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A VIEW OF THE
COVENANT OF WORKS

THOMAS BOSTON

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A View of the Covenant of Works

from the Sacred Records

by Thomas Boston

WHEREIN

THE PARTIES IN THAT COVENANT, THE MAKING OF IT, ITS PARTS, CONDITIONARY AND PROMISSORY, AND MINATORY; OUR FATHER ADAM'S BREAKING OF IT; THE IMPUTATION OF THAT BREACH TO HIS POSTERITY; AND THE STATE OF MAN UNDER THAT BROKEN COVENANT, AND UNDER THE OURSE THEREOF, ARE DISTINCTLY CONSIDERED:

TOGETHER WITH

A PARTICULAR APPLICATION OF THE SUBJECT, FOR THE CONVICTION BOTH OF SAINTS AND SINNERS

"Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat Sighing, through all her works, gave signs of woe, That all was lost."—MILTON.

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PREFACE

THOUGH the doctrines and precepts of Christianity are unalterable in their nature, and must necessarily be the same in all ages and places; yet we find that the foolish caprice of men has made them appear in various shapes, in different periods and countries.

In the golden days of Christianity, before men had learned the art of making gain of godliness in a literal sense, and contracted the ridiculous humour of modelling religion according to their respective tastes and tempers, the religion of Jesus was then seen in its native simplicity, unadulterated with the unnatural additions and embellishments of human invention. In process of time, when it was found that religion was not unsubservient to worldly interest, some of its votaries, inclining to make the kingdom of Christ resemble the kingdoms of this world, stripped religion in a great measure of its

native unadorned simplicity, and dressed it in garments of their own manufacture.

This dangerous spirit of innovating, when it once begins, knows no bounds or limits. It is like a river, or flood, whose current has been stopped, when once let loose it will disregard its proper channel, and carry every thing down with its impetuous torrent. The rapid progress which this wild spirit has made, is clearly seen in those enormous corruptions which gradually crept into the Church of Rome, until at length she arrived at the monstrous absurdity of a wafer god, created by the benediction of a priest.

It had not however been so fatal to the interests of true religion, if the inventions of men had been confined to circumstantials, or things of lesser importance. Had this been the case, the blessed religion of Jesus would not have had so much reason to put on her widow's weeds. The Christian world was pleased to indulge some ingenious triflers in forming refined theories of the creation of all things, and was not offended whether they chose a volcano or a long tailed comet for the instrument of their dissolution; nor has the Christian denied the same gracious indulgence to such of the same kidney as have tried to lash their lingering "moments into speed," by attempting curious calculations with respect to the prophecies in the book of the Revelation, nor will he laugh, I am persuaded, when they out-live their calculations. A decent company will not readily quarrel with a conceited cook for garnishing the dishes with herbs that are not eatable; but if he infuses these herbs into the sauce, every one who regards his life and health, will immediately take the alarm, and refuse to eat. In like manner the friends of Jesus, for the sake of peace, will be disposed to bear with men's foibles and humours, when they are, comparatively speaking, harmless, and do not alter the system, or affect the essentials of our holy religion; but, on the other hand, if men take it into their heads to new-model the system of Christianity, and to prescribe a new plan of salvation, such criminal liberty can never be permitted, and those who regard the

health and welfare of their souls, will neither taste, relish, nor digest such poisonous unwholesome food.

That such attempts have been made (and with considerable success too), the present state of the religious world is a sufficient proof. The rusty armour of Pelagius and Socinus has, with unparalleled effrontery, been buckled on, and the self-flattering doctrines of Arminius have, with sanguine hopes of success, been furbished up anew. Nor has the wild-fire stopt here. As Pelagius took away original sin, another adventurer, determined not to be out-done by the arch-heretic, at one blow rids us of actual transgression. Strange hypothesis! Sin, revelation as well as experience and fact tell us, has an actual existence in the world. There are only two kinds of it, viz. original and actual; how then can any of these species of sin exist, if man is guilty of neither?

One could scarce believe that such chimeras as these would ever enter into men's heads, to whom the uncorrupted sources of divine truth are accessible. But the truth is this:—Men have generally formed such conceptions of the present state of human nature, and the extent of its powers, as they wish to be true, and wishing them to be true, have asserted them to be so; and after dressing her up in a gay attire of their own making, to complete her honour, and fix the crown of glory upon her head, have complacently enough given her salvation of her own working out. Hence it is, that human merit and personal righteousness pass so currently in this refined age as the only, conditions of our acceptance with God, and justification in his sight. The success of this modern method of Christian-making is easily accounted for. For as it ascribes the whole praise of his salvation to man himself, it is much more agreeable to the pride of the human heart, than the gospel method of salvation, which resolves the whole into the free grace of God in Christ Jesus. But though such a scheme of salvation is greedily swallowed by the human heart, yet if it has not the sanction of the infallible oracles of truth, it must be looked upon as "a cunningly devised fable."

Whilst such unscriptural principles as these, with respect to the way of access to the divine favour, are assiduously propagated by some, and greedily swallowed by others, the following publication cannot be deemed an unseasonable one. It turns upon a capital article in the Christian system, upon our notions of which all our views of the method of acceptance with God must depend. For if one man maintains that human nature, by proper culture and improvement, may acquire strength and integrity equal to that which it had in the days of primæval rectitude, salvation by works will to him appear quite practicable. But on the other hand, if another man, according to sacred writ, believes that the descendants of Adam are obnoxious to the curse of the law, and "dead in trespasses and sins," he will clearly see the necessity of Christ's satisfaction to remove the one, and the power of the Spirit to raise from the other.

As the following sheets therefore are designed to give us the scriptural account of the original transactions betwixt God and the first parent of the human race, to express, the nature and extent of the effects of the fall, and consequently to lead us to right conceptions of the method of salvation prescribed in the gospel; they will not, the editor fondly hopes, be an unacceptable offering to the public.

As to the performance itself, the reader, when it comes into his hand, must judge of its merit. To attempt a character of it, would be too delicate a task for the pen of so near a relation as the author's grandson. He only begs leave to inform the public, that the work is genuine, and is printed from the author's manuscript, without any alterations or additions, but such as are merely verbal, and do not affect the sense. It was preached in a course of sermons to his own congregation by the worthy author, in the latter end of the year 1721, and in the beginning of the year 1722. And it appears from the following paragraph, extracted from his diary, that he was led to undertake the subject, on account of the controversy agitated before several General Assemblies of this National Church, concerning a book entitled "The Marrow of Modern Divinity." "I was now led,"

says the author, "for my ordinary, to treat of the two covenants, which lasted a long time. I began on the covenant of works, August 27, this year [1721], and handling it at large from several texts, I insisted thereon till May in the following year. I studied it with considerable earnestness and application, being prompted thereto, as to the close consideration of the other covenant too, afterwards, by the state the doctrine in this church was then arrived at."—N.B. The author here alludes to the controversy above mentioned.

The Editor did not think himself at liberty to change its original form of sermons. He has, however, for the ease of the reader, divided the treatise into parts, and added general titles to them, as well as to the subdivisions of each part, which he thought himself sufficiently warranted to do, as the author himself has followed the same method in his "View of the Covenant of Grace."

The reader will find, in the book, several references to the celebrated Dr. Witsius' "Economy of the Covenants," which, though they are not in the original manuscript, the Editor has added, with a view of referring the reader to that great work, for a further illustration of some of the subjects of this essay.

It would be unnecessary to offer to the public the reasons why this performance remained so long in manuscript, or why it now emerges from its obscurity so long after its rev. Author's death. Readers of a certain class will perhaps think that it has come to light soon enough, and those of another complexion will not relish it less because they have wanted it long. It now ventures out an orphan into the world; and as some of the same family ["The Fourfold State," &c., &c.], have met with a candid reception from the public, the orphan hopes, even under the disadvantages common to posthumous publications, that it will meet with some regard for its parent's sake.

MICHAEL BOSTON.

PART I

**OF THE TRUTH AND NATURE OF THE
COVENANT OF WORKS**

GENESIS 2:17

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

INTRODUCTION

MY design is, under the divine conduct, to open up unto you the two covenants of works and grace; and that because in the knowledge and right application of them the work of our salvation lies; the first covenant shewing us our lost state, and the second holding forth the remedy in Jesus Christ; the two things which, for the salvation of souls, I have always thought it necessary chiefly to inculcate. And I think it the more necessary to treat of these subjects, that, in these our declining days, the nature of both these covenants is so much perverted by some, and still like to be more so. And as I desire to lay a good foundation among you, while I have opportunity; so I intreat all of you, and particularly the younger sort, to hearken and hear for the time to come. I begin with the first covenant to shew the nature of it from this text, "But of the tree of the knowledge," &c.

In which words we have an account of the original transaction between God and our first father Adam in paradise, while yet in the state of primitive integrity. In which the following things are to be remarked, being partly expressed and partly implied.

1. The Lord's making over to him a benefit by way of a conditional promise, which made the benefit a debt upon the performing of the condition. This promise is a promise of life, and is included in the threatening of death, thus; If thou eat not of the tree of the knowledge, &c., thou shalt live; even as in the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" is plainly implied, Thou shalt preserve thy own life and the life of others. And thus it is explained by Moses; Rom. 10:5, "The man which doth those things shall live by them." Besides,

the license given him to eat of all the other trees, and so of the tree of life, which had a sacramental use, imports this promise.

2. The condition required to entitle him to this benefit; namely, obedience. It is expressed in a prohibition of one particular, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." There was a twofold law given to Adam; the natural law, which was concreated with him, engraven on his heart in his creation. For it is said, Gen. 1:27, that "God created man in his own image;" compared with Eph. 4:24, "That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." This law was afterwards promulgated on Mount Sinai, being much obliterated by sin. Another law was the symbolical law, mentioned in the text, which, not being known by nature's light, was revealed to Adam, probably by an audible voice. By this God chose to try, and by an external action, exemplify his obedience to the natural law concreated with him. And this being a thing in its own nature altogether indifferent, the binding of it upon him by the mere will of the divine lawgiver, did clearly import the more strong tie of the natural law upon him in all the parts of it. Thus perfect obedience was the condition of this covenant.

3. The sanction, or penalty in case of the breach of the covenant, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." For if death was entailed on a doing of that which was only evil, because it was forbidden; much more might Adam understand it to be entailed on his doing of anything forbidden, because evil, or contrary to the nature or will of God, the knowledge of which was impressed on his mind in his creation. The sanction is plainly expressed, not the promise; because the last was plainly enough signified to him in the tree of life, and he had ample discoveries of God's goodness and bounty, but none of his justice, at least to himself. And it does not appear that the angels were yet fallen; or if they were, that Adam knew of it.

4. Adam's going into the proposal, and acceptance of those terms, is sufficiently intimated to us by his objecting nothing against it. Thus the Spirit of God teaches us Jonah's repentance and yielding at length to the Lord, after a long struggle, chap. 4:11; as also Adam's own going into the covenant of grace, Gen. 3:15. Besides, his knowledge could not but represent to him how beneficial a treaty this was; his upright will could not but comply with what a bountiful God laid on him; and he, by virtue of that treaty, claimed the privilege of eating of the other trees, and so of the tree of life, as appears from Eve's words, Gen. 3:3, "But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

Now it is true, we have not here the word covenant; yet we must not hence infer, that there is no covenant in this passage, more than we may deny the doctrine of the Trinity and sacraments, because those words do not occur where these things are treated of in scripture, nay, are not to be found in the scripture at all. But as in those cases, so here we have the thing; for the making over of a benefit to one, upon a condition, with a penalty, gone into by the party it is proposed to, is a covenant, a proper covenant, call it as you will.

The Covenant of Works, between God and Adam, a proper covenant.

The truth deducible from the words is this;—

DOCT.—There was a covenant of works, a proper covenant, between God and Adam the father of mankind.

In handling this important point, I shall,

I. Confirm the great truth expressed in the doctrinal note, and evince the being of such a covenant.

II. Explain the nature of this covenant.

III. Conclude with practical uses.

The truth of the Covenant of Works confirmed

1. I shall confirm this great truth, and evince the being of such a covenant. It is altogether denied by the Arminians that there was any such covenant, and amongst ourselves by Professor Simson, that it was a proper covenant. The weight of this matter lies here, that if the covenant made with Adam was not a proper covenant, he could not be a proper representing head; and if he was not, then there cannot be a proper imputation of Adam's sin unto his posterity. None could ever dream, but there must be a manifest difference betwixt covenants between God and man, and those between men and men. There is no manner of equality betwixt God and man; God could require all duty of men without any covenant; yea, they have nothing but what is from him, and so owe it to him. But those things do not hinder, that, upon God's condescending to enter into a covenant with man, there may be a proper covenant betwixt them. Though all similitudes here must halt; yet let us suppose a father to propose to his son, that if he will obey his orders, and especially in one point give him punctual obedience, for instance, labour his vineyard, he will give him a certain sum of money; and the son having nothing to labour it with, the father furnishes him with all things necessary thereto; the son accepts of this proposal. Can any man say that there is not a proper bargain, or covenant, in this case betwixt the father and his son, although the son was tied by the bond of nature to obey his father's commands in all this antecedently to the bargain, and though he has nothing to labour it with, but what he has from the father? Let him perform his father's orders now according to the covenant, and he can challenge the sum as a debt, which he could not do before. For proof of this, consider,

1. Here is a concurrence of all that is necessary to constitute a true and proper covenant of works. The parties contracting, God and man; God requiring obedience as the condition of life; a penalty fixed in case of breaking; and man acquiescing in the proposal. The force

of this cannot be evaded, by comparing it with the consent of subjects to the laws of an absolute prince. For such a law proposed by a prince, promising a reward upon obedience to it, is indeed the proposing of a covenant, the which the subject consenting to for himself and his, and taking on him to obey, does indeed enter into a covenant with the prince, and having obeyed the law may claim the reward by virtue of paction. And so the covenant of works is ordinarily in scripture called "the law," being in its own nature a pactional law.

2. It is expressly called a covenant in scripture, Gal. 4:2, "For these are the two covenants, the one from the Mount Sinai," &c. This covenant from Mount Sinai was the covenant of works as being opposed to the covenant of grace, namely, the law of the ten commandments, with promise and sanction, as before expressed. At Sinai it was renewed indeed, but that was not its first appearance in the world. For there being but two ways of life to be found in scripture, one by works, the other by grace; the latter hath no place, but where the first is rendered ineffectual; therefore the covenant of works was before the covenant of grace in the world; yet the covenant of grace was promulgated quickly after Adam's fall; therefore the covenant of works behoved to have been made with him before. And how can one imagine a covenant of works set before poor impotent sinners, if there had not been such a covenant with man in his state of integrity? Hos. 6:7, "But as for them; like Adam, they have transgressed the covenant." Our translators set the word Adam on the margin. But in Job 31:33, they translate the very same word, "as Adam." This word occurs but three times in scripture, and still in the same sense. Job 31:33, "If I covered my transgressions, as Adam," Psalm 82:7, "But ye shall die like Adam." Compare ver. 6, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High;" compared with Luke 3:38, "Adam, which was the son of God." And also here, Hos. 6:7. While Adam's hiding his sin, and his death are made an example, how natural is it that his transgression, that led the way to all, be made so too? This is the proper and literal sense of the words; it is so read by several, and is certainly the meaning of it.

3. We find a law of works opposed to the law of faith, Rom. 3:27. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith." This law of works is the covenant of works, requiring works, or obedience, as the condition pleadable for life; for otherwise the law as a rule of life requires works too. Again, it is a law that does not exclude boasting, which is the very nature of the covenant of works, that makes the reward to be of debt. And further, the law of faith is the covenant of grace; therefore the law of works is the covenant of works. So Rom. 6:14, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." And this was the way of life without question, which was given to Adam at first.

4. There were sacramental signs and seals of this transaction in paradise. As it has pleased the Lord still to deal with man in the way of a covenant, so to append seals to these covenants. God's covenant with Noah, that he would not destroy the earth again with water, had the rainbow as a sign of it to confirm it, Gen. 9:12, 13. The covenant with Abraham had circumcision; that with the Israelites, circumcision and the passover; and the new covenant with the New Testament church, baptism and the Lord's supper. So to the covenant of works God appended the two trees; the tree of life, Gen. 3:22, "And now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever;" and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, mentioned in the words of the text. When we find then confirming seals of this transaction, we must own it to be a covenant.

5. Lastly, All mankind are by nature under the guilt of Adam's first sin; Rom. 5:12, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And they are under the curse of the law before they have committed actual sin: hence they are said to be "by nature children of wrath," Eph. 2:3, which they must needs owe to Adam's sin, as imputed to them. This must be owing to a particular relation betwixt them and him; which must either be, that he is their natural head simply, from whence they derive their natural being; but then the sins of our immediate parents, and all other mediate ones too, behoved to be

imputed rather than Adam's, because our relation to them is nearer; or because he is our federal head also, representing us in the first covenant. And that is the truth, and evidences the covenant of works made with Adam to have been a proper covenant.

The Nature of the Covenant of Works

II. I shall explain the nature of the covenant of works. In order to this, I shall consider,

1. The parties contracting in this covenant.
2. The parts of the covenant; and,
3. The seals of it.

The parties in the Covenant of Works

FIRST, I shall consider the parties contracting in this covenant: These were two.

God the first party in the covenant

First, On the one hand God himself, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Gen. 2:16, "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying," &c. God, as Creator and Sovereign Lord of man, condescended to enter into a covenant with man, his own creature and subject, whom he might have governed by a simple law, without proposing to him the reward of life. Thus it was a covenant betwixt two very unequal parties. And here God shewed,

1. His supreme authority over the creature man, founded on man's natural dependence on him as his Creator, Rom. 11:36, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." He gave him a law which he was to obey, under the greatest penalty; not only the natural law, but that positive law depending on the mere will of the Lawgiver; Job 25:2, "Dominion and fear are with him." The truth is,

it is a flower of the imperial crown of heaven, due to him only who is absolutely supreme, to stamp mere will into a law binding men.

2. His abundant goodness, in annexing such a great reward to man's service, which it could never merit; Heb. 11:6, "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Here was a full fountain of goodness opened afresh, after he had let out signal goodness to man in his creation and settlement in the world, after all appears a method how to make him eternally happy in another and better world.

3. His admirable condescension, in stooping to make a covenant with his own creature. It is true he was a holy creature, yet he was but a creature. What God might have exacted of him by mere authority, he is pleased to require by compact, so making himself debtor to man upon man's obedience, which without a covenant he could not have been.

Adam, as a public person, the other party in the Covenant

Secondly, On the other hand was Adam, the father of all mankind. He must be considered here under a twofold notion.

1. As a righteous man, morally perfect, endued with sufficient power and abilities to believe and do whatever God should reveal to or require of him, fully able to keep the law. That Adam was thus furnished when the covenant was made with him,

1st, Appears from plain scripture; Eccl. 7:29, "God hath made man upright." There was an agreeableness of the powers of his soul to the holy law of God, which is habitual righteousness, here asserted; and likewise, Gen. 1:31, "God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." Not only were all things made good, but very good. Everything had the goodness agreeable to its nature; it was fit for the end God made it for; and so man, being made to serve God, was fitted for that service. So man was very good morally; for that is agreeable to his rational nature, without which he could not be reckoned very good.

2dly, Man was created in the image of God, Gen. 1:27. And so,

(1.) His mind was endowed with knowledge; for that is a part of the image of God in man, Col. 3:10, where believers are said to "have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." We have a most ample testimony of this, Gen. 3:22, (Heb.), "Behold the man that was one of us, to know good and evil." He was sufficiently able to know good and evil; good, to follow it; and evil, to avoid it. He had a light of knowledge within him, which, rightly improved, might have directed his way, through all dangers, during the time of his trial.

(2.) His will was endowed with righteousness, Eph. 4:24, where "the new man" is said to be "after God created in righteousness." It was, by its natural set received in creation, straight to the will of God. The holy law was not only written in his mind by the knowledge of it; but in his heart, by the inclinations of his will towards it. No contrary bent was in him, nor propensity to evil; that was inconsistent with the image of God in perfection, and would have been sin in him.

(3.) His affections were holy; hence, Eph. 4:24, forecited, "the new man" is also said to be "after God created in true holiness." This speaks out the purity and orderliness of his affections. He was not created without passions and affections, as love, joy, delight, &c., for these belong to man's nature; Acts 14:15, where the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, said to the people at Lystra, "We are men of like passions with you." These affections are like winds to the ship at sea; but there were no poisonous blasts to be found among them; and no violent and impetuous blasts neither, as is the case since the fall. But there was a pleasant, regular gale of them, whereby he might have made way through all dangers.

(4.) He had an executive power, whereby he was capable to do what he knew to be his duty, and inclined to do. He was made very good, Gen. 1:31, forecited; which implies not only a power to do good, but a facility in doing it free from all clogs and hinderances. Now, the spirit

may be willing, but the flesh is weak. But there was no such thing with Adam; there was no mixture of corruption in his soul, and nothing from the body to hinder his course of obedience.

3dly, and Lastly, If he had not been so, that covenant could not have been made with him. It was inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God to have required that of his creature, which he had not ability to perform given him by his Creator. Wherefore before Adam could be obliged to perfect obedience, he behoved to have ability competent for it; otherwise that saying of the wicked and slothful servant had been true; Matth. 25:24, "Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed." The case now is not the same with us, Adam having received and lost that power for himself and us. For although one cannot demand payment of a debt which he never lent or gave any manner of way; yet having once lent the sum, he may require it of the debtor and his heirs, though they be not able to pay.

Thus was man perfectly furnished and fitted to enter into this covenant. Let me therefore improve this point in a very few words, before I proceed further.

USE 1. How low is man now brought, how unlike to what he was at his creation! Alas! man is now ruined, and sin is the cause of that fatal ruin.

2. What madness is it for men to look to that covenant for salvation, when they are nowise fit for the way of it, having lost all the furniture and ability proper for the observation thereof.

3. Lastly, See how ye stand with respect to this covenant; whether ye are discharged from it, and brought within the bond of the new covenant in Christ or not. But I proceed,

2. Adam, in the covenant of works, is to be considered as the first man, 1 Cor. 15:47, in whom all mankind was included. And he was,

1st, The natural root of mankind, from which all the generations of men on the face of the earth spring. This is evident from Acts 17:26, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth;" which determines all men to be of one stock, one original, or common parentage. And this also appears from Gen. 3:20, "Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living;" which determines that to be only Adam's family. And of him was also Eve, who was not only formed for him but of him, Gen. 2:21, 22, 23. Thus Adam was the compend of the whole world.

2dly, The moral root, a public person, and representative of mankind. And as such the covenant of works was made with him. As to this representation by Adam, we may note,

(1.) That the man Christ was not included in it; Adam did not represent him, as he stood covenanting with God. This is manifest, in that Christ is opposed to Adam, as the last and second Adam to the first Adam, 1 Cor. 15:45, one representative to another, ver. 48. And if that covenant had been kept, Christ had not come, whose work it is to repair the loss by the breach of the first covenant, by establishing another covenant for that end. Besides, Christ was not born, as all others are, by virtue of that blessing of fruitfulness given before the fall, under the covenant of works, while it yet remained unbroken; but by virtue of a special promise given after the fall, which promise was the erecting of another covenant, namely, the covenant of grace, whereof Christ was the head, Gen. 3:15.

(2.) Whether Eve was included in this representation, is not so clear. I find she is excepted by some. It is plain, that Adam was the original whence she came, as he and she together are of all their posterity. He was her head, Eph. 5:23, "For the husband is the head of the wife." The thread of the history, Gen. 2, gives us the making of the covenant of works with Adam before the formation of Eve. The covenant itself runs in terms as delivered to one person, ver. 16, 17, "Thou mayest—Thou shalt." From whence it seems to me that she was included. It is true, she fell by her own transgression; and so might any of Adam's

posterity have fallen to themselves, as she did to herself, during the time of probation in this covenant; but the ruin of mankind was not completed till he did eat. And therefore Adam is first convicted, though Eve was first in the transgression, Gen. 3:9.

(3.) Without question, all his posterity by ordinary generation were included in it. He stood for them all in that covenant, and was their federal head, that covenant being made with him as a public person representing them all. For,

[1.] The relation which the scripture teaches betwixt Adam and Christ evinces this. The one is called the first Adam, the other the last Adam, 1 Cor. 15:45; the one the first man, the other the second man, ver. 47. Now, Christ is not the second man, but as he is a public person, representing all his elect seed in the covenant of grace, being their federal head; therefore Adam was a public person representing all his natural seed in the covenant of works, being their federal head; for if there be a second man there must be a first man; if a second representative there must be a first. Again, Christ is not the last Adam, but as the federal head of the elect, bringing salvation to them by his covenant keeping; therefore the first Adam was the federal head of those whom he brought death upon by his covenant-breaking, and these are all, ver. 22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." And therefore the apostle, Rom. 5:14, calls Adam a figure or type of Christ. Accordingly each of these representatives are held forth with their respective parties represented by them, being made like unto them, 1 Cor. 15:48, "As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."

[2.] Adam's breaking of the covenant is in law their breaking of it; it is imputed to them by a holy God, whose judgment is according to truth, and therefore can never impute to men the sin of which they are not guilty. Rom. 5:12—"All have sinned." Now, if we enquire what is the particular sin here meant; the apostle makes it evident, that it is Adam's first sin, vers. 15, 19,—"If through the offence of one many

be dead.—As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men." And that sin was the breaking of the covenant. Now, we could never be reckoned breakers of the covenant in him, if we were not reckoned first makers of it in him; that is, that Adam was our federal head in that covenant, so that it was made with us in him.

[3.] The ruins by the breach of that covenant fall on all mankind, not excepting those who are not guilty of actual sin. Hence believers are said to have been "the children of wrath, even as others," Eph. 2:3, and that "death hath reigned over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," Rom. 5:14. All were excluded from paradise, and from the tree of life, in the loins of Adam; the ground was cursed to them, as well as to him. Yea, all die spiritually, and that in him, 1 Cor. 15:22, forecited. Yet it is only "the soul that sinneth, shall die," Ezek. 18:4. They thus die who are not chargeable with personal sins, Rom. 5:14, also above cited. It must be by virtue of that original threatening then, Gen. 3:17,—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And if they die by virtue of that threatening, they were under that law to which it was annexed; but they could no other way be under it, than as in Adam their federal head and representative.

[4.] Lastly, The sin and death we come under by Adam, is still restrained unto that sin of his by which he brake the covenant of works, Rom. 5:15–19, "Through the offence of one many be dead. The judgment was by one to condemnation.—By one man's offence death reigned by one.—By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation.—By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." As for Adam's after sins, the scripture takes no notice of them that way. If our communion with him in sin and death did depend merely on his natural relation to us, the conveyance of guilt from him unto us could not have ceased, till his whole guilt contracted all his life over had disburdened itself upon us; because the natural relation ceased not, but was still the same. It depended then upon some supervenient relation, the which could be no other but that he was constituted a public person, representing us in the

first covenant; the which ceased, when he went in for himself into the second covenant. The ship whereof he was made steersman being split, the covenant of grace, as another ship came up, of which Christ was the steersman; and this covenant was let out as a rope to hale the passengers to land. This Adam laid hold on, and so quitted his first post, that his after mismanagement could no more harm as formerly.

The equity of this representation

This representation was just and equal, though we did not make choice of Adam for that effect. The justice and equity of it appears, in that,

1. God made the choice; he pitched on Adam as a fit person to represent all mankind; and there is no mending of God's work, which is perfect, Eccl. 3:14. There was infinite wisdom at making of it, and sovereign authority to establish it. The covenant proposed to Adam, could not but in duty be consented to by him; and there is the same obligation to his posterity. If judges on earth may name and give tutors to minors, might not the Judge of all the earth do the same to his own creatures?

2. Adam was undoubtedly the most fit choice. He was the common father of us all; so being our natural head, he was fittest to be our federal head. He was in case for managing the bargain to the common advantage, Eccl. 7:29, being "made upright," and furnished with sufficient abilities. And his own interest was on the same bottom with that of his posterity. Thus his abilities, and natural affection concurring with his own interest, spoke him to be a fit person for that office.

3. Lastly, The choice was of a piece with the covenant. The covenant, in its own nature most advantageous for man, though it could not be profitable to God, Job 35:7, was a free benefit and gift on God's part; for as much as man had not a claim to the life promised, but by the covenant. So that as the covenant owed its being, not to nature, but a

positive constitution of God; so did the choice owe its being to the same. God joined the covenant and representation together; and so the consent of Adam or his posterity to the one, was a consenting to the other.

The parts of the Covenant of Works

SECONDLY, I come now to discourse of the parts of the covenant. These are the things agreed upon betwixt God and man in this transaction; the which God proposed, and man assented to, which made it properly God's covenant. It was himself who settled and drew all the articles of it, by himself alone; Rom. 11:34, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? (says the apostle), or who hath been his counsellor?" Nothing was left to man, but to receive, acquiesce in, and consent to it, as is manifest from the text. This was becoming the inequality of the parties; suitable to God's sovereign authority over man, whose proposals to his creature are in effect laws; and suitable to the meanness of man in his best estate, who hath nothing but what he receives, and can never profit his Maker. Hence may be inferred,

1. That for a man's entering into the covenant of grace, there is no more required but the soul's hearty consent to the proposal of the covenant made to him in the gospel. For surely there is no more required of a sinner to instate him in the second covenant, a covenant of grace, than was required of Adam in innocence to instate him in the covenant of works; Isa. 55:3, "Incline your ear, (says the Lord), and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Herein the two covenants are at least equal. What casts the balance on the side of the covenant of grace is, that it is an everlasting one, and a soul once in it can never fall out again, Cant. 3:10.

2. That surely God has made the second covenant himself; he proposes it to us, and requires us to embrace it; and has not left it to

us to frame and mould it according to our mind, and then call on him to consent to the covenant we have framed. If he drew the whole of the first covenant to innocent man, much more has he drawn the whole of the second covenant for sinners. Let them know then, that it is their duty to study what God has proposed in his gospel, to examine themselves as to their liking of that way of salvation; and if their souls be content with it as it is laid down, let them embrace it.

3. Forasmuch as faith is the soul's assent to the covenant of grace, it cannot be the condition of that covenant properly so called. For consenting to a covenant is a consenting to the condition of it, and all the rest of the parts thereof; as we see in the first covenant, and may perceive in the second also in respect of Christ, where his doing and dying were the only proper conditions which he assented to; Psalm 40:7, where he says, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me." But assenting to the condition of a covenant cannot be the condition itself properly speaking; otherwise we own faith to be the condition on our part, that is, the mean by which we are interested in Christ and the covenant, even as the woman's taking of the man may be called the condition of the marriage-covenant; which any may see is not the proper condition of it, but marriage faithfulness.

Now the parts of the covenant of works agreed upon by God and man were three; the condition to be performed by man, the promise to be accomplished to man upon his performance of the condition, and the penalty in case of man's breaking the covenant.

The Condition of the Covenant of Works

FIRST, The first part is the condition to be performed; which was obedience to the law, fulfilling the commands God gave him, by doing what they required, Rom. 10:5, upon the doing of which he might claim the promised life in virtue of the compact. So this was a covenant, a covenant properly conditional. For understanding of this, we must consider,

1. What law he was by this covenant obliged to yield obedience to. And,

2. What kind of obedience he was obliged to yield thereto.

1st, Let us consider what law he was by this covenant obliged to yield obedience to.

Man under a twofold law, Natural and Symbolical

1. The natural law, the law of the ten commandments, as the New Testament explains it, Gal. 3:10, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The sum of this law is comprehended in what our Lord says; Matth. 22:37–39, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." That this law was given to Adam, is manifest, if it is considered that he was created righteous and holy, Gen. 1:27, compared with Eph. 4:24. And all created righteousness and holiness is a conformity to the moral law, the perpetual rule of righteousness. And that he knew that law is evident, in that the knowledge of it is an essential part of righteousness and holiness, or the image of God, Col. 3:10. Moreover, the remains of this law with the very heathens, Rom. 2:15, are an evidence of its being given to Adam in perfection; as the remains of a fallen house shew that sometime a house stood there.

If it be inquired, How that law was given him? It was written on his mind and heart, Rom. 2:15; and that in his creation, Eccl. 7:29. Therefore it is called the natural law. He was no sooner a man than he was a righteous man, knowing the natural law he was under, and being conformed to it in the powers and faculties of his soul. That same law which God gave from Sinai with thunder and lightning, in all the precepts of it was breathed into Adam's soul, when God breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul.

This law was afterwards incorporated into the covenant of works, and was the chief matter of it. I say, afterwards; for the covenant of works is not so ancient as the natural law. The natural law was in being when there was no covenant of works; for the former was given to man in his creation, without paradise; the later was made with him after he was brought into paradise, Gen. 2:7, 8, 15, 16, 17. The natural law had no promise of eternal life; for God might have annihilated his creature, though he had not sinned, till once the covenant of works was made. But then God put to the natural law a promise of eternal life, and a threatening of death, and so it became a covenant of works.

How then can men make such ado against believers being delivered from the law as it is the covenant of works, as if the law could no more be a rule of life to believers if that be so? It was a rule of life to Adam before the covenant of works, and it may, yea and must be a rule of life to believers, after the covenant of works is gone as to them. God made it once the matter of the covenant of works, and in that covenant a rule of life to Adam and all his natural seed; and why may it not be made the matter of the law of Christ, and therein be a rule of life to them that are his?

To shut up this point, see your deep concern in this covenant; and consider that your help is not therein, but in laying hold on Christ, the head of the second covenant.

2. Another law which Adam was obliged, by the covenant of works, to yield obedience to, was the positive symbolical law, forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, recorded in the text. This law Adam had not, nor could have, but by revelation; for it was no part of the law of nature, being in its own nature indifferent, and altogether depending on the will of the Lawgiver, who, in a consistency with his own and man's nature too, might have appointed otherwise concerning it. But this law being once given, the natural law obliged him to the observation of it, inasmuch as it strictly bound him to obey his God and Creator in all things, binding

him to love the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. Hence it follows,

1st, That in as far as this law was obeyed, the natural law was obeyed; and the breaking of the former was the breaking of the latter also. They were but several links of one chain, constitutions of the Supreme Lawgiver, which, in point of obedience, stood and fell together.

2dly, That whatever is revealed by the Lord to be believed or to be done, the natural law of the ten commandments obliges to the believing or doing of it; Psalm 19:7, "The law of the Lord is perfect." Hence faith is reckoned a duty of the first command. The gospel reveals the object of faith, and the natural law lays on the obligation to the duty of believing.

This law was not given, because of any evil that was in the fruit itself of that tree; for "God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good," Gen. 1:31. It was not forbidden because it was evil; but evil because forbidden. Yet was the giving of that law an action becoming the divine perfections, however small the matter seems to be in itself. In the most minute things God appears greatest.

(1.) Herein man's obedience was to turn upon the precise point of respect to the will of God, which was a trial of his obedience exactly suited to the state he was then in, and by which the most glaring evidence of true obedience would have been given. So this was a most fit probatory command. To love God and one's neighbour, nature itself taught Adam. Not to have another God, worship images, take God's name in vain; to keep the Sabbath, returning once a-week only; these could not have given such a demonstration of man's obedience to his Creator, having such affinity with the nature of God, in themselves, and with his own pure nature too. As little could the commands of the second table have been so, he having no neighbour then in the world with him, and Eve only his own flesh for a considerable time after.

(2.) Thus his obedience or disobedience behoved to be most clear, conspicuous, and undeniable, not only to himself, but to other creatures capable of observation; forasmuch as this law respected an external thing obvious to sense, and the discerning of any, who yet could not judge of internal acts of obedience or disobedience. So that God might be "clear in judging," Psalm 51:4; in the eyes of angels good and bad, and of man himself.

(3.) It was most proper for asserting God's dominion over man, being a visible badge of man's subjection to God. God had made him lord of the inferior world, set him down in paradise, a place furnished with all things for necessity and delight; so it was becoming the divine wisdom and sovereign dominion, to discharge him from meddling with one tree in the garden, as a testimony of his holding all of him as his great Landlord.

(4.) It was a most proper moral instrument, and suitable mean, to retain man in his integrity, who though a happy creature, was yet a changeable one. So far was it from being a bar to his further happiness, as Satan alleged, Gen. 3:5. The tree of knowledge, as it stood under that prohibition, was a continual monitor to him to take heed to himself, a watchword to beware of the enemy; a plain lecture of his mutable state, wherein he might learn that he was yet but in favour on his good behaviour. Besides, it was a sign of emptiness hung at the door of the creation, with that inscription, "Here is not your rest;" so pointing him to God, as the alone fountain of happiness, forasmuch as there was a want even in paradise.

(5.) It was a compend of the law of nature. Love to God and one's neighbour was wrapt up in it; and all the ten commands were eminently comprehended therein. For in not eating thereof he would have testified his supreme love to God, and his due love to his posterity; and in eating thereof he cast off both, and so broke all the ten commandments.

The nature of the Obedience due by man to the Law

Secondly, Let us consider what kind of obedience to the law Adam was, by this covenant, obliged to yield, as the condition of it. To this twofold law he was to yield,

1. Perfect obedience. Imperfect obedience could not have been accepted under this covenant; neither for justification, for it would have condemned man, Gal. 3:10, formerly cited; nor under the covenant of grace could it be accepted for that end neither, Matth. 3:15; as it became the second Adam to fulfil all righteousness; nor yet could it be accepted in point of justification under that covenant, though under the covenant of grace it is. The reason is, because under the first covenant the work must be accepted for its conformity to the law, and then the person for the work's sake; but imperfect obedience could never be accepted of God for its own sake; for God is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity," Hab. 1:13. But under the second covenant the persons of believers are first accepted for Christ's sake, Eph. 1:6; and then their works for the same Christ's sake, Heb. 11:4. So then the condition of this covenant was perfect obedience, and that,

(1.) Perfect in respect of the principle of it. His nature, soul, and heart behoved always to be kept pure and untainted, as the principle of action. So the law is explained, Luke 10:25–28, "And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? and he answering, said, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou has answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." Where the least blemish is in the soul, mind, will, or affections, it must needs make the actions sinful; "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job 14:4; "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit," Matth. 7:18. Where there is any indisposition for, or reluctance to duty, there is a blemish in the frame of the soul. Therefore of necessity man behoved to retain a perfect purity in his soul, as the condition of that covenant. God gave man a heart

perfectly pure, and commanded him to keep it from being in the least tainted; put on him a fair white garment of habitual inherent righteousness, and commanded it to be kept free from the least spot, under the pain of death.

(2.) Perfect in parts, nowise defective or lame, wanting any part necessary to its integrity; James 1:4. And it behoved to be thus perfect. [1.] In respect of the parts of the law, Gal. 3:10. His obedience behoved to be as broad as the whole law, natural and positive; extending to all the commands thereof laid on him; nothing committed that the law forbade, nothing omitted that the law required. One link of this chain being broken, all was broke together; "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," James 2:10; [2.] in respect of the parts of the man, Luke 10:27, 28, forecited. His mind, will, and affections, his soul and his body, all of them behoved to be employed in obedience to the law; and it behoved to be the obedience, as of the whole law, so of the whole man. Thus was he bound to internal and external obedience in the whole compass of both, according to the law. [3.] In respect of the parts of every human action, Gal. 3:10. The law requires in every such action, a goodness of the matter, manner, and end: a failure in any of these in any one action broke this covenant. So in every action what he did behoved to be good, well done; and all to the glory of God, as the chief end. The least mismanagement in any of these, the least squint look, would have marred all.

(3.) Perfect in degrees, Luke 10:27, 28, above cited. His obedience, as the condition of the covenant, was to be not only of equal breadth with the law, but of equal height with it, in every point. Every part of every action behoved to be screwed up to that pitch determined by the law; all that was lower than it was to be rejected as sinful.

