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A

COMMENTARY

ON THE

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS,

DESIGNED FOR

STUDENTS OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

BY

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PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY GRIGG & ELLIOT,

NO. 9 NORTH FOURTH STREET.

1835.

**ENTERED, according to the act of Congress, in the year 1835, by CHARLES HODGE,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the District of New Jersey.**

PRINCETON: PRINTED BY JOHN BOGART.

INTRODUCTION.

Paul.

WHEN Paul and the other apostles were called to enter upon their important duties, the world was in a deplorable and yet most interesting state. Both Heathenism and Judaism were in the last stages of decay. The polytheism of the Greeks and Romans had been carried to such an extent as to shock the common sense of mankind, and to lead the more intelligent among them openly to reject and ridicule it. This scepticism had already extended itself to the mass of the people, and become almost universal. As the transition from infidelity to superstition is certain, and generally immediate, all classes of the people were disposed to confide in dreams, enchantments, and other miserable substitutes for religion. The two reigning systems of philosophy, the Stoic and Platonic, were alike insufficient to satisfy the agitated minds of men. The former sternly repressed the best natural feelings of the soul, inculcating nothing but a blind resignation to the unalterable course of things, and promising nothing beyond an unconscious existence hereafter. The latter regarded all religions as but different forms of expressing the same general truths, and represented the whole mythological system as an allegory, as incomprehensible to the common people as the pages of a book to those who cannot read. This system promised more than it could accomplish. It excited feelings which it could not satisfy, and thus contributed to produce that general ferment which existed at this period. Among the Jews, generally, the state of things was hardly much better. They had, indeed, the form of true religion, but were, in a great measure destitute of its spirit. The Pharisees were contented with the form; the Sadducees

were sceptics; the Essenes were enthusiasts and mystics. Such being the state of the world, men were led to feel the need of some surer guide than either reason or tradition, and some better foundation of confidence than either heathen philosophers or Jewish sects could afford. Hence, when the glorious gospel was revealed, thousands of hearts, in all parts of the world, were prepared by the grace of God to exclaim, This is all our desire and all our salvation.

The history of the apostle Paul shows that he was prepared to act in such a state of society. In the first place, he was born and probably educated in part at Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia; a city almost on a level with Athens and Alexandria for its literary zeal and advantages. In one respect, it is said by ancient writers to have been superior to either of them. In the other cities mentioned, the majority of students were strangers, but in Tarsus they were the inhabitants themselves.* That Paul passed the early part of his life here is probable, because the trade which he was taught, in accordance with the custom of the Jews, was one peculiarly common in Cilicia. From the hair of the goats, with which that province abounded, a rough cloth was made, which was much used in the manufacture of tents. The knowledge which the apostle manifests of the Greek authors, 1 Cor. 15: 33. Tit. 1: 12, would also lead us to suppose that he had received at least part of his education in a Grecian city. Many of his characteristics, as a writer, lead to the same conclusion. He pursues far more than any other of the sacred writers of purely Jewish education, the logical method in presenting truth. There is almost always a regular concatenation in his discourses, evincing the spontaneous exercise of a disciplined mind, even when not carrying out a previous plan. His epistles, therefore, are far more logical than ordinary letters, without the formality of regular dissertations. Another characteristic of his manner is, that in discussing any question, he always presents the ultimate principle on which the decision depends. These and similar characteristics of this apostle are commonly, and probably with justice, ascribed partly to his turn of mind and partly to his early education. We learn from the scriptures themselves, that the

* Strabo, Lib. 14, ch. 5.

Holy Spirit, in employing men as his instruments in conveying truth, did not change their mental habits; he did not make Jews write like Greeks, or force all into the same mould. Each retained his own peculiarities of style and manner, and, therefore, whatever is peculiar in each, is to be referred, not to his inspiration, but to his original character and culture. While the circumstances just referred to, render it probable that the apostle's habits of mind were in some measure influenced by his birth and early education in Tarsus, there are others (such as the general character of his style) which show that his residence there could not have been long, and that his education was not thoroughly Grecian. We learn from himself that he was principally educated at Jerusalem, being brought up, as he says, at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22: 3). This is the second circumstance in the providential preparation of the apostle for his work, which is worthy of notice. As Luther was educated in a Catholic seminary, and thoroughly instructed in the scholastic theology of which he was to be the great opposer, so the apostle Paul was initiated into all the doctrines and modes of reasoning of the Jews, with whom his principal controversy was to be carried on. The early adversaries of the gospel were all Jews. Even in the heathen cities they were so numerous, that it was through them and their proselytes that the church in such places was founded. We find, therefore, that in almost all his epistles, the apostle contends with Jewish errorists, the corrupters of the gospel by means of Jewish doctrines. Paul, the most extensively useful of all the apostles, was thus a thoroughly educated man; a man educated with a special view to the work which he was called to perform. We find, therefore, in this, as in most similar cases, that God effects his purposes by those instruments which he has, in the ordinary course of his providence, specially fitted for their accomplishment. In the third place, Paul was converted without the intervention of human instrumentality, and was taught the gospel by immediate revelation. "I certify you, brethren," he says to the Galatians, "that the gospel which was preached of me, was not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." These circumstances are important, as he was thus placed completely on a level with the other apostles. He had seen the Lord Jesus, and could, therefore, be one of

the witnesses of his resurrection; he was able to claim the authority of an original inspired teacher and messenger of God. It is obvious that he laid great stress upon this point, from the frequency with which he refers to it. He was thus furnished not only with the advantages of his early education, but with the authority and power of an apostle of Jesus Christ.

His natural character was ardent, energetic, uncompromising and severe. How his extravagance and violence were subdued by the grace of God is abundantly evident from the moderation, mildness, tenderness and conciliation manifested in all his epistles. Absorbed in the one object of glorifying Christ, he was ready to submit to any thing, and to yield any thing necessary for this purpose. He no longer insisted that others should think and act just as he did; so that they obeyed Christ, he was satisfied, and he willingly conformed to their prejudices and tolerated their errors, so far as the cause of truth and righteousness allowed. By his early education, by his miraculous conversion and inspiration, by his natural disposition, and by the abundant grace of God was this apostle fitted for his work, and sustained under his multiplied and arduous labours.

Origin and Condition of the Church at Rome.

One of the providential circumstances which most effectually contributed to the early propagation of Christianity, was the dispersion of the Jews among surrounding nations. They were widely scattered through the East, Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Greece and Italy, especially at Rome. As they were permitted, throughout the wide extent of the Roman Empire, to worship God according to the traditions of their fathers, synagogues were every where established in the midst of the heathen. The apostles, being Jews, had thus every where a ready access to the people. The synagogues furnished a convenient place for regular assemblies, without attracting the attention or exciting the suspicion of the civil authorities. In these assemblies they were sure of meeting not only Jews, but the heathen also, and precisely the class of heathen best prepared for the reception of the gospel. The infinite superiority of the pure theism of the Old Testament scriptures to any form of religion known to the ancients, could not fail to attract and convince multitudes among the pagans, wherever the Jewish worship

was established. Such persons became either proselytes or "devout," that is, worshippers of the true God. Being free from the inveterate national and religious prejudices of the Jews, and at the same time convinced of the falsehood of polytheism, they were the most susceptible of all the early hearers of the gospel. It was by converts from among this class of persons, that the churches in all the heathen cities were in a great measure founded. There is abundant evidence that the Jews were very numerous at Rome, and that the class of proselytes or devout persons among the Romans was also very large. Philo says (*Legatio in Caium*, p. 1041, ed. Frankf.) that Augustus had assigned the Jews a large district beyond the Tiber for their residence. He accounts for their being so numerous from the fact that the captives carried thither by Pompey were liberated by their masters, who found it inconvenient to have servants who adhered so strictly to a religion which forbade constant and familiar intercourse with the heathen. Dion Cassius (*Lib. 60, c. 6*) mentions that the Jews were so numerous at Rome that Claudius was at first afraid to banish them, but contented himself with forbidding their assembling together. That he afterwards, on account of the tumults which they occasioned, did banish them from the city, is mentioned by Suetonius (*Vita Claudii, c. 25*), and by Luke, *Acts 18: 2*. That the Jews on the death of Claudius returned to Rome, is evident from the fact that Suetonius and Dion Cassius speak of their being very numerous under the following reigns; and also from the contents of this epistle, especially the salutations in *ch. 16*, addressed to Jewish Christians.

That the establishment of the Jewish worship at Rome had produced considerable effect on the Romans, is clear from the statements of the heathen writers themselves. Ovid speaks of the synagogues as places of fashionable resort; Juvenal (*Satire 14*), ridicules his countrymen for becoming Jews;* and Tacitus

* *Quidam sortiti metuentem sabbata patrem,
Nil præter nubes, coeli numen adorant:
Nec distare putant humana carne suillam,
Qua pater abstinuit, mox et præputia ponunt.
Romanas autem soliti contemnere leges,
Judaicum ediscunt, et servant, ac metuunt jus,
Tradidit arcano quodcunque volumine Moses, &c.*

(Hist. Lib. 5, ch. 5*) refers to the presents sent by Roman proselytes to Jerusalem. The way was thus prepared for the early reception and rapid extension of Christianity in the imperial city. When the gospel was first introduced there, or by whom the introduction was effected, is unknown. Such was the constant intercourse between Rome and the provinces, that it is not surprising that some of the numerous converts to Christianity made in Judea, Asia Minor and Greece, should at an early period find their way to the capital. It is not impossible that many, who had enjoyed the personal ministry of Christ, and believed in his doctrines, might have removed or returned to Rome, and been the first to teach the gospel in that city. Still less improbable is it, that among the multitudes present at Jerusalem at the day of Pentecost, among whom were "strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes," there were some who carried back the knowledge of the gospel. That the introduction of Christianity occurred at an early period may be inferred not only from the probabilities just referred to, but from other circumstances. When Paul wrote this epistle, the faith of the Romans was spoken of throughout the world, which would seem to imply that the church had already been long established. Aquila and Priscilla, who left Rome on account of the decree of Claudius banishing the Jews, were probably Christians before their departure; nothing at least is said of their having been converted by the apostle. He found them at Corinth, and being of the same trade, he abode with them, and on his departure took them with him into Syria.

The tradition of some of the ancient fathers that Peter was the founder of the church at Rome is inconsistent with the statements given in the Acts of the apostles. Irenaeus (Haeres. III. 1) says, that "Matthew wrote his gospel, while Peter and Paul were in Rome preaching the gospel and founding the church there." And Eusebius (Chron. ad ann. 2 Claudii) says, "Peter having founded the church at Antioch, departed for Rome, preaching the gospel." Both these statements are incorrect. Peter did not found the church at Antioch, nor did he and Paul preach together at Rome. That Peter was not at Rome prior to Paul's visit appears from the entire silence of

* *Pessimus quisque, spretis religionibus patriis, tributa et stipes illuc congerebat, unde auctae Judaeorum res.*

this epistle on the subject; and from no mention being made of the fact in any of the letters written from Rome by Paul during his imprisonment. The tradition that Peter ever was at Rome rests on very uncertain authority. It is first mentioned by Dionysius of Corinth in the latter half of the second century, and from that time it seems to have been generally received. The account is in itself improbable, as Peter's field of labour was in the east, about Babylon; and as the statement of Dionysius is full of inaccuracies. He makes Peter and Paul the founders of the church at Corinth, and makes the same assertion regarding the church at Rome, neither of which is true. He also says that Paul and Peter suffered martyrdom at the same time at Rome, which, from the silence of Paul respecting Peter during his last imprisonment, is in the highest degree improbable.* History, therefore, has left us ignorant of the time when this church was founded, and the persons by whom the work was effected.

The condition of the congregation may be inferred from the circumstances already mentioned, and from the drift of the apostle's letter. As the Jews and proselytes were very numerous at Rome, the early converts, as might be expected, were from both these classes. The latter, however, seem greatly to have predominated, because we find no such evidence of a tendency to Judaism, as is supposed in the Epistle to the Galatians. Paul no where seems to apprehend that the church at Rome would apostatize as the Galatian Christians had already done. And in chapters 14 and 15, his exhortations imply that the Gentile party were more in danger of oppressing the Jewish, than the reverse. Paul, therefore, writes to them as Gentiles (ch. 1: 13), and claims, in virtue of his office as apostle of the Gentiles, the right to address them with all freedom and authority (15: 16). The congregation, however, was not composed exclusively of this class; many converts, originally Jews, were included in their numbers, and those belonging to the other class were more or less under the influence of Jewish opinions. The apostle, therefore, in this, as in all his other epistles addressed to congregations similarly situated, refutes those doctrines of the Jews which were inconsistent with the gospel,

* See Eichhorn's *Einleitung*, Vol. 3, p. 203, and Neander's *Geschichte der Pflanzung*, &c. p. 456.

and answers those objections, which they and those under their influence were accustomed to urge against it. These different elements of the early churches were almost always in conflict, both as to points of doctrine and discipline. The Jews insisted, to a greater or less extent, on their peculiar privileges and customs, and the Gentiles disregarded, and at times despised the scruples and prejudices of their weaker brethren. The opinions of the Jews particularly controverted in this epistle are, 1. That connexion with Abraham by natural descent and by the bond of circumcision, together with the observance of the law, is sufficient to secure the favour of God. 2. That the blessings of the Messiah's reign were to be confined to Jews and those who would consent to become proselytes. 3. That subjection to heathen magistrates was inconsistent with the dignity of the people of God, and with their duty to the Messiah as king. There are clear indications in other parts of scripture, as well as in their own writings, that the Jews placed their chief dependence upon the covenant of God with Abraham, and the peculiar rites and ordinances connected with it. Our Saviour, when speaking to the Jews, tells them, "Say not, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," (Luke 3: 8). It is clearly implied in this passage, that the Jews supposed, that to have Abraham as their father was sufficient to secure the favour of God. The Rabbins taught that God had promised Abraham that his descendants, though wicked, should be saved on account of his merit. Justin Martyr mentions this as the ground of confidence of the Jews in his day. "Your Rabbins," he says, "deceive themselves and us in supposing that the kingdom of heaven is prepared for all those who are the natural seed of Abraham, even though they be sinners and unbelievers." (*Dialogue with Trypho.*) They were accustomed to say, "Great is the virtue of circumcision; no circumcised person enters hell." And one of their standing maxims was, "All Israel hath part in eternal life."*

The second leading error of the Jews was a natural result of

* See Raymundi Martini Pugio Fidei, P. III. Disc. 3, c. 16. Pococke's *Miscellanea*, p. 172, 227. Witsii *Miscellanea*, P. II. p. 553. Michaelis *Introduction to the N. T.* vol. 3, p. 93.

the one just referred to. If salvation was secured by connexion with Abraham, then none who were not united to their great ancestor could be saved. There is no opinion of the Jews more conspicuous in the sacred writings, than that they were greatly superior to the Gentiles, that the theocracy and all its blessings belonged to them, and that others could attain even an inferior station in the kingdom of the Messiah only by becoming Jews.

The indisposition of the Jews to submit to heathen magistrates arose partly from their high ideas of their own dignity, and their contempt for other nations, partly from their erroneous opinions of the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, and partly, no doubt, from the peculiar hardships and oppressions to which they were exposed. The prevalence of this indisposition among them is proved by its being a matter of discussion whether it was even lawful to pay tribute to Caesar; by their assertion that, as Abraham's seed, they were never in bondage to any man; and by their constant tumults and rebellions, which led first to their banishment from Rome, and, finally, to the utter destruction of their city. The circumstances of the church at Rome, composed of both Jewish and Gentile converts; surrounded by Jews who still insisted on the necessity of circumcision, of legal obedience, and of connexion with the family of Abraham in order to salvation; and disposed on many points to differ among themselves, sufficiently account for the character of this epistle.

Time and place of its composition.

There are no sufficient data for fixing accurately and certainly the chronology of the life and writings of the apostle Paul. It is, therefore, in most cases, only by a comparison of various circumstances that an approximation to the date of the principal events of his life can be made. With regard to this epistle, it is plain, from its contents, that it was written just as Paul was about to set out on his last journey to Jerusalem. In the 15th chapter he says, that the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia had made a collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem, and that he was on the eve of his departure for that city (v. 25). This same journey is mentioned in Acts 20, and occurred most probably in the spring (see Acts 20: 16) of the year 58 or 59.

This date best suits the account of his long imprisonment, first at Cesarea and then at Rome, of four years, and his probable liberation in 62 or 63. His subsequent labours and second imprisonment would fill up the intervening period of two or three years to the date of his martyrdom, towards the close of the reign of Nero. That this epistle was written from Corinth appears from the special recommendation of Phebe, a deaconess of the neighbouring church, who was probably the bearer of the letter (ch. 16: 1); from the salutations of Erastus and Gaius, both residents of Corinth, to the Romans (ch. 16: 23); compare 2 Tim. 4: 20, and 1 Cor. 1: 14; and from the account given in Acts 20: 2, 3, of Paul's journey through Macedonia into Greece, before his departure for Jerusalem, for the purpose of carrying the contributions of the churches for the poor in that city.

Authenticity of the Epistle.

That this epistle was written by the apostle Paul, admits of no reasonable doubt. 1. It, in the first place, purports to be his. It bears his signature, and speaks throughout in his name. 2. It has uniformly been recognised as his. From the apostolic age to the present time, it has been referred to and quoted by a regular series of authors, and recognised as of divine authority in all the churches. It would be requisite, in order to disprove its authenticity, to account satisfactorily for these facts, on the supposition of the epistle being spurious. The passages in the early writers, in which this epistle is alluded to or cited, are very numerous, and may be seen in Lardner's *Credibility*, Vol. II. 3. The internal evidence is no less decisive in its favour. (a) In the first place, it is evidently the production of a Jew, familiar with the Hebrew text and the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, because the language and style are such as no one, not thus circumstanced, could adopt; and because the whole letter evinces such an intimate acquaintance with Jewish opinions and prejudices. (b) It agrees perfectly in style and manner with the other epistles of this apostle. (c) It is, in the truth and importance of its doctrines and in the elevation and purity of its sentiments, immeasurably superior to any uninspired production of the age in which it appeared. A comparison of the genuine apostolic writings with the spurious productions of the

first and second centuries, affords one of the strongest collateral evidences of the authenticity and inspiration of the former. (d) The incidental or undesigned coincidences, as to matters of fact, between this epistle and other parts of the New Testament, are such as to afford the clearest evidence of its having proceeded from the pen of the apostle. Compare Rom. 15: 25—31, with Acts 20: 2, 3. 24: 17. 1 Cor. 16: 1—4. 2 Cor. 8: 1—4. 9: 2. Rom. 16: 21—23 with Acts 20: 4. Rom. 16: 3, et seqq. with Acts 18: 2, 18—26. 1 Cor. 16: 19, &c. (see Paley's *Horae Paulinae*). 4. Besides these positive proofs, there is the important negative consideration, that there are no grounds for questioning its authenticity. There are no discrepancies between this and other sacred writings; no counter testimony among the early fathers; no historical or critical difficulties which must be solved before it can be recognised as the work of Paul. There is, therefore, no book in the bible, and there is no ancient book in the world, of which the authenticity is more certain than that of this epistle.

