospel (^{<301B>}Philippians 1:13).

(5) There is evidently an increase in the rigor of his imprisonment implied now, as compared with the early stage of it, as described in ^{<430B>}Acts 28:1-31; compare ^{<301B>}Philippians 1:29,30 2:27. History furnishes a probable clue to account for this increase of vigor. In the second year of Paul's imprisonment (A.D. 62), Burrus, the Praetorian Prefect, to whose custody he had been committed (^{<430B>}Acts 28:16, "the captain of the guard"), died; and Nero the emperor having divorced Octavia, and married Poppoea, a Jewish proselytess (who then caused her rival, Octavia, to be murdered, and gloated over the head of her victim), exalted Tigellinus, the chief promoter of the marriage, a monster of wickedness, to the Praetorian Prefecture. It was then he seems to have been removed from his own house into the Praetorium, or barrack of the Praetorian guards, attached to the palace, for stricter custody; and hence he writes with less hopeful anticipations as to the result of his trial (^{<301B>}Philippians 2:17 3:11). Some of the Praetorian guards who had the custody of him before, would then naturally make known his "bonds," in accordance with ^{<301B>}Philippians 1:13; from the smaller Praetorian bodyguard at the palace the report would spread to the general permanent Praetorian camp, which Tiberius had established north of the city, outside of the walls. He had arrived in Rome, February, 61; the "two whole years" (^{<430B>}Acts 20:30) in his own hired house" ended February, 63, so that the date of this Epistle, written shortly after, evidently while the danger was imminent, would be about spring or summer, 63. The providence of God averted the danger. He probably was thought beneath the notice of Tigellinus, who was more intent on court intrigues. The death of Nero's favorite, Pallas, the brother of Felix, this same year, also took out of the way another source of danger.

The STYLE is abrupt and discontinuous, his fervor of affection leading him to pass rapidly from one theme to another (^{<301B>}Philippians 2:18,19-24,25-30 3:1,2,3,4-14,15). In no Epistle does he use so warm expressions of love. In ^{<301B>}Philippians 4:1 he seems at a loss for words sufficient to express all the extent and ardor of his affection for the Philippians: "My brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the

Lord, my dearly beloved.” The mention of bishops and deacons in
~~Philippians~~ Philippians 1:1 is due to the late date of the Epistle, at a time when the Church had begun to assume that order which is laid down in the Pastoral Epistles, and which continued the prevalent one in the first and purest age of the Church.

CHAPTER 1

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-30.

INSCRIPTION. THANKSGIVING AND PRAYERS FOR THE FLOURISHING SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE PHILIPPIANS. HIS OWN STATE AT ROME, AND THE RESULT OF HIS IMPRISONMENT IN SPREADING THE GOSPEL. EXHORTATION TO CHRISTIAN CONSISTENCY.

1. Timotheus — mentioned as being well known to the Philippians (^{440B}Acts 16:3,10-12), and now present with Paul. Not that Timothy had any share in writing the Epistle; for Paul presently uses the first person singular, “I,” not “we” (^{500B}Philippians 1:3). The mention of his name implies merely that Timothy joined in affectionate remembrances to them.

servants of Jesus Christ — The oldest manuscripts read the order, “Christ Jesus.” Paul does not call himself “an apostle,” as in the inscriptions of other Epistles; for the Philippians needed not to be reminded of his apostolic authority. He writes rather in a tone of affectionate familiarity.

all — so ^{500B}Philippians 1:4,7,8,25 ^{500B}Philippians 2:17,26. It implies comprehensive affection which desired not to forget any one among them “all.”

bishops — synonymous with “presbyters” in the apostolical churches; as appears from the same persons being called “elders of the Church” at Ephesus (^{440B}Acts 20:17), and “overseers” (^{440B}Acts 20:28), *Greek*, “bishops.” And ^{500B}Titus 1:5, compare with ^{500B}Philippians 1:7. This is the earliest letter of Paul where bishops and deacons are mentioned, and the only one where they are separately addressed in the salutation. This accords with the probable course of events, deduced alike from the letters and history. While the apostles were constantly visiting the churches in person or by messengers, regular pastors would be less needed; but when some were removed by various causes, provision for the permanent order

of the churches would be needed. Hence the three pastoral letters, subsequent to this Epistle, give instruction as to the due appointment of bishops and deacons. It agrees with this new want of the Church, when other apostles were dead or far away, and Paul long in prison, that bishops and deacons should be prominent for the first time in the opening salutation. The Spirit thus intimated that the churches were to look up to their own pastors, now that the miraculous gifts were passing into God's ordinary providence, and the presence of the inspired apostles, the dispensers of those gifts, was to be withdrawn [PALEY, "*Horae Paulinae*"]. "Presbyter," implied the *rank*; "bishop," *the duties of the office* [NEANDER]. Naturally, when the apostles who had the chief supervision were no more, one among the presbyters presided and received the name "bishop," in the more restricted and modern sense; just as in the Jewish synagogue one of the elders presided as "ruler of the synagogue." Observe, the apostle addresses the Church (that is, the congregation) more directly than its presiding ministers (Colossians 4:17 1 Thessalonians 5:12 Hebrews 13:24 Revelation 1:4,11). The bishops managed more the internal, the deacons the external, affairs of the Church. The plural number shows there was more than one bishop or presbyter, and more than one deacon in the Church at Philippi.

2. Grace ... peace — The very form of this salutation implies the union of Jew, Greek, and Roman. The Greek salutation was "joy" (*chairein*), akin to the *Greek* for "grace" (*charis*). The Roman was "health," the intermediate term between *grace* and *peace*. The *Hebrew* was "peace," including both temporal and spiritual prosperity. *Grace* must come first if we are to have true *peace*.

from ... from — Omit the second "from": as in the *Greek*, "God our Father" and "the Lord Jesus Christ," are most closely connected.

3. Translate, "In all my remembrance of you."

4. making request — Translate, "making *my* request."

for you all — The frequent repetition in this Epistle of "all" with "you," marks that Paul desires to declare his love for *all* alike, and will not recognize any divisions among them.

with joy — the characteristic feature in this Epistle, as *love* is in that to the Ephesians (compare ^{<5018>}Philippians 1:18 ^{<5082>}Philippians 2:2,19,28 3:1 4:1,4). *Love* and *joy* are the two first-fruits of the Spirit. *Joy* gives especial animation to prayers. It marked his high opinion of them, that there was almost everything in them to give him *joy*, and almost nothing to give him pain.

5. Ground of his “thanking God” (^{<5003>}Philippians 1:3): “For your (continued) fellowship (that is, real spiritual participation) in (literally, ‘in regard to’) the Gospel from the first day (of your becoming *partakers* in it) until now.” Believers have the fellowship of the Son of God (^{<6009>}1 Corinthians 1:9) and of the Father (^{<6003>}1 John 1:3) in the Gospel, by becoming partakers of “the fellowship of the Holy Ghost” (^{<4734>}2 Corinthians 13:14), and exercise that fellowship by acts of communion, not only the communion of the Lord’s Supper, but holy liberality to brethren and ministers (^{<5009>}Philippians 4:10,15, “*communicated ... concerning giving*”; ^{<4703>}2 Corinthians 9:13 ^{<4806>}Galatians 6:6 ^{<5339>}Hebrews 13:16, “To communicate forget not”).

6. confident — This confidence nerves prayers and thanksgivings (^{<5003>}Philippians 1:3,4).

this very thing — *the very thing* which he prays for (^{<5006>}Philippians 1:4) is the matter of his believing confidence (^{<4112>}Mark 11:24 ^{<6154>}1 John 5:14,15). Hence the result is sure.

he which hath begun — God (^{<5883>}Philippians 2:13).

a good work — Any work that God begins, He will surely finish (^{<4982>}1 Samuel 3:12). Not even men begin a work at random. Much more the fact of His beginning the work is a pledge of its completion (^{<2902>}Isaiah 26:12). So as to the particular work here meant, the *perfecting of their fellowship in the Gospel* (^{<5005>}Philippians 1:5 ^{<4974>}Psalms 37:24 89:33 138:8 ^{<6105>}John 10:28,29 ^{<4829>}Romans 8:29,35-39 11:1,2 ^{<5067>}Hebrews 6:17-19 ^{<5017>}James 1:17 ^{<6104>}Jude 1:24). As God cast not off Isra_el for ever, though chastening them for a time, so He will not cast off the spiritual Isra_el (^{<6539>}Deuteronomy 33:3 ^{<2703>}Isaiah 27:3 ^{<6005>}1 Peter 1:5).

perform it until — “perfect it up to” [ALFORD, ELLICOTT, and others].

the day of ... Christ — (<5000>Philippians 1:10). The Lord's coming, designed by God in every age of the Church to be regarded as near, is to be the goal set before believers' minds rather than their own death.

7. meet — *Greek*, "just."

to think this — to have the prayerful confidence I expressed (<5000>Philippians 1:4-6).

of you — literally, "*in behalf of you.*" Paul's confident prayer *in their behalf* was that God would perfect His own good work of grace in them.

because, etc. — Punctuate and translate, "Because I have you in my heart (so <5000>Philippians 1:8; otherwise the *Greek* and the words immediately following in the verse, favor the *Margin*, 'Ye have *me* in *your* heart ... being partakers of my grace') (both, in my bonds, and in *my* defense and confirmation of the Gospel), you (I say) all being fellow partakers of my grace." This last clause thus assigns the reason why he has them *in his heart* (that is, cherished in his love, <4000>2 Corinthians 3:2 7:3), even in his bonds, and in his defense and confirmation of the Gospel (such as he was constantly making in private, <4000>Acts 28:17-23; his self-defense and confirmation of the Gospel being necessarily conjoined, as the *Greek* implies; compare <5000>Philippians 1:17), namely, "inasmuch as ye are fellow partakers of my grace": inasmuch as ye share with me in "the fellowship of the Gospel" (<5000>Philippians 1:5), and have manifested this, both by suffering as I do for the Gospel's sake (<5000>Philippians 1:28-30), and by imparting to me of your substance (<5000>Philippians 4:15). It is natural and right for me thus confidently to pray in your behalf. (ELLICOTT, and others translate, "To be thus minded for you all"), because of my having you in my warmest remembrances even in my bonds, since you are sharers with me in the Gospel grace. Bonds do not bind love.

8. Confirmation of <5000>Philippians 1:7.

record — that is, *witness*.

in the bowels of Jesus Christ — "Christ Jesus" is the order in the oldest manuscripts. My *yearning love* (so the *Greek* implies) to you is not merely from natural affection, but from devotedness to Christ Jesus. "Not Paul, but Jesus Christ lives in Paul; wherefore Paul is not moved in the

bowels (that is, the tender love, ^{<2612>}Jeremiah 31:20) of Paul, but of Jesus Christ” [BENGEL]. All real spiritual love is but a portion of Christ’s love which yearns in all who are united to Him [ALFORD].

9. The subject of his prayer for them (^{<5004>}Philippians 1:4).

your love — to Christ, producing love not only to Paul, Christ’s minister, as it did, but also to one another, which it did not altogether as much as it ought (^{<5052>}Philippians 2:2 4:2).

knowledge — of doctrinal and practical truth.

judgment — rather, “perception”; “perceptive sense.” Spiritual perceptiveness: spiritual sight, spiritual hearing, spiritual feeling, spiritual taste. Christianity is a vigorous plant, not the hotbed growth of enthusiasm. “Knowledge” and “perception” guard love from being ill-judged.

10. Literally, “*With a view to your proving* (and so approving and embracing) *the things that excel*” (^{<4128>}Romans 2:18); not merely things not bad, but the things best among those that are good; the things of more advanced excellence. Ask as to things, not merely, Is there no harm, but is there any good, and which is the best?

sincere — from a *Greek* root. *Examined in the sunlight and found pure.*

without offense — not stumbling; running the Christian race without falling through any stumbling-block, that is, temptation, in your way.

till — rather, “unto,” “against”; so that when the day of Christ comes, ye may be found pure and without offense.

11. The oldest manuscripts read the singular, “fruit.” So ^{<4122>}Galatians 5:22 (see on Ga. 5:22); regarding the works of righteousness, however manifold, as *one* harmonious whole, “the *fruit* of the Spirit” (^{<4119>}Ephesians 5:9) ^{<5058>}James 3:18, “the fruit of righteousness” (^{<5821>}Hebrews 12:11); ^{<4122>}Romans 6:22, “fruit unto holiness.”

which are — “which *is* by (*Greek*, ‘*through*’) Jesus Christ.” Through His sending to us the Spirit from the Father. “We are wild and useless olive

trees till we are grafted into Christ, who, by His living root, makes us fruit-bearing branches” [CALVIN].

12. understand — *Greek*, “know.” The Philippians probably had feared that his imprisonment would hinder the spread of the Gospel; he therefore removes this fear.

the things which happened unto me — *Greek*, “the things concerning me.”

rather — so far is my imprisonment from hindering the Gospel. Faith takes in a favorable light even what seems adverse [BENGEL]
(³⁰¹⁹Philippians 1:19,28 ³⁰¹⁷Philippians 2:17).

13. my bonds in Christ — rather as *Greek*, “So that my bonds *have become manifest in Christ*,” that is, known, as endured in Christ’s cause.

palace — literally, “Praetorium,” that is, the barrack of the Praetorian guards attached to the palace of Nero, on the Palatine hill at Rome; not the general Praetorian camp outside of the city; for this was not connected with “Caesar’s household,” which ³⁰²²Philippians 4:22 shows the Praetorium here meant was. The emperor was “Praetor,” or Commander-in-Chief; naturally then the barrack of his bodyguard was called the Praetorium. Paul seems now not to have been at large in his own hired house, though chained to a soldier, as in ⁴⁰³⁶Acts 28:16,20,30,31, but in strict custody in the Praetorium; a change which probably took place on Tigellinus becoming Praetorian Prefect. See *Introduction*.

in all other places — so CHRYSOSTOM. Or else, “TO all the rest,” that is, “manifest to all the other” Praetorian soldiers stationed elsewhere, through the instrumentality of the Praetorian household guards who might for the time be attached to the emperor’s palace, and who relieved one another in succession. Paul had been now upwards of two years a prisoner, so that there was time for his cause and the Gospel having become widely known at Rome.

14. Translate as *Greek*, “And *that* (³⁰¹⁵Philippians 1:13) *most* of the brethren in the Lord,” etc. “In the Lord,” distinguishes them from “brethren after the flesh,” Jewish fellow countrymen. ELLICOTT translates, “*Trusting in the Lord*.”

by my bonds — encouraged by my patience in bearing my bonds.

much more bold — Translate as *Greek*, “are more abundantly bold.”

15. “Some indeed *are preaching* Christ even *for* envy, that is, to carry out the *envy* which they felt towards Paul, on account of the success of the Gospel in the capital of the world, owing to his steadfastness in his imprisonment; they wished through envy to transfer the credit of its progress from him to themselves. Probably Judaizing teachers (^{<540>}Romans 14:1-23 ^{<480>}1 Corinthians 3:10-15 9:1, etc. ^{<710>}2 Corinthians 11:1-4).

some also of — rather, “for”

good will — answering to “the brethren” (^{<3014>}Philippians 1:14); some being *well disposed* to him.

16, 17. The oldest manuscripts transpose these verses, and read, “*These* (last) *indeed out of* love (to Christ and me), knowing (the opposite of ‘thinking’ below) that I am set (that is, appointed by God, ^{<318>}1 Thessalonians 3:3) for the defense of the Gospel (^{<300>}Philippians 1:7, not on my own account). But the others *out of* contention (or rather, ‘a factious spirit’; ‘cabal’; a spirit of intrigue, using unscrupulous means to compass their end; ‘self-seeking’ [ALFORD]) *proclaim* (the *Greek* is not the same as that for ‘preach,’ but, ‘announce’) Christ, not sincerely (answering to ‘but of a spirit of intrigue,’ or ‘self-seeking’). Literally, ‘not purely’; not with a pure intention; the Jewish leaven they tried to introduce was in order to *glorify themselves* (^{<402>}Galatians 6:12,13; however, see on ^{<3018>}Philippians 1:18), thinking (but in vain) *to raise up* (so the oldest manuscripts read) *tribulation* to my bonds.” Their *thought* was, that taking the opportunity of my being laid aside, they would exalt themselves by their Judaizing preaching, and depreciate me and my preaching, and so cause me trouble of spirit in my bonds; they thought that I, like themselves, sought my own glory, and so would be mortified at their success over mine. But they are utterly mistaken; “I rejoice” at it (^{<3018>}Philippians 1:18), so far am I from being *troubled* at it.

18. What follows from this? Does this trouble me as they thought it would? “Notwithstanding” their unkind *thought* to me, and self-seeking intention, the cause I have at heart is furthered “every way” of preaching,

“whether in pretense (with a by motive, ^{<5016>}Philippians 1:16) or in truth (out of true ‘love’ to Christ, ^{<5017>}Philippians 1:17), Christ is *proclaimed*; and therein I do rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice.” From this it would seem that these self-seeking teachers in the main “proclaimed Christ,” not “another Gospel,” such as the Judaizers in Galatia taught (^{<5018>}Galatians 1:6-8); though probably having some of the Jewish leaven (see on ^{<5015>}Philippians 1:15,16), their *chief* error was their self-seeking envious *motive*, not so much error of doctrine; had there been *vital* error, Paul would not have *rejoiced*. The *proclamation of CHRIST*,” however done, roused attention, and so was sure to be of service. Paul could thus rejoice at the good result of their bad intentions (^{<5020>}Psalms 76:10 ^{<5015>}Isaiah 10:5,7).

19. turn to my salvation — “turn out *to me for*, (or *unto*) salvation.” This proclamation of Christ every way will turn out to *my spiritual good*. Christ, whose interests are my interests, being glorified thereby; and so the coming of His kingdom being furthered, which, when it does come, will bring completed “SALVATION” (^{<5023>}Hebrews 9:28) to me and all whose “earnest expectation” (^{<5019>}Philippians 1:20) is that Christ may be magnified in them. So far is their preaching from causing me, as they thought, *tribulation in my bonds* (^{<5016>}Philippians 1:16). Paul plainly quotes and applies to himself the very words of the *Septuagint* (^{<5036>}Job 13:16), “This shall turn out to my salvation,” which belong to all God’s people of every age, in their tribulation (compare ^{<5035>}Job 13:15).

through your prayer and the supply — The *Greek* intimately joins the two nouns together, by having but one preposition and one article: “Through your prayer and (*the consequent*) supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (obtained for me through your prayer).”

20. According to my earnest expectation — The *Greek* expresses, “expectation *with uplifted head* (^{<5023>}Luke 21:28) *and outstretched neck*.” ^{<5029>}Romans 8:19 is the only other place in the New Testament that the word occurs. TITTMANN says, in both places it implies not mere *expectation*, but *the anxious desire of an anticipated prosperous issue in afflictive circumstances*. The subject of his earnest expectation which follows, answers to “my salvation” (^{<5019>}Philippians 1:19).

in nothing I shall be ashamed — in nothing have reason to be ashamed of “my work for God, or His work in me” [ALFORD]. Or, “in nothing be

disappointed in my *hope*, but that I may fully obtain it” [ESTIUS]. So “ashamed” is used in ^{<R13>}Romans 9:33.

all boldness — “all” is opposed to “in nothing,” as “boldness” is the opposite to “ashamed.”

so now also — when “my body” is “in bonds” (^{<S117>}Philippians 1:17).

Christ — not Paul, “shall be magnified.”

life, or by death — Whatever be the issue, I cannot lose; I must be the gainer by the event. Paul was not omniscient; in the issue of things pertaining to themselves, the apostles underwent the same probation of faith and patience as we.

21. For — in either event (^{<S121>}Philippians 1:20) I must be the gainer, “For to me,” etc.

to live is Christ — whatever life, time, and strength, I have, is Christ’s; Christ is the sole object for which I live (^{<R121>}Galatians 2:20).

to die is gain — not the act of dying, but as the *Greek* (“to have died”) expresses, *the state after death*. Besides the glorification of Christ by my death, which is my primary object (^{<S122>}Philippians 1:20), the change of state caused by death, so far from being a matter of *shame* (^{<S121>}Philippians 1:20) or loss, as my enemies suppose, will be a positive “gain” to me.

22. Rather as *Greek*, “But if to live in the flesh (if), this (I say, the continuance in life which I am undervaluing) be the fruit of my labor (that is, be the condition in which the fruit of my ministerial labor is involved), *then* what I shall choose I know not (I cannot determine with myself, if the choice were given me, both alternatives being great goods alike).” So ALFORD and ELLICOTT. BENDEL takes it as *English Version*, which the *Greek* will bear by supposing an ellipsis, “If to live in the flesh (be my portion), this (continuing to live) is the fruit of my labor,” that is, this continuance in life will be the occasion of my bringing in “the fruit of labor,” that is, will be the occasion of “labors” which are their own “fruit” or reward; or, this my continuing “to live” will have this “fruit,” namely, “labors” for Christ. GROTIUS explains “the fruit of labor” as an idiom for “worthwhile”; If I live in the flesh, this is worth my while, for thus

Christ's interest will be advanced, "For to me to live is Christ"

(^{<5002}Philippians 1:21; compare ^{<5080}Philippians 2:30 ^{<5115}Romans 1:13). The second alternative, namely, dying, is taken up and handled, ^{<5017}Philippians 2:17, "If I be offered."

23. For — The oldest manuscripts read, "But." "I know not (^{<5002}Philippians 1:22), BUT am in a strait (am perplexed) betwixt *the* two (namely, 'to live' and 'to die'), having the desire *for* departing (literally, 'to loose anchor,' ^{<5006}2 Timothy 4:6) and being with Christ; FOR (so the oldest manuscripts) it is by far better"; or as the *Greek*, more forcibly, "by far *the more preferable*"; a double comparative. This refutes the notion of the soul being dormant during its separation from the body. It also shows that, while he regarded the Lord's advent as at all times near, yet that his death before it was a very possible contingency. The *partial* life eternal is in the interval between death and Christ's second advent; the *perfectional*, at that advent [BISHOP PEARSON]. *To depart* is better than to remain in the flesh; *to be with Christ is far, far better*; a New Testament hope (^{<5024}Hebrews 12:24), [BENGEL].

24. to abide — to continue somewhat longer.

for you — *Greek*, "on your account"; "for your sake." In order to be of service to *you*, I am willing to forego my entrance a little sooner into blessedness; heaven will not fail to be mine at last.

25. Translate, "And being confident of this."

I know, etc. — by prophetic intimations of the Spirit. He did not yet know the issue, as far as *human appearances* were concerned (^{<5082}Philippians 2:23). He doubtless returned from his first captivity to Philippi (^{<5039}Hebrews 13:19 ^{<5022}Philemon 1:22).

joy of faith — *Greek*, "joy in your faith."

26. Translate, "That your matter of glorying (or *rejoicing*) may abound in Christ Jesus in me (that is, in my case; *in respect to me*, or *for me* who have been granted to your prayers, ^{<5015}Philippians 1:19) through my presence again among you." ALFORD makes the "matter of glorying," *the possession of the Gospel*, received from Paul, which would abound, be assured and increased, by his presence among them; thus, "in me," implies

that Paul is the worker of the material of abounding in Christ Jesus. But “my *rejoicing* over you” (^{<3476>}Philippians 2:16), answers plainly to “your *rejoicing* in respect to me” here.

27. Only — Whatever happens as to my coming to you, or not, make this your one only care. By supposing this or that future contingency, many persuade themselves they will be such as they ought to be, but it is better always without evasion to perform present duties under present circumstances [BENGEL].

let your conversation be — (Compare ^{<3083>}Philippians 3:20). The *Greek* implies, “Let your *walk as citizens* (namely, of the heavenly state; ‘the city of the living God,’ ^{<3022>}Hebrews 12:22, ‘the heavenly Jerusalem,’ ‘fellow citizens of the saints,’ ^{<3029>}Ephesians 2:19) be,” etc.

I ... see ... hear — so ^{<3183>}Philippians 1:30. “Hear,” in order to include both alternatives, must include the meaning *know*.

your affairs — your state.

in one spirit — the fruit of partaking of the Holy Spirit (^{<3008>}Ephesians 4:3,4).

with one mind — rather as *Greek*, “*soul*,” the sphere of the affections; subordinate to the “Spirit,” man’s higher and heavenly nature. “There is sometimes natural antipathies among believers; but these are overcome, when there is not only unity of spirit, but also of *soul*” [BENGEL].

striving together — with united effort.

28. terrified — literally, said of horses or other animals startled or suddenly scared; so of sudden *consternation* in general.

which — your not being terrified.

evident token of perdition — if they would only perceive it (^{<3005>}2 Thessalonians 1:5). It attests this, that in contending hopelessly against you, they are only rushing on to their own perdition, not shaking your united faith and constancy.

to you of salvation — The oldest manuscripts read, “of *your* salvation”; not merely *your temporal safety*.

29. For — rather, a proof that this is an evident token from God of your salvation, “*Because*,” etc.

it is given — *Greek*, “it *has been granted as a favor*,” or “gift of grace.” Faith is the gift of God (^{<4018>}Ephesians 2:8), not wrought in the soul by the will of man, but by the Holy Ghost (^{<4012>}John 1:12,13).

believe on him — “To believe *Him*,” would merely mean to believe He speaks the truth. “To believe *on Him*,” is to believe in, and trust through, Him to obtain eternal salvation. *Suffering for Christ* is not only not a mark of God’s anger, but *a gift of His grace*.

30. ye saw in me — (^{<4062>}Acts 16:12,19, etc. ^{<5002>}1 Thessalonians 2:2). I am “in nothing terrified by mine adversaries” (^{<5022>}Philippians 1:29), so ought not ye. The words here, “ye saw ... and ... hear,” answer to “I come and see you, or else ... *hear*” (^{<5027>}Philippians 1:27).

CHAPTER 2

~~500~~PHILIPPIANS 2:1-30.

CONTINUED EXHORTATION: TO UNITY: TO HUMILITY AFTER CHRIST'S EXAMPLE, WHOSE GLORY FOLLOWED HIS HUMILIATION: TO EARNESTNESS IN SEEKING PERFECTION, THAT THEY MAY BE HIS JOY IN THE DAY OF CHRIST: HIS JOYFUL READINESS TO BE OFFERED NOW BY DEATH, SO AS TO PROMOTE THEIR FAITH. HIS INTENTION TO SEND TIMOTHY: HIS SENDING EPAPHRODITUS MEANTIME.

1. The “therefore” implies that he is here expanding on the exhortation (~~502~~Philippians 1:27), “In one Spirit, with one mind (*soul*).” He urges *four influencing motives* in this verse, to inculcate the four Christian duties corresponding respectively to them (~~500~~Philippians 2:2). “That ye be *like-minded*, having the same *love*, of *one accord*, of one mind”;

(1) “If there be (with you) *any consolation in Christ*,” that is, any *consolation of which Christ is the source*, leading you to wish to *console me* in my afflictions borne for Christ’s sake, ye owe it to me to grant my request “that ye be like-minded” [CHRYSTOM and ESTIUS]:

(2) “If there be any comfort of (that is, flowing from) love,” the adjunct of “consolation in Christ”;

(3) “If any fellowship of (communion together as Christians, flowing from joint participation in) the Spirit” (~~4734~~2 Corinthians 13:14). As *Pagans* meant literally those who were of one village, and *drank of one fountain*, how much greater is the union which conjoins those who drink of the same Spirit! (~~4004~~1 Corinthians 12:4,13) [GROTIUS]:

(4) “If any bowels (tender emotions) and mercies (compassions),” the adjuncts of “fellowship of the Spirit.” The opposites of the two pairs, into which the four fall, are reprobated, ~~5000~~Philippians 2:3,4.

2. Fulfill — that is, Make full. I have joy in you, *complete* it by that which is still wanting, namely, *unity* (^{<500>}Philippians 1:9).

likeminded — literally, “that ye be of the same mind”; more general than the following “of one mind.”

having the same love — equally disposed to love and be loved.

being of one accord — literally, “with united *souls*.” This pairs with the following clause, thus, “With united souls, being of one mind”; as the former two also pair together, “That ye be likeminded, having the same love.”

3. Let nothing be done — The italicized words are not in the *Greek*. Perhaps the ellipsis had better be supplied from the *Greek* (^{<500>}Philippians 2:2), “*Thinking* nothing in the way of strife” (or rather, “factious intrigue,” “self-seeking,” see on ^{<5000>}Philippians 1:16). It is the *thought* which characterizes the action as good or bad before God.

lowliness of mind — The *direct* relation of this grace is to God alone; it is the sense of dependence of the creature on the Creator as such, and it places all created beings in this respect on a level. The man “lowly of mind” as to his spiritual life is independent of men, and free from all slavish feeling, while sensible of his continual dependence on God. Still it INDIRECTLY affects his behavior toward his fellow men; for, conscious of his entire dependence on God for all his abilities, even as they are dependent on God for theirs, he will not pride himself on his abilities, or exalt self in his conduct toward others (^{<4000>}Ephesians 4:2 ^{<5000>}Colossians 3:12) [NEANDER].

let each esteem — Translate as *Greek*, “esteeming each other superior to *yourselves*.” Instead of fixing your eyes on those points in which you excel, fix them on those in which your neighbor excels you: this is true “humility.”

4. The oldest manuscripts read, “Not *looking each of you* (plural, *Greek*) on his own things (that is, not *having regard* solely to them), but *each of you* on the things of others” also. Compare ^{<5002>}Philippians 2:21; also Paul’s own example (^{<5002>}Philippians 1:24).

5. The oldest manuscripts read, “Have this mind in you,” etc. He does not put forward himself (see on ^{<110>}Philippians 2:4, and ^{<102>}Philippians 1:24) as an example, but Christ, THE ONE pre-eminently who sought not His own, but “humbled Himself” (^{<128>}Philippians 2:8), first in taking on Him our nature, secondly, in humbling Himself further in that nature (^{<153>}Romans 15:3).

6. Translate, “Who *subsisting* (or *existing*, namely, originally: the *Greek* is not the simple substantive verb, ‘to be’) in the form of God (the divine *essence* is not meant: but the *external self-manifesting characteristics of God*, the *form* shining forth from His glorious essence). The divine nature had infinite BEAUTY in itself, even without any creature contemplating that beauty: that beauty was ‘the form of God’; as ‘the *form* of a servant’ (^{<100>}Philippians 2:7), which is in contrasted opposition to it, takes for granted the *existence* of His human nature, so ‘the form of God’ takes for granted His divine nature [BENGEL], Compare ^{<135>}John 5:37 17:5 ^{<105>}Colossians 1:15, ‘Who is the IMAGE of the invisible God’ at a time *before* ‘every creature,’ ^{<104>}2 Corinthians 4:4, *esteemed* (the same *Greek* verb as in ^{<108>}Philippians 2:3) His being *on an equality* with God no (act of) robbery” or *self-arrogation*; claiming to one’s self what does not belong to him. ELLICOTT, WAHL, and others have translated, “A *thing* to be grasped at,” which would require the *Greek* to be *harpagma*, whereas *harpagmos* means the *act* of seizing. So *harpagmos* means in the only other passage where it occurs, PLUTARCH [*On the Education of Children*, 120]. The same insuperable objection lies against ALFORD’S translation, “He regarded not as *self-enrichment* (that is, an *opportunity for self-exaltation*) His equality with God.” His argument is that the antithesis (^{<100>}Philippians 2:7) requires it, “He used His equality with God as *an opportunity, not for self-exaltation*, but for self-abasement, or *emptying Himself*.” But the antithesis is not between His *being on an equality with God*, and His *emptying Himself*; for He never emptied Himself of the fullness of His Godhead, or His “BEING *on an equality with God*”; but between His being “in the FORM (that is, the outward glorious self-manifestation) of God,” and His “taking on Him *the form of a servant*,” whereby He in a great measure emptied Himself of His precedent “form,” or outward self-manifesting glory as God. Not “looking on His own things” (^{<100>}Philippians 2:4), He, though existing in the form of God, He esteemed it no robbery to be on an equality

with God, yet made Himself of no reputation. “Being on an equality with God, is not identical with subsisting in the form of God”; the latter expresses the *external characteristics*, majesty, and beauty of the Deity, which “He emptied Himself of,” to assume “the *form* of a servant”; the former, “HIS BEING,” or NATURE, His already existing STATE OF EQUALITY with God, both the Father and the Son having the same ESSENCE. A glimpse of Him “in the form of God,” previous to His incarnation, was given to Moses (^{<1240>}Exodus 24:10,11), Aaron, etc.

7. made himself of no reputation, and ... and — rather as the *Greek*, “*emptied Himself, taking upon him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.*” The two latter clauses (there being no conjunctions, “and ... and,” in the *Greek*) expresses *in what* Christ’s “emptying of Himself” consists, namely, in “taking the form of a servant” (see on ^{<8005>}Hebrews 10:5; compare ^{<1236>}Exodus 21:5,6, and ^{<9400>}Psalms 40:6, proving that it was at the time when He assumed a *body*, He took “the form of a servant”), and in order to explain *how* He took “the form of a servant,” there is added, by “being made in the likeness of men.” His subjection to the law (^{<1120>}Luke 2:21 ^{<8004>}Galatians 4:4) and to His parents (^{<1125>}Luke 2:51), His low state as a carpenter, and carpenter’s reputed son (^{<1035>}Matthew 13:55 ^{<1035>}Mark 6:3), His betrayal for the price of a bond-servant (^{<1232>}Exodus 21:32), and slave-like death to relieve us from the slavery of sin and death, finally and chiefly, *His servant-like dependence as man on God*, while His divinity was not outwardly manifested (^{<2805>}Isaiah 49:3,7), are all marks of His “form as a servant.” This proves:

(1) He was in the form of a servant as soon as He was made man.

(2) He was “in the form of God” *before* He was “in the form of a servant.”

(3) He did as really subsist in the divine nature, as in the form of a servant, or in the nature of man. For He was as much “in the form of God” as “in the form of a servant”; and was so in the form of God as “to be on an equality with God”; He therefore could have been none other than God; for God saith, “To whom will ye liken Me and make Me equal?” (^{<2805>}Isaiah 46:5), [BISHOP PEARSON]. His *emptying Himself* presupposes His previous *plenitude of Godhead* (^{<8014>}John 1:14

^{<5019>}Colossians 1:19 2:9). He remained full of this; yet He bore Himself as if He were *empty*.

8. being found in fashion as a man — *being already, by His “emptying Himself,” in the form of a servant, or likeness of man* (^{<6100>}Romans 8:3), “He humbled Himself (still further by) *becoming* obedient *even* unto death (not as *English Version*, ‘He humbled Himself *and became*,’ etc.; the *Greek* has no ‘and,’ and has the *participle*, not the verb), and that the death of the cross.” “Fashion” expresses that He had the *outward guise, speech, and look*. In ^{<1007>}Philippians 2:7, in the *Greek*, the emphasis is on Himself (which stands before the *Greek* verb), “He emptied *Himself*,” *His divine self*, viewed in respect to what He had heretofore been; in ^{<1018>}Philippians 2:8 the emphasis is on “*humbled*” (which stands before the *Greek* “Himself”); He not only “emptied Himself” of His previous “form of God,” but submitted to *positive* HUMILIATION. He “became obedient,” namely, to God, as His “servant” (^{<4559>}Romans 5:19 ^{<4008>}Hebrews 5:8). Therefore “*God*” is said to “exalt” Him (^{<1019>}Philippians 2:9), even as it was God to whom He became voluntarily “obedient.” “Even unto death” expresses the climax of His obedience (^{<1008>}John 10:18).

9. Wherefore — as the just consequence of His self-humiliation and obedience (^{<4085>}Psalms 8:5, 6 110:1, 7 ^{<1018>}Matthew 28:18 ^{<1020>}Luke 24:26 ^{<4077>}John 5:27 10:17 ^{<5101>}Romans 14:9 ^{<4011>}Ephesians 1:20-22 ^{<4019>}Hebrews 2:9). An intimation, that if we would hereafter be exalted, we too must, after His example, now humble ourselves (^{<1019>}Philippians 2:3, 5 ^{<1020>}Philippians 3:21 ^{<4085>}1 Peter 5:5, 6). Christ emptied Christ; God exalted Christ as man to equality with God [BENGEL].

highly exalted — *Greek*, “*super-eminently* exalted” (^{<4009>}Ephesians 4:10).

given him — *Greek*, “bestowed on Him.”

a name — along with the corresponding *reality*, glory and majesty.

which — Translate, namely, “that which is above every name.” The name “JESUS” (^{<1020>}Philippians 2:10), which is even now in glory His name of honor (^{<4005>}Acts 9:5). “Above” not only men, but angels (^{<4012>}Ephesians 1:21).

10. at the name — rather as *Greek*, “in the name.”

bow — rather, “bend,” in token of worship. Referring to ^{<2452>}Isaiah 45:23; quoted also in ^{<5441>}Romans 14:11. To worship “in the name of Jesus,” is to worship Jesus *Himself* (compare ^{<1021>}Philippians 2:11 ^{<1080>}Proverbs 18:10), or *God in Christ* (^{<3623>}John 16:23 ^{<4014>}Ephesians 3:14). Compare “Whosoever shall call upon *the name of the Lord* (that is, whosoever shall call on *the Lord in His revealed character*) shall be saved” (^{<5012>}Romans 10:13 ^{<4002>}1 Corinthians 1:2); “all that call upon *the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*” (compare ^{<5122>}2 Timothy 2:22); “call on the Lord”; ^{<4075>}Acts 7:59, “calling upon ... and saying, Lord Jesus” (^{<4014>}Acts 9:14,21 22:16).

of things in heaven — angels. They worship Him not only as God, but as the ascended *God-man*, “Jesus” (^{<4021>}Ephesians 1:21 ^{<3000>}Hebrews 1:6 ^{<4022>}1 Peter 3:22).

in earth — men; among whom He tabernacled for a time.

under the earth — the dead; among whom He was numbered once (^{<5449>}Romans 14:9,11 ^{<4001>}Ephesians 4:9,10 ^{<6153>}Revelation 5:13). The demons and the lost may be included *indirectly*, as even they give homage, though one of fear, not love, to Jesus (^{<4081>}Mark 3:11 ^{<4081>}Luke 8:31 ^{<5029>}James 2:19, see on ^{<1021>}Philippians 2:11).

11. every tongue — Compare “every knee” (^{<1090>}Philippians 2:10). *In every way* He shall be acknowledged as Lord (no longer as “servant,” ^{<1000>}Philippians 2:7). As none can fully do so “but by the Holy Ghost” (^{<4018>}1 Corinthians 12:3), the spirits of good men who are dead, must be the class *directly* meant, ^{<1090>}Philippians 2:10, “under the earth.”

to the glory of God the Father — the grand end of Christ’s mediatorial office and kingdom, which shall cease when this end shall have been fully realized (^{<4189>}John 5:19-23,30 17:1,4-7 ^{<4154>}1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

12. Wherefore — Seeing that we have in Christ such a specimen of glory resulting from “*obedience*” (^{<1038>}Philippians 2:8) and humiliation, see that ye also be “obedient,” and so “*your salvation*” shall follow your obedience.

as ye have ... obeyed — “*even as ye have been obedient*,” namely, to God, as Jesus was “obedient” unto God (see on ^{<1038>}Philippians 2:8).

not as, etc. — “not *as if*” it were a matter to be done “in my presence only, but now (as things are) much more (with more earnestness) in my absence (because my help is withdrawn from you)” [ALFORD].

work out — carry out to its full perfection. “Salvation” is “worked in” (^{<3183>}Philippians 2:13 ^{<3011>}Ephesians 1:11) believers by the Spirit, who enables them through faith to be justified *once for all*; but it needs, as a progressive work, to be “worked out” by obedience, through the help of the same Spirit, unto perfection (^{<3005>}2 Peter 1:5-8). The sound Christian neither, like the formalist, rests in the means, without looking to the end, and to the Holy Spirit who alone can make the means effectual; nor, like the fanatic, hopes to attain the end without the means.

your own — The emphasis is on this. Now that *I* am not present to further the work of your salvation, “work out *your own* salvation” yourselves the more carefully. Do not think this work cannot go on because I am absent; “for” (^{<3183>}Philippians 2:13) it is God that worketh in you,” etc. In this case adopt a rule different from the former (^{<3119>}Philippians 2:4), but resting on the same principle of “lowliness of mind” (^{<3183>}Philippians 2:3), namely, “look each on *his own* things,” instead of “disputings” with others (^{<3014>}Philippians 2:14).

salvation — which is in “Jesus” (^{<3190>}Philippians 2:10), as His name (meaning God-Savior) implies.

with fear and trembling — the very feeling enjoined on “servants,” as to what ought to accompany their “obedience” (^{<3005>}Ephesians 6:5). So here: See that, as “servants” to God, after the example of Christ, ye be so “with the fear and trembling” which becomes servants; not slavish fear, but *trembling anxiety not to fall short of the goal* (^{<3105>}1 Corinthians 9:26,27 ^{<3001>}Hebrews 4:1, “Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any should come short of it”), *resulting from a sense of our human insufficiency, and from the consciousness that all depends on the power of God*, “who worketh both to will and to do” (^{<3112>}Romans 11:20). “Paul, though joyous, writes seriously” [J. J. WOLF].

13. For — encouragement to work: “For it is God who worketh in you,” always present with you, though I be absent. It is not said, “Work out your own salvation, *though* it is God,” etc. but, “*because* it is God who,”

etc. The *will*, and the power *to work*, being first instalments of His grace, encourage us to make full proof of, and carry out to the end, the “salvation” which He has first “worked,” and is still “working *in*” us, enabling us to “work it *out*.” “Our will does nothing thereunto without grace; but grace is inactive without our will” [ST. BERNARD]. Man is, in different senses, entirely active, and entirely passive: *God producing all, and we acting all*. What He produced is our own acts. It is not that God does some, and we the rest. God does all, and we do all. God is the only proper author, we the only proper actors. Thus the same things in Scripture are represented as from God, and from us. God makes a new heart, and we are commanded to make us a new heart; not merely because we must use the means in order to the effect, but the effect itself is our act and our duty (^{211B}Ezekiel 11:19 18:31 36:26) [EDWARDS].

worketh — rather as *Greek*, “worketh *effectually*.” We cannot of ourselves embrace the Gospel of grace: “the will” (^{480B}Psalms 110:3 ^{480B}2 Corinthians 3:5) comes solely of God’s gift to whom He will (^{484B}John 6:44,65); so also the power “to do” (rather, “*to work effectually*,” as the *Greek* is the same as that for “worketh in”), that is, effectual perseverance to the end, is wholly of God’s gift (^{500B}Philippians 1:6 ^{582B}Hebrews 13:21).

of his good pleasure — rather as *Greek*, “FOR His good pleasure”; *in order to carry out* His sovereign gracious purpose towards you (^{400B}Ephesians 1:5,9).

14. murmurings — *secret murmurings* and complaints against your fellow men arising from selfishness: opposed to the example of Jesus just mentioned (compare the use of the word, ^{487B}John 7:12,13 ^{408B}Acts 6:1 ^{400B}1 Peter 4:9 ^{481B}Jude 1:16).

disputings — The *Greek* is translated “doubting” in ^{508B}1 Timothy 2:8. But here referring to profitless “disputings” with our fellow men, in relation to whom we are called on to be “blameless and harmless” (^{504B}Philippians 2:15):so the *Greek* is translated, ^{408B}Mark 9:33,34. These disputings flow from “vain glory” reprobated (^{508B}Philippians 2:3); and abounded among the Aristotelian philosophers in Macedon, where Philippi was.

15. blameless and harmless — without either the repute of mischief, or the inclination to do it [ALFORD].

sons — rather as *Greek*, “the children of God” (^{<6184>}Romans 8:14-16). Imitation of our heavenly Father is the instinctive guide to our duty as His children, more than any external law (^{<4054>}Matthew 5:44,45,48).

without rebuke — “without (giving handle for) *reproach*.” The whole verse tacitly refers by contrast to ^{<6316>}Deuteronomy 32:5, “Their *spot* ... not ... of His *children* ... a *perverse* and *crooked* generation” (compare ^{<4022>}1 Peter 2:12).

ye shine — literally, “appear” [TRENCH]. “Show yourselves” (compare ^{<4054>}Matthew 5:14-16 ^{<4058>}Ephesians 5:8-13).

as lights in the world — The *Greek* expresses “as *luminaries* in the world,” as the sun and moon, “the lights,” or “great lights,” in the *material* world or in the firmament. The *Septuagint* uses the very same *Greek* word in the passage, ^{<4004>}Genesis 1:14,16; compare *Note*., see on ^{<6211>}Revelation 21:11.

16. Holding forth — to them, and so *applying* it (the common meaning of the *Greek*; perhaps here including also the other meaning, “holding *fast*”). The image of *light-bearers* or *luminaries* is carried on from ^{<4045>}Philippians 2:15. As the heavenly luminaries’ *light* is closely connected with the *life* of animals, so ye hold forth the light of Christ’s “word” (received from me) which is the “life” of the Gentiles (^{<4004>}John 1:4 ^{<4001>}John 1:1,5-7). Christ is “the Light of the world” (^{<4082>}John 8:12); believers are only “light-bearers” reflecting His light.

that I may rejoice in — literally, “*with a view to* (your being) a *subject of rejoicing* to me *against* the day of Christ” (^{<4000>}Philippians 4:1 ^{<4014>}2 Corinthians 1:14 ^{<4009>}1 Thessalonians 2:19).

that I have not run in vain — that it was not in vain that I labored for your spiritual good.

17. Yea, and if — rather as *Greek*, “Yea, if even”; implying that he regarded the contingency as not unlikely: He had assumed the *possibility* of his being found alive at Christ’s coming (for in every age Christ designed

Christians to stand in preparedness for His coming as at hand): he here puts a supposition which he regards as more likely, namely, his own death before Christ's coming.

I be offered — rather as *Greek*, “I am poured out.” “I am made a libation.” Present, not future, as the danger is threatening him *now*. As in sacrifices libations of wine were “*poured upon*” the offerings, so he represents his Philippian converts, offered through faith (or else their *faith* itself), as the sacrifice, and *his blood as the libation* “poured upon” it (compare ^{<515>}Romans 15:16 ^{<500>}2 Timothy 4:6).

service — *Greek*, “priest’s ministration”; carrying out the image of a sacrifice.

I joy — for myself (^{<502>}Philippians 1:21,23). His expectation of release from prison is much fainter, than in the Epistles to Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, written somewhat earlier from Rome. The appointment of Tigellinus to be Praetorian Prefect was probably the cause of this change. See *Introduction*.

rejoice with you all — ALFORD translates, “*I congratulate you all*,” namely on the honor occurring to you by my blood being poured out on the sacrifice of your faith. If *they rejoiced* already (as *English Version* represents), what need of his urging them, “*Do ye also joy*.”

18. “Do ye also rejoice” at this honor to you, “and congratulate me” on my blessed “gain” (^{<502>}Philippians 1:21).

19. ^{<515>}Philippians 2:22, “ye know the proof of him ... that ... he hath served with me,” implies that Timothy had been long with Paul at Philippi; Accordingly, in the history (^{<414>}Acts 16:1-4 17:10,14), we find them *setting out* together from Derbe in Lycaonia, and together again at Berea in Macedonia, near *the conclusion* of Paul’s missionary journey: an *undesigned* coincidence between the Epistle and history, a mark of genuineness [PALEY]. From ^{<515>}Philippians 2:19-30, it appears Epaphroditus was to set out at once to allay the anxiety of the Philippians on his account, and at the same time bearing the Epistle; Timothy was to follow after the apostle’s liberation was decided, when they could arrange their plans more definitely as to *where* Timothy should, on his return with

tidings from Philippi, meet Paul, who was designing by a wider circuit, and slower progress, to reach that city. Paul's reason for sending Timothy so soon after having heard of the Philippians from Epaphroditus was that they were now suffering persecutions (^{<3003>}Philippians 1:28-30); and besides, Epaphroditus' delay through sickness on his journey to Rome from Philippi, made the tidings he brought to be of less recent date than Paul desired. Paul himself also hoped to visit them shortly.

But I trust — Yet my death is by no means certain; yea, “I *hope* (*Greek*) in the Lord (that is, by the Lord's help)”

unto you — literally, “*for you*,” that is, to your satisfaction, not merely motion, *to you*.

I also — that not only you “may be of good *courage*” (so *Greek*) on hearing of me (^{<3062>}Philippians 2:23), but “I also, when I know your state.”

20. His reason for sending Timothy above all others: I have none so “like-minded,” literally, “like-*souled*,” with myself as is Timothy. Compare ^{<630>}Deuteronomy 13:6, “Thy friend which is as thine own *soul*” (^{<654>}Psalm 55:14). Paul's second self.

naturally — *Greek*, “genuinely”; “with *sincere* solicitude.” A case wherein the Spirit of God so changed man's nature, that to be *natural* was with him to be *spiritual*: the great point to be aimed at.

21. Translate as *Greek*, “*They all*” (namely, who are now with me, ^{<3014>}Philippians 1:14,17 ^{<3021>}Philippians 4:21: such Demas, then with him, proved to be, ^{<3044>}Colossians 4:14; compare ^{<3040>}2 Timothy 4:10 ^{<3024>}Philemon 1:24).

seek their own — opposed to Paul's precept (^{<3004>}Philippians 2:4 ^{<3011>}1 Corinthians 10:24,33 13:5). This is spoken, by comparison with Timothy; for ^{<3006>}Philippians 1:16,17 implies that some of those with Paul at Rome were genuine Christians, though not so self-sacrificing as Timothy. Few come to the help of the Lord's cause, where ease, fame, and gain have to be sacrificed. Most help only when Christ's gain is compatible with their own (^{<3057>}Judges 5:17,23).

22. Rare praise (^{<3002>}Nehemiah 7:2).

as a son with the father — Translate, “as a *child (serveth) a father.*”

served with me — When we might expect the sentence to run thus. “As a child *serveth a father*, so he *served me*”; he changes it to “served *with me*” in modesty; as Christians are not *servants TO one another*,” but *servants of God WITH one another* (compare ^{<1087>}Philippians 3:17).

in the gospel — Greek, “*unto*,” or “*for the Gospel.*”

23. so soon as I shall see — that is, so soon as *I shall have known for certain.*

24. also myself — as well as Timothy.

25. I supposed — “I thought it necessary.”

to send — It was properly a *sending Epaphroditus back* (^{<1088>}Philippians 4:18). But as he had come intending to stay some time with Paul, the latter uses the word “send” (compare ^{<1089>}Philippians 2:30).

fellow soldier — in the “good fight” of faith (^{<1090>}Philippians 1:27,30 ^{<1091>}2 Timothy 2:3 4:7).

your messenger — literally, “apostle.” The “apostles” or “messengers of the churches” (^{<1092>}Romans 16:7 ^{<1093>}2 Corinthians 8:23), were distinct from the “apostles” specially commissioned *by Christ*, as the Twelve and Paul.

ministered to my wants — by conveying the contributions from Philippi. The Greek “*leitourgon*,” literally, implies *ministering in the ministerial office*. Probably Epaphroditus was a presbyter or else a deacon.

26. For — reason for thinking it “necessary to send” “Epaphroditus. Translate as Greek, “*Inasmuch as he was longing after you all.*”

full of heaviness — The Greek expresses the being *worn out and overpowered with heavy grief.*

because that ye had heard that he had been sick — rather, “that he was sick.” He felt how exceedingly saddened you would be in hearing it; and he now is hastening to relieve your minds of the anxiety.

27. Epaphroditus’ sickness proves that the apostles had not ordinarily the *permanent* gift of miracles, any more than of inspiration: both were

vouchsafed to them only for each particular occasion, as the Spirit thought fit.

lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow — namely, the sorrow of losing him by death, in addition to the sorrow of my imprisonment. Here only occurs anything of a sorrowful tone in this Epistle, which generally is most joyous.

29. Receive him — There seems to be something behind respecting him. If extreme affection had been the sole ground of his “heaviness,” no such exhortation would have been needed [ALFORD].

in reputation — “in honor.”

30. for the work of Christ — namely, the bringing of a supply to me, the minister of Christ. He was probably in a delicate state of health in setting out from Philippi; but at all hazards he undertook this service of Christian love, which cost him a serious sickness.

not regarding his life — Most of the oldest manuscripts read, “hazarding,” etc.

to supply your lack of service — Not that Paul would imply, they lacked the *will*: what they “lacked” was the “*opportunity*” by which to send their accustomed bounty (Philippians 4:10). “That which ye would have done if you could (but which you could not through absence), he did for you; therefore receive him with all joy” [ALFORD].

CHAPTER 3

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-21.

WARNING AGAINST JUDAIZERS: HE HAS GREATER CAUSE THAN THEY TO TRUST IN LEGAL RIGHTEOUSNESS, BUT RENOUNCED IT FOR CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, IN WHICH HE PRESSES AFTER PERFECTION: WARNING AGAINST CARNAL PERSONS: CONTRAST OF THE BELIEVER'S LIFE AND HOPE.

1. Finally — rather, not with the notion of time, but making a transition to another general subject, “Furthermore” [BENGEL and WAHL] as in ^{<1001>}1 Thessalonians 4:1. Literally, “As to what remains,” etc. It is often used at the conclusion of Epistles for “finally” (^{<1000>}Ephesians 6:10 ^{<1002>}2 Thessalonians 3:1). But it is not restricted to this meaning, as ALFORD thinks, supposing that Paul used it here intending to close his Epistle, but was led by the mention of the Judaizers into a more lengthened dissertation.

the same things — concerning “rejoicing,” the prevailing feature in this Epistle (^{<1008>}Philippians 1:18,25 2:17 4:4, where, compare the “again I say,” with “the same things” here).

In the Lord — marks the true ground of joy, in contrast with “having confidence in the flesh,” or in any outward sensible matter of boasting (^{<1009>}Philippians 3:3).

not grievous — “not irksome.”

for you it is safe — Spiritual joy is the best safety against error (^{<1009>}Philippians 3:2 ^{<1000>}Nehemiah 8:10, end).

2. Beware — *Greek*, “Have your eye on” so as to beware of. Contrast “mark,” or “observe,” namely, so as to follow ^{<1007>}Philippians 3:17.

dogs — *Greek*, “the dogs,” namely, those impure persons “of whom I have told you often” (^{<1009>}Philippians 3:18,19); “the abominable” (compare

Revelation 21:8, with Revelation 22:15 Matthew 7:6 Titus 1:15,16): “dogs” in filthiness, unchastity, and snarling (Deuteronomy 23:18 Psalm 59:6,14,15 2 Peter 2:22): especially “enemies of the cross of Christ” (Philippians 3:18 Psalm 22:16,20). The Jews regarded the Gentiles as “dogs” (Matthew 15:26); but by their own unbelief they have ceased to be the true Isra_el, and are become “dogs” (compare Isaiah 56:10,11).

evil workers — (2 Corinthians 11:13), “deceitful workers.” Not simply “evildoers” are meant, but men who “worked,” indeed, ostensibly for the Gospel, but worked for evil: “serving not our Lord, but their own belly” (Philippians 3:19; compare Romans 16:18). Translate, “*The evil workmen*,” that is, bad *teachers* (compare 2 Timothy 2:15).

concision — *Circumcision* had now lost its spiritual significance, and was now become to those who rested on it as any ground of justification, a senseless mutilation. Christians have the only true *circumcision*, namely, that of the heart; legalists have only “concision,” that is, *the cutting off of the flesh*. To make “cuttings in the flesh” was expressly prohibited by the law (Leviticus 21:5): it was a Gentile-heathenish practice (1 Kings 18:28); yet this, writes Paul indignantly, is what these *legalists* are virtually doing in violation of the law. There is a remarkable gradation, says BIRKS [*Horae Apostolicae*] in Paul’s language as to circumcision. In his first recorded discourse (Acts 13:39), circumcision is not named, but implied as included in the law of Moses which cannot justify. Six or seven years later, in the Epistle to Galatians (Galatians 3:3), the first Epistle in which it is named, its spiritual inefficiency is maintained against those Gentiles who, beginning in the Spirit, thought to be perfected in the flesh. Later, in Epistle to Romans (Romans 2:28,29), he goes farther, and claims the substance of it for every believer, assigning the shadow only of it to the unbelieving Jew. In Epistle to Colossians (Colossians 2:11 3:11), still later, he expounds more fully the true circumcision as the exclusive privilege of the believer. Last of all here, the very name is denied to the legalist, and a term of reproach is substituted, “concision,” or *flesh-cutting*. Once obligatory on all the covenant-people, then reduced to a mere national distinction, it was more and more associated in the apostle’s experience with the open hostility of the Jews, and the perverse teaching of false brethren.

3. “We are the (real) circumcision” (⁴⁰²⁵Romans 2:25-29 ⁵⁰¹¹Colossians 2:11).

worship God in the Spirit — The oldest manuscripts read, “worship by the Spirit of God”; our religious *service* is rendered by the Spirit (⁶⁰²³John 4:23,24). Legal worship was outward, and consisted in outward acts, restricted to certain times and places. Christian worship is *spiritual*, flowing from the inworkings of the Holy Spirit, not relating to certain isolated acts, but embracing the whole life (⁶¹⁰¹Romans 12:1). In the former, men trusted in something human, whether descent from the theocratic nation, or the righteousness of the law, or mortification of “the flesh” (“Having confidence,” or “glorying in the flesh”) [NEANDER] (⁶¹⁰⁹Romans 1:9).

rejoice in Christ Jesus — “make our *boast* in Christ Jesus,” not in the law: the ground of their boasting.

have no confidence in the flesh — but in the Spirit.

4. “Although I (emphatical) might have confidence *even* in the flesh.” Literally, “I *having*,” but not using, “confidence in the flesh.”

I more — have more “whereof I might *have confidence* in the flesh.”

5. In three particulars he shows how he “might have confidence in the flesh” (Philippians 3:4):

- (1) His pure Jewish blood.
- (2) His legal preciseness and high status as such.
- (3) His zeal for the law. The *Greek* is literally, “Being in circumcision an eighth day person,” that is, not one circumcised in later life as a proselyte, but on the eighth day after birth, as the law directed in the case of Jew-born infants.

of the tribe of Benjamin — son of Rachel, not of the maid-servant [BENGEL].

Hebrew of the Hebrews — neither one or other parent being Gentile. The “Hebrew,” wherever he dwelt, retained the *language* of his fathers. Thus Paul, though settled in Tarsus, a Greek city, calls himself a Hebrew. A

“Grecian” or Hellenist, on the other hand, in the New Testament, is the term used for a “*Greek-speaking*” Jew [TRENCH].

touching the law — that is, as to legal status and strictness.

a Pharisee — “of the straitest sect” (^{405B}Acts 26:5).

6. Concerning — Translate as before and after, “*As touching Zeal*” (compare ^{402B}Acts 22:3 26:9).

blameless — *Greek*, “*having become blameless*” as to *ceremonial* righteousness: having attained *in the eyes of man blameless* legal perfection. As to the holiness *before God*, which is the inner and truest spirit of the law, and which flows from “the righteousness of God by faith,” he on the contrary declares (^{402C}Philippians 3:12-14) that he has *not* attained perfection.

7. gain — rather as *Greek*, “gains”; including all possible advantages of outward status, which he had heretofore enjoyed.

I counted — *Greek*, “I have counted for Christ’s sake loss.” He no longer uses the plural as in “gains”; for he counts them all but one great “loss” (^{403B}Matthew 16:26 ^{405C}Luke 9:25).

8. Yea doubtless — The oldest manuscripts omit “doubtless” (*Greek*, “*ge*”): translate, “*nay more*.” Not only “*have I counted*” *those* things just mentioned “loss for Christ’s sake, but, moreover, I *even* DO count ALL things but loss,” etc.

for the excellency — *Greek*, “On account of the surpassing excellency (the supereminence above them all) of the knowledge of Christ Jesus.”

my Lord — believing and loving appropriation of Him (^{403B}Psalm 63:1 ^{405B}John 20:28).

for whom — “on account of whom.”

I have suffered the loss — not merely I “*counted*” them “loss,” but have actually lost them.

all things — The *Greek* has the article, referring to the preceding “all things”; “I have suffered the loss of *them all*.”

dung — *Greek*, “refuse (such as excrements, dregs, dross) *cast to the dogs*,” as the derivation expresses. A “loss” is of something having value; but “refuse” is thrown away as not worthy of being any more touched or looked at.

win — Translate, to accord with the translation, ^{<1000>}Philippians 3:7, “*gain Christ*.” A man cannot make other things his “gain” or chief confidence, and at the same time “gain Christ.” He who loses all things, and even himself, on account of Christ, gains Christ: Christ is His, and He is Christ’s (^{<2106>}Song of Solomon 2:16 6:3 ^{<4023>}Luke 9:23,24 ^{<4023>}1 Corinthians 3:23).

9. be found in him — “be found” at His coming again, living spiritually “in Him” as the element of my life. Once *lost*, I have been “found,” and I hope to be perfectly “found” by Him (^{<2158>}Luke 15:8).

own righteousness ... of the law — (^{<1000>}Philippians 3:6 ^{<500>}Romans 10:3,5). “Of,” that is, *from*.

righteousness ... of God by faith — *Greek*, “which is *from* God (resting) *upon* faith.” Paul was transported from legal bondage into Christian freedom at once, and without any gradual transition. Hence, the bands of Pharisaism were loosed instantaneously; and opposition to Pharisaic Judaism took the place of opposition to the Gospel. Thus God’s providence fitly prepared him for the work of overthrowing all idea of legal justification. “The righteousness of faith,” in Paul’s sense, is the righteousness or perfect holiness of Christ appropriated by faith, as the *objective* ground of confidence for the believer, and also as a new *subjective* principle of life. Hence it includes the essence of a new disposition, and may easily pass into the idea of sanctification, though the two ideas are originally distinct. It is not any arbitrary act of God, as if he treated as sinless a man persisting in sin, simply because he believes in Christ; but the *objective* on the part of God corresponds to the *subjective* on the part of man, namely, faith. The realization of the archetype of holiness through Christ contains the pledge that this shall be realized in all who are one with Him by faith, and are become the organs of His Spirit. Its germ is imparted to them in believing although the fruit of a life perfectly conformed to the Redeemer, can only be gradually developed in this life [NEANDER].

10. That I may know him — experimentally. The aim of the “righteousness” just mentioned. This verse resumes, and more fully explains, “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ” (^{<508>}Philippians 3:8). To know HIM is more than merely to know a *doctrine* about Him. Believers are brought not only to redemption, but to the Redeemer Himself.

the power of his resurrection — assuring believers of their justification (^{<505>}Romans 4:25 ^{<517>}1 Corinthians 15:17), and raising them up spiritually with Him, by virtue of their identification with Him in this, as in all the acts of His redeeming work for us (^{<509>}Romans 6:4 ^{<502>}Colossians 2:12 3:1). The power of the Divine Spirit, which raised Him from literal death, is the same which raises believers from spiritual death now (^{<509>}Ephesians 1:19,20), and shall raise their bodies from literal death hereafter (^{<505>}Romans 8:11).

the fellowship of his sufferings — by identification with Him in His sufferings and death, *by imputation*; also, in *actually* bearing the cross whatever is laid on us, after His example, and so “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ” (^{<502>}Colossians 1:24); and in the *will* to bear aught for His sake (^{<508>}Matthew 10:38 16:24 ^{<501>}2 Timothy 2:11). As He bore all our sufferings (^{<504>}Isaiah 53:4), so we participate in His.

made conformable unto his death — “conformed to the likeness of His death,” namely, by continued sufferings for His sake, and mortifying of the carnal self (^{<505>}Romans 8:29 ^{<517>}1 Corinthians 15:31 ^{<502>}2 Corinthians 4:10-12 ^{<502>}Galatians 2:20).

11. If by any means — not implying uncertainty of the issue, but the earnestness of the struggle of faith (^{<505>}1 Corinthians 9:26,27), and the urgent need of jealous self-watchfulness (^{<502>}1 Corinthians 10:12).

attain unto the resurrection of the dead — The oldest manuscripts read, “the resurrection *from* (out of) the dead,” namely, the first resurrection; that of believers at Christ’s coming (^{<505>}1 Corinthians 15:23 ^{<505>}1 Thessalonians 4:15 ^{<505>}Revelation 20:5,6). The *Greek* word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. “The power of Christ’s resurrection” (^{<505>}Romans 1:4), ensures the believer’s attainment of the “resurrection from the (rest of the) dead” (compare ^{<505>}Philippians 3:20,21). Compare

“accounted worthy to *obtain the resurrection from the dead*” (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ Luke 20:35). “The resurrection of the just” (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ Luke 14:14).

12. Translate, “Not *that* I,” etc. (I do *not* wish to be understood as saying *that*, etc.).

attained — “obtained,” namely, a perfect knowledge of Christ, and of the power of His death, and fellowship of His sufferings, and a conformity to His death.

either were already perfect — “or *am* already *perfected*,” that is, *crowned* with the garland of victory, my course *completed*, and *perfection absolutely reached*. The image is that of a *race course* throughout. See ⲁⲓⲃⲉ1 Corinthians 9:24 ⲁⲓⲃⲉ2 Hebrews 12:23. See TRENCH [*Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*].

I follow after — “I press on.”

apprehend ... apprehended — “If *so be* that I may *lay hold on* that (namely, the *prize*, ⲁⲓⲃⲉ4 Philippians 3:14) for which also *I was laid hold on* by Christ” (namely, at my conversion, So 1:4 ⲁⲓⲃⲉ1 1 Corinthians 13:12).

Jesus — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Paul was close to “apprehending” the prize (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ2 2 Timothy 4:7,8). Christ the Author, is also the Finisher of His people’s “race.”

13. I — whatever others count as to themselves. He who counts himself perfect, must deceive himself by calling sin infirmity (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ1 1 John 1:8); at the same time, each must *aim* at perfection, to be a Christian at all (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ8 Matthew 5:48).

forgetting those things ... behind — *Looking back* is sure to end in *going back* (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ Luke 9:62): So Lot’s wife (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ Luke 17:32). If in stemming a current we cease pulling the oar against it, we are carried back. God’s word to us is as it was to Isra_el, “Speak unto the children of Isra_el that they go forward” (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ Exodus 14:15). The Bible is our landmark to show us whether we are progressing or retrograding.

reaching forth — with hand and foot, like a runner in a race, and the body bent forward. The Christian is always humbled by the contrast between

what he is and what he desires to be. The eye reaches before and draws on the hand, the hand reaches before and draws on the foot [BENGEL].

unto — towards (^{<800H} Hebrews 6:1).

14. high calling — literally, “the calling that is *above*” (^{<800H} Galatians 4:26 ^{<800H} Colossians 3:1): “the *heavenly* calling” (^{<800H} Hebrews 3:1). “The prize” is “the crown of righteousness” (^{<402H} 1 Corinthians 9:24 ^{<800H} 2 Timothy 4:8). ^{<412H} Revelation 2:10, “crown of life.” ^{<403H} 1 Peter 5:4, “a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” “The high,” or “heavenly calling,” is not restricted, as ALFORD thinks, to Paul’s own calling as an apostle by the summons of God from heaven; but *the common calling of all Christians to salvation in Christ*, which coming from heaven invites us to heaven, whither accordingly our minds ought to be uplifted.

15. therefore — resuming ^{<800H} Philippians 3:3. “As many of us then, as are perfect,” that is, *full grown* (no longer “babes”) in the Christian life (^{<800H} Philippians 3:3, “worshipping God in the Spirit, and having no confidence in the flesh”), ^{<403H} 1 Corinthians 2:6, fully established in things of God. Here, by “perfect,” he means one *fully fit for running* [BENGEL]; knowing and complying with the *laws* of the course (^{<800H} 2 Timothy 2:5). Though “perfect” in this sense, he was not yet “made perfect” (*Greek*) in the sense intended in ^{<800H} Philippians 3:12, namely, “crowned with *complete* victory,” and having attained *absolute perfection*.

thus minded — having the mind which he had described, ^{<800H} Philippians 3:7-14.

otherwise minded — having too high an opinion of yourselves as to your attainment of Christian *perfection*. “He who thinks that he has attained everything, hath nothing” [CHRYSOSTOM]. Probably, too, he refers to those who were tempted to think to attain to *perfection* by the law (^{<800H} Galatians 3:3): who needed the warning (^{<800H} Philippians 3:3), “Beware of the concision,” though on account of their former piety, Paul hopes confidently (as in ^{<403H} Galatians 5:10) that God will reveal the path of right-mindedness to them. Paul taught externally God “reveals” the truth internally by His Spirit (^{<412H} Matthew 11:25 16:17 ^{<403H} 1 Corinthians 3:6).

unto you — who sincerely strive to do God’s will (^{<417>}John 7:17
^{<417>}Ephesians 1:17).

16. The expectation of a new revelation is not to make you less careful in walking according to whatever degree of knowledge of divine things and perfection you have already attained. God makes further revelations to those who walk up to the revelations they already have (^{<300>}Hosea 6:3).

rule, let us mind the same thing — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Perhaps partly inserted from ^{<816>}Galatians 6:16, and ^{<518>}Philippians 2:2. Translate then, “Whereunto we have attained, let us walk on (a military term, *march in order*) in the same (the measure of knowledge already attained).”

17. followers — *Greek*, “imitators together.”

of me — as I am an *imitator of Christ* (^{<411>}1 Corinthians 11:1): Imitate me no farther than as I imitate Christ. Or as BENGEL “My fellow imitators of God” or “Christ”; “imitators of Christ together with me” (see on ^{<162>}Philippians 2:22; ^{<411>}Ephesians 5:1).

mark — for imitation.

which walk so as ye have us for an ensample — In *English Version* of the former clause, the translation of this clause is, “those who are walking so as ye have an example in us.” But in BENGEL’S translation, “inasmuch as,” or “since,” instead of “as.”

18. many walk — in such a manner. Follow not evildoers, because they are “many” (^{<123>}Exodus 23:2). Their numbers are rather a presumption against their being Christ’s “little flock” (^{<123>}Luke 12:32).

often — There is need of constant warning.

weeping — (^{<411>}Romans 9:2). A hard tone in speaking of the inconsistencies of professors is the very opposite of Paul’s spirit, and David’s (^{<119>}Psalms 119:136), and Jeremiah’s (^{<213>}Jeremiah 13:17). The Lord and His apostles, at the same time, speak more strongly against empty professors (as the Pharisees), than against open scoffers.

enemies of the cross of Christ — in their *practice*, not in doctrine (^{<404>}Galatians 6:14 ^{<3060>}Hebrews 6:6 10:29).

19. destruction — everlasting at Christ's coming. ^{<502>}Philippians 1:28, "perdition"; the opposite word is "Savior" (^{<3020>}Philippians 3:20).

end — fixed doom.

whose god is their belly — (^{<608>}Romans 16:18); hereafter to be destroyed by God (^{<403>}1 Corinthians 6:13). In contrast to our "body" (^{<502>}Philippians 3:21), which *our God*, the Lord Jesus, shall "fashion like unto His glorious body." Their belly is now pampered, our body now wasted; then the respective states of both shall be reversed.

glory is in their shame — As "glory" is often used in the Old Testament for *God* (^{<494>}Psalms 106:20), so here it answers to "whose God," in the parallel clause; and "shame" is the Old Testament term contemptuously given to an idol (^{<002>}Judges 6:32, *Marginal*). ^{<3047>}Hosea 4:7 seems to be referred to by Paul (compare ^{<612>}Romans 1:32). There seems no allusion to circumcision, as no longer *glorious*, but a *shame* to them (^{<502>}Philippians 3:2). The reference of the immediate context is to sensuality, and carnality in general.

mind earthly things — (^{<605>}Romans 8:5). In contrast to ^{<502>}Philippians 3:20 ^{<3032>}Colossians 3:2.

20. our conversation — rather, "our state" or "country"; *our citizenship: our life as citizens*. We are but *pilgrims* on earth; how *then* should we "mind earthly things?" (^{<502>}Philippians 3:19 ^{<3019>}Hebrews 11:9,10,13-16). Roman citizenship was then highly prized; how much more should the heavenly citizenship (^{<402>}Acts 22:28; compare ^{<001>}Luke 10:20)?

is — *Greek*, "has its existence."

in heaven — *Greek*, "in the heavens."

look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ — "We wait for (so the same *Greek* is translated, ^{<605>}Romans 8:19) the Lord Jesus as a (that is, in the capacity of a) Savior" (^{<502>}Hebrews 9:28). That He is "the Lord," now exalted above every name, assures our expectation (^{<502>}Philippians 2:9-11). Our High Priest is gone up into the Holy of Holies not made with hands,

there to atone for us; and as the Isra_elites stood outside the tabernacle, expecting Aaron's return (compare ^{<402>}Luke 1:21), so must we look unto the heavens expecting Christ thence.

21. *Greek*, "Who shall *transfigure* the body of our humiliation (namely, in which our humiliation has place, ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 4:10 ^{<409>}Ephesians 2:19 ^{<800>}2 Timothy 2:12), that it may be *conformed* unto the body of His glory (namely, in which His glory is manifested), according to the *effectual working* whereby," etc. Not only shall He come as our "Savior," but also as our *Glorifier*.

even — not only to make *the body* like His own, but "to subdue *all things*," even death itself, as well as Satan and sin. He gave a sample of the coming *transfiguration* on the mount (^{<4070>}Matthew 17:1, etc.). Not a change of *identity*, but of *fashion* or *form* (^{<4075>}Psalms 17:15 ^{<4351>}1 Corinthians 15:51). Our spiritual resurrection now is the pledge of our bodily resurrection to glory hereafter (^{<5081>}Philippians 3:20 ^{<8811>}Romans 8:11). As Christ's glorified body was essentially identical with His body of humiliation; so our resurrection bodies as believers, since they shall be like His, shall be identical essentially with our present bodies, and yet "spiritual bodies" (^{<4350>}1 Corinthians 15:42-44). Our "hope" is, that Christ, by His rising from the dead, hath obtained the power, and is become the pattern, of our resurrection (^{<3013>}Micah 2:13).

CHAPTER 4

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-23.

EXHORTATIONS: THANKS FOR THE SUPPLY FROM PHILIPPI: GREETING; AND CLOSING BENEDICTION.

1. “Wherefore”; since we have such a glorious hope (^{<508>}Philippians 3:20,21).

dearly beloved — repeated again at the close of the verse, implying that his great love to them should be a motive to their obedience.

longed for — “yearned after” in your absence (^{<508>}Philippians 1:8).

crown — in the day of the Lord (^{<507>}Philippians 2:16 ^{<509>}1 Thessalonians 2:19).

so — as I have admonished you.

stand fast — (^{<507>}Philippians 1:27).

2. Euodia and Syntyche were two women who seem to have been at variance; probably deaconesses of the church. He repeats, “I beseech,” as if he would admonish each separately, and with the utmost impartiality.

in the Lord — the true element of Christian union; for those “in the Lord” by faith to be at variance, is an utter inconsistency.

3. **And** — *Greek*, “Yea.”

true yoke-fellow — yoked with me in the same Gospel yoke (^{<412>}Matthew 11:29,30; compare ^{<517>}1 Timothy 5:17,18). Either Timothy, Silas (^{<415>}Acts 15:40 16:19, *at Philippi*), or the chief bishop of Philippi. Or else the *Greek*, “*Sunzugus*,” or “*Synzygus*,” is a proper name: “Who art truly, as thy name means, a yoke-fellow.” Certainly not *Paul’s wife*, as ^{<405>}1 Corinthians 9:5 implies he had none.

help those women — rather, as *Greek*, “help *them*,” namely, Euodia and Syntyche. “Co-operate with them” [BIRKS]; or as ALFORD, “Help in the work of their reconciliation.”

which labored with me — “*inasmuch* as they labored with me.” At Philippi, women were the first hearers of the Gospel, and Lydia the first convert. It is a coincidence which marks genuineness, that in this Epistle alone, special instructions are given to women who labored with Paul in the Gospel. In selecting the first teachers, those first converted would naturally be fixed on. Euodia and Syntyche were doubtless two of “the women who resorted to the riverside, where prayer was wont to be made” (^{<4163>}Acts 16:13), and being early converted, would naturally take an active part in teaching other women called at a later period; of course not in public preaching, but in a less prominent sphere (^{<5011>}1 Timothy 2:11,12).

Clement — bishop of Rome shortly after the death of Peter and Paul. His Epistle from the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth is extant. It makes no mention of the supremacy of the See of Peter. He was the most eminent of the apostolical fathers. ALFORD thinks that the Clement here was a *Philippian*, and not necessarily Clement, bishop of Rome. But ORIGIN [*Commentary*, ^{<4103>}John 1:29] identifies the Clement here with the bishop of Rome.

in the book of life — the register-book of those whose “citizenship is in heaven” (^{<0111>}Luke 10:20 ^{<5019>}Philippians 3:20). Anciently, free cities had a roll book containing the names of all those having the right of citizenship (compare ^{<1233>}Exodus 32:32 ^{<5633>}Psalms 69:28 ^{<4333>}Ezekiel 13:9 ^{<2711>}Daniel 12:1 ^{<6112>}Revelation 20:12 21:27).

4. (^{<2311>}Isaiah 61:10.)

always — even amidst the afflictions now distressing you (^{<5003>}Philippians 1:28-30).

again — as he had already said, “Rejoice” (^{<5011>}Philippians 3:1). Joy is the predominant feature of the Epistle.

I say — *Greek*, rather, “I *will* say.”

5. moderation — from a *Greek* root, “to yield,” whence *yieldingness* [TRENCH]; or from a root, “it is fitting,” whence “*reasonableness of dealing*” [ALFORD], that considerateness for others, *not urging one’s own rights to the uttermost*, but waiving a part, and thereby rectifying the injustices of justice. The archetype of this grace is God, who presses not the strictness of His law against us as we deserve (^{<400B>}Psalm 130:3,4); though having exacted the fullest payment for us from our Divine Surety. There are included in “moderation,” *candor* and *kindliness*. *Joy in the Lord* raises us above rigorism towards others (^{<400B>}Philippians 4:5), and carefulness (^{<400B>}Philippians 4:6) as to one’s own affairs. Sadness produces *morose harshness* towards others, and a troublesome spirit in ourselves.

Let ... be known — that is, in your conduct to others, let nothing inconsistent with “moderation” be seen. Not a precept to make a *display* of moderation. Let this grace “be known” to men in *acts*; let “your requests be made to God” in word (^{<400B>}Philippians 4:6).

unto all men — even to the “perverse” (^{<400B>}Philippians 2:15), that so ye may win them. Exercise “forbearance” even to your persecutors. None is so ungracious as not to be kindly to someone, from some motive or another, on some occasion; the believer is to be so “unto all men” at all times.

The Lord is at hand — The Lord’s coming again speedily is the grand motive to every Christian grace (^{<400B>}James 5:8,9). Harshness to others (the opposite of “moderation”) would be taking into our own hands prematurely the prerogatives of judging, which belongs to the Lord alone (^{<400B>}1 Corinthians 4:5); and so provoking God to judge us by the strict letter of the law (^{<400B>}James 2:12,13).

6. Translate, “Be anxious about nothing.” Care and prayer are as mutually opposed as fire and water [BENGEL].

by prayer and supplication — *Greek*, “by the prayer and the supplication” appropriate to each case [ALFORD]. *Prayer* for blessings; and the general term. *Supplication*, to avert ills; a special term, *suppliant entreaty* (see on ^{<400B>}Ephesians 6:18).

thanksgiving — for every event, prosperity and affliction alike (^{<5188>}1 Thessalonians 5:18 ^{<5183>}James 5:13). The Philippians might remember Paul's example at Philippi when in the innermost prison (^{<4165>}Acts 16:25). Thanksgiving gives effect to prayer (^{<4121>}2 Chronicles 20:21), and frees from *anxious carefulness* by making all God's dealings matter for *praise*, not merely for *resignation*, much less *murmuring*. "Peace" is the companion of "thanksgiving" (^{<5147>}Philippians 4:7 ^{<5185>}Colossians 3:15).

let your requests be made known unto God — with generous, filial, unreserved confidence; not keeping aught back, as too great, or else too small, to bring before God, though you might feel so as to your fellow men. So Jacob, when fearing Esau (^{<4339>}Genesis 32:9-12); Hezekiah fearing Sennacherib (^{<4244>}2 Kings 19:14 ^{<4315>}Psalms 37:5).

7. And — The inseparable consequence of thus laying everything before God in "prayer with thanksgiving."

peace — the dispeller of "anxious care" (^{<5146>}Philippians 4:6).

of God — coming from God, and resting in God (^{<4347>}John 14:27 16:33 ^{<5185>}Colossians 3:15).

passeth — *surpasseth*, or *exceedeth*, all man's notional powers of understanding its full blessedness (^{<4119>}1 Corinthians 2:9,10 ^{<4131>}Ephesians 3:20; compare ^{<4187>}Proverbs 3:17).

shall keep — rather, "shall guard"; shall keep as a well-garrisoned stronghold (^{<2361>}Isaiah 26:1,3). The same *Greek* verb is used in ^{<4115>}1 Peter 1:5. There shall be peace secure within, whatever outward troubles may besiege.

hearts and minds — rather, "hearts (the *seat* of the thoughts) and thoughts" or purposes.

through — rather as *Greek*, "*in* Christ Jesus." It is in Christ that we are "kept" or "guarded" secure.

8. Summary of all his exhortations as to relative duties, whether as children or parents, husbands or wives, friends, neighbors, men in the intercourse of the world, etc.

true — sincere, *in words*.

honest — Old English for “seemly,” namely, *in action*; literally, *grave, dignified*.

just — towards *others*.

pure — “chaste,” in relation to *ourselves*.

lovely — lovable (compare ^{<112>}Mark 10:21 ^{<174>}Luke 7:4,5).

of good report — referring to the *absent* (^{<102>}Philippians 1:27); as “lovely” refers to what is lovable *face to face*.

if there be any virtue — “whatever virtue there is” [ALFORD]. “Virtue,” the standing word in heathen ethics, is found once only in Paul’s Epistles, and once in Peter’s (^{<115>}2 Peter 1:5); and this in uses different from those in heathen authors. It is a term rather earthly and human, as compared with the names of the spiritual graces which Christianity imparts; hence the rarity of its occurrence in the New Testament. Piety and true morality are inseparable. Piety is love with its face towards God; morality is love with its face towards man. Despise not anything that is good in itself; only let it keep its due place.

praise — whatever is *praiseworthy*; not that Christians should make man’s praise their aim (compare ^{<128>}John 12:43); but they should live so as to *deserve* men’s praise.

think on — have a continual regard to, so as to “do” these things (^{<109>}Philippians 4:9) whenever the occasion arises.

9. both — rather, “The things *also* which ye have learned ... these *practice*”; the things which besides recommending them in words, have been *also* recommended *by my example*, carry into practice.

heard — though ye have not yet sufficiently “received” them.

seen — though ye have not as yet sufficiently “learned” them [BENGEL].

and — “and then,” as the necessary result (^{<107>}Philippians 4:7). Not only “the peace of God,” but “the God of peace” Himself “shall be with you.”

10. But — transitional conjunction. But “now” to pass to another subject.

in the Lord — He views everything with reference to Christ.

at the last — “at last”; implying he was expecting their gift, not from a selfish view, but as a “fruit” of their faith, and to “abound” to their account (⁵⁰⁰¹Philippians 4:11,17). Though long in coming, owing to Epaphroditus’ sickness and other delays, he does not imply their gift was too late.

your care ... hath flourished again — *Greek*, “Ye have flourished again (*revived*, as trees sprouting forth *again* in spring) in your care *for* me.”

wherein ye were also careful — in respect to which (*revival*, namely, the sending of a supply to me) “ye were also (all along) careful, but ye lacked opportunity”; whether from want of means or want of a messenger. Your “lack of service” (⁵⁰⁰⁸Philippians 2:30), was owing to your having “lacked opportunity.”

11. I have learned — The *I* in *Greek* is emphatical. I leave it to others if they will, to be discontented. *I*, for my part, have learned, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and the dealings of Providence (⁵⁰⁰⁸Hebrews 5:8), to be content in every state.

content — The *Greek*, literally expresses “independent of others, and having *sufficiency in one’s self*.” But Christianity has raised the term above the haughty *self-sufficiency* of the heathen Stoic to the *contentment* of the Christian, whose *sufficiency* is not in *self*, but in *God* (⁵⁰⁰⁸2 Corinthians 3:5 ⁵⁰⁰⁶1 Timothy 6:6,8 ⁵⁰⁰⁸Hebrews 13:5; compare ⁵⁰⁰⁶Jeremiah 2:36 45:5).

12. abased — in low circumstances (⁵⁰⁰⁸2 Corinthians 4:8 6:9,10).

everywhere — rather, “in each, and in all things” [ALFORD].

instructed — in the secret. Literally, “initiated” in a secret teaching, which is a *mystery* unknown to the world.

13. I can do all things — *Greek*, “*I have strength for all things*”; not merely “how to be abased and how to abound.” After special instances he declares his *universal* power — how triumphantly, yet how humbly! [MEYER].

through Christ which strengtheneth me — The oldest manuscripts omit “Christ”; then translate, “In *Him* who giveth me *power*,” that is, by virtue of my living union and identification with Him, who is my strength (^{<4021>}Galatians 2:20). Compare ^{<5012>}1 Timothy 1:12, whence probably, “Christ” was inserted here by transcribers.

14. He here guards against their thinking from what he has just said, that he makes light of their bounty.

ye did communicate with my affliction — that is, ye made yourselves *sharers with* me in my present affliction, namely, by sympathy; of which sympathy your *contribution* is the proof.

15. Now — “Moreover.” Arrange as *Greek*, “Ye also know (as well as I do myself).”

in the beginning of the gospel — dating from the *Philippian* Christian era; at the first preaching of the Gospel at Philippi.

when I departed from Macedonia — (^{<4174>}Acts 17:14). The Philippians had followed Paul with their bounty when he left Macedonia and came to Corinth. ^{<5118>}2 Corinthians 11:8,9 thus accords with the passage here, the dates assigned to the donation in both Epistles agreeing; namely, “in the *beginning* of the Gospel” here, and there, at the time of his *first* visit to Corinth [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*]. However, the supply meant here is not that which he received at Corinth, but the supply sent to him when “in Thessalonica, once and again” (^{<5048>}Philippians 4:16), [ALFORD].

as concerning giving and receiving — In the account between us, “the giving” was all on your part; “the receiving” all on mine.

ye only — We are not to wait for others in a good work, saying, “I will do so, when others do it.” We must go forward, though *alone*.

16. even in Thessalonica — “even” as early as when I had got no further than Thessalonica, ye sent me supplies for my necessities more than once.

17. a gift — *Greek*, “*the gift*.” Translate, “It is not that *I seek after* the gift, but *I do seek after the fruit* that *aboundeth* to your account”; what I do seek is your spiritual good, in the abounding of fruits of your faith

which shall be put down to your account, against the day of reward (~~scri~~ Hebrews 6:10).

18. But — Though “the gift” is not what I chiefly “seek after” (~~scri~~ Philippians 4:17), *yet* I am grateful for the gift, and hereby acknowledge it as ample for all my needs. Translate, “I have all” that I want, “and more than enough.” Literally, as *English Version*, “I abound” over and above my needs.

I am full — *Greek*, “I am filled full.”

the odour of a sweet smell — (See on ~~scri~~ Ephesians 5:2). The figure is drawn from the sweet-smelling incense which was burnt along with the sacrifices; their gift being in faith was not so much to Paul, as *to God* (~~scri~~ Matthew 25:40), before whom it “came up for a memorial” (~~scri~~ Acts 10:4), sweet-smelling in God’s presence (~~scri~~ Genesis 8:21 ~~scri~~ Revelation 8:3,4).

sacrifice acceptable — (~~scri~~ Hebrews 13:16).

19. my — Paul calls God here “my God,” to imply that God would reward their bounty to HIS servant, by “fully supplying” (translate so, literally, *fill to the full*) their every “need” (~~scri~~ 2 Corinthians 9:8), even as they had “fully” supplied his “need” (~~scri~~ Philippians 4:16,18). My Master will fully repay you; I cannot. The Philippians invested their bounty well since it got them such a glorious return.

according to his riches — The measure of His supply to you will be the immeasurable “riches of His grace” (~~scri~~ Ephesians 1:7).

in glory — These words belong to the whole sentence. “Glory” is the element in which His rich grace operates; and it will be the element IN which He will “supply fully all your need.”

by Christ Jesus — by virtue of your being “IN” (so *Greek*, not “by”) Christ Jesus, the Giver and Mediator of all spiritual blessings.

20. God and our Father — Translate, “Unto *our God and Father*.”

be glory — rather as the *Greek*, “be *the* glory.” Not to us, but to Him be “*the* glory” alike of your gift, and of His gracious recompense to you.

21. Salute every saint — *individually.*

greet — salute you.

The brethren which are with me — Perhaps Jewish believers are meant (⁴⁸²Acts 28:21). I think ⁴⁸³Philippians 2:20 precludes our thinking of “closer friends,” “colleagues in the ministry” [ALFORD]; he had only one close friend with him, namely, Timothy.

22. they that are of Caesar’s household — the slaves and dependents of Nero who had been probably converted through Paul’s teaching while he was a prisoner in the Praetorian barrack attached to the palace. Philippi was a Roman “colony,” hence there might arise a tie between the citizens of the mother city and those of the colony; especially between those of both cities who were Christians, converted as many of them were by the same apostle, and under like circumstances, he having been imprisoned at Philippi, as he now is at Rome.

23. (⁴⁸⁴Galatians 6:18).

be with you all. Amen — The oldest manuscripts read, “Be with your spirit,” and omit “Amen.”

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

The GENUINENESS of this Epistle is attested by JUSTIN MARTYR [*Dialogue with Trypho*, p. 311, B.], who quotes “the first-born of every creature,” in reference to Christ, from ^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15. THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH [*To Autolychus*, 2, p. 100]. IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 3.14.1], quotes expressly from this “Epistle to the Colossians” (^{<5044>}Colossians 4:14). CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 1. p. 325], quotes ^{<5028>}Colossians 1:28; also elsewhere he quotes ^{<5009>}Colossians 1:9-11, 28 2:2, etc. ^{<5008>}Colossians 2:8 3:12,14 4:2,3, etc. TERTULLIAN [*The Prescription against Heretics*, 7], quotes ^{<5008>}Colossians 2:8; [*On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, 23], and quotes ^{<5002>}Colossians 2:12,20 3:1,2. ORIGEN [*Against Celsus*, 5.8], quotes ^{<5028>}Colossians 2:18,19.

Colosse (or, as it is spelt in the best manuscripts, “Colassae”) was a city of Phrygia, on the river Lycus, a branch of the Meander. The Church there was mainly composed of Gentiles (compare ^{<5002>}Colossians 2:13). ALFORD infers from ^{<5001>}Colossians 2:1 (see on ^{<5001>}Colossians 2:1), that Paul had not seen its members, and therefore could not have been its founder, as THEODORET thought. ^{<5007>}Colossians 1:7,8 suggests the probability that Epaphras was the first founder of the Church there. The date of its foundation must have been subsequent to Paul’s visitation, “strengthening in order” all the churches of Galatia and Phrygia (^{<4824>}Acts 18:24); for otherwise we must have visited the Colossians, which ^{<5001>}Colossians 2:1 implies he had not. Had Paul been their father in the faith, he would doubtless have alluded to the fact, as in ^{<4806>}1 Corinthians 3:6,10 4:15 ^{<5005>}1 Thessalonians 1:5 2:1. It is only in the Epistles, Romans and Ephesians, and this Epistle, such allusions are wanting; in that to the Romans,

because, as in this Church of Colosse, he had not been the instrument of their conversion; in that to the Ephesians, owing to the general nature of the Epistle. Probably during the “two years” of Paul’s stay at Ephesus, when “*all which dwelt in Asia* heard the word of the Lord Jesus” (^{<480>}Acts 19:10,26), Epaphras, Philemon, Archippus, Apphia and the other natives of Colosse, becoming converted at Ephesus, were subsequently the first sowers of the Gospel seed in their own city. This will account for their personal acquaintance with, and attachment to, Paul and his fellow ministers, and for his loving language as to them, and their counter salutations to him. So also with respect to “them at Laodicea,” (^{<500>}Colossians 2:1).

The OBJECT of the Epistle is to counteract Jewish false teaching, by setting before the Colossians their true standing in Christ alone (exclusive of all other heavenly beings), the majesty of His person, and the completeness of the redemption wrought by Him; hence they ought to be conformed to their risen Lord, and to exhibit that conformity in all the relations of ordinary life ^{<500>}Colossians 2:16, “new moon, sabbath days,” shows that the false teaching opposed in this Epistle is that of *Judaizing* Christians. These mixed up with pure Christianity Oriental theosophy and angel-worship, and the asceticism of certain sections of the Jews, especially the Essenes. Compare JOSEPHUS [*Wars of the Jews*, 2.8,13]. These theosophists promised to their followers a deeper insight into the world of spirits, and a nearer approach to heavenly purity and intelligence, than the simple Gospel affords. CONYBEARE and HOWSON think that some Alexandrian Jew had appeared at Colosse, imbued with the Greek philosophy of PHILO’s school, combining with it the Rabbinical theosophy and angelology which afterwards was embodied in the Cabbala. Compare JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 12.3,4], from which we know that Alexander the Great had garrisoned the towns of Lydia and *Phrygia* with two thousand Mesopotamian and Babylonian *Jews* in the time of a threatened revolt. The Phrygians themselves had a mystic tendency in their worship of Cybele, which inclined them to receive the more readily the incipient Gnosticism of Judaizers, which afterward developed itself into the strangest heresies. In the Pastoral Epistles, the evil is spoken of as having reached a more deadly phase (^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:1-3 6:5), whereas he

brings no charge of immorality in this Epistle: a proof of its being much earlier in date.

The PLACE from which it was written seems to have been Rome, during his first imprisonment there (⁴⁰⁸⁷Acts 28:17-31). In my *Introduction* to the Epistle to the Ephesians, it was shown that the three Epistles, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, were sent at the same time, namely, during the freer portion of his imprisonment, before the death of Burrus.

⁵⁰¹⁹Colossians 4:3,4 ⁴¹⁶³Ephesians 6:19,20, imply greater freedom than he had while writing to the Philippians, after the promotion of Tigellinus to be Praetorian Prefect. See *Introduction* to Philippians.

This Epistle, though *carried* by the same bearer, Tychicus, who bore that to the *Ephesians*, was *written* previously to that Epistle; for many phrases similar in both appear in the more expanded form in the Epistle to the Ephesians (compare also *Note*, see on ⁴¹⁶²Ephesians 6:21). The *Epistle to the Laodiceans* (⁵⁰¹⁶Colossians 4:16) was *written* before that to the Colossians, but probably was *sent* by him to Laodicea at the same time with that to the Church at Colosse.

The STYLE is peculiar: many *Greek* phrases occur here, found nowhere else. Compare ⁵⁰¹⁸Colossians 2:8, “*spoil* you”; “making a show of them openly” (⁵⁰¹⁵Colossians 2:15); “beguile of your reward,” and “intruding” (⁵⁰¹⁸Colossians 2:18); “will-worship”; “satisfying” (⁵⁰²³Colossians 2:23); “filthy communication” (⁵⁰¹⁸Colossians 3:8); “rule” (⁵⁰¹⁵Colossians 3:15); “comfort” (⁵⁰¹¹Colossians 4:11). The loftiness and artificial elaboration of style correspond to the majestic nature of his theme, the majesty of Christ’s person and office, in contrast to the beggarly system of the Judaizers, the discussion of which was forced on him by the controversy. Hence arises his use of unusual phraseology. On the other hand, in the Epistle of the Ephesians, subsequently written, in which he was not so hampered by the exigencies of controversy, he dilates on the same glorious truths, so congenial to him, more at large, freely and uncontroversially, in the fuller outpouring of his spirit, with less of the elaborate and antithetical language of system, such as was needed in cautioning the Colossians against the particular errors threatening them. Hence arises the striking similarity of many of the phrases in the two Epistles written about the same time, and generally in the same vein of spiritual thought; while the

peculiar phrases of the Epistle to the Colossians are such as are natural, considering the controversial purpose of that Epistle.

CHAPTER 1

COLOSSIANS 1:1-29.

ADDRESS: INTRODUCTION: CONFIRMING EPAPHRAS' TEACHING: THE GLORIES OF CHRIST: THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER FOR THE COLOSSIANS: HIS OWN MINISTRY OF THE MYSTERY.

1. by the will of God — *Greek*, “through,” etc. (compare *Note*, see on ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 1:1).

Timothy — (Compare *Notes*, see on ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:1 and ^{<500>}Philippians 1:1). He was with Paul at the time of writing in Rome. He had been companion of Paul in his first tour through Phrygia, in which Colosse was. Hence the Colossians seem to have associated him with Paul in their affections, and the apostle joins him with himself in the address. Neither, probably, had *seen* the Colossian *Church* (compare ^{<500>}Colossians 2:1); but had seen, during their tour through Phrygia, individual Colossians, as Epaphras, Philemon, Archippus, and Apphia (^{<500>}Philemon 1:2), who when converted brought the Gospel to their native city.

2. Colosse — written in the oldest manuscripts, “Colasse.” As “saints” implies union with God, so “the faithful brethren” union with Christian men [BENGEL].

and the Lord Jesus Christ — supported by some oldest manuscripts omitted by others of equal antiquity.

3. Thanksgiving for the “faith, hope, and love” of the Colossians. So in the twin Epistle sent at the same time and by the same bearer, Tychicus (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:15,16).

We — I and Timothy.

and the Father — So some of the oldest manuscripts read. But others better omit the “and,” which probably crept in from ^{<400>}Ephesians 1:3.

praying always for you — with thanksgiving (^{<5049>}Philippians 4:6). See ^{<5004>}Colossians 1:4.

4. Since we heard — literally, “Having heard.” The language implies that he had only heard of, and not *seen*, them (^{<5011>}Colossians 2:1). Compare ^{<4908>}Romans 1:8, where like language is used of a Church which he had not at the time visited.

love ... to all — the absent, as well as those present [BENGEL].

5. For — to be joined with the words immediately preceding: “The love which ye have to all the saints *because of* (literally, ‘*on account of*’) the hope,” etc. The hope of eternal life will never be in us an inactive principle but will always produce “love.” This passage is abused by Romanists, as if the hope of salvation depended upon works. A false argument. It does not follow that our hope is founded on our works because we are strongly stimulated to live well; since nothing is more effectual for this purpose than the sense of God’s free grace [CALVIN].

laid up — a treasure *laid up* so as to be out of danger of being lost (^{<5002>}Timothy 4:8). *Faith, love, and hope* (^{<5004>}Colossians 1:4,5), comprise the sum of Christianity. Compare ^{<5023>}Colossians 1:23, “the hope of the Gospel.”

in heaven — *Greek*, “in the heavens.”

whereof ye heard before — namely, at the time when it was preached to you.

in the word, etc. — That “hope” formed part of “the word of the truth of the Gospel” (compare ^{<4913>}Ephesians 1:13), that is, part of the Gospel truth preached unto you.

6. Which is come unto you — *Greek*, “Which is present among you,” that is, which has come to, and remains with, you. He speaks of the word as a living person *present* among them.

as it is in all the world — *virtually*, as it was by this time preached in the leading parts of the then known world; *potentially*, as Christ’s command was that the Gospel should be preached to all nations, and not be limited, as the law was, to the Jews (^{<4139>}Matthew 13:38 24:14 28:19). However, the

true reading, and that of the oldest manuscripts, is that which omits the following “and,” thus (the “*it is*” of *English Version* is not in the original *Greek*): “As in all the world it is bringing forth fruit *and growing* (so the oldest manuscripts read; *English Version* omits ‘and growing,’ without good authority), even as it doth in you also.” Then what is asserted is not that the Gospel has been preached in all the world, but that it is *bearing fruits* of righteousness, and (like a tree *growing* at the same time that it is *bearing fruit*) *growing in numbers* of its converts in, or throughout, all the world.

heard of it — rather, “heard *it*.”

and knew — rather, “came to know”; became *fully* experimentally *acquainted* with.

the grace of God in truth — that is, in its truth, and with true knowledge [ALFORD].

7. As ye also learned — “Also” is omitted in the oldest manuscripts. The insertion implied that those inserting it thought that *Paul* had preached the Gospel to the Colossians as well as Epaphras, Whereas the omission in the oldest manuscripts implies that *Epaphras alone* was the founder of the Church at Colosse.

of — “*from* Epaphras.”

dear — *Greek*, “beloved.”

fellow servant — namely, of Christ. In ^{<5012>}Philemon 1:23 he calls him “my fellow prisoner.” It is possible that Epaphras may have been apprehended for his zealous labors in Asia Minor; but more probable that Paul gave him the title; as his faithful companion in his imprisonment (compare *Note*, see on ^{<5001>}Colossians 4:10, as to MEYER’s conjecture).

who is for you, etc. — Translate, “who is faithful in your behalf as a minister of Christ”; hinting that he is one not to be set aside for the new and erroneous teachers (^{<5011>}Colossians 2:1-23). Most of the oldest manuscripts read, “for (or ‘*in behalf of*’) US.” *Vulgate*, however, with one of the oldest manuscripts, supports *English Version*.

8. your love — (^{<5000>}Colossians 1:4); “to all the saints.”

in the Spirit — the sphere or element IN which alone true love is found; as distinguished from the state of those “in the flesh” (^{<618>}Romans 8:9). Yet even they needed to be stirred up to greater love (^{<518>}Colossians 3:12-14). Love is the first and chief fruit of the Spirit (^{<612>}Galatians 5:22).

9. we also — on our part.

heard it — (^{<500>}Colossians 1:4).

pray — Here he states what in *particular* he prays for; as in ^{<500>}Colossians 1:3 he stated *generally* the fact of his praying for them.

to desire — “to make request.”

might be filled — rather, “*may* be filled”; a verb, often found in this Epistle (^{<500>}Colossians 4:12,17).

knowledge — *Greek*, “*full and accurate knowledge*.” Akin to the Greek for “knew” (see on ^{<500>}Colossians 1:6).

of his will — as to how ye ought to walk (^{<457>}Ephesians 5:17); as well as chiefly that “mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself; that in the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ” (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:9,10); God’s “will,” whereby He eternally purposed to reconcile to Himself, and save men by Christ, not by angels, as the false teachers in some degree taught (^{<500>}Colossians 2:18) [ESTIUS]. There seems to have been a want of *knowledge* among the Colossians; notwithstanding their general excellencies; hence he so often dwells on this subject (^{<500>}Colossians 1:28 ^{<500>}Colossians 2:2,3 3:10,13 4:5,6). On the contrary he less extols *wisdom* to the Corinthians, who were puffed up with the conceit of knowledge.

wisdom — often mentioned in this Epistle, as opposed to the (false) “philosophy” and “show of wisdom” (^{<500>}Colossians 2:8,23; compare ^{<400>}Ephesians 1:8).

understanding — sagacity to discern what on each occasion is suited to the place and the time; its seat is “the understanding” or intellect; wisdom is more general and has its seat in the whole compass of the faculties of the soul [BENGEL]. “Wouldst thou know that the matters in the word of Christ are real things? Then never read them for mere knowledge sake”

[Quoted by GAUSSEN.] Knowledge is desirable only when seasoned by “spiritual understanding.”

10. *Greek*, “So as to walk”; so that ye may walk. True knowledge of God’s will is inseparable from walking conformably to it.

worthy of the Lord — (~~400~~ Ephesians 4:1).

unto — so as in every way to be well-pleasing to God.

pleasing — literally, “*desire of pleasing*.”

being fruitful — *Greek*, “bearing fruit.” This is the first manifestation of their “walking worthy of the Lord.” The second is, “increasing (growing) in the knowledge of God (or as the oldest manuscripts read, ‘growing BY the full knowledge of God’);” thus, as the *Gospel word* (~~500~~ Colossians 1:6) was said to “bring forth fruit,” and to “grow” in all the world, even as it did in the Colossians, ever since the day they *knew* the grace of God, so here it is Paul’s prayer that *they* might continue to “bring forth fruit,” and “grow” more and more *by the full knowledge* of God, the more that “knowledge” (~~500~~ Colossians 1:9) was imparted to them. The full knowledge of God is the real *instrument* of enlargement in soul and life of the believer [ALFORD]. The third manifestation of their walk is (~~501~~ Colossians 1:11), “Being strengthened with all might,” etc. The fourth is (~~502~~ Colossians 1:12), “Giving thanks unto the Father,” etc.

11. *Greek*, “Being made mighty with (literally, ‘in’) all might.”

according to his glorious power — rather, “according to the power (the characteristic of ‘His glory,’ here appropriate to Paul’s argument, ~~401~~ Ephesians 1:19 6:10; as its exuberant ‘riches,’ in ~~402~~ Ephesians 3:16) of His glory.” His power is inseparable from His glory (~~403~~ Romans 6:4).

unto all patience — so as to attain to all *patient endurance*; persevering, enduring continuance in the faith, in spite of trials of persecutors, and seductions of false teachers.

long-suffering — towards those whom one could repel. “Patience,” or “endurance,” is exercised in respect to those whom one cannot repel [CHRYSOSTOM].

with joyfulness — joyful endurance (⁴¹⁶⁵Acts 16:25 ⁴¹⁷⁸Romans 5:3,11).

12. You “giving thanks unto the Father.” See on ⁵⁰⁰Colossians 1:10; this clause is connected with “that ye may be filled” (⁵⁰⁰Colossians 1:9), and “that ye may walk” (⁵⁰⁰Colossians 1:10). The connection is not, “We do not cease to pray for you” (⁵⁰⁹Colossians 1:9) giving thanks.”

unto the Father — of Jesus Christ, and so *our* Father by adoption (⁴⁸⁸Galatians 3:26 4:4-6).

which hath made us meet — *Greek*, “who *made* us meet.” Not “*is making* us meet” by progressive growth in holiness; but *once for all made* us meet. It is not *primarily* the *Spirit’s* work that is meant here, as the text is often used; but the *Father’s* work in putting us by adoption, once for all, in a new standing, namely, *that of children*. The believers meant here were in different stages of progressive sanctification; but in respect to the meetness specified here, they all alike had it from the Father, in Christ His Son, being “complete in Him” (⁵²⁹Colossians 2:10). Compare ⁴³⁷⁷John 17:17 ⁵⁰⁰Jude 1:1, “sanctified by God *the Father*”; ⁴¹⁶¹1 Corinthians 1:30. Still, *secondarily*, this once-for-all meetness contains in it the germ of sanctification, afterwards developed progressively in the life by the Father’s Spirit in the believer. The Christian life of heavenliness is the first stage of heaven itself. There must, and will be, a *personal* meetness for heaven, where there is a *judicial* meetness.

to be partakers, etc. — *Greek*, “for the (or ‘*our*’) portion of the inheritance” (⁴¹⁶⁸Acts 20:32 26:18 ⁴⁰¹¹Ephesians 1:11) of the saints in light.” “Light” begins in the believer here, descending from “the Father of lights” by Jesus, “the true light,” and is perfected in the kingdom of light, which includes knowledge, purity, love, and joy. It is contrasted here with the “darkness” of the unconverted state (⁵⁰¹³Colossians 1:13; compare ⁴¹⁶⁹1 Peter 2:9).

13. from — *Greek*, “*out of* the power,” out of the sphere in which his power is exercised.

darkness — blindness, hatred, misery [BENGEL].

translated — Those thus translated as to state, are also transformed as to character. Satan has an organized dominion with various orders of powers

of evil (^{<49D>}Ephesians 2:2 6:12). But the term “kingdom” is rarely applied to his usurped rule (^{<4D2>}Matthew 12:26); it is generally restricted to the kingdom of God.

his dear Son — rather as *Greek*, “the Son of His love”: the Son on whom His love rests (^{<47D>}John 17:26 ^{<49D>}Ephesians 1:6); contrasted with the “darkness” where all is hatred and hateful.

14. (^{<49D>}Ephesians 1:7.)

redemption — rather as *Greek*, “*our* redemption.”

through his blood — omitted in the oldest manuscripts; probably inserted from ^{<49D>}Ephesians 1:7.

sins — Translate as *Greek*, “*our* sins.” The more general term: for which ^{<49D>}Ephesians 1:7, *Greek*, has, “*our transgressions*,” the more special term.

15. They who have experienced in themselves “redemption” (^{<5014>}Colossians 1:14), know Christ in the glorious character here described, as above the highest angels to whom the false teachers (^{<50D8>}Colossians 2:18) taught worship was to be paid. Paul describes Him:

(1) in relation to God and creation (^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15-17);

(2) in relation to the Church (^{<5018>}Colossians 1:18-20). As the former regards Him as the Creator (^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15,16) and the Sustainer (^{<5017>}Colossians 1:17) of the natural world; so the latter, as the source and stay of the new moral creation.

image — exact likeness and perfect Representative. Adam was made “in the image of God” (^{<0027>}Genesis 1:27). But Christ, the second Adam, perfectly reflected visibly “the invisible God” (^{<5017>}1 Timothy 1:17), whose glories the first Adam only in part represented. “Image” (*eicon*) involves “likeness” (*homoiosis*); but “likeness” does not involve “image.” “Image” always supposes a prototype, which it not merely resembles, but from which it is drawn: the exact counterpart, as the reflection of the sun in the water: the child the living image of the parent. “Likeness” implies mere *resemblance*, not the exact *counterpart* and *derivation* as “image” expresses; hence it is nowhere applied to the Son, while “image” is here, compare ^{<410>}1 Corinthians 11:7 [TRENCH]. (^{<4018>}John 1:18 14:9 ^{<0042>}

Corinthians 4:4 ^{<S16>}1 Timothy 3:16 ^{<S16>}Hebrews 1:3). Even before His incarnation He was the image of the invisible God, as the Word (^{<S16>}John 1:1-3) by whom God created the worlds, and by whom God appeared to the patriarchs. Thus His *essential* character as *always* “the image of God,”

(1) before the incarnation,

(2) in the days of His flesh, and

(3) now in His glorified state, is, I think, contemplated here by the verb “is.”

first-born of every creature — (^{<S16>}Hebrews 1:6), “the first-begotten”: “begotten of His Father before all worlds” [*Nicene Creed*]. Priority and superlative dignity is implied (^{<S16>}Psalms 89:27). *English Version* might seem to favor Arianism, as if Christ were a creature. Translate, “Begotten (literally, ‘born’) *before* every creature,” as the context shows, which gives the reason why He is so designated. “For,” etc. (^{<S16>}Colossians 1:16,17) [TRENCH]. This expression is understood by ORIGEN (so far is the *Greek* from favoring Socinian or Arian views) as declaring *the Godhead* of Christ, and is used by Him as a phrase to mark that *Godhead*, in contrast with His *manhood* [Book 2, sec. *Against Celsus*]. The *Greek* does not strictly admit ALFORD’S translation, “the first-born of all creation.”

16. For — *Greek*, “Because.” This gives the proof that He is not included in the things created, but is the “first-begotten” before “every creature” (^{<S16>}Colossians 1:15), begotten as “the Son of God’s love” (^{<S16>}Colossians 1:13), antecedently to all other emanations: “for” all these other emanations came from Him, and whatever was created, *was created by Him*.

by him — rather as *Greek*, “in Him”: as the conditional element, pre-existent and all-including: the creation of all things BY *Him* is expressed afterwards, and is a different fact from the present one, though implied in it [ALFORD]. God revealed Himself in the Son, the Word of the Father, *before all created existence* (^{<S16>}Colossians 1:15). That Divine Word carries IN *Himself the archetypes of all existences*, so that “IN *Him* all things that are in heaven and earth have been created.” The “in Him” indicates that the Word is the ideal ground of all existence; the “by Him,” below, that He is

the *instrument* of actually realizing the divine idea [NEANDER]. His essential nature as the Word of the Father is not a mere appendage of His incarnation, but is the ground of it. The original relation of the Eternal Word to men “made in His image” (^{<00027>}Genesis 1:27), is the source of the new relation to them by redemption, formed in His incarnation, whereby He restores them to His lost image. “*In Him*” implies something prior to “by” and “for Him” presently after: the three prepositions mark in succession the beginning, the progress, and the end [BENGEL].

all things — *Greek*, “the universe of things.” That the *new creation* is not meant in this verse (as Socinians interpret), is plain; for *angels*, who are included in the catalogue, were not *new created* by Christ; and he does not speak of the new creation till ^{<0018>}Colossians 1:18. The creation “of the things that are in the *heavens*” (so *Greek*) includes the creation of the *heavens themselves*: the former are rather named, since the inhabitants are more noble than their dwellings. Heaven and earth and all that is in them (^{<0011>}1 Chronicles 29:11 ^{<0009>}Nehemiah 9:6 ^{<0010>}Revelation 10:6).

invisible — the world of spirits.

thrones, or dominions — *lordships*: the thrones are the greater of the two.

principalities, or powers — rather, “*rules, or authorities*”: the former are stronger than the latter (compare *Note*, see on ^{<0021>}Ephesians 1:21). The latter pair refer to offices *in respect to God’s creatures*: “thrones and dominions” express exalted *relation to God*, they being the *chariots* on which He rides displaying His glory (^{<0017>}Psalms 68:17). The existence of various orders of angels is established by this passage.

all things — *Greek*, “the whole universe of things.”

were — rather, to distinguish the *Greek* aorist, which precedes from the perfect tense here, “*have been created*.” In the former case the creation was viewed as a *past act at a point of time*, or as done once for all; here it is viewed, not merely as one historic act of creation in the past, but as the *permanent result now and eternally continuing*.

by him — as the instrumental Agent (^{<0003>}John 1:3).

for him — as the grand *End* of creation; containing in Himself the reason why creation is at all, and why it is as it is [ALFORD]. He is the *final* cause as well as the *efficient* cause. LACHMANN’S punctuation of ^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15-18 is best, whereby “the first-born of every creature” (^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15) answers to “the first-born from the dead” (^{<5018>}Colossians 1:18), the whole forming one sentence with the words (“All things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist, and He is the Head of the body, the Church”) intervening as a parenthesis. Thus Paul puts first, *the origination by Him of the natural creation*; secondly, *of the new creation*. The parenthesis falls into four clauses, two and two: the former two support the first assertion, “the first-born of every creature”; the latter two prepare us for “the first-born from the dead”; the former two correspond to the latter two in their form — “All things by Him ... and He is,” and “By Him all things ... and He is.”

17. (^{<4088>}John 8:58.) Translate as *Greek*, “And *He Himself* (the great HE) is (implying *divine essential being*) before all things,” in *time*, as well as in *dignity*. Since He is before all things, He is *before even time*, that is, *from eternity*. Compare “the first-born of every creature” (^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15).

by him — *Greek*, “IN Him” (as the conditional element of existence, ^{<5016>}Colossians 1:16) [ALFORD].

consist — “subsist.” Not only are called into being from nothing, but *are maintained in their present state*. The Son of God is the *Conserver*, as well as the *Creator* of all things [PEARSON]. BENIGEL less probably explains, “All things in Him come together into one *system*: the universe found its completion in Him” (^{<2304>}Isaiah 41:4 ^{<6213>}Revelation 22:13). Compare as to GOD, ^{<5113>}Romans 11:36: similar language; therefore *Christ* must be God.

18. Revelation of Christ to the Church and the new creation, as the Originator of both.

he — emphatical. Not angels in opposition to the false teachers’ doctrine concerning angel-worship, and the power of Oeons or (imaginary) spirit emanations from God (^{<5121>}Colossians 2:10,18).

head of the body, the church — The Church is His body by virtue of His entering into communion corporeally with human nature [NEANDER],

(^{<402} Ephesians 1:22). The same One who is the Head of all things and beings by creation, is also, by virtue of being “the first-born from the dead,” and so “the first-fruits” of the new creation among men, the Head of the Church.

who is — that is, in that He is the Beginning [ALFORD]. Rather, this is *the beginning of a new paragraph*. As the former paragraph, which related to His originating the *physical* creation, began with “Who is” (^{<505} Colossians 1:15); so this, which treats of His originating the new creation, begins with “who is”; a parenthesis preceding. which closes the former paragraph, that parenthesis (see on ^{<506} Colossians 1:16), including from “all things were created by Him,” to “Head of the body, the Church.” The *head* of kings and high priests was anointed, as the seat of the faculties, the fountain of dignity, and *original* of all the members (according to *Hebrew* etymology). So Jesus by His unction was designated as the *Head* of the body, the Church.

the beginning — namely, of the new creation, as of the old (^{<389} Proverbs 8:2 ^{<600} 2 John 1:1; compare ^{<608} Revelation 1:8): the beginning of the Church of the first-born (^{<822} Hebrews 12:23), as being Himself the “first-born from the dead” (^{<463} Acts 26:23 ^{<651} 1 Corinthians 15:20,23). Christ’s primogeniture is threefold:

(1) From eternity the “first-begotten” of the Father (^{<505} Colossians 1:15);

(2) As the first-born of His mother (^{<4025} Matthew 1:25);

(3) As the Head of the Church, mystically begotten of the Father, as it were to a new life, on the day of His resurrection, which is His “regeneration,” even as His people’s coming resurrection will be their “regeneration” (that is, the resurrection which was begun in the soul, extended to the body and to the whole creation, ^{<609} Romans 8:21,22) (^{<408} Matthew 19:28 ^{<433} Acts 13:33 ^{<606} Revelation 1:5). Sonship and resurrection are similarly connected (^{<426} Luke 20:36 ^{<604} Romans 1:4 8:23 ^{<482} 1 John 3:2). Christ by rising from the dead is the efficient cause (^{<652} 1 Corinthians 15:22), as having obtained the power, and the exemplary cause, as being the pattern (^{<303} Micah 2:13 ^{<605} Romans 6:5

^{<1029}Philippians 3:21), of our resurrection: the resurrection of “the Head” involves consequentially that of the members.

that in all things — He resumes the “all things” (^{<5001}Colossians 1:20).

he might have the pre-eminence — *Greek*, “He HIMSELF *may* (thus) become the One holding the first place,” or, “take the precedence.” Both ideas are included, priority in *time* and priority in *dignity*: now in the regenerated world, as before in the world of creation (^{<5015}Colossians 1:15). “Begotten before every creature, or “first-born of every creature” (^{<1927}Psalms 89:27 ^{<1933}John 3:13).

19. *Greek*, “(God) was *well pleased*,” etc.

in him — that is, in the Son (^{<1029}Matthew 3:17).

all fullness — rather as *Greek*, “all *the* fullness,” namely, *of God*, whatever divine excellence is in God the Father (^{<5019}Colossians 2:9 ^{<1029}Ephesians 3:19; compare ^{<1116}John 1:16 3:34). The Gnostics used the term “fullness,” for the assemblage of emanations, or angelic powers, coming from God. The Spirit presciently by Paul warns the Church, that the true “fullness” dwells in Christ alone. This assigns the reason why Christ takes precedence of every creature (^{<5015}Colossians 1:15). For two reasons Christ is Lord of the Church:

(1) Because the fullness of the divine attributes (^{<5019}Colossians 1:19) dwells in Him, and so He has the *power* to govern the universe;

(2) Because (^{<5001}Colossians 1:20) what He has done for the Church gives Him the *right* to preside over it.

should ... dwell — as in a temple (^{<1021}John 2:21). *This indwelling of the Godhead in Christ* is the foundation of *the reconciliation* by Him [BENGEL]. Hence the “and” (^{<5001}Colossians 1:20) connects as cause and effect the two things, *the Godhead in Christ, and the reconciliation by Christ*.

20. The *Greek* order is, “And through Him (Christ) to reconcile again completely (see on ^{<1029}Ephesians 2:16) all things (*Greek*, ‘the whole universe of things’) unto Himself (unto God the Father, ^{<1029}2 Corinthians 5:19), having made peace (God the Father having made peace) through the

blood of His (Christ's) cross," that is, shed by Christ *on* the cross: the price and pledge of our reconciliation with God. The Scripture phrase, "God reconciles man to Himself," implies that He takes away by the blood of Jesus the barrier which God's justice interposes against man's being in union with God (compare *Note*, see on ^{<615>}Romans 5:10; ^{<615>}2 Corinthians 5:18). So the *Septuagint*, ^{<604>}1 Samuel 29:4, "Wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master," that is, *reconcile his master* unto him by appeasing his wrath. So ^{<612>}Matthew 5:23,24.

by him — "through Him" (the instrumental agent in the new creation, as in the original creation): emphatically repeated, to bring the person of Christ, as the Head of both creations alike, into prominence.

things in earth ... in heaven — Good angels, in one sense, do not need reconciliation to God; fallen angels are excluded from it (^{<606>}Jude 1:6). But probably redemption has effects on the world of spirits unknown to us. Of course, His reconciling *us*, and His reconciling *them*, must be by a different process, as He took not on Him the nature of angels, so as to offer a *propitiation* for them. But the effect of redemption on them, as He is *their* Head as well as *ours*, is that they are thereby *brought nearer God*, and so gain an increase of blessedness [ALFORD], and *larger views of the love and wisdom of God* (^{<601>}Ephesians 3:10). All creation subsists in Christ, all creation is therefore affected by His propitiation: sinful creation is strictly "reconciled" from its enmity; sinless creation, comparatively distant from His unapproachable purity (^{<605>}Job 4:18 15:15 25:5), is lifted into nearer participation of Him, and in this wider sense is reconciled. Doubtless, too, man's fall, following on Satan's fall, is a segment of a larger circle of evil, so that the remedy of the former affects the standing of angels, from among whom Satan and his host fell. Angels thereby having seen the magnitude of sin, and the infinite cost of redemption, and the exclusion of the fallen angels from it, and the inability of any creature to stand morally in his own strength, are *now* put beyond the reach of falling. Thus BACON's definition of Christ's Headship holds good: "The Head of *redemption* to man; the Head of *preservation* to angels." Some conjecture that Satan, when unfallen, ruled this earth and the pre-Adamic animal kingdom: hence his malice against man who succeeded to the lordship of this earth and its animals, and hence, too, his assumption of the form of a serpent, the subtlest of the animal tribes. ^{<603>}Luke 19:38 states expressly

“peace in heaven” as the result of finished redemption, as “peace on earth” was the result of its beginning at Jesus’ birth (^{<B14>}Luke 2:14). BENDEL explains the reconciliation to be that of not only God, but also *angels, estranged from men* because of man’s enmity against God. ^{<B10>}Ephesians 1:10 accords with this: This is true, but only part of the truth: so ALFORD’S view also is but part of the truth. An actual *reconciliation* or *restoration of peace in heaven*, as well as on earth, is expressed by Paul. As long as that blood of reconciliation was not actually shed, which is opposed (^{<B18>}Zechariah 3:8,9) to the accusations of Satan, but was only in promise, Satan could plead his right against men before God day and night (^{<B10>}Job 1:6 ^{<B20>}Revelation 12:10); hence he was in heaven till the ban on man was broken (compare ^{<B18>}Luke 10:18). So here; the world of earth and heaven owe to Christ alone *the restoration of harmony after the conflict and the subjugation of all things under one Head* (compare ^{<B12>}Hebrews 11:23). Sin introduced discord not only on earth, but also in heaven, by the fall of demons; it brought into the abodes of holy angels, though not positive, yet privative loss, a retardation of their highest and most perfect development, harmonious gradation, and perfect consummation. Angels were no more able than men by themselves to overcome the peace disturbers, and cast out the devils; it is only “by,” or “through HIM,” and “the blood of His cross,” that *peace was restored even in heaven*; it is only after Christ has obtained the victory fully and legally, that Michael (^{<B12>}Revelation 12:7-10) and his angels can cast out of heaven Satan and his demons (compare ^{<B15>}Colossians 2:15). Thus the point of Paul’s argument against angel-worship is, that angels themselves, like men, wholly depend on Christ, the sole and true object of worship [AUBERLEN].

21. The Colossians are included in this general reconciliation (compare ^{<B10>}Ephesians 2:1,12).

sometime — “once.”

alienated — from God and salvation: objectively *banished from God*, through the barrier which God’s justice interposed against your sin: subjectively *estranged* through the alienation of your own wills from God. The former is the prominent thought (compare ^{<B18>}Romans 5:10), as the second follows, “enemies in your mind.” “Actual *alienation* makes habitual ‘enemies’” [BENDEL].

in your mind — *Greek*, “in your understanding” or “thought” (^{<4118>}Ephesians 2:3 4:18).

by wicked works — rather as *Greek*, “in your wicked works” (wicked works were the element *in* which your *enmity* subsisted).

yet now — *Notwithstanding* the former alienation, *now* that Christ has come, *God* hath *completely reconciled*, or restored to His friendship *again* (so the *Greek*, compare *Note*, see on ^{<5002>}Colossians 1:20).

22. In the body of his flesh — the element in which His reconciling sufferings had place. Compare ^{<5002>}Colossians 1:24, “afflictions of Christ *in my flesh*” (^{<4124>}1 Peter 2:24). Angels who have not a “body of flesh” are not in any way our reconciling mediators, as your false teachers assert, but He, the Lord of angels, who has taken our *flesh*, that *in* it He might atone for our fallen manhood.

through death — rather as *Greek*, “through *His* death” (which could only take place in a body like ours, of flesh, ^{<5004>}Hebrews 2:14). This implies He took on Him our true and entire manhood. *Flesh* is the sphere in which His human sufferings could have place (compare ^{<5002>}Colossians 1:24 ^{<4125>}Ephesians 2:15).

to present you — (^{<4127>}Ephesians 5:27). The end of His reconciling atonement by death.

holy — positively; and in relation to God.

unblamable ... unprovable — negatively. “Without blemish” (as the *former Greek* word is translated as to Jesus, our Head, ^{<4119>}1 Peter 1:19) *in one’s self*. *Irreproachable* (the *Greek* for the *second* word, *one who gives no occasion for his being brought to a law court*) *is in relation to the world without*. *Sanctification*, as the fruit, is here treated of; *justification*, by Christ’s reconciliation, as the tree, having preceded (^{<4100>}Ephesians 1:4 5:26,27 ^{<5004>}Titus 2:14). At the same time, our sanctification is regarded here as *perfect* in Christ, into whom we are grafted at regeneration or conversion, and who is “made of God unto us (perfect) sanctification” (^{<4103>}1 Corinthians 1:30 ^{<4102>}1 Peter 1:2 ^{<5001>}Jude 1:1); not merely *progressive* sanctification, which is the *gradual development* of the sanctification which Christ is made to the believer from the first.

in his sight — in God’s sight, at Christ’s appearing.

23. If — “Assuming that,” etc.: not otherwise shall ye be so presented at His appearing (^{<502>}Colossians 1:22).

grounded — *Greek*, “founded,” “fixed on the *foundation*” (compare *Note*, see on ^{<487>}Ephesians 3:17; ^{<468>}Luke 6:48,49).

settled — “steadfast.” “Grounded” respects the *foundation* on which believers rest; “settled,” *their own steadfastness* (^{<480>}1 Peter 5:10). ^{<468>}1 Corinthians 15:58 has the same *Greek*.

not moved away — by the false teachers.

the hope of the gospel — (^{<418>}Ephesians 1:18).

which ye have heard ... which was preached to every creature ... whereof I ... am ... a minister — Three arguments against their being “moved away from the Gospel”:

(1) Their having heard it;

(2) The universality of the preaching of it;

(3) Paul’s ministry in it. For “to (*Greek*, ‘in’) every creature,” the oldest manuscripts read, “in *all creation*.” Compare “in all the world,” ^{<500>}Colossians 1:6; “all things ... in earth,” ^{<500>}Colossians 1:20 (^{<485>}Mark 16:15): thus he implies that the Gospel from which he urges them *not to be moved*, has this mark of truth, namely, the universality of its announcement, which accords with the command and prophecy of Christ Himself (^{<484>}Matthew 24:14). By “*was preached*,” he means not merely “*is being preached*,” but *has been actually, as an accomplished fact, preached*. PLINY, not many years subsequently, in his famous letter to the Emperor Trajan [*Epistles*, Book X., Epistle 97], writes, “Many of every age, rank, and sex, are being brought to trial. For the contagion of that superstition [Christianity] has spread over not only cities, but villages and the country.”

whereof I Paul am — rather as *Greek*, “*was made* a minister.” Respect for me, the minister of this world-wide Gospel, should lead you not to be moved from it. Moreover (he implies), the Gospel which ye heard from

Epaphras, your “minister” (^{<500>}Colossians 1:7), is the same of which “I was made a minister” (^{<502>}Colossians 1:25 ^{<480>}Ephesians 3:7): if you be moved from it, ye will desert the teaching of the recognized ministers of the Gospel for unauthorized false teachers.

24. Who — The oldest manuscripts omit “who”; then translate, “Now I rejoice.” Some very old manuscripts, and the best of the *Latin versions*, and *Vulgate*, read as *English Version*. To enhance the glory of Christ as paramount to all, he mentions his own sufferings for the Church of Christ. “Now” stands in contrast to “I *was made*,” in the past time (^{<502>}Colossians 1:23).

for you — “on your behalf,” that ye may be confirmed in resting solely on Christ (to the exclusion of angel-worship) by the glorification of Christ in my sufferings (^{<480>}Ephesians 3:1).

fill up that which is behind — literally, “the deficiencies” — all that are lacking of the afflictions of Christ (compare *Note*, see on ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:5). Christ is “afflicted in all His people’s afflictions” (^{<230>}Isaiah 63:9). “The Church is His body in which He is, dwells, lives, and therefore also suffers” [VITRINGA]. Christ was destined to endure certain afflictions in this figurative body, as well as in His literal; these were “that which is behind of the afflictions of *Christ*,” which Paul “filled up.” His own meritorious sufferings in expiation for sin were once for all completely filled up on the Cross. But His Church (His second Self) has her whole measure of afflictions fixed. The more Paul, a member, endured, the less remain for the rest of the Church to endure; the communion of saints thus giving them an interest in his sufferings. It is in reference to the Church’s afflictions, which are “Christ’s afflictions, that Paul here saith, “I fill up the deficiencies,” or “what remain behind of the afflictions of Christ.” She is afflicted to promote her growth in holiness, and her completeness in Christ. Not one suffering is lost (^{<480>}Psalms 56:8). All her members have thus a mutual interest in one another’s sufferings (^{<420>}1 Corinthians 12:26). But Rome’s inference hence, is utterly false that the Church has a stock treasury of the merits and satisfactions of Christ and His apostles, out of which she may dispense indulgences; the context has no reference to sufferings in *expiation of sin* and productive of *merit*. Believers should

regard their sufferings less in relation to themselves as individuals, and more as parts of a grand whole, carrying out God's perfect plan.

25. am — *Greek*, “I was made a minister”: resuming ^{<502>}Colossians 1:23, “whereof I Paul was made a minister.”

dispensation — the *stewardship* committed to me to dispense in the house of God, the Church, to the whole family of believers, the goods of my Master (^{<502>}Luke 12:42 ^{<501>}1 Corinthians 4:1,2 9:17 ^{<502>}Ephesians 3:2).

which is given — *Greek*, “which was given.”

for you — with a view to you, Gentiles (^{<502>}Colossians 1:27 ^{<501>}Romans 15:16).

to fulfill — to bring it fully to all: the end of his stewardship: “fully preached” (^{<501>}Romans 15:19). “The *fullness* of Christ (^{<501>}Colossians 1:19), and of the times (^{<501>}Ephesians 1:10) required him so to do” [BENGEL].

26. the mystery — (See on ^{<501>}Ephesians 1:9,10; ^{<501>}Ephesians 3:5-9). The *mystery*, once hidden, now revealed, is redemption for the whole Gentile world, as well as for the Jews, “Christ in *you* (Gentiles) the hope of glory” (^{<502>}Colossians 1:27).

from ages — “from,” according to ALFORD, refers to time, not “hidden from”: from the time of the ages; still what is meant is that the mystery was hidden from *the beings living in those “ages.”* The “ages” are the vast successive periods marked by successive orders of beings and stages of creation. *Greek*, “aeons,” a word used by the Gnostics for angelic beings emanating from God. The Spirit by Paul presciently, in opposition to Gnostic error already beginning (^{<502>}Colossians 2:18), teaches, that the mystery of redemption was hidden in God's purposes in Christ, alike from the *angelic beings* (compare ^{<501>}Ephesians 3:10) of the pre-Adamic “ages,” and from the subsequent *human* “generations.” Translate as *Greek*, “*the ages ... the generations.*”

made manifest to his saints — to His apostles and prophets primarily (^{<501>}Ephesians 3:5), and through them to *all His saints*.

27. would — rather as *Greek*, “willed,” or “was pleased to make known.” He resolves all into God’s *good pleasure* and *will*, that man should not glory save in God’s grace.

what — How full and inexhaustible!

the riches of the glory of this mystery — He accumulates phrase on phrase to enhance the greatness of the blessing in Christ bestowed by God on the Gentiles. Compare ^{<STR>}Colossians 2:3, “all the *treasures*” of *wisdom*; ^{<STR>}Ephesians 3:8, “the unsearchable *riches* of *Christ*”; ^{<STR>}Ephesians 1:7, “*riches* of His *grace*.” “*The glory of this mystery*” must be the glory which this once hidden, and now revealed, truth makes you Gentiles partakers of, partly now, but mainly when Christ shall come (^{<STR>}Colossians 3:4 ^{<STR>}Romans 5:2 8:17,18 ^{<STR>}Ephesians 1:18). This sense is proved by the following: “Christ in you the hope of *the* (so *Greek*) *glory*.” The lower was the degradation of you Gentiles, the higher is the richness of the glory to which the mystery revealed now raises you. You were “without *Christ*, and having *no hope*” (^{<STR>}Ephesians 2:12). Now you have “*Christ* in you the *hope of the glory*” just mentioned. ALFORD translates, “Christ among you,” to answer to “this mystery *among* the Gentiles.” But the whole clause, “Christ IN you (^{<STR>}Ephesians 3:17) the hope of glory,” answers to “this mystery,” and not to the whole sentence, “this mystery *among* the Gentiles.” What is *made known* “among you Gentiles” is, “Christ *in* you (now by faith as your *hidden* life, ^{<STR>}Colossians 3:3 ^{<STR>}Galatians 2:20) the hope of glory” (your manifested life). The contrast (antithesis) between “CHRIST IN YOU” now as your *hidden* life, and “the hope of glory” hereafter to be *manifested*, requires this translation.

28. preach — rather as *Greek*, “announce” or “proclaim.”

warning ... teaching — “Warning” is connected with *repentance*, refers to one’s *conduct*, and is addressed primarily to the *heart*. “Teaching” is connected with *faith*, refers to *doctrines*, and is addressed primarily to the *intellect*. These are the two heads of evangelical teaching.

every ... every man — without distinction of Jew or Gentile, great or small (^{<STR>}Romans 10:12,13).

in all wisdom — with all the wisdom *in our method of teaching* that we possess: so ALFORD. But ^{<500>}Colossians 1:9 ^{<508>}Colossians 3:16, favor ESTIUS' view, which refers it to the *wisdom communicated to those being taught*: keeping back nothing, but instructing all in the perfect knowledge of the mysteries of faith which is the true *wisdom* (compare ^{<406>}1 Corinthians 2:6,7 12:8 ^{<407>}Ephesians 1:17).

present — (See on ^{<502>}Colossians 1:22); at Christ's coming.

every man — Paul is zealous lest the false teachers should seduce *one single* soul of Christ's people at Colosse. So each individual among them should be zealous for himself and his neighbor. Even one soul is of incalculable value.

perfect in Christ — who is the *element in living union with* whom alone each believer can find *perfection: perfectly instructed* (^{<400>}Ephesians 4:13) in doctrine, and *full grown* or *matured* in faith and practice. "Jesus" is omitted in all the oldest manuscripts.

29. Whereunto — namely, "to present every man perfect in Christ."

I also labor — rather, "I labor also." I not only "proclaim" (*English Version*, "preach") Christ, but I *labor* also.

striving — in "conflict" (^{<500>}Colossians 2:1) of spirit (compare ^{<408>}Romans 8:26). The same *Greek* word is used of Epaphras (^{<500>}Colossians 4:12), "*laboring fervently* for you in prayers": literally, "agonizing," "striving as in the agony of a contest." So Jesus in Gethsemane when praying (^{<424>}Luke 22:44): so "strive" (the same *Greek* word, "agonize"), ^{<424>}Luke 13:24. So Jacob "*wrestled*" in prayer (^{<424>}Genesis 32:24-29). Compare "contention," *Greek*, "agony," or "striving earnestness," ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 2:2.

according to his working — Paul avows that he has power to "strive" in spirit for his converts, so far only as *Christ* works in him and by him (^{<408>}Ephesians 3:20 ^{<508>}Philippians 4:13).

mightily — literally, "in power."

CHAPTER 2

COLOSSIANS 2:1-23.

HIS STRIVINGS IN PRAYER FOR THEIR STEADFASTNESS IN CHRIST; FROM WHOM HE WARNS THEM NOT TO BE LED AWAY BY FALSE WISDOM.

1. For — He explains in what respect he “labored *striving*” (^{<SOL>}Colossians 1:29). Translate as *Greek*, “I wish you to know how great a conflict (the same *Greek* word as in ^{<SOL>}Colossians 1:29, “*agony* of a conflict” of fervent, anxious prayer; not conflict with the false teachers, which would have been impossible for him now in prison) I have for you.”

them at Laodicea — exposed to the same danger from false teachers as the Colossians (compare ^{<SOL>}Colossians 4:16). This danger was probably the cause of his writing to Laodicea, as well as to Colosse.

not seen my face in the flesh — including those in Hierapolis (^{<SOL>}Colossians 4:13). Paul considered himself a “debtor” to all the Gentiles (^{<ROM>}Romans 1:14). “His face” and presence would have been a “comfort” (^{<SOL>}Colossians 2:2 ^{<ACT>}Acts 20:38). Compare ^{<SOL>}Colossians 1:4,7,8, in proof that he had not *seen*, but only *heard of* the Colossians. Hence he strives by earnest *conflict* with God in anxious prayer for them, to make up for the loss of his bodily presence among them. Though “absent in the *flesh*, I am with you in the *Spirit*” (^{<SOL>}Colossians 2:5).

2. Translate, “That their hearts *may* be comforted.” The “their,” compared with “you” (^{<SOL>}Colossians 2:4), proves that in ^{<SOL>}Colossians 2:1 the words, “have not seen my face in the flesh,” is a *general* designation of those for whom Paul declares he has “conflict,” including the particular species, “you (Colossians) and them at Laodicea.” For it is plain, the prayer “that *their* hearts may be comforted,” must include in it the Colossians for whom he expressly says, “I have conflict.” Thus it is an abbreviated mode of expression for, “That *your and their* hearts may be comforted.” ALFORD translates, “confirmed,” or allows “comforted” in its original radical sense

strengthened. But the *Greek* supports *English Version*: the sense, too, is clear: *comforted* with the consolation of those whom Paul had not seen, and for whom, in consequence, he strove in prayerful conflict the more fervently; inasmuch as we are more anxious in behalf of absent, than present, friends [DAVENANT]. Their hearts would be comforted by “knowing what conflict he had for” them, and how much he is interested for their welfare; and also by being released from doubts on learning from the apostle, that the doctrine which they had heard from Epaphras was true and certain. In writing to churches which he had instructed face to face, he enters into particular details concerning them, as a father directing his children. But to those among whom he had not been in person, he treats of the more general truths of salvation.

being — Translate as *Greek* in oldest manuscripts, “They being knit together.”

in love — the bond and element of perfect *knitting together*; the antidote to the dividing schismatical effect of false doctrine. Love to God and to one another in Christ.

unto — the object and end of their being “knit together.”

all riches — *Greek*, “all the riches of the full assurance (⁵⁰⁶1 Thessalonians 1:5 ⁵⁰⁶Hebrews 6:11 10:22) of the (Christian) understanding.” The accumulation of phrases, not only “understanding,” but “the full assurance of understanding”; not only this, but “the *riches* of,” etc.; not only this, but “*all* the riches of,” etc. implies how he desires to impress them with the momentous importance of the subject in hand.

to — Translate “unto.”

acknowledgment — The *Greek* implies, “full and accurate knowledge.” It is a distinct *Greek* word from “knowledge,” ⁵⁰⁶Colossians 2:3. ALFORD translates, “thorough ... knowledge.” *Acknowledgment* hardly is strong enough; they did in a measure *acknowledge* the truth; what they wanted was the *full and accurate knowledge* of it (compare *Notes*, see on ⁵⁰⁶Colossians 1:9,10; ⁵⁰⁶Philippians 1:9).

of God, and of the Father and of Christ — The oldest manuscripts omit “and of the Father, and of”; then translate, “Of God (namely), Christ.”

Two very old manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “Of God the Father of Christ.”

3. Translate in the *Greek* order, “In whom (not as ALFORD, ‘in which’) *mystery*; Christ is Himself the ‘mystery’ (Colossians 2:2 1 Timothy 3:16), and to Christ the relative refers) are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.” The “all” here, answers to “all” in Colossians 2:2; as “treasures” answer to the “riches”; it is from the *treasures* that the *riches* (Colossians 2:2) are derived. “Are” is the predicate of the sentence; all the treasures ARE in Him; *hidden* is predicated of the state or manner in which they are in Him. Like a mine of unknown and inexhaustible wealth, the *treasures* of wisdom are all in Him *hidden*, but not in order to remain so; they only need to be explored for you to attain “unto the riches” in them (Colossians 2:2); but until you, Colossians, press after attaining *the full knowledge* (see on Colossians 2:2) of them, they remain “hidden.” Compare the parable, Matthew 13:44, “treasure hid.” This sense suits the scope of the apostle, and sets aside ALFORD’S objection that “the treasures are not hidden, but revealed.” “Hidden” plainly answers to “mystery” (Colossians 2:2), which is designed by God, if we be faithful to our privileges, not to remain *hidden*, but to be revealed (compare 1 Corinthians 2:7,8). Still as the mine is unfathomable, there will, through eternity, be always fresh treasures in Him to be drawn forth from their hidden state.

wisdom — general, and as to *experimental* and *practical* truth; whence comes “understanding” (Colossians 2:2).

knowledge — *special* and *intellectual*, in regard to *doctrinal* truth; whence comes “the full knowledge” (Colossians 2:2).

4. And — “Now.” Compare with “lest any man,” etc. Colossians 2:8,16,18. He refers to the blending of Judaism with Oriental philosophy, and the combination of this mixture with Christianity.

enticing words — plausible as wearing the guise of *wisdom* and *humility* (Colossians 2:18,23).

5. For — argument against their suffering themselves to be *beguiled*, drawn from a regard to his personal authority as though he were present.

joying and beholding — beholding with joy.

order — your *good order*; answering to “knit together” (^{◌SIMP}Colossians 2:2) as a well-organized body; the same *Greek* as that for *knit together*, is used of the body” of the Church *compacted*,” in ^{◌APOS}Ephesians 4:16. Compare ^{◌APOS}1 Corinthians 14:33,40.

steadfastness — *Greek*, “the firm (or ‘solid’) foundation.” As “order” expresses the outward aspect of the Church; so “steadfastness” expresses the inner basis on which their Church rested. The *Greek* literally implies not an abstract quality, but the *thing* in the concrete; thus their “faith” here is *the solid thing* which constituted the *basis* of their Church.

6. “As therefore ye received (once for all; the aorist tense; from Epaphras) Jesus *the* Christ *as your* Lord (compare ^{◌APOS}1 Corinthians 12:3 ^{◌APOS}2 Corinthians 4:5 ^{◌SIMP}Philippians 3:8), so walk in Him.” He says not merely, “Ye received” the doctrine of Christ, but “Jesus” Himself; this is the essence of faith (^{◌◌◌}John 14:21,23 ^{◌APOS}Galatians 1:16). Ye have received once for all the Spirit of *life* in Christ; carry into practice that life in your *walk* (^{◌APOS}Galatians 5:25). This is the main scope of the Epistle.

7. **Rooted** — (^{◌APOS}Ephesians 3:17).

built up — *Greek*, “being builded up.” As “rooted” implies their *vitality*; so “builded up,” massive *solidity*. As in the Song of Solomon, when one image is not sufficient to express the varied aspects of divine truth, another is employed to supply the idea required. Thus “walking,” a third image (^{◌SIMP}Colossians 2:6), expresses the thought which “rooted” and “built,” though each suggesting a thought peculiar to itself, could not express, namely, onward *motion*. “Rooted” is in the *past* tense, implying their first *conversion* and vital grafting “in Him.” “Built up” is *present* (in the *Greek*), implying their progressive *increase* in religion by union with Him. ^{◌APOS}Ephesians 2:20 refers to the *Church*; but the passage here to their *individual* progress in edification (^{◌APOS}Acts 20:32).

stablished — confirmed.

as — “even as.”

abounding therein with thanksgiving — advancing to fuller maturity (compare ^{<S>100}Colossians 2:2) in the faith, “with thanksgiving” to God as the gracious Author of this whole blessing.

8. Translate, “Beware (literally, ‘Look’ well) lest there *shall be* (as I fear there is: the *Greek* indicative expresses this) any man (pointing to some known emissary of evil, ^{<R>100}Galatians 1:7) *leading you away as his spoil* (not merely gaining spoil out of you, but making *yourselves* his spoil) through (by means of) his philosophy,” etc. The apostle does not condemn *all* philosophy, but “*the* philosophy” (so *Greek*) of the Judaic-oriental heretics at Colosse, which afterwards was developed into Gnosticism. You, who may have “the *riches* of *full* assurance” and “the *treasures* of wisdom,” should not suffer yourselves to be led away as a *spoil* by *empty*, deceitful philosophy: “riches” are contrasted with spoil; “full” with “vain,” or *empty* (^{<S>100}Colossians 2:2,3,9).

after — “according to.”

tradition of men — opposed to, “the fullness of *the Godhead*.” Applied to *Rabbinical traditions*, ^{<A>100}Mark 7:8. When men could not make revelation even *seem* to tell about deep mysteries which they were curious to pry into, they brought in human philosophy and pretended traditions to help it, as if one should bring a lamp to the sundial to find the hour [*Cautations for Times*, p. 85]. The false teachers boasted of a higher wisdom in theory, transmitted by tradition among the initiated; in practice they enjoined asceticism, as though matter and the body were the sources of evil. Phrygia (in which was Colosse) had a propensity for the mystical and magical, which appeared in their worship of Cybele and subsequent Montanism [NEANDER].

rudiments of the world — (See on ^{<R>100}Galatians 4:3). “The rudiments” or elementary lessons “of the (outward) world,” such as legal ordinances; our Judaic childhood’s lessons (^{<S>100}Colossians 2:11,16,20 ^{<R>100}Galatians 4:1-3). But NEANDER, “the *elements* of the world,” in the sense, *what is earthly, carnal and outward*, not “the rudiments of religion,” in Judaism and heathenism.

not after Christ — “Their” boasted higher “philosophy” is but human tradition, and a cleaving to the carnal and worldly, and not to Christ.

Though acknowledging Christ nominally, in spirit they by their doctrine deny Him.

9. For — “Because.” *Their* “philosophy” (^{<508>}Colossians 2:8) is not “after Christ,” as all true philosophy is, everything which comes not from, and tends not to, Him, being a delusion; “For in Him (alone) dwelleth” *as in a temple*, etc.

the fullness — (^{<509>}Colossians 1:19 ^{<340>}John 14:10).

of the Godhead — The *Greek* (*theotes*) means the ESSENCE and NATURE of the Godhead, not merely the *divine perfections* and attributes of Divinity (*Greek*, “*theiotes*”). He, as man, was not merely God-like, but in the fullest sense, God.

bodily — not merely as before His incarnation, but now “bodily in Him” as the incarnate word (^{<314>}John 1:14,18). Believers, by union with Him, partake of His fullness of the divine nature (^{<316>}John 1:16 ^{<300>}2 Peter 1:4; see on ^{<309>}Ephesians 3:19).

10. And — And *therefore*; and so. Translate in the *Greek* order, “Ye are in Him (by virtue of union with Him) *filled full*” of all that you need (^{<316>}John 1:16). Believers receive of the divine unction which flows down from their Divine Head and High Priest (^{<313>}Psalms 133:2). He is *full of* the “fullness” itself; we, *filled* from Him. Paul implies, Therefore ye Colossians need no supplementary sources of grace, such as the false teachers dream of. Christ is “the Head of all *rule and authority*” (so the *Greek*), ^{<311>}Ephesians 1:10; He, therefore, alone, not these subject “authorities” also, is to be adored (^{<508>}Colossians 2:18).

11. Implying that they did not need, as the Judaizers taught, the outward rite of circumcision, since they had already the inward spiritual reality of it.

are — rather, as the *Greek*, “Ye *were* (once for all) circumcised (spiritually, at your conversion and baptism, ^{<328>}Romans 2:28,29 ^{<508>}Philippians 3:3) with a (so the *Greek*) circumcision made without hands”; opposed to “the circumcision in the flesh *made by hands*” (^{<311>}Ephesians 2:11). Christ’s own body, by which the believer is

sanctified, is said to be “not made with hands” (^{<4115>}Mark 14:58 ^{<3911>}Hebrews 9:11; compare ^{<2715>}Daniel 2:45).

in putting off — rather as *Greek*, “in your putting off”; as an old garment (^{<4002>}Ephesians 4:22); alluding to the putting off the foreskin in circumcision.

the body of the sins of the flesh — The oldest manuscripts read, “the body of the flesh,” omitting “of the sins,” that is, “the body,” of which the prominent feature is *fleshiness* (compare ^{<5185>}Romans 8:13, where “flesh” and “the body” mutually correspond). This fleshly body, in its sinful aspect, is put off in baptism (where baptism answers its ideal) as the seal of regeneration where received in repentance and faith. In circumcision the *foreskin* only was put off; in Christian regeneration “the *body* of the flesh” is spiritually put off, at least it is so in its ideal conception, however imperfectly believers *realize* that ideal.

by — *Greek*, “in.” This spiritual circumcision is realized in, or by, union with Christ, whose “circumcision,” whereby He became responsible for us to keep the whole law, is imputed to believers for justification; and union with whom, in all His vicarious obedience, including HIS CIRCUMCISION, is the source of our sanctification. ALFORD makes it explanatory of the previous, “a circumcision made without hands,” namely, “the circumcision brought about by your union with Christ.” The former view seems to me better to accord with ^{<5102>}Colossians 2:12 3:1,3,4, which similarly makes the believer, by spiritual union with Christ, to have personal fellowship in the several states of Christ, namely, His death, resurrection, and appearing in glory. Nothing was done or suffered by our Mediator as such, but may be acted in our souls and represented in our spirits. PEARSON’S view, however, is that of ALFORD. JOSHUA, the type (not Moses in the wilderness), circumcised the Israelites in Canaan (^{<4612>}Joshua 5:2-9) the second time: the people that came out of Egypt having been circumcised, and afterwards having died in the wilderness; but those born after the Exodus not having been so. Jesus, the Antitype, is the author of the true circumcision, which is therefore called “the circumcision of Christ” (^{<4123>}Romans 2:29). As Joshua was “Moses’ minister,” so Jesus, “minister of the circumcision for the truth of God” unto the Gentiles (^{<5185>}Romans 15:8).

12. Translate, “*Having been buried with Him in your baptism.*” The past participle is here coincident in time with the preceding verb, “ye were (Greek) circumcised.” Baptism is regarded as the burial of the old carnal life, to which the act of immersion symbolically corresponds; and in warm climates where *immersion* is safe, it is the mode most accordant with the significance of the ordinance; but the spirit of the ordinance is kept by affusion, where immersion would be inconvenient or dangerous; to insist on literal immersion in all cases would be mere legal ceremonialism (⋈ Romans 6:3,4).

are risen — rather as *Greek*, “*were raised with Him.*”

through the faith, etc. — *by means of your faith in the operation of God*; so “faith of,” for “faith in” (⋈ Ephesians 3:12 ⋈ Philippians 3:9). Faith in God’s mighty operation in raising again Jesus, is saving faith (⋈ Romans 4:24 10:9); and it is wrought in the soul by His same “mighty working” whereby He “raised Jesus from the dead” (⋈ Ephesians 1:19,20). BENJEL seems to me (not as ALFORD understands him) to express the latter sense, namely, “Through the faith which is *a work of the operation of God who*,” etc. ⋈ Ephesians 1:19,20 accords with this; the same mighty power of God is exercised in raising one spiritually dead to the life of faith, as was “wrought in Christ when God raised Him literally from the dead.” However, “faith of” *usually* is “faith in” (⋈ Romans 3:22); but there is no grammatical impropriety in understanding it “the faith which is the effect of the operation of God” (⋈ Ephesians 2:8 ⋈ 1 Thessalonians 2:13). As His literal resurrection is the ground of the power put forth in our spiritual resurrection now, so it is a pledge of our literal resurrection hereafter (⋈ Romans 8:11).

13. you, being dead — formerly (⋈ Ephesians 2:1,2); even as Christ was among the dead, before that God raised Him “from the dead” (⋈ Colossians 2:12).

sins — rather as *Greek* is translated at end of this verse, “trespasses,” literally, “failings aside” from God’s ways; actual transgressions, as that of Adam.

uncircumcision of your flesh — your not having put off the old fleshly nature, the carnal foreskin, or *original sin*, which now by spiritual circumcision, that is, conversion and baptism, you have put off.

he quickened — GOD “quickened together with Him (CHRIST).” Just as Christ’s resurrection proved that He was delivered from the sin laid on Him, so our spiritual quickening proves that we have been forgiven our sins (^{<6122>}1 Peter 3:22 4:1,2).

forgiven you — So *Vulgate* and HILARY. But the oldest manuscripts read, “us,” passing from the particular persons, the Colossians, to the general Church (^{<5014>}Colossians 1:14 ^{<4010>}Ephesians 1:7).

all trespasses — *Greek*, “all *our* trespasses.”

14. Blotting out — *Greek*, “Having wiped out”; coincident in time with “having forgiven you” (^{<5123>}Colossians 2:13); hereby having *cancelled* the law’s indictment against you. The law (including especially the *moral* law, wherein lay the chief difficulty in obeying) is abrogated to the believer, as far as it was a compulsory, accusing code, and as far as “righteousness” (justification) and “life” were sought for by it. It can only produce outward works, not inward obedience of the will, which in the believer flows from the Holy Spirit in Him (^{<6121>}Romans 3:21 7:2,4 ^{<4123>}Galatians 2:19).

the handwriting of ordinances — rather, “IN ordinances” (see on ^{<4125>}Ephesians 2:15); “the law of commandments contained in ordinances.” “The handwriting” (alluding to the Decalogue, the representative of the law, *written by the hand* of God) is *the whole law*, the obligatory bond, under which all lay; the Jews primarily were under the bond, but they in this respect were the representative people of the world (^{<4123>}Romans 3:19); and in their inability to keep the law was involved the inability of the Gentiles also, in whose hearts “the work of the law was written” (^{<4125>}Romans 2:15); and as they did not keep this, they were condemned by it.

that was against us ... contrary to us — *Greek* “*adversary* to us”; so it is translated, ^{<5127>}Hebrews 10:27. “Not only was the law *against us* by its demands, but also *an adversary* to us by its accusations” [BENGEL].

TITTMANN explains the *Greek*, “having a *latent* contrariety to us”; not *open designed* hostility, but virtual unintentional opposition through our frailty; not through any opposition in *the law itself* to our good (^{<800>}Romans 7:7-12,14 ^{<800>}1 Corinthians 15:56 ^{<800>}Galatians 3:21 ^{<800>}Hebrews 10:3). The “WRITING” is part of “that which was contrary to us”; for “the *letter* killeth” (see on ^{<800>}2 Corinthians 3:6).

and took it — *Greek*, and hath taken it out of the way” (so as to be no longer a hindrance to us), by “nailing it to *the* cross.” Christ, by bearing the curse of the broken law, has redeemed us from its curse (^{<800>}Galatians 3:13). In His person nailed to the cross, the law itself was nailed to it. One ancient mode of cancelling bonds was by striking a nail through the writing: this seems at that time to have existed in Asia [GROTIUS]. The bond cancelled in the present case was the obligation lying against the Jews as representatives of the world, and attested by their *amen*, to keep the whole law under penalty of the curse (^{<800>}Deuteronomy 27:26 ^{<800>}Nehemiah 10:29).

15. ALFORD, ELLICOTT, and others translate the *Greek* to accord with the translation of the same *Greek*, ^{<800>}Colossians 3:9, “Stripping off from Himself the principalities and the powers: “GOD put off from Himself *the angels*, that is, their ministry, not employing them to be promulgators of the Gospel in the way that He had given the law by their “disposition” or ministry (^{<800>}Acts 7:53 ^{<800>}Galatians 3:19 ^{<800>}Hebrews 2:2,5): God manifested Himself without a veil in Jesus. “THE principalities and THE powers” refers back to ^{<800>}Colossians 2:10, Jesus, “the Head of all principality and power,” and ^{<800>}Colossians 1:16. In the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, God subjected all the principalities, etc., to Jesus, declaring them to be powerless as to His work and His people (^{<800>}Ephesians 1:21). Thus Paul’s argument against those grafting on Christianity Jewish observances, along with angel-worship, is, whatever part angels may be supposed to have had under the law, now at an end, God having put the legal dispensation itself away. But the objection is, that the context *seems* to refer to a triumph over *bad angels*: in ^{<800>}2 Corinthians 2:14, however, Christ’s *triumph* over those subjected to Him, is not a triumph for destruction, but for their salvation, so that good angels *may* be referred to (^{<800>}Colossians 1:20). But the *Greek* middle is susceptible of *English Version*, “having spoiled,” or, literally [TITTMANN], “having *completely*

stripped,” or “despoiled” *for Himself* (compare ^{<R08>}Romans 8:38 ^{<R01>}1 Corinthians 15:24 ^{<R02>}Ephesians 6:2). *English Version* accords with ^{<R02>}Matthew 12:29 ^{<R02>}Luke 11:22 ^{<R04>}Hebrews 2:14. Translate as the *Greek*, “The rules and authorities.”

made a show of them — at His ascension (see on ^{<R08>}Ephesians 4:8; confirming *English Version* of this verse).

openly — ^{<R04>}John 7:4 11:54, support *English Version* against ALFORD’S translation, “in openness of speech.”

in it — namely, His cross, or crucifixion: so the Greek fathers translate. Many of the Latins, “In *Himself*” or “in Him.” ^{<R02>}Ephesians 2:16 favors *English Version*, “reconcile ... by *the cross*, having slain the enmity thereby.” If “in Him,” that is, Christ, be read, still the Cross will be the place and means of God’s triumph in Christ over the principalities (^{<R02>}Ephesians 1:20 2:5). Demons, like other angels, were in heaven up to Christ’s ascension, and influenced earth from their heavenly abodes. As heaven was not yet opened to man before Christ (^{<R03>}John 3:13), so it was not yet shut against demons (^{<R06>}Job 1:6 2:1). But at the ascension Satan and his demons were “judged” and “cast out” by Christ’s obedience unto death (^{<R02>}John 12:31 16:11 ^{<R04>}Hebrews 2:14 ^{<R05>}Revelation 12:5-10), and the Son of man was raised to the throne of God; thus His resurrection and ascension are a public solemn triumph over the principalities and powers of death. It is striking that the heathen oracles were silenced soon after Christ’s ascension.

16. therefore — because ye are complete in Christ, and God in Him has dispensed with all subordinate means as *essential* to acceptance with Him.

meat ... drink — *Greek*, “eating ... drinking” (^{<R04>}Romans 14:1-17). Pay no regard to any one who sits in judgment on you as to legal observances in respect to foods.

holyday — *a feast yearly*. Compare the three, ^{<R03>}1 Chronicles 23:31.

new moon — monthly.

the sabbath — Omit “THE,” which is not in the *Greek* (compare *Note*, see on ^{<R04>}Galatians 4:10). “SABBATHS” (not “the sabbaths”) of the day of

atonement and feast of tabernacles have come to an end with the Jewish services to which they belonged (^{<1233>}Leviticus 23:32,37-39). The weekly sabbath rests on a more permanent foundation, having been instituted in Paradise to commemorate the completion of creation in six days.

^{<1233>}Leviticus 23:38 expressly distinguished “the sabbath of the Lord” from the other sabbaths. A *positive* precept is *right because it is commanded*, and ceases to be obligatory when abrogated; a moral precept is *commanded* eternally, *because it is eternally right*. If we could keep a perpetual sabbath, as we shall hereafter, the positive precept of the sabbath, one in each week, would not be needed. ^{<3019>}Hebrews 4:9, “rests,” *Greek*, “keeping of sabbath” (^{<2962>}Isaiah 66:23). But we cannot, since even Adam, in innocence, needed one amidst his earthly employments; therefore the sabbath is still needed and is therefore still linked with the other nine commandments, as obligatory in the spirit, though the letter of the law has been superseded by that higher spirit of love which is the essence of law and Gospel alike (^{<6138>}Romans 13:8-10).

17. things to come — the blessings of the Christian covenant, the substance of which Jewish ordinances were but the type. Compare “ages to come,” that is, the Gospel dispensation (^{<4077>}Ephesians 2:7). ^{<3018>}Hebrews 2:5, “the world to come.”

the body is of Christ — The *real substance* (of the blessings typified by the law) belongs to Christ (^{<3018>}Hebrews 8:5 10:1).

18. beguile — Translate, “Defraud you of your prize,” literally, “to adjudge a prize out of hostility away from him who deserves it” [TRENCH]. “To be umpire in a contest to the detriment of one.” This *defrauding of their prize* the Colossians would suffer, by letting any self-constituted *arbitrator* or *judge* (that is, false teacher) draw them away from Christ,” the righteous Judge” and Awarder of the prize (^{<3009>}2 Timothy 4:8 ^{<3012>}James 1:12 ^{<4004>}1 Peter 5:4), to angel-worship.

in a voluntary humility — So “will-worship” (^{<5022>}Colossians 2:23). Literally, “Delighting ([WAHL]) in humility”; *loving* (so the *Greek* is translated, ^{<4128>}Mark 12:38, “*love to go in long clothing*”) to indulge himself *in a humility* of his own imposing: *a volunteer in humility* [DALLAEUS]. Not as ALFORD, “Let no one *of purpose* defraud you,” etc. Not as GROTIUS, “If he ever so much wish” (to defraud you). For the participle

“wishing” or “delighting,” is one of the series, and stands in the same category as “intruding,” “puffed up,” “not holding”; and the *self-pleasing* implied in it stands in happy contrast to the (mock) *humility* with which it seems to me, therefore, to be connected. His “humility,” so called, is a *pleasing of self*: thus it stands in parallelism to “his fleshly mind” (its real name, though *he* styles it “humility”), as “wishing” or “delighting” does to “puffed up.” The *Greek* for “humility” is literally, “lowliness of *mind*,” which forms a clearer parallel to “puffed up by his fleshly *mind*.” Under pretext of humility, as if they durst not come directly to God and Christ (like the modern Church of Rome), they invoked angels: as Judaizers, they justified this on the ground that the law was given by angels. This error continued long in Phrygia (where Colosse and Laodicea were), so that the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 360) expressly framed its thirty-fifth canon against the “*Angelici*” (as AUGUSTINE [*Heresies*, 39], calls them) or “invokers of angels.” Even as late as THEODORET’S time, there were oratories to Michael the archangel. The modern Greeks have a legend that Michael opened a chasm to draw off an inundation threatening the Colossian Christians. Once men admit the inferior powers to share invocation with the Supreme, the former gradually engrosses all our serious worship, almost to the exclusion of the latter; thus the heathen, beginning with adding the worship of other deities to that of the Supreme, ended with ceasing to worship Him at all. Nor does it signify much, whether we regard such as directly controlling us (the pagan view), or as only *influencing* the Supreme in our behalf (the Church of Rome’s view); because he from whom I expect happiness or misery, becomes the uppermost object in my mind, whether he *give*, or only *procure* it [*Cautions for Times*]. Scripture opposes the idea of “patrons” or “intercessors” (⁵¹²⁵1 Timothy 2:5,6). True Christian humility joins consciousness of utter personal demerit, with a sense of participation in the divine life through Christ, and in the dignity of our adoption by God. Without the latter being realized, a false self-humiliation results, which displays itself in ceremonies and ascetic self-abasement (⁵¹²³Colossians 2:23), which after all is but spiritual pride under the mock guise of humility. Contrast “glorying in the Lord” (⁴¹³¹1 Corinthians 1:31).

intruding into ... things which he hath not seen — So very old manuscripts and *Vulgate* and ORIGEN read. But the oldest manuscripts and

LUCIFER omit “not”; then translate, “haughtily treading on (‘Standing on’ [ALFORD]) the things which he hath seen.” TREGELLES refers this to *fancied* visions of angels. But if Paul had meant a *fancied seeing*, he would have used some qualifying word, as, “which he *seemed* to see,” not “which he *hath* seen.” Plainly the things were *actually* seen by him, whether of demoniacal origination (^{<ORIG>}1 Samuel 28:11-20), or phenomena resulting from natural causation, mistaken by him as if supernatural. Paul, not stopping to discuss the nature of the things so seen, fixes on the radical error, the tendency of such a one in all this to walk by SENSE (namely, what he *haughtily prides himself on having SEEN*), rather than by FAITH in the UNSEEN “Head” (^{<SEN>}Colossians 2:19; compare ^{<ORIG>}John 20:29 ^{<TRU>}2 Corinthians 5:7 ^{<SEN>}Hebrews 11:1). Thus is the parallelism, “vainly puffed up” answers to “haughtily treading on,” or “setting his foot on”; “his fleshly mind” answers to the things which he hath seen,” since his fleshliness betrays itself in priding himself on *what he hath seen*, rather than on the *unseen* objects of *faith*. That the things seen may have been of demoniacal origination, appears from ^{<ORIG>}1 Timothy 4:1, “Some shall depart from the *faith*, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils” (*Greek*, “demons”). A warning to modern spiritualists.

puffed up — implying that the previous so called “humility” (*Greek*, “lowliness of mind”) was really a “puffing up.”

fleshly mind — *Greek*, “By the mind of his own flesh.” The flesh, or sensuous principle, is the fountain head whence his mind draws its craving after religious objects of *sight*, instead of, in true *humility* as a member, “holding fast the (unseen) Head.”

19. Translate, “Not holding *fast* the Head.” He who does not hold Christ solely and supremely above all others, does not hold Him at all [BENGEL]. The want of firm holding of Christ has set him loose to (pry into, and so) “tread haughtily on (pride himself on) things which he hath seen.” Each must hold fast the Head for himself, not merely be attached to the other members, however high in the body [ALFORD].

from which — rather, “from whom.”

the body — that is, all the members of the body (^{<ORIG>}Ephesians 4:16).

joints — the points of union where the supply of nourishment passes to the different members, furnishing the body with the materials of growth.

bands — the sinews and nerves which bind together limb and limb. Faith, love, and peace, are the spiritual bands. Compare “knit together in love” (^{<S10P>}Colossians 2:2 ^{<S12P>}Colossians 3:14 ^{<A0P>}Ephesians 4:3).

having nourishment ministered — that is, supplied to it continually. “Receiving ministration.”

knit together — The *Greek* is translated, “compacted,” ^{<A0P>}Ephesians 4:16: implying firm consolidation.

with the increase of God — (^{<A0P>}Ephesians 4:16); that is, *wrought* by God, the Author and Sustainer of the believer’s spiritual life, in union with Christ, the Head (^{<A0P>}1 Corinthians 3:6); and tending to the honor of God, being worthy of Him, its Author.

20. Wherefore — The oldest manuscripts omit “Wherefore.”

if ye be dead — *Greek*, “if ye died (so as to be freed) from,” etc. (compare ^{<A0P>}Romans 6:2 7:2,3 ^{<A0P>}Galatians 2:19).

rudiments of the world — (^{<S12P>}Colossians 2:8). Carnal, outward, worldly, legal ordinances.

as though living — as though you were not dead to the world like your crucified Lord, into whose death ye were buried (^{<A0P>}Galatians 6:14 ^{<A0P>}1 Peter 4:1,2).

are ye subject to ordinances — By do ye submit to be made subject to ordinances? Referring to ^{<S12P>}Colossians 2:14: you are again being made subject to “ordinances,” the “handwriting” of which had been “blotted out” (^{<S12P>}Colossians 2:14).

21. Compare ^{<S12P>}Colossians 2:16, “meat ... drink.” He gives instances of the “ordinances” (^{<S12P>}Colossians 2:20) in the words of their imposers. There is an ascending climax of superstitious prohibitions. The first *Greek* word (*hapse*) is distinguished from the third (*thiges*), in that the former means *close contact* and *retention*: the latter, *momentary contact* (compare ^{<A0P>}1 Corinthians 7:1 ^{<A0P>}John 20:17, *Greek*, “Hold me not”; cling not to me”).

Translate, “*Handle* not, *neither* taste, *nor even touch*.” The three refer to meats. “*Handle* not” (a stronger term than “*nor even touch*”), “*nor taste*” with the *tongue*, “*nor even touch*,” however slight the contact.

22. Which — things, namely, the three things handled, touched, and tasted.

are to perish — literally, “are constituted (by their very nature) for perishing (or ‘*destruction by corruption*’) in (or ‘*with*’) their using up (consumption).” Therefore they cannot really and lastingly defile a man (⁴⁸⁵⁷Matthew 15:17 ⁴⁸⁶³1 Corinthians 6:13).

after — according to. Referring to ⁵⁰²¹Colossians 2:20,21. All these “ordinances” are according to human, not divine, injunction.

doctrines — *Greek*, teachings.” ALFORD translates, “(doctrinal) systems.”

23. have — *Greek*, “are having”; implying the *permanent* characteristic which these ordinances are supposed to have.

show of wisdom — rather, “a *reputation* of wisdom” [ALFORD].

will-worship — arbitrarily invented worship: *would-be worship*, devised by *man’s own will*, not God’s. So jealous is God of human will-worship, that He struck Nadab and Abihu dead for burning strange incense (⁴⁸⁰⁰Leviticus 10:1-3). So Uzziah was stricken with leprosy for usurping the office of priest (⁴⁸⁰⁶2 Chronicles 26:16-21). Compare the will-worship of Saul (⁴⁹³⁸1 Samuel 13:8-14) for which he was doomed to lose his throne. This “voluntary worship” is the counterpart to their “voluntary humility” (⁵⁰⁰⁸Colossians 2:18): both specious in appearance, the former seeming in religion to do even *more* than God requires (as in the dogmas of the Roman and Greek churches); but really setting aside God’s will for man’s own; the latter seemingly self-abasing, but really proud of man’s self-willed “humility” (*Greek*, “lowliness of mind”), while virtually rejecting the dignity of direct communion with Christ, the Head; by worshipping of angels.

neglecting of the body — *Greek*, “not sparing of the body.” This asceticism seems to have rested on the Oriental theory that matter is the source of evil. This also looked plausible (compare ⁴⁸⁰²1 Corinthians 9:27).

not in any honor — of the body. As “neglecting of the body” describes asceticism *positively*; so this clause, *negatively*. Not paying any of that “honor” which is due to the body as redeemed by such a price as the blood of Christ. We should not degrade, but have a just estimation of ourselves, not in ourselves, but in Christ (⁴¹³⁶Acts 13:46 ⁴¹²¹1 Corinthians 3:21 6:15 7:23 12:23,24 ⁵¹⁰⁴1 Thessalonians 4:4). True self-denial regards the spirit, and not the forms of ascetical self-mortification in “meats which profit not those occupied therein” (⁵⁸¹⁹Hebrews 13:9), and is consistent with Christian self-respect, the “honor” which belongs to the believer as dedicated to the Lord. Compare “vainly,” ⁵¹²⁸Colossians 2:18.

to the satisfying of the flesh — This expresses the *real* tendency of their human ordinances of bodily asceticism, voluntary humility, and will-worship of angels. While seeming to *deny* self and the body, they really are *pampering* the flesh. Thus “satisfying of the *flesh*” answers to “puffed up by his *fleshly* mind” (⁵¹²⁸Colossians 2:18), so that “flesh” is used in its ethical sense, “the carnal nature” as opposed to the “spiritual”; not in the sense, “body.” The *Greek* for “satisfying” implies *satiating to repletion, or to excess*. “A surfeit of the carnal sense is human tradition” [HILARY THE DEACON, in BENGEL]. Tradition puffs up; it clogs the heavenly perceptions. They put away true “honor” that they may “*sate to the full* THE FLESH.” Self-imposed ordinances gratify the flesh (namely, self-righteousness), though seeming to mortify it.

CHAPTER 3

COLOSSIANS 3:1-25.

EXHORTATIONS TO HEAVENLY AIMS, AS OPPOSED TO EARTHLY, ON THE GROUND OF UNION TO THE RISEN SAVIOUR; TO MORTIFY AND PUT OFF THE OLD MAN, AND TO PUT ON THE NEW; IN CHARITY, HUMILITY, WORDS OF EDIFICATION, THANKFULNESS; RELATIVE DUTIES.

1. If ... then — The connection with ^{<5128>}Colossians 2:18,23, is, he had condemned the “fleshly mind” and the “satiating to the full the flesh”; in contrast to this he now says, “If then ye have been once for all raised up (*Greek*, aorist tense) together with Christ” (namely, at your conversion and baptism, ^{<5109>}Romans 6:4).

seek those things ... above — (^{<4163>}Matthew 6:33 ^{<4183>}Philippians 3:20).

sitteth — rather, as *Greek*, “Where Christ is, sitting on the right of God” (^{<4101>}Ephesians 1:20). The Head being quickened, the members are also quickened with Him. Where the Head is, there the members must be. The contrast is between the believer’s former state, alive to the world but dead to God, and his present state, dead to the world but alive to God; and between the earthly abode of the unbeliever and the heavenly abode of the believer (^{<4357>}1 Corinthians 15:47,48). We are already seated there *in* Him as our Head; and hereafter shall be seated *by* Him, as the Bestower of our bliss. As Elisha (^{<4122>}2 Kings 2:2) said to Elijah when about to ascend, “As the Lord liveth ... I will not leave thee”; so we must follow the ascended Savior with the wings of our meditations and the chariots of our affections. We should trample upon and subdue our lusts that our conversation may correspond to our Savior’s condition; that where the eyes of apostles were forced to leave Him, thither our thoughts may follow Him (^{<4162>}Matthew 6:21 ^{<5129>}John 12:32) [PEARSON]. Of ourselves we can no more ascend than a bar of iron lift itself up’ from the earth. But the love of Christ is a powerful magnet to draw us up (^{<4105>}Ephesians 2:5,6). The design of the

Gospel is not merely to give rules, but mainly to supply *motives* to holiness.

2. Translate, “Set your *mind* on the things above, not on the things,” etc. (^{<502>}Colossians 2:20). Contrast “who *mind* earthly things” (^{<509>}Philippians 3:19). Whatever we make an idol of, will either be a cross to us if we be believers, or a curse to us if unbelievers.

3. The *Greek* aorist tense implies, “For ye have died once for all” (^{<502>}Colossians 2:12 ^{<510>}Romans 6:4-7). It is not said, Ye must die practically to the world in order to become dead with Christ; but the latter is assumed as *once for all* having taken place. in the regeneration; what believers are told is, Develop this spiritual life in practice. “No one longs for eternal, incorruptible, and immortal life, unless he be wearied of this temporal, corruptible, and mortal life” [AUGUSTINE].

and your life ... hid — (^{<510>}Psalm 83:3); like a seed buried in the earth; compare “planted,” ^{<510>}Romans 6:5. Compare ^{<513>}Matthew 13:31,33, “like ... leaven ... *hid*.” As the glory of Christ now is hid from the world, so also the glory of believers’ inner life, proceeding from communion with Him, is still hidden with Christ in God; but (^{<504>}Colossians 3:4) when Christ, the Source of this life, shall manifest Himself in glory, then shall their hidden glory be manifest, and correspond in appearance to its original [NEANDER]. The Christian’s secret communion with God will now at times make itself seen without his intending it (^{<514>}Matthew 5:14,16); but his full manifestation is at Christ’s manifestation (^{<513>}Matthew 13:43 ^{<519>}Romans 8:19-23). “It doth not yet appear (*Greek*, ‘is not yet *manifested*’) what we shall be” (^{<512>}1 John 3:2 ^{<500>}1 Peter 1:7). As yet Christians do not always recognize the “life” of one another, so *hidden* is it, and even at times doubt as to their own life, so weak is it, and so harassed with temptations (^{<505>}Psalm 51:1-19 ^{<500>}Romans 7:1-25).

in God — to whom Christ has ascended. Our “life” is “laid up for” us *in God* (^{<505>}Colossians 1:5), and is secured by the decree of Him who is invisible to the world (^{<508>}2 Timothy 4:8).

4. Translate, “When Christ shall *be manifested* who is our life (^{<512>}John 11:25 14:6,19), then shall ye also with Him *be manifested* in glory” (^{<503>}1

Peter 4:13). The *spiritual* life our souls have now in Him shall be extended to our *bodies* (~~AKB~~ Romans 8:11).

then — and not till then. Those err who think to find a perfect Church before then. The true Church is now militant. Rome errs in trying to set up a Church now regnant and triumphant. The true Church shall be visible as a perfect and reigning Church, when Christ shall be visibly manifested as her reigning Head. Rome having ceased to look for Him in patient faith, has set up a visible mockhead, a false anticipation of the millennial kingdom. The Papacy took to itself by robbery that glory which is an object of hope, and can only be reached by bearing the cross now. When the Church became a harlot, she ceased to be a bride who goes to meet her Bridegroom. Hence the millennial kingdom ceased to be looked for [AUBERLEN].

5. Mortify — *Greek*, “make a corpse of”; “make dead”; “put to death.”

therefore — (See on ~~SMB~~ Colossians 3:3). Follow out to its necessary consequence the fact of your *having once for all* died with Christ spiritually at your regeneration, by daily “deadening your members,” of which united “the body of the sins of the flesh” consists (compare ~~SMB~~ Colossians 2:11). “The members” to be mortified are the fleshly instruments of lust, in so far as the members of the body are abused to such purposes. Habitually repress and do violence to corrupt desires of which the members are the instruments (compare ~~AKB~~ Romans 6:19 8:13 ~~AKB~~ Galatians 5:24,25).

upon the earth — where they find their support [BENGEL] (Compare ~~SMB~~ Colossians 3:2, “things on earth”). See ~~AKB~~ Ephesians 5:3,4.

inordinate affection — “lustful passion.”

evil concupiscence — more general than the last [ALFORD], the disorder of the *external* senses; “lustful passion,” *lust within* [BENGEL].

covetousness — marked off by the *Greek* article as forming a whole genus by itself, distinct from the genus containing the various species just enumerated. It implies a self-idolizing, grasping spirit; far worse than another *Greek* term translated “the love of money” (~~SMB~~ 1 Timothy 6:10).

which is — that is, inasmuch as it is “idolatry.” Compare *Note*, see on ^{<404>}Ephesians 4:19, on its connection with sins of impurity. *Self* and *mammon* are deified in the heart instead of God (^{<404>}Matthew 6:24; see on ^{<404>}Ephesians 5:5).

6. (See on ^{<404>}Ephesians 5:6.)

7. **sometime** — “once.”

walked ... when ye lived in them — These sins were the very element in which ye “*lived*” (before ye became once for all dead with Christ to them); no wonder, then, that ye “*walked*” in them. Compare on the opposite side, “*living* in the Spirit,” having as its legitimate consequence, “*walking* in the Spirit” (^{<405>}Galatians 5:25). The “*living*” comes first in both cases, the *walking* follows.

8. **But now** — that ye are no longer *living* in them.

ye also — like other believers; answering to “ye also” (^{<406>}Colossians 3:7) like other unbelievers formerly.

put off — “Do ye also put away all these,” namely, those just enumerated, and those which follow [ALFORD].

anger, wrath — (See on ^{<406>}Ephesians 4:31).

blasphemy — rather, “reviling,” “evil-speaking,” as it is translated in ^{<406>}Ephesians 4:31.

filthy communication — The context favors the translation, “*abusive language*,” rather than impure conversation. “Foul language” best retains the ambiguity of the original.

9. (^{<406>}Ephesians 4:25.)

put off — *Greek*, “*wholly* put off”; utterly renounced [TITTMANN]. (^{<406>}Ephesians 4:22).

the old man — the unregenerate nature which ye had before conversion.

his deeds — habits of acting.

10. the new man — (See on ^{<402>}Ephesians 4:23). Here (*neon*) the *Greek*, means “the *recently*-put-on nature”; that lately received at regeneration (see on ^{<402>}Ephesians 4:23,24).

which is renewed — *Greek*, “which is being renewed” (*anakainottmenou*); namely, its development into a perfectly renewed nature is continually progressing to completion.

in knowledge — rather as the *Greek*, “unto perfect knowledge” (see on ^{<500>}Colossians 1:6; ^{<500>}Colossians 1:9,10). Perfect knowledge of God excludes all sin (^{<673>}John 17:3).

after the image of him that created him — namely, of God that created the *new man* (^{<400>}Ephesians 2:10 4:24). The new creation is analogous to the first creation (^{<400>}2 Corinthians 4:6). As man was then made in the image of God naturally, so now spiritually. But the image of God formed in us by the Spirit of God, is as much more glorious than that borne by Adam, as the Second Man, the Lord from heaven, is more glorious than the first man. ^{<002>}Genesis 1:26, “Let us make man in our *image*, after our *likeness*.” The “image” is claimed for man, ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 11:7; the “likeness,” ^{<400>}James 3:9. ORIGEN [*On First Principles*, 3:6] taught, the *image* was something in which all were created, and which continued to man after the fall (^{<000>}Genesis 9:6). The *likeness* was something *towards* which man was created, that he might strive after it and attain it. TRENCH thinks God in the double statement (^{<002>}Genesis 1:26), contemplates both man’s first creation and his being “*renewed* in knowledge after the image of Him that created Him.”

11. Where — Translate, “Wherein,” namely, in the sphere of the renewed man.

neither ... nor ... nor ... nor — Translate as *Greek*, “There is *no such thing* as *Greek and Jew* (the difference of privilege between those born of the natural seed of Abraham and those not, is abolished), circumcision *and* uncircumcision (the difference of legal standing between the circumcised and uncircumcised is done away, ^{<405>}Galatians 6:15) — bondman, freeman.” The present Church is one *called out of the flesh*, and the present *world-course* (^{<400>}Ephesians 2:2), wherein such distinctions exist, to life in the Spirit, and to the future first resurrection: and this because Satan has such

power now over the flesh and the world. At Christ's coming when Satan shall no longer rule the flesh and the world, the nations in the flesh, and the word in millennial felicity, shall be the willing subjects of Christ and His glorified saints (²⁰⁷⁴ Daniel 7:14,22,27 ²⁰⁹⁷ Luke 19:17,19 ⁶³¹¹ Revelation 20:1-6 3:21). Israel in Canaan was a type of that future state when the Jews, so miraculously preserved distinct now in their dispersion, shall be the central Church of the Christianized world. As expressly as Scripture abolishes the distinction of Jew and Greek now as to religious privileges, so does it expressly foretell that in the coming new order of things, Israel shall be first of the Christian nations, not for her own selfish aggrandizement, but for their good, as the medium of blessing to them. Finally, after the millennium, the life that is in Christ becomes the power which transfigures *nature*, in the time of the new heaven and the new earth; as, before, it first transfigured the spiritual, then the political and social world.

Scythian — heretofore regarded as more barbarian than the barbarians. Though the relation of bond and free actually existed, yet in relation to Christ, all alike were free in one aspect, and servants of Christ in another (⁴¹⁷² 1 Corinthians 7:22 ⁴⁸⁸⁸ Galatians 3:28).

Christ is all — Christ absorbs in Himself all distinctions, being to all alike, everything that they need for justification, sanctification, and glorification (⁴¹⁸³ 1 Corinthians 1:30 3:21-23 ⁴⁸²¹ Galatians 2:20).

in all — who believe and are renewed, without distinction of person; the sole distinction now is, how much each draws from Christ. The unity of the divine life shared in by all believers, counterbalances all differences, even as great as that between the polished "*Greek*" and the rude "Scythian." Christianity imparts to the most uncivilized the only spring of sound, social and moral culture.

12. the elect of God — There is no "the" in the *Greek*, "God's elect" (compare ⁴⁸⁸⁸ Romans 8:3 ⁵¹⁰⁴ 1 Thessalonians 1:4). The order of the words "elect, holy, beloved," answers to the order of the things. *Election* from eternity precedes *sanctification* in time; the *sanctified*, feeling God's *love*, imitate it [BENGEL].

bowels of mercies — Some of the oldest manuscripts read singular, "mercy." *Bowels* express the yearning compassion, which has its seat in

the heart, and which we feel to act on our inward parts (^{<483>}Genesis 43:30 ^{<2810>}Jeremiah 31:20 ^{<4078>}Luke 1:78, *Margin*).

humbleness of mind — True “lowliness of mind”; not the mock “humility” of the false teachers (^{<5023>}Colossians 2:23 ^{<4040>}Ephesians 4:2,32).

13. Forbearing — as to present offenses.

forgiving — as to past offenses.

quarrel — rather as *Greek*, “cause of blame,” “cause of complaint.”

Christ — who had so infinitely greater cause of complaint against us. The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read “the Lord.” *English Version* is supported by one very old manuscript and old versions. It seems to have crept in from ^{<4042>}Ephesians 4:32.

14. above — rather “over,” as in ^{<4040>}Ephesians 6:16. Charity, which is the crowning grace, covering the multitude of others’ sins (^{<4048>}1 Peter 4:8), must *overlie* all the other graces enumerated.

which is — that is, “*for it is*”; literally, “*which thing is*.”

bond of perfectness — an upper garment which *completes* and keeps together the rest, which, without it, would be loose and disconnected. Seeming graces, where love is wanting, are mere hypocrisy. Justification by faith is assumed as already having taken place in those whom Paul addresses, ^{<5042>}Colossians 3:12, “elect of God, holy ... beloved,” and ^{<5042>}Colossians 2:12; so that there is no plea here for Rome’s view of justification by works. Love and its works “*perfect*,” that is, manifest the full maturity of faith developed (^{<4044>}Matthew 5:44,48). Love ... be ye *perfect*, etc. (^{<5021>}James 2:21,22 ^{<4045>}1 John 2:5). “If we love one another, God’s love is *perfected* in us” (^{<5038>}Romans 13:8 ^{<4040>}1 Corinthians 13:1-13 ^{<5042>}1 Timothy 1:5 ^{<4042>}1 John 4:12). As to “bond,” compare ^{<5042>}Colossians 2:2, “*knit together* in love” (^{<4040>}Ephesians 4:3), “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

15. peace of God — The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “The peace of CHRIST” (compare ^{<5045>}Philippians 4:7). “The peace of GOD.” Therefore Christ is God. Peace was His legacy to His disciples before He

left them (^{<6407}John 14:27), “MY peace I give unto you.” Peace is peculiarly His to give. Peace follows *love* (^{<5084}Colossians 3:14 ^{<4002}Ephesians 4:2,3).

rule — literally, “sit as umpire”; the same *Greek* verb simple, as appears compounded (^{<5085}Colossians 2:18). The false teacher, as a self-constituted *umpire*, defrauds you of your prize; but if the peace of Christ be your umpire ruling in your hearts, your reward is sure. “Let the peace of Christ act as umpire when anger, envy, and such passions arise; and restrain them.” Let not those passions give the award, so that you should be swayed by them, but let Christ’s peace be the decider of everything.

in your hearts — Many wear a peaceful countenance and speak peace with the mouth, while war is *in their hearts* (^{<4888}Psalms 28:3 55:21).

to the which — that is, with a view to which state of Christian peace (^{<2008}Isaiah 26:3); ^{<4075}1 Corinthians 7:15, “God hath called us to peace.”

ye are called — *Greek*, “ye were also called.” The “also” implies that besides Paul’s exhortation, they have *also* as a motive to “peace,” their having been once for all called.

in one body — (^{<4004}Ephesians 4:4). The unity of the body is a strong argument for “peace” among the members.

be ye thankful — for your “calling.” Not to have “peace ruling in your hearts” would be inconsistent with the “calling in one body,” and would be practical unthankfulness to God who called us (^{<4004}Ephesians 5:4,19,20).

16. The form which “thankfulness” (^{<5085}Colossians 3:15) ought to take.

Let the word of Christ — the Gospel *word* by which ye have been called.

richly — (^{<5085}Colossians 2:2 ^{<6514}Romans 15:14).

in all wisdom — ALFORD joins this clause with “teaching,” etc. not with “dwell in you,” as *English Version*, for so we find in ^{<5085}Colossians 1:28, “teaching in all wisdom,” and the two clauses will thus correspond, “In all wisdom teaching,” and “in grace singing in your hearts” (so the *Greek* order).

and ... and — The oldest manuscripts read “psalms, hymns, spiritual songs” (see on ^{<4004}Ephesians 5:19). At the *Agapae* or love-feasts, and in

their family circles, they were to be so full of the Word of Christ *in the heart* that the mouth should give it utterance in hymns of instruction, admonition, and praise (compare ^{<400>}Deuteronomy 6:7). TERTULLIAN [*Apology*, 39], records that at the love-feasts, after the water had been furnished for the hands and the lights had been literally, according as any had the power, whether by his remembrance of Scripture, or by his powers of composition, he used to be invited to sing praises to God for the common good. Paul contrasts (as in ^{<405>}Ephesians 5:18,19) the songs of Christians at their social meetings, with the bacchanalian and licentious songs of heathen feasts. Singing usually formed part of the entertainment at Greek banquets (compare ^{<405>}James 5:13).

with grace — *Greek*, “IN grace,” the element in which your singing is to be: “the grace” of the indwelling Holy Spirit. This clause expresses the seat and source of true psalmody, whether in private or public, namely, the *heart* as well as the voice; singing (compare ^{<405>}Colossians 3:15, “peace ... rule *in your hearts*”), the psalm of love and praise being in the heart before it finds vent by the lips, and even when it is not actually expressed by the voice, as in closet-worship. The *Greek* order forbids *English Version*, “with grace in your hearts”; rather, “singing in your hearts.”

to the Lord — The oldest manuscripts read, “to God.”

17. Literally, “And everything whatsoever ye do ... do all,” etc.; this includes *words* as well as *deeds*.

in the name of the Lord Jesus — *as disciples called by His name as His*, seeking His guidance and help, and desiring to act so as to gain His approval (^{<405>}Romans 14:8 ^{<405>}1 Corinthians 10:31 ^{<405>}2 Corinthians 5:15 ^{<405>}1 Peter 4:11). Compare “in the Lord,” ^{<405>}Colossians 3:18, and “Christ is *all*,” ^{<405>}Colossians 3:11.

God and the Father — The oldest manuscripts omit “and,” which seems to have crept in from ^{<405>}Ephesians 5:20.

by him — *Greek*, “through Him” as the channel of His grace to us, and of our thanksgiving to Him (^{<405>}John 14:6, end).

18. **unto your own husbands** — The oldest manuscripts omit “own,” which crept in from ^{<405>}Ephesians 5:22.

as it is fit in the Lord — *Greek*, “*was fit*,” implying that there was at Colosse some degree of failure in fulfilling this duty, “as it was your duty to have done as disciples of the Lord.”

19. (⌘ Ephesians 5:22-33.)

be not bitter — ill-tempered and provoking. Many who are polite abroad, are rude and bitter at home because they are not afraid to be so there.

20. (⌘ Ephesians 6:1.)

unto the Lord — The oldest manuscripts read, “*IN the Lord*,” that is, this is acceptable to God when it is done *in the Lord*, namely, from the principle of faith, and as disciples in union with the Lord.

21. (⌘ Ephesians 6:4.) It is a different *Greek* verb, therefore translate here, “*irritate not*.” By perpetual fault-finding “children” are “discouraged” or “disheartened.” A broken-down spirit is fatal to youth [BENGEL].

22. (⌘ Ephesians 6:5,6.) This is to fear God, when, though none sees us, we do no *evil*: but if we do evil, it is not God, but men, whom we fear.

singleness — “*simplicity of heart*.”

fearing God — The oldest manuscripts read, “the Lord.”

23. **And** — omitted in the oldest manuscripts (compare ⌘ Ephesians 6:7,8). Compare the same principle in the case of all men, Hezekiah (⌘ 2 Chronicles 31:21 ⌘ Romans 12:11).

do, do it — two distinct *Greek* verbs, “*Whatsoever ye do, work at it*” (or “*labor at*” it).

heartily — not from servile constraint, but with hearty good will.

24. **the reward of the inheritance** — “Knowing that it is from the Lord (the ultimate source of reward), ye shall receive the compensation (or recompense, which will make ample amends for your having no earthly possession as slaves now) consisting of the inheritance” (a term excluding the notion of meriting it by *works*: it is all of grace, ⌘ Romans 4:14 ⌘ Galatians 3:18).

for ye serve — The oldest manuscripts omit “for,” then translate as *Vulgate*, “Serve ye the Lord Christ;” compare ^{<4182>}Colossians 3:23, “To the Lord and not unto men” (^{<4172>}1 Corinthians 7:22,23).

25. But — The oldest manuscripts read, “for,” which accords with “serve ye,” etc. (^{<4184>}Colossians 3:24), the oldest reading: the *for* here gives a motive for obeying the precept. He addresses the slaves: Serve ye the Lord Christ, and leave your wrongs in His hands to put to rights: (translate), “For he that doeth wrong shall receive *back the wrong* which he hath done (by just retribution in kind), and there is no respect of persons” with the Great Judge in the day of the Lord. He favors the master no more than the slave (^{<4185>}Revelation 6:15).

CHAPTER 4

COLOSSIANS 4:1-18.

EXHORTATIONS CONTINUED. TO PRAYER: WISDOM IN RELATION TO THE UNCONVERTED: AS TO THE BEARERS OF THE EPISTLE, TYCHICUS AND ONESIMUS: CLOSING SALUTATIONS.

1. **give** — *Greek* “render”: literally, “afford.”

equal — that is, as the slaves owe their duties to you, so you *equally* owe to them your duties as masters. Compare “ye masters do the *same* things” (see on ^{<408>}Ephesians 6:9). ALFORD translates, “fairness,” “equity,” which gives a large and liberal interpretation of justice in common matters (^{<500>}Philemon 1:16).

knowing — (^{<500>}Colossians 3:24).

ye also — as well as they.

2. **Continue** — *Greek*, “Continue perseveringly,” “persevere” (^{<408>}Ephesians 6:18), “watching *thereunto*”; here, “watch *in the same*,” or “*in it*,” that is, in prayer: watching against the indolence as to prayer, and in prayer, of our corrupt wills.

with thanksgiving — for everything, whether joyful, or sorrowful, mercies temporal and spiritual, national, family, and individual (^{<408>}1 Corinthians 14:17 ^{<500>}Philippians 4:6 ^{<508>}1 Thessalonians 5:18).

3. **for us** — myself and Timothy (^{<500>}Colossians 1:1).

a door of utterance — Translate, “a door for the word.” Not as in ^{<408>}Ephesians 6:19, where power of “utterance” is his petition. Here it is an opportunity for *preaching the word*, which would be best afforded by his release from prison (^{<408>}1 Corinthians 16:9 ^{<402>}2 Corinthians 2:12 ^{<502>}Philemon 1:22 ^{<408>}Revelation 3:8).

to speak — so that we may speak.

the mystery of Christ — (^{<507>}Colossians 1:27).

for which ... also — *on account of which I am* (not only “an ambassador,” ^{<402>}Ephesians 6:20, but) **ALSO** in *bonds*.

4. ALFORD thinks that Paul asks their prayers for his release as if it were the “only” way by which he could “make it (the Gospel) manifest” as he ought. But while this is *included* in their subject of prayer, ^{<502>}Philippians 1:12,13, written somewhat later in his imprisonment, clearly shows that “a door for the word” could be opened, and was opened, for its *manifestation*, even while he remained imprisoned (compare ^{<510>}2 Timothy 2:9).

5. (See on ^{<415>}Ephesians 5:15,16.)

in wisdom — practical Christian prudence.

them ... without — Those not in the Christian brotherhood (^{<452>}1 Corinthians 5:12 ^{<502>}1 Thessalonians 4:12). The brethren, through love, will make allowances for an indiscreet act or word of a brother; the world will make none. Therefore be the more on your guard in your intercourse with the latter, lest you be a stumbling-block to their conversion.

redeeming the time — The *Greek* expresses, buying up for yourselves, and *buying off* from worldly vanities the *opportunity*, whenever it is afforded you, of good to yourselves and others. “*Forestall the opportunity*, that is, to buy up an article out of the market, so as to make the largest profit from it” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

6. with grace — *Greek*, “IN grace” as its element (^{<506>}Colossians 3:16 ^{<402>}Ephesians 4:29). Contrast the case of those “of the world” who “therefore *speak of the world*” (^{<405>}1 John 4:5). Even the smallest leaf of the believer should be full of the sap of the Holy Spirit (^{<417>}Jeremiah 17:7,8). His conversation should be cheerful without levity, serious without gloom. Compare ^{<402>}Luke 4:22 ^{<416>}John 7:46, as to Jesus’ speech.

seasoned with salt — that is, the *savor* of fresh and lively spiritual wisdom and earnestness, excluding all “corrupt communication,” and also tasteless *insipidity* (^{<415>}Matthew 5:13 ^{<408>}Mark 9:50 ^{<402>}Ephesians 4:29). Compare all the sacrifices *seasoned with salt* (^{<403>}Leviticus 2:13). Not far

from Colosse, in Phrygia, there was a salt lake, which gives to the image here the more appropriateness.

how ye ought to answer every man — (⁶⁰⁸⁵1 Peter 3:15).

7. Tychicus — (See on ⁴⁰⁶⁰Ephesians 6:2).

who is a beloved brother — rather, “the beloved brother”; the article “the” marks him as *well known to them*.

8. for the same purpose — *Greek*, “for this very purpose.”

that he might know your estate — Translate, “that he may know your state”: answering to ⁵⁰⁰⁷Colossians 4:7. So one very old manuscript and *Vulgate* read. But the oldest manuscripts and the *old Latin versions*, “that YE may know OUR state.” However, the latter reading seems likely to have crept in from ⁴⁰⁶²Ephesians 6:22. Paul was the more anxious to know the state of the Colossians, on account of the seductions to which they were exposed from false teachers; owing to which he had “great conflict for” them (⁵⁰⁰⁷Colossians 2:1).

comfort your hearts — distressed as ye are by my imprisonment, as well as by your own trials.

9. Onesimus — the slave mentioned in the Epistle to Philemon (⁵⁰⁰⁷Philemon 1:10,16), “a brother beloved.”

a faithful ... brother — rather, “the faithful brother,” he being known to the Colossians as the slave of Philemon, their fellow townsman and fellow Christian.

one of you — belonging to your city.

They shall make known unto you all things — *Greek*, “all the things here.” This substantial repetition of “all my state shall Tychicus declare unto you,” strongly favors the reading of *English Version* in ⁵⁰⁰⁸Colossians 4:8, “that *he* might (may) know your state,” as it is unlikely the same thing should be stated *thrice*.

10. Aristarchus — a Macedonian of Thessalonica (⁴⁰⁷⁰Acts 27:2), who was dragged into the theater at Ephesus, during the tumult with Gaius, they being “Paul’s companions in travel.” He accompanied Paul to Asia

(^{<400b}Acts 20:4), and subsequently (^{<402b}Acts 27:2) to Rome. He was now at Rome with Paul (compare ^{<502b}Philemon 1:23,24). As he is here spoken of as Paul's "fellow prisoner," but in ^{<502b}Philemon 1:24 as Paul's "fellow laborer"; and vice versa, Epaphras in ^{<502b}Philemon 1:23, as his "fellow prisoner," but here (^{<500b}Colossians 1:7) "fellow servant," MEYER in ALFORD, conjectures that Paul's friends voluntarily shared his imprisonment by turns, Aristarchus being his fellow prisoner when he wrote to the Colossians, Epaphras when he wrote to Philemon. The *Greek* for "fellow prisoner" is literally, *fellow captive*, an image from prisoners taken in warfare, Christians being "fellow soldiers" (^{<502b}Philippians 2:25 ^{<500b}Philemon 1:2), whose warfare is "the good fight of faith."

Mark — John Mark (^{<402b}Acts 12:12,25); the Evangelist according to tradition.

sister's son — rather, "cousin," or "kinsman to Barnabas"; the latter being the better known is introduced to designate Mark. The relationship naturally accounts for Barnabas' selection of Mark as his companion when otherwise qualified; and also for Mark's mother's house at Jerusalem being the place of resort of Christians there (^{<402b}Acts 12:12). The family belonged to *Cyprus* (^{<406b}Acts 4:36); this accounts for Barnabas' choice of Cyprus as the first station on their journey (^{<403b}Acts 13:4), and for Mark's accompanying them readily so far, it being the country of his family; and for Paul's rejecting him at the second journey for not having gone further than Perga, in Pamphylia, but having gone thence home to his mother at Jerusalem (^{<406b}Matthew 10:37) on the first journey (^{<403b}Acts 13:13).

touching whom — namely, Mark.

ye received commandments — possibly *before* the writing of this Epistle; or the "commandments" were *verbal* by Tychicus, and *accompanying this letter*, since the *past* tense was used by the ancients (where we use the present) in relation to the time which it would be when the letter was read by the Colossians. Thus (^{<501b}Philemon 1:19), "I have written," for "I write." The substance of them was, "If he come unto you, receive him." Paul's rejection of him on his second missionary journey, because he had turned back at Perga on the first journey (^{<403b}Acts 13:13 15:37-39), had caused an alienation between himself and Barnabas. Christian love soon healed the breach; for here he implies his restored

confidence in Mark, makes honorable allusion to Barnabas, and desires that those at Colosse who had regarded Mark in consequence of that past error with suspicion, should now “receive” him with kindness. Colosse is only about one hundred ten miles from Perga, and less than twenty from the confines of Pisidia, through which province Paul and Barnabas preached on their return during the same journey. Hence, though Paul had not personally visited the Colossian Church, they knew of the past unfaithfulness of Mark; and needed this recommendation of him, after the temporary cloud on him, so as to receive him, now that he was about to visit them as an evangelist. Again, in Paul’s last imprisonment, he, for the last time, speaks of Mark (⁵⁰⁴¹2 Timothy 4:11).

11. Justus — that is, *righteous*; a common name among the Jews; Hebrew, “*tzadik*” (⁴⁰²³Acts 1:23).

of the circumcision — This implies that Epaphras, Luke, and Demas (⁵⁰⁴²Colossians 4:12,14) were *not* of the circumcision. This agrees with Luke’s Gentile name (the same as Lucanus), and the Gentile aspect of his Gospel.

These only, etc. — namely, of the Jews. For the Jewish teachers were generally opposed to the apostle of the Gentiles (⁵⁰¹⁵Philippians 1:15). Epaphras, etc., were also fellow laborers, but Gentiles.

unto — that is, in promoting the Gospel kingdom.

which have been — *Greek*, “which have been *made*,” or “have become,” that is, *inasmuch as* they have become a comfort to me. The *Greek* implies *comfort* in forensic dangers; a different *Greek* word expresses comfort in domestic affliction [BENGEL].

12. Christ — The oldest manuscripts add “Jesus.”

laboring fervently — As the *Greek*, is the same, translate, “striving earnestly” (see on ⁵⁰¹⁹Colossians 1:29 and ⁵⁰¹¹Colossians 2:1), literally, “*striving as in the agony of a contest*.”

in prayers — Translate as *Greek*, “in *his* prayers.”

complete — The oldest manuscripts read, “fully assured.” It is translated, “fully persuaded,” ⁵⁰²⁰Romans 4:21 14:5. In the expression “perfect,” he

refers to what he has already said, ^{<502>}Colossians 1:28 2:2 3:14. “Perfect” implies the attainment of the *full maturity* of a Christian. BENDEL joins “in all the will of God” with “stand.”

13. a great zeal — The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* have “much labor.”

for you — lest you should be seduced (^{<503>}Colossians 2:4); a motive why you should be anxious for yourselves.

them that are in Laodicea ... Hierapolis — churches probably founded by Epaphras, as the Church in Colosse was. Laodicea, called from Laodice, queen of Antiochus II, on the river Lycus, was, according to the subscription to First Timothy, “the chiefest city of Phrygia Pacatiana” (^{<504>}1 Timothy 6:21). All the three cities were destroyed by an earthquake in A.D. 62 [TACITUS, *Annals*, 14.27]. Hierapolis was six Roman miles north of Laodicea.

14. It is conjectured that Luke “the beloved physician” (the same as the Evangelist), may have first become connected with Paul in professionally attending on him in the sickness under which he labored in Phrygia and Galatia (in which latter place he was detained by sickness), in the early part of that journey wherein Luke first is found in his company (^{<400>}Acts 16:10; compare *Note*, see on ^{<401>}Galatians 4:13). Thus the allusion to his medical profession is appropriate in writing to men of Phrygia. Luke ministered to Paul in his last imprisonment (^{<505>}2 Timothy 4:11).

Demas — included among his “fellow laborers” (^{<506>}Philemon 1:24), but afterwards a deserter from him through love of this world (^{<507>}2 Timothy 4:10). He alone has here no honorable or descriptive epithet attached to his name. Perhaps, already, his real character was betraying itself.

15. Nymphas — of Laodicea.

church ... in his house — So old manuscripts and *Vulgate* read. The oldest read, “THEIR house”; and one manuscript, “HER house,” which makes Nymphas a woman.

16. the epistle from Laodicea — namely, the Epistle which I wrote to the Laodiceans, and which you will get *from* them on applying to them.

Not the Epistle to the Ephesians. See *Introduction* to Ephesians and *Introduction* to Colossians. The Epistles from the apostles were publicly read in the church assemblies. IGNATIUS [*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 12], POLYCARP [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 3.11,12], CLEMENT [*Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1. 47], ^{<507>}1 Thessalonians 5:27 ^{<600>}Revelation 1:3, “Blessed is he that *readeth*, and they that *hear*.” Thus, they and the Gospels were put on a level with the Old Testament, which was similarly read (^{<6811>}Deuteronomy 31:11). The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write, besides those extant, other Epistles which He saw necessary for *that* day, and for particular churches; and which were not so for the Church of all ages and places. It is possible that as the Epistle to the Colossians was to be read for the edification of other churches besides that of Colosse; so the Epistle to the Ephesians was to be read in various churches besides Ephesus, and that Laodicea was the last of such churches before Colosse, whence he might designate the Epistle to the Ephesians here as “the Epistle *from* Laodicea.” But it is equally possible that the Epistle meant was one to the Laodiceans themselves.

17. say to Archippus — *The Colossians* (not merely the clergy, but the laymen) are directed, “Speak ye to Archippus.” This proves that Scripture belongs to the laity as well as the clergy; and that laymen may profitably admonish the clergy in particular cases when they do so in meekness. BENJEL suggests that Archippus was perhaps prevented from going to the Church assembly by weak health or age. The word, “fulfill,” accords with his ministry being near its close (^{<5025>}Colossians 1:25; compare ^{<5000>}Philemon 1:2). However, “fulfill” may mean, as in ^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:5, “*make full proof of thy ministry*.” “Give all diligence to follow it out fully”; a monition perhaps needed by Archippus.

in the Lord — The element in which every work of the Christian, and especially the Christian minister, is to be done (^{<5007>}Colossians 4:7 ^{<6129>}1 Corinthians 7:39 ^{<5000>}Philippians 4:2).

18. Paul’s autograph salutation (so ^{<6101>}1 Corinthians 16:21 ^{<5072>}Thessalonians 3:17), attesting that the preceding letter, though written by an amanuensis, is from himself.

Remember my bonds — Already in this chapter he had mentioned his “bonds” (^{<5000>}Colossians 4:3), and again ^{<5000>}Colossians 4:10, an incentive

why they should love and pray (~~<S00B>~~Colossians 4:3) for him; and still more, that they should, in reverential obedience to his monitions in this Epistle, shrink from the false teaching herein stigmatized, remembering what a conflict (~~<S00B>~~Colossians 2:1) he had in their behalf amidst his *bonds*. “When we read of his chains, we should not forget that they moved over the paper as he wrote; his [right] hand was chained to the [left hand of the] soldier who kept him” [ALFORD].

Grace be with you — *Greek*, “THE grace” which every Christian enjoys in some degree, and which flows from God in Christ by the Holy Ghost (~~<S00B>~~Titus 3:15 ~~<S00B>~~Hebrews 13:25)

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO

THE THESSALONIANS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

The AUTHENTICITY of this Epistle is attested by IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 5.6.1], quoting ^{<5783>}1 Thessalonians 5:23; CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*The Instructor*, 1.88], quoting ^{<5800>}1 Thessalonians 2:7; TERTULLIAN [*On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, 24], quoting ^{<5804>}1 Thessalonians 5:1; CAIUS in EUSEBIUS' *Ecclesiastical History* [6.20]; ORIGEN [*Against Celsus*, 3].

The OBJECT OF THE EPISTLE. — Thessalonica was at this time capital of the Roman second district of Macedonia [LIVY, *Histories*, 45.29]. It lay on the bay of Therme, and has always been, and still is, under its modern name Saloniki, a place of considerable commerce. After his imprisonment and scourging at Philippi, Paul (^{<5802>}1 Thessalonians 2:2) passed on to Thessalonica; and in company with Silas (^{<4470>}Acts 17:1-9) and Timotheus (^{<4468>}Acts 16:3 17:14, compare with ^{<5801>}1 Thessalonians 1:1 3:1-6 ^{<5800>}2 Thessalonians 1:1) founded the Church there. The Jews, as a body, rejected the Gospel when preached for three successive sabbaths (^{<4470>}Acts 17:2); but some few “believed and consorted with Paul and Silas, and of the devout (that is, proselytes to Judaism) Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.” The believers received the word joyfully, notwithstanding trials and persecutions (^{<5806>}1 Thessalonians 1:6 2:13) from their own countrymen and from the Jews (^{<5804>}1 Thessalonians 2:14-16). His stay at Thessalonica was doubtless not limited to the three weeks in which were the three sabbaths specified in ^{<4470>}Acts 17:2; for his laboring there with his hands for his support (^{<5801>}1 Thessalonians 2:9 ^{<5800>}2 Thessalonians 3:8), his receiving supplies there more than once from Philippi (^{<5804>}Philippians 4:16), his making many converts from the Gentiles

(^{<5009}1 Thessalonians 1:9; and as two oldest manuscripts read, ^{<4170}Acts 17:4, “of the devout *and* of the Greeks a great multitude,” ^{<4170}Acts 17:4), and his appointing ministers — all imply a longer residence. Probably as at Pisidian Antioch (^{<4136}Acts 13:46), at Corinth (^{<4186}Acts 18:6,7), and at Ephesus (^{<4198}Acts 19:8,9), having preached the Gospel to the Jews, when they rejected it, he turned to the Gentiles. He probably thenceforth held the Christian meetings in the house of Jason (^{<4175}Acts 17:5), perhaps “the kinsman” of Paul mentioned in ^{<5162}Romans 16:21. His great subject of teaching to them seems to have been the coming and kingdom of Christ, as we may infer from ^{<5110}1 Thessalonians 1:10 2:12,19 3:13 4:13-18 5:1-11,23,24; and that they should walk worthy of it (^{<5122}1 Thessalonians 2:12 4:1). And it is an undesigned coincidence between the two Epistles and ^{<4175}Acts 17:5,9, that the very charge which the assailants of Jason’s house brought against him and other brethren was, “These do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another *king*, one Jesus.” As in the case of the Lord Jesus Himself (^{<5133}John 18:33-37 19:12; compare ^{<4164}Matthew 26:64), they perverted the doctrine of the coming kingdom of Christ into a ground for the charge of treason against Caesar. The result was, Paul and Silas were obliged to flee under the cover of night to Berea; Timothy had probably preceded him (^{<4170}Acts 17:10,14). But the Church had been planted, and ministers appointed; nay, more, they virtually became missionaries themselves for which they possessed facilities in the extensive commerce of their city, and both by word and example were extending the Gospel in Macedonia, Achaia, and elsewhere (^{<5107}1 Thessalonians 1:7,8). From Berea, also. Paul, after having planted a Scripture-loving Church, was obliged to flee by the Thessalonian Jews who followed him thither. Timothy (who seems to have come to Berea separately from Paul and Silas, compare ^{<4170}Acts 17:10, with ^{<4174}Acts 17:14) and Silas remained there still, when Paul proceeded by sea to Athens. While there he more than once longed to visit the Thessalonians again, and see personally their spiritual state, and “perfect that which was lacking in their faith” (^{<5130}1 Thessalonians 3:10); but (probably using the Thessalonian Jews as his instruments, ^{<4137}John 13:27) “Satan hindered” him (^{<5128}1 Thessalonians 2:18; compare ^{<4173}Acts 17:13). He therefore sent Timotheus, who seems to have followed him to Athens from Berea (^{<4175}Acts 17:15), immediately on his arrival to Thessalonica (^{<5131}1 Thessalonians 3:1); glad as he would have been of Timothy’s help in the

midst of the cavils of Athenian opponents, he felt he must forego that help for the sake of the Thessalonian Church. Silas does not seem to have come to Paul *at Athens* at all, though Paul had desired him and Timothy to “come to him with all speed” (^{<4175>}Acts 17:15); but seems with Timothy (who from Thessalonica called for him at Berea) to have joined Paul *at Corinth* first; compare ^{<4181>}Acts 18:1,5, “When Silas and Timothy were come from *Macedonia*.” The Epistle makes no mention of Silas *at Athens*, as it does of Timothy (^{<5181>}1 Thessalonians 3:1).

Timothy’s account of the Thessalonian Church was highly favorable. They abounded in faith and charity and reciprocated his desire to see them (^{<5181>}1 Thessalonians 3:6-10). Still, as nothing human on earth is perfect, there were some defects. Some had too exclusively dwelt on the doctrine of Christ’s coming kingdom, so as to neglect the sober-minded discharge of present duties (^{<5181>}1 Thessalonians 4:11,12). Some who had lost relatives by death, needed comfort and instruction in their doubts as to whether they who died before Christ’s coming would have a share with those found alive in His kingdom then to be revealed. Moreover, also, there had been committed among them sins against chastity and sobriety (^{<5185>}1 Thessalonians 5:5-7), as also against charity (^{<5183>}1 Thessalonians 4:3-10 5:13,15). There were, too, symptoms in some of want of respectful love and subordination to their ministers; others treated slightly the manifestations of the Spirit in those possessing His gifts (^{<5189>}1 Thessalonians 5:19). To give spiritual admonition on these subjects, and at the same time commend what deserved commendation, and to testify his love to them, was the object of the Epistle.

The PLACE OF WRITING It was doubtless Corinth, where Timothy and Silas rejoined him (^{<4185>}Acts 18:5) soon after he arrived there (compare ^{<5187>}1 Thessalonians 2:17) in the autumn of A.D. 52.

The TIME OF WRITING was evidently immediately after having received from Timothy the tidings of their state (^{<5186>}1 Thessalonians 3:6) in the winter of A.D. 52, or early in 53. For it was written not long after the conversion of the Thessalonians (^{<5188>}1 Thessalonians 1:8,9), while Paul could speak of himself as only *taken from them for a short season* (^{<5187>}1 Thessalonians 2:17). Thus this Epistle was *first in date of all Paul’s extant Epistles*. The Epistle is written in the joint names of Paul, Silas, and

Timothy, the three founders of the Thessalonian Church. The plural first person “we,” is used everywhere, except in ^{¹1 Thessalonians 2:18 3:5 5:27. “We” is the true reading, ^{¹1 Thessalonians 4:13. The *English Version* “I,” in ^{¹1 Thessalonians 4:9 ^{¹1 Thessalonians 5:1,23, is not supported by the original [EDMUNDS].}}}}

The STYLE is calm and equable, in accordance with the subject matter, which deals only with Christian duties in general, taking for granted the great doctrinal truths which were not as yet disputed. There was no deadly error as yet to call forth his more vehement bursts of feeling and impassioned argument. The earlier Epistles, as we should expect, are moral and practical. It was not until Judaistic and legalizing errors arose at a later period that he wrote those Epistles (for example, Romans and Galatians) which unfold the cardinal doctrines of grace and justification by faith. Still, later the Epistles from his Roman prison confirm the same truths. And last of all, the Pastoral Epistles are suited to the more developed ecclesiastical constitution of the Church, and give directions as to bishops and deacons, and correct abuses and errors of later growth.

The prevalence of the Gentile element in this Church is shown by the fact that these two Epistles are among the very few of Paul’s writings in which no quotation occurs from the Old Testament.

CHAPTER 1

1 THESSALONIANS 1:1-10.

ADDRESS: SALUTATION: HIS PRAYERFUL THANKSGIVING FOR THEIR FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE. THEIR FIRST RECEPTION OF THE GOSPEL, AND THEIR GOOD INFLUENCE ON ALL AROUND.

1. Paul — He does not add “an apostle,” because in their case, as in that of the Philippians (see on ^{<4000>}Philippians 1:1), his apostolic authority needs not any substantiation. He writes familiarly as to faithful friends, not but that his apostleship was recognized among them (^{<5000>}1 Thessalonians 2:6). On the other hand, in writing to the Galatians, among whom some had called in question his apostleship, he strongly asserts it in the superscription. An undesigned propriety in the Epistles, evincing genuineness.

Silvanus — a “chief man among the brethren” (^{<4452>}Acts 15:22), and a “prophet” (^{<4452>}Acts 15:32), and one of the deputies who carried the decree of the Jerusalem council to Antioch. His age and position cause him to be placed before “Timothy,” then a youth (^{<4461>}Acts 16:1 ^{<5012>}1 Timothy 4:12). Silvanus (the Gentile expanded form of “Silas”) is called in ^{<4452>}1 Peter 5:12, “a faithful brother” (compare ^{<4419>}2 Corinthians 1:19). They both aided in planting the Thessalonian Church, and are therefore included in the address. This, the first of Paul’s Epistles, as being written before various evils crept into the churches, is without the censures found in other Epistles. So realizing was their Christian faith, that they were able hourly to look for the Lord Jesus.

unto the church — not merely as in the Epistles to Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, “to the saints,” or “the faithful at Thessalonica.” Though as yet they do not seem to have had the *final* Church organization under *permanent* “bishops” and deacons, which appears in the later Epistles (See on ^{<5000>}Philippians 1:1; see First and Second Timothy). Yet he

designates them by the honorable term “Church,” implying their status as not merely isolated believers, but a corporate body with spiritual rulers (^{<502>}1 Thessalonians 5:12 ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:1 ^{<400>}Galatians 1:2).

in — implying *vital union*.

God the Father — This marks that they were no longer *heathen*.

the Lord Jesus Christ — This marks that they were not *Jews*, but Christians.

Grace be unto you, and peace — that ye may have in God that *favor and peace* which men withhold [ANSELM]. This is the salutation in all the Epistles of Paul, except the three pastoral ones, which have “grace, mercy, and peace.” Some of the oldest manuscripts support, others omit the clause following, “from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” It may have crept in from ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 1:3 ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:2.

2. (^{<600>}Romans 1:9 ^{<502>}2 Timothy 1:3.) The structure of the sentences in this and the following verses, each successive sentence repeating with greater fullness the preceding, characteristically marks Paul’s abounding love and thankfulness in respect to his converts, as if he were seeking by words heaped on words to convey some idea of his exuberant feelings towards them.

We — I, Silvanus, and Timotheus. ^{<600>}Romans 1:9 supports ALFORD in translating, “making mention of you in our prayers without ceasing” (^{<502>}1 Thessalonians 1:3). Thus, “without ceasing,” in the second clause, answers in parallelism to “always,” in the first.

3. **work of faith** — *the working reality of your faith*; its alacrity in *receiving* the truth, and in *evincing* itself by its fruits. Not an otiose assent; but a *realizing, working faith*; not “in word only,” but in *one* continuous chain of “work” (singular, not plural, *works*), ^{<502>}1 Thessalonians 1:5-10 ^{<502>}James 2:22. So “the work of faith” in ^{<501>}2 Thessalonians 1:11 implies its *perfect development* (compare ^{<500>}James 1:4). The other governing substantives similarly mark respectively the characteristic manifestation of the grace which follows each in the genitive. *Faith, love, and hope*, are the three great Christian graces (^{<502>}1 Thessalonians 5:8 ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 13:13).

labor of love — The *Greek* implies *toil*, or *troublesome labor*, which we are stimulated by love to bear (^{<510>}1 Thessalonians 2:9 ^{<610>}Revelation 2:2). For instances of self-denying *labors of love*, see ^{<405>}Acts 20:35 ^{<610>}Romans 16:12. Not here *ministerial* labors. Those who shun trouble for others, love little (compare ^{<810>}Hebrews 6:10).

patience — Translate, “*endurance of hope*”; the *persevering endurance* of trials which flows from “hope.” ^{<610>}Romans 15:4 shows that “patience” also nourishes “hope.”

hope in our Lord Jesus — literally, “hope *of* our Lord Jesus,” namely, of His coming (^{<510>}1 Thessalonians 1:10): a hope that looked forward beyond all present things for the manifestation of Christ.

in the sight of God and our Father — Your “faith, hope, and love” were not merely such as would pass for genuine *before men*, but “in the sight of God,” the Searcher of hearts [GOMARUS]. Things are really what they are before God. BENDEL takes this clause with “remembering.” Whenever we *pray*, we *remember before God* your faith, hope, and love. But its separation from “remembering” in the order, and its connection with “your ... faith,” etc. make me to prefer the former view.

and, etc. — The *Greek* implies, “in the sight of *Him who* is [at once] God and our Father.”

4. Knowing — Forasmuch as we know.

your election of God — The *Greek* is rather, “beloved by God”; so ^{<600>}Romans 1:7 ^{<510>}2 Thessalonians 2:13. “Your election” means that *God has elected you* as individual believers to eternal life (^{<610>}Romans 11:5,7 ^{<510>}Colossians 3:12 ^{<510>}2 Thessalonians 2:13).

5. our gospel — namely, the Gospel which we preached.

came — *Greek*, “was made,” namely, by God, its Author and Sender. God’s having made our preaching among you to be attended with such “power,” is the proof that you are “elect of God” (^{<510>}1 Thessalonians 1:4).

in power — in the efficacy of the Holy Spirit clothing us with power (see end of verse; ^{<405>}Acts 1:8 4:33 6:5,8) in preaching the Gospel, and making it in you the power of God unto salvation (^{<610>}Romans 1:16). As “power”

produces *faith*; so “the Holy Ghost,” *love*; and “much assurance” (^{<500P>}Colossians 2:2, *full persuasion*), *hope* (^{<501H>}Hebrews 6:11), resting on faith (^{<502P>}Hebrews 10:22). So *faith*, *love*, and *hope* (^{<503B>}1 Thessalonians 1:3).

as ye know — answering to the “knowing,” that is, *as WE know* (^{<500H>}1 Thessalonians 1:4) your character as *the elect of God*, so *YE know* ours as *preachers*.

for your sake — The purpose herein indicated is not so much that of the apostles, as that of God. “You know what *God enabled us to be ... how mighty in preaching the word ... for your sakes ... thereby proving that He had chosen* (^{<500H>}1 Thessalonians 1:4) you for His own” [ALFORD]. I think, from ^{<500P>}1 Thessalonians 2:10-12, that, in “what manner of men we were among you,” besides the *power in preaching*, there is included also Paul’s and his fellow missionaries’ whole *conduct* which confirmed their preaching; and in this sense, the “for your sake” will mean “in order to win you.” This, though not the sole, yet would be a strong, motive to holy circumspection, namely, so as to win those without (^{<500P>}Colossians 4:5; compare ^{<400P>}1 Corinthians 9:19-23).

6. And ye — answering to “*For our Gospel*,” ^{<500P>}1 Thessalonians 1:5.

followers — *Greek*, “imitators.” The Thessalonians in their turn became “ensamples” (^{<500P>}1 Thessalonians 1:7) for others to *imitate*.

of the Lord — who was the apostle of the Father, and taught the word, which He brought from heaven, under adversities [BENGEL]. This was the point in which they imitated Him and His apostles, *joyful witness for the word in much affliction*: the second proof of their *election of God* (^{<500H>}1 Thessalonians 1:4); ^{<500P>}1 Thessalonians 1:5 is the first (see on ^{<500P>}1 Thessalonians 1:5).

received the word in much affliction — (^{<500H>}1 Thessalonians 2:14 3:2-5 ^{<400P>}Acts 17:5-10).

joy of — that is, *wrought* by “the Holy Ghost.” “The oil of gladness” wherewith the Son of God was “anointed above His fellows” (^{<400P>}Psalm 45:7), is the same oil with which He, by the Spirit, anoints His fellows too (^{<200P>}Isaiah 61:1,3 ^{<400P>}Romans 14:17 ^{<400P>}1 John 2:20,27).

7. ensamples — So some of the oldest manuscripts read. Others, “ensample” (singular), the whole Church being regarded as *one*. The *Macedonian* Church of Philippi was the only one in Europe converted before the Thessalonians. Therefore he means their past conduct is an ensample to all believers now; of whom he specifies those “in Macedonia” because he had been there since the conversion of the Thessalonians, and had left Silvanus and Timotheus there; and those in “Achaia,” because he was now at Corinth in Achaia.

8. from you sounded ... the word of the Lord — not that they actually became missionaries: but they, by the *report* which spread abroad of their “faith” (compare ^{<500>}Romans 1:8), and by Christian merchants of Thessalonica who traveled in various directions, bearing “the word of the Lord” with them, were *virtually* missionaries, recommending the Gospel to all within reach of their influence by word and by example (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:7). In “sounded,” the image is that of a trumpet filling with its clear-sounding echo all the surrounding places.

to God-ward — no longer directed to idols.

so that we need not to speak any thing — to them in praise of your faith; “for (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:9) they themselves” (the people in Macedonia, Achaia, and in every place) know it already.

9. Strictly there should follow, “For they themselves show of you,” etc.; but, instead, he substitutes that which was the instrumental cause of the Thessalonians’ conversion and faith, “for they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had *unto you*”; compare ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:5, which corresponds to this former clause, as ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:6 corresponds to the latter clause. “And how ye turned from idols to serve the living ... God,” etc. Instead of *our* having “to speak any thing” to them (in Macedonia and Achaia) in your praise (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:8), “they *themselves* (have the start of us in speaking of you, and) *announce concerning* (so the *Greek* of ‘show of’ means) us, what manner of (how effectual an) entrance we had unto you” (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:5 2:1).

the living and true God — as opposed to the *dead* and *false gods* from which they had “turned.” In the *English Version* reading, ^{<400>}Acts 17:4, “of the devout Greeks a great multitude,” no mention is made, as here, of the

conversion of *idolatrous* Gentiles at Thessalonica; but the reading of some of the oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* singularly coincides with the statement here: “Of the devout AND of Greeks (namely, *idolaters*) a great multitude”; so in ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:17, “the devout persons,” that is, Gentile proselytes to Judaism, form a separate class. PALEY and LACHMANN, by distinct lines of argument, support the “AND.”

10. This verse distinguishes them from the *Jews*, as ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:9 from the *idolatrous* Gentiles. To wait for the Lord’s coming is a sure characteristic of a true believer, and was prominent amidst the graces of the Thessalonians (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 1:7,8). His *coming* is seldom called his *return* (^{<648>}John 14:3); because the two advents are regarded as different phases of the same coming; and the second coming shall have features altogether new connected with it, so that it will not be a mere repetition of the first, or a mere coming *back again*.

his Son ... raised from the dead — the grand proof of His divine *Sonship* (^{<600>}Romans 1:4).

delivered — rather as *Greek*, “who *delivereth us*.” Christ has once for all *redeemed* us; He is *our Deliverer* ALWAYS.

wrath to come — (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 5:9 ^{<500>}Colossians 3:6).

CHAPTER 2

1 THESSALONIANS 2:1-20.

HIS MANNER OF PREACHING, AND THEIRS OF RECEIVING, THE GOSPEL; HIS DESIRE TO HAVE REVISITED THEM FRUSTRATED BY SATAN.

1. For — confirming ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:9. He discusses the manner of his fellow missionaries' preaching among them (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:5, and former part of ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 2:9) at ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 2:1-12; and the Thessalonians' reception of the word (compare ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:6,7, and latter part of ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 2:9) at ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 2:13-16.

yourselves — Not only do strangers report it, but *you* know it to be true [ALFORD] “yourselves.”

not in vain — *Greek*, “not vain,” that is, it was full of “power” (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:5). The *Greek* for “was,” expresses rather “hath been and is,” implying the *permanent* and continuing character of his preaching.

2. even after that we had suffered before — at Philippi (^{<400>}Acts 16:11-40): a circumstance which would have deterred mere natural, unspiritual men from further preaching.

shamefully entreated — ignominiously scourged (^{<400>}Acts 16:22,23).

bold — (^{<400>}Acts 4:29 ^{<400>}Ephesians 6:20).

in our God — The ground of our boldness in speaking was the realization of God as “OUR God.”

with much contention — that is, literally, as of *competitors in a contest*: striving earnestness (^{<500>}Colossians 1:29 2:1). But here *outward* conflict with persecutors, rather than *inward* and mental, was what the missionaries had to endure (^{<400>}Acts 17:5,6 ^{<500>}Philippians 1:30).

3. For — The ground of his “boldness” (^{¹1 Thessalonians 2:2), his freedom from all “deceit, uncleanness, and guile”; *guile*, before God, *deceit* (*Greek*, “imposture”), towards men (compare ^{²2 Corinthians 1:12 2:17 ^{⁴⁰¹⁴Ephesians 4:14); *uncleanness*, in relation to one’s self (impure motives of carnal self-gratification in gain, ^{¹1 Thessalonians 2:5), or lust; such as actuated false teachers of the Gentiles (^{³⁰¹⁶Philippians 1:16 ^{⁴⁰²⁰2 Peter 2:10,14 ^{⁴⁰¹⁸Jude 1:8 ^{⁴⁰¹⁴Revelation 2:14,15). So Simon Magus and Cerinthus taught [ESTIUS].}}}}}}}}

exhortation — The *Greek* means “consolation” as well as “exhortation.” The same Gospel which exhorts comforts. Its first lesson to each is that of peace in believing amidst outward and inward sorrows. It comforts them that mourn (compare ^{¹1 Thessalonians 2:11 ^{³⁰¹⁰Isaiah 61:2,3 ^{⁴⁰²⁰2 Corinthians 1:3,4).}}}

of — *springing from* — *having its source in* — deceit, etc.

4. as — according as; even as.

allowed — *Greek*, “We have been approved on trial,” “deemed fit.” This word corresponds to “God which *trieth* our hearts” below. This approval as to sincerity depends solely on the grace and mercy of God (^{⁴⁰¹⁵Acts 9:15 ^{⁴⁰²⁵1 Corinthians 7:25 ^{⁴⁰¹⁶2 Corinthians 3:5 ^{⁴⁰¹¹1 Timothy 1:11,12).}}}}

not as pleasing — not as persons who seek to please men; characteristic of false teachers (^{⁴⁰¹⁰Galatians 1:10).}

5. used we flattering words — literally, “become (that is, have we been found) in (the use of) language of flattery”; the resource of those who try to “please men.”

as ye know — “Ye know” as to whether I *flattered* you; as to “covetousness,” GOD, the Judge of the heart, alone can be “my witness.”

cloak of — that is, any specious guise under which I might cloak “covetousness.”

6. Literally, “Nor of men (have we been found, ^{¹1 Thessalonians 2:5) seeking glory.” The “of” here represents a different *Greek* word from “of” in the clause “*of* you ... *of* others.” ALFORD makes the former (*Greek*, “*ex*”) express the *abstract ground* of the glory; the latter (*apo*) the *concrete*}

object from which it was to come. The former means “originating from”; the latter means “on the part of.” Many teach heretical novelties, though not for fain, yet for “glory.” Paul and his associates were free even from this motive [GROTIUS], (^{REF} John 5:44).

we might have been burdensome — that is, by claiming maintenance (^{SUB} 1 Thessalonians 2:9 ^{REF} 2 Corinthians 11:9 12:16 ^{SUB} 2 Thessalonians 3:8). As, however, “glory” precedes, as well as “covetousness,” the reference cannot be *restricted* to the latter, though I think it is not *excluded*. Translate, “when we might have borne heavily upon you,” by pressing you *with the weight of self-glorifying authority*, and *with the burden* of our *sustenance*. Thus the antithesis is appropriate in the words following, “But we were *gentle* (the opposite of *pressing weightily*) among you” (^{SUB} 1 Thessalonians 2:7). On *weight* being connected with authority, compare *Note*, see on ^{REF} 2 Corinthians 10:10, “His letters are weighty” (^{REF} 1 Corinthians 4:21). ALFORD’S translation, which *excludes* reference to his right of claiming *maintenance* (“when we might have stood on our *dignity*”), seems to me disproved by ^{SUB} 1 Thessalonians 2:9, which uses *the same Greek word* unequivocally for “chargeable.” Twice he received supplies from Philippi while at Thessalonica (^{SUB} Philippians 4:16).

as the apostles — that is, as being apostles.

7. we were — *Greek*, “we were *made*” by God’s grace.

gentle — *Greek*, “*mild* in bearing with the faults of others” [TITTMANN]; one, too, who is gentle (though firm) in reproving the erroneous opinions of others (^{SUB} 2 Timothy 2:24). Some of the oldest manuscripts read, “we became *little children*” (compare ^{REF} Matthew 18:3,4). Others support the *English Version* reading, which forms a better antithesis to ^{SUB} 1 Thessalonians 2:6,7, and harmonizes better with what follows; for he would hardly, in the same sentence, compare himself both to the “infants” or “little children,” and to “a nurse,” or rather, “suckling mother.” *Gentleness* is the fitting characteristic of a *nurse*.

among you — *Greek*, “in the midst of you,” that is, in our intercourse with you being *as one of yourselves*.

nurse — a suckling mother.

her — *Greek*, “*her own children*” (compare ^{ⲥⲟⲩⲁ}1 Thessalonians 2:11). So ^{ⲁⲣⲓⲁ}Galatians 4:19.

8. So — to be joined to “we were willing”; “As a nurse cherisheth ... *so* we were willing,” etc. [ALFORD]. But BENDEL, “So,” that is, *seeing that we have such affection for you*.

being affectionately desirous — The oldest reading in the *Greek* implies, literally, *to connect one’s self with another*; to be closely attached to another.

willing — The *Greek* is stronger, “we were *well content*”; “we would gladly have imparted,” etc.”even our own *lives*” (so the *Greek* for “souls” ought to be translated); as we showed in the sufferings we endured in giving you the Gospel (^{ⲁⲛⲟⲩⲉ}Acts 17:1-34). As a nursing mother is ready to impart not only her milk to them, but her life for them, so we not only imparted gladly the spiritual milk of the word to you, but risked our own lives for your spiritual nourishment, imitating Him who laid down His life for His friends, the greatest proof of love (^{ⲁⲛⲟⲩⲉ}John 15:13).

ye were — *Greek*, “ye were become,” as having become our spiritual children.

dear — *Greek*, “dearly beloved.”

9. labor and travail — The *Greek* for “labor” means *hardship in bearing*; that for “travail,” *hardship in doing*; the former, toil with the utmost solicitude; the latter, the being wearied with fatigue [GROTIUS]. ZANCHIUS refers the former to *spiritual* (see ^{ⲥⲟⲩⲁ}1 Thessalonians 3:5), the latter to *manual* labor. I would translate, “weariness (so the *Greek* is translated, ^{ⲁⲛⲟⲩⲉ}2 Corinthians 11:27) and travail” (hard labor, *toil*).

for — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

laboring — *Greek*, “working,” namely, at tent-making (^{ⲁⲛⲟⲩⲉ}Acts 18:3).

night and day — The Jews reckoned the day from sunset to sunset, so that “night” is put before “day” (compare ^{ⲁⲛⲟⲩⲉ}Acts 20:31). Their labors with their hands for a scanty livelihood had to be engaged in not only by day, but by night also, in the intervals between spiritual labors.

because we would not be chargeable — *Greek*, “with a view to not burdening any of you” (^{<4119>}2 Corinthians 11:9,10).

preached unto you — *Greek*, “unto and among you.” Though but “three Sabbaths” are mentioned, ^{<4112>}Acts 17:2, these refer merely to the time of his preaching *to the Jews in the synagogue*. When rejected by them as a body, after having converted a few Jews, he turned to the Gentiles; of these (whom he preached to in a place distinct from the synagogue) “a great multitude believed” (^{<4114>}Acts 17:4, where the oldest manuscripts read, “of the devout [proselytes] and Greeks a great multitude”); then after he had, by labors continued *among the Gentiles* for some time, gathered in many converts, the Jews, provoked by his success, assaulted Jason’s house, and drove him away. His receiving “once and again” supplies from Philippi, implies a longer stay at Thessalonica than three weeks (^{<5106>}Philippians 4:16).

10. Ye are witnesses — as to our outward conduct.

God — as to our inner motives.

holily — towards God.

justly — towards men.

unblamably — in relation to ourselves.

behaved ourselves — *Greek*, “were made to be,” namely, by God.

among you that believe — rather, “*before* (that is, in the eyes of) you that believe”; whatever we may have seemed in the eyes of the unbelieving. As ^{<5119>}1 Thessalonians 2:9 refers to their outward occupation in the world; so ^{<5121>}1 Thessalonians 2:10, to their character among believers.

11. exhorted and comforted — *Exhortation* leads one to do a thing willingly; *consolation*, to do it joyfully [BENGEL], (^{<5124>}1 Thessalonians 5:14). Even in the former term, “exhorted,” the *Greek* includes the additional idea of *comforting* and *advocating* one’s cause: “encouragingly exhorted.” Appropriate in this case, as the Thessalonians were in sorrow, both through persecutions, and also through deaths of friends (^{<5126>}1 Thessalonians 4:13).

charged — “conjured solemnly,” literally, “testifying”; *appealing solemnly* to you before God.

every one of you — in private (^{<400>}Acts 20:20), as well as publicly. The minister, if he would be useful, must not deal merely in generalities, but must individualize and particularize.

as a father — with mild gravity. The *Greek* is, “*his own children*.”

12. worthy of God — “worthy of the Lord” (^{<500>}Colossians 1:10); “worthily of the saints” (^{<400>}Romans 16:2, *Greek*): “... of the Gospel” (^{<500>}Philippians 1:27) “... of the vocation wherewith ye are called” (^{<400>}Ephesians 4:1). Inconsistency would cause God’s name to be “blasphemed among the Gentiles” (^{<400>}Romans 2:24). The *Greek* article is emphatical, “Worthy of THE God who is calling you.”

hath called — So one of the oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate*. Other oldest manuscripts, “Who calleth us.”

his kingdom — to be set up at the Lord’s coming.

glory — that ye may share His glory (^{<400>}John 17:22 ^{<500>}Colossians 3:4).

13. For this cause — Seeing ye have had such teachers (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 2:10-12) [BENGEL], “we also (as well as ‘all that believe’ in Macedonia and Achaia) thank God without ceasing (‘always’ ... ‘in our prayers,’ ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 1:2), that when ye received the word of God which ye heard from us (literally, ‘God’s word of hearing from us,’ ^{<500>}Romans 10:16,17), ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, even as it is truly, the word of God.” ALFORD omits the “as” of *English Version*. But the “as” is required by the clause, “even as it is truly.” “Ye accepted it, not (*as*) the word of men (which it might have been *supposed* to be), but (*as*) the word of God, *even as it really is*.” The *Greek* for the first “received,” implies simply the hearing of it; the *Greek* of the second is “accepted,” or “welcomed” it. The proper object of faith, it hence appears, is *the word of God*, at first oral, then for security against error, written (^{<400>}John 20:30,31 ^{<500>}Romans 15:4 ^{<400>}Galatians 4:30). Also, that faith is *the work of divine grace*, is implied by Paul’s *thanksgiving*.

effectually worketh also in you that believe — “Also,” besides your accepting it with your hearts, it evidences itself in your lives. It shows its *energy* in its practical effects on you; for instance, working in you patient endurance in trial (^{<4124>}1 Thessalonians 2:14; compare ^{<4085>}Galatians 3:5 5:6).

14. followers — *Greek*, “imitators.” Divine *working* is most of all seen and felt in affliction.

in Judea — The churches of Judea were naturally the patterns to other churches, as having been the first founded, and that on the very scene of Christ’s own ministry. Reference to them is specially appropriate here, as the Thessalonians, with Paul and Silas, had experienced from Jews in their city persecutions (^{<4175>}Acts 17:5-9) similar to those which “the churches in Judea” experienced from Jews in that country.

in Christ Jesus — not merely “in God”; for the synagogues of the Jews (one of which the Thessalonians were familiar with, ^{<4170>}Acts 17:1) were also *in God*. But the Christian churches alone were not only *in God*, as the Jews in contrast to the Thessalonian idolaters were, but also *in Christ*, which the Jews were not.

of your own countrymen — including primarily the Jews settled at Thessalonica, from whom the persecution originated, and also the Gentiles there, instigated by the Jews; thus, “fellow countrymen” (the *Greek* term, according to Herodian, implies, not the *enduring* relation of fellow citizenship, but sameness of country *for the time being*), including naturalized Jews and native Thessalonians, stand in contrast to the pure “Jews” in Judea (^{<4085>}Matthew 10:36). It is an undesigned coincidence, that Paul at this time was suffering persecutions of the Jews at Corinth, whence he writes (^{<4085>}Acts 18:5,6,12); naturally his letter would the more vividly dwell on Jewish bitterness against Christians.

even as they — (^{<3085>}Hebrews 10:32-34). There was a *likeness* in respect to *the nation* from which both suffered, namely, Jews, and those *their own countrymen*; in the *cause* for which, and in the *evils* which, they suffered, and also in the steadfast *manner* in which they suffered them. Such sameness of fruits, afflictions, and experimental characteristics of believers, in all places and at all times, is a subsidiary evidence of the truth of the Gospel.

15. the Lord Jesus — rather as *Greek*, “Jesus THE LORD.” This enhances the glaring enormity of their sin, that in killing Jesus they killed the LORD (Compare ⁴¹⁸⁴Acts 3:14,15).

their own — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

prophets — (⁴¹⁷³Matthew 21:33-41 23:31-37 ⁴¹⁷³Luke 13:33).

persecuted us — rather as *Greek* (see *Margin*), “By persecution drove us out” (⁴¹⁴⁹Luke 11:49).

please not God — that is, they do not *make it their aim* to please God. He implies that with all their boast of being God’s peculiar people, they all the while are “no pleasers of God,” as certainly as, by the universal voice of the world, which even they themselves cannot contradict, they are declared to be perversely “contrary to all men.” JOSEPHUS [*Against Apion*, 2.14], represents one calling them “Atheists and Misanthropes, the dullest of barbarians”; and TACITUS [*Histories*, 5.5], “They have a hostile hatred of all other men.” However, the *contrariety to all men* here meant is, *in that they* “forbid us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved” (⁴¹²⁶1 Thessalonians 2:16).

16. Forbidding — *Greek*, “Hindering us from speaking,” etc.

to fill up their sins alway — Tending thus “to the filling up (the full measure of, ⁴¹⁵⁶Genesis 15:16 ⁴¹⁷³Daniel 8:23 ⁴¹⁷³Matthew 23:32) their sins at all times,” that is, *now as at all former times*. Their hindrance of the Gospel preaching to the Gentiles was the last measure added to their continually accumulating iniquity, which made them fully ripe for vengeance.

for — *Greek*, “but.” “But,” they shall proceed no further, for (⁴¹⁷³2 Timothy 3:8) “the” divine “wrath *has* (so the *Greek*) come upon (overtaken unexpectedly; the past tense expressing the speedy certainty of the divinely destined stroke) them to the uttermost”; not merely partial wrath, but wrath to its full extent, “even to the finishing stroke” [EDMUNDS]. The past tense implies that the fullest visitation of wrath was already begun. Already in A.D. 48, a tumult had occurred at the Passover in Jerusalem, when about thirty thousand (according to some) were slain; a

foretaste of the whole vengeance which speedily followed (☞ Luke 19:43,44 21:24).

17. But we — resumed from ☞ 1 Thessalonians 2:13; in contrast to *the Jews*, ☞ 1 Thessalonians 2:15,16.

taken — rather as *Greek*, “severed (violently, ☞ Acts 17:7-10) from you,” as parents bereft of their children. So “I will not leave you comfortless,” *Greek*, “orphanized” (☞ John 14:18).

for a short time — literally, “for the space of an hour.” “When we had been severed from you but a very short time (perhaps alluding to the suddenness of his unexpected departure), we the more abundantly (the shorter was our separation; for the desire of meeting again is the more vivid, the more recent has been the parting) endeavored,” etc. (Compare ☞ 2 Timothy 1:4). He does not hereby, as many explain, anticipate a short separation from them, which would be a false anticipation; for he did not soon revisit them. The *Greek* past participle also forbids their view.

18. Wherefore — The oldest manuscripts read, “Because,” or “Inasmuch as.”

we would — *Greek*, “*we wished to come*”; we intended to come.

even I Paul — My fellow missionaries as well as myself wished to come; I can answer for *myself* that I intended it more than once. His slightly distinguishing himself here from his fellow missionaries, whom throughout this Epistle he associates with himself in the plural, accords with the fact that Silvanus and Timothy stayed at Berea when Paul went on to Athens; where subsequently Timothy joined him, and was thence sent *by Paul alone* to Thessalonica (☞ 1 Thessalonians 3:1).

Satan hindered us — On a different occasion “the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of *Jesus*” (so the oldest manuscripts read), ☞ Acts 16:6,7, forbade or hindered them in a missionary design; here it is *Satan*, acting perhaps by wicked men, some of whom had already driven him out of Thessalonica (☞ Acts 17:13,14; compare ☞ John 13:27), or else by some more direct “messenger of Satan — a thorn in the flesh” (☞ 2 Corinthians 12:7; compare ☞ 2 Corinthians 11:14). In any event, the Holy Ghost and the providence of God overruled Satan’s opposition to further His own

purpose. *We* cannot, in each case, define whence hindrances in good undertakings arise; *Paul* in this case, by inspiration, was enabled to say; the hindrance was from Satan. GROTIUS thinks Satan's mode of hindering Paul's journey to Thessalonica was by instigating the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers to cavil, which entailed on Paul the necessity of replying, and so detained him; but he seems to have left Athens leisurely (^{<4173>}Acts 17:33,34 18:1). The *Greek* for "hindered" is literally, "to cut a trench between one's self and an advancing foe, to prevent his progress"; so Satan opposing the progress of the missionaries.

19. For — giving the reason for his earnest desire to see them.

Are not even ye in the presence of ... Christ — "Christ" is omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Are not even ye (namely, among others; the "even" or "also," implies that not *they alone* will be his crown) our hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing before Jesus, when He shall come (^{<4114>}2 Corinthians 1:14 ^{<5176>}Philippians 2:16 4:1)? The "hope" here meant is his hope (in a lower sense), that these his converts might be found in Christ at His advent (^{<5183>}1 Thessalonians 3:13). Paul's *chief* "hope" was JESUS CHRIST (^{<5001>}1 Timothy 1:1).

20. Emphatical repetition with increased force. Who but ye and our other converts are our *hope*, etc., *hereafter*, at Christ's coming? For it is ye *who* ARE now *our glory and joy*.

CHAPTER 3

1 THESSALONIANS 3:1-13.

PROOF OF HIS DESIRE AFTER THEM IN HIS HAVING SENT TIMOTHY: HIS JOY AT THE TIDINGS BROUGHT BACK CONCERNING THEIR FAITH AND CHARITY: PRAYERS FOR THEM.

1. Wherefore — because of our earnest love to you (^{<5127>}1 Thessalonians 2:17-20).

forbear — “endure” the suspense. The *Greek* is literally applied to a watertight vessel. When we could no longer contain ourselves in our yearning desire for you.

left at Athens alone — See my *Introduction*. This implies that he sent Timothy *from Athens*, whither the latter had followed him. However, the “we” favors ALFORD’S view that the determination to send Timothy was formed during the hasty consultation of Paul, Silas, and Timothy, *previous to his departure from Berea*, and that then he with them “resolved” to be “left alone” at Athens, when he should arrive there: Timothy and Silas not accompanying him, but remaining at Berea. Thus the “I,” ^{<5128>}1 Thessalonians 3:5, will express that the *act* of sending Timothy, when he arrived at Athens, was *Paul’s*, while the determination that Paul should be left alone at Athens, was that of the brethren as well as himself, at Berea, whence he uses, ^{<5129>}1 Thessalonians 3:1, “we.” The non-mention of Silas at Athens implies that he did not follow Paul to Athens as was at first intended; but Timothy did. Thus the history, ^{<4174>}Acts 17:14,15, accords with the Epistle. The word “left behind” (*Greek*) implies that Timothy had been with him *at Athens*. It was an act of self-denial for their sakes that Paul deprived himself of the presence of Timothy at Athens, which would have been so cheering to him in the midst of philosophic cavillers; but from love to the Thessalonians, he is well content to be left all “alone” in the great city.

2. minister of God and our fellow laborer — Some oldest manuscripts read, “fellow workman with God”; others, “minister of God.” The former is probably genuine, as copyists probably altered it to the latter to avoid the bold phrase, which, however, is sanctioned by ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 3:9 ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 6:1. The *English Version* reading is not well supported, and is plainly compounded out of the two other readings. Paul calls Timothy “our *brother*” here; but in ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 4:17, “my *son*.” He speaks thus highly of one so lately ordained, both to impress the Thessalonians with a high respect for the delegate sent to them, and to encourage Timothy, who seems to have been of a timid character (^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:12 5:23). “Gospel ministers do the work of God *with Him, for Him, and under Him*” [EDMUNDS].

establish — *Greek*, “confirm.” In ^{<500>}2 Thessalonians 3:3, GOD is said to “stablish”: He is the true establisher: ministers are His “instruments.”

concerning — *Greek*, “in behalf of,” that is, *for the furtherance* of your faith. The *Greek* for “comfort” includes also the idea, “exhort.” The Thessalonians in their trials needed both (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 3:3; compare ^{<400>}Acts 14:22).

3. moved — “shaken,” “disturbed.” The *Greek* is literally said of dogs *wagging* the tail in fawning on one. Therefore TITTMANN explains it, “That no man should, amidst his calamities, be *allured* by the *flattering* hope of a more pleasant life to abandon his duty.” So ELSNER and BENGEL, “cajoled out of his faith.” In afflictions, relatives and opponents combine with the ease-loving heart itself in flatteries, which it needs strong faith to overcome.

yourselves know — We always candidly told you so (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 3:4 ^{<400>}Acts 14:22). None but a religion from God would have held out such a trying prospect to those who should embrace it, and yet succeed in winning converts.

we — Christians.

appointed thereunto — by God’s counsel (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 5:9).

4. that we should suffer — *Greek*, “that we are about (we are sure) to suffer” according to the *appointment* of God (^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 3:3).

even as — “*even* (exactly) as it *both* came to pass *and* ye know”; ye know *both* that it came to pass, *and* that we foretold it (compare ~~GRB~~ John 13:19). The correspondence of the event to the prediction powerfully confirms faith: “Forewarned, forearmed” [EDMUNDS]. The repetition of “ye know,” so frequently, is designed as an argument, that being forewarned of coming affliction, they should be less readily “moved” by it.

5. For this cause — Because I know of your “tribulation” having actually begun (~~SUB~~ 1 Thessalonians 3:4).

when I — *Greek*, “when I *also* (as well as Timothy, who, Paul delicately implies, was equally anxious respecting them, compare “we,” ~~SUB~~ 1 Thessalonians 3:1), could no longer contain myself (*endure* the suspense).”

I sent — Paul was the actual sender; hence the “I” here: Paul, Silas, and Timothy himself had agreed on the mission already, before Paul went to Athens: hence the “we,” (see on ~~SUB~~ 1 Thessalonians 3:1).

to know — to learn the state of your faith, whether it stood the trial (~~SUB~~ Colossians 4:8).

lest ... have tempted ... and ... be — The indicative is used in the former sentence, the subjunctive in the latter. Translate therefore, “To know ... *whether haply* the tempter *have* tempted you (the indicative implying that he supposed such was the case), and *lest* (in that case) our labor *may prove to be* in vain” (compare ~~GRB~~ Galatians 4:11). Our labor in preaching would in that case be vain, so far as *ye* are concerned, but not as concerns *us* in so far as *we* have sincerely labored (~~SUB~~ Isaiah 49:4 ~~GRB~~ 1 Corinthians 3:8).

6. Join “now” with “come”; “But Timotheus having *just now come* from you unto us” [ALFORD]. Thus it appears (compare ~~GRB~~ Acts 18:5) Paul is writing from Corinth.

your faith and charity — (~~SUB~~ 1 Thessalonians 1:3; compare ~~SUB~~ 2 Thessalonians 1:3, whence it seems their faith subsequently increased still more). *Faith* was the solid foundation: *charity* the cement which held together the superstructure of their practice on that foundation. In that *charity* was included their “good (kindly) remembrance” of their teachers.

desiring greatly — *Greek*, “having a yearning desire for.”

we also — The desires of loving friends for one another's presence are reciprocal.

7. over you — in respect to you.

in — in the midst of: notwithstanding “all our distress (*Greek*, ‘necessity’) and affliction,” namely, external trials at Corinth, whence Paul writes (compare ^{<5180>}1 Thessalonians 3:6, with ^{<4185>}Acts 18:5-10).

8. now — as the case is; seeing ye stand fast.

we live — we flourish. It *revives us* in our affliction to hear of your steadfastness (^{<4327>}Psalms 22:26 ^{<6008>}2 John 1:3:4).

if — implying that the vivid joy which the missionaries “now” feel, *will continue* if the Thessalonians continue steadfast. They still needed exhortation, ^{<5180>}1 Thessalonians 3:10; therefore he subjoins the conditional clause, “if ye,” etc. (^{<5008>}Philippians 4:1).

9. For what thanks — *what sufficient* thanks?

render ... again — in return for His goodness (^{<4882>}Psalms 116:12).

for you — “concerning you.”

for all the joy — on account of all the joy. It was “comfort,” ^{<5180>}1 Thessalonians 3:7, now it is more, namely, *joy*.

for your sakes — on your account.

before our God — It is a joy which will bear God's searching eye: a joy as in the presence of God, not self-seeking, but disinterested, sincere, and spiritual (compare ^{<5180>}1 Thessalonians 2:20 ^{<4851>}John 15:11).

10. Night and day — (See on ^{<5180>}1 Thessalonians 2:9). Night is the season for the saint's holiest meditations and prayers (^{<5008>}2 Timothy 1:3).

praying — connected with, “we joy”; we joy while we pray; or else as ALFORD, *What thanks can we render to God while we pray?* The *Greek* implies a *beseeking* request.

exceedingly — literally, “more than exceeding abundantly” (compare ^{<4882>}Ephesians 3:20).

that which is lacking — Even the Thessalonians had points in which they needed improvement [BENGEL], (^{<DITB} Luke 17:5). Their doctrinal views as to the nearness of Christ's coming, and as to the state of those who had fallen asleep, and their practice in some points, needed correction (^{<S001}1 Thessalonians 4:1-9). Paul's method was to begin by commending what was praiseworthy, and then to correct what was amiss; a good pattern to all admonishers of others.

11. Translate, “May God Himself, *even* our Father (there being but one article in the *Greek*, requires this translation, ‘He who is at once God and our Father’), direct,” etc. The “Himself” stands in contrast with “we” (^{<S018}1 Thessalonians 2:18); *we* desired to come but could not through Satan's hindrance; but if God *Himself* direct our way (as we pray), none can hinder Him (^{<S016}2 Thessalonians 2:16,17). It is a remarkable proof of *the unity of the Father and Son*, that in the *Greek* here, and in ^{<S016}2 Thessalonians 2:16,17, the verb is *singular*, implying that the subject, the Father and Son, are but *one in essential Being*, not in mere unity of will. Almost all the chapters in both Epistles to the Thessalonians are sealed, each with its own prayer (^{<S023}1 Thessalonians 5:23 ^{<S011}2 Thessalonians 1:11 2:16 3:5,16) [BENGEL]. Paul does not think the prosperous issue of a journey an unfit subject for prayer (^{<S010} Romans 1:10 15:32) [EDMUNDS]. His prayer, though the answer was deferred, in about five years afterwards was fulfilled in his return to Macedonia.

12. The “you” in the *Greek* is emphatically put *first*; “But” (so the *Greek* for “and”) what concerns “YOU,” whether we come or not, “may the Lord make you to increase and abound in love,” etc. The *Greek* for “increase” has a more *positive* force; that for “abound” a more *comparative* force, “make you *full* (supplying ‘that which is lacking,’ ^{<S010}1 Thessalonians 3:10) and even abound.” “The Lord” may here be the Holy Spirit; so the Three Persons of the Trinity will be appealed to (compare ^{<S013}1 Thessalonians 3:13), as in ^{<S015}2 Thessalonians 3:5. So the Holy Ghost is called “the Lord” (^{<S017}2 Corinthians 3:17). “Love” is the fruit of the Spirit (^{<S022} Galatians 5:22), and His office is “to stablish in holiness” (^{<S013}1 Thessalonians 3:13 ^{<S012}1 Peter 1:2).

13. your hearts — which are naturally the spring and seat of unholiness.

before God, even our Father — rather, “before Him who is at once God and our Father.” Before not merely men, but Him who will not be deceived by the mere show of holiness, that is, may your holiness be such as will stand His searching scrutiny.

coming — *Greek*, “presence,” or “arrival.”

with all his saints — including both the holy angels and the holy elect of men (^{<5044>}1 Thessalonians 4:14 ^{<2070>}Daniel 7:10 ^{<3846>}Zechariah 14:5 ^{<4258>}Matthew 25:31 ^{<5002>}2 Thessalonians 1:7). The saints are “His” (^{<4093>}Acts 9:13). We must have “holiness” if we are to be numbered with His holy ones or “saints.” On “unblameable,” compare ^{<6948>}Revelation 14:5. This verse (compare ^{<5182>}1 Thessalonians 3:12) shows that “love” is the spring of true “holiness” (^{<4054>}Matthew 5:44-48 ^{<5130>}Romans 13:10 ^{<5084>}Colossians 3:14). God is He who really “stablishes”; Timothy and other ministers are but instruments (^{<5082>}1 Thessalonians 3:2) in “stablishing.”

CHAPTER 4

1 THESSALONIANS 4:1-18.

EXHORTATIONS TO CHASTITY; BROTHERLY LOVE; QUIET INDUSTRY; ABSTINENCE FROM UNDUE SORROW FOR DEPARTED FRIENDS, FOR AT CHRIST'S COMING ALL HIS SAINTS SHALL BE GLORIFIED.

1. Furthermore — *Greek*, “As to what remains.” Generally used towards the close of his Epistles (^{<410>}Ephesians 6:10 ^{<504>}Philippians 4:8).

then — with a view to the *love* and *holiness* (^{<512>}1 Thessalonians 3:12,13) which we have just prayed for in your behalf, we now give you exhortation.

beseech — “ask” as if it were a personal favor.

by, etc. — rather as *Greek*, “IN the Lord Jesus”; in communion with the Lord Jesus, as Christian ministers dealing with Christian people [EDMUNDS].

as ye ... received — when we were with you (^{<513>}1 Thessalonians 2:13).

how — *Greek*, the “how,” that is, *the manner*.

walk and ... please God — that is, “*and so please God*,” namely, by your walk; in contrast to the Jews who “please not God” (^{<515>}1 Thessalonians 2:15). The oldest manuscripts add a clause here, “even as also ye do walk” (compare ^{<511>}1 Thessalonians 4:10 5:11). These words, which he was able to say of them with truth, conciliate a favorable hearing for the precepts which follow. Also the expression, “abound *more and more*,” implies that there had gone before a recognition of their already in some measure *walking so*.

