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COMMENTARIES

EXPOSITION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

1 PETER

by John Gill

*Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth
— Psalm 60:4*

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1 PETER

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 1 PETER

That Simon, called Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, was the writer of this epistle, is not questioned by any; nor was the genuineness and authenticity of it ever made a doubt of. Eusebius says ^{f1}, that it had been confessed by all, and received without controversy; and that the ancients, without any scruple, had made use of it in their writings. It is called his “general”, or catholic epistle, because it was not written to any particular person, or to any particular church, but in general, to a number of Christians dispersed in several places. The time when this epistle was written is not certain; some place it in the year of Christ 44 or 45, and so make it to be the most ancient of all the epistles, and which is the more commonly received opinion; but Dr. Lightfoot ^{f2} places it in the year 65, because in it the apostle speaks of the end of all things being at hand, and of the fiery trial just coming on them, and of judgment beginning at the house of God, (~~1~~1 Peter 4:7,12,17) all which he applies to the destruction of Jerusalem; though others fix it to 61, in the seventh year of Nero ^{f3}. The place from whence it seems to be written was Babylon, (~~1~~1 Peter 5:13) which is to be understood not figuratively, either of Rome or Jerusalem, but properly of Babylon, the metropolis of Chaldea, or Assyria. The persons to whom it is written were Jews, at least chiefly; for there might be some Gentiles among them, who may be taken notice of in some parts of the epistle; but the principal part were Jews, as appears from their being called the strangers of the dispersion, or, as James calls them, “the twelve tribes scattered abroad”; from the mention of the tradition of their fathers; from their having their conversation honest among the Gentiles, and their past life among them; from urging subjection to the civil magistrates among the Heathens, and the right use of their Christian liberty as to the ceremonies of the law; and from the near destruction of Jerusalem, which could only affect them; and from the use made of the writings of the Old Testament, and the authority of the prophets; (see ~~1~~1 Peter 1:1,18 2:12 4:3 2:13,16 4:7,12,17) as well as from the second epistle, which was written to the

same; (see ~~6019~~ 2 Peter 1:19 2:1 3:1,2,15) in which he seems to refer to the epistle to the Hebrews, written by Paul, as to these. And besides, Peter was the minister of the circumcision, or of the circumcised Jews, as Paul was of the Gentiles; and even those passages in this epistle, which seem most likely to concern the Gentiles, may be understood of the Jews, as which speak of their ignorance, idolatry, and having not been a people, (~~6014~~ 1 Peter 1:14 4:3 2:10) which were true of them before conversion, and as living among Gentiles. The occasion of writing it was this; Peter meeting with Sylvanus, a faithful brother, and who had been a companion of the Apostle Paul, he takes this opportunity of sending a letter by him to the converted Jews, dispersed among the Gentile countries, where he, with Paul, and others, travelled: the design of which is to testify of the true doctrine of grace, in which they were agreed; (see ~~6052~~ 1 Peter 5:12). And accordingly in it he does treat of the doctrine of electing grace, of redeeming grace, of regenerating and sanctifying grace, and of persevering grace; and exhorts believers to the exercise of grace, of faith, hope, and love, and to the discharge of such duties becoming their several stations, whereby they might evidence to others the truth of grace in themselves, and adorn the doctrine of the grace of God, and recommend it to others: and particularly he exhorts them patiently to bear all afflictions and persecutions they should meet with, for their profession of the true grace of God, in which he encourages them to stand steadfast: and this is the general scope and design of the epistle.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 1

In this chapter, after the inscription and salutation, the apostle gives thanks to God for various blessings of grace bestowed, or to be bestowed upon the persons he writes to; and then, with the best of arguments and motives, urges them to the performance of several duties of religion. In the inscription, the person who is the writer of the epistle is described, both by his name, and by his office; and also the persons to whom it is sent, by their outward condition, strangers dispersed through several countries particularly mentioned, and by their spiritual estate, elect men; the source and spring of which election is the foreknowledge of God the Father; the means, the sanctification of the Spirit; and the end, obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ; and to these the apostle wishes a multiplication of grace and peace, ([1 Peter 1:1,2](#)) and then he gives thanks to God for the regeneration of them; the efficient cause of which is God the Father; the moving cause, his abundant mercy; the means, the resurrection of Christ from the dead; the end, a lively hope of a glorious inheritance, ([1 Peter 1:3,4](#)) and next follows a description of regenerate ones; they are such who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation; who rejoice in hope of that salvation, though now for a little while are sorrowful, by reason of afflictions, which are for the trial of their faith; they are believers in Christ, lovers of him, and rejoice in him, and shall at last receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls, ([1 Peter 1:5-9](#)) the excellency of which salvation is set forth from the concern the prophets had in it, the scrutiny they made into it, and the revelation of it made to them; from the concern the apostles had in it, and their report of it, and from the desire of angels to look into it, ([1 Peter 1:10-12](#)) upon which the apostle exhorts to the exercise of various graces and duties, to attention of mind, to sobriety, to a constant hope of eternal glory, and to holiness of life and conversation, ([1 Peter 1:13,14](#)) the arguments engaging to which are taken from the nature of God, who had called them by his grace, ([1 Peter 1:15,16](#)) from their concern with him, as a Father and a judge; from their state and condition, as sojourners in this world, and from their redemption by the blood of Christ from a vain conversation,

(~~¶17~~ 1 Peter 1:17-19) and of Christ, the Redeemer of them, many things are said, as that he was ordained before the foundation of the world to be the Redeemer; was manifested in human nature in these last days, for the sake of such that believe; was raised from the dead, and glorified, that there might be a sufficient foundation for the exercise of faith and hope in God, (~~¶20~~ 1 Peter 1:20,21) and next the apostle exhorts to brotherly love, in purity, and with fervency; from the consideration of the internal purification of them by the Spirit, through obedience to the truth; and from their regeneration, the cause of which was not corruptible, but incorruptible seed; and the means, the living and abiding word of God, (~~¶22~~ 1 Peter 1:22,23) which is illustrated by a passage out of (~~¶24~~ Isaiah 40:6-8) setting forth the frailty and mortality of men, and the transitoriness of all outward enjoyments; to which is opposed the duration of the everlasting Gospel, the means of regeneration, (~~¶25~~ 1 Peter 1:24,25).

Ver. 1. *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The writer of this epistle describes himself first by his name, Peter, the same with Cephas, which signifies a rock, or stone; a name given him by Christ at his first conversion, and which respected his after firmness, solidity, resolution, and constancy; for his former name was Simeon, or Simon, as sometimes called; (see ~~¶18~~ Matthew 4:18 ~~¶19~~ John 1:42) and he further describes himself by his office, as

an apostle of Jesus Christ; being one of the twelve apostles, and the first of that number; who saw Christ in the flesh, was conversant with him, had his call and commission immediately from him, and was qualified by him to preach the Gospel; and was sent out first into Judea, and then into all the world to publish it, with a power of working miracles to confirm it; and this his character he makes mention of, in order to give the greater weight and authority to his epistle; and it is to be observed, that he does not style himself, as his pretended successor does, the head of the church, and Christ's vicar on earth; nor does he call himself the prince of the apostles, but only an apostle, as he was upon an equal foot with the rest. The persons he writes to are

the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia: these Jews here intended are called strangers; not in a metaphorical sense, either because they were, as the wicked are, estranged from the womb, and alienated from the life of God, as all unconverted men are, and as they were before conversion; for now they were no more

strangers in this sense: or because of their unsettled state and condition in this life; having no continuing city, and seeking one to come, an heavenly country; and living as pilgrims and strangers, in which respect they are indeed so styled, (~~¶~~1 Peter 2:11) but in a civil sense, and not as the Gentiles were, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, for these were Jews; but on account of their not being in their own land, and in a foreign country, and therefore said to be “scattered”, or “the strangers of the dispersion”; either on account of the persecution at the death of Stephen, when multitudes of the converted Jews were scattered abroad, not only throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, but as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch; (see ~~¶~~Acts 8:1,4 11:19) and so it may be afterwards throughout the places here mentioned; or else these were some remains of the ten tribes carried captive by Shalmaneser, and of the two tribes by Nebuchadnezzar; or rather the dispersion of the Greeks, mentioned in (~~¶~~John 7:35) under the Macedonians, by Ptolemy Lagus: however, there were Jews of Pontus, who inhabited that place, and of such we read in (~~¶~~Acts 2:9) who came to worship at the feast of Pentecost, some of which were converted to the Christian faith, and being mentioned first, has occasioned this epistle to be called, both by Tertullian ^{f4}, and Cyprian ^{f5}, “the epistle to the Pontians”. Perhaps these Jews converted on the day of Pentecost, on their return hither, laid the first foundation of a Gospel church state in this country: it is a tradition of the ancients, mentioned by Eusebius ^{f6}, that Peter himself preached here, and so, very likely, formed the Christians he found, and those that were converted by him, into Gospel churches; and it appears by a letter of Dionysius, bishop of Corinth ^{f7}, that there were churches in Poutus in the “second” century, particularly at Amastris, the bishop of which was one Palma, whom he commends, and Focas is said to be bishop of Syncope, in the same age; and in the “third” century, Gregory and Athenodorus, disciples of Origen, were bishops in this country ^{f8}; the former was a very famous man, called Gregory Thaumaturgus, the wonder worker, and was bishop of Neocaesarea: in the “fourth” century there was a church in the same place, of which Longinus was bishop, as appears from the Nicene council, at which he and other bishops in Pontus were present; and in this age, in the times of Dioclesian, many in this country endured most shocking sufferings, related by Eusebius ^{f9}; and in the same century Helladius is said to govern the churches of Pontus; and in the “fifth” century we read of churches in Pontus, reformed by Chrysostom; in this age Theodorus was bishop of Heraclea, and Themistius of Amastris, both

in this province, and both these bishops were in the Chalcedon council; and in the “sixth” century there were churches in Pontus, whose bishops were in the fifth synod held at Rome and Constantinople; and so there were in the “seventh” and “eighth” centuries^{f10}

Galatia, next mentioned, is that part of the lesser Asia, called Gallo Graecia, in which were several churches, to whom the Apostle Paul wrote his epistle, called the epistle to the Galatians; (see Gill on “~~4466~~Acts 16:6”) (see Gill on “~~8002~~Galatians 1:2”).

Cappadocia, according to Ptolomy^{f11}, was bounded on the west by Galatia, on the south by Cilicia, on the east by Armenia the great, on the north by part of the Euxine Pontus; it had many famous cities in it, as Solinus^{f12} says; as Archelais, Neocaesarea, Melita, and Mazaca. The Jews oftentimes talk^{f13} of going from Cappadocia to Lud, or Lydda; so that, according to them, it seems to be near to that place, or, at least, that there was a place near Lydda so called; of this (see Gill on “~~4409~~Acts 2:9”). From this country also there were Jews at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, some of whom were converted; and here likewise the Apostle Peter is said to preach, as before observed of Pontus, and who probably founded a church or churches here in the “first” century; and in the “second” century, according to Tertullian^{f14}, there were believers in Christ dwelling in this country; and in the “third” century, Eusebius^{f15} makes mention of Neon, bishop of Larandis, and Celsus, bishop of Iconium, both in Cappadocia; there was also Phedimus of Amasea, in the same country, in this age, and at Caesarea, in Cappadocia, several martyrs suffered under Decius; and in this century, Stephen, bishop of Rome, threatened to excommunicate some bishops in Cappadocia, because they had rebaptized some that had been heretics: in the “fourth” century there were churches in Cappadocia, of one of which, namely, at Sasimi, the famous Gregory Nazianzen was first bishop, and afterwards of Nazianzum, as was also the famous Basil of Caesarea, in the same country; hither the persecution under Dioclesian reached, and many had their thighs broken, as Eusebius relates^{f16}; from hence were sent several bishops, who assisted at the council of Nice, under Constantine, and at another held at Jerusalem: in the “fifth” century there were churches in Cappadocia, in several places, the names of whose bishops are on record; as Firmus, Thalassius, Theodosins, Daniel, Aristomachus, Patricius, and others: in the “sixth” century there were many famous churches in this country, whose bishops were in the fifth synod held at Rome and Constantinople; and in the “seventh” century there were

several of them in the sixth synod of Constantinople; and in the “eighth” century mention is made of bishops of several churches in Cappadocia, in the second Nicene synod; and even in the “ninth” century there were Christians in these parts ^{f17}.

Asia here intends neither the lesser nor the greater Asia, but Asia, properly so called; and which, according to Solinus ^{f18}, Lycia and Phrygia bounded on the east, the Aegean shores on the west, the Egyptian sea on the south, and Paphlagonia on the north; the chief city in it was Ephesus, and so it is distinguished from Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia, and Bithynia, in (~~<4406>~~Acts 16:6,7) as here from Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia, and from Pontus and Cappadocia, in (~~<4409>~~Acts 2:9) though they were all in lesser Asia. Here also were Jews converted on the day of Pentecost; and here likewise Peter is said to preach; and by him, and by the Apostle John, who also lived and died in this country, churches were planted; and churches there were here, even in the “seventh” century, as distinct from the other Asia, greater or less; for out of it bishops were sent to, and were present at, the sixth council at Constantinople, whose names are recorded; yea, in the “eighth” century there were churches and bishops, one of which persuaded Leo to remove images from places of worship; and another was in the Nicene synod ^{f19}. The last place mentioned is

Bithynia, of which (see Gill on “~~<4407>~~Acts 16:7”). And though the Apostle Paul, and his companions, were not suffered at a certain time to go into Bithynia, and preach the Gospel there, yet it is certain that it was afterwards carried thither; and as Peter is said to preach in Pontus, Asia, and Capadocia, so likewise in Bithynia; here, according to the Roman martyrology, Luke, the evangelist, died; and, according to tradition, Prochorus, one of the seven deacons in (~~<4005>~~Acts 6:5) was bishop of Nicomedia, in this country; and Tychicus, of whom the Apostle Paul makes frequent mention, was bishop of Chalcedon, another city in it; and who are both said to be of the seventy disciples; (see Gill on “~~<2001>~~Luke 10:1”), and it is certain, from the testimony of Pliny ^{f20}, an Heathen writer, in a letter of his to Trajan the emperor, written about the year 104, that there were then great numbers of Christians in Bithynia; not only the cities, but the towns and villages were full of them; and in the “third” century, the persecution under Dioclesian raged, particularly at Nicomedia, where Anthimus, the pastor of the church in that place, had his head cut off as Eusebius ^{f21} relates: in the beginning of the “fourth” century, Nice, in Bithynia, became famous for the council held there under Constantine, against Arius; and in

this century, bishops from Bithynia assisted at a synod held at Tyre, in Phoenicia; and in the “fifth” century was held a synod at Chalcedon, a city in this country, against the Nestorinn heresy; and the names of several bishops of Chalcedon, Nicomedia, and Nice, who lived, in this age, are on record; and in the “sixth” century there were bishops from these several places, and others, who were present in the fifth synod at Constantinople; as there were also in the “seventh” century, at the sixth synod held at the same place, whose names are particularly mentioned; and in the “eighth” century bishops from hence were in the Nicene synod; and even in the ninth century there were some that bore the Christian name in Bithynia ^{f22}. In these places however, it seems, dwelt many Jews, who were converted to Christ, to whom the apostle inscribes this epistle, and whom he further describes in the following verse.

Ver. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*, etc.] Not to any office, as to that of bishops or presbyters; for though the apostle writes to some of them under this character, (~~401B~~ 1 Peter 5:1) yet not all; nor were they so called, as a nation, for they were persons scattered about in several countries; nor as a church, for they are not wrote to as such; nor does this character merely design their effectual calling; though as that is a fruit and evidence of election, it is sometimes so styled, and the saints called by grace are said to be chosen; (~~405D~~ John 15:19 ~~402B~~ 1 Corinthians 1:26) but it intends the eternal election of those persons both to grace and glory; which the apostle knew of, not by divine revelation, or any particular discovery made to him; but he concluded it in a judgment of charity, they being all under a profession of faith in Christ, and he having reason to believe that the greater part of them were truly partakers of that faith which demonstrated them to be the elect of God: the cause, spring, and source of their election was, “the foreknowledge of God the Father”: to whom election is commonly ascribed, agreeably to the order of the divine Persons in the Trinity, and their distinct parts in the economy of salvation, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit: and by this his “foreknowledge” is meant, not his eternal, universal, and infallible knowledge, and which is infinite, and reaches to all things and persons, present, future, or possible, for this has for its objects persons whom God never predestinated and chose: though certain it is that he knows and foreknows all whom he does predestinate and choose; nor does it intend the mere decree of election, or God's eternal purpose and resolution to choose, but the spring and source of that act of his: and much less does it

mean a bare prescience of men, and choice of them, upon a foresight of faith, holiness, good works, and perseverance therein; for these are all, when genuine, the fruits and effects of election, which are included in it, and secured and brought about by it; but the sovereign grace, good will, and pleasure of God, or the everlasting love of God the Father, which is the cause of, and has given birth to the act of election, is meant by foreknowledge, joined with affection, delight, and approbation; knowledge, and foreknowledge, as ascribed to the divine Being, often signify such things; (see ^{<1006>}Psalm 1:6 ^{<519>}2 Timothy 2:19 ^{<819>}Romans 8:29,30) (^{<510>}Romans 11:1,2) and such a knowledge God the Father had of the persons of the elect from all eternity; and which is the ground and foundation of his choosing them to grace and glory, and not anything in them, or done by them, or anything out of himself; no other reason can be given of it than his own grace, his pure love, and sovereign good will and pleasure: the means follow, through which they were chosen,

through sanctification of the Spirit; as in (^{<513>}2 Thessalonians 2:13). (See Gill on "^{<513>}2 Thessalonians 2:13"). The ends to which the saints are chosen are,

unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; by "obedience" is meant either the obedience of elect men to Christ, which lies in obeying the truth of the Gospel, called the obedience of faith; and so is the same with the "belief of the truth", which goes along in election with the sanctification of the Spirit, in (^{<513>}2 Thessalonians 2:13) and in submission to Gospel ordinances, and doing all good works in the name, faith, and strength of Christ; and which also are fruits and effects, and so not causes of divine predestination; (see ^{<410>}Ephesians 2:10) and also follow upon the sanctification of the Spirit; or else the obedience of Christ is intended; and so the Arabic version renders it, "unto the obedience of Jesus Christ"; which lay in his performing the precepts of the law, and bearing the penalty of it, death; and by which the chosen seed are justified, or made righteous in the sight of God, and have a title to eternal life and glory, and are safe from wrath to come; and to the enjoyment of this grace, they are chosen of God the Father; and between these two, predestination and justification, there is a close and inseparable connection; so that they that are interested in the one, are in the other; (see ^{<513>}Romans 8:30), the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; does not denote a small quantity of it, for it was shed and poured out in great abundance; but is said in allusion to the sprinkling of the blood of the passover lamb. (^{<122>}Exodus 12:22,23)

or to the sprinkling of the blood on the book of the covenant, and on the people at Mount Sinai, (^{<1248>}Exodus 24:8) or to other sprinklings of blood in their legal sacrifices: the application of the blood of Christ to the heart, by the Spirit of God, for cleansing, pardon, and justification, is meant; which affords true, solid, conscience peace and joy now, and entitles to eternal happiness and glory; all which are secured by electing grace. The salutation of these persons follows:

grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied; which is much the same that is used by the Apostle Paul in all his epistles; (see Gill on “^{<4007>}Romans 1:7”), only Peter adds the word “multiplied”; which makes it more express, and the sense more clear: he means an enlarged view of interest in the love of God, an increase of grace out of the fulness of it in Christ, and of Gospel light, and of the several gifts of the Spirit; and also of all prosperity outward and inward, of a conscience peace through the blood of Christ, which passeth all understanding, and a more established and well grounded hope of enjoying eternal peace hereafter. The phrase is Jewish, and is used in their salutations in this form, *ygsy ʾwkm̄l ʿ*, “let your peace be multiplied”^{f23}.

Ver. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, etc.] The epistle begins here with thanksgiving to God, or an ascription of blessing, praise, and glory to him; for this does not mean an invoking or conferring a blessing on him; neither of which can be, for there is not a greater than he to be invoked, nor can anything be added to his blessedness: but God may be blessed by his creatures when they speak well of him, and his wonderful works of creation, providence, and grace; when they ascribe all their mercies, spiritual and temporal, to him; give him the glory of them, and express their thanks for them in heart, lip, and life; and such a blessing of God for a special and spiritual favour, the grace of regeneration, is intended here: by “God” is meant, not God essentially, but personally considered, even God the Father, as is clearly expressed: the words are rendered in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions without the copulative “and”, thus, “blessed be God the Father”; and if that is retained, they may be rendered thus, “blessed be God, even the Father”; as in (^{<4008>}2 Corinthians 1:3) and so the latter be exegetical of the former; though both are true of Christ, in different senses; God is the God of Christ, as Christ is man; and he is the Father of Christ, as Christ is God; for, as man, he had no father, nor is he a son by office, but by nature; (see Gill on “^{<4008>}Ephesians 1:3”).

which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again:

regeneration is the blessing thanks are given for; and if we are to be thankful to God, and bless his name, because he hath made us creatures, and hath given us a natural being; much more should we praise him for making us new creatures, and giving us a spiritual being. To be “begotten again”, and so to be born again, is opposed unto, and distinguished from our first birth, when we were conceived, and shapen in sin; and designs a birth, spiritual, holy, and heavenly; it is signified by a being quickened, or made alive; so as in a spiritual sense, to see, and hear, and breathe after divine things, and to live a life of faith and holiness; by Christ being formed in the heart; by a partaking of the divine nature, and by being made new men, or new creatures: God, and not man, is the efficient cause of this, which is sometimes ascribed to the Spirit, and sometimes to the Son, and here to the Father; and it is not men's works, but his own good will and pleasure, his great love and free favour, his rich grace and abundant mercy, are the impulsive, or moving cause of it; and abundance of grace and mercy indeed is displayed in the regeneration and conversion of sinners: what they are regenerated to is,

unto a lively hope; meaning either the grace of hope, which is implanted in regeneration, and not before; for then, and then only, is a good hope through grace given; and it may be said to be “lively”, or “living”, inasmuch as it is fixed, not on dead works, but on a living Christ, on his person, blood, and righteousness; and is not the hope of a dead sinner, of a lifeless hypocrite, and formal professor, that has a name to live, and is dead, but of a living believer, one made truly alive by the spirit of life, from Christ; and is what is sometimes, at least, in lively exercise, and makes the heart of a believer cheerful, brisk, and lively; and is what is lasting and durable, and will never be lost, but will be held fast unto the end: or else the thing hoped for is intended, the hope laid up in heaven; the blessed hope regenerate ones are born unto, and are looking for, even eternal life and happiness; and the Syriac version renders it, “unto hope of life”: that is, or eternal life; and so reads one of Stephens's copies. Saints are both begotten again to the grace of hope, and to the glory which that grace is waiting for: the means is,

by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; which may be connected either with the act of begetting again; for Christ's resurrection is the virtual cause of regeneration, or regeneration is in virtue of Christ's resurrection; had he not risen from the dead, none would have been quickened, or made

to live, or have been raised to newness of life: his resurrection is the exemplar of regeneration; there is a likeness between them; as his resurrection was a declaration of his sonship, so regeneration is a manifestation of adoption; and as Christ's resurrection was his first step to glory, so is regeneration to eternal life; and both are wrought by the same almighty power: or the clause may be connected with the foregoing, "unto a lively hope"; for the resurrection of Christ is what is the means of, and lays a solid foundation of hope, both of the saints' resurrection from the dead, of which Christ is the meritorious cause, pledge, and pattern, and of eternal glory and happiness, since he rose for our justification, with which glorification is inseparably connected.

Ver. 4. *To an inheritance incorruptible*, etc.] This is a further explanation of the "lively hope", or hope laid up in heaven, which regenerate ones are begotten to: it is an "inheritance"; a large estate, and rich possession, they are born heirs apparent to; what is not to be got by industry, or obtained by the works of the law; for they that are of the law are not heirs; but what is the pure bequest and free gift of God, as a Father to his children; for an inheritance is proper and peculiar to children, nor does it belong to any but them; and it comes to them through the death of the testator, Christ, and of it the Holy Spirit is the pledge and earnest: and here it is said to be

incorruptible; it is free from corruption in itself; nor can it be corrupted by others, by moth, or rust, or other things, as gold, silver, and garments may, which are a part of earthly inheritances; nor can it be enjoyed by corrupt persons, either corrupted with sin, or clothed with frailty and mortality; wherefore, in order to inherit it, corruption must put on incorruption, in every sense; other epithets and commendations of it follow:

and undefiled; it is in its own nature pure and holy, and free from any defilement of sin; nor are there any of those impurities in it which Jews and Mahometans dream of in their vainly expected earthly paradise; nor will it be possessed by any but undefiled persons, such as are made so through the blood and righteousness of Christ:

and that fadeth not away; as do world, and the glory of it, and all inheritances and possessions in it; here is no continuing city, but there is one to come; in this inheritance are durable riches, everlasting habitations, an house eternal in the heavens, glories in it that will never wither and die, and pleasures which will never end, and which will be enjoyed without decrease or loathing:

reserved in heaven for you; the Alexandrian copy reads, “for us”; and the Ethiopic version renders it, “for us and you”; for all the saints; for all who are the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, and who are begotten again to a lively hope; for these this inheritance is prepared, laid up, and secured in the hands or Christ their feoffee, who has it in trust for them, and with whom they are co-heirs; and it is safe for them “in heaven”; out of the reach of men and devils: this serves both to commend the inheritance, to set forth the excellency of it, lying in such a place as heaven; for the situation of an inheritance adds oftentimes to the valuableness of it; and also the safety and security of it; it is safe, being in heaven, and more so as it is in Christ's hands there. The Jews are wont to call the future state an inheritance of the land of the living: they say ^{f24}

“this is called **hl j n**, “an inheritance”; and add, but in this world a man has no inheritance, nor continuance;”

so they interpret that phrase, “by the God of thy father”, in (⁰⁴⁹²⁵Genesis 49:25) thus ^{f25}

“this is **ansj a**, “the inheritance” of the superior place, which is called “heaven”;”

and sometimes they style it **hal [atnsj a**, “the superior inheritance”, or “the inheritance above” ^{f26}; all which agrees with Peter's language.

Ver. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God*, etc.] This is a description of the persons for whom the inheritance is reserved in heaven; they are not only chosen to salvation, and begotten again to an inheritance, but they are preserved unto it; their happiness is very great; their inheritance is safe in heaven for them, and they are kept below, amidst a thousand snares and difficulties, till they safely arrive to the possession of that: they are kept, not in and by themselves, the way of man is not in himself; nor in the hands of angels, for no such trust does God put in them; but in the hands of Jesus Christ, where they are safe, and out of which none can pluck them; on him, as a foundation, and in him, as a strong hold; they are kept in the love of God, and on his heart, from whence they can never be separated, and in the covenant of grace, out of which they will never be put; and in a state of justification, and shall never enter into condemnation; and in the family of God, for, being sons, they are no more servants; and in a state of grace and holiness, in the fear of God, and faith of Christ, and love to both; and in the path of truth, from whence they can never finally and totally fall: for

though they are not kept from the being of sin, and the workings of it, and slips and falls into it, yet from being destroyed by it; and though not from Satan, and his temptations, yet from being overcome by them; and though not entirely from unbelief, doubts, and fears, yet from final unbelief; for Christ prays for them, that their faith fail not; and from a final and total falling away from grace into sin: and they are kept thus, not by their own power and might, or that of any mere creature, but “by the power of God”; meaning, not the Gospel, nor the Spirit of God, but the perfection of his power; by which they are kept, as with a guard, or in a garrison, as the word here used signifies; not only angels encamp about them, and salvation is for walls and bulwarks, all around them; but God himself, in the perfection of his power, is a wall of fire to them; he is round about them from henceforth and for ever; their place of defence is the munition of rocks; his name is a strong tower, where they run and are safe: it is added,

through faith; some versions read it, “and by faith”, as the Syriac and Ethiopic; by that faith which is of the operation of God, of which Christ is the author and finisher, and shall never fail, it being supported by the same power the saints are kept; through faith in the power and faithfulness of God; through faith looking to Christ, leaning on him, and living upon him; by faith getting the victory over the world, and every other enemy, and being more than conquerors, through Christ. That to which the saints are kept is, “unto salvation”; salvation is already obtained for them, by the obedience and sufferings of Christ, and is applied to them in conversion, by the Spirit of Christ; but the full enjoyment of it, which is here intended, is reserved for them in heaven; and to this they are kept, being heirs of it, and shall certainly possess it: and which

is ready to be revealed in the last time; it is “ready”, being a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, and a salvation obtained by the blood of Christ, and a mansion of glory made fit for them, through the presence and intercession of their Redeemer: and it is ready “to be revealed”; in a short time it will be made manifest; at present it is much out of sight; eye has not seen, nor ear heard the full glories of it; saints themselves as yet do not know what they shall be, and have: but “in the last time”, when Christ shall come a second time to judge the world, he will raise the dead bodies of his saints; and then this salvation shall be fully manifested to them; and they shall enjoy it both in soul and body to all eternity.

Ver. 6. *Wherein ye greatly rejoice*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version reads, “in which ye shall rejoice”: and so the Syriac version, adding, “for ever”; and refer these words to the “last time”; or, times spoken of in the preceding verse; when the saints will greatly rejoice, being in full possession of eternal salvation; in distinction from the present time, in which they are in heaviness; but it is better to read the words in the present tense, and as expressive of the saints in this life, who are blessed with that fruit of the Spirit, joy, and have always reason to rejoice, and greatly rejoice. The connection is with the whole that goes before; and the sense is this, that regenerated persons rejoice, in that they are the elect of God, according to his everlasting love towards them, and free grace, and good will; in their regeneration, which is an evidence of their election of God; in the abundant mercy of God displayed in their regeneration; and in that lively hope of eternal life which is the effect of it; and in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which secures their justification of life, and their resurrection from the dead; and in the inheritance they are born heirs unto; and in their preservation to it by the power of God through faith; and in that complete salvation which is ready for them, and in a short time will be revealed, to which they are kept:

though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations. This seems to be a contrast, but is no real contradiction; for the character of the saints in this world is, that they are as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, (~~1~~ 2 Corinthians 6:10) rejoicing even in their tribulations and temptations; yea, for them, and on account of them, in some respects, which in others make them sorrowful, and heavy, or “heavy” with sorrow: the cause of this heaviness is not only indwelling corruptions, the hidings of God’s face, and the temptations of Satan, but afflictions and persecutions, which are here meant by “manifold temptations”; for not the temptations or to sin, are here intended, but the temptations with which God tempts and tries his people: so he sometimes does, by calling them to hard service, to do things difficult and disagreeable to flesh and blood, in which way he tempted Abraham; and by laying afflictions, or suffering afflictions to come upon them, by which he tried Job; and by permitting wicked men to reproach and persecute them, and to injure them in their characters, persons, and properties; and which was the case of the primitive Christians, and has been more or less the case of the saints ever since: now such exercises are called, from the quality of them, temptations, or trials; because they try the hearts, principles, and graces of them that believe, and

particularly their faith hereafter mentioned; and from the quantity of them, they are said to be various; they are of different sorts; as reproach, imprisonment, loss of goods, and death itself in divers shapes; and are more or less at different times and ages; and are exercised on various persons: and are sometimes very heavy, and grievous to be borne, and cause great heaviness and sorrow of heart; and yet there are things, and circumstances, and which are here hinted at, that greatly mitigate the heaviness occasioned by them; as, that these afflictions, and the heaviness that comes by them, are but little, and light, in comparison of the eternal weight of glory; though they are great tribulations in themselves, through and out of which the people of God come to the kingdom; and so the Syriac version renders it, “though at this time” **l y l q**, “ye are a little made sorrowful”; and then it is only “now”, for the present time, and but for a short time; for a little season, even for a moment, comparatively speaking; and also, “if need be”, which the Syriac version omits, though by all means to be retained: afflictive dispensations, in whatsoever form, are necessary, by the will of God, who has appointed them, and therefore must be, and ought to be, quietly submitted to, and patiently borne, on that consideration; and are also necessary, on account of Christ the head, to whom there must be a conformity of his members; and likewise on their own account; for the humbling of their souls; for the weaning of them from the things of this world; for the restraining, subduing, and keeping under the corruptions of their nature; and for the trial of grace: and it is only “if”, and when there is a necessity for them, that they are in heaviness by them; otherwise God does not delight to afflict and grieve the children of men, and much less his own; (see ^{ⲮⲔⲔⲑ}Lamentations 3:33) so the Jews say ^{f27}, that **Ⲍⲣⲭⲱⲛⲏ**, “there was a necessity” of God's tempting Abraham as he did, to humble and purify him.

Ver. 7. *That the trial of your faith*, etc.] This is the principal end which God has in afflictive providences, to try the faith of his people; so the faith of Abraham, Job, Habakkuk, and others, have been tried:

being much more precious than of gold that perisheth: the grace of faith is much more precious than gold; since that perisheth by using, but faith does not; and since it is so valuable as not to be obtained by it; and since those that have it, though poor in this world, are rich, and heirs of a kingdom: but the trying of it is abundantly more precious than gold; for not only as gold being tried in the fire is purged from its dross, and is proved to be

genuine and shines the brighter, so faith, being tried in the fire of afflictions, is purged from unbelief; and the believer is purged from his dross and tin, and his iniquity is purged, and the fruit of all is to take away sin; and he is tried and proved to be a true believer, and his faith shines the more illustriously, as in the above instances; yea, the very trying of it has an influence on other graces, for great usefulness; for the trying of faith works patience, and that, experience, and that, hope:

though it be tried with fire: either though gold be tried with fire, and so is greatly refined, yet it is more precious than that; or though faith be tried with the fire of afflictions, yet it is precious, and more precious than gold: and it is tried for this purpose,

that it might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; who is now in the highest heavens, and out of sight, but will appear a second time without sin unto salvation, and every eye shall see him; and when the believer will be found in him, and his faith be found unto praise by him, he will have praise of him himself; it will be said unto him, "Well done, good and faithful servant"; his faith will be praised for its steadiness and constancy, notwithstanding all persecutions and tribulations; and his good works, the fruits of faith, will be taken notice of by him with commendation; he will be honoured, by being placed on the right hand of Christ, and by being set down with him in his throne, and having a crown of righteousness given to him; and he will be glorified both in soul and body; his body will be made like to Christ's glorious body, and his soul will have a glory revealed in it; and in his whole person he shall appear, when Christ does, with him in glory.

Ver. 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love*, etc.] That is, Jesus Christ, whom they had never seen with their bodily eyes, being Jews, who dwelt not in Judea, when Christ was upon earth, but were scattered about in several parts of the Gentile world; and yet Christ being made known to them, through the preaching of the Gospel, they received and embraced him, and their affections were strongly set upon him: they loved him because of his excellencies and perfections, because of the loveliness of his person, and because he first loved them; they loved him because of the fulness of grace that was in him, because of what he had done for them, and was unto them, and because of the offices he sustained on their account, and the relations he stood in to them; they loved him above all creatures and things, and all of him, and that belong unto him, his people, truths, ordinances, ways, and

worship; they loved him with all their hearts, and in the sincerity of their souls, though they had never seen his face in the flesh; whereas sight often begets and increases love: their love was not carnal, but spiritual; it was a fruit of the Spirit of God in their souls; was accompanied with faith in Christ, and proceeded upon the report the Gospel made of him:

in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing; the Arabic version adds, “in him”: that is, in Christ, who was then received up into heaven, and must be retained there until the time of the restitution of all things; and therefore not now to be beheld with corporeal sight: and yet these regenerate ones, and lovers of Christ, believed in him; (see ~~401B~~ John 20:29) not with a notional, historical, and temporary faith, believing not merely what he said, or did, or does, or will do; but looking on him, and to him, for life and salvation; going out of themselves to him, embracing of him, leaning upon him as their Saviour and Redeemer; venturing their souls upon him, committing their all unto him, expecting all from him, both grace and glory: and so

rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; with a joy in believing on him, which is better experienced than expressed; a joy that not only strangers intermeddle not with, know nothing of, which entirely passes their understanding, but is such as saints themselves cannot speak out, or give a full and distinct account of; they want words to express it, and convey proper ideas of it to others: and it is a joy that is glorious; there is a rejoicing that is evil and scandalous; but this is honourable, and of which none need be ashamed; it is solid and substantial, and the matter of it always abiding, when the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment; it is a joy on account of the glory of God, which the believer lives in the hope and faith of; and it is a beginning, a presage and pledge of it; it is a glory begun here; it is the firstfruits, and a part also of it; and by it saints may know a little what heaven itself will be.