Analysis of the Epistle.

The epistle consists of three parts. The first which includes the first eight chapters, is occupied in the discussion of the doctrine of justification and its consequences. The second, embracing chapters 9, 10, 11, treats of the calling of the Gentiles, the rejection and future conversion of the Jews. The third consists of practical exhortations, and salutations to the Christians at Rome.

THE FIRST PART the apostle commences by saluting the Roman Christians, commending them for their faith, and expressing his desire to see them, and his readiness to preach the gospel at Rome. This readiness was founded on the conviction that the gospel revealed the only method by which men can be saved, viz. by faith in Jesus Christ, and this method is equally applicable to all mankind, Gentiles as well as Jews, ch. 1: 1—17. Paul thus introduces the two leading topics of the epistle.

In order to establish his doctrine respecting justification, he first proves that the Gentiles cannot be justified by their own works, ch. 1: 18—39; and then establishes the same position in reference to the Jews, ch. 2. 3: 1—20. Having thus shown

that the method of justification by works was unavailable for sinners, he unfolds that method which is taught in the gospel, ch. 3: 21—31. The truth and excellence of this method he confirms in chs. 4th and 5th. The obvious objection to the doctrine of gratuitous acceptance, that it must lead to the indulgence of sin, is answered, and the true design and operation of the law are exhibited in chs. 6th and 7th; and the complete security of all who confide in Christ is beautifully unfolded in chapter 8.

In arguing against the Gentiles, Paul assumes the principle that God will punish sin, ch. 1: 18, and then proves that they are justly chargeable both with impiety and immorality, because, though they possessed a competent knowledge of God, they did not worship him, but turned unto idols, and gave themselves up to all kinds of iniquity, ch. 1: 19—32.

He commences his argument with the Jews by expanding the general principle of the divine justice, and especially insisting on God's impartiality by showing that he will judge all men, Jews and Gentiles, according to their works, and according to the light they severally enjoyed, ch. 2: 1—16. He shows that the Jews, when tried by these rules, are as justly and certainly exposed to condemnation as the Gentiles, ch. 2: 17—29.

The peculiar privileges of the Jews afford no ground of hope that they will escape being judged on the same principles with other men, and when thus judged, they are found to be guilty before God. All men, therefore, are, as the scriptures abundantly teach, under condemnation, and, consequently, cannot be justified by their own works, ch. 3: 1—20.

The gospel proposes the only method by which God will justify men; a method which is entirely gratuitous; the condition of which is faith; which is founded on the redemption of Christ; which reconciles the justice and mercy of God, humbles man, lays the foundation for an universal religion, and establishes the law, ch. 3: 21—31.

The truth of this doctrine is evinced from the example of Abraham, the testimony of David, the nature of the covenant made with Abraham and his seed, and from the nature of the law. He proposes the conduct of Abraham as an example and encouragement to Christians, ch. 4: 1—25.

Justification by faith in Christ secures peace with God, present joy and the assurance of eternal life, ch. 5: 1—11. The method, therefore, by which God proposes to save sinners, is analogous to that by which they were first brought under condemnation. As on account of the offence of one, sentence has passed on all men to condemnation; so on account of the righteousness of one, all are justified, ch. 5: 12—21.

The doctrine of the gratuitous justification of sinners cannot lead to the indulgence of sin, because such is the nature of union with Christ, and such the object for which he died, that all who receive the benefits of his death, experience the sanctifying influence of his life, ch. 6: 1—11. Besides, the objection in question is founded on a misapprehension of the effect and design of the law, and of the nature of sanctification. Deliverance from the bondage of the law and from a legal spirit is essential to holiness. When the Christian is delivered from this bondage, he becomes the servant of God, and is brought under an influence which effectually secures his obedience, ch. 6: 12—23.

As, therefore, a woman, in order to be married to a second husband, must first be freed from her former one, so the Christian, in order to be united to Christ and to bring forth fruit unto God, must first be freed from the law, ch. 7: 1—6.

This necessity of deliverance from the law, does not arise from the fact that the law is evil, but from the nature of the case. The law is but the authoritative declaration of duty; which cannot alter the state of the sinner's heart. Its real operation is to produce the conviction of sin (vs. 7—13), and, in the renewed mind, to excite approbation and complacency in the excellence which it exhibits, but it cannot effectually secure the destruction of sin. This can only be done by the grace of God in Jesus Christ, ch. 7: 7—25.

Those who are in Christ, therefore, are perfectly safe. They are freed from the law; they have the indwelling of the life-giving Spirit; they are the children of God; they are chosen, called and justified according to the divine purpose; and they are the objects of the unchanging love of God, ch. 8: 1—39.

THE SECOND PART of the epistle relates to the persons to whom the blessings of Christ's kingdom may properly be offered, and the purposes of God respecting the Jews. In entering upon this subject, the apostle, after assuring his kindred of his

affection, establishes the position that God has not bound himself to regard as his children all the natural descendants of Abraham, but is at perfect liberty to choose whom he will to be heirs of his kingdom. The right of God to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, he proves from the declarations of scripture and from the dispensations of his providence. He shows that this doctrine of the divine sovereignty is not inconsistent with the divine character or man's responsibility, because God simply chooses from among the undeserving whom he will as the objects of his mercy, and leaves others to the just recompense of their sins, ch. 9: 1—24.

God accordingly predicted of old that he would call the Gentiles and reject the Jews. The rejection of the Jews was on account of their unbelief, ch. 9: 25—33. 10: 1—5. The two methods of justification are then contrasted, for the purpose of showing that the legal method is impracticable, but that the method proposed in the gospel is simple and easy, and adapted to all men. It should, therefore, agreeably to the revealed purpose of God, be preached to all men, ch. 10: 6—21.

The rejection of the Jews is not total; many of that generation were brought into the church, who were of the election of grace, ch. 11: 1—10. Neither is this rejection final. There is to be a future and general conversion of the Jews to Christ, and thus all Israel shall be saved, ch. 11: 11—36.

THE THIRD or practical part of the epistle, consists of directions, first, as to the general duties of Christians in their various relations to God, ch. 12; secondly, as to their political or civil duties, ch. 13; and, thirdly, as to their ecclesiastical duties, or those duties which they owe to each other as members of the church, ch. 14. 15: 1—13.

The epistle concludes with some account of Paul's labours and purposes, ch. 15: 14—33, and with the usual salutations, ch. 16.

COMMENTARY ON THE RÓMANS.

CHAPTER I.

Contents.

THIS chapter consists of two parts. The first extends to the close of v. 17, and contains the general introduction to the epistle. The second commences with v. 18, and extends to the close of the chapter : it contains the argument of the apostle to prove that the declaration contained in vs. 16, 17, that justification can only be obtained by faith, is true with regard to the heathen.

CHAP. 1: 1—17.

Analysis.

THIS section consists of two parts. The first, from v. 1 to 7 inclusive, is a salutatory address; the second, from v. 8 to 17, is the introduction to the epistle. Paul commences by announcing himself as a divinely commissioned teacher, set apart to the preaching of the gospel, v. 1. Of this gospel, he says, 1. That it was promised, and of course partially exhibited in the Old Testament, v. 2. 2. That its great subject was Jesus Christ, v. 3. Of Christ he says, that he was, as to his human nature, the Son of David; but as to his divine nature, the Son of God, vs. 3, 4. From this divine person he had received his office as an apostle. The object of this office was to bring men to believe the gospel; and it contemplated all nations as the field of its labour, v. 5. Of course the Romans were included, v. 6. To the Roman Christians, therefore, he wishes grace and peace, v. 7. Thus far the salutation.

Having shown in what character, and by what right he addressed them, the apostle introduces the subject of his letter by

expressing to them his respect and affection. He thanks God not only that they believed, but that their faith was universally known and talked of, v. 9. As an evidence of his concern for them, he mentions, 1. That he prayed for them constantly, v. 9. 2. That he longed to see them, vs. 10, 11. 3. That this wish to see them arose from a desire to do them good, and to reap some fruit of his ministry among them, as well as among other Gentiles, vs. 12, 13. Because he was under obligation to preach to all men, wise and unwise, he was therefore ready to preach even at Rome, vs. 14, 15. This readiness to preach arose from the high estimate he entertained of the gospel. And his reverence for the gospel was founded not on its excellent system of morals merely, but on its efficacy in saving all who believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, v. 16. This efficacy of the gospel arises from its teaching the true method of justification, that is, the method of justification by faith, v. 17. It will be perceived how naturally and skilfully the apostle introduces the two great subjects of the epistle—the method of salvation, and the persons to whom it may properly be offered.

Commentary.

(1) *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.* *Paul.* Jewish, as other oriental names were generally significant. Thus *Saul* means *the demanded, or asked for.* These names were very frequently changed, on the occurrence of any remarkable event in the life of those who bore them; as in the case of Abraham and Jacob, Gen. 17: 5. 32: 28. This was especially the case when the individual was advanced to some new office or dignity, Gen. 41: 45. Dan. 1: 6, 7. Hence a new name is sometimes equivalent to a new dignity, Apoc. 3: 17. As Paul seems to have received this name shortly after he entered on his duties as an apostle, it is often supposed, and not improbably, that it was on account of this call that his name was changed. Thus Simon, when chosen to be an apostle, was called Cephas or Peter, John 1: 42. Matt. 10: 2. Since, however, it was very common for those Jews who associated much with foreigners to have two names, one Jewish and the other Greek or Roman; sometimes entirely distinct, as Hillel and Pollio; sometimes nearly related, as Silas and Silvanus, it is perhaps more proba-

ble that the apostle was called Saul among the Jews, and Paul among the heathen. As he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and all his epistles, except that to the Hebrews, were addressed to churches founded among the heathen, it is not wonderful that he constantly called himself Paul instead of Saul. He styles himself *a servant of Jesus Christ*. This term is often used to express the relation in which, under the New Testament, the apostles stood to Christ, as in Gal. 1: 10. Phil. 1: 1. &c., as in the Old Testament the phrase *servant of God* expresses the relation in which any one employed in his special service stood to God, Jos. 24: 29. Numb. 12: 7. Judges 2: 8, &c. &c. It is therefore a general official designation.

Called an apostle. The word, rendered *called*, means also *chosen, appointed*, see v. 6 and 7 of this chapter. 1 Cor. 1: 1 and 24. Rom. 8: 28. compare Isaiah 48: 2. "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel my called," i. e. *my chosen*. 51: 2. 42: 6. In the epistles of the New Testament this word is rarely if ever used in reference to one externally called or invited to any office or blessing, but uniformly expresses the idea of an effectual calling, or of a selection and appointment. Paul begins many of his epistles by claiming to be thus divinely commissioned as an apostle, because his appointment was different from that of the other apostles, and its validity had frequently been called in question.

The term *apostle* or *messenger*, with few exceptions, is applied exclusively to those thirteen individuals appointed by Jesus Christ to deliver to men the message of salvation, to authenticate that message by signs and wonders, Heb. 3: 4, and especially by their testimony as eye witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, Acts 1: 22. 2: 32. 3: 15. 1 Cor. 15: 15; and to organize the Christian church by the appointment of officers and the general ordering of its affairs. It was therefore necessary that an apostle should have seen Christ after he arose from the dead, 1 Cor. 9: 1.

Separated unto the gospel of God. The word rendered *separated* expresses the idea both of selection and appointment, Levit. 20: 24, 26. Acts 13: 2. Gal. 1: 15. Paul was chosen and set apart to preach the gospel of God, that is, the gospel of which God is the author.

(2) *Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the*

holy scriptures. It was peculiarly pertinent to the apostle's object to state, that the gospel which he taught was not a new doctrine, much less inconsistent with writings which his readers knew to be of divine authority. This idea he therefore frequently repeats in reference to the method of salvation, ch. 3: 21. 10: 11, &c.; the rejection of the Jews, ch. 9: 27, 33. 10: 20, 21; and the calling of the Gentiles, ch. 9: 25. 10: 19, &c. see Luke 24: 44. John 12: 16. Acts 10: 43.

(3, 4) *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.* This verse is to be connected with the last clause of the first, and states the grand subject of that gospel which Paul was appointed to preach. That subject which includes all others, is the Son of God. Having mentioned the name, Paul immediately declares the nature of this exalted personage. The passage which follows is therefore peculiarly interesting, as giving a clear exhibition of the apostle's view of the character of Christ, and the import of the phrase *Son of God*.

There are three leading interpretations of this passage. 1. According to the first, the meaning is, 'Jesus Christ was, as to his human nature, the Son of David; but he was clearly demonstrated to be, as to his divine nature, the Son of God, by the resurrection from the dead.' 2. According to the second, the passage means, 'Christ was, in his state of humiliation, the Son of David, but was constituted the Son of God in his state of exaltation, by the resurrection from the dead; or, after his resurrection.' 3. According to the third, 'Christ was the Son of David, as to his human nature, but was declared to be the Son of God, *agreeably to the scriptures*, by the resurrection from the dead.'

The first of these interpretations is recommended by the following considerations. 1. The sense which it assigns to the several clauses may be justified by usage, and is required by the context. This will appear from the examination of each, as they occur. *Which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.* *Was made*, i. e. was born, see the same sense of the word here used, Gal. 4: 4. John 8: 41. 1 Peter 3: 6. The phrase *according to the flesh*, may, considered by itself, be very variously explained. As the word *flesh*, apart from its literal and obvious meaning, is very frequently used for *men*, as in the phrases *all flesh, no flesh, &c.*;

so it is used for human nature, and commonly, when employed in reference to men, for the nature of man, considered in itself, as apart from the Spirit of God, and therefore, with the associated ideas of weakness and corruption. Hence, in the phrases "to be born of the flesh," John 3: 6; "to be in the flesh," Rom. 8: 7; "to live after the flesh," Rom. 8: 17; "the works of the flesh," Gal. 5: 17; and in others of the same kind, the word expresses the idea of human nature considered as corrupt. But these accessory ideas are of course excluded, when the word is used in reference to Christ, as in the phrases "has come in the flesh," 1 John 4: 2; "was manifest in the flesh," 1 Tim. 3: 16; "became flesh," John 1: 14, &c. In all these cases, it stands for human nature, as such, not merely for the body or visible part of man, nor for his external condition or circumstances, but for all that Christ, who was made like unto his brethren, yet without sin, had in common with other men. So in this passage, and the parallel one, ch. 9: 5, *as to the flesh*, means *in as far as he was a man, or as to his human nature*. This interpretation is therefore according to usage, and the natural sense of the word. It is secondly required by the context. In what sense was Christ the son of David, or descended from the family of David, but as he was a man, or as to his human nature? Thirdly, the antithesis requires this interpretation, *as to the one nature* he was the Son of David; *as to the other* the Son of God. And fourthly, the passage in ch. 9: 5, in which it is said, that Christ was, *as to the flesh*, as a man, descended from the Israelites, confirms this interpretation. *And declared to be the Son of God with power*. That the word rendered *declared* has, in this case, that meaning, may be argued, 1. From its etymology. It comes from a word signifying a *limit* or *boundary*, and literally means *to set limits to, to define*, and such, in usage, is its frequent signification. *To define* is nearly related both to *appointing*, or to *naming, declaring, exhibiting a person or thing in its true nature*. In the New Testament, indeed the word, as in common Greek, is used generally to express the former idea, viz. that of constituting, or appointing; but the sense which our version gives it is in many cases involved in the other, Acts 10: 42. 17: 31. 2. The Greek commentators, Chrysostom and Theodoret, both so explain the word. So does the Syriac version. 3. This explanation

supposes the word to be used in a popular and general sense, but does not assign to it a new meaning. It signifies, says Morus, in common life, *I confirm, I cause it to be certain*. So that the expression of the apostle means, "it is confirmed or rendered certain that Jesus is the Son of God." 3. Reference may be made to that familiar biblical usage, according to which words are used declaratively. Thus, to make guilty, is to pronounce to be guilty; to make just, is to pronounce to be just; to make unclean, is to declare to be unclean. Hence, admitting that the words literally mean, 'made the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead,' they may, with the strictest regard to usage, be interpreted, *exhibited as made, declared to be*.* 4. The *necessity of the place* requires this interpretation; because it is not true that Christ was made the Son of God by his resurrection, since he was such before that event. 5. The passage, unless thus explained, is inconsistent with other declarations of the sacred writers, Acts 1: 22, &c., which speak of Christ's resurrection as the evidence of what he was, but not as making him either Son or King.

The words *with power* may either be connected adjectively with the preceding phrase, and the meaning be, 'the powerful Son of God;' or, which is preferable, adverbially with the word *declared*, 'he was powerfully, i. e. clearly declared to be the Son of God.' As when the sun shines out in his power, he is seen and felt in all his glory, so Christ, when he arose from the dead was recognized at once as the Son of God.