2. by the Lord Jesus — by His authority and direction, not by our own. He uses the strong term, “commandments,” in writing to this Church not

long founded, knowing that they would take it in a right spirit, and feeling it desirable that they should understand he spake with divine authority. He seldom uses the term in writing subsequently, when his authority was established, to other churches. ^{<470>}1 Corinthians 7:10 11:17 and ^{<505>}1 Timothy 1:5 (^{<508>}1 Thessalonians 4:18, where the subject accounts for the strong expression) are the exceptions. “The Lord” marks His paramount authority, requiring implicit obedience.

3. For — enforcing the assertion that his “commandments” were “by (the authority of) the Lord Jesus” (^{<502>}1 Thessalonians 4:2). Since “this is the will of God,” let it be your will also.

fornication — not regarded as a sin at all among the heathen, and so needing the more to be denounced (^{<450>}Acts 15:20).

4. know — by moral self-control.

how to possess his vessel — rather as *Greek*, “how to *acquire* (get for himself) *his own* vessel,” that is, that each should have *his own wife* so as to avoid fornication (^{<503>}1 Thessalonians 4:3 ^{<470>}1 Corinthians 7:2). The emphatical position of “his own” in the *Greek*, and the use of “vessel” for *wife*, in ^{<407>}1 Peter 3:7, and in common Jewish phraseology, and the correct translation “acquire,” all justify this rendering.

in sanctification — (^{<408>}Romans 6:19 ^{<405>}1 Corinthians 6:15,18). Thus, “his own” stands in opposition to dishonoring his brother by lusting after *his wife* (^{<506>}1 Thessalonians 4:6).

honor — (^{<584>}Hebrews 13:4) contrasted with “*dishonor* their own bodies” (^{<402>}Romans 1:24).

5. in the lust — *Greek*, “passion”; which implies that such a one is unconsciously the *passive* slave of lust.

which know not God — and so know no better. Ignorance of true religion is the parent of unchastity (^{<408>}Ephesians 4:18,19). A people’s morals are like the objects of their worship (^{<402>}Deuteronomy 7:26 ^{<480>}Psalms 115:8 ^{<402>}Romans 1:23,24).

6. go beyond — transgress the bounds of rectitude in respect to his “brother.”

defraud — “overreach” [ALFORD]; “take advantage of” [EDMUNDS].

in any matter — rather as *Greek*, “in *the* matter”; a decorous expression for the matter now in question; the conjugal honor of his neighbor as a husband, ^{<5004>}1 Thessalonians 4:4; ^{<5007>}1 Thessalonians 4:7 also confirms this view; the word “brother” enhances the enormity of the crime. It is your *brother* whom you wrong (compare ^{<5027>}Proverbs 6:27-33).

the Lord — the coming Judge (^{<5002>}2 Thessalonians 1:7,8).

avenger — the Righter.

of all such — *Greek*, “concerning all *these things*,” in all such cases of wrongs against a neighbor’s conjugal honor.

testified — *Greek*, “constantly testified [ALFORD].

7. unto uncleanness — *Greek*, “for the purpose of.”

unto — rather as *Greek*, “in”; marking that “holiness” is the element in which our calling has place; in a sphere of holiness. *Saint* is another name for *Christian*.

8. despiseth, etc. — *Greek*, “setteth at naught” such engagements imposed on him in his calling, ^{<5007>}1 Thessalonians 4:7; in relation to his “brother,” ^{<5006>}1 Thessalonians 4:6. He who doth so, “sets at naught not man (as for instance his brother), but God” (^{<4504>}Psalms 51:4) is used of *despising* or *rejecting* God’s minister, it may mean here, “He who despiseth” or “rejecteth” these our ministerial precepts.

who hath also given unto us — So some oldest manuscripts read, but most oldest manuscripts read, “Who (without ‘also’) *giveth* (present) unto you” (not “us”).

his Spirit — *Greek*, “His own Spirit, the *Holy* (One)”; thus emphatically marking “holiness” (^{<5007>}1 Thessalonians 4:7) as the end for which the Holy (One) is being given. “Unto you,” in the *Greek*, implies that the Spirit is being given *unto*, *into* (put “into” your hearts), *and among* you (compare ^{<5001>}1 Thessalonians 2:9 ^{<4003>}Ephesians 4:30). “Giveth” implies that sanctification is not merely a work once for all accomplished in the past, but a *present progressive* work. So the Church of England Catechism,

“*sanctifieth* (present) all the elect people of God.” “His own” implies that as He gives you that which is essentially identical with Himself, He expects you should become like Himself (^{<0016}1 Peter 1:16 ^{<0016}2 Peter 1:4).

9. brotherly love, etc. — referring here to acts of brotherly kindness in relieving distressed brethren. Some oldest manuscripts support *English Version* reading, “YE have”; others, and those the weightiest, read, “WE have.” *We* need not write, as *ye yourselves* are taught, and that by *God*: namely, in the heart by the Holy Spirit (^{<0065}John 6:45 ^{<0081}Hebrews 8:11 ^{<0021}1 John 2:20,27).

to love — *Greek*, “with a view to,” or “to the end of your loving one another.” Divine teachings have their confluence in love [BENGEL].

10. And indeed — *Greek*, “For even.”

11. study to be quiet — *Greek*, “*make it your ambition* to be quiet, and to do *your own business*.” In direct contrast to the world’s *ambition*, which is, “to make a great stir,” and “to be busybodies” (^{<0082}2 Thessalonians 3:11,12).

work with your own hands — The Thessalonian converts were, it thus seems, chiefly of the *working* classes. Their expectation of the immediate coming of Christ led some enthusiasts among them to neglect their daily work and be dependent on the bounty of others. See end of ^{<0012}1 Thessalonians 4:12. The expectation was right in so far as that the Church should be always looking for Him; but they were wrong in making it a ground for neglecting their daily work. The evil, as it subsequently became worse, is more strongly reproved in ^{<0082}2 Thessalonians 3:6-12.

12. honestly — in the *Old English* sense, “becomingly,” as becomes your Christian profession; not bringing discredit on it in the eyes of the outer world, as if Christianity led to sloth and poverty (^{<0083}Romans 13:13 ^{<0022}1 Peter 2:12).

them ... without — outside the Christian Church (^{<0011}Mark 4:11).

have lack of nothing — not have to beg from others for the supply of your wants (compare ^{<0083}Ephesians 4:28). So far from needing to beg from others, we ought to work and get the means of supplying the need of

others. Freedom from pecuniary embarrassment is to be desired by the Christian on account of the liberty which it bestows.

13. The leading topic of Paul's preaching at Thessalonica having been the coming *kingdom* (⁴¹⁷¹Acts 17:7), some perverted it into a cause for fear in respect to friends lately deceased, as if these would be excluded from the glory which those found alive alone should share. This error Paul here corrects (compare ⁵¹⁸⁰1 Thessalonians 5:10).

I would not — All the oldest manuscripts and versions have “*we* would not.” My fellow laborers (Silas and Timothy) and myself desire that ye should not be ignorant.

them which are asleep — The oldest manuscripts read *present tense*, “them which are *sleeping*”; the same as “the dead in Christ” (⁵⁰⁴⁶1 Thessalonians 4:16), to whose bodies (²⁷¹¹Daniel 12:2, not their *souls*; ²¹²⁷Ecclesiastes 12:7 ⁴¹⁸⁸2 Corinthians 5:8) death is a calm and holy sleep, from which the resurrection shall waken them to glory. The word “cemetery” means *a sleeping-place*. Observe, the glory and chief hope of the Church are not to be realized at death, but at the Lord's coming; one is not to anticipate the other, but all are to be glorified together at Christ's coming (⁵¹⁸⁰Colossians 3:4 ⁵¹⁴⁴Hebrews 11:40). Death affects the mere individual; but the coming of Jesus the whole Church; at death our souls are invisibly and individually with the Lord; at Christ's coming the whole Church, with all its members, in body and soul, shall be visibly and collectively with Him. As this is offered as a consolation to mourning relatives, *the mutual recognition of the saints* at Christ's coming is hereby implied.

that ye sorrow not, even as others — *Greek*, “the rest”; all the rest of the world besides Christians. Not all natural *mourning* for dead friends is forbidden: for the Lord Jesus and Paul sinlessly gave way to it (⁴¹⁸³John 11:31,33,35 ⁴¹⁸²Philippians 2:27); but sorrow as though there were “no hope,” which indeed the heathen had not (⁴¹⁸⁷Ephesians 2:12): the Christian *hope* here meant is that of *the resurrection*. ⁴¹⁸⁹Psalms 16:9,11 17:15 73:24 ⁴¹⁸²Proverbs 14:32, show that the Old Testament Church, though not having the hope *so bright* (⁴¹⁸⁸Isaiah 38:18,19), yet *had* this hope. Contrast CATULLUS [*Carmina* 5.4], “When once our brief day has set, we must sleep one everlasting night.” The sepulchral inscriptions of heathen

Thessalonica express the hopeless view taken as to those once dead: as AESCHYLUS writes, “Of one once dead there is no resurrection.” Whatever glimpses some heathen philosophers, had of the existence of the soul after death, they had none whatever of the body (^{<417B>}Acts 17:18,20,32).

14. For if — confirmation of his statement, ^{<504B>}1 Thessalonians 4:13, that the removal of *ignorance* as to the sleeping believers would remove undue grief respecting them. See ^{<504B>}1 Thessalonians 4:13, “hope.” Hence it appears our *hope* rests on our *faith* (“if we believe”). “As surely as we all believe that Christ died and rose again (the very doctrine specified as taught at Thessalonica, ^{<417B>}Acts 17:3), *so also* will God bring *those laid to sleep by Jesus* with Him (Jesus).” (Song of Solomon the order and balance of the members of the *Greek* sentence require us to translate). Believers are laid in sleep by Jesus, and so will be brought back from sleep with Jesus in His train when He comes. The disembodied souls are not here spoken of; the reference is to the sleeping *bodies*. The facts of Christ’s experience are repeated in the believer’s. He died and then rose: so believers shall die and then rise with Him. But in His case *death* is the term used, ^{<435B>}1 Corinthians 15:3,6, etc.; in theirs, *sleep*; because His death has taken for them the sting from death. The same Hand that shall raise them is that which *laid them to sleep*. “Laid to sleep by Jesus,” answers to “dead in Christ” (^{<504B>}1 Thessalonians 4:16).

15. by the word of the Lord — *Greek*, “in,” that is, *in virtue* of a direct revelation from the Lord to me. So ^{<103B>}1 Kings 20:35. This is the “mystery,” a truth once hidden, now revealed, which Paul shows (^{<435B>}1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

prevent — that is, “anticipate.” So far were the early Christians from regarding their departed brethren as *anticipating* them in entering glory, that they needed to be assured that those who remain to the coming of the Lord “will not anticipate them that are asleep.” The “we” means *whichever of us* are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord. The Spirit designed that believers in each successive age should live in continued expectation of the Lord’s coming, not knowing but that *they* should be among those found alive at His coming (^{<104B>}Matthew 24:42). It is a sad fall from this blessed hope, that *death* is looked for by most men, rather than the coming of our Lord. Each successive generation in its time

and place represents the generation which shall actually survive till His coming (^{<125>}Matthew 25:13 ^{<63>}Romans 13:11 ^{<65>}1 Corinthians 15:51 ^{<98>}James 5:9 ^{<105>}1 Peter 4:5,6). The Spirit subsequently revealed by Paul that which is not inconsistent with the expectation here taught of the Lord's coming at any time; namely, that His coming would not be until there should be a "falling away first" (^{<51>}2 Thessalonians 2:2,3); but as symptoms of this soon appeared, none could say but that still this precursory event might be realized, and so the Lord come in his day. Each successive revelation fills in the details of the general outline first given. So Paul subsequently, while still looking mainly for the Lord's coming to clothe him with his body from heaven, looks for going to be with Christ in the meanwhile (^{<48>}2 Corinthians 5:1-10 ^{<50>}Philippians 1:6,23 3:20,21 4:5). EDMUNDS well says, The "we" is an affectionate identifying of ourselves with our fellows of all ages, as members of the same body, under the same Head, Christ Jesus. So ^{<34>}Hosea 12:4, "God spake with *us* in Beth-el," that is, with Israel. "We did rejoice," that is, Israel at the Red Sea (^{<66>}Psalms 66:6). Though neither Hosea, nor David, was alive at the times referred to, yet each identifies himself with those that were present.

16. himself — in all the Majesty of His presence in person, not by deputy.

descend — even as He ascended (^{<40>}Acts 1:11).

with — *Greek*, "in," implying one concomitant circumstance attending His appearing.

shout — *Greek*, "signal shout," "war shout." Jesus is represented as a victorious King, giving the word of command to the hosts of heaven in His train for the last onslaught, at His final triumph over sin, death, and Satan (^{<69>}Revelation 19:11-21).

the voice of ... archangel — distinct from the "signal shout." Michael is perhaps meant (^{<100>}Jude 1:9 ^{<62>}Revelation 12:7), to whom especially is committed the guardianship of the people of God (^{<27>}Daniel 10:13).

trump of God — the trumpet blast which usually accompanies God's manifestation in glory (^{<129>}Exodus 19:16 ^{<97>}Psalms 47:5); here the last of the three accompaniments of His appearing: as the trumpet was used to

convene God's people to their solemn convocations (⁴⁰¹²Numbers 10:2,10 31:6), so here to summon God's elect together, preparatory to their glorification with Christ (⁴⁸⁰¹Psalms 50:1-5 ⁴¹⁸¹Matthew 24:31 ⁴¹⁵²1 Corinthians 15:52).

shall rise first — previously to the living being “caught up.” The “first” here has no reference to the *first* resurrection, as contrasted with that of “the rest of the dead.” That reference occurs elsewhere (⁴¹³¹Matthew 13:41,42,50 ⁴¹⁵²John 5:29 ⁴¹⁵³1 Corinthians 15:23,24 ⁴¹¹⁵Revelation 20:5,6); it simply stands in opposition to “then,” ⁴¹⁰⁷1 Thessalonians 4:17. FIRST, “the *dead* in Christ” shall rise, THEN the *living* shall be caught up. The Lord's people alone are spoken of here.

17. we which are alive ... shall be caught up — after having been “changed in a moment” (⁴¹⁵¹1 Corinthians 15:51,52). Again he says, “we,” recommending thus the expression to Christians of all ages, each generation bequeathing to the succeeding one a continually increasing obligation to look for the coming of the Lord. [EDMUNDS].

together with them — all together: the raised dead, and changed living, forming one joint body.

in the clouds — *Greek*, “in clouds.” The same honor is conferred on them as on their Lord. As He was taken in a cloud at His ascension (⁴¹⁰³Acts 1:9), so at His return with clouds (⁴¹⁰⁰Revelation 1:7), they shall be caught up in clouds. The clouds are His and their triumphal chariot (⁴¹⁴²Psalms 104:3 ⁴¹⁰³Daniel 7:13). ELLICOTT explains the *Greek*, “robed round by upbearing clouds” [*Aids to Faith*].

in the air — rather, “*into* the air”; caught up *into* the region just above the earth, where the *meeting* (compare ⁴¹⁵¹Matthew 25:1,6) shall take place between them ascending, and their Lord descending towards the earth. Not that the air is to be the place of their *lasting abode* with Him.

and so shall we ever be with the Lord — no more parting, and no more going out (⁴¹¹²Revelation 3:12). His point being established, that the dead in Christ shall be on terms of equal advantage with those found alive at Christ's coming, he leaves undefined here the other events foretold elsewhere (as not being necessary to his discussion), Christ's reign on

earth with His saints (^{<406}1 Corinthians 6:2,3), the final judgment and glorification of His saints in the new heaven and earth.

18. comfort one another — in your mourning for the dead (^{<5043}1 Thessalonians 4:13).

CHAPTER 5

1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-28.

THE SUDDENNESS OF CHRIST'S COMING A MOTIVE FOR WATCHFULNESS; VARIOUS PRECEPTS: PRAYER FOR THEIR BEING FOUND BLAMELESS, BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT, AT CHRIST'S COMING: CONCLUSION.

1. times — the general and indefinite term for chronological periods.

seasons — the *opportune times* (²⁰⁷⁰Daniel 7:12 ⁴⁰⁰⁷Acts 1:7). *Time* denotes quantity; *season*, quality. *Seasons* are parts of *times*.

ye have no need — those who watch do not need to be told *when* the hour will come, for they are always ready [BENGEL].

cometh — present: expressing its *speedy* and awful *certainty*.

2. as a thief in the night — The apostles in this image follow the parable of their Lord, expressing how the Lord's coming shall take men by surprise (⁴²⁴⁸Matthew 24:43 ⁶¹⁰²2 Peter 3:10). "The *night* is wherever there is quiet unconcern" [BENGEL]. "At midnight" (perhaps figurative: to some parts of the earth it will be *literal* night), ⁴²¹⁶Matthew 25:6. The thief not only gives no notice of his approach but takes all precaution to prevent the household knowing of it. So the Lord (⁶¹⁶⁵Revelation 16:15). *Signs* will precede the coming, to confirm the patient hope of the watchful believer; but the coming itself shall be sudden at last (⁴²⁴³Matthew 24:32-36 ⁴²¹⁵Luke 21:25-32,35).

3. they — the men of the world. ⁴¹⁸⁵1 Thessalonians 5:5,6 4:13, "others," all the rest of the world save Christians.

Peace — (⁴⁷⁸⁷Judges 18:7,9,27,28 ⁴¹⁶⁴Jeremiah 6:14 ⁴³³⁰Ezekiel 13:10).

then — *at the very moment* when they least expect it. Compare the case of Belshazzar, ⁴¹⁸¹Daniel 5:1-5,6,9,26-28; Herod, ⁴¹²¹Acts 12:21-23.

sudden — “unawares” (^{<423>}Luke 21:34).

as travail — “As *the* labor pang” comes in an instant on the woman when otherwise engaged (^{<480>}Psalms 48:6 ^{<230>}Isaiah 13:8).

shall not escape — *Greek*, “shall not at all escape.” Another awful feature of their ruin: there shall be then no possibility of shunning it however they desire it (^{<300>}Amos 9:2,3 ^{<605>}Revelation 6:15,16).

4. not in darkness — not in darkness of understanding (that is, spiritual ignorance) or of the moral nature (that is, a state of sin), ^{<405>}Ephesians 4:18.

that — *Greek*, “in order that”; with God results are all purposed.

that day — *Greek*, “THE day”; the *day* of the Lord (^{<505>}Hebrews 10:25, “the day”), in contrast to “darkness.”

overtake — unexpectedly (compare ^{<625>}John 12:35).

as a thief — The two oldest manuscripts read, “as (the daylight overtakes) *thieves*” (^{<807>}Job 24:17). Old manuscripts and *Vulgate* read as *English Version*.

5. The oldest manuscripts read, “FOR ye are all,” etc. Ye have no reason for fear, or for being taken by surprise, by the coming of the day of the Lord: “*For* ye are all sons (so the *Greek*) of light and sons of day”; a *Hebrew* idiom, implying that as *sons* resemble their fathers, so you are *in character* light (intellectually and morally illuminated in a spiritual point of view), ^{<018>}Luke 16:8 ^{<626>}John 12:36.

are not of — that is, *belong not to* night nor darkness. The change of person from “ye” to “we” implies this: *Ye* are sons of light because ye are Christians; and *we*, Christians, are not of night nor darkness.

6. others — *Greek*, “the rest” of the world: the unconverted (^{<503>}1 Thessalonians 4:13). “Sleep” here is worldly apathy to spiritual things (^{<631>}Romans 13:11 ^{<454>}Ephesians 5:14); in ^{<501>}1 Thessalonians 5:7, ordinary *sleep*; in ^{<510>}1 Thessalonians 5:10, death.

watch — for Christ’s coming; literally, “be wakeful.” The same *Greek* occurs in ^{<454>}1 Corinthians 15:34 ^{<502>}2 Timothy 2:26.

be sober — refraining from carnal indulgence, mental or sensual (~~1~~ Peter 5:8).

7. This verse is to be taken in the literal sense. Night is the time when sleepers sleep, and drinking men are drunk. To sleep by day would imply great indolence; to be drunken by day, great shamelessness. Now, in a spiritual sense, “we Christians profess to be day people, not night people; therefore our work ought to be day work, not night work; our conduct such as will bear the eye of day, and such has no need of the veil of night” [EDMUNDS], (~~1~~ Thessalonians 5:8).

8. *Faith, hope, and love*, are the three pre-eminent graces (~~1~~ Thessalonians 1:3 ~~1~~ Corinthians 13:13). We must not only be awake and sober, but also *armed*; not only watchful, but also guarded. The armor here is only *defensive*; in ~~Ephesians~~ 6:13-17, also *offensive*. Here, therefore, the reference is to the Christian means of being *guarded* against being surprised by the day of the Lord as a thief in the night. The *helmet* and *breastplate* defend the two vital parts, the head and the heart respectively. “With head and heart right, the whole man is right” [EDMUNDS]. The head needs to be kept from error, the heart from sin. For “the breastplate of righteousness,” ~~Ephesians~~ 6:14, we have here “the breastplate of faith and love”; for the righteousness which is imputed to man for justification, is “faith working by love” (~~Romans~~ 4:3,22-24 ~~Galatians~~ 5:6). “Faith,” as the motive *within*, and “love,” exhibited in *outward* acts, constitute the perfection of *righteousness*. In ~~Ephesians~~ 6:17 the helmet is “salvation”; here, “the *hope* of salvation.” In one aspect “salvation” is a present possession (~~John~~ 3:36 5:24 ~~1 John~~ 5:13); in another, it is a matter of “hope” (~~Romans~~ 8:24,25). Our Head primarily wore the “breastplate of righteousness” and “helmet of salvation,” that we might, by union with Him, receive both.

9. **For** — assigning the ground of our “hopes” (~~1~~ Thessalonians 5:8).

appointed us — Translate, “set” (~~Acts~~ 13:47), in His everlasting purpose of love (~~1~~ Thessalonians 3:3 ~~2 Timothy~~ 1:9). Contrast ~~Romans~~ 9:22 ~~Jude~~ 1:4.

to — that is, *unto* wrath.

to obtain — *Greek*, “to the acquisition of salvation”; said, according to BENGEL, Of One saved out of a general wreck, when all things else have been lost: so of the elect saved out of the multitude of the lost (^{<513>2} Thessalonians 2:13,14). The fact of God’s “appointment” of His grace “through Jesus Christ” (^{<415>} Ephesians 1:5), takes away the notion of our being able to “acquire” salvation *of ourselves*. Christ “acquired (so the *Greek* for ‘purchased’) the Church (and its salvation) with His own blood” (^{<418>} Acts 20:28); each member is said to be appointed by God to the “acquiring of salvation.” In the primary sense, God does the work; in the secondary sense, man does it.

10. died for us — *Greek*, “in our behalf.”

whether we wake or sleep — whether we be found at Christ’s coming awake, that is, alive, or asleep, that is, in our graves.

together — *all of us together*; the living not preceding the dead in their glorification “with Him” at His coming (^{<513>1} Thessalonians 4:13).

11. comfort yourselves — *Greek*, “one another.” Here he reverts to the same consolatory strain as in ^{<518>1} Thessalonians 4:18.

edify one another — rather as *Greek*, “edify (ye) the one the other”; “edify,” literally, “build up,” namely, in faith, hope, and love, by discoursing together on such edifying topics as the Lord’s coming, and the glory of the saints (^{<316>} Malachi 3:16).

12. beseech — “Exhort” is the expression in ^{<514>1} Thessalonians 5:14; here, “we beseech you,” as if it were a personal favor (Paul making the cause of the Thessalonian presbyters, as it were, his own).

know — to have a regard and respect for. Recognize their office, and treat them accordingly (compare ^{<413>1} Corinthians 16:18) with reverence and with liberality in supplying their needs (^{<517>1} Timothy 5:17). The Thessalonian Church having been newly planted, the ministers were necessarily novices (^{<516>1} Timothy 3:6), which may have been in part the cause of the people’s treating them with less respect. Paul’s practice seems to have been to ordain elders in every Church soon after its establishment (^{<413>} Acts 14:23).

them which labor ... are over ... admonish you — not three classes of ministers, but one, as there is but one article common to the three in the *Greek*. “Labor” expresses their laborious life; “are over you,” their pre-eminence as presidents or superintendents (“bishops,” that is, *overseers*, ^{<1000>}Philippians 1:1, “them that have rule over you,” literally, *leaders*, ^{<837>}Hebrews 13:17; “pastors,” literally, *shepherds*, ^{<4001>}Ephesians 4:11); “admonish you,” one of their leading functions; the *Greek* is “put in mind,” implying not arbitrary authority, but gentle, though faithful, admonition (^{<824>}2 Timothy 2:14,24,25 ^{<4001>}1 Peter 5:3).

in the Lord — Their presidency over you is *in divine things*; not in worldly affairs, but in things appertaining to the Lord.

13. very highly — *Greek*, “exceeding abundantly.”

for their work’s sake — The high nature of their work alone, the furtherance of your salvation and of the kingdom of Christ, should be a sufficient motive to claim your reverential love. At the same time, the word “work,” teaches ministers that, while claiming the reverence due to their office, it is not a sinecure, but a “work”; compare “*labor*” (even to *weariness*: so the *Greek*), ^{<152>}1 Thessalonians 5:12.

be at peace among yourselves — The “and” is not in the original. Let there not only be peace between ministers and their flocks, but also no party rivalries among yourselves, one contending in behalf of some one favorite minister, another in behalf of another (^{<4001>}Mark 9:50 ^{<112>}1 Corinthians 1:12 4:6).

14. brethren — This exhortation to “warm (*Greek*, ‘admonish,’ as in ^{<152>}1 Thessalonians 5:12) the unruly (those ‘disorderly’ persons, ^{<837>}2 Thessalonians 3:6,11, who would not work, and yet expected to be maintained, literally, said of soldiers who will *not* remain *in their ranks*, compare ^{<1001>}1 Thessalonians 4:11; also those insubordinate as to Church discipline, in relation to those ‘over’ the Church, ^{<152>}1 Thessalonians 5:12), comfort the feeble-minded (the *faint-hearted*, who are ready to sink ‘without hope’ in afflictions, ^{<1003>}1 Thessalonians 4:13, and temptations),” applies to all clergy and laity alike, though primarily the duty of the clergy (who are meant in ^{<152>}1 Thessalonians 5:12).”

support — literally, “lay fast hold on so as to support.”

the weak — spiritually. Paul practiced what he preached (^{<402>}1 Corinthians 9:22).

be patient toward all men — There is no believer who needs not the exercise of patience “toward” him; there is none to whom a believer ought not to show it; many show it more to strangers than to their own families, more to the great than to the humble; but we ought to show it “toward *all men*” [BENGEL]. Compare “the long-suffering of our Lord” (^{<702>}2 Corinthians 10:1 ^{<685>}2 Peter 3:15).

15. (^{<527>}Romans 12:17 ^{<689>}1 Peter 3:9.)

unto any *man* — whether unto a Christian, or a heathen, however great the provocation.

follow — as a matter of earnest pursuit.

16, 17. In order to “rejoice evermore,” we must “pray without ceasing” (^{<517>}1 Thessalonians 5:17). He who is wont to thank God for all things as happening for the best, will have continuous joy [THEOPHYLACT].

^{<688>}Ephesians 6:18 ^{<500>}Philippians 4:4,6, “Rejoice *in the Lord* ... by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving”; ^{<547>}Romans 14:17, “*in the Holy Ghost*”; ^{<522>}Romans 12:12, “*in hope*”; ^{<454>}Acts 5:41, “*in being counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ’s name*”; ^{<500>}James 1:2, *in falling “into divers temptations.”*

17. The *Greek* is, “Pray *without intermission*”; without allowing prayerless gaps to intervene between the times of prayer.

18. **In every thing** — even what *seems* adverse: for nothing is *really* so (compare ^{<688>}Romans 8:28 ^{<451>}Ephesians 5:20). See Christ’s example (^{<456>}Matthew 15:36 26:27 ^{<202>}Luke 10:21 ^{<614>}John 11:41).

this — That ye should “rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, (and) in every thing give thanks,” “is the will of God in Christ Jesus (as the Mediator and Revealer of that will, observed by those who are *in Christ* by faith, compare ^{<5184>}Philippians 3:14) concerning you.” *God’s will* is the believer’s law. LACHMANN rightly reads commas at the end of the three precepts (^{<5186>}1 Thessalonians 5:16-18), making “this” refer to all three.

19. Quench not — the Spirit being a holy *fire*: “where the Spirit is, He burns” [BENGEL] (^{<401>}Matthew 3:11 ^{<401>}Acts 2:3;7:51). Do not throw cold water on those who, under extraordinary inspiration of the Spirit, stand up to speak with tongues, or reveal mysteries, or pray in the congregation. The enthusiastic exhibitions of some (perhaps as to the nearness of Christ’s coming, exaggerating Paul’s statement, ^{<512>}2 Thessalonians 2:2, By *spirit*), led others (probably the presiding ministers, who had not always been treated with due respect by enthusiastic novices, ^{<512>}1 Thessalonians 5:12), from dread of enthusiasm, to discourage the free utterances of those really inspired, in the Church assembly. On the other hand, the caution (^{<512>}1 Thessalonians 5:21) was needed, not to receive “all” pretended revelations as divine, without “proving” them.

20. prophesyings — whether exercised in inspired teaching, or in predicting the future. “Despised” by some as beneath “tongues,” which seemed most miraculous; therefore declared by Paul to be a greater gift than tongues, though the latter were more showy (^{<445>}1 Corinthians 14:5).

21, 22. Some of the oldest manuscripts insert “But.” You ought indeed not to “quench” the manifestations of “the Spirit,” nor “despise prophesyings”; “but,” at the same time, do not take “all” as genuine which professes to be so; “prove (test) all” such manifestations. The means of testing them existed in the Church, in those who had the “discerning of spirits” (^{<420>}1 Corinthians 12:10 14:29 ^{<401>}1 John 4:1). Another sure test, which we also have, is, to try the professed revelation whether it accords with Scripture, as the noble Bereans did (^{<208>}Isaiah 8:20 ^{<471>}Acts 17:11 ^{<408>}Galatians 1:8,9). This precept negatives the Romish priest’s assumption of infallibly laying down the law, without the laity having the right, in the exercise of private judgment, to test it by Scripture. LOCKE says, Those who are for laying aside reason in matters of revelation, resemble one who would *put out his eyes* in order to use a *telescope*.

hold fast that which is good — Join this clause with the next clause (^{<512>}1 Thessalonians 5:22), not merely with the sentence preceding. As the result of your “proving all things,” and especially all *prophesyings*, “hold fast” (^{<485>}Luke 8:15 ^{<412>}1 Corinthians 11:2 ^{<801>}Hebrews 2:1) the good, and *hold yourselves aloof from every appearance of evil* (“*every evil species*” [BENGEL and WAHL]). Do not accept even a professedly spirit-inspired

communication, if it be at variance with the truth taught you (²Thessalonians 2:2).

22. TITTMANN supports *English Version*, “from every evil *appearance*” or “semblance.” The context, however, does not refer to *evil appearances* IN OURSELVES which we ought to abstain from, but to *holding ourselves aloof from every evil appearance* IN OTHERS; as for instance, in the pretenders to spirit-inspired prophesyings. In many cases the Christian should *not* abstain from what has the *semblance* (“appearance”) of evil, though really good. Jesus healed on the sabbath, and ate with publicans and sinners, acts which wore the *appearance* of evil, but which were not to be abstained from on that account, being really good. I agree with TITTMANN rather than with BENGEL, whom ALFORD follows. The context favors this sense: However *specious* be the *form* or *outward appearance* of such would-be prophets and their prophesyings, hold yourselves aloof from every such form when it is evil, literally, “Hold yourselves aloof from every evil appearance” or “form.”

23. the very God — rather as the *Greek*, “the God of peace *Himself*”; who can do for you by His own power what *I* cannot do by all my monitions, nor *you* by all your efforts (²⁰Romans 16:20 ²⁰Hebrews 13:20), namely, keep you from all evil, and give you all that is good.

sanctify you — for *holiness* is the necessary condition of “peace” (⁹Philippians 4:6-9).

wholly — *Greek*, “(so that you should be) perfect in every respect” [TITTMANN].

and — that is, “*and so* (omit ‘I pray God’; not in the *Greek*) may your ... spirit and soul and body be preserved,” etc.

whole — A different *Greek* word from “wholly.” Translate, “entire”; with none of the integral parts wanting [TITTMANN]. It refers to man in his normal integrity, as originally designed; an ideal which shall be attained by the glorified believer. All three, spirit, soul, and body, each in its due place, constitute man “entire.” The “spirit” links man with the higher intelligences of heaven, and is that highest part of man which is receptive of the quickening Holy Spirit (⁴⁷1 Corinthians 15:47). In the unspiritual,

the spirit is so sunk under the lower animal *soul* (which it ought to keep under) that such are termed “animal” (*English Version*. “sensual,” having merely the *body* of organized matter, and the *soul* the immaterial animating essence), having *not the Spirit* (compare ^{<424>}1 Corinthians 2:14; see on ^{<454>}1 Corinthians 15:44; 1Cor 15:46-48; ^{<486>}John 3:6). The unbeliever shall rise with an *animal* (soul-animated) *body*, but not like the believer with a *spiritual* (spirit-endued) *body* like Christ’s (^{<481>}Romans 8:11).

blameless unto — rather as *Greek*, “blamelessly (so as to be in a blameless state) at the coming of Christ.” In *Hebrew*, “peace” and “wholly” (perfect in every respect) are kindred terms; so that the prayer shows what the title “God of peace” implies. BENJEL takes “wholly” as *collectively*, all the Thessalonians without exception, so that no one should fail. And “whole (entire),” *individually*, each one of them entire, with “spirit, soul, and body.” The mention of the preservation of the *body* accords with the subject (^{<506>}1 Thessalonians 4:16). TRENCH better regards “wholly” as meaning, “having perfectly attained the moral *end*,” namely, to be a full-grown man in Christ. “Whole,” *complete*, with no grace which ought to be wanting in a Christian.

24. Faithful — to His covenant promises (^{<407>}John 10:27-29 ^{<409>}1 Corinthians 1:9 10:23 ^{<500>}Philippians 1:6).

he that calleth you — God, the caller of His people, will cause His calling not to fall short of its designed end.

do it — preserve and present you blameless at the coming of Christ (^{<513>}1 Thessalonians 5:23 ^{<483>}Romans 8:30 ^{<400>}1 Peter 5:10). You must not look at the foes before and behind, on the right hand and on the left, but to God’s faithfulness to His promises, God’s zeal for His honor, and God’s love for those whom He calls.

25. Some oldest manuscripts read, “Pray ye *also* for (literally, ‘concerning’) us”; make us and our work the subject of your prayers, even as we have been just praying for you (^{<523>}1 Thessalonians 5:23). Others omit the “also.” The clergy need much the prayers of their flocks. Paul makes the same request in the Epistles to Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and in Second Corinthians; not so in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, whose intercessions, as his spiritual sons, he was

already sure of; nor in the Epistles, I Corinthians, and Galatians, as these Epistles abound in rebuke.

26. Hence it appears this Epistle was first handed to the elders, who communicated it to “the brethren.”

holy kiss — pure and chaste. “A kiss of charity” (^{<054>}1 Peter 5:14). A token of Christian fellowship in those days (compare ^{<075>}Luke 7:45 ^{<087>}Acts 20:37), as it is a common mode of salutation in many countries. The custom hence arose in the early Church of passing the kiss through the congregation at the. holy communion [JUSTIN MARTYR, *Apology*, 1.65; *Apostolic Constitutions*, 2.57], the men kissing the men, and the women the women, in the Lord. So in the Syrian Church each takes his neighbor’s right hand and gives the salutation, “Peace.”

27. I charge — *Greek*, “I adjure you.”

read unto all — namely, publicly in the congregation at a particular time. The *Greek* aorist tense implies a single act done at a particular time. The earnestness of his adjuration implies how solemnly important he felt this divinely inspired message to be. Also, as this was the FIRST of the Epistles of the New Testament, he makes this the occasion of a solemn charge, that so its being publicly read should be a sample of what should be done in the case of the others, just as the Pentateuch and the Prophets were publicly read under the Old Testament, and are still read in the synagogue. Compare the same injunction as to the public reading of the Apocalypse, the LAST of the New Testament canon (^{<068>}Revelation 1:3). The “all” includes women and children, and especially those who could not read it themselves (^{<0512>}Deuteronomy 31:12 ^{<0683>}Joshua 8:33-35). What Paul commands with an adjuration, Rome forbids under a curse [BENGEL]. Though these Epistles had difficulties, the laity were all to hear them read (^{<0411>}1 Peter 4:11 ^{<0810>}2 Peter 3:10; even the very young, ^{<006>}2 Timothy 1:5 3:15). “Holy” is omitted before “brethren” in most of the oldest manuscripts, though some of them support it.

28. (See on ^{<0734>}2 Corinthians 13:14.) Paul ends as he began (^{<0061>}1 Thessalonians 1:1), with “grace.” The oldest manuscripts omit “Amen,” which probably was the response of the Church after the public reading of the Epistle.

The subscription is a comparatively modern addition. The Epistle was not, as it states, written from Athens, but from Corinth; for it is written in the names of Silas and Timothy (besides Paul), who did not join the apostle before he reached the latter city (~~<418>~~ Acts 18:5).

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE THESSALONIANS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

Its GENUINENESS is attested by POLYCARP [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 11], who alludes to ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 3:15. JUSTIN MARTYR [*Dialogue with Trypho*, p. 193.32], alludes to ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:3. IRENÆUS [*Against Heresies*, 7.2] quotes ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:8. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 1.5, p. 554; *The Instructor*, 1.17], quotes ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 3:2, as Paul's words. TERTULLIAN [*On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, 24] quotes ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:1,2, as part of Paul's Epistle.

DESIGN. — The accounts from Thessalonica, after the sending of the first Epistle, represented the faith and love of the Christians there as on the increase; and their constancy amidst persecutions unshaken. One error of doctrine, however, resulting in practical evil, had sprung up among them. The apostle's description of Christ's sudden second coming (^{<SIB>}1 Thessalonians 4:13, etc., and ^{<SIB>}1 Thessalonians 5:2), and the *possibility* of its being at any time, led them to believe it was *actually* at hand. Some professed to know by "the Spirit" (^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:2) that it was so; and others alleged that Paul had said so when with them. A letter, too, purporting to be from the apostle to that effect, seems to have been circulated among them. (That ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:2 refers to such a spurious letter, rather than to Paul's first Epistle, appears likely from the statement, ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 3:17, as to his autograph salutation being the mark whereby his genuine letters might be known). Hence some neglected their daily business and threw themselves on the charity of others, as if their sole duty was to wait for the coming of the Lord. This error, therefore, needed rectifying, and forms a leading topic of the second Epistle. He in it tells them (^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:1-17), that before the

Lord shall come, there must first be a great *apostasy*, and *the Man of Sin* must be revealed; and that the Lord's sudden coming is no ground for neglecting daily business; that to do so would only bring scandal on the Church, and was contrary to his own practice among them (^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 3:7-9), and that the faithful must withdraw themselves from such disorderly professors (^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 3:6,10-15). Thus, there are *three* divisions of the Epistle:

- (1) ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 1:1-12. Commendations of the Thessalonians' faith, love, and patience, amidst persecutions.
- (2) ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:1-17. The error as to the immediate coming of Christ corrected, and the previous rise and downfall of the Man of Sin foretold.
- (3) ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 3:1-16. Exhortations to orderly conduct in their whole walk, with prayers for them to the God of peace, followed by his autograph salutation and benediction.

DATE OF WRITING. — AS the Epistle is written in the joint names of Timothy and Silas, as well as his own, and as these were with him while at Corinth, and not with him for a long time subsequently to his having left that city (compare ^{<HIS>}Acts 18:18, with ^{<HIS>}Acts 19:22; indeed, as to Silas, it is doubtful whether he was ever subsequently with Paul), it follows, the *place* of writing must have been Corinth, and the *date*, during the one "year and six months" of his stay there, ^{<HIS>}Acts 18:11 (namely, beginning with the autumn of A.D. 52, and ending with the spring of A.D. 54), say about six months after his first Epistle, early in A.D. 53.

STYLE. — The style is not different from that of most of Paul's other writings, except in the prophetic portion of it (^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:1-12), which is distinguished from them in subject matter. As is usual in his more solemn passages (for instance, in the denunciatory and prophetic portions of his Epistles, for example, compare ^{<SIB>}Colossians 2:8,16, with ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:3; ^{<HIS>}1 Corinthians 15:24-28, with ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:8,9; ^{<HIS>}Romans 1:18, with ^{<SIB>}2 Thessalonians 2:8,10), his diction here is more lofty, abrupt, and elliptical. As the former Epistle dwells mostly on the second Advent in its aspect of glory to the sleeping and the living saints (^{<SIB>}1 Thessalonians 4:1-5:28), so this Epistle dwells mostly on it in

its aspect of everlasting destruction to the wicked and him who shall be the final consummation of wickedness, the Man of Sin. So far was Paul from laboring under an erroneous impression as to Christ's speedy coming, when he wrote his first Epistle (which rationalists impute to him), that he had distinctly told them, when he was with them, the same truths as to the apostasy being about first to arise, which he now insists upon in this second Epistle (~~<518B>~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:5). Several points of coincidence occur between the two Epistles, confirming the genuineness of the latter. Thus, compare ~~<518B>~~ 2 Thessalonians 3:2, with ~~<518B>~~ 1 Thessalonians 2:15,16; again, ~~<518B>~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:9, the Man of Sin "coming after the working of Satan," with ~~<518B>~~ 1 Thessalonians 2:18 3:5, where Satan's incipient work as the *hinderer* of the Gospel, and the *tempter*, appears; again, mild *warning* is enjoined, ~~<518B>~~ 1 Thessalonians 5:14; but, in this second Epistle, when the evil had grown worse, stricter discipline (~~<518B>~~ 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14): "withdraw from" the "company" of such.

Paul probably visited Thessalonica on his way to Asia subsequently (~~<427B>~~ Acts 20:4), and took with him thence Aristarchus and Secundus: the former became his "companion in travel" and shared with him his perils at Ephesus, also those of his shipwreck, and was his "fellow prisoner" at Rome (~~<427B>~~ Acts 27:2 ~~<504B>~~ Colossians 4:10 ~~<502B>~~ Philemon 1:24). According to tradition he became bishop of Apamea.

CHAPTER 1

2 THESSALONIANS 1:1-12.

**ADDRESS AND SALUTATION: INTRODUCTION:
THANKSGIVING FOR THEIR GROWTH IN FAITH AND LOVE,
AND FOR THEIR PATIENCE IN PERSECUTIONS, WHICH ARE A
TOKEN FOR GOOD EVERLASTING TO THEM, AND FOR
PERDITION TO THEIR ADVERSARIES AT CHRIST'S COMING:
PRAYER FOR THEIR PERFECTION.**

1. **in God our Father** — still more endearing than the address, <sup><SUB>1</sup>Thessalonians 1:1 “in God THE Father.”
2. **from God our Father** — So some oldest manuscripts read. Others omit “our.”
3. **We are bound** — *Greek*, “We owe it as a debt” (<sup><SUB>2</sup>Thessalonians 2:13). They had prayed for the Thessalonians (<sup><SUB>1</sup>Thessalonians 3:12) that they might “increase and abound in love”; their prayer having been heard, it is a small but a bounden return for them to make, to thank God for it. Thus, Paul and his fellow missionaries practice what they preach (<sup><SUB>1</sup>Thessalonians 5:18). In <sup><SUB>1</sup>Thessalonians 1:3, their thanksgiving was for the Thessalonians’ faith, love, and patience”; here, for their *exceeding growth* in *faith*, and for their *charity abounding*. “We are bound” expresses the duty of thanksgiving from its subjective side as an inward conviction. “As it is meet,” from the *objective*: side as something answering to the state of circumstances [ALFORD]. Observe the exact correspondence of the prayer (<sup><SUB>1</sup>Thessalonians 3:12, “The Lord make you to abound in love”) and the answer, “The love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth” (compare <sup><SUB>1</sup>Thessalonians 4:10).

meet — right.

4. **glory in you** — make our boast of you, literally, “in your case.” “Ourselves” implies that not merely did they hear others speaking of the

Thessalonians' faith, but they, the missionaries *themselves*, boasted of it. Compare ^{<5008>}1 Thessalonians 1:8, wherein the apostle said, their faith was so well known in various places, that he and his fellow missionaries had no need to speak of it; but here he says, so abounding is their love, combined with faith and patience, that he and his fellow missionaries *themselves*, make it a matter of glorying in the various churches elsewhere (he was now at Corinth in Achaia, and boasted there of the faith of the Macedonian churches, ^{<5005>}2 Corinthians 10:15-17 8:1, at the same time giving the glory to the Lord), not only looking forward to glorying thereat at Christ's coming (^{<5009>}1 Thessalonians 2:19), but doing so even now.

patience — in ^{<5008>}1 Thessalonians 1:3, “patience *of hope*.” Here *hope* is tacitly implied as the ground of their patience; ^{<5005>}2 Thessalonians 1:5,7 state the object of their hope, namely, the kingdom for which they suffer.

tribulations — literally, “pressures.” The Jews were the instigators of the populace and of the magistrates against Christians (^{<4076>}Acts 17:6,8).

which ye endure — *Greek*, “are (now) enduring.”

5. Which — Your *enduring* these tribulations is a “token of the righteous judgment of God,” manifested in your being enabled to endure them, and in your adversaries thereby filling up the measure of their guilt. The judgment is even now begun, but its consummation will be at the Lord's coming. David (^{<4071>}Psalms 73:1-14) and Jeremiah (^{<4071>}Jeremiah 12:1-4) were perplexed at the wicked prospering and the godly suffering. But Paul, by the light of the New Testament, makes this fact a matter of consolation. It is a *proof* (so the *Greek*) of the future judgment, which will set to rights the anomalies of the present state, by rewarding the now suffering saint, and by punishing the persecutor. And even now “the Judge of all the earth does right” (^{<4085>}Genesis 18:25); for the godly are in themselves sinful and need chastisement to amend them. What they suffer unjustly at the hands of cruel men they suffer justly at the hands of God; and they have their evil things here that they may escape condemnation with the world and have their good things hereafter (^{<4069>}Luke 16:25 ^{<4069>}1 Corinthians 11:32) [EDMUNDS].

that ye may be counted worthy — expressing the purpose of God's “righteous judgment” as regards you.

for which — *Greek*, “*in behalf of which ye are also suffering*” (compare ^{<454>}Acts 5:41 ^{<916>}9:16 ^{<502>}Philippians 1:29). “Worthy” implies that, though men are justified by faith, they shall be judged “according to their works” (^{<412>}Revelation 20:12; compare ^{<502>}1 Thessalonians 2:12 ^{<4006>}1 Peter 1:6,7 ^{<644>}Revelation 20:4). The “also” implies the connection between *the suffering for the kingdom* and *being counted worthy* of it. Compare ^{<487>}Romans 8:17,18.

6. seeing it is a righteous thing — This justifies the assertion above of there being a “*righteous judgment*” (^{<5002>}2 Thessalonians 1:5), namely, “seeing that it is (literally, ‘*if at least, if at all events it is*’) a *righteous thing* with (that is, in the estimation of) God” (which, as we all feel, it certainly is). Our own innate feeling of what is just, in this confirms what is revealed.

recompense — requite *in kind*, namely, *tribulation* to them that trouble you (*affliction* to those that *afflict* you); and to you who are *troubled*, *rest from trouble*.

7. rest — governed by “to recompense” (^{<5006>}2 Thessalonians 1:6). The *Greek* is literally, “relaxation”; loosening of the *tension* which had preceded; *relaxing* of the strings of endurance now so tightly drawn. The *Greek* word for “rest,” ^{<4028>}Matthew 11:28, is distinct, namely, *cessation* from labor. Also, ^{<5009>}Hebrews 4:9, “A keeping of sabbath.”

with us — namely, Paul, Silas, and Timothy, the writers, who are troubled like yourselves.

when — at the time when ... ; not sooner, not later.

with his mighty angels — rather as the *Greek*, “with the angels of His might,” or “power,” that is, the angels who are the ministers by whom He makes His might to be recognized (^{<4034>}Matthew 13:41,52). It is not *their* might, but *HIS* might, which is the prominent thought.

8. In flaming fire — *Greek*, “In flame of fire”; or, as other oldest manuscripts read, “*in fire of flame*.” This *flame of fire* accompanied His manifestation in the bush (^{<4002>}Exodus 3:2); also His giving of the law at Sinai (^{<4048>}Exodus 19:18). Also it shall accompany His revelation at His advent (^{<2009>}Daniel 7:9,10), symbolizing His own bright glory and His

consuming vengeance against His foes (^{<5027>}Hebrews 10:27 12:29 ^{<6187>}2 Peter 3:7,10).

taking — literally, “*giving*” them, as their portion, “vengeance.”

know not God — the Gentiles primarily (^{<4796>}Psalm 79:6 ^{<4048>}Galatians 4:8 ^{<5045>}1 Thessalonians 4:5); not of course those *involuntarily* not knowing God, but those *wilfully* not knowing Him, as Pharaoh, who might have known God if he would, but who boasted “I know not the Lord” (^{<6082>}Exodus 5:2); and as the heathen persecutors who might have known God by the preaching of those whom they persecuted. Secondarily, all who “profess to know God but in works deny Him” (^{<5016>}Titus 1:16).

obey not the gospel — primarily the unbelieving Jews (^{<5016>}Romans 10:3,16); secondarily, all who obey not the truth (^{<4118>}Romans 2:8).

Christ — omitted by some of the oldest manuscripts, and retained by others.

9. Who — *Greek*, “persons who,” etc.

destruction from the presence of the Lord — *driven far from* His presence [ALFORD]. The sentence *emanating from Him* in person, sitting as Judge [BENGEL], and *driving them far from Him* (^{<4541>}Matthew 25:41 ^{<6082>}Revelation 6:16 12:14; compare ^{<6082>}1 Peter 3:12 ^{<4041>}Isaiah 2:10,19). “The presence of the Lord” is the source whence the sentence goes forth; “the glory of His power” is the instrument whereby the sentence is carried into execution [EDMUNDS]. But ALFORD better interprets the latter clause (see ^{<5016>}2 Thessalonians 1:10), driven “from the manifestation of His power *in the glorification of His saints*.” *Cast out from the presence of the Lord* is the idea at the root of eternal death, the law of evil left to its unrestricted working, without one counteracting influence of the presence of God, who is the source of all light and holiness (^{<4041>}Isaiah 66:24 ^{<4041>}Mark 9:44).

10. “When He shall have come.”

glorified in his saints — as the element and mirror IN which His glory shall shine brightly (^{<4870>}John 17:10).

admired in all them that believe — *Greek*, “them that *believed*.” Once they *believed*, now they *see*: they had taken His word on trust. Now His

word is made good and they need faith no longer. With *wonder* all celestial intelligences (^{<401>}Ephesians 3:10) shall see and *admire* the Redeemer on account of the excellencies which He has wrought in them.

because, etc. — Supply for the sense, among whom (namely, those who shall be found to have believed) *you*, too, shall be; “because our testimony unto (so the *Greek* for ‘among’) you was believed” (and was not rejected as by those “who obey not the Gospel,” ^{<500>}2 Thessalonians 1:8). The early preaching of the Gospel was not abstract discussions, but a *testimony* to facts and truths experimentally known (^{<424>}Luke 24:48 ^{<400>}Acts 1:8). *Faith* is defined by BISHOP PEARSON as “an assent unto truths, credible upon the testimony of God, delivered unto us by the apostles and prophets” (originally delivering their testimony orally, but now in their writings). “Glorified in His saints” reminds us that *holiness* is *glory* in the bud; *glory* is *holiness* manifested.

11. Wherefore — *Greek*, “With a view to which,” namely, His glorification in you as His saints.

also — We not only anticipate the coming glorification of our Lord *in His saints*, but we also pray concerning (so the *Greek*) YOU.

our God — whom we serve.

count you worthy — The prominent position of the “You” in the *Greek* makes it the emphatic word of the sentence. May *you* be found among the saints whom God shall count worthy of their calling (^{<400>}Ephesians 4:1)! There is no dignity in us independent of God’s calling of us (^{<500>}2 Timothy 1:9). *The calling* here is not merely the first actual call, but the whole of God’s electing act, originating in His “purpose of grace given us in Christ before the world began,” and having its consummation in glory.

the good pleasure of, etc. — on the part of God [BENGEL].

faith — on your part. ALFORD refers the former clause, “good pleasure of his goodness,” also to *man*, arguing that the *Greek* for “goodness” is never applied to God, and translates, “All [that is, every possible] *right purpose of goodness*.” WAHL, “All *sweetness* of goodness,” that is, impart in full to you all the refreshing delights of goodness. I think that, as in the previous and parallel clause, “calling” refers to GOD’S purpose; and as the *Greek* for

“good pleasure” mostly is used of *God*, we ought to translate, “fulfill (His) *every gracious Purpose* of goodness (*on your part*),” that is, fully perfect in you all goodness according to *His gracious purpose*. Thus, “the grace of our God,” ^{<5112>}2 Thessalonians 1:12, corresponds to *God’s* “good pleasure” here, which confirms the *English Version*, just as “the grace of the *Lord Jesus Christ*” is parallel to “work of *faith*,” as Christ especially is the object of faith. “The work of faith”; *Greek*, (no article; supply from the previous clause *all*) *work of faith*”; faith manifested by *work*, which is its perfected development (^{<5104>}James 1:4; compare *Note*, see on ^{<5108>}1 Thessalonians 1:3). *Working reality of faith*.

with power — *Greek*, “in power,” that is, “*powerfully fulfill* in you” (^{<5111>}Colossians 1:11).

12. the name of our Lord Jesus — Our Lord Jesus *in His manifested personality* as the God-man.

in you, and ye in him — reciprocal glorification; compare ^{<5105>}Isaiah 28:5, “*The Lord of hosts* shall be ... a crown of glory and ... a diadem of beauty unto ... His people,” with ^{<5113>}Isaiah 62:3, “*Thou (Zion)* shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem,” etc. (^{<5110>}John 21:10 ^{<5102>}Galatians 1:24 ^{<5104>}1 Peter 4:14). The believer’s graces redound to Christ’s glory, and His glory, as their Head, reflects glory on them as the members.

the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ — There is but one *Greek* article to both, implying the inseparable unity of God and the Lord Jesus.

CHAPTER 2

2 THESSALONIANS 2:1-17.

CORRECTION OF THEIR ERROR AS TO CHRIST'S IMMEDIATE COMING. THE APOSTASY THAT MUST PRECEDE IT. EXHORTATION TO STEADFASTNESS, INTRODUCED WITH THANKSGIVING FOR THEIR ELECTION BY GOD.

1. Now — rather, “But”; marking the transition from his prayers *for* them to entreaties *to* them.

we beseech you — or “entreat you.” He uses affectionate entreaty, rather than stern reproof, to win them over to the right view.

by — rather, “with respect to”; as the *Greek* for “of” (~~4008~~ 2 Corinthians 1:8).

our gathering together unto him — the consummating or final gathering together of the saints to Him at His coming, as announced, ~~4081~~ Matthew 24:31 ~~5047~~ 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The *Greek* noun is nowhere else found except in ~~5029~~ Hebrews 10:25, said of *the assembling together* of believers for *congregational* worship. Our instinctive fears of the judgment are dispelled by the thought of being gathered together UNTO HIM (“even as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings”), which ensures our safety.

2. soon — on trifling grounds, without due consideration.

shaken — literally, “tossed” as ships tossed by an agitated sea. Compare for the same image, ~~4014~~ Ephesians 4:14.

in mind — rather as the *Greek*, “*from* your mind,” that is, from your mental steadfastness on the subject.

troubled — This verb applies to *emotional* agitation; as “shaken” to *intellectual*.

by spirit — by a *person professing* to have the *spirit* of prophecy (⁴¹⁸1 Corinthians 12:8-10 ⁴¹⁹1 John 4:1-3). The Thessalonians had been warned (⁵¹¹1 Thessalonians 5:20,21) to “prove” such professed prophesying, and to “hold fast (only) that which is good.”

by word — *of mouth* (compare ⁵¹⁵2 Thessalonians 2:5,15); some word or saying alleged to be that of Paul, orally communicated. If oral tradition was liable to such perversion in the apostolic age (compare a similar instance, ⁴¹²John 21:23), how much more in our age!

by letter as from us — purporting to be from us, whereas it is a forgery. Hence he gives a test by which to know his genuine letters (⁵¹⁷2 Thessalonians 3:17).

day of Christ — The oldest manuscripts read, “day of *the Lord*.”

is at hand — rather, “is *immediately imminent*,” literally, “is *present*”; “is *instantly coming*.” Christ and His apostles always taught that the day of the Lord’s coming is *at hand*; and it is not likely that Paul would imply anything contrary here; what he denies is, that it is so *immediately imminent, instant, or present*, as to justify the neglect of everyday worldly duties. CHRYSOSTOM, and after him ALFORD, translates, “is (already) present” (compare ⁵¹⁸2 Timothy 2:18), a kindred error. But in ⁵¹⁹2 Timothy 3:1, the same *Greek* verb is translated “come.” WAHL supports this view. The *Greek* is usually used of actual presence; but is quite susceptible of the translation, “is all but present.”

3. by any means — *Greek*, “in any manner.” Christ, in ⁴¹⁰Matthew 24:4, gives the same warning in connection with the same event. He had indicated three ways (⁵¹¹2 Thessalonians 2:2) in which they might be deceived (compare other ways, ⁵¹²2 Thessalonians 2:9, and ⁴¹⁵Matthew 24:5,24).

a falling away — rather as the *Greek*, “*the falling away*,” or “apostasy,” namely, *the* one of which “I told you” before (⁵¹²2 Thessalonians 2:5), “when I was yet with you,” and of which the Lord gave some intimation (⁴¹¹Matthew 24:10-12 ⁴¹⁶John 5:43).

that man of sin be revealed — The *Greek* order is, “And there have been revealed the man of sin.” As Christ was first in *mystery*, and afterwards

revealed (⁵¹⁸⁶1 Timothy 3:16), so Antichrist (the term used ⁶¹²⁸1 John 2:18 4:3) is first in mystery, and afterwards shall be developed and revealed (⁵¹¹⁰2 Thessalonians 2:7-9). As righteousness found its embodiment in Christ, “the Lord our righteousness,” so “sin” shall have its embodiment in “the man of sin.” *The hindering* power meanwhile restrains its manifestation; when that shall be removed, then this manifestation shall take place. The articles, “*the apostasy*,” and “*the man of sin*,” may also refer to their being *well known as foretold* in ²¹⁰⁸Daniel 7:8,25, “the little horn speaking great words against the Most High, and thinking to change times and laws”; and ²¹¹⁶Daniel 11:36, the wilful king who “shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods; neither shall he regard any god.”

the son of perdition — a title applied besides to Judas (the traitor, ⁶¹⁷²John 17:12), and to none else. Antichrist (the second “beast” coming up out of the earth); therefore he shall at first be “like a lamb, while he speaks as a dragon” (⁶⁶³¹Revelation 13:11); “coming in peaceably and by flatteries,” “working deceitfully,” but “his heart shall be against the holy covenant” (²¹¹²Daniel 11:21,23,28,30). Seeds of “the falling away” soon appear (⁵⁰⁰¹1 Timothy 4:1-3), but the full development and concentration of these anti-Christian elements in one person are still to appear. Contrast the King of Zion’s coming as JESUS:

- (1) righteous or *just*;
- (2) having *salvation*;
- (3) *lowly*;

whereas Antichrist is:

- (1) “the man of (the embodiment of) *sin*;
- (2) the son of *perdition*;
- (3) *exalting himself* above all that is worshipped.

He is *the son of perdition*, as consigning many to it, and finally doomed to it himself (⁶⁶⁷⁸Revelation 17:18,11). “He whose essence and inheritance is perdition” [ALFORD]. AS “the *kingdom* of heaven” is first brought before us in the abstract, then in the concrete, the *King*, the Lord Jesus; so here,

first we have (^{381B}2 Thessalonians 2:7) “the mystery of *iniquity*,” then “the *iniquitous one*” (^{381B}2 Thessalonians 2:8). Doubtless “the apostasy” of *Romanism* (the abstract) is one of the greatest instances of the working of *the mystery of iniquity*, and its blasphemous claims for the Pope (the concrete) are forerunners of the final concentration of blasphemy in *the man of sin*, who shall not merely, as the Pope, usurp God’s honor as *vicegerent* of God, but *oppose* God openly at last.

4. ^{211B} Daniel 11:36,37 is here referred to. The words used there as to Antiochus Epiphanes, Paul implies, shall even be more applicable to the man of sin, who is the New Testament actual Antichrist, as Antiochus was the Old Testament typical Antichrist. The previous world kingdoms had each one extraordinary person as its representative head and embodiment (thus Babylon had Nebuchadnezzar, ^{212B} Daniel 2:38, end; Medo-Persia had Cyrus; Greece had Alexander, and Antiochus Epiphanes, the forerunner of Antichrist); so the fourth and last world kingdom, under which we now live, shall have one final head, the concentrated embodiment of all the *sin* and *lawless iniquity* which have been in pagan and papal Rome. Rome’s final phase will probably be an unholy alliance between idolatrous superstition and godless infidelity.

Who opposeth and exalteth himself — There is but one *Greek* article to both participles, implying that the reason why he *opposeth himself* is in order that he may *exalt himself above*, etc. ALFORD takes the former clause absolutely, “He that withstands (CHRIST),” that is, Antichrist (^{612B}1 John 2:18). As at the conclusion of the Old Testament period, Israel apostate allied itself with the heathen world power against Jesus and His apostles (^{622B} Luke 23:12; and at Thessalonica, ^{417B} Acts 17:5-9), and was in righteous retribution punished by the instrumentality of the world power itself (Jerusalem being destroyed by Rome), ^{212B} Daniel 9:26,27; so the degenerate Church (become an “harlot”), allying itself with the godless world power (the “beast” of Revelation) against vital religion (that is, the harlot sitting on the beast), shall be judged by that world power which shall be finally embodied in Antichrist (^{381B} Zechariah 13:8,9 14:2 ^{617B} Revelation 17:16,17). In this early Epistle, the apostate Jewish Church as the harlot, and pagan Rome as the beast, form the historical background on which Paul draws his prophetic sketch of the apostasy. In the Pastoral Epistles, which were later, this prophecy appears in connection with Gnosticism, which had at

that time infected the Church. The harlot (the apostate Church) is first to be judged by the beast (the world power) and its kings (⁶⁶⁷Revelation 17:16); and afterwards the beasts and their allies (with the personal Antichrist at their head, who seems to rise after the judgment on the harlot, or apostate Church) shall be judged by the coming of Jesus Himself (⁶⁶⁸Revelation 19:20). Anti-Christian tendencies produce different Antichrists: these separate Antichrists shall hereafter find their consummation in an individual exceeding them all in the intensity of his evil character [AUBERLEN]. But judgment soon overtakes him. He is necessarily *a child of death*, immediately after his *ascent as the beast out of the bottomless pit going into perdition* (⁶⁶⁹Revelation 17:8,11). *Idolatry of self, spiritual pride, and rebellion against God*, are his characteristics; as *Christ-worship, humility, and dependence on God*, characterize Christianity. He not merely *assumes* Christ's character (as the "false Christs," ⁶⁷⁰Matthew 24:24), but "*opposes*" Christ. The *Greek* implies one *situated on an opposite side* (compare ⁶⁷¹1 John 2:22 ⁶⁷²2 John 1:7). One who, on the destruction of every religion, shall seek to establish his own throne, and for God's great truth, "God is man," to substitute his own lie, "Man is God" [TRENCH].

above all that is called God — (⁶⁷³1 Corinthians 8:5). The Pope (for instance, Clement VI) has even commanded the angels to admit into Paradise, without the alleged pains of purgatory, certain souls. But still this is only a foreshadowing of the Antichrist, who will not, as the Pope, *act in God's name*, but *against* God.

or that is worshipped — Rome here again gives a presage of Antichrist. The *Greek* is *Sebasma*; and *Sebastus* is the *Greek* for Augustus, who was worshipped as the secular ruler and divine vicegerent. The papacy has risen on the overthrow of *Caesar's* power. Antichrist shall exalt himself above *every* object of worship, whether on earth as the Caesar, or in heaven as God. The various prefigurations of Antichrist, Mohammed, Rome, Napoleon, and modern infidel secularism, contain only *some*, not *all*, his characteristics. It is the union of all in some one person that shall form the full Antichrist, as the union in one Person, Jesus, of all the types and prophecies constituted the full Christ [OLSHAUSEN].

in the temple of God ... that he is God — “He will reign a time, times, and half a time” (²¹⁷²Daniel 7:25), that is, three and a half years, and will sit *in the temple at Jerusalem*: then the Lord shall come from heaven and cast him into the take of fire and shall bring to the saints the times of their reigning, the seventh day of hallowed rest, and give to Abraham the promised inheritance” [IRENAEUS, *Against Heresies*, 30.4].

showing himself — with blasphemous and arrogant DISPLAY (Compare a type, ⁴¹²²Acts 12:21-23). The earliest Fathers unanimously looked for a personal Antichrist. Two objections exist to Romanism being regarded *the* Antichrist, though probably Romanism will leave its *culmination* in him:

(1) So far is Romanism from *opposing all that is called God*, that adoration of gods and lords many (the Virgin Mary and saints) is a leading feature in it;

(2) the papacy has existed for more than twelve centuries, and yet Christ is not come, whereas the prophecy regards the final Antichrist as short-lived, and soon going to perdition through the coming of Christ (⁴¹⁷⁸Revelation 17:18,11). Gregory the Great declared against the patriarch of Constantinople, that whosoever should assume the title of “universal bishop” would be “the forerunner of Antichrist.” The papacy fulfilled this his undesigned prophecy. The Pope has been called by his followers, “Our Lord God the Pope”; and at his inauguration in St. Peter’s, seated in his chair upon the high altar, which is treated as his footstool, he has vividly foreshadowed him who “exalteth himself above all that is called God.” An objection fatal to interpreting *the temple of God* here as *the Church* (⁴¹⁸⁶1 Corinthians 3:16,17 6:19) is, the apostle would never designate the *apostate* anti-Christian Church “the temple of God.” It is likely that, as Messiah was revealed among the Jews at Jerusalem, so Antimesiah shall appear among them when restored to their own land, and after they have rebuilt their *temple at Jerusalem*. Thus ²¹¹⁴Daniel 11:41,45 (see on ²¹¹⁴Daniel 11:41; ²¹¹⁵Daniel 11:45), corresponds, “He shall enter the glorious land (Judea), and he shall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas in *the glorious holy mountain*”; and then (²¹¹¹Daniel 12:1) “Michael, the great prince, shall stand up” to deliver God’s people. Compare *Note*, see on ⁴¹⁰⁸Daniel 9:26,27. Also the king of

Assyria, type of Antichrist (^{234D}Isaiah 14:12-14). “Lucifer” (a title of Messiah, assumed by Antichrist, ^{622D}Revelation 22:16); “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.” “I will sit upon the *mount of the congregation* (that is, God’s place of meeting His people of old, the temple), *in the sides of the north* (^{382D}Psalm 48:2); I will be like the Most High.” ^{610D}Revelation 11:1,2, “The temple of God ... the holy city” (namely, Jerusalem, ^{404D}Matthew 4:5), compare ^{498D}Psalm 68:18,29, referring to a period since Christ’s ascension, therefore not yet fulfilled (^{231D}Isaiah 2:1-3 ^{360D}Ezekiel 40:1-44:31 ^{384D}Zechariah 14:16-20 ^{391D}Malachi 3:1). “In the temple of God,” implies that it an *internal*, not an external, enemy which shall assail the Church. Antichrist shall, the first three and a half years of the prophetical week, keep the covenant, then break it and usurp divine honors in the midst of the week. Some think Antichrist will be a Jew. At all events he will, “by flatteries,” bring many, not only of the Gentiles, but also of “the tribes” of Israel (so the *Greek* for “kindreds,” ^{610D}Revelation 11:8,9), to own him as their long-looked-for Messiah, in the same “city where our Lord was crucified.” “Sitteth” here implies his occupying the place of power and majesty in opposition to Him who “sitteth on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (^{300D}Hebrews 1:3), and who shall come to “sit” there where the usurper had sat (^{426D}Matthew 26:64). See on ^{272D}Daniel 9:27; ^{610D}Revelation 11:2,3,9,11. Compare ^{382D}Ezekiel 38:2,3,6,9,10,13,14,16, as to Tyre, the type of Antichrist, characterized by similar blasphemous arrogance.

5. Remember, etc. — confuting those who represent Paul as having labored under error as to Christ’s immediate coming when writing his first Epistle, and as now correcting that error.

I told you — more than once, literally, “I was telling,” or “used to tell.”

6. now ye know — by my having told you. The power must have been one “known” to the Thessalonians.

what withholdeth — that which *holds him back*; “keeps him in check”: the power that has restrained the man of sin from his full and final development, is *the moral and conservative influence of political states* [OLSHAUSEN]: *the fabric of human polity* as a *coercive power*; as “he who now letteth” refers to *those who rule that polity* by which the great

upbursting of godlessness is kept down [ALFORD]. The “what withholdeth” refers to the *general hindrance*; “he who now letteth,” to *the person in whom that hindrance is summed up*. Romanism, as a forerunner of Antichrist, was thus kept in check by *the Roman emperor* (the then representative of the coercive power) until Constantine, having removed the seat of empire to Constantinople, the Roman bishop by degrees first raised himself to precedency, then to primacy, and then to sole empire above the secular power. The historical fact from which Paul starts in his prediction was probably the emperor Claudius’ expulsion of the Jews, the representative of the anti-Christian adversary in Paul’s day, from Rome, thus “withholding” them in some degree in their attacks on Christianity; this suggested the principle holding good to the end of time, and about to find its final fulfillment in the removal of *the withholding person or authority*, whereupon Antichrist in his worst shape shall start up.

that he might be — *Greek*, “in order that”: ye know that which keeps him back, in God’s purposes, from being sooner manifested, “*in order that he may be revealed in his own time*” (that is, the time appointed by God to him as his proper time for being manifested), not sooner (compare ²⁷¹³Daniel 11:35). The removal of the withholding power will be when the civil polity, derived from the Roman empire, which is to be, in its last form, divided into ten kingdoms (^{6610B}Revelation 17:3,11-13), shall, with its leading representative head for the time being (“he who now letteth,” *Greek*, “withholdeth,” as in ⁵¹⁰⁶2 Thessalonians 2:6), yield to the prevalent godless “lawlessness” with “the lawless one” as its embodiment. *The elect Church* and *the Spirit* cannot well be, as DE BURGH suggests, the *withholding* power meant; for both shall never be *wholly* “taken out of the way” (⁴⁸⁹¹Matthew 28:20). However, the testimony of *the elect Church*, and *the Spirit* in her, are the great hindrance to the rise of the apostasy; and it is possible that, though the Lord shall have a faithful few even then, yet the full energy of the Spirit in *the visible Church*, counteracting the energy or “working” of “the mystery of lawlessness” by the testimony of the elect, shall have been so far “taken out of the way,” or *set aside*, as to admit the manifestation of “the lawless one”; and so DE BURGH’S view may be right (⁴²⁸⁵Luke 18:8 ^{6610B}Revelation 11:3-12). This was a power of which the Thessalonians might easily “know” through Paul’s instruction.

7. the mystery of iniquity — the counterwork to “the mystery of godliness” (⁵⁴⁹⁶1 Timothy 3:16). Anti-Christianity *latently* working, as distinguished from its final *open* manifestation. “Mystery” in Scripture means, not what remains always a secret, but that which is for a while hidden, but in due time manifested (compare ⁴⁸⁹⁸Ephesians 3:4,5). Satan will resort to a mode of opposition more conformed to the then imminent “appearing” and “presence” of the Savior, and will anticipate Him with a last effort to maintain the dominion of the world [DE BURGH], just as at His first advent he rushed into open opposition, by taking possession of the bodies of men. “Iniquity,” *Greek*, “lawlessness”; defiant rejection of God’s *law* (compare *Note*, see on ³⁸⁹⁹Zechariah 5:9, ³⁸⁹⁹Zechariah 5:10). “Wickedness” (translated by the *Septuagint* by the same *Greek*, meaning “lawlessness,” which Paul employs here), embodied there as a woman, answers to “the mystery of iniquity,” here embodied finally in “the man of sin”: as the former was ultimately banished for ever from the Holy Land to her own congenial soil, Babylon, so iniquity and the man of sin shall fall before Michael and the Lord Himself, who shall appear as the Deliverer of His people (²⁷¹¹Daniel 12:1-3 ³⁸⁴⁹Zechariah 14:3-9). Compare ⁴⁰²⁶Matthew 12:43. The Jewish nation dispossessed of the evil spirit, the demon of idolatry being cast out through the Babylonian captivity, receives ultimately a worse form of the evil spirit, Christ-opposing self-righteousness. Also, the Christian Church in course of time taken possession of by the demon of Romish idolatry, then dispossessed of it by the Reformation, then its house “garnished” by hypocrisy, secularity, and rationalism, but “swept empty” of living faith, then finally apostatizing and repossessed by “the man of sin,” and *outwardly* destroyed for a brief time (though even then Christ shall have witnesses for Him among both the Jews, ³⁸⁹⁹Zechariah 13:9, and Gentiles, ⁴⁰²⁶Matthew 28:20), when Christ shall suddenly come (²⁷¹³Daniel 11:32-45 ⁴⁰²⁶Luke 18:7,8).

already — (⁶⁰⁰²2 John 1:9:10 ⁵⁰²⁶Colossians 2:18-23 ⁵⁰⁰¹1 Timothy 4:1); compare “even now already” (⁶⁰²⁸1 John 2:18 4:3) as distinguished from “in his own time” of being revealed *hereafter*. Antiquity, it appears from hence, is not a justification for unscriptural us.ages or dogmas, since these were “already,” even in Paul’s time, beginning to spring up: the written word is the only sure test. “Judaism infecting Christianity is the fuel; the

mystery of iniquity is the spark.” “It is one and the same impurity diffusing itself over many ages” [BENGEL].

only he who now letteth will let — The italicized words are not in the *Greek*. Therefore, translate rather, “only (that is, the continuance of the MYSTERY of iniquity-working will be *only*) until he who now *withholdeth* (the same *Greek* as in ^{<510>}2 Thessalonians 2:6) be taken out of the way.” “Only (*waiting*, ^{<500>}Hebrews 10:13) until he,” etc. Then it will work no longer in *mystery*, but in open manifestation.

8. Translate, “the lawless one”; the embodiment of all the godless “lawlessness” which has been working in “mystery” for ages (^{<510>}2 Thessalonians 2:7): “the man of sin” (^{<510>}2 Thessalonians 2:3).

whom the Lord — Some of the oldest manuscripts read, “the Lord *Jesus*.” How awful that He whose very name means *God-Savior*, should appear as the Destroyer; but the *salvation* of the Church requires the destruction of her foe. As the reign of Israel in Canaan was ushered in by judgments on the nations for *apostasy* (for the Canaanites were originally worshippers of the true God: thus Melchisedek, king of Salem, was the “priest of the most high God,” ^{<1148>}Genesis 14:18: Ammon and Moab came from righteous Lot), so the Son of David’s reign in Zion and over the whole earth, is to be ushered in by judgments on the apostate Christian world.

consume ... and ... destroy — So ^{<202>}Daniel 7:26, “consume and destroy”; ^{<2145>}Daniel 11:45. He shall “consume” him by His mere breath (^{<2104>}Isaiah 11:4 30:33): the sentence of judgment being the sharp sword that goeth out of His mouth (^{<605>}Revelation 19:15,21). Antichrist’s manifestation and destruction are declared in the same breath; at his greatest height he is nearest his fall, like Herod his type (^{<2024>}Isaiah 1:24-27 ^{<4127>}Acts 12:20-23). As the advancing fire, while still at a distance consumes little insects [CHRYSTOSTOM] by its mere heat, so Christ’s mere approach is enough to consume Antichrist. The mere “appearance of the coming” of the Lord of glory is sufficient to show to Antichrist his perfect nothingness. He is seized and “cast alive into the take of fire” (^{<605>}Revelation 19:20). So the world kingdoms, and the kingdom of the beast, give place to that of the Son of man and His saints. The *Greek* for “destroy” means “abolish” (the same *Greek* is so translated, ^{<510>}2 Timothy 1:10); that is, cause every vestige of him to disappear. Compare as to Gog attacking Israel and

destroyed by Jehovah (^{<3901>}Ezekiel 38:1-39:29), so as not to leave a vestige of him.

with the brightness of his coming — *Greek*, “the *manifestation*, (or *appearance*) of His *presence*”: the first outburst of His advent — the first gleam of His presence — is enough to *abolish* utterly all traces of Antichrist, as darkness disappears before the dawning day. Next, his adherents are “slain with the sword out of His mouth” (^{<6821>}Revelation 19:21). BENDEL’S distinction between “the appearance of His coming” and the “coming” itself is not justified by ^{<5034>}1 Timothy 6:14 ^{<5102>}2 Timothy 1:10 4:1,8 ^{<5103>}Titus 2:13, where the same *Greek* for “*appearing*” (*English Version*, here “the brightness”) plainly refers to *the coming itself*. The expression, “*manifestation* (appearing) of His presence,” is used in awful contrast to the *revelation* of the wicked one in the beginning of the verse.

9. whose coming — The same *Greek* as was used for *the Lord’s coming* (^{<5102>}2 Thessalonians 2:8) or personal “presence.”

is — in its essential character.

after — *according to* the working (“energy”) of Satan, as opposed to the *energy* or *working* of the Holy Spirit in the Church (see on ^{<4015>}Ephesians 1:19). As Christ is related to God, so is Antichrist to Satan, his visible embodiment and manifestation: Satan works through him. ^{<6821>}Revelation 13:2, “The dragon gave him (the beast) his power ... seat ... great authority.”

lying wonders — literally, “wonders” or “prodigies of falsehood.” His “power, signs, and wonders,” all have *falsehood* for their base, essence, and aim (^{<4034>}John 8:44), [ALFORD]. In ^{<4021>}Matthew 24:24 Jesus implies that the miracles shall be real, though demoniac, such mysterious effects of the powers of darkness as we read of in the case of the Egyptian sorcerers, not such as Jesus performed in their character, power, or aim; for they are against the revealed Word, and therefore not to be accepted as evidences of truth; nay, on the authority of that sure Word of prophecy (here, and ^{<4021>}Matthew 24:24), to be known and rejected as wrought in support of *falsehood* (^{<6811>}Deuteronomy 13:1-3,5 ^{<4008>}Galatians 1:8,9 ^{<6821>}Revelation 13:11-15 19:20). The same three *Greek* words occur for *miracles of Jesus* (^{<4022>}Acts 2:22 ^{<5034>}Hebrews 2:4); showing that as the Egyptian magicians

imitated Moses (^{<5810>}2 Timothy 3:1-8), so Antichrist will try to imitate Christ's works as a "sign," or *proof* of divinity.

10. deceivableness — rather as *Greek*, "deceit of (to promote) unrighteousness" (^{<5812>}2 Thessalonians 2:12).

in — The oldest manuscripts and versions omit "in." Translate, "*unto* them that *are perishing*" (^{<4015>}2 Corinthians 2:15,16 4:3): the victims of him whose very name describes his *perishing* nature, "the son of perdition"; in contrast to *you* whom (^{<5813>}2 Thessalonians 2:13) "God hath from the beginning chosen to *salvation* through *sanctification* of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

because — literally, "in requital for"; in just retribution for their having no *love* for the truth which was within their reach (on account of its putting a check on their bad passions), and for their having "pleasure in unrighteousness" (^{<5812>}2 Thessalonians 2:12 ^{<4018>}Romans 1:18); they are *lost* because they loved not, but rejected, the truth which would have *saved* them.

received not — *Greek*, "welcomed not"; admitted it not cordially.

love of the truth — not merely love of *truth*, but love of THE *truth* (and of, Jesus who is *the Truth*, in opposition to Satan's "lie," ^{<5812>}2 Thessalonians 2:9,11 ^{<4012>}John 8:42-44), can *save* (^{<4001>}Ephesians 4:21). We are required not merely to assent to, but to *love* the truth (^{<4019>}Psalms 119:97). The Jews rejected Him who came in His divine Father's name; they will receive Antichrist coming in *his own* name (^{<4013>}John 5:43). Their pleasant sin shall prove their terrible scourge.

11. for this cause — because "they received not the love of the truth." The best safeguard against error is "the love of the truth."

shall send — *Greek*, "sends," or "is sending"; the "delusion" is already beginning. God judicially sends hardness of heart on those who have rejected the truth, and gives them up in righteous judgment to Satan's delusions (^{<2069>}Isaiah 6:9,10 ^{<4012>}Romans 1:24-26,28). They first cast off the love of the truth, then God gives them up to Satan's delusions, then they settle down into "believing the lie": an awful climax (^{<1022>}1 Kings 22:22,23 ^{<3449>}Ezekiel 14:9 ^{<3826>}Job 12:16 ^{<4017>}Matthew 24:5,11 ^{<5001>}1 Timothy 4:1).

strong delusion — *Greek*, “the powerful working of error,” answering to the energizing “working of Satan” (^{<500>}2 Thessalonians 2:9); the same expression as is applied to the Holy Ghost’s operation in believers: “powerful” or “effectual (energizing) working” (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:19).

believe a lie — rather, “*the lie*” which Antichrist tells them, appealing to his miracles as proofs of it ... (^{<500>}2 Thessalonians 2:9).

12. they all ... damned — rather as *Greek*, “that *all*,” etc. He here states the general proposition which applies specially to Antichrist’s adherents. Not all in the Church of Rome, or other anti-Christian systems, shall be damned, but only “all who believed not the truth,” *when offered to them*, “but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (^{<400>}Romans 1:32 2:8). Love of *unrighteousness* being the great obstacle to *believing the truth*.

13. But — In delightful contrast to the damnation of the lost (^{<500>}2 Thessalonians 2:12) stands the “salvation” of Paul’s converts.

are bound — in duty (^{<500>}2 Thessalonians 1:3).

thanks ... to God — not to ourselves, your ministers, nor to you, our converts.

beloved of the Lord — Jesus (^{<400>}Romans 8:37 ^{<400>}Galatians 2:20 ^{<400>}Ephesians 5:2,25). Elsewhere *God the Father* is said to love us (^{<500>}2 Thessalonians 2:16 ^{<400>}John 3:16 ^{<400>}Ephesians 2:4 ^{<500>}Colossians 3:12). Therefore Jesus and the Father are one.

from the beginning — “before the foundation of the world” (^{<400>}Ephesians 1:4; compare ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 2:7 ^{<500>}2 Timothy 1:9); in contrast to those that shall “worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (^{<400>}Revelation 13:8). Some of the oldest manuscripts read as *English Version*, but other oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “as *first-fruits*.” The Thessalonians were among the first converts in Europe (compare ^{<500>}Romans 16:5 ^{<400>}1 Corinthians 16:15). In a more general sense, it occurs in ^{<500>}James 1:18 ^{<400>}Revelation 14:4; so I understand it here including the more restricted sense.

chosen you — The *Greek*, is not the ordinary word for “elected,” implying His eternal *selection*; but *taken for Himself*, implying His having *adopted* them in His eternal purpose. It is found in the *Septuagint* (^{
}Deuteronomy 7:7 10:15).

through — rather as *Greek*, “*in sanctification*” as the element in which *the choice to salvation* had place (compare ^{
}1 Peter 1:2), standing in contrast to the “unrighteousness,” the element in which Antichrist’s followers are given over by God to *damnation* (^{
}2 Thessalonians 2:12).

of the Spirit — wrought by the Spirit who sanctifies all the elect people of God, first by eternally consecrating them to perfect holiness in Christ, once for all, next by progressively imparting it.

belief of the truth — contrasted with “believed not the truth” (^{
}2 Thessalonians 2:12).

14. you — The oldest manuscripts read, “us.”

by our gospel — “*through*” the Gospel which we preach.

to ... glory — In ^{
}2 Thessalonians 2:13 it was “salvation,” that is, deliverance from all evil, of body and soul (^{
}1 Thessalonians 5:9); here it is positive good, even “glory,” and that “the glory of our Lord Jesus” Himself, which believers are privileged to share with Him (^{
}John 17:22,24 ^{
}Romans 8:17,29 ^{
}2 Timothy 2:10).

15. Therefore — God’s sovereign choice of believers, so far from being a ground for inaction on their part, is the strongest incentive to action and perseverance in it. Compare the argument, ^{
}Philippians 2:12,13, “Work out *your own* salvation, FOR it is God which worketh in you,” etc. We cannot fully explain this in *theory*; but to the sincere and humble, the *practical* acting on the principle is plain. “Privilege first, duty afterwards” [EDMUNDS].

stand fast — so as not to be “shaken or troubled” (^{
}2 Thessalonians 2:2).

hold — so as not to let go. Adding nothing, subtracting nothing [BENGEL]. The Thessalonians had not held fast his oral instructions but had suffered themselves to be imposed upon by pretended spirit-revelations, and words

and letters pretending to be from Paul (^{SR02}2 Thessalonians 2:2), to the effect that “the day of the Lord was instantly imminent.”

traditions — truths *delivered* and *transmitted* orally, or in writing (^{SR02}2 Thessalonians 3:6 ^{SR01}1 Corinthians 11:2; Greek, “traditions”). The Greek verb from which the noun comes, is used by Paul in ^{SR13}1 Corinthians 11:23 15:3. From the *three* passages in which “tradition” is used in a good sense, Rome has argued for her accumulation of *uninspired* traditions, virtually overriding God’s Word, while put forward as of co-ordinate authority with it. She forgets the *ten* passages (^{SR03}Matthew 15:2,3,6 ^{SR05}Mark 7:3,5,8,9,13 ^{SR04}Galatians 1:14 ^{SR08}Colossians 2:8) stigmatizing *man’s uninspired* traditions. Not even the apostles’ sayings were all inspired (for example, Peter’s dissimulation, ^{SR01}Galatians 2:11-14), but only when they claimed to be so, as in their words afterwards embodied in their canonical writings. Oral inspiration was necessary in their case, until the canon of the written Word should be complete; they proved their possession of inspiration by miracles wrought in support of the new revelation, which revelation, moreover, accorded with the existing Old Testament revelation; an additional test needed besides miracles (^{SR03}Deuteronomy 13:1-6 ^{SR07}Acts 17:11). When the canon was complete, the infallibility of the living men was transferred to the written Word, now the sole unerring guide, interpreted by the Holy Spirit. Little else has come down to us by the most *ancient* and *universal* tradition save this, the all-sufficiency of Scripture for salvation. Therefore, by tradition, we are constrained to cast off all tradition not contained in, or not provable by, Scripture. The Fathers are valuable *witnesses to historical facts*, which give force to the *intimations* of Scripture: such as the Christian Lord’s day, the baptism of infants, and the genuineness of the canon of Scripture. Tradition (in the sense of *human testimony*) cannot establish a *doctrine*, but can *authenticate a fact*, such as the facts just mentioned. Inspired tradition, in Paul’s sense, is not a supplementary oral tradition completing *our* written Word, but it is identical with the written Word *now* complete; then the latter not being complete, the tradition was necessarily in part oral, in part written, and continued so until, the latter being complete before the death of St. John, the last apostle, the former was no longer needed. Scripture is, according to Paul, the complete and sufficient rule in all that appertains to making “the man of God *perfect, thoroughly furnished* unto *all good works*” (^{SR06}2

Timothy 3:16,17). It is by leaving Paul's God-inspired tradition for human traditions that Rome has become the forerunner and parent of the Antichrist. It is striking that, from this very chapter denouncing Antichrist, she should draw an argument for her "traditions" by which she fosters anti-Christianity. Because the apostles' oral word was as trustworthy as their written word, it by no means follows that the oral word of those *not apostles* is as trustworthy as the *written* word of those who were apostles or inspired evangelists. No tradition of the apostles except their written word can be *proved* genuine on satisfactory evidence. We are no more bound to accept implicitly the Fathers' interpretations of Scripture, because we accept the Scripture canon on their testimony, than we are bound to accept the Jews' interpretation of the Old Testament, because we accept the Old Testament canon on their testimony.

our epistle — as distinguished from a "letter AS from us," ²Thessalonians 2:2, namely, that purports to be from us, but is not. He refers to his first Epistle to the Thessalonians.

16, 17. himself — by His own might, as contrasted with our feebleness; ensuring the efficacy of our prayer. Here *our Lord Jesus* stands first; in ¹Thessalonians 3:11, "God our Father."

which ... loved us — in the work of our redemption. Referring both to *our Lord Jesus* (⁸³⁷Romans 8:37 ⁸²¹Galatians 2:20) and God *our Father* (⁸¹⁶John 3:16).

everlasting consolation — not transitory, as worldly consolations in trials (⁸³⁸Romans 8:38,39). This for all time present, and then "good hope" for the future [ALFORD].

through grace — rather as *Greek* "IN grace"; to be joined to "hath given." Grace is the element in which the gift was made.

17. Comfort your hearts — unsettled as you have been through those who announced the immediate coming of the Lord.

good word and work — The oldest manuscripts invert the order, "work and word." *Establishment* in these were what the young converts at Thessalonica needed, not fanatical teaching (compare ⁴⁶⁸1 Corinthians 15:58).

CHAPTER 3

2 THESSALONIANS 3:1-18.

HE ASKS THEIR PRAYERS: HIS CONFIDENCE IN THEM: PRAYER FOR THEM: CHARGES AGAINST DISORDERLY IDLE CONDUCT; HIS OWN EXAMPLE: CONCLUDING PRAYER AND SALUTATION.

1. Finally — literally, “As to what remains.”

may have free course — literally, “may run”; spread rapidly without a drag on the wheels of its course. That the new-creating word may “run,” as “swiftly” as the creative word at the first (^{<475>}Psalm 147:15). The opposite is the word of God being “bound” (^{<10>}2 Timothy 2:9).

glorified — by sinners accepting it (^{<438>}Acts 13:48 ^{<402>}Galatians 1:23,24). Contrast “evil spoken of” (^{<1044>}1 Peter 4:14).

as it is with you — (^{<106>}1 Thessalonians 1:6 4:10 5:11).

2. that we ... be delivered from unreasonable ... men — literally, men *out of place, inept*, unseemly: *out of the way bad*: more than ordinarily bad. An undesigned coincidence with ^{<485>}Acts 18:5-9. Paul was now at Corinth, where the JEWS “opposed themselves” to his preaching: in answer to his prayers and those of his converts at Thessalonica and elsewhere, “the Lord, in vision,” assured him of exemption from “the hurt,” and of success in bringing in “much people.” On the unreasonable, out-of-the way perversity of the Jews, as known to the Thessalonians, see ^{<105>}1 Thessalonians 2:15,16.

have not faith — or as *Greek*, “the faith” of the Christian: the only antidote to what is “unreasonable and wicked.” The Thessalonians, from their ready acceptance of the Gospel (^{<106>}1 Thessalonians 1:5,6), might think “all” would similarly receive it; but the Jews were far from having such a readiness to believe the truth.

3. faithful — alluding to “faith” (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Thessalonians 3:2): though many will not believe, the Lord (other very old manuscripts read “God”) is still to be believed in as faithful to His promises (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 1 Thessalonians 5:24 ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Timothy 2:13). *Faith* on the part of man answers to faithfulness on the part of God.

stablish you — as he had prayed (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Thessalonians 2:17). Though it was on himself that wicked men were making their onset, he turns away from asking the Thessalonians’ prayers for HIS deliverance (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Thessalonians 3:2: so unselfish was he, even in religion), to express his assurance of THEIR establishment in the faith, and preservation from evil. This assurance thus exactly answers to his prayer for them (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Thessalonians 2:17), “Our Lord ... *stablish* you in every good word and work.” He has before his mind the Lord’s Prayer, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”; where, as here, the translation may be, “from the evil one”; the great hinderer of “every good word and work.” Compare ⲁⲓⲥⲁ Matthew 13:19, “the wicked one.”

4. we have confidence in the Lord — as “faithful” (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Thessalonians 3:3). Have confidence in no man when left to himself [BENGEL].

that ye both do — Some of the oldest manuscripts insert a clause, “that ye both have done” before, “and are doing, and will do.” He means the *majority* by “ye,” not *all* of them (compare ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Thessalonians 3:11 1:3 ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 1 Thessalonians 3:6).

5. If “the Lord” be here the Holy Ghost (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Corinthians 3:17), the three Persons of the Trinity will occur in this verse.

love of God — love to God.

patient waiting for Christ — rather as *Greek*, “the patience (endurance) of Christ,” namely, which Christ showed [ALFORD] (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 2 Thessalonians 2:4 ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 1 Thessalonians 1:3). ESTIUS, however, supports *English Version* (compare ⲁⲓⲥⲁ Revelation 1:9 3:10). At all events, this grace, “patience,” or *persevering endurance*, is connected with the “hope” (ⲥⲱⲣⲁ 1 Thessalonians 1:3, 10) of *Christ’s coming*. In ALFORD’S translation we may compare ⲥⲱⲣⲁ Hebrews 12:1, 2, “Run with *patience (endurance)* ... looking to JESUS ... who, for the joy that was before Him, *endured* the cross”; so WE are to

endure, as looking for the hope to be realized at His coming (^{<518>}Hebrews 10:36,37).

6. we command you — Hereby he puts to a particular test their obedience in general to his *commands*, which obedience he had recognized in ^{<519>}2 Thessalonians 3:4.

withdraw — literally, “to furl the sails”; as we say, *to steer clear of* (compare ^{<518>}2 Thessalonians 3:14). Some had given up labor as though the Lord’s day was immediately coming. He had enjoined mild censure of such in ^{<514>}1 Thessalonians 5:14, “*Warn ... the unruly*”; but now that the mischief had become more confirmed, he enjoins stricter discipline, namely, withdrawal from their company (compare ^{<415>}1 Corinthians 5:11 ^{<502>}2 John 1:10:11): not a formal sentence of excommunication, such as was subsequently passed on more heinous offenders (as in ^{<415>}1 Corinthians 5:5 ^{<502>}1 Timothy 1:20). He says “brother,” that is, professing Christian; for in the case of unprofessing heathen, believers needed not be so strict (^{<415>}1 Corinthians 5:10-13).

disorderly — Paul plainly would not have sanctioned the *order* of Mendicant Friars, who reduce such a “disorderly” and lazy life to a system. Call it not an *order*, but a *burden* to the community (BENGEL, alluding to the *Greek*, ^{<518>}2 Thessalonians 3:8, for “be chargeable,” literally, “be a burden”).

the tradition — the oral instruction which he had given to them when present (^{<519>}2 Thessalonians 3:10), and subsequently committed to writing (^{<501>}1 Thessalonians 4:11,12).

which he received of us — Some oldest manuscripts read, “ye received”; others, “they received.” The *English Version* reading has no very old authority.

7. how ye ought to follow us — how ye ought to live so as to “*imitate* (so the *Greek* for ‘follow’) *us*” (compare *Notes*, see on ^{<411>}1 Corinthians 11:1; ^{<501>}1 Thessalonians 1:6).

8. eat any man’s bread — *Greek*, “eat bread *from* any man,” that is, live at anyone’s expense. Contrast ^{<519>}2 Thessalonians 3:12, “*eat THEIR OWN bread*.”

wrought — (^{<428b>}Acts 20:34). In both Epistles they state they maintained themselves by labor; but in this second Epistle they do so in order to offer themselves herein as an example to the idle; whereas, in the first, their object in doing so is to vindicate themselves from all imputation of mercenary motives in preaching the Gospel (^{<508b>}1 Thessalonians 2:5,9) [EDMUNDS]. They preached gratuitously though they might have claimed maintenance from their converts.

labor and travail — “toil and hardship” (see on ^{<508b>}1 Thessalonians 2:9).

night and day — scarcely allowing time for repose.

chargeable — *Greek*, “a burden,” or “burdensome.” The Philippians did not regard it as a *burden* to contribute to his support (^{<508b>}Philippians 4:15,16), sending to him while he was in this very Thessalonica (^{<418b>}Acts 16:15,34,40). Many Thessalonians, doubtless, would have felt it a privilege to contribute, but as he saw some idlers among them who would have made a pretext of his example to justify themselves, he waived his right. His reason for the same course at Corinth was to mark how different were his aims from those of the false teachers who sought their own lucre (^{<471b>}2 Corinthians 11:9,12,13). It is at the very time and place of writing these Epistles that Paul is expressly said to have *wrought at tent-making* with Aquila (^{<418b>}Acts 18:3); an undesigned coincidence.

9. (^{<490b>}1 Corinthians 9:4-6, etc. ^{<480b>}Galatians 6:6.)

10. For even — Translate, “For *also*.” We not only set you the example, but gave a positive “command.”

commanded — *Greek* imperfect, “We were commanding”; we kept charge of you.

would not work — *Greek*, “*is unwilling to work*.” BENJEL makes this to be the argument: not that such a one is to have his food withdrawn from him by others; but he proves from the necessity of *eating* the necessity of *working*; using this pleasantry, Let him who will not work *show himself an angel*, that is, do without food as the angels do (but since he cannot do without food, then he ought to be not unwilling to work). It seems to me simpler to take it as a punishment of the idle. Paul often quotes good adages current among the people, stamping them with inspired approval.

In the *Hebrew*, “*Bereshith Rabba*,” the same saying is found; and in the book *Zeror*, “He who will not work before the sabbath, must not eat on the sabbath.”

11. busy bodies — In the *Greek* the similarity of sound marks the antithesis, “Doing none of their own business, yet overdoing in the business of others.” Busy about everyone’s business but their own. “Nature abhors a vacuum”; so if not doing one’s own business, one is apt to meddle with his neighbor’s business. Idleness is the parent of busybodies (^{<SAB>}1 Timothy 5:13). Contrast ^{<SAB>}1 Thessalonians 4:11.

12. by — The oldest manuscripts read, “IN the Lord Jesus.” So the *Greek*, ^{<SAB>}1 Thessalonians 4:1, implying the sphere wherein such conduct is appropriate and consistent. “We exhort you thus, as *ministers* IN *Christ*, exhorting our people IN Christ.”

with quietness — quiet industry; laying aside restless, bustling, intermeddling officiousness (^{<SAB>}2 Thessalonians 3:11).

their own — bread earned by themselves, not another’s bread (^{<SAB>}2 Thessalonians 3:8).

13. be not weary — The oldest manuscripts read, “Be not cowardly in”; do not be wanting in strenuousness in doing well. EDMUNDS explains it: Do not *culpably* neglect to do well, namely, with patient industry do your duty in your several callings. In contrast to the “disorderly, not-working busybodies” (^{<SAB>}2 Thessalonians 3:11; compare ^{<SAB>}Galatians 6:9).

14. note that man — mark him in your own mind as one to be avoided (^{<SAB>}2 Thessalonians 3:6).

that he may be ashamed — *Greek*, “made to turn and look into himself, and so be put to shame.” Feeling himself shunned by godly brethren, he may become ashamed of his course.

15. admonish him as a brother — not yet excommunicated (compare ^{<SAB>}Leviticus 19:17). Do not shun him in contemptuous silence, but tell him why he is so avoided (^{<SAB>}Matthew 18:15 ^{<SAB>}1 Thessalonians 5:14).

16. Lord of peace — Jesus Christ. The same title is given to Him as to the Father, “the GOD of peace” (^{<SAB>}Romans 15:33 16:20 ^{<SAB>}2 Corinthians

13:11). An appropriate title in the prayer here, where the harmony of the Christian community was liable to interruption from the “disorderly.” The *Greek* article requires the translation, “Give you *the* peace” which it is “His to give.” “Peace” outward and inward, here and hereafter (◀647 Romans 14:17).

always — unbroken, not changing with outward circumstances.

by all means — *Greek*, “in every way.” Most of the oldest manuscripts read, “in every *place*”; thus he prays for their peace *in all times* (“always”) *and places*.

Lord be with you all — May He bless you not only with *peace*, but also with His *presence* (◀493 Matthew 28:20). Even the disorderly brethren (compare ▶2 Thessalonians 3:15, “a brother”) are included in this prayer.

17. The Epistle was written by an amanuensis (perhaps Silas or Timothy), and only the closing salutation written by Paul’s “own hand” (compare ▶Romans 16:22 ▶1 Corinthians 16:21 ▶5048 Colossians 4:18). Wherever Paul does not subjoin this autograph salutation, we may presume he wrote the whole Epistle himself (◀661 Galatians 6:11).

which — *which* autograph salutation.

the token — to distinguish genuine Epistles from spurious ones put forth in my name (◀5102 2 Thessalonians 2:2).

in every epistle — Some think he signed his name to every Epistle with his own hand; but as there is no trace of this in any manuscripts of *all* the Epistles, it is more likely that he alludes to *his writing with his own hand in closing every Epistle*, even in those Epistles (Romans, Second Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, First Thessalonians) wherein he does not specify his having done so.

so I write — so I sign my name: this is a specimen of my *handwriting*, by which to distinguish my genuine letters from forgeries.

18. He closes every Epistle by praying for GRACE to those whom he addresses.

Amen — omitted in the oldest manuscripts It was doubtless the response of the congregation after hearing the Epistle read publicly; hence it crept into copies.

The Subscription is spurious, as the Epistle was written not “from Athens,” but from *Corinth*.

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TIMOTHY AND TITUS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

GENUINENESS. — The ancient Church never doubted of their being canonical and written by Paul. They are in the *Peschito Syriac* version of the second century. MURATORI's *Fragment on the Canon of Scripture*, at the close of the second century, acknowledges them as such. IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 1; 3.3.3; 4.16.3; 2.14.8; 3.11.1; 1.16.3], quotes ^{<5004>}1 Timothy 1:4,9 6:20 ^{<5005>}2 Timothy 4:9-11 ^{<5006>}Titus 3:10. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 2, p. 457; 3, pp. 534, 536; 1, p. 350], quotes ^{<5007>}1 Timothy 6:1,20; Second Timothy, as to *deaconesses*; ^{<5008>}Titus 1:12. TERTULLIAN [*The Prescription against Heretics*, 25; 6], quotes ^{<5009>}1 Timothy 6:20 ^{<5010>}2 Timothy 1:14 ^{<5011>}1 Timothy 1:18 6:13, etc. ^{<5012>}2 Timothy 2:2 ^{<5013>}Titus 3:10,11. EUSEBIUS includes the three in the "universally acknowledged" Scriptures. Also THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH [*To Autolychnus*, 3.14], quotes ^{<5014>}1 Timothy 2:1,2 ^{<5015>}Titus 3:1, and CAIUS (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.20]) recognizes their authenticity. CLEMENT OF ROME, in the end of the first century, in his first *Epistle to the Corinthians* [29], quotes ^{<5016>}1 Timothy 2:8. IGNATIUS, in the beginning of the second century, in *Epistle to Polycarp*, [6], alludes to ^{<5017>}2 Timothy 2:4. POLYCARP, in the beginning of the second century [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 4], alludes to ^{<5018>}2 Timothy 2:4; and in the ninth chapter to ^{<5019>}2 Timothy 4:10. Hegisippus, in the end of the second century, in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.32], alludes to ^{<5020>}1 Timothy 6:3,20. ATHENAGORAS, in the end of the second century, alludes to ^{<5021>}1 Timothy 6:16. JUSTIN MARTYR, in the middle of the second century [*Dialogue with*

Trypho, 47], alludes to ^{<500>}Titus 3:4. The Gnostic MARCION alone rejected these Epistles.

The HERESIES OPPOSED in them form the transition stage from Judaism, in its ascetic form, to Gnosticism, as subsequently developed. The references to Judaism and legalism are clear (^{<500>}1 Timothy 1:7 4:3 ^{<500>}Titus 1:10,14 ^{<500>}Titus 3:9). Traces of beginning Gnosticism are also unequivocal (^{<500>}1 Timothy 1:4). The Gnostic theory of a twofold principle from the beginning, evil as well as good, appears in germ in ^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:3, etc. In ^{<500>}1 Timothy 6:20 the term *Gnosis* ("science") itself occurs. Another Gnostic error, namely, that "the resurrection is past," is alluded to in ^{<500>}2 Timothy 2:17,18. The Judaism herein opposed is not that of the earlier Epistles, which upheld the law and tried to join it with faith in Christ for justification. It first passed into that phase of it which appears in the Epistle to the Colossians, whereby will-worship and angel-worship were superadded to Judaizing opinions. Then a further stage of the same evil appears in the Epistle to the Philippians (^{<500>}Philippians 3:2,18,19), whereby *immoral practice* accompanied false doctrine as to the resurrection (compare ^{<500>}2 Timothy 2:18, with ^{<482>}1 Corinthians 15:12,32,33). This descent from legality to superstition, and from superstition to godlessness, appears more matured in the references to it in these Pastoral Epistles. The false teachers now know not the true use of *the law* (^{<500>}1 Timothy 1:7,8), and further, have *put away good conscience* as well as *the faith* (^{<500>}1 Timothy 1:19 4:2); *speak lies in hypocrisy*, are *corrupt in mind*, and regard *godliness as a means of earthly gain* (^{<500>}1 Timothy 6:5 ^{<500>}Titus 1:11); *overthrow the faith* by heresies *eating as a canker*, saying *the resurrection is past* (^{<500>}2 Timothy 2:17,18), *leading captive silly women, ever learning yet never knowing the truth*, *reprobate as Jannes and Jambres* (^{<500>}2 Timothy 3:6,8), *defiled, unbelieving, professing to know God, but in works denying Him, abominable, disobedient, reprobate* (^{<500>}Titus 1:15,16). This description accords with that in the Catholic Epistles of St. John and St. Peter, and, in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This fact proves the later date of these Pastoral Epistles as compared with Paul's earlier Epistles. The Judaism reprobated herein is not that of an earlier date, so scrupulous as to the law; it was now tending to immortality of practice. On the other hand, the Gnosticism opposed in these Epistles is not the *anti-Judaic* Gnosticism of a later date, which arose

as a consequence of the overthrow of Judaism by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, but it was the intermediate phase between Judaism and Gnosticism, in which the Oriental and Greek elements of the latter were in a kind of amalgam with Judaism, just prior to the overthrow of Jerusalem.

The DIRECTIONS AS TO CHURCH GOVERNORS and ministers, “bishop-elders, and deacons,” are such as were natural for the apostle, in prospect of his own approaching removal, to give to Timothy, the president of the Church at Ephesus, and to Titus, holding the same office in Crete, for securing the due administration of the Church when he should be no more, and at a time when heresies were rapidly springing up. Compare his similar anxiety in his address to the Ephesian elders (^{<401>}Acts 20:21-30). The Presbyterate (elders; *priest* is a contraction from presbyter) and Diaconate had existed from the earliest times in the Church (^{<401>}Acts 6:3 11:30 14:23). Timothy and Titus, as superintendents or overseers (so *bishop* subsequently meant), were to exercise the same power in ordaining elders *at Ephesus* which the apostle had exercised in his *general* supervision of all the Gentile churches.

The PECULIARITIES OF MODES OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION, are such as the *difference of subject and circumstances of those addressed and those spoken of* in these Epistles, as compared with the other Epistles, would lead us to expect. Some of these peculiar phrases occur also in Galatians, in which, as in the Pastoral Epistles, he, with his characteristic fervor, attacks the false teachers. Compare ^{<512>}1 Timothy 2:6 ^{<501>}Titus 2:14, “gave Himself for us,” with ^{<800>}Galatians 1:4 ^{<511>}1 Timothy 1:17 ^{<501>}2 Timothy 4:18, “for ever and ever,” with ^{<801>}Galatians 1:5: “before God,” ^{<511>}1 Timothy 5:21 6:13 ^{<512>}2 Timothy 2:14 4:1, with ^{<801>}Galatians 1:20: “a pillar,” ^{<511>}1 Timothy 3:15, with ^{<801>}Galatians 2:9: “mediator,” ^{<511>}1 Timothy 2:5, with ^{<801>}Galatians 3:20: “in due season,” ^{<511>}1 Timothy 2:6 6:15 ^{<501>}Titus 1:3 with ^{<801>}Galatians 6:9.

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING. — The First Epistle to Timothy was written not long after Paul had left Ephesus for Macedon (^{<501>}1 Timothy 1:3). Now, as Timothy was in Macedon with Paul (^{<600>}2 Corinthians 1:1) on the occasion of Paul’s having passed from Ephesus into that country, as recorded, ^{<402>}Acts 19:22 ^{<401>}Acts 20:1, whereas the First Epistle to

Timothy contemplates a longer stay of Timothy in Ephesus, MOSHEIM supposes that Paul was nine *months* of the “three years” stay mostly at Ephesus (~~408~~ Acts 20:31) in Macedonia, and elsewhere (perhaps Crete), (the mention of only “three months” and “two years,” ~~408~~ Acts 19:8,10, favors this, the remaining nine months being spent elsewhere); and that during these nine months Timothy, in Paul’s absence, superintended the Church of Ephesus. It is not likely that Ephesus and the neighboring churches should have been left long without church officers and church organization, rules respecting which are given in this Epistle. Moreover, Timothy was still “a youth” (~~504~~ 1 Timothy 4:12), which he could hardly be called *after* Paul’s first imprisonment, when he must have been at least thirty-four years of age. Lastly, in ~~405~~ Acts 20:25, Paul asserts his *knowledge* that *the Ephesians should not all see his face again*, so that ~~500~~ 1 Timothy 1:3 will thus refer to his sojourn at Ephesus, recorded in ~~400~~ Acts 19:10, whence he passed into Macedonia. But the difficulty is to account for the false teachers having sprung up almost immediately (according to this theory) after the foundation of the Church. However, his visit recorded in ~~401~~ Acts 19:1-41 was not his first visit. The beginning of the Church at Ephesus was probably made at his visit a year before (~~400~~ Acts 18:19-21). Apollos, Aquila and Priscilla, carried on the work (~~400~~ Acts 18:24-26). Thus, as to the sudden growth of false teachers, there was time enough for their springing up, especially considering that the first converts at Ephesus were under Apollos’ imperfect Christian teachings at first, imbued as he was likely to be with the tenets of PHILO of Alexandria, Apollos’ native town, combined with John the Baptist’s Old Testament teachings (~~400~~ Acts 18:24-26). Besides Ephesus, from its position in Asia, its notorious voluptuousness and sorcery (~~400~~ Acts 19:18,19), and its lewd worship of Diana (answering to the Phoenician Ashtoreth), was likely from the first to tinge Christianity in some of its converts with Oriental speculations and Asiatic licentiousness of practices. Thus the phenomenon of the phase of error presented in this Epistle, being *intermediate between Judaism and later Gnosticism* (see above), would be such as might occur at an early period in the *Ephesian Church*, as well as later, when we know it had open “apostles” of error (~~400~~ Revelation 2:2,6), and Nicolaitans infamous in practice. As to the close connection between this First Epistle and the Second Epistle (which must have been written at the close of Paul’s life), on which ALFORD relies for his theory of making the First

Epistle also written at the close of Paul's life, the similarity of circumstances, the person addressed being one and the same, and either in Ephesus at the time, or at least connected with Ephesus as its church overseer, and having heretics to contend with of the same stamp as in the First Epistle, would account for the connection. There is not so great identity of tone as to compel us to adopt the theory that some years *could not* have elapsed between the two Epistles.

However, all these arguments against the later date may be answered. This First Epistle may refer not to the *first* organization of the Church under its bishops, or elders and deacons, but to the *moral qualifications* laid down at a later period for those officers when scandals rendered such directions needful. Indeed, the object for which he left Timothy at Ephesus he states (^{<5008>}1 Timothy 1:3) to be, not to organize the Church for the first time, but to restrain the false teachers. The directions as to the choice of fit elders and deacons refer to the filling up of vacancies, not to their first appointment. The fact of there existing an institution for Church widows implies an established organization. As to Timothy's "youth," it may be spoken of *comparatively young* compared with Paul, now "the aged" (^{<5009>}Philemon 1:9), and with some of the Ephesian elders, senior to Timothy *their overseer*. As to ^{<4015>}Acts 20:25, we know not but that "all" of the elders of Ephesus called to Miletus "never saw Paul's face" afterwards, as he "knew" (doubtless by inspiration) would be the case, which obviates the need of ALFORD'S lax view, that Paul was wrong in this his positive inspired anticipation (for such it was, not a mere boding surmise as to the future). Thus he probably visited Ephesus again (^{<5008>}1 Timothy 1:3 ^{<5009>}2 Timothy 1:18 4:20, he would hardly have been at *Miletum*, so near Ephesus, without visiting Ephesus) after his first imprisonment in Rome, though all the Ephesian elders whom he had addressed formerly at Miletus did not again see him. The general similarity of subject and style, and of the *state of the Church* between the two Epistles, favors the view that they were near one another in date. Also, against the theory of the early date is the difficulty of defining, when, during Paul's two or three years' stay at Ephesus, we can insert an absence of Paul from Ephesus long enough for the requirements of the case, which imply a lengthened stay and superintendence of Timothy at Ephesus (see, however, ^{<5014>}1 Timothy 3:14, on the other side) after having

been “left” by Paul there. Timothy did not stay there when Paul left Ephesus (~~4122~~ Acts 19:22 20:1 ~~4001~~ 2 Corinthians 1:1). In ~~5034~~ 1 Timothy 3:14, Paul says, “I write, hoping to come unto thee *shortly*,” but on the earlier occasion of his passing from Ephesus to Macedon he had no such expectation, but had planned to spend the summer in Macedon, and the winter in Corinth, (~~4305~~ 1 Corinthians 16:6). The expression “*Till I come*” (~~5013~~ 1 Timothy 4:13), implies that Timothy was not to leave his post till Paul should arrive; this and the former objection, however, do not hold good against MOSHEIM’s theory. Moreover, Paul in his farewell address to the Ephesian elders *prophetically anticipates* the rise of false teachers *hereafter* of their own selves; therefore this First Epistle, which speaks of their *actual* presence at Ephesus, would naturally seem to be not prior, but subsequent, to the address, that is, will belong to the later date assigned. In the Epistle to the Ephesians no notice is taken of the Judæo-Gnostic errors, which would have been noticed had they been really in existence; however, they are alluded to in the contemporaneous sister Epistle to Colossians (~~5011~~ Colossians 2:1-23).

Whatever doubt must always remain as to the date of the First Epistle, there can be hardly any as to that of the Second Epistle. In ~~5032~~ 2 Timothy 4:13, Paul directs Timothy to bring the books and cloak which the apostle had left at Troas. Assuming that the visit to Troas referred to is the one mentioned in ~~4015~~ Acts 20:5-7, it will follow that the cloak and parchments lay for about seven years at Troas, that being the time that elapsed between the visit and Paul’s first imprisonment at Rome: a very unlikely supposition, that he should have left either unused for so long. Again, when, during his first Roman imprisonment, he wrote to the Colossians (~~5044~~ Colossians 4:14) and Philemon (~~5023~~ Philemon 1:24), Demas was with him; but when he was writing ~~5040~~ 2 Timothy 4:10, Demas had forsaken him from love of this world, and gone to Thessalonica. Again, when he wrote to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon, he had good hopes of a speedy liberation; but here in ~~5046~~ 2 Timothy 4:6-8, he anticipates immediate death, having been at least once already tried (~~5046~~ 2 Timothy 4:16). Again, he is in this Epistle represented as in closer confinement than he was when writing those former Epistles in his first imprisonment (even in the Philippians, which represent him in greater uncertainty as to his life, he cherished the hope of soon being delivered, ~~5072~~ Philippians 2:24 ~~5016~~ 2

Timothy 1:16-18 2:9 4:6-8,16). Again (⁵⁰⁰2 Timothy 4:20), he speaks of having left Trophimus sick at Miletum. This could not have been on the occasion, ⁴⁰⁵Acts 20:15. For Trophimus was with Paul at Jerusalem shortly afterwards (⁴⁰⁷Acts 21:29). Besides, he would thus be made to speak of an event six or seven years after its occurrence, as a recent event: moreover, Timothy was, on that occasion of the apostle being at Miletum, with Paul, and therefore needed not to be informed of Trophimus' sickness there (⁴⁰⁶Acts 20:4-17). Also, the statement (⁵⁰⁰2 Timothy 4:20), "Erastus abode at Corinth," implies that Paul had shortly before been at Corinth, and left Erastus there; but Paul had not been at Corinth for several years before his first imprisonment, and in the interval Timothy had been with him, so that he did not need to write subsequently about that visit. He must therefore have been liberated after his first imprisonment (indeed, ⁸³³Hebrews 13:23,24, expressly proves that the writer was in *Italy* and *at liberty*), and resumed his apostolic journeyings, and been imprisoned at Rome again, whence shortly before his death he wrote Second Timothy.

EUSEBIUS [*Chronicles*, Anno 2083] (beginning October, A.D. 67), says, "Nero, to his other crimes, added the persecution of Christians: under him the apostles Peter and Paul consummated their martyrdom at Rome." So JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*], "In the fourteenth year of Nero, Paul was beheaded at Rome for Christ's sake, on the same day as Peter, and was buried on the Ostian Road, in the thirty-seventh year after the death of our Lord." ALFORD reasonably conjectures the Pastoral Epistles were written near this date. The interval was possibly filled up (so CLEMENT OF ROME states that Paul preached as far as "to the extremity of the west") by a journey to Spain (⁶⁵²Romans 15:24,28), according to his own original intention. MURATORI's *Fragment on the Canon of Scripture* (about A.D. 170) also alleges Paul's journey into Spain. So EUSEBIUS, CHRYSOSTOM, and JEROME. Be that as it may, he seems shortly before his second imprisonment to have visited Ephesus, where a new body of elders governed the Church (⁴⁰⁵Acts 20:25), say in the latter end of A.D. 66, or beginning of 67. Supposing him thirty at his conversion, he would now be upwards of sixty, and older in constitution than in years, through continual hardship. Even four years before he called himself "Paul the aged" (⁵⁰⁰Philemon 1:9).

From Ephesus he went into Macedonia (^{500B}1 Timothy 1:3). He may have written the First Epistle to Timothy from that country. But his use of “went,” not “came,” in ^{500B}1 Timothy 1:3, “When I went into Macedonia,” implies he was not there when writing. Wherever he was, he writes uncertain how long he may be detained from coming to Timothy (^{500B}1 Timothy 3:14,15). BIRKS shows the probability that he wrote from Corinth, between which city and Ephesus the communication was rapid and easy. His course, as on both former occasions, was from Macedon to Corinth. He finds a coincidence between ^{500B}1 Timothy 2:11-14, and ^{638B}1 Corinthians 14:34, as to women being silent in Church; and ^{540B}1 Timothy 5:17,18, and ^{400B}1 Corinthians 9:8-10, as to the maintenance of ministers, on the same principle as the Mosaic law, that the ox should not be muzzled that treadeth out the corn; and ^{505B}1 Timothy 5:19,20, and ^{471B}2 Corinthians 13:1-4, as to charges against elders. It would be natural for the apostle *in the very place where these directions had been enforced*, to reproduce them in his letter.

The date of the Epistle to Titus must depend on that assigned to First Timothy, with which it is connected in subject, phraseology, and tone. There is no difficulty in the Epistle to Titus, *viewed by itself*, in assigning it to the earlier date, namely, before Paul’s first imprisonment. In ^{448B}Acts 18:18,19, Paul, in journeying from Corinth to Palestine, for some cause or other landed at Ephesus. Now we find (^{500B}Titus 3:13) that Apollos in going from Ephesus to Corinth was to touch *at Crete* (which seems to coincide with Apollos’ journey from Ephesus to Corinth, recorded in ^{448B}Acts 18:24,27 19:1); therefore it is not unlikely that Paul may have taken Crete similarly on his way between Corinth and Ephesus; or, perhaps been driven out of his course to it in one of his three shipwrecks spoken of in ^{470B}2 Corinthians 11:25,26; this will account for his taking Ephesus on his way from Corinth to Palestine, though out of his regular course. At Ephesus Paul may have written the Epistle to Titus [HUG]; there he probably met Apollos and gave the Epistle to Titus to his charge, before his departure for Corinth by way of Crete, and before the apostle’s departure for Jerusalem (^{448B}Acts 18:19-21,24). Moreover, on Paul’s way back from Jerusalem and Antioch, he traveled some time in Upper Asia (^{440B}Acts 19:1); and it was then, probably, that his intention to “winter at Nicopolis” was realized, there being a town of that name between Antioch

and Tarsus, lying on Paul's route to Galatia (^{<5082>}Titus 3:12). Thus, First Timothy will, in this theory, be placed two and a half years later (^{<4001>}Acts 20:1; compare ^{<5003>}1 Timothy 1:3).

ALFORD'S argument for classing the Epistle to Titus with First Timothy, as written after Paul's first Roman imprisonment, stands or falls with his argument for assigning First Timothy to that date. Indeed, HUG'S unobjectionable argument for the earlier date of the Epistle to Titus, favors the early date assigned to First Timothy, which is so much akin to it, if other arguments be not thought to counterbalance this. The Church of Crete had been just founded (^{<5005>}Titus 1:5), and yet the same heresies are censured in it as in Ephesus, which shows that no argument, such as ALFORD alleges against the earlier date of First Timothy, can be drawn from them (^{<5001>}Titus 1:10,11,15,16 3:9,11). But vice versa, if, as seems likely from the arguments adduced, the First Epistle to Timothy be assigned to the later date, the Epistle to Titus must, from similarity of style, belong to the same period. ALFORD traces Paul's last journey *before his second imprisonment* thus: To Crete (^{<5005>}Titus 1:5), Miletus (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:20), Colosse (fulfilling his intention, ^{<5002>}Philemon 1:22), Ephesus (^{<5003>}1 Timothy 1:3 ^{<5018>}2 Timothy 1:18), from which neighborhood he wrote the Epistle to Titus; Troas, Macedonia, Corinth (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:20), Nicopolis (^{<5082>}Titus 3:12) *in Epirus*, where he had intended to winter; a place in which, as being a Roman colony, he would be free from tumultuary violence, and yet would be more open to a direct attack from foes in the metropolis, Rome. Being known in Rome as the leader of the Christians, he was probably [ALFORD] arrested as implicated in causing the fire in A.D. 64, attributed by Nero to the Christians, and was sent to Rome by the Duumvirs of Nicopolis. There he was imprisoned as a common malefactor (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 2:9); his Asiatic friends deserted him, except Onesiphorus (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 1:16). Demas, Crescens, and Titus, left him. Tychicus he had sent to Ephesus. Luke alone remained with him (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:10-12). Under the circumstances he writes the Second Epistle to Timothy, most likely while Timothy was at Ephesus (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 2:17; compare ^{<5003>}1 Timothy 1:20 ^{<5003>}2 Timothy 4:13), begging him to come to him before winter (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:21), and anticipating his own execution soon (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:6). Tychicus was perhaps the bearer of the Second Epistle (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:12). His defense was not made before the

emperor, for the latter was then in Greece (^{<5006}2 Timothy 4:16,17). Tradition represents that he died by the sword, which accords with the fact that his Roman citizenship would exempt him from torture; probably late in A.D. 67 or A.D. 68, the last year of Nero.

Timothy is first mentioned, (^{<4401}Acts 16:1, as dwelling in Lystra (not Derbe, compare ^{<4006}Acts 20:4). His mother was a Jewess named Eunice (^{<5006}2 Timothy 1:5); his father, “a Greek” (that is, a Gentile). As Timothy is mentioned as “a disciple” in (^{<4401}Acts 16:1, he must have been converted before, and this by Paul (^{<5001}1 Timothy 1:2), probably at his former visit to Lystra (^{<4406}Acts 14:6); at the same time, probably, that his Scripture-loving mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, were converted to Christ from Judaism (^{<5004}2 Timothy 3:14,15). Not only the good report given as to him by the brethren of Lystra, but also his origin, partly Jewish, partly Gentile, adapted him specially for being Paul’s assistant in missionary work, laboring as the apostle did in each place, firstly among the Jews, and then among the Gentiles. In order to obviate Jewish prejudices, he first circumcised him. He seems to have accompanied Paul in his tour through Macedonia; but when the apostle went forward to Athens, Timothy and Silas remained in Berea. Having been sent back by Paul to visit the Thessalonian Church (^{<5001}1 Thessalonians 3:2), he brought his report of it to the apostle at Corinth (^{<5001}1 Thessalonians 3:6). Hence we find his name joined with Paul’s in the addresses of both the Epistles to Thessalonians, which were written at Corinth. We again find him “ministering to” Paul during the lengthened stay at Ephesus (^{<4402}Acts 19:22). Thence he was sent before Paul into Macedonia and to Corinth (^{<4007}1 Corinthians 4:17 16:10). He was with Paul when he wrote the Second Epistle to Corinthians (^{<4002}2 Corinthians 1:1); and the following winter in Corinth, when Paul sent from thence his Epistle to the Romans (^{<5001}Romans 16:21). On Paul’s return to Asia through Macedonia, he went forward and waited for the apostle at Troas (^{<4003}Acts 20:3-5). Next we find him with Paul during his imprisonment at Rome, when the apostle wrote the Epistles to Colossians (^{<5001}Colossians 1:1), Philemon (^{<5001}Philemon 1:1), and Philippians (^{<5001}Philippians 1:1). He was imprisoned and set at liberty about the same time as the writer of the Hebrews (^{<5001}Hebrews 13:23). In the Pastoral Epistles, we find him mentioned as left by the apostle at Ephesus to superintend the Church there (^{<5001}1 Timothy 1:3). The last notice of him is

in the request which Paul makes to him (⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 4:21) to “come before winter,” that is about A.D. 67 [ALFORD]. EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.42], reports that he was first bishop of Ephesus; and [NICOPHORUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.11], represents that he died by martyrdom. If then, St. John, as tradition represents, resided and died in that city, it must have been *at a later period*. Paul himself ordained or consecrated him with laying on of his own hands, and those of the presbytery, in accordance with prophetic intimations given respecting him by those possessing the prophetic gift (⁵⁰¹⁸1 Timothy 1:18 4:14 ⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 1:6). His self-denying character is shown by his leaving home at once to accompany the apostle, and submitting to circumcision for the Gospel’s sake; and also by his abstemiousness (noted in ⁵⁰²³1 Timothy 5:23) notwithstanding his bodily infirmities, which would have warranted a more generous diet. Timidity and a want of self-confidence and boldness in dealing with the difficulties of his position, seem to have been a defect in his otherwise beautiful character as a Christian minister (⁵⁰⁰⁰1 Corinthians 16:10 ⁵⁰⁴²1 Timothy 4:12 ⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 1:7).

The DESIGN of the First Epistle was:

- (1) to direct Timothy to charge the false teachers against continuing to teach other doctrine than that of the Gospel (⁵⁰⁰⁸1 Timothy 1:3-20; compare ⁵⁰¹¹Revelation 2:1-6);
- (2) to give him instructions as to the orderly conducting of worship, the qualifications of bishops and deacons, and the selection of widows who should, in return for Church charity, do appointed service (⁵⁰⁰¹1 Timothy 2:1-6:2);
- (3) to warn against covetousness, a sin prevalent at Ephesus, and to urge to good works (⁵⁰⁰⁸1 Timothy 6:3-19).

CHAPTER 1

1 TIMOTHY 1:1-20.

ADDRESS: PAUL'S DESIGN IN HAVING LEFT TIMOTHY AT EPHESUS, NAMELY, TO CHECK FALSE TEACHERS; TRUE USE OF THE LAW; HARMONIZING WITH THE GOSPEL; GOD'S GRACE IN CALLING PAUL, ONCE A BLASPHEMER, TO EXPERIENCE AND TO PREACH IT; CHARGES TO TIMOTHY.

1. by the commandment of God — the authoritative *injunction*, as well as the commission, of God. In the earlier Epistles the phrase is, “by the *will* of God.” Here it is expressed in a manner implying that a necessity was laid on him to act as an apostle, not that it was merely at his option. The same expression occurs in the doxology, probably written long after the Epistle itself [ALFORD] (⁵⁰⁰⁶Romans 16:26).

God our Savior — The Father (⁵⁰⁰⁸1 Timothy 2:3 4:10 ⁴⁰⁴⁰Luke 1:47 ⁵⁰⁰⁹2 Timothy 1:9 ⁵⁰⁰⁸Titus 1:3 2:10 3:4 ⁶⁰²⁵Jude 1:25). It was a Jewish expression in devotion, drawn from the Old Testament (compare ⁵⁹⁰²Psalms 106:21).

our hope — (⁵⁰⁰⁷Colossians 1:27 ⁵⁰⁰⁸Titus 1:2 2:13).

2. my own son — literally, “a *genuine* son” (compare ⁴⁰⁰⁰Acts 16:1 ⁴⁰⁴¹1 Corinthians 4:14-17). See *Introduction*.

mercy — added here, in addressing Timothy, to the ordinary salutation, “Grace unto you” (⁴⁰⁰⁰Romans 1:7 ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 1:3, etc.), and peace.” In ⁴⁰⁰⁶Galatians 6:16, “peace and *mercy*” occur. There are many similarities of style between the Epistle to the Galatians and the Pastoral Epistles (see *Introduction*); perhaps owing to his there, as here, having, as a leading object in writing, the correction of false teachers, especially as to the right and wrong use of the *law* (⁵⁰⁰⁹1 Timothy 1:9). If the earlier date be assigned to First Timothy, it will fall not long after, or before (according as the Epistle to the Galatians was written at Ephesus or at Corinth) the writing

of the Epistle to the Galatians, which also would account for some similarity of style. “Mercy” is grace of a more tender kind, exercised towards the *miserable*, the experience of which in one’s own case especially fits for the Gospel MINISTRY. Compare as to Paul himself (⁵⁰¹⁴1 Timothy 1:14,16 ⁴⁰²⁵1 Corinthians 7:25 ⁴⁰⁰⁶2 Corinthians 4:1 ⁵⁰¹⁷Hebrews 2:17) [BENGEL]. He did not use “mercy” as to the churches, because “mercy” in all its fullness already existed towards them; but in the case of an individual minister, fresh measures of it were continually needed. “Grace” has reference to the *sins* of men; “mercy” to their *misery*. God extends His *grace* to men as they are guilty; His “mercy” to them as they are miserable [TRENCH].

Jesus Christ — The oldest manuscripts read the order, “Christ Jesus.” In the Pastoral Epistles “Christ” is often put before “Jesus,” to give prominence to the fact that the *Messianic* promises of the Old Testament, well known to Timothy (⁵⁰¹⁵2 Timothy 3:15), were fulfilled in Jesus.

3. Timothy’s superintendence of the Church at Ephesus was as *locum tenens* for the apostle, and so was temporary. Thus, the office of superintending overseer, needed for a time at Ephesus or Crete, in the absence of the presiding apostle, subsequently became a permanent institution on the removal, by death, of the apostles who heretofore superintended the churches. The first title of these overseers seems to have been “angels” (⁴⁰¹²Revelation 1:20).

As I besought thee to abide still — He meant to have added, “so I still beseech thee,” but does not complete the sentence until he does so *virtually*, not formally, at ⁵⁰¹⁸1 Timothy 1:18.

at Ephesus — Paul, in ⁴⁰²⁵Acts 20:25, declared to the Ephesian elders, “I know that ye all shall see my face no more.” If, then, as the balance of arguments seems to favor (see *Introduction*), this Epistle was written subsequently to Paul’s first imprisonment, the apparent discrepancy between his prophecy and the event may be reconciled by considering that the terms of the former were not that *he* should never visit *Ephesus* again (which this verse implies he did), but that *they all* should “see his face no more.” I cannot think with BIRKS, that this verse is compatible with his theory, that Paul did not actually visit Ephesus, though in its immediate neighborhood (compare ⁵⁰¹⁴1 Timothy 3:14 4:13). The corresponding

conjunction to “as” is not given, the sentence not being completed till it is virtually so at ^{<518>}1 Timothy 1:18.

I besought — a mild word, instead of authoritative command, to Timothy, as a fellow helper.

some — The indefinite pronoun is *slightly* contemptuous as to them (^{<402>}Galatians 2:12 ^{<510>}Jude 1:4), [ELLCOTT].

teach no other doctrine — than what I have taught (^{<506>}Galatians 1:6-9). His prophetic bodings some years before (^{<419>}Acts 20:29,30) were now being realized (compare ^{<508>}1 Timothy 6:3).

4. fables — legends about the origin and propagation of angels, such as the false teachers taught at Colosse (^{<512>}Colossians 2:18-23). “Jewish fables” (^{<5014>}Titus 1:14). “Profane, and old wives’ fables” (^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:7 ^{<5004>}2 Timothy 4:4).

genealogies — not merely such civil genealogies as were common among the Jews, whereby they traced their descent from the patriarchs, to which Paul would not object, and which he would not as here class with “fables,” but Gnostic genealogies of spirits and aeons, as they called them, “Lists of Gnostic emanations” [ALFORD]. So TERTULLIAN [*Against Valentinian*, c. 3], and IRENAEUS [*Preface*]. The Judaizers here alluded to, while maintaining the perpetual obligation of the Mosaic law, joined with it a theosophic ascetic tendency, pretending to see in it mysteries deeper than others could see. The *seeds*, not the *full-grown* Gnosticism of the post-apostolic age, then existed. This formed the transition stage between Judaism and Gnosticism. “Endless” refers to the tedious unprofitableness of their lengthy genealogies (compare ^{<5089>}Titus 3:9). Paul opposes to their “aeons,” the “King of the aeons (so the Greek, ^{<5017>}1 Timothy 1:17), whom be glory throughout the aeons of aeons.” The word “aeons” was probably not used in the technical sense of the latter Gnostics as yet; but “the only wise God” (^{<5017>}1 Timothy 1:17), by anticipation, confutes the subsequently adopted notions in the Gnostics’ own phraseology.

questions — of mere speculation (^{<4251>}Acts 25:20), not practical; generating merely curious discussions. “Questions and strifes of words” (^{<5001>}1 Timothy 6:4): “to no profit” (^{<5014>}2 Timothy 2:14); “gendering strifes” (^{<5023>}2

Timothy 2:23). “Vain jangling” (⁵⁰⁰⁶1 Timothy 1:6,7) of would-be “teachers of the law.”

godly edifying — The oldest manuscripts read, “*the dispensation of God*,” the Gospel dispensation of God towards man (⁴⁹⁷1 Corinthians 9:17), “which is (has its element) in faith.” CONYBEARE translates, “The exercising of *the stewardship* of God” (⁴⁹⁷1 Corinthians 9:17). He infers that the false teachers in Ephesus were presbyters, which accords with the prophecy, ⁴²⁸Acts 20:30. However, the oldest *Latin* versions, and IRENAEUS and HILARY, support *English Version* reading. Compare ⁵⁰⁰⁶1 Timothy 1:5, “faith unfeigned.”

5. But — in contrast to the doctrine of the false teachers.

the end — the aim.

the commandment — *Greek*, “of the charge” which you ought to urge on your flock. Referring to the same *Greek* word as in ⁵⁰⁰⁸1 Timothy 1:3,18; here, however, in a larger sense, as including *the Gospel* “*dispensation of God*” (see on ⁵⁰⁰⁴1 Timothy 1:4; ⁵⁰¹¹1 Timothy 1:11), which was the sum and substance of the “charge” committed to Timothy wherewith he should “charge” his flock.

charity — LOVE; the sum and end of the law and of the Gospel alike, and that wherein the Gospel is the fulfillment of the spirit of the law in its every essential jot and tittle (⁶³⁰Romans 13:10). The foundation is *faith* (⁵⁰⁰⁴1 Timothy 1:4), the “end” is *love* (⁵⁰¹⁴1 Timothy 1:14 ⁵⁰¹⁶Titus 3:15).

out of — springing as from a fountain.

pure heart — a heart purified by faith (⁴⁴⁵⁹Acts 15:9 ⁵¹²²2 Timothy 2:22 ⁵⁰¹⁵Titus 1:15).

good conscience — a conscience cleared from guilt by the effect of sound faith in Christ (⁵⁰¹⁹1 Timothy 1:19 ⁵⁰³⁹1 Timothy 3:9 ⁵¹⁰⁸2 Timothy 1:3 ⁴¹⁸²1 Peter 3:21). Contrast ⁵⁰⁴²1 Timothy 4:2 ⁵⁰¹⁵Titus 1:15; compare ⁴²¹⁶Acts 23:1. John uses “heart,” where Paul would use “conscience.” In Paul the understanding is the seat of *conscience*; the *heart* is the seat of *love* [BENGEL]. A good conscience is joined with sound faith; a bad conscience with unsoundness in the faith (compare ⁵⁰⁹⁴Hebrews 9:14).

faith unfeigned — not a hypocritical, dead, and unfruitful faith, but faith working by love (^{<886>}Galatians 5:6). The false teachers drew men off from such a loving, working, real faith, to profitless, speculative “questions” (^{<5004>}1 Timothy 1:4) and jangling (^{<5006>}1 Timothy 1:6).

6. From which — namely, from a pure heart, good conscience, and faith unfeigned, the well-spring of love.

having swerved — literally, “having missed the mark (the ‘end’) to be aimed at.” It is translated, “erred,” ^{<5021>}1 Timothy 6:21 ^{<5028>}2 Timothy 2:18. Instead of aiming at and attaining the graces above named, they “have turned aside (^{<5055>}1 Timothy 5:15 ^{<5004>}2 Timothy 4:4 ^{<5023>}Hebrews 12:13) unto vain jangling”; literally, “vain talk,” about the law and genealogies of angels (^{<5002>}1 Timothy 1:7 ^{<5039>}Titus 3:9 1:10); ^{<5061>}1 Timothy 6:20, “vain babblings and oppositions.” It is the greatest vanity when divine things are not truthfully discussed (^{<5022>}Romans 1:21) [BENGEL].

7. Sample of their “vain talk” (^{<5006>}1 Timothy 1:6).

Desiring — They are *would-be* teachers, not really so.

the law — the Jewish law (^{<5014>}Titus 1:14 3:9). The Judaizers here meant seem to be distinct from those impugned in the Epistles to the Galatians and Romans, who made the works of the law necessary to justification in opposition to Gospel grace. The Judaizers here meant corrupted the law with “fables,” which they pretended to found on it, subversive of morals as well as of truth. Their error was not in maintaining the *obligation* of the law, but in *abusing* it by fabulous and immoral interpretations of, and additions to, it.

neither what they say, nor whereof — neither understanding *their own assertions*, nor the *object* itself about which they make them. They understand as little about the one as the other [ALFORD].

8. But — “Now we know” (^{<5055>}Romans 3:19 7:14).

law is good — in full agreement with God’s holiness and goodness.

if a man — primarily, *a teacher*; then, every Christian.

use it lawfully — in its lawful place in the Gospel economy, namely, not as a means of a “righteous man” attaining higher perfection than could be attained by the Gospel alone (⁵⁰⁸1 Timothy 4:8 ⁵⁰⁹Titus 1:14), which was the perverted use to which the false teachers put it, but as a means of awakening the sense of sin in the ungodly (⁵⁰⁹1 Timothy 1:9,10; compare ⁵¹⁰Romans 7:7-12 ⁵¹¹Galatians 3:21).

9. law is not made for a righteous man — not for one standing by faith in the righteousness of Christ put on him for justification, and imparted inwardly by the Spirit for sanctification. “One not forensically amenable to the law” [ALFORD]. For *sanctification*, the law gives no inward power to fulfill it; but ALFORD goes too far in speaking of the righteous man as “not morally needing the law.” Doubtless, in proportion as he is inwardly led by the Spirit, the justified man needs not the law, which is only an outward rule (⁵¹⁴Romans 6:14 ⁵¹⁵Galatians 5:18,23). But as the justified man often does not give himself up wholly to the inward leading of the Spirit, he *morally* needs the outward *law* to show him his sin and God’s requirements. The reason why the ten commandments have no power to condemn the Christian, is not that they have no *authority* over him, but because Christ has fulfilled them as our surety (⁵¹⁶Romans 10:4).

disobedient — *Greek*, “not subject”; insubordinate; it is translated “unruly,” ⁵⁰⁰Titus 1:6,10; “lawless and disobedient” refer to opposers of the *law*, for whom it is “enacted” (so the *Greek*, for “is made”).

ungodly and ... sinners — *Greek*, he who does *not reverence* God, and he who *openly sins* against Him; the opposers of *God*, from the law comes.

unholy and profane — those inwardly *impure*, and those deserving exclusion from the outward participation in services of the sanctuary; sinners against the third and fourth commandments.

murderers — or, as the *Greek* may mean, “*smiters*” of fathers and ... mothers; sinners against the fifth commandment.

manslayers — sinners against the sixth commandment.

10. whoremongers, etc. — sinners against the seventh commandment.

men-stealers — that is, slave dealers. The most heinous offense against the eighth commandment. No stealing of a man's goods can equal in atrocity the stealing of a man's liberty. Slavery is not directly assailed in the New Testament; to have done so would have been to revolutionize violently the existing order of things. But Christianity teaches principles sure to undermine, and at last overthrow it, wherever Christianity has had its natural development (^{<4072>}Matthew 7:12).

liars ... perjured — offenders against the ninth commandment.

if there be any other thing — answering to the tenth commandment in its widest aspect. He does not particularly specify it because his object is to bring out the *grosser* forms of transgression; whereas the tenth is deeply spiritual, so much so indeed, that it was by it that the sense of sin, in its subtlest form of "lust," Paul tells us (^{<810>}Romans 7:7), was brought home to his own conscience. Thus, Paul argues, these *would-be teachers of the law*, while boasting of a higher perfection through it, really bring themselves down from the Gospel elevation to the level of the grossly "lawless," for whom, not for Gospel believers, the law was designed. And in actual practice the greatest sticklers for the law as the means of moral perfection, as in this case, are those ultimately liable to fall utterly from the morality of the law. Gospel grace is the only true means of sanctification as well as of justification.

sound — *healthy, spiritually wholesome* (^{<5068>}1 Timothy 6:3 ^{<5013>}2 Timothy 1:13 ^{<5013>}Titus 1:13 2:2), as opposed to *sickly, morbid* (as the *Greek* of "doting" means, ^{<5004>}1 Timothy 6:4), and "canker" (^{<817>}2 Timothy 2:17). "The doctrine," or "teaching, which is according to godliness" (^{<5068>}1 Timothy 6:3).

11. According to the glorious gospel — The *Christian's freedom from the law as a sanctifier, as well as a justifier*, implied in the previous, ^{<5009>}1 Timothy 1:9,10, is what this ^{<5011>}1 Timothy 1:11 is connected with. This exemption of the righteous from the law, and assignment of it to the lawless as its true object, is "according to the Gospel of the glory (so the *Greek*, compare *Note*, see on ^{<4004>}2 Corinthians 4:4) of the blessed God." The Gospel manifests God's glory (^{<8017>}Ephesians 1:17 3:16) in accounting "righteous" the believer, through the righteousness of Christ, without "the law" (^{<5009>}1 Timothy 1:9); and in imparting that righteousness whereby he

loathes all those sins against which (^{<5009>}1 Timothy 1:9,10) the law is directed. The term, “blessed,” indicates at once *immortality* and *supreme happiness*. The supremely blessed One is He from whom all blessedness flows. This term, as applied to GOD, occurs only here and in ^{<5065>}1 Timothy 6:15: appropriate in speaking here of the Gospel blessedness, in contrast to the *curse* on those under the law (^{<5009>}1 Timothy 1:9 ^{<8090>}Galatians 3:10).

committed to my trust — Translate as in the *Greek* order, which brings into prominent emphasis *Paul*, “committed in trust to me”; in contrast to the kind of law-teaching which *they* (who had no Gospel commission), the false teachers, *assumed to themselves* (^{<5008>}1 Timothy 1:8 ^{<5009>}Titus 1:3).

12. The honor done him in having the Gospel ministry committed to him suggests the digression to what he once was, no better (^{<5013>}1 Timothy 1:13) than those lawless ones described above (^{<5009>}1 Timothy 1:9,10), when the grace of our Lord (^{<5014>}1 Timothy 1:14) visited him.

And — omitted in most (not all) of the oldest manuscripts.

I thank — *Greek*, “I have (that is, feel) gratitude.”

enabled me — the same *Greek* verb as in ^{<4022>}Acts 9:22, “Saul increased the more in strength.” An undesigned coincidence between Paul and Luke, his companion. *Enabled* me, namely, for the ministry. “It is not in my own strength that I bring this doctrine to men, but as strengthened and nerved by Him who saved me” [THEODORET]. Man is by nature “without strength” (^{<6100>}Romans 5:6). True conversion and calling confer power [BENGEL].

for that — the main ground of his “thanking Christ.”

he counted me faithful — He foreordered and foresaw that I would be faithful to the trust committed to me. Paul’s *thanking* God for this shows that the merit of his faithfulness was due solely to God’s grace, not to his own natural strength (^{<4025>}1 Corinthians 7:25). *Faithfulness* is the quality required in a steward (^{<4002>}1 Corinthians 4:2).

putting me into — rather as in ^{<5009>}1 Thessalonians 5:9, “appointing me (in His sovereign purposes of grace) unto the ministry” (^{<4024>}Acts 20:24).

13. Who was before — *Greek*, “Formerly being a blasphemer.”
 “*Notwithstanding that I was before a blasphemer,*” etc. (⁴⁰⁹Acts 26:9,11).

persecutor — (⁴¹³Galatians 1:13).

injurious — *Greek*, “insulter”; one who acts injuriously from arrogant contempt of others. Translate, ⁴¹³Romans 1:30, “despiteful.” One who added insult to injury. BENGEL translates, “a despiser.” I prefer the idea, *contumelious to others* [WAHL]. Still I agree with BENGEL that “blasphemer” is against *God*, “persecutor,” against holy *men*, and “insolently injurious” includes, with the idea of injuring others, that of insolent “uppishness” [DONALDSON] in relation to *one’s self*. This threefold relation to God, to one’s neighbor, and to one’s self, occurs often in this Epistle (⁵⁰⁵1 Timothy 1:5,9,14 ⁵⁰²Titus 2:12).

I obtained mercy — God’s mercy, and Paul’s want of it, stand in sharp contrast [ELLICOTT]; *Greek*, “I was made the object of mercy.” The sense of mercy was perpetual in the mind of the apostle (compare *Note*, see on ⁵⁰⁰1 Timothy 1:2). Those who have felt mercy can best have mercy on those out of the way (⁵⁰⁸Hebrews 5:2,3).

because I did it ignorantly — *Ignorance* does not in itself deserve pardon; but it is a less culpable cause of unbelief than pride and wilful hardening of one’s self against the truth (⁴⁹⁴John 9:41 ⁴⁰⁹Acts 26:9). Hence it is Christ’s plea of intercession for His murderers (⁴²³Luke 23:34); and it is made by the apostles a mitigating circumstance in the Jews’ sin, and one giving a hope of a door of repentance (⁴⁸⁷Acts 3:17 ⁵⁰⁰Romans 10:2). The “because,” etc. does not imply that ignorance was a sufficient reason for *mercy* being bestowed; but shows how it was possible that such a sinner could obtain mercy. The positive ground of mercy being shown to him, lies solely in the compassion of God (⁵⁰⁸Titus 3:5). The ground of the *ignorance* lies in the *unbelief*, which implies that this ignorance is not unaccompanied with guilt. But there is a great difference between his honest zeal for the law, and a wilful striving against the Spirit of God (⁴¹²Matthew 12:24-32 ⁴¹⁵Luke 11:52) [WIESINGER].

14. And — *Greek*, “But.” Not only so (was *mercy* shown me), but
the grace — by which “I obtained mercy” (⁵⁰³1 Timothy 1:13).

was exceeding abundant — *Greek*, “superabounded.” Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (✠Romans 5:20).

with faith — *accompanied with* faith, the opposite of “unbelief” (✠1 Timothy 1:13).

love — in contrast to “a blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious.”

which is in Christ — as its element and home [ALFORD]: here as its source whence it flows to us.

15. faithful — worthy of credit, because “God” who says it “is faithful” to His word (✠1 Corinthians 1:9 ✠1 Thessalonians 5:24 ✠2 Thessalonians 3:3 ✠Revelation 21:5 22:6). This seems to have become an axiomatic *saying* among Christians the phrase, “faithful saying,” is peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles (✠1 Timothy 2:11 4:9 ✠Titus 3:8). Translate as *Greek*, “Faithful is the saying.”

all — all possible; full; to be received by all, and with all the faculties of the soul, mind, and heart. Paul, unlike the false teachers (✠1 Timothy 1:7), *understands what he is saying, and whereof he affirms*; and by his simplicity of style and subject, setting forth the grand fundamental truth of salvation through Christ, confutes the false teachers’ abstruse and unpractical speculations (✠1 Corinthians 1:18-28 ✠Titus 2:1).

acceptation — *reception* (as of a boon) into the heart, as well as the understanding, with all gladness; this is faith acting on the Gospel offer, and welcoming and appropriating it (✠Acts 2:41).

Christ — as promised.

Jesus — as manifested [BENGEL].

came into the world — which was full of sin (✠John 1:29 ✠Romans 5:12 ✠1 John 2:2). This implies His pre-existence. ✠John 1:9, *Greek*, “the true Light that, *coming into the world*, lighteth every man.”

to save sinners — even notable sinners like Saul of Tarsus. His instance was without a rival since the ascension, in point of the greatness of the sin and the greatness of the mercy: that the consenter to Stephen, the proto-martyr’s death, should be the successor of the same!

I am — not merely, “I was chief” (^{<639>}1 Corinthians 15:9 ^{<498>}Ephesians 3:8; compare ^{<283>}Luke 18:13). To each believer his own sins must always appear, as long as he lives, greater than those of others, which he never can know as he can know his own.

chief — the same *Greek* as in ^{<5016>}1 Timothy 1:16, “first,” which alludes to this fifteenth verse, Translate in both verses, “foremost.” Well might he infer where there was mercy for *him*, there is mercy for all who will come to Christ (^{<181>}Matthew 18:11 ^{<290>}Luke 19:10).

16. Howbeit — *Greek*, “But”; contrasting his own conscious sinfulness with God’s gracious visitation of him in mercy.

for this cause — for this very purpose.

that in me — in my case.

first — “foremost.” As I was “foremost” (*Greek* for *chief*, ^{<5015>}1 Timothy 1:15) in sin, so God has made me the “foremost” sample of *mercy*.

show — to His own glory (the middle *Greek*, voice), ^{<497>}Ephesians 2:7.

all long-suffering — *Greek*, “the whole (of His) long-suffering,” namely, in bearing so long with me while I was a persecutor.

a pattern — a sample (^{<606>}1 Corinthians 10:6,11) to assure the greatest sinners of the certainty that they shall not be rejected in coming to Christ, since even Saul found mercy. So David made his own case of pardon, notwithstanding the greatness of his sin, a sample to encourage other sinners to seek pardon (^{<495>}Psalms 32:5,6). The *Greek* for “pattern” is sometimes used for a “sketch” or outline — the filling up to take place in each man’s own case.

believe on him — Belief rests ON Him as the only foundation on which faith relies.

to life everlasting — the ultimate aim which faith always keeps in view (^{<502>}Titus 1:2).

17. A suitable conclusion to the beautifully simple enunciation of the Gospel, of which his own history is a living sample or pattern. It is from the experimental sense of grace that the doxology flows [BENGEL].

the King, eternal — literally, “King of the (eternal) ages.” The *Septuagint* translates ^{<158>}Exodus 15:18, “The Lord shall reign *for ages and beyond them*.” ^{<153>}Psalm 145:13, *Margin*, “Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,” literally, “a kingdom of all ages.” The “life everlasting” (^{<16>}1 Timothy 1:16) suggested here “the King *eternal*,” or *everlasting*. It answers also to “for ever and ever” at the close, literally, “to the ages of the ages” (the countless succession of ages made up of ages).

immortal — The oldest manuscripts read, “incorruptible.” The *Vulgate*, however, and one very old manuscript read as *English Version* (^{<12>}Romans 1:23).

invisible — (^{<16>}1 Timothy 6:16 ^{<130>}Exodus 33:20 ^{<118>}John 1:18 ^{<115>}Colossians 1:15 ^{<117>}Hebrews 11:27).

the only wise God — The oldest manuscripts omit “wise,” which probably crept in from ^{<127>}Romans 16:27, where it is more appropriate to the context than here (compare ^{<125>}Jude 1:25). “The only Potentate” (^{<16>}1 Timothy 6:15 ^{<160>}Psalm 86:10 ^{<154>}John 5:44).

for ever, etc. — See note, above. The thought of eternity (terrible as it is to unbelievers) is delightful to those assured of grace (^{<16>}1 Timothy 1:16) [BENGEL].

18. He resumes the subject begun at ^{<103>}1 Timothy 1:3. The conclusion (apodosis) to the foregoing, “*as I besought thee ... charge*” (^{<103>}1 Timothy 1:3), is here given, if not formally, at least substantially.

This charge — namely, “that thou in them (so the *Greek*) mightest war,” that is, fulfill thy high calling, not only as a Christian, but as a *minister* officially, one function of which is, to “*charge* some that they teach no other doctrine” (^{<103>}1 Timothy 1:3).

I commit — as a sacred deposit (^{<103>}1 Timothy 6:20 ^{<112>}2 Timothy 2:2) to be laid before thy hearers.

according to — in pursuance of; in consonance with.

the prophecies which went before on thee — the intimations given by prophets respecting thee at thy ordination, ^{<104>}1 Timothy 4:14 (as, probably, by Silas, a companion of Paul, and “a prophet,” ^{<152>}Acts 15:32).

Such prophetic intimation, as well as the good report given of Timothy by the brethren (^{<4412>}Acts 16:2), may have induced Paul to take him as his companion. Compare similar prophecies as to others: ^{<4411>}Acts 13:1-3, in connection with laying on of hands; ^{<44113>}Acts 11:28 21:10,11; compare ^{<4620>}1 Corinthians 12:10 14:1 ^{<4411>}Ephesians 4:11. In ^{<44113>}Acts 20:28, it is expressly said that “*the Holy Ghost* had made them (the Ephesian presbyters) overseers.” CLEMENT OF ROME [*Epistle to the Corinthians*], states it was the custom of the apostles “to make trial by the Spirit,” that is, by the “power of discerning,” in order to determine who were to be overseers and deacons in the several churches planted. So CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA says as to the churches near Ephesus, that the overseers were marked out for ordination by a revelation of the Holy Ghost to St. John.

by them — *Greek*, “in them”; arrayed as it were in them; armed with them.

warfare — not the mere “fight” (^{<5162>}1 Timothy 6:12 ^{<5002>}2 Timothy 4:7), but the *whole campaign*; the military service. Translate as *Greek*, not “a,” but “*the good warfare*.”

19. Holding — Keeping hold of “faith” and “good conscience” (^{<5005>}1 Timothy 1:5); not “putting the latter away” as “some.” *Faith* is like a very precious liquor; *a good conscience* is the clean, pure glass that contains it [BENGEL]. The loss of *good conscience* entails the *shipwreck of faith*. Consciousness of sin (unrepented of and forgiven) kills the germ of faith in man [WIESINGER].

which — *Greek* singular, namely, “good conscience,” not “faith” also; however, the result of *putting away* good conscience is, one *loses* faith also.

put away — a wilful act. They thrust it from them as a troublesome monitor. It reluctantly withdraws, extruded by force, when its owner is tired of its importunity, and is resolved to retain his sin at the cost of losing it. One cannot be on friendly terms with it and with sin at one and the same time.

made shipwreck — “with respect to THE faith.” *Faith* is the vessel in which they had professedly embarked, of which “good conscience” is the anchor. The ancient Church often used this image, comparing the course of

faith to navigation. The *Greek* does not imply that one having once had *faith* makes shipwreck of it, but that they who put away good conscience “make shipwreck with respect to THE faith.”

20. Hymenaeus — There is no difficulty in supposing him to be the Hymenaeus of ^{<517>}2 Timothy 2:17. Though “delivered over to Satan” (the lord of all outside the Church, ^{<408>}Acts 26:18, and the executor of wrath, when judicially allowed by God, on the disobedient, ^{<405>}1 Corinthians 5:5 ^{<411>}2 Corinthians 12:7), he probably was restored to the Church subsequently, and again troubled it. Paul, as an apostle, though distant at Rome pronounced the sentence to be executed at Ephesus, involving, probably, the excommunication of the offenders (^{<407>}Matthew 18:17,18). The sentence operated not only spiritually, but also physically, sickness, or some such visitation of God, falling on the person excommunicated, in order to bring him to repentance and salvation. Alexander here is probably “the coppersmith” who did Paul “much evil” when the latter visited Ephesus. The “delivering him to Satan” was probably the consequence of his *withstanding* the apostle (^{<514>}2 Timothy 4:14,15); as the same sentence on Hymenaeus was the consequence of “saying that the resurrection is past already” (^{<518>}2 Timothy 2:18; his putting away *good conscience*, naturally producing *shipwreck concerning FAITH*, ^{<519>}1 Timothy 1:19. If one’s religion better not his morals, his moral deficiencies will corrupt his religion. The rain which falls pure from heaven will not continue pure if it be received in an unclean vessel [ARCHBISHOP WHATELY]). It is possible that he is the Alexander, *then* a Jew, put forward by the Jews, doubtless against Paul, at the riot in Ephesus (^{<408>}Acts 19:33).

that they may — not “might”; implying that the effect still continues — the sentence is as yet unremoved.

learn — *Greek*, “be disciplined,” namely, by *chastisement* and suffering.

blaspheme — the name of God and Christ, by doings and teachings unworthy of their Christian profession (^{<512>}Romans 2:23,24 ^{<517>}James 2:7). Though the apostles had the power of excommunication, accompanied with bodily inflictions, miraculously sent (^{<408>}2 Corinthians 10:8), it does not follow that fallible ministers now have any power, save that of excluding from church fellowship notorious bad livers.

CHAPTER 2

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-15.

PUBLIC WORSHIP. DIRECTION AS TO INTERCESSIONS FOR ALL MEN, SINCE CHRIST IS A RANSOM FOR ALL. THE DUTIES OF MEN AND WOMEN RESPECTIVELY IN RESPECT TO PUBLIC PRAYER. WOMAN'S SUBJECTION; HER SPHERE OF DUTY.

1. therefore — taking up again the general subject of the Epistle in continuation (⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 2:1). “What I have therefore to say to thee by way of a *charge* (⁵⁰⁰³1 Timothy 1:3,18), is,” etc.

that, first of all ... be made — ALFORD takes it, “I *exhort first of all to make.*” “First of all,” doubtless, is to be connected with “I exhort”; what I *begin with* (for special reasons), is ... As the destruction of Jerusalem drew near, the Jews (including those at Ephesus) were seized with the dream of freedom from every yoke; and so virtually “blasphemed” (compare ⁵⁰⁰¹1 Timothy 1:20) God’s name by “speaking evil of dignities” (⁵⁰⁰¹1 Timothy 6:1 ⁵⁰⁰²2 Peter 2:10 ⁵⁰⁰³Jude 1:8). Hence Paul, in opposition, gives prominence to the injunction that prayer be made for *all* men, especially for *magistrates* and *kings* (⁵⁰⁰¹Titus 3:1-3) [OLSHAUSEN]. Some professing Christians looked down on all not Christians, as doomed to perdition; but Paul says *all men* are to be prayed for, as Christ died for all (⁵⁰⁰⁴1 Timothy 2:4-6).

supplications — a term implying the suppliant’s *sense of need*, and of *his own insufficiency*.

prayers — implying devotion.

intercessions — properly the *coming near to God* with childlike confidence, generally *in behalf of another*. The accumulation of terms implies prayer in its every form and aspect. according to all the relations implied in it.

2. For kings — an effectual confutation of the adversaries who accused the Christians of disaffection to the ruling powers (^{<417>}Acts 17:7 ^{<611>}Romans 13:1-7).

all ... in authority — literally, “in eminence”; in stations of eminence. The “quiet” of Christians was often more dependent on subordinate rulers, than on the supreme king; hence, “*all ... in authority*” are to be prayed for.

that we may lead — that we may be blessed with such good government as to lead ... ; or rather, as *Greek*, “to *pass*” or “*spend*.” The prayers of Christians for the government bring down from heaven peace and order in a state.

quiet — not troubled *from without*.

peaceable — “tranquil”; not troubled *from within* [OLSHAUSEN]. “He is *peaceable* (*Greek*) who makes no disturbance; he is *quiet* (*Greek*) who is himself free from disturbance” [TITTMANN].

in all godliness — “in all (possible ... requisite) *piety*” [ALFORD]. A distinct *Greek* word, ^{<510>}1 Timothy 2:10, expresses “godliness.”

honesty — *Greek*, “gravity” (^{<510>}Titus 2:2,7), “decorum,” or propriety of conduct. As “*piety*” is in relation to *God*, “gravity” is propriety of behavior among men. In the Old Testament the Jews were commanded to pray for their heathen rulers (^{<417>}Ezra 6:10 ^{<210>}Jeremiah 29:7). The Jews, by Augustus’ order, offered a lamb daily for the Roman emperor, till near the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jewish Zealots, instigated by Eleazar, caused this custom to cease [JOSEPHUS, *Wars of the Jews*, 2.17], whence the war originated, according to JOSEPHUS.

3. this — praying for all men.

in the sight of God — not merely *before men*, as if it were their favor that we sought (^{<417>}2 Corinthians 8:21).

our Savior — a title appropriate to the matter in hand. He who is “our Savior” *is willing that all should be saved* (^{<510>}1 Timothy 2:4 ^{<611>}Romans 5:18); therefore we should meet the will of God in behalf of others, by praying for the salvation of all men. More would be converted if we would pray more. He has actually saved *us* who believe, being “*our* Savior.” He is

willing that all should be saved, even those who do not as yet believe, if they will believe (compare ^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:10 ^{<512>}Titus 2:11).

4. “Imitate God.” Since He wishes that all should be saved, do you also wish it; and if you wish it, pray for it. For prayer is the instrument of effecting such things [CHRYSOSTOM]. Paul does not say, “He wishes *to save* all”; for then he *would* have saved all in matter of fact; but “will have all men to be saved,” implies the possibility of man’s accepting it (through God’s prevenient grace) or rejecting it (through man’s own perversity). Our prayers ought to include *all*, as God’s grace included *all*.

to come — They are not forced.

unto the knowledge — *Greek*, “the *full* knowledge” or “recognition” (See on ^{<432>}1 Corinthians 13:12; ^{<500>}Philippians 1:9).

the truth — the saving truth as it is in, and by, Jesus (^{<477>}John 17:3,17).

5. For there is one God — God’s *unity* in essence and purpose is a proof of His comprehending all His human children alike (created in His image) in His offer of grace (compare the same argument from His unity, ^{<488>}Romans 3:30 ^{<488>}Galatians 3:20); therefore all are to be prayed for. ^{<500>}1 Timothy 2:4 is proved from ^{<545>}1 Timothy 2:5; ^{<500>}1 Timothy 2:1, from ^{<500>}1 Timothy 2:4. The *one God* is common to all (^{<362>}Isaiah 45:22 ^{<475>}Acts 17:26). The one Mediator is mediator between God and all men potentially (^{<482>}Romans 3:29 ^{<405>}Ephesians 4:5,6 ^{<486>}Hebrews 8:6 9:15 12:24). They who have not this one God by one Mediator, have none: literally, a “go-between.” The *Greek* order is not “*and* one mediator,” but “one mediator *also* between ... While God will have all men to be saved by knowing God and the Mediator, there is a legitimate, holy order in the exercise of that will wherewith men ought to receive it. All mankind constitute, as it were, ONE MAN before God [BENGEL].

the man — rather “man,” absolutely and genetically: not a mere *individual man*: the Second Head of humanity, representing and embodying in Himself *the whole human race and nature*. There is no “the” in the *Greek*. This epithet is thus the strongest corroboration of his argument, namely, that Christ’s mediation affects the whole race, since there is but the one Mediator, designed as the Representative Man for all men alike (compare

^{<B15>}Romans 5:15 ^{<B16>}1 Corinthians 8:6 ^{<B17>}2 Corinthians 5:19 ^{<B18>}Colossians 2:14). His being “man” was necessary to His being a Mediator, sympathizing with us through experimental knowledge of our nature (^{<B19>}Isaiah 50:4 ^{<B20>}Hebrews 2:14 4:15). Even in nature, almost all blessings are conveyed to us from God, not immediately, but through the mediation of various agents. The effectual intercession of Moses for Israel (^{<B21>}Numbers 14:13-19, and ^{<B22>}Deuteronomy 9:1-29); of Abraham for Abimelech (^{<B23>}Genesis 20:7); of Job for his friends (^{<B24>}Job 42:10), the mediation being *PRESCRIBED* by *God* while declaring His purposes of forgiveness: all prefigure the grand mediation for all by the one Mediator. On the other hand, ^{<B25>}1 Timothy 3:16 asserts that He was also *God*.

6. gave himself — (^{<B26>}Titus 2:14). Not only *the Father* gave Him for us (^{<B27>}John 3:16); but *the Son* gave Himself (^{<B28>}Philippians 2:5-8).

ransom — properly of a captive slave. Man was the captive slave of Satan, sold under sin. He was unable to ransom himself, because absolute obedience is due to God, and therefore no act of ours can satisfy for the least offense. ^{<B29>}Leviticus 25:48 allowed one sold captive to be redeemed by one of his brethren. The Son of God, therefore, became man in order that, being made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, as our elder brother He should redeem us (^{<B30>}Matthew 20:28 ^{<B31>}Ephesians 1:7 ^{<B32>}1 Peter 1:18,19). The *Greek* implies not merely *ransom*, but a *substituted* or *equivalent ransom*: the *Greek* preposition, “*anti*,” implying reciprocity and vicarious substitution.

for all — *Greek*, “in behalf of all”: not merely for a privileged few; compare ^{<B33>}1 Timothy 2:1: the argument for *praying in behalf of all* is given here.

to be testified — *Greek*, “the testimony (that which was to be testified of, ^{<B34>}1 John 5:8-11) in its own due times,” or *seasons*, that is, in the times appointed by God for its being testified of (^{<B35>}1 Timothy 6:15 ^{<B36>}Titus 1:3). The oneness of the Mediator, involving the universality of redemption (which faith, however, alone appropriates), was the great subject of Christian testimony [ALFORD] (^{<B37>}1 Corinthians 1:6 2:1 ^{<B38>}2 Thessalonians 1:10).

7. Whereunto — For the giving of which testimony.

I am ordained — literally, “I was set”: the same *Greek*, as “putting me,” etc. (^{<5012>}1 Timothy 1:12).

preacher — literally, “herald” (^{<4021>}1 Corinthians 1:21 9:27 15:11 ^{<5011>}2 Timothy 1:11 ^{<5009>}Titus 1:3). He recurs to himself, as in ^{<5016>}1 Timothy 1:16, in *himself* a living *pattern* or announcement of the Gospel, so here “a herald and teacher of (it to) the Gentiles” (^{<4010>}Galatians 2:9 ^{<4001>}Ephesians 3:1-12 ^{<5029>}Colossians 1:23). The universality of his commission is an appropriate assertion here, where he is arguing to prove that prayers are to be made “for *all* men” (^{<5011>}1 Timothy 2:1).

I speak the truth ... and lie not — a strong asseveration of his universal commission, characteristic of the ardor of the apostle, exposed to frequent conflict (^{<5011>}Romans 11:1 ^{<4013>}2 Corinthians 11:13).

in faith and verity — rather, “in *the* faith and *the* truth.” The sphere in which his ministry was appointed to be exercised was *the faith* and *the truth* (^{<5014>}1 Timothy 2:4): *the Gospel truth*, the subject matter of *the faith* [WIESINGER].

8. I will — The *active* wish, or desire, is meant.

that men — rather as *Greek*, “that *the* men,” as distinguished from “the women,” to whom he has something different to say from what he said to the men (^{<5009>}1 Timothy 2:9-12 ^{<4014>}1 Corinthians 11:14,15 14:34,35). The *emphasis*, however, is not on this, but on the precept of *praying*, resumed from ^{<5011>}1 Timothy 2:1.

everywhere — *Greek*, “in every place,” namely, of public prayer. Fulfilling ^{<3011>}Malachi 1:11, “*In every place ... from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same ... incense shall be offered unto My name*”; and Jesus’ words, ^{<4020>}Matthew 18:20 ^{<4021>}John 4:21,23.

lifting up holy hands — The early Christians turned up their palms towards heaven, as those craving help do. So also Solomon (^{<1022>}1 Kings 8:22 ^{<4020>}Psalms 141:2). The Jews washed their hands before prayer (^{<4020>}Psalms 26:6). Paul figuratively (compare ^{<4020>}Job 17:9 ^{<5008>}James 4:8) uses language alluding to this custom here: so ^{<2015>}Isaiah 1:15,16. The *Greek* for “holy” means hands *which have committed no impiety, and observed every*

sacred duty. This (or at least the contrite desire to be so) is a needful qualification for effectual prayer (^{<1241>}Psalm 24:3,4).

without wrath — *putting it away* (^{<1063>}Matthew 5:23,24 6:15).

doubting — rather, “disputing,” as the *Greek* is translated in ^{<1414>}Philippians 2:14. Such things *hinder prayer* (^{<1091>}Luke 9:46 ^{<1401>}Romans 14:1 ^{<1081>}1 Peter 3:7). BENGEL supports *English Version* (compare an instance, ^{<1202>}2 Kings 7:2 ^{<1441>}Matthew 14:31 ^{<1112>}Mark 11:22-24 ^{<1006>}James 1:6).

9, 10. The context requires that we understand these directions as to women, in relation to their deportment *in public worship*, though the rules will hold good on *other* occasions *also*.

in modest apparel — “in seemly guise” [ELLICOTT]. The adjective means properly. *orderly, decorous, becoming*; the noun in secular writings means *conduct, bearing*. But here “apparel.” Women are apt to love fine dress; and at Ephesus the riches of some (^{<1067>}1 Timothy 6:17) would lead them to dress luxuriously. The *Greek* in ^{<1011>}Titus 2:3 is a more general term meaning “deportment.”

shamefacedness — TRENCH spells this word according to its true derivation, “shamefastness” (that which is made fast by an honorable shame); as “steadfastness” (compare ^{<1011>}1 Timothy 2:11,12).

sobriety — “self-restraint” [ALFORD]. Habitual inner self-government [TRENCH]. I prefer ELLICOTT’S translation, “sober-mindedness”: the well-balanced state of mind arising from habitual self-restraint.

with — *Greek*, “in.”

braided hair — literally, “plaits,” that is, plaited hair: probably with the “gold and pearls” intertwined (^{<1083>}1 Peter 3:3). Such gaud is characteristic of the spiritual harlot (^{<1174>}Revelation 17:4).

10. professing — *Greek*, “promising”: engaging to follow.

with good works — The *Greek* preposition is not the same as in ^{<1019>}1 Timothy 2:9; “by means of,” or “*through* good works.” Their adorning is to be effected *by means of* good works: not that they are to be clothed *in*, or *with*, them (^{<1021>}Ephesians 2:10). Works, not words in public, is their

province (^{540B}1 Timothy 2:8,11,12 ^{600B}1 Peter 3:1). *Works* are often mentioned in the Pastoral Epistles in order to oppose the loose living, combined with the loose doctrine, of the false teachers. The discharge of everyday duties is honored with the designation, “good works.”

11. learn — not “teach” (^{502D}1 Timothy 2:12 ^{434B}1 Corinthians 14:34). She should not even put questions in the public assembly (^{434B}1 Corinthians 14:35).

with all subjection — not “usurping authority” (^{502D}1 Timothy 2:12). She might teach, but not in public (^{483B}Acts 18:26). Paul probably wrote this Epistle from Corinth, where the precept (^{434B}1 Corinthians 14:34) was in force.

12. usurp authority — “to lord it over the man” [ALFORD], literally, “to be an autocrat.”

13. For — reason of the precept; the original order of creation.

Adam ... first — before Eve, who was created *for him* (^{610B}1 Corinthians 11:8,9).

14. Adam was not deceived — as Eve was *deceived* by the serpent; but was *persuaded* by his wife. ⁰⁰⁸⁷Genesis 3:17, “hearkened unto ... voice of ... wife.” But in ^{008B}Genesis 3:13, Eve says, “The *serpent beguiled me*.” Being more easily deceived, she more easily deceives [BENGEL], (^{471B}2 Corinthians 11:3). Last in being, she was first in sin — indeed, she alone was *deceived*. The subtle serpent knew that she was “the weaker vessel” (^{007D}1 Peter 3:7). He therefore tempted her, not Adam. She yielded to the temptations of sense and the *deceits of Satan*; he, to *conjugal* love. Hence, in the order of God’s judicial sentence, the serpent, the prime offender, stands first; the woman, who was deceived, next; and the man, persuaded by his wife, last (⁰⁰⁸⁴Genesis 3:14-19). In ^{485D}Romans 5:12, Adam is represented as the first transgressor; but there no reference is made to Eve, and Adam is regarded as the head of the sinning race. Hence, as here, ^{501B}1 Timothy 2:11, in ^{008B}Genesis 3:16, woman’s “subjection” is represented as the consequence of her being deceived.

being deceived — The oldest manuscripts read the compound *Greek* verb for the simple, “Having been *seduced by deceit*”: implying how *completely* Satan *succeeded in deceiving* her.

was in the transgression — *Greek*, “*came to be* in the transgression”: became involved in the existing state of transgression, literally, “the going beyond a command”; breach of a positive precept (^{<EDIS} Romans 4:15).

15. be saved in childbearing — *Greek*, “in (literally, ‘*through*’) (*her*, literally, ‘*the*’) child-bearing.” *Through*, or *by*, is often so used to express not *the means* of her salvation, but *the circumstances* AMIDST which it has place. Thus ^{<KRS}1 Corinthians 3:15, “He ... shall be saved: yet so as by (literally, ‘*through*,’ that is, amidst) fire”: in spite of the fiery ordeal which he has necessarily to pass *through*, he shall be saved. So here, “*In spite of* the trial of childbearing which she passes *through* (as her portion of the curse, ^{<DRG} Genesis 3:16, ‘in sorrow shalt thou *bring forth children*’), she shall be saved.” Moreover, I think it is *implied* indirectly that the very curse will be turned into a condition favorable to her salvation, by her faithfully performing her part in doing and suffering what God has assigned to her, namely, *child-bearing* and home duties, *her* sphere, as distinguished from public teaching, which is not hers, but *man’s* (^{<SD1}1 Timothy 2:11,12). In this home sphere, not ordinarily in one of active duty for advancing the kingdom of God, which contradicts the position assigned to her by God, she will be saved on the same terms as all others, namely, by living faith. Some think that there is a reference to the Incarnation “through THE child-bearing” (*Greek*), the bearing of the child Jesus. Doubtless this is the ground of women’s *child-bearing* in general becoming to them a blessing, instead of a curse; just as in the original prophecy (^{<DRS} Genesis 3:15,16) the promise of “the Seed of the woman” (the Savior) stands in closest connection with the woman’s being doomed to “sorrow” in “bringing forth children,” her very *child-bearing*, though *in sorrow*, being the function assigned to her by God whereby the Savior was born. This may be an ulterior reference of the Holy Spirit in this verse; but the primary reference required by the context is the one above given. “She shall be saved ([though] with childbearing),” that is, though suffering her part of the primeval curse in childbearing; just as a man shall be saved, though having to bear his part, namely, the sweat of the brow.

if they, etc. — “if *the women* (plural, taken out of ‘the woman,’ ^{<5024>}1 Timothy 2:14, which is put for *the whole sex*) continue,” or more literally, “shall (be found at the judgment to) have continued.”

faith and charity — the essential way to salvation (^{<5005>}1 Timothy 1:5). *Faith* is in relation to God. *Charity*, to our fellow man. *Sobriety*, to one’s self.

sobriety — “sober-mindedness” (see on ^{<5029>}1 Timothy 2:9, as contrasted with the unseemly forwardness reprov’d in ^{<5021>}1 Timothy 2:11). Mental receptivity and activity in family life were recognized in Christianity as the destiny of woman. One reason alleged here by Paul, is the greater danger of self-deception in the weaker sex, and the spread of errors arising from it, especially in a class of addresses in which sober reflectiveness is least in exercise [NEANDER]. The case (^{<4019>}Acts 21:9) was doubtless in private, not in public.

CHAPTER 3

~~508B~~ 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-16.

RULES AS TO BISHOPS (OVERSEERS) AND DEACONS. THE CHURCH, AND THE GOSPEL MYSTERY NOW REVEALED TO IT, ARE THE END OF ALL SUCH RULES.

1. Translate as *Greek*, “Faithful is the saying.” A needful preface to what follows: for the office of a bishop or overseer in Paul’s day, attended as it was with hardship and often persecution, would not seem to the world generally a desirable and “good work.”

desire — literally, “stretch one’s self forward to grasp”; “aim at”: a distinct *Greek* verb from that for “desireth.” What one does voluntarily is more esteemed than what he does when asked (~~485~~ 1 Corinthians 16:15). This is utterly distinct from ambitious desires after office in the Church. (~~508E~~ James 3:1).

bishop — overseer: as yet identical with “presbyter” (~~4017~~ Acts 20:17,28 ~~508E~~ Titus 1:5-7).

good work — literally, “honorable work.” Not the honor associated with it, but the *work*, is the prominent thought (~~4458~~ Acts 15:38 ~~508B~~ Philippians 2:30; compare ~~508B~~ 2 Timothy 4:5). He who aims at the office must remember the high qualifications needed for the due discharge of its functions.

2. The existence of Church organization and presbyters at Ephesus is presupposed (~~5087~~ 1 Timothy 5:17,19). The institution of Church widows (~~508B~~ 1 Timothy 5:3-25) accords with this. The directions here to Timothy, the president or apostolic delegate, are as to filling up *vacancies* among the bishops and deacons, or *adding* to their number. New churches in the neighborhood also would require presbyters and deacons. Episcopacy was adopted in apostolic times as the most expedient form of government, being most nearly in accordance with Jewish institutions, and so offering

the less obstruction through Jewish prejudices to the progress of Christianity. The synagogue was governed by presbyters, “elders” (⁴⁰⁸Acts 4:8 24:1), called also *bishops* or *overseers*. Three among them presided as “rulers of the synagogue,” answering to “bishops” in the modern sense [LIGHTFOOT, *Hebrew and Talmudic Exercitations*], and one among them took the lead. AMBROSE (in *The Duties of the Clergy* [2.13], as also BINGHAM [*Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, 2.11]) says, “They who are now called bishops were originally called apostles. But those who ruled the Church after the death of the apostles had not the testimony of miracles, and were in many respects inferior. Therefore they thought it not decent to assume to themselves the name of apostles; but dividing the names, they left to presbyters the name of the *presbytery*, and they themselves were called *bishops*.” “*Presbyter*” refers to the *rank*; “*bishop*,” to the *office* or function. Timothy (though not having the name) exercised the power at Ephesus then, which bishops in the modern sense more recently exercised.

blameless — “unexceptionable”; giving no *just* handle for blame.

husband of one wife — confuting the celibacy of Rome’s priesthood. Though the Jews practiced polygamy, yet as he is writing as to a Gentile Church, and as polygamy was never allowed among even laymen in the Church, the ancient interpretation that the prohibition here is against polygamy in a candidate bishop is not correct. It must, therefore, mean that, though laymen might lawfully marry again, candidates for the episcopate or presbytery were better to have been married only *once*. As in ⁴⁰⁹1 Timothy 5:9, “wife of one man,” implies a woman married but once; so “husband of one wife” here must mean the same. The feeling which prevailed among the Gentiles, as well as the Jews (compare as to Anna, ⁴¹⁰Luke 2:36,37), against a second marriage would, on the ground of expediency and conciliation in matters indifferent and not involving compromise of principle, account for Paul’s prohibition here in the case of one in so prominent a sphere as a bishop or a deacon. Hence the stress that is laid in the context on *the repute* in which the candidate for orders is held among those over whom he is to preside (⁴¹¹Titus 1:16). The Council of Laodicea and the apostolic canons discountenanced second marriages, especially in the case of candidates for ordination. Of course second marriage being *lawful*, the undesirableness of it holds good only under special circumstances. It is implied here also, that he who has a wife and

virtuous family, is to be preferred to a bachelor; for he who is himself bound to discharge the domestic duties mentioned here, is likely to be more attractive to those who have similar ties, for he teaches them not only by precept, but also by example (^{<5004>}1 Timothy 3:4,5). The Jews teach, a priest should be neither unmarried nor childless, lest he be unmerciful [BENGEL]. So in the synagogue, “no one shall offer up prayer in public, unless he be married” [in *Colbo*, ch. 65; VITRINGA, *Synagogue and Temple*].

vigilant — literally, “sober”; ever on the watch, as sober men alone can be; keenly alive, so as to foresee what ought to be done (^{<5186>}1 Thessalonians 5:6-8).

sober — sober-minded.

of good behavior — *Greek*, “orderly.” “*Sober*” refers to the inward mind; “*orderly*,” to the *outward* behavior, tone, look, gait, dress. The new man bears somewhat of a sacred festival character, incompatible with all confusion, disorder, excess, violence, laxity, assumption, harshness, and meanness (^{<5008>}Philippians 4:8) [BENGEL].

apt to teach — (^{<5124>}2 Timothy 2:24).

3. Not given to wine — The *Greek* includes *besides* this, not indulging in the *brawling, violent conduct towards others*, which proceeds from being given to wine. The opposite of “patient” or (*Greek*) “forbearing,” reasonable to others (see on ^{<5045>}Philippians 4:5).

no striker — with either hand or tongue: not as some teachers pretending a holy zeal (^{<4712>}2 Corinthians 11:20), answering to “not a brawler” or fighter (compare ^{<1224>}1 Kings 22:24 ^{<1325>}Nehemiah 13:25 ^{<2804>}Isaiah 58:4 ^{<4232>}Acts 23:2 ^{<5124>}2 Timothy 2:24,25).

not covetous — *Greek*, “not a lover of money,” whether he have much or little (^{<5007>}Titus 1:7).

4. ruleth — *Greek*, “presiding over.”

his own house — children and servants, as contrasted with “the church” (house) of God (^{<5015>}1 Timothy 3:5,15) which he may be called on to preside over.

having his children — rather as *Greek*, “having children (who are) in subjection” (☞ Titus 1:6). gravity propriety: *reverent* modesty on the part of the children [ALFORD]. The fact that *he has children* who are *in subjection to him in all gravity*, is the recommendation in his favor as one likely to rule well the Church.

5. For — *Greek*, “But.”

the church — rather, “a church” or congregation. How shall he who cannot perform the lesser function, perform the greater and more difficult?

6. not a novice — one just converted. This proves the Church of Ephesus was established now for some time. The absence of this rule in the Epistle to Titus, accords with the recent planting of the Church at Crete. *Greek*, “*neophyte*,” literally, “a young plant”; luxuriantly verdant (☞ Romans 6:5; 11:17 ☞ 1 Corinthians 3:6). The young convert has not yet been disciplined and matured by afflictions and temptations. Contrast Acts 21:16, “an old disciple.”

lifted up with pride — *Greek*, literally, “wrapt in smoke,” so that, inflated with self-conceit and exaggerated ideas of his own importance, he cannot see himself or others in the true light (☞ 1 Timothy 6:4 ☞ 2 Timothy 3:4).

condemnation of the devil — into the same condemnation as Satan fell into (☞ 1 Timothy 3:7 ☞ 2 Timothy 2:26). Pride was the cause of Satan’s condemnation (☞ Job 38:15 ☞ Isaiah 14:12-15 ☞ John 12:31 16:11 ☞ 2 Peter 2:4 ☞ Jude 1:6). It cannot mean condemnation or accusation *on the part of the devil*. The devil may bring a *reproach* on men (☞ 1 Timothy 3:7), but he cannot bring them into *condemnation*, for he does not judge, but is judged [BENGEL].

7. a good report — *Greek*, “testimony.” So Paul was influenced by the good report given of Timothy to choose him as his companion (☞ Acts 16:2).

of them which are without — from the as yet unconverted Gentiles around (☞ 1 Corinthians 5:12 ☞ Colossians 4:5 ☞ 1 Thessalonians 4:12), that they may be the more readily won to the Gospel (☞ 1 Peter 2:12), and

that the name of Christ may be glorified. Not even the former life of a bishop should be open to reproach [BENGEL].

reproach and the snare of the devil — *reproach* of men (⁵⁰⁵⁴1 Timothy 5:14) proving the occasion of his falling into *the snare of the devil* (⁵⁰⁶⁹1 Timothy 6:9 ⁴¹²⁵Matthew 22:15 ⁵⁰⁷²2 Timothy 2:26). The *reproach* continually surrounding him for former sins might lead him into *the snare* of becoming as bad as his reputation. Despair of recovering *reputation* might, in a weak moment, lead some into recklessness of living (²⁴⁸²Jeremiah 18:12). The reason why only moral qualities of a general kind are specified is, he presupposes in candidates for a bishopric the special gifts of the Spirit (⁵⁰⁴⁴1 Timothy 4:14) and true faith, which he desires to be evidenced outwardly; also he requires qualifications *in a bishop* not so indispensable in others.

8. The *deacons* were chosen by the voice of the people. CYPRIAN [*Epistle*, 2.5] says that good bishops never departed from the old custom of consulting the people. The deacons answer to the *chazzan* of the synagogue: the attendant *ministers*, or subordinate coadjutors of the presbyter (as Timothy himself was to Paul, ⁵⁰⁶⁶1 Timothy 4:6 ⁵⁰¹³Philemon 1:13; and John Mark, ⁴⁴³⁵Acts 13:5). Their duty was to read the Scriptures in the Church, to instruct the catechumens in Christian truths, to assist the presbyters at the sacraments, to receive oblations, and to preach and instruct. As the “chazzan” covered and uncovered the ark in the synagogue, containing the law, so the deacon in the ancient Church put the covering on the communion table. (See CHRYSOSTOM [19], *Homily* on Acts; THEOPHYLACT on Luke 19; and BALSAMAN on *Canon* 22, *Council of Laodicea*). The appointing of “the seven” in ⁴⁴⁶¹Acts 6:1-7 is perhaps not meant to describe the *first* appointment of the deacons of the Church. At least the *chazzan* previously suggested the similar order of deacons.

double-tongued — literally, “of double speech”; saying one thing to this person, and another to that person [THEODORET]. The extensive personal intercourse that deacons would have with the members of the Church might prove a temptation to such a fault. Others explain it, “Saying one thing, thinking another” (⁴¹¹⁹Proverbs 20:19 ⁴⁰¹³Galatians 2:13). I prefer the former.

not greedy of filthy lucre — All gain is filthy (literally, “base”) which is set before a man as a by-end in his work for God [ALFORD] (⁴⁰⁶⁵1 Peter 5:2). The deacon’s office of collecting and distributing alms would render this a necessary qualification.

9. the mystery of the faith — *holding the faith*, which to the natural man remains *a mystery*, but which has been revealed by the Spirit to them (⁴⁰⁶⁵Romans 16:25 ⁴⁰⁶⁷1 Corinthians 2:7-10), *in a pure conscience* (⁴⁰⁶⁶1 Timothy 1:5,19). (“Pure,” that is, in which nothing base or foreign is intermixed [TITTMANN]). Though deacons were not ordinarily called on to preach (Stephen and Philip are not exceptions to this, since it was as *evangelists*, rather than as *deacons*, they preached), yet as being office-bearers in the Church, and having much intercourse with all the members, they especially needed to have this characteristic, which every Christian ought to have.

10. “And moreover,” etc. [ALFORD].

be proved — not by a period of probation, but by a searching inquiry, conducted by Timothy, the ordaining president (⁴⁰⁶²1 Timothy 5:22), whether they be “blameless”; then when found so, “let them act as deacons.”

blameless — *Greek*, “unexceptionable”; as the result of public investigation unaccused [TITTMANN].

11. their wives — rather, “the women,” that is, *the deaconesses*. For there is no reason that special rules should be laid down as to the wives of the deacons, and not also as to the wives of the bishops or overseers.

Moreover, if the wives of the deacons were meant, there seems no reason for the omission of “their” (not in the *Greek*). Also the *Greek* for “even so” (the same as for “likewise,” ⁴⁰⁶⁸1 Timothy 3:8, and “in like manner,” ⁴⁰⁶⁹1 Timothy 2:9), denotes a transition to another class of persons.

Further, there were doubtless deaconesses at Ephesus, such as Phoebe was at Cenchrea (⁴⁰⁶¹Romans 16:1, “servant,” *Greek*, “deaconess”), yet no mention is made of them in this Epistle if not here; whereas, supposing them to be meant here, the third chapter embraces in due proportion all the persons in the service of the Church. Naturally after specifying the qualifications of the deacon, Paul passes to those of the kindred office. the

deaconess. “Grave” occurs in the case of both. “Not slanderers” here, answers to “not double-tongued” in the deacons; so “not false accusers” (^{500B}Titus 2:3). “Sober” here answers to “not given to much wine,” in the case of the deacons (^{500B}1 Timothy 3:8). Thus it appears he requires the same qualifications in female deacons as in deacons, only with such modifications as the difference of sex suggested. PLINY, in his celebrated letter to Trajan, *calls* them “female ministers.”

faithful in all things — of life as well as faith. Trustworthy in respect to the alms committed to them and their other functions, answering to “not greedy of filthy lucre,” ^{500B}1 Timothy 3:8, in the case of the deacons.

12. husbands of one wife — (See on ^{500B}1 Timothy 3:2).

ruling their children — There is no article in the *Greek*, “ruling children”; implying that he regarded the *having children to rule* as a qualification (^{500B}1 Timothy 3:4 ^{500B}Titus 1:6).

their own houses — as distinguished from “the Church of God” (see on ^{500B}1 Timothy 3:5). In the case of the deacons, as in that of the bishops, he mentions the first condition of receiving office, rather than the special qualifications for its discharge. The practical side of Christianity is the one most dwelt on in the Pastoral Epistles, in opposition to the heretical teachers; moreover, as the miraculous gifts began to be withdrawn, the safest criterion of efficiency would be the previous moral character of the candidate, the disposition and talent for the office being presupposed. So in ^{400B}Acts 6:3, a similar criterion was applied, “Look ye out among you seven men *of honest report*.” Less stress is laid on personal dignity in the case of the deacon than in that of the bishop (compare *Notes*, see on ^{500B}1 Timothy 3:2,3).

13. purchase to themselves a good degree — literally, “are *acquiring* ... a ... *step*.” Understood by many as “a higher step,” that is, promotion to the higher office of presbyter. But ambition of rising seems hardly the motive to faithfulness which the apostle would urge; besides, it would require the comparative, “a *better* degree.” Then the *past* aorist participle, “they that used the office of deacon well,” implies that the *present* verb, “*are acquiring* to themselves boldness,” is the result of the completed action of using the diaconate well. Also, Paul would not probably hold out

to every deacon the prospect of promotion to the presbytery in reward of his service. The idea of moving upwards in Church offices was as yet unknown (compare ^{<5210>}Romans 12:7, etc. ^{<4124>}1 Corinthians 12:4-11). Moreover, there seems little connection between reference to a higher Church rank and the words “great boldness.” Therefore, what those who have faithfully discharged the diaconate acquire for themselves is “a good standing-place” [ALFORD] (a well-grounded *hope* of salvation) against the day of judgment, ^{<5089>}1 Timothy 6:19 ^{<4083>}1 Corinthians 3:13,14 (the figurative meaning of “degree” or “step,” being *the degree of worth* which one has obtained in the eye of God [WIESINGER]); and boldness (resting on that *standing-place*”), as well for preaching and admonishing others now (^{<4089>}Ephesians 6:19; a firm standing forth for the truth against error), as also especially in relation to God their coming Judge, before whom they may be boldly confident (^{<4086>}Acts 24:16 ^{<4128>}1 John 2:28 3:21 4:17 ^{<5006>}Hebrews 4:16).

in the faith — rather as *Greek*, “in faith,” that is, boldness resting on their own faith.

which is in Christ Jesus — resting *in* Christ Jesus.

14. write I ... hoping — that is, “though I hope to come unto thee shortly” (^{<5043>}1 Timothy 4:13). As his hope was not very confident (^{<5085>}1 Timothy 3:15), he provides for Timothy’s lengthened superintendence by giving him the preceding rules to guide him. He now proceeds to give more general instructions to him as an evangelist, having a “gift” committed to him (^{<5044>}1 Timothy 4:14).

shortly — *Greek*, “sooner,” namely, than is presupposed in the preceding directions given to him. See my *Introduction* on this verse. This verse best suits the theory that this First Epistle was not written after Paul’s visit and departure from Ephesus (^{<4081>}Acts 19:1-20:38) when he had resolved to winter at Corinth after passing the summer in Macedonia (^{<4306>}1 Corinthians 16:6), but after his first imprisonment at Rome (^{<4087>}Acts 28:17-31); probably at Corinth, where he might have some thoughts of going on to Epirus before returning to Ephesus [BIRKS].

15. But if I tarry long — before coming to thee.

that — that is, I *write* (^{<5084>}1 Timothy 3:14) “that thou mayest know,” etc.

behave thyself — in directing the Church at Ephesus (⁵⁰⁴¹1 Timothy 4:11).

the house of God — the Church (⁵⁸⁰²Hebrews 3:2,5,6 10:21 ⁴⁰⁴⁷1 Peter 4:17 ⁴¹⁸⁶1 Corinthians 3:16, “the temple of God”; ⁴¹²²Ephesians 2:22).

which is — that is, inasmuch as it is.

the church — “the congregation.” The fact that the sphere of thy functions is “the congregation of the living God” (who is the ever living Master of the house, ⁵⁰²⁹2 Timothy 2:19,20,21), is the strongest motive to faithfulness in this *behavior as president* of a department of the house.” *The living God* forms a striking contrast to the lifeless idol, Diana of Ephesus (⁵⁰⁰¹1 Thessalonians 1:9). He is the fountain of “truth,” and the foundation of our “trust” (⁵⁰⁴⁰1 Timothy 4:10). Labor directed to a particular Church is service to the one great house of God, of which each particular Church is a part, and each Christian a lively stone (⁴¹²⁵1 Peter 2:5).

the pillar and ground of the truth — evidently predicated of *the Church*, not of “the mystery of godliness” (an interpretation not started till the sixteenth century; so BENGEL); for after two weighty predicates, “pillar and ground,” and these substantives, the third, a much weaker one, and that an adjective, “confessedly,” or “without controversy great,” would not come. “Pillar” is so used metaphorically of the three apostles on whom principally the Jewish Christian Church depended (⁴¹⁸⁹Galatians 2:9; compare ⁴¹⁸²Revelation 3:12). The Church is “the pillar of the truth,” as the continued existence (historically) of the truth rests on it; for it supports and preserves the word of truth. He who is of the truth belongs by the very fact to the Church. Christ is the alone ground of the truth in the highest sense (⁴¹⁸¹1 Corinthians 3:11). The apostles are foundations in a secondary sense (⁴¹²⁰Ephesians 2:20 ⁴²¹⁴Revelation 21:14). The Church rests on the truth as it is in Christ; not the truth on the Church. But the truth *as it is in itself* is to be distinguished from the truth *as it is acknowledged in the world*. In the former sense it needs no *pillar*, but supports itself; in the latter sense, it needs the Church as its pillar, that is, its supporter and preserver [BAUMGARTEN]. The importance of Timothy’s commission is set forth by reminding him of the excellence of “the house” in which he serves; and this in opposition to the coming heresies which Paul presciently forewarns him of immediately after (⁵⁰⁴¹1 Timothy 4:1). The

Church is to be the stay of the truth and its conserver for the world, and God's instrument for securing its continuance on earth, in opposition to those heresies (^{<4038}Matthew 16:18 28:20). The apostle does not recognize a Church which has not the truth, or has it only in part. Rome falsely claims the promise for herself. But it is not historical descent that constitutes a Church, but this only, to those heresies (^{<4038}Matthew 16:18 28:20). The apostle does not recognize a Church which has not the intermediate; the "ground," or "basement" (similar to "foundation," ^{<5029}2 Timothy 2:19), the final support of the building [ALFORD]. It is no objection that, having called the Church before "the house of God," he now calls it the "pillar"; for the literal word "Church" immediately precedes the new metaphors: so the *Church*, or congregation of believers, which before was regarded as *the habitation of God*, is now, from a different point of view, regarded as the *pillar* upholding the truth.

16. And — following up ^{<5085}1 Timothy 3:15: The pillar of the truth is the Church in which thou art required to minister; "AND (that thou mayest know how grand is that *truth* which the Church so upholds) confessedly (so the *Greek* for 'without controversy') great is the mystery of godliness: (namely), HE WHO (so the oldest manuscripts and versions read for 'God') was manifested in (the) flesh (He who) was justified in the Spirit," etc. There is set before us the whole dignity of Christ's person. If He were not essentially superhuman (^{<5023}Titus 2:13), how could the apostle emphatically declare that He was *manifested in (the) flesh*? [TREGELLES, *Printed Text of the Greek New Testament*]. (^{<4014}John 1:14 ^{<5000}Philippians 2:7 ^{<6002}1 John 1:2 4:2). Christ, in all His aspects, is Himself "the mystery of godliness." He who before was hidden "with God" was made *manifest* (^{<4001}John 1:1,14 ^{<4025}Romans 16:25,26 ^{<5003}Colossians 1:26 ^{<5002}2 Timothy 1:10 ^{<5021}Titus 2:11 3:4 ^{<4035}1 John 3:5,8). "Confessedly," that is, by the universal confession of the members of "the Church," which is in this respect the "pillar" or upholder "of *the truth*."

the mystery — the divine scheme embodied in CHRIST (^{<5007}Colossians 1:27), once hidden from, but now revealed to, us who believe.

of godliness — rather, "piety"; a different *Greek*, expresses godliness (^{<5021}1 Timothy 2:10). In opposition to the *ungodliness* or *impiety* inseparable from error (*departure from the faith*: "doctrines of devils,"

“profane fables,” ^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:1,7; compare ^{<506>}1 Timothy 6:3). To the victims of such error, the “mystery of piety” (that is, Christ Himself) remains a *mystery unrevealed* (^{<502>}1 Timothy 4:2). It is accessible only to “piety” (^{<509>}1 Timothy 3:9): in relation to the pious it is termed a “mystery,” though *revealed* (^{<407>}1 Corinthians 2:7-14), to imply the excellence of Him who is the surpassing essential subject of it, and who is Himself “wonderful” (^{<290>}Isaiah 9:6), surpassing knowledge (^{<408>}Ephesians 3:18,19); compare ^{<405>}Ephesians 5:32. The apostle now proceeds to unfold this confessedly great mystery in its details. It is not unlikely that some formula of confession or hymn existed in the Church and was generally accepted, to which Paul alludes in the words “*confessedly* great is the mystery,” etc. (to wit), “He who was manifested,” etc. Such hymns were then used (compare ^{<409>}Ephesians 5:19 ^{<506>}Colossians 3:16). PLINY [1.10, *Epistle*, 97], “They are wont on a fixed day before dawn to meet and sing a hymn in alternate responses to Christ, *as being God*”; and EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 5.28]. The short unconnected sentences with the words similarly arranged, and the number of syllables almost equal, and the ideas antithetically related, are characteristics of a Christian hymn. The clauses stand in parallelism; each two are connected as a pair, and form an antithesis turning on the opposition of heaven to earth; the order of this antithesis is reversed in each new pair of clauses: *flesh* and *spirit*, *angels* and *Gentiles*, *world* and *glory*; and there is a correspondence between the first and the last clause: “manifested in the flesh, received up into glory” [WIESINGER].

justified — that is, approved to be righteous [ALFORD]. Christ, while “in the flesh,” seemed to be just such a one as men in the flesh, and in fact bore their *sins*; but by having died to sin, and having risen again, He gained for Himself and His people *justifying righteousness* (^{<290>}Isaiah 50:8 ^{<600>}John 16:10 ^{<424>}Acts 22:14 ^{<602>}Romans 4:25 6:7,10 ^{<808>}Hebrews 9:28 ^{<608>}1 Peter 3:18 4:1 ^{<601>}1 John 2:1) [BENGEL]; or rather, as the antithesis to “was manifest in the flesh” requires, He was justified in the Spirit *at the same time* that He was manifest in the flesh, that is, He was vindicated as divine “in His Spirit,” that is, in *His higher nature*; in contrast to “in the flesh,” *His visible human nature*. This contrasted opposition requires “in the Spirit” to be thus explained: not “by the Spirit,” as ALFORD explains it. So ^{<608>}Romans 1:3,4, “Made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and

declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” So “justified” is used to mean *vindicated in one’s true character* (^{<4119>}Matthew 11:19 ^{<4175>}Luke 7:35 ^{<4184>}Romans 3:4). His manifestation “in the flesh” exposed him to *misapprehension*, as though he were nothing more (^{<4164>}John 6:41 7:27). His *justification*, or vindication, *in respect to His Spirit* or higher being, was effected by ALL *that manifested that higher being*, His words (^{<4172>}Matthew 7:29 ^{<4176>}John 7:46), His works (^{<4121>}John 2:11 3:2), by His Father’s testimony at His baptism (^{<4187>}Matthew 3:17), and at the transfiguration (^{<4177>}Matthew 17:5), and especially by His resurrection (^{<4133>}Acts 13:33 ^{<4104>}Romans 1:4), though not by this *exclusively*, as BENIGL limits it.

seen of angels — answering to “preached unto the Gentiles” (or rather “among *the nations*”; including the Jews), on the other hand (^{<4189>}Matthew 28:19 ^{<4162>}Romans 16:25,26). “Angels saw the Son of God with us, not having seen Him before” [CHRYSTOSTOM].’ “not even they had seen His divine nature, which is not visible to any creature, but they saw Him incarnate” [THEODORET] (^{<4188>}Ephesians 3:8,10 ^{<4112>}1 Peter 1:12; compare ^{<4106>}Colossians 1:16,20). What angels came to know by *seeing*, the nations learned by *preaching*. He is a new message to the one class as well as to the other; in the wondrous union in His person of things most opposite, namely, heaven and earth, lies “the mystery” [WIESINGER]. If the *English Version*, “Gentiles,” be retained, the antithesis will be between the *angels* who are so *near* the Son of God, the Lord of “angels,” and *the Gentiles* who were so utterly “afar off” (^{<4127>}Ephesians 2:17).

believed on in the world — which lieth in wickedness (^{<4175>}1 John 2:15 5:19). Opposed to “glory” (^{<4166>}John 3:16,17). This followed upon His being “preached” (^{<4104>}Romans 10:14).

received up into glory — *Greek*, “in glory.” However, *English Version* may be retained thus, “Received up (*so as now to be*) in glory,” that is, *into glory* (^{<4169>}Mark 16:19 ^{<4165>}Luke 24:51 ^{<4111>}Acts 1:11). His reception in heaven answers to His reception on earth by being “believed on.”

CHAPTER 4

1 TIMOTHY 4:1-16.

PREDICTION OF A COMING DEPARTURE FROM THE FAITH: TIMOTHY'S DUTY AS TO IT: GENERAL DIRECTIONS TO HIM.

The “mystery of iniquity” here alluded to, and already working (² Thessalonians 2:7), stands opposed to the “mystery of godliness” just mentioned (¹ Timothy 3:16).

1. Now — *Greek*, “But.” In contrast to the “mystery of godliness.”

the Spirit — speaking by the prophets in the Church (whose prophecies rested on those of the Old Testament, ^{7:25} Daniel 7:25 8:23, etc. ^{11:30} Daniel 11:30, as also on those of Jesus in the New Testament, ^{24:11-24} Matthew 24:11-24), and also by Paul himself, ² Thessalonians 2:3 (with whom accord ^{3:3} 2 Peter 3:3 ¹ John 2:18 ^{1:18} Jude 1:18).

expressly — “in plain words.” This shows that he refers to prophecies of the Spirit then lying before him.

in the latter times — in the times *following upon the times in which he is now writing*. Not some remote future, but times *immediately subsequent*, the beginnings of the apostasy being already discernible (^{20:29} Acts 20:29): these are the forerunners of “the *last days*” (^{3:1} 2 Timothy 3:1).

depart from the faith — The apostasy was to be within the Church, the faithful one becoming the harlot. In ² Thessalonians 2:3 (written earlier), the apostasy of the Jews from God (joining the heathen against Christianity) is the groundwork on which the prophecy rises; whereas here, in the Pastoral Epistles, the prophecy is connected with Gnostic errors, the seeds of which had already been sown in the Church [AUBERLEN] (^{2:18} 2 Timothy 2:18). Apollonius Tyanaeus, a heretic, came to Ephesus in the lifetime of Timothy.

giving heed — (^{1:4} 1 Timothy 1:4 ^{1:14} Titus 1:14).

seducing spirits — working in the heretical teachers. ^{<602>}1 John 4:2,3,6, “the spirit of error,” opposed to “the spirit of truth,” “the Spirit” which “speaketh” in the true prophets against them.

doctrines of devils — literally “teachings of (that is suggested by) demons.” ^{<495>}James 3:15, “wisdom ... devilish”; ^{<4115>}2 Corinthians 11:15, “Satan’s ministers.”

2. Rather translate, “Through (literally, ‘in’; the element *in* which the apostasy has place) the hypocrisy of lying speakers”; this expresses the means *through* which “some shall (be led to) depart from the faith,” namely, the reigned sanctity of the seducers (compare “deceivers,” ^{<5010>}Titus 1:10).

having their conscience seared — *Greek*, “having *their own* conscience,” etc., that is, not only “speaking lies” *to others*, but also having *their own* conscience seared. Professing to lead others to holiness, *their* own conscience is all the while defiled. Bad consciences always have recourse to hypocrisy. As *faith* and a *good conscience* are joined (^{<5015>}1 Timothy 1:5); so *hypocrisy* (that is, *unbelief*, ^{<4105>}Matthew 24:5,51; compare ^{<4126>}Luke 12:46) and a *bad conscience* here. THEODORET explains like *English Version*, “seared,” as implying their extreme *insensibility*; the effect of cauterizing being to deaden sensation. The *Greek*, however, primarily means “branded” with the consciousness of crimes committed against their better knowledge and conscience, like so many scars burnt in by a branding iron: Compare ^{<5015>}Titus 1:15 3:11, “condemned of himself.” They are conscious of the brand within, and yet with a hypocritical show of sanctity, they strive to seduce others. As “a seal” is used in a good sense (^{<5129>}2 Timothy 2:19), so “a brand” in a bad sense. The image is taken from the branding of criminals.

3. Sensuality leads to false spiritualism. Their own inward impurity is reflected in their eyes in the world without them, and hence their asceticism (^{<5014>}Titus 1:14,15) [WIESINGER]. By a spurious spiritualism (^{<5129>}2 Timothy 2:18), which made moral perfection consist in abstinence from outward things, they pretended to attain to a higher perfection. ^{<4109>}Matthew 19:10-12 (compare ^{<4108>}1 Corinthians 7:8,26,38) gave a seeming handle to their “forbidding marriage” (contrast ^{<5134>}1 Timothy 5:14); and the Old Testament distinction as to clean and unclean, gave a pretext for

teaching to “abstain from meats” (compare ^{<501>}Colossians 2:16,17,20-23). As these Judaizing Gnostics combined the harlot or apostate Old Testament Church with the beast (^{<617>}Revelation 17:3), or Gnostic spiritualizing anti-Christianity, so Rome’s Judaizing elements (^{<503>}1 Timothy 4:3) shall ultimately be combined with the open worldly-wise anti-Christianity of the false prophet or beast (^{<503>}1 Timothy 6:20,21 ^{<503>}Colossians 2:8 ^{<601>}1 John 4:1-3 ^{<632>}Revelation 13:12-15). Austerity gained for them a show of sanctity while preaching false doctrine (^{<503>}Colossians 2:23). EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 4.29] quotes from IRENAEUS [1.28] a statement that Saturninus, Marcion, and the Encratites preached abstinence from marriage and animal meats. Paul prophetically warns against such notions, the seeds of which already were being sown (^{<503>}1 Timothy 6:20 ^{<507>}2 Timothy 2:17,18).

to be received — *Greek*, “to be partaken of.”

of them — literally, (created and designed) “for them,” Though *all* (even the unbelieving, ^{<544>}Psalm 104:14 ^{<405>}Matthew 5:45) are partakers in these foods created by God, “they which believe” alone fulfill God’s design in creation *by partaking of them with thanksgiving*; as opposed to those who *abstain* from them, or in partaking of them, do not do so *with thanksgiving*. The unbelieving have not the designed use of such foods by reason of their “conscience being defiled” (^{<501>}Titus 1:15). The children of God alone “inherit the earth”; for obedience is the necessary qualification (as it was in the original grant of the earth to Adam), which they alone possess.

and know the truth — explanatory and defining who are “they which believe.” Translate as *Greek*, “and have *full* knowledge of the truth” (see on ^{<503>}Philippians 1:9). Thus he contradicts the assumption of superior *knowledge* and higher moral perfection, put forward by the heretics, on the ground of their abstinence from marriage and meats. “The *truth*” stands in opposition to their “*lies*” (^{<502>}1 Timothy 4:2).

4, 5. Translate as *Greek*, “Because” (expressing a reason resting on an *objective fact*; or, as here, a Scripture quotation) — “For” (a reason resting on something *subjective in the writer’s mind*).

every creature ... good — (^{<003>}Genesis 1:31 ^{<644>}Romans 14:14,20). A refutation by anticipation of the Gnostic opposition to creation: the seeds of which were now lurking latently in the Church. Judaism (^{<401>}Acts 10:11-16 ^{<605>}1 Corinthians 10:25,26) was the starting-point of the error as to meats: Oriental Gnosis added new elements. The old Gnostic heresy is now almost extinct; but its remains in the celibacy of Rome's priesthood, and in its fasts from animal meats, enjoined under the penalty of mortal sin, remain.

if ... with thanksgiving — Meats, though pure in themselves, become impure by being received with an unthankful mind (^{<640>}Romans 14:6 ^{<601>}Titus 1:15).

5. sanctified — “hallowed”; set apart as holy for the use of believing men: separated from “the creature,” which is under *the bondage of vanity and corruption* (^{<689>}Romans 8:19, etc.). Just as in the Lord's Supper, the thanksgiving prayer sanctifies the elements, separating them from their naturally alien position in relation to the spiritual world, and transferring them to their true relation to the new life. So in *every* use of the creature, thanksgiving prayer has the same effect, and ought always to be used (^{<601>}1 Corinthians 10:30,31).

by the word of God and prayer — that is, “by means of *intercessory* prayer” (so the *Greek*) — that is, *consecratory* prayer in behalf of “the creature” or food — that prayer mainly consisting of “the word of God.” The *Apostolic Constitutions* [7.49], give this ancient grace, almost wholly consisting of Scripture, “Blessed art thou, O Lord, who feedest me from my youth, who givest food to all flesh: Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that we, having all sufficiency, may abound unto every good work in Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom glory, honor, and might, be to thee for ever. Amen.” In the case of inspired men, “the word of God” would refer to *their* inspired prayers (^{<1171>}1 Kings 17:1); but as Paul speaks in general, including uninspired men's thanksgiving for meals, the “word of God” more probably refers to the *Scripture* words used in thanksgiving prayers.

6. If thou put ... in remembrance — rather as *Greek*, “If thou *suggest* to (bring under the notice of) the brethren,” etc.

these things — namely, the truths stated in ^{<5004>1 Timothy 4:4,5}, in opposition to the errors foretold, ^{<5004>1 Timothy 4:1-3}.

minister — “servant.”

nourished up — The *Greek* is *present*, not *past*: “*continually being nourished in*” (^{<5002>2 Timothy 1:5 3:14,15}).

the words of faith — rather, “the words of *the* faith” (compare ^{<5002>1 Timothy 4:12}).

good doctrine — “the good *teaching*.” Explanatory of “the faith,” in opposition to the “teachings of demons” (*English Version*, “doctrines of devils,” ^{<5004>1 Timothy 4:1}) which Timothy was to counteract. Compare “sound doctrine” (^{<5004>1 Timothy 1:10 6:3} ^{<5009>Titus 1:9 2:1}).

whereunto thou hast attained — “the *course* of which thou hast *followed*”; hast *followed along* by tracing its course and accompanying it [ALFORD]. Thou hast begun to follow up [BENGEL]. The same *Greek* occurs, “thou hast fully known” (^{<5002>2 Timothy 3:10}), “having had perfect understanding” (^{<5008>Luke 1:3}). It is an undesigned coincidence that the *Greek* verb is used only by Paul and *Paul’s companion*, Luke.

7. refuse — reject, avoid, *have nothing to do with* (^{<5023>2 Timothy 2:23} ^{<5030>Titus 3:10}).

old wives’ fables — anile myths (^{<5004>1 Timothy 1:4,9} ^{<5014>Titus 1:14}). They are “profane,” because leading away from “godliness” or “piety” (^{<5004>1 Timothy 1:4-7 6:20} ^{<5026>2 Timothy 2:16} ^{<5006>Titus 1:1,2}).

exercise thyself — literally, “exercise thyself” as one undergoing training in a gymnasium. Let thy self-discipline be not in ascetical exercises as the false teachers (^{<5004>1 Timothy 4:3,8}; compare ^{<5022>2 Timothy 2:22,23} ^{<5034>Hebrews 5:14 12:11}), but with a view to godliness or “piety” (^{<5004>1 Timothy 6:11,12}).

8. profiteth little — *Greek*, “profiteth to (but) a small extent.” Paul does not deny that fasting and abstinence from conjugal intercourse for a time, with a view to reaching the inward man through the outward, do profit somewhat, ^{<4013>Acts 13:3} ^{<4075>1 Corinthians 7:5,7 9:26,27} (though in its degenerate form, asceticism, dwelling solely on what is outward, ^{<5008>1}

Timothy 4:3, is not only not profitable but injurious). Timothy seems to have had a leaning to such outward self-discipline (compare ^{<5423>}1 Timothy 5:23). Paul, therefore, while not disapproving of this in its due proportion and place, shows the vast superiority of *godliness* or *piety*, as being *profitable* not merely “to a small extent,” but unto *all* things; for, having its seat within, it extends thence to the whole outward life of a man. Not unto one portion only of his being, but to every portion of it, bodily and spiritual, temporal and eternal [ALFORD]. “He who has *piety* (which is ‘profitable unto *all* things’) wants nothing needed to his well-being, even though he be without those helps which, ‘to a small extent,’ *bodily exercise* furnishes” [CALVIN]. “*Piety*,” which is the *end* for which thou art to “exercise thyself” (^{<5007>}1 Timothy 4:7), is the essential thing: the means are secondary.

having promise, etc. — Translate as *Greek*, “Having promise of life, that which now is, and that which is to come.” “Life” in its truest and best sense now and hereafter (^{<5101>}2 Timothy 1:1). Length of life now so far as it is really good for the believer; life in its truest enjoyments and employments now, and life blessed and eternal hereafter (^{<4065>}Matthew 6:33 ^{<4029>}Mark 10:29,30). “Now in this time” (^{<4844>}Psalms 84:11 112:1-10 ^{<4828>}Romans 8:28 ^{<4421>}1 Corinthians 3:21,22, “*all* things are yours ... the world, life ... things present, things to come”). Christianity, which seems to aim only at our happiness hereafter, effectually promotes it here (^{<5061>}1 Timothy 6:6 ^{<5009>}2 Peter 1:3). Compare Solomon’s prayer and the answer (^{<4107>}1 Kings 3:7-13).

9. (^{<5015>}1 Timothy 1:15). This verse (*Greek*), “faithful is the saying,” etc. confirms the assertion as to the “promise” attached to “godliness,” ^{<5008>}1 Timothy 4:8, and forms a prefatory introduction to ^{<5040>}1 Timothy 4:10, which is joined to ^{<5049>}1 Timothy 4:9 by “For.” So ^{<5201>}2 Timothy 2:11. Godly men seem to suffer loss as to this life: Paul hereby refutes the notion [BENGEL]. “God is the *Savior* specially of those that believe” (^{<5041>}1 Timothy 4:10), both as to “the life that now is,” and also as to “the life which is to come” (^{<5008>}1 Timothy 4:8).

10. therefore — *Greek*, “with a view to this.” *The reason why* “we both (‘both’ is omitted in the oldest manuscripts) labor (endure hardship) and suffer reproach (some oldest manuscripts read ‘strive’) is *because* we have

rested, and do rest our hope, on the living (and therefore, *life-giving*, ^{<5018>}1 Timothy 4:8) God.”

Savior — even in this life (^{<5008>}1 Timothy 4:8).

specially of those that believe — Their “labor and reproach” are not inconsistent with their having from the living God, their Savior, even the present life (^{<4110>}Mark 10:30, “a hundred fold now in this time ... with persecutions”), much more the life to come. If God is in a sense “Savior” of unbelievers (^{<5014>}1 Timothy 2:4, that is, is *willing* to be so *everlastingly*, and *is temporally here* their *Preserver* and *Benefactor*), much more of believers. He is the Savior of all men *potentially* (^{<5015>}1 Timothy 1:15); of believers alone *effectually*.

11. These truths, to the exclusion of those useless and even injurious teachings (^{<5001>}1 Timothy 4:1-8), while weighing well thyself, charge also upon others.

12. Let no man despise thy youth — Act so as to be respected in spite of thy youth (^{<4931>}1 Corinthians 16:11 ^{<5029>}Titus 2:15); compare “youthful” as to Timothy (^{<5022>}2 Timothy 2:22). He was but a mere youth when he joined Paul (^{<4111>}Acts 16:1-3). Eleven years had elapsed since then to the time subsequent to Paul’s first imprisonment. He was, therefore, still young; especially in comparison with Paul, whose place he was filling; also in relation to elderly presbyters whom he should “entreat as a father” (^{<5011>}1 Timothy 5:1), and generally in respect to his duties in rebuking, exhorting, and ordaining (^{<5011>}1 Timothy 3:1), which ordinarily accord best with an elderly person (^{<5019>}1 Timothy 5:19).

be thou an example — *Greek*, “*become a pattern*” (^{<5017>}Titus 2:7); the true way of making men not to despise (slight, or disregard) thy youth.

in word — in all that thou sayest in public and private.

conversation — that is, “behavior” the *Old English* sense of the word.

in charity ... faith — the two cardinal principles of the Christian (^{<4116>}Galatians 5:6). The oldest manuscripts omit, “in spirit.”

in purity — simplicity of holy motive followed out in consistency of holy action [ALFORD] (^{<5152>}1 Timothy 5:22 ^{<4066>}2 Corinthians 6:6 ^{<5187>}James 3:17 4:8 ^{<1012>}1 Peter 1:22).

13. Till I come — when Timothy's commission would be superseded for the time by the presence of the apostle himself (^{<5018>}1 Timothy 1:3 3:14).

reading — especially in the public congregation. The practice of reading Scripture was transferred from the Jewish synagogue to the Christian Church (^{<4046>}Luke 4:16-20 ^{<4135>}Acts 13:15 15:21 ^{<4084>}2 Corinthians 3:14). The New Testament Gospel and Epistles being recognized as inspired by those who had the gift of *discerning spirits*, were from the first, according as they were written, read along with the Old Testament in the Church (^{<5181>}1 Thessalonians 5:21,27 ^{<5046>}Colossians 4:16), [JUSTIN MARTYR, *Apology*, 1.67]. I think that while *public reading* is the prominent thought, the Spirit intended also to teach that Scripture reading in private should be "the fountain of all wisdom from which pastors ought to draw whatever they bring before their flock" [ALFORD].

exhortation — addressed to the feelings and will with a view to the regulation of the conduct.

doctrine — *Greek* (ministerial), "teaching" or *instruction*. Addressed to the understanding, so as to impart knowledge (^{<5062>}1 Timothy 6:2 ^{<5127>}Romans 12:7,8). Whether in public or private, *exhortation* and *instruction* should be based on *Scripture reading*.

14. Neglect not the gift — by letting it lie unused. In ^{<5009>}2 Timothy 1:6 the gift is represented as a *spark* of the Spirit lying within him, and sure to smoulder by neglect, the *stirring up* or keeping in lively exercise of which depends on the will of him on whom it is bestowed (^{<4158>}Matthew 25:18,25,27,28). The *charism* or spiritual gift, is that of the Spirit which qualified him for "the work of an evangelist" (^{<4041>}Ephesians 4:11 ^{<5052>}2 Timothy 4:5), or perhaps *the gift of discerning spirits*, specially needed in his function of ordaining, as overseer [BISHOP HINDS].

given thee — by God (^{<4101>}1 Corinthians 12:4,6).

by prophecy — that is, by the Holy Spirit, at his general ordination, or else consecration, to the special see of Ephesus, speaking through the

prophets God's will to give him the graces needed to qualify him for his work (⁵⁰¹⁸1 Timothy 1:18 ⁴⁴³¹Acts 13:1-3).

with ... laying on of ... hands — So in Joshua's case (⁴⁰⁷⁸Numbers 27:18-20 ⁶⁵⁰⁹Deuteronomy 34:9). The gift was connected with the symbolical act of laying on hands. But the *Greek* "with" implies that the *presbyter's* laying on hands was the mere *accompaniment* of the conferring of the gift. "By" (⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 1:6) implies that *Paul's* laying on his hands was the actual *instrument* of its being conferred.

of the presbytery — In ⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 1:6 the apostle mentions only *his own* laying on of hands. But there his aim is to remind Timothy specially of the part he himself took in imparting to him the gift. Here he mentions the fact, quite consistent with the other, that the neighboring presbyters took part in the ordination or consecration, he, however, taking the foremost part. Paul, though having the general oversight of the elders everywhere, was an elder himself (⁴⁰⁸¹1 Peter 5:1 ⁶⁰⁰²2 John 1:1). The Jewish council was composed of the elders of the Church (the presbytery, ⁴²²⁸Luke 22:66 ⁴⁰²⁶Acts 22:5), and a presiding rabbi; so the Christian Church was composed of apostles, elders, and a president (⁴⁴⁵⁶Acts 15:16). As the president of the synagogue was of the same order as his presbyters, so the bishop was of the same order as his presbyters. At the ordination of the president of the synagogue there were always three presbyters present to lay on hands, so the early Church canons required three bishops to be present at the consecration of a bishop. As the president of the synagogue, so the bishop of the Church alone could ordain, he acting as the representative, and in the name of the whole presbytery [VITRINGA]. So, in the Anglican Church, the bishop ordains, the presbyters or priests present joining with him in laying on hands.

15. Meditate — *Greek*, "*Meditate CAREFULLY upon*" (⁵⁰⁰⁸Psalms 1:2 119:15; compare "Isaac," ⁴⁰²⁶Genesis 24:63).

these things — (⁵⁰⁰²1 Timothy 4:12-14). As food would not nourish without digestion, which assimilates the food to the substance of the body, so spiritual food, in order to benefit us, needs to be appropriated by prayerful meditation.

give thyself wholly to — literally, “BE *in* these things”; let them engross thee wholly; be wholly absorbed in them. *Entire self-dedication*, as in other pursuits, so especially in religion, is the secret of proficiency. There are changes as to all other studies, fashionable to-day, out of fashion to-morrow; this study alone is never obsolete, and when made the all-engrossing aim sanctifies all other studies. The exercise of the ministry threatens the spirit of the ministry, unless it be sustained within. The minister must be first his own scholar before he can be another’s teacher.

profiting — *Greek*, “progress” towards perfection in the Christian life, and especially towards the fullest realization of the ideal of a Christian minister (^{<SOL2>}1 Timothy 4:12).

may appear to all — not for thy glory, but for the winning of souls (^{<SOL2>}Matthew 5:16).

16. Take heed — Give heed (^{<SOL2>}Acts 3:5).

thyself, and ... doctrine — “and unto thy teaching.” The two requisites of a good pastor: His teaching will be of no avail unless his own life accord with it; and his own purity of life is not enough unless he be diligent in teaching [CALVIN]. This verse is a summary of ^{<SOL2>}1 Timothy 4:12.

continue in them — (^{<SOL2>}2 Timothy 3:14).

in doing this — not “*by* doing this,” as though he could save himself by works.

thou shalt ... save thyself, and them that hear thee — (^{<SOL2>}Ezekiel 33:9 ^{<SOL2>}James 5:20). In performing faithfully his duty to others, the minister is promoting his own salvation. Indeed he cannot “give heed unto the teaching” of others, unless he be at the same time “giving heed unto himself.”

CHAPTER 5

1 TIMOTHY 5:1-25.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS AS TO HOW TIMOTHY SHOULD DEAL WITH DIFFERENT CLASSES IN THE CHURCH.

1. an elder — *in age*; probably not an elder *in the ministry*; these latter are not mentioned till ^{<5187>}1 Timothy 5:17, “the elders that rule.” Compare ^{<4187>}Acts 2:17, “your old men,” literally, “elders.” Contrasted with “the younger men.” As Timothy was admonished so to conduct himself as to give no man reason to *despise* his youth (^{<5042>}1 Timothy 4:12); so here he is told to bear in mind his youth, and to behave with the modesty which becomes a young man in relation to his elders.

Rebuke not — literally, “Strike not hard upon”; *Rebuke not sharply*: a different word from “rebuke” in ^{<5042>}2 Timothy 4:2.

entreat — exhort.

as brethren — and therefore equals; not lording it over them (^{<4181>}1 Peter 5:1-3).

2. with all purity — respectful treatment of the other sex will promote “purity.”

3. Honour — by setting on the church roll, as fit objects of charitable sustenance (^{<5186>}1 Timothy 5:9,17,18 ^{<4181>}Acts 6:1). So “honor” is used for *support* with necessities (^{<4186>}Matthew 15:4,6 ^{<4181>}Acts 28:10).

widows indeed — (^{<5186>}1 Timothy 5:16). Those really desolate; not like those (^{<5184>}1 Timothy 5:4) having children or relations answerable for their support, nor like those (in ^{<5186>}1 Timothy 5:6) “who live in pleasure”; but such as, from their earthly desolation as to friends, are most likely to trust wholly in God, persevere in continual prayers, and carry out the religious duties assigned to Church widows (^{<5185>}1 Timothy 5:5). Care for widows

was transferred from the Jewish economy to the Christian
(^{<184>}Deuteronomy 14:29 16:11 24:17,19).

4. if any widow have children — not “a widow indeed,” as having children who ought to support her.

nephews — rather, as *Greek*, “descendants,” or “grandchildren” [HESYCHIUS]. “Nephews” in *old English* meant “grandchildren” [HOOKER, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, 5.20].

let them — the children and descendants.

learn first — ere it falls to the Church to support them.

to show piety at home — filial piety towards their widowed mother or grandmother, by giving her sustenance. Literally, “to show piety towards *their own house*.” “Piety is applied to the reverential discharge of filial duties; as the parental relation is the earthly representation of God our heavenly Father’s relation to us. “*Their own*” stands in opposition to *the Church*, in relation to which the widow is comparatively a stranger. She has a claim on *her own* children, prior to her claim on the Church; let them fulfill this prior claim which she has on them, by sustaining her and not burdening the Church.

parents — *Greek*, (living) “progenitors,” that is, their mother or grandmother, as the case may be. “Let them learn,” implies that abuses of this kind had crept into the Church, widows claiming Church support though they had children or grandchildren able to support them.

good and — The oldest manuscripts omit. The words are probably inserted by a transcriber from ^{<508>}1 Timothy 2:3.

5. widow indeed, and desolate — contrasted with her who has children or grandchildren to support her (^{<504>}1 Timothy 5:4).

trusteth in God — perfect tense in *Greek*, “hath rested, and doth rest her hope in God.” ^{<505>}1 Timothy 5:5 *adds another* qualification in a widow for Church maintenance, besides her being “desolate” or destitute of children to support her. She must be not one “that liveth in pleasure” (^{<506>}1 Timothy 5:6), but one making God her main hope (the accusative in *Greek* expresses that God is *the ultimate aim whereto* her hope is *directed*;

whereas, ^{<5440>}1 Timothy 4:10, dative expresses hope *resting on* God as her present stay [WIESINGER]), and continuing constantly in prayers. Her destitution of children and of all ties to earth would leave her more unencumbered for devoting the rest of her days to God and the Church (^{<4133>}1 Corinthians 7:33,34). Compare also “Anna a widow,” who remained unmarried after her husband’s death and “departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers day and night” (^{<4131>}Luke 2:36,37). Such a one, Paul implies, would be the fittest object for the Church’s help (^{<5413>}1 Timothy 5:3); for such a one is promoting the cause of Christ’s Church by her prayers for it. “Ardor in prayers flows from hoping confidence in God” [LEO].

in supplications and prayers — *Greek*, “in *her* supplications and prayers”; the former signifies *asking under a sense of need*, the latter, *prayer* (see on ^{<5011>}1 Timothy 2:1; ^{<5001>}Philippians 4:6).

night and day — another coincidence with Luke (^{<4207>}Luke 18:7, “cry day and night”); contrast Satan’s accusations “day and night” (^{<6121>}Revelation 12:10).

6. she that liveth in pleasure — the opposite of such a widow as is described in ^{<5013>}1 Timothy 5:5, and therefore one utterly undeserving of Church charity. The *Greek* expresses *wanton prodigality* and excess [TITTMANN]. The root expresses *weaving* at a fast rate, and so lavish excess (see on ^{<5413>}James 5:5).

dead while she liveth — dead in the Spirit while alive in the flesh (^{<4132>}Matthew 8:22 ^{<4134>}Ephesians 5:14).

7. these things — just now spoken (^{<5413>}1 Timothy 5:5,6).

that they may be blameless — namely, the widows supported by the Church.

8. But — reverting to ^{<5413>}1 Timothy 5:4, “If any (a general proposition; therefore including in its application *the widow’s children or grandchildren*) provide not for his own (relations in general), and especially for those of his own house (in particular), he hath (practically) denied the faith.” Faith without love and its works is dead; “for the subject matter of faith is not mere opinion, but the grace and truth of God, to

which he that believes gives up his spirit, as he that loves gives up his heart” [MACK]. If in any case a duty of love is plain, it is in relation to one’s own relatives; to fail in so plain an obligation is a plain proof of want of love, and therefore of want of faith. “Faith does not set aside natural duties, but strengthens them” [BENGEL].

worse than an infidel — because even an infidel (or unbeliever) is taught by nature to provide for his own relatives, and generally recognizes the duty; the Christian who does not so, is worse (⁴¹⁵⁶Matthew 5:46,47). He has less excuse with his greater light than the infidel who may break the laws of nature.

9. Translate, “As a widow (that is, of the ecclesiastical order of *widowhood*; a kind of *female presbytery*), let none be enrolled (in the catalogue) who is less than sixty years old.” These were not *deaconesses*, who were chosen at a younger age (forty was the age fixed at the Council of Chalcedon), and who had virgins (in a later age called *widows*) as well as widows among them, but a band of widows set apart, though not yet formally and finally, to the service of God and the Church. Traces of such a class appear in ⁴⁴⁹⁴Acts 9:41. Dorcas herself was such a one. As it was expedient (see on ⁵⁴⁹²1 Timothy 3:2; ⁵⁰⁰⁶Titus 1:6) that the presbyter or bishop should have been but once married, so also in her case. There is a transition here to a new subject. The reference here cannot be, as in ⁵⁴⁹³1 Timothy 5:3, to *providing Church sustenance* for them. For the restriction to widows above sixty would then be needless and harsh, since many widows might be in need of help at a much earlier age; as also the rule that the widow must *not* have been *twice married*, especially since he himself, below (⁵⁴⁹⁴1 Timothy 5:14) enjoins the younger widows to marry again; as also that she must have *brought up children*. Moreover, ⁵⁴⁹⁵1 Timothy 5:10 presupposes some competence, at least in past times, and so poor widows would be excluded, the very class requiring charity. Also, ⁵⁴⁹⁶1 Timothy 5:11 would then be senseless, for then their remarrying would be a benefit, not an injury, to the Church, as relieving it of the burden of their sustenance. TERTULLIAN [*On the Veiling of Virgins*, 9], HERMAS [*Shepherd*, 1.2], and CHRYSOSTOM [*Homily*, 31], mention such an order of ecclesiastical widowhood, each one not less than sixty years old, and resembling the presbyters in the respect paid to them, and in some of their duties; they ministered with sympathizing counsel to other widows and to

orphans, a ministry to which their own experimental knowledge of the feelings and sufferings of the bereaved adapted them, and had a general supervision of their sex. Age was doubtless a requisite in *presbyters*, as it is here stated to have been in *presbyteresses*, with a view to their influence on the younger persons of their sex. They were supported by the Church, but not the only widows so supported (^{<548B>}1 Timothy 5:3,4).

wife of one man — in order not to throw a stumbling-block in the way of Jews and heathen, who regarded with disfavor second marriages (see on ^{<548E>}1 Timothy 3:2; ^{<500E>}Titus 1:6). This is the force of “blameless,” giving no offense, even in matters indifferent.

10. for good works — *Greek*, “IN honorable (excellent) works”; the sphere or element *in* which the good report of her had place (^{<548D>}Titus 2:7). This answers to ^{<548E>}1 Timothy 3:7, as to the bishop or presbyter, “He must have a good report of them which are without.”

if — if, in addition to being “well reported of.”

she ... brought up children — either her own (^{<548E>}1 Timothy 3:4,12), or those of others, which is one of the “good works”; a qualification adapting her for ministry to orphan children, and to mothers of families.

lodged strangers — ^{<548E>}1 Timothy 3:2, “given to hospitality” (^{<500E>}Titus 1:8); in the case of *presbyters*.

washed ... saints’ feet — after the example of the Lord (^{<4834>}John 13:14); a specimen of the universal spirit of humbly “by love serving one another,” which actuated the early Christians.

relieved the afflicted — whether by pecuniary or other relief.

followed ... good — (^{<548E>}1 Thessalonians 5:15; compare instances in ^{<425E>}Matthew 25:35,36).

11. younger — than sixty years old (^{<548D>}1 Timothy 5:9).

refuse — to take on the roll of presbyteress widows.

wax wanton — literally, “over-strong” (^{<4036>}2 Chronicles 26:16).

against Christ — rebelling against Christ, their proper Bridegroom [JEROME].

they will — *Greek*, “they wish”; their *desire* is to marry again.

12. Having — Bringing on themselves, and so *having* to bear as a burden (<481>Galatians 5:10) *judgment* from God (compare <5106>1 Timothy 3:6), weighing like a load on them.

cast off their first faith — namely, pledged to Christ and the service of the Church. There could be no hardship at the age of sixty or upwards in not marrying again (end of <5109>1 Timothy 5:9), for the sake of serving better the cause of Christ as presbyteresses; though, to ordinary widows, no barrier existed against remarriage (<4173>1 Corinthians 7:39). This is altogether distinct from Rome’s unnatural vows of celibacy in the case of young marriageable women. The widow-presbyteresses, moreover, engaged to remain single, not as though single life were holier than married life (according to Rome’s teaching), but because the interests of Christ’s cause made it desirable (see on <5102>1 Timothy 3:2). They had pledged “their first faith” to Christ as presbyteress widows; they now wish to transfer their faith to a husband (compare <4173>1 Corinthians 7:32,34).

13. withal — “at the same time, moreover.”

learn — usually in a good sense. But these women’s “learning” is *idleness*, *trifling*, and *busybodies’ tattle*.

wandering — *Greek*, “going about.”

from house to house — of the members of the Church (<5106>2 Timothy 3:6). “They carry the affairs of this house to that, and of that to this; they tell the affairs of all to all” [THEOPHYLACT].

tattlers — literally “*trifling* talkers.” In <6010>3 John 1:10, translated “prating.”

busybodies — mischievously *busy*; inconsiderately *curious* (<5102>2 Thessalonians 3:11). <4109>Acts 19:19, “curious,” the same *Greek*. *Curiosity* usually springs from idleness, which is itself the mother of *garrulity* [CALVIN].

speaking — not merely “*saying*.” The *subject-matter*, as well as the *form*, is involved in the *Greek* word [ALFORD].

which they ought not — (⁂ Titus 1:11).

14. younger women — rather, as ellipsis ought to be supplied, “the younger *widows*,” namely younger widows in general, as distinguished from the *older widows taken on the roll of presbyteresses* (⁂ 1 Timothy 5:9). The “therefore” means *seeing that young widows are exposed to such temptations*, “I will,” or “desire,” etc. (⁂ 1 Timothy 5:11-13). The precept here that they should marry again is not inconsistent with ⁂ 1 Corinthians 7:40; for the circumstances of the two cases were distinct (compare ⁂ 1 Corinthians 7:26). Here remarriage is recommended as an antidote to *sexual passion, idleness*, and the other evils noted in ⁂ 1 Timothy 5:11-13. Of course, where there was no tendency to these evils, marriage again would not be so requisite; Paul speaks of what is generally desirable, and supposing there should be danger of such evils, as was likely. “He does not impose *a law*, but points out *a remedy*, to younger widows” [CHRYSOSTOM].

bear children — (⁂ 1 Timothy 2:15); thus gaining one of the qualifications (⁂ 1 Timothy 5:10) for being afterwards a presbyteress widow, should Providence so ordain it.

guide — *Greek*, “*rule the house*” in the woman’s due place; not *usurping authority* over the man (⁂ 1 Timothy 2:12).

give none occasion — literally, “starting-point”: handle of reproach through the loose conduct of nominal Christians.

the adversary — of Christianity, Jew or Gentile. ⁂ Philippians 1:28 ⁂ Titus 2:8, “He that is of the contrary part.” Not *Satan*, who is introduced in a different relation (⁂ 1 Timothy 5:15).

to speak reproachfully — literally, “for the sake of reproach” (⁂ 1 Timothy 3:7 6:1 ⁂ Titus 2:5,10). If the *handle* were given, the *adversary* would use it *for the sake of reproach*. The adversary is eager to exaggerate the faults of a few, and to lay the blame on the whole Church and its doctrines [BENGEL].

15. For — *For* in the case of some this result has already ensued; “Some (widows) are already turned aside after Satan,” the seducer (not by falling away from the faith in general, but) by such errors as are stigmatized in ^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:11-13, sexual passion, idleness, etc., and so have *given occasion of reproach* (^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:14). “Satan finds some mischief still for the idle hands to do.”

16. If any ... have widows — of his family, however related to him. Most of the oldest manuscripts and versions omit “man or,” and read, “If any woman that believeth.” But the Received text *seems* preferable. If, however, the weightiest *authorities* are to prevail, the sense will be: He was speaking of younger widows; He now says, If *any believing young widow* have widows related to her needing support, let her relieve them, thereby casing the Church of the burden, ^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:3,4 (*there* it was *the children* and *grandchildren*; here it is *the young widow*, who, in order to avoid the evils of *idleness* and *wantonness*, the result of *idleness*, ^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:11,13 ^{<58B>}Ezekiel 16:49, is to be diligent in good works, such as “relieving the afflicted,” ^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:10, thus qualifying herself for being afterwards a *widow-presbyteress*).

let them — rather as *Greek*, “let him,” or “her”; “let such a one” (^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:10).

be charged — literally, “be *burdened*” with their support.

widows indeed — really helpless and friendless (^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:3,4).

17. The transition from the widow presbyteresses (^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:9) to the presbyters here, is natural.

rule well — literally, “preside well,” with wisdom, ability, and loving faithfulness, over the flock assigned to them.

be counted worthy of double honor — that is, the honor which is expressed by gifts (^{<58B>}1 Timothy 5:3,18) and otherwise. If a presbyter as such, in virtue of his office, is already worthy of honor, he who *rules well* is *doubly so* [WIESINGER] (^{<58B>}1 Corinthians 9:14 ^{<58B>}Galatians 6:6 ^{<58B>}1 Thessalonians 5:12). Not literally that a presbyter who rules well should get *double the salary* of one who does not rule well [ALFORD], or of a

presbyteress widow, or of the deacons [CHRYSTOSTOM]. “Double” is used for large in general (⁶⁸⁰Revelation 18:6).

specially they who labor in the word and doctrine — *Greek*, “teaching”; preaching of the word, and instruction, catechetical or otherwise. This implies that of the *ruling presbyters* there were two kinds, those who *labored in the word and teaching*, and those who did not. Lay presbyters, so called merely because of their *age*, have no place here; for both classes mentioned here alike are *ruling presbyters*. A college of presbyters is implied as existing in each large congregation. As in ⁵⁰⁰1 Timothy 3:1-16 their qualifications are spoken of, so here the acknowledgments due to them for their services.

18. the scripture — (⁶⁸⁰Deuteronomy 25:4; quoted before in ⁴⁹⁹1 Corinthians 9:9).

the ox that treadeth out — *Greek*, *An ox while treading*.

The laborer is worthy of his reward — or “hire”; quoted from ⁵⁰⁰Luke 10:7, whereas ⁴⁹⁹Matthew 10:10 has “his meat,” or “food.” If Paul extends the phrase, “Scripture saith,” to this second clause, as well as to the first, he will be hereby recognizing the Gospel of Luke, his own helper (whence appears the undesigned appositeness of the quotation), as inspired *Scripture*. This I think the correct view. The Gospel according to Luke was probably in circulation then about eight or nine years. However, it is possible “Scripture saith” applies only to the passage quoted from ⁶⁸⁰Deuteronomy 25:4; and then his quotation will be that of a common proverb, quoted also by the Lord, which commends itself to the approval of all, and is approved by the Lord and His apostle.

19. Against an elder — a presbyter of the Church.

receive not — “entertain not” [ALFORD].

but before two or three witnesses — A *judicial conviction* was not permitted in ⁶⁸⁰Deuteronomy 17:6 19:15, except on the testimony of at least two or three witnesses (compare ⁶⁸⁰Matthew 18:16 ⁶⁸⁷John 8:17 ⁶⁸¹2 Corinthians 13:1 ⁶⁸¹1 John 5:6,7). But Timothy’s *entertaining an accusation* against anyone is a different case, where the object was not judicially to punish, but to admonish: here he might *ordinarily* entertain it

without the need of two or three witnesses; but not in the case of an elder, since the more earnest an elder was to *convince gainsayers* (^{<5000>}Titus 1:9), the more exposed would he be to vexatious and false accusations. How important then was it that Timothy should not, without strong testimony, entertain a charge against presbyters, who should, in order to be efficient, be “blameless” (^{<5000>}1 Timothy 3:2 ^{<5000>}Titus 1:6). ^{<5000>}1 Timothy 5:21,24 imply that Timothy had the power of judging in the Church. Doubtless he would not *condemn* any save on the testimony of two or three witnesses, but in ordinary cases he would cite them, as the law of Moses also allowed, though there were only one witness. But in the case of elders, he would require two or three witnesses before even citing them; for their character for innocence stands higher, and they are exposed to envy and calumny more than others “Receive” does not, as ALFORD thinks, include both citation and conviction, but means only the former.

20. Them that sin — whether presbyters or laymen.

rebuke before all — publicly before the Church (^{<4000>}Matthew 18:15-17 ^{<4000>}1 Corinthians 5:9-13 ^{<4000>}Ephesians 5:11). Not until this “rebuke” was disregarded was the offender to be excommunicated.

others ... fear — that other members of the Church may have a wholesome fear of offending (^{<4000>}Deuteronomy 13:11 ^{<4000>}Acts 5:11).

21. I charge thee — rather as *Greek*, “I *adjure* thee”; so it ought to be translated (^{<5000>}2 Timothy 4:1).

before — “*in the presence of God*.”

Lord — omitted in the oldest manuscripts *God the Father, and Christ the Son*, will testify against thee, if thou disregardest my injunction. He vividly sets before Timothy *the last judgment*, in which God shall be revealed, and Christ seen face to face with His angels

elect angels — an epithet of reverence. The objects of divine electing love (^{<4000>}1 Peter 2:6). Not only “*elect*” (according to the everlasting purpose of God) in contradistinction to *the reprobate* angels (^{<4000>}2 Peter 2:4), but also to mark the excellence of the angels in general (as God’s chosen ministers, “holy angels,” “angels of light”), and so to give more solemnity to their testimony [CALVIN] as witnesses to Paul’s adjuration. Angels take part by

action and sympathy in the affairs of the earth (^{<2150} Luke 15:10 ^{<4949} 1 Corinthians 4:9).

these things — the injunctions, ^{<5159} 1 Timothy 5:19,20.

without preferring one before another — rather as *Greek*, “*prejudice*”; “judging before” hearing all the facts of a case. There ought to be judgment, but not prejudging. Compare “suddenly,” ^{<5152} 1 Timothy 5:22, also ^{<5154} 1 Timothy 5:24.

partiality — *in favor of* a man, as “prejudice” is bias *against* a man. Some of the oldest manuscripts read, “in the way of *summoning* (brethren) *before a* (heathen) *judge*.” But *Vulgate* and other good authorities favor the more probable reading in *English Version*.

22. Lay hands — that is, ordain (^{<5044} 1 Timothy 4:14 ^{<5002} 2 Timothy 1:6 ^{<5008} Titus 1:5). The connection is with ^{<5159} 1 Timothy 5:19. The way to guard against scandals occurring in the case of presbyters is, be cautious as to the character of the candidate before ordaining him; this will apply to other Church officers so ordained, as well as to presbyters. Thus, this clause refers to ^{<5159} 1 Timothy 5:19, as next clause, “neither be partaker of other men’s sins,” refers to ^{<5151} 1 Timothy 5:20. ELLICOTT and WIESINGER understand it of *receiving back into Church fellowship* or *absolution*, by *laying hands on those who had been* “rebuked” (^{<5151} 1 Timothy 5:20) *and then excommunicated* (^{<4187} Matthew 18:17); ^{<5151} 1 Timothy 5:20 favors this. But as in ^{<5044} 1 Timothy 4:14, and ^{<4016} Acts 6:6,13:3 ^{<5002} 2 Timothy 1:6, the laying on of hands is used of *ordination* (compare however as to *confirmation*, ^{<4187} Acts 8:17), it seems better to take it so here.

suddenly — hastily: ^{<5154} 1 Timothy 5:24,25 show that waiting for a time is salutary.

neither be partaker of other men’s sins — by negligence in ordaining ungodly candidates, and so becoming in some degree responsible for their sins. Or, there is the same transition from the *elders* to *all in general* who may sin, as in ^{<5159} 1 Timothy 5:19,20. Be not a partaker in other men’s sins by not “rebuking them that sin before all,” as well as those that are candidates for the presbytery, as also all “that sin.”

keep thyself pure — “thyself” is emphatic. “Keep THYSELF” *clear* of participation in OTHER men’s sin by not failing to *rebuke them that sin* (⁵⁰⁸¹1 Timothy 5:20). Thus the transition is easy to ⁵⁰⁸³1 Timothy 5:23, which is concerning Timothy *personally*; compare also ⁵⁰⁸⁴1 Timothy 5:24.

23. no longer — as a habit. This injunction to drink wine occasionally is a modification of the preceding “keep thyself pure.” The presbyter and deacon were enjoined to be “not given to wine” (⁵⁰⁸⁸1 Timothy 3:3,8). Timothy seems to have had a tendency to undue ascetical strictness on this point (compare *Note*, see on ⁵⁰⁸⁸1 Timothy 4:8; compare the Nazarene vow, ⁵⁰⁹¹Numbers 6:1-4; John the Baptist, ⁵⁰⁹⁵Luke 1:15 Romans 14). Paul therefore modifies the preceding words, “keep thyself pure,” virtually saying, “Not that I mean to enjoin that kind of purity which consists in asceticism, nay, *be no longer a water-drinker*,” that is, no longer drink *only* water, but *use a little wine*, as much as is needed for thy health. So ELLICOTT and WIESINGER. ALFORD thus: Timothy was of a feeble frame (see on ⁵⁰⁹⁹1 Corinthians 16:10,11), and prone to timidity in his duties as overseer where vigorous action was needed; hence Paul exhorts him to take all proper means to raise his bodily condition above these infirmities. God hereby commands believers to use all due means for preserving health, and condemns by anticipation the human traditions which among various sects have denied the use of wine to the faithful.

24. Two kinds of sins are specified: those *palpably manifest* (so the Greek for “open *beforehand*” ought to be translated; so in ⁵¹⁰⁴Hebrews 7:14, it is translated “evident”; literally, “*before*” *the eyes*, that is, notorious), further explained as “going before to judgment”; and those which follow after the men (“some men they, that is, their sins, follow after”), namely, not going beforehand, loudly accusing, but hidden till they come to the judgment: so ⁵¹⁰⁵1 Timothy 5:25, *the good works* are of two classes: those *palpably manifest* (translate so, instead of “manifest beforehand”) and “those that are otherwise,” that is, not *palpably manifest*. Both alike “cannot be hid”; the former class in the case of bad and good are *manifest* already; the latter class in the case of both are not manifest now, but shall be so at *the final judgment*.

going before to judgment — as heralds; crying sins which accuse their perpetrator. The connection seems to me this: He had enjoined Timothy,

⁵⁴⁸¹1 Timothy 5:20, “Rebuke *them that sin* before all”: and in ⁵⁴⁸²1 Timothy 5:22, “Neither be partaker of other men’s sins,” by ordaining ungodly men; having then by a digression at the clause, “keep thyself pure,” guarded against an ascetical error of Timothy in fancying purity consisted in asceticism, and having exhorted him to use wine for strengthening him in his work, he returns to the subject of his being vigorous as an overseer in *rebuking sin*, whether in presbyters or people, and in avoiding participation in men’s sins by ordaining ungodly candidates. He says, therefore, there are two classes of *sins*, as there are two classes of *good works*: those palpably *manifest*, and those not so; the former are those on which thou shouldest act decidedly at once when called on, whether to rebuke in general, or to ordain ministers in particular; as to the latter, the final *judgment* alone can decide; however hidden now they “cannot be hid” then. This could only be said of *the final judgment* (⁵⁴⁸³1 Corinthians 4:5; therefore, ALFORD’s reference of this verse to *Timothy’s judgment* in choosing elders must be wrong); all judgments before then are fallible. Thus he implies that Timothy can only be responsible if he connive at *manifest*, or evident sins; not that those *that are otherwise* shall escape judgment at last: just as in the case of *good works*, he can only be responsible for taking into account in his judgments those which are patent to all, not those secret good works which nevertheless will not remain hidden at the final judgment.

CHAPTER 6

1 TIMOTHY 6:1-21.

EXHORTATIONS AS TO DISTINCTIONS OF CIVIL RANK; THE DUTY OF SLAVES, IN OPPOSITION TO THE FALSE TEACHINGS OF GAIN-SEEKERS; TIMOTHY'S PURSUIT IS TO BE GODLINESS, WHICH IS AN EVERLASTING POSSESSION: SOLEMN ADJURATION TO DO SO AGAINST CHRIST'S COMING; CHARGE TO BE GIVEN TO THE RICH. CONCLUDING EXHORTATION.

1. servants — to be taken as predicated thus, “Let as many as are under the yoke (as) slaves” (Titus 2:9). The exhortation is natural as there was a danger of Christian slaves inwardly feeling above their heathen masters.

their own masters — The phrase “their own,” is an argument for submissiveness; it is not *strangers*, but *their own masters* whom they are required to respect.

all honor — *all* possible and fitting *honor*; not merely outward subjection, but that inward *honor* from which will flow spontaneously right outward conduct (see on Ephesians 5:22).

that the name of God — by which Christians are called.

blasphemed — Heathen masters would say, What kind of a God must be the God of the Christians, when such are the fruits of His worship (Romans 2:24 Titus 2:5,10)?

2. And — rather, “But.” The opposition is between those Christian slaves *under the yoke* of heathen, and *those that have believing masters* (he does not use the phrase “under the yoke” in the latter case, for service under believers is not a *yoke*). Connect the following words thus, “Let them (the slaves) not, because they (the masters) are brethren (and so *equals*, masters and slaves alike being Christians), despise them (the masters).”

but rather, etc. — “but all the more (so much the more: with the greater good will) do them service because they (the masters) are faithful (that is, believers) and beloved who receive (in the mutual *interchange* of relative duties between master and servant; so the *Greek*) the benefit” (*English Version* violates *Greek* grammar). This latter clause is parallel to, “because they are brethren”; which proves that “they” refers to the *masters*, not the *servants*, as TITTMANN takes it, explaining the verb in the common sense (^{<405>}Luke 1:54 ^{<405>}Acts 20:35), “who *sedulously labor* for their (masters’) benefit.” The very term “benefit” delicately implies service done with the right *motive*, Christian “good will” (^{<405>}Ephesians 6:7). If the common sense of the *Greek* verb be urged, the sense must be, “Because they (the masters) are faithful and beloved who *are sedulously intent on the benefiting*” of their servants. But PORPHYRY [*On Abstinence*, 1.46] justifies the sense of the *Greek* verb given above, which also better accords with the context; for otherwise, the article “*the*,” will have nothing in the preceding words to explain it, whereas in my explanation above “*the benefit*” will be that of the slaves’ *service*.

These things teach — (^{<5041>}1 Timothy 4:11 ^{<5025>}Titus 2:15).

3. teach otherwise — than I desire thee to “teach” (^{<5042>}1 Timothy 6:2). The *Greek* indicative implies, he puts not a merely supposed case, but one actually existing, ^{<5003>}1 Timothy 1:3, “*Every one* who *teaches* otherwise,” that is, who teaches *heterodoxy*.

consent not — *Greek*, “accede not to.”

wholesome — “sound” (^{<5040>}1 Timothy 1:10): opposed to the false teachers’ words, *unsound* through profitless science and immorality.

words of our Lord Jesus Christ — Paul’s inspired words are not merely his own, but are also *Christ’s* words.

4. He is proud — literally, “wrapt in smoke”; filled with the fumes of self-conceit (^{<5006>}1 Timothy 3:6) while “knowing nothing,” namely, of the doctrine which is according to godliness (^{<5003>}1 Timothy 6:3), though arrogating pre-eminent knowledge (^{<5007>}1 Timothy 1:7).

dotting about — literally, “*sick about*”; the opposite of “*wholesome*” (ⲥⲱⲃⲧ 1 Timothy 6:3). *Truth* is not the center *about* which his investigations move, but mere *word-strifes*.

questions — of controversy.

strifes of words — rather than about *realities* (ⲥⲱⲃⲧ 2 Timothy 2:14). These stand with them instead of “godliness” and “wholesome words” (ⲥⲱⲃⲧ 1 Timothy 6:3 ⲥⲱⲃⲧ 1 Timothy 1:4 ⲥⲱⲃⲧ Titus 3:9).

evil surmisings — as to those who are of a different party from themselves.

5. Perverse disputings — useless disputings. The oldest manuscripts read, “lasting contests” [WIESINGER]; “incessant collisions” [ALFORD]. “Strifes of words” had already been mentioned so that he would not be likely to repeat the same idea (as in the *English Version* reading) again.

corrupt minds — *Greek*, “of men corrupted (depraved) in mind.” The inmost source of the evil is in the perverted mind (ⲥⲱⲃⲧ 1 Timothy 6:4 ⲥⲱⲃⲧ 2 Timothy 3:8 ⲥⲱⲃⲧ Titus 1:15).

destitute of the truth — (ⲥⲱⲃⲧ Titus 1:14). They had had the truth, but through want of moral integrity and of love of the truth, they were misled by a pretended deeper gnosis (knowledge) and higher ascetical holiness, of which they made a trade [WIESINGER].

supposing, etc. — The *Greek* requires, “supposing (regarding the matter in this point of view) that piety (so translated for ‘godliness’) is a means of gain (that is, a way of advancing one’s worldly interests: a different *Greek* form, *poriswa*, expresses *the thing gained, gain*)”; not “that gain is godliness,” as *English Version*.

from such withdraw thyself — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. The connection with ⲥⲱⲃⲧ 1 Timothy 6:6 favors the omission of these words, which interrupt the connection.

6. But — Though they err in this, there is a sense in which “piety is” not merely gain, but “*great means of gain*”: not the *gaining* which they pursue, and which makes men to be *discontented* with their present possessions, and to use religion as “a cloak of covetousness” (ⲥⲱⲃⲧ 1 Thessalonians 2:5)

and *means of earthly gain*, but *the present and eternal gain* which *piety*, whose accompaniment is *contentment*, secures to the soul. WIESINGER remarks that Paul observed in Timothy a tendency to indolence and shrinking from the conflict, whence he felt (^{<5181>}1 Timothy 6:11) that Timothy needed cautioning against such temptation; compare also the second Epistle. Not merely *contentment* is great gain (a sentiment of the heathen CICERO [*Paradox* 6], “the greatest and surest riches”), but “piety with contentment”; for piety not only feels no need of what it has not, but also has that which exalts it above what it has not [WIESINGER]. The *Greek* for *contentment* is translated “sufficiency” (^{<498>}2 Corinthians 9:8). But the adjective (^{<5041>}Philippians 4:11) “content”; literally, “having a *sufficiency in one’s self*” independent of others. “The Lord always supplies His people with what is necessary for them. True happiness lies in piety, but this *sufficiency* [supplied by God, with which moreover His people are *content*] is thrown into the scale as a kind of overweight” [CALVIN] (^{<1171>}1 Kings 17:1-16 ^{<357>}Psalm 37:19 ^{<3316>}Isaiah 33:6,16 ^{<2421>}Jeremiah 37:21).

7. For — confirming the reasonableness of “contentment.”

and it is certain — *Vulgate* and other old versions support this reading. The oldest manuscripts, however, omit “and it is certain”; then the translation will be, “We brought nothing into the world (to teach us to remember) that neither can we carry anything out” (^{<8121>}Job 1:21 ^{<2165>}Ecclesiastes 5:15). Therefore, we should have no gain-seeking anxiety, the breeder of discontent (^{<4165>}Matthew 6:25).

8. And — *Greek*, “But.” In contrast to the greedy gain-seekers (^{<5065>}1 Timothy 6:5).

having — so long as we have food. (The *Greek* expresses “food sufficient in each case for our continually recurring wants” [ALFORD]). It is implied that we, as believers, shall *have* this (^{<2326>}Isaiah 23:16).

raiment — *Greek*, “covering”; according to some including a *roof to cover us*, that is, a dwelling, as well as clothing.

let us be therewith content — literally, “we shall be sufficiently provided”; “we shall be sufficed” [ALFORD].