Ver. 9. *Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.*] Which is a just and sufficient ground of joy and rejoicing. “Salvation” intends spiritual and eternal salvation; that which God appointed his people to from all eternity, which is obtained by Christ, applied by the Spirit, and will be fully enjoyed in heaven: this is the salvation “of souls”: which are of more worth than a world; and the redemption of which is precious, and requires a great price, and for which a great price is paid, as in (~~401B~~ 1 Peter 1:18,19). It is rightly supplied in our version by “your”, as in the Syriac,

Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; though the Vulgate Latin version only reads, “the salvation of souls”; and which is to be understood, not to the exclusion of bodies, for God has designed the salvation of them; and Christ has procured the redemption of them; and these will be preserved unto the coming of Christ, being united to him; and will be raised by him, and with their souls enjoy everlasting happiness with him; though, in the present state of things, salvation rather takes place in the soul than in the body, which is exposed to various labours, afflictions, and diseases; but the chief design of the phrase is, to distinguish this salvation from a corporeal and temporal one: and so the Jews use the phrase $\text{צְפֻנַּת הַנְּשָׁמָה}$, “the salvation of the soul”^{f28}, in opposition to, and distinction from, a mere bodily one; and it intends a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, and its curses; from hell, the second death, and wrath to come, and every spiritual enemy: which is the end of faith; or, as the Syriac version renders it, אַנְ[ר]וּפ , “the reward of faith”; not that faith is the cause of salvation, or meritorious of it; for that itself is the gift of God, and is rather a part of salvation, and, at most, but the means of perceiving an interest in it, and of enjoying the comfort of it; and is what will issue in it, and in the full enjoyment of it; when faith will both have its end and scope, and be at an end, being exchanged for fruition; just as a reward is given at the end of a man’s labours: hence it is called תֵּרֻמָּה , “the end”, (^{אֵיפֶס} Proverbs 23:18) and even now salvation is the end of faith, in like sense as Christ is the end of the law: as the law has its full accomplishment, and all its ends answered in Christ, so faith has its end, and all it looks for, desires, and wants, in salvation by Christ: and which is now “receiving”; for the saints not only shall receive, and enjoy the full possession of it hereafter, but they have it now; it is not only appointed to them, and wrought out for them, but is brought near, set before them, and applied to them, and put into the hands of faith by the Spirit of God; they have it in faith and hope, by which they are already saved; and in Christ their head and representative, in whom they are set down in heavenly places; and besides, they have the beginning, firstfruits, earnest, and pledge of it in their own hearts, as well as a right unto, and a meetness for the perfect possession of it hereafter; all which is matter of joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Ver. 10. *Of which salvation the prophets have inquired*, etc.] They greatly desired the coming of the Saviour, and to see him; they longed after the salvation to be accomplished by him, and expressed their wishes for him, and that; and inquired into the nature of it, and gave an account thereof,

according to the measure of light and knowledge communicated to them; they pointed out Christ as a Redeemer of his people, and his salvation as spiritual and eternal:

and searched diligently; in the use of means; by prayer and supplication; by reading the prophecies that went before; by observing the types, shadows, and sacrifices of the law; and by waiting upon the Lord for the inspiration of his Spirit. This last clause is omitted in the Syriac version, but rightly retained in all others:

who prophesied of the grace; [that should] come unto you; Jews, and also the Gentiles. They prophesied both of Christ, who is the unspeakable gift of God's free grace, who is full of grace, and by whom it comes; and also of the several blessings of grace through Christ, as of redeeming grace from sin, Satan, death, and the grave; of justifying grace, through his righteousness, he being the Lord our righteousness, in whom all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and glory; for though his righteousness is revealed without the law, yet it is witnessed to by law and prophets; of pardoning grace, as with God, and as a blessing of the new covenant, and as received through faith in Christ, to which give all the prophets witness; of adopting grace, both to Jews and Gentiles, signifying, that where they were not called the people of God, they should be called the sons of God; of regenerating and sanctifying grace, in giving a new heart and Spirit, in sprinkling with clean water, in writing the laws of God in the inward parts, and pouring out the Spirit in a plenteous manner on all sorts of men; of persevering grace, intimating that they that fear the Lord shall not depart from him, and that his loving kindness shall never depart from them; and of eternal life and glory, as God's free gift, which is that everlasting salvation, they say, Israel shall be saved in the Lord with.

Ver. 11. *Searching what, or what manner of time*, etc.] The prophets made a very diligent inquiry into the exact time when Christ should come to work out the salvation of his people; to whom it was made known that his coming should be before the sceptre, or tribe of Judah, and all civil government in it, ceased; and before the second temple was destroyed, into which the Messiah, the messenger of the covenant, was to come, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and that it should be seventy weeks, or 490 years, from a date given in (~~2024~~ Daniel 9:24-26) as it was revealed to the Prophet Daniel; who particularly inquired, and diligently searched into this matter, and was eminently a man of desires this way, as he is styled,

(²¹⁹²Daniel 9:23) and they not only searched into the exact time, but into the manner and quality of the time when the Saviour should come; and foretold that it would be, with respect to the nations of the world, a time of profound peace; with respect to the Jews, that it would be a time of great blindness, ignorance, unbelief, and hardness of heart; that such would be that generation, or age, for wickedness and barbarity, as could not be declared and expressed; and that few would believe the report of the Gospel; and that the Messiah would be rejected of men, and be wounded, bruised, and put to death; and with respect to the Gentiles, that the Gospel would be preached to them, and that they should seek to Christ, be gathered to him, and hope and trust in him; and that the followers of the Messiah should be persecuted, and greatly distressed, and yet comforted and sustained; and this should be the face of the times, and the state of things, when the salvation should be revealed: and all this, and much more,

the Spirit of Christ in them did signify; or “make manifest”: from whence it appears, that Christ then existed, as he did before there were any prophets, and even from everlasting, being the eternal God; and that the Spirit is from him, as well as from the Father; and as here, so he is often by the Jews ^{f29} called **aj yçm aj wr**, “the Spirit of the Messiah”, or “Christ”; and that the Spirit is truly God, since he could declare beforehand the exact time of Christ's coming, and the finality of the age in which he came, as well as bear a previous testimony to his sufferings and glory; as also, that he was in the prophets, and they were inspired by him, and spake as he moved and directed them:

when, it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. The “sufferings of Christ” are what the Jews call ^{f30} **j yçm yl bj**, “the sorrows of the Messiah”. These are particularly testified of in (⁴²²¹Psalm 22:1-31 69:1-36 ²⁵¹¹Isaiah 53:1-12 ²⁷⁹²Daniel 9:26) (³¹²⁰Zechariah 12:10). The glory, or “glories”, as it may be rendered, design his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to heaven, his session at the right hand of God, and having all power, authority, and judgment committed to him; and which are eminently and distinctly prophesied of in (⁴⁹⁶⁰Psalm 16:10 68:18 110:1 ²⁷⁷³Daniel 7:13,14).

Ver. 12. *Unto whom it was revealed*, etc.] The salvation they searched and inquired into, and the grace of it; the time of its being wrought out, and what sort of times they would be when Christ should come, both to the church, and to the world, among Jews and Gentiles; as also what cruel

sufferings the Messiah should undergo, and what great glory should be put upon him afterwards:

that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister. The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read “unto you”; and so do some copies. Not that they were ignorant of the things they searched into, and were revealed unto them, and they prophesied of; as the Jews sometimes say^{f31} of them,

“that they prophesied, and knew not what they prophesied of;”

though it is not to be supposed that they had such clear and distinct ideas of things as saints have now under the Gospel dispensation; yet they knew much of the grace of the Gospel, and had the comfort of it, and a view of interest in the great salvation, and saw the day of Christ afar off with pleasure: nor that they did not minister, and were not useful to the saints of the age in which they lived; for their prophecies concerning Christ, and salvation by him, were particularly calculated for their spiritual refreshment and comfort, and the support of their faith and hope under afflictive circumstances; but then they were not to have their accomplishment in their times; for though they sometimes speak of them, because of the certainty of them, as if they were already done, yet they knew they were not to be brought about until the last days; and therefore what was written by them, was written for our learning and instruction chiefly and principally, on whom the ends of the world are come; and though they were both profitable to themselves, and others that lived with them, yet they are more so to the saints under the Gospel dispensations, who are able to compare prophecies and facts together: even

the things which are now reported unto you; as accomplished facts; such as relate to the person and offices of Christ, and salvation wrought out by him; to his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension into heaven, and session at the right hand of God; of all which there is a true and faithful report made in the Gospel:

by them that have preached the Gospel unto you; meaning himself, and the rest of the apostles, who had been called, and qualified, and sent out by Christ to preach glad tidings, and publish peace, which they had done in the several parts of the world, both to Jew and Gentile:

with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; by Christ from the Father, particularly at the day of Pentecost, when the apostles had an extraordinary

and plentiful effusion of the Spirit, qualifying them to preach the Gospel to which they were called and sent: and thus, as the great salvation is commended, from the concern that the prophets of old had in it, so from the preaching of it by the apostles, who were influenced and guided by the same Spirit of Christ as they were, and in a far greater manner; and this salvation is still more commended from the great regard the blessed angels have unto it:

which things the angels desire to look into. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “into whom”; either into the Holy Spirit, and the things of the Spirit, which he testified in the prophets, and published by the apostles; or rather into Christ, his person, offices, and grace, the allusion being to the cherubim on the mercy seat, a type of Christ, which looked to one another, and to the mercy seat, (^{<0250>}Exodus 25:20) and was true of them in the days of Christ's flesh, when they ascended and descended on the son of man, (^{<0151>}John 1:51) and when he rose from the dead, and went to heaven; for then was he seen and gazed on by angels, as he now is, (^{<0116>}1 Timothy 3:16) or “into which things”: so the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; namely, the sufferings of Christ, and the glories following; the great mystery of redemption and salvation by Christ; the several doctrines of the Gospel, in which the glory of the grace, wisdom, righteousness, truth, and power of God is displayed; things they are highly delighted with, take pleasure in the contemplation of, and desire to have a greater knowledge of, and acquaintance with: they sung glory to God in the highest at the incarnation of Christ; they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner; and disdain not to be ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation; and learn of the church the manifold wisdom of God; which may serve greatly to commend the excellency of Gospel truths, and engage us in the study of them.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind,* etc.] With the girdle of truth; (see ^{<0114>}Ephesians 6:14) since angels desire to look into the mysteries of grace, do you apply your minds, and diligently attend unto them, in opposition to all loose and vagrant thoughts of the mind, about other things: give yourselves up wholly to them, meditate upon them, employ yourselves in them, and about them; seeing they are the study and inquiry of angels, and what the prophets have prophesied of, and searched into and ministered, and the apostles of Christ have preached; and besides, are things which relate to the person, office, sufferings, and glory of Christ, and the salvation of immortal souls. Though the phrase is sometimes used to denote preparation and readiness, and to be in a fit position to do

anything, as the Israelites were at the eating of the first passover, to march at the least notice out of Egypt; and so to go a journey, to run a race, to serve another, to wait on him, and for him, and also be prepared for battle; and is a metaphor taken from the custom of the eastern nations, who used to wear long garments, which they gathered up close to them, and girt about them, when they were about any of the above things, that they might be no hinderance to them, and that they might perform them with more expedition and dispatch; and so may be expressive of the readiness of believers, as pilgrims and travellers, for their journey towards the heavenly country, and to run the race set before them, and also to do every good work, according to the station they are placed in, to serve their Lord and master Jesus Christ in whatsoever he calls them to, and to wait for his coming; (see ^{<0125>}Luke 12:35-37) and also to fight his battles, to quit themselves like men, and be strong in defence of his Gospel, and against every enemy of his and theirs.

Be sober; which is not only opposed to intemperance in eating and drinking, which greatly disqualifies for the above readiness and attention, but also to a being inebriated with the cares of this life, which choke the word, and make it unfruitful, and lead men into temptation, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, and from the faith of Christ; and likewise to a being intoxicated with errors, and false doctrine, which lull men asleep, and render them incapable of serving Christ, and his church; and turn their heads from faith to fables, and are contrary to the words of truth and soberness; so that to be sober, is not only to be moderate in eating and drinking; but to be disengaged from the anxious cares of the world, and to be disentangled, recovered, or awaked from the error of the wicked:

and hope to the end; or “perfectly”, as the Greek word may be rendered, and as it is in the Syriac version, which joins it with the other phrase, and renders it, “be ye perfectly awaked”. The Arabic version renders it, “trusting with a perfect confidence”; so that it designs either the nature of that lively hope, to which they were begotten again, and are here exhorted to exercise, it being perfect, sincere, and without hypocrisy; not like the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish, and stand him in no stead, but an undissembled one; for as there is faith unfeigned, and love without dissimulation, so hope without hypocrisy; and also the full assurance of it, for as there is a plerophory of faith and love, and of understanding, so of hope; (see ^{<0111>}Hebrews 6:11) or it intends the duration of this grace, and the exercise of it: it is a grace that does, and will remain, and it ought to be

continually exercised, and the rejoicing of it to be kept firm, to the end; to the end of life, and until the saints come to the enjoyment of what they are hoping for; even

for the grace that is to be brought unto you as the revelation of Jesus Christ; and which may be rendered for the grace that is brought unto you, in or by the revelation of Jesus Christ: and the sense may be, that there is grace that is now brought to light by the Gospel, and that is brought home to the souls of God's people through it; as electing grace, redeeming grace, justifying grace, pardoning grace, adopting grace; and, in short, salvation, as all of grace; which Gospel is the revelation of Jesus Christ: it is a revelation that is made by him; and it is a revelation that is made of him; it is a revelation of the glory of his person and offices; herein is his righteousness revealed from faith to faith; and here the riches of his grace are made manifest, and laid to open view; life and immortality are brought to light by Christ in it; and the way to eternal life, glory, and salvation, as being by Christ, is pointed out by it; and all this grace that is brought, and set before the saints in the Gospel, they ought to hope for, and comfortably believe their interest in; and continue thus hoping, believing, and trusting to the end of their days: or if our version, and which is that of others also, be retained, the meaning is, that eternal glory and happiness, which is called “grace”, because it is the free gift of God through Christ, to his children and flock, and is the finishing of the grace that is bestowed on them, and wrought in them, and is future, “is to be brought”; is a glory that shall be revealed in them, and a salvation ready to be revealed to them; and which will be done when Christ shall be revealed from heaven, when he shall appear a second time, and in glory; and is, and ought to be, the object of their hope, for it is laid up, and reserved for them; and they have the earnest of it in them, as well as the promise of it to them. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions, instead of “grace”, read “joy”; and is the same with eternal glory, the joy of the Lord prepared for them, and which they shall enter into.

Ver. 14. *As obedient children*, etc.] Or “children of obedience”. This may be connected either with what goes before, that seeing they were children of God, by adopting grace, and in regeneration brought to the obedience of faith, to whom the inheritance belonged, therefore they ought to continue hoping for it; or with what follows, that since they were manifestly the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, being begotten again to a lively hope, they ought to be followers of him, and imitate him in holiness and

righteousness, and show themselves to be obedient ones to his Gospel and ordinances, as children ought to honour, and obey, and imitate their parents:

not fashioning yourselves to the former lusts in your ignorance. The phrase is much the same with that in (^{451B}Romans 12:2) “be not conformed to this world”; for to be conformed, or fashioned to the world, is to be fashioned to the lusts of it; and to be fashioned to the lusts of it is to indulge them, to make provision for them, to obey them, to live and walk in them; which should not be done by the children of God, and who profess themselves to be obedient ones to the Gospel, which teaches otherwise; and that because they are lusts, foolish, hurtful, and deceitful ones, ungodly ones; the lusts of the devil, as well as of the world, and of the flesh, and which war against the soul; and because they are “former” ones, which they served in a time of unregeneracy, and were now convinced and ashamed of, and therefore should no longer live to them; the time past of life being sufficient to have walked in them: and because they were lusts in ignorance, which they had indulged in a state of ignorance; not of Gentilism, though this might be the case of some, but of Judaism; when they knew not God, especially in Christ, and were ignorant of his righteousness, and of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as committed against a law that was holy and spiritual; nor did they know Christ, and the way of salvation by him, but thought they ought to do many things contrary to his name; nor the work of the Spirit in regeneration, saying with Nicodemus, how can these things be? nor the true sense of the Scriptures, the sacred oracles, that were committed to them; much less the Gospel, which was hidden from them, and they were enemies to: but now it was otherwise with them; they were made light in the Lord, and had knowledge of all these things; and therefore, as their light increased, and the grace of God, bringing salvation, appeared unto them, and shone out on them, it became them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and not to walk as they had done before, since they had not so learned Christ.

Ver. 15. *But as he which hath called you is holy,* etc.] Which is a periphrasis of God the Father, who had called them, not merely in an external way, by the outward ministry of the word; but internally, powerfully, and efficaciously, by his Spirit and grace; and who had called them to holiness of life and conversation, as well as in calling had implanted principles of holiness in them, and therefore is said to call them with an holy calling; and who himself is holy, naturally, perfectly, and

originally, and in such sense as no creature is, angels or men; and is glorious in holiness, and is the source and fountain of holiness in others: therefore

[so] be ye holy in all manner of conversation; which respects not internal holiness, but supposes it; for that is God's work, and not the creature's act; it is the sanctification of the Spirit, of which he is the author; this they were chosen unto from the beginning, and made partakers of in regeneration; but external holiness, holiness of life and conversation, in all the parts and branches of it, both with respect to God and men, in matters both of religion and civil life: and to be holy in this sense is an imitating of God, a copying after him, though he is far from being equalled by a sinful creature, or even by an angel in heaven; however, the arguments to it, taken from the nature of God, and of his effectual calling to grace and holiness, are very strong and powerful; for it is walking worthy of him, who has called us to his kingdom and glory; and walking worthy of that calling wherein we are called; and a following of God, as dear and obedient children; and what is according to his will, and what he directs unto, and requires, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 16. *Because it is written,* etc.] In (^{<81144>}Leviticus 11:44 19:2 20:7)

be ye holy, for I am holy: an argument the apostle knew must have weight with these persons, who were chiefly Jews, scattered abroad among the Gentiles, and had a value for the Scriptures of truth; and therefore, as the argument for holiness of life, from the nature and perfections of God, is strong, it must receive additional strength from this being the declared will of God, even their sanctification on this account; and though holiness, equal to God, is never to be attained to by a creature, yet so far as it is capable of it, it is desirable, because agreeable both to the nature and will of God, by all such who are truly his children, who love his name, adore his perfections, give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness, fear his goodness, and obey his will.

Ver. 17. *And if ye call on the Father,* etc.] Of Christ, and of all the saints; or “seeing” ye do. This is a fresh argument, engaging to holiness of life and conversation. Invocation of God includes the whole worship of him, the performance of every outward duty, and the exercise of every inward grace, particularly it designs prayer; and whoever are concerned in one, or the other, God will be sanctified by all them that draw nigh unto him: or the phrase may here intend an asserting God to be their Father, under the

influence of the spirit of adoption; and all such that do claim so near a relation to God ought to honour and obey him, and to be followers of him: whoever call God their Father, and themselves his children, ought to be careful that they do not blaspheme, or cause to be blasphemed, that worthy name by which they are called:

who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work.

This is another reason why men should be holy, taken from the general judgment; for this God that is a Father, is also a judge. There is a judgment after death, which is sure and certain, and reaches to all persons and things; and though the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son, yet he will judge everyone by that man Christ, whom he has ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead: before his judgment seat all must stand, where they will be impartially, and without respect of persons, tried; no account will be had of what nation and place they are, whether Jews or Gentiles, or of this, or the other country, unless to aggravate or lessen their condemnation; for it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for such who have been favoured with a Gospel revelation, and believe it not; nor from what parents they have descended, for the soul that sins, that shall die; nor of what age and sex they are, small and great shall stand before him; nor of what state and condition, rich or poor, high or low, bond or free; or of what religious sect and denomination, or whether they have conformed to some external things or not; no regard will be had to any outward appearance or profession. The Judge will not judge according to the sight of the eyes, and outward view of things; for he looks on the heart, and knows the secret springs of all actions; and according thereunto will he judge and pass the sentence; and therefore what manner of persons ought men to be, in all holy conversation and godliness? Hence it follows,

pass the time of your sojourning here in fear; the people of God in this world are “sojourners”, as all their fathers were; they are not natives of the place in, which they are; though they are in the world, they are not of it; they were natives of it by their first birth, but by their second they are born again from above, and so, belong to another place; they are of another country, even an heavenly one; are citizens of another city, a city which, has foundations, whose builder and maker is God, their citizenship is in heaven; and there is their Father's house, which is not made with hands, and is eternal; and there lies their estate, their inheritance; and though they dwell here below, neither their settlement nor their satisfaction are here;

they reckon themselves not at home while they are on earth, and are strangers in it, to the men of the world, and they to them; with whom they have not, or at least ought not to have, any fellowship. It is indeed but for a “time”, that they are sojourners, not an eternity; which time is fixed, and is very short, and will be quickly gone; it is but a little while, and Christ will come and take them home to his Father's house, where they shall be for ever with him; for it is only here on earth that they are pilgrims and strangers: and while they are so they should spend their time “in fear”; not of men nor of devils, nor of death and judgment, hell and eternal damnation; for such a fear is not consistent with the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and is the effect of the law, and not encouraged by the Gospel; is in natural men, yea, in devils themselves; but in the fear of God, and which springs from the grace of God, and is increased by it; is consistent with the strongest acts of faith, and with the greatest expressions of spiritual joy; is opposite to pride and self-confidence, and includes the whole worship of God, external and internal, and a religious conversation, in humility and lowliness of mind.

Ver. 18. *Forasmuch as ye know*, etc.] From the Scriptures of truth, by the testimony of the Spirit, by his work upon the soul, and by the application of the benefits of redemption, such as justification, pardon, adoption, and sanctification; (see ^{<18925>}Job 19:25 ^{<8121>}Galatians 2:20),

that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold. The redemption of a soul, which is of more worth than a world, requires a greater price than gold and silver; and those who have the largest share thereof, can neither redeem their own souls with it, nor the souls of others. The soul is immortal and incorruptible, but these are corruptible things, which may be cankered, or wear away, and perish by using; and therefore, seeing redemption is not obtained by anything corruptible, nothing corrupt in principle, or practice should be indulged. The allusion is to the redemption of the people of Israel, and of the firstborn, by shekels, (^{<12312>}Exodus 30:12,13 ^{<04346>}Numbers 3:46-48). Gold and silver do not mean pieces of gold and silver, but gold and silver coined; for only by such could redemption of anything be obtained ^{f32} but these are insufficient for the redemption of the soul; which is a deliverance from the slavery of sin, the bondage, curse, and condemnation of the law, the captivity of Satan, and from a state of poverty, having been deep in debt, and sold under sin. It here follows,

from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers; meaning not the corruption of nature, which is propagated from father to son by natural generation, and lies in the vanity of the mind, and is the spring and source of an evil conversation; though the saints, as they are redeemed from all sin, so from this, that it shall not be their condemnation; not Gentilism, which lay in vain philosophy, in idolatry and superstition, and in evil and wicked conversation, encouraged by the example of their ancestors; but Judaism, and either regards the ceremonial law, which was delivered by Moses to the Jewish fathers, and by them handed down to their posterity; and which was vain, as used and abused by them, and was unprofitable to obtain righteousness, life, and salvation by, and therefore was disannulled by Christ, who has redeemed and delivered his people from this yoke of bondage; or rather the traditions of the elders, which our Lord inveighs against, (^{<418B>}Matthew 15:3) etc. and the Apostle Paul was brought up in, and zealous of, before conversion, (^{<4014>}Galatians 1:14) as the Pharisees were. These were the inventions and decrees of them they called *twba*, “fathers”, to whose dogmas and decisions they paid the utmost respect. These made up their oral law, which the Jews say ^{f33} Moses received from Sinai, and delivered to Joshua; and Joshua to the elders; and the elders to the prophets; and the prophets to the men of the great synagogue, the last of which was Simeon the just; and from him it was delivered to another; and so from one to another to the times of Christ and his apostles and afterwards; and which consisted of many vain, useless, and unprofitable things; to walk according to which must be a vain conversation; and the saints now being redeemed by a greater price than that of silver and gold, and which is after mentioned, they ought not therefore to be the servants of men, no, not of these fathers, but of God and Christ.

Ver. 19. *But with the precious blood of Christ,* etc.] Christ was prophesied of as a Redeemer under the Old Testament, (^{<285D>}Isaiah 59:20) and the Jews frequently ascribe redemption to the word of the Lord God ^{f34}; and which the apostle here attributes to the blood of Christ; whose blood is the same with ours, only not tainted with sin; the blood of an innocent person, and of one who is God, as well as man, and was freely shed in the room and stead of his people, and so a sufficient price for their redemption: and it may truly be said to be “precious”: as it is to God, to whom it is a sweet smelling sacrifice, and with which he is well pleased; not that he takes delight in the mere effusion of his blood, but as this is the ransom price,

and the atonement of his chosen ones; and so it is to all them that believe, since by it they are justified; through it they have the forgiveness of their sins; their peace and reconciliation with God is made by it; and by it they are sanctified, and have boldness to enter into the holiest of all: and this blood of Christ, by which they are redeemed, is

as of a lamb without spot and blemish; Christ is comparable to any lamb, for the innocence of his nature, the meekness of his disposition and deportment, and for his patience under sufferings and in death; and to the lambs of the daily sacrifice, which were typical of the continual and constant virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice to take away sin; and particularly to the paschal lamb, he being the true passover sacrificed for us; and which, as also the lambs of the daily sacrifice, and all others, were to be without spot and blemish: and in which they prefigured Christ, who is without the stain of original, and the spot and blemish of actual sin; and so was a very fit person to be a sacrifice for sin, and a Redeemer of his people. The Jews have a notion, that the redemption of the Israelites out of Egypt, when a lamb without blemish was taken, and sacrificed and eaten, had a respect to the future redemption by the Messiah; and which, they say ^{f35}, was to be in the same time of the year; that as they were redeemed in Nisan, the month in which the passover was kept, so they were to be redeemed in the same month: and indeed at that time, and in that month, was redemption obtained by the blood of Christ. Of the former, the Targumist in (~~CHR~~Hosea 3:2) says,

“I have redeemed them by my word, on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, and have given silver shekels, the atonement of their souls.”

It is observable that the Hebrew word **יָד** signifies both “blood” and “money”, or price; whether some reference may not be had to this here, since both are included here, may be considered.

Ver. 20. *Who verily was foreordained*, etc.] Or “foreknown”; that is, by God; and which intends, not barely his prescience of Christ, of what he should be, do, and suffer; but such a previous knowledge of him, which is joined with love and affection to him; not merely as his own Son, and the express image of his person, but as Mediator; and whom he loved before the world was, and with a love of complacency and delight, and which will last for ever. It includes the choice of him as the head of the election, and

the pre-ordination of his human nature, to the grace of union to his divine Person, and the pre-appointment of him to various things. The Syriac version adds, “to this”; that is, to be the lamb for a sacrifice, to be a propitiation for the sins of his people, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them by his precious blood. The allusion is to the taking of the passover lamb from the sheep, or from the goats, and keeping it separate, from the tenth to the fourteenth day of the month, before it was slain; so Christ, as man, was chosen out from among the people; and as Joseph's antitype was separated from his brethren, and that

before the foundation of the world; for all God's decrees and appointments, relating either to Christ, or his people, are eternal; no new thoughts, counsels, and resolutions, are taken up by him in time. The affair of redemption by Christ is no new thing; the scheme of it was drawn in eternity; the persons to be redeemed were fixed on; the Redeemer was appointed in the council and covenant of peace; and even the very Gospel which proclaims it was ordained before the world, for our glory. A Saviour was provided before sin was committed, and the method of man's recovery was settled before his ruin took place; and which was done without any regard to the works and merits of men, but is wholly owing to the free and sovereign grace of God, and to his everlasting love, both to the Redeemer and the redeemed. The Jews ^{f36} reckon the name of the Messiah among the seven things that were created before the world was; in proof of which they mention, (~~49717~~ Psalm 72:17) but was manifest in these last times for you; he was before, he existed from everlasting; he lay in the bosom of his Father from all eternity: and was veiled and hid under the shadows of the ceremonial law, during the legal dispensation; but in the fulness of time was manifest in the flesh, and more clearly revealed in the Gospel, and to the souls of men; his manifestation in human nature is principally intended, and which was in the last times of the legal dispensation, at the end of the Jewish world or state, when a new world, or the world to come, took place. It is a rule with the Jews ^{f37}, that whenever the last days or times are mentioned, the times of the Messiah are designed: and this manifestation of Christ was for the sake of some particular persons, even for all God's elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles, and who are described in the following verse. The Alexandrian copy reads, “for us”; and the Ethiopic version, “for him”.

Ver. 21. *Who by him do believe in God*, etc.] Christ, as God, is the object of faith; as Mediator, he is the way to the Father, by which men come to

him, believe in him and lay hold upon him, as their covenant God and Father; and is also the author of that faith by which they believe in him; and all their encouragement to believe is taken from him; and such who do come to God by Christ, and stay themselves upon him, trusting in him, may know, and comfortably conclude, that Christ, who was foreordained from all eternity to be the Redeemer of his people, was manifest in the flesh for their sakes, and to obtain eternal redemption for them, which he was sent to do, by him

that raised him up from the dead: mention being made of his blood, as the price of redemption, (⁴⁰¹⁹1 Peter 1:19), supposes that he died; and lest it should be thought that he was held by the pains of death, and under the power of it, which it was impossible he should, considering the dignity of his person, as the Son of God, and the fulfilment of his engagements, as the surety of his people; his resurrection from the dead is asserted, which was not only foretold by himself, but predicted by the prophets, and was punctually accomplished; and which, as here, is usually ascribed to God the Father, though not to the exclusion of Christ himself, who had power to lay down his life, and take it up again; and which is a very great encouragement to faith in God, both with respect to justification in his sight, and acceptance with him, since Christ rose again for our justification, and with regard to a future resurrection:

and gave him glory; by raising him from the dead, when his body became a glorious one, being raised, spiritual, powerful, and incorruptible; and by his ascension to heaven, being received up in a cloud, attended by thousands of angels, and triumphing over the powers of darkness; and by placing him at his own right hand, which is an honour never bestowed on any mere creature; and by possessing him with the gifts of the Spirit for men, and giving him all power in heaven and in earth, and authority to exercise judgment on all, and a name above every name in this, or the world to come:

that your faith and hope might be in God; which are graces that go together, and much resemble and assist, each other; they are both the gifts of God, and have him for their object, and meet in the same persons; and are greatly encouraged by the resurrection of Christ, and the glory he now enjoys, since because he lives, those that believe in him shall live also, and appear with him in glory.

Ver. 22. *Seeing ye have purified your souls*, etc.] The apostle passes to another exhortation, namely, to brotherly love; the ground of which he makes to be, the purification of their souls; and which supposes that they had been impure; and indeed, their whole persons, souls and bodies, were so by nature; even all the members of their bodies, and all the powers and faculties of their souls: it is internal purity, purity of the heart, that is here particularly respected; though not to the exclusion of outward purity, for where there is the former, there will be the latter; but there may be an external purity, where there is not the inward one: this the apostle ascribes to the saints themselves, but not without the grace of God, the blood of Christ, and the operations of his Spirit; as appears by a following clause; but they are said to purify themselves, inasmuch as having the grace of faith bestowed on them, they were enabled, under the influences of the Spirit of God, to exercise it on the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin:

in obeying the truth; of the Gospel, by receiving, believing, and embracing it in the love of it; which teaches outward purity, and is a means in the hand of the spirit of inward purity, and of directing to the purifying blood of Jesus, who sanctifies and cleanses by the word:

through the Spirit; this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, but is in the Arabic version, and ought to be retained; for, as Christ died to purify to himself a peculiar people, the Spirit of Christ does from him purify the heart by faith in his blood; by sprinkling that on the conscience, and by leading the faith of God's people to the fountain of it, to wash it for sin, and for uncleanness; even both their consciences and their conversation, garments; whereby they obtain inward and outward purity:

unto unfeigned love of the brethren; which is the end of sanctification, and an evidence of it; when the saints are loved as brethren, and because such; and with a love without dissimulation, not in word and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth: this being the case, the exhortation follows:

[see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently: this is Christ's new commandment, and the evidence of regeneration; a distinguishing badge of Christianity, and without which all profession of religion is a vain and empty thing: this should be mutual and cordial; should proceed from the heart, and from an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience; and should be with warmth and fervency, and not with coldness and indifference;

though the word here used, **εκτενωσ**, may not only design the intenseness of it, but the extensiveness of it also; as that it should reach to all the saints, the poor as well as the rich, and the lesser as well as the greater and more knowing believers; and likewise may denote the continuance of it; it ought to be continually exercised, and to last always; and so the Arabic version renders it, “with a perpetual love”.

Ver. 23. *Being born again*, etc.] As they were of God, according to his abundant mercy, by the resurrection of Christ, to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance; as in (^{<A01B>}1 Peter 1:3) and therefore seeing they were brethren in a spiritual relation, they ought to love as brethren; being children of the same Father, belonging to the same family and household, having the same spirit, and the same nature and disposition, and being members one of another, and heirs of the same grace and glory; and not only so, but were taught of God their Father, in regeneration, to love one another: it became them highly, therefore, to exercise that grace, and particularly since they were born,

not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; referring not to seed cast into the earth, which first corrupts and dies, and then is quickened, and rises, and brings forth fruit; but to human seed, and which the Jews call **hj wrs hpj**, “the filthy drop”^{f38}; which is in itself corrupt, and is corrupted, and whereby the corruption of human nature is propagated; for whatsoever is born of the flesh is carnal and corrupt; and so the apostle has reference to the first birth, or natural generation of men, in which they are polluted and depraved, and confirms what the evangelist says, (^{<A01B>}John 1:13) that regenerate persons are not “born of blood”; or become new creatures, and holy men, by their natural descent, or first birth, be it from whom it will; for all men are of one blood originally, and that is tainted with sin; nor by the will of fallen creatures, of corruptible men, themselves or others; but of water, and of the Spirit, of the grace of the Spirit of God, which is seed pure and incorruptible, having no mixture or taint of sin, nor any degree of pollution in it, and which remains so; nor can it be corrupted by all the wickedness there is in man's heart; nor by all the pollutions of the world, or temptations of Satan; and this seed is conveyed into the heart by the Spirit of God, in regeneration, and it contains all grace in it;

by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever; for the incorruptible seed, and the ever living and abiding word, are two distinct things; though interpreters generally confound them: and by “the word of

God” is either meant the essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; who is concerned in regeneration as well as the Father and the Spirit; by whose resurrection, and in consequence of it, the elect of God are begotten again; and who, as the Word, is able to build up all the sanctified ones, and give them the inheritance they are born heirs unto: or the Gospel, the word of truth, which is made use of as a means of begetting souls again; and the rather, since it seems to be so interpreted, (~~4025~~ 1 Peter 1:25) the phrases, “which liveth and abideth forever”, may be either read in connection only with “God”, and as descriptive of him, who is the living God, is from everlasting to everlasting, in distinction from idols; and here added, to show that he can give power and efficacy to his word, to regenerate and quicken, and will continue to preserve and make it useful to all his saving purposes; so Jarchi explains the passage in (~~2408~~ Isaiah 40:8) after referred to, “the word of our God shall stand for ever”;

“because he lives and abides, and it is in his power to confirm it therefore it follows, “O Zion, that bringeth good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain”; for because he lives forever, this promise is published.”

Or else with the word of God, and is true both of Christ, and of the Gospel. Christ is the Word which lives; in him, as such, is life; he has life in himself as God, as man, and as Mediator; and is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and, eternal; and abides for ever in his person, without any change; and in his offices and grace, and righteousness; he abides a priest continually, has an unchangeable priesthood, and ever lives to make intercession, and of his kingdom there is no end: the same is said of the “Memra”, or Word of God, in the Chaldee paraphrase on (~~2810~~ Hosea 11:9) “I am God”, *yr̄mym*, “my word abideth for ever”: compare (~~4124~~ John 12:34). The Gospel also may be said to live, in opposition to the law, which is the killing letter; and because it points out the way of life and salvation to sinners; and is a means of quickening dead sinners, and of ingenerating that faith by which men live on Christ; and of revealing to them that righteousness which is unto justification of life; and of supporting and maintaining spiritual life in them; and of reviving drooping saints; the Syriac version renders it, “the living Word of God”: and it remains, and will abide; all its promises, blessings, doctrines, and ordinances, are lasting; it will continue in the world until all the elect of God are gathered in, until the second coming of Christ, and to the end of the world; notwithstanding all the persecutions of men, and cunning, craft of false teachers, and all the

ridicule and contempt it is treated with by mockers and scoffers: and will abide in the effects of it, in the hearts of the saints, to all eternity.