According to the spirit of holiness. That these words can properly be interpreted of the divine nature of Christ, may be argued, 1. Because the term *spirit* is obviously applicable to the nature of God, and the word *holiness*, which here qualifies it adjectively, expresses every thing in God, which is the foundation of reverence. It therefore exalts the idea expressed by *spirit*. 'According to that spiritual essence in Christ, which is worthy of the highest reverence.' 2. The divine

* The great majority of commentators, however various their views of the other parts of this passage, and of its general meaning, agree in explaining ὁμολογῶντος *declared, exhibited*. Besides the older commentators, see KOPPE, who translates *Declaratus per resurrectionem filius Dei*. FLATT, *Für Gottes Sohn, kräftig erklärt wurde*. "As Son of God, was powerfully declared." THOLUCK, *Ist nun offenbar worden als Gottes Sohn*. "Is now manifested as the Son of God."

nature in Christ is elsewhere called Spirit, Heb. 9: 14, "If the blood of bulls and of goats, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, with an eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot unto God." That is, 'if the blood of animals was of any avail, how much more efficacious must be the sacrifice of Christ, who was possessed of a divine nature.' In our version this passage is rendered *through*, instead of *with* an eternal Spirit; but this does not so well suit the context, nor give so good a sense. The same preposition is often rendered *with*, Rom. 2: 27. "with the letter," "with circumcision," i. e. having these things, see Wahl's Clavis. In 1 Tim. 3: 16, "God was manifest in the flesh; justified in the Spirit," the meaning probably is, the fact that God was incarnate was proved, and his claims vindicated by the divine nature, which exhibited its power and glory in so many ways, in the words and works of Christ. In 1 Peter 3: 18, Christ is said to have been put to death *as to the flesh*, but to have remained alive *as to the Spirit*, by which Spirit he preached to the spirits in prison. If this preaching refers to the times before the flood, then does *Spirit* here also mean the divine nature of Christ. 3. The antithesis obviously demands this interpretation—*as to the flesh*, Christ was the Son of David, *as to the Spirit*, the Son of God: if the flesh means his human, the Spirit must mean his divine nature. 4. It is confirmed by a comparison with ch. 9: 5. there the two natures of Christ are also brought into view and contrasted; as to the flesh he was an Israelite, but as to his higher nature he is God over all and blessed forever. So the latter clause of that passage answers the latter clause of this; to be the Son of God, is equivalent with being God over all.

By the resurrection from the dead. That is, the resurrection of Christ was the great decisive evidence that he was the Son of God; it was the public acknowledgement of God of the validity of all the claims which Christ had made. Hence the apostles were appointed as witnesses of that fact, Acts 1: 22. see on v. 1. This, of course, does not at all imply that the resurrection of Christ in itself was any proof that he was the Son of God, any further than it was a proof that he was all that he had claimed to be, and as, in its attending circumstances, it was a display of his divine power. He had power to lay down his

life, and he had power to take it again. This clause is sometimes rendered “*after* the resurrection from the dead.” The preposition used in the Greek admits of either rendering; but the former is best suited to the context, and more in accordance with the manner in which Paul speaks elsewhere of the resurrection. See the passages cited above.

The first argument then in favour of the interpretation of this passage which has just been given, is, that the sense which it assigns to all the clauses may be justified, and is required by the context. 2. A second argument is derived from the structure of the passage. As remarked above, when speaking of a particular clause, there is evidently an antithesis between the two clauses, as to the flesh, and as to the Spirit. In the one view, Christ is the Son of David; as to the other, the Son of God. 3. It is accordant with what is elsewhere taught of the Sonship of Christ, John 5: 17. 10: 30—33. Heb. 1: 4—8. 4. This interpretation should be adopted, because the others are pressed with serious, if not fatal objections. The second interpretation mentioned above makes the passage mean, ‘Christ was, as to his low condition, the Son of David; but was made the Son of God, as to his exalted state, by the resurrection from the dead.’ To this it may be objected, 1. That it assumes an unusual, and, in such a phrase as *son as to the flesh*, an unexampled sense of the word *flesh*. 2. To make the words *according to the spirit of holiness*, mean according to his exalted or pneumatic condition, violates all usage. No passage can be found in which the word so rendered means *exalted state*. It is difficult to see how it *can* have this sense. Reference is made to 1 Tim. 3: 16. Heb. 9: 14. 1 Peter 3: 18, in support of this interpretation. Let the reader consult these passages, and see if they bear out this exposition. 3. It affirms that Christ was made the Son of God by or after his resurrection. This is not correct, whatever sense be given to the term Son of God. Christ was the Messiah, and King before, as well as after his resurrection. 4. The resurrection is spoken of as the proof of Christ’s various glories, but not as his advancement to Sonship. The third interpretation differs from the first only by explaining the clause *according, or, as to the Spirit of holiness*, to mean, *agreeably to the scriptures*, i. e. to the declarations of the Holy Spirit. This however is liable to two objections. 1. It

is not the apostle's manner of referring to the scriptures. He generally says, 'as it is written,' 'according to the scriptures,' &c. 2. It is entirely inconsistent with the antithesis: *as to the flesh*, and *as to the Spirit* must correspond; if the former means 'as to his human nature,' the latter cannot mean 'according to the scriptures.'

The reason for dwelling at such length on this passage, is its great importance in the decision of the question, why Christ is called the Son of God? What is the import of that appellation? Does it express his dignity as Mediatorial King, or his intimate connexion with God as an object of his affection? or does it imply that he is of the same nature with God, partaker of his essence and attributes? Is the ground of its application the eternal relation between the first and second persons of the Trinity? These are important questions. The term *Son* is used in scripture to express such a variety of relations that nothing certain can be inferred from the mere force of this word. It expresses the relation of derivation, dependence, possession, likeness, intimate connexion, &c., in very various modifications. It is therefore used in a multitude of phrases foreign to the idiom of our language; as, son of five hundred years; sons of Belial, or worthlessness; son of death, of hunger, of destruction, &c.; sons of the kingdom; sons of the bride chamber; &c. &c. As, however, this is a very marked distinction kept up in the scriptures between the phrase *Son of God* in the singular, and *Sons of God* in the plural, it is evident that little light can be derived from the mere general use of the word *Son*, as to the precise import of the former of these phrases. The term *Son of God* is used in reference to Jesus Christ alone, except where, for an obvious reason, it is applied to Adam, as being produced by the immediate power of God. There is therefore a reason why Christ is called the Son of God, which applies to no other being in the universe. That this reason is not his royal dignity, appears, 1. Because the term, if expressive of mere exaltation or power, would not be so exclusively applied to Christ, but be given to other royal persons. 2. Because it is very nearly a gratuitous assumption, that kings in the Old Testament are called sons of God on account of their office. The passages referred to are the following: Ps. 2: 7, which, as it refers to Christ, can prove nothing

as to this point. Ps. 82: 6, where princes are called "sons of the Most High," which, however, may mean merely, they are highly favoured of God, treated as sons. 2 Sam. 7: 14, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son," means, as applied to Solomon, nothing more than 'I will regard and treat him as a father does a son.' Ps. 89: 27, "I will make him my first-born," i. e. 'I will treat him with peculiar favour.' It is therefore very far from being a familiar usage of the bible to call kings sons of God, on account of their exaltation or dignity; much less can it be assumed as the prominent, if not the only ground for designating Christ the Son of God.

If there is nothing in the usage of the term *Son*, or of the phrase *sons of God*, which can fix definitely the meaning of the appellation now in question, we must advert to those cases in which either the ground of the appellation is distinctly stated, or its true import explained. These cases are of course comparatively few. Christ is called Jesus in a multitude of instances, but the reason of his being so called is stated in but one or two. In like manner he is very frequently called the Son of God, but why he is so called we can learn only from the few cases just referred to. In this passage, for example, (Rom. 1: 3, 4) it seems to be definitely asserted, that Christ is the Son of God as to his divine nature; and of course the ground of his being so called, must be the relation between that nature and the eternal Father. In John 5: 17, Christ calls God his Father in such a way as to imply that he is equal with God. This is the interpretation which his hearers put upon his words, and one which Christ himself confirmed. The same is the case in John 10: 30—39, where Christ declares himself to be the Son of God in such a sense that he and the Father are one. In John 1: 14, the glory of Christ, which proved him to be God, is said to be his glory as the only begotten *Son* of the Father, compare v. 18. In Hebrews 1: 4—7, it is argued, in effect, that because Christ is called Son, he is God; higher than the angels, and worthy of their worship. These and other passages prove that Christ is called the Son of God, because he is of the same nature with the Father, and sustains to him a mysterious relation, as God, which lays the foundation for the appellation. When Christ calls himself the Son of God, he claims equality with God; and when he is so called by the

sacred writers, this equality is ascribed to him. It is not at all necessary, in order to make out the correctness of this remark, to show that, in every instance, reference is had to his divine nature. Is it necessary to prove that the appellation Son of man has uniformly reference to his human nature, in order to show that it properly implies that Christ is a man? These, and all other designations of Christ, no matter what their origin or import, are frequently used to designate his person. Hence the Son is said to give life, to judge, to be put to death, to be ignorant of the day of judgment, to be subject to the Father, &c. In all these cases no reference is had to the import of the term *Son*, or to the original ground of its application. It is merely a personal designation. In like manner, *Christ* is said to be God; to have died upon the cross; to have arisen from the dead, &c. The *Son of man* is said not to have where he may lay his head; to be in heaven, &c. The fact, therefore, that the term *Son* is often applied to designate the person of Christ, even when the immediate reference is to his human nature, cannot prove that the original ground of its application is not his relation, as God, to the Father; or that its application does not involve the assumption or ascription of equality with God.

Most of the passages, therefore, which give us any definite information on the nature of the Sonship of Christ, or of the reason of his being called the Son of God, show that the term *Son* implies a participation in the divine nature, and an ineffable relation between the first and second persons of the Trinity. Even if there were others, which assigned a different reason for his being so called, it would only prove that the import of the term, and the grounds of its application were manifold, and not that Christ was not the Son of God, as to his divine nature. The passage in Luke 1: 35, seems to assign the miraculous conception of Christ as a reason for his being called the Son of God. This may be admitted, and all that has been said as to his being a Son in a sense which involves equality with God, be still correct. Those who give this sense to Luke 1: 35, still say, that the principal reason for his being called the Son of God is his exaltation as King. The declaration of the angel to the Virgin Mary, may, however, be understood as implying not merely that the human nature of Christ was to be miracu-

lously conceived, but also that the divine Being was to come into personal union with that nature, and hence that holy thing, which should be born of her, should be called, i. e. recognized as divine.

Acts 13: 33, is often referred to as proving that Christ is called the Son of God on account of his resurrection. The passage is as follows. "God hath fulfilled the same (the promise made to the fathers) unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." On this passage it may be remarked, 1. Admitting our version of it to be correct, the inference drawn from it does not necessarily follow. If the second Psalm v. 7, means 'Thou art my Son, this day have I declared or exhibited thee as such;' then it is perfectly pertinent to the apostle's object, because he appeals to the fact of Christ's resurrection as a proof that God had recognized or exhibited him as his Son: which is precisely what is elsewhere taught when the resurrection is said to be a proof of the Sonship of the Redeemer. But, 2. Our version of Acts 13: 33, is, in all probability, incorrect. The word rendered *he hath raised up* (Jesus) *again*, means merely *he hath raised up*. Whether it refers to a raising up from the dead, or to a calling into existence, or to a certain office, depends upon the context. Acts 3: 22, "a prophet like unto me will God raise up," see Matt. 22: 24. Acts 2: 30. "Of the fruit of his loins he would raise up Christ," Acts 7: 18, &c. The insertion of the word *again*, in our translation, alters the sense, and is altogether arbitrary. The meaning probably is, 'we declare unto you glad tidings, how the promise made unto the fathers (the promise referred to in v. 23, that God would raise up a Saviour), God hath fulfilled unto us, in that he hath raised up Jesus.' There is no allusion to the resurrection. The promise referred to was not that Christ should rise from the dead, but that a Saviour should appear; and of this, the second Psalm is a clear prediction. In v. 34, Paul, having announced the glad tidings that a Saviour had come, introduces another subject, "But that he hath raised him from the dead, (as he had asserted in v. 30) he saith on this wise, &c.;" and then quotes Ps. 16th, in proof that his rising from the dead had been predicted. Hence, v. 33, and its quotation from Ps. 2d, have no reference to the resurrection,

and of course can prove nothing as to the nature of Christ's Sonship.*

(5) *By whom we have received grace and apostleship, &c.* Having in the preceding verses set forth the character of Jesus Christ, as at once the Son of David and the Son of God, Paul says it was from him, and not from any inferior source, that he has received his authority. This point he often insists upon, Gal. 1: 1. 1 Cor. 1: 1, &c. The word *grace* means favour, kindness, and is often metonymically used for any gift proceeding from kindness, especially unmerited kindness. Hence all the gifts of the Spirit are *graces*, unmerited favours. The greatest of God's gifts, after that of his Son, is the influence of the Holy Ghost; this, therefore, in the bible, and in common life, is called, by way of eminence, *grace*. The word may be so understood here, and include all those influences of the Holy Spirit by which Paul was furnished for his work. The two words *grace* and *apostleship* may however be taken together, and mean 'the grace or favour of being an apostle;' but the former explanation is to be preferred.

For obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name. Literally *unto obedience of the faith*. This expresses the design or object for which the office of apostle was conferred upon Paul. It was that all nations might be made obedient. Similar modes of expression are frequent, "Baptism unto repentance," i. e. that men might repent; "unto salvation," that they might be saved, &c. It is doubtful whether the word *faith* is to be understood here as in Gal. 1: 23, "He preacheth the faith, which he once destroyed;" and frequently elsewhere, for the object of faith, or for the exercise of belief. Either gives a good sense; according to the former, the meaning is, 'that all nations should be obedient to the gospel;' according to the latter, 'that they should yield that obedience which consists in faith.' Bengel unites the two. The former is the most common explanation, see Acts 6: 7. *Among all nations* is most naturally connected with the immediately preceding clause,

* See on this subject, besides the older theologians, such as *De Moor* in his *Commentarius Exegeticus* on *MARK's* Compend; *KNAPP's* *Theology*, translated by Mr. Woods; *KOPPE's* *Second Excursus* to his *Commentary* on *Galatians*; *PROFESSOR STUART's* *Letters* to Dr. Miller; *DR. MILLER's* *Letters* to Professor Stuart; and the *Biblical Repertory* for 1829, p. 429—456.

‘that obedience might be promoted among all nations.’ They may, however, be referred to the former clause, ‘we have received the apostleship among all nations.’ The words *for his name* are still more doubtful as to their connexion. Some join them with the middle clause, ‘for obedience of faith in his name,’ see Acts 26: 18. But this the words will hardly bear. Others connect them with the first clause, ‘apostleship in his name,’ 2 Cor. 5: 20. Others again, and more naturally, to the whole preceding clause. ‘Paul was an apostle that all nations might be obedient to the honour of Jesus Christ;’ that is, so that his name may be known.*

(6) *Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.* If the gospel contemplated all nations as the field of its operation, the Romans of course were not to be excluded. They, i. e. the persons addressed, were of the number of those who had become obedient to the faith. *The called of Jesus Christ* means those who are effectually called, not invited merely, but made actually partakers of the blessings to which they are called. The word *called* is often, therefore, as in the first verse, equivalent with *chosen*, see the passages cited on that verse. In 1 Cor. 1: 24, Christ is said to be a stumbling block to one class of men, and foolishness to another; “but to those that are called, the power of God, &c.,” where *the called* cannot mean those who receive the external call merely: but those who are effectually called. Rev. 17: 14, “those who are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful,” see, too, the frequent use of different forms of the verb signifying *to call*, Rom. 8: 30; “them he also called,” Jude 1: 1; “to the called,” 1 Peter 5: 10. 2: 9. Such a call is in fact a choice; it is a taken one from among many. Hence, to be called, is to be chosen, as just remarked. *Called of Jesus Christ* does not mean *called by Christ*; but the genitive expresses the idea of possession, ‘the called ones who belong to Christ,’ ‘Christ’s called, or chosen ones.’

(7) *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints.* As this verse contains the salutation, it is, in sense, immediately connected with the first. ‘Paul an apostle to all that be at Rome.’ All that intervenes is not properly a paren-

* *Pro nomine ergo tantumdem valet acsi dixisset, ut manifestem, qualis sit Christus.—CALVIN.*

thesis, but an accumulation of clauses, one growing out of the other, and preventing the apostle finishing the sentence with which he commenced. This is very characteristic of Paul's manner, and as is peculiarly obvious in his two epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. His teeming mind protruded its rich thoughts and glowing sentiments so rapidly, that his course was often impeded, and the original object for a time entirely lost sight of. See Ephesians 3: 1, where the sentence, with which the first verse begins, is interrupted, and is not resumed until v. 14, or, perhaps, the beginning of the next chapter.

The salutation of Paul is addressed to all the Christians who were at Rome, whom he calls *beloved of God*, and *called to be saints*. The people of God are often, both in the Old and New Testament, distinguished by the honourable appellation, *beloved of God*, Deut. 33: 12. Col. 3: 12. *Called to be saints*, means *chosen* or *made saints*; as in v. 1, *called to be an apostle*, means *chosen* or *appointed an apostle*, see 1 Cor. 1: 2. The fact that they were saints, was to be attributed to the gracious choice or call of God. The word translated *saints* properly means *separated*, and is applied in a multitude of cases in the Old Testament, both to persons and things consecrated to God. In this sense, all the Hebrews were a holy people. But in the New Testament, when used in reference to persons, it expresses their moral relation to God, in the great majority of cases. This is its meaning here. The Roman Christians were called to be not merely a people consecrated externally to God, as were the Jews, but to be morally holy, see on ch. 11: 16. *Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*. This is the common form of salutation. *Grace* is the divine favour; and *peace* is the consequence of it, and includes, as does the corresponding Hebrew word, all blessings. Compare the phrases "way of peace," "God of peace," "gospel of peace," and the like. Hence it is used constantly in salutations, "Peace be with you," i. e. may all good rest upon you. The Greek term has this extent of meaning from being used with the same latitude as the Hebrew word, which signifies, as an adjective, *complete (integer)*, and as a substantive, *completeness (integritas)*, *well-being*; and, therefore, includes all that is necessary to make one what

he would wish to be. When the favour of God is secured, all other blessings follow in its train.*

These blessings are sought from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is equally with the Father the source of these blessings, and, therefore, the object of prayer; which, under such circumstances, and for such blessings, is one of the highest acts of worship. God is called our Father, as he from whom all good ultimately comes; and Jesus Christ is called Lord, as our Ruler, under whose care and protection we are placed, and through whose ministration all good is actually bestowed.