9. will be rich — have more than “*food and raiment.*” *Greek*, “*wish to be rich*”; not merely *are willing*, but are resolved, and earnestly *desire* to have riches at any cost (^{<1083>}Proverbs 28:20,22). This *wishing* (not the riches themselves) is fatal to “contentment” (^{<5086>}1 Timothy 6:6). Rich men are not told to cast away their riches, but not to “trust” in them, and to “do good” with them (^{<5087>}1 Timothy 6:17,18 ^{<5021>}Psalms 62:10).

fall into temptation — not merely “are exposed to temptation,” but actually “*fall into*” it. The *falling into* it is what we are to pray against, “Lead us not into temptation” (^{<5084>}James 1:14); such a one is already in a sinful state, even before any overt act of sin. The *Greek* for “temptation” and “gain” contains a play on sounds — *porasmus, peirasmus*.

snare — a further step downwards (^{<5087>}1 Timothy 3:7). He falls into “the snare of the devil.”

foolish — irrational.

hurtful — to those who fall into the snare. Compare ^{<5002>}Ephesians 4:22, “deceitful lusts” which deceive to one’s deadly hurt.

lusts — With the one evil lust (“*wish to be rich*”) many others join themselves: the one is the “root of all evils” (^{<5083>}1 Timothy 6:10).

which — *Greek*, “whatever (lusts).”

drown — an awful descending climax from “fall into”; this is the last step in the terrible descent (^{<5085>}James 1:15); translated “sink,” ^{<5087>}Luke 5:7.

destruction ... perdition — *destruction* in general (temporal or eternal), and *perdition* in particular, namely, that of body and soul in hell.

10. the love of money — not the money itself, but the *love* of it — the *wishing to be rich* (^{<5089>}1 Timothy 6:9) — “is a root (ELLICOTT and MIDDLETON: not as *English Version*, ‘the root’) of all evils.” (Song of Solomon the *Greek* plural). The wealthiest may be rich not in a bad sense; the poorest may covet to be so (^{<5021>}Psalms 62:10). *Love of money* is not the sole root of evils, but it is a leading “root of bitterness” (^{<5025>}Hebrews 12:15), for “it destroys faith, the root of all that is good” [BENGEL]; its offshoots are “temptation, a snare, lusts, destruction, perdition.”

coveted after — lusted after.

erred from — literally, “have been made to err from the faith” (⁵⁰¹⁹1 Timothy 1:19 4:1).

pierced — (⁴⁰²⁵Luke 2:35).

with ... sorrows — “pains”: “thorns” of the parable (⁴¹³²Matthew 13:22) which choke the word of “faith.” “The prosperity of fools destroys them” (²¹⁰³Proverbs 1:32). BENGEL and WIESINGER make them the gnawings of conscience, producing remorse for wealth badly acquired; the harbingers of the future “perdition” (⁵⁰⁰⁹1 Timothy 6:9).

11. But thou — in contrast to the “some” (⁵⁰⁰¹1 Timothy 6:10).

man of God — who hast God as thy true riches (⁴¹⁵¹Genesis 15:1 ¹⁹⁶⁵Psalm 16:5 ²¹⁹⁴Lamentations 3:24). Applying primarily to Timothy as a minister (compare ⁴⁰⁰²2 Peter 1:21), just as the term was used of Moses (⁴⁵³¹Deuteronomy 33:1), Samuel (⁴⁹⁰⁶1 Samuel 9:6), Elijah, and Elisha; but, as the exhortation is as to duties *incumbent also on all Christians*, the term applies secondarily to him (so ⁵¹⁸⁷2 Timothy 3:17) as a Christian man *born of God* (⁵¹¹⁸James 1:18 ⁴³¹¹1 John 5:1), no longer a *man of the world* raised above earthly things; therefore, God’s property, not his own, bought with a price, and so having parted with all right in himself: Christ’s work is to be *his* great work: he is to be Christ’s living representative.

flee these things — namely, “the love of money” with its evil results (⁵⁰⁰⁹1 Timothy 6:9,10).

follow after righteousness — (⁵¹²²2 Timothy 2:22).

godliness — “piety.” *Righteousness* is more in relation to our fellow man; *piety* (“godliness”) to God”; *faith* is the root of both (see on ⁵¹¹⁷Titus 2:12).

love — by which “faith worketh.”

patience — *enduring perseverance* amidst trials.

meekness — The oldest manuscripts read, “meek-spiritedness,” namely, towards the opponents of the Gospel.

12. Fight the good fight — BIRKS thinks this Epistle was written from Corinth, where contests in the national games recurred at stated seasons, which will account for the allusion here as in ^{<4024>}1 Corinthians 9:24-26. Contrast “strifes of words” (^{<5004>}1 Timothy 6:4). Compare ^{<5018>}1 Timothy 1:18 ^{<5042>}2 Timothy 4:7. The “good profession” is connected with the *good fight* (^{<5004>}Psalm 60:4).

lay hold on eternal life — the crown, or garland, the prize of victory, laid hold of by the winner in the “good fight” (^{<5042>}2 Timothy 4:7,8 ^{<5012>}Philippians 3:12-14). “*Fight* (literally, ‘strive’) with such striving earnestness as to *lay hold on* the prize, *eternal life*.”

also — not in the oldest manuscripts.

professed a good profession — *Greek*, “didst confess THE good confession,” namely, *the Christian* confession (as the *Greek* word is the same in this verse as that for “confession” in ^{<5013>}1 Timothy 6:13, probably the *profession* here is the confession *that Christ’s kingdom is the kingdom of the truth*, ^{<4835>}John 18:36,37), at thy being set apart to thy ministerial function (whether in general, or as overseer at Ephesus): the same occasion as is referred to in ^{<5018>}1 Timothy 1:18 4:14 ^{<5004>}2 Timothy 1:4.

before many witnesses — who would testify against thee if thou shouldst fall away [BENGEL].

13. quickeneth all things — that is, “maketh alive.” But the oldest manuscripts read, “preserveth alive”; as the same *Greek* means in ^{<4079>}Acts 7:19; compare ^{<4009>}Nehemiah 9:6. He urges Timothy to faithfulness here by the present manifestation of God’s power in preserving all things, as in ^{<5034>}1 Timothy 6:14, by the future manifestation of God’s power at the appearing of Christ. The assurance that “eternal life,” ^{<5012>}1 Timothy 6:12, will be the result of “fighting the good fight,” rests on the fullness and power of Him who is the God of all life, present and to come.

witnessed — It was the Lord’s part to *witness*, Timothy’s part to *confess* (or “profess,” ^{<5012>}1 Timothy 6:12) “*the good confession*” [BENGEL]. *The* confession was His testimony that He was King, and His kingdom that of *the truth* (see on ^{<5012>}1 Timothy 6:12; ^{<5015>}1 Timothy 6:15 ^{<4271>}Matthew 27:11). Christ, in attesting, or bearing witness to this truth, attested the truth of

the whole of Christianity. Timothy's *profession*, or *confession*, included therefore the whole of the Christian truth.

14. keep this commandment — *Greek*, “the commandment,” that is, the Gospel rule of life (⁵⁰⁰⁵1 Timothy 1:5 ⁴⁸³⁴John 13:34 ⁴⁰²²2 Peter 2:21 3:2).

without spot, unrebukeable — agreeing with “thou.” Keep the commandment and so be without spot,” etc. “Pure” (⁵⁴⁵²1 Timothy 5:22 ⁴⁰⁵²Ephesians 5:27 ⁵¹⁰⁷James 1:27 ⁴⁰⁸⁴2 Peter 3:14).

until the appearing of ... Christ — *His coming in person* (⁵¹⁰⁸2 Thessalonians 2:8 ⁵¹⁰³Titus 2:13). Believers then used in their practice to set before themselves the day of Christ as near at hand; we, the hour of death [BENGEL]. The fact has in all ages of the Church been certain, the time as uncertain to Paul, as it is to us; hence, ⁵⁴⁵⁵1 Timothy 6:15, he says, “in His times”: the Church's true attitude is that of continual expectation of her Lord's return (⁴⁶⁰⁸1 Corinthians 1:8 ⁵⁰⁰⁶Philippians 1:6,10).

15. in his times — *Greek*, “His own [fitting] times” (⁴⁰⁰⁷Acts 1:7). The plural implies successive stages in the manifestation of the kingdom of God, each having its own appropriate time, the regulating principle and knowledge of which rests with the Father (⁵⁰⁰⁶1 Timothy 2:6 ⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 1:9 ⁵⁰⁰³Titus 1:3 ⁵⁰⁰⁰Hebrews 1:1).

he shall show — “display”: an expression appropriate in reference to His “APPEARING,” which is stronger than His “coming,” and implies its *visibility*; “manifest”: *make visible* (compare ⁴⁰⁸³Acts 3:20): “He” is *the Father* (⁵⁴⁶⁶1 Timothy 6:16).

blessed — in Himself: so about to be the source of *blessing* to His people at Christ appearing, whence flows their “blessed hope” (⁵⁰¹¹1 Timothy 1:11 ⁴⁰²³Titus 2:13).

only — (⁴⁶⁰⁸John 17:3 ⁵⁵⁰²Romans 16:27 ⁴⁶⁵⁴Revelation 15:4).

King of kings — elsewhere applied also to Jesus (⁴⁰⁰⁷Revelation 1:5 17:14 19:16).

16. Who only hath immortality — in His own essence, not merely at the will of another, as all other immortal beings [JUSTIN MARTYR, *Quaest. ad Orthod.*, 61]. As He *hath immortality*, so will He give it to us who believe;

to be out of Him is death. It is mere heathen philosophy that attributes to the soul indestructibility in itself, which is to be attributed solely to God's gift. As He hath life *in Himself*, so hath He given to the Son to have life *in Himself* (^{<613>}John 5:26). The term used in the New Testament for "immortal," which does not occur, is "incorruptible." "Immortality" is found in ^{<613>}1 Corinthians 15:53,54.

dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto — After *life* comes mention of *light*, as in ^{<604>}John 1:4. That *light* is *unapproachable* to creatures, except in so far as they are admitted by Him, and as He goes forth to them [BENGEL]. It is *unapproachable* on account of its exceeding brightness [THEOPHYLACT]. If one cannot gaze steadfastly at the sun, which is but a small part of creation, by reason of its exceeding heat and power, how much less can mortal man gaze at the inexpressible glory of God [THEOPHYLACT, *To Autolycus*] (^{<640>}Psalms 104:2 ^{<605>}1 John 1:5).

no man hath seen — (^{<623>}Exodus 23:20 ^{<608>}John 1:18 ^{<605>}Colossians 1:15 ^{<612>}Hebrews 11:27 ^{<602>}1 John 4:12). Perhaps even in the perfect state no creature shall fully see God. Still the saints shall, in some sense, have the blessedness of *seeing* Him, which is denied to mere *man* (^{<608>}Matthew 5:8 ^{<612>}1 Corinthians 13:12 ^{<602>}1 John 3:2 ^{<624>}Revelation 22:4).

17. Resuming the subject from above, ^{<605>}1 Timothy 6:5,10. The immortality of God, alone rich in glory, and of His people through Him, is opposed to the lust of money (compare ^{<604>}1 Timothy 6:14-16). From speaking of the *desire* to be rich, he here passes to those who *are* rich:

- (1) What ought to be their disposition;
- (2) What use they ought to make of their riches, and,
- (3) The consequences of their so using them.

rich in this world — contrasted with the riches of the future kingdom to be the portion of believers at Christ's "appearing," ^{<604>}1 Timothy 6:14.

high-minded — often the character of the rich (see ^{<612>}Romans 12:16).

trust — *Greek*, "to have their trust resting."

in ... in — rather, "upon ... upon," as the oldest manuscripts.

uncertain riches — rather as *Greek*, “the *uncertainty* of riches.” They who rest their trust on riches, rest trust on *uncertainty* itself (^{<319>}Proverbs 23:5). Now they belong to one person, now to another, and that which has many masters is possessed by none [THEODORET].

living God — The best manuscripts and versions omit “living.” He who trusts in riches transfers to them the duty he owes to God [CALVIN].

who giveth — *Greek*, “affordeth.”

all things richly — temporal and eternal, for the body and for the soul. In order to be truly rich, seek to be blessed of, and in, God (^{<319>}Proverbs 10:22 ^{<608>}2 Peter 1:3).

to enjoy — *Greek*, “for enjoyment.” Not that the heart may cleave to them as its idol and *trust* (^{<508>}1 Timothy 4:3). *Enjoyment* consists in giving, not in holding fast. Non-employment should be far removed, as from man, so from his resources (^{<519>}James 5:2,3) [BENGEL].

18. do good — like God Himself (^{<608>}Psalm 119:68 ^{<447>}Acts 14:17) and Christ (^{<418>}Acts 10:38). TITTMANN translates, “to do,” or “act well”; as the *Greek* for “to be beneficent” is a distinct word, *agathopoiein*.

rich in good works — so “rich in faith,” which produces good works (^{<508>}James 2:5). Contrasted with “rich in this world,” ^{<507>}1 Timothy 6:17. Literally, it is “rich in honorable (right) works.” *Greek*, “*kalois*,” “*ergois*,” are works good or *right* in themselves: “*agathois*,” good to another.

ready to distribute — free givers [ALFORD]; the heart not cleaving to possessions, but ready to impart to others.

willing to communicate — ready *contributors* [ALFORD]: liberal in admitting others to share our goods in *common with* ourselves (^{<808>}Galatians 6:6 ^{<836>}Hebrews 13:16).

19. Laying up in store — “therefrom (that is, by this means [ALFORD]; but BENGEL makes the *Greek* “*apo*” mean laying apart *against a future time*), laying up for themselves as a treasure” [ALFORD] (^{<408>}Matthew 6:19,20). This is a treasure which we act wisely in *laying up in store*, whereas the wisest thing we can do with earthly treasures is “to distribute” them and give others a share of them (^{<508>}1 Timothy 6:18).

good foundation — (See on ^{<50B>}1 Timothy 3:13; ^{<106>}Luke 6:48 ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 3:11). The sure reversion of the future heavenly inheritance: earthly riches *scattered* in faith lay up in store a sure *increase* of heavenly riches. We gather by scattering (^{<112>}Proverbs 11:24 13:7 ^{<201>}Luke 16:9).

that ... eternal life — The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “*that which is really life*,” its joys being solid and enduring (^{<91>}Psalm 16:11). The life that now is cannot be called so, its goods being unsubstantial, and itself a vapor (^{<50B>}James 4:14). “In order that (‘with their feet so to speak on this foundation’ [DE WETTE]) they may lay hold on that which is life indeed.”

20, 21. Recapitulatory conclusion: the main aim of the whole Epistle being here summarily stated.

O Timothy — a personal appeal, marking at once his affection for Timothy, and his prescience of the coming heresies.

keep — from spiritual thieves, and from enemies who will, while men sleep, sow tares amidst the good seed sown by the Son of man.

that which is committed to thy trust — *Greek*, “the deposit” (^{<50B>}1 Timothy 1:18 ^{<511>}2 Timothy 1:12,14 2:2). “*The true*” or “*sound doctrine*” to be taught, as opposed to “*the science falsely so called*,” which leads to “*error concerning the faith*” (^{<502>}1 Timothy 6:21). “It is not thine: it is another’s property with which thou hast been entrusted: Diminish it not at all” [CHRYSOSTOM]. “That which was entrusted to thee, not found by thee; which thou hast received, not invented; a matter not of genius, but of teaching; not of private usurpation, but of public tradition; a matter brought to thee, not put forth by thee, in which thou oughtest to be not an enlarger, but a guardian; not an originator, but a disciple; not leading, but following. ‘Keep,’ saith he, ‘the deposit,’; preserve intact and inviolate the talent of the catholic faith. What has been entrusted to thee, let that same remain with thee; let that same be handed down by thee. Gold thou hast received, gold return. I should be sorry thou shouldest substitute aught else. I should be sorry that for gold thou shouldest substitute lead impudently, or brass fraudulently. I do not want the mere appearance of gold, but its actual reality. Not that there is to be no progress in religion in Christ’s Church. Let there be so by all means, and the greatest progress; but then let it be real progress, not a change of the faith. Let the intelligence

of the whole Church and its individual members increase exceedingly, provided it be only in its own kind, the doctrine being still the same. Let the religion of the soul resemble the growth of the body, which, though it develops its several parts in the progress of years, yet remains the same as it was essentially" [VINCENTIUS LIRINENSIS, A.D. 434].

avoiding — “turning away from” (compare ^{<5180>}2 Timothy 3:4). Even as they have “turned away from the truth” (^{<5006>}1 Timothy 1:6 5:15 ^{<5004>}2 Timothy 4:4).

profane — (^{<5007>}1 Timothy 4:7 ^{<5126>}2 Timothy 2:16).

vain — *Greek*, “empty”: mere “strifes of words,” ^{<5004>}1 Timothy 6:4, producing no moral fruit.

oppositions — dialectic antithesis of the false teachers [ALFORD]. WIESINGER, not so probably, “oppositions to the sound doctrine.” I think it likely germs existed already of the heresy of dualistic oppositions, namely, between the good and evil principle, afterwards fully developed in Gnosticism. Contrast Paul’s just antithesis (^{<5036>}1 Timothy 3:16 6:5,6 ^{<5125>}2 Timothy 2:15-23).

science falsely so called — where there is not faith, there is not knowledge [CHRYSOSTOM]. There was true “knowledge,” a special gift of the Spirit, which was abused by some (^{<4001>}1 Corinthians 8:1 12:8 14:6). This gift was soon counterfeited by false teachers arrogating to themselves pre-eminently the gift (^{<5108>}Colossians 2:8,18,23). Hence arose the creeds of the Church, called *symbols*, that is, in *Greek*, “watchwords,” or a test whereby the orthodox might distinguish one another in opposition to the heretical. Perhaps here, ^{<5031>}1 Timothy 6:20, and ^{<5013>}2 Timothy 1:13,14, imply the existence of some such brief formula of doctrine then existing in the Church; if so, we see a good reason for its not being written in Scripture, which is designed not to give dogmatic formularies, but to be the fountain whence all such formularies are to be drawn according to the exigencies of the several churches and ages. Probably thus a portion of the so-called apostle’s creed may have had their sanction, and been preserved solely by tradition on this account. “The creed, handed down from the apostles, is not written on paper and with ink, but on fleshy tables of the heart” JEROME [*Against John of Jerusalem*, 9]. Thus, in the creed, contrary

to the “oppositions” (the germs of which probably existed in the Church in Paul’s latter days) whereby the aeons were *set off* in pairs, God is stated to be “the Father Almighty,” or *all-governing* “maker of heaven and earth” [BISHOP HINDS].

21. Which some professing — namely, professing these *oppositions of science falsely so called*.

erred — (See on ~~5006~~ 1 Timothy 1:6; ~~5021~~ 1 Timothy 2:11) — literally, “missed the mark” (~~5006~~ 2 Timothy 3:7,8). True sagacity is inseparable from faith.

Grace — *Greek*, “*the* grace,” namely, of God, for which we Christians look, and in which we stand [ALFORD].

be with thee — He restricts the salutation to Timothy, as the Epistle was not to be read in public [BENGEL]. But the oldest manuscripts read, “be with you”; and the “thee” may be a transcriber’s alteration to harmonize with ~~5002~~ 2 Timothy 4:22 ~~5085~~ Titus 3:15.

Amen — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO TIMOTHY

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

PLACE OF WRITING. — Paul, in the interval between his first and second imprisonment, after having written First Timothy from Macedonia or Corinth [BIRKS] (if we are to adopt the opinion that First Timothy was written after his first imprisonment), returned to Ephesus, as he intended, by way of *Troas*, where he left the books, etc. (mentioned in ² Timothy 4:13), with Carpus. From Ephesus he went to Crete for a short visit and returned, and then wrote to Titus. Next he went by Miletus to Corinth (² Timothy 4:20), and thence to Nicopolis (^{Titus} Titus 3:12), whence he proceeded to Rome. From his prison there he wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy, shortly before his martyrdom. It is not certain where Timothy was at this time. Some of the internal evidences favor the view of his having been then at Ephesus; thus the salutation of Priscilla and Aquila, who generally resided there (² Timothy 4:19); also that of the household of Onesiphorus, who is stated in ² Timothy 1:16-18 to have ministered to Paul *at Ephesus*, a circumstance implying his residence there. Also, the Hymenaeus of ² Timothy 2:17 seems to be the same as the Hymenaeus at Ephesus (¹ Timothy 1:20); and probably “Alexander the coppersmith” (² Timothy 4:14) is the same as the Alexander joined with Hymenaeus (¹ Timothy 1:20), and possibly the same as the Alexander put forward by the Jews to clear themselves, not to befriend Paul, at the riot in *Ephesus* (⁴ Acts 19:33,34). The difficulty is, on this supposition, how to account for ² Timothy 4:12,20: if Timothy was at Ephesus, why did he need to be told that *Paul had sent Tychicus to Ephesus?* or that *Paul had left Trophimus, himself an Ephesian* (⁴ Acts 21:29), *sick at Miletus*, which was only thirty miles from Ephesus? However, see on ²

Timothy 4:12; ^{<5040>}2 Timothy 4:20. Troas lay on the road to Rome from either Ephesus or Pontus, so that ^{<5043>}2 Timothy 4:13 will accord with the theory of either Ephesus or any other place in the northwest of Asia Minor, being Timothy's place of sojourn at the time. Probably, he had the general superintendence of the Pauline churches in Asia Minor, in accordance with his mission combining the office of *evangelist*, or *itinerant missionary*, with that of *presiding overseer*. Ephesus was probably his headquarters.

TIME OF WRITING. —

(1) Paul's first imprisonment, described in ^{<4087>}Acts 28:17-31, was much milder than that in which he was when writing Second Timothy. In the former, he had liberty to lodge in his own hired house, and to receive all comers, guarded only by a single soldier; in the latter, he was so closely confined that Onesiphorus with difficulty found him; he was chained, his friends had forsaken him, and he had narrowly escaped sentence of execution from the Roman emperor. Medieval legends represent the Mamertine prison, or Tullianum, as the scene of his incarceration with Peter. But this is irreconcilable with the fact of Onesiphorus, Linus, Pudens, etc., having access to him. He was probably under military custody, as in his former imprisonment, though of a severer kind (^{<5016>}2 Timothy 1:16-18 2:9 4:6-8,16,17).

(2) The visit to Troas (^{<5043>}2 Timothy 4:13) can hardly have been that mentioned in ^{<4015>}Acts 20:5-7, the last before his first imprisonment; for, if it were, the interval between that visit and the first imprisonment would be seven or eight years, a period most unlikely for him to have allowed to pass without sending for his cloak and parchments, when they might have been of service to him in the interim.

(3) Paul's leaving Trophimus sick at Miletus (^{<5040>}2 Timothy 4:20), could not have been on the occasion mentioned in ^{<4015>}Acts 20:15; for, subsequent to that, Trophimus was with Paul in Jerusalem (^{<4013>}Acts 21:29).

(4) The words (^{<5040>}2 Timothy 4:20), "Erastus abode at Corinth," imply that Paul had shortly before been at Corinth, where he left Erastus. But before his first imprisonment, Paul had not been at Corinth for several

years; and in the interval Timothy had been with him, so that Timothy did not need at a later period to be told about that visit (^{<441>}Acts 20:2,4). For all these reasons the imprisonment, during which he wrote Second Timothy, is shown to be his second imprisonment. Moreover, ^{<442>}Hebrews 13:23,24, represents the writer (who was probably Paul) as *in Italy*, and *at liberty*. So CLEMENT OF ROME [*First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.5], the disciple of Paul, explicitly states, “In the east and west, Paul as a preacher instructed *the whole world* (that is, the Roman empire) in righteousness, and having gone to *the extremity of the west*, and having borne witness before the rulers (of Rome), he so was removed from the world.” This plainly implies that he fulfilled his design (^{<615>}Romans 15:24-28) of a missionary journey *into Spain*. The canon of the New Testament, compiled about A.D. 170 (called MURATORI’s *Canon*), also mentions “the journey of Paul from Rome to Spain.” See ROUTH [*Sacred Fragments*, vol. 4, p. 1-12].

His martyrdom is universally said to have occurred in Nero’s reign [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.22; JEROME, *On Illustrious Men*]. Five years thus seem to have elapsed between the first imprisonment, A.D. 63 (^{<443>}Acts 28:17-31), and his martyrdom, June A.D. 68, the last year of Nero’s reign. He was probably arrested by the magistrates in Nicopolis (^{<444>}Titus 3:12) in Epirus, in the winter, on a double charge, first, of being one of the Christians who had conspired, it was alleged by Nero’s partisans, to set fire to Rome, A.D. 64; secondly, of introducing a novel and unlawful religion. His friends all left him, except Luke: Demas from “love of this present world”: the others from various causes (^{<445>}2 Timothy 4:10,11). On the first charge he seems to have been acquitted. His liberation from his first imprisonment took place in A.D. 63, the year before the great fire at Rome, which Nero made the pretext for his persecution of the Christians. Every cruelty was heaped on them; some were crucified; some were arrayed in the skins of wild beasts and hunted to death by dogs; some were wrapped in pitch-robcs and set on fire by night to illuminate the circus of the Vatican and gardens of Nero, while that monster mixed among the spectators in the garb of a charioteer. But now (A.D. 67 or 68) some years had elapsed since the first excitement which followed the fire. Hence, Paul, being a Roman citizen, was treated in his trial with a greater respect for the forms of the law, and hence was

acquitted (^{STIM7} 2 Timothy 4:17) on the first charge of having instigated the Christians to their supposed acts of incendiarism before his last departure from Rome. Alexander the coppersmith seems to have been a witness against him (^{STIM4} 2 Timothy 4:14). Had he been condemned on the first charge, he would probably have been burnt alive, as the preceding martyrs were, for *arson*. His judge was the city Praefect. CLEMENT OF ROME specifies that his trial was (not before the emperor, but) “before the rulers.” No advocate ventured to plead his cause, no patron appeared for him, such as under ordinary circumstances might have aided him; for instance, one of the powerful aemilian house, under which his family possibly enjoyed clientship (^{STIM6} 2 Timothy 4:16,17), whence he may have taken his name Paul. The place of trial was, probably, one of the great basilicas in the Forum, two of which were called the Pauline Basilicas, from L. aemilius Paulus, who had built one and restored the other. He was remanded for the second stage of his trial. He did not expect this to come on until the following “winter” (^{STIM2} 2 Timothy 4:21), whereas it took place about midsummer; if in Nero’s reign, not later than June. In the interim Luke was his only constant companion; but one friend from Asia, Onesiphorus, had diligently sought him and visited him in prison, undeterred by the danger. Linus, too, the future bishop of Rome, Pudens, the son of a senator, and Claudia, his bride, perhaps the daughter of a British king (see on ^{STIM2} 2 Timothy 4:21), were among his visitors; and Tychicus, before he was sent by Paul to Ephesus (^{STIM2} 2 Timothy 4:12; perhaps bearing with him this Epistle).

OBJECT OF THE EPISTLE. — He was anxious to see his disciple Timothy, before his death, and that Timothy should bring Mark with him (^{STIM2} 2 Timothy 1:4 4:9,11,21). But feeling how uncertain it was whether Timothy should arrive in time, he felt it necessary, also, to give him by letter a last warning as to the heresies, the germs of which were then being scattered in the Churches. Hence he writes a series of exhortations to faithfulness, and zeal for sound doctrine, and patience amidst trials: a charge which Timothy seems to have needed, if we are to judge from the apostle’s earnestness in urging him to boldness in Christ’s cause, as though Paul thought he saw in him some signs of constitutional timidity (^{STIM2} 2 Timothy 2:2-8 4:1-5 ^{STIM2} 1 Timothy 5:22,23).

PAUL'S DEATH. — DIOYSIUS, bishop of Corinth (quoted in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.25]) about A.D. 170, is the earliest authority for the tradition that Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome “about the same time” as Paul, after having labored for some time there. He calls Peter and Paul “the founders of the Corinthian and Roman Churches.” The Roman presbyter, CAIUS (about A.D. 200), mentions the tradition that Peter suffered martyrdom in the Vatican. But

(1) Peter's work was *among the Jews* (✠^{ROM} Galatians 2:9), whereas Rome was a Gentile Church (✠^{ROM} Romans 1:13. Moreover,

(2) the First Epistle of Peter (✠^{ROM} 1 Peter 1:1 5:13) represents him as laboring *in Babylon* in Mesopotamia.

(3) The silence concerning Peter of Paul's Epistles written in Rome, negatives the tradition of his having founded, or labored long at Rome; though it is *possible* he may have endured martyrdom there. His martyrdom, certainly, was not, as JEROME says, “on the same day” with that of Paul, else Paul would have mentioned Peter's being at Rome in ✠^{ROM} 2 Timothy 4:11. The legend says that Peter, through fear, was fleeing from Rome at early dawn by the Appian Way, when he met our Lord, and falling at His feet, asked, Lord, whither goest thou? to which the Lord replied, I go again to be crucified. The disciple returned penitent and ashamed, and was martyred. The Church of *Domine quo vadis*, on the Appian Way, commemorates the supposed fact. Paul, according to CAIUS (quoted in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.25]), suffered martyrdom *on the Ostian Way*. So also JEROME, who gives the date, the fourteenth year of Nero. It was common to send prisoners, whose death might attract too much notice at Rome, to some distance from the city, under a military escort, for execution; hence the soldier's *sword*, not the executioner's *axe*, was the instrument of his decapitation [OROSIUS, *The Seven Books of History against the Pagans*, 7.7]. Paul appears, from ✠^{ROM} Philippians 1:12-30, to have had his partisans even in the palace, and certainly must have exercised such an influence as would excite sympathy in his behalf, to avoid which the execution was ordered outside the city. Compare TACITUS [*Histories*, 4.11]. The Basilica of St. Paul, first built by Constantine, now stands outside Rome on the road to Ostia: before the

Reformation it was under the protection of the kings of England, and the emblem of the order of the Garter is still to be seen among its decorations. The traditional spot of the martyrdom is the *Tre Fontane*, not far from the Basilica [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

~~ROM~~ 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-18.

ADDRESS: THANKFUL EXPRESSION OF LOVE AND DESIRE TO SEE HIM: REMEMBRANCE OF HIS FAITH AND THAT OF HIS MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER. EXHORTATION TO STIR UP THE GIFT OF GOD IN HIM, AND NOT SHRINK FROM AFFLICTION, ENFORCED BY THE CONSIDERATION OF THE FREENESS OF GOD'S GRACE IN OUR GOSPEL CALLING, AND BY THE APOSTLE'S EXAMPLE. THE DEFECTION OF MANY: THE STEADFASTNESS OF ONESIPHORUS.

CHAPTER 1

1. This Epistle is the last testament and swan-like death song of Paul [BENGEL].

according to the promise of life ... in Christ — Paul’s *apostleship* is in order to carry into effect this promise. Compare “according to the faith ... in hope of eternal life ... promise,” etc. (◀500◀ Titus 1:1,2). This “promise of life in Christ” (compare ▶500◀ 2 Timothy 1:10 ▶500◀ 2 Timothy 2:8) was needed to nerve Timothy to fortitude amidst trials, and to boldness in undertaking the journey to Rome, which would be attended with much risk (◀500◀ 2 Timothy 1:8).

2. my dearly beloved son — In ▶500◀ 1 Timothy 1:2, and ▶500◀ Titus 1:4, written at an earlier period than this Epistle, the expression used is in the *Greek*, “my *genuine* son.” ALFORD sees in the change of expression an intimation of an altered tone as to Timothy, more of mere love, and less of confidence, as though Paul saw in him a want of firmness, whence arose the need of his *stirring up* afresh the faith and grace in Him (◀500◀ 2 Timothy 1:6). But this seems to me not justified by the *Greek* word *agapetos*, which implies the attachment of *reasoning* and *choice*, on the ground of *merit* in the one “beloved,” not of merely *instinctive* love. See TRENCH [*Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*].

3. I thank — *Greek*, “I feel gratitude to God.”

whom I serve from my forefathers — *whom I serve* (◀500◀ Romans 1:9) as *did my forefathers*. He does not mean to put on the same footing the Jewish and Christian service of God; but simply to assert his own conscientious service of God as he had received it from his *progenitors* (not Abraham, Isaac, etc., whom he calls “the fathers,” not “progenitors” as the *Greek* is here; ▶500◀ Romans 9:5). The memory of those who had gone before to whom he is about to be gathered, is now, on the eve of death, pleasant to him; hence also, he calls to mind the faith of the mother and grandmother of Timothy; as he walks in the faith of his forefathers (◀421◀ Acts 23:1 24:14 26:6,7 28:20), so Timothy should persevere firmly in the faith of his parent and grandparent. Not only Paul, but the Jews who

reject Christ, forsake the faith of their forefathers, who looked for Christ; when they accept Him, the hearts of the children shall only be returning to the faith of their forefathers (^{<300b}Malachi 4:6 ^{<500b}Luke 1:17 ^{<612b}Romans 11:23,24,28). Probably Paul had, in his recent defense, dwelt on this topic, namely, that he was, in being a Christian, only following his *hereditary faith*.

that ... I have remembrance of thee — “*how* unceasing I *make my mention* concerning thee” (compare ^{<500b}Philemon 1:4). The cause of Paul’s feeling thankful is, not that he remembers Timothy unceasingly in his prayers, but for what Timothy is in faith (^{<500b}2 Timothy 1:5) and graces; compare ^{<600b}Romans 1:8,9, from which supply the elliptical sentence thus, “I thank God (for thee, for God is my witness) whom I serve ... that (or *how*) without ceasing I have remembrance (or *make mention*) of thee,” etc.

night and day — (See on ^{<500b}1 Timothy 5:5).

4. desiring — *Greek*, “with *yearning* as for one much *missed*.”

mindful of thy tears — not only at our parting (^{<400b}Acts 20:37), but also often when under pious feelings.

that I may be filled with joy — to be joined with “desiring to see thee” (^{<600b}Romans 1:11,12 15:32).

5. When I call to remembrance — This increased his “desire to see” Timothy. The oldest manuscripts read, “When I *called* to remembrance”; implying that some recent incident (perhaps the contrasted cowardice of the hypocrite Demas, who forsook him) had reminded him of the sincerity of Timothy’s faith.

faith that is in thee — ALFORD translates, “that *was* in thee.” He remembers Timothy’s faith in the *past* as a fact; its *present* existence in him is only matter of his confident *persuasion* or hope.

which — *Greek*, “such as.”

dwelt — “made its dwelling” or abode (^{<400b}John 14:23). The past tense implies they were now dead.

first — before it dwelt in thee. She was the furthest back of the progenitors of Timothy whom Paul knew.

mother Eunice — a believing Jewess; but his father was a Greek, that is, a heathen (⁴⁰¹Acts 16:1). The faith of the one parent sanctified the child (³⁸⁵2 Timothy 3:15 ⁴⁰⁴1 Corinthians 7:14). She was probably converted at Paul's first visit to Lystra (⁴⁰⁶Acts 14:6). It is an undesigned coincidence, and so a mark of truth, that in ⁴⁰¹Acts 16:1 the belief of the mother *alone* is mentioned, just as here praise is bestowed on the faith of the mother, while no notice is taken of the father [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*].

and — *Greek*, “but,” that is, notwithstanding appearances [ALFORD].

persuaded that — *it dwells, or it shall dwell* “in thee also.” The mention of the faith of his mother and grandmother is designed as an incentive to stir up his faith.

6. Wherefore — *Greek*, “For which cause,” namely, because thou hast inherited, didst once possess, and I trust (“am persuaded”) still dost possess, such unfeigned faith [ALFORD].

stir up — literally, “rekindle,” “revive the spark of”; the opposite of “quench” or “extinguish” (³⁸⁹1 Thessalonians 5:19). Paul does not doubt the existence of real faith in Timothy, but he desires it to be put into active exercise. Timothy seems to have become somewhat remiss from being so long without Paul (³⁹²2 Timothy 2:22).

gift of God — the spiritual grace received for his ministerial office, either at his original ordination, or at his consecration to the particular office of superintending the Ephesian Church (see on ⁵⁰⁴1 Timothy 4:14), imparting *fearlessness, power, love, and a sound mind* (³⁹⁰2 Timothy 1:7).

by the putting on of my hands — In ⁵⁰⁴1 Timothy 4:14, it is “with [not *by*] the laying on of the hands *of the presbytery*.” The apostle was chief in the ordination, and to him “BY” is applied. The presbytery were his assistants; so “with,” implying merely *accompaniment*, is said of them. Paul was the instrument in Timothy's ordination and reception of the grace then conferred; the presbyters were the concurrent participants in the act of ordination; so the *Greek*, “*dia*” and “*meta*.” So in ordinations by

a bishop in our days, he does the *principal* act; they join in laying on hands *with* him.

7. For, etc. — implying that Timothy needed the exhortation “to stir up the gift of God in him,” being constitutionally “timid”: “For God *did not* give us (so the *Greek*, namely, at our ordination or consecration) the spirit of *fear*.” The spirit which He gave us, was not the spirit of timidity (literally, “cowardice,” which is weakness), but of “power” (exhibited in a fearless “testimony” for Christ, ^{<500>}2 Timothy 1:8). “Power is the invariable accompaniment of the gift of *the Holy Ghost*. ^{<1249>}Luke 24:49 ^{<4008>}Acts 1:8; compare ^{<4006>}Acts 6:6, “full of faith and of the *Holy Ghost*,” with ^{<500>}2 Timothy 1:8, “full of faith and *power*.” Fear is the result of “the spirit of bondage” (^{<4195>}Romans 8:15). Fear *within* exaggerates the causes of fear *without*. “The spirit of power” is the spirit of man dwelt in by the Spirit of God imparting *power*; this power “casteth out fear” from ourselves, and stimulates us to try to cast it out of others (^{<6408>}1 John 4:18).

love — which moves the believer while “speaking the truth” with *power*, when giving his testimony for Christ (^{<500>}2 Timothy 1:8), at the same time to do so “in love” (^{<4005>}Ephesians 4:15).

a sound mind — The *Greek*, is rather, “the bringing of men to a sound mind” [WAHL]. BENDEL supports *English Version*, “a sound mind,” or “sober-mindedness”; a duty to which a young man like Timothy especially needed to be exhorted (^{<5122>}2 Timothy 2:22 ^{<5012>}1 Timothy 4:12 ^{<5010>}Titus 2:4,6). So Paul urges him, in ^{<5100>}2 Timothy 2:4, to give up worldly entanglements, which as *thorns* (^{<4184>}Luke 8:14) choke the word. These three gifts are preferable to any miraculous powers whatever.

8. therefore — seeing that God hath given us such a spirit, not that of *fear*.

Be not thou ... ashamed — I agree with ELLICOTT, in opposition to ALFORD, that the *Greek* subjunctive here, with the negative, implies action *completed at one time*, not *continued action*, which the present imperative would express; thus implying that Timothy had *not* decidedly *yet* evinced such feeling of *shame*; though I think, Paul, amidst the desertion of others who once promised fair, and from being aware of Timothy’s constitutional *timidity* (see on ^{<500>}2 Timothy 1:7), felt it necessary to stir him up and

guard him against the possibility of unchristian dereliction of duty as to bold confession of Christ. *Shame* (^{<5008>}2 Timothy 1:8) is the companion of *fear* (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 1:7); if fear be overcome, false shame flees [BENGEL]. Paul himself (^{<5012>}2 Timothy 1:12), and Onesiphorus (^{<5016>}2 Timothy 1:16), were instances of fearless profession removing false shame. He presents in contrast sad instances of fear and shame (^{<5015>}2 Timothy 1:15).

of the testimony of our Lord — *of the testimony* which thou art bound to give in the cause *of our Lord*; he says “our,” to connect Timothy and himself together in the testimony which both should give for their common Lord. *The testimony which Christ gave before Pilate* (^{<5012>}1 Timothy 6:12,13), is an incentive to the believer that he should, after His Lord’s example, *witness a good testimony* or *confession*.

nor of me his prisoner — The cause of God’s servants is the cause of God Himself (^{<4001>}Ephesians 4:1). Timothy might easily be tempted to be ashamed of one in prison, especially as not only worldly shame, but great risk, attended any recognition of Paul the prisoner.

be thou partaker — *with me*.

of the gospel — rather, as *Greek*, “for the Gospel,” that is, suffered for *the Gospel* (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 2:3-5 ^{<5013>}Philemon 1:13).

according to the power of God — exhibited in having *saved* and *called* us (^{<5002>}2 Timothy 1:9). God who has done the greater act of power (that is, saved us), will surely do the less (carry us safe through *afflictions* borne *for the Gospel*). “Think not that thou hast to bear these afflictions by thine own power; nay, it is by the power of God. It was a greater exercise of power than His making the heaven, His persuading the world to embrace salvation” [CHRYSOSTOM].

9. Who ... called us — namely, God the Father (^{<4006>}Galatians 1:6). The having “saved us” in His eternal purpose of “grace, given us in Christ before the world began,” precedes his actual “calling” of us in due time with a call made effective to us by the Holy Spirit; therefore, “saved us” comes before “called us” (^{<4028>}Romans 8:28-30).

holy calling — the actual call *to a life of holiness*. ^{<5001>}Hebrews 3:1, “heavenly calling” [TITTMANN, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*];

whereas we were *sinner*s and *enemies* (^{<4018}Ephesians 1:18 4:1). The call comes wholly *from* God and claims us wholly *for* God. “Holy” implies the *separation* of believers from the rest of the world unto God.

not according to — not having regard to our works in His election and calling of grace (^{<4011}Romans 9:11 ^{<4018}Ephesians 2:8,9).

his own purpose — The origination of salvation was of *His own purpose*, flowing from His own goodness, not for works of ours coming first, but wholly because of His own gratuitous, electing love [THEODORET and CALVIN].

grace ... given us — in His everlasting purpose, regarded as the same as when actually accomplished in due time.

in Christ — believers being regarded by God as IN HIM, with whom the Father makes the covenant of salvation (^{<4008}Ephesians 1:4 3:11).

before the world began — *Greek*, “before the times (periods) of ages”; the enduring ages of which no end is contemplated (^{<4011}1 Corinthians 2:7 ^{<4018}Ephesians 3:11).

10. But ... now ... manifest — in contrast to its concealment heretofore in the eternal purpose of God “before the world began” (^{<4009}2 Timothy 1:9 ^{<4006}Colossians 1:16 ^{<4002}Titus 1:2,3).

appearing — the visible manifestation in the flesh.

abolished death — *Greek*, “taken away *the power* from death” [TITTMANN]. The *Greek* article before “death” implies that Christ abolished death, not only in some particular instance, but in its very essence, being, and idea, as well as in all its aspects and consequences (^{<4012}John 11:26 ^{<4010}Romans 8:2,38 ^{<4015}1 Corinthians 15:26,55 ^{<4014}Hebrews 2:14). The carrying out of the abolition of death into full effect is to be at the resurrection (^{<4014}Revelation 20:14). The death of the body meanwhile is but temporary, and is made no account of by Christ and the apostles.

brought ... to light — making visible by the Gospel what was before hidden in God’s purpose.

life — of the Spirit, acting first on the soul here, about to act on the body also at the resurrection.

immortality — *Greek*, “incorruptibility” of the new life, not merely of the risen body [ALFORD], (^{<6181>}Romans 8:11).

through — *by means of the Gospel*, which brings to light the life and immortality purposed by God from eternity, but manifested now first to man by Christ, who in His own resurrection has given the pledge of His people’s final triumph over death through Him. Before the Gospel revelation from God, man, by the light of nature, under the most favorable circumstances, had but a glimmering idea of the possibility of a future being of *the soul*, but not the faintest idea of the resurrection of *the body* (^{<4178>}Acts 17:18,32). If Christ were not “the life,” the dead could never live; if He were not the resurrection, they could never rise; had He not the keys of hell and death (^{<6118>}Revelation 1:18), we could never break through the bars of death or gates of hell [BISHOP PEARSON].

11. Whereunto — For the publication of which Gospel.

I am appointed — *Greek*, “I was appointed.”

preacher — *Greek*, “herald.”

teacher of the Gentiles — (^{<5171>}1 Timothy 2:7). He brings forward his own example in this verse and ^{<5112>}2 Timothy 1:12, as a pattern for Timothy, as a *public* “preacher,” an “apostle,” or *missionary* from place to place, and a “teacher” *in private* instructing His flock with patient perseverance.

12. For the which cause — For the Gospel cause of which I was appointed a preacher (^{<5112>}2 Timothy 1:10,11).

I also suffer — besides my *active* work as a missionary. ELLICOTT translates, “I suffer even these things”; the sufferings attendant on my being a prisoner (^{<5112>}2 Timothy 1:8,15).

I am not ashamed — neither be thou (^{<5112>}2 Timothy 1:8).

for — Confidence as to the future drives away shame [BENGEL].

I know — though the world knows Him not (^{<6104>}John 10:14 17:25).

whom — I know what a *faithful*, promise-keeping God He is (⁵¹²2 Timothy 2:13). It is not, I know *how* I have believed, but, I know WHOM I have believed; a feeble faith may clasp a strong Savior.

believed — rather, “trusted”; carrying out the metaphor of a depositor depositing his pledge with one whom he *trusts*.

am persuaded — (⁵¹⁸Romans 8:38).

he is able — in spite of so many foes around me.

that which I have committed unto him — *Greek*, “my deposit”; the body, soul, and spirit, which I have deposited in God’s safe keeping (⁵¹³1 Thessalonians 5:23 ⁵⁰⁹1 Peter 4:19). So Christ Himself in dying (⁵²⁴Luke 23:46). “God deposits with us His word; we deposit with God our spirit” [GROTIUS]. There is one deposit (His revelation) committed by God to us, which we ought to keep (⁵¹³2 Timothy 1:13,14) and transmit to others (⁵¹²2 Timothy 2:2); there is another committed by God to us, which we should commit to His keeping, namely, ourselves and our heavenly portion.

that day — the day of His appearing (⁵¹⁸2 Timothy 1:18 ⁵¹⁸2 Timothy 4:8).

13. Hold fast the form — rather as *Greek*, “*Have* (that is, keep) a *pattern* of sound (*Greek*, ‘healthy’) words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love.” “Keep” suits the reference to a *deposit* in the context. The secondary position of the verb in the *Greek* forbids our taking it so strongly as *English Version*, “Hold fast.” The *Greek* for “form” is translated “pattern” in ⁵¹⁶1 Timothy 1:16, the only other passage where it occurs. Have such a *pattern* drawn from my *sound* words, in opposition to the *unsound* doctrines so current at Ephesus, *visibly impressed* (WAHL translates it “delineation”; the verb implies “to make a *lively and lasting impress*”) on thy mind.

in faith and love — the element IN which my sound words had place, and in which thou art *to have the vivid impression* of them as thy *inwardly delineated pattern*, moulding conformably thy outward profession. So nearly BENGEL explains, ⁵¹⁸1 Timothy 3:9.

14. Translate as *Greek*, “That goodly deposit keep through the Holy Ghost,” namely, “the sound words which I have committed to thee” (² Timothy 1:13 ² Timothy 2:2).

in us — in all believers, not merely in you and me. The indwelling Spirit enables us to keep from the robbers of the soul the deposit of His word committed to us by God.

15. all they which are in Asia — Proconsular Asia; “all who are there now, when they were in Rome (not ‘be’ or ‘are,’ but) turned from me” then; were “ashamed of my chain,” in contrast to ONESIPHORUS; did not stand with me but forsook me (² Timothy 4:16). It is possible that the occasion of their turning from him was at his apprehension in Nicopolis, whither they had escorted him on his way to Rome, but from which they turned back to Asia. A hint to Timothy, now in Asia, not to be like them, but to imitate rather ONESIPHORUS, and to come to him (² Timothy 4:21).

Phygellus and Hermogenes — specified perhaps, as being persons from whom such pusillanimous conduct could least be expected; or, as being well known to Timothy, and spoken of before in conversations between him and Paul, when the latter was in Asia Minor.

16. The Lord give mercy — even as ONESIPHORUS had abounded in works of *mercy*.

the house of Onesiphorus — He himself was then absent from Ephesus, which accounts for the form of expression (² Timothy 4:19). His *household* would hardly retain his name after the master was dead, as BENGEL supposes him to have been. Nowhere has Paul prayers for the dead, which is fatal to the theory, favored by ALFORD also, that he was dead. God blesses not only the righteous man himself, but all his household.

my chain — Paul in the second, as in his first imprisonment, was bound by a chain to the soldier who guarded him.

17. found me — in the crowded metropolis. So in turn “may he *find* mercy of the Lord in that day” when the whole universe shall be assembled.

18. grant unto him — as well as “unto his house” (^{<5116>}2 Timothy 1:16).

the Lord — who rewards a kindness done to His disciples as if done to Himself (^{<4256>}Matthew 25:45).

of — *from* the Lord; “the Lord” is emphatically put instead of “from Himself,” for solemnity and emphasis (^{<5116>}2 Thessalonians 3:5).

in how many things — “how many acts of ministry he rendered.”

unto me — omitted in the oldest manuscripts, so that the “ministered” may include services rendered *to others* as well as to Paul.

very well — rather as *Greek*, “Thou knowest better” (than I can tell thee, seeing that thou art more of a regular resident at Ephesus).

CHAPTER 2

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-26.

EXHORTATIONS; TO FAITHFULNESS AS A GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST; ERRORS TO BE SHUNNED; THE LORD'S SURE FOUNDATION; THE RIGHT SPIRIT FOR A SERVANT OF CHRIST.

1. Thou therefore — following my example (⁵⁰⁰⁸2 Timothy 1:8,12), and that of ONESIPHORUS (⁵⁰⁰⁶2 Timothy 1:16-18), and shunning that of those who forsook me (⁵⁰¹⁵2 Timothy 1:15).

my son — *Children* ought to imitate their father.

be strong — literally, “be invested with *power*.” Have power, and show thyself to have it; implying an abiding state of power.

in the grace — the *element* IN which the believer's strength has place. Compare ⁵⁰⁰²2 Timothy 1:7, “God hath given us the spirit of *power*.”

2. among — *Greek*, “through,” that is, with the attestation (literally, “intervention”) of many witnesses, namely, the presbyters and others present at his ordination or consecration (⁵⁰¹⁴1 Timothy 4:14 6:12).

commit — in trust, as a *deposit* (⁵⁰¹⁴2 Timothy 1:14).

faithful — the quality most needed by those having a trust committed to them.

who — *Greek*, “(persons) *such as* shall be competent to teach (them to) others also.” Thus the way is prepared for inculcating the duty of faithful endurance (⁵⁰¹³2 Timothy 2:3-13). Thou shouldest consider as a motive to endurance, that thou hast not only to keep the deposit for thyself, but to transmit it unimpaired to others, who in their turn shall fulfill the same office. This is so far from supporting oral tradition *now* that it rather teaches how precarious a mode of preserving revealed truth it was,

depending, as it did, on the trustworthiness of each individual in the chain of succession; and how thankful we ought to be that *God Himself* has given *the written Word*, which is exempt from such risk.

3. Thou therefore endure hardness — The oldest manuscripts have no “*Thou therefore*,” and read, “Endure hardship *with* (me).” “Take thy share in suffering” [CONYBEARE and HOWSON].

4. “No one while serving as a soldier.”

the affairs of (this) life — “the businesses of life” [ALFORD]; mercantile, or other than military.

him who hath chosen him — the general who at the first enlisted him as a soldier. Paul himself worked at tent-making (~~418B~~ Acts 18:3). Therefore what is prohibited here is, not all other save religious occupation, but the becoming *entangled*, or over-engrossed therewith.

5. And — “Moreover.”

strive for masteries — “strive in the games” [ALFORD]; namely, the great national games of Greece.

yet is he not crowned, except — even though he gain the victory.

strive lawfully — observing all the conditions of both the contest (keeping within the bounds of the course and stript of his clothes) and the preparation for it, namely, as to self-denying diet, anointing, exercise, self-restraint, chastity, decorum, etc. (~~412B~~ 1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

6. must be first partaker — The right of *first partaking of the fruits* belongs to him *who* is *laboring*; do not thou, therefore, relax thy labors, as thou wouldest be foremost in partaking of the reward. CONYBEARE explains “first,” *before the idler*.

7. Consider the force of the illustrations I have given from the soldier, the contender in the games, and the husbandmen, as *applying to thyself in thy ministry*.

and the Lord give, etc. — The oldest manuscripts read, “*for the Lord will give thee understanding*.” Thou canst understand my meaning so as personally to apply it to thyself; for the Lord will give thee understanding

when thou seekest it from Him “in all things.” Not intellectual perception, but personal appropriation of the truths metaphorically expressed, was what he needed to be given him by the Lord.

8. Rather as *Greek*, “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead.” Remember Christ risen, so as to follow Him. As He was raised after death, so if thou wouldest share His risen “life,” thou must now share His “death” (²2 Timothy 2:11). The *Greek* perfect passive participle, implies a *permanent character* acquired by Jesus as *the risen Savior*, and *our permanent interest in Him as such*. Christ’s resurrection is put prominently forward as being the truth now assailed (²2 Timothy 2:18), and the one best calculated to stimulate Timothy to steadfastness in sharing Paul’s sufferings for the Gospel’s sake (see on ²2 Timothy 2:3).

of the seed of David — The one and only genealogy (as contrasted with the “endless genealogies,” ¹1 Timothy 1:4) worth thinking of, for it proves Jesus to be the Messiah. The absence of the article in the *Greek*, and this formula, “of the seed of David” (compare ¹Romans 1:3), imply that the words were probably part of a recognized short oral creed. In His death He assured us of His humanity; by His resurrection, of His divinity. That He was not crucified for *His own* sin appears from His resurrection; that He was crucified shows that He bore sin, *on* Him, though not in Him.

my gospel — that which I always taught.

9. Wherein — in proclaiming which Gospel.

suffer trouble — literally, “evil.” I am a sufferer of evil as though I were a doer of evil.

bonds — (¹2 Timothy 1:16).

word ... not bound — Though my person is bound, my tongue and my pen are not (²2 Timothy 4:17 ⁴Acts 28:31). Or he alludes not merely to *his own* proclamation of the Gospel, though in chains, but to the freedom of its circulation *by others*, even though his power of circulating it is now prescribed (¹Philippians 1:18). He also hints to Timothy that he being free ought to be the more earnest in the service of it.

10. Therefore — Because of the anxiety I feel that the Gospel should be extended; that anxiety being implied in ^{<509>}2 Timothy 2:9.

endure — not merely “I passively *suffer*,” but “I actively and perseveringly *endure*,” and “am ready to endure patiently all things.”

the elect’s sakes — for the sake of the Church: all the members of Christ’s spiritual body (^{<503>}Colossians 1:24).

they ... also — as well as myself: both God’s elect not yet converted and those already so.

salvation ... glory — not only *salvation* from wrath, but *glory* in *reigning* with Him eternally (^{<502>}2 Timothy 2:12). Glory is the full expansion of *salvation* (^{<402>}Acts 2:47 ^{<502>}Romans 8:21-24,30 ^{<509>}Hebrews 9:28). So *grace* and *glory* (^{<580>}Psalm 84:12).

11. Greek, “Faithful is the saying.”

For — “For” the fact is so that, “if we be dead with Him (the *Greek* aorist tense implies *a state once for all entered into in past times* at the moment of regeneration, ^{<503>}Romans 6:3,4,8 ^{<502>}Colossians 2:12), we shall also live with Him.” The symmetrical form of “the saying,” ^{<501>}2 Timothy 2:11-13, and the rhythmical balance of the parallel clauses, makes it likely, they formed part of a Church hymn (see on ^{<506>}1 Timothy 3:16), or accepted formula, perhaps first uttered by some of the Christian “prophets” in the public assembly (^{<405>}1 Corinthians 14:26). The phrase “faithful is the saying,” which seems to have been the usual formula (compare ^{<505>}1 Timothy 1:15 3:1 4:9 ^{<508>}Titus 3:8) in such cases, favors this.

12. suffer — rather, as the *Greek* is the same as in ^{<502>}2 Timothy 2:10, “If we endure (with Him)” (^{<507>}Romans 8:17).

reign with him — The peculiar privilege of the elect Church now suffering with Christ, then to reign with Him (see on ^{<402>}1 Corinthians 6:2). Reigning is something more than mere *salvation* (^{<507>}Romans 5:17 ^{<502>}Revelation 3:21 5:10 20:4,5).

deny — *with the mouth*. As “believe” *with the heart follows*, ^{<502>}2 Timothy 2:12. Compare the opposite, “confess with thy mouth” and “believe in thine heart” (^{<509>}Romans 10:9,10).

he also will deny us — (✠⁴⁰⁸ Matthew 10:33).

13. believe not — “If we are unbelievers (literally, ‘unfaithful’), He remains *faithful*” (✠⁶⁰⁰ Deuteronomy 7:9,10). The oldest manuscripts read, “For He cannot (it is an *impossibility* that He should) deny Himself.” *He* cannot be unfaithful to His word that He will deny those who deny Him, though *we* be not faithful to our profession of faith in Him (✠^{608B} Romans 3:3). Three things are impossible to God, to die, to lie, and to be deceived [AUGUSTINE, *The Creed*, 1.1], (✠^{608S} Hebrews 6:18). This impossibility is not one of infirmity, but of infinite power and majesty. Also, indirectly, comfort is suggested to believers, that He is faithful to His promises to them; at the same time that apostates are shaken out of their self-deceiving fancy, that because they change, Christ similarly may change. A warning to Timothy to be steadfast in the faith.

14. them — those over whom thou dost preside (✠^{608B} Titus 3:1).

charging — *Greek*, “testifying continually”: “adjuring them.”

before the Lord — (✠^{602L} 1 Timothy 5:21).

that they strive not about words — rather, “strive with words”: “not to have a (mere) *war of words*” (✠^{602S} 2 Timothy 2:23,24 ✠^{604A} 1 Timothy 6:4) where the most vital matters are at stake (✠^{602L} 2 Timothy 2:17,18 ✠^{604S} Acts 18:15). The oldest manuscripts put a stop at “charging them before the Lord” (which clause is thus connected with “put them in remembrance”) and read the imperative, “Strive not thou in words,” etc.

to no profit — not qualifying “words”; but *Greek* neuter, in apposition with “strive in words,” “(a thing tending) to no profit,” literally, “profitable for nothing”; the opposite of “meet for the master’s use” (✠^{602L} 2 Timothy 2:21).

to the subverting — sure to subvert (overturn) the hearers: the opposite of “edifying” (building up) (✠^{602L} 2 Corinthians 13:10).

15. Study — *Greek*, “Be earnest,” or “diligent.”

to show — *Greek*, “present,” as in ✠^{602L} Romans 12:1.

thymself — as distinguished from those whom Timothy was to charge (^{<514>}2 Timothy 2:14).

approved — tested by trial: opposed to “reprobate” (^{<516>}Titus 1:16).

workman — alluding to ^{<101>}Matthew 20:1, etc.

not to be ashamed — by his work not being “approved” (^{<512>}Philippians 1:20). Contrast “deceitful workers” (^{<713>}2 Corinthians 11:13).

rightly dividing — “rightly handling” [*Vulgate*]; “rightly administering” [ALFORD]; literally, cutting “straight” or “right”: the metaphor being from a father or a steward (^{<601>}1 Corinthians 4:1) *cutting* and *distributing* bread among his children [VITRINGA and CALVIN], (^{<624>}Luke 12:42). The *Septuagint*, ^{<1016>}Proverbs 3:6 11:5, use it of “making one’s way”: so BENDEL here takes Paul to mean that Timothy may *make ready a straight way for* “the word of truth,” and may himself walk straight forward according to this line, turning neither to the right nor to the left, “teaching no other doctrine” (^{<503>}1 Timothy 1:3). The same image of a *way* appears in the *Greek* for “increase” (see on ^{<516>}2 Timothy 2:16). The opposite to “rightly handling,” or “dispensing,” is, ^{<607>}2 Corinthians 2:17, “corrupt the word of God.”

truth — *Greek*, “the truth” (compare ^{<518>}2 Timothy 2:18).

16. shun — literally, “stand above,” separate from, and superior to.

vain — opposed to “the truth” (^{<515>}2 Timothy 2:15).

babblings — with loud voice: opposed to the temperate “word” (^{<509>}Titus 3:9).

increase — *Greek*, “advance”; literally, “strike forward”: an image from pioneers *cutting* away all obstacles *before* an advancing army. They pretend *progress*; the only kind of *progress* they make is to a greater pitch of impiety.

more ungodliness — *Greek*, “a greater degree of impiety.”

17. will eat — literally, “will have pasture.” The consuming progress of mortification is the image. They pretend to give rich spiritual *pasture* to

their disciples: the only *pasture* is that of a spiritual cancer feeding on their vitals.

canker — a “cancer” or “gangrene.”

Hymenaeus — (See on ^{<500>}1 Timothy 1:20). After his excommunication he seems to have been readmitted into the Church and again to have troubled it.

18. erred — *Greek*, “missed the aim” (see ^{<502>}1 Timothy 6:21).

is past already — has already taken place. The beginnings of the subsequent Gnostic heresy already existed. They “wrested” (^{<606>}2 Peter 3:16) Paul’s own words (^{<604>}Romans 6:4 ^{<606>}Ephesians 2:6 ^{<502>}Colossians 2:12) “to their own destruction,” as though the resurrection was merely the spiritual raising of souls from the death of sin. Compare ^{<652>}1 Corinthians 15:12, where he shows all our hopes of future glory rest on the literal reality of the resurrection. To believe it past (as the Seleucians or Hermians did, according to AUGUSTINE [*Epistles*, 119.55, *To Januarius*, 4]), is to deny it in its true sense.

overthrow — trying to subvert “the foundation” on which alone faith can rest secure (^{<509>}2 Timothy 2:19; compare ^{<501>}Titus 1:11).

19. Nevertheless — Notwithstanding the subversion of *their* faith, “the firm foundation of *God* standeth” fast (so the *Greek* ought to be translated). The “foundation” here is “the Church” [ALFORD], “the ground” or basement support “of the truth” (^{<505>}1 Timothy 3:15), Christ Himself being the ultimate “foundation” (^{<601>}1 Corinthians 3:11). In the steadfast standing of *the Church* there is involved the steadfast certainty of the *doctrine* in question (^{<508>}2 Timothy 2:18). Thus the “house” (^{<502>}2 Timothy 2:20) answers to the “foundation”; it is made up of the elect whom “the Lord knoweth” (acknowledgeth, recognizes, ^{<600>}Psalms 1:6 ^{<602>}Matthew 7:23 ^{<604>}John 10:14 ^{<603>}1 Corinthians 8:3) as “His,” and who persevere to the end, though others “err concerning the faith” (^{<604>}Matthew 24:24 ^{<603>}John 10:28 ^{<603>}Romans 10:38,39 ^{<603>}1 John 2:19). BENIGL takes “the foundation” to be *the immovable faithfulness of God* (to His promises to His elect [CALVIN]). This contrasts well with the *erring from the faith*

on the part of the reprobate, ^{<5128>}2 Timothy 2:18. Though *they* deny the *faith*, God abates not *His faithfulness* (compare ^{<5123>}2 Timothy 2:13).

having — seeing that it has [ELLCOTT].

seal — “inscription”: indicating *ownership* and *destination*: inscriptions were often engraven on a “foundation” stone (^{<6214>}Revelation 21:14) [ALFORD]. This will agree with the view that “the foundation” is *the Church* (^{<4171>}Ephesians 2:20). If it be taken God’s *immovable faithfulness*, the “seal” will be regarded as attached to His covenant promise, with the inscription or legend, on one side of its round surface, “The Lord knoweth (it is ‘knew’ in the *Septuagint*, ^{<4047>}Numbers 16:5, to which Paul here alludes, altering it for his purpose by the Spirit) them that are His”; on the observe side, “Let every one that nameth (as *his* Lord, ^{<3207>}Psalms 20:7, or preacheth in His name, ^{<3409>}Jeremiah 20:9) Christ.”

depart — *Greek*, “stand aloof.”

from iniquity — (^{<2521>}Isaiah 52:11). In both clauses there may be an allusion to ^{<4045>}Numbers 16:5,26, *Septuagint*. God’s part and man’s part are marked out. God chooseth and knoweth His elect; our part is to believe, and by the Spirit depart from all iniquity, an unequivocal proof of our being the Lord’s (compare ^{<4525>}Deuteronomy 29:29 ^{<4525>}Luke 13:23-27). St. Lucian when asked by his persecutors, “Of what country art thou?” replied, “I am a Christian.” “What is your occupation? ... I am a Christian.” “Of what family? ... I am a Christian.” [CHRYSOSTOM, *Orations*, 75]. He cannot be honored with the name Christian, who dishonors by iniquity, Christ, the Author of the name. Blandina’s refreshment amidst her tortures was to say, “I am a Christian, and *with us Christians no evil is done*” [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.1]. Apostasy from the faith is sure soon to be followed by indulgence in iniquity. It was so with the false teachers (^{<5128>}2 Timothy 3:2-8,13).

20. in a great house — that is, the visible professing Christian Church (^{<5125>}1 Timothy 3:15). Paul is speaking, not of those without, but of the [visible] family of God [CALVIN]. So the parable of the sweep-net (^{<4135>}Matthew 13:47-49) gathering together of every kind, good and bad: as the good and bad cannot be distinguished while under the waves, but only when brought to shore, so believers and unbelievers continue in the same

Church, until the judgment makes the everlasting distinction. “The ark of Noah is a type of the Church; as in the former there were together the leopard and the kid, the wolf and the lamb; so in the latter, the righteous and sinners, vessels of gold and silver, with vessels of wood and earth” [JEROME, *Dialogue against the Luciferians*, 302] (compare ^{<116>}Matthew 20:16).

vessels of gold ... silver — precious and able to endure fire.

of wood and earth — worthless, fragile, and soon burnt (^{<123>}2 Corinthians 3:12-15 15:47).

some ... some — the former ... the latter.

to dishonor — (^{<169>}Proverbs 16:4 ^{<197>}Romans 9:17-23).

21. If a man ... purge himself from these — The *Greek* expresses “If one (for example, thou, Timothy) purify himself (so as to separate) *from among these*” (*vessels* unto dishonor).

sanctified — set apart as wholly consecrated to the Lord.

and meet — Some oldest manuscripts omit “and.”

the master’s — the Lord’s. Paul himself was such a vessel: once one among those of earth, but afterwards he became by grace one of gold.

prepared unto every good work — (^{<127>}2 Timothy 3:17 ^{<198>}Titus 3:1). Contrast ^{<166>}Titus 1:16.

22. Flee — There are many lusts from which our greatest safety is in *flight* (^{<132>}Genesis 39:12). Avoid occasions of sin. From the abstemious character of Timothy (^{<133>}1 Timothy 5:23) it is likely that not animal indulgences, but the impetuosity, rash self-confidence, hastiness, strife, and vainglory of young men (^{<134>}1 John 2:14-16), are what *he* is here warned against: though the Spirit probably intended the warning to include *both* in its application to the Church *in general*.

also — *Greek*, “But”; in contrast to “every good work,” ^{<122>}2 Timothy 2:21.

youthful — Timothy was a youth (^{<142>}1 Timothy 4:12).

righteousness — the opposite of “iniquity,” that is, unrighteousness (^{<5129>}2 Timothy 2:19; compare ^{<5161>}1 Timothy 6:11).

peace, with, etc. — rather, put no comma, “*peace with them* that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (^{<5005>}1 Timothy 1:5 ^{<4905>}Ephesians 6:5 ^{<5122>}Colossians 3:22). We are to *love* all men, but it is not possible to be at *peace* with all men, for this needs community of purpose and opinion; they alone who call on the Lord sincerely (as contrasted with the false teachers who had only the form of godliness, ^{<5125>}2 Timothy 3:5,8 ^{<5015>}Titus 1:15,16) have this community [THEODORET]. (^{<5028>}Romans 12:18).

23. (^{<5019>}Titus 3:9.)

unlearned — *Greek*, “undisciplined”; not tending to promote the discipline of faith and morals (^{<4923>}Proverbs 5:23). “Uninstructive”; in contrast with “instructing” (^{<5125>}2 Timothy 2:25), and “wise unto salvation” (^{<5125>}2 Timothy 3:15).

avoid — “decline.”

24. **not strive** — “The servant of the Lord” must imitate his master in not *striving contentiously*, though uncompromising in earnestly contending for the faith (^{<5013>}Jude 1:3 ^{<4129>}Matthew 12:19).

gentle unto all men — “patient” (*Greek*, “patient in bearing wrongs”) in respect to adversaries. He is to be *gentle* so that he may occasion no evils; *patient* so that he may endure evils.

apt to teach — implying not only solid teaching and ease in teaching, but patience and assiduity in it [BENGEL].

25. **instructing** — *Greek*, “disciplining,” *instructing with correction*, which those who deal in “*uninstructive*” or “undisciplined questions” need (see on ^{<5123>}2 Timothy 2:23; ^{<5111>}1 Timothy 1:20).

those that oppose themselves — *Greek*, “oppositely affected”; those of a different opinion.

if ... peradventure — *Greek*, “if at any time.”

repentance — which they need as antecedent to *the full knowledge* (so the *Greek* for ‘*acknowledgment*’) of the truth” (^{<5104>}1 Timothy 2:4), their minds

being corrupted (^{<888>}2 Timothy 3:8), and their lives immoral. The cause of the spiritual ignorance which prompts such “questions” is moral, having its seat in the *will*, not in the intellect (^{<887>}John 7:17). Therefore repentance is their first need. That, not man, but God alone can “give” (^{<485>}Acts 5:31).

26. recover themselves — *Greek*, “awake to soberness,” namely from the spiritual intoxication whereby they have fallen into the snare of the devil.

the snare — (^{<481>}Ephesians 6:11, “the wiles of the devil”: ^{<507>}1 Timothy 3:7 6:9).

taken captive by him at his will — *so as to follow the will of* “THAT” (the *Greek* emphatically marks Satan thus) foe. However, different *Greek* pronouns stand for “him” and “his”; and the *Greek* for “taken captive” means not “captured *for destruction*,” but “*for being saved alive*,” as in ^{<485>}Luke 5:10, “Thou shalt catch men to save them unto life”; also there is no article before the *Greek* participle, which the *English Version* “who are taken captive,” would require. Therefore, translate, “That they may awake ... taken as saved (and willing) captives by him (the servant of the Lord, ^{<824>}2 Timothy 2:24), so as to follow the will of HIM (the Lord, ^{<824>}2 Timothy 2:24, or “God,” ^{<825>}2 Timothy 2:25).” There are here two evils, the “snare” and *sleep*, from which they are delivered: and two goods to which they are translated, *awaking* and deliverance. Instead of Satan’s thrall comes the free and willing *captivity of obedience* to Christ (^{<405>}2 Corinthians 10:5). It is God who goes before, *giving repentance* (^{<825>}2 Timothy 2:25); then the work of His servant following is sure to be crowned with success, leading the convert henceforth to “live to the will of God” (^{<424>}Acts 22:14 ^{<402>}1 Peter 4:2).

CHAPTER 3

2 TIMOTHY 3:1-17.

COMING EVIL DAYS: SIGNS OF EVIL ALREADY: CONTRAST IN THE DOCTRINE AND LIFE OF PAUL, WHICH TIMOTHY SHOULD FOLLOW IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS EARLY TRAINING IN SCRIPTURE.

1. also — *Greek*, “but.”

last days — preceding Christ’s second coming (^{GRB}2 Peter 3:3 ^{GRIS}Jude 1:18). “The *latter* times,” ^{SOB}1 Timothy 4:1, refer to a period not so remote as “the *last* days,” namely, the long days of papal and Greek anti-Christianity.

perilous — literally, “*difficult* times,” in which it is difficult to know what is to be done: “grievous times.”

shall come — *Greek*, “shall be imminent”; “shall come unexpectedly” [BENGEL].

2. men — in the professing Church. Compare the catalogue, ^{RTD}Romans 1:29, etc., where much the same sins are attributed to heathen men; it shall be a relapse into virtual heathendom, with all its beast-like propensities, whence the symbol of it is “a beast” (^{GRB}Revelation 13:1,11,12, etc. ^{GRB}Revelation 17:3,8,11).

covetous — Translate, “money-loving,” a distinct *Greek* word from that for “covetous” (see on ^{SOB}Colossians 3:5). The cognate *Greek* substantive (^{SOB}1 Timothy 6:10) is so translated, “the *love of money* is a (*Greek*, not ‘the’) root of all evil.”

boasters — empty boasters [ALFORD]; boasting of having what they have not.

proud — overweening: literally, *showing* themselves *above* their fellows.

blasphemous — rather, “evil-speakers,” revilers.

disobedient to parents — The character of the times is even to be gathered especially from the manners of the young [BENGEL].

unthankful — The obligation to *gratitude* is next to that of *obedience to parents*.

unholy — irreligious [ALFORD]; inobservant of the offices of piety.

3. truce-breakers — rather as the *Greek* is translated in ~~ROM~~Romans 1:31, “implacable.”

false accusers — slanderers (~~SOL~~1 Timothy 3:11 ~~ROM~~Titus 2:3).

incontinent, fierce — at once both soft and hard: incontinently indulging themselves, and inhuman to others.

despisers, etc. — “no lovers of good” [ALFORD]; the opposite of “a lover of good” (~~ROM~~Titus 1:8).

4. heady — precipitate in action and in passion.

high-minded — literally, “puffed up” with pride, as with smoke blinding them.

lovers of pleasure ... God — Love of pleasure destroys the love and sense of God.

5. form — outward semblance.

godliness — piety.

denying — rather as *Greek*, “*having denied*,” that is, renounced.

the power — the living, regenerating, sanctifying influence of it.

turn away — implying that some of such characters, forerunners of the last days, were already in the Church.

6. of this sort — *Greek*, “of these,” such as were described (~~ROM~~2 Timothy 3:5).

creep into — stealthily.

laden with sins — (²⁰⁰⁴Isaiah 1:4); applying to the “silly women” whose consciences are burdened with sins, and so are a ready prey to the false teachers who promise ease of conscience if they will follow them. A bad conscience leads easily to shipwreck of faith (⁵⁰¹⁹1 Timothy 1:19).

divers lusts — not only animal lusts, but passion for change in doctrine and manner of teaching; the running after fashionable men and fashionable tenets, drawing them in the most opposite directions [ALFORD].

7. Ever learning — some new point, for mere curiosity, to the disparagement of what they seemed to know before.

the knowledge — *Greek*, “the *perfect* knowledge”; the only safeguard against further novelties. Gnosticism laid hold especially of the female sex [ESTIUS, 1.13.3]: so Roman Jesuitism.

8. Now — *Greek*, “But”; it is no wonder there should be now such opponents to the truth, for their prototypes existed in ancient times [ALFORD].

Jannes ... Jambres — traditional names of the Egyptian magicians who resisted Moses (⁴⁰⁰¹Exodus 7:11,22), derived from “the unwritten teaching of the Jews” [THEODORET]. In a point so immaterial as the names, where Scripture had not recorded them, Paul takes the names which general opinion had assigned the magicians. EUSEBIUS [*Preparation of the Gospel*], quotes from NUMENIUS, “Jannes and Jambres were *sacred scribes* (a lower order of priests in Egypt) skilled in magic.” HILLER interprets “Jannes” from the Abyssinian language *a trickster*, and “Jambres” *a juggler*” (⁴⁴³⁸Acts 13:8).

resist — “withstand,” as before. They did so by trying to rival Moses’ miracles. So the false teachers shall exhibit lying wonders in the last days (⁴²⁰⁴Matthew 24:24 ⁵⁰¹⁹2 Thessalonians 2:9 ⁶¹³⁴Revelation 13:14,15).

reprobate — *incapable of testing* the truth (⁴⁵¹⁵Romans 1:28) [BENGEL]. ALFORD takes passively, “not abiding the test”; rejected on being tested (²⁴⁵⁰Jeremiah 6:30).

9. they shall proceed no further — Though *for a time* (⁵⁰¹⁹2 Timothy 2:16) “they shall *advance* or *proceed* (*English Version*, ‘increase’) unto

more ungodliness,” yet there is a *final* limit beyond which they shall not be able to “proceed further” (◀~~881~~ Job 38:11 ◀~~611~~ Revelation 11:7,11). They themselves shall “wax worse and worse” (◀~~583~~ 2 Timothy 3:13), but they shall at last be for ever prevented from seducing others. “Often malice proceeds deeper down, when it cannot extend itself” [BENGEL].

their folly — literally, “dementation”: *wise* though they think themselves.

shall be manifest — *Greek*, “shall be brought forth from concealment into open day” [BENGEL], (◀~~645~~ 1 Corinthians 4:5).

as theirs ... was — as that of those magicians was, when not only could they no longer try to rival Moses in sending boils, but the boils fell upon themselves: so as to the lice (◀~~488~~ Exodus 8:18 9:11).

10. fully known — literally, “fully followed up” and traced; namely, with a view to following me as thy pattern, so far as I follow Christ; the same *Greek* as in ◀~~409~~ Luke 1:3, “*having had perfect understanding of all things.*” His pious mother Eunice and grandmother Lois would recommend him to *study fully* Paul’s Christian course as a pattern. He had not been yet the companion of Paul at the time of the apostle’s persecutions in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra (◀~~483~~ Acts 13:50 14:5,19), but is first mentioned as such ◀~~483~~ Acts 16:1-3. However, he was “a disciple” already, when introduced to us in ◀~~483~~ Acts 16:1-3; and as Paul calls him “my own son in the faith,” he must have been converted by the apostle previously; perhaps in the visit to those parts three years before. Hence arose Timothy’s knowledge of Paul’s persecutions, which were the common talk of the churches in those regions about the time of his conversion. The *incidental* allusion to them here forms an *undesigned coincidence* between the history and the Epistle, indicating genuineness [PALEY, *Horae Paulinae*]. A forger of Epistles from the Acts would never allude to Timothy’s *knowledge* of persecutions, when that knowledge is not expressly mentioned in the history, but is only arrived at by indirect inference; also the omission of *Derbe* here, in the Epistle, is in minute accordance with the fact that in *Derbe no persecution* is mentioned in the history, though *Derbe and Lystra* are commonly mentioned together. The reason why he mentions his persecutions before Timothy became his companion, and not those subsequent, was because Timothy was familiar with the latter as an eye-witness and Paul needed not to remind him of them, but the former Timothy had *traced up* by

seeking the information from others, especially as the date and scene of them was the date and scene of his own conversion.

doctrine — “teaching.”

manner of life — “conduct,” “behavior.”

purpose — The *Greek* is elsewhere usually used of *God’s* “purpose.” But here, as in ^{<4112>}Acts 11:23, of Paul’s determined “purpose of heart in cleaving unto the Lord.” My *set aim*, or *resolution*, in my apostolic function. and in every action is, not my selfish gain, but the glory of God in Christ.

long-suffering — towards my adversaries, and the false teachers; towards brethren in bearing their infirmities; towards the unconverted, and the lapsed when penitent (^{<500>}2 Timothy 4:2 ^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 6:6 ^{<4152>}Galatians 5:22 ^{<4009>}Ephesians 4:2 ^{<5082>}Colossians 3:12).

charity — *love* to all men.

patience — “endurance”; *patient continuance* in well-doing amidst adversities (^{<5011>}2 Timothy 3:11 ^{<4017>}Romans 2:7).

11. afflictions — “sufferings.”

which — *Greek*, “such as.”

in Antioch — of Pisidia (^{<4134>}Acts 13:14,50,51).

Iconium — (^{<4141>}Acts 14:1-5).

Lystra — (^{<4146>}Acts 14:6,19).

what — How grievous.

out of ... all ... Lord delivered me — (^{<5017>}2 Timothy 4:17 ^{<4547>}Psalms 34:17 ^{<4010>}2 Corinthians 1:10). An encouragement to Timothy not to fear persecutions.

12. Yea, and — an additional consideration for Timothy: if he *wishes to live godly in Christ*, he must make up his mind to encounter persecution.

that will, etc. — *Greek*, “all whose *will is to live*,” etc. So far should persecution be from being a stumbling-block to Timothy, he should

consider it a mark of the pious. So the same *Greek* is used of the same thing, ^{<414>}Luke 14:28,33, “intending (*Greek*, ‘*wishing*’) to build a tower ... counteth the cost.”

live godly in Christ — (^{<421>}Galatians 2:20 ^{<502>}Philippians 1:21). There is no godliness (*Greek*, “piously”) or *piety* out of Christ. The world easily puts up with the mask of a religion which depends on itself, but the piety which derives its vigor directly from Christ is as odious to modern Christians as it was to the ancient Jews [BENGEL].

shall suffer persecution — and will not decline it (^{<451>}Galatians 5:11). BISHOP PEARSON proves the divine origination of Christianity from its success being inexplicable on the supposition of its being of human origin. The nature of its doctrine was no way likely to command success:

- (1) it condemns all other religions, some established for ages;
- (2) it enjoins precepts ungrateful to flesh and blood, the mortifying of the flesh, the love of enemies, and the bearing of the cross;
- (3) it enforces these seemingly unreasonable precepts by promises seemingly incredible; not good things such as afford complacency to our senses, but such as cannot be obtained till after this life, and presuppose what then seemed impossible, the resurrection;
- (4) it predicts to its followers what would seem sure to keep most of the world from embracing it, *persecutions*.

13. Reason why persecutions must be expected, and these becoming worse and worse as the end approaches. The breach between light and darkness, so far from being healed, shall be widened [ALFORD].

evil men — in contrast to the “godly” (^{<452>}2 Timothy 3:12).

seducers — literally, “conjurers.” Magical arts prevailed at Ephesus (^{<499>}Acts 19:19), and had been renounced by many Ephesians on embracing Christianity: but now when Paul was writing to Ephesus, symptoms of a return to *conjuring* tricks appeared: an undesigned coincidence [BURTON]. Probably *sorcery* will characterize the final apostasy (^{<635>}Revelation 13:15 18:23 22:15).

wax worse — literally, “advance in the direction of worse” (see on ^{STRB}2 Timothy 3:9). Not contradictory to that verse: there the *diffusion* of the evil was spoken of; here its *intensity* [ALFORD].

deceiving, and being deceived — He who has once begun to deceive others, is the less easily able to recover himself from error, and the more easily embraces in turn the errors of others [BENGEL].

14. But ... thou — Whatever they may do. Resuming the thread begun at ^{STRB}2 Timothy 3:10.

learned — from me and thy mother and grandmother (^{STRB}2 Timothy 1:5 2:2).

assured of — from Scripture (^{STRB}2 Timothy 3:15).

of whom — plural, not singular, in the oldest manuscripts, “from what teachers.” Not only from me, but from Lois and Eunice.

15. from a child — literally, “from an infant.” The tender age of the first dawn of reason is that wherein the most lasting impressions of faith may be made.

holy scriptures — The Old Testament taught by his *Jewish* mother. An undesigned coincidence with ^{STRB}2 Timothy 1:5 ^{AKB}Acts 16:1-3.

able — in themselves: though through men’s own fault they often do not *in fact* make men savingly alive.

wise unto salvation — that is, *wise* unto the attainment of salvation. Contrast “folly” (^{STRB}2 Timothy 3:9). *Wise* also in extending it to others.

through faith — as the *instrument* of this wisdom. Each *knows* divine things only as far as *his own experience* in himself extends. He who has not faith, has not *wisdom* or *salvation*.

which is in — that is, rests on Christ Jesus.

16. All scripture — *Greek*, “Every Scripture,” that is, Scripture in its every part. However, *English Version* is sustained, though the *Greek* article be wanting, by the technical use of the term “Scripture” being so well known as not to need the article (compare *Greek*, ^{AKB}Ephesians 3:15

2:21). The *Greek* is never used of *writings* in general, but only of the sacred Scriptures. The position of the two *Greek* adjectives closely united by “and,” forbids our taking the one as an epithet, the other as predicated and translated as ALFORD and ELLICOTT. “Every Scripture given by inspiration of God is *also* profitable.” *Vulgate* and the best manuscripts, favor *English Version*. Clearly the adjectives are so closely connected that as surely as one is a predicate, the other must be so too. ALFORD admits his translation to be harsh, though legitimate. It is better with *English Version* to take it in a construction legitimate, and at the same time *not harsh*. The *Greek*, “God-inspired,” is found nowhere else. Most of the New Testament books were written when Paul wrote this his latest Epistle: so he includes in the clause “All Scripture is God-inspired,” not only the *Old Testament*, in which alone Timothy was taught when a child (² Timothy 3:15), but the New Testament books according as they were recognized in the churches which had men gifted with “discerning of spirits,” and so able to distinguish really inspired utterances, persons, and so their writings from spurious. Paul means, “All Scripture is God-inspired *and therefore* useful”; because *we* see no utility in any words or portion of it, it does not follow it is not God-inspired. It is *useful*, because *God-inspired*; not *God-inspired*, because useful. One reason for the article not being before the *Greek*, “Scripture,” may be that, if it had, it *might* be supposed that it limited the sense to the *hiera grammata*, “Holy Scriptures” (² Timothy 3:15) of the *Old Testament*, whereas here the assertion is more general: “all Scripture” (compare *Greek*, ² Peter 1:20). The translation, “all Scripture that is God-inspired is also useful,” would imply that there is some *Scripture* which is not God-inspired. But this would exclude the appropriated sense of the word “Scripture”; and who would need to be told that “all divine Scripture is *useful* (‘profitable’)?” ^{Hebrews} 4:13 would, in ALFORD’S view, have to be rendered, “All naked things are *also* open to the eyes of Him,” etc.: so also ¹ Timothy 4:4, which would be absurd [TREGELLES, *Remarks on the Prophetic Visions of the Book of Daniel*]. Knapp well defines inspiration, “An extraordinary divine agency upon teachers while giving instruction, whether oral or written, by which they were taught how and what they should speak or write” (compare ² Samuel 23:1 ^{Acts} 4:25 ² Peter 1:21). The *inspiration* gives the divine *sanction* to all the words of Scripture, though those words be the utterances of the individual writer,

and only in special cases *revealed* directly by God (^{41EB}1 Corinthians 2:13). *Inspiration* is here predicated of the *writings*, “all Scripture,” not of the persons. The question is not *how* God has done it; it is as to the *word*, not the *men* who wrote it. What we must believe is that He *has* done it, and that all the sacred writings are every where inspired, though not all alike matter of special *revelation*: and that even the very *words* are stamped with divine sanction, as Jesus used them (for example in the temptation and ^{41EB}John 10:34,35), for deciding all questions of doctrine and practice. There are degrees of *revelation* in Scripture, but not of *inspiration*. The sacred writers did not even always know the full significance of their own God-inspired words (^{41EB}1 Peter 1:10,11,12). Verbal inspiration does not mean mechanical dictation, but all “Scripture is (so) inspired by God,” that everything in it, its narratives, prophecies, citations, the whole — ideas, phrases, and words — are such as He saw fit to be there. The *present condition* of the text is no ground for concluding against the *original text* being inspired, but is a reason why we should use all critical diligence to restore the original inspired text. Again, inspiration may be accompanied by revelation or not, but it is as much needed for writing *known* doctrines or facts authoritatively, as for communicating *new* truths [TREGELLES]. The omission here of the substantive verb is, I think, designed to mark that, not only the Scripture *then* existing, but what was *still to be written till the canon should be completed*, is included as *God-inspired*. The Old Testament law was the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; so it is appropriately said to be “able to make *wise* unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ”: the term *wisdom* being appropriated to a knowledge of the relations between the Old and New Testaments, and opposed to the pretended *wisdom* of the false teachers (^{500E}1 Timothy 1:7,8).

doctrine — Greek, “teaching,” that is, *teaching the ignorant dogmatic truths* which they cannot otherwise know. He so uses the Old Testament, ^{41EB}Romans 1:17.

reproof — “refutation,” *convicting the erring* of their error. Including *polemical* divinity. As an example of this use of the Old Testament, compare ^{41EB}Galatians 3:6,13,16. “Doctrine and reproof” comprehend the *speculative* parts of divinity. Next follow the *practical*: Scripture is profitable for:

(1) *correction* (*Greek*, “setting one right”; compare an example, ^{<601>}1 Corinthians 10:1-10) and *instruction* (*Greek*, “disciplining,” as a father does his child, see on ^{<525>}2 Timothy 2:25; ^{<606>}Ephesians 6:4 ^{<587>}Hebrews 12:5,11, or “training” by instruction, warning, example, kindnesses, promises, and chastisements; compare an example, ^{<453>}1 Corinthians 5:13). Thus the whole science of theology is complete in Scripture. Since Paul is speaking of Scripture in general and in the notion of it, the only *general* reason why, in order to *perfecting* the godly (^{<572>}2 Timothy 3:17), it should extend to *every department* of revealed truth, must be that it was intended to be the *complete and sufficient rule* in all things touching perfection. See Article VI, *Common Prayer Book*.

in — *Greek*, “instruction *which is in* righteousness,” as contrasted with the “instruction” in worldly rudiments (^{<502>}Colossians 2:20,22).

17. man of God — (See on ^{<561>}1 Timothy 6:11).

perfect, thoroughly furnished — *Greek*, “thoroughly perfected,” and so “perfect.” The man of God is perfectly accoutred out of Scripture for his work, whether he be a minister (compare ^{<500>}2 Timothy 4:2 with ^{<586>}2 Timothy 3:16) or a spiritual layman. No oral tradition is needed to be added.

CHAPTER 4

2 TIMOTHY 4:1-22.

SOLEMN CHARGE TO TIMOTHY TO DO HIS DUTY ZEALOUSLY, FOR TIMES OF APOSTASY ARE AT HAND, AND THE APOSTLE IS NEAR HIS TRIUMPHANT END: REQUESTS HIM TO COME AND BRING MARK WITH HIM TO ROME, AS LUKE ALONE IS WITH HIM, THE OTHERS HAVING GONE: ALSO HIS CLOAK AND PARCHMENTS: WARNS HIM AGAINST ALEXANDER: TELLS WHAT BEFELL HIM AT HIS FIRST DEFENSE: GREETINGS: BENEDICTION.

1. charge — *Greek*, “adjure.”

therefore — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

the Lord Jesus Christ — The oldest manuscripts read simply, “Christ Jesus.”

shall judge — His *commission* from God is mentioned, ^{<400>}Acts 10:42; his resolution to do so, ^{<400>}1 Peter 4:5; the execution of his commission, here.

at his appearing — The oldest manuscripts read, “and” for “at”; then translate, “(I charge thee *before God* ...) and by His appearing.”

and his kingdom — to be set at His appearing, when we hope to reign with Him. His kingdom is real now, but not visible. It shall then be both real *and visible* (^{<400>}Luke 22:18,30 ^{<400>}Revelation 1:7 11:15 19:6). *Now* he reigns *in the midst of His enemies* expecting till they shall be overthrown (^{<400>}Psalms 110:2 ^{<400>}Hebrews 10:13). *Then* He shall reign with His adversaries prostrate.

2. Preach — literally, “proclaim as a herald.” The term for the discourses in the synagogue was *daraschoth*; the corresponding *Greek* term (implying dialectal style, dialogue, and discussion, ^{<400>}Acts 17:2,18 18:4,19) is applied in Acts to *discourses* in the Christian Church. JUSTIN MARTYR

[*Apology*, 2], describes the order of public worship, “On Sunday all meet and the writings of the apostles and prophets are read; then the president delivers a discourse; after this all stand up and pray; then there is offered bread and wine and water; the president likewise prays and gives thanks, and the people solemnly assent, saying, Amen.” The bishops and presbyters had the right and duty to preach, but they sometimes called on deacons, and even laymen, to preach. EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.19]; in this the Church imitated the synagogue (◀4017 Luke 4:17-22 ◀4015 Acts 13:15,16).

be instant — that is, urgent, earnest, in the whole work of the ministry.

in season, out of season — that is, at all seasons; whether they regard your speaking as seasonable or unseasonable. “Just as the fountains, though none may draw from them, still flow on; and the rivers, though none drink of them, still run; so must we do all on our part in speaking, though none give heed to us” [CHRYSOSTOM, *Homily*, 30, vol. 5., p. 221]. I think with CHRYSOSTOM, there is included also the idea of times whether seasonable or unseasonable *to Timothy himself*; not merely when convenient, but when inconvenient to thee, night as well as day (◀4018 Acts 20:31), in danger as well as in safety, in prison and when doomed to death as well as when at large, not only in church, but everywhere and on all occasions, whenever and wherever the Lord’s work requires it.

reprove — “convict,” “confute.”

with, etc. — *Greek*, “IN (the *element in* which the exhortation ought to have place) all long-suffering (◀4019 2 Timothy 2:24,25 3:10) and *teaching*”; compare ◀4020 2 Timothy 2:24, “apt to teach.” The *Greek* for “doctrine” here is *didache*, but in ◀4021 2 Timothy 3:16, *didascalía*. “*Didascalía*” is what one receives; “*didachē*” is what is communicated [TITTMANN].

3. they — professing Christians.

sound doctrine — *Greek*, “the sound (see on ◀4022 1 Timothy 1:10) doctrine (*didascalías*)” or “teaching,” namely, of the Gospel. Presently follows the concrete, “teachers.”

after their own lusts — Instead of regarding the will of God they dislike being interrupted in their lusts by true teachers.

heap — one on another: an indiscriminate mass of false teachers. Variety delights itching ears. “He who despises sound teaching, leaves sound teachers; they seek instructors like themselves” [BENGEL]. It is the corruption of the people in the first instance, that creates priestcraft (^{<1831}Exodus 32:1).

to themselves — such as will suit their depraved tastes; *populus vult decipi, et decipiatur* — “the people wish to be deceived, so let them be deceived.” “Like priest, like people” (^{<1123}1 Kings 12:31 ^{<3009}Hosea 4:9).

itching — like to hear teachers who give them mere pleasure (^{<4479}Acts 17:19-21), and do not offend by truths grating to their ears. They, as it were, tickle with pleasure the levity of the multitude [CICERO], who come as to a theater to hear what will delight their ears, not to learn [SENECA, *Epistles*, 10.8] what will do them good. “Itch in the ear is as bad in any other part of the body, and perhaps worse” [SOUTH].

4. The ear brooks not what is opposed to the man’s lusts.

turned — *Greek*, “turned aside” (^{<5006}1 Timothy 1:6). It is a righteous retribution, that when men *turn away* from the truth, they should be *turned to fables* (^{<3429}Jeremiah 2:19).

fables — (^{<5006}1 Timothy 1:4).

5. I am no longer here to withstand these things; be thou a worthy successor of me, no longer depending on me for counsel, but thine own master, and swimming without the corks [CALVIN]; follow my steps, inherit their result, and the honor of their end [ALFORD].

watch thou — literally, “with the wakefulness of one *sober*.”

in all things — on all occasions and under all circumstances (^{<5007}Titus 2:7).

endure affliction — suffer hardships [ALFORD].

evangelist — a missionary bishop preacher, and teacher.

make full proof of — fulfill in all its requirements, leaving nothing undone (^{<4125}Acts 12:25 ^{<5559}Romans 15:19 ^{<5047}Colossians 4:17).

6. Greek, “For I am already being offered”; literally, as a *libation*; appropriate to the shedding of *his blood*. Every sacrifice began with an initiatory libation on the victim’s head (compare *Note*, see on ^{<500>}Philippians 2:17). A motive to stimulate Timothy to faithfulness — the departure and final blessedness of Paul; it is the end that crowns the work [BENGEL]. As the time of his departure was indicated to Peter, so to Paul (^{<6014>}2 Peter 1:14).

my departure — literally, “loosing anchor” (see on ^{<5023>}Philippians 1:23). *Dissolution*.

7. “I have striven the good strife”; the *Greek* is not restricted to a *fight*, but includes any competitive *contest*, for example, that of the racecourse (^{<5062>}1 Timothy 6:12 [ALFORD]; ^{<4924>}1 Corinthians 9:24, etc. ^{<5011>}Hebrews 12:1,2).

kept the faith — the Christian faith committed to me as a believer and an apostle (compare ^{<5014>}2 Timothy 1:14 ^{<6020>}Revelation 2:10 3:10).

8. a crown — rather as *Greek*, “the crown.” The “henceforth” marks the decisive moment; he looks to his state in a threefold aspect:

- (1) The past “I have fought”;
- (2) The immediate present; “there is laid up for me.”
- (3) The future “the Lord will give in that day” [BENGEL].

crown — a crown, or garland, used to be bestowed at the Greek national games on the successful competitor in wrestling, running, etc. (compare ^{<6014>}1 Peter 5:4 ^{<6020>}Revelation 2:10).

of righteousness — The reward is *in recognition of righteousness* wrought in Paul by God’s Spirit; the crown is prepared for the righteous; but it is a crown *which consists in righteousness*. *Righteousness will be its own reward* (^{<6021>}Revelation 22:11). Compare ^{<6034>}Exodus 39:30. A man is justified gratuitously by the merits of Christ through faith; and when he is so justified God accepts his works and honors them with a reward which is not their due, but is given of grace. “So great is God’s goodness to men that He wills that their works should be merits, though they are merely His own gifts” [POPE CELESTINE I., *Epistles*, 12].

give — *Greek*, “shall award” in righteous requital as “Judge” (⁴⁰⁷³Acts 17:31 ⁴¹⁵⁰2 Corinthians 5:10 ⁵⁰⁰⁶2 Thessalonians 1:6,7).

in that day — not until His appearing (⁵⁰¹²2 Timothy 1:12). The partakers of the first resurrection may receive a *crown* also *at the last day*, and obtain in that general assembly of all men, a *new* award of praise. The favorable sentence passed on the “brethren” of the Judge, who sit with Him on His throne, is in ⁴¹⁵⁴Matthew 25:40, taken for granted as *already* awarded, when that affecting those who benefited them is being passed [BENGEL]. The former, the elect Church who reign with Christ in the millennium, are fewer than the latter. The *righteous* heavenly Judge stands in contrast to the unrighteous earthly judges who condemned Paul.

me — individual appropriation. *Greek*, “not only to me.”

them that love — *Greek*, “have loved, and do love”; *habitual* love and desire for Christ’s appearing, which presupposes *faith* (compare ⁵⁰⁰⁵Hebrews 9:28). Compare the sad contrast, ⁵⁰¹⁰2 Timothy 4:10, “having loved this present world.”

9. (⁵⁰²⁶2 Timothy 4:21 ⁵⁰⁰⁴2 Timothy 1:4,8.) Timothy is asked to come to be a comfort to Paul, and also to be strengthened by Paul, for carrying on the Gospel work after Paul’s decease.

10. Demas — once a “fellow laborer” of Paul, along with Mark and Luke (⁵⁰¹⁴Colossians 4:14 ⁵⁰²⁹Philemon 1:24). His motive for forsaking Paul seems to have been love of worldly ease, safety, and comforts at home, and disinclination to brave danger with Paul (⁴¹³³Matthew 13:20,21,22). CHRYSOSTOM implies that Thessalonica was his home.

Galatia — One oldest manuscript supports the reading “Gaul.” But most oldest manuscripts, etc., “Galatia.”

Titus — He must have therefore left Crete after “setting in order” the affairs of the churches there (⁵⁰¹⁵Titus 1:5).

Dalmatia — part of the Roman province of Illyricum on the coast of the Adriatic. Paul had written to him (⁵⁰¹²Titus 3:12) to come to him in the winter to Nicopolis (in Epirus), intending in the spring to preach the Gospel in the adjoining province of Dalmatia. Titus seems to have gone

thither to carry out the apostle's intention, the execution of which was interrupted by his arrest. Whether he went of his own accord, as is likely, or was sent by Paul, which the expression "is departed" hardly accords with, cannot be positively decided. Paul here speaks only of his personal attendants having forsaken him; he had still friends among the Roman Christians who visited him (^{<502>}2 Timothy 4:21), though they had been afraid to stand by him at his trial (^{<501>}2 Timothy 4:16).

11. Take — *Greek*, "take up" on thy journey (^{<401>}Acts 20:13,14). John Mark was probably in, or near, Colosse, as in the Epistle to the Colossians (^{<504>}Colossians 4:10), written two years before this, he is mentioned as about to visit them. Timothy was now absent from Ephesus and somewhere in the interior of Asia Minor; hence he would be sure to fall in with Mark on his journey.

he is profitable to me for the ministry — Mark had been under a cloud for having forsaken Paul at a critical moment in his missionary tour with Barnabas (^{<455>}Acts 15:37-40 13:5,13). Timothy had subsequently occupied the same post in relation to Paul as Mark once held. Hence Paul, appropriately here, wipes out the past censure by high praise of Mark and guards against Timothy's making self-complacent comparisons between himself and Mark, as though he were superior to the latter (compare ^{<502>}Philemon 1:24). Demas apostatizes. Mark returns to the right way, and is no longer unprofitable, but is profitable for the Gospel ministry (^{<501>}Philemon 1:11).

12. And — *Greek*, "But." Thou art to come to me, *but* Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus to supply thy place (if thou so willest it) in presiding over the Church there in thy absence (compare ^{<502>}Titus 3:12). It is possible Tychicus was the bearer of this Epistle, though the omission of "to thee" is rather against this view.

13. cloak ... I left — probably obliged to leave it in a hurried departure from Troas.

Carpus — a faithful friend to have been entrusted with so precious deposits. The mention of his "cloak," so far from being unworthy of inspiration, is one of those graphic touches which sheds a flood of light on the last scene of Paul's life, on the confines of two worlds; in this wanting

a cloak to cover him from the winter cold, in that covered with the righteousness of saints, “clothed upon with his house from heaven” [GAUSSEN]. So the inner vesture and outer garment of Jesus, Paul’s master, are suggestive of most instructive thought (^{GRK} John 19:2).

books — He was anxious respecting these that he might transmit them to the faithful, so that they might have the teaching of his writings when he should be gone.

especially the parchments — containing perhaps some of his inspired Epistles themselves.

14. Alexander the coppersmith — or “smith” in general. Perhaps the same as the Alexander (see on ^{GRK} 1 Timothy 1:20) at Ephesus. Excommunicated then he subsequently was restored, and now vented his personal malice because of his excommunication in accusing Paul before the Roman judges, whether of incendiarism or of introducing a new religion. See my *Introduction*. He may have been the Alexander put forward by the Jews in the tumult at Ephesus (^{GRK} Acts 19:33,34).

reward — The oldest manuscripts read, “*shall* reward,” or “requite him.” Personal revenge certainly did not influence the apostle (^{GRK} 2 Timothy 4:16, end).

15. our words — the arguments of us Christians for our common faith. Believers have a common cause.

16. At my first answer — that is, “defense” in court, at my first public examination. Timothy knew nothing of this, it is plain, till Paul now informs him. But during his *former* imprisonment at Rome, Timothy was with him (^{GRK} Philippians 1:1,7). This must have been, therefore, a *second* imprisonment. He must have been set free before the persecution in A.D. 64, when the Christians were accused of causing the conflagration in Rome; for, had he been a prisoner then, he certainly would not have been spared. The tradition [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.251] that he was finally *beheaded*, accords with his not having been put to death in the persecution, A.D. 64, when *burning to death* was the mode by which the Christians were executed, but subsequently to it. His “first” trial in his second imprisonment seems to have been on the charge of complicity in

the conflagration; his absence from Rome may have been the ground of his acquittal on that charge; his final condemnation was probably on the charge of introducing a new and unlawful religion into Rome.

stood with me — *Greek*, “came forward with me” [ALFORD] as a friend and advocate.

may *it* not be laid to their charge — The position of “their,” in the *Greek*, is emphatic. “May it not be laid to THEIR charge,” for they were intimidated; *their* drawing back from me was not from bad disposition so much as from fear; it is sure to be laid to the charge of those who intimidated them. Still Paul, like Stephen, would doubtless have offered the same prayer for his persecutors themselves (^{<417B>}Acts 7:60).

17. the Lord — the more because *men* deserted me.

stood with me — stronger than “came forward with me” (*Greek*, ^{<501B>}2 Timothy 4:16).

strengthened — *Greek*, “put strength in me.”

by me — “through me”; through my means. One single occasion is often of the greatest moment.

the preaching — “the Gospel proclamation.”

might be fully known — might be fully made (see on ^{<501B>}2 Timothy 4:5).

that all the Gentiles — present at my trial, “might hear” the Gospel proclaimed then. Rome was the capital of the Gentile world, so that a proclamation of the truth to the Romans was likely to go forth to the rest of the Gentile world.

I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion — namely, Satan, the roaring, devouring lion (^{<422B>}Luke 22:31 ^{<617B>}1 Peter 5:8). I was prevented falling into his snare (^{<512B>}2 Timothy 2:26 ^{<422B>}Psalms 22:21 ^{<617B>}2 Peter 2:9); ^{<501B>}2 Timothy 4:18 agrees with this interpretation, “The Lord shall *deliver* me *from every evil* work,” namely, both from evil and the evil one, as the *Greek* of the Lord’s Prayer expresses it. It was not deliverance from Nero (who was called *the lion*) which he rejoiced in, for he did not fear *death*

(^{<5046}2 Timothy 4:6-8), but deliverance from the temptation, through fear, to deny His Lord: so ALFORD.

18. And the Lord shall, etc. — Hope draws its conclusions from the past to the future [BENGEL].

will preserve me — literally, “will save” (^{<4922}Psalm 22:21), “will bring me safe to.” Jesus is the Lord and the Deliverer (^{<5083}Philippians 3:20 ^{<5001}1 Thessalonians 1:10): He saves from evil; He gives good things.

heavenly kingdom — *Greek*, “His kingdom which is a heavenly one.”

to whom, etc. — *Greek*, “to whom be *the* glory unto the ages of ages.” The very *hope* produces a doxology: how much greater will be the doxology which the actual *enjoyment* shall produce! [BENGEL].

19. Prisca and Aquila — (^{<4812}Acts 18:2,3 ^{<5083}Romans 16:3,4 ^{<4991}1 Corinthians 16:19, written from Ephesus, where therefore Aquila and Priscilla must then have been).

household of Onesiphorus — If he were dead at the time, the “household” would not have been called “the household of *Onesiphorus*.” He was probably *absent* (see on ^{<5016}2 Timothy 1:16).

20. In order to depict his desertion, he informs Timothy that Erastus, one of his usual companions (^{<4822}Acts 19:22, possibly the same Erastus as in ^{<5023}Romans 16:23, though how he could leave his official duties for missionary journeys is not clear), stayed behind at Corinth, his native place, or usual residence, of which city he was “chamberlain,” or city steward and treasurer (^{<5023}Romans 16:23); and Trophimus he left behind at Miletus sick. (On his former history, see on ^{<4904}Acts 20:4; ^{<4923}Acts 21:29). This verse is irreconcilable with the imprisonment from which he writes being the *first*: for he did not pass by Corinth or Miletus on his way to Rome when about to be imprisoned for the first time. As Miletus was near Ephesus, there is a presumption that Timothy was *not* at Ephesus when Paul wrote, or he would not need to inform Timothy of Trophimus lying sick in his immediate neighborhood. However, Trophimus may not have been still at Miletus at the time when Paul wrote, though he had left him there on his way to Rome. Prisca and Aquila were most likely to be at Ephesus (^{<5046}2 Timothy 4:19), and he desires Timothy to *salute them*: so

also Onesiphorus' household (^{<5118>}2 Timothy 1:18). Paul had not the power of healing at will (^{<4812>}Acts 19:12), but as the Lord allowed him.

21. before winter — when a voyage, according to ancient usages of navigation, would be out of the question: also, Paul would need his “cloak” against the winter (^{<5013>}2 Timothy 4:13).

Pudens ... Claudia — afterwards husband and wife (according to MARTIAL [*Epigrams*, 4.13; 11.54]), he a Roman knight, she a Briton, surnamed *Rufina*. TACITUS [*On Agriculture*, 14], mentions that territories in southeast Britain were given to a British king; Cogidunus, in reward for his fidelity to Rome, A.D. 52, while Claudius was emperor. In 1772 a marble was dug up at Chichester, mentioning Cogidunus with the surname Claudius, added from his patron, the emperor's name; and *Pudens* in connection with Cogidunus, doubtless his father-in-law. His daughter would be Claudia, who seems to have been sent to Rome for education, as a pledge of the father's fidelity. Here she was under the protection of Pomponia, wife of Aulus Plautius, conqueror of Britain. Pomponia was accused of *foreign superstitions*, A.D. 57 [TACITUS, *Annals*, 3.32], probably *Christianity*. She probably was the instrument of converting Claudia, who took the name *Rufina* from her, that being a cognomen of the Pomponian gens (compare ^{<5119>}Romans 16:13, *Rufus*, a Christian). Pudens in MARTIAL and in the Chichester inscription, appears as a *pagan*; but perhaps he or his friends concealed his Christianity through fear. Tradition represents *Timothy*, a son of Pudens, as taking part in converting the Britons.

Linus — put third; therefore not at this time yet, as he was afterwards, *bishop*. His name being here inserted between Pudens and Claudia, implies the two were not yet married. “Eubulus” is identified by some with Aristobulus, who, with his converts, is said to have been among the first evangelists of Britain. Paul himself, says CLEMENT, “visited *the farthest west* [perhaps Britain, certainly *Spain*], and was martyred under the rulers at Rome,” who were Nero's vicegerents in his absence from the city.

22. Grace be with you — plural in oldest manuscripts, “with YOU,” that is, thee and the members of the Ephesian and neighboring churches.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO

TITUS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

GENUINENESS. — CLEMENT OF ROME quotes it [*Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2]; IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 3.3.4] refers to it as Paul's; THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH [*To Autolychus*, 3.14], quotes it as Scripture. Compare CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 1, p. 299]; TERTULLIAN [*The Prescription against Heretics*, 6].

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING. — This Epistle seems to have been written from Corinth [BIRKS], subsequently to his first imprisonment, when Paul was on his way to Nicopolis (^{<3182>}Titus 3:12) in Epirus, where he purposed passing the winter, shortly before his martyrdom, A.D. 67. BIRKS thinks, from the similarity of the Epistle to Titus and First Timothy, that both were written from the same place, Corinth, and at dates not widely apart; First Timothy shortly after coming to Corinth, before he had planned a journey to Epirus, the Epistle to Titus afterwards. The journey to Crete and Ephesus for the bearers of his letters would be easy from Corinth, and he could himself thence easily pass into Epirus. He had shortly before visited Crete, wherein a Church existed (though without due organization), the first foundation of which he may have partly laid at his former visit (^{<4212>}Acts 27:7, etc.), when on his way to his first imprisonment at Rome. That he returned to the East after his first imprisonment appears most probable from ^{<3122>}Philippians 2:24 ^{<5022>}Philemon 1:22. However, there may have been seeds of Christianity sown in Crete, even before his first visit, by the Cretans who heard Peter's preaching on Pentecost (^{<4212>}Acts 2:11).

OCCASION OF WRITING. — Corrupt elements soon showed themselves in the Cretan Church, similar to those noticed in the Epistles to Timothy, as

existing in the Ephesian Church, Judaism, false pretensions to science, and practical ungodliness. Paul, on his late visit, had left Titus in Crete to establish Church government, and ordain *presbyters* (*deacons* are not mentioned). Titus had been several times employed by Paul on a mission to the Corinthian Churches, and had probably thence visited Crete, which was within easy reach of Corinth. Hence the suitability of his selection by the apostle for the superintendence of the Cretan Church. Paul now follows up with instructions by letter those he had already given to Titus in person on the qualifications of elders, and the graces becoming the old, the young, and females, and warns him against the unprofitable speculations so rife in Crete. The national character of the Cretans was low in the extreme, as EPIMENIDES, quoted in ^{<5012>}Titus 1:12, paints it. LIVY [*History*, 44.45], stigmatizes their *avarice*; POLYBIUS [*Histories*, 6.46.9], their *ferocity* and *fraud*; and [*Histories*, 6.47.5], their *mendacity*, so much so, that “to Cretanize” is another name for *to lie*: they were included in the proverbial three infamous initials “K” or “C,” “Cappadocia, Crete, Cilicia.”

NOTICES OF TITUS. — It is strange that he is never mentioned by this name in Acts, and there seems none of those mentioned in that book who exactly answers to him. He was a *Greek*, and therefore a Gentile (^{<8011>}Galatians 2:1,3), and converted by Paul (^{<5009>}Titus 1:4). He accompanied the apostle on the deputation sent from the Church of Antioch to Jerusalem, to consult the apostles respecting the circumcision of Gentile converts (^{<4152>}Acts 15:2); and, agreeably to the decree of the council there, was not circumcised. He was in company with Paul at Ephesus, whence he was sent to Corinth to commence the collection for the Jerusalem saints, and to ascertain the effect of the First Epistle on the Corinthians (^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 7:6-9 8:6 12:18), and there showed an unmercenary spirit. He next proceeded to Macedon, where he joined Paul, who had been already eagerly expecting him at Troas (^{<4012>}2 Corinthians 2:12,13, “Titus my brother,” ^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 7:6). He was then employed by the apostle in preparing the collection for the poor saints in Judea, and became the bearer of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (^{<4002>}2 Corinthians 8:16,17,23). Paul in it calls him “my partner and fellow helper concerning you.” His being located in Crete (^{<5012>}Titus 1:5) was subsequent to Paul’s first imprisonment, and shortly before the second, about A.D. 67, ten years

subsequent to the last notice of him in Second Corinthians (~~<4728>~~2 Corinthians 12:18), A.D. 57. He probably met Paul, as the apostle desired, at Nicopolis; for his subsequent journey into Dalmatia, thence (or else from Rome, whither he may have accompanied Paul) would be more likely, than from the distant Crete (~~<5040>~~2 Timothy 4:10, written *subsequently to the Epistle to Titus*). In the unsettled state of things then, Titus' episcopal commission in Crete was to be but temporary, Paul requiring the presence of Titus with himself, whenever Artemas or Tychicus should arrive in Crete and set him free from his duties there.

Tradition represents him to have died peaceably in Crete, as archbishop of Gortyna, at an advanced age.

CHAPTER 1

TITUS 1:1-16.

**ADDRESS: FOR WHAT END TITUS WAS LEFT IN CRETE.
QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS: GAINSAYERS IN CRETE
NEEDING REPROOF.**

1. servant of God — not found elsewhere in the same connection. In ~~ROM~~Romans 1:1 it is “servant of Jesus Christ” (~~ROM~~Galatians 1:10 ~~PHI~~Philippians 1:1; compare ~~ACT~~Acts 16:17 ~~REV~~Revelation 1:1 15:3). In ~~ROM~~Romans 1:1, there follows, “called to be an *apostle*,” which corresponds to the general designation of the office first, “*servant of GOD*,” here, followed by the special description, “*apostle of Jesus Christ*.” The full expression of his apostolic office answers, in both Epistles, to the design, and is a comprehensive index to the contents. The *peculiar* form here would never have proceeded from a forger.

according to the faith — rather, “for,” “with a view to subserve the faith”; this is the object of my apostleship (compare ~~TIT~~Titus 1:4,9 ~~ROM~~Romans 1:5).

the elect — for whose sake we ought to endure all things (~~2~~2 Timothy 2:10). This election has its ground, not in anything belonging to those thus distinguished, but in the purpose and will of God from everlasting (~~2~~2 Timothy 1:9 ~~ROM~~Romans 8:30-33; compare ~~LUK~~Luke 18:7 ~~EPH~~Ephesians 1:4 ~~COL~~Colossians 3:12). ~~ACT~~Acts 13:48 shows that all faith on the part of the elect, rests on the divine foreordination: they do not become *elect* by their faith, but receive *faith*, and so become believers, because they are *elect*.

and the acknowledging of the truth — “and (for promoting) the *full knowledge* of the truth,” that is, the Christian truth (~~EPH~~Ephesians 1:13).

after godliness — that is, which belongs to *piety*: opposed to the knowledge which has not for its object the truth, but error, doctrinal and practical (~~TIT~~Titus 1:11,16 ~~1~~1 Timothy 6:3); or even which has for its

object mere earthly truth, not growth in the divine life. “Godliness,” or “piety,” is a term peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles: a fact explained by the apostle having in them to combat doctrine tending to “ungodliness” (^{<5016>}2 Timothy 2:16; compare ^{<5017>}Titus 2:11,12).

2. In hope of eternal life — connected with the whole preceding sentence. That whereon rests my aim as an apostle to promote *the elect’s faith and full knowledge of the truth*, is, “the hope of eternal life” (^{<5017>}Titus 2:13 3:7 ^{<4216>}Acts 23:6 24:15:28:20).

that cannot lie — (^{<5018>}Romans 3:4 11:29 ^{<5018>}Hebrews 6:18).

promised before the world began — a contracted expression for “*purposed* before the world began (literally, ‘before the ages of time’), and *promised* actually in time,” the promise springing from the eternal purpose; as in ^{<5019>}2 Timothy 1:9, the *gift* of grace was the result of the eternal purpose “before the world began.”

3. in due times — *Greek*, “in its own seasons,” the seasons appropriate to it, and fixed by God for it (^{<4000>}Acts 1:7).

manifested — implying that the “promise,” ^{<5019>}Titus 1:2, had lain hidden in His eternal purpose heretofore (compare ^{<5020>}Colossians 1:26 ^{<5019>}2 Timothy 1:9,10).

his word — equivalent to “eternal life” (^{<5019>}Titus 1:2 ^{<4324>}John 5:24 6:63 17:3,17).

through preaching — *Greek*, “in preaching,” of rather as ALFORD (see on ^{<5017>}2 Timothy 4:17), “in the (Gospel) *proclamation* (the thing preached, the Gospel) with which I was entrusted.”

according to — in pursuance of (compare ^{<5021>}1 Timothy 1:1).

of God our Savior — rather as *Greek*, “of *our Savior God*.” *God* is predicated of *our Savior* (compare ^{<5022>}Jude 1:25 ^{<4040>}Luke 1:47). Also ^{<4240>}Psalms 24:5 ^{<5023>}Isaiah 12:2 45:15,21, *Septuagint*. Applied to Jesus, ^{<5024>}Titus 1:4 ^{<5023>}Titus 2:13 3:6 ^{<5022>}2 Timothy 1:10.

4. Titus, mine own son — *Greek*, “my genuine child” (^{500B}1 Timothy 1:2), that is, converted by my instrumentality (^{400B}1 Corinthians 4:17 ^{500B}Philemon 1:10).

after the common faith — a genuine son in respect to (in virtue of) the faith *common* to all the people of God, comprising in a common brotherhood Gentiles as well as Jews, therefore embracing Titus a Gentile (^{600B}2 Peter 1:1 ^{600B}Jude 1:3).

Grace, mercy, and peace — “mercy” is omitted in some of the oldest manuscripts. But one of the best and oldest manuscripts supports it (compare *Notes*, see on ^{500B}1 Timothy 1:2; ^{500B}2 Timothy 1:2). There are many similarities of phrase in the Pastoral Epistles.

the Lord Jesus Christ — The oldest manuscripts read only “Christ Jesus.”

our Savior — found thus added to “Christ” only in Paul’s *Pastoral Epistles*, and in ^{600B}2 Peter 1:1,11 2:20 3:18.

5. I left thee — “I left thee *behind*” [ALFORD] when I left the island: *not* implying *permanence* of commission (compare ^{500B}1 Timothy 1:3).

in Crete — now Candia.

set in order — rather as *Greek*, “that thou mightest *follow up* (the work begun by me), setting right the things that are wanting,” which I was unable to complete by reason of the shortness of my stay in Crete. Christianity, doubtless, had long existed in Crete: there were some Cretans among those who heard Peter’s preaching on Pentecost (^{400B}Acts 2:11). The number of Jews in Crete was large (^{500B}Titus 1:10), and it is likely that those scattered in the persecution of Stephen (^{400B}Acts 11:19) preached to them, as they did to the Jews of Cyprus, etc. Paul also was there on his voyage to Rome (^{400B}Acts 27:7-12). By all these instrumentalities the Gospel was sure to reach Crete. But until Paul’s later visit, after his first imprisonment at Rome, the Cretan Christians were without Church organization. This Paul began, and had commissioned (before leaving Crete) Titus to go on with, and now reminds him of that commission.

ordain — rather, “appoint,” “constitute.”

in every city — “from city to city.”

as I ... appointed thee — that is, as I directed thee; prescribing as well the *act* of constituting elders, as also the *manner* of doing so, which latter includes the qualifications required in a presbyter presently stated. Those called “elders” here are called “bishops” in ^{<500P>}Titus 1:7. *Elder* is the term of *dignity* in relation to the college of presbyters; *bishop* points to the *duties* of his office in relation to the flock. From the unsound state of the Cretan Christians described here, we see the danger of the want of Church government. The appointment of presbyters was designed to check idle *talk* and speculation, by setting forth the “faithful word.”

6. (Compare *Notes*, see on ^{<500P>}1 Timothy 3:2-4.) The thing dwelt on here as the requisite in a bishop, is a good reputation among those over whom he is to be set. The immorality of the Cretan professors rendered this a necessary requisite in one who was to be a *reprover*: and their unsoundness in doctrine also made needful great steadfastness in the faith (^{<500P>}Titus 1:9,13).

having faithful children — that is, *believing* children. He who could not bring his children to faith, how shall he bring others? [BENGEL]. ALFORD explains, “established in the faith.”

not accused — not merely not riotous, but “not (even) accused of riot” (“profligacy” [ALFORD]; “dissolute life” [WAHL]).

unruly — *insubordinate*; opposed to “in subjection” (^{<500P>}1 Timothy 3:4).

7. For ... must — The emphasis is on “must.” The reason why I said “blameless,” is the very idea of a “bishop” (an overseer of the flock; he here substitutes for “presbyter” the term which expresses his *duties*) involves the *necessity* for such blamelessness, if he is to have influence over the flock.

steward of God — The greater the master is, the greater the virtues required in His servant [BENGEL], (^{<500P>}1 Timothy 3:15); the Church is God’s house, over which the minister is set as a steward (^{<500P>}Hebrews 3:2-6 ^{<500P>}1 Peter 4:10,17). Note: ministers are not merely *Church* officers, but God’s stewards; Church government is of divine appointment.

not self-willed — literally, “self-pleasing”; unaccommodating to others; *harsh*, the opposite of “a lover of hospitality” (◌^{500F} Titus 1:6); so Nabal (◌^{621E} 1 Samuel 25:1-44); self-loving and imperious; such a spirit would incapacitate him for *leading* a willing flock, instead of *driving*.

not given to wine — (See on ◌^{548B} 1 Timothy 3:3; ◌^{548B} 1 Timothy 3:8).

not given to filthy lucre — not making the Gospel a means of gain (◌^{548B} 1 Timothy 3:3,8). In opposition to those “teaching for filthy lucre’s sake” (◌^{5011B} Titus 1:11 ◌^{546B} 1 Timothy 6:5 ◌^{608E} 1 Peter 5:2).

8. lover of hospitality — needed especially in those days (◌⁵⁰¹³ Romans 12:13 ◌^{548E} 1 Timothy 3:2 ◌^{583E} Hebrews 13:2 ◌^{609B} 1 Peter 4:9 ◌^{600E} 3 John 1:5). Christians travelling from one place to another were received and forwarded on their journey by their brethren.

lover of good men — *Greek*, “a lover of (all that is) good,” men or things (◌^{500B} Philippians 4:8,9).

sober — towards *one’s self*; “discreet”; “self-restrained” [ALFORD], (see on ◌^{548B} 1 Timothy 2:9).

just — towards “men.”

holy — towards *God* (see on ◌⁵⁰¹⁰ 1 Thessalonians 2:10).

temperate — “One having his passions, tongue, hand and eyes, at command” [CHRYSOSTOM]; “continent.”

9. Holding fast — Holding firmly to (compare ◌^{608B} Matthew 6:24 ◌^{619E} Luke 16:13).

the faithful — true and trustworthy (◌⁵⁰¹⁵ 1 Timothy 1:15).

word as he has been taught — literally, “the word (which is) according to the teaching” which he has received (compare ◌^{500F} 1 Timothy 4:6, end; ◌⁵⁰⁸⁴ 2 Timothy 3:14).

by — Translate as *Greek*, “to exhort *in* doctrine (*instruction*) which is sound”; *sound doctrine* or *instruction* is the element IN which his *exhorting* is to have place ... On “sound” (peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles), see ◌⁵⁰¹¹ 1 Timothy 1:10 6:3.

convince — rather, “reprove” [ALFORD], (^{<501B>}Titus 1:13).

10. unruly — “insubordinate.”

and — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. “There are many unruly persons, vain talkers, and deceivers”; “unruly” being predicated of both *vain talkers* and deceivers.

vain talkers — opposed to “holding fast the faithful word” (^{<500B>}Titus 1:9). “Vain jangling” (^{<500B>}1 Timothy 1:6); “foolish questions, unprofitable and vain” (^{<500B>}Titus 3:9). The source of the evil was corrupted Judaism (^{<501B>}Titus 1:14). Many Jews were then living in Crete, according to JOSEPHUS; so the Jewish leaven remained in some of them after conversion.

deceivers — literally, “deceivers of the minds of others” (*Greek*, ^{<400B>}Galatians 6:3).

11. mouths ... stopped — literally, “muzzled,” “bridled” as an unruly beast (compare ^{<450B>}Psalms 32:9).

who — *Greek*, “(seeing that they are) such men as”; or “inasmuch as they” [ELLCOTT].

subvert ... houses — “overthrowing” their “faith” (^{<500B>}2 Timothy 2:18). “They are the devil’s levers by which he subverts the houses of God” [THEOPHYLACT].

for filthy lucre — (^{<500B>}1 Timothy 3:3, 8 6:5).

12. One — Epimenides of Phaestus, or Gnossus, in Crete, about 600. He was sent for to purify Athens from its pollution occasioned by Cylon. He was regarded as a diviner and *prophet*. The words here are taken probably from his treatise “*concerning oracles*.” Paul also quotes from two other heathen writers, ARATUS (^{<407B>}Acts 17:28) and MENANDER (^{<455B>}1 Corinthians 15:33), but he does not honor them so far as even to mention their names.

of themselves ... their own — which enhances his authority as a witness. “To Cretanize” was proverbial for *to lie*: as “to Corinthianize” was for *to be dissolute*.

always liars — not merely *at times*, as every natural man is. Contrast ^{<5002>}Titus 1:2, “God that *cannot lie*.” They love “fables” (^{<5014>}Titus 1:14); even the heathen poets laughed at their lying assertion that they had in their country the sepulcher of Jupiter.

evil beasts — rude, savage, cunning, greedy. Crete was *a country without wild beasts*. Epimenides’ sarcasm was that its human inhabitants supplied the place of wild beasts.

slow bellies — indolent through pampering their bellies. *They themselves* are called “bellies,” for that is the member for which they live (^{<5008>}Romans 16:18 ^{<5009>}Philippians 3:19).

13. This witness — “This testimony (though coming from a Cretan) is true.”

sharply — Gentleness would not reclaim so perverse offenders.

that they — that *those seduced* by the false teachers may be brought back to *soundness* in the faith. Their malady is strifes about words and questions (^{<5009>}Titus 3:9 ^{<5004>}1 Timothy 6:4).

14. Jewish fables — (See on ^{<5004>}1 Timothy 1:4; ^{<5007>}1 Timothy 4:7; ^{<5004>}2 Timothy 4:4). These formed the transition stage to subsequent Gnosticism; as yet the error was but profitless, and not tending to godliness, rather than openly opposed to the faith.

commandments of men — as to *ascetic* abstinence (^{<5015>}Titus 1:15 ^{<5007>}Mark 7:7-9 ^{<5016>}Colossians 2:16,20-23 ^{<5008>}1 Timothy 4:3).

that turn from the truth — whose characteristic is that they turn away from the truth (^{<5004>}2 Timothy 4:4).

15. all things — external, “are pure” in themselves; the distinction of *pure* and *impure* is not in the things, but in the disposition of him who uses them; in opposition to “the commandments of men” (^{<5014>}Titus 1:14), which forbade certain things as if impure intrinsically. “To the pure” inwardly, that is, those purified in heart by *faith* (^{<4450>}Acts 15:9 ^{<5014>}Romans 14:20 ^{<5008>}1 Timothy 4:3), all outward things are pure; all are open to, their use. Sin alone touches and defiles the soul (^{<4233>}Matthew 23:26 ^{<5014>}Luke 11:41).

nothing pure — either within or without (^{<512>}Romans 14:23).

mind — their mental sense and intelligence.

conscience — their moral consciousness of the conformity or discrepancy between their motives and acts on the one hand, and God's law on the other. A conscience and a mind defiled are represented as the source of the errors opposed in the Pastoral Epistles (^{<509>}1 Timothy 1:19 3:9 6:5).

16. They profess — that is, *make a profession* acknowledging God. He does not deny their theoretical knowledge of God, but that they *practically* know Him.

deny him — the opposite of the previous “profess” or “confess” Him (^{<508>}1 Timothy 5:8 ^{<512>}2 Timothy 2:12 3:5).

abominable — themselves, though laying so much stress on the contracting of abomination from outward things (compare ^{<511>}Leviticus 11:10-13 ^{<512>}Romans 2:22).

disobedient — to God (^{<509>}Titus 3:3 ^{<512>}Ephesians 2:2 5:6).

reprobate — rejected as worthless *when tested* (see on ^{<512>}Romans 1:28; ^{<512>}1 Corinthians 9:27; ^{<509>}2 Timothy 3:8).

CHAPTER 2

~~SOB~~ TITUS 2:1-15.

DIRECTIONS TO TITUS: HOW TO EXHORT VARIOUS CLASSES OF BELIEVERS: THE GRACE OF GOD IN CHRIST OUR GRAND INCENTIVE TO LIVE GODLY.

1. But ... thou — in contrast to the reprobate seducers stigmatized in ~~SOB~~ Titus 1:11,15,16. “He deals more in exhortations, because those intent on useless questions needed chiefly to be recalled to the study of a holy, moral life; for nothing so effectually allays men’s wandering curiosity, as the being brought to recognize those duties in which they ought to exercise themselves” [CALVIN].

speak — without restraint: contrast ~~SOB~~ Titus 1:11, “mouths ... stopped.”

doctrine — “instruction” or “teaching.”

2. sober — Translated “vigilant,” as *sober* men alone can be (~~SOB~~ 1 Timothy 3:2). But “sober” here answers to “not given to wine,” ~~SOB~~ Titus 2:3 ~~SOB~~ Titus 1:7.

grave — “dignified”; behaving with *reverent propriety*.

temperate — “self-restrained”; “discreet” [ALFORD], (~~SOB~~ Titus 1:8 ~~SOB~~ 1 Timothy 2:9).

faith ... charity [love] ... **patience** — combined in ~~SOB~~ 1 Timothy 6:11. “Faith, *hope*, charity” (~~SOB~~ 1 Corinthians 13:13). “Patience,” *Greek*, “enduring perseverance,” is the attendant on, and is supported by, “hope” (~~SOB~~ 1 Corinthians 13:7 ~~SOB~~ 1 Thessalonians 1:3). It is the grace which especially becomes *old men*, being the fruit of ripened experience derived from trials overcome (~~SOB~~ Romans 5:3).

3. behavior — “deportment.”

as becometh holiness — “as becometh women consecrated to God” [WAHL]: being by our Christian calling priestesses unto God (^{<488B>}Ephesians 5:3 ^{<509D>}1 Timothy 2:10). “Observant of sacred decorum” [BENGEL].

not false accusers — not slanderers: a besetting sin of some elderly women.

given to much wine — the besetting sin of the Cretans (^{<5012>}Titus 1:12). Literally, “enslaved to much wine.” Addiction to wine is *slavery* (^{<489C>}Romans 6:16 ^{<5092>}2 Peter 2:19).

teachers — in private: not in public (^{<6464>}1 Corinthians 14:34 ^{<5021>}1 Timothy 2:11,12); influencing for good the younger women by precept and example.

4. to be sober — *Greek*, “self-restrained,” “discreet”; the same *Greek* as in ^{<5022>}Titus 2:2, “temperate.” (But see on ^{<5022>}Titus 2:2; compare *Note*, ^{<5002>}2 Timothy 1:7). ALFORD therefore translates, “That they school (admonish in their duty) the young women to be lovers of their husbands,” etc. (the foundation of all domestic happiness). It was judicious that Titus, a young man, should admonish the young women, not directly, but through the older women.

5. keepers at home — as “guardians of the house,” as the *Greek* expresses. The oldest manuscripts read, “*Workers* at home”: active in household duties (^{<4071>}Proverbs 7:11 ^{<5053>}1 Timothy 5:13).

good — kind, *beneficent* (^{<4015>}Matthew 20:15 ^{<4887>}Romans 5:7 ^{<4028>}1 Peter 2:18). Not churlish and niggardly, but thrifty as housewives.

obedient — rather “submissive,” as the *Greek* is translated; (see on ^{<4852>}Ephesians 5:21,22; ^{<4854>}Ephesians 5:24).

their own — marking the duty of subjection which they owe them, as being *their own* husbands (^{<4822>}Ephesians 5:22 ^{<5058>}Colossians 3:18).

blasphemed — “evil spoken of.” That no reproach may be cast on the Gospel, through the inconsistencies of its professors (^{<5018>}Titus 2:8,10 ^{<4824>}Romans 2:24 ^{<5054>}1 Timothy 5:14 6:1). “Unless we are virtuous, blasphemy will come through us to the faith” [THEOPHYLACT].

6. Young — *Greek*, “The younger men.”

sober-minded — self-restrained [ALFORD]. “Nothing is so hard at this age as to overcome pleasures and follies” [CHRYSOSTOM].

7. In — *with respect to* all things.

thyself a pattern — though but a young man thyself. All teaching is useless unless the teacher’s example confirm his word.

in doctrine — *in thy ministerial teaching* (showing) *uncorruptness*, that is, *untainted purity* of motive on thy part (compare ^{<5113>}2 Corinthians 11:3), so as to be “a pattern” to all. As “gravity,” etc., refers to Titus himself, so “uncorruptness”; though, doubtless, uncorruptness of *the doctrine* will be sure to follow as a consequence of the Christian minister being of simple, uncorrupt integrity himself.

gravity — dignified seriousness in setting forth the truth.

sincerity — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

8. speech — discourse in public and private ministrations.

he that is of the contrary part — the adversary (^{<5019>}Titus 1:9 ^{<5025>}2 Timothy 2:25), whether he be heathen or Jew.

may be ashamed — put to confusion by the power of truth and innocence (compare ^{<5015>}Titus 2:5,10 ^{<5054>}1 Timothy 5:14 6:1).

no evil thing — *in our acts, or demeanor*.

of you — So one of the oldest manuscripts. Other very old manuscripts read, “of US,” Christians.

9. servants — “slaves.”

to please them well — “to give satisfaction” [ALFORD]. *To be complaisant in everything*; to have that zealous desire to gain the master’s goodwill which will anticipate the master’s wish and do even more than is required. The reason for the frequent recurrence of injunctions to slaves to *subjection* (^{<4015>}Ephesians 6:5, etc.; ^{<5032>}Colossians 3:22 ^{<5001>}1 Timothy 6:1, etc.; ^{<5028>}1 Peter 2:18) was, that in no rank was there more danger of the doctrine of the *spiritual* equality and freedom of Christians being

misunderstood than in that of slaves. It was natural for the slave who had become a Christian, to forget his place and put himself on a *social* level with his master. Hence the charge for each to abide in the sphere in which he was when converted (⁴⁰²¹1 Corinthians 7:20-24).

not answering again — *in contradiction* to the master: so the *Greek*, “not contradicting” [WAHL].

10. Not purloining — *Greek*, “Not *appropriating*” what does not belong to one. It means “keeping back” dishonestly or deceitfully (^{448P}Acts 5:2,3).

showing — manifesting in acts.

all — all possible.

good — really good; not so in mere appearance (^{446P}Ephesians 6:5,6 ^{500P}Colossians 3:22-24). “The heathen do not judge of the Christian’s doctrines from the doctrine, but from his actions and life” [CHRYSOSTOM]. Men will write, fight, and even die for their religion; but how few *live* for it! Translate, “That they may adorn the doctrine of our Savior God,” that is, God the Father, the originating author of salvation (compare *Note*, see on ^{500P}1 Timothy 1:1). God deigns to have His Gospel-doctrine adorned even by slaves, who are regarded by the world as no better than beasts of burden. “Though the service be rendered to an earthly master, the honor redounds to God, as the servant’s goodwill flows from the fear of God” [THEOPHYLACT]. Even slaves, low as is their status, should not think the influence of their example a matter of no consequence to religion: how much more those in a high position. His love in being “our Savior” is the strongest ground for our adorning His doctrine by our lives. This is the force of “For” in ^{502P}Titus 2:11.

11. the grace of God — God’s *gratuitous favor* in the scheme of redemption.

hath appeared — *Greek*, “hath been *made to appear*,” or “*shine forth*” (^{299P}Isaiah 9:2 ^{407P}Luke 1:79). “hath been *manifested*” (^{500P}Titus 3:4), after having been long hidden in the loving counsels of God (^{500P}Colossians 1:26 ^{500P}2 Timothy 1:9,10). The image is illustrated in ⁴⁰²¹Acts 27:20. The grace of God hath now been embodied in Jesus, the *brightness* of the Father’s glory,” *manifested* as the “Sun of righteousness,” “the Word made flesh.”

The Gospel dispensation is hence termed “the day” (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}1 Thessalonians 5:5,8; there is a double “appearing,” that of “grace” here, that of “glory,” ^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Titus 2:13; compare ^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Romans 13:12). Connect it not as *English Version*, but, “The grace ... that *bringeth salvation to all men* hath appeared,” or “been manifested” (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}1 Timothy 2:4 4:10). Hence God is called “our *Savior*” (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Titus 2:10). The very name *Jesus* means the same.

to all — of whom he enumerated the different classes (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Titus 2:2-9): even to servants; to us Gentiles, once aliens from God. Hence arises our obligation to all men (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Titus 3:2).

12. Teaching — *Greek*, “disciplining us.” Grace exercises *discipline*, and is imparted in connection with disciplining chastisements (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}1 Corinthians 11:32 ^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Hebrews 12:6,7). The education which the Christian receives from “the grace” of God is a discipline often trying to flesh and blood: just as children need disciplining. The *discipline* which it exercises *teaches* us to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world* (*Greek*, “age,” or course of things) where such self-discipline is needed, seeing that its spirit is opposed to God (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Titus 1:12,16 ^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}1 Corinthians 1:20 3:18,19): in the coming world we may gratify every desire without need of self-discipline, because all desires there will be conformable to the will of God.

that — *Greek*, “in order that”; the end of the “disciplining” is “*in order that ... we may live soberly,*” etc. This point is lost by the translation, “*teaching* us.”

denying ... lusts — (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Luke 9:23). The *Greek* aorist expresses “denying *once for all*.” We deny “worldly lusts” when we withhold our consent from them, when we refuse the delight which they suggest, and the act to which they solicit us, nay, tear them up by the roots out of our soul and mind [ST. BERNARD, *Sermon* 11].

worldly lusts — The *Greek* article expresses, “*the* lusts of the world,” “*all* worldly lusts” [ALFORD], (^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Galatians 5:16 ^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}Ephesians 2:3 ^{ⲥⲓⲛⲉ}1 John 2:15-17 5:19). The *world* (*cosmos*) will not come to an end when this present *age* (*aeon*) or course of things shall end.

live soberly, righteously, and godly — the *positive* side of the Christian character; as “denying ... lusts” was the *negative*. “Soberly,” that is, *with self-restraint*, in relation to *one’s self*: “righteously” or *justly*, in relation to our *neighbor*; “godly” or *piously*, in relation to *God* (not merely *amiably* and *justly*, but something higher, *godly*, with love and reverence toward God). These three comprise our “disciplining” in *faith* and *love*, from which he passes to *hope* (^{<501>}Titus 2:13).

13. (^{<501>}Philippians 3:20,21).

Looking for — with constant *expectation* (so the *Greek*) and with joy (^{<489>}Romans 8:19). This will prove the antidote to worldly lusts, and the stimulus to “live in this present world” conformably to this *expectation*. The *Greek* is translated, “waiting for,” in ^{<402>}Luke 2:25.

that — *Greek*, “the.”

blessed — bringing blessedness (^{<500>}Romans 4:7,8).

hope — that is, object of hope (^{<484>}Romans 8:24 ^{<485>}Galatians 5:5 ^{<505>}Colossians 1:5).

the glorious appearing — There is but one *Greek* article to both “hope” and “appearing,” which marks their close connection (the *hope* being about to be realized only at the *appearing* of Christ). Translate, “*The blessed hope and manifestation* (compare *Note*, see on ^{<501>}Titus 2:11) *of the glory*.” The *Greek* for “manifestation” is translated “brightness” in ^{<502>}2 Thessalonians 2:8. As His “coming” (*Greek*, “*parousia*”) expresses the fact; so “brightness, appearing,” or “manifestation” (*epiphaneia*) expresses His personal *visibility* when He shall come.

the great God and our Savior Jesus — There is but one *Greek* article to “God” and “Savior,” which shows that both are predicated of one and the same Being. “Of Him who is at once the great God and our Savior.” Also

(2) “appearing” (*epiphaneia*) is never by Paul predicated of God the Father (^{<408>}John 1:18 ^{<506>}1 Timothy 6:16), or even of “His glory” (as ALFORD explains it): it is *invariably* applied to CHRIST’S coming, to which (at His first advent, compare ^{<500>}2 Timothy 1:10) the kindred

verb “appeared” (*epephanee*), ^{<5021>}Titus 2:11, refers (^{<5184>}1 Timothy 6:14 ^{<5010>}2 Timothy 4:1,8). Also

(3) in the context (^{<5124>}Titus 2:14) there is no reference to the Father, but to Christ alone; and here there is no occasion for reference to *the Father* in the exigencies of the context. Also

(4) the expression “great God,” as applied to Christ, is in accordance with the context, which refers to *the glory of His appearing*; just as “the true God” is predicated of Christ, ^{<5181>}1 John 5:20. The phrase occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but often in the Old Testament. ^{<5121>}Deuteronomy 7:21 10:17, predicated of Jehovah, who, as their manifested Lord, led the Israelites through the wilderness, doubtless the Second Person in the Trinity. Believers now look for the manifestation of His glory, inasmuch as they shall share in it. Even the Socinian explanation, making “the great God” to be *the Father*, “our Savior,” *the Son*, places God and Christ *on an equal relation* to “the glory” of the future appearing: a fact incompatible with the notion that Christ is not divine; indeed it would be blasphemy so to couple any mere created being with God.

14. gave himself — “The forcible ‘Himself, His whole self, the greatest gift ever given,’ must not be overlooked.”

for us — *Greek*, “in our behalf.”

redeem us — *deliver us from bondage by paying the price* of His precious *blood*. An appropriate image in addressing bond-servants (^{<5119>}Titus 2:9,10):

from all iniquity — the essence of sin, namely, “transgression of the law”: in bondage to which we were till then. The aim of His redemption was to redeem us, not merely from the penalty, but from the being of all iniquity. Thus he reverts to the “teaching” in righteousness, or *disciplining* effect of the grace of God that bringeth salvation (^{<5121>}Titus 2:11,12).

peculiar — *peculiarly His own*, as Israel was of old.

zealous — in doing and promoting “good works.”

15. with all authority — Translate, “authoritativeness” (compare “sharply,” ^{<5010>}Titus 1:13).

Let no man despise thee — Speak with such vigor as to command respect (⁵⁰¹²1 Timothy 4:12). Warn them with such authority that no one may *think himself above* (so the *Greek* literally) the need of admonition [TITTMANN, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*].

CHAPTER 3

✠TITUS 3:1-15.

WHAT TITUS IS TO TEACH CONCERNING CHRISTIANS' BEHAVIOR TOWARDS THE WORLD: HOW HE IS TO TREAT HERETICS: WHEN AND WHERE HE IS TO MEET PAUL. SALUTATION. CONCLUSION.

1. Put them in mind — as they are in danger of forgetting their duty, though knowing it. The opposition of Christianity to heathenism, and the natural disposition to rebellion of the Jews under the Roman empire (of whom many lived in Crete), might lead many to forget practically what was a recognized Christian principle in theory, submission to the powers that be. DIODORUS SICULUS mentions the tendency of the Cretans to riotous insubordination.

to be subject — “willingly” (so the *Greek*).

principalities ... powers — *Greek*, “magistracies ... authorities.”

to obey — the *commands* of “magistrates”; not necessarily implying *spontaneous* obedience. *Willing* obedience is implied in “ready to every good work.” Compare ✠Romans 13:3, as showing that obedience to the magistracy would tend to good works, since the magistrate’s aim *generally* is to favor the good and punish the bad. Contrast “disobedient” (✠Titus 3:3).

2. To speak evil of no man — especially, not of “dignities” and magistrates.

no brawlers — “not quarrelsome,” not attacking others.

gentle — towards those who attack us. Yielding, considerate, not urging one’s rights to the uttermost, but forbearing and kindly (see on ✠Philippians 4:5). Very different from the *innate greediness* and spirit of aggression towards others which characterized the Cretans.

showing — in acts.

all — all possible.

meekness — (See on ~~from~~ 2 Corinthians 10:1); the opposite of passionate severity.

unto all men — The duty of Christian conduct towards *all men* is the proper consequence of the universality of God's grace to all men, so often set forth in the pastoral Epistles.

3. For — Our own past sins should lead us to be lenient towards those of others. "Despise none, for such wast thou also." As the penitent thief .said to his fellow thief, "Dost thou not fear God ... seeing that thou art in the same condemnation."

we — Christians.

were — Contrast ~~from~~ Titus 3:4, "But when," that is, *now*: a favorite contrast in Paul's writing, that between our *past* state by nature, and our *present* state of deliverance from it by grace. As God treated us, we ought to treat our neighbor.

sometimes — once.

foolish — wanting right reason in our course of living. Irrational. The exact picture of human life without grace. Grace is the sole remedy for foolishness.

disobedient — to God.

deceived — led astray. The same *Greek*, "out of the way" (~~from~~ Hebrews 5:2).

serving — *Greek*, "in *bondage to*," serving as *slaves*."

divers — The cloyed appetite craves constant variety.

pleasures — of the flesh.

malice — malignity.

hateful ... hating — correlatives. Provoking the hatred of others by their detestable character and conduct, and in turn hating them.

4. To show how little reason the Cretan Christians had to be proud of themselves, and despise others not Christians (see on ^{<500P>}Titus 3:2,3). It is to the “kindness and love of God,” not to their own merits, that they owe salvation.

kindness — *Greek*, “goodness,” “benignity,” which manifests His *grace*.

love ... toward man — teaching us to have such “love (benevolence) toward *man*” (*Greek*, “philanthropy”), “showing all meekness unto all *men*” (^{<500P>}Titus 3:2), even as God had “*toward man*” (^{<500P>}Titus 2:11); opposed to the “hateful and hating” characteristics of unrenewed men, whose wretchedness moved God’s *benevolent kindness*.

of God our Savior — *Greek*, “of our Savior God,” namely, the Father (^{<500P>}Titus 1:3), who “saved us” (^{<500P>}Titus 3:5) “through Jesus Christ our Savior” (^{<500P>}Titus 3:6).

appeared — *Greek*, “was made to appear”; was manifested.

5. Not by — *Greek*, “Out of”; “not as a result springing *from* works,” etc.

of righteousness — *Greek*, “in righteousness,” that is, wrought “*in a state of righteousness*”: as “deeds ... wrought *in* God.” There was an utter absence in us of the element (“righteousness”) in which alone righteous works could be done, and so necessarily an absence of the works. “We neither did works of righteousness, nor were saved in consequence of them; but His goodness did the whole” [THEOPHYLACT].

we — emphatically opposed to “His.”

mercy — the prompting cause of our salvation individually: “*In pursuance of His mercy*.” His *kindness* and *love to man* were manifested in redemption once for all wrought by Him for mankind *generally*; His *mercy* is the prompting cause for our *individual* realization of it. *Faith* is presupposed as the instrument of our being “saved”; our being so, then, is spoken of as an *accomplished fact*. *Faith* is not mentioned, but only *God’s* part. as Paul’s object here is not to describe man’s new state, but the saving agency of *God* in bringing about that state, *independent of all merit on the man’s part* (see on ^{<500P>}Titus 3:4).

by — *Greek*, “through”; by means of.

the washing — rather, “the laver,” that is, the baptismal font.

of regeneration — *designed* to be the visible instrument of regeneration.

“The apostles are wont to draw an argument from the sacraments to prove the thing therein signified, because it ought to be a recognized principle among the godly, that God does not mark us with empty signs. but by His power inwardly makes good what He demonstrates by the outward sign. Wherefore baptism is congruously and truly called *the laver of regeneration*. We must connect the sign and thing signified, so as not to make the sign empty and ineffectual; and yet not, for the sake of honoring the sign, to detract from the Holy Spirit what is peculiarly His” [CALVIN], (~~cf.~~ 1 Peter 3:21). Adult candidates for baptism are presupposed to have had repentance and faith (for Paul often assumes in faith and charity that those addressed are what they profess to be, though in fact some of them were not so, ~~cf.~~ 1 Corinthians 6:11), in which case baptism would be the visible “laver or regeneration” to them, “faith being thereby *confirmed*, and grace *increased*, by virtue of prayer to God” [Article XXVII, Church of England]. Infants are *charitably presumed* to have received a grace in connection with their Christian descent, in answer to the *believing* prayers of their parents or guardians presenting them for baptism, which grace is visibly sealed and increased by baptism, “the laver of regeneration.” They are *presumed* to be then regenerated, until years of developed consciousness prove whether they have been *actually* so or not. “Born of (from) water and (no ‘of’ in *Greek*) the Spirit.” The Word is the *remote* and *anterior* instrument of the new birth; Baptism, the *proximate* instrument. The Word, the instrument to the individual; Baptism, in relation to the *Society* of Christians. The laver of cleansing stood outside the door of the tabernacle, wherein the priest had to wash before entering the Holy Place; so we must wash in the laver of regeneration before we can enter the Church, whose members are “a royal priesthood.” “Baptism by the Spirit” (whereof water baptism is the designed accompanying seal) makes the difference between Christian baptism and that of John. As Paul presupposes the outward Church is the visible community of the redeemed, so he speaks of baptism on the supposition that it answers to its idea; that all that is inward belonging to its completeness accompanied the outward. Hence he here asserts of outward baptism whatever is involved in the believing appropriation of the divine facts which it

symbolizes, whatever is realized when baptism fully corresponds to its original design. So ~~KEY~~ Galatians 3:27; language holding good only of those in whom the inward living communion and outward baptism coalesce. “Saved us” applies fully to those truly regenerate alone; in a general sense it may include many who, though put within reach of salvation, shall not finally be saved. “Regeneration” occurs only once more in New Testament, ~~KEY~~ Matthew 19:28, that is, *the new birth of the heaven and earth* at Christ’s second coming to renew all material things, the human body included, when the creature, now travailing in labor-throes to the birth, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Regeneration, which now begins in the believer’s soul, shall then be extended to his body, and thence to all creation.

and renewing — not “*the laver* (‘washing’) of renewing,” but “and BY the renewing,” etc. following “saved us.” To make “renewing of the Holy Ghost” follow “the laver” would destroy the balance of the clauses of the sentence, and would make baptism the seal, not only of *regeneration*, but also of the subsequent process of *progressive* sanctification (“renewing of the Holy Ghost”). *Regeneration* is a thing once for all done; *renewing* is a process daily proceeding. As “the washing,” or “laver,” is connected with “*regeneration*,” so the “renewing of the Holy Ghost” is connected with “shed on us abundantly” (~~KEY~~ Titus 3:6).

6. Which — the Holy Ghost.

he shed — *Greek*, “poured out”; not only on the Church in general at Pentecost, but also “on us” individually. This *pouring out* of the Spirit comprehends the grace received before, in, and subsequently to, baptism.

abundantly — *Greek*, “richly” (~~KEY~~ Colossians 3:16).

through Jesus Christ — the channel and Mediator of the gift of the Holy Ghost.

our Savior — immediately; as the Father is mediately “our Savior.” The Father is the author of our salvation and saves us by Jesus Christ.

7. That, etc. — the purpose which He aimed at in having “saved us” (~~KEY~~ Titus 3:5), namely, “That being (having been) justified (*accounted righteous* through faith at our ‘regeneration,’ and *made righteous* by the

daily ‘renewing of the Holy Ghost’) by His grace (as opposed to *works*, ^{<GRK>}Titus 3:5) we should be made heirs.”

his grace — *Greek*, “the grace of the former,” that is, God (^{<GRK>}Titus 3:4 ^{<GRK>}Romans 5:15).

heirs — (^{<GRK>}Galatians 3:29).

according to the hope of eternal life — ^{<GRK>}Titus 1:2, and also the position of the *Greek* words, confirm *English Version*, that is, *agreeably* to the hope of eternal life; the eternal inheritance fully satisfying the hope. BENDEL and ELLICOTT explain it, “*heirs of eternal life*, in the way of hope,” that is, not yet in actual possession. Such a *blessed hope*, which once was not possessed, will lead a Christian to practice holiness and meekness toward others, the lesson especially needed by the Cretans.

8. *Greek*, “faithful is the saying.” A formula peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles. Here “the saying” is the statement (^{<GRK>}Titus 3:4-7) as to the gratuitousness of God’s gift of salvation. Answering to the “Amen.”

these things, etc. — *Greek*, “concerning these things (the truths dwelt on, ^{<GRK>}Titus 3:4-7; not as *English Version*, what follow), I will that thou affirm (*insist*) strongly and persistently, in order that they who have believed God (the *Greek* for ‘believed in God’ is different, ^{<GRK>}John 14:1. ‘They who have learnt to credit God’ in what He saith) may be careful (‘Solicitously sedulous’; *diligence is necessary*) to maintain (literally, ‘to set before themselves so as to sustain’) good works.” No longer applying their *care* to “unprofitable” and unpractical speculations (^{<GRK>}Titus 3:9).

These things — These results of doctrine (“good works”) are “good and profitable unto men,” whereas no such practical results flow from “foolish questions.” So GROTIUS and WIESINGER. But ALFORD, to avoid the tautology, “these (good works) are good unto men,” explains, “these *truths*” (^{<GRK>}Titus 3:4-7).

9. avoid — stand aloof from. Same *Greek*, as in ^{<STR>}2 Timothy 2:16; see on ^{<STR>}2 Timothy 2:16.

foolish — *Greek*, “insipid”; producing no moral fruit. “Vain talkers.”

genealogies — akin to the “fables” (see on ^{<5004>}1 Timothy 1:4). Not so much direct heresy as yet is here referred to, as profitless discussions about genealogies of aeons, etc ... which ultimately led to Gnosticism. Synagogue discourses were termed *daraschoth*, that is, “discussions.” Compare “*disputer* of this world (*Greek*, ‘dispensation’).”

strivings about the law — about the authority of the “commandments of men,” which they sought to confirm by the law (^{<5014>}Titus 1:14; see on ^{<5007>}1 Timothy 1:7), and about the mystical meaning of the various parts of the law in connection with the “genealogies.”

10. heretic — *Greek* “heresy,” originally meant a *division* resulting from individual self-will; the individual doing and teaching what he *chose*, independent of the teaching and practice of the Church. In course of time it came to mean definitely “heresy” in the modern sense; and in the later Epistles it has almost assumed this meaning. The heretics of Crete, when Titus was there, were in doctrine followers of their own self-willed “questions” reprobated in ^{<5019>}Titus 3:9, and immoral in practice.

reject — decline, avoid; not formal excommunication, but, “have nothing more to do with him,” either in admonition or intercourse.

11. is ... subverted — “is become perverse.”

condemned of himself — He cannot say, no one told him better: continuing the same after frequent admonition, he is self-condemned. “He sinneth” wilfully against knowledge.

12. When I shall send — have sent.

Artemas or Tychicus — to supply thy place in Crete. Artemas is said to have been subsequently bishop of Lystra. Tychicus was sent twice by Paul from Rome to Lesser Asia in his first imprisonment (which shows how well qualified he was to become Titus’ successor in Crete); ^{<4920>}Ephesians 6:21; and in his second, ^{<5012>}2 Timothy 4:12. Tradition makes him subsequently bishop of Chalcedon, in Bithynia.

Nicopolis — “the city of victory,” called so from the battle of Actium, in Epirus. This Epistle was probably written from Corinth in the autumn.

Paul purposed a journey through aetolia and Acarnania, into Epirus, and there “to winter.” See my *Introduction* to the Pastoral Epistles.

13. Bring ... on their journey — Enable them to proceed forward by supplying necessities for their journey.

Zenas — the contracted form of Zenodorus.

lawyer — a Jewish “scribe,” who, when converted, still retained the title from his former occupation. A *civil* lawyer.

Apollos — with Zenas, probably the bearers of this Epistle. In ~~492~~1 Corinthians 16:12, Apollos is mentioned as purposing to visit Corinth; his now being at Corinth (on the theory of Paul being at Corinth when he wrote) accords with this purpose. Crete would be on his way either to Palestine or his native place, Alexandria. Paul and Apollos thus appear in beautiful harmony in that very city where their names had been formerly the watchword of unchristian party work. It was to avoid this party rivalry that Apollos formerly was unwilling to visit Corinth though Paul desired him. HIPPOLYTUS mentions Zenas as one of the Seventy, and afterwards bishop of Diospolis.

14. And ... also — *Greek*, “But ... also.” Not only *thou*, but let others also of “our” fellow believers (or “whom we have gained over at Crete”) with thee.

for necessary uses — *to supply the necessary wants* of Christian missionaries and brethren, according as they stand in need in their journeys for the Lord’s cause. Compare ~~500B~~Titus 1:8, “a lover of hospitality.”

15. Greet — “*Salute* them that love us in the faith.” All at Crete had not this *love* rooted in *faith*, the true bond of fellowship. A salutation peculiar to this Epistle, such as no forger would have used.

Grace — *Greek*, “*The* grace,” namely, *of God*.

with you all — not that the Epistle is addressed to *all* the Cretan Christians, but Titus would naturally impart it to his flock.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO

PHILEMON

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

The testimonies to its authenticity are — ORIGEN [*Homily 19*, on *Jeremiah*, vol. 1., p. 185, *Edition Huetius*], cites it as the letter of Paul to Philemon concerning Onesimus; TERTULLIAN [*Against Marcion*, 5.21]: “The brevity of this Epistle is the sole cause of its escaping the falsifying hands of Marcion.” EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.25], mentions it among “the universally acknowledged Epistles of the canon”; JEROME [*Commentary on Philemon*, vol. iv., p. 442], argues for it against those who objected to its canonicity on the ground of its subject being beneath an apostle to write about. IGNATIUS [*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 2; *Epistle to the Magnesians*, 12], seems to allude to ^{<5000>}Philemon 1:20. Compare *Epistle to Polycarp* [1 and 6]. Its brevity is the cause of its not being often quoted by the Fathers. PALEY [*Horae Paulinae*], has shown striking proofs of its authenticity in the undesigned coincidences between it and the Epistle to the Colossians.

PLACE AND TIME OF WRITING. — This Epistle is closely linked with the Epistle to the Colossians. Both were carried by the same bearer, Onesimus (with whom, however, Tychicus is joined in the Epistle to the Colossians), ^{<5009>}Colossians 4:9. The persons sending salutations are the same, except one, Jesus called *Justus* (^{<5001>}Colossians 4:11). In both alike Archippus is addressed (^{<5009>}Philippians 2:2 ^{<5007>}Colossians 4:17). Paul and Timothy stand in the headings of both. And in both Paul appears as a prisoner (^{<5009>}Philippians 2:9 ^{<5008>}Colossians 4:18). Hence it follows, it was written at the same time and place as the Epistle to the Colossians (which was about the same time as the Epistle to the Ephesians), namely, at Rome, during Paul’s first imprisonment, A.D. 61 or 62.

OBJECT. — Onesimus, of Colosse (“one of you,” ^{<5047>}Colossians 4:9), slave of Philemon, had fled from his master to Rome, after having probably defrauded him (^{<5185>}Philippians 2:18). He there was converted to Christianity by Paul, and being induced by him to return to his master, he was furnished with this Epistle, recommending him to Philemon’s favorable reception, as being now no longer a mere servant, but also a brother in Christ. Paul ends by requesting Philemon to prepare him a lodging, as he trusted soon to be set free and visit Colosse. This Epistle is addressed also to Apphia, supposed from its domestic subject to have been Philemon’s wife, and Archippus (a minister of the Colossian Church, ^{<5047>}Colossians 4:17), for the same reason, supposed to be a near relative.

Onesimus in the *Apostolical Canons* [73], is said to have been emancipated by his master. The *Apostolical Constitutions* [7.46] state that he was consecrated by Paul, bishop of Berea, in Macedonia, and that he was martyred at Rome. IGNATIUS [*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 1], speaks of him as bishop of the Ephesians.

STYLE. — It has been happily termed, from its graceful and delicate urbanity, “the polite Epistle.” Yet there is nothing of insincere compliment, miscalled politeness by the world. It is manly and straightforward, without misrepresentation or suppression of facts; at the same time it is most captivately persuasive. ALFORD quotes LUTHER’S eloquent description, “This Epistle showeth a right, noble, lovely example of Christian love. Here we see how St. Paul layeth himself out for the poor Onesimus, and with all his means pleadeth his cause with his master, and so setteth himself as if he were Onesimus, and had himself done wrong to Philemon. Yet all this doeth he, not with force, as if he had right thereto, but he stripped himself of his right, and thus enforceth Philemon to forego his right also. Even as Christ did for us with God the Father, thus also doth St. Paul for Onesimus with Philemon: for Christ also stripped Himself of His right, and by love and humility enforced [?] the Father to lay aside His wrath and power, and to take us to His grace for the sake of Christ, who lovingly pleadeth our cause, and with all His heart layeth Himself out for us; for we are all His Onesimi, to my thinking.”

~~500E~~PHILEMON 1:1-25.

ADDRESS. THANKSGIVING FOR PHILEMON'S LOVE AND FAITH. INTERCESSION FOR ONESIMUS. CONCLUDING REQUEST AND SALUTATIONS.

This Epistle affords a specimen of the highest wisdom as to the manner in which Christians ought to manage social affairs on more exalted principles.

1. prisoner of Jesus Christ — one whom Christ's cause has made a prisoner (compare "in the bonds of the Gospel," (~~501B~~ Philemon 1:13). He does not call himself, as in other Epistles, "Paul an apostle," as he is writing familiarly, not authoritatively.

our ... fellow laborer — in building up the Church at Colosse, while we were at Ephesus. See my *Introduction* to Colossians.

2. Apphia — the *Latin*, "Appia"; either the wife or some close relative of Philemon. She and Archippus, if they had not belonged to his family, would not have been included with Philemon in the address of a letter on a domestic matter.

Archippus — a minister of the Colossian Church (~~504F~~ Colossians 4:17).

fellow soldier — (~~501B~~ 2 Timothy 2:3).

church in thy house — In the absence of a regular church building, the houses of particular saints were used for that purpose. Observe Paul's tact in associating with Philemon those associated by kindred or Christian brotherhood with his *house*, and not going beyond it.

4. always — joined by ALFORD with, "I thank my God."

5. Hearing — the ground of his thanksgiving. It is a delicate mark of authenticity, that he says "hearing" as to churches and persons whom he had not seen or *then* visited. Now Colosse, Philemon's place of residence, he had never yet seen. Yet ~~501B~~ Philemon 1:19 here implies that Philemon was his convert. Philemon, doubtless, was converted at Ephesus, or in some other place where he met Paul.

love and faith — The theological order is first *faith* then *love*, the fruit of faith. But he purposely puts Philemon's *love* in the first place, as it is to an act of love that he is exhorting him.

toward ... toward — different *Greek* words: “towards” ... “unto.” *Towards* implies simply direction; *unto*, to the advantage of.

6. That — The aim of my thanksgiving and prayers for thee is, *in order that the*, etc.

the communication of thy faith — *the imparting of it and its fruits* (namely, acts of love and beneficence: as ^{<8336>}Hebrews 13:16, “to communicate,” that is, to impart a share) *to others*; or, *the liberality to others flowing from thy faith* (so the *Greek* is translated, “liberal distribution,” ^{<4193>}2 Corinthians 9:13).

effectual by — *Greek*, “in”; the element in which his liberality had place, that is, may be *proved by acts in*, etc.

acknowledging — *Greek*, “the thorough knowledge,” that is, the experimental or practical *recognition*.

of every good thing which is in you — The oldest manuscripts read, “which is in US,” that is, the practical recognition of every grace which is in us *Christians*, in so far as we realize the Christian character. In short, that thy faith may by acts be proved to be “a faith which worketh by love.”

in Christ Jesus — rather as *Greek*, “unto Christ Jesus,” that is, to the glory of Christ Jesus. Two of the oldest manuscripts omit “Jesus.” This verse answers to ^{<5006>}Philemon 1:5, “thy love and faith toward all saints”; Paul never ceases to mention him in his prayers, *in order that* his faith may still further show its power in his relation to others, by exhibiting every grace which is in Christians to the glory of Christ. Thus he paves the way for the request in behalf of Onesimus.

7. For — a reason for the prayer, ^{<5006>}Philemon 1:4-6.

we have — *Greek*, “we had.”

joy and consolation — joined in ^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 7:4.

saints are refreshed by thee — His house was open to them.

brother — put last, to conciliate his favorable attention to the request which follows.

8. Wherefore — Because of my love to thee, I prefer to “*beseech*,” rather than “enjoin,” or *authoritatively command*.

I might ... enjoin — in virtue of the obligation to *obedience* which Philemon lay under to Paul, as having been converted through his instrumentality.

in Christ — the element in which his boldness has place.

9. for love’s sake — mine to thee, and (what ought to be) thine to Onesimus. Or, that Christian love of which thou showest so bright an example (⁵⁰⁰⁰Philemon 1:7).

being such an one — Explain, *Being such a one* as thou knowest me to be, namely,

Paul — the founder of so many churches, and an apostle of Christ, and thy father in the faith.

the aged — a circumstance calculated to secure thy respect for anything I request.

and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ — the strongest claim I have on thy regard: if for no other reason, at least in consideration of this, through commiseration gratify me.

10. I beseech thee — emphatically repeated from ⁵⁰⁰⁰Philemon 1:9. In the *Greek*, the name “Onesimus” is skilfully put last, he puts first a favorable description of him before he mentions the name that had fallen into so bad repute with Philemon. “I beseech thee for my son, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus.” Scripture does not sanction slavery, but at the same time does not begin a political crusade against it. It sets forth *principles of love* to our fellow men which were sure (as they have done) in due time to undermine and overthrow it, without violently convulsing the then existing political fabric, by stirring up slaves against their masters.

11. Which ... was ... unprofitable — belying his name Onesimus, which means “profitable.” Not only was he “unprofitable,” but positively injurious, having “wronged” his master. Paul uses a mild expression.

now profitable — Without godliness a man has no station. *Profitable* in spiritual, as well as in *temporal* things.

12. mine own bowels — as dear to me as my own heart [ALFORD].

Compare ^{<S017>}Philemon 1:17, “as myself.” The object of my most intense affection as that of a parent for a child.

13. I — emphatical. I for my part. Since *I* had such implicit trust in him as to desire to keep him with me for his services, *thou* mayest.

I would have retained — different *Greek* from the “would,” ^{<S014>}Philemon 1:14, “I could have *wished*,” “I was *minded*” here; but “I was not *willing*,” ^{<S014>}Philemon 1:14.

in thy stead — that he might supply in your place all the services to me which you, if you were here, would render in virtue of the love you bear to me (^{<S019>}Philemon 1:19).

bonds of the gospel — my bonds endured for the Gospel’s sake (^{<S009>}Philemon 1:9).

14. without thy mind — that is, consent.

should not be as — “should not appear as a matter of necessity, but of free will.” Had Paul kept Onesimus, however willing to gratify Paul Philemon might be, he would have no opportunity given him of showing he was so, his leave not having been asked.

15. perhaps — speaking in human fashion, yet as one believing that God’s Providence probably (for we cannot dogmatically define the hidden purposes of God in providence) overruled the past evil to ultimately greater good to him. This thought would soften Philemon’s indignation at Onesimus’ past offense. So Joseph in ^{<0485>}Genesis 45:5.

departed — literally, “was parted from thee”; a softening term for “ran away,” to mitigate Philemon’s wrath.

receive him — *Greek*, “have him for thyself in full possession” (see on ^{<1018>}Philippians 4:18). The same *Greek* as in ^{<1018>}Matthew 6:2.

for ever — in this life and in that to come (compare ^{<1021>}Exodus 21:6). Onesimus’ time of absence, however long, was but a short “hour” (so *Greek*) compared with the everlasting devotion henceforth binding him to his master.

16. No longer as a mere servant or slave (though still he is that), but above a servant, so that thou shalt derive from him not merely the services of a slave, but higher benefits: a *servant* “in the flesh,” he is a *brother* “in the Lord.”

beloved, specially to me — who am his spiritual father, and who have experienced his faithful attentions. Lest Philemon should dislike Onesimus being called “brother,” Paul first recognizes him as a brother, being the spiritual son of the same God.

much more unto thee — to whom he stands in so much nearer and more lasting relation.

17. a partner — in the Christian fellowship of faith, hope, and love.

receive him as myself — resuming “receive him that is mine own bowels.”

18. *Greek*, “But it (thou art not inclined to ‘receive him’ because) he hath wronged thee”; a milder term than “robbed thee.” Onesimus seems to have confessed some such act to Paul.

put that on mine account — I am ready to make good the loss to thee if required. The latter parts of ^{<1018>}Philemon 1:19,21, imply that he did not expect Philemon would probably demand it.

19. with mine own hand — not employing an amanuensis, as in other Epistles: a special compliment to Philemon which he ought to show his appreciation of by granting Paul’s request. Contrast ^{<1018>}Colossians 4:18, which shows that the Epistle to the Colossian Church, accompanying this Epistle, had only its closing “salutation” written by Paul’s own hand.

albeit, etc. — literally, “that I may not say ... not to say,” etc.

thou owest ... even thine own self — not merely thy possessions. For to my instrumentality thou owest thy salvation. So the debt which “he oweth thee” being transferred upon me (I making myself responsible for it) is cancelled.

20. let me — “me” is emphatic: “Let *me* have profit (so *Greek* ‘for joy,’ *onainen*, referring to the name *Onesimus*, ‘profitable’) from *thee*, as *thou* shouldst have had from Onesimus”; for “thou owest thine ownself to me.”

in the Lord — not in worldly gain, but in thine increase in the graces of the Lord’s Spirit [ALFORD].

my bowels — my heart. Gratify my feelings by granting this request.

in the Lord — The oldest manuscripts read, “*in Christ*,” the element or sphere in which this act of Christian love naturally ought to have place.

21. Having confidence in thy obedience — to my apostolic authority, if I were to “enjoin” it (^{<500B>}Philemon 1:8), which I do not, preferring to beseech thee for it as a favor (^{<500B>}Philemon 1:9).

thou will also do more — towards Onesimus: hinting at his possible manumission by Philemon, *besides*, being kindly received.

22. This prospect of Paul’s visiting Colosse would tend to secure a kindly reception for Onesimus, as Paul would know in person how he had been treated.

your ... you — referring to Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and the Church in Philemon’s house. The same expectation is expressed by him, ^{<500B>}Philippians 2:23,24, written in the same imprisonment.

23. The same persons send salutations in the accompanying Epistle, except that “Jesus Justus” is not mentioned here.

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner — He had been sent by the Colossian Church to inquire after, and minister to, Paul, and possibly was cast into *prison* by the Roman authorities on suspicion. However, he is not mentioned as a *prisoner* in ^{<500B>}Colossians 4:12, so that “fellow prisoner” here may mean merely one who was a faithful companion to Paul in his imprisonment, and by his society put himself in the position of a prisoner.

So also “Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner,” ^{<5041}Colossians 4:10, may mean. Benson conjectures the meaning to be that on some *former* occasion these two were Paul’s “fellow prisoners,” *not at the time*.

25. be with your spirit — (^{<4668}Galatians 6:18 ^{<5022}2 Timothy 4:22).

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

CANONICITY AND AUTHORSHIP. — CLEMENT OF ROME, at the end of the first century (A.D), copiously uses it, adopting its words just as he does those of the other books of the New Testament; not indeed giving to either the term “Scripture,” which he reserves for the Old Testament (the canon of the New Testament not yet having been formally established), but certainly not ranking it below the other New Testament acknowledged Epistles. As our Epistle claims *authority* on the part of the writer, CLEMENT’S adoption of extracts from it is virtually sanctioning its authority, and this in the apostolic age. JUSTIN MARTYR quotes it as divinely authoritative, to establish the titles “apostle,” as well as “angel,” as applied to the Son of God. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA refers it expressly to Paul, on the authority of Pantænus, chief of the Catechetical school in Alexandria, in the middle of the second century, saying, that as Jesus is termed in it the “apostle” sent to the Hebrews, Paul, through humility, does not in it call himself apostle of the Hebrews, being apostle to the Gentiles. CLEMENT also says that Paul, as the Hebrews were prejudiced against him, prudently omitted to put forward his name in the beginning; also, that it was originally written in *Hebrew* for the Hebrews, and that Luke translated it into *Greek* for the Greeks, whence the style is similar to that of Acts. He, however, quotes frequently the words of the existing *Greek* Epistle as Paul’s words. ORIGEN similarly quotes it as Paul’s Epistle. However, in his Homilies, he regards the style as distinct from that of Paul, and as “more Grecian,” but the thoughts as the apostle’s; adding that the “ancients who have handed down the tradition of its Pauline authorship, must have had good reason for doing so, though God

alone knows the certainty who was the actual writer” (that is, probably “transcriber” of the apostle’s thoughts). In the African Church, in the beginning of the third century, TERTULLIAN ascribes it to Barnabas. IRENAEUS, bishop of Lyons, is mentioned in EUSEBIUS, as quoting from this Epistle, though without expressly referring it to Paul. About the same period, Caius, the presbyter, in the Church of Rome, mentions only *thirteen* Epistles of Paul, whereas, if the Epistle to the Hebrews were included, there would be *fourteen*. So the canon fragment of the end of the second century, or beginning of the third, published by MURATORI, apparently omits mentioning it. And so the Latin Church did not recognize it as Paul’s till a considerable time after the beginning of the third century. Thus, also, NOVATIAN OF ROME, CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE, and VICTORINUS, also of the Latin Church. But in the fourth century, HILARY OF POITIERS (A.D. 368), LUCIFER OF CAGLIARI (A.D. 371), AMBROSE OF MILAN (A.D. 397) and other Latins, quote it as Paul’s; and the fifth Council of Carthage (A.D. 419) formally reckons it among his fourteen Epistles.

As to the *similarity* of its *style to that of Luke’s* writings, this is due to his having been so long the companion of Paul. CHRYSOSTOM, comparing Luke and Mark, says, “Each imitated his teacher: Luke imitated Paul flowing along with more than river fullness; but Mark imitated Peter, who studied brevity of style.” Besides, there is a greater predominance of Jewish feeling and familiarity with the peculiarities of the Jewish schools apparent in this Epistle than in Luke’s writings. There is no clear *evidence* for attributing the authorship to him, or to Apollos, whom ALFORD upholds as the author. The grounds alleged for the latter view are its supposed Alexandrian phraseology and modes of thought. But these are such as any Palestinian Jew might have used; and Paul, from his Hebraeo-Hellenistic education at Jerusalem and Tarsus, would be familiar with PHILO’S modes of thought, which are not, as some think, necessarily all derived from his Alexandrian, but also from his Jewish, education. It would be unlikely that the Alexandrian Church should have so undoubtingly asserted the Pauline authorship, if Apollos, *their own countryman*, had really been the author. The eloquence of its style and rhetoric, a characteristic of Apollos’ at Corinth, whereas Paul there spoke in words unadorned by man’s wisdom, are doubtless designedly adapted to the minds of those

whom Paul in this Epistle addresses. To the Greek Corinthians, who were in danger of idolizing human eloquence and wisdom, he writes in an unadorned style, in order to fix their attention more wholly on the Gospel itself. But the Hebrews were in no such danger. And his Hebraeo-Grecian education would enable him to write in a style attractive to the Hebrews at Alexandria, where Greek philosophy had been blended with Judaism. The *Septuagint* translation framed at Alexandria had formed a connecting link between the latter and the former; and it is remarkable that all the quotations from the Old Testament, excepting two (^{<581>}Hebrews 10:30 ^{<582>}13:5), are taken from the *Septuagint*. The fact that the peculiarities of the Septuagint are interwoven into the argument proves that the *Greek* Epistle is an original, not a translation; had the original been *Hebrew*, the quotations would have been from the *Hebrew* Old Testament. The same conclusion follows from the plays on similarly sounding words in the *Greek*, and alliterations, and rhythmically constructed periods. CALVIN observes, If the Epistle had been written in *Hebrew*, ^{<583>}Hebrews 9:15-17 would lose all its point, which consists in the play upon the double meaning of the *Greek* “*diathece*,” a “covenant,” or a “testament,” whereas the *Hebrew* “*berith*” means only “covenant.”

Internal evidence favors the Pauline authorship. Thus the topic so fully handled in this Epistle, that Christianity is superior to Judaism, inasmuch as the reality exceeds the type which gives place to it, is a favorite one with Paul (compare ^{<584>}2 Corinthians 3:6-18 ^{<585>}Galatians 3:23-25 4:1-9,21-31, wherein the allegorical mode of interpretation appears in its divinely sanctioned application — a mode pushed to an unwarrantable excess in the Alexandrian school). So the Divine Son appears in ^{<586>}Hebrews 1:3, etc., as in other Epistles of Paul (^{<587>}Philippians 2:6 ^{<588>}Colossians 1:15-20), as *the Image*, or manifestation of the Deity. His lowering of Himself for man’s sake similarly, compare ^{<589>}Hebrews 2:9, with ^{<590>}2 Corinthians 8:9 ^{<591>}Philippians 2:7,8. Also His final exaltation, compare ^{<592>}Hebrews 2:8 ^{<593>}Hebrews 10:13 12:2, with ^{<594>}1 Corinthians 15:25,27. The word “Mediator” is peculiar to Paul alone, compare ^{<595>}Hebrews 8:6, with ^{<596>}Galatians 3:19,20. Christ’s death is represented as the sacrifice for sin prefigured by the Jewish sacrifices, compare ^{<597>}Romans 3:22-26 ^{<598>}1 Corinthians 5:7, with ^{<599>}Hebrews 7:1-10:39. The phrase, “God of Peace,” is peculiar to Paul, compare ^{<600>}Hebrews 13:20 ^{<601>}Romans 15:33 ^{<602>}1

Thessalonians 5:23. Also, compare ^{<800>}Hebrews 2:4, *Margin*, ^{<624>}1 Corinthians 12:4. Justification, or “righteousness by faith,” appears in ^{<800>}Hebrews 11:7 10:38, as in ^{<617>}Romans 1:17 4:22 5:1 ^{<881>}Galatians 3:11 ^{<1084>}Philippians 3:9. The word of God is the “sword of the Spirit,” compare ^{<802>}Hebrews 4:12, with ^{<607>}Ephesians 6:17. Inexperienced Christians are *children needing milk*, that is, instruction in the *elements*, whereas riper Christians, as *full-grown men*, require *strong meat*, compare ^{<882>}Hebrews 5:12,13 6:1, with ^{<601>}1 Corinthians 3:1,2 14,20 ^{<804>}Galatians 4:9 ^{<1084>}Colossians 3:14. Salvation is represented as a *boldness of access to God by Christ*, compare ^{<806>}Hebrews 10:19 with ^{<882>}Romans 5:2 ^{<408>}Ephesians 2:18 3:12. Afflictions are a *fight*, ^{<802>}Hebrews 10:32; compare ^{<1083>}Philippians 1:30 ^{<801>}Colossians 2:1. The Christian life is a *race*, ^{<801>}Hebrews 12:1; compare ^{<604>}1 Corinthians 9:24 ^{<1082>}Philippians 3:12-14. The Jewish ritual is a *service*, ^{<604>}Romans 9:4; compare ^{<801>}Hebrews 9:1,6. Compare “subject to bondage,” ^{<805>}Hebrews 2:15, with ^{<881>}Galatians 5:1. Other characteristics of Paul’s style appear in this Epistle; namely, a propensity “to go off at a word” and enter on a long parenthesis suggested by that word, a fondness for play upon words of similar sound, and a disposition to repeat some favorite word. Frequent appeals to the Old Testament, and quotations linked by “and again,” compare ^{<805>}Hebrews 1:5 2:12,13, with ^{<619>}Romans 15:9-12. Also quotations in a peculiar application, compare ^{<806>}Hebrews 2:8, with ^{<457>}1 Corinthians 15:27 ^{<602>}Ephesians 1:22. Also the same passage quoted in a form not agreeing with the *Septuagint*, and with the addition “saith the Lord,” not found in the *Hebrew*, in ^{<803>}Hebrews 10:30 ^{<629>}Romans 12:19.

The supposed Alexandrian (which are rather Philon-like) characteristics of the Epistle are probably due to the fact that the Hebrews were generally then imbued with the Alexandrian modes of thought of PHILO, etc., and Paul, without coloring or altering Gospel truth “to the Jews, became (in style) as a Jew, that he might win the Jews” (^{<601>}1 Corinthians 9:20). This will account for its being recognized as Paul’s Epistle in the Alexandrian and Jerusalem churches unanimously, to the Hebrews of whom probably it was addressed. Not one Greek father ascribes the Epistle to any but Paul, whereas in the Western and Latin churches, which it did not reach for some time, it was for long doubted, owing to its anonymous form, and generally less distinctively Pauline style. Their reason for not accepting it as Paul’s,

or indeed as canonical, for the first three centuries, was *negative*, insufficient evidence for it, not positive evidence against it. The positive evidence is generally for its Pauline origin. In the Latin churches, owing to their distance from the churches to whom belonged the Hebrews addressed, there was no generally received tradition on the subject. The Epistle was in fact but little known at all, whence we find it is not mentioned at all in the *Canon of Muratori*. When at last, in the fourth century, the Latins found that it was received as Pauline and canonical on good grounds in the Greek churches, they universally acknowledged it as such.

The personal notices all favor its Pauline authorship, namely, his intention to visit those addressed, shortly, along with Timothy, styled “our brother,” ^{<8123>}Hebrews 13:23; his being then in prison, ^{<8129>}Hebrews 13:19; his formerly having been imprisoned in Palestine, according to *English Version* reading, ^{<8124>}Hebrews 10:34; the salutations transmitted to them from believers of Italy, ^{<8122>}Hebrews 13:24. A reason for not prefixing the name may be the rhetorical character of the Epistle which led the author to waive the usual form of epistolary address.

DESIGN. — His aim is to show the superiority of Christianity over Judaism, in that it was introduced by one far higher than the angels or Moses, through whom the Jews received the law, and in that its priesthood and sacrifices are far less perfecting as to salvation than those of Christ; that He is the substance of which the former are but the shadow, and that the type necessarily gives place to the antitype; and that now we no longer are kept at a comparative distance as under the law, but have freedom of access through the opened veil, that is, Christ’s flesh; hence he warns them of the danger of apostasy, to which Jewish converts were tempted, when they saw Christians persecuted, while Judaism was tolerated by the Roman authorities. He infers the obligations to a life of faith, of which, even in the less perfect Old Testament dispensation, the Jewish history contained bright examples. He concludes in the usual Pauline mode, with practical exhortations and pious prayers for them.

HIS MODE OF ADDRESS is in it hortatory rather than commanding, just as we might have expected from Paul addressing the Jews. He does not write to the *rulers* of the Jewish Christians, for in fact there was no exclusively

Jewish Church; and his Epistle, though primarily addressed to the Palestinian Jews, was intended to include the Hebrews of all adjoining churches. He inculcates obedience and respect in relation to their rulers (^{<831>}Hebrews 13:7,17,24); a tacit obviating of the objection that he was by writing this Epistle interfering with the prerogative of Peter the apostle of the circumcision, and James the bishop of Jerusalem. Hence arises his gentle and delicate mode of dealing with them (^{<832>}Hebrews 13:22). So far from being surprised at discrepancy of style between an Epistle to Hebrews and Epistles to Gentile Christians, it is just what we should expect. The Holy Spirit guided him to choose means best suited to the nature of the ends aimed at. WORDSWORTH notices a peculiar Pauline Greek construction, ^{<833>}Romans 12:9, literally, "Let your love be without dissimulation, ye abhorring ... evil, cleaving to ... good," which is found nowhere else save ^{<834>}Hebrews 13:5, literally, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, ye being content with," etc. (a noun singular feminine nominative absolute, suddenly passing into a participle masculine nominative plural absolute). So in quoting Old Testament Scripture, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews quotes it as *a Jew* writing to Jews would, "God *spoke* to our fathers," not, "it is *written*." So ^{<835>}Hebrews 13:18, "We trust we have a good conscience" is an altogether Pauline sentiment (^{<836>}Acts 23:1 24:16 ^{<837>}2 Corinthians 1:12 4:2 ^{<838>}2 Timothy 1:3). Though he has not prefixed his name, he has given at the close his universal token to identify him, namely, his apostolic salutation, "Grace be with you all"; this "salutation with his own hand" he declared (^{<839>}2 Thessalonians 3:17,18) to be "his token in every Epistle": so ^{<840>}1 Corinthians 16:21,23 ^{<841>}Colossians 4:18. The same prayer of greeting closes *every one* of his Epistles, and is not found in any one of the Epistles of the other apostles written in Paul's lifetime; but it is found in the last book of the New Testament Revelation, and subsequently in the Epistle of CLEMENT OF ROME. This proves that, by whomsoever the body of the Epistle was committed to writing (whether a mere amanuensis writing by dictation, or a companion of Paul by the Spirit's gift of *interpreting tongues*, ^{<842>}1 Corinthians 12:10, transfusing Paul's Spirit-taught sentiments into his own Spirit-guided diction), Paul at the close sets his seal to the whole as really his, and sanctioned by him as such. The churches of the East, and Jerusalem, their center, to which quarter it was first sent, received it as Paul's from the earliest times according to Cyril,

Bishop of Jerusalem (A.D. 349). JEROME, though bringing with him from Rome the prejudices of the Latins against the Epistle to the Hebrews, aggravated, doubtless, by its seeming sanction of the Novatian heresy (~~ROM~~ Hebrews 6:4-6), was constrained by the force of facts to receive it as Paul's, on the almost unanimous testimony of all Greek Christians from the earliest times; and was probably the main instrument in correcting the past error of Rome in rejecting it. The testimony of the Alexandrian Church is peculiarly valuable, for it was founded by Mark, who was with Paul at Rome in his first confinement, when this Epistle seems to have been written (~~COL~~ Colossians 4:10), and who possibly was the bearer of this Epistle, at the same time visiting Colosse on the way to Jerusalem (where Mark's mother lived), and thence to Alexandria. Moreover, ~~2P~~ 2 Peter 3:15,16, written shortly before Peter's death, and like his first Epistle written by him, "the apostle of the circumcision," to the "*Hebrew*" Christians dispersed in the East, says, "As our beloved brother Paul hath written *unto you*" (~~2P~~ 2 Peter 3:15), that is, to the *Hebrews*; also the words added, "As also in all his Epistles" (~~2P~~ 2 Peter 3:16), distinguish the *Epistle to the Hebrews* from the rest; then he further speaks of it as on a level with "*other Scriptures*," thus asserting at once its Pauline authorship and divine inspiration. An interesting illustration of the power of Christian faith and love; Peter, who had been openly rebuked by Paul (~~GA~~ Galatians 2:7-14), fully adopted what Paul wrote; there was no difference in the Gospel of the apostle of the circumcision and that of the apostle of the uncircumcision. It strikingly shows God's sovereignty that He chose as the instrument to confirm the *Hebrews*, Paul, *the apostle of the Gentiles* (~~RO~~ Romans 11:13); and on the other hand, Peter to open the Gospel door to the *Gentiles* (~~AC~~ Acts 10:1, etc.), though being *the apostle of the Jews*; thus perfect unity reigns amidst the diversity of agencies.

Rome, in the person of CLEMENT OF ROME, originally received this Epistle. Then followed a period in which it ceased to be received by the Roman churches. Then, in the fourth century, Rome retracted her error. A plain proof she is not unchangeable or infallible. As far as Rome is concerned, the Epistle to the Hebrews was not only lost for three centuries, but never would have been recovered at all but for the Eastern churches; it is therefore a happy thing for Christendom that Rome is not the Catholic Church.

It plainly was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, which would have been mentioned in the Epistle had that event gone before, compare ^{<830}Hebrews 13:10; and probably to churches in which the Jewish members were the more numerous, as those in Judea, and perhaps Alexandria. In the latter city were the greatest number of resident Jews next to Jerusalem. In Leontopolis, in Egypt, was another temple, with the arrangements of which, WIESELER thinks the notices in this Epistle more nearly corresponded than with those in Jerusalem. It was from Alexandria that the Epistle appears first to have come to the knowledge of Christendom. Moreover, “the Epistle to the Alexandrians,” mentioned in the *Canon of Muratori*, may possibly be this Epistle to the Hebrews. He addresses the Jews as peculiarly “the people of God” (^{<827}Hebrews 2:17 4:9 13:12), “the seed of Abraham,” that is, as the primary stock on which Gentile believers are grafted, to which ^{<816}Romans 11:16-24 corresponds; but he urges them to come out of the carnal earthly Jerusalem and to realize their spiritual union to “the heavenly Jerusalem” (^{<828}Hebrews 12:18-23 13:13).

The use of *Greek* rather than *Hebrew* is doubtless due to the Epistle being intended, not merely for the Hebrew, but for the Hellenistic Jew converts, not only in Palestine, but elsewhere; a view confirmed by the use of the *Septuagint*. BENDEL thinks, probably (compare ^{<85}2 Peter 3:15,16, explained above), the Jews primarily, though not exclusively, addressed, were those who had left Jerusalem on account of the war and were settled in Asia Minor.

The notion of its having been originally in *Hebrew* arose probably from its *Hebrew* tone, method, and topics. It is reckoned among the Epistles, *not at first generally acknowledged*, along with James, Second Peter, Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation. A beautiful link exists between these Epistles and *the universally acknowledged* Epistles. Hebrews unites the ordinances of Leviticus with their antitypical Gospel fulfillment. James is the link between the highest doctrines of Christianity and the universal law of moral duty — a commentary on the Sermon on the Mount — harmonizing the decalogue law of Moses, and the revelation to Job and Elias, with the Christian law of liberty. Second Peter links the teaching of Peter with that of Paul. Jude links the earliest unwritten to the latest written Revelation. The two shorter Epistles to John, like Philemon, apply

Christianity to the minute details of the Christian life, showing that Christianity can sanctify all earthly relations.

CHAPTER 1

HEBREWS 1:1-14.

**THE HIGHEST OF ALL REVELATIONS IS GIVEN US NOW IN
THE SON OF GOD, WHO IS GREATER THAN THE ANGELS,
AND WHO, HAVING COMPLETED REDEMPTION, SITS
ENTHRONED AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND.**

The writer, though not inscribing his name, was well known to those addressed (^{<800>}Hebrews 13:19). For proofs of Paul being the author, see my *Introduction*. In the Pauline method, the statement of subject and the division are put before the discussion; and at the close, the practical follows the doctrinal portion. The ardor of Spirit in this Epistle, as in First John, bursting forth at once into the subject (without prefatory inscription of name and greeting), the more effectively strikes the hearers. The date must have been while the temple was yet standing, before its destruction, A.D. 70; some time before the martyrdom of Peter, who mentions this Epistle of Paul (^{<600>}2 Peter 3:15,16); at a time when many of the first *hearers* of the Lord were dead.

1. at sundry times — *Greek*, “in many portions.” All was not revealed to each one prophet; but one received one portion of revelation, and another another. To Noah the quarter of the world to which Messiah should belong was revealed; to Abraham, the nation; to Jacob, the tribe; to David and Isaiah, the family; to Micah, the town of nativity; to Daniel, the exact time; to Malachi, the coming of His forerunner, and His second advent; through Jonah, His burial and resurrection; through Isaiah and Hosea, His resurrection. Each only knew in part; but when that which was perfect came in Messiah, that which was in part was done away (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 13:12).

in divers manners — for example, internal suggestions, audible voices, the Urim and Thummim, dreams, and visions. “In one way He was seen by Abraham, in another by Moses, in another by Elias, and in another by

Micah; Isaiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel, beheld different forms” [THEODORET]. (Compare ^{<4011>}Numbers 12:6-8). The Old Testament revelations were fragmentary in substance, and manifold in form; the very *multitude* of prophets shows that they prophesied only *in part*. In Christ, the revelation of God is full, not in shifting hues of separated color, but Himself the pure light, uniting in His one person the whole spectrum (^{<3008>}Hebrews 1:3).

spake — the expression usual for a Jew to employ in addressing Jews. So Matthew, a Jew writing especially for Jews, quotes Scripture, not by the formula, “It is written,” but “said,” etc.

in time past — From Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, for four hundred years, there had arisen no prophet, in order that the Son might be the more an object of expectation [BENGEL]. As God (the Father) is introduced as having *spoken* here; so God the Son, ^{<3018>}Hebrews 2:3; God the Holy Ghost, ^{<3037>}Hebrews 3:7.

the fathers — the Jewish fathers. The Jews of former days (^{<4011>}1 Corinthians 10:1).

by — *Greek*, “in.” A mortal king speaks *by* his ambassador, not (as the King of kings) *in* his ambassador. The Son is the last and highest manifestation of God (^{<4034>}Matthew 21:34,37); not merely a measure, as in the prophets, but the fullness of the Spirit of God dwelling in Him bodily (^{<4016>}John 1:16 3:34 ^{<3018>}Colossians 2:9). Thus he answers the Jewish objection drawn from their prophets. Jesus is the end of all prophecy (^{<4050>}Revelation 19:10), and of the law of Moses (^{<4017>}John 1:17 5:46).

2. in these last days — In the oldest manuscripts the *Greek* is. “At the last part of these days.” The Rabbins divided the whole of time into “this age,” or “world,” and “the age to come” (^{<3018>}Hebrews 2:5 6:5). The days of Messiah were the transition period or “last part of these days” (in contrast to “in times past”), the close of the existing dispensation, and beginning of the final dispensation of which Christ’s second coming shall be the crowning consummation.

by *his* Son — *Greek*, “IN (His) Son” (^{<4040>}John 14:10). The true “Prophet” of God. “His majesty is set forth:

(1) *Absolutely* by the very name “Son,” and by three glorious predicates, “whom He hath appointed,” “by whom He made the worlds,” “who sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;” thus His course is described from the beginning of all things till he reached the goal (^{<800B>}Hebrews 1:2,3).

(2) *Relatively*, in comparison with the angels, (^{<800B>}Hebrews 1:4; the *confirmation* of this follows, and the very name “Son” is proved at ^{<800B>}Hebrews 1:5; the “heirship,” ^{<800B>}Hebrews 1:6-9; the “making the worlds,” ^{<800B>}Hebrews 1:10-12; the “sitting at the right hand” of God, ^{<800B>}Hebrews 1:13,14.” His being made *heir* follows His *sonship*, and preceded His *making the worlds* (^{<800B>}Proverbs 8:22,23 ^{<800B>}Ephesians 3:11). As *the first begotten*, He is heir of the universe (^{<800B>}Hebrews 1:6), which He made instrumentally, ^{<800B>}Hebrews 11:3, where “by the Word of God” answers to “by whom” (the Son of God) here (^{<800B>}John 1:3). Christ was “appointed” (in God’s eternal counsel) to creation as an office; and the universe so created was assigned to Him as a kingdom. He is “heir of all things” by right of creation, and especially by right of redemption. The promise to Abraham that he should be heir of the world had its fulfillment, and will have it still more fully, in Christ (^{<800B>}Romans 4:13 ^{<800B>}Galatians 3:16 4:7).

worlds — the inferior and the superior worlds (^{<800B>}Colossians 1:16). Literally, “ages” with all things and persons belonging to them; the universe, including all space and ages of time, and all material and spiritual existences. The *Greek* implies, He not only appointed His Son heir of all things before creation, but *He also* (better than “also He”) made by Him the worlds.

3. Who being — by pre-existent and essential being.

brightness of his glory — *Greek*, the *effulgence* of His glory. “Light of (from) light” [*Nicene Creed*]. “Who is so senseless as to doubt concerning the eternal being of the Son? For when has one seen light without effulgence?” [ATHANASIUS, *Against Arius, Orations*, 2]. “The sun is never seen without effulgence, nor the Father without the Son” [THEOPHYLACT]. It is *because* He is the brightness, etc., and *because* He upholds, etc., that He *sat down on the right hand*, etc. It was a return to His divine glory

(^{<AM>}John 6:62 17:5; compare Wisdom 7:25,26, where similar things are said of wisdom).

express image — “impress.” But veiled in the flesh. The Sun of God in glory beams Too bright for us to scan; But we can face the light that streams For the mild Son of man. (^{<ACB>}2 Corinthians 3:18)

of his person — *Greek*, “of His substantial essence”; “*hypostasis*.”

upholding all things — *Greek*, “the universe.” Compare ^{<SUS>}Colossians 1:15,17,20, which enumerates the three facts in the same order as here.

by the word — Therefore the Son of God is a Person; for He has the word [BENGEL]. *His word is God’s word* (^{<SUS>}Hebrews 11:3).

of his power — “The word” is the utterance which comes from His (the Son’s) power, and gives expression to it.

by himself — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

purged — *Greek*, “made purification of ... sins,” namely, in His atonement, which graciously covers the guilt of sin. “Our” is omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Sin was the great *uncleanness* in God’s sight, of which He has effected the purgation by His sacrifice [ALFORD]. Our nature, as guilt-laden, could not, without our great High Priest’s blood of atonement sprinkling the heavenly mercy seat, come into immediate contact with God. EBRARD says, “The mediation between man and God, who was present in the Most Holy Place, was revealed in three forms:

(1) In sacrifices (typical propitiations for guilt);

(2) In the priesthood (the agents of those sacrifices);

(3) In the Levitical laws of purity (Levitical purity being attained by sacrifice positively, by avoidance of Levitical pollution negatively, the people being thus enabled to come into the presence of God without dying, ^{<ACB>}Deuteronomy 5:26)” (^{<ACB>}Leviticus 16:1-34).

sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high — fulfilling

^{<ACB>}Psalms 110:1. This sitting of the Son at God’s right hand was by the act of the Father (^{<SUS>}Hebrews 8:1 ^{<ACB>}Ephesians 1:20); it is never used of His pre-existing state co-equal with the Father, but always of His exalted state

as Son of man after His sufferings, and as Mediator for man in the presence of God (^{<618>}Romans 8:34): a relation towards God and us about to come to an end when its object has been accomplished (^{<613>}1 Corinthians 15:28).

4. Being made ... better — by His exaltation by the Father (^{<302>}Hebrews 1:3,13):in contrast to His being “made lower than the angels” (^{<301>}Hebrews 2:9). “Better,” that is, *superior* to. As “being” (^{<301>}Hebrews 1:3) expresses His essential being so “being made” (^{<302>}Hebrews 7:26) marks what He became in His assumed manhood (^{<300>}Philippians 2:6-9). Paul shows that His humbled form (at which the Jews might stumble) is no objection to His divine Messiahship. As the law was given by the ministration of angels and Moses, it was inferior to the Gospel given by the divine Son, who both is (^{<300>}Hebrews 1:4-14) as God, and has been made, as the exalted Son of man (^{<301>}Hebrews 2:5-18), much better than the angels. The manifestations of God by angels (and even by the angel of the covenant) at different times in the Old Testament, did not bring man and God into personal union, as the manifestation of God in human flesh does.

by inheritance obtained — He always had the *thing* itself, namely, *Sonship*; but *He* “obtained by inheritance,” according to the promise of the Father, *the name* “Son,” whereby He is made known to men and angels. He is “the Son of God” in a sense far exalted above that in which angels are called “sons of God” (^{<300>}Job 1:6 38:7). “The fullness of the glory of the peculiar name “the Son of God,” is unattainable by human speech or thought. All appellations are but fragments of its glory beams united in it as in a central sun, ^{<602>}Revelation 19:12. *A name that no man knew but He Himself.*”

5. For — substantiating His having “obtained a more excellent name than the angels.”

unto which — A frequent argument in this Epistle is derived from *the silence of Scripture* (^{<301>}Hebrews 1:13 ^{<301>}Hebrews 2:16 7:3,14) [BENGEL].

this day have I begotten thee — (^{<601>}Psalms 2:7). Fulfilled at the resurrection of Jesus, whereby the Father “declared,” that is, made manifest His divine Sonship, heretofore veiled by His humiliation (^{<413>}Acts

13:33 ^{<5100}Romans 1:4). Christ has a fourfold right to the title “Son of God”;

(1) By *generation*, as begotten of God;

(2) By *commission*, as sent by God;

(3) By *resurrection*, as “the first-begotten of the dead” (compare ^{<4280}Luke 20:36 ^{<6100}Romans 1:4 ^{<6000}Revelation 1:5);

(4) By *actual possession*, as heir of all [BISHOP PEARSON]. The Psalm here quoted applied primarily in a less full sense to Solomon, of whom God promised by Nathan to David. “I will be his father and he shall be my son.” But as the whole theocracy was of Messianic import, the triumph of David over Hadadezer and neighboring kings (^{<1000}2 Samuel 8:1-18 ^{<4000}Psalm 2:2,3,9-12) is a type of God’s ultimately subduing all enemies under His Son, whom He sets (*Hebrew*, “anointed,” ^{<4000}Psalm 2:6) on His “holy hill of Zion,” as King of the Jews and of the whole earth, the antitype to Solomon, son of David. The “I” in *Greek* is emphatic; *I* the Everlasting Father have begotten Thee this day, that is, on this day, the day of Thy being manifested as My Son, “the first-begotten of the dead” (^{<5000}Colossians 1:18 ^{<6000}Revelation 1:5). when Thou hast ransomed and opened heaven to Thy people. He had been always Son, but now first was manifested as such in His once humbled, now exalted manhood united to His Godhead. ALFORD refers “this day” to the *eternal* generation of the Son: the day in which the Son was begotten by the Father is an everlasting *to-day*: there never was a yesterday or past time to Him, nor a to-morrow or future time: “Nothing there is to come, and nothing past, but an eternal NOW doth ever last” (^{<3000}Proverbs 30:4 ^{<6000}John 10:30,38 16:28 17:8). The communication of the divine essence in its fullness, involves eternal generation; for the divine essence has no beginning. But the context refers to a definite point of time, namely, that of His having entered on the *inheritance* (^{<5000}Hebrews 1:4). The “bringing the first-begotten into the world” (^{<5000}Hebrews 1:6), is not subsequent, as ALFORD thinks, to ^{<5000}Hebrews 1:5, but anterior to it (compare ^{<4000}Acts 2:30-35).

6. And — *Greek*, “But.” Not only this proves His superiority, BUT a more decisive proof is ^{<4000}Psalm 97:7, which shows that not only at His

resurrection, but also in prospect of His being *brought into the world* (compare ^{<891>}Hebrews 9:11 10:5) as man, in His incarnation, nativity (^{<411>}Luke 2:9-14), temptation (^{<414>}Matthew 4:10,11), resurrection (^{<418>}Matthew 28:2), and future second advent in glory. angels were designed by God to be subject to Him. Compare ^{<516>}1 Timothy 3:16, “seen of angels”; God manifesting Messiah as one to be gazed at with adoring love by heavenly intelligences (^{<410>}Ephesians 3:10 ^{<509>}2 Thessalonians 1:9,10 ^{<412>}1 Peter 3:22). The fullest realization of His Lordship shall be at His second coming (^{<497>}Psalms 97:7 ^{<454>}1 Corinthians 15:24,25 ^{<510>}Philippians 2:9). “Worship Him all ye gods” (“gods,” that is, *exalted beings*, as *angels*), refers to *God*; but it was universally admitted among the Hebrews that God would dwell, in a peculiar sense, in Messiah (so as to be in the Talmud phrase, “capable of being pointed to with the finger”); and so what was said of God was true of, and to be fulfilled in, Messiah. KIMCHI says that the ninety-third through the hundred first Psalms contain in them the mystery of Messiah. God ruled the theocracy in and through Him.

the world — subject to Christ (^{<505>}Hebrews 2:5). As “the first-begotten” He has the rights of *primogeniture* (^{<412>}Romans 8:29); ^{<505>}Colossians 1:15,16,18). In ^{<459>}Deuteronomy 32:43, the *Septuagint* has, “Let all the angels of God worship Him,” words not now found in the *Hebrew*. This passage of the *Septuagint* may have been in Paul’s mind as to the *form*, but the *substance* is taken from ^{<510>}Psalms 97:7. The type David, in the ^{<497>}Psalms 89:27 (quoted in ^{<505>}Hebrews 1:5), is called “God’s *first-born*, higher than the *kings* of the earth”; so the antitypical first-begotten, the son of David, is to be worshipped by all inferior *lords*, such as *angels* (“gods,” ^{<497>}Psalms 97:7); for He is “King of kings and Lord of lords” (^{<696>}Revelation 19:16). In the *Greek*, “again” is transposed; but this does not oblige us, as ALFORD thinks, to translate, “when He *again shall have introduced*,” etc. namely, at Christ’s second coming; for there is no previous mention of a *first* bringing in; and “again” is often used in quotations, not to be joined with the verb, but parenthetically (“that I may again quote Scripture”). *English Version* is correct (compare ^{<415>}Matthew 5:33; *Greek*, ^{<412>}John 12:39).

7. of — The *Greek* is rather, “In reference TO the angels.”

spirits — or “winds”: Who employeth His angels as the winds, His ministers as the lightnings; or, He maketh His angelic ministers the

directing powers of winds and flames, when these latter are required to perform His will. “Commissions them to assume the agency or form of flames for His purposes” [ALFORD]. *English Version*, “maketh His angels *spirits*,” means, He maketh them of a subtle, incorporeal nature, swift as the wind. So ^{<980}Psalm 18:10, “a *cherub* ... the wings of the *wind*.”

^{<8014}Hebrews 1:14, “ministering *spirits*,” favors *English Version* here. As “spirits” implies the wind-like velocity and subtle nature of the *cherubim*, so “flame of fire” expresses the burning devotion and intense all-consuming zeal of the adoring *seraphim* (meaning “burning”), ^{<2811}Isaiah 6:1. The translation, “maketh winds His messengers, and a flame of fire His *ministers* (!),” is plainly wrong. In the ^{<9445}Psalm 104:3,4, the subject in each clause comes first, and the attribute predicated of it second; so the *Greek* article here marks “angels” and “ministers” as the *subjects*, and “winds” and “flame of fire,” *predicates*, *Schemoth Rabba* says, “God is called God of Zebaoth (the heavenly hosts), because He does what He pleases with His angels. When He pleases, He makes them to sit (^{<6811}Judges 6:11); at other times to stand (^{<2012}Isaiah 6:2); at times to resemble women (^{<3819}Zechariah 5:9); at other times to resemble men (^{<1812}Genesis 18:2); at times He makes them ‘spirits’; at times, fire.” “Maketh” implies that, however exalted, they are but creatures, whereas the Son is the Creator (^{<5011}Hebrews 1:10):not *begotten from everlasting*, nor to be *worshipped*, as the Son (^{<6411}Revelation 14:7 22:8,9).

8. O God — the *Greek* has the article to mark emphasis (^{<9811}Psalm 45:6,7).

for ever ... righteousness — *Everlasting duration* and *righteousness* go together (^{<9812}Psalm 45:2 89:14).

a scepter of righteousness — literally, “a rod of rectitude,” or “straightforwardness.” The oldest manuscripts prefix “and” (compare ^{<7011}Esther 4:11).

9. iniquity — “unrighteousness.” Some oldest manuscripts read, “lawlessness.”

therefore — because God loves righteousness and hates iniquity.

God ... thy God — JEROME, AUGUSTINE, and others translate ^{<9817}Psalm 45:7, “O God, Thy God, hath anointed thee,” whereby Christ is addressed

as God. This is probably the true translation of the *Hebrew* there, and also of the *Greek* of Hebrews here; for it is likely the Son is addressed, “O God,” as in ^{<8008>}Hebrews 1:8. The *anointing* here meant is not that at His baptism, when He solemnly entered on His ministry for us; but that with the “oil of gladness,” or “exulting joy” (which denotes a *triumph*, and follows as the consequence of His manifested *love of righteousness* and *hatred of iniquity*), wherewith, after His triumphant completion of His work, He has been anointed by the Father above His fellows (not only above us, His fellow men, the adopted members of God’s family. whom “He is not ashamed to call His brethren,” but above the angels, fellow partakers in part with Him, though infinitely His inferiors, in the glories, holiness, and joys of heaven; “sons of God,” and angel “messengers,” though subordinate to the divine Angel — “Messenger of the covenant”). Thus He is antitype to Solomon, “chosen of all David’s many sons to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel,” even as His father David was chosen before all the house of his father’s sons. The image is drawn from the custom of anointing guests at feasts (^{<8215>}Psalm 23:5); or rather of anointing kings: not until His ascension did He assume the *kingdom* as Son of man. A fuller accomplishment is yet to be, when He shall be VISIBLY the anointed King over the whole earth (set by the Father) on His holy hill of Zion, ^{<8216>}Psalm 2:6,8. So David, His type, was first anointed at Bethlehem (^{<8217>}1 Samuel 16:13 ^{<8218>}Psalm 89:20); and yet again at Hebron, first over Judah (^{<8219>}2 Samuel 2:4), then over all Israel (^{<821A>}2 Samuel 5:3); not till the death of Saul did he enter on his actual kingdom; as it was not till after Christ’s death that the Father set Him at His right hand far above all principalities (^{<821B>}Ephesians 1:20,21). The forty-fifth Psalm in its first meaning was addressed to Solomon; but the Holy Spirit inspired the writer to use language which in its fullness can only apply to the antitypical Solomon, the true Royal Head of the theocracy.

10. And — In another passage (^{<821C>}Psalm 102:25-27) He says.

in the beginning — *English Version*, ^{<821D>}Psalm 102:25, “of old”: *Hebrew*, “before,” “aforetime.” The *Septuagint*, “in the beginning” (as in ^{<821E>}Genesis 1:1) answers by contrast to *the end* implied in “They shall perish,” etc. The *Greek* order here (not in the *Septuagint*) is, “Thou in the beginning, O Lord,” which throws the “Lord” into emphasis. “Christ is preached even

in passages where many might contend that the Father was principally intended” [BENGEL].

laid the foundation of — “*firmly* founded” is included in the idea of the *Greek*.

heavens — plural: not merely one, but manifold, and including various orders of heavenly intelligences (^{<4010>}Ephesians 4:10).

works of thine hands — the heavens, as a woven veil or curtain spread out.

11. They — The earth and the heavens in their present state and form “shall perish” (^{<8026>}Hebrews 12:26,27 ^{<6183>}2 Peter 3:13). “Perish” does not mean *annihilation*; just as it did not mean so in the case of “the world that being overflowed with water, *perished*” under Noah (^{<6186>}2 Peter 3:6). The covenant of the possession of the earth was renewed with Noah and his seed on the renovated earth. So it shall be after the perishing by fire (^{<6182>}2 Peter 3:12,13).

remainest — *through* (so the *Greek*) all changes.

as ... a garment — (^{<2501>}Isaiah 51:6).

12. vesture — *Greek*, “an enwrapping cloak.”

fold them up — So the *Septuagint*, ^{<19421>}Psalms 102:26; but the *Hebrew*, “*change* them.” The Spirit, by Paul, treats the *Hebrew* of the Old Testament, with independence of handling, presenting the divine truth in various aspects; sometimes as here sanctioning the *Septuagint* (compare ^{<2341>}Isaiah 34:4 ^{<6184>}Revelation 6:14); sometimes the *Hebrew*; sometimes varying from both.

changed — as one lays aside a garment to put on another.

thou art the same — (^{<2341>}Isaiah 46:4 ^{<4906>}Malachi 3:6). The same in nature, therefore in covenant faithfulness to Thy people.

shall not fail — *Hebrew*, “shall not end.” Israel, in the Babylonian captivity, in the hundred second Psalm, casts her hopes of deliverance on Messiah, the unchanging covenant God of Israel.

13. Quotation from ^{<BIB>}Psalm 110:1. The image is taken from the custom of conquerors putting the feet on the necks of the conquered (^{<BIB>}Joshua 10:24,25).

14. ministering spirits — referring to ^{<SOOT>}Hebrews 1:7, “spirits ... ministers.” They are incorporeal *spirits*, as God is, but *ministering* to Him as inferiors.

sent forth — present participle: “being sent forth” *continually*, as their regular service in all ages.

to minister — *Greek*, “unto (that is, ‘for’) ministry.”

for them — *Greek*, “on account of the.” Angels are sent forth on *ministrations to God and Christ*, not primarily to men, though *for the good* of “those who are about to inherit salvation” (so the *Greek*): the elect, who believe, or shall believe, for whom all things, angels included, work together for good (^{<BIB>}Romans 8:28). Angels’ ministrations are not properly rendered to men, since the latter have no power of commanding them, though their ministrations to God are often directed to the good of men. So the superiority of the Son of God to angels is shown. They “all,” how ever various their ranks, “minister”; He is ministered to. They “*stand*” (^{<BIB>}Luke 1:19) before God, or are “*sent forth*” to execute the divine commands on behalf of them whom He pleases to save; He “*sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high*” (^{<SOOT>}Hebrews 1:3,13). He rules; they serve.

CHAPTER 2

^{S01} HEBREWS 2:1-18.

DANGER OF NEGLECTING SO GREAT SALVATION, FIRST SPOKEN BY CHRIST; TO WHOM, NOT TO ANGELS, THE NEW DISPENSATION WAS SUBJECTED; THOUGH HE WAS FOR A TIME HUMBLD BELOW THE ANGELS: THIS HUMILIATION TOOK PLACE BY DIVINE NECESSITY FOR OUR SALVATION.

1. Therefore — Because Christ the Mediator of the new covenant is so far (^{S01} Hebrews 1:5-14) above all angels, the mediators of the old covenant.

the more earnest — *Greek*, “the more abundantly.”

heard — spoken by God (^{S01} Hebrews 1:1); and by the Lord (^{S01} Hebrews 2:3).

let them slip — literally “flow past them” (^{S01} Hebrews 4:1).

2. (Compare ^{S01} Hebrews 2:3.) Argument *a fortiori*.

spoken by angels — the Mosaic law spoken by the ministration of angels (^{S01} Deuteronomy 33:2 ^{P01} Psalm 68:17 ^{A01} Acts 7:53 ^{G01} Galatians 3:19).

When it is said, ^{E01} Exodus 20:1, “God spake,” it is meant He spake by angels as His mouthpiece, or at least angels repeating in unison with His voice the words of the Decalogue; whereas the Gospel was first spoken by the Lord alone.

was steadfast — *Greek*, “was made steadfast,” or “confirmed”: was enforced by penalties on those violating it.

transgression — by doing evil; literally, *overstepping* its bounds: a positive violation of it.

disobedience — by neglecting to do good: a negative violation of it.

recompense — (^{E01} Deuteronomy 32:35).

3. we — who have received the message of salvation so clearly delivered to us (compare ^{<822>}Hebrews 12:25).

so great salvation — embodied in Jesus, whose very name means “salvation,” including not only deliverance from foes and from death, and the grant of temporal blessings (which the law promised to the obedient), but also grace of the Spirit, forgiveness of sins, and the promise of heaven, glory, and eternal life (^{<801>}Hebrews 2:10).

which — “*inasmuch as it is a salvation which began,*” etc.

spoken by the Lord — as the instrument of proclaiming it. Not as the law, spoken by the instrumentality of angels (^{<801>}Hebrews 2:2). Both law and Gospel came from God; the difference here referred to lay in *the instrumentality* by which each respectively was promulgated (compare ^{<801>}Hebrews 2:5). Angels recognize Him as “the Lord” (^{<416>}Matthew 28:6 ^{<411>}Luke 2:11).

confirmed unto us — not by penalties, as the law was *confirmed*, but by spiritual gifts (^{<801>}Hebrews 2:4).

by them that heard *him* — (Compare ^{<401>}Luke 1:2). Though Paul had a special and independent revelation of Christ (^{<801>}Galatians 1:16,17,19), yet he classes himself with those Jews whom he addresses, “unto us”; for like them in many particulars (for example, the agony in Gethsemane, ^{<801>}Hebrews 5:7), he was dependent for autoptic information on the twelve apostles. So the *discourses* of Jesus, for example, the Sermon on the Mount, and the first proclamation of the Gospel kingdom by the Lord (^{<417>}Matthew 4:17), he could only know by the report of the Twelve: so the saying, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (^{<415>}Acts 20:35). Paul mentions what they had *heard*, rather than what they had *seen*, conformably with what he began with, ^{<801>}Hebrews 1:1,2, “spake ... spoken.” Appropriately also in his Epistles to Gentiles, he dwells on his independent call to the apostleship of the Gentiles; in his Epistle to the Hebrews, he appeals to the apostles who had been long with the Lord (compare ^{<412>}Acts 1:21 10:41); so in his sermon to the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia (^{<413>}Acts 13:31); and “he only appeals to the testimony of these apostles in a general way, in order that he may bring the Hebrews to the Lord alone” [BENGEL], not to become partisans of particular apostles, as

Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, and James, the bishop of Jerusalem. This verse implies that the Hebrews of the *churches of Palestine and Syria* (or those of them dispersed in Asia Minor [BENGEL], ^{<601>}1 Peter 1:1, or in Alexandria) were primarily addressed in this Epistle; for of none so well could it be said, the Gospel was confirmed to them by the immediate hearers of the Lord: the past tense, “was confirmed,” implies some little time had elapsed since this testification by eye-witnesses.

4. them — rather, “God also [as well as Christ, ^{<500>}Hebrews 2:3] bearing witness to it,” etc. joining in attestation of *it*.”

signs and wonders — performed by Christ and His apostles. “Signs” and miracles, or other facts regarded as *proofs* of a divine mission; “wonders” are miracles viewed as prodigies, causing *astonishment* (^{<402>}Acts 2:22,33); “powers” are miracles viewed as evidences of superhuman *power*.

divers miracles — *Greek*, “varied (miraculous) powers” (^{<402>}2 Corinthians 12:12) granted to the apostles after the ascension.

gifts, etc. — *Greek*, “distributions.” The gift of the Holy Spirit was given to Christ without measure (^{<601>}John 3:34), but to us it is distributed in various measures and operations (^{<500>}Romans 12:3,6, etc. ^{<401>}1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

according to his own will — God’s free and sovereign will, assigning one gift of the Spirit to one, another to another (^{<402>}Acts 5:32 ^{<401>}Ephesians 1:5).

5. For — confirming the assertion, ^{<500>}Hebrews 2:2,3, that the new covenant was spoken by One higher than the mediators of the old covenant, namely, angels. Translate in the *Greek* order, to bring out the proper emphasis, “Not the angels hath He,” etc.

the world to come — implying, He *has* subjected to angels *the existing world*, the Old Testament dispensation (then still partly existing as to its framework), ^{<500>}Hebrews 2:2, the political kingdom of the earth (^{<201>}Daniel 4:13 10:13,20,21 12:1), and the natural elements (^{<601>}Revelation 9:11 16:4). and even individuals (^{<401>}Matthew 18:10). “The world to come” is the new dispensation brought in by Christ, beginning in grace here, to be completed in glory hereafter. It is called “to come,” or “about to be,” as at the time of its being subjected to Christ by the divine decree, it was as yet a thing of

the future, and is still so to us, in respect to its full consummation. In respect to the *subjecting* of all things to Christ in fulfillment of ^{<BIB>}Psalm 8:1-9, the realization is still “to come.” Regarded from the Old Testament standpoint, which looks prophetically forward to the New Testament (and the Jewish priesthood and Old Testament ritual were in force then when Paul wrote, and continued till their forcible abrogation by the destruction of Jerusalem), it is “the world to come”; Paul, as addressing Jews, appropriately calls it so, according to their conventional way of viewing it. We, like them, still pray, “Thy kingdom come”; for its *manifestation* in glory is yet future. “This world” is used in contrast to express the present fallen condition of the world (^{<BIB>}Ephesians 2:2). Believers belong not to this present world course, but by faith rise in spirit to “the world to come,” making it a present, though internal. reality. Still, in the present world, natural and social, angels are mediately rulers under God in some sense: not so in the coming world: man in it, and the Son of man, man’s Head, are to be supreme. Hence greater reverence was paid to angels by men in the Old Testament than is permitted in the New Testament. For man’s nature is exalted in Christ now, so that angels are our “fellow servants” (^{<BIB>}Revelation 22:9). In their ministrations they stand on a different footing from that on which they stood towards us in the Old Testament. We are “brethren” of Christ in a nearness not enjoyed even by angels (^{<BIB>}Hebrews 2:10-12,16).

6. But — It is not to angels the Gospel kingdom is subject, BUT ...

one ... testified — the usual way of quoting Scripture to readers familiar with it. ^{<BIB>}Psalm 8:5-7 praises Jehovah for exalting MAN, so as to subject all the works of God on earth to him: this dignity having been lost by the first Adam, is realized only in Christ the Son of man, the Representative Man and Head of our redeemed race. Thus Paul proves that it is to MAN, not to *angels*, that God has subjected the “world to come.” In ^{<BIB>}Hebrews 2:6-8, MAN is spoken of *in general* (“him ... him ... his); then at ^{<BIB>}Hebrews 2:9, first JESUS is introduced as fulfilling, as man, all the conditions of the prophecy, and passing through death Himself; and so consequently bringing us men, His “brethren,” to “glory and honor.”

What, etc. — How insignificant in himself, yet how exalted by God’s grace! (Compare ^{<BIB>}Psalm 144:3). The *Hebrew*, “*Enosh*” and “*Ben-Adam*,”

express “man” and “Son of man” in his weakness: “Son of man” is here used of *any* and *every child of man*: unlike, seemingly, the lord of creation, such as he was originally (^{<000>}Genesis 1:1-2:25), and such as he is designed to be (^{<000>}Psalms 8:1-9), and such as he actually is by title and shall hereafter more fully be in the person of, and in union with, Jesus, pre-eminently the Son of man (^{<000>}Hebrews 2:9).

art mindful — as of one absent.

visitest — *lookest after* him, as one present.

7. a little — not as BENGEL, “a little *time*.”

than the angels — *Hebrew*, “than God,” “*Elohim*,” that is, the abstract qualities of God, such as *angels* possess in an inferior form; namely, heavenly, spiritual, incorporeal natures. Man, in his original creation, was set next beneath them. So the man Jesus, though Lord of angels, when He emptied Himself of the externals of His Divinity (see on ^{<000>}Philippians 2:6,7), was in His human nature “a little lower than the angels”; though this is not the primary reference here, but *man* in general.

crownedst him with glory and honor — as the appointed kingly vicerent of God over this earth (^{<000>}Genesis 1:1-2:25).

and didst set him over the works of thy hands — omitted in some of the oldest manuscripts; but read by others and by oldest versions: so ^{<000>}Psalms 8:6, “Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands.”

8. (^{<000>}1 Corinthians 15:27.)

For in that — that is, “For in that” *God saith in the eighth Psalm*, “He put the all things (so the *Greek*, *the* all things just mentioned) in subjection under him (man), He left nothing ... As no limitation occurs in the sacred writing, the “all things” must include heavenly, as well as earthly things (compare ^{<000>}1 Corinthians 3:21,22).

But now — As things now are, we see not yet *the* all things put under man.

9. But — We see not *man* as yet exercising lordship over all things, “*but rather, Him who was made a little lower than the angels* (compare ⁴²²¹⁸ Luke 22:43), we behold (*by faith*: a different *Greek* verb from that for ‘we see,’ ⁴⁰⁰⁸ Hebrews 2:8, which expresses the impression which our eyes *passively* receive from objects around us; whereas, ‘we behold,’ or ‘look at,’ implies the *direction* and *intention* of one *deliberately* regarding something which he tries to see: so ⁴⁰⁰⁸ Hebrews 3:19 10:25, *Greek*), namely, Jesus, on account of His suffering of death, crowned,” etc. He is already crowned. though unseen by us, save by faith; hereafter all things shall be subjected to Him visibly and fully. The ground of His exaltation is “on account of His having suffered death” (⁴⁰⁰⁸ Hebrews 2:10 ⁴²¹⁸ Philippians 2:8,9).

that he by the grace of God — (⁴⁰⁰⁸ Titus 2:11 3:4). The reading of ORIGIN, “That He *without God*” (*laying aside His Divinity*; or, for every being *save God*: or perhaps alluding to His having been temporarily “forsaken,” as the Sin-bearer, by the Father on the cross), is not supported by the manuscripts. The “that,” etc. is connected with “crowned with glory,” etc. thus: His exaltation after sufferings is the *perfecting* or consummation of His work (⁴⁰⁰⁸ Hebrews 2:10) for us: without it His death would have been ineffectual; with it, and from it, flows the result *that His tasting of death is available for* (in behalf of, for the good of) *every man*. He is crowned as the Head in heaven of our common humanity, presenting His blood as the all-prevailing plea for us. This coronation above makes His death applicable for *every* individual *man* (observe the singular; not merely “for all men”), ⁴⁰⁰⁸ Hebrews 4:14 9:24 ⁴⁰⁰⁸ 1 John 2:2. “Taste death” implies His personal experimental undergoing of death: death of the body, and death (spiritually) of the soul, in His being forsaken of the Father. “As a physician first tastes his medicines to encourage his sick patient to take them, so Christ, when all men feared death, in order to persuade them to be bold in meeting it, tasted it Himself. though He had no need” [CHRYSOSTOM]. (⁴⁰⁰⁸ Hebrews 2:14,15).

10. For — giving a reason why “the grace of God” required that Jesus “should taste death.”

it became him — The whole plan was (not only not derogatory to, but) highly *becoming* God, though unbelief considers it a *disgrace* [BENGEL]. An answer to the Jews, and Hebrew Christians, whosoever, through

impatience at the delay in the promised advent of Christ's glory, were in danger of apostasy, stumbling at Christ *crucified*. The Jerusalem Christians especially were liable to this danger. This scheme of redemption was altogether such a one as harmonizes with the love, justice, and wisdom of God.

for whom — God the Father (^{<613>}Romans 11:36 ^{<618>}1 Corinthians 8:6 ^{<604>}Revelation 4:11). In ^{<506>}Colossians 1:16 the same is said of Christ.

all things — *Greek*, “the universe of things,” “the all things.” He uses for “God,” the periphrasis, “Him for whom ... by whom are all things,” to mark the becomingness of Christ's suffering as the way to His being “perfected” as “Captain of our salvation,” seeing that His is the way that pleased Him whose will and whose glory are *the end* of all things, and by whose *operation* all things exist.

in bringing — The *Greek* is past, “having brought as He did,” namely, *in His electing purpose* (compare “ye are sons,” namely, in His purpose, ^{<606>}Galatians 4:6 ^{<610>}Ephesians 1:4), a purpose which is accomplished in Jesus being “perfected through sufferings.”

many — (^{<418>}Matthew 20:28). “The Church” (^{<822>}Hebrews 2:12), “the general assembly” (^{<823>}Hebrews 12:23).

sons — no longer *children* as under the Old Testament law, but *sons* by adoption.

unto glory — to share Christ's “glory” (^{<814>}Hebrews 2:9; compare ^{<807>}Hebrews 2:7 ^{<670>}John 17:10,22,24 ^{<612>}Romans 8:21). Sonship, holiness (^{<821>}Hebrews 2:11), and glory, are inseparably joined. “Suffering,” “salvation,” and “glory,” in Paul's writings, often go together (^{<812>}Timothy 2:10). *Salvation* presupposes *destruction*, deliverance from which for us required Christ's “sufferings.”

to make ... perfect — “to consummate”; to bring to consummated glory through sufferings, as the appointed avenue to it. “He who suffers for another, not only benefits him, but becomes himself the brighter and more perfect” [CHRYSOSTOM]. Bringing to the end of troubles, and to the *goal* full of glory: a metaphor from the contests in the public games. Compare “It is finished,” ^{<624>}Luke 24:26 ^{<623>}John 19:30. I prefer, with CALVIN,

understanding, “to make perfect as a completed *sacrifice*”: *legal* and *official*, not moral, *perfection* is meant: “to *consecrate*” (so the same *Greek* is translated ^{<802>}Hebrews 7:28; compare *Margin*) by the finished expiation of His death, as our perfect High Priest, and so our “Captain of salvation” (^{<433>}Luke 13:32). This agrees with ^{<821>}Hebrews 2:11, “He that sanctifieth,” that is, consecrates them by Himself being made a consecrated offering for them. So ^{<504>}Hebrews 10:14,29 ^{<679>}John 17:19: by the perfecting of His consecration for them in His death, He perfects their consecration, and so throws open access to glory (^{<509>}Hebrews 10:19-21 ^{<589>}Hebrews 5:9 9:9 accord with this sense).

captain of, etc. — literally, *Prince-leader*: as Joshua, not Moses, led the people into the Holy Land, so will our Joshua, or Jesus, lead us into the heavenly inheritance (^{<439>}Acts 13:39). The same *Greek* is in ^{<502>}Hebrews 12:2, “*Author* of our faith.” ^{<405>}Acts 3:15, “*Prince* of life” (^{<408>}Acts 5:31). Preceding others by His example, as well as the originator of our salvation.

11. he that sanctifieth — Christ who once for all consecrates His people to God (^{<600>}Jude 1:1, bringing them nigh to Him as the consequence) and everlasting glory, by having consecrated Himself for them in His being made “perfect (as their expiatory sacrifice) through sufferings” (^{<821>}Hebrews 2:10 ^{<500>}Hebrews 10:10,14,29 ^{<677>}John 17:17,19). God in His electing love, by Christ’s finished work, *perfectly* sanctifies them to God’s service and to heaven *once for all*: then they are *progressively* sanctified by the transforming Spirit “Sanctification is glory working in embryo; glory is sanctification come to the birth, and manifested” [ALFORD].

they who are sanctified — *Greek*, “they that are being sanctified” (compare the use of “sanctified,” ^{<474>}1 Corinthians 7:14).

of one — Father, God: not in the sense wherein He is Father of *all* beings, as angels; for these are excluded by the argument (^{<509>}Hebrews 2:16); but as He is Father of His *spiritual human* sons, Christ the Head and elder Brother, and His believing people, the members of the body and family. Thus, this and the following verses are meant to justify his having said, “many *sons*” (^{<500>}Hebrews 2:10). “Of one” is not “of one father *Adam*,” or “*Abraham*,” as BENGEL and others suppose. For the Savior’s participation in the *lowness* of our humanity is not mentioned till ^{<504>}Hebrews 2:14, and then as a consequence of what precedes. Moreover, “*Sons of God*” is, in

Scripture usage, the dignity obtained by our union with Christ; and our *brotherhood* with Him flows from *God* being *His* and *our* Father. Christ's Sonship (by generation) in relation to God is reflected in the sonship (by adoption) of His brethren.

he is not ashamed — though being the Son of *God*, since they have now by adoption obtained a like dignity, so that His majesty is not compromised by brotherhood with them (compare ^{<3116>}Hebrews 11:16). It is a striking feature in Christianity that it unites such amazing contrasts as “our brother and our God” [THOLUCK]. “God makes of sons of men sons of God, because God hath made of the Son of God the Son of man” [ST. AUGUSTINE on Psalm 2].

12. (^{<3222>}Psalm 22:22.) Messiah declares the name of the Father, not known fully as Christ's Father, and therefore *their* Father, till after His crucifixion (^{<3117>}John 20:17), among His brethren (“the Church,” that is, the congregation), that they in turn may praise Him (^{<3223>}Psalm 22:23). At ^{<3222>}Psalm 22:22, which begins with Christ's cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and details minutely His sorrows, passes from Christ's sufferings to His triumph, prefigured by the same in the experience of David.

will I sing — as leader of the choir (^{<3118>}Psalm 8:2).

13. I will put my trust in him — from the *Septuagint*, ^{<3117>}Isaiah 8:17, which immediately precedes the next quotation, “Behold, I and the children,” etc. The only objection is the following words, “and again,” usually introduce a *new* quotation, whereas these two are parts of one and the same passage. However, this objection is not valid, as the two clauses express distinct ideas; “I will put my trust in Him” expresses His *filial* confidence in God as His Father, to whom He flees from His sufferings, and is not disappointed; which His believing brethren imitate, *trusting* solely in the Father through Christ, and not in their own merits. “Christ exhibited this “trust,” not for Himself, for He and the Father are one, but for His own people” (^{<3119>}Hebrews 2:16). Each fresh aid given Him assured Him, as it does them, of aid for the future, until the complete victory was obtained over death and hell ^{<3119>}Philippians 1:16 [BENGEL].

Behold I and the children, etc. — (²¹⁸⁸Isaiah 8:18). “Sons” (²¹⁸⁹Hebrews 2:10), “brethren” (²¹⁹²Hebrews 2:12), and “children,” imply His right and property in them from everlasting. He speaks of them as “children” of God, though not yet in being, yet considered as such in His *purpose*, and presents them before God the Father, who has given Him them, to be glorified with Himself. Isaiah (meaning “salvation of Jehovah”) typically represented Messiah, who is at once Father and Son, Isaiah and Immanuel (²¹⁹⁶Isaiah 9:6). He expresses his resolve to rely, he and his children, not like Ahaz and the Jews on the Assyrian king, against the confederacy of Pekah of Israel, and Rezin of Syria, but on Jehovah; and then foretells the deliverance of Judah by God, in language which finds its antitypical full realization only in the far greater deliverance wrought by Messiah. Christ, the antitypical Prophet, similarly, instead of the human confidences of His age, Himself, and with Him GOD THE FATHER’S *children* (who are therefore *His* children, and so antitypical to *Isaiah’s* children, though here regarded as His “brethren,” compare ²¹⁹⁶Isaiah 9:6; “Father” and “His seed,” ²⁵⁵⁰Isaiah 53:10) led by Him, trust wholly in God for salvation. The official words and acts of all the prophets find their antitype in the Great Prophet (²¹⁹⁹Revelation 19:10), just as His kingly office is antitypical to that of the theocratic kings; and His priestly office to the types and rites of the Aaronic priesthood.

14. He who has thus been shown to be the “Captain (*Greek*, ‘Leader’) of salvation” to the “many sons,” by *trusting* and *suffering* like them, must therefore become *man* like them, in order that His death may be efficacious for them [ALFORD].

the children — before mentioned (²¹⁹²Hebrews 2:13); those existing in His eternal purpose, though not in actual being.

are partakers of — literally, “have (in His purpose) been partakers” all in common.

flesh and blood — *Greek* oldest manuscripts have “blood and flesh.” The inner and more important element, the *blood*, as the more immediate vehicle of the soul, stands before the more palpable element, the flesh; also, with reference to *Christ’s blood-shedding* with a view to which He entered into community with our *corporeal* life. “The life of the *flesh* is in

the *blood*; it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” (^{<BR71}Leviticus 17:11,14).

also — *Greek*, “in a *somewhat* similar manner”; not *altogether* in a like manner. For He, unlike them, was conceived and born not in sin (^{<BR15}Hebrews 4:15). But mainly “in like manner”; not in mere *semblance* of a body, as the Docetae heretics taught.

took part of — participated in. The forfeited inheritance (according to Jewish law) was ransomed by the nearest of kin; so Jesus became our nearest of kin by His assumed humanity, in order to be our Redeemer.

that through death — which He could not have undergone as God but only by becoming man. Not by Almighty power but *by His death* (so the *Greek*) He overcame death. “Jesus suffering death overcame; Satan wielding death succumbed” [BENGEL]. As David cut off the head of Goliath with the giant’s own sword wherewith the latter was wont to win his victories. Coming to redeem mankind, Christ made Himself a sort of hook to destroy the devil; for in Him there was His humanity to attract the devourer to Him, His divinity to pierce him, apparent weakness to provoke, hidden power to transfix the hungry ravisher. The *Latin* epigram says, *Mors mortis morti mortem nisi morte tu lisset, aeternae vitae janua clausa foret*. “Had not death by death borne to death the death of Death, the gate of eternal life would have been closed”.

destroy — literally, “render powerless”; deprive of all power to hurt His people. “That thou mightest still the enemy and avenger” (^{<BR10}Psalms 8:2). The same *Greek* verb is used in ^{<BR10}2 Timothy 1:10, “abolished death.” There is no more death for believers. Christ plants in them an undying seed, the germ of heavenly immortality, though believers have to pass through natural death.

power — Satan is “strong” (^{<BR29}Matthew 12:29).

of death — implying that *death* itself is a *power* which, though originally foreign to human nature, now reigns over it (^{<BR12}Romans 5:12 6:9). The power which death has Satan wields. The author of sin is the author of its consequences. Compare “power of the enemy” (^{<BR19}Luke 10:19). Satan has acquired over man (by God’s law, ^{<BR17}Genesis 2:17 ^{<BR12}Romans 6:23) the

power of death by man's sin, death being the executioner of sin, and man being Satan's "lawful captive." Jesus, by dying, has made the dying His own (^{<64B>}Romans 14:9), and has taken the prey from the mighty. Death's power was manifest; he who wielded that power, lurking beneath it, is here expressed, namely, Satan. Wisdom 2:24, "By the envy of the devil, death entered into the world."

15. fear of death — even before they had experienced its actual *power*.

all their lifetime — Such a life can hardly be called life.

subject to bondage — literally, "subjects *of* bondage"; not merely *liable to* it, but *enthralled in* it (compare ^{<64B>}Romans 8:15 ^{<64B>}Galatians 5:1).

Contrast with this *bondage*, the *glory* of the "sons" (^{<64B>}Hebrews 2:10).

"Bondage" is defined by Aristotle, "The living not as one chooses"; "liberty," "the living as one chooses." Christ by delivering us from the curse of God against our sin, has taken from death all that made it formidable. Death, viewed apart from Christ, can only fill with horror, if the sinner dares to think.

16. For verily — *Greek*, "For *as we all know*"; "For as you will doubtless grant." Paul probably alludes to ^{<64B>}Isaiah 41:8 ^{<64B>}Jeremiah 31:32, *Septuagint*, from which all *Jews* would know well that the fact here stated as to Messiah was what the prophets had led them to expect.

took not on *him*, etc. — rather, "It is not angels that He is *helping* (the present tense implies *duration*); but it is the seed of Abraham that He is *helping*." The verb is literally, *to help by taking one by the hand*, as in ^{<64B>}Hebrews 8:9, "When I took them by the hand," etc. Thus it answers to "succor," ^{<64B>}Hebrews 2:18, and "deliver," ^{<64B>}Hebrews 2:15. "Not angels," who have no flesh and blood, but "the children," who have "flesh and blood," He takes hold of to help by "Himself taking part of the same" (^{<64B>}Hebrews 2:14). Whatever effect Christ's work may have on angels, He is not taking hold to help them by suffering in their nature to deliver them from death, as in our case.

the seed of Abraham — He views Christ's redemption (in compliment to the Hebrews whom he is addressing, and as enough for his present purpose) with reference to Abraham's seed, *the Jewish nation*, primarily;

not that he excludes the Gentiles (^{<RB>}Hebrews 2:9, “for every man”), who, when believers, are the seed of Abraham spiritually (compare ^{<RB>}Hebrews 2:12 ^{<RB>}Psalms 22:22,25,27), but direct reference to them (such as is in ^{<RB>}Romans 4:11,12,16 ^{<RB>}Galatians 3:7,14,28,29) would be out of place in his present argument. It is the same argument for Jesus being the Christ which Matthew, writing his Gospel for the Hebrews, uses, tracing the genealogy of Jesus from Abraham, the father of the Jews, and the one to whom the promises were given, on which the Jews especially prided themselves (compare ^{<RB>}Romans 9:4,5).

17. Wherefore — *Greek*, “Whence.” Found in *Paul’s* speech, ^{<RB>}Acts 26:19.

in all things — which are incidental to manhood, the being born, nourished, growing up, suffering. *Sin* is not, in the original constitution of man, a necessary attendant of manhood, so He had no sin.

it behooved him — by moral necessity, considering what the justice and love of God required of Him as Mediator (compare ^{<RB>}Hebrews 5:3), the office which He had voluntarily undertaken in order to “help” man (^{<RB>}Hebrews 2:16).

his brethren — (^{<RB>}Hebrews 2:11); “the seed of Abraham” (^{<RB>}Hebrews 2:16), and so also the spiritual seed, His elect out of all mankind.

be, etc. — rather as *Greek*, “that He might *become* High Priest”; He was *called* so, when He was “made perfect by the things which He suffered” (^{<RB>}Hebrews 2:10 ^{<RB>}Hebrews 5:8-10). He was actually *made* so, when He entered within the veil, from which last flows His ever continuing intercession as Priest for us. The death, as man, must first be, in order that the bringing in of the blood into the heavenly Holy Place might follow, in which consisted the expiation as High Priest.

merciful — to “the *people*” deserving wrath by “sins.” *Mercy* is a prime requisite in a priest, since his office is to help the wretched and raise the fallen: such *mercy* is most likely to be found in one who has a fellow-feeling with the afflicted, having been so once Himself (^{<RB>}Hebrews 4:15); not that the Son of God needed to be taught by suffering to be merciful, but that in order to save us He needed to take our manhood with all its

sorrows, thereby qualifying Himself, by experimental suffering with us, to be our sympathizing High Priest, and assuring us of His entire fellow-feeling with us in every sorrow. So in the main CALVIN remarks here.

faithful — true to God (^{<3075>}Hebrews 3:5,6) and to man (^{<3072>}Hebrews 10:23) in the mediatorial office which He has undertaken.

high priest — which Moses was not, though “faithful” (^{<3071>}Hebrews 2:1-18). Nowhere, except in ^{<3070>}Psalms 110:4 ^{<3073>}Zechariah 6:13, and in this Epistle, is Christ expressly called a *priest*. In this Epistle alone His priesthood is professedly discussed; whence it is evident how necessary is this book of the New Testament. In ^{<3070>}Psalms 110:1-7, and ^{<3073>}Zechariah 6:13, there is added mention of the *kingdom* of Christ, which elsewhere is spoken of without the *priesthood*, and that frequently. On the cross, whereon as Priest He offered the sacrifice, He had the title “King” inscribed over Him [BENGEL].

to make reconciliation for the sins — rather as *Greek*, “to propitiate (in respect to) the sins”; “to expiate the sins.” Strictly divine *justice* is “propitiated”; but God’s *love* is as much from everlasting as His justice; therefore, lest Christ’s sacrifice, or its typical forerunners, the legal sacrifices, should be thought to be antecedent to God’s grace and love, neither are said in the Old or New Testament to have *propitiated God*; otherwise Christ’s sacrifices might have been thought to have first induced God to love and pity man, instead of (as the fact really is) His love having *originated* Christ’s sacrifice, whereby divine justice and divine love are harmonized. The sinner is brought by that sacrifice into God’s favor, which by sin he had forfeited; hence his right prayer is, “God *be propitiated* (so the *Greek*) to me who am a sinner” (^{<3073>}Luke 18:13). Sins bring death and “the fear of death” (^{<3075>}Hebrews 2:15). He had no sin Himself, and “made reconciliation for the iniquity” of all others (^{<3071>}Daniel 9:24).

of the people — “the seed of Abraham” (^{<3071>}Hebrews 2:16); the literal Israel first, and then (in the design of God), through Israel, the believing Gentiles, the spiritual Israel (^{<3070>}1 Peter 2:10).

18. For — explanation of how His being *made like His brethren in all things* has made Him *a merciful and faithful High Priest* for us (^{<8017>}Hebrews 2:17).

in that — rather as *Greek*, “wherein He suffered Himself; having been tempted, He is able to succor them *that are being tempted*” in the same temptation; and as “He was tempted (tried and afflicted) in all points,” He is able (by the power of *sympathy*) to succor us in all possible temptations and trials incidental to man (^{<8016>}Hebrews 4:16 5:2). He is the antitypical Solomon, having for every grain of Abraham’s seed (which were to be as the sand for number), “largeness of heart even as the sand that is on the seashore” (^{<1009>}1 Kings 4:29). “Not only as God He knows our trials, but also as man He knows them by experimental feeling.”

CHAPTER 3

<3001> HEBREWS 3:1-19.

THE SON OF GOD GREATER THAN MOSES, WHEREFORE UNBELIEF TOWARDS HIM WILL INCUR A HEAVIER PUNISHMENT THAN BEFELL UNBELIEVING ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS.

As Moses especially was the prophet by whom “God in times past spake to the fathers,” being the mediator of the law, Paul deems it necessary now to show that, great as was Moses, the Son of God is greater. EBRARD in ALFORD remarks, The angel of the covenant came in the name of God before Israel; Moses in the name of Israel before God; whereas the high priest came *both* in the name of God (bearing the name JEHOVAH on his forehead) before Israel, and in the name of Israel (bearing the names of the twelve tribes on his breast) before God (<1230> Exodus 28:9-29,36,38). Now Christ is above the angels, according to the first and second chapters because

(1) as Son of God He is higher; and

(2) because manhood, though originally lower than angels, is in Him exalted above them to the lordship of “the world to come,” inasmuch as He is at once Messenger of God to men, and also atoning Priest-Representative of men before God (<3017> Hebrews 2:17,18).

Parallel with this line of argument as to His superiority to angels (<3004> Hebrews 1:4) runs that which here follows as to His superiority to Moses (<3008> Hebrews 3:3):

(1) because as *Son* over the house; He is above the *servant* in the house (<3005> Hebrews 3:5,6), just as the *angels* were shown to be but *ministering* (serving) spirits (<3014> Hebrews 1:14), whereas He is the *Son* (<3006> Hebrews 3:7,8);

(2) because the bringing of Israel into the promised rest, which was not finished by Moses, is accomplished by Him (^{<500>}Hebrews 4:1-11), through His being not merely a leader and lawgiver as Moses, but also a propitiatory High Priest (^{<504>}Hebrews 4:14 5:10).

1. Wherefore — *Greek*, “Whence,” that is, seeing we have such a sympathizing Helper you ought to “consider attentively,” “contemplate”; fix your eyes and mind on Him with a view to profiting by the contemplation (^{<502>}Hebrews 12:2). The *Greek* word is often used by Luke, Paul’s companion (^{<022>}Luke 12:24,27).

brethren — in Christ, the common bond of union.

partakers — “of the Holy Ghost.”

heavenly calling — coming to us from heaven, and leading us to heaven whence it comes. ^{<084>}Philippians 3:14, “the high calling”; *Greek* “the calling above,” that is, *heavenly*.

the Apostle and High Priest of our profession — There is but one *Greek* article to both nouns, “Him who is at once Apostle and High Priest” — *Apostle*, as Ambassador (a higher designation than “angel”-messenger) sent by the Father (^{<021>}John 20:21), pleading the cause of *God with us*; *High Priest*, as pleading *our* cause *with God*. Both His Apostleship and High Priesthood are comprehended in the one title, *Mediator* [BENGEL]. Though the title “Apostle” is nowhere else applied to Christ, it is appropriate here in addressing Hebrews, who used the term of the delegates sent by the high priest to collect the temple tribute from Jews resident in foreign countries, even as Christ was Delegate of the Father to this world far off from Him (^{<037>}Matthew 21:37). Hence as what applies to Him, applies also to His people, the Twelve are designated His apostles, even as He is the Father’s (^{<021>}John 20:21). It was desirable to avoid designating Him here “angel,” in order to distinguish His nature from that of angels mentioned before, though he is “the Angel of the Covenant.” The “legate of the Church” (*Sheliach Tsibbur*) offered up the prayers in the synagogue in the name of all, and for all. So Jesus, “the Apostle of our profession,” is *delegated* to intercede for the Church before the Father. The words “of our profession,” mark that it is not of the legal ritual, but of our Christian faith, that He is the High Priest. Paul compares Him as an

Apostle to Moses; as High Priest to Aaron. He alone holds both offices combined, and in a more eminent degree than either, which those two brothers held apart.

profession — “confession,” corresponds to God having *spoken* to us by His Son, sent as Apostle and High Priest. What God proclaims we confess.

2. He first notes the feature of *resemblance* between Moses and Christ, in order to conciliate the Hebrew Christians whom He addressed, and who still entertained a very high opinion of Moses; he afterwards brings forward Christ’s superiority to Moses.

Who was faithful — The *Greek* implies also that He still is faithful, namely, as our mediating High Priest, faithful to the trust God has assigned Him (^{SKB7} Hebrews 2:17). So Moses in God’s *house* (^{QMT} Numbers 12:7).

appointed him — “made Him” HIGH PRIEST; to be supplied from the preceding context. *Greek*, “made”; so in ^{SKB5} Hebrews 5:5 ^{QMT} 1 Samuel 12:6, *Margin*; ^{QMT6} Acts 2:36; so the *Greek* fathers. Not as ALFORD, with AMBROSE and the Latins, “created Him,” that is, as man, in His incarnation. The likeness of Moses to Messiah was foretold by Moses himself (^{SKB5} Deuteronomy 18:15). Other prophets only *explained Moses*, who was in this respect superior to them; but Christ was *like Moses*, yet superior.

3. **For** — assigning the reason why they should “consider” attentively “Christ” (^{SKB1} Hebrews 3:1), highly as they regard Moses who resembled Him in *faithfulness* (^{SKB2} Hebrews 3:2).

was — *Greek*, “has been.”

counted worthy of more glory — by God, when He exalted Him to His own right hand. The Hebrew Christians admitted the fact (^{SKB3} Hebrews 1:13).

builded the house — *Greek*, “inasmuch as He hath more honor than the house, who *prepared* it,” or “*established* it” [ALFORD]. The *Greek* verb is used purposely instead of “builded,” in order to mark that the building meant is not a literal, but a spiritual house: the Church both of the Old

Testament and New Testament; and that the building of such a house includes all the *preparations* of providence and grace needed to furnish it with “living stones” and fitting “servants.” Thus, as Christ the Founder and Establisher (in Old Testament as well as the New Testament) is greater than the house so established, including the servants, He is greater also than Moses, who was but a “servant.” Moses, as a servant, is a portion of the house, and less than the house; Christ, as the Instrumental Creator of all things, must be God, and so greater than the house of which Moses was but a part. *Glory* is the result of *honor*.

4. Someone must be the establisher of every house; Moses was not the establisher of the house, but a portion of it (but He who established all things, *and therefore* the spiritual house in question, is God). Christ, as being instrumentally the Establisher of all things, must be the Establisher of the house, and so greater than Moses.

5. faithful in all his house — that is in all GOD’S house (^{<SRD>}Hebrews 3:4).

servant — not here the *Greek* for “slave,” but “a ministering attendant”; marking the high office of Moses towards God, though inferior to Christ, a kind of *steward*.

for a testimony of, etc. — in order that he might in his typical institutions give “testimony” to Israel “of the things” of the Gospel “which were to be spoken afterwards” by Christ (^{<SRD>}Hebrews 8:5 9:8,23 10:1).

6. But Christ — was and is faithful (^{<SRD>}Hebrews 3:2).

as a son over his own house — rather, “over *His* (GOD’S, ^{<SRD>}Hebrews 3:4) house”; and therefore, as *the inference* from His being one with God, *over His own house*. So ^{<SRD>}Hebrews 10:21, “having an High Priest over the house of God.” Christ enters His Father’s house as the Master [OVER it], but Moses as a servant [IN it, ^{<SRD>}Hebrews 3:2,5] [CHRYSOSTOM]. An ambassador in the absence of the king is very distinguished — in the presence of the king he falls back into the multitude [BENGEL].

whose house are we — Paul and his Hebrew readers. One old manuscript, with *Vulgate* and LUCIFER, reads, “*which* house”; but the weightiest manuscripts support *English Version* reading.

the rejoicing — rather, “the matter of rejoicing.”

of the hope — “of *our* hope.” Since all our good things lie in hopes, we ought so to hold fast our hopes as already to rejoice, as though our hopes were realized [CHRYSOStOM].

firm unto the end — omitted in LUCIFER and AMBROSE, and in one oldest manuscript, but supported by most oldest manuscripts.

7-11. Exhortation from ^{<B8B>}Psalm 95:7-11, not through unbelief to lose participation in the spiritual house. Seeing that we are the house of God if we hold fast our confidence ... (^{<B8B>}Hebrews 3:6). Jesus is “faithful,” be not ye unfaithful (^{<B8B>}Hebrews 3:2,12). The sentence beginning with “wherefore,” interrupted by the parenthesis confirming the argument from ^{<B8B>}Psalm 95:7-11, is completed at ^{<B8B>}Hebrews 3:12, “Take heed,” etc.

Holy Ghost saith — by the inspired Psalmist; so that the words of the latter are the words of God Himself.

To-day — at length; in David’s day, as contrasted with the days of Moses in the wilderness, and the whole time since then, during which they had been rebellious against God’s voice; as for instance, in the wilderness (^{<B8B>}Hebrews 3:8). The Psalm, each fresh time when used in public worship, by “to-day,” will mean the particular day when it was, or is, used.

hear — obediently.

his voice — of grace.

8. Harden not your hearts — This phrase here only is used of *man’s* own act; usually of *God’s* act (^{<B8B>}Romans 9:18). When man is spoken of as the agent in hardening, the phrase usually is, “harden his neck,” or “back” (^{<B8B>}Nehemiah 9:17).

provocation ... temptation — “Massah-meribah,” translated in *Margin* “tentation ... chiding,” or “strife” (^{<B8B>}Exodus 17:1-7). Both names seem to refer to that one event, the murmuring of the people against the Lord at Rephidim for want of water. The first offense especially ought to be guarded against, and is the most severely reprov’d, as it is apt to produce many more. ^{<B8B>}Numbers 20:1-13 and ^{<B8B>}Deuteronomy 33:8 mention a

second similar occasion in the wilderness of Sin, near Kadesh, also called Meribah.

in the day — *Greek*, “according to the day of.”

9. When — rather, “Where,” namely, in the wilderness.

your fathers — The authority of the *ancients* is not conclusive [BENGEL].

tempted me, proved me — The oldest manuscripts read, “tempted (Me) in the way of testing,” that is, *putting (Me) to the proof* whether I was able and willing to relieve them, not believing that I am so.

saw my works forty years — They saw, without being led thereby to repentance, My works of power partly in affording miraculous help, partly in executing vengeance, forty years. The “forty years” joined in the *Hebrew* and *Septuagint*, and below, ^{<SK17>}Hebrews 3:17, with “I was grieved,” is here joined with “they saw.” Both are true; for, during the same forty years that they were tempting God by unbelief, notwithstanding their seeing God’s miraculous works, God was being grieved. The lesson intended to be hinted to the Hebrew Christians is, their “to-day” is to last only between the first preaching of the Gospel and Jerusalem’s impending overthrow, namely, FORTY YEARS; exactly the number of years of Israel’s sojourn in the wilderness, until the full measure of their guilt having been filled up all the rebels were overthrown.

10. grieved — displeased. Compare “walk contrary,” ^{<CR2>}Leviticus 26:24,28.

that generation — “*that*” implies alienation and estrangement. But the oldest manuscripts read, “this.”

said — “*grieved*,” or “displeased,” at their first offense. Subsequently when they hardened their heart in unbelief still more, He *sware* in His *wrath* (^{<SK11>}Hebrews 3:11); an ascending gradation (compare ^{<SK17>}Hebrews 3:17,18).

and they have not known — *Greek*, “But these very persons,” etc. They perceived I was displeased with them, yet they, the same persons, did not a whit the more wish to know my ways [BENGEL]; compare “but they,” ^{<PA6>}Psalms 106:43.

not known my ways — not known practically and believingly the ways in which I would have had them go, so as to reach My rest (^{<1820>}Exodus 18:20).

11. So — literally, “as.”

I swear — BENGEL remarks the oath of God preceded the forty years.

not — literally, “If they shall enter ... (God do so to me and more also),” ^{<1835>}2 Samuel 3:35. The *Greek* is the same, ^{<1832>}Mark 8:12.

my rest — Canaan, primarily, their rest after wandering in the wilderness: still, even when in it, they never *fully* enjoyed rest; whence it followed that the threat extended farther than the exclusion of the unbelieving from the literal land of rest, and that the rest promised to the believing in its full blessedness was, and is, yet future: ^{<1853>}Psalms 25:13 37:9,11,22,29, and Christ’s own beatitude (^{<1835>}Matthew 5:5) all accord with this, ^{<1832>}Hebrews 3:9.

12. Take heed — to be joined with “wherefore,” ^{<1832>}Hebrews 3:7.

lest there be — *Greek* (indicative), “lest there *shall* be”; lest there be, as I fear there is; implying that it is not merely a *possible* contingency, but that there is ground for thinking *it will be so*.

in any — “in any one of you.” Not merely ought all in general be on their guard, but they ought to be so concerned for the safety of *each one* member, as not to suffer any one to perish through their negligence [CALVIN].

heart — The heart is not to be trusted. Compare ^{<1832>}Hebrews 3:10, “They do always err in their heart.”

unbelief — *faithlessness*. Christ is *faithful*; therefore, saith Paul to the Hebrews, we ought not to be *faithless* as our fathers were under Moses.

departing — apostatizing. The opposite of “come unto” Him (^{<1832>}Hebrews 4:16). God punishes such apostates in kind. He departs from them — the worst of woes.

the living God — real: the distinctive characteristic of the God of Israel, not like the lifeless gods of the heathen; therefore One whose threats are

awful realities. To apostatize from Christ is to apostatize from the living God (^{<SRH>}Hebrews 2:3).

13. one another — *Greek*, “yourselves”; let each exhort himself and his neighbor.

daily — *Greek*, “on each day,” or “day by day.”

while it is called To-day — while the “to-day” lasts (the day of grace, ^{<MD>}Luke 4:21, before the coming of the day of glory and judgment at Christ’s coming, ^{<SRH>}Hebrews 10:25,37). To-morrow is the day when idle men work, and fools repent. To-morrow is Satan’s to-day; he cares not what good resolutions you form, if only you fix them for to-morrow.

lest ... of you — The “you” is emphatic, as distinguished from “your fathers” (^{<SRH>}Hebrews 3:9). “That from among you no one (so the *Greek* order is in some of the oldest manuscripts) be hardened” (^{<SRH>}Hebrews 3:8).

deceitfulness — causing you to “err in your heart.”

sin — unbelief.

14. For, etc. — enforcing the warning, ^{<SRH>}Hebrews 3:12.

partakers of Christ — (Compare ^{<SRH>}Hebrews 3:1,6). So “partakers of the Holy Ghost” (^{<SRH>}Hebrews 6:4).

hold — *Greek*, “hold fast.”

the beginning of our confidence — that is, the confidence (literally, *substantial, solid confidence*) of faith which we have begun (^{<SRH>}Hebrews 6:11 12:2). A Christian so long as he is not *made perfect*, considers himself as a *beginner* [BENGEL].

unto the end — unto the coming of Christ (^{<SRH>}Hebrews 12:2).

15. While it is said — connected with ^{<SRH>}Hebrews 3:13, “exhort one another ... while it is said, To-day”: ^{<SRH>}Hebrews 3:14, “for we are made partakers,” etc. being a parenthesis. “It entirely depends on yourselves that the invitation of the ninety-fifth Psalm be not a mere invitation, but also an actual enjoyment.” ALFORD translates, “Since (that is, ‘for’) it is

said,” etc. regarding ^{<SRIS>}Hebrews 3:15 as a proof that we must “hold ... confidence ... unto the end,” in order to be “partakers of Christ.”

16. For some — rather interrogatively, “For WHO was it that, when they had heard (referring to ‘if ye will *hear*,’ ^{<SRIS>}Hebrews 3:15), did provoke (God)?” The “For” implies, Ye need to take heed against unbelief: for, was it not because of unbelief that all our fathers were excluded (^{<SRIS>}Ezekiel 2:3)? “Some,” and “not all,” would be a faint way of putting his argument, when his object is to show the *universality* of the evil. Not merely *some*, but *all* the Israelites, for the solitary exceptions, Joshua and Caleb, are hardly to be taken into account in so general a statement. So ^{<SRIS>}Hebrews 3:17,18, are interrogative:

(1) the beginning of the provocation, soon after the departure from Egypt, is marked in ^{<SRIS>}Hebrews 3:16;

(2) the forty years of it in the wilderness, ^{<SRIS>}Hebrews 3:17;

(3) the denial of entrance into the land of rest, ^{<SRIS>}Hebrews 3:18.