Ver. 24. *For all flesh is as grass,* etc.] All men, as born of corruptible seed, are frail, mortal, and perishing; they spring up like grass, and look beautiful for a while, but are very weak and tender, and in a little time they are cut down by death, and wither away; and while they live, are, in a good measure, nothing but grass in another form; the substance of their life is greatly by it; what is the flesh they eat, but grass turned into it? and this mortality is not only the case of wicked men, as the Jews ^{f39} interpret the word, but of good men; even of the prophets, and preachers of the Gospel; and yet the word of God spoken by them continues for ever: the passage referred to is in (²³¹⁶Isaiah 40:6-8)

and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass; all outward things which are in esteem with men, and render them glorious to one another, as riches, honour, wisdom, strength, external righteousness, holiness, and goodness; all which are fading and transitory, like the flower of the field; but the Gospel continues, and reveals durable riches, and honour with Christ; and true wisdom and strength with him, and spiritual knowledge, in comparison of which, all things are dross and dung; and an everlasting righteousness; and true holiness in him: some have thought respect may be had to the legal dispensation, and to all the glory and stateliness and goodness of the worship and ordinances of it, which were to endure but for a time, and are now removed; and the Gospel dispensation has taken place of them, which will continue to the end of the world:

the grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away; and so fading are all the above things.

Ver. 25. *But the word of the Lord endureth for ever,* etc.] Though men die, and ministers of the word too, and everything in the world is uncertain, unstable, fleeting, and passing away, and whatever change has been in the ordinances of divine service; yet the word of the Lord, the Gospel of Christ, is settled for ever, and will never pass away:

and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you; this is the apostle's application of the passage in Isaiah, showing that the word of the Lord there is the same with the Gospel preached by him, and the other apostles, at that present time; and is no other than that good tidings Zion is said to bring; (see ²³¹⁹Isaiah 40:9) the selfsame Gospel the Prophet Isaiah

preached the apostles did, though with greater clearness, and more success; (see ~~6108~~ Romans 10:8,16).

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 2

This chapter consists of exhortations, in general, to a holy life; and, in particular, to obedience to superiors. It begins with an exhortation to lay aside various vices, which were unbecoming regenerate persons, ([1 Peter 2:1](#)) and, agreeably to their character, as new born babes, to express a desire after the Gospel, which is commended from its nature, being comparable to milk; and from its quality, being reasonable, sincere, and unmixed; and from the end and usefulness of it, a spiritual growth; and the argument engaging to such a desire is the experience they had of the grace of Christ in it, ([1 Peter 2:2,3](#)) whose excellency is declared, under the metaphor of a stone, said to be living, to be chosen of God, and precious to him, though rejected by men; to whom the saints are encouraged to come, as lively stones built up, a spiritual house, for the exercise of the holy office of the priesthood, by offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ, ([1 Peter 2:4,5](#)) and that Christ is such a precious stone, is proved from ([Isaiah 28:16](#)) and not only to God, but to all them that believe; though to them that believe not, he is the stone of rejection, stumbling, and offence; to stumble at which, and the doctrine of it, through disobedience, they were of old appointed by God, ([1 Peter 2:6-8](#)) but the character of the persons the apostle writes to was very different, quite the reverse, being chosen and called, and manifestly the people of God, and sharing in his grace and mercy, ([1 Peter 2:9,10](#)) and these he exhorts, suitable to their state and condition, to abstain from sin, as an enemy to their souls, and to live an honest life and conversation among the Gentiles, that they, instead of speaking evil of them, might, by beholding their good works, glorify God, ([1 Peter 2:11,12](#)). And particularly he exhorts them to obedience to civil magistrates, both superior and inferior; partly from the author of them, they being of the Lord; and partly from the usefulness of them to punish wicked men, and to encourage good men; and also from its being the will of God, by such obedience, to silence the cavils of foolish men, ([1 Peter 2:13-15](#)). And whereas it might be objected, that they were made free by Christ, and therefore should not be the servants of men; it is granted, that they were free; but then it is denied, that they should use

their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness: and besides, it should be observed, that they were the servants of God, and therefore ought to do what he enjoined them; and, among other things, yield obedience to civil magistrates, (^{<A126>}1 Peter 2:16). And to this purpose are various exhortations in (^{<A127>}1 Peter 2:17), and another particular one is added, which is to servants, to be subject to their masters, and fear them, whether they be good or bad, (^{<A128>}1 Peter 2:18) and then he comforts such that had bad masters, and encourages them to bear the injuries they received from them patiently; because so to do was grateful to God, and acceptable in his sight; and because they were called unto it by him; and because of the example Christ had left them in suffering for them, (^{<A129>}1 Peter 2:19-21). And this is further urged from the character of Christ, who was without sin, and yet suffered, and from his conduct, who, when reviled, made no return, but left his cause with God, (^{<A122>}1 Peter 2:22,23) which leads on the apostle take notice of the nature of Christ's sufferings in his body on the cross, and the ends of them, which were expiation of sin, healing diseases, and holiness of life, as a consequent thereof, (^{<A124>}1 Peter 2:24) previous to which conversion, which is illustrated by the former state and condition men are in, being as sheep going astray; and by their present one, being returned to Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, (^{<A125>}1 Peter 2:25).

Ver. 1. *Wherefore, laying aside all malice*, etc.] Since the persons the apostle writes to were born again, and therefore ought to love one another, he exhorts them to the disuse of such vices as were disagreeable to their character as regenerate men, and contrary brotherly love; he dissuades them from them, and advises to “lay them aside”, either as weights and burdens, which it was not fit for new born babes to carry; (see ^{<S121>}Hebrews 12:1) or rather as old worn out clothes, as filthy rags, which should be put off, laid by, and never used more, being what were very unsuitable to their character and profession to wear: the metaphor is the same as in (^{<A122>}Ephesians 4:22 ^{<S123>}Colossians 3:8,9) and the first he mentions is malice; to live in which is a mark of an unregenerate man, and very unbecoming such who are born again; and is not consistent with the relation of brethren, and character of children, or new born babes, who are without malice, and do not bear and retain it: “all” of this is to be laid aside, towards all persons whatever, and in every shape, and in every instance of it:

and all guile; fraud, or deceit, in words or actions; and which should not be found, and appear in any form, in Israelites indeed, in brethren, in the

children of God; who ought not to lie one to another, or defraud each other, nor express that with their lips which they have not in their hearts; which babes are free from, and so should babes in Christ:

and hypocrisies; both to God and men: hypocrisy to God is, when persons profess that which they have not, as love to God, faith in Christ, zeal for religion, fervent devotion, and sincerity in the worship of God; and do all they do to be seen of men, and appear outwardly righteous, and yet are full of all manner of iniquity: hypocrisy to men is, pretence of friendship, loving in word and tongue only, speaking peaceably with the mouth, but in heart laying wait; a sin to be abhorred and detested by one that is born from above; and is contrary to that integrity, simplicity, and sincerity of heart, which become regenerate persons, the children of God, and brethren one of another:

and envies; at each other's happiness and prosperity, riches, honours, gifts temporal or spiritual; for such are works of the flesh, show men to be carnal, are unbecoming regenerated persons, and contrary to the exercise of Christian charity, or love, which envieth not the welfare of others, either respecting body, soul, or estate:

and all evil speakings; backbitings, whisperings, detractions, hurting one another's characters by innuendos, false charges, and evil surmises; which is not acting like men that are made new creatures, and are partakers of the divine nature, nor like brethren, or as Christ's little ones, and who are of God, begotten again to be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Ver. 2. *As new born babes*, etc.] The Syriac version renders it, “be ye simple as infants”; and as if it was a distinct exhortation of itself, and from that which follows; though it seems rather to be descriptive of the persons spoken to, and a character of them, under which the apostle addresses them; which carries in it a reason strengthening the exhortation after given: he takes it for granted that they were begotten again, according to the abundant mercy of God, and born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, and that they were just, or lately born; and which is to be understood of them all in general, and not of younger converts among them, who might be called little children with respect to others who were young men or fathers; but that, comparatively speaking, those that had been of the longest standing were but as it were newly born, it being at most but a few years since they were called by grace: and they were as “babes”, not on account of their want of knowledge, or unskilfulness in the word of

righteousness; or of nonproficiency in the learning of divine truths, and their great dulness, backwardness, and imperfection; or because of their incapacity in taking in, and digesting the strong meat and sublimer doctrines of the Gospel; or for their instability and simplicity, being easily deceived and beguiled; nor for their weakness in faith, not being able to walk alone, and their insufficiency to defend, or provide for themselves; but because of their harmlessness and innocence, meekness and humility; and for the sincerity of their faith and love, obedience and profession. The proselytes to the Jews' religion are often said ^{f40} to be **ymd dl wnc ʿwj qk**, “as an infant just born”, or a new born babe; to which the allusion may here be made:

desire the sincere milk of the word; this is not a declaration that these new born souls did do so, though that might be true, but an exhortation to them so to do, as it became them: by “the sincere milk of the word” is meant the Gospel, even the whole of it, and not, as elsewhere, the more plain and easy truths of it; which is compared to milk for its purity in itself, for every word of God is pure and for its purifying nature, as used by the Spirit of God; and for its sweetness and agreeable taste to a regenerate man; and because easy of digestion to a spiritual one; and because it is nutritive to him, by it he is nourished up unto eternal life; and because, as milk is of a cooling nature, so the Gospel is a means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, of assuaging those inflammations, and of allaying that wrath and fiery indignation, raised in the conscience of a sinner by the law; and because as milk, medicinally used, is a restorative in consumptive disorders, so the Gospel is not only the means of helping a declining person, and who is wasted and consumed by sin, but even of quickening such as are dead in sin; it is the savour of life unto life. The Jewish writers speak of **hrwt l q bl j**, “the milk of the law” ^{f41}, of which they generally interpret ^{f42} the passage in (~~280~~ Isaiah 55:1) but it is much better applied to the Gospel, which is the milk of the word, or “rational milk”: not that the Gospel is a scheme according to the carnal reason of men; it is contrary to that, and above sound reason, though not repugnant to it; but it is what is calculated for faith, the spiritual reason of men, and for such who have their spiritual senses exercised, to discern between good and evil; it is a spiritual drink, and is made up of spiritual things, and suited to the spiritual man; it is milk, not in a natural, but in a mystic and spiritual sense: the Syriac version renders it, “the word which is as milk, pure and spiritual”: and it is “sincere”; without mixture, unadulterated with the inventions and doctrines

of men, Jews or heretics: or “without deceit”; being neither deceitfully handled by the faithful ministers of it, nor causing deceit, or deceiving those that cordially receive it. Now, this it becomes regenerate person, to “desire”; and vehemently long after, as a new born babe does after its mother’s milk; for the Gospel is that to one that is born again, as the breast is to a babe: desire after it supposes knowledge of it; and where there is an experimental knowledge, there will be a value and esteem for it, even above necessary food, and, at times, an hungering and thirsting after it, an impatient longing for, and desire of it; when such souls will labour after it, and diligently observe and attend every opportunity of enjoying it, and think long ere the seasons of meeting with it return; for it is suitable food for them, savoury food, such as their souls love, and which indeed they cannot live without: now the end of this exhortation, and of such a desire, and of feeding on the words of faith and sound doctrine, is,

that ye may grow thereby: regenerate persons are not at their full growth at once; they are first children, then young men, and then fathers in Christ; the Gospel is appointed as a means of their spiritual growth, and by the blessing of God becomes so, and which they find to be so by good experience; and therefore this milk of the word is desirable on this account, for the increase of faith, and the furtherance of the joy of it; for their growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and in an experience of spiritual strength from him, and unto him, as their head in all things; not merely in the leaves of a profession, but in the fruits of grace, righteousness, and holiness. The Alexandrian copy, and several others, and also the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, add, “unto salvation”: that is, until they come to a perfect knowledge of Christ, and to be perfect men with him, being arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, and in the possession of that salvation he has obtained for them.

Ver. 3. *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*] Reference is had to (¹³⁴⁸Psalm 34:8), “O taste and see that the Lord is good”; and the Syriac version here adds, “if ye have seen”: by the Lord is meant, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the following words show, who is gracious and amiable, and lovely in his person; who has a fulness of grace in him for his people; has displayed his grace towards them, in engaging for them as a surety, in assuming their nature, obeying, suffering, and dying in their stead; he is gracious in his word and promises, truths and ordinances, and in all his offices and relations; and regenerate persons have tasted that he is so: an

unregenerate man has no spiritual taste; his taste is vitiated by sin, and not being changed, sin is a sweet morsel in his mouth, and he disrelishes everything that is spiritual; but one that is born again savours the things of the Spirit of God; sin is exceeding sinful to him, and Christ exceeding precious; he, and his fruit, his promises, and blessings of grace, his word and ordinances, are sweet unto his taste: and the taste he has is not a mere superficial one, such as hypocrites may have of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; but such a taste of Christ, and of his grace, as, by a true faith, to eat his flesh, and drink his blood, and so have everlasting life; such have a saving and experimental knowledge of Christ, an application of him, and his saving benefits to them, a revelation of him in them, so that they find and feel that he dwells in them, and they in him; such receive out of Christ's fulness, and grace for grace, and live by faith upon him, and receive nourishment from him; and of this the apostle made no doubt concerning these persons, but took it for granted that they had had such tastes of Christ, and therefore could not but desire the Gospel, which is a revelation of Christ, and sets forth the glory of his person, and the riches of his grace: and whereas, such as have truly tasted of his grace cannot but desire to have more, and fresh tastes of it; where should they have them, but in his word and ordinances? and therefore, would they grow in grace, and know more of Christ, and taste more of his goodness, it is their interest, as it is their spiritual nature, to desire the Gospel, in the purity and sincerity of it.

Ver. 4. *To whom coming, as unto a living stone*, etc.] Christ here, as often elsewhere, is compared to a "stone"; and Peter, by the use of this metaphor, shows that he is not the rock, but Christ is the rock on which the church is built, and he is the foundation stone on which every believer is laid; and it is chiefly with respect to the usefulness of a stone in building, that Christ is compared to one, who is the foundation and cornerstone, as well as for strength and duration; and he is called a "living" one, because he has life in himself, as God, as Mediator, and as man; and communicates life to others, as natural life to all creatures, and spiritual and eternal life to his people, whose great privilege it is to come to him: and by coming to him is meant believing in him; and it does not design the first act of faith on Christ, or a soul's first coming to Christ, but an after and continued exercise of faith on him; and it supposes Christ to be come at, notwithstanding he is in heaven, and saints on earth, for their faith and hope can enter into, and reach him within the vail, and notwithstanding

their many transgressions and backslidings; it supposes life in them, or they could not come; and a sense of their need of him, of his righteousness to justify them, of his blood for pardoning and cleansing, of his fulness to supply their want of food, rest, peace, comfort, and salvation in him; and a persuasion of his ability and willingness to relieve them: and they are encouraged to come to him under the above considerations, as a stone, a foundation stone; believing that he is laid as a foundation, and that he is the only foundation, and therefore they lay the whole stress of their salvation, and build all their hopes of happiness on him; and as a living stone, deriving grace, life, and strength from him; exercising faith on him for all the mercies, blessings, and comforts of a spiritual life, and looking to his mercy for eternal life.

Disallowed indeed of men; by the Jewish builders, high priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, and the body and bulk of that nation; who rejected him as the Messiah, and stone of Israel, refused him as a foundation stone, and left him out of the building; and laid another foundation, even their own works of righteousness, on which sandy foundation they built themselves, and directed others to do so likewise; and set him, at nought, as a living stone, would not come to him for life, but sought it in the law, the killing letter, and among their dead works; but though Christ was thus disallowed and disesteemed of by men, yet was he highly valued and esteemed by God:

but chosen of God, and precious; his human nature was “chosen” from among, and above all other individuals of mankind; to be united to the Son of God; as God-man and Mediator, he was chosen to that high office, to be the head of the church, and the Saviour of the body; to be the foundation in the spiritual building, and to be the author and giver of spiritual and eternal life to as many as were given him. Moreover, this phrase denotes the superior excellency of Christ to angels and men in the account of God; being the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, the Son of his love, in whom he was always well pleased, and in whom he took infinite delight, considered both as his Son, and the surety of his people; and to whom he was

precious, and by him highly honoured, made higher than the kings of the earth, than the angels in heaven, than the heavens themselves, being set down at God's right hand, and a name given him above every name in this world, or that to come; and who is precious to the saints too, more so than rubies, or any precious stones, or any thing or creature whatever; his

person is precious, and so are his name, his blood, his righteousness, his truths, his ordinances, and his people.

Ver. 5. *Ye also, as lively stones*, etc.] Saints likewise are compared to stones; they lie in the same quarry, and are the same by nature as the rest of mankind, till dug out and separated from thence by the powerful and efficacious grace of God, when they are hewn, and made fit for the spiritual building; where both for their ornament, beauty, and strength, which they receive from Christ, they are compared to stones, and are lasting and durable, and will never perish, nor be removed out of the building: and because of that life which they derive from him, and have in him, they are called “lively”, or “living stones”; the spirit of life having entered into them, a principle of life being implanted in them, and coming to Christ, the living stone, they live upon him, and he lives in them; and his grace in them is a well of living water, springing up into eternal life. It was usual with poets and philosophers to call stones, as they lie in the quarry before they are taken out of it, “living” ones: so Virgil ^{f43}, describing the seats of the nymphs, says, “*intus aquae dulces vivoque sedilia saxo, nympharum domus*”, etc. but here the apostle calls such living stones, who were taken out from among the rest: the stones which Deucalion and Pyrrha cast over their heads after the flood are called ^{f44} ζῶοψεντες λιθοι, “quickened stones”, they becoming men, as the fable says. “Are built up a spiritual house”; these living stones being laid, and cemented together, in a Gospel church state, become the house of God in a spiritual sense, in distinction from the material house of the tabernacle, and temple of old, to which the allusion is; and which is built up an habitation for God, by the Spirit, and is made up of spiritual men; such as have the Spirit of God, and savour the things of the Spirit, and worship God in Spirit and in truth; among whom spiritual services are performed, as prayer, praise, preaching, and hearing the word, and administering ordinances. Some read these words in the imperative, as an exhortation, “be ye built up as lively stones; and be ye spiritual temples and holy priests”, as the Syriac version. A synagogue with the Jews is called *ygj wr tyb*, “a spiritual house” ^{f45}; and so is the third temple which the Jews expect in the times of the Messiah; of which one of their writers ^{f46} thus says:

“it is known from the ancient wise men, that the future redemption, with which shall be the third *ynj wr*, “spiritual” sanctuary, is the work of God, and will not be as the former redemptions: “I will fill

this house with glory”; this is *ynj wr*, “a spiritual” one, for even the walls shall be *μyynj wr*, “spiritual” — for even all this “house” shall be “spiritual”; for that which was then built, which is the second, shall be turned into another a “spiritual” one:”

and which has been already done, and is what the apostle means here, the church, under the Gospel dispensation, or the Gospel church state, in opposition to the worldly sanctuary, and carnal worship of the Jews.

An holy priesthood; in allusion to the priests under the law, who were set apart, and sanctified for that office; but now, under the Gospel, all the saints are priests unto God, and are all appointed and directed

to offer up spiritual sacrifices; their whole selves, souls, and bodies, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice; their prayers and praises, and all good works done in faith, and from love, and to the glory of God; particularly acts of kindness and beneficence to poor saints; these are called spiritual, in distinction from legal sacrifices, and because offered in a spiritual manner, under the influence, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God, and with their spirits. So the Jews speak of spiritual sacrifices, as distinct from material ones:

“the intellectual sacrifice (they say ^{f47}) is before the material sacrifices, both in time and excellency. — Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the earth, and behold the intellectual attention did not agree with it, which is *ynj wrh ^brq*, “the spiritual sacrifice”.”

Now such are

acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; through whom they are offered up; for it is through him the saints have access to God, present themselves to him, and their services; and both persons and services are only accepted in Christ, and for his sake, and in virtue of his sacrifice, which is always of a sweet smelling savour to God.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture*, etc.] (⁻²³⁸⁶Isaiah 28:16). This is produced as a proof of the excellency of Christ, as compared to a stone; and of his usefulness in the spiritual building; and of his being chosen of God, and precious, though rejected by men; and of the happiness, comfort, and safety of those that believe in him. That this

prophecy belongs to the Messiah, is the sense of some of the Jewish writers: the Targum on it applies it to a mighty king; it does not mention the King Messiah, as Galatinus^{f48} cites it; but Jarchi expressly names him, and interprets it of him:

behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; Christ is here called a chief corner stone, as in (⁴⁰²⁰Ephesians 2:20) because he not only adorns and strengthens the building, but unites the parts, and keeps them together, even all the saints, Jews or Gentiles, in all ages and places, whether in heaven or earth; and he, as such, is chosen of God for that purpose, and is precious both to God and man, on that account; and is a stone, not of men's laying, but of God's laying in his council, covenant, promises, and prophecies, in the mission of him into this world, and in the Gospel ministry; the place where he is laid is in Sion, the Gospel church, of which he is both the foundation and corner stone: and this account is introduced with a "behold", it being something very wonderful, and worthy of attention: to which is added,

he that believeth on him shall not be confounded: or "ashamed"; of the foundation and cornerstone Christ, nor of his faith in him; and he shall not be confounded by men or devils, neither in this world, nor in that to come; he shall have confidence before Christ, and not be ashamed at his coming; he shall be safe now, being laid on this stone; nor shall he be removed from it, or intimidated by any enemy, so as to flee from it; nor shall he make haste, as it is in (²³⁸⁶Isaiah 28:16) to lay another foundation; and he shall be found upon this hereafter; so that his person and state will be safe, though many of his works may be burnt up.

Ver. 7. *Unto you therefore which believe*, etc.] And such are not all they that can say their creed, or give their assent to the articles of it; nor all that believe a divine revelation, and that the Scriptures are the word of God, and give credit to all that is contained in the sacred oracles; or who believe the whole Gospel, and all the truths of it; as that there is one God; that there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit; that Christ is the Son of God, and truly God; that he is the Mediator between God and man; that he is the Messiah, is become incarnate, has obeyed, suffered, and died for men, and is the Saviour of them: that he rose again, ascended to heaven, is set down at the right hand of God, intercedes for his people, and will come a second time to judge the world in righteousness; together with all other truths which arise from, depend upon, and are connected with

these; nor all that say they believe, or profess to do so; but such who have seen themselves lost and undone by sin, their need of a Saviour, and Christ as the only one; who have seen the Son, the beauty of his person, the fulness of his grace, and the necessity and suitableness of salvation by him; who have beheld him as able to save them, as every way proper for them, and desirable by them, for faith is a sight of Christ; who also come to him under the drawings of efficacious grace, as perishing sinners, encouraged by his invitations and declarations, and venture on him; who likewise lay hold upon him, as their Saviour, and will have no other; give up themselves to him, and commit their all into his hands; who rely and stay themselves upon him, trust him with all they have, and for all they want, expecting grace and glory from him; who live upon him, and walk on in him, go on believing in him, till they receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. Now to these, in proof of what is asserted in the above passage out of Isaiah, Christ is

precious; he is so in all his names and titles, as Immanuel, God with us, and that cluster of them in (²³⁰⁶ Isaiah 9:6) and particularly his name Jesus, a Saviour, which is as ointment poured forth, and draws the love of believers to him; and so he is in both his natures, divine and human; the perfections of deity in him, his being in the form of God, and equal to him, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, render him very amiable in the view of believers; who rightly conclude from hence, that all he has done, and does, must answer the purposes for which they are designed; and his having a perfect human nature, like to theirs, excepting sin, in which he wrought salvation for them on earth, and is now glorified in heaven, makes him a delightful object to them: he is also precious to them in all his offices; in his priestly office, his blood is precious, as it must needs be, since by it they are purchased and redeemed; they are justified and sanctified by it; through it they have the forgiveness of sin, and boldness to enter into the holiest of all: his righteousness is precious to them, it being the best robe, the wedding garment, fine linen, clean and white, every way suitable to them, and answerable to the demands of the law; is pure, perfect, and everlasting; that by which they are justified from all things, and which will answer for them in a time to come, and entitles them to eternal life. His sacrifice is precious, of a sweet smelling savour to them, as well as to God; by which their sins are fully expiated, put, and taken away; full satisfaction being made for them, and they themselves thereby perfected for ever. And so he is in his prophetic

office. His word is precious, and all the truths of the Gospel, which are comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; the promises of it are exceeding great and precious, being suited to the cases of all believers: and he is also precious in his kingly office; his commands are not grievous; his yoke is easy, and burden light; believers love his commandments above gold, yea; above fine gold, and esteem his precepts concerning all things to be right, and delight in his ways and ordinances: moreover, he is precious to them in all his relations, as he is the head of eminence and influence, their kind and loving husband, their everlasting Father, their affectionate brother, and faithful friend; his whole person, in every view, is precious to them that believe; the church of Christ, the members of his body, the sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, in these is all the delight of saints; everything that is in Christ, that is of him, or belongs to him, is precious to such souls: some read the words, “to you therefore that believe, he is honour”; as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; and so the word is rendered in (^{<S17>}Romans 13:7), he is both an honour to them, that they are related to him; and he is honoured by them, by believing in him, and obeying him; and he is the cause of all their true honour, both in this and the other world. The Syriac version renders it, “to therefore is this honour given”; namely, that such a stone is laid, and that they were built upon it, and should not be confounded or ashamed, either here or hereafter; connecting the words with the preceding. The Septuagint use the word the apostle here does, in (^{<S110>}Isaiah 11:10) where it is prophesied of the Messiah, that his rest shall be glorious; they render it τιμη, “honour”, or “precious”. The Jewish writers have adopted the word ymyj into their language, and use it for profit and gain^{f49}; in which sense it is applicable to Christ, who is gain to believers, both in life and in death; they being blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and he being all in all to them: and also they use it, as denoting the intrinsic price and value of anything^{f50}, and which is a right sense of the word; and to believers the price of wisdom, or Christ, is far above rubies, and all the things that can be desired; to them he is precious as a stone, as a foundation and corner stone, and more precious than the most precious stones or things in nature; this he is to them that believe: next follows, in this and the other verse, the account of what he is to them that believe not:

but unto them which be disobedient; who are not persuadable, unbelieving, and are children of disobedience; who neither obey God and his righteous law, nor Christ and his Gospel:

the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner; reference is manifestly had to (^{<4382>}Psalm 118:22) which is a passage that clearly belongs to the Messiah, and which is suggested by Christ himself, (see Gill on "^{<4114>}Matthew 21:42"); and is by our apostle, in (^{<4411>}Acts 4:11,12) applied unto him: by the builders are meant the rulers of the Jews, both civil and ecclesiastical, and especially the latter, the Scribes, Pharisees, and chief priests; who set up for builders of the church of God, but were miserable ones; they built themselves, and taught others to build, on the observance of the ceremonial law, and the traditions of the elders; on their carnal privileges, and moral righteousness; and these disallowed of Christ in the building, rejected him as the Messiah, refused him as the Saviour and Redeemer, and set him at nought, had him in the utmost derision, and reckoned him as a worm, and no man; but, to their great mortification, he is not only laid and retained as the foundation and cornerstone, but made the head of the building, and is exalted at God's right hand above angels and men; he is the head of the body, the church; he is higher than the kings of the earth, and angels are subject to him.

Ver. 8. *And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*, etc.] The apostle alludes to (^{<2184>}Isaiah 8:14) and which is a prophecy of the Messiah; (see Gill on "^{<6103>}Romans 9:33") and had its accomplishment in the unbelieving and disobedient Jews; who stumbled at his birth and parentage; at the manner of his birth, being born of a virgin; at the meanness of his parents, his supposed father being a carpenter, and his mother, Mary, a poor woman, when they expected the Messiah would have sprung from some rich and noble family; and at the place of his birth, which they imagined was Galilee, from his education and conversation there; they stumbled also at his education, and could not conceive how he should know letters, and from whence he should have his wisdom, having never been trained up in any of their schools and academies, or at the feet of any of their doctors and Rabbins; but, on the other hand, was brought up and employed in the trade of a carpenter; they stumbled at his outward meanness and poverty, when they expected the Messiah would be a rich, powerful, and glorious monarch; and so at the obscurity of his kingdom, which was not of this world, and came not with observation, when they dreamt of an earthly and temporal one, which should be set up in great splendour and glory; and they stumbled likewise at the company he kept, and the audience that attended him, being the poorer sort of the people, and the more illiterate, and also such who had been very profane and wicked, as publicans and

harlots; moreover, they stumbled at his ministry, at the doctrine he preached, particularly at the doctrine of his divinity, and of spiritual communion with him, by eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, and at the doctrines of distinguishing grace; and so at his miracles, by which he confirmed his mission and ministry, some of these being wrought on the sabbath day, and others they imputed to diabolical influence and assistance, in a word, they stumbled at his death, having imbibed a notion that Christ abideth for ever, and especially at the manner of it, the death of the cross; wherefore the preaching of Christ crucified always was, and still is, a stumbling block unto them:

even to them which stumble at the word; either the essential Word, Christ Jesus, as before; or rather at the doctrine of the Gospel, at that part of it which respects a trinity of persons in the Godhead; because their carnal reason could not comprehend it, and they refused to submit to revelation, and to receive the witness of God, which is greater than that of men; and at that part of it which regards the deity of Christ, and that for this reason, because he was a man, and in order to enervate the efficacy of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and fearing too much honour should be given to him; and also at that part of the word which concerns the distinguishing grace of God, as eternal personal election, particular redemption, and efficacious grace in conversion; against which the carnal mind of man is continually cavilling and replying, and, in so doing, against God himself, charging him with cruelty, injustice, and insincerity; and particularly at that part of the word which holds forth the doctrine of free justification, by the righteousness of Christ; this was the grand stumbling block of the Jews, who sought for righteousness, not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and of the spirituality of the law, and of themselves, and their own righteousness, of which they had an overweening opinion:

being disobedient; to the Gospel revelation, and unwilling to submit their carnal reason to it; this is the source and cause of their stumbling at Christ and his Gospel: it is worth while to compare this with the paraphrase of (~~2084~~ Isaiah 8:14) which passage is here referred to; and the paraphrase of it runs thus;

““if ye obey not”, his word shall be among you for revenge, and for a stone smiting, and for a rock of offence to both houses of the

princes of Israel, and for destruction and offence to those who are divided upon the house of Judah, etc.”

whereunto also they were appointed; both to stumble at the word of the Gospel, and at Christ, the sum and substance of it, he being set in the counsel and purpose of God, as for the rising of some, so for the stumbling and falling of others; and also to that disobedience and infidelity which was the cause of their stumbling; for as there are some whom God appointed and foreordained to believe in Christ, on whom he has determined to bestow true faith in him, and who have it as a pure gift, in consequence of such appointment; so there are others, whom he has determined to leave in that disobedience and infidelity into which the fall brought and concluded them, through which they stumble at Christ, and his word, and, in consequence thereof, justly perish; but this is not the case of all; there are some who are the objects of distinguishing grace and favour, and who are described in the following verse.

Ver. 9. *But ye are a chosen generation*, etc.] Or “kindred”; the phrase is to be seen in the Septuagint, on (²³⁶³Isaiah 43:20), to which, and the following verse, the apostle refers here, and in another part of this text. The allusion is throughout to the people of Israel in general, who, in an external way, were all that is here said; but was only true in a spiritual sense of such as were chosen and called among the Jews: and who were a “generation or kindred”; being regenerate, or through abundant mercy begotten, and of an incorruptible seed born again; and were akin to God, he being their Father, and they his children by adopting grace, and which was made manifest by their new birth; and also akin to Christ, he being their head, husband, Father, and brother, and they his members, spouse, children, and brethren; and to the saints, being of the same household and family in heaven and in earth; having the same Father, Lord, Spirit, faith, baptism, and they all brethren: and they were a “chosen” generation or kindred; being famous, and in high esteem with God, and accounted by him for a generation; he having chosen them above all kindreds, tongues, people, and nations, and that from all eternity; and of his own sovereign good will and pleasure; and not on account of their faith, holiness, and good works; and to special benefits, to the relation and kindred they are in, to grace here, and glory hereafter; to regeneration and sanctification, and to salvation and eternal life; just as Israel, as a nation, were chosen above all others, because of the love of God to them, and for no other reason, to many external privileges and favours, which others did not enjoy: now the apostle mentions this

character first, because God's eternal election is the source and spring of all spiritual blessings, which provides and secures them, and according to which they are bestowed, and with which they are inseparably connected:

a royal priesthood; referring to (^{<2906}Exodus 19:6), where the Israelites are called a “kingdom of priests”; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, kings, priests; (see ^{<6006}Revelation 1:6) a character which one of the Jewish commentators says ^{f51} shall return to the Jews **abl dyt [l** , “in time to come”; and well agrees with all the people of Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, who are all of them kings, through their relation to Christ; and at the present time have a kingdom which cannot be moved, or taken away from them; being not only brought into the Gospel dispensation, the kingdom of the Messiah, and having a right to all the privileges and immunities of it, but have also the kingdom of grace set up within them, or grace, as a reigning principle, implanted in them; which lies not in anything external, but in righteousness and true holiness, in inward peace, and spiritual joy; and they have the power of kings over sin, Satan, and the world; and the riches of kings, being possessed of the riches of grace now, and entitled to the riches of glory in another world; they live like kings, they wear royal apparel, the robe of Christ's righteousness; they sit at the king's table, and feed on royal dainties; and are attended on as kings, angels being their life guards, and ministering spirits to them; and hereafter they shall reign with Christ on earth, and that for the space of a thousand years, and, after that, for ever: being raised up from a low estate, to inherit the crown of glory, to wear the crown of life and righteousness, and possess the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, of which they are now heirs: and they are “priests”, as well as kings; being made so by Christ, and through his priestly office; are anointed with the Holy Ghost, and sanctified by his grace, and allowed to draw near to God, and offer up by Christ their spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise; and are enabled and assisted to offer up the sacrifice of a broken heart, and their bodies also, and even their lives when called to it; the allusion is to the kingdom and priesthood being formerly together, and which met in Christ, (^{<3013}Zechariah 6:13) and in his people. The Jews were wont to call the priestly dignity and office **hnhk rtk**, “the crown of the priesthood” ^{f52}:

an holy nation; referring to the same place in (^{<2906}Exodus 19:6) where the Israelites are so called, being separated by God from other nations, and legally and externally sanctified by him; as all the true Israel of God are

sanctified, or set apart by God the Father, in eternal election, to real and perfect holiness; and are sanctified or cleansed from sin, by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; and are internally sanctified by the Spirit of God; have principles of holiness wrought in them, from whence they live holy lives and conversations:

a peculiar people; as the Israelites are called a “peculiar treasure”, (^{<4095>}Exodus 19:5) to which the reference is: God's elect are a peculiar people, to whom he bears a peculiar love; they are chosen by him to be a special people above all others, and have peculiar blessings bestowed on them, and peculiar care is taken of them; they are the Lord's, **hl gs**, his treasure, his jewels, his portion and inheritance, and therefore he will preserve and save them; they are a people for acquisition, purchase, and possession, as the words may be rendered; whom God has obtained, procured, and purchased for himself, with the precious blood of his Son; hence the Syriac version renders them, **aqyrp aḥnk**, “a redeemed company”: the same with the church God has purchased with his blood, (^{<4018>}Acts 20:28) and the purchased possession, (^{<4014>}Ephesians 1:14) and which are redeemed and purified to be, and appear to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works, (^{<5014>}Titus 2:14) the end of all which grace being bestowed upon them in election, redemption, and regeneration, is,

that ye should show forth the praises of him; that is, God, who has chosen them into a spiritual kindred and relation, made them kings and priests, sanctified them by his Spirit, and redeemed them by his Son, as a peculiar people; all which laid them under obligation to show forth with their lips, and in their lives and conversations, his “virtues”: we read, “praises”; and so the Syriac version; that is, the power, wisdom, goodness, love, grace, and mercy of God, and the commendations of them, displayed in the above instances: the apostle seems to have his eye on (^{<2361>}Isaiah 43:21), where the Septuagint use the same word for “praise”, as here: next follows a periphrasis of God, and in it an argument, or reason for speaking of his virtues, and showing forth his praise:

who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which is to be understood, not of an external call by the ministry of the word only; for many are called in this sense, who are not chosen, redeemed, and sanctified; but of an internal, special, powerful, holy, and heavenly calling, by the Spirit and grace of God: and this is, “out of darkness”; out of the darkness of the law, under the former dispensation, which was as night, in

comparison of the Gospel day; and out of that darkness which the Jews were particularly in, in and about the coming of Christ, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and the spirituality of the law; having lost all right notions of the Messiah, and the true sense of the Scriptures, and were carried away with the traditions of the elders, and led by blind guides, the Scribes and Pharisees; out of this darkness, as well as what is common to men, in a state of unregeneracy, having no sight of themselves, their sin, and misery, nor knowledge of divine things, of God in Christ, and of salvation by him, and of the work of the Spirit upon the heart, they were called,

into his marvellous light: by which they saw the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the insufficiency of their righteousness, their need of Christ, and salvation by him; and astonishing it was to them, that they who were born blind, and were brought up in darkness, and were darkness itself, should be made light in the Lord; and the objects they saw were amazing to them; everything in a spiritual way was marvellous in their eyes; especially the sun of righteousness, the light of the world, and also the wonderful things out of the law, or doctrine of Christ, the Gospel, and the surprising love and grace of God, in the whole, and in the several parts of their salvation: it was with them, as if a child, from the moment of its birth, was shut up in a dungeon, where there was not the least crevice to let in the least degree of light, and should continue here till at years of maturity, and then be brought out at once, at noonday, the sun shining in its full strength and glory, when that particularly, and all objects about him, must strike him with wonder and surprise. The Syriac version renders it, “his most excellent light”; the apostle seems to refer to the form of praise and thanksgiving used by the Jews, at the time of the passover; who say ^{f53},

“we are bound to confess, to praise, to glorify, etc. him who hath done for our fathers, and for us, all these wonders; he hath brought us out of bondage to liberty; from sorrow to joy, and from mourning to a good day, *I wdg rwal hl ypamw*, “and out of darkness into great light”; and from subjection unto redemption.”