2. Adam was obliged to perpetual obedience, Gal. 3:10. Not that he was for ever to have been upon his trial; for that would have rendered the promise of life vain and fruitless, since he could never at that rate have attained the reward of his obedience. But it behoved

to be perpetual, as a condition of the covenant, during the time set by God himself for the trial; which time God has not discovered in his word. The time of this life is now the time of trial. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the room of the elect, obeyed the law about the space of thirty-three years; for so long he lived. Whatever was the time appointed for man's trial, according to the covenant; his obedience behoved to be perpetual during that time, without interruption of the course of it, without defection and apostasy from it; till that time had expired in a course of continued obedience, he could not have claimed the final reward of his work. But that time being so expired, he would have been confirmed in goodness, so that he could no more fall away, as a part of the life promised. And the covenant of works would have for ever remained as man's eternal security for, and ground of his eternal life; but no longer as a rule of his obedience, for that would have been to reduce him to the state of trial he was in before, and to have set him anew to work as a title to what he already possessed, by virtue of his supposed keeping of that covenant. Yet man could be in no state, wherein he should not owe obedience to his Creator, no not in the state of glory; and if he owed obedience still, he behoved still to have a rule; and for that effect, the law of nature, which is perpetual, would have returned to its primitive constitution, the form of the covenant of works being done away from it; and so have been man's rule in the state of confirmation. Hence it follows,

(1.) That forasmuch as the Lord Jesus Christ has mended and perfected that work, which Adam marred; believers being united to him, are so confirmed in a state of grace, that they cannot but persevere, and that for ever. Hence it is observable, that the just by faith are declared to be entitled to that very benefit which Adam was by his obedience to have been entitled to; Hab. 2:4, "The just shall live by his faith;" namely, a life which shall persevere and endure for ever. And therefore the apostle useth that scripture to prove the perseverance of believers, and the certainty of their eternal salvation; Heb. 10:38, 39, "Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving

of the soul." And believers are declared actually to have eternal life, though that life is not yet come unto its full vigour, which is reserved for heaven, John 17:3, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." 1 John 5:13, "These things have I written unto you, that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

(2.) As it is in vain for Christless sinners, utterly impotent for any good, to pretend to work that they may procure to themselves life; so believers ought not to work for life, or that they may, by their holiness and obedience, gain life. For believers in Christ have life already in him, by virtue of his working perfectly and perpetually in their room and stead; and for them to pretend so to work for it, is to cast dishonour on Christ's perfect and perpetual obedience. The truth is, holiness is a main part of that life and salvation we have by Jesus Christ. "Of him [i. e. God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us—sanctification," 1 Cor. 1:30. "Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" Tit. 3:5, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," Tit. 2:14. And were there more pressing of faith to obtain holiness, and less dividing of holiness from life and salvation, making the former the means to procure to ourselves the latter, there would be more true holiness in these dregs of time.

(3.) They that are not holy have no saving interest in Jesus Christ; and while they continue so, shall never see the face of God in peace; Heb. 12:14, "Follow—holiness," says the apostle, "without which no man shall see the Lord." Where is the man that pretends to be in Christ, and to have faith, and yet makes no conscience of a holy life, of the duties of piety towards God, righteousness and mercy towards his neighbour; but tramples on any of the ten commandments; I say to him with confidence, as the apostle Peter said to Simon Magus, Acts 8:21, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." Has Christ fulfilled the covenant

which Adam broke; and are not all that are united to him made thereupon partakers of life? How can it be otherwise according to the faithfulness of God? Surely, then, thou who art living in sin, and so art dead while thou livest, hast no saving interest in him.

(4.) Though the believer is under the law of the ten commandments as a rule of life, he is not under the law as a covenant of works in any sense; neither does the law he is under adjudge him to eternal life upon his obedience, nor lay him under the curse, and adjudge him to eternal death for his sins. But the law as to him is stript of its promise of eternal life to obedience, and of its threatening of eternal death to his sins. This is the apostle Paul's doctrine; "Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ," Rom. 7:4; "Ye are not under the law, but under grace," chap. 6:14; "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. 8:1; "That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith; but the man that doth them, shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," Gal. 3:11, 12, 13. And how can it be otherwise, unless one will say that Christ, by his perfect and perpetual obedience, has not set his people beyond the reach of the curse, nor secured their life?

3. Adam was obliged to personal obedience. Hence says the Lord, "Ye shall keep my statutes and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them," Lev. 18:5, which words the apostle Paul quotes; Rom. 10:5, "Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doth these things shall live by them." It behoved to be personal obedience. Not that every person of Adam's race, according to the original constitution, behoved to yield this obedience for himself, in order to obtain the life promised. It is true, indeed, that all Adam's children, who should have been born and grown up, before the time of his trial was expired, would have been obliged, (it would seem) to that obedience for that end, in their own persons; and if they had failed in it, the loss would have been to themselves, and to themselves only. This may be learned from the case of Eve,

noticed before. But that in case Adam had stood out the whole time of his trial, every one of his posterity after that should yet have been obliged to yield obedience for life in their own persons is what I cannot comprehend. For then, to what purpose was the representation of mankind by Adam? for what end was he constituted their federal head? It is plain, that by Adam's breaking of the covenant, death has come on them, who had no being in the world in Adam's time; and how this can be consistent with the goodness of God, and the equity of his proceedings, unless they were to have had the promised life upon running the set course of his obedience, I see not; and therefore must conclude, that after Adam's standing out the set time, all mankind then standing with him, would have been confirmed; and those who should afterwards have come into the world, would not only have had original righteousness conveyed to them from him, but have been confirmed too in holiness and happiness, so that they could not have fallen.

It is true, the covenant of works now proposes the same condition to every man under it, that it did to Adam, to be performed in his own person for himself, if he will have life by it. The reason is plain, Adam sinning is no more the representative in that covenant, to act for them; so they must take the same way every one for themselves, that he was to have taken for himself and all his posterity. While the pilot manages the ship carefully and skilfully, so as she makes her way towards the port, the passengers have nothing to do for their own safety, all is safe by his management; but if he run the ship on a rock, and split it, and make his escape, every one of the passengers must be pilot for himself, and work for his own life and safety.

But this obedience behoved to be personal in the following respects. It behoved to be performed,

(1.) By man himself, and not another for him, Lev 18:15, forecited. The covenant of works knew nothing of a surety or mediator. "In the day thou eatest thou shalt die," plainly imports, that man, the moment he sinned, broke the covenant, and was a dead man in law.

If he could have provided a surety who should have obeyed, when he disobeyed, that would not have fulfilled that covenant, or kept it. If a surety was to have place, it behoved to be by a new bargain, wherein a new representation was settled.

(2.) By one person, and not by more; that is, the righteousness of the covenant behoved to be of one piece, and not one part wrought by one, and another part by another. The sinning soul behoved to die; and imperfect righteousness could not be accepted in part, more than it could be in whole, because such righteousness is not righteousness indeed, but sinful want of conformity to the law. Hence it follows,

[1.] That God's accepting of a surety, as well as his providing one for lost sinners in the second covenant, was purely of free grace. For "in him," says the apostle, "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace," Eph. 1:7; he might have held man to the first bargain, and made all mankind utterly miserable without remedy, having once broke the first covenant. But the riches of sovereign free love and grace brought forth a new bargain, wherein a surety was admitted, when that benefit to us might have been refused; yea, and was provided by him too, when we, could never have procured one to take that burden on him for us.

[2.] That the purchase of our salvation by the precious blood of Christ, which was a full price for it, is so far from lowering the riches of free grace in it, that it exceedingly heightens the same. When you hear of free pardon and salvation to sinners, through the satisfaction of Christ, beware of imagining, that satisfaction spoils the freedom of it; but remember, that God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, might have in justice insisted on our own personal, perfect satisfying of the demands of the covenant of works; and yet such was their love and grace to poor sinners, that the Father parts with his Son to die for us, the Son lays down his life in our stead, and the Holy Spirit freely applies his purchase to sinners. So that all is of free grace to us. If it

had been consistent with the nature of God, to have forgiven sin without satisfaction, such remission would have been of free grace; but when there behoved to be a satisfaction made, and God admitted a surety, and provided the same himself, this speaks unspeakable riches of grace; As if a king should give his own son to satisfy the law for a traitor, John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

[3.] That there can be no mixing of our own righteousness, in greater or lesser measure, with the righteousness of Christ, in our justification, by the second covenant, Gal. 3:12, "For the law is not of faith; but the man that doth them shall live in them." We must betake ourselves wholly to the one or to the other. For the demands of the first covenant must be answered, by that righteousness on which we can be justified; and unless we have of our own a perfect righteousness to produce for that end, nothing we have can be accepted in that point, since there is no admitting of a pieced righteousness. And evident it is, that we cannot pretend to a perfect righteousness of our own, and therefore must go wholly to Christ for one.

The Promise of the Covenant of Works

Secondly, The promise to be accomplished to man upon his performance of the condition. That was a promise of life, Rom. 10:5, forecited, which was implied in the threatening of death in case of sinning. For understanding the promised life, we must consider the condition to be performed, two ways.

1st, In the course of its performance, while man should have been in the way running the race of his obedience to obtain the crown; while he should have been on his trials for the subsequent reward, holding the way of God's commandments, and walking in the path chalked out to him by the divine law, during the time of his probation, without going off the way in the least. In this case the promise would

have held pace with his continuance in the course of obedience. And by virtue of the covenant, he would have enjoyed a concomitant reward of life. "For in keeping of God's commands," says the Psalmist, "there is great reward," Psalm 19:11. This is evident from the terms of the covenant in the text, which manifestly imply this, namely, While thou dost not eat thereof, thou shalt surely live. Now, this promised life was twofold, natural and spiritual, each of them perfectly prosperous: for, in scripture language, to live is to live prosperously, or in prosperity, 1 Sam. 25:6. And man's prosperity in the state of integrity, could not be a mixed prosperity, as now in this sinful state, but truly perfect, without mixture of anything that might mar it. And as for the life itself, natural and spiritual, they were both given him in his creation. So then the life promised, and to be accomplished in the course of His performance of the condition of the covenant, was,

A Prosperous Natural Life Promised

1. A prosperous natural life, perfectly prosperous. The natural life was given to man by God's breathing in him the breath of life, Gen. 2:7; knitting a rational soul unto his body, and so animating it which was presently discovered by man's breathing at his nostrils. While that union betwixt the soul and body remains, man lives a natural life. And thus man should have lived prosperously, while performing the condition of the covenant. This implied a threefold benefit.

(1.) The continuation of natural life, Rom. 6:23. Man's body was indeed made of dust; but, by virtue of the covenant-promise, it would have been secured from returning to the dust again. As it was created without any principle of death within it, so the covenant barred all hazard of death from without it, from any other hand, as long as that covenant should be kept. Till the bond of the covenant was treacherously loosed by man himself, there was no loosing of the silver cord that knits soul and body together.

(2.) The vigour of natural life. The keeping of the covenant was a perfect security against all decay and languishing of natural life, which tends unto death. Since man even in that state was to eat, drink, and sleep, no doubt his body was to be supported by these means; but the fruits of the untainted earth were fitted for the preservation of such a life; and while his soul continued pure, he could not but make a regular use of them, according to the appointment of the Creator.

(3.) The comfort of natural life, pure and unmixed with the sorrows of it, which are now felt, but not till sin entered. All men know, that life is one thing and the comfort of life another; but these could not be divided till the wedge of sin was driven to separate them. This lay in these two things:—

[1.] Freedom from all evils and inconveniencies of life, which might embitter it to him. What these are, we all know from experience; a flood of them being let out on the world with the first sin, not to be dried up till the world end, and death and evil be cast into the lake of fire; Gen. 3:17–19, "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Hence labour was to be without toil, strength without mixture of weakness and uneasiness, health without pain, or sickness, or indisposition of body.

[2.] The comfortable enjoyment of life with the conveniencies of it, Gen. 2:16, where the Lord God said unto man, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." Life itself sometimes is burdensome now, and the good things of it are beset as with thorns and briers; but innocent Adam could have had none of these things to complain

of. He was lord of the inferior creatures, and they were at his disposal. What joy and comfort the creatures could yield to him, he was master of, and could not but have a more exquisite taste of than any man since. He was clothed with the greatest honour, and had it with the profits and refined pleasures of life, together with God's favour.

We know then where to lay the blame of the miseries of this life and death itself. The breaking of that covenant opened the sluice to that flood of them which now overflows the world.

A Prosperous Spiritual Life Promised

2. A prosperous spiritual life, perfectly prosperous. The soul of man was and is in its own nature immortal, not liable to the dissolution to which the body is subject. But besides, it was endowed with spiritual life, whereby it lived to God in union and communion with him, as bearing the image of God, a lively image of his righteousness and holiness, Gen. 1:7, Eccl. 7:29. And thus man would have lived prosperously, performing the condition of the covenant. And this implied a fourfold benefit.

(1.) The continuation of the image of God in him, the uprightness of his nature in which he was created. Nothing could have marred that while the covenant was kept. The knowledge of his mind would have remained with him, as would also the righteousness of his will and the holiness of his affections. That glorious likeness to God in which he was created, was a beauty which nothing but sin could mar.

(2.) The continuance of the love and favour of God. He was the friend of God, the favourite of heaven; and as long as he kept the covenant, nothing could dissolve the friendship. Life lies in God's favour, and upon his good behaviour he was surely to enjoy it still. It could never have left him, as long as he kept God's way, For God cannot but love, favour, and delight in his own image, in whomsoever it is preserved entire.

(3.) Ready access to God, and fellowship with him. The covenant was a covenant of friendship; and while sin was kept out there was nothing to mar his intercourse with God, He would still have had immediate communion with God; for there was no need of a mediator where there was no breach, Gal. 3:20, The means of communion with God, prayers, praises, &c. would at no time have been dry wells of salvation to him; no desertions, nor hidings of God's face, could have place,

(4.) Lastly, The daily comfort of his performance. He would still have had the pleasure there is in the very keeping of God's commands, and the comfortable feast of the testimony of a good conscience, upon every piece of obedience performed. And the greater this would have been, the longer he had continued, and the nearer he had come to the end of his race, where was the crown to be received.

Thus we may see God's bounty and man's ingratitude. He had wages in hand allowed him, a present reward of his work, according to that, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." Yet would he needs better his condition before the time, and so quite marred it.

Eternal Life in Heaven Promised

2dly, We may consider the condition to be performed, as actually performed, and completely fulfilled. God had appointed to man a time of trial and probation, during which he was carefully to take heed to himself, that he obeyed perfectly and perpetually, as being liable to sin; and so to give proof of himself, of his awful respect to his Creator's will, and his right management of the talents given him by his great Lord to trade with. In this case, viz., upon man's standing in his innocence till that time was expired, eternal life was by the promise secured to him as the reward of his work, Matth. 19:17. And in it these four benefits were implied.

1. The confirmation of his soul in innocence, righteousness, and holiness, that he should be set beyond hazard of sinning, and that for evermore, as the confirmed angels are. Being justified upon his perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience, this would have followed of course, according to the tenor of the covenant; otherwise he would have been for ever upon trial, which is inconsistent with the nature of the covenant. Mutability is woven into the very nature of the creature, and so Adam was created mutable; but he would have been, upon his obedience, secured from actual liability to change for evermore. The need of watching would have been over with him in that case, as it is with the saints in heaven.

2. The setting of his body absolutely and for ever out of all hazard of death, even remote hazard. While he was in the state of trial, there was a possibility of death's making an approach to it, viz., on supposition of sin. But had the condition of the covenant once been fully performed, there had been no more any possibility of his dying, Rom. 6:21, because no more possibility of sinning.

3. The settling of the love and favour of God upon him for ever, without any hazard of his falling out of it. This also necessarily would have followed on his confirmation in righteousness. The sun of favour from God, from that time, should have shone so upon him, as it could never more have gone down. The friendship would have been so confirmed, that there should have been no more a possibility of a breach for ever.

4. Lastly, The transporting of him soul and body to heaven, there to enjoy the perfection of blessedness through eternity. He should not always have lived in the earthly paradise, where he was to eat, drink, sleep, &c., but, in God's own time, been carried to the heavenly paradise, to live there as the angels of God. He was happy while he was in the course of obedience, and had communion with God. But there he would have been perfectly happy, and had more near and full communion with God, Psalm 16 ult.

I am not here to launch forth into the subject of heaven's happiness, which man should have enjoyed by this covenant, had he kept it. Only in a word, for the substance of it, it would have been the same that the saints shall enjoy for ever; for it was the life which Adam lost for himself and his posterity that Christ purchased by his obedience and death for his spiritual seed, Rom. 10:5, compared with Hab. 2:4, both forecited. And that was eternal life in heaven without controversy. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself proposing the covenant of works to a legalist, holds forth eternal life as the promise of it to be had on the performance of the condition; Luke 10:25–28, "And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." And the weakness of the law to give eternal life now, proceeds only from our inability to fulfil that condition of it, Rom. 8:3. For which cause, Christ put himself in the room of the elect, to fulfil that obedience which they were unable to give, Gal. 4:4, 5, and so consequently gained the life to them which they should otherwise have had if man had not sinned. Besides, it is evident, that by, the breach of this covenant man now falls under the sentence of eternal death in hell; therefore, on the grounds of the goodness of God, and the equity of his proceedings, one may conclude that eternal life in heaven was promised.

The difference between Adam's and the saints' heaven

Yet there would have been considerable difference betwixt innocent Adam's heaven, and the Mediator's heaven, which the saints shall be possessed of; but the advantage lies to the side of the latter. There are four things that would have been wanting (if I may so speak) in innocent Adam's heaven, that will be found in the saints' heaven.

(1.) The additional sweetness of the enjoyment that arises from the experience of want and misery. Two men are set down at a feast; the one never knew what hunger and want meant; the other never got a full meal all his days, but want and hunger were his daily companions. Which of the two would the feast be sweetest to? The case is plain. Sin is the worst of things, there is no good in it; the effects of sin, sorrow, misery, and trouble, are bitter; but God permitted the one, and has brought the other on, in depth of wisdom; for out of these is a sauce drawn that will give an additional sweetness to the supper of the Lamb in the upper house. While the saints walk in their white robes, and remember the filthy, ragged, black garments they went in some time a-day, it will raise their praises a note higher than innocent Adam's, while he should have looked on his, which there was never a spot upon. When after many tossings on the sea of this world, and the numerous floods of difficulties and dangers from sin and Satan which have beset them, the saints happily arrive on the shore of the heavenly Canaan, their relish of the pleasures to be enjoyed there will be the greater and the more delightful.

(2.) The fairest flower in heaven to be seen by bodily eyes, would have been wanting in innocent Adam's heaven, namely, the man Christ. It is a groundless, anti-scriptural notion, that the Son of God would have been incarnate, though man had never sinned, John 3:16; 1 Tim. 1:15. It was for sinners the Saviour was sent. The ruin of man's nature in the first Adam, was the occasion sovereign love took to raise it up to the highest possible pitch of glory and dignity, in the person of the Son of God. There our nature is personally united to the divine nature, even in the person of the Son; and the man Christ is in heaven more glorious than a thousand suns. It is true, Adam would have had the sight and enjoyment of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but he could not have said, as they, Behold God in our nature, our elder brother, &c.

(3.) The charter, written with blood, securing the enjoyment of heaven's happiness. Adam would have had good security indeed for

it, by the fulfilled covenant of works; but behold a more glorious charter, the covenant of grace, written with the blood of the Son of God, Heb. 13:20. Every draught of the well of the water of life innocent Adam would have had in his heaven, he might have cried out with wonder concerning it, O the gracious reward of my obedience! But the saints shall say of theirs, The glorious purchase of my Redeemer's blood; this is the purchase of the Son of God, Rev. 7:9, 10, "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

(4.) Lastly, The manner of living, as members of the mystical body of Christ. Innocent Adam would have lived for ever in heaven as the friend of God; but the saints shall live there as members of Christ, John 6:57, and 14:19. They shall be more nearly allied to the Son of God than Adam would have been, Eph. 5:30. He will be their husband in an everlasting marriage-covenant, their elder brother, the head, of which they are members, and through whom they will derive their glory, as they do their grace, from the Godhead, as united to Christ, the prime receptacle of grace and glory, Rev. 7 ult., "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. 21:23, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

Thus have I shown you the nature of the promise of the covenant of works, and the life therein made over conditionally to man. If we consider the life Adam could have expected from God, in a course of obedience, though there had been no covenant, we say, Adam performing obedience, according to the natural law written in his heart, would have had a prosperous life and being, while he had a being; this Adam might conclude from the good and bountiful nature

of God. But still it would have been consistent with the nature of God, to have withdrawn his supporting hand from man, so as he might have ceased to be any more. And this would have been but taking away freely what he gave freely, being under no obligation to continue it; for even Adam's innocent works could not have properly merited at God's hand, Rom. 11:35, "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" They could have only merited improperly, by virtue of compact, not by the intrinsic worth of the thing. Here,

[1.] The continuation of life to Adam, even while he continued obedient, was entirely due to the covenant God was pleased to make with him. And here was grace even in the covenant of works, that God was pleased by promise to secure the continuance of man's being, while he continued obedient.

[2.] The right that Adam could have pled to eternal life in heaven, by virtue of his obedience, was entirely founded on the covenant. If God had not revealed to him the promise of it, he could not have known that he should have had it, nor could he have demanded it. The natural law had no such promise. And here was more grace in the covenant of works. And therefore it is no wonder, that though men overturn the gospel-doctrine of free grace, yet they will not take with it. The Pharisees of old, Luke 18:11, and the Papists to this day, own free grace in their profession; and what wonder, since innocent Adam, pleading life upon his works, could not have denied but he was debtor to free grace? But here lies the matter; they put in their own works, their repentance, holiness, and obedience, (turning faith into a work, that it may go in with the rest), between free grace and them, making themselves but debtors to it at second hand for life and salvation. And if one shall tell sinners, Here you are to do or work nothing for life and salvation, but only receive the free grace gift of life and salvation from Christ by faith, and be debtors at first hand; though withal we tell them, that repentance, holiness, obedience, and good works, are the inseparable attendants of faith; they cry out, Error, Antinomianism, Licentious doctrine! Yet it is the doctrine of

the gospel, Tit. 3:5; Eph. 2:8. And it is not the doctrine of the gospel, nor does the apostle say, "By grace ye are saved, through works;" for so would Adam have been saved according to the covenant of works, being debtor to free grace at the second hand, which the proud Pharisee was content to be. It is true, Adam's obedience was perfect, ours is not; but buying is buying still, though one buy ten times below the worth, as well as when he buys at the full value.

The Penalty of the Covenant of Works

Thirdly, We come now to consider the penalty in case of man's breaking the covenant, not fulfilling the condition. This was death, death in its full latitude and extent, as opposed unto life and prosperity. This death was twofold. And we may speak of it as a thing that has fallen out.

Legal Death

First, Legal death, whereby man sinning became dead in law, being a condemned man, laid under the curse, or sentence of the law, binding him over to the wrath of God, and to revenging justice; "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse. For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. 3:10. Thus was man to die the day he should break the covenant; and thus he died that very moment he sinned, because by his sin he broke the holy, just, and good law of God; set himself in opposition to the holy nature of God, and cast off the yoke of submission to his Creator. This was an actual liableness to all miseries for satisfying offended justice. Thus the clouds gathered over his head, to shower down upon him; and thus was he girded with the cords of death, which neither himself nor any other creature could loose.

Real Death

Secondly, Real death, which is the execution of the sentence, Deut. 29:19, 20; the threatened evils, and punishments contained in the

curse of the law, coming upon him. And of this there are several parts, all which man became liable to, or fell upon him, when he sinned. We take them up in these three; spiritual, natural, and eternal death.

Spiritual Death

1. Spiritual death, which is the death of the soul, and spirit of man, Eph. 2:1, where the apostle mentions a being "dead in trespasses and sins." This results from the separation of the soul from God, by the breaking of the silver cord of this covenant, which knit innocent man to God, causing him to live, and live prosperously, as long as it was unbroken; but being broken, that union and communion was dissolved, and they parted, Isa. 59:2. Thus man was separated from the fountain of life, upon which death necessarily ensued. This death may be considered,

1st, As immediately seizing him upon the breaking of the covenant. And thus a twofold spiritual death seized him, as the penalty of the covenant; a moral and a relative death.

(1.) A moral death of the soul, by which it was divested of the image of God, viz. saving knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; and the whole nature was corrupted, Eph. 2:1; and so left destitute of a principle of vital spiritual actions, that it can no more think, will, or do anything truly good, than a dead man can perform the functions of life, Rom. 3:10, 11, 12, where a dreadful picture of the corruption of human nature is given; "As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one; There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one." The soul of man was a curious piece of workmanship, made by the finger of God; it was set up, and set a going for its Master's use, like a watch; but sin broke the chain and spring; so that all the wheels of a sudden stood moveless and could go no more.

(2.) A relative death of the soul, by which the blessed relation man stood in to God was extinguished. He was no more the friend of God, and the favourite of his maker. This was death indeed, Psalm 30:5. He enjoyed the friendship, favour, and fellowship of God, upon his good behaviour; he sinned, and so he behoved to lose them. Thus God became his enemy as Rector and judge of the world, and he was set up as a mark for the arrows of wrath.

2dly, As preying upon the soul of man, through the course of his natural life in the world. Sin laid the soul as it were in the grave, the house of death; and there being dead while the man liveth, devouring death works and preys in, and upon it, two ways:—

(1.) In the progress of sin and corruption in the soul, as the body in the grave rots more and more, Psalm 14:3. The soul being spiritually dead, the longer it lies in that case, the more loathsome and abominable it becomes. Swarms of reigning lusts breed in it, and are active therein; the remains of the image of God are defaced more and more in it, and the soul still set farther off from God. All actual sins are the workings of this death, the motions of the verminating life of the soul in the grave of sin, Eph. 2:1, 2. So that they are not only sins in themselves, but punishments of the first sin, which cannot cease to follow on God's departing from the soul; which may persuade us of the absurdity of that principle, That there is no sin in hell.

(2.) In strokes of wrath on the soul. Where the carcase is, there these, like so many eagles, gather together. The sinning soul becomes the centre, wherein all manner of spiritual plagues meet together, as worms do in bodies interred, to feed thereon, Job 20:26. These are manifold; some of them felt, as sorrows, terrors, anxieties, losses, and troubles, crossing the man's will, and so vexing, fretting, and disquieting him. Those are indeed a death to the soul, having a curse in them, like so many envenomed arrows shot into man; some of them not felt, so as to make the man groan under them, as blindness of mind, hardness of heart, strong delusions, but they are the more dangerous, as wounds that bleed inwardly.

Natural Death

2. Natural death, which is the death of the body. This results from the separation of the soul from the body. It is twofold; stinged and unstinged death. Unstinged death parts the soul and body indeed, but not by virtue of the curse for sin. This is the lot of the people of God, 1 Cor. 15:55, and is not the penalty of the covenant of works; for that is death with the sting of the curse, Gal. 3:10, which death Christ died, which penalty he paid, and so freed believers from it, Gal. 3:13. So that there is a specifical difference betwixt the death of believers and that death threatened in the covenant of works; they are not of the same kind, no more than they die the death that Christ died.

The natural death, the penalty of the covenant of works, then, is not simply the death of the body, but the stinged death of the body, the separation of soul and body by virtue of the curse; that as they joined in sin against God, they might be separated for the punishment of it for a time; though afterwards to be reunited at the resurrection, with a change of their constitution. For that there will be a change on the bodies of the wicked, as well as on those of the godly, is evident in that they shall continue united to their souls in hell, without food, and under torments; either of which, according to their present constitution, would dissolve their frame, and issue in death. Now, this natural death may be considered two ways, as the penalty of the covenant of works, inwardly and outwardly.

1st, Inwardly, in the body of man. There death got its seat in the day that he sinned; there it spread itself from the soul, where it began that fatal moment of yielding to the tempter. And thus it may be considered three ways; in its beginning, progress, and consummation.

(1.) In the beginning of it. That day that man sinned he became mortal, Gen. 3:19. The crown of immortality, which he held of his Creator, by virtue of the covenant of works, fell from off his head, and he became a subject of the king of terrors. That day he got his

death's wounds, of which he died afterwards. The mutiny then began among the constituent parts of the body, (witness the terror, anxiety, and shame, causing a motion of the blood and spirits, which before their sinning they were unacquainted with); and the end of that was the destruction and dissolution of the whole frame.

(2.) In the progress of it, in maladies and diseases, whereby death carries on its subjects towards the house appointed for all living, Eccl. 3:20. Every pain, gripe, or stitch, is death's working like a canker in the body of man. Every sickness and disease is a forerunner of death, coming before to give warning of the approach. The sweat, toil, and weariness that man is liable to, are fore-tokens of the body's falling down at length into the dust, Gen. 3:19. Man has now his morning, mid-day, and afternoon; and then comes the night. He has his spring, summer, and autumn, and then winter. Like a flower he has his bud, blossom, fading, and then his falling off. But innocent man would have had a lasting mid-day, summer, and blossom. What follows these respectively, is owing to the breach of the covenant.

(3.) In the consummation of it, by the separation of the soul from the body, Heb. 9:27. The pins of the tabernacle being loosed, it lies along upon the earth at length. The body of man like an old house, falls all down together, while the soul, the inhabitant, makes its escape, and leaves it. They joined in breaking of the covenant, and are punished with separation; the body going to the dust, and the soul to God who gave it, to receive its sentence.

2dly, Outwardly, upon the creatures, upon which the body of man has a dependence as to its life and welfare. What dependence we have on the creatures as to this, every one knows by experience. Without the air we cannot breathe; and as the temperature of it is, it is well or ill with our bodies. On the product of the earth we live; the fruits thereof are the support of our natural life, with the beasts that feed on them. The earth depends on the heavens; and according to their influence upon it, so it is serviceable to us. See the chain of

dependence among the creatures; Hos. 2:21, 22, "And it shall come to pass in that day; I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel." Now man's natural life being so much bound up in these, the life promised him in the covenant could not but comprehend the continuing of these in their original constitution, Gen. 1:31, and fitness for the support of man's natural life and vigour, as means for that end. And so death, the penalty of the covenant, must needs spread itself even to them, and that upon the same score. Thus also it may be considered three ways: in its beginning, progress, and consummation.

(1.) In the beginning of it. And that was the curse laid upon the creature for the sake of the sinner man; Gen. 3:17, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake," said the Lord unto Adam. Man became vanity by his sin, and the creatures were made subject to vanity on his account; so that they could not reach the end of their primitive constitution, but fainted as it were in the way; "For," says the apostle, Rom. 8:20, "the creature was made subject to vanity." Nay, such a burden lies on the creation, as makes the whole to "groan and travail in pain," ver. 22. Where can we turn our eyes now, but we may see death riding in triumph? The earth's barrenness often paints death on the faces of the inhabitants thereof, by scarcity and famine; the air is sometimes empoisoned with pestilential vapours, that kill and sweep away multitudes; the fire often burns and torments men; the waters swallow them up; beasts wound, bruise, and kill them; nay, we are not secure from the very stones of the field. The very sun in the heavens approaching to them scorches and causes languishing; and removing from us, causes us shiver with cold; and holding itself under clouds, damps men's spirits. For death has spread itself over all.

(2.) In the progress of it, Psalm 102:26. Man's declining in the several ages, is manifest. Men are of less stature, less bones and strength, than sometime they were. And why, but because our mother earth is past her prime, and entered into her old age, and her

breasts afford not such nourishment as in her youth? Hence man's days are very few now in comparison of what they were before the flood, when the curse had not sunk so deep into the earth, as it has done from that time, when it had well nigh extinguished her vigour. And whence is this weakness in the earth, but from this, that the heavens also faint, are waxed old, and afford no such influences as before? And whence is that but from the sin of man in breaking the covenant of friendship with God, pursued by death, which extends itself to all things that have any hand in preserving that life, which it has a commission to take away?

(3.) In the consummation of it, in the destruction by fire that is awaiting the world. For "in the day of the Lord the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up," 2 Pet. 3:10. The visible heavens and the earth are now like an old worn garment; then shall the old worn garment be rent in pieces, and cast into the fire. Man's old house, the earth, that has often been made to shake with earthquakes, shall then fall all down to ashes together; and the noble furniture of it, God's works and men's works in it shall be burnt up. The roaring seas shall be silent at length, and be no more. Yea, the sun, who now runs his race like a strong man, shall fall as breathless. And the world, that beautiful fabric of heaven and earth, shall have a dying day. The death threatened in the covenant of works shall pull all down together. And then death itself, with all the appurtenances thereof, shall be pent up in hell for ever, Rev. 20:14, by the power of the glorious Mediator, Isa. 25:8.

Eternal Death

(3.) Eternal death, which issues from the eternal separation of both soul and body from God in hell, Matth. 25:41. This is the full accomplishment of the curse of the covenant of works; and presupposes the union of the soul and body, in a dreadful resurrection to damnation; the criminal soul and body being brought forth from their separate prisons and joined together again, that

death may exercise its full force upon them for ever and ever. That this was the penalty of the covenant of works, is manifest from the event testified by the holy scriptures, this being the lot of all those who, not embracing the covenant of grace, live and die under the covenant of works. For, says the apostle, 2 Thess. 1:7–9, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." And this death may be considered two ways, as flowing from the sanction of the covenant of works, and from the nature of the creature fallen under that sanction.

1st, As it flows from the sanction of the covenant of works, requiring satisfaction to offended justice, and all the wronged attributes of God. And thus it is a punishment inflicted to satisfy for the offence, and repair the honour of God impaired by man's sin. And that punishment is twofold; the punishment of loss, and the punishment of sense.

(1.) The punishment of loss; Matth. 25:41, "Depart from me, ye cursed." Man having sinned, and this death once seizing him, he is deprived of God's favour, and all comfortable communion with him of any sort is blocked up. The sun sets upon him, and the midnight darkness of God's forsaking of his creature falls on. Justice suffers not one grain of comfort to be put into the sinner's cup. All the least chinks, by which the least beam of the Lord's countenance might shine into the soul are stopt, and the creature is left absolutely comfortless. Thus it is with the damned in hell; and thus Christ, as man's surety, had the sun of his Father's countenance eclipsed, Matth. 27:46, when he cried with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

(2.) The punishment of sense, in most grievous torments of soul and body; Matth. 25:41, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." When death has proceeded thus far with the sinner, the waves

of God's wrath go quite over his head, arrows of vengeance dipt in the poison of the curse fly at him continually. Who knows the power of them? Psalm 90:11. The damned are inexpressibly miserable under them for ever and ever. By them was the heart of our glorious Redeemer "melted like wax, in the midst of his bowels," Psalm 22:14.

All this is requisite to shew just indignation against sin, and to wipe off the stain left by it on the honour of God.

2dly, As it flows from the nature of the creature fallen under the sanction of the covenant. And thus in this death, these dreadful circumstances do concur.

(1.) An irrecoverable loss of God's friendship, favour and image, Matth. 25:41. No more communication for ever can be between God and the creature brought to this dreadful case. All passage of sanctifying influences is stopt; the curse lies on the creature, which bars all emanations of love and favour from heaven, and leaves it under unalterable barrenness. The holy frame of the soul marred by sin, must remain so, never to be mended.

(2.) Perpetual bitter despair, Mark 9:44. The creature once sunk into this sea of wrath, can never get up its head, nor see the shore; and knows it never shall. Hence absolute despair seizeth them, and all hope is plucked up by the roots. This lies as a talent of lead upon them, and must continually cut them to the heart. When the man Christ was forsaken of his Father, he knew he was able to get through the floods of wrath, and that he would at length joyfully set his foot on the shore; but that was because he was God as well as man. But weak man can never get through.

(3.) Continual sinning. Think and act they must; and how can they but sin, when their corrupt nature remains with them in hell? Submission to just punishment is their duty; but how can they do that in whose hearts is not the least measure of God's grace? Nay, they will gnash their teeth, in rage against God.

(4.) The eternity of the whole. Because they cannot pay out the debt to the full, therefore must they ever lie in the prison. The wrong done by sin to the honour of God is an infinite one, because done against an infinite God; and therefore the satisfaction can never be completed by a finite sufferer. So the yoke of punishment is wreathed about the neck of the sinner for ever and ever, never to be taken off.

This was the penalty of the covenant of works. And thus much of the parts of the covenant.

The Seals of the Covenant of Works

Thirdly, I shall consider the seals of the covenant of works, whereby it was confirmed to Adam. It has pleased God to append seals to his covenants with men in all ages, for the confirmation of their faith of the respective covenants; and this covenant seems not to have wanted some seals appended thereto for the same effect. Though innocent Adam was not called to faith in a redeemer, no such object of faith being revealed, or competent in that state; yet was faith in God always a duty of the first command, and innocent Adam under this covenant was required to have and exercise a faith agreeable to the nature of the covenant he was under. That was, a firm persuasion that he should have life upon his performing of perfect obedience, but should die upon the least disobedience to his Creator. And according as he maintained this faith so was his obedience. Therefore Satan set himself first of all to attack the faith of our first parents, Gen. 3:4; and when he had got it knocked on the head, then he carried his ruining project according to his wish. No wonder then he still sets himself in a peculiar manner against that grace. Now, for confirming this his faith, there were two sacramental seals appended to the covenant.

1. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Gen. 2:17. What sort of a tree it was the scripture doth not determine, nor do the Jews pretend to define. Some gather from Cant. 2:3, that it was an apple tree. But it is plain from the original text, that these are not the

words of Christ, but of the spouse to Christ; and the book being allegorical, it is too slender a ground at best to build such a fact upon. Whatever it was, it was not so called, as having a power really to make men wise. So the tempter pretended, Gen. 3:5, but he was a liar from the beginning, John 8:44. But it was a sign both of good and evil; sealing to him all good while he should abstain from it, and evil if he should eat of it; and so confirming his faith in both parts of the persuasion of it. And eventually, by eating of it, he knew good by the loss of it, and evil by the feeling of it. Though it was not to be touched, it might be seen, even as the rainbow, the seal of the covenant with Noah.

2. The tree of life, Gen. 2:9. The which, though it might be an excellent means of preserving the vigour of natural life, as other trees of paradise also, yet it could not have a virtue in itself of making man every way immortal. But it was a notable sacramental sign of life and eternal happiness, according to the nature of that covenant. The which is intimated by the eternal quickening virtue of our Lord Jesus Christ to the perfect happiness of the saints, coming under that name in the New Testament, Rev. 22:2; he being that in reality which the tree of life did signify. And thus the eating of it served to confirm Adam's faith, according to that covenant, namely, his persuasion of life upon performing of perfect obedience. The which is clearly intimated, Gen. 3:22. But man having, by his sin, lost his right to the life signified, could no more be admitted to the partaking of the sacramental sign of it.

The Doctrine of the Covenant of Works applied

USE. What is said upon this subject, serves for instruction, refutation, and exhortation.

USE I. For instruction. Here as in a glass ye may see several things, concerning God, concerning man in his best estate, concerning Christ, and concerning man in his present fallen state.

1. Concerning God, look into this covenant, and behold,

1st, The wonderful condescension of God, and of his goodness and grace toward his creature man. He stooped so low as to enter into a covenant with his own creature, a covenant wherein he shewed himself a most bountiful and gracious God towards man. Man was not at his own, but God's disposal. Death was the natural wages of sin, but the life promised could not have been pleaded, but upon the foot of a covenant. Before that covenant man was bound to all obedience; but God was free to have disposed of him, after all, as he should see meet. But he made himself debtor to man for eternal life, upon his performing of perfect obedience; yet in the meantime his strength to obey was all from God, and there was no proportion betwixt man's work and the reward.

2dly, The spotless holiness and exact justice of God against sin. When we look to the condition and the penalty of this covenant, we must needs cry out, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness?" Exod. 15:11, and, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity," Hab. 1:13. See here, sinners, how God looks on the least sin. Is it not the abominable thing which he hates with a perfect hatred? Such an evil it is as is enough to ruin a world of creatures among whom it spreads its baleful influence, and to dissolve the whole fabric of heaven and earth.

2. Concerning man in his state of primitive integrity.

1st, Man was a holy and happy creature in his first state. He was a spotless creature, meet to transact with God, and to entertain communion with him, immediately by himself without a Mediator. He was able to obey perfectly all the ten commandments. He was happy in God's favour and covenant-friendship. Ah! how is he now fallen like a star from heaven.