Compare *Note*, see on ^{<SRIS>}1 Corinthians 10:5, “with the majority of them God was displeased.”

howbeit — “Nay (why need I put the question?), was it not all that came out of Egypt?” (^{<SRIS>}Exodus 17:1,2).

by Moses — by the instrumentality of Moses as their leader.

17. But — Translate, “Moreover,” as it is not in contrast to ^{<SRIS>}Hebrews 3:16, but carrying out the same thought.

corpses — literally, “limbs,” implying that their bodies fell limb from limb.

18. to them that believed not — rather as *Greek*, “to them that *disobeyed*.” *Practical* unbelief (^{<SRIS>}Deuteronomy 1:26).

19. they could not enter — though desiring it.

CHAPTER 4

~~<SYRIAC>~~ HEBREWS 4:1-16.

THE PROMISE OF GOD’S REST IS FULLY REALIZED THROUGH CHRIST: LET US STRIVE TO OBTAIN IT BY HIM, OUR SYMPATHIZING HIGH PRIEST.

1. Let us ... fear — not with slavish terror, but godly “fear and trembling” (~~<SYRIAC>~~ Philippians 2:12). Since so many have fallen, we have cause to fear (~~<SYRIAC>~~ Hebrews 3:17-19).

being left us — still *remaining* to us after the others have, by neglect, lost it.

his rest — God’s heavenly rest, of which Canaan is the type. “To-day” still continues, during which there is the danger of failing to reach the *rest*. “To-day,” rightly used, terminates in the *rest* which, when once obtained, is never lost (~~<SYRIAC>~~ Revelation 3:12). A foretaste of the rest Is given in the inward rest which the believer’s soul has in Christ.

should seem to come short of it — *Greek*, “to have come short of it”; *should be found*, when the great trial of all shall take place [ALFORD], to have fallen short of attaining the promise. The word “seem” is a mitigating mode of expression, though not lessening the reality. BENGEL and OWEN take it, Lest there should be any *semblance* or appearance of falling short.

2. gospel preached ... unto them — in type: the earthly Canaan, wherein they failed to realize perfect rest, suggesting to them that they should look beyond to the heavenly land of rest, to which *faith* is the avenue, and from which *unbelief* excludes, as it did from the earthly Canaan.

the word preached — literally, “the word of hearing”: *the word heard by them*.

not being mixed with faith in them that heard — So the *Syriac* and the *Old Latin Versions*, older than any of our manuscripts, and LUCIFER, read,

“As the world did not unite with the hearers in faith.” The word heard being the food which, as the bread of life, must pass into flesh and blood through man’s appropriating it to himself in faith. Hearing alone is of as little value as undigested food in a bad stomach [THOLUCK]. The whole of oldest *extant* manuscript authority supports a different reading, “unmingled as *they* were (*Greek* accusative case agreeing with ‘them’) in faith with its hearers,” that is, with its *believing, obedient* hearers, as Caleb and Joshua. So “hear” is used for “obey” in the context, ^{<SOUP>}Hebrews 4:7, “To-day, if ye will hear His voice.” The disobedient, instead of being blended in “the same body,” separated themselves as Korah: a tacit reproof to like separatists from the Christian assembling together (^{<SOUP>}Hebrews 10:25 ^{<SOUP>}Jude 1:19).

3. For — justifying his assertion of the need of “faith,” ^{<SOUP>}Hebrews 4:2.

we which have believed — we who at Christ’s coming shall be found to have believed.

do enter — that is, are to enter: so two of the oldest manuscripts and LUCIFER and the *old Latin*. Two other oldest manuscripts read, “Let us enter.”

into rest — *Greek*, “into *the* rest” which is promised in the ninety-fifth Psalm.

as he said — God’s saying that *unbelief* excludes from entrance implies that *belief* gains an entrance into the rest. What, however, Paul mainly here dwells on in the quotation is that the promised “*rest*” has not *yet* been entered into. At ^{<SOUP>}Hebrews 4:11 he again, as in ^{<SOUP>}Hebrews 3:12-19 already, takes up *faith* as the indispensable qualification for entering it.

although, etc. — Although God had finished His works of creation and entered on *His* rest from creation long before Moses’ time, yet under that leader of Israel another rest was promised, which most fell short of through unbelief; and although the rest in Canaan was subsequently attained under Joshua, yet long after, in David’s days, God, in the ninety-fifth Psalm, still speaks of *the rest of God* as not yet attained. THEREFORE, there must be meant a rest *still future*, namely, that which “remaineth for the people of God” in heaven, ^{<SOUP>}Hebrews 4:3-9, when they shall rest from

their works, as God did from His, ^{<8040>}Hebrews 4:10. The argument is to show that by “My rest,” God means a future rest, not *for Himself*, but *for us*.

finished — *Greek*, “brought into existence,” “made.”

4. he spake — God (^{<0000>}Genesis 2:2).

God did rest the seventh day — a rest not ending with the seventh day, but beginning then and still continuing, into which believers shall hereafter enter. God’s rest is not a rest necessitated by fatigue, nor consisting in idleness, but is that upholding and governing of which creation was the beginning [ALFORD]. Hence Moses records the end of each of the first six days, but not of the seventh.

from all his works — *Hebrew*, ^{<0000>}Genesis 2:2, “from all His *work*.” God’s “work” was *one*, comprehending, however, many “*works*.”

5. in this place — In this passage of the Psalm again, it is implied that the rest was even then still future.

6. it remaineth — still to be realized.

some must enter — The denial of entrance to unbelievers is a virtual promise of entrance to those that believe. God wishes not His rest to be empty, but furnished with guests (^{<0423>}Luke 14:23).

they to whom it was first preached entered not — literally, “they who first (in the time of Moses) had the Gospel preached to them,” namely, in type, see on ^{<8040>}Hebrews 4:2.

unbelief — *Greek*, rather “disobedience” (see on ^{<8085>}Hebrews 3:18).

7. Again — *Anew* the promise recurs. Translate as the *Greek* order is, “He limited a certain day, ‘To-day.’” Here Paul interrupts the quotation by, “In (the Psalm of) David saying after so long a time (after five hundred years’ possession of Canaan),” and resumes it by, “as it *has been* said *before* (so the *Greek* oldest manuscript, *before*, namely, ^{<8080>}Hebrews 3:7,15), To-day if ye hear His voice,” etc. [ALFORD].

8. Answer to the objection which might be made to his reasoning, namely, that those brought into Canaan by Joshua (so “Jesus” here means, as in

^{<475>}Acts 7:45) did enter the *rest* of God. If the rest of God meant Canaan, God would not after their entrance into that land, have spoken (or speak [ALFORD]) of another (future) day of entering the rest.

9. therefore — because God “speaks of another day” (see on ^{<800>}Hebrews 4:8).

remaineth — still to be realized hereafter by the “some (who) must enter therein” (^{<800>}Hebrews 4:6), that is, “the people of God,” the true Israel who shall enter into *God’s rest* (“My rest,” ^{<800>}Hebrews 4:3). God’s rest was a Sabbatism; so also will ours be.

a rest — *Greek*, “Sabbatism.” In time there are many Sabbaths, but then there shall be the enjoyment and keeping of a Sabbath-rest: one perfect and eternal. The “rest” in ^{<800>}Hebrews 4:8 is *Greek*, “*catapausis*,” *Hebrew*, “*Noah*”; rest from weariness, as the ark rested on Ararat after its tossings to and fro; and as Israel, under Joshua, enjoyed at last rest from war in Canaan. But the “rest” in this ^{<800>}Hebrews 4:9 is the nobler and more exalted (*Hebrew*) “*Sabbath*” rest; literally, “cessation”: rest from *work when finished* (^{<800>}Hebrews 4:4), as God rested (^{<697>}Revelation 16:17). The two ideas of “rest” combined, give the perfect view of the heavenly Sabbath. Rest from weariness, sorrow, and sin; and rest in the completion of God’s new creation (^{<697>}Revelation 21:5). The whole renovated creation shall share in it; nothing will there be to break the Sabbath of eternity; and the Triune God shall rejoice in the work of His hands (^{<317>}Zephaniah 3:17). Moses, the representative of the law, could not lead Israel into Canaan: the law leads us to Christ, and there its office ceases, as that of Moses on the borders of Canaan: it is Jesus, the antitype of Joshua, who leads us into the heavenly rest. This verse indirectly establishes the obligation of the Sabbath still; for the type continues until the antitype supersedes it: so legal sacrifices continued till the great antitypical Sacrifice superseded it, As then the antitypical heavenly Sabbath-rest will not be till Christ, our Gospel Joshua, comes, to usher us into it, the typical earthly Sabbath must continue till then. The Jews call the future rest “the day which is all Sabbath.”

10. For — justifying and explaining the word “rest,” or “Sabbatism,” just used (see on ^{<800>}Hebrews 4:9).

he that is entered — whosoever once enters.

his rest — *God's* rest: the rest prepared *by God* for His people [ESTIUS]. Rather, “*His* rest”: the *man's* rest: that assigned to him by God as *his*. The *Greek* is the same as that for “his own” immediately after.

hath ceased — The *Greek* aorist is used of indefinite time, “*is wont to* cease,” or rather, “rest”: *rests*. The past tense implies at the same time the *certainty* of it, as also that in this life a kind of foretaste in Christ is already given [GROTIUS] (^{<4186>}Jeremiah 6:16 ^{<4128>}Matthew 11:28,29). Our highest happiness shall, according to this verse, consist in our being united in one with God, and moulded into conformity with Him as our archetype [CALVIN].

from his own works — even from those that were good and suitable to the time of doing work. Labor was followed by rest even in Paradise (^{<4088>}Genesis 2:3,15). The work and subsequent rest of God are the archetype to which we should be conformed. The argument is: He who once enters rest, rests from labors; but God's people have not yet rested from them, therefore they have not yet entered the rest, and so it must be still future. ALFORD translates, “He that entered into his (or else God's, but rather ‘his’; ^{<3110>}Isaiah 11:10, ‘His rest’: ‘the joy of the Lord,’ ^{<4123>}Matthew 25:21,23) rest (namely, *Jesus*, our Forerunner, ^{<3044>}Hebrews 4:14 6:20, ‘The Son of God that *is passed through the heavens*’: in contrast to Joshua the type, who did *not bring* God's people *into* the heavenly rest), he *himself* (*emphatical*) rested from his works” (^{<3004>}Hebrews 4:4), as God (did) from *His own*” (so the *Greek*, “works”). The argument, though generally applying to *anyone who has entered his rest*, probably alludes to Jesus in particular, the antitypical Joshua, who, having entered His rest at the Ascension, has ceased or rested from His work of the new creation, as God on the seventh day rested from the work of physical creation. Not that He has ceased to carry on the work of redemption, nay, He upholds it by His mediation; but He has ceased from those portions of the work which constitute the foundation; the sacrifice has been once for all accomplished. Compare as to God's creation rest, once for all completed, and rested from. but now still upheld (see on ^{<3004>}Hebrews 4:4).

11. Let us ... therefore — Seeing such a promise is before us, which we may, like them, fall short of through unbelief.

labor — *Greek*, “strive diligently.”

that rest — which is still future and so glorious. Or, in ALFORD’S translation of ^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:10, “That rest into which *Christ* has entered before” (^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:14 ^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 6:20).

fall — with the soul, not merely the body, as the rebel Israelites fell (^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 3:17).

after the same example — ALFORD translates, “fall *into* the same example.” The less prominent place of the “fall” in the *Greek* favors this. The sense is, “lest any fall into such *disobedience* (so the *Greek* for ‘unbelief’ means) as they gave a sample of” [GROTIUS]. The Jews say, “The parents are a sign (warning) to their sons.”

12. For — Such *diligent striving* (^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:11) is incumbent on us FOR we have to do with a God whose “word” whereby we shall be judged, is heart-searching, and whose eyes are all-seeing (^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:13). The qualities here attributed to *the word of God*, and the whole context, show that it is regarded in its JUDICIAL power, whereby it doomed the disobedient Israelites to exclusion from Canaan, and shall exclude unbelieving so-called Christians from the heavenly rest. The written Word of God is not the prominent thought here, though the passage is often quoted as if it were. Still the word of God (the same as that preached, ^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:2), used here in the broadest sense, but with special reference to its *judicial* power, INCLUDES the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit with double edge, one edge for convicting and converting some (^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:2), and the other for condemning and destroying the unbelieving (^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:14). ^{<GOD>}Revelation 19:15 similarly represents the Word’s judicial power as a sharp sword going out of Christ’s mouth to *smite* the nations. The same word which is saving to the faithful (^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:2) is destroying to the disobedient (^{<SOUL>}2 Corinthians 2:15,16). The personal Word, to whom some refer the passage, is not here meant: for He *is* not the sword, but *has* the sword. Thus reference to Joshua appropriately follows in ^{<SOUL>}Hebrews 4:8.

quick — *Greek*, “living”; having living power, as “the rod of the mouth and the breath of the lips” of “the living God.”

powerful — *Greek*, “energetic”; not only *living*, but *energetically efficacious*.

sharper — “more cutting.”

two-edged — sharpened at both edge and back. Compare “sword of the Spirit ... word of God” (⁴⁸⁷Ephesians 6:17). Its *double* power seems to be implied by its being “two-edged.” “It judges all that is in the heart, for there it passes through, at once *punishing* [unbelievers] and searching [both believers and unbelievers]” [CHRYSOSTOM]. PHILO similarly speaks of “God passing between the parts of Abraham’s sacrifices (⁴¹⁵⁷Genesis 15:17, where, however, it is a ‘burning lamp’ that passed between the pieces) with His word, which is the cutter of all things: which sword, being sharpened to the utmost keenness, never ceases to divide all sensible things, and even things not perceptible to sense or physically divisible, but perceptible and divisible by the word.” Paul’s early training, both in the *Greek* schools of Tarsus and the Hebrew schools at Jerusalem, accounts fully for his acquaintance with Philo’s modes of thought, which were sure to be current among learned Jews everywhere, though Philo himself belonged to Alexandria, not Jerusalem. Addressing Jews, he by the Spirit sanctions what was true in their current literature, as he similarly did in addressing Gentiles (⁴⁴⁷²⁸Acts 17:28).

piercing — *Greek*, “coming through.”

even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit — that is, reaching through even to the separation of the animal *soul*, the lower part of man’s incorporeal nature, the seat of animal desires, which he has in common with the brutes; compare the same *Greek*, ⁴⁴²⁴1 Corinthians 2:14, “the natural [animal-souled] man” (⁴¹¹⁹Jude 1:19), from the spirit (the higher part of man, receptive of the Spirit of God, and allying him to heavenly beings).

and of the joints and marrow — rather, “(reaching even TO) both the joints (so as to divide them) and marrow.” Christ “knows what is in man” (⁴⁴²⁵John 2:25): so His word reaches as far as to the most intimate and accurate knowledge of man’s most hidden parts, feelings, and thoughts, dividing, that is, *distinguishing* what is *spiritual* from what is *carnal* and *animal* in him, the *spirit* from the *soul*: so ⁴¹³⁷Proverbs 20:27. As the knife of the Levitical priest reached to dividing parts, closely united as the *joints*

of the limbs, and penetrated to the innermost parts, as the *marrows* (the *Greek* is *plural*); so the word of God divides the closely joined parts of man's immaterial being, soul and spirit, and penetrates to the innermost parts of the spirit. The clause (reaching even to) "*both* the joints and marrow" is subordinate to the clause, "even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." (In the oldest manuscripts as in *English Version*, there is no "both," as there is in the clause "*both* the joints *and* ... which marks the latter to be subordinate). An image (appropriate in addressing Jews) from the literal dividing of joints, and penetrating to, so as to open out, the marrow, by the priest's knife, illustrating the previously mentioned spiritual "dividing of soul from spirit," whereby each (soul as well as spirit) is laid bare and "naked" before God; this view accords with ~~SOULD~~ Hebrews 4:13. Evidently "the dividing of the soul from the spirit" answers to the "joints" which *the sword, when it reaches* unto, *divides asunder*, as the "spirit" answers to the innermost "marrow." "Moses forms the soul, Christ the spirit. The soul draws with it the body; the spirit draws with it both soul and body." ALFORD'S interpretation is clumsy, by which he makes the soul *itself*, and the spirit *itself*, to be divided, instead of the soul *from* the spirit: so also he makes not only the *joints* to be divided asunder, but the *marrow* also to be divided (?). The Word's dividing and far penetrating power has both a punitive and a healing effect.

discerner of the thoughts — *Greek*, "capable of judging the purposes."

intents — rather, "conceptions" [CRELLIUS]; "ideas" [ALFORD]. AS the *Greek* for "thoughts" refers to the *mind* and *feelings*, so that for "intent," or rather "mental conceptions," refers to the *intellect*.

13. creature — visible or invisible.

in his sight — in *God's* sight (~~SOULD~~ Hebrews 4:12). "God's wisdom, simply manifold, and uniformly multiform, with incomprehensible comprehension, comprehends all things incomprehensible."

opened — literally, "thrown on the back so as to have the neck laid bare," as a victim with neck exposed for sacrifice. The *Greek* perfect tense implies that this is our *continuous* state in relation to God. "Show, O man, *shame* and *fear* towards thy God, for no veil, no twisting, bending,

coloring, or disguise, can cover *unbelief*” (*Greek*, ‘disobedience,’ ^{<8041>}Hebrews 4:11). Let us, therefore, earnestly labor to enter the rest lest any fall through practical unbelief (^{<8041>}Hebrews 4:11).

14. Seeing then — *Having, therefore*; resuming ^{<807>}Hebrews 2:17.

great — as being “the Son of God, higher than the heavens” (^{<8026>}Hebrews 7:26): the archetype and antitype of the legal high priest.

passed into the heavens — rather, “passed *through* the heavens,” namely, those which come between us and God, the aerial heaven, and that above the latter containing the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, etc. These heavens were the veil which our High Priest *passed through* into the heaven of heavens, the immediate presence of God, just as the Levitical high priest passed through the veil into the Holy of Holies. Neither Moses, nor even Joshua, could bring us into this rest, but Jesus, as our Forerunner, already spiritually, and hereafter in actual presence, body, soul, and spirit, brings His people into the heavenly rest.

Jesus — the antitypical Joshua (^{<8008>}Hebrews 4:8).

hold fast — the opposite of “let slip” (^{<8011>}Hebrews 2:1); and “fall away” (^{<8008>}Hebrews 6:6). As the *genitive* follows, the literally, sense is, “Let us *take hold* of our profession,” that is, of the faith and hope which are subjects of our profession and confession. The accusative follows when the sense is “hold fast” [TITTMANN].

15. For — the motive to “holding our profession” (^{<8044>}Hebrews 4:14), namely the sympathy and help we may expect from our High Priest. Though “great” (^{<8044>}Hebrews 4:14), He is not above caring for us; nay, as being in all points one with us as to manhood, sin only excepted, He sympathizes with us in every temptation. Though exalted to the highest heavens, He has changed His place, not His nature and office in relation to us, His condition, but not His affection. Compare ^{<173>}Matthew 26:38, “watch with me”: showing His desire in the days of His flesh for *the sympathy of those whom He loved*: so He now gives His suffering people *His sympathy*. Compare Aaron, the type, bearing the names of the twelve tribes in the breastplate of judgment on his heart, when he entered into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually (^{<1729>}Exodus 28:29).

cannot be touched with the feeling of — *Greek*, “cannot sympathize with our infirmities”: our *weaknesses*, physical and moral (not sin, but liability to its assaults). He, though sinless, can sympathize with us sinners; His understanding more acutely perceived the forms of temptation than we who are weak can; His will repelled them as instantaneously as the fire does the drop of water cast into it. He, therefore, experimentally knew what power was needed to overcome temptations. He is capable of sympathizing, for He was at the same time tempted without sin, and yet truly tempted [BENGEL]. In Him alone we have an example suited to men of every character and under all circumstances. In sympathy He adapts himself to each, as if He had not merely taken on Him man’s nature in general, but also the peculiar nature of that single individual.

but — “nay, rather, He was (one) tempted” [ALFORD].

like as we are — *Greek*, “according to (our) similitude.”

without sin — *Greek*, “*choris*,” “*separate* from sin” (⁵⁰²⁷Hebrews 7:26). If the *Greek* “*aneu*” had been used, *sin* would have been regarded as the object absent from Christ the subject; but *choris* here implies that Christ, the *subject*, is regarded as separated from sin the object [TITTMANN]. Thus, throughout His temptations in their origin, process, and result, sin had nothing in Him; He was apart and separate from it [ALFORD].

16. come — rather as *Greek*, “approach,” “draw near.”

boldly — *Greek*, “with confidence,” or “freedom of speech” (⁴⁹⁸⁹Ephesians 6:19).

the throne of grace — God’s throne is become to us a *throne of grace* through the mediation of our High Priest at God’s right hand (⁵⁰⁰¹Hebrews 8:1 12:2). Pleading our High Priest Jesus’ meritorious death, we shall always find God on a *throne of grace*. Contrast Job’s complaint (⁵⁰¹⁸Job 23:3-8) and Elihu’s “IF,” etc. (⁵⁰²³Job 33:23-28).

obtain — rather, “receive.”

mercy — “Compassion,” by its derivation (literally, fellow feeling from *community of suffering*), corresponds to the character of our High Priest “touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (⁵⁰⁴⁵Hebrews 4:15).

find grace — corresponding to “throne *of grace*.” *Mercy* especially refers to the remission and removal of sins; *grace*, to the saving bestowal of spiritual gifts [ESTIUS]. Compare “Come unto Me ... and I will *give* you rest (the rest *received* on first believing). Take My yoke on you ... and ye shall *find* rest (the continuing rest and peace *found* in daily submitting to Christ’s easy yoke; the former answers to “*receive mercy*” here; the latter, to “*find grace*,” ^{<411>}Matthew 11:28,29).

in time of need — *Greek*, “seasonably.” Before we are overwhelmed by the temptation; when we most need it, in temptations and persecutions; such as is suitable to the time, persons, and end designed (^{<1947>}Psalm 104:27). A supply of grace is in store for believers against all exigencies; but they are only supplied with it according as the need arises. Compare “in due time,” ^{<610>}Romans 5:6. Not, as ALFORD explains, “help in time,” that is, *to-day*, while it is yet open to us; the accepted time (^{<1102>}2 Corinthians 6:2).

help — Compare ^{<510>}Hebrews 2:18, “He is able to *succor* them that are tempted.”

CHAPTER 5

~~ROM~~ HEBREWS 5:1-14.

CHRIST'S HIGH PRIESTHOOD; NEEDED QUALIFICATIONS; MUST BE A MAN; MUST NOT HAVE ASSUMED THE DIGNITY HIMSELF, BUT HAVE BEEN APPOINTED BY GOD; THEIR LOW SPIRITUAL PERCEPTIONS A BAR TO PAUL'S SAYING ALL HE MIGHT ON CHRIST'S MELCHISEDEC-LIKE PRIESTHOOD.

1. For — substantiating ~~ROM~~ Hebrews 4:15.

every — that is, every legitimate high priest; for instance, the Levitical, as he is addressing Hebrews, among whom the Levitical priesthood was established as the legitimate one. Whatever, reasons Paul, is excellent in the Levitical priests, is also in Christ, and besides excellencies which are not in the Levitical priests.

taken from among men — not from among angels, who could not have a fellow feeling with us men. This qualification Christ has, as being, like the Levitical priest, *a man* (~~ROM~~ Hebrews 2:14,16). Being “*from men*,” He can be “*for* (that is, in behalf of, for the good of) men.”

ordained — *Greek*, “constituted,” “appointed.”

both gifts — to be joined with “for sins,” as “sacrifices” is (the “both ... and” requires this); therefore not the *Hebrew*, “*mincha*,” “unbloody offerings,” but animal whole burnt offerings, *spontaneously given*. “Sacrifices” are the animal sacrifices *due according to the legal ordinance* [ESTIUS].

2. Who can — *Greek*, “being able”; *not pleasing himself* (~~EST~~ Romans 15:3).

have compassion — *Greek*, “estimate mildly,” “feel leniently,” or “moderately towards”; “to make allowance for”; not showing stern rigor save to the obstinate (~~ROM~~ Hebrews 10:28).

ignorant — sins not committed in resistance of light and knowledge, but as Paul's past sin (^{<5013>}1 Timothy 1:13). No sacrifice was appointed for wilful sin committed with a high hand; for such were to be punished with death; all other sins, namely, ignorances and errors, were confessed and expiated with sacrifices by the high priest.

out of the way — not deliberately and altogether wilfully erring, but deluded through the fraud of Satan and their own carnal frailty and thoughtlessness.

infirmity — moral weakness which is sinful, and makes men capable of sin, and so requires to be expiated by sacrifices. This kind of "infirmity" Christ had not; He had the "infirmity" of body whereby He was capable of suffering and death.

3. by reason hereof — "on account of this" infirmity.

he ought ... also for himself, to offer for sins — the Levitical priest ought; in this our High Priest is superior to the Levitical. The second "for" is a different *Greek* term from the first; "*in behalf of the people ... on account of sins.*"

4. no man — of any other family but Aaron's, according to the Mosaic law, can take to himself the office of high priest. This verse is quoted by some to prove the need of an apostolic succession of ordination in the Christian ministry; but the reference here is to the *priesthood*, not the Christian *ministry*. The analogy in our Christian dispensation would warn ministers, seeing that God has separated them from the congregation of His people to bring them near Himself, and to do the service of His house, and to minister (as He separated the Levites, Korah with his company), that content with this, they should beware of assuming the sacrificial priesthood also, which belongs to Christ alone. The sin of Korah was, not content with the ministry as a Levite, he took the sacerdotal priesthood also. No Christian minister, as such, is ever called *Hiereus*, that is, sacrificing priest. All Christians, without distinction, whether ministers or people, have a metaphorical, not a literal, priesthood. The sacrifices which they offer are spiritual, not literal, their bodies and the fruit of their lips, praises continually (^{<5035>}Hebrews 13:15). Christ alone had a proper and true sacrifice to offer. The law sacrifices were typical, not metaphorical, as the

Christian's, nor proper and true, as Christ's. In Roman times the Mosaic restriction of the priesthood to Aaron's family was violated.

5. glorified not himself — did not assume the glory of the priestly office of Himself without the call of God (^{<854>}John 8:54).

but he that said — that is, the Father glorified Him or appointed Him to the priesthood. This appointment was involved in, and was the result of, the *Sonship* of Christ, which qualified Him for it. None but the divine Son could have fulfilled such an office (^{<808>}Hebrews 10:5-9). The connection of *Sonship* and *priesthood* is typified in the *Hebrew* title for *priests* being given to David's sons (^{<808>}2 Samuel 8:18). Christ did not constitute *Himself* the Son of God, but was from everlasting the only-begotten of the *Father*. On His Sonship depended His glorification, and His being called of God (^{<860>}Hebrews 5:10), as Priest.

6. He is here called simply "Priest"; in ^{<885>}Hebrews 5:5, "High Priest." He is a *Priest* absolutely, because He stands alone in that character without an equal. He is "High Priest" in respect of the Aaronic type, and also in respect to us, whom He has made *priests* by throwing open to us access to God [BENGEL]. "The *order* of Melchisedec" is explained in ^{<875>}Hebrews 7:15, "the *similitude* of Melchisedec." The priesthood is similarly combined with His kingly office in ^{<883>}Zechariah 6:13. Melchisedec was at once man, priest, and king. Paul's selecting as the type of Christ one not of the stock of Abraham, on which the Jews prided themselves, is an intimation of Messianic universalism.

7. in the days of his flesh — (^{<824>}Hebrews 2:14 10:20). ^{<880>}Hebrews 5:7-10 state summarily the subject about to be handled more fully in the seventh and eighth chapters.

when he had offered — rather, "*in that He offered.*" His crying and tears were part of the experimental lesson of obedience which He submitted to learn from the Father (when God was qualifying Him for the high priesthood). "Who" is to be construed with "learned obedience" (or rather as *Greek*, "*His* obedience"; "*the* obedience" which we all know about). This all shows that "Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest" (^{<885>}Hebrews 5:5), but was appointed thereto by the Father.

prayers and supplications — *Greek*, “*both* prayers and supplications.” In Gethsemane, where He prayed *thrice*, and on the cross, where He cried, My God, my God ... probably repeating inwardly *all* the twenty-second Psalm. “Prayers” refer to the mind: “supplications” also to the body (namely, the suppliant attitude) (⁴¹⁶³Matthew 26:39) [BENGEL].

with strong crying and tears — The “tears” are an additional fact here communicated to us by the inspired apostle, not recorded in the Gospels, though implied. ⁴¹⁶⁷Matthew 26:37, “sorrowful and very heavy.” ⁴¹⁶⁸Mark 14:33 ⁴²²⁴Luke 22:44, “in an agony He prayed more earnestly ... His sweat ... great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” ⁴²⁷¹Psalm 22:1 (“roaring ... cry”), ⁴²⁷²Psalm 22:2,19,21,24 69:3,10, “I *wept*.”

able to save him from death — ⁴¹⁶⁹Mark 14:36, “All things are *possible* unto Thee” (⁴¹⁷⁷John 12:27). His cry showed His entire participation of man’s infirmity: His reference of His wish to the will of God, His sinless faith and obedience.

heard in that he feared — There is no intimation in the twenty-second Psalm, or the Gospels that Christ prayed to be saved from the mere act of dying. What He feared was the hiding of the Father’s countenance. His holy filial love must rightly have shrunk from this strange and bitterest of trials without the imputation of impatience. To have been passively content at the approach of such a cloud would have been, not faith, but sin. The cup of death He prayed to be freed from was, not corporal, but spiritual death, that is, the (temporary) separation of His human soul from the light of God’s countenance. His prayer was “heard” in His Father’s strengthening Him so as to hold fast His unwavering faith under the trial (*My God, my God*, was still His filial cry under it. still claiming God as His, though God hid His face), and soon removing it in answer to His cry during the darkness on the cross, “My God, my God,” etc. But see below a further explanation of how He was heard. The *Greek* literally, is, “Was heard *from His fear*,” that is, so as to be saved from His fear. Compare ⁴²⁷³Psalm 22:21, which well accords with this, “Save me *from* the lion’s mouth (His prayer): thou hast heard me *from* the horns of the unicorns.” Or what better accords with the strict meaning of the *Greek* noun, “*in consequence of His REVERENTIAL FEAR*,” that is, in that He *shrank from* the horrors of separation from the bright presence of the Father, yet was

reverentially cautious by no thought or word of impatience to give way to a shadow of distrust or want of perfect filial love. In the same sense ^{<102>}Hebrews 12:28 uses the noun, and ^{<103>}Hebrews 11:7 the verb. ALFORD somewhat similarly translates, “By reason of His reverent submission.” I prefer “reverent *fear*.” The word in derivation means the *cautious handling* of some precious, yet, delicate vessel, which with ruder handling might easily be broken [TRENCH]. This fully agrees with Jesus’ spirit, “If it be possible ... *nevertheless not My will, but Thy will be done*”; and with the context, ^{<104>}Hebrews 5:5, “Glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest,” implying *reverent fear*: wherein it appears He had the requisite for the office specified ^{<105>}Hebrews 5:4, “No man taketh this honor unto himself.” ALFORD well says, What is true in the Christian’s life, that what we ask from God, though He may not grant in the form we wish, yet He grants in His own, and that a better form, does not hold good in Christ’s case; for Christ’s real prayer, “not My will, but Thine be done,” in consistency with His reverent fear towards the Father, was granted in the very form in which it was expressed, not in another.

8. Though He WAS (so it ought to be translated: a positive admitted fact: not a mere supposition as *were* would imply) God’s divine Son (whence, even in His agony, He so lovingly and often cried, *Father*, ^{<106>}Matthew 26:39), yet He learned *His* (so the *Greek*) obedience, not from His Sonship, but from His sufferings. As the Son, He was always obedient to the Father’s will; but *the* special obedience needed to qualify Him as our High Priest, He learned experimentally in practical suffering. Compare ^{<107>}Philippians 2:6-8, “*equal with God*, but ... took upon Him the form of a *servant*, and became *obedient* unto death,” etc. He was *obedient* already before His passion, but He stooped to a still more humiliating and trying form of *obedience* then. The *Greek* adage is, “*Pathemata mathemata*,” “sufferings, disciplinings.” *Praying* and *obeying*, as in Christ’s case, ought to go hand in hand.

9. **made perfect** — completed, brought to His goal of learning and suffering through death (^{<108>}Hebrews 2:10) [ALFORD], namely, at His glorious resurrection and ascension.

author — *Greek*, “cause.”

eternal salvation — obtained for us in the *short* “days of Jesus’ flesh” (^{<800>}Hebrews 5:7; compare ^{<800>}Hebrews 5:6, “for ever,” ^{<800>}Isaiah 45:17).

unto all ... that obey him — As Christ *obeyed* the Father, so must we *obey* Him by faith.

10. Greek, rather, “*Addressed* by God (by the appellation) High Priest.” Being formally recognized by God as High Priest at the time of His being “made perfect” (^{<800>}Hebrews 5:9). He was High Priest already *in the purpose of God* before His passion; but after it, when perfected, He was formally addressed so.

11. Here he digresses to complain of the low spiritual attainments of the Palestinian Christians and to warn them of the danger of falling from light once enjoyed; at the same time encouraging them by God’s faithfulness to persevere. At ^{<800>}Hebrews 6:20 he resumes the comparison of Christ to Melchisedec.

hard to be uttered — rather as *Greek*, “hard of interpretation to speak.” Hard for me to state intelligibly to you owing to your dulness about spiritual things. Hence, instead of *saying many things*, he writes in comparatively *few words* (^{<800>}Hebrews 13:22). In the “we,” Paul, as usual, includes Timothy with himself in addressing them.

ye are — *Greek*, “ye have *become* dull” (the *Greek*, by derivation, means *hard to move*): this implies that *once*, when first “enlightened,” they were earnest and zealous, but had *become* dull. That the Hebrew believers AT JERUSALEM were dull in spiritual things, and legal in spirit, appears from ^{<800>}Acts 21:20-24, where James and the elders expressly say of the “thousands of Jews which believe,” that “they are all *zealous of the law*”; this was at Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem, after which this Epistle seems to have been written (see on ^{<800>}Hebrews 5:12, on “for the time”).

12. for the time — considering the long time that you have been Christians. Therefore this Epistle was not one of those written early.

which be the first principles — *Greek*, “the *rudiments of the beginning* of.” A Pauline phrase (see on ^{<800>}Galatians 4:3; ^{<800>}Galatians 4:9). Ye need not only to be taught *the first elements*, but also “*which* they be.” They are therefore enumerated ^{<800>}Hebrews 6:1,2 [BENGEL]. ALFORD translates,

“That *someone* teach you the rudiments”; but the position of the *Greek*, “*tina*,” inclines me to take it interrogatively, “which,” as *English Version*, *Syriac*, *Vulgate*, etc.

of the oracles of God — namely, of the Old Testament: instead of seeing Christ as the end of the Old Testament Scripture, they were relapsing towards Judaism, so as not only not to be capable of understanding the typical reference to Christ of such an Old Testament personage as Melchisedec, but even much more elementary references.

are become — through indolence.

milk ... not ... strong meat — “Milk” refers to such fundamental first principles as he enumerates in ^{<SOH>}Hebrews 6:1,2. The *solid meat*, or *food*, is not absolutely necessary for preserving life, but is so for acquiring greater strength. Especially in the case of the Hebrews, who were much given to allegorical interpretations of their law, which they so much venerated, the application of the Old Testament types, to Christ and His High Priesthood, was calculated much to strengthen them in the Christian faith [LIMBORCH].

13. useth — *Greek*, “partaketh,” that is, taketh as *his portion*. Even strong men partake of milk, but do not make milk their chief, much less their sole, diet.

the word of righteousness — the Gospel wherein “the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith” (^{<KOT>}Romans 1:17), and which is called “the ministration of righteousness” (^{<KOT>}2 Corinthians 3:9). This includes the doctrine of *justification* and sanctification: the first *principles*, as well as the *perfection, of the doctrine of Christ*: the nature of the offices and person of Christ as the true Melchisedec, that is, “King of *righteousness*” (compare ^{<HRE>}Matthew 3:15).

14. strong meat — “solid food.”

them ... of full age — literally, “perfect”: akin to “perfection” (^{<SOH>}Hebrews 6:1).

by reason of use — *Greek*, “habit.”

senses — organs of sense.

exercised — similarly connected with “righteousness” in ^{<821>}Hebrews 12:11.

to discern both good and evil — as a child no longer an infant (^{<2016>}Isaiah 7:16): so able to distinguish between sound and unsound doctrine. The mere child puts into its mouth things hurtful and things nutritious, without discrimination: but not so the adult. Paul again alludes to their tendency not to discriminate, but to be carried about by strange doctrines, in ^{<839>}Hebrews 13:9.

CHAPTER 6

HEBREWS 6:1-14.

WARNING AGAINST RETROGRADING, WHICH SOON LEADS TO APOSTASY; ENCOURAGEMENT TO STEADFASTNESS FROM GOD’S FAITHFULNESS TO HIS WORD AND OATH.

1. Therefore — Wherefore: seeing that ye ought not now to be still “babes” (³⁸¹Hebrews 5:11-14).

leaving — getting further forward than the elementary “principles.” “As in building a house one must never leave the foundation: yet to be always laboring in ‘laying the foundation’ would be ridiculous” [CALVIN].

the principles of the doctrine — *Greek*, “the word of the beginning,” that is, the discussion of the “first principles of Christianity” (³⁸²Hebrews 5:12).

let us go on — *Greek*, “let us be borne forward,” or “bear ourselves forward”; implying active exertion: press on. Paul, in teaching, here classifies himself with the Hebrew readers, or (as they ought to be) learners, and says, Let us together press forward.

perfection — the matured knowledge of those who are “of full age” (³⁸³Hebrews 5:14) in Christian attainments.

foundation of — that is, *consisting in* “repentance.”

repentance from dead works — namely, not springing from the *vital* principle of faith and love toward God, and so counted, like their doer, *dead* before God. This *repentance from dead works* is therefore paired with “faith toward God.” The three pairs of truths enumerated are designedly such as JEWISH believers might in some degree have known from the Old Testament, but had been taught more clearly when they became Christians. This accounts for the omission of *distinct* specification of some essential first principle of Christian truth. Hence, too, he mentions

“faith toward *God*,” and not *explicitly* faith toward *Christ* (though of course included). Repentance and faith were the first principles taught under the Gospel.

2. the doctrine of baptisms — paired with “laying on of hands,” as the latter followed on Christian baptism, and answers to the rite of *confirmation* in Episcopal churches. Jewish believers passed, by an easy transition, from Jewish *baptismal purifications* (^{<800>}Hebrews 9:10, “washings”), baptism of proselytes, and John’s baptism, and legal imposition of hands, to their Christian analogues, *baptism*, and the subsequent *laying on of hands*, accompanied by the gift of the Holy Ghost (compare ^{<800>}Hebrews 6:4). *Greek*, “*baptismoι*,” plural, including *Jewish* and *Christian baptisms*, are to be distinguished from *baptisma*, singular, *restricted* to Christian baptism. The six particulars here specified had been, as it were, *the Christian Catechism* of the Old Testament; and such Jews who had begun to recognize Jesus as the Christ immediately on the new light being shed on these fundamental particulars, were accounted as having the elementary *principles* of the doctrine of Christ [BENGEL]. The first and most obvious elementary instruction of Jews would be the *teaching* them the typical significance of their own ceremonial law in its Christian fulfillment [ALFORD].

resurrection, etc. — held already by the Jews from the Old Testament: confirmed with clearer light in Christian *teaching* or “doctrine.”

eternal judgment — judgment fraught with eternal consequences either of joy or of woe.

3. will we do — So some of the oldest manuscripts read; but others, “Let us do.” “This,” that is, “Go on unto perfection.”

if God permit — For even in the case of good resolutions, we cannot carry them into effect, save through God “working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (^{<180>}Philippians 2:13). The “for” in ^{<800>}Hebrews 6:4 refers to this: I say, if God permit, *for* there are cases where God does not permit, for example, “it is impossible,” etc. Without God’s blessing, the cultivation of the ground does not succeed (^{<800>}Hebrews 6:7).

4. We must “go on toward perfection”; for if we *fall away*, after having received enlightenment, it will be *impossible to renew us again to repentance*.

for those — “in the case of those.”

once enlightened — once for all illuminated by the word of God taught in connection with “baptism” (to which, in ^{<800>}Hebrews 6:2, as once for all done,” once enlightened” here answers); compare ^{<403>}Ephesians 5:26. This passage probably originated the application of the term “illumination” to baptism in subsequent times. *Illumination*, however, was not supposed to be the inseparable accompaniment of *baptism*: thus CHRYSOSTOM says, “Heretics have *baptism*, not *illumination*: they are baptized in body, but not enlightened in soul: as Simon Magus was baptized, but not illuminated.” That “enlightened” here means *knowledge of the word of truth*, appears from comparing the same *Greek* word “illuminated,” ^{<800>}Hebrews 10:32, with ^{<800>}Hebrews 10:26, where “knowledge of the truth” answers to it.

tasted of the heavenly gift — tasted *for themselves*. As “enlightened” refers to the sense of *sight*: so here *taste* follows. “The heavenly gift”; *Christ* given by the Father and revealed by the enlightening word preached and written: as conferring peace in the remission of sins; and as the Bestower of the gift of the Holy Spirit (^{<408>}Acts 8:19,20),

made partakers of the Holy Ghost — specified as distinct from, though so inseparably connected with, “enlightened,” and “tasted of the heavenly gift,” *Christ*, as answering to “laying on of hands” after baptism, which was then generally accompanied with the impartation of *the Holy Ghost* in miraculous *gifts*.

5. tasted the good word of God — distinct from “tasted OF (genitive) the heavenly gift”; we do not yet enjoy *all* the fullness of *Christ*, but only have a taste OF Him, the heavenly gift now; but believers may taste the *whole* word (accusative case) of God already, namely, God’s “good word of *promise*.” The Old Testament promise of Canaan to Israel typified “the good word of God’s” promise of the heavenly rest (^{<800>}Hebrews 4:1-16). Therefore, there immediately follows the clause, “the powers of the world to come.” As “enlightening” and “tasting of the heavenly gift,” *Christ*, the

Bread of Life, answers to FAITH: so “made partakers of the Holy Ghost,” to CHARITY, which is the first-fruit of the Spirit: and “tasted the good word of *God*, and the powers of the world to come,” to HOPE. Thus the triad of privileges answers to the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Spirit, in their respective works toward us. “The world to come,” is the Christian dispensation, viewed especially in its *future glories*, though already begun in grace here. The *world to come* thus stands in contrast to *course of this world*, altogether disorganized because God is not its spring of action and end. By faith, Christians make the world to come a present reality, though but a foretaste of the perfect future. The powers of this new spiritual world, partly exhibited in outward miracles at that time, and then, as now, especially consisting in the Spirit’s inward quickening influences are the earnest of the coming inheritance above, and lead the believer who gives himself up to the Spirit to seek to live as the angels, to sit with Christ in heavenly places, to set the affections on things above, and not on things on earth, and to look for Christ’s coming and the full manifestation of the world to come. This “world to come,” in its future aspect, thus corresponds to “resurrection of the dead and eternal life” (^{<R01>}Hebrews 6:2), the *first* Christian principles which the Hebrew believers had been taught, by the Christian light being thrown back on their Old Testament for their instruction (see on ^{<R01>}Hebrews 6:1,2). “The world to come,” which, as to its “powers,” exists already in the redeemed, will pass into a fully realized fact at Christ’s coming (^{<R01>}Colossians 3:4).

6. If — *Greek*, “And (yet) have fallen away”; compare a less extreme falling or declension, ^{<R01>}Galatians 5:4, “Ye are fallen from grace.” Here an entire and wilful apostasy is meant; the Hebrews had not yet so fallen away; but he warns them that such would be the final result of retrogression, if, instead of “going on to perfection,” they should need to learn again the first principles of Christianity (^{<R01>}Hebrews 6:1).

to renew them again — They have been “once” (^{<R01>}Hebrews 6:4) already *renewed*, or made anew, and now they need to be “*renewed*” over “again.”

crucify to themselves the Son of God — “*are crucifying to themselves*” Christ, instead of, like Paul, *crucifying the world unto them by the cross of Christ* (^{<R01>}Galatians 6:14). So in ^{<R01>}Hebrews 10:29, “trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith ...

sanctified, an unholy thing.” “The Son of God,” marking His dignity, shows the greatness of their offense.

put him to an open shame — literally, “make a public example of” Him, as if He were a malefactor suspended on a tree. What the carnal Israel did outwardly, those who fall away from light do inwardly, they virtually crucify again the Son of God; “they tear him out of the recesses of their hearts where He had fixed His abode and exhibit Him to the open scoffs of the world as something powerless and common” [BLEEK in ALFORD]. The Montanists and Novatians used this passage to justify the lasting exclusion from the Church of those who had once lapsed. The Catholic Church always opposed this view, and readmitted the lapsed on their repentance, but did not rebaptize them. This passage implies that persons may be in some sense “renewed,” and yet fall away finally; for the words, “renew *again*,” imply that they have been, in *some* sense, *not the full sense*, ONCE RENEWED by the Holy Ghost; but certainly not that they are “the elect,” for these can never fall away, being chosen unto everlasting life (~~ROM~~ John 10:28). The elect abide in Christ, hear and continuously obey His voice, and do not fall away. He who abides not in Christ, is cast forth as a withered branch; but he who abides in Him becomes more and more free from sin; the wicked one cannot touch him; and he by faith overcomes the world. A *temporary* faith is possible, without one thereby being constituted one of the elect (~~MARK~~ Mark 4:16,17). At the same time it does not limit God’s grace, as if it were “impossible” *for God* to reclaim even such a hardened rebel so as yet to look on Him whom he has pierced. The impossibility rests in their having known in themselves once the power of Christ’s sacrifice, and yet now rejecting it; there *cannot possibly* be any new means devised for their renewal afresh, and the means provided by God’s love they now, after experience of them, deliberately .and continuously reject; their conscience being served, and they “twice dead” (~~JUDE~~ Jude 1:12), are now past hope, except by a miracle of God’s grace. “It is the curse of evil eternally to propagate evil” [THOLUCK]. “He who is led into the whole (?) compass of Christian experiences, may yet cease to abide in them; he who abides not in them, was, at the very time when he had those objective experiences, not *subjectively* true to them; otherwise there would have been fulfilled in him, “Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance” (~~MATTHEW~~ Matthew 13:12), so that he

would have abided in them and not have fallen away” [THOLUCK]. Such a one was never truly a Spirit-led disciple of Christ (^{<814>}Romans 8:14-17). The sin against the Holy Ghost, though somewhat similar, is not identical with this sin; for *that* sin may be committed by those *outside* the Church (as in ^{<122>}Matthew 12:24,31,32); this, only by those *inside*.

7. the earth — rather as *Greek* (no article), “land.”

which drinketh in — *Greek*, “which *has* drunk in”; not merely receiving it on the surface. Answering to those who have enjoyed the privilege of Christian experiences, being in some sense renewed by the Holy Ghost; true alike of those who persevere and those who “fall away.”

the rain that cometh oft upon it — not merely failing *over* it, or *towards* it, but falling and resting *upon* it so as to *cover* it (the *Greek* genitive, not the accusative). The “oft” implies, on God’s part, the riches of His abounding grace (“coming” spontaneously, and often); and, on the apostate’s part, the wilful perversity whereby he has done continual despite to the oft-repeated motions of the Spirit. Compare “How *often*,” ^{<123>}Matthew 23:37. The rain of heaven falls both on the elect and the apostates.

bringeth forth — as the *natural* result of “*having drunk in* the rain.” See above.

herbs — provender.

meet — fit. Such as the master of the soil wishes. The opposite of “rejected,” ^{<808>}Hebrews 6:8.

by whom — rather as *Greek*, “for (that is, on account of) whom,” namely, the lords of the soil; not the laborers, as *English Version*, namely, God and His Christ (^{<419>}1 Corinthians 3:9). The heart of man is the earth; man is the dresser; herbs are brought forth meet, not for the dresser, by whom, but for God, the owner of the soil, for whom it is dressed. The plural is general, *the owners whoever they may be*; here *God*.

receiveth — “partaketh of.”

blessing — fruitfulness. Contrast God’s curse causing unfruitfulness (^{<1087>}Genesis 3:17,18); also spiritually (^{<2475>}Jeremiah 17:5-8).

from God — Man's use of means is vain unless God bless (^{<400>}1 Corinthians 3:6,7).

8. that which — rather as *Greek* (no article), “But *if it* (the ‘land,’ ^{<800>}Hebrews 6:7) bear”; not so favorable a word as “bringeth forth,” ^{<800>}Hebrews 6:7, said of the good soil.

briers — *Greek*, “thistles.”

rejected — after having been *tested*; so the *Greek* implies. *Reprobate ... rejected* by the Lord.

nigh unto cursing — on the verge of being given up to its own barrenness by the just curse of God. This “nigh” softens the severity of the previous “It is impossible,” etc. (^{<800>}Hebrews 6:4,6). The ground is not yet actually *cursed*.

whose — “of which (*land*) the end is unto burning,” namely, with the consuming fire of the last judgment; as the land of Sodom was given to “brimstone, salt, and *burning*” (^{<620>}Deuteronomy 29:23); so as to the ungodly (^{<400>}Matthew 3:10,12 7:19 13:30 ^{<800>}John 15:6 ^{<600>}2 Peter 3:10). Jerusalem, which had so resisted the grace of Christ, was then nigh unto cursing, and in a few years was burned. Compare ^{<400>}Matthew 22:7, “*burned up their city*” an earnest of a like fate to all wilful abusers of God's grace (^{<800>}Hebrews 10:26,27).

9. beloved — appositely here introduced; LOVE to you prompts me in the strong warnings I have just given, not that I entertain unfavorable thoughts of you; nay, I anticipate *better things* of you; *Greek* “*the things which are better*”; that ye are not *thorn-bearing*, or *nigh unto cursing*, and doomed *unto burning*, but heirs of *salvation* in accordance with God's faithfulness (^{<800>}Hebrews 6:10).

we are persuaded — on good grounds; the result of proof. Compare ^{<650>}Romans 15:14, “I myself am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye are full of *goodness*.” A confirmation of the Pauline authorship of this Epistle.

things that accompany — *Greek*, “things that hold by,” that is, are close unto “salvation.” Things that are linked unto salvation (compare ^{<800>}Hebrews 6:19). In opposition to “nigh unto cursing.”

though — *Greek*, “if even we thus speak.” “For it is better to make you afraid with words, that ye may not suffer in fact.”

10. not unrighteous — not *unfaithful* to His own gracious promise. Not that we have any inherent *right to claim* reward; for

(1) a *servant* has no merit, as he only does that which is his bounden duty;

(2) our best performances bear no proportion to what we leave undone;

(3) all strength comes from God; but God has *promised of His own grace* to reward the good works of His people (already accepted through faith in Christ); it is His *promise*, not our merits, which would make it *unrighteous* were He not to reward His people’s works. God will be no man’s debtor.

your work — your whole Christian life of active obedience.

labor of love — The oldest manuscripts omit “labor of,” which probably crept in from ^{<500B>}1 Thessalonians 1:3. As “love” occurs here, so “hope,” ^{<500B>}Hebrews 6:11, “faith,” ^{<500B>}Hebrews 6:12; as in ^{<400B>}1 Corinthians 13:13: the *Pauline* triad. By their *love* he sharpens their *hope* and *faith*.

ye have showed — (Compare ^{<500B>}Hebrews 10:32-34).

toward his name — Your acts *of love* to the saints were done for His name’s sake. The distressed condition of the Palestinian Christians appears from the collection for them. Though receiving bounty from other churches, and therefore not able to minister much by *pecuniary* help, yet those somewhat better off could minister to the greatest sufferers in their Church in various other ways (compare ^{<500B>}2 Timothy 1:18). Paul, as elsewhere, gives them the utmost credit for their graces, while delicately hinting the need of perseverance, a lack of which had probably somewhat begun to show itself.

11. And — *Greek*, “But.”

desire — *Greek*, “earnestly desire.” The language of fatherly affection, rather than command.

every one of you — implying that *all* in the Palestinian churches had not shown the same diligence as some of those whom he praises in ^{<860>}Hebrews 6:10. “He cares alike for great and small, and overlooks none.” “Every one of them,” even those diligent in acts of LOVE (^{<860>}Hebrews 6:10), needed to be stimulated to *persevere* in the same diligence with a view to the full assurance of HOPE unto the end. They needed, besides love, patient perseverance, resting on *hope* and *faith* (^{<860>}Hebrews 10:36 13:7). Compare “the full assurance of faith,” ^{<860>}Hebrews 10:22 ^{<860>}Romans 4:21 ^{<860>}1 Thessalonians 1:5.

unto the end — the coming of Christ.

12. be not — *Greek*, “become not.” In ^{<860>}Hebrews 5:11, he said, “Ye have become dull (*Greek*, ‘*slothful*’) of hearing”; here he warns them not to become “slothful *absolutely*,” namely, also in mind and deed. He will not become slothful who keeps always *the end* in view; *hope* is the means of ensuring this.

followers — *Greek*, “imitators”; so in ^{<860>}Ephesians 5:1, *Greek*; ^{<860>}1 Corinthians 11:1.

patience — *Greek*, “*long-suffering* endurance.” There is the *long-suffering patience*, or *endurance of love*, ^{<860>}1 Corinthians 13:4, and that of *faith*, ^{<860>}Hebrews 6:15.

them who ... inherit the promises — *Greek*, “who *are inheriting*,” etc.; to whom the promises are their inheritance. Not that they *have* actually entered on the *perfect* inheritance, which ^{<860>}Hebrews 11:13,39,40 explicitly denies; though doubtless the dead in Christ have, in the disembodied soul, a foretaste of it; but “them (enumerated in ^{<860>}Hebrews 11:2-40) who in every age have been, are, or shall be, *inheritors* of the promises”; of whom Abraham is an illustrious example (^{<860>}Hebrews 6:13).

13. For — confirming the reasonableness of resting on “the promises” as infallibly sure, resting as they do on God’s oath, by the instance of Abraham. “He now gives consolation, by *the oath of God’s grace*, to those whom, in the second, third, and fourth chapters, he had warned by the *oath* of God’s ‘wrath.’ The oath of wrath did not primarily extend its force

beyond the wilderness; but the oath of grace is in force for ever”
[BENGEL].

14. multiplying ... multiply — Hebraism for *superabundantly multiply*.

thee — The increase of Abraham’s seed is virtually an increase of *himself*. The argument here refers to Abraham *himself* as an example; therefore Paul quotes ^{<427>}Genesis 22:17, “thee,” instead of “thy seed.”

15. so — thus relying on the promise.

16. for confirmation — not to be joined, as *English Version*, to “an oath”; but to “an end” [ALFORD]. I prefer, “The oath is to them, in respect to confirmation (of one’s solemn promise or covenant; as here, *God’s*), an end of all *contradiction* (so the *Greek* is translated, ^{<327>}Hebrews 12:3), or “gainsaying.” This passage shows:

- (1) an oath is sanctioned even in the Christian dispensation as lawful;
- (2) that the limits to its use are, that it only be employed where it can *put an end to contradiction in disputes*, and *for confirmation* of a solemn promise.

17. Wherein — that is, *Which being the case* among men, God, in accommodation to their manner of confirming covenants, superadded to His sure word His *oath*: the “TWO immutable things” (^{<328>}Hebrews 6:18).

willing ... counsel — *Greek*, “willing ... *will*”; words akin. Expressing the utmost benignity [BENGEL].

more abundantly — than had He not sworn. His word would have been amply enough; but, to make assurance doubly sure, He “interposed with an oath” (so the *Greek*). Literally, *He acted as Mediator*, coming between Himself and us; as if He were less, while He swears, than Himself by whom He swears (for the less among men usually swear by the greater). Dost thou not yet believe, thou that hearest the promise? [BENGEL].

heirs of promise — not only Abraham’s literal, but also his spiritual, seed (^{<429>}Galatians 3:29).

18. immutable — Translate, as in ^{<327>}Hebrews 6:17, “unchangeable.”

impossible ... to lie — “*ever to lie*”; this is the force of the *Greek* aorist [ALFORD]. His not being able to deny Himself is a proof, not of weakness, but of strength incomparable.

consolation — under doubts and fears, and so “encouragement,” literally, “exhortation.”

fled for refuge — as if from a shipwreck; or, as one fleeing to one of the six cities of refuge. Kadesh, that is, *holy*, implies the holiness of Jesus, our Refuge. Shechem, that is, *shoulder*, the government is upon his shoulder (^{<200}Isaiah 9:6). Hebron, that is, *fellowship*, believers are called into the fellowship of Christ. Bezer, that is, *a fortress*, Christ is so to all who trust in Him. Ramoth, that is, *high*, for Him hath God exalted with His right hand (^{<400}Acts 5:31). Golan, that is, *joy*, for in Him all the saints are justified and shall glory.

lay hold upon the hope — that is, the object of our hope, as upon a preservative from sinking.

set before us — as a prize for which we strive; a new image, namely, the race course (^{<300}Hebrews 12:1,2).

19. Hope is found represented on coins by an *anchor*.

sure and steadfast — *sure* in respect to *us*: *steadfast*, or “firm” [ALFORD], in *itself*. Not such an *anchor* as will not keep the vessel from tossing, or an anchor unsound or too light [THEOPHYLACT].

which entereth into that — that is the place

within the veil — two images beautifully combined:

(1) The *soul is the ship*: the *world the sea*: the *bliss beyond the world, the distant coast*; the *hope* resting on faith, the *anchor* which prevents the vessel being tossed to and fro; the *encouraging consolation* through the *promise* and *oath* of God, the cable connecting the ship and anchor.

(2) The world is the fore-court: heaven, the Holy of Holies; Christ, the High Priest going before us. so as to enable us, after Him. and through Him, to enter within the veil. ESTIUS explains, As the anchor does not stay in the waters, but enters the ground hidden beneath the waters,

and fastens itself in it, so hope, our anchor of the soul, is not satisfied with merely coming to the vestibule, that is..is not content with merely earthly and visible goods, but penetrates even to those which are within the veil, namely. to the Holy of Holies. where it lays hold on God Himself. and heavenly goods. and fastens on them. “Hope, entering within heaven, hath made us already to be in the things promised to us, even while we are still below. and have not yet received them; such strength he has. as to make those that are earthly to become heavenly.” “The soul clings, as one in fear of shipwreck to an anchor, and sees not whither the cable of the anchor runs — where it is fastened: but she knows that it is fastened behind the veil which hides the future glory.”

veil — *Greek*, “*catapetasma*”: the *second* veil which shut in the Holiest Place. The outer veil was called by a distinct *Greek* term, *calumma*: “the second (that is, the inner) veil.”

20. The absence of the *Greek* article requires ALFORD’S translation, “Where. As forerunner for us (that is, in our behalf), entered Jesus” [*and is now*: this last clause is implied in the ‘where’ of the *Greek*, which implies being IN a place: ‘whither’ is understood to ‘entered,’ taken out of ‘where’; whither *Jesus entered*, and *where* He is now]. The “for us” implies that it was not for Himself. as God, He needed to enter there, but as our High Priest, representing and introducing us, His followers, opening the way to us, by His intercession with the Father. as the Aaronic high priest entered the Holiest Place once a year to make propitiation for the people. The first-fruits of our nature are ascended, and so the rest is sanctified. Christ’s ascension is our promotion: and whither the glory of the Head has preceded. thither the hope of the body, too, is called. We ought to keep festal day, since Christ has taken up and set in the heavens the first-fruit of our lump, that is, the human flesh [CHRYSOSTOM]. As John Baptist was Christ’s forerunner on earth, so Christ is ours in heaven.

CHAPTER 7

HEBREWS 7:1-28.

CHRIST'S HIGH PRIESTHOOD AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHISEDEC SUPERIOR TO AARON'S.

1. this Melchisedec — (^{<303>}Hebrews 6:20 ^{<330>}Psalms 110:4). The verb does not come till ^{<303>}Hebrews 7:3, “abideth.”

king ... priest — Christ unites these offices in their highest sense, and so restores the patriarchal union of these offices.

Salem — Jerusalem, that is, *seeing peace*; others make Salem distinct, and to be that mentioned (^{<103>}Genesis 33:18 ^{<412>}John 3:23).

the most high God — called also “Possessor of heaven and earth” (^{<149>}Genesis 14:19,22). This title of God, “the Most High,” handed down by tradition from the primitive revelation, appears in the Phœnician god “Elion,” that is, *Most High*. It is used to imply that the God whom Melchisedec served is THE TRUE GOD, and not one of the gods of the nations around. So it is used in the only other cases in which it is found in the New Testament, namely in the address of the demoniac, and the divining damsel constrained to confess that her own gods were false, and God the only true God.

who met Abraham — in company with the king of Sodom (^{<147>}Genesis 14:17,18).

slaughter — perhaps *defeat*, as ALFORD translates. So ^{<147>}Genesis 14:17 (compare ^{<145>}Genesis 14:15) may be translated. Arioch, king of Ellasar, lived and reigned after the disaster [BENGEL]. However, if Chedorlaomer and Amraphel and Tidal were slain, though Arioch survived, “*slaughter of the kings*” would be correct.

blessed him — As priest he first blessed Abraham on God's part; next he blessed God on Abraham's part: a reciprocal blessing. Not a mere wish,

but an authoritative and efficacious intercession as a priest. The Most High God's prerogative as "Possessor of heaven and earth," is made over to Abraham; and Abraham's glory, from his victory over the foe, is made over to God. A blessed exchange for Abraham (^{<0149>}Genesis 14:19,20).

2. gave — *Greek*, "apportioned"; assigned as his portion.

tenth ... of all — namely, the booty taken. The tithes given are closely associated with the priesthood: the mediating priest received them as a pledge of the giver's whole property being God's; and as he conveyed God's gifts to man (^{<800>}Hebrews 7:1, "blessed him"), so also man's gifts to God. Melchisedec is a sample of how God preserves, amidst general apostasy, an elect remnant. The meeting of Melchisedec and Abraham is the connecting link between to two dispensations, the patriarchal, represented by Melchisedec, who seems to have been *especially consecrated by God as a KING-PRIEST*, the highest form of that primitive system in which each father of a household was priest in it, and the Levitical, represented by Abraham, in which the priesthood was to be limited to one family of one tribe and one nation. The Levitical was parenthetical, and severed the kingdom and priesthood; the patriarchal was the true forerunner of Christ's, which, like Melchisedec's, *unites the kingship and priesthood*, and is not derived from other man, or transmitted to other man; but derived from God, and is transmitted in God to a never-ending perpetuity. Melchisedec's priesthood continueth in Christ for ever. For other points of superiority, see ^{<8079>}Hebrews 7:16-21. Melchisedec must have had some special consecration above the other patriarchs, as Abraham, who also exercised the priesthood; else Abraham would not have paid tithe to him as to a superior. His peculiar function seems to have been, by God's special call, *KING-priest* whereas no other "patriarch-priest" was also a God-consecrated king.

first being — Paul begins the mystical explanation of the historical fact (allegorical explanations being familiar to JEWS), by mentioning the significancy of the name.

righteousness — not merely righteous: so Christ. *Hebrew* "*Malchi*" means *king*: "*Tzedek*," *righteousness*.

King of Salem — not only his own name, but that of the city which he ruled, had a typical significance, namely, *peace*. Christ is the true *Prince of peace*. The *peace* which He brings is the fruit of *righteousness*.

3. Without father, etc. — explained by “without genealogy” (so the *Greek* is for “without descent”); compare ^{<307>}Hebrews 7:6, that is, his genealogy is *not known*, whereas a Levitical priest could not dispense with the proof of his descent.

having neither beginning of days nor end of life — namely, history not having recorded his beginning nor end, as it has the beginning and end of Aaron. The *Greek* idiom expressed by “without father,” etc. one whose parentage was humble or *unknown*. “Days” mean his time of discharging his *function*. So the eternity spoken of in ^{<308>}Psalm 110:4 is that of the *priestly office* chiefly.

made like — It is not said that he was absolutely “like.” *Made like*, namely, in the particulars here specified. Nothing is said in Genesis of the end of his priesthood, or of his having had in his priesthood either predecessor or successor, which, in a typical point of view, represents Christ’s eternal priesthood, without beginning or end. Aaron’s *end* is recorded; Melchisedec’s not: typically significant. “The Son of God” is not said to be made like unto Melchisedec, but Melchisedec to be “made like the Son of God.” When ALFORD denies that Melchisedec was made like the Son of God *in respect of his priesthood*, on the ground that Melchisedec was *prior in time* to our Lord, he forgets that Christ’s eternal priesthood was an archetypal reality *in God’s purpose from everlasting*, to which Melchisedec’s priesthood was “made like” in due time. The Son of God is the more ancient, and is the archetype: compare ^{<309>}Hebrews 8:5, where the heavenly things are represented as the *primary archetype of the Levitical ordinances*. The epithets, “without father,” etc. “beginning of days,” “nor end,” “abideth continually,” belong to Melchisedec only *in respect to his priesthood*, and in *so far as he is the type of the Son of God*, and are strictly true of Him alone. Melchisedec was, in his priesthood, “made like” Christ, as far as the imperfect type could represent the lineaments of the perfect archetype. “The portrait of a living man can be seen on the canvas, yet the man is very different from his picture.” There is nothing in the account, ^{<310>}Genesis 14:18-20, to mark Melchisedec as a

superhuman being: he is classed with the other kings in the chapter as a living historic personage: not as ORIGEN thought, an angel; nor as the Jews thought, Shem, son of Noah; nor as CALMET, Enoch; nor as the Melchisedekites, that he was the Holy Ghost; nor as others, the Divine Word. He was probably of Shemitic, not Canaanite origin: the last independent representative of the original Shemitic population, which had been vanquished by the Canaanites, Ham's descendants. The greatness of Abraham then lay in hopes; of Melchisedec, in present possession. Melchisedec was the highest and last representative of the Noahic covenant, as Christ was the highest and ever enduring representative of the Abrahamic. Melchisedec, like Christ, unites in himself the *kingly and priestly* offices, which Abraham does not. ALFORD thinks the epithets are, in some sense, strictly true of Melchisedec *himself*; not merely in the typical sense given above; but that he had not, as mortal men have, a beginning or end of life (?). A very improbable theory, and only to be resorted to in the last extremity, which has no place here. With Melchisedec, whose priesthood probably lasted a long period, the priesthood and worship of the true God in Canaan ceased. He was first and last *king-priest* there, till Christ, the antitype; and therefore his priesthood is said to last for ever, because it both lasts a long time, and lasts as long as the nature of the thing itself (namely, his life, and the continuance of God's worship in Canaan) admits. If Melchisedec were high priest for ever in a literal sense, then Christ and he would now still be high priests, and we should have two instead of one (!). THOLUCK remarks, "Melchisedec *remains* in so far as the type remains in the antitype, in so far as his priesthood remains in Christ." The *father* and *mother* of Melchisedec, as also his children, are not descended from Levi, as the Levitical priests (⁸⁰⁰⁰Hebrews 7:6) were required to be, and are not even mentioned by Moses. The wife of Aaron, Elisheba, the *mother* from whom the Levitical priests spring, is mentioned: as also Sarah, the original mother of the Jewish nation itself. As man, Christ had no *father*; as God, *no mother*.

4. consider — not merely *see*, but *weigh with attentive contemplation*, the fact.

even — "to whom (as his superior) Abraham *even* paid tithe (went so far as to pay tithe) of (consisting of, literally, 'from') *the best of the spoils*

(literally, ‘the top of the heap’; whether of corn, the first-fruits of which, taken from the top, used to be consecrated to God; or of spoils, from the top of which the general used to take some portion for consecration to God, or for his own use).” He paid “tithes of ALL,” and those tithes were taken out of the topmost and best portion of the whole spoils.

the patriarch — in the *Greek* emphatically standing at the end of the whole sentence: And this payer of tithe being no less a personage than “the patriarch,” the first forefather and head of our Jewish race and nation See on ^{<800>}Hebrews 7:3, on Melchisedec’s superiority as specially consecrated *king-priest*, above the other *patriarch-priests*.

5. sons of Levi — namely, those alone who belonged to the family of Aaron, to whom the priesthood was restricted. Tithes originally paid to the whole tribe of Levi, became at length attached to the priesthood.

according to the law — sanctioned by Jehovah (^{<800>}Hebrews 9:19).

of their brethren — with whom, in point of natural descent, they are on a level.

though, etc. — Though thus on a level by common descent from Abraham, they yet pay tithe to the Levites, whose brethren they are. Now the Levites are subordinate to the priests; and these again to Abraham, their common progenitor; and Abraham to Melchisedec. “How great” (^{<800>}Hebrews 7:4) then, must this Melchisedec be in respect to his priesthood, as compared with the Levitical, though the latter received tithes! and now unspeakably great must “the Son of God” be, to whom, as the sacerdotal archetype (in God’s purpose), Melchisedec was made like! Thus compare the “consider,” ^{<800>}Hebrews 7:4, in the case of Melchisedec, the type, with the “consider” (*Greek*, “contemplate attentively,” see on ^{<800>}Hebrews 3:1, a stronger word than here) in the case of Christ, the archetype.

6. he whose descent is not counted from them — not from “the sons of Levi,” as those “who receive the priesthood.” This verse explains “without descent” (*Greek*, “genealogy” in both verses, ^{<800>}Hebrews 7:3). He who needs not, as the Levitical priests, to be able to trace his genealogy back to Levi.

received — *Greek*, “*hath* received tithes.”

blessed — *Greek*, “*hath* blessed.” The perfect tense implies that the significance of the fact endures to the present time.

him that had — “the possessor of the promises,” Abraham’s peculiar distinction and designation. Paul exalts Abraham in order still more to exalt Melchisedec. When Christ is the subject, the singular “promise” is used. “The promises” in the plural, refer to God’s promise of greatness to himself and his seed, and of the possession of Canaan, twice repeated before the blessing of Melchisedec. As the priests, though above the people (~~scri~~ Hebrews 7:7) whom it was their duty to “bless,” were yet subordinate to Abraham; and as Abraham was subordinate to Melchisedec, who blessed him, Melchisedec must be much above the Levitical priests.

7. The principle that the blesser is superior to him whom he blesses, holds good only in a blessing given with divine authority; not merely a prayerful wish, but one that is divinely efficient in working its purport, as that of the patriarchs on their children: so Christ’s blessing, ~~scri~~ Luke 24:51 ~~scri~~ Acts 3:26.

8. Second point of superiority: Melchisedec’s is an *enduring*, the Levitical a *transitory*, priesthood. As the law was a *parenthesis* between Abraham’s dispensation of promise of grace, and its enduring fulfillment at Christ’s coming (~~scri~~ Romans 5:20, *Greek*, “The law entered as something *adscititious* and by the way”): so the Levitical priesthood was parenthetical and temporary, between Melchisedec’s typically enduring priesthood, and its antitypical realization in our ever continuing High Priest, Christ.

here — in the *Levitical* priesthood.

there — in the priesthood *after the order of Melchisedec*. In order to bring out the typical parallel more strongly, Paul substitutes, “He of whom it is witnessed that he liveth,” for the more untypical, “He *who is made like to Him* that liveth.” Melchisedec “liveth” merely in his *official* capacity, his priesthood being continued in Christ. Christ, on the other hand, is, in *His own person*, “ever living after the power of an endless life” (~~scri~~ Hebrews 7:16,25). Melchisedec’s death not being recorded, is expressed by the

positive term “liveth,” for the sake of bringing into prominence the antitype, Christ, of whom alone it is strictly and perfectly true, “that He liveth.”

9. as I may so say — to preclude what he is about to say being taken in the mere literal sense; *I may say* that, *virtually*, Levi, in the person of his father Abraham, acknowledged Melchisedec’s superiority, and paid tithes to him.

who receiveth tithes — (Compare ⁸⁰⁷⁵Hebrews 7:5).

in Abraham — *Greek*, “by means of (by the hand of) Abraham”; through Abraham. “Paid tithes,” literally, “hath been tithed,” that is, been taken tithes of.

10. in the loins of his father — that is, *forefather* Abraham. *Christ* did not, in this sense, pay tithes in Abraham, for He never was in the loins of an earthly father [ALFORD]. Though, in respect to His mother, He was “of the fruit of (David’s, and so of) Abraham’s loins,” yet, being supernaturally, without human father, conceived, as He is above the natural law of birth, so is he above the law of tithes. Only those born in the natural way, and so in sin, being under the curse, needed to pay tithe to the priest, that he might make propitiation for their sin. Not so Christ, who derived only His flesh, not also the taint of the flesh, from Abraham. BENGEL. remarks, The blessings which Abraham had *before* meeting Melchisedec were the *general* promises, and the special one of a *natural seed*, and so of Levi; but the promises under which *Christ* was comprehended, and the faith for which Abraham was so commended, followed *after* Abraham’s meeting Melchisedec, and being *blessed by him*: to which fact. ⁸⁰⁸¹Genesis 15:1, “*After* these things,” calls our attention. This explains why Christ, the supernatural seed, is not included as paying tithes through Abraham to Melchisedec.

11. perfection — absolute: “the bringing of man to his highest state, namely, that of salvation and sanctification.”

under it — The reading in the oldest manuscripts is, “*Upon* it (that is, on the ground of it as the basis, the priest having to administer the law, ⁸⁰⁸²Malachi 2:7: it being presupposed) the people (⁸⁰⁸³Hebrews 9:19, ‘*all* the

people') have received the law (the *Greek* is *perfect*, not aorist tense; implying the people were still observing the law)."

what further need — (^{<SKOT>}Hebrews 8:7). For God does nothing needless.

another — rather as *Greek*, "that a *different* priest (one of a different order) should arise (*anew*, ^{<SKOT>}Hebrews 7:15).

not be called — *Greek*, "not be *said (to be)* after the order of Aaron," that is, that, when spoken of in the ^{<EBOD>}Psalms 110:4, "He is not said to be (as we should expect, if the Aaronic priesthood was perfect) after the order of Aaron."

12. For — the reason why Paul presses the words "after the order of Melchisedec" in ^{<EBOD>}Psalms 110:4, namely, because these presuppose a change or transference of the priesthood, and this carries with it a change also of the law (which is inseparably bound up with the priesthood, both stand and fall together, ^{<SKOT>}Hebrews 7:11). This is his answer to those who might object, What need was there of a new covenant?

13. Confirming the truth that *a change is made of the law* (^{<SKOT>}Hebrews 7:12), by another fact showing the distinctness of the new priesthood from the Aaronic.

these things — (^{<EBOD>}Psalms 110:4).

pertaineth — *Greek*, "hath partaken of" (the perfect tense implies the *continuance* still of His manhood).

another — "a *different* tribe" from that of Levi.

14. evident — literally, "manifest before the eyes" as a thing indisputable; a proof that whatever difficulties may now appear, *then* Jesus Christ's genealogy labored under none.

our Lord — the only place where this now common title occurs without "Jesus," or "Christ," except ^{<GRS>}2 Peter 3:15.

sprang — as a plant, and a branch.

Judah — ^{<Q490>}Genesis 49:10 ^{<Q127>}Luke 1:27,39 (Hebron of Judah, where LIGHTFOOT thinks Jesus was conceived) ^{<Q100>}Luke 2:4,5 ^{<GRS>}Revelation 5:5.

of which tribe ... priesthood — “*in respect to which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests*” (so the oldest manuscripts read, nothing to imply that priests were to be taken from it).

15. Another proof that the law, or economy, is changed, namely, forasmuch as Christ is appointed Priest, “not according to the law of a carnal (that is, a mere *outward*) commandment,” but “according to the power of an *indissoluble* (so the *Greek*) life.” The hundred tenth Psalm appoints Him “for ever” (^{<807>}Hebrews 7:17). The Levitical law required a *definite carnal* descent. In contrast stands “the power”; Christ’s spiritual, inward, living power of overcoming death. Not agreeably to a *statute* is Christ appointed, but according to an inward *living power*.

it — the change of the law or economy, the statement (^{<807>}Hebrews 7:12,18).

far more — *Greek*, “more abundantly.”

for that — “seeing that,” literally, “if”; so ^{<850>}Romans 5:10.

after the similitude of Melchisedec — answering to “after the order of Melchisedec” (^{<850>}Hebrews 5:10). The “order” cannot mean a *series of priests*, for Melchisedec neither received his priesthood from, nor transmitted it to, any other mere man; it must mean “answering to the *office* of Melchisedec.” Christ’s priesthood is similar to Melchisedec’s in that it is “for ever” (^{<807>}Hebrews 7:16,17).

another — rather as *Greek*, “a different.”

16. carnal ... endless — mutually contrasted. As “form” and “power” are opposed, ^{<816>}2 Timothy 3:5; so here “the law” and “power,” compare ^{<816>}Romans 8:3, “The law was *weak* through the flesh”; and ^{<807>}Hebrews 7:18, “weakness.” “The law” is here not the law in general, but the *statute* as to the priesthood. “Carnal,” as being only *outward and temporary*, is contrasted with “endless,” or, as *Greek*, “indissoluble.” Commandments is contrasted with “life.” The *law* can give a *commandment*, but it cannot give *life* (^{<807>}Hebrews 7:19). But our High Priest’s inherent “power,” now in heaven, has in Him “life for ever”; ^{<804>}Hebrews 9:14, “through the *eternal Spirit*”; ^{<825>}Hebrews 7:25, “able ... ever liveth” (^{<850>}John 5:26). It is in the

power of His resurrection life, not of His earthly life, that Christ officiates as a Priest.

17. For — proving His *life* to be “endless” or indissoluble (^{<8076} Hebrews 7:16). The emphasis is on “for ever.” The oldest manuscripts read, “*He is testified of*, that Thou art,” etc.

18. there is — *Greek*, “there takes place,” according to ^{<8076} Psalm 110:4.

disannuling — a repealing.

of the commandment — ordaining the Levitical priesthood. And, as the Levitical priesthood and the law are inseparably joined, since the former is repealed, the latter is so also (see on ^{<8076} Hebrews 7:11).

going before — the legal ordinance introducing and giving place to the Christian, the antitypical and permanent end of the former.

weakness and unprofitableness — The opposite of “power” (^{<8076} Hebrews 7:16).

19. For, etc. — justifying his calling the law *weak* and *unprofitable* (^{<8076} Hebrews 7:18). The law could not bring men to: true justification or sanctification before God, which is the “perfection” that we all need in order to be accepted of Him, and which we have in Christ.

nothing — not merely “no one,” but “nothing.” The law brought nothing to its perfected end; everything in it was introductory to its antitype in the Christian economy, which realizes the perfection contemplated; compare “unprofitableness,” ^{<8076} Hebrews 7:18.

did — rather connect with ^{<8076} Hebrews 7:18, thus, “There takes place (by virtue of ^{<8076} Psalm 110:4) a repealing of the commandment (on the one hand), but (on the other) a bringing in *afterwards* (the *Greek* expresses that there is a bringing in of something *over and above* the law; a *superinducing*, or *accession of something new*, namely, something better than the good things which the pre-existing law promised [WAHL]) of a better hope,” not one weak and unprofitable, but, as elsewhere the Christian dispensation is called, “everlasting,” “true,” “the second,” “more excellent,” “different,” “living,” “new,” “to come,” “perfect.” Compare

^{<806}Hebrews 8:6, bringing us *near to God*, now in spirit, hereafter both in spirit and in body.

we draw nigh unto God — the sure token of “perfection.” *Weakness* is the opposite of this filial confidence of access. The access through the legal sacrifices was only symbolical and through the medium of a priest; that through Christ is immediate, perfect, and spiritual.

20. Another proof of the superiority of Christ’s Melchisedec-like priesthood; the oath of God gave a solemn weight to it which was not in the law-priesthood, which was not so confirmed.

he was made priest — rather supply from ^{<802}Hebrews 7:22, which completes the sentence begun in this verse, ^{<802}Hebrews 7:21 being a parenthesis, “inasmuch as not without an oath *He was made surety of the testament* (for ...), of so much better a testament hath Jesus been made the surety.”

21. Translate in the *Greek* order, “For they indeed (the existing legal priests) without the (solemn) *promise* on oath (so the *Greek* [TITTMANN]) are made priests.”

by him — God.

unto him — the Lord, the Son of God (^{<801}Psalms 110:1).

not repent — never change His purpose.

after the order of Melchisedec — omitted in some oldest manuscripts, contained in others.

22. surety — ensuring in His own person the certainty of the covenant to us. This He did by becoming responsible for our guilt, by sealing the covenant with His blood, and by being openly acknowledged as our triumphant Savior by the Father, who raised Him from the dead. Thus He is at once God’s surety for man, and man’s surety for God, and so Mediator between God and man (^{<800}Hebrews 8:6).

better — ^{<800}Hebrews 8:6 13:20, “everlasting.”

testament — sometimes translated, “covenant.” The *Greek* term implies that it is *appointed* by God, and comprises the relations and bearings partly of a *covenant*, partly of a *testament*:

(1) the appointment made without the concurrence of a second party, of somewhat concerning that second party; a last will or testament, so in ^{<806>}Hebrews 9:16,17;

(2) a mutual agreement in which both parties consent.

23. Another proof of superiority; the Levitical priests were many, as death caused the need of continually new ones being appointed in succession. Christ dies not, and so hath a priesthood which passes not from one to another.

were — *Greek*, “are made.”

many — one after another; opposed to His “*unchangeable* (that does not pass from one to another) priesthood” (^{<8024>}Hebrews 7:24).

not suffered to continue — *Greek*, “*hindered from permanently continuing*,” namely, *in the priesthood*.

24. he — emphatic; *Greek*, “Himself.” So in ^{<806>}Psalms 110:4, “THOU art a *priest*”; singular, not *priests*, “many.”

continueth — *Greek*, simple verb, not the compound as in ^{<8023>}Hebrews 7:23. “Remaineth,” namely, *in life*.

unchangeable — *Greek*, “hath His priesthood unchangeable”; *not passing from one to another, intransmissible*. Therefore no earthly so-called apostolic succession of priests are His vicegerents. The Jewish priests had *successors* in office, because “they could not continue by reason of death.” But this Man, because He liveth ever, hath no successor in office, not even Peter (^{<806>}1 Peter 5:1).

25. Wherefore — *Greek*, “Whence”; inasmuch as “He remaineth *for ever*.”

also — as a natural consequence flowing from the last, at the same time *a new and higher thing* [ALFORD].

save — His very name JESUS (^{<8072>}Hebrews 7:22) meaning *Savior*.

to the uttermost — altogether, perfectly, so that nothing should be wanting afterwards for ever [TITTMANN]. It means “in any wise,” “utterly,” in ^{<2311>}Luke 13:11.

come unto God — by faith.

by him — *through Him* as their mediating Priest, instead of through the Levitical priests.

seeing he ever liveth — resuming “He continueth ever,” ^{<8072>}Hebrews 7:24; therefore “He is able to the uttermost”; He is not, like the Levitical priest, prevented by *death*, for “He ever liveth” (^{<8073>}Hebrews 7:23).

to make intercession — There was but the *one offering* on earth once for all. But the *intercession* for us in the heavens (^{<8072>}Hebrews 7:26) is ever continuing, whence the result follows, that we can never be separated from the love of God in Christ. He *intercedes* only for those who come unto God through Him, not for the unbelieving world (^{<8074>}John 17:9). As samples of His intercession, compare the *prophetical* descriptions in the Old Testament. “By an humble omnipotency (for it was by His *humiliation* that He obtained *all power*), or omnipotent humility, appearing in the presence, and presenting His postulations at the throne of God” [BISHOP PEARSON]. He was not only the offering, but the priest who offered it. Therefore, He has become not only a sacrifice, but an intercessor; His intercession being founded on His voluntary offering of Himself without spot to God. We are not only then in virtue of His sacrifice forgiven, but in virtue of the intercession admitted to favor and grace [ARCHBISHOP MAGEE].

26. such — as is above described. The oldest manuscripts read, “also.” “For to us (as *sinner*s; emphatical) there was also becoming (besides the other excellencies of our High Priest) such an High Priest.”

holy — “pious” (a distinct *Greek* word from that for *holy*, which latter implies *consecration*) towards *God*; perfectly answering God’s will in reverent piety (^{<3930>}Psalms 16:10).

harmless — literally, “free from evil” and guile, in relation to *Himself*.

undefiled — not defiled by stain contracted from others, in relation to *men*. Temptation, to which He was exposed, left no trace of evil in Him.

separate — rather, “*separated* from sinners,” namely, in His heavenly state as our High Priest above, after He had been *parted from the earth*, as the Levitical high priest was separated from the people in the sanctuary (whence he was not to go out), ^{<B212>}Leviticus 21:12. Though justifying through faith the ungodly, He hath no contact with them *as such*. He is lifted above our sinful community, being “made higher than the heavens,” at the same time that He makes believers *as such* (not as sinners), “to sit together (with Him) in heavenly places” (^{<B100>}Ephesians 2:6). Just as Moses *on the mount* was separated from and above the people, and alone with God. This proves Jesus is GOD. “Though innumerable lies have been forged against the venerable Jesus, none dared to charge Him with any intemperance” [ORIGEN].

made — Jesus was higher before (^{<B100>}John 17:5), and as the *God-MAN* was *made* so by the Father after His humiliation (compare ^{<B100>}Hebrews 1:4).

higher than the heavens — for “He passed *through* [so the *Greek*] the heavens” (^{<B100>}Hebrews 4:14).

27. daily — “day by day.” The priests *daily* offered sacrifices (^{<B100>}Hebrews 9:6 10:11 ^{<B238>}Exodus 29:38-42). The high priests took part in these daily-offered sacrifices only on festival days; but as they represented the whole priesthood, the daily offerings are here attributed to them; their exclusive function was to offer the atonement “once every year” (^{<B100>}Hebrews 9:7), and “year by year continually” (^{<B100>}Hebrews 10:1). The “daily” strictly belongs to *Christ*, not to the high priests, “who needeth not daily, as those high priests (*year by year*, and their subordinate priests daily), to offer,” etc.

offer up — The *Greek* term is peculiarly used of *sacrifices for sin*. The high priest’s double offering on the day of atonement, the bullock for himself, and the goat for the people’s sins, had its counterpart in the TWO lambs offered daily by the ordinary priests.

this he did — not “died first for His own sins and then the people’s,” but *for the people’s only*. The negation is twofold: He needeth not to offer

(1) daily; nor

(2) to offer for His own sins also; for He offered Himself a spotless sacrifice (^{<S02>}Hebrews 7:26 ^{<S015>}Hebrews 4:15). The sinless alone could offer for the sinful.

once — rather as *Greek*, “once for all.” The sufficiency of the *one* sacrifice to atone for *all* sins *for ever*, resulted from its absolute spotlessness.

28. For — reason for the difference stated in ^{<S027>}Hebrews 7:27, between His one sacrifice and their oft repeated sacrifices, namely, because of His entire freedom from the sinful *infirmity* to which they are subject. *He needed not, as they, to offer FOR HIS OWN SIN*; and being now exempt from death and “perfected for evermore,” *He needs not to REPEAT His sacrifice*.

the word — “the word” confirmed by “the oath.”

which — which *oath* was after the law. namely, in ^{<P00>}Psalms 110:4, abrogating the preceding law-priesthood.

the Son — contrasted with “men.”

consecrated — *Greek*, “made perfect” once for all, as in ^{<S021>}Hebrews 2:10 5:9; see on ^{<R01>}Hebrews 2:10; ^{<R09>}Hebrews 5:9. Opposed to “having infirmity.” *Consecrated as a perfected priest* by His perfected sacrifice, and consequent anointing and exaltation to the right hand of the Father.

CHAPTER 8

HEBREWS 8:1-13.

CHRIST, THE HIGH PRIEST IN THE TRUE SANCTUARY, SUPERSEDING THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD; THE NEW RENDERS OBSOLETE THE OLD COVENANT.

1. the sum — rather, “the principal point”; for the participle is present, not *past*, which would be required if the meaning were “the sum.” “The chief point in (or, ‘in the case’; so the *Greek*, ^{<8910>}Hebrews 9:10,15,17) the things which we are speaking,” literally, “which are being spoken.”

such — so transcendently pre-eminent, namely in this respect, that “He is set on the right hand of,” etc. Infinitely above all other priests in this one grand respect, He exercises His priesthood IN HEAVEN, not in the *earthly* “holiest place” (^{<8912>}Hebrews 10:12). The Levitical high priests, even when they entered the Holiest Place once a year, only *STOOD* for a *brief space before the symbol* of God’s throne; but Jesus *SITS on the throne* of the Divine Majesty in the heaven itself, and this *for ever* (^{<8911>}Hebrews 10:11,12).

2. minister — The *Greek* term implies *priestly ministry* in the temple.

the sanctuary — *Greek*, “the holy places”; the Holy of Holies. Here the heavenly sanctuary is meant.

the true — the archetypal and antitypical, as contrasted with the typical and symbolical (^{<8913>}Hebrews 9:24). *Greek* “*alethinos*” (used here) is opposed to that which does not fulfill its idea, as for instance, *a type*; “*alethes*,” to that which is untrue and unreal, as a lie. The measure of *alethes* is reality; that of *alethinos*, ideality. In *alethes* the idea corresponds to the thing; in *alethinos*, the thing to the idea [KALMIS in ALFORD].

tabernacle — (^{<8911>}Hebrews 9:11). *His body*. Through His glorified body as the tabernacle, Christ passes into the heavenly “Holy of Holies,” the

immediate immaterial presence of God, where He intercedes for us. This tabernacle in which God dwells, is where God in Christ meets us who are “members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” This tabernacle answers to the heavenly Jerusalem, where God’s *visible* presence is to be manifested to His perfected saints and angels, who are united in Christ the Head; in contradistinction to His personal *invisible* presence in the Holy of Holies unapproachable save to Christ. ^{<8014>}John 1:14, “Word ... dwelt among us,” *Greek*, “tabernacled.”

pitched — *Greek*, “fixed” firmly.

not man — as Moses (^{<8015>}Hebrews 8:5).

3. For — assigning his reason for calling him “minister of the sanctuary” (^{<8016>}Hebrews 8:2).

somewhat — He does not offer again His *once for all* completed sacrifice. But as the high priest did *not* enter the Holy Place *without blood*, so Christ has entered the heavenly Holy Place *with His own blood*. That “blood of sprinkling” is in heaven. And is thence made effectual to sprinkle believers as the end of their election (^{<8017>}1 Peter 1:2). The term “consecrate” as a priest, is literally, to *fill the hand*, implying that an offering is given into the hands of the priest, which it is his duty to present to God. If a man be a priest, he must have some gift in his hands to offer. Therefore, Christ, as a priest, has His blood as His oblation to offer before God.

4. Implying that Christ’s priestly office is exercised in heaven, not in earth; in the power of His resurrection life, not of His earthly life.

For — The oldest manuscripts read, “accordingly then.”

if, etc. — “if He were on earth, He would *not even* (so the *Greek*) be a priest” (compare ^{<8018>}Hebrews 7:13,14); therefore, certainly, He could not exercise the high priestly function in the earthly Holy of Holies.

seeing that, etc. — “since there are” already, and exist now (the temple service not yet being set aside, as it was on the destruction of Jerusalem), “those (the oldest manuscripts omit ‘priests’) who offer *the* (appointed) gifts according to (the) law.” *Therefore, His sacerdotal “ministry” must be “in the heavens,” not on earth* (^{<8019>}Hebrews 8:1). “If His priesthood

terminated on the earth, He would not even be a priest at all” [BENGEL]. I conceive that the denial here of Christ’s priesthood *on earth* does not extend to the sacrifice on the cross which *He offered as a priest on earth*; but applies only to the crowning work of His priesthood, the *bringing of the blood into the Holy of Holies*, which He could not have done in the *earthly* Holy of Holies, as not being an Aaronic priest. The *place* (the heavenly Holy of Holies) was as essential to the atonement being made as the *oblation* (the blood). The body was burnt without the gate; but the sanctification was effected by the presentation of the blood within the sanctuary by the high priest. If on earth, He would not be a priest *in the sense of the law of Moses* (“according to the law” is emphatic).

5. Who — namely, the priests.

serve unto the example — not “*after* the example,” as BENGEL explains. But as in ^{<8330>}Hebrews 13:10, “serve the tabernacle,” that is, do it service: so “serve (the tabernacle which is but) *the outline* and shadow.” The *Greek* for “example” is here taken for the *sketch, copy, or suggestive representation* of the heavenly sanctuary, which is the antitypical reality and primary archetype. “The mount” answers to *heaven*, ^{<8122>}Hebrews 12:22.

admonished — The *Greek* especially applies to *divine responses and commands*.

to make — “perfectly”: so the *Greek*.

See — Take heed, accurately observing the pattern, that so thou mayest make, etc.

saith he — God.

the pattern — an accurate representation, presented in vision to Moses, of the heavenly real sanctuary. Thus the earthly tabernacle was copy of a copy; but the latter accurately representing the grand archetypal original in heaven (^{<1250>}Exodus 25:40).

6. now — not *time*; but “as it is.”

more excellent ministry — than any earthly ministry.

by how much — in proportion as.

mediator — coming between us and God, to carry into effect God's covenant with us. "The messenger (angel) of the covenant."

which — *Greek*, "one which" [ALFORD]: *inasmuch as being one which*.

established — *Greek*, "enacted as a law." So ^{<8182>}Romans 3:27, "law of faith"; and ^{<8182>}Romans 8:2 9:31, apply "law" to the Gospel covenant. It is implied hereby, the Gospel is founded on the law, in the spirit and essence of the latter.

upon — resting upon.

better promises — enumerated ^{<8182>}Hebrews 8:10,11. The Old Testament promises were mainly of earthly, the New Testament promises, of heavenly blessings: the exact fulfillment of the earthly promises was a pledge of the fulfillment of the heavenly. "Like a physician who prescribes a certain diet to a patient, and then when the patient is beginning to recover, changes the diet, permitting what he had before forbidden; or as a teacher gives his pupil an elementary lesson at first; preparatory to leading him to a higher stage": so Rabbi Albo in his *Ikkarim*. Compare ^{<8172>}Jeremiah 7:21,22, which shows that God's original design in the old covenant ritual system was, that it should be pedagogical, as a schoolmaster leading and preparing men for Christ.

7. Same reasoning as in ^{<8171>}Hebrews 7:11.

faultless — perfect in all its parts, so as *not to be found fault with* as wanting anything which ought to be there: answering all the purposes of a law. The law in its *morality* was *blameless* (*Greek*, "*amomos*"); but in *saving us* it was defective, and so not *faultless* (*Greek*, "*amemptos*").

should no place have been sought — as it has to be now; and as it is sought in the prophecy (^{<8182>}Hebrews 8:8-11). The old covenant would have anticipated all man's wants, so as to give no occasion for *seeking* something more perfectly adequate. Compare on the phrase "place ... sought," ^{<8172>}Hebrews 12:17.

8. finding fault with them — the people of the old covenant, who were not made "faultless" by it (^{<8182>}Hebrews 8:7); and whose *disregard* of

God's covenant made Him to “*regard them not*” (^{<808>}Hebrews 8:9). The law is not *in itself* blamed, but *the people* who had not observed it.

he saith — (^{<283>}Jeremiah 31:31-34; compare ^{<2118>}Ezekiel 11:19 36:25-27). At Rama, the headquarters of Nebuzar-adan, whither the captives of Jerusalem had been led, Jeremiah uttered this prophecy of Israel's restoration under another David, whereby Rachel, wailing for her lost children, shall be comforted; literally in part fulfilled at the restoration under Zerubbabel, and more fully to be hereafter at Israel's return to their own land; spiritually fulfilled in the Gospel covenant, whereby God forgives absolutely His people's sins, and writes His law by His Spirit on the hearts of believers, the true Israel. “This prophecy forms the third part of the third trilogy of the three great trilogies into which Jeremiah's prophecies may be divided: Jeremiah 21-25, against the shepherds of the people; Jeremiah 26-29, against the false prophets; Jeremiah 30 and 31, the book of restoration” [DELITZSCH in ALFORD].

Behold, the days come — the frequent formula introducing a Messianic prophecy.

make — *Greek*, “perfect”; “consummate.” A suitable expression as to the new covenant, which perfected what the old could not (compare end of ^{<808>}Hebrews 8:9, with end of ^{<808>}Hebrews 8:10).

Israel ... Judah — Therefore, the ten tribes, as well as Judah, share in the new covenant. As both shared the exile, so both shall share the literal and spiritual restoration.

9. Not according to, etc. — very different from, and far superior to, the old covenant, which only “worked wrath” (^{<418>}Romans 4:15) through man's “not regarding” it. The new covenant enables us to obey by the Spirit's inward impulse producing love because of the forgiveness of our sins.

made with — rather as *Greek*, “made to”: the Israelites being only recipients, not coagents [ALFORD] *with* God.

I took them by the hand — as a father takes his child by the hand to support and guide his steps. “There are three periods:

(1) that of the promise;

(2) that of the pedagogical instruction;

(3) that of fulfillment” [BENGEL]. The second, that of the pedagogical pupilage, began at the exodus from Egypt.

I regarded them not — *English Version*, ^{<2612>}Jeremiah 31:32, translates, “Although *I was an husband unto* them.” Paul’s translation here is supported by the *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, and GESENIUS, and accords with the kindred *Arabic*. The Hebrews *regarded not* God, so God, in righteous retribution, *regarded* them *not*. On “continued not in my covenant,” Schelling observes: The law was in fact the mere *ideal* of a religious constitution: in *practice*, the Jews were throughout, before the captivity, more or less polytheists, except in the time of David, and the first years of Solomon (the type of Messiah’s reign). Even after the return from Babylon, idolatry was succeeded by what was not much better, formalism and hypocrisy (^{<4124>}Matthew 12:43). The law was

(1) a typical picture, tracing out the features of the glorious Gospel to be revealed;

(2) it had a delegated virtue from the Gospel, which ceased, therefore, when the Gospel came.

10. make with — *Greek*, “make unto.”

Israel — comprising the before disunited (^{<5005>}Hebrews 8:8) ten tribes’ kingdom, and that of Judah. They are united in the spiritual Israel, the elect Church, now: they shall be so in the literal restored kingdom of Israel to come.

I will put — literally, “(I) giving.” This is the first of the “better promises” (^{<5006>}Hebrews 8:6).

mind — their intelligent faculty.

in, etc. — rather, “ON their hearts.” Not on tables of stone as the law (^{<4125>}2 Corinthians 3:3).

write — *Greek*, “inscribe.”

and I will be to them a God, etc. — fulfilled first in the outward kingdom of God. Next, in the inward Gospel kingdom. Thirdly, in the kingdom at

once outward and inward, the spiritual being manifested outwardly (~~REV~~ Revelation 21:3). Compare a similar progression as to the priesthood

(1) ~~EXOD~~ Exodus 19:6;

(2) ~~1 PETER~~ 1 Peter 2:5;

(3) ~~ISAIAH~~ Isaiah 61:6 ~~REV~~ Revelation 1:6. This progressive advance of the significance of the Old Testament institutions, etc., says THOLUCK, shows the *transparency* and prophetic character which runs throughout the whole.

11. Second of the “better promises” (~~HEB~~ Hebrews 8:6).

they shall not — “they shall not have to teach” [ALFORD].

his neighbor — So *Vulgate* reads; but the oldest manuscripts have “his (fellow) *citizen*.”

brother — a closer and more endearing relation than *fellow citizen*.

from the least to the greatest — *Greek*, “from the little one to the great one.” ~~ZEC~~ Zechariah 12:8, “He that is feeble among them shall be as David.” Under the old covenant, the priest’s lips were to keep knowledge, and at his mouth the people were to seek the law: under the new covenant, the Holy Spirit teaches every believer. Not that the mutual teaching of brethren is excluded while the covenant is being promulgated; but when once the Holy Spirit shall have fully taught all the remission of their sins and inward sanctification, then there shall be no further’ need of man teaching his fellow man. Compare ~~1 THESS~~ 1 Thessalonians 4:9 5:1, an earnest of that perfect state to come. On the way to that perfect state every man should teach his neighbor. “The teaching is not hard and forced, because grace renders all teachable; for it is not the ministry of the letter, but of the spirit (~~2 COR~~ 2 Corinthians 3:6). The believer’s firmness does not depend on the *authority* of human teachers. God Himself teaches” [BENGEL]. The New Testament is shorter than the Old Testament, because, instead of the *details* of an outward letter law, it gives the all-embracing *principles* of the spiritual law written on the conscience, leading one to spontaneous instinctive obedience in outward details. None save the Lord can teach effectually, “know the Lord.”

12. For, etc. — the *third* of “the better promises” (~~scrib~~ Hebrews 8:6). The *forgiveness of sins* is, and will be, the root of this new state of inward grace and knowledge of the Lord. Sin being abolished, sinners obtain grace.

I will be merciful — *Greek*, “propitious”; the *Hebrew*, “*salach*,” is always used of God only in relation to men.

and their iniquities — not found in *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and one oldest *Greek* manuscript; but most oldest manuscripts have the words (compare ~~scrib~~ Hebrews 10:17).

remember no more — Contrast the law, ~~scrib~~ Hebrews 10:3.

13. he — God.

made ... old — “hath (at the time of speaking the prophecy) antiquated the first covenant.” From the time of God’s mention of a NEW covenant (since God’s words are all realities) the first covenant might be regarded as ever dwindling away, until its complete abolition on the actual introduction of the Gospel. Both covenants cannot exist side by side. Mark how verbal inspiration is proved in Paul’s argument turning wholly on the one word “NEW” (covenant), occurring but once in the Old Testament.

that which decayeth — *Greek*, “that which is being antiquated,” namely, at the time when Jeremiah spake. For in Paul’s time, according to his view, the new had absolutely set aside the old covenant. The *Greek* for (*Kaine*) *New* (Testament) implies that it is *of a different kind* and *supersedes the old*: not merely *recent* (*Greek*, “*nea*”). Compare ~~scrib~~ Hosea 3:4,5.

CHAPTER 9

HEBREWS 9:1-28.

INFERIORITY OF THE OLD TO THE NEW COVENANT IN THE MEANS OF ACCESS TO GOD: THE BLOOD OF BULLS AND GOATS OF NO REAL AVAIL: THE BLOOD OF CHRIST ALL-SUFFICIENT TO PURGE AWAY SIN, WHENCE FLOWS OUR HOPE OF HIS APPEARING AGAIN FOR OUR PERFECT SALVATION.

1. Then verily — *Greek*, “Accordingly then.” Resuming the subject from ~~ROM~~ Hebrews 8:5. In accordance with the command given to Moses, “the first covenant had,” etc.

had — not “has,” for as a *covenant* it no longer existed, though its rites were observed till the destruction of Jerusalem.

ordinances — of divine right and institution.

service — worship.

a worldly sanctuary — *Greek*, “its (literally, ‘*the*’) sanctuary worldly,” mundane; consisting of the elements of the visible world. Contrasted with *the heavenly sanctuary*. Compare ~~ROM~~ Hebrews 9:11,12, “not of this building,” ~~ROM~~ Hebrews 9:24. Material, outward, perishing (however precious its materials were), and also defective religiously. In ~~ROM~~ Hebrews 9:2-5, “*the worldly sanctuary*” is discussed; in ~~ROM~~ Hebrews 9:6, etc., the “ordinances of worship.” The outer tabernacle the Jews believed, signified *this world*; the Holy of Holies, *heaven*. JOSEPHUS calls the outer, divided into two parts, “a secular and common place,” answering to “the earth and sea”; and the inner holiest place, the third part, appropriated to God and not accessible to men.

2. Defining “the worldly tabernacle.”

a tabernacle — “the tabernacle.”

made — built and furnished.

the first — the anterior tabernacle.

candlestick ... table — typifying *light* and *life* (⁴²⁵⁸Exodus 25:31-39). The candlestick consisted of a shaft and six branches of gold, seven in all, the bowls made like almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch. It was carried in Vespasian's triumph, and the figure is to be seen on Titus' arch at Rome. The *table* of shittim wood, covered with gold, was for the showbread (⁴²⁵⁹Exodus 25:23-30).

showbread — literally, “the setting forth of the loaves,” that is, the loaves set forth: “the show of the bread” [ALFORD]. In the outer holy place: so the Eucharist continues until our entrance into the heavenly Holy of Holies (⁴¹²⁶1 Corinthians 11:26).

which, etc. — “which (tabernacle) is called the holy place,” as distinguished from “the Holy of Holies.”

3. And — *Greek*, “But.”

after — behind; within.

second veil — There were two veils or curtains, one before the Holy of Holies (*catapetasma*), here alluded to, the other before the tabernacle door (*calumma*).

called — as opposed to “the true.”

4. golden censer — The *Greek*, must not be translated “altar of incense,” for *it* was not in “the holiest” place “after the second veil,” but in “the holy place”; but as in ⁴⁴³⁹2 Chronicles 26:19, and ⁴¹⁸¹Ezekiel 8:11, “censer”: so *Vulgate* and *Syriac*. This GOLDEN censer was only used on the day of atonement (other kinds of censers on other days), and is therefore associated with *the holiest place*, as being taken into it on that anniversary by the high priest. The expression “which had,” does not mean that the golden censer was deposited there, for in that case the high priest would have had to go in and bring it out before burning incense in it; but that the golden censer was one of the articles *belonging to*, and used for, the yearly service in the holiest place. He virtually supposes (without specifying) the existence of the “altar of incense” in the anterior holy place, by mentioning

the golden censer filled with incense from it: the incense answers to *the prayers of the saints*; and the altar though outside the holiest place, is connected with it (*standing close by the second veil, directly before the ark of the covenant*), even as we find an antitypical altar in heaven. The rending of the veil by Christ has brought the antitypes to the altar, candlestick, and showbread of the anterior holy place into the holiest place, heaven. In ^{<1062>}1 Kings 6:22, *Hebrew*, “*the altar*” is said to *belong to the oracle*, or holiest place (compare ^{<0300>}Exodus 30:6).

ark — of shittim wood, that is, acacia. Not in the second temple, but in its stead was a stone basement (called “the stone of foundation”), three fingers high.

pot — “golden,” added in the *Septuagint*, and sanctioned by Paul.

manna — an omer, each man’s daily portion. In ^{<1089>}1 Kings 8:9 ^{<4590>}2 Chronicles 5:10, it is said there was nothing in the ark of Solomon’s temple save the two stone tables of the law put in by Moses. But the expression that there was nothing THEN therein save the two tables, leaves the inference to be drawn that formerly there were the other things mentioned by the Rabbis and by Paul here, the pot of manna (the memorial of God’s providential care of Israel) and the rod of Aaron, the memorial of the lawful priesthood (^{<0475>}Numbers 17:3,5,7,10). The expressions “before the Lord” (^{<0650>}Exodus 16:32), and “before the testimony” (^{<0470>}Numbers 17:10) thus mean, “IN the ark.” “In,” however, may be used here (as the corresponding *Hebrew* word) as to things *attached to* the ark as appendages, as the book of the law was put “*in the side of the ark*,” and so the golden jewels offered by the Philistines (^{<0068>}1 Samuel 6:8).

tables of the covenant — (^{<890>}Deuteronomy 9:9 10:2).

5. over it — over “the ark of the covenant.”

cherubim — representing the ruling powers by which God acts in the moral and natural world. (See on ^{<3000>}Ezekiel 1:6; ^{<3000>}Ezekiel 10:1). Hence sometimes they answer to the ministering angels; but mostly to the elect redeemed, by whom God shall hereafter rule the world and set forth His manifold wisdom: redeemed humanity, combining in, and with itself, the highest forms of subordinate creaturely life; not angels. They stand on the

mercy seat, and *on that ground* become the habitation of God, from which His glory is to shine upon the world. They expressly say, ^{<618>}Revelation 5:8-10, “Thou hast *redeemed us*.” They are there *distinguished from the angels*, and associated with the elders. They were of one piece with the mercy seat, even as the Church is one with Christ: their sole standing is on the blood-sprinkled mercy seat; they gaze down at it as the redeemed shall for ever; they are “the habitation of God through the Spirit.”

of glory — The cherubim were *bearers* of the divine *glory*, whence, perhaps, they derive their name. The Shekinah, or cloud of *glory*, in which Jehovah appeared between the cherubim over the mercy seat, the lid of the ark, is doubtless the reference. THOLUCK thinks the twelve loaves of the showbread represent the twelve tribes of the nation, *presented as a community* before God consecrated to Him (just as in the Lord’s Supper believers, the spiritual Israel, all partaking of the one bread, and becoming one bread and one body, present themselves before the Lord as consecrated to Him, ^{<616>}1 Corinthians 10:16,17); the oil and light, the pure knowledge of the Lord, in which the covenant people are to shine (the *seven* (lights), implying perfection); the ark of the covenant, the symbol of God’s kingdom in the old covenant, and representing God dwelling among His own; the ten commandments in the ark, the law as the basis of union between God and man; the mercy seat covering the law and sprinkled with the blood of atonement for the collective sin of the people, God’s mercy [in Christ] stronger than the law; the cherubim, the personified [redeemed] creation, looking down on the mercy seat, where God’s mercy, and God’s law, are set forth as the basis of creation.

mercy seat — *Greek*, “the propitiatory”: the golden cover of the ark, on which was sprinkled the blood of the propitiatory sacrifice on the day of atonement; the footstool of Jehovah, the meeting place of Him and His people.

we cannot — conveniently: besides what met the eye in the sanctuary, there were spiritual realities symbolized which it would take too long to discuss in detail, our chief subject at present being the *priesthood* and the *sacrifices*. “Which” refers not merely to the cherubim, but to *all* the contents of the sanctuary enumerated in ^{<800>}Hebrews 9:2-5.

6. The use made of the sanctuary so furnished by the high priest on the anniversary of atonement.

ordained — arranged.

always — twice at the least every day, for the morning and evening care of the lamps, and offering of incense (^{<207>}Exodus 30:7,8).

went — *Greek*, “enter”: present tense.

7. **once every year** — the tenth day of the seventh month. He entered within the veil *on that day* twice at least. Thus “once” means here *on the one occasion only*. The two, or possibly more, entrances on that one day were regarded as parts of the one whole.

not without blood — (^{<308>}Hebrews 8:3).

offered — *Greek*, “offers.”

errors — *Greek*, “ignorances”: “inadvertent errors.” They might have known, as the law was clearly promulgated, and they were bound to study it; so that their *ignorance* was culpable (compare ^{<407>}Acts 3:17 ^{<408>}Ephesians 4:18 ^{<414>}1 Peter 1:14). Though one’s ignorance may mitigate one’s punishment (^{<208>}Luke 12:48), it does not wholly exempt from punishment.

8. **The Holy Ghost** — Moses himself did not comprehend the typical meaning (^{<411>}1 Peter 1:11,12).

signifying — by the typical exclusion of all from the holiest, save the high priest once a year.

the holiest of all — heaven, the antitype.

the first tabernacle — the anterior tabernacle, representative of the whole Levitical system. *While it* (the first tabernacle, and that which represents the Levitical system) *as yet* “has a standing” (so the *Greek*, that is, “has continuance”: “lasts”), *the way to heaven* (the antitypical “holiest place”) *is not yet made manifest* (compare ^{<309>}Hebrews 10:19,20). The Old Testament economy is represented by the holy place, the New Testament economy by the Holy of Holies. Redemption, by Christ, has opened the Holy of Holies (access to heaven by *faith* now, ^{<310>}Hebrews

4:16 7:19,25 10:19,22; by *sight* hereafter, ^{<2000>}Isaiah 33:24 ^{<1119>}Revelation 11:19 21:2,3) to all mankind. The *Greek* for “not yet” (*me po*) refers to the mind of the Spirit: the Spirit intimating that men should *not think* the way was yet opened [TITTMANN]. The *Greek* negative, “*ou po*,” would deny the *fact* objectively; “*me po*” denies the thing subjectively.

9. Which — “The which,” namely, anterior tabernacle: “*as being that which was*” [ALFORD].

figure — *Greek*, “parable”: *a parabolic setting forth of the character of the Old Testament.*

for — “*in reference to the existing time.*” *The time of the temple-worship* really belonged to the Old Testament, but *continued still in Paul’s time and that of his Hebrew readers.* “The time of reformation” (^{<3000>}Hebrews 9:10) stands in contrast to this, “the existing time”; though, in reality, “the time of reformation,” the New Testament time, was now *present* and existing. So “the age *to come*,” is the phrase applied to the Gospel, because it was *present only to believers*, and its fullness even to them is still *to come*. Compare ^{<3000>}Hebrews 9:11, “good things to come.”

in which — *tabernacle*, not *time*, according to the reading of the oldest manuscripts. Or translate, “according to which” *parabolic representation*, or *figure*.

were — *Greek*, “are.”

gifts — unbloody oblations.

could not — *Greek*, “cannot”: are not able.

him that did the service — any worshipper. The *Greek* is “*latreuein*,” *serve* God, which is all men’s duty; not “*leitourgein*,” to serve in a *ministerial office*.

make ... perfect — perfectly remove the sense of guilt, and sanctify inwardly through love.

as pertaining to the conscience — “in respect to the (moral-religious) consciousness.” They can only reach as far as the outward flesh (compare “*carnal ordinances*,” ^{<3000>}Hebrews 9:10,13,14).

10. Which — sacrifices.

stood — consisted in [ALFORD]; or, “have attached to them” only things which appertain to the use of foods, etc. The rites of meats, etc., go *side by side* with the sacrifices [THOLUCK and WAHL]; compare ^{<8126>}Colossians 2:16.

drinks — (^{<8119>}Leviticus 10:9 11:4). Usage subsequently to the law added many observances as to meats and drinks.

washings — (^{<1298>}Exodus 29:4).

and carnal ordinances — One oldest manuscript, *Syriac* and *Coptic*, omit “and.” “Carnal ordinances” stand in apposition to “sacrifices” (^{<8909>}Hebrews 9:9). *Carnal* (outward, affecting only the *flesh*) is opposed to *spiritual*. Contrast “flesh” with “conscience” (^{<8093>}Hebrews 9:13,14).

imposed — as a burden (^{<4150>}Acts 15:10,28) continually pressing heavy.

until the time of reformation — *Greek*, “the *season of rectification*,” when the reality should supersede the type (^{<8088>}Hebrews 8:8-12). Compare “better,” ^{<8123>}Hebrews 9:23.

11. But — in contrast to “*could not* make ... perfect” (^{<8099>}Hebrews 9:9).

Christ — The Messiah, of whom all the prophets foretold; not “Jesus” here. From whom the “reformation” (^{<8090>}Hebrews 9:10), or *rectification*, emanates, which frees from the yoke of carnal ordinances, and which is being realized gradually now, and shall be perfectly in the consummation of “the age (world) to come.” “Christ ... High Priest,” exactly answers to ^{<8015>}Leviticus 4:5, “the priest that is anointed.”

being come an, etc. — rather, “having come forward (compare ^{<8007>}Hebrews 10:7, a different *Greek* word, picturesquely presenting Him before us) *as* High Priest.” The Levitical priests must therefore retire. Just as on the day of atonement, no work was done, no sacrifice was offered, or priest was allowed to be in the tabernacle while the high priest went into the holiest place to make atonement (^{<8167>}Leviticus 16:17,29). So not our righteousness, nor any other priest’s sacrifice, but Christ alone atones; and as the high priest before offering incense had on common garments of a priest, but after it wore his holy garments of “glory and beauty”

(^{<1282D}Exodus 28:2,40) in entering the holiest, so Christ entered the heavenly holiest in His glorified body.

good things to come — Greek, “the good things to come,” ^{<300H}Hebrews 10:1; “better promises,” (^{<300H}Hebrews 8:6; the “eternal inheritance,” ^{<300H}Hebrews 9:15 ^{<100H}1 Peter 1:4; the “things hoped for,” ^{<300H}Hebrews 11:1).

by a ... tabernacle — joined with “He entered.” Translate, “*Through the ... tabernacle*” (of which we know) [ALFORD]. As the Jewish high priest passed *through* the anterior tabernacle into the holiest place, so Christ passed through *heaven* into the inner abode of the unseen and unapproachable God. Thus, “the tabernacle” here is the *heavens through* which He passed (see on ^{<300H}Hebrews 4:14). But “the tabernacle” is also *the glorified body of Christ* (see on ^{<300H}Hebrews 8:2), “not of this building” (not of the mere natural “*creation*, but of the spiritual and heavenly, *the new creation*”), the Head of the mystical body, the Church. *Through* this glorified body He passes into the heavenly holiest place (^{<300H}Hebrews 9:24), the immaterial, unapproachable presence of God, where He intercedes for us. *His glorified body*, as the meeting place of God and all Christ’s redeemed, and the angels, answers to *the heavens* through which He passed, and passes. His *body* is opposed to the *tabernacle*, as His blood to the blood of goats, etc.

greater — as contrasted with the small dimensions of the earthly anterior tabernacle.

more perfect — effective in giving pardon, peace, sanctification, and access to closest communion with God (compare ^{<300H}Hebrews 9:9 ^{<300H}Hebrews 10:1).

not made with hands — but by the Lord Himself (^{<300H}Hebrews 8:2).

12. Neither — “Nor yet.”

by — “through”; as the means of His approach.

goats ... calves — not a bullock, such as the Levitical high priest offered for himself, and a goat for the people, on the day of atonement (^{<100H}Leviticus 16:6,15), *year by year*, whence the plural is used, *goats ... calves*. Besides the goat offered for the people the blood of which was

sprinkled before the mercy seat, the high priest led forth a second goat, namely, the scapegoat; over it he confessed the people's sins, putting them on the head of the goat, which was sent as the sin-bearer into the wilderness out of sight, implying that the atonement effected by the goat sin offering (of which the ceremony of the scapegoat is a part, and not distinct from the sin offering) consisted in the transfer of the people's sins on the goat, and their consequent removal out of sight. The translation of sins on the victim usual in other expiatory sacrifices being omitted in the case of the slain goat, but employed in the case of the goat sent away, proved the two goats were regarded as one offering [ARCHBISHOP MAGEE]. Christ's death is symbolized by the slain goat; His resurrection to life by the living goat sent away. Modern Jews substitute in some places a *cock* for the goat as an expiation, the sins of the offerers being transferred to the entrails, and exposed on the housetop for the birds to carry out of sight, as the scapegoat did; the *Hebrew* for "man" and "cock" being similar, *gebher* [BUXTORF].

by — "through," as the means of His entrance; the key unlocking the heavenly Holy of Holies to Him. The *Greek* is forcible, "through THE blood of His own" (compare ^{<802>}Hebrews 9:23).

once — "once for all."

having obtained — having *thereby* obtained; literally, "found for Himself," as a thing of insuperable difficulty to all save Divine Omnipotence, self-devoting zeal, and love, to find. The access of Christ to the Father was arduous (^{<807>}Hebrews 5:7). None before had trodden the path.

eternal — The entrance of our Redeemer, *once for all*, into the heavenly holiest place, secures *eternal* redemption to us; whereas the Jewish high priest's entrance was repeated year by year, and the effect temporary and partial, "On redemption," compare ^{<402>}Matthew 20:28 ^{<400>}Ephesians 1:7 ^{<5014>}Colossians 1:14 ^{<5005>}1 Timothy 2:5 ^{<5024>}Titus 2:14 ^{<4019>}1 Peter 1:19.

HEBREWS 9:13-28.

PROOF OF AND ENLARGEMENT ON, THE “ETERNAL REDEMPTION”

For His blood, offered by Himself, purifies not only outwardly, as the Levitical sacrifices on the day of atonement, but inwardly unto the service of the living God (^{<893>} Hebrews 9:13,14). His death is the inaugurating act of the new covenant, and of the heavenly sanctuary (^{<895>} Hebrews 9:15-23). His entrance into the true Holy of Holies is the consummation of His once-for-all-offered sacrifice of atonement (^{<892>} Hebrews 9:24,26); henceforth, His reappearance alone remains to complete our redemption (^{<892>} Hebrews 9:27,28).

13. if — as we know is the case; so the *Greek* indicative means. Argument from the less to the greater. If the blood of mere brutes could purify in any, however small a degree, how much more shall inward purification, and complete and eternal salvation, be wrought by the blood of Christ, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead?

ashes of an heifer — (^{<896>} Numbers 19:16-18). The type is full of comfort for us. The water of separation, made of the ashes of the red heifer, was the provision for removing ceremonial defilement whenever incurred *by contact with the dead*. As she was slain without the camp, so Christ (compare ^{<891>} Hebrews 13:11 ^{<897>} Numbers 19:3,4). The ashes were laid by for constant use; so the continually cleansing effects of Christ's blood, once for all shed. In our wilderness journey we are continually contracting defilement by contact with the spiritually dead, and with dead works, and need therefore continual application to the antitypical life-giving cleansing blood of Christ, whereby we are afresh restored to peace and living communion with God in the heavenly holy place.

the unclean — *Greek*, “those defiled” on any particular occasion.

purifying — *Greek*, “purity.”

the flesh — Their effect in themselves extended no further. The law had a carnal and a spiritual aspect; *carnal*, as an instrument of the Hebrew polity, God, their King, accepting, in minor offenses, expiatory victims

instead of the sinner, otherwise doomed to death; spiritual, as *the shadow of good things to come* (^{<800f} Hebrews 10:1). The spiritual Israelite derived, in partaking of these legal rights, spiritual blessings not flowing from them, but from the great antitype. Ceremonial sacrifices released from *temporal penalties* and *ceremonial disqualifications*; Christ's sacrifice releases from *everlasting penalties* (^{<800d} Hebrews 9:12), and *moral impurities on the conscience* disqualifying from access to God (^{<8004} Hebrews 9:14). The purification of the flesh (the mere outward man) was by "sprinkling"; the *washing* followed by inseparable connection (^{<0009} Numbers 19:19). So *justification* is followed by *renewing*.

14. offered himself — The voluntary nature of the offering gives it especial efficacy. He "through the eternal Spirit," that is, His divine Spirit (^{<8000} Romans 1:4, in contrast to His "flesh," ^{<8005} Hebrews 9:3; *His Godhead*, ^{<0006} 1 Timothy 3:16 ^{<0008} 1 Peter 3:18), "His inner personality" [ALFORD], which gave a free consent to the act, offered Himself. The animals offered had no *spirit* or will to consent in the act of sacrifice; they were offered *according to the law*; they had a life neither enduring, nor of any intrinsic efficacy. But He from eternity, with *His divine and everlasting Spirit*, concurred with the Father's will of redemption by Him. His offering began on the altar of the cross, and was completed in His entering the holiest place with His blood. The *eternity* and infinitude of His divine Spirit (compare ^{<8006} Hebrews 7:16) gives *eternal* ("eternal redemption," ^{<800d} Hebrews 9:12, also compare ^{<8005} Hebrews 9:15) and infinite merit to His offering, so that not even the infinite justice of God has any exception to take against it. It was "through His most burning love, flowing from His eternal Spirit," that He offered Himself [OECOLAMPADIUS].

without spot — The animal victims had to be without *outward* blemish; Christ on the cross was a victim *inwardly* and *essentially* stainless (^{<0009} 1 Peter 1:19).

purge — purify from fear, guilt, alienation from Him, and selfishness, the source of *dead works* (^{<800d} Hebrews 9:22,23).

your — The oldest manuscripts read "our." The *Vulgate*, however, supports *English Version* reading.

conscience — moral religious *consciousness*.

dead works — All works done in the natural state, which is a state of sin, are *dead*; for they come not from living faith in, and love to, “the *living* God” (^{<810>}Hebrews 11:6). As contact with a dead body defiled ceremonially (compare the allusion, “ashes of an heifer,” ^{<809>}Hebrews 9:13), so dead works defile the inner consciousness spiritually.

to serve — *so as to serve*. The ceremonially unclean could not *serve God* in the outward communion of His people; so the unrenewed cannot serve God in spiritual communion. Man’s works before justification, however lifelike they look, are dead, and cannot therefore be accepted before the living God. To have offered a dead animal to God would have been an insult (compare ^{<300>}Malachi 1:8); much more for a man not justified by Christ’s blood to offer dead works. But those purified by Christ’s blood in *living* faith do serve (^{<607>}Romans 12:1), and shall more fully serve God (^{<620>}Revelation 22:3).

living God — therefore requiring living spiritual service (^{<604>}John 4:24).

15. for this cause — Because of the all-cleansing power of His blood, this fits Him to be Mediator (^{<806>}Hebrews 8:6, ensuring to both parties, God and us, the ratification) of the new covenant, which secures both forgiveness for the sins not covered by the former imperfect covenant or testament, and also an eternal inheritance to the called.

by means of death — rather, as *Greek*, “death having taken place.” At the moment that His death took place, the necessary effect is, “the called receive the (*fulfillment of the*) promise” (so ^{<620>}Luke 24:49 uses “promise”; ^{<805>}Hebrews 6:15 ^{<400>}Acts 1:4); that moment divides the Old from the New Testament. The “called” are the elect “heirs,” “partakers of the heavenly calling” (^{<806>}Hebrews 3:1).

redemption of ... transgressions ... under ... first testament — the transgressions of *all men* from Adam to Christ, first against the primitive revelation, then against the revelations to the patriarchs, then against the law given to Israel, the representative people of the world. The “first testament” thus includes the whole period from Adam to Christ, and not merely that of the covenant with Israel, which was a concentrated representation of *the covenant made with* (or *the first testament* given to) *mankind by sacrifice*, down from the fall to redemption. Before the

inheritance by the New Testament (for here the idea of the “INHERITANCE,” following as the result of Christ’s “death,” being introduced, requires the *Greek* to be translated “testament,” as it was before *covenant*) could come in, there must be *redemption* of (that is, deliverance from the penalties incurred by) the *transgressions* committed *under the first testament*, for the propitiatory sacrifices under the first testament reached only as far as removing outward ceremonial defilement. But in order to obtain the inheritance which is a reality, there must be a real propitiation, since God could not enter into covenant relation with us so long as past sins were unexpiated; ^{<6136>}Romans 3:24,25, “a propitiation ... His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.”

might — *Greek*, “may receive,” which previously they could not (^{<8113>}Hebrews 11:39,40).

the promise — to Abraham.

16. A general axiomatic truth; it is “*a testament*”; not *the testament*. The testator must die before his *testament* takes effect (^{<8107>}Hebrews 9:17). This is a common meaning of the *Greek* noun *diathece*. So in ^{<0229>}Luke 22:29, “I appoint (by testamentary disposition; the cognate *Greek* verb *diatithemai*) unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.” The need of death before the testamentary appointment takes effect, holds good in Christ’s relation as MAN to us; Of course not in *God’s* relation to Christ.

be — literally, be borne”: “be involved in the case”; *be inferred*; or else, “be brought forward in court,” so as to give effect to the will. This sense (*testament*) of the *Greek* “*diathece*” here does not exclude its other secondary senses in the other passages of the New Testament:

(1) a *covenant* between *two* parties;

(2) an arrangement, or disposition, made by *God alone* in relation to us. Thus, ^{<1135>}Matthew 26:28 may be translated, “Blood of the *covenant*”; for a *testament* does not require *blood* shedding. Compare ^{<0248>}Exodus 24:8 (*covenant*), which Christ quotes, though it is probable He *included* in a sense “testament” also under the *Greek* word *diathece* (comprehending *both* meanings, “covenant” and “testament”), as this designation strictly and properly applies to the new dispensation, and

is rightly applicable to the old also, not in itself, but when viewed as typifying the new, which is properly a *testament*. Moses (¹²⁴⁸Exodus 24:8) speaks of the same thing as [Christ and] Paul. Moses, by the term “covenant,” does not mean aught save one concerning giving the heavenly *inheritance* typified by Canaan after the death of the *Testator*, which he represented by the sprinkling of blood. And Paul, by the term “testament,” does not mean aught save one having *conditions* attached to it, one which is at the same time a *covenant* [POLI, *Synopsis*]; the conditions are fulfilled by Christ, not by us, except That we must *believe*, but even this God works in His people. THOLUCK explains, as elsewhere, “*covenant ... covenant ... mediating victim*”; the *masculine* is used of the victim personified, and regarded as mediator of the covenant; especially as in the new covenant a MAN (Christ) took the place of the victim. The covenanting parties used to pass between the divided parts of the sacrificed animals; but, without reference to this rite, the need of a *sacrifice* for establishing a covenant sufficiently explains this verse. Others, also, explaining the *Greek* as “covenant,” consider that the death of the sacrificial victim represented in all covenants the death of both parties as *unalterably bound to the covenant*. So in the redemption-covenant, the death of Jesus symbolized the death of God (?) in the person of the mediating victim, and the death of man in the same. But the expression is not “there must be the death of *both parties* making the covenant,” but *singular*, “of *Him* who *made* (aorist, past time; not ‘of Him *making*’) the testament.” Also, it is “death,” not “sacrifice” or “slaying.” Plainly, the death is supposed to be *past* (aorist, “made”); and the fact of the death is *brought* (*Greek*) before court to give effect to the will. These requisites of a will, or testament. concur here:

(1) a testator;

(2) heirs;

(3) goods;

(4) the death of the testator;

(5) the fact of the death *brought forward* in court. In ⁴⁰²⁸Matthew 26:28 two other requisites appear: *witnesses*, the disciples; and *a seal*, the

sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the sign of His *blood* wherewith the testament is primarily sealed. It is true the *heir* is ordinarily the *successor* of him who dies and so ceases to have the possession. But in this case Christ comes to life again, and is Himself (including all that He hath), in the power of His now endless life, His people's inheritance; in *His* being Heir (^{<300>}Hebrews 1:2), *they* are heirs.

17. after — literally, “over,” as we say “*upon* the death of the testators”; not as THOLUCK, “on the condition that slain sacrifices be there,” which the *Greek* hardly sanctions.

otherwise — “seeing that it is never availing” [ALFORD]. BENDEL and LACHMANN read with an interrogation, “Since, is it ever in force (surely not) while the testator liveth?”

18. Whereupon — rather, “Whence.”

dedicated — “inaugurated.” The Old Testament strictly and formally began on that day of inauguration. “Where the *disposition*, or *arrangement*, is ratified by the blood of another, namely, of animals, which cannot make a *covenant*, much less make a *testament*, it is not strictly a *testament*, where it is ratified by the death of him that makes the arrangement, it is strictly, *Greek* ‘*diathece*,’ *Hebrew* ‘*berith*,’ taken in a wider sense, a *testament*” [BENDEL]; thus, in ^{<300>}Hebrews 9:18, referring to the old dispensation, we may translate, “the first (*covenant*)”: or better, retain “the first (*testament*),” not that the old dispensation, *regarded by itself*, is a *testament*, but it is so when regarded as the *typical representative of the new*, which is strictly a *Testament*.

19. For — confirming the general truth, ^{<300>}Hebrews 9:16.

spoken ... according to the law — strictly adhering to every direction of “the law of commandments contained in ordinances” (^{<400>}Ephesians 2:15). Compare ^{<124>}Exodus 24:3, “Moses told the people *all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments*; and *all the people* answered with one voice,” etc.

the blood of calves — *Greek*, “the calves,” namely, those sacrificed by the “young men” whom he sent to do so (^{<124>}Exodus 24:5). The “peace offerings” there mentioned were “of *oxen*” (*Septuagint*, “little calves”), and

the “burnt offerings” were probably (though this is not specified), as on the day of atonement, *goats*. The law in Exodus sanctioned formally many sacrificial practices in use by tradition, from the primitive revelation long before.

with water — prescribed, though not in the twenty-fourth chapter of Exodus, yet in other purifications; for example, of the leper, and the water of separation which contained the ashes of the red heifer.

scarlet wool, and hyssop — ordinarily used for purification. *Scarlet* or *crimson*, resembling blood: it was thought to be a peculiarly deep, fast dye, whence it typified sin (see on ^{<2118>}Isaiah 1:18). So Jesus wore a scarlet robe, the emblem of the deep-dyed sins He bore *on* Him, though He had none *in* Him. Wool was used as imbibing and retaining water; the hyssop, as a bushy, tufty plant (wrapt round with the scarlet wool), was used for sprinkling it. The wool was also a symbol of purity (^{<2118>}Isaiah 1:18). The *Hyssopus officinalis* grows on walls, with small lancet-formed woolly leaves, an inch long, with blue and white flowers, and a knotty stalk about a foot high.

sprinkled ... the book — namely, out of which he had read “every precept”: the book of the testament or covenant. This sprinkling of the book is not mentioned in the twenty-fourth chapter of Exodus. Hence BENGEL translates, “And (having taken) the book itself (so ^{<1210>}Exodus 24:7), he both sprinkled all the people, and (^{<8121>}Hebrews 9:21) moreover sprinkled the tabernacle.” But the *Greek* supports *English Version*. Paul, by inspiration, supplies the particular specified here, not in ^{<1247>}Exodus 24:7. The sprinkling of the *roll* (so the *Greek* for “book”) of the covenant, or testament, as well as of the people, implies that neither can *the law* be fulfilled, nor the people be purged from their sins, save by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ (^{<612>}1 Peter 1:2). Compare ^{<8123>}Hebrews 9:23, which shows that there is something antitypical to the Bible in heaven itself (compare ^{<612>}Revelation 20:12). The *Greek*, “itself,” distinguishes *the book itself* from the “precepts” in it which he “spake.”

20. ^{<1248>}Exodus 24:8, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which *the Lord* has made with you concerning all these words.” The change is here made to accord with Christ’s inauguration of the new testament, or covenant, as recorded in ^{<1221>}Luke 22:20, “This cup (is) the new Testament in My blood,

which is shed for you”: the only Gospel in which the “is” has to be supplied. Luke was *Paul’s* companion, which accounts for the correspondence, as here too “is” has to be supplied.

testament — (See on ^{<309>}Hebrews 9:16,17). The Greek “*diathece*” means both “testament” and “covenant”: the term “covenant” better suits the old dispensation, though the idea *testament* is included, for the old was one in its typical relation to the new dispensation, to which the term “testament” is better suited. Christ has sealed the testament with His *blood*, of which the Lord’s Supper is the sacramental sign. The testator was represented by the animals slain in the old dispensation. In both dispensations the inheritance was bequeathed: in the new by One who has come in person and died; in the old by the same one, only typically and ceremonially present. See ALFORD’S excellent Note.

enjoined unto you — *commissioned* me to ratify *in relation to you*. In the old dispensation the condition to be fulfilled on the people’s part is implied in the words, ^{<1218>}Exodus 24:8, “(Lord made with you) *concerning all these words*.” But here Paul omits this clause, as he includes the fulfillment of this condition of obedience to “all these words” in the new covenant, as part of God’s promise, in ^{<308>}Hebrews 8:8,10,12, whereby Christ fulfils all for our justification, and will enable us by putting His Spirit in us to fulfill all in our now progressive, and finally complete, sanctification.

21. Greek, “*And, moreover, in like manner*.” The *sprinkling of the tabernacle with blood* is added by inspiration here to the account in ^{<1215>}Exodus 30:25-30 40:9,10, which mentions only Moses’ anointing the tabernacle and its vessels. In ^{<1210>}Leviticus 8:10,15,30, the sprinkling of blood upon Aaron and his garments. and upon his sons, and upon the altar, is mentioned as well as the anointing, so that we might naturally infer, as JOSEPHUS has distinctly stated, that the tabernacle and its vessels were sprinkled with blood as well as being anointed: ^{<1210>}Leviticus 16:16,20,33, virtually sanctions this inference. The tabernacle and its contents needed purification (^{<1212>}2 Chronicles 29:21).

22. almost — to be joined with “all things,” namely *almost all things* under the old dispensation. The exceptions to *all things being purified* by

blood are, ^{<1250>}Exodus 19:10 ^{<1815>}Leviticus 15:5, etc., ^{<1816>}Leviticus 16:26,28 22:6 ^{<1812>}Numbers 31:22-24.

without — *Greek*, “apart from.”

shedding of blood — *shed* in the slaughter of the victim, and poured out at the altar subsequently. The *pouring out of the blood on the altar* is the main part of the sacrifice (^{<18711>}Leviticus 17:11), and it could not have place apart from the previous *shedding of the blood* in the slaying. Paul has, perhaps, in mind here, ^{<221>}Luke 22:20, “This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”

is — *Greek*, “takes place”: comes to pass.

remission — of sins: a favorite expression of Luke, Paul’s companion. Properly used of remitting a debt (^{<1612>}Matthew 6:12 18:27,32); our sins are debts. On the truth here, compare ^{<18111>}Leviticus 5:11-13, an exception because of poverty, confirming the general rule.

23. patterns — “the suggestive representations”; the typical copies (see on ^{<181815>}Hebrews 8:5).

things in the heavens — the heavenly tabernacle and the things therein.

purified with these — with the blood of bulls and goats.

heavenly things themselves — the archetypes. Man’s sin had introduced an element of disorder into the relations of God and His holy angels in respect to man. The *purification* removes this element of disorder and changes God’s wrath against man in heaven (designed to be the place of God’s revealing His grace to men and angels) into a smile of reconciliation. Compare “peace in heaven” (^{<181938>}Luke 19:38). “The uncreated heaven of God, though in itself Untroubled light, yet needed a purification in so far as the light of love was obscured by the fire of wrath against sinful man” [DELITZSCH in ALFORD]. Contrast ^{<16111>}Revelation 12:7-10. Christ’s atonement had the effect also of casting Satan out of heaven (^{<181018>}Luke 10:18 ^{<181231>}John 12:31, compare ^{<181214>}Hebrews 2:14). Christ’s body, the true tabernacle (see on ^{<181812>}Hebrews 8:2; ^{<181911>}Hebrews 9:11), as bearing our imputed sin (^{<18121>}2 Corinthians 5:21). was consecrated (^{<181717>}John

17:17,19) and purified by the shedding of His blood to be the meeting place of God and man.

sacrifices — The plural is used in expressing the general proposition, though strictly referring to the *one* sacrifice of Christ once for all. Paul implies that His one sacrifice, by its matchless excellency, is equivalent to the Levitical many sacrifices. It, though but one, is manifold in its effects and applicability to many.

24. Resumption more fully of the thought, “He entered in once into the holy place,” ^{<802>}Hebrews 9:12. He has in ^{<803>}Hebrews 9:13,14, expanded the words “by his own blood,” ^{<800>}Hebrews 9:12; and in ^{<805>}Hebrews 9:15-23, he has enlarged on “an High Priest of good things to come.”

not ... into ... holy places made with hands — as was the Holy of Holies in the earthly tabernacle (see on ^{<801>}Hebrews 9:11).

figures — copies “of the true” holiest place, heaven, the original archetype (^{<806>}Hebrews 8:5).

into heaven itself — the immediate presence of the invisible God beyond all the created heavens, *through* which latter Jesus passed (see on ^{<804>}Hebrews 4:14; ^{<486>}1 Timothy 6:16).

now — ever since His ascension in the present economy (compare ^{<802>}Hebrews 9:26).

to appear — TO PRESENT HIMSELF; *Greek*, “to be made to appear.” Mere man may have a vision through a medium, or veil, as Moses had (^{<1238>}Exodus 33:18,20-23). Christ alone beholds the Father without a veil, and is His perfect image. Through seeing HIM only can we see the Father.

in the presence of God — *Greek*, “to the face of God.” The saints shall hereafter see God’s face in Christ (^{<620>}Revelation 22:4): the earnest of which is now given (^{<488>}2 Corinthians 3:18). Aaron, the Levitical high priest *for* the people, stood *before the ark* and only saw the *cloud*, the symbol of God’s glory (^{<1280>}Exodus 28:30).

for us — in our behalf as our Advocate and Intercessor (^{<802>}Hebrews 7:25 ^{<808>}Romans 8:34 ^{<481>}1 John 2:1). “It is enough that Jesus should *show Himself for us* to the Father: the sight of Jesus satisfied God in our behalf.

He brings before the face of God no offering which has exhausted itself, and, as only sufficing for a time, needs renewal; but He himself is in person, by virtue of the eternal Spirit, that is, the imperishable life of His person, now and for ever freed from death, our eternally present offering before God” [DELITZSCH in ALFORD].

25. As in ~~scribes~~ Hebrews 9:24, Paul said, it was not into the typical, but the true sanctuary, that Christ is entered; so now he says, that His sacrifice needs not, as the Levitical sacrifices did, to be repeated. Construe, “*Nor yet did He enter for this purpose that He may offer Himself often,*” that is, “*present Himself in the presence of God,* as the high priest does (Paul uses the *present tense*, as the legal service was then existing), year by year, on the day of atonement, entering the Holy of Holies.

with — literally, “in.”

blood of others — *not his own*, as Christ did.

26. then — in that case.

must ... have suffered — rather as *Greek*, “It would have been necessary for Him often to suffer.” In order to “offer” (~~scribes~~ Hebrews 9:25), or present Himself often before God in the heavenly holiest place, like the legal high priests making fresh renewals of this high priestly function. He would have had, and would have often to suffer. His *oblation* of Himself before God was once for all (that is, the bringing in of His blood into the heavenly Holy of Holies), and therefore the preliminary *suffering* was once for all.

since the foundation of the world — The continued sins of men, from their first creation, would entail a continual suffering on earth, and consequent oblation of His blood in the heavenly holiest place, *since the foundation of the world*, if the one oblation “in the fullness of time” were not sufficient. PHILO [*The Creation of the World*, p. 637], shows that the high priest of the Hebrews offered sacrifices for the whole human race. “If there had been greater efficacy in the repetition of the oblation, Christ necessarily would not have been so long promised, but would have been sent immediately after the foundation of the world to suffer, and offer Himself at successive periods” [GROTIUS].

now — as the case is,

once — for all; without need of renewal. Rome’s fiction of an UNBLOODY sacrifice in the mass, contradicts her assertion that the *blood* of Christ is present in the wine; and also confutes her assertion that the mass is propitiatory; for, if *unbloody*, it cannot be *propitiatory*; for *without shedding of blood there is no remission* (^{<802>}Hebrews 9:22). Moreover, the expression “once” for all here, and in ^{<808>}Hebrews 9:28, and ^{<800>}Hebrews 10:10,12, proves the falsity of her view that there is a continually repeated offering of Christ in the Eucharist or mass. The offering of Christ was a thing once done that it might be thought of for ever (compare *Note*, see on ^{<802>}Hebrews 10:12).

in the end of the world — *Greek*, “at the consummation of the ages”; the winding up of all the previous ages from the foundation of the world; to be followed by a new age (^{<800>}Hebrews 1:1,2). The last age, beyond which no further age is to be expected before Christ’s speedy second coming, which is the complement of the first coming; literally, “the ends of the ages”; ^{<089>}Matthew 28:20 is literally, “the consummation of *the age*,” or *world* (singular; not as here, plural, *ages*). Compare “the fullness of times,” ^{<010>}Ephesians 1:10.

appeared — *Greek*, “been manifested” on earth (^{<506>}1 Timothy 3:16 ^{<012>}1 Peter 1:20). *English Version* has confounded three distinct *Greek* verbs, by translating all alike, ^{<808>}Hebrews 9:24,26,28, “appear.” But, in ^{<808>}Hebrews 9:24, it is “to present Himself,” namely, *before God in the heavenly sanctuary*; in ^{<808>}Hebrews 9:26, “been manifested” *on earth*. in ^{<808>}Hebrews 9:28, “shall be seen” by all, and especially believers.

put away — abolish; doing away sin’s power as well by delivering men from its guilt and penalty, so that it should be powerless to condemn men, as also from its yoke, so that they shall at last sin no more.

sin — singular number; all the sins of men of every age are regarded as *one mass* laid on Christ. He hath not only droned for all *actual sins*, but destroyed *sin itself*. ^{<809>}John 1:29, “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the *sin* (not merely *the sins*: singular, not plural) of the world.”

by the sacrifice of himself — *Greek*, “by (through) *His own* sacrifice”; not by “blood of *others*” (^{<809>}Hebrews 9:25). ALFORD loses this contrast in translating, “by His sacrifice.”

27. as — inasmuch as.

it is appointed — *Greek*, “it is *laid up* (as our appointed lot),”

^{<8005}Colossians 1:5. The word “appointed” (so *Hebrew* “*seth*” means) in the case of man, answers to “anointed” in the case of Jesus; therefore “the Christ,” that is, *the anointed*, is the title here given designedly. He is the representative man; and there is a strict correspondence between the history of *man* and that of *the Son of man*. The two most solemn facts of our being are here connected with the two most gracious truths of our dispensation, our death and judgment answering in parallelism to Christ’s first coming to die for us, and His second coming to consummate our salvation.

once — and no more.

after this the judgment — namely, at Christ’s appearing, to which, in

^{<8005}Hebrews 9:28, “judgment” in this verse is parallel. Not, “after this comes the heavenly glory.” The intermediate state is a state of joyous, or else agonizing and fearful, *expectation* of “judgment”; after the judgment comes the full and final state of joy, or else woe.

28. Christ — *Greek*, “THE Christ”; the representative MAN; representing all men, as the first Adam did.

once offered — not “often,” ^{<8025}Hebrews 9:25; just as “men,” of whom He is the representative Head, are appointed by God *once* to die. He did not need to die again and again for each individual, or each successive generation of men, for He represents *all* men of every age, and therefore needed to die but once for all, so as to exhaust the penalty of death incurred by all. He was offered by the Father, His own “eternal Spirit” (^{<8094}Hebrews 9:14) concurring; as Abraham spared not Isaac, but offered him, the son himself unresistingly submitting to the father’s will (^{<021}Genesis 22:1-24).

to bear the sins — referring to ^{<2512}Isaiah 53:12, “He bare the sins of many,” namely, *on Himself*; so “bear” means, ^{<0215}Leviticus 24:15

^{<0059}Numbers 5:31 14:34. The *Greek* is literally “to bear up” (^{<0124}1 Peter 2:24). “Our sins were laid on Him. When, therefore, He was lifted up on the cross, He bare up our sins along with Him” [BENGEL].

many — not opposed to *all*, but to few. He, *the One*, was offered for *many*; and that *once for all* (compare ~~4118~~ Matthew 20:28).

look for him — *with waiting expectation even unto the end* (so the *Greek*). It is translated “wait for” in ~~4118~~ Romans 8:19,23 ~~4117~~ 1 Corinthians 1:7, which see.

appear — rather, as *Greek*, “be seen.” No longer in the alien “form of a servant,” but in His own proper glory.

without sin — apart from, separate from, sin. Not bearing the sin of many *on* Him as at His first coming (even then there was no sin *in* Him). That sin has been at His first coming once for all taken away, so as to need no repetition of His sin offering of Himself (~~4118~~ Hebrews 9:26). At His second coming He shall have no more to do with sin.

unto salvation — to bring in completed salvation; redeeming then the body which is as yet subject to the bondage of corruption. Hence, in ~~4118~~ Philippians 3:20 he says, “we look for THE SAVIOR.” Note, Christ’s *prophetical* office, as the *divine Teacher*, was especially exercised during His earthly ministry; His *priestly* is now from His first to His second coming; His *kingly* office shall be fully manifested at, and after, His second coming.

CHAPTER 10

HEBREWS 10:1-39.

CONCLUSION OF THE FOREGOING ARGUMENT. THE YEARLY RECURRING LAW SACRIFICES CANNOT PERFECT THE WORSHIPPER, BUT CHRIST'S ONCE FOR-ALL OFFERING CAN.

Instead of the daily ministry of the Levitical priests, Christ's service is perfected by the one sacrifice, whence He now sits on the right hand of God as a Priest-King, until all His foes shall be subdued unto Him. Thus the new covenant (^{<300>}Hebrews 8:8-12) is inaugurated, whereby the law is written on the heart, so that an offering for sin is needed no more.

Wherefore we ought to draw near the Holiest in firm faith and love; fearful of the awful results of apostasy; looking for the recompense to be given at Christ's coming.

1. Previously the *oneness* of Christ's offering was shown; now is shown its perfection as contrasted with the law sacrifices.

having — inasmuch as it has but “the shadow, not the very image,” that is, not the exact likeness, reality, and full revelation, such as the Gospel has. The “image” here means the *archetype* (compare ^{<300>}Hebrews 9:24), the original, solid image [BENGEL] realizing to us those heavenly verities, of which the law furnished but a *shadowy outline* before. Compare ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 3:13,14,18; the Gospel is the very setting forth by the Word and Spirit of the heavenly realities themselves, out of which it (the Gospel) is constructed. So ALFORD. As Christ is “*the express image* (*Greek*, ‘impress’) of the Father’s person” (^{<300>}Hebrews 1:3), so the Gospel is the heavenly verities themselves manifested by revelation — *the* heavenly very *archetype*, of which the law was drawn as a sketch, or outline copy (^{<300>}Hebrews 8:5). The law was a continual process of acted prophecy, proving the divine design that its counterparts should come; and proving the truth of those counterparts when they came. Thus the

imperfect and continued expiatory sacrifices before Christ foretend, and now prove, the reality of, Christ's one perfect antitypical expiation.

good things to come — (⁸⁰¹¹Hebrews 9:11); belonging to “the world (age) to come.” *Good things* in part made present by faith to the believer, and to be fully realized hereafter in actual and perfect enjoyment. Lessing says, “As Christ's Church on earth is a prediction of the economy of the future life, so the Old Testament economy is a prediction of the Christian Church.” In relation to the temporal good things of the law, the spiritual and eternal good things of the Gospel are “good things *to come*.”

⁸⁰¹⁷Colossians 2:17 calls legal ordinances “the shadow,” and Christ “the body.”

never — at any time (⁸⁰¹¹Hebrews 10:11).

with those sacrifices — rather, “with *the same* sacrifices.

year by year — This clause in the *Greek* refers to the whole sentence, not merely to the words “which they the priests offered” (*Greek*, “offer”). Thus the sense is, not as *English Version*, but, *the law year by year, by the repetition of the same sacrifices, testifies its inability to perfect the worshippers*; namely, on the YEARLY day of atonement. The “daily” sacrifices are referred to, ⁸⁰¹¹Hebrews 10:11.

continually — *Greek*, “continuously,” implying that they offer a toilsome and ineffectual “*continuous*” round of the “same” atonement-sacrifices *recurring* “year by year.”

comers thereunto — those so *coming unto* God, namely, the worshippers (the whole people) coming to God in the person of their representative, the high priest.

perfect — fully meet man's needs as to justification and sanctification (see on ⁸⁰¹¹Hebrews 9:9).

2. For — if the law could, by its sacrifices, have perfected the worshippers.

they — the sacrifices.

once purged — IF they were *once for all cleansed* (⁸⁰²⁷Hebrews 7:27).

conscience — “consciousness of sin” (^{<809>}Hebrews 9:9).

3. But — so far from *those sacrifices ceasing to be offered* (^{<809>}Hebrews 10:2).

in, etc. — in the fact of their being offered, and in the course of their being offered on the day of atonement. Contrast ^{<807>}Hebrews 10:17.

a remembrance — a recalling to mind by the high priest’s confession, on the day of atonement, of the sins both of each past year and of all former years, proving that the expiatory sacrifices of former years were not felt by men’s consciences to have fully atoned for former sins; in fact, the expiation and remission were only legal and typical (^{<809>}Hebrews 10:4,11). The Gospel remission, on the contrary, is so complete, that sins are “remembered no more” (^{<807>}Hebrews 10:17) by God. It is unbelief to “forget” this once-for-all purgation, and to fear on account of “former sins” (^{<809>}2 Peter 1:9). The believer, once for all *bathed*, needs only to “wash” his hands and “feet” of soils, according as he daily contracts them, in Christ’s blood (^{<809>}John 13:10).

4. For, etc. — reason why, necessarily, there is a continually recurring “remembrance of sins” in the legal sacrifices (^{<809>}Hebrews 10:3). *Typically*, “the blood of bulls,” etc., sacrificed, had power; but it was only in virtue of the power of the one real antitypical sacrifice of Christ; they had no power *in themselves*; they were not the instrument of perfect vicarious atonement, but an exhibition of the need of it, suggesting to the faithful Israelite the sure hope of coming redemption, according to God’s promise.

take away — “take off.” The *Greek*, ^{<809>}Hebrews 10:11, is stronger, explaining the weaker word here, “take away *utterly*.” The blood of beasts could not take away the sin of *man*. A MAN must do that (see on ^{<809>}Hebrews 9:12-14).

5. Christ’s voluntary self offering, in contrast to those inefficient sacrifices, is shown to fulfill perfectly “the will of God” as to our redemption, by completely atoning “for (our) sins.”

Wherefore — seeing that a nobler than animal sacrifices was needed to “take away sins.”

when he cometh — *Greek*, “coming.” The time referred to is the period *before* His entrance into the world, when the inefficiency of animal sacrifices for expiation had been proved [THOLUCK]. Or, the time is that between Jesus’ first dawning of reason as a child, and the beginning of His public ministry, during which, being ripened in human resolution, He was intently devoting Himself to the doing of His Father’s will [ALFORD]. But the time of “coming” is *present*; not “when He had come,” but “when *coming* into the world”; so, in order to accord with ALFORD’S view, “the world” must mean His PUBLIC ministry: when coming, or about to come, into *public*. The *Greek* verbs are in the past: “sacrifice ... Thou *didst* not wish, but a body Thou *didst* prepare for Me”; and, “Lo, *I am come*.” Therefore, in order to harmonize these times, the present *coming*, or about to come, with the past, “A body Thou *didst* prepare for Me,” we must either explain as ALFORD, or else, if we take the period to be *before* His actual arrival in the world (the earth) or *incarnation*, we must explain the *past* tenses to refer to God’s *purpose*, which speaks of what He designed from eternity as though it were already fulfilled. “A body Thou *didst* prepare in Thy eternal counsel.” This seems to me more likely than explaining “coming into the world,” “*coming into public*,” or entering on His public ministry. David, in the fortieth Psalm (here quoted), reviews his past troubles and God’s having delivered him from them, and his consequent desire to render willing obedience to God as more acceptable than sacrifices; but the Spirit puts into his mouth language finding its partial application to David, and its full realization only in the divine Son of David. “The more any son of man approaches the incarnate Son of God in position, or office, or individual spiritual experience, the more directly may his holy breathings in the power of Christ’s Spirit be taken as utterances of Christ Himself. Of all men, the prophet-king of Israel resembled and foreshadowed Him the most” [ALFORD].

a body hast thou prepared me — *Greek*, “Thou *didst fit* for Me a body.” “In Thy counsels *Thou didst determine to make for Me a body*, to be given up to death as a sacrificial victim” [WAHL]. In the *Hebrew*, ⁹⁰⁶Psalm 40:6, it is “mine ears hast thou opened,” or “dug.” Perhaps this alludes to the custom of *boring the ear of a slave who volunteers to remain under his master when he might be free*. Christ’s assuming a human *body*, in obedience to the Father’s will, in order to die the death of a slave

(^{<804}Hebrews 2:14), was virtually the same act of voluntary submission to service as that of a slave suffering his ear to be bored by his master. His *willing obedience to the Father's will* is what is dwelt on as giving especial virtue to His sacrifice (^{<807}Hebrews 10:7,9,10). The *preparing*, or *fitting of a body* for Him, is not with a view to His mere incarnation, but to His expiatory *sacrifice* (^{<800}Hebrews 10:10), as the *contrast* to “sacrifice and offering” requires; compare also ^{<804}Romans 7:4 ^{<402}Ephesians 2:16 ^{<502}Colossians 1:22. More probably “opened mine ears” means *opened mine inward ear*, so as to be attentively obedient to what God wills me to do, namely, to assume the body He has prepared for me for my sacrifice, so ^{<836}Job 33:16, *Margin*; ^{<830}Job 36:10 (doubtless the boring of a slave’s “ear” was the symbol of *such willing obedience*); ^{<280}Isaiah 50:5, The Lord God hath opened mine ear,” that is, made me *obediently* attentive as a slave to his master. Others somewhat similarly explain, “Mine ears hast thou digged,” or “*fashioned*,” not with allusion to ^{<026}Exodus 21:6, but to the true office of the ear — a willing, submissive attention to the voice of God (^{<280}Isaiah 50:4,5). The forming of the ear implies the preparation of the body, that is, the incarnation; this secondary idea, really in the *Hebrew*, though less prominent, is the one which Paul uses for his argument. In either explanation the idea of Christ taking on Him the form, and becoming *obedient as a servant*, is implied. As He assumed a body in which to make His self-sacrifice, so ought we *present our bodies a living sacrifice* (^{<811}Romans 12:1).

6. burnt offerings — *Greek*, “*whole burnt offerings*.”

thou hast had no pleasure — as if these could in themselves atone for sin: God had pleasure in (*Greek*, “approved,” or “*was well pleased with*”) them, in so far as they were an act of obedience to His positive command under the Old Testament, but not as having an intrinsic efficacy such as Christ’s sacrifice had. Contrast ^{<087}Matthew 3:17.

7. I come — rather, “I am come” (see on ^{<805}Hebrews 10:5). “Here we have the creed, as it were, of Jesus: ‘*I am come to fulfill the law*,’ ^{<087}Matthew 5:17; to preach, ^{<003}Mark 1:38; to call sinners to repentance, ^{<052}Luke 5:32; to send a sword and to set men at variance, ^{<069}Matthew 10:34,35; I came down from heaven to do the will of Him that sent me, ^{<438}John 6:38,39 (so here, ^{<907}Psalms 40:7,8); I am sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,

^{<1524}Matthew 15:24; I am come into this world for judgment, ^{<4129}John 9:39; I am come that they might have life, and might have it more abundantly, ^{<3000}John 10:10; to save what had been lost, ^{<4181}Matthew 18:11; to seek and to save that which was lost, ^{<2901}Luke 19:10; compare ^{<5015}1 Timothy 1:15; to save men's lives, ^{<4057}Luke 9:56; to send fire on the earth, ^{<4247}Luke 12:49; to minister, ^{<4108}Matthew 20:28; as "the Light," ^{<4246}John 12:46; to bear witness unto the truth, ^{<4287}John 18:37. See, reader, that thy Savior obtain what He aimed at in thy case. Moreover, do thou for thy part say, why thou art come here? Dost thou, then, also, do the will of God? From what time? and in what way?" [BENGEL]. When the two goats on the day of atonement were presented before the Lord, that goat on which the lot of the Lord should fall was to be offered as a sin offering; and that lot was lifted up on high in the hand of the high priest, and then laid upon the head of the goat which was to die; so the *hand* of God *determined* all that was done to Christ. Besides the covenant of God with man through Christ's blood, there was another covenant made by the Father with the Son from eternity. The condition was, "If He shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed," etc. (^{<2501}Isaiah 53:10). The Son accepted the condition, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God" [BISHOP PEARSON]. Oblation, intercession, and benediction, are His three priestly offices.

in the volume, etc. — literally, "the roll": the parchment manuscript being wrapped around a cylinder headed with knobs. Here, the Scripture "volume" meant is the fortieth Psalm. "By this very passage 'written of Me,' I undertake to do Thy will [namely, that I should die for the sins of the world, in order that all who believe may be saved, not by animal sacrifices, ^{<5006}Hebrews 10:6, but by My death]." This is the written contract of Messiah (compare ^{<4038}Nehemiah 9:38), whereby He engaged to be our surety. So complete is the inspiration of all that is written, so great the authority of the Psalms, that what David says is really what Christ then and there said.

8. he — Christ.

Sacrifice, etc. — The oldest manuscripts read, "*Sacrifices and offerings*" (plural). This verse combines the two clauses previously quoted distinctly, ^{<5006}Hebrews 10:5,6, in contrast to the sacrifice of Christ with which God was well pleased.

9. Then said he — “At that time (namely, when speaking by David’s mouth in the fortieth Psalm) He hath said.” The rejection of the legal sacrifices involves, as its concomitant, the voluntary offer of Jesus to make the self-sacrifice with which God is well pleased (for, indeed, it was God’s own “will” that He *came to do* in offering it: so that *this* sacrifice could not but be well pleasing to God).

I come — “I am come.”

taketh away — “sets aside the first,” namely, “the legal system of sacrifices” which God wills not.

the second — “the will of God” (^{<5007>}Hebrews 10:7,9) that Christ should redeem us by His self-sacrifice.

10. By — *Greek*, “In.” So “in,” and “through,” occur in the same sentence, ^{<602>}1 Peter 1:22, “Ye have purified your souls *in* obeying the truth *through* the Spirit.” Also, ^{<6005>}1 Peter 1:5, in the *Greek*. The “*in* (fulfillment of) which will” (compare the use of *in*, ^{<6006>}Ephesians 1:6, “wherein [in which grace] He hath made us accepted, in the Beloved”), expresses the *originating* cause; “THROUGH the offering ... of Christ,” the *instrumental* or *mediatory* cause. The whole work of redemption flows from “the will” of God the Father, as the First Cause, who decreed redemption from before the foundation of the world. The “will” here (*boulema*) is His *absolute sovereign will*. His “good will” (*eudokia*) is a particular aspect of it.

are sanctified — once for all, and as our *permanent state* (so the *Greek*). It is the finished work of Christ in having sanctified us (that is, having translated us from a state of unholy alienation into a state of *consecration* to God, having “no more conscience of sin,” ^{<5910>}Hebrews 10:2) once for all and permanently, not the process of gradual sanctification, which is here referred to.

the body — “prepared” for Him by the Father (^{<5915>}Hebrews 10:5). As the atonement, or reconciliation, is by the blood of Christ (^{<6871>}Leviticus 17:11), so our *sanctification* (consecration to God, holiness and eternal bliss) is by the *body* of Christ (^{<5022>}Colossians 1:22). ALFORD quotes the *Book of Common Prayer Communion Service*, “that our sinful bodies may be

made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood.”

once for all — (^{<3027>}Hebrews 7:27 9:12,26,28 10:12,14).

11. And — a new point of contrast; the frequent repetition of the sacrifices.

priest — The oldest manuscripts read, “high priest.” Though he did not in person stand “daily” offering sacrifices, he did so by the subordinate priests of whom, as well as of all Israel, he was the representative head. So “daily” is applied to the high priests (^{<3027>}Hebrews 7:27).

standeth — the attitude of one ministering; in contrast to “*sat down* on the right hand of God,” ^{<3027>}Hebrews 10:12, said of Christ; the posture of one being ministered to as a king.

which — *Greek*, “the which,” that is, of such a kind as.

take away — utterly; literally, “strip off all round.” Legal sacrifices might, *in part*, produce the sense of forgiveness, yet scarcely even that (see on ^{<3001>}Hebrews 10:4); but *entirely* to strip off one’s guilt they never could.

12. this man — emphatic (^{<3003>}Hebrews 3:3).

for ever — joined in *English Version* with “offered one sacrifice”; offered one sacrifice, the efficacy of which endures for ever; literally.

“continuously,” (compare ^{<3014>}Hebrews 10:14). “The offering of Christ, once for all made, will continue the one and only oblation for ever; no other will supersede it” [BENGEL]. The mass, which professes to be the frequent repetition of one and the same sacrifice of Christ’s body, is hence disproved. For not only is Christ’s body one, but also *His offering is one*, and that inseparable from His suffering (^{<3026>}Hebrews 9:26). The mass would be much the same as the Jewish sacrifices which Paul sets aside as abrogated, for they were anticipations of the one sacrifice, just as Rome makes masses continuations of it, in opposition to Paul’s argument. A repetition would imply that the former once-for-all offering of the one sacrifice was imperfect, and so would be dishonoring to it (^{<3012>}Hebrews 10:2,18). ^{<3014>}Hebrews 10:14, on the contrary, says, “He hath PERFECTED FOR EVER them that are sanctified.” If Christ offered Himself at the last

supper, then He offered Himself again on the cross, and there would be *two* offerings; but Paul says there was only *one, once for all*. Compare *Note*, see on ^{<800>}Hebrews 9:26. *English Version* is favored by the usage in this Epistle, of putting the *Greek* “for ever” after that which it qualifies. Also, “one sacrifice for ever,” stands in contrast to “the same sacrifices oftentimes” (^{<800>}Hebrews 10:11). Also, ^{<855>}1 Corinthians 15:25,28, agrees with ^{<800>}Hebrews 10:12,13, taken as *English Version*, not joining, as ALFORD does, “for ever” with “sat down,” for Jesus is to *give up* the mediatorial throne “when all things shall be subdued unto Him,” and not to sit on it *for ever*.

13. expecting — “waiting.” *Awaiting* the execution of His Father’s will, that all His foes should be subjected to Him. The Son *waits* till the Father shall “send Him forth to triumph over all His foes.” He is now *sitting* at rest (^{<800>}Hebrews 10:12), invisibly reigning, and having His foes virtually, by right of His death, subject to Him. His present *sitting* on the unseen throne is a necessary preliminary to His coming forth to subject His foes openly. He shall then come forth to a visibly manifested kingdom and conquest over His foes. Thus He fulfils ^{<800>}Psalms 110:1. This agrees with ^{<855>}1 Corinthians 15:23-28. He is, by His Spirit and His providence, now subjecting His foes to Him in part (^{<800>}Psalms 110:1-7). The subjection of His foes *fully* shall be at His second advent, and from that time to the general judgment (^{<800>}Revelation 19:1-20:15); then comes the subjection of Himself as Head of the Church to the Father (the mediatorial economy ceasing when its end shall have been accomplished), that God may be all in all. Eastern conquerors used to tread on the necks of the vanquished, as Joshua did to the five kings. So Christ’s total and absolute conquest at His coming is symbolized.

be made his footstool — literally, “be placed (rendered) footstool of His feet.”

his enemies — Satan and Death, whose strength consists in “sin”; this being taken away (^{<800>}Hebrews 10:12), the power of the foes is taken away, and their destruction necessarily follows.

14. For — The sacrifice being “for ever” in its efficacy (^{<800>}Hebrews 10:12) needs no renewal.

them that are sanctified — rather as *Greek*, “them that *are being* sanctified.” The sanctification (consecration to God) of the elect (^{<801>}1 Peter 1:2) believers is perfect in Christ once for all (see on ^{<800>}Hebrews 10:10). (Contrast the law, ^{<807>}Hebrews 7:19 9:9 10:1). The development of that sanctification is progressive.

15. The *Greek*, has “moreover,” or “now.”

is a witness — of the truth which I am setting forth. The Father’s witness is given ^{<801>}Hebrews 5:10. The Son’s, ^{<807>}Hebrews 10:5. Now is added that of the Holy Spirit, called accordingly “the Spirit of grace,” ^{<807>}Hebrews 10:29. The testimony of all Three leads to the same conclusion (^{<808>}Hebrews 10:18).

for after that he had said before — The conclusion to the sentence is in ^{<807>}Hebrews 10:17, “*After He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them (with the house of Israel, ^{<808>}Hebrews 8:10; here extended to the spiritual Israel) ... saith the Lord; I will put (literally, ‘giving,’ referring to the giving of the law; not now as then, giving into the hands, but giving) My laws into their hearts (‘mind,’ ^{<808>}Hebrews 8:10) and in their minds (‘hearts,’ ^{<808>}Hebrews 8:10); I will inscribe (so the *Greek*) them (here He omits the addition quoted in ^{<808>}Hebrews 8:10,11, *I will be to them a God ... and they shall not teach every man his neighbor ...), and (that is, after He had said the foregoing, HE THEN ADDS) their sins ... will I remember no more.*” The great object of the quotation here is to prove that, there being *in the Gospel covenant*, “REMISSION of sins” (^{<807>}Hebrews 10:17), there is no more need of a sacrifice for sins. The object of the same quotation in ^{<808>}Hebrews 8:8-13 is to show that, there being a “NEW covenant,” the old is antiquated.*

18. where remission of these is — as there is under the Gospel covenant (^{<807>}Hebrews 10:17). “Here ends the finale (^{<801>}Hebrews 10:1-18) of the great tripartite arrangement (^{<800>}Hebrews 7:1-25 7:26-9:12 9:13-10:18) of the middle portion of the Epistle. Its great theme was Christ a High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. What it is to be a high priest after the order of Melchisedec is set forth, ^{<808>}Hebrews 7:1-25, as contrasted with the Aaronic order. That Christ, however, as High Priest, is Aaron’s antitype in the true holy place, by virtue of His self-sacrifice here on earth, and Mediator of a better covenant, whose essential character the old only

typified, we learn, ^{<8026>}Hebrews 7:26-9:12. And that Christ's self-sacrifice, offered through the Eternal Spirit, is of everlasting power, as contrasted with the unavailing cycle of legal offerings, is established in the third part, ^{<8003>}Hebrews 9:13-10:18; the first half of this last portion [^{<8003>}Hebrews 9:13-28], showing that both our present possession of salvation, and our future completion of it, are as certain to us as that He is with God, ruling as a Priest and reigning as a King, once more to appear, no more as a bearer of our sins, but in glory as a Judge. The second half, ^{<8001>}Hebrews 10:1-18, reiterating the main position of the whole, the High Priesthood of Christ, grounded on His offering of Himself — its kingly character its eternal accomplishment of its end, confirmed by Psalms 40 and 110 and Jeremiah 31" [DELITZSCH in ALFORD].

19. Here begins the third and last division of the Epistle; *our duty now while waiting for the Lord's second advent*. Resumption and expansion of the exhortation (^{<8004>}Hebrews 4:14-16; compare ^{<8002>}Hebrews 10:22,23 here) wherewith he closed the first part of the Epistle, preparatory to his great doctrinal argument, beginning at ^{<8000>}Hebrews 7:1.

boldness — "free confidence," grounded on the consciousness that our sins have been forgiven.

to enter — literally, "as regards the entering."

by — *Greek*, "in"; it is *in* the blood of Jesus that our boldness to enter is grounded. Compare ^{<8002>}Ephesians 3:12, "*In* whom we have boldness and access with confidence." It is His having once for all entered as our Forerunner (^{<8001>}Hebrews 6:20) and High Priest (^{<8002>}Hebrews 10:21), making atonement for us with His blood, which is continually there (^{<8024>}Hebrews 12:24) before God, that gives us confident access. No priestly caste now mediates between the sinner and his Judge. We may come *boldly* with loving confidence, not with slavish fear, directly through Christ, the only mediating Priest. The minister is not officially nearer God than the layman; nor can the latter serve God at a distance or by deputy, as the natural man would like. Each must come for himself, and all are accepted when they come by the new and living way opened by Christ. Thus all Christians are, in respect to access directly to God, virtually high priests (^{<6601>}Revelation 1:6). They draw nigh in and through Christ, the only proper High Priest (^{<8025>}Hebrews 7:25).

20. which, etc. — The antecedent in the *Greek* is “the entering”; not as *English Version*, “way.” Translate, “which (entering) He has consecrated (not as though it were already existing, but *has been the first to open*, INAUGURATED *as a new thing*; see on ^{<306>}Hebrews 9:18, where the *Greek* is the same) for us (as) a new (Greek, ‘recent’; recently opened, ^{<307>}Romans 16:25,26) and living way” (not like the lifeless way through the law offering of the blood of *dead* victims, but real, *vital*, and of perpetual efficacy, because the *living* and *life-giving* Savior is that way. It is a *living hope* that we have, producing not *dead*, but *living*, works). Christ, the first-fruits of our nature, has ascended, and the rest is sanctified thereby. “Christ’s ascension is our promotion; and whither the glory of the Head hath preceded, thither the hope of the body, too, is called” [LEO].

the veil — As the *veil* had to be passed *through* in order to enter the holiest place, so the weak, human suffering *flesh* (^{<308>}Hebrews 5:7) of Christ’s humanity (which veiled His God head) had to be passed through by Him in entering the heavenly holiest place for us; in putting off His *rent flesh*, the temple veil, its type, was simultaneously rent from top to bottom (^{<309>}Matthew 27:51). Not His *body*, but His weak suffering *flesh*, was the veil; His body was the temple (^{<310>}John 2:19).

21. high priest — As a different *Greek* term (*archiereus*) is used always elsewhere in this Epistle for “high priest,” translate as *Greek* here, “A Great Priest”; one who is at once King and “Priest on His throne” (^{<311>}Zechariah 6:13); a royal Priest, and a priestly King.

house of God — the spiritual house, the *Church*, made up of believers, whose home is *heaven*, where Jesus now is (^{<312>}Hebrews 12:22,23). Thus, by “the house of God,” over which Jesus is, *heaven* is included in meaning, as well as the *Church*, whose home it is.

22. (^{<313>}Hebrews 4:16 7:19.)

with a true heart — without hypocrisy; “in truth, and with a perfect heart”; a heart thoroughly imbued with “the truth” (^{<314>}Hebrews 10:26).

full assurance — (^{<315>}Hebrews 6:11); with no doubt as to our acceptance when coming to God by the blood of Christ. As “faith” occurs here, so “*hope*,” and “*love*,” ^{<316>}Hebrews 10:23,24.

sprinkled from — that is, sprinkled *so as to be cleansed* from.

evil conscience — a consciousness of guilt unatoned for, and uncleansed away (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} Hebrews 10:2 ^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} Hebrews 9:9). Both the *hearts* and the *bodies* are cleansed. The legal purifications were with blood of animal victims and with water, and could only cleanse the *flesh* (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} Hebrews 9:13,21). Christ's blood purifies the *heart* and conscience. The Aaronic priest, in entering the holy place, washed with *water* (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} Hebrews 9:19) in the brazen laver. Believers, as priests to God, are once for all washed in BODY (as distinguished from "hearts") at baptism. As we have an immaterial, and a material nature, the cleansing of both is expressed by "hearts" and "body," the inner and the outer man; so the whole man, material and immaterial. The baptism of the body, however, is not the mere putting away of material filth, nor an act operating by intrinsic efficacy, but the sacramental seal, applied to the outer man, of a spiritual washing (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} 1 Peter 3:21). "Body" (not merely "flesh," the *carnal* part, as ^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} 2 Corinthians 7:1) includes the *whole* material man, which needs cleansing, as being redeemed, as well as the soul. The body, once polluted with sin, is washed, so as to be fitted like Christ's holy body, and by His body, to be spiritually a pure and living offering. On the "pure water," the symbol of consecration and sanctification, compare ^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} John 19:34 ^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} 1 Corinthians 6:11 ^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} 1 John 5:6 ^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} Ezekiel 36:25. The perfects "having ... hearts *sprinkled* ... body (the *Greek* is singular) *washed*," imply a continuing state produced by a once-for-all accomplished act, namely, our justification by faith through Christ's blood, and consecration to God, sealed sacramentally by the baptism of our body.

23. (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} Hebrews 3:6,14 4:14.)

profession — *Greek*, "confession."

our faith — rather as *Greek*, "our hope"; which is indeed *faith* exercised as to the future inheritance. *Hope* rests on faith, and at the same time quickens *faith*, and is the ground of our bold *confession* (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} 1 Peter 3:15). Hope is similarly (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} Hebrews 10:22) connected with *purification* (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} 1 John 3:3).

without wavering — without declension (^{ⲥⲟⲙⲉ} Hebrews 3:14), "steadfast unto the end."

he — God is faithful to His promises (^{<5067>}Hebrews 6:17,18 11:11 12:26,28 ^{<4009>}1 Corinthians 1:9 10:13 ^{<5134>}1 Thessalonians 5:24 ^{<5132>}2 Thessalonians 3:3; see also Christ's promise, ^{<6026>}John 12:26); but man is too often unfaithful to his duties.

24. Here, as elsewhere, *hope* and *love* follow *faith*; the Pauline triad of Christian graces.

consider — with the mind attentively fixed on “one another” (see on ^{<5067>}Hebrews 3:1), contemplating with continual consideration the characters and wants of our brethren, so as to render mutual help and counsel. Compare “consider,” ^{<5401>}Psalms 41:1, and ^{<5025>}Hebrews 12:15, “(All) looking diligently lest *any* fail of the grace of God.”

to provoke — *Greek*, “*with a view to provoking unto love*,” instead of provoking to hatred, as is too often the case.

25. assembling of ourselves together — The *Greek*, “*episunagoge*,” is only found here and ^{<5102>}2 Thessalonians 2:1 (the gathering together of the elect to Christ at His coming, ^{<4263>}Matthew 24:31). The assembling or gathering of ourselves for Christian communion in private and public, is an earnest of our being gathered together to Him at His appearing. Union is strength; continual assemblings together beget and foster *love*, and give good opportunities for “provoking to good works,” by “exhorting one another” (^{<5067>}Hebrews 3:13). IGNATIUS says, “When ye frequently, and in numbers meet together, the powers of Satan are overthrown, and his mischief is neutralized by your likemindedness in the faith.” To neglect such assemblings together might end in apostasy at last. He avoids the *Greek* term “*sunagoge*,” as suggesting the Jewish *synagogue* meetings (compare ^{<4100>}Revelation 2:9).

as the manner of some is — “manner,” that is, habit, custom. This gentle expression proves he is not here as yet speaking of *apostasy*.

the day approaching — This, the shortest designation of the day of the Lord's coming, occurs elsewhere only in ^{<4033>}1 Corinthians 3:13; a confirmation of the Pauline authorship of this Epistle. The Church being in *all ages* kept uncertain how soon Christ is coming, *the day* is, and has been, in each age, practically always near; whence, believers have been

called on always to be watching for it as nigh at hand. The Hebrews were now living close upon One of those great types and foretastes of it, the destruction of Jerusalem (^{<4B1}Matthew 24:1,2), “the bloody and fiery dawn of the great day; that day is the day of days, the ending day of all days, the settling day of all days, the day of the promotion of time into eternity, the day which, for the Church, breaks through and breaks off the night of the present world” [DELITZSCH in ALFORD].

26. Compare on this and following verses, ^{<50B1}Hebrews 6:4, etc. There the warning was that if there be not diligence in progressing, a falling off will take place, and apostasy may ensue: here it is, that if there be lukewarmness in Christian communion, apostasy may ensue. if

we sin — *Greek* present participle: if we be found *sinning*, that is, not isolated acts, but a *state* of sin [ALFORD]. A violation not only of the *law*, but of the whole economy of the New Testament (^{<50B3}Hebrews 10:28,29).

wilfully — presumptuously, *Greek* “willingly.” After receiving “full knowledge (so the *Greek*, compare ^{<50B4}1 Timothy 2:4) of the truth,” by having been “enlightened,” and by having “tasted” a certain measure even of grace of “the Holy Ghost” (the Spirit of truth, ^{<50B7}John 14:17; and “the Spirit of grace,” ^{<50B5}Hebrews 10:29): to *fall away* (as “sin” here means, ^{<50B2}Hebrews 3:12,17; compare ^{<50B6}Hebrews 6:6) and apostatize (^{<50B8}Hebrews 3:12) to Judaism or infidelity, is not a sin of *ignorance*, or error (“*out of the way*,” the result) of infirmity, but a *deliberate sinning* against the Spirit (^{<50B9}Hebrews 10:29 ^{<50B10}Hebrews 5:2): *such* sinning, where a consciousness of Gospel obligations not only was, but is present: a sinning presumptuously and pre severingly against Christ’s redemption *for* us, and the Spirit of grace *in* us. “He only who stands high can fall low. A lively reference in the soul to what is good is necessary in order to be thoroughly wicked; hence, man can be more reprobate than the beasts, and the apostate angels than apostate man” [THOLUCK].

remaineth no more sacrifice — For there is but ONE Sacrifice that can atone for sin; they, after having fully known that sacrifice, deliberately reject it.

27. a certain — an extraordinary and indescribable. The indefiniteness, as of something *peculiar of its kind*, makes the description the more terrible (compare *Greek*, ^{<G18>}James 1:18).

looking for — “expectation”: a later sense of the *Greek*. ALFORD strangely translates, as the *Greek* usually means elsewhere, “reception.” The transition is easy from “giving a reception to” something or someone, to “looking for.” Contrast the “expecting” (the very same *Greek* as here), ^{<G13>}Hebrews 10:13, which refutes ALFORD.

fiery indignation — literally, “zeal of fire.” Fire is personified: glow or ardor of fire, that is, of Him who is “a consuming fire.”

devour — continually.

28. Compare ^{<G13>}Hebrews 2:2,3 12:25.

despised — “set at naught” [ALFORD]: utterly and heinously violated, not merely some minor detail, but *the whole law and covenant*; for example, by idolatry (^{<G13>}Deuteronomy 17:2-7). So here *apostasy* answers to such an utter violation of the old covenant.

died — *Greek*, “dies”: the normal punishment of such transgression, then still in force.

without mercy — literally, “mercies”: removal out of the pale of mitigation, or a respite of his doom.

under — on the evidence of.

29. sorer — *Greek*, “worse,” namely, “punishment” (literally, “vengeance”) than any mere temporal punishment of the body.

suppose ye — an appeal to the Hebrews’ reason and conscience.

thought worthy — by God at the judgment.

trodden under foot the Son of God — by “wilful” apostasy. So he treads under foot God Himself who “glorified His *Son* as an high priest” (^{<G13>}Hebrews 5:5 6:6).

an unholy thing — literally, “common,” as opposed to “sanctified.” No better than the blood of a common man, thus involving the consequence

that Christ, in claiming to be God, was guilty of blasphemy. and so deserved to die!

wherewith he was sanctified — for Christ died even for him.

“Sanctified,” in the fullest sense, belongs only to the saved elect. But in some sense it belongs also to those who have gone a far way in Christian experience, and yet fall away at last. The higher such a one’s past Christian experiences, the deeper his fall.

done despite unto — by repelling in *fact*: as “blasphemy” is despite in *words* (^{<4032>}Mark 3:29). “Of the Jews who became Christians and relapsed to Judaism, we find from the history of Uriel Acosta, that they required a blasphemy against Christ. ‘They applied to Him epithets used against Molech the adulterous branch,’ etc.” [THOLUCK].

the Spirit of grace — the Spirit that confers grace. “He who does not accept the benefit, insults Him who confers it. He hath made thee a son: wilt thou become a slave? He has come to take up His abode with thee; but thou art introducing evil into thyself” [CHRYSOSTOM]. “It is the curse of evil eternally to propagate evil: so, for him who profanes the Christ *without him*, and blasphemes the Christ *within him*, there is subjectively no renewal of a change of mind (^{<3016>}Hebrews 6:6), and objectively no new *sacrifice for sins*” (^{<3017>}Hebrews 10:26) [THOLUCK].

30. him — God, who enters no empty threats.

Vengeance belongeth unto me — *Greek*, “To Me belongeth vengeance”: exactly according with *Paul’s* quotation, ^{<6129>}Romans 12:19, of the same text.

Lord shall judge his people — in grace, or else anger, according as each deserves: here, “judge,” so as to punish the reprobate apostate; there, “judge,” so as to interpose in behalf of, and save His people (^{<6234>}Deuteronomy 32:36).

31. fearful ... to fall into the hands — It is good like David *to fall into the hands of God*, rather than man, when one does so with filial *faith* in his father’s love, though God *chastises* him. “It is fearful” to fall into His hands as a reprobate and presumptuous sinner doomed to His just vengeance as Judge (^{<3017>}Hebrews 10:27).

living God — therefore able to punish for ever (^{<418>}Matthew 10:28).

32. As previously he has warned them by the awful end of apostates, so here he stirs them up by the remembrance of their own former faith, patience, and self-sacrificing love. So ^{<618>}Revelation 2:3,4.

call to remembrance — habitually: so the present tense means.

illuminated — “enlightened”: come to “the knowledge of the truth” (^{<588>}Hebrews 10:26) in connection with baptism (see on ^{<588>}Hebrews 6:4). In spiritual baptism, Christ, who is “the Light,” is put on. “On the one hand, we are not to sever the sign and the grace signified where the sacrifice truly answers its designs; on the other, the glass is not to be mistaken for the liquor, nor the sheath for the sword” [BENGEL].

fight of — that is, *consisting of* afflictions.

33. The persecutions here referred to seem to have been endured by the Hebrew Christians at their first conversion, not only in Palestine, but also in Rome and elsewhere, the Jews in every city inciting the populace and the Roman authorities against Christians.

gazing-stock — as in a *theater* (so the *Greek*): often used as the place of punishment in the presence of the assembled multitudes. ^{<442>}Acts 19:29
^{<409>}1 Corinthians 4:9, “Made a *theatrical* spectacle to the world.”

ye became — of your own accord: attesting your Christian sympathy with your suffering brethren.

companions of — sharers in affliction with.

34. **ye had compassion on me in my bonds** — The oldest manuscripts and versions omit “me,” and read, “Ye both sympathized with *those in bonds* (answering to the last clause of ^{<588>}Hebrews 10:33; compare ^{<838>}Hebrews 13:3,23 6:10), and accepted (so the *Greek* is translated in ^{<815>}Hebrews 11:35) with joy (^{<500>}James 1:2; *joy in tribulations*, as exercising faith and other graces, ^{<618>}Romans 5:3; and the pledge of the coming glory, ^{<418>}Matthew 5:12) the plundering of your (own) goods (answering to the first clause of ^{<588>}Hebrews 10:33).”

in yourselves — The oldest manuscripts omit “in”: translate, “knowing that ye have *for* (or ‘*to*’) *yourselves*.”

better — a heavenly (^{<8116>}Hebrews 11:16).

enduring — not liable to *spoiling*.

substance — possession: peculiarly our own, if we will not *cast away* our birthright.

35-37. Consequent exhortation to confidence and endurance, as Christ is soon coming.

Cast not away — implying that they now have “confidence,” and that it will not withdraw of itself, unless they “cast it away” wilfully (compare ^{<8114>}Hebrews 3:14).

which — *Greek*, “the which”: inasmuch as being such as.

hath — present tense: it is as certain as if you had it in your hand (^{<8115>}Hebrews 10:37). It hath in reversion.

recompense of reward — of grace not of debt: a reward of a kind which no mercenary self-seeker would seek: holiness will be its own reward; self-devoting unselfishness for Christ’s sake will be its own rich recompense (see on ^{<8112>}Hebrews 2:2; ^{<8112>}Hebrews 11:26).

36. patience — *Greek*, “waiting endurance,” or “enduring perseverance”: the kindred *Greek* verb in the *Septuagint*, ^{<8112>}Habakkuk 2:3, is translated, “*wait for it*” (compare ^{<8112>}James 5:7).

after ye have done the will of God — “that whereas ye have done the will of God” hitherto (^{<8112>}Hebrews 10:32-35), ye may now show also *patient, persevering endurance*, and so “receive the promise,” that is, the promised reward: eternal life and bliss commensurate with our work of faith and love (^{<8112>}Hebrews 6:10-12). We must not only *do*, but also *suffer* (^{<8112>}1 Peter 4:19). God first uses the *active* talents of His servants; then polishes the other side of the stone, making the *passive* graces shine, *patience, meekness*, etc. It may be also translated, “That ye may do the will of God, and receive,” etc. [ALFORD]: “patience” itself is a further and a persevering doing of “God’s will”; otherwise it would be profitless and no

real grace (^{<4072>}Matthew 7:21). We should look, not merely for individual bliss now and at death, but for the great and general consummation of bliss of all saints, both in body and soul.

37, 38. Encouragement to patient endurance by consideration of the shortness of the time till Christ shall come, and God's rejection of him that draws back, taken from ^{<8100>}Habakkuk 2:3,4.

a little while — (^{<8166>}John 16:16).

he that shall come — literally, “the Comer.” In Habakkuk, it is *the vision* that is said to be about to come. *Christ*, being the grand and ultimate subject of all prophetic vision, is here made by Paul, under inspiration, the subject of the Spirit's prophecy by Habakkuk, in its final and exhaustive fulfillment.

38. just — The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “my just man.” God is the speaker: “He who is just in My sight.” BENGEL translates, “The just shall live by *my faith*”: answering to the *Hebrew*, ^{<8100>}Habakkuk 2:4; literally, “the just shall live by the faith *of Him*,” namely, *Christ*, the final subject of “the vision,” who “will not lie,” that is, disappoint. Here not merely the first beginning, as in ^{<8101>}Galatians 3:11, but the *continuance*, of the spiritual life of the justified man is referred to, as opposed to declension and apostasy. As the justified man receives his first spiritual life by faith, so it is *by faith* that he *shall* continue to *live* (^{<4000>}Luke 4:4). The *faith* meant here is that fully developed living trust in the unseen (^{<8100>}Hebrews 11:1) Savior, which can keep men steadfast amidst persecutions and temptations (^{<8100>}Hebrews 10:34-36).

but — *Greek*, “and.”

if any man draw back — So the *Greek* admits: though it might also be translated, as ALFORD approves, “if *he* (the just man) draw back.” Even so, it would not disprove the final perseverance of saints. For “the just man” in this latter clause would mean one seemingly, and in part really, though not savingly, “just” or *justified*: as in ^{<8100>}Ezekiel 18:24,26. In the *Hebrew*, this latter half of the verse stands first, and is, “Behold, his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him.” Habakkuk states the *cause* of drawing back: *a soul lifted up*, and in self-inflated unbelief setting itself up

against God. Paul, by the Spirit, states the *effect*, it *draws back*. Also, what in Habakkuk is, “His soul is not upright in him,” is in Paul, “My soul shall have no pleasure in him.” Habakkuk states the *cause*, Paul the effect: He who is not right in his own soul, does not stand right with God; God has no pleasure in him. BENDEL translates Habakkuk, “His soul is not upright in *respect to him*,” namely, Christ, the subject of “the vision,” that is, *Christ has no pleasure in him* (compare ^{<822>}Hebrews 12:25). Every flower in spring is not a fruit in autumn.

39. A Pauline elegant turning-off from denunciatory warnings to charitable hopes of his readers (^{<812>}Romans 8:12).

saving of the soul — literally, “acquisition (or *obtaining*) of the soul.” The kindred *Greek* verb is applied to Christ’s *acquiring* the Church as the *purchase* of His blood (^{<818>}Acts 20:28). If we *acquire* or *obtain* our soul’s salvation, it is through Him who has obtained it for us by His bloodshedding. “The unbelieving man *loses his soul*: for not being God’s, neither is he his own [compare ^{<816>}Matthew 16:26 with ^{<815>}Luke 9:25]: faith saves the soul by linking it to God” [DELITZSCH in ALFORD].

CHAPTER 11

HEBREWS 11:1-40.

DEFINITION OF THE FAITH JUST SPOKEN OF (HEBREWS 10:39): EXAMPLES FROM THE OLD COVENANT FOR OUR PERSEVERANCE IN FAITH.

1. *Description* of the great things which *faith* (in its widest sense: not here restricted to *faith* in the Gospel sense) does for us. Not a full *definition* of faith in its whole nature, but a description of its great characteristics in relation to the subject of Paul's exhortation here, namely, to perseverance.

substance, etc. — It substantiates promises of God which we hope for, as future in fulfillment, making them present realities to us. However, the *Greek* is translated in ^{scri}Hebrews 3:14, "confidence"; and it also here may mean "sure confidence." So ALFORD translates. THOMAS MAGISTER supports *English Version*, "The whole thing that follows is virtually contained in the first principle; now the *first commencement* of the things hoped for is in us through the assent of faith, which virtually contains all the things hoped for." Compare *Note*, see on ^{scri}Hebrews 6:5, "tasted ... powers of the world to come." Through faith, the future object of Christian hope, *in its beginning*, is already present. True faith infers the reality of the objects believed in and honed for (^{scri}Hebrews 11:6). HUGO DE ST. VICTOR distinguished *faith* from *hope*. By *faith* alone we are sure of eternal things that they ARE: but by *hope* we are confident that WE SHALL HAVE them. All hope presupposes faith (^{scri}Romans 8:25).

evidence — "demonstration": convincing proof to the believer: the soul thereby seeing what the eye cannot see.

things not seen — the whole invisible and spiritual world: not things future and things pleasant, as the "things hoped for," but also the past and present, and those the reverse of pleasant. "Eternal life is promised to us, but it is when we are dead: we are told of a blessed resurrection, but meanwhile we moulder in the dust; we are declared to be justified, and sin

dwells in us; we hear that we are blessed, meantime we are overwhelmed in endless miseries: we are promised abundance of all goods, but we still endure hunger and thirst; God declares He will immediately come to our help, but He seems deaf to our cries. What should we do if we had not faith and hope to lean on, and if our mind did not emerge amidst the darkness above the world by the shining of the Word and Spirit of God?" [CALVIN]. Faith is an assent unto truths credible upon the testimony of God (not on the *reasonableness* of the thing revealed, though by this we may judge as to whether it be what it professes, a genuine revelation), delivered unto us in the writings of the apostles and prophets. Thus Christ's ascension is the cause, and His absence the crown, of our faith: because He ascended, we the more believe, and because we believe in Him who hath ascended, our faith is the more accepted [BISHOP PEARSON]. Faith believes what it sees not; for if thou seest there is no faith; the Lord has gone away so as not to be seen: He is hidden that He may be believed; the yearning desire by faith after Him who is unseen is the preparation of a heavenly mansion for us; when He shall be seen it shall be given to us as the reward of faith [AUGUSTINE]. As Revelation deals with spiritual and invisible things exclusively, faith is the faculty needed by us, since it is the evidence of things not seen. By faith we venture our eternal interests on the bare word of God, and this is altogether reasonable.

2. For — So high a description of faith is not undeserved; for ... [ALFORD].

by it — *Greek*, "in it": in respect to ... in the matter of," it, "or, as *Greek* more emphatically, "this."

the elders — as though still living and giving their powerful testimony to the reasonableness and excellence of faith (⁸²¹Hebrews 12:1). Not merely *the ancients*, as though they were people solely of the past; nay, they belong to the one and the same blessed family as ourselves (⁸¹⁹Hebrews 11:39,40). "*The elders*," whom we all revere so highly. "Paul shows how we ought to seek in all its fullness, under the veil of history, the essential substance of the doctrine sometimes briefly indicated" [BENGEL]. "*The elders*," as "*the fathers*," is a title of honor given on the ground of their bright faith and practice.

obtained a good report — *Greek*, "were testified of," namely, favorably (compare ⁸⁰⁸Hebrews 7:8). It is a phrase of Luke, Paul's companion. Not

only men, but God, gave testimony to their faith (^{<800>}Hebrews 11:4,5,39). Thus they being testified of themselves have become “witnesses” to all others (^{<800>}Hebrews 12:1). The earlier elders had their patience exercised for a long period of life: those later, in sharper afflictions. Many things which they hoped for and did not see, subsequently came to pass and were conspicuously seen, the event confirming faith [BENGEL].

3. we understand — We perceive with our spiritual intelligence the fact of the world’s creation by God, though we see neither Him nor the act of creation as described in ^{<800>}Genesis 1:1-31. The natural world could not, without revelation, teach us this truth, though it confirms the truth when apprehended by faith (^{<800>}Romans 1:20). Adam is passed over in silence here as to his faith, perhaps as being the first who fell and brought sin on us all; though it does not follow that he did not repent and believe the promise.

worlds — literally, “ages”; all that exists in time and space, visible and invisible, present and eternal.

framed — “fitly formed and consolidated”; including the creation of the single parts and the harmonious organization of the whole, and the continual providence which maintains the whole throughout all ages. As creation is the foundation and a specimen of the whole divine economy, so faith in creation is the foundation and a specimen of all faith [BENGEL].

by the word of God — not here, the *personal* word (Greek, “*logos*,” ^{<800>}John 1:1) but *the spoken word* (Greek, “*rhema*”); though by the instrumentality of the personal word (^{<800>}Hebrews 1:2).

not made, etc. — Translate as *Greek*, “so that not out of things which appear hath that which is seen been made”; not as in the case of all things which we see reproduced from previously existing and visible materials, as, for instance, the plant from the seed, the animal from the parent, etc., has the visible world sprung into being from apparent materials. So also it is implied in the first clause of the verse that the invisible spiritual worlds were framed not from previously existing materials. BENGEL explains it by distinguishing “appear,” that is, *begin to be seen* (namely, at creation), from *that which is seen* as already in existence, not merely *beginning* to be seen; so that the things seen were not made of the things which appear,”

that is, which *begin to be seen by us in the act of creation*. We were not spectators of creation; it is by faith we perceive it.

4. more excellent sacrifice — because offered in *faith*. Now *faith* must have some *revelation of God* on which it fastens. The revelation in this case was doubtless God's command to sacrifice *animals* ("the firstlings of the flock") in token of the forfeiture of men's life by sin, and as a type of the promised bruiser of the serpent's head (^{<0015>}Genesis 3:15), the one coming sacrifice: this command is implied in God's having made coats of skin for Adam and Eve (^{<0021>}Genesis 3:21): for these skins must have been taken from animals slain *in sacrifice*: inasmuch as it was not for *food* they were slain, animal food not being permitted till after the flood; nor for mere *clothing*, as, were it so, clothes might have been made of the fleeces without the needless cruelty of killing the animal; but a coat of skin put on Adam from a sacrificed animal typified the covering or atonement (the *Hebrew* for *atone* means to *cover*) resulting from Christ's sacrifice. The *Greek* is more literally rendered [KENNICOTT] by WYCLIFFE, "a *much more* sacrifice"; and by Queen Elizabeth's version "a greater sacrifice." A fuller, more ample sacrifice, that which partook more largely and essentially of the true nature and virtue of sacrifice [ARCHBISHOP MAGEE]. It was not any intrinsic merit in "the firstling of the flock" above "the fruit of the ground." It was God's appointment that gave it all its excellency as a sacrifice; if it had not been so, it would have been a presumptuous act of *will-worship* (^{<0023>}Colossians 2:23), and taking of a life which man had no right over before the flood (^{<0009>}Genesis 9:1-6). The sacrifice seems to have been a holocaust, and the sign of the divine acceptance of it was probably the consumption of it by fire from heaven (^{<0157>}Genesis 15:17). Hence, "to accept" a burnt sacrifice is in *Hebrew* "to turn it to ashes" (^{<0203>}Psalms 20:3, *Margin*). A flame seems to have issued from the Shekinah, or flaming cherubim, east of Eden ("the presence of the Lord," ^{<0116>}Genesis 4:16), where the first sacrifices were offered. Cain, in unbelieving self-righteousness, presented merely a *thank offering*, not like Abel feeling his need of the propitiatory sacrifice appointed on account of sin. God "had respect (first) unto Abel, and (then) to his offering" (^{<0004>}Genesis 4:4). Faith causes the believer's person to be accepted, and then his offering. Even an animal sacrifice, though of God's appointment, would not have been accepted, had it not been offered in faith.

he obtained witness — *God* by fire attesting His acceptance of him as “righteous by faith.”

his gifts — the common term for *sacrifices*, implying that they must be freely *given*.

by it — by faith exhibited in his animal sacrifice.

dead, yet speaketh — His *blood crying front the ground to God*, shows how precious, because of his “faith,” he was still in God’s sight, even when dead. So he becomes a witness to us of the blessed effects of faith.

5. Faith was the ground of his *pleasing God*; and his *pleasing God* was the ground of his *translation*.

translated — (^{<0052>}Genesis 5:22,24). Implying a *sudden* removal (the same *Greek* as in ^{<0000>}Galatians 1:6) from mortality without death to immortality: such a CHANGE as shall pass over the living at Christ’s coming (^{<0051>}1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

had this testimony — namely of Scripture; the *Greek* perfect implies that this testimony continues still: “he *has* been testified of.”

pleased God — The Scripture testimony virtually expresses that he *pleased God*, namely, “Enoch walked with God.” The *Septuagint* translates the *Hebrew* for “walked with God,” ^{<0009>}Genesis 6:9, *pleased God*.

6. without — *Greek*, “*apart from* faith”: if one be destitute of faith (compare ^{<0023>}Romans 14:23).

to please — Translate, as ALFORD does, the *Greek* aorist, “It is impossible to please God *at all*” (^{<0008>}Romans 8:8). Natural amiabilities and “works done before the grace of Christ are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ; yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin” [Article XIII, *Book of Common Prayer*]. Works not rooted in God are splendid sins [AUGUSTINE].

he that cometh to God — as a worshipper (^{<0079>}Hebrews 7:19).

must believe — *once for all*: *Greek* aorist tense.

that God is — is the true self-existing Jehovah (as contrasted with all so-called gods, not gods, ^{<808>}Galatians 4:8), the source of all being, though he sees Him not (^{<811>}Hebrews 11:1) as being “invisible” (^{<812>}Hebrews 11:27). So Enoch; this passage implies that he had not been favored with *visible* appearances of God, yet he *believed* in God’s *being*, and in God’s *moral government*, as the Rewarder of His diligent worshippers, in opposition to antediluvian skepticism. Also Moses was not so favored before he left Egypt the first time (^{<812>}Hebrews 11:27); still he believed.

and ... is — a different *Greek* verb from the former “is.” Translate, “is eventually”; *proves to be*; literally, “becomes.”

rewarder — renderer of reward [ALFORD]. So God proved to be to Enoch. The reward is *God Himself* diligently “sought” and “walked with” in partial communion here, and to be fully enjoyed hereafter. Compare ^{<115>}Genesis 15:1, “I am thy exceeding great reward.”

of them — and them only.

diligently seek — *Greek*, “seek out” God. Compare “seek *early*,” ^{<108>}Proverbs 8:17. Not only “ask” and “seek,” but “knock,” ^{<109>}Matthew 7:7; compare ^{<812>}Hebrews 11:12 ^{<131>}Luke 13:24, “Strive” as in an agony of contest.

7. warned of God — The same *Greek*, ^{<808>}Hebrews 8:5, “admonished of God.”

moved with fear — not mere slavish fear, but as in ^{<807>}Hebrews 5:7; see on ^{<807>}Hebrews 5:7; *Greek*, “reverential fear”: opposed to the world’s sneering disbelief of the revelation, and self-deceiving security. Join “by faith” with “prepared an ark” (^{<131>}1 Peter 3:20).

by the which — faith.

condemned the world — For since he believed and was saved, so might they have believed and been saved, so that their condemnation by God is by his case shown to be just.

righteousness which is by faith — *Greek*, “according to faith.” A Pauline thought. Noah is first called “righteous” in ^{<108>}Genesis 6:9. Christ calls Abel so, ^{<135>}Matthew 23:35. Compare as to Noah’s righteousness,

^{<3444}Ezekiel 14:14,20 ^{<0115}2 Peter 2:5, “a preacher of righteousness.” Paul here makes *faith* the principle and ground of his righteousness.

heir — the consequence of sonship which flows from faith.

8. From the antediluvian saints he passes to the patriarchs of Israel, to whom “the promises” belonged.

called — by God (^{<0115}Genesis 12:1). The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “He that was called Abraham,” his name being changed from Abram to Abraham, on the occasion of God’s making with him and his seed a covenant sealed by circumcision, many years after his call out of Ur. “By faith, he who was (afterwards) called Abraham (*father of nations*, ^{<0115}Genesis 17:5, in order to become which was the design of God’s bringing him out of Ur) obeyed (the command of God: to be understood in this reading), *so as to go out*,” etc.

which he should after receive — He had not fully received even this promise when he went out, for it was not *explicitly* given him till he had reached Canaan (^{<0115}Genesis 12:1,6,7). When the promise of the land was given him the Canaanite was still in the land, and himself a stranger; it is in the new heaven and new earth that he shall receive his personal inheritance promised him; so believers sojourn on earth as strangers, while the ungodly and Satan lord it over the earth; but at Christ’s coming that same earth which was the scene of the believer’s conflict shall be the inheritance of Christ and His saints.

9. **sojourned** — as a “stranger and pilgrim.”

in — *Greek*, “into,” that is, he went *into* it and sojourned there.

as in a strange country — a country *not belonging to him*, but to others (so the *Greek*), ^{<4015}Acts 7:5,6.

dwelling in tabernacles — *tents*: as *strangers* and *sojourners* do: moving from place to place, as having no fixed possession of their own. In contrast to the abiding “city” (^{<8110}Hebrews 11:10).

with — Their kind of dwelling being the same is a proof that their faith was the same. They all alike were content to wait for their good things

hereafter (^{<0165>}Luke 16:25). Jacob was fifteen years old at the death of Abraham.

heirs with him of the same promise — Isaac did not inherit it from Abraham, nor Jacob from Isaac, but they all inherited it from God directly as “fellow heirs.” In ^{<802>}Hebrews 6:12,15,17, “the promise” means *the thing promised* as a thing in part *already attained*; but in this chapter “the promise” is of something still *future*. However, see on ^{<802>}Hebrews 6:12.

10. looked for — *Greek*, “he was expecting”; waiting for with eager expectation (^{<818>}Romans 8:19).

a city — *Greek*, “*the city*,” already alluded to. Worldly Enoch, son of the murderer Cain, was the first to build his city here: the godly patriarchs waited for their city hereafter (^{<8116>}Hebrews 11:16 12:22 13:14).

foundations — *Greek*, “*the foundations*” which the *tents* had not, nor even men’s present cities have.

whose builder and maker — *Greek*, “*designer* [^{<4004>}Ephesians 1:4,11] and master-builder,” or *executor of the design*. The city is worthy of its Framer and Builder (compare ^{<8116>}Hebrews 11:16 ^{<802>}Hebrews 8:2). Compare *Note*, see on ^{<892>}Hebrews 9:12,” on “found.”

11. also Sara herself — though being the weaker vessel, and though at first she doubted.

was delivered of a child — omitted in the oldest manuscripts: then translate, “and that when she was past age” (^{<8049>}Romans 4:19).

she judged him faithful who had promised — after she had ceased to doubt, being instructed by the angel that it was no jest, but a matter in serious earnest.

12. as good as dead — literally, “deadened”; no longer having, as in youth, energetic vital powers.

stars ... sand — (^{<0217>}Genesis 22:17).

13-16. Summary of the characteristic excellencies of the patriarchs’ faith

died in faith — died as *believers*, waiting for, not actually *seeing* as yet their good things promised to them. They were true to this principle of *faith* even unto, and especially in, their dying hour (compare ^{<811>}Hebrews 11:20).

These all — beginning with “Abraham” (^{<810>}Hebrews 11:8), to whom *the promises were made* (^{<810>}Galatians 3:16), and who is alluded to in the end of ^{<811>}Hebrews 11:13 and in ^{<811>}Hebrews 11:15 [BENGEL and ALFORD]. But the “ALL” can hardly but include Abel, Enoch, and Noah. Now as these did not receive the promise of entering literal Canaan, *some other promise made in the first ages*, and often repeated, must be that meant, namely, the promise of a coming Redeemer made to Adam, namely, “the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” Thus the promises cannot have been merely temporal, for Abel and Enoch mentioned here received no temporal promise [ARCHBISHOP MAGEE]. This promise of eternal redemption is the inner essence of the promises made to Abraham (^{<810>}Galatians 3:16).

not having received — It was this that constituted their “faith.” If they had “received” THE THING PROMISED (so “the promises” here mean: the plural is used because of the *frequent renewal* of the promise to the patriarchs: ^{<811>}Hebrews 11:17 says he *did* receive the *promises*, but not *the thing promised*), it would have been *sight*, not *faith*.

seen them afar off — (^{<810>}John 8:56). Christ, as the Word, was preached to the Old Testament believers, and so became the seed of life to their souls, as He is to ours.

and were persuaded of them — The oldest manuscripts omit this clause.

embraced them — as though they were not “afar off,” but within reach, so as to draw them to themselves and clasp them in their embrace. TRENCH denies that the Old Testament believers *embraced* them, for they only saw them *afar off*: he translates, “saluted them,” as the homeward-bound mariner, recognizing from afar the well-known promontories of his native land. ALFORD translates, “*greeted* them.” Jacob’s exclamation, “I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord” (^{<810>}Genesis 49:18) is such a *greeting* of salvation from afar [DELITZSCH].

confessed ... were strangers — so Abraham to the children of Heth (^{<020>}Genesis 23:4); and Jacob to Pharaoh (^{<040>}Genesis 47:9 ^{<090>}Psalm 119:19). Worldly men hold fast the world; believers sit loose to it. *Citizens of the world* do not confess themselves “strangers on the earth.”

pilgrims — *Greek*, “temporary (literally, ‘by the way’) sojourners.”

on the earth — contrasted with “an heavenly” (^{<010>}Hebrews 11:16): “our citizenship is in heaven” (*Greek*: ^{<010>}Hebrews 10:34 ^{<090>}Psalm 119:54 ^{<010>}Philippians 3:20). “Whosoever professes that he has a Father in heaven, confesses himself a stranger on earth; hence there is in the heart an ardent longing, like that of a child living among strangers, in want and grief, far from his fatherland” [LUTHER]. “Like ships in seas while *in*, *above* the world.”

14. For — proof that “faith” (^{<010>}Hebrews 11:13) was their actuating principle.

declare plainly — make it plainly evident.

seek — *Greek*, “seek *after*”; implying the direction towards which their desires ever tend.

a country — rather as *Greek*, “a fatherland.” In confessing themselves *strangers* here, they evidently imply that they regard not this as their home or fatherland, but seek after another and a better.

15. As Abraham, had he desired to leave his pilgrim life in Canaan, and resume his former fixed habitation in Ur, among the carnal and worldly, had in his long life ample opportunities to have done so; and so spiritually, as to all believers who came out from the world to become God’s people, they might, if they had been so minded, have easily gone back.

16. Proving the truth that the old fathers did not, as some assert, “look only for transitory promises” [Article VII, *Book of Common Prayer*].

now — as the case is.

is not ashamed — *Greek*, “Is not ashamed of them.” Not merely once did God call himself *their God*, but He is NOW not ashamed to have Himself called so, they being *alive* and abiding with Him where He is. For, by the

law, God cannot come into contact with anything dead. None remained dead in Christ's presence (^{<217>}Luke 20:37,38). He who is Lord and Maker of heaven and earth, and all things therein, when asked, What is Thy name? said, omitting all His other titles, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" [THEODORET]. Not only is He *not ashamed*, but glories in the name and relation to His people. The "wherefore" does not mean that God's *good pleasure* is the meritorious, but the *gracious*, consequence of their obedience (that obedience being the result of His Spirit's work in them in the first instance). He first so "called" Himself, then they so called Him.

for — proof of His being "*their* God," namely, "He hath prepared (in His eternal counsels, ^{<117>}Matthew 20:23 25:34, and by the progressive acts of redemption, ^{<642>}John 14:2) for them a city," the city in which He Himself reigns, so that their yearning *desires* shall not be disappointed (^{<8114>}Hebrews 11:14,16).

a city — on its garniture by God (compare ^{<6211>}Revelation 21:10-27).

17. offered up — literally, "hath offered up," as if the work and its praise were yet enduring [ALFORD]. As far as His intention was concerned, he did sacrifice Isaac; and in actual fact "he offered him," as far as the presentation of him on the altar as an offering to God is concerned.

tried — *Greek*, "tempted," as in ^{<1220>}Genesis 22:1. *Put to the proof* of his faith. Not that God "tempts" *to sin*, but God "tempts" in the sense of *proving* or *trying* (^{<3113>}James 1:13-15).

and — and so.

he that had received — rather as *Greek*, "accepted," that is, *welcomed* and embraced by faith, not merely "had the promises," as in ^{<8005>}Hebrews 7:6. This added to the difficulty in the way of his faith, that it was in Isaac's posterity the promises were to be fulfilled; how then could they be fulfilled if Isaac were sacrificed?

offered up — rather as *Greek*, "was offering up"; he was in the act of offering.

his only-begotten son — Compare ⁽¹²²⁰⁾Genesis 22:2, “Take now thy son, thine only son.” EUSEBIUS [*The Preparation of the Gospel*, 1.10, and 4.16], has preserved a fragment of a *Greek* translation of Sanchoniatho, which mentions a mystical sacrifice of the Phoenicians, wherein a prince in royal robes was the offerer, and his only son was to be the victim: this evidently was a tradition derived from Abraham’s offering, and handed down through Esau or Edom, Isaac’s son. Isaac was Abraham’s “only-begotten son” in respect of Sarah and the promises: he sent away his other sons, by other wives (⁽¹²¹⁶⁾Genesis 25:6). Abraham is a type of the Father not sparing His only-begotten Son to fulfill the divine purpose of love. God nowhere in the Mosaic law allowed human sacrifices, though He claimed the first-born of Israel as His.

18. Of whom — rather as *Greek* “He (*Abraham*, not Isaac) TO whom it was said” [ALFORD]. BENDEL supports *English Version*. So ⁽⁸⁰⁰⁾Hebrews 1:7 uses the same *Greek* preposition, “unto,” for “in respect to,” or “of.” This verse gives a definition of the “only-begotten Son” (⁽⁸¹⁷⁾Hebrews 11:17).

in Isaac shall thy seed be called — (⁽¹²¹²⁾Genesis 21:12). The posterity of Isaac alone shall be accounted as the seed of Abraham, which is the heir of the promises (⁽⁸¹⁰⁾Romans 9:7).

19. Faith answered the objections which reason brought against God’s command to Abraham to offer Isaac, by suggesting that what God had promised He both could and would perform, however impossible the performance might seem (⁽⁸⁰⁴⁾Romans 4:20,21).

able to raise *him* — rather, in general, “able to raise from the dead.” Compare ⁽⁸¹⁰⁾Romans 4:17, “God who quickeneth the dead.” The quickening Of Sarah’s dead womb suggested the thought of God’s power to raise even the dead, though no instance of it had as yet occurred.

he received him — “received him back” [ALFORD].

in a figure — *Greek*, “in a parable.” ALFORD explains, “Received him back, risen from that death which he had undergone in, under, *the figure of the ram*.” I prefer with BISHOP PEARSON, ESTIUS, and GREGORY OF NYSSA, understanding the *figure* to be the representation which the whole

scene gave to Abraham of Christ in His death (typified by Isaac's offering in intention, and the ram's actual substitution answering to Christ's vicarious death), and in His resurrection (typified by Abraham's receiving him back alive from the jaws of death, compare ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 1:9,10); just as on the day of atonement the slain goat and the scapegoat together formed one joint rite representing Christ's death and resurrection. It was then that Abraham saw Christ's day (^{<408>}John 8:56): accounting God was able to raise even from the dead: from which state of the dead he received him back *as a type of the resurrection in Christ*.

20. Jacob is put before Esau, as heir of the chief, namely, the *spiritual* blessing.

concerning things to come — *Greek*, “*even concerning things to come*”: not only concerning things present. Isaac, *by faith*, assigned to his sons things future, as if they were present.

21. both the sons — *Greek*, “*each of the sons*” (^{<447>}Genesis 47:29,48:8-20). He knew not Joseph's sons, and could not distinguish them by sight, yet *he did distinguish them by faith*, transposing his hands intentionally, so as to lay his right hand on the younger, Ephraim, whose posterity was to be greater than that of Manasseh: he also adopted these grandchildren as his own sons, after having transferred the right of primogeniture to Joseph (^{<442>}Genesis 48:22).

and worshipped — This did not take place in immediate connection with the foregoing, but before it, when Jacob made Joseph swear that he would bury him with his fathers in Canaan, not in Egypt. The assurance that Joseph would do so filled him with pious gratitude to God, which he expressed by raising himself on his bed to an attitude of *worship*. His faith, as Joseph's (^{<512>}Hebrews 11:22), consisted in his so confidentially anticipating the fulfillment of God's promise of Canaan to his descendants, as to desire to be buried there as his proper possession.

leaning upon the top of his staff — ^{<443>}Genesis 47:31, *Hebrew* and *English Version*, “upon the bed's head.” The *Septuagint* translates as Paul here. JEROME justly reprobates the notion of modern Rome, that Jacob *worshipped the top of Joseph's staff*, having on it an image of Joseph's power, to which Jacob bowed in recognition of the future sovereignty of

his son's tribe, the father bowing to the son! The *Hebrew*, as translated in *English Version*, sets it aside: *the bed* is alluded to afterwards (^{<081P>}Genesis 48:2 49:33), and it is likely that Jacob turned himself in his *bed* so as to have his face toward the pillow, ^{<281P>}Isaiah 38:2 (there were no *bedsteads* in the East). Paul by adopting the *Septuagint* version, brings out, under the Spirit, *an additional fact*, namely, that the aged patriarch used *his own* (not Joseph's) *staff* to lean on in worshipping on his bed. The *staff*, too, was the *emblem of his pilgrim state* here on his way to his heavenly city (^{<581P>}Hebrews 11:13,14), wherein God had so wonderfully supported him. ^{<630>}Genesis 32:10, "With my *staff* I passed over Jordan, and now I am become," etc. (compare ^{<021>}Exodus 12:11 ^{<010B>}Mark 6:8). In ^{<1142>}1 Kings 1:47, the same thing is said of David's "bowing on his bed," an act of adoring thanksgiving to God for God's favor to his son before death. He omits the more leading blessing of the twelve sons of Jacob; because "he plucks only the flowers which stand by his way, and leaves the whole meadow full to his readers" [DELITZSCH in ALFORD].

22. when he died — "when dying."

the departing — "the exodus" (^{<081P>}Genesis 50:24,25). Joseph's eminent position in Egypt did not make him regard it as his home: in faith he looked to God's promise of Canaan being fulfilled and desired that his bones should rest there: testifying thus:

(1) that he had no doubt of his posterity obtaining the promised land: and

(2) that he believed in the resurrection of the body, and the enjoyment in it of the heavenly Canaan. His wish was fulfilled (^{<623>}Joshua 24:32 ^{<4016>}Acts 4:16).

23. parents — So the *Septuagint* has the plural, namely, Amram and Jochebed (^{<081P>}Numbers 26:59); but in ^{<010B>}Exodus 2:2, the mother alone is mentioned; but doubtless Amram sanctioned all she did, and secrecy. being their object, he did not appear prominent in what was done.

a proper child — *Greek*, "a comely child." ^{<4012>}Acts 7:20, "exceeding fair," *Greek*, "fair to God." The "faith" of his parents in saving the child must have had some divine revelation to rest on (probably at the time of his

birth), which marked their “exceeding fair” babe as one whom God designed to do a great work by. His *beauty* was probably “the sign” appointed by God to assure their faith.

the king’s commandment — to slay all the males (¹⁰¹²Exodus 1:22).

24. So far from *faith* being opposed to *Moses*, he was an eminent example of it [BENGEL].

refused — in believing self-denial, when he might possibly have succeeded at last to the throne of Egypt. Thermutis, Pharaoh’s daughter, according to the tradition which Paul under the Spirit sanctions, adopted him, as JOSEPHUS says, with the consent of the king. JOSEPHUS states that when a child, he threw on the ground the diadem put on him in jest, a presage of his subsequent formal rejection of Thermutis’ adoption of him. Faith made him to prefer the adoption of the King of kings, unseen, and so to choose (⁸¹²Hebrews 11:25,26) things, the very last which flesh and blood relish.

25. He balanced the best of the world with the worst of religion, and decidedly chose the latter. “Choosing” implies a deliberate resolution, not a hasty impulse. He was forty years old, a time when the judgment is matured.

for a season — If the world has “pleasure” (*Greek*, “enjoyment”) to offer, it is but “for a season.” If religion bring with it “affliction,” it too is but for a season; whereas its “pleasures are for evermore.”

26. Esteeming — Inasmuch as he esteemed.

the reproach of Christ — that is, the reproach which falls on the Church, and which Christ regards as His own reproach, He being the Head, and the Church (both of the Old and New Testament) His body. Israel typified Christ; Israel’s sufferings were Christ’s sufferings (compare ¹⁰¹²2 Corinthians 1:5 ⁸¹²Colossians 1:24). As uncircumcision was Egypt’s *reproach*, so circumcision was the badge of Israel’s expectation of Christ, which Moses especially cherished, and which the Gentiles reproached Israel on account of. Christ’s people’s reproach will ere long be their great glory.

had respect unto, etc. — Greek, “*turning his eyes away from other considerations, he fixed them on the (eternal) recompense*” (^{<813>}Hebrews 11:39,40).

27. not fearing the wrath of the king — But in ^{<104>}Exodus 2:14 it is said, “Moses feared, and fled from the face of Pharaoh.” He was *afraid*, and fled from the danger where no duty called him to stay (to have stayed without call of duty would have been to tempt Providence, and *to sacrifice his hope of being Israel’s future deliverer according to the divine intimations*; his great aim, see on ^{<812>}Hebrews 11:23). He *did not fear the king* so as to neglect his duty and not return when God called him. It was *in spite of the king’s prohibition he left Egypt*, not fearing the consequences which were likely to overtake him if he should be caught, after having, in defiance of the king, left Egypt. If he had stayed and resumed his position as adopted son of Pharaoh’s daughter, his slaughter of the Egyptian would doubtless have been connived at; but his resolution to take his portion with oppressed Israel, which he could not have done had he stayed, was the motive of his flight, and constituted the “faith” of this act, according to the express statement here. The exodus of Moses with Israel cannot be meant here, for it was made, not in defiance, but by the desire, of the king. Besides, the chronological order would be broken thus, the next particular specified here, namely, the institution of the *Passover*, having taken place *before the exodus*. Besides, it is Moses’ *personal* history and faith which are here described. The faith of the people (“THEY passed”) is not introduced till ^{<812>}Hebrews 11:29.

endured — steadfast in faith amidst trials. He had fled, *not* so much from *fear of Pharaoh*, as from a revulsion of feeling in finding God’s people insensible to their high destiny, and from disappointment at not having been able to inspire them with those hopes for which he had sacrificed all his earthly prospects. This accounts for his strange reluctance and despondency when commissioned by God to go and arouse the people (^{<105>}Exodus 3:15 ^{<107>}4:1,10-12).

seeing him ... invisible — as though he had not to do with men, but only with God, ever before his eyes by faith, though *invisible* to the bodily eye (^{<803>}Romans 1:20 ^{<107>}1 Timothy 1:17 ^{<107>}6:16). Hence he feared not the wrath of *visible* man; the characteristic of *faith* (^{<810>}Hebrews 11:1 ^{<107>}Luke 12:4,5).

28. kept — *Greek*, “*hath kept*,” the Passover being, in Paul’s day, still observed. His *faith* here was his belief in the invisible God’s promise that the destroying angel should *pass over*, and not *touch* the inmates of the blood-sprinkled houses (^{<1022>}Exodus 12:23). “He acquiesced in the bare word of God where the thing itself was not apparent” [CALVIN].

the first-born — *Greek* neuter; *both of man and beast*.

29. they — Moses and Israel.

Red Sea — called so from its red seaweed, or rather from Edom (meaning “red”), whose country adjoined it.

which ... assaying to do — *Greek*, “of which (Red Sea) the Egyptians having made experiment.” *Rashness* and *presumption* mistaken by many for *faith*; with similar rash presumption many rush into eternity. The same thing when done by the believer, and when done by the unbeliever, is not the same thing [BENGEL]. What was *faith* in Israel, was *presumption* in the Egyptians.

were drowned — *Greek*, “were swallowed up,” or “engulfed.” They sank in the sands as much as in the waves of the Red Sea. Compare ^{<1052>}Exodus 15:12, “the *earth* swallowed them.”

30. The soundings of trumpets, though one were to sound for ten thousand years, cannot throw down walls, but *faith* can do all things [CHRYSOSTOM].

seven days — whereas sieges often lasted for years.

31. Rahab showed her “faith” in her confession, ^{<1019>}Joshua 2:9,11, “I know that Jehovah hath given you the land; Jehovah your God, is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.”

the harlot — Her former life adds to the marvel of her repentance, faith, and preservation (^{<1031>}Matthew 21:31-32).

believed not — *Greek*, “were disobedient,” namely, to the will of God manifested by the miracles wrought in behalf of Israel (^{<1018>}Joshua 2:8-11).

received — in her house (^{<1011>}Joshua 2:1,4,6).

with peace — peaceably; so that they had nothing to fear in her house. Thus Paul, quoting the same examples (^{<8117>}Hebrews 11:17,31) for the power of *faith*, as James (^{<9121>}James 2:21,25; see on ^{<9121>}James 2:21; ^{<9125>}James 2:25) does for justification by *works* evidentially, shows that in maintaining justification by faith alone, he means not a dead faith, but “faith which *worketh* by love” (^{<8117>}Galatians 5:6).

32. the time — suitable for the length of an Epistle. He accumulates collectively some out of many examples of faith.

Gideon — put before Barak, not chronologically, but as being more celebrated. Just as Samson for the same reason is put before Jephthae. The mention of Jephthae as an example of “faith,” makes it unlikely he sacrificed the *life* of his daughter for a rash vow. David, the warrior king and prophet, forms the transition from warrior chiefs to the “prophets,” of whom “Samuel” is mentioned as the first.

33. subdued kingdoms — as David did (^{<1081>}2 Samuel 8:1, etc.); so also Gideon subdued Midian (^{<1001>}Judges 7:1-25).

wrought righteousness — as Samuel did (^{<9809>}1 Samuel 8:9 12:3-23 15:33); and David (^{<1085>}2 Samuel 8:15).

obtained promises — as “the prophets” (^{<8113>}Hebrews 11:32) did; for through them the promises were given (compare ^{<7929>}Daniel 9:21) [BENGEL]. Rather, “obtained *the fulfillment* of promises,” which had been previously the object of their *faith* (^{<10345>}Joshua 21:45 ^{<10856>}1 Kings 8:56). Indeed, Gideon, Barak, etc., also *obtained* the things which God promised. Not “*the* promises,” which are still future (^{<8113>}Hebrews 11:13,39).

stopped the mouths of lions — Note the words, “because he *believed* in his God.” Also Samson (^{<10749>}Judges 14:6), David (^{<9734>}1 Samuel 17:34-37), Benaiah (^{<1230>}2 Samuel 23:20).

34. Quenched the violence of fire — (^{<7137>}Daniel 3:27). Not merely “quenched the fire,” but “quenched the power (so the *Greek*) of the fire.” ^{<7189>}Daniel 3:19-30 and ^{<7162>}Daniel 6:12-23 record the last miracles of the Old Testament. So the martyrs of the Reformation, though not escaping *the fire*, were delivered from its having *power* really or lastingly to hurt them.

escaped ... sword — So Jephthah (^{<1712B>}Judges 12:3); and so David escaped Saul's sword (^{<1881>}1 Samuel 18:11 19:10,12); Elijah (^{<1191>}1 Kings 19:1, etc. ^{<1164>}2 Kings 6:14).

out of weakness ... made strong — Samson (^{<1763>}Judges 16:28 15:19). Hezekiah (^{<2370>}Isaiah 37:1-38:22). MILTON says of the martyrs, "They shook the powers of darkness with the irresistible power of weakness."

valiant in fight — Barak (^{<1744>}Judges 4:14,15). And the Maccabees, the sons of Matthias, Judas, Jonathan, and Simon, who delivered the Jews from their cruel oppressor, Antiochus of Syria.

armies — literally, "camps" referring to ^{<10021>}Judges 7:21. But the reference may be to the Maccabees having put to flight the Syrians and other foes.

35. Women received their dead raised — as the widow of Zarephath (^{<1177>}1 Kings 17:17-24). The Shunammite (^{<11721>}2 Kings 4:17-35). The two oldest manuscripts read. "They received women of aliens by raising their dead." ^{<11724>}1 Kings 17:24 shows that the raising of the widow's son by Elijah led her to the faith, so that he thus *took* her into fellowship, an *alien* though she was. Christ, in ^{<1001>}Luke 4:26, makes especial mention of the fact that Elijah was sent to an alien from Israel, a woman of Sarepta. Thus Paul may quote this as an instance of Elijah's faith, that at God's command he went to a Gentile city of Sidonia (contrary to Jewish prejudices), and there, as the fruit of faith, not only raised her dead son, but *received* her as a convert into the family of God, as *Vulgate* reads. Still, *English Version* may be the right reading.

and — *Greek*, "but"; in contrast to those raised again to life.

tortured — "broken on the wheel." Eleazar (2 Maccabees 6:18, end; 2 Maccabees 19:20,30). The sufferer was stretched on an instrument like a drumhead and scourged to death.

not accepting deliverance — when offered to them. So the seven brothers, 2 Maccabees 7:9,11,14,29,36; and Eleazar, 2 Maccabees 6:21,28,30, "Though I might have been delivered from death, I endure these severe pains, being beaten."

a better resurrection — than that of the women’s children “raised to life again”; or, than the resurrection which their foes could give them by delivering them from death (^{<271B>}Daniel 12:2 ^{<271B>}Luke 20:35 ^{<3081>}Philippians 3:11). The fourth of the brethren (referring to ^{<271B>}Daniel 12:2) said to King Antiochus, “To be put to death by men, is to be chosen to look onward for the hopes which are of God, to be raised up again by Him; but for thee there is no resurrection to life.” The writer of Second Maccabees *expressly disclaims inspiration*, which prevents our mistaking Paul’s allusion here to it as if it sanctioned the Apocrypha as inspired. In quoting Daniel, he quotes a book *claiming inspiration*, and so tacitly sanctions that claim.

36. others — of a *different* class of confessors for the truth (the *Greek* is different from that for “others,” ^{<581B>}Hebrews 11:35, *alloi, heteroi*).

trial — testing their *faith*.

imprisonment — as Hanani (^{<1460>}2 Chronicles 16:10), imprisoned by Asa. Micaiah, the son of Imlah, by Ahab (^{<1225>}1 Kings 22:26,27).

37. stoned — as Zechariah, son of Jehoiada (^{<480>}2 Chronicles 24:20-22 ^{<4235>}Matthew 23:35).

sawn asunder — as Isaiah was said to have been by Manasseh; but see my *Introduction* to Isaiah.

tempted — *by their foes*, in the midst of their tortures, to renounce their faith; the most bitter aggravation of them. Or else, *by those of their own household*, as Job was [ESTIUS]; or by the fiery darts of Satan, as Jesus was in His last trials [GLASSIUS]. Probably it included all three; they were *tempted* in every possible way, by friends and foes, by human and satanic agents, by caresses and afflictions, by words and deeds, to forsake God, but in vain, through the power of faith.

sword — literally, “they died in the murder of the sword.” In ^{<581B>}Hebrews 11:34 the contrary is given as an effect of *faith*, “they escaped the edge of the sword.” Both alike are marvellous effects of faith. In both accomplishes great things and suffers great things, without counting it suffering [CHRYSOSTOM]. Urijah was so slain by Jehoiakim (^{<3023>}Jeremiah 26:23); and *the prophets* in Israel (^{<1190>}1 Kings 19:10).

in sheepskins — as Elijah (^{<1193>}1 Kings 19:13, *Septuagint*). They were *white*; as the “goat-skins” were *black* (compare ^{<831F>}Zechariah 13:4).

tormented — *Greek*, “in evil state.”

38. Of whom the world was not worthy — So far from their being unworthy of living in the world, as their exile in deserts, etc., might seem to imply, “the world was not worthy of them.” The world, in shutting them out, shut out from itself a source of blessing; such as Joseph proved to Potiphar (^{<131F>}Genesis 39:5), and Jacob to Laban (^{<131D>}Genesis 30:27). In condemning them, the world condemned itself.

caves — literally, “chinks.” Palestine, from its hilly character, abounds in *fissures* and caves, affording shelter to the persecuted, as the fifty hid by Obadiah (^{<1108>}1 Kings 18:4,13) and Elijah (^{<1198>}1 Kings 19:8,13); and Mattathias and his sons (1 Maccabees 2:28,29); and Judas Maccabeus (2 Maccabees 5:27).

39. having obtained a good report — *Greek*, “being borne witness of.” *Though* they were so, yet “they received not the promise,” that is, the *final completion* of “salvation” *promised* at Christ’s coming again (^{<818>}Hebrews 9:28); “the eternal inheritance” (^{<815>}Hebrews 9:15). Abraham did *obtain* the very thing *promised* (^{<815>}Hebrews 6:15) *in part*, namely, blessedness *in soul* after death, by virtue of faith in Christ about to come. The *full* blessedness of body and soul shall not be till the full number of the elect shall be accomplished, and all together, no one preceding the other, shall enter on the full glory and bliss. Moreover, in another point of view, “It is probable that some accumulation of blessedness was added to holy souls, when Christ came and fulfilled all things even as at His burial many rose from the dead, who doubtless ascended to heaven with Him” [FLACIUS in BENDEL]. (Compare *Note*, see on ^{<808>}Ephesians 4:8). The *perfecting* of believers in title, and in respect to conscience, took place once for all, at the death of Christ, by virtue of His being made by death *perfect* as Savior. Their *perfecting in soul* at, and ever after Christ’s death, took place, and takes place at their death. But the universal and final perfecting will not take place till Christ’s coming.

40. provided — with divine forethought from eternity (compare ^{<1218>}Genesis 22:8,14).

some better thing for us — (^{<817>}Hebrews 7:19); than they had here. They had not in this world, “apart from us” (so the *Greek* is for “without us,” that is, they had to wait for us for), the clear revelation of the promised salvation actually accomplished, as we now have it in Christ; in their state, beyond the grave their *souls* also seem to have attained an increase of *heavenly* bliss on the death and ascension of Christ; and they shall not attain the full and final *glory in body and soul* (the regeneration of the creature), until the full number of the elect (including us with them) is completed. The Fathers, CHRYSOSTOM, etc., restricted the meaning of ^{<819>}Hebrews 11:39,40 to this last truth, and I incline to this view. “The connection is, You, Hebrews, may far more easily exercise patience than Old Testament believers; for they had much longer to wait, and are still waiting until the elect are all gathered in; you, on the contrary, have not to wait for them” [ESTIUS]. I think his object in these verses (^{<819>}Hebrews 11:39,40) is to warn Hebrew Christians against their tendency to relapse into *Judaism*. “Though the Old Testament worthies attained such eminence by faith, they are not above us in privileges, but the reverse.” It is not *we* who are perfected *with them*, but rather *they with us*. They waited for His coming; we enjoy Him as having come (^{<800>}Hebrews 1:1 2:3). Christ’s death, the means of *perfecting* what the Jewish *law could not perfect*, was reserved for our time. Compare ^{<810>}Hebrews 12:2, “*perfecter* (*Greek*) of our faith.” Now that Christ is come, they in soul share our blessedness, being “the spirits of the just made perfect” (^{<822>}Hebrews 12:23); so ALFORD; however, see on ^{<822>}Hebrews 12:23. ^{<812>}Hebrews 9:12 shows that the blood of Christ, brought into the heavenly holy place by Him, first opened an entrance into heaven (compare ^{<813>}John 3:13). Still, the fathers were in blessedness by faith in the Savior to come, at death (^{<815>}Hebrews 6:15 ^{<822>}Luke 16:22).

CHAPTER 12

HEBREWS 12:1-29.

EXHORTATION TO FOLLOW THE WITNESSES OF FAITH JUST MENTIONED: NOT TO FAINT IN TRIALS: TO REMOVE ALL BITTER ROOTS OF SIN: FOR WE ARE UNDER, NOT A LAW OF TERROR, BUT THE GOSPEL OF GRACE, TO DESPISE WHICH WILL BRING THE HEAVIER PENALTIES, IN PROPORTION TO OUR GREATER PRIVILEGES.

1. **we also** — as well as those recounted in ^{<821>}Hebrews 12:11.

are compassed about — *Greek*, “have so great a cloud (a numberless multitude *above* us, like a cloud, ‘holy and pellucid,’ [CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA]) of witnesses surrounding us.” The image is from a “race,” an image common even in Palestine from the time of the Greco-Macedonian empire, which introduced such *Greek* usages as national games. The “witnesses” answer to the spectators pressing round to see the competitors in their contest for the prize (^{<814>}Philippians 3:14). Those “witnessed of” (*Greek*, ^{<815>}Hebrews 11:5,39) become in their turn “witnesses” in a twofold way:

(1) attesting by their own case the faithfulness of God to His people [ALFORD] (^{<812>}Hebrews 6:12), some of them *martyrs* in the modern sense;

(2) witnessing our struggle of faith; however, this second sense of “witnesses,” though agreeing with the *image* here if it is to be pressed, is not *positively*, unequivocally, and *directly* sustained by Scripture. It gives vividness to the image; as the crowd of spectators gave additional spirit to the combatants, so the *cloud of witnesses* who have themselves been in the same contest, ought to increase our earnestness, testifying, as they do, to God’s faithfulness.

weight — As corporeal unwieldiness was, through a disciplinary diet, laid aside by candidates for the prize in racing; so carnal and worldly lusts, and all, whether from without or within, that would impede the heavenly runner, are the spiritual *weight* to be laid aside. “Encumbrance,” *all superfluous weight*; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and even harmless and otherwise useful things which would positively retard us (^{<411R>}Mark 10:50, the blind man *casting away his garment* to come to Jesus; ^{<419C>}Mark 9:42-48; compare ^{<410C>}Ephesians 4:22 ^{<319P>}Colossians 3:9,10).

the sin which doth so easily beset us — *Greek*, “sin which easily stands around us”; so LUTHER, “which always so clings to us”: “sinful propensity always surrounding us, ever present and ready” [WAHL]. It is not primarily “*the sin*,” etc., but *sin* in general, with, however, special reference to “apostasy,” against which he had already warned them, as one to which they might *gradually* be seduced; the besetting sin of the Hebrews, UNBELIEF.

with patience — *Greek*, “in persevering endurance” (^{<310P>}Hebrews 10:36). On “run” compare ^{<419P>}1 Corinthians 9:24,25.

2. Looking unto — literally, “Looking from afar” (see on ^{<312P>}Hebrews 11:26); fixing the eyes upon Jesus seated on the throne of God.

author — “Prince-leader.” The same *Greek* is translated, “Captain (of salvation),” ^{<310P>}Hebrews 2:10; “Prince (of life),” ^{<418P>}Acts 3:15. Going before us as the Originator of our faith, and the Leader whose matchless example we are to follow always. In this He is distinguished from all those examples of faith in ^{<312P>}Hebrews 11:2-40. (Compare ^{<411P>}1 Corinthians 11:1). On His “faith” compare ^{<313P>}Hebrews 2:13 3:12. Believers have ever looked to Him (^{<312P>}Hebrews 11:26 13:8).

finisher — *Greek*, “Perfecter,” referring to ^{<314P>}Hebrews 11:40.

of our faith — rather as *Greek*, “of *the* faith,” including both His faith (as exhibited in what follows) and our faith. He fulfilled the ideal of faith Himself, and so, both as a vicarious offering and an example, He is the object of our faith.

for the joy ... set before him — namely, of presently after *sitting down at the right hand of the throne of God*; including besides His own personal joy, the joy of sitting there as a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins. The coming joy disarmed of its sting the present pain.

cross ... shame — the great stumbling-block to the Hebrews. “Despised,” that is, disregarded.

3. For — justifying his exhortation, “Looking unto Jesus.”

consider — by way of comparison with yourselves, so the *Greek*.

contradiction — unbelief, and every kind of opposition (^{<403>}Acts 28:19).

sinners — *Sin* assails us. Not *sin*, but *sinner*s, contradicted Christ [BENGEL].

be wearied and faint — *Greek*, “lest ye weary fainting.” Compare ^{<404>}Isaiah 49:4,5, as a specimen of Jesus not being *wearied out* by the *contradiction* and strange unbelief of those among whom He *labored*, preaching as never man did, and exhibiting miracles wrought by His inherent power, as none else could do.

4. not yet resisted unto blood — image from *pugilism*, as he previously had the image of a *race*, both being taken from the great national Greek games. Ye have suffered the loss of *goods*, and *been a gazing-stock by reproaches and afflictions*; ye have not shed your blood (see on ^{<405>}Hebrews 13:7). “The athlete who hath seen his own *blood*, and who, though cast down by his opponent, does not let his spirits be cast down, who as often as he hath fallen hath risen the more determined, goes down to the encounter with great hope” [SENECA].

against sin — *Sin* is personified as an adversary; sin, whether within you, leading you to *spare* your blood, or in our adversaries, leading them to *shed* it, if they cannot through your faithfulness even unto blood, induce you to apostatize.

5. forgotten — “utterly,” so the *Greek*. Compare ^{<406>}Hebrews 12:15-17, in which he implies how utterly *some* of them had forgotten God’s word. His *exhortation* ought to have more effect on you than the cheers and

exhortations of the spectators have on the competitors striving in the games.

which — *Greek*, “the which,” of which the following is a specimen [ALFORD].

speaketh unto you — as in a *dialogue* or *discourse*, so the *Greek*, implying God’s loving condescension (compare ^{<2018>}Isaiah 1:18).

despise not — literally, “Do not *hold of little account*.” Betraying a *contumacious spirit of unbelief* (^{<5812>}Hebrews 3:12), as “faint” implies a broken-down, weak, and *desponding spirit*. “Chastening” is to be borne with “subjection” (^{<5819>}Hebrews 12:9); “rebuke” (more severe than *chastening*) is to be borne with *endurance* (^{<5817>}Hebrews 12:7). “Some in adversity kick against God’s will, others despond; neither is to be done by the Christian, who is peculiarly the child of God. To him such adverse things occur only by the decree of God, and that designed in kindness, namely, to remove the defilements adhering to the believer, and to exercise his patience” [GROTIUS].

6. (^{<6089>}Revelation 3:19.)

and — *Greek*, “yea and,” “and moreover”; bringing out an additional circumstance.

scurgeth — which draws forth “blood” (^{<5816>}Hebrews 12:4).

receiveth — accepts. Takes to Himself as a son “in whom He *delighteth*” (^{<2082>}Proverbs 3:12).

7. In ^{<5817>}Hebrews 12:7,8 the need of “chastening” or “discipline” is inculcated; in ^{<5819>}Hebrews 12:9, the duty of those to whom it is administered.

If — The oldest manuscripts read, “With a view to chastening (that is, since God’s chastisement is with a view to your chastening, that is, disciplinary amelioration) endure patiently”; so *Vulgate*. ALFORD translates it as indicative, not so well, “It is for chastisement that *ye are enduring*.”

dealeth with you — “beareth Himself toward you” in the very act of chastening.

what son is he — “What son is there” even in ordinary life? Much more God as to His sons (²³⁸⁰Isaiah 48:10 ⁴⁴⁰²Acts 14:22). The most eminent of God’s saints were the most afflicted. God leads them by a way they know not (²³⁰⁶Isaiah 42:16). We too much look at each trial by itself, instead of taking it in connection with the whole plan of our salvation, as if a traveler were to complain of the steepness and roughness of one turn in the path, without considering that it led him into green pastures, on the direct road to the city of habitation. The New Testament alone uses the *Greek* term for education (*paideia*), to express “discipline” or *correction*, as of a *child* by a wise father.

8. if ye be without — excluded from participation in chastisement, and wishing to be so.

all — all *sons*: all the worthies enumerated in the eleventh chapter: all the *witnesses* (⁸⁰⁷Hebrews 12:1).

are — *Greek*, “have been made.”

then are ye bastards — of whom their fathers take no care whether they are educated or not; whereas every right-minded father is concerned for the moral well-being of his legitimate son. “Since then not to be chastised is a mark of bastardy, we ought [not to refuse, but] rejoice in chastisement, as a mark of our genuine sonship” [CHRYSOSTOM].

9. fathers ... which corrected us — rather as *Greek*, “We had the fathers of our flesh as correctors.”

subjection — See the punishment of insubordination, ⁶²¹⁸Deuteronomy 21:18.

Father of spirits — contrasted with “the fathers of our flesh.”

“Generation by men is carnal, by God is spiritual” [BENGEL]. As “Father of spirits,” He is both the Originator, and the Providential and Gracious Sustainer, at once of animal and spiritual life. Compare “and LIVE,” namely, spiritually; also ³⁸²⁰Hebrews 12:10, “that we might be partakers of His holiness” (⁶¹⁰⁹2 Peter 1:4). God is a spirit Himself, and the Creator of

spirits like Himself, in contrast to men who are flesh, and the progenitors of flesh (^{<RRB>}John 3:6). Jesus our pattern “learned obedience” experimentally by suffering (^{<RRB>}Hebrews 5:8).

and live — and so, thereby live spiritually and eternally.

10. Showing wherein the chastisement of our heavenly Father is preferable to that of earthly fathers.

for a few days — that is, *with a view to* our well-being in *the few days* of our earthly life: so the *Greek*.

after their own pleasure — *Greek*, “according to what seemed fit to themselves.” Their rule of chastening is what may seem fit to their own often erring judgment, temper, or caprice. The two defects of human education are:

(1) the prevalence in it of a view to the interests of our *short* earthly term of *days*;

(2) the absence in parents of the unerring wisdom of our heavenly Father. “They err much at one time in severity, at another in indulgence [^{<ORB>}1 Samuel 3:13 ^{<RRB>}Ephesians 6:4], and do not so much chasten as THINK they chasten” [BENGEL].

that we might be partakers of his holiness — becoming holy as He is holy (^{<RRB>}John 15:2). To become *holy* like God is tantamount to being educated for passing *eternity* with God (^{<RRB>}Hebrews 12:14 ^{<RRB>}2 Peter 1:4). So this “partaking of God’s holiness” stands in contrast to the “few days” of this life, with a view to which earthly fathers generally educate their sons.

11. joyous ... grievous — *Greek*, “matter of joy ... matter of grief.” The objection that chastening is grievous is here anticipated and answered. It only seems so to those being chastened, whose judgments are confused by the present pain. Its ultimate *fruit* amply compensates for any temporary pain. The real object of the fathers in chastening is not that they find pleasure in the children’s pain. Gratified wishes, our Father knows, would often be our real curses.

fruit of righteousness — *righteousness* (in practice, springing from faith) is the *fruit* which chastening, the tree yields (^{<3011>}Philippians 1:11).

“Peaceable” (compare ^{<2307>}Isaiah 32:17): in contrast to the ordeal of conflict by which it has been won. “Fruit of righteousness to be enjoyed in peace after the conflict” [THOLUCK]. As the olive garland, the emblem of *peace* as well as *victory*, was put on the victor’s brow in the games.

exercised thereby — as athletes exercised in training for a contest.

Chastisement is the *exercise* to give experience, and make the spiritual combatant irresistibly victorious (^{<6100>}Romans 5:3). “Oh, happy the servant for whose improvement his Lord is earnest, with whom he deigns to be angry, whom He does not deceive by dissembling admonition” (withholding admonition, and so leading the man to think he needs it not!) [TERTULLIAN, *Patience*, 11]. Observe the “afterwards”; *that* is the time often when God works.

12. He addresses them as runners in a race, and pugilists, and warriors [CHRYSOSTOM]. The “wherefore” is resumed from ^{<8021>}Hebrews 12:1.

lift up — In ^{<2300>}Isaiah 35:3, from which Paul here quotes, it is, “*Strengthen ye the weak hands.*” The *hand* is the symbol of one’s strength. ALFORD translates, “Put straight again the relaxed hands.” *English Version* expresses the sense well.

feeble — literally, “paralyzed”; a word used only by Luke, *Paul’s* companion, in the New Testament. The exhortation has three parts: the first relates to *ourselves*, ^{<8020>}Hebrews 12:12,13; the second, to *others*, ^{<8024>}Hebrews 12:14, “peace with all men”; the third, to *God*, “holiness, without which,” etc. The first is referred to in ^{<8025>}Hebrews 12:15, “test any man fail of the grace of God”; the second in the words, “lest any root of bitterness,” etc.; the third in ^{<8026>}Hebrews 12:16, “Lest there be any fornicator or profane person,” etc. This threefold relation often occurs in *Paul’s* Epistles. Compare *Note*, see on ^{<3022>}Titus 2:12, “soberly, righteously, and godly.” The *Greek* active verb, not the middle or reflexive, requires the sense to be, Lift up not only *your own* hands and knees, but also those of *your brethren* (compare ^{<8025>}Hebrews 12:15 ^{<2301>}Isaiah 35:4).

13. Quoted from ^{<3005>}Proverbs 4:26, *Septuagint*, “Make straight paths for thy feet.”

straight — that is, leading by a straight road to joy and grace (^{<801>}Hebrews 12:1,2,15). Cease to “halt” between Judaism and Christianity [BENGEL].

paths — literally, “wheel tracks.” Let your walk be so firm and so unanimous in the right direction that a plain track and “highway” may be thereby established for those who accompany and follow you, to perceive and walk in (^{<230>}Isaiah 35:8) [ALFORD].

that which is lame — those “weak in the faith” (^{<640>}Romans 14:1), having still Judaizing prejudices.

be turned out of the way — (^{<200>}Proverbs 4:27); and, so missing the way, lose the prize of “the race” (^{<801>}Hebrews 12:1).

rather he healed — Proper exercise of itself contributes to health; the habit of walking straight onward in the right way tends to *healing*.

14. follow peace with all men — with the brethren especially (^{<640>}Romans 14:19), that so the “lame” among them be not “turned out of the way” (^{<801>}Hebrews 12:13), and that no one of them “fail of the grace of God” (^{<801>}Hebrews 12:15).

holiness — a distinct *Greek* word from God’s “holiness” (^{<801>}Hebrews 12:10). Translate here “sanctification.” His is absolute *holiness*: our part is to put on His holiness, becoming “holy as He is holy,” by *sanctification*. While “following peace with all men,” we are not so to seek to please them, as to make God’s will and our sanctification a secondary object; this latter must be our first aim. (^{<801>}Galatians 1:10).

without which — *Greek*, “apart from which.”

no man shall see the Lord — no man *as a son*; in heavenly glory (^{<601>}Revelation 22:3,4). In the East, none but the greatest favorites are admitted to the honor of seeing the king (compare ^{<140>}2 Samuel 14:24). The Lord being pure and holy, none but the pure and holy shall see Him (^{<400>}Matthew 5:8). Without holiness in them, they could not enjoy Him who is holiness itself (^{<340>}Zechariah 14:20). The connection of *purity* with *seeing the Lord*, appears in ^{<400>}1 John 3:2,3 ^{<400>}Ephesians 5:5. Contrast ^{<801>}Hebrews 12:16 (compare ^{<500>}1 Thessalonians 4:3). In ^{<400>}Matthew 24:30 ^{<601>}Revelation 1:7, it is said that all shall see the Lord; but, that shall be as a

Judge, not as their lasting portion and God, which is meant here. The *Greek* verb does not denote the mere action of seeing, but the seer's state of mind to which the object is presented: so in ^{<418>}Matthew 5:8 they shall *truly comprehend* God [TITTMANN]. None but the holy could *appreciate* the holy God, none else therefore shall abide in His presence. "The bad shall only see Him in His form *as Son of man* [compare ^{<413>}Revelation 1:13, with ^{<607>}Revelation 1:7; and ^{<420>}Matthew 24:30 ^{<401>}Acts 1:11 17:31]; still it will be in the glory in which He shall judge, not in the lowliness in which He was judged. *His form as God*, wherein He is equal to the Father, without doubt the ungodly shall not see; for it is only 'the pure in heart who shall see God'" [AUGUSTINE]. "He shall come to judge, who stood before a judge. He shall come in the form in which He was judged, that they may see Him whom they pierced: He who was before hidden shall come manifested in power: He, as Judge, shall condemn the real culprits, who was Himself falsely made a culprit."

15. lest any ... fall — *Greek*, "lest any (namely, through sloth in running) *failing*," or "*falling short of the grace of God ... trouble you*." The image is taken from a company of travelers, one of whom lags behind, and so never reaches the end of the long and laborious journey [CHRYSOSTOM].

root of bitterness — not merely a "*bitter root*," which might possibly bring forth sweet fruits; this, a root whose *essence* is "*bitterness*," never could. Paul here refers to ^{<152>}Deuteronomy 29:18, "Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood" (compare ^{<402>}Acts 8:23). *Root of bitterness* comprehends every *person* (compare ^{<521>}Hebrews 12:16) and every *principle* of doctrine or practice so radically corrupt as to spread corruption all around. The only safety is in rooting out such a root of bitterness.

many — rather, "*the many*," that is, the whole congregation. So long as it is hidden under the earth it cannot be remedied, but when it "springs up," it must be dealt with boldly. Still remember the caution (^{<413>}Matthew 13:26-30) as to rooting out *persons*. No such danger can arise in rooting out bad *principles*.

16. fornicator — (^{<521>}Hebrews 13:4 ^{<608>}1 Corinthians 10:8).

or profane — *Fornication* is nearly akin to gluttony, Esau's sin. He *profanely* cast away his spiritual privilege for the gratification of his palate. ^{<1029>}Genesis 25:34 graphically portrays him. An example well fitted to strike needful horror into the Hebrews, whosoever of them, like Esau, were only sons of Isaac according to the flesh [BENGEL].

for one morsel — The smallness of the inducement only aggravates the guilt of casting away eternity for such a trifle, so far is it from being a claim for mercy (compare ^{<1016>}Genesis 3:6). *One* single act has often the greatest power either for good or for evil. So in the cases of Reuben and Saul, for evil (^{<1404>}Genesis 49:4 ^{<1381>}1 Chronicles 5:1 ^{<1032>}1 Samuel 13:12-14); and, on the other hand, for good, Abraham and Phinehas (^{<1111>}Genesis 12:1, etc. ^{<1155>}Genesis 15:5,6 ^{<1051>}Numbers 25:6-15).

his birthright — *Greek*, “his own (so the oldest manuscripts read, intensifying the suicidal folly and sin of the act) rights of primogeniture,” involving the high spiritual privilege of being ancestor of the promised seed, and heir of the promises in Him. The Hebrews whom Paul addressed, had, as Christians, the spiritual rights of primogeniture (compare ^{<8129>}Hebrews 12:23): he intimates that they must exercise holy self-control, if they wish not, like Esau, to forfeit them.

17. afterwards — *Greek*, “*even* afterward.” He despised his birthright, accordingly *also* he was despised and rejected when he wished to have the blessing. As in the believer's case, so in the unbeliever's, there is an “afterwards” coming, when the believer shall look on his past griefs, and the unbeliever on his past joys, in a very different light from that in which they were respectively viewed at the time. Compare “Nevertheless afterward,” etc. ^{<8121>}Hebrews 12:11, with the “afterward” here.

when he would — when he *wished* to have. “He that will not when he may, when he will, shall have nay” (^{<10124>}Proverbs 1:24-30 ^{<10134>}Luke 13:34,35 19:42).

he was rejected — not as to every blessing, but only that which would have followed the primogeniture.

he found no place of repentance — The *cause* is here put for the *effect*, “repentance” for the object which Esau aimed at in his so-called

repentance, namely, *the change of his father's determination* to give the chief blessing to Jacob. Had he *sought* real *repentance with tears* he would have *found* it (^{<400>}Matthew 7:7). But he did not find it because this was not what he sought. What proves his *tears* were not those of one seeking true repentance is, immediately after he was foiled in his desire, he resolved to murder Jacob! He shed tears, not for his sin, but for his suffering the penalty of his sin. His were tears of vain regret and remorse, not of repentance. "Before, he might have had the blessing without tears; afterwards, no matter how many tears he shed, he was rejected. Let us use the time" (^{<287>}Luke 18:27)! [BENGEL]. ALFORD explains "repentance" here, *a chance, by repenting, to repair* (that is, to regain the lost blessing). I agree with him that the translation, instead of "repentance," "no place for *changing HIS FATHER'S mind*," is forced; though doubtless this is what was the true aim of the "repentance" which he sought. The language is framed to apply to *profane* despisers who wilfully cast away grace and *seek repentance* (that is, not real; but *escape from the penalty* of their sin), but in vain. Compare "afterward," ^{<4251>}Matthew 25:11,12. Tears are no proof of real repentance (^{<9216>}1 Samuel 24:16,17; contrast ^{<518>}Psalms 56:8).

it — *the blessing*, which was the real object of Esau, though ostensibly seeking "repentance."

18. For — The fact that we are not under the law, but under a higher, and that the last dispensation, the Gospel, with its glorious privileges, is the reason why especially the Hebrew Christians should "look diligently," etc. (^{<5225>}Hebrews 12:15,16).

are not come — *Greek*, "have not come near to." Alluding to ^{<6041>}Deuteronomy 4:11, "Ye *came near* and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire ... with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness." "In your *coming near unto God*, it has not been to," etc.

the mount — The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* omit "the mount." But still, "the mount" must be supplied from ^{<5122>}Hebrews 12:22.

that might be touched — palpable and material. Not that any save Moses was allowed to touch it (^{<1092>}Exodus 19:12,13). The Hebrews drew near to the material Mount Sinai with material bodies; we, to the spiritual

mount in the spirit. The “darkness” was that formed by the clouds hanging round the mount; the “tempest” accompanied the thunder.

19. trumpet — to rouse attention, and herald God’s approach (^{<1296>}Exodus 19:16).

entreated that the word should not be spoken — literally, “that speech should not be added to them”; not that they refused to hear the word of God, but they wished that God should not Himself speak, but employ Moses as His mediating spokesman. “The voice of words” was the Decalogue, spoken by God Himself, a voice issuing forth, without *any* form being seen: after which “He *added* no more” (^{<1832>}Deuteronomy 5:22).

20. that which was commanded — “the interdict” [TITTMANN]. A *stern interdictory mandate* is meant.

And — rather, “Even if a beast (much more a man) touch,” etc.

or thrust through with a dart — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. The *full* interdict in ^{<1292>}Exodus 19:12,13 is abbreviated here; the beast alone, being put for “whether man or beast”; the *stoning*, which applies to the *human* offender, alone being specified, the beast’s punishment, namely, the being *thrust through with a dart*, being left to be understood.

21. the sight — the *vision* of God’s majesty.

quake — *Greek*, “I am in trembling”; “fear” affected his *mind*: “trembling,” his body. Moses is not recorded in Exodus to have used these words. But Paul, by inspiration, supplies (compare ^{<4015>}Acts 20:35 ^{<1832>}Timothy 3:8) this detail. We read in ^{<1839>}Deuteronomy 9:19, *Septuagint*, of similar words used by Moses after breaking the two tables, through fear of God’s anger at the people’s sin in making the golden calves. He doubtless similarly “feared” in hearing the ten commandments spoken by the voice of Jehovah.

22. are come — *Greek*, “have come near unto” (compare ^{<1841>}Deuteronomy 4:11). Not merely, ye *shall* come, but, ye *have already come*.

Mount Sion — antitypical Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, of which the spiritual invisible Church (of which the first foundation was laid in literal Zion, ^{<4025>}John 12:15 ^{<4016>}1 Peter 2:6) is now the earnest; and of which the

restored literal Jerusalem hereafter shall be the earthly representative, to be succeeded by the everlasting and “new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven” (^{<601>}Revelation 21:2-27; compare ^{<8110>}Hebrews 11:10).

22, 23. to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church — The *city* of God having been mentioned, the mention of its citizens follows. Believers being like the angels (^{<8006>}Job 1:6 38:7), “sons of God,” are so their “equals” (^{<4218>}Luke 20:36); and being reconciled through Christ, are adopted into God’s great and blessed family. For the full completion of this we pray (^{<4030>}Matthew 6:10). *English Version* arrangement is opposed:

(1) by “and” always beginning each new member of the whole sentence;

(2) “general assembly and Church,” form a kind of tautology;

(3) “general assembly,” or rather, “*festal* full assembly,” “the jubilant full company” (such as were the Olympic games, celebrated with joyous singing, dancing, etc.), applies better to the *angels* above, ever hymning God’s praises, than to the Church, of which a considerable part is now militant on earth. Translate therefore, “to myriads (ten thousands, compare ^{<6532>}Deuteronomy 33:2 ^{<4467>}Psalms 68:17 ^{<2070>}Daniel 7:10 ^{<6014>}Jude 1:14; namely), the full festal assembly of angels, and the Church of the first-born.” Angels and saints together constitute the *ten thousands*. Compare “*all angels, all nations*” (^{<4253>}Matthew 25:31,32. Messiah is pre-eminently “the First-born,” or “First-begotten” (^{<8009>}Hebrews 1:6), and all believers become so by adoption. Compare the type, ^{<4032>}Numbers 3:12,45,50 ^{<4018>}1 Peter 1:18. As the kingly and priestly succession was in the first-born, and as Israel was God’s “first-born” (^{<6022>}Exodus 4:22; compare ^{<4232>}Exodus 13:2), and a “kingdom of priests” to God (^{<4201>}Exodus 19:6), so believers (^{<6001>}Revelation 1:6).