This was also part of their morning prayer ^{f54};

“I confess before thee, O my God, and the God of my fathers, that thou hast brought me out of darkness into light.”

And it is to be observed, that the third Sephira, or number, in the Jewish Cabalistic tree, which answers to the third Person in the Trinity, among other names, is called, “marvellous light”^{f55}.

Ver. 10. *Which in time were not a people*, etc.] A “Loammi” being put upon them; (see ^{<2009>}Hosea 1:9,10 2:23) to which the apostle here refers: God's elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles, were, from eternity, his chosen people, and his covenant people; and, as such, were given to Christ, and they became his people, and his care and charge; and he saved them by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and redeemed them to himself, a peculiar people: but then, before conversion, they are not a people formed by God for himself, and his praise; nor Christ's willing people, either to be saved by him, or to serve him; nor are they, nor can they be truly known by themselves, or others, to be the people of God: the Syriac version gives the true sense of the phrase, by rendering it “these who before were not” [~]wbcj , “reckoned or accounted a people”; that is, by others:

but are now the people of God; being regenerated, called, and sanctified, they are avouched by God to be his people; they have the witness of the Spirit to their spirits, that they are the people of God; they can then claim their relation to God, and are known, acknowledged, and called the people of God, by others:

which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy; being called formerly, Loruhamah, (^{<2006>}Hosea 1:6 2:23) which passages the apostle has in view: before conversion there is mercy in God's heart towards his elect, and so there is in the covenant of grace, and which was shown in the provision of his Son, as a Saviour, in the mission of him, and redemption by him; but this is not manifested to them, until they are begotten again, according to abundant mercy, and then they obtain mercy; having in their regeneration an evident display of the mercy of God towards them, and an application of his pardoning grace and mercy, through the blood of his Son, unto them.

Ver. 11. *Dearly beloved, I beseech you*, etc.] The apostle, from characters of the saints, and which express their blessings and privileges, with great beauty, propriety, and pertinency, passes to exhortations to duties; he addresses the saints under this affectionate appellation, “dearly beloved”, to express his great love to them, and to show that what he was about to exhort them to sprung from sincere and hearty affection for them, and was

with a view to their real good; nor does he in an authoritative way command, as he might have done, as an apostle, but, as a friend, he entreats and beseeches them:

as strangers and pilgrims; not in a literal sense, though they were in a foreign country, in a strange land, and sojourners there, but in a spiritual and mystical sense; they were “strangers”, not to God and Christ, and to the Spirit, to themselves, to the saints, and to all that is good, as they had formerly been, but to the world, the men of it, and the things in it; and therefore it became them to separate from it, and not conform to it; to abstain from all appearance of evil, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts: and they were “pilgrims”; whose habit is Christ and his righteousness; whose food is Christ and his fulness; whose staff is Christ and the promises; whose guide is the blessed Spirit; the place for which they are bound is heaven, the better country, where is their Father's house, their friends, and their inheritance; this world not being their country, nor their resting place, it became them to have their conversation in heaven, and to

abstain from fleshly lusts; which spring from the flesh, and are concerned about fleshly things, and are exercised in and by the members of the flesh, or body; hence, in the Syriac version, they are called, “the lusts of the body”: these are to be abstained from; not that the apostle thought that they could be without them; for while the saints are in the body, flesh, or corrupt nature will be in them, and the lusts thereof; but then these are not to be indulged, or provision to be made for them, to fulfil them; they are not to be obeyed and served, or lived unto, but to be denied and crucified, being unsuitable to the character of strangers and pilgrims, and also because of their hurtful and pernicious nature:

which war against the soul; (see ^{<8723>}Romans 7:23 ^{<500>}James 4:1 ^{<2163>}Song of Solomon 6:13), these are enemies to the spiritual peace, comfort, and welfare of the soul; and being of a man's household, and in his heart, are the worst enemies he has; and are to be treated as such, to be shunned and avoided, watched and guarded against; for though they cannot destroy the souls of true believers, they may bring much leanness upon them, and greatly distress them, and spoil them of their inward joy, and spiritual pleasure.

Ver. 12. *Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles*, etc.] To have the conversation honest, is to provide things honest in the sight of

men; to live and walk honestly before all; to do those things which are right and honest in the sight of God, and among men; to order the conversation aright, according to the law of God, which is a rule of walk and conversation, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ; and which was the more, and rather to be attended to, because these converted Jews were “among the Gentiles”, that knew not God; idolaters, and unbelievers, profane sinners, who were watching for their halting, and that they might take an advantage against them, and the Gospel, and the religion they professed, from their conversations:

that whereas they speak against you as evildoers: charging them with the grossest immoralities, as the Heathens did the Christians in the first ages; which appears evidently from the apologies of Tertullian, Justin Martyr, and others; though it seems that the Jewish converts are here intended, who were accused by the Gentiles of seditious principles and practices, and of acting contrary to the laws of civil government, refusing to yield subjection to Gentile magistrates, and obedience to Heathen masters; and hence the apostle, in some following verses, enlarges on those duties, and which he exhorts them to attend unto, that they might put to silence the ignorance of such foolish accusers: and

that they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation; or “trial”, or “examination”, as the Syriac version renders it; which may be understood either of human or divine visitation; if of the former, then the sense is, let the saints attend to all the duties of civil life, that when Heathen magistrates come to visit their several districts, and inquire and examine into the conduct of men, and seeing and finding that the Christians behave well and orderly, instead of persecuting them, they will bless God that they are such good subjects; if of divine visitation, which seems most likely, this must either design a visitation by way of judgment, or of mercy; for as the Jews say ^{f56}, there is *hdyqp*, “a visitation”, for good, and a visitation for evil: God sometimes visits in a way of punishment for sin, and sometimes in away of grace, for the good and welfare of men; and then the sense is, that when wicked men take notice of and observe the good works of the saints, their civil, honest, and orderly conversation, they shall glorify God on that account, who has enabled them to perform them; and acknowledge the goodness of them, and the wrong judgment they have passed upon them, and the ill measure they have measured out to them; and this will be, either when God visits them in a way of wrath, as at the day of judgment, or at the time of some

temporal calamity before, or when he visits them in a way of mercy, calls them by his grace, and effectually works upon them by his Spirit: the same argument for the performance of good works is used by Christ, in (~~41516~~ Matthew 5:16).

Ver. 13. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man*, etc.] Or, “to every human creation”, or “creature”; not to “all the sons of men”, as the Syriac version renders it; or to all the individuals of mankind; for there are some that are in such stations and circumstances, that they are not to be submitted to, but to be ruled over, and governed: so kings are not to submit to their subjects, nor are parents to be subject to their children, nor husbands to their wives, nor masters to their servants, which would be preposterous; but submission is limited and restrained to persons in such a place and situation: “the human creature”, or “creation”, here designs the Gentiles, who are elsewhere called the creature, the whole creation, every creature, and every creature under heaven, (~~41819~~ Romans 8:19-22 ~~41615~~ Mark 16:15 ~~50023~~ Colossians 1:23) and particularly Heathen magistrates, styled creation, or creature: not as men, for all men, as such, are creatures; but as magistrates, being created, constituted, and appointed such, and installed into, and invested with such an office: and “human”; not only because they were men, and were taken out from among men that bore the office of magistrates, and governed over men, and were for the good and advantage of mankind, but because they were created and placed in such a station by men; though government itself is of God, is a divine institution, yet this and that particular form of government is of man; and especially the forms of government among the Gentiles were human; and are here so called, in distinction from the form of government among the Jews, which was a theocracy, and was divine; wherefore the Jews, and so these converted ones, scrupled yielding obedience to Heathen magistrates; on which account they were spoken against, as evildoers; hence the apostle, in the first place, and as a principal part of their honest conversation among the Gentiles, exhorts them to submission to civil magistrates, though they were creatures of men; and to everyone of them, though a Gentile, an unbeliever, and a wicked man: and this he urges,

for the Lord's sake; for the sake of Christ Jesus the Lord, because of his command, who ordered to give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and in imitation of him, who paid tribute to whom tribute was due; and for the sake of his honour and glory, who was ill thought and spoken of by the Gentiles, because of the disregard of the converted Jews to their

magistrates; and which served to prejudice them against Christ and his Gospel: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “for God's sake”; because civil government is of God; magistracy is of divine appointment; the powers that he are ordained of God, though this or the other form is of man's prescription: it is the command of God that magistrates should be obeyed; and it makes for his glory, as well as for the good of men, when they are submitted to in things that do not contradict the revealed will of God; for otherwise, not man, but God, is to be obeyed:

whether it be to the king; to Caesar, the Roman emperor; and the then reigning one seems to be Nero, who, though a wicked man, was to be submitted to in things civil and lawful; and it holds good of any other king that has the supreme government of a nation: the Syriac version reads it in the plural number, “to kings”; and though the name of king was odious to the Romans, from the times of Tarquin, nor did they call their chief governor, or governors, by this name, yet other nations did; (see ^{<43015>}John 19:15) and subjection was to be yielded to him, “as supreme”; for the sake, and in consideration of his being in so high and exalted a station, having the supreme power and government of the people in his hands. The Syriac version renders it, “because of their power”; and the Arabic version, “because of his power”; and the Ethiopic version, “because all things are his”; the Roman emperors were absolute monarchs; (see ^{<6101>}Romans 13:1).

Ver. 14. *Or unto governors*, etc.] Inferior magistrates, such as were under the Roman emperor; as proconsuls, procurators, etc. such as Pontius Pilate, Felix, and Festus, who had under the emperor the government of particular nations, provinces, and cities:

as unto them that are sent by him; either by the king, the Roman emperor, by whom they were sent, from whom they received their commission, and derived their authority, under whom they acted, and to whom they were accountable; or by God, by whom they are ordained, and whose ministers they are, and for the ends hereafter mentioned; so that this contains an argument or reason why they should be submitted to:

for the punishment of evildoers; the breakers of the laws of God and men, on whom punishment is to be inflicted, by the civil magistrates, for the breach of them, by lines, scourgings, imprisonment, and death itself, according as the crimes are:

and for the praise of them that do well; who behave according to the laws of God and nations, and are obedient to magistrates, and subject to every ordinance; these have praise of men, of magistrates, and are rewarded by them; by protecting their persons, defending their properties, and preserving them in the peaceable enjoyment of their estates and possessions; (see ~~613B~~ Romans 13:3).

Ver. 15. *For so is the will of God*, etc.] Which refers not so much to what goes before; though it is a truth, that it is the will of God that men should be subject to magistrates, and that magistrates should encourage virtue, and discourage vice, reward the obedient, and punish delinquents; but to what follows:

that with well doing; by doing good works, and those well; by living soberly, righteously, and godly; by having the conversation honest among the Gentiles, agreeably to the law of God, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ; particularly, by living according to the laws of civil society, so far as is consistent with, and not contrary to the commands of God; and by being subject to every civil magistrate, and ordinance of man:

ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: or, as the Syriac version renders it, “that ye may stop the mouths of those foolish men who know not God”; or, as the Ethiopic version has it, “who know not these things”; who are ignorant of God, of his righteousness, of his law, his Gospel, and ordinances. The Gentiles were very ignorant of these things, and very foolish in their imaginations about religious affairs; and from this their ignorance and folly arose calumnies, reflections, and censures upon the people of God; they neither knew God, nor them, nor true religion, and reproached what they understood not, and for want of knowing it: now the apostle signified, that it was the declared will of God that his people should so behave in civil life, that their enemies should be entirely confounded, and silenced, and have nothing to say against them; the word signifies to be muzzled, to have the mouth shut up, as with a bit or bridle; it is used in (~~412D~~ Matthew 22:12 ~~410D~~ 1 Corinthians 9:9).

Ver. 16. *As free*, etc.] These converted Jews might value themselves on their freedom, partly as the descendants of Abraham, and so freeborn, and not to be brought into bondage to other people; and chiefly because of their liberty which they had in and by Christ Jews. The apostle allows that they were freemen, that they were Christ's freemen, were free from sin, its damning and domineering power, and from the curses and condemnation of

the law, and had freedom of access to God, and a right to all the privileges and immunities of the house of God; but then they were not free to sin, and to live in the contempt of the laws of God and men, to despise government, speak evil of dignities, and break in upon the rules of civil society:

and not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness; under a pretence of Christian liberty, to hurt the persons, properties, and estates of men, without looking upon themselves accountable for their conduct to their superiors: some think the apostle alludes to the ancient custom of servants, who, when they were made free, walked with a cap, or covering on their heads, in token of it: it follows,

[but] as the servants of God; for they that are free are the servants of God and Christ, and show themselves to be so by submitting to and obeying those that are under them, and ordained by them; and which is no ways inconsistent with, and contrary to their Christian liberty, which never was designed to thwart and subvert the principles of natural religion, laws of a moral nature, or the rules of civil government; some instances of which are next mentioned.

Ver. 17. *Honour all men*, etc.] To whom honour is due, according to the place, station, and circumstances in which they are, the gifts of providence and grace bestowed on them, and the usefulness they are of, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, rich or poor, believers or unbelievers: it is a saying of Ben Zoma^{f57},

“who is to be honoured, or is worthy of honour? *twyrbh ta dbkm*, “he that honoureth creatures”;

meaning men in general, or the Gentiles particularly, who were sometimes so called by the Jews; (see Gill on “⁴¹⁶⁵Mark 16:15”), and may be meant by “all men” here:

love the brotherhood; or “your brethren”, as the Syriac version renders it: the whole company of the brethren in Christ, who are born of God, are members of Christ, and of the same body, and have the same spirit, belong to the same family, and are of the household of faith, let them be of whatsoever nation, or in whatsoever circumstances of life. The Jews had not that good opinion of, nor that affection for the Gentiles, but were ready to treat them with indifference, neglect, and contempt; and not only those that knew not God, but even believing Gentiles themselves; and which is

the reason of these exhortations, that they should despise no man, but honour all; and especially should express their love, both by words and deeds, to those that were in the same spiritual relation with them, and that without any difference, on account of their being of another nation:

fear God; not with a servile, but a filial fear, the new covenant grace of fear; which springs from the goodness of God, has that for its object, and is increased by the fresh instances and discoveries of it; and which shows itself in a reverential affection for God, a strict regard to his worship and ordinances, and a carefulness of offending him. This is placed between what goes before, and follows after, to show the influence it has on each of them; for where the fear of God is, there will be due respect shown to all men, more or less, and an hearty and affectionate love to all the saints, as brethren, and a proper regard to those that are set in high places of dignity and power:

honour the king; Caesar, the Roman emperor, though a wicked, persecuting Nero, and so any other king or governor; who, so far as he acts the part of a civil magistrate, preserves the peace, the property, and liberty of his subjects, is a terror to evil works, and an encourager of good ones, and rules according to the laws of God, and civil society, is deserving of great honour and esteem from men; and which is to be shown by speaking well of him; by a cheerful subjection to him; by an observance of the laws, and by payment of tribute, and doing everything to make him easy, and honourable in his government: advice much like this is given by Isocrates^{f58};

“fear God, honour parents, revere friends, and obey the laws.”

Ver. 18. *Servants, be subject to your masters*, etc.] This was another notion of the Jews, that because they were the seed of Abraham, they ought not to be the servants of any; and particularly such as were believers in Christ thought they ought not to serve unbelieving masters, nor indeed believing ones, because they were equally brethren in Christ with them; hence the Apostle Peter, here, as the Apostle Paul frequently elsewhere, inculcates this duty of servants to their masters; (see ^{<407>}1 Corinthians 7:20,21 ^{<408>}Ephesians 6:5 ^{<512>}Colossians 3:22 ^{<540>}1 Timothy 6:1) (^{<519>}2 Timothy 2:9) the manner in which they are to be subject to them is,

with all fear; with reverence to their persons, strict regard to their commands, faithfulness in any trust reposed in them, diligence in the discharge of their duty, and carefulness of offending them: and all this,

not only to the good and gentle; those that are good natured, kind, beneficent, and merciful; that do not use them with rigour and severity; are moderate in their demands of service; require no more to be done than what is reasonable; allow them sufficient diet, give them good wages, and pay them duly:

but also to the froward; the ill natured, morose, and rigorous; who exact more labour than is requisite; give hard words, and harder blows; withhold sufficiency of food from them, and keep back the hire of their labours.

Ver. 19. *For this is thankworthy*, etc.] Or “grace”; this is a fruit and effect of grace, an instance of it, in which it shows itself: the Syriac version adds, “with God”; and so it is read in one of Beza's copies, and in the Alexandrian copy, and some others; that is, this is grateful to God, and acceptable with him; as in (⁴¹²²1 Peter 2:20),

if a man for conscience towards God; or, “for a good conscience”, as the Syriac version reads it; for acting according to his conscience, in matters of religion, in the things of God; “for the knowledge of God”, as the Arabic version renders it; for the knowledge of God in Christ; for the Gospel of Christ, and a profession of it: or, “for God”, as the Ethiopic version; for the cause of God and truth, and for the sake of things appertaining to God, and that make for his glory:

endure grief; what occasions grief, as severe words, bitter reproaches, hard censures, and heavy blows; and that with patience, and without murmuring, and with resignation to the will of God:

suffering wrongfully; there being no just cause for an ill look, word, or blow, to be given.

Ver. 20. *For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults*, etc.] Which ye have committed, and are guilty of, and are truly such:

ye shall take it patiently? to be silent, and not murmur when beaten, within measure, for real faults, is no great honour, nor does it deserve any praise; it is the least that can be done:

but if, when ye do well; either in their master's service, or rather in the business of religion, and the things of God; as when what they do is according to the will of God, and from love to him, and in faith, and in the name and strength of Christ, and to the glory of God; without all which there is no well doing:

and suffer for it; reproach and persecution, by words or blows, in person or property:

ye take it patiently; without grieving and repining, or answering again, and making any returns:

this is acceptable with God; is agreeably to his will, and grateful in his sight, what he is well pleased with, is reckoned grace with him; and though it is his own grace, and of his own bestowing, he will reward it with glory.

Ver. 21. *For even hereunto were ye called*, etc.] Both to well doing, of which none but those who are called with an holy and effectual calling are capable; and which they are fitted for, and are under obligation to perform, and to suffer for so doing, which they must always expect, and to patience in suffering for it, which highly becomes them. This being then one end of the saints' effectual calling, is made use of as an argument to engage them to the exercise of the grace of patience in suffering for well doing; and another follows:

because Christ also suffered for us; in our room and stead, to fulfil the law, satisfy the justice of God, and make reconciliation for sin; and not only for our good, or merely as a martyr, to confirm the truth of his doctrine, or barely as an example to us, though this also is true: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, “for you”; for you servants, as well as others, and therefore should cheerfully and patiently suffer for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; and the rather, because he suffered,

leaving us, or “you”, as the same copies, and the Vulgate Latin version read,

an example that ye should follow his steps: Christ is an example to his people in the exercise of grace, as of faith, love, zeal, meekness, and humility; and in the discharge of duty, in his regard to the commands of the moral law, and positive institutions of religion; in his constancy in prayer; in frequent attendance on public worship; in his submission to the ordinance of baptism, and his celebration of the supper; and likewise in his

sufferings; and in his meekness, patience, courage, and resignation to the will of God, which is what is here intended, and in which his people are to fellow and imitate him.

Ver. 22. *Who did no sin*, etc.] He was in the likeness of sinful flesh; he looked like a sinful man, being born of a sinful woman, and keeping company with sinful men, being himself a man of sorrows, greatly afflicted, and at last put to death. He was traduced as a sinner by his enemies, and had all the sins of his people on him, which he bore, and made satisfaction for, and were the reason of his sufferings; but he had no sin in his nature, nor did he commit any in his life:

neither was guile found in his mouth; though it was diligently sought for, by the Scribes and Pharisees; there was no deceit in his lips, no falsehood in his doctrine, any more than there was immorality in his conversation; he was an Israelite indeed on all accounts, and in the fullest sense of that phrase; reference is had to (²⁵⁰Isaiah 53:9) and this is observed, partly to show that Christ suffered not for himself, or for any sins of his own, but for the sins of others, for which he was very fit, since he had none of his own; and partly as an argument for patience in suffering; for since Christ suffered, who had no sin, nor did any, nor could any be found in him, charged upon him, and proved against him; and which sufferings of his he bore with patience; then how much must it become sinful men to bear their sufferings patiently, though they may not be criminal with respect to the things for which they suffer, but yet are so in other things, whereas Christ was not criminal, nor blameworthy in anything?

Ver. 23. *Who when he was reviled, reviled not again*, etc.] When he was reproached as a glutton, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, all the reply he made was, that Wisdom is justified of her children; and when he was charged with casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils, he defended himself, not with bad language, but with strong reasonings; and when he was said to be a Samaritan, and had a devil, his only answer was, that he had not, that he honoured his Father, and they dishonoured him; and when he was reviled on the cross, by those that passed by, by the chief priests, and Scribes, and the thieves that were crucified with him, he made no return, he opened not his mouth, and much less in a recriminating way.

When he suffered he threatened not; when he endured buffetings, and scourgings in his body, when the officers in the palace of the high priests

spit in his face, buffeted him, and smote him with the palms of their hands, and bid him prophesy who smote him, all which were very provoking; yet he said not one word to them, much less threatened them with what he would do to them for such usage another day, when he would let them know, with vengeance, who it was that smote him; no, he took all patiently from them, and from Pilate, and the Roman soldiers, when scourged by them; he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; and when he suffered crucifixion, and was put to such distressing pains and agonies, he did not threaten his crucifiers with a future judgment, when he would take vengeance, and execute his wrath upon them, but prays to his Father for the forgiveness of their sins: and, as it follows;

but committed [himself] to him that judgeth righteously; he commended his Spirit, or soul, to God his Father, and committed his cause to him, to vindicate it in what way he should think fit, who he knew was the Judge of all the earth, that would do right; and so the Syriac version supplies it with *hynyd*, “his judgment”: which he left with God, the righteous Judge, to whom vengeance belongs; and which is an example, and an instruction to the saints to do so likewise; not to render railing for railing, or to seek revenge, but to leave their cause with their God, who will, in his own time, avenge the wrongs and injuries done them. The Vulgate Latin version reads, contrary to all the Greek copies, and other versions, “but delivered himself to him that judgeth unjustly”; the sense of which is, that Christ delivered himself into the hands of Pilate, who unjustly condemned him to death; but is neither the reading, nor sense of the text.

Ver. 24. *Who his own self bare our sins*, etc.] As was typified by the high priest bearing the sins of the holy things of the people of Israel, when he went into the most holy place, and by the scape goat bearing the iniquities of all the people unto a land not inhabited, and as was foretold by the Prophet Isaiah. The apostle here explains the nature and end of Christ's sufferings, which were to make atonement for sins, and which was done by bearing them. What Christ bore were “sins”, even all sorts of sin, original and actual, and every act of sin of his people; and all that is in sin, all that belongs to it, arises from it, and is the demerit of it, as both filth, guilt, and punishment; and a multitude of sins did he bear, even all the iniquities of all the elect; and a prodigious load and weight it was; and than which nothing could be more nauseous and disagreeable to him, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity: and these sins he bore were not his own, nor the sins of

angels, but of men; and not of all men, yet of many, even as many as were ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, whom he justifies and brings to glory; our sins, not the sins of the Jews only, for Peter was a Jew, and so were those to whom he writes, but of the Gentiles also, even the sins of all his people, for them he saves from their sins, being stricken for them. His “bearing” them was in this manner: he becoming the surety and substitute of his people, their sins were laid upon him by his Father, that is, they were imputed to him, they were reckoned as his, and placed to his account; and Christ voluntarily took them upon himself; he took them to himself, as one may take the debt of another, and make himself answerable for it; or as a man takes up a burden, and lays it on his shoulders; so Christ took up our sins, and “carried” them “up”, as the word here used signifies, alluding to the priests carrying up the sacrifice to the altar, and referring to the lifting up of Christ upon the cross; whither he carried the sins of his people, and bore them, and did not sink under the weight of them, being the mighty God, and the man of God's right hand, made strong for himself; and so made entire satisfaction for them, by enduring the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and all that punishment which was due unto them; and thereby bore them away, both from his people, and out of the sight of God, and his vindictive justice; and removed them as far as the east is from the west, and made a full end of them; and this he himself did, and not another, nor by another, or with the help of another; not by the means of a goat, as the high priest, but by himself; though he was assisted in bearing his cross, yet he had no help in bearing our sins; angels could not help him; his Father stood at a distance from him; there was none to help; his own arm brought salvation to him; but

his own self, who knew no sin, nor did any, he by himself purged away our sins, and made reconciliation for them, by bearing them: and which he did

in his own body, and not another's; in that body which his Father prepared for him, and which he took of the virgin, and was free from sin; though not to the exclusion of his soul, which also was made an offering for sin, and in which he endured great pains and sorrows for sin: and all this

on the tree; the accursed tree, the cross; which is expressive both of the shame and pain of his sufferings and death. The end of which was,

that we being dead to sin; “to our sins”, as the Alexandrian copy, and the Ethiopic version read; as all the elect are, through bearing their sins, and suffering death for them, so as that sin shall not be imputed to them; it is as

though it never was; it is dead to them, and they to that, as to its damning power and influence; so as that they are entirely discharged from it, and can never come into condemnation on account of it, and can never be hurt, so as to be destroyed by it; nor by death, either corporeal or eternal, since the sting of death, which is sin, is taken away, and the strength of sin, which is the law, is dead to them, and they to that: in short, through the death of Christ they are so dead to sin, that it is not only finished, made an end of, and put away, but the body of it is destroyed, that it should not be served; which is an end subordinate to the former, and expressed in the next clause:

should live unto righteousness; live, and not die the second death, and live by faith on the righteousness of Christ, for justification of life, and soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world; which the grace of God teaches, and the love of Christ in bearing sin constrains to, and the redemption by his precious blood lays under an obligation to do; for those whose sins Christ has bore are not their own, but being bought with the price of his blood, they are bound to live to him who has a property in them, and a right to claim all obedience from them:

by whose stripes ye were healed; the passage referred to is in (^{251B}Isaiah 53:5) which is a prophecy of the Messiah, as is acknowledged by the Jews ^{f59}, who say ^{f60},

“this is the King Messiah, who was in the generation of the ungodly, as it is said, (^{251B}Isaiah 53:5) “and with his stripes we are healed”; and for this cause God saved him, that he might save Israel, and rejoice with them in the resurrection of the dead.”

Sin is a disease, a natural and hereditary one, an epidemic distemper, that reaches to all men, and to all the powers and faculties of their souls, and members of their bodies; and which is nauseous and loathsome, and in itself mortal and incurable; nor can it be healed by any creature, or anything that a creature can do. Christ is the only physician, and his blood the balm and sovereign medicine; this cleanses from all sin; through it is the remission of sin, which is meant by healing; for healing of diseases, and forgiving iniquities, is one and the same thing; (see ^{1943B}Psalm 103:3 ^{2333B}Isaiah 33:24 ^{1940B}Psalm 41:4) on which latter text a learned Jew ^{f61} has this note,

“this interpreters explain $\text{h j y l s } \hat{\text{w}}\text{q l}$, “as expressive of forgiveness”;

and the Jews say, there is no healing of diseases but it signifies forgiveness ^{f62}: it is an uncommon way of healing by the stripes of another. Some think the apostle alludes to the stripes which servants receive from their masters, to whom he was now speaking; and in order to encourage them to bear them patiently, observes, that Christ himself suffered stripes, and that they had healing for their diseases and wounds, by means of his stripes, or through his being wounded and bruised for them.

Ver. 25. *For ye were as sheep going astray*, etc.] This is a proof of their being healed, namely, their conversion; in which an application of the blood of Christ, and pardon, and so healing by it, was made to their souls. The apostle has still in view the prophecy of (²⁵³¹⁶ Isaiah 53:6). God's elect are sheep before conversion; not that they have the agreeable properties of sheep, as to be meek, harmless, innocent, clean, and profitable, for they are the reverse of all this; nor can some things be said of them before conversion, as may be after, as that they hear Christ's voice, and follow him; nor are they so called, because unprejudiced against, and predisposed unto the Gospel, for the contrary is true of them; but they are so in electing grace, and were so considered in the Father's gift of them to Christ, and when made his care and charge, and hence they are called the sheep of his hand; and when Christ laid down his life, and rose again, which he did for the sheep, and as the great Shepherd of them; and when called by grace, for their being sheep, and Christ's own sheep by the Father's gift, and his own purpose, is the reason why he looks them up, calls them by name, and returns them: but then they are not yet of his fold; they are lost sheep, lost in Adam, and by his fall, and by their own actual transgressions; they are as sheep going astray from the shepherd, and from the flock, going out of the right way, and in their own ways; and are, like sheep, stupid and insensible of their danger; and as they never return of themselves, until they are sought for, and brought back: hence it follows,

but are now returned; not returned themselves, but were returned by powerful and efficacious grace: saints are passive, and not active in first conversion; they are turned, not by the power of their own free will, but by the power of God's free grace; they are returned under the illuminations and quickenings of the blessed Spirit, and through the efficacious drawings of the Father's love, unto Christ:

unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls; by whom Christ is meant, who bears the office of a Shepherd, and fully performs it by feeding his

sheep, providing a good fold and pasture for them; by gathering the lambs in his arms, and gently leading those that are with young; by healing their diseases, and preserving them from beasts of prey; hence he is called the good, the great, and chief Shepherd: and he is the “Bishop” or “Overseer” of the souls of his people, though not to the exclusion of their bodies: he has took the oversight of them willingly, and looks well to his flock, inspects into their cases, and often visits them, and never forsakes them; nor will he leave them till they receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls; which he has undertook and effected by his obedience, sufferings and death. Philo the Jew^{f63} observes, that

“to be a shepherd is so good a work, that it is not only a title given to kings and wise men, and souls perfectly purified, but to God the governor of all — -who, as a Shepherd and King, leads according to justice and law, setting over them his right Logos, “the first begotten Son”, who has taken the care of this holy flock, as does the deputy of a great king.”

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 3

In this chapter the apostle instructs wives how to behave towards their husbands, and husbands how to behave towards their wives; and then exhorts to various things common to all Christians, and particularly to suffer patiently for righteousness sake; to which he encourages them from the sufferings of Christ, and the benefits resulting from them, on which he enlarges to the end of the chapter. He begins with the duty of wives to their husbands, even unbelieving ones, which is subjection to them, urged from the profitable effect of it; since hereby they might be won over to the Christian religion, without the use of the word, as a means, by their conversation, which is explained of chastity and fear, (^{<ARB>}1 Peter 3:1,2). And he proceeds to give some advice about their apparel, that they should have a greater regard to internal ornaments; particularly meekness and quietness of spirit, which is highly esteemed of by God, rather than to outward adorning; and which he enforces by the examples of godly women in former times, who were so adorned, and were subject to their husbands, particularly Sarah, the wife of Abraham, (^{<ARB>}1 Peter 3:3-6). And next the apostle directs husbands how to conduct towards their wives, to dwell with them, and honour them, because vessels, and weaker vessels, and also heirs of the same grace of life; and besides, to use them ill would be an hinderance of their praying together, (^{<ARB>}1 Peter 3:7). And then follow various exhortations to unity of judgment, compassion, brotherly love, pity, courteousness, and patience under the reproaches and revilings of men, which is the way to inherit a blessing they are called unto, (^{<ARB>}1 Peter 3:8,9) and that these are incumbent on the saints, and that they shall be blessed, who are helped to regard them, is proved by some passages out of (^{<SB42>}Psalm 34:12-16), which passages are cited, (^{<ARB>}1 Peter 3:10-12). And in order to encourage to the exercise of the above things, the apostle suggests, that they that so behaved should not be hurt by any; and if they did suffer for righteousness sake from wicked men, yet still they would be happy; nor should this deter them from making a public confession of their faith; to which should be added a good conscience and conversation, to the shame and confusion of them that spoke evil of them, and accused them,

(~~4183~~ 1 Peter 3:13-16). And though they were distressed and injured by men, they should not be cast down, nor murmur, since it was the will of God it should be so; and since it was better to suffer for doing well than for doing ill; and especially the example of Christ should animate to patience, since he, an innocent person, suffered for the sins of unjust men, to reconcile them to God; and he is now glorified and happy, and so will his people be, (~~4187~~ 1 Peter 3:17,18). And having made mention of his being quickened by the Spirit, the apostle takes occasion from hence of observing, that by the same Spirit Christ preached in the times of Noah to disobedient persons, whose spirits were now in hell; and he takes notice of the longsuffering of God in that dispensation towards them, and of the goodness of God in saving Noah, and his family, in the ark, which was a figure of baptism; of which some account is given what it is, and is not, and which saves by the resurrection of Christ, (~~4189~~ 1 Peter 3:19-21) who is described by his ascension to heaven, session at the right hand of God, and dominion over angels, authorities, and powers, (~~4192~~ 1 Peter 3:22).

Ver. 1. *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands*, etc.] As well as subjects to princes, and servants to masters; though not with the same sort of subjection, but what is suitable to the relation they stand in to their husbands; (see Gill on “~~4192~~ Ephesians 5:22”). (See Gill on “~~5188~~ Colossians 3:18”).

that if any obey not the word; any husband who is an unbeliever, has no love for the Gospel, and gives no credit to it, but despises, disbelieves, and rejects it, the word of truth, of faith, of righteousness, reconciliation, and salvation. The apostle, though he includes all wives, and exhorts them in general to subjection to their own husbands, yet has a particular regard to such as had unbelieving husbands, and who, on that account, were scrupulous of living with them, and of being in subjection to them; and therefore, as the Apostle Paul also did, he advises them to abide with them, and behave well to them, using much the same argument as he does in (~~4170~~ 1 Corinthians 7:10,13,16).

they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; for though the ordinary way and means of conversion is the word, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word; yet it may be sometimes done without it; or however by the agreeable conversation of professors, and so of religious wives, the hearts of such as were averse to Christianity, and the Gospel, as unbelieving husbands, may be so softened, and wrought upon,

as to entertain a better opinion of it, and in process of time be inclined to hear and attend it; the consequence of which may prove their conversion, which is a gaming, or winning of souls; and which, as it is for their good, is for the glory of Christ; for as every soul that is delivered from the power of darkness, and is translated into the kingdom of Christ, is a loss to Satan, it is a gain to Christ, and to his church. The Syriac version, instead of “without the word”, reads, “without labour”; as if the winning of unbelieving husbands was easily obtained by the conversation of their wives.

Ver. 2. *While they behold your chaste conversation*, etc.] Cheerful subjection, strong affection, and inviolable attachment to them, and strict regard to the honour of the marriage state, and to the preserving of the bed undefiled with lusts and adulteries:

coupled with fear; with reverence of their husbands, giving them due honour, and showing all proper respect; or with the fear of God, which being before their eyes, and upon their hearts, engages them to such an agreeable conversation.

Ver. 3. *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning*, etc.] Or that only and principally; let not that be solely or chiefly attended to, nor anxiously sought after, nor ever in order to allure and ensnare others, or to fill with pride and vanity; nor should it be indecent and luxurious, immodest and immoderate, and unsuitable to the age, character, and station of persons; otherwise clothing is both convenient and necessary; and a decent garb, neat and modest apparel, and what is suitable to the years, rank, and quality of persons, is very commendable: nor are we to suppose that the apostle forbids the use of what follows, but only when used in a luxurious and extravagant manner, and to feed pride and vanity, and encourage, lasciviousness and wantonness:

of plaiting the hair; folding it up in curls, tying it up in knots, and putting it into the form of horns and towers, made by their crisping pins, with their cauls and round tires, like the moon, as was the custom of those times, and still is. There were women among the Jews, whose business it was to plait women's hair; Mary Magdalene is thought to have her name from thence, and that to be her business. The Jews often speak of one Miriam or Mary, by whom they seem to mean the mother of our Lord, who, they say^{f64} was

ayyçn r [yç al dgm, “a plaiter of women's hair”; (see Gill on “^{<475>}Matthew 27:56”).