2dly, Man at his best estate, standing on his own legs, is a fickle creature, liable to change. The penalty set him in the covenant, spake

him to be mutable, capable of forgetting his duty to his Maker, and his own interest; and the doleful event confirmed it. Why should men put their trust in men, and make flesh their arm? The most accomplished mere man that ever was on earth, was capable of being unfaithful to his trust, and actually was so. No wonder now that every man be a liar.

3. Concerning Christ the Saviour of sinners, behold here,

1st, The absolute necessity of a Surety in the event of a breach of this covenant. The condition was so high, and the penalty so dreadful, in this covenant, that being once broken, it was beyond the power of man to retrieve the matter. He must bear the heavy penalty, and that he could never discharge. He must begin again, and fulfil the condition; and that was beyond his power. Therefore there behoved to be a surety to act and suffer for man, or he was ruined without hope of relief. Hence said our blessed Surety, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" Luke 24:26. No creature was able to have undertaken this important office; it was a burden too heavy for angels. Only he who was God as well as man could perform the arduous task.

2dly, The love of Christ to poor sinners in becoming Surety for broken men. "Greater love" (says our Lord, John 15:13.) "hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "God commendeth his love towards us," (says the apostle, Rom. 5:8.), "in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." None less than God man was able to answer the demands of this covenant, when once broken; therefore the Son of God was pitched upon to be the second Adam, to repair the breach made by the first; Psalm 89:19, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people." And when there was no helper, he offered himself to undergo the burden; Psalm 40:6, 7, "Sacrifice and offering," said this blessed Helper, "thou didst not require; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come." If ever ye would see what Christ has done for sinners, so

as to be ravished with admiration of his matchless performance, study the covenant of works which he fulfilled as the second Adam, after it was broken by the first.

4. Concerning man in his fallen state.

1st, It is no wonder, that however scarce good works are in the world, yet working to win heaven is so very frequent. Legal principles and practices are natural to men; the covenant of works being that covenant that was made with Adam, and in him with all mankind, and so after a sort engrained in man's nature. And nothing less than the power of grace is able to bring man from off that way, to the salvation by Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 1:23, 24, "Christ crucified is unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, he is the power of God, and the wisdom of God." We are like those who being bred merchants, though their stock is gone, must still be trafficking with small wares.

2dly, Salvation by works of our own is quite impossible; there is no life nor salvation to be had by the law, Gal. 3:10, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." Will ye bring your good meanings and desires, your repentance, your obedience, such as it is, and think to get life, and salvation, and acceptance with God thereby? Remember, if ye will be for doing to live your obedience must be perfect and perpetual; and that if you fail, you are under the curse. That is the tenor of the covenant of works, and it will abate nothing. And therefore ye must quit the way of that covenant, or perish for ever; for ye are absolutely incapable to answer its demands.

USE II. For refutation. With what is said these three things following are inconsistent.

1. That there was no proper covenant of works between God and Adam. The contrary has been already proved from the holy scripture,

and the nature of the thing. If we yield that point, the imputation of Adam's sin will have slender grounds to stand on; and if that fail, the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness will be in hazard.

2. That believers are not wholly and altogether set free from the law as a covenant of works; from the commanding power of it, as well as the condemning power of it. If that be so, believers in Christ are yet in a miserable case; for the commands of the covenant of works are no less than commands of perfect and perpetual obedience, under the pain of the curse; Rom. 3:19, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Compare Gal 3:10, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." But believers are set beyond the reach of the curse; ver. 13, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Rom. 8:1, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." They are dead to the law as a covenant of works, Rom. 7:4, "Ye are," says the apostle, "dead to the law by the body of Christ;" and death sets one altogether free. They are under the covenant of grace, and they cannot be under both at once; Rom. 6:14, "Ye are not," says Paul, "under the law, but under grace."

3. That believers must do good works to answer the demands of the law, as a covenant of works, if they will obtain salvation. Truly our good works will never be able to answer these demands; and if we pretend to do them for that end, as the covenant of works will never accept them, so we cast dishonour on Christ, who has answered all these demands already for believers, by his perfect and perpetual obedience. When God set Adam to seek salvation by his works, he was able for works; it was a thousand times easier to him to give perfect obedience than for us to give sincere obedience. So we may be sure God bringing in a second covenant for the help of lost sinners, would never put them again on seeking salvation by works, after their strength for them was gone.

USE III. For exhortation. Consider seriously of this covenant, with application to the particular state and case of our own souls. Here was a solemn bargain made with our first father, of the utmost importance to him and all his posterity. Will ye not lay to heart your own case with respect to it? Consider,

1. That this covenant was made with Adam in your name, for you in particular, as well as the rest of his posterity. So that you were all once under it, as really as if you had in your own persons consented to the terms of it; and the obedience it required of Adam was equally required of you; and the curse he subjected himself to by the breach of it, lies heavy on you as well as him.

2. Whether ye be delivered from it or not. If ye be, happy are ye; if ye be not, there is a weight lying above your heads that will sink you for ever in the bottomless gulf of perdition, if ye get not loose from that covenant, Gal. 3:10, forecited.

3. None are delivered from it, but those whom God himself, man's covenant party, has discharged. The breaking of a bargain can never deliver the breaker from it, but lays him under the penalty. Nothing can deliver him but a discharge from the party he bargained with.

4. God discharges none from it, but upon full satisfaction made to all its demands on them. For our Lord has determined the matter thus, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled," Matth. 5:18. The sinner shall be obliged to give the law fair count and reckoning, and payment, else he cannot have his discharge. Consider if ye have any experience of this being done in your own case.

5. Lastly, The only way to satisfy this covenant, is by faith to lay hold upon Jesus Christ the surety, and to plead his obedience and death. The believer counts up to the law all that Christ has done and suffered, as done for him; so the accounts are cleared, the believer is

discharged, the discharge being written with the blood of his Surety. And so he is set free from it for ever.

Thus much of the reality, nature, parts, &c. of the covenant of works.

PART II

OF THE BREACH OF THE COVENANT OF WORKS

HOSEA 6:7

But they like men have transgressed the covenant.

IN the beginning of this chapter, we have the Jews brought in repenting and turning to the Lord; which looks to that conversion of theirs that is yet to come, and hereby is insured, and that by virtue of the resurrection of Christ. Meanwhile they were to be laid under heavy strokes, and after a sort rejected. They were to be under a long eclipse of God's favour, the valley of vision being turned into a land of darkness. This looks to the Assyrian and Babylonish captivity, and further, to the ruin of the whole nation by the Romans, and their long rejection, which they are under to this day.

The causes of this are specified, to justify God's proceedings against them (1.) Their inconstancy in that which is good, ver. 4, "Your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away." Sometimes they seemed to promise fair for reformation, but all their fair blossoms quickly fell off. Such was the promising appearance Israel made when Jehu came to the kingdom, and such was that

made by Judah in the days of Hezekiah and Josiah. Such too were the hosannas and loud shouts made at Christ's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, which were soon changed into "Crucify him, crucify him." Therefore did the prophets and apostles testify against them, and denounce the judgments of God against them, and thereby ministerially hew and slay them; ver. 5, "Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth." (2.) Their breach of covenant with God; quite slighting and perverting, instead of pursuing the ends of the covenant; vers. 6, 7, "For I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offering. But they like men have transgressed the covenant; there they have dealt treacherously against me." (3.) An universal deluge of sin and defection from God, that had spread itself over all ranks. Israel and Judah both were carried away with it, "Israel was defiled," ver. 10, &c.; and Judah was ripe for destruction; ver. 11, "Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee," &c. Priest and people were quite wrong, vers. 9, 10, magistrates and ministers, church and state; Ramoth-Gilead, a city of refuge, protecting wilful murderers, or delivering up those they ought to have protected; the priests profane, no better than robbers and murderers, vers. 8, 9. General defection is a cause and presage of a sweeping stroke. It is the second of these that concerns our purpose; "They like men have transgressed the Covenant." Wherein two things may be considered.

1. The crime charged on them, transgressing the covenant, covenant-breaking. This is a crime of a high nature; it strikes at the root of society among men, and therefore is scandalous and punishable though it be but a man's covenant. How much more atrocious is the crime where God is the one party? God took the Israelites into covenant with himself when he brought them out of Egypt. It was entered into with awful solemnity, Exod. 24. The design and ends of it were to lead them to Christ, and so to real holiness in the practise of the duties of the moral law. But, instead of this, they rejected Christ and sat down upon the poor performances of the ceremonial law, ver. 6, without faith and love. So they transgressed the covenant, and broke it, Jer. 31:32; Heb. 8:9.

2. Whom they resembled in breach of covenant. In this they acted like men, as our translators and others turn it; that is vain, light, fickle, and inconstant as man. But the Vulgate, Tigurine, Castalio, Arias Montanus, Rabbi Solomon, Grotius, and the Dutch translation and our own translation in the margin, read, like Adam. There is nothing about the Hebrew word to weaken this; on the contrary, at this rate the word is taken in the proper sense, and this reading is evidently the more forcible of the two; and therefore is the preferable and genuine one, agreeably enough to the context. Besides, as I shewed before, the original word does but twice more occur in the scripture, viz., Job 31:33; Psalm 82:17; and in both these places is taken the same way. So the sense is, "They like their father Adam, have transgressed the covenant," for so the word is. He broke covenant with God, and so have they; he the covenant of works, they the covenant of grace, which they externally entered into. God set down Adam in paradise in covenant with him, the end of which was to make him completely happy; but he perverted the end of the covenant, preferred the fruit of a tree to his moral duty to God, so broke the covenant, and was cast out of paradise; and God set Israel down in Canaan, in covenant with him, the end of which was to lead them to Christ, as the end of the law; but they perverted the end of that covenant, and, preferring ceremonial observances to Christ and moral duty, transgressed the covenant, and therefore must be cast out of Canaan. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was, by God's appointment, a seal of the covenant, fitted to help man to the keeping of it; but he used it the quite contrary way; the ceremonial law was, by God's appointment, for sealing the covenant of grace, and leading the Jews to Christ; but they used it the quite contrary way; and so it was a stumbling-block to them.

The doctrine clearly arising from the text is,

DOCTRINE. Our father Adam broke the Covenant of Works.

In discoursing from this doctrine, I shall,

I. Consider the fatal step by which that covenant was transgressed and broken.

II. How this fatal step was brought about.

III. How the covenant of works was broken by it.

IV. Apply the subject.

The Fatal Step by which the Covenant of Works was broken

I. I shall consider the fatal step by which that covenant was transgressed and broken. I think I need not stand to prove that this covenant was broken by Adam. The truth of Moses' narration, Gen. 3, puts it beyond controversy; as also doth the doleful experience of his posterity, Rom. 5:12. Our father Adam was once in a flourishing condition, had in his hand a noble portion of holiness and happiness for every one of his children; and he had more in hope for himself and them, which would have made them eternally and completely happy. He had a goodly stock to set up with at first; and a trade with heaven to improve his stock in, which, rightly managed, would have made all his family happy for ever; the which trade was opened to him by this covenant. But, alas! the whole family is ruined, we are all born beggars, we have nothing left us; nay, we are pursued for our father's debt as well as our own, Rom. 5:18, "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" and we are in hazard of dying in prison for evermore. A plain evidence that our father was broke, his trade mismanaged, and he run in debt, the communication with heaven stopt; and so the covenant was broken. Besides the Lord's making a new covenant, a covenant of grace, with Christ, as the second Adam, for the salvation of lost sinners of Adam's family, is a plain proof that the covenant of works was broken, and the transgressors thereof ruined by the first Adam. And what was the fatal step?

It was the eating of the forbidden fruit, Gen. 3:6, "When the woman saw that the tree was good, &c. she took of the fruit thereof, and did

eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." This was that by which the covenant was broken, and man ruined. No wonder eating and drinking is the destruction of many to this day; this engine of ruin had too much success in the hand of the great deceiver, not to ply it still. God gave Adam a dominion over the creatures, to use them soberly for his own comfort and God's glory. He "put all things under his feet;" he only kept one tree from him, that he might not eat of the fruit thereof, and that for the trial of his obedience. He was discharged, under the pain of death, to meddle with it; to which prohibition he consented; and yet, over the belly of the solemn covenant, he laid hand on it, ate of it, and broke the covenant. Here, for the understanding of this sin aright, consider the progress, the ingredients, and the aggravations of it.

The Progress of the Sin of breaking the Covenant of Works

First, Consider the progress of this sin. It is not to be imagined, that Adam and Eve were innocent till they had the forbidden fruit in their mouths; the coveting of it in their hearts behoved of necessity to be before that; but the eating of it was that whereby sin and apostasy from God was completed. The beginning of their sin was unbelief and doubting. At the suggestion of Satan they doubted the truth of God in the threatening, Gen. 3:3–6. So, in this fatal battle, their faith got the first stroke. And it being once foundered, their heart plied to the temptation, and the lust after the forbidden fruit arose, and then the sin was completed by actual eating, Gen. 3:6. The eye of the mind was first blemished; a mist arose from hell, which they admitted, that by degrees darkened their understanding, so that they first doubted, and then disbelieved the threatening of the covenant. Then their will was easily conquered to a compliance with the temptation, and turned away from the command, the rule of duty. A last and corrupt affection to the tree seized them, discovering itself at the eye, in a lustful looking at it, Gen. 3:6. So the hand took it, and the mouth ate it, and the fatal morsel was lodged within the body.

Thus the cool of temptation raised a flame, which quickly spread itself over the whole soul and body. The which is often reached in the case of their sinful posterity, who by these means are frequently cast down from their excellency as it were in a moment, and plunged into a gulf of misery.

There is more ill in doubting and unbelief than men are aware of. It was the devil's master-piece for the ruin of souls under the covenant of works; and so it is still under the covenant of grace; Mark 16:16, "He that believeth not shall be damned." Men were first ruined by their doubting and unbelief of the threatening of the first covenant; now men are ruined by their doubting and unbelief of the promise of the second covenant; Isa. 53:1, "Who hath believed our report?" says the prophet. And what that report is, see 1 John 5:10, 11, "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believed not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son." Though doubting may consist with faith, so that it be not reigning; yet it belongs not but is contrary, to the nature of faith, which in itself is a firm persuasion, more or less firm, according to the strength of it.

The Ingredients of this Sin

Secondly, Let us consider the ingredients of this sin. If it is opened up, one may see it to be a complication of evils; not a little sin, but a great one, and in some sort the greatest sin.

1. Horrid unbelief was in it. By it the truth and faithfulness of God to his word was questioned, disbelieved, and denied; the lie was given to the God of truth, 1 John 5:11, forecited. And to make the affront the blacker, the devil was believed in his contradiction to God. God said, Yea; Satan said, No; and the decision was in favour of the latter.

2. Pride, ambition, bold presumption, and curiosity, took place in this sin. No less was attempted by it, than to be like God himself;

Gen. 3:5, "Ye shall be as gods," said the old serpent. God had set them in paradise; but they would, in a manner, ascend above the height of the clouds, and set their throne above the stars, as the proud monarch of Babylon did, Isa. 14:13, 14. They had full liberty as to the use of all that was in paradise; only God looked up from them that one tree; and they boldly forced the lock, and ate that which God forbade them to touch; as if nothing was to be bid to them.

3. There was in this sin monstrous ingratitude, and discontent with their condition. They wanted nothing for necessity, convenience, or delight, beseeming their state of trial. A bountiful God had heaped favours on them; they bore God's image, were fit to be companions of angels, were the envy of devils, had the dominion of the lower world, and were God's confederates. But all this was sunk and lost in unthankfulness; and they were so little contented, that they would needs have that in very deed which they had no want of, as is often the case with their children.

4. This sin contained in it contempt of God, rebellion against him, and downright apostasy from him, going over to the devil's side. Thus it was a renouncing of the covenant, and a conspiring with Satan against God. They carry themselves as if they had been decoyed into a foolish bargain; and, forgetting the majesty of God, and their own dependence on him, they break his bands, and cast his cords from them; pretending they would see better to themselves, and so they cast off his yoke at one touch.

5. Lastly, In one word, this sin was a breaking of the whole law of God at once. By this one deed, not only was the positive law trampled under foot, but the natural law written in their hearts was broken in all the ten commandments of it at once, as I have shewn elsewhere.

The Aggravations of this Sin

Thirdly, Let us view the aggravations of this sin. Consider,

1. The person who did it; righteous Adam; one who was not tainted with original sin, as others now are, but was endued with original righteousness; one in whom Satan had nothing, till he winded it in by his subtilty. There was no blindness of mind, perverseness of will, or unholiness of affections, to graft his temptation on. So having these advantages, the sin was in that respect of all sins the most heinous. And therefore he having found mercy, is a pattern of mercy to all who will believe in Christ.

2. The object by which he was enticed, and for which he broke God's law. It was not a wedge of gold, as in Achan's case; nor thirty pieces of silver, as in that of Judas; but a morsel of fruit. The smaller the thing was, the greater the sin; and the more inexcusable the sinner, whom Satan caught with so sorry a bait. What need had he of that, who had enough besides? But when once the mind is bewitched with temptation, if it enough to stir up a longing after fruit, if it be but forbidden; as the wayfaring man in Nathan's parable was entertained by the rich man with his poor neighbour's lamb, though he had a flock of his own.

3. The nature of the thing. Though it was a small thing, yet it was a sacred thing, set apart for a holy use, not to be touched. This sin was theft, and theft of the worst kind, namely, sacrilege. It was a profanation of holy things, and that of the worst kind; profanation of a sacrament, a seal of the covenant. No wonder it brought on a curse.

4. The place where it was committed. In paradise, where every flower was proclaiming the glory of God, where he wanted nothing necessary for him, but was surrounded on every hand with tokens of the Lord's kindness to him. Eden was the pleasantest spot of the virgin earth, and paradise the pleasantest spot of Eden. But there the rebellion was begun against God, who set him in that delightful place. In the presence-chamber, as it were, rebel man, by this act of his, struck at his sovereign Lord. So it was aggravated like the murder of Zacharias, who was slain between the temple and the altar, Matth. 23:35.

5. The time when it was committed. He had not been long in the world, till he lifted up his heel against his Creator. He had stood short while, till, being giddy with pride and ambition, he fell into disgrace. What time Adam fell, is a question. It is the common opinion, that he fell the same day he was created. Some think he stood longer, supposing the events recorded about him. Gen 2 and 3 to require more time than one day. And the deists improve that against the credit of Moses' history, but entirely without ground, I think the common opinion is true. The devil's envy and malice would set him a-work on the first occasion to ruin man; and, for all that appears, whenever he tried it, he carried his point. If our first parents had stood longer, the blessing of marriage would have taken place in a state of innocence. The scripture says, Satan was "a liar, and a murderer from the beginning," John 8:44. Let "Adam in honour could not night; he became like as the beasts, they were alike," Psalm 49:12. From this text the Hebrew doctors gather, that the glory of the first man did not night with him; and the ancient translators understand it of Adam. The work of redemption is the more illustrious, that man could not stand one day without the Mediator's help.

6. Lastly, The effects and consequents of this sin. These are all evils that came on Adam himself, and on his posterity to this day, and that will come, even to the end of the world. Hereby all mankind were ruined. That sin was the wide gate at which sin and death entered into the world. It spread its malignant influence over the creation, loosed the pins of the fabric of the world, which it will pull down at length altogether, according to the import of the threatening.

How the Fatal step, in the breach of the covenant of works, was brought about

II. I shall consider how this fatal step was brought about. For clearing of this, three things are to be considered; Satan's tempting to it; God's leaving man to the freedom of his own will in the matter;

and man's abusing this freedom of will, and complying with the temptation.

Of Satan's tempting to this Sin

First, Satan tempted to it. God created all the angels holy spirits, yet mutable, as the event in some of them has proved. Some of them were elected to eternal happiness from eternity, and some of them not elected, 1 Tim. 5:21, where the apostle speaks of elect angels. They were all created the first day, as appears from Gen. 1:1, 2, compared with Job 38:7. In the former it is said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And in the latter place it is said that, when God "laid the foundations of the earth, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;" by whom are most certainly to be understood the angels. The reprobate angels were not fallen before the sixth day; for it is said, Gen. 1:31, that, on that day, "God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." On the sixth day man was made, and the same day he fell, as has been shewn before. The reprobate angels were fallen before him, and therefore they fell the same day too. And it seems they lost no time, but immediately, with the first occasion, one of them sets to work against man, and gained his point by temptation, John 8:44, forecited.

Concerning this temptation we may remark

1. The instrument of the temptation was a serpent, Gen. 3:1. And,

1st, It was a true and real serpent, as appears from Moses comparing it with the rest of the beasts; Gen. 3:1, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field." What sort of a serpent it was is not determined. Some think it to have been a beautiful creature of a shining colour; for there are serpents mentioned. Deut. 8:15, called in the original text Seraphim, which is a name given to angels. And so possibly Eve might take the serpent to have been acted by one of the good angels, or Seraphims. What, ever sort it was of, serpents

have been of great note in the kingdom of the devil since. The Egyptians worshipped serpents. The genius of a place was painted as a serpent. And in the old Greek mysteries they were wont to carry about a serpent, and cry, Evah—a memorial of the extraordinary service it had done the devil.

2dly, It was acted by the devil. For since serpents could not-speak, and far less reason, neither of which was wanting in this case, one may surely conclude, that it was the devil who abused the body of the serpent to his wicked purpose, and therefore is called that old serpent the devil and Satan, Rev. 12:9, and chap. 20:2.

2. Satan set upon the woman first, the woman the weaker vessel, that having once overcome her, he might by her means the more easily conquer the man. And thus he readily manages his temptations still, observing where the wall is weakest, that there he may make his attack with the more success. And he chose the time when she was alone, not with her husband, from whom she seems to have had the knowledge of the covenant God entered into with him. Had they been together, they might have jointly withstood him who conquered both, one after another.

3. He moveth a doubt concerning the command; Gen. 3:1, "Yea hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" And thus he does subtilly and ambiguously. He does not at first bring forth the whole venom of the temptation, but pretends, as one in doubt, that he would be informed by the woman. It is hard to tell whether he meant this of God's forbidding to eat of any, or only not of every tree of the garden. It is the design of the tempter to draw us unto a contempt of the commands of God. The woman, however, gives him a round answer, wherein she makes a very ample profession of the truth; vers. 2, 3, "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." They may resist at first, who are afterwards overcome.

4. Quitting the attack on the command, which he perceived her to adhere to, Satan falls on the threatening, and contradicts it, Gen. 3:4, "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." He tells her it was not so sure as she imagined, that God would punish them at that rate. He puts her in hope of escaping punishment. Thus Satan resisted, flies; but where one method fails he will try another, and, through hopes of impunity entertained in one's heart, he often gains his purpose.

5. He proceeds as one that wished well to her and her husband, and pretends to shew how they might both arrive at a high pitch of happiness speedily: even to be as gods, and that in knowledge or intellectual delights; insinuating withal, that, by the very name of the tree, the truth of what he said might appear. For (said the serpent) "God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil." Thus the liar and murderer still ruins men, pretending to make them happy, while he carries on their destruction.

6. Lastly, She being ensnared, he makes use of her to tempt her husband, and prevails, Gen. 3:6, "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." And thus he often conveys his temptations to us, by those whose interest in us and affection to us, we doubt not, and whom therefore we suspect not; and so he rends men with wedges of their own timber, making one a snare to another.

God left Man to the Freedom of his own Will

Secondly, God left man to the freedom of his own will in this matter. He was not the cause of his fall; he moved him not, nor could he move him to it; James 3:13, "For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." Such is the holiness of his nature. He gave him a power to stand if he would, and he took not away from

him any grace given; but, for his trial, left him to his freedom of will, with which he was created. God made him good and righteous, and the natural set of his will was to good only, Eccl. 7:26. But it was liable to change, yet only to change by himself; he could only be made evil or sinful by his own choice.

If it be asked, why man was not set beyond the possibility of change. It is to be remembered, that absolute immutability is the peculiar prerogative of God himself, and every creature, in as far as it is a creature, is incapable of being so immutable. Yet the creature may be in some sense made immutable, that is, so as it shall not be possible for it actually to fall from its goodness, though there is still a changeableness in its nature. Now, if man had been created without so much as a remote power in himself to change himself, he had not been a free agent; but God might have so established him, as that he could not actually have fallen; yet that would have been owing to confirming grace. The which why the Lord did not bestow on him, it belongs not to us to define; only he was no debtor to him for it.

Man abused the Freedom of his Will

Thirdly, Man abused his own liberty or freedom of will, and complied with the temptation, and so broke the covenant. He only himself was the true and proper cause of his own falling; not God, for he can never be the author of sin; not the devil, nor Eve, for they could only tempt and entice, but not force him. It was his own choice, he did it freely without coercion or compulsion; and he could have stood if he would. And thus was the fatal step made, whereby the covenant was broken.

How the Covenant of Works was Broken

III. I shall consider how the covenant of works was broken by this fatal step. We may take up this in three things.

1. The command was violated. The covenant required perfect obedience, but it was not given; perpetual obedience, but man did

soon come to a stand in the course of obedience, and went no farther. Here he disobeyed, here he shook off the yoke, here he sinned against his God. Thus the condition of the covenant of works was broken.

2. The right and title to the promised benefit by that covenant was undermined. The promised life was lost, man had no more any pretensions to it; he could no more plead the reward, which was to be given him in hand; and the prospect of the reward, which before his disobedience he had in hope, was entirely cut off. Thus failing in his performance of the condition of the covenant, he rendered the promise of the covenant null and void, as if it had never been made.

3. He fell under the penalty of the covenant, became liable to death in its utmost extent. As he had no more ado with the promise, the threatening now bound him to bear the wrath threatened for the satisfaction of divine justice. The blessing of the covenant being lost, the curse of it seized him, and he was bound with the cords of death; the which was let out as a flood, at that breach which was made in the covenant, and overflowed.

(1.) The soul of man, so that it died spiritually, losing the image of God, and losing the favour of God. Man turning from God as his chief end, the image of God in his soul was defaced, Gen 5:1, 3, His saving knowledge was lost; witness the cover of fig-leaves which our first parents prepared for covering of their nakedness, and their pretending to hide themselves from the presence of God, Gen. 3:7. The righteousness of his will was lost; witness their aversion to God, hiding themselves from him, their excusing of their sin, transferring of their guilt, the man laying the blame on the woman, the woman on the serpent; nay, Adam not obscurely reflected on God himself. The holiness and regularity of their affections went off; they were filled with disorder, confusion, and shame. They lost God's favour, were seized with horror of conscience, Gen. 3:8, were driven out of paradise, like a divorced woman out of the house of her husband,

declared incapable of communion with God, and debarred from the tree of life, the seal of the covenant.

(2.) The body of man became mortal, death working within it and without it, from that moment the covenant was broken. He was condemned to toil and weariness for life, and then to return to the dust at length, the frame and constitution of man's body having become deadly from the moment of his breaking the covenant. And sorrow and pain in breeding and bringing forth of children, was laid on the female sex, as a particular mark of displeasure with the first sin; and the ground was cursed for man's sake, because of the dependance of the life of man upon it.

(3.) Lastly, Soul and body were subjected and bound over to eternal death in hell. For this was comprehended in the threatening of the covenant of works, as has been already shewn.

Thus was the covenant of works broken. Yet man was not, and could not thereby be freed from that covenant; still he was bound to obedience, according to the command of it; and to satisfaction, according to the threatening. Only God was no more obliged to fulfil his promise, since it was conditional, and the condition was broken.

Application of the Doctrine of the Breach of the Covenant of Works

USE I. Here is a memorial which we have need ever to carry about with us, while we live in this world; A memorial,

1. Of the nothingness of the creature, when left to itself. God left some of the angels to themselves and they turned devils; he left innocent Adam to himself, and he turned apostate. O the need of continual supplies of grace! There was no bent and inclination to evil naturally in them; but in us there is a natural propensity to turn from God. What need have we then to cry, "Lead us not into temptation?" What need of continual dependence upon the Lord?

2. Of the hopelessness of salvation by works. That was the way which man was first set on, and that is the way which man naturally is set to follow unto this day. But what hope can there be that way? Adam was able to work for life, having sufficient strength laid to his hand, and yet he miscarried in it; how can it prosper in our hands, who are without strength, and whose work-arm is broken; he had less to do than we have now, only perfect obedience was required of him at first; but of us now is required not only perfect obedience, but satisfaction for sin done. We have more work and less strength than Adam had. When he fell a-working for heaven, which work was marred in his hand, it may justly make us to despair of salvation that way. He could not stand, how shall we that are fallen raise up ourselves? How unlikely is it that self-destroyers shall be their own saviours?

USE II. Here is a watchword which we ought never to forget.

1. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The devil still goes about seeking whom he may devour. No state, while ye are here, can secure you from temptation. Though ye be in a state of friendship with God, he will attack you. No place, though a paradise can protect you. He has malice enough to drive you to the greatest sins; subtilty and long experience to manage the temptation so as it may best take. Do not parley with temptation, listening to the tempter may bring on doubting, doubting will bring on disbelieving, and disbelieving will bring on full compliance. O therefore watch!

2. Take heed of forgetting the covenant of your God. When men lose the sense of the bond of the covenant, they cannot long forbear the breaking of it. We see this in Adam our father, and we may see it daily in men's personal covenants, and the national covenants these lands are under the bonds of. The impression of them is worn off, and so the duties of them are cast behind men's backs. No wonder that this is the sin of the land, and of particular persons, seeing we are all children of the great covenant transgressor, Adam.

USE III. Lastly, Here is a demonstration of the absolute necessity of being united to the second Adam, who kept the second covenant, and thereby fulfilled the demands of the first covenant. See your absolute need of him; prize him, and flee to him by faith, behold him with an eye of faith who has repaired the breach. The first Adam broke the first covenant, by eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree; Christ has repaired the breach by hanging on a tree and bearing the curse for his people. Adam's preposterous love to his wife made him sin; Christ's love to his spouse made him suffer and satisfy. In a garden Adam sinned, and therefore in a garden Christ was buried. Eating ruined man, and by eating he is saved again. By eating the forbidden fruit all died; and by eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood by faith, the soul gets life again, John 6:57. O then have recourse to Christ; and thus shall you be saved from the ruins of the fall and have an interest in the covenant made with Christ, the condition of which being already fulfilled by him, can never be broken, or they who are once in it ever fall out of it again.

PART III

OF THE IMPUTATION OF ADAM'S FIRST SIN TO HIS POSTERITY

ROMANS 5:19

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

YE have heard of the making of the original contract betwixt God and man, the covenant of works; as also of the breaking of it by our father Adam. This text shews our concern in the breach of that covenant; and it is necessary we be sensible of it, that we be not eternally ruined thereby, but, being convinced of that debt lying on our head, may flee to and make use of the great Surety for removing it from us.

In this chapter, ver. 14, the apostle shews Adam to have been a figure or type of Christ; and from ver. 12, and downwards, he institutes a comparison betwixt these two, the common heads and representatives of mankind, though Christ's representation is not so extensive as Adam's; but each of them represented his seed; Adam his natural seed, and Christ all his spiritual elect seed. Adam by his disobedience broke the first covenant; Christ by his obedience to the death fulfilled the second covenant. The disobedience of the one brings condemnation and death on those that are his; the obedience of the other brings justification and life to all that are his. The reason of both is given in the text; namely, that by the one all his are made sinners, and sinners are justly condemned and die; by the other all his are made righteous, and the righteous must, according to the covenant, be justified and live.

So the text is a comparison made betwixt the effect of Adam's disobedience, and the effect of Christ's obedience. The clauses are quite contrary the one to the other, as light and darkness; and so are the effects redounding from them to those who are respectively affected by them. The former makes men sinners, the latter makes men righteous. It is the former that concerns our present purpose; "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Where consider,

1. The malignant cause to which all evil among men is owing; "one man's disobedience." This is the impure fountain of all, the original of all evils. Here two things must be cleared, (1.) Who that one man was. Who but Adam, the first man; him the apostle had expressly named, ver. 14, as the great transgressor, the head of the rebellion,

the fountain of sin, opposed to Christ Jesus as the fountain of righteousness; and unto him our text in the Greek expressly points, which saith not simply, δι' ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου, By one man, &c., but διὰ της παρακοῆς του ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου, by that one man's disobedience, that man Adam whom he had mentioned before. (2.) What that disobedience was. No question but Adam was guilty of many acts of disobedience through the whole course of his life after his fall; but the text speaks of this disobedience emphatically, and as such by way of eminency, that disobedience, plainly referring to the first sin of Adam, that was the sin which first broke into the world, and opened the sluice to death, ver. 12; the transgression of Adam, ἡ παραβάσις Ἀδὰμ, ver. 14; that offence or fall, ver. 15. So then this disobedience is Adam's breaking of the covenant of works, by his eating of the forbidden fruit. The transgression of Adam was his transgressing of the covenant, which set him the bounds he was to keep within, on pain of death, Rom. 5:14, compared with Hosea 6:7. He set off in a course of covenant obedience running for the prize; but he stumbled and fell in breaking the covenant. Though he was a son by creation, he was God's hired servant by covenant; but by disobedience to his master he broke the covenant.

2. The answerable effect; "Many were made sinners." The poisonous fountain being opened, the waters kill wherever they come. Here also two things are to be cleared. (2.) Who these many are. Even the all mentioned ver. 12. All Adam's natural seed comprehended with him in the first covenant, as the many made righteous are all Christ's spiritual seed comprehended with him in the second covenant, but the apostle uses the term many here, though all are meant, not only because all are many, but because one man, viz., the man Christ, is excepted; so, in strict propriety of speech, Adam's disobedience did not touch all men simply, but many, there being one man excepted; and also because the scope of the apostle here is to shew that many shall be made righteous by the obedience of one; to prove which, proceeding on that principle. That the deed of one may be imputed to many, he instanceth in Adam's disobedience, who being one man, yet his deed was imputed to many; and he being a type or figure of

Christ in that respect, it plainly follows, that as by his disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of Christ shall many be made righteous. (2.) How by Adam's disobedience they were made sinners. There are but three ways how by the sin of another we may be made sinners. [1.] By adopting it through consent and approbation; so Ahab was the murderer of Naboth, though not he, but the magistrates of Jezreel did the deed, 1 Kings 21:19. But this is not the way we are made sinners by Adam's disobedience; for infants, and many in the world who never heard of Adam or his sin, and therefore are incapable of adopting it at that rate, are yet made sinners by it. Or, [2.] By imitation, as Pelagians would have it. So indeed one may be made a sinner by imitating sinners. But this cannot be it neither in this case; (1.) Because infants who are not capable of imitation, are involved here as well as others, Rom. 5:14, where death is said to "reign over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." So also are Pagans included here, who know nothing of the copy that Adam cast us. (2.) Because we are made sinners by Adam's disobedience, as we are made righteous by Christ's obedience. But it is not by imitation, but by imputation of Christ's obedience we are made righteous; therefore it cannot be that we are made sinners by imitation of Adam's sin. (3.) All men of all ages, sexes, conditions, &c., are made sinners. But it is incredible, that, if imitation were the way, there should never have been so much as one mere man to refuse to imitate the ruining example. Therefore, (3.) It necessarily follows that we are thereby made sinners by imputation; even as we are made righteous by Christ's obedience, the same being reckoned our obedience, though not done by us in our own persons. We are not only made liable to punishment by this disobedience, but we are made sinners by it. Not only is the guilt ours, but the fault is ours; we not only die in Adam, 1 Cor. 15:22, but we sinned in him as our federal head, Rom. 5:12; we broke the covenant in him; that breach in law-reckoning is ours, and is reckoned ours because it is ours by virtue of our being one with him, in his loins, as our natural and federal head.

The text affords the following doctrine, plainly founded upon it.

Adam's Sin in Breaking the Covenant of Works, is the Sin of his Posterity

DOCTRINE. Adam's breaking of the covenant of works, by his eating of the forbidden fruit, is our sin, our breaking of it, as well as his.

For the illustration of this doctrine, I shall,

- I. Consider the extent of this sin which is ours.
- II. Shew how Adam's sin of breaking the covenant of works is our sin, our breaking it.
- III. Evince the truth of the doctrine, and prove the imputation of Adam's first sin, the sin of breaking the covenant of works, by eating the forbidden fruit, to his posterity.
- IV. Shew the ground and reason why this first sin is ours.
- V. Lastly, Improve the subject.

Of the Extent of the first Sin, which is ours

I. I shall consider the extent of this sin which is ours. There is a twofold breaking of the covenant of works.

1. There is a private and personal breaking of it by such persons as are still under it. And thus it is to this day broken every day; John 7:19, "Did not Moses give you the law," said Christ to the Jews, "and yet none of you keepeth the law?" Let none imagine that the covenant of works being broken by Adam, was laid by as an useless thing, which men were no more concerned in. It is true, it is no more useful now as a way to salvation and happiness; but that is not from itself, but from man's weakness, whose weak head, heart, and legs, cannot serve him to walk in so high a way to heaven, from which he fell down headlong before in Adam, and received such a bruise as made him quite incapable for it after. But the covenant itself stands

firm still in all the parts of it. The promise of it still stands to perfect obedience, which now takes in suffering as well as doing; as appears from what passed between our Lord and a certain lawyer, Luke 10:27, 28. The lawyer had put the question to him, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Our Lord answered, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" The lawyer having replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself;" our Lord thereupon said, "Thou has answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." So that if any could answer the demands of this covenant, he should have the promised life. The threatening of it stands firm as mountains of brass, that without satisfying it by one's self or surety, none shall escape; for "without shedding of blood there is no remission," Heb. 9:22; and "God will by no means clear the guilty," Exod. 34:7. The commands of the covenant are in as full vigour as ever; for the breaking of a law can never take away the binding force and authority of it; so that it demands perfect obedience of all that are under it, with as much authority still as ever it did of Adam, Rom 3:19; For "what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law." And all men continue under it till they be ingrafted into Christ, be dead to it, and married to Christ, Rom. 6:14. Wherefore all ye Christless sinners are under it, and are breaking it every day, in every thought, word, and action of yours; and so the curse of it is raining down upon you incessantly; Gal. 3:10, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." John 3:36, "He that believeth not—the wrath of God abideth on him."

Some of you stand off from the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and from personal covenanting with God in embracing the covenant of grace, and think ye do wisely to hold your necks out of the yoke of a covenant with God. But, poor soul, thou art hard and fast under covenant to God, the covenant of works, by which thou art bound to perfect obedience, under the pain of God's curse; and every sin of thine is covenant-breaking with God, laying thee under the curse of the covenant. So all this wisdom of yours amounts to a holding fast of

the covenant of death, and refusing a covenant of life. But this breaking of the covenant of works, by violating the commands of it now, is not what we aim at.

2. There was a public breaking of it by Adam, the father of all mankind, standing as the representative of his posterity. This breach was made in paradise, where Adam broke the covenant by eating the forbidden fruit. And even this is our sin, and breaking of the covenant; viz. the first breaking of it is ours, and brings us under guilt.

The extent of this breach of the covenant may be considered two ways; in reference to the persons to whom the guilt of it reaches, whose sin it becomes; and in reference to the sin itself.

1st, The extent of this sin may be considered in reference to the persons to whom the guilt of it reaches, whose sin it becomes. And thus we say,

(1.) It extended not to the man Christ. Adam's breaking of the covenant was not his: he sinned not in Adam, as the rest of mankind did. Though he was born of a woman, he was born sinless; hence the angel said unto the virgin Mary, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God," Luke 1:35. And Heb. 7:26, he is said to be "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." He came "to destroy the works of the devil," 1 John 3:8, and "to take away sin," John 1:29, which he could not have been fit for if he himself had been one of the sinful multitude. If he had needed a sacrifice for himself, he could not have been an atoning sacrifice for us.

He was indeed a son of Adam, as appears from his genealogy brought up to Adam, Luke 3. And it was necessary he should be so, that he might be our near kinsman, to redeem us; that man's sins might be expiated by man's sufferings, and so justice might be satisfied of the same nature that sinned. But Adam was not the man Christ's federal

head, nor was he comprehended with him in the covenant of works; forasmuch as he did not come of Adam in virtue of the blessing of fruitfulness given to the man and woman before the fall, but was the seed of the woman only, born by virtue of a spiritual promise made after the breach of the covenant of works. So the breach of that covenant could not be imputed to him, or counted his, by virtue of his relation to Adam.