23. written in heaven — enrolled as citizens there. *All* those who at the coming of “God the Judge of all” (which clause therefore naturally follows), shall be found “written in heaven,” that is, *in the Lamb’s book of life* (^{<6027>}Revelation 21:27). Though still fighting the good fight on earth, still, in respect to your destiny, and present life of *faith* which substantiates things hoped for, ye *are* already members of the heavenly citizenship.

“We are one citizenship with angels; to which it is said in the psalm, *Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God*” [AUGUSTINE]. I think ALFORD wrong in *restricting* “the Church of the first-born written in heaven,” to those militant on earth; it is rather, *all* those who *at the Judge’s coming* shall be found written in heaven (the true patent of heavenly nobility; contrast “written in the earth,” ^{<24713>}Jeremiah 17:13, and Esau’s profane sale of his birthright, ^{<58126>}Hebrews 12:16); these all, from the beginning to the end of the world, forming *one* Church to which every believer is already come. The *first-born* of Israel were “written” in a roll (^{<08141>}Numbers 3:40).

the spirits of just men made perfect — at the resurrection, when the “JUDGE” shall appear, and believers’ bliss shall be consummated by the union of the glorified *body* with the *spirit*; the great hope of the New Testament (^{<6181>}Romans 8:20-23 ^{<50416>}1 Thessalonians 4:16). The place of this clause *after* “the JUDGE OF ALL,” is my objection to BENGEL and ALFORD’s explanation, the souls of the just *in their separate state perfected*. Compare *Notes*, see on ^{<58133>}Hebrews 11:39,40, to which he refers here, and which I think confirms my view; those heretofore *spirits*, but now to be perfected by being clothed upon with the body. Still the phrase, “*spirits* of just men made perfect,” not merely “just men made perfect,” may favor the reference to the happy spirits in their separate state. The *Greek* is not “the *perfected spirits*,” but “the spirits of *the perfected just*.” In no other passage are *the just* said to be *perfected* before the resurrection, and the completion of the full number of the elect (^{<61111>}Revelation 6:11); I think, therefore, “spirits of the just,” may here be used to express *the just whose predominant element in their perfected state shall be spirit*. So *spirit* and *spirits* are used of *a man or men in the body, under the influence of the spirit*, the opposite of *flesh* (^{<61816>}John 3:6). The resurrection bodies of the saints shall be *bodies* in which the *spirit* shall altogether preponderate over the *animal soul* (see on ^{<61541>}1 Corinthians 15:44).

24. new — not the usual term (*kaine*) applied to the Christian covenant (^{<58155>}Hebrews 9:15), which would mean *new* as *different from*, and superseding the *old*; but *Greek*, “*nea*,” “recent,” “lately established,” having the “freshness of youth,” as opposed to age. The mention of Jesus, *the Perfector* of our faith (^{<58121>}Hebrews 12:2), and Himself perfected through sufferings and death, in His resurrection and ascension (^{<58121>}Hebrews 2:10

5:9), is naturally suggested by the mention of “the just *made perfect*” at their resurrection (compare ^{<8072>}Hebrews 7:22). Paul uses “Jesus,” dwelling here on Him as the Person realized as our loving friend, not merely in His *official* character as the *Christ*.

and to the blood of sprinkling — here enumerated as distinct from “Jesus.” BENGEL reasonably argues as follows: His blood was entirely “poured out” of His body by the various ways in which it was shed, His bloody sweat, the crown of thorns, the scourging, the nails, and after death the spear, just as the blood was entirely poured out and extravasated from the animal sacrifices of the law. It was *incorruptible* (^{<6018>}1 Peter 1:18,19). No Scripture states it was again put into the Lord’s body. At His ascension, as our great High Priest, He entered the heavenly holiest place “BY His own blood” (not *after* shedding His blood, nor *with* the blood in His body, but), carrying it separately from his body (compare the type, ^{<3000>}Hebrews 9:7,12,25 13:11). Paul does not say, by the efficacy of His blood, but, “by *His own proper* blood” (^{<3002>}Hebrews 9:12); not MATERIAL blood, but “the blood of Him who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot unto God” (^{<3014>}Hebrews 9:14). So in ^{<3019>}Hebrews 10:29, *the Son of God and the blood of the covenant wherewith he* (the professor) *was sanctified*, are mentioned separately. Also in ^{<3030>}Hebrews 13:12,20; also compare ^{<3009>}Hebrews 10:19, with ^{<3020>}Hebrews 10:21. So in the Lord’s Supper (^{<6016>}1 Corinthians 10:16 11:24-26), *the body and blood* are separately represented. The blood itself, therefore, continues still in heaven before God, the perpetual ransom price of “the eternal covenant” (^{<3030>}Hebrews 13:20). Once for all Christ sprinkled the blood peculiarly for us at His ascension (^{<3002>}Hebrews 9:12). But it is called “the blood of sprinkling,” on account also of its continued use in heaven, and in the consciences of the saints on earth (^{<3014>}Hebrews 9:14 10:22 ^{<2515>}Isaiah 52:15). This sprinkling is analogous to the sprinkled blood of the Passover. Compare ^{<6010>}Revelation 5:6, “In the midst of the throne, a Lamb *as it had been slain*.” His glorified body does not require meat, nor the circulation of the blood. His blood introduced into heaven took away the dragon’s right to accuse. Thus Rome’s theory of *concomitancy* of the blood with the body, the excuse for giving only the bread to the laity, falls to the ground. The mention of “the blood of sprinkling” naturally follows the mention of

the “covenant,” which could not be consecrated without *blood* (^{<8198>}Hebrews 9:18,22).

speaketh** better things than that of Abel** — namely, than the sprinkling (the best manuscripts read the article *masculine*, which refers to “sprinkling,” not to “blood,” which last is neuter) of blood by Abel in his sacrifice spake. This comparison between two *things of the same kind* (namely, Christ’s sacrifice, and Abel’s sacrifice) is more natural, than between two things different in kind and in results (namely, Christ’s sacrifice, and Abel’s *own* blood [ALFORD], which was not a sacrifice at all); compare ^{<8101>}Hebrews 11:4 ^{<1004>}Genesis 4:4. This accords with the whole tenor of the Epistle, and of this passage in particular (^{<8128>}Hebrews 12:18-22), which is to show the superiority of Christ’s sacrifice and the new covenant, to the Old Testament sacrifices (of which Abel’s is the first recorded; it, moreover, was testified to by God as acceptable to Him above Cain’s), compare ^{<8001>}Hebrews 9:1-10:39. The word “better” implies superiority to something that is good: but Abel’s own blood was not at all good for the purpose for which Christ’s blood was efficacious; nay, it cried for vengeance. So ARCHBISHOP MAGEE, HAMMOND, and KNATCHBULL. BENGE**L** takes “the blood of Abel” as put for *all* the blood shed on earth crying for vengeance, and greatly increasing the other cries raised by sin in the world; counteracted by the blood of Christ calmly speaking in heaven for us, and from heaven to us. I prefer Magee’s view. Be this as it may, to deny that Christ’s atonement is truly a propitiation, overthrows Christ’s priesthood, makes the sacrifices of Moses’ law an unmeaning mummery, and represents Cain’s sacrifice as good as that of Abel.

25. refuse not — through unbelief.

him that speaketh — God in Christ. As the *blood of sprinkling* is represented as *speaking* to God for us, ^{<8124>}Hebrews 12:24; so here God is represented as speaking to us (^{<8101>}Hebrews 1:1,2). His word now is the prelude of the last “shaking” of all things (^{<8127>}Hebrews 12:27). The same word which is heard in the Gospel *from heaven*, will shake heaven and earth (^{<8126>}Hebrews 12:26).

who refused him — *Greek*, “refusing as they did.” Their seemingly submissive entreaty that the word should not be spoken to them by God

any more (^{<SOP>}Hebrews 12:19), covered over refractory hearts, as. their subsequent deeds showed (^{<SRM>}Hebrews 3:16).

that spake — *revealing with oracular warnings His divine will: so the Greek.*

if we turn away — *Greek, “we who turn away.” The word implies greater refractoriness than “refused,” or “declined.”*

him that speaketh from heaven — God, by His Son in the Gospel, speaking from His heavenly throne. Hence, in Christ’s preaching frequent mention is made of “the kingdom of the heavens” (*Greek, ^{<HRD>}Matthew 3:2*). In the giving of the law God spake on earth (namely, Mount Sinai) by angels (^{<SRM>}Hebrews 2:2; compare ^{<SRM>}Hebrews 1:2). In ^{<OPD>}Exodus 20:22, when God says, “I talked with you *from heaven*,” this passage in Hebrews shows that not the highest heavens, but the visible heavens, the clouds and darkness, are meant, out of which God by angels proclaimed the law on Sinai.

26. then shook — when He gave the law on Sinai.

now — under the Gospel.

promised — The announcement of His coming to break up the present order of things, is to the ungodly a terror, to the godly a promise, the fulfillment of which they look for with joyful hope.

Yet once more — Compare *Notes*, see on ^{<SRM>}Haggai 2:6; ^{<SRM>}Haggai 2:21,22, both of which passages are condensed into one here. The shaking began at the first coming of Messiah; it will be completed at His second coming, prodigies in the world of nature accompanying the overthrow of all kingdoms that oppose Messiah. The *Hebrew* is literally, “it is yet one little,” that is, a single brief space till the series of movements begins ending in the advent of Messiah. Not merely the earth, as at the establishment of the Sinaitic covenant, but heaven also is to be shaken. The two advents of Messiah are regarded as one, the complete shaking belonging to the second advent, of which the presage was given in the shakings at the first advent: the convulsions connected with the overthrow of Jerusalem shadowing forth those about to be at the overthrow of all the God-opposed kingdoms by the coming Messiah.

27. this *word*, Yet once more — So Paul, by the Spirit, sanctions the *Septuagint* rendering of ^{<300>}Haggai 2:6, giving an additional feature to the prophecy in the *Hebrew*, as rendered in *English Version*, not merely that it shall be *in a little while*, but that it is to be “*once more*” as the final act. The stress of his argument is on the “ONCE.” *Once for all; once and for ever*. “In saying ‘once more,’ the Spirit implies that something has already passed, and something else shall be which is to remain, and is no more to be changed to something else; for the *once* is exclusive, that is, *not many times*” [ESTIUS].

those things that are shaken — the heaven and the earth. As the shaking is to be *total*, so shall the removal be, making way for the better things that are unremovable. Compare the Jewish economy (the type of the whole present order of things) giving way to the new and abiding covenant: the forerunner of the everlasting state of bliss.

as of things ... made — namely, of this present *visible creation*: compare ^{<400>}2 Corinthians 5:1 ^{<500>}Hebrews 9:11, “made with hands ... of this creation,” that is, things so *made* at creation that they would not remain of themselves, but be removed. The new abiding heaven and earth are also *made* by God, but they are of a higher nature than the material creation, being made to partake of the divine nature of Him who is not *made*: so in this relation, as one with the uncreated God, they are regarded as not of the same class as the *things made*. The things *made* in the former sense do *not remain*; the things of the new heaven and earth, like the uncreated God, “shall REMAIN before God” (^{<200>}Isaiah 66:22). The Spirit, the seed of the new and heavenly being, not only of the believer’s soul, but also of the future body, is an *uncreated* and immortal principle.

28. receiving — as we do, in prospect and sure hope, also in the possession of the Spirit the first-fruits. This is our privilege as Christians.

let us have grace — “let us have thankfulness” [ALFORD after CHRYSOSTOM]. But

(1) this translation is according to classical *Greek*, not Paul’s phraseology for “to be thankful.”

(2) “To God” would have been in that case added.

(3) “Whereby we may serve God,” suits the *English Version* “grace” (that is Gospel grace, the work of the Spirit, producing faith exhibited in *serving God*), but does not suit “thankfulness.”

acceptably — *Greek*, “well-pleasingly.”

reverence and godly fear — The oldest manuscripts read, “reverent caution and fear.” *Reverent caution* (same *Greek* as in ^{<GR>}Hebrews 5:7; see on ^{<GR>}Hebrews 5:7) lest we should offend God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. *Fear* lest we should bring destruction on ourselves.

29. *Greek*, “For even”: “for also”; introducing an *additional* solemn incentive to diligence. Quoted from ^{<GR>}Deuteronomy 4:24.

our God — in whom we *hope*, is also to be *feared*. He is love (^{<GR>}1 John 4:8,16); yet there is another side of His character; God has *wrath* against sin (^{<GR>}Hebrews 10:27,31).

CHAPTER 13

HEBREWS 13:1-25.

EXHORTATION TO VARIOUS GRACES, ESPECIALLY CONSTANCY IN FAITH, FOLLOWING JESUS AMIDST REPROACHES. CONCLUSION, WITH PIECES OF INTELLIGENCE AND SALUTATIONS.

1. brotherly love — a distinct special manifestation of “charity” or “love” (2 Peter 1:7). The Church of Jerusalem, to which in part this Epistle was addressed, was distinguished by this grace, we know from Acts (compare Hebrews 6:10 10:32-34 12:12,13).

continue — *Charity will itself continue. See that it continue with you.*

7. Two manifestations of “brotherly love,” *hospitality and care for those in bonds.*

Be not forgetful — implying it was a duty which they all recognized, but which they might forget to act on (Hebrews 13:3,7,16). The enemies of Christianity themselves have noticed the practice of this virtue among Christians [JULIAN, *Epistles*, 49].

entertained angels unawares — Abraham and Lot did so (Genesis 18:2 19:1). To obviate the natural distrust felt of strangers, Paul says, an unknown guest may be better than he looks: he may be unexpectedly found to be as much a *messenger* of God for good, as the angels (whose name means *messenger*) are; nay more, if a Christian, he represents Christ Himself. There is a play on the same *Greek* word, *Be not forgetful and unaware*; let *not* the duty of hospitality to strangers *escape* you; for, by entertaining strangers, it has *escaped* the entertainers that they were entertaining angels. Not unconscious and forgetful of the duty, they have unconsciously brought on themselves the blessing.

3. Remember — in prayers and acts of kindness.

bound with them — by virtue of the unity of the members in the body under one Head, Christ (^{<42>}1 Corinthians 12:26).

suffer adversity — *Greek*, “are in evil state.”

being yourselves also in the body — and so liable to the adversities incident to the natural body, which ought to dispose you the more to sympathize with them, not knowing how soon your own turn of suffering may come. “One experiences adversity almost his whole life, as Jacob; another in youth, as Joseph; another in manhood, as Job; another in old age” [BENGEL].

4. *is*, etc. — Translate, “Let marriage *be treated as* honorable”: as ^{<83>}Hebrews 13:5 also is an exhortation.

in all — “in the case of all men”: “among all.” “To avoid fornication let EVERY MAN have his own wife” (^{<40>}1 Corinthians 7:2). Judaism and Gnosticism combined were soon about to throw discredit on marriage. The venerable Paphnutius, in the Council of Nice, quoted this verse for the justification of the married state. If one does not himself marry, he should not prevent others from doing so. Others, especially Romanists, translate, “in all *things*,” as in ^{<83>}Hebrews 13:18. But the warning being against lasciviousness, the contrast to “*whoremongers and adulterers*” in the parallel clause, requires the “in all” in this clause to refer to *persons*.

the bed undefiled — Translate, as *Greek* requires “undefiled” to be a *predicate*, not an epithet, “And let the bed *be* undefiled.”

God will judge — Most whoremongers escape the notice of human tribunals; but God takes particular cognizance of those whom man does not punish. Gay immoralities will then be regarded in a very different light from what they are now.

5. conversation — “manner of life.” The love of filthy lust and the love of filthy lucre follow one another as closely akin, both alienating the heart from the Creator to the creature.

such things as ye have — literally, “present things” (^{<50>}Philippians 4:11).

I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee — A promise tantamount to this was given to Jacob (^{<0285}Genesis 28:15), to Israel (^{<0306}Deuteronomy 31:6,8), to Joshua (^{<0005}Joshua 1:5), to Solomon (^{<0300}1 Chronicles 28:20). It is therefore like a divine adage. What was said to them, extends also to us. He will neither withdraw His *presence* (“never leave thee”) nor His *help* (“nor forsake thee”) [BENGEL].

6. may — rather as *Greek*, expressing confidence actually realized, “So that we boldly (confidently) *say*” (^{<0800}Psalm 56:4,11 118:6). Punctuate as both the *Hebrew* and the *Greek* require, “And (so) I will not fear: what (then) shall man do unto me?”

7. Remember — so as to imitate: not to *invoke* in prayer, as Rome teaches.

have the rule — rather, “who have *had* the rule over you”: your spiritual leaders.

who — *Greek*, “the which”: such persons as.

have spoken unto you — “spake” (so the *Greek* aorist means) during their lifetime. This Epistle was among those written later, when many of the heads of the Jerusalem Church had passed away.

whose faith — even unto death: probably death by martyrdom, as in the case of the instances of *faith* in ^{<0135}Hebrews 11:35. Stephen, James the brother of our Lord and bishop of Jerusalem, as well as James the brother of John (^{<0022}Acts 12:2), in the Palestinian Church, which Paul addresses, suffered martyrdom.

considering — *Greek*, “looking up to,” “diligently contemplating all over,” as an artist would a model.

the end — the termination, at death. The *Greek*, is used of *decease* (^{<0031}Luke 9:31 ^{<0015}2 Peter 1:15).

of their conversation — “manner of life”: “religious walk” (^{<0013}Galatians 1:13 ^{<0022}Ephesians 4:22 ^{<0012}1 Timothy 4:12 ^{<0013}James 3:13). *Considering* how they manifested the soundness of their faith by their holy *walk*, which they maintained even to *the end of that walk* (their death by martyrdom).

8. This verse is not, as some read it, in apposition with “the end of their conversation” (^{<801>}Hebrews 13:7), but forms the transition. “Jesus Christ, yesterday and to-day (is) the same, and (shall be the same) unto the ages (that is, unto all ages).” The *Jesus Christ* (the full name being given, to mark with affectionate solemnity both His *person* and His *office*) who supported your spiritual *rulers* through life even unto their *end* “yesterday” (in times past), being at once “the Author and the Finisher of their faith” (^{<801>}Hebrews 12:2), remains still the same Jesus Christ “to-day,” ready to help you also, if like them you walk by “faith” in Him. Compare “this same Jesus,” ^{<401>}Acts 1:11. He who *yesterday* (proverbial for the past time) suffered and died, is *to-day* in glory (^{<618>}Revelation 1:18). “As night comes between yesterday and to-day, and yet night itself is swallowed up by *yesterday* and *to-day*, so the “suffering” did not so interrupt the glory of Jesus Christ which was of yesterday, and that which is to-day, as not to continue to be the same. He is the same *yesterday*, before He came into the world, and *to-day*, in heaven. *Yesterday* in the time of our predecessors, and *to-day* in our age” [BENGEL]. So the doctrine is the *same*, not variable: this verse thus forms the transition between ^{<801>}Hebrews 13:7 and ^{<801>}Hebrews 13:9. He is always “the same” (^{<801>}Hebrews 1:12). The same in the Old and in the New Testament.

9. about — rather, as oldest manuscripts read, “carried *aside*”; namely, compare ^{<401>}Ephesians 4:14.

divers — differing from the one faith in the one and the same Jesus Christ, as taught by them who had the rule over you (^{<801>}Hebrews 13:7).

strange — foreign to the truth.

doctrines — “teachings.”

established with grace; not with meats — not with observances of Jewish distinctions between clean and unclean meats, to which ascetic Judaizers added in Christian times the rejection of some meats, and the use of others: noticed also by *Paul* in ^{<408>}1 Corinthians 8:8, 13 6:13 ^{<617>}Romans 14:17, an exact parallel to this verse: these are some of the “divers and strange doctrines” of the previous sentence. Christ’s body offered once for all for us, is our true spiritual “meat” to “eat” (^{<801>}Hebrews 13:10), “the stay and the staff of bread” (^{<201>}Isaiah 3:1), the mean of all “grace.”

which have not profited — *Greek*, “in which they who walked were not profited”; namely, in respect to justification, perfect cleansing of the conscience, and sanctification. Compare on “walked,” ~~401~~ Acts 21:21; namely, with superstitious scrupulosity, as though the worship of God in itself consisted in such legal observances.

10. Christianity and Judaism are so totally distinct, that “they who serve the (Jewish) tabernacle,” have no right to eat our spiritual Gospel meat, namely, the Jewish priests, and those who follow their guidance in serving the ceremonial ordinance. He says, “serve *the tabernacle*,” not “serve *IN* the tabernacle.” Contrast with this servile worship ours.

an altar — the cross of Christ, whereon His body was offered. The Lord’s table represents this altar, the cross; as the bread and wine represent the sacrifice offered on it. Our meat, which we by faith spiritually eat, is the flesh of Christ, in contrast to the typical ceremonial meats. The two cannot be combined (~~402~~ Galatians 5:2). That not a literal eating of the sacrifice of Christ is meant in the Lord’s Supper, but a spiritual is meant, appears from comparing ~~403~~ Hebrews 13:9 with ~~404~~ Hebrews 13:10, “with GRACE, NOT with MEATS.”

11, 12. For just as “the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by ... are burned without the camp,” so “Jesus also that ... suffered without the gate” of ceremonial Judaism, of which His crucifixion outside the gate of Jerusalem is a type.

for — reason why they who serve the tabernacle, are excluded from share in Christ; because His sacrifice is not like one of those sacrifices in which they had a share but answers to one which was “wholly burned” outside (the *Greek* is “burnt completely,” “consumed by burning”), and which consequently they could not eat of. ~~405~~ Leviticus 6:30, gives the general rule, “No sin offering whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, shall be eaten; it shall be burnt in the fire.” The sin offerings are twofold: the *outward*, whose blood was sprinkled on the outward altar, and of whose bodies the priests might eat; and the *inward*, the reverse.

the sanctuary — here *the Holy of Holies*, into which the blood of the sin offering was brought on the day of atonement.

without the camp — in which were the tabernacle and Levitical priests and legal worshippers, during Israel's journey through the wilderness; replaced afterwards by Jerusalem (containing the temple), outside of whose walls Jesus was crucified.

12. Wherefore Jesus — In order that the Antitype might fulfill the type.

sanctify — Though not brought into the temple “sanctuary” (^{GEN} Hebrews 13:11) His blood has been brought into the heavenly sanctuary, and “sanctifies the people” (^{GEN} Hebrews 2:11,17), by cleansing them from sin, and consecrating them to God.

his own — not blood of animals.

without the gate — of Jerusalem; as if unworthy of the society of the covenant-people. The fiery ordeal of His *suffering* on the cross, answers to the *burning* of the victims; thereby His mere fleshly life was completely destroyed, as their bodies were; the second part of His offering was His carrying His blood into the heavenly holiest before God at His ascension, that it should be a perpetual atonement for the world's sin.

13. therefore — This “therefore” breathes the deliberate fortitude of believers [BENGEL].

without the camp — “outside the legal polity” [THEODORET] of Judaism (compare ^{GEN} Hebrews 13:11) “Faith considers Jerusalem itself as a *camp*, not a *city*” [BENGEL]. He contrasts with the Jews, who serve an earthly sanctuary, the Christians to whom the altar in heaven stands open, while it is closed against the Jews. As Jesus suffered without the gate, so spiritually must those who desire to belong to Him, withdraw from the earthly Jerusalem and its sanctuary, as from this world in general. There is a reference to ^{GEN} Exodus 33:7, when the tabernacle was moved *without the camp*, which had become polluted by the people's idolatry of the golden calves; so that “every one who sought the Lord went out unto *the tabernacle of the congregation* (as Moses called the tabernacle outside the camp), which was without the camp”; a lively type of what the Hebrews should do, namely, come out of the carnal worship of the earthly Jerusalem to worship God in Christ in spirit, and of what we all ought to do, namely, come out from all carnalism, worldly formalism, and mere

sensuous worship, and know Jesus in His spiritual power apart from worldliness, seeing that “we have no continuing city” (^{<834>}Hebrews 13:14).

bearing — as Simon of Cyrene did.

his reproach — the reproach which He bare, and which all His people bear with Him.

14. here — on earth. Those Hebrews who clung to the earthly sanctuary are representatives of all who cling to this earth. The earthly Jerusalem proved to be no “abiding city,” having been destroyed shortly after this Epistle was written, and with it fell the Jewish civil and religious polity; a type of the whole of our present earthly order of things soon to perish.

one to come — (^{<805>}Hebrews 2:5 11:10,14,16 12:22 ^{<808>}Philippians 3:20).

15. As the “altar” was mentioned in ^{<830>}Hebrews 13:10, so the “sacrifices” here (compare ^{<801>}1 Peter 2:5, namely, *praise* and *doing good*, ^{<836>}Hebrews 13:16). Compare ^{<808>}Psalms 119:108 ^{<821>}Romans 12:1.

By him — as the Mediator of our prayers and praises (^{<843>}John 14:13,14); not by Jewish observances (^{<804>}Psalms 50:14,23 69:30,31 107:22 116:17). It was an old saying of the rabbis, “At a future time all sacrifices shall cease, but praises shall not cease.”

of praise — for salvation.

continually — not merely at fixed seasons, as those on which the legal sacrifices were offered, but throughout all our lives.

fruit of *our* lips — (^{<879>}Isaiah 57:19 ^{<842>}Hosea 14:2).

giving thanks — *Greek*, “confessing.” BENGEL remarks that the *Hebrew*, “*todah*,” is beautifully emphatic. It literally means “acknowledgment” or “confession.” In praising a creature, we may easily exceed the truth; but in praising God we have only to go on *confessing* what He really is to us. Hence it is impossible to exceed the truth, and here is *genuine* praise.

16. But — But the sacrifice of praise with the lips (^{<835>}Hebrews 13:15) is not enough; there must be also *doing good* (beneficence) and communicating (that is, imparting a share of your means, ^{<806>}Galatians 6:6) to the needy.

with such — and not mere ritualistic sacrifices.

17. Obey them that have the rule over you — (Compare ^{<8317>}Hebrews 13:7,24). This threefold mention of the *rulers* is peculiar to this Epistle. In other Epistles Paul includes the *rulers* in his exhortations. But here the address is limited to the *general body of the Church*, in contrast to the *rulers* to whom they are charged to yield reverent submission. Now this is just what might be expected when the apostle of the Gentiles was writing to the Palestine Christians, among whom James and the eleven apostles had exercised a more immediate authority. It was important he should not seem to set himself in opposition to their guides, but rather strengthen their hands; he claims no authority directly or indirectly over these rulers themselves [BIRKS]. “Remember” your deceased rulers (^{<8317>}Hebrews 13:7). “Obey” your living rulers; nay, more, not only *obey* in cases where no sacrifice of self is required, and where you are *persuaded* they are right (so the *Greek*, for “obey”), but “*submit yourselves*” as a matter of dutiful *yielding*, when your judgment and natural will incline you in an opposite direction.

they — on their part; so the *Greek*. As they do their part, so do you yours. So Paul exhorts, ^{<8182>}1 Thessalonians 5:12,13.

watch — “are vigilant” (*Greek*).

for — *Greek*, “in behalf of.”

must give account — The strongest stimulus to *watchfulness* (^{<4183>}Mark 13:34-37). CHRYSOSTOM was deeply struck with these words, as he tells us [*On the Priesthood*, 6], “The fear of this threat continually agitates my soul.”

do it — “watch for your soul’s eternal salvation.” It is a perilous responsibility for a man to have to give account for others’ deeds, who is not sufficient for his own [ESTIUS, from AQUINAS]. I wonder whether it be possible that any of the rulers should be saved [CHRYSOSTOM]. Compare Paul’s address to the elders, ^{<4183>}Acts 20:28 ^{<4001>}1 Corinthians 4:1-5, where also he connects ministers’ responsibility with the account to be hereafter given (compare ^{<4183>}1 Peter 5:4).

with joy — at your obedience; anticipating, too, that you shall be their “joy” in the day of giving account (^{<1000>}Philippians 4:1).

not with grief — at your disobedience; apprehending also that in the day of account you may be among the lost, instead of being their crown of rejoicing. In giving account, the stewards are liable to blame if aught be lost to the Master. “Mitigate their toil by every office of attention and respect, that with alacrity, rather than with grief, they may fulfill their duty, arduous enough in itself, even though no unpleasantness be added on your part” [GROTIUS].

that — *Grief* in your pastors is *unprofitable for you*, for it weakens their spiritual power; nay, more, “the *groans* (so the *Greek* for ‘grief’) of other creatures are heard; how much more of pastors!” [BENGEL]. So God will be provoked to avenge on you their “groaning” (*Greek*). If they must render God an account of their negligence, so must you for your ingratitude to them [GROTIUS].

18. Pray for us — Paul usually requests the Church’s intercessions for him in closing his Epistles, just as he begins with assuring them of his having them at heart in his prayers (but in this Epistle not till ^{<800>}Hebrews 13:20,21), ^{<800>}Romans 15:30. “Us,” includes both himself and his companions; he passes to himself alone, ^{<800>}Hebrews 13:19.

we trust we have a good conscience — in spite of your former jealousies, and the charges of my Jewish enemies at Jerusalem, which have been the occasion of my imprisonment at Rome. In refutation of the Jews’ aspersions, he asserts in the same language as here his own *conscientiousness* before God and man, ^{<400>}Acts 23:1-3 24:16,20,21 (wherein he virtually implies that his reply to Ananias was not sinful impatience; for, indeed, it was a prophecy which he was inspired at the moment to utter, and which was fulfilled soon after).

we trust — *Greek*, “we are persuaded,” in the oldest manuscripts. Good conscience produces confidence, where the Holy Spirit rules the conscience (^{<800>}Romans 9:1).

honestly — “in a *good* way.” The same *Greek* word as “*good* conscience.” Literally, “rightly,” “becomingly.”

19. the rather — *Greek*, “*I the more abundantly beseech you.*”

to do this — to pray for me.

that I may be restored to you — (^{<502>}Philemon 1:22). It is here first in the letter he mentions himself, in a way so unobtrusive, as not to prejudice his Hebrew readers against him, which would have been the result had he commenced this as his other Epistles, with authoritatively announcing his name and apostolic commission.

20. Concluding prayer.

God of peace — So Paul, (^{<653>}Romans 15:33 16:20 ^{<4731>}2 Corinthians 13:11 ^{<509>}Philippians 4:9 ^{<5153>}1 Thessalonians 5:23 ^{<5186>}2 Thessalonians 3:16. The Judaizing of the Hebrews was calculated to sow seeds of discord among them, of disobedience to their pastors (^{<3837>}Hebrews 13:17), and of alienation towards Paul. *The God of peace* by giving unity of true doctrine, will unite them in mutual love.

brought again from the dead — *Greek*, “brought up,” etc.: God brought the Shepherd; the Shepherd shall bring the flock. Here only in the Epistle he mentions the resurrection. He would not conclude without mentioning ‘the connecting link between the two truths mainly discussed; the *one perfect sacrifice* and the *continual priestly intercession* — the depth of His humiliation and the height of His glory — the “altar” of the cross and the ascension to the heavenly Holy of Holies.

Lord Jesus — the title marking His *person* and His *Lordship* over us. But (^{<3831>}Hebrews 13:21, “through Jesus *Christ*.” His *office*, as the *Anointed* of the Spirit, making Him the medium of communicating the Spirit to us, the holy unction flowing down from the Head on the members (compare ^{<4126>}Acts 2:36).

great — (^{<3044>}Hebrews 4:14).

shepherd of the sheep — A title familiar to his Hebrew readers, from their Old Testament (^{<2381>}Isaiah 63:11; *Septuagint*): primarily *Moses*, antitypically *Christ*: already compared together, (^{<3837>}Hebrews 3:2-7. The transition is natural from their earthly pastors (^{<3837>}Hebrews 13:17), to the

Chief Pastor, as in ^{<GRI1>}1 Peter 5:1-4. Compare ^{<EZE1>}Ezekiel 34:23 and Jesus' own words, ^{<JOH1>}John 10:2,11,14.

through the blood — *Greek*, “in,” *in virtue of* the blood (^{<HEB1>}Hebrews 2:9); it was because of His bloody death for us, that the Father raised and crowned Him with glory. The “blood” was the seal of the everlasting covenant entered into between the Father and Son; *in virtue of the Son's blood*, first Christ was raised, then Christ's people shall be so (^{<ZEC1>}Zechariah 9:11, seemingly referred to here; ^{<ACT1>}Acts 20:28).

everlasting — The *everlastingness* of the *covenant* necessitated the resurrection. This clause, “the blood of the everlasting covenant,” is a summary retrospect of the Epistle (compare ^{<HEB2>}Hebrews 9:12).

21. Make you perfect — properly said of healing a rent; *join you together in perfect harmony* [BENGEL].

to do his will, working in you — (^{<HEB3>}Hebrews 10:36); rather as *Greek*, “*doing in you*.” Whatever good we *do*, God *does* in us.

well-pleasing in his sight — (^{<ISA1>}Isaiah 53:10 ^{<EPH1>}Ephesians 5:10).

through Jesus Christ — “God *doing* (working) in you that ... *through Jesus Christ*” (^{<PHI1>}Philippians 1:11).

to whom — to Christ. He closes as he began (^{<HEB4>}Hebrews 1:1-14), with giving glory to Christ.

22. suffer the word — The Hebrews not being the section of the Church assigned to Paul (but the Gentiles), he uses gentle entreaty, rather than authoritative command.

few words — compared with what might be said on so important a subject. *Few*, in an Epistle which is more of a *treatise* than an Epistle (compare ^{<1PE1>}1 Peter 5:12). On the seeming inconsistency with ^{<GAL1>}Galatians 6:11, compare *Note*, see on ^{<GAL2>}Galatians 6:11.

23. our brother Timothy — So Paul, ^{<1CO1>}1 Corinthians 4:17 ^{<2CO1>}2 Corinthians 1:1 ^{<COL1>}Colossians 1:1 ^{<1TH1>}1 Thessalonians 3:2.

is set at liberty — from prison. So Aristarchus was imprisoned with Paul. BIRKS translates, “dismissed,” “sent away,” namely, on a mission to

Greece, as Paul promised (^{<5188>}Philippians 2:19). However, *some* kind of previous detention is implied before his being *let go* to Philippi. Paul, though now at large, was still *in Italy*, whence he sends the salutations of Italian Christians (^{<5839>}Hebrews 13:24), waiting for Timothy to join him, so as to start for Jerusalem: we know from ^{<5008>}1 Timothy 1:3, he and Timothy were together at Ephesus after his departing from Italy eastward. He probably left Timothy there and went to Philippi as he had promised. Paul implies that if Timothy shall not *come shortly*, he will start on his journey to the Hebrews at once.

24. all — The Scriptures are intended for *all*, young and old, not merely for ministers. Compare the different classes addressed, “wives,” ^{<4182>}Ephesians 5:22; little children, ^{<4188>}1 John 2:18; “all,” ^{<4188>}1 Peter 3:8 5:5. He says here “all,” for the Hebrews whom he addresses were not all in one place, though the Jerusalem Hebrews are chiefly addressed.

They of Italy — not merely the brethren at Rome, but of other places in Italy.

25. Paul’s characteristic salutation in every one of his other thirteen Epistles, as he says himself, ^{<4121>}1 Corinthians 16:21,23 ^{<5008>}Colossians 4:18 ^{<5187>}2 Thessalonians 3:17. It is found in no Epistle written by any other apostle in Paul’s lifetime. It is used in ^{<6221>}Revelation 22:21, written subsequently, and in CLEMENT OF ROME. Being known to be his badge, it is not used by others in his lifetime. The *Greek* here is, “*The* grace (namely, of our Lord Jesus Christ) be with you all.”

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JAMES

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

THIS is called by EUSEBIUS ([*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.23], about the year 330 A.D). the first of the Catholic Epistles, that is, the Epistles intended for general circulation, as distinguished from Paul's Epistles, which were addressed to particular churches or individuals. In the oldest manuscripts of the New Testament extant, they stand *before* the Epistles of Paul. Of them, two only are mentioned by EUSEBIUS as *universally acknowledged* (*Homologoumena*), namely, the First Epistle of Peter, and the First Epistle of John. *All*, however, are found in every existing manuscript of the whole New Testament.

It is not to be wondered at that Epistles not addressed to particular churches (and particularly one like that of James, addressed to the Israelite believers scattered abroad) should be for a time less known. The first mention of James' Epistle by name occurs early in the third century, in ORIGEN [*Commentary on* ^{<411>}John 1:19, 4.306], who was born about 185, and died A.D. 254. CLEMENT OF ROME ([*First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 10]; compare ^{<412>}James 2:21,23; [*First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 11]; compare ^{<412>}James 2:25 ^{<413>}Hebrews 11:31) quotes it. So also HERMAS [*Shepherd*] quotes ^{<401>}James 4:7. IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 4.16.2] is thought to refer to ^{<412>}James 2:23. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA commented on it, according to CASSIODORUS. EPHREM THE SYRIAN [*Against the Greeks*, 3.51] quotes ^{<401>}James 5:1. An especially strong proof of its authenticity is afforded by its forming part of the old Syriac version, which contains no other of *the disputed books* (*Antilegomena*, [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.25]), except the Epistle to the Hebrews. None of the Latin fathers before the fourth century quote it; but soon after the

Council of Nicea it was admitted as canonical both by the East and West churches, and specified as such in the Councils of Hippo and Carthage (397 A.D.). This is just what we might expect; a writing known only partially at first, when subsequently it obtained a wider circulation, and the proofs were better known of its having been recognized in apostolic churches, having in them men endowed with the discernment of spirits, which qualified them for discriminating between inspired and uninspired writings, was universally accepted. Though *doubted* for a time, at last the disputed books (James, Second Peter, Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation) were universally and undoubtingly accepted, so that no argument for the Old Testament Apocrypha can be drawn from their case: as to *it* the Jewish Church had *no doubt*; it was *known not* to be inspired.

LUTHER'S objection to it ("an Epistle of straw, and destitute of an evangelic character") was due to his mistaken idea that it (⁵⁰²⁴James 2:14-26) opposes the doctrine of justification by faith, and not by works, taught by Paul. But the two apostles, while looking at justification from distinct standpoints, perfectly harmonize and mutually complement the definitions of one another. Faith precedes love and the works of love; but without them it is dead. Paul regards faith in the justification of the sinner *before God*; James, in the justification of the believer *evidently before men*. The error which James meets was the Jewish notion that their possession and knowledge of the law of God would justify them, even though they disobeyed it (compare ⁵⁰²²James 1:22 with ⁴⁸⁰⁷Romans 2:17-25). ⁵⁰⁰³James 1:3 4:1,12 seem plainly to allude to ⁴⁸⁰⁵Romans 5:3 6:13 7:23 14:4. Also the tenor of ⁵⁰²⁴James 2:14-26 on "justification," seems to allude to Paul's teaching, so as to correct false Jewish notions of a different kind from those which he combatted, though not unnoticed by him also (⁴⁸⁰⁷Romans 2:17, etc.).

Paul (⁴⁸⁰⁹Galatians 2:9) arranges the names "James, Cephas, John," in the order in which their Epistles stand. James who wrote this Epistle (according to most ancient writers) is called (⁴⁸⁰⁹Galatians 1:19), "the Lord's brother." He was son of Alpheus or Cleopas (⁴²⁴³Luke 24:13-18) and Mary, sister of the Virgin Mary. Compare ⁴¹⁵⁰Mark 15:40 with ⁴⁸²⁵John 19:25, which seems to identify the mother of James the Less with the wife of Cleopas, not with the Virgin Mary, Cleopas' wife's sister. Cleopas is the *Hebrew*, Alpheus the *Greek* mode of writing the same name. Many,

however, as HEGESIPPUS [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 23.1], distinguish *the Lord's brother* from the son of Alpheus. But the Gospel according to the Hebrews, quoted by JEROME, represents James, the Lord's brother, as present at the institution of the Eucharist, and therefore identical with the apostle James. So the Apocryphal Gospel of James. In Acts, James who is put foremost in Jerusalem after the death of James, the son of Zebedee, is not distinguished from James, the son of Alpheus. He is not mentioned as one of the Lord's brethren in ^{<4014>}Acts 1:14; but as one of the "apostles" (^{<4019>}Galatians 1:19). He is called "the Less" (literally, "the little," ^{<4150>}Mark 15:40), to distinguish him from James, the son of Zebedee. ALFORD considers James, the brother of the Lord, the author of the Epistle, to have been the eldest of the sons of Joseph and Mary, after Jesus (compare ^{<4155>}Matthew 13:55), and that James the son of Alpheus is distinguished from him by *the latter* being called "the Less," (that is, junior). His arguments against the Lord's brother, the bishop of Jerusalem, being the apostle, are:

(1) The Lord's brethren did not believe on Jesus at a time when the apostles had been already called (^{<4008>}John 7:3,5), therefore none of the Lord's brethren could be among the apostles (but it does not follow from ^{<4008>}John 7:3 that *no one* of them believed).

(2) The apostles' commission was to preach the Gospel *everywhere*, not to be bishops in a particular locality (but it is unlikely that one not an apostle should be bishop of Jerusalem, to whom even apostles yield deference, ^{<4153>}Acts 15:13,19 ^{<4019>}Galatians 1:19 2:9,12. The Savior's last command to the apostles collectively to *preach the Gospel everywhere*, is not inconsistent with each having a particular sphere of labor in which he should be a missionary bishop, as Peter is said to have been at Antioch).

He was surnamed "the Just." It needed peculiar wisdom so to preach the Gospel as not to disparage the law. As bishop of Jerusalem writing to the twelve tribes, he sets forth the Gospel in its aspect of relation to the law, which the Jews so revered. As Paul's Epistles are a commentary on the doctrines flowing from the death and resurrection of Christ, so James's Epistle has a close connection with His teaching during His life on earth, especially His Sermon on the Mount. In both, the law is represented as

fulfilled in love: the very language is palpably similar (compare ^{<5012>}James 1:2 with ^{<4152>}Matthew 5:12; ^{<5104>}James 1:4 with ^{<4158>}Matthew 5:48; ^{<5015>}James 1:5 5:15 with ^{<4107>}Matthew 7:7-11; ^{<5023>}James 2:13 with ^{<4187>}Matthew 5:7 6:14,15; ^{<5101>}James 2:10 with ^{<4159>}Matthew 5:19; ^{<5004>}James 4:4 with ^{<4161>}Matthew 6:24; ^{<5041>}James 4:11 with ^{<4103>}Matthew 7:1,2; ^{<5182>}James 5:2 with ^{<4159>}Matthew 6:19). The whole spirit of this Epistle breathes the same Gospel-*righteousness* which the Sermon on the Mount inculcates as the highest realization of the law. James's own character as "the Just," or *legally righteous*, disposed him to this coincidence (compare ^{<5011>}James 1:20 2:10 3:18 with ^{<4151>}Matthew 5:20). It also fitted him for presiding over a Church still zealous for the law (^{<4218>}Acts 21:18-24 ^{<4102>}Galatians 2:12). If any could win the Jews to the Gospel, he was most likely who presented a pattern of Old Testament righteousness, combined with evangelical faith (compare also ^{<5118>}James 2:8 with ^{<4154>}Matthew 5:44,48). Practice, not profession, is the test of obedience (compare ^{<5017>}James 2:17 4:17 with ^{<4102>}Matthew 7:2-23). Sins of the tongue, however lightly regarded by the world, are an offense against the law of love (compare ^{<5011>}James 1:26 3:2-18 with ^{<4152>}Matthew 5:22; also any swearing, ^{<5152>}James 5:12; compare ^{<4153>}Matthew 5:33-37).


The absence of the apostolic benediction in this Epistle is probably due to its being addressed, not merely to the believing, but also indirectly to unbelieving, Israelites. To the former he commends humility, patience, and prayer; to the latter he addresses awful warnings (^{<5182>}James 5:7-11 4:9 5:1-6).

James was martyred at the Passover. This Epistle was probably written just before it. The destruction of Jerusalem foretold in it (^{<5181>}James 5:1, etc.), ensued a year after his martyrdom, A.D. 69. HEGESIPPUS (quoted in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.23]) narrates that he was set on a pinnacle of the temple by the scribes and Pharisees, who begged him to restrain the people who were in large numbers embracing Christianity. "Tell us," said they in the presence of the people gathered at the feast, "which is the door of Jesus?" James replied with a loud voice, "Why ask ye me concerning Jesus the Son of man? He sitteth at the right hand of power, and will come again on the clouds of heaven." Many thereupon cried, Hosanna to the Son of David. But James was cast down headlong by the Pharisees; and praying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what

they do,” he was stoned and beaten to death with a fuller’s club. The Jews, we know from Acts, were exasperated at Paul’s rescue from their hands, and therefore determined to wreak their vengeance on James. The publication of his Epistle to the dispersed Israelites, to whom it was probably carried by those who came up to the periodical feasts, made him obnoxious to them, especially to the higher classes, because it foretold the woes soon about to fall on them and their country. Their taunting question, “Which is the door of Jesus?” (that is, by what door will He come when He returns?), alludes to his prophecy, “the coming of the Lord draweth nigh ... behold the Judge standeth before the *door*” (⁵⁸⁸James 5:8,9). ^{583E}Hebrews 13:7 probably refers to the martyrdom of James, who had been so long bishop over the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, “Remember them which have (rather, ‘had’) the rule (spiritually) over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”

His inspiration as an apostle is expressly referred to in ⁴¹⁵⁹Acts 15:19,28, “*My sentence is,*” etc.: “It seemed good to *the Holy Ghost, and to us,*” etc. His episcopal authority is implied in the deference paid to him by Peter and Paul (⁴⁰²⁷Acts 12:17 21:18 ⁸⁰¹⁹Galatians 1:19 2:9). The Lord had appeared specially to him after the resurrection (⁶⁸¹1 Corinthians 15:7). Peter in his First Epistle (universally from the first received as canonical) tacitly confirms the inspiration of James’s Epistle, by incorporating with his own inspired writings no less than ten passages from James. The “apostle of the circumcision,” Peter, and the first bishop of Jerusalem, would naturally have much in common. Compare ⁵⁰⁰¹James 1:1 with ⁶⁰⁰¹1 Peter 1:1; ⁵⁰⁰²James 1:2 with ⁶⁰⁰⁶1 Peter 1:6 4:12,13; ⁵⁰¹¹James 1:11 with ⁶⁰²¹1 Peter 1:24; ⁵⁰¹⁸James 1:18 with ⁶⁰⁰⁸1 Peter 1:3; ⁵⁰¹²James 2:7 with ⁶⁰⁴¹1 Peter 4:14; ⁵⁰¹³James 3:13 with ⁶⁰²²1 Peter 2:12; ⁵⁰⁰⁴James 4:1 with ⁶⁰²¹1 Peter 2:11; ⁵⁰⁰⁶James 4:6 with ⁶⁰⁰⁶1 Peter 5:5,6; ⁵⁰⁰⁷James 4:7 with ⁶⁰⁰⁶1 Peter 5:6,9; ⁵⁰¹⁰James 4:10 with ⁶⁰⁰⁶1 Peter 5:6; ⁵⁰²⁰James 5:20 with ⁶⁰⁰⁶1 Peter 4:6. Its being written in the purest *Greek* shows it was intended not only for the Jews at Jerusalem, but also for the Hellenistic, that is, Greek-speaking, Jews.

The style is close, curt, and sententious, gnome following after gnome. A Hebraic character pervades the Epistle, as appears in the occasional poetic parallelisms (⁵⁰⁰¹James 3:1-12). Compare “assembly”: *Greek*, “synagogue,”

 James 2:2, *Margin*. The images are analogical arguments, combining at once logic and poetry. Eloquence and persuasiveness are prominent characteristics.

The similarity to Matthew, the most Hebrew of the Gospels, is just what we might expect from the bishop of Jerusalem writing to Israelites. In it the higher spirit of Christianity is seen putting the Jewish law in its proper place. The law is enforced in its everlasting spirit, not in the letter for which the Jews were so zealous. The doctrines of grace, the distinguishing features of Paul's teaching to the Hellenists and Gentiles, are less prominent as being already taught by that apostle. James complements Paul's teaching, and shows to the Jewish Christians who still kept the legal ordinances down to the fall of Jerusalem, the spiritual principle of the law, namely, love manifested in obedience. To sketch "the perfect man" *continuing* in the Gospel *law of liberty*, is his theme.

CHAPTER 1

~~SUB~~JAMES 1:1-27.

INSCRIPTION: EXHORTATION ON HEARING, SPEAKING, AND WRATH.

The last subject is discussed in ~~SUB~~James 3:13-4:17.

1. James — an apostle of the circumcision, with Peter and John, James in Jerusalem, Palestine, and Syria; Peter in Babylon and the East; John in Ephesus and Asia Minor. Peter addresses the dispersed *Jews of Pontus, Galatia, and Cappadocia*; James, the *Israelites of the twelve tribes scattered abroad*.

servant of God — not that he was not an *apostle*; for Paul, an apostle, also calls himself so; but as addressing the Israelites generally, including even indirectly the unbelieving, he in humility omits the title “apostle”; so Paul in writing to the Hebrews; similarly Jude, an apostle, in his General Epistle.

Jesus Christ — not mentioned again save in ~~SUB~~James 2:1; not at all in his speeches (~~4054~~Acts 15:14,15 21:20,21), lest his introducing the name of Jesus oftener should seem to arise from vanity, as being “the Lord’s brother” [BENGEL]. His teaching being practical, rather than doctrinal, required less frequent mention of Christ’s name.

scattered abroad — literally “which are in the dispersion.” The dispersion of the Israelites, and their connection with Jerusalem as a center of religion, was a divinely ordered means of propagating Christianity. The pilgrim troops of the law became caravans of the Gospel [WORDSWORTH].

greeting — found in no other Christian letter, but in James and the Jerusalem Synod’s Epistle to the Gentile churches; an undesigned coincidence and mark of genuineness. In the original *Greek* (*chairein*) for “greeting,” there is a connection with the “joy” to which they are exhorted

amidst their existing distresses from poverty and consequent oppression. Compare ^{<653>}Romans 15:26, which alludes to their poverty.

2. My brethren — a phrase often found in James, marking community of nation and of faith.

all joy — cause for the highest joy [GROTIUS]. Nothing but joy [PISCATOR]. Count *all* “divers temptations” to be *each* matter of joy [BENGEL].

fall into — unexpectedly, so as to be *encompassed* by them (so the original *Greek*).

temptations — not in the limited sense of allurements to sin, but *trials* or distresses of any kind which test and purify the Christian character. Compare “tempt,” that is, try, ^{<1021>}Genesis 22:1. Some of those to whom James writes were “sick,” or otherwise “afflicted” (^{<943>}James 5:13). Every possible trial to the child of God is a masterpiece of strategy of the Captain of his salvation for his good.

3. the trying — the *testing* or *proving* of your faith, namely, by “divers temptations.” Compare ^{<883>}Romans 5:3, *tribulation* worketh patience, and patience *experience* (in the original *dokime*, akin to *dokimion*, “trying,” here; there it is *experience*: here the “trying” or *testing*, whence experience flows).

patience — The original implies more; *persevering endurance* and *continuance* (compare ^{<105>}Luke 8:15).

4. Let endurance have a perfect *work* (taken out of the previous “*worketh* patience” or endurance), that is, have its *full effect*, by showing the most perfect degree of endurance, namely, “joy in bearing the cross” [MENOCHIUS], and enduring to the end (^{<102>}Matthew 10:22) [CALVIN].

ye may be perfect — fully developed in all the attributes of a Christian character. For this there is required “joy” [BENGEL], as part of the “perfect work” of probation. The work of God in a man is the man. If God’s teachings by patience have had a perfect work in you, *you* are perfect [ALFORD].

entire — that which has all *its parts complete, wanting no integral part*; ^{<5163>}1 Thessalonians 5:23, “your whole (literally, ‘entire’) spirit, soul, and body”; as “perfect” implies *without a blemish in its parts*.

5. English Version omits “But,” which the *Greek* has, and which is important. “But (as this *perfect entireness wanting nothing* is no easy attainment) if any,” etc.

lack — rather, as the *Greek* word is repeated after James’s manner, from ^{<5004>}James 1:4, “wanting nothing,” translate, “If any of you *want* wisdom,” namely, the wisdom whereby ye may “count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations,” and “let patience have her perfect work.” This “wisdom” is shown in its effects in detail, ^{<5007>}James 3:7. The highest wisdom, which governs patience alike in poverty and riches, is described in ^{<5009>}James 1:9,10.

ask — (^{<5002>}James 4:2).

liberally — So the *Greek* is rendered by *English Version*. It is rendered *with simplicity*, ^{<5128>}Romans 12:8. God gives without adding aught which may take off from the graciousness of the gift [ALFORD]. God requires the same “simplicity” in His children (“eye ... single,” ^{<4022>}Matthew 6:22, literally, “simple”).

upbraideth not — an illustration of God’s giving *simply*. He gives to the humble suppliant without upbraiding him with his past sin and ingratitude, or his future abuse of God’s goodness. The Jews pray, “Let me not have need of the gifts of men, whose gifts are few, but their upbraidings manifold; but give me out of Thy large and full hand.” Compare Solomon’s prayer for “wisdom,” and God’s gift above what he asked, though God foresaw his future abuse of His goodness would deserve very differently. James has before his eye the Sermon on the Mount (see my *Introduction*). God hears every true prayer and grants either the thing asked, or else something better than it; as a good physician consults for his patient’s good better by denying something which the latter asks not for his good, than by conceding a temporary gratification to his hurt.

6. ask in faith — that is, the persuasion that God can and will give. James begins and ends with *faith*. In the middle of the Epistle he removes the hindrances to faith and shows its true character [BENGEL].

wavering — between belief and unbelief. Compare the case of the Israelites, who seemed to partly believe in God's power, but leaned more to unbelief by "limiting" it. On the other hand, compare ^{<400>}Acts 10:20 ^{<600>}Romans 4:20 ("*staggered not* ... through unbelief," literally, as here, "*wavered not*"); ^{<500>}1 Timothy 2:8.

like a wave of the sea — ^{<250>}Isaiah 57:20 ^{<400>}Ephesians 4:14, where the same *Greek* word occurs for "tossed to and fro," as is here translated, "driven with the wind."

driven with the wind — from without.

tossed — from within, by its own instability [BENGEL]. At one time cast on the shore of faith and hope, at another rolled back into the abyss of unbelief; at one time raised to the height of worldly pride, at another tossed in the sands of despair and affliction [WIESINGER].

7. For — resumed from "For" in ^{<500>}James 1:6.

that man — such a wavering self-deceiver.

think — Real *faith* is something more than a mere *thinking* or *surmise*.

anything — namely, of the things that he prays for: he does receive many things from God, food, raiment, etc., but these are the general gifts of His providence: of the things specially granted in answer to prayer, the waverer shall not receive "anything," much less wisdom.

8. double-minded — literally, "double-souled," the one soul directed towards God, the other to something else. The *Greek* favors ALFORD's translation, "He (the waverer, ^{<500>}James 1:6) is a man double-minded, unstable," etc.; or better, BEZA's. The words in this ^{<500>}James 1:8 are in apposition with "that man," ^{<500>}James 1:7; thus the "us," which is not in the original, will not need to be supplied, "A man double-minded, unstable in all his ways!" The word for "double-minded" is found here and in ^{<500>}James 4:8, for the first time in Greek literature. It is not a *hypocrite* that

is meant, but a *fickle*, “wavering” man, as the context shows. It is opposed to *the single eye* (⁴⁰⁶²Matthew 6:22).

9, 10. Translate, “*But* let the brother,” etc. that is, the best remedy against *double-mindedness* is that Christian *simplicity* of spirit whereby the “brother,” low in outward circumstances, may “rejoice” (answering to ³⁰⁰²James 1:2) “in that he is exalted,” namely, by being accounted a son and heir of God, his very sufferings being a pledge of his coming glory and crown (³⁰¹²James 1:12), and the rich may rejoice “in that he is made low,” by being stripped of his goods for Christ’s sake [MENOCHIUS]; or in that he is made, by sanctified trials, lowly in spirit, which is true matter for rejoicing [GOMARUS]. The design of the Epistle is to reduce all things to an equable footing (³⁰¹¹James 2:1 5:13). The “low,” rather than the “rich,” is here called “the brother” [BENGEL].

10. So far as one is merely “rich” in worldly goods, “he shall pass away”; in so far as his predominant character is that of a “brother,” he “abideth for ever” (⁶¹⁷¹1 John 2:17). This view meets all ALFORD’s objections to regarding “the rich” here as a “brother” at all. To avoid making the rich a brother, he translates, “But the rich glories in his humiliation,” namely, in that which is really his debasement (his rich state, ³¹⁸⁶Philippians 3:19), just as the low is told to rejoice in what is really his exaltation (his lowly state).

11. Taken from ²³⁰⁶Isaiah 40:6-8.

heat — rather, “the hot wind” from the (east or) south, which scorches vegetation (⁴²²⁵Luke 12:55). The “burning heat” of the sun is not at its *rising*, but rather at noon; whereas the scorching *Kadim* wind is often at sunrise (Jon 4:8) [MIDDLETON, *The Doctrine of the Greek Article*].

⁴¹⁰²Matthew 20:12 uses the *Greek* word for “heat.” ²³⁰⁷Isaiah 40:7, “*bloweth* upon it,” seems to answer to “the hot *wind*” here.

grace of the fashion — that is of the external appearance.

in his ways — referring to the burdensome extent of the rich man’s devices [BENGEL]. Compare “his ways,” that is, his course of life, ³⁰⁰⁸James 1:8.

12. Blessed — Compare the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount (^{<416B>}Matthew 5:4,10,11).

endureth temptation — not the “falling into divers temptations” (^{<500B>}James 1:2) is the matter for “joy,” but the *enduring* of temptation “unto the end.” Compare ^{<K517>}Job 5:17.

when he is tried — literally, “when he has become tested” or “approved,” when he has passed through the “trying” (^{<500B>}James 1:3), his “faith” having finally gained the victory.

the crown — not in allusion to the crown or garland given to winners in the games; for this, though a natural allusion for Paul in writing to the heathen, among whom such games existed, would be less appropriate for James in addressing the Jewish Christians, who regarded Gentile usages with aversion.

of life — “life” constitutes the crown, literally, *the* life, the only true life, the highest and eternal life. The crown implies a *kingdom* (^{<420B>}Psalm 21:3).

the Lord — not found in the best manuscripts and versions. The believer’s heart fills up the omission, without the name needing to be mentioned. The “faithful One who promised” (^{<512B>}Hebrews 10:23).

to them that love him — In ^{<500B>}2 Timothy 4:8, “the crown of righteousness to them that love His appearing.” Love produces patient *endurance*: none attest their love more than they who suffer for Him.

13. when ... tempted — tried by *solicitation to evil*. Heretofore the “temptation” meant was that of *probation by afflictions*. Let no one fancy that God lays upon him an inevitable necessity of sinning. God does not send trials on you in order to make you worse, but to make you better (^{<500B>}James 1:16,17). Therefore do not sink under the pressure of evils (^{<400B>}1 Corinthians 10:13).

of God — by agency proceeding *from* God. The *Greek* is not “tempted *by*,” but, “from,” implying indirect agency.

cannot be tempted with evil, etc. — “Neither do any of our sins tempt God to entice us to worse things, nor does He tempt any *of His own accord*” (literally, “of Himself”; compare the antithesis, ^{<511B>}James 1:18, “*Of*

His own will He begat us” to holiness, so far is He from tempting us *of His own will*) [BENGEL]. God is said in ^{<020>}Genesis 22:1 to have “tempted Abraham”; but there the *tempting* meant is that of *trying* or *proving*, not that of seducement. ALFORD translates according to the ordinary sense of the *Greek*, “God is *unversed* in evil.” But as this gives a less likely sense, *English Version* probably gives the true sense; for ecclesiastical *Greek* often uses words in new senses, as the exigencies of the new truths to be taught required.

14. Every man, when tempted, is so through being drawn away of (again here, as in ^{<013>}James 1:13, the *Greek* for “of” expresses the actual *source*, rather than the agent of temptation) his own lust. The cause of sin is in ourselves. Even Satan’s suggestions do not endanger us before they are made *our own*. Each one has *his own peculiar* (so the *Greek*) lust, arising from his own temperament and habit. Lust flows from the original birth-sin in man, inherited from Adam.

drawn away — the *beginning* step in temptation: drawn away from truth and virtue.

enticed — literally, “taken with a bait,” as fish are. The *further progress*: the man *allowing himself* (as the *Greek* middle voice implies) *to be enticed* to evil [BENGEL]. “Lust” is here personified as the harlot that allures the man.

15. The guilty union is committed by the will embracing the temptress. “Lust,” the harlot, then, “brings forth sin,” namely, of that kind to which the temptation inclines. Then *the particular sin* (so the *Greek* implies), “when it is completed, brings forth death,” with which it was all along pregnant [ALFORD]. This “death” stands in striking contrast to the “crown of life” (^{<012>}James 1:12) which “patience” or *endurance* ends in, when it has its “perfect work” (^{<004>}James 1:4). He who will fight Satan with Satan’s own weapons, must not wonder if he finds himself overmatched. Nip sin in the bud of lust.

16. Do not err in attributing to God temptation to evil; nay (as he proceeds to show), “every good,” all that is good on earth, comes from God.

17. gift ... gift — not the same words in *Greek*: the first, *the act of giving*, or the gift in its *initiatory* stage; the second, *the thing given, the boon, when perfected*. As the “good gift” stands in contrast to “sin” in its initiatory stage (^{<5015>}James 1:15), so the “perfect boon” is in contrast to “sin when it is finished,” bringing forth *death* (^{<6008>}2 Peter 1:3).

from above — (Compare ^{<5015>}James 3:15).

Father of lights — Creator of *the lights in heaven* (compare ^{<1838>}Job 38:28 [ALFORD]; ^{<1040>}Genesis 4:20,21 ^{<5029>}Hebrews 12:9). This accords with the reference to the changes in the light of the heavenly bodies alluded to in the end of the verse. Also, Father of the spiritual lights in the kingdom of grace and glory [BENGEL]. These were typified by the supernatural lights on the breastplate of the high priest, the Urim. As “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” (^{<6015>}1 John 1:5), He cannot in any way be the Author of sin (^{<5013>}James 1:13), which is darkness (^{<4189>}John 3:19).

no variableness ... shadow of turning — (^{<3016>}Malachi 3:6). None of the alternations of light and shadow which the physical “lights” undergo, and which even the spiritual lights are liable to, as compared with God. “Shadow of turning,” literally, the dark “shadow-mark” cast *from* one of the heavenly bodies, arising from its “turning” or revolution, for example, when the moon is eclipsed by the shadow of the earth, and the sun by the body of the moon. BENGEL makes a climax, “no variation — not even the shadow of a turning”; the former denoting a change in the *understanding*; the latter, in the *will*.

18. (^{<4013>}John 1:13). The believer’s regeneration is the highest example of nothing but good proceeding from God.

Of his own will — Of his own good pleasure (which shows that it is God’s essential nature to do good, not evil), not induced by any external cause.

begat he us — spiritually: a once-for-all accomplished act (^{<6003>}1 Peter 1:3,23). In contrast to “lust when it hath conceived, *bringeth forth* sin, and sin ... *death*” (^{<5015>}James 1:15). *Life* follows naturally in connection with *light* (^{<5017>}James 1:17).

word of truth — the Gospel. The objective mean, as *faith* is the appropriating mean of regeneration by the Holy Spirit as the efficient agent.

a kind of first-fruits — Christ is, in respect to the resurrection, “the first-fruits” (^{<650>}1 Corinthians 15:20,23): believers, in respect to regeneration, are, *as it were*, first-fruits (image from the consecration of the first-born of man, cattle, and fruits to God; familiar to the Jews addressed), that is, they are the first of God’s regenerated creatures, and the pledge of the ultimate regeneration of the creation, ^{<619>}Romans 8:19,23, where also the Spirit, the divine agent of the believer’s regeneration, is termed “the first-fruits,” that is, the earnest that the regeneration now begun in the soul, shall at last extend to the body too, and to the lower parts of creation. Of all God’s visible creatures, believers are the noblest part, and like the legal “first-fruits,” sanctify the rest; for this reason they are much tried now.

19. Wherefore — as your evil is of yourselves, but your good from God. However, the oldest manuscripts and versions read thus: “YE KNOW IT (so ^{<405>}Ephesians 5:5 ^{<507>}Hebrews 12:17), my beloved brethren; BUT (consequently) let every man be swift to hear,” that is, docile in receiving “the word of truth” (^{<503>}James 1:18,21). The true method of hearing is treated in ^{<502>}James 1:21-27, and ^{<501>}James 2:1-26.

slow to speak — (^{<005>}Proverbs 10:19 17:27,28 ^{<260>}Ecclesiastes 5:2). A good way of escaping one kind of temptation arising from ourselves (^{<503>}James 1:13). Slow to speak authoritatively as a master or teacher of others (compare ^{<501>}James 3:1): a common Jewish fault: slow also to speak such hasty things of God, as in ^{<503>}James 1:13. Two ears are given to us, the rabbis observe, but only one tongue: the ears are open and exposed, whereas the tongue is walled in behind the teeth.

slow to wrath — (^{<503>}James 3:13,14 4:5). Slow in becoming heated by debate: another Jewish fault (^{<610>}Romans 2:8), to which much *speaking* tends. TITTMANN thinks not so much “wrath” is meant, as an *indignant* feeling of *fretfulness* under the calamities to which the whole of human life is exposed; this accords with the “divers temptations” in ^{<500>}James 1:2. Hastiness of temper hinders hearing God’s word; so Naaman, ^{<121>}2 Kings 5:11 ^{<408>}Luke 4:28.

20. Man's angry zeal in debating, as if jealous for the honor of God's righteousness, is far from working that which is really righteousness in God's sight. True "righteousness is sown in peace," not in wrath (^{<3185>}James 3:18). The oldest and the received reading is "worketh," produceth not. best reading means "worketh," that is, *practiceth* not:

21. lay apart — "once for all" (so the *Greek*): as a filthy garment. Compare Joshua's filthy garments, (^{<3032>}Zechariah 3:3,5 (^{<6714>}Revelation 7:14. "Filthiness" is cleansed away by hearing the word (^{<6153>}John 15:3).

superfluity of naughtiness — *excess* (for instance, the *intemperate* spirit implied in "wrath," (^{<3019>}James 1:19,20), which arises from *malice* (our natural, *evil disposition* towards one another). (^{<6011>}1 Peter 2:1 has the very same words in the *Greek*. So "malice" is the translation, (^{<4063>}Ephesians 4:31 (^{<3032>}Colossians 3:8. "*Faulty excess*" [BENGEL] is not strong enough. Superfluous excess in *speaking* is also reprobated as "coming of *evil*" (the *Greek* is akin to the word for "naughtiness" here) in the Sermon on the Mount (^{<4053>}Matthew 5:37), with which James' Epistle is so connected.

with meekness — *in mildness* towards one another [ALFORD], the opposite to "wrath" (^{<3019>}James 1:20): answering to "as new-born babes" (^{<6011>}1 Peter 2:2). *Meekness*, I think, includes also a childlike, *docile*, *humble*, as well as an uncontentious, spirit (^{<6210>}Psalms 25:9 45:4 (^{<2312>}Isaiah 66:2 (^{<4053>}Matthew 5:5 11:28-30 18:3,4; contrast (^{<6011>}Romans 2:8). On "receive," applied to ground receiving seed, compare (^{<4001>}Mark 4:20. Contrast (^{<4071>}Acts 17:11 (^{<3006>}1 Thessalonians 1:6 with (^{<3120>}2 Thessalonians 2:10.

engrafted word — the Gospel *word*, whose proper attribute is to be *engrafted* by the Holy Spirit, so as to be livingly incorporated with the believer, as the fruitful shoot is with the wild natural stock on which it is engrafted. The law came to man only from without, and admonished him of his duty. The Gospel is *engrafted* inwardly, and so fulfils the ultimate design of the law (^{<6006>}Deuteronomy 6:6 11:18 (^{<6011>}Psalms 119:11). ALFORD translates, "The *implanted* word," referring to the parable of the sower (^{<4013>}Matthew 13:1-23). I prefer *English Version*.

able to save — a strong incentive to correct our dulness in hearing the word: that word which we hear so carelessly, is able (instrumentally) to save us [CALVIN].

souls — your true selves, for the “body” is now liable to sickness and death: but the soul being now saved, both soul and body at last shall be so (^{<316>}James 5:15,20).

22. Qualification of the precept, “Be swift to *hear*”: “Be ye doers ... not hearers only”; not merely “*Do* the word,” but “*Be* doers” systematically and continually, as if this was your regular business. James here again refers to the Sermon on the Mount (^{<402>}Matthew 7:21-29).

deceiving your own selves — by the logical fallacy (the *Greek* implies this) that the mere hearing is all that is needed.

23. For — the logical self-deceit (^{<312>}James 1:22) illustrated.

not a doer — more literally, “a notdoer” [ALFORD]. The true disciple, say the rabbis, learns in order that he may do, not in order that he may merely know or teach.

his natural face — literally, “the countenance of his birth”: the face he was born with. As a man may behold his *natural face* in a mirror, so the hearer may perceive his *moral* visage in God’s Word. This faithful portraiture of man’s soul in Scripture, is the strongest proof of the truth of the latter. In it, too, we see mirrored God’s glory, as well as our natural vileness.

24. beholdeth — more literally, “he *contemplated* himself and hath *gone* his way,” that is, no sooner has he contemplated his image than he is gone his way (^{<311>}James 1:11). “Contemplate” answers to hearing the word: “goeth his way,” to relaxing the attention after hearing — letting the mind go elsewhere, and the interest of the thing heard pass away: then *forgetfulness* follows [ALFORD] (Compare ^{<333>}Ezekiel 33:31). “Contemplate” here, and in ^{<313>}James 1:23, implies that, though cursory, yet some knowledge of one’s self, at least for the time, is imparted in hearing the word (^{<424>}1 Corinthians 14:24).

and ... and — The repetition expresses hastiness joined with levity [BENGEL].

forgetteth what manner of man he was — in the mirror. Forgetfulness is no excuse (^{<315>}James 1:25 ^{<409>}2 Peter 1:9).

25. looketh into — literally, “stoopeth down to take a close look into.” Peers into: stronger than “beholdeth,” or “contemplated,” ^{<502>}James 1:24. A blessed curiosity if it be efficacious in bearing fruit [BENGEL].

perfect law of liberty — the Gospel rule of life, perfect and perfecting (as shown in the Sermon on the Mount, ^{<458>}Matthew 5:48), and making us truly walk at liberty (^{<488>}Psalm 119:32, *Church of England Prayer Book Version*). Christians are to aim at a higher standard of holiness than was generally understood under the law. The *principle* of love takes the place of the letter of the law, so that by the Spirit they are free from the yoke of sin, and free to obey by spontaneous instinct (^{<508>}James 2:8,10,12 ^{<488>}John 8:31-36 15:14,15; compare ^{<472>}1 Corinthians 7:22 ^{<481>}Galatians 5:1,13 ^{<426>}1 Peter 2:16). The law is thus *not made void*, but *fulfilled*.

continueth therein — contrasted with “goeth his way,” ^{<502>}James 1:24, continues both *looking into* the mirror of God’s word, and doing its precepts.

doer of the work — rather, “a doer of work” [ALFORD], an actual worker.

blessed in his deed — rather, “in his *doing*”; in the very doing there is blessedness (^{<491>}Psalm 19:11).

26, 27. An example of *doing work*.

religious ... religion — The *Greek* expresses the *external service* or exercise of *religion*, “godliness” being the internal soul of it. “If any man *think himself to be* (so the *Greek*) religious, that is, *observant of the offices of religion*, let him know these consist not so much in outward observances, as in such acts of mercy and humble piety (^{<307>}Micah 6:7,8) as *visiting the fatherless*, etc., and *keeping one’s self unspotted from the world*” (^{<433>}Matthew 23:23). James does not mean that these *offices* are the great essentials, or sum total of religion; but that, whereas the law service was merely ceremonial, the very *services* of the Gospel consist in acts of mercy and holiness, and it has light for its *garment*, its very *robe* being righteousness [TRENCH]. The *Greek* word is only found in ^{<405>}Acts 26:5, “after the straitest sect of our *religion* I lived a Pharisee.” ^{<508>}Colossians 2:18, “*worshipping* of angels.”

bridleth not ... tongue — Discretion in speech is better than fluency of speech (compare ^{<98B>}James 3:2,3). Compare ^{<98B>}Psalm 39:1. God alone can enable us to do so. James, in treating of the law, naturally notices this sin. For they who are free from grosser sins, and even bear the outward show of sanctity, will often exalt themselves by detracting others under the pretense of zeal, while their real motive is love of evil-speaking [CALVIN].

heart — It and the tongue act and react on one another.

27. Pure ... and undefiled — “Pure” is that love which has in it *no foreign admixture*, as self-deceit and hypocrisy. “Undefiled” is the means of its being “pure” [TITTMANN]. “Pure” expresses the *positive*, “undefiled” the *negative* side of religious service; just as *visiting the fatherless and widow* is the active, *keeping himself unspotted from the world*, the passive side of religious duty. This is the nobler shape that our religious exercises take, instead of the ceremonial offices of the law.

before God and the Father — literally, “before Him who is (our) God and Father.” God is so called to imply that if we would be like our Father, it is not by fasting, etc., for He does none of these things, but in being “merciful as our Father is merciful” [CHRYSOSTOM].

visit — in sympathy and kind offices to alleviate their distresses.

the fatherless — whose “Father” is God (^{<98B>}Psalm 68:5); peculiarly helpless.

and — not in the *Greek*; so close is the connection between active works of mercy to others, and the maintenance of personal unworldliness of spirit, word, and deed; no copula therefore is needed. Religion in its rise interests us about *ourselves* in its progress, about our *fellow creatures*: in its highest stage, about the honor of God.

keep himself — with jealous watchfulness, at the same time praying and depending on God as alone able to keep us (^{<98B>}John 17:15 ^{<98B>}Jude 1:24).

CHAPTER 2

~~SIN~~ JAMES 2:1-26.

THE SIN OF RESPECT OF PERSONS: DEAD, UNWORKING FAITH SAVES NO MAN.

James illustrates “the perfect law of liberty” (~~SIN~~ James 1:25) in one particular instance of a sin against it, concluding with a reference again to that law (~~SIN~~ James 2:12,13).

1. brethren — The equality of all Christians as “brethren,” forms the groundwork of the admonition.

the faith of ... Christ — that is, the Christian faith. James grounds Christian practice on Christian faith.

the Lord of glory — So ~~408~~ 1 Corinthians 2:8. As all believers, alike rich and poor, derive all their glory from their union with Him, “the Lord of glory,” not from external advantages of worldly fortune, the sin in question is peculiarly inconsistent with His “faith.” BENGEL, making no ellipsis of “the Lord,” explains “glory” as in apposition with Christ who is THE GLORY (~~409~~ Luke 2:32); the true Shekinah glory of the temple (~~410~~ Romans 9:4). *English Version* is simpler. The glory of Christ resting on the poor believer should make him be regarded as highly by “brethren” as his richer brother; nay, more so, if the poor believer has more of Christ’s spirit than the rich brother.

with respect of persons — literally, “*in respectings* of persons”; “in” the practice of partial preferences of persons in various ways and on various occasions.

2, 3. “If there chance to have come” [ALFORD].

assembly — literally, “synagogue”; this, the latest honorable use, and the only *Christian* use of the term in the New Testament, occurs in James’s Epistle, the apostle who maintained to the latest possible moment the

bonds between the Jewish synagogue and the Christian Church. Soon the continued resistance of the truth by the Jews led Christians to leave the term to them exclusively (^{MSB}Revelation 3:9). The “synagogue” implies a mere *assembly* or congregation not necessarily united by any common tie. “Church,” a people bound together by mutual ties and laws, though often it may happen that the members are not assembled [TRENCH and VITRINGA]. Partly from James’ Hebrew tendencies, partly from the Jewish Christian churches retaining most of the Jewish forms, this term “synagogue” is used here instead of the Christian term “Church” (*ecclesia*, derived from a root, “called out,” implying the union of its members in spiritual bonds, independent of space, and called out into separation from the world); an undesigned coincidence and mark of truth. The people in the Jewish synagogue sat according to their rank, those of the same trade together. The introduction of this custom into Jewish Christian places of worship is here reprobated by James. Christian churches were built like the synagogues, the holy table in the east end of the former, as the ark was in the latter; the *desk* and *pulpit* were the chief articles of furniture in both alike. This shows the error of comparing the Church to the temple, and the ministry to the priesthood; the temple is represented by the whole body of worshippers; the church building was formed on the model of the synagogue. See VITRINGA [*Synagogue and Temple*].

goodly apparel ... gay clothing — As the *Greek*, is the same in both, translate both alike, “gay,” or “splendid clothing.”

3. have respect to him, etc. — though ye know not who he is, when perhaps he may be a heathen. It was the office of the deacons to direct to a seat the members of the congregation [CLEMENT OF ROME, *Apostolical Constitutions*, 2.57, 58].

unto him — not in the best manuscripts. Thus “thou” becomes more demonstratively emphatic.

there — at a distance from where the good seats are.

here — near the speaker.

under my footstool — not literally so; but on the ground, down by my footstool. The poor man must either *stand*, or if he sits, *sit* in a degrading position. The speaker has a footstool as well as a good seat.

4. Are ye not ... partial — literally, “Have ye not made distinctions” or “differences” (so as to prefer one to another)? So in ^{<612>}Jude 1:22.

in yourselves — in your minds, that is, according to your carnal inclination [^{<GROTIUS>}].

are become judges of evil thoughts — The *Greek* words for “judges” and for “partial,” are akin in sound and meaning. A similar translation ought therefore to be given to both. Thus, either for “judges,” etc. translate, “*distinguishers* of (that is, *according to* your) evil thoughts”; or, do ye not *partially judge between* men, and are become *evilly-thinking judges* (^{<412>}Mark 7:21)? The “evil thoughts” are in the judges themselves; as in ^{<281>}Luke 18:6, the *Greek*, “judge of injustice,” is translated, “unjust judge.” ALFORD and WAHL translate, “Did ye not *doubt*” (respecting your *faith*, which is inconsistent with the distinctions made by you between rich and poor)? For the *Greek* constantly means “*doubt*” in all the New Testament. So in ^{<500>}James 1:6, “waving.” ^{<122>}Matthew 21:21 ^{<401>}Acts 10:20 ^{<601>}Romans 4:20, “staggered not.” The same play on the same kindred words occurs in the *Greek* of ^{<640>}Romans 14:10,23, “judge ... doubteth.” The same blame of being a judge, when one ought to be an obeyer, of the law is found in ^{<501>}James 4:11.

5. Hearken — James *brings to trial* the self-constituted “judges” (^{<504>}James 2:4).

poor of this world — The best manuscripts read, “those poor *in respect to the world*.” In contrast to “the rich in this world” (^{<507>}1 Timothy 6:17). Not of course *all* the poor; but the poor, *as a class*, furnish more believers than the rich as a class. The rich, if a believer, renounces riches as his portion; the poor, if an unbeliever, neglects that which is the peculiar advantage of poverty (^{<103>}Matthew 5:3 ^{<625>}1 Corinthians 1:26,27,28).

rich in faith — *Their riches consist in faith.* ^{<121>}Luke 12:21, “rich toward God.” ^{<508>}1 Timothy 6:18, “rich in good works” (^{<619>}Revelation 2:9;

compare ^{<4189>}2 Corinthians 8:9). Christ's poverty is the source of the believer's riches.

kingdom ... promised — (^{<4023>}Luke 12:32 ^{<4019>}1 Corinthians 2:9 ^{<5008>}2 Timothy 4:8).

6. The world's judgment of the poor contrasted with God's.

ye — Christians, from whom better things might have been expected; there is no marvel that men of the world do so.

despised — literally, “dishonored.” To dishonor the poor is to dishonor those whom God honors, and so to invert the order of God [CALVIN].

rich — as a class.

oppress — literally, “abuse their power against” you.

draw you — Translate, “is it not *they* (those very persons whom ye partially prefer, ^{<5001>}James 2:1-4) that *drag* you (namely, with violence)” [ALFORD].

before ... judgment seats — instituting persecutions for religion, as well as oppressive lawsuits, against you.

7. “Is it not they that blaspheme?” etc. as in ^{<5006>}James 2:6 [ALFORD]. Rich heathen must here chiefly be meant; for none others would directly blaspheme the name of Christ. Only *indirectly* rich Christians can be meant, who, by their inconsistency, *caused* His name *to be blasphemed*; so ^{<4591>}Ezekiel 36:21,22 ^{<6124>}Romans 2:24. Besides, there were few rich Jewish Christians at Jerusalem (^{<6531>}Romans 15:26). They who dishonor God's name by wilful and habitual sin, “take (or *bear*) the Lord's name in vain” (compare ^{<4109>}Proverbs 30:9, with ^{<4207>}Exodus 20:7).

that worthy name — which is “good before the Lord's saints” (^{<4530>}Psalms 52:9 54:6); which ye pray may be “hallowed” (^{<4069>}Matthew 6:9), and “by which ye are called,” literally, “which was invoked” or, “called upon by you” (compare ^{<4046>}Genesis 48:16 ^{<2001>}Isaiah 4:1, *Margin*; ^{<4157>}Acts 15:17), so that at your baptism “*into* the name” (so the *Greek*, ^{<4189>}Matthew 28:19) of Christ, ye became Christ's people (^{<4023>}1 Corinthians 3:23).

8. The *Greek* may be translated, “If, *however*, ye fulfill,” etc. that is, as ALFORD, after ESTIUS, explains, “*Still* I do not say, hate the rich (for their oppressions) and drive them from your assemblies; if you choose to observe the royal law ... well and good; but respect of persons is a breach of that law.” I think the translation is, “If *in very deed* (or ‘indeed on the one hand’) ye fulfill the royal law ... ye do well, but if (on the other hand) ye respect persons, ye practice sin.” The Jewish Christians boasted of, and rested in, the “law” (^{<481>}Acts 15:1 21:18-24 ^{<487>}Romans 2:17 ^{<482>}Galatians 2:12). To this the “indeed” alludes. “(Ye rest in the law): If *indeed* (then) ye fulfill it, ye do well; but if,” etc.

royal — the law that is king of all laws, being the sum and essence of the ten commandments. The great King, God, is love; His law is the royal law of love, and that law, like Himself, reigns supreme. He “is no respecter of persons”; therefore to respect persons is at variance with Him and His royal law, which is at once a law of love and of liberty (^{<502>}James 2:12). The law is the “whole”; “the (particular) Scripture” (^{<603>}Leviticus 19:18) quoted is a part. To break a part is to break the whole (^{<501>}James 2:10).

ye do well — being “blessed in your deed” (“doing,” *Margin*) as a doer, not a forgetful hearer of the law (^{<505>}James 1:25).

9. *Respect of persons* violates the command to *love all alike* “as thyself.”

ye commit sin — literally, “ye work sin,” ^{<402>}Matthew 7:23, to which the reference here is probably, as in ^{<502>}James 1:22. Your *works* are sin, whatever boast of the law ye make in words (see on ^{<508>}James 2:8).

convinced — *Old English* for “convicted.”

as transgressors — not merely of this or that particular command, but of the whole absolutely.

10. The best manuscripts read, “Whosoever *shall have kept* the whole law, and yet *shall have offended* (literally, ‘stumbled’; not so strong as ‘fall,’ ^{<611>}Romans 11:11) in one (point; here, the *respecting of persons*), is (hereby) become guilty of all.” The law is one seamless garment which is rent if you but rend a part; or a musical harmony which is spoiled if there be one discordant note [TIRINUS]; or a golden chain whose completeness is broken if you break one link [GATAKER]. You thus break *the whole law*,

though not the whole of the law, because you offend against *love*, which is the fulfilling of the law. If any part of a man be leprous, the whole man is judged to be a leper. God requires perfect, not partial, obedience. We are not to choose out parts of the law to keep, which suit our whim, while we neglect others.

11. He is One who gave the whole law; therefore, they who violate His will in one point, violate it all [BENGEL]. The law and its Author alike have a complete unity.

adultery ... kill — selected as being the most glaring cases of violation of duty towards one's neighbor.

12. Summing up of the previous reasonings.

speak — referring back to ^{<5019}James 1:19,26; the fuller discussion of the topic is given ^{<5015}James 3:5-12.

judged by the law of liberty — (^{<5025}James 1:25); that is, the Gospel law of love, which is not a law of external constraint, but of internal, *free*, instinctive inclination. The law of liberty, through God's mercy, frees us from the curse of the law, that henceforth we should be free to love and obey willingly. If we will not in turn practice the law of love to our neighbor, that law of grace condemns us still more heavily than the old law, which spake nothing but wrath to him who offended in the least particular (^{<5013}James 2:13). Compare ^{<4832}Matthew 18:32-35 ^{<5028}John 12:48 ^{<5030}Revelation 6:16, "Wrath of the (merciful) Lamb."

13. The converse of, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (^{<4817}Matthew 5:7). Translate, "*The judgment (which is coming on all of us) shall be without mercy to him who hath showed no mercy.*" It shall be such toward every one as every one shall have been [BENGEL]. "Mercy" here corresponds to "love," ^{<5018}James 2:8.

mercy rejoiceth against judgment — Mercy, so far from fearing judgment in the case of its followers, actually *glorifieth against* it, knowing that it cannot condemn them. Not that *their* mercy is the ground of their acquittal, but the mercy of God in Christ towards them, producing mercy on their part towards their fellow men, makes them to *triumph over judgment*, which all in themselves otherwise deserve.

14. James here, passing from the particular case of “mercy” or “love” violated by “respect of persons,” notwithstanding profession of the “faith of our Lord Jesus” (^{<5111>}James 2:1), combats the Jewish tendency (transplanted into their Christianity) to substitute a lifeless, inoperative acquaintance with the letter of the law, for change of heart to practical holiness, as if justification could be thereby attained (^{<5112>}Romans 2:3,13,23). It seems hardly likely but that James had seen Paul’s Epistles, considering that he uses the same phrases and examples (compare ^{<5121>}James 2:21,23,25, with ^{<5122>}Romans 4:3 ^{<5123>}Hebrews 11:17,31; and ^{<5124>}James 2:14,24, with ^{<5125>}Romans 3:28 ^{<5126>}Galatians 2:16). Whether James individually designed it or not, the Holy Spirit by him combats not Paul, but those who abuse Paul’s doctrine. The teaching of both alike is inspired, and is therefore to be received without wresting of words; but each has a different class to deal with; Paul, self-justiciaries; James, Antinomian advocates of a mere notional faith. Paul urged as strongly as James the need of works as evidences of faith, especially in the later Epistles, when many were abusing the doctrine of faith (^{<5127>}Titus 2:14 3:8). “Believing and doing are blood relatives” [RUTHERFORD].

What *doth it* profit — literally, “What is the profit?”

though a man say — James’ expression is not, “If a man have faith,” but “if a man *say* he hath faith”; referring to a mere *profession* of faith, such as was usually made at baptism. Simon Magus so “*believed* and was baptized,” and yet had “neither part nor lot in this matter,” for his “heart,” as his words and works evinced, was not right in the sight of God. ALFORD wrongly denies that “say” is emphatic. The illustration, ^{<5128>}James 2:16, proves it is: “If one of you *say*” to a naked brother, “Be ye warmed, notwithstanding ye give not those things needful.” The inoperative *profession* of sympathy answering to the inoperative *profession* of faith.

can faith save him — rather, “can such a faith (literally, ‘the faith’) save him?” — *the* faith you pretend to: the empty name of boasted faith, contrasted with true fruit-producing faith. So that which self-deceivers claim is called “wisdom,” though not true wisdom, ^{<5129>}James 3:15. The “him” also in the *Greek* is emphatic; the particular man who professes faith without having the works which evidence its vitality.

15. The *Greek* is, “*But* if,” etc.: the “*But*” taking up the argument against such a one as “said he had faith, and yet had not works,” which are its fruits.

a brother, etc. — a *fellow Christian*, to whom we are specially bound to give help, independent of our general obligation to help all our fellow creatures.

be — The *Greek* implies, “*be found*, on your access to them.”

16. The habit of receiving passively sentimental impressions from sights of woe without carrying them out into active habits only hardens the heart.

one of you — James brings home the case to his hearers individually.

Depart in peace — as if all their wants were satisfied by the mere words addressed to them. The same words in the mouth of Christ, whose faith they said they had, were accompanied by efficient deeds of love.

be ... warmed — with clothing, instead of being as heretofore “naked” (^{<S>}James 2:15 ^{<S>}Job 31:20).

filled — instead of being “destitute of food” (^{<S>}Matthew 15:37).

what doth it profit — concluding with the same question as at the beginning, ^{<S>}James 2:14. Just retribution: kind professions unaccompanied with corresponding acts, as they are of no “profit” to the needy object of them, so are of no profit to the professor himself. So faith consisting in mere profession is unacceptable to God, the object of faith, and profitless to the possessor.

17. faith ... being alone — ALFORD joins “is dead *in itself*.” So BENDEL, “If the works which living faith produces have no existence, it is a proof that faith itself (literally, ‘in respect to itself’) has no existence; that is, that what one boasts of as faith, is *dead*.” “Faith” is said to be “dead *in itself*,” because when it has works it is *alive*, and it is discerned to be so, not in respect to its works, but in respect to *itself*. *English Version*, if retained, must not be understood to mean that faith can exist “alone” (that is, severed from works), but thus: Even so *presumed* faith, if it have not works, is dead, being by itself “alone,” that is, severed from works of

charity; just as the body would be “dead” if alone, that is, severed from the spirit (^{512b}James 2:26). So ESTIUS.

18. “*But some one will say*”: so the *Greek*. This verse continues the argument from ^{512b}James 2:14,16. One may *say* he has faith though he have not works. Suppose one were to *say* to a naked brother, “Be warmed,” without giving him needful clothing. “*But* someone (entertaining views of the need of faith having works joined to it) will say (in opposition to the ‘say’ of the professor).”

show me thy faith without thy works — if thou canst; but thou canst not SHOW, that is, *manifest* or *evidence* thy alleged (^{512b}James 2:14, “say”) faith without works. “Show” does not mean here to *prove* to me, but *exhibit* to me. Faith is unseen save by God. To *show* faith to man, works in some form or other are needed: we are justified judicially by God (⁴⁸³Romans 8:33); meritoriously, by Christ (^{263b}Isaiah 53:11); mediately, by faith (⁴⁸³Romans 5:1); evidentially, by works. The question here is not as to the *ground* on which believers are justified, but about the *demonstration* of their faith: so in the case of Abraham. In ¹²¹Genesis 22:1 it is written, God did *tempt* Abraham, that is, put to the *test of demonstration* the reality of his faith, not for the satisfaction of God, who already knew it well, but to *demonstrate* it before men. The offering of Isaac at that time, quoted here, ^{512b}James 2:21, formed no part of the *ground* of his justification, for he was justified previously on his simply believing in the promise of spiritual heirs, that is, believers, numerous as the stars. He was then justified: that justification was *showed* or manifested by his offering Isaac forty years after. That work of faith *demonstrated*, but did not contribute to his justification. The tree *shows* its life by its fruits, but it was alive before either fruits or even leaves appeared.

19. Thou — emphatic. Thou self-deceiving claimant to faith without works.

that there is one God — rather, “that God is one”: God’s *existence*, however, is also asserted. The fundamental article of the creed of Jews and Christians alike, and the point of faith on which especially the former boasted themselves, as distinguishing them from the Gentiles, and hence adduced by James here.

thou doest well — so far good. But unless thy faith goes farther than an assent to this truth, “the evil spirits (literally, ‘demons’: ‘devil’ is the term restricted to *Satan*, their head) believe” so far in common with thee, “and (so far from being saved by such a faith) shudder (so the *Greek*),”

^{<1029}Matthew 8:29 ^{<1064}Luke 4:34 ^{<1014}2 Peter 2:4 ^{<1006}Jude 1:6 ^{<1010}Revelation 20:10. Their faith only adds to their torment at the thought of having to meet Him who is to consign them to their just doom: so thine (^{<1030}Hebrews 10:26,27, it is not the faith of love, but of fear, that hath torment, ^{<1018}1 John 4:18).

20. wilt thou know — “Vain” men are not *willing* to know, since they have no wish to “do” the will of God. James beseeches such a one to lay aside his perverse *unwillingness* to know what is palpable to all who are willing to do.

vain — who deceivest thyself with a delusive hope, resting on an unreal faith.

without works — The *Greek*, implies *separate from the* works [ALFORD] which ought to flow from it if it were real.

is dead — Some of the best manuscripts read, “is idle,” that is, unavailing to effect what you hope, namely, to save you.

21. Abraham ... justified by works — *evidentially*, and *before men* (see on ^{<1028}James 2:18). In ^{<1023}James 2:23, James, like Paul, recognizes the Scripture truth, that it was his *faith* that was counted to Abraham for righteousness in his justification before God.

when he had offered — rather, “when he offered” [ALFORD], that is, brought as an offering at the altar; not implying that he actually offered him.

22. Or, “thou seest.”

how — rather, “that.” In the two clauses which follow, emphasize “faith” in the former, and “works” in the latter, to see the sense [BENGEL].

faith wrought with his works — for it was *by faith* he offered his son. Literally, “was working (at the time) with his works.”

by works was faith made perfect — not was *vivified*, but attained its *fully consummated development*, and is *shown to be real*. So “my strength is *made perfect* in weakness,” that is, *exerts itself most perfectly*, shows how great it is [CAMERON]: so ^{<6017>}1 John 4:17 ^{<800>}Hebrews 2:10 5:9. The germ really, from the first, contains in it the full-grown tree, but its perfection is not attained till it is matured fully. So ^{<3008>}James 1:4, “Let patience have her *perfect work*,” that is, have its *full effect* by showing the most perfect degree of endurance, “that ye may be perfect,” that is, *fully developed* in the *exhibition* of the Christian character. ALFORD explains, “Received its realization, was entirely exemplified and filled up.” So Paul, ^{<1050>}Philippians 2:12, “Work out your own salvation”: the salvation was already in germ theirs in their free justification through faith. It needed to be *worked out* still to fully developed perfection in their life.

23. scripture was fulfilled — ^{<0150>}Genesis 15:6, quoted by Paul, as realized in Abraham’s justification by *faith*; but by James, as realized subsequently in Abraham’s *work* of offering Isaac, which, he says, *justified* him. Plainly, then, James must mean by *works* the same thing as Paul means by *faith*, only that he speaks of faith at its manifested development, whereas Paul speaks of it in its germ. Abraham’s offering of Isaac was not a mere act of obedience, but an act of faith. Isaac was the subject of the promises of God, that in him Abraham’s seed should be called. The same God calls on Abraham to slay the subject of His own promise, when as yet there was no seed in whom those predictions could be realized. Hence James’ saying that Abraham was justified by *such* a work, is equivalent to saying, as Paul does, that he was justified by faith itself; for it was in fact *faith expressed in action*, as in other cases saving faith is expressed in words. So Paul states as the mean of salvation faith *expressed*. The “Scripture” would not be “fulfilled,” as James says it was, but contradicted by any interpretation which makes man’s *works* justify him before God: for that Scripture makes no mention of works at all, but says that Abraham’s *belief* was counted to him for righteousness. God, in the first instance, “justifies the *ungodly*” through faith; subsequently the believer is justified *before the world* as righteous through faith manifested in words and works (compare ^{<1055>}Matthew 25:35-37, “the righteous,” ^{<1050>}Matthew 25:40). The best authorities read, “But Abraham believed,” etc.

and he was called the Friend of God — He was not so *called* in his lifetime, though he *was* so even then from the time of his justification; but he was *called* so, being recognized as such by all on the ground of his works of faith. “He was the *friend* (in an active sense), the *lover of God*, in reference to his works; and (in a passive sense) *loved by God* in reference to his justification by works. Both senses are united in ^{<814>}John 15:14,15” [BENGEL].

24. justified and, not by faith only — that is, by “faith without (*separated* from: *severed from*) works,” its proper fruits (see on ^{<812>}James 2:20). Faith to justify must, from the first, include obedience in germ (to be developed subsequently), though the former alone is the ground of justification. The scion must be grafted on the stock that it may live; it must bring forth fruit to prove that it does live.

25. It is clear from the nature of Rahab’s act, that it is not quoted to prove justification by works as such. She *believed* assuredly what her other countrymen disbelieved, and this in the face of every improbability that an unwarlike few would conquer well-armed numbers. In this belief she hid the spies at the risk of her life. Hence ^{<813>}Hebrews 11:31 names this as an example of *faith*, rather than of obedience. “By *faith* the *harlot* Rahab perished not with them that *believed* not.” If an instance of obedience were wanting. Paul and James would hardly have quoted a woman of previously bad character, rather than the many moral and pious patriarchs. But as an example of free grace justifying men through an *operative*, as opposed to a mere verbal *faith*, none could be more suitable than a saved “harlot.” As Abraham was an instance of an illustrious man and the father of the Jews, so Rahab is quoted as a woman, and one of abandoned character, and a Gentile, showing that justifying faith has been manifested in those of every class. The nature of the works alleged is such as to prove that James uses them only as *evidences of faith*, as contrasted with a mere verbal profession: not works of charity and piety, but works the value of which consisted solely in their being proofs of faith: they were faith expressed in act, synonymous with *faith* itself.

messengers — spies.

had received ... had sent — rather, “received ... thrust them forth” (in haste and fear) [ALFORD].

another way — from that whereby they entered her house, namely, through the window of her house on the wall, and thence to the mountain.

26. Faith is a spiritual thing: works are material. Hence we might expect *faith* to answer to the *spirit*, *works to the body*. But James reverses this. He therefore does not mean that faith in all cases answers to the body; but the FORM of *faith* without *the working reality* answers to the *body* without the *animating spirit*. It does not follow that *living faith* derives its life from works, as the body derives its life from the animating spirit.

CHAPTER 3

~~SURE~~ JAMES 3:1-18.

DANGER OF EAGERNESS TO TEACH, AND OF AN UNBRIDLED TONGUE: TRUE WISDOM SHOWN BY UNCONTENTIOUS MEEKNESS.

1. be not — literally, “become not”: taking the office too hastily, and of your own accord.

many — The office is a noble one; but few are fit for it. Few govern the tongue well (~~SURE~~ James 3:2), and only such as can govern it are fit for the office; therefore, “teachers” ought not to be many.

masters — rather, “teachers.” The Jews were especially prone to this presumption. The idea that faith (so called) without works (~~SURE~~ James 2:14-26) was all that is required, prompted “many” to set up as “teachers,” as has been the case in all ages of the Church. At first all were allowed to teach in turns. Even their inspired gifts did not prevent liability to abuse, as James here implies: much more is this so when self-constituted teachers have no such miraculous gifts.

knowing — as all might know.

we ... greater condemnation — James in a humble, conciliatory spirit, includes himself: if *we* teachers abuse the office, we shall receive greater condemnation than those who are mere hearers (compare ~~TRUE~~ Luke 12:42-46). CALVIN, like *English Version*, translates, “masters” that is, self-constituted *censors* and reprovers of others ~~SURE~~ James 4:12 accords with this view.

2. all — The *Greek* implies “all without exception”: even the apostles.

offend not — literally “stumbleth not”: is void of offense or “slip” in word: in which respect one is especially tried who sets up to be a “teacher.”

3. Behold — The best authorities read, “but if,” that is, *Now whensoever* (in the case) of horses (such is the emphatic position of “horses” in the *Greek*) we put *the* bits (so literally, “the customary bits”) into their mouths that they may obey us, we turn about *also* their whole body. This is to illustrate how *man* turns about his whole body with the little tongue. “The same applies to the pen, which is the substitute for the tongue among the absent” [BENGEL].

4. Not only animals, but *even ships*.

the governor listeth — literally, “the impulse of the steersman pleaseth.” The feeling which moves the tongue corresponds with this.

5. boasteth great things — There is *great* moment in what the careless think “little” things [BENGEL]. Compare “a world,” “the course of nature,” “hell,” ^{sure} James 3:6, which illustrate how the little tongue’s great words produce great mischief.

how great a matter a little fire kindleth — The best manuscripts read, “*how little* a fire kindleth how great a,” etc. ALFORD, for “matter,” translates, “forest.” But GROTIUS translates as *English Version*, “material for burning”: a pile of fuel.

6. Translate, “The tongue, that world of iniquity, is a fire.” As man’s little world is an image of the greater world, the universe, so the tongue is an image of the former [BENGEL].

so — omitted in the oldest authorities.

is — literally, “is constituted.” “The tongue is (constituted), among the members, the one which defileth,” etc. (namely, as fire defiles with its smoke).

course of nature — “the orb (cycle) of creation.”

setteth on fire ... is set on fire — habitually and continually. While a man inflames others, he passes out of his own power, being consumed in the flame himself.

of hell — that is, of the devil. *Greek*, “Gehenna”; found here only and in ^{<4152>}Matthew 5:22. James has much in common with the Sermon on the Mount (^{<3162>}Proverbs 16:27).

7. every kind — rather, “every nature” (that is, natural disposition and characteristic power).

of beasts — that is, quadrupeds of every disposition; as distinguished from the three other classes of creation, “birds, creeping things (the *Greek* includes not merely ‘serpents,’ as *English Version*), and things in the sea.”

is tamed, and hath been — is continually being tamed, and hath been so long ago.

of mankind — rather, “by the nature of man”: man’s characteristic power taming that of the inferior animals. The dative in the *Greek* may imply, “Hath suffered itself to be brought into tame subjection TO the nature of men.” So it shall be in the millennial world; even now man, by gentle firmness, may tame the inferior animal, and even elevate its nature.

8. no man — literally, “no one of men”: neither can a man control his neighbor’s, nor even his own tongue. Hence the truth of ^{<3182>}James 3:2 appears.

unruly evil — The *Greek*, implies that it is at once *restless* and *incapable of restraint*. Nay, though nature has hedged it in with a double barrier of the lips and teeth, it bursts from its barriers to assail and ruin men [ESTIUS].

deadly — literally, “death-bearing.”

9. God — The oldest authorities read, “Lord.” “Him who is Lord and Father.” The uncommonness of the application of “Lord” to the Father, doubtless caused the change in modern texts to “God” (^{<3127>}James 1:27). But as Messiah is called “Father,” ^{<2301>}Isaiah 9:6, so God the Father is called by the Son’s title, “Lord”: showing the unity of the Godhead. “Father” implies His *paternal* love; “Lord,” His dominion.

men, which — not “men *who*”; for what is meant is not particular men, but men *genetically* [ALFORD].

are made after ... similitude of God — Though in a great measure man has lost the *likeness* of God in which he was originally made, yet enough of it still remains to show what once it was, and what in regenerated and restored man it shall be. We ought to reverence this remnant and earnest of what man shall be in ourselves and in others. “Absalom has fallen from his father’s favor, but the people still recognize him to be the king’s son” [BENGEL]. Man resembles in humanity the Son of man, “the express image of His person” (^{<800B>}Hebrews 1:3), compare ^{<000B>}Genesis 1:26 ^{<000B>}1 John 4:20. In the passage, ^{<000B>}Genesis 1:26, “image” and “likeness” are distinct: “image,” according to the Alexandrians, was something *in* which men were created, being common to all, and continuing to man after the fall, while the “likeness” was something *toward* which man was created, to strive after and attain it: the former marks man’s physical and intellectual, the latter his moral pre-eminence.

10. The tongue, says AESOP, is at once the best and the worst of things. So in a fable, a man with the same breath blows hot and cold. “Life and death are in the power of the tongue” (compare ^{<600B>}Psalms 62:4).

brethren — an appeal to their consciences by their *brotherhood* in Christ.

ought not so to be — a mild appeal, leaving it to themselves to understand that such conduct deserves the most severe reprobation.

11. fountain — an image of the *heart*: as the *aperture* (so the *Greek* for “place” is literally) of the fountain is an image of man’s *mouth*. The image here is appropriate to the scene of the Epistle, Palestine, wherein salt and bitter springs are found. Though “sweet” springs are sometimes found near, yet “sweet and bitter” (water) do not flow “at the same place” (*aperture*). Grace can make the same mouth that “sent forth the bitter” once, send forth the sweet for the time to come: as the wood (typical of Christ’s cross) changed Marah’s bitter water into sweet.

12. Transition from the mouth to the heart.

Can the fig tree, etc. — implying that it is an *impossibility*: as before in ^{<800B>}James 3:10 he had said it “*ought not so to be*.” James does not, as Matthew (^{<000B>}Matthew 7:16,17), make the question, “Do men gather figs of *thistles*?” His argument is, No tree “can” bring forth *fruit inconsistent with*

its nature, as for example, the fig tree, olive berries: so if a man speaks bitterly, and afterwards speaks good words, the latter must be so only seemingly, and in hypocrisy, they *cannot* be real.

so can no fountain ... salt ... and fresh — The oldest authorities read, “Neither can a salt (water spring) yield fresh.” So the mouth that emits cursing, cannot really emit also blessing.

13. Who — (Compare ^{<BRD>}Psalm 34:12,13). All wish to appear “wise”: few are so.

show — “by works,” and not merely by profession, referring to <sup><SUB></sup>James 2:18.

out of a good conversation his works — by *general* “good conduct” manifested in *particular* “works.” “Wisdom” and “knowledge,” without these being “shown,” are as dead as faith would be without works [ALFORD].

with meekness of wisdom — with the meekness inseparable from true “wisdom.”

14. if ye have — *as is the case* (this is implied in the *Greek* indicative).

bitter — ^{<DO>}Ephesians 4:31, “bitterness.”

envying — rather, “emulation,” or literally, “zeal”: kindly, generous emulation, or zeal, is not condemned, but that which is “bitter” [BENGEL].

strife — rather, “rivalry.”

in your hearts — from which flow your words and deeds, as from a fountain.

glory not, and lie not against the truth — To *boast of your wisdom* is virtually a lying against the truth (the gospel), while your lives belie your glorying. <sup><SUB></sup>James 3:15 <sup><SUB></sup>James 1:18, “The word of truth.” ^{<BD>}Romans 2:17,23, speaks similarly of the same contentious Jewish Christians.

15. This wisdom — in which ye “glory,” as if ye were “wise” (<sup><SUB></sup>James 3:13,14).

descendeth not from above — literally, “is not one descending,” etc.: “from the Father of lights” (true illumination and wisdom), ^{<3017>}James 1:17; through “the Spirit of truth,” ^{<6136>}John 15:26.

earthly — opposed to *heavenly*. Distinct from “earthly,” ^{<4357>}1 Corinthians 15:47. *Earthly* is what is IN the earth; *earthly*, what is of the earth.

sensual — literally, “animal-like”: the wisdom of the “natural” (the same *Greek*) man, not born again of God; “not having the Spirit” (^{<6119>}Jude 1:19).

devilish — in its origin (from “hell,” ^{<3086>}James 3:6; not from God, the Giver of true wisdom, ^{<3085>}James 1:5), and also in its character, which accords with its origin. Earthly, sensual, and devilish, answer to the three spiritual foes of man, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

16. envying — So *English Version* translates the *Greek*, which usually means “zeal”; “*emulation*,” in ^{<6133>}Romans 13:13. “The envious man stands in his own light. He thinks his candle cannot shine in the presence of another’s sun. He aims directly at men, obliquely at God, who makes men to differ.”

strife — rivalry [ALFORD].

confusion — literally, “tumultuous anarchy”: both in society (translated “commotions,” ^{<4019>}Luke 21:9; “tumults,” ^{<4065>}2 Corinthians 6:5), and in the individual mind; in contrast to the “peaceable” composure of true “wisdom,” ^{<3087>}James 3:17. James does not honor such effects of this earthly wisdom with the name “fruit,” as he does in the case of the wisdom from above. ^{<3088>}James 3:18; compare ^{<4069>}Galatians 5:19-22, “*works* of the flesh ... *fruit* of the Spirit.”

17. first pure — literally, “chaste,” “sanctified”: pure from all that is “earthly, sensual (animal), devilish” (^{<3085>}James 3:15). This is put, “*first of all*,” before “peaceable” because there is an unholy peace with the world which makes no distinction between clean and unclean. Compare “undefiled” and “unspotted from the world,” ^{<3027>}James 1:27 4:4,8, “purify ... hearts”; ^{<4022>}1 Peter 1:22, “*purified* ... souls” (the same *Greek*). Ministers must not preach before a purifying change of heart, “Peace,” where there is no peace. Seven (the perfect number) characteristic peculiarities of true wisdom are enumerated. *Purity* or *sanctity* is put first because it has

respect both to God and to ourselves; the six that follow regard our fellow men. Our first concern is to have in ourselves sanctity; our second, to be at peace with men.

gentle — “forbearing”; making allowances for others; lenient towards neighbors, as to the DUTIES they owe us.

easy to be entreated — literally, “easily persuaded,” tractable; not harsh as to a neighbor’s FAULTS.

full of mercy — as to a neighbor’s MISERIES.

good fruits — contrasted with “every evil work,” ^{<5086>}James 3:16.

without partiality — recurring to the warning against partial “respect to persons,” ^{<5081>}James 2:1,4,9. ALFORD translates as the *Greek* is translated, ^{<5086>}James 1:6, “wavering,” “*without doubting*.” But thus there would be an epithet referring to *one’s self* inserted amidst those referring to one’s conduct towards others. *English Version* is therefore better.

without hypocrisy — Not as ALFORD explains from ^{<5082>}James 1:22,26, “Without deceiving yourselves” with the name without the reality of religion. For it must refer, like the rest of the six epithets, to our relations to others; our peaceableness and mercy towards others must be “without dissimulation.”

18. “The peaceable fruit of righteousness.” He says “righteousness”; because it is itself the true wisdom. As in the case of the earthly wisdom, after the characteristic description came its *results*; so in this verse, in the case of the heavenly wisdom. There the results were present; here, future.

fruit ... sown — Compare ^{<5071>}Psalm 97:11 ^{<5072>}Isaiah 61:3, “trees of righteousness.” Anticipatory, that is, the seed whose “fruit,” namely, “righteousness,” shall be ultimately reaped, is now “sown in peace.” “Righteousness,” now in germ, when fully developed as “fruit” shall be itself the everlasting *reward* of the righteous. As “sowing in peace” (compare “*sown in dishonor*,” ^{<4658>}1 Corinthians 15:43) produces the “fruit of righteousness,” so conversely “the work” and “effect of righteousness” is “peace.”

of them that make peace — “by (implying also that it is *for* them, and *to* their good) them that work peace.” They, and they alone, are “blessed.” “Peacemakers,” not merely they who reconcile others, but who *work peace*. “Cultivate peace” [ESTIUS]. Those truly wise towards God, while peaceable and tolerant towards their neighbors, yet make it their chief concern to sow righteousness, not cloaking men’s sins, but reproving them with such peaceable moderation as to be the physicians, rather than the executioners, of sinners [CALVIN].

CHAPTER 4

~~500~~JAMES 4:1-17.

AGAINST FIGHTINGS AND THEIR SOURCE; WORLDLY LUSTS; UNCHARITABLE JUDGMENTS, AND PRESUMPTUOUS RECKONING ON THE FUTURE.

1. whence — The cause of quarrels is often sought in external circumstances, whereas internal lusts are the true origin.

wars, etc. — contrasted with the “peace” of heavenly wisdom. “Fightings” are the active carrying on of “wars.” The best authorities have a second “whence” before “fightings.” Tumults marked the era before the destruction of Jerusalem when James wrote. He indirectly alludes to these. The members are the first seat of war; thence it passes to conflict between man and man, nation and nation.

come they not, etc. — an appeal to their consciences.

lusts — literally, “pleasures,” that is, the lusts which prompt you to “desire” (see on ~~500~~James 4:2) *pleasures*; whence you seek self at the cost of your neighbor, and hence flow “fightings.”

that war — “campaign, as an army of soldiers encamped within” [ALFORD] the soul; tumultuously war against the interests of your fellow men, while lusting to advance self. But while warring thus against others they (without his knowledge) war against the soul of the man himself, and against the Spirit; therefore they must be “mortified” by the Christian.

2. Ye lust — A different *Greek* word from that in ~~500~~James 4:1. “Ye desire”; literally, “ye set your *mind* (or heart) *on*” an object.

have not — The lust of desire does not ensure the actual possession. Hence “ye kill” (not as *Margin*, without any old authority, “envy”) to ensure possession. Not probably in the case of professing Christians of that day in a literal sense, but “kill and envy” (as the *Greek* for “desire to

have” should be translated), that is, harass and oppress through envy [DRUSIUS]. Compare ^{<810>}Zechariah 11:5, “slay”; *through envy, hate*, and desire to get out of your way, and so are “murderers” in God’s eyes [ESTIUS]. If literal murder [ALFORD] were meant, I do not think it would occur so early in the series; nor had Christians then as yet reached so open criminality. In the Spirit’s application of the passage to all ages, literal *killing* is included, flowing from the desire to possess so David and Ahab. There is a climax: “Ye desire,” the individual lust for an object; “ye kill and envy,” the feeling and action of individuals against individuals; “ye fight and war,” the action of many against many.

ye have not, because ye ask not — God promises to those who pray, not to those who fight. The petition of the lustful, murderous, and contentious is not recognized by God as *prayer*. If ye prayed, there would be no “wars and fightings.” Thus this last clause is an answer to the question, ^{<900>}James 4:1, “Whence come wars and fightings?”

3. Some of them are supposed to say in objection, But we do “ask” (pray); compare ^{<900>}James 4:2. James replies, It is not enough to ask for good things, but we must ask with a good spirit and intention. “Ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* (your object of prayer) upon (literally, ‘in’) your lusts (literally, ‘pleasures’)”; not that ye may have the things you need for the service of God. Contrast ^{<900>}James 1:5 with ^{<405>}Matthew 6:31,32. If ye prayed aright, all your pro. per wants would be supplied; the improper cravings which produce “wars and fightings” would then cease. Even believers’ prayers are often best answered when their desires are most opposed.

4. The oldest manuscripts omit “adulterers and,” and read simply, “Ye adulteresses.” God is the rightful husband; the men of the world are regarded collectively as one *adulteress*, and individually as *adulteresses*.

the world — in so far as the men of it and their motives and acts are aliens to God, for example, its selfish “lusts” (^{<900>}James 4:3), and covetous and ambitious “wars and fightings” (^{<900>}James 4:1).

enmity — not merely “inimical”; a state of enmity, and that enmity itself. Compare ^{<405>}1 John 2:15, “love ... the world ... the love of the Father.”

whosoever ... will be — The *Greek* is emphatic, “shall *be resolved* to be.” Whether he succeed or not, if his *wish* be to be the friend of the world, he *renders himself, becomes* (so the *Greek* for “is”) by the very fact, “the enemy of God.” Contrast “Abraham the friend of God.”

5. in vain — No word of Scripture can be so. The quotation here, as in ^{<H54}Ephesians 5:14, seems to be not so much from a particular passage as one gathered by James under inspiration from the general tenor of such passages in both the Old and New Testaments, as ^{<H49}Numbers 14:29 ^{<P17}Proverbs 21:20 ^{<R17}Galatians 5:17.

spirit that dwelleth in us — Other manuscripts read, “that God hath made to dwell in us” (namely, at Pentecost). If so translated, “Does the (Holy) Spirit that God hath placed in us lust to (towards) envy” (namely, as ye do in your worldly “wars and fightings”)? Certainly not; ye are therefore walking in the flesh, not in the Spirit, while ye thus *lust towards*, that is, *with envy* against one another. The friendship of the world tends to breed *envy*; the Spirit produces very different fruit. ALFORD attributes the epithet “with envy,” in the unwarrantable sense of *jealously*, to the Holy Spirit: “The Spirit *jealously desires* us for His own.” In *English Version* the sense is, “the (natural) spirit that hath its dwelling in us lusts with (literally, ‘to,’ or ‘towards’) envy.” Ye lust, and because ye have not what ye lust after (^{<S00}James 4:1,2), ye envy your neighbor who has, and so the *spirit of envy* leads you on to “fight.” James also here refers to ^{<S14}James 3:14,16.

6. But — “Nay, rather.”

he — God.

giveth more grace — ever increasing grace; the farther ye depart from “envy” [BENGEL].

he saith — The same God who causes His spirit to dwell in believers (^{<S05}James 4:5), by the Spirit also speaks in Scripture. The quotation here is probably from ^{<H34}Proverbs 3:34; as probably ^{<P10}Proverbs 21:10 was generally referred to in ^{<S05}James 4:5. In *Hebrew* it is “scorneth the scorners,” namely, those who think “Scripture speaketh in vain.”

resisteth — literally, “setteth Himself in array against”; even as they, like Pharaoh, set themselves against Him. God repays sinners in their own coin. “Pride” is the mother of “envy” (^{<3045>}James 4:5); it is peculiarly satanic, for by it Satan fell.

the proud — The *Greek* means in derivation one who *shows himself above* his fellows, and so lifts himself against God.

the humble — the unenvious, uncovetous, and unambitious as to the world. Contrast ^{<3046>}James 4:4.

7. Submit to ... God — so ye shall be among “the humble,” ^{<3046>}James 4:6; also ^{<3046>}James 4:10 ^{<3046>}1 Peter 5:6.

Resist ... devil — Under his banner *pride* and *envy* are enlisted in the world; resist his temptations to these. Faith, humble prayers, and heavenly wisdom, are the weapons of resistance. The language is taken from warfare. “Submit” as a good soldier puts himself in complete subjection to his captain. “Resist,” stand bravely against.

he will flee — Translate, “he *shall* flee.” For it is a promise of God, not a mere assurance from man to man [ALFORD]. He shall flee worsted as he did from Christ.

8. Draw nigh to God — So “cleave unto Him,” ^{<3047>}Deuteronomy 30:20, namely, by prayerfully (^{<3047>}James 4:2,3) “resisting Satan,” who would oppose our access to God.

he will draw nigh — propitious.

Cleanse ... hands — the outward instruments of action. None but the clean-handed can ascend into the hill of the Lord (justified through Christ, who alone was perfectly so, and as such “ascended” thither).

purify ... hearts — literally “make chaste” of your spiritual *adultery* (^{<3048>}James 4:4, that is, worldliness) “your hearts”: the inward source of all impurity.

double-minded — divided between God and the world. The “double-minded” is at fault in *heart*; the *sinner* in his *hands* likewise.

9. Be afflicted — literally, “Endure misery,” that is, mourn over your wretchedness through sin. *Repent with deep sorrow* instead of your present laughter. A blessed *mourning*. Contrast ^{<2>20}Isaiah 22:12,13 ^{<10>}Luke 6:25. James does not add here, as in ^{<500>}James 5:1, “howl,” where he foretells the *doom of the impenitent* at the coming destruction of Jerusalem.

heaviness — literally, “falling of the countenance,” casting down of the eyes.

10. in the sight of the Lord — as continually in the presence of Him who alone is worthy to be exalted: recognizing His presence in all your ways, the truest incentive to *humility*. The tree, to grow upwards, must strike its roots deep downwards; so man, to be exalted, must have his mind deep-rooted in humility. In ^{<1000>}1 Peter 5:6, it is, Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, namely, in His dealings of Providence: a distinct thought from that here.

lift you up — in part in this world, fully in the world to come.

11. Having mentioned sins of the tongue (^{<500>}James 3:5-12), he shows here that *evil-speaking* flows from the same spirit of exalting self at the expense of one’s neighbor as caused the “fightings” reprobated in this chapter (^{<500>}James 4:1).

Speak not evil — literally, “Speak not against” one another.

brethren — implying the inconsistency of such depreciatory speaking of one another in *brethren*.

speaketh evil of the law — for the law in commanding, “Love thy neighbor as thyself” (^{<500>}James 2:8), virtually condemns evil-speaking and judging [ESTIUS]. Those who superciliously condemn the acts and words of others which do not please themselves, thus aiming at the reputation of sanctity, put their own moroseness in the place of the law, and claim to themselves a power of censuring above the law of God, condemning what the law permits [CALVIN]. Such a one acts as though the law could not perform its own office of *judging*, but he must fly upon the office [BENGEL]. This is the last mention of the law in the New Testament. ALFORD rightly takes the “law” to be the old moral law applied in its comprehensive spiritual fullness by Christ: “the law of liberty.”

if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer ... but a judge — Setting aside the Christian *brotherhood* as all alike called to be *doers* of the law, in subjection to it, such a one arrogates the office of a *judge*.

12. There is one lawgiver — The best authorities read in addition, “and judge.” Translate, “There is One (alone) who is (at once) Lawgiver and Judge, (namely) He who is able to save and destroy.” Implying, God alone is Lawgiver and therefore Judge, since it is He alone who can execute His judgments; our inability in this respect shows our presumption in trying to act as judges, as though we were God.

who art thou, etc. — The order in the *Greek* is emphatic, “But (inserted in oldest manuscripts) thou, who art thou that judgest another?” How rashly arrogant in judging thy fellows, and wresting from God the office which belongs to Him over thee and THEM alike!

another — The oldest authorities read, “thy neighbor.”

13. Go to now — “Come now”; said to excite attention.

ye that say — *boasting* of the morrow.

To-day or to-morrow — as if ye had the free choice of either day as a certainty. Others read, “To-day *and* to-morrow.”

such a city — literally, “this the city” (namely, the one present to the mind of the speaker). *This city here*.

continue ... a year — rather, “spend one year.” Their language implies that when this one year is out, they purpose similarly settling plans for to come [BENGEL].

buy and sell — Their plans for the future are all worldly.

14. what — literally, “of what nature” is your life? that is, how evanescent it is.

It is even — Some oldest authorities read, “For ye are.” BENGEL, with other old authorities, reads, “For it shall be,” the future referring to the “morrow” (⁵⁰¹³James 4:13-15). The former expresses, “Ye yourselves are transitory”; so everything of yours, even your life, must partake of the same transitoriness. Received text has no old authority.

and then vanisheth away — “afterwards vanishing as it came”; literally, “afterwards (as it appeared), *so vanishing*” [ALFORD].

15. Literally, “instead of your saying,” etc. This refers to “ye that say” (~~SOLES~~ James 4:13).

we shall live — The best manuscripts read, “We shall *both live and do*,” etc. The boasters spoke as if *life, action*, and the particular kind of action were in their power, whereas all three depend entirely on the will of the Lord.

16. now — as it is.

rejoice in ... boastings — “ye boast in arrogant presumptions,” namely, vain confident fancies that the future is certain to you (~~SOLES~~ James 4:13).

rejoicing — boasting [BENGEL].

17. The general principle illustrated by the particular example just discussed is here stated: knowledge without practice is imputed to a man as great and presumptuous sin. James reverts to the principle with which he started. Nothing more injures the soul than wasted impressions. Feelings exhaust themselves and evaporate, if not embodied in practice. As we will not act except we feel, so if we will not act out our feelings, we shall soon cease to feel.

CHAPTER 5

~~SURE~~ JAMES 5:1-20.

WOES COMING ON THE WICKED RICH: BELIEVERS SHOULD BE PATIENT UNTO THE LORD'S COMING: VARIOUS EXHORTATIONS.

1. Go to now — Come now. A phrase to call solemn attention.

ye rich — who have neglected the true enjoyment of riches, which consists in doing good. James intends this address to rich Jewish unbelievers, not so much for themselves, as for the saints, that they may bear with patience the violence of the rich (~~SURE~~ James 5:7), knowing that God will speedily avenge them on their oppressors [BENGEL].

miseries that shall come — literally, “that are coming upon you” unexpectedly and swiftly, namely, at the coming of the Lord (~~SURE~~ James 5:7); primarily, at the destruction of Jerusalem; finally, at His visible coming to judge the world.

2. corrupted — *about to be destroyed* through God's curse on your oppression, whereby your riches are accumulated (~~SURE~~ James 5:4). CALVIN thinks the sense is, Your riches perish without being of any use either to others or even to yourselves, for instance, your garments which are moth-eaten in your chests.

garments ... moth-eaten — referring to ~~AND~~ Matthew 6:19,20.

3. is cankered — “rusted through” [ALFORD].

rust ... witness against you — in the day of judgment; namely, that your riches were of no profit to any, lying unemployed and so contracting rust.

shall eat your flesh — The rust which once ate your riches, shall then gnaw your conscience, accompanied with punishment which shall prey upon your bodies for ever.

as ... fire — not with the slow process of *rusting*, but with the swiftness of consuming *fire*.

for the last days — Ye have heaped together, not treasures as ye suppose (compare ^{<DIP>}Luke 12:19), but wrath against the last days, namely, the coming judgment of the Lord. ALFORD translates more literally, “*In these last days (before the coming judgment) ye laid up (worldly) treasure*” to no profit, instead of repenting and seeking salvation (see on ^{<SRB>}James 5:5).

4. Behold — calling attention to their coming doom as no vain threat.

laborers — literally “workmen.”

of you kept back — So *English Version* rightly. Not as ALFORD, “crieth out *from* you.” The “keeping back of the hire” was, *on the part OF* the rich, virtually an act of “*fraud*,” because the poor laborers were not immediately paid. The phrase is therefore not, “kept back *by* you,” but “*of* you”; the latter implying *virtual*, rather than overt, fraud. James refers to ^{<BIB>}Deuteronomy 24:14,15, “At this day ... give his *hire*, neither shall the sun go down upon it, lest he CRY against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.” Many sins “cry” to heaven for vengeance which men tacitly take no account of, as unchastity and injustice [BENGEL]. Sins peculiarly offensive to God are said to “cry” to Him. The rich ought to have given freely to the poor; their not doing so was sin. A still greater sin was their not paying their debts. Their greatest sin was not paying them to the poor, whose wages is their all.

cries of them — a double cry; both that of the hire abstractly, and that of the laborers hired.

the Lord of sabaoth — here only in the New Testament. In ^{<RUB>}Romans 9:29 it is a quotation. It is suited to the Jewish tone of the Epistle. It reminds the rich who think the poor have no protector, that the Lord of the whole hosts in heaven and earth is the guardian and avenger of the latter. He is identical with the “coming Lord” Jesus (^{<SRB>}James 5:7).

5. Translate, “Ye have luxuriated ... and wantoned.” The former expresses *luxurious effeminacy*; the latter, *wantonness* and *prodigality*. Their luxury was at the expense of the defrauded poor (^{<SRB>}James 5:4).

on the earth — The same earth which has been the scene of your wantonness, shall be the scene of the judgment coming on you: instead of earthly delights ye shall have punishments.

nourished ... hearts — that is glutted your bodies like beasts to the full extent of your hearts' desire; ye live to eat, not eat to live.

as in a day of slaughter — The oldest authorities omit "as." Ye are like beasts which eat to their hearts' content *on* the very day of their approaching slaughter, unconscious it is near. The phrase answers to "the last days," ^{<508>}James 5:3, which favors ALFORD'S translation there, "in," not "for."

6. Ye have condemned ... the just — The *Greek* aorist expresses, "Ye are *accustomed* to condemn ... the just." Their condemnation of Christ, "the Just," is foremost in James' mind. But all the innocent blood shed, and to be shed, is included, the Holy Spirit comprehending James himself, called "the Just," who was slain in a tumult. See my *Introduction*. This gives a peculiar appropriateness to the expression in this verse, the same "as the righteous (*just*) man" (^{<509>}James 5:16). The justice or righteousness of Jesus and His people is what peculiarly provoked the ungodly great men of the world.

he doth not resist you — The very patience of the Just one is abused by the wicked as an incentive to boldness in violent persecution, as if they may do as they please with impunity. God doth "resist the proud" (^{<508>}James 4:6); but Jesus as man, "as a sheep is dumb before the shearers, so He opened not His mouth": so His people are meek under persecution. The day will come when God will resist (literally, "set Himself in array against") His foes and theirs.

7. Be patient therefore — as judgment is so near (^{<508>}James 5:1,3), ye may well afford to be "patient" after the example of the *unresisting Just one* (^{<508>}James 5:6).

brethren — contrasted with the "rich" oppressors, ^{<508>}James 5:1-6.

unto the coming of the Lord — Christ, when the trial of your patience shall cease.

husbandman waiteth for — that is, patiently bears toils and delays through hope of the harvest at last. Its “preciousness” (compare ^{<BC0P>}Psalm 126:6, “precious seed”) will more than compensate for all the past. Compare the same image, ^{<R0P>}Galatians 6:3,9.

hath long patience for it — “over it,” *in respect to it*.

until he receive — “until *it* receive” [ALFORD]. Even if *English Version* be retained, the receiving of the early and latter rains is not to be understood as the object of his hope, but *the harvest* for which those rains are the necessary preliminary. The early rain fell at sowing time, about November or December; the latter rain, about March or April, to mature the grain for harvest. The latter rain that shall precede the coming spiritual harvest, will probably be another Pentecost-like effusion of the Holy Ghost.

8. coming ... draweth nigh — The *Greek* expresses present time and a settled state. ^{<D0P>}1 Peter 4:7, “is at hand.” We are to live in a continued state of expectancy of the Lord’s coming, as an event *always* nigh. Nothing can more “stablish the heart” amidst present troubles than the realized expectation of His speedy coming.

9. Grudge not — rather “Murmur not”; “grumble not.” The *Greek* is literally, “groan”: a half-suppressed murmur of impatience and harsh judgment, not uttered aloud or freely. Having exhorted them to patience in bearing wrongs from the wicked, he now exhorts them to a forbearing spirit as to the offenses given by brethren. Christians, who bear the former patiently, sometimes are impatient at the latter, though much less grievous.

lest ... condemned — The best manuscript authorities read, “judged.” James refers to ^{<D0P>}Matthew 7:1, “Judge not lest ye be *judged*.” To “murmur against one another” is virtually to *judge*, and so to become liable to be *judged*.

judge ... before the door — referring to ^{<D0P>}Matthew 24:33. The *Greek* is the same in both passages. and so ought to be translated here as there, “doors,” plural. The phrase means “near at hand” (^{<D0P>}Genesis 4:7), which in the oldest interpretations [Targums of *Jonathan* and *Jerusalem*] is explained, “thy sin is reserved *unto the judgment of the world to come*.”

Compare “the everlasting doors” (^{<1247}Psalm 24:7, whence He shall come forth). The Lord’s coming to destroy Jerusalem is primarily referred to; and ultimately, His coming again visibly to judgment.

10. the prophets — who were especially persecuted, and therefore were especially “blessed.”

example of suffering affliction — rather, simply, “of affliction,” literally, “evil treatment.”

11. count them happy — (^{<1150}Matthew 5:10).

which endure — The oldest authorities read, “which have endured,” which suits the sense better than *English Version*: “Those who in past days, like the prophets and Job, have endured trials.” Such, not those who “have lived in pleasure and been wanton on the earth” (^{<1155}James 5:5), are “happy.”

patience — rather, “endurance,” answering to “endure”: the *Greek* words similarly corresponding. Distinct from the *Greek* word for “patience”

^{<1150}James 5:10. The same word ought to be translated, “endurance,”

^{<1103}James 1:3. He here reverts to the subject which he began with.

Job — This passage shows the history of him is concerning a real, not an imaginary person; otherwise his case could not be quoted as an example at all. Though he showed much of impatience, yet he always returned to this, that he committed himself wholly to God, and at last showed a perfect spirit of enduring submission.

and have seen — (with the eyes of your mind). ALFORD translates from the old and genuine reading, “see also,” etc. The old reading is, however, capable of being translated as *English Version*.

the end of the Lord — the end which the Lord gave. If Job had much to “endure,” remember also Job’s happy “end.” Hence, learn, though much tried, to “endure to the end.”

that — ALFORD and others translate, “inasmuch as,” “for.”

pitiful ... of tender mercy — The former refers to the “feeling”; the latter, to the *act*. His *pity* is shown in not laying on the *patient endurer* more trials

than he is able to bear; His *mercy*, in His giving a happy “end” to the trials [BENGEL].

12. But above all — as swearing is utterly alien to the Christian meek “endurance” just recommended.

swear not — through impatience, to which trials may tempt you (^{<50B>}James 5:10,11). In contrast to this stands the proper use of the tongue, ^{<50B>}James 5:13. James here refers to ^{<05B>}Matthew 5:34, etc.

let your yea be yea — Do not use oaths in your everyday conversation, but let a simple affirmative or denial be deemed enough to establish your word.

condemnation — literally, “judgment,” namely, of “the Judge” who “standeth before the doors” (^{<50B>}James 5:9).

13. afflicted — referring to the “suffering affliction” (^{<50B>}James 5:10).

let him pray — not “swear” in rash impatience.

merry — joyous in mind.

sing psalms — of praise. Paul and Silas sang psalms even in affliction.

14. let him call for the elders — not some *one* of the elders, as Roman Catholics interpret it, to justify their usage in *extreme unction*. The prayers of the elders over the sick would be much the same as though the whole Church which they represent should pray [BENGEL].

anointing him with oil — The usage which Christ committed to His apostles was afterwards continued with laying on of hands, as a token of the highest faculty of medicine .in the Church. just as we find in ^{<01B>}1 Corinthians 6:2 the Church’s highest judicial function. Now that the miraculous gift of healing has been withdrawn for the most part. to use the sign where the reality is wanting would be unmeaning superstition. Compare other apostolic usages now discontinued rightly, ^{<01B>}1 Corinthians 11:4-15 16:20. “Let them use oil who can by their prayers obtain recovery for the sick: let those who cannot do this, abstain from using the empty sign” [WHITAKER]. Romish extreme unction is administered to those *whose life is despaired of*, to heal the *soul*, whereas James’ unction was to heal

the body. CARDINAL CAJETAN [*Commentary*] admits that James cannot refer to extreme unction. Oil in the East, and especially among the Jews (see the Talmud, *Jerusalem* and *Babylon*), was much used as a curative agent. It was also a sign of the divine grace. Hence it was an appropriate sign in performing miraculous cures.

in the name of the Lord — by whom alone the miracle was performed: men were but the instruments.

15. prayer — He does not say *the oil* shall save: it is but the symbol.

save — plainly not as Rome says, “save” *the soul*. but *heal* “the sick”: as the words, “the Lord shall raise him up,” prove. So the same *Greek* is translated, “made (thee) whole,” ^{<100>}Matthew 9:21,22.

and if ... sins — for not all who are sick are so because of some special sins. Here a case is supposed of one visited with sickness for special sins.

have committed — literally, “be in a state of *having committed* sins,” that is, be under the consequences of sins committed.

they — rather, “it”: *his having committed sins* shall be forgiven him. The connection of sin and sickness is implied in ^{<33>}Isaiah 33:24 ^{<100>}Matthew 9:2-5 ^{<100>}John 5:14. The absolution of the sick, retained in the Church of England, refers to the sins which the sick man confesses (^{<100>}James 5:16) and repents of, whereby outward scandal has been given to the Church and the cause of religion; not to sins in their relation to God, the only Judge.

16. The oldest authorities read, “Confess, THEREFORE,” etc. Not only in the particular case of sickness, but universally confess.

faults — your *falls* and *offenses*, in relation to one another. The word is not the same as *sins*. ^{<100>}Matthew 5:23,24 ^{<100>}Luke 17:4, illustrate the precept here.

one to another — not to the priest, as Rome insists. The Church of England *recommends* in certain cases. Rome *compels* confession in all cases. Confession is desirable in the case of

(1) *wrong* done to a neighbor;

(2) when under a troubled conscience we ask *counsel* of a godly minister or friend as to how we may obtain God's forgiveness and strength to sin no more, or when we desire their intercessory prayers for us ("Pray for one another"): "Confession may be made to anyone who can pray" [BENGEL];

(3) *open* confession of sin before the Church and the world, in token of penitence. Not *auricular* confession.

that ye may be healed — of your bodily sicknesses. Also that, if your sickness be the punishment of sin, the latter being forgiven on intercessory prayer, "ye may be healed" of the former. Also, that ye may be healed spiritually.

effectual — intense and fervent, not "wavering" (^{<3006>}James 1:6), [BEZA]. "When *energized*" by the Spirit, as those were who performed miracles [HAMMOND]. This suits the collocation of the *Greek* words and the sense well. A righteous man's prayer is always heard generally, but his particular request for the *healing* of another was then likely to be granted when he was one *possessing a special charism of the Spirit*. ALFORD translates, "Availeth much *in its working*." The "righteous" is one himself careful to avoid "faults," and showing his faith by works (^{<3024>}James 2:24).

17. Elias ... like passions as we — therefore it cannot be said that he was so raised above us as to afford no example applicable to common mortals like ourselves.

prayed earnestly — literally, "prayed with prayer": Hebraism for *prayed intensely*. Compare ^{<0215>}Luke 22:15, "With desire I have desired," that is, earnestly desired. ALFORD is wrong in saying, Elias' prayer that it might not rain "is not even hinted at in the Old Testament history." In ^{<1100>}1 Kings 17:1 it is plainly implied, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, *before whom I stand*, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but *according to my word*." His prophecy of the fact was according to a divine intimation given to him in answer to prayer. In jealousy for God's honor (^{<1100>}1 Kings 19:10), and being of one mind with God in his abhorrence of apostasy, he prayed that the national idolatry should be punished with a national judgment, drought; and on Israel's profession of repentance he prayed for

the removal of the visitation, as is implied in ^{<1189>}1 Kings 18:39-42; compare ^{<1025>}Luke 4:25.

three years, etc. — Compare ^{<1180>}1 Kings 18:1, “The third year,” namely, from Elijah’s going to Zarephath; the prophecy (^{<5081>}James 5:1) was probably about five or six months previously.

18. prayed ... and — that is, “and so.” Mark the connection between the prayer and its accomplishment.

her fruit — her usual and due fruit, heretofore withheld on account of sin. Three and a half years is the time also that the two witnesses prophesy who “have power to shut and open heaven that it rain not.”

19. The blessing of reclaiming an erring sinner by the mutual consent and intercessory prayer just recommended.

do err — more literally, “be led astray.”

the truth — the Gospel doctrine and precepts.

one — literally, “any”; as “*any*” before. *Everyone* ought to seek the salvation of *everyone* [BENGEL].

20. Let him — the converted.

know — for his comfort, and the encouragement of others to do likewise.

shall save — future. The salvation of the one so converted shall be manifested hereafter.

shall hide a multitude of sins — not his own, but the sins of the converted. The *Greek* verb in the middle voice requires this. ^{<1002>}Proverbs 10:12 refers to charity “covering” the sins of others *before men*; James to one’s effecting by the conversion of another that that other’s sins be covered *before God*, namely, with Christ’s atonement. He effects this by making the convert partaker in the Christian covenant for the remission of all sins. Though this hiding of sins was included in the previous “shall save,” James expresses it to mark in detail the greatness of the blessing conferred on the penitent through the converter’s instrumentality, and to incite others to the same good deed.

THE FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF

PETER

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

ITS GENUINENESS is attested by ^{<0012>}2 Peter 3:1. On the authority of Second Peter, see the *Introduction*. Also by POLYCARP (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 4.14]), who, in writing to the Philippians, quotes many passages: in the second chapter he quotes ^{<0013>}1 Peter 1:13,21 3:9; in the fifth chapter, ^{<0011>}1 Peter 2:11. EUSEBIUS says of PAPIAS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39] that he, too, quotes Peter's First Epistle. IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 4.9.2] expressly mentions it; and in [4.16.5], ^{<0026>}1 Peter 2:16. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 1.3, p. 544], quotes ^{<0021>}1 Peter 2:11,12,15,16; and [p. 562], ^{<0021>}1 Peter 1:21,22; and [4, p. 584], ^{<0024>}1 Peter 3:14-17; and [p. 585], ^{<0042>}1 Peter 4:12-14. ORIGEN (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25]) mentions this Epistle; in [*Homily 7*, on Joshua, vol. 2, p. 63], he mentions *both* Epistles; and [*Commentary on Psalm 3 and on John*], he mentions ^{<0028>}1 Peter 3:18-21. TERTULLIAN [*Antidote to the Scorpion's Sting*, 12], quotes expressly ^{<0021>}1 Peter 2:20,21; and [*Antidote to the Scorpion's Sting*, 14], ^{<0023>}1 Peter 2:13,17. EUSEBIUS states it as the opinion of those before him that this was among *the universally acknowledged* Epistles. The *Peschito Syriac Version* contains it. The fragment of the canon called MURATORI'S omits it. Excepting this, and the Paulician heretics, who rejected it, all ancient testimony is on its side. The *internal evidence* is equally strong. The author calls himself the apostle Peter, ^{<0001>}1 Peter 1:1, and "a witness of Christ's sufferings," and an "elder," ^{<0021>}1 Peter 5:1. The energy of the style harmonizes with the warmth of Peter's character; and, as ERASMUS says, this Epistle is full of apostolic dignity and authority and is worthy of the leader among the apostles.

PETER'S PERSONAL HISTORY. — Simon, Or Simeon, was a native of Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee, son of Jonas or John. With his father and his brother Andrew he carried on trade as a fisherman at Capernaum, his subsequent place of abode. He was a married man, and tradition represents his wife's name as *Concordia* or *Perpetua*. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA says that she suffered martyrdom, her husband encouraging her to be faithful unto death, "Remember, dear, our Lord." His wife's mother was restored from a fever by Christ. He was brought to Jesus by his brother Andrew, who had been a disciple of John the Baptist, but was pointed to the Savior as "the Lamb of God" by his master (⁴⁰¹⁹John 1:29). Jesus, on first beholding him, gave him the name by which chiefly he is known, indicative of his subsequent character and work in the Church, "Peter" (*Greek*) or "Cephas" (*Aramaic*), *a stone* (⁴⁰⁴⁸Matthew 4:18). He did not join our Lord finally until a subsequent period. The leading incidents in his apostolic life are well known: his walking on the troubled waters to meet Jesus, but sinking through doubting (⁴¹⁴¹Matthew 14:30); his bold and clear acknowledgment of the divine person and office of Jesus (⁴¹³⁶Matthew 16:16 ⁴¹⁸¹Mark 8:29 ⁴¹¹⁷John 11:27), notwithstanding the difficulties in the way of such belief, whence he was then also designated as *the stone*, or *rock* (⁴¹⁶⁸Matthew 16:18); but his rebuke of his Lord when announcing what was so unpalatable to carnal prejudices, Christ's coming passion and death (⁴¹⁶²Matthew 16:22); his passing from one extreme to the opposite, in reference to Christ's offer to wash his feet (⁴¹¹⁸John 13:8,9); his self-confident assertion that *he* would never forsake his Lord, whatever others might do (⁴¹⁵³Matthew 26:33), followed by his base denial of Christ thrice with curses (⁴¹⁵⁵Matthew 26:75); his deep penitence; Christ's full forgiveness and prophecy of his faithfulness unto death, after he had received from him a profession of "love" as often repeated as his previous denial (⁴⁰¹⁵John 21:15-17). These incidents illustrate his character as zealous, pious, and ardently attached to the Lord, but at the same time impulsive in feeling, rather than calmly and continuously steadfast. Prompt in action and ready to avow his convictions boldly, he was hasty in judgment, precipitate, and too self-confident in the assertion of his own steadfastness; the result was that, though he abounded in animal courage, his moral courage was too easily overcome by fear of man's opinion. A wonderful change was wrought in him by his restoration after his fall, through the grace of his risen Lord. His zeal and ardor became sanctified,

being chastened by a spirit of unaffected humility. His love to the Lord was, if possible, increased, while his mode of manifesting it now was in doing and suffering for His name, rather than in loud protestations. Thus, when imprisoned and tried before the Sanhedrim for preaching Christ, he boldly avowed his determination to continue to do so. He is well called “the mouth of the apostles.” His faithfulness led to his apprehension by Herod Agrippa, with a view to his execution, from which, however, he was delivered by the angel of the Lord.

After the ascension he took the lead in the Church; and on the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, he exercised the designed power of “the keys” of Christ’s kingdom, by opening the door of the Church, in preaching, for the admission of thousands of Israelites; and still more so in opening (in obedience to a special revelation) an entrance to the “devout” (that is, Jewish proselyte from heathendom) *Gentile*, Cornelius: the forerunner of the harvest gathered in from *idolatrous* Gentiles at Antioch. This explains in what sense Christ used as to him the words, “Upon this rock I will build my Church” (⁴¹⁶⁸ Matthew 16:18), namely, on the preaching of Christ, the true “Rock,” by connection with whom only he was given the designation: a title shared in common on the same grounds by the rest of the apostles, as the first founders of the Church on Christ, “the chief corner-stone” (⁴¹²⁰ Ephesians 2:20). A name is often given in *Hebrew*, not that the person is actually the thing itself, but has some special relation to it; as Elijah means *Mighty Jehovah*, so Simon is called Peter “the rock,” not that he is so, save by connection with Jesus, the only true Rock (⁴³³⁶ Isaiah 28:16 ⁴¹⁸¹ 1 Corinthians 3:11). As subsequently he identified himself with “Satan,” and is therefore *called so* (⁴¹⁶² Matthew 16:23), in the same way, by his clear confession of Christ, the Rock, he became identified with Him, and is accordingly so called (⁴¹⁶⁸ Matthew 16:18). It is certain that there is no instance on record of Peter’s having ever claimed or exercised supremacy; on the contrary, he is represented as *sent* by the apostles at Jerusalem to confirm the Samaritans baptized by Philip the deacon; again at the council of Jerusalem, not he, but James the president, or leading bishop in the Church of that city, pronounced the authoritative decision: (⁴¹⁵⁹ Acts 15:19, “My *sentence* is,” etc. A kind of primacy, doubtless (though certainly not supremacy), was given him on the ground of his age, and prominent earnestness, and boldness in taking

the lead on many important occasions. Hence he is called “first” in enumerating the apostles. Hence, too, arise the phrases, “Peter and the Eleven,” “Peter and the rest of the apostles”; and Paul, in going up to Jerusalem after his conversion, went to see Peter in particular.

Once only he again betrayed the same spirit of vacillation through fear of man’s reproach which had caused his denial of his Lord. Though at the Jerusalem council he advocated the exemption of Gentile converts from the ceremonial observances of the law, yet he, after having associated in closest intercourse with the Gentiles at Antioch, withdrew from them, through dread of the prejudices of his Jewish brethren who came from James, and timidly dissembled his conviction of the religious equality of Jew and Gentile; for this Paul openly withstood and rebuked him: a plain refutation of his alleged *supremacy* and *infallibility* (except where specially inspired, as in writing his Epistles). In all other cases he showed himself to be, indeed, as Paul calls him, “a pillar” (◀ROM Galatians 2:9). Subsequently we find him in “Babylon,” whence he wrote this First Epistle to the Israelite believers of the dispersion, and the Gentile Christians united in Christ, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*, 1] states that “Peter, after having been bishop of Antioch, and after having preached to the believers of the circumcision in Pontus, etc. [plainly inferred from ◀COR 1 Peter 1:1], in the second year of Claudius went to Rome to refute Simon Magus, and for twenty-five years there held the episcopal chair, down to the last year of Nero, that is, the fourteenth, by whom he was crucified with his head downwards, declaring himself unworthy to be crucified as his Lord, and was buried in the Vatican, near the triumphal way.” EUSEBIUS [*Chronicles*, Anno 3], also asserts his episcopate at Antioch; his assertion that Peter founded that Church contradicts ◀HIB Acts 11:19-22. His journey to Rome to oppose Simon Magus arose from JUSTIN’s story of the statue found at Rome (really the statue of the Sabine god, *Semo Sanctus*, or Hercules, mistaken as if Simon Magus were worshipped by that name, “Simoni Deo Sancto”; found in the Tiber in 1574, or on an island in the Tiber in 1662), combined with the account in ◀HIB Acts 8:9-24. The twenty-five years’ bishopric is chronologically impossible, as it would make Peter, at the interview with Paul at Antioch, to have been then for some years bishop of Rome! His crucifixion is certain from Christ’s prophecy, ◀JOH John

21:18,19. DIONYSIUS OF CORINTH (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.25]) asserted in an epistle to the Romans, that Paul and Peter planted both the Roman and Corinthian churches, and endured martyrdom in Italy at the same time. So TERTULLIAN [*Against Marcion*, 4.5, and *The Prescription Against Heretics*, 36, 38]. Also Caius, the presbyter of Rome, in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.25] asserts that some memorials of their martyrdom were to be seen at Rome on the road to Ostia. So EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.25, and *Demonstration of the Gospel*, 3.116]. So LACTANTIUS [*Of the Manner in Which the Persecutors Died*, 2]. Many of the details are palpably false; whether the *whole* be so or not is dubious, considering the tendency to concentrate at Rome events of interest [ALFORD]. What is certain is, that Peter was not there before the writing of the Epistle to the Romans (A.D. 58), otherwise he would have been mentioned in it; nor during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, otherwise he would have been mentioned in some one of Paul's many other Epistles written from Rome; nor during Paul's second imprisonment, at least when he was writing the Second Epistle to Timothy, just before his martyrdom. He *may* have gone to Rome after Paul's death, and, as common tradition represents, been imprisoned in the Mamertine dungeon, and crucified on the Janiculum, on the eminence of St. Pietro in Montorio, and his remains deposited under the great altar in the center of the famous basilica of St. Peter. AMBROSE [*Epistles*, 33 (Edition Paris, 1586), p. 1022] relates that St. Peter, not long before his death, being overcome by the solicitations of his fellow Christians to save himself, was fleeing from Rome when he was met by our Lord, and on asking, "Lord, whither goest Thou?" received the answer, "I go to be crucified afresh." On this he returned and joyfully went to martyrdom. The church called "*Domine quo vadis*" on the Appian Way, commemorates the legend. It is not unlikely that the whole tradition is built on the connection which existed between Paul and Peter. As Paul, "the apostle of the uncircumcision," wrote Epistles to Galatia, Ephesus, and Colosse, and to Philemon at Colosse, making the Gentile Christians the persons prominently addressed, and the Jewish Christians subordinately so; so, vice versa, Peter, "the apostle of the circumcision," addressed the same churches, the Jewish Christians in them primarily, and the Gentile Christians also, secondarily.

TO WHOM HE ADDRESSES THIS EPISTLE. — The heading, ^{<001}1 Peter 1:1, “to the elect strangers (spiritually *pilgrims*) of the dispersion” (*Greek*), clearly marks the Christians of the *Jewish* dispersion as prominently addressed, but still including also *Gentile* Christians as grafted into the Christian Jewish stock by adoption and faith, and so being part of the true Israel. ^{<004}1 Peter 1:14 2:9,10 3:6 4:3 clearly prove this. Thus he, the apostle of the circumcision, sought to unite in one Christ Jew and Gentile, promoting thereby the same work and doctrine as Paul the apostle of the uncircumcision. The provinces are named by Peter in the heading in the order proceeding from northeast to south and west. Pontus was the country of the Christian Jew Aquila. To Galatia Paul paid two visits, founding and confirming churches. Crescens, his companion, went there about the time of Paul’s last imprisonment, just before his martyrdom. Ancyra was subsequently its ecclesiastical metropolis. Men of Cappadocia, as well as of “Pontus” and “Asia,” were among the hearers of Peter’s effective sermon on the Pentecost whereon the Spirit descended on the Church; these probably brought home to their native land the first tidings of the Gospel. Proconsular “Asia” included Mysia, Lydia, Caria, Phrygia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia. In Lycaonia were the churches of Iconium, founded by Paul and Barnabas; of Lystra, Timothy’s birthplace, where Paul was stoned at the instigation of the Jews; and of Derbe, the birthplace of Gaius, or Caius. In Pisidia was Antioch, where Paul was the instrument of converting many, but was driven out by the Jews. In Caria was Miletus, containing doubtless a Christian Church. In Phrygia, Paul preached both times when visiting Galatia in its neighborhood, and in it were the churches of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse, of which last Church Philemon and Onesimus were members, and Archippus and Epaphras leaders. In Lydia was the Philadelphian Church, favorably noticed in ^{<007}Revelation 3:7, etc.; that of Sardis, the capital, and of Thyatira, and of Ephesus, founded by Paul, and a scene of the labors of Aquila and Priscilla and Apollos, and subsequently of more than two whole years’ labor of Paul again, and subsequently censured for falling from its first love in ^{<008}Revelation 2:4. Smyrna of Ionia was in the same quarter, and as one of the seven churches receives unqualified praise. In Mysia was Pergamos. Troas, too, is known as the scene of Paul’s preaching and raising Eutychus to life (^{<005}Acts 20:6-10), and of his subsequently staying for a time with Carpus (^{<002}2 Timothy 4:13). Of “Bithynia,” no Church is expressly named in Scripture

elsewhere. When Paul at an earlier period “assayed to go into Bithynia” (~~A~~ Acts 16:7), the Spirit suffered him not. But afterwards, we infer from ~~1~~ Peter 1:1, the Spirit did impart the Gospel to that country, possibly by Peter’s ministry. In government, these several churches, it appears from this Epistle (~~1~~ Peter 5:1,2, “Feed,” etc.), were much in the same states as when Paul addressed the Ephesian “elders” at Miletus (~~A~~ Acts 20:17,28, “feed”) in very similar language; elders or presbyter-bishops ruled, while the apostles exercised the general superintendence. They were exposed to persecutions, though apparently not systematic, but rather annoyances and reproach arising from their not joining their heathen neighbors in riotous living, into which, however, some of them were in danger of falling. The evils which existed among themselves, and which are therefore reprov’d, were ambition and lucre-seeking on the part of the presbyters (~~1~~ Peter 5:2,3), evil thoughts and words among the members in general, and a want of sympathy and generosity towards one another.

HIS OBJECT seems to be, by the prospect of their heavenly portion and by Christ’s example, to afford consolation to the persecuted, and prepare them for a greater approaching ordeal, and to exhort all, husbands, wives, servants, presbyters, and people, to a due discharge of relative duties, so as to give no handle to the enemy to reproach Christianity, but rather to win them to it, and so to establish them in “the true grace of God wherein they stand” (~~1~~ Peter 5:12). However, see on ~~1~~ Peter 5:12, on the oldest reading. ALFORD rightly argues that “exhorting and testifying” there, refer to Peter’s *exhortations* throughout the Epistle grounded on *testimony* which he bears to the Gospel truth, already well known to his readers by the teaching of Paul in those churches. They were already introduced “into” (so the Greek, ~~1~~ Peter 5:12) this *grace of God* as their safe *standing-ground*. Compare ~~1~~ Corinthians 15:1, “I declare unto you the Gospel *wherein ye stand*.” Therefore he does not, in this Epistle, set forth a complete statement of this Gospel doctrine of grace, but falls back on it as already known. Compare ~~1~~ Peter 1:8,18, “ye know”; ~~1~~ Peter 3:15 ~~2~~ Peter 3:1. Not that Peter servilely copies the style and mode of teaching of Paul, but as an independent witness in his own style attests the same truths. We may divide the Epistle into: (I) The inscription (~~1~~ Peter 1:1,2). (II) The stirring-up of a pure feeling in believers as born again of God. By the motive of *hope* to which God has regenerated us (~~1~~ Peter

1:3-12); bringing forth the fruit of *faith*, considering the costly price paid for our redemption from sin (⁴⁰¹⁴1 Peter 1:14-21). Being purified by the Spirit unto *love* of the brethren as begotten of God's eternal word, as spiritual priest-kings, to whom alone Christ is precious (⁴⁰¹²1 Peter 1:22 2:10); after Christ's example in suffering, maintaining a good *conversation* in every relation (⁴⁰²⁰1 Peter 2:10 3:14), and a good *profession* of faith as having in view Christ's once-offered sacrifice, and His future coming to judgment (⁴⁰¹⁵1 Peter 3:15 4:11); and exhibiting *patience* in *adversity*, as looking for future glorification with Christ,

(1) in general as Christians, ⁴⁰⁴²1 Peter 4:12-19;

(2) each in his own sphere, ⁴⁰³¹1 Peter 5:1-11. "The title "Beloved" marks the separation of the second part from the first, ⁴⁰²¹1 Peter 2:11; and of the third part from the second, ⁴⁰⁴²1 Peter 4:12" [BENGEL]. (III). The conclusion.

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING. — It was plainly before the open and *systematic* persecution of the later years of Nero had begun. That this Epistle was written after Paul's Epistles, even those written during his imprisonment at Rome, ending in A.D. 63, appears from the acquaintance which Peter in this Epistle shows he has with them. Compare ⁴⁰¹³1 Peter 2:13 with ⁵⁰⁰²1 Timothy 2:2-4; ⁴⁰¹⁸1 Peter 2:18 with ⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 6:5; ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Peter 1:2 with ⁴⁰⁰⁰Ephesians 1:4-7; ⁴⁰⁰³1 Peter 1:3 with ⁴⁰⁰⁰Ephesians 1:3; ⁴⁰¹⁴1 Peter 1:14 with ⁵⁰⁰⁷Romans 12:2; ⁴⁰⁰⁶1 Peter 2:6-10 with ⁵⁰⁰³Romans 9:32,33; ⁴⁰¹³1 Peter 2:13 with ⁵⁰⁰³Romans 13:1-4; ⁴⁰⁰⁶1 Peter 2:16 with ⁴⁰⁰³Galatians 5:13; ⁴⁰¹⁸1 Peter 2:18 with ⁴⁰⁰⁵Ephesians 6:5; ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Peter 3:1 with ⁴⁰⁰²Ephesians 5:22; ⁴⁰⁰³1 Peter 3:9 with ⁵⁰²⁷Romans 12:17; ⁴⁰⁰⁰1 Peter 4:9 with ⁵⁰¹⁴Philippians 2:14 ⁵⁰²³Romans 12:13 ⁵⁰³²Hebrews 13:2; ⁴⁰⁰⁰1 Peter 4:10 with ⁵⁰⁰⁶Romans 12:6-8; ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Peter 5:1 with ⁵⁰⁰⁸Romans 8:18; ⁴⁰⁰⁵1 Peter 5:5 with ⁵⁰⁰²Ephesians 5:21 ⁵⁰⁰³Philippians 2:3,5-8; ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Peter 5:8 with ⁵⁰⁰⁶1 Thessalonians 5:6; ⁴⁰¹⁴1 Peter 5:14 with ⁴⁰⁰¹1 Corinthians 16:20. Moreover, in ⁴⁰¹³1 Peter 5:13, Mark is mentioned as with Peter in Babylon. This must have been after ⁵⁰⁰⁰Colossians 4:10 (A.D. 61-63), when Mark was with Paul at Rome, but intending to go to Asia Minor. Again, in ⁵⁰⁰²1 Timothy 4:11 (A.D. 67 or 68), Mark was in or near Ephesus, in Asia Minor, and Timothy is told to bring him to Rome. So that it is likely it was after this, namely, after Paul's martyrdom, that Mark joined Peter,

and consequently that this Epistle was written. It is not likely that Peter would have entrenched on Paul's field of labor, the churches of Asia Minor, *during Paul's lifetime*. The death of the apostle of the uncircumcision, and the consequent need of someone to follow up his teachings, probably gave occasion to the testimony given by Peter to the same churches, collectively addressed, in behalf of the same truth. The relation in which the Pauline Gentile churches stood towards the apostles at Jerusalem favors this view. Even the Gentile Christians would naturally look to the spiritual fathers of the Church at Jerusalem, the center whence the Gospel had emanated to them, for counsel wherewith to meet the pretensions of Judaizing Christians and heretics; and Peter, always prominent among the apostles in Jerusalem, would even when elsewhere feel a deep interest in them, especially when they were by death bereft of Paul's guidance. BIRKS [*Horae Evangelicae*] suggests that false teachers may have appealed from Paul's doctrine to that of James and Peter. Peter then would naturally write to confirm the doctrines of grace and tacitly show there was no difference between his teaching and Paul's. BIRKS prefers dating the Epistle A.D. 58, after Paul's second visit to Galatia, when Silvanus was with him, and so could not have been with Peter (A.D. 54), and before his imprisonment at Rome, when Mark was with him, and so could not have been with Peter (A.D. 62); perhaps when Paul was detained at Caesarea, and so debarred from personal intercourse with those churches. I prefer the view previously stated. This sets aside the tradition that Paul and Peter suffered martyrdom together at Rome. ORIGEN's and EUSEBIUS' statement that Peter visited the churches of Asia in person seems very probable.

The PLACE OF WRITING was doubtless Babylon on the Euphrates (^{REF1} Peter 5:13). It is most improbable that in the midst of writing matter-of-fact communications and salutations in a remarkably plain Epistle, the symbolical language of prophecy (namely, "Babylon" for *Rome*) should be used. JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 15.2.2; 3.1] states that there was a *great multitude of Jews* in the Chaldean Babylon; it is therefore likely that "the apostle of the circumcision" (^{REF1} Galatians 2:7,8) would at some time or other visit them. Some have maintained that the Babylon meant was in Egypt because Mark preached in and around Alexandria after Peter's death, and therefore it is likely he did so along with that apostle in the

same region previously. But no mention elsewhere in *Scripture* is made of this Egyptian Babylon, but only of the Chaldean one. And though towards the close of Caligula's reign a persecution drove the Jews thence to Seleucia, and a plague five years after still further thinned their numbers, yet this does not preclude their return and multiplication during the twenty years that elapsed between the plague and the writing of the Epistle. Moreover, the order in which the countries are enumerated, from northeast to south and west, is such as would be adopted by one writing from the Oriental Babylon on the Euphrates, not from Egypt or Rome. Indeed, COSMAS INDICOPLEUSTES, in the sixth century, understood the Babylon meant to be *outside* the Roman empire. Silvanus, Paul's companion, became subsequently Peter's, and was the carrier of this Epistle.

STYLE. — Fervor and practical truth, rather than logical reasoning, are the characteristics, of this Epistle, as they were of its energetic, warm-hearted writer. His familiarity with Paul's Epistles shown in the language accords with what we should expect from the fact of Paul's having "communicated the Gospel which he preached among the Gentiles" (as revealed specially to him) to Peter among others "of reputation" (~~ROM~~ Galatians 2:2). Individualities occur, such as baptism, "the answer of a good conscience toward God" (~~1PE~~ 1 Peter 3:21); "consciousness of God" (*Greek*), ~~1PE~~ 1 Peter 2:19, as a motive for enduring sufferings; "living hope" (~~1PE~~ 1 Peter 1:3); "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away" (~~1PE~~ 1 Peter 1:4); "kiss of charity" (~~1PE~~ 1 Peter 5:14). Christ is viewed less in relation to His past sufferings than as at present exalted and hereafter to be manifested in all His majesty. *Glory* and *hope* are prominent features in this Epistle (~~1PE~~ 1 Peter 1:8), so much so that WEISS entitles him "the apostle of hope." The realization of future bliss as near causes him to regard believers as but "strangers" and "sojourners" here. Chastened fervor, deep humility, and ardent love appear, just as we should expect from one who had been so graciously restored after his grievous fall. "Being converted," he truly does "strengthen his brethren." His fervor shows itself in often repeating the same thought in similar words.

In some passages he shows familiarity with the Epistle of James, the apostle of special weight with the Jewish legalizing party, whose inspiration he thus confirms (compare ~~1PE~~ 1 Peter 1:6,7 with ~~JAM~~ James 1:2,3;

^{<0024}1 Peter 1:24 with ^{<5010}James 1:10; ^{<0021}1 Peter 2:1 with ^{<5021}James 1:21; ^{<0028}1 Peter 4:8 with ^{<5050}James 5:20, both quoting ^{<2002}Proverbs 10:12 5:5 with ^{<5005}James 4:6, both quoting ^{<2033}Proverbs 3:34). In most of these cases Old Testament quotations are the common ground of both. “Strong susceptibility to outward impressions, liveliness of feeling, dexterity in handling subjects, dispose natures like that of Peter to repeat afresh the thoughts of others” [STEIGER].

The diction of this Epistle and of his speeches in Acts is very similar: an undesigned coincidence, and so a mark of genuineness (compare ^{<0021}1 Peter 2:7 with ^{<4041}Acts 4:11; ^{<0012}1 Peter 1:12 with ^{<4052}Acts 5:32; ^{<0021}1 Peter 2:24 with ^{<4053}Acts 5:30 10:39; ^{<0021}1 Peter 5:1 with ^{<4052}Acts 2:32 3:15; ^{<0010}1 Peter 1:10 with ^{<4053}Acts 3:18 10:43; ^{<0012}1 Peter 1:21 with ^{<4055}Acts 3:15 10:40; ^{<0015}1 Peter 4:5 with ^{<4002}Acts 10:42; ^{<0021}1 Peter 2:24 with ^{<4053}Acts 3:19,26).

There is, too, a recurrence to the language of the Lord at the last interview after His resurrection, recorded in ^{<2015}John 21:15-23. Compare “the Shepherd ... of ... souls,” ^{<0025}1 Peter 2:25; “Feed the flock of God,” “the chief Shepherd,” ^{<0012}1 Peter 5:2,4, with ^{<2015}John 21:15-17; “Feed My lambs ... sheep”; also “Whom ... ye love,” ^{<0008}1 Peter 1:8 2:7, with ^{<2015}John 21:15-17; “lovest thou Me?” and ^{<0014}2 Peter 1:14, with ^{<2018}John 21:18,19.

WIESINGER well says, “He who in loving impatience cast himself into the sea to meet the Lord, is also the man who most earnestly testifies to the hope of His return; he who dated his own faith from the sufferings of his Master, is never weary in holding up the suffering form of the Lord before his readers to comfort and stimulate them; he before whom the death of a martyr is in assured expectation, is the man who, in the greatest variety of aspects, sets forth the duty, as well as the consolation, of suffering for Christ; as a rock of the Church he grounds his readers against the storm of present tribulation on the true Rock of ages.”

CHAPTER 1

1 PETER 1:1-25.

**ADDRESS TO THE ELECTED OF THE GODHEAD:
THANKSGIVING FOR THE LIVING HOPE TO WHICH WE ARE
BEGOTTEN, PRODUCING JOY AMIDST SUFFERINGS: THIS
SALVATION AN OBJECT OF DEEPEST INTEREST TO
PROPHETS AND TO ANGELS: ITS COSTLY PRICE A MOTIVE
TO HOLINESS AND LOVE, AS WE ARE BORN AGAIN OF THE
EVER-ABIDING WORD OF GOD.**

1. Peter — *Greek form of Cephas, man of rock.*

an apostle of Jesus Christ — “He who preaches otherwise than as a messenger of Christ, is not to be heard; if he preach as such, then it is all one as if thou didst hear Christ speaking in thy presence” [LUTHER].

to the strangers scattered — literally, “sojourners of *the dispersion*”; only in ^{◀BIB}John 7:35 and ^{◀BIB}James 1:1, in New Testament, and the *Septuagint*, ^{◀BIB}Psalms 147:2, “the outcasts of Israel”; the designation peculiarly given to *the Jews* in their dispersed state throughout the world ever since the Babylonian captivity. These he, as the apostle of the circumcision, primarily addresses, but not in the limited temporal sense only; he regards their temporal condition as a shadow of their spiritual calling to be *strangers* and pilgrims on earth, looking for the heavenly Jerusalem as their home. So the *Gentile* Christians, as the spiritual Israel, are included secondarily, as having the same high calling. He (^{◀BIB}1 Peter 1:14 2:10 4:3) plainly refers to Christian *Gentiles* (compare ^{◀BIB}1 Peter 1:17 ^{◀BIB}1 Peter 2:11). Christians, if they rightly consider their calling, must never settle themselves here, but feel themselves *travelers*. As the Jews in their *dispersion* diffused through the nations the knowledge of the one God, preparatory to Christ’s first advent, so Christians, by their dispersion among the unconverted, diffuse the knowledge of Christ, preparatory to His second advent. “The children of God scattered abroad”

constitute one whole in Christ, who “gathers them together in one,” now partially and in Spirit, hereafter perfectly and visibly. “Elect,” in the *Greek* order, comes before “strangers”; *elect*, in relation to heaven, *strangers*, in relation to the earth. The *election* here is that of individuals to eternal life by the sovereign grace of God, as the sequel shows. “While each is certified of his own election by the Spirit, he receives no assurance concerning others, nor are we to be too inquisitive [^{<4021>}John 21:21,22]; Peter numbers them among the *elect*, as they carried the appearance of having been regenerated” [CALVIN]. He calls the whole Church by the designation strictly belonging only to the better portion of them [CALVIN]. The election to *hearing*, and that to *eternal life*, are distinct. Realization of our election is a strong motive to holiness. The minister invites all, yet he does not hide the truth that in none but the elect will the preaching effect eternal blessing. As the chief fruit of exhortations, and even of threatenings, redounds to “the elect”; therefore, at the outset, Peter addresses *them*. STEIGER translates, to “the elect pilgrims who form the dispersion in Pontus.”, etc. The *order* of the provinces is that in which they would be viewed by one writing from the east from *Babylon* (^{<4013>}1 Peter 5:13); from northeast southwards to Galatia, southeast to Cappadocia, then Asia, and back to Bithynia, west of Pontus. Contrast the order, ^{<4019>}Acts 2:9. He now was ministering to those same peoples as he preached to on Pentecost: “Parthians, Medes, Elamites, dwellers in Mesopotamia and Judea,” that is, the Jews now subject to the Parthians, whose capital was *Babylon*, where he labored in person; “dwellers in Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Bithynia,” the Asiatic dispersion derived from Babylon, whom he ministers to by letter.

2. foreknowledge — *foreordaining* love (^{<4021>}1 Peter 1:20), inseparable from God’s *foreknowledge*, the origin *from* which, and pattern *according to* which, election takes place. ^{<4023>}Acts 2:23, and ^{<4011>}Romans 11:2, prove “foreknowledge” to be *foreordination*. God’s *foreknowledge* is not the perception of any ground of action out of Himself; still in it liberty is comprehended, and all absolute constraint debarred [ANSELM in STEIGER]. For so the Son of God was “foreknown” (so the *Greek* for “foreordained,” ^{<4021>}1 Peter 1:20) to be the sacrificial Lamb, not against, or without His will, but His will rested in the will of the Father; this includes self-conscious action; nay, even cheerful acquiescence. The *Hebrew* and *Greek* “know”

include *approval* and *acknowledging* as one's own. The *Hebrew* marks the oneness of *loving* and *choosing*, by having one word for both, *bachar* (Greek, "*hairetizo*," *Septuagint*). Peter descends from the eternal "election" of God through the *new birth*, to the believer's "sanctification," that from this he might again raise them through the consideration of their *new birth* to a "living hope" of the heavenly "inheritance" [HEIDEGGER]. The divine three are introduced in their respective functions in redemption.

through — Greek, "in"; the element in which we are elected. The "election" of God realized and manifested itself "IN" their sanctification. Believers are "sanctified through the offering of Christ once for all" (^{<8000}Hebrews 10:10). "Thou must believe and know that thou art holy; not, however, through thine own piety, but through the blood of Christ" [LUTHER]. This is the true sanctification of the Spirit, to obey the Gospel, to trust in Christ [BULLINGER].

sanctification — the Spirit's setting apart of the saint as consecrated to God. The execution of God's *choice* (^{<8000}Galatians 1:4). God the Father gives us salvation by gratuitous election; the Son earns it by His blood-shedding; the Holy Spirit applies the merit of the Son to the soul by the Gospel word [CALVIN]. Compare ^{<0020}Numbers 6:24-26, the Old Testament triple blessing.

unto obedience — the result or *end aimed at* by God as respects us, the *obedience* which consists in faith, and that which flows from faith; "obeying the truth through the Spirit" (^{<0020}1 Peter 1:22). ^{<8000}Romans 1:5, "obedience to the faith," and obedience the fruit of faith.

sprinkling, etc. — not in justification through the atonement once for all, which is expressed in the previous clauses, but (as the order proves) *the daily being sprinkled by Christ's blood, and so cleansed from all sin*, which is the privilege of one already justified and "walking in the light."

Grace — the source of "peace."

be multiplied — still further than already. ^{<0020}Daniel 4:1, "Ye have now peace and grace, but still not in perfection; therefore, ye must go on increasing until the old Adam be dead" [LUTHER].

3. He begins, like Paul, in opening his Epistles with giving thanks to God for the greatness of the salvation; herein he looks forward

(1) into the future (¹1 Peter 1:3-9);

(2) backward into the past (¹1 Peter 1:10-12) [ALFORD].

Blessed — A distinct *Greek* word (*eulogetos*, “Blessed BE”) is used of God, from that used of man (*eulogemenos*, “Blessed IS”).

Father — This whole Epistle accords with the Lord’s prayer; “Father,” ¹1 Peter 1:3,14,17,23 2:2; “Our,” ¹1 Peter 1:4, end; “In heaven,” ¹1 Peter 1:4; “Hallowed be Thy name,” ¹1 Peter 1:15,16 3:15; “Thy kingdom come,” ¹1 Peter 2:9; “Thy will be done,” ¹1 Peter 2:15 3:17 4:2,19; “daily bread,” ¹1 Peter 5:7; “forgiveness of sins,” ¹1 Peter 4:8,1; “temptation,” ¹1 Peter 4:12; “deliverance,” ¹1 Peter 4:18 [BENGEL]; Compare ¹1 Peter 3:7 4:7, for allusions to *prayer*. “*Barak*,” *Hebrew* “bless,” is literally “kneel.” God, as the original source of blessing, must be blessed through all His works.

abundant — *Greek*, “much,” “full.” That God’s “mercy” should reach *us*, guilty and enemies, proves its fullness. “Mercy” met our *misery*; “grace,” our *guilt*.

begotten us again — of the *Spirit* by the *word* (¹1 Peter 1:23); whereas we were children of wrath naturally, and *dead* in sins.

unto — so that we have.

lively — *Greek*, “living.” It has life in itself, gives life, and looks for life as its object [DE WETTE]. *Living* is a favorite expression of Peter (¹1 Peter 1:23 ¹1 Peter 2:4,5). He delights in contemplating *life* overcoming death in the believer. *Faith* and *love* follow *hope* (¹1 Peter 1:8,21,22). “(Unto) a lively hope” is further explained by “(To) an inheritance incorruptible ... fadeth not away,” and “(unto) salvation ... ready to be revealed in the last time.” I prefer with BENGEL and STEIGER to join as in *Greek*, “Unto a hope *living* (possessing life and vitality) *through* the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Faith, the subjective means of the spiritual resurrection of the soul, is wrought by the same power whereby Christ was raised from the dead. Baptism is an objective means (¹1 Peter 3:21). Its moral fruit is a

new life. The connection of our sonship with the resurrection appears also in ~~☩~~Luke 20:36 ~~☩~~Acts 13:33. Christ's resurrection is the cause of ours,

(1) as an efficient cause (~~☩~~1 Corinthians 15:22);

(2) as an exemplary cause, all the saints being about to rise after the similitude of His resurrection. Our "hope" is, Christ rising from the dead hath ordained the power, and is become the pattern of the believer's resurrection. The soul, born again from its natural state into the life of grace, is after that born again unto the life of glory.

~~☩~~Matthew 19:28, "regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory"; the resurrection of our bodies is a kind of coming out of the womb of the earth and entering upon immortality, a nativity into another life [BISHOP PEARSON]. The four causes of our salvation are;

(1) the primary cause, God's mercy;

(2) the proximate cause, Christ's death and resurrection;

(3) the formal cause, our regeneration;

(4) the final cause, our eternal bliss. As John is the disciple of *love*, so Paul of *faith*, and Peter of *hope*. Hence, Peter, most of all the apostles, urges the resurrection of Christ; an undesigned coincidence between the history and the Epistle, and so a proof of genuineness. Christ's resurrection was the occasion of his own restoration by Christ after his fall.

4. To an inheritance — the object of our "hope" (~~☩~~1 Peter 1:3), which is therefore not a *dead*, but a "*living*" hope. The inheritance is the believer's already by title, being actually assigned to him; the entrance on its possession is future, and hoped for as a certainty. Being "begotten again" as a "son," he is an "heir," as earthly fathers *beget* children who shall *inherit* their goods. The *inheritance* is "salvation" (~~☩~~1 Peter 1:5,9); "the grace to be brought at the revelation of Christ" (~~☩~~1 Peter 1:13); "a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

incorruptible — not having within the germs of death. Negations of the imperfections which meet us on every side here are the chief means of

conveying to our minds a conception of the heavenly things which “have not entered into the heart of man,” and which we have not faculties now capable of fully knowing. Peter, sanguine, impulsive, and highly susceptible of outward impressions, was the more likely to feel painfully the deep-seated *corruption* which, lurking under the outward splendor of the loveliest of earthly things, dooms them soon to rottenness and decay.

undefiled — not stained as earthly goods by sin, either in the acquiring, or in the using of them; unsusceptible of any stain. “The rich man is either a dishonest man himself, or the heir of a dishonest man” [JEROME]. Even Israel’s inheritance was *defiled* by the people’s sins. Defilement intrudes even on our holy things now, whereas God’s service ought to be undefiled.

that fadeth not away — Contrast ^{<6024>}1 Peter 1:24. Even the most delicate part of the heavenly inheritance, its bloom, continues *unfading*. “In *substance* incorruptible; in *purity* undefiled; in *beauty* unfading” [ALFORD].

reserved — *kept up* (^{<5015>}Colossians 1:5, “*laid up* for you in heaven,” ^{<5048>}2 Timothy 4:8); *Greek* perfect, expressing a *fixed and abiding state*, “which has been and is reserved.” The inheritance is in security, beyond risk, out of the reach of Satan, though we for whom it is reserved are still in the midst of dangers. Still, if we be believers, we too, as well as the inheritance, are “kept” (the same *Greek*, ^{<6712>}John 17:12) by Jesus safely (^{<6005>}1 Peter 1:5).

in heaven — *Greek*, “in the heavens,” where it can neither be destroyed nor plundered. It does not follow that, because it is *now* laid up in *heaven*, it shall not *hereafter* be on *earth* also.

for you — It is secure not only in itself from all misfortune, but also from all alienation, so that no other can receive it in your stead. He had said us (^{<6008>}1 Peter 1:3); he now turns his address to the elect in order to encourage and exhort them.

5. kept — *Greek*, “who are being guarded.” He answers the objection, Of what use is it that salvation is “reserved” for us in heaven, as in a calm secure haven, when we are tossed in the world as on a troubled sea in the midst of a thousand wrecks? [CALVIN]. As the inheritance is “kept” (^{<6006>}1 Peter 1:4) safely for the far distant “heirs,” so must they be “guarded” in

their persons so as to be sure of reaching it. Neither shall it be wanting to them, nor they to it. “We are *guarded in the world* as our inheritance is *kept in heaven*.” This defines the “you” of ~~GOOD~~ 1 Peter 1:4. The inheritance, remember, belongs only to those who “endure unto the end,” being “guarded” by, or IN “the power of God, through *faith*.” Contrast ~~GOOD~~ Luke 8:13. God Himself is our sole *guarding power*. “It is His *power* which saves us from our enemies. It is His *long-suffering* which saves us from ourselves” [BENGEL]. ~~GOOD~~ Jude 1:1, “preserved in Christ Jesus”; ~~GOOD~~ Philippians 1:6 4:7, “keep”; *Greek*, “guard,” as here. This guarding is effected, on the part of God, by His “power,” the efficient cause; on the part of man, “through faith,” the effective means.

by — *Greek*, “in.” The believer lives spiritually *in* God, and in virtue of His power, and God lives in him. “In” marks that the cause is inherent in the means, working organically through them with living influence, so that the means, in so far as the cause works organically through them, exist also in the cause. The power of God which guards the believer is no external force working upon him from without with mechanical necessity, but the spiritual power of God in which he lives, and with whose Spirit he is clothed. It comes down on, and then dwells in him, even as he is in it [STEIGER]. Let none flatter himself he is being guarded by the power of God unto salvation, if he be not walking by *faith*. Neither speculative knowledge and reason, nor works of seeming charity, will avail, severed from faith. It is through faith that salvation is both received and kept.

unto salvation — the final end of the new birth. “Salvation,” not merely accomplished for us in title by Christ, and made over to us on our believing, but *actually manifested, and finally completed*.

ready to be revealed — When Christ shall be revealed, it shall be revealed. The preparations for it are being made now, and began when Christ came: “All things are now *ready*”; the salvation is already accomplished, and only waits the Lord’s time to be manifested: He “is ready to judge.”

last time — the last day, closing the day of grace; the day of judgment, of redemption, of the restitution of all things, and of perdition of the ungodly.

6. Wherein — in which prospect of final salvation.

greatly rejoice — “exult with joy”: “are exuberantly glad.” *Salvation* is realized by faith (⁴⁰⁰1 Peter 1:9) as a thing so actually present as to cause exulting joy in spite of existing afflictions.

for a season — *Greek*, “for a little time.”

if need be — “if it be God’s will that it should be so” [ALFORD], for not all believers are afflicted. One need not invite or lay a cross on himself, but only “take up” the cross which God imposes (“his cross”); ⁴⁰²2 Timothy 3:12 is not to be pressed too far. Not every believer, nor every sinner, is tried with afflictions [THEOPHYLACT]. Some falsely think that notwithstanding our forgiveness in Christ, a kind of atonement, or expiation by suffering, is needed.

ye are in heaviness — *Greek*, “ye were grieved.” The “grieved” is regarded as *past*, the “exulting joy” present. Because the realized joy of the coming salvation makes the *present grief* seem as a thing of the *past*. At the first shock of affliction *ye were grieved*, but now *by anticipation ye rejoice*, regarding the present grief as past.

through — *Greek*, “IN”: the element in which the grief has place.

manifold — many and of various kinds (⁴⁰⁴1 Peter 4:12,13).

temptations — “trials” testing your faith.

7. Aim of the “temptations.”

trial — testing, proving. That your *faith so proved* “may be found (aorist; *once for all*, as the result of its being proved on the judgment-day) unto (eventuating in) praise,” etc. namely, the praise to be bestowed by the Judge.

than that of gold — rather, “than gold.”

though — “which perisheth, YET is tried with fire.” If gold, though perishing (⁴⁰⁸1 Peter 1:18), is yet tried with fire in order to remove dross and test its genuineness, how much more does your faith, which shall never perish, need to pass through a fiery trial to remove whatever is defective, and to test its genuineness and full value?

glory — “Honor” is not so strong as “glory.” As “praise” is in *words*, so “honor” is in deeds: *honorary reward*.

appearing — Translate as in ⁴⁰¹³1 Peter 1:13, “revelation.” At Christ’s revelation shall take place also the revelation of the sons of God (⁴⁰⁰⁹Romans 8:19, “manifestation,” *Greek*, “revelation”; ⁴⁰¹⁵1 John 3:2, *Greek*, “manifested ... manifested,” for “appear ... appear”).

8. not having seen, ye love — though in other cases it is *knowledge* of the person that produces *love* to him. They are more “blessed that have not seen and yet have believed,” than they who believed because they have seen. On Peter’s own love to Jesus, compare ⁴⁰¹⁵John 21:15-17. Though the apostles had seen Him, they now ceased to know Him merely after the flesh.

in whom — connected with “believing”: the result of which is “ye rejoice” (*Greek*, “exult”).

now — *in the present state*, as contrasted with the *future* state when believers “shall see His face.”

unspeakable — (⁴⁰¹⁹1 Corinthians 2:9).

full of glory — *Greek*, “glorified.” A joy now already *encompassed with glory*. The “glory” is partly in present possession, through the presence of Christ, “the Lord of glory,” in the soul; partly in assured anticipation. “The Christian’s joy is bound up with *love* to Jesus: its ground is *faith*; it is not therefore either self-seeking or self-sufficient” [STEIGER].

9. Receiving — in sure anticipation; “the end of your faith,” that is, its crowning consummation, finally completed “salvation” (Peter here confirms Paul’s teaching as to *justification by faith*): also receiving *now* the title to it and the first-fruits of it. In ⁴⁰¹⁰1 Peter 1:10 the “salvation” is represented as *already present*, whereas “the prophets” had it not as yet present. It must, therefore, in this verse, refer to the present: *Deliverance now from a state of wrath*: believers even now “receive salvation,” though its full “revelation” is future.

of ... souls — The immortal *soul* was what was lost, so “salvation” primarily concerns the soul; the *body* shall share in redemption hereafter;

the *soul* of the believer is saved already: an additional proof that “receiving ... salvation” is here a thing present.

10. The magnitude of this “salvation” is proved by the earnestness with which “prophets” and even “angels” searched into it. Even from the beginning of the world this salvation has been testified to by the Holy Spirit.

prophets — Though there is no *Greek* article, yet *English Version* is right, “*the* prophets” generally (including all the Old Testament *inspired* authors), as “*the* angels” similarly refer to them in general.

inquired — perseveringly: so the *Greek*. Much more is manifested to us than by diligent inquiry and search the prophets attained. Still it is not said, they searched *after* it, but *concerning* (so the *Greek* for “of”) it. They were already certain of the redemption being about to come. They did not like us fully *see*, but they *desired* to see the one and the same Christ whom we fully see in spirit. “As Simeon was anxiously desiring previously, and tranquil in peace only when he had seen Christ, so all the Old Testament saints saw Christ only hidden, and as it were absent — absent not in power and grace, but inasmuch as He was not yet manifested in the flesh” [CALVIN]. The prophets, as *private individuals*, had to reflect on the hidden and far-reaching sense of their own prophecies; because their words, *as prophets, in their public function*, were not so much their own as the Spirit’s, speaking by and in them: thus Caiaphas. A striking testimony to verbal inspiration; the *words* which the inspired authors wrote are God’s words expressing the mind of the Spirit, which the writers themselves searched into, to fathom the deep and precious meaning, even as the believing readers did. “Searched” implies that they had determinate marks to go by in their search.

the grace that should come unto you — namely, the grace of the New Testament: an earnest of “the grace” of perfected “salvation ... to be brought at the (second) revelation of Christ.” Old Testament believers also possessed the grace of God; they were children of God, but it was as children in their nonage, so as to be like servants; whereas we enjoy the full privileges of adult sons.

11. what — *Greek*, “*In reference to what, or what manner of time.*” *What* expresses the *time* absolutely: what was to be the era of Messiah’s coming; *what manner of time*; what events and features should characterize the time of His coming. The “or” implies that some of the prophets, if they could not as individuals discover the exact *time*, searched into its characteristic features and events. The *Greek* for “time” is *the season*, the epoch, the fit time in God’s purposes.

Spirit of Christ ... in them — (⁴⁴¹⁶⁷Acts 16:7, in oldest manuscripts, “the Spirit of Jesus”; ⁶⁹⁰⁰Revelation 19:10). So JUSTIN MARTYR says, “Jesus was He who appeared and communed with Moses, Abraham, and the other patriarchs.” CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA calls Him “the Prophet of prophets, and Lord of all the prophetic spirit.”

did signify — “did give intimation.”

of — *Greek*, “the sufferers (appointed) *unto* Christ,” or *foretold in regard to Christ*. “Christ,” *the anointed* Mediator, whose *sufferings* are the price of our “salvation” (⁶¹⁰¹⁹1 Peter 1:9,10), and who is the channel of “the grace that should come unto you.”

the glory — *Greek*, “glories,” namely, of His resurrection, of His ascension, of His judgment and coming kingdom, the necessary consequence of the sufferings.

that should follow — *Greek*, “after these (sufferings),” ⁶¹⁰¹⁸1 Peter 3:18-22 5:1. Since “the Spirit of Christ” is the *Spirit* of God, Christ is God. It is only because the Son of God was to become our Christ that He manifested Himself and the Father through Him in the Old Testament, and by the Holy Spirit, eternally proceeding from the Father and Himself, spake in the prophets.

12. Not only was the future revealed to them, but this also, that these revelations of the future were given them not for themselves, but for our good in Gospel times. This, so far from disheartening, only quickened them in unselfishly testifying in the Spirit for the partial good of their own generation (only of believers), and for the full benefit of posterity. Contrast in Gospel times, ⁶⁵²⁰Revelation 22:10. Not that their prophecies were unattended with spiritual instruction as to the Redeemer to their own

generation, but the full light was not to be given till Messiah should come; it was well that they should have this “revealed” to them, lest they should be disheartened in not clearly discovering with all their *inquiry and search* the full particulars of the coming “salvation.” To Daniel (²⁰¹⁵ Daniel 9:25,26) the “time” was revealed. *Our* immense privileges are thus brought forth by contrast with theirs, notwithstanding that they had the great honor of Christ’s Spirit speaking in them; and this, as an incentive to still greater earnestness on our part than even they manifested (⁴⁰¹³ 1 Peter 1:13, etc.).

us — The oldest manuscripts read “you,” as in ⁴⁰¹¹ 1 Peter 1:10. This verse implies that *we*, Christians, may understand the prophecies by the Spirit’s aid in their most important part, namely, so far as they have been already fulfilled.

with the Holy Ghost sent down — on Pentecost. The oldest manuscripts omit *Greek* preposition *en*, that is, “in”; then translate, “by.” The Evangelists speaking by the Holy Spirit were infallible witnesses. “The Spirit of Christ” was in the prophets also (⁴⁰¹¹ 1 Peter 1:11), but not manifestly, as in the case of the Christian Church and its first preachers, “SENT down from heaven.” How favored are we in being ministered to, as to “salvation,” by prophets and apostles alike, the latter now announcing the same things as actually fulfilled which the former foretold.

which things — “the things now reported unto you” by the evangelistic preachers “Christ’s sufferings and the glory that should follow” (⁴⁰¹¹ 1 Peter 1:11,12).

angels — still higher than “the prophets” (⁴⁰¹¹ 1 Peter 1:10). Angels do not any more than ourselves possess an INTUITIVE knowledge of redemption. “To look into” in *Greek* is literally, “to bend over so as to look deeply into and see to the bottom of a thing.” See on ⁵⁰²⁵ James 1:25, on same word. As the cherubim stood bending over the mercy seat, the emblem of redemption, in the holiest place, so the angels intently gaze upon and desire to fathom the depths of “the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, *seen of angels*” (⁵⁴⁸¹⁶ 1 Timothy 3:16). Their “ministry to the heirs of salvation” naturally disposes them to wish to penetrate this mystery as reflecting such glory on the love, justice, wisdom, and power of their and our God and Lord. They can know it only through its manifestation in the Church, as they personally have not the

direct share in it that we have. “Angels have only the contrast between good and evil, without the power of conversion from sin to righteousness: witnessing such conversion in the Church, they long to penetrate the knowledge of the means whereby it is brought about” [HOFMAN in ALFORD].

13. Wherefore — Seeing that the prophets ministered unto you in these high Gospel privileges which they did not themselves fully share in, though “searching” into them, and seeing that even angels “desire to look into” them, how earnest you ought to be and watchful in respect to them!

gird up ... loins — referring to Christ’s own words, ^{<0135>}Luke 12:35; an image taken from the way in which the Israelites ate the passover with the loose outer robe girded up about the waist with a girdle, as ready for a journey. Workmen, pilgrims, runners, wrestlers, and warriors (all of whom are types of the Christians), so gird themselves up, both to shorten the garment so as not to impede motion, and to gird up the body itself so as to be braced for action. The believer is to have his mind (mental powers) collected and always ready for Christ’s coming. “Gather in the strength of your spirit” [HENSLER]. *Sobriety*, that is, spiritual *self-restraint*, lest one be overcome by the allurements of the world and of sense, and patient *hopeful* waiting for Christ’s revelation, are the true ways of “girding up the loins of the mind.”

to the end — rather, “perfectly,” so that there may be nothing deficient in your hope, no *casting away of your confidence*. Still, there may be an allusion to the “end” mentioned in ^{<009>}1 Peter 1:9. Hope so perfectly (*Greek*, “*teleios*”) as to reach unto *the end* (*telos*) of your faith and hope, namely, “the grace that is being brought unto you in (so the *Greek*) the revelation of Christ.” As *grace* shall then be *perfected*, so you ought to *hope perfectly*. “Hope” is repeated from ^{<003>}1 Peter 1:3. The two appearances are but different stages of the ONE great revelation of Christ, comprising the New Testament from the beginning to the end.

14. From *sobriety of spirit* and *endurance of hope* Peter passes to *obedience, holiness, and reverential fear*.

As — marking their present actual character as “born again” (^{<003>}1 Peter 1:3,22).

obedient children — *Greek*, “children of obedience”: children to whom *obedience* is their characteristic and ruling nature, as a child is of the same nature as the mother and father. Contrast ^{ⲁⲙⲉ}Ephesians 5:6, “the children of disobedience.” Compare ^{ⲁⲙⲓⲧ}1 Peter 1:17, “obeying the Father” whose “children” ye are. Having the obedience of *faith* (compare ^{ⲁⲙⲓⲧ}1 Peter 1:22) and so of *practice* (compare ^{ⲁⲙⲓⲧ}1 Peter 1:16,18). “Faith is the highest obedience, because discharged to the highest command” [LUTHER].

fashioning — The outward *fashion* (*Greek*, “*schema*”) is fleeting, and merely on the surface. The “form,” or *conformation* in the New Testament, is something deeper and more perfect and essential.

the former lusts in — which were characteristic of your state of ignorance of God: true of both Jews and Gentiles. The sanctification is first described negatively (^{ⲁⲙⲓⲧ}1 Peter 1:14, “not fashioning yourselves,” etc.; the putting off the old man, even in the outward *fashion*, as well as in the inward *conformation*), then positively (^{ⲁⲙⲓⲧ}1 Peter 1:15, putting on the new man, compare ^{ⲁⲙⲉ}Ephesians 4:22,24). “Lusts” flow from the original birth-sin (inherited from our first parents, who by self-willed desire brought sin into the world), the *lust* which, ever since man has been alienated from God, seeks to fill up with earthly things the emptiness of his being; the manifold forms which the mother-lust assumes are called in the plural *lusts*. In the regenerate, as far as the *new man* is concerned, which constitutes his truest self, “sin” no longer exists; but in the flesh or old man it does. Hence arises the conflict, uninterruptedly maintained through life, wherein the new man in the main prevails, and at last completely. But the natural man knows only the combat of his lusts with one another, or with the law, without power to conquer them.

15. Literally, “But (rather) after the pattern of Him who hath called you (whose characteristic is that He is) holy, be (*Greek*, ‘become’) ye yourselves also holy.” God is our grand model. God’s *calling* is a frequently urged motive in Peter’s Epistles. Every one that begets, begets an offspring resembling himself [EPIPHANIUS]. “Let the acts of the offspring indicate similarity to the Father” [AUGUSTINE].

conversation — deportment, course of life: one’s way of going about, as distinguished from one’s internal nature, to which it must outwardly correspond. Christians are already holy unto God by consecration; they

must be so also in their *outward walk and behavior in all respects*. The outward must correspond to the inward man.

16. *Scripture* is the true source of all authority in questions of doctrine and practice.

Be ye ... for I am — It is I with whom ye have to do. Ye are mine. Therefore abstain from Gentile pollutions. We are too prone to have respect unto men [CALVIN]. As I am the fountain of holiness, being holy in My *essence*, be ye therefore zealous to be *partakers* of holiness, that ye may be as I also am [DIDYMUS]. God is essentially holy: the creature is holy in so far as it is sanctified by God. God, in giving the command, is willing to give also the power to obey it, namely, through the sanctifying of the Spirit (^{<401>}1 Peter 1:2).

17. if ye call on — that is, “*seeing that ye call on*,” for all the regenerate pray as *children* of God, “Our *Father* who art in heaven” (^{<406>}Matthew 6:9 ^{<411>}Luke 11:2).

the Father — rather, “Call upon *as Father* Him who without acceptance of persons (^{<408>}Acts 10:34 ^{<421>}Romans 2:11 ^{<501>}James 2:1, not accepting the Jew above the Gentile, ^{<491>}2 Chronicles 19:7 ^{<421>}Luke 20:21; properly said of a judge not biassed in judgment by respect of persons) judgeth,” etc. The Father judgeth by His Son, His Representative, exercising His delegated authority (^{<452>}John 5:22). This marks the harmonious and complete unity of the Trinity.

work — Each man’s *work* is *one* complete whole, whether good or bad. The particular works of each are manifestations of the general character of his lifework, whether it was of faith and love whereby alone we can please God and escape condemnation.

pass — *Greek*, “conduct yourselves during.”

sojourning — The outward state of the Jews in their *dispersion* is an emblem of the *sojourner-like* state of all believers in this world, away from our true Fatherland.

fear — reverential, not slavish. He who is your Father, is also your Judge — a thought which may well inspire reverential fear. THEOPHYLACT observes, A double fear is mentioned in Scripture:

(1) *elementary*, causing one to become serious;

(2) *perfective*: the latter is here the motive by which Peter urges them as sons of God to be obedient. *Fear* is not here opposed to *assurance*, but to carnal *security*: fear producing vigilant caution lest we offend God and backslide. “*Fear* and *hope* flow from the same fountain: *fear* prevents us from falling away from *hope*” [BENGEL]. Though *love* has no *fear* IN it, yet in our present state of imperfect love, it needs to have fear going ALONG WITH It as a subordinate principle. This fear drowns all other fears. The believer fears God, and so has none else to fear. Not to fear God is the greatest baseness and folly. The martyrs’ more than mere human courage flowed from this.

18. Another motive to reverential, vigilant *fear* (^{<0017>}1 Peter 1:17) of displeasing God, the consideration of the costly price of our redemption from sin. Observe, it is *we* who are bought by the blood of Christ, not heaven. The blood of Christ is not in Scripture said to buy heaven for us: heaven is the “inheritance” (1 Peter 1: 4) given to us as sons, by the promise of God.

corruptible — Compare ^{<0017>}1 Peter 1:7, “gold that perisheth,” ^{<0023>}1 Peter 1:23.

silver and gold — *Greek*, “or.” Compare Peter’s own words, ^{<0016>}Acts 3:6: an undesigned coincidence.

redeemed — Gold and silver being liable to corruption themselves, can free no one from spiritual and bodily death; they are therefore of too little value. Contrast ^{<0019>}1 Peter 1:19, Christ’s “*precious* blood.” The Israelites were ransomed with half a shekel each, which went towards purchasing the *lamb* for the daily sacrifice (^{<0010>}Exodus 30:12-16; compare ^{<0018>}Numbers 3:44-51). But the Lamb who redeems the spiritual Israelites does so “without money or price.” Devoted by sin to the justice of God, the Church of the first-born is redeemed from sin and the curse with Christ’s precious blood (^{<0015>}Matthew 20:28 ^{<0016>}1 Timothy 2:6 ^{<0014>}Titus 2:14

^{<689>}Revelation 5:9). In all these passages there is the idea of *substitution*, the giving of one for another by way of a ransom or equivalent. Man is “sold under sin” as a slave; shut up under condemnation and the curse. The ransom was, therefore, paid to the righteously incensed Judge, and was accepted as a vicarious satisfaction for our sin by God, inasmuch as it was His own love as well as righteousness which appointed it. An Israelite sold as a bond-servant for debt might be redeemed by one of his brethren. As, therefore, we could not redeem ourselves, Christ assumed our nature in order to become our nearest of kin and brother, and so our God or Redeemer. Holiness is the natural fruit of redemption “from our vain conversation”; for He *by* whom we are redeemed is also He *for* whom we are redeemed. “Without the righteous abolition of the curse, either there could be found no deliverance, or, what is impossible, the grace and righteousness of God must have come in collision” [STEIGER]; but now, Christ having borne the curse of our sin, frees from it those who are made God’s children by His Spirit.

vain — self-deceiving, unreal, and unprofitable: promising good which it does not perform. Compare as to the Gentiles, ^{<4445>}Acts 14:15 ^{<812>}Romans 1:21 ^{<6017>}Ephesians 4:17; as to human philosophers, ^{<680>}1 Corinthians 3:20; as to the disobedient Jews, ^{<2044>}Jeremiah 4:14.

conversation — course of life. To know what our sin is we must know what it cost.

received by tradition from your fathers — The Jews’ traditions.

“Human piety is a vain blasphemy, and the greatest sin that a man can commit” [LUTHER]. There is only one Father to be imitated, ^{<6017>}1 Peter 1:17; compare ^{<689>}Matthew 23:9, the same antithesis [BENGEL].

19. precious — of inestimable value. The *Greek* order is, “With precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish (*in itself*) and without spot (*contracted by contact with others*), (even the blood) of Christ.” Though very man, He remained pure *in Himself* (“without blemish”), and uninfected by any impression of sin *from without* (“without spot”), which would have unfitted Him for being our atoning Redeemer: so the passover lamb, and every sacrificial victim; so too, the Church, the Bride, by her union with Him. As Israel’s redemption from Egypt required the blood of the paschal lamb, so our redemption from sin and the curse required the blood of

Christ; “foreordained” (⁴⁰⁰1 Peter 1:20) from eternity, as the passover lamb was taken up on the tenth day of the month.

20. God’s eternal foreordination of Christ’s redeeming sacrifice, and completion of it *in these last times for us*, are an additional obligation on us to our maintaining a holy walk, considering how great things have been thus done for us. Peter’s language in the history corresponds with this here: an undesigned coincidence and mark of genuineness. Redemption was no afterthought, or remedy of an unforeseen evil, devised at the time of its arising. God’s *foreordaining* of the Redeemer refutes the slander that, on the Christian theory, there is a period of four thousand years of nothing but an incensed God. God *chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world* (⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 1:4).

manifest — in His incarnation in the fullness of the time. He existed from eternity before He was *manifested*.

in these last times — ⁴⁰⁰1 Corinthians 10:11, “the ends of the world.” This last dispensation, made up of “times” marked by great changes, but still retaining a general unity, stretches from Christ’s ascension to His coming to judgment.

21. by him — Compare “the *faith* which is *by Him*,” ⁴⁰⁰Acts 3:16. *Through* Christ: His Spirit, obtained for us in His resurrection and ascension, enabling us to believe. This verse excludes all who do not “by Him believe in God,” and includes all of every age and clime that do. Literally, “*are believers* in God.” “*To believe IN (Greek, ‘eis’) God*” expresses an *internal* trust: “by believing to love God, going INTO Him, and cleaving to Him, incorporated into His members. By this faith the ungodly is justified, so that *thenceforth* faith itself begins to work by love” [P. LOMBARD]. *To believe ON (Greek, “epi,” or dative case) God* expresses the confidence, which grounds itself *on* God, reposing on Him. “Faith IN (Greek, ‘en’) His blood” (⁴⁰⁰Romans 3:25) implies that His blood is the element IN which faith has its proper and abiding place. Compare with this verse, ⁴⁰⁰Acts 20:21, “Repentance toward (Greek, ‘eis,’ ‘into,’ turning *towards* and *going into*) God and faith toward (Greek, ‘eis,’ ‘into’) Christ”: where, as there is but one article to both *repentance* and *faith*, the two are inseparably joined as together forming one truth; where “repentance” is, there “faith” is; when one knows God the Father

spiritually, then he must know the Son by whom alone we can come to the Father. In Christ we have life: if we have not the doctrine of Christ, we have not God. The only living way to God is through Christ and His sacrifice.

that raised him — The raising of Jesus by God is the special ground of our “believing”:

(1) because by it God declared openly His acceptance of Him as our righteous substitute;

(2) because by it and His glorification He received power, namely, the Holy Spirit, to impart to His elect “faith”: the same power enabling us to believe as raised Him from the dead. Our faith must not only be IN Christ, but BY and THROUGH Christ. “Since in Christ’s resurrection and consequent dominion our safety is grounded, *there* ‘faith’ and ‘hope’ find their stay” [CALVIN].

that your faith and hope might be in God — the object and effect of *God’s raising Christ*. He states what was the actual result and fact, not an exhortation, except *indirectly*. Your *faith* flows from His *resurrection*; your *hope* from God’s having “given Him glory” (compare ¹1 Peter 1:11, “glories”). Remember God’s having raised and glorified Jesus as the anchor of your faith and hope in God, and so keep alive these graces. Apart from Christ we could have only feared, not *believed* and *hoped* in God. Compare ¹1 Peter 1:3,7-9,13, on *hope* in connection with *faith*; *love* is introduced in ¹1 Peter 1:22.

22. purified ... in obeying the truth — *Greek*, “in your (or ‘the’) obedience of (that is, ‘to’) the truth (the Gospel way of salvation),” that is, in the fact of your *believing*. *Faith* purifies the heart as giving it the only pure motive, love to God (⁹Acts 15:9 ¹Romans 1:5, “*obedience to the faith*”).

through the Spirit — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. The Holy Spirit is the purifier by bestowing the obedience of faith (¹1 Peter 1:2 ¹1 Corinthians 12:3).

unto — with a view to: the proper result of the *purifying* of your hearts by faith. “For what end must we lead a chaste life? That we may thereby be saved? No: but for this, that we may serve our neighbor” [LUTHER].

unfeigned — ¹1 Peter 2:1,2, “laying aside ... *hypocrisies* ... sincere.”

love of the brethren — that is, of Christians. *Brotherly love* is distinct from common *love*. “The Christian loves primarily those in Christ; secondarily, all who might be in Christ, namely, all men, as Christ as man died for all, and as he hopes that they, too, may become his Christian brethren” [STEIGER]. BENDEL remarks that as here, so in ²2 Peter 1:5-7, “brotherly love” is preceded by the purifying graces, “*faith*, knowledge, and godliness,” etc. Love to the brethren is the evidence of our regeneration and justification by faith.

love one another — When the *purifying by faith into love of the brethren* has formed the *habit*, then the *act* follows, so that the “love” is at once *habit* and *act*.

with a pure heart — The oldest manuscripts read, “(love) from the heart.”

fervently — *Greek*, “intensely”: with all the powers *on the stretch* (¹1 Peter 4:8). “Instantly” (¹Acts 26:7).

23. Christian brotherhood flows from our new birth of an imperishable seed, the abiding word of God. This is the consideration urged here to lead us to exercise *brotherly love*. As natural relationship gives rise to natural affection, so spiritual relationship gives rise to spiritual, and therefore abiding love, even as the *seed* from which it springs is abiding, not transitory as earthly things.

of ... of ... by — “The word of God” is not the material of the spiritual new birth, but its mean or medium. By means of the *word* the man receives the incorruptible *seed of the Holy Spirit*, and so becomes one “born again”: ¹John 3:3-5, “born of *water and the Spirit*”: as there is but one *Greek* article to the two nouns, the close connection of the sign and the grace, or new birth signified is implied. The *word* is the remote and anterior instrument; *baptism*, the proximate and sacramental instrument. The word is the instrument in relation to the individual; baptism, in relation to the

Church as a society (<sup><SUB></sup>James 1:18). We are born again *of the Spirit*, yet not without the use of means, but by the word of God. The word is not the beggiting principle itself, but only that by which it works: the vehicle of the mysterious germinating power [ALFORD].

which liveth and abideth for ever — It is because the Spirit of God accompanies it that the word carries in it the germ of life. They who are so born again *live and abide for ever*, in contrast to those who sow to the flesh. “The Gospel bears incorruptible fruits, not dead works, because it is itself incorruptible” [BENGEL]. The word is an eternal divine power. For though the voice or speech vanishes, there still remains the kernel, the truth comprehended in the voice. This sinks into the heart and is living; yea, it is GOD Himself. So God to Moses, ^{<QMD>}Exodus 4:12, “I will be with thy mouth” [LUTHER]. The life is in *God*, yet it is communicated to us through the *word*. “The *Gospel* shall never cease, though its ministry shall” [CALOVIUS]. The abiding *resurrection glory* is always connected with our *regeneration* by the Spirit. Regeneration beginning with renewing man’s *soul* at the resurrection, passes on to the *body*, then to the whole world of nature.

24. Scripture proof that the word of God lives for ever, in contrast to man’s natural frailty. If ye were born again of flesh, corruptible seed, ye must also perish again as the grass; but now that from which you have derived life remains eternally, and so also will render you eternal.

flesh — man in his mere earthly nature.

as — omitted in some of the oldest manuscripts.

of man — The oldest manuscripts read, “of it” (that is, of the flesh). “The glory” is the wisdom, strength, riches, learning, honor, beauty, art, virtue, and righteousness of the NATURAL man (expressed by “flesh”), which all are transitory (^{<RRR>}John 3:6), not OF MAN (as *English Version* reads) absolutely, for the glory of *man*, in his true ideal realized in the believer, is eternal.

withereth — *Greek*, aorist: literally, “withered,” that is, is withered as a thing of the past. So also the *Greek* for “falleth” is “fell away,” that is, is fallen away: it no sooner is than it is gone.

thereof — omitted in the best manuscripts and versions. “The grass” is the *flesh*: “the flower” its *glory*.

25. (~~1388~~ Psalm 119:89.)

this is the word ... preached unto you — That is eternal which is born of incorruptible seed (~~1024~~ 1 Peter 1:24); but ye have received the incorruptible seed, the word (~~1025~~ 1 Peter 1:25); therefore ye are born for eternity, and so are bound now to live for eternity (~~1022~~ 1 Peter 1:22,23). Ye have not far to look for the word; it is among you, even the joyful Gospel message which we preach. Doubt not that the Gospel *preached to you* by our brother Paul, and which ye have embraced, is the eternal truth. Thus the *oneness* of Paul’s and Peter’s creed appears. See my *Introduction*, showing Peter addresses some of the same churches as Paul labored among and wrote to.

CHAPTER 2

1 PETER 2:1-25.

EXHORTATIONS.

To guileless feeding on the word by the sense of their privileges as new-born babes, living stones in the spiritual temple built on Christ the chief corner-stone, and royal priests, in contrast to their former state: also to abstinence from fleshly lusts, and to walk worthily in all relations of life, so that the world without which opposes them may be constrained to glorify God in seeing their good works. Christ, the grand pattern to follow in patience under suffering for well-doing.

1. laying aside — once for all: so the *Greek* aorist expresses as a garment *put off*. The exhortation applies to Christians alone, for in none else is the new nature existing which, as “the inward man” (Ephesians 3:16) can cast off the old as an outward thing, so that the Christian, through the continual renewal of his inward man, can also exhibit himself externally as a new man. But to unbelievers the demand is addressed, that *inwardly*, in regard to the *nous* (mind), they must become changed, *meta-noeisthai* (*repent*) [STEIGER]. The “therefore” resumes the exhortation begun in 1 Peter 1:22. Seeing that ye are born again of an incorruptible seed, be not again entangled in evil, which “has no substantial being, but is an acting in contrariety to the being formed in us” [THEOPHYLACT]. “Malice,” etc., are utterly inconsistent with the “love of the brethren,” unto which ye have “purified your souls” (1 Peter 1:22). The vices here are those which offend against the BROTHERLY LOVE inculcated above. Each succeeding one springs out of that which immediately precedes, so as to form a *genealogy* of the sins against love. Out of *malice* springs *guile*; out of *guile*, *hypocrisies* (pretending to be what we are not, and not showing what we really are; the opposite of “love unfeigned,” and “without dissimulation”); out of *hypocrisies*, *envies* of those to whom we think ourselves obliged to play the hypocrite; out of *envies*, *evil-speaking*, malicious, envious detraction of others. *Guile* is the permanent *disposition*; *hypocrisies* the

acts flowing from it. The guileless knows no envy. Compare ^{<ant>}1 Peter 2:2, “sincere,” *Greek*, “*guileless*.” “*Malice* delights in another’s hurt; *envy* pines at another’s good; *guile* imparts duplicity to the heart; *hypocrisy* (flattery) imparts duplicity to the tongue; *evil-speakings* wound the character of another” [AUGUSTINE].

2. new-born babes — altogether without “guile” (^{<ant>}1 Peter 2:1). As long as we are here we are “babes,” in a specially tender relation to God (^{<ant>}Isaiah 40:11). The childlike spirit is indispensable if we would enter heaven. “Milk” is here not elementary truths in contradistinction to more advanced Christian truths, as in ^{<ant>}1 Corinthians 3:2 ^{<ant>}Hebrews 5:12,13; but in contrast to “guile, hypocrisies,” etc. (^{<ant>}1 Peter 2:1); the simplicity of *Christian doctrine in general* to the childlike spirit. The same “word of grace” which is the instrument in regeneration, is the instrument also of *building up*. “The mother of the child is also its natural nurse” [STEIGER]. The babe, instead of chemically analyzing, instinctively desires and feeds on the milk; so our part is not self-sufficient rationalizing and questioning, but simply receiving the truth in the love of it (^{<ant>}Matthew 11:25).

desire — *Greek*, “have a yearning desire for,” or “longing after,” a natural impulse to the regenerate, “for as no one needs to teach new-born babes what food to take, knowing instinctively that a table is provided for them in their mother’s breast,” so the believer of himself thirsts after the word of God (^{<ant>}Psalms 119:1-176). Compare TATIUS’ language as to Achilles.

sincere — *Greek*, “guileless.” Compare ^{<ant>}1 Peter 2:1, “laying aside *guile*.” IRENAEUS says of heretics. They mix chalk with the milk. The article, “the,” implies that besides *the well-known pure milk*, *the Gospel*, there is no other pure, unadulterated doctrine; it alone can make us *guileless* (^{<ant>}1 Peter 2:1).

of the word — Not as ALFORD, “spiritual,” nor “reasonable,” as *English Version* in ^{<ant>}Romans 12:1. The *Greek* “*logos*” in Scripture is not used of the *reason*, or *mind*, but of the WORD; the preceding context requires that “the word” should be meant here; the adjective “*logikos*” follows the meaning of the noun *logos*, “word.” ^{<ant>}James 1:21, “*Lay apart* all filthiness ... and receive with meekness *the engrafted WORD*,” is exactly parallel, and confirms *English Version* here.

grow — The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “grow *unto salvation*.” Being BORN *again unto salvation*, we are also to *grow unto salvation*. The end to which growth leads is perfected *salvation*. “Growth is the measure of the fullness of that, not only rescue from destruction, but positive blessedness, which is implied in *salvation*” [ALFORD].

thereby — *Greek*, “in it”; fed on it; in its strength (⁴⁰¹⁴Acts 11:14). “The word is to be desired with appetite as the cause of life, to be swallowed in the hearing, to be chewed as cud is by rumination with the understanding, and to be digested by faith” [TERTULLIAN].

3. Peter alludes to ¹³⁴⁸Psalms 34:8. The first “tastes” of God’s goodness are afterwards followed by fuller and happier experiences. A taste whets the appetite [BENGEL].

gracious — *Greek*, “good,” benignant, kind; as God is revealed to us in Christ, “the Lord” (⁴⁰⁰⁴1 Peter 2:4), we who are born again ought so to be *good and kind* to the brethren (⁴⁰¹²1 Peter 1:22). “Whosoever has not tasted the word to him it is not sweet it has not reached the heart; but to them who have experienced it, who with the heart believe, ‘Christ has been sent for me and is become my own: my miseries are His, and His *life* mine,’ it tastes sweet” [LUTHER].

4. **coming** — *drawing near* (same *Greek* as here, ³³⁰²Hebrews 10:22) by faith continually; present tense: not having come once for all at conversion.

stone — *Peter* (that is, *a stone*, named so by Christ) desires that all similarly should be *living stones* BUILT ON CHRIST, THE TRUE FOUNDATION-STONE; compare his speech in ⁴⁰⁴¹Acts 4:11. An undesigned coincidence and mark of genuineness. The Spirit foreseeing the Romanist perversion of ⁴⁰⁶⁸Matthew 16:18 (compare ⁴⁰⁶⁶Matthew 16:16, “Son of the LIVING God,” which coincides with his language here, “the LIVING stone”), presciently makes Peter himself to refuse it. He herein confirms Paul’s teaching. Omit the *as unto* of *English Version*. Christ is positively termed the “living stone”; *living*, as having life in Himself from the beginning, and as raised from the dead to live evermore (⁴⁰¹⁸Revelation 1:18) after His rejection by men, and so the source of life to us. Like no earthly *rock*, He lives and gives life. Compare ⁴⁰⁰⁴1 Corinthians 10:4, and the type, ⁴⁰⁷⁰Exodus 17:6 ⁴⁰⁴¹Numbers 20:11.

disallowed — rejected, reprobated; referred to also by Christ Himself: also by Paul; compare the kindred prophecies, ²³⁸⁴Isaiah 8:14 ⁴⁸³Luke 2:34.

chosen of God — literally, “*with* (or ‘*in the presence and judgment of*) God elect,” or, “chosen out” (⁴⁸⁶1 Peter 2:6). Many are alienated from the Gospel, because it is not everywhere in favor, but is on the contrary rejected by most men. Peter answers that, though rejected by men, Christ is peculiarly the *stone* of salvation honored by God, first so designated by Jacob in his deathbed prophecy.

5. Ye also, as lively stones — partaking of the name and life which is in “THE LIVING STONE” (⁴⁸⁴1 Peter 2:4 ⁴⁸¹1 Corinthians 3:11). Many names which belong to Christ in the singular are assigned to Christians in the plural. He is “THE SON,” “High Priest,” “King,” “Lamb”; they, “sons,” “priests,” “kings,” “sheep,” “lambs.” So the Shulamite called from Solomon [BENGEL].

are built up — *Greek*, “are being built up,” as in ⁴⁸²Ephesians 2:22. Not as ALFORD, “Be ye built up.” Peter grounds his exhortations, ⁴⁸⁶1 Peter 2:2,11, etc., on their conscious sense of their high privileges as *living stones in the course of being built up into a spiritual house* (that is, “the habitation of the Spirit”).

priesthood — Christians are both the spiritual *temple* and the *priests* of the temple. There are two *Greek* words for “temple”; *hieron* (the *sacred place*), the whole building, including the courts wherein the sacrifice was killed; and *naos* (the *dwelling*, namely, of God), the inner shrine wherein God peculiarly manifested Himself, and where, in the holiest place, the *blood* of the slain sacrifice was presented before Him. All believers alike, and not merely ministers, are now the dwelling of God (and are called the “*naos*,” *Greek*, not the *hieron*) and priests unto God (⁴⁸⁶Revelation 1:6). The minister is not, like the Jewish priest (*Greek*, “*hiercus*”), admitted nearer to God than the people, but merely for order’s sake leads the spiritual services of the people. *Priest* is the abbreviation of *presbyter* in the *Church of England Prayer Book*, not corresponding to the Aaronic priest (*hiereus*, who offered *literal* sacrifices). Christ is the only literal *hiereus-priest* in the New Testament through whom alone we may always draw near to God. Compare ⁴⁸⁹1 Peter 2:9, “a royal priesthood,” that is, *a body of priest-kings*, such as was Melchisedec. The Spirit never, in New

Testament, gives the name *hiereus*, or *sacerdotal* priest, to ministers of the Gospel.

holy — consecrated to God.

spiritual sacrifices — not the literal one of the mass, as the Romish self-styled disciples of Peter teach. Compare ^{<280>}Isaiah 56:7, which compare with “*acceptable* to God” here; ^{<300>}Psalm 4:5 50:14 51:17,19 ^{<340>}Hosea 14:2 ^{<300>}Philippians 4:18. “Among spiritual sacrifices the first place belongs to the general oblation of ourselves. For never can we offer anything to God until we have offered ourselves (^{<300>}2 Corinthians 8:5) in sacrifice to Him. There follow afterwards prayers, giving of thanks, alms deeds, and all exercises of piety” [CALVIN]. Christian houses of worship are never called temples because the *temple* was a place for *sacrifice*, which has no place in the Christian dispensation; the Christian temple is the congregation of spiritual worshippers. The synagogue (where reading of Scripture and prayer constituted the worship) was the model of the Christian house of worship (compare *Note*, see on ^{<300>}James 2:2, *Greek*, “synagogue”; ^{<450>}Acts 15:21). Our sacrifices are those of prayer, praise, and self-denying services in the cause of Christ (^{<300>}1 Peter 2:9, end).

by Jesus Christ — as our mediating High Priest before God. Connect these words with “offer up.” Christ is both *precious* Himself and makes us *accepted* [BENGEL]. As the temple, so also the priesthood, is built on Christ (^{<300>}1 Peter 2:4,5) [BEZA]. Imperfect as are our services, we are not with unbelieving timidity, which is close akin to refined self-righteousness, to doubt their acceptance THROUGH CHRIST. After extolling the dignity of Christians he goes back to CHRIST as the sole source of it.

6. Wherefore also — The oldest manuscripts read, “Because that.” The statement above is so “*because* it is contained in Scripture.”

Behold — calling attention to the glorious announcement of His eternal counsel.

elect — so also believers (^{<300>}1 Peter 2:9, “chosen,” *Greek*, “*elect* generation”).

precious — in *Hebrew*, ²³³⁶Isaiah 28:16, “a corner-stone of preciousness.” See on ²³³⁶Isaiah 28:16. So in ⁴¹¹⁷1 Peter 2:7, Christ is said to be, to believers, “precious,” *Greek*, “preciousness.”

confounded — same *Greek* as in ⁴¹³³Romans 9:33 (Peter here as elsewhere confirming Paul’s teaching. See *Introduction*; also ⁴¹¹¹Romans 10:11), “ashamed.” In ²³³⁶Isaiah 28:16, “make haste,” that is, flee in sudden panic, covered with the *shame* of confounded hopes.

7. Application of the Scripture just quoted first to the believer, then to the unbeliever. On the opposite effects of the same Gospel on different classes, compare ⁴¹³³John 9:39 ⁴¹²⁵2 Corinthians 2:15,16.

precious — *Greek*, “THE preciousness” (⁴¹¹⁶1 Peter 2:6). To you believers belongs *the preciousness* of Christ just mentioned.

disobedient — to the faith, and so disobedient in practice.

the stone which ... head of ... corner — (⁴¹³²Psalms 118:22). Those who rejected the STONE were all the while in spite of themselves unconsciously contributing to its becoming Head of the corner. The same magnet has two poles, the one repulsive, the other attractive; so the Gospel has opposite effects on believers and unbelievers respectively.

8. **stone of stumbling**, etc. — quoted from ²³³⁴Isaiah 8:14. Not merely they *stumbled*, in that their prejudices were offended; but their stumbling implies the *judicial punishment* of their reception of Messiah; they hurt themselves in stumbling over the corner-stone, as “stumble” means in ⁴¹³⁶Jeremiah 13:16 ⁴¹¹⁸Daniel 11:19.

at the word — rather, join “being disobedient to the word”; so ⁴¹¹¹1 Peter 3:1 4:17.

whereunto — to penal *stumbling*; to the judicial punishment of their unbelief. See above.

also — an additional thought; God’s ordination; not that God ordains or *appoints* them to *sin*, but they are given up to “the fruit of *their own* ways” according to the eternal counsel of God. The moral ordering of the world is altogether of God. God appoints the ungodly to be *given up unto* sin, and a *reprobate mind*, and its necessary penalty. “Were appointed,”

Greek, “set,” answers to “*I lay*,” *Greek*, “set,” ^{<4116>}1 Peter 2:6. God, in the active, is said to *appoint* Christ and the elect (directly). Unbelievers, in the passive, are said to be *appointed* (God acting less directly in the appointment of the sinner’s awful course) [BENGEL]. God ordains the wicked to punishment, not to crime [J. CAPPEL]. “Appointed” or “set” (not here “FORE-ordained”) refers, not to the eternal counsel so directly, as to the penal justice of God. Through the same Christ whom sinners rejected, they shall be rejected; unlike believers, they are by God *appointed unto wrath* as FITTED for it. The lost shall lay all the blame of their ruin on their own sinful perversity, not on God’s decree; the saved shall ascribe all the merit of their salvation to God’s electing love and grace.

9. Contrast in the privileges and destinies of believers. Compare the similar contrast with the preceding context.

chosen — “elect” of God, even as Christ your Lord is.

generation — implying the unity of spiritual origin and kindred of believers as a class distinct from the world.

royal — kingly. Believers, like Christ, the antitypical Melchisedec, are at once *kings* and *priests*. Israel, in a spiritual sense, was designed to be the same among the nations of the earth. The full realization on earth of this, both to the literal and the spiritual Israel, is as yet future.

holy nation — antitypical to Israel.

peculiar people — literally, “a people *for an acquisition*,” that is, whom God chose to be *peculiarly His*: ^{<4408>}Acts 20:28, “purchased,” literally, “acquired.” God’s “*peculiar treasure*” above others.

show forth — *publish abroad*. Not *their own* praises but *His*. They have no reason to magnify themselves above others for once they had been in the same darkness, and only through God’s grace had been brought to the light which they must henceforth *show forth* to others.

praises — *Greek*, “virtues,” “excellencies”: His glory, *mercy* (^{<4120>}1 Peter 2:10), *goodness* (*Greek*, ^{<4113>}1 Peter 2:3 ^{<4147>}Numbers 14:17,18 ^{<2370>}Isaiah 63:7). The same term is applied to believers, ^{<6005>}2 Peter 1:5.

of him who hath called you — (^{<6003>}2 Peter 1:3).

out of darkness — of heathen and even Jewish ignorance, sin, and misery, and so out of the dominion of the prince of darkness.

marvellous — Peter still has in mind ^{<1882>}Psalm 118:23.

light — It is called “His,” that is, God’s. Only the (spiritual) *light* is created by God, not *darkness*. In ^{<2817>}Isaiah 45:7, it is physical darkness and evil, not moral, that God is said to *create*, the punishment of sin, not sin itself. Peter, with characteristic boldness, brands as *darkness* what all the world calls *light*; reason, without the Holy Spirit, in spite of its vaunted power, is spiritual darkness. “It cannot apprehend what faith is: there it is stark blind; it gropes as one that is without eyesight, stumbling from one thing to another, and knows not what it does” [LUTHER].

10. Adapted from ^{<2009>}Hosea 1:9, 10 2:23. Peter plainly confirms Paul, who quotes the passage as implying the call of the Gentiles to become spiritually that which Israel had been literally, “the people of God.” Primarily, the prophecy refers to literal Israel, hereafter to be fully that which in their best days they were only partially, God’s people.

not obtained mercy — literally, “who were men not compassionated.” Implying that it was God’s pure *mercy*, not their merits, which made the blessed change in their state; a thought which ought to kindle their lively *gratitude*, to be shown with their life, as well as their lips.

11. As heretofore he exhorted them to walk worthily of their calling, in contradistinction to their own former walk, so now he exhorts them to glorify God before unbelievers.

Dearly beloved — He gains their attention to his exhortation by assuring them of his love.

strangers and pilgrims — (^{<6017>}1 Peter 1:17). *Sojourners*, literally, settlers having a *house* in a city without being *citizens* in respect to the rights of citizenship; a picture of the Christian’s position on earth; *and pilgrims*, staying for a time in a foreign land. FLACIUS thus analyzes the exhortation:

(1) Purify your souls

(a) as *strangers* on earth who must not allow yourselves to be kept back by earthly lusts, and

(b) because these lusts war against the soul's salvation.

(2) Walk piously among unbelievers

(a) so that they may cease to calumniate Christians, and

(b) may themselves be converted to Christ.

fleshly lusts — enumerated in ^{<859>}Galatians 5:19, etc. Not only the gross appetites which we have in common with the brutes, but all the thoughts of the unrenewed mind.

which — *Greek*, “*the* which,” that is, inasmuch as being such as “war.” etc. Not only do they impede, but they assail [BENGEL].

the soul — that is, against the regenerated soul; such as were those now addressed. The regenerated soul is besieged by sinful lusts. Like Samson in the lap of Delilah, the believer, the moment that he gives way to fleshly lusts, has the locks of his strength shorn, and ceases to maintain that spiritual separation from the world and the flesh of which the Nazarite vow was the type.

12. conversation — “behavior”; “conduct.” There are two things in which “strangers and pilgrims” ought to bear themselves well:

(1) the *conversation* or conduct, as subjects (^{<823>}1 Peter 2:13), servants (^{<828>}1 Peter 2:18), wives (^{<801>}1 Peter 3:1), husbands (^{<837>}1 Peter 3:7), all persons under all circumstances (^{<808>}1 Peter 2:8);

(2) *confession* of the faith (^{<815>}1 Peter 3:15,16). Each of the two is derived from *the will of God*. Our conversation should correspond to our Savior's condition; this is in heaven, so ought that to be.

honest — honorable, becoming, proper (^{<816>}1 Peter 3:16). Contrast “vain conversation,” ^{<818>}1 Peter 1:18. A good walk does not make us pious, but we must first be pious and believe before we attempt to lead a good course. Faith first receives from God, then love gives to our neighbor [LUTHER].

whereas they speak against you — *now* (¹1 Peter 2:15), that they may, nevertheless, at some time or other *hereafter* glorify God. The *Greek* may be rendered, “*Wherein* they speak against you ... that (*herein*) they may, by your good works, which *on a closer inspection they shall behold*, glorify God.” The very works “which on more careful consideration, must move the heathen to praise God, are at first the object of hatred and raillery” [STEIGER].

evildoers — Because as Christians they could not conform to heathenish customs, they were accused of disobedience to all legal authority; in order to rebut this charge, they are told to *submit to every ordinance of man* (not sinful in itself).

by — owing to.

they shall behold — *Greek*, “they shall be *eye-witnesses of*”; “shall behold *on close inspection*”; as opposed to their “ignorance” (¹1 Peter 2:15) of the true character of Christians and Christianity, by judging on mere hearsay. The same *Greek* verb occurs in a similar sense in ¹1 Peter 3:2. “Other men *narrowly look at* (so the *Greek* implies) the actions of the righteous” [BENGEL]. TERTULLIAN contrasts the early Christians and the heathen: these delighted in the bloody gladiatorial spectacles of the amphitheater, whereas a Christian was excommunicated if he went to it at all. No Christian was found in prison for crime, but only for the faith. The heathen excluded slaves from some of their religious services, whereas Christians had some of their presbyters of the class of slaves. Slavery silently and gradually disappeared by the power of the Christian law of love, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” When the pagans deserted their nearest relatives in a plague, Christians ministered to the sick and dying. When the Gentiles left their dead unburied after a battle and cast their wounded into the streets, the disciples hastened to relieve the suffering.

glorify — forming a high estimate of the God whom Christians worship, from the exemplary conduct of Christians themselves. We must do good, not with a view to *our own* glory, but to the glory *of God*.

the day of visitation — of God’s grace; when God shall *visit* them *in mercy*.

13. every ordinance of man — “every human institution” [ALFORD], literally, “every human *creation*.” For though of divine appointment, yet in the mode of nomination and in the exercise of their authority, earthly governors are but human institutions, being *of men*, and *in relation to men*. The apostle speaks as one raised above all human things. But lest they should think themselves so ennobled by faith as to be raised above subordination to human authorities, he tells them to *submit themselves for the sake of Christ*, who desires you to be subject, and who once was subject to earthly rulers Himself, though having all things subject to Him, and whose honor is at stake in you as His earthly representatives. Compare ~~615~~ Romans 13:5, “Be subject for conscience’ sake.”

king — The Roman emperor was “supreme” in the Roman provinces to which this Epistle was addressed. The Jewish zealots refused obedience. The distinction between “the king as supreme” and “governors sent by him” implies that “if the king command one thing, and the subordinate magistrate another, we ought rather to obey the superior” [AUGUSTINE in GROTIUS]. Scripture prescribes nothing upon the form of government, but simply subjects Christians to that everywhere subsisting, without entering into the question of the *right* of the rulers (thus the Roman emperors had by force seized supreme authority, and Rome had, by unjustifiable means, made herself mistress of Asia), because the *de facto* governors have not been made by chance, but by the providence of God.

14. governors — subordinate to the emperor, “sent,” or delegated by Caesar to preside over the provinces.

for the punishment — No tyranny ever has been so unprincipled as that some appearance of equity was not maintained in it; however corrupt a government be, God never suffers it to be so much so as not to be better than anarchy [CALVIN]. Although bad kings often oppress the good, yet that is scarcely ever done by public authority (and it is of what is done by public authority that Peter speaks), save under the mask of right. Tyranny harasses many, but anarchy overwhelms the whole state [HORNEIUS]. The only justifiable exception is in cases where obedience to the earthly king plainly involves disobedience to the express command of the King of kings.

praise of them that do well — Every government recognizes the excellence of truly Christian subjects. Thus PLINY, in his letter to the Emperor Trajan, acknowledges, “I have found in them nothing else save a perverse and extravagant superstition.” The recognition in the long run mitigates persecution (ⲁⲓⲃⲓ 1 Peter 3:13).

15. Ground of his directing them to *submit themselves* (ⲁⲓⲃⲓ 1 Peter 2:13).

put to silence — literally, “to muzzle,” “to stop the mouth.”

ignorance — spiritual not having “the knowledge of God,” and therefore ignorant of the children of God, and misconstruing their acts; influenced by mere appearances, and ever ready to open their mouths, rather than their eyes and ears. Their *ignorance* should move the believer’s pity, not his anger. They judge of things which they are incapable of judging through unbelief (compare ⲁⲓⲃⲓ 1 Peter 2:12). Maintain such a walk that they shall have no charge against you, except touching your faith; and so their minds shall be favorably disposed towards Christianity.

16. As free — as “the Lord’s freemen,” connected with ⲁⲓⲃⲓ 1 Peter 2:15, *doing well as being free*. “Well-doing” (ⲁⲓⲃⲓ 1 Peter 2:15) is the natural fruit of being *freemen* of Christ, made free by “the truth” from the bondage of sin. Duty is enforced on us to guard against licentiousness, but the *way* in which it is to be fulfilled, is by love and the holy instincts of Christian liberty. We are given *principles*, not *details*.

not using — *Greek*, “not as having your liberty for a veil (cloak) of badness, but as the servants of God,” and therefore bound to *submit to every ordinance of man* (ⲁⲓⲃⲓ 1 Peter 2:13) which is of God’s appointment.

17. Honour all men — *according to whatever honor is due in each case*. Equals have a respect due to them. Christ has dignified our humanity by assuming it; therefore we should not dishonor, but be considerate to and honor our common humanity, even in the very humblest. The first “honor” is in the *Greek* aorist imperative, implying, “*In every case render promptly every man’s due*” [ALFORD]. The second is in the *present* tense, implying, *Habitually and continually* honor the king. Thus the first is the general precept; the three following are its three great divisions.

Love — present: *Habitually love* with the special and congenial affection that you ought to feel to brethren, besides the general *love* to all men.

Fear God ... the king — The king is to be *honored*; but God alone, in the highest sense, *feared*.

18. Servants — *Greek*, “household servants”: not here the *Greek* for “slaves.” Probably including *freedmen* still remaining in their master’s house. *Masters* were not commonly Christians: he therefore mentions only the duties of the *servants*. These were then often persecuted by their unbelieving masters. Peter’s special object seems to be to teach them *submission*, whatever the character of the masters might be. Paul not having this as his prominent design, includes *masters* in his monitions.

be subject — *Greek*, “being subject”: the participle expresses a particular instance of the general exhortation to good conduct, ^{<601>}1 Peter 2:11,12, of which the first particular precept is given ^{<602>}1 Peter 2:13, “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake.” The general exhortation is taken up again in ^{<606>}1 Peter 2:16; and so the participle ^{<608>}1 Peter 2:18, “being subject,” is joined to the hortatory imperatives going before, namely, “abstain,” “submit yourselves.” “honor all men.”

with — *Greek*, “in.”

all — all possible: under all circumstances, such as are presently detailed.

fear — the awe of one subject: God, however, is the ultimate object of the “fear”: *fear* “for the Lord’s sake” (^{<603>}1 Peter 2:13), not merely slavish fear of masters.

good — kind.

gentle — indulgent towards errors: considerate: yielding, not exacting all which justice might demand.

froward — perverse: harsh. Those bound to obey must not make the disposition and behavior of the superior the measure of the fulfillment of their obligations.

19. Reason for subjection even to froward masters.

thankworthy — (ⲉⲗⲓⲙⲓ Luke 6:33). A course out of the common, and especially *praiseworthy* in the eyes of God: not as Rome interprets, earning merit, and so a work of supererogation (compare ⲉⲗⲓⲙⲓ 1 Peter 2:20).

for conscience toward God — literally, “consciousness of God”: from a conscientious regard to God, more than to men.

endure — *Greek*, “patiently bear up under”: as a superimposed burden [ALFORD].

grief — *Greek*, “griefs.”

20. what — *Greek*, “what kind of.”

glory — what peculiar *merit*.

buffeted — the punishment of slaves, and suddenly inflicted [BENGEL].

this is — Some oldest manuscripts read, “for.” Then the translation is, “But if when ... ye take it patiently (it is a glory), *for* this is acceptable.”

acceptable — *Greek*, “thankworthy,” as in ⲉⲗⲓⲙⲓ 1 Peter 2:19.

21. Christ’s example a proof that patient endurance under undeserved sufferings is acceptable with God.

hereunto — to the patient endurance of unmerited suffering (ⲉⲗⲓⲙⲓ 1 Peter 3:9). Christ is an example to servants, even as He was once in “the form of a servant.”

called — with a heavenly calling, though slaves.

for us — *His dying for us* is the highest exemplification of “doing well” (ⲉⲗⲓⲙⲓ 1 Peter 2:20). Ye must patiently suffer, being innocent, as Christ also innocently suffered (not for Himself, but *for us*). The oldest manuscripts for “us ... us,” read, “you ... for you.” Christ’s sufferings, while they are for an example, were also primarily sufferings “*for us*,” a consideration which imposes an everlasting obligation on us to please Him.

leaving — *behind*: so the *Greek*: on His departure to the Father, to His glory.

an example — *Greek*, “a copy,” literally, “a writing copy” set by masters for their pupils. Christ’s precepts and sermons were the *transcript* of His life. Peter *graphically* sets before servants those features especially suited to their case.

follow — *close upon*: so the *Greek*.

his steps — *footsteps*, namely, of His *patience* combined with *innocence*.

22. Illustrating Christ’s *well-doing* (⁴⁰²¹1 Peter 2:20) though suffering.

did — *Greek* aorist. “Never in a single instance did” [ALFORD]. Quoted from ²⁵¹⁹Isaiah 53:9, end, *Septuagint*.

neither — nor yet: not even [ALFORD]. Sinlessness as to the *mouth* is a mark of *perfection*. *Guile* is a common fault of servants. “If any boast of his innocency, Christ surely did not suffer as an evildoer” [CALVIN], yet He took it patiently (⁴⁰²¹1 Peter 2:20). On Christ’s sinlessness, compare ⁴¹⁵²2 Corinthians 5:21 ⁴⁸⁰³Hebrews 7:26.

23. Servants are apt to “answer again” (⁵⁰¹⁹Titus 2:9). *Threats* of divine judgment against oppressors are often used by those who have no other arms, as for instance, slaves. Christ, who as Lord could have threatened with truth, never did so.

committed *himself* — or *His cause*, as man in His suffering. Compare the type, ⁴⁴¹⁰Jeremiah 11:20. In this Peter seems to have before his mind ²⁵¹⁹Isaiah 53:8. Compare ⁴⁵²⁶Romans 12:19, on our corresponding duty. Leave your case in His hands, not desiring to make Him executioner of your revenge, but rather praying for enemies. God’s *righteous judgment* gives tranquillity and consolation to the oppressed.

24. his own self — there being *none other* but *Himself* who could have done it. His *voluntary* undertaking of the work of redemption is implied. The *Greek* puts in antithetical juxtaposition, OUR, and HIS OWN SELF, to mark the idea of *His substitution for us*. His “well-doing” in His sufferings is set forth here as an example to servants and to us all (⁴⁰²¹1 Peter 2:20).

bare — to sacrifice: *carried and offered up*: a sacrificial term. ²⁵¹⁹Isaiah 53:11,12, “He *bare* the sin of many”: where the *idea of bearing on Himself*

is the prominent one; here the *offering in sacrifice* is combined with that idea. So the same *Greek* means in ⁴⁰¹⁵1 Peter 2:5.

our sins — In *offering or presenting in sacrifice* (as the *Greek* for “bare” implies) His body, Christ offered in it the *guilt* of our sins upon the cross, as upon the altar of God, that it might be expiated in Him, and so taken away from us. Compare ²⁵³⁰Isaiah 53:10, “Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin.” Peter thus means by “bare” what the *Syriac* takes two words to express, *to bear* and *to offer*:

(1) He hath *borne* our sins laid upon Him [namely, their guilt, curse, and punishment];

(2) He hath so borne them that He *offered* them along with Himself on the altar. He refers to the animals upon which sins were first laid, and which were then *offered* thus laden [VITRINGA]. Sin or guilt among the Semitic nations is considered as a burden lying heavily upon the sinner [GESENIUS].

on the tree — the cross, the proper place for One on whom the *curse* was laid: this curse stuck to Him until it was legally (through His death as the guilt-bearer) destroyed in His body: thus the handwriting of the bond against us is cancelled by His death.

that we being dead to sins — the effect of His death to “sin” in the aggregate, and to all particular “sins,” namely, that we should be as entirely *delivered from* them, as a slave that is *dead* is delivered from service to his master. This is our spiritfult *standing* through faith by virtue of Christ’s death: our actual mortification of particular *sins* is in proportion to the degree of our effectually being made conformable to His death. “That we should *die to the sins* whose collected guilt Christ carried away in His death, and so LIVE TO THE RIGHTEOUSNESS (compare ²⁵³¹Isaiah 53:11. ‘My *righteous* servant shall *justify* many’), the gracious relation to God which He has brought in” [STEIGER].

by whose stripes — *Greek*, “stripe.”

ye were healed — a paradox, yet true. “Ye servants (compare ‘buffeted,’ ‘the tree,’ ⁴⁰²⁰1 Peter 2:20,24) often bear *the strife*; but it is not more than your Lord Himself bore; learn from Him patience in wrongful sufferings.

25. (^{<2516}Isaiah 53:6.)

For — Assigning their natural need of *healing* (^{<4124}1 Peter 2:24).

now — Now that the atonement for all has been made, the foundation is laid for *individual conversion*: so “ye are *returned*,” or “have *become converted* to,” etc.

Shepherd and Bishop — The designation of the *pastors* and *elders* of the Church belongs in its fullest sense to the great Head of the Church, “the good Shepherd.” As the “*bishop*” *oversees* (as the *Greek* term means), so “the *eyes of the Lord are over the righteous*” (^{<4182}1 Peter 3:12). He gives us His spirit and feeds and guides us by His word. “Shepherd,” *Hebrew*, “*Parnas*,” is often applied to *kings*, and enters into the composition of names, as “*Pharnabazus*.”

CHAPTER 3

~~1000~~ 1 PETER 3:1-22.

**RELATIVE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES:
EXHORTATIONS TO LOVE AND FORBEARANCE: RIGHT
CONDUCT UNDER PERSECUTIONS FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS'
SAKE, AFTER CHRIST'S EXAMPLE, WHOSE DEATH RESULTED
IN QUICKENING TO US THROUGH HIS BEING QUICKENED
AGAIN, OF WHICH BAPTISM IS THE SACRAMENTAL SEAL.**

1. Likewise — *Greek*, “In like manner,” as “servants” in their sphere; compare the reason of the woman’s subjection, ~~400~~ 1 Corinthians 11:8-10 ~~500~~ 1 Timothy 2:11-14.

your own — enforcing the obligation: it is not strangers ye are required to *be subject to*. Every time that obedience is enjoined upon women to their husbands, the *Greek*, “*idios*,” “one’s own peculiarly,” is used, while the wives of men are designated only by *heauton*, “of themselves.” Feeling the need of leaning on one stronger than herself, the wife (especially if joined to an *unbeliever*) might be tempted, though only spiritually, to enter into that relation with another in which she ought to stand to “*her own* spouse (~~400~~ 1 Corinthians 14:34,35, “Let them ask *their own* [*idiotic*] husbands at home”); an attachment to the person of the teacher might thus spring up, which, without being in the common sense spiritual adultery, would still weaken in its spiritual basis the married relation [STEIGER].

that, if — *Greek*, “that even if.” *Even if* you have a husband that obeys not the word (that is, is an unbeliever).

without the word — *independently of hearing the word preached*, the usual way of *faith* coming. But BENGEL, “without word,” that is, *without direct Gospel discourse* of the wives, “they *may* (literally, in oldest manuscripts, ‘shall,’ which marks the almost objective *certainty* of the result) be won” indirectly. “Unspoken acting is more powerful than unperformed speaking” [AECUMENIUS]. “A soul converted is *gained* to

itself, to the pastor, wife, or husband, who sought it, and to Jesus Christ; added to His treasury who thought not His own precious blood too dear to lay out for this gain" [LEIGHTON]. "The discreet wife would choose first of all to persuade her husband to share with her in the things which lead to blessedness; but if this be impossible, let her then alone diligently press after virtue, in all things obeying him so as to do nothing at any time against his will, except in such things as are essential to virtue and salvation" [CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA].

2. behold — on narrowly looking into it, literally, "having closely observed."

chaste — pure, spotless, free from all impurity.

fear — *reverential*, towards your husbands. Scrupulously pure, as opposed to the noisy, ambitious character of worldly women.

3. Literally, "To whom let there belong (namely, as their peculiar ornament) not the outward adornment (usual in the sex which first, by the fall, brought in the need of covering, see on ~~the~~ 1 Peter 5:5) of," etc.

plaiting — artificial braiding, in order to attract admiration.

wearing — literally, "putting round," namely, the head, as a diadem — the arm, as a bracelet — the finger, as rings.

apparel — showy and costly. "Have the blush of modesty on thy face instead of paint, and moral worth and discretion instead of gold and emeralds" [MELISSA].

4. But — "Rather." The "outward adornment" of jewelry, etc., is forbidden, in so far as woman loves such things, not in so far as she uses them from a sense of propriety, and does not *abuse* them. Singularity mostly comes from pride and throws needless hindrances to religion in the way of others. Under costly attire there may be a humble mind. "Great is he who uses his earthenware as if it were plate; not less great is he who uses his silver as if it were earthenware" [SENECA in ALFORD].

hidden — *inner* man, which the Christian instinctively *hides* from public view.

of the heart — *consisting in the heart* regenerated and adorned by the Spirit. This “inner man of the heart” is the subject of the verb “be,” ^{<GRB>}1 Peter 3:3, *Greek*: “Of whom let the inner man be,” namely, the distinction or adornment.

in that — consisting or standing *in that* as its element.

not corruptible — not transitory, nor tainted with corruption, as all earthly adornments.

meek and quiet — *meek*, not creating disturbances: *quiet*, bearing with tranquillity the disturbances caused by others. *Meek* in affections and feelings; *quiet* in words, countenance, and actions [BENGEL].

in the sight of God — who looks to inward, not merely outward things.

of great price — The results of redemption should correspond to its costly price (^{<GRB>}1 Peter 1:19).

5. after this manner — with the *ornament of a meek and quiet spirit* (compare the portrait of the godly wife, ^{<GRB>}Proverbs 31:10-31).

trusted — *Greek*, “hoped.” “Holy” is explained by “hoped in (so as to be ‘united to,’ *Greek*) God.” Hope in God is the spring of true holiness [BENGEL].

in subjection — Their ornament consisted in their subordination. Vanity was forbidden (^{<GRB>}1 Peter 3:3) as being contrary to female *subjection*.

6. Sara — an example of *faith*.

calling him lord — (^{<GRB>}Genesis 18:12).

ye are — *Greek*, “ye have become”: “children” of Abraham and Sara by *faith*, whereas ye were Gentile aliens from the covenant.

afraid with any amazement — *Greek*, “fluttering alarm,” “consternation.” *Act well, and be not thrown into sudden panic*, as weak females are apt to be, by any opposition from without. BENGEL translates, “Not afraid OF *any fluttering terror* coming from without” (^{<GRB>}1 Peter 3:13-16). So the *Septuagint*, ^{<GRB>}Proverbs 3:25 uses the same *Greek* word, which Peter probably refers to. Anger assails men; *fear*, women. You need

fear no man in doing what is right: not thrown into fluttering agitation by any sudden outbreak of temper on the part of your unbelieving husbands, while you *do well*.

7. dwell — *Greek*, “dwelling”: connected with the verb, ^{<1027>}1 Peter 2:17, “Honor all.”

knowledge — Christian knowledge: appreciating the due relation of the sexes in the design of God, and acting with tenderness and forbearance accordingly: *wisely: with wise consideration*.

them ... giving honor to the wife — translate and punctuate the *Greek* rather, “dwelling according to knowledge with the female (*Greek adjective*, qualifying ‘vessel’; not as *English Version*, a noun) as with the weaker vessel (see on ^{<1004>}1 Thessalonians 4:4. Both husband and wife are vessels in God’s hand, and of God’s making, to fulfill His gracious purposes. Both weak, the woman the *weaker*. The sense of his own weakness, and that she, like himself, is God’s *vessel* and fabric, ought to lead him to act with tender and wise consideration towards her who is the *weaker fabric*), giving (literally, ‘*assigning*,’ ‘*apportioning*’) honor as being also (besides being man and wife) heirs together,” etc.; or, as the Vatican manuscript reads, as to those who are also (besides being your wives) fellow heirs.” (The reason why the man should *give honor* to the woman is, because *God gives honor to both* as fellow heirs; compare the same argument, ^{<1010>}1 Peter 3:9). He does not take into account the case of an *unbelieving* wife, as she might yet believe.

grace of life — God’s *gracious* gift of *life* (^{<1004>}1 Peter 1:4,13).

that your prayers be not hindered — by dissensions, which prevent *united* prayer, on which depends the blessing.

8. General summary of relative duty, after having detailed *particular* duties from ^{<1018>}1 Peter 2:18.

of one mind — as to the faith.

having compassion one of another — *Greek*, “sympathizing” in the joy and sorrow of others.

love as brethren — *Greek*, “loving the brethren.”

pitiful — towards the afflicted.

courteous — genuine Christian politeness; not the tinsel of the world's politeness; stamped with *unfeigned love* on one side, and *humility* on the other. But the oldest manuscripts read, “humble-minded.” It is slightly different from “humble,” in that it marks a *conscious effort* to be truly *humble*.

9. evil — in deed.

railing — in word.

blessing — your revilers; participle, not a noun after “rendering.”

knowing that — The oldest manuscripts read merely, “because.”

are — *Greek*, “were called.”

inherit a blessing — not only passive, but also active; receiving spiritual blessing from God by faith, and in your turn blessing others from love [GERHARD in ALFORD]. “It is not in order to inherit a blessing that we must bless, but because our portion is blessing.” No *railing* can injure you (1 Peter 3:13). Imitate God who “blesses” you. The first fruits of His *blessing* for eternity are enjoyed by the righteous even now (1 Peter 3:10) [BENGEL].

10. will love — *Greek*, “wishes to love.” He who *loves life* (present and eternal), and *desires to continue to do so*, not involving himself in troubles which will make this life a burden, and cause him to forfeit eternal life. Peter confirms his exhortation, 1 Peter 3:9, by Psalm 34:12-16.

refrain — curb, literally, “cause to cease”; implying that our natural inclination and custom is to speak evil. “Men commonly think that they would be exposed to the wantonness of their enemies if they did not strenuously vindicate their rights. But the Spirit promises a life of blessedness to none but those who are gentle and patient of evils” [CALVIN].

evil ... guile — First he warns against sins of the *tongue*, evil-speaking, and deceitful, double-tongued speaking; next, against *acts* of injury to one's neighbor.

11. In oldest manuscripts, *Greek*, “*Moreover* (besides his words, in acts), let him.”

eschew — “turn from.”

ensue — *pursue* as a thing hard to attain, and that flees from one in this troublesome world.

12. Ground of the promised present and eternal life of blessedness to the meek (ⲉⲓⲃⲏ 1 Peter 3:10). The Lord’s eyes are ever over them for good.

ears ... unto their prayers — (ⲉⲓⲃⲏ 1 John 5:14,15).

face ... against — The *eyes* imply *favorable* regard; the *face* of the Lord upon (not as *English Version*, “against”) them that do evil, implies that He narrowly observes them, so as not to let them really and lastingly hurt His people (compare ⲉⲓⲃⲏ 1 Peter 3:13).

13. who ... will harm you — This fearless confidence in God’s protection from harm, Christ, the Head, in His sufferings realized; so His members.

if ye be — *Greek*, “if ye have *become*.”

followers — The oldest manuscripts read “emulous,” “zealous of” (ⲉⲓⲃⲏ Titus 2:14).

good — The contrast in *Greek* is, “Who will do you *evil*, if ye be zealous of *good*?”

14. But and if — “But if even.” “The promises of *this* life extend only so far as it is expedient for us that they should be fulfilled” [CALVIN]. So he proceeds to state the exceptions to the promise (ⲉⲓⲃⲏ 1 Peter 3:10), and how the truly wise will behave in such exceptional cases. “If ye should *suffer*”; if it should so happen; “suffer,” a milder word than *harm*.

for righteousness — “not the suffering, but the cause for which one suffers, makes the martyr” [AUGUSTINE].

happy — Not even can *suffering* take away your *blessedness*, but rather promotes it.

and — *Greek*, “but.” Do not impair your blessing (ⲉⲓⲃⲏ 1 Peter 3:9) by *fearing* man’s *terror* in your times of adversity. Literally, “Be not terrified

with their terror,” that is, with that which they try to strike into you, and which strikes themselves when in adversity. This verse and ^{<1895>}1 Peter 3:15 is quoted from ^{<2182>}Isaiah 8:12,13. God alone is to be feared; he that fears God has none else to fear.

neither be troubled — the threat of the law, ^{<1895>}Leviticus 26:36 ^{<1895>}Deuteronomy 28:65,66; in contrast to which the Gospel gives the believer a heart assured of God’s favor, and therefore unruffled, amidst all adversities. Not only be not *afraid*, but be not even *agitated*.

15. sanctify — *hallow; honor as holy*, enshrining Him *in your hearts*. So in the Lord’s Prayer, ^{<1895>}Matthew 6:9. God’s holiness is thus glorified in our hearts as the dwelling-place of His Spirit.

the Lord God — The oldest manuscripts read “Christ.” Translate, “Sanctify *Christ as Lord*.”

and — *Greek*, “but,” or “moreover.” *Besides* this inward sanctification of God *in the heart*, *be also ready always to give*, etc.

answer — an apologetic answer defending your faith.

to every man that asketh you — The last words limit the universality of the “always”; not to a roller, but to everyone among the heathen who inquires honestly.

a reason — a reasonable account. This refutes Rome’s dogma, “I believe it, because the Church believes it.” Credulity is believing without evidence; faith is believing on evidence. There is no repose for reason itself but in faith. This verse does not impose an obligation to bring forward a learned proof and logical defense of revelation. But as believers deny themselves, crucify the world, and brave persecution, they must be buoyed up by some strong “hope”; men of the world, having no such hope themselves, are moved by curiosity to *ask* the secret of this hope; the believer must be *ready* to give an *experimental account* “how this hope arose in him, what it contains, and on what it rests” [STEIGER].

with — The oldest manuscripts read, “*but with*.” Be ready, *but with* “meekness.” Not pertly and arrogantly.

meekness — (ⲁⲓⲣⲁ 1 Peter 3:4). The most effective way; not self-sufficient impetuosity.

fear — due respect towards man, and reverence towards God, remembering His cause does not need man's hot temper to uphold it.

16. Having a good conscience — the secret spring of *readiness to give account* of our *hope*. So *hope* and *good conscience* go together in ⲁⲓⲣⲁⲓ Acts 24:15,16. Profession without practice has no weight. But those who *have a good conscience* can afford to give an account of their hope “with meekness.”

whereas — (ⲁⲓⲣⲁ 1 Peter 2:12).

they speak evil of you, as of evildoers — One oldest manuscript reads, “ye are spoken against,” omitting the rest.

falsely accuse — “calumniate”; the *Greek* expresses malice shown in deeds as well as in words. It is translated, “despitefully use,” ⲁⲓⲣⲁⲓ Matthew 5:44 ⲁⲓⲣⲁ Luke 6:28.

conversation — life, conduct.

in Christ — who is the very element of your life as Christians. “In Christ” defines “good.” It is your good walk *as Christians*, not as citizens, that calls forth malice (ⲁⲓⲣⲁ 1 Peter 4:4,5,14).

17. better — One may object, I would not bear it so ill if I had deserved it. Peter replies, it is *better* that you did not deserve it, in order that doing well and yet being spoken against, you may prove yourself a true Christian [GERHARD].

if the will of God be so — rather as the optative is in the oldest manuscripts, “if the will of God should will it so.” Those who honor God's will as their highest law (ⲁⲓⲣⲁⲓ 1 Peter 2:15) have the comfort to know that suffering is God's appointment (ⲁⲓⲣⲁⲓ 1 Peter 4:19). So Christ Himself; our inclination does not wish it.

18. Confirmation of ⲁⲓⲣⲁⲓ 1 Peter 3:17, by the glorious results of Christ's suffering innocently.

For — “Because.” That is “better,” ⁽¹⁰⁸⁷⁾1 Peter 3:17, means of which we are rendered more like to Christ in death and in life; for His death brought the best issue to Himself and to us [BENGEL].

Christ — the Anointed *Holy* One of God; the *Holy* suffered for *sins*, the *Just* for the *unjust*.

also — as well as yourselves (⁽¹⁰⁸⁷⁾1 Peter 3:17). Compare ⁽¹⁰²¹⁾1 Peter 2:21; there His suffering was brought forward as an example to us; here, as a proof of the blessedness of suffering for well-doing.

once — for all; never again to suffer. It is “better” for us also once to suffer with Christ, than for ever without Christ. We now are suffering our “once”; it will soon be a thing of the past; a bright consolation to the tried.

for sins — as though He had Himself committed them. He exposed Himself to death by His “confession,” even as we are called on to “give an answer to him that asketh a reason of our hope.” This was “well-doing” in its highest manifestation. As He suffered, “The Just,” so we ought willingly to suffer, for *righteousness*’ sake (⁽¹⁰⁸⁴⁾1 Peter 3:14; compare ⁽¹⁰⁸²⁾1 Peter 3:12,17).

that he might bring us to God — together with Himself in His ascension to the right hand of God (⁽¹⁰⁸²⁾1 Peter 3:22). He brings us, “the unjust,” justified together with Him into heaven. So the result of Christ’s death is His *drawing men to Him*; spiritually now, in our having *access into the Holiest*, opened by Christ’s ascension; literally hereafter. “Bring us,” moreover, by the same steps of humiliation and exaltation through which He Himself passed. The several steps of Christ’s progress from lowliness to glory are trodden over again by His people in virtue of their oneness with Him (⁽¹⁰⁸¹⁾1 Peter 4:1-3). “To God,” is *Greek* dative (not the preposition and case), implying that *God wishes it* [BENGEL].

put to death — the means of His *bringing us to God*.

in the flesh — that is, *in respect to* the life of *flesh* and blood.

quicken by the Spirit — The oldest manuscripts omit the *Greek* article. Translate with the preposition “in,” as the antithesis to the previous “*in the flesh*” requires, “*IN spirit*,” that is, in respect to His

Spirit. “Put to death” in the former *mode of life*; “quickened” in the other. Not that His Spirit ever died and was *quickened*, or made alive again, but whereas He had lived after the manner of mortal men in the flesh, He *began to live a spiritual* “resurrection” (ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ 1 Peter 3:21) *life*, whereby He has the power to bring us to God. Two ways of explaining ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ 1 Peter 3:18,19, are open to us:

(1) “Quickened in Spirit,” that is, *immediately* on His release from the “flesh,” the energy of His undying spirit-life was “quickened” by God the Father, into new modes of action, namely, “in the Spirit He *went* down (as subsequently He *went* up to heaven, ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ 1 Peter 3:22, the same *Greek* verb) and heralded [not *salvation*, as ALFORD, contrary to Scripture, which everywhere represents man’s state, whether saved or lost, after death irreversible. Nor is any mention made of the *conversion* of the spirits in prison. See on ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ 1 Peter 3:20. Nor is the phrase here ‘preached *the Gospel*’ (*evangelizo*), but ‘heralded’ (*ekeruxe*) or ‘preached’; but simply *made the announcement* of His finished work; so the same *Greek* in ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ Mark 1:45, ‘publish,’ confirming Enoch and Noah’s testimony, and thereby declaring the virtual condemnation of their unbelief, and the salvation of Noah and believers; a sample of the similar opposite effects of the same work on *all* unbelievers, and believers, respectively; also a consolation to those whom Peter addresses, in their sufferings at the hands of unbelievers; specially selected for the sake of ‘baptism,’ its ‘antitype’ (ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ 1 Peter 3:21), which, as a seal, marks believers as separated from the rest of the doomed world] to the spirits (His *Spirit* speaking to the *spirits*) in prison (in Hades or Sheol, awaiting the judgment, ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ 2 Peter 2:4), which were of old disobedient when,” etc.