And of wearing of gold; or “golden things”; golden ornaments, as bracelets, chains, and rings, or pieces of gold stuck in the plaitings and folds of the hair. The Jewish women used to wear a crown of gold on their head, in the form of the city of Jerusalem, called a golden city ^{f65}; and which they wore, after its destruction, in memory of it; but with those they might not go out on a sabbath day. R. Akibah, it is said ^{f66}, made a golden city for his wife, and the wife of Rabban Gamaliel envied her, for it seems this was reckoned a grand dress. Not that the sense is, that every thing of this kind is forbidden, but when used to excess and extravagance; otherwise the daughters of Abraham and Sarah were decked with ear rings, bracelets, and jewels of gold; (see ^{<122>}Genesis 24:22,30,47,53).

or of putting on of apparel; that is “excellent”, or precious, as the Syriac version adds; or “of great price”, as the Ethiopic; that is beyond a person's ability or rank; the apostle means such apparel as is unbecoming and unsuitable, for he cannot be thought to forbid the putting on of any apparel; but his sense is, that women should not so much regard, and be so intent upon the outward adorning of their bodies, with any sort of clothing, and especially such as does not become them, as the inward adorning of their minds, next mentioned;

Ver. 4. *But [let it be] the hidden man of the heart,* etc.] By which is meant internal grace; which gives a beauty and ornament to the soul, far preferable to that which plaiting of the hair, wearing of gold, or any costly apparel, can give to the body: and this is called a man, as it is elsewhere the new man, (^{<404>}Ephesians 4:24) because it has that which answers to what is in man, to his soul, and the powers and faculties of it: this man, or new creature, has a new heart and Spirit; it has a will to that which is spiritually good, and an understanding of divine things, and affections for Christ, for his Gospel, ordinances, ways, and people, and for things above: it has what answers to all the five senses; there is in it a seeing of the Son of God in the glories of his person and the fulness of his grace, and of the invisible things of another world; an hearing of the word, of the voice of Christ, so as to understand it, and live, and to distinguish it from the voice of a stranger; a smelling a sweet savour in the things of God, and of his Spirit, and in the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; a tasting that the Lord is gracious, his fruits pleasant, and his word sweeter than the honey, or the

honeycomb; and a feeling of the burden of sin, an handling of the word of life, a laying hold on Christ, and retaining him: and it has what answers to the parts and members of the body; it has eyes to see with, ears to hear with, hands to receive from Christ, and work with, to his glory, and feet to walk with: it has, in short, all the parts of a man, though these are not yet grown up to perfection; and so that is not yet a perfect man, or arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; but a man it is: and “a man of the heart”; it has its seat there; it is an inward principle in the soul; hence it is called the “inner” and “inward man”; and nothing outward is it, as external humiliation for sin, abstinence from it, reformation of life and manners, a profession of religion, and conformity to Gospel ordinances; but it is something inward, as appears from its names, both here and elsewhere; it is called spirit, seed, the root of the matter, and oil in the vessels; and from the seat and subject of it, the heart, the spirit, the understanding and will, the mind, conscience, and affections: and it is the “hidden man”; it is wisdom in the hidden part; it is hidden from the men of the world; they do not know what it is, nor what it means, nor how it is, or can be; the life of it is hidden from them, and the food it lives upon is hidden manna to them, and so are both its joys and sorrows: it is sometimes hidden from the saints themselves; when they walk in darkness, and see no light, they are at a loss to know whether this principle is in them or not; and it is hidden from other believers, till they give an account of it to them, when by comparing it with the word of God, and their own experience, they perceive it is the grace of God in them; and it is hidden from Satan, it is out of his reach, he cannot touch it; though he can touch the old man, and stir up the corruptions of it, yet he cannot touch the new man, that which is born of God, nor hurt or destroy it; but it is not hidden from God; he sees it where men cannot, being covered with a variety of infirmities and sins, and knows it is not where men sometimes think it is. The nature of this hidden man is further expressed by what follows,

in that which is not corruptible; it is opposed to corruptible things, as the outward adorning consists of, such as plaited hair, silver and gold, golden chains, rings, etc. and costly apparel; nor is it corrupt in itself; the old man is corrupt according to its deceitful lusts, but this new man, the hidden man of the heart, has no corruption in it, nor cleaving to it: it is the workmanship of God, and is created in righteousness and holiness; though it is as yet imperfect, there is nothing impure in it; nor can it ever perish, or

be lost; it is an incorruptible seed, and will always remain when gold will perish, and the best of garments be moth eaten, and decay:

[even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit; this is one, and a principal part of the inward adorning, or hidden man of the heart; and those that are possessed of such a spirit are not easily provoked to anger; patiently bear, and put up with injuries; carry themselves affably and courteously unto all; entertain the meanest thoughts of themselves, and the best of others; do not envy the gifts and graces of others, and are willing to be instructed and admonished by the meanest saint; quietly submit to the will of God, in all adverse dispensations of Providence; and ascribe all they have, and are, to the free grace of God, and reckon that when they have done all they can, they are but unprofitable servants. This grace of meekness, humility, and quietness, is a fruit of the Spirit, and so a part of the hidden man, and is what is very ornamental to a believer; it is his clothing, his inward adorning, and what makes him lovely in the sight of God, and of his people; (see ^{CHRIS}1 Peter 5:5) and it is very useful to him in hearing the word, in giving a reason of the hope that is in him, in restoring others, and in showing forth a good conversation; and particularly it greatly becomes, and exceedingly beautifies women professing godliness; who ought to bear much with their husbands, and be in silence, which is what the apostle has a principal regard unto: and to encourage the more to the exercise of it, adds,

which is in the sight of God of great price; which may refer to the whole adorning, to the hidden man of the heart, which is incorruptible, in opposition to the outward adorning, which may be esteemed by men, and be precious in their sight; and particularly to the ornament of meekness and quietness of spirit; for God has a great regard to the meek, humble, and quiet souls; he lifts them up, when cast down; he causes glad tidings to be preached to them; he increases their joy in the Lord; he feeds them, when hungry, to their satisfaction; he guides them in judgment, and teaches them his ways; he will rise up in judgment for them, and reprove with equity for their sake; he gives more grace unto them, and beautifies them with salvation, and will cause them to inherit the earth.

Ver. 5. *For after this manner in the old time*, etc.] In ages past, the years of many generations, since the time that God created man upon earth; in the times before the flood, and after it; in the times of the patriarchs, judges, kings, and prophets of Israel, under the Old Testament

dispensation. The apostle exhorts and encourages to this inward dress and ornament, from the antiquity of it: for in this way, and after this fashion,

the holy women also: who were sanctified by the Spirit of God, and lived holy lives and conversations, such as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah, Ruth, Hannah, and others:

who trusted in God; that he would send the Messiah, and make good all his promises, judging and believing him to be faithful to his word, and able to fulfil whatever he had promised, as Sarah, (^{<38111>}Hebrews 11:11). Such holy and believing women as these are worthy of imitation in their adorning and dress, and who, in the manner before described by the apostle, adorned themselves; or this was the adorning which they sought after, valued, and chiefly regarded; not what was external, but internal: and which lay in meekness and humility, and in a quiet deportment, and in

being in subjection unto their own husbands; according to their original make, and natural relation, and the laws of God, and of creation; which is more becoming and adorning than plaiting of hair, wearing of gold, or costly raiment, and recommends them more, both in the sight of God and men; nothing being a more indecent and uncomely sight than a woman not in subjection to her husband.

Ver. 6. *Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham*, etc.] Going along with him wherever he went, as from Chaldea to Canaan, and into Egypt, and the land of the Philistines, saying the words he put into her mouth, (^{<0125>}Genesis 12:5,11,13) and doing the things he bid her do, (^{<0186>}Genesis 18:6) “calling him lord”; or “my lord”, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, and as it appears she did from (^{<0182>}Genesis 18:12). The Jews use this instance to the same purpose the apostle does, saying ^{f67},

“the wife ought to take care of the family, to educate her children, to serve and minister to her husband in all things, “calling him her own lord”; which is what we learn from the example of Sarah, who called Abraham her lord, saying, “my lord is old”.”

Whose daughters ye are; meaning not by natural descent, though they were, these being Jews the apostle writes to, but by grace, and in a spiritual sense; just as those are the children of Abraham, who walk in the steps of his faith, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; so such are the daughters of Sarah, the children of the free woman, who imitate her in faith and obedience; that is, they appear, and are declared to be so:

as long as ye do well: do acts of beneficence and hospitality to strangers, and proper objects, as Sarah did, and all and every good work, according to the will of God, from love, and in faith, and with a view to his glory; and particularly obey and live in subjection to their husbands, as she did: and are not afraid with any amazement; are not deterred from doing well, nor scared by the terrors and menaces of wicked men, either their own husbands, or others; or who with fortitude and intrepidity of mind continue in the discharge of their duty to God and men, and particularly to their husbands, following them, and obeying their lawful commands, as Sarah did in Egypt, and in Gerar, though she exposed herself to great danger: this is said, because women are timorous, and apt to be frightened at everything, from the performance of their duty.

Ver. 7. *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them*, etc.] “With your wives”, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; which not only included dwelling together in the same house, and bedding together in the same bed, but the whole of conjugal conversation, and all the offices and duties incumbent on men in a married state:

according to knowledge; of themselves, and their wives, and the duties belonging to the conjugal state, and the laws of God and man respecting it; and according to their knowledge of the Gospel, and the Christian dispensation, which no ways breaks in upon, but strengthens and encourages to the observance of things belonging to natural religion, and civil life; and according to that superior knowledge of things, which, generally speaking, men have to women; as also wisely, prudently, becoming their characters as men and Christians:

particularly giving honour to the wife; by speaking well of her, and respectfully to her, and by deeds as well as words; not only by clothing her in a decent and becoming manner, suitable to her station; but by providing everything honest and comely for her, food and raiment, a suitable maintenance, all the necessaries, conveniences, and delights of life, that are laudable and proper; in which sense the word honour is used in (^{54RB-1} Timothy 5:3,17) and this was agreeably to the doctrine of the Jews ^{f68}, who say,

“let a man always take care *wtçā dwbkb*, “of the glory of his wife”; for there is no blessing found in a man’s house, but for the sake of his wife, as it is said, (⁰¹²⁶Genesis 12:16) “and he entreated

Abraham well for her sake”: and Rabba used to say to the citizens, **wkyçnl wryqwa**, “honour your wives”, that ye may be rich.”

And indeed this is what they promised in their marriage contract, which runs thus ^{f69}:

“be thou unto me for a wife, according to the law of Moses and Israel, and I, by the word of heaven, or God, will worship, **ryqwaw**, “and honour”, and nourish, and take care of thee, according to the custom of the Jews, who worship, and “honour”, and nourish, and take care of their wives.”

As unto the weaker vessel; so in (Th 4:4) the wife is called a vessel, (see Gill on “~~504b~~ 1 Thessalonians 4:4”), and here “the weaker”; being so for the most part, both as to strength of body, and endowments of mind; and therefore to be used gently and tenderly, and not be treated with neglect and contempt, or with inhumanity and severity; but as, in every state and condition, the strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak; so a man should bear with, and accommodate himself to the infirmities of his wife, and hide them as much as he can, and not expose them, nor despise her on account of them. It is a saying of the Jews ^{f70},

“if thy wife be short of stature, bow thyself, and whisper to her.”

The meaning of the proverb is, that he ought to suit himself to her capacity and weakness:

and as being heirs together of the grace of life; not of a natural life, and the good things of it; though husbands and wives partake of the same kind of life, and have a right unto, and share in the same necessaries of life; so Adam and Eve were partakers of the same life, and sharers of the same benefits; and which is a reason indeed why they ought to live lovingly together: but something more is intended; not the external gifts of the Spirit, which, unless in some few instances, are bestowed on men, and not on women; nor the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, which are the means of grace and life; though men and women, called by grace, have an equal right to them, and enjoy them; (see ~~818b~~ Galatians 3:28) but grace here, and glory hereafter, are here meant. Some copies, as the Alexandrian, and others, read, “heirs together of the manifold grace of life”; God's own people, without any difference as to sex, as men and women, equally share in grace, as it signifies the love and favour of God; which is the same to all

the objects, as to the date of it, which is from everlasting, one not being loved before another; and as to the quality of it, which is free, sovereign, special, discriminating and unchangeable, one being loved not with one sort of love, another with another; and as to the quantity of it, it not admitting of more or less; and as to the duration, which is for ever: and so they are heirs of it, as it denotes the blessings of grace; being equally heirs of, and sharers in electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace: and as it may intend the internal graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, and love; which as to their principles are the same in all the saints, though different as to the degree of the exercise of them: and which may be called “the grace of life”; or “living grace”, as some copies and the Complutensian edition read, and so the Arabic version, because by it men and women, who were dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened; and in distinction to counterfeit grace, which differs as much from true grace, as the picture of a man from a living man; and because it lives for ever, and never dies, and gives a meetness for eternal life, which it springs up to, issues in, and is inseparably connected with. Moreover, by it may be meant eternal life and salvation, of which the saints, without any difference as to sex, are heirs of: so some copies read, “heirs of manifold grace, and life”; by the former, meaning grace here, and by the latter, glory hereafter; which is a life of vision of God, and uninterrupted communion with him; of perfection and pleasure, and which will last for ever; and may be called

the grace of life, because it is the free gift of God's grace: and agreeably the Syriac version renders it, “the gift of eternal life”; and the Ethiopic version, glorious life: and this is represented as an inheritance, being what belongs only to the children; and which they have not by their own works, as an acquisition of theirs, but by the free grace of their heavenly Father, and as his gift and bequest unto them. Now all the saints, of whatever state, condition, or sex, are equally heirs of this inheritance; for there is but one inheritance, one kingdom, one crown of glory, which all shall enjoy; and whatever disparity there may be, particularly between husband and wife, in their natural relation, there is none in the things of grace, and with regard to the kingdom of glory; and which is an argument why husbands should dwell peaceably and comfortably with their wives, and give all due honour to them, since they are upon a par in spiritual things, there being neither male nor female in Christ Jesus, and because they are now joint heirs of, and shall equally share in eternal life and happiness.

That your prayers be not hindered: as they would be were they not to dwell together; or should not the husband give honour to his wife, and take care of her as he ought to do: hence would arise strifes and quarrels, when they could not cordially, and to edification, join together in prayer; nor would such prayers, put up in wrath, be acceptable unto God, who requires that men should lift up holy hands everywhere, whether in public, or in private, in God's house, or in their own houses, without wrath and doubting. From hence we may observe, that family prayer is a duty incumbent on professors of religion, and great care should be taken that it be not neglected and hindered.

Ver. 8. *Finally, be ye all of one mind,* etc.] Not that the apostle was about to conclude his epistle; but having finished his exhortations respecting the obedience of subjects to magistrates, and of servants to their masters, and the duties incumbent on husbands and wives, he proceeds to sum up what he had further to say, in general rules; which regarded all sorts of Christians, magistrates and subjects, masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children, old and young, rich and poor, of whatsoever state, age, sex, or condition; and so the Arabic version renders it, “the sum of the commandment is”; and the Ethiopic version, “the sum of all is this”; namely, what follows; “be ye all of one mind”; whatever difference there might be in their natural and civil relation and character; and which is to be understood not of the sameness of affection to one another, or of an humble and condescending spirit, disposition, and carriage to each other, for these are expressed in some following exhortations; but of sameness of judgment with respect to the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, in which saints should be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment; for as the church is but one body, of which Christ is the head, there should be but one mind in it; even as there is but one Spirit of God, who convinces, enlightens, and leads into truth; and but one heart and way, given to fear the Lord; and there is but one hope of our calling, or to which we are called; and one way to it, and therefore ought to agree in everything respecting the way, the truth, and the life; though in things which do not, should bear with one another; and there is but one Lord, who gives the same laws and ordinances to one as to another, and which are to be kept alike by all; and there is but one faith, one doctrine of faith, which is uniform and all of a piece, and but one rule and standard of faith, the sacred Scriptures, and but one baptism, to be administered in the same way, and upon the same sort of subjects, and in the same name of the

Father, Son, and Spirit; and but one God and Father of all; all belong to the same family, and therefore should preserve a unity of spirit and mind, and speak the same things; which is necessary to carry on the worship of God, honourably and regularly, to the glorifying of him, and for the peace, comfort, and safety of the churches of Christ:

having compassion one of another; or sympathizing with each other, both in prosperity and adversity, whether in temporal or spiritual things; rejoicing with them that rejoice in Christ, make their boast of him, and have communion with him, and who are also blessed with health of body, and a competency of the good things of this life; and weeping with them that weep for the loss of goods, relations, etc. and being in bonds and afflictions; or because of sin, the absence of Christ, and the temptations of Satan; and being concerned also for such who are fallen into immorality, or error, and heresy; endeavouring to restore them out of the one or the other, in a spirit of meekness and tenderness: to all which they should be engaged by the example of Christ, the sympathizing high priest; by the consideration of the divine compassion to them, both in a providential way, and in a way of grace; and on account of their union and relation to each other, as members of the same body:

love as brethren; not in a natural and civil, but in a spiritual relation, being children of God, and brethren of Christ, and in a Gospel church state; and whose love to each other ought to be universal, fervent, without dissimulation, and as Christ has loved them; and which should show itself in praying for each other, in bearing one another's burdens, in forgiving each other, in admonishing in love, and building up one another on their most holy faith, and communicating to each other both in temporals and spirituals: and of a very excellent nature is it; it is the bond of perfectness, and evidence of regeneration; the glory and ornament of a profession, and without which it is nothing; and what renders the communion of the saints with each other pleasant and profitable, comfortable to themselves, and honourable in the eyes of others; and to which they should be induced from the consideration of the love of God and Christ unto them, and from their relation to each other, as brethren:

be pitiful; to those that are in distress; put on bowels of mercy, and relieve and succour them, distributing cheerfully to their necessities:

be courteous; gentle and affable, carrying it friendly to one another, seeking those things which may be most agreeable to each other, shunning

all moroseness, stiffness, and incivility. The Vulgate Latin version renders it by two words, “modest, humble”: not proud, haughty, and overbearing, but condescending to each other, and to men of low estates; and so the Syriac version renders it, “kind and meek”.

Ver. 9. *Not rendering evil for evil*, etc.] Doing an ill thing in return to one that has done ill to you, and in a way of revenge for it; which is contrary to what is before advised to, and which is taking God's prerogative and work out of his hands, whose vengeance is, and which is to be overcome of evil:

or railing for railing; returning ill language to such as have given it, but rather should imitate Christ, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, (⁴¹²³1 Peter 2:23) and whose advice is, instead of returning injuries, blows, or words, to turn to him that smites on the right cheek the other also and to bless them that curse, do good to them that hate, and pray for them that persecute, (⁴¹²³Matthew 5:39,44) and which is here directed to:

but contrariwise blessing; praying for a blessing on them; for if we are to do so for our enemies, for them that hate us, despitefully use and persecute us, as did Christ, Stephen the protomartyr, and the apostles, then much more our fellow Christians who may do us an injury or speak evil of us, or to us: who seem to be chiefly intended: the argument to persuade to it follows,

knowing that ye are thereunto called; referring either to what goes before being called by grace to the discharge of all the above duties exhorted to, and particularly to suffer patiently all injuries and affronts; and instead of making returns in the same way, to bless and pray for those that have hurt us, either by words or deeds; (see Pe 2:20,21) or to what follows, that ye should inherit a blessing; temporal blessing or blessings; for godliness has the promise of this life and godly persons shall not want any good thing; and even while the blessings of others are cursed they have their outward mercies with a blessing, and they are blessings indeed to them; wherefore, the little they may have is better than the large affluence of others: and also spiritual blessing, or blessings; such as peace of conscience, the pardon of all their sins a justifying righteousness adopting grace, all supplies of grace from Christ, his presence and communion with him: and also an eternal one, even life for evermore; called so, because it springs from the free favour, good will, and blessing of God, and which its being an inheritance also shows; and because such that enjoy it are eternally and unspeakably happy.

Ver. 10. *For he that will love life,* etc.] This, with what follows here and in the two next verses, are taken out of (^{<13812>}Psalm 34:12-16) and are produced as a proof of what is before said; that it is a good man's duty not to do or speak evil in return for what is done or said to him; but on the contrary, it becomes him to avoid evil, do good, and seek peace as much as possible, and leave it with a righteous God to vindicate him and his cause, who will not fail to do it; and that such shall inherit the blessing both here and hereafter: in the psalm, these words are put by way of question, “what man is he that desireth life?” that wills it with pleasure, that loves it with a love of complacency and delight? and which is to be understood, not of natural life; for what man is there that do not love that? love of a natural life is natural to men; it is a first principle in nature to desire life, and a preservation of it, and to a great length; a man will give all that he has for it, as Satan said, (^{<8114>}Job 2:4), but both of a spiritual life, a life of faith on Christ, communion with him, and holiness from him; the life of God, or to live soberly, righteously, and godly, which carnal men are alienated from, and enemies to, and cannot desire, only spiritual men; and of an eternal one; and so some of the Jewish interpreters ^{f71} understand by life and good days, in the psalm, such as are both in this world, and in that which is to come:

and see good days; not the days of this life, which are evil, even the days of a good man, (^{<1479>}Genesis 47:9) and the more so, the longer he lives; for the days of old age are evil days, in which there is no pleasure, (^{<2111>}Ecclesiastes 12:1), unless such days are meant, in which much good is done to the honour and glory of God, and in which gracious souls enjoy much of God, and see and taste of his grace and goodness in the land of the living; though, rather, the good days of eternity, even length of days for ever and ever, which holy men of God shall see, and enjoy in the other world, when they shall be possessed of fulness of joy, and of pleasure for evermore: in the psalm it is, “and loveth [many] days, that he may see good”; desires a blessed eternity of good things:

let him refrain his tongue from evil; bridle that unruly member, which has a world of iniquity in it; let him keep it as with a bit, from the vices incident to it; from all obscene words, filthy and corrupt communication, whatever is unsavoury and unedifying; from lying, cursing, swearing, and particularly from railing and evil speaking, in return for such language, which is chiefly meant; as well as from belching out blasphemies against God, and damnable heresies among men; for whoever would be thought a religious

man, and lays no restraint on his tongue, his religion is a vain thing, (~~SOLES~~ James 1:26) and his lips that they speak no guile; as flatterers do, who speak that with their mouth which does not agree with their heart, and so beguile and deceive persons; and as false teachers, who use dishonest arts, walk in craftiness, handle the word of God deceitfully, use ambiguous phrases, and words of double meaning, and with their good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple but such things do not become persons that seek for glory, honour, and immortality; that profess to be Israelites indeed; in these guile should not be found in their lips, nor in their lives.

Ver. 11. *Let him eschew evil*, etc.] Avoid all kinds of evil, hate it, abstain from the appearance of it, and have no fellowship with it; and particularly should avoid rendering evil for evil, or taking revenge on persons for doing him ill:

and do good; everything that is good, all good works, according to the will of God, in the exercise of faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God; and without trusting to them, and depending upon them for life and salvation; and particularly do good for evil; do good to all men, acts of kindness and beneficence, even to enemies, and especially to them that are of the household of faith. The Jewish interpreters¹⁷² on the psalm from whence these words are taken observe, that in the first of these clauses are contained all the negative precepts, whose number with them is three hundred, sixty, and five; and in the latter of them, all the affirmative precepts, which amount to two hundred and forty eight:

let him seek peace and ensue it: “or pursue it”; let him seek after it, in the world, and with all men, as much as possible, yea, with his very enemies; and live a peaceable and quiet life, in the kingdom, city, town, and neighbourhood where he is; and particularly in the church of God, and with the saints; which he should seek with all diligence and eagerness, and pursue with all rigour to the utmost of his power; and endeavour to cultivate all he can, and follow the things which make for it. The note of one of the Jewish commentators¹⁷³ on this passage is, “seek peace”, in thine own place; “and pursue it”, in another place.

Ver. 12. *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous*, etc.] Who are so not merely in the sight of men, but of God; nor in their own account, and by their own works, but in the esteem of God, through the imputation of the righteousness of his Son unto them: and because he loves this

righteousness, and is well pleased with it, seeing by it his law is magnified and made honourable, therefore his countenance beholds with pleasure and delight those righteous ones who are clothed with it; his eyes of omniscience, love, care, and protection, are always upon them, watching over them, delighting in them, running to and fro in the earth on behalf of them; he sees every injury done them, and in his own time and way will do them justice; which is a reason why they should not take vengeance themselves, but leave it with him, whose it is:

and his ears are open to their prayers; or “prayer”; in the Hebrew text, “to their cry”; he is a God hearing prayer, and his righteous ones have his ear; he hears them while they are speaking, and will sooner or later answer, and avenge his elect, who cry unto him day and night; for as he has an ear to hear their cries, which is not heavy, he has an arm to save them, which is not shortened; and this is another reason why they should behave as before directed, and which is still strengthened by what follows;

but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil; it is added in the psalm, “to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth”: by “the face of the Lord” is meant, as the Jewish writers^{f74} interpret it, the anger of the Lord; it intends, not his kind, pleasant, and loving countenance, but his angry one with the former he beholds the upright, and with it he looks upon his righteous ones; but the latter is upon and against the wicked, and is dreadful and intolerable, and the consequence of it is everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

Ver. 13. *And who is he that will harm you*, etc.] Or “can harm you”. God will not; for his eyes are upon the righteous, to protect and defend them, and, his ears are open to their cries, to avenge them; he is on their side, and he is the only lawgiver that is able to save, and to destroy. Christ will not; for when he came the first time, it was not to condemn, but to save; and when he comes a second time, though he will rule the wicked with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter’s vessel; yet his people, who are his jewels, he will spare, as a man spares his only son. Good angels will not; these rejoice at the conversion, and in the salvation of sinful men, encamp about the saints, and are ministering spirits to them: nor the devil; though he would devour, he cannot; for greater is he that is in the saints, than he that is in the world: nor can sin; for though it wars against them, it shall not have the dominion over them; and though it often breaks in upon

their peace and comfort, it cannot damn and destroy their souls: nor the law; for though it pronounces guilty, and curses those that are under it, and are of the works of it, yet since Christ has fulfilled it for his people, by obeying its precepts, and bearing its penalty, the curse, it lies not against them, nor can it inflict any punishment on them: nor the men of the world; who hate and persecute the saints; these can do them no real harm; they cannot hurt their grace, which shines the brighter, being tried and proved in the furnace of affliction; they cannot destroy their peace and comfort by all the trouble they give them; all the harm they can do them is to their bodies; they can do none to their souls; and even all the evil things they do to their bodies work together for their good; and they must be very wicked men that will do harm in any respect to such as behave well in states, cities, towns, or neighbourhoods:

if ye be followers of that which is good; of God, who is essentially, originally, and infinitely good, and does good to all his creatures, by imitating him in holiness and righteousness, in kindness, mercy, and beneficence; and of Christ, the good Shepherd, following him in the exercise of grace, as of humility, love, patience, etc. and in the discharge of duty; and of good men, the apostles of Christ, the first churches, faithful ministers, and all such who through faith and patience have inherited the promises, and that both in doctrine and practice; and of all good things, whatever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, particularly righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. Some copies, as the Alexandrian, and others, read, “zealots”, or “zealous of good”; of good works, as in (³¹²⁴Titus 2:14) and so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 14. *But and if ye suffer for righteousness sake*, etc.] For the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, which was the great stumbling block to the Jews, and on account of which they persecuted the Christians; it being not after man, nor according to the carnal reason of men, and was contrary to the method they had fixed on, and what excluded boasting in them, and was thought to be a licentious doctrine; and for a righteous cause, for professing Christ and his Gospel; for vindicating both which, whoever did must expect to suffer persecution; and also for living soberly, righteously, and godly; for by a religious life and conversation the saints are separated from the world, and are distinguished from them, which in effect sets a mark of infamy and reproach upon them; and saints, by an agreeable life, reprove others, and condemn them; all which irritate

and provoke them to hate and persecute them: now these words prevent an objection that might be made to what is before said; that none can, or will harm such as are followers of good; whereas it is a clear case, that saints for righteousness sake are hurt, and do suffer in their persons, characters, and estate; they are reproached and reviled, and often suffer confiscation of goods, imprisonment, and even death itself; to which the apostle answers, by granting it, and supposing that this should be the case, as it sometimes is; yet no hurt is done them, they are still happy persons: happy are ye; since suffering on such an account is a gift of God, even as believing in Christ itself is, and is a real honour done to a person, and to be so accounted; moreover, such generally enjoy much of the presence of God, and the comforts of his Spirit; the Spirit of God and of glory rests upon them; hereby the graces of the Spirit of God in them are exercised, tried, and proved, and shine out the brighter; the faith and hope of other Christians are strengthened, and God is glorified; and besides, the kingdom of heaven, the crown of life, and eternal glory, with which their sufferings are not to be compared, are theirs, and which they shall certainly enjoy: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; referring to a passage in (⁻²³⁸²Isaiah 8:12) and the meaning is either, be not afraid with the same sort of fear as wicked men are; with a worldly slavish fear of men, and of the loss of worldly things, and of life itself: or, afraid of them, as the Syriac version renders it; who inject fear into you; do not be afraid of their revilings and reproaches, of their threatenings and menaces, and even of death itself by them, which is the utmost they can do; do not be troubled at anything they say or do to you; since nothing can harm you, since God is on your side, Christ has delivered you from this present evil world, and saved you out of the hands of every enemy; and since the love of God, which casteth out fear, is shed abroad in your hearts, and you are encompassed with it, and nothing can separate you from it.

Ver. 15. *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts*, etc.] Still referring to (⁻²³⁸³Isaiah 8:13) not by making him holy, which need not, nor cannot be, he being essentially, infinitely, and perfectly holy; but by declaring and proclaiming his holiness, as the seraphim in Isaiah's prophecy, and the four living creatures in the Revelation did; and by glorifying of him, praising and applauding all his perfections, and among the rest, this of his holiness, and giving thanks at the remembrance of it; which he has so much displayed in the works of creation, providence, redemption, and grace; hence the Arabic version renders it, bless the Lord God in your hearts: the Lord God is

sanctified by his people externally, when they regard his commands, attend his ordinances, and call upon his name, and praise him; but here an internal sanctification of him, a sanctification of him in their hearts, is intended, and what is opposed to the fear of men, and unbelief, and lies in the exercise of the grace of fear upon him; (see ^{<2183>}Isaiah 8:13) and which has for its object his goodness, and is a fruit of the covenant of his grace, and is a child like and godly fear; and in the exercise of faith upon him, upon his covenant and promises, his faithfulness, and power to help, assist, and preserve; whereby glory is given to him, a witness borne to his truth, and he is sanctified: some copies, as the Alexandrian, and one of Stephens's, read, sanctify the Lord Christ; and so read the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; and certain it is that he is intended in (^{<2183>}Isaiah 8:13) as appears from (^{<1184>}1 Peter 3:14) compared with (^{<803>}Romans 9:33 ^{<118>}1 Peter 2:8)

and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear; by the hope that is in the saints, is not designed the grace of hope itself, which is given to them, and implanted in them in regeneration; the reason, ground, and foundation of which are, the love, grace, and mercy of God, through Christ, and his person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and redemption; but the Gospel, the whole Christian doctrine, the doctrine of faith, and which the Syriac version here calls the “hope of faith”; and the profession of Christianity, called in (^{<303>}Hebrews 10:23), the profession of hope; in which persons profess their hope of eternal life and happiness through Christ, as doctrine of the Gospel directs them to. Now, a “reason” of this is to be given; not that they are to account for the Gospel, upon the foot of carnal reason; for that is not of men, nor according to the carnal reason of men; nor is it to be thought that every Christian should be capable of defending the Gospel, either in whole, or in part, by arguments and reasons, in a disputatious way, or to give a reason and argument for every particular truth; but that he should be well acquainted with the ground and foundation of the Christian religion; at least, with the first principles of the oracles of God, and be conversant with the Scriptures, and be able to point out that in them, which is the reason of his holding this and the other truth, though he is not able to give a gainsayer satisfaction, or to stop his mouth: and this is to be done with meekness and fear; with meekness, before men; in an humble modest way; not with an haughty air, and in a morose and surly manner, which serves only to irritate and provoke: and with fear; either of God, and so the Ethiopic Version renders it, with the fear of the

Lord; considering the subject of the argument, and the importance of it, and how much the honour of God is concerned in it; and taking care lest the answer should be delivered in a light, trifling, and negligent manner, and that no part of truth be dropped or concealed, in order to please men, and be screened from their resentments; or with all due reverence of, and respect to men, to superiors, to the civil magistrates, who may ask the reason; for they are to be treated with honour and esteem, and to be answered in an handsome and becoming manner, suitable to the dignity of their persons and office; as the sanhedrim was by Stephen; and as Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, by the Apostle Paul: and this answer, or reason, is to be given to every man; that has authority to ask, and that asks in a modest manner, and with a reverence suitable to the subject; for the phrases, “with meekness and fear”, may respect him that asks the reason, as well as him that gives the answer; for that which is holy is not to be given to dogs, to impudent persons, mockers and scoffers, nor are pearls to be cast before swine, filthy and irreverent persons; (see ^{407b}Matthew 7:6) the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and so the Vulgate Latin version, read, “but with meekness and fear”; for if it is not asked in such a way, there is no obligation to give an answer: and this is to be given “always”; whenever it is asked in such a manner, and by proper persons; when there is a necessity of it, and as opportunity offers: and saints should be always “ready to” give and therefore it becomes them daily and diligently to search the Scriptures, meditate on them, and get all the help and assistance they can, to lead them into an acquaintance with them, that they may be so; for though the apostles had extraordinary assistance promised them, and therefore were bid not to consider beforehand what they should say, when brought before kings and princes; yet this is not to be expected by ordinary persons, nor in ordinary cases. Agreeably to this is the advice of R. Eleazar ^{f75};

“be diligent to learn the law, and know what thou shouldest answer to an Epicure,”

or heretic: says R. Jochanan ^{f76},

“in every place where the Sadducees object, ^{^dyxb ^tbwçt} their answer is at their side,”

or ready; that is, in the same Scriptures on which they form their objections.

Ver. 16. *Having a good conscience*, etc.] Meaning not the faculty of the conscience itself, which is naturally evil, and defiled with sin, and is only made good by the sanctification of the Spirit, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, by which the heart is sprinkled from it, and that itself purged from dead works; but a life and conversation according to the dictates of such a conscience, in the uprightness and sincerity of it, and by the grace of God, and according to the Gospel, and whereby the doctrines of it are adorned; for, as besides internal sanctification of God, or a fearing of him, and believing in him with the heart, there must be a profession of him with the mouth, and a reason of faith and hope given verbally, when there is an occasion for it; so to both must be added a conscientious discharge of duty, both to God and men, which is one way of defending and recommending the doctrines of the Gospel:

that whereas they speak evil of you as of evildoers; as vain, proud, haughty, and arrogant persons, as seditious men, enemies to order and civil magistracy; as such that speak evil of dignities, and despise government; when they shall see your modest and humble deportment in the world, and before them, and with what reverence and esteem you treat them:

they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ; which was in consequence of their being in Christ, and made new creatures by him, and was as became his Gospel, and by and under the influence of his grace and Spirit.

Ver. 17. *For it is better, if the will of God be so*, etc.] For all things are ordered by the will of God, even all the sufferings and afflictions of the saints; and which is a reason why they ought to be patiently submitted to, and bore: and “better” it is, more honourable and profitable,

that ye suffer for well doing; for believing in Christ, professing him and his Gospel, giving a free and open reason for so doing, and for exercising a good conscience, and living godly in Christ Jesus:

than for evil doing; as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or a busy body in other men's matters, (⁴⁰¹⁵1 Peter 4:15,16).

Ver. 18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins*, etc.] Not his own, for he committed none, but for the sins of his people; in order to obtain the remission of them, to make reconciliation for them, and to take and put them away, and finish and make an end of them; which sufferings of his, on account of them, were many and great: he suffered much by bearing the

griefs, and carrying the sorrows of his people, whereby he became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs, from his cradle to his cross; and from the temptations of Satan, being in all points tempted, as his members are, though without sin; and from the contradiction of sinners against him, in his name, credit, and character, abusing him as the worst of men; and he suffered in his soul, from the wrath of God, and curses of the law, which lay upon him; and in his body, by many buffetings, scourges, wounds, and death itself, even the death of the cross; and which being the finishing part of his sufferings, is chiefly here meant. The Alexandrian copy reads, “died for you”; and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “died for our sins”; and this he did once, and but once; he died once, and will die no more; he was offered up once, and will be offered up no more; there is no more offering, or sacrifice for sin; the reason is, because his one offering is sufficient to take away sin, which the legal sacrifices were not, and therefore were often offered; and the reason why this his one offering, or once suffering and dying, is sufficient, is, because of his divine nature, or eternal Spirit, by which he offered himself, and gave infinite virtue to his sacrifice and satisfaction: now, this is an argument for suffering patiently; since Christ, the head, has also suffered, and therefore, why not the members? and since he has suffered for their sins, therefore they should not grudge to suffer for his sake; and seeing also their sufferings are but once, in this life only, and as it were but for a moment, and not to be compared with his sufferings for them; and especially when it is considered what follows:

the just for the unjust; Christ, the holy and just one, who is holy in his nature, and righteous in his life and actions, which were entirely conformable to the righteous law of God, and upright and faithful in the discharge of his office, and therefore called God's righteous servant; he suffered, and that not only by unjust men, by the Jews, by Pilate, and the Roman soldiers, but for and in the room and stead of unjust men, sinners, and ungodly, who were destitute of righteousness, and full of all unrighteousness; and since he did, it need not be thought hard, or strange, that sinful men should suffer at the hands of others; and still it should be borne with the greater patience, since Christ not only suffered for them, but since an end is answered by it, as is here suggested:

that he might bring us to God; nigh to God, who, with respect to communion, were afar off from him; and in peace and reconciliation with him, who were enemies to him by wicked works; and that they might have

freedom of access, with boldness, unto God, through his precious blood, and the vail of his flesh; and that he might offer them unto God, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions render it; as a sacrifice acceptable unto God, presenting them to him unblamable and unreprouceable in his sight; that he might bring them into his grace and presence here, and, as the great Captain of their salvation, bring them to him in glory hereafter:

being put to death in the flesh; in the human nature: flesh includes the whole of human nature, both body and soul; for though the body only dies, yet death is the dissolution of the union between them both; and such was Christ's death; for though the union between the two natures continued, yet his body and soul were disunited; his body was left on the cross, and his soul, or Spirit, was commended to God, when his life was taken from the earth, and he was put to death in a violent manner by men:

but quickened by the Spirit; raised from the dead by his divine nature, the Spirit of holiness, the eternal Spirit, by which he offered himself, and by virtue of which, as he had power to lay down his life, so he had power to take it up again; when he was also justified in the Spirit, and all the elect in him. Now, as the enemies of Christ could do no more than put him to death in the flesh, so the enemies of his people can do no more than kill the body, and cannot reach the soul; and as Christ is quickened and raised from the dead, so all his elect are quickened together, and raised with him, representatively, and shall, by virtue of his resurrection, be raised personally, and live also; which is no inconsiderable argument to suffer afflictions patiently, and which is the design of this instance and example of the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ.