Nay, he is another public person, as the first Adam was; the federal head in the second covenant, erected to repair the ruins made by the breach of the first; and so he is called the Second Adam, and is represented as the antitype to the first Adam, Rom. 5:14, unto whom the first Adam, having mismanaged his own headship, did as a private person commit himself for salvation, being in a mystical union by faith joined to Jesus Christ, as the quickening Head in the second covenant. But,

(2.) It extended to all mankind besides Christ, without exception of any one from the first son and daughter of Adam, to the last child that shall be born into the world, 1 Cor. 15:22, "In Adam all die." It is the common portion of all the children of our father's family, from the oldest to the youngest; the common inheritance of the whole tribe of Adam, from the least to the greatest. The man a hundred years old may say, It is my sin; and the child at its first moving in the womb may say, It is mine. The guilt of it is removed indeed from believers upon their union with Christ; but once it lay upon them to condemnation also, as it still lies on all unregenerate persons, Rom. 5:18, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." The saints in heaven are singing glory to him who washed them from it in his own blood, and the damned in hell are lying, and will lie for ever under the weight of it.

2dly, The extent of this sin may be considered in reference to the sin itself. There is something in this sin peculiar to Adam's person, in so far as though the whole mass of mankind was concerned in it, yet there was this difference betwixt Adam and his posterity, that he was

the representative, they were the party represented; he sinned this sin in his own person, they only in him; and consequently he ruined not himself only, but all the world by it; they ruined themselves only by it. Wherefore, setting aside what was in this sin peculiar to Adam, as the head of the covenant; otherwise,

This sin of breaking the covenant of works is our sin in the whole compass and extent of it. We must look back to the state of innocence, and behold the human nature adorned with the glorious image of God in our father Adam, and us in his loins, taken into covenant with God, a covenant of life upon condition of perfect obedience, which we in him were able to give, and fenced with a threatening of death, which we were not liable to before we sinned. And we must consider, with sorrow of heart, how we broke that covenant in Adam; and, with bitter repentance, shame, and self-loathing, lament over the eating of that forbidden fruit, and all the ingredients of it, our horrid unbelief, pride, ambition, presumption, and bold curiosity, our monstrous ingratitude, &c. The fearful aggravations of it must accent our lamentation, that it was in the state of righteousness of our nature the fact was committed, how small and sorry an object was the covenant broken for, a thing though small yet sacred, the place where, the time when, and the direful effects and consequents of it on ourselves. And we must apply to the Head of the second covenant for our reparation, pardon, and reconciliation with God.

Vain men who have never been deeply convinced of sin by the working of the Spirit on their hearts, but measure their religion more by their corrupt reason than God's word, will be apt to look on these things as idle tales, and to say in their hearts, Would to God we may mourn for our own sins, the sins that we ourselves have been guilty of. Alas, sirs, that sin, with all the ingredients and aggravations of it, as is said, is as really your own sin, as the lies ye have made with your own tongue, the profane oaths ye have sworn, &c., Rom. 5:12, 19, "By one man's sin, death entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "By one man's

disobedience many were made sinners." And if it be not forgiven you, through the atoning blood of Christ, it will sink you into hell; and we know no sins that are forgiven, but they are repented of expressly, if known, and virtually if unknown. We find David mourning over it, Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." And so ought all of us to mourn over it every day of our life, and have recourse to the blood of Jesus for pardon of it. And I shall shew,

How Adam's sin, in breaking the Covenant of Works, is the sin of his Posterity

II. How Adam's sin of breaking the covenant of works is our sin, our breaking it.

1. It is really ours in itself. It is not ours in its effects only, as a father's sin in riotously spending his estate, reaches his whole family, reducing them to poverty and want. Though the effects of that riotous spending, the poverty, misery, and want, be theirs; yet the riotous spending is the father's only. But so is it not in this case. It is true, the effects of it, the sinful and penal evils following this sin, are ours; we see them, we feel them, and the most stupid groan under them; but the sin itself is ours too. And,

(1.) The guilt of it is ours, Rom. 5:18, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" that is, the guilt of sin, whereby the soul is bound over to God's wrath, by virtue of the sanction of the law. Thus that word is used frequently in the scripture, as appears from John 3:18, "He that believeth not, is condemned already." Rom. 8:1, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" though it is often mistaken for what we call damnation, by which is understood the full execution of the law's sentence after death. So the guilt of the eating of the forbidden fruit lies on all men naturally as their guilt; though but one man's mouth tasted it, the guilt of the crime seizes all men. Every man is bound

over to God's wrath for it, till the Lord Jesus, by an application of his blood to the soul, loose the cords of death.

(2.) The fault of it is ours, Rom. 5:1, "All have sinned," namely, in Adam. The fault lies in its contrariety to the holy commandment; this made it a faulty deed, a criminal action, a sin against God; and as such it is ours. We in Adam transgressed the law, broke through the hedge, and so broke the covenant. If the fault were not ours, a holy God would never punish us for it: but certain it is, that he does punish the children of Adam for it, Rom. 5:14, "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." It is true indeed, God may punish one that is not really faulty, for the fault of another, if he do voluntarily substitute himself in the room of the faulty, having a full power so to dispose of himself; and that was the case of Christ the Mediator; but that cannot be pretended to be our case with respect to Adam's sin.

(3.) The stain and blot of it is ours. The whole nature of man was tainted with it, vitiated, and blackened, and, through defilement and loathsomeness thereby, rendered incapable of, and quite unfit for, communion with God, Gen. 3:24. This sin defiled the whole mass of man's nature, from our father Adam going through all his posterity, like leaven through the whole lump, 1 Cor. 15:22, "In Adam all die;" their souls die spiritually; his whole race, by this sin, became as dead carcasses.

Thus Adam's sin, in itself, is really ours.

2. It is ours in law-reckoning; God imputes it to us, charges it upon us all once, in our natural state; though whenever a soul believes in Christ, it is disimputed to that soul, Rom. 8:1, "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." But, by a sentence passed in the court of heaven, all mankind are decerned sinners, transgressors of the law, guilty of the first sin, and therefore liable to death, the penalty of the covenant, Rom. 5:12, 19, "All have sinned.—

By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." And for as much as the judgment of God is according to truth, the matter must stand in itself, as it is found in that law-reckoning; that is to say, because we are really sinners in Adam, therefore we are reckoned in law to be so. So that the imputation of Adam's sin to us, necessarily presupposes its being really ours.

Proof of the Imputation of Adam's First Sin to his Posterity

III. I shall evince the truth of the doctrine, and prove the imputation of Adam's first sin, the sin of breaking the covenant of works, by eating the forbidden fruit, to his posterity."

1. The scripture plainly teacheth, that all sinned in Adam, and were made sinners by his first sin, which was the breaking of the covenant of works, by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, Rom. 5:12, 19, both forecited. Where it is to be remarked, (1.) That the apostle speaks of the first sin in both texts; for as in the 19th verse, he calls it "that disobedience;" so in ver. 12, the or that sin, by way of eminency, as vers. 14, 15, in opposition to that obedience, by way of eminency, ver. 19, whereas, speaking of sin in general, ver. 13, he calls it simply sin. Besides, he speaks of that sin, by which death entered into the world; as by one man that sin entered into the world, and by that sin death; but it is evident, that it was by the first sin that death entered into the world; therefore all sinned in Adam in breaking the covenant of works. This also is clear from the scope of this chapter, which is to account for the justification of sinners by the obedience of Christ, which the apostle does by shewing that Christ died in our room and stead, vers. 7–11, and he sums up the whole matter in this conclusion; ver. 12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" and this conclusion he afterwards enlarges upon. The words, it is plain, must have something understood, to make up the sense; and I conceive it is this; "Wherefore it is even as by one man that sin entered into the world," &c. i. e. The matter of the justification of a sinner before God lies even as the condemnation

and death of sinners by that sin of one man, &c. (2.) That the apostle determines all men to have sinned that sin. For that, or in whom (as Mark 2:5) all have sinned. But that this is the sense, however, the words be rendered, appears, if it is considered, [1.] That death entered into the world by that sin, and so passed on all men; but, according to the apostle, it could not pass on all men for that sin, but for that all were the sinners; for where death comes, sin must needs be before; by the rule of justice no man can die for a sin he is not guilty of. [2.] If all sinned, infants sinned too; but infants are not capable of having sinned otherwise than in Adam. The apostle teaches very plainly, that infants are comprehended in these all, and that they sinned, ver. 14, "that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," which clearly bears them to have sinned another way. (3.) By that sin we were constituted or made sinners, ver. 19, not by consent and approbation, nor by imitation, but by imputation, as was argued before; and consequently, since the judgment of God is according to truth, we sinned that sin.

2. All are under the guilt of that sin in Adam, till it be removed in justification by faith in Jesus Christ; they are, by virtue of that sin, bound over to death, and the eternal wrath of God. This the scripture teaches evidently, 1 Cor. 15:22, "In Adam all die." But how can they die in him, if they did not sin in him? Rom. 5:12, "By one man—death passed upon all." Sin then behoved in the first place by him to pass on all; ver. 15, "Through the offence of one many be dead." That offence therefore behoved to be their offence, ver. 18, "By the offence of one, it was (viz. the offence) upon all men unto condemnation," i. e. the guilt of eternal wrath; but how could they be condemned by a holy and just God for an offence that was not their offence, it being undeniable that they did not substitute themselves, nor were they substituted by another, in the room of the offender? When the apostle tells us, that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. 8:1, does he not plainly teach us, (1.) That all who are not in Christ, are under condemnation, whoever they be, whether guilty of actual sin in their own persons or not, as infants and idiots? (2.) That even such as are now in Christ,

were under condemnation, all along while they were not in him? Let men take a view of our guilty state in Adam, that wrath which by nature we stand adjudged to, Eph. 2:3, which the scripture plainly teaches; and then consider the holy, just nature of God; they shall be obliged to own that we sinned in Adam, and that his sin is ours as well as his, and that that wrath on that account is just. But corrupt unsubdued nature first frames to itself a notion of God's justice, according to its own principles, and then rejects this imputation as inconsistent therewith, and then puts a sense on clear scripture texts agreeable to its preconceived notions.

3. The universal depravation and corruption of human nature is a glaring evidence of this. Man is now despoiled of his primitive glory and integrity, the image of God, the rectitude of his nature, with which he was created; and instead of it his whole nature is corrupted, there is in it a bent and propensity to evil. His mind is darkened, his will perverse, his affections altogether disorderly. He is born in this case, corruption is woven into his nature from the time he has a being in the womb; Job 14:4, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Gen. 6:5, "Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually." Psalm 51:5, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." There is a necessity of regeneration, without a man be born again he is ruined for ever, John 3:3. He is naturally dead in sin, he must be raised from death, he is so marred that he must be new made, created to good works, else he will lie for ever void of spiritual life, utterly unable to do anything but sin, Eph. 2:5, 10. Such a nature and such a frame of soul is a sin, a fountain of sin. But without question it is a misery too, and the greatest of miseries human nature is capable of, as setting men at the greatest distance from God the chief good. Therefore it must be concluded to be a punishment of sin too, and of some sin previous to it, which can be none else but Adam's first sin. And that sin must be our sin, the sin of all mankind, since it is punished at this fearful rate in us and all mankind. It is not possible to account for the justice of this dispensation otherwise. It was inconsistent with the nature of

God to have created man in this case; yet thus we are from the time we have a being as men. Is this from the Creator otherwise than as a punishment of sin? Must it not be from ourselves, (Hos. 13:9, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself,") as the authors of our misery, by sinning against God, namely, sinning this sin, for no other can have place here? The law of natural generation without this will not salve the matter; for so justice would have required either the stopping of generation, or else that even corrupt Adam should not have generated corrupt children. It is within the compass of omnipotency though not the compass of created power, to bring a clean thing out of an unclean, as was done in the case of the man Christ; otherwise the greatest misery and punishment which might have been averted, is inflicted upon mankind without any fault of theirs; which is more than absurd.

4. Though men venture to deny sin in infants, who are without question incapable of actual sinning in their own persons, Rom. 5:14, and 9:11, yet it is undeniable they are liable to misery, pains, sickness, and die as well as those who are grown person. The groans and tears of parents over the cradles, the moans and distress of poor harmless babes, the graves of the smallest size in the churchyard, are demonstrations of these. Yea, look to the old world, swept away with the flood, and there you will see the infants drowned with the sinners a hundred years old. Look to the overthrow of Sodom, and you will see them burnt in the fire from heaven with the lustful parents that begot them. Look to Jerusalem when it was destroyed, and there you will see them pining to death by famine, with the aged sinners. Then look up to heaven, and behold a holy, just God, who sent these plagues, and consider if it be consistent with his holy nature to treat innocent senseless persons at that rate. And after all look into your Bible, and you will see how God is justified in all these. There you will see the threatening of death annexed to the sin of breaking the covenant of works, Gen. 3:17, and seeing it executed upon them, ye must needs conclude they are guilty. There you find "death passes on all, for that all have sinned;" Rom. 5:12, "reigns over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," ver. 14, and

thence you must conclude them sinners. There it appears, that "the wages of sin is death," Rom. 6:23; they receive the wages, they must have then wrought the work of sin; not in their own persons surely, for they were not capable; therefore they sinned in Adam. As for the corruption of their nature, it justifies this procedure indeed; but yet the propagation of it to them is owing to this first sin; and the dispensation of God in that matter must be justified, by their guilt of that sin.

5. Lastly, The comparison stated in scripture, betwixt Christ and Adam, plainly evinceth this. The apostle, Rom. 5:14, tells us that Adam was a type or figure of Christ; and 1 Cor. 15:45, he calls the one the "first Adam," the other the "last Adam." Whence it appears, that as Christ was the federal head in the covenant of grace; so Adam was the federal head in the covenant of works. Whence we may gather,

(1.) That as Christ, in his obedience and death, stood not as a private person, but what he did and suffered, he did and suffered as a public person, to be imputed to all his spiritual seed; 2 Cor. 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;" so Adam sinning, and breaking the covenant of works, did what he did not as a private man, whose guilt remains with himself, but as a public person, whose deed was to be imputed to all his posterity, or natural seed; Rom. 5:18, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

(2.) That since Adam was eventually a head of destruction and ruin to all his seed, and Christ a head of reparation and salvation to all that were his seed of the shipwrecked multitude; 1 Cor. 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" then as God laid on Christ the iniquities of all that are his, making them to meet on him, Isa. 53:6, so Adam's sin was from him diffused, and came upon all that were his, Rom 5:12; for the one was to repair those whom the other had destroyed; to pay their debts which they had been involved in by the other.

(3.) As believers obeyed and satisfied in Christ their head in the second covenant, so all men sinned in Adam their head in the first covenant. The former is the doctrine of the scripture. "The righteousness of the law was fulfilled in them," Rom. 8:4. They were "crucified with him," Gal. 2:20; which further appears, in that they were "raised up, and set in heaven in him," Eph. 2:6. Hence the latter is established; we broke the law in Adam, and sinned against God in him.

(4.) Lastly, As we are made righteous by the obedience of Christ; so we are made sinners by the disobedience of Adam. So says the text. But we are made righteous by the obedience of Christ imputed to us, therefore we are made sinners through the disobedience of Adam imputed to us. Christ's righteousness is really ours, not in its effects only, but in itself, being that very righteousness on which, we are acquitted and justified. So Adam's sin is really ours, not in its effects, only, but in itself, being that upon which we are all by nature condemned persons, Rom. 5:18. As soon as we have a spiritual being in Christ, and are united to him by his Spirit and by faith, so soon is Christ's righteousness ours; and as soon as we have a natural being as children of Adam, Adam's sin is ours.

So much for the proof of this doctrine, That Adam's first sin, the sin of breaking the covenant of works, by eating the forbidden fruit, is our sin, our breaking of it, or is imputed to his posterity.

The Ground and Reason of the Imputation of Adam's first sin to his Posterity

IV. I shall show the ground and reason why Adam's first sin, or breaking of the covenant of works, is our sin, our breaking of it. This is the foundation of the imputation of that sin to us, and lies in these two things jointly.

1. He was our natural or seminal head, the natural root of all mankind, Acts 17:26. God set up the human nature in him pure and

undefiled, blessed him with fruitfulness, Gen. 1:28, and from him all mankind derive their pedigree. So that as Levi, being in the loins of Abraham, when Melchisedek met him, paid tithes in Abraham, Heb. 7:9, 10, so we, being in the loins of Adam, when the tempter met him, sinned and broke the covenant in him. But,

2. Which is the main thing, He was our federal head in the covenant of works, our representative in that bargain. There was a proper covenant betwixt God and Adam; and in it Adam was not considered as a private person, but stood as the head of all mankind in it, acting for himself and for his posterity whom he represented; even as the second Adam in the covenant of grace. And thus his sin was ours. Even as Abraham, having the covenant made with him, was the federal as well as natural head of Levi, being the covenant-head of the Jewish nation; and therefore Levi in his loins is reckoned to have paid tithes to Melchisedek.

The sum of the matter lies here; all mankind being originally one in Adam, were made legally one in him and with him, by the covenant of works entered into with Adam, as the head of all mankind, constituted by God himself, the infinitely wise and absolute Lord of all the creatures. By the bond of the covenant superadded to the natural tie betwixt him and us, we were made one with him, to all the purposes of the covenant. And being thus one with him, his sin in breaking of the covenant was ours as well as his. The being of this covenant I have already proved, and have also accounted for the equity and justice of this dispensation.

The Doctrine of the Imputation of Adam's First Sin to his Posterity applied

USE I. This truth serves to discover, and set before our eyes,

1. The malignant nature of sin. It is an infectious vapour, a plague, a pest to mankind, of a killing nature, wherever it comes. One sinner of mankind infected the whole race; one morsel of that leaven leavened

the whole nature of man. It is the spiritual pestilence in the world, that makes more spiritual havoc than fire and sword; an emblem of which God is giving this day in France by a bodily pestilence, with which also he is threatening these nations. It is Solomon's observation, "That one sinner destroyeth much good," Eccl. 9:18. This is emphatically represented to us in the case of Adam, and often in the case of many particular sinners among us, whose sphere of activity is more narrow; but O what destruction do they make within their bounds! this malignity of it appears,

(1.) In its spreading from the sinner to all that are concerned in him, destroying and breaking down like a flood where it comes. The peace and purity of the whole world was marred by Adam's sin; and the peace and purity of lesser societies are still marred with the sins of others, Heb. 12:15. The apostle exhorts Christians to "look diligently, lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble them, and thereby many be defiled." How many such roots of bitterness are sprung up in our land, wherewith the peace and purity of church and state are both marred together at this day. How many such have sprung up and are still springing up among us, whose pangs of lust mar the quiet of families, leave a blot on them, make the congregation a reproach, and to stink in the nostrils of the sober part of their neighbours.

(2.) In that when the sinner is dead and gone, his sin lives and works after him. It is long since Adam died, but still his sin is working. Jeroboam sinned so in his life, as that he opened such a sluice as ran for several generations after he was silent in the grave. And thus do the sins of many still live and destroy much good after they are gone. And therefore, besides the particular judgment at death, there is a general judgment at the end of the world, where people must answer for the mischief done by the current of their sin in the world after they were gone out of it.

2. The awful and tremendous holy sovereignty of God, whose judgments are always just, but often unsearchable. When one

considers how God made the angels independent upon one another as to standing and falling, but comprehended the whole race of mankind under one federal head; whom also, in the depth of his sovereign wisdom he permitted to fall, when he could have held him up; so as all mankind are ruined in him; must we not cry out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out," Rom. 11:33. The dispensation was just, he can do us no wrong; it was becoming the divine perfections, and designed for holy ends in the depth of wisdom. But in the meantime, there is need of a holy, humble spirit to adore the sovereignty of it.

3. The impossibility of our obtaining salvation by the way of this covenant. What hopes can we have of living by doing, when it has misgiven in our head already, when we were fitted for working at another rate than we can pretend to be now? We have already broken that covenant, fallen under the penalty of it, the which we must needs discharge before we can have access to begin again on new ground, to look for life by keeping it better. And who of us is able to discharge that debt to the justice of God? "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight," Rom. 3:20.

4. The glory of the contrivance of the second covenant by the ever-blessed Trinity, and of the performance of it by the second Adam in our nature. Look here and behold the necessity of it for our salvation; what could they have done for themselves, who had ruined themselves, and were brought into the world in a state of condemnation? There was a necessity of the obedience and death of Christ in that case; Luke 24:26, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" Behold the suitableness of it; man was ruined by Adam's breaking the first covenant, and the remedy is provided by Christ's keeping the second covenant. Behold the perfection of it. It takes away not only this sin, but all other sins too. How strong is the grace of Christ, that is able to stop the torrent of Adam's sin, increased with innumerable personal sins running with it in one channel? Rom. 5:16.

5. Lastly, A notable confirmation of believers' faith as to the imputation of Christ's righteousness and death unto them, upon their embracing the covenant of grace. Is Adam's sin ours by virtue of our union with him as the federal head in the covenant of works? Surely Christ's righteousness, obedience, and death, are no less ours in virtue of our union with Christ, the federal head in the second covenant. That God who imputes the one to all mankind for condemnation, will much more impute the other to believers for justification.

USE II. This doctrine serves to stir up to several duties. And,

1. Be convinced of this sin as your sin. Take it home to yourselves among the rest of the pieces of guilt, chargeable upon you before the Lord. God charges it on all mankind as their sin; all men therefore ought to charge it on themselves, since he is the Amen, faithful and true Witness, and cannot charge any with guilt falsely or by mistake. It is hard to convince men of this; but when the Spirit of the Lord comes to carry the work of conviction through, he will fasten this conviction on the conscience among others; and how can one sue for the pardon of that sin which he will not admit the conviction of?

2. Confess and mourn over this sin before the Lord. Be humbled under the sense of it, and anxiously inquire how ye may be saved from it, and the wrath and curse of God due to you for it. Consider seriously how this debt is on your head by nature, how you are transgressors from the womb, breakers of covenant with God, fallen under the penalty of the covenant of works, by your not fulfilling the condition of it, but transgressing the covenant. Live no more unconcerned about it, but sist your guilty consciences in this point particularly before the Lord; and let that fear and sorrow work in your souls on this head, that ought to be in the case of sins committed by you in your own persons. I shall enforce this with some motives.

MOTIVE 1. Consider that it is really your sin, by which, you have offended God, broken his covenant, and made yourselves liable to eternal wrath. And shall it not lie heavy on your spirits, that you have thus sinned? Rom. 5:19. If it be really your sin, your debt ye are involved in by the mismanagement of your first father; can it be safe to be unconcerned about it, while a holy just God is the party ye have to do with?

MOT. 2. It is the fountain of all the sins and miseries that ever have been found with you. Ye are guilty before God of sins of heart, lip and life: these must sometime be a terror to the soul. But whence did all this flow, but from your corrupt nature, averse to all good, and prone to all evil? And whence had you that nature, but from the guilt of this sin lying on you? Ye have been plunged in a gulf of miseries; even from the womb to this day, the clouds have been returning after the rain. Trace them to the spring-head, and you will find they all issue from this sin. And what sin can ye truly mourn over to purpose, if ye do not mourn over the fountain of all? What calls more loudly for repenting and mourning than this leading sin?

MOT. 3. While the guilt of this sin lies upon you ye lose all your labour in striving to get the guilt of other sins removed, or to get your lives reformed. That is but to shut the door while the grand thief is in the house; to labour to dry up the streams, while ye are at no pains to get the poisonous fountain stopt; the which is labour in vain. And it is the overlooking of this that is the cause of the apostacy of many who sometimes have made such a fair appearance; and is also the cause of the prevalence of a legal disposition that is so much at this day among professors.

MOT. 4. Lastly, If ye get not the pardon of it, it will ruin you for ever, Rom. 5:18. Hereby ye are condemned; and a pardon only can reverse the sentence. Ye must then sue out the pardon of it; and if you come to God on that errand, be sure your souls will be humbled and broken within you for it.

And if ye would have your hearts duly affected with this sin, (1.) Labour to lay aside your carnal reasonings, and believe God's word as the word of truth and righteousness, which fixes this guilt on all mankind, and particularly on you. These reasonings in this matter are dangerous, and can tend to nothing but hardening the heart, and casting dishonour on God. (2.) How ye naturally trace the steps of Adam in his breaking of the covenant, so bearing fallen Adam's image most lively, as I showed elsewhere. The consideration of this may serve to prove the fact upon us, while we do so readily fall into the same way again, as far as we have occasion. (3.) Consider the righteousness of Christ, which is to be the same way imputed to all believers, and shall be imputed to you on your believing. There is a gift of righteousness to be imputed, as well as that debt of sin is charged upon you.

Lastly, Let this stir you up to quit your hold of the first Adam and his covenant, and flee for life and salvation to the second Adam in the second covenant, uniting with him by faith. The offer of the gospel is made to you: the Lord has made a grant of his son as a quickening head to poor sinners. Believe it, embrace the offer, accept heaven's gift; otherwise ye will be ruined, not only by the breach of the first covenant, but by despising of the second.

If ye be of those to whom that iniquity is forgiven, ye will highly prize the second Adam; for "unto them that believe he is precious," 1 Pet. 2:7. Ye will be holy and tender in your walk, the power of sin being broken where the guilt is removed, Rom. 8:1. Ye will be dead to the law, and denied to your own righteousness, making Christ's fulfilling of the covenant your only plea for life and salvation, Matth. 5:3, Phil. 3:3.

Thus far of the breach of the covenant of works, and the extent of it.

PART IV

THE CONDITION OF MEN WHEN UNDER THE BROKEN COVENANT OF WORKS; AND THEIR DREADFUL STATE UNDER THE CURSE

SECT. I

**THE STATE OF MANY MEN UNDER THE BROKEN
COVENANT OF WORKS; WHO THEY ARE; THE EFFECT
OF THAT COVENANT UPON THEM; AND THE REASONS
WHY SO MANY CONTINUE UNDER IT**

GALATIANS 3:10

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

HAVING discoursed of the breaking of the covenant of works by all mankind in Adam, we are next to inquire into the state and case of sinners under that broken covenant. And that the text shews to be a very lamentable and dangerous one. In a shipwreck, when the ship is dashed in pieces upon a rock, how heavy is the case of the crew among the raging waves? The ship can no more carry them to the harbour, but failing them, leaves them to the mercy of the waves. If one can get a broken plank to hold by, that is the greatest safety there; but that doth often but hold in their miserable lives for a little, till the passengers are swallowed up. Such, and unspeakably worse, is the case of sinners under the broken covenant of works, which leaves them under the curse, as we see in the text. In which we have,

1. The covenant-state of some of mankind, yea, of many of them. They "are of the works of the law;" it is the same thing as to be of the law of works; that is, to be under the covenant of works. So "the works of the law" are opposed to "the hearing of faith," Gal. 3:2, that is, the law to the gospel, the covenant of works to the covenant of grace. But the apostle in our text intimates their covenant-state by a phrase which, in the first place, designs their habitual course and practice, viz. to seek life and salvation by the works of the law; but, in the next place, designs the covenant they are under, whereof their practice is a plain evidence. They are opposed to those who are of faith, who, being under the covenant of grace, by faith look for life and salvation by Christ's works.

The phrase, "As many as are of the works of the law," imports, that there are others who are not under that covenant. In the scripture we read of "two covenants," Gal. 4:24. Each of these have their children; and so the world is divided into two sorts of men; some under the covenant of grace, others still remaining under the covenant of works; which the phrase "under the curse," doth also bear; for since they are under the curse of the law, or covenant of works, they are surely under the law or covenant itself; for whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the the law," Rom. 3:19.

2. The state and case of men under that covenant; they "are under the curse." The covenant is broken, and so they are fallen under the penalty; the duty of the covenant is neglected and cast off; and so they are under the curse of the covenant. As the blessing or promise, which they have lost, comprehends all good for time and eternity, soul and body; so the curse comprehends all evil on soul and body, for time and eternity. To be under the curse is to be by the law's sentence separated and destined to evil, according to the threatening, Gen. 2:17, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

3. The proof and evidence of this their miserable state and case; "For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." There is an

extract of the sentence of the law which is standing against them, Deut. 27:26, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." That sets the matter in full light, from whence the conscience of every man under that covenant may conclude him under the curse.

The two following doctrines comprehend the full scope of the words, namely,

DOCT. I. There are some, yea, many, of mankind, who are still under the broken Covenant of Works.

DOCT. II. Man in his natural state, being under the broken covenant of works, is under the curse.

DOCT. I. There are some, yea, many, of mankind, who are still under the broken Covenant of Works.

In the prosecution of this subject. I shall,

I. Evince the truth of the doctrine, that there are some, yea many, of mankind, who are still under the broken covenant of works.

II. Describe who they are that are under this broken covenant.

III. Shew what is the effect of the broken covenant of works upon them.

IV. Shew why so many remain still under this broken covenant.

V. Lastly, Apply the subject.

Proof of the doctrine that many persons still continue under the broken covenant of works

I. I shall evince the truth of this doctrine, that there are some, yea, many of mankind, who are still under the broken covenant of works.

This will clearly appear, if ye consider,

1. That there are but "few that shall be saved," Matth. 7:14. Christ's flock is but a very little flock, Luke 12:32. But all who are brought from under the covenant of works, are brought into the covenant of grace; Rom. 6:14, they are not under the law but under grace; and all who are within the bond of the covenant of grace, are of Christ's flock, and shall be saved, Heb. 8:10. Hence it follows that the most part of mankind are left under the covenant of works. The truth is, all men by nature are under it, and so are born under the curse, Eph. 2:3. And many live and die under it; and therefore the sentence against the whole wretched herd of the condemned world runs in these terms, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," &c.

2. The scripture is plain on this head. The apostle tells us that there are some under the law, Rom. 3:19, to whom the law doth say what it says, for conviction and condemnation; and that is under the law as a covenant of works, for otherwise all are under it as a rule of life. It curseth and condemneth many; Gal. 3:10, "Cursed is every one," viz., who is under the law; for its curse cannot reach others, there being "no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. 8:1. It condemns all unbelievers; John 3:18, "He that believeth not is condemned already," viz., by the sentence of the law as the covenant of works; for the covenant of grace condemns no man, John 5:45, said our Lord to the Jews, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." Chap. 12:47, "And if any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world but to save the world."

3. As all men in Adam were taken into the covenant of works, so no man can be freed from the obligation of it, but they who are discharged from it by God who was man's party in it. This is evident from the general nature of contracts. And none are discharged from it but on a full answering of all it could demand of them, Matth. 5:18. For said our Lord, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle

shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." This no man can attain unto but by faith in Jesus Christ, whereby the soul appropriates and applies to itself Christ's obedience and satisfaction offered in the gospel; and so pleading these gets up the discharge; "For being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1. But certain it is that all men have not faith, nay, few have it; therefore few are discharged from the covenant of works, but most part are still under it.

4. Freedom from the covenant of works is such a privilege as requires both price and power, each of them infinite, to invest a sinner with it. The sinner is by nature under the covenant of works, bound to perfect obedience to its commands, to complete satisfaction of its sanction. None but Christ was able to purchase the sinner's freedom from that covenant, since none but he could answer its high demands. When the sinner's freedom is purchased, he is so loath to part with that covenant, that none but the Spirit of Christ, in his day of power, can make him willing to come away from under it. So it is the peculiar privilege of the elect, for whom Christ died; yea, of believers, whom the Spirit of Christ has translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, Rom. 7:4; Gal. 2:19.

5. There are many who still live as they were born; in the same state wherein their father Adam left them, when he broke; who were never to this day in any due concern how to be discharged from the debt he left upon their head, or of the bond of the covenant of works which in him they entered into. How can it be then, but that the debt remains, and the bond is uncanceled as to them? In one of the two Adams all mankind stand to this day; some in the first Adam, bearing the image of the earthly, sin and death; others in the second Adam, bearing the image of the heavenly, life and salvation. The translation from the first to the second none meet with in a morning-dream; both law and gospel have a part to act in their souls, ere this work can be effected.

6. Lastly, There are but two covenants, viz. of works and grace, Gal. 4:24, as there never were but two ways of life and salvation, by works

and by grace; and but two federal heads of mankind, the first and second Adam. Under one of these covenants, and but under one of them, every son and daughter of Adam must be; either under the law or under grace, Rom. 6:14. The covenant of grace has not been so much as externally revealed or preached to many in the world; and among those to whom it is, how few are there who have really and truly embraced it? how do many stand at a distance from it, as they would do from fetters of iron? Since therefore but few are within the bond of the covenant of grace, it is evident that most men are under the covenant of works.

Hence the case of many, yea, most men, is most miserable, they are under the curse.

Those who are Under the Covenant of Works described

II. The second thing proposed was, Who they are that are under the broken covenant of works? This is a weighty enquiry; it is in effect, who are they that are under the curse? because all that are under it, now that it is broken, are under the curse. Therefore take heed to it, and apply what may be offered on this head. I premise these four things, to make this the more clear.

1. Men may be under the covenant of works, and yet living under the external dispensation of the covenant of grace. There is a great difference betwixt one's visible church state, and the state of their souls before the Lord. The covenant of grace was preached to Adam in paradise, Gen. 3:15, yet was he in hazard of running back to the covenant of works, ver. 22. The Jews had the dispensation of the covenant of grace among them, and the ceremonial law clearly held out the way of salvation by the Messiah, yet most of them were under the covenant of works, being sons of the bondwoman. So, under the gospel dispensation to this day, many to whom the covenant of grace is offered, continue under the covenant of works. It is one thing to hear the new covenant proclaimed, another thing to accept of it by faith.

2. Men may receive the seals of the covenant of grace, and yet be under the covenant of works. Circumcision was a seal of the covenant of grace, yet many who received it were still sons of the bondwoman, to be cast out from inheriting with the children, Gal. 4:24, 25, 30. And so will many who are baptized in the name of Christ, and have partaken of the Lord's supper, yet be disowned at the last day, by the Head of the second covenant, as none of his, Luke 13:26, forasmuch as they never truly came into the bond of that covenant.

3. Men may be convinced in their consciences of the impossibility of obtaining salvation by Adam's covenant of works, and yet remain under it still. Where are they who are so very stupid, as to think that they can obtain salvation by perfect obedience to the law? The Pharisees of old, and the Papists to this day, will not venture their salvation on the absolute perfection of their own obedience; yet the former lived, and the latter do live, under that covenant. Let no man deceive himself here; such a conviction as hardly any man can shun, is not sufficient to divorce a man from the law or covenant of works.

4. Lastly, Men, upon the offer of the covenant of grace made to them, may aim at accepting of it, and so enter into a personal covenant with God, and yet remain under the covenant of works. Many miss their mark in their covenanting with God, and, instead of accepting God's covenant of grace, make a covenant of works with God, upon other terms than Adam's covenant was, for which there is no warrant in the word. The Galatians did not cast off Christ's righteousness altogether, but only mixed their own works with his; and thus do many still, looking on their faith, repentance, and obedience, such as they are, to be the fulfilling of a law, upon which they are to be accepted of God.

But more particularly, and directly,

1st, All unregenerate persons are under the covenant of works. Where is the unconverted man or woman, living in the state of irregeneracy, strangers to a saving change on their souls? That man

or woman is yet a branch of the old Adam, growing on the old stock, a stranger to the new covenant, because not in Christ, the head of the covenant. For "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," 2 Cor. 5:17. Such an unregenerate person is still under the covenant of works. This is evident, in that the death contained in the threatening of that covenant has full sway over them, so that they are dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 3:1, 5. They lie yet without spiritual life, as the first Adam left them. They have no communion with the second Adam, else they had been quickened; for he is a quickening head, as the other was a killing one.

2dly, All that have not the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them are under the covenant of works; For "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," Rom. 8:9. And says the same apostle, Gal. 5:8, "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." It is one of the first promises of the covenant of grace, the giving of the Spirit, Ezek. 37:27, "A new Spirit will I put within you." And the Spirit of Christ once entering into a man never changes his habitation. For, saith Christ himself, John 14:16, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter: that he may abide with you for ever." Wo to those, then, that have not the Spirit of grace, they are under the curse. And such are all prayerless persons, Zech. 12:10; ignorant, unconvinced sinners, who have not yet seen their lost and ruined state, John 16:8; refractory and rebellious ones, who will not be hedged in within the Lord's way, Ezek. 36:27; carnal men, who are under the government of their own lusts and unruly passions, Gal. 5:16.

3. All unbelievers, John 3:18. Whosoever is destitute of saving faith is under the covenant of works; for it is by faith that one is brought within the bond of the covenant of grace, is married unto Christ, being dead to the law. Every soul of man is under one of the two husbands, Christ or the law. All believers have their Maker for their husband; and all unbelievers have the law as a covenant of works for theirs, a rigorous husband, a weak one, who can do nothing for their

life and salvation, but for their ruin and destruction. Faith unites the soul to Christ, Eph. 3:17. The unbeliever, what though he go about the duties of religion, walk soberly and strictly, he is not joined to Christ, therefore he remains under the covenant of works, under the curse.

4. All unsanctified, unholy persons, Rom. 6:14. The doctrinal staking sinners down under, and wreathing about their necks the yoke of the law as a covenant of works, is so far from being a proper method to bring them to holiness and good works, that contrariwise they shall never be holy, never do one good work, till such time as they are fairly rid of that yoke, and sit down under the jurisdiction of grace. So that true holiness is an infallible mark of one delivered from the law; and unholiness, of one that is yet hard and fast under it, Gal. 5:18, forecited. Legalism is rank enmity to true holiness, is but a devil transformed into an angel of light, and never prevails so in the church as in a time of apostacy, growing unholiness, untenderness, regardlessness of the commands of God, when all flesh has corrupted their ways. Take for an example, Popery, the grand apostasy. What set of men that call themselves Christians, set up for the law and good works in their doctrine, more than they do? and among whom is there less of these to be found? How can they be but unholy, who are under the covenant of works? for there is no communion with God in the way of that covenant now; so sanctifying influences are stopt, and they must wither and pine away in their iniquity. Whereas when once the soul is brought out from that covenant into the covenant of grace, the course of sanctifying influences is opened, the clean and cleansing water flows into their souls; the head of the covenant is a holy head, conveying holiness to his members; the spirit of the covenant is a sanctifying Spirit; the promises of the covenant are promises of holiness; the blood of the covenant is purifying blood; and, in a word, every thing in the covenant tends to sanctifying and making holy the covenanters.

5. All profane, loose, and licentious men, are under the covenant of works, Rom. 7:5, and 8:2. These men of Belial are under that heavy

yoke. For under that covenant, being broken, sin and death have the force of a law upon the subjects, as the worms, stench and rottenness, domineer in the grave without control. When one sees so many profane lives, unclean, drunkards, swearers, liars, thieves, cheaters, oppressors, and others, walking after their own lusts; he may conclude all these to be evidences and consequents of the curse of the broken covenant on them; even as when ye go through a field full of briers, thorns, thistles, nettles, &c., ye may sigh and say, These are the product of the curse laid on the earth. These people think they walk at liberty; but what liberty is it? Even such as that madman enjoyed, Mark 5:4, who had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; neither could any man tame him. The truth is, they are the arrantest slaves on earth, who are slaves to their own domineering lusts and passions; 2 Pet. 2:19, "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." Such kindly slaves are they of the worst of masters, that they have lost all just notion and sense of true liberty, Psalm 119:45.

6. All mere moralists, such as satisfy themselves with common honesty and sobriety, living in the meantime strangers to religious exercises, and without a form of godliness. These are under the covenant of works, as seeking justification and acceptance with God by their conformity (such as it is) to the letter of the law, Gal. 5:4. These are they who please themselves, in their wronging no man, doing justly betwixt man and man, and in their pretended keeping of a good heart towards God; while in the meantime, the rottenness of their hearts appears in their ignorance of God and Christ, and the way of salvation by him, their estrangedness from the duty of prayer and other holy exercises. Some of these have that scripture much in their mouths; Micah 6:8, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" little considering that the last clause thereof writes death on their foreheads. They are under the covenant of works with a witness,

having betaken themselves to their shreds of moral honesty, as so many broken boards of that split ship.