(8) *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, &c.* From this verse to the end of the 17th, we have the general introduction to the epistle. It is distinguished by the usual characteristics of the introductory portions of the apostle's letters. 1. It is commendatory. This is the case in all his epistles, more or less, except that to the Galatians. However severe his reproofs, he never fails to begin in a conciliatory manner. Compare also the introduction to chapters 9th and 10th. 2. It is affectionate. 3. It is pious, i. e. full of grateful acknowledgements to God as the author of all the good he had to commend in them, or hope for them. 4. It is skilful; introducing, in the most natural and appropriate manner, the topics of discussion. *First indeed.* There is nothing to answer in what follows to the word *indeed*, and it is, therefore, in our version, omitted. Compare, on this clause, 1 Cor. 11: 18. 2 Cor. 12: 12, and other instances of the same kind, in which the apostle fails to carry out regularly the construction with which he commences. Before introducing any other topic, the apostle expresses his gratitude to God on their account. *My God* is the endearing form of expression which he uses, in the consciousness of his reconciliation. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," Jer. 30: 22, contains all the blessings of the covenant of grace. *My God through Jesus Christ*, as these words are often explained, thus expressing the idea that God is our God, or is reconciled to us through Jesus Christ. The latter clause may, however, be connected with the words *I give thanks*. This is the more natural construction, and is

* Nihil prius optandum, quam ut Deum propitium habeamus: quod designatur per Gratiam. Deinde, ut ab eo prosperitas et successus omnium rerum fluat, qui significatur Pacis vocabulo.—CALVIN.

recommended by a comparison with such passages as Eph. 5: 20, "Giving thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," Heb. 13: 15. John 14: 13. These passages show that we must recognize the mediation of Christ in our offerings to God.

That your faith is spoken of throughout the world. This is the ground of the apostle's thanksgiving; and of course assumes, that faith is the gift of God, something for which we ought to be thankful. The cause of the faith of the Romans, being so generally spoken of, may have been either that it was remarkably strong and decided, or that it was considered of special importance, that at Rome, the capital of the world, the gospel had been embraced.

(9) *For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit, in the gospel of his Son, &c.* That Paul was really thankful for the conversion of the Romans, he confirms by the fact that he was constantly mindful of them in his prayers; and that he did thus remember them, he calls God to witness. This appeal to God as a witness of the truth of our declarations, approaches very nearly to the nature of an oath, wanting only the imprecation of divine displeasure in the case of falsehood. It is, with Paul, not unfrequent, 2 Cor. 1: 23. Gal. 1: 20. Phil. 1: 8, &c. &c. The word rendered *I serve*, means, properly, *I worship*, or *perform religious service*, and is always elsewhere used in this sense in the New Testament. This meaning may be here retained, "whom I worship in my spirit," i. e. not merely externally, but cordially; and the clause *in the gospel of his Son* may mean either, agreeably to the gospel, or in preaching the gospel. If the latter, the idea may be, that preaching the gospel is itself a religious service; or that his devotion to this duty was evidence that he was a sincere worshipper.* The former interpretation is the simpler of the two—*according to the gospel*. The preposition rendered *in*, often expresses the rule according to which any thing is done—"according to what judgment ye judge, &c." Matt. 7: 2.

(10) *Making request if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come*

* So CALVIN, Deinde a signo probat, quomodo Deum non ficto colat, nempe ministerio suo. Erat enim amplissimum illud specimen, esse hominem Dei gloriæ deditum, &c.

unto you. Not merely the fact that he prayed, but the subject of his prayers, evinced his interest in the Roman Christians. *If by any means now at length* expresses the strength of the apostle's desire to see them, and implies that it had been, as he afterwards assures them was the case, long cherished. *I may have a prosperous journey*; this is all expressed by one word in the Greek, which means, *I may be prospered*, see 2 Cor. 16: 2. 3 John v. 2. The idea therefore is, 'that God would order things favourably to his visiting them.' *By the will of God*, not merely by the divine favour, but under the divine guidance.

(11) *For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, &c.* The desire of the apostle to visit Rome, arose from no idle curiosity, nor from a mere desire of intercourse with his fellow-christians, but from a wish to be useful. *Spiritual gifts* are gifts of which the Holy Spirit is the author, and include, not only those miraculous endowments, of which such frequent mention is made in the epistle to the Corinthians and elsewhere, but also the ordinary gifts of teaching, exhortation and prophesying, enumerated in 1 Cor. 12. Gifts of the former class were communicated by laying on of the hands of the apostles, Acts 8: 17. 19: 6, and therefore abounded in churches founded by the apostles, 1 Cor. 1: 7. Gal. 3: 5. As the church at Rome was not of this number, it has been supposed that Paul's meaning in this passage is, that he was desirous of communicating to them some of the extraordinary gifts, by which the gospel, in other places, was attended and confirmed. To this view is suited the object which he had in his mind, viz. "that they might be established." Although this idea is not to be excluded, a comparison with vs. 12, 13, shows that the apostle's meaning is more general.

(12) *That is, that I may be comforted together with you, &c.* This verse is connected with the last clause of the preceding; it does not imply that the apostle was to receive from them the same gifts that he wished to impart to them, but that he expected to be benefited by their improvement. It is designed, therefore, with singular modesty, to insinuate, that he did not imagine himself above being improved by the Roman Christians, or that the benefit would be all on one side. He hoped to derive good from those to whom he imparted good.

The word rendered *to comfort*, means *to invite, to exhort, to instruct, to console, &c.* Which of these senses is to be preferred here, is not easy to decide. Most probably the apostle intended to use the word in a wide sense, as expressing the idea that he might be excited, encouraged and comforted by his intercourse with his Christian brethren.*

(13) *Now I would not have you ignorant brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, &c.* In ch. 15: 22, 23, he mentions the same fact, and says this purpose had been long entertained; its execution was prevented by providential circumstances, or direct intimations of the divine will. In 1 Thess. 2: 18, he tells the Thessalonians that Satan had hindered his coming to them. In Acts 16: 6, 7, it is said that he "was forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." And in Rom. 15: 21, 22, he says his pressing calls to preach the gospel where it had not before been heard, had much hindered his going to Rome. His object in desiring to visit them was, *that he might have some fruit among them, as among other Gentiles.* *To have fruit*, commonly means to derive advantage from; ch. 6: 21, 22, "what fruit had ye," i. e. what advantage had ye. Many give the words this sense here, and understand the apostle as referring to personal benefits of some kind, which he wished to derive from preaching to them. But it is much more natural to understand him as referring to that fruit, which, as Calvin remarks, the apostles were sent to gather. John 15: 16, "I have chosen you that ye might go and bring forth fruit," i. e. produce great results, and that your fruit may remain.

(14) *I am debtor both to the Greeks and the Barbarians, both the wise and the unwise.* That is, 'I am officially bound to preach to all classes of men.' Those whom he calls in the first clause Greeks and Barbarians, he calls in the second, wise and unwise. As the Greeks called all foreigners barbarians, and as most other nations were uncivilized, the term barbarian was often used as equivalent with *rude, uncultivated*. Properly, however, it means *a foreigner, one of another language*, especially in reference to the Greeks: for the Romans were called, and called themselves barbarians, until the Greek

* Vide in quantam moderationem submittat pium pectus, quod non recusat a rudibus tirunculis confirmationem petere.—CALVIN.

language and literature prevailed among them: Paul uses it in its original sense in 1 Cor. 14: 11, "I shall be unto him that speaketh, a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me," i. e. we shall be as foreigners to each other, if one uses a tongue unknown to the other. It is used, as here, for those destitute of Roman or Jewish culture, Acts 28: 2, 4, and Col. 3: 11. It is said to have been first employed as a term of reproach by the Greeks in reference to the Persians after their wars with that people. See Passow's Greek Lexicon on this word.

(15) *So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.* As the apostle's obligation extended to all classes, he was prepared to preach even at Rome, where he might expect the greatest opposition and contempt. Our translation of the first clause of this verse is the same as that given by Grotius.* It may, however, more consistently with the structure of the sentence, be rendered *so, my desire is*, or, *so, I am ready*; the words translated *as much as in me is*, being a mere paraphrase for the possessive pronoun, or for the genitive case of the personal pronoun.

(16) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* We have here the theme of the whole epistle. The gospel proposes salvation on the condition of faith; and it is universally applicable to the Greek as well as the Jew. These ideas are presented more fully in the two following verses. Thus naturally does the apostle introduce the great topics of discussion, the method of salvation, and the persons to whom it may be proposed. The connexion between this and the preceding verse is obvious. The reason why he was ready to preach the gospel, even in the proud capital of the world, was that it is divinely efficacious in securing the salvation of men. It does what no other system ever did or can accomplish. The words rendered *the power of God* may be taken for *divinely efficacious*; better, however, as expressing the idea of *that through which the power of God is manifested*, Acts 8: 10. 1 Cor. 1: 18, 24.† 'The gospel

* Quod meae est potestatis id paratum est. Thus too BEZA, Quicquid in me situm est, promptum est ad vobis quoque qui Romae estis evangelizandum.

† Organon Dei vere potens et efficax ad servandum.—BEZA.

is an instrument, in the hands of God, truly powerful in saving men.' *To every one that believeth.* Emphasis must be laid upon both members of this clause. The gospel is thus efficacious *to every one*, without distinction between Jew and Gentile; and to every one *that believeth*, not who is circumcised, or who obeys the law, or who does this or that, or any other thing, but who believes, i. e. who receives and confides in Jesus Christ in all the characters, and for all the purposes in which he is presented in the gospel. It will be very clearly seen in the progress of the epistle, that Paul attributes no special efficacy to faith itself, considered as an exercise of the mind. As such, it is no more worthy of being the condition of salvation, than love, or repentance, or resignation, or any other act of obedience to the law of God. It is as the organ of reception; as the acquiescence of the soul in the method of salvation proposed in the gospel, that it is the turning point in the destiny of every human being. The grand idea of this epistle, and of the whole bible (as far as this subject is concerned), is that the ground of our justification, and the source of our sanctification, are not in ourselves; that neither human merit nor human power can have any of the glory of our salvation. To the merit of Christ we owe our acceptance with God, and to the power of the Holy Ghost, our preparation for his presence. *To the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* It would be in direct contradiction to one of the prominent objects of the apostle in writing this epistle, as well as to his explicit declarations, to make this clause teach that the gospel was specially designed or adapted for the Jews, see ch. 3: 9, 22, 29. 10: 12, &c. The meaning obviously is, 'for the Jew in the first instance, and then for the Greek.' The gospel was to be preached to all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem*, compare Acts 3: 26 and 13: 26. Paul often says 'Jews and *Greeks*' for 'Jews and Gentiles,' ch. 2: 9. 3: 9, &c., because, after the conquests of Alexander, the Greeks were the Gentiles with whom the Jews were most familiar.

(17) *For therein the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, &c.* The reason why the gospel is so efficacious in the salvation of men, i. e. in securing the pardon of their sins, and the moral renovation of their hearts and lives, is not that it reveals a perfect moral system, or that it teaches the doctrine of a future state of reward and punishment, or that it

discloses new views of the divine character. All this is true and efficacious; but the power of the gospel lies in the fact that it teaches the doctrine of justification by faith, or, in other words, it reveals *the righteousness of God by faith*. This expression is one of the most important in the epistle, and is variously explained.

The word rendered *righteousness*, has, in the scriptures, a very great extent and variety of meaning. It signifies not merely *justice* in its strict sense, but general rectitude, including all moral excellence. It is used, therefore, especially in the Old Testament, for almost every specific virtue, as truth, benevolence, mercy, &c. The examples may be seen in the Lexicons. Its common and proper meaning is, *that which makes a man just*, i. e. which fulfils and satisfies all the claims of justice or law. Hence, *a just man* is one who can stand in judgment. See the constant opposition between the *just* and the *unjust*; between those who can, and those who cannot answer the demands of law. The word, therefore, not unfrequently means the state of one who is thus just, or who has done all that is required of him. This Tholuck gives as its original meaning. See Is. 5: 23, "who take the righteousness of the righteous from him;" that is, not who take away his excellence, but its consequences; who deprive him of the benefits of his righteousness, or exclude him from the state or condition of those who are regarded as righteous. This is by many considered as the dominant meaning of the word in the New Testament. 'The state of freedom from punishment, and enjoyment of the favour of God, i. e. the condition of those who are considered righteous in his sight.' See such passages as Is. 45: 8. 51: 5, and 56: 1, where *righteousness* is connected with *salvation*, as a nearly synonymous term. Ps. 24: 5, "he shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation;" here *righteousness* is not *excellence*, but the blessings consequent on it. Hence, 'to receive righteousness' is to be justified. And so this verse may be rendered 'he shall be justified by the God of his salvation.' Prov. 21: 21, "he that followeth after righteousness and mercy, findeth life, righteousness and honour," where the word is obviously used in different senses in the two members of the verse. In this sense of the word, it is nearly equivalent with *justification*, not as the act of God, but viewed in refer-

ence to the sinner. See 2 Cor. 3: 9, where "the ministration of condemnation" is opposed to "the ministration of righteousness," i. e. justification; Rom. 9: 31, where "the law of righteousness" may mean 'the rule of justification;' Gal. 2: 21, "if righteousness (justification) *come* by the law, Christ is dead in vain;" 3: 21, "if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness (justification) should have been by the law;" 5: 5. Rom. 5: 21. Finally, when used in reference to God, it may mean *his justification*, that is, his way of justifying sinners. Thus *salvation of God* is used, Acts 28: 28, for 'his method of salvation.'

One of the greatest difficulties in understanding the epistles of Paul, especially those to the Romans and Galatians, arises from the fulness and variety of the meaning of the word here rendered *righteousness*. The difficulty is greatly enhanced to the reader of the English version, as the English term answers to a small portion only of the ideas which may be expressed by the Greek word. Hence, an interpretation which the Greek readily admits, the English will not bear. It is, therefore, often necessary to vary the translation of this word in obedience to the requirements of the context. With regard to the important phrase *righteousness of God*, in this verse, there are three interpretations which demand attention. 1. According to the first, it is to be understood of some divine attribute, the rectitude or mercy of God, see ch. 3: 5, 25. But this interpretation does not, in the first place, suit the context. It is not because the gospel contains the declaration of God's rectitude, or even of his mercy, that it is so efficacious. 2. The latter sense, that of *mercy*, the word rarely, if ever has, in such a connexion in the New Testament. 3. This interpretation is inconsistent with the force of the words *by faith*. It is the righteousness of God *by faith*, that is revealed in the gospel. The phrases righteousness of, or by faith, and of the law, are so opposed to each other as to be mutually explanatory. It is the former which is the great theme of the gospel, and which cannot possibly mean the 'mercy which is by faith.' 4. This interpretation cannot be applied to other passages where the phrase occurs; as ch. 3: 21, where this righteousness of God is declared not to be legal; ch. 10: 3, where the righteousness of the

Jews, 'as their own,' is opposed to the righteousness of God, see Phil. 3: 9.

II. According to the second view, the phrase means 'that righteousness, of which God is the author, and which is acceptable to him;' as "ways of God" are ways which he approves. In favour of this interpretation it may be urged, 1. That it gives the word *righteousness* its most common and appropriate meaning; and assigns to the genitive *of God* one of its most familiar acceptations. 2. That it is sustained by a reference to the frequently recurring expression, 'righteous before God,' or 'in his sight,' i. e. in his estimation, which shows how familiar it was to the sacred writers to qualify the righteousness which was to be desired, by designating it as such in the estimation of God. 3. This interpretation will suit most of the passages in which the phrase occurs, ch. 3: 21. 10: 3. Phil. 3: 9, &c. It suits also the opposition between 'righteousness of, or by faith,' and 'righteousness of the law, or by the works of the law.' These expressions are used in such connexion with the phrase under consideration, as to show that the word *righteousness* must mean the same thing in both cases. 'Righteousness by faith' is 'that excellence which is obtained by faith;' and 'righteousness of the law' is that which is obtained by obedience to the law. 4. It suits the contrast, Rom. 10: 3, between 'our own righteousness' and 'the righteousness of God.' It is especially recommended by a comparison with Phil. 3: 9. "Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Here it is evident "the righteousness which is of God," is that meritorious excellence which he gives, as distinguished from that which we gain by our own works. This serves to explain what Paul meant by the more concise phrase, "righteousness of God." This interpretation, which, among the older Calvinistic writers,* is altogether the most common,

* *Justitiam Dei accipio, quæ apud Dei tribunal approbetur; quemadmodum contra Hominum justitiam vocare solent, quæ hominum opinione habetur et censetur justitia, licet fumus tantum sit.*—CALVIN. BEZA'S explanation is much the same. So, too, among the moderns, even the philosophical NEANDER, "Die *δικαιοσύνη τοῦ Θεοῦ* bezeichnet hier, (he is speaking of Rom. 10: 2) ein solches Gerechtheit, welches vor Gott Geltung hat und von ihm herkommt im Gegensatz gegen ein solches, das man sich durch eigene Kräfte und Werke erwerben meint und

is perfectly suited to the context. The power of the gospel is attributed to the fact, that a justifying righteousness is therein revealed, that is, a merit which satisfies all the demands of the law, and which God offers, as the ground of the sinner's dependence, in preference to any righteousness or merit of his own.

III. According to the third interpretation, "righteousness of God" means 'God's method of justification.' This is consistent, as shown above, with the meaning of the word in the original. It may signify *justification*, or a state of favour with God, and then the method of obtaining it. This is, among modern writers, the interpretation which is most generally received, although the second seems to be again coming into vogue. This view has the great advantage of being applicable to all the places in which the phrase occurs in this epistle, except ch. 3: 5, and (perhaps) 3: 25. It suits also the opposition between the expressions 'the method of justification by faith,' and 'the method of justification by works.' But it is, on the other hand, liable to several objections. It gives the word *righteousness* a figurative and comparatively unusual meaning. It does not so well suit the opposition between 'our own righteousness,' and 'the righteousness of God;' as the former of these phrases cannot well mean '*our own* method of justification.' It is opposed also to the explanation of the apostle, furnished by the expression, 'the righteousness which is of God by faith,' Phil. 3: 9, which cannot, in that passage, mean 'God's method of justification.' On the whole, therefore, the old interpretation is the best, better suited to the usage of the words, better adapted to the context, and to the train and object of the apostle's argument, which all tends to demonstrate that the ground of our acceptance with God, is something out of ourselves: a righteousness which is of God, and not our own. The words *from faith to faith* are not to be connected with the word revealed, as though the meaning were, 'revealed

das, wenn auch Menschen durch den Schein sich täuschen lassen, vor dem Blick des heiligen, all wissenden Gottes nicht bestehen kann." "Δικαιοσύνη τοῦ Θεοῦ designates here such a righteousness as is of avail before God, and which comes from him, in opposition to that which men imagine they can gain by their own power and works, and which, even if they allow themselves to be cheated by the semblance, cannot stand before the eye of the all-holy and all-seeing God."—*Geschichte der Pflanzung der Kirche, &c.*, vol. 2, p. 537.

from faith to faith,' but with the word righteousness. It is "the righteousness of God, *which is by faith to faith,*" that is disclosed by the gospel. The most natural interpretation of these words is that which makes the repetition merely intensive—'from faith to faith,' entirely of faith, in which works have no part. See 2 Cor. 2: 16, "death to death," means very deadly, "life unto life" eminently salutary. That righteousness, then, which is acceptable before God, is that of which he is the author, and which is received by faith alone.