Ver. 19. *By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.*] Various are the senses given of this passage: some say, that Christ, upon his death, went in his human soul to hell; either, as some, to preach to the devils and damned spirits, that they might be saved, if they would; and, as others, to let them know that he was come, and to fill them with dread and terror; but though hell may be meant by the prison, yet the text does not say that he went unto it, or preached in it; only that the spirits were in it, to whom he sometimes went, and preached; nor is his human soul, but his divine nature meant, by the Spirit, by which he went and preached to them: and as for the ends proposed, the former is impracticable and impossible; for after death follows judgment, which is an eternal one; nor is there any salvation, or hope of salvation afterwards; and the latter is absurd, vain,

and needless. Others, as the Papists, imagine the sense to be, that Christ, at his death, went in his human soul, into a place they call “Limbus Patrum”, which they suppose is meant by the prison here, and delivered the souls of the Old Testament saints and patriarchs from thence, and carried them with him to heaven; but this sense is also false, because, as before observed, not the human soul of Christ, but his divine nature, is designed by the Spirit; nor is there any such place as here feigned, in which the souls of Old Testament saints were, before the death of Christ; for they were in peace and rest, in the kingdom of heaven, in Abraham's bosom, inheriting the promises, and not in a prison; besides, the text says not one word of the delivering of these spirits out of prison, only of Christ's preaching to them: add to all this, and which Beza, with others, observes, the apostle speaks of such as had been disobedient, and unbelievers; a character which will not agree with righteous men, and prophets, and patriarchs, under the former dispensation: others think the words are to be understood of Christ's going to preach, by his apostles, to the Gentiles, as in (~~40217~~ Ephesians 2:17) who were in a most miserable condition, strangers to the covenants of promise, and destitute of the hope of salvation, and sat in darkness, and the shadow of death, and, as it were, at the gates of hell; were in the bonds of iniquity, and dead in sin, and had been for long time past foolish and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, to which they were in bondage. This is, indeed, a more tolerable sense than the former; but it will be difficult to show, that men, in the present state of life, are called “spirits”, which seems to be a word that relates to the souls of men, in a separate state from their bodies; and especially that carnal and unconverted men are ever so called; and besides, the apostle is speaking of such who were disobedient in the times of Noah; and therefore not of the Gentiles, in the times of the apostles: add to which, that the transition from the times of the apostles, according to this sense, to the days of Noah, is very unaccountable; this sense does not agree with the connection of the words: others are of opinion, that this is meant of the souls of the Old Testament saints, who were *εν φυλακη*, “in a watch”, as they think the phrase may be rendered, instead of “in prison”: and said to be in such a situation, because they were intent upon the hope of promised salvation, and were looking out for the Messiah, and anxiously desiring his coming, and which he, by some gracious manifestation, made known unto them: but though the word may sometimes signify a watch, yet more commonly a prison, and which sense best suits here; nor is that anxiety and uneasiness, which represents them as in a prison, so applicable to souls in a state of happiness; nor such a

gracious manifestation so properly called preaching; and besides, not believers, but unbelievers, disobedient ones, are here spoken of; and though it is only said they were sometimes so, yet to what purpose should this former character be once mentioned of souls now in glory? but it would be tedious to reckon up the several different senses of this place; some referring it to such in Noah's time, to whom the Gospel was preached, and who repented; and though they suffered in their bodies, in the general deluge, yet their souls were saved; whereas the apostle calls them all, "the world of the ungodly", (~~GEN~~ 2 Peter 2:5) and others, to the eight souls that were shut up in the ark, as in a prison, and were saved; though these are manifestly distinguished in the text from the disobedient spirits. The plain and easy sense of the words is, that Christ, by his Spirit, by which he was quickened, went in the ministry of Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and preached both by words and deeds, by the personal ministry of Noah, and by the building of the ark, to that generation who was then in being; and who being disobedient, and continuing so, a flood was brought upon them which destroyed them all; and whose spirits, or separate souls, were then in the prison of hell, so the Syriac version renders it, **ܠܘܥܒ**, "in hell", (see ~~REV~~ Revelation 20:7) when the Apostle Peter wrote this epistle; so that Christ neither went into this prison, nor preached in it, nor to spirits that were then in it when he preached, but to persons alive in the days of Noah, and who being disobedient, when they died, their separate souls were put into prison, and there they were when the apostle wrote: from whence we learn, that Christ was, that he existed in his divine nature before he was incarnate, he was before Abraham, he was in the days of Noah; and that Christ also, under the Old Testament, acted the part of a Mediator, in his divine nature, and by his Spirit discharged that branch of it, his prophetic office, before he appeared in human nature; and that the Gospel was preached in those early times, as unto Abraham, so before him.

Ver. 20. *Which sometime were disobedient*, etc.] To all the instructions and warnings which God gave them, to all the strivings of his Spirit, and to the ministry of Christ, by Noah; they continued in their profaneness and impiety, and to corrupt their ways, and fill the earth with violence and wickedness; not believing what they were threatened with, or that ever a flood would come upon them, and destroy them: and this "sometime" refers to the time of their being upon earth, who were now in hell; "to the days of Noah"; hereafter mentioned; and which the Syriac version connects with this clause, reading it thus, "who of old were disobedient in the days

of Noah”; at which time it was, that Christ, by his Spirit in Noah, went and preached to them: when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah: that is, when God, who is longsuffering and patient, waited on these disobedient ones, in Noah's time, for the space of an hundred and twenty years:

while the ark was preparing; by Noah, according to the directions which God gave him, (^{<0064>}Genesis 6:14-22) and which, as R. Tanchuma says ^{f77}, was fifty two years a building; others say ^{f78} an hundred years; but Jarchi says ^{f79} it was an hundred and twenty; and which seems most likely, that being the term of time in which God's longsuffering waited on them; during which time Noah was preaching to them, and building the ark:

wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water; the eight persons were, Noah, and his wife, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and their three wives. It is a common tradition with the Jews ^{f80}, that besides these, Og, king of Bashan, escaped the flood; and who, they say, is the same that escaped, and told Abraham of Lot's being carried captive by the kings ^{f81}; the manner of his escape at the flood they relate thus ^{f82};

“Og came, who was delivered from the men that died at the flood; and he rode upon the ark, and he had a covering upon his head, and was fed with the food of Noah; but not for his worthiness was he delivered, but that the inhabitants of the world might see the power of the Lord;”

and elsewhere ^{f83}, after this manner, citing those words, “and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark”, (^{<0073>}Genesis 7:23) they add,

“except Og, king of Bashan, who sat on a certain piece of wood which belonged to the scaffolding of the ark, and he swore to Noah, and his sons, that he would be their servant for ever. What did Noah do? he bored an hole in the ark, and every day reached out food to him, and he remained alive, according to what is said, (^{<0081>}Deuteronomy 3:11) “only Og, king of Bashan”, etc.”

But this is all a mere fiction; and equally fabulous is the account the Arabians give, who say ^{f84} that eighty persons, together with Noah, were taken into the ark, among whom was Jorham, their father; for there were no more than eight persons saved; and this is the apostle's sense; and

agreeably the Syriac version renders it, “and eight souls” *dwj l b*, “only entered into it, and were saved by water”; and we are told by some of the eastern writers ^{f85}, that when these eight went out of the ark, they built a city, which they called Themanin, which, in the Arabic language, signifies “eight”, according to their number. The ark was a type of Christ, into whom whoever enters by faith, or in whom whoever believes, shall be saved; but as they that entered into the ark were but few, so are those that enter in at the strait gate, or believe in Christ; and they that went into the ark were saved by the water bearing up the ark, even by that by which others were destroyed; as the very same thing, for different reasons, is the cause or means of destruction and salvation; so Christ is set, for the fall and rising of many, is a stumblingblock to some, and the power and wisdom of God to others; and the Gospel, and the ministers of it, are the savour of life unto life to some, and the savour of death unto death to others. This instance of the dispensation of the providence of God to the old world is very appropriately, though by way of digression, introduced by the apostle; showing, that in times past, as then, God's usual method has been to afford the outward means to ungodly men, and to bear with them long, and then bring down his vengeance upon them, and save his own people; and this suffering saints might depend upon would be their case, and therefore should bear their afflictions patiently.

Ver. 21. *The like figure whereunto [even] baptism doth also now save us,* etc.] The ark, and deliverance by it, as it was a type of Christ, and salvation by him, so it was a figure of baptism, and baptism was the antitype of that; or there is something in these which correspond, and answer to, and bear a resemblance to each other: as the ark was God's ordinance, and not man's invention, so is baptism, it is of heaven, and not of men; and as the ark, while it was preparing, was the scorn and derision of men, so is this ordinance of the Gospel; it was rejected with disdain by the Scribes and Pharisees, as it still is by many; and as the ark, when Noah and his family were shut up in it by God, represented a burial, and they seemed, as it were, to be buried in it, it was a lively emblem of baptism, which is expressed by a burial, (~~ROM~~ Romans 6:4 ~~COL~~ Colossians 2:12) and as they in the ark had the great deep broke up under them, and the windows of heaven opened over them, pouring out waters upon them, they were, as it were, immersed in, and were covered with water, this fitly figured baptism by immersion; nor were there any but adult persons that entered into the ark, nor should any be baptized but believers; to which may be added, that

as the one saved by water, so does the other; for it is water baptism which is here designed, which John practised, Christ gave a commission for, and his disciples administered: it saves not as a cause, for it has no causal influence on, nor is it essential to salvation. Christ only is the cause and author of eternal salvation; and as those only that were in the ark were saved by water, so those only that are in Christ, and that are baptized into Christ, and into his death, are saved by baptism; not everyone that is baptized, but he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, (^{<4166>}Mark 16:16), for baptism

is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh; the design of it is not to take off the sordid flesh, as circumcision did; or in a ceremonious way, outwardly, to sanctify to the purifying of the flesh, as the Jewish baptisms did; (see ^{<3900>}Hebrews 9:10,13), or to take away either original or actual sin; this only the blood of Christ can do; and it is not a mere external cleansing of the body:

but the answer of a good conscience towards God; the Vulgate Latin renders it, “the interrogation of a good conscience”; referring, it may be, to the interrogations that used to be put to those who desired baptism; as, dost thou renounce Satan? dost thou believe in Christ? (see ^{<4036>}Acts 8:36,37), others render it, “the stipulation of a good conscience”; alluding also to the ancient custom of obliging those that were baptized to covenant and agree to live an holy life and conversation, to renounce the devil and all his works, and the pomps and vanities of this world; and baptism does certainly lay an obligation on men to walk in newness of life; (see ^{<3104>}Romans 6:4,5), the Ethiopic version renders it, “confession of God”; and to this the Syriac version agrees, rendering it, “confessing God with a pure conscience”; for, to baptism, profession of faith in Christ, and of the doctrine of Christ in a pure conscience, is requisite; and in baptism persons make a public confession of God, and openly put on Christ before men: the sense seems plainly this; that then is baptism rightly performed, and its end answered, when a person, conscious to himself of its being an ordinance of Christ, and of his duty to submit to it, does do so upon profession of his faith in Christ, in obedience to his command, and “with” a view to his glory; in doing which he discharges a good conscience towards God: and being thus performed, it saves,

by the resurrection of Jesus Christ; being a means of leading the faith of the baptized person, as to the blood of Christ, for pardon and cleansing, so

to the resurrection of Christ, to justification; (see ~~4128~~ Acts 2:38 22:16 ~~8145~~ Romans 4:25), moreover, the sense of the passage may be this, that baptism is a like figure as the ark of Noah was; that as the entrance of Noah and his family into the ark was an emblem of a burial, so their coming out of it was a figure of the resurrection; and just such a figure is baptism, performed by immersion, both of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and of the resurrection of saints to walk in newness of life. The Arabic version renders the whole verse thus; “of which thing baptism is now a type saving us, not by removing the filth of the flesh only, but by exhilarating a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ”.

Ver. 22. *Who is gone into heaven*, etc.] After he had been risen forty days, where he is received, and will remain, until the restitution of all things; and where he appears in the presence of God for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them; and is entered as their forerunner, and is preparing mansions of glory for them; and will come again, and take them to himself, to be for ever with him, and from hence they expect him:

and is on the right hand of God; where Stephen saw him; and which is an honour never conferred on any angel, or man; and shows that Christ had done his work, and that in a way acceptable to God; the Vulgate Latin version here adds “swallowing up death, that we might be made heirs of eternal life”; but is not supported by any copy or version:

angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him; by “angels” may be meant angels both good and bad, who are all in subjection to Christ; and by authorities and powers, the kings, princes, and governors of this world, who hold their dominions from and under the Lord Jesus Christ; and which is an argument why believers should patiently bear all their sufferings and afflictions, since Christ has the government in his hands, and he rules and overrules all things for good; and when he pleases, he can put a stop to the rage and persecutions of men; and so the apostle returns to his former argument, in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 4

In this chapter the apostle goes on to exhort to an holy life and conversation, and to the several duties of religion, and to suffer cheerfully for the sake of Christ. From the consideration of Christ's sufferings, he exhorts the saints to arm themselves with the same mind, and cease from sin, and live no longer to the lusts of men, but to the will of God, (^{<0001>}1 Peter 4:1,2) the reason, or argument engaging to it, is taken from the past time of life, in which they walked in all manner of sin, and which ought to suffice, though they should be spoken evil of by wicked men, for not continuing therein, (^{<0003>}1 Peter 4:3,4) and to fortify their minds against such abuses, the apostle takes notice of the general judgment, when such persons must give an account for their evil speaking to the Judge of quick and dead; and that though those to whom the Gospel is preached, and embrace it, suffer death for it, being judged of men in their bodies, yet they live to God in their souls, (^{<0005>}1 Peter 4:5,6) and seeing the end of all things is near, he exhorts to various things, as to sobriety, watchfulness unto prayer, and especially to fervent charity, since that covers a multitude of sins, (^{<0007>}1 Peter 4:7,8) and to hospitality, without grudging, and to a communication of all good things, as faithful stewards of them, (^{<0009>}1 Peter 4:9,10) and particularly to the dispensation of the Gospel, according to the word of God; and to a ministration to the poor, according to a man's ability, with a view to the glory of God, by Christ, (^{<0011>}1 Peter 4:11) and next, the apostle proceeds to comfort the saints under reproaches and persecutions, and to instruct them how to behave under such circumstances; as that they should not think such things strange, though grievous, since they were for the trial of their graces, (^{<0012>}1 Peter 4:12) but should rather rejoice, since they were partakers of the sufferings of Christ now, and should share in his glory when revealed, which would make them exceeding glad, (^{<0013>}1 Peter 4:13) yea, inasmuch as it was for the name of Christ they suffered reproach, they ought to reckon themselves happy persons; since the glorious Spirit of God rested on them, and since the issue of it was, the glorifying of God by them, though he was evil spoken of by those that reproached them, (^{<0014>}1 Peter 4:14) indeed, they ought not

to suffer as persons guilty of capital crimes; should they, they would have reason to be ashamed, but not since they suffered as Christians; but, on the contrary, should give glory to God for it, who had done them so much honour as to call them to it, (~~4045~~1 Peter 4:15,16), and to reconcile their minds to sufferings, he observes, that the time was come, that afflictions should begin with the people of God, on account of which, the righteous are scarcely saved, though certainly; and that, therefore, sad must be the state of the disobedient and ungodly, even of their wicked persecutors, (~~4047~~1 Peter 4:17,18) wherefore, upon the whole, seeing it was the will of God they should suffer, they ought to suffer patiently, and, in well doing, commit the care of their souls to their faithful Creator, (~~4049~~1 Peter 4:19).

Ver. 1. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh.* etc.]

The apostle having finished his digression concerning Christ's preaching in the ministry of Noah, to men whose spirits were now in prison, and concerning the salvation of Noah's family in the ark, by water, and concerning its antitype, baptism, its nature and effect, returns to the sufferings of Christ he had before made mention of; and argues from thence to holiness of life, and patience in sufferings, after this manner; seeing then Christ, the eternal Son of God, the Lord of glory, the holy and Just One, suffered such indignities, reproaches, and persecutions from men, the wrath of God, the curses of the law, and death itself; and that not for himself, nor for angels, but for men, and those not all men, otherwise his death, with respect to some, must be in vain; but for a particular number of men, in distinction from others, described in the beginning of this epistle, as elect, according to the foreknowledge of God; and these sufferings he endured in the room and stead of those persons, in the days of his flesh, while here on earth, and in his human nature, both soul and body, and was crucified through the weakness of his flesh, and for the sins of our flesh, and which he bore in his own:

arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; that was in Christ; as he suffered for you, do ye likewise suffer for him, in his cause, for righteousness sake, for the sake of him and his Gospel; and bear all reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions on his account, willingly and cheerfully, with meekness and patience, as he did, and with the same view; not indeed to make satisfaction for sin, which was his principal design, but that being dead unto sin, you might live unto righteousness. The apostle speaks to the saints, in this exhortation, as to soldiers, and who had many

enemies to engage with, and therefore should put on their armour, and be in a readiness to meet any attack upon them:

for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin: meaning either Christ, who having suffered in human nature for the sins of his people, whereby he has made satisfaction for them, is now clear of them; the sins that were imputed to him being took and bore away, finished and made an end of, and he justified from them, and freed from all the effects of them, and punishment for them, as from all the infirmities of human nature, from mortality and death: or the person that has suffered in and with Christ, his head and representative, which is all one as if he had suffered himself, in person; by virtue of which his sin ceases, and he ceases from being chargeable with it, as if he had never sinned; which is the case of every criminal, when he has suffered the penalty of the law for his crime: or else the person that is dead to sin, by virtue of the death of Christ, and, in imitation of it, who has been baptized into Christ's death, and planted in the likeness of it; whose old man is crucified with Christ, and he is dead with him; who has crucified the affections with the lusts, and through the Spirit has mortified the deeds of the body; which way the generality of interpreters go: such a man has ceased from sin; not from the being and indwelling of it in him; nor from the burden of it on him; nor from a continual war with it in him; nor from slips and falls by it, and into it; no, nor from it in the most solemn and religious services; but as from the guilt of it, and obligation to punishment by it, through the death of Christ; so from the servitude and dominion of it, through the power of divine grace, in consequence of Christ's death: or rather, the believer that suffers death in his body, for the sake of Christ, such an one immediately ceases from the very being of sin, and all commission of it; he becomes at once perfectly pure and holy, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and a noble argument this is to meet death without fear, and to suffer it cheerfully and willingly, since the consequence of this will be an entire freedom from sin, than which nothing can be more desirable by a believer: to this agrees the Syriac version, which renders the words thus: "for whoever is dead in his body hath ceased from all sins"; but the Arabic version more fully confirms this sense, and is the best version of the text, and is this; "be ye armed with this (same) thought, that (not for) he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin"; that is, fortify your minds against all the fears of sufferings, and of death, for the sake of Christ, with this single thought; that he that has suffered martyrdom for Christ, in his body, or has suffered

death for his sake, or dies in the Lord, is free from sin, and so from sorrow, and is the most happy person imaginable; so that this last clause is not a reason of the former, but points out, and is explanative of what that same mind or thought is Christians should arm themselves with, against the fears of death; and it is the best piece of armour for this service, a saint can make use of.

Ver. 2. *That he no longer should live*, etc.] The Arabic version reads, “that ye no longer should live”. This expresses the end of being armed with the above thought, that a suffering saint after death is clear of sin; and the use that is to be made of it in the present time of life, and the remainder of it, that such a person who so thinks, and is thus guarded and fortified against the fears of death, should no more, or any longer live,

the rest of [his] time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God: the phrase, “his time in the flesh”, means the present time of life, in the body, and is the same with those phrases, in the days of his flesh, to abide in the flesh, and be at home in the body; and the words of the text suppose the former part of this time to have been spent in sinful lusts and pleasures, as the former part of the time of God's elect, even that before conversion, is; and that the remaining part of it, be it longer or shorter, ought to be spent otherwise: “not to the lusts of men”; of wicked and unregenerate men, unconverted Gentiles; which they are addicted to, immersed in, and serve; and which they are desirous others should live in; and which are sometimes called divers worldly and fleshly lusts; and are foolish, and hurtful, and deceitful, and drown men in perdition, and therefore not to be lived unto: “but to the will of God”; revealed in his word, and which is good, acceptable, and perfect; one part of which is sanctification, holiness of heart, life, and conversation, as also patient suffering all reproach, injury, and persecution, for the sake of the Gospel; to live soberly, righteously, and godly, to study to exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and men, and to suffer patiently for his name's sake, is to live to the will of God; and nothing more strongly should engage to this than the consideration of a sinless life after death; (see ~~GENE~~ 2 Peter 3:11,13,14). The lusts of men, and the will of God, being opposed to each other, shows that the nature of man is sadly corrupted, and is opposite to God; and that the will of man is depraved, and that the desires of it are not to that which is good, but are contrary to the will of God.

Ver. 3. *For the time past of our life may suffice us*, etc.] The word “our” is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions. The Arabic version reads, “the time of your past life”; and to the same purpose the Ethiopic version; and which seems to be the more agreeable reading, since it can hardly be thought that the apostle would put himself among the Jews dispersed among the Gentiles, who had walked with them in their unregeneracy, in all the sins hereafter mentioned, and best agrees with the following verse:

to have wrought the will of the Gentiles; or “when ye wrought”, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions;

when we walked, or “were walking in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries”. These converted persons, in the past time of their life, before conversion, “walked” in sin; which denotes a series and course of sinning, a persisting and progress in it, with delight and pleasure, promising themselves security and impunity: the particular sins they walked in are reducible to these three heads, unchastity, intemperance, and idolatry:

in lasciviousness, lusts; which belong to the head of uncleanness, and take in all kinds of it; as fornication, adultery, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts:

excess of wine, revellings, banquetings; which refer to intemperance of every sort, by eating or drinking: as gluttony, drunkenness, surfeitings, and all luxurious feasts and entertainments, attended with riotings, revellings, and obscene songs; and which are here mentioned in the Syriac and Arabic versions, and which lead to lasciviousness, and every unclean lust:

and abominable idolatries; which some understand of worshipping of angels; but they seem rather to intend the idolatries the Jews were led into by the feasts of the Gentiles, either at their own houses, or in the idol's temple; by which means they were gradually brought to idolatry, and to all the wickedness and abominations committed by them at such times: and it is easy to observe, that the two former, uncleanness and intemperance, often lead men into idolatry; (see ^{<12316>}Exodus 32:6 ^{<0201>}Numbers 25:1,2). Now when they walked in these things, they “wrought the will of the Gentiles”; they did the things which the sinners of the Gentiles, the worst of men, that knew not God, took pleasure in, and what they would have others do; and therefore, since the past time of their life had been spent in

such a way, it was sufficient, and more than sufficient; (see ³⁵⁰⁶Ezekiel 44:6), for no time is allowable for sin; and therefore it became them for the future, and in the remaining part of life, to behave in another manner; not to do the will of the Gentiles, but the will of God; to which that grace of God obliged them, that had made a difference between what they were themselves formerly, and themselves now, and between themselves, and others.

Ver. 4. *Wherein they think it strange*, etc.] Here the apostle points out what the saints must expect from the men of the world, by living a different life; and he chooses to mention it, to prevent discouragements, and that they might not be uneasy and distressed when they observed it; as that they would wonder at the change in their conversations, and look on it as something unusual, new, and unheard of, and treat them as strangers, yea, as enemies, on account of it:

that you run not with them into the same excess of riot; to their luxurious entertainments, their Bacchanalian feasts, and that profusion of lasciviousness, luxury, intemperance, and wickedness of all sorts, which, with so much eagerness of mind, and bodily haste, they rushed into; being amazed that they should not have the same taste for these things as before, and as themselves now had; and wondering how it was possible for them to abstain from them, and what that should be that should give them a different cast of mind, and turn of action:

speaking evil of you; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions supply “you” as we do; but in the Greek text it is only, “speaking evil of, or blaspheming”; God, Christ, religion, the Gospel, and the truths of it, and all good men; hating them because different from them, and because their lives reprove and condemn them; charging them with incivility, unsociableness, preciseness, and hypocrisy.

Ver. 5. *Who shall give account to him*, etc.] “To God himself”, as the Syriac version reads; of all their blasphemies, and hard speeches spoken by them against God, Christ, the Gospel, and good men, and receive their just punishment. This the apostle says, to calm the minds of God's people, and make them to sit easy under all censures, reproaches, and calumnies, and not think of avenging themselves, but commit themselves to him that will judge righteously; even to him,

that is ready to judge the quick and the dead; that is, all men, such as will be found alive when he comes, and those that have died before, who will then be raised from the dead, to receive their judgment; and by whom is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom all judgment is committed; and who is ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead, and will judge both at his appearing and kingdom; yea, the day is appointed when this judgment will proceed by him, and he is at the door; so that he may be truly said to be ready for it, as he is every way equal to it, and will finish it with righteousness.

Ver. 6. *For, for this cause was the Gospel preached also*, etc.] Not for what goes before, because Christ was ready to judge quick and dead; and because wicked men must give an account to him, and therefore the Gospel is preached to them also, that they may be left without excuse; but for what follows, and which does not so much design the reason of the preaching of it, as the event consequential upon it. By the Gospel is meant the good news of the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ, and salvation by him: and includes all the doctrines of grace, as of pardon, righteousness, and eternal life; and by its being “preached” is meant the publishing of it openly, freely, and boldly, with faithfulness and consistence: the persons to whom it was preached are

to them that are dead; not in a figurative sense, dead in trespasses and sins; though this is the case of all mankind, and of God's elect, in a state of nature, whether Jews or Gentiles; and the Gospel is preached to such, as it is ordered to be preached to all nations, to every creature, and is the means of quickening dead sinners; and this follows upon it, that such as receive it are judged and condemned by men, and live spiritually here, according to the will of God, and an eternal life hereafter; but the word “dead” is used in the same sense as in the preceding verse, where it manifestly signifies such who had been alive, but were now dead in a natural sense, whom Christ would judge as well as those that will be found alive when he comes; wherefore the Gospel has been preached also to them that are already dead, as well as to those who are now alive. And by these are meant, not the dead, whose souls are in hell, for to them, there, the Gospel never was, nor never will be preached, nor they saved, as Origen, and his followers, have vainly thought: nor the deceased patriarchs, before the coming of Christ, whose souls, by the Papists, are said to be in “Limbus”, whither Christ, they say, went upon his death, and preached to them, and delivered them; but these never were in any such place, but in peace and rest; nor did

Christ, in his human soul, descend thither, but went to paradise: nor the dead in general, before the apostle's writing of this epistle; for though the Gospel had been preached from the beginning, from the fall of Adam, to certain persons, and at certain periods of time, yet not to all the individuals of mankind who were then dead, especially in the Gentile world; nor the Old Testament saints in general, who were now dead, though they had the Gospel preached to them in types and figures, in promises and prophecies; nor the men in the times of Noah, to whom the Gospel was preached by him, and who, some of them, as supposed, though they were judged and punished in their bodies in the view of men, being drowned in the waters of the flood, yet repenting and believing, upon Noah's preaching to them, they live in their spirits in eternal life, according to the free mercy and grace of God; but though the Gospel was preached to them, yet they remained disobedient to it, even all of them, but Noah's family, for anything that appears; and are styled the world of the ungodly, and are now spirits in the prison of hell, and therefore cannot be said to live according to God in the Spirit: but such are intended, to whom the Gospel had been preached, and to whom it had been effectual unto salvation; who had received it in the love of it, had sincerely professed it, and had suffered for it even death itself; such are designed who had suffered in the flesh, or were dead in their bodies, (~~and~~ 1 Peter 4:1) who either were dead in the Lord, or especially had suffered death for his sake, as Stephen and others: and this, with what follows, is mentioned with a general view to encourage the saints to patient suffering for Christ; to fortify them against the ill opinion and judgment the world have formed of them; and to assure them, that Christ will judge his people, both quick and dead, and avenge their cause, since the Gospel has been preached to one as well as to another, and attended with the same power: the effect and consequence of which is,

that they might be judged according to men in the flesh; meaning, either that such persons that receive and profess the Gospel, and suffer for it, are judged according to the judgment of men that are in the flesh, in an unregenerate estate, that is, carnal men, to be a strange and unaccountable sort of people, as in (~~and~~ 1 Peter 4:4) to receive such a strange set of notions, so strenuously to contend for them, and so constantly to abide by them, and to debar themselves of so many pleasures of life, and expose themselves to so much reproach and shame, to such dangers, and even to death itself: while they are judged to be by these men enthusiasts, madmen and fools; and at other times to be knaves and villains, hypocrites and

deceivers; and this is the common effect of the Gospel being preached and coming with power to any; (see ~~404B~~ 1 Corinthians 4:3) or the sense is, that such persons, according to men, or in their apprehensions, are judged of God, or have the judgments of God inflicted on them in their flesh, in their bodies, for some sins of theirs; and therefore they suffer what they do in the flesh, vengeance pursuing them; being ignorant that when they are judged, as they reckon it, they are only chastened by the Lord in a fatherly way, that they might not be eternally condemned with the world, (~~413B~~ 1 Corinthians 11:32) or else to complete the sense, for all may be taken into it, these persons, who were formerly alive, but now dead, and had embraced and professed the Gospel preached to them, were judged and condemned, and put to death in the flesh, according to the will of wicked men, and which was all that they were capable of;

but though this was their case, though they were thus judged, censured, and condemned, yet

live according to God in the Spirit; while they were here on earth, the Gospel preached to them had such an effect upon them, as to cause them to live spiritually, to live by faith on Christ, to live a life of holiness from him, and communion with him, and to live according to the will of God, in righteousness and true holiness; and now, though dead in their bodies, they live in their spirits or souls an eternal life of comfort, peace, pleasure, and happiness with God, according to his eternal purpose, unchangeable covenant, promise, grace, and love.

Ver. 7. *But the end of all things is at hand*, etc.] With respect to particular persons, the end of life, and which is the end of all things in this world to a man, is near at hand; which is but as an hand's breadth, passes away like a tale that is told, and is but as a vapour which appears for a while, and then vanishes away. Or this may be said with regard to the Jews, the end of their church and civil state was near at hand, of their sacrifices, temple, city, and nation; or with respect to the whole universe, to the scheme and fashion of this world, which will soon be gone, though the substance will abide; when the heavens shall pass away, and the earth and all therein will be burnt up; when there will be an end of all the purposes and promises of God respecting the present state of things concerning his church and people, and of the judgments of God upon his enemies here; when the man of sin will be destroyed, and the wickedness of the wicked will be come to an end, and the sorrows, afflictions, and persecutions of the saints, will be no

more; and when will be an end put to the present dispensation of things; there will be an end of the ministry of the word, and of the administration of ordinances; time will be no more, and the final state of both good and bad men will take place: this may be said to be at hand in the apostle's time, though so long ago, because that was the last time, and the last dispensation of things; and whereas they knew not the exact time when it would be, they frequently spoke of it as near, in order to stir up the saints to the more diligent discharge of duty, and fervent exercise of grace, as here:

be ye therefore sober, or “temperate”, as the Arabic version renders it; and so is opposed to intemperance in eating and drinking, which is an abuse of the creatures of Gods, and unfits a man for the duties of religion; when Satan easily gets an advantage, and is often the cause of other sins, and is frequently dissuaded from, for the same reason as here; (see ^{<4073>}1 Corinthians 7:31 ^{<42134>}Luke 21:34,35) or chaste, as the Syriac version; and so is opposed to immodesty in words, actions, or apparel, in which sense sobriety is used in (^{<54109>}1 Timothy 2:9) or “prudent”, as the Vulgate Latin version; and is opposed to all self-conceit and vanity of mind, and imprudence in conduct and conversation; (see ^{<51118>}Romans 12:3) and to all immoderate care of the world, which has the same effect upon the soul as surfeiting and drunkenness on the body: it hinders the soul in the service of God, chokes the word, and makes it unprofitable, and runs men into many sins, snares, and temptations; and the consideration of the end of all things being at hand should draw off from it. It may also signify soundness of mind and judgment in the doctrines of faith, which are words of truth and soberness; and the rather this may be exhorted to, since towards the close of time there will be little of the doctrine of faith in the earth, and men will not be able to endure sound doctrine: it follows,

and watch unto prayer; watch all opportunities of praying, or of attendance on that ordinance, both in private and in public; watch and observe both your present wants, and present mercies, that ye may know what to pray for, and what to return thanks for; and that you have a due reverence of the divine Majesty, in whose presence you are entering. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it, “watch”, or “be awake in prayers”; be careful that you lift up your hearts with your hands to God; that you pray for such things as are agreeable to the revealed will of God; that you pray in faith, and lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting; and watch for the Spirit of God to enlarge your hearts in prayer, and to assist you both as to the

matter and manner of praying. And persons should also watch after prayer for a return of it; and that they do not depend upon the duty performed; and that they are not negligent to return thanks for the mercy prayed for, when received. Very rightly does the apostle join the above exhortation with this, since a man that is not sober is neither fit to watch nor pray; and a drunken man, according to the Jewish canons, might not pray^{f86}:

“one that is a drinker, or in drink, let him not pray, or if he prays, his prayer is deprecations; a drunken man, let him not pray, and if he prays his prayer is blasphemies.”

Or, as it is elsewhere^{f87} expressed,

“let not a drunken man pray, because he has no intention; and if he prays, his prayer is an abomination, therefore let him return and, pray when he is clear of his drunkenness: let no one in drink pray, and if he prays, his prayer is prayer (unless the word *hlypt* should rather be rendered “folly”, as it may); who is a drunken man? he that cannot speak before a king; a man in drink can speak before a king, and not be confounded; even though he drinks but a fourth part, or a quarter of wine, let him not pray until his wine is departed from him.”

Ver. 8. *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves*, etc.] Not but that charity, or love, is to be exercised towards all men, even towards enemies, but more especially towards the saints, and that under such a consideration in which it cannot be exercised towards others; namely, as their brethren in Christ, and as belonging to him, as the children of God, as redeemed by Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit; and these not only such as are of the same nation, and belong to the same particular church and community, or of the same denomination, but all the saints everywhere, whether Jews or Gentiles, or of whatsoever name, and in whatsoever state and condition: and this love ought to be mutual and reciprocal, and to be warm and fervent, and not lukewarm and indifferent, as it too often is; and should be constant, “continued”, and “perpetual”, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions here read: and this the apostle exhorts to above all things else; since outward sobriety, and watchings, and prayer, and all other duties, are nothing without this; this is the sum and substance of the law, and the fulfilling of it; and without this a mere

knowledge of the Gospel, and a profession of it, are in vain, and therefore in the first place to be attended to. And especially for the following reason,

for charity shall cover the multitude of sins; referring to (³¹⁰²Proverbs 10:12) not a man's own sins, but the sins of others; and not from the sight of God, for from that only the blood and righteousness of Christ cover sins, even all the sins, the whole multitude of the sins of God's elect; but from the sight of men, both of those against whom they are committed, and others; since charity, or true love, thinks no ill, but puts the best constructions upon the words and actions of fellow Christians, and does not take them up, and improve and exaggerate them, but lets them lie buried in oblivion: it takes no notice of injuries, offences, and affronts, but overlooks them, bears with them, and forgives them, so that they are never raked up, and seen any more; which prevents much scandal, strife, and trouble. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “covereth”, as in (³¹⁰²Proverbs 10:12).