7. Lastly, All formal hypocrites, or legal professors, these sons and daughters of the bond-woman, Gal. 4:24, 25. These are they who have been convinced, but never were converted; who have been awakened by the law, but were never laid to rest by the gospel; who are brought to duties but have never been brought out of them to Jesus Christ; who pretend to be married to Christ, but were never yet divorced from nor dead to the law; and so are still joined to the first husband the law as a covenant of works. Though they be strict and zealous professors and therein go beyond many; they are as really enemies to Christ as the profane are; Rom. 10:3, "For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to stablish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." Though they will not let an opportunity of duty slip, but take heed to their ways, and dare not walk at random, as many do; all that they do is under the influence of the covenant of works, and therefore God regards it not, but they remain under the curse.

Of the Commanding, Debarring, Condemning, and Irritating Power of the Covenant of Works, upon those who are under it

III. I proceed to show what is the effect of the broken covenant of works upon those who are under it.

Of the Commanding Power of the Covenant of Works

First, It has and exercises a commanding power over them, binding them to its obedience, with the strongest bonds and ties of authority. Its commands are contained in the fiery law delivered from Mount Sinai, out of the midst of the fire, Deut. 5:22. The obedience of them, which it binds unto, is perfect obedience, every way perfect, Luke 10:27, 28. It has its full commanding power over them all that are

under it. It has become a question whether or not believers are set free from the commanding power of the covenant of works, as well as from the condemning power of it. We own the ten commands, which were delivered on Mount Sinai, to be the eternal rule of righteousness, and that these are given of God in the hand of Jesus Christ to believers, for a rule of life to them; that they require of them perfect obedience, and have all the binding power over them that the sovereign authority of God the Creator and Redeemer can give them, which is supreme and absolute. But that believers are under that law as it stands in the covenant of works, that these commands are bound on believers by the tie of the covenant of works, or that the covenant of works has a commanding power over believers, we must deny. For believers are dead to the law as a covenant of works, Rom. 7:4, and therefore as a husband cannot pretend to command his wife after she is dead and the relation dissolved; so believers being dead to the law as a covenant, it cannot have any commanding authority over them. They are not under it, Rom. 6:14, how then can it have any commanding power over them? They are not under its jurisdiction, but under that of grace; so though the commands be the same as to the matter, yet they are not to take them from the covenant of works, but from the law as in the hand of Christ. Our Lord Jesus did, in the name of all his people, put himself under its commanding power, and satisfied all its commands, to deliver his people that were under it, Gal. 4:4, 5, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." And shall they dishonour him by putting their necks under it again? After Christ has got up the bond, having fully paid all the law's demands, shall we pretend to enter in payment again?

Let us take a view of the commanding power of the covenant of works, which it has over all that are under it.

1. It commands and binds to perfect obedience, under pain of the curse; Gal. 3:10, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Every the least duty is commanded with this certification, and this is the risk they

run upon every the least slip. The law in the hand of Christ unto believers commands obedience too, and that under a penalty. But it is a soft one in comparison of that, namely, strokes of fatherly anger; as appears from Psalm 89:30–33, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes," &c. This penalty is not the curse of a wrathful judge, Gal. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." But the covenant of works has no less certification, it cannot speak to its subjects in softer terms; so that though the stroke itself be never so small, yet there is a curse in it, if it were but the miscarrying of a basket of bread, Deut. 28:17.

2. It commands without any promise of strength at all to perform. There is no such promise to be found in all the Bible, belonging to that covenant. It shews what is to be done, and with all severity exacts the task; but furnishes not anything whereof it is to be made. So the case of men under that covenant is represented by Israel's case in Egypt, Exod. 5:18, "Go therefore now and work," said Pharaoh to that people; "for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks." Under the covenant of grace, duty is required, but strength is promised too, Ezek. 36:27, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." And the commands in the hands of the Mediator are turned into promises, as appears from Deut. 10:16, "Circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked." Compare chap. 30:6, "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Yea, the Mediator's calls and commands to his people bear a promise of help; Prov. 10:29, "The way of the Lord is strength to the upright." But there is no such thing in the covenant of works; the work must be performed in the strength that was given; they must trade with the stock that mankind was set up with at first: but that strength is gone, that stock is

wasted; howbeit the law can neither make it up again, nor yet abate of its demands.

Of the Debarring Power of the Covenant of Works

Secondly, The broken covenant of works has a debarring power over them that are under it, in respect of the promise; it bars them from life and salvation, as long as they are under its dominion, Gal. 2:16, "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." While Adam kept this covenant, it secured eternal life to him; but as soon as it was broken, it set it beyond his reach; and neither he nor any of his descendents had ever seen life, if another covenant had not been provided. The broken covenant of works fixes a great gulf betwixt its territories and life and salvation; so that no man can pass from the one to the other. If any would be at heaven, they must get out from under the law, and get into the covenant of grace; so shall they have life and salvation; but not otherwise. There are two bars which this broken covenant draws betwixt its subjects and life and salvation.

1. There is no life to the sinner without complete satisfaction to justice, for the wrong he has done to the honour of God and his law; Heb. 9:22, for "without shedding of blood is no remission." The terms of the covenant were—"In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," Gen. 2:17. Now the covenant is broken, the penalty must be paid, in the true sense and meaning of the bond; the sinner must die, and die infinitely, die till infinite justice be satisfied. Can the sinner get over this bar? Is he able to satisfy, can he go to that death, a sacrifice for himself, and return again? Can he pay the penalty of the bond? No, no. In his blindness and ignorance, he thinks perhaps to get over it by his mourning and afflicting himself for his sin, by bearing as well as he can the afflictions God lays on him; but all his sufferings in the world are but an earnest of what he must suffer hereafter. For at best they are but the sufferings of a finite being, which cannot compensate the wrong his sin has done to the honour of an infinite God; and besides, he sins anew in his suffering too; he cannot bear a cross without some grudge against

God, and some impatience, which are new sins. So the sinner in this does but attempt to wash himself in the mire. Wherefore he can never get over this bar. And if he were over it, there is yet a.

2. Second bar betwixt him and life and salvation, namely, There is no life and salvation without perfect obedience to its commands for the time to come; Matth. 19:17, "If thou wilt enter into life," says Christ unto the young man in the gospel, "keep the commandments." This was the condition of the covenant; and it is not enough that a man pay the penalty of a broken covenant, but he must perform the condition of it, ere he can plead the benefit. Perfect obedience to the commands of God is the terms of life in that covenant; no less was proposed to Adam, who broke it; no less to Christ who fulfilled it in the room of his elect, Gal. 4:4, 5, forecited. As there was a necessity of passive obedience to it, Luke 24:26, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" so was there of active obedience, Matth. 3:15, "It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." And there is no less proposed to all that are under it.

Is the sinner able to get over this bar? His stock of strength is gone; the fall in Adam has so bruised him, that his arm is broken, he cannot work for life; he is not fit to be God's hired servant now for life; for till he get life of free grace in Christ, he can do nothing, John 15:5. He must be saved before he can work one good work, saved from sin, the guilt and power of it; saved from the spiritual death he is lying under, as the penalty of the covenant of works; how then can he work for salvation? The scripture is express on this head, not only that we are not justified by works, but that we are not saved by works: for "By grace are ye saved," says the apostle, "through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," Eph. 2:8–10. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Tit. 3:5.

I know the sinner, in his blindness, will think to please God by his doing as well as he can; by his pretended sincerity, though he cannot attain to perfection; by the will, where he cannot reach the deed. But alas! he considers not that the covenant of works will admit of none of these, all which are rejected by that one sentence of the law, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Besides that there is not one thing that he does that is well done, while he is not in Christ; there is no sincerity with him, but selfishness; no will but self-will.

And as there is no getting over either of these bars, so there is no removing them out of the way, that so the sinner may have a passage, without concerning himself with them, Matth. 5:18. Some fancy to themselves a removing of them by mere mercy. God knows that we cannot answer the demands of the covenant of works, so, think they, mercy will pass them for the safety of the sinner. But has not God sufficiently declared the contrary, in the sending of his own Son, who, before he could redeem the elect, behoved to get over them both by perfect obedience and satisfaction in their stead, Rom. 8:22. If the terms of life and salvation could have been abated, might not God's own Son have expected the abatement in his favour, while he stood in the room of elect sinners? but he got no abatement; how can ye expect it then; See Exod. 34:7.

Of the Condemning Power of the Covenant of Works

Thirdly, The broken covenant of works has a cursing and condemning power over them that are under it, in respect of the threatening. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. 3:10. Compare Rom. 3:19, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Every man and woman under it, is in a state of condemnation; they are condemned persons, bound over to the wrath of God in time and eternity, John 3:18, "He that believeth not is condemned already." So

that there have never any come to Christ but with the rope about their necks, as condemned criminals. Christ's kingdom is the jurisdiction of grace, where grace, life, and salvation reign through Jesus Christ. It is peopled by fugitives out of the dominion of the law; and they that flee thither are all such as find there is no living for them at home; they are such as the sentence of death is passed upon, and there is no access for a remission to them under the dominion of the law. And they never think of fleeing into the jurisdiction of grace, till once the sentence of death is intimated unto them, by their own consciences, and they begin to see they are in hazard every moment of being drawn to death; for till then, they will not believe it. Then they bethink themselves of making their escape out of the law's dominion.

This power the law, as a covenant of works, has over them by sin, forasmuch as it was a clause in the covenant, that man sinning should die the death, Gen. 2:17. It had no such power over man, till once sin entered; but upon the breach of the command, the penalty took place. And since every man is born a sinner, he is also born a cursed and condemned man by the sentence of the law, which abides on him so long as he continues under that covenant. And upon every sin committed, the yoke is wreathed faster and faster about his neck; so that upon every sin committed by persons while in that state, there is a new band by which they are bound over to wrath.

Of the Irritating Power of the Covenant of Works

Lastly, The broken covenant of works has an irritating influence upon all that are under it, so that instead of making them better, it makes them worse, stirring up their corruptions, like a nest of ants, being troubled by one's touching of them, Rom. 7:9, 10, 11, "For when we were in the flesh, says the apostle, the motions of sin which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.—And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." Men under this covenant, whose

corruptions lie dormant after a sort, while the law is not applied to their consciences, when once the law is brought home to their souls, and they are touched with it, their corrupt hearts swell and rage in sin, like the sea troubled with winds. See a notable instance of it, Acts 7:54, in the case of the Jews after Stephen's speech to them, "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." And hence is that direction of our Saviour, Matth. 7:6, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." You may look to another instance, Hos. 11:2, "As they called them, so they went from them." And thus it is, that by the law sin abounds, and becomes exceedingly sinful.

Now, this is accidental to the law as the covenant of works; for it is holy, and just, and good; and therefore can never bring forth sin as the native fruit of it. But it is owing to the corruption of men's hearts, impatient of restraint, Rom. 7:12, 13, forecited. While the sun shines warm on a garden, the flowers send forth a pleasant smell; but while it shines so on the dunghill, it smells more abominably than at other times. So it is here. There are two things here to be considered in the case of the law.

1. It lays an awful restraint on the sinner with its commands and threatenings, Gal. 3:10. The unrenewed man would never make a holy life his choice; might he freely follow his own inclination, he would not regard what is good, but give himself a liberty in sinful courses. But the law is as a bridle to him; it crosses and contradicts his sinful inclinations; it commands him to obey under the pain of the curse, and threatens him with death and damnation, if he shall transgress the bounds it sets him. It is to him as the bridle and spur to the horse; as the master and his whip to the slave. So that the sinner can never cordially like it, but all the obedience it gets from him is mercenary, having no higher springs than hope of reward and fear of punishment.

2. In the meantime it has no power to subdue his corruptions, to remove his rebellious disposition, to reconcile his heart to holiness, or to strengthen him for the performance of duty; "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John 1:17. As it finds the man without strength, so it leaves him, though it never ceases to exact duty of him. Though no straw is given to the sinner by it, yet the tale of the bricks it will not suffer to be diminished. Hence,

(1.) The very restraint of the law, as the covenant of works, awakens, and puts an edge upon the corruption of the heart, Rom. 7:11, forecited. It breeds in the corrupt heart a longing after the forbidden fruit, though it have nothing more to commend it than allowed fruit, but that it is forbidden. The sinner perceiving the thorn-hedge of the law betwixt him and sin, conceives a keenness to be over the hedge. And hence it is, that many are never so ready to break out into extravagancies, as after their consciences have been most keenly plied by the word. And thus many never give such a loose to their lusts, as after solemn occasions of communion with God.

(2.) In the encounter betwixt the law and lusts, lusts gather strength by the law's crossing them. They are irritated, provoked, and stirred up the more, that the law goes about to hold them down, Rom. 7:5. They swell, they rally all their forces, to make head against their enemy, that they may get the victory. The sinner, the more he is plied by the law to hold him back, runs the more fiercely down the steep place into the sea, like the swine possessed by the devil. If the law come into the heart without gospel grace to water the soul, it shall be like one with a besom sweeping a dry floor; the more forcibly one sweeps, the more thick will the dust flee up, and flee about into every corner. The sinner is like the unruly horse, which the more he is checked with the bit, rages the more. And hence the issue often is that which we find in Hos. 4:17, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone;" and in Psalm 81:11, 12, "But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me; so I gave them up unto their own heart's lust, and they walked in their own counsels."

(3.) The sinner, finding the case hopeless, hardens himself, and goes on, like treacherous Judah, Jer. 2:25, "Thou saidst, There is no hope. No; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go." He looks to the height of the law's commands, and finds himself incapable to reach them; and he looks to the terror of the law's threatenings, and finds them unavoidable. So he gives up with hope, sits down hardened in secret despair, using all means to stop the access of light from the law for his conviction and disquietment. Thus he is like a tired horse, that bears the spur, but will not answer it; or if he be moved by it, turns back to bite the rider, but goes not one foot faster for all it.

(4.) Lastly, Hence the heart is filled with the hatred of the holy law, and of the holy God who made it, and holds by it. This is the fearful issue of the matter, Prov. 1:29, "They hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord." Rom. 1:30,— "Haters of God." As the condemned criminal hates the judge and the law, so do they. They cannot bring up their hearts to the purity the law requires, and cannot get the law brought down to the impurity of their hearts, but still it reads their doom; hence the heart cannot miss to rise against the law, being girded with the cords of death by it; and against God in secret grudges at his holiness and justice, and secret wishes that he were not such an one as he is.

This is a short account of what is called the irritating power of the law; from which alone one may see, what a fearful case it is to be under the law as it is the covenant of works. It tends to make the heart of man a very hell; and the truth is, in hell it comes to its height; and so they are held like wild bulls in a net.

The Reasons why so many persons still remain under the broken Covenant of Works

IV. I now proceed to shew, why so many do still remain under the broken covenant of works. As for those who never heard of, nor had the offer of the covenant of grace, we need not inquire much. The

case is plain; they know no other way. But men to whom the covenant of grace is proclaimed, yet remain under the covenant of works; they will still hang on about Sinai for all the thunders and lightnings there, and will not come to Zion. The following reasons of this conduct may be given:—

1. It is natural to men, being made with Adam, and us in his loins; it is engrained in the hearts of all men naturally. "Tell me," says the apostle, Gal. 2:21, "ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" And there are impressions of it to be found in the hearts of all, among the ruins of the fall. The law as a covenant of works was the first husband that human nature was wedded to; and so it is still natural to men to cleave to it. And we have a clear proof of it,

(1.) In men left to the swing of their own nature; they all go this way in their dealing with God for life and favour. Look abroad into the world, and behold the vast multitudes embracing Paganism, Judaism, Mahometism, and Popery. All these agree in this, that it is by doing man must live, though they hugely differ in the things that are to be done for life. Look into the Protestant churches, and you shall see readily, that the more corrupt any of them is, the more they incline to the way of this covenant. Consider persons among us ignorant of the principles of true religion, who, not having received instruction, speak of the way of life and salvation as nature prompts them, and you shall find them also of the same mind. Finally, consider all unrenewed men whatsoever, having the knowledge and making profession of the expectation of life and salvation in the way of the covenant of grace; yet they in practice stumble at this stumbling-stone, Matt. 5:3.

(2.) In men awakened and convinced, and in moral seriousness seeking to know what course they shall take to be saved, and plying their work for that end. They all take this principle for granted, That it is by doing they must obtain life and salvation, Matth 19:16, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Luke 10:25, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And this obtains when they are

pricked to the very heart, and the law as the covenant of works has wounded them to the very soul. They never think of a divorce from the law, that they may be married to Christ; but how shall they do to please the old husband, and so be saved from wrath; as is plain in the case of Peter's hearers, Acts 2:27, when, being pricked in their hearts, they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" and in the case of the Philippian jailor, Acts 16:30, who being awakened by a train of very alarming incidents, and trembling through terror, cried out, "What must I do to be saved?"

(3.) In the saints, who are truly married to Jesus Christ, O what hankering after the first husband, how great the remains of a legal spirit, how hard is it for them to forget their father's house? Psalm 45:10. Adam having embraced the promise of the Messiah, yet was in hazard of running back to this covenant. There is a disposition to deal with God, in the way of giving so much duty for so much grace and favour with God, in the best, that they have continually to strive with. Self-denial is one of the most difficult duties in Christianity.

2. The way of that covenant is most agreeable to the pride of man's heart. A proud heart will rather serve itself with the less, than stoop to live upon free grace, Rom. 10:3. Man must be broken, bruised, and humbled, and laid very low, before he will embrace the covenant of grace. While a broken board of the first covenant will do men any service, they will hold by it, rather than come to Christ; like men who will rather live in a cottage of their own, than in another man's, castle. To renounce all our own wisdom, works, and righteousness, and to cast away all those garments as filthy rags, which we have been at so much pains to patch up, is quite against the grain with corrupt nature, Rom. 7:4.

3. It is most agreeable to man's reason, in its corrupt state. If one should have asked the opinion of the philosophers, concerning that religion which taught salvation by a crucified Christ, and through the righteousness of another; they would have said, it was unreasonable and foolish, and that the only way to true happiness was the way of

moral virtue. The Jewish Rabbis would have declared it scandalous, 1 Cor. 1:23, where the preaching of Christ crucified is said to be to the Jews a stumbling-block, (in the Greek, a scandal); and would have maintained the only way to eternal life to be by the law of Moses. To this day many learned men cannot see the reasonableness of the gospel-method of salvation, in opposition to the way of the covenant of works; and therefore our godly forefathers, who reformed from Popery, and maintained the reformed truth against Popery by their heroic zealous wrestlings even unto blood, while they shewed that acquaintance with practical godliness and real holiness, whereof there is little in our day, are in effect looked upon as a parcel of well-meaning simple men, whose doctrine must be reformed over again, and rendered more agreeable to reason. A rational religion is like to be the plague of this day. But assure ye yourselves, that wherever the gospel comes in power, it will make the reason of the wisest sit down at its feet, and learn, and give ever its questions formed by Hows and Whys, 2 Cor. 10:5, It "casts down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Even unlearned and simple men, in whom this appears less, because they do not enter deep into the thought, will be found sick of the same disease, when once they are thoroughly awakened, and take these matters to heart How will they dispute against the gospel-method of salvation, against the promise, against their believing their welcome to Christ, who are so sinful and unworthy! The matter appears so great, as indeed it is, that they look on the gospel-method as a dream, and they cannot believe it.

4. Ignorance and insensibleness of the true state of that matter, as it now is. There is a thick darkness about Mount Sinai, through the whole dominion of the law; so that they who live under the covenant of works, see little but what they see by the lightnings now and then flashing out. Hence they little know where they are, nor what they are.

(1.) They do not understand the nature of that covenant to purpose, Gal. 4:21. Any notion they have of it, is lame and weak, without efficacy. They see not how forcibly it binds to perfect obedience and satisfaction, how rigorous it is in its demands, and will abate nothing, though a man should do to the utmost of his power, and with cries and tears of blood seek forgiveness for the rest. They are not acquainted with the spirituality of the law, and the vast compass of the holy commandment, but stick too much in the letter of it. Hence they are alive without the law, Rom. 7:9. They narrow the demands of it, that so they may be the more likely to fulfil them.

(2.) They are not duly sensible of their own utter inability for that way of salvation; "There is one that accuseth them, even Moses," or the law, "in whom they trust," John 5:45. They know they are off the way, and that they have wandered from God; but they hope they will get back to him again by repentance; while, in the meantime, their heart is a heart of stone, and they cannot change it; and "the Ethiopian shall" be able as soon to "change his skin, the leopard his spots, as they may do good that are accustomed to do evil," Jer. 13:23; and there is no coming to God but by Christ, John 4:6. They know they have sinned, and provoked justice against them; but they hope to be sorry for their sin, to pray to God for forgiveness, and bear any thing patiently that God lays on them; while in the meantime they see not that none of those things will satisfy God's justice, which yet will have full satisfaction for every the least sin of theirs, ere they see heaven. They know they must be holy; but they hope to serve God better than ever they have done; while in the meantime they consider not that their work-arm is broken, and they can work none to purpose till they be saved by grace.

Application of the Doctrine of the Condition of Men under the broken Covenant of Works

This doctrine may be applied for information and exhortation.

USE I. Of information. Hence learn,

1. That some, yea many of mankind, are under the curse, bound over to wrath. For that is the case of all persons under that covenant. Their necks are under a heavy yoke; they are liable in payment of a penalty, which they will never be able to discharge, and to put off their heads. They may pay more or less of it in this world; but if they get not rid of it another way, it will not be paid out through all the ages of eternity.

2. See here whence it is that true holiness is so rare, and wickedness and ungodliness so frequent in the world. Most men are under that covenant, under which sin and death reign; and there is no holiness, there are no good works under it, Rom. 6:14. It has, being broken, barred communion betwixt God and sinners under it; and therefore of necessity there must be a pining away in iniquity while one is under it. It is only in the way of the second covenant that sanctifying influences are had.

3. Here ye may see the true spring of legalism in principles as well as in practice. Many are really under that covenant; no wonder then there be many to set up for that way. It is the way that backsliding churches in all ages have gone. It soon began in the primitive apostolical churches; and that mystery of iniquity wrought till it issued in Popery, the grand apostasy under the New Testament.

4. See whence it is that the doctrine of the gospel is so little understood, and in the purity of it is looked at as a strange thing. It is like other things which are not known in the country in which one is bred, and therefore stared at, and often mistaken. Hence it gets ill names in the world. When Christ himself preached it, he was called a friend of publicans and sinners; when Paul preached it, they would not believe but he made void the law by it, and that he opened a door for licentiousness of life, Rom. 3:8.

USE II. Be exhorted then seriously and impartially to try what covenant ye are under. It is true there is a covenant of grace made, proclaimed and offered unto you, and ye are

all under the outward dispensation of the covenant of grace; but yet many are notwithstanding really under the covenant of works still. As ye love your own souls, try impartially, whether ye be under it or not, but under the covenant of grace. For motives, consider

MOTIVE 1. Ye are all born under the covenant of works, being "by nature children of wrath," Eph. 2:3. It is in the region of the law that we all draw our first breath. And no man will get out from its dominion in a morning dream. We owe it to our second birth, whoever of us are brought into the covenant of grace; but that is not our original state. The law is the first husband to all and every one of Adam's children. I would have you try whether ye be dead to it, and divorced from it or not.

MOTIVE 2. Till once ye see yourselves under the covenant of works, and so lost and ruined with the burden of that broken covenant on you; ye may hear of the covenant of grace, but ye will never take hold of it in good earnest, Gal. 2:6. Here lies the ruin of the most part who hear the gospel; they were never slain by the law, and therefore never quickened by the gospel; they never find the working of the deadly poison conveyed to them from the first Adam, and therefore they see no beauty in the second Adam for which he is to be desired.

MOTIVE 3. Your salvation or ruin turns on this point. What covenant ye are under. If thou be within the bond of the covenant, of grace, thou art in a state of salvation; "He that believeth shall be saved," Mark 16:16. David could say, "God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, 2 Sam. 23:5. If thou art under the covenant of works, thou art in a state of death; for, says the text, "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." And is this so light and trivial a matter that thou shouldst be unconcerned which of these covenants thou art under?

MOTIVE 4. There is no ease for a poor sinner but severity and rigour, under the covenant of works. One may easily see that we are not able to abide that now, when we are become weak and guilty; for, says the Psalmist, Psalm 130:3, "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities; O Lord, who shall stand?" But while thou remainest under the first covenant, thou caust expect nothing but wrath and fury. There is no pardon under that covenant; the law-statute being, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," Gen. 2:17 The sinner must die the death. That ever we heard of pardon is owing to the second covenant, which secures pardoning mercy to those who come under the bond of it; for "by him (Christ) all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts 13:39. Though there is no question but the covenant of works requires repentance, a turning to God under pain of the curse; yet there is no grace for helping the sinner to it under this covenant; and suppose one could attain to it, it could not help him. There is no accepting the will for the deed under it. It is not good will, but perfectly good works that will satisfy it.

MOTIVE 5. While ye are under that covenant, ye are without Christ, Eph. 2:12. As a woman cannot, by the law of God, be married to two husbands at once, so one cannot be under the covenant of works and married to Christ at once. The first marriage to the law must be dissolved by death or divorce, ere the soul can be married to Christ, Rom. 7:4. And being without Christ, ye have no saving interest in his purchase.

Lastly, All attempts you make to get to heaven, while under this covenant, will be vain. The children of that covenant are, by an unalterable statute of the court of heaven, excluded from the heavenly inheritance; so that, do what you will, while ye abide under it, you may as well fall a-ploughing the rocks, and sowing your seed in the sand of the sea, as think to get to heaven that way; for what saith the scripture? "Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman," Gal. 4:30. The way to heaven by that covenant is blocked up

to sinners, the angel with the flaming sword guards the tree of life, so that there is no access to salvation that way, but under a condition impossible for you to perform.

Now, to set this matter in a due light to you, I will,

1. Give some marks and characters of those that are under this covenant.
2. Discover the vanity of some pleas that such have, to prove that it is not to their own works that they trust for salvation, but to Christ.

First, I will give some marks and characters of those that are under this covenant.

1. They have never yet parted with the law, or covenant of works, lawfully, which all the saints have done. There are two ways of parting with that covenant. One is by running away from it; and thus we may apply to this case Nabal's tale concerning David, 1 Sam 25:10, "There be many servants now-a-days, that break away every man from his master." They break its bonds, and cast away its cords, value neither its commands nor threats; for they look on it like an almanack out of date, as a thing that they are not concerned with. This is no lawful parting, and therefore it cannot dissolve the relation betwixt them and it. A servant or a wife that is run away, is a servant or a wife for all that still. And the master can bring back the one, and make him serve or suffer; and the husband the other. And so will this covenant deal with such, and make them sensible they are under it still, in the strictest bonds. It will take them by the throat here or hereafter, saying, Pay what thou owest.

The other is parting with it, after fair count and reckoning with it, and payment instructed; a parting with it upon a divorce obtained, after a fair hearing given it before the Judge of all the earth. It is brought about in this manner. There is a summons given at the instance of the law, or covenant of works, to the conscience of the

secure sinner, to compear before the tribunal of God. Hereby the conscience being awakened, it appears and stands trembling at the bar; in the meantime the King's Son offers himself in a marriage covenant to the guilty soul, with his righteousness, obedience, and satisfaction. The law appears and pleads,

(1.) So much and so much owing by the sinner, for his breaking its commands. Mountains of guilt appear innumerable articles in its accounts; and the charge must be owned just, for it is just in every particular. Here the sinner, betaking himself to Christ, pleads by faith the satisfaction of Christ for him; and, embracing the gospel offers, he sets betwixt him and the law the death and sufferings of Christ, as full payment of that debt.

(2.) So much to be done before the sinner can be saved, according to the condition of the covenant, perfect obedience due to it by all the children of Adam. The sinner cannot deny the debt; but pleads by faith the Mediator's payment of it, by his obedience even to the death. He counts upon this score unto the law, all that Christ the Son of God did for the space of about thirty-three years on the earth, in the perfect obedience of all its commands.

Thus the sinner, embracing Christ, has wherewith to answer it. And the plea of payment that way is sustained, and the soul is declared free from the law or covenant of works, and so lawfully parted from it. What experience have ye of this? This will, for the substance of it, pass in every soul freed from the covenant of works. But alas! how many are there, [1.] Who were never troubled about that, how to get a discharge of that bargain from the Judge of all the earth, but have lived at ease without it? [2.] Who never saw a necessity of reckoning with the law, in order to their getting clear of it? [3.] Who have still aimed at putting off the demands of the law, with their own obedience and suffering, such as they were?

2. They are of a legal spirit, and have not the spirit of the covenant of grace. Caleb and Joshua had another spirit than the rest of the Jews,

so have those who are within the bond of the covenant of grace, Gal. 4:24. In the saints indeed there are wretched remains of that spirit, but it does not reign in them as in others.

1st, They are of a slavish spirit who are under that covenant; whereas the saints are acted by a son-like spirit. For, says the apostle, Rom. 8:15; "ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." As the slave is moved with fear, not with love; so is it with them. This slavish spirit appears in them thus:

(1.) They are driven from sin, and to their duty, by the fear of hell and wrath, rather than drawn from the one to the other by any hatred of the one, and love of the other, in themselves; like the Israelites of old, of whom it is said; Psalm 78:34, "When he [God] slew them, then they sought him; and they returned, and enquired early after God." It is the influence of the covenant of works in its terrible sanction, that moves them. Take away that, secure them but from hell and damnation, and they would give themselves the swing in their lusts; they have no other kind of principle to move them to holiness; all is selfish about them.

(2.) They content themselves with the bare performance of duty, and abstaining from any sin, without regarding the true principle, end, and manner of doing; even as the slave who is concerned for no more, but to get his task over, Isa. 29:13. It is not their business to get their hearts wrought up to the love of God, concern for his glory, and to the doing of their work in faith; but to get the work done, Luke 18:11. It may be they dare not neglect duty, but it is not their concern to find Christ in duty, nor is it their grief if they do not find him.

(3.) Under terror of conscience they do not flee to the blood of Christ, but to their work again, to amend what was done amiss, or make it up by greater diligence, Acts 2:37. Are not the consciences of men under that covenant affrighted sometimes? But consider how they are pacified again. Not by the sprinkling of Christ's blood on them by

faith, Heb. 9:14, but by resolves to do better in time to come, by prayers, mourning, &c. And hence it is that their corruptions are never weakened for all this, for the law makes nothing perfect; but the believing application of the blood of Christ not only takes away guilt, but strengthens the soul.

2dly, They are of a mercenary spirit; they are acted by the spirit of a hireling, who works that he may win his wages. The covenant of works is so natural to us, that we naturally know no other religion, but to work and win, do good works that we may win heaven by them. Hence the prodigal would be put among the hired servants, when he thought of returning; but when he returned, he insists not on that. This spirit appears in those who are under the covenant of works thus:—

(1.) Their work is for reward, to obtain God's favour and salvation by their works, Rom. 10:3. Whereas the saints look for salvation and the favour of God only through the obedience and death of Jesus Christ, Tit. 3:5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." I own the saints, may have an eye to the gratuitous reward promised to them to crown their work and labour of love, as Moses is said to have "had respect unto the recompense of the reward," Heb. 11:26; and they may be thereby influenced in their duty. But then they look for that reward as coming to them, not for the sake of their work, but for the sake of Christ's work. They are sons, and have a more noble principle of obedience to God, Heb. 6:10, as God's own children, Rom 8:15, who, having the inheritance secured to them another way than by their working, are prompted to obedience by their love to God, and desire to please him. The truth is, those who are under the broken covenant of works, being destitute of saving faith, are void also of true love to God, 1 Tim. 1:5. It is themselves mainly, if not only, that they seek in their duties; and, were it not the hope of gain to themselves by them, they would not regard them. In a word, they serve God, not out of any kindly love to him, but that thereby they may serve themselves.

(2.) The more they do and the better they do, they look on God to be the more in their debt, like Micah, who said, "Now I know that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest," Judg. 17:13. For it is according to their own doing, not according to their interest in Christ's blood, that they expect favour from the Lord. The publican, Luke 18:13, pleads mercy through a propitiation, "Be propitious to me," according to the Greek; but the Pharisee pleads upon what himself had done more than many others, ver. 12, "God, I thank thee," says he, "that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican! I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." Hence their hearts rise against God, if they find not their works regarded and rewarded, according to the value themselves put upon them; like the Jews of old, who said, "Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Isa. 58:3. Hence ariseth a very considerable difference betwixt the children of the two covenants; those of the first covenant, the better they do their duty, their hearts are the more filled with conceit of themselves, their duties, like wind, puff them up, as in the case of the Pharisee, Luke 18:11, quoted above. But those of the second covenant, the better they do, they are the more humbled and low in their own eyes; like David, who said, "Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? 1 Chron. 29:14, and like the apostle Paul, "In what am I behind the very chiefest apostles," said he, "though I be nothing? 2 Cor. 12:11.

(3.) Their duties make them more easy and secure in some one sin or other; like the adulterous woman, Prov. 7:14, 15, "I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee." The Jews, as profane as they were in Isaiah's time, brought a multitude of sacrifices to God's altar, Isa. 1:11. Why did they do so, but because they expected that these would make all odds even betwixt God and them? Just so do many with their duties; they pray to God, and many good things; so they can with the more ease do and say many ill things. By their duties they seem to themselves as it

were to pay the old, and they can the more freely take on the new. Thus they "bless God and curse men with the same tongue. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing," James 3:9, 10. They use their duties for an occasion to the flesh, and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness; than which there cannot be a more speaking evidence of one under the broken covenant of works. Publicans and harlots will enter into the kingdom of heaven, before such persons.

Thus you have some characters of those who are under this covenant, and may perceive that they deal with God in the matter of his favour and salvation in the way of that covenant, and not in the way of the covenant of grace. But it is hard to convince men of this; therefore,

Secondly, I will discover the vanity of some pleas that such have, to prove that it is not to their own works that they trust for salvation, but to Christ.

1. They are so far, say they, from trusting to their own works in this matter, that they really wonder anybody can do it. I answer, that this is rather a sign of the ignorance of the corruption of man's nature, and unacquaintedness with the deceitfulness of your own heart, than of your freedom from that corrupt way of dealing with God. Hazael said so in another case, "Am I a dog to do this thing?" Yet was he such a dog as to do it. Ye know not, it seems, what spirits ye are of. That way of dealing with God is as natural to us, as to fishes to swim in the sea, and birds to fly in the air. The godly themselves are not quite free from it. The disciples needed that lesson, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do," Luke 17:10. For they are too apt to think much of any little they do; like Peter, "Behold we have forsaken all," said he, "and followed thee," Matth. 19:27. The difference then lies here—the godly feel this corrupt way of dealing with God, they wrestle against it, loath themselves for it, and would fain be rid of it; whereas it reigns in others, and has quiet possession.

2. This is rank Popery, and they are true Protestants, believing that we are not saved for our works, but for the sake of Christ. ANSWER, It is indeed the very life and soul of Popery. But what is Popery, but the product of man's corrupt nature, framing a way of salvation according to the covenant of works? So even Protestants have Popish hearts by nature. A floating principle in the head, received by means of education, or other external teaching, will never be able to change the natural bent of the heart. It is the teaching of the Spirit with power which only can do that. It is an article of the profane Protestant's religion, that there is a heaven and a hell, yet they live as if there were neither of them. That the grace of God teacheth to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; yet their life and practice is as far from this principle, as the east is distant from the west. Men do not always live according to their professed principles; therefore, in this point, the head may look one way, and the heart another.

3. They are persuaded that of themselves, without the grace of God, they can do nothing; that there is no strength in them. ANSWER, Many have this in their mouths, who never to this day were let into a view of their own utter inability to help themselves. They take up that principle, rather to be a cover to their sloth, and a pretence to shift duty, than out of any conviction of the truth of it in their own souls. Hence none are readier to delay and put off salvation-work from time to time than they; as if they could really do all, and that at any time. But whatever be of that, this is an insignificant plea; the proud Pharisee might have pleaded that as well as you, and yet he stood upon his works with God, Luke 18:11, forecited. The matter lies here; they profess they can do nothing without the help of grace; but when by the help of grace they have done their duty, they think God cannot but save them, who so serve him; as if God's grace helped men to purchase their own salvation.

4. They are convinced that they cannot keep the law perfectly, but when they have done all they can, they look to Christ to supply all wherein they come short. ANSWER. The truth is, that nobody is so

far from doing all they can, as such men are who pretend most to it; there are many things they never do, which yet are within the compass of their natural powers. But the Pharisees, who, nobody doubt, dealt with God in this way of works, were convinced as well as you, that they did not keep the law perfectly; but then the ceremonial law afforded them a salve, in their apprehension, for their defects in the duties of the moral law. Just so is the case in this plea, where the deceit lies in that the man lays not the whole stress of his acceptance with God and his salvation on the obedience and death of Christ; but partly on his own works, partly on Christ, thus mixing his own righteousness with Christ's, which the apostle rejects; "The law is not of faith, but the man that doth them shall live in them," Gal. 3:12. "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law," chap. 5:4.

Lastly, They trust in Christ for the acceptance of all their duties, and are persuaded they would never be accepted but for Christ's sake. ANSWER. Men may do this, and yet still keep the way of the covenant of works. Being persuaded that the best of their duties are not without some imperfection, they look to get them accepted as they are for Christ's sake, so as God will thereupon justify and save them, give them his favour, pardon their sin, keep them out of hell, and give them heaven. Thus they make use of Christ for obtaining salvation by their own works; as some Papists teach, that our own works merit by virtue of the merits of Christ, and that they merit not, but as they are dipped in his blood. But the way of the second covenant is to look to Christ alone for the acceptance of our persons, to justification and salvation; and then our persons being accepted, to look to him also for the acceptance of our works, not in point of justification, but of sanctification only. This was Paul's way, Phil. 3:8, 9, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

O deal impartially with yourselves in this matter, and be not too easy in this important point. The heart of man is a depth of deceit, and if you are not exercised to root up this weed of legality, and have felt the difficulty of so doing, it is a shrewd sign ye are yet under the covenant of works; the misery of which condition I am now to open up to you in the second doctrine from the text.

SECT. II

THE MISERY OF THOSE WHO ARE UNDER THE BROKEN COVENANT OF WORKS

DOCTRINE II. Man in his natural state being under the broken covenant of works is under the curse.

Here is the case in which Adam left all his children, the case of all by nature. Behold here as in a glass the doleful condition of sinners by the breach of the first covenant,—they are "under the curse." I shall consider this dreadful condition,

I. More generally.

II. Take a more particular view of the dreadful condition of the natural man under the curse of the broken covenant of works.

III. Apply the subject.

A General View of the Curse under which Men in their Natural State are

I. I shall consider the dreadful condition in which men in a natural state are, under the broken covenant of works. And here let us consider,

1. What curse that is which they are under.
2. What it is to be under the curse.
3. Confirm the doctrine, that man in his natural state, being under the broken covenant of works, is under the curse.

What the Curse is which Natural Men are under

First, I shall consider what curse that is which they are under. It is the sentence of the law as a covenant of works, binding over and devoting the sinner to destruction. Thus the covenant being made with the awful sanction of death, Gen. 2:17, upon the transgressing of it, the curse is pronounced. Gen. 3. And so it is,

1. God's curse, as the sinner's lawgiver and judge; it is his sentence of death against the transgressor, the doom pronounced by him on the malefactor that has not continued in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. It is expressly called "the curse of the Lord," Prov. 3:33; and those under it "the people of his curse," Isa. 34:5. Man's curse is often causeless, so it miscarries, it comes not, it does no more harm than a bird flying over one's head, Prov. 26:2. But God's curse is ever on a valid weighty cause; so his justice requires, and it cannot miss, by reason of his truth, to come, and lie heavy where it does come by reason of his almighty power, John 3:36.