(2) The strongest point in favor of (1) is the position of “sometime,” that is, *of old*, connected with “disobedient”; whereas if the *preaching* or announcing were a thing long past, we should expect “sometime,” or *of old*, to be joined to “went and preached.” But this transposition may express that *their disobedience preceded His preaching*. The *Greek* participle expresses the reason of His *preaching*, “*inasmuch as* they were sometime disobedient” (compare ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ 1 Peter 4:6). Also “went” seems to mean a *personal* going, as in ⲁⲓⲉⲛⲓ 1 Peter 3:22, not merely *in spirit*. But see the answer below. The objections are “quickened” must

refer to Christ's *body* (compare ^{<012>}1 Peter 3:21, end), for as His *Spirit* never ceased to live, it cannot be said to be "quickened." Compare ^{<013>}John 5:21 ^{<014>}Romans 8:11, and other passages, where "quicken" is used of the *bodily* resurrection. Also, not His *Spirit*, but His *soul*, went to Hades. His Spirit was commended by Him at death to His Father, and was thereupon "in Paradise." The theory —

(1) would thus require that His descent to the spirits in prison should be *after* His resurrection! Compare ^{<009>}Ephesians 4:9,10, which makes the *descent* precede the *ascent*. Also Scripture elsewhere is silent about such a heralding, though possibly Christ's death had immediate effects on the state of both the godly and the ungodly in Hades: the souls of the godly heretofore in comparative confinement, perhaps then having been, as some Fathers thought, translated to God's immediate and heavenly presence; but this cannot be *proved* from Scripture. Compare however, ^{<015>}John 3:13 ^{<008>}Colossians 1:18. *Prison* is always used in a *bad* sense in Scripture. "Paradise" and "Abraham's bosom," the abode of good spirits in Old Testament times, are separated by a wide gulf from Hell or Hades, and cannot be called "prison." Compare ^{<010>}2 Corinthians 12:2,4, where "paradise" and the "third heaven" correspond. Also, why should the antediluvian unbelievers in particular be selected as the objects of His preaching in Hades? Therefore explain: "Quickened in spirit, in which (as distinguished from *in person*; the words "in which," that is, *in spirit*, expressly obviating the objection that "went" implies a *personal going*) He went (in the person of Noah, "a preacher of righteousness," ^{<016>}2 Peter 2:5: ALFORD'S own Note, ^{<017>}Ephesians 2:17, is the best reply to his argument from "went" that a *local* going to Hades *in person* is meant. As "He CAME and preached peace" by His *Spirit* in the apostles and ministers after His death and ascension: so before His incarnation He preached in Spirit through Noah to the antediluvians, ^{<018>}John 14:18,28 ^{<019>}Acts 26:23. "Christ should show," literally, "*announce* light to the Gentiles") and preached unto the spirits in prison, that is, the antediluvians, whose bodies indeed seemed free, but their spirits were in prison, shut up in the earth as one great condemned cell (exactly parallel to ^{<020>}Isaiah 24:22,23 "upon the earth ... they shall be gathered together as *prisoners* are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up *in the*

prison,” etc. [just as the fallen angels are judicially regarded as “in chains of darkness,” though for a time now at large on the earth, ^{<604>}1 Peter 2:4], where ^{<608>}1 Peter 3:18 has a plain allusion to the flood, “the windows from on high are open,” compare ^{<607>}Genesis 7:11); from this prison the only way of escape was that preached by Christ in Noah. Christ, who in our times came in the flesh, in the days of Noah preached *in Spirit* by Noah to the spirits then in prison (^{<230>}Isaiah 61:1, end, “the Spirit of the Lord God hath sent me to *proclaim* the opening of the *prison* to them that are bound”). So in ^{<611>}1 Peter 1:11, “the Spirit of Christ” is said to have testified in the prophets. As Christ suffered even to death by enemies, and was afterwards quickened in virtue of His “Spirit” (or divine nature, ^{<608>}Romans 1:3,4 ^{<655>}1 Corinthians 15:45), which henceforth acted in its full energy, the first result of which was the raising of His body (^{<612>}1 Peter 3:21, end) from the prison of the grave and His soul from Hades; so the same Spirit of Christ enabled Noah, amidst reproach and trials, to preach to the disobedient spirits fast bound in wrath. That Spirit in you can enable you also to suffer patiently now, looking for the resurrection deliverance.

20. once — not in the oldest manuscripts.

when ... the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah —

Oldest manuscripts. *Greek*, “*was continuing to wait on*” (if haply men in the hundred twenty years of grace would repent) until the *end* of His waiting came in their death by the flood. This refutes ALFORD’S idea of a second day of grace having been given in Hades. Noah’s days are selected, as the ark and the destroying flood answer respectively to “baptism” and the coming destruction of unbelievers by fire.

while the ark was a-preparing — (^{<510>}Hebrews 11:7). A long period of God’s “long-suffering and waiting,” as Noah had few to help him, which rendered the world’s unbelief the more inexcusable.

wherein — literally, “(by having entered) *into* which.”

eight — seven (the sacred number) with ungodly Ham.

few — so now.

souls — As this term is here used of *living* persons, why should not “spirits” also? Noah preached to their ears, but Christ *in spirit*, to their *spirits*, or spiritual natures.

saved by water — The same water which drowned the unbelieving, buoyed up the ark in which the eight were saved. Not as some translate, “were brought safe *through* the water.” However, the sense of the preposition may be as in ^{<485>}1 Corinthians 3:15, “they were safely preserved *through* the water,” though having to be *in the water*.

21. whereunto — The oldest manuscripts read, “which”: literally, “which (namely, *water*, in general; being) the antitype (of the water of the flood) is now saving (the salvation being not yet fully realized by us, compare ^{<481>}1 Corinthians 10:1,2,5 ^{<485>}Jude 1:5; *puts into a state of salvation*) us also (two oldest manuscripts read ‘*you*’ for ‘*us*’: *You also*, as well as Noah and his party), to wit, baptism.” Water saved Noah not of itself, but by sustaining the ark built in *faith*, resting on God’s word: it was to him the sign and mean of a kind of *regeneration*, of the earth. The flood was for Noah a baptism, as the passage through the Red Sea was for the Israelites; by baptism in the flood he and his family were transferred from the old world to the new: from immediate destruction to lengthened probation; from the companionship of the wicked to communion with God; from the severing of all bonds between the creature and the Creator to the privileges of the covenant: so we by spiritual baptism. As there was a Ham who forfeited the privileges of the covenant, so many now. The antitypical water, namely, baptism, saves you also not of itself, nor the mere material water, but the spiritual thing conjoined with it, repentance and faith, of which it is the sign and seal, as Peter proceeds to explain. Compare the union of the sign and thing signified, ^{<485>}John 3:5 ^{<481>}Ephesians 5:26 ^{<485>}Titus 3:5 ^{<482>}Hebrews 10:22; compare ^{<486>}1 John 5:6.

not the, etc. — “flesh” bears the emphasis. “Not the putting away of the filth of *the flesh*” (as is done by a mere water baptism, unaccompanied with the Spirit’s baptism, compare ^{<481>}Ephesians 2:11), but of the soul. It is the ark (Christ and His Spirit-filled Church), not the water, which is the instrument of salvation: the water only flowed round the ark; so not the mere water baptism, but the water when accompanied with the Spirit.

answer — *Greek*, “interrogation”; referring to the *questions* asked of candidates for baptism; eliciting a confession of faith “toward God” and a renunciation of Satan ([AUGUSTINE, *The Creed*, 4.1]; [CYPRIAN, *Epistles*, 7, *To Rogatianus*]), which, when flowing from “a good conscience,” assure one of being “saved.” Literally, “a good conscience’s interrogation (including the satisfactory *answer*) toward God.” I prefer this to the translation of WAHL, ALFORD and others, “*inquiry* of a good conscience *after God*”: not one of the parallels alleged, not even ¹⁰¹⁷2 Samuel 11:7, in the *Septuagint*, is strictly in point. Recent Byzantine *Greek* idiom (whereby the term meant:

- (1) the question;
- (2) the stipulation;
- (3) the engagement), easily flowing from the usage of the word as Peter has it, confirms the former translation.

by the resurrection of Jesus — joined with “saves you”: In so far as baptism applies to us the power of Christ’s resurrection. As Christ’s death unto sin is the source of the believer’s death unto, and so deliverance from, sin’s penalty and power; so His resurrection life is the source of the believer’s new spiritual life.

22. (¹³⁰Psalm 110:1 ¹³⁸Romans 8:34,38 ¹⁵¹1 Corinthians 15:24 ¹⁰²Ephesians 1:21 3:10 ¹⁰⁶Colossians 1:16 2:10-15). The fruit of His patience in His voluntary endured and undeserved sufferings: a pattern to us, ¹⁸⁷1 Peter 3:17,18.

gone — (²⁶Luke 24:51). Proving against rationalists an actual material ascension. Literally, “is on the right hand of God, *having gone* into heaven.” The oldest manuscripts of the *Vulgate* and the *Latin Fathers*, add what expresses the benefit to us of Christ’s sitting on God’s right hand, “Who is on the right hand of God, *having swallowed up death that we may become heirs of everlasting life*”; involving for us A STATE OF LIFE, saved, glorious, and eternal. The *Greek* manuscripts, however, reject the words. Compare with this verse Peter’s speeches, ⁴⁸³Acts 2:32-35 3:21,26 10:40,42.

CHAPTER 4

1 PETER 4:1-19.

LIKE THE RISEN CHRIST, BELIEVERS HENCEFORTH OUGHT TO HAVE NO MORE TO DO WITH SIN.

As the end is near, cultivate self-restraint, watchful prayerfulness, charity, hospitality, scriptural speech, ministering to one another according to your several gifts to the glory of God: Rejoicing patience under suffering.

1. for us — supported by some oldest manuscripts and versions, omitted by others.

in the flesh — in His mortal body of humiliation.

arm — (⁴⁸⁸¹Ephesians 6:11,13).

the same mind — of suffering with patient willingness what God *will*s you to suffer.

he that hath suffered — for instance, Christ first, and in His person the believer: a general proposition.

hath ceased — literally, “has been made to cease,” *has obtained* by the very fact of His having suffered once for all, *a cessation from sin*, which had heretofore lain on Him (Romans 6:6-11, especially, 1 Peter 4:7). The Christian is by faith one with Christ: as then Christ by death is judicially freed from sin; so the Christian who has in the person of Christ died, has no more to do with it judicially, and ought to have no more to do with it actually. “The flesh” is the sphere in which sin has place.

2. That he, etc. — “That he (the believer, who has once for all obtained cessation from sin by suffering, in the person of Christ, namely, in virtue of his union with the crucified Christ) should no longer live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God” as his rule. “*Rest of his time in the flesh*” (the *Greek* has the preposition “in” here, not

in 1 Peter 4:1 as to Christ) proves that the reference is here not to Christ, but to the believer, whose remaining time for glorifying God is short (1 Peter 4:3). “Live” in the truest sense, for heretofore he was *dead*. Not as ALFORD, “*Arm yourselves ... with a view no longer to live the rest of your time.*”

3. may suffice — *Greek*, “is sufficient.” Peter takes the lowest ground: for not even the past time ought to have been wasted in lust; but since you cannot recall it, at least lay out the future to better account.

us — omitted in oldest manuscripts.

wrought — *Greek*, “wrought out.”

Gentiles — heathen: which many of you were.

when, etc. — “walking as ye have done [ALFORD] in *lasciviousness*”; the *Greek* means *petulant, immodest, wantonness*, unbridled conduct: not so much filthy lust.

excess of wine — “wine-bibblings” [ALFORD].

abominable — “nefarious,” “lawless idolatries,” violating God’s most sacred law; not that *all* Peter’s readers (see on 1 Peter 1:1) *walked* in these, but many, namely, the Gentile portion of them.

4. Wherein — In respect to which abandonment of your former *walk* (1 Peter 4:3).

run not with them — eagerly, in troops [BENGEL].

excess — literally, “profusion”; a sink: stagnant water remaining after an inundation.

riot — profligacy.

speaking evil — charging you with pride, singularity, hypocrisy, and secret crimes (ⲙⲁⲩⲁ 1 Peter 4:14 2 Peter 2:2). However, there is no “of you” in the *Greek*, but simply “blaspheming.” It seems to me always to be used, either directly or indirectly, in the sense of *impious reviling against God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit*, and the Christian religion, not merely against men as such; *Greek*, ⲙⲁⲩⲁ 1 Peter 4:14, below.

5. They who now call you to account falsely, shall have to give account themselves for this very evil-speaking (^{GRS}Jude 1:15), and be condemned justly.

ready — very speedily (1 Peter 4:7 ^{GRS}2 Peter 3:10). Christ's coming is to the believer always near.

6. **For** — giving the reason for 1 Peter 4:5, "judge the *dead*."

gospel preached also to ... dead — as well as to them now living, and to them that shall be found alive at the coming of the Judge. "Dead" must be taken in the same literal sense as in 1 Peter 4:5, which refutes the explanation "dead" *in sins*. Moreover, the absence of the *Greek* article does not necessarily restrict the sense of "dead" to particular dead persons, for there is no *Greek* article in 1 Peter 4:5 also, where "the dead" is universal in meaning. The sense seems to be, Peter, as representing the true attitude of the Church in every age, expecting Christ at any moment, says, The Judge is ready to judge the quick and dead — *the dead*, I say, *for* they, too, in their lifetime, have had the Gospel preached to them, that so they might be judged at last in the same way as those living now (and those who shall be so when Christ shall come), namely, "men in the flesh," and that they might, having escaped condemnation by embracing the Gospel so preached, live unto God in the spirit (though death has passed over their flesh), ^{GRS}Luke 20:38, thus being made like Christ in death and in life (see on ^{GRS}1 Peter 3:18). He says, "live," not "made alive" or quickened; for they are supposed to have been already "quickened together with Christ" (Ephesians 2:5). This verse is parallel to ^{GRS}1 Peter 3:18; compare *Note*, see on ^{GRS}1 Peter 3:18. The Gospel, substantially, was "preached" to the Old Testament Church; though not so fully as to the New Testament Church. It is no valid objection that the Gospel has not been preached to *all* that shall be found dead at Christ's coming. For Peter is plainly referring only to those within reach of the Gospel, or who might have known God through His ministers in Old and New Testament times. Peter, like Paul, argues that those found *living* at Christ's coming shall have no advantage above the *dead* who shall then be raised, inasmuch as the latter *live unto*, or "according to," *God*, even already in His purpose. ALFORD'S explanation is wrong, "that they might be judged according to men as regards the flesh," that is, *be in the state of the completed sentence*

on sin, which is *death after the flesh*. For “judged” cannot have a different meaning in this verse from what “judge” bears in 1 Peter 4:5. “Live according to God” means, live a life with God, *such as God lives*, divine; as contrasted with “according to men in the flesh,” that is, a life such as men live in the flesh.

7. Resuming the idea in 1 Peter 4:5.

the end of all things — and therefore also of the wantonness (1 Peter 4:3,4) of the wicked, and of the sufferings of the righteous [BENGEL]. The nearness meant is not that of mere “time,” but that *before the Lord*; as he explains to guard against misapprehension, and defends God from the charge of procrastination: We live in the last dispensation, not like the Jews under the Old Testament. The Lord will come as a thief; He is “ready” (1 Peter 4:5) to judge the world at any moment; it is only God’s long-suffering and His will that the Gospel should be preached as a witness to all nations, that induces Him to lengthen out the time which is with Him still as nothing.

sober — “self-restrained.” The opposite duties to the sins in 1 Peter 4:3 are here inculcated. Thus “sober” is the opposite of “lasciviousness” (1 Peter 4:3).

watch — *Greek*, “be soberly vigilant”; not intoxicated with worldly cares and pleasures. Temperance promotes *wakefulness* or watchfulness, and both promote prayer. Drink makes drowsy, and drowsiness prevents prayer.

prayer — *Greek*, “prayers”; the end for which we should exercise vigilance.

8. above all things — not that “charity” or *love* is placed above “prayer,” but because *love* is the animating spirit, without which all other duties are dead. Translate as *Greek*, “Having your mutual (literally, ‘towards yourselves’) charity intense.” He presupposes its existence among them; he urges them to make it more fervent.

charity shall cover the multitude, etc. — The oldest manuscripts have “covereth.” Quoted from Proverbs 10:12; compare Proverbs 17:9. “Covereth” so as not harshly to condemn or expose faults; but

forbearingly to bear the other's burdens, forgiving and forgetting past offenses. Perhaps the *additional* idea is included, By prayer for them, *love tries to have them covered by God*; and so being the instrument of converting the sinner from his error, "covereth a (not 'the,' as *English Version*) multitude of sins"; but the former idea from Proverbs is the *prominent* one. It is not, as Rome teaches, "covereth" *his own* sins; for then the *Greek* middle voice would be used; and Proverbs 10:12 17:9 support the Protestant view. "As God with His love covers my sins if I believe, so must I also *cover the sins of my neighbor*" [LUTHER]. Compare the conduct of Shem and Japheth to Noah (^{<0023>}Genesis 9:23), in contrast to Ham's exposure of his father's shame. We ought to cover others' sins only where love itself does not require the contrary.

9. (^{<0123>}Romans 12:13 Hebrews 13:2.) Not the spurious hospitality which passes current in the world, but the entertaining of those *needing* it, especially those exiled for the faith, as the representatives of Christ, and all hospitality to whomsoever exercised from genuine Christian love.

without grudging — *Greek*, "murmuring." "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity," that is open-hearted sincerity; with cordiality. Not secretly speaking against the person whom we entertain, or upbraiding him with the favor we have conferred in him.

10. **every** — "even as *each* man hath received," in whatever degree, and of whatever kind. The Spirit's *gifts* (literally, "gift of *grace*," that is, *gratuitously* bestowed) are the common property of the Christian community, each Christian being but a steward for the edifying of the whole, not receiving the gift merely for his own use.

minister the same — not discontentedly envying or disparaging *the gift of another*.

one to another — *Greek* as in 1 Peter 4:8, "towards yourselves"; implying that all form but one body, and in seeking the good of other members they are promoting the good of *themselves*.

stewards — referring to ^{<0123>}Matthew 25:15, etc.; ^{<0123>}Luke 19:13-26.

11. **If any ... speak** — namely, as a prophet, or divinely taught *teacher* in the Church assembly.

as the, etc. — The *Greek* has no article: “as oracles of God.” This may be due to *Greek*: “God,” having no article, it being a principle when a governed noun omits the *Greek* article that the governing noun should omit it, too. In ^{<4178>}Acts 7:38 also, the *Greek* article is wanting; thus *English Version*, “as the oracles of God,” namely, *the Old Testament*, would be “right,” and the precept be similar to Romans 12:6, “prophesy according to *the analogy of the faith*.” But the context suits better thus, “Let him speak as (becomes one speaking) *oracles OF GOD*.” His divinely inspired words are *not his own*, but *God’s*, and as a *steward* (^{<1041>}1 Peter 4:10) having them committed to him, he ought so to speak them. Jesus was the pattern in this respect (^{<4172>}Matthew 7:29 ^{<8249>}John 12:49 14:10; compare Paul, ^{<1127>}2 Corinthians 2:17). Note, the very same term as is applied in the only other passages where it occurs (^{<4178>}Acts 7:38 Romans 3:2 ^{<3152>}Hebrews 5:12), to the *Old Testament* inspired writings, is here predicated of the inspired *words* (the substance of which was afterwards committed to *writing*) of the *New Testament* prophets.

minister — in *acts*; the other sphere of spiritual activity besides *speaking*.

as of — “out of” the store of his “strength” (*Greek*, *physical* power in relation to outward service, rather than moral and intellectual “ability”; so in ^{<4123>}Mark 12:30).

giveth — *Greek*, “supplieth”; originally said of a *choragus*, who *supplied* the chorus with all necessities for performing their several parts.

that God in all things may be glorified — the final end of all a Christian’s acts.

through Jesus Christ — the mediator through whom all our blessings come down to us, and also through whom all our praises ascend to God. Through Christ alone can God be glorified in us and our sayings and doings.

to whom — Christ.

be — *Greek*, “is.”

for ever and ever — *Greek*, “unto the ages of the ages.”

12. strange — they might *think it strange* that God should allow His chosen children to be sore tried.

fiery trial — like the fire by which metals are tested and their dross removed. The *Greek* adds, “in your case.”

which is to try you — *Greek*, “which is taking place for a trial to you.” Instead of its “*happening* to you” as some strange and untoward *chance*, it “is taking place” with the gracious *design* of trying you; God has a wise design in it — a consolatory reflection.

13. inasmuch as — The oldest manuscripts read, “in proportion as”; “in as far as” ye by suffering are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, that is, by faith enter into realizing fellowship with them; willingly for His sake suffering as He suffered.

with exceeding joy — *Greek*, “*exulting* joy”; now ye *rejoice* amidst sufferings; then ye shall EXULT, for ever free from sufferings (1 Peter 1:6,8). If we will not bear suffering for Christ now, we must bear eternal sufferings hereafter.

14. for — *Greek*, “IN the name of Christ,” namely, *as Christians* (¹1 Peter 4:16 3:14, above); “*in My name*, because ye *belong to Christ*.” The emphasis lies on this: ¹1 Peter 4:15, “as a murderer, thief,” etc., stands in contrast. Let your suffering be on account of Christ, not on account of evil-doing (¹1 Peter 2:20).

reproached — *Reproach* affects noble minds more than loss of goods, or even bodily sufferings.

the spirit ... upon you — the same Spirit as rested on Christ (¹1 Luke 4:18). “The Spirit of glory” is *His* Spirit, for He is the “Lord of glory” (James 2:1). Believers may well overcome the “*reproach*” (compare ¹1 Hebrews 11:26), seeing that “the Spirit of *glory*” rests upon them, as upon Him. It cannot prevent the happiness of the righteous, if they are reproached for Christ, because they retain before God their *glory* entire, as having the Spirit, with whom *glory* is inseparably joined [CALVIN].

and of God — *Greek*, “and *the* (Spirit) of God”; implying that *the Spirit of glory* (which is Christ’s Spirit) is at the same time also *the Spirit of God*.

on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified — omitted in the two oldest *Greek* manuscripts and *Syriac* and *Coptic* versions, but supported by one very old manuscript, *Vulgate*, *Sahidic*, *CYPRIAN*, etc. “Evil spoken of,” literally, “blasphemed”; not merely do they “*speak against you*,” as in ⁴⁰¹⁶1 Peter 3:16, but *blasphemously mock Christ* and Christianity itself.

15. But — *Greek*, “For.” “Reproached *in the name of Christ*” I say (⁴⁰⁴⁴1 Peter 4:14), “FOR *let none*,” etc.

as ... as ... as ... as — the “as” twice in italics is not in the *Greek*. The second *Greek*, “as,” distinguishes the class “busybody in other men’s matters,” from the previous class of delinquents. Christians, from mistaken zeal, under the plea of faithfulness, might readily step out of their own calling and make themselves judges of the acts of unbelievers. Literally, “a bishop in what is (not his own, but) another’s” province; an allusion to the existing *bishops* or overseers of the Church; a self-constituted bishop in others’ concerns.

16. a Christian — the name given in contempt first at Antioch. ⁴¹²⁵Acts 11:26 26:28; the only three places where the term occurs. At first believers had no distinctive name, but were called among themselves “brethren,” Acts 6:3; “disciples,” Acts 6:1; “those of the way,” Acts 9:2; “saints,” Romans 1:7; by the Jews (who denied that Jesus was the *CHRIST*, and so would never originate the name *Christian*), in contempt, “Nazarenes.” At Antioch, where first *idolatrous* Gentiles (Cornelius, Acts 10:1,2, was not an idolater, but a proselyte) were converted, and wide missionary work began, they could be no longer looked on as a *Jewish sect*, and so *the Gentiles* designated them by the new name “Christians.” The rise of the new name marked a new epoch in the Church’s life, a new stage of its development, namely, its missions to the Gentiles. The idle and witty people of Antioch, we know from heathen writers, were famous for inventing nicknames. The date of this Epistle must have been when this had become the generally recognized designation *among Gentiles* (*it is never applied by Christians to each other*, as it was in after ages — an undesigned proof that the New Testament was composed when it professes), and when the name exposed one to reproach and suffering, though not seemingly as yet to *systematic* persecution.

let him not be ashamed — though the world is ashamed of shame. To suffer for one's own faults is no honor (~~4045~~ 1 Peter 4:15 ~~4020~~ 1 Peter 2:20), — for Christ, is no *shame* (~~4044~~ 1 Peter 4:14 ~~4083~~ 1 Peter 3:13).

but let him glorify God — not merely glory in persecution; Peter might have said as the contrast, “but let him esteem it an honor to himself”; but the honor is to be given *to God*, who counts him worthy of such an honor, involving exemption from the coming judgments on the ungodly.

on this behalf — The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “in this *name*,” that is, in respect of suffering for such a name.

17. Another ground of consolation to Christians. All must pass under the judgment of God; God's own household first, their chastisement being here, for which they should glorify Him as a proof of their membership in His family, and a pledge of their escape from the end of those whom the last judgment shall find disobedient to the Gospel.

the time — *Greek*, “season,” “fit time.”

judgment must begin at the house of God — the Church of living believers. Peter has in mind Ezekiel 9:6; compare Amos 3:2 Jeremiah 25:29. Judgment is already begun, the Gospel word, as a “two-edged sword,” having the double effect of saving some and condemning others, and shall be consummated at the last judgment. “When power is given to the destroyer, he observes no distinction between the righteous and the wicked; not only so, but he begins first at the righteous” [WETSTEIN from *Rabbins*]. But God limits the destroyer's power over His people.

if ... at us, what shall the end be of them, etc. — If even the godly have chastening judgments now, how much more shall the ungodly be doomed to damnatory judgments at last.

gospel of God — the very God who is to judge them.

18. scarcely — Compare “so as by fire,” ~~4185~~ 1 Corinthians 3:15; having to pass through trying chastisements, as David did for his sin. “The righteous” man has always more or less of trial, but the issue is certain, and the entrance into the kingdom *abundant* at last. The “scarcely” marks the severity of the ordeal, and the unlikelihood (in a mere human point of

view) of the righteous sustaining it; but the righteousness of Christ and God's everlasting covenant make it all sure.

ungodly — having no regard for God; negative description.

sinner — loving sin; positive; the same man is at once God-forgetting and sin-loving.

appear — in judgment.

19. General conclusion from ^{<0017>}1 Peter 4:17,18. Seeing that the godly know that their sufferings are *by God's will*, to chasten them that they may not perish with the world, they have good reason to trust God cheerfully amidst sufferings, persevering *in well-doing*.

let them — *Greek*, “let them *also*,” “let *even* them,” as well as those not suffering. Not only under ordinary circumstances, but *also* in time of suffering, let believers *commit*. (Compare *Note*, see on ^{<0014>}1 Peter 3:14).

according to the will of God — (See on ^{<0017>}1 Peter 3:17). God's will that the believer should suffer (^{<0017>}1 Peter 4:17), is for his good. One oldest manuscript and *Vulgate* read, “in *well-doings*”; contrast ill-doings, ^{<0015>}1 Peter 4:15. Our committing of ourselves to God is to be, not in indolent and passive quietism, but accompanied with active *well-doings*.

faithful — to His covenant promises.

Creator — who is therefore also our Almighty Preserver. He, not we, must *keep* our souls. Sin destroyed the original spiritual relation between creature and Creator, leaving that only of government. Faith restores it; so that the believer, living to *the will of God* (1 Peter 4:2), rests implicitly on his *Creator's* faithfulness.

CHAPTER 5

1 PETER 5:1-14.

EXHORTATIONS TO ELDERS, JUNIORS, AND ALL IN GENERAL. PARTING PRAYER. CONCLUSION.

1. elders — alike in office and age (1 Peter 5:5).

I ... also an elder — To put one's self on a level with those whom we exhort, gives weight to one's exhortations (compare 2 John 1:1,2). Peter, in true humility for the Gospel's sake, does not put forward his *apostleship* here, wherein he *presided over the elders*. In the apostleship the apostles have no successors, for "the signs of an apostle" have not been transmitted. The presidents over the presbyters and deacons, by whatever name designated, *angel*, *bishop*, or *moderator*, etc., though *of the same ORDER as the presbyters*, yet have virtually succeeded to a superintendency of the Church analogous to that exercised by the apostles (this superintendency and priority existed from the earliest times after the apostles [TERTULLIAN]); just as the Jewish synagogue (the model which the Church followed) was governed by a council of presbyters, presided over by one of themselves, "the chief ruler of the synagogue." (Compare VITRINGA [*Synagogue and Temple*, Part II, chs. 3 and 7]).

witness — an *eye-witness* of Christ's sufferings, and so qualified to exhort you to believing patience in *suffering for well-doing* after His example (1 Peter 4:19 2:20). This explains the "therefore" inserted in the oldest manuscripts, "I therefore exhort," resuming exhortation from 1 Peter 4:19. His higher dignity as an *apostle* is herein delicately implied, as *eye-witnessing* was a necessary qualification for apostleship: compare Peter's own speeches, Acts 1:21,22 2:32 10:39.

also — implying the righteous recompense corresponding to the sufferings.

partaker of the glory — according to Christ's promise; an earnest of which was given in the transfiguration.

2. Feed — *Greek*, “Tend as a shepherd,” by discipline and doctrine. Lead, feed, heed: by prayer, exhortation, government, and example. The dignity is marked by the term “*elder*”; the *duties* of the office, to *tend* or *oversee*, by “*bishop*.” Peter has in mind Christ's injunction to him, “Feed (*tend*) My sheep ... Feed (*pasture*) My lambs” (ⲉⲓⲃⲏⲓ John 21:16). He invites the elders to share with him the same duty (compare ⲉⲁⲓⲃⲏⲓ Acts 20:28). The flock is Christ's.

which is among you — While having a concern for *all* the Church, your special duty is to feed that portion of it “which is among you.”

oversight — *Greek*, “bishopric,” or duty of bishops, that is, overseer.

not by constraint — Necessity is laid upon them, but willingness prevents it being felt, both in undertaking and in fulfilling the duty [BENGEL]. “He is a true presbyter and minister of the counsel of God who doeth and teacheth the things of the Lord, being not accounted righteous merely because he is a presbyter, but because righteous, chosen into the presbytery” [CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA].

willingly — One oldest manuscript, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*, add, “as God would have it to be done” (ⲉⲓⲃⲏⲓ Romans 8:27).

not for filthy lucre — (Isaiah 56:11 Titus 1:7).

of a ready mind — promptly and heartily, without selfish motive of gain-seeking, as the Israelites gave their services *willing-heartedly* to the sanctuary.

3. being lords — *Greek*, “lording it”: implying pride and oppression. “Not that we have dominion over your faith.”

God's heritage — *Greek*, “the inheritances,” that is, the *portions* of the Church committed severally to your pastoral charge [BENGEL]. It is explained by “the flock” in the next clause. However, in 1 Peter 5:2, “flock of God which is among you,” answering to “(God's) heritages” (plural to express *the sheep* who are God's portion and inheritance, Deuteronomy 32:9) committed to you, favors *English Version*. The flock, *as one whole*,

is God's heritage, or *flock* in the singular. Regarded in relation to its *component sheep*, divided among several pastors, it is in the plural "heritages." Compare ^{<4117>}Acts 1:17,25, "part" (the same *Greek*). BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, wrote to Pope Eugene, "Peter could not give thee what he had not: what he had he gave: the *care* over the Church, not *dominion*."

being — *Greek*, "becoming."

ensamples — the most effective recommendation of precept (^{<5012>}Timothy 4:12). Titus 2:7, "patterns." So Jesus. "A monstrosity it is to see the highest rank joined with the meanest mind, the first seat with the lowest life, a grandiloquent tongue with a lazy life, much talking with no fruit" [BERNARD].

4. And — "And so": as the result of "being ensamples" (1 Peter 5:3).

chief Shepherd — the title peculiarly Christ's own, not Peter's or the pope's.

when ... shall appear — *Greek*, "be manifested" (Colossians 3:4). Faith serves the Lord while still unseen.

crown — *Greek*, "*stephanos*," a garland of *victory*, the prize in the Grecian games, woven of ivy, parsley, myrtle, olive, or oak. *Our* crown is distinguished from *theirs* in that it is "incorruptible" and "fadeth not away," as the leaves of theirs soon did. "The crown of *life*." Not a *kingly* "crown" (a different *Greek* word, *diadema*): the prerogative of the Lord Jesus (^{<6912>}Revelation 19:12).

glory — *Greek*, "*the glory*," namely, *to be then revealed* (1 Peter 5:1 ^{<6013>}1 Peter 4:13).

that fadeth not away — *Greek*, "amaranthine" (compare 1 Peter 1:4).

5. ye younger — The *deacons* were originally the younger men, the *presbyters* older; but subsequently as *presbyter* expressed the *office* of Church ruler or teacher, so *Greek* "*neoteros*" means not (as literally) *young men* in age, but *subordinate ministers* and servants of the Church. So Christ uses the term "younger." For He explains it by "he that doth serve," literally, "he that ministereth as a deacon"; just as He explains "the greatness" by "he that is chief," literally, "he that *ruleth*," the very word

applied to the *bishops* or *presbyters*. So “the young men” are undoubtedly the deacons of the Church of Jerusalem, of whom, as being all *Hebrews*, the Hellenistic Christians subsequently complained as neglecting their *Grecian* widows, whence arose the appointment of the seven others, *Hellenistic* deacons. So here, Peter, having exhorted the *presbyters*, or elders, not to lord it over those committed to them, adds, Likewise ye *neoters* or younger, that is, subordinate ministers and deacons, submit cheerfully to the command of the elders [MOSHEIM]. There is no Scripture sanction for “younger” meaning *laymen* in general (as ALFORD explains): its use in this sense is probably of later date. The “*all of you*” that follows, refers to the *congregation* generally; and it is likely that, like Paul, Peter should notice, previous to the general congregation, the *subordinate ministers* as well as the *presbyters*, writing as he did to the same region (Ephesus), and to confirm the teaching of the apostle of the Gentiles.

Yea — to sum up all my exhortations in one.

be subject — omitted in the oldest manuscripts and versions, but TISCHENDORF quotes the *Vatican* manuscript for it. Then translate, “Gird (¹¹¹³1 Peter 1:13 4:1) fast on humility (lowliness of mind) to one another.” The verb is literally, “tie on with a fast *knot*” [WAHL]. Or, “*gird on* humility as *the slave dress (encomboma)*”: as the Lord girded Himself with a towel to perform a servile office of humility and love, washing His disciples’ feet, a scene in which Peter had played an important part, so that he would naturally have it before his mind. Compare similarly 1 Peter 5:2 with ¹²¹⁵John 21:15-17. Clothing was the original badge of man’s sin and shame. Pride caused the need of man’s clothing, and pride still reigns in dress; the Christian therefore clothes himself in humility (1 Peter 3:3,4). God provides him with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, in order to receive which man must be stripped of pride.

God resisteth the proud — Quoted, as James 4:6, from Proverbs 3:34. Peter had James before his mind, and gives his Epistle inspired sanction. Compare 1 Peter 5:9 with James 4:7, literally, “arrayeth Himself against.” Other sins flee from God: pride alone opposeth itself to God; therefore, God also in turn *opposes Himself* to the proud [GERHARD in ALFORD]. Humility is the vessel of all graces [AUGUSTINE].

6. under the mighty hand — afflicting you (⁶¹⁸⁵1 Peter 3:15): “accept” His chastisements, and turn to Him that smiteth you. He depresses the proud and exalts the humble.

in due time — Wait humbly and patiently for His own fit time. One oldest manuscript and *Vulgate* read, “In the season of visitation,” namely, His visitation in mercy.

7. Casting — *once for all*: so the *Greek* aorist.

care — “anxiety? The advantage flowing from *humbling ourselves under God’s hand* (1 Peter 5:6) is confident reliance on His goodness. Exemption from care goes along with humble submission to God.

careth for you — literally “*respecting* you.” Care is a burden which faith casts off the man on his God. Compare Psalm 22:10 37:5 55:22, to which Peter alludes; ⁶¹⁷²Luke 12:22,37 Philippians 4:6.

careth — not so strong a *Greek* word as the previous *Greek* “anxiety.”

8. Peter has in mind Christ’s warning to himself to *watch* against *Satan*, from forgetting which he fell.

Be sober ... vigilant — “Care,” that is, *anxiety*, will intoxicate the soul; therefore be sober, that is, self-restrained. Yet, lest this freedom from *care* should lead any to false security, he adds, “Be vigilant” against “your adversary.” Let this be your “care.” God provides, therefore do not be anxious. The devil seeks, therefore watch [BENGEL].

because — omitted in the oldest manuscripts The broken and disjointed sentences are more fervid and forcible. LUCIFER OF CAGLIARI reads as *English Version*.

adversary — literally, “opponent in a court of justice” (Zechariah 3:1). “Satan” means *opponent*. “Devil,” *accuser* or *slanderer* (⁶¹⁷⁰Revelation 12:10). “The enemy” (⁶¹³⁹Matthew 13:39). “A murderer from the beginning” (⁶¹⁸⁴John 8:44). He counteracts the Gospel and its agents. “The tempter.”

roaring lion — implying his violent and insatiable thirst for prey as a hungry lion. Through man’s sin he got God’s justice on his side against us;

but Christ, our Advocate, by fulfilling all the demands of justice for us, has made our redemption altogether consistent with justice.

walketh about — (Job 1:7 2:2). So the children of the wicked one *cannot rest*. Evil spirits are in 2 Peter 2:4 Jude 1:6, said to be already in chains of darkness and in hell. This probably means that this is their doom *finally*: a doom already begun in part; though for a time they are permitted to roam in the world (of which Satan is prince), especially in the dark air that surrounds the earth. Hence perhaps arises the miasma of the air at times, as physical and moral evil are closely connected.

devour — entangle in worldly “care” (1 Peter 5:7) and other snares, so as finally to destroy. Compare ^{Ⓜ25}Revelation 12:15,16.

9. (^{Ⓜ13}Luke 4:13 ^{Ⓜ11}Ephesians 6:11-17 James 4:7.)

steadfast — Compare established in the truth,” ^{Ⓜ12}2 Peter 1:12. Satan’s power exists only in respect to the unbelieving; the faithful he cannot hurt (^{Ⓜ18}1 John 5:18). Faith gives strength to prayer, the great instrument against the foe (James 1:6, etc.).

knowing, etc. — “encouragement not to faint in afflictions”: your brethren suffer the same; nothing beyond the common lot of Christians befalls you (^{Ⓜ13}1 Corinthians 10:13). It is a sign of God’s favor rather than displeasure, that Satan is allowed to harass you, as he did Job. Your fellow Christians have the same battle of faith and prayer against Satan.

are — *are being accomplished* according to the appointment of God.

in the world — lying in the wicked one, and therefore necessarily the scene of “tribulation” (^{Ⓜ33}John 16:33).

10. Comforting assurance that God will finally “perfect” His work of “grace” in them, after they have undergone the necessary previous suffering.

But — Only do you watch and resist the foe: God will perform the rest [BENGEL].

of all grace — (Compare ^{Ⓜ10}1 Peter 4:10). The God to whom as its source all grace is to be referred; who in grace completes what in grace He began.

He from the first “called (so the oldest manuscripts read for “us”) unto (with a view to) glory.” He will not let His purpose fall short of completion. If He does so in punishing, much more in grace. The three are fitly conjoined: the *call*, the *glory* to which we are called, and the way (*suffering*); the fourth is the ground of the calling, namely, *the grace of God in Christ*.

by — *Greek*, “in.” Christ is He *in virtue of* whom, and *in union with* whom, believers are called to glory. The opposite is “in the world” (1 Peter 5:9 ⁴¹⁶³ John 16:33).

after that ye have suffered — Join to “called you”: *suffering*, as a necessary preliminary to *glory*, was contemplated in God’s *calling*.

a while — short and inconsiderable, as compared with the *glory*.

perfect, etc. — The two oldest manuscripts, and *Vulgate* and *Coptic* versions, read, “*shall perfect* (so that there shall be nothing *defective* in you), *stablish*, *strengthen*,” and omit “*settle*,” literally, “ground,” or “fix on a foundation.” ALFORD reads it in spite of the oldest manuscripts The authority of the latter I prefer; moreover the climax seems to require rather a verb of *completing* the work of grace, than, as the *Greek* means, *founding* it. The *Greek* has, “shall HIMSELF perfect you”: though you are called on to *watch* and *resist* the foe, God *Himself* must really do all in and through you. The same God who begins must *Himself* complete the work. The *Greek* for “*stablish*” (so as to be “steadfast in the faith,” 1 Peter 5:9) is the same as “*strengthen*,” ⁴¹⁷² Luke 22:32. Peter has in mind Christ’s charge, “When thou art converted, *strengthen* thy brethren.” His exhortation accords with his name *Peter*, “Thou art *Peter*, and upon this *rock* I will build My Church.” “*Stablish*,” so as not to waver. “*Strengthen*” *with might in the inner man by His Spirit*, against the foe.

11. To him — emphatic. To Him and Him alone: not to ourselves. Compare “Himself,” see on ⁴¹⁵⁰ 1 Peter 5:10.

glory and — omitted in the oldest manuscripts and versions.

dominion — *Greek*, “the might” shown in so “perfecting,” you, ⁴¹⁵⁰ 1 Peter 5:10.

12. Silvanus — *Silas*, the companion of Paul and Timothy: a suitable messenger by whom to confirm, as Peter here does, *Paul's* doctrine of “the true grace of God” in the same churches (compare ^{<G185>}2 Peter 3:16). We never meet with Silvanus as Paul's companion after Paul's last journey to Jerusalem. His connection with Peter was plainly subsequent to that journey.

as I suppose — Join “faithful unto you [STEIGER], as I suppose.” Silvanus may have stood in a close relation to the churches in Asia, perhaps having taken the oversight of them after Paul's departure, and had afterwards gone to Peter, by whom he is now sent back to them with this Epistle. He did not *know*, by positive observation, *Silvanus' faithfulness to them*; he therefore says, “faithful *to you*, as I suppose,” from the accounts I hear; not expressing doubt. ALFORD joins “I have *written unto you*,” which the *Greek* order favors. The seeming uncertainty, thus, is not as to Silvanus' faithfulness, which strongly marked by the *Greek* article, but as to whether he or some other would prove to be the bearer of the letter, addressed as it was to five provinces, *all* of which Silvanus might not reach: “By Silvanus, that faithful brother, as *expect*, I have Written to you” [BIRKS].

briefly — *Greek*, “in few (words),” as compared with the importance of the subject (^{<G132>}Hebrews 13:22).

exhorting — not so much formally *teaching doctrines*, which could not be done in so “few words.”

testifying — bearing my testimony *in confirmation* (so the *Greek* compound verb implies) of that truth which ye have already heard from Paul and Silas (^{<G127>}1 John 2:27).

that this — of which I have just written, and of which Paul before testified to you (whose testimony, now that he was no longer in those regions, was called in question probably by some; compare ^{<G185>}2 Peter 3:15,16). ^{<G112>}2 Peter 1:12, “the present truth,” namely, the grace formerly promised by the prophets, and *now* manifested to you. “Grace” is the keynote of Paul's doctrine which Peter now confirms (Ephesians 2:5,8). Their sufferings for the Gospel made them to need some attestation and confirmation of the truth, that they should not fall back from it.

wherein ye stand — The oldest manuscripts read imperatively, “*Stand ye*.” Literally, “*into* which (having been already admitted, 1 Peter 1:8,21 2:7,8,9) stand (therein).” Peter seems to have in mind Paul’s words (Romans 5:2 1 Corinthians 15:1). “The grace wherein we stand must be true, and our standing in it true also” [BENGEL]. Compare in “He began his Epistle with grace (1 Peter 1:2), he finishes it with grace, he has besprinkled the middle with grace, that in every part he might teach that the Church is not saved but by grace.”

13. The ... at Babylon — ALFORD, BENGEL, and others translate, “She that is elected together with you in Babylon,” namely, *Peter’s wife*, whom he *led about* with him in his missionary journeys. Compare 1 Peter 3:7, “*heirs together of the grace of life*.” But why she should be called “elected together with you *in Babylon*,” as if there had been no Christian woman in Babylon besides, is inexplicable on this view. In *English Version* the sense is clear: “That portion of *the whole dispersion* (1 Peter 1:1, *Greek*), or Church of Christianized Jews, with Gentile converts, which resides in Babylon.” As Peter and John were closely associated, Peter addresses the Church in John’s peculiar province, Asia, and closes with “your *co-elect* sister Church at *Babylon* saluteth you”; and John similarly addresses the “elect lady,” that is, *the Church in Babylon*, and closes with “the children of thine elect sister (the Asiatic Church) greet thee”; (compare *Introduction* to Second John). ERASMUS explains, “Mark *who is in the place of a son to me*”: compare ⁴¹²²Acts 12:12, implying Peter’s connection with Mark; whence the mention of him in connection with *the Church* at Babylon, in which he labored under Peter before he went to Alexandria is not unnatural. PAPIAS reports from the presbyter John [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39], that Mark was interpreter of Peter, recording in his Gospel the facts related to him by Peter. Silvanus or Silas had been substituted for John Mark, as Paul’s companion, because of Mark’s temporary unfaithfulness. But now Mark restored is associated with Silvanus, Paul’s companion, in Peter’s esteem, as Mark was already reinstated in Paul’s esteem. That Mark had a spiritual connection with the Asiatic’ churches which Peter addresses, and so naturally salutes them, appears from ^{5041b}2 Timothy 4:11 ⁵⁰⁴⁰Colossians 4:10.

Babylon — The Chaldean Babylon on the Euphrates. See *Introduction*, ON THE PLACE OF WRITING this Epistle, in proof that *Rome* is not meant

as Papists assert; compare LIGHTFOOT *sermon*. How unlikely that in a *friendly salutation* the enigmatical title of Rome given in *prophecy* (John, Revelation 17:5), should be used! Babylon was the center from which the Asiatic *dispersion* whom Peter addresses was derived. PHILO [*The Embassy to Gaius*, 36] and JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 15.2. 2 23.12] inform us that Babylon contained a great many Jews in the apostolic age (whereas those at Rome were comparatively few, about eight thousand [JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities*, 17.11]); so it would naturally be visited by the apostle of the circumcision. It was the headquarters of those whom he had so successfully addressed on Pentecost, Acts 2:9, Jewish “Parthians ... dwellers in Mesopotamia” (the Parthians were then masters of Mesopotamian Babylon); these he ministered to *in person*. His other hearers, the Jewish “dwellers in Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia,” he now ministers to by letter. The earliest distinct authority for Peter’s martyrdom *at Rome* is DIONYSIUS, bishop of Corinth, in the latter half of the second century. The desirableness of representing Peter and Paul, the two leading apostles, as together founding the Church of the metropolis, seems to have originated the tradition. CLEMENT OF ROME [*First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 4.5], often quoted for, is really against it. He mentions Paul and Peter together, but makes it as a *distinguishing* circumstance of Paul, that he preached both in the East and West, implying that Peter never was in the West. In ~~2~~ 2 Peter 1:14, he says, “I must *shortly* put off this tabernacle,” implying his martyrdom was near, yet he makes no allusion to Rome, or any intention of his visiting it.

14. kiss of charity — ~~610~~ Romans 16:16, “an *holy kiss*”: the token of love to God and the brethren. *Love* and *holiness* are inseparable. Compare the instance, ~~405~~ Acts 20:37.

Peace — Peter’s closing salutation; as Paul’s is, “Grace be with you,” though he accompanies it with “peace be to the brethren.” “Peace” (flowing from *salvation*) was Christ’s own salutation after the resurrection, and from Him Peter derives it.

be with you all that are in Christ Jesus — The oldest manuscripts omit “Jesus.” In ~~402~~ Ephesians 6:24, addressed to the same region, the same limitation of the salutation occurs, whence, perhaps, Peter here adopts it. Contrast, “Be *with you all*,” ~~610~~ Romans 16:24 ~~403~~ 1 Corinthians 16:23.

THE SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

AUTHENTICITY AND GENUINENESS. — If not a gross imposture, *its own internal witness* is unequivocal in its favor. It has *Peter's* name and apostleship in its heading: not only his surname, but his original name *Simon*, or *Simeon*, he thus, at the close of his life, reminding his readers who he originally was before his call. Again, in ⁶⁰¹⁶2 Peter 1:16-18, he mentions *his presence at the Transfiguration*, and *Christ's prophecy of his death!* and in ⁶⁰¹⁵2 Peter 3:15, *his brotherhood with Paul*. Again, in 2 Peter 3:1, the author speaks of himself as author of the former Epistle: it is, moreover, addressed so as to *include* (but not to be restricted to) the same persons as the first, whom he presupposes to be acquainted with the writings of Paul, by that time recognized as "Scripture" (⁶⁰¹⁵2 Peter 3:15, "the long-suffering of God," compare Romans 2:4). This necessarily implies a *late date*, when Paul's Epistles (including Romans) already had become generally diffused and accepted as Scripture in the Church. The Church of the fourth century had, besides the testimony which we have of the *doubts* of the earlier Christians, other external evidence which we have not, and which, doubtless, under God's overruling providence, caused them to accept it. It is hard to understand how a book palpably false (as it would be if Peter be not the author) could have been accepted in the Canon as finally established in the Councils of Laodicea, A.D. 360 (if the fifty-ninth article be genuine), Hippo, and Carthage in the fourth century (393 and 397). The whole tone and spirit of the Epistle disprove its being an imposture. He writes as one not speaking of himself, but *moved by the Holy Ghost* (⁶⁰¹²2 Peter 1:21). An attempt at such a fraud in the first ages would have brought only shame and suffering, alike from Christians and

heathen, on the perpetrator: there was then *no temptation to pious frauds* as in later times. That it must have been written in the earliest age is plain from the *wide gulf in style* which separates it and the other New Testament Scriptures from even the earliest and best of the post-apostolic period.

DAILLE well says, “God has allowed a fosse to be drawn by human weakness around the sacred canon to protect it from all invasion.”

Traces of acquaintance with it appear in the earliest Fathers. HERMAS [*Similitudes*, 6.4] (compare ^{ⲁⲓⲉ}2 Peter 2:13), Greek, “luxury in the day ... luxuriating with their own deceivings”; and [*Shepherd*, *Vision* 3.7], “They have left their true way” (compare ^{ⲁⲓⲉ}2 Peter 2:15); and [*Shepherd*, *Vision* 4.3], “Thou hast escaped this world” (compare ^{ⲁⲓⲉ}2 Peter 2:20). CLEMENT OF ROME, [*Epistle to the Corinthians*, 7.9; 10], as to Noah’s preaching and Lot’s deliverance, “the Lord making it known that He does not abandon those that trust in Him, but appoints those otherwise inclined to judgment” (compare 2 Peter 2:5,6,7,9). IRENAEUS, A.D. 178 (“the day of the Lord is as a thousand years”), and JUSTIN MARTYR seem to allude to 2 Peter 3:8. HIPPOLYTUS [*On Antichrist*], seems to refer to ^{ⲁⲓⲉ}2 Peter 1:21, “The prophets spake not of their own private (individual) ability and will, but what was (revealed) to them alone by God.” The difficulty is, neither TERTULLIAN, CYPRIAN, CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, nor the oldest Syriac (*Peschito*) version (the *later Syriac* has it), nor the fragment known as *Muratori’s Canon*, mentions it. The first writer who has expressly named it is ORIGEN, in the third century (*Homily* on Joshua; also *Homily* 4 on Leviticus, and *Homily* 13 on Numbers), who names it “Scripture,” quoting 2 Peter 1:4 2:16; however (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25]), he mentions that the Second Epistle was doubted by some. FIRMILIAN, bishop of Cappadocia, in *Epistle to Cyprian* speaks of Peter’s *Epistles* as warning us to avoid heretics (a monition which occurs in the *Second*, not the *First* Epistle). Now *Cappadocia* is one of the countries mentioned (compare 1 Peter 1:1 with 2 Peter 3:1) as addressed; and it is striking, that from Cappadocia we get the earliest decisive testimony. “Internally it claims to be written by Peter, and this claim is confirmed by the Christians of that very region in whose custody it *ought* to have been found” [TREGELLES].

The books disputed (*Antilegomena*), as distinguished from those universally recognized (*Homologoumena*), are Epistles Second Peter,

James, Second and Third John, Jude, the Apocalypse, Epistle to Hebrews (compare EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.3,25]). The *Antilegomena* stand in quite a different class from the *Spurious*; of these there was no *dispute*, they were universally rejected; for example, *the Shepherd of Hermas*, *the Revelation of Peter*, *the Epistle of Barnabas*. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM (A.D. 348) enumerates *seven* Catholic Epistles, including Second Peter; so also GREGORY NAZIANZEN (A.D. 389), and EPIPHANIUS (A.D. 367). The oldest *Greek* manuscripts extant (of the fourth century) contain the *Antilegomena*. JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*], conjectured, from a supposed difference of style between the two Epistles, that Peter, being unable to write *Greek*, employed a different translator of his *Hebrew* dictation in the Second Epistle, and not the same as translated the First into *Greek*. Mark is said to have been his translator in the case of the Gospel according to Mark; but this is all gratuitous conjecture. Much of the same views pervade both Epistles. In both alike he looks for the Lord's coming suddenly, and the end of the world (compare 2 Peter 3:8-10 with 1 Peter 4:5); the inspiration of the prophets (compare 1 Peter 1:10-12 with 2 Peter 1:19-21 3:2); the new birth by the divine word a motive to abstinence from worldly lusts (1 Peter 1:22 2:2; compare 2 Peter 1:4); also compare 1 Peter 2:9 with 2 Peter 1:3, both containing in the *Greek* the rare word "virtue" (1 Peter 4:17 with 2 Peter 2:3).

It is not strange that *distinctive peculiarities* of STYLE should mark each Epistle, the design of both not being the same. Thus the *sufferings* of Christ are more prominent in the First Epistle, the object there being to encourage thereby Christian sufferers; the *glory* of the exalted Lord is more prominent in the Second, the object being to communicate fuller "knowledge" of Him as the antidote to the false teaching against which Peter warns his readers. Hence His title of redemption, "Christ," is the one employed in the First Epistle; but in the Second Epistle, "the Lord." *Hope* is characteristic of the First Epistle; *full knowledge*, of the Second Epistle. In the First Epistle he puts his *apostolic authority* less prominently forward than in the Second, wherein his design is to warn against false teachers. The same difference is observable in Paul's Epistles. Contrast 1 Thessalonians 1:1 2 Thessalonians 1:1 Philippians 1:1, with Galatians 1:1 1 Corinthians 1:1. The reference to Paul's writings as already existing in numbers, and as then a recognized part of *Scripture* (2 Peter 3:15,16),

implies that this Epistle was written at a late date, just before Peter's death.

Striking verbal coincidences occur: compare ^{<6019>}1 Peter 1:19, end, with ^{<6084>}2 Peter 3:14, end; 2 Peter 1:3, "His own," *Greek*, ^{<6026>}2 Peter 2:16 3:17 with 1 Peter 3:1,5. The omission of the *Greek* article, ^{<6023>}1 Peter 2:13 with ^{<6022>}2 Peter 1:21,2:4,5,7. Moreover, two words occur, ^{<6013>}2 Peter 1:13, "tabernacle," that is, the body, and ^{<6015>}2 Peter 1:15, "decease," which at once remind us of the transfiguration narrative in the Gospel. Both Epistles refer to the deluge, and to Noah as the *eighth* that was saved. Though the First Epistle abounds in *quotations* of the Old Testament, whereas the Second contains none, yet *references* to the Old Testament occur often (^{<6022>}2 Peter 1:21 2:5-8,15 3:5,6,10,13). Compare *Greek*, ^{<6021>}1 Peter 3:21, "putting away," with ^{<6014>}2 Peter 1:14; ^{<6017>}1 Peter 1:17, *Greek*, "pass the time," with ^{<6028>}2 Peter 2:18; 1 Peter 4:3, "walked in," with ^{<6020>}2 Peter 2:10 3:3; "called you," ^{<6015>}1 Peter 1:15 2:9 5:10, with 2 Peter 1:3.

Moreover, more verbal coincidences with the speeches of Peter in Acts occur in this *Second*, than in the *First* Epistle. Compare *Greek*, "obtained," 2 Peter 1:1 with ^{<4017>}Acts 1:17; 2 Peter 1:6, *Greek*, "godliness," with ^{<4032>}Acts 3:12, the only passage where the term occurs, except in the Pastoral Epistles; and 2 Peter 2:9 with Acts 10:2,7; 2 Peter 2:9, "punished," with ^{<4021>}Acts 4:21, the only places where the term occurs; 2 Peter 3:2, the double genitive, with ^{<4032>}Acts 5:32; "the day of the Lord," ^{<6020>}2 Peter 3:10, with ^{<4021>}Acts 2:20, where only it occurs, except in 1 Thessalonians 5:2.

The testimony of Jude, ^{<6017>}Jude 1:17,18, is strong for its genuineness and inspiration, by adopting its very words, and by referring to it as received by the churches to which he, Jude, wrote, "Remember the words which were spoken before of the *apostles* of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you *there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.*" Jude, therefore, must have written *after* Second Peter, to which he plainly refers; not before, as ALFORD thinks. No less than eleven passages of Jude rest on similar statements of Second Peter. Jude 1:2, compare 2 Peter 1:2; Jude 1:4, compare 2 Peter 2:1; Jude 1:6, compare 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:7, compare 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 1:8, compare ^{<6020>}2 Peter 2:10; Jude 1:9, compare ^{<6021>}2 Peter 2:11; ^{<6011>}Jude 1:11, compare ^{<6025>}2 Peter 2:15; ^{<6012>}Jude 1:12, compare ^{<6027>}2 Peter 2:17; ^{<6016>}Jude 1:16,

compare ^{<G12>}2 Peter 2:18; ^{<G18>}Jude 1:18, compare 2 Peter 2:1 3:3. Just in the same way Micah, Micah 4:1-4, leans on the somewhat earlier prophecy of Isaiah, whose inspiration he thereby confirms. ALFORD reasons that because Jude, in many of the passages akin to Second Peter, is fuller than Second Peter, he must be prior. This by no means follows. It is at least as likely, if not more so, that the briefer is the earlier, rather than the fuller. The dignity and energy of the style is quite consonant to what we should expect from the prompt and ardent foreman of the apostles. The difference of style between First and Second Peter accords with the distinctness of the subjects and objects.

THE DATE, from what has been said, would be about A.D. 68 or 69, about a year after the first, and shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, the typical precursor of the world's end, to which ^{<G10>}2 Peter 3:10-13 so solemnly calls attention, after Paul's ministry had closed (compare *Greek* aorist tense, "wrote," past time, ^{<G15>}2 Peter 3:15), just before Peter's own death. It was written to *include* the same persons, and perhaps in, or about the same place, as the first. Being without salutations of individuals, and entrusted to the care of no one church, or particular churches as the first is, but directed generally "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us" (2 Peter 1:1), it took a longer time in being recognized as canonical. Had Rome been the place of its composition or publication, it could hardly have failed to have had an early acceptance — an incidental argument against the tradition of Peter's martyrdom *at Rome*. The remote scene of its composition in Babylon, or else in some of the contiguous regions beyond the borders of the Roman empire, and of its circulation in Cappadocia, Pontus, etc., will additionally account for its tardy but at last universal acceptance in the catholic Church. The former Epistle, through *its more definite address*, was earlier in its general acceptance.

OBJECT. — In ^{<G17>}2 Peter 3:17,18 the twofold design of the Epistle is set forth; namely, to guard his readers against "the error" of false teachers, and to exhort them to grow in experimental "knowledge of our Lord and Savior" (^{<G18>}2 Peter 3:18). The ground on which this *knowledge* rests is stated, ^{<G12>}2 Peter 1:12-21, namely, the inspired testimony of apostles and prophets. The danger now, as of old, was about to arise from false teachers, who soon were to come among them, as Paul also (to whom reference is made, ^{<G15>}2 Peter 3:15,16) testified in the same region. The

grand antidote is “the *full knowledge* of our Lord and Savior,” through which we know God the Father, partake of His nature, escape from the pollutions of the world, and have entrance into Christ’s kingdom. The aspect of Christ presented is not so much that of the past *suffering*, as of the future *reigning*, Savior, His present *power*, and future new kingdom. This aspect is taken as best fitted to counteract the *theories* of the false teachers who should “deny” His *Lordship* and His *coming* again, the two very points which, as an *apostle and eye-witness*, Peter attests (His “power” and His “coming”); also, to counteract *their evil example in practice*, blaspheming the way of truth, despising governments, slaves to covetousness and filthy lusts of the flesh, while boasting of Christian freedom, and, worst of all, apostates from the truth. The *knowledge of Christ*, as being the knowledge of “the way of righteousness,” “the right way,” is the antidote of their bad practice. Hence “the preacher” of righteousness, Noah, and “righteous Lot,” are instanced as escaping the destruction which overtook the “unjust” or “unrighteous”; and Balaam is instanced as exemplifying the awful result of “unrighteousness” such as characterized the false teachers. Thus the Epistle forms one connected whole, the parts being closely bound together by mutual relation, and the end corresponding with the beginning; compare ⁶⁰⁸⁴2 Peter 3:14,18 with 2 Peter 1:2, in both “grace” and “peace” being connected with “the knowledge” of our Savior; compare also ⁶⁰⁸⁷2 Peter 3:17 with 2 Peter 1:4,10,12; and ⁶⁰⁸⁸2 Peter 3:18, “grow in grace and knowledge,” with the fuller 2 Peter 1:5-8; and ⁶⁰⁹⁰2 Peter 2:21; and ⁶⁰⁹³2 Peter 3:13, “righteousness,” with 2 Peter 1:1; and 2 Peter 3:1 with ⁶⁰⁹⁵2 Peter 1:13; and 2 Peter 3:2 with ⁶⁰⁹⁶2 Peter 1:19.

The *germs* of Carpocratian and Gnostic heresies already existed, but the actual manifestation of these heresies is spoken of as *future* (2 Peter 2:1,2, etc.): another proof that this Epistle was written, as it professes, in the apostolic age, before the *development* of the Gnostic heresies in the end of the first and the beginning of the second centuries. The description is too general to identify the heresies with any particular one of the subsequent forms of heresy, but applies generally to them all.

Though altogether distinct in aim from the First Epistle, yet a connection may be traced. The neglect of the warnings to circumspection in the walk led to the evils foretold in the Second Epistle. Compare the warning against

the abuse of Christian *freedom*, ^{<G126>}1 Peter 2:16 with ^{<G129>}2 Peter 2:19, “While they promise them *liberty*, they themselves are the *servants of corruption*”; also the caution against *pride*, 1 Peter 5:5,6 with ^{<G128>}2 Peter 2:18, “they speak great swelling words of vanity.”

CHAPTER 1

2 PETER 1:1-21.

ADDRESS: EXHORTATION TO ALL GRACES, AS GOD HAS GIVEN US, IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST, ALL THINGS PERTAINING TO LIFE: CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF APOSTLES, AND ALSO PROPHETS, TO THE POWER AND COMING OF CHRIST.

1. Simon — the *Greek* form: in oldest manuscripts, “Symeon” (*Hebrew*, that is, “hearing”), as in ⁴¹⁵⁴Acts 15:14. His mention of his original name accords with the design of this Second Epistle, which is to warn against the coming false teachers, by setting forth the true “knowledge” of Christ on the testimony of the *original apostolic eye-witnesses* like himself. This was not required in the First Epistle.

servant — “slave”: so Paul, Romans 1:1.

to them, etc. — He addresses a wider range of readers (*all* believers) than in the First Epistle, 2 Peter 1:1, but means to include *especially* those addressed in the First Epistle, as 2 Peter 3:1 proves.

obtained — by grace. Applied by *Peter* to the receiving of the apostleship, literally, “by allotment”: as the *Greek* is, Luke 1:9 ⁴¹⁵⁴John 19:24. They did not acquire it for themselves; the divine election is as independent of man’s control, as the lot which is cast forth.

like precious — “equally precious” to all: to those who believe, though not having seen Christ, as well as to Peter and those who have seen Him. For it lays hold of the same “exceeding great and *precious* promises,” and the same “righteousness of God our Savior.” “The *common* salvation ... the faith once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3).

with us — apostles and eye-witnesses (⁶⁰¹⁸2 Peter 1:18). Though putting forward his *apostleship* to enforce his exhortation, he with true humility

puts himself, as to “the faith,” on a level with all other believers. The degree of faith varies in different believers; but *in respect to its objects*, present justification, sanctification, and future glorification, it is common alike to all. Christ is to all believers “made of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.”

through — *Greek*, “in.” Translate, as the one article to both nouns requires, “the righteousness of *Him who is* (at once) *our God and* (our) *Savior.*” Peter, confirming Pau.’s testimony to the same churches, adopts Paul’s inspired phraseology. The Gospel plan sets forth *God’s righteousness*, which is Christ’s righteousness, in the brightest light. Faith has its sphere IN it as its peculiar element: God is in redemption “righteous,” and at the same time a “Savior”; compare Isaiah 45:21, “a *just* God and a *Savior*.”

2. Grace ... peace — (1 Peter 1:2).

through — *Greek*, “in”: the sphere IN which alone *grace* and *peace* can be multiplied.

knowledge — *Greek*, “full knowledge.”

of God, and of Jesus our Lord — The *Father* is here meant by “God,” but the *Son* in 2 Peter 1:1: marking how entirely *one* the Father and Son are (John 14:7-11). The *Vulgate* omits “of God and”; but oldest manuscripts support the words. Still the prominent object of Peter’s exhortation is “the knowledge of *Jesus our Lord*” (a phrase only in ~~ROM~~ Romans 4:24), and, only secondarily, of the Father through Him (2 Peter 1:8 ~~ROM~~ 2 Peter 2:20 3:18).

3. According as, etc. — Seeing that [ALFORD]. “As He hath given us ALL things (needful) for life and godliness, (so) do you give us ALL diligence,” etc. The oil and flame are given wholly of grace by God, and “taken” by believers: their part henceforth is to “trim their lamps” (compare 2 Peter 1:3,4 with 2 Peter 1:5, etc.).

life and godliness — Spiritual *life* must exist first before there can be true *godliness*. *Knowledge of God* experimentally is the first step to *life* (John 17:3). The child must have vital breath. first, and then cry to, and walk in the ways of, his father. It is not by *godliness* that we obtain *life*, but by

life, godliness. To life stands opposed corruption; to godliness, lust (2 Peter 1:4).

called us — (2 Peter 1:10); “calling” (1 Peter 2:9).

to glory and virtue — rather, “*through* (His) *glory*.” Thus *English Version* reads as one oldest manuscript. But other oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “*By His own* (peculiar) *glory and virtue*”; being the explanation of “His divine power”; *glory* and *moral excellency* (the same attribute is given to God in 1 Peter 2:9, “praises,” literally, “virtues”) characterize God’s “power.” “Virtue,” the standing word in heathen ethics, is found only once in Paul (Philippians 4:8), and in Peter in a distinct sense from its classic usage; it (in the heathen sense) is a term too low and earthly for expressing the gifts of the Spirit [TRENCH, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*].

4. Whereby, etc. — By His *glory and virtue*: His *glory* making the “promises” to be *exceeding great*; His *virtue* making them “precious” [BENGEL]. *Precious promises* are the object of *precious faith*.

given — The *promises* themselves are a *gift*: for God’s *promises* are as sure as if they were fulfilled.

by these — *promises*. They are the object of faith, and even now have a sanctifying effect on the believer, assimilating him to God. Still more so, when they shall be *fulfilled*.

might, etc. — *Greek*, “that ye MAY become partakers of the divine nature,” even now in part; hereafter perfectly; 1 John 3:2, “We shall be like Him.”

the divine nature — not God’s essence, but His *holiness*, including His “glory” and “virtue,” 2 Peter 1:3; the opposite to “corruption through lust.” Sanctification is the imparting to us of *God Himself* by the Holy Spirit in the soul. We by faith partake also of the material nature of Jesus (Ephesians 5:30). The “divine power” enables us to be partakers of “the divine nature.”

escaped the corruption — which involves in, and with itself, *destruction* at last of soul and body; on “escaped” as from a condemned cell, compare ^{GR28}2 Peter 2:18-20 ^{GR97}Genesis 19:17 ^{SC13}Colossians 1:13.

through — *Greek*, “in.” “The corruption in the world” has its seat, not so much in the surrounding elements, as in the “lust” or concupiscence of men’s hearts.

5. And beside this — rather, “And for this very reason,” namely, “seeing that His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3).

giving — literally, “introducing,” side by side with God’s *gift*, on your part “diligence.” Compare an instance, ^{GR10}2 Peter 1:10 ^{GR14}2 Peter 3:14 ^{GR11}2 Corinthians 7:11.

all — all possible.

add — literally, “minister additionally,” or, abundantly (compare *Greek*, ^{GR10}2 Corinthians 9:10); said properly of the one who *supplied* all the equipments of a chorus. So accordingly, “there will be *ministered abundantly* unto you an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Savior” (^{GR11}2 Peter 1:11).

to — *Greek*, “in”; “*in* the possession of *your faith*, *minister virtue*. Their *faith* (answering to “knowledge of Him,” 2 Peter 1:3) is presupposed as the gift of God (2 Peter 1:3 Ephesians 2:8), and is not required to be *ministered* by us; *in* its exercise, *virtue* is to be, moreover, ministered. Each grace being assumed, becomes the stepping stone to the succeeding grace: and the latter in turn qualifies and completes the former. *Faith* leads the band; *love* brings up the rear [BENGEL]. The fruits of *faith* specified are *seven*, the perfect number.

virtue — moral excellency; manly, strenuous energy, answering to the *virtue* (energetic excellency) of God.

and to — *Greek*, “in”; “and in (the exercise of) your virtue knowledge,” namely, practical discrimination of good and evil; intelligent appreciation of what is the will of God in each detail of practice.

6. Greek, “And in your knowledge self-control.” In the exercise of Christian *knowledge* or discernment of God’s will, let there be the practical fruit of *self-control* as to one’s lusts and passions. Incontinence weakens the mind; continence, or self-control, moves weakness and imparts strength And in your self-control patient endurance” amidst sufferings, so much dwelt on in the First Epistle, second, third, and fourth chapters. “And in your patient endurance godliness”; it is not to be mere stoical endurance, but united to [and flowing from] *God-trusting* [ALFORD].

7. “And in your godliness brotherly kindness”; not suffering your godliness to be moroseness, nor a sullen solitary habit of life, but kind, generous, and courteous [ALFORD]. Your natural affection and *brotherly kindness* are to be sanctified by *godliness*. “And in your brotherly kindness love,” namely, to *all* men, even to enemies, in thought, word, and deed. From *brotherly kindness* we are to go forward to *love*. Compare ¹Thessalonians 3:12, “Love one toward another (brotherly kindness), and toward all men (charity).” So *charity* completes the choir of graces in ¹Colossians 3:14. In a retrograde order, he who has *love* will exercise *brotherly kindness*; he who has *brotherly kindness* will feel *godliness* needful; the *godly* will mix nothing stoical with his *patience*; to the patient, *temperance* is easy; the temperate weighs things well, and so has *knowledge*; knowledge guards against sudden impulse carrying away its *virtue* [BENGEL].

8. be — *Greek*, “subsist” that is, supposing these things to have an actual *subsistence* in you; “be” would express the mere matter-of-fact *being* (¹Acts 16:20).

abound — *more than in others*; so the *Greek*.

make — “render,” “constitute you,” habitually, by the very fact of possessing these graces.

barren — “inactive,” and, as a field lying fallow and *unworked* (*Greek*), so *barren* and *useless*.

unfruitful in — rather, ... *in respect to*, “The *full knowledge* (*Greek*) of Christ” is the goal towards which all these graces tend. As their *subsisting* in us constitutes us *not barren* or idle, so their *abounding* in us constitutes

us *not unfruitful* in respect to it. It is through *doing* His will, and so becoming like Him, that we grow in *knowing* Him (~~ALFORD~~ John 7:17).

9. But — *Greek*, “For.” Confirming the need of these graces (2 Peter 1:5-8) by the fatal consequences of the want of them.

he that lacketh — *Greek*, “he to whom these are not present.”

blind — as to the spiritual realities of the unseen world.

and cannot see afar off — explanatory of “blind.” He *closes his eyes* (*Greek*) as unable to see distant objects (namely, heavenly things), and fixes his gaze on present and earthly things which alone he can see. Perhaps a degree of *wilfulness* in the blindness is implied in the *Greek*, “closing the eyes,” which constitutes its culpability; hating and rebelling against the light shining around him.

forgotten — *Greek*, “contracted forgetfulness,” wilful and culpable obliviousness.

that he was purged — The continually present sense of one’s sins having been once for all forgiven, is the strongest stimulus to every grace (Psalm 130:4). This once-for-all accomplished cleansing of unbelievers *at their* new birth is taught symbolically by Christ, ~~ALFORD~~ John 13:10, *Greek*, “He that has been *bathed* (once for all) needeth not save to *wash* his feet (of the soils contracted in the daily walk), but is clean every whit (in Christ our righteousness).” “Once purged (with Christ’s blood), we should have no more consciousness of sin (as condemning us, Hebrews 10:2, because of God’s promise).” Baptism is the sacramental pledge of this.

10. Wherefore — seeking the blessed consequence of having, and the evil effects of not having, these graces (2 Peter 1:8,9).

the rather — the more earnestly.

brethren — marking that it is affection for them which constrains him so earnestly to urge them. Nowhere else does he so address them, which makes his calling them so here the more emphatical.

give diligence — The *Greek* aorist implies *one lifelong effect* [ALFORD].

to make — *Greek* middle voice; to make *so far as it depends on you*; to do *your part* towards making. “To make” absolutely and finally is God’s part, and would be in the active.

your calling and election sure — by *ministering additionally in your faith virtue, and in your virtue knowledge*, etc. God must work all these graces in us, yet not so that we should be mere *machines*, but *willing instruments* in His hands in making His election of us “secure.” The *ensuring* of our *election* is spoken of not in respect to God, whose counsel is steadfast and everlasting, but in respect to *our part*. There is no uncertainty on His part, but on ours the only security is our *faith* in His promise and the fruits of the Spirit (2 Peter 1:5-7,11). Peter subjoins *election* to *calling*, because the *calling* is the effect and proof of God’s *election*, which goes before and is the main thing (^{<413>}Romans 8:28,30,33, where God’s “*elect*” are those “*predestinated*,” and election is “His *purpose*,” according to which He “called” them). We know His *calling* before His *election*, thereby *calling* is put first.

fall — *Greek*, “stumble” and fall finally (^{<411>}Romans 11:11). Metaphor from one *stumbling* in a race (^{<412>}1 Corinthians 9:24).

11. an entrance — rather as *Greek*, “*the* entrance” which ye look for.

ministered — the same verb as in 2 Peter 1:5. *Minister* in your faith virtue and the other graces, so shall there be *ministered to you* the entrance into that heaven where these graces shine most brightly. The reward of grace hereafter shall correspond to the work of grace here.

abundantly — *Greek*, “richly.” It answers to “abound,” 2 Peter 1:8. If these graces *abound* in you, you shall have your entrance into heaven not merely “scarcely” (as he had said, ^{<415>}1 Peter 4:18), nor “so as by fire,” like one escaping with life after having lost all his goods, but in triumph without “stumbling and falling.”

12. Wherefore — as these graces are so necessary to your abundant entrance into Christ’s kingdom (^{<411>}2 Peter 1:10,11).

I will not be negligent — The oldest manuscripts read, “*I will be about* always to put you in remembrance” (an accumulated future: I will regard you as always needing to be reminded): compare “I will endeavor,” ^{<415>}2

Peter 1:15. “I will be sure always to remind you” [ALFORD]. “Always”; implying the reason why he writes the second Epistle so soon after the first. He feels *there is likely* to be more and more need of admonition on account of the increasing corruption (2 Peter 2:1,2).

in the present truth — *the Gospel truth now present with you*: formerly promised to Old Testament believers as *about to be*, now in the New Testament *actually present* with, and in, believers, so that they are “established” in it as a “present” reality. Its importance renders frequent monitions never superfluous: compare Paul’s similar apology, ^{<6154>}Romans 15:14,15.

13. Yea — *Greek*, “But”; though “you know” the truth (^{<6012>}2 Peter 1:12).

this tabernacle — soon to be taken down (2 Corinthians 5:1): I therefore need *to make the most of my short time* for the good of Christ’s Church. The zeal of Satan against it, the more intense *as his time is short*, ought to stimulate Christians on the same ground.

by — *Greek*, “in” (compare 2 Peter 3:1).

14. shortly I must put off — *Greek*, “the putting off (as a garment) of my tabernacle is speedy”: implying a *soon approaching*, and also a *sudden* death (as a violent death is). Christ’s words, ^{<6118>}John 21:18,19, “When thou art old,” etc. were the ground of his “knowing,” now that he was old, that his foretold martyrdom was near. Compare as to Paul, 2 Timothy 4:6. Though a violent death, he calls it a “departure” (*Greek* for “decease,” ^{<6015>}2 Peter 1:15), compare ^{<4016>}Acts 7:60.

15. endeavor — “use my diligence”: the same *Greek* word as in ^{<6010>}2 Peter 1:10: this is the field in which my *diligence* has scope. Peter thus fulfils Christ’s charge, “Feed My sheep” (^{<6216>}John 21:16,17).

decease — “departure.” The very word (“exodus”) used in the Transfiguration, Moses and Elias conversing about Christ’s *decease* (*found nowhere else in the New Testament*, but ^{<8112>}Hebrews 11:22, “the *departing* of Israel” out of Egypt, to which the saints’ deliverance from the present bondage of corruption answers). “Tabernacle” is another term found here as well as there (^{<4118>}Luke 9:31,33): an undesigned coincidence confirming Peter’s authorship of this Epistle.

that ye may be able — by the help of this written Epistle; and perhaps also of Mark's Gospel, which Peter superintended.

always — *Greek*, “on each occasion”: as often as occasion may require.

to have ... in remembrance — *Greek*, “to exercise remembrance of.” Not merely “to remember,” as sometimes we do, things we care not about; but “have them in (earnest) remembrance,” as momentous and precious truths.

16. For — reason why he is so earnest that the remembrance of these things should be continued after his death.

followed — out in detail.

cunningly devised — *Greek*, “devised by (*man's*) *wisdom*”; as distinguished from what *the Holy Ghost* teaches (compare ^{41B3}1 Corinthians 3:13). But compare also 2 Peter 2:3, “feigned words.”

fables — as the heathen mythologies, and the subsequent Gnostic “fables and genealogies,” of which the germs already existed in the junction of Judaism with Oriental philosophy in Asia Minor. A precautionary protest of the Spirit against the rationalistic theory of the Gospel history being *myth*.

when we made known unto you — not that Peter himself had *personally* taught the churches in Pontus, Galatia, etc., but he was one of the apostles whose testimony was borne to them, and to *the Church in general*, to whom this Epistle is addressed (2 Peter 1:1, *including*, but not *restricted*, as *First Peter*, to the churches in Pontus, etc.).

power — the opposite of “fables”; compare the contrast of “word” and “power,” ^{41B1}1 Corinthians 4:20. A specimen of His *power* was given at the Transfiguration also of His “*coming*” again, and its attendant glory. The *Greek* for “coming” is always used of His *second* advent. A refutation of the scoffers (2 Peter 3:4): I, James and John, saw with our own eyes a mysterious sample of His coming glory.

were — *Greek*, “were made.”

eye-witnesses — As initiated spectators of mysteries (so the *Greek*), we were admitted into His innermost secrets, namely, at the Transfiguration.

his — emphatical (compare *Greek*): “THAT great ONE’S *majesty*.”

17. received ... honor — in the *voice* that spake to Him.

glory — in the *light* which shone around Him. came *Greek*, “was borne”: the same phrase occurs only in ~~1~~¹ Peter 1:13; one of several instances showing that the argument against the authenticity of this Second Epistle, from its dissimilarity of style as compared with First Peter, is not well founded.

such a voice — as he proceeds to describe.

from the excellent glory — rather as *Greek*, “by (that is uttered by) the magnificent glory (that is, by *God*: as His glorious manifested presence is often called by the Hebrews “the Glory,” compare “His Excellency,” ~~Deuteronomy~~^{Deuteronomy} 33:26 Psalm 21:5).”

in whom — *Greek*, “*in regard to whom*” (accusative case); but Matthew 17:5, “in whom” (dative case) centers and rests My good pleasure. Peter also omits, as not required by his purpose, “hear Him,” showing his independence in his inspired testimony.

I am — *Greek* aorist, past time, “My good pleasure *rested* from eternity.”

18. which came — rather as *Greek*, “we heard borne from heaven.”

holy mount — as the Transfiguration mount came to be regarded, on account of the manifestation of Christ’s divine glory there.

we — emphatical: we, James and John, as well as myself.

19. We — all believers.

a more sure — rather as *Greek*, “we have *the* word of prophecy more sure (confirmed).” Previously we knew its *sureness* by faith, but, through that visible specimen of its hereafter entire fulfillment, assurance is made *doubly sure*. Prophecy assures us that Christ’s *sufferings*, now past, are to be followed by Christ’s *glory*, still future: the Transfiguration gives us a pledge to make our faith still stronger, that “the day” of His glory will “dawn” ere long. He does not mean to say that “the word of prophecy,” or Scripture, is surer than *the voice of God* heard at the Transfiguration, as *English Version*; for this is plainly not the fact. The fulfillment of

prophecy so far in Christ's history makes us the *surer* of what is yet to be fulfilled, His consummated glory. The word was the "lamp (*Greek* for 'light') heeded" by Old Testament believers, until a gleam of the "day dawn" was given at Christ's first coming, and especially in His Transfiguration. So the word is *a lamp* to us still, until "the day" burst forth fully at the second coming of "the Sun of righteousness." *The day*, when it dawns upon you, makes *sure* the fact that you saw correctly, though indistinctly, the objects revealed by *the lamp*.

whereunto — to which word of prophecy, primarily the Old Testament in Peter's *day*; but now also in our day the New Testament, which, though brighter than the Old Testament (compare 1 John 2:8, end), is but a *lamp* even still as compared with the brightness of the eternal day (compare 2 Peter 3:2). Oral teachings and traditions of ministers are to be tested by the written word (⁴⁴⁷¹Acts 17:11).

dark — The *Greek* implies *squalid*, having neither water nor light: such spiritually is the world without, and the smaller world (microcosm) within, the heart in its natural state. Compare the "dry places" ⁴¹²⁴Luke 11:24 (namely, unwatered by the Spirit), through which the unclean spirit goeth.

dawn — bursting *through* the darkness.

day star — *Greek*, the morning star," as ⁶²¹⁹Revelation 22:16. The Lord Jesus.

in your hearts — Christ's *arising in the heart* by His Spirit giving full assurance, creates spiritually full day in the heart, the means to which is prayerfully *giving heed to the word*. This is associated with the coming of *the day of the Lord*, as being the earnest of it. Indeed, even our *hearts* shall not *fully* realize Christ in all His unspeakable glory and felt presence, until He shall come (Malachi 4:2). Isaiah 66:14,15, "When you see this, your *heart* shall rejoice ... For, behold, the Lord will come." However, TREGELLES' punctuation is best, "whereunto ye do well to take heed (as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day have dawned and the morning star arisen) in your hearts." For the day has already dawned in the heart of believers; what they wait for is its visible manifestation at Christ's coming.

20. “Forasmuch as ye know this” (ⲁⲓⲃⲁ 1 Peter 1:18).

first — the *foremost* consideration in studying the word of prophecy. Laying it down as a *first principle* never to be lost sight of.

is — *Greek*, not the simple verb, *to be*, but *to begin to be*, “proves to be,” “becometh.” No prophecy is found to be the result of “private (the mere individual writer’s uninspired) *interpretation*” (*solution*), and so *origination*. The *Greek* noun *epilysis*, does not mean in itself *origination*; but that which the sacred writer could not always fully *interpret*, though being the speaker or writer (as ⲁⲓⲃⲁ 1 Peter 1:10-12 implies), was plainly not of his own, but of God’s *disclosure*, *origination*, and *inspiration*, as Peter proceeds to add, “But holy men ... spake (and afterwards wrote) ... moved by the Holy Ghost”: a reason why ye should “give” all “heed” to it. The parallelism to ⲁⲓⲃⲁ 2 Peter 1:16 shows that “*private interpretation*,” contrasted with “moved by the Holy Ghost,” here answers to “fables devised by (human) wisdom,” contrasted with “we were eye-witnesses of *His majesty*,” as attested by the “voice from God.” The words of the prophetic (and so of all) Scripture writers were not mere words *of the individuals*, and therefore to be *interpreted by them*, but of “the Holy Ghost” by whom they were “moved.” “Private” is explained, ⲁⲓⲃⲁ 2 Peter 1:21, “by the will of man” (namely, the individual writer). In a secondary sense the text teaches also, as the word is the *Holy Spirit’s*, it cannot be *interpreted* by its *readers* (any more than by its *writers*) by their mere *private* human powers, but by the teaching of *the Holy Ghost* (ⲁⲓⲃⲁ John 16:14). “He who is the author of Scripture is its supreme interpreter” [GERHARD]. ALFORD translates, “springs not out of human interpretation,” that is, is not a prognostication made by a man *knowing what he means* when he utters it, but,” etc. (ⲁⲓⲃⲁ John 11:49-52). Rightly: except that the verb is rather, *doth become*, or *prove to be*. It not being of private interpretation, you must “*give heed*” to it, looking for the *Spirit’s* illumination “in your hearts” (compare *Note*, see on ⲁⲓⲃⲁ 2 Peter 1:19).

21. came not in old time — rather, “was never at any time borne” (to us).

by the will of man — alone. Jeremiah 23:26, “prophets of the deceit of *their own heart*.” Compare 2 Peter 3:5, “willingly.”

holy — One oldest manuscript has, “*men FROM God*”: the emissaries from God. “Holy,” if read, will mean because they had the Holy Spirit.

moved — *Greek*, “borne” (along) as by a mighty wind: Acts 2:2, “*rushing* (the same *Greek*) wind”: rapt out of themselves: still not in fanatical excitement (~~412~~ 1 Corinthians 14:32). The *Hebrew* “*nabi*,” “prophet,” meant an *announcer* or interpreter of God: he, as *God’s spokesman*, *interpreted* not his own “private” will or thought, but God’s “Man of the Spirit” (Hosea 9:7, *Margin*). “Thou testifiedst by Thy Spirit in Thy prophets.” “Seer,” on the other hand, refers to the *mode of receiving* the communications from God, rather than to the *utterance* of them to others. “Spake” implies that, both in its original oral announcement, and now even when in writing, it has been always, and is, *the living voice* of God *speaking* to us through His inspired servants. *Greek*, “borne (along)” forms a beautiful antithesis to “was borne.” They were passive, rather than active instruments. The *Old Testament* prophets primarily, but including also *all* the inspired penmen, whether of the New or Old Testament (2 Peter 3:2).

CHAPTER 2

2 PETER 2:1-22.

FALSE TEACHERS TO ARISE: THEM BAD PRACTICES AND SURE DESTRUCTION, FROM WHICH THE GODLY SHALL BE DELIVERED, AS LOT WAS.

1. But — in contrast to the prophets “moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21).

also — as well as the true prophets (2 Peter 1:19-21). Paul had already testified the entrance of false prophets into the same churches.

among the people — Israel: he is writing to believing *Israelites* primarily (see on 1 Peter 1:1). Such a “false prophet” was Balaam (2 Peter 2:15).

there shall be — Already symptoms of the evil were appearing (2 Peter 2:9-22 Jude 1:4-13).

false teachers — teachers of falsehood. In contrast to the true teachers, whom he exhorts his readers to give heed to (2 Peter 3:2).

who — *such as* (literally, “the which”) shall.

privily — not at first openly and directly, but *by the way*, bringing in error *by the side* of the true doctrine (so the *Greek*): Rome objects, Protestants cannot point out the exact date of the beginnings of the false doctrines superadded to the original truth; we answer, Peter foretells us it would be so, that the first introduction of them would be stealthy and unobserved (Jude 1:4).

damnable — literally, “of destruction”; entailing destruction (Philippians 3:19) on all who follow them.

heresies — *self-chosen* doctrines, not emanating from God (compare “will-worship,” Colossians 2:23).

even — going *even* to such a length as to *deny* both in teaching and practice. *Peter* knew, by bitter repentance, what a fearful thing it is to deny the Lord (ⲁⲓⲃⲁ Luke 22:61,62).

denying — Him whom, above all others, they ought to *confess*.

Lord — “Master and Owner” (*Greek*), compare Jude 1:4, *Greek*. Whom the true doctrine teaches to be their OWNER *by* right of purchase. Literally, “denying Him who bought them (that He should be thereby), their Master.”

bought them — Even the ungodly were bought by His “precious blood.” It shall be their bitterest self-reproach in hell, that, as far as Christ’s redemption was concerned, they might have been saved. The denial of His *propitiatory* sacrifice is included in the meaning (compare 1 John 4:3).

bring upon themselves — compare “God *bringing in* the flood *upon* the world,” 2 Peter 2:5. Man brings upon himself the vengeance which God brings upon him.

swift — swiftly descending: as the Lord’s coming shall be swift and sudden. As the ground swallowed up Korah and Dathan, and “they went down *quick* into the pit.” Compare ⲁⲓⲓⲓ Jude 1:11, which is akin to this passage.

2. follow — out: so the *Greek*.

pernicious ways — The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “licentiousness” (Jude 1:4). False doctrine and immoral practice generally go together (ⲁⲓⲃⲁ 2 Peter 2:18,19).

by reason of whom — “on account of whom,” namely, the followers of the false teachers.

the way of truth shall be evil spoken of — “blasphemed” by those without, who shall lay on Christianity itself the blame of its professors’ evil practice. Contrast ⲁⲓⲓⲓ 1 Peter 2:12.

3. through, etc. — *Greek*, “IN covetousness” as their element (ⲁⲓⲃⲁ 2 Peter 2:14, end). Contrast ⲁⲓⲓⲓ 2 Corinthians 11:20 12:17.

of a long time — in God’s eternal purpose. “*Before of old* ordained to condemnation” (Jude 1:4).

lingereth not — though sinners think it lingers; “is not idle.”

damnation — *Greek*, “destruction” (see on 2 Peter 2:1). Personified.

slumbereth not — though sinners *slumber*.

4. if — The apodosis or consequent member of the sentence is not expressed, but is virtually contained in 2 Peter 2:9. If God in past time has punished the ungodly and saved His people, He will be sure to do so also in our days (compare end of 2 Peter 2:3).

angels — the highest of intelligent creatures (compare with this verse, Jude 1:6), yet not spared when they sinned.

hell — *Greek*, “*Tartarus*”: nowhere else in New Testament or the *Septuagint*: equivalent to the usual *Greek*, “*Gehenna*.” Not inconsistent with 1 Peter 5:8; for though their final doom is *hell*, yet for a time they are permitted to roam beyond it in “the darkness of this world.” Slaves of *Tartarus* (called “the abyss,” or “deep,” ⁴⁸⁸Luke 8:31; “the bottomless pit,” ⁴⁹¹Revelation 9:11) may also come upon earth. Step by step they are given to *Tartarus*, until at last they shall be wholly bound to it.

delivered — as the judge delivers the condemned prisoner to the officers (Revelation 20:2).

into chains — (Jude 1:6). The oldest manuscripts read, “dens,” as ALFORD translates: the *Greek*, however, may, in Hellenistic *Greek*, mean “chains,” as Jude expresses it. They are “reserved” unto hell’s “mist of darkness” as their final “judgment” or doom, and meanwhile their exclusion from the light of heaven is begun. So the ungodly were considered as virtually “in prison,” though at large on the earth, from the moment that God’s sentence went forth, though not executed till one hundred twenty years after.

5. eighth — that is, Noah, and seven others. Contrasted with the densely peopled “world of the ungodly.”

preacher — not only “righteous” himself (compare 2 Peter 2:8), but also “a preacher of righteousness”: adduced by Peter against the *licentiousness* of the false teachers (2 Peter 2:2) who have no prospect before them but destruction, even as it overtook the ungodly world in Noah’s days.

6. **with**, etc. — “TO overthrow” [ALFORD].

ensample — “of (the fate that should befall) those who in after-time should live ungodly.” Compare Jude 1:7, “set forth for an example.”

7. **just** — righteous.

filthy conversation — literally, “behavior in licentiousness” (Genesis 19:5).

the wicked — *Greek*, “lawless”: who set at defiance the *laws* of nature, as well as man and God. The Lord reminds us of Lot’s faithfulness, but not of his sin in the cave: so in Rahab’s case.

8. **vexed** — *Greek*, “tormented.”

9. **knoweth how** — He is at no loss for means, even when men see no escape.

out of — not actually *from*.

temptations — trials.

to be punished — *Greek*, “being punished”: as the fallen angels (2 Peter 2:4), actually under sentence, and awaiting its final execution. Sin is already its own penalty; hell will be its full development.

10. **chiefly** — They *especially* will be punished (Jude 1:8).

after — following after.

lust of uncleanness — *defilement*: “hankering after polluting and unlawful use of the flesh” [ALFORD].

government — *Greek*, “lordship,” “dominion” (Jude 1:8).

Presumptuous — *Greek*, “Darers.” *Self-will* begets *presumption*. Presumptuously daring.

are not afraid — though they are so insignificant in *might*; *Greek*, “tremble not” (Jude 1:8, end).

speak evil of — *Greek*, “blaspheme.”

dignities — *Greek*, “glories.”

11. which are — though they are.

greater — than these blasphemers. Jude instances *Michael* (Jude 1:9).

railing accusation — *Greek*, “blaspheming judgment” (Jude 1:9).

against them — against “dignities,” as for instance, the fallen angels: once exalted, and still retaining traces of their former power and glory.

before the Lord — In the presence of the Lord, *the Judge*, in reverence, they abstain from judgment [BENGEL]. Judgment belongs to God, not the angels. How great is the dignity of the saints who, as Christ’s assessors, shall hereafter judge angels! Meanwhile, *railing judgments*, though spoken with truth, *against dignities*, as being uttered irreverently, are of the nature of “blasphemies” (*Greek*, 1 Corinthians 4:4,5). If superior angels dare not, as being in the presence of God, the Judge, speak evil even of the bad angels, how awful the presumption of those who speak evil blasphemously of good “dignities.” 2 Samuel 16:7,8, Shimei; Numbers 16:2,3, Korah, etc., referred to also in ~~Gen~~ Jude 1:11 Numbers 12:8, “Were ye (Aaron and Miriam) *not afraid to speak evil* of My servant Moses?” The angels who sinned still retain the indelible impress of majesty. Satan is still “a strong man”: “prince of this world”; and under him are “principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world.” We are to avoid irreverence in regard to them, not on their account, but on account of God. A warning to those who use Satan’s name irreverently and in blasphemy. “When the ungodly curseth Satan, he curseth his own soul.”

12. (~~Gen~~ Jude 1:19).

But — In contrast to the “angels,” ~~Gen~~ 2 Peter 2:11.

brute — *Greek*, “irrational.” In contrast to *angels* that “excel in strength.”

beasts — *Greek*, “animals” (compare Psalm 49:20).

natural — transposed in the oldest manuscripts, “born natural,” that is, born naturally so: being *in their very nature* (that is, naturally) as such (irrational animals), born to be taken and destroyed (*Greek*, “unto capture and destruction,” or *corruption*, see on Galatians 6:8; compare end of this verse, “shall perish,” literally, “shall be corrupted,” in their own *corruption*. ^{<610>}Jude 1:10, *naturally ... corrupt themselves*,” and so *destroy themselves*; for one and the same *Greek* word expresses *corruption*, the seed, and *destruction*, the developed fruit).

speak evil of — *Greek*, “*in the case of things which they understand not.*” Compare the same presumption, the parent of subsequent Gnostic error, producing an opposite, though kindred, error, the worshipping of good angels”: ^{<510>}Colossians 2:18, “*intruding into those things which he hath not seen.*”

13. receive — “shall carry off as their due.”

reward of — that is, *for their “unrighteousness”* [ALFORD]. Perhaps it is implied, *unrighteousness* shall be its own *reward* or punishment. “Wages of unrighteousness” (^{<10>}2 Peter 2:15) has a different sense, namely, *the earthly gain to be gotten by “unrighteousness.”*

in the daytime — Translate as *Greek*, “counting the luxury which is in the daytime (not restricted to *night*, as ordinary revelling. Or as *Vulgate* and CALVIN, “the luxury which is *but for a day*”: so ^{<810>}Hebrews 11:25, “the pleasures of sin *for a season*”; and ^{<810>}Hebrews 12:16, Esau) to be pleasure,” that is, to be their chief good and highest enjoyment.

Spots — *in themselves.*

blemishes — disgraces: bringing *blame* (so the *Greek*) *on the Church and on Christianity* itself.

sporting themselves — *Greek*, “luxuriating.”

with — *Greek*, “in.”

deceivings — or else passively, “deceits”: *luxuries gotten by deceit*. Compare ^{<10>}Matthew 13:22, “Deceitfulness of riches”; ^{<10>}Ephesians 4:22, “Deceitful lusts.” While deceiving others, they are deceived themselves. Compare with *English Version*, ^{<10>}Philippians 3:19, “Whose glory is in

their shame.” “Their own” stands in opposition to “you”: “While partaking of the *love-feast* (compare ⁶¹²Jude 1:12) with *you*,” they are at the same time “luxuriating in *their own* deceivings,” or “deceits” (to which latter clause answers ⁶¹²Jude 1:12, end: Peter presents the positive side, “they *luxuriate* in their own deceivings”; Jude, the negative, “feeding themselves *without fear*”). But several of the oldest manuscripts, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Sahidic Versions* read (as Jude), “In their own love-feasts”: “their own” will then imply that they pervert the *love-feasts* so as to make them subserve *their own* self-indulgent purposes.

14. full of adultery — literally, “full of an adulteress,” as though they carried about adulteresses always dwelling in their eyes: the eye being the avenue of lust [HORNEIUS]. BENDEL makes the *adulteress* who fills their eyes, to be “alluring desire.”

that cannot cease — “that cannot *be made to cease* from sin.”

beguiling — “laying baits for.”

unstable — not firmly established in faith and piety.

heart — not only the *eyes*, which are the channel, but the *heart*, the fountain head of lust. Job 31:7, “Mine *heart* walked after mine *eyes*.”

covetous practices — The oldest manuscripts read singular, “covetousness.”

cursed children — rather as *Greek*, “children of curse,” that is, devoted to the curse. *Cursing* and *covetousness*, as in Balaam’s case, often go together: the curse he designed for Israel fell on Israel’s foes and on himself. True believers *bless*, and curse not, and *so are blessed*.

15. have — Some of the seducers are spoken of as *already come*, others as *yet to come*.

following — out: so the *Greek*.

the way — (⁰⁰²²Numbers 22:23,32 Isaiah 56:11).

son of Bosor — the same as *Beor* (Numbers 22:5). This word was adopted, perhaps, because the kindred word *Basar* means *flesh*; and

Balaam is justly termed *son of carnality*, as covetous, and the enticer of Israel to lust.

loved the wages of unrighteousness — and therefore wished (in order to gain them from Balak) to curse Israel whom God had blessed, and at last gave the hellish counsel that the only way to bring God's curse on Israel was to entice them to *fleshly lust* and *idolatry*, which often go together.

16. was rebuked — *Greek*, “had a rebuke,” or *conviction*; an *exposure* of his specious wickedness on his being *tested* (the root verb of the *Greek* noun means to “convict on testing”).

his — *Greek*, “his own”: his own beast convicted him of *his own* iniquity.

ass — literally, “beast of burden”; the ass was the ordinary animal used in riding in Palestine.

dumb — *Greek*, “voiceless-speaking *in man's voice*”; marking the marvellous nature of the miracle.

forbade — literally, “hindered.” It was not the *words* of the ass (for it merely deprecated his beating it), but *the miraculous fact of its speaking at all*, which *withstood* Balaam's perversity in desiring to go after God had forbidden him in the first instance. Thus indirectly the ass, and directly the angel, *rebuked* his worse than asinine obstinacy; the ass *turned aside* at the sight of the angel, but Balaam, after God had plainly said, Thou shalt not go, persevered in wishing to go for gain; thus the ass, *in act, forbade* his madness. How awful a contrast — a *dumb beast* forbidding an *inspired prophet*!

17. (ⲓⲛⲓⲩ Jude 1:12,13.)

wells — “clouds” in Jude; both *promising* (compare ⲓⲛⲓⲩ 2 Peter 2:19) water, but yielding none; so their “great swelling words” are found on trial to be but “vanity” (ⲓⲛⲓⲩ 2 Peter 2:18).

clouds — The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “mists,” *dark*, and not transparent and bright as “clouds” often are, whence the latter term is applied sometimes to the saints; fit emblem of the children of darkness. “Clouds” is a transcriber's correction from ⲓⲛⲓⲩ Jude 1:12, where it is

appropriate, “clouds ... without water” (promising what they do not perform); but not here, “mists driven along by a tempest.”

mist — *blackness*; “the *chilling horror* accompanying *darkness*” [BENGEL].

18. allure — *Greek*, “lay baits for.”

through — *Greek*, “in”; the *lusts of the flesh* being the element IN which they lay their baits.

much wantonness — *Greek*, “by licentiousness”; the bait which they lay.

clean escaped — *Greek*, “really escaped.” But the oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “scarcely,” or “for but a little time”; scarcely have they escaped from them who live in error (the ungodly world), when they are allured by these seducers into sin again (ⲉⲓⲛⲓ 2 Peter 2:20).

19. promise ... liberty — (Christian) — These promises are instances of their “great swelling words” (ⲉⲓⲛⲓ 2 Peter 2:18). The *liberty* which they propose is such as fears not Satan, nor loathes the flesh. Pauline language, adopted by Peter here, and ⲉⲓⲛⲓ 1 Peter 2:16; see on ⲉⲓⲛⲓ 1 Peter 2:16; (compare ⲉⲓⲛⲓ 2 Peter 3:15 ⲉⲓⲛⲓ Romans 6:16-22 8:15,21 Galatians 5:1,13; compare ⲉⲓⲛⲓ John 8:34).

corruption — (See on ⲉⲓⲛⲓ 2 Peter 2:12); “destroyed ... perish ... corruption.”

of whom — “by whatever ... by the same,” etc.

20. after they — *the seducers* “themselves” *have escaped* (ⲉⲓⲛⲓ 2 Peter 2:19; see on Hebrews 6:4-6).

pollutions — which bring “corruption” (ⲉⲓⲛⲓ 2 Peter 2:19).

through — *Greek*, “in.”

knowledge — *Greek*, “full and accurate knowledge.”

the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ — solemnly expressing in full the great and gracious One from whom they fall.

latter end is worse ... than the beginning — Peter remembers Christ's words. "Worse" stands opposed to "better" (~~Q12~~ 2 Peter 2:21).

21. the way of righteousness — "the way of truth" (2 Peter 2:2). Christian doctrine, and "the knowledge of the Lord and Savior."

turn — back again; so the *Greek*.

from the holy commandment — the Gospel which enjoins *holiness*; in opposition to their *corruption*. "Holy," not that it makes holy, but because it ought to be kept *involute* [TITTMANN].

delivered — once for all; admitting no turning back.

22. But — You need not wonder at the event; for *dogs* and *swine* they were before, and dogs and swine they will continue. They "scarcely" (~~Q18~~ 2 Peter 2:18) have escaped from their filthy folly, when they again are entangled in it. Then they seduce others who have in like manner "for a little time escaped from them that live in error" (~~Q18~~ 2 Peter 2:18). Peter often quoted Proverbs in his First Epistle (1 Peter 1:7 2:17 4:8,18); another proof that both Epistles come from the same writer.

CHAPTER 3

2 PETER 3:1-18.

**SURENESS OF CHRIST'S COMING, AND ITS
ACCOMPANIMENTS, DECLARED IN OPPOSITION TO
SCOFFERS ABOUT TO ARISE. GOD'S LONG SUFFERING A
MOTIVE TO REPENTANCE, AS PAUL'S EPISTLES SET FORTH;
CONCLUDING EXHORTATION TO GROWTH IN THE
KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.**

1. now — “This now a second Epistle I write.” Therefore he had lately written the former Epistle. The seven Catholic Epistles were written by James, John, and Jude, shortly before their deaths; previously, while having the prospect of being still for some time alive, they felt it less necessary to write [BENGEL].

unto you — The Second Epistle, though more general in its address, yet *included* especially the same persons as the First Epistle was particularly addressed to.

pure — literally, “pure when examined by sunlight”; “sincere.” *Adulterated with no error.* Opposite to “having the understanding *darkened*.” ALFORD explains, The mind, will, and affection, in relation to the outer world, being turned to God [the *Sun* of the soul], and not obscured by fleshly and selfish regards.

by way of — *Greek*, “in,” “*in putting you in remembrance*” (2 Peter 1:12,13). Ye already *know* (2 Peter 3:3); it is only needed that I *remind* you (Jude 1:5).

2. prophets — of the Old Testament.

of us — The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “And of the commandment of the Lord and Savior (declared) by YOUR apostles” (so “apostle of the Gentiles,” Romans 11:13) — the apostles *who live*

among you in the present time, in contrast to the *Old Testament* “prophets.”

3. Knowing this first — from the word of the apostles.

shall come — Their very *scoffing* shall confirm the truth of the prediction.

scoffers — The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* add, “(scoffers) *in* (that is, ‘with’) *scoffing*.” As Revelation 14:2, “harping with harps.”

walking after their own lusts — (2 Peter 2:10 Jude 1:16,18). Their own pleasure is their sole law, unrestrained by reverence for God.

4. (Compare Psalm 10:11 73:11.) Presumptuous skepticism and lawless lust, setting nature and its so-called laws above the God of nature and revelation, and arguing from the past continuity of nature’s phenomena that there can be no future interruption to them, was the sin of the antediluvians, and shall be that of the scoffers in the last days.

Where — implying that it ought to have taken place before this, if ever it was to take place, but that it never will.

the promise — which you, believers, are so continually looking for the fulfillment of (2 Peter 3:13). What becomes of the promise which you talk so much of?

his — *Christ’s*; the subject of prophecy from the earliest days.

the fathers — to whom *the promise* was made, and who rested all their hopes on it.

all things — in the *natural world*; skeptics look not beyond this.

as they were — *continue as they do*; as we see them to continue. From the time of the promise of Christ’s coming as Savior and King being given to the fathers, down to the present time, all things continue, and have continued, *as they now are*, from “the beginning of creation.” The “scoffers” here are not necessarily atheists, nor do they maintain that the world existed from eternity. They are willing to recognize a God, but not the God *of revelation*. They reason from seeming delay against the fulfillment of God’s word at all.

5. Refutation of their scoffing from Scripture history.

willingly — wilfully; they do not *wish* to know. Their ignorance is voluntary.

they ... are ignorant of — in contrast to 2 Peter 3:8, “Be not ignorant of this.” Literally, in both verses, “This escapes THEIR notice (sagacious philosophers though they think themselves)”; “let this not escape YOUR notice.” They obstinately shut their eyes to the Scripture record of the creation and the deluge; the latter is the very parallel to the coming judgment by fire, which Jesus mentions, as Peter doubtless remembered.

by the word of God — not by a fortuitous concurrence of atoms [ALFORD].

of old — *Greek*, “from of old”; from the first. beginning of all things. A confutation of their objection, “all things continue as they were FROM THE BEGINNING OF CREATION.” Before the flood, the same objection to the possibility of the flood might have been urged with the same plausibility: The heavens (sky) and earth have been FROM OF OLD, how unlikely then that they should not *continue* so! But, replies Peter, the flood came in spite of their reasonings; so will the conflagration of the earth come in spite of the “scoffers” of the last days, changing the whole order of things (the present “world,” or as *Greek* means, “order”), and introducing the new heavens and earth (^{GEB}2 Peter 3:13).

earth standing out of — *Greek*, “consisting of,” that is, “formed out of the water.” The waters under the firmament were at creation gathered together into one place, and the dry land emerged *out of* and above, them.

in, etc. — rather, “*by means of* the water,” as a great instrument (along with *fire*) in the changes wrought on the earth’s surface to prepare it for man. Held together BY the water. The earth arose *out of* the water *by the efficacy of the water* itself [TITTMANN].

6. Whereby — *Greek*, “By which” (plural). *By means of which* heavens and earth (in respect to the WATERS which flowed together *from both*) *the then world perished* (that is, in respect to its *occupants*, men and animals, and its then existing *order*: not *was annihilated*); for in the flood “the fountains of the great deep were broken up” from *the earth*

(1) below, and “the windows of *heaven*”

(2) above “were opened.” The earth was deluged by that water *out of* which it had originally risen.

7. (Compare Job 28:5, end).

which are now — “the postdiluvian visible world.” In contrast to “that *then was*,” 2 Peter 3:6.

the same — Other oldest manuscripts read, “His” (God’s).

kept in store — *Greek*, “treasured up.”

reserved — “kept.” It is only God’s constantly watchful providence which holds together the present state of things till His time for ending it.

8. **be not ignorant** — as those scoffers are (2 Peter 3:5). Besides the refutation of them (2 Peter 3:5-7) drawn from the history of the deluge, here he adds another (addressed more to believers than to the mockers): God’s delay in fulfilling His promise is not, like men’s delays, owing to inability or fickleness in keeping His word, but through “long-suffering.”

this one thing — as the consideration of *chief importance* (~~and~~ Luke 10:42).

one day ... thousand years — (Psalm 90:4): Moses there says, Thy *eternity*, knowing no distinction between a *thousand* years and a *day*, is the refuge of us creatures of a day. Peter views God’s eternity in relation to the last day: that day seems to us, short-lived beings, long in coming, but *with the Lord* the interval is irrespective of the idea of long or short. His eternity exceeds all measures of time: to His divine knowledge all future things are present: His power requires not long delays for the performance of His work: His long-suffering excludes all impatient expectation and eager haste, such as we men feel. He is equally blessed in one day and in a thousand years. He can do the work of a thousand years in one day: so in 2 Peter 3:9 it is said, “He is not slack,” that is, “slow”: He has always the power to fulfill His “promise.”

thousand years as one day — No delay which occurs is long to God: as to a man of countless riches, a thousand dollars are as a single penny. God’s aeonologe (*eternal-ages* measurer) differs wholly from man’s

horologe (*hour-glass*). His gnomon (dial-pointer) shows all the hours at once in the greatest activity and in perfect repose. To Him the hours pass away, neither more slowly, nor more quickly, than befits His economy. There is nothing to make Him need either to hasten or delay the end. The words, “with the Lord” (Psalm 90:4, “In Thy sight”), silence all man’s objections on the ground of his incapability of understanding this [BENGEL].

9. slack — slow, tardy, *late*; exceeding the due time, as though that time were already come. ^{<HEB>}Hebrews 10:37, “will not *tarry*.”

his promise — which the scoffers cavil at. 2 Peter 3:4, “Where is the promise?” It shall be surely fulfilled “according to His promise” (^{<GRK>}2 Peter 3:13).

some — the “scoffers.”

count — His promise to be the result of “slackness” (tardiness).

long-suffering — waiting until the full number of those appointed to “salvation” (^{<GRK>}2 Peter 3:15) shall be completed.

to us-ward — The oldest manuscripts, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, etc. read, “towards YOU.”

any — not desiring that any, yea, even that the scoffers, should perish, which would be the result if He did not give space for repentance.

come — *go and be received* to repentance: the *Greek* implies there is *room* for their being *received* to repentance (compare *Greek*, Mark 2:2 ^{<HEB>}John 8:37).

10. The certainty, suddenness, and concomitant effects, of the coming of the day of the Lord. FABER argues from this that the millennium, etc., must *precede* Christ’s literal coming, not *follow* it. But “the day of the Lord” comprehends the whole series of events, beginning with the pre-millennial advent, and ending with the destruction of the wicked, and final conflagration, and general judgment (which last intervenes between the conflagration and the renovation of the earth).

will — emphatical. But (in spite of the mockers, and notwithstanding the delay) *come and be present* the day of the Lord SHALL.

as a thief — Peter remembers and repeats his Lord's image (⁴⁰²⁹Luke 12:39,41) used in the conversation in which he took a part; so also Paul (1 Thessalonians 5:2) and John (Revelation 3:3 16:15).

the heavens — which the scoffers say' shall "continue" as they are (2 Peter 3:4 ⁴⁰⁸⁵Matthew 24:35 Revelation 21:1).

with a great noise — with a rushing noise, like that of a *whizzing* arrow, or the crash of a devouring flame.

elements — *the component materials of the world* [WAHL]. However, as "the works" in the earth are mentioned separately from "the earth," so it is likely by "elements," mentioned after "the heavens," are meant "the works therein," namely, *the sun, moon, and stars* (as THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH [p. 22, 148, 228]; and JUSTIN MARTYR [*Apology*, 2.44], use the word "elements"): these, as at creation, so in the destruction of the world, are mentioned [BENGEL]. But as "elements" is not so used in Scripture *Greek*, perhaps it refers to *the component materials* of "the heavens," including *the heavenly bodies*; it clearly belongs to the former clause, "the heavens," not to the following, "the earth," etc.

melt — be dissolved, as in ^{4081b}2 Peter 3:11.

the works ... therein — of nature and of art.

11. Your duty, seeing that this is so, is to be ever eagerly expecting the day of God.

then — Some oldest manuscripts substitute "thus" for "then": a happy refutation of the "thus" of the scoffers, 2 Peter 3:4 (*English Version*, "As they were," *Greek*, "thus").

shall be — *Greek*, "*are being* (in God's appointment, soon to be fulfilled) dissolved"; the present tense implying *the certainty* as though it were actually present.

what manner *of men* — exclamatory. How watchful, prayerful, zealous!

to be — not the mere *Greek* substantive verb of existence (*einai*), but (*huparchein*) denoting a *state* or *condition* in which one is supposed to be [TITTMANN]. What holy men ye ought to be found to be, when the event comes! This is “the holy commandment” mentioned in 2 Peter 3:2.

conversation ... godliness — *Greek*, plural: *behaviors* (towards men), *godlinesses* (or *pieties* towards God) in their *manifold* modes of manifestation.

12. hasting unto — *with the utmost eagerness desiring* [WAHL], praying for, and contemplating, the coming Savior as at hand. The *Greek* may mean “hastening (that is, *urging onward* [ALFORD]) the day of God”; not that God’s eternal appointment of the time is changeable, but God appoints *us* as instruments of accomplishing those events which must be first before the day of God can come. By praying for His coming, furthering the preaching of the Gospel for a witness to all nations, and bringing in those whom “the long-suffering of God” waits to save, we *hasten the coming of the day of God*. The *Greek* verb is always in New Testament used as neuter (as *English Version* here), not active; but the *Septuagint* uses it *actively*. Christ says, “Surely I come quickly. Amen.” *Our* part is to *speed forward* this consummation by praying, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (⁽⁴⁰²⁾Revelation 22:20).

the coming — *Greek*, “*presence*” of a *person*: usually, of the Savior.

the day of God — God has given many myriads of days to *men*: one shall be the great “day of God” Himself.

wherein — rather as *Greek*, “on account of (or *owing to*) which” day.

heavens — the upper and lower regions of the sky.

melt — Our igneous rocks show that they were once in a liquid state.

13. Nevertheless — “But”: in contrast to the destructive effects of the day of God stand its constructive effects. As the flood was the baptism of the earth, eventuating in a renovated earth, partially delivered from “the curse,” so the baptism with fire shall purify the earth so as to be the renovated abode of regenerated man, wholly freed from the curse.

his promise — (Isaiah 65:17 66:22). The “we” is not emphatical as in *English Version*.

new heavens — new atmospheric heavens surrounding the renovated earth.

righteousness — *dwelleth* in that coming world as its essential feature, all pollutions having been removed.

14. that ye ... be found of him — “in His sight” [ALFORD], at His coming; plainly implying a *personal* coming.

without spot — at the coming marriage feast of the Lamb, in contrast to ^{GRB}2 Peter 2:13, “Spots they are and blemishes while they feast,” not having on the King’s pure wedding garment.

blameless — (1 Corinthians 1:8 ^{GRB}Philippians 1:10 ^{GRB}1 Thessalonians 3:13 5:23).

in peace — in all its aspects, towards God, your own consciences, and your fellow men, and as its consequence eternal *blessedness*: “the God of peace” will effect this for you.

15. account ... the long-suffering ... is salvation — is designed for the salvation of those yet to be gathered into the Church: whereas those scoffers “count it (to be the result of) slackness” on the Lord’s part (2 Peter 3:9).

our beloved brother Paul — a beautiful instance of love and humility. Peter praises the very Epistles which contain his condemnation.

according to the wisdom given unto him — adopting Paul’s own language, ^{GRB}1 Corinthians 3:10, “*According to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise master-builder.*” Supernatural and inspired wisdom “GIVEN” him, not acquired in human schools of learning.

hath written — *Greek* aorist, “wrote,” as a thing wholly *past*: Paul was by this time either dead, or had ceased to minister to them.

to you — *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Colossians*, the same region as Peter addresses. Compare “in peace,” ^{GRB}2 Peter 3:14, a practical exhibition of which Peter now gives in showing how perfectly agreeing Paul (who wrote

the Epistle to the *Galatians*) and he are, notwithstanding the event recorded (^{<R11>}Galatians 2:11-14). Colossians 3:4 refers to *Christ's second coming*. The Epistle to the Hebrews, too (addressed not only to the Palestinian, but also secondarily to the Hebrew Christians everywhere), may be referred to, as Peter primarily (though not exclusively) addresses in both Epistles the *Hebrew* Christians of the dispersion (see on 1 Peter 1:1). ^{<R12>}Hebrews 9:27,28 10:25,37, "speak of these things" (^{<R15>}2 Peter 3:16) which Peter has been handling, namely, the coming of the day of the Lord, delayed through His "long-suffering," yet near and sudden.

16. also in all his epistles — Romans 2:4 is very similar to ^{<R15>}2 Peter 3:15, beginning. The Pauline Epistles were by this time become the *common* property of all the churches. The "all" seems to imply they were now completed. The subject of the Lord's coming is handled in ^{<R13>}1 Thessalonians 4:13 5:11; compare ^{<R10>}2 Peter 3:10 with 1 Thessalonians 5:2. Still Peter distinguishes Paul's Epistle, or Epistles, "TO YOU," from "*all his (other) Epistles*," showing that certain definite churches, or particular classes of believers, are meant by "you."

in which — *Epistles*. The oldest manuscripts read the feminine relative (*hais*); not as Received Text (*hois*), "in which *things*."

some things hard to be understood — namely, in reference to Christ's coming, for example, the statements as to the man of sin and the apostasy, before Christ's coming. "Paul seemed thereby to delay Christ's coming to a longer period than the other apostles, whence some doubted altogether His coming" [BENGEL]. Though there be some things hard to be understood, there are enough besides, plain, easy, and sufficient for perfecting the man of God. "There is scarce anything drawn from the obscure places, but the same in other places may be found most plain" [AUGUSTINE]. It is our own prejudice, foolish expectations, and carnal fancies, that make Scripture difficult [JEREMY TAYLOR].

unlearned — Not those wanting *human* learning are meant, but those *lacking the learning imparted by the Spirit*. The humanly *learned* have been often most deficient in spiritual learning, and have originated many heresies. Compare ^{<R12>}2 Timothy 2:23, a different *Greek* word, "unlearned," literally, "untutored." When religion is studied as a science,

nothing is more abstruse; when studied in order to know our duty and practice it, nothing is easier.

unstable — not yet established in what they have learned; shaken by every seeming difficulty; who, in perplexing texts, instead of waiting until God by His Spirit makes them plain in comparing them with other Scriptures, hastily adopt distorted views.

wrest — strain and twist (properly with a *hand screw*) what is straight in itself (for example, ² Timothy 2:18).

other scriptures — Paul’s Epistles were, therefore, by this time, recognized in the Church, as “Scripture”: a term never applied in any of the fifty places where it occurs, save to the Old and New Testament sacred writings. Men in each Church having miraculous *discernment of spirits* would have prevented any uninspired writing from being put on a par with the Old Testament word of God; the apostles’ lives also were providentially prolonged, Paul’s and Peter’s at least to thirty-four years after Christ’s resurrection, John’s to thirty years later, so that fraud in the canon is out of question. The three first Gospels and Acts are included in “the other Scriptures,” and perhaps all the New Testament books, save John and Revelation, written later.

unto their own destruction — not through Paul’s fault (2 Peter 2:1).

17. Ye — warned by the case of those “unlearned and unstable” persons (² Peter 3:16).

knowing ... before — the event.

led away with — the very term, as Peter remembers, used by Paul of Barnabas’ being “carried,” *Greek*, “led away with” Peter and the other Jews in their hypocrisy.

wicked — “lawless,” as in 2 Peter 2:7.

fall from — (*grace*, Galatians 5:4: the true source of) “steadfastness” or *stability* in contrast with the “unstable” (² Peter 3:16): “established” (² Peter 1:12): all kindred *Greek* terms. Compare ¹ Jude 1:20,21.

18. grow — Not only do not “fall from” (~~GEN~~ 2 Peter 3:17), but *grow onward*: the true secret of not going backward. ~~ADHS~~ Ephesians 4:15, “Grow up into Him, the Head, Christ.”

grace and ... knowledge of ... Christ — “the grace and knowledge of Christ” [ALFORD rightly]: *the grace* of which *Christ* is the author, and *the knowledge* of which *Christ* is the object.

for ever — *Greek*, “to the day of eternity”: the day that has no end: “the day of the Lord,” beginning with the Lord’s coming.

THE FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JOHN

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

AUTHORSHIP. — POLYCARP, the disciple of John [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 7], quotes 1 John 4:3. EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39] says of PAPIAS, a hearer of John, and a friend of POLYCARP, “He used testimonies from the First Epistle of John.” IRENAEUS, according to EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 5.8], often quoted this Epistle. So in his work *Against Heresies* [3.15; 5, 8] he quotes from John by name, ¹ John 2:18, etc.; and in [3.16,7], he quotes 1 John 4:1-3 5:1, and 2 John 1:7:8. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 2.66, p. 464] refers to ¹ John 5:16, as in John’s *larger Epistle*. See other quotations [*Miscellanies*, 3.32,42; 4.102]. TERTULLIAN [*Against Marcion*, 5.16] refers to 1 John 4:1, etc.; [*Against Praxeas*, 15], to 1 John 1:1. See his other quotations [*Against Praxeas*, 28; *Against the Gnostics*, 12]. CYPRIAN [*Epistles*, 28 (24)], quotes as John’s, 1 John 2:3,4; and [*On the Lord’s Prayer*, 5] quotes ¹ John 2:15-17; and [*On Works and Alms*, 3], 1 John 1:8; and [*On the Advantage of Patience*, 2] quotes 1 John 2:6. MURATORI’S *Fragment on the Canon of Scripture* states, “There are two of John (the Gospel and Epistle?) esteemed Catholic,” and quotes 1 John 1:3. The *Peschito Syriac* contains it. ORIGEN (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25]) speaks of the First Epistle as genuine, and “probably the second and third, though all do not recognize the latter two”; on the Gospel of John, [*Commentary on John*, 13.2], he quotes 1 John 1:5. DIONYSIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, ORIGEN’S scholar, cites the words of this Epistle as those of the Evangelist John. EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.24], says, John’s first Epistle and Gospel are *acknowledged without question* by those of the present day, as well as by the ancients. So also JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*]. The

opposition of COSMAS INDICOPLEUSTES, in the sixth century, and that of MARCION because our Epistle was inconsistent with his views, are of no weight against such irrefragable testimony.

The internal evidence is equally strong. Neither the Gospel, nor this Epistle, can be pronounced an imitation; yet both, in style and modes of thought, are evidently of the same mind. The *individual* notices are not so numerous or obvious as in Paul's writings, as was to be expected in a *Catholic* Epistle; but such as there are accord with John's position. He implies his apostleship, and perhaps alludes to his Gospel, and the affectionate tie which bound him as an *aged* pastor to his spiritual "children"; and in ⁴¹²⁸1 John 2:18,19 4:1-3, he alludes to the false teachers as known to his readers; and in ⁴¹²⁹1 John 5:21 he warns them against the idols of the surrounding world. It is no objection against its authenticity that the doctrine of the *Word*, or divine second Person, existing from everlasting, and in due time made flesh, appears in it, as also in the Gospel, as opposed to the heresy of the Docetae in the *second century*, who denied that our Lord *is come in the flesh*, and maintained He came only in outward *semblance*; for the same doctrine appears in ⁵⁰¹⁵Colossians 1:15-18 ⁵⁰¹⁶1 Timothy 3:16 Hebrews 1:1-3; and the germs of Docetism, though not fully developed till the second century, were in existence in the first. The Spirit, presciently through John, puts the Church beforehand on its guard against the coming heresy.

TO WHOM ADDRESSED. — AUGUSTINE [*The Question of the Gospels*, 2.39], says this Epistle was written to the *Parthians*. BEDE, in a prologue to the seven Catholic Epistles, says that ATHANASIUS attests the same. By the *Parthians* may be meant the Christians living beyond the Euphrates in the Parthian territory, outside the Roman empire, "the Church at Babylon elected together with (you)," the churches in the Ephesian region, the quarter to which Peter addressed his Epistles (⁴¹⁸²1 Peter 5:12). As Peter addressed the flock which John subsequently tended (and in which Paul had formerly ministered), so John, Peter's close companion after the ascension, addresses the flock among whom Peter had been when he wrote. Thus "the elect lady" (2 John 1:1) answers "to the Church elected together" (⁴¹⁸³1 Peter 5:13). See further confirmation of this view in *Introduction* to Second John. It is not necessarily an objection to this view that John never is known to have personally ministered in the Parthian

territory. For neither did Peter personally minister to the churches in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia, though he wrote his Epistles to them. Moreover, in John's prolonged life, we cannot dogmatically assert that he did not visit the Parthian Christians, after Peter had ceased to minister to them, on the mere ground of absence of extant testimony to that effect. This is as probable a view as ALFORD's, that in the passage of AUGUSTINE, "to the Parthians," is to be altered by conjectural emendation; and that the Epistle is addressed to the churches at and around Ephesus, on the ground of the fatherly tone of affectionate address in it, implying his personal ministry among his readers. But his position, as probably the only surviving apostle, accords very well with his addressing, in a Catholic Epistle, a cycle of churches which he may not have specially ministered to in person, with affectionate fatherly counsel, by virtue of his general apostolic superintendence of all the churches.

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING. — This Epistle seems to have been written subsequently to his Gospel as it assumes the reader's acquaintance with the Gospel facts and Christ's speeches, and also with the special aspect of the incarnate Word, as God *manifest in the flesh* (⁵¹⁸⁶1 Timothy 3:16), set forth more fully in his Gospel. The tone of address, as a father addressing his "*little children*" (the continually recurring term, 1 John 2:1,12,13,18,28 3:7,18 4:4 5:21), accords with the view that this Epistle was written in John's old age, perhaps about A.D. 90. In ⁵¹⁸⁸1 John 2:18, "it is the last time," probably does not refer to any particular event (as the destruction of Jerusalem, which was now many years past) but refers to the nearness of the Lord's coming as proved by the rise of *Antichristian teachers*, the mark of *the last time*. It was the Spirit's purpose to keep the Church always expecting Christ as ready to come at any moment. The whole Christian age is *the last time* in the sense that no other dispensation is to arise till Christ comes. Compare "these last days," Hebrews 1:2. Ephesus may be conjectured to be the *place* whence it was written. The controversial allusion to the germs of Gnostic heresy accord with Asia Minor being the place, and the last part of the apostolic age the *time*, of writing this Epistle.

CONTENTS. — The leading subject of the whole is, *fellowship with the Father and the Son* (1 John 1:3). Two principal divisions may be noted:

(1) 1 John 1:5-2:28: the theme of this portion is stated at the outset, “*God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all*”; consequently, in order to have fellowship with Him, we must *walk in light* (1 John 1:7); connected with which in the *confession* and subsequent *forgiveness of our sins* through *Christ’s propitiation and advocacy*, without which forgiveness there could be no light or fellowship with God: a farther step in thus walking in the light is, positively *keeping God’s commandments*, the sum of which is *love*, as opposed to *hatred*, the acme of disobedience to God’s word: negatively, he exhorts them according to their several stages of spiritual growth, *children, fathers, young men*, in consonance with their privileges as *forgiven, knowing the Father*, and *having overcome the wicked one, not to love the world*, which is incompatible with the indwelling of *the love of the Father*, and to be on their guard against the *Antichristian* teachers already in the world, who were not of the Church, but of the world, against whom the true defense is, that his believing readers who have the *anointing of God*, should *continue to abide in the Son and in the Father*.

(2) The second division (¹⁰⁷²1 John 2:29-5:5) discusses the theme with which it opens, *He is righteous*; consequently (as in the first division), “*every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him*.” *Sonship* in us involves our purifying ourselves as He is pure, even as we *hope to see, and therefore to be made like our Lord when He shall appear*; in this second, as in the first division, both a positive and a negative side are presented of “*doing righteousness as He is righteous*,” involving a contrast between the children of God and the children of the devil. *Hatred* marks the latter; *love*, the former: this love gives assurance of acceptance with God for ourselves and our prayers, accompanied as they are (¹⁰⁷³1 John 3:23) with obedience to His great commandment, to “*believe on Jesus, and love one another*”; the seal (¹⁰⁷⁴1 John 3:24) of His dwelling in us and assuring our hearts, is the Spirit which He hath given us. In contrast to this (as in the first division), he warns against false spirits, the notes of which are, *denial of Christ*, and *adherence to the world*. *Sonship*, or birth of God, is then more fully described: its essential feature is unslavish, free *love to God, because God first loved us, and gave His Son to die for us, and consequent love to the brethren*, grounded on their being sons of God also like ourselves, and so *victory*

over the world; this victory being gained only by the man who believes in Jesus as the Son of God.

(3) *The conclusion* establishes this last central truth, on which rests our fellowship with God, *Christ's having come by the water* of baptism, *the blood* of atonement, and *the witnessing Spirit*, which is *truth*. As in the opening he rested this cardinal truth on the apostles' witness of the eye, the ear, and the touch, so now at the close he rests it on *God's witness*, which is accepted by the believer, in contrast with the unbeliever, who *makes God a liar*. Then follows his closing statement of his *reason for writing* (^{¶153}1 John 5:13; compare the corresponding 1 John 1:4, at the beginning), namely, that *believers in Christ the Son of God may know that they have* (now already) *eternal life* (the source of "joy," 1 John 1:4; compare similarly his object in writing the Gospel, ^{¶154}John 20:31), and so have confidence as to their prayers being answered (corresponding to ^{¶155}1 John 3:22 in the second part); for instance, their intercessions for a *sinning brother* (unless his sin be a *sin unto death*). He closes with a brief summing up of the instruction of the Epistle, the high dignity, sanctity, and safety from evil of the children of God in contrast to the sinful world, and a warning against *idolatry*, literal and spiritual: "Keep yourselves from idols."

Though the Epistle is not directly polemical, the *occasion* which suggested his writing was probably the rise of Antichristian teachers; and, *because* he knew the spiritual character of the several classes whom he addresses, *children, youths, fathers*, he feels it necessary to write to confirm them in the faith and joyful fellowship of the Father and Son, and to assure them of the reality of the things they believe, that so they may have the full privileges of believing.

STYLE. — His peculiarity is fondness for aphorism and repetition. His tendency to repeat his own phrase, arises partly from the affectionate, hortatory character of the Epistle; partly, also, from its Hebraistic forms abounding in parallel clauses, as distinguished from the Grecian and more logical style of Paul; also, from his childlike simplicity of spirit, which, full of his one grand theme, repeats, and dwells on it with fond delight and enthusiasm. Moreover as ALFORD well says, the appearance of uniformity is often produced by want of deep enough exegesis to discover the real

differences in passages which seem to express the same. Contemplative, rather than argumentative, he dwells more on the general, than on the particular, on the inner, than on the outer, Christian life. Certain fundamental truths he recurs to again and again, at one time enlarging on, and applying them, at another time repeating them in their condensed simplicity. The thoughts do not march onward by successive steps, as in the logical style of Paul, but rather in circle drawn round one central thought which he reiterates, ever reverting to it, and viewing it, now under its positive, now under its negative, aspect. Many terms which in the Gospel are given as Christ's, in the Epistle appear as the favorite expressions of John, naturally adopted from the Lord. Thus the contrasted terms, "flesh" and "spirit," "light" and "darkness," "life" and "death," "abide in Him": fellowship with the Father and Son, and with one another," is a favorite phrase also, not found in the Gospel, but in Acts and Paul's Epistles. In him appears the harmonious union of opposites, adapting him for his high functions in the kingdom of God, contemplative repose of character, and at the same time ardent zeal, combined with burning, all-absorbing love: less adapted for active outward work, such as Paul's, than for spiritual service. He handles Christian verities not as abstract dogmas, but as living realities, personally enjoyed in fellowship with God in Christ, and with the brethren. Simple, and at the same time profound, his writing is in consonance with his spirit, unrheterical and undialectic, gentle, consolatory, and loving: the reflection of the Spirit of Him on whose breast he lay at the last supper, and whose beloved disciple he was. EWALD in ALFORD, speaking of the "unruffled and heavenly repose" which characterizes this Epistle, says, "It appears to be the tone, not so much of a father talking with his beloved children, as of a glorified saint addressing mankind from a higher world. Never in any writing has the doctrine of heavenly love — a love working in stillness, ever unwearied, never exhausted — so thoroughly approved itself as in this Epistle."

JOHN'S PLACE IN THE BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH. — As Peter founded and Paul propagated, so John completed the spiritual building. As the Old Testament puts prominently forward the *fear of God*, so John, the last writer of the New Testament, gives prominence to the *love of God*. Yet, as the Old Testament is not all limited to presenting the fear of God, but sets forth also His *love*, so John, as a representative of the New Testament,

while breathing so continually the spirit of love, gives also the plainest and most awful warnings against sin, in accordance with his original character as Boanerges, “son of thunder.” His mother was Salome, mother of the sons of Zebedee, probably sister to Jesus’ mother (compare ^{<1925>}John 19:25, “His mother’s sister,” with ^{<175>}Matthew 27:56 ^{<150>}Mark 15:40), so that he was cousin to our Lord; to his mother, under God, he may have owed his first serious impressions. Expecting as she did the Messianic kingdom in glory, as appears from her petition (^{<1110>}Matthew 20:20-23), she doubtless tried to fill his young and ardent mind with the same hope. NEANDER distinguishes three leading tendencies in the development of the Christian doctrine, the Pauline, the Jacobean (between which the Petrine forms an intermediate link), and the Johannean. John, in common with James, was less disposed to the intellectual and dialectic cast of thought which distinguishes Paul. He had not, like the apostle of the Gentiles, been brought to faith and peace through severe conflict; but, like James, had reached his Christian individuality through a quiet development: James, however, had passed through a moulding in Judaism previously, which, under the Spirit, caused him to present Christian truth in connection with the law, in so far as the latter in its spirit, though not letter, is permanent, and not abolished, but established under the Gospel. But John, from the first, had drawn his whole spiritual development from the personal view of Christ, the model man, and from intercourse with Him. Hence, in his writings, everything turns on one simple contrast: divine *life* in communion with Christ; death in separation from Him, as appears from his characteristic phrases, “*life, light, truth; death, darkness, lie.*” “As James and Peter mark the gradual transition from spiritualized Judaism to the independent development of Christianity, and as Paul represents the independent development of Christianity in opposition to the Jewish standpoint, so the contemplative element of John reconciles the two, and forms the closing point in the training of the apostolic Church” [NEANDER].

CHAPTER 1

1 JOHN 1:1-10.

THE WRITER'S AUTHORITY AS AN EYEWITNESS TO THE GOSPEL FACTS, HAVING SEEN, HEARD, AND HANDLED HIM WHO WAS FROM THE BEGINNING: HIS OBJECT IN WRITING: HIS MESSAGE. IF WE WOULD HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM, WE MUST WALK IN LIGHT, AS HE IS LIGHT.

1. Instead of a formal, John adopts a virtual address (compare 1 John 1:4). To wish *joy* to the reader was the ancient customary address. The sentence begun in 1 John 1:1 is broken off by the parenthetic 1 John 1:2, and is resumed at 1 John 1:3 with the repetition of some words from 1 John 1:1.

That which was — not “began to be,” but *was* essentially (*Greek*, “*een*,” not “*egeneto*”) before He was *manifested* (1 John 1:2); answering to “Him that is *from the beginning*” (~~1~~ 1 John 2:13); so John's Gospel, John 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word.” Proverbs 8:23, “I was set up from everlasting, *from the beginning*, or ever the earth was.”

we — apostles.

heard ... seen ... looked upon ... handled — a series rising in gradation. *Seeing* is a more convincing proof than *hearing* of; *handling*, than even *seeing*. “*Have heard ... have seen*” (perfect tenses), as a possession *still abiding* with us; but in *Greek* (not as *English Version* “have,” but simply) “looked upon” (not perfect tense, as of a *continuing* thing, but aorist, *past* time) while Christ the incarnate Word was still with us. “Seen,” namely, His glory, as revealed in the Transfiguration and in His miracles; and His passion and death in a real body of flesh and blood. “Looked upon” as a wondrous spectacle steadfastly, deeply, contemplatively; so the *Greek*. Appropriate to John's contemplative character.

hands ... handled — Thomas and the other disciples on distinct occasions after the resurrection. John himself had leaned on Jesus' breast at the last

supper. Contrast the wisest of the heathen *feeling after* (the same *Greek* as here; *groping after* WITH THE HANDS”) *if haply they might find God* (see ~~4177~~ Acts 17:27). This proves against Socinians he is here speaking of the *personal incarnate Word*, not of Christ’s *teaching* from the beginning of His official life.

of — “concerning”; following “heard.” “Heard” is the verb most applying to the purpose of the Epistle, namely the truth which John had *heard concerning the Word of life*, that is, (Christ) *the Word* who is *the life*. “Heard,” namely, from Christ Himself, including all Christ’s teachings about Himself. Therefore he puts “of,” or “concerning,” before “the word of life,” which is inapplicable to any of the verbs except “heard”; also “heard” is the only one of the verbs which he resumes at 1 John 1:5.

2. the life — Jesus, “the Word of life.”

was manifested — who had previously been “with the Father.”

show — Translate as in 1 John 1:3, “declare” (compare 1 John 1:5). *Declare* is the general term; *write* is the particular (1 John 1:4).

that eternal life — *Greek*, “the life which is eternal.” As the Epistle begins, so it ends with “eternal life,” which we shall ever enjoy with, and in, Him who is “the life eternal.”

which — *Greek*, “the which.” the before-mentioned (1 John 1:1) life *which* was with the Father “from the beginning” (compare John 1:1). This proves the distinctness of the First and Second Persons in the one Godhead.

3. That which we have seen and heard — resumed from 1 John 1:1, wherein the sentence, being interrupted by 1 John 1:2, parenthesis, was left incomplete.

declare we unto you — Oldest manuscripts add *also; unto you also* who have not *seen or heard* Him.

that ye also may have fellowship with us — that *ye also* who have not seen, *may* have the *fellowship* with us which we who have seen enjoy; what that fellowship consists in he proceeds to state, “Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son.” Faith realizes what we have not seen as

spiritually visible; not till by faith we too have seen, do we know all the excellency of the true Solomon. He Himself is ours; He in us and we in Him. We are “partakers of the divine nature.” We know God only by having fellowship with Him; He may thus be *known*, but not *comprehended*. The repetition of “with” before the “Son,” distinguishes the *persons*, while the *fellowship* or *communion* with both *Father* and *Son*, implies their unity. It is not added “and with the Holy Ghost”; for it is *by* the Holy Ghost or Spirit of the Father and Son in us, that we are enabled to have *fellowship with the Father and Son* (compare ^{GR1}1 John 3:24). Believers enjoy the fellowship OF, but not WITH, the Holy Ghost. “Through Christ God closes up the chasm that separated Him from the human race, and imparts Himself to them in the communion of the divine life” [NEANDER].

4. these things — and none other, namely, this whole Epistle.

write we unto you — Some oldest manuscripts omit “unto you,” and emphasize “we.” Thus the antithesis is between “we” (apostles and eye-witnesses) and “your.” We write thus that *your joy* may be full. Other oldest manuscripts and versions read “OUR joy,” namely, *that our joy may be filled full by* bringing you also into fellowship with the Father and Son. (Compare ^{GR6}John 4:36, end; Philippians 2:2, “Fulfil ye my joy,” ^{GR7}Philippians 2:16 4:1 2 John 1:8). It is possible that “your” may be a correction of transcribers to make this verse harmonize with ^{GR1}John 15:11 16:24; however, as John often repeats favorite phrases, he may do so here, so “your” may be from himself. So ^{GR12}2 John 1:12, “your” in oldest manuscripts. The authority of manuscripts and versions on both sides here is almost evenly balanced. Christ Himself is the source, object, and center of His people’s joy (compare 1 John 1:3, end); it is in *fellowship with Him* that we have *joy*, the fruit of faith.

5. First division of the body of the Epistle (compare *Introduction*).

declare — *Greek*, “announce”; report in turn; a different *Greek* word from 1 John 1:3. As the Son announced the message heard from the Father as His apostle, so the Son’s apostles announce what they have heard from the Son. John nowhere uses the term “Gospel”; but the *witness* or *testimony*, *the word*, *the truth*, and here the *message*.

God is light — What light is in the natural world, that God, the source of even material light, is in the spiritual, the fountain of wisdom, purity, beauty, joy, and glory. As all material life and growth depends on *light*, so all spiritual life and growth depends on GOD. As God here, so Christ, in 1 John 2:8, is called “the true light.”

no darkness at all — strong negation; *Greek*, “No, not even one speck of darkness”; no ignorance, error, untruthfulness, sin, or death. John heard this from Christ, not only in express words, but in His acted words, namely, His is whole manifestation in the flesh as “the brightness of the Father’s *glory*.” Christ Himself was the embodiment of “the message,” representing fully in all His sayings, doings, and sufferings, Him who is LIGHT.

6. say — profess.

have fellowship with him — (1 John 1:3). The essence of the Christian life.

walk — in inward and outward action, whithersoever we turn ourselves [BENGEL].

in darkness — *Greek*, “in *the* darkness”; opposed to “the light” (compare 1 John 2:8,11).

lie — (1 John 2:4).

do not — in *practice*, whatever we *say*.

the truth — (Ephesians 4:2^{and} 1 John 3:21).

7. Compare Ephesians 5:8,11-14. “WE WALK”; “God is (*essentially* in His very nature as ‘the light,’ 1 John 1:5) in the light.” WALKING *in the light*, the element in which God Himself is, constitutes the test of fellowship with Him. Christ, like us, *walked* in the light (1 John 2:6). ALFORD notices, Walking in the light as He is in the light, is no mere imitation of God, *but an identity in the essential element* of our daily walk with the essential element of God’s eternal being.

we have fellowship one with another — and of course *with God* (to be understood from 1 John 1:6). Without having fellowship with God there

can be no true and Christian fellowship one with another (compare 1 John 1:3).

and — as the result of “walking in the light, as He is in the light.”

the blood of Jesus ... cleanseth us from all sin — daily contracted through the sinful weakness of the flesh. and the power of Satan and the world. He is speaking not of justification through His blood once for all, but of the *present sanctification* (“cleanseth” is *present* tense) which the believer, *walking in the light* and having *fellowship with God and the saints*, enjoys as His privilege. Compare ~~RE30~~ John 13:10, *Greek*, “He that has been *bathed*, needeth not save to *wash* his feet, but is clean every whit.” Compare 1 John 1:9, “*cleanse* us from all unrighteousness,” a further step besides “*forgiving* us our sins.” Christ’s blood is the cleansing mean, whereby gradually, being already justified and in fellowship with God, we become *clean* from all sin which would mar our fellowship with God. Faith applies the cleansing, purifying blood. Some oldest manuscripts omit “Christ”; others retain it.

8. The confession of sins is a necessary consequence of “walking in the light” (1 John 1:7). “If thou shalt confess thyself a sinner, the *truth* is in thee; for the *truth* is itself *light*. Not yet has thy life become perfectly light, as sins are still in thee, but yet thou hast already begun to be illuminated, because there is in thee confession of sins” [AUGUSTINE].

that we have no sin — “HAVE,” not “have *had*,” must refer not to the past sinful life while unconverted, but to the *present* state wherein believers *have sin* even still. Observe, “sin” is in the singular; “(confess our) *sins*” (1 John 1:9) in the plural. *Sin* refers to the *corruption of the old man* still present in us, and the *stain* created by the actual *sins* flowing from that old nature in us. To confess our need of cleansing from *present* sin is essential to “walking in the light”; so far is the presence of some sin incompatible with our *in the main* “walking in light.” But the believer hates, confesses, and longs to be delivered from all sin, which is *darkness*. “They who defend their sins, will see in the great day whether their sins can defend them.”

deceive ourselves — We cannot deceive God; we only make ourselves to err from the right path.

the truth — (1 John 2:4). True faith. “The truth respecting God’s holiness and our sinfulness, which is the very first spark of light in us, has no place in us” [ALFORD].

9. confess — with the lips, speaking from a contrite heart; involving also confession to our fellow men of offenses committed against them.

he — God.

faithful — to His own promises; “true” to His word.

just — Not merely the mercy, but the *justice* or *righteousness* of God is set forth in the redemption of the penitent believer in Christ. God’s promises of mercy, to which He is *faithful*, are in accordance with His *justice*.

to — *Greek*, “in order that.” His forgiving *us our sins and cleansing us*, etc. is in furtherance of the *ends* of His eternal *faithfulness* and *justice*.

forgive — remitting the *guilt*.

cleanse — purify from all filthiness, so that henceforth we more and more become free from the presence of sin through the Spirit of sanctification (compare ¹⁹¹⁴Hebrews 9:14; and above, see on 1 John 1:7).

unrighteousness — offensive to Him who “is just” or *righteous*; called “sin,” 1 John 1:7, because “sin is the transgression of the law,” and the law is the expression of God’s *righteousness*, so that *sin* is *unrighteousness*.

10. Parallel to 1 John 1:8.

we have not sinned — referring to the commission of actual *sins*, even after regeneration and conversion; whereas in 1 John 1:8, “we have no sin,” refers to the present GUILT remaining (until cleansed) from the *actual sins* committed, and to the SIN of our corrupt old nature still adhering to us. The perfect “have ... sinned” brings down the commission of sins to the present time, not merely sins committed *before*, but *since, conversion*.

we make him a liar — a gradation; 1 John 1:6, “we lie”; 1 John 1:8, “we deceive ourselves”; worst of all, “we make Him a liar,” by denying His word that all men are sinners (compare ¹⁹¹⁴1 John 5:10).

his word is not in us — “His word,” which is “the truth” (1 John 1:8), accuses us truly; by denying it we drive it from our hearts (compare ~~John~~ John 5:38). Our rejection of “His word” in respect to our being sinners, implies as the consequence our rejection of His word and will revealed in the .law and Gospel *as a whole*; for these throughout rest on the fact that *we have sinned, and have sin.*

CHAPTER 2

1 JOHN 2:1-29.

THE ADVOCACY OF CHRIST IS OUR ANTIDOTE TO SIN WHILE WALKING IN THE LIGHT; FOR TO KNOW GOD, WE MUST KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS AND LOVE THE BRETHREN, AND NOT LOVE THE WORLD, NOR GIVE HEED TO ANTICHRISTS, AGAINST WHOM OUR SAFETY IS THROUGH THE INWARD ANOINTING OF GOD TO ABIDE IN GOD: SO AT CHRIST'S COMING WE SHALL NOT BE ASHAMED.

1. (^{GRK}1 John 5:18.)

My little children — The diminutive expresses the tender affection of an aged pastor and spiritual father. *My own dear children*, that is, sons and daughters (see on ^{GRK}1 John 2:12).




these things — (1 John 1:6-10). My purpose in writing what I have just written is not that you should abuse them as giving a license to sin but, on the contrary, “in order that ye may not sin at all” (the *Greek* aorist, implying the absence not only of the habit, but of *single acts* of sin [ALFORD]). In order to “walk in the light” (1 John 1:5,7), the first step is *confession of sin* (1 John 1:9), the next (1 John 2:1) is that we should *forsake all sin*. The divine purpose has for its aim, either to prevent the commission of, or to destroy sin [BENGEL].

And, etc. — connected with the former; *Furthermore*, “if any man sin,” let him, while loathing and condemning it, not fear to go at once to God, the Judge, confessing it, for “we have an Advocate with Him.” He is speaking of a BELIEVER’S *occasional* sins of infirmity through Satan’s fraud and malice. The use of “we” immediately afterwards implies that *we all* are *liable* to this, though not necessarily constrained to sin.

we have an advocate — Advocacy is God’s family blessing; other blessings He grants to good and bad alike, but justification, sanctification, continued intercession, and peace, He grants to His children alone.

advocate — *Greek*, “*paraclete*,” the same term as is applied to the Holy Ghost, as the “other Comforter”; showing the unity of the Second and Third Persons of the Trinity. Christ is the Intercessor *for us* above; and, in His absence, here below the Holy Ghost is the other Intercessor *in us*. Christ’s *advocacy* is inseparable from the Holy Spirit’s *comfort* and working in us, as the spirit of intercessory prayer.

righteous — As our “advocate,” Christ is not a mere suppliant petitioner. He pleads for us on the ground of *justice*, or *righteousness*, as well as mercy. Though He can say nothing good *of us*, He can say much *for us*. It is His *righteousness*, or obedience to the law, and endurance of its full penalty for us, on which He grounds His claim for our acquittal. The sense therefore is, “in that He is *righteous*”; in contrast to our *sin* (“if any man *sin*”). The Father, by raising Him from the dead, and setting Him at His own right, has once for all accepted Christ’s claim for us. Therefore the accuser’s charges against God’s children are vain. “The righteousness of Christ stands on our side; for God’s righteousness is, in Jesus Christ, ours” [LUTHER].

2. And he — *Greek*, “*And Himself*.” He is our all-prevailing Advocate, because He is *Himself* “the propitiation”; *abstract*, as in  1 Corinthians 1:30: He is to us *all that is needed for propitiation* “in behalf of our sins”; *the propitiatory sacrifice*, provided by the Father’s love, removing the estrangement, and appeasing the righteous wrath, on God’s part, against the sinner. “There is no incongruity that a father should be *offended* with that son whom he loveth, and at that time offended with him when he *loveth* him” [BISHOP PEARSON]. The only other place in the New Testament where *Greek* “propitiation” occurs, is  1 John 4:10; it answers in the *Septuagint* to *Hebrew*, “*caphar*,” to *effect an atonement* or *reconciliation* with God; and in Ezekiel 44:29, to the *sin offering*. In  Romans 3:25, *Greek*, it is “propitiatory,” that is, the mercy seat, or lid of the ark whereon God, represented by the Shekinah glory above it, met His people, represented by the high priest who sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice on it.

and — *Greek*, “yet.”

ours — believers: not *Jews*, in contrast to Gentiles; for he is not writing to Jews (1 John 5:21).

also for the sins of the whole world — Christ’s “advocacy” is limited to *believers* (1 John 2:1 1 John 1:7): His *propitiation* extends as widely as *sin* extends: see on 2 Peter 2:1, “denying the Lord that *bought them*.” “The whole world” cannot be restricted to the *believing* portion of the world (compare 1 John 4:14; and “the whole world,” 1 John 5:19). “Thou, too, art part of the world, so that thine heart cannot deceive itself and think, The Lord died for Peter and Paul, but not for me” [LUTHER].

3. hereby — *Greek*, “in this.” “It is *herein*,” and herein only, that we know (present tense) that we have knowledge of (perfect tense, once-for-all obtained and continuing *knowledge of Him*)” (1 John 2:4,13,14). Tokens whereby to discern grace are frequently given in this Epistle. The Gnostics, by the Spirit’s prescient forewarning, are refuted, who boasted of *knowledge*, but set aside *obedience*. “Know Him,” namely, as “the righteous” (1 John 2:1,29); our “Advocate and Intercessor.”

keep — John’s favorite word, instead of “do,” literally, “watch,” “guard,” and “keep safe” as a precious thing; observing so as to keep. So Christ Himself. Not faultless conformity, but hearty acceptance of, and willing subjection to, God’s whole revealed will, is meant.

commandments — *injunctions* of faith, love, and obedience. John never uses “the law” to express the rule of Christian obedience: he uses it as the Mosaic law.

4. I know — *Greek*, “I have knowledge of (perfect) Him.” Compare with this verse 1 John 1:8.

5. Not merely repeating the proposition, 1 John 2:3, or asserting the merely opposite alternative to 1 John 2:4, but expanding the “know Him” of 1 John 2:3, into “in Him, verily (not as a matter of vain boasting) is the love of (that is towards) God perfected,” and “we are in Him.” *Love* here answers to *knowledge* in 1 John 2:3. In proportion as we love God, in that same proportion we *know* Him, and vice versa, until our *love and knowledge* shall attain their full maturity of perfection.

his word — *His word* is one (see on 1 John 1:5), and comprises His “*commandments*,” which are many (1 John 2:3).

hereby — in our progressing towards this ideal of perfected love and obedience. There is a gradation: 1 John 2:3, “*know Him*”; 1 John 2:5, “*we are in Him*”; 1 John 2:6, “*abideth in Him*”; respectively, *knowledge*, *fellowship*, *abiding constancy*. [BENGEL].

6. abideth — implying a condition lasting, without intermission, and without end.

He that saith ... ought — so that his deeds may be consistent with his words.

even as he — Believers readily supply the name, their hearts being full of Him (compare ~~John~~ John 20:15). “Even as He walked” when on earth, especially in respect to *love*. John delights in referring to Christ as the model man, with the words, “Even as He,” etc. “It is not Christ’s walking on the sea, but His ordinary walk, that we are called on to imitate” [LUTHER].

7. Brethren — The oldest manuscripts and versions read instead, “Beloved,” appropriate to the subject here, *love*.

no new commandment — namely, *love*, the main principle of walking *as Christ walked* (1 John 2:6), and that commandment, of which one exemplification is presently given, 1 John 2:9,10, *the love of brethren*.

ye had from the beginning — from the time that ye first heard the Gospel word preached.

8. a new commandment — It was “old,” in that *Christians* as such had heard it *from the first*; but “new” (*Greek*, “*kaine*,” not “*nea*”: *new and different* from the *old* legal precept) in that it was first *clearly* promulgated with Christianity; though the inner *spirit* of the law was *love* even to enemies, yet it was enveloped in some bitter precepts which caused it to be temporarily almost unrecognized, till the Gospel came. Christianity first put *love to brethren* on the *new* and highest MOTIVE, instinctive love to Him who first loved us, constraining us to love all, even enemies, thereby walking in the steps of Him who loved us when enemies. So Jesus

calls it “new,” ^{<B34>}John 13:34,35, “Love one another *as I have loved you*” (the new motive); ^{<B52>}John 15:12.

which thing is true in him and in you — “*In Christ* all things are always true, and were so from the beginning; but *in Christ and in us* conjointly *the commandment* [the love of brethren] *is then true* when we acknowledge the truth which is *in Him*, and have the same flourishing *in us*” [BENGEL]. ALFORD explains, “Which thing (*the fact that the commandment is a new one*) is true in Him and in you because the darkness is *passing away*, and the true light is now shining; that is, the commandment *is a new one*, and this is true both in the case of Christ and in the case of you; because *in you* the darkness is passing away, and *in Him* the true light is shining; therefore, on both accounts, the command is a *new one*: new as regards you, because you are newly come from darkness into light; new as regards Him, because He uttered it when He came into the world to lighten every man, and began that shining which even now continues.” I prefer, as BENGEL, to explain, The *new commandment* finds its *truth* in its practical *realization* in the walk of Christians in union with Christ. Compare the use of “verily,” 1 John 2:5. ^{<B42>}John 4:42, “indeed”; ^{<B55>}John 6:55. The repetition of “in” before “you,” “in Him and in you,” not “in Him and you” implies that the love commandment finds its realization *separately*: first it did so “*in Him*,” and then it does so “in us,” in so far as we now “also walk even as He walked”; and yet it finds its realization also *conjointly*, by the two being united in one sentence, even as it is by virtue of the love commandment having been first fulfilled *in Him*, that it is also now fulfilled *in us*, through His Spirit in us: compare a similar case, ^{<B17>}John 20:17, “*My Father and your Father*”; by virtue of His being “*My Father*,” He is also *your Father*.

darkness is past — rather, as in ^{<B17>}1 John 2:17, “is passing away.” It shall not be wholly “past” until “the Sun of righteousness” shall arise *visibly*; “the light is now shining” *already*, though but partially until the day bursts forth.

9-11. There is no mean between *light and darkness*, *love and hatred*, *life and death*, *God and the world*: wherever spiritual *life* is, however weak, there *darkness* and *death* no longer reign, and *love* supplants *hatred*; and ^{<B55>}Luke 9:50 holds good: wherever *life* is not, *there death, darkness*, the

flesh, the world, and hatred, however glossed over and hidden from man's observation, prevail; and ^{◀G123}Luke 11:23 holds good. "Where love is not, there hatred is; for the heart cannot remain a void" [BENGEL].

in the light — as his proper element.

his brother — his neighbor, and especially those of the Christian brotherhood. The very title "brother" is a reason why love should be exercised.

even until now — notwithstanding that "the true light already has begun to shine" (1 John 2:8).

10. Abiding in *love* is *abiding in the light*; for the Gospel light not only illumines the understanding, but warms the heart into love.

none occasion of stumbling — In contrast to, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." "In him who loves there is neither blindness nor *occasion of stumbling* [to himself]: in him who does not love, there is both *blindness* and occasion of stumbling. He who hates his brother, is both a stumbling-block to himself, and stumbles against himself and everything within and without; he who loves has an unimpeded path" [BENGEL]. John has in mind Jesus' words, John 11:9,10. ALFORD well says, "The light and the darkness are within ourselves; admitted into us by the eye, whose singleness fills the whole body with light."

11. is in darkness ... walketh — "is" marks his continuing STATE: he has never come out of "the darkness" (so *Greek*); "walketh" marks his OUTWARD WALK and acts.

whither — *Greek*, "where"; including not only the destination *to which*, but the way *whereby*.

hath blinded — rather, as *Greek* aorist, "blinded" of old. Darkness not only surrounds, but blinds him, and that a blindness of long standing.

12. little children — *Greek*, "little sons," or "dear sons and daughters"; not the same *Greek* as in ^{◀G123}1 John 2:13, "little *children*," "infants" (in age and standing). He calls ALL to whom he writes, "little *sons*" (1 John 2:1,

Greek; ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:28 3:18 4:4 5:21); but only in ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:13,18 he uses the term “little children,” or “infants.” Our Lord, whose Spirit John so deeply drank into, used to His disciples (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}John 13:33) the term “little sons,” or *dear sons and daughters*; but in John 21:5, “little children.” It is an undesigned coincidence with the Epistle here, that in John’s Gospel somewhat similarly the classification, “lambs, sheep, sheep,” occurs.

are forgiven — “have been, and are forgiven you”: ALL God’s *sons and daughters* alike enjoy this privilege.

13, 14. All three classes are first addressed in the present. “I write”; then in the past (aorist) tense, “I wrote” (not “I have written”; moreover, in the oldest manuscripts and versions, in the end of ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:13, it is past, “I wrote,” not as *English Version*, “I write”). Two classes, “fathers” and “young men,” are addressed with the same words each time (except that the address to the *young men* has an addition expressing the source and means of their victory); but the “little sons” and “little children” are differently addressed.

have known — and do know: so the *Greek* perfect means. The “I wrote” refers not to a former Epistle, but to this Epistle. It was an idiom to put the *past* tense, regarding the time from the *reader’s* point of view; when he should receive the Epistle the writing would be *past*. When he uses “I write,” he speaks from *his own* point of view.

him *that is* from the beginning — Christ: “that which was from the beginning.”

overcome — The *fathers*, appropriately to their age, are characterized by *knowledge*. The *young men*, appropriately to theirs, by *activity in conflict*. The *fathers*, too, have *conquered*; but now their active service is past, and they and the *children* alike are characterized by *knowing* (the *fathers* know *Christ*, “Him that was from the beginning”; the *children* know the Father). The first thing that the *little children* realize is that God is their *Father*; answering in the parallel clause to “little sons ... your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake,” the universal first privilege of *all* those really-dear *sons* of God. Thus this latter clause includes *all*, whereas the former clause refers to those more especially who are in the *first* stage of spiritual life, “little children.” Of course, these can only know *the Father* as theirs

through *the Son* (^{<41127} Matthew 11:27). It is beautiful to see how the *fathers* are characterized as reverting back to the first great truths of spiritual childhood, and the sum and ripest fruit of advanced experience, the *knowledge of Him that was from the beginning* (twice repeated, ^{<41213} 1 John 2:13,14). Many of them had probably known *Jesus* in person, as well as by faith.

14. young men ... strong — *made so out of natural weakness*, hence enabled to *overcome* “the strong man armed” through Him that is “stronger.” Faith is the victory that overcomes the world. This term “overcome” is peculiarly John’s, adopted from his loved Lord. It occurs sixteen times in the Apocalypse, six times in the First Epistle, only thrice in the rest of the New Testament. In order to overcome the world on the ground, and in the strength, of the blood of the Savior, we must be willing, like Christ, to part with whatever of the world belongs to us: whence immediately after “ye have overcome the wicked one (the prince of the world),” it is added, “Love not the world, neither the things ... in the world.”

and, etc. — the secret of the young men’s *strength*: the Gospel *word*, clothed with living power by the Spirit who *abideth* permanently in them; this is “the sword of the Spirit” wielded in prayerful waiting on God. Contrast the mere physical strength of young men, Isaiah 40:30,31. *Oral teaching* prepared these youths for the profitable use of *the word* when *written*. “Antichrist cannot endanger you (^{<41218} 1 John 2:18), nor Satan tear from you *the word of God*.”

the wicked one — who, as “prince of this world,” enthrals “the world” (^{<41215} 1 John 2:15-17 5:19, *Greek*, “the wicked one”), especially the young. Christ came to destroy this “prince of the world.” Believers achieve the first grand conquest over him when they pass from darkness to light, but afterwards they need to maintain a continual *keeping* of themselves from his assaults, looking to God by whom alone they are *kept* safe. BENDEL thinks John refers specially to the remarkable constancy exhibited by youths in Domitian’s persecution. Also to the young man whom John, after his return from Patmos, led with gentle, loving persuasion to repentance. This youth had been commended to the overseers of the Church by John, in one of his tours of superintendency, as a promising

disciple; he had been, therefore, carefully watched up to baptism. But afterwards relying too much on baptismal grace, he joined evil associates, and fell from step to step down, till he became a captain of robbers. When John, some years after, revisited that Church and heard of the youth's sad fall, he hastened to the retreat of the robbers, suffered himself to be seized and taken into the captain's presence. The youth, stung by conscience and the remembrance of former years, fled away from the venerable apostle. Full of love the aged father ran after him, called on him to take courage, and announced to him forgiveness of his sins in the name of Christ. The youth was recovered to the paths of Christianity, and was the means of inducing many of his bad associates to repent and believe [CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Who Is the Rich Man Who Shall Be Saved?* 4.2; EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.20; CHRYSOSTOM, *First Exhortation to Theodore*, 11].

15. Love not the world — that *lieth in the wicked one* (~~GEN~~ 1 John 5:19), whom ye young men *have overcome*. Having once for all, through *faith, overcome the world* (1 John 4:4 5:4), carry forward the conquest by not loving it. “The world” here means “man, and man’s world” [ALFORD], in his and its state as *fallen from God*. “God loved [with the love of *compassion*] the world,” and we should feel the same kind of love for the fallen world; but we are *not* to *love* the world with *congeniality* and *sympathy* in its alienation from God; we cannot have this latter kind of love for the God-estranged world, and yet have also “the love of the Father in” us.

neither — *Greek*, “nor yet.” A man might deny in general that he *loved the world*, while keenly following some one of THE THINGS IN IT: its riches, honors, or pleasures; this clause prevents him escaping from conviction.

any man — therefore the warning, though primarily addressed to the young, applies to *all*.

love of — that is, *towards* “the Father.” The two, God and the (sinful) world, are so opposed, that both cannot be congenially loved at once.

16. all that is in the world — can be classed under one or other of the three; the world contains these and no more.

lust of the flesh — that is, the lust which has its seat and source in our lower animal nature. Satan tried this temptation the first on Christ: Luke 4:3, “Command this stone that it be made *bread*.” Youth is especially liable to fleshly lusts.

lust of the eyes — the avenue through which outward things of the world, riches, pomp, and beauty, inflame us. Satan tried this temptation on Christ when he showed Him the kingdoms of the world in a moment. By the lust of the eyes David (2 Samuel 11:2) and Achan fell (^{<1672>}Joshua 7:21).

Compare David’s prayer, Psalm 119:37; Job’s resolve, Psalm 31:1

^{<105>}Matthew 5:28. The only good of worldly riches to the possessor is the beholding them with the *eyes*. Compare ^{<2448>}Luke 14:18, “I must go and SEE it.”

pride of life — literally, “arrogant assumption”: vainglorious display.

Pride was Satan’s sin whereby he fell and forms the link between the two foes of man, the *world* (answering to “the lust of the eyes”) and the *devil* (as “the lust of the flesh” is the third foe). Satan tried this temptation on Christ in setting Him on the temple pinnacle that, in spiritual *pride* and *presumption*, on the ground of His Father’s care, He should cast Himself down. The same three foes appear in the three classes of soil on which the divine seed falls: the wayside hearers, the *devil*; the thorns, *the world*; the rocky undersoil, *the flesh* (^{<133>}Matthew 13:18-23 Mark 4:3-8). The world’s awful *antitrinity*, the “lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,” similarly is presented in Satan’s temptation of Eve: “When she saw that the tree was good for *food*, pleasant to the *eyes*, and a tree to be desired to make one *wise*,” Genesis 3:6 (one manifestation of “the pride of life,” the desire to know above what God has revealed, Colossians 2:8, the pride of unsanctified knowledge).

of — does not spring *from* “the Father” (used in relation to the preceding “little children,” ^{<102>}1 John 2:12, or “little sons”). He who is born *of* God alone turns *to* God; he who is of the world turns to the world; the sources of love to God and love to the world, are irreconcilably distinct.

17. the world — with all who are of the world worldly.

passeth away — *Greek*, “is passing away” even now.

the lust thereof — in its threefold manifestation (⁴¹²⁶1 John 2:16).

he that doeth the will of God — not his own *fleshly* will, or the will of the *world*, but that of God (1 John 2:3,6), especially in respect to *love*.

abideth for ever — “even as God also abideth for ever” (with whom the godly is one; compare Psalm 55:19, “God, even He that abideth of old): a true *comment*, which CYPRIAN and LUCIFER have added to the *text* without support of *Greek* manuscripts. In contrast to the three *passing* lusts of the world, the doer of God’s will has three *abiding* goods, “riches, honor, and life” (Proverbs 22:4).

18. Little children — same *Greek* as ⁴¹²³1 John 2:13; children *in age*. After the *fathers* and *young men* were gone, “the last time” with its “many Antichrists” was about to come suddenly on *the children*. “In this *last hour* we all even still live” [BENGEL]. Each successive age has had in it some of the signs of “the last time” which precedes Christ’s coming, in order to keep the Church in continual waiting for the Lord. The connection with ⁴¹²⁵1 John 2:15-17 is: There are coming those seducers who arc of the world (1 John 4:5), and would tempt you to go out from us (⁴¹²⁹1 John 2:19) and deny Christ (⁴¹²⁷1 John 2:22).

as ye have heard — from the apostles, preachers of the Gospel (for example, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10; and in the region of Ephesus, ⁴¹²⁹Acts 20:29,30).

shall come — *Greek*, “cometh,” namely, out of his own place. *Antichrist* is interpreted in two ways: a false Christ (Matthew 24:5,24), literally, “*instead of Christ*”; or an *adversary of Christ*, literally, “*against Christ*.” As John never uses *pseudo-Christ*, or “false Christ,” for *Antichrist*, it is plain he means an *adversary of Christ*, claiming to himself what belongs to Christ, and wishing to substitute himself for Christ as the supreme object of worship. He *denies the Son*, not merely, like the pope, acts in the name of the Son, 2 Thessalonians 2:4, “Who *opposeth* himself (*Greek*, “ANTI-*keimenos*”) [to] all that is called God,” decides this. For God’s great truth, “God is man,” he would substitute his own lie, “man is God” [TRENCH].

are there — *Greek*, “there have begun to be”; there have arisen. These “many Antichrists” answer to “the spirit of lawlessness (*Greek*) doth

already work.” The Antichristian principle appeared then, as now, in evil men and evil teachings and writings; but still “THE Antichrist” means a hostile *person*, even as “THE Christ” is a personal Savior. As “cometh” is used of Christ, *so* here of Antichrist, the embodiment in his own person of all the Antichristian features and spirit of those “many Antichrists” which have been, and are, his forerunners. John uses the singular of him. No other New Testament writer uses the term. He probably answers to “the little horn having the eyes of a man, and speaking great things” (Daniel 7:8,20); “the man of sin, son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:3); “the beast ascending out of the bottomless pit” (Revelation 11:7 17:8), or rather, “the false prophet,” the same as “the second beast coming up out of the earth” (Revelation 13:11-18 16:13).

19. out from us — from our Christian communion. Not necessarily a formal secession or *going out*: thus Rome has spiritually *gone out*, though formally still of the Christian Church.

not of us — by spiritual fellowship (1 John 1:3). “They are like bad humors in the body of Christ, the Church: when they are vomited out, then the body is relieved; the body of Christ is now still under treatment, and has not yet attained the perfect soundness which it shall have only at the resurrection” [AUGUSTINE, *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John*, Homily 3.4].

they would ... have continued — implying the indefectibility of grace in the elect. “Where God’s call is effectual, there will be sure perseverance” [CALVIN]. Still, it is no fatal necessity, but a “voluntary necessity” [DIDYMUS], which causes men to remain, or else go from the body of Christ. “We are either among the members, or else among the bad humors. It is of his own will that each is either an Antichrist, or in Christ” [AUGUSTINE]. Still God’s actings in eternal election harmonize in a way *inexplicable to us*, with man’s free agency and responsibility. It is men’s own evil will that chooses the way to hell; it is God’s free and sovereign grace that draws any to Himself and to heaven. To God the latter shall ascribe wholly their salvation from first to last: the former shall reproach themselves alone, and not God’s decree, with their condemnation (1 John 3:9 5:18).

that they were not all of us — This translation would imply *that some of the Antichrists are of us!* Translate, therefore, “that all (who are for a time among us) are not of us.” Compare ⁴¹¹⁹1 Corinthians 11:19, “There must be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.” For “were” some of the oldest manuscripts read “are.” Such occasions test who are, and who are not, the Lord’s people.

20. But — *Greek*, “And.” He here states the means which they as believers have wherewith to withstand. *Antichrists* (⁴¹¹⁸1 John 2:18), namely, the *chrism* (so the *Greek*: a play upon similar sounds), or “anointing unguent,” namely, the Holy Spirit (more plainly mentioned further on, as in John’s style, ⁴¹²¹1 John 3:24 4:13 5:6), which *they* (“ye” is emphatical in contrast to those apostates, ⁴¹¹⁹1 John 2:19) have “from the Holy One, *Christ*” (⁴¹²³John 1:33 3:34 15:26 16:14): “the righteous” (1 John 2:1), “pure” (1 John 3:3), “the Holy One” (⁴¹²⁴Acts 3:14) “of God”; ⁴¹⁰²Mark 1:24. Those anointed of God in *Christ* alone can resist those anointed with the spirit of Satan, *Antichrists*, who would sever them from the Father and from the Son. Believers have the anointing Spirit from *the Father* also, as well as from the Son; even as the Son is anointed therewith by the Father. Hence the Spirit is the token that we are in the Father and in the Son; without it a man is none of Christ. The material unguent of costliest ingredients, poured on the head of priests and kings, typified this spiritual unguent, derived from Christ, the Head, to us, His members. We can have no share in Him as *Jesus*, except we become truly *Christians*, and so be in Him as *Christ*, anointed with that unction from the Holy One. The Spirit poured on Christ, the Head, is by Him diffused through all the members. “It appears that we all are the body of *Christ*, because we all are anointed: and we all in Him are both *Christ’s* and *Christ*, because in some measure the whole *Christ* is Head and body.”

and — therefore.

ye know all things — needful for acting aright against Antichrist’s seductions, and for Christian life and godliness. In the same measure as one hath *the Spirit*, in that measure (no more and no less) he knows all these things.

21. but because ye know it, and that, etc. — Ye not *only know* what is the truth (concerning the Son and the Father, ⁴¹²⁵1 John 2:13), but also are

able to detect a lie as a thing opposed to the truth. For right (a straight line) is the index of itself and of what is crooked [ESTIUS]. The *Greek* is susceptible of ALFORD'S translation, "Because ye know it, and *because* no lie is of the truth" (literally, "every lie is excluded from being of the truth"). I therefore wrote (in this Epistle) to point out what the lie is, and who the liars are.

22. a liar — *Greek*, "Who is the liar?" namely, guilty of *the* lie just mentioned (^{¶121}1 John 2:21).

that Jesus is the Christ — the grand central truth.

He is Antichrist — *Greek*, "*the* Antichrist"; not however here *personal*, but in the abstract; the ideal of Antichrist is "he that denieth the Father and the Son." To deny the latter is virtually to deny the former. Again, the truth as to the Son must be held in its integrity; to deny that Jesus is the Christ, or that He is the Son of God, or that He came in the flesh, invalidates the whole (^{¶122}Matthew 11:27).

23. *Greek*, "Every one who denieth the Son, hath not the Father either" (1 John 4:2,3): "inasmuch as God hath given Himself to us wholly to be enjoyed in Christ" [CALVIN].

he — *that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also*. These words ought not to be in italics, as though they were not in the original: for the oldest *Greek* manuscripts have them.

hath — namely, in his abiding possession as his "portion"; by living personal "fellowship."

acknowledgeth — by open confession of Christ.

24. Let that — truth respecting the Father and the Son, regarded as a seed not merely dropped in, but having taken root (1 John 3:9).

ye — in the *Greek* standing emphatically at the beginning of the sentence. YE, therefore, *acknowledge the Son, and so shall ye have the Father also* (^{¶123}1 John 2:23).

from the beginning — from the time of your first hearing the Gospel.

remain — Translate as before, "abide."

ye also — in your turn, as distinguished from “that which ye have heard,” the seed *abiding in you*. Compare ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:27, “the anointing *abideth in you* ... ye shall *abide in Him*.” Having taken into us the living seed of the truth concerning the Father and the Son, we become transformed into the likeness of Him whose seed we have taken into us.

25. this is the promise — *Eternal life* shall be the permanent consummation of thus *abiding in the Son and in the Father* (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:24).

he — *Greek*, “Himself,” Christ, “the Son” (compare 1 John 1:1).

promised — (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}John 3:15,36 6:40,47,57 17:2,3).

26. These things — (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:18-25).

have I written — resumed from ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:21 and ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:14.

seducer you — that is, are trying to seduce or lead you into error.

27. But — *Greek*, “And you (contrasting the believing readers with the *seducers*; the words ‘and you’ stand prominent, the construction of the sentence following being altered, and no verb agreeing with ‘and you’ until ‘need not’) ... the anointing,” etc. (resumed from ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}1 John 2:20).

received of him — (^{ⲁⲓⲃ}John 1:16). So we “are unto God a sweet savor of Christ.”

abideth in you — He tacitly thus admonishes them to say, when tempted by seducers, “The anointing abideth in us; we do not need a teacher [for we have the Holy Spirit as our teacher, Jeremiah 31:34 ^{ⲁⲓⲃ}John 6:45 16:13]; it teaches us the truth; in that teaching we will abide” [BENGEL].

and — and therefore. God is sufficient for them who are taught of Him; they are independent of all others, though, of course, not declining the Christian counsel of faithful ministers. “Mutual communication is not set aside, but approved of, in the case of those who are partakers of the anointing in one body” [BENGEL].

the same anointing — which ye once for all received, and which now still abides in you.

of — “concerning.”

all things — essential to salvation; the point under discussion. Not that the believer is made infallible, for no believer here receives the Spirit in all its fullness, but only the measure needful for keeping him from soul-destroying error. So the Church, though having the Spirit in her, is not infallible (for many fallible members can never make an infallible whole), but is kept from ever wholly losing the saving truth.

no lie — as Antichristian teaching.

ye shall abide in him — (ⲁⲓⲃⲏ 1 John 2:24, end); even as “the anointing abideth in you.” The oldest manuscripts read the imperative, “*abide* in Him.”

28. little children — *Greek*, “little sons,” as in ⲁⲓⲃⲏ 1 John 2:12; believers of every stage and age.

abide in him — Christ. John repeats his monition with a loving appellation, as a father addressing dear children.

when — literally, “if”; the uncertainty is not as to the fact, but *the time*.

appear — *Greek*, “be manifested.”


we — both writer and readers.

ashamed before him — literally, “*from Him*”; shrink back *from Him* ashamed. Contrast “boldness in the day of judgment,” ⲁⲓⲃⲏ 1 John 4:17; compare ⲁⲓⲃⲏ 1 John 3:21 5:14. In the Apocalypse (written, therefore, BENGEL thinks, subsequently), Christ’s coming is represented as put off to a greater distance.

29. The heading of the second division of the Epistle: “God is righteous; therefore, every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him.” Love is the grand feature and principle of “righteousness” selected for discussion, ⲁⲓⲃⲏ 1 John 2:29-3:3.

If ye know ... ye know — distinct *Greek* verbs: “if ye *are aware* (are in possession of the knowledge) ... ye *discern* or apprehend also that,” etc. Ye are already aware that *God* (“He” includes both “the Father,” *of* whom the believer *is born* (end of this verse, and 1 John 3:1), and “the Son,” 1

John 2:1,23) *is righteous*, ye must necessarily, thereby, perceive also the consequence of that truth, namely, “that everyone that doeth righteousness (and he alone; literally, *the* righteousness such as the righteous God approves) is born of Him.” The righteous produceth the righteous. We are never said to be *born again of Christ*, but of *God*, with whom Christ is one. HOLLAZ in ALFORD defines *the righteousness of God*, “It is the divine energy by whose power God wills and does all things which are conformable to His eternal law, prescribes suitable laws to His creatures, fulfils His promises to men, rewards the good, and punishes the ungodly.”

doeth — “For the graces (virtues) are practical, and have their being in being produced (in being exercised); for when they have ceased to act, or are only about to act, they have not even being” [AECUMENIUS]. “God is righteous, and therefore the *source* of righteousness; when then a man doeth righteousness, we know that the source of his righteousness is God, that consequently he has acquired by new birth from God that righteousness which he had not by nature. We argue from his *doing righteousness*, to his being *born of God*. The error of Pelagians is to conclude that *doing righteousness* is a condition of *becoming* a child of God” [ALFORD most truly]. Compare  Luke 7:47,50: Her much love *evinced* that her sins *were already* forgiven; not, were the *condition* of her sins being forgiven.

CHAPTER 3

1 JOHN 3:1-24.

DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD AND THE CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL. BROTHERLY LOVE THE ESSENCE OF TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS.

1. Behold — calling attention, as to some wonderful exhibition, little as the world sees to admire. This verse is connected with the previous ^{<129>}1 John 2:29, thus: All our *doing of righteousness* is a mere sign that God, of His matchless love, has adopted us as children; it does not save us, but is a proof that we are saved of His grace.

what manner of — of what surpassing excellence, how gracious on His part, how precious to us.

love ... bestowed — He does not say that God hath given us some gift, but *love itself* and the fountain of all honors, the heart itself, and that not for our works or efforts, but of His grace [LUTHER].

that — “what manner of love”; resulting in, proved by, our being, etc. The immediate *effect aimed at* in the bestowal of this love is, “*that* we should be called children of God.”

should be called — should have received the privilege of such a glorious *title* (though seeming so imaginary to the world), along with the glorious *reality*. With God *to call* is to *make really to be*. Who so great as God? What nearer relationship than that of *sons*? The oldest manuscripts add, “And we ARE SO” really.

therefore — “on this account,” because “we are (really) so.”

us — the children, like the Father.

it knew him not — namely, the Father. “If they who regard not God, hold thee in any account, feel alarmed about thy state” [BENGEL]. Contrast

1 John 5:1. The world's whole course is one great act of non-recognition of God.

2. Beloved — by the Father, and therefore by me.

now — in contrast to “not yet.” We *now* already are really sons, though not recognized as such by the world, and (as the consequence) we look for the visible manifestation of our sonship, which *not yet* has taken place.

doth not yet appear — *Greek*, “it hath not yet (‘at any time,’ *Greek* aorist) been visibly manifested what we shall be” — what further glory we shall attain by virtue of this our sonship. The “what” suggests a something inconceivably glorious.

but — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Its insertion in *English Version* gives a wrong antithesis. It is not, “*We do not yet know manifestly* what ... but we know,” etc. *Believers have* some degree of the manifestation already, though the *world has not*. The connection is, The manifestation *to the world* of what we shall be, has not yet taken place; *we know* (in general; as a matter of *well-assured knowledge*; so the *Greek*) that when (literally, “if”; expressing no doubt as to the fact, but only as to the time; also implying the coming preliminary fact, on which the consequence follows, Malachi 1:6 John 14:3) He (not “it,” namely, that which is not yet manifested [ALFORD]) shall be manifested (1 John 3:5 2:28), we shall be like Him (Christ; all sons have a substantial resemblance to their father, and Christ, whom we shall be like, is “the express image of the Father’s person,” so that in resembling Christ, we shall resemble the Father). We *wait for the manifestation* (literally, the “apocalypse”; the same term as is applied to Christ’s own manifestation) *of the sons of God*. After our natural birth, the new birth into the life of grace is needed, which is to be followed by the new birth into the life of glory; the two latter alike are termed “the regeneration” (~~488~~ Matthew 19:28). The resurrection of our bodies is a kind of coming out of the womb of the earth, and being born into another life. Our first temptation was that we should be like God in knowledge, and by that we fell; but being raised by Christ, we become truly like Him, by knowing Him as we are known, and by seeing Him as He is [PEARSON, *Exposition of the Creed*]. As the first immortality which Adam lost was to be able not to die, so the last shall be not to be able to die. As man’s first free choice or will was to be able not to sin, so our last

shall be not to be able to sin [AUGUSTINE, *The City of God*, 22.30]. The devil fell by aspiring to God's *power*; man, by aspiring to his *knowledge*; but aspiring after God's *goodness*, we shall ever grow in His likeness. The transition from *God* the Father to "He," "Him," referring to Christ (who alone is ever said in Scripture to be *manifested*; not the Father, ^{GRB}John 1:18), implies the entire unity of the Father and the Son.

for, etc. — Continual beholding generates likeness (^{GRB}2 Corinthians 3:18); as the face of the moon being always turned towards the sun, reflects its light and glory.

see him — not in His innermost Godhead, but as manifested in Christ. None but the pure can see the infinitely Pure One. In all these passages the *Greek* is the same verb *opsomai*; not denoting the action of seeing, but the state of him to whose eye or mind the object is presented; hence the *Greek* verb is always in the middle or reflexive voice, to *perceive* and *inwardly appreciate* [TITTMANN]. Our spiritual bodies will appreciate and recognize spiritual beings hereafter, as our natural bodies now do natural objects.

3. this hope — of being hereafter "like Him." *Faith* and *love*, as well as *hope*, occur in ^{GRB}1 John 3:11,23.

in — rather, "(resting) upon Him"; grounded on His promises.

purifieth himself — by Christ's Spirit in him (John 15:5, end). "Thou purifiest thyself, not of thyself, but of Him who comes that He may dwell in thee" [AUGUSTINE]. One's justification through faith is presupposed.

as he is pure — unsullied with any uncleanness. The Second Person, by whom both the Law and Gospel were given.

4. Sin is incompatible with birth from God (1 John 3:1-3). John often sets forth the same truth *negatively*, which he had before set forth *positively*. He had shown, birth from God involves self-purification; he now shows where sin, that is, the want of self-purification, is, there is no birth from God.

Whosoever — *Greek*, "Every one who."

committeth sin — in contrast to 1 John 3:3, “Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself”; and 1 John 3:7, “He that doeth righteousness.”

transgresseth ... the law — *Greek*, “committeth transgression of law.” God’s law of purity; and so shows he has no such hope of being hereafter pure as God is pure, and, therefore, that he is not born of God.

for — *Greek*, “and.”

sin is ... transgression of ... law — definition of *sin* in general. The *Greek* having the article to both, implies that they are convertible terms. The *Greek* “sin” (*hamartia*) is literally, “a missing of the mark.” God’s will being that mark to be ever aimed at. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” The crookedness of a line is shown by being brought into juxtaposition with a straight ruler.

5. Additional proof of the incompatibility of sin and sonship; the very object of Christ’s manifestation in the flesh was *to take away* (by one act, and entirely, aorist) all sins, as the scapegoat did typically.

and — another proof of the same.

in him is no sin — not “was,” but “is,” as in 1 John 3:7, “He *is* righteous,” and 1 John 3:3, “He *is* pure.” Therefore we are to be so.

6. He reasons from Christ’s own entire separation from sin, that those in him must also be separate from it.

abideth in him — as the branch in the vine, by vital union living by His life.

sinneth not — In so far as he abides in Christ, so far is he free from all sin. The ideal of the Christian. The life of sin and the life of God mutually exclude one another, just as darkness and light. In matter of fact, believers do fall into sins (1 John 1:8-10 2:1,2); but all such sins are alien from the life of God, and need Christ’s cleansing blood, without application to which the life of God could not be maintained. He sinneth not so long as he abideth in Christ.

whosoever sinneth hath not seen him — *Greek* perfect, “has not seen, and does not see Him.” Again the *ideal* of Christian intuition and knowledge is presented (^{<1072>}Matthew 7:23). All sin as such is at variance with the notion of one regenerated. Not that “whosoever is betrayed into sins has never seen nor known God”; but *in so far* as sin exists, *in that degree* the spiritual intuition and knowledge of God do not exist in him.

neither — “not even.” To *see* spiritually is a further step than *to know*; for by *knowing* we come to *seeing* by vivid realization and experimentally.

7, 8. The same truth stated, with the addition that he who sins is, so far as he sins, “of the devil.”

let no man deceive you — as Antinomians try to mislead men.

righteousness — *Greek*, “the righteousness,” namely, of Christ or God.

he that doeth ... is righteous — Not his *doing* makes him *righteous*, but his *being righteous* (justified by the righteousness of God in Christ, Romans 10:3-10) makes him to do *righteousness*: an inversion common in familiar language, logical in reality, though not in form, as in ^{<1074>}Luke 7:47 ^{<1084>}John 8:47. Works do not justify, but the justified man works. We infer from his *doing righteousness* that he is already *righteous* (that is, has the true and only principle of *doing righteousness*, namely, *faith*), and is therefore *born of God* (1 John 3:9); just as we might say, The tree that bears good fruit is a good tree, and has a living root; not that the fruit *makes* the tree and its root to be good, but it *shows* that they are so.

he — Christ.

8. He that committeth sin is of the devil — in contrast to “He that doeth righteousness,” 1 John 3:7. He is *a son of the devil* (^{<1080>}1 John 3:10 ^{<1084>}John 8:44). John does not, however, say, “born of the devil.” as he does “born of God,” for “the devil begets none, nor does he create any; but whoever imitates the devil becomes a child of the devil by imitating him, not by proper birth” [AUGUSTINE, *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John*, Homily 4.10]. From the devil there is not generation, but corruption [BENGEL].

sinneth from the beginning — from the time that any began to sin [ALFORD]: from the time that he became what he is, the devil. He seems to have kept his first estate only a very short time after his creation [BENGEL]. *Since the fall of man* [at the beginning of our world] *the devil is (ever) sinning* (this is the force of “sinneth”; he has sinned from the beginning, is the cause of all sins, and still goes on sinning; present). As the author of sin, and prince of this world, he has never ceased to seduce man to sin [LUECKE].

destroy — break up and do away with; bruising and crushing the serpent’s head.

works of the devil — sin, and all its awful consequences. John argues, Christians cannot do that which Christ came to destroy.

9. Whosoever is born of God — literally, “Everyone that is begotten of God.”

doth not commit sin — His higher nature, as one born or begotten of God, doth not sin. *To be begotten of God* and *to sin*, are states mutually excluding one another. In so far as one sins, he makes it doubtful whether he be *born of God*.

his seed — the living word of God, made by the Holy Spirit the seed in us of a new life and the continual mean of sanctification.

remaineth — abideth in him (compare *Note*, see on 1 John 3:6; ^{RES} John 5:38). This does not contradict 1 John 1:8,9; the regenerate show the utter incompatibility of *sin* with *regeneration*, by cleansing away every sin into which they may be betrayed by the old nature, at once in the blood of Christ.

cannot sin, because he is born of God — “because it is *of God* that *he is born*” (so the *Greek* order, as compared with the order of the same words in the beginning of the verse); not “because he *was* born of God” (the *Greek* is perfect tense, which is *present* in meaning, not aorist); it is not said, Because a man was once for all born of God he never afterwards can sin; but, Because he is born of God, the seed abiding now in Him, he cannot sin; so long as it energetically abides, sin can have no place. Compare Genesis 39:9, Joseph, “How CAN I do this great wickedness

and sin against God?" The principle within me is at utter variance with it. The regenerate life is incompatible with sin, and gives the believer a hatred for sin in every shape, and an unceasing desire to resist it. "The child of God in this conflict receives indeed wounds daily, but never throws away his arms or makes peace with his deadly foe" [LUTHER]. The exceptional sins into which the regenerate are surprised, are owing to the new life principle being for a time suffered to lie dormant, and to the sword of the Spirit not being drawn instantly. Sin is ever active, but no longer reigns. The *normal* direction of the believer's energies is against sin; the law of God after the inward man is the *ruling* principle of his true self though the old nature, not yet *fully* deadened, rebels and sins. Contrast ^{<G18>}1 John 5:18 with ^{<G8>}John 8:34; compare Psalm 18:22,23 32:2,3 119:113,176. The magnetic needle, the nature of which is always to point to the pole, is easily turned aside, but always reseeks the pole.

10. children of the devil — (See on 1 John 3:8; ^{<G10>}Acts 13:10). There is no middle class between the children of God and the children of the devil.

doeth not righteousness — Contrast ^{<G12>}1 John 2:29.

he that loveth not his brother — (1 John 4:8); a particular instance of that *love* which is the sum and fulfillment of all righteousness, and the token (not loud professions, or even seemingly good works) that distinguishes God's children from the devil's.

11. the message — "announcement," as of something good; not a mere *command*, as the law. The Gospel *message* of Him who loved us, announced by His servants, is, that we *love the brethren*; not here all mankind, but those who are our brethren in Christ, children of the same family of God, of whom we have been born anew.

12. *who* — not in the *Greek*.

of that wicked one — Translate, "*evil* one," to accord with "Because his own works were *evil*." Compare 1 John 3:8, "of the devil," in contrast to "of God," ^{<G10>}1 John 3:10.

slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous — through envy and hatred of his brother's piety, owing to

which God accepted Abel's, but rejected Cain's offering. Enmity from the first existed between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

13. Marvel not — The marvel would be if the world loved you.

the world — of whom Cain is the representative (^{GRD}1 John 3:12).

hate you — as Cain hated even his own brother, and that to the extent of murdering him. The world feels its bad works tacitly reproved by your good works.

14. We — emphatical; hated though we be by the world, *we* know what the world knows not.

know — as an assured fact.

passed — *changed our state.* ^{GRD}Colossians 1:13, “from the power of darkness ... translated into the kingdom of His dear Son.”

from death unto life — literally, “*out of the* death (which enthrals the unregenerate) *into the* life (of the regenerate).” A palpable coincidence of language and thought, the beloved disciple adopting his Lord's words.

because we love the brethren — the ground, not of our *passing over out of death into life*, but of our *knowing* that we have so. *Love*, on our part, is the *evidence* of our justification and regeneration, not the *cause* of them. “Let each go to his own heart; if he find there love to the brethren, let him feel assured that he has passed from death unto life. Let him not mind that his glory is only hidden; when the Lord shall come, then shall he appear in glory. For he has vital energy, but it is still wintertime; the root has vigor, but the branches are as it were dry; within there is marrow which is vigorous, within are leaves, within fruits, but they must wait for summer” [AUGUSTINE].

He that loveth not — Most of the oldest manuscripts omit “his brother,” which makes the statement more general.

abideth — still.

in death — “in *the* (spiritual) death” (ending in eternal death) which is the state of all by nature. His want of *love* evidences that no saving change has passed over him.

15. *hateth* — equivalent to “loveth not” (ⲁⲓⲃⲏⲛ 1 John 3:14); there is no medium between the two. “Love and hatred, like light and darkness, life and death, necessarily replace, as well as necessarily exclude, one another” [ALFORD].

is a murderer — because indulging in that passion, which, if followed out to its natural consequences, would make him one. “Whereas, ⲁⲓⲃⲏⲛ 1 John 3:16 desires us to lay down our lives for the brethren; *duels* require one (awful to say!) to risk *his own* life, rather than not deprive *another* of life” [BENGEL]. God regards the inward disposition as tantamount to the outward act which would flow from it. Whomsoever one hates, one wishes to be dead.

hath — Such a one still “abideth in death.” It is not his *future* state, but his *present*, which is referred to. He who hates (that is, loveth not) his brother (ⲁⲓⲃⲏⲛ 1 John 3:14), cannot in this his present state have eternal life abiding in him.

16. What true *love to the brethren* is, illustrated by the love of Christ to us.

Hereby — *Greek*, “Herein.”

the love of *God* — The words “of God” are not in the original. Translate, “We arrive at the knowledge of love”; we apprehend what true love is.

he — Christ.

and we — on our part, if absolutely needed for the glory of God, the good of the Church, or the salvation of a brother.

lives — Christ alone laid down His one *life* for us all; we ought to lay down our *lives* severally for the lives of the brethren; if not actually, at least virtually, by giving our time, care, labors, prayers, substance: *Non nobis, sed omnibus*. Our life ought not to be dearer to us than God’s own Son was to Him. The apostles and martyrs acted on this principle.

17. *this world’s good* — literally, “livelihood” or substance. If we ought to lay down our *lives* for the brethren (ⲁⲓⲃⲏⲛ 1 John 3:16), how much more ought we not to withhold our *substance*?

seeth — not merely *casually*, but deliberately *contemplates* as a spectator; *Greek*, “beholds.”

shutteth up his bowels of compassion — which had been momentarily opened by the *spectacle* of his brother’s need. The “bowels” mean the *heart*, the seat of compassion.

how — *How* is it possible that “the love of (that is, ‘to’) God dwelleth (*Greek*, ‘abideth’) in him?” Our superfluities should yield to the necessities; our comforts, and even our necessities in some measure, should yield to the extreme wants of our brethren. “Faith gives Christ to me; love flowing from faith gives me to my neighbor.”

18. When the venerable John could no longer walk to the meetings of the Church but was borne thither by his disciples, he always uttered the same address to the Church; he reminded them of that one commandment which he had received from Christ Himself, as comprising all the rest, and forming the distinction of the new covenant, “My little children, love one another.” When the brethren present, wearied of hearing the same thing so often, asked why he always repeated the same thing, he replied, “Because it is the commandment of the Lord, and if this one thing be attained, it is enough” [JEROME].

in word — *Greek*, “with word ... with tongue, but in deed and truth.”

19. hereby — *Greek*, “herein”; in our *loving in deed and in truth* (^{GRS}1 John 3:18).

we know — The oldest manuscripts have “we shall know,” namely, if we fulfill the command (^{GRS}1 John 3:18).

of the truth — that we are real disciples of, and belonging to, *the truth*, as it is in Jesus: begotten of God with the word of truth. Having herein *the truth* radically, we shall be sure not to love merely *in word and tongue*. (^{GRS}1 John 3:18).

assure — literally, “persuade,” namely, so as to cease to condemn us; satisfy the questionings and doubts of our consciences as to whether we be accepted *before* God or not (compare ^{GRS}Matthew 28:14 ^{GRS}Acts 12:20, “*having made* Blastus their friend,” literally, “persuaded”). The “heart,” as

the seat of the feelings, is our inward *judge*; the *conscience*, as the witness, acts either as our justifying advocate, or our condemning accuser, before God even now. John 8:9, has “conscience,” but the passage is omitted in most old manuscripts. John nowhere else uses the term “conscience.” Peter and Paul alone use it.

before him — as in the sight of Him, the omniscient Searcher of *hearts*. *Assurance* is designed to be the ordinary experience and privilege of the believer.

20. LUTHER and BENGEL take this verse as consoling the believer whom his *heart condemns*; and who, therefore, like Peter, appeals from conscience to Him who is *greater than conscience*. “Lord, Thou *knowest all things*: thou knowest that I love Thee.” Peter’s conscience, though condemning him of his sin in denying the Lord, assured him of his *love*; but fearing the possibility, owing to his past fall, of deceiving himself, he appeals to the all-knowing God: so Paul, 1 Corinthians 4:3,4. So if we be believers, even if *our heart condemns us of sin in general*, yet having the one sign of sonship, love, we may still *assure our hearts* (some oldest manuscripts read *heart*, ^{GRB}1 John 3:19, as well as ^{GRB}1 John 3:20), as knowing *that God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things*. But thus the same *Greek* is translated “because” in the beginning, and “(we know) *that*” in the middle of the verse, and if the verse were consolatory, it probably would have been, “Because EVEN if our heart condemn us,” etc. Therefore translate, “*Because* (rendering the reason why it has been stated in ^{GRB}1 John 3:19 to be so important to ‘assure our hearts before Him’) if our heart condemn (*Greek*, ‘*know* [aught] *against* us’; answering by contrast to ‘we shall *know* that we are of the truth’) us (it is) *because* God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.” If our heart judges us unfavorably, we may be sure that He, knowing more than our heart knows, judges us more unfavorably still [ALFORD]. A similar ellipsis (“it is”) occurs in ^{GRB}1 Corinthians 14:27 2 Corinthians 1:6 8:23. The condemning testimony of our conscience is not alone, but is the echo of the voice of Him who is greater and knoweth all things. Our hypocrisy in *loving by word and tongue*, not in *deed and truth*, does not escape even our conscience, though weak and knowing but little, how much less God who knows all things! Still the consolatory view may be the right one. For the *Greek* for “we shall *assure* our hearts” (see on ^{GRB}1 John 3:19), is *gain*

over, persuade so as to be stilled, implying that there was a previous state of *self-condemnation by the heart* (^{GR1}1 John 3:20), which, however, is *got over* by the consolatory thought, “God is greater than my heart” which condemns me, and “knows all things” (Greek “*ginoskei*,” “*knows*,” not “*kataginoskei*,” “*condemns*”), and therefore knows my *love* and desire to serve Him, and knows my *frame* so as to pity my weakness of faith. This *gaining over* the heart to peace is not so advanced a stage as the *having CONFIDENCE towards God* which flows from a *heart condemning us not*. The first “because” thus applies to the two alternate cases, ^{GR1}1 John 3:20,21 (giving the ground of saying, that *having love we shall gain over, or assure our minds before Him*, ^{GR9}1 John 3:19); the second “because” applies to the first alternate alone, namely, “if our heart condemn us.” When he reaches the second alternate, ^{GR1}1 John 3:21, he states it independently of the former “because” which had connected it with ^{GR9}1 John 3:19, inasmuch as *CONFIDENCE toward God* is a farther stage than *persuading our hearts*, though always preceded by it.

21. Beloved — There is no “But” contrasting the two cases, ^{GR1}1 John 3:20,21, because “Beloved” sufficiently marks the transition to the case of the brethren walking in the full confidence of *love* (^{GR8}1 John 3:18). The two results of our being able to “assure our hearts before Him” (^{GR9}1 John 3:19), and of “our heart condemning us not” (of insincerity as to *the truth* in general, and as to *LOVE* in particular) are,

(1) confidence toward God;

(2) a sure answer to our prayers. John does not mean that all whose hearts do not condemn them, are therefore safe before God; for some have their conscience seared, others are ignorant of the truth, and it is not only *sincerity*, but *sincerity in the truth* which can save men.

Christians are those meant here: knowing Christ’s precepts and testing themselves by them.

22. we receive — as a matter of fact, according to His promise. Believers, as such, ask only what is in accordance with God’s will; or if they ask what God wills not, they bow their will to God’s will, and so God grants them either their request, or something better than it.

because we keep his commandments — Compare Psalm 66:18 34:15 145:18,19. Not as though our merits earned a hearing for our prayers, but when we are believers in Christ, all our works of faith being the fruit of *His* Spirit in us, are “pleasing in God’s sight”; and our prayers being the voice of the same Spirit of God in us, naturally and necessarily are answered by Him.

23. Summing up of God’s commandments under the Gospel dispensation in one commandment.

this is his commandment — singular: for *faith* and *love* are not *separate* commandments, but are indissolubly united. We cannot truly *love* one another without *faith* in Christ, nor can we truly believe in Him without love.

believe — *once for all*; *Greek* aorist.

on the name of his Son — on all that is revealed in the Gospel concerning Him, and on Himself in respect to His person, offices, and atoning work.

as he — as *Jesus* gave us commandment.

24. dwelleth in him — The believer dwelleth in Christ.

and he in him — Christ in the believer. Reciprocity. “Thus he returns to the great keynote of the Epistle, *abide in Him*, with which the former part concluded” (~~1~~¹ John 2:28).

hereby — herein we (believers) know that he abideth in us, namely, from (the presence in us of) the Spirit “which He hath given us.” Thus he prepares, by the mention of the true Spirit, for the transition to the false “spirit,” 1 John 4:1-6; after which he returns again to the subject of *love*.

CHAPTER 4

1 JOHN 4:1-21.

TESTS OF FALSE PROPHETS. LOVE, THE TEST OF BIRTH FROM GOD, AND THE NECESSARY FRUIT OF KNOWING HIS GREAT LOVE IN CHRIST TO US.

1. Beloved — the affectionate address wherewith he calls their attention, as to an important subject.

every spirit — which presents itself in the person of a prophet. The Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error, speak by men's spirits as their organs. There is but one Spirit of truth, and one spirit of Antichrist.

try — by the tests (1 John 4:2,3). All believers are to do so: not merely ecclesiastics. Even an angel's message should be tested by the word of God: much more men's teachings, however holy the teachers may seem.

because, etc. — the reason why we must “try,” or *test* the spirits.

many false prophets — not “prophets” in the sense “foretellers,” but organs of the spirit that inspires them, *teaching* accordingly either truth or error: “many Antichrists.”

are gone out — as if from God.

into the world — said alike of good and bad prophets (2 John 1:7). The world is easily seduced (1 John 4:4,5).

2. Hereby — “Herein.”

know ... the Spirit of God — whether he be, or not, in those teachers professing to be moved by Him.

Every spirit — that is, *Every teacher* claiming inspiration by the HOLY SPIRIT.

confesseth — The truth is taken for granted as established. Man is required to *confess* it, that is, in his teaching to profess it openly.

Jesus Christ is come in the flesh — a twofold truth confessed, that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, and that *He is come* (the *Greek* perfect tense implies not a mere past historical fact, as the aorist would, but also the *present continuance* of the fact and its blessed effects) *in the flesh* (“clothed with flesh”: not with a mere *seeming* humanity, as the Docetae afterwards taught: He therefore was, previously, something far above flesh). His *flesh* implies His *death* for us, for only by assuming flesh could He die (for as God He could not), Hebrews 2:9,10,14,16; and His death implies His LOVE for us (^{ⲁⲓⲃⲉ} John 15:13). To deny the reality of *His flesh* is to deny His love, and so cast away the root which produces all true love on the believer’s part (1 John 4:9-11,19). Rome, by the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, denies Christ’s proper humanity.

3. confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh — IRENAEUS [3.8], LUCIFER, ORIGEN, on ^{ⲁⲓⲃⲉ} Matthew 25:14, and *Vulgate* read, “Every spirit which *destroys* (*sets aside*, or *does away with*) Jesus (Christ).” CYPRIAN and POLYCARP support *English Version* text. The oldest extant manuscripts, which are, however, centuries after POLYCARP, read, “Every spirit that confesseth not (that is, refuses to confess) Jesus” (in His person, and all His offices and divinity), omitting “is come in the flesh.”

ye have heard — from your Christian teachers.

already is it in the world — in the person of *the false prophets* (1 John 4:1).

4. Ye — emphatical: YE who confess Jesus: in contrast to “them,” the false teachers.

overcome them — (1 John 5:4,5); instead of being “overcome and brought into (spiritual) bondage” by them (^{ⲁⲓⲃⲉ} 2 Peter 2:19). John 10:8,5, “the sheep did *not hear them*”: “a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.”

he that is in you — *God*, of whom ye are.

he that is in the word — the spirit of Antichrist, the devil, “the prince of this world.”

5. of the world — They derive their spirit and teaching from the world, “unregenerate human nature, ruled over and possessed by Satan, the prince of this world” [ALFORD].

speak they of the word — They draw the matter of their conversation from the life, opinions, and feelings of the world.

the world heareth them — (^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}John 15:18,19). *The world loves its own.*

6. We — *true teachers* of Christ: in contrast to *them*.

are of God — and therefore *speak of God*: in contrast to “speak they of the world,” 1 John 4:5.

knoweth God — as his Father, being a child “*of God*” (^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}1 John 2:13,14).

heareth us — Compare ^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}John 18:37, “Every one that is of the truth, heareth My voice.”

Hereby — (1 John 4:2-6); by their confessing, or not confessing, Jesus; by the kind of reception given them respectively by those who know God, and by those who are of the world and not of God.

spirit of truth — *the Spirit* which comes from God and teaches *truth*.

spirit of error — *the spirit* which comes from Satan and seduces into *error*.

7. Resumption of the main theme (^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}1 John 2:29). *Love*, the sum of *righteousness*, is the test of our being *born of God*. Love flows from a sense of God’s love to us: compare 1 John 4:9 with ^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}1 John 3:16, which 1 John 4:9 resumes; and ^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}1 John 4:13 with ^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}1 John 3:24, which similarly ^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}1 John 4:13 resumes. At the same time, 1 John 4:7-21 is connected with the immediately preceding context, 1 John 4:2 setting forth *Christ’s incarnation, the great proof of God’s love* (^{ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ}1 John 4:10).

Beloved — an address appropriate to his subject, “love.”

love — *All love is from God* as its fountain: especially that embodiment of love, God manifest in the flesh. The *Father* also is *love* (1 John 4:8). The *Holy Ghost* sheds *love* as its first fruit abroad in the heart.

knoweth God — spiritually, experimentally, and habitually.

8. knoweth not — *Greek* aorist: not only *knoweth* not now, but never *knew*, *has not once for all known* God.

God is love — There is no *Greek* article to *love*, but to *God*; therefore we cannot translate, *Love is God*. God is fundamentally and essentially LOVE: not merely *is loving*, for then John's argument would not stand; for the conclusion from the premises then would be this, *This man is not loving: God is loving; therefore he knoweth not God IN SO FAR AS GOD IS LOVING*; still he might know Him in His *other* attributes. But when we take love as God's essence, the argument is sound: *This man doth not love*, and *therefore knows not love: God is essentially love, therefore he knows not God*.

9. toward us — *Greek*, "in our case."

sent — *Greek*, "*hath sent*."

into the world — a proof against Socinians, that the Son existed before He was "sent into the world." Otherwise, too, He could not have been our *life* (1 John 4:9), our "*propitiation*" (~~GENO~~ 1 John 4:10), or our "Savior" (~~GENO~~ 1 John 4:14). It is the grand *proof* of God's love, His having sent "*His only-begotten Son, that we might live through Him*," who is *the Life*, and who has redeemed our forfeited life; and it is also the grand *motive* to our mutual love.

10. Herein is love — *love* in the abstract: *love*, in its highest ideal, is herein. The love was all on God's side, none on ours.

not that we loved God — though so altogether worthy of love.

he loved us — though so altogether unworthy of love. The *Greek* aorist expresses, Not that we *did* any act of love *at any time* to God, but that He *did* the act of love to us in sending Christ.

11. God's love to us is the grand motive for our love to one another (¹John 3:16).

if — as we all admit as a fact.

we ... also — as being *born of God*, and therefore resembling our Father who is love. In proportion as we appreciate God's love to us, we love Him and also *the brethren*, the children (by regeneration) of the same God, the representatives of the unseen God.

12. *God*, whom *no man hath seen at any time*, hath appointed His children as the visible recipients of our outward kindness which flows from love to Himself, "whom *not* having *seen*, we love," compare *Notes*, ¹John 4:11, ¹John 4:19,20. Thus ¹John 4:12 explains why, instead (in ¹John 4:11) of saying, "If God so loved us, we ought also to love *God*," he said, "We ought also to love *one another*."

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us — for God is love; and it must have been from Him dwelling in us that we drew the real love we bear to the brethren (1 John 4:8,16). John discusses this in ¹John 4:13-16.

his love — rather, "the love of Him," that is, "to Him" (1 John 2:5), evinced by our love to His representatives, our brethren.

is perfected in us — John discusses this in ¹John 4:17-19. Compare 1 John 2:5, "is perfected," that is, attains its proper maturity.

13. Hereby — "Herein." The token vouchsafed to us of God's dwelling (*Greek*, "abide") in us, though we see Him not, is this, that He hath given us "of His Spirit" (¹John 3:24). Where the Spirit of God is, there God is. ONE Spirit dwells in the Church: each believer receives a measure "of" that Spirit in the proportion God thinks fit. *Love* is His first-fruit (¹Galatians 5:22). In Jesus alone the Spirit dwelt without measure (¹John 3:34).

14. And we — primarily, *we apostles*, Christ's appointed eye-witnesses to testify to the facts concerning Him. The internal evidence of the indwelling Spirit (¹John 4:13) is corroborated by the external evidence of the eye-witnesses to the fact of the Father having "sent His Son to be the Savior of the world."

seen — *Greek*, “contemplated,” “attentively beheld” (see on 1 John 1:1).

sent — *Greek*, “*hath sent*”: not an entirely past fact (aorist), but one of which the effects continue (perfect tense).

15. shall confess — once for all: so the *Greek* aorist means.

that Jesus is the Son of God — and therefore “the Savior of the world” (1 John 4:14).

16. And we — *John and his readers* (not as 1 John 4:14, *the apostles* only).

known and believed — True *faith*, according to John, is a faith of *knowledge* and experience: true *knowledge* is a knowledge of *faith* [LUECKE].

to us — *Greek*, “in our case” (see on 1 John 4:9).

dwelleth — *Greek*, “abideth.” Compare with this verse, 1 John 4:7.

17, 18. (Compare 1 John 3:19-21.)

our love — rather as the *Greek*, “LOVE (in the abstract, the principle of love [ALFORD]) is made perfect (in its relations) *with us*.” Love dwelling in us advances to its consummation “*with us*” that is, as it is concerned *with us*: so *Greek*. Luke 1:58, “showed mercy upon (literally, ‘with’) her”: 2 John 1:2, the truth “shall be *with us* for ever.”

boldness — “confidence”: the same *Greek* as 1 John 3:21, to which this passage is parallel. The opposite of “fear,” 1 John 4:18. *Herein* is our love perfected, namely, *in God dwelling in us, and our dwelling in God* (1 John 4:16), involving as its *result* “that we can have confidence (or *boldness*) in the day of judgment” (so terrible to all other men, Acts 24:25 Romans 2:16).

because, etc. — The ground of our “confidence” is, “*because* even as He (Christ) is, we also are in this world” (and He will not, in that day, condemn those who are *like Himself*), that is, we are *righteous* as He is righteous, especially in respect to that which is the sum of righteousness, *love* (1 John 3:14). Christ IS righteous, and *love* itself, in heaven: so are we, His members, who are still “in this world.” Our oneness with Him

even *now* in His exalted position above (Ephesians 2:6), so that all that belongs to Him of righteousness, etc., belongs to us also by perfect imputation and progressive impartation, is the ground of our *love* being *perfected so that we can have confidence in the day of judgment*. We are *in*, not *of*, this world.

18. Fear has no place in *love*. *Bold confidence* (^{<G1017>}1 John 4:17), based on *love*, cannot coexist with *fear*. *Love*, which, when *perfected*, gives *bold confidence*, *casts out fear* (compare ^{<S1014>}Hebrews 2:14,15). The design of Christ's propitiatory death was to *deliver* from this *bondage of fear*.

but — “nay” [ALFORD].

fear hath torment — *Greek*, “punishment.” Fear is always revolving in the mind the punishment deserved [ESTIUS]. Fear, by anticipating punishment (through consciousness of deserving it), has it even now, that is, the foretaste of it. *Perfect love* is incompatible with such a self-punishing *fear*. *Godly fear* of offending God is quite distinct from slavish fear of consciously deserved punishment. The latter *fear* is natural to us all until *love casts it out*. “Men's states vary: one is without fear and love; another, with fear without love; another, with fear and love; another, without fear with love” [BENGEL].

19. him — omitted in the oldest manuscripts. Translate, *We* (emphatical: WE on our part) *love* (in general: love alike *Him*, and *the brethren*, and *our fellow men*), because He (emphatical: answering to “we”; *because it was He who*) first loved us in sending His Son (*Greek* aorist of a definite act at a point of time). He was the first to love us: this thought ought to create in us *love casting out fear* (^{<G1018>}1 John 4:18).

20. loveth not ... brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen — It is easier for us, influenced as we are here by sense, to direct love towards one within the range of our senses than towards One unseen, appreciable only by faith. “Nature is prior to grace; and we by nature love things seen, before we love things unseen” [ESTIUS]. *The eyes are our leaders in love*. “Seeing is an incentive to love” [AECUMENIUS]. If we do not love *the brethren*, the visible representatives of *God*, how can we love God, the invisible One, *whose children they are*? The true ideal of man, lost in Adam, is realized in Christ, in whom God is

revealed as He is, and man as he ought to be. Thus, by faith in Christ, we learn to love both the true God, and the true man, and so to love the brethren as bearing His image.

hath seen — and continually sees.

21. Besides the argument (^{<600>}1 John 4:20) from the common feeling of men, he here adds a stronger one from God's express *commandment* (^{<123>}Matthew 22:39). He who loves, will do what the object of his love wishes.

he who loveth God — he who wishes to be regarded by God as loving Him.

CHAPTER 5

1 JOHN 5:1-21.

WHO ARE THE BRETHREN ESPECIALLY TO BE LOVED (1 JOHN 4:21); OBEDIENCE, THE TEST OF LOVE, EASY THROUGH FAITH, WHICH OVERCOMES THE WORLD. LAST PORTION OF THE EPISTLE. THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS TO THE BELIEVER'S SPIRITUAL LIFE. TRUTHS REPEATED AT THE CLOSE: FAREWELL WARNING.

1. Reason why our “brother” (1 John 4:21) is entitled to such *love*, namely, because he is “born (begotten) of God”: so that if we want to show our love to *God*, we must show it to God’s visible representative.


Whosoever — *Greek*, “Everyone that.” He could not be our “Jesus” (God-Savior) unless He were “the Christ”; for He could not reveal the way of salvation, except He were a *prophet*: He could not work out that salvation, except He were a *priest*: He could not confer that salvation upon us, except He were a *king*: He could not be *prophet*, *priest*, and *king*, except He were the Christ [PEARSON, *Exposition of the Creed*].

born — Translate, “begotten,” as in the latter part of the verse, the *Greek* being the same. Christ is the “only-begotten Son” by *generation*; we become begotten sons of God by *regeneration* and adoption.

every one that loveth him that begat — sincerely, not in mere profession (1 John 4:20).

loveth him also that is begotten of him — namely, “his brethren” (1 John 4:21).

2. **By** — *Greek*, “In.” As our *love to the brethren* is the sign and test of our *love to God*, so (John here says) our *love to God* (tested by our “keeping his commandments”) is, conversely, the ground and only true basis of *love to our brother*.

we know — John means here, not the *outward* criteria of genuine brotherly love, but the *inward spiritual* criteria of it, *consciousness of love to God* manifested in a hearty keeping of His commandments. When we have this inwardly and outwardly confirmed *love to God*, we can *know* assuredly that we truly *love the children of God*. “*Love to one’s brother* is prior, according to the order of nature (see on  1 John 4:20); *love to God* is so, according to the order of grace (1 John 5:2). At one time the former is more immediately known, at another time the latter, according as the mind is more engaged in human relations or in what concerns the divine honor” [ESTIUS]. John shows what true *love* is, namely, that which is referred to God as its first object. As previously John urged the effect, so now he urges the cause. For he wishes mutual love to be so cultivated among us, as that *God* should always be placed first [CALVIN].

3. this is — the *love* of God consists in this.

not grievous — as so many think them. It is “the way of the transgressor” that “is hard.” What makes them to the regenerate “not grievous,” is *faith* which “overcometh the world” (1 John 5:4): in proportion as faith is strong, the grievousness of God’s commandments to the rebellious flesh is overcome. The reason why believers feel any degree of irksomeness in God’s commandments is, they do not realize fully by faith the privileges of their spiritual life.

4. For — (See on 1 John 5:3). The reason why “His commandments are not grievous.” Though there is a conflict in keeping them, the sue for the whole body of the regenerate is victory over every opposing influence; meanwhile there is a present *joy* to each believer in keeping them which makes them “not grievous.”

whatsoever — *Greek*, “all that is begotten of God.” The neuter expresses *the universal whole*, or *aggregate of the regenerate*, regarded as one collective body John 3:6 6:37,39, “where BENGEL remarks, that in Jesus’ discourses, what the Father has given Him is called, in the singular number and neuter gender, *all* whatsoever; those who come to the *Son* are described in the masculine gender and plural number, *they all*, or singular, *every one*. The Father has given, as it were, the whole mass to the Son, that all whom He gave may be *one* whole: that *universal* whole the Son singly evolves, in the execution of the divine plan.”

overcometh — habitually.

the world — all that is opposed to keeping the commandments of God, or draws us off from God, in this world, including our corrupt *flesh*, on which the world's blandishments or threats act, as also including Satan, *the prince of this world* (^{<62>}John 12:31 14:30 16:11).

this is the victory that overcometh — Greek aorist, "... that *hath* (already) *overcome* the world": the *victory* (where *faith* is) hereby is implied as having been *already obtained* (^{<63>}1 John 2:13 4:4).

5. Who — "Who" *else* "but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God:" "the Christ" (1 John 5:1)? Confirming, by a triumphant question defying all contradiction, as an undeniable fact, 1 John 5:4, that *the victory* which overcomes the world is *faith*. For it is by *believing*: that we are made one with *Jesus the Son of God*, so that we partake of *His victory over the world*, and have dwelling in us One greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4). "Survey the whole world, and show me even one of whom it can be affirmed with truth that he overcomes the world, who is not a Christian, and endowed with this faith" [EPISCOPIUS in ALFORD].

6. This — the Person mentioned in 1 John 5:5. This *Jesus*.

he that came by water and blood — "by water," when His ministry was inaugurated by baptism in the Jordan, and He received the Father's testimony to His Messiahship and divine *Sonship*. Compare 1 John 5:5, "believeth that Jesus is the *Son of God*," with ^{<64>}John 1:33,34, "The Spirit ... remaining on Him ... I saw and bare record that this is *the Son of God*"; and 1 John 5:8, below, "there are three that bear *witness* in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood." Corresponding to this is *the baptism of water and the Spirit* which He has instituted as a standing seal and mean of initiatory incorporation with Him.

and blood — He came by "the blood of His cross" (so "by" is used, ^{<65>}Hebrews 9:12: "by," that is, *with*, "His own blood He entered in once into the holy place"): a fact *seen* and so solemnly *witnessed* to by John. "These two past facts in the Lord's life are this abiding *testimony* to us, by virtue of the permanent application to us of their cleansing and atoning power."

Jesus Christ — not a mere appellation, but a solemn assertion of the Lord's Person and Messiahship.

not by, etc. — *Greek*, “not *IN the water* only, but *IN the water* and *IN* (so oldest manuscripts add) *the blood*.” As “*by*” implies the mean *through*, or *with*, which He came: so “*in*,” the element *in* which He came. “The” implies that *the water* and *the blood* were sacred and well-known symbols. John Baptist came only baptizing with water, and therefore was not the *Messiah*. Jesus came first to undergo Himself the double baptism of water and blood, and then to baptize us with the Spirit-cleansing, of which *water* is the sacramental seal, and with His atoning *blood*, the efficacy of which, once for all shed, is perpetual in the Church; and therefore is *the Messiah*. It was His shed *blood* which first gave *water baptism* its spiritual significance. We are baptized *into His death*: the grand point of union between us and Him, and, through Him, between us and God.

it is the Spirit, etc. — *The Holy Spirit* is an additional witness (compare 1 John 5:7), besides the *water* and the *blood*, to Jesus' *Sonship* and *Messiahship*. The Spirit attested these truths at Jesus' baptism by descending on Him, and throughout His ministry by enabling Him to speak and do what man never before or since has spoken or, done; and “it is the Spirit that beareth witness” of Christ, now permanently in the Church: both in the inspired New Testament Scriptures, and in the hearts of believers, and in the spiritual reception of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

because the Spirit is truth — It is His essential *truth* which gives His witness such infallible authority.

7. three — Two or three witnesses were required by law to constitute adequate testimony. The only *Greek* manuscripts *in any form* which support the words, “in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth,” are the *Montfortianus* of Dublin, copied evidently from the *modern Latin Vulgate*; the *Ravianus*, copied from the *Complutensian Polyglot*; a manuscript at Naples, with the words added in the *Margin* by a recent hand; *Ottobonianus*, 298, of the fifteenth century, the *Greek* of which is a mere translation of the accompanying *Latin*. All the old versions omit the words. The oldest manuscripts of the *Vulgate* omit them: the earliest *Vulgate* manuscript which has them being *Wizanburgensis*, 99, of the

eighth century. A scholium quoted in *Matthaei*, shows that the words did not arise from fraud; for in the words, in all *Greek* manuscripts “there are *three* that bear record,” as the Scholiast notices, the word “three” is *masculine*, because the three things (*the Spirit, the water, and the blood*) are SYMBOLS OF THE TRINITY. To this CYPRIAN, 196, also refers, “Of the *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*, it is written, ‘*And these three are one*’ (a unity).” There must be some mystical truth implied in using “*three*” (*Greek*) in the *masculine*, though the antecedents, “Spirit, water, and blood,” are *neuter*. That THE TRINITY was the truth meant is a natural inference: the triad specified pointing to a still Higher Trinity; as is plain also from 1 John 5:9, “the witness of GOD,” referring to the *Trinity* alluded to in the Spirit, water, and blood. It was therefore first written as a *marginal* comment to complete the sense of the *text*, and then, as early at least as the eighth century, was introduced into the text of the *Latin Vulgate*. The testimony, however, could only be borne *on earth* to men, not in *heaven*. The marginal comment, therefore, that inserted “in heaven,” was inappropriate. It is *on earth* that the context evidently requires the witness of the three, *the Spirit, the water, and the blood*, to be borne: mystically setting forth the divine *triune* witnesses, the Father, the Spirit, and the Son. LUECKE notices as internal evidence against the words, John never uses “the Father” and “the Word” as correlates, but, like other New Testament writers, associates “the Son” with “the Father,” and always refers “the Word” to “God” as its correlate, not “the Father.” Vigilius, at the end of the fifth century, is the first who quotes the disputed words as in the text; but no *Greek* manuscript earlier than the fifteenth is extant with them. The *term* “Trinity” occurs first in the third century in TERTULLIAN [*Against Praxeas*, 3].

8. agree in one — “tend unto one result”; their agreeing testimony to Jesus’ Sonship and Messiahship they give by the sacramental grace in the *water* of baptism, received by the penitent believer, by the atoning efficacy of His *blood*, and by the internal witness of His *Spirit* (~~AND~~ 1 John 5:10): answering to the testimony given to *Jesus’ Sonship and Messiahship* by His baptism, His crucifixion, and the Spirit’s manifestations in Him (see on 1 John 5:6). It was by His *coming by water* (that is, His baptism in Jordan) that Jesus was solemnly inaugurated in office, and revealed Himself as Messiah; this must have been peculiarly important in John’s

estimation, who was first led to Christ by the testimony of the Baptist. By the baptism then received by Christ, and by His redeeming *blood*-shedding, and by that which the Spirit of God, whose witness is infallible, has effected, and still effects, by Him, the *Spirit*, the *water*, and the *blood*, unite, as the threefold witness, to verify His divine Messiahship [NEANDER].

9. If, etc. — We do *accept* (and rightly so) the witness of veracious men, fallible though they be; much more ought we to accept *the* infallible witness of God (the Father). “The testimony of the Father is, as it were, the basis of the testimony of the Word and of the Holy Spirit; just as the testimony of *the Spirit* is, as it were, the basis of the testimony of *the water* and the *blood*” [BENGEL].

for — This principle applies in the present case, FOR

which — in the oldest manuscripts, “*because* He hath given testimony concerning His Son.” What that testimony is we find above in 1 John 5:1,5, “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God”; and below in ~~and~~ 1 John 5:10,11.

10. hath the witness — of God, by His *Spirit* (1 John 5:8).

in himself — God’s Spirit dwelling in him and *witnessing* that “Jesus is the Lord,” “the Christ,” and “the Son of God” (1 John 5:1,5). The witness of the Spirit *in* the believer *himself* to his own sonship is not here expressed, but follows as a consequence of believing the witness of God to Jesus’ divine Sonship.

believeth not God — credits not His *witness*.

made him a liar — a consequence which many who virtually, or even avowedly, do not believe, may well startle back from as fearful blasphemy and presumption (~~and~~ 1 John 1:10).

believeth not the record — *Greek*, “believeth not IN the record, or *witness*.” Refusal to *credit* God’s testimony (“believeth not God”) is involved in refusal *to believe* IN (to rest one’s trust in) Jesus Christ, the object of God’s *record* or *testimony*. “Divine “faith” is an assent unto something as credible upon the testimony of God. This is the highest kind

of *faith*; because the object hath the highest credibility, because grounded upon the testimony of God, which is infallible” [PEARSON, *Exposition of the Creed*]. “The authority on which we believe is divine; the doctrine which we follow is divine” [LEO].

gave — *Greek*, “hath testified, and now testifies.”

of — concerning.

11. hath given — *Greek*, aorist: “gave” once for all. Not only “*promised*” it.

life is in his Son — essentially (John 1:4 11:25 14:6); bodily (Colossians 2:9); operatively (⁵¹¹⁰2 Timothy 1:10) [LANGE in ALFORD]. It is in the second Adam, the Son of God, that this *life* is secured to us, which, if left to depend on us, we should lose, like the first Adam.

12. the Son ... life — *Greek*, “THE life.” BENGEL remarks, The verse has two clauses: in the former the Son is mentioned without the addition “of God,” for believers know *the Son*: in the second clause the addition “of God” is made, that unbelievers may know thereby what a serious thing it is not to have Him. In the former clause “has” bears the emphasis; in the second, *life*. To *have the Son* is to be able to say as the bride, “I am my Beloved’s, and *my Beloved is mine*” [So 6:3]. *Faith* is the mean whereby the regenerate HAVE Christ as a *present* possession, and in having Him *have life* in its germ and reality now, and shall have life in its fully developed manifestation hereafter. *Eternal life* here is:

(1) *initial*, and is an earnest of that which is to follow; in the intermediate state

(2) *partial*, belonging but to a part of a man, though that is his nobler part, the soul separated from the body; at and after the resurrection

(3) *perfectional*. This life is not only natural, consisting of the union of the soul and the body (as that of the reprobate in eternal pain, which ought to be termed *death* eternal, not *life*), but also spiritual, the union of the soul to God, and supremely blessed for ever (for *life* is another term for *happiness*) [PEARSON, *Exposition of the Creed*].

13. The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “These things have I written unto you [omitting *‘that believe on the name of the Son of God’*] that ye may know that ye have eternal life (compare ^{<GR1>}1 John 5:11), THOSE (of you I mean) WHO believe (not as *English Version* reads, *‘and that ye may believe’*) on the name of the Son of God.” *English Version*, in the latter clause, will mean, “that ye may *continue* to believe,” etc. (compare ^{<GR2>}1 John 5:12).

These things — This Epistle. He, towards the close of his Gospel (^{<GR3>}John 20:30,31), wrote similarly, stating his purpose in having written. In 1 John 1:4 he states the object of his writing this Epistle to be, “that your joy may be full.” To “*know that we have eternal life*” is the sure way to “joy in God.”

14. the confidence — *boldness* (^{<GR4>}1 John 4:17) in prayer, which results from *knowing that we have eternal life* (^{<GR5>}1 John 5:13 ^{<GR6>}1 John 3:19,22).

according to his will — which is the believer’s will, and which is therefore no restraint to his prayers. In so far as God’s will is not our will, we are not abiding in faith, and our prayers are not accepted. ALFORD well says, If we *knew* God’s will thoroughly, and *submitted* to it heartily, it would be impossible for us to ask anything for the spirit or for the body which He should not perform; it is this ideal state which the apostle has in view. It is the *Spirit* who teaches us inwardly, and Himself in us asks according to the will of God.

15. hear — *Greek*, “that He *heareth* us.”

we have the petitions that we desired of him — *We have*, as present possessions, everything *whatsoever we desired (asked) from Him*. Not one of our *past* prayers offered in faith, *according to His will*, is lost. Like Hannah, we can rejoice over them as granted even before the event; and can recognize the event when it comes to pass, as not from chance, but obtained by our past prayers. Compare also Jehoshaphat’s believing confidence in the issue of his prayers, so much so that he appointed singers to praise the Lord beforehand.

16. If any ... see — on any particular occasion; *Greek* aorist.

his brother — a fellow Christian.

sin a sin — in the act of sinning, and continuing in the sin: present.

not unto death — provided that it is *not unto death*.

he shall give — The *asker* shall be the means, by his intercessory prayer, of *God giving* life to the sinning brother. Kindly reproof ought to accompany his intercessions. *Life* was in process of being forfeited by the sinning brother when the believer's intercession obtained its restoration.

for them — resuming the proviso put forth in the beginning of the verse. "Provided that the sin is not unto death." "Shall give life," I say, *to*, that is, obtain life "*for* (in the case of) them that sin not unto death."

I do not say that he shall pray for it — The *Greek* for "pray" means a REQUEST as of one on an equality, or at least on terms of familiarity, with him from whom the favor is sought. "The Christian intercessor for his brethren, John declares, shall not assume the authority which would be implied in making request for a sinner who has sinned the sin unto death (⁴⁹⁵⁵1 Samuel 15:35 16:1 ⁴⁹⁵⁹Mark 3:29), that it might be forgiven him" [TRENCH, *Greek Synonyms of the New Testament*]. Compare ⁴⁹⁶⁰Deuteronomy 3:26. *Greek* "ask" implies the humble petition of an inferior; so that our Lord never uses it, but always uses (*Greek*) "request." Martha, from ignorance, once uses "ask" in His case (⁴⁹⁶²John 11:22). "Asking" for a brother sinning not unto death, is a humble petition in consonance with God's will. To "request" for a sin unto death [*intercede, as it were, authoritatively for it*, as though we were more merciful than God] would savor of presumption; prescribing to God in a matter which lies out of the bounds of our brotherly yearning (because one sinning unto death would thereby be demonstrated not to be, nor ever to have been, truly a brother, ⁴⁹⁶⁹1 John 2:19), how He shall inflict and withhold His righteous judgments. Jesus Himself intercedes, not for the world which hardens itself in unbelief, but for those given to Him out of the world.

17. "Every unrighteousness (even that of believers, compare 1 John 1:9 3:4. Every coming short of *right*) is sin"; (but) not every sin is the sin unto death.

and there is a sin not unto death — in the case of which, therefore, believers may intercede. *Death* and *life* stand in correlative opposition (⁴⁹⁷¹1

John 5:11-13). *The sin unto death* must be one tending “towards” (so the *Greek*), and so resulting in, *death*. ALFORD makes it to be an appreciable ACT of sin, namely, *the denying Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God* (in contrast to confess this truth, 1 John 5:1,5), ^{<G129>}1 John 2:19,22 4:2,3 5:10. Such wilful deniers of Christ are not to be received into one’s house, or wished “God speed.” Still, I think with BENDEL, not merely the *act*, but also the *state* of apostasy accompanying the *act*, is included — a “state of soul in which faith, love, and hope, in short, the new life, is extinguished. The chief commandment is *faith* and *love*. Therefore, the chief sin is that by which faith and love are destroyed. In the former case is *life*; in the latter, *death*. As long as it is not evident (see on ^{<G129>}1 John 5:16, on ‘see’) that it is a sin unto death, it is lawful to pray. But when it is deliberate rejection of grace, and the man puts from him life thereby, how can others procure for him life?” Contrast ^{<G129>}James 5:14-18. Compare ^{<G129>}Matthew 12:31,32 as to the wilful rejection of Christ, and resistance to the Holy Ghost’s plain testimony to Him as the divine Messiah. Jesus, on the cross, pleaded only for those who KNEW NOT *what they were doing* in crucifying Him, not for those wilfully resisting grace and knowledge. If we *pray* for the impenitent, it must be with humble reference of the matter to God’s will, not with the intercessory *request* which we should offer for *a brother* when erring.

18. (1 John 3:9.)

We know — Thrice repeated emphatically, to enforce the three truths which the words preface, as matters of the brethren’s joint experimental knowledge. This ^{<G129>}1 John 5:18 warns against abusing ^{<G129>}1 John 5:16,17, as warranting carnal security.

whosoever — *Greek*, “every one who.” Not only advanced believers, but *every one* who is born again, “sinneth not.”

he that is begotten — *Greek* aorist, “has been (once for all in *past* time) begotten of God”; in the beginning of the verse it is perfect. “Is begotten,” or “born,” as a *continuing* state.

keepeth himself — The *Vulgate* translates, “The having been begotten of God keepeth HIM” (so one of the oldest manuscripts reads): so ALFORD. Literally, “He having been begotten of God (nominative pendent), *it* (the

divine generation implied in the nominative) keepeth him.” So 1 John 3:9, “His seed remaineth in him.” Still, in *English Version* reading, God’s working by His Spirit inwardly, and man’s working under the power of that Spirit as a responsible agent, is what often occurs elsewhere. That *God* must *keep* us, if we are to *keep ourselves* from evil, is certain. Compare ^{<675>}John 17:15 especially with this verse.

that wicked one toucheth him not — so as to hurt him. In so far as he realizes his regeneration-life, the prince of this world *hath nothing in him* to fasten his deadly temptations on, as in Christ’s own case. His divine regeneration has severed once for all his connection with the prince of this world.

19. world lieth in wickedness — rather, “lieth in *the wicked one*,” as the *Greek* is translated in ^{<675>}1 John 5:18 ^{<673>}1 John 2:13,14; compare 1 John 4:4 ^{<674>}John 17:14,15. The world *lieth* in the power of, and abiding in, the wicked one, as the resting-place and lord of his slaves; compare “abideth in death,” ^{<674>}1 John 3:14; contrast ^{<674>}1 John 5:20, “we are in Him that is true.” While the believer has been delivered out of his power, the whole world *lieth* helpless and motionless still in it, just as it was; including the wise, great, respectable, and all who are not by vital union in Christ.

20. Summary of our Christian privileges.

is come — *is present, having come*. “HE IS HERE — all is full of Him — His incarnation, work, and abiding presence, is to us a living fact” [ALFORD].

given us an understanding — Christ’s, office is to give the inner spiritual understanding to discern the things of God.

that we may know — Some oldest manuscripts read, “(so) that we know.”

him that is true — God, as opposed to every kind of *idol* or false god (^{<674>}1 John 5:21). Jesus, by virtue of His oneness with God, is also “He that is true” (Revelation 3:7).

even — “we are in the true” God, *by virtue of being* “in His Son Jesus Christ.”

This is the true God — “*This* Jesus Christ (the last-named Person) is the true God” (identifying Him thus with the Father in His attribute, “the only true God,” John 17:3, primarily attributed to the Father).

and eternal life — predicated of the Son of God; ALFORD wrongly says, He was *the life*, but not *eternal life*. The Father is indeed *eternal life* as its source, but the Son also is that *eternal life manifested*, as the very passage (1 John 1:2) which ALFORD quotes, proves against him. Compare also ^{ALF}1 John 5:11,13. Plainly it is as the *Mediator of ETERNAL LIFE to us* that Christ is here contemplated. The *Greek* is, “The true God and eternal life is this” Jesus Christ, that is, In believing in Him we believe in the true God, and have eternal life. The Son is called “He that is TRUE,” Revelation 3:7, as here. This naturally prepares the way for warning against *false* gods (^{ALF}1 John 5:21). Jesus Christ is the only “express image of God’s person” which is sanctioned, the only true visible manifestation of God. All other representations of God are forbidden as *idols*. Thus the Epistle closes as it began (1 John 1:1,2).

21. Affectionate parting caution.

from idols — Christians were then everywhere surrounded by *idolaters*, with whom it was impossible to avoid intercourse. Hence the need of being on their guard against any even indirect compromise or act of communion with idolatry. Some at Pergamos, in the region whence John wrote, fell into the snare of eating things sacrificed to idols. The moment we cease to abide “in Him that is true (by abiding) in Jesus Christ,” we become part of “the world that lieth in the wicked one,” given up to *spiritual*, if not in all places *literal*, idolatry (Ephesians 5:5 Colossians 3:5).

THE SECOND AND THIRD EPISTLES GENERAL

OF JOHN

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

AUTHENTICITY. — That these two Epistles were written by the same author appears from their similarity of tone, style, and sentiments. That John, the beloved disciple, was the author of the Second and Third Epistles, as of the First Epistle, appears from IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 1.16.3], who quotes ^{GR1102}2 John 1:10,11; and in [3.16.8], he quotes 2 John 1:7, mistaking it, however, as if occurring in First John. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA (A.D. 192) [*Miscellanies*, 2.66], implies his knowledge of other Epistles of John besides the First Epistle; and in fragments of his *Adumbrations* [p. 1011], he says, “John’s Second Epistle which was written to the virgins (*Greek*, “*parthenous*”; perhaps *Parthos* is what was meant) is the simplest; but it was written to a certain Babylonian named *the Elect lady*.” DIONYSIUS OF ALEXANDRIA (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 7.25]) observes that John never names himself in his Epistles, “not even in the Second and Third Epistles, although they are short Epistles, but simply calls himself the presbyter, a confutation of those who think John *the apostle* distinct from John *the PRESBYTER*. ALEXANDER OF ALEXANDRIA cites ^{GR1102}2 John 1:10:11, as John’s [SOCRATES, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.6]. CYPRIAN [*Concerning the BAPTISM of Heretics*], in referring to the bishops at the Council of Carthage, says, “John the apostle, in His Epistle, has said, if any come to you” (^{GR1102}2 John 1:10); so that this Epistle, and therefore its twin sister, Third John, was recognized as apostolic in the North African Church. The MURATORI fragment is ambiguous. The Second and Third Epistles were not in the *Peschito* or old Syriac version; and COSMAS INDICOPLEUSTES in the sixth century says that in his time the Syriac Church only acknowledged three

of the Catholic Epistles, First Peter, First John, and James. But EPHREM THE SYRIAN quotes the Second Epistle of John. EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*,] reckons both Epistles among the *Antilegomena* or *controverted Scriptures*, as distinguished from the *Homologoumena* or *universally acknowledged* from the first. Still his own opinion was that the two minor Epistles were genuine, remarking, as he does in *Demonstration of the Gospel* [3.5], that in John's "*Epistles*" he does not mention his own name, nor call himself an apostle or evangelist, but an "elder" (2 John 1:1 3 John 1:1). ORIGEN (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25]) mentions the Second and Third Epistles, but adds, "*not all* admit (implying that *most* authorities do) their genuineness." JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*, 9] mentions the two latter Epistles as attributed to John the presbyter, whose sepulcher was shown among the Ephesians in his day. But the designation "elder" was used of the apostles by others (for example, PAPIAS, in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39]), and is used by Peter, an apostle, of himself (1 Peter 5:1). Why, then, should not John also use this designation of himself, in consonance with the humility which leads him not to name himself or his apostleship even in the First Epistle? The *Antilegomena* were generally recognized as canonical soon after the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325). Thus CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, A.D. 349, enumerates fourteen Epistles of Paul, and seven Catholic Epistles. So GREGORY NAZIANZEN, in A.D. 389. The Councils of Hippo, 393, and Carthage, 397, adopted a catalogue of New Testament books exactly agreeing with our canon. So our oldest extant *Greek* manuscripts. The Second and Third Epistles of John, from their brevity (which ORIGEN notices), and the private nature of their contents, were less generally read in the earliest Christian assemblies and were also less quoted by the Fathers; hence arose their non-universal recognition at the first. Their private nature makes them the less likely to be spurious, for there seems no purpose in their forgery. The style and coloring too accord with the style of the First Epistle.

TO WHOM ADDRESSED. — The Third Epistle is directed to Gaius or Caius; whether Gaius of Macedonia (~~CHBD~~ Acts 19:20), or Gaius of Corinth (~~CHBD~~ Romans 16:23 ~~CHBD~~ 1 Corinthians 1:14), or Gaius of Derbe (Acts 20:4), it is hard to decide. MILL believes Gaius, bishop of Pergamos [*Apostolic Constitutions*, 7.40], to be the person addressed in 3 John 1:1.

The address of the Second Epistle is more disputed. It opens, “The elder unto the *Elect lady*” (2 John 1:1). And it closes, “The children of thy *elect* sister greet thee” (2 John 1:13). Now, 1 Peter 1:1,2, addresses the *elect* in Asia, etc., and closes (1 Peter 5:13), “The Church that is *at Babylon*, *elected* together with you, saluteth you.” Putting together these facts, with the quotations (above) from CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, and the fact that the word “Church” comes from a *Greek* word (*kyriake*) cognate to the *Greek* for “lady” (*kyria*; “belonging to the *Lord*,” *kyrios*); WORDSWORTH’S view is probable. As Peter in Babylon had sent the salutations of *the elect Church* in the then *Parthian* (see above on CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA) *Babylon* to her *elect sister* in Asia, so John, the metropolitan president of the elect Church in Asia, writes to *the elect lady*, that is, Church, in Babylon. NEANDER, ALFORD, and others, think the *Greek* “*kyria*” not to mean “lady,” but to be her *proper name*; and that she had a “sister, a Christian matron,” then with John.

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING. — EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.25] relates that John, after the death of Domitian, returned from his exile in Patmos to Ephesus, and went on missionary tours into the heathen regions around, and also made visitations of the churches around, and ordained bishops and clergy. Such journeys are mentioned, 2 John 1:12 3 John 1:10,14. If EUSEBIUS be right, both Epistles must have been written after the Apocalypse, in his old age, which harmonizes with the tone of the Epistles, and in or near Ephesus. It was on one of his visitation tours that he designed to rebuke Diotrephes (3 John 1:9,10).

2 JOHN 1:1-13.

**ADDRESS: GREETING: THANKSGIVING FOR THE ELECT
LADY’S FAITHFULNESS IN THE TRUTH: ENJOINS LOVE:
WARNS AGAINST DECEIVERS, LEST WE LOSE OUR REWARD:
CONCLUSION.**

1. The elder — In a familiar letter John gives himself a less authoritative designation than “apostle”; so 1 Peter 5:1.

lady — BENDEL takes the *Greek* as a proper name *Kyria*, answering to the *Hebrew* “Martha.” Being a person of influence, “deceivers” (2 John 1:7) were insinuating themselves into her family to seduce her and her children from the faith [TIRINUS], whence John felt it necessary to write a warning to her. (But see my *Introduction* and ⁴¹⁵³1 Peter 5:13). A particular *Church*, probably that at Babylon, was intended. “Church” is derived from *Greek* “*Kuriake*,” akin to *Kuria*, or *Kyria* here; the latter word among the Romans and Athenians means the same as *ecclesia*, the term appropriated to designate the *Church assembly*.

love in the truth — Christian *love* rests on the Christian *truth* (2 John 1:3, end). Not merely “I love *in truth*,” but “I love in THE truth.”

all — All Christians form one fellowship, rejoicing in the spiritual prosperity of one another. “The communion of love is as wide as the communion of faith” [ALFORD].

2. For the truth’s sake — joined with “I love,” 2 John 1:1. “They who love *in the truth*, also love *on account of the truth*.”

dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever — in consonance with Christ’s promise.

3. Grace be with you — One of the oldest manuscripts and several versions have “us” for *you*. The *Greek* is literally, “Grace *shall be* with us,” that is, with both *you and me*. A prayer, however, is implied besides a confident affirmation.

grace ... mercy ... peace — “*Grace*” covers the sins of men; “mercy,” their miseries. *Grace* must first do away with man’s guilt before his misery can be relieved by *mercy*. Therefore *grace* stands before *mercy*. *Peace* is the result of both, and therefore stands third in order. Casting all our care on the Lord, with thanksgiving, maintains this peace.

the Lord — The oldest manuscripts and most of the oldest versions omit “the Lord.” John never elsewhere uses this title in his Epistles, but “the Son of God.”

in truth and love — The element or sphere in which alone *grace*, *mercy*, and *peace*, have place. He mentions *truth* in 2 John 1:4; *love*, in 2 John 1:5. Paul uses FAITH and *love*; for *faith* and *truth* are close akin.

4. I found — probably in one of his missionary tours of superintendence. See *Introduction*, at the end, and ^{<612}2 John 1:12 ^{<613}3 John 1:10,14.

of thy children — some.

in truth — that is, in *the* Gospel truth.

as — even as. “The Father’s commandment” is the standard of “the truth.”

5. I beseech — rather (compare *Note*, see on ^{<616}1 John 5:16), “I request thee,” implying some degree of *authority*.

not ... new commandment — It was *old* in that Christians heard it from the first in the Gospel preaching; *new*, in that the Gospel rested love on the new principle of filial imitation of God who first loved us, and gave Jesus to die for *us*; and also, in that *love* is now set forth with greater clearness than in the Old Testament dispensation. Love performs both tables of the law, and is the end of the law and the Gospel alike (compare *Notes*, see on 1 John 2:7,8).

that we — implying that he already had love, and urging her to join him in the same Christian grace. This verse seems to me to decide that a *Church*, not an *individual lady*, is meant. For a man to urge a woman (“THEE”; not *thee and thy children*) that he and she should *love one another*, is hardly like an apostolic precept, however pure may be the love enjoined; but all is clear if “the lady” represent a *Church*.

6. “Love is the fulfilling of the law” (^{<610}Romans 13:10), and the fulfilling of the law is the sure test of love.

This is the commandment — *Greek*, “The commandment is this,” namely, *love*, in which all God’s other commandments are summed up.

7. As *love* and *truth* go hand in hand (2 John 1:3,4), he feels it needful to give warning against teachers of untruth.

For — giving the reason why he dwelt on *truth* and on *love*, which manifests itself in keeping God's commandments (2 John 1:6).

many — (⁴¹²⁸1 John 2:18 4:1).

are entered — The oldest manuscripts read, “have *gone forth*,” namely, from us.

confess not ... Jesus ... in the flesh — the token of Antichrist.

is come — *Greek*, “coming.” He who denies Christ's *coming* in the flesh, denies the *possibility* of the incarnation; he who denies that he *has come*, denies its *actuality*. They denied the possibility of a Messiah's appearing, or *coming*, in the flesh [NEANDER]. I think the *Greek* present participle implies *both* the first and the second advent of Christ. He is often elsewhere called *the Coming One* (*Greek*), Matthew 11:3 ⁴¹²⁹Hebrews 10:37. The denial of the reality of His manifestation in the flesh, at His first coming, and of His personal advent again, constitutes Antichrist. “The world *turns away* from God and Christ, busily intent upon its own husks; but to OPPOSE God and Christ is of the leaven of Satan” [BENGEL].

This is a, etc. — *Greek*, “This (such a one as has been just described) is *the deceiver* and *the Antichrist*.” The *many* who in a degree fulfill the character, are forerunners of the final personal Antichrist, who shall concentrate in himself all the features of previous Antichristian systems.

8. Look to yourselves — amidst the widespread prevalence of deception so many being led astray. So Christ's warning, Matthew 24:4,5,24.

we lose not ... we receive — The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “That YE lose not, but that YE receive.”

which we have wrought — So one oldest manuscript reads. Other very old manuscripts, versions, and Fathers, read, “which YE have wrought.” The *we* being seemingly the more difficult reading is less likely to have been a transcriber's alteration. Look that ye lose not the believing state of “truth and love,” which WE (as God's workmen, 2 Corinthians 6:1 ⁴¹³⁰2 Timothy 2:15) were the instruments of working in you.

a full reward — of grace not of debt. *Fully* consummated glory. If “which YE have wrought” be read with very old authorities, the reward meant is that of their “work (of faith) and labor of love.” There are degrees of heavenly reward proportioned to the degrees of capability of receiving heavenly blessedness. Each vessel of glory hanging on Jesus shall be fully happy. But the larger the vessel, the greater will be its capacity for receiving heavenly bliss. He who with one pound made ten, received authority over ten cities. He who made five pounds received five cities; each according to his capacity of rule, and in proportion to his faithfulness. Compare ⁴⁵¹1 Corinthians 15:41. “There is no half reward of the saints. It is either lost altogether, or received *in full*; in *full* communion with God” [BENGEL]. Still no service of minister or people shall fail to receive its reward.

9. The *loss* (2 John 1:8) meant is here explained: the *not having God*, which results from *abiding not in the doctrine of Christ*.

transgresseth — The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “Every one who *takes the lead*”; literally, “goes,” or “leads on before”; compare John 10:4, “He goeth before them” (not the same *Greek*). Compare 3 John 1:9, “Loveth to have the *pre-eminence*.”

hath not God — (⁴⁷³1 John 2:23 5:15). The second “of Christ” is omitted in the oldest manuscripts, but is understood in the sense.

He — emphatical: *He and He alone*.

10. If there come any — as a teacher or brother. The *Greek* is indicative, not subjunctive; implying that such persons *do actually come*, and *are sure to come*; when any comes, as there will. True love is combined with hearty renunciation and separation from all that is false, whether persons or doctrines.

receive him not ... neither bid him God speed — This is not said of those who were always aliens from the Church, but of those who wish to be esteemed brethren, and subvert the true doctrine [GROTIUS]. The greeting salutation forbidden in the case of such a one is that *usual among Christian brethren* in those days, not a mere formality, but a token of *Christian brotherhood*.

11. By wishing a false brother or teacher “God (or ‘*good*’) speed,” you imply that he is capable as such of good speed and *joy* (the literal meaning of the *Greek*), and that you wish him it while opposing Christ; so you identify yourself with “his evil deeds.” The *Greek* of “partaker” is “having communion with.” We cannot have communion with saints and with Antichrist at the same time. Here we see John’s naturally fiery zeal directed to a right end. POLYCARP, the disciple of John, told contemporaries of IRENAEUS, who narrates the story on their authority, that on one occasion when John was about to bathe, and heard that Cerinthus, the heretic, was within, he retired with abhorrence, exclaiming, Surely the house will fall in ruins since the enemy of the truth is there.

12. I would not write — A heart full of love pours itself out more freely face to face, than by letter.

paper — made of Egyptian papyrus. Pens were then reeds spliterally

ink — made of soot and water, thickened with gum. Parchment was used for the permanent manuscripts in which the Epistles were preserved. Writing *tablets* were used merely for temporary purposes, as our slates.

face to face — literally, “mouth to mouth.”

full — *Greek*, “filled full.” Your joy will be complete in hearing from me in person the joyful Gospel truths which I now defer communicating till I see you. On other occasions his writing the glad truths was for the same purpose.

13. ALFORD confesses that the non-mention of the “lady” herself here seems rather to favor the hypothesis that a *Church* is meant.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF

JOHN

Commentary by A. R. FAUSSETT

3 JOHN 1:1-14.

ADDRESS: WISH FOR GAIUS' PROSPERITY: JOY AT HIS WALKING IN THE TRUTH. HOSPITALITY TO THE BRETHREN AND STRANGERS THE FRUIT OF LOVE. DIOTREPHES' OPPOSITION AND AMBITION. PRAISE OF DEMETRIUS. CONCLUSION.

1. I — emphatical. *I* personally, for my part. On Gaius or Caius, see my *Introduction* before Second Epistle.

love in the truth — (2 John 1:1). “Beloved” is repeated often in this Epistle, indicating strong affection (3 John 1:1,2,5,11).

2. above all things — *Greek*, “concerning all things”: so ALFORD: *in all respects*. But WAHL justifies *English Version* (compare 1 Peter 4:8). Of course, since his *soul's prosperity* is presupposed, “above all things” does not imply that John wishes Gaius’ bodily health above that of his soul, but as the *first* object to be desired *next after spiritual health*. I know you are prospering in the concerns of your soul. I wish you similar prosperity in your body. Perhaps John had heard from the brethren (3 John 1:3) that Gaius was in bad health, and was tried in other ways (~~and~~ 3 John 1:10), to which the wish, 3 John 1:2, refers.

prosper — in general.

be in health — in particular.

3. testified of the truth that is in thee — *Greek*, “of” (or ‘to’) thy truth”: thy share of that truth in which thou walkest [ALFORD].

even as thou — in contrast to Diotrophes (3 John 1:9).

4. my children — members of the Church: confirming the view that the “elect lady” is a Church.

5. faithfully — an act becoming a faithful man.

whatsoever thou doest — a distinct *Greek* word from the former “doest”: translate, “workest”: whatsoever work, or labor of love, thou dost perform. So ¹⁸⁸¹Matthew 26:10, “She hath wrought a good *work* upon me.”

and to strangers — The oldest manuscripts, “and that (that is, and those brethren) strangers.” The fact of the brethren whom thou didst entertain being “strangers,” enhances the love manifested in the act.

6. borne witness of thy charity before the church — to stimulate others by the good example. The brethren so entertained by Gaius were missionary evangelists (3 John 1:7); and, probably, in the course of narrating their missionary labors for the edification of the Church where John then was, incidentally mentioned the loving hospitality shown them by Gaius.

bring forward on their journey — “If thou (*continue to*) forward on their journey” by giving them provisions for the way.

after a godly sort — *Greek*, “in a manner worthy of God,” whose ambassadors they are, and whose servant thou art. He who honors God’s missionary servants (3 John 1:7), honors God.

7. his name’s sake — Christ’s.

went forth — as missionaries.

taking nothing — refusing to *receive* aught by way of pay, or maintenance, though justly entitled to it, as Paul at Corinth and at Thessalonica.

Gentiles — the Christians just gathered out by their labors from among the heathen. As Gaius himself was a *Gentile* convert, “the Gentiles” here must mean *the converts just made from the heathen*, the Gentiles to whom they had *gone forth*. It would have been inexpedient to have taken aught (the *Greek* “*meden*” implies, not that they *got* nothing, though they had

desired it, but that it was of *their own choice* they *took nothing*) from the infant churches among the heathen: the case was different in receiving hospitality from Gaius.

8. We — in contradistinction to “the Gentiles” or “heathen” referred to, 3 John 1:7.

therefore — as they take nothing from the Gentiles or heathen.

receive — The oldest manuscripts read, “take up.” As they “take” nothing from the Gentiles, we ought to *take them up* so as to support them.

fellow helpers — with them.

to the truth — that is, *to promote* the truth.

9. I wrote — The oldest manuscripts add “something”: a *communication*, probably, on the subject of *receiving the brethren* with brotherly love (3 John 1:8,10). That Epistle was not designed by the Spirit for the universal Church, or else it would have been preserved.

unto the church — of which Gaius is a member.

loveth ... pre-eminence — through ambition. Evidently occupying a high place in the Church where Gaius was (~~6013~~ 3 John 1:10).

among them — *over* the members of the Church.

receiveth us not — virtually, namely, by not *receiving* with love the brethren whom we recommended to be received (3 John 1:8,10; compare ~~6010~~ Matthew 10:40).

10. if I come — (~~6014~~ 3 John 1:14).

I will remember — literally, “I will bring to mind” before all by stigmatizing and punishing.

prating — with mere silly tattle.

neither doth he ... receive the brethren — with hospitality. “The brethren” are the missionaries on their journey.

forbiddeth them that would — receive them.

casteth them — those that would receive the brethren, by excommunication from the Church, which his influence, as a leading man (3 John 1:9) in it, enabled him to do. NEANDER thinks that the missionaries were JEWS by birth, whence it is said in their praise they *took nothing from THE GENTILES*: in contrast to other Jewish missionaries who abused ministers' right of maintenance elsewhere, as Paul tells us, ^{<4712>}2 Corinthians 11:22 Philippians 3:2,5,19. Now in the Gentile churches there existed an ultra-Pauline party of anti-Jewish tendency, the forerunners of Marcion: Diotrefes possibly stood at the head of this party, which fact, as well as this domineering spirit, may account for his hostility to the missionaries, and to the apostle John, who had, by the power of love, tried to harmonize the various elements in the Asiatic churches. At a later period, Marcion, we know, attached himself to Paul alone, and paid no deference to the authority of John.

11. follow not that which is evil — as manifested in Diotrefes (3 John 1:9,10).

but ... good — as manifested in Demetrius (^{<6012>}3 John 1:12).

is of God — is born of God, who is good.

hath not seen God — spiritually, not literally.

12. of all men — who have had opportunity of knowing his character.

of the truth itself — The Gospel standard of *truth* bears witness to him that he walks conformably to it, in acts of real love, hospitality to the brethren (in contrast to Diotrefes), etc. Compare ^{<612>}John 3:21 “He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.”

we also — besides the testimony of “all men,” and “of the truth itself.”

ye know — The oldest manuscripts read, “thou knowest.”

13. I will not — rather as *Greek*, “I wish not ... to write” more.

14. face to face — *Greek*, “mouth to mouth.”