Ver. 9. *Use hospitality*, etc.] Or, “be lovers of strangers”, as the phrase may be rendered, and as it is in the Syriac version; that is, such as are of a distant country, or come from afar, and are unknown by face, especially good men, that are obliged to remove from their native country for the sake of religion, or by one providence or another; and these are to be loved: and love is to be shown them, both negatively, by not vexing them, and making them uneasy in body or mind; by not oppressing them by violence and injustice, and making any exorbitant demands upon them; or by not perverting judgment with respect to them; and positively, by directing, counselling, and advising them, and if need be, by giving them food, and raiment, and lodging: and it is what men have been led to by the very light of nature, as in the instances of Jethro the Midianite towards Moses, and the inhabitants of Melita with Publius, the chief man of the island, towards the Apostle Paul and his company; and is what God enjoined the Israelites by divers laws, since they had been strangers in the land of Egypt; and various are the exhortations to it in the New Testament; and some, by the practice of it, have entertained angels unawares, as Abraham, and Lot; and even Christ himself, as the two disciples travelling to Emmaus; and is what is highly regarded and commended by Christ, and the contrary is resented by him; and therefore it ought to be used and practised frequently; saints should inure themselves to it, be given to it, pursue and follow hard after it; (see Gill on “⁴⁵¹²³Romans 12:13”), (see Gill on “³⁸¹²Hebrews 13:2”). The apostle adds here, one to another; which

clause is left out in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; the reason of which may be, because the authors of these versions might think this not so consistent with the duty exhorted to, since the objects of it are strangers; but it should be observed, that so were these persons the apostle writes to; (see ~~1~~ 1 Peter 1:1), they were scattered about, and lived in different countries, and were strangers to one another, and therefore the clause is pertinent enough; and the sense is, that as they were in foreign countries, and at a distance one from another, whenever by any providence they were brought where each other were, that they would be hospitable to one another: and that

without grudging: food, raiment, and lodging, or what they want, whether direction or advice, thinking it no trouble to give them either; or without murmurings, as it may be rendered, as if they were burdensome, and they were too chargeable to them, and their stay too long; and without complaints of them, finding fault, and picking quarrels with them, and laying charges against them, in order to get rid of them. This is one branch of charity before recommended.

Ver. 10. *As every man hath received the gift*, etc.] That is, from God, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add. This is a general rule laid down by the apostle, according to which, distribution of every kind, whether in things temporal or spiritual, is to be made, even according to the nature, quality, and quantity of the gift received: the greatest gift God bestows on men, next to himself, Son, and Spirit, and received by them in this life, is special grace; which God gives of his sovereign will and pleasure, liberally, abundantly, without the deserts of men, or conditions to be performed by them; of this kind are faith, repentance, hope, and love: the next to this is the ministerial gift, or what qualifies men for the work of the ministry; which is not anything in nature, or what is acquired by art and industry, but is a gift of grace, which is bestowed on some in a higher, on others in a lower degree: and besides these, there are the gifts of nature and providence, as human wisdom, and the knowledge of things natural and civil, riches and wealth, and the various good things of life; for there is nothing a man has in nature and in grace but what is a gift to him, and what he has received: and according to the measure of the gift received, be it what it will, the exhortation is,

even so minister the same one to another; or to, and among yourselves; to your neighbours or companions, as the Syriac, version renders it; if the gift

be special grace though that itself cannot be imparted from one to another, yet the knowledge of it may; and it becomes such who have an experience of the grace of God upon their hearts to make it known, both to particular friends in private conversation, and to the church of God in public, for the use and edification of others, and the glory of God's grace: if the gift be a ministerial one, whether it be greater or less, for it is not in all alike, it is not to be wrapped up in a napkin, and hid in the earth, or to lie neglected, but to be stirred up, and used for the benefit of the souls of men: and if it is a temporal one, the good things of this life, according to the measure of them, that a man has, he is to minister to the supply of the poor; and as God has prospered him, he is to distribute to the necessities of others; as men freely receive, be it what it will, they should freely minister it, according to the nature and measure of it:

as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; for they are but stewards of whatsoever gifts they have; and therefore, if they would approve themselves good stewards, they should minister the same in proportion to their reception of them. Manifold and various are the graces of the Spirit of God, and the rich experiences communicated to men, which are not only for themselves, but for the good of others also: gifts for public usefulness are different one from another; one man has one gift, and another has another; or the same gift is not alike in all, in some greater, and in others less; and all are but stewards: they are accountable for them, and the use of them, to their great Lord and master: and various are the doctrines of the grace of God; of the grace of the Father in election, in the everlasting covenant, in the mission of his Son, in the free justification of sinners by his righteousness, in the free and full pardon of all their sins, in the adoption of any into his family, and in the gift of eternal life; and of the Son of God, in engaging as the surety of his people from everlasting, in assuming their nature in time, in obeying, suffering, and dying in their room and stead; and of the Spirit of God in regeneration and sanctification; and of all these mysteries of grace the ministers of the Gospel are stewards; and it is required of them that they be faithful. Temporal good things are given to men, not for their own use only, but for others; and they are but stewards of them; the original proprietor is God, and to him they must give an account of their stewardship, and how they have used and disposed of the manifold gifts which God of his goodness has put into their hands; so that this last clause contains a reason or argument enforcing the above rule.

Ver. 11. *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*, etc.] This is an application of the above general rule to a particular case, the public ministry of the word, for that is here meant: “if any man speak”; not in any manner, or on any subject; not in a private way, or about things natural and civil; but in public, and concerning divine things: “let him speak”: this is rightly supplied in our translation; and in which it is supported and confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions, who both supply the same way: “as the oracles of God”; by which are meant the writings of the Old Testament, the sacred Scriptures; (see ~~ROM~~ Romans 3:2) so called, because they come from God, are breathed and spoken by him, and contain his mind and will, and are authoritative and infallible; and according to these he is to speak who speaks in public on divine subjects, both as to the matter and manner of his speech: the matter of it must be agreeably to the divinely inspired word of God, must be fetched out of it, and confirmed by it; and he is to speak every thing that is in it, and keep back nothing, but declare the whole counsel of God, and only what is in it, without mixing his own chaff, or the doctrines of men with it; and it should be spoken in a manner agreeably to it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words of the Holy Ghost; and with all boldness, for so the Gospel ought to be spoken; and with all certainty and assurance, constantly affirming the things of it, for nothing is more sure than they are; and with all openness, plainness, and freedom, making truth manifest, laying it plain and open before men, as it ought to be; and that with all reverence and godly fear, which becomes both speaker and hearer. The apostle next proceeds to mention another case, to which the above rule is applicable;

if any man minister, [let him do it] as of the ability which God giveth; that is, if any man minister in temporal things to the supply of the poor; if a private man, and in a private way, let him do it in proportion to his ability, as God has prospered him in the world; or if an officer of the church, a deacon; and which seems to be the sense, for so the word used signifies, **διακονει**, if any man perform the office, or act the part of a deacon, let him do it according to what God, in his providence, has put into his hands; that is, of the church's stock, which he should minister with simplicity and cheerfulness. A like division of church offices into public preaching of the word, and ministering to the wants of the poor, is here made, as in (~~ROM~~ Romans 12:6-8). The end of all this is,

that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; or by all means, as the Arabic version renders it; by all ways and methods proper; for the glory of God should be the principal view in every action of life: hence the Syriac version adds to the phrase, “in all things”, for the sake of explanation, “which ye do”; by sobriety, by prayer, by watching unto it; by exercising fervent charity, and using hospitality one to another; by ministering the gift as it is received; by the public ministration of the word; and by supplying the wants of the poor, whether in a personal or in a church way: or in all gifts, whether private or public, temporal or spiritual; since they all come from God, and men are accountable to him for them; and therefore should be used so as to glorify him by them, and give him the glory of them; and not glory in them, as if not received from him: or in all the members of the church, whether officers, as pastors and deacons, or private Christians; all should so behave in their respective stations, as God may have glory: “through Jesus Christ”: through whom all grace is communicated, by whom all gifts are bestowed, and by virtue of grace and strength received from him every good work is performed to the glory of God:

to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever; meaning either to God the Father, from whom every good gift comes; who is the God of all grace, of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things; and therefore the praise and glory of all belongs to him; and who has the dominion over all creatures and things, and has the disposal of all in nature, providence, and grace: or to Jesus Christ, out of whose fulness manifold grace, grace for grace, is received; and who having ascended on high, has received gifts for men, and gives them to them, and so is worthy of all praise; and who, as God, has the kingdom of nature and providence equally with the Father, and, as Mediator, the kingdom of grace, the government of the church; and whose dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth; and of whose kingdom there will be no end.

Amen; so let it be, so shall it be.

Ver. 12. *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial*, etc.] By which may be meant either the destruction of Jerusalem, which was at hand, and of which the apostle may be thought to give the Jews he writes to notice of before hand; that they might be prepared for it, and not be overwhelmed with consternation and amazement when they should hear of it; who, though in other countries, must be affected with it, and would be a

trying dispensation to them: or else the afflictions and persecutions which daily come upon them, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; signified by “fire” or “burning”, because grievous to the flesh, and gave great uneasiness, distress, and pain to it; and because of the fury of men, and the violence and fierceness of their rage, expressed thereby; as also because the people of God under them are sometimes ready to conceive that the wrath of God is poured out, like fire, upon them. But the apostle would not have these saints entertain any such thoughts, and therefore he calls them “beloved”; that is, of God, as they were notwithstanding all the fiery trials and afflictions which were brought upon them; or he means, that they were beloved by him, and dear unto him, and other saints, though they were ill treated and reproached by the world: the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “my beloved”; and the Ethiopic version, “our brethren”: and the apostle exhorts them not to look upon their afflictions that either did or should attend them as strange and uncommon things; since afflictions, of whatsoever kind, are not things of chance, and do not rise up out of the dust, but are by the appointment, and according to the will of God; and are also the common lot of the people of God in all ages, from the beginning of the world, the same afflictions are accomplished in others; yea, Christ himself endured the same hatred, reproach, and contradiction of sinners, against himself; and they are what he has given his people reason to expect, having told them of them before hand, that they might not be offended at them; and as they lay in his way to glory, it need not seem strange that the saints also should, through many tribulations, enter the kingdom. Moreover, this fiery dispensation, be it what it will, was not to destroy them, but to try them, and that for their good, profit, and advantage; just as gold and silver are tried in the fire, and lose their dross, and become purer and brighter:

which is to try you; afflictions try the graces of the saints; as their faith in Christ, which becomes thereby much more precious than of gold that perisheth; and their love to him, by which it appears that no tribulation can separate them from it, nor many waters and floods of afflictions drown it; and their hope of eternal life, which grows more lively and strong, and is as an anchor, sure and steadfast, amidst the greatest storms. These try a man's profession of religion, whether it is took up on good principles, and without sinister views; since, if it is not, when persecution, because of the word, comes, he is offended and gone; and likewise what a man's principles are, whether worth suffering for or not; and whether they will bear him up,

and he abide by them, when called to suffer for them; and therefore, since such ends are answered by fiery trials, they should not be looked upon as strange and unusual things: as though some strange thing happened unto you; which was never known and heard of before; and as if useless, and of no service, and as foreign to the characters, cases, and circumstances of the saints in this world. The apostle in this verse returns to his former argument, to animate and encourage the saints in suffering afflictions patiently for righteousness sake.

Ver. 13. *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings,* etc.] Not of his personal sufferings; though they were partakers of the benefits and blessings which come through them, and result from them, such as justification, peace, and pardon, and which are matter and ground of rejoicing; but of the sufferings of his body, the church, which is mystically himself; and are called his, because of the union between him and his people, and the sympathy he bears to them, and because they are endured for the sake of him and his Gospel, and conform the saints, and make them like unto him; and therefore suffering saints should rejoice in this, that their sufferings are accounted by Christ as his own, who in all their afflictions is afflicted; and that they are honoured to suffer for his name's sake, and are hereby made like unto him:

that when his glory shall be revealed; the glory of his divine nature, as the only begotten Son of God, in which he will come and appear at the last day; and which, though incommunicable, will be more manifest to all men, and especially to the saints, who will know more of him, as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; and when the glory of his office, as Mediator, will be more conspicuous, and shall be beheld by all that the Father has given to him; and also the glory of his human nature, which is now crowned with glory and honour at the right hand of God; and likewise the glory which he has in his hands for his people, even eternal glory and happiness: this is now, in a great measure, unseen, but it will then be revealed, both to the saints and in them; they will appear with Christ in glory, and have a glory both upon their souls and bodies. As they suffer with him, and for his sake, they will be glorified with him, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of his holy angels: the consideration of which, as it must greatly encourage to suffer for his sake, so must be matter of great joy; as follows:

ye may be glad also with exceeding joy; a joy unspeakable, and full of glory, being made partakers of the glory of Christ, either in beholding, or in possessing it.

Ver. 14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ*, etc.] For being called by his name; for bearing the name of Christians; for believing in him, and professing him; and for the sake of his Gospel, which is sometimes called his name, (^{<4095>}Acts 9:15) not that the apostle makes any doubt of this, for nothing is more certain than that the saints shall be reproached, and all manner of evil spoken of them falsely for Christ's name sake; but he supposes it, and takes it for granted, that they are, and will be reproached, and yet pronounces them blessed persons:

happy are ye; some supply it, “shall ye be”, as the Vulgate Latin version; that is, in the other world, because the kingdom of heaven, the crown of life and glory, belongs to such persons; they will be happy at death, in judgment, and to all eternity: others, with our translators, supply, “are ye”, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; for such are happy now in themselves, being both comfortable in their frames, and honourable in their persons and characters, however uncomfortable, miserable, and dishonourable they may appear to the men of the world:

for the Spirit of glory, and of God, resteth upon you; alluding to (^{<2310>}Isaiah 11:2) that is, the glorious Spirit of God, as the Syriac version renders it; who is glorious in himself, in the perfections of his nature, being possessed of the same glorious divine essence with the Father and Son; and in his works both of nature, being equally concerned with the other Persons in the Godhead in the works of creation and providence, and also of grace, especially the latter; and in all his gifts and graces with which he adorns the saints, and makes them glorious: and his resting on them denotes his inhabitation in them, and his abiding with them, and remaining in them; and which appears by the comfort they enjoy in their souls amidst all the reproaches and revilings of men, and by the strength which they have to bear up under and endure shame and persecution for the sake of Christ; and which casts an honour upon them, and makes them both glorious and cheerful. The Jews have a saying^{f88}, that the Holy Ghost does not dwell on any, but on him that has a cheerful heart:

on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified: on the part of the revilers, the person, office, work, and grace, the operations and influences of the Spirit are blasphemed and ridiculed; the power of the

Spirit, with which the saints speak, the experiences of grace they express, the comforts of the Spirit they declare that they enjoy under suffering circumstances, as well as their courage, patience, and cheerfulness he gives them, are generally bantered by persecutors; and indeed all the reproaches they cast upon the people of God fall upon the Spirit of God, by whom they are animated and influenced: but on the part of the sufferers he is glorified; inasmuch as they continue to bear a testimony to his grace, depend upon his strength, and ascribe all their comfort and gracious experience unto him. This clause is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, but is in all Beza's Greek copies, excepting one; and is also in the Arabic version.

Ver. 15. *But let none of you suffer as a murderer*, etc.] The punishment for murder was death by the law of God, (^{<0006>}Genesis 9:6)

or as a thief; whose fine or mulct, according to the Jewish law, was a fivefold or fourfold restitution, according to the nature of the thing that was stolen, (^{<0221>}Exodus 22:1)

or as an evildoer; a breaker of any of the laws of God or men, which are of a moral nature, and for the good of civil society:

or as a busybody in other men's matters; “or as a bishop in another man's diocese”; that concerns himself in things he has nothing to do with, and neglects his own affairs, and lives in idleness, and upon the spoil of others; or takes upon him to manage, direct, order, and command other men's servants, or persons that do not belong to him, to do his business, or whatsoever he pleases. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “a desirer of other's goods”; and the Ethiopic version, “a covetous desirer of other's things”; and so is led on by an insatiable thirst for them, to obtain them in an evil way, either by secret fraud, or open violence and oppression. To suffer in any such cases is scandalous and dishonourable, and unbecoming the character of a Christian. This last clause is left out in the Syriac version.

Ver. 16. *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian*, etc.] Because he is one, and professes himself to be one. This name was first given to the disciples at Antioch, either by themselves, or by the Gentiles; however, it being agreeable to them, was retained; it is only mentioned here, and in (^{<4126>}Acts 11:26 26:28),

let him not be ashamed; neither of Christ, and his Gospel, for which he suffers, nor of the name he bears, nor of the punishment he endures,

however ignominious and shameful it may be among men; but let him, as his Lord and master did, endure the cross, and despise the shame, (~~HEB~~ Hebrews 12:2)

but let him glorify God on this behalf: that he bestows this gift upon him to suffer for Christ, as well as to believe in him; and that he does him so much honour to call him to such service, and to strengthen him in it, so as to take it joyfully, and endure it patiently and cheerfully. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and also the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, instead of “in this behalf”, read “in this name”; that is, of a Christian.

Ver. 17. *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God,* etc.] By the house of God is either meant the temple at Jerusalem, which is often so called, because it was built for God, and where were the symbol of his presence, and his worship; and now the time was come, or at hand, that God would begin at his sanctuary, and leave this house desolate, and not one stone should be left upon another, as Christ had foretold: or else the church of God, which is frequently called the house of God, because it is of his building, where he dwells, and grants his gracious presence, and which he beautifies, fills, repairs, and defends; and so may design believers in Christ, those that are of the household and family of God: and by judgment is meant, not punishment for sin, strictly speaking, because Christ has endured this in the room and stead of his church and people, and therefore in justice cannot be inflicted on them; but afflictions and persecutions, and which are fatherly chastisements, and different from God's judgment on the world, and condemnation with it; (see ~~1COR~~ 1 Corinthians 11:32) and these may be said to “begin” with them, because it is only in this life the saints have their afflictions; and which are in love to them, and therefore are early brought upon them to try them, and purge them, and make them partakers of his holiness: besides, wicked men are often made use of as instruments, by which God chastises his people; upon which account they are reserved till last, to be the objects of his vengeance, when they have filled up the measure of their sins; and then what is begun in love at the house of God, will end in wrath and severe punishment on them: and whereas it is said, “the time” is come, or at hand, it may be observed, that as God has his set time to favour his Zion, so likewise to chastise her; all his people's times are in his hand, as of comfort, so of temptation, affliction, and persecution. The first times of Christianity, or of the preaching of the Gospel, were times of trouble and distress; for as it

was necessary the Gospel should be confirmed by signs and wonders, so that it should be tried and proved by the sufferings of the saints for it: and the phrase also suggests, that these sufferings and afflictions were but for a time, and even as it were for a moment, for a little while; and is a reason why the saints should glorify God, as these words imply, being introduced with the causal particle, “for”; that they have their sufferings now, and not with the wicked in the world to come, which will have no end:

and if [it] first begin at us; either us Jews, for Peter, and those he writes to, were such; or us Christians, who believe in Christ, have embraced his Gospel, and profess his name:

what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? of which God is the author, and which contains things relating to him; as the grace of God, the righteousness of God, peace with him, pardon from him, justification before him, and acceptance with him; and which he commits to men, and qualifies them for preaching it, and succeeds the ministry of it; and it being his Gospel, as it makes it the more valuable in itself, so it is to be had in the greatest reverence and esteem; and the greater is the sin of such who despise and reject it, as did the unbelieving Jews, who seem chiefly designed, here; it was first preached to them, but they disbelieved the doctrines of it, and submitted not to its ordinances, and rejected Christ, the Saviour, the sum and substance of it; and put it away from them, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life: and what shall the end of such be? in this world wrath came upon them to the uttermost, ruin upon their nation, city, and temple; and in the world to come everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and eternal vengeance in flames of fire. The Jews have various phrases, and frequent expressions in their writings, which resemble these, and serve to illustrate them. When Noah told the old world of the flood, and called upon them to repent, they are represented as saying to him ^{f89},

“where does punishment begin? *hytyb ʾm*, “at the house” of that man does it “begin?” when Methuselah died, they said unto him, does not punishment begin at the house of that man?”

and elsewhere ^{f90}, says R. Jonathan,

“punishment does not come into the world, but in the time that the wicked are in the world; and it does not begin (i.e. at them) *hl j t μyqydxh ʾm al a*, but it begins at the righteous;”

and again ^{f91}

“when God executes judgment on the righteous, he is praised; for if he executes this on them, how much more on the ungodly?”

(see ^{2301b}Isaiah 10:11,12 ^{2429b}Jeremiah 25:29 49:12 ^{2696b}Ezekiel 19:6).

Ver. 18. *And if the righteous scarcely be saved*, etc.] Reference is had to (^{2113b}Proverbs 11:31) where in the Septuagint version are the same words as here: the “righteous” are such, not who are so in their own opinion, or merely in the esteem of others, nor on account of their vility, morality, and external righteousness before men, or by the deeds of the law; but who are made righteous by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them: and such are “scarcely saved”; not as if they were but in part saved, for they are completely saved; Christ has wrought out and finished a complete salvation for them; and they are saved from all enemies, and everything that might hurt them; from sin, Satan, the law, the world, hell, and death; and they are completely justified, and have all their sins pardoned, and shall be perfectly saved: nor as if their salvation was doubtful; for though they are scarcely, yet certainly saved; for they are chosen to salvation, and Christ has obtained it for them, and they have the application of it already made to them by the blessed Spirit; and being justified, or made righteous persons, nothing is more certain than that they shall be glorified: but they are said to be “scarcely” saved, because of the difficulty of it, both with respect to Christ, who met with difficulties in working out their salvation; by reason of the strictness of divine justice, and the demands of the righteous law, which would make no abatement; the sins of his people he had to bear, and make atonement for; the many enemies he had to grapple with, and the accursed death of the cross, he had to undergo; though they were such he was able to surmount, and did: and especially with respect to the saints themselves; for though their salvation is certain and complete, being finished by Christ, yet their enjoyment of it is attended with many difficulties; by reason of the corruptions of nature, a law in their members warring against the law of their minds; the frequent temptations of Satan, who seeks to devour them, and their wrestlings with principalities and powers, which are above their match; and also by reason of various afflictions and persecutions, and many tribulations, which make their way to eternal life a strait way, and through which they must enter into the kingdom of heaven: and if this be their case, as it is,

where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? the profane sinner, the Christless, impenitent, unbelieving, and unregenerate man; otherwise all men are sinners, in themselves; but here it means such as are destitute of the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, and the justifying righteousness of Christ, and that live and die in their sins: where shall such appear? not in the congregation of the righteous; nor at the right hand of Christ; nor in heaven, into which no defiled sinner shall enter; nor even on earth, among and under the rocks and mountains, which will not be able to hide them from the face of the Judge, and his wrath, when he shall come; but at Christ's left hand, and in hell, and among the devils and damned there.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God,* etc.]

This is the conclusion made from the foregoing premises; that seeing the state and condition of the saints in this world, at worst, and which is but for a time, is infinitely preferable to the dreadful state and condition of disobedient persons, ungodly men, and sinners, and which will endure to all eternity; they should not think strange of their sufferings, or complain of them, but patiently endure them; and especially when they consider that these are not the effects of chance, or merely owing to the malice and wickedness of men, or to any second cause only; but they are the will of God, are by his appointment, under his direction, and by his order, and for their good, and his own glory; and therefore it becomes them to

commit the keeping of their souls [to him], in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator: and which is not only their duty, but their privilege: and the sense is, that when they are called to suffer for Christ, they should commit their cause to God, who, as he is the Creator, is the Governor of the universe, and will judge righteously; and when they are even called to lay down their lives for his sake, they shall not lose them; though their bodies are killed, they may and should commit their souls, when departing from their bodies, into the hands of God; as Stephen, the first martyr, committed his into the hands of Christ, in imitation of him; where he that made them, as he is able to keep them, will faithfully preserve them in happiness and glory, till the resurrection morn, when their bodies shall be raised and reunited to them: and this is to be performed, in “well doing”; for which they suffer, and in which they should continue to the last; not rendering evil for evil, but blessing; and in imitation of Christ, and his servant Stephen, pray for their worst enemies, and wish them all the good, and do them all the acts of kindness that lie in their power.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 5

In this chapter the apostle first exhorts pastors and members of churches to their respective duties as such; and then to those which were common to them all, as Christians; and closes the epistle with prayers for them, salutations of them, and with his apostolic benediction. He begins with the pastors or elders, and describes himself as a fellow elder, an eyewitness of Christ's sufferings, and a partaker of his glory, ([1 Peter 5:1](#)), and these he exhorts to feed the flock of God, where they were; to take the charge and oversight of them, freely, readily, and willingly, and not through force or covetousness; and not to exercise a tyrannical dominion over them, but to be examples to them, ([1 Peter 5:2,3](#)), and the argument made use of to encourage them to all this is, that at the appearance of Christ, the chief Shepherd, they should receive a never fading crown of glory, ([1 Peter 5:4](#)) and next, the members of the churches are exhorted to submit to the rule and government of their pastors, being according to the word of God; and to be subject to one another; and particularly to put on humility, as a garment very ornamental to them; and the rather, since God opposes himself to men that are proud, but gives more grace to the humble, ([1 Peter 5:5](#)) and especially he exhorts them to be humble under the hand of God, since that is a mighty one, and this is the way to be exalted in due time; and also to cast their care upon him, seeing he cared for them, ([1 Peter 5:6,7](#)) and then the apostle proceeds to the common duties of Christians, and to exhort them to sobriety and watchfulness, since Satan their adversary was a cruel and indefatigable one, and ever seeking the ruin of men; and to resist him in the steadfast exercise of faith, and patiently bear all afflictions, seeing the same were accomplished in their brethren in the world, ([1 Peter 5:8,9](#)) and then he puts up some petitions for them, that they might be perfected, stablished, strengthened, and settled, ([1 Peter 5:10](#)) and ascribes glory and dominion for ever to the God of grace, to whom he prays, ([1 Peter 5:11](#)) after which he names the person by whom he sends this epistle, giving a summary of it; that it was an exhortation and a testimony to the true doctrine of grace wherein they stood, ([1 Peter 5:12](#)), and next follow the salutations of the church at

Babylon, and of his son Marcus, to them, (~~(153)~~ 1 Peter 5:13), and lastly, he desires they would salute one another with a kiss of love, and gives them his benedictory wish, (~~(154)~~ 1 Peter 5:14).

Ver. 1. *The elders which are among you I exhort*, etc.] The apostle returns to particular exhortations, after having finished his general ones, and which chiefly concern patient suffering for Christ; and having particularly exhorted subjects to behave aright to civil magistrates, servants to their masters, and husbands and wives mutually to each other, here proceeds to exhort “elders” to the discharge of their office and duty; by whom are meant, not the elder in age, or the more ancient brethren in the churches, though they are distinguished from the younger, in (~~(155)~~ 1 Peter 5:5) but men in office, whose business it was to feed the flock, as in (~~(156)~~ 1 Peter 5:2) and though these might be generally the elder men, and whose office required, at least, senile gravity and prudence, yet they were not always so; sometimes young men, as Timothy, and others, were chosen into this office, which is the same with that of pastors, bishops, or overseers; for these are synonymous names, and belong to persons in the same office: and these are said to be “among” them, being members of the churches, and called out from among them to the pastoral office, and who were set over them in the Lord, and had their residence in the midst of them; for where should elders or pastors be, but with and among their flocks? they were fixed among them; and in this an elder differs from an apostle; an elder was tied down to a particular church, whereas an apostle was at large, and had authority in all the churches; and these the Apostle Peter does not command in an authoritative way, though he might lawfully have used his apostolic power; but he chose rather to exhort, entreat, and beseech, and that under the same character they bore:

who also am an elder; or, “who am a fellow elder”; and so the Syriac version renders it; and which expresses his office, and not his age, and is entirely consistent with his being an apostle; for though that is an higher office than a pastor, or elder, yet it involves that, and in some things agrees with it; as in preaching the word, and administering ordinances; and is mentioned to show the propriety and pertinency of his exhortation to the elders; for being an elder himself, it was acting in character to exhort them; nor could it be objected to as impertinent and unbecoming; and since he was still in an higher office, on which account he could have commanded, it shows great humility in him to put himself upon a level with them, and only entreat and beseech them; he does not call himself the prince of the

apostles and pastors, and the vicar of Christ, as his pretended successor does, but a fellow elder:

and a witness of the sufferings of Christ; as he was even an eyewitness of many of them; of his exceeding great sorrow in his soul, of his agony and bloody sweat in the garden, and of his apprehension, and binding by the officers and soldiers there; and of the contumelious usage he met with in the high priest's hall, where was mocked, blindfolded, buffeted, and smote upon the face; if not of his sufferings on the cross; since it is certain John was then present; and quickly after we read of Peter and he being together, (~~ACTS~~ John 19:26 20:2) and therefore a very fit person to exhort these elders to feed the churches under their care with the preaching of a crucified Christ; since he, from his certain knowledge, could affirm his sufferings and his death: moreover, he was a witness, that is, a minister, and preacher of the sufferings of Christ, and of the doctrines of peace, pardon, justification, and salvation through them; as appears from all his sermons recorded in the “Acts of the Apostles”, and from these his epistles: and besides, he was a partaker of the sufferings of Christ; he bore witness to him, by suffering for him; and as the Apostle Paul did, filled up the afflictions of Christ in his flesh; he, with other apostles, were put into the common prison by the Jewish sanhedrim, for preaching Christ, as he afterwards was by Herod; and had, doubtless, by this time, gone through a variety of sufferings for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, as he afterwards glorified God by dying that death, which his Lord and master signified to him before hand; and therefore a very proper person to exhort these elders to discharge their work and office, and persevere in it, whatever they were called to suffer for it:

and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; which some think has reference to the transfiguration of Christ upon the mount, where Peter was present, and saw the glory of Christ, and of those that were with him, Moses and Elias, and enjoyed their company, and heard their conversation with so much pleasure and delight, that he was for continuing there; and which was an emblem and pledge of the glory of Christ, that was afterwards to be revealed, and still is to be revealed, and so the Syriac version renders it, “a partaker of his glory”: of the glory of Christ, (see ~~ACTS~~ 1 Peter 4:13) or it regards the eternal glory and happiness of the saints, which is at present hid, and unseen, but shall be revealed at the last time, at the coming of Christ, when he shall appear in his glory, both to the saints, in them, and upon them; a glory which shall be both upon body and soul;

and this the apostle calls himself a partaker of, as in Christ, his head and representative, and because of his interest in it, his assurance of right unto it, and meetness for it, and the certainty of enjoying it; nothing being more sure than this, that those that suffer with Christ, and for his sake, shall be glorified with him. Now, the exhortation of a person in such an office, as before expressed, and of one that was an eyewitness of Christ's sufferings, and had endured so much for Christ, and had had so large an experience of his grace, and such full assurance of glory, must carry great weight and influence in it, and is as follows.

Ver. 2. *Feed the flock of God which is among you*, etc.] Some read, “as much as in you is”; that is, to the utmost of your power, according to your abilities, referring to the manner of feeding the flock, doing it in the best way they are capable of; but the phrase is rather descriptive of the flock to be fed, which points it out, and distinguishes it from all others, and for which they should have a particular regard; it being the flock, as the Syriac version renders it, which “is delivered unto you”; which was committed to their care, and they were made overseers of, and stood in a special relation to; wherefore it was incumbent on them to regard them, so as they did not, and were not obliged to regard, any other distinct flock: by “the flock of God”; or, “of Christ”, as some copies read, is meant, not the whole world, which Philo the Jew^{f92} calls the greatest and most perfect, **του οντος ψευου ποιμην**, “flock of the true God”; but the church of God, over which they were elders or pastors, consisting of Christ's sheep and lambs, he ordered Peter to feed, as he now does his fellow elders; and because they are the flock of God, which he has chosen, distinguished, and separated from the rest of the world, and has made the care and charge of Christ; put them into his hands, whence they are called the sheep of his hand; which he has purchased with his blood, and effectually called by his grace, and returned them to himself, the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, who before were as sheep going astray, and folded them together in a Gospel church state; all this is a reason, and a strong one, why they should be fed; not with every wind of doctrine, which blows up the pride of human nature, and swells men with vain conceits of themselves; nor with the chaff of human doctrines; nor with trifling and speculative notions; but with knowledge and understanding of divine and evangelical truths, with the words of faith and sound doctrine, with the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ; with the Gospel of the grace of God, which contains milk for babes, and meat for strong men; and with a crucified Christ himself, who is

the bread of life, and whose flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; by directing them to his person, blood, and righteousness, to live by faith on; by preaching the doctrines of peace and pardon by his blood, atonement and satisfaction by his sacrifice, and justification by his righteousness, and complete salvation by his obedience and death: in short, feeding includes the whole of the pastor's work, the ministry of the word, the administration of ordinances, and the rule and government of the church, in the several branches of it; for the same word signifies to rule as to feed; and which work is further expressed by

taking the oversight thereof; that is, of the flock; or “take the care of it”, as the Syriac version renders it, and adds, “spiritually”; in a spiritual manner; which is an interpretation of the phrase: an acting the part of a bishop or overseer of it, as the word signifies; looking diligently to it, inspecting into the various cases of the members of the church; using diligence to know the state of the flock, and performing all the offices of a careful shepherd; as feeding the flock; and not themselves; strengthening the diseased; healing the sick; binding up that which was broken; bringing again that which was driven away, and seeking that which was lost; watching over them that they go not astray; and restoring of them in the spirit of meekness, when they are gone out of the way; and overlooking both their practices and their principles; admonishing, reproving them for sin, as the case requires; and preserving them, as much as in them lies, from wolves, and beasts of prey; from false teachers, and from all errors and heresies: all which is to be done,

not by constraint; or with force, in a rigorous and severe manner; for this may be understood actively of pastors not forcing their flock, over driving them, or ruling them with force and cruelty, complained of in (²⁵⁰Ezekiel 34:4) or passively, of their being forced to feed the flock, and superintend it; as such may be said to be, who enter into the ministry, and continue in it, because obliged to it for want of a livelihood, and not knowing how to get one any other way; or through the pressing instances of relations, acquaintance, and friends; this ought not to be a matter of necessity, but of choice; they should be induced to it by no other necessity than what Christ has laid upon them, by calling them to the work, and furnishing them for it with the gifts of his Spirit; and should engage and continue in it by no other constraint than that of his love; wherefore it follows,

but willingly. The Vulgate Latin version adds, “according to God”, and so some copies; according to the will of God, and agreeably to his word; and the Ethiopic version renders it, “with equity for God”; with all uprightness and integrity, for the sake of the honour and glory of God; this should be done with all a man's heart and soul, and should spring from pure love to Christ; for no man is fit to feed Christ's lambs and sheep but those who sincerely love him; (see ⁴²¹⁵John 21:15-17), and from a cordial and affectionate concern for the good of souls; and from, an hearty desire unto, and delight in, the work itself; otherwise all he does will be as a task and burden; he will do it grudgingly, and with negligence, and will murmur under it, at least secretly. The Arabic version renders it, “watching, not forced watches, but willing ones”. This contrast of phrases seems to be Jewish, or Rabbinical ^{f93}; it is a tradition of the Rabbans;

“blood which is defiled, and they sprinkle it ignorantly, it is accepted; presumptuously, not accepted; of what things are these said? of a private person; but of a congregation, whether ignorantly or presumptuously, it is accepted; and of a stranger, whether ignorantly or presumptuously, ^{ˆwxrb ˆyb snwab ˆyb}, “whether by constraint or willingly”, it is not accepted:”

it follows here,

not for filthy lucre; not from a covetous disposition, which is a filthy one; and for the sake of gaining money, and amassing wealth and riches, as the false prophets in Isaiah's time, who were never satisfied; and the false teachers in the apostle's time, who, through covetousness, made merchandise of men, and supposed that gain was godliness; whereas there is no such thing as serving God and mammon; and as the work of the ministry should not be entered upon, and continued in, with any such sordid view; so neither for the sake of gaining glory and applause, a presidency, and chief place in the churches, and a name among the ministers of the Gospel, and credit and esteem among men:

but of a ready mind; or, “from the whole heart”, as the Syriac version renders it; and in a cheerful view of reproaches and persecutions, of the loss of credit and reputation, of worldly substance, and of life itself; and with a sincere concern for the glory of God, and the good of immortal souls; being ready to do everything with cheerfulness, that may contribute to either of these. The Ethiopic version renders it, “in the fulness of your heart with joy”.