2. It is the curse of the law, Gal. 3:13, the curse of the broken covenant of works, whose penalty is death. So it runs in our text, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The law is armed with a curse against the disobedient, and therefore when obedience is not performed it is poured out, Dan. 9:11. Of old when men entered into a covenant, they cut a beast in twain, and passed betwixt the parts, to signify the curse on the breaker, that he should be like that beast. Hence the Lord threatens covenant-breakers, Jer. 34:18, "And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant,—which they had

made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof," &c. Compare Matth. 24:51, "And they shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites," &c. As for the curse of the gospel, as the scripture mentions no such thing, it is needless; the law secures the curse and a double curse on those who despise the gospel.

Now, in this curse there are three things to be considered:

1st, The revenging wrath of God is in it, Matth. 25:41, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." It is the breathing of fiery indignation by vindictive justice against the sinner. Sin is so opposite to the nature of God, that he cannot endure it; but his wrath (may I say it with reverence) takes fire against the sinner, at the very sight of it, and makes the curse to fly against him. See this awfully represented, Deut. 29:20, "The anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him."

2dly, A binding over of the sinner unto punishment, for the satisfaction of offended justice, Gal. 3:13, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." As the judge, by his sentence of death, binds over the criminal to death; so God by his curse, binds over the sinner unto death in its whole compass, as in the threatening of the covenant of works. Thus he is bound to suffer till justice is satisfied, which being without the sinner's reach, the punishment comes to be eternal. It is not a punishment for the amendment of the party, as under the covenant of grace; but for reparation of the honour of the Lawgiver and law.

3dly, A separating of the sinner unto destruction, though not of his being, yet of his wellbeing; Deut. 29:21, "The Lord shall separate him unto evil—according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law." Hereby the sinner is exterminated and excommunicated from the society of God's favourites, and set up as a

mark for the arrows of wrath. As accursed things were to be destroyed, and not kept for use; so the curse on the sinner is a devoting of him to destruction, as a vessel of wrath, in which justice may be glorified; 2 Thess. 1:9, such "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

What it is to be Under the Curse

SECONDLY, Let us consider what it is to be under the curse. Man in his natural state, being under the broken covenant of works, is under the curse, and so,

1. He is under the wrath of God, "a child of wrath by nature," Eph. 2:3. "The wrath of God abideth on him," John 3:36. God is displeased with him; he is not, and cannot be pleased with him; as "without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. 11:6. God is ever angry with him, Psalm 7:1, "every day," however he spend the day, better or worse." He cannot endure the sight of him; "The foolish cannot stand in his sight," Psal. 5:5. That black cloud of the wrath of God is over his head from the moment of his being a living soul, and all along during his continuance in his natural state, under the broken covenant of works. He may be well pleased with himself, and others may be so too, saints as well as sinners; but God is still wroth with him.

2. He is bound over to revenging justice. It has him by the throat, saying, "Pay what thou owest;" though perhaps he neither feels the gripe, nor hears the terrible demand, because his conscience is asleep, and all his spiritual senses are fast bound up; "Now we know," says the apostle, "that what things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God;" "guilty" (Gr.) compare Acts 28:4, that is, under revenging justice. The holiness of God gave out the holy commandment in the covenant, justice annexed the threatening of death to the breach of it, truth secures the

accomplishment of the threatening, and so lays the sinner under justice, without relief. So that there is no parting of them, till the utmost farthing be paid (2 Thess. 1:9, "punished with," Gr., "suffer justice" or "vengeance, everlasting destruction,") by the sinner himself, or a cautioner.

3. He stands as a mark for the arrows of vengeance; he is a devoted man in law, tied to the stake, that the law and justice of God may disburden all their arrows into him, and that in him may meet all the plagues flowing from avenging wrath; "If he turn not," says the Psalmist, "He [God] will whet his sword; he has bent his bow and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death: he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors," Psalm 7:12, 13. Job complains that he was set as a mark for God's arrows, Job. 16:12, 13, but natural men have better reason for that complaint. They are in law devoted heads; on which the law has laid its hand as on the head of a sacrifice, as a signal for cutting off; Psalm 94:23, "He shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off." Psalm 37:22, "They that be cursed of him shall he cut off."

O! If men did believe this to be their condition under the broken covenant of works, what rest could they possibly have while in that state? How would they anxiously inquire, what way they might be discharged from that broken bargain? But alas! as the unbelief of the threatening was the cause of the desperate adventure to break the covenant; so the unbelief of the curse following thereupon, is the cause why they are easy under it. Therefore I shall next confirm the truth of the doctrine.

Confirmation of the truth of this doctrine, That man under the broken covenant of works is under the curse

THIRDLY, I shall confirm the doctrine, that man in his natural state, (being under the broken covenant of works,) is under the curse.

1. This is evident from plain scripture testimony. Our text is express. Therein it is proved from the records of the court of heaven, as to this process; "It is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." This sentence is extracted out of Deut. 27:26 "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." And the apostle plainly designs the persons again (whom this sentence is passed, namely, those that are under the law Rom. 3:19, compared with chap. 6:14. Who then make a I doubt of it? It is as firm as the truth of God can make it, in word, and under his hand and seal.

2. It is evident from the consideration of the justice of God, an supreme Rector and Judge of the world; by which he cannot-do right, and give sin its due. Two things will clear it.

1st, The breaking of that covenant, whereof all under it the guilty, deserves the curse. They broke it in Adam, and the breaking it every day; and so they deserve the curse. Now, of deserving of the curse does not arise from the threatening of all nal wrath annexed for a sanction to the commands in the hant our new divinity would have it; that is framed for bringings lievers under the curse of the law too. But it arises from sin's contrariety to the command of the holy law; for it is manifest, that sin does not therefore deserve a curse, because a curse is threatened against it; but because it deserves a curse, therefore a curse is threatened.

Now look at sin in the glass of the holy commandment, and you will see it deserves the curse. For the commandment is,

(1.) An image of the sovereign spotless holiness of God; "The law is holy," Rom. 7:12. When God would let out the beams of his own holiness to man, he gave him the law of the ten commandments, as a transcript of it, and wrote them in his heart; and afterwards, the writing being much defaced, he wrote them to him in his word. So the commandment is holy without spot, as God is. So that the creature rising up against the commandment, riseth up against God.

(2.) It is an image of his righteousness and equity, whereby he does justly to all; "the commandment is just," Rom. 7:12. The commandment is all right in every part, and of perpetual equity; "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right," Psalm 119:128. Look to it as it prescribes our duty to God, to our neighbour, and to ourselves, Tit. 2:12. It is of spotless and perfect righteousness, as that God is whose righteous nature and will it represents.

(3.) An image of his goodness: "The commandment is good," Rom. 7:12. It is all lovely, lovely in every part; lovely in itself, and in the eyes of all who are capable to discern truly what is good, and what evil, Psalm 119:97, "O how love I thy law!" Conformity to it is the perfection of the creature, and its true happiness, as rendering the creature like unto God, 1 John 3:2.

Thus the breaking of the covenant, by doing contrary to the holy commandment, is the transgressing of the holy, just, and good will of our sovereign Lord; a defacing of and doing violence to his image, who is the chief good and infinite good. Therefore sin is the chief or greatest evil, and consequently deserves the curse.

2dly, Since it deserves the curse, the justice of God, which gives everything its due, ensures the curse upon it, Gen. 18:25; 2 Thes. 1:6. If sin did not lay the sinner under the curse, how would the rectoral justice of God appear? He will rain a terrible storm on the wicked, not because he delights in the death of the sinner, but because he loves righteousness, Psalm 11:6, 7, and his righteousness requires it.

3. It appears from the threatening of the covenant; Gen. 2:17, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." That threatening being a threatening of death in its whole extent, ensures the curse on the sinner whenever he transgresseth the command. And the truth of God requires that it take effect, and be not like words spoken to the wind. Here is the case then, man came under the covenant of works, wherein death was threatened in case of transgression; now the covenant is broken. It behoved then of necessity, that that moment

man sinned, he should be bound over to the revenging wrath of God, or fall under the curse. And in that case all natural men lie. And thus the sentence of the law passeth immediately on sinning; Gal. 3:10, "Cursed is every one that continueth not," &c., in the present tense; agreeable to the tenor of the threatening, "In the day that thou eatest," &c.

4. If man had once run the course of his obedience, being come to the last point of it, be behoved to have been justified and adjudged to eternal life, according to the tenor of the covenant; Rom. 10:5, "The man which doth those things shall live by them;" the sentence of the law would immediately have passed in his favour, according to the promise. And therefore man, having once broken the covenant, falls under the curse, and is adjudged to eternal death; for the curse bears the same relation to the threatening, that law-justification bears to the promise. Hence it is that the unbeliever is declared to be condemned already, John 3:18.

Lastly, Christ's being made a curse for sinners is a clear evidence of sinners being naturally under the curse; Gal. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." He took their place in the broken covenant of works, Gal. 4:4, 5, that bearing the curse due to them, they might be set free upon their union with him. Hence they who by faith are united to Christ having his satisfaction imputed to them, are delivered from the curse, as borne for them, and away from them, by their Surety, but all others remain under it, as not being reputed to have satisfied it.

Thus far in the general, concerning this dreadful condition. But,

A more Particular View of the dreadful condition of the Natural Man, under the curse of the broken Covenant of Works

II. We must take a more particular view of the dreadful condition of the natural man under the curse of the broken covenant of works.

And here opens the most terrible scene that men are capable of beholding, in time or eternity. Happy they who timely behold it, so as to be thereby stirred up to flee to Christ. It comprehends both the sinfulness and the misery of a natural state, the curse being the chain by which the sinner is bound over to death in its full latitude, as it stands in the threatening of the covenant, Gen. 2:17, and by which he is staked down under that death. And we shall take a view of this in the natural man's condition, by the breach of the covenant of works, in this life, and after this life.

The Condition of the Natural Man under the Curse, in this Life

FIRST, The natural man's condition, under the curse of the broken covenant, is very terrible in that part of it which takes place in this life. The execution of the curse is not quite delayed to another world; it is begun in this life, carried further on at death, and full and final execution comes at the last day. As to that part of this condition which takes place in this life, we shall have the more distinct view of it, if we take it up in these following parcels; as to the soul, the body, and the whole man.

The Condition of the Natural Man's Soul under the Curse

First, Let us view the condition of the natural man's soul under the curse. The natural man's soul is under the curse. It is the most noble part of the man, but the heaviest part of the curse lies upon it. And therefore Christ's soul-sufferings, when he was made a curse for us, were the most terrible of all his sufferings. That is the inward man into which the curse sinks, like water or oil, Psalm 109:18. In the moment man sinned, his soul fell under the curse. And so,

1. His soul was separated from God, in favour with whom its life lay, Psalm 36:5; Deut. 29:21. The course of saving influences was stopt, the sun went quite down on him, and he lost God, his friend, his life, the soul of his soul. Thus natural men live without God, Eph. 2:12, separated from him, Isaiah 59:2. There is no saving intercourse

betwixt God and them, more than there is betwixt us and our friends now lying in the grave, Psalm 5:5, Amos 3:3. They hear his word preached; but, alas! they hear not his own voice, John 5:37. They pray to him, but he hears them not neither; John 9:31, "God heareth not sinners." They hang on about the posts of his doors, but they never get a sight of the King's face. Be where they will, in the church or in the tavern, in duty or out of it, they are ever at a distance from God. The reason is, they are under the curse, which is as a great gulf fixed betwixt God and them, that there can be no communication between them, none by any means, but what can dry up the gulf, or remove the curse; which the blood of Christ only, applied to the soul, can do.

2. Hence man's soul-beauty was lost; death seizing on him by sin, his beauty went off. As when Christ cursed the fig-tree, it withered away; its blossoms went up as dust, its verdure and greenness were lost; so the cursed sinner was stript of his original righteousness, the light of his mind, the rectitude of his will, the orderliness of his affections, and the right temper of all the faculties of his soul, Gen. 3:7, 8. Thus, under the curse, the natural man's soul lies in ruins, "dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. 2:1, dead to God, dead to righteousness, dead to its primitive constitution and frame, though in a living body.

A dead corpse is an awful sight, where the soul is gone. But thy dead soul, from which God is gone, O natural man! is a more awful one. Couldst thou see thy inward man, as well as thou seest the outward, thou wouldst see a soul within thee of a ghastly countenance, the eyes of its understanding set, its speech laid, all the spiritual senses now locked up, no pulse of kindly affection towards God beating any more; but the soul lying speechless, motionless, cold and stiff like a stone, under the curse.

3. Hence the whole soul is corrupted in all the faculties thereof, Gen. 6:5, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," Jer. 17:9. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and

desperately wicked: who can know it?" As the soul being gone, the body corrupts; so the soul, being divested of its original righteousness, is wholly corrupted and defiled, having a kind of verminating life in it; Psalm 14:3, "They are altogether become filthy." And as when the curse was laid on the earth, the very nature of the soil was altered; so the souls of men under the curse are quite altered from their original holy constitution. This appears in all the faculties thereof.

(1.) Look into the mind, framed at first to be the eye of the soul; there is a lamentable alteration upon it under the curse. "O how is the fine gold become dim!" There is a mist upon it, whereby it is become weak, dull, and stupid in spiritual things, and really incapable of these things; 1 Cor. 2:14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Darkness has sat down on the mind; Eph. 5:8, "Ye were sometimes darkness:" and there spiritual blindness and ignorance reign, not to be removed by man's instruction, or any power less than what can take off the curse. This cursed ground is fruitful of mistakes, misapprehensions, delusions, monstrous and misshapen conceptions in divine things; doubtings, distrust, unbelief of divine revelation, grow there, of their own accord, as the natural product of the cursed soil; while the seed of the word of the kingdom sown there does perish, and faith cannot spring up in it, for such is the soil that they cannot take with it.

(2.) Look into the will, framed to have the command in the soul, and it is in wretched plight. Its uprightness for God is gone, and it is turned away backward from him. It is not only under an inability for good, but having lost all power to turn itself that way, Rom. 5:6, "We were without strength"; Phil. 2:13, "For it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure;" but it is averse to it, as the untrained bullock is to the yoke; Psal. 81:11, "My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me"; Luke 19:14, "We will not have this man to reign over us"; John 5:40, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." The will is set in direct opposition

and contrariety to the will of God; Rom. 8:7, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." It is a heart of stone, that will break ere it bow to the will of God; and will remain refractory and contumacious against him, till the curse be removed, and the nature of the soul changed, though it should be plied with all the joys of heaven and all the terrors of hell. It is prone to evil, having a fixed bent unto sin; Hos. 11:7, "My people are bent unto backsliding from me;" and this proneness to sin nothing can alter but an omnipotent hand.

(3.) Look into the affections, framed to be the arms and feet of the soul for good, and they are quite wrong. Set spiritual objects before them to be embraced, then they are powerless, they cannot embrace them, nor grip them stedfastly; they presently grow weary, and let go any hold they have of them; like the stony-ground hearers, who because they had no root withered away, Matth. 13:6. But as for carnal objects, agreeable to their lusts, they fly upon them, they clasp and twine about them; they hold so fast a grip, that it is with no small difficulty they can be got to let go their hold. Summon them to duty, they are flat, there is no raising of them, they cannot stir; but on the least signal given them by temptation, they are like Saul's hungry soldiers, flying on the spoil.

(4.) Look into the conscience, framed to be in the soul God's deputy for judgment, his spy, and watchman over his creature; and it is miserably corrupted; Tit. 1:15, "Their mind and conscience is defiled." It is quite unfitted for its office. It is fallen under a sleepy distemper, sleeping and loving to slumber. So it is a dumb conscience, often not meddling with the work of directing, informing of the will of God, warning against sin, and exciting to duty; and thus men are left as when there was no king in Israel, every one doing that which is right in their own eyes. Sometimes being consulted, it gives quite wrong orders, calling darkness light, and light darkness, having lost its right judgment; like those of whom our Lord speaks; John 16:2, "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service." And accordingly it excuseth where it should

accuse; and accuseth where it should excuse. And if it be once thoroughly awakened, it drives towards despair.

(5.) Lastly, Look into the memory, framed to be the storehouse of the soul, and the symptoms of the curse appear there too. Things agreeable to the corruption of nature, and which may strengthen the same, stick fast in the memory, so that often one cannot get them forgotten, though they would fain have their remembrance razed. But spiritual things natively fall out of it, and are soon forgotten; the memory, like a leaking vessel, letting them slip.

4. Man being in these respects spiritually dead, the which death was the consequent of the first sin, the curse lies on him as a gravestone, and the penalty binds it upon him, that he cannot recover. So he is in some sort, by the curse, buried out of God's sight. Thus sinners are said to be "concluded in unbelief," Rom. 11:32; shut up, as in a prison, "under the law," viz. with its curse, Gal. 3:23. So when Christ comes to sinners with his offers of life and salvation, he finds them hound in a prison, Isa. 61:1, "He hath sent me—to proclaim—the opening of the prison to them that are bound." They are under chains of darkness, even the chains of the curse on all the faculties of the soul; which they can no more shake off them, than a dead man can loose and throw off him his dead clothes, hoise up his grave-stone, and come forth to the light. The curse cuts off the communication between God and the sinner, and so closes up all door of hope, while it remains, but by that which can remove the curse.

5. Hence that corruption of the soul grows more and more. As the dead corpse, the longer it lies in the grave, it rots the more, till devouring death has perfected its work in its utter ruin; so the dead soul under the curse grows worse and worse in all the faculties thereof, till it is brought to the utmost pitch of sin and misery in hell; 2 Tim. 3:13, like "evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse." Sin continuing its reign in the soul, must needs gather strength; and the longer the corruption of nature continues, the stronger it grows.

And hence it is, that ordinarily the longer one has lived in an unregenerate state, the pangs of the new birth are the more severe.

6. And hence the corruption of nature shoots forth itself in innumerable particular lusts, according to its growth, Mark 7:21, 22, 23, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." These all spring up in the soul under the curse, in such plenty as at length to cover the face of the whole soul, as the cursed earth brings forth thorns and thistles without the pains of the husbandman, and as nettles do the face of the sluggard's vineyard, Prov. 24:30, 31. The man thinks himself very far from such a sin as he has not been tried with; but when a fit temptation offers, he appears in his own colours? why? but because the soul under the curse was fit to conceive by such a temptation.

7. And these lusts grow stronger and stronger. The man who "first walks in the counsel of the ungodly," proceeds to "stand in the way of sinners," and at length "sits down on the seat of the scornful," Psalm 1:1. The more corrupt one's nature grows, the more nourishment it sends forth to feed and flesh particular lusts. And these lusts, acting according to their nature, gather strength by exercise; so that custom makes their acting so easy and ready, that they come at length to refuse to be managed, like those of whom Peter speaks; 2 Epist. 2:14, "having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin." And the man must quit the reins to them, they are quite beyond his control, Jer. 13:23.

But this is not all the misery of the soul under the curse; there are additional plagues, which by the curse they are liable to, who are under it. These soul-plagues are of two sorts; silent strokes, and tormenting plagues.

1. Silent strokes, which make their way into the soul with no noise; but the less they are felt, they are the more dangerous; such as,

(1.) Judicial blindness; Eph. 4:18, "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." They are naturally blind, and love not to have their eyes opened; John 3:19, "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." However, some gleams of light get into their minds, while it shines in the word round about them. But they rebel against the light, shut their eyes upon it, and so make themselves more blind; Job 21:14, "Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Wherefore God, in his just judgment, causes the light to withdraw, that it shall not enter into their souls, and leaves them to Satan, to be by him blinded more than ever; 2 Cor. 4:3, 4, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

(2.) Strong delusions. Men living under the gospel-light, having the truth clearly discovered to them, do often keep the truth prisoner; Rom. 1:18, "Who hold the truth in unrighteousness." They receive the true principles into their heads, but they will not allow them to model their lives in conformity to the truth. So they receive not the truth in love. For avenging of which quarrel, they are given up to a spirit of delusion; 2 Thess. 2:10, 11, "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.—For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." This is the curse beginning to work at this day, for the contempt of the glorious gospel; and how the fearful plague of delusion may spread ere it end, God only knows.

(3.) Hardness of heart, Rom. 2:5. Men's hearts are naturally hard and insensible; but under softening means they harden them more; and

God hardens them judicially; Rom. 9:18, "Whom he will he hardeneth;" withholding his grace from them; Deut. 29:4, as Moses said to the Israelites, "The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear;" blasting all means to them, whether providences or ordinances, whereby others are bettered, so that they do them no good; Hos. 4:17, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone;" exposing them in his holy providence to such objects, as their corruptions make an occasion of sinning more, Deut. 1:30; giving them over to their lusts, leaving them to the temptations of the world, and to the power of Satan, and suffering them to prosper in an evil course. Whereby it comes to pass that they are hardened in sin more than before.

(4.) A reprobate sense, Rom. 1:28, whereby men lose the faculty of discerning betwixt good and evil, as those who are deprived of the sense of tasting know no difference betwixt bitter and sweet. Thus men, who being wedded to their lusts, and can by no means be brought to part with them, but treat that light which discovers the evil of them as an enemy, are sometimes, in the fearful judgment of God, suffered to proceed this length, that they can see no evil even in gross sins, but vile abominations are in their eyes harmless things.

(5.) Lastly, Vile affection, Rom. 1:26. Many a time vile affections stir in the soul, and the grace of God in some, and reason and a natural conscience in others, do strive against them, and repress their fury. These are the product of the corruption of nature in all men; but this soul-plague is more dreadful. In it the soul is given up to these vile affections, so that by them they are commanded, and ruled, and led, like beasts without reason. A fearful case; reason and conscience are imprisoned, all power and rule over the soul is taken out of their hands; and the rabble of vile passions and affections manage all, without control. So that the soul is like a ship at sea without a governor, that is tossed hither and thither, being entirely under the management of the winds and waves.

2. Tormenting plagues, which make the soul to feel them, to its great pain and uneasiness. Many are the executioners employed against the soul fallen under the curse, who together do pierce, rack, and rend it as it were in pieces. These are tormenting passions, which had never appeared in the soul had it not fallen into sin, and so under the curse. Such tormenting plagues, which the soul under the curse is liable to, are chiefly these following:—

1st, Discontent. This haunts the soul like a ghost, ever since men fell from God, sometimes in greater, sometimes in lesser measure. He would not rest contented in God, and from that time he could have no more content within himself. He must have all his will, otherwise he is discontented; and that he shall never get, till God's will be his will; and that will never be till he be delivered from under the curse. Hence wretched man is born weeping, lives complaining and discontented, and dies disappointed. What saws, axes, and harrows of iron does this discontent draw through the soul, in fretfulness, impatience, murmuring, grudging, repining, quarrelling with God and men; whereby men become a burden to the Spirit of God, a burden to others, and a burden to themselves? The discontented soul is ruffled and rankled with very small trials, like Ahab, Haman, &c., yea, and often with it knows not what; only there is something wanting, and the mind is uneasy. The mystery lies here, the peace of God is not ruling in the heart, Col. 3:15; Phil. 4:7.

2dly, Wrath. This is a fire in the man's bosom, to burn him up; an arrow, a dagger, a sword piercing to the very soul; Job 5:2, "For wrath killeth the foolish man." This fills him with rage and fury, and makes the whole soul like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, but its "waves toss themselves" and roll up and down, "casting up mire and dirt." The proud heart with temptation swells; and these will no more he wanting to us while here, than the air will be free from midges in the heat of summer, that the man may travel undisturbed. The secret discontent in the soul, following on its loss of God, is the cause of this, as well as of other tormenting passions. Hungry folk are soon angry. The gnawing hunger in the soul after happiness and

satisfaction, from which it is barred under the curse, makes them so peevish and wrathful.

3dly, Anxiety, whereby the soul is as it were stretched on tenter hooks, and is drawn asunder by divers thoughts, and put on the rack. Many are the grounds of this torture to the soul. Sometimes it is on the account of carnal things, which come under the name of "the cares of this life," Luke 8:14, and so as many lusts as a man has to satisfy, so much anxiety how to get them satisfied falls to the share of the wretched soul. Ahab is racked how to get his covetousness satisfied, Haman is racked with his ambition and revenge, &c. Hence the man travaileth with iniquity, Psalm 7:14, is in pain as a woman with child to bring forth. Sometimes it is on the account of his soul's state before God, how to escape the wrath and curse of God, while the dreadful sound is in the man's ears; Acts 2:37, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said,—Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Acts 16:30, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" This, though it comes to nought in many, yet the Lord makes use of for bringing the elect to Christ.

4thly, Sorrow of heart, which is a weight on the soul pressing it down, the native fruit of sin and the curse. There is a flood of sorrow let out on man under the curse, which divides itself into two great streams. (1.) The sorrow of the world, 2 Cor. 7:10. Here run over the soul, the floods of sorrow arising from worldly losses, crosses, disappointments, which men meet with in worldly things, in their bodies, estates, reputation, relations, and the like. And this stream never dries up, every day has the evil thereof, Matth. 6 ult. And as if the evils coming on men themselves mediately, or immediately, could not sufficiently cause these waters to swell, such is the disposition of the soul under the curse, that the good which others meet with, often serves to increase them, by means of envy, ill will, and grudge at their prosperity, Job 5:2, "Envy slayeth the silly one." (2.) The sorrows of death, Psalm 116:3, arising from a sight of the guilt of sin lying on the soul before the Lord, which will make the most stout-hearted bow their heads under the weight, Matth. 27:3, 4.

These are the most bitter waters caused by sin and the curse; and woe to him with whom they swell to the brim, if Christ be not a lifter up of the head to him.

5thly, Fear and terror, which seizing on the soul puts an end to its ease and quiet. This covereth the soul with blackness, darkness, and tempest; takes away its courage, strikes a damp upon it, and makes it restless. And it is twofold, both effects of the curse on the soul.

(1.) Terror of heart, from the apprehension of danger and misery approaching. Man, having sinned, is by the curse denounced a rebel, yea and adjudged to death; hence he is in God's world like a man under sentence of death, wandering here and there within the King's dominions, ready to be frightened at every accident, and no where secure or in quietness, like Cain, Gen. 4:14. How can they be fearless among God's creatures, to whom God is an enemy? Guilt is a mother and nurse of fears; and hence it comes to pass, that the sinner sometimes is made to tremble at the shaking of a leaf. In a special manner, any token, presage, or likelihood of the approach of death, the king of terrors, fills the soul with tormenting fear. This is awfully described, Deut. 28:65, 66, 67, "And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even; and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see."

(2.) Horror of conscience, arising from the sense of guilt, and apprehension of God's wrath against the soul, Isa. 33:14, "The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" This is of all terrors in the world the greatest, and makes a deep wound in the soul, Prov. 18:14, "A wounded spirit who can bear?" Cain could not bear it,

Gen. 4:13. Judas could not endure it, Matth. 28:3, 4. Jeremiah prays against it, Jer. 17:17, it made Pashur a terror to himself, chap. 20:4. This is the dreadful workings of the curse in the soul, giving it a foretaste of hell. And we may observe three degrees of it.

(1.) A confused fear as to one's soul's state, making the person uneasy with suspicions and jealousies that matters are all wrong betwixt God and the soul; like that of Herod, Matth 14:1, 2, who, hearing of the fame of Jesus, said unto his servants; "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him." Conscience may sleep long very sound, and yet at length begin to speak, as it were betwixt sleeping and waking, so as it may fill the man with uneasiness with its very may-be's. For under the curse it can never be true to a man's ease, but will one time or other give alarms.

(2.) A sharp pang, though passing like a stitch in one's side, which, while it lasts, fills the soul with horror, and makes the man's heart melt in him like wax, under clear apprehensions that God, is his enemy. Such was that of Belshazzar, Dan. 5:6, and Felix, Acts 24:25, "And as Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." He felt the fire kindled in his bosom, that it was too strong for him; and therefore immediately orders that there be no more fuel laid to it, lest it should quite burn him up. Such one-day fevers of conscience, no doubt, many natural men do feel under the curse, though by methods of their own, they find means to cause the fit wear off.

(3.) A vehement and abiding horror which they can no more shake off, as in Judas' case, Matth. 27:3, 4. Then the guilt that lay on the conscience like brimstone, is fired, and burns so that they cannot quench the flame. The arrows of wrath, dipt in the poison of the curse, and shot into the soul by an almighty hand, work so as the poison of them drinks up their spirits. The beginnings of hell then are felt. The conscience is, like Mount Sinai, all in fire and smoke.

The terrors of God are round about them, as set in battle array against them, and they become a terror to others too. The threatenings of the holy law are no more looked on as scare-crows, by the most obstinate sinner once brought to pass; their lusts then are bitter to them as death; and all the comforts of the world sapless.

Lastly, Despair; Isa. 17:11, "In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow." This is the very height of the soul's torment in this world, and puts the copestone on its misery here, and no wonder, for it is the tormenting plague of the damned. A man may be under great horror of conscience, and yet there may be a secret hope of an outgate which supports him; but who can conceive, without experience, the torment of that soul on whom despair hath seized, and hath shut up all doors of hope? What a fearful case must that soul be in, against which the sea of the Lord's wrath so swells and rages, that it is in that case, Acts 27:20, "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." This leaves the soul no ease at all, and sometimes hath a most fearful issue, as in Saul and Judas.

The Body is under the Curse

SECONDLY, The natural man's body is under the curse. The first sin was completed by an action of the body; man ate the forbidden fruit, and with it swallowed down death, by virtue of the curse, which followed sin hard at the heels. God made man a compend of the universe, by his creating power raised a body, a beautiful fabric, out of the dust, and lodged the soul, a spirit, an immortal substance, in it, as in a glorious and convenient habitation, and he blessed the house as well as the inhabitant, Gen. 1:28. But the house he commanded to be kept clean; being defiled by the soul, suddenly he cursed the soul's habitation, and the original blessing was succeeded with a heavy curse; Deut. 28:18, "Cursed shall be the fruit of thy

body." And surely the cursing of the fruit implies a curse on the tree it grows on, viz., the defiled body. The condition of the body, thus laid under the curse, we may view in the following particulars:—

1. It is liable to many defects and deformities in the very constitution thereof. Adam and Eve were at their creation not only sound and entire in their souls, but in their bodies, having nothing unsightly about them. But O how often now is there seen a variation from the original pattern, in the very formation of the body! Some are born deaf, dumb, blind, or the like. Some with a want of some necessary organ, some with what is superfluous. Some with such a constitution of body as makes them idiots, the organs of the body being so far out of case, that they are unfit for the actions of the rational life; and the soul is by them kept in a mist during the union with that body. All this is owing to sin and the curse, without which there had been no such things in the body of man. It is purely owing to mercy that these things are not more frequent; for by the curse all the sons and daughters of Adam are liable to them; and it may be an humbling question, therefore, to the most handsome and beautiful, 1 Cor. 4:7, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" And God makes some such instances, that all may see in them what by the curse they are liable to, John 9:3.

2. As the temperature of the body was by the first sin altered, so as it disposed to sin, Gen. 3:7, so by the curse that degenerate constitution of it is penally bound on, by which it comes to pass that it is a snare to the soul continually. The seeds of sin are in it; it is "sinful flesh," Rom. 8:3, "a vile body," Phil. 3:21, and these seeds are never removed while the curse lies on it, being a part of that death to which it is bound over by the curse. Thus the case of the man must needs be very miserable, while a sinful soul and sinful flesh remain so closely knit together, in the nearest relation, each a snare to the other; the soul disposing the body to sin, and the body and the soul on the other hand, the corruption of the whole man must make fearful

advances under the curse. To this is much owing the crowd of "fleshly lusts which war against the soul," 1 Pet. 2:11; such as sensuality, gluttony, drunkenness, filthiness, &c. which more and more drown the soul in destruction and perdition. And the sad effects of this distemperature of the body are never wanting, of one kind or another, in all the periods of life; and by means thereof it comes to pass, that the souls of many are in their bodies as sunk in and overwhelmed with a mire of flesh and blood.

3. It is under the curse a vessel of dishonour. By its original make, it was a vessel of honour, appointed to honourable uses, and was so used by the soul before sin entered; and every member had its particular honourable service, serving the soul in subordination to God. But now it is brought down from its honour, and its "members are yielded instruments of unrighteousness unto sin," Rom. 6:13, and is abused to the vilest purposes; and it is never restored to its honour till, the curse being removed, it becomes the temple of God, by virtue of the purchase of it made by the blood of Christ. But while the curse remains its honour lies in the dust, being bound to such service as it was at first put to, in looking to, taking, and eating the forbidden fruit. See a melancholy description of this, Rom. 3:13, and downwards, It is made by the drunkard like a common sink, by the glutton like a draught, and often like a weary beast under the load of divers lusts. Every natural man's soul makes it a drudge; in some it must be a slave to the vanity of the mind, in others to covetousness, in others to wrath and revenge; in a word, its union with the sinful soul under the curse is become a yoke of iron.

4. It is liable to many mischiefs from without, tending to render it uneasy for the time, and at length to dissolve the frame of it. From the heavens above us, the air about us, the earth underneath us, and all that therein is, it is liable to hurt. All the creatures are in a state of enmity to man, while he is an enemy to God; and the least fly that passeth through the air is able to annoy him now; so that the natural man is ever in the midst of his armed enemies. The promise of the covenant was his guard, that while he kept the commandment, no

evil could approach unto him; but now the guard is removed, and he is laid under the curse, having broken the covenant, whereby not only his covenant defence is departed from him, but heaven has proclaimed war against him, armed the whole creation against the men of his curse, and ordered them to be ready to attack him on a moment's warning. Hence the waters swallow up some, the fire hurts others, beasts wound and bruise others, and man is not safe from the stones of the field, yea, every creature's hand is against him. And not only so, but by the curse men are become mischievous one to another, fighting, beating, wounding, and killing one another.

5. There is a seed-plot of much misery within it. It is by the curse become a weak body, and so liable to much toil and weariness, fainting and languishing under the weight of the exercise it is put to, Gen. 3:19. And not only so, but it hath in it such seeds of corruption, tending to its dissolution, as spring up in many and various maladies, which prove so heavy many times, that they make life itself a burden. By virtue of the curse, death works in the body, all along from the womb, as a mole under ground, till at length it lays the whole fabric in the dust, and leaves not, as it were, one stone on another, in the grave. No part of the body, without or within, is beyond the reach of diseases and torturing pains. The greatest care of the body cannot altogether ward them off. The curse has turned this world into an hospital, where some are groaning under one distemper, some under another; some at one time, some at another; and some in that respect are dying daily, knowing little or nothing of perfect health. The strongest are liable to be so weakened by diseases, as to be unable to turn themselves on a bed; those who enjoy the greatest ease, to tormenting pains; the most beautiful may be a prey to loathsome diseases and sores; and the soundest constitution to infections plagues.

6. Lastly, In all these respects the body is a clog to the soul in point of duty, often hanging like a dead weight upon it, unfitting it for, and hindering it from its most necessary work. The sinful soul is in itself most unfit for its great work, in this state of trial, by reason of the evil

qualities of it under the curse. But the wretched body makes it more so. The care of the body doth so take up its thoughts with most men, that, caring for it, the soul is lost. Its strength and vigour is a snare to it, and its weakness and uneasiness often interrupt or quite mar the exercises wherein the soul might profitably be employed. And one may see the forlorn case of the soul of man in this body under the curse, how it is on every hand pulled back from salvation work, in the case of many to whom health and strength is such a powerful snare while it remains, that they will not, and when they are gone, trouble and distress of body do so fill their hand, that they cannot mind their salvation work to purpose.

But it may be objected, That by this account of the condition of those under the curse, the case of natural men and of believers in Christ is alike; since it is evident, that not only these bodily miseries, but many of these soul miseries are common to both. I answer, Though it seem to be alike in the eye of beholders, in regard these miseries are materially the same on natural men and on the children of God; yet really there is a vast difference. On the former they are truly effects of the curse; on the latter they are indeed effects of sin, but not of the curse; "For Christ hath redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them," Gal. 3:13. Sin entering into the world was a fountain of miseries; and till it be dried up, there will be miseries on men's bodies and souls; but the poison of the curse is mixed with these bitter streams to some, but not to others; and that makes as great a difference betwixt the case of the godly and ungodly, as betwixt the case of one man to whom poison, and another to whom medicine is administered. And,

(1.) The stream of miseries on soul or body to a natural man, runs in the channel of the covenant of works; but to a believer, in the channel of the covenant of grace. To the former it comes by virtue of the threatening, Gen. 2:17, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;" To the latter it comes by virtue of that, Psalm 89:30, 31, 32, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my

commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." Running in the channel of the first covenant, they bring the curse along with them; but in the channel of the second covenant, the curse is not to be found; the waters are healed, however bitter they may be, Isa. 54:9. When one has a slave, he punishes him for his misdemeanors, by virtue of his masterly authority over him. But if he be freed and adopted for a son, he chastens him, but no more as a slave, but as a son.

(2.) There is revenging wrath in the one, but fatherly anger only in the other, Isa. 54:9, "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." If it was never such a small stroke on the natural man, it is in part of payment of law-debt, for he is under the law, in its commanding, cursing, and condemning power; if it were ever such a heavy stroke on a child of God, it is no part of payment of law-debt, which he is for ever discharged of in his union with Christ. An ungodly man's basket of bread miscarries; it is no great loss, one would think, he may bear it; but alas! there is an impression of wrath upon it, it miscarried by virtue of the curse, Deut. 28:17, "Cursed shall be thy basket;" and so it is heavier than the sand of the sea, though he, being insensible of his case, feels not the weight of it. Good Eli falls from off his seat, and breaks his neck, 1 Sam. 4:18. O heavy stroke! we are apt to say; yea but there was no worse in it than fatherly anger; the covenant was not broken, though his neck was broken, Psalm 89:34, "My covenant will I not break." He got a soft fall; as hard as it appeared to spectators, he fell on a pavement of love, Cant. 3:10.

(3.) The miseries of the ungodly in this life are an earnest of eternal misery in hell; but those of the godly are medicines, to keep back their soul from death; 1 Cor. 11:32, "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." Every stroke a man under the curse gets, he may call it "Joseph;" for "the Lord will add another." The least brook that runs,

is making towards the sea, as well as the deepest river; and the least affliction, by virtue of the curse, laid on a man, looks towards hell, as well as the greatest stroke he meets with. Though a piece of money be but small in itself, if it be an earnest-penny of a great sum, it is valued accordingly. And so the least stroke would be frightful to a natural man, if he discerned the nature of it. But in the worst afflictions of God's people, there is a seed of joy, Psalm 97:11, "Light is sown for the righteous; and gladness for the upright in heart;" and the darkest night will have a fair clear morning. There was more of heaven in Heman's hell, Psalm 88:15, than there is in the greatest ease, joy, and prosperity of the wicked.

The Whole Man is under the Curse

Thirdly, The whole man is under the curse. The sinner fallen from God, fell under the curse; and like a deluge it has gone over him, and surrounded him on every hand. Hence our Lord Christ, being made a curse for us, was beset with sorrows, Matth. 26:38, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," like a man when the devouring waves are compassing him round about, and from every hand coming in upon him, ready to swallow him up. Thus stands the natural man under the curse; it is upon him, it is round about him; go where he will, there is no shifting of it, all his days he wades through these waters; he is in the deep mire, where there is no firm standing. He is cursed,

1. In his name and reputation; "The seed of evil doers shall never be renowned," Isa. 14:20. Sin laid man's honour in the grave, and the curse lays the grave-stone upon it; and it can never rise again till the curse be removed; Isa. 43:4, "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable." What of it appears before that, is but as it were a ghost, a spectre of honour, that vanisheth away, which vain men please themselves with a little, as with illusions of fancy. The sinner's name may shoot up and flourish a little; but it is blasted by the curse, with shame, contempt, reproach, and disgrace. And no heights of worldly grandeur can secure men against this; the curse is

a worm at the root, which will work and cause to wither the sinner's name, whatever pains be taken to hold it green. A good name is better than precious ointment; but where the curse lies, the dead fly will be found there, to cause it to send forth a stinking savour. Every man is desirous of a name, and the raising of it was the snare in which man was first caught, "Ye shall be as gods;" but since that time, man has been laid open to many and deep wounds in it, while by the curse the tongues of those of his own kind have been as arrows shot from a bent bow against it, Psalm 57:4.