As it is written, The just shall live by faith. The words, *as it is written,* are the usual formula of reference to the Old Testament. In what relation the passage cited may stand to the topic in hand, whether as a prediction, or an inculcation of the same or some analogous truth, or of something which may serve as an illustration, depends entirely on the context. In the present case, Paul wishes to show the importance of faith, by a reference to a passage in Habakkuk 2: 4, in which the prophet declares that the safety of the people depended upon their believing. Those who turned a deaf ear to the threatenings and promises of God should perish, but those who believed should live. The passage, therefore, is directly in point, and shows that, as well in reference to the external theocracy of the Old Testament, as to the spiritual theocracy or kingdom of Christ, under the New Testament, the favour of God was to be secured by faith.

Agreeably to the position of the words in the original, these words may be pointed either thus, 'the just by faith, shall live,' or thus, 'the just, by faith shall live.' The former is more consistent with the immediate object of the apostle, who is speaking of a *justness by faith*. It is also the connexion and sense of the words in the Old Testament. *Shall live,* shall enjoy the favour of God, whose favour is life, and whose loving-kindness is better than life, see Rom. 5: 17. 8: 13. 10: 3, and the numerous passages in which the word *life* expresses all the benefits of the redemption of Christ.

Doctrines.

1. The apostolic office, except as to what was peculiar and extraordinary, being essentially the same with the ministerial office in general, Paul teaches, 1. That ministers are the ser-

vants of Christ, deriving their authority from him, and not from the people; 2. That their calling is to preach the gospel, to which all other avocations must be made subordinate; 3. That the object of their appointment is to bring men to the obedience of faith; 4. That their field is all nations; 5. That the design of all is to honour Christ; it is for his name, vs. 1—5.

2. The gospel is contained, in its rudiments, in the Old Testament. It is the soul of the old dispensation, v. 2.

3. Christ is the Alpha and Omega of the gospel. In stating the substance of the gospel, Paul says, 'it concerns Jesus Christ,' v. 3.

4. Christ is at once God and man; the son of David and the Son of God, vs. 3, 4.

5. Christ is called the Son of God in reference to his divine nature, and on account of the relation in which, as God, he stands to the Father. The name, therefore, is expressive of his divine character, vs. 3, 4,

6. He is the proper object of prayer, and the source of spiritual blessings, v. 7.

7. He is the mediator, through whom our prayers and thanksgiving must be presented unto God, v. 8.

8. God is the source of all spiritual good; is to be worshipped in spirit, and agreeably to the gospel; and his providence is to be recognized in reference to the most ordinary affairs of life, vs. 8—10.

9. Ministers are not a class of men exalted above the people, and independent of them for spiritual benefits, but are bound to seek, as well as to impart good, in all their intercourse with those to whom they are sent, vs. 11, 12.

10. Ministers are bound to preach the gospel to all men, rich as well as poor, wise as well as unwise; for it is equally adapted to the wants of all, vs. 14, 15.

11. The salvation of men, including the pardon of their sins, and the moral renovation of their hearts, can be effected by the gospel alone. The wisdom of men, during four thousand years previous to the advent of Christ, failed to discover any adequate means for the attainment of either of these objects; and those who, since the advent, have neglected the gospel, have been equally unsuccessful, v. 16, &c.

12. The power of the gospel lies not in its pure theism, or

perfect moral code, but in the cross, in the doctrine of justification by faith in a crucified Redeemer, v. 17, &c.

Remarks.

1. Ministers should remember that they are "separated unto the gospel," and that any occupation which, by its demands upon their attention, or from its influence on their character or feelings, interferes with their devotion to this object, is for them wrong, v. 1.

2. If Jesus Christ is the great subject of the gospel, it is evident that we cannot have right views of the one, without having correct opinions respecting the other. What think ye of Christ? cannot be a minor question. To be Christians, we must recognize him as the Messiah, or Son of David; and as divine, or the Son of God; we must be able to pray to him, to look for blessings from him, and recognize him as the mediator between God and man, vs. 1—8.

3. Christians should remember that they are *saints*; that is, persons separated from the world and consecrated to God. They therefore cannot serve themselves or the world, without a dereliction of their character. They are saints, because called and made such of God. To all such, grace and peace are secured by the mediation of Christ, and the promise of God, v. 7.

4. In presenting truth, every thing consistent with fidelity should be done to conciliate the confidence and kind feelings of those to whom it is addressed; and every thing avoided, which tends to excite prejudice against the speaker or his message. Who more faithful than Paul? Yet who more anxious to avoid offence? Who more solicitous to present the truth, not in its most irritating form, but in the manner best adapted to gain for it access to the unruffled minds of his readers? vs. 8—14.

5. As all virtues, according to the Christian system, are graces (gifts), they afford matter for thanksgiving, but never for self-commendation, v. 8.

6. The intercourse of Christians should be desired, and made to result in edification, by their mutual faith, v. 12.

7. He who rejects the doctrine of justification by faith, rejects the gospel. His whole method of salvation, and system of religion, must be different from those of the apostles, v. 17.

8. Whether we be wise or unwise, moral or immoral, in the

sight of men, orthodox or heterodox in our opinions; unless we are believers, unless we cordially receive 'the righteousness which is of God,' as the ground of acceptance, we have no part or lot in the salvation of the gospel, v. 17.

CHAP. 1: 18—32.

Analysis.

THE apostle having stated that the only righteousness available in the sight of God is that which is obtained by faith, proceeds to prove that such is the case. This proof required that he should, in the first instance, demonstrate that the righteousness which is of the law, or of works, was insufficient for the justification of a sinner. This he does, first in reference to the Gentiles, ch. 1: 18—32; and then in relation to the Jews, ch. 2:—3: 1—20. The residue of this chapter then is designed to prove that the Gentiles are justly exposed to condemnation. The apostle thus argues: God is just; his displeasure against sin (which is its punishment) is clearly revealed, v. 18. This principle is assumed by the apostle, as the foundation of his whole argument. If this be granted, it follows that all, who are chargeable with either impiety or immorality, are exposed to the wrath of God, and cannot claim his favour on the ground of their own character or conduct. That the Gentiles are justly chargeable with both impiety and immorality, he thus proves. They have ever enjoyed such a revelation of the divine character as to render them inexcusable, vs. 19, 20. Notwithstanding this opportunity of knowing God, they neither worshipped nor served him, but gave themselves up to all forms of idolatry. This is the height of all impiety, vs. 21, 23. In consequence of this desertion of God, he gave them up to the evil of their own hearts, so that they sank into all manner of debasing crimes. The evidences of this corruption of morals were so painfully obvious, that Paul merely appeals to the knowledge which his readers all possessed of the fact, vs. 24—31. These various crimes they do not commit ignorantly; they are aware of their ill-desert; and yet they not only commit them themselves, but encourage others in the same course, v. 32.

The inference from the established sinfulness of the Gentile world, Paul does not draw, until he has substantiated the same

charge against the Jews. He then says, since all are sinners before God, no flesh can be justified by the works of the law. ch. 3: 20.

Commentary.

(18) *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, &c.* The connexion of this verse with the preceding, and consequently the force of the particle *for*, will be perceived, if it is remembered that Paul had just asserted, that those only who were just by faith, could live; in other words, that no righteousness but that which is of God by faith, can avail to the justification of men. The reason is assigned in this verse; God is just. Men must be justified by faith, for the wrath of God is revealed, &c. *The wrath of God* means his disapprobation of sin and his determination to punish it. The passion which is called anger or wrath, and which is always mixed more or less with malignity in the human breast, is, of course, infinitely removed from what the word imports when used in reference to God. Yet as anger in men leads to the infliction of evil on its object, the word is, agreeably to a principle which pervades the scriptures, applied to the calm and undeviating purpose of the divine mind, which secures the connexion between sin and misery, with the same general uniformity that any other law in the physical or moral government of God operates. This wrath *is revealed from heaven*. These words are variously explained. Some very unnecessarily take the present *is revealed*, for the future *shall be revealed*, i. e. in the last day. It is no less obvious that the apostle does not mean that this wrath is now revealed in the gospel, for his object is to reason with those who knew not, or who rejected the gospel. The simplest interpretation is that which makes Paul declare that the divine wrath is clearly made known; made known *from heaven*, where God dwells, and whence he is said to look down on the children of men, and whence all manifestations of his character are said to proceed. This revelation is *from heaven*, as the lightning is, which forces itself on the most reluctant vision. Even so Paul assumes that God's punitive justice forces itself on the knowledge and conviction of every sinner. He, therefore, neither tells us how it is manifested, nor does he attempt to prove that such is the

fact. It is one of those obvious and ultimate truths, which, existing in every man's consciousness, may safely be assumed as both known and admitted. It will be seen that all Paul's reasoning on the subject of justification rests on the principle here assumed. To what purpose would it be to prove that men are sinners, unless God is determined to punish sin? If retributive justice is no part of the divine character, their sinfulness may be admitted, and yet it may be consistently maintained, that they can be justified by any work, moral or ceremonial, which God might choose to appoint. But if sin must be punished, then pardon must not only be gratuitous, as it regards the sinner, but it can only be dispensed on the ground of an adequate atonement.

Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Although the words *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness* are often used indiscriminately, they are not to be considered in this case as synonymous, because Paul distinctly proves that the Gentiles are chargeable both with impiety and immorality, in the ordinary acceptance of these terms. These two all-comprehensive classes of sins are declared to be the objects of the divine displeasure.

Who hold the truth in unrighteousness. The word *truth* is here variously explained. It is obviously inconsistent with the context to understand it of the gospel, as though the apostle meant to denounce judgment on those who opposed the gospel. The word is used with considerable latitude in the scriptures. It is often used for *true religion*, including both its doctrines, John 8: 32. Rom. 2: 20. 2 Cor. 4: 2, &c. &c., and its duties, John 3: 21. 1 John 1: 6, "who do not the truth, &c." Such is probably its meaning here. The word rendered *to hold*, in the sense of *having in possession*, is so used in 1 Cor. 7: 30. 15: 2. Luke 8: 15, &c. If this sense be adopted here, the word *truth* must be understood *objectively*, for the true doctrine; and *in unrighteousness* should be rendered *with unrighteousness*. The meaning of the clause would then be, 'who have the truth with unrighteousness,' i. e. although possessed of the truth are still unrighteous. See James 2: 1, for a precisely similar expression, "my brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, with respect of persons," i. e. do not, if believers, cherish a respect of persons. As, however, the word also means *to hold back, to hinder*, and then *to impede*; it may

be so understood here, and the clause be rendered ‘who oppose the truth by unrighteousness;’ or better, ‘who wickedly oppose the truth,’ i. e. religion. The latter interpretation is the simpler of the two, but the former is sustained, in some measure, by a comparison with v. 21, in which men are represented as knowing God, i. e. having the truth, and yet acting wickedly.

(19) *Since that which may be known of God is manifest in them, &c.* The apostle’s object being to prove that the Gentiles are justly chargeable with impiety, he commences by showing that they have not the excuse of ignorance, since all men have enjoyed a competent revelation of the divine character. This, as is his manner, he introduces naturally, by the associating idea contained in the last clause of v. 18, ‘men wickedly oppose the truth, *since* they have a sufficient knowledge of it;’ or ‘men who are wicked, still have the truth, since what may be known of God has been revealed to them.’ In either case, the connexion and argument are essentially the same. *That which may be known.* Such is the common and proper meaning of the word here used, and which suits well the context. It is, therefore, to be preferred to another rendering, which is also philologically correct, according to which, the word means *knowledge*, ‘the knowledge of God is revealed,’ &c. The words translated *in them*, may be rendered *to them*, or *among them*. The first is to be preferred, as it is more natural and more forcible. It is not an external revelation merely, of which the apostle is speaking, but of that witness of the existence and perfections of God also, which every man has in the constitution of his own nature;* and in virtue of which alone, he is competent to appreciate the manifestations of God in his works. *For God hath showed it unto them.* The knowledge in question is a revelation. It is a manifestation of God in them and to them. Such knowledge is not a conclusion arrived at by a process of reasoning, but it is seen in its own light and felt in its own power. The manifestation to which Paul specially refers, is that which is made in the external world, and for the right apprehension of which God has fashioned our nature.†

* Dei notitia recondita est in intimis mentis penetralibus.—BEZA.

† Quod dicit *Deum manifestasse*, sensus est, ideo conditum esse hominem, ut spectator sit fabricae mundi; ideo datos ei oculos, ut intuitu tam pulchrae imaginis ad auctorem ipsum feratur.—CALVIN.

(20) *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, &c.* This verse is a confirmation and illustration of the preceding. The knowledge, of which Paul speaks, relates to the invisible things of God, that is, his eternal power and Godhead. These things, Paul says, are seen, though invisible, by their manifestation in the external world. This manifestation is perpetual and universal. It is *from the creation of the world*. These words may indeed be rendered *by the creation, &c.*, but not consistently with the latter part of the verse; nor do they, when thus rendered, give so pertinent a sense. These invisible things are seen, *being understood*; that is, it is a mental vision of which Paul speaks. The eye of sense sees nothing but the external object, the mind sees mind; and mind possessed not of human power and perfections, but of eternal power and divinity. The latter word (which is not the same with that also rendered *Godhead*, Col. 2: 9) means *the divine majesty and excellence*, and, therefore, includes all the divine perfections. These perfections are manifested *by the things which are made*; so the word here used properly means, see Eph. 2: 10; but it may also mean *works* generally. ‘Being understood by his works,’ would then include the dispensations of his providence, as well as the products of his hands. The common version, however, is more natural and appropriate. *So that they are without excuse.* These words are by many frequently considered as depending on the last clause of v. 19, ‘God hath showed it unto them, so that they are without excuse.’ The former part of this verse is thus thrown into a parenthesis. The sense remains the same. God has so manifested himself in his works, as to render the impiety, and especially the idolatry of men, inexcusable. It is not necessary to maintain that this revelation is competent to supply all the knowledge which a sinner needs. It is enough that it renders men inexcusable;* and as it is that by which they are to be judged, ch. 2: 14, 15; if it be disregarded, it renders their condemnation as just, although

* Sit hæc distinctio: Demonstrationem Dei, qua gloriam suam in creaturis perspicuam facit, esse, quantum ad lucem suam, satis evidentem; quantum ad nostram caecitatem, non adeo sufficere. Caeterum non ita caeci sumus, ut ignorantiam possimus prætexere, quin perversitatis arguamur.—CALVIN.

not so severe, as the condemnation of those who disregard the clearer light of the gospel. The sentiment of this verse occurs in Acts 14: 17, "Nevertheless, he left not himself without a witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, filling our hearts with food and gladness."*

(21) *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, &c.* That men are justly chargeable with impiety, Paul proves, because they had a competent knowledge of God, but did not act agreeably to it. *When they knew*, means either having the opportunity of knowing, or actually possessing this knowledge. The latter is probably the apostle's meaning. God has revealed himself in the constitution of human nature, and in his works, to all men. This revelation is indeed greatly and generally neglected; and other, and delusive guides followed, so that the heathen are commonly ignorant of what it teaches. In like manner the bible is neglected, and those to whom it is sent, disregarding its directions, follow those who teach for doctrines the commandments of men. In both cases, however, there is knowledge presented, and a revelation made; and in both is ignorance without excuse. As there is no apology for the impiety of the heathen to be found in any unavoidable ignorance of God, their idolatry is the fruit of depravity. The apostle, therefore, says, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful. These two expressions include every act of worship. The former refers to the recognition of all the divine perfections, the latter to the acknowledgement of God as the source of all good. To regard God as possessed of all excellence, and as the giver of all good, is true piety.

Instead of thus rendering unto God the homage and gratitude which are his due, *they became vain in their imaginations; and their foolish heart was darkened.* 'They became

* That the heathen themselves recognized the works of God as a manifestation of his existence and glory, is evident from their frequent declarations to this effect. *Aristotle*, De Mundo VI., *πάση θνητῇ φύσει γινόμενος ἀθεώγητος, ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων θεωπεύεται ὁ θεός.* *Cicero*, Tusc. I. 29, Deum non vides, tamen — Deum agnoscis ex operibus ejus. *Seneca*, epistola 96, Primus est deorum cultus deos credere; deinde reddere illis majestatem suam, reddere bonitatem, sine qua nulla majestas est; scire illos esse qui praesident mundo, qui universa vi sua temperant, qui humani generis tutelam gerunt.—*WETSTEIN* and *GRÆTIUS*.

vain,' i. e. foolish, senseless, devoid of true wisdom. "In their *imagination*," or *opinions*. The word here used, often occurs in a bad sense, 2 Cor. 10: 4. Prov. 6: 18. Jer. 11: 19. And, in this case, it is the foolish and wicked opinions respecting divine things into which the heathen were sunk, that are intended.*

Their foolish heart was darkened. 'Their soul lost all right apprehensions of the divine character and perfections, and they were, hence, able to worship as gods, birds, beasts and creeping things.' *Foolish* means both *senseless* and *wicked*, see v. 31, and ch. 10: 19. The word *heart* stands here, as very frequently, for the *whole soul*. Matt. 13: 15, men "understand with the heart;" Rom. 10: 10, they 'believe with the heart;' 2 Cor. 4: 6, the heart is enlightened with knowledge; Eph. 1: 8, 'the eyes of the heart (according to the true reading) are enlightened;' and so frequently both in the Old and New Testaments. It should be remarked, that the scriptures are very far from making the broad distinction between the understanding and affections, or between the intellectual and moral faculties, which we are so apt to make. They do not speak of the soul as though it consisted of separate and independent parts, but as one. Hence, as just stated, the word *heart* is used indiscriminately for the seat of the affections, and of the purely intellectual exercises. And hence, too, the word *understanding*, or *mind*, is used for the seat of the affections, Eph. 2: 3; "desires of the mind," Col. 1: 21. Accordingly, throughout the bible, we find the ideas of wickedness and folly, of wisdom and piety intimately related. In scriptural language, a *fool* is an impious man; the *wise* are the pious; *foolishness* is sin; *understanding* is religion, and *wisdom* is true piety. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy gettings, get understanding," Prov. 4: 7. Prov. 3: 13, 35, and very often elsewhere. The vanity, therefore, of which Paul speaks, as consequent on the loss of the knowledge of God, is very far from designating merely the folly of the heathen; it expresses their whole moral state. Men cannot be *such* fools, without being wicked. In Eph. 4: 17, Paul makes the *vanity* of the heathen to include ignorance, alienation from the life of

* Alles Denken des Menschen ist nur Erscheinung seines Gemüthes, seines innern Seyns.—Тролицк.