Ver. 3. *Neither as being lords over God's heritage*, etc.] Or “clergy”; meaning not ecclesiastical persons, as presbyters, and deacons, who are supposed to be under the government of bishops, though not to be governed with tyranny, and in a haughty, imperious, and arrogant manner; to which sense the Arabic version inclines, rendering the words thus; “not as those who domineer over such that are appointed in the dignities of the priesthood”; but such cannot be designed, because they are presbyters, or elders, which are here exhorted not to use such tyrannical power and authority; wherefore the flock, or church of God, the people of Christ, and members of churches, in common, are here intended: the Ethiopic version renders it, “his own people”; who are the lot, portion, and inheritance of God, and Christ; and moreover, the several churches are the parts, portions, and heritages, for the word is in the plural number, which are assigned to the care of their respective pastors, and elders, in allusion to the land of Canaan, which was distributed by lot: the word “clergy” is common to all the saints, and not to be appropriated to a particular order of men, or to officers of churches; and these are not to be lorded over by their elders, in a domineering and arbitrary way; for though they are set over them in the Lord, and have the rule over them, and should be submitted to, and obeyed in their right and lawful ministrations of the word and ordinances, and are worthy of double honour when they rule well; yet they are not to take upon them an absolute authority over the consciences of men; they are not to teach for doctrines the commandments of men; nor to have the dominion over the faith of men, but to be helpers of their joy; and are not to coin new articles of faith, or enact new laws, and impose them on the churches; but are to teach the doctrines of Christ, and rule according to the laws he has given:

but being ensamples to the flock. The Ethiopic version reads, “to his own flock”; that is, the flock of God; and the Vulgate Latin version adds, “heartily”; the meaning is, that they should go before the flock, and set an example to believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity; and be patterns of good works to them, and recommend the doctrines they preach, and the duties they urge, by their own lives and conversations; and particularly should be ensamples to the saints, in liberality and beneficence, in lenity and gentleness, in meekness and humility, in opposition to the vices before warned against.

Ver. 4. *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear*, etc.] This is the encouraging motive and argument to engage the elders and pastors of

churches to discharge their office faithfully, cheerfully, and in an humble manner: by “the chief Shepherd” is meant Christ, who may well be called so, since he is God's fellow, and in all respects equal with him, and is the Shepherd and Bishop of the souls of men; all other bishops, pastors, and elders, are under him; they receive their commissions from him to feed his lambs and sheep; are made pastors and overseers by him; and have their gifts, qualifying them for such offices, from him; and have their several flocks assigned unto them by him; and from him have they all the food with which they feed them, and are accountable to him for them, and the discharge of their office; so that Christ is the chief Shepherd, in the dignity of his person, he being God over all, blessed for ever; in his qualifications for his office, having all power, grace, and wisdom in him, to protect his flock, supply their wants, guide and direct them; and in the nature and number of his flock, being rational creatures, the souls of men, even elect men; and though they are, when compared with others, but a little flock, yet, considered by themselves, are a great number; and especially the general assembly will be, in comparison of the little bodies and societies of saints under pastors and teachers, of Christ's setting over them, with respect to whom, principally, he is called the chief Shepherd: the allusion is to the principal shepherd, whose own the sheep were, or, however, had the principal charge of them; who used to have others under him, to do the several things relating to the flocks he directed, and were called “little shepherds”; so Aben Ezra says ^{f94}, it was customary for the shepherd to have under him **μynj q μy[wr**, “little shepherds”: the same perhaps with the hirelings, whose own the sheep are not, (~~4012~~ John 10:12) who are retained, or removed, according to their behaviour; these, in the Talmudic language, are called **yl zrb** ^{f95}, or **yl zrk**; though, according to Guido ^{f96}, the word, pronounced in the latter way, signifies a “chief shepherd”, who takes care of men, and has other shepherds, servants under him; and such an one used to be called **l wdgh h[wrh**, “the great”, or “chief shepherd”; so Maimonides ^{f97} says, it was the custom of shepherds to have servants under them, to whom they committed the flocks to keep; so that when **l wdgh h[wrh**, “the chief shepherd”, delivered to other shepherds what was under his care, these came in his room; and if there was any loss, the second shepherd, who was under the “chief shepherd”, was obliged to make good the loss, and not the first shepherd, who was the chief shepherd; and to the same purpose says another of their commentators ^{f98}; it is the custom of **l wdgh h[wrh**, “the chief shepherd”, to deliver

(the flock) to the little shepherd that is under him; wherefore the shepherd that is under him is obliged to make good any loss: now, such a shepherd is Christ; he has others under him, whom he employs in feeding his sheep, and who are accountable to him, and must give up their account when he appears: at present he is out of the bodily sight of men, being received up to heaven, where he will be retained till the time of the restitution of all things; and then he will appear a second time in great glory, in his own, and in his Father's, and in the glory of his holy angels: and when he thus appears,

ye shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away; in distinction from those crowns which were given to the conqueror, in the Olympic games; which were made of divers flowers, of the olive, wild olive, pine tree, and of parsley, and inserted in a branch of the wild olive tree^{f99} and which quickly faded away; or in allusion to crowns made of amaranthus^{f100}, the plant “everlasting”, so called, from the nature of it, because it never fades: the eternal glory and happiness, which is here meant by a crown of glory, or a glorious crown, never fades away, but ever shines in its full lustre; and this faithful ministers shall receive at the hands of the chief Shepherd, as a gift of his, as a reward of grace; when they have finished their work, they will enter into the joy of their Lord, and shine as the stars for ever and ever; they shall reign with Christ, as kings, on a throne of glory, wearing a crown of glory, and enjoying a kingdom and glory to all eternity.

Ver. 5. *Likewise ye younger*, etc.] Not in office, as if inferior officers to bishops were here intended, who ought to be subject to them; for elders and pastors are the same with them, nor is there any other office but that of deacons; nor younger pastors and overseers, such an one as Timothy was; not but that a deference is to be paid, and proper respect had to such who are of greater age, and longer standing and experience, by younger brethren in the ministry; nor such as are only younger in years, who ought to rise up unto, and honour hoary hairs, which may be done where subjection is not required, as here; nor such as are young in grace and experience, since there are little children, young men, and fathers in the church; but all the members of churches in common are here intended, as distinguished from their officers; for as pastors and overseers were, for the most part, chosen from among those that were senior in age, so the members generally consisted of the younger sort; and besides, as it was usual to call chief men and rulers, whether in church or state, fathers, so

those that were subjects, the younger; (see ^{<2126>}Luke 21:26). These the apostle exhorts as follows,

submit yourselves unto the elder; not merely in age, but in office, as before; for as he had exhorted the elders to a discharge of their work and office, he proceeds, in the next place, and which is signified by the word “likewise”, to stir up the members of the churches to their duty to their elders, or pastors, who had the oversight of them; and that is to “submit” themselves to them, as in (^{<8317>}Hebrews 13:17), which is done by attending constantly on the word preached by them, and receiving it, so far as it agrees with the Scriptures of truth; and by joining with them in all the ordinances of Christ, and their administrations of them; by being subject to the laws of Christ's house, as put in execution by them; by taking their counsel and advice, regarding and hearkening to their admonitions and reproofs, and taking them in good part, looking upon them, and behaving towards them, as their spiritual guides and governors. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, “to your elders”; such as were particularly set over them in the Lord, and had taken the care of them, for to no others are they obliged to submit themselves.

Yea, all [of you] be subject one to another; that is, all the members of the churches should not only submit themselves to their pastors, but to their fellow members, as in (^{<4921>}Ephesians 5:21), they should submit to the superior judgments of one another, esteeming each other better than themselves, and not be tenacious of their own way of thinking and judging of things; yea, condescend to men of low estates and weaker minds, bear the infirmities of the weak, and take all admonitions and reproofs given in a friendly manner kindly; and cheerfully perform all offices of love, and by it serve one another in things temporal and spiritual; doing the meanest services for the good of each other, such as washing the feet of one another, in imitation of their Lord and master.

And be clothed with humility; without which there will be no subjection, either to the elders, or one another. This is a grace which shows itself in a man's thinking and speaking the best of others, and the worst of himself; in not affecting places and titles of eminence; in being content with the lowest place, and patiently bearing the greatest contempt; in not aspiring to things too high for him, always acknowledging his own meanness, baseness, and unworthiness, ascribing all he is, and has, to the grace and goodness of God, whether it be gifts of nature, providence, or grace: and this is a

believer's clothing, not the robe of his justifying righteousness before God, but is a considerable part of his inward garment of sanctification, which is in the sight of God of great price; and makes a large show in his outward conversation garments before men, and renders him lovely and amiable: it is an ornament to him, which is precious with God, and recommends him to the esteem of men, and the religion and Gospel he professes, and his profession of it. Some think there is a metaphor in the words, taken from knots of ribbons, and such like things, wore by women on their heads, or breasts, for ornament; and that the apostle's advice to the saints is, that their breast knot, or ornament, should be humility. Others think it is taken from a sort of badge which servants wore over their garments, by which they were distinguished; and so saints are directed to put on this badge, by which they may be known to be the servants of Christ: the former seems more agreeable: but as the word signifies to bind, or fasten anything, by tying of knots, it may denote the retaining of this grace in constant exercise, so as never to be without it; and to be clothed or covered with it, is always to have it on, and in exercise, in every action of life, in all our deportment before God and men, in all public and religious worship, and throughout the whole of our conversation, in the family, in the world, or in the church. The phrase seems to be Jewish, and is to be met with in the writings of the Jews. It is said ^{f101},

“he that has fear, **hwn[b çbl tnw**, “and is clothed with humility”; humility is the most excellent, and is comprehended in all, as it is said, (^{<2024>}Proverbs 22:4). He who has the fear of God is worthy of humility, and everyone that hath humility is worthy of kindness or holiness.”

And it is a saying of R. Meir ^{f102},

“he that loves God loves men; he that makes God glad makes men glad; and it (the law) **hwn[wtçbl m**, “clothes him with humility and fear”.”

For he resisteth the proud; or “scorneth the scorners”, as it is in (^{<2024>}Proverbs 3:34), from whence these words are taken: the Lord treats them as they treat others; as they despise all other men and things, he despises them; he is above them, in that they have dealt proudly, and has them in derision; he eludes all their artifices, and frustrates their schemes, and disappoints their ambitious views, and scatters them in the imagination

of their hearts, and brings their counsels to confusion, and opposes himself to them, and as their adversary; and a dreadful thing it is for persons to have God stand up against them, and resist them. This is a reason dissuading from pride, and exciting to humility, as is also what follows: and giveth grace to the humble; that is, more grace; (see ³⁰⁰⁶James 4:6). The first grace cannot be intended, for no man is truly humble before he has received the grace of God, it is that which makes him so; or it may design larger gifts of grace, which God bestows on those who acknowledge him to be the author and giver of what they have, and who make a proper use of them to his glory; when he takes away from the vain and ostentatious that which to themselves and others they seemed to have. Moreover, God grants his gracious presence to such as are of an humble, and of a contrite spirit; and at last he gives them glory, which is a free grace gift, and the perfection of grace; the poor in spirit, or humble souls, have both a right and meetness for, and shall enjoy the kingdom of heaven.

Ver. 6. *Humble yourselves therefore*, etc.] Or be ye humbled before God, and in his sight; quietly submit to his will; patiently bear every affliction without murmuring, repining, or replying against him; be still under the rod, and despise not the chastening of the Lord; mourn over sin as the cause, acknowledge your vileness and unworthiness, and stand in awe of his majesty, considering yourselves as

under the mighty hand of God a phrase expressive of his omnipotence which cannot be stayed, and it would be madness to oppose it; and which is able to cast down the proud, and dash them to pieces, as well as to exalt the humble. His hand, upon men, in a way of chastisement, presses sore, and, in a way of punishment, presses down, and crushes to pieces; but to be under it in an humble manner is safe and profitable; such are hid as in the hollow of his hand, and are safe as in a pavilion, and comfortable under the shadow of his wings; and such humiliation and submission to him, and putting themselves under his mighty hand and care, is the way to exaltation:

that he may exalt you in due time: the Arabic version reads, “in the time of exaltation”: when his time to exalt is come, either in this world, or more especially at the appearance of Christ and his kingdom. The Vulgate Latin version, and two copies of Beza's, one of Stephens's, and the Alexandrian, read, “in the time of visitation”; and so the Ethiopic version, “when he shall have visited you”; which seems to be taken out of (⁴¹²²1 Peter 2:12) sooner

or later such who are humbled shall be exalted; it is the usual way and method which God takes to abase the proud, and exalt the humble; for humble souls honour him, and therefore such as honour him he will honour; and this he does in his own time, in a time that makes most for his glory, and their good; oftentimes he does it in this life, and always in that which is to come.

Ver. 7. *Casting all your care upon him*, etc.] “Upon God”: as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read. The words are taken out of, or at least refer to (⁴⁵⁷²Psalm 55:22), where, instead of “cast thy burden upon the Lord”, the Septuagint have it, “cast thy care upon the Lord”; the care of the body, and of all the affairs of life, concerning which saints should not be anxiously thoughtful, but depend upon the providence of God, though in the diligent use of means, which is not forbidden, nor discouraged by this, or any such like exhortation; as also the care of the soul, and the spiritual and eternal welfare of it, which should be committed into the hands of Christ, on whom help is laid, and who is become the author of eternal salvation; nor should this slacken and make persons negligent in the use of means, for the good, comfort, and advantage of their souls:

for he careth for you; for the bodies of his people, and their outward concerns of life, for food and raiment for them, and for the preservation of them, who will not suffer them to want, nor withhold any good thing from them, or ever leave them and forsake them; and for their souls, for which he has made provision in his Son, and in the covenant of his grace has laid help upon a mighty Saviour; and who has obtained an eternal redemption for them, bestows his grace upon them, and gives every needful supply of it to them, and keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation.

Ver. 8. *Be sober, be vigilant*, etc.] The apostle had exhorted to each of these before; (see ⁴⁰¹³1 Peter 1:13 4:7) but thought fit to repeat them; sobriety and watchfulness being exceeding necessary and useful in the Christian life; and the one cannot well be without the other: unless a man is sober in body and mind, he will not be watchful, either over himself or others, or against the snares of sin, Satan, and the world; and if he is not on his watch and guard, he is liable to every sin and temptation. The Syriac version renders the words, “watch”, and “be ye mindful”, or “remember”; watch with diligence, care, and industry, keeping a good lookout, minding and observing everything that presents, and remembering the power and cunning of the enemy; and the Ethiopic version renders them thus, “be ye

prudent, and cause your heart to understand”; referring them not to temperance of body, but sobriety of mind, and to a prudent conduct and behaviour, as having a subtle as well as a malicious enemy to deal with:

because your adversary the devil; he who is a defamer and calumniator; who accuses God to men, and men to God, and is therefore styled the accuser of the brethren; he is the saints' avowed and implacable enemy. Satan is an enemy to mankind in general, but more especially to the seed of the woman, to Christ personal, and to Christ mystical, to all the elect of God: the word here used is a forensic term, and signifies a court adversary, or one that litigates a point in law, or opposes another in an action or suit at law. The Jews ^{f103} have adopted this word into their language, and explain it by *ˆyd l [b*, “a law adversary”, or one that has a suit of law depending against another. Satan accuses men of the breach of the law, and pleads that justice might take place, and punishment be inflicted, and which he pursues with great violence and diligence:

as a roaring lion; so called, both on account of his strength, and also because of his rage, malice, and cruelty, which he breathes out against the saints, who, though he cannot destroy them, will do all he can to terrify and affright them; so the young lions in (~~Psalm 104:21~~) are, by the Cabalistic Jews ^{f104}, understood of devils; to which, for the above reasons, they may be truly compared:

walketh about; to and fro in the earth; (see ~~Job 1:7~~) as a lion runs about here and there, when almost famished with hunger; and it also denotes the insidious methods, wiles, and stratagems Satan takes to surprise men, and get an advantage of them: he takes a tour, and comes round upon them, upon the back of them, at an unawares, so that they have need to be always sober, and upon their guard:

seeking whom he may devour; this is the end of his walking about: and the like is expressed in the Targum on (~~Job 1:7 2:2~~)

“and Satan answered before the Lord, and said, from going about in the earth *ydbw[b qdbml*, “to search into the works” of the children of men, and from walking in it;”

that so he might have something to accuse them of, and they fall a prey into his hands. This is the work he is continually employed in; he is always seeking to do mischief, either to the souls, or bodies, or estates of men,

especially the former; though he can do nothing in either respect without a permission, not unless he “may”; and though this, with respect to body and estate, is sometimes granted, as in the case of Job, yet never with respect to the souls of any of God's elect, which are safe in Christ's hands, and out of his reach; this hinders not but that saints should be sober and watchful.

Ver. 9. *Whom resist*, etc.] By no means give way to him, by indulging any sin, or yielding to any temptation, but oppose him, and stand against his wiles, his cunning and his power:

steadfast in the faith; both in the doctrine of faith, which Satan endeavours to remove from, or cause to stagger in; and in the grace of faith, exercising it on the promises of God, and his perfections, particularly his power and faithfulness concerned in them, and in the blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and person of Christ, which faith is capable of making use of, as a shield, to good purpose, against all the fiery darts of Satan; as also in a profession of faith, which, as it should be held fast without wavering, and which the devil is very busy to keep persons from making, or to cause them to drop it when they have made it, by violent suggestions, strong temptations, and a flood of reproaches and persecutions; all which should be disregarded:

knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world; and therefore should not be surprised and staggered by them, nor think them strange, but endure them without murmuring, and with patience and cheerfulness; since they are the “same afflictions” and trials which others have been exercised with in all ages: the same which the fraternity, or “brotherhood”, as the word signifies, (see ~~1~~1 Peter 2:17) who stand in the same relation to God and Christ as they do, endure; yea, the same which Christ himself, who stands in this relation to them, has endured: and which must be expected while they are “in the world”; but this is the great mercy, that they are only endured in this world; there will be none in the world to come; they will be “accomplished” and finished here; and every believer has his measure, which must be filled up; and so has the whole of Christ, his church, and when they are fulfilled they will be no more.

Ver. 10. *But the God of all grace*, etc.] Who has riches of grace, an immense plenty of it in himself, has treasured up a fulness of grace in his Son; is the author of all the blessings of grace, of electing, adopting, justifying, pardoning, and regenerating grace; and is the giver of the several graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, repentance, etc. and of all the

supplies of grace; and by this character is God the Father described as the object of prayer, to encourage souls to come to the throne of his grace, and pray, and hope for, and expect a sufficiency of his grace in every time of need; as well as to show that the sufferings of the saints here are but for a while; that they are in love and kindness; and that they shall certainly enjoy the glory they are called unto by him; and which is the next thing by which he stands described,

who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ. This “call” is not a mere external one by the ministry of the word, which is not always effectual and unto salvation; but an internal, special, and efficacious one, and which is high, holy, heavenly, and unchangeable. The persons who are the subjects of it are us, whom God has chosen in Christ, and are preserved in him, and redeemed by him; and who are a select people, and distinguished from others, and yet in themselves no better than others; nay, often the vilest, meanest, and most contemptible. Some ancient copies read “you”, and so do the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: what they are called to is “his eternal glory”; that which is glorious in itself, and is signified by what is the most glorious in this world, as a kingdom, crown, throne, inheritance, etc. and lies in constant and uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; in a complete vision of the glory of Christ, and in perfect conformity to him; in a freedom from all evil, and in a full enjoyment of all happiness: and this is “his”, God the Father's; which he has prepared and provided for his people of his own grace, and which he freely gives unto them, and makes them meet for: and it is “eternal”; it will last for ever, and never pass away, as does the glory of this world; it is a continuing city, a never fading inheritance, an eternal weight of glory: and to this the saints are called “by”, or “in Jesus Christ”; the glory they are called to is in his hands; and they themselves, by being called unto it, appear to be in him, and as such to belong unto him, or are the called of Christ Jesus; and besides, they are called by him, by his Spirit and grace, and into communion with him, and to the obtaining of his glory.

After that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you; some copies, and also the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read these words in the future tense, not as a prayer, but as a promise, “shall make you perfect”, etc. the sense is the same; for if it is a prayer, it is a prayer in faith, for what shall be done; for God will make his people “perfect”: and which respects not their justification; for in that sense they are perfect already in Christ, their head, who has perfectly fulfilled the law

for them, and fully expiated their sins; has completely redeemed them, and procured for them the pardon of all their trespasses; and has justified them from all their iniquities: but their sanctification; for though all grace is implanted in them at once, yet it is gradually brought to perfection; there is a perfection of parts, of all the parts of the new man, or creature, but not of degrees; and there is a comparative perfection with respect to themselves, before conversion, or with respect to hypocrites; for perfection oftentimes means no other than integrity and sincerity; or with respect to other Christians, who are weaker in knowledge and experience: and there is a perfection of holiness in Christ, who is their sanctification, but not in themselves; for every part of the work of grace is imperfect, as faith, love, knowledge, etc. and sin dwells in them, and they stand in need of fresh supplies of grace; and even the best of them disclaim perfection, though they greatly desire it, as here the apostle prays for it; and which shows that, as yet, they had it not, though they will have it hereafter in heaven, where there will be perfect knowledge, and perfect holiness, and perfect happiness. He also prays that God would “stablish” them, or believes and promises that he would. The people of God are in a safe and established state and condition already; they are in the arms of everlasting love, and in the hands of Christ, and in a sure and inviolable covenant of grace, and are built on the rock of ages; and are in a state of grace, of justifying, adopting, and sanctifying grace, from whence they can never finally and totally fall; and yet they are very often unstable in their hearts and frames, and in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and in their adherence to the doctrines of the Gospel; and need to be established, and to have a more firm persuasion of their interest in the love of God, and a more steady view of their standing in Christ, and the covenant of his grace, and a more lively and comfortable exercise grace on him, and a more constant discharge of duty, and a more firm and closer adherence to the truths and ordinances of the Gospel; and they will have a consummate stability in heaven, where are sure dwelling places. Another petition, or promise, is, that God would “strengthen” them; which supposes them to be weak and feeble, not as to their state and condition, for their place of defence is the munition of rocks; nor in the same sense as natural men are, or as they themselves were before conversion; nor are they all alike weak, some are weaker in faith and knowledge, and of a more weak and scrupulous conscience than others, and are more easily drawn aside by corruptions and temptations, and are in greater afflictions: and this is to be understood, not of bodily, but spiritual strength; that God would strengthen their souls, and the work of his grace

in them, their faith, hope, and love; and strengthen them to perform their duties, to withstand temptations, oppose their own corruptions, bear the cross, reproaches, and persecutions, and do their generation work: and he further adds, and “settle” you, or “found” you; not that God would now lay the foundation, Christ, for he had been laid by him ready in his counsels and decrees, and in the covenant of his grace, in the mission of him into this world, and by his Spirit in their hearts; nor that he would afresh lay them on Christ, the foundation, for they were there laid already, and were safe; but that he would build them up, and settle their faith on this foundation, that they might be rooted and grounded in the love of God, have a lively sense and firm persuasion of their interest in it, and be grounded and settled in the faith of the Gospel; be settled under a Gospel ministry, have a fixed abode in the house of God, enjoy the spiritual provisions of it, and have fellowship with Christ, and his people here; and at last enter and dwell in the city which has foundations, where they will be never more subject to wavering, instability, and inconstancy, and from whence they will never be removed; this will be their last and eternal settlement: and this will be “after” they have “suffered awhile”; in their bodies, characters, and estates, through the malice and wickedness of men; and in their souls, from their own corruptions, the temptations of Satan, and the hidings of God's face; which will be but for a very little while, for a moment, as it were; these are only the sufferings of this present time, and in the present evil world; nor are they inconsistent with God being the God of all grace unto them, or with their being called to eternal glory, the way to which lies through them; and they are the means of perfecting, establishing, strengthening, and settling them.

Ver. 11. *To him be glory, and dominion, for ever and ever, Amen.*] The Syriac version begins this doxology in the preceding verse, reading the words thus, “to the God of grace”, and then putting what follows, “who hath called us”, etc. into a parenthesis, connects them with these, “be glory, and power, and honour”, etc. “glory” is due to God for all the grace he bestows on men; and to give it to him shows a sense of divine goodness, and a grateful heart; and to him very fitly is “dominion” ascribed, whose kingdom rules over all, and who dispenses his grace, as well as his providential favours, in a sovereign way; and whom the saints are in a peculiar manner under obligation to obey; to which is added, “Amen”, signifying that so the apostle prayed it might be, and believed it would be.

Ver. 12. *By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you*, etc.] Silvanus is the same with Silas, so often mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as a companion of the Apostle Paul; whom Peter met with in his travels, and sent this letter by him, or used him as his amanuensis, or both: his character is, that he was “a faithful brother” to those persons to whom this epistle is written; that is, he was a faithful minister of the Gospel to them, who with great sincerity and integrity preached the word unto them, as the apostle was well informed, and had reason to believe; for what follows,

as I suppose, does not suggest any doubt of it, but, on the contrary, a firm belief; for the word used signifies to repute, to reckon, to conclude a thing upon the best and strongest reasons; though some connect this phrase, as that “also unto you”, with the following clause,

I have written briefly; as does the Syriac version, which renders the whole thus, “these few things, as I think, I have written unto you, by Silvanus, a faithful brother”; and then the sense is, this short epistle, as in my opinion it is, I have wrote and sent to you by Silvanus, who is faithful and upright, as a brother, a minister, and a messenger. The Arabic version seems to refer the above clause, “as I suppose”, neither to the character of Silvanus, nor to the brevity of the epistle, but to the matter of it, rendering it thus, “these things, in a few words, I have written unto you, according to my sense”; according to my judgment and reason, as I think, by which you will see and know my real sentiments and thoughts of things; for what I have written is according to the best of my understanding and knowledge:

exhorting, and testifying, that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand; or “have stood”, and still continue to do so: the Syriac version renders it, “I am persuaded and testify”; expressing his great confidence and assurance, that the Gospel of the grace of God, which springs from the grace of God, is full of it, and declares it, and which he had delivered in this epistle, and they had formerly received, and had stood fast in, and abode by, was the true Gospel. The Arabic version gives another sense, rendering the words thus, “entreating and beseeching, that this grace of God, in which ye stand, may be true and firm”; that is, that ye may still continue truly to embrace and profess it, and firmly abide by it; though the meaning rather is, that the apostle bears a testimony to the truth of the Gospel, and of the Christian religion, as held and professed by them with constancy hitherto; and exhorts them unto the consideration of the truth of

it, which might be depended upon, to cleave unto it with full purpose of heart.

Ver. 13. *The church that is at Babylon*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, supply the word “church”, as we do. Some, by “Babylon”, understand Rome, which is so called, in a figurative sense, in the book of the Revelations: this is an ancient opinion; so Papias understood it, as ^{f105} Eusebius relates; but that Peter was at Rome, when he wrote this epistle, cannot be proved, nor any reason be given why the proper name of the place should be concealed, and a figurative one expressed. It is best therefore to understand it literally, of Babylon in Assyria, the metropolis of the dispersion of the Jews, and the centre of it, to whom the apostle wrote; and where, as the minister of the circumcision, he may be thought to reside, here being a number of persons converted and formed into a Gospel church state, whereby was fulfilled the prophecy in (~~1370~~ Psalm 87:4) perhaps this church might consist chiefly of Jews, which might be the reason of the apostle's being here, since there were great numbers which continued here, from the time of the captivity, who returned not with Ezra; and these are said by the Jews ^{f106} to be of the purest blood: many of the Jewish doctors lived here; they had three famous universities in this country, and here their Talmud was written, called from hence ^{f107} Babylonian. The church in this place is said to be

elected together with you; that is, were chosen together with them in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to grace here, and glory hereafter; or were equally the elect of God as they were, for as such he writes to them, (~~1000~~ 1 Peter 1:2) and this the apostle said in a judgment of charity of the whole church, and all the members of it, being under a profession of faith in Christ; and nothing appearing to the contrary, but that their faith was unfeigned, and their profession right and sincere. This Church, he says,

saluteth you; wishes all peace, happiness, and prosperity of every kind,

and so doth Marcus, my son; either, in a natural sense, his son according to the flesh; since it is certain Peter had a wife, and might have a son, and one of this name: or rather in a spiritual sense, being one that he was either an instrument of converting him, or of instructing him, or was one that was as dear to him as a son; in like manner as the Apostle Paul calls Timothy, and also Titus, his own son. This seems to be Mark the evangelist, who was called John Mark, was Barnabas's sister's son, and his mother's name was

Mary; (see ^{<51040>}Colossians 4:10 ^{<41212>}Acts 12:12,25). He is said ^{f108} to be the interpreter of Peter, and to have wrote his Gospel from what he heard from him; and who approved of it, and confirmed it, and indeed it is said to be his.

Ver. 14. *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, “with an holy kiss”; and so some copies, as in (^{<51616>}Romans 16:16) and elsewhere; (see Gill on “ ^{<51616>}Romans 16:16”); and intends such a kiss, as is not only opposite to everything that is lascivious and impure, but is expressive of true love and affection, and is hearty and sincere: and such a love the Jews call, as the apostle does here, *wmyj rd hqyçn*, “a kiss of love” ^{f109}; for as Philo the Jew ^{f110} observes, a kiss and love differ, the one may be without the other, a mere compliment, a show of friendship, and not arise from sincere love.

Peace with you all, that are in Christ Jesus; who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and appeared to be in him by the effectual calling; and were at least by profession in him, and were in Christ mystical, and incorporated in a Gospel church; the Arabic version reads, “who are in the love of Jesus Christ”. To these the apostle wishes peace, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. The Vulgate Latin reads “grace”, which is most usual in Paul’s epistles. The epistle is closed with

Amen, as is common; the apostle wishing that this might be the case, and believing that it would be.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 3.

Ft2 -- Harmony, etc. Vol. I. p. 335.

Ft3 -- Fabricii Bibliothec. Graec. 50:4. c. 5. sect. 10. p. 164.

Ft4 -- Scorpiace, c. 12.

Ft5 -- Testimon. ad Quirin. 50:3. c. 36, 37, 39.

Ft6 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 1.

Ft7 -- Apud Euseb. ib. 50:4. c. 23.

Ft8 -- Ib. 50:7. c. 14. Hieron. Script. Ecclesiastes Catalog. sect. 75.

Ft9 -- Ib. 50:8. c. 12.

Ft10 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 289. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 602. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5.

Ft11 -- Geograph. 50:5. c. 6.

Ft12 -- Polyhist. c. 57.

Ft13 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 51. 3. & in Exodus fol. 33. 2. & 35. 4.

Ft14 -- Adv. Judaeos, c. 7. ad Scapulam, c. 3.

Ft15 -- Eccl. Hist. 50:6. c. 19.

Ft16 -- lb. 50:8. 12.

Ft17 -- Eccl. Hist. Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 2. c. 3. p. 11. c. 7. p. 117. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 4. c. 9. p. 350, 390. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 605, 606. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 3.

Ft18 -- C. 53.

Ft19 -- Ib. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5.

Ft20 -- Epist. 50:10. ep. 97.

- Ft21** -- Eccl. Hist. 50:8. c. 5, 6.
- Ft22** -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. c. 9. p. 390. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 601, 602. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 3.
- Ft23** -- T. Hieros. Masser Sheni, fol. 56. 3. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 2.
- Ft24** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 150. 3.
- Ft25** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 131. 2.
- Ft26** -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 34. 3.
- Ft27** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 22. 1.
- Ft28** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 168. 4.
- Ft29** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 19. 3. & passim.
- Ft30** -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 1. & passim.
- Ft31** -- T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 119. 2.
- Ft32** -- Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Beracot, c. 7. sect. 1.
- Ft33** -- Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1, 2, etc.
- Ft34** -- Targum in ²⁰⁰⁷Hosea 1:7. & 3:2. & in ²⁰⁰⁷Joel 2:17.
- Ft35** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 102. 3.
- Ft36** -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 59. 1. & Nedarim, fol. 89. 2.
- Ft37** -- Kimchi in ²⁰⁰⁵Isaiah 2:2.
- Ft38** -- Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 1. & Bartenora in ib. Zohar in Exodus fol. 62. 1. & 78. 2.
- Ft39** -- Targum, Jarchi, & Kimchi, in ²⁰⁰⁵Isaiah 40:6.
- Ft40** -- T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 22. 1. & 48. 2. & 62. 1. & 97. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Issure Bia, c. 14. sect. 11. & Eduth, c. 13. sect. 2.
- Ft41** -- Jarchi in Cant. 5. 12.
- Ft42** -- Jarchi, Aben Ezra, & Kimchi, in ²⁵⁰¹Isaiah 55:1. Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 26. 1.

- Ft43** -- Aeneid. 50:1.
- Ft44** -- Eustathius in Homer. Iliad. 1.
- Ft45** -- Neve Shalom apud Caphtor, fol. 14. 1.
- Ft46** -- R. Alshech. in Hagg. 2:7, 8, 9, 10.
- Ft47** -- Neve Shalom apud Caphtor, fol. 88. 2. Vid. Raziel. fol. 33. 1.
- Ft48** -- De Aroan. Cathol. Ver. 50:3. c. 21.
- Ft49** -- Targum in ^{<1788>}Esther 3:8. & 5:13. & 7:4.
- Ft50** -- Targum Hierosol. in ^{<0233>}Genesis 21:33. Targum Jon. in ^{<0235>}Genesis 23:15. Targum in ^{<1810>}Proverbs 31:10. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 2. 3. & sect. 11. fol. 9. 3.
- Ft51** -- Baal Hatturim in loc.
- Ft52** -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 13. Tzeror Hammot, fol. 78. 3.
- Ft53** -- Misn. Pesachim, c. 10. sect. 5. Haggada Shel Pesach, p. 23. Maimon. Hilchot Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 5.
- Ft54** -- T. Hieros. Beracot, c. 4. fol. 7. 1.
- Ft55** -- Cabala Denudata, par. 2. p. 8.
- Ft56** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 93. 3.
- Ft57** -- Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 1.
- Ft58** -- Paraen. ad Demos Orat. 1.
- Ft59** -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 85. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 53. 3. & 90. 1.
- Ft60** -- R. Moses Haddarsan apud Galatin. de Aeanis Cathol. Verit. 50:6. c. 2.
- Ft61** -- R. Sol. Urbin Ohel Moed, fol. 64. 1.
- Ft62** -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 43. 1.
- Ft63** -- De Agricultura, p. 194, 195.
- Ft64** -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 104. 2. Chagiga, fol. 4. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 67.

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Ft65 -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 6. sect. 1.

Ft66 -- T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 7. 4.

Ft67 -- Sepher Musar apud Drus. de Quaesitis, Ep. 54. & in loc.

Ft68 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 59. 1. & Sepher Musar apud Drusium in loc.

Ft69 -- Apud. Buxtorf. Chald. Gram. p. 389.

Ft70 -- T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 59. 1.

Ft71 -- Kimchi in Psal. 34:17.

Ft72 -- Aben Ezra & Kimchi in Psal. 34:14.

Ft73 -- Jarchi.

Ft74 -- Jarchi & Menachem apud ib. & Aben Ezra in loc.

Ft75 -- Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 14.

Ft76 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 2.

Ft77 -- In Pirke Eliezer, c. 23.

Ft78 -- Elmacin. Hist. apud Hottinger. Smegma Orient. 50:1. c. 8. p. 249.

Ft79 -- In ^{<0065>}Genesis 6:15.

Ft80 -- Targum Jon. in ^{<0081>}Deuteronomy 3:11. T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 61. 1.

Ft81 -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 37. 2. Targum Jon. & Jarchi in ^{<0143>}Genesis 14:13.

Ft82 -- Targum Jon. in ^{<0143>}Genesis 14:13.

Ft83 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 23.

Ft84 -- Pocock. Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 38.

Ft85 -- Eutyhii Annal. p. 43. Elmacin. Hist. 50:1. c. 1. p. 12. Patricides, p. 10. Apud Hottinger, Smegma Orient. 50:1. c. 8. p. 251, 252.

Ft86 -- T. Hieros. Terumot, fol. 40. 4.

- Ft87** -- Maimon. Hilch Tephilla, c. 4. sect. 17.
- Ft88** -- T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 55. 1.
- Ft89** -- Midrash Kohelet, fol. 79. 4.
- Ft90** -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 60. 1. Caphtor, fol. 70. 2.
- Ft91** -- Jarchi in Numbers 179. apud Grotium in loc.
- Ft92** -- De Agricultura, p. 195.
- Ft93** -- T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 25. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 54. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Issure Mizbeach, c. 4. sect. 5, 6.
- Ft94** -- Comment. in ~~3108~~ Zechariah 11:8.
- Ft95** -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 56. 2.
- Ft96** -- Dictionar. Syr. Chald. p. 102.
- Ft97** -- In Misn. Bava Kama, c. 6. sect. 2.
- Ft98** -- Bartenora in Misn. Bava Kama, c. 6. sect. 2.
- Ft99** -- Vide Paschaliū de Coronis, 50:6. c. 1. p. 339. c. 16. p. 391. c. 18. p. 399. c. 19. p. 413.
- Ft100** -- Ib. 50:3. c. 11. p. 178.
- Ft101** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 60. 3.
- Ft102** -- Pirke Abot, c. 6. sect. 1.
- Ft103** -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 41. 4. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 82. fol. 41. 4. & Jarchi & Aruch in Mattanot Cehuna in ib.
- Ft104** -- Lex. Cabal. p. 231, 417.
- Ft105** -- Eccl. Hist. 50:2. c. 15.
- Ft106** -- T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 69. 2. & 71. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
- Ft107** -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 24. 1.
- Ft108** -- Papias apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 39. Tertullian. adv. Marcion, 50:4. c. 5. Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccl. sect. 2. 18.
- Ft109** -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 60. 3, 4.

Ft110 -- Quis rerum divin. Haeres. p. 486, 487.