2. In his employment and calling in the world, Gen. 3:19, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground." Man is put to sore toil, weariness, and distress in his worldly employment; and when he has done, O what fruitless pains and travel he is made to see! How often do men labour as in the very fire! and all the issue is, they weary themselves for very vanity. There is sore and hard travel; and after all men must say, "We have, as it were, brought forth wind." The husbandman toils in labouring the ground, and the earth by virtue of the curse often gives him but a poor reward of his labour. The store-master is diligent to know the state of his flocks, and looks well to his herds; but oftentimes it is seen that that will not effect it, the curse works against him, and all goes to wreck, Deut. 28:17, "Cursed shall be thy store." The tradesman is early and late at his work, but often has much ado to get bread to his mouth and his family. The merchant carefully watches occasions of advancing his interest; but how often seeking gain does he find loss! and some unforeseen events discover a secret hand of providence working against him in the management of his affairs. See Hag. 1:6, "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes." The case of the labour of the mind, is in this respect no better than the labour of the hands. Solomon tells us, from his experience, the grievous toil of it; Eccl. 1:13, "I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven; this sore travail hath God

given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith." And he also tells the sorry issue of that toil; ver. 18, "For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." No set of men have more remarkable symptoms of the curse on their employment, than those whose labour is the labour of the mind. The toil is sore, the success small, and the disappointments innumerable. The physician and the lawyer labour, the one to preserve the body, the other the estate; but after all their pains, their art fails, they mistake the case, or it is beyond their power to rectify it. The projects of statesmen, laid in the depth of their wisdom, how often are they baffled, and by some small occurrence the whole frame thereof is unhinged! The guides of the Church, after all their contrivances for a steady management of her course, how often do they row her into deep waters, from whence they cannot bring her back, till she is dashed in pieces! Even in preaching of the gospel, while men shine, they burn and waste; and when all is done, they must sit down and say, "Who hath believed our report? I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought and in vain." Whence is all this, but that man has fallen under the curse, and it mars whatever he goes about to make?

3. In his worldly substance, Deut. 28:17, "Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store." Wherever he hath it, he hath the curse with it; whether it be in the field, Deut. 28:16, or whether it be in the house, Prov. 3:33. On the meat he eats, on the liquor he drinks, the clothes he wears, and the house where he lodges, there is a curse lying, because they are his. And under the weight of it they groan, as longing to be delivered out of his cursed hands, Rom. 8:21, 22. And sometimes even providence recovers them out of their hands in this life, as men do goods out of the hands of unjust possessors, Hos. 2:9, "I will return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness." Thus under the curse men are liable to melancholy alterations and changes in their outward estate. Riches make themselves wings by virtue of the curse, and fly away, not to be called back again. The man is infatuated in his

management, and so is not aware till he has run himself aground. He wants the hedge of the covenant-protection about what is his; and he sustains losses and damages at the hands of those with whom he has to do. Yea, he gathers and heaps up, and diligently watches it; but a fire unblown consumes it, and it melts away like snow before the sun; the curse, like a moth, eats it away, and he is wormed out of that on which he set his heart. Or if it stay with him, it is sometimes locked up from him, so as he has not the comfortable use of it, Eccl. 6:2, "A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof." And so the man never has a blessed use of it, never has power to use it for the high and honourable ends it is appointed of God unto, when he gives it into their hands as stewards of it for him. The loss he has by it, as it turns to his hurt, is never counterbalanced by the gain. And all this comes on the natural man in virtue of the curse.

4. In his relations. Relations are the joints of society, and sin going through them all, they are all defiled, and the curse goes through them too, Deut. 28:18, "Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body." In them men promise themselves comfort; but there they find sorrow, pain, and smart. There they lean as it were to a wall, and a serpent does bite them. In the state, magistrates often oppress, ensnare, and entangle the conscience, and prove a terror to those that do well. In the church, ministers are unfaithful, unwatchful, unconcerned for the good of souls, or unsuccessful. In neighbourhood, men are unjust, selfish, and snares one to another. In the family, disorder and confusion are found, through every one's unfaithfulness in the duties of their respective relations. How many are there unequally yoked, companions of life, through their jarrings and discord, a burden and a cross to one another! Husbands such men of Belial that their wives cannot speak to them; wives as rottenness in the bones of their husbands; parents unnatural, and unfaithful to, and careless of their children; children froward, perverse, and stubborn; sons of youth, hoped to be arrows in the hand of their parents, turning to be arrows to pierce them to the heart; daughters, expected to be as corner-

stones for their father's family, falling down on the heads of their parents, and crushing their spirits; masters unjust and unfaithful to their servants; and servants perverse, rebellious, and unconscionable in their service. For the curse has gone wide, and in every relation the weight of it is found; though most men that find the weight of it, know it not to be the curse indeed.

5. In his lot, whatever it is, afflicted or prosperous. Afflictions are cursed to the man who is under the curse; he is not bettered by them, though others are. He is not humbled by them, but his spirit is embittered; and, instead of coming to God under them, he runs farther away from him. "Why," says the Lord to Israel, "should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more," Isa. 1:5. God binds the man with these cords, but he crieth not. He may groan under the weight of his affliction, but he turns not unto the Lord; he saith not, "Where is God my Maker?" Job 35:10. He remains stubborn, incorrigible, and impenitent; Jer. 5:3—"Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return." The man's prosperity in the world is a snare to his soul and ruins him, Prov. 1:32, "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them." If his ground bring forth plentifully, his barns are seen to, but his soul is neglected; as was the case of the rich man in the gospel, Luke 12:16, &c. If his family prosper, his house be in safety, and his stock thrive, they say unto God, "Depart from us: for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?" Job 21:8–14, 15. "If waters of a full cup be wrung out to them, they set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.—And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?" Psalm 73:8, 9, &c. Youth, health, strength, and wealth together, prove ruining by virtue of the curse. Be the man's lot what it will, there is a curse on it to him, and it tends to his destruction.

6. In his use of the means of grace; Rom. 11:8, "God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear." The man sits under the dropping of the gospel, but it does him no good. He is as the ground that often drinks in the rain, but brings forth no fruit meet for him by whom it is dressed. He stands cumbering the ground in God's vineyard, for there is a withering curse on him, Good grapes are expected from the pains bestowed on him, but behold, only wild grapes appear. His praying, hearing, communicating, &c., are but like a withered hand that is never stretched out, nor reaches to the throne. His convictions and raised affections quickly settle again, and these fair appearances come to nothing. The gospel, that is a savour of life to some, is a savour of death to him, 2 Cor. 2:16; and Christ himself, who is set for the raising of many, is eventually for his falling. Thus the curse turns everything against the man, and all is death to him.

7. Lastly, In his person. Being a sinful man under the covenant of works, he is a cursed man; For it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The curse fixeth not only on what is his, but on himself; and it is for his sake that it is laid on other things. The curse, as you have heard, is on his soul, and on his body; for wherever sin is found under this covenant, there the curse also is And,

(1.) The man is under the power of Satan, Acts 26:18. Into the hand of this enemy man fell, when he broke the covenant of works. Satan having waged war against heaven, set on man, heaven's confederate, and gained the unhappy victory, gained him by temptation to renounce his allegiance to his rightful Lord by breaking the covenant, and so he fell under his power, as his captive taken in war, Isa. 49:24, was brought under bondage to this worst of masters, 2 Pet. 2:19, and is ruled by him at his pleasure, 2 Tim. 2 ult. The curse of the covenant falling on the covenant-breaker, he is thereby laid under condemnation, and adjudged to death according to the threatening; and so he falls under the power of him that has the power of death, that is the devil, Heb. 2:14. Every natural man is shut up as in a

prison, in his natural state; and there he lies in bonds, Isa. 61:1. There are God's bands on him, the bands of the curse binding him over to death; and the devil's bands are on him, viz, the bands of strong lusts and corruptions, with which they are laden, as a malefactor in prison is laden with irons. And Satan has the power of gaoler over them. He keeps the keys of the prison, and narrowly watches the prisoners that none of them escape. They are not all kept alike close; but none of them can move beyond the bounds of his jurisdiction, more than the prisoner can get out of the dungeon. Even when the king's word comes to deliver the elect, he will not yield them up; but the prison doors must be broke open, and they forcibly taken out of his hand by a stronger than he.

(3.) The natural man being under the curse is continually in hazard of utter destruction, of having the copestone put on his misery, and being set beyond all possibility of help. If his eyes were opened he would see himself every moment in danger of dropping down into the pit of hell; Psalm 7:12, "If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready." The man is constantly standing before God's bent bow, and has nothing to secure him one moment from the drawing of it. The sentence of death is passed against him, John 3:18, but there is no day intimated for the execution, but every day the dead warrant may be signed against him, and he led forth to death. His name may be "Magor-missabib," a terror round about, Jer. 20:3. Whither can he look where he will not see his enemies ready to ruin him, on a word of command from that God under whose curse he lies? And what can he do for himself amidst his armed enemies? He is quite naked, Rev. 3:17, and cannot fight them; he is without strength, Rom. 5:6, and cannot wield armour, though he had it; he is bound hand and foot, Isa. 61:1, and cannot flee; and if he could, whither could he flee for safety? Heaven's gates are shut upon him; in the utmost parts of the earth, or the most remote rock in the sea, God's hand would find him out. Justice is pursuing the criminals under the curse, crying for vengeance on the traitors, and their foot shall certainly slide in due time; the law is continually throwing the fire-balls of its curses on

them, and will at length set them on fire round about; death is on the pursuit after them, and has gained much ground of them already, and the cloud of wrath hangs over their heads continually in the curse, and the small rain of God's wrath is still falling on them; how soon death may overtake them, they know not; and then the cloud breaks, and the great rain of his strength falls down upon them, and sweeps them away without hope for ever and ever.

The Condition of the Natural Man under the curse, after this life

SECONDLY, The natural man's condition under the broken covenant of works, is very terrible in that part of it which takes place after this life. Then comes the full execution of the curse, and it is fixed on the sinner without possibility of deliverance. Then will be seen and felt by those who perish under it, what is in the womb of the curse of the broken covenant, whereof all that befalls them in this life is but an earnest. The truth is, it cannot be fully represented in words from the tongues of men; but we shall briefly point at it in the following particulars.

Death under the Curse

First, The natural man under the curse must not only die, but die by virtue of the curse. Death in any shape has a terrible aspect, it is the king of terrors, and can hardly miss to make the creature shrink, being a destruction of nature, and carrying him into another world where he never was before, and putting him into a quite new state, which he has had no prior experience of. But death to the natural man is in a singular manner terrible; it is death of the worst kind. The believer in Christ must die too; but Christ having died for them by virtue of the curse, and that death of his being applied to them by faith, they die not in virtue of the curse; Gal. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." It is a fatherly chastisement, a medicine to them, yea the most effectual medicine, that cures them of all their maladies, 1 Cor. 11:30, 32.

But the natural man dies by virtue of the curse of the broken covenant, agreeable to the threatening annexed thereto, Gen. 2:17. Accordingly, upon man's sinning, the curse seized him; and continuing under that covenant, it is still working in him, till it works his body and soul asunder. Soul and body joined in sin against God, and by sin the man was separated from God; and, as a meet reward of the error, the companions in sin are separated by the curse at length; which would have remained eternally in a happy union, had not sin entered.

Now, that we may have a view of death to a sinner by virtue of the curse, consider,

1. It is the ruining stroke from the hand of an absolute God, proceeding according to the covenant of works against the sinner in full measure; "He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world," Job 18:18. It is the fatal wound, the wound of an enemy, for the sinner's utter destruction. To a saint, death is a friend's wound, a stroke from the hand of a father, proceeding against his children in the way of the covenant of grace, for their complete happiness. But the ungodly in death fall into the hands of the living God, who then is and ever will be, to them a consuming fire. Having led their life under that covenant, they are then crushed in pieces by the curse for the breaking of it.

2. It is the breaking up of the peace betwixt God and them for ever: it is God setting his seal to the proclamation of an everlasting war with them; after which no message of peace is to go betwixt them any more for ever. It fixeth an impassable gulf, cutting of all comfortable communication with heaven, for the ages of eternity, Luke 16:26. Now the sinner under the curse, living within the visible church, has the privilege of offers of life and salvation; but then there is no more gospel, nor are there any more good tidings of peace, when once death has done its work. The curse which in life might have been got removed by the sinner's embracing Christ, is then fastened for ever on him without remedy. The door is shut, and that for ever.

3. It puts an end to all their comfort of whatsoever nature, Luke 16:25. Lazarus is then comforted, but the wicked tormented. It utterly quenches their coal, and puts out all their light, Job 18:18, forecited. To the godly, death puts an end to their worldly comforts, but then it lets them into the full enjoyment of their Lord in heaven; but as for the ungodly, at death they leave all their worldly comforts behind them, and they have no comfort before them in the place whither they go. The curse then draws a bar betwixt them and every thing that is pleasant and easy.

4. It is death armed with its sting, and all the strength it has from sin, and a holy just broken law. "The sting of death," whereby it pierces like a stinged serpent, "is sin," 1 Cor. 15:56, and "the strength of sin is the law." Now, when death comes on the ungodly man, all his sins are unpardoned; the guilt of them all binding him, as with innumerable cords, over to eternal wrath, lies upon him. And these cords of guilt cannot be broken; for the law is their strength, which threatens sin with eternal wrath; and God's truth and faithfulness therein plighted, cannot fail. Thus is death armed against the unbeliever, and herein lies the truly killing nature of it. Where that sting is away, as it is to all in Christ, it can do them no real harm, whatever way they die, whether a lingering or sudden death, a violent or natural one, under a cloud or in the light of comfort, 1 Cor. 15:55–57.

5. Lastly, It is the fearful passage out of this world into everlasting misery, Luke 16:22, 23. It is a dark valley at best; but the Lord is with his people while they go through it, Psalm 23:4. It is a deep water at best; but where the curse is removed, the Lord Jesus will be the lifter up of the head, that the passenger shall not sink. But who can conceive the horror of the passage the sinner under the curse has, upon whom that frightful weight lies? It leads him as an ox to the slaughter; it opens like a trap-door underneath him, by which he falls into the pit, and like a whirlpool swallows him up in a moment, and he is staked down in an unalterable state of unspeakable misery.

Secondly, He is immediately after death haled before the tribunal of that God, under whose curse he lies; Eccl. 12:7, "The spirit shall return unto God who give it." Compare Heb. 9:27, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." There the soul is judged according to its state, and the deeds done in the body; and there it must receive its particular sentence. And what can it be, but "Depart, ye cursed?" Where can such a soul expect to find its own place, but in the place of torment? Luke 16:23. The cause is already judged, the sinner is under the curse, bound over to hell by the sentence of the holy law. And those whom the law has power to curse and does curse while they are in this world, God will never bless in the other world. Consider the sinner under the curse before this tribunal; and,

1. All his sins, of all kinds, in all the periods of his life, from the first to the last breathing on earth are upon him. The curse seals them up as in a bag, that not one of them can be missing; Hos. 13:12, "The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up." Where a pardon takes place, the curse is removed, and being once removed, it never returns; so where the curse is, there neither is nor has been a pardon; for these are inconsistent, the one being a binding over of the sinner to wrath, the other a dissolution of that band, so that God will remember their iniquities no more. But where no pardon is, God has sworn he will not forget any of that sinner's works, Amos 8:7. How fearful, then, must the case be, while the sinner stands before this tribunal with all his sins whatsoever upon him?

2. As the man's sins were multiplied, so the curses of the law were multiplied upon him; for it is the constant voice of the law, upon every transgression of those under the covenant of works, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. 3:10. How then can such a one escape, while innumerable cords of death are upon him, before a just Judge, with their united force binding him over to destruction? His misery is hereby insured without all peradventure; and the more of these cords there are upon him, the greater must his punishment be.

3. There is no removing of the curse then, Luke 13:25. The time of trial is over, and judgment is to be passed according to what was done in the flesh. When a court is erected within a sinner's own breast in this world, and conscience convicts him as a transgressor of the law, a covenant-breaker, and therefore pronounces him cursed; there is a Surety for the sinner to fly to, an Advocate into whose hands he may commit his cause, a Mediator to trust in and roll his burden on by faith. But before that tribunal there is none for the sinner who comes thither under the curse. As the tree fell, it must lie; that throne is a throne of pure justice to him, without any mixture of the grace he despised. By the law of works, which he chose to live under, despising the law of grace, he must be judged.

4. Lastly, Wherefore he must there inevitably sink under the weight of the curse for ever, Psalm 1:5. He must fall a sacrifice for his own sin, who now slight the only atoning sacrifice, even Christ our passover sacrificed for us. In the course of justice sin must be satisfied for, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. The satisfaction must be proportioned to the injury done to the honour of an infinite God by it. In the gospel, Christ is set before the sinner as the scape-goat before Aaron; he is called to lay his hand on the head thereof, by faith transferring the guilt on the Surety. Since the sinner did not so, but lived and died under the curse, his iniquity must fall and lie for ever on his own head.

Thirdly, The soul is shut up in hell, by virtue of the curse, Luke 16:22, 23, "And in hell be lift up his eyes." Thus, by the sentence of the broken covenant, the sinner is cut asunder by the sword of death, and his soul receives its portion, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, being haled from the tribunal into the pit. Then falls the great rain of God's wrath on the men of his curse, the sinner being, to his own conviction, entered in payment of the debt which he can never discharge, and which can never be forgiven. The state of the separate soul under the curse, after its particular judgment, who can sufficiently express the horror of? Consider these things following on that head.

1. Separate souls under the curse, after their particular judgment, are lodged in the place of the damned, called Hell in the scriptures. Then the godly and the wicked change places, who lived together in this world as a mixed company; the soul, which, through faith received the blessing, is carried to heaven; and the soul which parted with the body under the curse, is carried to hell. This is evident from the parable of Dives and Lazarus, Luke 16:22, 23. In hell the souls of the wicked are lodged as in a prison, reserved to a further judgment against the great day, 1 Pet. 3:19. And who can imagine what thoughts of horror must, at its entrance thither, seize the soul, which a little before was in the body in this world, but then goes into an unalterable state of misery, and hath the bars of the pit shut upon it, without hope of relief? O the fearful sudden change it will be to them who lived in wealth and ease, and to them who lived in poverty and distress here! Who can say to which of them it shall be the most frightful change?

2. The dregs of the curse shall there be wrung out to them, and they made to drink them, in the fearful punishment inflicted upon them for the satisfaction of offended justice, for all their sins, original and actual. Then shall be, more remarkably than ever before, accomplished that passage; Psalm 75:8, "In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red: it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same; but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them." The separate soul doth not sleep, nor is void of feeling, nor is it extinguished till the resurrection, as some have dreamed; no, no; it lives, but lives in misery; it feels, but feels nothing but anguish. It is laid under the punishment of loss, being at once deprived of all those things wherein it sought its satisfaction in this world, and of all the happiness of the other world; and it is punished also with the punishment of sense, the wrath of an angry God being poured into it, Luke 16:23, 24, which is expressed under the notion of being "tormented in a flame." Then all the joys of the cursed soul are killed, plucked up by the root; and a flood of sorrows surrounds it, having neither brim nor bottom.

3. They are sensible of their lost happiness, Luke 16:23. They see it to their unspeakable anguish. Whatever they heard of heaven, and the happiness of those who die in the Lord, while they were on earth, they will get a more affecting discovery of it then, which will cause them to rage against themselves, that ever they should have preferred the pleasures of sin and a vain world to such a blessed state. And how must it pierce the wretched soul, to think that not only all is lost, but lost without possibility of recovery? Luke 16:26. O that men would be wise in time, and believe that the state of trial will end with them ere long, and so bend their cares and endeavours, that, amidst the throng of the world's business, cares, vanities, and temptations, they lose not their souls.

4. Their consciences are then awakened, never to fall asleep any more for ever. They will scorch them then like a fire that cannot be quenched, and gnaw them like a worm that never dieth. Without question separate souls are capable of calling things past to remembrance, as is evident in the case of the rich man when in the separate state, Luke 16:25, where Abraham bids him remember what a portion he had in this life; the rich man remembers his five brethren, and what a life he and they led, ver. 28. The conscience that was seared till it was past feeling, will then be fully sensible. The evil of sin will then be clearly seen, because felt; the threatenings of the holy law will no more be accounted scarecrows, nor will there be any such fools there as to make a mock of sin. The soul there will be under continual remorse and regret for ever the ill-spent life, where there is no place for repentance. The soul that would never search and try its ways, while there was occasion to mend what was amiss, will there go through the several steps of life and conversation here; and every new sin that casts up to it as done in the body, will pierce the soul like an envenomed arrow.

5. They will be filled with torturing passions, which will keep the soul ever on the rack. Their sinful nature remains with them under the curse, and they will sin against God still, as well as they did in this life; but with this difference, that whereas they had pleasure in their

sins here, they shall have none in their sins there; they shall be forever precluded from acting that wickedness that may give pleasure, and the restraint upon them that way in their prison may contribute to their torment; for, no doubt, the seeds of all sin remain still in them there under the curse; but their sins there shall be their felt misery too. The scripture holds out those torturing passions which they will be filled with, by "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth;" which intimates to us, that souls there are overwhelmed with sorrow, anguish, and anxiety, with wrath, grudge, murmuring, envy, rage, and despair.

6. Lastly, In this state they must continue till the last day, that they be reunited to their respective bodies, and so the whole man get his sentence at the general judgment, adjudging both soul and body to everlasting fire, Matth. 25. For after they are gone out of this world, their wickedness may be living behind them, and the stream of it may be running when their bodies are consumed in the grave, and their souls have been long in the pit of destruction, like the sin of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin; all which must be accounted for. And hence it appears, that the expectation of reuniting with their bodies can be no comfortable thought to them but a thought of horror, a fearful expectation.

The Sinner's Body goes to the Dust

Fourthly, The body goes to the dust in virtue of the curse, Psalm 49:14, "Like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them." Man's body in the state of innocence was immortal, not subject to death: sin made it mortal, the curse bound it over to death, and to the grave, the dark territory of death, Rom. 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." Hence our Lord Jesus Christ, becoming a curse for his own, was carried prisoner to the grave, Isa. 53:9, lay there for a time, bound with the cords of death, Acts 2:24; but having fully discharged the debt for which he was laid up, disarmed death, and proved the destruction of the grave for all that are his; Hos. 13:14, "O death, I will be thy plagues: O grave, I will be thy destruction "But in

the meantime death and the grave remain as before to all those who have no saving interest in him; so that wherever the dead bodies of the wicked are laid up, or however they are disposed of, whether consumed by the fire, eaten up by other creatures, or laid in a grave properly so called; wherever they remain in the state of the dead; there they are laid up in virtue of the curse. But the bodies of the godly are not so.

The state of the dead body in the grave, under the curse, we may take up in these three things.

It is laid up there as in a prison, like a malefactor in a dungeon, to be kept there till the day of execution. Hence, in the language of the Holy Ghost, Psalm 16:10, hell and the grave, or the state of the dead, go under one and the same name; so that article of the creed, that "Christ descended into hell," is expounded of his continuing in the state of the dead. The bodies of the godly go to the grave too, but it is a place of rest to them, where they rest as in their bed, till the joyful morning of the resurrection, Isa. 57:2. For death, armed with the sting, poured out all its venom on Christ, when it had him there, in their room and stead. So it is a hiding-place to them, Job 14:13. Whither they are carried from the evil to come, Isa. 57:1, and where their eyes are held from beholding grievousness, and an end is put to their toil, Rev. 14:13. But in scripture account it is not a place of rest to the ungodly. Remarkable to this purpose is that text, Job 3:17, 18, "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voice of the oppressor." There are two sorts of men spoke of here, who both go to the grave; ungodly men, troublers of others, persecutors, oppressors; godly men, wearied with trouble, imprisonment and oppression. The state of the former in the grave is, they are laid by from doing mischief, causing their terror any longer in the land of the living; the state of the latter is, they are at rest. And as great a difference there is betwixt the two, though one cannot discern it from the posture of their dust, as betwixt a roan asleep in his own bed, and a man bound

hand and foot in a dungeon, Isa. 57:2; 1 Sam. 2:9; Psalm 31:17. And it is their moval or continuance of the curse that makes the difference.

2. Their sin and guilt remains on them there, and that without further possibility of a removal; Job 20:11, "His bones are full of the sins of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust." Sin is a dangerous companion in life; one had better live in chains of iron, than in chains of guilt; but happy they with whom sin parts. when soul and body part at death. That is the lot of believers in Christ, who at the Red Sea of death get the last sight of it. There the Lord says to the dying saint, whether he hears it or not, as Exod. 14:13, "The Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day ye shall see them again no more for ever." But the man dying under the curse, all his sins take a dead gripe of him never to be let go; and when he lies down in the grave, they lie down with him, and they never part. This is not to be discerned neither in the dust, by-bodily eyes, but it is most certain, and as it is represented in the glass of the word, it makes a spectacle of unspeakable horror; Nah. 1:14, "I will make thy grave, for thou art vile;" like a vile, filthy, and loathsome thing, which one cannot endure to look at, and there is no cleansing of; but a hole is dug in the earth, wherein it is covered up with all its filthiness about it. When a saint dies, there is (so to speak) one grave made for him and another for his vileness; and he is to rise again, but his vileness never to rise; but for the ungodly, there is but one, when he lies down and his vileness with him, both to rise together again.

3 All the ruin brought on their bodies there, is done by virtue of the curse; Job 24:19, "The grave consumes those which have sinned." Death makes fearful havoc where it comes; not only doth it separate the soul from the body; but separates the several parts of the body one from another, until it reduce the whole into dust, not to be discerned by the quickest eye from common dust. Thus it fares with the bodies of the godly indeed, as well as the bodies of the wicked; nevertheless great is the difference,—the curse working these effects in the bodies of the latter, but not of the former, stinged death in the one, unstinged death in the other; so all these effects in the one are

pieces of revenging wrath for the satisfaction of justice; in the other not so, but like the melting down of the crazy silver vessel, to be cast into a new mould.

The Wicked shall Rise again under the Curse

Fifthly, They shall rise again out of their graves, at the last day, under the curse; John 5:29, "They that have done evil, shall come forth unto the resurrection of damnation." Compare Matth. 25:41, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" Our Lord Jesus Christ, who became a curse for all his people, was carried from the cross to the grave; but there the debt was fully paid, and the curse was exhausted; the cursing law and justice had no more to exact of him; so he was brought forth out of the prison of the grave, as one free person who had completely discharged the debt which he was laid in prison for. And hence believers in Christ, though they fall down into the grave, as well as others; yet they do not fall down into it under the curse, far less do they rise again, at the last day, under the curse. But the natural man having lived and died under the covenant of works, goes to the grave under the curse; and forasmuch as all that comes on him, in the state of the dead, cannot satisfy completely for his debt, therefore as the curse remains on him all along while he is there, so he rises again under it. And in this doleful event three things may be considered:—

1. They shall rise again out of their graves by virtue of the curse. This is implied in that forecited, John 5:29. When the end of time is come, the last trumpet shall sound, and all that are in the graves shall come forth, godly and ungodly; but the godly shall rise by virtue of their blessed union with Christ, Rom. 8:11; the ungodly by virtue of the curse of the broken covenant on them. As the malefactor is, in virtue of the sentence of death passed on him, shut up in close prison till the time of execution; and in virtue of the same sentence brought out of prison at the time appointed for his execution; even so the unbeliever is, in virtue of the curse of the law adjudging him to eternal death in hell, laid up in the grave till the last day; and, in

virtue of the same curse, brought out of the grave at that day. Hence, by the bye, one may see, that there is no force in that arguing, viz., The separation of the soul and body was not the sanction of the law; else why should the wicked be clothed with their bodies at the resurrection? It is true, that separation was not the whole of the sanction, but it was a remarkable part of it; and there is no inconsistency in the separation and reuniting of soul and body, being both comprehended in the sanction, more than in the laying up of the malefactor for, and bringing him forth to execution, being both comprehended in the sentence of death. The same curse that separated soul and body at death, and separated each part of the body from another in the grave, shall, at the time appointed, have another kind of effect in bringing together the scattered pieces of dust, and joining them together in one body, and joining it again to the soul.

2. All their sin and guilt shall rise again with them; the, body that was laid in the grave, a vile body; a foul instrument of the soul in divers lusts; an unclean vessel, stained, polluted and defiled, with divers kinds of filthy impure lusts; shall rise again with all its impurities cleaving to it, Isa. 66:24, "They shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." It is the peculiar privilege of believers to have their "vile bodies changed," Phil. 3:21. If the bodies of sinners be not cleansed by the washing with that pure water, Heb. 10:22, viz. the blood and Spirit of Jesus Christ; though they be strained in never so minute parts, through the earth in a grave, they will lose nothing of their vileness and pollution, it will still cleave to every part of their dust, and appear again therewith at the resurrection. Then shall they get a new and horrible sight of the use they made of their tongues in profane swearing, cursing, mocking at religion, lying, reproaching, cruel and unjust threatenings, &c, in undue silence, when God's honour, their own soul's interest, and their neighbour's good, required them to speak; of the use they made of their bellies, in gluttony, and drunkenness, and pampering of the flesh; of their bodies, in uncleanness, lasciviousness, and wantonness; of their hands, in pilfering, stealing, unjust beating and abusing their fellow-creatures,

immoderately busying them in the things of this life, to the neglect of their souls; in a word, of the use they made of their whole body, and every member thereof; with the qualities and endowments thereof, its youth, beauty, comeliness, health, and strength; together with the memorials of dying put into their hands, as hurts, wounds, weakness, sickness, old age; all of them to have been improved for God, the good of mankind, and their own eternal welfare. O, if men could look upon these things now, as then they will appear, the sweet morsel of sin would be accounted as the poison of asps.

3. Their appearance will be frightful and horrible beyond expression, when they come forth of their graves under the curse, and set their feet on the earth again. When, at the sound of the trumpet, the dead shall all arise out of their graves, and the wicked are cast forth as abominable branches, what a fearful awakening will they have out of their long sleep! When they get another sight of this earth, upon which they led their ungodly lives; see their godly neighbours taken out from among them in the same spot of ground where they all lay, and carried away with joy to meet the Lord in the air; and when they see the Judge come to the judgment of the great day, in awful state; and they are going forward to appear before his tribunal; no appearance of malefactors going, under a guard, to the place of execution; no case of a besieged city taken, and soldiers burning and slaying, and the inhabitants running and crying for fear of the sword; can sufficiently represent the frightful appearance which men risen again at the last day, under the curse, will make. What ghastly visages will they then have! How will the now fairest ungodly faces be black as a coal, through extreme terror, anguish, and perplexity! How will they shiver, tremble, their knees smite one against another, and their hearts be pierced as with arrows, while they see the doleful day they would not believe! what roarings and yellings, and hideous noise will then be amongst the innumerable crowd of the ungodly, driven forward to the tribunal as beasts to the slaughter? What "crying to the rocks and the mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of the Lamb," but all in vain! Rev. 6:16, 17. Then

will the weight of the curse be felt to purpose, how lightly soever men now walk under it.

The Wicked appear before Christ's Tribunal under the Curse

Sixthly, They shall appear before the tribunal of Christ under the curse, like a malefactor in chains before his judge, Matth. 25:41. All must appear there, great and small, good and bad; none shall be amissing; Rom. 14:10, "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." But they who now receive the blessing through faith shall be in no hazard of the curse then or there. But it is not possible, that those who lived and died under the curse, should not have it upon them before that tribunal; for after death there is no removing of it. The fearful state of those under the curse before that judgment-seat may be viewed in these particulars.

1. In virtue of the curse they shall be set on the left band, Matth. 25:33. No honour is designed for them, but shame and everlasting contempt; no sentence, but what will fix them in an unalterable state of misery; so no access for them to the right hand amongst the blessed, but they must be ranged together on the left hand as a company of cursed ones.

2. The face of the judge must needs be terrible to them, as being under the curse of him who sits upon the throne, Rev. 6:16, 17. When they see him, they shall know him to be he, who with his Father and the Holy Spirit gave that law which they transgressed, made that covenant which they broke, whose voice the curse of the law against transgressors was and is; the which must needs take effect in their everlasting ruin, by reason of his justice, holiness, and truth. And he will be in a special manner terrible to such as had the gospel offer made to them, and the more terrible, the more plainly, affectionately, and powerfully it was pressed on them to accept it. O how will it strike them as a dart, when they look towards the throne, thinking with themselves, Lo there he sits to judge me now, and destroy me,

who so often made offer of life and salvation to me by his messengers, which I slighted! I might through him have obtained the blessing, but now I stand trembling under the weight of the curse. The despised Lamb of God is turned into a lion against me. Consider this, O sinners, while God is on a throne of grace for you; lest it be taken down, and a tribunal of pure justice be set up for you.

3. To clear the equity of the curse, and the execution thereof upon them, their "works shall be brought into judgment," Eccl. 12:14. Their whole life shall be searched into, and laid to the rule of the holy law, and the enormity and sinfulness thereof be discovered. Their corrupt nature, with all the malignity and venom against the rule of righteousness, shall be laid open. Their sins shall be set in the light of God's countenance, in such full tale, that they shall see God is true to his word and oath, that he would not forget any of their works. The mask will then be entirely taken off their faces, and all their pretences to piety solemnly rejected, and declared to have been but hypocrisy. Their secret wickedness, which they rejoiced to have got hid, and which they so artfully managed, that there was no discovering of it while they might have confessed and found mercy, shall then be set in broad day light before God and the world when there is no remedy. Conscience shall then be no more blind nor dumb; but shall witness against them and for God; and shall never be silent any more. The sin and misery brought upon others by their ungodly courses, taking effect when they themselves were gone out of the world, shall then be pursued in all their breadth and length, laid to their charge, and proved against them; and so the account of their debt to the divine justice shall be fully, stated at that day.

4. Their doom shall be pronounced; Matth. 25:41, "Depart, from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Thus shall they receive their final sentence, never to hear more from the mouth of him that sits upon the throne. This determines the full execution of the curse on the whole man, soul and body together. The godly shall get their final sentence too; but, O! the vast difference betwixt "Come ye blessed," and "Depart ye cursed." The unspeakable

happiness of the saints in heaven, and the unspeakable misery of the damned in hell, will shew the difference. But the weight of both lies, you see, in the state of the parties, as under the blessing, or under the curse. There is the turning point in respect of one's eternal state.

This World shall be Burnt with Fire

Seventhly, As they shall be, by virtue of the curse now to be fully executed, driven from the judgment-seat into hell; so, in virtue of the same curse of the broken covenant of works, this world shall go up in flames, and so have an end put to it; 2 Pet 3:10, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." When sin got place in the earth by the breach of the covenant, the curse was laid upon it, and the foundations thereof were as it were shaken; by its relation to man, it came within the compass of the curse for his sin, and so was devoted to destruction, which shall then take its full effect. Yea, the whole frame of the creation, having relation to sinful man, was blasted for his sake, being made "subject to vanity," Rom. 8:20, 21. And so the heaven, which because it is over the head of the covenant breaker, is therefore now sometimes made brass, shall, upon the same account, then pass away with a great noise; even as the earth, which is sometimes made iron, because it is under him, shall then be burnt up, Deut. 28:23, with 2 Pet. 3:10, just quoted. So the curse is a train laid in the bowels of the creation, which now and then gives it terrible shocks, but will at last blow all up together. And when once it has done that, and so put an end to this stage of vanity and wickedness; all the effects of it that now lie scattered through the creation, shall be gathered together and cast into the place of the damned (Rev. 20:14, 15,) with them; so that though death and misery are everywhere to be found now, it shall be no where then but in that one place; and all that goes under the name of death shall be in that place. The weight comprehended in the curse lies now on many backs, and so is the more easily borne; but then it shall all lie on the

backs of the men of the Lord' curse, and on theirs only; and so shall they feel the full weight of it.

The Wicked shall lie for ever under the weight of the Curse in hell

Eighthly, They shall lie for ever under the weight of the curse in hell, on soul and body together; Matth. 25:41, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." Here is their misery completed, here is the full execution of the curse. The curse was big with wrath, indignation, and fury of a holy, jealous, just God, against sin, and sinners for sin, ever since it first entered, upon the breach of the covenant; and it has since that time still been bringing forth, yet there has likewise still been some allay in it, and the storm of wrath has not yet come to the height. While men, even the men of the Lord's curse, live in this world, much patience is exercised towards them, and partly through the slenderness of the strokes laid on them, partly through their insensibleness, and partly through the mixture of mercy in their cup, they make a shift to live at some case; and if their case be at any time disturbed, yet they ordinarily, though not always, find some means to recover it; and even while their souls are in hell, during the time betwixt their death and the last judgment, their bodies lie at ease in the grave; so but the one half of the man is in torment, and a part of him is easy, without any sense or feeling of the least annoyance. But when once the dead are raised again, and the men of the curse have got their last sentence, and time is absolutely at an end, the mystery of God finished, and a quite new state of the creation brought in, to wit, the eternal state; then shall the curse bring forth the threatened death in its full strength and force on the undischarged covenant-breakers; and as Christ, standing surety for the elect, knew by his experience so shall the men of the curse know by their experience, what was within the compass of the threatening of the covenant of works; Gen. 2:17, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Many a commentary has heaven wrote upon it unto men, in flaming fire, in blood and gore, in sighs, groans, and swooning of the whole creation; but never a full one yet, excepting in the

sufferings of the Son of God on the cross. The elect of God get their eyes opened to read that, and so they make haste and escape out of the dominion of that covenant to which the curse belongs; but the rest are blinded, they cannot read it there. But God will write another full commentary on it after the last judgment, whence all the men of the Lord's curse shall, in their horrible experience, learn what was in it, namely, in the threatening of the covenant of works. The dregs of the cup of the curse shall then be brought above, and they shall drink them.

1. In virtue of the curse, the pit, having received them, shall close its mouth on them. A fearful emblem of this we have, Numb. 16:32, 33, in the case of Korah and his company; "And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them." Compare that threatening, Psalm 21:9, "Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger, the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them." They shall be cast into the lake of fire, as death and hell are, to be shut up there without coming forth again any more, Rev. 20:14, 15. By the force of the curse upon them, they shall be confined in the place allotted for damned men and devils. It shall so draw the bars of the pit about them, that sooner shall they remove mountains of brass than remove them. It shall be stronger than chains of iron to bind them hand and foot that they make no escape, Matth. 22:13, yea and to bind them in bundles for the fire of God's wrath, that companions in sin may be companions in punishment, Matth. 13:30.

2. The curse shall then be like a partition wall of adamant, to separate them quite from God, and any the least comfortable intercourse with him, Matth. 25:41. While on the other side of the wall the light of glory shines, more bright than a thousand suns, filling the saints with joy unspeakable, and which we cannot comprehend, and causing the arch of heaven to ring with their songs of praise; on their side is nothing but utter darkness, without the

least gleam of light; and there shall be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. For why, God himself is the only true happiness of the creature, and Christ the only way to the Father; but then there is a total and final separation betwixt God and Christ, and them. The day of the Lamb's wrath is come, all possibility of reconciliation is removed, and patience towards them is quite ended, and the curse hath its full stroke; so God, the fountain of all good, departs quite from them, abandons them, casts them off utterly, and that moment all the streams of goodness towards them dry up, and their candle is quite extinguished. Then shall be known what is in that word, Hos. 9:12, "Wo to them when I depart from them." And then there is no getting over the wall, no passing of the great gulf for ever, Luke 16:26.

3. It shall hence be a final stop to all sanctifying influences towards them. While they are in this world, there is a possibility of removing the curse, and that the worst of men may be made holy; but when there is a total and final separation from God in hell, sorely there are no sanctifying influences there. The corrupt nature they carried with them thither, must then abide with them there; and they must needs act there, since their being is continued; and a corrupt nature will ever act corruptly, while it acts at all, Matth. 7:17. And therefore there will be sin in hell after the last judgment, unless one will suppose that they will be under no law there; which is absurd, seeing a creature, as a creature, owes obedience to God in what state soever it be. Yea, they will sin there at a horrible rate, in blasphemies against God, and other sins akin thereto, as men absolutely void of all goodness, in a desperate state of misery, Rev. 14 ult.; Matth 22:13. The curse will be a dry wind, not to fan nor to cleanse, but to wither, blast, and kill their souls.