God, hardness of heart, and devotion to sensual pleasures; compare 1 Pet. 1: 18.

(22) *Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools.* The word translated *professing*, means either simply *affirming, saying*, Acts 25: 19, or *boasting, pretending to be*. The latter is its meaning here.* ‘While making the highest pretensions to wisdom, they exhibited the greatest folly.’ The evidence and illustration of this remark follows in the next verse. That rational creatures, instead of reverencing the God who reveals himself in all his works, should worship creatures inferior to themselves, even brute beasts, and offensive reptiles, is the most humbling and melancholy evidence of the imbecility and ruin of our race. It is to be remarked, also, that the higher the advancement of the nations in refinement and philosophy, the greater, as a general rule, the degradation and folly of their systems of religion. Witness the state of opinion and practice on this subject among the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, in comparison with the simpler faith of earlier nations, or of the aborigines of America. The further men have departed from the teachings of divine revelation, however made, and the more they have relied on their own understanding, the more deplorably besotted and foolish have they become. And it matters little under what external circumstances this departure is made, the result is always the same. In the midst of all the light of modern science, and of the reflection from the word of God, which illuminates the whole atmosphere, the modern materialists of France, and pantheistical idealists of Germany, while professing themselves to be wise, have become fools, as conspicuously and as fully as any of the ancient deniers of the only living and true God; and for the very same reason; ‘they do not like to retain God in their knowledge.’

(23) *And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, &c.* Herein consisted their amazing folly, that they should worship the lowest of his creatures instead of the glorious Creator. *The glory of the incorruptible God* is equivalent with *the glorious incorruptible God*. The phrase rendered *changed the glory into*,

* For numerous examples of this use of the word, see WETSTEIN on this passage.

&c., may more correctly be rendered *exchanged the glory for*, &c. 'They exchanged the glorious God for senseless idols.' Compare Ps. 106: 20,* which may be translated, 'they exchanged their glory for the similitude of an ox that eateth grass;' Jer. 2: 11, "my people have changed their glory for *that which* doth not profit;" Hosea 4: 7. Greater folly than this exchange of the living and glorious God, for the mere image of birds, beasts and reptiles, the world has never seen. That the heathen really worshipped such objects is well known. Philo says that the whole land of Egypt was covered with temples and groves, dedicated to dogs, wolves, lions, land and water animals, crocodiles, birds, &c. With regard to the vast majority of the people, the homage terminated on the animal or the idol; and the case was but little better with the pantheistical refiners and defenders of this system, who professed to worship the great and universal divine principle, in these particular manifestations. Why should the higher manifestation of God in the human soul, do homage to the lower development of the universal principle in a reptile? We never find the sacred writers making any account of this common subterfuge and apology for idolatry. All who bowed down before a stock or stone, they denounced as worshipping gods which their own hands had made, which had eyes but saw not, ears but heard not, and hands that could not save.

The universal idolatry of the heathen world, committed under a degree of light which rendered it inexcusable, is the evidence which Paul adduces to prove that they are "ungodly," and consequently exposed to the wrath of God.

In the passage which follows, from v. 24 to the end of the chapter, he designs to show that the Gentiles are not only ungodly, but unrighteous. He traces their immorality to their impiety.

(24) *Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, &c.* They having abandoned God, he abandoned them. He not only permitted them to take their course, but he judicially, that is, as a punish-

* Compare the Hebrew and the Septuagint version of this verse with the expression used by Paul.

† Leg. ad Cai. 566, as quoted by Wetstein.

ment, withdrew and withheld the restraints of his providence and Spirit, and gave them up to the dominion of their own wicked passions.* The construction of this verse is rather doubtful. It may be construed, as by our translators, 'he delivered them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts,' or 'he gave them up to the unclean lusts of their hearts;' the words rendered *unto uncleanness* being then made to qualify the word for *lusts* or *desires*. The former is much the most probable; see vs. 26, 28, for the same construction. *To dishonour their own bodies between themselves*. This infinitive *to dishonour* (which in the Greek has the article in the genitive before it) may be simply explanatory of the word *uncleanness*, 'the uncleanness of dishonouring their bodies,' i. e. which consisted therein; or it may express the *object* or *result*. Here, of course, the latter view of the passage is to be preferred, 'so that they dishonoured, &c.' The natural consequence of turning from God, is the destruction of all the better governing feelings of our nature; so that there is nothing to restrain us from sinking into the most degrading vices. The soul, when turned from God, is turned from its only proper object and portion, and therefore is destitute of support and restraint. The same sentiment which is expressed in this and the preceding verses, is repeated in those which immediately follow.

(25) *Who changed the truth of God into a lie, &c.* 'God delivered them up, because they were such as those who changed,' see Winer, p. 193. This verse may be better rendered 'who exchanged the truth of God for a lie,' see v. 23. The *truth of God* may mean *the true God*; and *a lie*, a *false God*, which is a lie, a mere deception. The word is applied to any thing which is not what it professes, or is supposed to be. Hence, false doctrines are called a lie, 2 Thess. 2: 11; and false Gods, in the Old Testament, are also so called, compare Ps. 31: 6. The sense of the passage would then be, 'who exchange the true, for a false God.' Or the passage may mean 'who exchange the true nature of God, for a false conception of his character.' The general idea is, in either case, the same.

* Zu gleicher Zeit stellt er aber diese sittliche Verderbniss auch als ein göttliches Gericht dar. 'At the same time he represents this moral corruption (of the heathen) as a divine punishment.'—ТЮЛТСК.

And worship and serve the creature more than the Creator.

This clause is an amplification of the preceding. They exchanged the true God for idols, and worshipped the creature rather than the Creator. *Worship and serve*; the former of these words refers more directly to the inward homage of the heart, and the latter, to the outward expression of it. Instead of translating *more than*, the Greek may be rendered *against, to the injury of*, 'they worshipped the creature to the injury of the Creator:' or, *passing by, neglecting*, 'they worshipped the creature to the neglect of the Creator.' The last is best suited to the context. The charge is, that instead of worshipping God, they worshipped his creatures, &c. When the sacred writers speak of God as neglected or insulted by men, they commonly add an expression of reverence and pious awe, as well to show the wickedness of those who forsake such a God, as to relieve their own hearts. So the prophets call God "the holy one of Israel," when they speak of the folly and wickedness of those who refuse to reverence him, Is. 1: 4. Thus Paul renders clearer the sin of those who worship the creature rather than the Creator, by declaring him to be worthy of all praise. *Who is blessed for ever. Amen. Blessed*, i. e. worthy to be praised, or revered. This is the word used almost uniformly in such doxologies, both in the Old and New Testaments. *Amen* is a Hebrew word, signifying *true*, and also, *truth*. When used adverbially at the beginning of a sentence, it expresses affirmation or assurance, *verily*: at the end, desire or approbation, *so let it be*, or *it is true*. It is therefore employed to express assent to the prayers offered by one in the name of others.

(26) *For this cause God gave them up to vile affections, &c.* This verse repeats, in a more definite form, the idea of v. 24. The reasons why Paul refers in the first instance to the sins of uncleanness, in illustration and proof of the degradation of the heathen, probably are, 1. That these sins are always intimately connected with idolatry, forming often even a part of the worship rendered to the false gods; 2. That in turning from the pleasures of holiness, or intercourse with God, men naturally turn to the pleasures of sense; 3. That these sins are peculiarly brutalizing, leading sooner to the destruction of all elevated feeling, and especially of all sense of divine things, than almost any other; 4. That they were the most notorious, prevalent

and openly acknowledged and defended of all the crimes of the heathen. As men degraded God, they also degraded themselves below the level of the beasts, by their devotion to worse than brutal passions.*

(27) This corruption of morals was confined to no one class or sex. Paul first refers to the degradation of females among the heathen, because they are always the last to be affected in the decay of morals; and, therefore, when they are abandoned, the very fountains of purity are corrupted. It is unnecessary to say more than that virtue has lost its hold on the female sex in any community, to produce the conviction that it has already reached the lowest point of degradation.

Paul again presents the idea that this deep depravity of the heathen was the consequence and punishment of their abandonment of God. *Receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.* *Error*, aberration, wandering from God, or truth, or virtue. Hence the word is used for *apostacy*, Ezek. 38: 10, and perhaps 2 Pet. 2: 18; for *deceit*, and also *wickedness generally*, James 5: 20. Jude v. 11. Here, from the context, the first meaning appears to be the best. It was wandering from God which brought them to such degradation. "Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed,"† 1 Sam. 2: 30. According to another interpretation, the *error* here intended is the commission of the unnatural crimes just spoken of; and *the recompense*, the natural evils consequent upon them. This also gives a good sense, but not so consistent with the drift of the whole passage.

(28) *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, &c.* Another repetition of the sentiment of vs. 24, 26, that those who abandon God, he also abandons. *To have in knowledge*

* How common the crimes mentioned in this and the following verse were, may be inferred from the declaration of Martial, that no one was so timidly modest as to fear being detected in their commission. See GROTIUS on v. 27.

† The heathen themselves often express the sentiment that impiety is the source of all other moral evils. *Silius* IV. 794, Heu primæ scelerum causæ mortalibus ægris naturam nesciri Deum. *Cicero*, *Natura Deorum* 12, Haud scio, an, pietate adversus Deos sublata, fides etiam et societas, et una excellentissima virtus justitia tollatur.—WETSTEIN.

is a stronger expression than *to know*. ‘They did not deem it worth while to retain the knowledge of God.’ The ground form of the verb rendered *they did not like*, means, 1. *To test or prove*; 2. *To approve, to judge worthy*, 1 Cor. 16: 3, “whom ye shall approve;” 3. *To discern or decide upon*. The second signification seems best suited to this passage. ‘They did not think it of any account to retain the knowledge of the true God.’

Reprobate mind. The word for *reprobate* is derived from the same root with the verb just spoken of. There is, therefore, a correspondence between the terms which is not preserved in our version. ‘As they did not approve of God, he gave them up to a mind which no one could approve.’ The word literally means *that which cannot bear the test*; see 1 Cor. 9: 27. 2 Cor. 13: 5—7. It is applied, therefore, to any thing which is actually rejected, or is worthy of universal disapprobation. This is its meaning generally, if not universally, in common Greek, as well as in the New Testament. Beza, Bengel, and many others, take the word in an active sense, ‘a mind which cannot judge, or devoid of judgment.’* The meaning would then be, ‘a mind incapable of estimating and appreciating things aright;’ so that they commit the greatest crimes as though they were matters of indifference. This gives indeed a very good sense, but not being supported by the use of the word elsewhere, the common interpretation is to be preferred.

To do those things which are not convenient. This is the consequence of the dereliction just spoken of, and the natural fruit of a reprobate mind. *Things not convenient* are things which are not becoming the nature or duties of man. They include all the crimes enumerated in the following verses.

(29—31) *Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, &c.* These and other crimes were not of rare occurrence. The heathen *were filled* with them. They not only abounded, but in many cases were palliated, and even justified. To their existence and prevalence, therefore, Paul appeals as to a notorious fact. Dark as the picture here drawn

* *Perversam illis mentem dedit Dominus, quae nihil jam probare posset.*—CALVIN. Hoc loco active notatur mens, quae *probat* minime probanda; cui relicti sunt, qui maxime probanda non *probarunt*.—BENGL.

is, of the morals of the heathen world, it is not so dark as that drawn by the most distinguished Greek and Latin authors of their respective countrymen. On the two preceding verses, and on every word in those which follow to v. 32, Wetstein and Grotius quote even *ad nauseam* from ancient writers, passages which more than bear out the dreadful charges of the apostle. See also Leland's Work on the Necessity for a Divine Revelation, and Tholuck's Dissertation on the Morals of the Heathen, &c., translated for the Biblical Repository, Vol. II. What Paul says of the ancient heathen is found to be true, in all its essential features, of those of our own day. Wherever men have existed, there have they manifested themselves to be sinners, ungodly and unrighteous, and consequently justly exposed to the wrath of God.

(32) *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.* As Paul had before showed that the impiety of the heathen was inexcusable, inasmuch as they had a knowledge of God, so he here shows that their immorality is equally without defence. These crimes were not committed ignorantly. They knew the *judgment of God*. The word rendered *judgment*, as well as the corresponding Hebrew term, is used in a very wide sense in the scriptures, for any thing which God has ordained or commanded; as in the frequent phrase, "thy judgments," in the Old Testament. Hence it includes the law of God. This is its meaning here, 'they know the law of God—what he has commanded;' see Luke 1: 6. Rom. 2: 26. They are acquainted not only with the precept, but the sanction of this law; they know not only that these crimes are forbidden, but that those who do them *are worthy of death*. *Death* here, as often elsewhere, means the penalty of the law, all those evils by which sin is punished, Rom. 6: 23. The idea, therefore, here is, that the heathen knew that they deserved punishment for their crimes; in other words, that they were justly exposed to the wrath of God. How they knew this, Paul does not here say, but explains in the next chap. v. 14. It was a knowledge written upon their hearts, or included in the very constitution of their nature; it was implied in their being moral beings. The crimes of the heathen were not only aggravated by being committed against

a knowledge of their turpitude and ill desert, but also by their being deliberate. They did not commit such offences in the heat of passion merely, but they took pleasure in those who did them. They were, of set purpose and fixed preference, wicked; and the promoters of all iniquity. Such is Paul's argument to prove that the Gentiles are all under sin, are justly chargeable with impiety and immorality, and consequently exposed to the divine displeasure.

Doctrines.

1. The punitive justice of God is an essential attribute of his nature. This attribute renders the punishment of sin necessary, and is the foundation of the need of a vicarious atonement, in order to the pardon of sinners. This doctrine the apostle assumes as a first principle, and makes the basis of his whole exposition of the doctrine of justification, v. 18.

2. That sin is a proper object of punishment, and that, under the righteous government of God, it will be punished, are moral axioms, which have 'a self-evidencing light,' whenever proposed to the moral sense of men, vs. 18, 32.

3. God has never left himself without a witness among his rational creatures. Both in reference to his own nature and to the rule of duty, he has, in his works and in the human heart, given sufficient light to render the impiety and immorality of men inexcusable, vs. 19, 20, 32.

4. Natural religion is not a sufficient guide to salvation. What individual or what nation has it ever led to right views of God or of his law? The experience of the whole world, under all the variety of circumstances in which men have existed, proves its insufficiency; and, consequently, the necessity of a special divine revelation, vs. 21—23.

5. The heathen, who have only the revelation of God in his works and in their own hearts, aided by the obscure traditional knowledge which has come down to them, need the gospel. In point of fact, the light which they enjoy does not lead them to God and holiness, vs. 21—23.

6. Error (on moral and religious subjects) has its root in depravity. Men are ignorant of God and duty, because they do not like to retain him in their knowledge, vs. 21, 28.

7. God often punishes one sin by abandoning the sinner to

the commission of others. Paul repeats this idea three times, vs. 24, 26, 28. This judicial abandonment is consistent with the holiness of God, and the free agency of man. God does not impel or entice to evil. He ceases to restrain. He says of the sinner, Let him alone, vs. 24—28.

8. Religion is the only true foundation, and the only effectual safeguard for morality. Those who abandon God, he abandons. Irreligion and immorality, therefore, have ever been found inseparably connected, vs. 24—28.

9. It evinces, in general, greater depravity to encourage others in the commission of crimes, and to rejoice in their commission, than to commit them one's self, v. 32.

10. The most reprobate sinner carries about with him a knowledge of his just exposure to the wrath of God. Conscience can never be entirely extirpated, v. 32.

Remarks.

1. It lies in the very nature of sin, that it should be inexcusable, and worthy of punishment. Instead, therefore, of palliating its enormity, we should endeavour to escape from its penalty, vs. 18, 32.

2. As the works of God reveal his eternal power and God-head, we should accustom ourselves to see in them the manifestations of his perfections, vs. 18—21.

3. The human intellect is as erring as the human heart. We can no more find truth than holiness when estranged from God; even as we lose both light and heat when we depart from the sun. Those, in every age, have sunk deepest into folly, who have relied most on their own understandings. 'In thy light only, O God, can we see light,' v. 21, &c.

4. If the sins of the heathen, committed under the feeble light of nature, be inexcusable, how great must be the aggravation of those committed under the light of the scriptures, v. 20.

5. As the light of nature is insufficient to lead the heathen to God and holiness, it is one of the most obvious and urgent of duties to send them the light of the bible, v. 20—23.

6. Men should remember that their security from open and gross sins is not in themselves, but in God; and they should regard as the worst of punishments, his withdrawing from them his Holy Spirit, v. 24—28.

7. Sins of uncleanness are peculiarly debasing and demoralizing. To be preserved from them is mentioned in scripture as a mark of the divine favour, Ecc. 7: 26. Prov. 22: 14; to be abandoned to them, as the mark of reprobation.

8. To take pleasure in those who do good makes us better, as to delight in those who do evil, is the surest way to become even more degraded than they are themselves, v. 32.

CHAPTER II.

Contents.

THE object of this chapter is to establish the same charges against the Jews, which had just been proved against the Gentiles, to show that they also were exposed to the wrath of God. It consists of three parts. The first contains an exhibition of those simple principles of justice upon which all men are to be judged, vs. 1—16. The second is an application of these principles to the case of the Jews, vs. 17—24. The third is an exhibition of the true nature and design of circumcision, intended to show that the Jews could not expect exemption on the ground of that rite, vs. 25—39.

CHAP. 2: 1—16.

Analysis.