Peace — peace inward of conscience, peace fraternal of friendship, peace supernal of glory [LYRA].

friends — a title seldom used in the New Testament, as it is absorbed in the higher titles of “brother, brethren.” Still Christ recognizes the relation of *friend* also, based on the highest grounds, obedience to Him from love, and entailing the highest privileges, admission to the intimacy of the holy and glorious God, and sympathizing Savior; so Christians have “friends” in Christ. Here in a friendly letter, mention of “friends” appropriately occurs.

by name — not less than if their names were written [BENGEL].

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF

JUDE

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR. — He calls himself in the address “the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James.” See *Introduction to the Epistle of James*, in proof of James the *apostle*, and James the *Lord’s brother*, the bishop of Jerusalem, being one and the same person. ^{<819>}Galatians 1:19 alone seems to me to prove this. Similarly, Jude the brother of our Lord, and Jude the apostle, seem to be one and the same. **JEROME** [*Against Helvidius*], rightly maintains that by the Lord’s brethren are meant his cousins, children of Mary and Cleophas (the same as Alphaeus). From 1 Corinthians 9:5 (as “brethren of the Lord” stands between “other apostles” and “Cephas”), it seems natural to think that the *brethren of the Lord* are distinguished from the apostles only because *all* his brethren were not apostles, but only James and Jude. Jude’s reason for calling himself “brother of Jesus,” was that James, as bishop of Jerusalem, was better known than himself. Had he been, in the strict sense, *brother of our Lord*, he probably would have so entitled himself. His omission of mention of his *apostleship* is no proof that he was not an apostle; for so also James omits it in his heading; and Paul, in his Epistles to the Philippians, Thessalonians, and Philemon, omits it. Had the writer been a counterfeiter of the apostle Jude, he would doubtless have called himself an “apostle.” He was called also Lebbaeus and Thaddeus, probably to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot, the traitor. Lebbaeus, from *Hebrew* “*leeb*,” “heart,” means *courageous*. Thaddeus is the same as Theudas, from *Hebrew* “*thad*,” the “breast.” Luke and John, writing later than Matthew, when there would be no confusion between him and Judas Iscariot, give his name Judas. The only circumstance relating to him recorded in the Gospels occurs in ^{<842>}John 14:22, “Judas saith unto

Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" JEROME [*Commentary on Matthew*] says that he was sent to Edessa, to Abgarus, king of Osroene, or Edessa, and that he preached in Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Persia, in which last country he suffered martyrdom. The story is told on EUSEBIUS' authority, that Abgarus, on his sickbed, having heard of Jesus' power to heal, sent to beg Him to come and cure him, to which the Lord replied, praising his faith, that though he had not seen the Savior, he yet believed; adding, "As for what thou hast written, that I should come to thee, it is necessary that all those things for which I was sent should be fulfilled by Me in this place, and that having filled them I should be received up to Him that sent Me. When, therefore, I shall be received into heaven, I will send unto thee some one of My disciples who shall both heal thy distemper and give life to thee and those with thee." Thomas is accordingly said to have been inspired to send Thaddeus for the cure and baptism of Abgarus. The letters are said to have been shown Thaddeus among the archives of Edessa. It is possible such a message was verbally sent. and the substance of it registered in writing afterwards (compare 2 Kings 5:1-27; and ~~1~~¹⁰ Matthew 15:22). HEGESIPPUS (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.20]) states that when Domitian inquired after David's posterity, some grandsons of Jude, called the Lord's brother, were brought into his presence. Being asked as to their possessions, they said that they had thirty-nine acres of the value of nine thousand denarii, out of which they paid him taxes, and lived by the labor of their hands, a proof of which they gave by showing the hardness of their hands. Being interrogated as to Christ and His kingdom, they replied that it was not of this world, but heavenly; and that it would be manifested at the end of the world, when He would come in glory to judge the living and the dead.

AUTHENTICITY. — EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.25], reckons it among the *Antilegomena* or *controverted* Scriptures, "though recognized by the majority." The reference to the contest of Michael, the archangel, with the devil, for the body of Moses, not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament, but found in the *apocryphal* "Book of Enoch," probably raised doubts as to its authenticity, as JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*, 4] says. Moreover, its not being addressed to one particular Church, or individual, caused it not to be so immediately recognized as canonical. A counterfeiter

would have avoided using what did not occur in the Old Testament, and which might be regarded as apocryphal.

As to the book of Enoch, if quoted by Jude, his quotation of a passage from it gives an inspired sanction only to *the truth of that passage*, not to the whole book; just as Paul, by inspiration, sanctions particular sentiments from ARATUS, EPIMENIDES, and MENANDER, but not all their writings. I think, rather as there is some slight variation between Jude's statement and that of the book of Enoch, that Jude, though probably not ignorant of the book of Enoch, stamps with inspired sanction the current tradition of the Jews as to Enoch's prophecies; just as Paul mentions the names of the Egyptian magicians, "Jannes and Jambres" (2 Timothy 3:8), not mentioned in the Old Testament. At all events, the prophecy ascribed to Enoch by Jude was really his, being sanctioned as such by this inspired writer. So also the narration as to the archangel Michael's dispute with Satan concerning the body of Moses, is by Jude's inspired authority (Jude 1:9) declared true. The book of Enoch is quoted by JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENAEUS, CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, etc. Bruce, the Abyssinian traveler, brought home three copies of it in *Ethiopic*, from Alexandria, of which Archbishop Lawrence, in 1821, gave an English translation. The *Ethiopic* was a version from the *Greek*, and the *Greek* doubtless a version from the *Hebrew*, as the names of the angels in it show. The *Apostolic Constitutions*, ORIGEN [*Against Celsus*], JEROME, and AUGUSTINE, pronounce it not canonical. Yet it is in the main edifying, vindicating God's government of the world, natural and spiritual, and contradicting none of the Scripture statements. The name *Jesus* never occurs, though "Son of man," so often given to Messiah in the Gospels, is frequent, and terms are used expressive of His dignity, character, and acts, exceeding the views of Messiah in any other Jewish book. The writer seems to have been a Jew who had become thoroughly imbued with the sacred writings of Daniel. And, though many coincidences occur between its sentiments and the New Testament, the Messianic portions are not distinct enough to prove that the writer knew the New Testament. Rather, he seems to have immediately preceded Christ's coming, about the time of Herod the Great, and so gives us a most interesting view of believing Jews' opinions before the advent of our Lord. The Trinity is recognized (Enoch 60:13,14). Messiah is "the elect One" existing from eternity (Enoch 48:2,3,5); "All kings shall fall down before

Him, and worship and fix their hopes on this Son of man” (Enoch 61:10-13). He is the object of worship (Enoch 48:3,4); He is the supreme Judge (Enoch 60:10,11; 68:38,39). There shall be a future state of retribution (Enoch 93:8,9; 94:2,4; 95; 96; 99; 103); The eternity of future punishment (Enoch 103:5). VOLKMAR, in ALFORD, thinks the book was written at the time of the sedition of Barchochebas (A.D. 132), by a follower of Rabbi Akiba, the upholder of that impostor. This would make the book Antichristian in its origin. If this date be correct, doubtless it copied some things from Jude, giving them the Jewish, not the Christian, coloring.

EUSEBIUS [*Demonstration of the Gospel*, 3.5] remarks, it accords with John’s humility that in Second and Third John he calls himself “the elder.” For the same reason James and Jude call themselves “servants of Jesus Christ.” CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Adumbrations*, in *Epistle of Jude*, p. 1007] says, “Jude, through reverential awe, did not call himself *brother*, but *servant*, of Jesus Christ, and brother of James.”

TERTULLIAN [*On the Apparel of Women*, 3] cites the Epistle as that of the apostle James. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA in *Miscellanies* [3.2.11] quotes Jude 1:8,17 as Scripture, in *The Instructor* [3.8.44], Jude 1:5. The MURATORI fragment asserts its canonicity [ROUTH, *Sacred Fragments*, 1.306]. ORIGEN [*Commentary on* ^{<135>}Matthew 13:55] says, “Jude wrote an Epistle of few lines, but one filled full of the strong words of heavenly grace.” Also, in his *Commentary on* ^{<122>}Matthew 22:23, ORIGEN quotes Jude 1:6; and on ^{<180>}Matthew 18:10, he quotes Jude 1:1. He calls the writer “Jude the apostle,” in the *Latin* remains of his works (compare DAVIDSON, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 498). JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*, 4] reckons it among the Scriptures. Though the oldest manuscripts of the Peschito omit it, EPHREM THE SYRIAN recognizes it. WORDSWORTH reasons for its genuineness thus: Jude, we know, died before John, that is, before the beginning of the second century. Now EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.32] tells us that James was succeeded in the bishopric of Jerusalem by Symeon his brother; and also that Symeon sat in that see till A.D. 107, when as a martyr he was crucified in his hundred twentieth year. We find that the Epistle to Jude was known in the East and West in the second century; it was therefore circulated in Symeon’s lifetime. It never would have received currency such as it had, nor would Symeon have permitted a letter bearing the name of an apostle, his own brother

Jude, brother of his own apostolical predecessor, James, to have been circulated, if it were not really Jude's.

TO WHOM ADDRESSED. — The references to Old Testament history, Jude 1:5,7, and to Jewish tradition, ^{ⲓⲁⲓⲓⲛ}Jude 1:14, etc., make it likely that *Jewish* Christians are the readers to whom Jude mainly (though including also *all* Christians, Jude 1:1) writes, just as the kindred Epistle, Second Peter, is addressed primarily to the same class; compare *Introduction* to First Peter and *Introduction* to Second Peter. The persons stigmatized in it were not merely *libertines* (as ALFORD thinks), though no doubt that was one of their prominent characteristics, but heretics in *doctrine*, “denying the only Lord God, and our Savior Jesus Christ.” Hence he urges believers “earnestly to contend for *the faith* once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 1:3). Insubordination, self-seeking, and licentiousness, the fruit of Antinomian teachings, were the evils against which Jude warns his readers; reminding them that, to build themselves in their most holy faith, and to pray in the Holy Ghost, are the only effectual safeguards. The same evils, along with mocking skepticism, shall characterize the last days before the final judgment, even as in the days when Enoch warned the ungodly of the coming flood. As Peter was in Babylon in writing ^{ⲓⲁⲓⲓⲛ}1 Peter 5:13, and probably also in writing Second Peter (compare *Introduction* to First Peter and *Introduction* to Second Peter), Jude addressed his Epistle primarily to *the Jewish Christians in and about Mesopotamian Babylon* (a place of great resort to the Jews in that day), or else to *the Christian Jews dispersed in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia* (1 Peter 1:1), the persons addressed by Peter. For Jude is expressly said to have preached in *Mesopotamia* [JEROME, *Commentary on Matthew*], and his Epistle, consisting of only twenty-five verses, contains in them no less than eleven passages from Second Peter (see my *Introduction* to Second Peter for the list). Probably in Jude 1:4 he witnesses to the fulfillment of Peter's prophecy, “There *are* certain men *crept in unawares*, who were before of old ordained (rather as *Greek*, “forewritten,” that is, announced *beforehand* by the apostle Peter's *written* prophecy) to this *condemnation*, ungodly men *denying* the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Compare 2 Peter 2:1, “There *shall* be false teachers among you who *privily* shall bring in *damnable* heresies, even *denying the Lord* that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift *destruction*.” Also ^{ⲓⲁⲓⲓⲛ}Jude 1:17,18 plainly

refers to *the very words* of 2 Peter 3:3, “Remember the words which were spoken before of the *apostles* of our Lord Jesus; how they told you there should be *mockers in the last time* who should *walk after their own ungodly lusts*.” This proves, in opposition to ALFORD, that Jude’s Epistle is later than Peter’s (whose inspiration he thus confirms, just as Peter confirms Paul’s, ~~and~~ 2 Peter 3:15,16), not vice versa.

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING. — ALFORD thinks, that, considering Jude was writing to Jews and citing signal instances of divine vengeance, it is very unlikely he would have omitted to allude to the destruction of Jerusalem if he had written after that event which uprooted the Jewish polity and people. He conjectures from the tone and references that the writer lived in Palestine. But as to the former, negative evidence is doubtful; for neither does John allude in his Epistles, written after the destruction of Jerusalem, to that event. MILL fixes on A.D. 90, after the death of all the apostles save John. I incline to think from ~~and~~ Jude 1:17,18 that some time had elapsed since the Second Epistle of Peter (written probably about A.D. 68 or 69) when Jude wrote, and, therefore, that the Epistle of Jude was written *after* the destruction of Jerusalem.

JUDE 1:1-25.

ADDRESS: GREETING: HIS OBJECT IN WRITING: WARNING AGAINST SEDUCERS IN DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE FROM GOD’S VENGEANCE ON APOSTATES, ISRAEL, THE FALLEN ANGELS, SODOM AND GOMORRAH. DESCRIPTION OF THESE BAD MEN, IN CONTRAST TO MICHAEL: LIKE CAIN, BALAAM, AND CORE: ENOCH’S PROPHECY AS TO THEM: THE APOSTLES’ FOREWARNING: CONCLUDING EXHORTATION AS TO PRESERVING THEIR OWN FAITH, AND TRYING TO SAVE OTHERS: DOXOLOGY.

1. servant of Jesus Christ — as His minister and apostle.

brother of James — who was more widely known as bishop of Jerusalem and “brother of the Lord” (that is, either *cousin*, or stepbrother, being son of Joseph by a former marriage; for ancient traditions universally agree that

Mary, Jesus' mother, continued perpetually a virgin). Jude therefore calls himself modestly "brother of James." See my *Introduction*.

to them ... sanctified by God the Father — The oldest manuscripts and versions, ORIGEN, LUCIFER, and others read, "beloved" for *sanctified*. If *English Version* be read, compare ^{<502}Colossians 1:12 1 Peter 1:2. The *Greek* is not "by," but "in." God the Father's *love* is the element IN which they are "beloved." Thus the conclusion, ^{<502}Jude 1:21, corresponds, "Keep yourselves *in* the love of God." Compare "beloved of the Lord" ^{<503}2 Thessalonians 2:13.

preserved in Jesus Christ — "kept." Translate not "in," but as *Greek*, "FOR Jesus Christ." "Kept *continually* (so the *Greek perfect* participle means) by God the Father for Jesus Christ," against the day of His coming. Jude, beforehand, mentions the source and guarantee for the final accomplishment of believers' salvation; lest they should be disheartened by the dreadful evils which he proceeds to announce [BENGEL].

and called — predicated of "them that are beloved in God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: who are called." God's effectual *calling* in the exercise of His divine prerogative, guarantees their eternal safety.

2. Mercy — in a time of wretchedness. Therefore *mercy* stands first; the mercy of *Christ* (^{<502}Jude 1:21).

peace — in the *Holy Ghost* (^{<502}Jude 1:20).

love — of *God* (^{<502}Jude 1:21). The three answer to the divine Trinity.

be multiplied — in you and towards you.

3. Design of the Epistle (compare ^{<502}Jude 1:20,21).

all diligence — (2 Peter 1:5). As the minister is to give *all diligence* to admonish, so the people should, in accordance with his admonition, give *all diligence* to have all Christian graces, and to make their calling sure.

the common salvation — wrought by Christ. Compare *Note*, see on 2 Peter 1:1, "obtained LIKE precious faith," This *community of faith*, and of the object of faith, *salvation*, forms the ground of mutual exhortation by appeals to common hopes and fears.

it was needful for me — rather, “I felt it necessary to write (now *at once*; so the *Greek* aorist means; the *present* infinitive ‘to write,’ which precedes, expresses merely the general fact of writing) exhorting you.” The reason why he felt it necessary “to write *with exhortation*,” he states, Jude 1:4, “For there are certain men crept in,” etc. Having intended to write generally of “*the common salvation*,” he found it necessary from the existing evils in the Church, to write specially that they should *contend for the faith against* those evils.

earnestly contend — Compare ^{<302>}Philippians 1:27, “striving together for the faith of the Gospel.”

once, etc. — *Greek*, “*once for all* delivered.” No other faith or revelation is to supersede it. A strong argument for resisting heretical innovators (Jude 1:4). Believers, like Nehemiah’s workmen (Nehemiah 4:17), with one hand “build themselves up in their most holy faith”; with the other they” contend earnestly for the faith” against its foes.

the saints — all Christians, *holy* (that is, consecrated to God) by their calling, and in God’s design.

4. certain men — implying disparagement.

crept in unawares — stealthily and unlawfully. See on 2 Peter 2:1, “*privily* shall bring in damnable heresies.”

before ... ordained — *Greek*, “forewritten,” namely, in Peter’s prophecy ^{<3017>}Jude 1:17,18; and in Paul’s before that, 1 Timothy 4:1 2 Timothy 3:1; and by implication in the judgments which overtook the apostate angels. The disobedient Israelites, Sodom and Gomorrah, Balaam and Core, and which are *written* “for an example” (Jude 1:7, and Jude 1:5,6,11). God’s eternal character as the Punisher of sin, as set forth in Scripture “of old,” is the ground on which such apostate characters are ordained to condemnation. Scripture is the reflection of God’s book of life in which believers are “written among the living.” “Forewritten” is applied also in Romans 15:4 to the things written in Scripture. Scripture itself reflects God’s character from everlasting, which is the ground of His decrees from everlasting. BENGEL explains it as an abbreviated phrase for, “They were

of old foretold by Enoch (⁴¹¹⁴ Jude 1:14, who did not *write* his prophecies), and afterwards marked out by the *written* word.”

to this condemnation — Jude graphically puts their judgment as it were present before the eyes, “THIS.” Enoch’s prophecy comprises the “ungodly men” of the last days before Christ’s coming to judgment, as well as their forerunners, the “ungodly men” before the flood, the type of the last judgment (⁴²⁶⁷ Matthew 24:37-39 2 Peter 3:3-7). The disposition and the doom of both correspond.

the grace of our God — A phrase for the Gospel especially sweet to believers who appropriate God in Christ as “*our* God,” and so rendering the more odious the vile perversity of those who turn the Gospel state of grace and liberty into a ground of licentiousness, as if their exemption from the law gave them a license to *sin*.

denying the only Lord — The oldest manuscripts, versions, and Fathers omit “God,” which follows in *English Version*. Translate as the *Greek*, “the only Master”; here used of *Jesus Christ*, who is at once *Master* and “Lord” (a different *Greek* word). See on 2 Peter 2:1. By virtue of Christ’s perfect oneness with the Father, He, as well as the Father, is termed “the ONLY” God and “MASTER.” *Greek*, “Master,” implies God’s *absolute ownership* to dispose of His creatures as He likes.

5. (⁴³⁸¹ Hebrews 3:16 4:13.)

therefore — Other oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate* read, “But”; in contrast to the ungodly Jude 1:4.

though ye once — rather, “once for all.” Translate, “I wish to remind you, *as* knowing ALL (namely, *that I am referring to*; so the oldest manuscripts, versions, and Fathers) *once for all*.” As already they know all the facts once for all, he needs only to “remind” them.

the Lord — The oldest manuscripts and versions read, “Jesus.” So “Christ” is said to have accompanied the Israelites in the wilderness; so perfectly is Jesus one with the God of the Israelite theocracy.

saved — brought safely, and into a state of safety and salvation.

afterward — *Greek*, “secondly”; in the next instance “destroyed them that believed not,” as contrasted with His *in the first instance* having saved them.

6. (2 Peter 2:4.)

kept not their first estate — *Vulgate* translates, “their own *principality*,” which the fact of angels being elsewhere called “principalities,” favors: “their own” implies that, instead of being content with the *dignity* once for all assigned to them under the Son of God, they aspired higher. ALFORD thinks the narrative in Genesis 6:2 is alluded to, not the fall of the devil and his angels, as he thinks “giving themselves over to fornication” (Jude 1:7) proves; compare *Greek*, “in like manner *to these*,” namely, to the angels (Jude 1:6). It seems to me more natural to take “sons of God” (Genesis 6:2) of the Sethites, than of angels, who, as “spirits,” do not seem capable of carnal connection. The parallel, 2 Peter 2:4, plainly refers to the fall of the apostate angels. And “in like manner *to these*,” Jude 1:7, refers to *the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah*, “the cities about them” sinning “in like manner” as “they” did [ESTIUS and CALVIN]. Even if *Greek* “these,” Jude 1:7, refer to *the angels*, the sense of “in like manner as these” will be, not that the angels carnally *fornicated* with the daughters of men, but that their ambition, whereby their affections went *away from* God and they fell, is in God’s view a sin of like kind spiritually as Sodom’s going *away* from God’s order of nature after strange flesh; the sin of the apostate angels after their kind is analogous to that of the human Sodomites after their kind. Compare the somewhat similar spiritual connection of *whoremongers* and *covetousness*. The apocryphal book of Enoch interprets Genesis 6:2 as ALFORD. But though Jude accords with it in some particulars, it does not follow that he accords with it in all. The Hebrews name the fallen angels Aza and Azazel.

left — on their own accord.

their own — *Greek*, “their proper.”

habitation — heaven, all bright and glorious, as opposed to the “darkness” to which they now are doomed. Their ambitious designs seem to have had a peculiar connection with this earth, of which Satan before his

fall may have been God's vicegerent, whence arises his subsequent connection with it as first the Tempter, then "the prince of this world."

reserved — As the *Greek* is the same, and there is an evident reference to *their* having "*kept not* their first estate," translate, "He hath kept." Probably what is meant is, He hath kept them *in His purpose*; that is their sure doom; moreover, as yet, Satan and his demons roam at large on the earth. An earnest of their doom is their having been cast out of heaven, being already restricted to "the darkness of this present world," the "air" that surrounds the earth, their peculiar element now. They lurk in places of gloom and death, looking forward with agonizing fear to their final torment in the bottomless pit. He means not literal chains and darkness, but figurative in this present world where, with restricted powers and liberties, shut out from heaven, they, like condemned prisoners, await their doom.

7. Even as — ALFORD translates, "I wish to remind you (Jude 1:5) *that*."

Sodom, etc. — (2 Peter 2:6).

giving themselves over to fornication — following fornication *extraordinarily*, that is, *out of the* order of nature. On "in like manner *to them*" (*Greek*), compare *Note*, see on Jude 1:6. Compare on spiritual fornication, "go a *whoring from thee*," Psalm 73:27.

going after strange flesh — departing from the course of nature, and going after that which is unnatural. In later times the most enlightened heathen nations indulged in the sin of Sodom without compunction or shame.

are set forth — before our eyes.

suffering — undergoing *to this present time*; alluding to the marks of volcanic fire about the Dead Sea.

the vengeance — *Greek*, "righteous retribution."

eternal fire — The lasting marks of the fire that consumed the cities irreparably, is a type of the eternal fire to which the inhabitants have been consigned. BENIGEL translates as the *Greek* will admit, "*Suffering (the) punishment* (which they endure) as an example or *sample of eternal fire* (namely, that which shall consume the wicked)." Ezekiel 16:53-55 shows

that Sodom's punishment, as a nation, is *not eternal*. Compare also 2 Peter 2:6.

8. also — rather, “In like manner nevertheless” (notwithstanding these warning examples) [ALFORD].

these ... dreamers — The *Greek* has not “filthy” of *English Version*. The clause, “these men dreaming” (that is, in their dreams), belongs to all the verbs, “defile,” “despise,” and “speak evil.” All sinners are spiritually asleep, and their carnal activity is as it were a dream (1 Thessalonians 5:6,7). Their *speaking evil of dignities* is because they are *dreaming*, and *know not what they are speaking evil of* (⁵⁰¹⁶Jude 1:10). “As a man dreaming seems to himself to be seeing and nearing many things, so the natural man's lusts are agitated by joy, distress, fear, and the other passions. But he is a stranger to self-command. Hence, though he bring into play all the powers of reason, he cannot conceive the true liberty which the sons of light, who are awake and in the daylight; enjoy” [BENGEL].

defile the flesh — (Jude 1:7).

dominion — “lordship.”

dignities — literally, “glories.” Earthly and heavenly *dignities*.

9. Michael, the archangel — Nowhere in Scripture is the plural used, “archangels”; but only ONE, “archangel.” The only other passage in the New Testament where it occurs, is ⁵⁰¹⁶1 Thessalonians 4:16, where Christ is distinguished from the archangel, with whose voice He shall descend to raise the dead; they therefore err who confound Christ with Michael. The name means, *Who is like God?* In Daniel 10:13 he is called “One (*the first,* *Margin*) of the chief princes.” He is the champion angel of Israel. In Revelation 12:7 the conflict between Michael and Satan is again alluded to.

about the body of Moses — his literal body. Satan, as having the power of death, opposed the raising of it again, on the ground of Moses' sin at Meribah, and his murder of the Egyptian. That Moses' body was raised, appears from his presence with Elijah and Jesus (who were in the body) at the Transfiguration: the sample and earnest of the coming resurrection kingdom, to be ushered in by Michael's standing up for God's people.

Thus in each dispensation a sample and pledge of the future resurrection was given: Enoch in the patriarchal dispensation, Moses in the Levitical, Elijah in the prophetic. It is noteworthy that the same rebuke is recorded here as was used by the Angel of the Lord, or Jehovah the Second Person, in pleading for Joshua, the representative of the Jewish Church, against Satan, in Zechariah 3:2; whence some have thought that also here “the body of Moses” means the Jewish Church accused by Satan, before God, for its filthiness, on which ground he demands that divine justice should take its course against Israel, but is rebuked by the Lord who has “chosen Jerusalem”: thus, as “the body of Christ” is *the Christian Church*, so “the body of Moses” is the Jewish Church. But the literal body is evidently here meant (though, secondarily, the Jewish Church is typified by Moses’ body, as it was there represented by Joshua the high priest); and Michael, whose connection seems to be so close with Jehovah-Messiah on the one hand, and with Israel on the other, naturally uses the same language as his Lord. As Satan (*adversary* in court) or the devil (*accuser*) accuses alike the Church collectively and “the brethren” individually, so Christ pleads for us as our Advocate. Israel’s, and all believers’ full justification, and the accuser’s being rebuked finally, is yet future. JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 4.8], states that God hid Moses’ body, lest, if it had been exposed to view, it would have been made an idol of. Jude, in this account, either adopts it from the apocryphal “assumption of Moses” (as ORIGIN [*Concerning Principalities*, 3.2] thinks), or else from the ancient tradition on which that work was founded. *Jude*, as inspired, could distinguish how much of the tradition was true, how much false. *We* have no such means of distinguishing, and therefore can be sure of no tradition, save that which is in the *written word*.

durst not — from reverence for Satan’s former *dignity* (Jude 1:8).

railing accusation — *Greek*, “judgment of blasphemy,” or *evil-speaking*. Peter said, Angels do not, in order to avenge themselves, rail at dignities, though ungodly, when they have to contend with them: Jude says that the archangel Michael himself did not rail even at the time when he fought with the devil, the prince of evil spirits — not from fear of him, but from reverence of God, whose delegated power in this world Satan once had, and even in some degree still has. From the word “disputed,” or *debated in controversy*, it is plain it was a judicial contest.

10. (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ 2 Peter 2:12.)

those things which — *Greek*, “all things *whatsoever* they *understand not*,” namely, the things of the spiritual world.

but what ... naturally — Connect thus, “*Whatever* (so the *Greek*) things naturally (by natural, blind instinct), as the unreasoning (so the *Greek*) animals, they know,” etc. The *Greek* for the former “know” implies deeper knowledge; the latter “know,” the mere perception of the “animal senses and faculties.”

11. **Woe** — See on ⲁⲓⲃⲉ 2 Peter 2:14, “*cursed children*.”

Cain — the murderer: the root of whose sin was hatred and envy of the godly, as it is the sin of these seducers.

ran greedily — literally, “have been poured forth” like a torrent that has burst its banks. Reckless of what it costs, the loss of God’s favor and heaven, on they rush after gain like Balaam.

perished in the gainsaying of Core — (compare *Note*, see on ⲁⲓⲃⲉ Jude 1:12). When we read of Korah perishing by gainsaying, we read virtually also of these perishing in like manner through the same: for the same seed bears the same harvest.

12. spots — So ⲁⲓⲃⲉ 2 Peter 2:13, *Greek*, “*spiloī*”; but here the *Greek* is *spilades*, which elsewhere, in secular writers, means *rocks*, namely, on which the Christian *love-feasts* were in danger of being shipwrecked. The oldest manuscript prefixes the article emphatically, “THE rocks.” The reference to “clouds ... winds ... waves of the sea,” accords with this image of *rocks*. *Vulgate* seems to have been misled by the similar sounding word to translate, as *English Version*, “spots”; compare however, ⲁⲓⲃⲉ Jude 1:23, which favors *English Version*, if the *Greek* will bear it. Two oldest manuscripts, by the transcriber’s effort to make Jude say the same as Peter, read here “deceivings” for “love-feasts,” but the weightiest manuscript and authorities support *English Version* reading. The love-feast accompanied the Lord’s Supper (ⲁⲓⲃⲉ 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, end). Korah the Levite, not satisfied with his *ministry*, aspired to the *sacrificing priesthood* also: so ministers in the Lord’s Supper have sought to make it a *sacrifice*, and themselves the *sacrificing* priests, usurping the function of

our only Christian sacerdotal *Priest*, Christ Jesus. Let them beware of Korah's doom!

feeding themselves — *Greek*, “pasturing (tending) themselves.” What they look to is the pampering of *themselves*, not the feeding of the flock.

without fear — Join these words not as *English Version*, but with “feast.” Sacred feasts especially ought to be celebrated *with fear*. Feasting is not faulty in itself [BENGEL], but it needs to be accompanied with *fear* of forgetting God, as Job in the case of his sons' feasts.

clouds — from which one would expect refreshing rains. ~~GRK~~ 2 Peter 2:17, “wells without water.” Professors without practice.

carried about — The oldest manuscripts have “carried aside,” that is, out of the right course (compare ~~GRK~~ Ephesians 4:14).

trees whose fruit withereth — rather, “trees of the late (or *waning*) autumn,” namely, when there are no longer leaves or fruits on the trees [BENGEL].

without fruit — having no good fruit of knowledge and practice; sometimes used of what is positively *bad*.

twice dead — First when they cast their leaves in autumn, and seem during winter *dead*, but revive again in spring; secondly, when they are “plucked up by the roots.” So these apostates, once dead in unbelief, and then by profession and baptism raised from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, but now having become *dead again* by apostasy, and so *hopelessly dead*. There is a climax. Not only *without leaves*, like *trees in late autumn*, but *without fruit*: not only so, but dead twice; and to crown all, “plucked up by the roots.”

13. Raging — wild. Jude has in mind Isaiah 57:20.

shame — plural in *Greek*, “shames” (compare ~~GRK~~ Philippians 3:19).

wandering stars — instead of moving on in a regular orbit, as lights to the world, bursting forth on the world like erratic comets, or rather, meteors of fire, with a strange glare, and then doomed to fall back again into the blackness of gloom.

14. See *Introduction* on the source whence Jude derived this prophecy of Enoch. The Holy Spirit, by Jude, has sealed the truth of this much of the matter contained in the book of Enoch, though probably that book, as well as Jude, derived it from tradition (compare *Note*, see on Jude 1:9). There are reasons given by some for thinking the book of Enoch copied from Jude rather than vice versa. It is striking how, from the first, prophecy hastened towards its consummation. The earliest prophecies of the Redeemer dwell on His second coming in glory, rather than His first coming in lowliness (compare ^{<1085>}Genesis 3:15 with ^{<5191>}Romans 16:20). Enoch, in his translation without death, illustrated that truth which he all his life preached to the unbelieving world, the certainty of the Lord's coming, and the resurrection of the dead, as the only effectual antidote to their skepticism and self-wise confidence in nature's permanence.

And Enoch — *Greek*, “Moreover, also Enoch,” etc.

seventh from Adam — *Seven* is the sacred number. In Enoch, freedom from death and the sacred number are combined: for every seventh object is most highly valued. Jude thus shows the antiquity of the prophecies. Compare *Note*, see on Jude 1:4, “of old.” There were only *five* fathers between Enoch and Adam. The *seventh* from Adam prophesied the things which shall close the *seventh age* of the world [BENGEL].

of these — in relation to these. The reference of his prophecies was not to the antediluvians alone, but to *all* the ungodly (^{<6115>}Jude 1:15). His prophecy applied primarily indeed to the flood, but ultimately to the final judgment.

cometh — literally, “came.” Prophecy regards the future as certain as if it were *past*.

saints — Holy angels (compare Deuteronomy 33:2 Daniel 7:10 Zechariah 14:5 ^{<1251>}Matthew 25:31 ^{<8222>}Hebrews 12:22).

15. This verse and the beginning of Enoch's prophecy is composed in *Hebrew* poetic parallelism, the oldest specimen extant. Some think Lamech's speech, which is also in poetic parallelism, was composed in mockery of Enoch's prophecy: as Enoch foretold Jehovah's coming to

judgment, so Lamech presumes on impunity in polygamy and murder (just as Cain the murderer seemed to escape with impunity).

convince — convict.

hard speeches — such as are noticed in Jude 1:8,10,16 Malachi 3:13,14; contrast ^{<517>}Romans 16:17.

ungodly sinners — not merely *sinners*, but proud *despisers of God: impious*.

against him — They who speak against God's children are regarded by God as speaking *against Himself*.

16. murmurers — in secret: *muttering murmurs* against God's ordinances and ministers in Church and state. Compare Jude 1:8, "speak evil of dignities"; ^{<515>}Jude 1:15, "hard speeches"; against the Lord.

complainers — never satisfied with their lot (Numbers 11:1; compare the penalty, ^{<516>}Deuteronomy 28:47,48).

walking after their own lusts — (^{<518>}Jude 1:18). The secret of their *murmuring and complaining* is the restless insatiability of their desires.

great swelling words — (^{<518>}2 Peter 2:18).

men's persons — their mere outward appearance and rank.

because of advantage — for the sake of what they may gain from them. While they *talk great swelling words*, they are really mean and fawning towards those of wealth and rank.

17. But; beloved ... ye — in contrast to those reprobates, ^{<519>}Jude 1:20, again.

remember — implying that his readers had been contemporaries of the apostles. For Peter uses the very same formula in reminding the contemporaries of himself and the other apostles.

spoken before — spoken already before now.

the apostles — Peter (see on 2 Peter 3:2,3), and Paul before Peter (^{<520>}Acts 20:29 1 Timothy 4:1 2 Timothy 3:1). Jude does not exclude himself from

the number of *the apostles* here, for in ^{<G118>}Jude 1:18, immediately after, he says, “they told You,” not *us* (rather as *Greek*, “used to tell you” implying that Jude’s readers were contemporaries of the apostles, who *used to tell* them).

18. mockers — In the parallel, 2 Peter 3:3, the same *Greek* is translated, “scoffers.” The word is found nowhere else in the New Testament. How ALFORD can deny that 2 Peter 3:2,3 is referred to (at least in part), I cannot imagine, seeing that Jude quotes the very words of *Peter* as the words which *the apostles* used to speak to his (Jude’s) readers.

walk after their own ungodly lusts — literally, “after (according to) their own lusts *of ungodliness*.”

19. These be they — showing that their characters are such as Peter and Paul had foretold.

separate themselves — from Church communion in its vital, spiritual reality: for outwardly they took part in Church ordinances (^{<G112>}Jude 1:12). Some oldest manuscripts omit “themselves”: then understand it, “separate,” cast out members of the Church by excommunication (Isaiah 65:5 66:5 ^{<G162>}Luke 6:22 ^{<G184>}John 9:34; compare “casteth them out of the Church,” ^{<G113>}3 John 1:10). Many, however, understand “themselves,” which indeed is read in some of the oldest manuscripts as *English Version* has it. Arrogant setting up of themselves, as having greater sanctity and a wisdom and peculiar doctrine, distinct from others, is implied.

sensual — literally, “animal-souled”: as opposed to the *spiritual*, or “having the Spirit.” It is translated, “the *natural* man,” ^{<G124>}1 Corinthians 2:14. In the threefold division of man’s being, *body*, *soul*, and *spirit*, the due state in God’s design is, that “the spirit,” which is the recipient of the Holy Spirit uniting man to God, should be first, and should rule the soul, which stands intermediate between *the body* and *spirit*: but in the *animal*, or *natural* man, the spirit is sunk into subserviency to the animal soul, which is earthly in its motives and aims. The “carnal” sink somewhat lower, for in these *the flesh*, the lowest element and corrupt side of man’s bodily nature, reigns paramount.

having not the Spirit — In the animal and natural man *the spirit*, his higher part, which ought to be the receiver of the Holy Spirit, is not so; and therefore, his spirit not being in its normal state, he is said *not to have the spirit* (compare John 3:5,6). In the completion of redemption the parts of redeemed man shall be placed in their due relation: whereas in the ungodly, *the soul* severed from *the spirit* shall have for ever animal life without union to God and heaven — a living death.

20. Resuming ^{<6117>}Jude 1:17.

building up yourselves — the opposite to the “separate themselves” (^{<6119>}Jude 1:19):as “in the Holy Ghost” is opposed to “having not the Spirit.”

on — as *on* a foundation. *Building on* THE FAITH is equivalent to building on *Christ*, the object of faith.

praying in the Holy Ghost — (^{<6120>}Romans 8:26 ^{<6121>}Ephesians 6:18). The Holy Spirit teaches *what we* are to pray for, and *how*. None can pray aright save by being *in the Spirit*, that is, in the element of His influence. CHRYSOSTOM states that, among the charisms bestowed at the beginning of the New Testament dispensation, was *the gift of prayer*, bestowed on someone who prayed in the name of the rest, and taught others to pray. Moreover, their prayers so conceived and often used, were received and preserved among Christians, and out of them forms of prayer were framed. Such is the origin of liturgies [HAMMOND].

21. In ^{<6122>}Jude 1:20,21, Jude combines the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: and *faith*, *hope*, and *love*.

Keep yourselves — not in your own strength, but “in the love of God,” that is, *God’s love to you* and all His believing children, the only guarantee for their being *kept* safe. Man’s need of watching is implied; at the same time he cannot *keep* himself, unless God in His love keep him.

looking for — in hope.

the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ — to be fully manifested at His coming. *Mercy* is usually attributed to the Father: here to the Son; so entirely one are they.

22, 23. None but those who “keep themselves” are likely to “save” others.

have compassion — So one oldest manuscript reads. But two oldest manuscripts, *Vulgate*, etc., read, “convict”; “reprove to their conviction”; “confute, so as to convince.”

making a difference — The oldest manuscripts and versions read the accusative for the nominative, “when separating themselves” [WAHL], referring to ^{GR19}Jude 1:19; or “when contending with you,” as the *Greek* is translated, Jude 1:9.

23. save with fear — The oldest manuscripts do not read “with fear” in this position: but after “snatching them out of the fire” (with which, compare Amos 4:11 ^{GR15}1 Corinthians 3:15 Zechariah 3:2, said of a most narrow escape), they add the following words, forming a THIRD class, “and others compassionate with (IN) fear.” Three kinds of patients require three kinds of medical treatment. Ministers and Christians are said to “save” those whom they are made the instruments of saving; the *Greek* for “save” is present, therefore meaning “try to save.” Jude already (Jude 1:9) had reference to the same passage (Zechariah 3:1-3). The three classes are:

(1) those who *contend with you* (accusative case in oldest manuscripts), whom you should *convict*;

(2) those who are as brands already in the fire, of which hell-fire is the consummation: these you should *try to save by snatching them out*;

(3) those who are objects of *compassion*, whom accordingly you should *compassionate* (and help if occasion should offer), but at the same time not let pity degenerate into connivance at their error. Your compassion is to be accompanied “with fear” of being at all defiled by them.

hating — Even *hatred* has its legitimate field of exercise. Sin is the only thing which God hates: so ought we.

even the garment — a proverbial phrase: avoiding the most remote contact with sin, and hating that which borders on it. As *garments* of the apostles wrought miracles of good in healing, so the very *garment* of sinners metaphorically, that is, anything brought into contact with their

pollution, is to be avoided. Compare as to lepers and other persons defiled, ~~CRIS~~ Leviticus 13:52-57 15:4-17: the garments were held polluted; and anyone touching them was excluded, until purified, from religious and civil communion with the sanctified people of Israel. Christians who received at baptism the white garment in token of purity, are not to defile it by any approach to what is defiled.

24, 25. Concluding doxology.

Now — *Greek*, “But.”

you — ALFORD, on inferior authority, reads, “them.” *You* is in contradistinction to those *ungodly men* mentioned above.

keep ... from falling — rather, “guard ... (so as to be) *without falling*,” or *stumbling*.

faultless — *Greek*, “blameless.”

before the presence of his glory — that is, *before Himself*, when He shall be revealed in *glory*.

with exceeding joy — literally, “with exultation” as of those who *leap* for joy.

25. To the only ... God our Savior — The oldest manuscripts add, “through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The transcribers, fancying that “Savior” applied to Christ alone, omitted the words. The sense is, To the only God (the Father) who is our Savior through (that is, by the mediation of) Jesus Christ our Lord.

dominion — *Greek*, “might.”

power — *authority: legitimate power*. The oldest manuscripts and *Vulgate*, after “power,” have “before all the age,” that is, before all time as to the *past*: “and now,” as to the present; “and to all the ages,” that is, *for ever*, as to the time to come.

THE REVELATION

OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

Commentary by **A. R. FAUSSETT**

INTRODUCTION

AUTHENTICITY. — The author calls himself *John* (Revelation 1:1,4,9 2:8). JUSTIN MARTYR [*Dialogue with Trypho*, p. 308] (A.D. 139-161) quotes from the Apocalypse, as *John the apostle's* work, the prophecy of the millennium of the saints, to be followed by the general resurrection and judgment. This testimony of JUSTIN is referred to also by EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 4.18]. JUSTIN MARTYR, in the early part of the second century, held his controversy with TRYPHO, a learned Jew, at *Ephesus*, where John had been living thirty or thirty-five years before: he says that “the Revelation had been given to John, one of the twelve apostles of Christ.” MELITO, bishop of *Sardis* (about A.D. 171), *one of the seven churches addressed*, a successor, therefore, of one of the seven angels, is said by EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 4.26] to have written treatises on the Apocalypse of *John*. The testimony of the bishop of *Sardis* is the more impartial, as *Sardis* is one of the churches severely reproved (Revelation 3:1). So also THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH (about A.D. 180), according to EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 4.26], quoted testimonies from the Apocalypse of John. EUSEBIUS says the same of Apollonius, who lived in Asia Minor in the end of the second century. IRENAEUS (about A.D. 180), a hearer of POLYCARP, the disciple of John, and supposed by ARCHBISHOP USHER to be the *angel of the Church of Smyrna*, is most decided again and again in quoting the Apocalypse as the work of the apostle John [*Against Heresies*, 4.20.11; 4.21.3; 4.30.4; 5.36.1; 5.30.3; 5.35.2]. In [5.30.1], alluding to the mystical number of the beast, six hundred sixty-six (ἑξάκιστος Revelation 13:18), found in all old copies, he says, “We do not hazard a confident theory as to the name of

Antichrist; for if it had been necessary that his name should be proclaimed openly at the present time, it would have been declared by him who saw the apocalyptic vision; *for it was seen at no long time back, but almost in our generation, towards the end of Domitian's reign.*" In his work *Against Heresies*, published ten years after Polycarp's martyrdom, he quotes the Apocalypse twenty times, and makes long extracts from it, as inspired Scripture. These testimonies of persons contemporary with John's immediate successors, and more or less connected with the region of the seven churches to which Revelation is addressed, are most convincing. TERTULLIAN, of North Africa (about A.D. 220), [*Against Marcion*, 3.14], quotes the apostle John's descriptions in the Apocalypse of the sword proceeding out of the Lord's mouth (~~cf.~~ Revelation 19:15), and of the heavenly city (Revelation 21:1-27). Compare *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* [27]; *A Treatise on the Soul*, [8, 9, etc.]; *The Prescription Against Heretics*, [33]. The MURATORI fragment of the canon (about A.D. 200) refers to John the apostle writing to the seven churches. HIPPOLYTUS, bishop of Ostia, near Rome (about A.D. 240) [*On Antichrist*, p. 67], quotes Revelation 17:1-18, as the writing of John the apostle. Among HIPPOLYTUS' works, there is specified in the catalogue on his statue, a treatise "on the Apocalypse and Gospel according to John." CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA (about A.D. 200) [*Miscellanies*, 6.13], alludes to the twenty-four seats on which the elders sit as mentioned by John in the Apocalypse (Revelation 4:5); also, [*Who Is the Rich Man Who Shall Be Saved?* 42], he mentions John's return from Patmos to Ephesus on the death of the Roman tyrant. ORIGEN (about A.D. 233), [*Commentary on Matthew*, in EUSEBIUS *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25], mentions John as the author of the Apocalypse, without expressing any doubts as to its authenticity; also, in *Commentary on Matthew*, [16.6], he quotes Revelation 1:9, and says, "John seems to have beheld the Apocalypse in the island of Patmos." VICTORINUS, bishop of Pettau in Pannonia, who suffered martyrdom under Diocletian in A.D. 303, wrote the earliest extant commentary on the Apocalypse. Though the *Old Syriac Peschito version* does not contain the Apocalypse, yet EPHREM THE SYRIAN (about A.D. 378) frequently quotes the Apocalypse as canonical, and ascribes it to John.

Its *canonicity* and inspiration (according to a scholium of ANDREAS OF CAPPADOCIA) are attested by PAPIAS, a hearer of John, and associate of

POLYCARP. PAPIAS was bishop of Hierapolis, near *Laodicea*, one of the seven churches. WORDSWORTH conjectures that a feeling of shame, on account of the rebukes of *Laodicea* in Revelation, may have operated on the Council of Laodicea, so as to omit Revelation from its list of books to be *read publicly* (?). The Epistle of the churches of Lyons and Vienne to the churches of Asia and Phrygia (in EUSEBIUS, [*Ecclesiastical History*, 5.1-3]), in the persecution under Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 77) quotes Revelation 1:5 3:14 14:4 22:11, as Scripture. CYPRIAN (about A.D. 250) also, in *Epistle 13*, quotes Revelation 2:5 as Scripture; and in *Epistle 25* he quotes ~~Revelation~~ Revelation 3:21, as of the same authority as the Gospel. (For other instances, see ALFORD'S *Prolegomena*, from whom mainly this summary of evidence has been derived). ATHANASIUS, in his *Festival Epistle*, enumerates the Apocalypse among the *canonical* Scriptures, to which none must add, and from which none must take away. JEROME [*Epistle to Paulinus*] includes in the canon the Apocalypse, adding, "It has as many mysteries as words. All praise falls short of its merits. In each of its words lie hid manifold senses." Thus an unbroken chain of testimony down from the apostolic period confirms its canonicity and authenticity.

The ALOGI [EPIPHANIUS, *Heresies*, 51] and CAIUS the Roman presbyter [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.28], towards the end of the second and beginning of the third century, rejected John's Apocalypse on mere captious grounds. CAIUS, according to JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*], about A.D. 210, attributed it to Cerinthus, on the ground of its supporting the millennial reign on earth. DIONYSIUS OF ALEXANDRIA mentions many before his time who rejected it because of its obscurity and because it seemed to support Cerinthus' dogma of an earthly and carnal kingdom; whence they attributed it to Cerinthus. This DIONYSIUS, scholar of ORIGEN, and bishop of Alexandria (A.D. 247), admits its inspiration (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 7.10]), but attributes it to some John distinct from John the apostle, on the ground of its difference of style and character, as compared with John's Gospel and Epistle, as also because the name John is several times mentioned in the Apocalypse, which is always kept back in both the Gospel and Epistle; moreover, neither does the Epistle make any allusion to the Apocalypse, nor the Apocalypse to the Epistle; and the style is not pure *Greek*, but abounds in barbarisms and solecisms. EUSEBIUS wavers in opinion [*Ecclesiastical History*, 24.39] as to

whether it is, or is not, to be ranked among the undoubtedly canonical Scriptures. His antipathy to the millennial doctrine would give an unconscious bias to his judgment on the Apocalypse. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM (A.D. 386), [*Catechetical Lectures*, 4.35,36], omits the Apocalypse in enumerating the New Testament Scriptures to be read privately as well as publicly. “Whatever is not read in the churches, that do not even read by thyself; the apostles and ancient bishops of the Church who transmitted them to us were far wiser than thou art.” Hence, we see that, in his day, the Apocalypse was not read in the churches. Yet in *Catechetical Lectures*, 1.4 he quotes Revelation 2:7,17; and in *Catechetical Lectures*, 1; 15.13 he draws the prophetic statement from Revelation 17:11, that the king who is to humble the three kings (Daniel 7:8,20) is the *eighth king*. In *Catechetical Lectures*, 15; 27 he similarly quotes from Revelation 12:3,4. ALFORD conjectures that CYRIL had at some time changed his opinion, and that these references to the Apocalypse were slips of memory whereby he retained phraseology which belonged to his former, not his subsequent views. The sixtieth canon (if genuine) of the Laodicean Council in the middle of the fourth century omits the Apocalypse from the canonical books. The Eastern Church in part doubted, the Western Church, after the fifth century, universally recognized, the Apocalypse. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA [*On Worship*, 146], though implying the fact of some doubting its genuineness, himself undoubtedly accepts it as the work of St. John. ANDREAS OF CAESAREA, in Cappadocia, recognized as genuine and canonical, and wrote the first entire and connected commentary on, the Apocalypse. The sources of doubt seem to have been,

- (1) the antagonism of many to the millennium, which is set forth in it;
- (2) its obscurity and symbolism having caused it not to be read in the churches, or to be taught to the young. But *the most primitive* tradition is unequivocal in its favor. In a word, the objective evidence is decidedly for it; the only arguments against it seem to have been subjective.

The personal notices of John in the Apocalypse occur Revelation 1:1,4,9 Revelation 22:8. Moreover, the writer’s addresses to the churches of Proconsular *Asia* (Revelation 2:1) accord with the concurrent tradition,

that after John's return from his exile in Patmos, at the death of Domitian, under Nerva, he resided for long, and died at last in Ephesus, in the time of Trajan [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.20,23]. If the Apocalypse were not the inspired work of John, purporting as it does to be an address from their superior to the seven churches of Proconsular Asia, it would have assuredly been rejected *in that region*; whereas the earliest testimonies *in those churches* are all in its favor. One person alone was entitled to use language of authority such as is addressed to the seven angels of the churches — namely, John, as the last surviving apostle and superintendent of all the churches. Also, it accords with John's manner to assert the accuracy of his testimony both at the beginning and end of his book (compare Revelation 1:2,3 22:8, with ^{<B14}John 1:14 21:24 1 John 1:1,2). Again, it accords with the view of the writer being an *inspired apostle* that he addresses the angels or presidents of the several churches in the tone of a *superior* addressing inferiors. Also, he commends the Church of Ephesus for trying and convicting "them which *say they are apostles*, and are not," by which he implies his own undoubted claim to apostolic inspiration (Revelation 2:2), as declaring in the seven epistles Christ's will revealed through him.

As to the difference of style, as compared with the Gospel and Epistle, the *difference of subject* in part accounts for it, the visions of the seer, transported as he was above the region of sense, appropriately taking a form of expression abrupt, and unbound by the grammatical laws which governed his writings of a calmer and more deliberate character. Moreover, as being a Galilean Hebrew, John, in writing a Revelation akin to the Old Testament prophecies, naturally reverted to their Hebraistic style. ALFORD notices, among the features of resemblance between the styles of the Apocalypse and John's Gospel and Epistle:

- (1) the characteristic appellation of our Lord, peculiar to John exclusively, "the Word of God" (^{<B13}Revelation 19:13; compare John 1:1 1 John 1:1).
- (2) the phrase, "he that overcometh" (Revelation 2:7,11,17 3:5,12,21 12:11 15:2 17:14 21:7; compare ^{<B13}John 16:33 ^{<B13}1 John 2:13,14 4:4 5:4,5).

(3) The *Greek* term (*alethinos*) for “true,” as opposed to that which is shadowy and unreal (Revelation 3:7,14 6:10 15:3 16:7 19:2,9,11 21:5 22:6). This term, found only once in Luke (^{<241>}Luke 16:11), four times in Paul (1 Thessalonians 1:9 Hebrews 8:2 9:24 10:22), is found nine times in John’s Gospel (John 1:9 4:23,37 6:32 7:28 8:16 15:1 John 17:3 19:3,5), twice in John’s First Epistle (1 John 2:8 5:20), and ten times in Revelation (Revelation 3:7,14 6:10 15:3 16:7 19:2,9,11 21:5 Revelation 22:6).

(4) The *Greek* diminutive for “Lamb” (*arnion*, literally, “lambkin”) occurs twenty-nine times in the Apocalypse, and the only other place where it occurs is ^{<215>}John 21:15. In John’s writings alone is Christ called *directly* “the Lamb” (^{<219>}John 1:29,36). in ^{<219>}1 Peter 1:19, He is called “as a lamb without blemish,” in allusion to Isaiah 53:7. So the use of “witness,” or “testimony” (Revelation 1:2,9 6:9 11:7, etc.; compare John 1:7,8,15,19,32 1 John 1:2 4:14 5:6-11). “Keep the word,” or “commandments” (Revelation 3:8,10 12:17; compare ^{<215>}John 8:51,55 14:15). The assertion of the same thing positively and negatively (Revelation 2:2,6,8,13 3:8,17,18; compare John 1:3,6,7,20 ^{<217>}1 John 2:27,28). Compare also ^{<217>}1 John 2:20,27 with ^{<218>}Revelation 3:18, as to the spiritual *anointing*. The seeming solecisms of style are attributable to that inspired elevation which is above mere grammatical rules, and are designed to arrest the reader’s attention by the peculiarity of the phrase, so as to pause and search into some deep truth lying beneath. The vivid earnestness of the inspired writer, handling a subject so transcending all others, raises him above all servile adherence to ordinary rules, so that at times he abruptly passes from one grammatical construction to another, as he graphically sets the thing described before the eye of the reader. This is not due to ignorance of grammar, for he “has displayed a knowledge of grammatical rules in other much more difficult constructions” [WINER]. *The connection of thought* is more attended to than mere grammatical connection. Another consideration to be taken into account is that two-fifths of the whole being the recorded language of others, he moulds his style accordingly. Compare TREGELLES’ *Introduction to Revelation from Heathen Authorities*.

TREGELLES well says [*New Testament Historic Evidence*], “There is no book of the New Testament for which we have such clear, ample, and numerous testimonies in the second century as we have in favor of the Apocalypse. The more closely the witnesses were connected with the apostle John (as was the case with IRENAEUS), the more explicit is their testimony. That doubts should prevail in after ages must have originated either in ignorance of the earlier testimony, or else from some supposed intuition of what an apostle *ought* to have written. The objections on the ground of internal *style* can weigh nothing against the actual evidence. It is in vain to argue, a priori, that John *could* not have written this book when we have the evidence of several competent witnesses that he *did* write it.”

RELATION OF THE APOCALYPSE TO THE REST OF THE CANON. —

GREGORY OF NYSSA [tom. 3, p. 601], calls Revelation “the last book of grace.” It completes the volume of inspiration, so that we are to look for no further revelation till Christ Himself shall come. Appropriately the last book completing the canon was written by John, the last survivor of the apostles. The New Testament is composed of the historical books, the Gospels and Acts, the doctrinal Epistles, and the one prophetical book, Revelation. The same apostle wrote the last of the Gospels, and probably the last of the Epistles, and the only prophetical book of the New Testament. All the books of the New Testament had been written, and were read in the Church assemblies, some years before John’s death. His life was providentially prolonged that he might give the final attestation to Scripture. About the year A.D. 100, the bishops of Asia (the angels of the seven churches) came to John at EPHESUS, bringing him copies of the three Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and desired of him a statement of his apostolical judgment concerning them; whereupon he pronounced them authentic, genuine, and inspired, and at their request added his own Gospel to complete the fourfold aspect of the Gospel of Christ (compare MURATORI [*Fragment on the Canon of Scripture*]; EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.24]; JEROME [*Commentary on Matthew*]; VICTORINUS on the *Apocalypse*; THEODORET [*Ecclesiastical History*, 39]). A Greek divine, quoted in ALLATIUS, calls Revelation “the seal of the whole Bible.” The canon would be incomplete without Revelation. Scripture is a complete whole, its component books, written in a period ranging over one thousand five hundred years, being mutually connected. Unity of aim and spirit

pervades the entire, so that the end is the necessary sequence of the middle, and the middle of the beginning. Genesis presents before us man and his bride in innocence and blessedness, followed by man's fall through Satan's subtlety, and man's consequent misery, his exclusion from Paradise and its tree of life and delightful rivers. Revelation presents, in reverse order, man first liable to sin and death, but afterwards made conqueror through the blood of the Lamb; the first Adam and Eve, represented by the second Adam, Christ, and the Church. His spotless bride, in Paradise, with free access to the tree of life and the crystal water of life that flows from the throne of God. As Genesis foretold the bruising of the serpent's head by the woman's seed (⁴⁰¹⁵Genesis 3:15), so Revelation declares the final accomplishment of that prediction (Revelation 19:1-20:15).

PLACE AND TIME OF WRITING. — The best authorities among the Fathers state that John was exiled under Domitian (IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 5; 30]; CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA; EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.20]). VICTORINUS says that he had to labor in the mines of Patmos. At Domitian's death, A.D. 95, he returned to Ephesus under the Emperor Nerva. Probably it was immediately after his return that he wrote, under divine inspiration, the account of the visions vouchsafed to him in Patmos (Revelation 1:2,9). However, Revelation 10:4 seems to imply that he wrote the visions immediately after seeing them. Patmos is one of the Sporades. Its circumference is about thirty miles. "It was fitting that when forbidden to go beyond certain bounds of the earth's lands, he was permitted to penetrate the secrets of heaven" [BEDE, *Explanation of the Apocalypse* on chap. 1]. The following arguments favor an earlier date, namely, under Nero:

(1) EUSEBIUS [*Demonstration of the Gospel*] unites in the same sentence John's banishment with the stoning of James and the beheading of Paul, which were *under Nero*.

(2) CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA's story of the robber reclaimed by John, after he had pursued, and with difficulty overtaken him, accords better with John then being a younger man than under Domitian, when he was one hundred years old. Arethas, in the sixth century, applies the sixth seal to the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), adding that the

Apocalypse was written before that event. So the *Syriac version* states he was banished by Nero the Caesar. Laodicea was overthrown by an earthquake (A.D. 60) but was immediately rebuilt, so that its being called “rich and increased with goods” is not incompatible with this book having been written under the Neronian persecution (A.D. 64). But the possible allusions to it in ^{<8077>}Hebrews 10:37; compare Revelation 1:4,8 4:8 22:12; ^{<8110>}Hebrews 11:10; compare ^{<6114>}Revelation 21:14; ^{<8122>}Hebrews 12:22,23; compare Revelation 14:1; Hebrews 8:1,2; compare ^{<6119>}Revelation 11:19 15:5 21:3; ^{<8012>}Hebrews 4:12; compare ^{<6115>}Revelation 1:16 2:12,16 19:13,15; Hebrews 4:9; compare Revelation 20:1-15; also 1 Peter 1:7,13 4:13, with Revelation 1:1; 1 Peter 2:9 with ^{<6150>}Revelation 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:8, with ^{<6125>}Revelation 2:26,27 3:21 11:18; ^{<4102>}Ephesians 6:12, with Revelation 12:7-12; Philippians 4:3, with Revelation 3:5 13:8,17:8 20:12,15; ^{<8018>}Colossians 1:18, with Revelation 1:5; ^{<4152>}1 Corinthians 15:52, with Revelation 10:7 11:15-18, make a date before the destruction of Laodicea possible. Cerinthus is stated to have died before John; as then he borrowed much in his Pseudo-Apocalypse from John’s, it is likely the latter was at an earlier date than Domitian’s reign. See TILLOCH’S *Introduction to Apocalypse*. But the Pauline benediction (Revelation 1:4) implies it was written after Paul’s death under Nero.

TO WHAT READERS ADDRESSED. — The inscription states that it is addressed to the seven churches of Asia, that is, Proconsular Asia. John’s reason for fixing on the number *seven* (for there were more than seven churches in the region meant by “Asia,” for instance, Magnesia and Tralles) was doubtless because *seven* is the sacred number implying totality and universality: so it is implied that John, through the medium of the seven churches, addresses in the Spirit the Church of all places and ages. The Church in its various states of spiritual life or deadness, in all ages and places, is represented by the seven churches, and is addressed with words of consolation or warning accordingly. Smyrna and Philadelphia alone of the seven are honored with unmixed praise, as faithful in tribulation and rich in good works. Heresies of a decided kind had by this time arisen in the churches of Asia, and the love of many had waxed cold, while others had advanced to greater zeal, and one had sealed his testimony with his blood.

OBJECT. — It begins with admonitory addresses to the seven churches from the divine Son of man, whom John saw in vision, after a brief introduction which sets forth the main subject of the book, namely, to “show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass” (the first through third chapters). From the fourth chapter to the end is mainly prophecy, with practical exhortations and consolations, however, interspersed, similar to those addressed to the seven churches (the representatives of the universal Church of every age), and so connecting the body of the book with its beginning, which therefore forms its appropriate introduction. Three schools of interpreters exist:

- (1) The Preterists, who hold that almost the whole has been fulfilled.
- (2) The Historical Interpreters, who hold that it comprises the history of the Church from John’s time to the end of the world, the seals being *chronologically* succeeded, by the trumpets and the trumpets by the vials.
- (3) The Futurists, who consider almost the whole as yet future, and to be fulfilled immediately before Christ’s second coming. The first theory was not held by any of the earliest Fathers, and is only held now by Rationalists, who limit John’s vision to things within his own horizon, pagan Rome’s persecutions of Christians, and its consequently anticipated destruction. The Futurist school is open to this great objection: it would leave the Church of Christ unprovided with prophetic guidance or support under her fiery trials for 1700 or 1800 years. Now God has said, “Surely He will do nothing, but He revealeth His secrets unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). The Jews had a succession of prophets who guided them with the light of prophecy: what their prophets were to them, that the apocalyptic Scriptures have been, and are, to us.

ALFORD, following ISAAC WILLIAMS, draws attention to the parallel connection between the Apocalypse and Christ’s discourse on the Mount of Olives, recorded in Matthew 24:4-28. The seals plainly bring us down to the second coming of Christ, just as the trumpets also do (compare ~~6:12~~ Revelation 6:12-17 8:1, etc. ~~11:15~~ Revelation 11:15), and as the vials also do (~~16:17~~ Revelation 16:17): all three run parallel, and end in the same point. Certain “catchwords” (as WORDSWORTH calls them) connect the three

series of symbols together. They do not succeed one to the other in historical and chronological sequence, but move side by side, the subsequent series filling up in detail the same picture which the preceding series had drawn in outline. So VICTORINUS (on Revelation 7:2), the earliest commentator on the Apocalypse, says, “The order of the things said is not to be regarded, since often the Holy Spirit, when He has run to the end of the last time, again returns to the same times, and supplies what He has less fully expressed.” And PRIMASIUS [*Commentary on the Apocalypse*], “In the trumpets he gives a description by a pleasing *repetition*, as is his custom.”

At the very beginning, John hastens, by anticipation (as was the tendency of all the prophets), to the grand consummation. Revelation 1:7, “Behold, He cometh with clouds,” etc. Revelation 1:8,17, “I am the beginning and *the ending* ... the first and *the last*.” So the seven epistles exhibit the same anticipation of the end. ⁽⁶¹⁸⁾Revelation 3:12, “Him that overcometh, I will write upon Him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven”; compare at the close, Revelation 21:2. So also ⁽⁶¹²⁾Revelation 2:28, “I will give him the morning star”; compare at the close, ⁽⁶²⁶⁾Revelation 22:16, “I am the bright and morning star.”

Again, the *earthquake* that ensues on the opening of the sixth seal is one of the catchwords, that is, a link connecting chronologically this sixth seal with the sixth trumpet (⁽⁶¹³⁾Revelation 9:13 11:13): compare also the seventh vial, ⁽⁶¹⁷⁾Revelation 16:17,18. The concomitants of the opening of the sixth seal, it is plain, in no full and exhaustive sense apply to any event, save the terrors which shall overwhelm the ungodly just before the coming of the Judge.

Again, *the beast out of the bottomless pit* (Revelation 11:7), between the sixth and seventh trumpets, connects this series with the section, twelfth through fourteenth chapters, concerning the Church and her adversaries.

Again, the sealing of the 144,000 under the sixth seal connects this seal with the section, the twelfth through fourteenth chapters.

Again, the loosing of the four winds by the four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, under the sixth seal, answers to the loosing of the *four* angels at the Euphrates, under the sixth trumpet.

Moreover, links occur in the Apocalypse connecting it with the Old Testament. For instance, the “mouth speaking great things” (Daniel 7:8 Revelation 13:5), connects the *beast that blasphemes against God, and makes war against the saints*, with the *little horn* (Daniel 7:21 Revelation 13:6,7), or at last king, who, arising after the ten kings, shall *speak against the Most High, and wear out the saints* (Daniel 7:25); also, compare the “forty-two months” (Revelation 13:5), or “a thousand two hundred and threescore days” (Revelation 12:6), with the “time, times, and the dividing of time,” of Daniel 7:25. Moreover, the “forty-two months,” Revelation 11:2, answering to Revelation 12:6 13:5, link together the period under the sixth trumpet to the section, Revelation 12:1-14:20.

AUBERLEN observes, “The history of salvation is mysteriously governed by holy numbers. They are the scaffolding of the organic edifice. They are not merely outward indications of time, but indications of nature and essence. Not only nature, but history, is based in numbers. Scripture and antiquity put numbers as the fundamental forms of things, where we put ideas.” As number is the regulator of the relations and proportions of the natural world, so does it enter most frequently into the revelations of the Apocalypse, which sets forth the harmonies of the supernatural, the immediately Divine. Thus the most supernatural revelation leads us the farthest into the natural, as was to be expected, seeing the God of nature and of revelation is one. *Seven* is the number for perfection (compare Revelation 1:4 4:5, the *seven* Spirits before the throne; also, Revelation 5:6, the Lamb’s *seven* horns and *seven* eyes). Thus *the seven churches* represent the Church catholic in its totality. *The seven seals* (Revelation 5:1), *the seven trumpets* (Revelation 8:2), and *the seven vials* (Revelation 17:1), are severally a complete series each in itself, fulfilling perfectly the divine course of judgments. *Three and a half* implies a number opposed to the divine (seven), but broken in itself, and which, in the moment of its highest triumph, is overwhelmed by judgment and utter ruin. *Four* is the number of the world’s extension; *seven* is the number of God’s revelation in the world. In the *four* beasts of Daniel (Daniel 7:3) there is a recognition of some power above them, at the same time that there is a mimicry of the

four cherubs of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 10:9), the heavenly symbols of all creation in its due subjection to God (Revelation 4:6-8). So the four corners of the earth, the four winds, the four angels loosed from the Euphrates, and Jerusalem lying “foursquare” (Revelation 21:16), represent world-wide extension. The sevenfoldness of the Spirits on the part of God corresponds with the fourfold cherubim on the part of the created. John, seeing more deeply into the essentially God-opposed character of the world, presents to us, not the *four* beasts of Daniel, but the *seven* heads of the beast, whereby it arrogates to itself the *sevenfold* perfection of *the Spirits of God*; at the same time that, with characteristic self-contradiction, it has *ten* horns, the number peculiar to the world power. Its unjust usurpation of the sacred number *seven* is marked by the addition of an *eighth* to the *seven* heads, and also by the beast’s own number, six hundred sixty-six, which in units, tens, and hundreds, verges upon, but falls short of, *seven*. The judgments on the world are complete in *six*: after the sixth seal and the sixth trumpet, there is a pause. When *seven* comes, there comes “the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ.” Six is the number of the world given to judgment. Moreover, *six* is half of *twelve*, as *three and a half* is the half of *seven*. *Twelve* is the number of the Church: compare the *twelve* tribes of Israel, the *twelve* stars on the woman’s head (Revelation 12:1), the *twelve* gates of new Jerusalem (Revelation 21:12,21). *Six* thus symbolizes the world broken, and without solid foundation. Twice twelve is the number of the heavenly elders; twelve times twelve thousand the number of the sealed elect (Revelation 7:4): the tree of life yields twelve manner of fruits. Doubtless, besides this symbolic force, there is a special chronological meaning in the numbers; but as yet, though a *commanded* subject of investigation, they have received no solution which we can be sure is the true one. They are intended to stimulate reverent inquiry, not to gratify idle speculative curiosity; and when the event shall have been fulfilled, they will show the divine wisdom of God, who ordered all things in minutely harmonious relations, and left neither the times nor the ways haphazard.

The arguments for the year-day theory are as follows: Daniel 9:24, “Seventy weeks are determined upon,” where the *Hebrew* may be *seventy sevens*; but MEDE observes, the *Hebrew* word means always seven of *days*, and never seven of *years* (Leviticus 12:5 Deuteronomy 16:9,10,16).

Again, the number of *years*’ wandering of the Israelites was made to correspond to the number of *days* in which the spies searched the land, namely, *forty*: compare “each day for a year,” ^{<1145>}Numbers 14:33,34. So in Ezekiel 4:5,6, “I have laid up on thee the *years* of their iniquity, according to the number of the *days*, three hundred and ninety days ... forty days: I have appointed thee *each day for a year*.” John, in Revelation itself, uses *days* in a sense which can hardly be literal. ^{<1121>}Revelation 2:10, “Ye shall have tribulation *ten days*”: the persecution of *ten years* recorded by EUSEBIUS seems to correspond to it. In the year-day theory there is still quite enough of obscurity to exercise the patience and probation of faith, for we cannot say precisely *when* the 1260 years *begin*: so that this theory is quite compatible with Christ’s words, “Of that day and hour knoweth no man” (^{<1125>}Matthew 24:36 ^{<1132>}Mark 13:32). However, it is a difficulty in this theory that “a thousand years,” in Revelation 20:6,7, can hardly mean one thousand by three hundred sixty days, that is, three hundred sixty thousand years. The first resurrection there must be literal, even as Revelation 20:5 must be taken literally, “*the rest of the dead* lived not again until the thousand years were finished” (Revelation 20:5). To interpret the former spiritually would entail the need of interpreting the latter so, which would be most improbable; for it would imply that “*the rest of the* (spiritually) *dead lived not* (spiritually)” until the end of the thousand years, and then that they did come spiritually to life. ^{<1152>}1 Corinthians 15:23, “they that are Christ’s at His coming,” confirms the literal view.

CHAPTER 1

REVELATION 1:1-20.

**TITLE: SOURCE AND OBJECT OF THIS REVELATION:
BLESSING ON THE READER AND KEEPER OF IT, AS THE TIME
IS NEAR: INSCRIPTION TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES:
APOSTOLIC GREETING: KEYNOTE, “BEHOLD HE COMETH”
(COMPARE AT THE CLOSE, ⁶²²¹REVELATION 22:20, “SURELY I
COME QUICKLY”); INTRODUCTORY VISION OF THE SON OF
MAN IN GLORY, AMIDST THE SEVEN CANDLESTICKS, WITH
SEVEN STARS IN HIS RIGHT HAND.**

1. Revelation — an apocalypse or *unveiling* of those things which had been veiled. A *manifesto* of the kingdom of Christ. The travelling manual of the Church for the Gentile Christian times. Not a *detailed history* of the future, but a representation of the great epochs and chief powers in developing the kingdom of God in relation to the world. The “Church-historical” view goes counter to the great principle that Scripture interprets itself. Revelation is to teach us to understand the times, not the times to interpret to us the Apocalypse, although it is in the nature of the case that a reflex influence is exerted here and is understood by the prudent [AUBERLEN]. The book is in a series of parallel groups, not in chronological succession. Still there is an organic historical development of the kingdom of God. In this book all the other books of the Bible end and meet: in it is the consummation of all previous prophecy. Daniel foretells as to Christ and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, and the last Antichrist. But John’s Revelation fills up the intermediate period, and describes the millennium and final state beyond Antichrist. Daniel, as a godly statesman, views the history of God’s people in relation to the *four world kingdoms*. John, as an apostle, views history from the *Christian Church aspect*. The term *Apocalypse* is applied to no Old Testament book. Daniel is the nearest approach to it; but what Daniel was told to *seal* and

shut up till the time of the end, John, now that *the time is at hand* (Revelation 1:3), is directed to *reveal*.

of Jesus Christ — coming *from* Him. Jesus Christ, not John the writer, is the Author of the Apocalypse. Christ taught many things before His departure; but those which were unsuitable for announcement at that time He brought together into the Apocalypse [BENGEL]. Compare His promise, ^{<R15>}John 15:15, “All things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you”; also, ^{<R13>}John 16:13, “The Spirit of truth *will show* you things to come.” The Gospels and Acts are the books, respectively, of His first advent, in the flesh, and in the Spirit; the Epistles are the inspired comment on them. The Apocalypse is the book of His second advent and the events preliminary to it.

which God gave unto him — The Father reveals Himself and His will in, and by, His Son.

to show — The word recurs in Revelation 22:6: so entirely have the parts of Revelation reference to one another. It is its peculiar excellence that it comprises in a perfect compendium future things, and these widely differing: things close at hand, far off, and between the two; great and little; destroying and saving; repeated from old prophecies and new; long and short, and these interwoven with one another, opposed and mutually agreeing; mutually involving and evolving one another; so that in no book more than in this would the addition, or taking away, of a single word or clause (^{<R22>}Revelation 22:18,19), have the effect of marring the sense of the context and the comparison of passages together [BENGEL].

his servants — not merely to “His servant John,” but to *all* His servants (compare Revelation 22:3).

shortly — *Greek*, “speedily”; literally, “in,” or “with speed.” Compare “the time is at hand,” Revelation 1:3 22:6, “shortly”; Revelation 22:7, “Behold, I come *quickly*.” Not that the things prophesied were according to man’s computation near; but this word “shortly” implies a corrective of our estimate of worldly events and periods. Though a “thousand years” (Revelation 20:1-15) at least are included, the time is declared to be *at hand*. Luke 18:8, “speedily.” The Israelite Church hastened eagerly to the predicted end, which premature eagerness prophecy restrains (compare

Daniel 9:1-27). The Gentile Church needs to be reminded of the transitoriness of the world (which it is apt to make its home) and the nearness of Christ's advent. On the one hand Revelation says, "the time is at hand"; on the other, the succession of seals, etc., show that many intermediate events must first elapse.

he sent — Jesus Christ sent.

by his angel — joined with "sent." The angel does not come forward to "signify" things to John until Revelation 17:1 19:9,10. Previous to that John receives information from others. Jesus Christ opens the Revelation, ~~6610~~ Revelation 1:10,11 4:1; in Revelation 6:1 one of the four living creatures acts as his informant; in ~~6613~~ Revelation 7:13, one of the elders; in Revelation 10:8,9, the Lord and His angel who stood on the sea and earth. Only at the end (Revelation 17:1) does the one angel stand by Him (compare Daniel 8:16 9:21 Zechariah 1:19).

2. bare record of — "testified the word of God" in this book. Where we would say "*testifies*," the ancients in epistolary communications use the past tense. The word of God constitutes his testimony; Revelation 1:3, "the words of this prophecy."

the testimony of Jesus — "the Spirit of prophecy" (~~6610~~ Revelation 19:10).

and of all things that, etc. — The oldest manuscripts omit "and." Translate, "whatsoever things he saw," in apposition with "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ."

3. he that readeth, and they that hear — namely, the *public reader* in Church assemblies, and *his hearers*. In the first instance, he by whom John sent the book from Patmos to the seven churches, read it publicly: a usage most scriptural and profitable. A special *blessing* attends him who *reads* or *hears* the apocalyptic "prophecy" with a view to *keeping* the things therein (as there is but one article to "they that hear and keep those things," not two classes, but only one is meant: "they who not only hear, but also keep those things," ~~6613~~ Romans 2:13); even though he find not the key to its interpretation, he finds a stimulus to faith, hope, and patient waiting for Christ. Note: the term "prophecy" has relation to the human

medium or *prophet* inspired, here John: “Revelation” to the Divine Being who reveals His will, here Jesus Christ. God gave the revelation to Jesus: He by His angel revealed it to John, who was to make it known to the Church.

4. John — the apostle. For none but he (supposing the writer an honest man) would thus sign himself nakedly without addition. As sole survivor and representative of the apostles and eye-witnesses of the Lord, he needed no designation save his name, to be recognized by his readers.

seven churches — not that there were not more churches in that region, but the number *seven* is fixed on as representing *totality*. These *seven* represent the universal Church of all times and places. See TRENCH’S [Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia] interesting note, ^{<0171}Revelation 1:20, on the number *seven*. It is the *covenant number*, the sign of God’s covenant relation to mankind, and especially to the Church. Thus, the *seventh day*, sabbath (Genesis 2:3 Ezekiel 20:12). Circumcision, the sign of the covenant, after *seven* days (^{<0172}Genesis 17:12). Sacrifices (Numbers 23:1,14:29 ^{<0173}2 Chronicles 29:21). Compare also God’s acts typical of His covenant (Joshua 6:4,15,16 ^{<0174}2 Kings 5:10). The feasts ordered by *sevens* of time (Deuteronomy 15:1 16:9,13,15). It is a combination of *three*, the divine number (thus the Trinity: the thrice Holy, Isaiah 6:3; the blessing, ^{<0175}Numbers 6:24-26), and *four* the number of the organized world in its extension (thus the *four* elements, the *four* seasons, the *four* winds, the *four* corners or quarters of the earth, the *four* living creatures, emblems of redeemed creaturely life, Revelation 4:6 Ezekiel 1:5,6, with *four* faces and *four* wings each; the *four* beasts and *four* metals, representing the four world empires, Daniel 2:32,33 7:3; the *four*-sided Gospel designed for all quarters of the world; the sheet tied at *four* corners, ^{<0176}Acts 10:11; the *four* horns, the sum of the world’s forces against the Church, Zechariah 1:18). In the Apocalypse, where God’s covenant with His Church comes to its consummation, appropriately the number *seven* recurs still more frequently than elsewhere in Scripture.

Asia — Proconsular, governed by a Roman proconsul: consisting of Phrygia, Mysia, Caria, and Lydia: the kingdom which Attalus III had bequeathed to Rome.

Grace ... peace — Paul's apostolical greeting. In his Pastoral Epistles he inserts "mercy" in addition: so 2 John 1:3.

him which is ... was ... is to come — a periphrasis for the incommunicable name JEHOVAH, the self-existing One, unchangeable. In *Greek* the indeclinability of the designation here implies His unchangeableness. Perhaps the reason why "He which is to come" is used, instead of "He that shall be," is because the grand theme of Revelation is the Lord's *coming* (Revelation 1:7). Still it is THE FATHER as distinguished from "Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:5) who is here meant. But so one are the Father and Son that the designation, "which is to come," more immediately applicable to Christ, is used here of the Father.

the seven Spirits which are before his throne — The oldest manuscripts omit "are."

before — literally, "in the presence of." The Holy Spirit in His sevenfold (that is, perfect, complete, and universal) energy. Corresponding to "the seven churches." One in His own essence, manifold in His gracious influences. The *seven* eyes resting on the stone laid by Jehovah (Revelation 5:6). Four is the number of the creature world (compare the fourfold cherubim); *seven* the number of God's revelation in the world.

5. the faithful witness — of the truth concerning Himself and His mission as Prophet, Priest, and King Savior. "He was *the faithful witness*, because all things that He heard of the Father He faithfully made known to His disciples. Also, because He taught the way of God in truth, and cared not for man, nor regarded the persons of men. Also, because the truth which He taught in words He confirmed by miracles. Also, because the testimony to Himself on the part of the Father He denied not even in death. Lastly, because He will give true testimony of the works of good and bad at the day of judgment" [RICHARD OF ST. VICTOR in TRENCH]. The nominative in *Greek* standing in apposition to the genitive, "Jesus Christ," gives majestic prominence to "the faithful witness."

the first-begotten of the dead — (⁵⁰¹⁸Colossians 1:18). Lazarus rose. to die again. Christ rose to die no more. The image is not as if the grave was the womb of His resurrection-birth [ALFORD]; but as ⁴⁴³³Acts 13:33 Romans 1:4, treat Christ's *resurrection* as the epoch and event which

fulfilled the Scripture, Psalm 2:7, “This day (at the resurrection) have I *begotten* Thee.” It was then that His divine Sonship as the God-man was manifested and openly attested by the Father. So our resurrection and our manifested sonship, or generation, are connected. Hence “regeneration” is used of the *resurrection-state* at the restitution of all things (☩Matthew 19:28).

the prince — or Ruler. The kingship of the world which the tempter offered to Jesus on condition of doing homage to him, and so shunning the cross, He has obtained by the cross. “The kings of the earth” conspired against the Lord’s Anointed (Psalm 2:2): these He shall break in pieces (Psalm 2:9). Those who are wise in time and kiss the Son shall *bring their glory* unto Him at His manifestation as King of kings, after He has destroyed His foes.

Unto him that loved us — The oldest manuscripts read the present, “... *loveth* us.” It is His ever-continuing character, *He loveth us*, and ever shall love us. His love rests evermore on His people.

washed us — The two oldest manuscripts read, “freed (*loosed* as from a bond) us”: so ANDREAS and PRIMASIUS. One very old manuscript, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic* read as *English Version*, perhaps drawn from Revelation 7:4. “loosed us in (virtue of) His blood,” being the *harder* reading to understand, is less likely to have come from the transcribers. The reference is thus to *Greek*, “*lutron*,” the ransom paid for our release (☩Matthew 20:28). In favor of *English Version* reading is the usage whereby the priests, before putting on the holy garments and ministering, *washed* themselves: so spiritually believers, as *priests* unto God, must first be *washed* in Christ’s blood from every stain before they can serve God aright now, or hereafter minister as dispensers of blessing to the subject nations in the millennial kingdom, or minister before God in heaven.

6. And hath — rather as *Greek*, “And (He) hath.”

made us kings — The oldest manuscripts read, “a kingdom.” One oldest manuscript reads the dative, “for us.” Another reads “us,” accusative: so *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS. This seems preferable, “He made us (to be) a kingdom.” So Exodus 19:6, “a kingdom of priests”; 1 Peter 2:9, “a royal priesthood.” The saints shall constitute peculiarly a *kingdom* of

God, and shall themselves be *kings* (^{<650>}Revelation 5:10). They shall share His King-Priest throne in the millennial kingdom. The emphasis thus falls more on the *kingdom* than on *priests*: whereas in *English Version* reading it is equally distributed between both. This book lays prominent stress on the saints' *kingdom*. They are kings because they are priests: the priesthood is the continuous ground and legitimization of their kingship; they are kings in relation to man, priests in relation to God, serving Him day and night in His temple (^{<675>}Revelation 7:15 5:10). The priest-kings shall rule, not in an external mechanical manner, but simply in virtue of what they are, by the power of attraction and conviction overcoming the heart [AUBERLEN].

priests — who have pre-eminently the privilege of near access to the king. David's sons were priests (*Hebrew*), ^{<688>}2 Samuel 8:18. The distinction of *priests* and people, nearer and more remote from God, shall cease; all shall have nearest access to Him. All persons and things shall be holy to the Lord.

God and his Father — There is but one article to both in the *Greek*, therefore it means, "Unto Him who is at once God and His Father."

glory and dominion — *Greek*, "*the glory and the might*." The fuller threefold doxology occurs, Revelation 4:9,11; fourfold, ^{<693>}Revelation 5:13 ^{<695>}Jude 1:25; sevenfold, ^{<697>}Revelation 7:12 1 Chronicles 29:11. Doxology occupies the prominent place above, which prayer does below. If we thought of *God's glory* first (as in the Lord's Prayer), and gave the secondary place to our needs, we should please God and gain our petitions better than we do.

for ever and ever — *Greek*, "unto the ages."

7. with clouds — *Greek*, "*the clouds*," namely, of heaven. "A cloud received Him out of their sight" at His ascension (Acts 1:9). His ascension corresponds to the manner of His coming again (^{<411>}Acts 1:11). Clouds are the symbols of *wrath* to sinners.

every eye — His coming shall therefore be a personal, visible appearing.

shall see — It is because they do not now *see* Him, they will not believe. Contrast ^{<419>}John 20:29.

they also — they *in particular*; “whosoever.” Primarily, at His pre-millennial advent *the Jews*, who shall “look upon Him whom they have pierced,” and mourn *in repentance*, and say, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Secondly, and here *chiefly*, at the general judgment all the ungodly, not only those who actually pierced Him, but those who did so by their sins, shall look with trembling upon Him. John is the only one of the Evangelists who records the *piercing* of Christ’s side. This allusion identifies him as the author of the Apocalypse. The reality of Christ’s humanity and His death is proved by His having been *pierced*; and the *water and blood* from His side were the antitype to the Levitical waters of cleansing and blood offerings.

all kindreds ... shall wail — all the unconverted at the general judgment; and especially at His pre-millennial advent, the Antichristian confederacy (Zechariah 12:3-6,9 14:1-4 ¹⁸⁸⁷ Matthew 24:30). *Greek*, “all the *tribes* of the *land*,” or “the earth.” See the limitation to “all,” Revelation 13:8. Even the godly while rejoicing in His love shall feel penitential sorrow at their sins, which shall all be manifested at the general judgment.

because of — *Greek*, “at,” or “in regard to Him.”

Even so, Amen — Gods seal of His own word; to which corresponds the believer’s prayer, ¹⁸²¹ Revelation 22:20. The “even so” is *Greek*; “Amen” is *Hebrew*. To both Gentiles and Jews His promises and threats are unchangeable.

8. *Greek*, “I am *the Alpha* and *the Omega*,” The first and last letters of the alphabet. God in Christ comprises all that goes between, as well as the first and last.

the beginning and the ending — omitted in the oldest manuscripts, though found in *Vulgate* and *Coptic*. Transcribers probably inserted the clause from Revelation 21:6. In Christ, Genesis, the Alpha of the Old Testament, and Revelation, the Omega of the New Testament, meet together: the last book presenting to us man and God reconciled in Paradise, as the first book presented man at the beginning innocent and in God’s favor in Paradise. Accomplishing *finally* what I *begin*. Always the same; before the dragon, the beast, false prophet, and all foes. An

anticipatory consolation to the saints under the coming trials of the Church.

the Lord — The oldest manuscripts read “the Lord God.”

Almighty — *Hebrew*, “*Shaddai*,” and “*Jehovah Sabaoth*,” that is, “of hosts”; commanding all the hosts or powers in heaven and earth, so able to overcome all His Church’s foes. It occurs often in Revelation, but nowhere else in the New Testament save ^{<4068>}2 Corinthians 6:18, a quotation from Isaiah.

9. I John — So “I Daniel” (Daniel 7:28 9:2 10:2). One of the many features of resemblance between the Old Testament and the New Testament apocalyptic seers. No other Scripture writer uses the phrase.

also — as well as being an apostle. The oldest manuscripts omit “also.” In his Gospel and Epistles he makes no mention of his *name*, though describing himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” Here, with similar humility, though naming himself, he does not mention his apostleship.

companion — *Greek*, “fellow partaker in the tribulation.” Tribulation is the necessary precursor of the kingdom,” therefore “the” is prefixed. This must be borne with “patient endurance.” The oldest manuscripts omit “in the” before “kingdom.” All three are inseparable: *the tribulation, kingdom and endurance*.

patience — Translate, “endurance.” “Persevering, enduring continuance” (^{<4412>}Acts 14:22); “the queen of the graces (virtues)” [CHRYSOSTOM].

of, etc. — The oldest manuscripts read “IN Jesus,” or “Jesus Christ.” It is IN Him that believers have the right to the *kingdom*, and the spiritual strength to enable them to *endure patiently* for it.

was — *Greek*, “came to be.”

in ... Patmos — now Patmo or Palmosa. See *Introduction* on this island, and John’s exile to it under Domitian, from which he was released under Nerva. Restricted to a small spot on earth, he is permitted to penetrate the wide realms of heaven and its secrets. Thus John drank of Christ’s cup, and was baptized with His baptism (^{<4102>}Matthew 20:22).

for — *Greek*, “for the sake of,” “on account of”; so, “*because of* the word of God and ... testimony.” Two oldest manuscripts omit the second “for”; thus “the Word of God” and “testimony of Jesus” are the more closely joined. Two oldest manuscripts omit “Christ.” The Apocalypse has been always appreciated most by the Church in adversity. Thus the Asiatic Church from the flourishing times of Constantine less estimated it. The African Church being more exposed to the cross always made much of it [BENGEL].

10. I was — *Greek*, “I came to be”; “I became.”

in the Spirit — in a state of ecstasy; the outer world being shut out, and the inner and higher life or spirit being taken full possession of by God’s Spirit, so that an immediate connection with the invisible world is established. While the *prophet* “speaks” in the Spirit, the apocalyptic seer *is in* the Spirit in his whole person. The spirit only (that which connects us with God and the invisible world) is active, or rather recipient, in the apocalyptic state. With Christ this being “in the Spirit” was not the exception, but His continual state.

on the Lord’s day — Though forcibly detained from Church communion with the brethren in the sanctuary on the Lord’s day, the weekly commemoration of the resurrection, John was holding spiritual communion with them. This is the earliest mention of *the term*, “the Lord’s day.” But the consecration of the day to worship, almsgiving, and the Lord’s Supper, is implied in Acts 20:7 1 Corinthians 16:2; compare ~~John~~ John 20:19-26. The name corresponds to “the Lord’s Supper,” ~~1~~ 1 Corinthians 11:20. IGNATIUS seems to allude to “the Lord’s day” [*Epistle to the Magnesians*, 9], and IRENAEUS [*Quaest ad Orthod.*, 115] (in JUSTIN MARTYR). JUSTIN MARTYR [*Apology*, 2.98], etc., “On Sunday we all hold our joint meeting; for the first day is that on which God, having removed darkness and chaos, made the world, and Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead. On the day before Saturday they crucified Him; and on the day after Saturday, which is Sunday, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught these things.” To the Lord’s day PLINY doubtless refers [*Epistles*, Book X., p. 97], “The Christians on a *fixed day* before dawn meet and sing a hymn to Christ as God,” etc. TERTULLIAN [*The Chaplet*, 3], “On the Lord’s day we deem it wrong to fast.” MELITO, bishop of Sardis (second

century), wrote a book *on the Lord's day* [EUSEBIUS 4.26]. Also, DIONYSIUS OF CORINTH, in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 4.23,8]. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 5. and 7.12]; ORIGEN [*Against Celsus*, 8. 22]. The theory that *the day of Christ's second coming* is meant, is untenable. "The day of the Lord" is different in the *Greek* from "the Lord's (an adjective) day," which latter in the ancient Church always designates our Sunday, though it is not impossible that the two shall coincide (at least in some parts of the earth), whence a tradition is mentioned in JEROME [*Commentary on Matthew*, 25], that the Lord's coming was expected especially on the Paschal Lord's day. The visions of the Apocalypse, the seals, trumpets, and vials, etc., are grouped in *sevens*, and naturally begin on the first day of the seven, the birthday of the Church, whose future they set forth [WORDSWORTH].

great voice — summoning solemn attention; *Greek* order, "I heard a voice behind me great (loud) as (that) of a trumpet." The trumpet summoned to religious feasts, and accompanies God's revelations of Himself.

11. I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and — The oldest manuscripts, omit all this clause.

write in a book — To this *book*, having such an origin, and to the other books of Holy Scripture, who is there that gives the weight which their importance demands, preferring them to the *many books* of the world? [BENGEL].

seven churches — As there were many other churches in Proconsular Asia (for example, Miletus, Magnesia, Tralles), besides the seven specified, doubtless the number *seven* is fixed upon because of its mystical signification, expressing *totality* and *universality*. The words, "which are in Asia" are rejected by the oldest manuscripts, A, B, C, CYPRIAN, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac*; *Coptic* alone supports them of old authorities. These seven are representative churches; and, as a complex whole, ideally complete, embody the chief spiritual characteristics of the Church, whether as faithful or unfaithful, in all ages. The churches selected are not taken at random, but have a many-sided completeness. Thus, on one side we have Smyrna, a Church exposed to persecutions unto death; on the other Sardis, having a high *name* for spiritual *life and yet dead*. Again, Laodicea, in its own estimate *rich* and *having need of nothing*, with ample talents, yet

lukewarm in Christ's cause; on the other hand, Philadelphia, with but a *little strength*, yet *keeping* Christ's word and having an *open door* of usefulness *set before* it by Christ Himself. Again, Ephesus, intolerant of *evil* and of *false apostles*, yet having *left its first love*; on the other hand, Thyatira, abounding in *works, love, service, and faith*, yet *suffering* the false *prophetess* to *seduce* many. In another aspect, Ephesus in conflict with false freedom, that is fleshly licentiousness (the Nicolaitanes); so also Pergamos in conflict with Balaam-like tempters to fornication and *idol-meats*; and on the other side, Philadelphia in conflict with the Jewish synagogue, that is, legal bondage. Finally, Sardis and Laodicea without any active opposition to call forth their spiritual energies; a dangerous position, considering man's natural indolence. In the historic scheme of interpretation, which seems fanciful, Ephesus (meaning "the beloved" or "desired" [STIER]) represents the waning period of the apostolic age. Smyrna ("myrrh"), bitter suffering, yet sweet and costly perfume, the martyr period of the Decian and Diocletian age. Pergamos (a "castle" or "tower"), the Church possessing earthly power and decreasing spirituality from Constantine's time until the seventh century. Thyatira ("unwearied about sacrifices"), the Papal Church in the first half of the Middle Ages; like "Jezebel," keen about its so-called *sacrifice* of the mass, and slaying the prophets and witnesses of God. Sardis, from the close of the twelfth century to the Reformation. Philadelphia ("brotherly love"), the first century of the Reformation. Laodicea, the Reformed Church after its first zeal had become *lukewarm*.

12. see the voice — that is, *ascertain* whence the *voice* came; to *see* who was it from whom the *voice* proceeded.

that — *Greek*, "of what kind it was *which*." The voice is that of God the Father, as at Christ's baptism and transfiguration, so here in presenting Christ as our High Priest.

spake — The oldest manuscripts, versions, and Fathers read, "was speaking."

being — "having turned."

seven ... candlesticks — "lamp-stands" [KELLY]. The stand holding the lamp. In ⁽¹²⁵⁾Exodus 25:31,32, the seven are united in ONE candlestick or

lamp-stand, that is, six arms and a central shaft; so Zechariah 4:2,11. Here the seven are *separate* candlesticks, typifying, as that *one*, the entire Church, but now no longer as the Jewish Church (represented by the *one* sevenfold candlestick) restricted to one outward unity and one place; the several churches are mutually independent as to external ceremonies and government (provided all things are done to edification, and schisms or needless separations are avoided), yet one in the unity of the Spirit and the Headship of Christ. The candlestick is not light, but the bearer of light, holding it forth to give light around. The light is the Lord's, not the Church's; from Him she receives it. She is to be a light-bearer to His glory. The candlestick stood in the holy place, the type of the Church on earth, as the holiest place was type of the Church in heaven. The holy place's only light was derived from the candlestick, daylight being excluded; so the Lord God is the Church's only light; hers is the light of grace, not nature. "Golden" symbolizes at once the greatest *preciousness* and *sacredness*; so that in the *Zend Avesta*, "golden" is synonymous with heavenly or divine [TRENCH].

13. His glorified form as man could be recognized by John, who had seen it at the Transfiguration.

in the midst — implying Christ's continual presence and ceaseless activity *in the midst* of His people *on earth*. In Revelation 4:1-3, when He appears *in heaven*, His insignia undergo a corresponding change yet even there the rainbow reminds us of His everlasting covenant with them.

seven — omitted in two of the oldest manuscripts, but supported by one.

Son of man — The form which John had seen enduring the agony of Gethsemane, and the shame and anguish of Calvary, he now sees glorified. His glory (as *Son of man*, not merely *Son of God*) is the result of His humiliation as *Son of man*.

down to the foot — a mark of high rank. The garment and girdle seem to be emblems of His *priesthood*. Compare Exodus 28:2,4,31; *Septuagint*. Aaron's robe and girdle were "for glory and beauty," and combined the insignia of royalty and priesthood, the characteristics of Christ's antitypical priesthood "after the order of Melchisedec." His being *in the midst of the candlesticks* (only seen in the *temple*), shows that it is as a

king-priest He is so attired. This priesthood He has exercised ever since His ascension; and, therefore He here wears its emblems. As Aaron wore these insignia when He came forth from the sanctuary to bless the people (Leviticus 16:4,23,24, the *chetoneth*, or holy linen coat), so when Christ shall come again, He shall appear in the similar attire of “beauty and glory” (Isaiah 4:2, *Margin*). The angels are attired somewhat like their Lord (Revelation 15:6). The ordinary girding for one actively engaged, was at *the loins*; but JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*,3.7.2], expressly tells us that the Levitical priests were girt higher up, about the breasts or *paps*, appropriate to calm, majestic movement. The girdle bracing the frame together, symbolizes collected powers. *Righteousness* and *faithfulness* are Christ’s girdle. The high priest’s girdle was only interwoven with gold, but Christ’s is all of gold; the antitype exceeds the type.

14. — *Greek*, “But,” or “And.”

like wool — *Greek*, “like white wool.” The *color* is the point of comparison; signifying *purity* and glory. (Song of Solomon in Isaiah 1:18). Not *age*, for hoary hairs are the sign of decay.

eyes ... as ... flame — all-searching and penetrating like fire: at the same time, also, implying *consuming* indignation against sin, especially at His coming “in flaming fire, taking vengeance” on all the ungodly, which is confirmed as the meaning here, by ^(ref)Revelation 19:11,12.

15. fine brass — *Greek*, “*chalcolibanus*,” derived by some from two *Greek* words, “brass” and “frankincense”; derived by BOCHART from *Greek*, “*chalcos*,” “brass,” and *Hebrew*, “*libbeen*,” “to whiten”; hence, “brass,” which in the furnace has reached a *white* heat. Thus it answers to “burnished (flashing, or glowing) brass,” Ezekiel 1:7 Revelation 10:1, “His feet as pillars of fire.” Translate, “*Glowing* brass, as if they had been made fiery (red-hot) in a furnace.” The feet of the priests were bare in ministering in the sanctuary. So our great High Priest here.

voice as ... many waters — (Ezekiel 43:2); in Daniel 10:6, it is “like the voice of a *multitude*.” As the Bridegroom’s voice, so the bride’s, Revelation 14:2 19:6 Ezekiel 1:24, the cherubim, or redeemed creation. His voice, however, is here regarded in its terribleness to His foes. Contrast So 2:8 5:2, with which compare ^(ref)Revelation 3:20.

16. he had — *Greek*, “having.” John takes up the description from time to time, irrespective of the construction, *with separate strokes of the pencil* [ALFORD].

in ... right hand seven stars — (Revelation 1:20 Revelation 2:1 3:1). He holds them as a star-studded “crown of glory,” or “royal diadem,” in His hand: so Isaiah 62:3. He is their Possessor and Upholder.

out of ... mouth went — *Greek*, “going forth”; not wielded in the hand. His WORD is omnipotent in executing His will in punishing sinners. It is the sword of His Spirit. Reproof and punishment, rather than its converting winning power, is the prominent point. Still, as He encourages the churches, as well as threatens, the former quality of the Word is not excluded. Its *two* edges (back and front) may allude to its double efficacy, condemning some, converting others. TERTULLIAN [*Epistle against Judaizers*], takes them of *the Old and the New Testaments*. RICHARD OF ST. VICTOR, “the Old Testament cutting externally our *carnal*, the New Testament internally, our *spiritual* sins.”

sword — *Greek*, “*romphaia*,” the Thracian long and heavy broad sword: six times in Revelation, once only elsewhere in New Testament, namely, Luke 2:35.

sun ... in his strength — in unclouded power. So shall the righteous shine, reflecting the image of the Sun of righteousness. TRENCH notices that this description, sublime as a purely mental conception, would be intolerable if we were to give it an outward form. With the Greeks, aesthacial taste was the first consideration, to which all others must give way. With the Hebrews, truth and the full representation ideally of the religious reality were the paramount consideration, that representation being designed not to be outwardly embodied, but to remain a purely mental conception. This exalting of the essence above the form marks their deeper religious earnestness.

17. So fallen is man that God’s manifestation of His glorious presence overwhelms him.

laid his right hand upon me — So the same Lord Jesus did at the Transfiguration to the three prostrate disciples, of whom John was one,

saying, Be not afraid. The “touch” of His hand, as of old, imparted strength.

unto me — omitted in the oldest manuscripts.

the first ... the last — (Isaiah 41:4 44:6 48:12). From eternity, and enduring to eternity: “the First by creation, the Last by retribution: the First, because before Me there was no God formed; the Last, because after Me there shall be no other: the First, because from Me are all things; the Last, because to Me all things return” [RICHARD OF ST. VICTOR].

18. Translate as *Greek*, “AND THE LIVING ONE”: connected with last sentence, ~~omit~~ Revelation 1:17.

and was — *Greek*, “and (yet) I *became*.”

alive for evermore — *Greek*, “living unto the ages of ages”: not merely “*I live*,” but I have life, and am the source of it to My people. “To Him belongs *absolute* being, as contrasted with the *relative* being of the creature; others may *share*, He only *hath* immortality: *being in essence, not by mere participation, immortal*” [THEODORET in TRENCH]. One oldest manuscript, with *English Version*, reads Amen.” Two others, and most of the oldest versions and Fathers, omit it. His having passed through death as one of us, and now living in the infinite plenitude of life, reassures His people, since through Him death is the gate of resurrection to eternal life.

have ... keys of hell — *Greek*, “Hades”; *Hebrew*, “Sheol.” “Hell” in the sense, the *place of torment*, answers to a different *Greek* word, namely, *Gehenna*. I can release from *the unseen world of spirits* and from DEATH whom I *will*. The oldest manuscripts read by transposition, “Death and Hades,” or Hell.” It is death (which came in by sin, robbing man of his immortal birthright, ~~omit~~ Romans 5:12) that peoples Hades, and therefore should stand first in order. *Keys* are emblems of authority, opening and shutting at will “the gates of Hades” (Psalm 9:13,14 Isaiah 38:10 ~~omit~~ Matthew 16:18).

19. The oldest manuscripts read, “Write *therefore*” (inasmuch as I, “the First and Last,” have the keys of death, and vouchsafe to thee this vision for the comfort and warning of the Church).

things which are — “the things which thou hast seen” are those narrated in this chapter (compare ⁶¹¹¹Revelation 1:11). “The things which are” imply the present state of things in the churches when John was writing, as represented in the second and third chapters. “The things which shall be hereafter,” the things symbolically represented concerning the future history of the fourth through twenty-second chapters. ALFORD translates, “*What things they signify*”; but the antithesis of the next clause forbids this, “the things which shall be hereafter,” *Greek*, “which are about to come to pass.” The *plural* (*Greek*) “are,” instead of the usual *Greek* construction *singular*, is owing to *churches* and *persons* being meant by things” in the clause, “the things which are.”

20. in — *Greek*, “upon My right hand.”

the mystery ... candlesticks — in apposition to, and explaining, “the things which thou hast seen,” governed by “Write.” *Mystery* signifies the hidden truth, veiled under this symbol, and now revealed; its correlative is *revelation*. *Stars* symbolize lordship (⁶⁰⁴⁷Numbers 24:17; compare Daniel 12:3, of faithful teachers; ⁶¹⁸⁰Revelation 8:10 12:4 ⁶¹¹³Jude 1:13).

angels — not as ALFORD, from ORIGEN [*Homily 13* on Luke, and *Homily 20* on Numbers], the guardian angels of the churches, just as individuals have their guardian angels. For how could heavenly angels be charged with the delinquencies laid here to the charge of these angels? Then, if a human angel be meant (as the Old Testament analogy favors, Haggai 1:13, “the Lord’s Messenger in the Lord’s message”; Malachi 2:7 3:1), *the bishop*, or superintendent pastor, must be the angel. For whereas there were many presbyters in each of the larger churches (as for example, Ephesus, Smyrna, etc.), there was but *one* angel, whom, moreover, the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls holds responsible for the spiritual state of the Church under him. The term *angel*, designating an office, is, in accordance with the enigmatic symbolism of this book, transferred from the heavenly to the earthly superior ministers of Jehovah; reminding them that, like the heavenly angels above, they below should fulfill God’s mission zealously, promptly and efficiently. “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven!”

CHAPTER 2

REVELATION 2:1-29.

EPISTLES TO EPHESUS, SMYRNA, PERGAMOS, THYATIRA.

Each of the seven epistles in this and the third chapter, commences with, “I know thy works.” Each contains a promise from Christ, “To him that overcometh.” Each ends with, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” The title of our Lord in each case accords with the nature of the address, and is mainly taken from the imagery of the vision, ^{ⲙⲓⲛ}Revelation 1:12-16. Each address has a threat or a promise, and most of the addresses have both. Their order seems to be ecclesiastical, civil, and geographical: Ephesus first, as being the Asiatic metropolis (termed “the light of Asia,” and “first city of Asia”), the nearest to Patmos, where John received the epistle to the seven churches, and also as being that Church with which John was especially connected; then the churches on the west coast of Asia; then those in the interior. Smyrna and Philadelphia alone receive unmixed praise. Sardis and Laodicea receive almost solely censure. In Ephesus, Pergamos, and Thyatira, there are some things to praise, others to condemn, the latter element preponderating in one case (Ephesus), the former in the two others (Pergamos and Thyatira). Thus the main characteristics of the different states of different churches, in all times and places, are portrayed, and they are suitably encouraged or warned.

1. Ephesus — famed for the temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. For three years Paul labored there. He subsequently ordained Timothy superintending overseer or bishop there: probably his charge was but of a temporary nature. John, towards the close of his life, took it as the center from which he superintended the province.

holdeth — *Greek*, “holdeth fast,” as in ^{ⲙⲓⲛ}Revelation 2:25 ^{ⲙⲓⲛ}Revelation 3:11; compare ^{ⲙⲓⲛ}John 10:28,29. The title of Christ here as “holding fast the seven stars (from ^{ⲙⲓⲛ}Revelation 1:16: only that, for *having* is

substituted *holding fast* in His grasp), and walking in the midst of the seven candlesticks,” accords with the beginning of His address to the *seven* churches representing the universal Church. *Walking* expresses His unwearied activity in the Church, guarding her from internal and external evils, as the high priest moved to and fro in the sanctuary.

2. I know thy works — expressing His omniscience. Not merely “thy professions, desires, good resolutions” (ⲉⲙⲓⲁⲓ Revelation 14:13, end).

thy labor — Two oldest manuscripts omit “thy”; one supports it. The *Greek* means “labor unto weariness.”

patience — persevering *endurance*.

bear — *evil men* are a *burden* which the Ephesian Church regarded as intolerable. We are to “bear (the same *Greek*, Galatians 6:2) one another’s burdens” in the case of *weak* brethren; but not to bear *false brethren*.

tried — by experiment; not the *Greek* for “test,” as 1 John 4:1. The apostolical churches had the miraculous gift of *discerning spirits*. Compare ⲉⲙⲓⲁⲓ Acts 20:28-30, wherein Paul presciently warned the *Ephesian* elders of the coming false teachers, as also in writing to Timothy at Ephesus. TERTULLIAN [*On Baptism*, 17], and JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*, in Lucca 7], record of John, that when a writing, professing to be a canonical history of the acts of Paul, had been composed by a presbyter of Ephesus, John convicted the author and condemned the work. So on one occasion he would not remain under the same roof with Cerinthus the heretic.

say they are apostles — probably Judaizers. IGNATIUS [*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 6], says subsequently, “Onesimus praises exceedingly your good discipline that no heresy dwells among you”; and [*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 9], “Ye did not permit those having evil doctrine to sow their seed among you, but closed your ears.”

3. borne ... patience — The oldest manuscripts transpose these words. Then translate as *Greek*, “persevering endurance ... borne.” “Thou hast borne” My reproach, but “thou canst not bear the evil” (Revelation 2:2). A beautiful antithesis.

and ... hast labored, and hast not fainted — The two oldest manuscripts and oldest versions read, “and ... hast not labored,” omitting “and hast fainted.” The difficulty which transcribers by *English Version* reading tried to obviate, was the seeming contradiction, “I know thy *labor* ... and thou hast *not labored*.” But what is meant is, “Thou hast not been *wearied out* with labor.”

4. somewhat ... because — Translate, “I have against thee (this) *that*,” etc. It is not a mere somewhat”; it is everything. How characteristic of our gracious Lord, that He puts foremost all He can find to approve, and only after this notes the shortcomings!

left thy first love — to Christ. Compare ^{<5162>}1 Timothy 5:12, “cast off their first faith.” See the Ephesians’ first *love*, ^{<5115>}Ephesians 1:15. This epistle was written under Domitian, when thirty years had elapsed since Paul had written his Epistle to them. Their warmth of love had given place to a lifeless orthodoxy. Compare Paul’s view of faith so called without love, 1 Corinthians 13:2.

5. whence — from what a height.

do the first works — the *works* which flowed from thy *first love*. Not merely “feel thy first feelings,” but do works flowing from the same principle as formerly, “faith which worketh by love.”

I will come — *Greek*, “I am coming” in special judgment on thee.

quickly — omitted in two oldest manuscripts, *Vulgate* and *Coptic versions*: supported by one oldest manuscript.

remove thy candlestick out of his place — I will take away the Church from Ephesus and remove it elsewhere. “It is removal of the candlestick, not extinction of the candle, which is threatened here; judgment for some, but that very judgment the occasion of mercy for others. So it has been. The seat of the Church has been changed, but the Church itself survives. What the East has lost, the West has gained. One who lately visited Ephesus found only three Christians there, and these so ignorant as scarcely to have heard the names of St. Paul or St. John” [TRENCH].

6. But — How graciously, after necessary censure, He returns to praise for our consolation, and as an example to *us*, that we would show, when we reprove, we have more pleasure in praising than in fault-finding.

hatest the deeds — We should hate men's evil *deeds*, not hate the men themselves.

Nicolaitanes — IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 1.26.3] and TERTULLIAN [*Prescription against Heretics*, 46] make these followers of Nicolas, one of *the seven* (honorably mentioned, Acts 6:3,5). They (CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA [*Miscellanies*, 2.20 3.4] and EPIPHANIUS [*Heresies*, 25]) evidently confound the latter Gnostic Nicolaitanes, or followers of one Nicolaos, with those of Revelation. MICHAELIS' view is probable: Nicolaos (*conqueror of the people*) is the *Greek* version of Balaam, from *Hebrew* “*Belang Am*,” “Destroyer of the people.” Revelation abounds in such duplicate *Hebrew* and *Greek* names: as Apollyon, Abaddon: Devil, Satan: Yea (*Greek*, “*Nai*”), Amen. The name, like other names, Egypt, Babylon, Sodom, is symbolic. Compare ^{ⲉⲛⲓⲁ}Revelation 2:14,15, which shows the true sense of Nicolaitanes; they are not a sect, but professing Christians who, like Balaam of old. tried to introduce into the Church a false freedom, that is, licentiousness; this was a reaction in the opposite direction from Judaism, the first danger to the Church combated in the council of Jerusalem, and by Paul in the Epistle to Galatians. These symbolical Nicolaitanes, or followers of Balaam, abused Paul's doctrine of the grace of God into a plea for lasciviousness (^{ⲉⲛⲓⲁ}2 Peter 2:15,16,19 Jude 1:4,11 who both describe the same sort of seducers as followers of *Balaam*). The difficulty that they should appropriate a name branded with infamy in Scripture is met by TRENCH: The Antinomian Gnostics were so opposed to John as a Judaizing apostle that they would assume as a name of chiefest honor one which John branded with dishonor.

7. He that hath an ear — This clause precedes the promise in the first three addresses, succeeds it in the last four. Thus the promises are enclosed on both sides with the precept urging the deepest attention as to the most momentous truths. Every man “hath an ear” naturally, but he alone will be able to hear spiritually to whom God has given “the hearing ear”; whose “ear God hath wakened” and “opened.” Compare “Faith, the ears of the soul” [CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA].

the Spirit saith — What *Christ* saith, *the Spirit* saith; so one are the Second and Third Persons.

unto the churches — not merely to the particular, but to the universal Church.

overcometh — In John's Gospel (^{<6163>}John 16:33) and First Epistle (1 John 2:13,14,5:4,5) an object follows, namely, "the world," "the wicked one." Here, where the final issue is spoken of, *the conqueror* is named absolutely. Paul uses a similar image (^{<61924>}1 Corinthians 9:24,25 ^{<61925>}2 Timothy 2:5; but not the same as John's phrase, except ^{<61927>}Romans 12:21).

will I give — as the Judge. The tree of life in Paradise, lost by the fall, is restored by the Redeemer. Allusions to it occur in Proverbs 3:18 11:30 13:12 15:4, and prophetically, Revelation 22:2,14 Ezekiel 47:12; compare ^{<61919>}John 6:51. It is interesting to note how closely these introductory addresses are linked to the body of Revelation. Thus, *the tree of life* here, with Revelation 22:1; deliverance from *the second death* (^{<61921>}Revelation 2:11), with ^{<61914>}Revelation 20:14 21:8; *the new name* (^{<61917>}Revelation 2:17), with Revelation 14:1; *power over the nations*, with Revelation 20:4; *the morning star* (^{<61928>}Revelation 2:28), with ^{<61926>}Revelation 22:16; *the white raiment* (Revelation 3:5), with Revelation 4:4 16:15; *the name in the book of life* (Revelation 3:5), with Revelation 13:8 20:15; *the new Jerusalem* and its citizenship (^{<61912>}Revelation 3:12), with ^{<61911>}Revelation 21:10.

give ... tree of life — The thing promised corresponds to the kind of faithfulness manifested. They who refrain from Nicolaitane indulgences (Revelation 2:6) and idol-meats (^{<61914>}Revelation 2:14,15), shall eat of meat infinitely superior, namely, the fruit of the tree of life, and the hidden manna (^{<61917>}Revelation 2:17).

in the midst of the paradise — The oldest manuscripts omit "the midst of." In Genesis 2:9 these words are appropriate, for there were *other* trees in the garden, but not *in the midst of it*. Here *the tree of life* is simply *in the paradise*, for no other tree is mentioned in it; in Revelation 22:2 the tree of life is "*in the midst of the street of Jerusalem*"; from this the clause was inserted here. *Paradise* (a Persian, or else Semitic word), originally used of any garden of delight; then specially of Eden; then the temporary abode of

separate souls in bliss; then “the *Paradise of God*,” the third heaven, the immediate presence of God.

of God — (Ezekiel 28:13). One oldest manuscript, with *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*, and CYPRIAN, read, “MY God,” as in ^{ⲁⲓⲃⲉ}Revelation 3:12. So Christ calls God, “My God and your God” (^{ⲁⲓⲃⲉ}John 20:17; compare ^{ⲁⲓⲃⲉ}Ephesians 1:17). God is *our* God, in virtue of being peculiarly *Christ’s* God. The main bliss of Paradise is that it is the *Paradise of God*; God Himself dwelling there (Revelation 21:3).

8. Smyrna — in Ionia, a little to the north of Ephesus. POLYCARP, martyred in A.D. 168, eighty-six years after his conversion, was bishop, and probably “the angel of the Church in Smyrna” meant here. The allusions to persecutions and faithfulness unto death accord with this view. IGNATIUS [*The Martyrdom of Ignatius* 3], on his way to martyrdom in Rome, wrote to POLYCARP, then (A.D. 108) bishop of Smyrna; if his bishopric commenced ten or twelve years earlier, the dates will harmonize. TERTULLIAN [*The Prescription against Heretics*, 32], and IRENAEUS, who had talked with POLYCARP in youth, tell us POLYCARP was consecrated bishop of Smyrna by St. John.

the first ... the last ... was dead ... is alive — The attributes of Christ most calculated to comfort the Church of Smyrna under its persecutions; resumed from ^{ⲁⲓⲃⲉ}Revelation 1:17,18. As death was to Him but the gate to life eternal, so it is to be to them (^{ⲁⲓⲃⲉ}Revelation 2:10,11).

9. thy works, and — omitted in two oldest manuscripts, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic*. Supported by one oldest manuscript.

tribulation — owing to persecution.

poverty — owing to “the spoiling of their goods.”

but thou art rich — in grace. Contrast Laodicea, *rich* in the world’s eyes and her own, *poor* before God. “There are both poor rich-men, and rich poor-men in God’s sight” [TRENCH].

blasphemy of them — blasphemous calumny of thee on the part of (or *arising from*) them.

say they are Jews, and are not — Jews by national descent, but not spiritually of “the true circumcision.” The Jews blaspheme Christ as “the hanged one.” As elsewhere, so at Smyrna they bitterly opposed Christianity; and at POLYCARP’S martyrdom they joined the heathens in clamoring for his being cast to the lions; and when there was an obstacle to this, for his being burnt alive; and with their own hands they carried logs for the pile.

synagogue of Satan — Only once is the term “synagogue” in the New Testament used of the Christian assembly, and that by the apostle who longest maintained the union of the Church and Jewish Synagogue. As the Jews more and more opposed Christianity, and it more and more rooted itself in the Gentile world, the term “synagogue” was left altogether to the former, and Christians appropriated exclusively the honorable term “Church”; contrast an earlier time when the Jewish theocracy is called “the Church in the wilderness.” Compare Numbers 16:3 20:4, “congregation of the Lord.” Even in James 2:2 it is “*your* (not *the Lord’s*) assembly.” The Jews, who might have been “the Church of God,” had now, by their opposition and unbelief, become the synagogue of Satan. So “the throne of Satan” (^{¶1123}Revelation 2:13) represents the *heathens*’ opposition to Christianity; “the depths of Satan” (^{¶1124}Revelation 2:24), the opposition of *heretics*.

10. Fear none, etc. — the oldest manuscripts read, “Fear *not* those things,” etc. “The Captain of our salvation never keeps back what those who faithfully witness for Him may have to bear for His name’s sake; never entices recruits by the promise they shall find all things easy and pleasant there” [TRENCH].

devil — “the accuser.” He acted, through Jewish *accusers* against Christ and His people. The conflict of the latter was not with mere flesh and blood, but with the rulers of the darkness of this world.

tried — with *temptation* by “the devil.” The same event is often both a *temptation* from the devil, and a *trial* from God — God sifting and winnowing the man to separate his chaff from his wheat, the devil sifting him in the hope that nothing but chaff will be found in him [TRENCH].

ten days — not the ten persecutions from Nero to Diocletian. LYRA explains *ten years* on the year-day principle. The *shortness* of the duration of the persecution is evidently made the ground of consolation. The time of trial shall be short, the duration of your joy shall be for ever. Compare the use of “ten days” for a short time, ^{<125>}Genesis 24:55 ^{<411>}Numbers 11:19. *Ten* is the number of the world powers hostile to the Church; compare the *ten* horns of the beast, Revelation 13:1.

unto death — so as even to endure death for My sake.

crown of life — ^{<311>}James 1:12 ² Timothy 4:8, “crown of righteousness”; 1 Peter 5:4, “crown of glory.” The *crown* is the *garland*, the mark of a *conqueror*, or of one *rejoicing*, or at a *feast*; but *diadem* is the mark of a KING.

11. shall not be hurt — *Greek*, “shall not by any means (or possibly) be hurt.”

the second death — “the lake of fire.” “The death in life of the lost, as contrasted with the life in death of the saved” [TRENCH]. The phrase “the second death” is peculiar to the Apocalypse. What matter about the first death, which sooner or later must pass over us, if we escape *the second death*? “It seems that they who die that death shall be *hurt* by it; whereas, if it were annihilation, and so a conclusion of their torments, it would be no way hurtful, but highly beneficial to them. But the living torments are the second death” [BISHOP PEARSON]. “The life of the damned is death” [AUGUSTINE]. Smyrna (meaning *myrrh*) yielded its sweet perfume in being bruised even to death. Myrrh was used in embalming dead bodies (^{<439>}John 19:39); was an ingredient in the holy anointing oil (^{<412>}Exodus 30:23); a perfume of the heavenly Bridegroom (Psalm 45:8), and of the bride (Song of Solomon 3:6). “Affliction, like it, is *bitter* for the time being, but *salutary*; preserving the elect from *corruption*, and *seasoning* them for immortality, and gives scope for the exercise of the *fragrantly breathing* Christian virtues” [VITRINGA]. POLYCARP’S noble words to his heathen judges who wished him to recant, are well known: “Fourscore and six years have I served the Lord, and He never wronged me, how then can I blaspheme my King and Savior?” Smyrna’s faithfulness is rewarded by its candlestick not having been removed out of its place (Revelation 2:5);

Christianity has never wholly left it; whence the Turks call it, “Infidel Smyrna.”

12. TRENCH prefers writing *Pergamus*, or rather, *Pergamum*, on the river Caicus. It was capital of Attalus the Second’s kingdom, which was bequeathed by him to the Romans, 133 B.C. Famous for its library, founded by Eumenes (197-159), and destroyed by Caliph Omar. *Parchment*, that is, *Pergamena charta*, was here discovered for book purposes. Also famous for the magnificent temple of aesculapius, the healing god [TACITUS, *Annals*, 3.63].

he which hath the sharp sword with two edges — appropriate to His address having a twofold bearing, a searching power so as to convict and convert some (ⲉⲛⲉⲣⲉ Revelation 2:13,17), and to convict and condemn to punishment others (ⲉⲛⲉⲣⲉ Revelation 2:14-16, especially ⲉⲛⲉⲣⲉ Revelation 2:16; compare also see on ⲉⲛⲉⲣⲉ Revelation 1:16).

13. I know thy works — Two oldest manuscripts omit this clause; one oldest manuscript retains it.

Satan’s seat — rather as the *Greek* is translated all through Revelation, “throne.” Satan, in impious mimicry of God’s heavenly throne, sets up his earthly throne (Revelation 4:2). aesculapius was worshipped there under the serpent form; and Satan, the old serpent, as the instigator (compare ⲉⲛⲉⲣⲉ Revelation 2:10) of fanatical devotees of aesculapius, and, through them, of the supreme magistracy at Pergamos, persecuted one of the Lord’s people (Antipas) even to death. Thus, this address is an anticipatory preface to Revelation 12:1-17; *Note*: “*throne* ... the dragon, Satan ... war with her seed,” Revelation 12:5,9,17.

even in those days — Two oldest manuscripts omit “even”; two retain it.

wherein — Two oldest manuscripts omit this (then translate, “in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness,” or “martyr”); two retain it. Two oldest manuscripts read, “My witness, MY faithful one”; two read as *English Version*. Antipas is another form for Antipater. SIMEON METAPHRASTES has a palpably legendary story, unknown to the early Fathers, that Antipas, in Domitian’s reign, was shut up in a red-hot brazen bull, and ended his life in thanksgivings and prayers. HENGSTENBERG

makes the name, like other apocalyptic names, symbolical, meaning one standing out “against all” for Christ’s sake.

14. few — in comparison of the *many* tokens of thy faithfulness.

hold the doctrine of Balaam — “the *teaching* of Balaam,” namely, that which he “taught Balak.” Compare “the counsel of Balaam,” ^{ORIGEN} Numbers 31:16. “Balak” is dative in the *Greek*, whence BENGEL translates, “taught (the Moabites) for (that is, to please) Balak.” But though in Numbers it is not expressly said he taught *Balak*, yet there is nothing said inconsistent with his having done so; and JOSEPHUS [*Antiquities*, 4. 6. 6], says he did so. The dative case is a Hebraism for the accusative case.

children — *Greek*, “sons of Israel.”

stumbling-block — literally, that part of a trap on which the bait was laid, and which, when touched, caused the trap to close on its prey; then any entanglement to the foot [TRENCH].

eat things sacrificed unto idols — the act common to the Israelites of old, and the Nicolaitanes in John’s day; he does not add what was peculiar to the Israelites, namely, that they *sacrificed* to idols. The temptation to eat idol-meats was a peculiarly strong one to the Gentile converts. For not to do so involved almost a withdrawal from partaking of any social meal with the heathen around. For idol-meats, after a part had been offered in sacrifice, were nearly sure to be on the heathen entertainer’s table; so much so, that the *Greek* “to kill” (*thuein*) meant originally “to sacrifice.” Hence arose the decree of the council of Jerusalem forbidding to eat such meats; subsequently some at Corinth ate unscrupulously and *knowingly* of such meats, on the ground that the idol is nothing; others needlessly tortured themselves with scruples, lest *unknowingly* they should eat of them when they got meat from the market or in a heathen friend’s house. Paul handles the question in 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 10:25-33.

fornication — often connected with idolatry.

15. thou — emphatic: “So THOU also hast,” As Balak and the Moabites of old had Balaam and his followers literally, *so hast thou also them that hold the same Balaamite or Nicolaitane doctrine* spiritually or symbolically. Literal eating of idol-meats and fornication in Pergamos were accompanied

by spiritual idolatry and fornication. So TRENCH explains. But I prefer taking it, “THOU *also*,” as well as Ephesus (“in like manner” as Ephesus; see below the oldest reading), hast ... Nicolaitanes, with this important difference, Ephesus, as a Church, *hates them* and casts them out, but thou “*hast them*,” namely, in the Church.

doctrine — teaching (see on Revelation 2:6): namely, to tempt God’s people to idolatry.

which thing I hate — It is sin not to hate what God hates. The Ephesian Church (Revelation 2:6) had this point of superiority to Pergamos. But the three oldest manuscripts, and *Vulgate* and *Syriac*, read instead of “which I hate,” “IN LIKE MANNER.”

16. The three oldest manuscripts read, “Repent, *therefore*.” Not only the Nicolaitanes, but the whole Church of Pergamos is called on to repent of not having *hated* the Nicolaitane teaching and practice. Contrast Paul, ^{ⲉⲁⲛⲉ}Acts 20:26.

I will come — I am coming.

fight against them — *Greek*, “war with them”; with the Nicolaitanes primarily; but including also *chastisement of the* whole Church at Pergamos: compare “unto THEE.”

with the sword of my mouth — resumed from ^{ⲉⲙⲓⲛ}Revelation 1:16, but with an allusion to the drawn *sword* with which the angel of the Lord confronted Balaam on his way to curse Israel: an earnest of *the sword* by which he and the seduced Israelites fell at last. The spiritual Balaamites of John’s day are to be smitten with the Lord’s spiritual sword, the word or “rod of His mouth.”

17. to eat — omitted in the three oldest manuscripts.

the hidden manna — the heavenly food of Israel, in contrast to the idol-meats (^{ⲉⲙⲓⲛ}Revelation 2:14). A pot of manna was laid up in the holy place “before the testimony.” The allusion is here to this: probably also to the Lord’s discourse (^{ⲉⲙⲓⲛ}John 6:31-35). Translate, “the manna which is hidden.” As the manna hidden in the sanctuary was by divine power preserved from corruption, so Christ in His incorruptible body has passed

into the heavens, and is hidden there until the time of His appearing. Christ Himself is the manna “hidden” from the world, but revealed to the believer, so that he has already a foretaste of His preciousness. Compare as to Christ’s own hidden food on earth, [Ⓜ]John 4:32,34, and Job 23:12. The full manifestation shall be at His coming. Believers are now hidden, even as their meat is hidden. As the manna in the sanctuary, unlike the other manna, was incorruptible, so the spiritual feast offered to all who reject the world’s dainties for Christ is everlasting: an incorruptible body and life for ever in Christ at the resurrection.

white stone ... new name ... no man knoweth saving he — TRENCH’S explanation seems best. *White* is the color and livery of heaven. “New” implies something altogether renewed and heavenly. The white stone is a glistening diamond, the Urim borne by the high priest within the *choschen* or breastplate of judgment, with the twelve tribes’ names on the twelve precious stones, next the heart. The word *Urim* means “light,” answering to the color *white*. None but the high priest knew the name written upon it, probably the incommunicable name of God, “Jehovah.” The high priest consulted it in some divinely appointed way to get direction from God when needful. The “new name” is *Christ’s* (compare [Ⓜ]Revelation 3:12, “I will write upon him *My new name*”): some new revelation of Himself which shall hereafter be imparted to His people, and which they alone are capable of receiving. The connection with the “hidden manna” will thus be clear, as none save the high priest had access to the “manna hidden” in the sanctuary. Believers, as spiritual priests unto God, shall enjoy the heavenly antitypes to the hidden manna and the Urim stone. What they had peculiarly to contend against at Pergamos was the temptation to *idol-meats*, and *fornication*, put in their way by Balaamites. As Phinehas was rewarded with “an everlasting priesthood” for his zeal against these very sins to which the Old Testament Balaam seduced Israel; so the heavenly high priesthood is the reward promised here to those zealous against the New Testament Balaamites tempting Christ’s people to the same sins.

receiveth it — namely, “the stone”; not “the new name”; see above. The “name that no man knew but Christ Himself,” He shall hereafter reveal to His people.

18. Thyatira — in Lydia, south of Pergamos. Lydia, the purple-seller of this city, having been converted at Philippi, a Macedonian city (with which Thyatira, as being a Macedonian colony, had naturally much intercourse), was probably the instrument of first carrying the Gospel to her native town. John follows the geographical order here, for Thyatira lay a little to the left of the road from Pergamos to Sardis [STRABO, 13:4].

Son of God ... eyes like ... fire ... feet ... like fine brass — or “glowing brass” (see on ^{¶114}Revelation 1:14,15, whence this description is resumed). Again His attributes accord with His address. The title “Son of God,” is from Psalm 2:7,9, which is referred to in ^{¶127}Revelation 2:27. The attribute, “eyes like a flame,” etc. answers to ^{¶123}Revelation 2:23, “I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts.” The attribute, “feet like ... brass,” answers to ^{¶127}Revelation 2:27, “as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers,” He *treading* them *to pieces* with His strong feet.

19. The oldest manuscripts transpose the *English Version* order, and read, “faith and service.” The four are subordinate to “thy works”; thus, “I know thy works, *even* the love and the faith (these two forming one pair, as ‘faith works by love,’ Galatians 5:6), and the service (*ministration* to the suffering members of the Church, and to all in spiritual or temporal need), and the endurance of (that is, shown by) thee (this pronoun belongs to all four).” As *love* is inward, so *service* is its outward manifestation. Similarly, *faith* and persevering *endurance*, or “*patient continuance* (the same *Greek* as here, Romans 2:7) in well-doing,” are connected.

and thy works; and the last — Omit the second “and,” with the three oldest manuscripts and the ancient versions; translate, “And (I know) thy works which are last (to be) more in number than the first”; realizing 1 Thessalonians 4:1; the converse of ^{¶125}Matthew 12:45 ^{¶127}2 Peter 2:20. Instead of retrograding from “the first works” and “first love,” as Ephesus, Thyatira’s *last works* exceeded her *first* (Revelation 2:4,5).

20. a few things — omitted in the three oldest manuscripts. Translate then, “I have against thee *that*,” etc.

sufferest — The three oldest manuscripts read, “lettest alone.”

that woman — Two oldest manuscripts read, “THY wife”; two omit it. *Vulgate* and most ancient versions read as *English Version*. The symbolical Jezebel was to the Church of Thyatira what Jezebel, Ahab’s “wife,” was to him. Some self-styled prophetess (or as the feminine in *Hebrew* is often used *collectively* to express a multitude, *a set of false prophets*), as closely attached to the Church of Thyatira as a *wife* is to a husband, and as powerfully influencing for evil that Church as Jezebel did Ahab. As Balaam, in Israel’s early history, so Jezebel, daughter of Eth-baal, king of Sidon (¹¹⁶¹1 Kings 16:31, formerly priest of Astarte, and murderer of his predecessor on the throne, JOSEPHUS [*Against Apion*, 1.18]), was the great seducer to idolatry in Israel’s later history. Like her father, she was swift to shed blood. Wholly given to Baal worship, like Eth-baal, whose name expresses his idolatry, she, with her strong will, seduced the weak Ahab and Israel beyond the calf-worship (which was a worship of the true God under the cherub-ox form, that is, a violation of the second commandment) to that of Baal (a violation of the first commandment also). She seems to have been herself a priestess and prophetess of Baal. Compare ¹¹⁶²2 Kings 9:22,30, “*whoredoms* of ... Jezebel and her *witchcrafts*” (impurity was part of the worship of the Phoenician Astarte, or Venus). Her spiritual counterpart at Thyatira lured God’s “servants” by pretended utterances of inspiration to the same libertinism, fornication, and eating of idol-meats, as the Balaamites and Nicolaitanes (Revelation 2:6,14,15). By a false spiritualism these seducers led their victims into the grossest carnality, as though things done in the flesh were outside the true man, and were, therefore, indifferent. “The deeper the Church penetrated into heathenism, the more she herself became heathenish; this prepares us for the expressions ‘harlot’ and ‘Babylon,’ applied to her afterwards” [AUBERLEN].

to teach and to seduce — The three oldest manuscripts read, “and she teaches and seduces,” or “deceives.” “Thyatira was just the reverse of Ephesus. There, much zeal for orthodoxy, but little love; here, activity of faith and love, but insufficient zeal for godly discipline and doctrine, a patience of error even where there was not a participation in it” [TRENCH].

21. space — *Greek*, “time.”

of her fornication ... she repented not — The three oldest manuscripts read, “and she *willeth not to repent of* (literally, ‘out of,’ that is, so as to come out of) *her fornication*.” Here there is a transition from *literal to spiritual* fornication, as appears from ⁽⁶¹²²⁾Revelation 2:22. The idea arose from Jehovah’s covenant relation to the Old Testament Church being regarded as a marriage, any transgression against which was, therefore, *harlotry, fornication, or adultery*.

22. Behold — calling attention to her awful doom to come.

I will — *Greek* present, “I cast her.”

a bed — The place of her sin shall be the place of her punishment. The bed of her sin shall be her bed of sickness and anguish. Perhaps a pestilence was about to be sent. Or the bed of the grave, and of the hell beyond, where the worm dieth not.

them that commit adultery with her — spiritually; including both the eating of *idol-meats* and *fornication*. “With her,” in the *Greek*, implies *participation with her* in her adulteries, namely, by *suffering her* (⁽⁶¹²¹⁾Revelation 2:20), or *letting her alone*, and so virtually encouraging her. Her punishment is distinct from theirs; she is to be cast into a *bed*, and her *children* to be *killed*; while those who make themselves partakers of her sin by tolerating her, are to be cast into *great tribulation*.

except they repent — *Greek* aorist, “repent” *at once*; shall have repented by the time limited in My purpose.

their deeds — Two of the oldest manuscripts and most ancient versions read “her.” Thus, God’s true servants, who by connivance, are incurring the guilt of *her deeds*, are distinguished from her. One oldest manuscript, ANDREAS, and CYPRIAN, support “their.”

23. her children — (Isaiah 57:3 Ezekiel 23:45,47). Her proper adherents; not those who *suffer* her, but those who are begotten of her. A distinct class from the last in ⁽⁶¹²²⁾Revelation 2:22 (compare *Note*, see on ⁽⁶¹²²⁾Revelation 2:22), whose sin was less direct, being that only of connivance.

kill ... with death — Compare the disaster that overtook the literal Jezebel's votaries of Baal, and Ahab's sons, ^{<1180>}1 Kings 18:40 2 Kings 10:6,7,24,25. *Kill with death* is a Hebraism for *slay with most sure and awful death*; so "dying thou shalt die" (^{<0027>}Genesis 2:17). Not "die the common death of men" (^{<0029>}Numbers 16:29).

all the churches shall know — implying that these addresses are designed for the catholic Church of all ages and places. So palpably shall God's hand be seen in the judgment on Thyatira, that the whole Church shall recognize it as God's doing.

I am he — the "I" is strongly emphatical: "that it is *I* am He who," etc.

searcheth ... hearts — God's peculiar attribute is given to Christ. The "reins" are the seat of the desires; the "heart," that of the thoughts. The Greek for "searcheth" expresses an accurate following up of all tracks and windings.

unto every one of you — literally, "unto you, to each."

according to your works — to be judged not according to the mere act as it appears to man, but with reference to the motive, *faith* and *love* being the only motives which God recognizes as sound.

24. you ... and ... the rest — The three oldest manuscripts omit "and"; translate then, "Unto you, the rest."

as many as have not — not only do not *hold*, but are free from contact with.

and which — The oldest manuscripts omit "and"; translate, "whosoever."

the depths — These false prophets boasted peculiarly of their *knowledge of mysteries* and *the deep things of God*; pretensions subsequently expressed by their arrogant title, *Gnostics* ("full of knowledge"). The Spirit here declares their so-called "depths," (namely, of knowledge of divine things) to be really "depths of Satan"; just as in Revelation 2:9, He says, instead of "the synagogue of God," "the synagogue of Satan."

HENGSTENBERG thinks the teachers themselves professed to fathom *the depths of Satan*, giving loose rein to fleshly lusts, without being hurt thereby. They who thus think to fight Satan with his own weapons

always find him more than a match for them. The words, “as they speak,” that is, “as they call them,” coming after not only “depths,” but “depths of Satan,” seem to favor this latter view; otherwise I should prefer the former, in which case, “as they speak,” or “call them,” must refer to “depths” only, not also “depths of *Satan*.” The original sin of Adam was a desire to know EVIL *as well as good*, so in HENGSTENBERG’S view, those who professed to know “the depths of Satan.” It is the prerogative of God alone to know evil fully, without being hurt or defiled by it.

I will put — Two oldest manuscripts have “I put,” or “cast.” One oldest manuscript reads as *English Version*.

none other burden — save abstinence from, and protestation against, these abominations; no “depths” beyond your reach, such as they teach, no new doctrine, but the old faith and rule of practice once for all delivered to the saints. Exaggerating and perfecting Paul’s doctrine of grace without the law as the source of justification and sanctification, these false prophets rejected the law as a rule of life, as though it were an intolerable “burden.” But it is a “light” burden. In ⁴¹⁵⁸Acts 15:28,29, the very term “burden,” as here, is used of abstinence from fornication and idol-meats; to this the Lord here refers.

25. that which ye have already — (Jude 1:3, end).

hold fast — do not let go from your grasp, however false teachers may wish to wrest it from you.

till I come — when your conflict with evil will be at an end. The *Greek* implies *uncertainty* as to when He shall come.

26. And — implying the close connection of the promise to the conqueror that follows, with the preceding exhortation, ⁴¹⁶²Revelation 2:25.

and keepeth — *Greek*, “and he that keepeth.” Compare the same word in the passage already alluded to by the Lord, ⁴¹⁵⁸Acts 15:28,29, end.

my works — in contrast to “her (*English Version*, ‘their’) works” (⁴¹⁶²Revelation 2:22). The works which I command and which are the fruit of My Spirit.

unto the end — (^{4B1E}Matthew 24:13). The image is perhaps from the race, wherein it is not enough to enter the lists, but the runner must persevere *to the end*.

give power — *Greek*, “authority.”

over the nations — at Christ’s coming the saints shall possess the kingdom “under the whole heaven”; therefore over this earth; compare ^{4B1E}Luke 19:17, “have thou *authority* [the same *word* as here] over ten cities.”

27. From Psalm 2:8,9.

rule — literally, “rule as a shepherd.” In Psalm 2:9 it is, “Thou shalt *break* them with a rod of iron.” The *Septuagint*, pointing the *Hebrew* word differently, read as Revelation here. The *English Version* of Psalm 2:9 is doubtless right, as the parallel word, “dash in pieces,” proves. But the Spirit in this case sanctions the *additional* thought as true, that the Lord shall mingle mercy to some, with judgment on others; beginning by destroying His Antichristian foes, He shall reign in love over the rest. “Christ shall rule them with a *scepter* of iron, to make them capable of being ruled with a scepter of gold; severity first, that grace may come after” (TRENCH, who thinks we ought to translate “SCEPTER” for “rod,” as in Hebrews 1:8). “Shepherd” is used in Jeremiah 6:3, of *hostile rulers*; so also in Zechariah 11:16. As severity here is the primary thought, “rule as a shepherd” seems to me to be used thus: He who would have shepherded them with a pastoral rod, shall, because of their hardened unbelief, shepherd them with a rod of iron.

shall they be broken — So one oldest manuscript, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic Versions* read. But two oldest manuscripts, read, “as the vessels of a potter *are* broken to shivers.” A *potter’s vessel dashed to pieces*, because of its failing to answer the design of the maker, is the image to depict God’s sovereign power to give reprobates to destruction, not by caprice, but in the exercise of His righteous judgment. The saints shall be in Christ’s victorious “armies” when He shall inflict the last decisive blow, and afterwards shall reign with Him. Having by faith “overcome the world,” they shall also rule the world.

even as I — “as *I* also have received of (from) My Father,” namely, in Psalm 2:7-9. Jesus had refused to receive the kingdom without the cross at Satan’s hands; He would receive it from none but the Father, who had appointed the cross as the path to the crown. As the Father has given the authority to Me over the heathen and uttermost parts of the earth, so I impart a share of it to My victorious disciple.

28. the morning star — that is, I will give unto him *Myself*, who am “the morning star” (^{<6216>}Revelation 22:16); so that reflecting My perfect brightness, he shall shine like Me, the morning star, and share My *kingly glory* (of which a *star* is the symbol, ^{<0217>}Numbers 21:17 Matthew 2:2). Compare ^{<6217>}Revelation 2:17, “I will give him ... the hidden manna,” that is, *Myself*, who am that manna (^{<6163>}John 6:31-33).

CHAPTER 3

REVELATION 3:1-22.

THE EPISTLES TO SARDIS, PHILADELPHIA, AND LAODICEA.

1. Sardis — the ancient capital of Lydia, the kingdom of wealthy Croesus, on the river Pactolus. The address to this Church is full of rebuke. It does not seem to have been in vain; for MELITO, bishop of Sardis in the second century, was eminent for piety and learning. He visited Palestine to assure himself and his flock as to the Old Testament canon and wrote an epistle on the subject [EUSEBIUS *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.26]; he also wrote a commentary on the Apocalypse [EUSEBIUS, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.26; JEROME, *On Illustrious Men*, 24].

he that hath the seven Spirits of God — that is, He who hath all the fullness of the Spirit (Revelation 1:4 4:5 5:6, with which compare Zechariah 3:9 4:10, proving His Godhead). This attribute implies His infinite power by the Spirit to convict of sin and of a hollow profession.

and the seven stars — (Revelation 1:16,20). His *having the seven stars*, or presiding ministers, flows, as a consequence, from His *having the seven Spirits*, or the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The human ministry is the fruit of Christ's sending down the gifts of the Spirit. *Stars* imply brilliancy and glory; the fullness of the Spirit, and the fullness of brilliant light in Him, form a designed contrast to the formality which He reproves.

name ... livest ... dead — (1 Timothy 5:6 2 Timothy 3:5 Titus 1:16; compare Ephesians 2:1,5 5:14). "A name," that is, a reputation. Sardis was famed among the churches for spiritual *vitality*; yet the Heart-searcher, who seeth not as man seeth, pronounces her *dead*; how great searchings of heart should her case create among even the best of us! Laodicea deceived herself as to her true state (Revelation 3:17), but it is not written that she had a high *name* among the other churches, as Sardis had.

2. Be — *Greek*. “Become,” what thou art not, “watchful,” or “wakeful,” literally, “waking.”

the things which remain — Strengthen those thy remaining few graces, which, in thy spiritual deadly slumber, are not yet quite extinct [ALFORD]. “The things that remain” can hardly mean “the PERSONS that are not yet dead, but *are ready to die*”; for Revelation 3:4 implies that the “few” faithful ones at Sardis were not “ready to die,” but were full of life.

are — The two oldest manuscripts read, “were ready,” literally, “were about to die,” namely, at the time when you “strengthen” them. This implies that “thou art dead,” Revelation 3:1, is to be taken with limitation; for those must have some life who are told to *strengthen the things that remain*.

perfect — literally, “filled up in full complement”; Translate, “complete.” Weighed in the balance of Him who requires living faith as the motive of works, and found wanting.

before God — *Greek*, “in the sight of God.” The three oldest manuscripts, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*, read, “before (in the sight of) MY God”; Christ’s judgment is God the Father’s judgment. In the sight of men, Sardis had “a name of living”: “so many and so great are the obligations of pastors, that he who would in reality fulfill even a third of them, would be esteemed holy by men, whereas, if content with that alone, he would be sure not to escape hell” [JUAN D’AVILA]. Note: in Sardis and Laodicea alone of the seven we read of no conflict with foes within or without the Church. Not that either had renounced the *appearance* of opposition to the world; but neither had the faithfulness to witness for God by word and example, so as to “torment them that dwelt on the earth” (⁵¹¹Revelation 11:10).

3. how thou hast received — (Colossians 2:6 1 Thessalonians 4:1 ⁵¹¹1 Timothy 6:20). What Sardis is to “remember” is, not *how* joyfully she had received originally the Gospel message, but how the precious deposit was committed to her originally, so that she could not say, she had not “received and heard” it. The *Greek* is not aorist (as in Revelation 2:4, as to Ephesus, “Thou *didst* leave thy first love”), but “thou hast received” (perfect), and still hast the permanent deposit of doctrine committed to

thee. The word “keep” (so the *Greek* is for *English Version*, “hold fast”) which follows, accords with this sense. “Keep” or observe the commandment which thou hast received and didst hear.

heard — *Greek* aorist, “didst hear,” namely, when the Gospel doctrine was committed to thee. TRENCH explains “how,” *with what demonstration of the Spirit and power* from Christ’s ambassadors the truth came to you, and how heartily and zealously you at first received it. Similarly BENGEL, “Regard to her former *character* (*how* it once stood) ought to guard Sardis against the future *hour*, *whatsoever* it shall be, proving fatal to her.” But it is not likely that the Spirit repeats the same exhortation virtually to Sardis as to Ephesus.

If therefore — seeing thou art so warned, if, nevertheless, etc.

come on thee as a thief — in special judgment on thee as a Church, with the same stealthiness and as unexpectedly as shall be My visible second coming. As *the thief* gives no notice of his approach. Christ applies the language which in its fullest sense describes His second coming, to describe His coming in special judgments on churches and states (as Jerusalem, Matthew 24:4-28) these special judgments being anticipatory earnest of that great last coming. “The last day is hidden from us, that every day may be observed by us” [AUGUSTINE]. Twice Christ in the days of His flesh spake the same words (ⲓⲃⲏⲛ Matthew 24:42,43 ⲓⲃⲏⲛ Luke 12:39,40); and so deeply had His words been engraven on the minds of the apostles that they are often repeated in their writings (ⲓⲃⲏⲛ Revelation 16:15 1 Thessalonians 5:2,4,6 ⲓⲃⲏⲛ 2 Peter 3:10). The Greek proverb was that “the feet of the avenging deities are shod with wool,” expressing the noiseless approach of the divine judgments, and their possible nearness at the moment when they were supposed the farthest off [TRENCH].

4. The three oldest manuscripts prefix “but,” or “nevertheless” (notwithstanding thy spiritual deadness), and omit “even.”

names — persons *named* in the book of life (Revelation 3:5) known by name by the Lord as His own. These had the reality corresponding to their name; not a mere *name* among men as *living*, while really *dead* (Revelation 3:1). The gracious Lord does not overlook any exceptional cases of real saints in the midst of unreal professors.

not defiled their garments — namely, the garments of their Christian profession, of which baptism is the initiatory seal, whence the candidates for baptism used in the ancient Church to be arrayed in white. Compare also ⁴¹⁵⁷Ephesians 5:27, as to the spotlessness of the Church when she shall be presented to Christ; and Revelation 19:8, as to the “fine linen, clean and white, the righteousness of the saints,” in which it shall be granted to her to be arrayed; and “the wedding garment.” Meanwhile she is not to sully her Christian profession with any defilement of flesh or spirit, but to “keep her garments.” For no defilement shall enter the heavenly city. Not that any keep themselves here wholly free from defilement; but, as compared with hollow professors, the godly *keep themselves unspotted from the world*; and when they do contract it, they wash it away, so as to have their “robes white in the blood of the Lamb” (⁴¹⁷⁴Revelation 7:14). The *Greek* is not “to stain” (*Greek*, “*miainein*”), but to “defile,” or besmear (*Greek*, “*molunein*”), So 5:3.

they shall walk with me in white — The promised reward accords with the character of those to be rewarded: keeping their *garments undefiled* and white through the blood of the Lamb now, they shall *walk with Him in white* hereafter. On “with me,” compare the very same words, ⁴²³⁸Luke 23:43 ⁴¹⁷⁴John 17:24. “Walk” implies spiritual life, for only the living walk; also liberty, for it is only the free who walk at large. The grace and dignity of flowing long garments is seen to best advantage when the person “walks”: so the graces of the saint’s manifested character shall appear fully when he *shall serve* the Lord perfectly hereafter (Revelation 22:3).

they are worthy — with the worthiness (not their own, but that) which Christ has put on them (⁴¹⁷⁴Revelation 7:14). Ezekiel 16:14, “perfect through MY comeliness which I had put upon thee.” Grace is glory in the bud. “The *worthiness* here denotes a congruity between the saint’s *state of grace* on earth, and that of *glory*, which the Lord has appointed for them, about to be estimated by the law itself of grace” [VITRINGA]. Contrast ⁴¹³⁶Acts 13:46.

5. white — not a dull white, but glittering, dazzling white [GROTIUS]. Compare ⁴¹³⁸Matthew 13:43. The body transfigured into the likeness of Christ’s body, and emitting beams of light reflected from Him, is probably the “white raiment” promised here.

the same — *Greek*, “THIS man”; he and he alone. So one oldest manuscript reads. But two oldest manuscripts, and most of the ancient versions, “shall THUS be clothed,” etc.

raiment — *Greek*, “garments.” “He that overcometh” shall receive the same reward as they who “have not defiled their garments” (Revelation 3:4); therefore the two are identical.

I will not — *Greek*, “I will not by any means.”

blot out ... name out of ... book of life — of the heavenly city. A register was kept in ancient cities of their citizens: the names of the dead were of course erased. So those who have a *name that they live and are dead* (Revelation 3:1), are blotted out of God’s roll of the heavenly citizens and heirs of eternal *life*; not that in God’s electing decree they ever were in His book of life. But, according to human conceptions, those who had a high name for piety would be supposed to be in it, and were, in respect to privileges, actually among those in the way of salvation; but these privileges, and the fact that they once might have been saved, shall be of no avail to them. As to the *book of life*, compare Revelation 13:8 17:8 20:12,15 21:27 ^{TR}Exodus 32:32 Psalm 69:28 Daniel 12:1. In the sense of the “call,” many are enrolled among the *called* to salvation, who shall not be found among *the chosen* at last. The pale of salvation is wider than that of election. Election is fixed. Salvation is open to all and is pending (humanly speaking) in the case of those mentioned here. But ^{TR}Revelation 20:15 21:27, exhibit the book of the elect alone in the narrower sense, after the erasure of the others.

before ... before — *Greek*, “in the presence of.” Compare the same promise of Christ’s confessing before His Father those who confessed Him, ^{TR}Matthew 10:32,33 Luke 12:8,9. He omits “in heaven” after “My Father,” because there is, now that He is in heaven, no contrast between the Father *in heaven* and the Son *on earth*. He now sets His seal from heaven upon many of His words uttered on earth [TRENCH]. An undesigned coincidence, proving that these epistles are, as they profess, in their words, as well as substance, Christ’s own addresses; not even tinged with the color of John’s style, such as it appears in his Gospel and Epistles. The coincidence is mainly with the three other Gospels, and not with John’s, which makes the coincidence more markedly undesigned. So

also the clause, “He that hath an ear, let him hear,” is not repeated from John’s Gospel, but from the Lord’s own words in the three synoptic Gospels (⁴¹¹⁵Matthew 11:15 13:9 Mark 4:9,23 7:16 Luke 8:8 14:35).

6. (See on Revelation 2:7.)

7. Philadelphia — in Lydia, twenty-eight miles southeast of Sardis, built by Attalus Philadelphus, king of Pergamos, who died A.D. 138. It was nearly destroyed by an earthquake in the reign of Tiberius [TACITUS, *Annals*, 2.47]. The connection of this Church with Jews there causes the address to it to have an Old Testament coloring in the images employed. It and Smyrna alone of the seven receive unmixed praise.

he that is holy — as in the Old Testament, “*the Holy One* of Israel.” Thus Jesus and the God of the Old Testament are one. None but God is absolutely holy (*Greek*, “*hagios*,” separate from evil and perfectly hating it). In contrast to “the synagogue of Satan” (Revelation 3:9).

true — *Greek*, “*alethinos*”: “VERY God,” as distinguished from the false gods and from all those who *say that they are* what *they are not* (Revelation 3:9):real, genuine. Furthermore, He *perfectly* realizes all that is involved in the names, GOD, *Light* (John 1:9 1 John 2:8), *Bread* (⁴¹⁶²John 6:32), the *Vine* (John 15:1); as distinguished from all typical, partial, and imperfect realizations of the idea. His nature answers to His name (John 17:3 1 Thessalonians 1:9). The *Greek*, “*alethes*,” on the other hand, is “truth-speaking,” “truth-loving” (⁴¹⁶³John 3:33 Titus 1:2).

he that hath the key of David — the antitype of Eliakim, to whom the “key,” the emblem of authority “over the house of David,” was transferred from Shebna, who was removed from the office of chamberlain or treasurer, as unworthy of it. Christ, the Heir of the throne of David, shall supplant all the less worthy stewards who have abused their trust in God’s spiritual house, and “shall reign over the house of Jacob,” literal and spiritual (⁴¹⁶⁴Luke 1:32,33), “for ever,” “as a Son over His own house” (Hebrews 3:2-6). It rests with Christ to open or shut the heavenly palace, deciding who is, and who is not, to be admitted: as He also opens, or shuts, the prison, *having the keys of hell (the grave) and death* (⁴¹⁶⁵Revelation 1:18). The power of the keys was given to Peter and the other apostles, only when, and in so far as, Christ made him and them

infallible. Whatever degrees of this power may have been committed to ministers, the supreme power belongs to Christ alone. Thus Peter rightly opened the Gospel door to the Gentiles (Acts 10:1-48 11:17,18; especially ~~Acts~~ Acts 14:27, end). But he wrongly tried to shut the door in part again (~~Galatians~~ Galatians 2:11-18). Eliakim had “the key of the house of David laid upon his shoulder”: Christ, as the antitypical David, Himself has the key of the supreme “government upon His shoulder.” His attribute here, as in the former addresses, accords with His promise. Though “the synagogue of Satan,” false “Jews” (Revelation 3:9) try to “shut” the “door” which I “set open before thee”; “no man can shut it” (Revelation 3:8).

shutteth — So *Vulgate* and *Syriac Versions* read. But the four oldest manuscripts read, “shall shut”; so *Coptic Version* and ORIGEN.

and no man openeth — Two oldest manuscripts, B, *Aleph*, *Coptic Version*, and ORIGEN read, “shall open.” Two oldest manuscripts, A, C, and *Vulgate Version* support *English Version* reading.

8. I have set — *Greek*, “given”: it is My gracious *gift* to thee.

open door — for evangelization; a door of spiritual usefulness. The *opening of a door* by Him to the Philadelphian Church accords with the previous assignation to Him of “the key of David.”

and — The three oldest manuscripts, A, B, C, and ORIGEN read, “*which* no man can shut.”

for — “because.”

a little — This gives the idea that Christ says, He sets before Philadelphia an open door because she has *some little* strength; whereas the sense rather is, He does so because she has “*but little* strength”: being consciously weak herself, she is the fitter object for God’s power to rest on [so AQUINAS], that so the Lord Christ may have all the glory.

and hast kept — *and* so, the *littleness of thy strength* becoming the source of Almighty power to thee, as leading thee to rest wholly on My great power, *thou hast kept My word*. GROTIUS makes “little strength” to mean that she had a Church *small in numbers and external resources*: “a little flock poor in worldly goods, and of small account in the eyes of men”

[TRENCH]. So ALFORD. I prefer the view given above. The *Greek* verbs are in the aorist tense: “Thou didst keep ... didst not deny My name”: alluding to some particular occasion when her faithfulness was put to the test.

9. I will make — *Greek* present, “I make,” literally, “I give” (see on Revelation 3:8). The promise to Philadelphia is larger than that to Smyrna. To Smyrna the promise was that “the synagogue of Satan” should not prevail against the faithful in her: to Philadelphia, that she should even win over some of “the synagogue of Satan” to *fall on their faces and confess God is in her of a truth*. Translate, “(some) of the synagogue.” For until Christ shall come, and *all* Israel then be saved, there is but “a remnant” being gathered out of the Jews “according to the election of grace.” This is an instance of how Christ set before her an “open door,” some of her greatest adversaries, the Jews, being brought to the obedience of the faith. Their *worshipping before her feet* expresses the convert’s willingness to take the very lowest place in the Church, doing servile honor to those whom once they persecuted, rather than dwell with the ungodly. So the Philippian jailer before Paul.

10. patience — “endurance.” “The word of My endurance” is *My Gospel word*, which teaches *patient endurance* in expectation of my coming (Revelation 1:9). *My endurance* is the endurance which I require, and which I practice. Christ Himself now *endures*, *patiently* waiting until the usurper be cast out, and all “His enemies be made His footstool.” So, too, His Church, for the joy before her of sharing His coming kingdom, *endures patiently*. Hence, in ^{CHAB}Revelation 3:11, follows, “Behold, I come quickly.”

I also — The reward is in kind: “because thou didst keep,” etc. “I also (on My side) will keep thee,” etc.

from — *Greek*, “(so as to deliver thee) *out of*,” not to exempt *from* temptation.

the hour of temptation — the appointed *season* of affliction and temptation (so in ^{CHAB}Deuteronomy 4:34 the plagues are called “the temptations of Egypt”), literally, “*the temptation*”: the sore temptation which is coming on: the time of great tribulation before Christ’s second coming.

to try them that dwell upon the earth — those who are of earth, earthy (^{MS} Revelation 8:13). “Dwell” implies that their home is earth, not heaven. *All mankind, except the elect* (Revelation 13:8,14). The temptation brings out the fidelity of those *kept* by Christ and hardens the unbelieving reprobates (^{MS} Revelation 9:20,21 16:11,21). The particular persecutions which befell Philadelphia shortly after, were the earnest of the great last tribulation before Christ’s coming, to which the Church’s attention in all ages is directed.

11. Behold — omitted by the three oldest manuscripts and most ancient versions.

I come quickly — the great incentive to persevering faithfulness, and the consolation under present trials.

that ... which thou hast — “The word of my patience,” or “endurance” (^{MS} Revelation 3:10), which He had just commended them for keeping, and which involved with it the attaining of the kingdom; this they would lose if they yielded to the temptation of exchanging consistency and suffering for compromise and ease.

that no man take thy crown — which otherwise thou wouldst receive: that no tempter cause thee to lose it: not that the tempter would thus secure it for himself (^{MS} Colossians 2:18).

12. pillar in the temple — In one sense there shall be “no temple” in the heavenly city because there shall be no distinction of things into sacred and secular, for all things and persons shall be holy to the Lord. The city shall be all one great temple, in which the saints shall be not merely *stones*, as in the spiritual temple now on earth, but all eminent as *pillars*: immovably firm (unlike Philadelphia, the city which was so often shaken by earthquakes, STRABO [12 and 13]), like the colossal pillars before Solomon’s temple, Boaz (that is, “In it is strength”) and Jachin (“It shall be established”): only that those pillars were outside, these shall be within the temple.

my God — (See on Revelation 2:7).

go no more out — The *Greek* is stronger, *never more at all*. As the elect angels are beyond the possibility of falling, being now under (as the

Schoolmen say) “the blessed necessity of goodness,” so shall the saints be. The door shall be once for all shut, as well to shut safely in for ever the elect, as to shut out the lost (⁴²⁵⁰Matthew 25:10 ⁴¹⁸⁵John 8:35; compare Isaiah 22:23, the type, Eliakim). They shall be priests for ever unto God (Revelation 1:6). “Who would not yearn for that city out of which no friend departs, and into which no enemy enters?” [AUGUSTINE in TRENCH].

write upon him the name of my God — as belonging to God in a peculiar sense (Revelation 7:3 9:4 14:1; and especially Revelation 22:4), therefore secure. As the name of Jehovah (“Holiness to the Lord”) was on the golden plate on the high priest’s forehead (⁴²³⁹Exodus 28:36-38); so the saints in their heavenly royal priesthood shall bear His name openly, as consecrated to Him. Compare the caricature of this in the brand on the forehead of the beast’s followers (⁴⁶³⁰Revelation 13:16,17), and on the harlot (Revelation 17:5; compare Revelation 20:4).

name of the city of my God — as one of its citizens (Revelation 21:2,3,10, which is briefly alluded to by anticipation here). The full description of the city forms the appropriate close of the book. The saint’s citizenship is now hidden, but then it shall be manifested: he shall have *the right to enter in through the gates into the city* (⁴⁶²⁴Revelation 22:14). This was the city which Abraham *looked for*.

new — *Greek*, “*kaine*.” Not the old Jerusalem, once called “the holy city,” but having forfeited the name. *Greek*, “*nea*,” would express that it had *recently come* into existence; but *Greek*, “*kaine*,” that which is *new and different*, superseding the worn-out old Jerusalem and its polity. “John, in the Gospel, applies to the old city the *Greek* name *Hierosolyma*. But in the Apocalypse, always, to the heavenly city the *Hebrew* name, *Hierusalem*. The Hebrew name is the original and holier one: the *Greek*, the recent and more secular and political one” [BENGEL].

my new name — at present incommunicable and only known to God: to be hereafter revealed and made the believer’s own in union with God in Christ. Christ’s name written on him denotes he shall be *wholly Christ’s*. New also relates to Christ, who shall assume a *new* character (answering to His “new name”) entering with His saints on a kingdom — not that which He had with the Father before the worlds, but that earned by His

humiliation as Son of man. GIBBON, the infidel [*Decline and Fall*, ch. 64], gives an unwilling testimony to the fulfillment of the prophecy as to Philadelphia from a temporal point of view, Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect, — a *column* in a scene of ruins — a pleasing example that the paths of honor and safety may sometimes be the same.”

13. (See on Revelation 2:7).

14. Laodiceans — The city was in the southwest of Phrygia, on the river Lycus, not far from Colosse, and lying between it and Philadelphia. It was destroyed by an earthquake, A.D. 62, and rebuilt by its wealthy citizens without the help of the state [TACITUS, *Annals*, 14.27]. This wealth (arising from the excellence of its wools) led to a self-satisfied, lukewarm state in spiritual things, as ⁶⁶⁸⁷Revelation 3:17 describes. See on ⁵⁰⁴⁶Colossians 4:16, on the Epistle which is thought to have been written to the Laodicean Church by Paul. The Church in latter times was apparently flourishing; for one of the councils at which the canon of Scripture was determined was held in Laodicea in A.D. 361. Hardly a Christian is now to be found on or near its site.

the Amen — (Isaiah 65:16, *Hebrew*, “Bless Himself in the God of *Amen* ... swear by the God of *Amen*,” ⁶⁶⁸⁸2 Corinthians 1:20). He who not only says, but is, *the Truth*. The saints used *Amen* at the end of prayer, or in assenting to the word of God; but none, save the Son of God, ever said, “Amen, I say unto you,” for it is the language peculiar to God, who avers *by Himself*. The New Testament formula, “Amen. I say unto you,” is equivalent to the Old Testament formula, “*as I live*, saith Jehovah.” In John’s Gospel alone He uses (in the *Greek*) the double “Amen,” ⁶⁶⁸⁹John 1:51 3:3, etc.; in *English Version*, “Verily, verily.” The title happily harmonizes with the address. His unchanging faithfulness as “the Amen” contrasts with Laodicea’s wavering of purpose, “neither hot nor cold” (⁶⁶⁹⁰Revelation 3:16). The angel of Laodicea has with some probability been conjectured to be Archippus, to whom, thirty years previously, Paul had already given a monition, as needing to be stirred up to diligence in his ministry. So the *Apostolic Constitutions*, [8.46], name him as the first bishop of Laodicea: supposed to be the son of Philemon (Philemon 1:2).

faithful and true witness — As “the Amen” expresses the unchangeable truth of His promises; so “the faithful the true witness,” the truth of His revelations as to the heavenly things which He has seen and testifies. “Faithful,” that is, trustworthy (^{<5016>}2 Timothy 2:11,13). “True” is here (Greek, “*alethinos*”) *not truth-speaking* (Greek, “*alethes*”), but “perfectly realizing all that is comprehended in the name *Witness*” (^{<5013>}1 Timothy 6:13). Three things are necessary for this:

- (1) to have seen with His own eyes what He attests;
- (2) to be competent to relate it for others;
- (3) to be willing truthfully to do so. In Christ all these conditions meet [TRENCH].

beginning of the creation of God — not he whom God created first, but as in ^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15-18 (see on ^{<5015>}Colossians 1:15-18), the *Beginner* of all creation, its originating instrument. All creation would not be represented adoring Him, if He were but one of themselves. His being the Creator is a strong guarantee for His *faithfulness* as “the Witness and Amen.”

15. neither cold — The antithesis to “hot,” literally, “boiling” (“fervent,” ^{<4825>}Acts 18:25 ^{<4821>}Romans 12:11; compare So 8:6 ^{<4249>}Luke 24:32), requires that “cold” should here mean more than negatively cold; it is rather, positively *icy cold*: having never yet been warmed. The Laodiceans were in spiritual things *cold* comparatively, but not *cold* as the world outside, and as those who had never belonged to the Church. The lukewarm state, if it be the transitional stage to a warmer, is a desirable state (for a little religion, if real, is better than none); but most fatal when, as here, an abiding condition, for it is mistaken for a safe state (^{<4617>}Revelation 3:17). This accounts for Christ’s desiring that they were *cold* rather than *lukewarm*. For then there would not be the same “danger of mixed motive and disregarded principle” [ALFORD]. Also, there is more hope of the “cold,” that is, those who are of the world, and not yet warmed by the Gospel call; for, when called, they may become *hot* and fervent Christians: such did the once-*cold* publicans, Zaccheus and Matthew, become. But the *lukewarm* has been brought within reach of the holy fire, without being heated by it into *fervor*: having religion enough to lull the conscience in

false security, but not religion enough to save the soul: as Demas, ^{<5140>}2 Timothy 4:10. Such were the *halters between two opinions* in Israel (^{<1182>}1 Kings 18:21; compare ^{<1274>}2 Kings 17:41 ^{<4162>}Matthew 6:24).

16. neither cold nor hot — So one oldest manuscript, B, and *Vulgate* read. But two oldest manuscripts, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* transpose thus, “hot nor cold.” It is remarkable that the *Greek* adjectives are in the masculine, agreeing with the angel, not feminine, agreeing with the Church. The Lord addresses the angel as the embodiment and representative of the Church. The chief minister is answerable for his flock if he have not faithfully warned the members of it.

I will — *Greek*, “I am about to,” “I am ready to”: I have it in my mind: implying graciously the possibility of the threat not being executed, if only they repent at once. His dealings towards them will depend on theirs towards Him.

spue thee out of my month — reject with righteous loathing, as Canaan spued out its inhabitants for their abominations. Physicians used *lukewarm* water to cause *vomiting*. *Cold* and *hot* drinks were common at feasts, but never *lukewarm*. There were hot and cold springs near Laodicea.

17. Self-sufficiency is the fatal danger of a lukewarm state (see on ^{<695>}Revelation 3:15).

thou sayest — virtually and mentally, if not in so many words.

increased with goods — *Greek*, “have become enriched,” implying self-praise in self-acquired riches. The Lord alludes to Hosea 12:8. The riches on which they prided themselves were spiritual riches; though, doubtless, their spiritual self-sufficiency (“I have need of nothing”) was much fostered by their worldly wealth; as, on the other hand, *poverty of spirit* is fostered by *poverty* in respect to worldly riches.

knowest not that thou — in particular above all others. The “THOU” in the *Greek* is emphatic.

art wretched — *Greek*, “art *the* wretched one.”

miserable — So one oldest manuscripts reads. But two oldest manuscripts prefix “the.” Translate, “*the* pitiable”; “the one especially to be pitied.” How different Christ’s estimate of men, from their own estimate of themselves, “I have need of nothing!”

blind — whereas Laodicea boasted of a deeper than common *insight* into divine things. They were not absolutely *blind*, else *eye-salve* would have been of no avail to them; but *short-sighted*.

18. Gentle and loving irony. Take *My advice*, thou who fanciest thyself in *need of nothing*. Not only art thou not in need of nothing, but art in need of the commonest necessities of existence. He graciously stoops to their modes of thought and speech: Thou art a people ready to listen to any *counsel* as to how to *buy* to advantage; then, listen to My *counsel* (for I am “*Counsellor*,” Isaiah 9:6), buy of ME” (*in whom*, according to Paul’s Epistle written to the neighboring Colosse and intended for the Laodicean Church also, Colossians 2:1,3 4:16, *are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*). “Buy” does not imply that we can, by any work or merit of ours, *purchase* God’s free gift; nay the very purchase money consists in the renunciation of all self-righteousness, such as Laodicea had (ⲙⲉⲛⲧ Revelation 3:17). “Buy” at the cost of thine own self-sufficiency (so Paul, Philippians 3:7,8); and the giving up of all things, however dear to us, that would prevent our *receiving* Christ’s salvation as a *free gift*, for example, self and worldly desires. Compare Isaiah 55:1, “Buy ... without money and price.”

of me — the source of “unsearchable riches” (Ephesians 3:8). Laodicea was a city of extensive money transactions [CICERO].

gold tried in, etc. — literally, “*fired* (and fresh) *from* the fire,” that is, just fresh *from* the furnace which has proved its purity, and retaining its bright gloss. Sterling spiritual wealth, as contrasted with its counterfeit, in which Laodicea boasted itself. Having bought this *gold* she will be no longer *poor* (ⲙⲉⲛⲧ Revelation 3:17).

mayest be rich — *Greek*, “mayest be enriched.”

white raiment — “garments.” Laodicea’s wools were famous. Christ offers infinitely whiter raiment. As “gold tried in the fire” expresses *faith*

tested by fiery trials: so “white raiment,” *Christ’s righteousness* imputed to the believer in justification and imparted in sanctification.

appear — *Greek*, “be manifested,” namely, at the last day, when everyone without the wedding garment shall be discovered. To strip one, is in the East the image of putting to open shame. So also to clothe one with fine apparel is the image of doing him honor. Man can discover his shame, God alone can cover it, so that his nakedness shall not be manifested at last (^{SIBB}Colossians 3:10-14). Blessed is he whose sin is so *covered*. The hypocrite’s shame may be manifested now; it must be so at last.

anoint ... with eye-salve — The oldest manuscripts read, “(buy of Me) eye-salve (*collyrium*, a roll of ointment), to anoint thine eyes.” Christ has for Laodicea an ointment far more precious than all the costly unguents of the East. The *eye* is here the conscience or inner light of the mind. According as it is sound and “single” (*Greek*, “haplous,” “simple”), or otherwise, the man sees aright spiritually, or does not. The Holy Spirit’s unction, like the ancient eye-salve’s, first smarts with conviction of sin, then heals. He opens our eyes first to ourselves in our wretchedness, then to the Savior in His preciousness. TRENCH notices that the most sunken churches of the seven, namely, Sardis and Laodicea, are the ones in which alone are specified no opponents from without, nor heresies from within. The Church owes much to God’s overruling Providence which has made so often internal and external foes, in spite of themselves, to promote His cause by calling forth her energies in contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Peace is dearly bought at the cost of spiritual stagnation, where there is not interest enough felt in religion to contend about it at all.

19. (Job 5:17 Proverbs 3:11,12 Hebrews 12:5,6.) So in the case of Manasseh (^{481B}2 Chronicles 33:11-13).

As many — All. “He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. And shalt thou be an exception? If excepted from suffering the scourge, thou art excepted from the number of the sons” [AUGUSTINE]. This is an encouragement to Laodicea not to despair, but to regard the rebuke as a token for good, if she profit by it.

I love — *Greek*, “*philo*,” the love of gratuitous *affection*, independent of any grounds for esteem in the object loved. But in the case of Philadelphia

(Revelation 3:9), “I have loved thee” (*Greek*, “*egapesa*”) with the love of *esteem*, founded on the judgment. Compare the note in my *English Gnomon* of BENDEL, ⁴⁰¹⁵John 21:15-17.

I rebuke — The “I” in the *Greek* stands first in the sentence emphatically. I in My dealings, so altogether unlike man’s, in the case of *all whom I love, rebuke*. The *Greek*, “*elencho*,” is the same verb. as in John 16:8, “(the Holy Ghost) will *convince* (rebuke unto conviction) the world of sin.”

chasten — “chastise.” The *Greek*, “*paideu*,” which in classical *Greek* means to *instruct*, in the New Testament means to *instruct by chastisement* (Hebrews 12:5,6). David was *rebuked unto conviction*, when he cried, “I have sinned against the Lord”; the *chastening* followed when his child was taken from him (⁴⁰²³2 Samuel 12:13,14). In the divine *chastening*, the sinner at one and the same time winces under the rod and learns righteousness.

be zealous — habitually. Present tense in the *Greek*, of a *lifelong course of zeal*. The opposite of “lukewarm.” The *Greek* by alliteration marks this: Laodicea had not been “hot” (*Greek*, “*zestos*”), she is therefore urged to “be zealous” (*Greek*, “*zeleue*”): both are derived from the same verb, *Greek*, “*zeo*,” “to boil.”

repent — *Greek* aorist: of an act to be *once for all done*, and *done at once*.

20. stand — waiting in wonderful condescension and long-suffering.

knock — (Song of Solomon 5:2). This is a further manifestation of His loving desire for the sinner’s salvation. He who is Himself “the Door,” and who bids us “knock” that it may be “opened unto” us, is first Himself to knock at the door of our hearts. If He did not knock first, we should never come to knock at His door. Compare So 5:4-6, which is plainly alluded to here; the Spirit thus in Revelation sealing the canonicity of that mystical book. The spiritual state of the bride there, between *waking* and *sleeping*, slow to open the door to her divine lover, answers to that of the *lukewarm* Laodicea here. “Love in regard to men emptied (humbled) God; for He does not remain in His place and call to Himself the servant whom He loved, but He comes down Himself to seek him, and He who is all-rich arrives at the lodging of the pauper, and with His own voice intimates His

yearning love, and seeks a similar return, and withdraws not when disowned, and is not impatient at insult, and when persecuted still waits at the doors" [NICOLAUS CABASILAS in TRENCH].

my voice — He appeals to the sinner not only with His hand (His providences) *knocking*, but with His *voice* (His word read or heard; or rather, His Spirit inwardly applying to man's spirit the lessons to be drawn from His providence and His word). If we refuse to answer to His knocking at our door now, He will refuse to hear our knocking at His door hereafter. In respect to His second coming also, He is even now *at the door*, and we know not how soon He may *knock*: therefore we should always be ready to *open to Him immediately*.

if any man hear — for man is not compelled by irresistible force: Christ *knocks*, but does not break open the door, though the violent take heaven by the force of prayer (^{<1112>}Matthew 11:12): whosoever does hear, does so not of himself, but by the *drawings* of God's grace (^{<1644>}John 6:44): *repentance* is Christ's gift (^{<153>}Acts 5:31). He *draws*, not drags. The Sun of righteousness, like the natural sun, the moment that *the door* is opened, pours in His light, which could not previously find an entrance. Compare HILARY on Psalm 118:19.

I will come in to him — as I did to Zaccheus.

sup with him, and he with me — Delightful reciprocity! Compare "dwelleth in me, and I in Him," ^{<1666>}John 6:56. Whereas, ordinarily, the admitted guest sups with the admitter, here the divine guest becomes Himself the host, for He is the bread of life, and the Giver of the marriage feast. Here again He alludes to the imagery of So 4:16, where the Bride invites Him to *eat pleasant fruits*, even as He had first prepared a feast for her, "His fruit was sweet to my taste." Compare the same interchange, John 21:9-13, the feast being made up of the viands that Jesus brought, and those which the disciples brought. The consummation of this blessed intercommunion shall be at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, of which the Lord's Supper is the earnest and foretaste.

21. sit with me in my throne — (^{<102>}Revelation 2:26,27 20:6 ^{<163>}Matthew 19:28 20:23 ^{<172>}John 17:22,24 ^{<122>}2 Timothy 2:12). The same whom Christ had just before threatened to *spue out of His mouth*, is now offered a *seat*

with Him on His throne! “The highest place is within reach of the lowest; the faintest spark of grace may be fanned into the mightiest flame of love” [TRENCH].

even as I also — Two thrones are here mentioned:

(1) His Father’s, upon which He now sits, and has sat since His ascension, after His victory over death, sin, the world; upon this none can sit save God, and the God-man Christ Jesus, for it is the incommunicable prerogative of God alone;

(2) the throne which shall be peculiarly *His* as the once humbled and then glorified *Son of man*, to be set up over the whole earth (heretofore usurped by Satan) at His coming again; in this the *victorious* saints shall share (1 Corinthians 6:2). The transfigured elect Church shall with Christ judge and reign over the nations in the flesh, and Israel the foremost of them; ministering blessings to them as angels were the Lord’s mediators of blessing and administrators of His government in setting up His throne in Israel at Sinai. This privilege of our high calling belongs exclusively to the present time while Satan reigns, when alone there is scope for conflict and for *victory* ([☞]2 Timothy 2:11,12).

When Satan shall be bound (Revelation 20:4), there shall be no longer scope for it, for all on earth shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. This, the grandest and crowning promise, is placed at the end of all the seven addresses, to gather all in one. It also forms the link to the next part of the book, where the Lamb is introduced seated *on His Father’s throne* (Revelation 4:2,3 5:5,6). The Eastern throne is broad, admitting others besides him who, as chief, occupies the center.

TRENCH notices; The order of the promises in the seven epistles corresponds to that of the unfolding of the kingdom of God its first beginnings on earth to its consummation in heaven. To the faithful at Ephesus:

(1) *The tree of life in the Paradise of God* is promised (Revelation 2:7), answering to Genesis 2:9.

(2) Sin entered the world and death by sin; but to the faithful at Smyrna it is promised, they *shall not be hurt by the second death* ([☞]Revelation 2:11).

(3) The promise of the *hidden manna* (Revelation 2:17) to Pergamos brings us to the Mosaic period, the Church in the wilderness.

(4) That to Thyatira, namely, triumph *over the nations* (Revelation 2:26,27), forms the consummation of the kingdom in prophetic type, the period of David and Solomon characterized by this *power of the nations*. Here there is a division, the seven falling into two groups, *four* and three, as often, for example, the Lord's Prayer, three and four. The scenery of the last three passes from earth to heaven, the Church contemplated as triumphant, with its steps from glory to glory.

(5) Christ promises to the believer of Sardis not to blot his name out of the book of life but to confess him before His Father and the angels at the judgment-day, and clothe him with a glorified body of dazzling whiteness (Revelation 3:4,5).

(6) To the faithful at Philadelphia Christ promises they shall be citizens of the new Jerusalem, fixed as immovable pillars there, where city and temple are one (Revelation 3:12); here not only individual salvation is promised to the believer, as in the case of Sardis, but also privileges in the blessed communion of the Church triumphant.

(7) Lastly, to the faithful of Laodicea is given the crowning promise, not only the two former blessings, but a seat with Christ on His throne, even as He has sat with His Father on His Father's throne (Revelation 3:21).

CHAPTER 4

REVELATION 4:1-11.

VISION OF GOD'S THRONE IN HEAVEN; THE FOUR AND TWENTY ELDERS; THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES.

Here begins the Revelation proper; and first, the fourth and fifth chapters set before us the heavenly scenery of the succeeding visions, and God on His throne, as the *covenant God of His Church*, the Revealer of them to His apostle through Jesus Christ. The first great portion comprises the opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets (fourth to eleventh chapters). As the communication respecting the seven churches opened with a suitable vision of the Lord Jesus as Head of the Church, so the second part opens with a vision suitable to the matter to be revealed. The scene is changed from earth to *heaven*.

1. After this — *Greek*, “After these things,” marking the opening of the next vision in the succession. Here is the transition from “the things which are” (^{omit} Revelation 1:19), the existing state of the seven churches, as a type of the Church in general, in John’s time, to “the things which shall be hereafter,” namely, in relation to the time when John wrote.

I looked — rather as *Greek*, “I saw” in vision; not as *English Version* means, I directed my *look* that way.

was — Omit, as not being in the *Greek*.

opened — “standing open”; not as though John saw it in the act of being opened. Compare Ezekiel 1:1 ^{omit} Matthew 3:16 ^{omit} Acts 7:56 10:11. But in those visions the heavens opened, disclosing the visions to those below on earth. Whereas here, heaven, the temple of God, remains closed to those on earth, but John is transported in vision through an open door up into heaven, whence he can see things passing on earth or in heaven, according as the scenes of the several visions require.

the first voice which I heard — the voice which I heard at first, namely, in ^{am}Revelation 1:10; *the former voice*.

was as it were — Omit *was*, it not being in the *Greek*. “Behold” governs in sense both “a door,” etc. and “the first voice,” etc.

Come up hither — through the “open door.”

be — come to pass.

hereafter — *Greek*, “after these things”: after the present time (^{am}Revelation 1:19).

2. And — omitted in the two oldest manuscripts, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*.

I was, etc. — *Greek*, “I became in the Spirit” (see on ^{am}Revelation 1:10): I was completely rapt in vision into the heavenly world.


was set — not *was placed*, but *was situated*, literally, “lay.”

one sat on the throne — the Eternal Father: the Creator (^{am}Revelation 4:11): also compare Revelation 4:8 with Revelation 1:4, where also the Father is designated, “which is, and was, and is to come.” When the Son, “the Lamb,” is introduced, Revelation 5:5-9, a *new* song is sung which distinguishes *the Sitter on the throne* from *the Lamb*, “*Thou* hast redeemed us to *God*,” and ^{am}Revelation 5:13, “Unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” So also in Revelation 5:7, as in Daniel 7:13, the *Son of man* brought before *the Ancient of days* is distinguished from Him. The Father in essence is invisible, but in Scripture at times is represented as assuming a visible form.


3. was — omitted in the two oldest manuscripts but supported by *Vulgate* and *Coptic*.

to look upon — *Greek*, “in sight,” or “appearance.”

jasper — From ^{am}Revelation 21:11, where it is called *most precious*, which the *jasper* was not, EBRARD infers it was a diamond. Ordinarily, the *jasper* is a stone of various wavy colors, somewhat transparent: in ^{am}Revelation 21:11 it represents watery crystalline brightness. The *sardine*, our cornelian, or else a fiery red. As the watery brightness represents God’s holiness, so the fiery red His justice executing fiery

wrath. The same union of white or watery brightness and fiery redness appears in  Revelation 1:14 10:1 Ezekiel 1:4 8:2 Daniel 7:9.

rainbow round about the throne — forming a complete circle (type of God's perfection and eternity: not a half circle as the earthly rainbow) surrounding the throne vertically. Its various colors, which combined form one pure solar ray, symbolize the varied aspects of God's providential dealings uniting in one harmonious whole. Here, however, the predominating color among the prismatic colors is green, the most refreshing of colors to look upon, and so symbolizing God's consolatory promises in Christ to His people amidst judgments on His foes. Moreover, the rainbow was the appointed token of God's covenant with all flesh, and His people in particular. Hereby God in type renewed to man the grant originally made to the first Adam. The antitype will be the "new heavens and the new earth" restored to redeemed man, just as the earth, after the destruction by the flood, was restored to Noah. As the rainbow was first reflected on the waters of the world's ruin, and continues to be seen only when a cloud is brought over the earth, so another deluge, namely, of fire, shall precede the new heavens and earth: the Lord, as here, on His throne, whence (Revelation 4:5) proceed "lightnings and thunderings," shall issue the commission to rid the earth of its oppressors: but then, amidst judgment, when other men's hearts fail them for fear, the believer shall be reassured by the rainbow, the covenant token, round the throne (compare DE BURGH, *Exposition of Revelation*). The heavenly bow speaks of the shipwreck of the world through sin: it speaks also of calm and sunshine after the storm. The *cloud* is the regular token of God's and Christ's presence, for example, in the tabernacle's holiest place; on Mount Sinai at the giving of the law; at the ascension (Acts 1:9); at His coming again (Revelation 4:7).

4. seats — rather as the *Greek* is translated in this very verse, "thrones," of course lower and smaller than the grand central *throne*. So  Revelation 16:10, "the seat (rather, *throne*) of the beasts," in hellish parody of God's throne.

four and twenty elders — *Greek*, "*the* four and twenty (or as one oldest manuscript, 'twenty-four') elders": the well-known elders [ALFORD]. But TREGELLES translates, "Upon the twenty-four thrones (*I saw*: omitted in

two oldest manuscripts) elders sitting”: which is more probable, as *the twenty-four elders* were not mentioned before, whereas *the twenty-four thrones* were. They are not angels, for they have *white robes* and *crowns* of victory, implying a conflict and endurance, “Thou hast *redeemed us*”: they represent the *Heads* of the Old and New Testament churches respectively, the Twelve Patriarchs (compare Revelation 7:5-8, not in their personal, but in their representative character), and Twelve Apostles. So in Revelation 15:3, “the song of *Moses*, and of the *Lamb*,” the double constituents of the Church are implied, the Old Testament and the New Testament. “Elders” is the very term for *the ministry* both of the Old and New Testament, the Jewish and the catholic Gentile Church. The tabernacle was a “pattern” of the heavenly antitype; the holy place, a figure of HEAVEN ITSELF. Thus Jehovah’s throne is represented by the mercy seat in the holiest, the Shekinah-cloud over it. “The seven lamps of fire before the throne” (Revelation 4:5) are antitypical to the seven-branched candlestick also in the holiest, emblem of the manifold Spirit of God: “the sea of glass” (Revelation 4:6) corresponds to the molten sea before the sanctuary, wherein the priests washed themselves before entering on their holy service; so introduced here in connection with the redeemed “priests unto God” (compare *Note*, see on Revelation 15:2). The “four living creatures” (Revelation 4:6,7) answer to the cherubim over the mercy seat. So the twenty-four throned and crowned elders are typified by the twenty-four chiefs of the twenty-four courses of priests, “*Governors* of the sanctuary, and governors of God” (1 Chronicles 24:5 25:1-31).

5. proceeded — *Greek*, “proceed.”

thunderings and voices — The two oldest manuscripts transpose, “voices and thunderings.” Compare at the giving of the law on Sinai, ^{ⓓⓔⓖ}Exodus 19:16. “The *thunderings* express God’s threats against the ungodly: there are voices in the thunders (Revelation 10:3), that is, not only does He threaten generally, but also predicts *special* judgments” [GROTIUS].

seven lamps ... seven Spirits — The Holy Spirit in His sevenfold operation, as the light-and-life Giver (compare Revelation 5:6, *seven eyes* ... *the seven Spirits of God*; Revelation 1:4 21:23 ^{ⓔⓑⓔ}Psalm 119:105) and

fiery purifier of the godly, and consumer of the ungodly (ⲙⲁⲩⲁⲧⲏⲙ Matthew 3:11).

6. Two oldest manuscripts, A, B, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and *Syriac* read, “As it were a sea of glass.”

like ... crystal — not imperfectly transparent as the ancient common glass, but like rock crystal. Contrast the turbid “many waters” on which the harlot “sitteth” (Revelation 17:1,15). Compare Job 37:18, “the sky ... as a molten looking-glass.” Thus, primarily, the pure ether which separates God’s throne from John, and from all things before it, may be meant, symbolizing the “purity, calmness, and majesty of God’s rule” [ALFORD]. But see the analogue in the temple, the molten sea *before* the sanctuary (see on Revelation 4:4, above). There is in this sea depth and transparency, but not the fluidity and instability of the natural sea (compare Revelation 21:1). It stands solid, calm, and clear, God’s *judgments* are called “a great deep” (Psalm 36:6). In Revelation 15:2 it is a “sea of glass mingled with *fire*.” Thus there is symbolized here the purificatory baptism of water and the Spirit of all who are made “kings and priests unto God.” In Revelation 15:2 the baptism with the fire of trial is meant. Through both all the king-priests have to pass in coming to God: His *judgments*, which overwhelm the ungodly, they stand firmly upon, as on a solid sea of glass; able like Christ to walk on the sea, as though it were solid.

round about the throne — one in the midst of each side of the throne.

four beasts — The *Greek* for “beasts,” Revelation 13:1,11, is different, *therion*, the symbol for the carnal man by opposition to God losing his true glory, as lord, under Him, of the lower creatures, and degraded to the level of the *beast*. Here it is *zoon*, “living creatures”; not *beast*.

7. **calf** — “a steer” [ALFORD]. The *Septuagint* often uses the *Greek* term here for an *ox* (Exodus 22:1 29:10, etc.).

as a man — The oldest manuscripts have “as of a man.”

8. **about him** — *Greek*, “round about him.” ALFORD connects this with the following sentence: “All round and within (their wings) they are (so two oldest manuscripts, A, B, and *Vulgate* read) full of eyes.” John’s object is to show that the six wings in each did not interfere with that

which he had before declared, namely, that they were “full of eyes before and behind.” The eyes were *round* the outside of each wing, and up the *inside* of each when half expanded, and of the part of body in that inward recess.

rest not — literally, “have no rest.” How awfully different the reason why the worshippers of the beast “have no rest day nor night,” namely, “their torment for ever and ever.”

Holy, holy, holy — The “*tris-hagion*” of the *Greek* liturgies. In Isaiah 6:3, as here, it occurs; also Psalm 99:3,5,9, where He is praised as “holy,”

(1) on account of His majesty (Revelation 4:1) about to display itself;

(2) His justice (Revelation 4:4) already displaying itself;

(3) His mercy (Revelation 4:6-8) which displayed itself in times past. So here “Holy,” as He “who was”; “Holy,” as He “who is”: “Holy,” as He “who is to come.” He showed Himself an object of holy worship in the past creation of all things: more fully He shows Himself so in governing all things: He will, in the highest degree, show Himself so in the consummation of all things. “Of (from) Him, through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.” In Isaiah 6:3 there is added, “the whole EARTH is full of His glory.” But in Revelation this is deferred until the glory of THE LORD fills *the earth*, His enemies having been destroyed [BENGEL].

Almighty — answering to “Lord of hosts” (Sabaoth), Isaiah 6:3.

The cherubim here have *six* wings, like the seraphim in Isaiah 6:2; whereas the cherubim in Ezekiel 1:6 had *four* wings each. They are called by the same name, “living creatures.” But whereas in Ezekiel each living creature has all four faces, here the four belong severally one to each. See on Ezekiel 1:6. The four *living creatures* answer by contrast to the four world powers represented by four *beasts*. The Fathers identified them with the four Gospels, Matthew the lion, Mark the ox, Luke the man, John the eagle: these symbols, thus viewed, express not the personal character of the Evangelists, but the manifold aspect of *Christ* in relation to the world (*four* being the number significant of world-wide extension, for example, the four quarters of the world) presented by them severally: the lion expressing

royalty, as Matthew gives prominence to this feature of Christ; the ox, *laborious endurance*, Christ's prominent characteristic in Mark; man, *brotherly sympathy* with the whole race of man, Christ's prominent feature in Luke; the eagle, *soaring majesty*, prominent in John's description of Christ as the Divine Word. But here the context best suits the view which regards the *four living creatures* as representing the *redeemed election-Church* in its relation of ministering king-priests to God, and ministers of blessing to the redeemed earth, and the nations on it, and the animal creation, in which *man* stands at the head of all, *the lion* at the head of wild beasts, *the ox* at the head of tame beasts, *the eagle* at the head of birds and of the creatures of the waters. Compare Revelation 5:8-10, "Thou hast redeemed us by Thy blood out of every kindred ... and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth"; and Revelation 20:4, the partakers with Christ of the first resurrection, who conjointly with Him *reign* over the redeemed nations that are in the flesh. Compare as to the happy and willing subjection of the lower animal world, Isaiah 11:6-8 65:25 Ezekiel 34:25 Hosea 2:18. Jewish tradition says the "four standards" under which Israel encamped in the wilderness, to the east, Judah, to the north, Dan, to the west, Ephraim, to the south, Reuben, were respectively a *lion*, an *eagle*, an *ox*, and a *man*, while in the midst was the tabernacle containing the Shekinah symbol of the Divine Presence. Thus we have "the picture of that blessed period when — the earth having been fitted for being the kingdom of the Father — the court of heaven will be transferred to earth, and the 'tabernacle of God shall be with men' (Revelation 21:3), and the whole world will be subject to a never-ending theocracy" (compare DE BURGH, *Exposition of Revelation*). The point of union between the two views given above is: Christ is the perfect realization of the ideal of man; Christ is presented in His fourfold aspect in the four Gospels respectively. The redeemed election-Church similarly, when in and through Christ (with whom she shall reign) she realizes the ideal of man, shall combine in herself human perfections having a fourfold aspect:

- (1) kingly righteousness with hatred of evil and judicial equity, answering to the "lion";
- (2) laborious diligence in every duty, the "ox";

(3) human sympathy, the “man”;

(4) the contemplation of heavenly truth, the “eagle.” As the high-soaring intelligence, the *eagle*, forms the contrasted complement to practical labor, the *ox* bound to the soil; so holy judicial vengeance against evil, the *lion* springing suddenly and terribly on the doomed, forms the contrasted complement to human sympathy, the *man*. In Isaiah 6:2 we read, “Each had six wings: with twain he covered his face (in *reverence*, as not presuming to lift up his face to God), with twain he covered his feet (in humility, as not worthy to stand in God’s holy presence), and with twain he did fly [in *obedient* readiness to do instantly God’s command].”

9-11. The ground of praise here is God’s *eternity*, and God’s *power* and *glory* manifested in the creation of all things for His pleasure. Creation is the foundation of all God’s other acts of power, wisdom, and love, and therefore forms the first theme of His creatures’ thanksgivings. The four living creatures take the lead of the twenty-four elders, both in this anthem, and in that *new song* which follows on the ground of their redemption (Revelation 5:8-10).

when — that is, whensoever: as often as. A simultaneous giving of glory on the part of the beasts, and on the part of the elders.

give — “shall give” in one oldest manuscript.

for ever and ever — *Greek*, “unto the ages of the ages.”

10. fall — immediately. *Greek*, “*shall* fall down”: implying that this ascription of praise *shall be* repeated onward to eternity. So also, “*shall* worship ... *shall* cast their crowns,” namely, in acknowledgment that all the merit of their *crowns* (not kingly *diadems*, but the *crowns* of conquerors) is due to Him.

11. O Lord — The two oldest manuscripts, A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* add, “and our God.” “Our” by virtue of creation, and especially redemption. One oldest manuscript, B, and *Syriac* insert “the Holy One.” But another, A, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic* omit this, as *English Version* does.

glory, etc. — “*the* glory ... *the* honor ... *the* power.”

thou — emphatic in the *Greek*: “It is THOU who didst create.”

all things — *Greek*, “the all things”: the universe.

for, etc. — *Greek*, “on account of”; “for the sake of Thy pleasure,” or “will.” *English Version* is good *Greek*. Though the context better suits, it was *because of Thy will*, that “they were” (so one oldest manuscript, A, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, instead of *English Version* “are”: another oldest manuscript, B, reads, “They were *not*, and were created,” were created out of nothing), that is, *were existing*, as contrasted with their previous non-existence. With God to *will* is to effect: to determine is to perform. So in Genesis 1:3, “Let there be light, and there was light”: in *Hebrew* an expressive tautology, the same word and tense and letters being used for “let there be,” and “there was,” marking the simultaneity and identity of the will and the effect. D. LONGINUS [*On the Sublime*, 9], a heathen, praises this description of God’s power by “the lawgiver of the Jews, no ordinary man,” as one worthy of the theme.

were created — by Thy definite act of creation at a definite time.

CHAPTER 5

REVELATION 5:1-14.

THE BOOK WITH SEVEN SEALS: NONE WORTHY TO OPEN IT BUT THE LAMB: HE TAKES IT AMIDST THE PRAISES OF THE REDEEMED, AND OF THE WHOLE HEAVENLY HOST.

1. **in**, etc. — *Greek*, “(lying) *upon* the right hand.” His right hand was open and on it lay the book. On God’s part there was no withholding of His future purposes as contained in the book: the only obstacle to unsealing it is stated in Revelation 5:3 [ALFORD].

book — rather, as accords with the ancient form of books, and with the *writing on the backside*, “a roll.” The *writing on the back* implies fullness and completeness, so that nothing more needs to be added (⁶¹¹Revelation 22:18). The roll, or book, appears from the context to be “*the title-deed of man’s inheritance*” [DE BURGH] redeemed by Christ, and contains the successive steps by which He shall recover it from its usurper and obtain actual possession of the kingdom already “purchased” for Himself and His elect saints. However, no portion of the roll is said to be *unfolded* and *read*; but simply the *seals* are successively *opened*, giving final access to its contents being read as a perfect whole, which shall not be until the events symbolized by the seals shall have been past, when ⁶¹²Ephesians 3:10 shall receive its *complete* accomplishment, and the Lamb shall reveal God’s providential plans in redemption in all their manifold beauties. Thus the opening of the seals will mean the successive steps by which God in Christ clears the way for the final opening and reading of the book at the visible setting up of the kingdom of Christ. Compare, at the grand consummation, ⁶¹³Revelation 20:12, “Another book was opened ... the book of life”; ⁶¹⁴Revelation 22:19. None is worthy to do so save the Lamb, for He alone as such has redeemed man’s forfeited inheritance, of which *the book is the title-deed*. The question (Revelation 5:2) is not (as commonly supposed), Who should reveal the destinies of the Church (for this any

inspired prophet would be competent to do)? but, Who has the WORTH to give man a new title to his lost inheritance? [DE BURGH].

sealed ... seven seals — *Greek*, “sealed up,” or “firmly sealed.” The number *seven* (divided into four, the world-wide number, and three, the divine) abounds in Revelation and expresses *completeness*. Thus, the *seven seals*, representing all power given to the Lamb; the *seven trumpets*, by which the world kingdoms are shaken and overthrown, and the Lamb’s kingdom ushered in; and the *seven vials*, by which the beast’s kingdom is destroyed.

2. strong — (Psalm 103:20). His voice penetrated heaven, earth, and Hades (Revelation 10:1-3).

3. no man — *Greek*, “no one.” Not merely *no man*, but also *no one* of any order of beings.

in earth — *Greek*, “upon the earth.”

under the earth — namely, in Hades.

look thereon — to look upon the contents, so as to read them.

4. and to read — inserted in *English Version Greek* text without good authority. One oldest manuscript, ORIGEN, CYPRIAN, and HILARY omit the clause. “To read” would be awkward standing between “to open the book” and “to look thereon.” John having been promised a revelation of “things which must be hereafter,” *weeps* now at his earnest desire being apparently frustrated. He is a pattern to us to imitate, as an eager and teachable learner of the Apocalypse.

5. one of — *Greek*, “one from among.” The “elder” meant is, according to some (in LYRA), Matthew. With this accords the description here given of Christ, “the *Lion*, which is (so the *Greek*) of the tribe of Juda, the root of David”; the royal, David-descended, lion-aspect of Christ being that prominent in Matthew, whence the lion among the fourfold cherubim is commonly assigned to him. GERHARD in BENDEL thought Jacob to be meant, being, doubtless, one of those who rose with Christ and ascended to heaven (⁴¹⁷⁵Matthew 27:52,53). The elders in heaven round God’s

throne know better than John, still in the flesh, the far-reaching power of Christ.

Root of David — (Isaiah 11:1,10). Not merely “a sucker come up from David’s ancient root” (as ALFORD limits it), but also including the idea of His being Himself the root and origin of David: compare these two truths brought together, ^{<1220>}Matthew 22:42-45. Hence He is called not merely *Son of David*, but also *David*. He is at once “the branch” of David, and “the root” of David, David’s Son and David’s Lord, the *Lamb* slain and therefore the *Lion* of Juda: about to reign over Israel, and thence over the whole earth.

prevailed — *Greek*, “conquered”: absolutely, as elsewhere (^{<6121>}Revelation 3:21): *gained the victory*: His past victory over all the powers of darkness entitles Him now to open the book.

to open — that is, *so as to open*. One oldest manuscript, B, reads, “He that openeth,” that is, whose office it is to open, but the weight of oldest authorities is with *English Version* reading, namely, A, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and ORIGIN.

6. I beheld, and, lo — One oldest manuscript, A, omits “and, lo.” Another, B, CYPRIAN, etc., support, “and, lo,” but omit, “and I beheld.”

in the midst of the throne — that is, not on the throne (compare Revelation 5:7), but in the midst of the company (Revelation 4:4) which was “round about the throne.”

Lamb — *Greek*, “*arnion*”; always found in Revelation exclusively, except in ^{<1215>}John 21:15 alone: it expresses *endearment*, namely, the endearing relation in which Christ now stands to us, as the consequence of His previous relation as the *sacrificial Lamb*. So also our relation to Him: He the *precious Lamb*, we His *dear lambs*, one with Him. BENDEL thinks there is in *Greek*, “*arnion*,” the idea of *taking the lead of the flock*. Another object of the form *Greek*, “*arnion*,” the Lamb, is to put Him in the more marked contrast to *Greek*, “*therion*,” the Beast. Elsewhere *Greek*, “*amnos*,” is found, applying to Him as the *paschal, sacrificial Lamb* (Isaiah 53:7, *Septuagint*; ^{<1213>}John 1:29,36 ^{<4082>}Acts 8:32 ^{<1119>}1 Peter 1:19).

as it had been slain — bearing marks of His past death wounds. He was standing, though bearing the marks of one slain. In the midst of heavenly glory Christ crucified is still the prominent object.

seven horns — that is, *perfect might*, “seven” symbolizing *perfection*; “horns,” *might*, in contrast to the *horns* of the Antichristian world powers, Revelation 17:3; etc. Daniel 7:7,20 8:3.

seven eyes ... the seven Spirits ... sent forth — So one oldest manuscript, A. But B reads, “*being sent forth*.” As the *seven lamps* before the throne represent the Spirit of God immanent in the Godhead, so the *seven eyes* of the Lamb represent the same sevenfold Spirit profluent from the incarnate Redeemer in His world-wide energy. The *Greek* for “sent forth,” *apostellomena*, or else *apestalmenoi*, is akin to the term “apostle,” reminding us of the Spirit-impelled labors of Christ’s apostles and minister throughout the world: if the present tense be read, as seems best, the idea will be that of those labors *continually going on* unto the end. “Eyes” symbolize His all-watchful and wise providence for His Church, and against her foes.

7. The book lay on the open hand of Him that sat on the throne for any to take who was found worthy [ALFORD]. The Lamb takes it from the Father in token of formal investiture into His universal and everlasting dominion as Son of man. This introductory vision thus presents before us, in summary, the consummation to which all the events in the seals, trumpets, and vials converge, namely, the setting up of Christ’s kingdom visibly. Prophecy ever hurries to the grand crisis or end, and dwells on intermediate events only in their typical relation to, and representation of, the end.

8. had taken — *Greek*, “took.”

fell down before the Lamb — who shares worship and the throne with the Father.

harps — Two oldest manuscripts, A, B, *Syriac* and *Coptic* read, “a harp”: a kind of guitar, played with the hand or a quill.

vials — “bowls” [TREGELLES]; censers.

odours — *Greek*, “incense.”

prayers of saints — as the angel offers their prayers (Revelation 8:3) with incense (compare Psalm 141:2). This gives not the least sanction to Rome’s dogma of our praying to saints. Though *they* be employed by God in some way unknown to us to present our prayers (nothing is said of their *interceding* for us), yet *we* are told to pray only to Him (^{<690>}Revelation 19:10 22:8,9). *Their own* employment is praise (whence they all have *harps*): ours is prayer.

9. sung — *Greek*, “sing”: it is their blessed occupation continually. The theme of *redemption* is ever new, ever suggesting fresh thoughts of praise, embodied in the “new song.”

us to God — So manuscript B, *Coptic*, *Vulgate*, and CYPRIAN. But A omits “us”: and *Aleph* reads instead, “to *our* God.”

out of — the present election-church gathered *out* of the world, as distinguished from the peoples gathered to Christ as the subjects, not of an election, but of a general and world-wide conversion of all nations.

kindred ... tongue ... people ... nation — The number *four* marks world-wide extension: the four quarters of the world. For “kindred,” translate as *Greek*, “tribe.” This term and “people” are usually restricted to *Israel*: “tongue and nation” to the *Gentiles* (Revelation 7:9 11:9 13:7, the oldest reading; Revelation 14:6). Thus there is here marked the election-Church gathered from Jews and Gentiles. In ^{<600>}Revelation 10:11, for “tribes,” we find among the four terms “kings”; in ^{<617>}Revelation 17:15, “multitudes.”

10. made us — A, B, *Aleph*, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, “them.” The *Hebrew* construction of the third person for the first, has a graphic relation to *the redeemed*, and also has a more modest sound than *us*, *priests* [BENGEL].

unto our God — So B and *Aleph* read. But A omits the clause.

kings — So B reads. But A, *Aleph*, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and CYPRIAN, read, “A kingdom.” *Aleph* reads also “a priesthood” for *priests*. They who cast their crowns before the throne, do not call themselves *kings* in the sight. of the great *King* (^{<600>}Revelation 4:10,11); though their priestly access has

such dignity that their reigning on earth cannot exceed it. So in Revelation 20:6 they are not called “kings” [BENGEL].

we shall reign on the earth — This is a new feature added to Revelation 1:6. *Aleph*, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic* read, “*They shall reign.*” A and B read, “*They reign.*” ALFORD takes this reading and explains it of the Church EVEN NOW, in Christ her Head, reigning on the earth: “all things are being put under her feet, as under His; her kingly office and rank are asserted, even in the midst of persecution.” But even if we read (I think the weightiest authority is against it), “*They reign,*” still it is the prophetic present for the future: the seer being transported into the future when the full number of the redeemed (represented by the *four living creatures*) shall be complete and the visible *kingdom begins*. The saints do spiritually reign now; but certainly not as they shall when the prince of this world shall be bound (see on Revelation 20:2-6). So far from *reigning on the earth* now, they are “made as the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things.” In ⁽¹¹¹⁵⁾Revelation 11:15,18, the locality and time of the kingdom are marked. KELLY translates, “reign *over* the earth” (*Greek*, “*epi tees gees*”), which is justified by the *Greek* (*Septuagint*, Judges 9:8 ⁽¹¹²²⁾Matthew 2:22). The elders, though ruling *over the earth*, shall not necessarily (according to this passage) remain *on* the earth. But *English Version* is justified by ⁽¹¹⁸⁰⁾Revelation 3:10. “The elders were *meek*, but the flock of the meek independently is much larger” [BENGEL].

11. I beheld — the angels: who form the outer circle, while the Church, the object of redemption, forms the inner circle nearest the throne. The heavenly hosts ranged around gaze with intense love and adoration at this crowning manifestation of God’s love, wisdom, and power.

ten thousand times ten thousand — *Greek*, “myriads of myriads.”

12. to receive power — *Greek*, “*the power.*” The remaining six (the whole being *seven*, the number for *perfection* and *completeness*) are all, as well as “power,” ranged under the one *Greek* article, to mark that they form *one* complete aggregate belonging to God and His co-equal, the Lamb. Compare ⁽¹¹⁷²⁾Revelation 7:12, where each of all seven has the article.

riches — both spiritual and earthly.

blessing — ascribed praise: the *will* on the creature's part, though unaccompanied by the *power*, to return blessing for blessing conferred [ALFORD].

13. The universal chorus of creation, including the outermost circles as well as the inner (of saints and angels), winds up the doxology. The *full* accomplishment of this is to be when Christ takes His great power and reigns visibly.

every creature — “all His works in all places of His dominion” (Psalm 103:22).

under the earth — the departed spirits in Hades.

such as are — So B and *Vulgate*. But A omits this.

in the sea — *Greek*, “*upon* the sea”: the sea animals which are regarded as being on the surface [ALFORD].

all that are in them — So *Vulgate* reads. A omits “all (things)” here (*Greek*, “*panta*”), and reads, “I heard all (*Greek*, “*pantas*”) saying”: implying the harmonious concert of all in the four quarters of the universe.

Blessing, etc. — *Greek*, “*the blessing, the honor, and the glory, and the might to the ages of the ages.*” The *fourfold* ascription indicates *world-wide* universality.

14. said — So A, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read. But B and *Coptic* read, “(I heard) *saying*.”

Amen — So A reads. But B reads, “*the* (accustomed) Amen.” As in ~~Revelation~~ Revelation 4:11, the four and twenty elders asserted God's worthiness to receive the glory, as having *created all things*, so here the four living creatures ratify by their “Amen” the whole *creation's* ascription of the glory to Him.

four and twenty — omitted in the oldest manuscripts: *Vulgate* supports it.

him that liveth for ever and ever — omitted in all the manuscripts: inserted by commentators from Revelation 4:9. But there, where the thanksgiving is *expressed*, the words are appropriate; but here less so, as

their worship is that of silent prostration. “Worshipped” (namely, God and the Lamb). So in Revelation 11:1, “worship” is used absolutely.

CHAPTER 6

REVELATION 6:1-17.

THE OPENING OF THE FIRST SIX OF THE SEVEN SEALS.

Compare *Note*, see on Revelation 5:1. Many (MEDE, FLEMING, NEWTON, etc.). hold that all these seals have been fulfilled, the sixth having been so by the overthrow of paganism and establishment of Christianity under Constantine's edict, A.D. 312. There can, however, be no doubt that at least the sixth seal is future, and is to be at the coming again of Christ. The great objection to supposing the seals to be finally and exhaustively fulfilled (though, probably, particular events may be partial fulfilments typical of the final and fullest one), is that, if so, they ought to furnish (as the destruction of Jerusalem, according to Christ's prophecy, does) a strong external evidence of Revelation. But it is clear they cannot be used for this, as hardly any two interpreters of this school are agreed on what events constitute the fulfillment of each seal. Probably not isolated facts, but *classes* of events preparing the way for Christ's coming kingdom, are intended by the opening of the seals. The four living creatures severally cry at the opening of the first four seals, "Come," which fact marks the division of the *seven*, as often occurs in this sacred number, into *four* and *three*.

1. one of the seals — The oldest manuscripts, A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, "one of the *seven* seals."

noise — The three oldest manuscripts read this in the nominative or dative, not the genitive, as *English Version*, "I heard one from among the four living creatures saying, as (it were) *the voice* (or, '*as with the voice*') of thunder." The first living creature was like a *lion* (Revelation 4:7): his voice is in consonance. Implying the lion-like boldness with which, in the successive great revivals, the faithful have *testified for Christ*, and especially a little before His coming shall testify. Or, rather, their earnestness in praying for *Christ's coming*.

Come and see — One oldest manuscript, B, has “And see.” But A, C, and *Vulgate* reject it. ALFORD rightly objects to *English Version* reading: “Whither was John to come? Separated as he was by the glassy sea from the throne, was he to cross it?” Contrast the form of expression, Revelation 10:8. It is much more likely to be the cry of the redeemed to the Redeemer, “Come” and deliver the groaning creature from the bondage of corruption. Thus, Revelation 6:2 is an answer to the cry, *went* (literally, “came”) forth corresponding to “Come.” “Come,” says GROTIUS, is the living creature’s address to John, *calling his earnest attention*. But it seems hard to see how “Come” by itself can mean this. Compare the only other places in Revelation where it is used, Revelation 4:1 22:17. If the four living creatures represent the four Gospels, the “Come” will be their invitation to everyone (for it is not written that they addressed *John*) to *accept* Christ’s salvation while there is time, as the opening of the seals marks a progressive step towards the end (compare ⁶²⁷Revelation 22:17). Judgments are foretold as accompanying the *preaching of the Gospel as a witness to all nations* (Revelation 14:6-11 Matthew 24:6-14). Thus the invitation, “Come,” here, is aptly parallel to ⁶¹⁴Matthew 24:14. The opening of the first four seals is followed by judgments preparatory for His coming. At the opening of the fifth seal, the martyrs above express the same (Revelation 6:9,10; compare Zechariah 1:10). At the opening of the sixth seal, the Lord’s coming is ushered in with terrors to the ungodly. At the seventh, the consummation is fully attained (⁶¹⁵Revelation 11:15).


2. Evidently Christ, whether in person, or by His angel, preparatory to His coming again, as appears from ⁶⁹¹Revelation 19:11,12.

bow — (Psalm 45:4,5).

crown — *Greek*, “*stephanos*,” the garland or wreath of a *conqueror*, which is also implied by His *white horse*, white being the emblem of victory. In ⁶⁹¹Revelation 19:11,12 the last step in His victorious progress is represented; accordingly there He wears *many diadems* (*Greek*, “*diademata*”; not merely *Greek*, “*stephanoi*,” “crowns” or “wreaths”), and is personally attended by the hosts of heaven. Compare Zechariah 1:7-17 6:1-8; especially ⁶⁹¹Revelation 6:10 below, with Zechariah 1:12; also compare the colors of the four horses.

and to conquer — that is, so as to gain a lasting victory. All four seals usher in *judgments* on the earth, as the power which opposes the reign of Himself and His Church. This, rather than the work of conversion and conviction, is primarily meant, though doubtless, secondarily, the elect will be gathered out through His word and His judgments.

3. and see — omitted in the three oldest manuscripts, A, B, C, and *Vulgate*.

4. red — the color of *blood*. The color of the horse in each case answers to the mission of the rider. Compare  Matthew 10:24-36, “Think not I am come to send *peace* on earth; I came not to send *peace*, but a *sword*.” The *white* horse of Christ’s bloodless victories is soon followed, through man’s perversion of the Gospel, by the *red* horse of bloodshed; but this is overruled to the clearing away of the obstacles to Christ’s coming kingdom. The patient *ox* is the emblem of the second *living creature* who, at the opening of this seal, saith, “Come.” The saints amidst judgments on the earth in patience “endure to the end.”

that they should kill — The *Greek* is indicative future, “that they may, as they also shall, kill one another.”

5. Come and see — The two oldest manuscripts, A, C, and *Vulgate* omit “and see.” B retains the words.

black — implying *sadness* and *want*.

had — *Greek*, “having.”

a pair of balances — the symbol of scarcity of provisions, the bread being doled out by weight.

6. a voice — Two oldest manuscripts, A, C, read, “*as it were* a voice.” B reads as *English Version*. The voice is heard “in the midst of the four living creatures” (as Jehovah in the Shekinah-cloud manifested His presence between the cherubim); because it is only for the sake of, and in connection with, His redeemed, that God mitigates His judgments on the earth.

A measure — “A *chaenix*.” While making food scarce, do not make it so much so that a *chaenix* (about a day’s provision of wheat, variously estimated at two or three pints) shall not be obtainable “for a penny”

(*denarius*, about twenty cents, probably the day's wages of a laborer). *Famine* generally follows the *sword*. Ordinarily, from sixteen to twenty measures were given for a denarius. The *sword*, *famine*, *noisome beasts*, and the *pestilence*, are God's four judgments on the earth. A spiritual famine, too, may be included in the judgment. The "Come," in the case of this third seal, is said by the third of the four living creatures, whose likeness is *a man* indicative of sympathy and human compassion for the sufferers. God in it tempers judgment with mercy. Compare Matthew 24:7, which indicates the very calamities foretold in these seals, *nation rising against nation* (the sword), *famines*, *pestilences* (Revelation 6:8), and *earthquakes* (^{and} Revelation 6:12).

three measures of barley for a penny — the cheaper and less nutritious grain, bought by the laborer who could not buy enough wheat for his family with his day's wages, a denarius, and, therefore, buys barley.

see thou hurt not the oil, and the wine — the luxuries of life, rather than necessities; the oil and wine were to be spared for the refreshment of the sufferers.

7. and see — supported by B; omitted by A, C, and *Vulgate*. The *fourth living creature*, who was "like a flying eagle," introduces this seal; implying high-soaring intelligence, and judgment descending from on high fatally on the ungodly, as the king of birds on his prey.

8. pale — "livid" [ALFORD].

Death — personified.

Hell — *Hades* personified.

unto them — *Death* and *Hades*. So A, C read. But B and *Vulgate* read, "to him."

fourth part of the earth — answering to the first four seals; his portion as one of the four, being a *fourth part*.

death — pestilence; compare Ezekiel 14:21 with the four judgments here, the *sword*, *famine*, *pestilence*, and *wild beasts*; the *famine* the consequence of the *sword*; *pestilence*, that of *famine*; and *beasts* multiplying by the consequent depopulation.

with the beasts — Greek, “by”; more direct agency. These four seals are marked off from the three last, by the four living creatures introducing them with “Come.” The calamities indicated are not restricted to one time, but extend through the whole period of Church history to the coming of Christ, before which last great and terrible day of the Lord they shall reach highest aggravation. The first seal is the summary, Christ going forth *conquering* till all enemies are subdued under Him, with a view to which the judgments subsequently specified accompany the *preaching of the Gospel for a witness to all nations*.

9. The three last seals relate to the invisible, as the first four to the visible world; the fifth, to the martyrs who have died as believers; the sixth, to those who have died, or who shall be found at Christ’s coming, unbelievers, namely, “the kings ... great men ... bondman ... freeman”; the seventh, to the silence in heaven. The scene changes from earth to heaven; so that interpretations which make these three last consecutive to the first four seals, are very doubtful.

I saw — in spirit. For souls are not naturally visible.

under the altar — As the blood of sacrificial victims slain on the altar was poured *at the bottom of the altar*, so the souls of those sacrificed for Christ’s testimony are symbolically represented as *under the altar*, in heaven; for the life or animal *soul* is in the *blood*, and blood is often represented as crying for vengeance (^{COH}Genesis 4:10). The altar in heaven, antitypical to the altar of sacrifice, is Christ crucified. As it is the altar that sanctifies the gift, so it is Christ alone who makes our obedience, and even our sacrifice of life for the truth, acceptable to God. The sacrificial altar was not in the sanctuary, but outside; so Christ’s literal sacrifice and the figurative sacrifice of the martyrs took place, not in the heavenly sanctuary, but outside, here on earth. The only altar in heaven is that antitypical to the temple altar of incense. The blood of the martyrs cries from the earth under Christ’s cross, whereon they may be considered virtually to have been sacrificed; their souls cry from under the altar of incense, which is Christ in heaven, by whom alone the incense of praise is accepted before God. They are *under* Christ, in His immediate presence, shut up unto Him in joyful eager expectancy until He shall come to raise the sleeping dead. Compare the language of 2 Maccabees 7:36 as indicating

Jewish opinion on the subject. Our brethren who have now suffered a short pain are dead *under* (Greek) *God's covenant* of everlasting life.

testimony which they held — that is, which they bore, as committed to them to bear. Compare ⁽⁶²⁷⁾Revelation 12:17, “*Have* (same Greek as here) the testimony of Jesus.”

10. How long — Greek, “Until when?” As in the parable the woman (symbol of the Church) *cries day and night* to the unjust judge for justice against her adversary who is always oppressing her (compare below, ⁽⁶²⁰⁾Revelation 12:10); so the elect (not only on earth, but *under Christ's covering*, and in His presence in Paradise) *cry day and night* to God, who will assuredly, in His own time, avenge His and their cause, “though He bear *long* with them.” These passages need not be *restricted* to some particular martyrdoms, but have been, and are receiving, and shall receive partial fulfilments, until their last exhaustive fulfillment before Christ's coming. So as to the other events foretold here. The glory even of those in Paradise will only be complete when Christ's and the Church's foes are cast out, and the earth will become Christ's kingdom at His coming to raise the sleeping saints.

Lord — Greek, “Master”; implying that He has them and their foes and all His creatures as absolutely at His disposal, as a master has his *slaves*; hence, in ⁽⁶⁶¹⁾Revelation 6:11, “*fellow servants*,” or *fellow slaves* follows.

holy — Greek, “the Holy one.”

avenge — “exact vengeance for our blood.”

on — Greek, “from them.”

that dwell on the earth — the ungodly, of earth, earthly, as distinguished from the Church, whose home and heart are even now in heavenly places.

11. white robes — The three oldest manuscripts, A, B, C, read, “A white robe was given.”

every one of — One oldest manuscript, B, omits this. A and C read, “unto them, unto each,” that is, unto them severally. Though their joint cry for the riddance of the earth from the ungodly is not yet granted, it is intimated that it will be so in due time; meanwhile, *individually* they

receive the white robe, indicative of light, joy, and triumphant victory over their foes; even as the Captain of their salvation goes forth on a *white* horse *conquering and to conquer*; also of purity and sanctity through Christ. MAIMONIDES says that the Jews used to array priests, when approved of, *in white robes*; thus the sense is, they are admitted among the blessed ones, who, as spotless priests, minister unto God and the Lamb.

should — So C reads. But A and B, “*shall rest*.”

a little season — One oldest manuscript, B, omits “little.” A and C support it. Even if it be omitted, is it to be inferred that the “season” is short as compared with eternity? BENJEL fancifully made a *season* (Greek, “*chronus*,” the word here used) to be one thousand one hundred and eleven one-ninth years, and a *time* (^{612D}Revelation 12:12,14, Greek, “*kairos*”) to be a fifth of a *season*, that is, two hundred and twenty-two two-ninths years. The only distinction in the *Greek* is, a *season* (Greek, “*chronus*”) is a sort of aggregate of *times*. Greek, “*kairos*,” a specific time, and so of short duration. As to their *rest*, compare ^{614B}Revelation 14:13 (the same Greek, “*anapauomai*”); Isaiah 57:2 Daniel 12:13.

until their ... brethren ... be fulfilled — in number. Until their full number shall have been completed. The number of the elect is definitely fixed: perhaps to fill up that of the fallen angels. But this is mere conjecture. The *full* blessedness and glory of all the saints shall be simultaneous. The earlier shall not anticipate the later saints. A and C read, “shall have been accomplished”; B and *Aleph* read, “shall have accomplished (their course).”

12. As Revelation 6:4,6-8, the sword, famine, and pestilence, answer to Matthew 24:6,7 Revelation 6:9,10, as to martyrdoms, answer to Matthew 24:9,10; so this passage, ^{612D}Revelation 6:12,17, answers to ^{612D}Matthew 24:29,30, “the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven; ... then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming”; imagery describing *the portents* of the immediate coming of the day of the Lord; but *not the coming itself* until the elect are sealed, and the judgments invoked by the martyrs descend on the earth, the sea, and the trees (Revelation 7:1-3).

and, lo — So A reads. But B and C omit “lo.”

earthquake — *Greek*, “shaking” of *the heavens*, the sea, and the dry land; the shaking of these mutable things being the necessary preliminary to the setting up of those *things which cannot be shaken*. This is one of the *catchwords* [WORDSWORTH] connecting the sixth seal with the sixth trumpet (¹¹¹⁵Revelation 11:13) and the seventh vial (¹¹¹⁷Revelation 16:17-21); also the seventh seal (Revelation 8:5).

sackcloth — One kind, made of the “hair” of Cilician goats, was called “cilicium,” or Cilician cloth, and was used for tents, etc. Paul, a Cilician, made such tents (Acts 18:3).

moon — A, B, C, and oldest versions read, “the whole moon”; the full moon; not merely the crescent moon.

as blood — (Joel 2:31).

13. stars ... fell ... as a fig tree casteth her ... figs — (Isaiah 34:4 Na 3:12). The Church shall be then ripe for glorification, the Antichristian world for destruction, which shall be accompanied with mighty phenomena in nature. As to the stars falling to the earth, Scripture describes natural phenomena as they would appear to the spectator, not in the language of scientific accuracy; and yet, while thus adapting itself to ordinary men, it drops hints which show that it anticipates the discoveries of modern science.

14. departed — *Greek*, “*was separated from*” its place; “*was made to depart*.” Not as ALFORD, “*parted asunder*”; for, on the contrary, it was rolled *together* as a scroll which had been open is rolled up and laid aside. There is no “*asunder one from another*” here in the *Greek*, as in ¹¹¹⁸Acts 15:39, which ALFORD copies.

mountain ... moved out of ... places — (Psalm 121:1, *Margin*; Jeremiah 3:23 4:24 Na 1:5). This total disruption shall be the precursor of the new earth, just as the pre-Adamic convulsions prepared it for its present occupants.

15. kings ... hid themselves — Where was now the spirit of those whom the world has so greatly feared? [BENGEL].

great men — statesmen and high civil officers.

rich men ... chief captains — The three oldest manuscripts, A, B, C, transpose thus, “chief captains ... rich men.”

mighty — The three oldest manuscripts, A, B, and C read, “strong” physically (Psalm 33:16).

in — literally “into”; ran *into*, so as to *hide themselves* in.

dens — “caves.”

16. from the face — (Psalm 34:16). On the whole verse, compare Hosea 10:8 ¹²³⁴Luke 23:30.

17. Literally, “the day, the great (day),” which can only mean the last great day. After the Lord has exhausted all His ordinary judgments, the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts, and still sinners are impenitent, the great day of the Lord itself shall come. Matthew 24:6-29 plainly forms a perfect parallelism to the six seals, not only in the events, but also in the order of their occurrence: Matthew 24:3, the first seal; Matthew 24:6, the second seal; Matthew 24:7, the third seal; Matthew 24:7, end, the fourth seal; Matthew 24:9, the fifth seal, the persecutions and abounding iniquity under which, as well as consequent judgments accompanied with gospel preaching to all nations as a witness, are particularly detailed, Matthew 24:9-28; ¹²³⁴Matthew 24:29, the sixth seal.

to stand — to stand justified, and not condemned before the Judge. Thus the sixth seal brings us to the verge of the Lord’s coming. The ungodly “tribes of the earth” tremble at the signs of His immediate approach. But before He actually inflicts the blow in person, “the elect” must be “gathered out.

CHAPTER 7

REVELATION 7:1-17.

SEALING OF THE ELECT OF ISRAEL. THE COUNTLESS MULTITUDE OF THE GENTILE ELECT.

1. And — so B and Syriac. But A, C, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic* omit “and.”

after these things — A, B, C, and *Coptic* read, “after this.” The two visions in this chapter come in as an episode *after* the sixth seal, and before the seventh seal. It is clear that, though “Israel” may elsewhere designate the spiritual Israel, “the elect (Church) on earth” [ALFORD], here, where the names of the tribes one by one are specified, these names cannot have any but the literal meaning. The second advent will be the time of *the restoration of the kingdom to Israel*, when *the times of the Gentiles shall have been fulfilled*, and the Jews shall at last say, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” The period of the Lord’s absence has been a blank in the history of the Jews as a nation. As then Revelation is the Book of the Second Advent [DE BURGH], naturally mention of God’s restored favor to Israel occurs among the events that usher in Christ’s advent.

earth ... sea ... tree — The judgments to descend on these are in answer to the martyrs’ prayer under the *fifth* seal. Compare the same judgments under the *fifth* trumpet, the sealed being exempt (Revelation 9:4).

on any tree — *Greek*, “against any tree” (*Greek*, “*epi ti dendron*”: but “on the earth,” *Greek*, “*epi tees gees*”).

2. from the east — *Greek*, “the rising of the sun.” The quarter from which God’s glory oftenest manifests itself.

3. Hurt not — by letting loose the destructive winds.

till we have sealed the servants of our God — parallel to ^{ABD} Matthew 24:31, “His angels ... shall gather together His elect from the four winds.”

God's love is such, that He *cannot do anything* in the way of judgment, till His people are secured from hurt (^{<0182>}Genesis 19:22). Israel, at the eve of the Lord's coming, shall be found re-embodied as a nation; for its tribes are distinctly specified (Joseph, however, being substituted for Dan; whether because Antichrist is to come from Dan, or because Daniel is to be Antichrist's especial tool [ARETAS, tenth century], compare ^{<0497>}Genesis 49:17 Jeremiah 8:16 Amos 8:14; just as there was a Judas among the Twelve). Out of these tribes *a believing remnant* will be preserved from the judgments which shall destroy all the Antichristian confederacy (^{<0182>}Revelation 6:12-17), and *shall be transfigured with the elect Church of all nations*, namely, 144,000 (or whatever number is meant by this symbolical number), who shall faithfully resist the seductions of Antichrist, while the rest of the nation, restored to Palestine in unbelief, are his dupes, and at last his victims. Previously to the Lord's judgments on Antichrist and his hosts, these latter shall destroy *two-thirds* of the nation, *one-third* escaping, and, by the Spirit's operation through affliction, turning to the Lord, which remnant shall form the nucleus on earth of the Israelite nation that is from this time to stand at the head of the millennial nations of the world. Israel's spiritual resurrection shall be "as life from the dead" to all the nations. As now a regeneration goes on here and there of individuals, so there shall then be a regeneration of nations universally, and this in connection with Christ's coming.

^{<0182>}Matthew 24:34; "this generation (the Jewish nation) shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled," which implies that Israel can no more *pass away* before Christ's advent, than Christ's own *words* can *pass away* (the same *Greek*), ^{<0182>}Matthew 24:35. So exactly Zechariah 13:8,9 14:2-4,9-21; compare Zechariah 12:2-14 13:1,2. So also Ezekiel 8:17,18 9:1-7, especially Ezekiel 9:4. Compare also Ezekiel 10:2 with Revelation 8:5, where the final judgments actually fall on the earth, with the same accompaniment, *the fire of the altar cast into the earth*, including the *fire scattered over the city*. So again, Revelation 14:1, the same 144,000 appear on Zion with the Father's name in their forehead, at the close of the section, the twelfth through fourteenth chapters, concerning the Church and her foes. Not that the saints are exempt from trial: ^{<0182>}Revelation 7:14 proves the contrary; but their trials are distinct from the *destroying* judgments that fall on the world; from these they are exempted, as Israel

was from the plagues of Egypt, especially from the last, the Israelite doors having the protecting seal of the blood-mark.

foreheads — the most conspicuous and noblest part of man's body; on which the helmet, "the hope of salvation," is worn.

4. *Twelve* is the number of the tribes, and appropriate to *the Church*: three by four: three, the *divine* number, multiplied by four, the number for *world-wide extension*. Twelve by twelve implies *fixity and completeness*, which is taken a thousandfold in 144,000. A *thousand* implies *the world perfectly pervaded by the divine*; for it is *ten*, the world number, raised to the power of *three*, the number of God.

of all the tribes — literally, "out of every tribe"; not 144,000 of each tribe, but the aggregate of the twelve thousand *from every tribe*.

children — *Greek*, "sons of Israel." ^{ALFORD} Revelation 3:12 21:12, are no objection, as ALFORD thinks, to the literal Israel being meant; for, in consummated glory, still the Church will be that "built on the foundation of the (*Twelve*) apostles (Israelites), Jesus Christ (an Israelite) being the chief corner-stone." Gentile believers shall have *the name of Jerusalem written on them*, in that they shall share the citizenship antitypical to that of the literal Jerusalem.

5-8. Judah (meaning *praise*) stands first, as Jesus' tribe. Benjamin, the youngest, is last; and with him is associated second last, Joseph. Reuben, as originally first-born, comes next after Judah, to whom it gave place, having by sin lost its primogeniture right. Besides the reason given above (see on Revelation 7:2), another akin for the omission of Dan, is, its having been the first to lapse into idolatry (Judges 18:1-31); for which same reason the name Ephraim, also (compare Judges 17:1-3 Hosea 4:17), is omitted, and Joseph substituted. Also, it had been now for long almost extinct. Long before, the Hebrews say [GROTIUS], it was reduced to the one family of Hussim, which perished subsequently in the wars before Ezra's time. Hence it is omitted in the fourth through eighth chapters of First Chronicles. Dan's small numbers are joined here to Naphtali's, whose brother he was by the same mother [BENGEL]. The twelve times twelve thousand sealed ones of Israel are the nucleus of transfigured humanity [AUBERLEN], to which the elect Gentiles are joined, "a multitude which no

man could number,” Revelation 7:9 (that is, the Church of Jews and Gentiles indiscriminately, in which the Gentiles are the predominant element, ^{ⲉⲓⲁⲓⲁ} Luke 21:24. The word “tribes,” *Greek*, implies that *believing Israelites* are in this *countless multitude*). Both are in heaven, yet ruling over the earth, as ministers of blessing to its inhabitants: while upon earth the world of nations is added to the kingdom of Israel. The twelve apostles stand at the head of the whole. The upper and the lower congregation, though distinct, are intimately associated.

9. no man — *Greek*, “no one.”

of all nations — *Greek*, “OUT OF *every nation*.” The human race is “*one nation*” by origin, but afterwards separated itself into *tribes*, *peoples*, and *tongues*; hence, the one singular stands first, followed by the three plurals.

kindreds — *Greek*, “tribes.”

people — *Greek*, “peoples.” The “first-fruits unto the Lamb,” the 144,000 (Revelation 14:1-4) of Israel, are followed by a copious harvest of all nations, an election *out of* the Gentiles, as the 144,000 are an election out of Israel (see on Revelation 7:3).

white robes — (See on ^{ⲉⲓⲁⲓⲁ} Revelation 6:11; also Revelation 3:5, 18 4:4).

palms in ... hands — the antitype to Christ’s entry into Jerusalem amidst the palm-bearing multitude. This shall be just when He is about to come visibly and take possession of His kingdom. The *palm branch* is the symbol of joy and triumph. It was used at the feast of tabernacles, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when they kept feast to God in thanksgiving for the ingathered fruits. The antitype shall be the completed gathering in of the harvest of the elect redeemed here described. Compare Zechariah 14:16, whence it appears that the *earthly* feast of tabernacles will be renewed, in commemoration of Israel’s preservation in her long wilderness-like sojourn among the nations from which she shall now be delivered, just as the original typical feast was to commemorate her dwelling for forty years in booths or tabernacles in the literal wilderness.

10. cried — *Greek*, “cry,” in the three oldest manuscripts, A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*. It is their continuing, ceaseless employment.

Salvation — literally, “THE salvation”; all the praise of our salvation be ascribed to our God. At the Lord’s entry into Jerusalem, the type, similarly “salvation” is the cry of the palm-bearing multitudes. *Hosanna* means “save us now”; taken from Psalm 118:25, in which Psalm (Psalm 118:14,15,21,26) the same connection occurs between *salvation*, the *tabernacles* of the righteous, and the Jews’ cry to be repeated by the whole nation at Christ’s coming, “Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

11. The angels, as in ^(~~all~~) Revelation 5:11, in their turn take up the anthem of praise. There it was “*many* angels,” here it is “*all* the angels.”

stood — “were standing” [ALFORD].

12. *Greek*, “The blessing, the glory, the wisdom, the thanksgiving, the honor, the power, the might [the doxology is *sevenfold*, implying its totality and completeness], *unto the ages of the ages.*”

13. answered — namely, to my thoughts; spoke, asking the question which might have been expected to arise in John’s mind from what has gone before. One of the twenty-four elders, representing the Old and New Testament ministry, appropriately acts as interpreter of this vision of the glorified Church.

What, etc. — *Greek* order, “These which are arrayed in white robes, WHO are they?”

14. Sir — *Greek*, “Lord.” B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic* versions, and CYPRIAN read, “My Lord.” A omits “My,” as *English Version*.

thou knowest — taken from Ezekiel 37:3. Comparatively ignorant ourselves of divine things, it is well for us to look upward for divinely communicated knowledge.

came — rather as *Greek*, “come”; implying that they are *just come*.

great tribulation — *Greek*, “THE great tribulation”; “the tribulation, the great one,” namely, the tribulation to which the martyrs were exposed under the fifth seal, the same which Christ foretells as about to precede His coming (^(~~all~~) Matthew 24:21, *great tribulation*), and followed by the same signs as the sixth seal (^(~~all~~) Matthew 24:29,30), compare Daniel 12:1;

including also retrospectively all *the tribulation* which the saints of all ages have had to pass through. Thus this seventh chapter is a recapitulation of the vision of the six seals, Revelation 6:1-17, to fill up the outline there given in that part of it which affects the faithful of that day. There, however, their number was waiting to be completed, but here it is completed, and they are seen taken out of the earth before the judgments on the Antichristian apostasy; with their Lord, they, and all His faithful witnesses and disciples of past ages, wait for His coming and their coming to be glorified and reign together with Him. Meanwhile, in contrast with their previous sufferings, they are exempt from the hunger, thirst, and scorching heats of their life on earth (^{<6076>}Revelation 7:16), and are fed and refreshed by the Lamb of God Himself (^{<6077>}Revelation 7:17 14:1-4,13); an earnest of their future perfect blessedness in both body and soul united (Revelation 21:4-6 22:1-5).

washed ... robes ... white in the blood of ... Lamb — (Revelation 1:5 Isaiah 1:18 ^{<8094>}Hebrews 9:14 1 John 1:7; compare Isaiah 61:10 Zechariah 3:3-5). Faith applies to the heart the purifying blood; once for all for justification, continually throughout the life for sanctification.

15. Therefore — because they are so washed white; for without it they could never have entered God's holy heaven; (^{<6214>}Revelation 22:14, "Blessed are those who *wash their robes* (the oldest manuscripts reading), that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city"; ^{<6217>}Revelation 21:27 ^{<4954>}Ephesians 5:26,27.

before — *Greek*, "in the presence of." Matthew 5:8 ^{<4952>}1 Corinthians 13:12, "face to face."

throne ... temple — These are connected because we can approach the heavenly King only through priestly mediation; therefore, Christ is at once King and Priest on His throne.

day and night — that is, perpetually; as those approved of as priests by the Sanhedrim were clothed in white, and kept by turns a perpetual watch in the temple at Jerusalem; compare as to the singers, ^{<1383>}1 Chronicles 9:33, "day and night"; Psalm 134:1. Strictly "there is no night" in the heavenly sanctuary (Revelation 22:5).

in his temple — in what is the heavenly analogue to His temple on earth, for strictly there is “no temple therein” (^{<62D>}Revelation 21:22), “God and the Lamb are the temple” filling the whole, so that there is no distinction of sacred and secular places; the city is the temple, and the temple the city. Compare Revelation 4:8, “the four living creatures rest not *day and night*, saying, Holy,” etc.

shall dwell among them — rather (*Greek*, “*scenosei ep’ autous*”), “shall be the tabernacle over them” (compare Revelation 21:3 ^{<62D>}Leviticus 26:11, especially Isaiah 4:5,6 8:14 25:4 Ezekiel 37:27). His *dwelling among them* is to be understood as a secondary truth, besides what is expressed, namely, His being their covert. When once He *tabernacled among us as the Word made flesh*, He was in great lowliness; then He shall be in great glory.

16. (Isaiah 49:10).

hunger no more — as they did here.

thirst any more — (^{<62B>}John 4:13).

the sun — literally, scorching in the East. Also, symbolically, the sun of persecution.

neither ... light — *Greek*, “by no means at all ... light” (fall).

heat — as the sirocco.

17. **in the midst of the throne** — that is, in the middle point in front of the throne (Revelation 5:6).

feed — *Greek*, “tend as a shepherd.”

living fountains of water — A, B, *Vulgate*, and CYPRIAN read, (eternal) “*life’s* fountains of waters.” “Living” is not supported by the old authorities.

CHAPTER 8

REVELATION 8:1-13.

SEVENTH SEAL. PREPARATION FOR THE SEVEN TRUMPETS. THE FIRST FOUR AND THE CONSEQUENT PLAGUES.

1. **was** — *Greek*, “came to pass”; “began to be.”

silence in heaven about ... half an hour — The last seal having been broken open, the book of God’s eternal plan of redemption is opened for the Lamb to read to the blessed ones in heaven. The *half hour’s silence* contrasts with the previous jubilant songs of *the great multitude*, taken up by the *angels* (Revelation 7:9-11). It is the solemn introduction to the employments and enjoyments of the eternal Sabbath-rest of the people of God, commencing with the Lamb’s reading the book heretofore sealed up, and which we cannot know till then. In Revelation 10:4, similarly at the eve of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when the seven thunders uttered their voices, John is forbidden to write them. The seventh trumpet (¶1115 Revelation 11:15-19) winds up God’s vast plan of providence and grace in redemption, just as the seventh seal brings it to the same consummation. So also the seventh vial, ¶1617 Revelation 16:17. Not that the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven vials, though parallel, are repetitions. They each trace the course of divine action up to the grand consummation in which they all meet, under a different aspect. *Thunders, lightnings, an earthquake*, and *voices* close the seven thunders and the seven seals alike (compare Revelation 8:5, with ¶1119 Revelation 11:19). Compare at the seventh vial, the voices, thunders, lightnings, and earthquake, ¶1618 Revelation 16:18. *The half-hour silence* is the brief pause GIVEN TO JOHN between the preceding vision and the following one, implying, on the one hand, the solemn introduction to the eternal sabbatism which is to follow the seventh seal; and, on the other, the silence which continued during the incense-accompanied prayers which usher in the first of the seven trumpets (Revelation 8:3-5). In the Jewish temple, musical instruments and singing resounded during the whole time of the

offering of the sacrifices, which formed the first part of the service. But at the offering of incense, solemn silence was kept (“My soul *waiteth* upon God,” Psalm 62:1; “is silent,” *Margin*; Psalm 65:1, *Margin*), the people praying secretly all the time. The *half-hour* stillness implies, too, the earnest adoring expectation with which the blessed spirits and the angels await the succeeding unfolding of God’s judgments. A *short* space is implied; for even an *hour* is so used (⁶⁷Revelation 17:12 18:10,19).

2. the seven angels — Compare the apocryphal Tobit 12:15, “I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.” Compare ⁶⁸Luke 1:19, “I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God.”

stood — *Greek*, “stand.”

seven trumpets — These come in during the time while the martyrs *rest until their fellow servants also, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled*; for it is *the inhabitants of the earth* on whom the judgments fall, on whom also the martyrs prayed that they should fall (⁶⁹Revelation 6:10). *All* the ungodly, and not merely some one portion of them, are meant, all the opponents and obstacles in the way of the kingdom of Christ and His saints, as is proved by ⁷⁰Revelation 11:15,18, end, at the close of the seven trumpets. The Revelation becomes more special only as it advances farther (Revelation 13:1-18 16:10 17:18). By the seven trumpets the world kingdoms are overturned to make way for Christ’s universal kingdom. The first four are connected together; and the last three, which alone have *Woe, woe, woe* (Revelation 8:7-13).

3. another angel — not Christ, as many think; for He, in Revelation, is always designated by one of His proper titles; though, doubtless, He is the only true High Priest, the Angel of the Covenant, standing before the golden altar of incense, and there, as Mediator, offering up His people’s prayers, rendered acceptable before God through the incense of His merit. Here the angel acts merely as a *ministering spirit* (Hebrews 1:4), just as the twenty-four elders *have vials full of odors*, or incense, *which are the prayers of saints* (Revelation 5:8), and which they present before the Lamb. How precisely their ministry, in perfuming the prayers of the saints and offering them on the altar of incense, is exercised, we know not, but we do know they are not to be prayed TO. If we send an offering of tribute to

the king, the king's messenger is not allowed to appropriate what is due to the king alone.

there was given unto him — The angel does not provide the incense; it is *given to him* by Christ, whose meritorious obedience and death are the incense, rendering the saints' prayers well pleasing to God. It is not the saints who give the angel the incense; nor are their prayers identified with the incense; nor do they offer their prayers to him. Christ alone is the Mediator through whom, and to whom, prayer is to be offered.

offer it with the prayers — rather as *Greek*, “*give it TO the prayers,*” so rendering them efficacious as a *sweet-smelling savor* to God. Christ's merits alone can thus *incense* our prayers, though the angelic ministry be employed to attach this incense to the prayers. The saints' praying on earth, and the angel's incensing in heaven, are simultaneous.

all saints — The prayers both of the saints in the heavenly rest, and of those militant on earth. The martyrs' cry is the foremost, and brings down the ensuing judgments.

golden altar — antitype to the earthly.

4. the smoke ... *which came* with the prayers ... ascended up — rather, “the smoke of the incense FOR (or ‘*given TO*’: ‘given’ being understood from Revelation 8:3) the prayers of the saints ascended up, out of the angel's hand, in the presence of Gods” The angel merely burns the incense given him by Christ the High Priest, so that its smoke blends with the ascending prayers of the saints. The saints themselves are priests; and the angels in this priestly ministration are but *their fellow servants* (~~and~~ Revelation 19:10).

5. cast it into the earth — that is, *unto* the earth: the hot coals off the altar cast on the earth, symbolize God's fiery judgments about to descend on the Church's foes in answer to the saints' incense-perfumed prayers which have just ascended before God, and those of the martyrs. How marvellous the power of the saints' prayers!

there were — “there took place,” or “ensued.”

voices, and thunderings, and lightnings — B places the “voices” after “thunderings.” A places it after “lightnings.”

6. sound — blow the trumpets.

7. The common feature of the first four trumpets is, the judgments under them affect *natural objects*, the accessories of life, the earth, trees, grass, the sea, rivers, fountains, the light of the sun, moon, and stars. The last three, the *woe-trumpets* (^{<1183>}Revelation 8:13), affect men’s life with pain, death, and hell. The language is evidently drawn from the plagues of Egypt, five or six out of the ten exactly corresponding: the *hail*, the *fire* (^{<1124>}Exodus 9:24), the *WATER turned to blood* (^{<1175>}Exodus 7:19), the *darkness* (^{<1121>}Exodus 10:21), the *locusts* (^{<1102>}Exodus 10:12), and perhaps the *death* (^{<1185>}Revelation 9:18). Judicial retribution in kind characterizes the inflictions of the first four, those elements which had been abused punishing their abusers.

mingled with — A, B, and *Vulgate* read, *Greek*, “... IN blood.” So in the case of the second and third vials (Revelation 16:3,4).

upon the earth — *Greek*, “unto the earth.” A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* add, “And the third of the earth was burnt up.” So under the third trumpet, the *third* of the rivers is affected: also, under the sixth trumpet, the *third* part of men are killed. In Zechariah 13:8,9 this tripartite division appears, but the proportions reversed, two parts killed, only a third preserved. Here, vice versa, two-thirds escape, one-third is smitten. The fire was the predominant element.

all green grass — no longer a third, but *all* is *burnt up*.

8. as it were — not literally a mountain: a mountain-like burning mass. There is a plain allusion to Jeremiah 51:25 Amos 7:4.

third part of the sea became blood — In the parallel second vial, the *whole* sea (not merely *a third*) becomes *blood*. The overthrow of Jericho, the type of the Antichristian Babylon, after which Israel, under Joshua (the same name as *Jesus*), victoriously took possession of Canaan, the type of Christ’s and His people’s kingdom, is perhaps alluded to in the *SEVEN trumpets*, which end in the overthrow of all Christ’s foes, and the setting up of His kingdom. On the *seventh* day, at the *seventh* time, when

the *seven* priests blew the *seven* ram's horn trumpets, the people shouted, and the walls fell flat: and then ensued the *blood-shedding* of the foe. A mountain-like fiery mass would not naturally change water into blood; nor would the third part of *ships* be thereby destroyed.

9. The symbolical interpreters take *the ships* here to be *churches*. For the *Greek* here for ships is not the common one, but that used in the Gospels of the apostolic vessel in which Christ taught: and the first churches were in the shape of an inverted ship: and the *Greek* for *destroyed* is also used of heretical *corruptings* (1 Timothy 6:5).

10. a lamp — *a torch*.

11. The symbolizers interpret the *star fallen from heaven* as a chief minister (ARIUS, according to BULLINGER, BENIGEL, and others; or some future false teacher, if, as is more likely, the event be still future) falling from his high place in the Church, and instead of shining with heavenly light as a *star*, becoming a torch lit with earthly fire and smouldering with smoke. And “wormwood,” though medicinal in some cases, if used as ordinary water would not only be disagreeable to the taste, but also fatal to life: so “heretical wormwood changes the sweet Siloas of Scripture into deadly Marahs” [WORDSWORTH]. Contrast the converse change of bitter Marah water into sweet, ^(*DEUT*) Exodus 15:23. ALFORD gives as an illustration in a physical point of view, the conversion of water into *firewater* or *ardent* spirits, which may yet go on to destroy even as many as a third of the ungodly in the latter days.

12. third part — not a *total* obscuration as in the sixth seal (^(*REVEL*) Revelation 6:12,13). This *partial* obscuration, therefore, comes between the prayers of the martyrs under the fifth seal, and the last overwhelming judgments on the ungodly under the sixth seal, at the eve of Christ's coming.

the night likewise — withdrew a third part of the light which the bright Eastern moon and stars ordinarily afford.

13. an angel — A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read for “angel,” which is supported by none of the oldest manuscripts, “an eagle”: the symbol of judgment descending fatally from on high; the king of birds pouncing on the prey. Compare this fourth trumpet and the flying *eagle* with the fourth

seal introduced by the fourth living creature, “like a flying eagle,” Revelation 4:7 6:7,8: the aspect of Jesus as presented by the fourth Evangelist. *John* is compared in the cherubim (according to the primitive interpretation) to a flying eagle: *Christ’s divine majesty* in this similitude is set forth in the Gospel according to John, His *judicial visitations* in the Revelation of John. Contrast “another angel,” or *messenger*, with “the everlasting Gospel,” Revelation 14:6.

through the midst of heaven — *Greek*, “in the mid-heaven,” that is, in the part of the sky where the sun reaches the *meridian*: in such a position as that the eagle is an object conspicuous to all.

the inhabitants of the earth — the ungodly, the “men of the world,” whose “portion is in this life,” upon whom the martyrs had prayed that their blood might be avenged (~~Rev~~ Revelation 6:10). Not that they sought personal revenge, but their zeal was for the honor of God against the foes of God and His Church.

the other — *Greek*, “*the remaining voices.*”

CHAPTER 9

REVELATION 9:1-21.

THE FIFTH TRUMPET: THE FALLEN STAR OPENS THE ABYSS WHENCE ISSUE LOCUSTS. THE SIXTH TRUMPET. FOUR ANGELS AT THE EUPHRATES LOOSED.

1. The last three trumpets of the seven are called, from ~~the~~ Revelation 8:13, *the woe-trumpets*.

fall — rather as *Greek*, “fallen.” When John saw it, it was not in the act of *falling*, but had *fallen* already. This is a connecting link of this fifth trumpet with Revelation 12:8,9,12, “*Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, for the devil is come down,*” etc. Compare Isaiah 14:12, “*How art thou fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the morning!*”

the bottomless pit — *Greek*, “the pit of the abyss”; *the orifice of the hell* where Satan and his demons dwell.

3. **upon** — *Greek*, “unto,” or “into.”

as the scorpions of the earth — as contrasted with the “locusts” which come up *from hell*, and are not “of the earth.”

have power — namely, to sting.

4. **not hurt the grass ... neither ... green thing ... neither ... tree** — the food on which they ordinarily prey. Therefore, not natural and ordinary locusts. Their natural instinct is supernaturally restrained to mark the judgment as altogether divine.

those men which — *Greek*, “the men whosoever.”

in, etc. — *Greek*, “upon their forehead.” Thus this fifth trumpet is proved to follow the *sealing* in Revelation 7:1-8, under the sixth seal. None of the saints are hurt by these locusts, which is not true of the saints in Mohammed’s attack, who is supposed by many to be meant by the

locusts; for many true believers fell in the Mohammedan invasions of Christendom.

5. they ... they — The subject changes: the first “they” is *the locusts*; the second is the *unsealed*.

five months — the ordinary time in the year during which locusts continue their ravages.

their torment — the torment of the sufferers. This fifth verse and Revelation 9:6 cannot refer to an invading army. For an army would *kill*, and not merely *torment*.

6. shall desire — *Greek*, “eagerly desire”; set their mind on.

shall flee — So B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read. But A and *Aleph* read, “fleeth,” namely continually. In ¹⁸⁸¹Revelation 6:16, which is at a later stage of God’s judgments, the ungodly seek annihilation, not from the torment of their suffering, but from fear of the face of the Lamb before whom they have to stand.

7. prepared unto battle — *Greek*, “made ready unto war.” Compare *Note*, see on Joel 2:4, where the resemblance of locusts to horses is traced: the plates of a horse armed for battle are an image on a larger scale of the outer shell of the locust.

crowns — (Nahum 3:17). ELLIOTT explains this of the *turbans* of Mohammedans. But how could turbans be “like gold?” ALFORD understands it of the head of the locusts actually ending in a crown-shaped fillet which resembled gold in its material.

as the faces of men — The “as” seems to imply the locusts here do not mean *men*. At the same time they are not natural locusts, for these do not sting *men* (Revelation 9:5). They must be supernatural.

8. hair of women — long and flowing. An Arabic proverb compares the antlers of locusts to the hair of girls. EWALD in ALFORD understands the allusion to be to the hair on the legs or bodies of the locusts: compare “rough caterpillars,” Jeremiah 51:27.

as the teeth of lions — (Joel 1:6, as to locusts).

9. as it were breastplates of iron — not such as forms the thorax of the natural locust.

as ... chariots — (Joel 2:5-7).

battle — *Greek*, “war.”

10. tails like unto scorpions — like unto *the tails of* scorpions.


and there were stings — There is no oldest manuscript for this reading. A, B, *Aleph*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, “and (they have) stings: and in their tails (is) their power (literally, ‘authority’: authorized power) to hurt.”

11. And — so *Syriac*. But A, B, and *Aleph*, omit “and.”

had — *Greek*, “have.”

a king ... *which is* the angel — *English Version*, agreeing with A, *Aleph*, reads the (*Greek*) article before “angel,” in which reading we must translate, “They have as king over them *the* angel,” etc. Satan (compare Revelation 9:1). Omitting the article with B, we must translate, “They have as king *an* angel,” etc.: one of the chief demons under Satan: I prefer from Revelation 9:1, the former.

bottomless pit — *Greek*, “abyss.”

Abaddon — that is, *perdition* or *destruction* (Job 26:6 Proverbs 27:20). The locusts are supernatural instruments in the hands of Satan to torment, and yet not kill, the ungodly, under this fifth trumpet. Just as in the case of godly Job, Satan was allowed to torment with elephantiasis, but not to touch his *life*. In  Revelation 9:20, these two woe-trumpets are expressly called “plagues.” ANDREAS OF CAESAREA, A.D. 500, held, in his *Commentary on Revelation*, that the locusts mean *evil spirits* again permitted to come forth on earth and afflict men with various plagues.

12. Greek, “*The one woe.*”

hereafter — *Greek*, “after these things.” I agree with ALFORD and DE BURGH, that these *locusts from the abyss* refer to judgments about to fall on the ungodly immediately before Christ’s second advent. None of the interpretations which regard them as past, are satisfactory. Joel 1:2-7 2:1-11, is strictly parallel and expressly refers (Joel 2:11) to THE DAY OF THE

LORD GREAT AND VERY TERRIBLE: Joel 2:10 gives the portents accompanying the day of the Lord's coming, *the earth quaking, the heavens trembling, the sun, moon, and stars, withdrawing their shining*: Joel 2:18,31,32, also point to the immediately succeeding deliverance of Jerusalem: compare also, the previous last conflict in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and the dwelling of God thenceforth in Zion, blessing Judah. DE BURGH confines the locust judgment to *the Israelite land*, even as the sealed in Revelation 7:1-8 are Israelites: not that there are not others sealed as elect in *the earth*; but that, the judgment being confined to *Palestine*, the sealed of *Israel alone* needed to be expressly excepted from the visitation. Therefore, he translates throughout, "the land" (that is, of Israel and Judah), instead of "the earth." I incline to agree with him.

13. a voice — literally, "*one voice*."

from — *Greek*, "out of."

the four horns — A, *Vulgate* (*Amiatinus* manuscript), *Coptic*, and *Syriac* omit "four." B and CYPRIAN support it. The *four* horns together gave forth their voice, not diverse, but *one*. God's revelation (for example, the Gospel), though in its aspects fourfold (*four* expressing *world-wide* extension: whence *four* is the number of the Evangelists), still has but one and the same voice. However, from the parallelism of this sixth trumpet to the fifth seal (Revelation 6:9,10), the martyrs' cry for the avenging of their blood from the altar reaching its consummation under the sixth seal and sixth trumpet, I prefer understanding this *cry from the four corners of the altar* to refer to the saints' prayerful cry from the four quarters of the world, *incensed* by the angel, and ascending to God from the golden altar of incense, and bringing down in consequence fiery judgments. *Aleph* omits the whole clause, "one from the four horns."

14. in, etc. — *Greek*, "*epi to potamo*"; "on," or "at the great river."

Euphrates — (Compare ^{and} Revelation 16:12). The river whereat Babylon, the ancient foe of God's people was situated. Again, whether from the literal region of the Euphrates, or from the spiritual Babylon (*the apostate Church*, especially ROME), four angelic ministers of God's judgments shall go forth, assembling an army of horsemen throughout the four quarters of

the earth, to slay a third of men, the brunt of the visitation shall be on Palestine.

15. were — “which had been prepared” [TREGELLES rightly].

for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year — rather as *Greek*, “for (that is, against) THE hour, and day, and month, and year,” namely, appointed by God. The *Greek* article (*teen*), put once only before all the periods, implies that the hour in the day, and the day in the month, and the month in the year, and the year itself, had been definitely fixed by God. The article would have been omitted had a sum-total of periods been specified, namely, three hundred ninety-one years and one month (the period from A.D. 1281, when the Turks first conquered the Christians, to 1672, their last conquest of them, since which last date their empire has declined).

slay — not merely to “hurt” (^{<690>}Revelation 9:10), as in the fifth trumpet.

third part — (See on Revelation 8:7-12).

of men — namely, of earthy men, ^{<683>}Revelation 8:13, “inhabiters of the earth,” as distinguished from God’s sealed people (of which the sealed of Israel, Revelation 7:1-8, form the nucleus).

16. Compare with these two hundred million, Psalm 68:17 Daniel 7:10. The hosts here are evidently, from their numbers and their appearance (^{<697>}Revelation 9:17), not merely *human* hosts, but probably *infernal*, though constrained to work out God’s will (compare Revelation 9:1,2).

and I heard — A, B, *Aleph*, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and CYPRIAN omit “and.”

17. thus — as follows.

of fire — the *fiery color* of the breastplates answering to the *fire* which *issued* out of their *mouths*.

of jacinth — literally, “of hyacinth color,” the hyacinth of the ancients answering to our *dark blue iris*: thus, their *dark, dull-colored* breastplates correspond to the *smoke* out of their mouths.

brimstone — *sulphur-colored*: answering to the *brimstone* or sulphur out of their mouths.

18. By these three — A, B, C, and *Aleph* read (*apo* for *kupo*), “From”; implying the *direction* whence the slaughter came; not direct instrumentality as “by” implies. A, B, C, *Aleph* also add “plagues” after “three.” *English Version* reading, which omits it, is not well supported.

by the fire — *Greek*, “owing to the fire,” literally, “out of.”

19. their — A, B, C and *Aleph* read, “the power of the horses.”

in their mouth — whence issued the fire, smoke, and brimstone (◀*Revelation* 9:17). Many interpreters understand the *horsemen* to refer to the myriads of Turkish cavalry arrayed in scarlet, blue, and yellow (*fire*, *hyacinth*, and *brimstone*), the *lion-headed horses* denoting their invincible courage, and *the fire* and *brimstone* out of their mouths, the gunpowder and artillery introduced into Europe about this time, and employed by the Turks; the tails, like serpents, having a venomous sting, the false religion of Mohammed supplanting Christianity, or, as ELLIOTT thinks, the Turkish pachas’ horse tails, worn as a symbol of authority. (!) All this is very doubtful. Considering the parallelism of this sixth trumpet to the sixth seal, the likelihood is that events are intended immediately preceding the Lord’s coming. “The false prophet” (as Isaiah 9:15 proves), or second beast, having the horns of a lamb, but speaking as *the dragon*, who supports by lying miracles the final Antichrist, seems to me to be intended. Mohammed, doubtless, is a forerunner of him, but not the exhaustive fulfiller of the prophecy here: Satan will, probably, towards the end, bring out all the powers of hell for the last conflict (see on ◀*Revelation* 9:20, on “devils”; compare Revelation 9:1,2,17,18).

with them — with the serpent heads and their venomous fangs.