4. It shall be the breath that shall blow the fire continually, and keep it burning, for their exquisite torment in soul and body; Isa. 30:33, "For Tophet is ordained of old: yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."

There the worm which shall gnaw them, shall never die, for the curse will keep it in life; the fire that shall burn them shall never be quenched, for the curse shall nourish it, and be as bellows blowing it, to cause it flame without intermission. The curse shall enter into their souls, and melt them like wax before the fire; it shall sink into their flesh and bones, like boiling lead, and torment them in every part. It will stake them down there as marks for the arrows of God, which, dipt in the poison of the curse, shall be continually piercing them and burning them up. No pity, no compassion to be shewn any more, but the fire-balls of the curse will be flying against them incessantly; Rev. 14:11, "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night."

5. Lastly, The curse shall lengthen out their misery to all eternity; Matth. 25:41, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." It binds the sinner to make complete and full satisfaction, for all the wrongs he has done to the honour of an infinite God; it binds him to pay till there be a sufficient compensation made for them all. Now, there being no proportion betwixt finite and infinite, the finite creature can never, by its sufferings, expiate its crimes against an infinite God. Hence, when the sinner has suffered millions of ages in hell, the curse still binds him down to suffer more, because he has not yet fully satisfied; and since he can never fully satisfy, it will bind him down for ever and ever, Rev. 14:11, and will bring new floods of wrath over his head; and renew its demands of satisfaction through the ages of eternity, but never, never say, It is enough.

Thus have I endeavoured to open up unto you the nature of the curse of the broken covenant of works, and the dreadful condition of those under it, in this life, and after this life. But after all, who knows the power of God's wrath? No tongue can tell what the frightful experience of those who live and die under it, shall teach them. But thus much may suffice to have shewn you the misery of being under the covenant of works.

Application of the doctrine, That natural men being under the broken Covenant of Works are under the curse

This doctrine shall be improved in two practical uses; for conviction and for exhortation.

USE I. Of conviction. What has been said on this awful subject may serve to fix convictions in the consciences both of saints and sinners.

First, Saints, who are brought from under this covenant, delivered from it and the curse thereof by Jesus Christ, view this curse in the nature and weight, the length and breadth of it; and say in your hearts before the Lord,

1. Do ye suitably prize and esteem your God, Redeemer and Saviour? Are your hearts suitably affected with the love of God in Christ, that set on foot your deliverance, and brought it about? Ah! this consideration may afford us a breast full of convictions. What manner of love was this, that the Father did choose you from among the cursed children of Adam to inherit the blessing? that the Son died for you, to redeem you from the curse? that the Holy Ghost applied to you the purchase of Christ's death, to the actual removing of this curse from off you? O where is that love, that warm, glowing love to the Lord, that this requires! The Father's love to you while under the curse, moved him to make his Son to be sin for you, who knew no sin, that you might be made the righteousness of God in him. Christ's love to you made him become a curse for you, and drink the dregs of that cup, which ye should have drank through eternity in hell. The Spirit's love to you made him watch the moment appointed for your deliverance, and bring you out with a strong hand from the dominion of the law, and transport you into the dominion of grace, where there is no more curse. O look back to the dreadful curse which ye were under; look up to the love in delivering of you; keep one eye upon the one, and another eye upon the other, till these cold hearts of yours warm with love.

2. Do ye suitably prize the new covenant, the second covenant? Do ye pry into the mystery of the glorious contrivance, stand and wonder at the device for bringing cursed sinners to inherit the blessing? Would it not become you well to be often looking into it, and saying, "This is all my salvation, and all my desire?" 2 Sam. 23:5. Ah! why have we not higher and more honourable thoughts of the covenant of grace, of the Second Adam, the Head, Surety, and Messenger of the covenant, of the gospel, the proclamation of the covenant, the Bible the book of the covenant, the promises of the covenant, the matchless privileges of the covenant, and even of the public criers of the covenant too? Isa. 52:7. To help you to this, lay the volume of the two covenants before you; open and read the covenant of works in the first place, where you will find nothing but demands of perfect obedience under the pain of the curse; a promise of life upon conditions impossible to be performed by you, but the curse, wrath, death, hell, and damnation to the sinner. Then turn over to the covenant of grace, and read life and salvation through Jesus Christ by faith; no curse, death, hell, damnation, nor revenging wrath; all these discharged by the Surety. And so raise your esteem of the new covenant in Christ's blood.

3. Do ye walk answerably to the deliverance from this curse? Ah! may not that be applied justly to us; Deut. 32:6, "Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy Father that hath bought, thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?" Obedience to all the ten commands is bound on all under the covenant of works, under the pain of the curse, Gal. 3:10, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Obedience to them all is bound on believers too, but by another tie, viz. the tie of their deliverance from the curse, by their God-Redeemer; Exod. 20:2, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt," &c. And this, and not the former, is the way in which the law of the ten commands gets any acceptable obedience, 1 Tim. 1:5, from sinful man. O look to the curse of the covenant of works, from which ye are delivered, and be convinced and humbled to the very dust,

(1.) That ye should walk so untenderly, unwatchfully, and uncircumspectly, before the Lord that bought you, and that in the midst of cursed children, a crooked and perverse generation. What can more strike a nail to the heart of a gracious person, than when the Spirit of the Lord whispers into his soul, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness? wherefore say my people, We are lords; we will come no more unto thee?" Jer. 2:31. And, "Is this your kindness to your friend?" Is that your compassion to the, world lying in wickedness, to cast a stumbling-block before the blind? You speak, you act untenderly; is that the use of the tongue redeemed from the curse? Is that the use of the eyes, hands, and feet, body and soul, delivered from the curse of the broken covenant? I think, that a believer looking to the cross should say, and abide by it, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," Phil. 1:21.

(2.) That ye should so dote upon this earth, this cursed earth, that the curse of the broken covenant of works has lain upon these five thousand years, and has sucked the sap out of, and so dried up by this time, that it is near to taking fire, and to be burnt to ashes, by virtue of the curse upon it. Let the men of the Lord's curse, who have their portion in it, set their hearts upon it, go upon their belly, and lick the dust, (it is no wonder they cannot get up their back, on whom the heavy curse of the broken covenant lies); but lift ye up your souls unto the Lord, and hearken to his voice; Cant. 4:8, "Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon; look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Herman, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards."

(3.) That ye should perform duties so heartlessly, coldly, and indifferently; with so little faith, love, fervency, humility, zeal, and confidence. O look to the curse of the broken covenant, with the effects of it in earth and hell, that ye may be stirred up to the performance of duty after another manner. I mean not that ye should look upon it as what ye are actually liable to in case, of transgression; for this to a believer, who is never free from sin one moment, may well make his heart die in him like a stone; it will never kindly

quicken him; it may well drag or drive him to his duty, like a slave; it will never cause him perform it like a son; but look upon it as what ye are delivered from, and that will draw, melt, and kindly quicken the heart in love, Eph. 2:11–13; Luke 1:74, 75. Deliverance from wrath is the most powerful motive to obedience.

(4.) That ye should bear your troubles and trials so impatiently, as if your crosses were so many curses. Look to the condition of those under the curse in this world, and you will see your heaviest cross is lighter than their smallest ones, which have the weight of the curse in them, that yours have not, however you cry out under their weight; yea your adversity is better than their prosperity; the frowns of providence you meet with, are preferable to the smiles of providence in their lot; there is no curse in the former, but in the latter there is. Look to the condition of those under the curse in hell; and that duly considered, ye will kiss the rod, and say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not," Lam. 3:22. Look how Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, and you will see the poison taken out of the cup, and the pure water of affliction presented to you in your cup to pledge him in; and why not drink it, and drink it thankfully? Bear the cross for him, and take blows and buffetings for his sake, and from him for our own good, who has borne away the curse.

4. Have ye due thoughts of the evil of sin? Is your horror of it suitably raised? Rom. 12:9, "Abhor that which is evil," abhor it as hell, so the word may bear. If you duly consider the curse, it may fill you with shame and blushing on this head. There is much blindness in the minds of believers, much hardness in their hearts, and coldness in their affections with respect to spiritual things. The lively sense of the evil of sin is often very small. We dare not own believers to be yet liable to the curse, Christ having, with his precious blood applied to them by faith, freed them from it; but it is of great and necessary use to them as a looking-glass, wherein they may see the evil of sin, the due demerit of it, what their sins do in themselves deserve, what

Christ suffered for these sins of theirs, and what they should have suffered for them, if Christ had not suffered it in their stead. Trace the curse in its effects in this life, and after this life, as they have been represented to you; so will you see God's high indignation against sin, the infinite evil that is in the least transgression of the holy law. Behold it in this glass, and you shall conceive a horror of it; and be ashamed that you have entertained so slight thoughts of it.

5. Lastly, Are ye duly affected with the ease of those who, being strangers to Christ, are yet under the curse? Are ye at due pains for their recovery and deliverance? How natural is it for men, who with difficulty have escaped the greatest danger, to be affected with the case of others who are still in the same danger, in hazard of perishing? But though multitudes are under the curse still, and, it may be, some such as we have a peculiar interest in; yet where is the due care, compassion, and concern for them, that they may be delivered? They are not concerned for themselves, because they have not yet got a broad view of their hazard; but why are not such concerned for them, as have had their eyes opened in their own case. Sure the case of all men by nature is alike, and therefore the past danger of believers gives a clear view of the present danger of unbelievers, unless it be out of mind with them, which it should not be, that once they were "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world," Eph. 2:12. The apostle's experience of the terror of the Lord stirred him up to persuade others to flee from the curse, 2 Cor. 5:11; and it well becomes others, who are themselves as brands plucked out of the burning, to act with that concern in the case of others, pulling them out of the fire, Jude ver. 23, and to mourn for the case of those who continue insensible of their danger, as our blessed Redeemer did in the case of Jerusalem, Luke 19:41, 42.

Secondly, Sinners, ye who are under the broken covenant of works still, not united to Christ by faith, and savingly interested in the

covenant of grace, but living yet in your natural unregenerate state, ye may hence be convinced,

1. That ye are under the curse; ye are they who are the people of the Lord's curse, under the sentence of the law, actually binding you over to destruction. Ye are they who by breaking of the original contract have fallen under the penalty, and are decerned in the court of heaven to pay it. Against you, as transgressors of the law, is the sentence passed according to the threatening, Gen. 2:17, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Against you, and every one of you in particular, is the curse denounced. So the condition of those under the curse, is your condition in particular; and what such are liable to, you are liable to; for your name is in the black roll of the people of the curse, of those appointed to death, and devoted to destruction, in virtue of the curse of the broken covenant of works.

O Sirs, admit the conviction, and go not about to bless yourselves in your own hearts, putting the thoughts of being under the curse far away from you. There is light enough here to convince your consciences in that point, if ye will not shut your eyes against clear light. All who are under the broken covenant of works are under the curse, but you are under that covenant; therefore you are under the curse. If you be not under that covenant, where is your discharge from it? The believer's discharge may be read; Rom. 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Chap. 7:4, "Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another." But where is yours? The unbeliever's discharge is nowhere to be found. It is past dispute that covenant is broken, and that being broken it curseth the breakers; it is undeniable that you are breakers of it, and therefore you must be under the curse.

It is your interest to admit this conviction. What will it avail you to bless yourselves in your own hearts, when God himself in his holy law denounces the curse against you? It is not by the sentence you pass on yourselves that you must stand or fall, but by the sentence

God passeth on you in his word. Nay, men's blessing themselves, against whom God denounceth the curse, does but the more expose them to the evils contained in the curse, coming on them speedily and furiously; Deut. 29:19, 20, "And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst; the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven." The admitting of this conviction is among the first steps to a delivery; and there would be good hopes of one's obtaining of the blessing of the gospel at length, if he were once soundly convinced of his being under the curse of the law. And therefore the curse is preached, not that sinners may perish under it, but that they, seeing themselves under it, may stir up themselves to make their escape. The law does its work to prepare sinners for Christ, convincing them of sin, that they are sinners; convincing them of their misery, that they are under the curse; and they that never yet saw themselves under the curse, give a shrewd sign that they were never yet brought from under it. But when once a sinner sees himself concluded under the curse of the law, then he is in a fair way to prize Christ and the blessing of the gospel, and to get himself carefully to inquire what course he should take to be saved. And the believing of the curse of the law with a particular application to one's self, must necessarily go before the so believing the promise of the gospel indeed.

Why should it seem strange in your eyes, who yet are not truly united to Christ by faith, that you should be under the curse of the broken covenant of works? that is the common case of all mankind by nature; and the deliverance from under it befalls no man in a morning dream. And sure it is that most men have never been much in pain to get rid of it; and some there are who, striving to get clear of it in a legal way, have but wreathed that yoke faster about their own necks. Do not you know that Christ himself, as the elect's surety, was made a curse? How could that be if they themselves had not been

under it, and likewise unable to bear it so as to exhaust it? Now, there is no saving interest in his purchase, till once the soul is brought to Christ by faith, and united to him; which you are not.

It is very consistent with the mercy of God, to lay unbelievers under the curse; for his mercy can never act in prejudice of his exact justice. The covenant being made with Adam for all mankind, the curse behoved to fall on the breakers according to the threatening, by virtue of the truth and justice of God. But mercy indeed has a way made for it towards the miserable under the curse, inasmuch as the prisoners are made prisoners of hope, by having deliverance from the curse proclaimed to them in the gospel; the which may be actually conveyed to them in the way of God's own appointment; namely the cursed sinner's believing on the name of Christ. But what need were there of either purchasing or proclaiming it to you, if you were not under it?

Think not that you cannot be under the curse, because God has done much for you, has given you many blessings, as health, strength, wit, wealth, and prosperity in the world; or because he has wrought many wonderful deliverances for you, has brought you from a low and mean estate to a high one, and mightily increased you in outward comforts and enjoyments. Remember it, and consider well, that all these are but left-hand blessings, which one may have poured in upon him in abundance, and yet be under the curse, and they be cursed to him; Mal. 2:2, "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already." Neither think, that because you are poor and mean in the world, have a hard and afflicted lot therein, that therefore you are certainly possessed of God's blessing and not under the curse. Nay, these things are in their own nature effects of the curse, and so they are in very deed to all who are not in Christ, but under the first covenant; and the curse may and doth pursue men in this world, as well as in the world to come; and one may be very miserable in this life and in the other too, by virtue of the curse. Neither deceive yourselves in this matter, with external privileges which you do enjoy in the fellowship of the

church. You may be set down at the table of gospel ordinances there, and yet be under the curse, Rom. 11:9, and by Virtue thereof, none of these things doing your souls good.

Wherefore, young sinners and old sinners, yet in your natural unconverted state, be convinced that ye are under the curse which has been described. Lay the matter to heart; what the law saith to them that are under it, it says to you; take it home then to yourselves, and believe you are under the curse.

2. Be convinced that ye are in a very miserable condition, being under the curse; Eph. 2:3, "By nature the children of wrath." Whatever your outward lot in the world is, your condition is dreadful in this respect. If you had Samson's strength, Absalom's beauty, Solomon's wit and wealth, and Methuselah's long life-time to enjoy them in, your case is miserable beyond expression, being under the curse of the broken covenant of works. The case of a devoted person, loaded with the curses of a city or country, and so put to death, was lamentable; but whosoever thou art who art under this covenant, and so under the curse, thou hast the curse of the Lord of heaven and earth upon thee, binding thee over to eternal destruction, and so art in a thousand times worse case. Your loss is unspeakable, and the whole world cannot compensate it; namely, the loss of God's favour. This burthen is insupportable; for there is that weight in this curse which will sink thee for ever, though now, perhaps, thou feelest it not. The curse binds thee to the payment of a debt to revenging justice, which thou wilt never be able to discharge. You have heard your miserable condition under the curse at large.

To sum it up in a few words; your condition is miserable here, and will be more miserable hereafter, if you die as you now live. In this world, the cloud of wrath hangs over your head, and the small rain of God's indignation is continually falling upon you; in the world to come, the full shower will fall, the floods of wrath will break out and overwhelm you. Your life hangs in doubt every day; and as you live in the most dangerous circumstances, exposed without any covert to

the arrows of wrath; so you are not ready to die. On this side death you are in the midst of your armed enemies, and on the other side death you fall into the hands of the living God. O lay to heart your misery ere it be too late.

Refuse not to admit the conviction of the great misery of your condition, because you do not feel yourself so miserable. Remember, that it is not your feeling, but God's word of truth, which can determine you happy or miserable. The judgment of God is always according to truth; and if you will carry your case to the word, you will see it a most deplorable case; view it in the glass of the holy broken law which you are under, and you must needs be affected with the horror of it; "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." You read, you hear the law, with its terrible sentence against the breakers, its fearful curses and denunciations of wrath; but do you apply them to yourselves? Nay, you entertain them as if they did not concern you, nor were directed to you; and if at any time they are like to take hold of you, and grip your consciences, you flee from them, and labour to divert your minds from such thoughts. But remember, "what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law;" and consequently it saith them to you, as if your name were expressed in what it saith. And if the law speaks to you indeed, it will have its effect on you, however you may persuade yourself it means not concerning you.

What though you do not feel your misery? Many think themselves in good case, who in very deed are in a most miserable and wretched condition, as it fared with Laodicea, Rev. 3:17. They entertain themselves with dreams of happiness, while ruin abides them; think themselves safe, while they are in the utmost hazard. Nay, there are many who are so far gone under the curse, that they are past feeling, Eph. 4:19. Neither the sinfulness nor misery of their souls gives them any distress, anxiety, or perplexity of mind. And that is a case miserable to a degree, inasmuch as it is so far a hopeless case.

But why are ye not sensible of your miserable case? Though ye feel not the weight of it upon you for the present, yea though ye have all ease and prosperity in the world, being neither under trouble of body nor mind, nor any disaster in your affairs; yet ye ought to remember, that the curse works by silent strokes, as well as by tormenting plagues, as ye have heard; yea, and that the most terrible workings of the curse are awaiting the people of the curse, on the other side death. Surely then ye have reason to believe, and be convinced, that your state is most miserable, though for the present you feel not the weight of it; for the curse, working like a moth, insensibly, makes a ruinous condition, in which the breaking will at length come suddenly at an instant; and they must needs be in a state of unspeakable misery, whom eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord is abiding, ready to seize them at the time appointed.

Wherefore believe the doctrine of the law, concerning the curse, and the misery of sinners under it; believe it with application to yourselves. Believe it upon the testimony of God, who is truth itself; believe it, because God has said it, though perhaps you do not feel it; so shall you come to be duly affected with it, and by that means be stirred up to a concern to be saved from it, which would be a promising step towards a recovery.

3. Be convinced, that your case is desperately sinful while you are under that covenant. While sin remains, the root of misery remains, which will spring up; the fountain abides, which will cast forth waters of bitterness; and it must and will remain in its strength while ye are under that Covenant; because, being under that covenant, ye are under the curse. Hence says the apostle, 1 Cor. 15:56, "The strength of sin is the law." While the law, as the covenant of works, then, hath power over a man, sin will have its strength in him, which he can by no means break. While ye are under that covenant, and so under the curse,

(1.) The guilt of your sin lies on you, the guilt of eternal wrath; and it cannot be removed. The curse stakes you down under that guilt, it

binds it upon you as with bands of iron and brass, that it is not possible you should ever get up your head, while the curse is on it; and the curse will be upon it as long as ye are under that covenant, Gal. 3:10. The covenant in the threatening of it said, If man sin, he shall die; and so sinning he contracted the guilt of death, he came under debt to vindictive justice. The curse of the covenant says, The sinner must die, he must pay his debt to the utmost farthing, he cannot be freed from it without full payment. This you cannot do. The justice and truth of God confirm the curse of the law on the sinner, that it cannot be balked without an imputation of dishonour on them. And since it is not possible for you to make full satisfaction, and so to exhaust the curse, no, not through the ages of eternity; it is evident, that the curse does inviolably bind the guilt of your sin on you, so that while the former remains on you, the latter is immoveable.

Now consider that ye were born sinners under this covenant, and so born under the curse of it; and that the law is most extensive, both as to parts and degrees of obedience, and so condemns everything you do, because you do nothing in the perfection which it requires. Hence your sins are innumerable, your several pieces of guilt are past reckoning, and you are every day adding to the account; but in the meantime the account never suffers any diminution. The state of a sinner under the curse is an unfathomable gulf, into which the waters are continually running, but not the least drop goes out from it again. New guilt is still added, but nothing of the old or new guilt is removed; the curse lets in more, but it lets none out; all is sealed up under the curse, from your sin in the womb, till your sin of this minute.

Ye will say, God forbid! Surely he is a merciful God. I have been troubled about my sins, and I have repented of them, and begged forgiveness, and I hope he has pardoned me; and I hope to do the same for the time to come, and he will pardon me still. ANSWER. Not to speak here of what repentance can be found in one lying under the curse of the first covenant, ye should take notice, that you

being still under the covenant of works, God deals with you in the way of that covenant, and that covenant admits of no pardon to them who are under it, Acts 13:39. For a pardon under that covenant would render the threatening and curse of it vain, and of no effect; and so fasten a blot and stain on the truth and justice of God, and would indeed quite overturn that covenant, and leave it as little regarded by God himself, as it has been by the sinner. Indeed, if you can bear the curse, so as, by your suffering what it binds on you, to exhaust it, and fully satisfy justice; then your crime is expiated, and even in the way of that covenant God and you are friends again; but that is as impossible for you, as to lift the whole fabric of heaven and earth out of its place. The truth is, nothing can procure you the pardon of one sin, but what can remove the curse; while you are under that covenant, you have no saving interest in the blood of Christ, so the curse is not taken off you thereby; and certain it is, that your repentance and begging forgiveness can never remove the curse from off you, for they can never be a full satisfaction to offended justice. And therefore, notwithstanding your pretended repenting and begging pardon, your guilt still remains; there is no pardon in the case; though your guilt is forgotten by you, it is remembered of God still, and is written before him as with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond.

(2.) Sin has a reigning power over you; and it neither is nor can be broken, you continuing under that covenant, Rom. 6:14, where the apostle plainly teaches, that they who are under the law are under the dominion of sin. Man, innocent and holy, entered into that covenant; but once turning a sinner under it, he could never turn a saint again under it. It furnished strength to man being clean to keep himself clean, but provided no laver for him once defiled, to wash himself clean again, I know that the men of that covenant do not make, all of them, an alike black appearance in their lives and conversations; some of them bear the devil's mark on their foreheads; others have it in the hollow of their hand, which, they can keep from the view of the world. But the whole of them are an unsanctified company, and under the reigning power of sin, which is

in them entire and unbroken, Rom. 3:10–12. So that I say your ease is desperately sinful as to the reigning power of sin, while under that covenant; ye neither are nor can be holy under it. And think not this strange. For,

[1.] Since you are sinners under that covenant, you must needs be dead men; for so runs the threatening; Gen. 2:17, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die." Your natural life is yet preserved, therefore your spiritual life then must be gone, Eph. 2:1. So all the men of that covenant are dead and buried in trespasses and sins. Death preys on their souls, and bears full sway there. Hence it is called "the law of sin and death," Rom, 8:3, sin and death reigning over all that are under its dominion. And therefore Christ, the head of the second covenant, was made a quickening spirit, death reigning under the first.

What though you perform religious duties under this covenant? They are all but dead works, but the carcasses of duties, without life and spirit. They have the matter of duty, but they are not done in a right manner; they are not from a right principle, nor are they directed to the right end; they are all selfish, slavish, and mercenary, and can never be acceptable to God.

[2.] Being under the curse, there is a separation betwixt God and your soul, and so the course of sanctifying influences is blocked up, Isa. 57:2. While the curse thus stands as a partition-wall of God's own making, in the course of justice, betwixt God and you, how can there be any saying communion with him? and without that how can ye be made holy? Our Lord Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, purchased the Spirit of sanctification for those that are his; plainly importing, that there was no access for the Spirit of sanctification to the unholy creature by the first covenant.

You may possibly find an enlargement of heart in duty under that covenant; but mistake it not for communion with God, there is no communion with him but by Jesus Christ the head of the second

covenant, Eph. 2:18. And for an evidence hereof, you shall observe, that whereas communion with God has a sanctifying and humbling efficacy where it is; these enlargements have no such effect, but on the contrary fill the heart with pride and self-esteem, and so render the soul more unholy, 1 John 1:6

(3.) That covenant is no channel of sanctification to the unholy creature. To a sinner it is "the ministration of death," 2 Cor. 3:7, and of "condemnation," ver. 9, a "killing letter," exacting obedience to be performed on the strength given at first, but now quite spent; but promising no new strength for duty, but laying on the curse for non-performance. It is the gospel, or covenant of grace, that is the "ministration of the Spirit," ver. 8. And for this the apostle appeals to the experience of those who have received the Spirit, Gal. 3:2, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

It is true, that under that covenant you may have been influenced to reformation of life, and prompted to the performing of duty; but all this amounts to no more in that case, but a change of life, and reaches never to a change of one's nature. Fear of punishment and hope of reward, are here the springs of all; not the love of God; and so the result of it is a form of godliness, without the power of it.

[4.] That covenant, instead of having a sanctifying influence on sinners, has an irritating power on their corruptions. The more close it comes upon their consciences, the more their lusts are provoked, as was before explained, Rom. 7:7. I may herein appeal to sinners' experience. Have ye not sometimes found sleeping corruptions awakened by the law's forbidding of them? and weak lusts gather strength by the very sight of the hedge which the law has set betwixt you and them? And have not your hearts, on some particular occasions, finding how their inclinations were crossed by its commands, awed and frightened by its threatenings and curses, even risen against it secretly, and against the God that made it?—Thus under that covenant your case is desperately sinful.

4. Be convinced, that while ye remain under that covenant, ye remain under the curse; and there is no deliverance from the curse without deliverance from the covenant. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." It is vain to think one can be under that covenant, being a sinner, and not be under the curse; for the curse will be found to take place in the dominion of the law, wherever sin is found. So as long as ye live under the broken covenant of works, so long ye live under the curse; and if ye die under that covenant, ye die under the curse. When innocent Adam entered into that covenant, it did not curse, nor could it curse him or his, while as yet there was no command of it broken; but when once sin entered, the curse immediately took place, and seized on him and all his posterity; and under it they lie, as long as they remain under that covenant, and are not delivered from that original contract.

This is a weighty consideration, and may pierce the hearts of all who have not got their discharge as to that covenant, who have not got that hand-writing that is so much against them, blotted out with respect to them. Whatever ye do, whatever ye suffer, whatever change be in your conversation, or in the temper and disposition of your spirits, while ye remain under that covenant, the yoke of the curse remains still wreathed about your necks. And, to fasten this conviction the more on you, consider,

(1.) Ye being under that covenant were born under the curse, "by nature the children of wrath," Eph. 2:3. Adam's sin laid all men under it; and as soon as we are Adam's children we are cursed children, bound over to death by the sentence of the broken law or covenant, Rom. 5:18. Now, there are only two ways how that curse may be supposed to be removed and taken off you, viz., either by your own bearing it for yourselves so as to bear it off, or by another's bearing it for you imputed to you; for that it should be taken off you in a way of mere mercy, without any bearing it to the satisfaction of justice, is inconsistent with God's justice, truth, and covenant, as you heard before. But the former way, it cannot be that ye are or shall be delivered from it; for whatever ye have suffered in your souls, bodies,

or any other way, or whatever ye may suffer is still but the sufferings of a finite being, which can never compensate the wrong done to the honour of an infinite God by your sin; and therefore the sufferings of the damned have no end. The breach made by the creature's sin in the honour of an infinite God, is a gulf which swallows up all sufferings of the creature, but can never be thereby filled up. As to the latter, it cannot take place, but in the way of the second covenant, which is inconsistent with your continuing under this covenant. The imputation of Christ's satisfaction, and the delivery from the curse thereby are consequents of the soul's union with Christ, Rom. 8:1, which is by one's entering into the covenant of grace, whereby they part with the covenant of works which they naturally cleave to, Rom. 7:4. Therefore it necessarily follows, that while ye remain under the covenant of works, ye remain under the curse, the curse laid on for Adam's sin.

(2.) Suppose that curse were removed, and no curse were lying on you now for the first breach of the covenant; yet ye cannot refuse but that however watchfully you have behaved yourselves, endeavouring to keep the law you have been guilty of some sins in your own persons; you have, sometimes at least, thought evil, spoken evil, and done evil; some duties ye have omitted, some crimes against God and his law ye have committed. Now these lay you under the curse, since you are under the covenant which curseth the sinner; for it is written "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." It is not enough to do some things of the law; if all be not done, one is by this covenant staked down under the curse.

(3.) When you have done the best that possibly you can do to keep the commandments, ye still fall under the curse, while ye are under this covenant, because whatever good ye do, ye do it not; for perfection in every point of duty is required under it, Luke 10:27, and not only so, (for that is required under the covenant of grace too, Matth. 5 ult.,) but it is required under pain of the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things," &c.

So that if you should omit no duty, external or internal, consistent with one's continuing under that covenant, and should perform them with all the vigour, zeal, and carefulness ye are capable of; yet even for these the covenant would thunder out its curse against you, for that you fail in them in any the least measure or degree.

(4.) Forasmuch as the law requires all perfection in all things, and at all times; and that at no time, in any action, you attain to that perfection, but are still sinning in all your thoughts, words, and actions; therefore the law is still raining down its curse on you, and binding you over with new ties to death, for your new sins, cursing for every thing done amiss. Wherefore since you do nothing but what, one way or other, is done amiss in the eye of the law, it is impossible you should ever get your head lifted up from under the curse while you continue in that covenant.

(5.) Lastly, But put the case, though indeed it is impossible that you under this covenant could arrive at perfection, so that you should sin no more, either by omission or commission, either in the matter or in the manner of what you do; but that your obedience should be from this moment perfect in parts and degrees, and that you should obey in as great perfection as the angels do in heaven; I say that, notwithstanding, you remaining under this covenant should still remain under the curse. For it is evident that you are guilty of many sins already, and what is done by you can never be undone; and for that cause you have fallen under the curse already, and your perfect obedience for the present time and the time to come, being a debt you owe for the time wherein it is performed, can never expiate the former guilt or be reputed satisfying for the debt before contracted. Yea, suppose you had never sinned in your own persons, but had perfectly obeyed since you were capable of keeping or breaking God's law; yet being under that covenant you should still be under the curse, as being born under it, on the account of Adam's first sin, which it is plain, on the former grounds, could not be expiated by that your supposed perfect obedience.

Thus it is evident, that while ye remain under this covenant ye remain under the curse.

Say not, that, at this rate, all must be under the curse, since in many things we offend all; for the state of sinners under the two covenants is vastly different. By the first covenant, they that are under it are liable to the curse in case of sinning; but by the second covenant, they that are under it are not liable thereto in any case, but freed from it, Gal. 3:13. Because Christ's bearing it for them is imputed to them. Sin under the former reigns unto death, but under the latter "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life," Rom. 5 ult. In justification the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, made for all the sins of all his people, past, present, and to come, are imputed unto believers, and so they are discharged at once of their whole debt to revenging justice, and they can never more fall under the curse, nor be liable to it for their sins, more than a man can be liable in payment of a debt already paid and discharged. To pretend that believers may be liable to the curse, and yet not fall under the curse upon their sinning is vain; for if by the law, or threatening, they be liable to the curse in case of transgression; the curse must needs seize them, when they do actually transgress, in virtue of the truth of God in the threatening; for hath he said it, and shall it not come to pass? Neither is it profitable, in the case of the curse, to distinguish betwixt gross sins, and other sins; for the cursing law makes no such distinction in that point, but where it curseth for one sin, it curses for all, of what kind soever; Gal. 3:10, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things," &c.

So this misery is peculiar to those under the covenant of works.

5. Be convinced, that there is no salvation for you under that covenant. You must either quit it, and escape out of its dominion, or perish under it. To be saved, and yet be under the curse is inconsistent. But while ye are under that covenant, ye are under the curse; and therefore while ye are under it, ye cannot be saved, but

must needs perish. Therefore, I say, if ye abide in that broken ship, ye are ruined, ye will be swallowed up, ye will never see the shore of Immanuel's land. O be convinced of this, that you may despair of ever entering into heaven by that door; that your hopes and expectations by it may die, being plucked up by the roots; and you may look out for another door of hope. Consider,

(1.) That it was the door opened to innocent Adam indeed, but by one wrong step missing it, he could never make his entry by it any more, but was fain to betake himself to another door, even Jesus Christ in the free promise, Gen. 3:15. How then can ye expect to enter by it? he found that being once a sinner, he was able no longer to live under the dominion of the law, and therefore did betake himself to the dominion of free grace; his garment of fig-leaves which he made for himself, he parted with as insufficient, and took on the coat of skins (of sacrifices) which the Lord God made unto him. Ye must go and do likewise, or ye perish.

(2.) Sinners being shut up for destruction under this covenant, the door was bolted with the bar of the curse, so that there is no escaping from death by it for them, Gal. 3:10. When Samson was shut up for death in Gaza, he took the doors of the gate of the city, bar and all, upon his shoulders, and so got out of the city to the mountains, Judg. 15. But this bar of the curse is too heavy for the shoulders of angels, they are not able to bear it, far less are ye able. So there is no access to the hill of God that way for you. That gate is like unto what we read of; Ezek. 44:2, 3, "No man shall enter in by it: it is for the prince," the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Samson, who, when all his elect were shut up for death in the prison of the law covenant, barred with the bar of the curse, put himself in their room; and in his might lifted up the gate, bar and all, and carried them away, and so made a way for them to escape.

Take heed you deceive not yourselves in this matter, with the promises of life you apprehend to be made to your keeping of the commandments of God. It is true, there is a promise of life to

obedience in the covenant of works; but then it is only to perfect obedience. The curse is denounced against the least failure, Luke 10:27, 28, Gal. 3:10. Now, it is evident you can have no hope by this promise, since you cannot perform the obedience to which it is made. And there is no promise of life in that covenant on any lower condition. Sincere obedience will not entitle you to that promise, though ye could perform it, as ye really cannot; the will cannot be accepted here for the deed; for the law denounces the curse on every one under it for the least imperfection; and so staves them off from any benefit by its promise. The promise of life and salvation is in the covenant of grace freely made for the sake of Christ, to be received by faith in him; and even in it godliness hath the promise of life annexed to it, but is made not to the work, but to the worker being in Christ; and not for his work's sake, but for Christ's sake. But you being under the covenant of works, have no saying interest in the promises of the covenant of grace, and so have no part nor lot in the life and salvation there promised. And besides, all your obedience is servile and mercenary, unacceptable to God; so far from having the promise of life, that on the contrary such workers are expressly excluded from it; Gal. 4:30, "Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman."

Thus ye see there is no salvation for you under the broken covenant of works.

6. Be convinced, that there is an absolute necessity of being set free from the covenant of works, of being brought into the covenant of grace, and savingly interested in the Lord Jesus, the second Adam. If you be not set free from the first covenant, ye are ruined. For as many as are under the bond of it are under the curse. To put the question to yourselves, Whether you had best quit that covenant, or not? is in effect, Whether you had best remain under the curse, or endeavour to escape? This is a point that in reason can admit no more dispute, than whether a drowning man should be willing to be

preserved from perishing? or whether a man should cast burning coals out of his bosom?

If you be not brought into the covenant of grace, interested in Jesus Christ by faith, you can never be freed from the covenant of works. No man shall ever get up that bond, but on his instructing full payment both of the principal sum and of the penalty; that is, both of perfect obedience to the law, and satisfaction to justice for the breach made by sin. This you shall never be able to instruct, do or suffer what you will, unless you embrace and unite with Christ by faith in the second covenant, by means of which his obedience and satisfaction shall be counted up on your score.

Here then is the one thing needful; unless you take this course, ye shall never see life or salvation, but perish for ever.

7. Lastly, Be convinced, that your help must come wholly from the Lord Jesus Christ, and that you can contribute nothing by your own working for your own relief; Hos. 13:9, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." For being under that covenant, ye are under the curse; and what can one do for himself, acceptable to God, who is under these bonds of death? It is true, sinners will not, come to Christ, till they be deeply sensible of their sin and misery; but to require such and such qualifications in sinners before they may come to Christ, is to lay a snare before them, keeping them back from Christ, and teaching them to lay some weight upon their qualifications while they are yet under the curse.

In a special manner to tell sinners that they must truly repent of their sins before they may believe in Christ, or before they may apprehend the remission of sin in the promise, is in effect to say, that they must be holy, and repent in a manner acceptable to God, while they are yet lying under his curse; for the curse is not removed but in justification. The truth is, there is a legal repentance, agreeing to the state of one under the curse, arising from a legal faith, the faith of the curse, that goes before saving faith and remission of sin; and

however necessary it is to stir up the soul to prize Christ, it cannot be acceptable to God, since the man is still under his curse. But no doing no working, no repenting of ours can please God, till once we are from under the curse, through faith in him who justifies the ungodly. And therefore, to effectuate the sinner's passing from the one covenant and its curse, into the other, and the blessing thereof, no doing, no working of ours is required, but only to receive Christ, pardon of sin, deliverance from the curse by faith, they being all offered and exhibited, in the free promise of the gospel, to the sinner under the curse. And so, the curse being removed, the partition-wall betwixt God and the sinner is taken down, and the influences of the Spirit unto sanctification, evangelical repentance, and new obedience, flow into the soul.

USE II. Of Exhortation

First, Let unbelievers, who are still under this covenant, receive these convictions, and be warned, excited, and exhorted timely to sue to be delivered from under the covenant of works, and for that end to be instated in the covenant of grace, by faith in Jesus Christ. What need is there of further motives than the text gives, in telling us, that all under this covenant are under the curse? which has been explained at large to you. Ah! is it safe to go home and sleep another night under the curse? Is it safe to venture more time under it, when you know not which moment of your time may be the last? As ye have any regard to your own souls, lay this matter to heart, and delay no longer; but haste, escape for your life. Consider, I pray you,

1. The curse is a weight which you will never be able to bear. The weight of God's revenging wrath is in it, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; on whomsoever this stone falls, it will grind him to powder.

2. It is a growing weight; as your sins grow, the curse grows; Rom. 2:5, "After thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up

unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath." The evils thou art bound over to are the greater, and the bonds are the stronger.

3. It is a weight that may be now removed from off you; 2 Cor. 6:2, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Those whom this weight has sunk down into the pit already, it can never be removed from off them; but ye are yet within the reach of mercy, the Mediator is ready to take the yoke off your jaws.

4. If the weight of the curse be not removed from off you, it will be the heavier that deliverance from it was in your power; Matth. 11:21, "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you." The men of that covenant will all feel the weight of the curse, but it will have a double weight to despisers of the gospel.

5. Lastly, It will be an eternal weight, Matth. 25:41, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." There is an eternal weight of glory for the saints in the promise; and an eternal weight of wrath for sinners in the curse, which they shall for ever lie under, and never get clear of.

Let these motives then excite and induce you to flee from the curse of the broken covenant of works, unto the covenant of grace, where life is only to be found.

Secondly, Believers in Christ, delivered from this covenant, (1.) Be thankful for your deliverance, as a deliverance from the curse. Let the warmest gratitude glow in your breasts for so great a deliverance; and let your soul, and all that is within you, be stirred up to bless your glorious Deliverer for this unspeakable blessing. (2.) Walk holily and fruitfully in good works, since the bands of death are removed, and your souls are healed. Be holy in all manner of life and conversation; adorning the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. Let the whole tenor of your lives testify that you are not under the curse, but that you inherit the blessing of eternal life, by living to

the praise and honour of Christ, who hath delivered you from the wrath to come. (3.) Turn not back to the broken covenant of works again, in legal principles, nor in legal practices. The more the temper and frame of your spirit lies that way, the more unholy will ye be; and the more your duties savour of it, the less savoury will they be unto your God. It is only by being dead to the law, that ye will live unto God.

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