THAT men so impious and immoral, as those described in the preceding chapter, deserved the divine pleasure, &c., and could never, by their own works, secure the favour of God, the Jew was prepared readily to admit. But might there not be a set of men, who, in virtue of some promise on the part of God, or of the performance of some special duties, could claim exemption from the execution of God's purpose to punish all sin? To determine this point, it was necessary to consider a little more fully the justice of God, in order to see whether it admitted of impunity to sinners on the ground supposed. This first section of the chapter, therefore, is employed in expanding the principle of v. 18 of the first chapter. It contains a developement of those principles of justice which commend themselves at once to every man's conscience. The first is, that he who condemns

in others what he does himself, does thereby condemn himself, v. 1. The second, that God's judgments are according to the truth or real state of the case, v. 2. The third, that the special goodness of God, manifested towards any individual or people, forms no ground of exemption from merited punishment, but being designed to lead them to repentance, when misimproved aggravates their condemnation, vs. 3—5. The fourth, that the ground of judgment is the works, not the external relations or professions of men; God will punish the wicked and reward the good, whether Jew or Gentile, without the least respect of persons, vs. 6—11. The fifth, that the standard of judgment is the light which men have severally enjoyed. Those having a written law shall be judged by it, and those who have only the law written on their hearts, (and that the heathen have such a law is proved by the operations of conscience, vs. 13—15) shall be judged by that law, v. 12. These are the principles according to which all men are to be judged in the last day by Jesus Christ, v. 16.

Commentary.

(1) *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest, &c.* In order to feel the force of the apostle's reasoning, it should be remembered that the principal ground on which the Jews expected acceptance with God, was the covenant of God with Abraham, in which he promised to be a God to him and his seed after him. This promise they understood as securing the salvation of all those who retained their relation to Abraham, by the observance of the law, and the rite of circumcision. They expected, therefore, to be treated as the favourites of God, and viewed, not so much in their own personal character, as in their relation to their great progenitor. This point will be more fully noticed in the next chapter. We cannot sufficiently admire the skill with which Paul conducts his argument against this ground of confidence. He does not even name the Jew, and say, 'Therefore, O Jew, thou art inexcusable, &c.' He begins at such a distance, that the prejudices of his readers are not at all aroused. He states his principles so generally and so simply, that they must have forced the assent of the Jew, before he was at all aware of their application to himself. They are indeed self-evident, and yet

when admitted and applied, are found to be destructive of the very foundation on which the children of Abraham expected to inherit his blessing.

The connexion, indicated by the word *therefore*, between this and the preceding chapter, is not very obvious. It may be explained thus: in v. 32, ch. 1, it is stated, that those who commit sin are conscious of its ill-desert; those, therefore, who condemn it, acknowledge still more clearly its desert of punishment, and, of consequence, condemn themselves, if they are chargeable with it; or to state the same view in a rather different form, ‘Those who commit sin, are worthy of death, much more those who encourage and delight in its commission, v. 32; and still more obviously than either, he, who, while he condemns others, himself commits the same offence.’

Whosoever thou art that judgest. That the Jew is intended in this, and the following verses, is evident, from the drift of the argument, from his being expressly named in vs. 9, 10, and from the direct application of the argument to him in v. 17, and onward. It was, no doubt, with design, that the apostle made the address thus general in the first instance. The principle stated in the verse is true in relation to all men. The word rendered *to judge*, means frequently *to condemn*, see v. 12. Acts 7: 7. 2 Thess. 2: 12, &c., and may be so rendered here, ‘Thou art inexcusable, whosoever thou art that condemnest, for wherein thou condemnest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that condemnest, doest the same things.’* The apostle wished to show that the ready sanction, which the Jew gave to the condemnation of the Gentile, involved the condemnation of himself, inasmuch as Jew and Gentile were to be judged by the same general principles.

The words rendered *in that* may mean *because that*, see ch. 8: 3; or, *in that*, eo ipso, in the very act of condemning another, thou condemnest thyself. The reason for this declaration follows, ‘Because thou that condemnest, doest the same things.’ The ground of condemnation is the thing done, not the person of the agent. This is the first principle.

* The passage, however, may be more forcible as it now stands. CALVIN'S comment is, Praeter elegantem verborum Graecorum allusionem *χρῖναι καὶ καταχρῖναι* notanda est exaggeratio, qua utitur. Perinde enim valet loquutio acsi diceret, *Bis es damnabilis, qui iisdem obnoxius es vitiis, quae in aliis carpis et accusas.*

(2) *But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things.* This verse admits of two interpretations. Paul may say, 'However perverse your judgments are in condemning others, while you excuse yourself, we know that God's judgments are not thus partial. His decisions are according to the truth, are correct and just, and according to the real state of the case, and not the external circumstances or relations of those concerned;' see v. 11. John 8: 15, 16, 'Ye judge after the flesh; my judgment is true.' The connexion between this and the previous verse is thus obvious, 'Ye judge one way, but God judgeth another.' According to the second interpretation, the meaning is, 'We know that God's judgment is certainly (will certainly be pronounced) against all who do such things. You condemn such crimes, and so assuredly will God.' Either of these views is perfectly consistent with the force of the words. See examples in favour of the latter view in Raphelius on this verse. The former, however, is better suited to the context and the apostle's object. The word rendered *judgment*, often means *condemnation*; ch. 3: 8, "whose condemnation is just;" 1 Cor. 11: 29, 34, and frequently elsewhere. Its more general sense of judicial decision is more suitable, however, to this verse. This is the second principle. God's judgment is according to the truth, impartial, and founded upon the real character and conduct of men.

(3) *And thinkest thou, O man, that judgest them which do such things, &c.* 'If God's judgments are impartial and just, how can those escape who commit the very things which they condemn in others?' Paul's language includes the idea also, that if these things are condemned by men, how much more by a righteous God. The former, however, is the main point. It is preposterous to suppose that God will spare those who do what they are so ready to condemn others for doing.

(4, 5) *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, &c.* Paul refers in this and the following verse to the common ground of security of the Jews. They were God's peculiar people; his goodness towards them proved that he would not deal with them as with others. That the Jews really entertained this opinion is evident, in the first place, from the apostle's argument here and in the next chapter, and in other parts of his writings, see ch. 9 and 11; from such ex-

pressions as those in Matt. 3: 9, "Think not to say, we have Abraham for our father;" John 8: 33; and from numerous declarations of the Jewish writers themselves on this subject. (See the next chapter.)

The connexion is distinctly marked by the particle *or*; 'Or admitting the general principle, that those, who do what they condemn in others, are themselves exposed to condemnation; do you so abuse the divine goodness, as to suppose it will afford impunity in sin, when its real design is to lead you to repentance?' Those despise the goodness of God, who pervert it, and derive from it a license to sin, supposing either that God will never punish, because he long delays, or that his goodness towards us is so peculiar that we shall escape, though others perish; see 2 Peter 3: 8, 9. The use of the several terms, *goodness*, *forbearance* and *long-suffering*, serves to express more strongly the idea of the divine mercy. The word rendered *riches* is a favourite term with the sacred writers, to express the idea of abundance or greatness, 2 Cor. 8: 2. Eph. 1: 7. 2: 7, &c. The word for *goodness* is a general term, expressive of mildness and kindness; that rendered *forbearance* signifies *patience* under suffering, and also under provocation. It is used also for a *truce* or *respite*, 1 Macc. 12: 25, and Josephus contra Apion. VI. 5, 1, &c. It expresses here God's long delay of punishment. *Long-suffering*, slowness to anger. *Not knowing*, i. e. not regarding or considering 'that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance,' i. e. is designed and adapted to lead.

(5) *But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath, &c.* The mercies and advantages of the Jews, and the peculiar forbearance of God towards them, so far from being an evidence that God would ultimately spare them, would, by being abused, greatly aggravate their condemnation. "*After thy hardness, &c.*" i. e. '*through, or on account of thy hard and impenitent heart;*' see Eph. 1: 5, 7. 3: 3, &c. The word rendered *to treasure*, is used not only in reference to the hoarding up of things which are considered valuable, but also in the sense of accumulating or increasing ones stock of any thing good or bad; see Amos 3: 10. "*Treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath;*" literally *in the day*, i. e. upon the day; 'wrath on that day of

wrath;’ see v. 16. The abuse of God’s mercies will cause an accumulation of the grounds of punishment on the day of judgment. This day is often called *the day of wrath*; the day of vengeance, because then shall the wrath of God be most conspicuously displayed. “That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,” Zeph. 1: 15.

Instead of the reading, “and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” many MSS., several of the ancient versions and fathers, insert the conjunction, and read, ‘on the day of wrath, and of the revelation, and of the righteous judgment of God.’ This method is adopted by Mill, Wetstein, Knapp, &c. Lachmann gives the common reading. If the former method be preferred, ‘the day of revelation’ would of course mean ‘the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ,’ who is to come to judge the world in righteousness. This is the day on which God’s displeasure against all “ungodliness and unrighteousness,” by whomsoever committed, shall be most signally displayed; and when God’s righteous judgment, and the fact that it is righteous, shall be most clearly revealed. These verses, therefore, contain a third important principle laid down by the apostle. The goodness of God can never secure impunity to sinners; and its abuse will be sure to aggravate their guilt and punishment.

(6) *Who will render to every man according to his deeds.* In this and the following verses, to the 11th, the important truth is taught, that the ground of the judgment of God is the works of men, not their relations or professions. Stress must be laid upon both members of the verse; God will render to *every one*, Jew as well as Gentile, according to *his works*, in opposition to any other ground of judgment.

(7) *To them, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.* The principle which is stated generally in the preceding verse, is applied to the two great classes of men in this and the one following. ‘God will render to every man according to his deeds; to the good he will render life; to the wicked tribulation and anguish.’ This verse contains the description of the character and reward of the righteous. They are those whose affections and objects of pursuit are in heaven, “who seek glory

and honour and immortality;” and who seek these things ‘by well doing,’ by the persevering performance of all duty. To such, God will render eternal life. It is not to the Jew as Jew, nor to the Gentile as Gentile, any more than it is to the Catholic, the Episcopalian, or the Presbyterian, as such, but to the good as good, whether belonging to one class or the other, that eternal life is to be awarded.

The word rendered *patient continuance*, means often patience under afflictions, and also *constancy, perseverance*. Luke 8: 15, “who bring forth fruit with constancy;” see 1 Thess. 1: 3, the phrase “constancy of hope,” for perseverance in hope; so in this verse “constancy of good works,” means constancy in the performance of good works; which is the meaning which our translation so well expresses. *Glory, honour and immortality*, i. e. a glorious and honourable immortality, though the idea is much more forcibly expressed by the words as they stand in our version.

(8) *But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.* Here the apostle describes the character and reward of the wicked. They are contentious and disobedient; and their recompense is indignation and wrath. The sense of this verse is perfectly plain, although the construction in the original is not quite regular. The sentence, as connected with the preceding, would naturally be constructed thus, ‘but to the contentious (God will render) indignation and wrath.’ As it stands, it must be translated, ‘to the contentious, indignation and wrath shall be rendered;’ which mode of construction is continued through the following verse. The phrase rendered *those who are contentious*, literally is *those who are of contention*; as ‘those who are of faith,’ for believers; ‘those who are of circumcision,’ for the circumcised, Acts 10: 45. Gal. 3: 7. Tit. 2: 8; see Phil. 1: 16, 17. The word for *contention*, and the corresponding verb, are used frequently in reference specially to contending with any one in the sense of resisting his authority. 1 Sam. 12: 14, 15, “and not rebel (Greek *contend*) against the commandment of the Lord;” Deut. 21: 20, “this our son is stubborn and rebellious (contentious), he will not obey our voice.” So, in this case, *the contentious* are the rebellious, those who do not obey God or the truth. *The truth*, i. e. true

religion, the true standard of moral and religious duty; see ch. 1: 18. *But obey unrighteousness.* Instead of obeying truth and holiness, they yield obedience to sin, unrighteousness being obviously taken in a wide sense for all that is morally wrong.

Indignation and wrath, i. e. the greatest wrath. The former of the Greek words here used, according to Ammonius, as quoted by Wetstein, expresses sudden or temporary passion, and the latter more permanent anger. According to Eustathius, the former refers to the internal emotion, the latter to the outward expression of it. The words are here to be understood metonymically for the effects of indignation and wrath, that is, severe punishment. And this is explained in the next verse.

(9) *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil*, &c. Intensity, as is obvious, is expressed by the use of these nearly synonymous words, tribulation and anguish. *Every soul of man*, a common biblical expression, Acts 2: 41. Num. 19: 11. The Greek and Hebrew words for *soul* are familiarly used for *person*; ‘Let every soul,’ i. e. every ‘person,’ ch. 13: 1. *To the Jew first and also the Gentile.* It becomes now apparent, that the apostle, in laying down these general principles of justice, by which the dealings of God are to be regulated, had the Jew specially in view. God, he says, will render to every man according to his works; to the good eternal life, to the evil tribulation and anguish. And lest the *every man* should fail to arrest attention, Paul says expressly, that the Jew as well as the Gentile is thus to be judged. The word *first*, here, may express either order or pre-eminence. According to the former view, the meaning is, ‘This judgment shall begin with the Jew, and be extended to the Gentiles;’ so Calvin* and others; see ch. 1: 16. According to the other, ‘The Jew shall not only be punished as well as others, but, having been more highly favoured, his punishment shall be more severe.’ In like manner, if the Jew is faithful, his reward will be the greater, as is intimated in the next verse. “The Jew first,” is, therefore, equivalent with ‘the Jew especially.’ As both ideas are correct, both may have been intended by the apostle.

* Haec universalis est divini iudicii lex, quae a Judaëis incipiet, et comprehendet totum orbem.

(10) *But glory, honour and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.* This verse is just the converse of the preceding. These verses state that, with regard to all men, the judgment of God is determined by their works. This is the ground of decision with respect to all, because God is perfectly impartial.

(11) *For there is no respect of persons with God.* The word rendered *respect of persons*, and its cognates, Acts 10: 34. James 2: 9, are peculiar to the Hellenistic or Jewish Greek. They are derived from the phrase frequently occurring in the Old Testament, *to accept the face* (i. e. the person), in the sense of showing favour. This phrase is often used in a good sense. Gen. 19: 21, "See I have accepted thee," (i. e. thy face), Job. 42: 8. So 'accepted or lifted up of face,' means one honoured or favoured, 2 Kings 5: 1. Is. 3: 3, &c. Most frequently, and especially when spoken of judges, it is used in a bad sense. Levit. 19: 15, "Thou shalt not accept the person of the poor," Prov. 24: 23, &c. So in the New Testament, uniformly in the sense of improper partiality, Eph. 6: 9. Col. 3: 25. James 2: 1. This verse then contains the sentiment which is at the foundation of the declaration of the preceding verses. The Jews and Gentiles shall be treated on precisely the same principles, because God is perfectly impartial. There is no respect of persons with him.

(12) *For as many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law.* In the preceding verse it was stated that God is impartial and just in all his judgments. This is confirmed, not only by the previous statement that he would judge every man according to his works, but also by the exhibition of the important principle announced in this verse. Men are to be judged by the light they have severally enjoyed. The ground of judgment is their works, the standard of judgment their knowledge. *As many as have sinned without law*, that is, as appears from the context, without a special revelation of the divine will; see 1 Cor. 9: 21. *The law*, as used by the apostle, as will be seen hereafter, means *the rule of duty*, the will of God as revealed for our obedience; commonly, however, with special reference to the revelation made in the scriptures. This is evidently the case here. *Shall perish without*

law, that is, shall be punished by a different standard, to wit, by that against which they have sinned. The word rendered *perish*, from its opposition to that used in the latter part of the verse, expresses the idea, 'being condemned, shall be punished.' *As many as have sinned in the law.* *In the law*, i. e. subject to the law, as to be *in the flesh*, ch. 7: 5. 8: 8, &c., is to be subject to the flesh; to be *in sin* is to be under its control; see ch. 3: 19, "What the law says, it says to those who are under the law," literally, *those in the law*, as here. The meaning, therefore, obviously is, 'Those who are under a special revelation of the will of God, and have sinned, &c. &c., shall be judged by the law.' *Judged*, i. e. *condemned*, as the word often means (see the Lexicons), and as the context here requires. *By the law*, i. e. by means of the law, by it as the rule or standard; see the same preposition so used, James 2: 12. 2 Cor. 8: 8. Paul no more asserts in this passage that all who have no revelation shall perish, than he does that all who have a revelation shall be condemned. He is not speaking of the actual destiny of either class, but of the rule by which men are to be judged.

(13) *For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.* The reason is here assigned for the declaration contained in the last clause of the preceding verse, 'Those who are under the law shall be judged by it, or punished according to it, for it is not the mere possession of the law, but obedience to it, which is of avail before God.' *The hearers* of the law, because *readers*, before the multiplication of books by the press, were comparatively few. Hence, it was by hearing, rather than by reading, that knowledge was obtained. Thus Polybius says, that his history was suited to one class of *hearers* only (Hist. p. 752). And Josephus (Ant. 1: 26) says, we are the *hearers* of the laws which he gave us; (see Krebs on this verse). The phrase to be *just before God*, i. e. in his sight or estimation, serves to explain the other equivalent term at the end of the verse, *shall be justified*. Both are evidently forensic expressions, and mean, shall be regarded and treated as just or righteous in the sight of God. The apostle has evident reference to the opinion of the Jews, that being a Jew was enough to secure admission into heaven. When Paul says *the doers of the law* shall be justified, he is of course not to be understood as teaching, contrary to his

own repeated declarations and arguments, that men are actually to be justified by obedience to the law. This is the very thing which he is labouring to prove impossible. The context renders his meaning plain. He is speaking not of the method of justification available for sinners, but of the principles on which all who are *out of Christ* are to be judged. They shall be judged impartially, according to their works, and agreeably to their knowledge of duty. On these principles no flesh living can be justified in the sight of God. The only way, as he afterwards teaches, to escape their application, is to confide in Christ, in virtue of whose death, God can be just and yet justify the ungodly who believe in him.

Though this verse, with the 14th and 15th, form a parenthesis, as is evident from the 16th, which requires to be immediately connected with the 12th, yet they are intimately related to what immediately precedes. The 13th is the ground of what is asserted in the last clause of the 12th, viz. that those who have sinned under a law shall be condemned by it; and vs. 14, 15, are the ground of the assertion, that those who have sinned without a revelation, shall yet be punished, because, though they have no law, they are a law unto themselves.