20. the rest of the men — that is, the ungodly.

yet — So A, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*. B and *Aleph* read, “did not even repent of,” namely, so as to give up “the works,” etc. Like Pharaoh hardening his heart against repentance notwithstanding the plagues.

of their hands — (¹⁶³²Deuteronomy 31:29). Especially the idols *made by their hands*. Compare ⁶⁶³⁴Revelation 13:14,15, “the image of the beast” ⁶⁶³⁹Revelation 19:20.

that they should not — So B reads. But A, C, and *Aleph* read “that they shall not”: implying a prophecy of *certainty* that it shall be so.

devils — *Greek*, “demons” which lurk beneath the idols which idolaters worship.

21. sorceries — witchcrafts by means of *drugs* (so the *Greek*). One of the fruits of the unrenewed flesh: the sin of the heathen: about to be repeated by apostate Christians in the last days, ⁶⁶²⁵Revelation 22:15, “sorcerers.” The heathen who shall have rejected the proffered Gospel and clung to their fleshly lusts, and apostate Christians who shall have relapsed into the same shall share the same terrible judgments. The worship of images was established in the East in A.D. 842.

fornication — singular: whereas the other sins are in the plural. Other sins are perpetrated at intervals: those lacking purity of heart indulge in *one* perpetual fornication [BENGEL].

CHAPTER 10

REVELATION 10:1-11.

VISION OF THE LITTLE BOOK.

As an episode was introduced between the sixth and seventh seals, so there is one here (Revelation 10:1-11:14) after the sixth and introductory to the seventh trumpet (↗Revelation 11:15, which forms the grand consummation). The Church and her fortunes are the subject of this episode: as the judgments on the unbelieving *inhabitants of the earth* (↗Revelation 8:13) were the exclusive subject of the fifth and sixth woe-trumpets. ↗Revelation 6:11 is plainly referred to in Revelation 10:6 below; in ↗Revelation 6:11 the martyrs crying to be avenged were told they must “rest yet for a little season” or *time*: in Revelation 10:6 here they are assured, “There shall be no longer (any interval of) time”; their prayer shall have no longer to wait, but (Revelation 10:7) *at the trumpet sounding of the seventh angel* shall be consummated, and *the mystery of God* (His mighty plan heretofore hidden, but then to be revealed) *shall be finished*. The *little open book* (Revelation 10:2,9,10) is given to John by the angel, with a charge (↗Revelation 10:11) that he *must prophesy again concerning* (so the *Greek*) *peoples, nations, tongues, and kings*: which prophecy (as appears from ↗Revelation 11:15-19) affects those *peoples, nations, tongues, and kings* only in relation to ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH, who form the main object of the prophecy.

1. another mighty angel — as distinguished from the *mighty angel* who asked as to the former and more comprehensive book (Revelation 5:2), “Who is worthy to open the book?”

clothed with a cloud — the emblem of God coming in judgment.

a — A; B, C. and *Aleph* read “the”; referring to (Revelation 4:3) *the rainbow* already mentioned.

rainbow upon his head — the emblem of covenant mercy to God's people, amidst judgments on God's foes. Resumed from Revelation 4:3 (see on Revelation 4:3).

face as ... the sun — (ⲙⲓⲗⲏ Revelation 1:16 18:1).

feet as pillars of fire — (ⲙⲓⲗⲏ Revelation 1:15 Ezekiel 1:7). The angel, as representative of Christ, reflects His glory and bears the insignia attributed in ⲙⲓⲗⲏ Revelation 1:15, 16 4:3, to Christ Himself. The *pillar of fire* by night led Israel through the wilderness, and was the symbol of God's presence.

2. he had — *Greek*, "Having."

in his hand — in his left hand: as in Revelation 10:5 (see on Revelation 10:5), *he lifts up his right hand to heaven*.

a little book — a roll *little* in comparison with the "book" (Revelation 5:1) which contained the *whole* vast scheme of God's purposes, not to be fully read till the final consummation. This other, a *less book*, contained only a portion which John was now to make his own (Revelation 10:9,11), and then to use in prophesying to others. The New Testament begins with the word "book" (*Greek*, "*biblus*"), of which "the little book" (*Greek*, "*biblaridion*") is the diminutive, "the little bible," the Bible in miniature.

upon the sea ... earth — Though the beast with seven heads is about to arise out of the *sea* (Revelation 13:1), and the beast with two horns like a lamb (ⲙⲓⲗⲏ Revelation 13:11) out of the *earth*, yet it is but for a time, and that *time shall no longer be* (Revelation 10:6,7) when once *the seventh trumpet is about to sound*; the angel with his right foot on the sea, and his left on the earth, claims both as God's, and as about soon to be cleared of the usurper and his followers.

3. as ... lion — Christ, whom the angel represents, is often so symbolized (Revelation 5:5, "the Lion of the tribe of Juda").

seven thunders — *Greek*, "*the seven thunders*." They form part of the Apocalyptic symbolism; and so are marked by the article as *well known*. Thus *thunderings* marked the opening of the seventh seal (Revelation 8:1,5); so also at the seventh vial (ⲙⲓⲗⲏ Revelation 16:17,18). WORDSWORTH calls this *the prophetic use of the article*; "*the thunders*, of which more

hereafter.” Their full meaning shall be only known at the grand consummation marked by the seventh seal, the seventh trumpet (^{611B}Revelation 11:19), and the seventh vial.

uttered their — Greek, “*spake their own voices*”; that is, voices peculiarly *their own*, and not now revealed to men.

4. when — *Aleph* reads, “Whatsoever things.” But most manuscripts support *English Version*.

uttered their voices — A, B, C, and *Aleph* omit “their voices.” Then translate, “had spoken.”

unto me — omitted by A, B, C, *Aleph*, and *Syriac*.

Seal up — the opposite command to ^{622A}Revelation 22:20. Even though at *the time of the end* the things *sealed* in Daniel’s time were to be revealed, yet not so the voices of these thunders. Though heard by John, they were not to be imparted by him to others in this book of Revelation; so terrible are they that God in mercy withholds them, since “sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” The godly are thus kept from morbid ponderings over the evil to come; and the ungodly are not driven by despair into utter recklessness of life. ALFORD adds another aim in concealing them, namely, “godly fear, seeing that the arrows of God’s quiver are not exhausted.” Besides the terrors foretold, there are others unutterable and more horrifying lying in the background.

5. lifted up his hand — So A and *Vulgate* read. But B, C, *Aleph*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*, “... his *right* hand.” It was customary to lift up the hand towards heaven, appealing to the God of truth, in taking a solemn oath. There is in this part of the vision an allusion to Daniel 12:1-13. Compare Revelation 10:4, with Daniel 12:4,9; and Revelation 10:5,6, end, with Daniel 12:7. But there the angel clothed in linen, and standing upon the waters, sware “a time, times, and a half” were to interpose before the consummation; here, on the contrary, the angel standing with his left foot on the earth, and his right upon the sea, swears *there shall be time no longer*. There he lifted up both hands to heaven; here he has *the little book* now *open* (whereas in Daniel *the book* is *sealed*) in his left hand (Revelation 10:2), and he *lifts up* only *his right hand to heaven*.

6. liveth for ever and ever — *Greek*, “liveth unto the ages of the ages” (compare Daniel 12:7).

created heaven ... earth ... sea, etc. — This detailed designation of God as the Creator, is appropriate to the subject of the angel’s oath, namely, the consummating of the mystery of God (Revelation 10:7), which can surely be brought to pass by the same Almighty power that created all things, and by none else.

that there should be time no longer — *Greek*, “that time (that is, an interval of time) no longer shall be.” The martyrs shall have no longer a time to wait for the accomplishment of their prayers for the purgation of the earth by the judgments which shall remove their and God’s foes from it (ⲓⲁⲓⲓ Revelation 6:11). The appointed *season* or *time* of delay is at an end (the same *Greek* is here as in ⲓⲁⲓⲓ Revelation 6:11, *chronos*). Not as *English Version* implies, Time shall end and eternity begin.

7. But — connected with Revelation 10:6. “There shall be no longer time (that is, delay), *but* in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to (so the *Greek*) sound his trumpet (so the *Greek*), then (literally, ‘also’; which conjunction often introduces the consequent member of a sentence) the mystery of God is finished,” literally, “has been finished”; the prophet regarding the future as certain as if it were past. A, C, *Aleph*, and *Coptic* read the past tense (*Greek*, “*etelesthee*”). B reads, as *English Version*, the future tense (*Greek*, “*telesthee*”). “should be finished” (compare ⲓⲁⲓⲓ Revelation 11:15-18). Sweet consolation to the waiting saints! The seventh trumpet shall be sounded without further delay.

the mystery of God — the theme of the “little book,” and so of the remainder of the Apocalypse. What a grand contrast to the “mystery of iniquity Babylon!” The mystery of God’s scheme of redemption, once hidden in God’s secret counsel and dimly shadowed forth in types and prophecies, but now more and more clearly revealed according as the Gospel kingdom develops itself, up to its fullest consummation at the end. Then finally His servants shall praise Him most fully, for the glorious consummation of the mystery in having taken to Himself and His saints the kingdom so long usurped by Satan and the ungodly. Thus this verse is an anticipation of ⲓⲁⲓⲓ Revelation 11:15-18.

declared to — *Greek*, “declared the glad tidings to.” “The mystery of God” is the *Gospel glad tidings*. The office of the *prophets* is to receive the *glad tidings* from God, in order to *declare* them to others. The final consummation is the great theme of the Gospel announced to, and by, the prophets (compare Galatians 3:8).

8. spake ... and said — So *Syriac* and *Coptic* read. But A, B, C, “(I heard) again speaking with me, and saying” (*Greek*, “*lalousan ... legousan*”).

little book — So *Aleph* and B read. But A and C, “the book.”

9. I went — *Greek*, “I went *away*.” John here leaves heaven, his standing-point of observation heretofore, to be near the angel standing on the earth and sea.

Give — A, B, C, and *Vulgate* read the infinitive, “Telling him *to give*.”

eat it up — appropriate its contents so entirely as to be assimilated with (as food), and become part of thyself, so as to impart them the more vividly to others. His finding the roll sweet to the taste at first, is because it was the Lord’s will he was doing, and because, divesting himself of carnal feeling, he regarded God’s will as always agreeable, however bitter might be the message of judgment to be announced. Compare Psalm 40:8, *Margin*, as to Christ’s inner complete appropriation of God’s word.

thy belly bitter — parallel to Ezekiel 2:10, “There was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.”

as honey — (Psalm 19:10 119:103). Honey, sweet to the mouth, sometimes turns into bile in the stomach. The thought that God would be glorified (Revelation 11:3-6, 11-18) gave him the sweetest pleasure. Yet, afterwards the *belly*, or carnal natural feeling, was embittered with grief at the prophecy of the coming bitter persecutions of the Church (Revelation 11:7-10); compare John 16:1,2. The revelation of the secrets of futurity is *sweet* to one at first, but *bitter* and distasteful to our natural man, when we learn the cross which is to be borne before the crown shall be won. John was grieved at the coming apostasy and the sufferings of the Church at the hands of Antichrist.

10. the little book — So A and C, but B, *Aleph*, and *Vulgate*, “the book.”

was bitter — *Greek*, “was embittered.”

11. he said — A, B, and *Vulgate* read, “*they say* unto me”; an indefinite expression for “it was said unto me.”

Thou must — The obligation lies upon thee, as the servant of God, to prophesy at His command.

again — as thou didst already in the previous part of this book of Revelation.

before, etc. — rather as *Greek* (*epilaois*), “*concerning* many peoples,” etc., namely, in their relation to the Church. The eating of the book, as in Ezekiel’s case, marks John’s inauguration to his prophetical office — here to a fresh stage in it, namely, the revealing of the things which befall the holy city and the Church of God — the subject of the rest of the book.

CHAPTER 11

REVELATION 11:1-19.

MEASUREMENT OF THE TEMPLE. THE TWO WITNESSES' TESTIMONY: THEIR DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION: THE EARTHQUAKE: THE THIRD WOE: THE SEVENTH TRUMPET USHERS IN CHRIST'S KINGDOM. THANKSGIVING OF THE TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS.

This eleventh chapter is a compendious summary of, and introduction to, the more detailed prophecies of the same events to come in the twelfth through twentieth chapters. Hence we find *anticipatory* allusions to the subsequent prophecies; compare Revelation 11:7, “the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit” (not mentioned before), with the detailed accounts, Revelation 13:1,11 17:8; also Revelation 11:8, “the great city,” with Revelation 14:8 17:1,5 18:10.

1. and the angel stood — omitted in A, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic*. Supported by B and *Syriac*. If it be omitted, the “reed” will, in construction, agree with “saying.” So WORDSWORTH takes it. The *reed*, the canon of Scripture, the measuring reed of the Church, our rule of faith, *speaks*. So in Revelation 16:7 *the altar* is personified as *speaking* (compare *Note*, see on Revelation 16:7). The Spirit speaks in the canon of Scripture (the word *canon* is derived from *Hebrew*, “*kaneh*,” “a reed,” the word here used; and John it was who completed the canon). So VICTORINUS, AQUINAS, and VITRINGA. “Like a rod,” namely, straight: like a *rod of iron* (^{¶127}Revelation 2:27), unbending, destroying all error, and that “cannot be broken.” ^{¶127}Revelation 2:27 *Hebrews* 1:8, *Greek*, “a rod of straightness,” *English Version*, “a scepter of righteousness”; this is added to guard against it being thought that the *reed* was one “shaken by the wind” In the abrupt style of the Apocalypse, “saying” is possibly indefinite, put for “*one said*.” Still WORDSWORTH’S view agrees best with *Greek*. So the ancient commentator, ANDREAS OF CAESAREA, in the end of the fifth century (compare *Notes*, see on Revelation 11:3,4).

the temple — *Greek*, “*naon*” (as distinguished from the *Greek*, “*hieron*,” or temple in general), the Holy Place, “*the sanctuary*.”

the altar — of incense; for it alone was in “the sanctuary.” (*Greek*, “*naos*”). The measurement of the Holy place seems to me to stand parallel to the sealing of the elect of Israel under the sixth seal. God’s elect are symbolized by the sanctuary at Jerusalem (^{418B}1 Corinthians 3:16,17, where the same *Greek* word, “*naos*,” occurs for “temple,” as here). Literal Israel in Jerusalem, and with the temple restored (Ezekiel 40:3,5, where also the temple is measured with the measuring reed, the forty-first, forty-second, forty-third, and forty-fourth chapters), shall stand at the head of the elect Church. The measuring implies at once the exactness of the proportions of the temple to be restored, and the definite completeness (not one being wanting) of the numbers of the Israelite and of the Gentile elections. The literal temple at Jerusalem shall be the typical forerunner of the heavenly Jerusalem, in which there shall be all temple, and *no* portion exclusively set apart as *temple*. John’s accurately drawing the distinction in subsequent chapters between God’s servants and those who bear the mark of the beast, is the way whereby he fulfils the direction here given him *to measure the temple*. The fact that the *temple* is distinguished from *them that worship therein*, favors the view that the spiritual temple, the Jewish and Christian Church, is not exclusively meant, but that the literal temple must also be meant. It shall be rebuilt on the return of the Jews to their land. Antichrist shall there put forward his blasphemous claims. The sealed elect of Israel, the head of the elect Church, alone shall refuse his claims. These shall constitute the true sanctuary which is here measured, that is, accurately marked and kept by God, whereas the rest shall yield to his pretensions. WORDSWORTH objects that, in the twenty-five passages of the Acts, wherein the Jewish temple is mentioned, it is called *hieron*, not *naos*, and so in the apostolic Epistles; but this is simply because no occasion for mentioning *the literal Holy Place* (*Greek*, “*naos*”) occurs in Acts and the Epistles; indeed, in ^{418B}Acts 7:48, though not directly, there does occur the term, *naos*, indirectly referring to the Jerusalem temple *Holy Place*. In addressing Gentile Christians, to whom the literal Jerusalem temple was not familiar, it was to be expected the term, *naos*, should not be found in the literal, but in the spiritual sense. In ^{611B}Revelation 11:19 *naos* is used in a *local* sense; compare also ⁶¹⁵Revelation 14:15,17 15:5,8.

2. But — *Greek*, “And.”

the court ... without — all outside *the Holy Place* (Revelation 11:1).

leave out — of thy measurement, literally, “cast out”; reckon as unhallowed.

it — emphatic. *It* is not to be measured; whereas the Holy Place is.

given — by God’s appointment.

unto the Gentiles — In the wider sense, there are meant here “the times of the Gentiles,” wherein Jerusalem is “*trod*den down of the Gentiles,” as the parallel, ⁽²⁰²⁾Luke 21:24, proves; for the same word is used here [*Greek*, “*patein*”], “tread under foot.” Compare also Psalm 79:1 Isaiah 63:18.

forty ... two months — (Revelation 13:5). The same period as Daniel’s “time, times, and half” (⁽⁶²⁴⁾Revelation 12:14); and Revelation 11:3, and Revelation 12:6, the woman a fugitive in the wilderness “a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” In the wider sense, we may either adopt the year-day theory of 1260 years (on which, and the papal rule of 1260 years, see on Daniel 7:25; Daniel 8:14; Daniel 12:11), or rather, regard the 2300 days (Daniel 8:14), 1335 days (Daniel 12:11,12). 1290 days, and 1260 days, as symbolical of the long period of the Gentile times, whether dating from the subversion of the Jewish theocracy at the Babylonian captivity (the *kingdom* having been never since restored to Israel), or from the last destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, and extending to the restoration of the theocracy at the coming of Him “whose right it is”; the different epochs marked by the 2300, 1335, 1290, and 1260 days, will not be fully cleared up till the grand consummation; but, meanwhile, our duty and privilege urge us to investigate them. Some one of the epochs assigned by many may be right but as yet it is uncertain. The times of the Gentile monarchies during Israel’s *seven times* punishment, will probably, in the narrower sense (Revelation 11:2), be succeeded by the much more restricted times of the personal Antichrist’s tyranny in the Holy Land. The long years of papal misrule may be followed by the short time of the man of sin who shall concentrate in himself all the apostasy, persecution, and evil of the various forerunning Antichrists, Antiochus, Mohammed, Popery, just before Christ’s advent. His time shall be THE

RECAPITULATION and open consummation of the “mystery of iniquity” so long leavening the world. Witnessing churches may be followed by witnessing individuals, the former occupying the longer, the latter, the shorter period. The *three and a half* (1260 days being three and a half years of three hundred sixty days each, during which the two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth) is the sacred number *seven* halved, implying the Antichristian world-power’s time is broken at best; it answers to the *three and a half* years’ period in which Christ witnessed for the truth, and the Jews, His own people, disowned Him, and the God-opposed world power crucified Him (compare *Note*, see on Daniel 9:27). The three and a half, in a word, marks the time in which the earthly rules over the heavenly kingdom. It was the duration of Antiochus’ treading down of the temple and persecution of faithful Israelites. The resurrection of the witnesses after three and a half days, answers to Christ’s resurrection after three days. The world power’s times never reach the sacred fullness of seven times three hundred sixty, that is, 2520, though they approach to it in 2300 (Daniel 8:14). The forty-two months answer to Israel’s forty-two sojournings (Numbers 33:1-50) in the wilderness, as contrasted with the sabbatic rest in Canaan: reminding the Church that here, in the world wilderness, she cannot look for her sabbatic rest. Also, three and a half years was the period of the heaven being shut up, and of consequent famine, in Elias’ time. Thus, three and a half represented to the Church the idea of toil, pilgrimage, and persecution.

3. I will give *power* — There is no “power” in the *Greek*, so that “give” must mean “give *commission*,” or some such word.

my two witnesses — *Greek*, “the two witnesses of me.” The article implies that the two were well known at least to John.

prophecy — preach under the inspiration of the Spirit, denouncing judgments against the apostate. They are described by symbol as “the two olive trees” and “the two candlesticks,” or *lamp-stands*, “standing before the God of the earth.” The reference is to Zechariah 4:3,12, where two *individuals* are meant, Joshua and Zerubbabel, who ministered to the Jewish Church, just as the two olive trees emptied the oil out of themselves into the bowl of the candlestick. So in the final apostasy God will raise up two inspired witnesses to minister encouragement to the

afflicted, though sealed, remnant. As *two* candlesticks are mentioned in Revelation 11:4, but only *one* in Zechariah 4:2, I think the twofold Church, Jewish and Gentile, may be meant by the two candlesticks represented by the two witnesses: just as in Revelation 7:1-8 there are described first the sealed of Israel, then those of all nations. But see on Revelation 11:4. The actions of the two witnesses are just those of Moses when witnessing for God against Pharaoh (the type of Antichrist, the last and greatest foe of Israel), *turning the waters into blood*, and *smiting with plagues*; and of Elijah (the witness for God in an almost universal apostasy of Israel, a remnant of seven thousand, however, being left, as the 144,000 sealed, Revelation 7:1-8) causing *fire* by his word to *devour the enemy*, and *shutting heaven*, so that it rained not for three years and six months, the very time (1260 days) during which the two witnesses prophesy. Moreover, the words “witness” and “prophesy” are usually applied to *individuals*, not to abstractions (compare Psalm 52:8). DE BURGH thinks Elijah and Moses will again appear, as Malachi 4:5,6 seems to imply (compare ^{<171>}Matthew 17:11 ^{<102>}Acts 3:21). Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ at the Transfiguration, which foreshadowed His coming millennial kingdom. As to Moses, compare Deuteronomy 34:5,6 Jude 1:9. Elias’ genius and mode of procedure bears the same relation to the “second” coming of Christ, that John the Baptist’s did to the first coming [BENGEL]. Many of the early Church thought the two witnesses to be Enoch and Elijah. This would avoid the difficulty of the dying a *second* time, for these have never yet died; but, perhaps, shall be the witnesses slain. Still, the *turning the water to blood*, and the *plagues* (Revelation 11:6), apply best to “*Moses* (compare Revelation 15:3, the song of *Moses*”). The transfiguration glory of Moses and Elias was not their permanent resurrection-state, which shall not be till Christ shall come to glorify His saints, for He has precedence before all in rising. An objection to this interpretation is that those blessed departed servants of God would have to submit to death (Revelation 11:7,8), and this in Moses’ case a *second* time, which ^{<107>}Hebrews 9:27 denies. See on Zechariah 4:11,12, on the two witnesses as answering to “the two olive trees.” The two olive trees are channels of the oil feeding the Church, and symbols of peace. The Holy Spirit is the oil in them. Christ’s witnesses, in remarkable times of the Church’s history, have generally appeared in pairs: as Moses and

Aaron, the inspired civil and religious authorities; Caleb and Joshua; Ezekiel the priest and Daniel the prophet; Zerubbabel and Joshua.

in sackcloth — the garment of prophets, especially when calling people to mortification of their sins, and to repentance. Their very exterior aspect accorded with their teachings: so Elijah, and John who came in His spirit and power. The *sackcloth* of the witnesses is a catch word linking this episode under the sixth trumpet, with the *sun black as sackcloth* (in righteous retribution on the apostates who rejected God's witnesses) under the sixth seal (^{<612>}Revelation 6:12).

4. standing before the God of the earth — A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS read "Lord" for "God": so Zechariah 4:14. Ministering to (^{<619>}Luke 1:19), and as in the sight of Him, who, though now so widely disowned on "earth," is its rightful King, and shall at last be openly recognized as such (^{<615>}Revelation 11:15). The phrase alludes to Zechariah 4:10,14, "the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." The article "the" marks this allusion. They are "the two candlesticks," not that they are the Church, the *one* candlestick, but as its representative *light-bearers* (*Greek*, "*phosteres*," ^{<645>}Philippians 2:15), and ministering for its encouragement in a time of apostasy. WORDSWORTH'S view is worth consideration, whether it may not constitute a secondary sense: *the two witnesses, the olive trees*, are THE TWO TESTAMENTS ministering their *testimony* to the Church of the old dispensation, as well as to that of the new, which explains the two witnesses being called also *the two candlesticks* (the Old and New Testament churches; the candlestick in Zechariah 4:2 is but *one* as there was then but one Testament, and one Church, the Jewish). The Church in both dispensations has no light in herself, but derives it from the Spirit through the witness of the twofold word, the two olive trees: compare *Note*, see on Revelation 11:1, which is connected with this, *the reed*, the *Scripture canon*, being the measure of the Church: so PRIMASIUS [X, p. 314]: the two witnesses preach in sackcloth, marking the ignominious treatment which the word, like Christ Himself, receives from the world. So the twenty-four elders represent the ministers of the two dispensations by the double twelve. But Revelation 11:7 proves that primarily the two Testaments cannot be meant; for these shall never be "killed," and never "shall have finished their testimony" till the world is finished.

5. will hurt — *Greek*, “wishes,” or “desires to hurt them.”

fire ... devoureth — (Compare Jeremiah 5:14 23:29).

out of their mouth — not literally, but God makes their inspired denunciations of judgment to come to pass and *devour* their enemies.

if any man will hurt them — twice repeated, to mark the *immediate certainty* of the accomplishment.

in this manner — so in like manner as he tries to hurt them (compare ~~Revelation~~ Revelation 13:10). Retribution in kind.

6. These ... power — *Greek*, “authorized power.”

it rain not — *Greek*, “*huetos brechee*,” “rain shower not,” literally, “*moisten*” not (the earth).

smite ... with all plagues — *Greek*, “with (literally, ‘in’) every plague.”

7. finished their testimony — The same verb is used of Paul’s ending his ministry by a violent death.

the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit — *Greek*, “the wild beast ... the abyss.” This beast was not mentioned before, yet he is introduced as “*the* beast,” because he had already been described by Daniel (Daniel 7:3,11), and he is fully so in the subsequent part of the Apocalypse, namely, Revelation 13:1 17:8. Thus, John at once appropriates the Old Testament prophecies; and also, viewing his whole subject at a glance, mentions as familiar things (though not yet so to the reader) objects to be described hereafter by himself. It is a proof of the unity that pervades all Scripture.

make war against them — alluding to Daniel 7:21, where the same is said of *the little horn* that sprang up among the ten horns on the fourth beast.

8. dead bodies — So *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *ANDREAS*. But A, B, C, the oldest manuscripts, and *Coptic* read the singular, “dead body.” The two fallen in one cause are considered as *one*.

the great city — *eight* times in the Revelation elsewhere used of BABYLON (Revelation 14:8 16:19 17:18 18:10,16,18,19,21). In

⁽⁶²¹⁾Revelation 21:10 (*English Version* as to *the new Jerusalem*), the oldest manuscripts omit “the great” before *city*, so that it forms no exception. It must, therefore, have an anticipatory reference to the mystical Babylon.

which — *Greek*, “the which,” namely, “*the city which*.”

spiritually — in a spiritual sense.

Sodom — The very term applied by Isaiah 1:10 to apostate Jerusalem (compare Ezekiel 16:48).

Egypt — the nation which the Jews’ besetting sin was to lean upon.

where ... Lord was crucified — This identifies the city as Jerusalem, though the Lord was crucified *outside* of the city. EUSEBIUS mentions that the scene of Christ’s crucifixion was enclosed within the city by Constantine; so it will be probably at the time of the slaying of the witnesses. “The beast [for example, Napoleon and France’s efforts] has been long struggling for a footing in Palestine; after his ascent from the bottomless pit he struggles much more” [BENGEL]. Some one of the Napoleonic dynasty may obtain that footing, and even be regarded as Messiah by the Jews, in virtue of his restoring them to their own land; and so may prove to be the last Antichrist. The difficulty is, how can Jerusalem be called “the great city,” that is, Babylon? By her becoming the world’s capital of idolatrous apostasy, such as Babylon originally was, and then Rome has been; just as she is here called also “Sodom and Egypt.”

also our — A, B, C, ORIGEN, ANDREAS, and others read, “also *their*.” Where *their Lord*, also, as well as they, was slain. Compare ⁽⁶²²⁾Revelation 18:24, where *the blood of ALL slain on earth* is said to be found IN BABYLON, just as in ⁽⁴²³⁾Matthew 23:35, Jesus saith that, “upon the Jews and JERUSALEM” (Compare ⁽⁴²³⁾Matthew 23:37,38) shall “come ALL the righteous blood shed upon earth”; whence it follows Jerusalem shall be the last capital of the world apostasy, and so receive the last and worst visitation of all the judgments ever inflicted on the apostate world, the earnest of which was given in the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. In the

wider sense, in the Church-historical period, the Church being the sanctuary, all outside of it is the world, the great city, wherein all the martyrdoms of saints have taken place. *Babylon* marks its idolatry, *Egypt* its tyranny, *Sodom* its desperate corruption, *Jerusalem* its pretensions to sanctity on the ground of spiritual privileges, while all the while it is the murderer of Christ in the person of His members. All which is true of Rome. So VITRINGA. But in the more definite sense, *Jerusalem* is regarded, even in Hebrews (^{681D} Hebrews 13:12-14), as the world city which believers were then to go forth from, in order to “seek one to come.”

9. they — rather, “(*some*) of the peoples.”

people — *Greek*, “peoples.”

kindreds — *Greek*, “tribes”; all save the elect (whence it is not said, *The peoples ...* but [*some*] *of the peoples ...* , or, *some of the peoples ...* may refer to *those of the nations ...*, *who at the time shall hold possession of Palestine and Jerusalem*).

shall see — So *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*. But A, B, C, and ANDREAS, the present, “see,” or rather (*Greek*, “*blepousin*”), “look upon.” The prophetic present.

dead bodies — So *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS. But A, B, C, and *Coptic*, singular, as in Revelation 11:8, “dead body.” Three and a half days answer to the three and a half years (see on Revelation 11:2,3), the half of seven, the full and perfect number.

shall not suffer — so B, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS. But A, C, and *Vulgate* read, “do not suffer.”

in graves — so *Vulgate* and PRIMASIUS. But B, C, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS, *singular*;

translate, “into a sepulcher,” literally, “a monument.” Accordingly, in righteous retribution in kind, *the flesh* of the Antichristian hosts is not buried, but given to *all the fowls in mid-heaven* to eat (^{681D} Revelation 19:17,18,21).

10. they that dwell upon ... earth — those who belong to the earth, as its citizens, not to heaven (^{681D} Revelation 3:10 8:13 12:12 13:8).

shall — so *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*. But A, B, and C read *the present* tense; compare *Note*, see on Revelation 11:9, on “shall not suffer.”

rejoice over them — The Antichristianity of the last days shall probably be under the name of philosophical enlightenment and civilization, but really man’s deification of himself. Fanaticism shall lead Antichrist’s followers to exult in having at last seemingly silenced in death their Christian rebukers. Like her Lord, the Church will have her dark passion week followed by the bright resurrection morn. It is a curious historical coincidence that, at the fifth Lateran Council, May 5, 1514, no witness (not even the Moravians who were summoned) testified for the truth, as HUSS and JEROME did at Constance; an orator ascended the tribunal before the representatives of papal Christendom, and said, “There is no reclaimant, no opponent.” LUTHER, on October 31, 1517, exactly three and a half years afterwards, posted up his famous theses on the church at Wittenberg. The objection is, the years are years of three hundred sixty-five, not three hundred sixty, days, and so two and a half days are deficient; but still the coincidence is curious; and if this prophecy be allowed other fulfilments, besides the final and literal one under the last Antichrist, this may reasonably be regarded as one.

send gifts one to another — as was usual at a joyous festival.

tormented them — namely, with the plagues which they had power to inflict (Revelation 11:5,6); also, by their testimony against the earthly.

11. Translate as *Greek*, “After *the* three days and an half.”

the Spirit of life — the same which breathed *life* into Israel’s dry bones, Ezekiel 37:10,11 (see on Ezekiel 37:10,11), “Breath *came into* them.” The passage here, as there, is closely connected with *Israel’s* restoration as a nation to political and religious life. Compare also concerning the same, Hosea 6:2, where Ephraim says, “After two days will He revive us; in the *third day* He will *raise us up*, and we shall *live* in His sight.”

into — so B and *Vulgate*. But A reads (*Greek*, “*en autois*”), “(so as to be) IN them.”

stood upon their feet — the very words in Ezekiel 37:10, which proves the allusion to be to *Israel's* resurrection, in contrast to “the times of the Gentiles” wherein these “tread under foot the holy city.”

great fear — such as fell on the soldiers guarding Christ's tomb at His resurrection (Matthew 28:4), when also there was a great earthquake (Revelation 11:2).

saw — *Greek*, “beheld.”


12. they — so A, C, and *Vulgate*. But B, *Coptic*, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS read, “I heard.”



a cloud — *Greek*, “the cloud”; which may be merely the generic expression for what we are familiar with, as we say “*the* clouds.” But I prefer taking the article as definitely alluding to THE cloud which received Jesus at His ascension, Acts 1:9 (where there is no article, as there is no allusion to a previous cloud, such as there is here). As they resembled Him in their three and a half years' witnessing, their three and a half days lying in death (though not for exactly the same time, nor put in a tomb as He was), so also in their ascension is the translation and transfiguration of the sealed of Israel (Revelation 7:1-8), and the elect of all nations, caught up out of the reach of the Antichristian foe. In ~~Rev~~ Revelation 14:14-16, He is represented as sitting on a *white cloud*.

their enemies beheld them — and were thus openly convicted by God for their unbelief and persecution of His servants; unlike Elijah's ascension formerly, in the sight of friends only. The Church caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and transfigured in body, is justified by her Lord before the world, even as the man-child (Jesus) was “caught up unto God and His throne” from before *the dragon standing ready to devour the woman's child as soon as born*.

13. “In that same hour”; literally, “the hour.”


great earthquake — answering to the “great earthquake” under the sixth seal, just at the approach of the Lord (~~Rev~~ Revelation 6:12). Christ was delivered unto His enemies on the fifth day of the week, and on the *sixth* was crucified, and on the sabbath rested; so it is under the sixth seal and sixth trumpet that the last suffering of the Church, begun under the fifth

seal and trumpet, is to be consummated, before she enters on her seventh day of eternal sabbath. *Six* is the number of the world power's greatest triumph, but at the same time verges on *seven*, the divine number, when its utter destruction takes place. Compare "666" in  Revelation 13:18, "the number of the beast."

tenth part of the city fell — that is, of "the great city" ( Revelation 16:19 Zechariah 14:2). Ten is the number of the *world kingdoms* ( Revelation 17:10-12), and the *beast's horns* (Revelation 13:1), and the *dragon's* (Revelation 12:3). Thus, in the Church-historical view, it is hereby implied that one of the ten apostate world kingdoms fall. But in the narrower view a tenth of Jerusalem under Antichrist falls. The nine-tenths remain and become when purified the center of Christ's earthly kingdom.

of men — *Greek*, "names of men." The men are as accurately enumerated as if their names were given.

seven thousand — ELLIOTT interprets *seven chiliads* or provinces, that is, the seven Dutch United Provinces lost to the papacy; and "names of men," titles of dignity, duchies, lordships, etc. Rather, *seven thousand* combine the two mystical perfect and comprehensive numbers *seven* and *thousand*, implying the *full and complete* destruction of the impenitent.

the remnant — consisting of the Israelite inhabitants not slain. Their conversion forms a blessed contrast to Revelation 16:9; and above,  Revelation 9:20,21. These repenting (Zechariah 12:10-14 13:1), become in the flesh the loyal *subjects* of Christ reigning over the earth with His transfigured saints.

gave glory to the God of heaven — which while apostates, and worshipping the beast's image, they had not done.

God of heaven — The apostates of the last days, in pretended scientific enlightenment, recognize no *heavenly* power, but only the natural forces in the earth which come under their observation. His receiving up into *heaven* the two witnesses who had *power* during their time on earth *to shut heaven* from raining (Revelation 11:6), constrained His and their enemies who witnessed it, to acknowledge *the God of heaven*, to be *God of the earth* (Revelation 11:4). As in Revelation 11:4 He declared Himself to be *God of*

the earth by His two witnesses, so now He proves Himself to be *God of heaven* also.

14. The second woe — that under the sixth trumpet (~~690~~ Revelation 9:12-21), including also the prophecy, Revelation 11:1-13: Woe to the world, joy to the faithful, as *their redemption draweth nigh*.

the third woe cometh quickly — It is not mentioned in detail for the present, until first there is given a sketch of the history of the origination, suffering, and faithfulness of the Church in a time of apostasy and persecution. Instead of the third woe being detailed, the grand consummation is summarily noticed, the thanksgiving of the twenty-four elders in heaven for the establishment of *Christ's kingdom on earth*, attended with the *destruction of the destroyers of the earth*.

15. sounded — with his trumpet. Evidently “the LAST trumpet.” *Six* is close to *seven*, but does not reach it. The world judgments are complete in *six*, but by the fulfillment of *seven* the world kingdoms become Christ's. Six is the number of the world given over to judgment. It is half of *twelve*, the Church's number, as three and a half is half of seven, the divine number for completeness. BENGEL thinks the angel *here* to have been Gabriel, which name is compounded of *El*, GOD, and *Geber*, MIGHTY MAN (Revelation 10:1). Gabriel therefore appropriately announced to Mary the advent of the *mighty God-man*: compare the account of the *man-child's* birth which follows (Revelation 12:1-6), to which this forms the transition though the seventh trumpet in time is subsequent, being the consummation of the historical episode, the twelfth and thirteen chapters. The seventh trumpet, like the seventh seal and seventh vial, being the consummation, is accompanied differently from the preceding six: not the consequences which follow on earth, but those IN HEAVEN, are set before us, the *great voices and thanksgiving of the twenty-four elders in heaven*, as the *half-hour's silence in heaven* at the seventh seal, and the *voice out of the temple in heaven*, “*It is done*,” at the seventh vial. This is parallel to Daniel 2:44, “The God of heaven shall set up a *kingdom*, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break to pieces all these *kingdoms*, and it shall stand for ever.” It is the setting up of *Heaven's* sovereignty over the earth visibly, which, when invisibly exercised, was rejected by the earthly rulers heretofore. The

distinction of worldly and spiritual shall then cease. There will be no beast in opposition to the woman. Poetry, art, science, and social life will be at once worldly and Christian.

kingdoms — A, B, C, and *Vulgate* read the singular, “The *kingdom* (sovereignty) of (over) the world is our Lord’s and His Christ’s.” There is no good authority for *English Version* reading. The *kingdoms* of the world give way to *the kingdom of (over) the world* exercised by Christ. The earth-kingdoms are many: His shall be *one*. The appellation “Christ,” *the Anointed*, is here, where His *kingdom* is mentioned appropriately for the first time used in Revelation. For it is equivalent to KING. Though priests and prophets also were *anointed*, yet this term is peculiarly applied to Him as King, insomuch that “the Lord’s anointed” is His title as KING, in places where He is distinguished from the priests. The glorified Son of man shall rule mankind by His transfigured Church in heaven, and by His people Israel on earth: Israel shall be the priestly mediator of blessings to the whole world, realizing them first.

he — not emphatic in the *Greek*.

shall reign for ever and ever — *Greek*, “unto the ages of the ages.” Here begins the millennial reign, the consummation of “the mystery of God” (Revelation 10:7).

16. before God — B and *Syriac* read, “before *the throne of God*.” But A, C, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic* read as *English Version*.

seats — *Greek*, “thrones.”

17. thanks — for the answer to our prayers (⁶¹⁰Revelation 6:10,11) in *destroying them which destroy the earth* (⁶¹¹Revelation 11:18), thereby preparing the way for setting up the kingdom of Thyself and Thy saints.

and art to come — omitted in A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, CYPRIAN, and ANDREAS. The consummation having actually come, they do not address Him as they did when it was still future, “Thou that art to come.” Compare ⁶¹²Revelation 11:18, “is come.” From the sounding of the seventh trumpet He is to His people JAH, the ever present Lord, WHO IS, more peculiarly than JEHOVAH “who is, was, and *is to come*.”

taken to thee thy great power — “to Thee” is not in the *Greek*. Christ *takes* to Him the kingdom as His own of *right*.

18. the nations were angry — alluding to Psalm 99:1, *Septuagint*, “The Lord is become King: let the peoples become *angry*.” Their anger is combined with *alarm* (^{<1254>}Exodus 15:14 ^{<1254>}2 Kings 19:28, “thy *rage against Me* is come up into Mine ears, I will put My hook in thy nose,” etc.). Translate, as the *Greek* is the same. “The nations were *angered*, and Thy *anger* is come.” How petty man’s impotent *anger*, standing here side by side with that of the omnipotent God!

dead ... be judged — proving that this seventh trumpet is at the end of all things, when the judgment on Christ’s foes and the reward of His saints, long prayed for by His saints, shall take place.

the prophets — as, for instance, the two *prophesying witnesses* (Revelation 11:3), and those who have showed them kindness for Christ’s sake. Jesus shall come to effect by His presence that which we have looked for long, but vainly, in His absence, and by other means.

destroy them which destroy the earth — Retribution in kind (compare Revelation 16:6 ^{<1257>}Luke 19:27). See on Daniel 7:14-18.

19. A similar solemn conclusion to that of the seventh seal, Revelation 8:5, and to that of the seventh vial, ^{<1258>}Revelation 16:18. Thus, it appears, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven vials, are not consecutive, but parallel, and ending in the same consummation. They present the unfolding of God’s plans for bringing about the grand end under three different aspects, mutually complementing each other.

the temple — the sanctuary or *Holy place* (*Greek*, “*naos*”), not the whole *temple* (*Greek*, “*hieron*”).

opened in heaven — A and C read the article, “the temple of God “which is” in heaven, was opened.”


the ark of his testament — or “... His *covenant*.” As in the first verse the earthly sanctuary was *measured*, so here its heavenly antitype is laid open, and the antitype above to the *ark of the covenant* in the Holiest Place below is seen, the pledge of God’s faithfulness to His covenant in

saving His people and punishing their and His enemies. Thus this forms a fit close to the series of trumpet judgments and an introduction to the episode (the twelfth and thirteen chapters) as to His faithfulness to His Church. Here first His secret place, the heavenly sanctuary, is opened for the assurance of His people; and thence proceed His judgments in their behalf (~~Gal~~ Revelation 14:15,17 15:5 16:17), which the great company in heaven laud as “true and righteous.” This then is parallel to the scene at the heavenly altar, at the close of the seals and opening of the trumpets (Revelation 8:3), and at the close of the episode (the twelfth through fifteenth chapters) and opening of the vials (Revelation 15:7,8). See on Revelation 12:1, note at the opening of the chapter.

CHAPTER 12


REVELATION 12:1-17.


VISION OF THE WOMAN, HER CHILD, AND THE PERSECUTING DRAGON.

1. This episode (Revelation 12:1-15:8) describes *in detail* the persecution of Israel and the elect Church by the beast, which had been *summarily* noticed, Revelation 11:7-10, and the triumph of the faithful, and torment of the unfaithful. So also the sixteenth through twentieth chapters are the description in detail of the judgment on the beast, etc., summarily noticed in  Revelation 11:13,18. The beast in Revelation 12:3, etc., is shown not to be alone, but to be the instrument in the hand of a greater power of darkness, Satan. That this is so, appears from the time of the eleventh chapter being the period also in which the events of the twelfth and thirteenth chapters take place, namely, 1260 days (Revelation 12:6,14 Revelation 13:5; compare Revelation 11:2,3).

great — in size and significance.

wonder — *Greek*, “sign”: significant of momentous truths.

in heaven — not merely the sky, but the *heaven* beyond just mentioned,  Revelation 11:19; compare Revelation 12:7-9.

woman clothed with the sun ... moon under her feet — the Church, Israel first, and then the Gentile Church; clothed with Christ, “the Sun of righteousness.” “Fair as the moon, clear as the sun.” Clothed with the Sun, the Church is the bearer of divine supernatural light in the world. So the seven churches (that is, the Church universal, the woman) are represented as light-bearing *candlesticks* ( Revelation 1:12,20). On the other hand, the *moon*, though standing above the sea and earth, is altogether connected with them and is an earthly light: *sea*, *earth*, and *moon* represent the worldly element, in opposition to the kingdom of God — heaven, the sun. The moon cannot disperse the darkness and change it into-day: thus she

represents the world religion (heathenism) in relation to the supernatural world. The Church has the moon, therefore, under her feet; but the stars, as heavenly lights, on her head. The devil directs his efforts against the stars, the angels of the churches, about hereafter to shine for ever. The twelve stars, the crown around her head, are the twelve tribes of Israel [AUBERLEN]. The allusions to *Israel* before accord with this: compare ⁽¹¹¹⁶⁾Revelation 11:19. “the temple of God”; “the ark of His testament.” The ark lost at the Babylonian captivity, and never since found, is seen in the “temple of God opened in heaven,” signifying that God now enters again into covenant with His ancient people. The woman cannot mean, literally, the virgin mother of Jesus, for she did not flee into the wilderness and stay there for 1260 days, while the dragon persecuted the remnant of her seed (⁽¹¹²³⁾Revelation 12:13-17) [DE BURGH]. The *sun*, *moon*, and *twelve stars*, are emblematical of Jacob, Leah, or else Rachel, and the twelve patriarchs, that is, the Jewish Church: secondarily, the Church universal, having *under her feet*, in due subordination, the ever changing moon, which shines with a borrowed light, emblem of *the Jewish dispensation*, which is now in a position of inferiority, though supporting the woman, and also of the changeful things of this world, and having on her head the crown of twelve stars, the twelve apostles, who, however, are related closely to Israel’s twelve tribes. The Church, in passing over into the Gentile world, is

(1) persecuted;

(2) then seduced, as heathenism begins to react on her.

This is the key to the meaning of the symbolic woman, beast, harlot, and false prophet. *Woman* and *beast* form the same contrast as *the Son of man* and the *beasts* in Daniel. As the Son of man comes *from heaven*, so the woman is seen *in heaven* (Revelation 12:1). The two beasts arise respectively *out of the sea* (compare Daniel 7:3) and *the earth* (Revelation 13:1,11): their origin is not of heaven, but of earth earthy. Daniel beholds the heavenly Bridegroom coming visibly to reign. John sees the woman, the Bride, whose calling is heavenly, in the world, before the Lord’s coming again. The characteristic of woman, in contradistinction to man, is her being subject, the surrendering of herself, her being receptive. This similarly is man’s relation to God, to be subject to, and receive from, God. All autonomy of the human spirit reverses man’s relation to God. Woman-

like receptivity towards God constitutes *faith*. By it the *individual* becomes a child of God; the children *collectively* are viewed as “the woman.” Humanity, in so far as it belongs to God, is the *woman*. Christ, the Son of the woman, is in Revelation 12:5 emphatically called “the MAN-child” (*Greek*, “*huios arrheen*,” “male-child”). Though born of a woman, and under the law for man’s sake, He is also the Son of God, and so the HUSBAND of the Church. As Son of the woman, He is ““Son of man”; as *male-child*, He is Son of God, and Husband of the Church. All who imagine to have life in themselves are severed from Him, the Source of life, and, standing in their own strength, sink to the level of senseless *beasts*. Thus, the woman designates universally the kingdom of God; the beast, the kingdom of the world. The woman of whom Jesus was born represents *the Old Testament congregation of God*. The woman’s travail-pains (Revelation 12:2) represent the Old Testament believers’ ardent longings for the promised Redeemer. Compare the joy at His birth (Isaiah 9:6). As new Jerusalem (called also “the woman,” or “wife,” Revelation 21:2,9-12), with its twelve gates, is the exalted and transfigured Church, so the woman with the twelve stars is the Church militant.

2. pained — *Greek*, “tormented” (*basanizomene*). DE BURGH explains this of the bringing in of the first-begotten into the world AGAIN, when Israel shall at last welcome Him, and when “the man-child shall rule all nations with the rod of iron.” But there is a plain contrast between the *painful travailing* of the woman here, and Christ’s second coming to the Jewish Church, the believing remnant of Israel, “*Before she travailed she brought forth ... a MAN-CHILD*,” that is, almost *without travail-pangs*, she receives (at His second advent), as if born to her, Messiah and a numerous seed.

3. appeared — “was seen.”

wonder — *Greek*, “*semeion*,” “sign.”

red — So A and *Vulgate* read. But B, C, and *Coptic* read, “of fire.” In either case, the *color* of the dragon implies his fiery rage as a *murderer from the beginning*. His representative, *the beast*, corresponds, *having seven heads and ten horns* (the number of horns on the fourth beast of Daniel 7:7 Revelation 13:1). But there, *ten* crowns are on the *ten horns* (for before the end, the fourth empire is divided into *ten* kingdoms); here, *seven* crowns (rather, “diadems,” *Greek*, “*diademata*,” not *stephanoi*, “wreaths”)

are *upon his seven heads*. In Daniel 7:4-7 the Antichristian powers up to Christ's second coming are represented by four beasts, which have among them *seven heads*, that is, the first, second, and fourth beasts having *one* head each, the third, *four* heads. His universal dominion as prince of this fallen world is implied by the *seven diadems* (contrast the "many diadems on Christ's head," ⁽⁶⁶¹²⁾ Revelation 19:12, when coming to destroy him and his), the caricature of the *seven* Spirits of God. His worldly instruments of power are marked by the *ten horns*, ten being the number of the world. It marks his self-contradictions that he and the beast bear both the number *seven* (the divine number) and *ten* (the world number).

4. drew — *Greek*, present tense, "draweth," "drags down." His *dragging down the stars* with *his tail* (lashed back and forward in his fury) implies his persuading to apostatize, like himself, and to become earthy, those angels and also once eminent human teachers who had formerly been heavenly (compare Revelation 12:1 1:20 Isaiah 14:12).

stood — "stands" [ALFORD]: perfect tense, *Greek*, "*hesteken*."

ready to be delivered — "about to bring forth."

for to devour, etc. — "that when she brought forth, he might devour her child." So the dragon, represented by his agent Pharaoh (a name common to all the Egyptian kings, and meaning, according to some, *crocodile*, a reptile like the dragon, and made an Egyptian idol), was ready to devour Israel's *males* at the birth of the nation. Antitypically the true Israel, Jesus, when born, was sought for destruction by Herod, who slew all the *males* in and around Bethlehem.

5. man-child — *Greek*, "a son, a male." On the deep significance of this term, see on Revelation 12:1,2.

rule — *Greek*, "*poimainein*," "tend as a shepherd"; (see on ⁽⁶¹²²⁾ Revelation 2:27).

rod of iron — A rod is for long-continued obstinacy until they submit themselves to obedience [BENGEL]: ⁽⁶¹²²⁾ Revelation 2:27 Psalm 2:9, which passages prove the Lord Jesus to be meant. Any interpretation which ignores this must be wrong. The *male son's* birth cannot be the origin of the Christian state (Christianity triumphing over heathenism under

Constantine), which was not a divine child of the woman, but had many impure worldly elements. In a secondary sense, *the ascending of the witnesses up to heaven* answers to Christ's own ascension, "caught up unto God, and unto His throne": as also His ruling the nations with a rod of iron is to be shared in by believers (⁽⁶⁰²⁾Revelation 2:27). What took place primarily in the case of the divine Son of the woman, shall take place also in the case of those who are one with Him, the sealed of Israel (Revelation 7:1-8), and the elect of all nations, about to be translated and to reign with Him over the earth at His appearing.

6. woman fled — Mary's flight with Jesus into Egypt is a type of this.

where she hath — So C reads. But A and B add "there."

a place — that portion of the heathen world which has received Christianity professedly, namely, mainly the fourth kingdom, having its seat in the modern Babylon, Rome, implying that *all* the heathen world would not be Christianized in the present order of things.

prepared of God — literally, "*from God.*" Not by human caprice or fear, but by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, the *woman*, the Church, *fled into the wilderness*.

they should feed her — *Greek*, "nourish her." Indefinite for, "she should be fed." The heathen world, *the wilderness*, could not nourish the Church, but only afford her an outward shelter. Here, as in Daniel 4:26, and elsewhere, the third person plural refers to *the heavenly powers* who minister from God *nourishment* to the Church. As Israel had its time of first bridal love, on its first going out of Egypt into the wilderness, so the Christian Church's *wilderness-time of first love* was the apostolic age, when it was separate from the *Egypt* of this world, having no city here, but seeking one to come; having only a *place in the wilderness prepared of God* (Revelation 12:6,14). The harlot takes the world city as her own, even as Cain was the first builder of a *city*, whereas the believing patriarchs lived in *tents*. Then apostate Israel was the harlot and the young Christian Church the woman; but soon spiritual fornication crept in, and the Church in the seventeenth chapter is no longer *the woman*, but *the harlot*, the *great Babylon*, which, however, has in it hidden the true people of God (Revelation 18:4). The deeper the Church penetrated into heathendom, the

more she herself became heathenish. Instead of overcoming, she was overcome by the world [AUBERLEN]. Thus, *the woman* is “the one inseparable Church of the Old and New Testament” [HENGSTENBERG], the stock of the Christian Church being Israel (Christ and His apostles being Jews), on which the Gentile believers have been *grafted*, and into which Israel, on her conversion, shall be grafted, as into *her own olive tree*. During the whole Church-historic period, or “times of the Gentiles,” wherein “Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles,” there is no believing Jewish Church, and therefore, only the Christian Church can be “the woman.” At the same time there is meant, secondarily, the preservation of the Jews during this Church-historic period, in order that Israel, who was once “the woman,” and of whom the *man-child* was born, may become so again at the close of the Gentile times, and stand at the head of the two elections, literal Israel, and spiritual Israel, the Church elected from Jews and Gentiles without distinction. Ezekiel 20:35,36, “I will bring you into *the wilderness of the people* (Hebrew, ‘peoples’), and there will I plead with you ... like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of Egypt” (compare *Notes*, see on Ezekiel 20:35,36): not a *wilderness* literally and locally, but spiritually a *state of discipline and trial* among the Gentile “peoples,” during the long Gentile times, and one finally consummated in the last time of unparalleled trouble under Antichrist, in which the sealed remnant (Revelation 7:1-8) who constitute “the woman,” are nevertheless preserved “from the face of the serpent” (⁶⁶²⁴Revelation 12:14).

thousand two hundred and threescore days — anticipatory of

⁶⁶²⁴Revelation 12:14, where the persecution which caused her to flee is mentioned in its place: ⁶⁶³¹Revelation 13:11-18 gives the details of the persecution. It is most unlikely that the transition should be made from the birth of Christ to the last Antichrist, without notice of the long intervening Church-historical period. Probably the 1260 days, or periods, representing this long interval, are RECAPITULATED on a shorter scale analogically during the last Antichrist’s short reign. They are equivalent to three and a half years, which, as half of the divine number *seven*, symbolize the seeming victory of the world over the Church. As they include the whole *Gentile times of Jerusalem’s being trodden of the Gentiles*, they must be much longer than 1260 years; for, above several centuries more than 1260 years have elapsed since Jerusalem fell.

7. In Job 1:6-11 2:1-6, Satan appears among the sons of God, presenting himself before God in heaven, as the accuser of the saints: again in Zechariah 3:1,2. But at Christ's coming as our Redeemer, he *fell from heaven*, especially when Christ suffered, rose again, and ascended to heaven. When Christ appeared before God as our Advocate, Satan, the accusing adversary, could no longer appear before God against us, but was *cast out judicially* (^{<B83>}Romans 8:33,34). He and his angels henceforth range through the air and the earth, after a time (namely, the interval between the ascension and the second advent) about to be cast hence also, and bound in hell. That "heaven" here does not mean merely the air, but the abode of angels, appears from Revelation 12:9,10,12 ^{<129>}1 Kings 22:19-22.

there was — *Greek*, "there came to pass," or "arose."

war in heaven — What a seeming contradiction in terms, yet true! Contrast the blessed result of Christ's triumph, ^{<B38>}Luke 19:38, "peace in heaven." ^{<501>}Colossians 1:20, "made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to *reconcile* all things unto Himself; whether ... things in earth, or things *in heaven*."

Michael and his angels ... the dragon ... and his angels — It was fittingly ordered that, as the rebellion arose from unfaithful angels and their leader, so they should be encountered and overcome by faithful angels and their archangel, in heaven. On earth they are fittingly encountered, and shall be overcome, as represented by the beast and false prophet, by the Son of man and His armies of human saints (^{<604>}Revelation 19:14-21). The conflict on earth, as in Daniel 10:13, has its correspondent conflict of angels in heaven. Michael is peculiarly the prince, or presiding angel, of the Jewish nation. The conflict in heaven, though judicially decided already against Satan from the time of Christ's resurrection and ascension, receives its actual completion in the execution of judgment by the angels who cast out Satan from heaven. From Christ's ascension he has no standing-ground judicially against the believing elect. ^{<208>}Luke 10:18, "I beheld (in the earnest of the future full fulfillment given in the subjection of the demons to the disciples) Satan as lightning fall from heaven." As Michael fought before with Satan about the body of the mediator of the old covenant (Jude 1:9), so now the mediator of the new covenant, by offering His sinless body in sacrifice, arms Michael with power to renew and finish the

conflict by a complete victory. That Satan is not yet *actually* and *finally* cast out of heaven, though the *judicial* sentence to that effect received its ratification at Christ's ascension, appears from ^(~~602~~) Ephesians 6:12, "spiritual wickedness in high (*Greek*, 'heavenly') places." This is the primary Church-historical sense here. But, through Israel's unbelief, Satan has had ground against that, the elect nation, appearing before God as its accuser. At the eve of its restoration, in the ulterior sense, his standing-ground in heaven against Israel, too, shall be taken from him, "the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem" *rebuking* him, and casting him out from heaven actually and for ever by Michael, the prince, or presiding angel of the Jews. Thus Zechariah 3:1-9 is strictly parallel, Joshua, the high priest, being representative of his nation Israel, and Satan standing at God's fight hand as adversary to resist Israel's justification. Then, and not till then, fully (^(~~620~~) Revelation 12:10, "NOW," etc.) shall *ALL things be reconciled unto Christ IN HEAVEN* (^(~~611~~) Colossians 1:20), and there shall be *peace in heaven* (^(~~618~~) Luke 19:38).

against — A, B, and C read, "with."

8. prevailed not — A and *Coptic* read, "*He* prevailed not." But B and C read as *English Version*.

neither — A, B, and C read, "not even" (*Greek*, "*oude*"): a climax. Not only did they not prevail, but *not even their place was found any more in heaven*. There are four gradations in the ever deeper downfall of Satan:

(1) He is deprived of his heavenly excellency, though having still access to heaven as man's accuser, up to Christ's first coming. As heaven was not fully yet opened to man (^(~~616~~) John 3:13), so it was not yet shut against Satan and his demons. The Old Testament dispensation could not overcome him.

(2) From Christ, down to the millennium, he is judicially cast out of heaven as the accuser of the elect, and shortly before the millennium loses his power against Israel, and has sentence of expulsion fully executed on him and his by Michael. His rage on earth is consequently the greater, his power being concentrated on it, especially towards the end, when "he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (^(~~622~~) Revelation 12:12).

(3) He is bound during the millennium (Revelation 20:1-3).

(4) After having been loosed for a while, he is cast for ever into the lake of fire.

9. that old serpent — alluding to Genesis 3:1,4.

Devil — the *Greek*, for “accuser,” or “slanderer.”

Satan — the *Hebrew* for “adversary,” especially in a court of justice. The twofold designation, *Greek* and *Hebrew*, marks the twofold objects of his accusations and temptations, the elect Gentiles and the elect Jews.

world — *Greek*, “habitable world.”

10. Now — *Now* that Satan has been cast out of heaven. Primarily fulfilled in part at Jesus’ resurrection and ascension, when He said (^{<1838>}Matthew 28:18), “All power [*Greek*, ‘*exousia*,’ ‘authority,’ as here; see below] is given unto Me in heaven and in earth”; connected with Revelation 12:5, “Her child was *caught up unto God and to His throne*.” In the ulterior sense, it refers to the eve of Christ’s second coming, when Israel is about to be restored as mother-church of Christendom, Satan, who had resisted her restoration on the ground of her unworthiness, having been cast out by the instrumentality of Michael, Israel’s angelic *prince* (see on Revelation 12:7). Thus this is parallel, and the necessary preliminary to the glorious event similarly expressed, ^{<6115>}Revelation 11:15, “The kingdom of this world is become (the very word here, *Greek*, ‘*egeneto*,’ ‘is come,’ ‘hath come to pass’) our Lord’s and His Christ’s,” the result of Israel’s resuming her place.

salvation, etc. — *Greek*, “the salvation (namely, fully, finally, and victoriously accomplished, ^{<8025>}Hebrews 9:28; compare Luke 3:6, yet future; hence, not till *now* do the blessed raise the fullest hallelujah for *salvation* to the Lamb, ^{<6111>}Revelation 7:10 19:1) the power (*Greek*, ‘*dunamis*’), and the authority (*Greek*, ‘*exousia*’; ‘*legitimate power*’; see above) of His Christ.”

accused them before our God day and night — Hence the need that the oppressed Church, *God’s own elect* (like the widow, *continually coming*, so as even to *weary* the unjust judge), should *cry day and night unto Him*.

11. they — emphatic in the *Greek*. “They” in particular. They and they alone. They were the persons who overcame.

overcame — (🔍 Romans 8:33,34,37 16:20).

him — (1 John 2:14,15). It is the same *victory* (a peculiarly Johannean phrase) over Satan and the world which the Gospel of John describes in the life of Jesus, his Epistle in the life of each believer, and his Apocalypse in the life of the Church.

by, etc. — *Greek* (*dia* to *haima*; accusative, not genitive case, as *English Version* would require, compare ^{<890>}Hebrews 9:12), “on account of (on the ground of) the blood of the Lamb”; “because of”; on account of and by virtue of its having been shed. Had that blood not been shed, Satan’s accusations would have been unanswerable; as it is, that blood meets every charge. SCHOTTGEN mentions the Rabbinical tradition that Satan accuses men all days of the year, except the day of atonement. TITTMANN takes the *Greek* “*dia*,” as it often means, *out of regard* to the blood of the Lamb; this was the impelling cause which *induced* them to undertake the contest *for the sake of* it; but the view given above is good *Greek*, and more in accordance with the general sense of Scripture.

by the word of their testimony — *Greek*, “on account of the word of their testimony.” On the ground of their faithful testimony, even unto death, they are constituted victors. Their testimony evinced their victory over him by virtue of the blood of the Lamb. Hereby they confess themselves worshippers of the slain Lamb and overcome the beast, Satan’s representative; an anticipation of Revelation 15:2, “them that had gotten the victory over the beast” (compare ~~Revelation~~ Revelation 13:15,16).

unto — Greek, “*achri*,” “even as far as.” They carried their not-love of life *as far as even unto* death.

12. Therefore — because Satan is cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:9).

dwel — literally, “tabernacle.” Not only angels and the souls of the just with God, but also the faithful militant on earth, who already in spirit tabernacle in heaven, having their home and citizenship there, *rejoice* that Satan is cast out of their home. “Tabernacle” for *dwel* is used to mark that, though still on the earth, they in spirit are hidden “in the secret of God’s

tabernacle.” They belong not to the world, and, therefore, exult in judgment having been passed on the prince of this world.

the inhabitants of — So ANDREAS reads. But A, B, and C omit. The words probably, were inserted from ^{<40B>}Revelation 8:13.

is come down — rather as *Greek*, “*catebee*,” “is gone down”; John regarding the heaven as his standing-point of view whence he looks down on the earth.

unto you — *earth and sea*, with their inhabitants; those who lean upon, and essentially belong to, the *earth* (contrast John 3:7, *Margin*, with ^{<40B>}John 3:31 8:23 ^{<50B>}Philippians 3:19, end; 1 John 4:5) and its *sea*-like troubled politics. Furious at his expulsion from heaven, and knowing that his time on earth is short until he shall be cast down lower, when Christ shall come to set up *His* kingdom (Revelation 20:1,2), Satan concentrates all his power to destroy as many souls as he can. Though no longer able to accuse the elect in heaven, he can tempt and persecute on earth. The more light becomes victorious, the greater will be the struggles of the powers of darkness; whence, at the last crisis, Antichrist will manifest himself with an intensity of iniquity greater than ever before.

short time — *Greek*, “*kairon*,” “season”: *opportunity* for his assaults.

13. Resuming from Revelation 12:6 the thread of the discourse, which had been interrupted by the episode, Revelation 12:7-12 (giving in the invisible world the ground of the corresponding conflict between light and darkness in the visible world), this verse accounts for her *flight into the wilderness* (Revelation 12:6).

14. were given — by God’s determinate appointment, not by human chances (^{<40B>}Acts 9:11).

two — *Greek*, “the two wings of the great eagle.” Alluding to Exodus 19:4: proving that the Old Testament Church, as well as the New Testament Church, is included in “the woman.” All believers are included (Isaiah 40:30,31). *The great eagle* is the world power; in Ezekiel 17:3,7, *Babylon* and *Egypt*: in early Church history, *Rome*, whose standard was the *eagle*, turned by God’s providence from being hostile into a protector of the

Christian Church. As “wings” express remote parts of the earth, the *two* wings may here mean the east and west divisions of the Roman empire.

wilderness — the land of the heathen, the Gentiles: in contrast to Canaan, the *pleasant* and *glorious land*. God dwells in the glorious land; demons (the rulers of the heathen world, ~~662~~ Revelation 9:20 ~~661~~ 1 Corinthians 10:20), in the wilderness. Hence Babylon is called *the desert of the sea*, Isaiah 21:1-10 (referred to also in Revelation 14:8 18:2). Heathendom, in its essential nature, being without God, is a desolate *wilderness*. Thus, the woman’s flight into the wilderness is the passing of the kingdom of God from the Jews to be among the Gentiles (typified by Mary’s flight with her child from Judea into Egypt). The eagle flight is from Egypt into the wilderness. The *Egypt* meant is virtually stated (Revelation 11:8) to be Jerusalem, which has become spiritually so by *crucifying our Lord*. Out of her the New Testament Church flees, as the Old Testament Church out of the literal Egypt; and as the true Church subsequently is called to flee out of Babylon (the woman become an harlot, that is, the Church become apostate) [AUBERLEN].

her place — the chief seat of the then world empire, Rome. The Acts of the Apostles describe the passing of the Church from Jerusalem to Rome. The Roman protection was the eagle wing which often shielded Paul, the great instrument of this transmigration, and Christianity, from Jewish opponents who stirred up the heathen mobs. By degrees the Church had “her place” more and more secure, until, under Constantine, the empire became Christian. Still, all this Church-historical period is regarded as a wilderness time, wherein the Church is in part protected, in part oppressed, by the world power, until just before the end the enmity of the world power under Satan shall break out against the Church worse than ever. As Israel was in the wilderness forty years, and had forty-two stages in her journey, so the Church for *forty-two* months, three and a half years or *times* [literally, *seasons*, used for *years* in Hellenistic *Greek* (MOERIS, the Atticist), *Greek*, “*kairous*,” Daniel 7:25 12:7], or 1260 days (Revelation 12:6) between the overthrow of Jerusalem and the coming again of Christ, shall be a wilderness sojourner before she reaches her millennial rest (answering to Canaan of old). It is possible that, besides this Church-historical fulfillment, there may be also an ulterior and narrower fulfillment in the restoration of Israel to Palestine, Antichrist for seven

times (short periods analogical to the longer ones) having power there, for the former three and a half times keeping covenant with the Jews, then breaking it in the midst of the week, and the mass of the nation fleeing by a second Exodus into the wilderness, while a *remnant* remains in the land exposed to a fearful persecution (the “144,000 sealed of Israel,” Revelation 7:1-8 14:1, *standing with the Lamb*, after the conflict is over, *on Mount Zion*: “the first-fruits” of a large company to be gathered to Him) [DE BURGH]. These *details* are very conjectural. In Daniel 7:25 12:7, the subject, as perhaps here, is the time of Israel’s calamity. That seven times do not necessarily mean seven years, in which each day is a year, that is, 2520 years, appears from Nebuchadnezzar’s *seven times* (Daniel 4:23), answering to Antichrist, the beast’s duration.

15, 16. flood — *Greek*, “river” (compare Exodus 2:3 ⁴⁰²Matthew 2:20; and especially Exodus 14:1-31). The *flood*, or river, is the stream of Germanic tribes which, pouring on Rome, threatened to destroy Christianity. But *the earth helped the woman*, by *swallowing up the flood*. The earth, as contradistinguished from water, is the world consolidated and civilized. The German masses were brought under the influence of Roman civilization and Christianity [AUBERLEN]. Perhaps it includes also, generally, the help given by earthly powers (those least likely, yet led by God’s overruling providence to give help) to the Church against persecutions and also heresies, by which she has been at various times assailed.

17. wroth with — *Greek*, “at.”

went — *Greek*, “went away.”

the remnant of her seed — distinct in some sense from the woman herself. Satan’s first effort was to root out the Christian Church, so that there should be no visible profession of Christianity. Foiled in this, he *wars* (Revelation 11:7 13:7) against the invisible Church, namely, “those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus” (A, B, and C omit “Christ”). These are “the remnant,” or *rest of her seed*, as distinguished from her seed, “the man-child” (Revelation 12:5), on one hand, and from mere professors on the other. The Church, in her beauty and unity (Israel at the head of Christendom, the whole forming one perfect Church), is now not manifested, but awaiting the *manifestations of*

the sons of God at Christ's coming. Unable to destroy Christianity and the Church as a whole, Satan directs his enmity against true Christians, the elect *remnant*: the others he leaves unmolested.

CHAPTER 13

REVELATION 13:1-18.

VISION OF THE BEAST THAT CAME OUT OF THE SEA: THE SECOND BEAST, OUT OF THE EARTH, EXERCISING THE POWER OF THE FIRST BEAST, AND CAUSING THE EARTH TO WORSHIP HIM.

1. I stood — So B, *Aleph*, and *Coptic* read. But A, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac*, “*He stood.*” Standing on the sand of the *sea*, HE gave his power to the beast that rose out of the sea.

upon the sand of the sea — where *the four winds* were to be seen *striving upon the great sea* (Daniel 7:2).

beast — *Greek*, “wild beast.” Man becomes “brutish” when he severs himself from God, the archetype and true ideal, in whose image he was first made, which ideal is realized by the man Christ Jesus. Hence, the world powers seeking their own glory, and not God’s, are represented as *beasts*; and Nebuchadnezzar, when in self-deification he forgot that “the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men,” was driven among the beasts. In Daniel 7:4-7 there are *four* beasts: here the *one* beast expresses the sum-total of the God-opposed world power viewed in its universal development, not restricted to one manifestation alone, as Rome. This first beast expresses the world power attacking the Church more from without; the second, which is a revival of, and minister to, the first, is the world power as *the false prophet* corrupting and destroying the Church from within.

out of the sea — (Daniel 7:3; compare *Note*, see on Revelation 8:8); out of the troubled waves of *peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues*. The *earth* (ⲉⲣⲁⲩ Revelation 13:11), on the other hand, means the consolidated, ordered world of nations, with its culture and learning.

seven heads and ten horns — A, B, and C transpose, “ten horns and seven heads.” The ten horns are now put first (contrast the order, Revelation 12:3) because they are crowned. They shall not be so till the last stage of the fourth kingdom (the Roman), which shall continue until the fifth kingdom, Christ’s, shall supplant it and destroy it utterly; this last stage is marked by the *ten toes* of the two feet of the image in Daniel 2:33,41,42. The *seven* implies the world power setting up itself as God, and caricaturing the *seven* Spirits of God; yet its true character as God-opposed is detected by the number *ten* accompanying the seven. Dragon and beast both wear crowns, but the former on the heads, the latter on the horns (Revelation 12:3 13:1). Therefore, both heads and horns refer to kingdoms; compare Revelation 17:7,10,12, “kings” representing the kingdoms whose heads they are. The *seven* kings, as peculiarly powerful — the great powers of the world — are distinguished from the *ten*, represented by the horns (simply called “kings,” ⁽⁶⁶⁷²⁾Revelation 17:12). In Daniel, *the ten* mean the last phase of the world power, the fourth kingdom divided into *ten parts*. They are connected with the *seventh head* (⁽⁶⁶⁷²⁾Revelation 17:12), and are as yet future [AUBERLEN]. The mistake of those who interpret the beast to be Rome exclusively, and the *ten horns* to mean kingdoms which have taken the place of Rome in Europe already, is, the fourth kingdom in the image has TWO legs, representing the eastern as well as the western empire; the ten toes are not upon the one foot (the west), as these interpretations require, but on the two (east and west) together, so that any theory which makes the ten kingdoms belong to the west alone must err. If the ten kingdoms meant were those which sprung up on the overthrow of Rome, the ten would be accurately known, whereas twenty-eight different lists are given by so many interpreters, making in all sixty-five kingdoms! [TYSO in DE BURGH]. The seven heads are the seven world monarchies, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Germanic empire, under the last of which we live [AUBERLEN], and which devolved for a time on Napoleon, after Francis, emperor of Germany and king of Rome, had resigned the title in 1806. FABER explains *the healing of the deadly wound* to be the revival of the Napoleonic dynasty after its overthrow at Waterloo. That secular dynasty, in alliance with the ecclesiastical power, the Papacy (⁽⁶⁶³¹⁾Revelation 13:11, etc.), being “the eighth head,” and yet “of the seven” (⁽⁶⁶⁷¹⁾Revelation 17:11), will temporarily triumph over the saints, until destroyed in Armageddon

(⁶⁶⁷Revelation 19:17-21). A Napoleon, in this view, will be the Antichrist, restoring the Jews to Palestine, and accepted as their Messiah at first, and afterwards fearfully oppressing them. Antichrist, the summing up and concentration of all the world evil that preceded, is the eighth, but yet one of the seven (⁶⁶⁷Revelation 17:11).

crowns — Greek, “diadems.”

name of blasphemy — So C, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS. A, B, and *Vulgate* read, “names of blasphemy,” namely, a name on each of the heads; blasphemously arrogating attributes belonging to God alone (compare *Note*, see on Revelation 17:3). A characteristic of the *little horn* in Daniel 7:8,20,21 2 Thessalonians 2:4.

2. leopard ... bear ... lion — This beast unites in itself the God-opposed characteristics of the three preceding kingdoms, resembling respectively the *leopard*, *bear*, and *lion*. It rises up out of the sea, as Daniel’s four beasts, and has *ten horns*, as Daniel’s fourth beast, and *seven heads*, as Daniel’s four beasts had in all, namely, one on the first, one on the second, four on the third, and one on the fourth. Thus it represents comprehensively in one figure *the world power* (which in Daniel is represented by four) of *all times and places*, not merely of one period and one locality, viewed as opposed to God; just as the *woman* is the Church of all ages. This view is favored also by the fact, that the beast is the vicarious representative of Satan, who similarly has *seven heads* and *ten horns*: a general description of his universal power in all ages and places of the world. Satan appears as a serpent, as being the archetype of the beast nature (Revelation 12:9). “If the seven heads meant merely seven Roman emperors, one cannot understand why they alone should be mentioned in the original image of Satan, whereas it is perfectly intelligible if we suppose them to represent Satan’s power on earth viewed collectively” [AUBERLEN].

3. One of — literally, “from among.”

wounded ... healed — twice again repeated emphatically (⁶⁶⁷Revelation 13:12,14); compare Revelation 17:8,11, “the beast that *was*, and *is not*, and *shall ascend* out of the bottomless pit” (compare ⁶⁶⁷Revelation 13:11); the Germanic empire, the seventh head (revived in *the eighth*), as yet future

in John's time (⁶⁷⁰Revelation 17:10). Contrast the change whereby Nebuchadnezzar, being humbled from his self-deifying pride, was converted from his *beast*-like form and character to MAN'S form and true position towards God; symbolized by his *eagle wings being plucked*, and himself made to stand upon his feet as a *man* (Daniel 7:4). Here, on the contrary, the *beast's* head is not changed into a *human* head, but receives a deadly wound, that is, the world kingdom which this head represents does not truly turn to God, but for a time its God-opposed character remains paralyzed ("as it were slain"; the very words marking the beast's outward resemblance to the Lamb, "as it were slain," see on Revelation 5:6. Compare also the second beast's resemblance to the *Lamb*, ⁶⁷¹Revelation 13:11). Though seemingly *slain* (*Greek* for "wounded"), it remains the beast still, to rise again in another form (⁶⁷¹Revelation 13:11). The first six heads were heathenish, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome; the new seventh world power (the pagan German hordes pouring down on Christianized Rome), whereby Satan had hoped to stifle Christianity (⁶⁷¹Revelation 11:15,16), became itself Christianized (answering to the beast's, *as it were, deadly wound: it was slain, and it is not*, ⁶⁷¹Revelation 17:11). Its *ascent out of the bottomless pit answers to the healing of its deadly wound* (Revelation 17:8). No essential change is noticed in Daniel as effected by Christianity upon the fourth kingdom; it remains essentially God-opposed to the last. The beast, *healed* of its temporary and external *wound*, now returns, not only from the sea, but from the *bottomless pit*, whence it draws new Antichristian strength of hell (Revelation 13:3,11,12,14 Revelation 11:7 17:8). Compare the *seven evil spirits* taken into the temporarily dispossessed, and *the last state worse than the first*, ⁶⁷²Matthew 12:43-45. A new and worse heathenism breaks in upon the Christianized world, more devilish than the old one of the first heads of the beast. The latter was an apostasy only from the general revelation of God in nature and conscience; but this new one is from God's revelation of love in His Son. It culminates in Antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition (compare ⁶⁷¹Revelation 17:11); 2 Thessalonians 2:3; compare 2 Timothy 3:1-4, the very characteristics of old heathenism (⁶⁷²Romans 1:29-32) [AUBERLEN]. More than one wound seems to me to be meant, for example, that under Constantine (when the pagan worship of the emperor's image gave way to Christianity), followed by the healing, when image worship and the other papal errors were introduced into the Church; again, that at

the Reformation, followed by the lethargic *form of godliness without the power*, and about to end in the last great apostasy, which I identify with the second beast (^{<6631>}Revelation 13:11), Antichrist, the same seventh world power in another form.

wondered after — followed with wondering gaze.

4. which gave — A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS read, “because he gave.”

power — *Greek*, “the authority” which it had; *its* authority.

Who is like unto the beast? — The very language appropriated to *God*, ^{<6951>}Exodus 15:11 (whence, in the *Hebrew*, the Maccabees took their name; the opponents of the Old Testament Antichrist, Antiochus); Psalm 35:10 71:19 113:5 Micah 7:18; *blasphemously* (Revelation 13:1,5) assigned to the beast. It is a parody of the name “Michael” (compare Revelation 12:7), meaning, “Who is like unto God?”

5. blasphemies — So ANDREAS reads. B reads “blasphemy.” A, “blasphemous things” (compare Daniel 7:8 11:25).

power — “authority”; *legitimate power* (*Greek*, “*exousia*”).

to continue — *Greek*, “*poiesai*,” “to act,” or “work.” B reads, “to make war” (compare Revelation 13:4). But A, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS omit “war.”

forty ... two month — (See on Revelation 11:2,3; Revelation 12:6).

6. opened ... mouth — The usual formula in the case of a set speech, or series of speeches. Revelation 13:6,7 expand Revelation 13:5.

blasphemy — So B and ANDREAS. A and C read “blasphemies.”

and them — So *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, ANDREAS, and PRIMASIUS read. A and C omit “and”: “them that dwell (literally, ‘tabernacle’) in heaven,” mean not only angels and the departed souls of the righteous, but believers on earth who have their citizenship in heaven, and whose true life is hidden from the Antichristian persecutor in *the secret of God’s tabernacle*. See on ^{<6920>}Revelation 12:12; John 3:7.

7. power — *Greek*, “authority.”

all kindreds ... tongues ... nations — *Greek*, “every tribe ... tongue ... nation.” A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, ANDREAS, and PRIMASIUS add “and people,” after “tribe” or “kindred.”

8. all that dwell upon the earth — being of earth earthy; in contrast to “them that dwell in heaven.”

whose names are not written — A, B, C, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS read singular, “(every one) whose (*Greek*, ‘*hou*’; but B, *Greek*, ‘*hon*,’ plural) *name* is not written.”

Lamb slain from the foundation of the world — The *Greek* order of words favors this translation. He was *slain* in the Father’s eternal counsels: compare ~~and~~ 1 Peter 1:19,20, virtually parallel. The other way of connecting the words is, “Written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb slain.” So in Revelation 17:8. The elect. The former is in the *Greek* more obvious and simple. “Whatsoever virtue was in the sacrifices, did operate through Messiah’s death alone. As He was “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” so all atonements ever made were only effectual by His blood” [BISHOP PEARSON, *Exposition of the Creed*].

9. A general exhortation. Christ’s own words of monition calling solemn attention.

10. He that leadeth into captivity — A, B, C, and *Vulgate* read, “if any one (be) for captivity.”

shall go into captivity — *Greek* present, “goeth into captivity.” Compare Jeremiah 15:2, which is alluded to here. *Aleph*, B, and C read simply, “he goeth away,” and omit “into captivity.” But A and *Vulgate* support the words.

he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword — So B and C read. But A reads, “if any (is for) being (literally, ‘to be’) killed with the sword.” As of old, so now, those to be persecuted by the beast in various ways, have their trials severally appointed them by God’s fixed

counsel. *English Version* is quite a different sense, namely, a warning to the persecutors that they shall be punished with retribution in kind.

Here — “Herein”: in bearing their appointed sufferings lies the *patient endurance ... of the saints*. This is to be the motto and watchword of the elect during the period of the world kingdom. As the first beast is to be met by *patience* and *faith* (⁶⁶³⁰Revelation 13:10), the second beast must be opposed by true *wisdom* (⁶⁶³⁸Revelation 13:18).

11. another beast — “the false prophet.”

out of the earth — out of society civilized, consolidated, and ordered, but still, with all its culture, of earth earthy: as distinguished from “the sea,” the troubled agitations of various peoples out of which the world power and its several kingdoms have emerged. “*The sacerdotal persecuting power, pagan and Christian*; the pagan priesthood making an image of the emperors which they compelled Christians to worship, and working wonders by magic and omens; the Romish priesthood, the inheritors of pagan rites, images, and superstitions, lamb-like in Christian professions, dragon-like in word and act” [ALFORD, and so the Spanish Jesuit, LACUNZA, writing under the name BEN EZRA]. As the first beast was like the Lamb in being, *as it were, wounded to death*, so the second is like the Lamb in having *two lamb-like horns* (its essential difference from the Lamb is marked by its having TWO, but the Lamb SEVEN horns, Revelation 5:6). The former paganism of the world power, seeming to be wounded to death by Christianity, revives. In its second beast-form it is Christianized heathendom ministering to the former, and having earthly culture and learning to recommend it. The second beast’s, or false prophet’s rise, coincides in time with the healing of the beast’s deadly wound and its revival (⁶⁶³²Revelation 13:12-14). Its *manifold* character is marked by the Lord (⁶⁶¹¹Matthew 24:11,24), “*Many false prophets shall rise*,” where He is speaking of the last days. As the former beast corresponds to the first four beasts of Daniel, so the second beast, or the false prophet, to the little horn starting up among the ten horns of the fourth beast. This Antichristian horn has not only the mouth of blasphemy (Revelation 13:5), but also “the eyes of man” (Daniel 7:8): the former is also in the first beast (Revelation 13:1,5), but the latter not so. “The eyes of man” symbolize cunning and intellectual culture, the very characteristic of “the

false prophet” (ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ Revelation 13:13-15 ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ Revelation 16:14). The first beast is physical and political; the second a spiritual power, the power of knowledge, ideas (the favorite term in the French school of politics), and scientific cultivation. Both alike are *beasts*, from below, not from above; faithful allies, worldly Antichristian wisdom standing in the service of the worldly Antichristian power: the dragon is both lion and serpent: might and cunning are his armory. The dragon gives his external power to the first beast (Revelation 13:2), his spirit to the second, so that it *speaks as a dragon* (ⲉⲓⲃⲓⲥ Revelation 13:11). The second, arising *out of the earth*, is in Revelation 11:7 17:8, said to *ascend out of the bottomless pit*: its very culture and world wisdom only intensify its infernal character, the pretense to superior knowledge and rationalistic philosophy (as in the primeval temptation, Genesis 3:5,7, “their EYES [as here] were opened”) veiling the deification of nature, self, and man. Hence spring Idealism, Materialism, Deism, Pantheism, Atheism. Antichrist shall be the culmination. The Papacy’s claim to the double power, secular and spiritual, is a sample and type of the twofold beast, that *out of the sea*, and that *out of the earth*, or *bottomless pit*. Antichrist will be the climax, and final form. PRIMASIUS OF ADRUMENTUM, in the sixth century, says, “He feigns to be a lamb that he may assail the Lamb — the body of Christ.”

12. power — *Greek*, “authority.”

before him — “in his presence”; as ministering to, and upholding him. “The non-existence of the beast embraces the whole Germanic Christian period. The healing of the wound and return of the beast is represented [in regard to its *final* Antichristian manifestation though including also, meanwhile, its healing and return under Popery, which is baptized heathenism] in that principle which, since 1789, has manifested itself in beast-like outbreaks” [AUBERLEN].

which dwell therein — the earthly-minded. The Church becomes the *harlot*: the world’s political power, the Antichristian *beast*; the world’s wisdom and civilization, *the false prophet*. Christ’s three offices are thus perverted: the first beast is the false *kingship*; the harlot, the false *priesthood*; the second beast, the false *prophet*. The beast is the *bodily*, the false prophet the *intellectual*, the harlot the *spiritual* power of Antichristianity [AUBERLEN]. The *Old-Testament Church* stood under the

power of the beast, the heathen world power: *the Middle-Ages Church* under that of the harlot: *in modern times* the false prophet predominates. But in the last days all these God-opposed powers which have succeeded each other shall *co-operate*, and raise each other to the most terrible and intense power of their nature: *the false prophet causes men to worship the beast, and the beast carries the harlot*. These three forms of apostasy are reducible to two: *the apostate Church* and *the apostate world, pseudo-Christianity* and *Antichristianity*, the harlot and the beast; for the false prophet is also a beast; and the two beasts, as different manifestations of the same beast-like principle, stand in contradistinction to the harlot, and are finally judged together, whereas separate judgment falls on the harlot [AUBERLEN].

deadly wound — *Greek*, “wound of death.”

13. wonders — *Greek*, “signs.”

so that — so *great* that.

maketh fire — *Greek*, “maketh even fire.” This is the very miracle which the two witnesses perform, and which Elijah long ago had performed; this the beast from the bottomless pit, or the false prophet, mimics. Not merely tricks, but miracles of a demoniacal kind, and by demon aid, like those of the Egyptian magicians, shall be wrought, most calculated to deceive; wrought “after the working (*Greek*, ‘energy’) of Satan.”

14. deceiveth them that dwell on the earth — the earthly-minded, but not *the elect*. Even a miracle is not enough to warrant belief in a professed revelation unless that revelation be in harmony with God’s already revealed will.

by the means of those miracles — rather as *Greek*, “on account of (because of; in consequence of) those miracles.”

which he had power to do — *Greek*, “which were given him to do.”

in the sight of the beast — “before him” (^{663D}Revelation 13:12).

which — A, B, and C read, “who”; marking, perhaps, a personal Antichrist.

had — So B and ANDREAS read. But A, C, and *Vulgate* read, “hath.”

15. he had power — *Greek*, “it was given to him.”

to give life — *Greek*, “breath,” or “spirit.”

image — Nebuchadnezzar set up in Dura a golden *image* to be worshipped, probably of himself; for his dream had been interpreted, “Thou art this head of gold”; the three Hebrews who refused to worship the *image* were east into a burning furnace. All this typifies the last apostasy. PLINY, in his letter to Trajan, states that he consigned to punishment those Christians who would not worship the emperor’s image with incense and wine. So JULIAN, the apostate, set up his own image with the idols of the heathen gods in the Forum, that the Christians in doing reverence to it, might seem to worship the idols. So Charlemagne’s image was set up for homage; and the Pope *adored* the new emperor [DUPIN, vol. 6, p. 126]. Napoleon, the successor of Charlemagne, designed after he had first lowered the Pope by removing him to Fontainebleau, then to “make an idol of him” [*Memorial de Sainte Helene*]; keeping the Pope near him, he would, through the Pope’s influence, have directed the religious, as well as the political world. The revived Napoleonic dynasty may, in some one representative, realize the project, becoming the beast supported by the false prophet (perhaps some openly infidel supplanter of the papacy, under a spiritual guise, after the harlot, or apostate Church, who is distinct from the second beast, has been stripped and judged by the beast, ⁶⁶⁷¹⁶Revelation 17:16); he then might have an image set up in his honor as a test of secular and spiritual allegiance.

speak — “False doctrine will give a spiritual, philosophical appearance to the foolish apotheosis of the creaturely personified by Antichrist” [AUBERLEN]. JEROME, on Daniel 7, says, Antichrist shall be “one of the human race in whom the whole of Satan shall dwell bodily.” Rome’s *speaking* images and winking pictures of the Virgin Mary and the saints are an earnest of the future demoniacal miracles of the false prophet in making the beast’s or Antichrist’s image to speak.

16. to receive a mark — literally, “that they should give them a mark”; such a brand as masters stamp on their slaves, and monarchs on their subjects. Soldiers voluntarily punctured their arms with marks of the

general under whom they served. Votaries of idols branded themselves with the idol's cipher or symbol. Thus Antiochus Epiphanes branded the Jews with the ivy leaf, the symbol of Bacchus (2 Maccabees 6:7; 3 Maccabees 2:29). Contrast God's *seal* and *name in the foreheads of His servants*, Revelation 7:3 14:1 22:4; and ⁴⁸¹⁷Galatians 6:17, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus," that is, I am His soldier and servant. The mark in the right hand and forehead implies the prostration of *bodily* and *intellectual* powers to the beast's domination. "In *the forehead* by way of profession; in the *hand* with respect to work and service" [AUGUSTINE].

17. And — So A, B, and *Vulgate* read. C, IRENAEUS, 316, *Coptic*, and *Syriac* omit it.

might buy — *Greek*, "may be able to buy."

the mark, or the name — *Greek*, "the mark (namely), the name of the beast." The mark may be, as in the case of the sealing of the saints in the forehead, not a visible mark, but symbolical of allegiance. So the sign of the cross in Popery. The Pope's interdict has often shut out the excommunicate from social and commercial intercourse. Under the final Antichrist this shall come to pass in its most violent form.

number of his name — implying that the name has some numerical meaning.

18. wisdom — the armory against the second beast, as *patience and faith* against the first. Spiritual *wisdom* is needed to solve the *mystery* of iniquity, so as not to be beguiled by it.

count ... for — The "for" implies the possibility of our calculating or counting the beast's number.

the number of a man — that is, counted as men generally count. So the phrase is used in ⁴⁸¹⁷Revelation 21:17. The number is the number of a *man*, not of *God*; he shall extol himself above the power of the Godhead, as the *MAN of sin* [AQUINAS]. Though it is an imitation of the divine name, it is only *human*.

six hundred threescore and six — A and *Vulgate* write the numbers in full in the *Greek*. But B writes merely the three *Greek* letters standing for

numbers, *Ch, X, St*. “C reads” 616, but IRENAEUS, 328, opposes this and maintains “666.” IRENAEUS, in the second century, disciple of POLYCARP, John’s disciple, explained this number as contained in the *Greek* letters of *Lateinos* (L being thirty; A, one; T, three hundred; E, five; I, ten; N, fifty; O, seventy; S, two hundred). The *Latin* is peculiarly the language of the Church of Rome in all her official acts; the forced unity of language in ritual being the counterfeit of the true unity; the premature and spurious anticipation of the real unity, only to be realized at Christ’s coming, when all the earth shall speak “one language” (Zephaniah 3:9). The last Antichrist may have a close connection with Rome, and so the name *Lateinos* (666) may apply to him. The *Hebrew* letters of *Balaam* amount to 666 [BUNSEN]; a type of the *false prophet*, whose characteristic, like Balaam’s, will be high spiritual knowledge perverted to Satanic ends. The number *six* is the world number; in 666 it occurs in units, tens, and hundreds. It is next neighbor to the sacred *seven*, but is severed from it by an impassable gulf. It is *the number of the world given over to judgment*; hence there is a pause between the sixth and seventh seals, and the sixth and seventh trumpets. The judgments on the world are complete in *six*; by the fulfillment of *seven*, the kingdoms of the world become Christ’s. As *twelve* is the number of the Church, so six, its half, symbolizes the world kingdom broken. The raising of the six to tens and hundreds (higher powers) indicates that the beast, notwithstanding his progression to higher powers, can only rise to greater ripeness for judgment. Thus 666, the judged world power, contrasts with the 144,000 sealed and transfigured ones (the Church number, twelve, squared and multiplied by one thousand, the number symbolizing the world pervaded by God; ten, the world number, raised to the power of three the number of God) [AUBERLEN]. The “mark” (*Greek*, “*charagma*”) and “name” are one and the same. The first two radical letters of *Christ* (*Greek*, “*Christos*”), *Ch* and *R*, are the same as the first two of *charagma*, and were the imperial monogram of Christian Rome. Antichrist, personating Christ, adopts a symbol like, but not agreeing with, Christ’s monogram, *Ch, X, St*; whereas the radicals in “Christ” are *Ch, R, St*. Papal Rome has similarly substituted the standard of *the Keys* for the standard of *the Cross*; so on the papal *coinage* (the image of power, ⁴¹²¹Matthew 22:20). The two first letters of “Christ,” *Ch, R*, represent *seven* hundred, the perfect number. The *Ch, X, St* represent an

imperfect number, a triple *falling away* (apostasy) from *septenary* perfection [WORDSWORTH].

CHAPTER 14

REVELATION 14:1-20.

THE LAMB SEEN ON ZION WITH THE 144,000.

**THEIR SONG. THE GOSPEL PROCLAIMED BEFORE THE END
BY ONE ANGEL: THE FALL OF BABYLON, BY ANOTHER: THE
DOOM OF THE BEAST WORSHIPPERS, BY A THIRD. THE
BLESSEDNESS OF THE DEAD IN THE LORD.
THE HARVEST. THE VINTAGE.**

In contrast to the beast, false prophet, and apostate Church (Revelation 13:1-18) and introductory to the announcement of judgments about to descend on them and the world (Revelation 14:8-11, anticipatory of Revelation 18:2-6), stand here the redeemed, “the divine kernel of humanity, the positive fruits of the history of the world and the Church” [AUBERLEN]. The fourteenth through sixteenth chapters describe the preparations for the Messianic judgment. As the fourteenth chapter begins with *the 144,000 of Israel* (compare Revelation 7:4-8, no longer exposed to trial as then, but now triumphant), so the fifteenth chapter begins with those who have *overcome* from among the Gentiles (compare Revelation 15:1-5 with Revelation 7:9-17); the two classes of elect forming together the whole company of transfigured saints who shall reign with Christ.

1. a — A, B, C, *Coptic*, and ORIGEN read, “*the*.”

Lamb ... on ... Sion — having left His position “in the midst of the throne,” and now taking His stand *on Sion*.

his Father’s name — A, B, and C read, “*His name and His Father’s name*.”

in — *Greek*, “upon.” God’s and Christ’s *name* here answers to the *seal* “upon their foreheads” in Revelation 7:3. As the 144,000 of Israel are “the

first-fruits” (Revelation 14:4), so “the harvest” (^{14:15}Revelation 14:15) is the general assembly of Gentile saints to be translated by Christ as His first act in assuming His kingdom, prior to His judgment (^{16:17-21}Revelation 16:17-21, the last seven vials) on the Antichristian world, in executing which His saints shall share. As Noah and Lot were taken seasonably out of the *judgment*, but exposed to the *trial* to the last moment [DE BURGH], so those who shall reign with Christ shall first suffer with Him, being delivered out of the *judgments*, but not out of the *trials*. The Jews are meant by “the saints of the Most High”: against them Antichrist makes war, *changing their times and laws*; for true Israelites cannot join in the idolatry of the beast, any more than true Christians. The common affliction will draw closely together, in opposing the beast’s worship, the Old Testament and New Testament people of God. Thus the way is paved for Israel’s conversion. This last utter *scattering of the holy people’s power* leads them, under the Spirit, to seek Messiah, and to cry at His approach, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

2. from — *Greek*, “out of.”

voice of many waters — as is the voice of Himself, such also is the voice of His people.

I heard the voice of harpers — A, B, C, and ORIGEN read, “the voice which I heard (was) as of harpers.”

3. sung — *Greek*, “sing.”

as it were — So A, C, and *Vulgate* read. It is “as it were” a *new song*; for it is, in truth, as old as God’s eternal purpose. But B, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, ORIGEN, and ANDREAS omit these words.

new song — (Revelation 5:9,10). The song is that of victory after conflict with the dragon, beast, and false prophet: never sung before, for such a conflict had never been fought before; therefore *new*: till now the kingdom of *Christ* on earth had been usurped; they sing the new song in anticipation of His blood-bought kingdom with His saints.

four beasts — rather, as *Greek*, “four living creatures.” The harpers and singers evidently include the 144,000: so the parallel proves (Revelation 15:2,3), where the same act is attributed to *the general company of the*

saints, the harvest (⁶⁴⁴⁵Revelation 14:15) from all nations. Not as ALFORD, “the harpers and song are in heaven, but the 144,000 are on earth.”

redeemed — literally, “purchased.” Not even the angels can learn that song, for they know not *experimentally* what it is to have “come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb” (⁶⁰⁷⁴Revelation 7:14).

4. virgins — spiritually (Matthew 25:1); in contrast to the apostate Church, Babylon (Revelation 14:8), spiritually “a harlot” (Revelation 17:1-5 Isaiah 1:21; contrast 2 Corinthians 11:2 ⁴¹²⁵Ephesians 5:25-27). Their not being *defiled with women* means they were not led astray from Christian faithfulness by the tempters who jointly constitute the spiritual “harlot.”

follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth — in glory, being especially near His person; the fitting reward of their following Him so fully on earth.

redeemed — “purchased.”

being the — rather, “*as a first-fruit*.” Not merely a “first-fruit” in the sense in which *all* believers are so, but Israel’s 144,000 elect are the *first-fruit*, the Jewish and Gentile elect Church is the *harvest*; in a further sense, the whole of the transfigured and translated Church which reigns with Christ at His coming, is the *first-fruit*, and the consequent general ingathering of Israel and the nations, ending in the last judgment, is the full and final harvest.

5. guile — So ANDREAS in one copy. But A, B, C, ORIGEN, and ANDREAS in other copies read, “falsehood.” Compare with *English Version* reading Psalm 32:2 Isaiah 53:9 ⁶¹⁴⁷John 1:47.

for — So B, *Syriac, Coptic*, ORIGEN, and ANDREAS read. But A and C omit.

without fault — *Greek*, “blameless”: in respect to the sincerity of their fidelity to Him. Not absolutely, and in themselves *blameless*; but regarded as such on the ground of His righteousness in whom alone they trusted, and whom they faithfully served by His Spirit in them. The allusion seems to be to Psalm 15:1,2. Compare Revelation 14:1, “*stood on Mount Sion*.”

before the throne of God — A, B, C, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, ORIGEN, and ANDREAS omit these words. The oldest *Vulgate* manuscript supports them.

6. Here begins the portion relating to the Gentile world, as the former portion related to Israel. Before the *end* the Gospel is to be preached for a WITNESS *unto all nations*: not that all nations shall be converted, but all nations shall have had the opportunity given them of deciding whether they will be for, or against, Christ. Those thus *preached* to are “they that dwell (so A, *Coptic*, and *Syriac* read. But B, C, ORIGEN, *Vulgate*, CYPRIAN, 312, read, ‘SIT,’ compare ⁴⁰⁴⁶Matthew 4:16 ⁴⁰¹⁷Luke 1:79, having their *settled* home) on the earth,” being of earth earthy: this last season of grace is given them, if yet they may repent, before “judgment” (Revelation 14:7) descends: if not, they will be left without excuse, as the world which resisted the preaching of Noah in the the hundred twenty years “while the long-suffering of God waited.” “So also the prophets gave the people a last opportunity of repentance before the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, and our Lord and His apostles before the Roman destruction of the holy city” [AUBERLEN]. The *Greek* for “unto” (*epi*, in A and C) means literally, “upon,” or “over,” or “in respect to” (⁴⁰⁹²Mark 9:12 ⁴⁰⁷³Hebrews 7:13). So also “TO every nation” (*Greek*, “*epi*,” in A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, ORIGEN, ANDREAS, CYPRIAN, and PRIMASIUS). This, perhaps, implies that the Gospel, though diffused *over* the globe, shall not come savingly *unto* any save the elect. The world is not to be evangelized till Christ shall come: meanwhile, God’s purpose is “to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name,” to be witnesses of the effectual working of His Spirit during the counter-working of “the mystery of iniquity.”

everlasting gospel — the Gospel which announces the *glad tidings* of the *everlasting* kingdom of Christ, about to ensue immediately after the “judgment” on Antichrist, announced as imminent in Revelation 14:7. As the former angel “flying through the midst of heaven” (⁴⁰⁸³Revelation 8:13) announced “woe,” so this angel “flying in the midst of heaven” announced *joy*. The three angels making this last proclamation of the Gospel, the fall of Babylon (Revelation 14:8), the harlot, and the judgment on the beast worshippers (Revelation 14:9-11), the voice from heaven respecting the blessed dead (⁴⁰⁴³Revelation 14:13), the vision of the Son of man on the cloud (⁴⁰⁴¹Revelation 14:11), the harvest (⁴⁰⁴⁵Revelation 14:15), and the

vintage (^{<4448>}Revelation 14:18), form the compendious summary, amplified in detail in the rest of the book.

7. Fear God — the forerunner to embracing the *love* of God manifested in *the Gospel*. Repentance accompanies faith.

give glory to him — and not to the beast (compare Revelation 13:4 Jeremiah 13:16).

the hour of his judgment — “The hour” implies the *definite time*. “Judgment,” not the general judgment, but that up on Babylon, the beast, and his worshippers (Revelation 14:8-12).

worship him that made heaven — not Antichrist (compare ^{<4445>}Acts 14:15).

sea ... fountains — distinguished also in Revelation 8:8,10.

8. another — So *Vulgate*. But A, B, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS add, “a second”; “another, a second angel.”

Babylon — here first mentioned; identical with *the harlot*, the apostate Church; distinct from *the beast*, and judged separately.

is fallen — anticipation of Revelation 18:2. A, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS support the second “is fallen.” But B, C, and *Coptic* omit it.

that great city — A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* omit “city.” Then translate, “Babylon the great.” The ulterior and exhaustive fulfillment of Isaiah 21:9.

because — So ANDREAS. But A, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, “which.” B and *Coptic* omit it. Even reading “which,” we must understand it as giving the *reason* of her fall.

all nations — A, B and C read, “all *the* nations.”

the wine of the wrath of her fornication — *the wine of the wrath* of God, the consequence of *her fornication*. As she made the nations drunk with the wine of her fornication, so she herself shall be made drunk with the wine of God’s wrath.

9. A, B, C, and ANDREAS read, “another, a third angel.” Compare with this verse ^{ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲛ}Revelation 13:15,16.

10. **The same** — *Greek*, “he also,” as the just and inevitable retribution.

wine of ... wrath of God — (Psalm 75:8).

without mixture — whereas wine was so commonly *mixed* with water that to *mix* wine is used in *Greek* for to *pour out* wine; *this* wine of God’s wrath is *undiluted*; there is no drop of water to cool its heat. Naught of grace or hope is blended with it. This terrible threat may well raise us above the fear of man’s threats. This *unmixed* cup is already *mingled* and prepared for Satan and the beast’s followers.

indignation — *Greek*, “*orges*,” “abiding wrath,” But the *Greek* for “wrath” above (*Greek*, “*thumou*”) is *boiling indignation*, from (*Greek*, “*thuo*”) a root meaning “to boil”; this is temporary ebullition of anger; that is lasting [AMMONIUS], and accompanied with a purpose of vengeance [ORIGEN on Psalm 2:5].

tormented ... in the presence of ... angels — (Psalm 49:14 58:10 139:21 Isaiah 66:24). God’s enemies are regarded by the saints as their enemies, and when the day of probation is past, their mind shall be so entirely one with God’s, that they shall rejoice in witnessing visibly the judicial vindication of God’s righteousness in sinners’ punishment.

11. **for ever and ever** — *Greek*, “unto ages of ages.”

no rest day nor night — Contrast the very different sense in which the same is said of the four living creatures in heaven, “They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy”; yet they do “rest” in another sense; they rest from sin and sorrow, weariness and weakness, trial and temptation (^{ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲛ}Revelation 14:13); the lost have no rest from sin and Satan, terror, torment, and remorse.

12. **Here**, etc. — resumed from ^{ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲛ}Revelation 13:10; see on ^{ⲁⲛⲁⲓⲛ}Revelation 13:10. In the fiery ordeal of persecution which awaits all who will not worship the beast, the *faith* and *patience* of the followers of *God and Jesus* shall be put to the test, and proved.

patience — *Greek*, “*hupomene*,” “patient, persevering endurance.” The second “here” is omitted in A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and PRIMASIUS. Translate, “Here is the endurance of the saints, who keep,” etc.

the faith of Jesus — the faith which has Jesus for its object.

13. Encouragement to cheer those persecuted under the beast.

Write — to put it on record for ever.

Blessed — in *resting from their toils*, and, in the case of the saints just before alluded to as persecuted by the beast, in *resting from persecutions*. Their full *blessedness* is now “from henceforth,” that is, FROM THIS TIME, when the judgment on the beast and the harvest gatherings of the elect are imminent. The time so earnestly longed for by former martyrs is now all but come; the full number of their fellow servants is on the verge of completion; they have no longer to “*rest* (the same *Greek* as here, *anapausis*) yet for a little season,” their eternal *rest*, or *cessation* from toils (2 Thessalonians 1:7; *Greek*, “*anesis*,” relaxation after hardships. Hebrews 4:9,10, *sabbatism of rest*; and *Greek*, “*catapausis*,” akin to the *Greek* here) is close at hand now. They are *blessed* in being about to sit down to *the marriage supper of the Lamb* (Revelation 19:9), and in having part in the *first resurrection* (Revelation 20:6), and in *having right to the tree of life* (Revelation 22:14). In Revelation 14:14-16 follows the explanation of why they are pronounced “blessed” now in particular, namely, *the Son of man on the cloud* is just coming to gather them in as *the harvest* ripe for garner.

Yea, saith the Spirit — The words of God the Father (the “voice from heaven”) are echoed back and confirmed by the Spirit (speaking in the Word, Revelation 2:7 22:17; and in the saints, 2 Corinthians 5:5 1 Peter 4:14). All “God’s promises in Christ are yea” (2 Corinthians 1:20).

unto me — omitted in A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*.

that they may — The *Greek* includes also the idea, They are blessed, *in that they SHALL rest from their toils* (so the *Greek*).

and — So B and ANDREAS read. But A, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read “for.” They rest from their toils *because* their time for toil is past; they enter on

the *blessed rest* because of their faith evinced by their works which, therefore, “follow WITH (so the *Greek*) them.” Their *works* are specified because respect is had to the coming judgment, wherein every man shall be “judged according to his works.” His works do not go before the believer, nor even go by his side, but *follow* him at the same time that they go *with* him as a proof that he is Christ’s.

14. crown — *Greek*, “*stephanon*,” “garland” of victory; not His *diadem* as a king. The victory is described in detail, ^(~~691~~)Revelation 19:11-21.

one sat — “one sitting,” *Greek*, “*cathemenon homoion*,” is the reading of A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic*.

15. Thrust in — *Greek*, “Send.” The angel does not command the “Son of man” (^(~~644~~)Revelation 14:14), but is the mere messenger announcing to the Son the will of *God the Father*, in whose hands are kept *the times and the seasons*.

thy sickle — alluding to ^(~~609~~)Mark 4:29, where also it is “*sendeth* the sickle.” The Son sends His sickle-bearing angel to reap the righteous when fully ripe.

harvest — the harvest crop. By the *harvest*-reaping the elect righteous are gathered out; by the *vintage* the Antichristian offenders are removed out of the earth, the scene of Christ’s coming kingdom. The Son of man Himself, with a golden crown, is introduced in the *harvest*-gathering of the elect, a mere angel in the *vintage* (^(~~648~~)Revelation 14:18-20).

is ripe — literally, “is dried.” Ripe for glory.

16. thrust in — *Greek*, “cast.”

17. out of the temple ... in heaven — (^(~~615~~)Revelation 11:19).

18. from the altar — upon which were offered the incense-accompanied prayers of all saints, which bring down in answer God’s fiery judgment on the Church’s foes, the *fire* being *taken from the altar and cast upon the earth*.

fully ripe — *Greek*, “come to their acme”; ripe for punishment.

19. “The vine” is what is the subject of judgment because its grapes are not what God looked for considering its careful culture, but “wild grapes” (Isaiah 5:1-30). The apostate world of Christendom, not the world of heathendom who have not heard of Christ, is the object of judgment. Compare the emblem, ~~Revelation~~ Revelation 19:15 Isaiah 63:2,3 Joel 3:13.

20. without the city — Jerusalem. The scene of the blood-shedding of Christ and His people shall be also the scene of God’s vengeance on the Antichristian foe. Compare the “horsemen,” ~~Revelation~~ Revelation 9:16,17.

blood — answering to the red wine. The slaughter of the apostates is what is here spoken of, not their eternal punishment.

even unto the horse bridles — of the avenging “armies of heaven.”

by the space of a thousand ... six hundred furlongs — literally, “a thousand six hundred furlongs *off*” [W. KELLY]. Sixteen hundred is a square number; four by four by one hundred. The *four* quarters, north, south, east, and west, of the Holy Land, or else of the world (the completeness and universality of the world-wide destruction being hereby indicated). It does not exactly answer to the length of Palestine as given by JEROME, one hundred sixty Roman miles. BENDEL thinks the valley of Kedron, between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, is meant, the torrent in that valley being about to be discolored with blood to the extent of sixteen hundred furlongs. This view accords with Joel’s prophecy that the valley of Jehoshaphat is to be the scene of the overthrow of the Antichristian foes.

CHAPTER 15

REVELATION 15:1-8.

THE LAST SEVEN VIALS OF PLAGUES: SONG OF THE VICTORS OVER THE BEAST.

1. the seven last plagues — *Greek*, “seven plagues which are the last.”

is filled up — literally, “was finished,” or “consummated”: the prophetic past for the future, the future being to God as though it were past, so sure of accomplishment is His word. This verse is the summary of the vision that follows: the angels do not actually receive the vials till Revelation 15:7; but here, in Revelation 15:1, by anticipation they are spoken of as *having* them. There are no more plagues after these until the Lord’s coming in judgment. The destruction of Babylon (Revelation 18:2) is the last: then in ~~19:11~~ Revelation 19:11-16 He appears.

2. sea of glass — Answering to the molten sea or great brazen laver before the mercy seat of the earthly temple, for the purification of the priests; typifying the baptism of water and the Spirit of all who are made kings and priests unto God.

mingled with fire — answering to the *baptism* on earth *with fire*, that is, fiery trial, as well as with the Holy Ghost, which Christ’s people undergo to purify them, as gold is purified of its dross in the furnace.

them that had gotten the victory over — *Greek*, “those (coming) off from (the conflict with) the beast-conquerors.”

over the number of his name — A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* omit the words in *English Version*, “over his mark.” *The mark*, in fact, is the *number of his name* which the faithful refused to receive, and so were victorious over it.

stand on the sea of glass — ALFORD and DE BURGH explain “on (the shore of) the sea”: *at* the sea. So the preposition, *Greek*, “*epi*,” with the

accusative case, is used for *at*, ^{<661>}Revelation 3:20. It has a pregnant sense: “standing” implies *rest*, *Greek* “*epi*” with the accusative case implies motion “towards.” Thus the meaning is, Having come TO the sea, and now *standing* AT it. In ^{<119>}Matthew 14:26, where Christ walks *on* the sea, the *Greek* oldest manuscripts have the genitive, not the accusative as here. Allusion is made to the Israelites standing *on the shore at the Red Sea*, after having passed victoriously through it, and after the Lord had destroyed the Egyptian foe (type of Antichrist) in it. Moses and the Israelites’ song of triumph (Exodus 15:1) has its antitype in the saints’ “song of Moses and the Lamb” (Revelation 15:3). Still *English Version* is consistent with good *Greek*, and the sense will then be: As the sea typifies the troubled state out of which the beast arose, and which is to be no more in the blessed world to come (Revelation 21:1), so the victorious saints stand on it, having it *under their feet* (as the *woman* had the *moon*, see on Revelation 12:1); but it is now no longer treacherous wherein the feet sink, but solid like glass, as it was under the feet of Christ, whose triumph and power the saints now share. Firmness of footing amidst apparent instability is thus represented. They can stand, not merely as victorious Israel *at* the Red Sea, and as John *upon* the sand of the shore, but *upon the sea* itself, now firm, and reflecting their glory as glass, their past conflict shedding the brighter luster on their present triumph. Their happiness is heightened by the retrospect of the dangers through which they have passed. Thus this corresponds to ^{<614>}Revelation 7:14,15.

harps of God — in the hands of these heavenly *virgins*, infinitely surpassing the timbrels of Miriam and the Israelitesses.

3. song of Moses ... and ... the Lamb — The New Testament song of the Lamb (that is, the song which the Lamb shall lead, as being “the Captain of our salvation,” just as Moses was leader of the Israelites, the song in which those who conquer through Him [^{<613>}Romans 8:37] shall join, ^{<621>}Revelation 12:11) is the antitype to the triumphant Old Testament song of Moses and the Israelites at the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-21). The Churches of the Old and New Testament are essentially one in their conflicts and triumphs. The two appear joined in this phrase, as they are in the twenty-four elders. Similarly, Isaiah 12:1-6 foretells the song of the redeemed (Israel foremost) after the second antitypical exodus and deliverance *at the Egyptian Sea*. The passage through the Red Sea under the pillar of cloud

was Israel's baptism, to which the believer's baptism in trials corresponds. The elect after their trials (especially those arising from the beast) shall be taken up before the vials of wrath be poured on the beast and his kingdom. So Noah and his family were taken out of the doomed world before the deluge; Lot was taken out of Sodom before its destruction; the Christians escaped by a special interposition of Providence to Pella before the destruction of Jerusalem. As the pillar of *cloud* and *fire* interposed between Israel and the Egyptian foe, so that Israel was safely landed on the opposite shore before the Egyptians were destroyed; so the Lord, coming with *clouds* and in flaming *fire*, shall first catch up His elect people "in the clouds to meet Him in the air," and then shall with fire destroy the enemy. The Lamb leads the song in honor of the Father amidst the great congregation. This is the "new song" mentioned in Revelation 14:3. The singing victors are the 144,000 of Israel, "the first-fruits," and the general "harvest" of the Gentiles.

servant of God — (¹⁹¹⁶Exodus 14:31 Numbers 12:7 Joshua 22:5). The Lamb is more: He is the SON.

Great and marvellous are thy works, etc. — part of Moses' last song (Deuteronomy 32:3,4). The vindication of the justice of God that so He may be glorified is the grand end of God's dealings. Hence His servants again and again dwell upon this in their praises (Revelation 16:7 19:2 Proverbs 16:4 Jeremiah 10:10 Daniel 4:37). Especially at the judgment (Psalm 50:1-6 145:17).

saints — There is no manuscript authority for this. A, B, *Coptic*, and CYPRIAN read, "of the NATIONS." C reads "of the ages," and so *Vulgate* and *Syriac*. The point at issue in the Lord's controversy with the earth is, whether He, or Satan's minion, the beast, is "the King of the nations"; here at the eve of the judgments descending on the kingdom of the beast, the transfigured saints hail Him as "the King of the nations" (Ezekiel 21:27).

4. Who shall not — *Greek*, "Who is there but must fear Thee?" Compare Moses' song, (¹⁹¹⁴Exodus 15:14-16, on the fear which God's judgments strike into the foe.

thee — so *Syriac*. But A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and CYPRIAN reject "thee."

all nations shall come — alluding to Psalm 22:27-31; compare Isaiah 66:23 Jeremiah 16:19. The conversion of *all nations*, therefore, shall be when Christ shall come, and not till then; and the first moving. cause will be Christ's *manifested judgments* preparing all hearts for receiving Christ's mercy. He shall effect by His presence what we have in vain tried to effect in His absence. The present preaching of the Gospel is gathering out the elect remnant; meanwhile "the mystery of iniquity" is at work, and will at last come to its crisis; then shall judgment descend on the apostates at the *harvest-end of this age* (Greek, ^{<139>}Matthew 13:39,40) when the tares shall be cleared out of the earth, which thenceforward becomes Messiah's kingdom. The confederacy of 'the apostates against Christ becomes, when overthrown with fearful judgments, the very means in God's overruling providence of preparing the nations not joined in the Antichristian league to submit themselves to Him.

judgments — Greek, "righteousnesses."

are — literally, "were": the prophetic past for the immediate future.

5. So ^{<118>}Revelation 11:19; compare ^{<167>}Revelation 16:17. "The tabernacle of the testimony" appropriately here comes to view, where God's faithfulness in avenging His people with judgments on their foes is about to be set forth. We need to get a glimpse within the Holy place to "understand" the secret spring and the end of God's righteous dealings.

behold — omitted by A, B, C, Syriac, and ANDREAS. It is supported only by *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and PRIMASIUS, but no manuscript.

6. **having** — So B reads. But A and C, read "who have": not that they had them yet (compare Revelation 15:7), but they are by anticipation described according to their office.

linen — So B reads. But A, C, and *Vulgate*, "a stone." On the principle that the harder reading is the one least likely to be an interpolation, we should read, "a stone pure ('and' is omitted in A, B, C, and ANDREAS), brilliant" (so the *Greek*): probably the diamond. With *English Version*, compare ^{<411>}Acts 1:10 10:30.

golden girdles — resembling the Lord in this respect (^{<118>}Revelation 1:13).

7. one of the four beasts — *Greek*, “living creatures.” The presentation of the vials to the angels by one of the living creatures implies the ministry of the Church as the medium for manifesting to angels the glories of redemption (~~4080~~ Ephesians 3:10).

vials — “bowls”; a broad shallow cup or bowl. The breadth of the vials in their upper part would tend to cause their contents to pour out *all at once*, implying the overwhelming suddenness of the woes.

full of ... wrath — How sweetly do the *vials full of odors*, that is, the incense-perfumed prayers of the saints, contrast with these!

8. temple ... filled — (Isaiah 6:4); compare ~~4088~~ Exodus 40:34 ~~4454~~ 2 Chronicles 5:14, as to the earthly temple, of which this is the antitype.

the glory of God and ... power — then fully manifested.

no man was able to enter ... the temple — because of God’s presence in His manifested glory and power during the execution of these judgments.

CHAPTER 16

REVELATION 16:1-21.

THE SEVEN VIALS AND THE CONSEQUENT PLAGUES.

The trumpets shook the world kingdoms in a longer process; the vials destroy with a swift and sudden overthrow the kingdom of “the beast” in particular who had invested himself with the world kingdom. The Hebrews thought the Egyptian plagues to have been inflicted with but an interval of a month between them severally [BENGEL, referring to SEDER OLAM]. As Moses took ashes from an earthly common furnace, so angels, as priestly ministers in the heavenly temple, take holy fire in sacred vials or bowls, from the heavenly altar to pour down (compare Revelation 8:5). The same heavenly altar which would have kindled the sweet incense of prayer bringing down blessing upon earth, by man’s sin kindles the fiery descending curse. Just as the river Nile, which ordinarily is the source of Egypt’s fertility, became blood and a curse through Egypt’s sin.

1. a great voice — namely, God’s. These seven vials (the detailed expansion of *the vintage*, ¹⁶⁴⁸Revelation 14:18-20) being called “the last,” must belong to the period just when the term of the beast’s power has expired (whence reference is made in them all to the worshippers of the beast as the objects of the judgments), close to the end or coming of the Son of man. The first four are distinguished from the last three, just as in the case of the seven seals and the seven trumpets. The first four are more general, affecting the earth, the sea, springs, and the sun, not merely a portion of these natural bodies, as in the case of the trumpets, but the whole of them; the last three are more particular, affecting the throne of the beast, the Euphrates, and the grand consummation. Some of these particular judgments are set forth in detail in the seventeenth through twentieth chapters.

out of the temple — B and Syriac omit. But A, C, *Vulgate*, and ANDREAS support the words.

the vials — so *Syriac* and *Coptic*. But A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and ANDREAS read, “the *seven* vials.”

upon — *Greek*, “into.”

2. went — *Greek*, “went away.”

poured out — So the angel cast fire into the earth previous to the series of trumpets (Revelation 8:5).

upon — so *Coptic*. But A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, “into.”

noisome — literally, “evil” (compare ^{<1827>}Deuteronomy 28:27,35). The very same *Greek* word is used in the *Septuagint* as here, *Greek*, “*helkos*.” The reason why the sixth Egyptian plague is the *first* here is because it was directed against the Egyptian magicians, Jannes and Jambres, so that they could not stand before Moses; and so here the plague is sent upon those who in the beast worship had practiced sorcery. As they submitted to the mark of the beast, so they must bear the mark of the avenging God. Contrast Revelation 7:3 Ezekiel 9:4,6.

grievous — distressing to the sufferers.

sore upon the men — antitype to the sixth Egyptian plague.

which had the mark of the beast — Therefore this first vial is subsequent to the period of the beast’s rule.

3. angel — So B and ANDREAS. But A, C, and *Vulgate* omit it.

upon — *Greek*, “into.”

became as ... blood — answering to another Egyptian plague.

of a dead man — putrefying.

living soul — So B and ANDREAS. But A, C, and *Syriac*, “soul of life” (compare ^{<1828>}Genesis 1:30 7:21,22).

in the sea — So B and ANDREAS. But A, C, and *Syriac* read, “(as respects) the things in the sea.”

4. (^{<1829>}Exodus 7:20.)

angel — so *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS. But A, B, C, and *Vulgate* omit it.

5. angel of the waters — that is, presiding over the waters.

O Lord — omitted by A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS.

and shalt be — A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and ANDREAS for this clause read, “(which art and wast) *holy*.” The Lord is now no longer He that *shall* come, for He *is come* in vengeance and therefore the third of the three clauses found in Revelation 1:4,8 4:8 is here and in ~~6117~~ Revelation 11:17 omitted.

judged thus — literally, “these things.” “Thou didst inflict this judgment.”

6. (~~6118~~ Revelation 11:18, end; Genesis 9:6 Isaiah 49:26.) An anticipation of ~~6180~~ Revelation 18:20,24; compare ~~6135~~ Revelation 13:15.

For — A, B, C, and ANDREAS omit.

7. another out of — omitted in A, C, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*. Translate then, “I heard the altar [personified] saying.” On it the prayers of saints are presented before God: beneath it are the souls of the martyrs crying for vengeance on the foes of God.

8. angel — so *Coptic* and ANDREAS. But A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* omit it.

upon — not as in Revelation 16:2,3, “into.”

sun — Whereas by the fourth trumpet the sun is darkened (~~6182~~ Revelation 8:12) in a third part, here by the fourth vial the sun’s bright scorching power is intensified.

power was given unto him — rather, “unto *it*,” the sun.

men — *Greek*, “the men,” namely, those who had the mark of the beast (Revelation 16:2).

9. men — *Greek*, “*the men*.”

repented not to give him glory — (𐤀𐤎𐤏𐤓 Revelation 9:20). Affliction, if it does not melt, hardens the sinner. Compare the better result on others, 𐤀𐤎𐤏𐤓 Revelation 11:13 14:7 15:4.

10. angel — omitted by A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac*. But *Coptic* and *ANDREAS* support it.

seat — *Greek*, “*throne of the beast*”: set up in arrogant mimicry of God’s throne; the dragon gave his throne to the beast (Revelation 13:2).

darkness — parallel to the Egyptian plague of darkness, Pharaoh being the type of Antichrist (compare *Notes*, see on Revelation 15:2,3; compare the fifth trumpet, Revelation 9:2).

gnawed their tongues for pain — *Greek*, “*owing to the pain*” occasioned by the previous plagues, rendered more appalling by the darkness. Or, as “gnashing of teeth” is one of the accompaniments of hell, so this “gnawing of their tongues” is through rage at the baffling of their hopes and the overthrow of their kingdom. They meditate revenge and are unable to effect it; hence their frenzy [GROTIUS]. Those in anguish, mental and bodily, bite their lips and tongues.

11. sores — This shows that each fresh plague was accompanied with the continuance of the preceding plagues: there was an accumulation, not a mere succession, of plagues.

repented not — (Compare Revelation 16:9).

12. angel — so *Coptic* and *ANDREAS*. A, B, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* omit.

kings of the east — *Greek*, “the kings who are from the rising of the sun.” Reference to *the Euphrates* similarly occurs in the sixth trumpet. The drying up of the *Euphrates*, I think, is to be taken figuratively, as *Babylon* itself, which is situated on it, is undoubtedly so, Revelation 17:5. The waters of the *Euphrates* (compare Isaiah 8:7,8) are spiritual *Babylon*’s, that is, the apostate Church’s (of which Rome is the chief, though not exclusive representative) spiritual and temporal powers. The drying up of the waters of *Babylon* expresses the same thing as the ten kings stripping, eating, and burning the whore. The phrase, “way may be prepared for,” is that applied to *the Lord’s coming* (Isaiah 40:3 Matthew 3:3 𐤀𐤎𐤏𐤓 Luke 1:76).

He shall come *from the East* (⁴⁸⁰⁷Matthew 24:27 Ezekiel 43:2, “the glory of the God of Israel came *from the way of the East*”): not alone, for His elect transfigured saints of Israel and the Gentiles shall accompany Him, who are “*kings and priests unto God*” (Revelation 1:6). As the Antichristian ten *kings* accompany the beast, so the saints accompany as *kings* the *King of kings* to the last decisive conflict. DE BURGH and others take it of *the Jews*, who also were designed to be *a kingdom of priests to God* on earth. They shall, doubtless, become priest-kings in the flesh to the nations in the flesh at His coming. Abraham from the East (if Isaiah 41:2,8,9, refers to him, and not Cyrus) conquering the Chaldean kings is a type of Israel’s victorious restoration to the priest-kingdom. Israel’s exodus after the last Egyptian plagues typifies Israel’s restoration after the spiritual Babylon, the apostate Church, has been smitten. Israel’s promotion to the priest-kingdom after Pharaoh’s downfall, and at the Lord’s descent at Sinai to establish the theocracy, typifies the restored kingdom of Israel at the Lord’s more glorious descent, when Antichrist shall be destroyed utterly. Thus, besides the transfigured saints, Israel secondarily may be meant by “the kings from the East” who shall accompany the “King of kings” returning “from the way of the East” to reign over His ancient people. As to the *drying up* again of the *waters* opposing His people’s assuming the kingdom, compare Isaiah 10:26 11:11,15 Zechariah 10:9-11. The name Israel (⁴⁸²⁸Genesis 32:28) implies *a prince with God*. Compare Micah 4:8 as to the return of the kingdom to Jerusalem. DURHAM, several centuries ago, interpreted the drying up of the Euphrates to mean the wasting away of the Turkish power, which has heretofore held Palestine, and so the way being prepared for Israel’s restoration. But as *Babylon* refers to the apostate Church, not to Mohammedanism, the drying up of the Euphrates (answering to Cyrus’ overthrow of literal Babylon by marching into it through the dry channel of the Euphrates) must answer to the draining off of the apostate Church’s resources, the Roman and Greek corrupt Church having been heretofore one of the greatest barriers by its idolatries and persecutions in the way of Israel’s restoration and conversion. The *kings of the earth* who are earthly (⁴⁸³⁴Revelation 16:14), stand in contrast to the *kings from the East* who are heavenly.

13. unclean spirits like frogs — the antitype to the plague of frogs sent on Egypt. The presence of the “unclean spirit” in the land (Palestine) is

foretold, Zechariah 13:2, in connection with idolatrous *prophets*. Beginning with infidelity as to Jesus Christ's coming in the flesh, men shall end in the grossest idolatry of the beast, the incarnation of all that is self-deifying and God-opposed in the world powers of all ages; having rejected Him that came in the Father's name, they shall worship one that comes in his own, though really the devil's representative; as frogs croak by night in marshes and quagmires, so these unclean spirits in the darkness of error teach lies amidst the mire of filthy lusts. They talk of *liberty*, but it is not Gospel liberty, but license for lust. There being *three*, as also *seven*, in the description of the last and worst state of the Jewish nation, implies a parody of the two divine numbers, *three* of the Trinity, and *seven* of the Holy Spirit (Revelation 1:4). Some observe that *three frogs* were the original arms of France, a country which has been the center of infidelity, socialism, and false spiritualism. A and B read, "*as it were* frogs," instead of "*like* frogs," which is not supported by manuscripts. The unclean spirit out of the mouth of *the dragon* symbolizes the proud infidelity which opposes God and Christ. That out of the *beast's* mouth is the spirit of the world, which in the politics of men, whether lawless democracy or despotism, sets man above God. That out of the mouth of the *false prophet* is lying spiritualism and religious delusion, which shall take the place of the harlot when she shall have been destroyed.

the dragon — Satan, who *gives his power and throne* (Revelation 13:2) *to the beast*.

false prophet — distinct from the harlot, the apostate Church (of which Rome is the chief, though not sole, representative), Revelation 17:1-3,16; and identical with *the second beast*, [Ⓜ]Revelation 13:11-15, as appears by comparing [Ⓜ]Revelation 19:20 with [Ⓜ]Revelation 13:13; ultimately consigned to the lake of fire with the first beast; as is also the dragon a little later ([Ⓜ]Revelation 20:10). The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, "the mystery of iniquity," form a blasphemous Antitrinity, the counterfeit of "the mystery of godliness" God manifests in Christ, witnessed to by the Spirit. The dragon acts the part of God the Father, assigning his authority to his representative the beast, as the Father assigns His to the Son. They are accordingly jointly worshipped; compare as to the Father and Son, [Ⓜ]John 5:23; as the ten-horned beast has its ten horns crowned with *diadems* (Greek, Revelation 13:1), so Christ has on His head

many diadems. While the false prophet, like the Holy Ghost, speaks not of himself, but tells all men to worship the beast, and confirms his testimony to the beast by *miracles*, as the Holy Ghost attested similarly to Christ's divine mission.

14. devils — *Greek*, “demons.”

working miracles — *Greek*, “signs.”

go forth unto — or “for,” that is, to tempt them to the battle with Christ.

the kings of the earth and, etc. — A, B, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS omit “of the earth and,” which clause is not in any manuscript. Translate, “kings of the whole habitable world,” who are “of this world,” in contrast to “the kings of (from) the East” (the sun-rising), ^{<662>}Revelation 16:12, namely, the saints to whom Christ *has appointed a kingdom*, and who are “children of light.” God, in permitting Satan's *miracles*, as in the case of the Egyptian magicians who were His instruments in hardening Pharaoh's heart, gives the reprobate up to judicial delusion preparatory to their destruction. As Aaron's rod was changed into a serpent, so were those of the Egyptian magicians. Aaron turned the water into blood; so did the magicians. Aaron brought up frogs; so did the magicians. With the *frogs* their power ceased. So this, or whatever is antitypical to it, will be the last effort of the dragon, beast, and false prophet.

battle — *Greek*, “war”; the final conflict for the kingship of the world described in ^{<667>}Revelation 19:17-21.

15. The gathering of the world kings with the beast against the Lamb is the signal for Christ's coming; therefore He here gives the charge to be watching for His coming and clothed in the garments of justification and sanctification, so as to be accepted.

thief — (^{<1245>}Matthew 24:43 ^{<682>}2 Peter 3:10).

they — saints and angels.

shame — literally, “unseemliness” (*Greek*, “*aschemosunee*”): *Greek*, 1 Corinthians 13:5: a different word from the *Greek* in ^{<6185>}Revelation 3:18 (*Greek*, “*aischunee*”).

16. he — rather, “they (the three unclean spirits) gathered them together.” If *English Version* be retained, “He” will refer to *God* who gives them over to the delusion of the three unclean spirits; or else *the sixth angel* (~~and~~ Revelation 16:12).

Armageddon — *Hebrew*, “*Har*,” a mountain, and “*Megiddo*” in Manasseh in Galilee, the scene of the overthrow of the Canaanite kings by God’s miraculous interposition under Deborah and Barak; the same as the great plain of Esdraelon. Josiah, too, as the ally of Babylon, was defeated and slain at Megiddo; and the mourning of the Jews at the time just before God shall interpose for them against all the nations confederate against Jerusalem, is compared to the mourning for Josiah at Megiddo. *Megiddo* comes from a root, *gadad*, “cut off,” and means *slaughter*. Compare Joel 3:2,12,14, where “the valley of Jehoshaphat” (meaning in *Hebrew*, “judgment of God”) is mentioned as the scene of God’s final vengeance on the God-opposing foe. Probably some great plain, antitypical to the valleys of Megiddo and Jehoshaphat, will be the scene.

17. angel — so ANDREAS. But A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* omit it.

into — so ANDREAS (*Greek*, “*eis*”). But A and B, “upon” (*Greek*, “*epi*”).

great — so B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS. But A omits.

of heaven — so B and ANDREAS But A, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* omit.

It is done — “It is come to pass.” God’s voice as to the final consummation, as Jesus’ voice on the cross when the work of expiation was completed, “It is finished.”

18. voice ... thunders ... lightnings — A has the order, “lightnings ... voices ... thunders.” This is the same close as that of the seven seals and the seven thunders; but with the difference that they do not merely form the conclusion, but introduce the consequence, of the last vial, namely, the utter destruction of Babylon and then of the Antichristian armies.

earthquake — which is often preceded by a lurid state of air, such as would result from the vial poured upon it.

men were — so B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS. But A and *Coptic* read, “A man was.”

so mighty — *Greek*, “such.”

19. the great city — the capital and seat of the apostate Church, spiritual Babylon (of which Rome is the representative, if one literal city be meant). The city in Revelation 11:8 (see on Revelation 11:8), is probably distinct, namely, Jerusalem under Antichrist (*the beast*, who is distinct from *the harlot* or apostate Church). In ^{¶1113}Revelation 11:13 only a *tenth* of Jerusalem falls whereas here the city (Babylon) “became (*Greek*) into three parts” by the earthquake.

cities of the nations — other great cities in league with spiritual Babylon.

great ... came in remembrance — *Greek*, “Babylon the great was remembered” (Revelation 18:5). It is now that the last call to escape from Babylon is given to God’s people in her (Revelation 18:4).

fierceness — the *boiling over* outburst of His wrath (*Greek*, “*thumou orgees*”), compare *Note*, see on ^{¶1410}Revelation 14:10.

20. Plainly parallel to ^{¶1614}Revelation 6:14-17, and by anticipation descriptive of the last judgment.

the mountains — rather as *Greek*, “there were found no mountains.”

21. fell — *Greek*, “descends.”

upon men — *Greek*, “*the men*.”

and men blasphemed God — not those struck who died, but the rest. Unlike the result in the case of Jerusalem (^{¶1113}Revelation 11:13), where “the remnant ... affrighted ... gave glory to the God of heaven.”

was — *Greek*, “is.”

CHAPTER 17

REVELATION 17:1-18.

THE HARLOT BABYLON'S GAUD: THE BEAST ON WHICH SHE RIDES, HAVING SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS, SHALL BE THE INSTRUMENT OF JUDGMENT ON HER.

As ¹⁶¹²Revelation 16:12 stated generally the vial judgment about to be poured on *the harlot*, Babylon's power, as the seventeenth and eighteen chapters give the same in detail, so the nineteenth chapter gives in detail the judgment on the *beast* and the *false prophet*, summarily alluded to in ¹⁶¹³Revelation 16:13-15, in connection with the Lord's *coming*.

1. unto me — A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* omit.

many — So A. But B, "*the many waters*" (Jeremiah 51:13); ¹⁶¹⁵Revelation 17:15, below, explains the sense. The whore is the apostate Church, just as "the woman" (Revelation 12:1-6) is *the Church while faithful*. Satan having failed by violence, tries too successfully to seduce her by the allurements of the world; unlike her Lord, she was overcome by this temptation; hence she is seen *sitting on the scarlet-colored beast*, no longer the wife, but the harlot; no longer Jerusalem, but spiritually Sodom (Revelation 11:8).

2. drunk with — *Greek*, "owing to." It cannot be pagan Rome, but papal Rome, if a particular seat of error be meant, but I incline to think that the judgment (Revelation 18:2) and the spiritual fornication (Revelation 18:3), though finding their culmination in Rome, are not restricted to it, but comprise the whole apostate Church, Roman, Greek, and even Protestant, so far as it has been seduced from its "first love" (Revelation 2:4) to Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, and given its affections to worldly pomps and idols. The *woman* (Revelation 12:1) is the congregation of God in its purity under the Old and New Testament, and appears again as the Bride of the Lamb, the transfigured Church prepared for the marriage feast. The woman, the invisible Church, is latent in the apostate Church, and is the Church militant; the Bride is the Church triumphant.

3. the wilderness — Contrast her in Revelation 12:6,14, having a *place in the wilderness-world*, but not a home; a sojourner here, looking for the city to come. Now, on the contrary, she is contented to have her portion in this moral wilderness.

upon a scarlet ... beast — The same as in Revelation 13:1, who there is described as here, “having seven heads and ten horns (therein betraying that he is representative of the dragon, Revelation 12:3), and upon his heads names (so the oldest manuscripts read) of blasphemy”; compare also Revelation 17:12-14, below, with Revelation 19:19,20, and Revelation 17:13,14,16. Rome, resting on the world power and ruling it by the claim of supremacy, is the chief, though not the exclusive, representative of this symbol. As the dragon is fiery-red, so the beast is blood-red in color; implying its *blood-guiltiness*, and also deep-dyed sin. The *scarlet* is also the symbol of kingly authority.

full — all over; not merely “on his heads,” as in Revelation 13:1, for its opposition to God is now about to develop itself in all its intensity. Under the harlot’s superintendence, the world power puts forth blasphemous pretensions worse than in pagan days. So the Pope is placed by the cardinals *in God’s temple on the altar to sit there*, and the cardinals *kiss the feet* of the Pope. This ceremony is called in Romish writers “the adoration.” [*Historie de Clerge*, Amsterd., 1716; and LETTENBURGH’S *Notitia Curiae Romanae*, 1683, p. 125; HEIDEGGER, *Myst. Bab.*, 1, 511, 514, 537]; a papal coin [*Numismata Pontificum*, Paris, 1679, p. 5] has the blasphemous legend, “*Quem creant, adorant.*” *Kneeling* and *kissing* are the worship meant by John’s word nine times used in respect to the rival of God (Greek, “*proskunein*”). *Abomination*, too, is the scriptural term for an idol, or any creature worshipped with the homage due to the Creator. Still, there is some check on the God-opposed world power while ridden by the harlot; the consummated Antichrist will be when, having destroyed her, the beast shall be revealed as the concentration and incarnation of all the self-deifying God-opposed principles which have appeared in various forms and degrees heretofore. “The Church has gained outward recognition by leaning on the world power which in its turn uses the Church for its own objects; such is the picture here of Christendom ripe for judgment” [AUBERLEN]. The seven heads in the view of many are the seven successive forms of government of Rome: kings, consuls, dictators,

decemvirs, military tribunes, emperors, the German emperors [WORDSWORTH], of whom Napoleon is the successor (⁶⁶⁷¹Revelation 17:11). But see the view given, see on Revelation 17:9,10, which I prefer. The crowns formerly on the ten horns (Revelation 13:1) have now disappeared, perhaps an indication that the ten kingdoms into which the Germanic-Slavonic world [*the old Roman empire*, including the East as well as the West, the two legs of the image with five toes on each, that is, ten in all] is to be divided, will lose their monarchical form in the end [AUBERLEN]; but see ⁶⁶⁷²Revelation 17:12, which seems to imply crowned *kings*.

4. The color scarlet, it is remarkable, is that reserved for popes and cardinals. Paul II made it penal for anyone but cardinals to wear hats of scarlet; compare *Roman Ceremonial* [3.5.5]. This book was compiled several centuries ago by MARCELLUS, a Romish archbishop, and dedicated to Leo X. In it are enumerated five different articles of dress of *scarlet* color. A vest is mentioned studded with *pearls*. The Pope's miter is of *gold* and *precious stones*. These are the very characteristics outwardly which Revelation thrice assigns to the harlot or Babylon. So Joachim an abbot from Calabria, about A.D. 1200, when asked by Richard of England, who had summoned him to Palestine, concerning Antichrist, replied that "he was born long ago at Rome, and is now exalting himself above all that is called God." ROGER HOVEDEN [*Annals*, 1.2], and elsewhere, wrote, "The harlot arrayed in gold is the Church of Rome." Whenever and wherever (not in Rome alone) the Church, instead of being "clothed (as at first, Revelation 12:1) with the sun" of heaven, is arrayed in earthly meretricious gauds, compromising the truth of God through fear, or flattery, of the world's power, science, or wealth, she becomes the harlot seated on the beast, and doomed in righteous retribution to be judged by the beast (⁶⁶⁷³Revelation 17:16). Soon, like Rome, and like the Jews of Christ's and the apostles' time leagued with the heathen Rome, she will then become the persecutor of the saints (Revelation 17:6). Instead of drinking her Lord's "cup" of suffering, she has "a cup full of abominations and filthinesses." Rome, in her medals, represents herself holding a cup with the self-condemning inscription, "*Sedet super universum*." Meanwhile the world power gives up its hostility and accepts Christianity externally; the beast gives up its God-opposed character, the woman gives up her divine

one. They meet halfway by mutual concessions; Christianity becomes worldly, the world becomes Christianized. The gainer is the world; the loser is the Church. The beast for a time receives a *deadly wound* (Revelation 13:3), but is not really transfigured; he will return worse than ever (⁶⁶⁷¹Revelation 17:11-14). The Lord alone by His coming can make the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. The “purple” is the badge of empire; even as in mockery it was put on our Lord.

decked — literally, “gilded.”

stones — *Greek*, “stone.”

filthiness — A, B, and ANDREAS read, “the filthy (impure) things.”

5. upon ... forehead ... name — as harlots usually had. What a contrast to “HOLINESS TO THE LORD,” inscribed on the miter *on* the high priest’s forehead!

mystery — implying a spiritual fact heretofore hidden, and incapable of discovery by mere reason, but now revealed. As the union of Christ and the Church is a “great mystery” (a spiritual truth of momentous interest, once hidden, now revealed, ⁶⁶⁷²Ephesians 5:31,32), so the Church conforming to the world and thereby becoming a harlot is a counter “mystery” (or spiritual truth, symbolically now revealed). As iniquity in the harlot is a leaven working in “*mystery*,” and therefore called “the *mystery of iniquity*,” so when she is destroyed, the iniquity heretofore working (comparatively) latently in her, shall be *revealed in the man of iniquity*, the open embodiment of all previous evil. Contrast the “mystery of God” and “godliness,” Revelation 10:7 ⁶⁶⁷³1 Timothy 3:16. It was Rome that crucified Christ; that destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the Jews; that persecuted the early Christians in pagan times, and Protestant Christians in papal times; and probably shall be again restored to its pristine grandeur, such as it had under the Caesars, just before the burning of the harlot and of itself with her. So HIPPOLYTUS [*On Antichrist*] (who lived in the second century), thought. Popery cannot be at one and the same time the “*mystery of iniquity*,” and the *manifested* or *revealed* Antichrist. Probably it will compromise for political power (Revelation 17:3) the portion of Christianity still in its creed, and thus shall prepare the way for

Antichrist's manifestation. The name Babylon, which in the image, Daniel 2:32,38, is given to the *head*, is here given to the harlot, which marks her as being connected with the fourth kingdom, Rome, the last part of the image. Benedict XIII, in his indiction for a jubilee, A.D. 1725, called Rome "the mother of all believers, and the mistress of all churches" (harlots like herself). The correspondence of syllables and accents in *Greek* is striking; "*He porne kai to therion; He numphe kai to arnion.*" "The whore and the beast; the Bride and the Lamb."

of harlots — *Greek*, "of the harlots and of the abominations." Not merely Rome, but Christendom as a whole, even as formerly Israel as a whole, has become a harlot. The invisible Church of true believers is hidden and dispersed in the visible Church. The boundary lines which separate harlot and woman are not denominational nor drawn externally, but can only be spiritually discerned. If Rome were the *only* seat of Babylon, much of the spiritual profit of Revelation would be lost to us; but the harlot "sitteth upon many waters" (Revelation 17:1), and "ALL nations have drunk of the wine of her fornication" (Revelation 17:2 Revelation 18:3; "the earth," Revelation 19:2). External extensiveness over the whole world and internal conformity to the world — worldliness in extent and contents — is symbolized by the name of the world city, "Babylon." As the sun shines on all the earth, thus the woman clothed with the sun is to let her light penetrate to the uttermost parts of the earth. But she, in externally Christianizing the world, permits herself to be seduced by the world; thus her universality or catholicity is not that of the *Jerusalem* which we look for ("the MOTHER of us all," Revelation 21:2 Isaiah 2:2-4 ~~and~~ Galatians 4:26), but that of *Babylon*, the world-wide but harlot city! (As Babylon was destroyed, and the Jews restored to Jerusalem by Cyrus, so our Cyrus — a Persian name meaning the *sun* — the Sun of righteousness, shall bring Israel, literal and spiritual, to the holy Jerusalem at His coming. Babylon and Jerusalem are the two opposite poles of the spiritual world). Still, the Romish Church is not only accidentally and as a matter of fact, but in virtue of its very PRINCIPLE, a harlot, the metropolis of whoredom, "the mother of harlots"; whereas the evangelical Protestant Church is, according to her principle and fundamental creed, a chaste woman; the Reformation was a protest of the woman against the harlot. The spirit of the heathen world kingdom Rome had, before the Reformation, changed the

Church in the West into a *Church-State*, Rome; and in the East, into a *State-Church*, fettered by the world power, having its center in Byzantium; the Roman and Greek churches have thus fallen from the invisible spiritual essence of the Gospel into the elements of the world [AUBERLEN]. Compare with the “woman” called “Babylon” here, the woman named “wickedness,” or “lawlessness,” “iniquity” (Zechariah 5:7,8,11), carried to *Babylon*: compare “the mystery of iniquity” and “the man of sin,” “that *wicked one*,” literally, “*the lawless one*” (2 Thessalonians 2:7,8; also ⁴⁸¹²Matthew 24:12).

6. **martyrs** — witnesses.

I wondered with great admiration — As the *Greek* is the same in the verb and the noun, translate the latter “wonder.” John certainly did not *admire* her in the modern English sense. Elsewhere (Revelation 17:8 13:3), all the earthly-minded (“they that dwell on the earth”) *wonder* in admiration of the beast. Here only is John’s *wonder* called forth; not the *beast*, but the woman sunken into the harlot, the Church become a world-loving apostate, moves his sorrowful astonishment at so awful a change. That the world should be beastly is natural, but that the faithful bride should become the whore is monstrous, and excites the same amazement in him as the same awful change in Israel excited in Isaiah and Jeremiah. “Horrible thing” in them answers to “abominations” here. “*Corruptio optimi pessima*”; when the Church falls, she sinks lower than the godless world, in proportion as her right place is higher than the world. It is striking that in Revelation 17:3, “woman” has not the article, “*the woman*,” as if she had been before mentioned: for though identical in one sense with the *woman*, Revelation 12:1-6, in another sense she is not. The elect are never perverted into apostates, and still remain as *the true woman* invisibly contained in the *harlot*; yet Christendom regarded as *the woman* has apostatized from its first *faith*.

8. *beast ... was, and is not* — (Compare ⁴⁵⁷¹Revelation 17:11). The time when the beast “is not” is the time during which it has “the deadly wound”; the time of *the seventh head* becoming Christian externally, when its beast-like character was put into suspension temporarily. The *healing of its wound* answers to its *ascending out of the bottomless pit*. The beast, or Antichristian world power, returns worse than ever, with satanic

powers from hell (Revelation 11:7), not merely from *the sea* of convulsed nations (Revelation 13:1). Christian civilization gives the beast only a temporary wound, whence *the deadly wound* is always mentioned in connection with its being *healed up* the non-existence of the beast in connection with its reappearance; and Daniel does not even notice any change in the world power effected by Christianity. We are endangered on one side by the spurious Christianity of the harlot, on the other by the open Antichristianity of the beast; the third class is Christ's little flock."

go — So B, *Vulgate*, and ANDREAS read the future tense. But A and IRENAEUS, "goeth."

into perdition — The continuance of this revived seventh (that is, the eighth) head is short: it is therefore called "the son of perdition," who is essentially doomed to it almost immediately after his appearance.

names were — so *Vulgate* and ANDREAS. But A, B, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read the singular, "name is."

written in — *Greek*, "upon."

which — rather, "when they behold the beast *that* it was," etc. So *Vulgate*.

was, and is not, and yet is — A, B, and ANDREAS read, "and shall come" (literally, "be present," namely, again: *Greek*, "*kai paresta*"). The *Hebrew*, "*tetragrammaton*," or sacred four letters in *Jehovah*, "who is, who was, and who is to come," the believer's object of worship, has its contrasted counterpart in the beast "who was, and is not, and shall be present," the object of the earth's worship [BENGEL]. They exult with *wonder* in seeing that the beast which had seemed to have received its death blow from Christianity, *is on the eve of reviving* with greater power than ever on the ruins of that religion which tormented them (~~GEN~~ Revelation 11:10).

9. Compare ~~GEN~~ Revelation 13:18 Daniel 12:10, where similarly spiritual discernment is put forward as needed in order to understand the symbolical prophecy.

seven heads and seven mountains — The connection between *mountains and kings* must be deeper than the mere outward fact to which

incidental allusion is made, that Rome (the then world city) is on seven hills (whence heathen Rome had a national festival called *Septimontium*, the feast of the seven-hilled city [PLUTARCH]; and on the imperial coins, just as here, she is represented as a *woman seated on seven hills*. Coin of Vespasian, described by CAPTAIN SMYTH [*Roman Coins*, p. 310; ACKERMAN, 1, p. 87]). The seven heads can hardly be at once seven *kings* or *kingdoms* (^{<667D>}Revelation 17:10), and seven geographical *mountains*. The true connection is, as the *head* is the prominent part of the body, so the *mountain* is prominent in the land. Like “sea” and “earth” and “waters ... peoples” (^{<667E>}Revelation 17:15), so “mountains” have a symbolical meaning, namely, prominent seats of power. Especially such as are prominent hindrances to the cause of God (Psalm 68:16,17 Isaiah 40:4 41:15 49:11 Ezekiel 35:2); especially Babylon (which geographically was in a *plain*, but spiritually is called a destroying *mountain*, Jeremiah 51:25), in majestic contrast to which stands Mount Zion, “the mountain of the Lord’s house” (Isaiah 2:2), and the heavenly mount; (^{<667F>}Revelation 21:10, “a great and high mountain ... and that great city, the holy Jerusalem.” So in Daniel 2:35, the *stone* becomes a *mountain* — Messiah’s universal kingdom supplanting the previous world kingdoms. As nature shadows forth the great realities of the spiritual world, so seven-hilled Rome is a representative of the seven-headed world power of which the dragon has been, and is the prince. The “seven kings” are hereby distinguished from the “ten kings” (^{<667G>}Revelation 17:12): the former are what the latter are not, “mountains,” great seats of the world power. The seven universal God-opposed monarchies are Egypt (the first world power which came into collision with God’s people,) Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Medo-Persia, Rome, the Germanic-Slavonic empire (the *clay* of the fourth kingdom mixed with its iron in Nebuchadnezzar’s image, a *fifth* material, Daniel 2:33,34,42,43, symbolizing this last head). These seven might seem not to accord with the seven heads in Daniel 7:4-7, *one* head on the first beast (Babylon), *one* on the second (Medo-Persia), *four* on the third (Greece; namely, Egypt, Syria, Thrace with Bithynia, and Greece with Macedon): but Egypt and Greece are in both lists. Syria answers to Assyria (from which the name Syria is abbreviated), and Thrace with Bithynia answers to the Gothic-Germanic-Slavonic hordes which, pouring down on Rome from the North, founded the Germanic-Slavonic empire. *The woman sitting on the seven hills* implies the Old and New Testament Church conforming to,

and resting on, the world power, that is, on all the seven world kingdoms. Abraham and Isaac dissembling as to their wives through fear of the kings of Egypt foreshadowed this. Compare Ezekiel 16:1-63 23:1-49, on Israel's whoredoms with Egypt, Assyria, Babylon; and ⁴⁰²²Matthew 7:24 24:10-12,23-26, on the characteristics of the New Testament Church's harlotry, namely, distrust, suspicion, hatred, treachery, divisions into parties, false doctrine.

10. there are — Translate, “they (the seven heads) are seven kings.”

five ... one — *Greek*, “the five ... the one”; the first five of the seven are *fallen* (a word applicable not to *forms of government passing away*, but to the *fall* of once powerful empires: Egypt, Ezekiel 29:1-30:26; Assyria and Nineveh, Na 3:1-19; Babylon, Revelation 18:2 Jeremiah 50:1-51:64; Medo-Persia, Daniel 8:3-7,20-22 10:13 11:2; Greece, Daniel 11:4). *Rome* was “the one” existing in John's days. “Kings” is the Scripture phrase for *kingdoms*, because these kingdoms are generally represented in character by some one prominent head, as Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, Medo-Persia by Cyrus, Greece by Alexander, etc.

the other is not yet come — not as ALFORD, inaccurately representing AUBERLEN, *the Christian empire beginning with Constantine*; but, the *Germanic-Slavonic empire beginning* and continuing in its beast-like, that is, HEATHEN Antichristian character for only “a short space.” The time when it is said of it, “it is not” (⁴⁶⁷¹Revelation 17:11), is the *time* during which it is “wounded to death,” and has the “deadly wound” (Revelation 13:3). The external Christianization of the migrating hordes from the North which descended on Rome, is the *wound* to the beast answering to the *earth swallowing up the flood* (heathen tribes) sent by the dragon, Satan, to drown the woman, the Church. The emphasis palpably is on “a *short space*,” which therefore comes first in the *Greek*, not on “he must continue,” as if his *continuance for some* [considerable] *time* were implied, as ALFORD wrongly thinks. The time of external Christianization (while the beast's wound continues) has lasted for centuries, ever since Constantine. Rome and the Greek Church have partially healed the wound by image worship.

11. beast that ... is not — his beastly character being kept down by outward Christianization of the state until he starts up to life again as “the

eighth” king, his “wound being healed” (Revelation 13:3), Antichrist manifested in fullest and most intense opposition to God. The “he” is emphatic in the *Greek*. *He*, peculiarly and pre-eminently: answering to “the little horn” with eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things, before whom *three of the ten horns were plucked up by the roots*, and to whom the whole ten “give their power and strength” (⁶⁶⁷Revelation 17:12,13,17). That a *personal* Antichrist will stand at the head of the Antichristian kingdom, is likely from the analogy of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Old Testament Antichrist, “the little horn” in Daniel 8:9-12; also, “the man of sin, son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8), answers here to “goeth into perdition,” and is applied to an individual, namely, Judas, in the only other passage where the phrase occurs (⁶⁶⁷John 17:12). He is essentially a child of destruction, and hence he has but a little time ascended out of the bottomless pit, when he “goes into perdition” (Revelation 17:8,11). “While the Church passes through death of the flesh to glory of the Spirit, the beast passes through the glory of the flesh to death” [AUBERLEN].

is of the seven — rather “springs *out of* the seven.” The eighth is not merely one of the seven restored, but a new power or person proceeding *out of* the seven, and at the same time embodying all the God-opposed features of the previous seven concentrated and consummated; for which reason there are said to be not *eight*, but only *seven* heads, for the eighth is the embodiment of all the seven. In the birth-pangs which prepare the “regeneration” there are *wars, earthquakes, and disturbances* [AUBERLEN], wherein Antichrist takes his rise (“sea,” Revelation 13:1 Mark 13:8 Luke 21:9-11). He does not *fall* like the other seven (⁶⁶⁷Revelation 17:10), but is *destroyed, going to his own perdition*, by the Lord in person.

12. ten kings ... received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings ... with the beast — Hence and from ⁶⁶⁷Revelation 17:14,16, it seems that these ten kings or kingdoms, are to be contemporaries with the beast in its last or eighth form, namely, Antichrist. Compare Daniel 2:34,44, “the stone smote the image upon *his feet*,” that is, upon the *ten* toes, which are, in Daniel 2:41-44, interpreted to be “*kings*.” The ten kingdoms are not, therefore, ten which arose in the overthrow of Rome (heathen), but are to rise out of the last state of the fourth kingdom under the eighth head. I agree with ALFORD that the phrase “*as kings*,” implies

that they reserve their kingly rights in their alliance with the beast, wherein “they give their power and strength unto” him (^{667B}Revelation 17:13). They have the *name* of kings, but not with undivided kingly power [WORDSWORTH]. See AUBERLEN’S not so probable view, see on Revelation 17:3.

one hour — a definite *time* of *short* duration, during which “the devil is come down to the inhabitant of the earth and of the sea, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a *short time*.” Probably the three and a half years (Revelation 11:2,3 13:5). Antichrist is in existence long before the fall of Babylon; but it is only at its fall he obtains the vassalage of the ten kings. He in the first instance imposes on the Jews as the Messiah, coming in his own name; then persecutes those of them who refuse his blasphemous pretensions. Not until the sixth vial, in the latter part of his reign, does he associate the ten kings with him in war with the Lamb, having gained them over by the aid of the spirits of devils working miracles. His connection with Israel appears from his sitting “in the temple of God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4), and as the antitypical “abomination of desolation standing in the Holy place” (Daniel 9:27 12:11 ^{667B}Matthew 24:15), and “in the city Where our Lord was crucified” (Revelation 11:8). It is remarkable that IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 5:25] and CYRIL OF JERUSALEM [RUFINUS, *Historia Monachorum*, 10.37] prophesied that Antichrist would have his seat at Jerusalem and would restore the kingdom of the Jews. JULIAN the apostate, long after, took part with the Jews, and aided in building their temple, herein being Antichrist’s forerunner.

13. one mind — one *sentiment*.

shall give — So *Coptic*. But A, B, and *Syriac*, “give.”

strength — *Greek*, “authority.” They become his dependent allies (^{667A}Revelation 17:14). Thus Antichrist sets up to be *King of kings*, but scarcely has he put forth his claim when the true KING OF KINGS appears and dashes him down in a moment to destruction.

14. These shall ... war with the Lamb — in league with the beast. This is a summary anticipation of ^{667B}Revelation 19:19. This shall not be till *after* they have first executed judgment on the harlot (^{667C}Revelation 17:15,16).

Lord of lords, etc. — anticipating ~~the~~ Revelation 19:16.

are — not in the *Greek*. Therefore translate, “And they that are with Him, called chosen, and faithful (shall overcome them, namely, the beast and his allied kings).” These have been with Christ in heaven unseen, but now appear with Him.

15. (Revelation 17:1 Isaiah 8:7.) An impious parody of Jehovah who “sitteth upon the flood” [ALFORD]. Also, contrast the “many waters” Revelation 19:6, “Alleluia.”

peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues — The “peoples,” etc. here mark the universality of the spiritual fornication of the Church. The “tongues” remind us of the original Babel, the confusion of *tongues*, the beginning of Babylon, and the first commencement of idolatrous apostasy after the flood, as the tower was doubtless dedicated to the deified heavens. Thus, Babylon is the appropriate name of the harlot. The Pope, as the chief representative of the harlot, claims a double supremacy over all *peoples*, typified by the “two swords” according to the interpretation of Boniface VIII in the Bull, “*Unam Sanctam*,” and represented by the two keys: spiritual as the universal bishop, whence he is crowned with the miter; and temporal, whence he is also crowned with the tiara in token of his imperial supremacy. Contrast with the Pope’s *diadems* the “many diadems” of Him who alone has claim to, and shall exercise when He shall come, the twofold dominion (~~the~~ Revelation 19:12).

16. upon the beast — But A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, “*and the beast*.”

shall make her desolate — having first dismounted her from her seat on the beast (Revelation 17:3).

naked — stripped of all her gaud (Revelation 17:4). As Jerusalem used the world power to crucify her Savior, and then was destroyed by that very power, Rome; so the Church, having apostatized to the world, shall have judgment executed on her first by the world power, the beast and his allies; and these afterwards shall have judgment executed on them by Christ Himself in person. So Israel leaning on Egypt, a broken reed, is pierced by it; and then Egypt itself is punished. So Israel’s whoredom with Assyria

and Babylon was punished by the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. So the Church when it goes a-whoring after the word as if *it* were the reality, instead of witnessing against its apostasy from God, is false to its profession. Being no longer a reality itself, but a sham, the Church is rightly judged by that world which for a time had used the Church to further its own ends, while all the while “hating” Christ’s unworldly religion, but which now no longer wants the Church’s aid.

eat her flesh — *Greek* plural, “masses of flesh,” that is, “carnal possessions”; implying the fullness of carnality into which the Church is sunk. The judgment on the harlot is again and again described (Revelation 18:1 19:5); first by an “angel having great power” (Revelation 18:1), then by “another voice from heaven” (Revelation 18:4-20), then by “a mighty angel” (Revelation 18:21-24). Compare Ezekiel 16:37-44, originally said of Israel, but further applicable to the New Testament Church when fallen into spiritual fornication. On the phrase, “eat ... flesh” for prey upon one’s property, and injure the character and person, compare Psalm 14:4 27:2 Jeremiah 10:25 Micah 3:3. The First Napoleon’s Edict published at Rome in 1809, confiscating the papal dominions and joining them to France, and later the severance of large portions of the Pope’s territory from his sway and the union of them to the dominions of the king of Italy, virtually through Louis Napoleon, are a first instalment of the full realization of this prophecy of the whore’s destruction. “Her flesh” seems to point to her temporal dignities and resources, as distinguished from “herself” (*Greek*). How striking a retribution, that having obtained her first temporal dominions, the exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of the LOMBARDS, and the state of Rome, by recognizing the *usurper* Pepin as lawful king of France, she should be stripped of her dominions by another usurper of France, the Napoleonic dynasty!

burn ... with fire — the legal punishment of an abominable fornication.

17. hath put — the prophetic past tense for the future.

fulfill — *Greek*, “do,” or “accomplish.” The *Greek*, “*poiesai*,” is distinct from that which is translated, “fulfilled,” *Greek*, “*telesthesontai*,” below.

his will — *Greek*, “his mind,” or *purpose*; while they think only of doing their own purpose.

to agree — literally, “to do” (or *accomplish*) one mind” or “purpose.” A and *Vulgate* omit this clause, but B supports it.

the words of God — foretelling the rise and downfall of the beast; *Greek*, “*hoi logoi*,” in A, B, and ANDREAS. *English Version* reading is *Greek*, “*ta rhemata*,” which is not well supported. No mere articulate utterances, but the efficient *words* of Him who is *the Word*: *Greek*, “*logos*.”

fulfilled — (Revelation 10:7).

18. reigneth — literally, “*hath kingship* over the kings.” The harlot cannot be a mere *city* literally, but is called so in a spiritual sense (Revelation 11:8). Also the beast cannot represent a spiritual power, but a world power. In this verse the harlot is presented before us ripe for judgment. The eighteenth chapter details that judgment.

CHAPTER 18

REVELATION 18:1-24.

BABYLON'S FALL: GOD'S PEOPLE CALLED OUT OF HER: THE KINGS AND MERCHANTS OF THE EARTH MOURN, WHILE THE SAINTS REJOICE AT HER FALL.

1. And — so *Vulgate* and *ANDREAS*. But A, B, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* omit “And.”

power — *Greek*, “authority.”

lightened — “illuminated.”

with — *Greek*, “owing to.”

2. mightily ... strong — not supported by manuscripts. But A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, “with (literally, ‘in’) a mighty voice.”

is fallen, is fallen — so A, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *ANDREAS*. But B and *Coptic* omit the second “is fallen” (Isaiah 21:9 Jeremiah 51:8). This phrase is here prophetic of her fall, still future, as Revelation 18:4 proves.

devils — *Greek*, “demons.”

the hold — a keep or prison.

3. drunk — Revelation 14:8, from which perhaps “the wine” may have been interpolated. They have *drunk of her fornication*, the consequence of which will be *wrath* to themselves. But A, B, and C read, “(owing to the wrath of her fornication all nations) have *fallen*.” *Vulgate* and most versions read as *English Version*, which may be the right reading though not supported by the oldest manuscripts. Babylon, the whore, is destroyed before the beast slays the two witnesses (Revelation 11:7), and then the beast himself is destroyed.

the wine — so B, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*. But A, C, and *Vulgate* omit.

abundance — literally, “power.”

delicacies — *Greek*, “luxury.” See on ^{501b}1 Timothy 5:11, where the *Greek* verb “wax wanton” is akin to the noun here. Translate, “wanton luxury.” The reference is not to earthly merchandise, but to spiritual wares, indulgences, idolatries, superstitions, worldly compromises, wherewith the harlot, that is, the apostate Church, has made *merchandise* of men. This applies especially to Rome; but the *Greek*, and even in a less degree Protestant churches, are not guiltless. However, the *principle* of evangelical Protestantism is pure, but the *principle* of Rome and the Greek church is not so.

4. Come out of her, my people — quoted from Jeremiah 50:8 51:6,45. Even in the Romish Church God has a people: but they are in great danger; their only safety is in coming out of her at once. So also in every apostate or world-conforming church there are some of God’s invisible and true Church, who, if they would be safe, must come out. Especially at the eve of God’s judgment on apostate Christendom: as Lot was warned to come out of Sodom just before its destruction, and Israel to come from about the tents of Dathan and Abiram. So the first Christians came out of Jerusalem when the apostate Jewish Church was judged. “State and Church are precious gifts of God. But the State being desecrated to a different end from what God designed it, namely. to govern for, and as under, God, becomes beast-like; the Church apostatizing becomes the harlot. The true woman is the kernel: beast and harlot are the shell: whenever the kernel is mature, the shell is thrown away” [AUBERLEN]. “The harlot is not Rome alone (though she is pre-eminently so), but every Church that has not Christ’s mind and spirit. False Christendom, divided into very many sects, is truly Babylon, that is, confusion. However, in all Christendom the true Jesus-congregation, the woman clothed with the sun, lives and is hidden. Corrupt, lifeless Christendom is the harlot, whose great aim is the pleasure of the flesh, and which is governed by the spirit of nature and the world” [HAHN in AUBERLEN]. The first justification of the woman is in her being called out of Babylon the harlot, as the culminating stage of the latter’s sin, when judgment is about to fall: for apostate Christendom, Babylon, is not to be converted, but to be destroyed. Secondly, she has to pass through an ordeal of persecution from the beast, which purifies and prepares her for

the transfiguration glory at Christ's coming (Revelation 20:4 ~~<20>~~ Luke 21:28).

be not partakers — *Greek*, “have no *fellowship* with her sins.”

that ye receive not of her plagues — as Lot's wife, by lingering too near the polluted and doomed city.

5. her sins — as a great heap.

reached — *Greek*, “reached so far as to come into close contact with, and to *cleave* unto.”

6. Addressed to the executioners of God's wrath.

Reward — *Greek*, “repay.”

she rewarded — *English Version* reading adds “you” with none of the oldest manuscripts. But A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* omit it. She had not *rewarded* or *repaid* the world power for some injury which the world power had inflicted on her; but she had *given* the world power that which was its *due*, namely, spiritual delusions, because it did not like to retain God in its knowledge; the unfaithful Church's principle was, “*Populus vult decipi, et decipiat*.” “The people like to be deceived, and let them be deceived.”

double — of sorrow. Contrast with this the *double* of joy which Jerusalem shall receive for her past suffering (Isaiah 61:7 Zechariah 9:12); even as she has received *double* punishment for her sins (Isaiah 40:2).

unto her — So *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and *ANDREAS*. A, B, and C omit it.

in the cup — (Revelation 18:3 Revelation 14:8 17:4).

filled — literally “mixed.”

fill to her double — of the Lord's cup of wrath.

7. How much — that is in proportion as.

lived deliciously — luxuriously: see on Revelation 18:3, where the *Greek* is akin.

sorrow — *Greek*, “mourning,” as for a dead husband.

I sit — so *Vulgate*. But A, B, and C prefix “that.”

I ... am no widow — for the world power is my husband and my supporter.

shall see no sorrow — *Greek*, “mourning.” “I am seated (*this long time*) ... I *am* no widow ... I *shall* see no sorrow,” marks her complete unconcerned security as to the past, present, and future [BENGEL]. I shall never have to mourn as one bereft of her husband. As Babylon was queen of the East, so Rome has been queen of the West, and is called on Imperial coins “the *eternal city*.” So Papal Rome is called by AMMIAN MARCELLIN [15.7]. “Babylon is a former Rome, and Rome a latter Babylon. Rome is a daughter of Babylon, and by her, as by her mother, God has been pleased to subdue the world under one sway” [AUGUSTINE]. As the Jew’s restoration did not take place till Babylon’s fall, so R. KIMCHI on Obadiah, writes, “When Rome (Edom) shall be devastated, there shall be redemption to Israel.” Romish idolatries have been the great stumbling-blocks to the Jews’ acceptance of Christianity.

8. death — on herself, though she thought herself secure even from the death of her husband.

mourning — instead of her feasting.

famine — instead of her *luxurious delicacies* (Revelation 18:3,7).

fire — (See on ⁶⁶⁷⁶ Revelation 17:16). Literal fire may burn the literal city of Rome, which is situated in the midst of volcanic agencies. As the ground was cursed for Adam’s sin, and the earth under Noah was sunk beneath the flood, and Sodom was burnt with fire, so may Rome be. But as the harlot is mystical (the whole faithless Church), the *burning* may be mainly mystical, symbolizing utter destruction and removal. BENGEL is probably right in thinking Rome will once more rise to power. The carnal, faithless, and worldly elements in all churches, Roman, Greek, and Protestant, tend towards one common center, and prepare the way for the last form of the beast, namely, Antichrist. The Pharisees were in the main sound in creed, yet judgment fell on them as on the unsound Sadducees and half-heathenish Samaritans. So faithless and adulterous, carnal, worldly Protestant churches, will not escape for their soundness of creed.

the Lord — so B, C, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS. But A and *Vulgate* omit. “Strong” is the meaning of God’s *Hebrew* name, “EL.”

judgeth — But A, B, and C read the *past tense* (*Greek*, “*krinas*”), “who *hath judged* her”: the prophetic past for the future: the charge in Revelation 18:4 to God’s people to *come out of her* implies that the judgment was not yet actually executed.

9. lived deliciously — *Greek*, “luxuriated.” The faithless Church, instead of reproving, connived at the self-indulgent luxury of the great men of this world, and sanctioned it by her own practice. Contrast the world’s *rejoicing* over the dead bodies of the two witnesses (Ⲅⲓⲡ Revelation 11:10) who had tormented it by their faithfulness, with its *lamentations* over the harlot who had made the way to heaven smooth, and had been found a useful tool in keeping subjects in abject tyranny. Men’s carnal mind relishes a religion like that of the apostate Church, which gives an opiate to conscience, while leaving the sinner license to indulge his lusts.

bewail her — A, B, C, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and CYPRIAN omit “her.”

10. God’s judgments inspire fear even in the worldly, but it is of short duration, for the kings and great men soon attach themselves to the beast in its last and worst shape, as open Antichrist, claiming all that the harlot had claimed in blasphemous pretensions and more, and so making up to them for the loss of the harlot.

mighty — *Rome* in *Greek* means *strength*; though that derivation is doubtful.

11. shall — So. B. But A and C read the present, “weep and mourn.”

merchandise — *Greek*, “cargo”: wares carried in *ships*: ship-lading (compare Ⲅⲓⲡ Revelation 18:17). *Rome* was not a commercial city, and is not likely from her position to be so. The *merchandise* must therefore be spiritual, even as the harlot is not literal, but spiritual. She did not witness against carnal luxury and pleasure-seeking, the source of the *merchants’* gains, but conformed to them (Revelation 18:7). She cared not for the sheep, but for the wool. Professing Christian merchants in her lived as if this world not heaven, were the reality, and were unscrupulous as to the means of getting gain. Compare *Notes*, see on Zechariah 5:4-11, on the

same subject, the judgment on mystical *Babylon's* merchants for unjust gain. All the merchandise here mentioned occurs repeatedly in the *Roman Ceremonial*.

12. (See on Revelation 17:4).

stones ... pearls — *Greek*, “stone ... pearl.”

fine linen — A, B, and C read *Greek*, “*bussinou*” for “*bussou*,” that is, “fine linen manufacture” [ALFORD]. The manufacture for which *Egypt* (the type of the apostate Church, Revelation 11:8) was famed. Contrast “the fine linen” (Ezekiel 16:10) put on Israel, and on the New Testament Church (Revelation 19:8), the Bride, by God (Psalm 132:9).

thyine wood — the *citrus* of the Romans: probably the *cypressus thyoides*, or the *thuia articulata*. “Citron wood” [ALFORD]. A sweet-smelling tree of Cyrene in Lybia, used for incense.

all manner vessels — *Greek*, “every vessel,” or “furniture.”

13. cinnamon — designed by God for better purposes: being an ingredient in the holy anointing oil, and a plant in the garden of the Beloved (Song of Solomon 4:14); but desecrated to vile uses by the adulteress (Proverbs 7:17).

odours — of incense. A, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* prefix “and amomium” (a precious hair ointment made from an Asiatic shrub). *English Version* reading is supported by *Coptic* and *ANDREAS*, but not oldest manuscripts.

ointments — *Greek*, “ointment.”

frankincense — Contrast the true “incense” which God loves (Psalm 141:2 Malachi 1:11).

fine flour — the *similago* of the Latins [ALFORD].

beasts — of burden: cattle.

slaves — *Greek*, “bodies.”

souls of men — (Ezekiel 27:13). Said of *slaves*. Appropriate to the spiritual harlot, apostate Christendom, especially Rome, which has so often *enslaved* both *bodies* and *souls* of men. Though the New Testament

does not directly forbid slavery, which would, in the then state of the world, have incited a slave revolt, it virtually condemns it, as here. Popery has derived its greatest gains from the sale of masses for *the souls of men* after death, and of indulgences purchased from the Papal chancery by rich merchants in various countries, to be retailed at a profit [MOSHEIM, III, 95, 96].

14. Direct address to Babylon.

the fruits that thy soul lusted after — *Greek*, “thy autumn-ripe fruits of the lust (eager desire) of the soul.”

dainty — *Greek*, “fat”: “sumptuous” in food.

goodly — “splendid,” “bright,” in dress and equipage.

departed — supported by none of our manuscripts. But A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, “perished.”

thou shalt — A, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, “*They* (men) *shall* no more find them at all.”

15. of these things — of the things mentioned, ⁶⁶⁸⁰Revelation 18:12,13.

which — “*who*.”

made rich by — *Greek*, “derived riches *from* her.”

stand afar off for the fear — (Compare ⁶⁶⁸⁰Revelation 18:10).

wailing — *Greek*, “mourning.”

16. **And** — so *Vulgate* and ANDREAS. But A, B, and C omit.

decked — literally, “glided.”

stones ... pearls — *Greek*, “stone ... pearl.” B and ANDREAS read “pearls.” But A and C, “pearl.”

17. **is come to naught** — *Greek*, “is desolated.”

shipmaster — *Greek*, “steersman,” or “pilot.”

all the company in ships — A, C, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, “Every one who saileth to a place” (B has “... to *the* place”), *every voyager. Vessels*

were freighted with pilgrims to various shrines, so that in one month (A.D. 1300) two hundred thousand pilgrims were counted in Rome [D'AUBIGNE, *Histoire de la Reformation*]: a source of gain, not only to the Papal see, but to *shipmasters, merchants, pilots*, etc. These latter, however, are not restricted to those literally “shipmasters,” etc., but mainly refer, in the mystical sense, to all who share in the spiritual traffic of apostate Christendom.

18. when they saw — *Greek*, “*horontes*.” But A, B, C, and ANDREAS read, *Greek*, “*blepontes*,” “looking at.” *Greek*, “*blepo*,” is to *use the eyes*, to *look*: the act of seeing without thought of the object seen. *Greek*, “*horao*,” refers to the thing *seen* or presented to the eyes [TITTMANN].

smoke — so B, C. But A reads “place.”

What city is like — Compare the similar beast as to *the beast*, Revelation 13:4: so closely do the harlot and beast approximate one another. Contrast the attribution of this praise to God, to whom alone it is due, by *His* servants (^{<DESI>}Exodus 15:11). MARTIAL says of Rome, “Nothing is equal to her;” and ATHENAEUS, “She is the epitome of the world.”

19. wailing — “mourning.”

that had ships — A, B, and C read, “that had *their* ships”: literally, “*the* ships.”

costliness — her costly treasures: abstract for concrete.

20. holy apostles — So C reads. But A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS read, “*Ye saints and ye apostles*.”

avenged you on her — *Greek*, “judged your judgment on (literally, exacting it *from*) her.” “There is more joy in heaven at the harlot’s downfall than at that of the two beasts. For the most heinous of all sin is the sin of those who know God’s word of grace, and keep it not. The worldliness of the Church is the most worldly of all worldliness. Hence, Babylon, in Revelation, has not only Israel’s sins, but also the sins of the heathen; and John dwells longer on the abominations and judgments of the harlot than on those of the beast. The term ‘harlot’ describes the false Church’s essential character. She retains her human shape as the *woman*,

does not become a *beast*: she has the form of godliness, but denies its power. Her rightful lord and husband, Jehovah-Christ, and the joys and goods of His house, are no longer her all in all, but she runs after the visible and vain things of the world, in its manifold forms. The fullest form of her whoredom is, where the Church wishes to be itself a worldly power, uses politics and diplomacy, makes flesh her arm, uses unholy means for holy ends, spreads her dominion by sword or money, fascinates men by sensual ritualism, becomes ‘mistress of ceremonies’ to the dignitaries of the world, flatters prince or people, and like Israel, seeks the help of one world power against the danger threatening from another” [AUBERLEN]. *Judgment*, therefore, *begins with* the harlot, as in privileges *the house of God*.

21. a — *Greek*, “one.”

millstone — Compare the judgment on the Egyptian hosts at the Red Sea, Exodus 15:5,10 Nehemiah 9:11, and the foretold doom of Babylon, the world power, Jeremiah 51:63,64.

with violence — *Greek*, “with impetus.” This verse shows that this prophecy is regarded as still to be fulfilled.

22. pipers — flute players. “Musicians,” painters and sculptors, have desecrated their art to lend fascination to the sensuous worship of corrupt Christendom.

craftsman — artisan.

23. What a blessed contrast is Revelation 22:5, respecting the city of God: “They need *no candle* (just as Babylon shall *no more* have *the light of a candle*, but for a widely different reason), for the Lord God giveth them light.”

candle — Translate as *Greek*, “lamp.”

bridegroom ... bride ... no more ... in thee — Contrast the heavenly city, with its *Bridegroom*, *Bride*, and blessed *marriage supper* (Revelation 19:7,9 21:2,9 Isaiah 62:4,5).

thy merchants were — So most of the best authorities read. But A omits the *Greek* article before “merchants,” and then translates, “The great men of ... were thy merchants.”

sorceries — *Greek*, “sorcery.”

24. Applied by Christ (~~1215~~ Matthew 23:35) to apostate Jerusalem, which proves that not merely the literal city Rome, and the Church of Rome (though the *chief* representative of the apostasy), but the **WHOLE** of the faithless Church of both the Old and New Testament is meant by Babylon the harlot; just as the whole Church (Old and New Testament) is meant by “the woman” (Revelation 12:1). As to literal *city*, ARINGHUS in BENGEL says, Pagan Rome was the “general shambles” for slaying the sheep of Jesus. FRED. SEYLER in BENGEL calculates that papal Rome, between A.D. 1540 and 1580, slew more than nine hundred thousand Protestants. Three reasons for the harlot’s downfall are given:

- (1) The *worldly greatness* of her *merchants*, which was due to unholy traffic in spiritual things.
- (2) Her *sorceries*, or juggling tricks, in which the false prophet that ministers to the beast in its last form shall exceed her; compare “sorcerers” (Revelation 21:8 22:15), specially mentioned among those doomed to the lake of fire.
- (3) Her persecution of (Old Testament) “prophets” and (New Testament) “saints.”

CHAPTER 19

REVELATION 19:1-21.

THE CHURCH'S THANKSGIVING IN HEAVEN FOR THE JUDGMENT ON THE HARLOT. THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB: THE SUPPER: THE BRIDE'S PREPARATION: JOHN IS FORBIDDEN TO WORSHIP THE ANGEL: THE LORD AND HIS HOSTS COME FORTH FOR WAR: THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE: THE KINGS AND THEIR FOLLOWERS SLAIN BY THE SWORD OUT OF CHRIST'S MOUTH.

1. As in the case of the opening of the prophecy, Revelation 4:8 5:9, etc.; so now, at one of the great closing events seen in vision. the judgment on the harlot (described in Revelation 18:1-24), there is a song of praise in heaven to God: compare ~~(177)~~ Revelation 7:10, etc., toward the close of the seals, and ~~(178)~~ Revelation 11:15-18, at the close of the trumpets: Revelation 15:3, at the saints' victory over the beast.

And — so ANDREAS. But A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* omit.

a great voice — A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS read, “*as it were* a great voice.” What a contrast to the lamentations Revelation 18:1-24! Compare Jeremiah 51:48. The *great* manifestation of God's power in destroying Babylon calls forth a *great voice* of praise *in heaven*.

people — *Greek*, “multitude.”

Alleluia — *Hebrew*, “Praise ye JAH,” or JEHOVAH: here first used in Revelation, whence ELLICOTT infers the *Jews* bear a prominent part in this thanksgiving. JAH is not a contraction of “JEHOVAH,” as it sometimes occurs jointly with the latter. It means “He who Is”: whereas Jehovah is “He who will be, is, and was.” It implies God experienced as a PRESENT help; so that “Hallelujah,” says KIMCHI in BENDEL, is found first in the Psalms *on the destruction of the ungodly*. “Hallelu-Jah” occurs four times in this passage. Compare Psalm 149:4-9, which is plainly parallel, and

indeed identical in many of the phrases, as well as the general idea. Israel, especially, will join in the Hallelujah, when “her warfare is accomplished” and her foe destroyed.

Salvation, etc. — *Greek*, “The salvation ... the glory ... the power.”

and honor — so *Coptic*. But A, B, C, and *Syriac* omit.

unto the Lord our God — so ANDREAS. But A, B, C, and *Coptic* read, “(Is) of our God,” that is, belongs to Him.

2. which did corrupt the earth — *Greek*, “used to corrupt” continually. “Instead of opposing and lessening, she promoted the sinful life and decay of the world by her own earthliness, allowing the salt to lose its savor” [AUBERLEN].

avenged — *Greek*, “exacted in retribution.” A particular application of the principle (Genesis 9:5).

blood of his servants — literally shed by the Old Testament adulterous Church, and by the New Testament apostate Church; also virtually, though not literally, by all who, though called Christians, hate their brother, or love not the brethren of Christ, but shrink from the reproach of the cross, and show unkindness towards those who bear it.

3. again — *Greek*, “a second time.”

rose up — *Greek*, “goeth up.”

for ever and ever — *Greek*, “to the ages of the ages.”

4. beasts — rather, “living creatures.”

sat — *Greek*, “sitteth.”

5. out of — *Greek*, “out from the throne” in A, B, C.

Praise our God — Compare the solemn act of praise performed by the Levites, ^{<365>}1 Chronicles 16:36 23:5, especially when the house of God was filled with the divine glory (^{<453>}2 Chronicles 5:13).

both — omitted in A, B, C, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and *Syriac*. Translate as *Greek*, “the small and the great.”

6. many waters — Contrast the “many waters” on which the whore sitteth (Revelation 17:1). This verse is the hearty response to the stirring call, “Alleluia! Praise our God” (Revelation 19:4,5).

the Lord God omnipotent — *Greek*, “*the Omnipotent.*”

reigneth — literally, “reigned”: hence *reigneth once for all*. His reign is a fact already established. Babylon, the harlot, was one great hindrance to His reign being recognized. Her overthrow now clears the way for His advent to reign; therefore, not merely Rome, but the whole of Christendom in so far as it is carnal and compromised Christ for the world, is comprehended in the term “harlot.” The beast hardly arises when he at once “goeth into perdition”: so that Christ is prophetically considered as already reigning, so soon does His advent follow the judgment on the harlot.

7. glad ... rejoice — *Greek*, “rejoice ... exult.”

give — so B and ANDREAS. But A reads, “we *will* give.”

glory — *Greek*, “*the glory.*”

the marriage of the Lamb is come — The *full* and *final* consummation is at Revelation 21:2-9, etc. Previously there must be the overthrow of the beast, etc., at the Lord’s coming, the binding of Satan, the millennial reign, the loosing of Satan and his last overthrow, and the general judgment. The elect-Church, the heavenly Bride, soon after the destruction of the harlot, is transfigured at the Lord’s coming, and joins with Him in His triumph over the beast. On the emblem of the heavenly Bridegroom and Bride, compare Matthew 22:2 25:6,10 2 Corinthians 11:2. Perfect union with Him personally, and participation in His holiness; joy, glory, and kingdom, are included in this symbol of “marriage”; compare Song of Solomon everywhere. Besides the *heavenly* Bride, the transfigured, translated, and risen Church, reigning *over* the earth with Christ, there is also the *earthly* bride, Israel, in the flesh, never yet *divorced*, though for a time separated, from her divine husband, who shall then be reunited to the Lord, and be the mother Church of the millennial earth, Christianized through her. Note, we ought, as Scripture does, restrict the language drawn from marriage-love to *the Bride*, the Church *as a whole*; not use it as individuals in our relation to

Christ, which Rome does in the case of her nuns. Individually, believers are effectually-called *guests*; collectively, they constitute *the bride*. The harlot divides her affections among many lovers: the bride gives hers exclusively to Christ.

8. granted — Though in one sense *she* “made herself ready,” having by the Spirit’s work in her put on “the wedding garment,” yet in the fullest sense it is not she, but her Lord, who makes her ready by “*granting* to her that she be arrayed in fine linen.” It is He who, by *giving Himself* for her, *presents her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, but holy and without blemish*. It is He also who sanctifies her, naturally vile and without beauty, *with the washing of water by the word, and puts His own comeliness on her*, which thus becomes hers.

clean and white — so ANDREAS. But A and B transpose. Translate, “bright and pure”; at once brilliantly *splendid* and *spotless* as in the bride herself.

righteousness — Greek, “righteousnesses”; distributively used. *Each* saint must have this righteousness: not merely be justified, as if the righteousness belonged to the Church *in the aggregate*; the saints together have *righteousnesses*; namely, He is *accounted as* “the Lord our righteousness” to each saint on his believing, their robes being made *white in the blood of the Lamb*. The righteousness of the saint is not, as ALFORD erroneously states, *inherent*, but is *imputed*: if it were otherwise, Christ would be merely enabling the sinner to justify himself. ^{Ⓡ185}Romans 5:18 is decisive on this. Compare Article XI, Church of England. The justification already given to the saints in title and unseen possession, is now GIVEN them *in manifestation*: they openly walk with Christ in white. To this, rather than to their primary justification on earth, the reference is here. Their justification before the apostate world, which had persecuted them, contrasts with the judgment and condemnation of the harlot. “Now that the harlot has fallen, the woman triumphs” [AUBERLEN]. Contrast with the *pure fine linen* (indicating the simplicity and purity) of the bride, the tawdry ornamentation of the harlot. Babylon, the apostate Church, is the antithesis to new Jerusalem, the transfigured Church of God. The woman (Revelation 12:1-6), the harlot (Revelation 17:1-7), the bride (Revelation 19:1-10), are the three leading aspects of the Church.

9. He — God by His angel *saith unto me*.

called — effectually, not merely externally. The “unto,” or into,” seems to express this: not merely invited *to* (*Greek*, “*epi*”), but called INTO, so as to be *partakers of* (*Greek*, “*eis*”); compare 1 Corinthians 1:9.

marriage supper — *Greek*, “the supper of the marriage.” Typified by the Lord’s Supper.

true — *Greek*, “genuine”; veritable sayings which shall surely be fulfilled, namely, all the previous revelations.

10. at — *Greek*, “before.” John’s intending to worship the angel here, as in Revelation 22:8, on having revealed to him the glory of the new Jerusalem, is the involuntary impulse of adoring joy at so blessed a prospect. It forms a marked contrast to the sorrowful *wonder* with which he had looked on the Church in her apostasy as the harlot (Revelation 17:6). It exemplifies the corrupt tendencies of our fallen nature that even John, an apostle, should have all but fallen into “voluntary humility and worshipping of angels,” which Paul warns us against.

and of thy brethren — that is, *a fellow servant* of thy brethren.

have the testimony of Jesus — (See on ⁶⁶²⁷Revelation 12:17).

the testimony of — that is, *respecting* Jesus.

is the spirit of prophecy — is the result of the same spirit of prophecy in you as in myself. We angels, and you apostles, all alike have the testimony of (bear testimony concerning) Jesus by the operation of one and the same Spirit, who enables me to show you these revelations and enables you to record them: wherefore we are *fellow servants*, not I your lord to be worshipped by you. Compare Revelation 22:9, “I am fellow servant of thee and of thy brethren *the prophets*”; whence the “FOR the testimony,” etc. here, may be explained as giving the reason for his adding “and (fellow servant) of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus.” I mean, *of the prophets*; “for it is of *Jesus* that thy brethren, *the prophets*, testify by the Spirit in them.” A clear condemnation of Romish invocation of saints as if they were our superiors to be adored.

11. behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him — identical with Revelation 6:2. Here as there he comes forth “conquering and to conquer.” Compare the *ass*-colt on which He rode into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-7). The *horse* was used for war: and here He is going forth to war with the beast. The *ass* is for peace. His riding on it into Jerusalem is an earnest of His reign in Jerusalem over the earth, as the *Prince of peace*, after all hostile powers have been overthrown. When the security of the world power, and the distress of the people of God, have reached the highest point, the Lord Jesus shall appear visibly from heaven to put an end to the whole course of the world, and establish His kingdom of glory. He comes to judge with vengeance the world power, and to bring to the Church redemption, transfiguration, and power over the world. Distinguish between this *coming* (ⲁⲓⲃⲱⲧ Matthew 24:27,29,37,39; *Greek*, “*parousia*”) and *the end*, or final judgment (ⲁⲓⲃⲱⲧ Matthew 25:31 ⲁⲓⲃⲱⲧ 1 Corinthians 15:23). Powerful natural phenomena shall accompany His advent [AUBERLEN].

12. Identifying Him with the Son of man similarly described, ⲁⲓⲃⲱⲧ Revelation 1:14.

many crowns — *Greek*, “diadems”: not merely (*Greek*, “*stephanoî*”) garlands of victory, but royal crowns, as KING OF KINGS. Christ’s diadem comprises all the diadems of the earth and of heavenly powers too. Contrast the papal tiara composed of three *diadems*. Compare also the little horn (Antichrist) that overcomes the *three* horns or kingdoms, Daniel 7:8,24 (*Quaere, the Papacy?* or some *three* kingdoms that succeed the papacy, which itself, as a temporal kingdom, was made up at first of *three* kingdoms, the exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the state of Rome, obtained by Pope Zachary and Stephen II from Pepin, the usurper of the French dominion). Also, the *seven crowns* (diadems) *on the seven heads of the dragon* (Revelation 12:3), and *ten diadems on the ten heads of the beast*. These usurpers claim the diadems which belong to Christ alone.

he had a name written — B and Syriac insert, “He had *names written*, and a name written,” etc. meaning that *the names* of the dominion which each diadem indicated were *written* on them severally. But A, *Vulgate*, ORIGEN, and CYPRIAN omits the words, as *English Version*.

name ... that no man knew but ... himself — (⁶⁷³⁸Judges 13:18 1 Corinthians 2:9,11 1 John 3:2). The same is said of the “new name” of believers. In this, as in all other respects, the disciple is made like his Lord. The Lord’s own “new name” is to be theirs, and to be “in their foreheads”; whence we may infer that His as yet *unknown* name also is written on His forehead; as the high priest had “Holiness to the Lord” inscribed on the miter on his brow. John saw it as “written,” but *knew not* its meaning. It is, therefore, a name which in all its glorious significance can be only understood when the union of His saints with Him, and His and their joint triumph and reign, shall be perfectly manifested at the final consummation.

13. vesture dipped in blood — Isaiah 63:2 is alluded to here, and in ⁶⁶⁹⁵Revelation 19:15, end. There the *blood* is not His own, but that of His foes. So here the blood on His “vesture,” reminding us of *His own blood* shed for even the ungodly who trample on it, is a premonition of the shedding of *their blood* in righteous retribution. He sheds the blood, not of the godly, as the harlot and beast did, but of the blood-stained ungodly, including them both.

The Word of God — who made the world, is He also who under the same character and attributes shall make it anew. His title, *Son of God*, is applicable in a lower sense, also to His people; but “the Word of God” indicates His incommunicable Godhead, joined to His manhood, which He shall then manifest in glory. “The Bride does not fear the Bridegroom; her love casteth out fear. She welcomes Him; she cannot be happy but at His side. The Lamb [Revelation 19:9, the aspect of Christ to His people at His coming] is the symbol of Christ in His gentleness. Who would be afraid of a lamb? Even a little child, instead of being scared, desires to caress it. There is nothing to make us afraid of God but sin, and Jesus is the *Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world*. What a fearful contrast is the aspect which He will wear towards His enemies! Not as the Bridegroom and the Lamb, but as the [avenging] judge and warrior stained in the blood of His enemies.”

14. the armies ... in heaven — Compare “the horse bridles,” ⁶⁶⁴⁰Revelation 14:20. The glorified saints whom God “will bring with” Christ at His advent; compare ⁶⁶⁷⁴Revelation 17:14, “they that are with Him, called, chosen, faithful”; as also “His mighty angels.”

white and clean — Greek, “pure.” A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and CYPRIAN omit “and,” which ORIGEN and ANDREAS retain, as *English Version*.

15. out of his mouth ... sword — (ⲉⲙⲓⲗⲉ Revelation 1:16 2:12,16). Here in its *avenging* power, 2 Thessalonians 2:8, “consume with the Spirit of His mouth” (Isaiah 11:4, to which there is allusion here); not in its convicting and converting efficacy (ⲉⲙⲓⲗⲉ Ephesians 6:17 ⲉⲃⲟⲩⲉ Hebrews 4:12,13, where also the judicial keenness of the sword-like word is included). The Father commits the judgment to the Son.

he shall rule — The HE is emphatic, He and none other, in contrast to the usurpers who have misruled on earth. “Rule,” literally, “tend as a shepherd”; but here in a punitive sense. He, who would have *shepherded* them with pastoral rod and with the golden scepter of His love, shall dash them in pieces, as refractory rebels, with “a rod of iron.”

treadeth ... wine-press — (Isaiah 63:3).

of the fierceness and wrath — So ANDREAS reads. But A, B, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and ORIGEN read, “of the fierceness (or *boiling indignation*) of the wrath,” omitting “and.”

Almighty — The fierceness of Christ’s wrath against His foes will be executed with the resources of omnipotence.

16. “His name written on His vesture and on His thigh,” was written partly on the vesture, partly on the thigh itself, at the part where in an equestrian figure the robe drops from the thigh. The *thigh* symbolizes Christ’s humanity as having come, after the flesh, from the *loins* of David, and now appearing as the glorified “Son of man.” On the other hand, His incommunicable divine name, “which no man knew,” is on His head (ⲉⲙⲓⲗⲉ Revelation 19:12), [MENOCHIUS].

KING OF KINGS — Compare ⲉⲙⲓⲗⲉ Revelation 17:14, in contrast with ⲉⲙⲓⲗⲉ Revelation 19:17, the beast being in attempted usurpation a *king of kings*, the ten kings delivering their kingdom to him.

17. an — Greek, “one.”

in the sun — so as to be conspicuous in sight of the whole world.

to all the fowls — (Ezekiel 39:17-20).

and gather yourselves — A, B, *Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic*, and ANDREAS read, “be gathered,” omitting “and.”

of the great God — A, B, *Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic*, and ANDREAS read, “the great supper (that is, banquet) of God.”

18. Contrast with this “supper,” ^(~~697~~) Revelation 19:17,18, *the marriage supper of the Lamb*, Revelation 19:9.

captains — *Greek*, “captains of thousands,” that is, *chief captains*. The “kings” are “the ten” who “give their power unto the beast.”

free and bond — specified in ^(~~613~~) Revelation 13:16, as “receiving the mark of the beast.” The repetition of *flesh* (in the *Greek* it is plural: *masses of flesh*) five times in this verse, marks the gross *carnality* of the followers of the beast. Again, the giving of their flesh to the fowls to eat, is a righteous retribution for their not suffering *the dead bodies* of Christ’s *witnesses to be put in graves*.

19. gathered together — at Armageddon, under the sixth vial. For “*their* armies” in B and ANDREAS, there is found “*His* armies” in A.

war — so ANDREAS. But A and B read, “*the war*,” namely, that foretold, ^(~~694~~) Revelation 16:14 17:4.

20. and with him the false prophet — A reads, “and those with him.” B reads, “and he who was with him, the false prophet.”

miracles — *Greek*, “*the miracles*” (literally, “*signs*”) recorded already (^(~~634~~) Revelation 13:14) as wrought by *the second beast before* (literally, ‘in sight of’) *the first beast*. Hence it follows the *second beast* is identical with *the false prophet*. Many expositors represent the first beast to be the secular, the second beast to be the ecclesiastical power of Rome; and account for the change of title for the latter from the “other beast” to the “false prophet,” is because by the judgment on the harlot, the ecclesiastical power will then retain nothing of its former character save the power to deceive. I think it not unlikely that the false prophet will be the successor of the spiritual pretensions of the papacy; while the beast in its last form as the fully revealed Antichrist will be the secular representative and

embodiment of the fourth world kingdom, Rome, in its last form of intensified opposition to God. Compare with this prophecy, Ezekiel 38:1-39:29 Daniel 2:34,35,44 11:44,45 12:1 Joel 3:9-17 Zechariah 12 13 14. Daniel (Daniel 7:8) makes no mention of the second beast, or false prophet, but mentions that “the little horn” has “the eyes of a man,” that is, cunning and intellectual culture; this is not a feature of the first beast in the thirteenth chapter, but is expressed by the Apocalyptic “false prophet,” the embodiment of man’s unsanctified knowledge, and the subtlety of the old serpent. The first beast is a political power; the second is a spiritual power — the power of ideas. But both are *beasts*, the worldly Antichristian wisdom serving the worldly Antichristian power. The dragon is both lion and serpent. As the first law in God’s moral government is that “judgment should begin at the house of God,” and be executed on the harlot, the faithless Church, by the world power with which she had committed spiritual adultery, so it is a second law that the world power, after having served as God’s instrument of punishment, is itself punished. As the harlot is judged by the beast and the ten kings, so these are destroyed by the Lord Himself coming in person. So Zephaniah 1:1-18 compared with Zephaniah 2:1-15. And Jeremiah, after denouncing Jerusalem’s judgment by Babylon, ends with denouncing Babylon’s own doom. Between the judgment on the harlot and the Lord’s destruction of the beast, will intervene that season in which earthly-mindedness will reach its culmination, and Antichristianity triumph for its short three and a half days during which the two witnesses lie dead. Then shall the Church be ripe for her glorification, the Antichristian world for destruction. The world at the highest development of its material and spiritual power is but a decorated carcass round which the eagles gather. It is characteristic that Antichrist and his kings, in their blindness, imagine that they can wage war against the King of heaven with earthly hosts; herein is shown the extreme folly of Babylonian confusion. The Lord’s mere appearance, without any actual encounter, shows Antichrist his nothingness; compare the effect of Jesus’ appearance even in His humiliation, John 18:6 [AUBERLEN].

had received — rather as *Greek*, “received,” *once for all*.

them; that worshipped — literally, “them worshipping” not an act *once for all done*, as the “received” implies, but those *in the habit of* “worshipping.”

These both were cast ... into a lake — *Greek*, “... the lake of fire,” Gehenna. Satan is subsequently cast into it, at the close of the outbreak which succeeds the millennium (~~600~~ Revelation 20:10). Then Death and Hell, as well those not found at the general judgment “written in the book of life”; this constitutes “the second death.”

alive — a living death; not mere annihilation. “Their worm dieth not, their fire is not quenched.”

21. the remnant — *Greek*, “the rest,” that is, “the kings and their armies” (~~600~~ Revelation 19:19) classed together in one indiscriminate mass. A solemn confirmation of the warning in Psalm 2:10.

CHAPTER 20

REVELATION 20:1-15.

SATAN BOUND, AND THE FIRST-RISEN SAINTS REIGN WITH CHRIST, A THOUSAND YEARS; SATAN LOOSED, GATHERS THE NATIONS, GOG AND MAGOG, ROUND THE CAMP OF THE SAINTS, AND IS FINALLY CONSIGNED TO THE LAKE OF FIRE; THE GENERAL RESURRECTION AND LAST JUDGMENT.

1. The destruction of his representatives, the beast and the false prophet, to whom he had given his *power, throne, and authority*, is followed by the binding of Satan himself for a thousand years.


the key of the bottomless pit — now transferred from Satan's hands, who had heretofore been permitted by God to use it in letting loose plagues on the earth; he is now to be made to feel himself the torment which he had inflicted on men, but his full torment is not until he is cast into "the lake of fire" (☞ Revelation 20:10).

2. **that old** — ancient serpent (Revelation 12:9).

thousand years — As *seven* mystically implies universality, so a *thousand* implies *perfection*, whether in good or evil [AQUINAS on ch. 11]. *Thousand* symbolizes that the world is perfectly leavened and pervaded by the divine; since *thousand* is *ten*, the number of the world, raised to the *third* power, *three* being the number of God [AUBERLEN]. It may denote *literally* also a *thousand years*.

3. **shut him** — A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS omit "him."

set a seal upon him — *Greek*, "over him," that is, sealed up the door of the abyss over his head. A surer seal to keep him from getting out than his seal over Jesus in the tomb of Joseph, which was burst on the resurrection morn. Satan's binding at' this juncture is not arbitrary, but is the necessary consequence of the events (☞ Revelation 19:20); just as Satan's being cast

out of heaven, where he had previously been the accuser of the brethren, was the legitimate judgment which passed on him through the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ (Revelation 12:7-10). Satan imagined that he had overcome Christ on Golgotha, and that his power was secure for ever, but the Lord in death overcame him, and by His ascension as our righteous Advocate cast out Satan, the accuser from heaven. Time was given on earth to make the beast and harlot powerful, and then to concentrate all his power in Antichrist. The Antichristian kingdom, his last effort, being utterly destroyed by Christ's mere appearing, his power on earth is at an end. He had thought to destroy God's people on earth by Antichristian persecutions (just as he had thought previously to destroy Christ); but the Church is not destroyed from the earth but is raised to rule over it, and Satan himself is shut up for a thousand years in the "abyss" (*Greek* for "bottomless pit"), the preparatory prison to the "lake of fire," his final doom. As before he ceased by Christ's ascension to be an accuser in heaven, so during the millennium he ceases to be the seducer and the persecutor on earth. As long as the devil rules in the darkness of the world, we live in an atmosphere impregnated with deadly elements. A mighty purification of the air will be effected by Christ's coming. Though sin will not be absolutely abolished — for men will still be in the flesh (Isaiah 65:20) — sin will no longer be a universal power, for the flesh is not any longer seduced by Satan. He will not be, as now, "the god and prince of the world" — nor will the world "lie in the wicked one" — the flesh will become ever more isolated and be overcome. Christ will reign with His transfigured saints over men in the flesh [AUBERLEN]. This will be the manifestation of "the world to come," which has been already set up invisibly in the saints, amidst "this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4 Hebrews 2:5 5:5). The Jewish Rabbis thought, as the world was created in six days and on the *seventh* God rested, so there would be six millenary periods, followed by a sabbatical millennium. Out of seven years every seventh is the year of remission, so out of the seven thousand years of the world the seventh millenary shall be the millenary of remission. A tradition in the house of Elias, A.D. 200, states that the world is to endure six thousand years; two thousand before the law, two thousand under the law, and two thousand under Messiah. Compare *Note*, see on Hebrews 4:9 and Hebrews 4:9, *Margin*; see on  Revelation 14:13. PAPIAS, JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENAEUS, and CYPRIAN, among the earliest Fathers, all held the doctrine

of a millennial kingdom on earth; not till millennial views degenerated into gross carnalism was this doctrine abandoned.

that he should deceive — so A. But B reads, “that he deceive” (*Greek*, “*plana*,” for “*planeese*”).

and — so *Coptic* and *ANDREAS*. But A, B, and *Vulgate* omit “and.”

4, 5. they sat — the twelve apostles, and the saints in general.

judgment was given unto there — (See on Daniel 7:22). The office of judging was given to them. Though in one sense having to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, yet in another sense they “do not come into judgment (*Greek*), but have already passed from death unto life.”

souls — This term is made a plea for denying the literality of the first resurrection, as if the resurrection were the spiritual one of the *souls* of believers in this life; the life and reign being that of the soul raised in this life from the death of sin by vivifying faith. But “souls” expresses their disembodied state (compare Revelation 6:9) as John saw them at first; “and they lived” implies their *coming to life in the body again*, so as to be visible, as the phrase, Revelation 20:5, “this is the first resurrection,” proves; for as surely as “the rest of the dead lived not (again) until,” etc. refers to the *bodily* general resurrection, so must *the first resurrection* refer to the body. This also accords with ⁴⁶⁵²1 Corinthians 15:23, “They that are Christ’s at His coming.” Compare Psalm 49:11-15. From Revelation 6:9, I infer that “souls” is here used in the strict sense of *spirits disembodied* when first seen by John; though doubtless “souls” is often used in general for *persons*, and even for *dead bodies*.

beheaded — literally, “smitten with an axe”; a *Roman* punishment, though crucifixion, casting to beasts, and burning, were the more common modes of execution. The guillotine in revolutionary France was a revival of the mode of capital punishment of pagan imperial Rome. Paul was *beheaded*, and no doubt shall share *the first resurrection*, in accordance with his prayer that he “might attain unto the resurrection from out of the rest of the dead” (*Greek*, “*exanastasis*”). The above facts may account for the specification of this particular kind of punishment.

for ... for — *Greek*, “for the sake of”; “on account of”; “because of.”

and which — *Greek*, “and the *which*.” And prominent among this class (the beheaded), such as did not worship the beast. So Revelation 1:7, *Greek*, “and the *which*,” or “and such as,” particularizes prominently among the general class those that follow in the description [TREGELLES]. The *extent* of the first resurrection is not spoken of here. In ⁴⁶²³1 Corinthians 15:23,51 ⁵⁰⁴⁴1 Thessalonians 4:14 we find that all “in Christ” shall share in it. John himself was not “beheaded,” yet who doubts but that he shall share in the first resurrection? The martyrs are put first, because most like Jesus in their sufferings and death, therefore nearest Him in their life and reign; for Christ indirectly affirms there are relative degrees and places of honor in His kingdom, the highest being for those who drink his cup of suffering. Next shall be those who have not bowed to the world power, but have looked to the things unseen and eternal.

neither — “not yet.”

foreheads ... hands — *Greek*, “forehead ... hand.”

reigned with Christ — over the earth.

5. But — B, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS read, “and.” A and *Vulgate* omit it.

again — A, B, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS omit it. “Lived” is used for *lived again*, as in Revelation 2:8. John saw them not only when restored to life, but when in the act of reviving [BENGEL].

first resurrection — “the resurrection of the just.” Earth is not yet transfigured, and cannot therefore be the meet locality for the transfigured Church; but from heaven the transfigured saints with Christ rule the earth, there being a much freer communion of the heavenly and earthly churches (a type of which state may be seen in the forty days of the risen Savior during which He appeared to His disciples), and they know no higher joy than to lead their brethren on earth to the same salvation and glory as they share themselves. The millennial reign on earth does not rest on an isolated passage of the Apocalypse, but all Old Testament prophecy goes on the same view (compare Isaiah 4:3 11:9 35:8). Jesus, while opposing the carnal views of the kingdom of God prevalent among the Jews in His day, does not contradict, but confirms, the Old Testament view of a coming, earthly, Jewish kingdom of glory: beginning from within, and spreading itself now

spiritually, the kingdom of God shall manifest itself outwardly at Christ's coming again. The papacy is a false anticipation of the kingdom during the Church-historical period. "When Christianity became a worldly power under Constantine, the hope of the future was weakened by the joy over present success" [BENGEL]. Becoming a harlot, the Church ceased to be a bride going to meet her Bridegroom; thus millennial hopes disappeared. The rights which Rome as a harlot usurped, shall be exercised in holiness by the Bride. They are "kings" because they are "priests" (Revelation 20:6 Revelation 1:6 5:10); their priesthood unto God and Christ (⁶¹⁷⁵Revelation 7:15) is the ground of their kingship in relation to man. Men will be willing subjects of the transfigured priest-kings, in the day of the Lord's power. Their power is that of attraction, winning the heart, and not counteracted by devil or beast. Church and State shall then be co-extensive. Man created "to have dominion over earth" is to rejoice over *his* world with unmixed, holy joy. John tells us that, instead of the devil, the transfigured Church of Christ; Daniel, that instead of the heathen beast, the holy Israel, shall rule the world [AUBERLEN].

6. Blessed — (Compare ⁶³⁴³Revelation 14:13 19:9).

on such the second death hath no power — even as it has none on Christ now that He is risen.

priests of God — Apostate Christendom being destroyed, and the believing Church translated at Christ's coming, there will remain Israel and the heathen world, constituting the majority of men then alive, which, from not having come into close contact with the Gospel, have not incurred the guilt of rejecting it. These will be the subjects of a general conversion (⁶¹¹⁵Revelation 11:15). "The veil" shall be taken off Israel first, then from off "all people." The glorious events attending Christ's appearing, the destruction of Antichrist, the transfiguration of the Church, and the binding of Satan, will prepare the nations for embracing the Gospel. As *individual* regeneration goes on now, so there shall be a "regeneration" of *nations* then. Israel, as a nation, shall be "born at once — in one day." As *the Church* began at Christ's ascension, so the *kingdom* shall begin at His second advent. This is the humiliation of the modern civilized nations, that nations which they despise most, Jews and uncivilized barbarians, the negro descendants of Ham who from the curse of Noah have been so

backward, Cush and Sheba, shall supplant and surpass them as centers of the world's history (compare ^{<622>}Deuteronomy 32:21 ^{<619>}Romans 10:19 11:20, etc.). The Jews are our teachers even in New Testament times. Since their rejection revelation has been silent. The whole Bible, even the New Testament, is written by Jews. If revelation is to recommence in the millennial kingdom, converted Israel must stand at the head of humanity. In a religious point of view, Jews and Gentiles stand on an equal footing as both alike needing mercy; but as regards God's instrumentalities for bringing about His kingdom on earth, Israel is His chosen people for executing His plans. The Israelite priest-kings on earth are what the transfigured priest-kings are in heaven. There shall be a blessed chain of giving and receiving — God, Christ, the transfigured Bride the Church, Israel, the world of nations. A new time of revelation will begin by the outpouring of the fullness of the Spirit. Ezekiel (the fortieth through forty-eighth chapters), himself son of a priest, sets forth the priestly character of Israel; Daniel the statesman, its kingly character; Jeremiah (Jeremiah 33:17-21), both its priestly and kingly character. In the Old Testament the whole Jewish national life was religious only in an external legal manner. The New Testament Church insists on inward renewal, but leaves its outward manifestations free. But in the millennial kingdom, all spheres of life shall be truly Christianized from within outwardly. The Mosaic ceremonial law corresponds to Israel's priestly office; the civil law to its kingly office: the Gentile Church adopts the moral law, and exercises the prophetic office by the word working inwardly. But when the royal and the priestly office shall be revived, then — the principles of the Epistle to the Hebrews remaining the same — also the ceremonial and civil law of Moses will develop its spiritual depths in the divine worship (compare ^{<4157>}Matthew 5:17-19). At present is the time of preaching; but then the time of the *Liturgy* of converted souls forming "the great congregation" shall come. Then shall our present defective governments give place to perfect governments in both Church and State. Whereas under the Old Testament the Jews exclusively, and in the New Testament the Gentiles exclusively, enjoy the revelation of salvation (in both cases humanity being divided and separated), in the millennium both Jews and Gentiles are united, and the whole organism of mankind under the first-born brother, Israel, walks in the light of God, and the full life of humanity is at last realized. Scripture does not view the human race as an aggregate of individuals and

nationalities, but as an organic whole, laid down once for all in the first pages of revelation. (¹⁰⁰²⁵Genesis 9:25-27 10:1,5,18,25,32 Deuteronomy 32:8 recognizes the fact that from the first the division of the nations was made with a relation to Israel). Hence arises the importance of the Old Testament to the Church now as ever. Three grand groups of nations, Hamites, Japhetites, and Shemites, correspond respectively to the three fundamental elements in man — body, soul, and spirit. The flower of Shem, the representative of *spiritual* life, is Israel, even as the flower of Israel is He in whom all mankind is summed up, the second Adam (Genesis 12:1-3). Thus Israel is the mediator of divine revelations for all times. Even nature and the animal world will share in the millennial blessedness. As sin loses its power, decay and death will decrease [AUBERLEN]. Earthly and heavenly glories shall be united in the twofold election. Elect Israel in the flesh shall stand at the head of the earthly, the elect spiritual Church, the Bride, in the heavenly. These twofold elections are not merely for the good of the elect themselves, but for the good of those to whom they minister. The heavenly Church is elected not merely to salvation, but to rule in love, and minister blessings over the whole earth, as king-priests. The glory of the transfigured saints shall be felt by men in the flesh with the same consciousness of blessing as on the Mount of Transfiguration the three disciples experienced in witnessing the glory of Jesus, and of Moses and Elias, when Peter exclaimed, “It is good for us to be here”; in ¹⁰¹¹⁶2 Peter 1:16-18, the Transfiguration is regarded as the earnest of Christ’s coming in glory. The privilege of “our high *calling* in Christ” is limited to the present time of Satan’s reign; when he is bound, there will be no scope for suffering for, and so afterwards *reigning* with, Him (¹⁰¹²²Revelation 3:21; compare *Note*, see on 1 Corinthians 6:2). Moreover, none can be saved in the present age and in the pale of the Christian Church who does not also reign with Christ hereafter, the necessary preliminary to which is suffering with Christ now. If we fail to lay hold of the crown, we lose all, “*the gift of grace* as well as the *reward of service*” [DE BURGH].

7. expired — *Greek*, “finished.”

8. Gog and Magog — (Ezekiel 38:1-39:29; see on Ezekiel 38:2). Magog is a general name for northern nations of Japheth’s posterity, whose ideal head is Gog (Genesis 10:2). A has but one *Greek* article to “Gog and

Magog,” whereby the two, namely, the prince and the people, are marked as having the closest connection. B reads the second article before Magog wrongly. HILLER [*Onomasticon*] explains both words as signifying “lofty,” “elevated.” For “quarters” the *Greek* is “corners.”

to battle — *Greek*, “to *the* war,” in A and B. But ANDREAS omits “the.”

9. on the breadth of the earth — so as completely to overspread it. Perhaps we ought to translate, “... of the [holy] *land*.”

the camp of the saints and the beloved city — the camp of the saints encircling *the beloved city*, Jerusalem (Ecclesiasticus 24:11). Contrast “hateful” in Babylon (Revelation 18:2 ⁻⁶⁸²⁵ Deuteronomy 32:15, *Septuagint*). Ezekiel’s prophecy of Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38:1-39:29) refers to the attack made by Antichrist on Israel *before* the millennium: but this attack is made *after* the millennium, so that “Gog and Magog” are mystical names representing the final adversaries led by Satan in person. Ezekiel’s Gog and Magog come from *the north*, but those here come “from the four corners of the earth.” *Gog* is by some connected with a *Hebrew* root, “covered.”

from God — so B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS. But A omits the words. Even during the millennium there is a separation between heaven and earth, transfigured humanity and humanity in the flesh. Hence it is possible that an apostasy should take place at its close. In the judgment on this apostasy the world of nature is destroyed and renewed, as the world of history was before the millennial kingdom; it is only then that the new heaven and new earth are realized in final perfection. The *millennial* new heaven and earth are but a foretaste of this everlasting state when the upper and lower congregations shall be no longer separate, though connected as in the millennium, and when new Jerusalem shall descend from God out of heaven. The inherited sinfulness of our nature shall be the only influence during the millennium to prevent the power of the transfigured Church saving all souls. When this time of grace shall end, no other shall succeed. For what can move him in whom the visible glory of the Church, while the influence of evil is restrained, evokes no longing for communion with the Church’s King? As the history of the world of nations ended with the manifestation of the Church in visible glory, so that of mankind in general shall end with the great separation of the just from the wicked (⁻⁶⁸¹² Revelation 20:12) [AUBERLEN].

10. that deceived — *Greek*, “that deceiveth.”

lake of fire — his final doom: as “the bottomless pit” (Revelation 20:1) was his temporary prison.

where — so *Coptic*. But A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, “where *also*.”

the beast and the false prophet are — (~~and~~ Revelation 19:20).

day and night — figurative for *without intermission* (Revelation 22:5), such as now is caused by night interposing between day and day. The same phrase is used of the *external* state of the blessed (Revelation 4:8). As the bliss of these is eternal, so the woe of Satan and the lost must be. As the beast and the false prophet led the former conspiracy against Christ and His people, so Satan in person heads the last conspiracy. Satan shall not be permitted to enter this Paradise regained, to show the perfect security of believers, unlike the first Adam whom Satan succeeded in robbing of Paradise; and shall, like Pharaoh at the Red Sea, receive in this last attempt his final doom.

for ever and ever — *Greek*, “to the ages of the ages.”

11. great — in contrast to the “thrones,” Revelation 20:4.

white — the emblem of purity and justice.

him that sat on it — the Father [ALFORD]. Rather, the Son, to whom “the Father hath committed all judgment.” God in Christ, that is, the Father represented by the Son, is He before whose judgment-seat we must all stand. The Son’s mediatorial reign is with a view to prepare the kingdom for the Father’s acceptance. When He has done that, He shall give it up to the Father, “that God may be all in all,” coming into direct communion with His creatures, without intervention of a Mediator, for the first time since the fall. Heretofore Christ’s *Prophetical* mediation had been prominent in His earthly ministry, His *Priestly* mediation is prominent now in heaven between His first and second advents, and His *Kingly* shall be so during the millennium and at the general judgment.

earth and heaven fled away — The final conflagration, therefore, precedes the general judgment. This is followed by the new heaven and earth (Revelation 21:1-27).

12. the dead — “the rest of the dead” who did not share the first resurrection, and those who died during the millennium.

small and great — B has “*the small and the great.*” A, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and ANDREAS have “the great and the small.” The wicked who had died from the time of Adam to Christ’s second advent, and all the righteous and wicked who had died during and after the millennium, shall then have their eternal portion assigned to them. The godly who were transfigured and reigned with Christ during it, shall also be present, not indeed to have their portion assigned as if for the first time (for that shall have been fixed long before, ^{<RS>}John 5:24), but to have it *confirmed* for ever, and that God’s righteousness may be vindicated in the case of both the saved and the lost, in the presence of an assembled universe. Compare “We must ALL appear,” etc. ^{<SL>}Romans 14:10 ^{<EN>}2 Corinthians 5:10. The saints having been first pronounced just themselves by Christ out of “the book of life,” shall sit as assessors of the Judge. Compare ^{<RS>}Matthew 25:31,32,40, “*these* My brethren.” God’s omniscience will not allow the most insignificant to escape unobserved, and His omnipotence will cause the mightiest to obey the summons. The *living* are not specially mentioned: as these all shall probably first (before the destruction of the ungodly, Revelation 20:9) be transfigured, and caught up with the saints long previously transfigured; and though present for the confirmation of their justification by the Judge, shall not then first have their eternal state assigned to them, but shall sit as assessors with the Judge.

the books ... opened — (Daniel 7:10). The books of God’s remembrance, alike of the evil and the good (Psalm 56:8 139:4 Malachi 3:16): conscience (^{<RS>}Romans 2:15,16), the word of Christ (^{<RS>}John 12:48), the law (^{<RS>}Galatians 3:10), God’s eternal counsel (Psalm 139:16).

book of life — (Revelation 3:5 13:8 21:27 ^{<RS>}Exodus 32:32,33 Psalm 69:28 Daniel 12:1 Philippians 4:3). Besides the general book recording the works of all, there is a special book for believers in which their names are written, not for their works, but for the work of Christ *for*, and *in*, them. Therefore it is called, “*the Lamb’s book of life.*” Electing grace has singled them out from the general mass.

according to their works — We are justified *by* faith, but judged *according to* (not *by*) our works. For the general judgment is primarily

designed for the final vindication of *God's righteousness before* the whole world, which in this checkered dispensation of good and evil, though really ruling the world, has been for the time less manifest. *Faith* is appreciable by God and the believer alone (~~4127~~ Revelation 2:17). But *works* are appreciable by all. These, then, are made the evidential test to decide men's eternal state, thus showing that God's administration of judgment is altogether righteous.

13. death and hell — *Greek, "Hades."* The essential identity of the dying and risen body is hereby shown; for the *sea* and *grave* give up *their dead*. The body that sinned or served God shall, in righteous retribution, be the body also that shall suffer or be rewarded. The "sea" may have a symbolical [CLUVER from AUGUSTINE], besides the literal meaning, as, in Revelation 8:8 12:12 13:1 18:17,19; so "death" and "hell" are personifications (compare Revelation 21:1). But the literal sense need hardly be departed from: all the different regions wherein the bodies and souls of men had been, gave them up.

14. Death and Hades, as personified representatives of the enemies of Christ' and His Church, are said to be cast into the lake of fire to express the truth that Christ and His people shall never more die, or be in the state of disembodied spirits.

This is the second death — "the lake of fire" is added in A, B, and ANDREAS. *English Version*, which omits the clause, rests on inferior manuscripts. In hell the ancient form of death, which was one of the enemies destroyed by Christ, shall not continue, but a death of a far different kind reigns there, "*everlasting* destruction from the presence of the Lord": an abiding testimony of the victory of Christ.

15. The blissful lot of the righteous is not here specially mentioned as their bliss had commenced *before* the final judgment. Compare, however, ~~4128~~ Matthew 25:34,41,46.

CHAPTER 21

REVELATION 21:1-27.

THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH: NEW JERUSALEM OUT OF HEAVEN.

The remaining two chapters describe the eternal and consummated kingdom of God and the saints on the new earth. As the world of nations is to be pervaded by divine influence in the millennium, so the world of nature shall be, not annihilated, but transfigured universally in the eternal state which follows it. The earth was cursed for man's sake; but is redeemed by the second Adam. *Now* is the Church; in the millennium shall be the kingdom; and after that shall be the new world wherein God shall be all in all. The "day of the Lord" and the conflagration of the earth are in ~~GEN~~ 2 Peter 3:10,11 spoken of as if connected together, from which many argue against a millennial interval between His coming and the general conflagration of the old earth, preparatory to the new; but "day" is used often of a whole period comprising events intimately connected together, as are the Lord's second advent, the millennium, and the general conflagration and judgment. Compare Genesis 2:4 as to the wide use of "day." Man's *soul* is redeemed by regeneration through the Holy Spirit now; man's *body* shall be redeemed at the resurrection; man's *dwelling-place*, His inheritance, the earth, shall be redeemed perfectly at the creation of the new heaven and earth, which shall exceed in glory the first Paradise, as much as the second Adam exceeds in glory the first Adam before the fall, and as man regenerated in body and soul shall exceed man as he was at creation.

1. the first — that is the former.

passed away — *Greek*, in A and B is "were departed" (*Greek*, "*apeelthon*," not as in *English Version*, "*pareelthe*").

was — *Greek*, "is," which graphically sets the thing before our eyes as present.

no more sea — The sea is the type of perpetual unrest. Hence our Lord rebukes it as an unruly hostile troubler of His people. It symbolized the political tumults out of which “the beast” arose, Revelation 13:1. As the physical corresponds to the spiritual and moral world, so the absence of *sea*, after the metamorphosis of the earth by *fire*, answers to the unruffled state of solid peace which shall then prevail. The *sea*, though severing lands from one another, is now, by God’s eliciting of good from evil, made the medium of communication between countries through navigation. Then man shall possess inherent powers which shall make the sea no longer necessary, but an element which would detract from a perfect state. A “river” and “water” are spoken of in Revelation 22:1,2, probably literal (that is, with such changes of the natural properties of water, as correspond analogically to man’s own transfigured body), as well as symbolical. The sea was once the element of the world’s destruction, and is still the source of death to thousands, whence after the millennium, at the general judgment, it is specially said, “The *sea* gave up the dead ... in it.” Then it shall cease to destroy, or disturb, being removed altogether on account of its past destructions.

2. And I John — “John” is omitted in A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS; also the “I” in the *Greek* of these authorities is not emphatic. The insertion of “I John” in the *Greek* would somewhat interfere with the close connection which subsists between “the new heaven and earth,” Revelation 21:1, and the “new Jerusalem” in this verse.

Jerusalem ... out of heaven — (ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲛ Revelation 3:12 ⲉⲕⲃⲉⲛ Galatians 4:26, “Jerusalem which is above”; ⲉⲕⲓⲏⲏⲉⲛ Hebrews 11:10 12:22 13:14). The *descent* of the new Jerusalem *out of heaven* is plainly distinct from the *earthly* Jerusalem in which Israel in the flesh shall dwell during the millennium, and follows on the creation of the new heaven and earth. John in his Gospel always writes [*Greek*] *Hierosoloma* of the old city; in the Apocalypse always *Hierousaleem* of the heavenly city (ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲛ Revelation 3:12). *Hierousaleem* is a *Hebrew* name, the original and holy appellation. *Hierosoloma* is the common *Greek* term, used in a political sense. Paul observes the same distinction when refuting Judaism (ⲉⲕⲃⲉⲛ Galatians 4:26; compare ⲉⲕⲓⲏⲏⲉⲛ Galatians 1:17,18 2:1 ⲉⲕⲓⲏⲏⲉⲛ Hebrews 12:22), though not so in the Epistles to Romans and Corinthians [BENGEL].

bride — made up of the blessed citizens of “the holy city.” There is no longer merely a Paradise as in Eden (though there is that also, Revelation 2:7), no longer a mere garden, but now *the city of God* on earth, costlier, statelier, and more glorious, but at the same time the result of labor and pains such as had not to be expended by man in dressing the primitive garden of Eden. “The lively stones” were severally in time laboriously chiselled into shape, after the pattern of “the Chief corner-stone,” to prepare them for the place which they shall everlastingly fill in the heavenly Jerusalem.

3. out of heaven — so ANDREAS. But A and *Vulgate* read, “out of the throne.”

the tabernacle — alluding to the tabernacle of God in the wilderness (wherein many signs of His presence were given): of which this is the antitype, having previously been in heaven: ^{<6119>}Revelation 11:19:15:5, “the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven”; also Revelation 13:6. Compare the contrast in ^{<8192>}Hebrews 9:23,14, between “the patterns” and “the heavenly things themselves,” between “the figures” and “the true.” The earnest of the true and heavenly tabernacle was afforded in the Jerusalem temple described in Ezekiel 40:1-42:20, as about to be, namely, during the millennium.

dwelt with them — literally, “*tabernacle* with them”; the same *Greek* word as is used of the divine Son “*tabernacling* among us.” Then He was in the weakness of the *flesh*: but at the new creation of heaven and earth He shall tabernacle among us in the glory of His manifested Godhead (Revelation 22:4).

they — in *Greek* emphatic, “*they*” (in particular).

his people — *Greek*, “His *peoples*”: “the nations of the saved” being all peculiarly His, as Israel was designed to be. So A reads. But B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, “His *people*”: singular.

God himself ... with them — realizing fully His name Immanuel.

4. all tears — *Greek*, “every tear.”

no more death — *Greek*, “death shall be no more.” Therefore it is not the millennium, for in the latter there is *death* (Isaiah 65:20 ^{<65>}1 Corinthians 15:26,54, “the *last* enemy ... destroyed is *death*,” ^{<64>}Revelation 20:14, *after* the millennium).

sorrow — *Greek*, “mourning.”

passed away — *Greek*, “departed,” as in Revelation 21:1.

5. sat — *Greek*, “sitteth.”

all things new — not recent, but *changed from the old* (*Greek*, “*kaina*,” not “*nea*”). An earnest of this regeneration and transfiguration of nature is given already in the regenerate soul.

unto me — so *Coptic* and *ANDREAS*. But *A*, *B*, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* omit.

true and faithful — so *ANDREAS*. But *A*, *B*, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* transpose, “faithful and true” (literally, “genuine”).

6. It is done — the same *Greek* as in ^{<66>}Revelation 16:17. “It is come to pass.” So *Vulgate* reads with *English Version*. But *A* reads, “They (‘*these words*,’ Revelation 21:5) are come to pass.” All is as sure as if it actually had been fulfilled for it rests on the word of the unchanging God. When the consummation shall be, God shall rejoice over the work of His own hands, as at the completion of the first creation God *saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good* (^{<63>}Genesis 1:31).

Alpha ... Omega — *Greek* in *A* and *B*, “*the Alpha ... the Omega*” (^{<61>}Revelation 1:18).

give unto ... athirst ... water of life — (^{<62>}Revelation 22:17 Isaiah 12:3 55: ^{<63>}1 John 4:13,14 7:37,38). This is added lest any should despair of attaining to this exceeding weight of glory. In our present state we may drink of the stream, then we shall drink at the *Fountain*.

freely — *Greek*, “gratuitously”: the same *Greek* as is translated, “(They hated Me) without a cause,” ^{<65>}John 15:25. As *gratuitous* as was man’s hatred of God, so *gratuitous* is God’s love to man: there was every cause in Christ why man should love Him, yet man hated Him; there was every cause in man why (humanly speaking) God should have hated man, yet

God loved man: the very reverse of what might be expected took place in both cases. Even in heaven our drinking at the Fountain shall be God's *gratuitous* gift.

7. He that overcometh — another aspect of the believer's life: a conflict with sin, Satan, and the world is needed. *Thirsting* for salvation is the first beginning of, and continues for ever (in the sense of an appetite and relish for divine joys) a characteristic of the believer. In a different sense, the believer "shall never thirst."

inherit all things — A, B, *Vulgate*, and CYPRIAN read, "*these* things," namely, the blessings described in this whole passage. With "all things," compare ^{<41>}1 Corinthians 3:21-23.

I will be his God — *Greek*, "I will be to him a God," that is, all that is implied of blessing in the name "God."

he shall be my son — "He" is emphatic: *He* in particular and in a peculiar sense, above others: *Greek*, "shall be *to me* a son," in fullest realization of the promise made in type to Solomon, son of David, and antitypically to the divine Son of David.

8. the fearful — *Greek*, "the cowardly," who do not *quit themselves like men* so as to "overcome" in the good fight; who have the spirit of slavish "fear," not love, towards God; and who through fear of man are not bold for God, or "draw back." Compare ^{<612>}Revelation 21:27 22:15.

unbelieving — *Greek*, "faithless."

abominable — who have drank of the harlot's "cup of abominations."

sorcerers — one of the characteristics of Antichrist's time.

all liars — *Greek*, "all *the* liars": or else "all *who are* liars"; compare 1 Timothy 4:1,2, where similarly *lying* and dealings with *spirits* and *demons*, are joined together as features of "the latter times."

second death — ^{<614>}Revelation 20:14: "*everlasting* destruction," 2 Thessalonians 1:9 ^{<4194>}Mark 9:44,46,48, "Where THEIR worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

9. The same angel who had shown John *Babylon the harlot*, is appropriately employed to show him in contrast *new Jerusalem, the Bride* (Revelation 17:1-5). The angel so employed is the one that had the last seven plagues, to show that the ultimate blessedness of the Church is one end of the divine judgments on her foes.

unto me — A, B, and *Vulgate* omit.

the Lamb's wife — in contrast to her *who sat on many waters* (Revelation 17:1), (that is, intrigued with many peoples and nations of the world, instead of giving her undivided affections, as the Bride does, to the Lamb.

10. The words correspond to Revelation 17:3, to heighten the contrast of the bride and harlot.

mountain — Compare Ezekiel 40:2, where a similar vision is given from a *high mountain*.

that great — omitted in A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and CYPRIAN. Translate then, “the holy city Jerusalem.”

descending — Even in the millennium the earth will not be a suitable abode for transfigured saints, who therefore shall then reign in heaven over the earth. But after the renewal of the earth at the close of the millennium and judgment, they shall *descend* from heaven to dwell on an earth assimilated to heaven itself. “From God” implies that “we (the city) are God’s workmanship.”

11. Having the glory of God — not merely the Shekinah-cloud, but God Himself as her glory dwelling in the midst of her. Compare the type, the earthly Jerusalem in the millennium (Zechariah 2:5; compare ⁶⁶²³ Revelation 21:23, below).

her light — *Greek*, “light-giver”: properly applied to the heavenly *luminaries* which diffuse light. Compare *Note*, see on ³⁴⁴⁵ Philippians 2:15, the only other passage where it occurs. The “and” before “her light” is omitted in A, B, and *Vulgate*.

even like — *Greek*, “as it were.”

jasper — representing *watery crystalline brightness*.

12. And — A and B omit. Ezekiel 48:30-35, has a similar description, which implies that the millennial Jerusalem shall have its exact antitype in the heavenly Jerusalem which shall descend on the finally regenerated earth.

wall great and high — setting forth the security of the Church. Also, the exclusion of the ungodly.

twelve angels — guards of the twelve gates: an additional emblem of perfect security, while the gates being never shut (⁶¹²Revelation 21:25) imply perfect liberty and peace. Also, angels shall be the brethren of the heavenly citizens.

names of ... twelve tribes — The inscription of the names on the gates implies that none but the spiritual Israel, God's elect, shall enter the heavenly city. As the millennium wherein *literal* Israel *in the flesh* shall be the mother Church, is the antitype to the Old Testament *earthly* theocracy in the Holy Land, so the *heavenly* new *Jerusalem* is the consummation antitypical to the *spiritual* Israel, the elect Church of Jews and Gentiles being now gathered out: as the spiritual Israel now is an advance upon the previous literal and carnal Israel, so the heavenly Jerusalem shall be much in advance of the millennial Jerusalem.

13. On the north ... on the south — A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, “*And on the north and on the south.*” In Ezekiel, Joseph, Benjamin, Daniel (for which Manasseh is substituted in Revelation 7:6), are on the east (Ezekiel 48:32); Reuben, Judah, Levi, are on the *north* (Ezekiel 48:31); Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, on the *south* (Ezekiel 48:33); Gad, Asher, Naphtali, on the *west* (Ezekiel 48:34). In Numbers, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun are on the east (Numbers 2:3,5,7). Reuben, Simeon, Gad, on the south (⁶¹¹Numbers 2:10,12,14). Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, on the *west* (⁶¹²Numbers 2:18,20,22). Dan, Asher, Naphtali, on the *north* (⁶¹³Numbers 2:25,27,29).

14. twelve foundations — Joshua, the type of Jesus, chose twelve men out of the people, to carry twelve stones over the Jordan with them, as Jesus chose twelve apostles to be the twelve foundations of the heavenly city, of which He is Himself the Chief corner-stone. Peter is not the only apostolic rock on whose preaching Christ builds His Church. Christ

Himself is the true foundation: the twelve are foundations only in regard to their apostolic testimony concerning Him. Though Paul was an apostle besides the twelve, yet the mystical number is retained, twelve representing the Church, namely thirty the divine number, multiplied by four, the world number.

in them the names, etc. — As architects often have their names inscribed on their great works, so the names of the apostles shall be held in everlasting remembrance. *Vulgate* reads, “*in* them.” But A, B, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS read, “*upon* them.” These authorities also insert “twelve” before “names.”

15. had a golden reed — so *Coptic*. But A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, “had (as) *a measure*, a golden reed.” In Revelation 11:2 the non-measuring of the outer courts of the temple implied its being given up to secular and heathen desecration. So here, on the contrary, the city being measured implies the entire consecration of every part, all things being brought up to the most exact standard of God’s holy requirements, and also God’s accurate guardianship henceforth of even the most minute parts of His holy city from all evil.

16. twelve thousand furlongs — literally, “*to twelve thousand stadii*”: one thousand furlongs being the space between the several twelve gates. BENDEL makes the length of *each side* of the city to be twelve thousand stadii. The stupendous height, length, and breadth being exactly alike, imply its faultless symmetry, transcending in glory all our most glowing conceptions.

17. hundred ... forty ... four cubits — twelve times twelve: the Church-number squared. The wall is far beneath the height of the city.

measure of a man, that is, of the angel — The ordinary measure used by *men* is the measure here used by the *angel*, distinct from “the measure of the sanctuary.” Men shall then be *equal to the angels*.

18. the building — “the structure” [TREGELLES], *Greek*, “*endomeesis*.”

gold, like ... clear glass — Ideal gold, transparent as no gold here is [ALFORD]. Excellencies will be combined in the heavenly city which now seem incompatible.

19. And — so *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and *ANDREAS*. But A, B, and *Vulgate* omit. Compare ^{ⲉⲛⲓⲁ}Revelation 21:14 with this verse; also Isaiah 54:11.

all manner of precious stones — Contrast ^{ⲉⲛⲓⲁ}Revelation 18:12 as to the harlot, Babylon. These precious stones constituted the “foundations.”

chalcedony — agate from Chalcedon: semi-opaque, sky-blue, with stripes of other colors [ALFORD].

20. sardonyx — a gem having the redness of the cornelian, and the whiteness of the onyx.

sardius — (See on Revelation 4:3).

chrysolite — described by *PLINY* as *TRANSPARENT* and of a golden brightness, like our topaz: different from our pale green crystallized *chrysolite*.

beryl — of a sea-green color.

topaz — *PLINY* [37.32], makes it *green* and transparent, like our chrysolite.

chrysoprasus — somewhat pale, and having the purple color of the amethyst [*PLINY*, 37, 20, 21].

jacinth — The flashing violet brightness in the amethyst is diluted in the jacinth [*PLINY*, 37.41].

21. every several — *Greek*, “each one severally.”

22. no temple ... God ... the temple — As God now dwells in the spiritual Church, His “temple” (*Greek*, “*naos*,” “shrine”; ^{ⲉⲛⲓⲁ}1 Corinthians 3:17 6:19), so the Church when perfected shall dwell in Him as her “temple” (*naos*: the same *Greek*). As the Church was “His sanctuary,” so He is to be their sanctuary. Means of grace shall cease when the end of grace is come. Church ordinances shall give place to the God of ordinances. Uninterrupted, immediate, direct, communion with Him and the Lamb (compare ^{ⲉⲛⲓⲁ}John 4:23), shall supersede intervening ordinances.

23. in it — so *Vulgate*. But A, B, and *ANDREAS* read, “(shine) *on* it,” or literally, “*for* her.”

the light — *Greek*, “the lamp” (Isaiah 60:19,20). The direct light of God and the Lamb shall make the saints independent of God’s creatures, the sun and moon, for light.

24. of them which are saved ... in — A, B, *Vulgate*, *Coptic*, and *ANDREAS* read “(the nations shall walk) *by means* of her light”: omitting “of them which are saved.” Her brightness shall supply them with light.

the kings of the earth — who once had regard only to their glory, having been converted, now in the new Jerusalem do bring their glory into it, to lay it down at the feet of their God and Lord.

and honor — so B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac*. But A omits the clause.

25. not be shut ... by day — therefore shall never be shut: for it shall *always* be day. Gates are usually shut by night: but in it shall be no night. There shall be continual free ingress into it, so as that all which is blessed and glorious may continually be brought into it. So in the millennial type.

26. All that was truly glorious and excellent in the earth and its converted *nations* shall be gathered into it; and while all shall form *one* Bride, there shall be various orders among the redeemed, analogous to the divisions of *nations* on earth constituting the one great human family, and to the various orders of angels.

27. anything that defileth — *Greek*, “*koinoun*.” A and B read [*koinon*,] “anything *unclean*.”

in the Lamb’s book of life — (See on ⁽⁶¹⁰⁾Revelation 20:12; ⁽⁶¹⁵⁾Revelation 20:15). As all the filth of the old Jerusalem was carried outside the walls and burnt there, so nothing defiled shall enter the heavenly city, but be burnt *outside* (compare ⁽⁶²¹⁾Revelation 22:15). It is striking that the apostle of love, who shows us the glories of the heavenly city, is he also who speaks most plainly of the terrors of hell. On ⁽⁶²²⁾Revelation 21:26,27, *ALFORD* writes a Note, rash in speculation, about the heathen *nations*, above what is written, and not at all required by the sacred text: compare *Note*, see on ⁽⁶²³⁾Revelation 21:26.

CHAPTER 22

REVELATION 22:1-21.

THE RIVER OF LIFE: THE TREE OF LIFE: THE OTHER BLESSEDNESSES OF THE REDEEMED. JOHN FORBIDDEN TO WORSHIP THE ANGEL. NEARNESS OF CHRIST'S COMING TO FIX MAN'S ETERNAL STATE. TESTIMONY OF JESUS, HIS SPIRIT, AND THE BRIDE, ANY ADDITION TO WHICH, OR SUBTRACTION FROM WHICH, SHALL BE ETERNALLY PUNISHED. CLOSING BENEDICTION.

1. pure — A, B, *Vulgate*, and HILARY 22, omit.

water of life — infinitely superior to the typical waters in the first Paradise (~~omit~~ Genesis 2:10-14); and even superior to those figurative ones in the millennial Jerusalem (Ezekiel 47:1,12 Zechariah 14:8), as the matured fruit is superior to the flower. The millennial waters represent full Gospel grace; these waters of new Jerusalem represent Gospel glory perfected. Their continuous flow from God, the Fountain of life, symbolizes the uninterrupted continuance of life derived by the saints, ever fresh, from Him: life in fullness of joy, as well as perpetual vitality. Like pure crystal, it is free from every taint: compare Revelation 4:6, “before the throne a sea of glass, like crystal.”

clear — *Greek*, “bright.”

2. The harmonious unity of Scripture is herein exhibited. The Fathers compared it to a ring, an unbroken circle, returning into itself. Between the events of Genesis and those at the close of the Apocalypse, at least six thousand or seven thousand years intervene; and between Moses the first writer and John the last about one thousand five hundred years. How striking it is that, as in the beginning we found Adam and Eve, his bride, in innocence in Paradise, then tempted by the serpent, and driven from the tree of life, and from the pleasant waters of Eden, yet not without a promise of a Redeemer who should crush the serpent; so at the close, the.

old serpent cast out for ever by the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who appears with His Bride, the Church, in a better Paradise, and amidst better waters (Revelation 22:1): the tree of life also is there with all its *healing* properties, not guarded with a flaming sword, but open to all who overcome (Revelation 2:7), and there is no more curse.

street of it — that is, of the city.

on either side of the river — ALFORD translates, “In the midst of the street of it (the city) and of the river, on one side and on the other” (for the second *Greek*, “*enteuthen*,” A, B, and Syriac read, *ekeithen*: the sense is the same; compare *Greek*, ~~ⲉⲛⲧⲉⲩⲧⲉⲛ~~ John 19:18); thus the trees were on each side in the middle of the space between the street and the river. But from Ezekiel 47:7, I prefer *English Version*. The antitype exceeds the type: in the first Paradise was only *one* tree of life; now there are “*very many trees at the bank of the river, on the one side and on the other*.” To make good sense, supposing there to be but *one* tree, we should either, as MEDE, suppose that the *Greek* for *street* is a *plain* washed on both sides by the river (as the first Paradise was washed on one side by the Tigris, on the other by the Euphrates), and that in the midst of the plain, which itself is in the midst of the river’s branches, stood the tree: in which case we may translate, “In the midst of the street (plain) *itself*, and of the river (having two branches flowing) on this and on that side, was there the tree of life.” Or else with DURHAM suppose, *the tree* was in the midst of the river, and extending its branches to both banks. But compare Ezekiel 47:12, the millennial type of the final Paradise; which shows that there are several trees of the one kind, all termed “the tree of life.” Death reigns now because of sin; even in the millennial earth sin, and therefore death, though much limited, shall not altogether cease. But in the final and heavenly city on earth, sin and death shall utterly cease.

yielded her fruit every month — *Greek*, “according to each month”; each month had its own proper fruit, just as different seasons are now marked by their own productions; only that then, unlike now, there shall be *no season without its fruit*, and there shall be an endless variety, answering to *twelve*, the number symbolical of the world-wide Church (compare *Note*, see on Revelation 12:1; ~~ⲉⲛⲧⲉⲩⲧⲉⲛ~~ Revelation 21:14). ARCHBISHOP WHATLEY thinks that the tree of life was among the trees of which Adam

freely ate (Genesis 2:9,16,17), and that his continuance in immortality was dependent on his *continuing* to eat of this tree; having forfeited it, he became liable to death; but still the effects of having eaten of it for a time showed themselves in the longevity of the patriarchs. God could undoubtedly endue a tree with special medicinal powers. But ^{<1672>}Genesis 3:22 seems to imply, *man had not yet taken of the tree*, and that if he had, he would have lived for ever, which in his then fallen state would have been the greatest curse.

leaves ... for ... healing — (Ezekiel 47:9,12). The *leaves* shall be the *health-giving* preventive securing the redeemed against, not healing them of, sicknesses, while “the fruit shall be for meat.” In the millennium described in Ezekiel 47:1-23 and Revelation 20:1-15, the Church shall give the Gospel-tree to the nations outside Israel and the Church, and so shall heal their spiritual malady; but in the *final* and *perfect* new Jerusalem here described, the state of all is eternally fixed, and no saving process goes on any longer (compare ^{<621>}Revelation 22:11). ALFORD utterly mistakes in speaking of “nations outside,” and “dwelling on the renewed earth, organized under kings, and saved by the influences of the heavenly city” (!) Compare Revelation 21:2,10-27; the “nations” mentioned (^{<612>}Revelation 21:24) are those which have long before, namely, in the millennium (^{<615>}Revelation 11:15), become the Lord’s and His Christ’s.

3. no more curse — of which the earnest shall be given in the millennium (Zechariah 14:11). God can only dwell where the curse and its cause, the cursed thing sin (^{<672>}Joshua 7:12), are removed. So there follows rightly, “But the throne of God and of the Lamb (who redeemed us from the curse, ^{<610>}Galatians 3:10,13) shall be in it.” Compare in the millennium, Ezekiel 48:35.

serve him — with *worship* (^{<675>}Revelation 7:15).

4. see his face — revealed in divine glory, *in Christ Jesus*. They shall see and know Him with intuitive knowledge of Him, *even as they are known by Him* (1 Corinthians 13:9-12), and face to face. Compare ^{<516>}1 Timothy 6:16, with John 14:9. God the Father can only be seen in Christ.

in — *Greek*, “on their foreheads.” Not only shall they personally and in secret (^{<617>}Revelation 3:17) know their sonship, but they shall be known as

sons of God to all the citizens of the new Jerusalem, so that the free flow of mutual love among the members of Christ's family will not be checked by suspicion as here.

5. there — so ANDREAS. But A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* read, “(there shall be no night) any longer”; *Greek*, “*eti*,” for “*ekei*.”

they need — A, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic* read the future, “they *shall* not have need.” B reads, “(and there shall be) no need.”

candle — *Greek*, “lamp.” A, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* insert “light (of a candle, or lamp).” B Omits it.

of the sun — so A. But B omits it.

giveth ... light — “illumines.” So *Vulgate* and *Syriac*. But A reads, “*shall* give light.”

them — so B and ANDREAS. But A reads, “*upon* them.”

reign — with a glory probably transcending that of their reign in heaven with Christ over the millennial nations in the flesh described in Revelation 20:4,6; that reign was but for a limited time, “a thousand years”; this final reign is “unto the ages of the ages.”

6. These sayings are true — thrice repeated (Revelation 19:9 21:5). For we are slow to believe that God is as good as He is. The news seems to us, habituated as we are to the misery of this fallen world, too good to be true [NANGLE]. They are no dreams of a visionary, but the realities of God's sure word.

holy — so ANDREAS. But A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, “(the Lord God of the) *spirits* (of the prophets).” The Lord God who with His Spirit inspired their spirits so as to be able to prophesy. There is but one Spirit, but individual prophets, according to the measure given them (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), had their own spirits [BENGEL] (ⲙⲓⲛⲓ 1 Peter 1:11 ⲙⲓⲛⲓ 2 Peter 1:21).

be done — *Greek*, “come to pass.”

7. “And” is omitted in *Coptic* and ANDREAS with *English Version*, but is inserted by A, B, *Vulgate* and *Syriac*.

blessed — (Revelation 1:3).

8. Both here and in Revelation 19:9,10, the apostle's falling at the feet of the angel is preceded by a glorious promise to the Church, accompanied with the assurance, that "These are the true sayings of God," and that those are "blessed" who keep them. Rapturous emotion, gratitude, and adoration, at the prospect of the Church's future glory transport him out of himself, so as all but to fall into an unjustifiable act; contrast his opposite feeling at the prospect of the Church's deep fall [AUBERLEN], see on Revelation 17:6; Revelation 19:9,10.

saw ... and heard — A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Syriac* transpose these verbs. Translate literally, "I John (was he) who heard and saw these things." It is observable that in ^(~~MS~~)Revelation 19:10, the language is, "I fell before his feet to worship him"; but here, "I fell down to worship (God?) *before the feet* of the angel." It seems unlikely that John, when once reproved, would fall into the very same error again. BENGE'S view, therefore, is probable; John had first intended to worship *the angel* (^(~~MS~~)Revelation 19:10), but now only *at his feet* intends to worship (God). The angel does not even permit this.

9. Literally, "See not"; the abruptness of the phrase marking the angel's abhorrence of the thought of *his* being worshipped however indirectly. Contrast the fallen angel's temptation to Jesus, "Fall down and worship me" (Matthew 4:9).

for — A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, ANDREAS, and CYPRIAN omit "for"; which accords with the abrupt earnestness of the angel's prohibition of an act derogatory to God.

and of — "and (the fellow servant) of thy brethren."

10. Seal not — But in Daniel 12:4,9 (compare Daniel 8:26), the command is, "Seal the book," for the vision shall be "for many days." The fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy was distant, that of John's prophecy is near. The New Testament is the time of the end and fulfillment. The Gentile Church, for which John wrote his Revelation, needs more to be impressed with the shortness of the period, as it is inclined, owing to its Gentile origin, to conform to the world and forget the coming of the Lord. The Revelation

points, on the one hand, to Christ's coming as distant, for it shows the succession of the seven seals, trumpets, and vials; on the other hand, it proclaims, "Behold, I come quickly." So Christ marked many events as about to intervene before His coming, and yet He also says "Behold, I come quickly," because our right attitude is that of continual prayerful watching for His coming (Matthew 25:6,13,19 ~~41133~~ Mark 13:32-37 [AUBERLEN]; compare Revelation 1:3).

11. unjust — "unrighteous"; in relation to one's fellow men; opposed to "righteous," or "just" (as the *Greek* may be translated) below. More literally, "he that *doeth unjustly*, let him *do unjustly* still."

filthy — in relation to one's own soul as unclean before God; opposed to holy," consecrated to God as pure. A omits the clause, "He which is filthy let him be filthy still." But B supports it. In the letter of the Vienne and Lyons Martyrs (in EUSEBIUS) in the second century, the reading is, "He that is *lawless* (*Greek*, '*anomos*') let him be lawless; and he that is righteous let him be righteous (literally, 'be justified') still." No manuscript is so old. A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, ANDREAS, and CYPRIAN read, "let him do righteousness" (~~6129~~ 1 John 2:29 3:7). The punishment of sin is sin, the reward of holiness is holiness. Eternal punishment is not so much an arbitrary law, as a result necessarily following in the very nature of things, as the fruit results from the bud. No worse punishment can God lay on ungodly men than to give them up to themselves. The solemn lesson derivable from this verse is, Be converted now in the short time left (~~6129~~ Revelation 22:10, end) before "I come" (Revelation 22:7,12), or else you must remain unconverted for ever; sin in the eternal world will be left to its own natural consequences; holiness in germ will there develop itself into perfect holiness, which is happiness.

12. And — in none of our manuscripts. But A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and CYPRIAN omit it.

behold, I come quickly — (Compare Revelation 22:7).

my reward is with me — (Isaiah 40:10 62:11).

to give — *Greek*, "to render."

every man — *Greek*, "to each."

shall be — so B in MAI. But B in TISCHENDORF, and A, *Syriac*, read, “is.”

13. I am Alpha — *Greek*, “... *the Alpha and the Omega.*” A, B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, ORIGEN, and CYPRIAN transpose thus, “the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” ANDREAS supports *English Version*. Compare with these divine titles assumed here by the Lord Jesus, Revelation 1:8, 17 21:6. At the winding up of the whole scheme of revelation He announces Himself as the One *before whom and after whom there is no God.*

14. do his commandments — so B, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and CYPRIAN. But A, *Aleph*, and *Vulgate* read, “(Blessed are they that) *wash their robes,*” namely, *in the blood of the Lamb* (compare ⁽⁶¹⁷⁴⁾Revelation 7:14). This reading takes away the pretext for the notion of salvation by works. But even *English Version* reading is quite compatible with salvation by grace; for God’s first and grand Gospel “commandment” is to believe on Jesus. Thus our “right” to (*Greek*, “privilege” or “lawful authority over”) the tree of life is due not to our doings, but to what He has done for us. The *right*, or *privilege*, is founded, not on our merits, but on God’s grace.

through — *Greek*, “by the gates.”

15. But — so *Coptic*. But A, B, HIPPOLYTUS, ANDREAS, and CYPRIAN omit.

dogs — *Greek*, “the dogs”; the impure, filthy (⁽⁶¹²¹⁾Revelation 22:11; compare Philippians 3:2).

maketh — including also “whosoever *practiceth* a lie” [W. KELLY].

16. mine angel — for Jesus is Lord of the angels.

unto you — ministers and people in the seven representative churches, and, through you, to testify to Christians of all times and places.

root ... offspring of David — appropriate title here where assuring His Church of “the sure mercies of David,” secured to Israel first, and through Israel to the Gentiles. *Root* of David, as being Jehovah; the offspring of David as man. David’s Lord, yet David’s son (⁽⁴¹²⁶⁾Matthew 22:42-45).

the morning star — that ushered in the day of grace in the beginning of this dispensation and that shall usher in the everlasting day of glory at its close.

17. Reply of the spiritual Church and John to Christ's words (Revelation 22:7,12,16).

the Spirit — in the churches and in the prophets.

the bride — not here called "wife," as that title applies to her only when the full number constituting the Church shall have been completed. The invitation, "Come," only holds good while the Church is still but an affianced *Bride*, and not the actually wedded *wife*. However, "Come" may rather be the prayer of the Spirit in the Church and in believers in reply to Christ's "I come quickly," crying, Even so, "Come" (Revelation 22:7,12); ⁽¹²²⁾Revelation 22:20 confirms this view. The whole question of your salvation hinges on this, that you be able to hear with joy Christ's announcement, "I come," and to reply, "Come" [BENGEL]. Come to fully glorify Thy Bride.

let him that heareth — that is, let him that heareth the Spirit and Bride saying to the Lord Jesus, "Come," join the Bride as a true believer, become part of her, and so say with her to Jesus, "Come." On "heareth" means "obeyeth"; for until one has *obeyed* the Gospel call, he cannot pray to Jesus "Come"; so "hear" is used, Revelation 1:3 ⁽¹²¹⁾John 10:16. Let him that hears and obeys Jesus' voice (⁽¹²²⁾Revelation 22:16 Revelation 1:3) join in praying "Come." Compare Revelation 6:1,10; see on Revelation 6:1. In the other view, which makes "Come" an invitation to sinners, this clause urges those who themselves hear savingly the invitation to address the same to others, as did Andrew and Philip after they themselves had heard and obeyed Jesus' invitation, "Come."

let him that is athirst come — As the Bride, the Church, prays to Jesus, "Come," so she urges all whosoever *thirst* for participation in the full manifestation of redemption-glory at *His coming to us*, to COME in the meantime and drink of the living waters, which are the earnest of "the water of life pure as crystal ... out of the throne of God of the Lamb" (Revelation 22:1) in the regenerated heaven and earth.

And — so *Syriac*. But A, B, *Vulgate*, and *Coptic* omit “and.”

whosoever will — that is, is willing and desirous. There is a descending climax; Let him that *heareth* effectually and savingly Christ’s voice, pray individually, as the Bride, the Church, does collectively, “Come, Lord Jesus” (⁶²¹Revelation 22:20). Let him who, though not yet having actually *heard* unto salvation, and so not yet able to join in the prayer, “Lord Jesus, come, “still *thirsts* for it, *come* to Christ. Whosoever is even *willing*, though his desires do not yet amount to positive *thirsting*, let him take the water of life freely, that is, gratuitously.

18. For I testify — None of our manuscripts have this. A, B, *Vulgate*, and ANDREAS read, “I” emphatic in the *Greek*. “*I* testify.”

unto these things — A, B, and ANDREAS read, “unto them.”

add ... add — just retribution in kind.

19. book — None of our manuscripts read this. A, B, *Aleph*, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic* read, “(take away his part, that is, portion) from the tree of life,” that is, shall deprive him of participation in the tree of life.

and from the things — so *Vulgate*. But A, B, *Aleph*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS omit “and”; then “which are written in this book” will refer to “the holy city and the tree of life.” As in the beginning of this book (Revelation 1:3) a blessing was promised to the devout, obedient student of it, so now at its close a curse is denounced against those who add to, or take from, it.

20. Amen. Even so, come — The Song of Solomon (Song of Solomon 8:14) closes with the same yearning prayer for Christ’s coming. A, B, and *Aleph* omit “Even so,” *Greek*, “*naī*”: then translate for *Amen*, “*So be it*, come, Lord Jesus”; joining the “Amen,” or “So be it,” not with Christ’s saying (for He calls Himself the “Amen” at the beginning of sentences, rather than puts it as a confirmation at the end), but with John’s reply. Christ’s “I come,” and John’s “Come,” are almost coincident in time; so truly does the believer reflect the mind of his Lord.

21. our — so *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Coptic*. But A, B, and *Aleph* omit.

Christ — so B, *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Coptic*, and ANDREAS. But A and *Aleph* omit.

with you all — so none of our manuscripts. B has, “with all the saints.” A and *Vulgate* have, “with all.” *Aleph* has, “with the saints.” This closing benediction, Paul’s mark in his Epistles, was after Paul’s death taken up by John. The Old Testament ended with a “curse” in connection with the *law*; the New Testament ends with a blessing in union with the Lord Jesus.

Amen — so B, *Aleph*, and ANDREAS. A and *Vulgate Fuldensis* omit it.

May the Blessed Lord who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, bless this humble effort to make Scripture expound itself, and make it an instrument towards the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints, to the glory of His great name and the hastening of His kingdom! Amen.