(14) *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things of the law, &c.* The word *for* does not indicate the connexion between this and the preceding, but between this and the first clause of the 12th, as just stated. ‘The Gentiles are not excusable, although not amenable to the written law revealed to the Jews, since they have a law written upon their hearts, by which they shall be judged, and according to which they shall be punished.’ In support of this assertion, the apostle appeals first to the moral acts of the heathen, as evincing a moral sense; and secondly, v. 15, to the operations of their conscience. *Do by nature the things of the law.* *To do the things of the law*, is to do what the law prescribes. When they practise any of the virtues, or perform any moral acts, these acts are the evidence of a moral sense; they show that the Gentiles have a rule of right and wrong, and a feeling of obligation, or, in other words, that they are a law unto themselves. The absence of all moral acts in the lower animals, shows that they have no law or sense of moral obligation. But

men, no matter how diversified may be their circumstances, all evince that they are under a moral law.

There is another interpretation of the phrase *to do the things of the law*, according to which, it means *to perform the office of the law*, to prescribe what is right and forbid what is wrong. The sense of the whole verse would then be, ‘Since the Gentiles, though destitute of a revelation, perform the office of a law, by commanding and forbidding things as right and wrong, they are thus a law unto themselves.’* But this interpretation attributes an unusual, though not unauthorized sense to the phrase in question; and is not so agreeable to the context. ‘To do the things of the law’ is to be ‘doers of the law,’ in the sense of the preceding verse.

Paul says, the heathen “do *by nature* the things of the law.” The word rendered *nature*, often signifies the natural constitution, innate tendency or disposition. Thus Xenophon (Cyp. Lib. 2. p. 42) says, ‘all animals are taught by nature to defend themselves.’ Jamblichus (IV. 7) speaks of ‘Demons or Deities, by nature wicked.’ Plutarch says (in Dionys. p. 176) he was ‘by nature swift to anger.’ Josephus (Ant. 7. 1) says of David, ‘he was by nature just and pious,’ &c. See Wetstein on Eph. 2: 3, and Le Clerc, *Ars Critica*, P. II. sect. 1, ch. vii.; compare Gal. 4: 8, Eph. 2: 3, &c. This expression is common in all languages, and is used, as in this case by the apostle, to refer us to a source of acts independent of external causes and influences. When it is said that an animal is cruel by nature, it is meant that its cruelty is to be accounted for by its natural constitution, and not by imitation or example. When, therefore, the Gentiles are said ‘to do by nature the things of the law,’ it is meant that they have not been taught by others. It is neither by instruction nor example, but by their own innate sense of right and wrong, that they are directed. Having this natural sense of right and wrong, though destitute of a law externally revealed, they are a law unto themselves.

(15) *Who show the work of the law written on their hearts, &c.* The relative pronouns, when used in this way at the beginning of a clause, are often intended to introduce a reason for a preceding declaration. So here, the Gentiles are a

* *Honesta jubeant, turpia prohibeant.*—BEZA.

law unto themselves, *because* they show the work of the law, &c.; see ch. 1: 25. 2 Cor. 8: 10, &c. The expression *work of the law*, may either mean ‘the effect of the law,’ viz. a knowledge of duty; or it may be a mere paraphrase for the law itself. The former view is adopted by Grotius, who explains it as ‘that which the law effects in the Jews, that is, a knowledge of right and wrong.’ Reference is made to similar expressions, as in Aristotle (Rhet. 1, 15, 6), ‘to do the work of the law,’ is to perform its office; see 2 Tim. 4: 5. It may, however, be understood as *the law itself*, as in Eph. 4: 12, “work of the ministry” may be the ministry itself; and 1 Thess. 1: 3, “work of faith,” faith itself; though in neither of these cases is the word *work* strictly redundant. Paul says the Gentiles *show* that this law is written on their hearts by their actions, as stated in the previous verse.

There is another source of proof as to the existence of this internal law, *their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another*. The former of these clauses may mean either ‘their conscience bearing witness to this law written in their hearts, i. e. assenting to it, and confirming it;’ or, what is better suited to the force of the word, ‘their conscience bears the same testimony with their acts; it joins to prove that they are a law unto themselves.’ *Conscience* is then obviously put for its exercises. Paul appeals both to the conduct and inward experience of the Gentiles in proof of his position, that they are not destitute of a rule of duty.

The other clause of this verse is very variously explained. The word rendered *in the mean while*, is sometimes an adverb, and sometimes a preposition. Our translators take it here as the former. The sense then is, ‘Their conscience, and *then* their thoughts or moral judgments of approval or disapproval;’ or ‘their conscience bears witness, and *hereafter* their thoughts (principles) shall approve or condemn them.’ But the word is so intimately connected with the genitive which follows, that it seems much more natural to take it as a preposition; as in Matt. 18: 15, “Tell him his fault between thee and him alone.” Acts 15: 9, “And put no difference between us and them,” &c. ‘Their thoughts between themselves, accusing or excusing;’ that is, ‘their moral judgments alternately approving

or condemning.* This clause may be considered as merely an amplification of the previous one, so that the testimony of conscience is made to consist in these approving and disapproving judgments; or it may be considered as co-ordinate with it, and as containing another proof of the apostle's general position, that the Gentiles are a law unto themselves. There are, then, three arguments presented in favour of this position, the moral conduct of the heathen, their general moral sense, and these special acts of self-approbation and self-accusing. The use of the word *and*, between the second and third clauses, is rather in favour of this latter view. Many interesting passages are quoted on this verse from the ancient writers, by Wetstein and Grotius, strikingly illustrating the statement of the apostle, and showing how fully the heathen were conscious that they had the law of God written upon their hearts.

(16) *In the day that God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.* Calvin places only a comma at the close of the preceding verse, and connects this with it, 'Their thoughts accusing or acquitting them on that day, in which God shall judge,' &c. Not, as he remarks, that conscience is then first to assume its office, but it will then be confirmed, &c. But this mode of connecting the passage seems inconsistent with the design of the 14th and 15th verses. They have not so much reference to the future judgment, as to the establishment of the point that the Gentiles have a law written on their hearts. Bengel connects this verse with the beginning of the 15th, 'Which show, in that day, that they have a law.' But it is evident that this construction is forced, as too much intervenes between the verb *show* and this clause; and Paul would most probably have used the future form, and said, 'They shall show hereafter, in that day,' &c. There seems no sufficient reason to depart from the common mode of explanation. Verses 13, 14, 15, although intimately related to the 12th, are yet evidently a parenthesis. Paul had said that those who had no law should be punished without reference to the written law, and that those who were subject to such a law should be judged by it, v. 12. He now adds, v. 16, that this is to be done on the last day, the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, &c.

* *Cogitationibus inter se accusantibus, aut etiam excusantibus.*—CALVIN. Und die Gedanken die sich unter einander anklagen oder entschuldigen.—LUTHER.

The secrets of men, not their works of parade, done to be seen and admired, but those hidden deeds of heart and life, which form the true criterion of character. Thus simply does he describe the great day, the day of judgment. This judgment shall be conducted by Jesus Christ, agreeably to our Saviour's own declaration, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;" see Acts 17: 31. The fact that there is to be such a day of trial, and that Jesus Christ is to be the judge, is part of the revelation contained in the gospel. Paul therefore adds, *according to my gospel*, which of course cannot mean that all men are to be judged by the gospel, whether they have heard it or not. This would be in direct contradiction to the principle which he had just been establishing, that men are to be judged by the light they severally possess. The meaning is, obviously, that the fact of a final and righteous judgment, is part of the revelation of the gospel.

Such then are the principles on which Paul assures us that all men are to be judged. They commend themselves irresistibly to every man's conscience as soon as they are announced, and yet every false hope of heaven is founded on their denial or neglect. It may be proper to repeat them, that it may be seen how obviously the hopes of the Jews, to which Paul, from v. 17 onward, applies them, are at variance with them. 1. He who condemns in others what he does himself, *ipso facto* condemns himself. 2. God's judgments are according to the real character of men. 3. The goodness of God, being designed to lead us to repentance, is no proof that he will not punish sin. The perversion of that goodness will increase our guilt, and aggravate our condemnation. 4. God will judge every man according to his works, not according to his professions, his ecclesiastical connexions or relations. 5. Men shall be judged by the knowledge of duty which they severally possess. God is therefore perfectly impartial. These are the principles on which men are to be tried, in the last day, by Jesus Christ, and those who expect to be dealt with on any other plan, will be dreadfully disappointed.

Doctrines.

1. The leading doctrine of this section is, that God is just. His judgments are infinitely removed above all those dis-

turbing causes of ignorance and partiality, by which the decisions of men are perverted, vs. 1, 16.

2. The refuge which men are always disposed to seek in their supposed advantages of ecclesiastical connexion, as belonging to the true church, &c. &c., is a vain refuge. God deals with men according to their real character, vs. 2, 3.

3. The goodness of God has both the design and tendency to lead men to repentance. If it fails, the fault must be their own, v. 4.

4. It is a great abuse of the divine goodness and forbearance to derive encouragement from them to continue in sin. Such conduct will certainly aggravate our condemnation, vs. 3—5.

5. None but the truly good, no matter what the professions, connexions or expectations of others may be, will be saved; and none but the truly wicked, whether Gentile or Jew, Christian or heathen will be lost, vs. 6—10.

6. The goodness, which the scriptures approve, consists, in a great degree, in the pursuit of heavenly things; it is a seeking after glory, honour and immortality, by a persevering continuance in well-doing. It is the pursuit of the true end of our being, by the proper means, v. 7.

7. The responsibility of men being very different in this world, their rewards and punishment will, in all probability, be very different in the next. Those who knew not their Lord's will shall be beaten with few stripes. And those who are faithful in the use of ten talents shall be made rulers over ten cities, vs. 9, 10.

8. The heathen are not to be judged by a revelation of which they never heard. But as they enjoy a revelation of the divine character in the works of creation, ch. 1: 19, 20, and of the rule of duty in their own hearts, vs. 14, 15, they are inexcusable. They can no more abide the test by which they are to be tried, than we can stand the application of the severer rule by which we are to be judged. Both classes, therefore, need a Saviour, v. 12.

9. The moral sense is an original part of our constitution, and not the result of education, v. 14.

10. Jesus Christ, who is to sit in judgment upon the secrets of all men, must be possessed of infinite knowledge, and therefore be divine, v. 16.

Remarks.

1. The deceitfulness of the human heart is strikingly exhibited in the different judgments which men pass upon themselves and others; condemning in others what they excuse in themselves. And it not unfrequently happens that the most censorious are the most criminal, vs. 1, 3.

2. How does the goodness of God affect us? If it does not lead us to repentance, it will harden our hearts and aggravate our condemnation, vs. 4, 5.

3. Genuine repentance is produced by discoveries of God's mercy, legal repentance by fear of his justice, v. 4.

4. Any doctrine which tends to produce security in sin, must be false. The proper effect of the enjoyment of peculiar advantages is to increase our sense of responsibility, and our gratitude to God, and not to make us suppose that we are his special favourites. God is no respecter of persons, vs. 3—10.

5. How vain the hopes of future blessedness, indulged by the immoral, founded upon the expectation either that God will not deal with them according to their works, or that the secrets of their hearts will not be discovered! vs. 6—10, 16.

6. If God is a just God, his wrath is not to be escaped by evasions, but in the way of his own appointment. If we have no righteousness of our own, we must seek that of the Saviour, vs. 1—16.

7. He who died for the sins of men is to sit in judgment upon sinners. How dreadful for those who reject his atonement! How delightful for those who confide in his merit! v. 16.

CHAP. 2: 17—29.

Analysis.

THIS section consists properly of two parts. The first, vs. 17—24, contains an application of the principles, laid down in the former section, to the case of the Jews. The second, vs. 25—29, is an exhibition of the nature and design of circumcision. The principal grounds of dependence on the part of the Jews, were, 1. Their covenant relation to God. 2. Their superior advantages as to divine knowledge. 3. Their circum-

cision. Now if it is true that God will judge every man, Jew or Gentile, according to his works, and by the law which he has enjoyed, what will it avail any to say, We are Jews, we have the law, v. 17; we have superior knowledge, v. 18; we can act as guides and instructors to others, v. 19? This may all be very true, but are you less a thief, merely because you condemn stealing? less an adulterer, because you condemn adultery? or less a blasphemer, because you abhor sacrilege? vs. 21, 22. This superior knowledge, instead of extenuating, only aggravates your guilt. While boasting of your advantages, you, by your sins, bring a reproach on God, vs. 23, 24. According to the first principles of justice, therefore, your condemnation will be no less certain, and far more severe than that of the Gentiles. As to circumcision, to which the Jews attached so much importance, the apostle shows that it could avail nothing, except on condition of obedience to the law or covenant to which it belonged, v. 25. If the law be broken, circumcision is worthless, v. 25, latter clause. On the other hand, if the law is obeyed, the want of circumcision will not prevent a blessing, v. 26. More than this, if those less favourably situated than the Jews, are found obedient, they will rise up in judgment against the disobedient, though favoured, people of God, v. 27. All this proves that an external rite can, in itself, have no saving power; because God is a Spirit, and requires and regards spiritual obedience alone. This principle is stated, first negatively, he is not a Jew who is such in profession merely, v. 29, and then affirmatively, he is a Jew who is one inwardly, v. 29.

Commentary.

(17) *Behold,* thou art a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God.* The main ground of confidence in

* Instead of the common reading ἰδὲ, the MSS. D. G. 1, 8, 10, 14, 31, and several others, read σὶ ὄε. This reading has the support of the Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic and Vulgate versions, and of several of the Greek and Latin fathers. It is the more difficult reading of the two. It is adopted by Bengel, Griesbach, Knapp and Lachmann. According to this reading, the construction of the whole passage is irregular. This verse would be the protasis of a sentence, to which no apodosis follows. See v. 12 of ch. 5. 2 Peter 2: 4. 'But if thou art a Jew, thou shouldst act accordingly;' or 'If a Jew, dost thou steal, &c. &c.' The 21st verse is, as to the sense, though not grammatically, the apodosis. See WIMER'S Grammatik, p. 442.

the Jew was, that he was one of the covenant people of God. To this, therefore, Paul first refers. *Thou art called a Jew*, i. e. one of the people of God. The word *Jew* is evidently taken here in its religious, rather than its civil or national sense; it expresses the relation of the people to God rather than to other nations. A Jew, therefore, in opposition to a Gentile, was a member of the true church, a child of Abraham, &c. In this sense the word occurs again in vs. 28, 29. Rev. 2: 9, "I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and are not." It is by many supposed that reference is here intended to the etymology of the name Judah and Jew, which is understood as meaning *a praiser of God*. So Philo (*De Allegoriis*, I. p. 55) says, 'Judah means one who confesses or praises;' and (*De Plantatione*, p. 233) he says, 'He is called Judah, which, interpreted, is confession to God;' see Grotius. There is probably no allusion to the mere etymological signification of the name.

Restest in the law, i. e. reclinest upon it as a ground of confidence. The same word occurs in the Septuagint version of the strikingly analogous passage in Micah 3: 11, "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us." This is precisely the spirit which Paul reproves, a reliance on external advantages, connected with security in sin. *The law* here means the whole civil and religious polity of the Jews; the Mosaic system, the possession of which made such a distinction between them and other nations, and conferred upon them such exalted privileges.

And makest thy boast of God. The words which are thus correctly rendered here, occur in a very different sense in ch. 5: 11, where they are translated *we joy in God*. The word rendered *to boast*, is expressive of self-gratulation, with or without sufficient reason. It is therefore often used for vain boasting. Its meaning here is obvious. The Jews considered that they had reason for self-gratulation and exaltation in their peculiar relation to God. Their boast and confidence was that he was their God, and that they were his people.

(18) *And knowest his will, and approvest the things which are most excellent, &c.* The second ground of confidence was their superior knowledge. The Jews not only supposed them-

selves to stand in a more favourable relation to God than the Gentiles, but they regarded themselves as personally greatly their superiors; having better knowledge of divine things, &c. On the ground of this superiority they expected to be treated with especial favour when they appeared before God. To this ground of confidence the apostle now refers. *Knowest his will*, 'art possessed of a divine revelation;' or, 'knowest what is pleasing to God.' The next clause may be rendered, either *thou approvest the things that are more excellent*; or *thou discernest (can decide about) the things which differ*. The usage of the Greek terms admit of either of these versions. The context is in favour of the latter, as the point in hand is the superior knowledge of the Jews, by which they were able to decide questions of duty which others could not, and hence thought themselves fit to be their guides and teachers. The same phrase occurs again, Phil. 1: 10, where it may be rendered as here. Paul there prays that Christians may abound in knowledge and judgment, and be able to decide what ought to be done, and what left undone. So Calvin, Beza, Elsner and others explain the passage. The latter quotes the interpretation of Theodoret, 'the things opposed to each other, righteousness and unrighteousness;' and Theophylact's, 'what ought to be done, and what ought not to be done.' The other view is adopted by the Vulgate, Grotius and our translators, both here and in Phil. 1: 10, and is, perhaps, the more commonly received of the two. The source of this superior knowledge was the word of God; hence, Paul adds, "being instructed out of the law."

(19, 20) *And art confident that thou thyself art a guide to the blind, and a light to them that are in darkness, &c.* What is expressed figuratively in this verse, is expressed literally in the one that follows—*an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes*. There is no trait of the Jewish character more prominently exhibited than their self-confident superiority to others. Hence their desire to make proselytes, their endless inculcation of the commands of men for the doctrines of God, their contempt of the Gentiles, &c. &c. Their Rabbins were in the habit of calling themselves 'the light of the world.' *Which hast the form of knowledge and truth in the law*. The word rendered *form*, means the *external shape or appearance of a thing*; 2 Tim. 3: 5, "Having the form of godliness."

It also signifies a just representation, and then a rule. The idea is, 'they have in the law a perfect representation of what truth and duty are,' or 'a perfect rule of moral truth.'* The words "knowledge and truth," by a common figure, may mean *true knowledge*; or be equivalent with *knowledge of the truth*.

(21, 22) *Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? &c.* For the connexion of this verse with the 17th, see the note on that passage. We have here the application of the above reasoning to the hopes of the Jews. If men are to be judged *according to their works*, those who *do* wickedly, who steal, commit adultery and sacrilege, no matter whether they are called Jews, and make their boast in God, and are instructed out of the law, or not, will assuredly be condemned. It is evident that the crimes of theft, adultery and sacrilege are here specified, not as crimes which all the Jews committed, but as examples merely. 'If you, though Jews, do what you condemn in others, you will not escape the righteous judgment of God. So far from this, your superior advantages will increase the weight of your condemnation.' Paul intended forcibly to assert that the Jews were guilty of these and other crimes, and it matters little whether the interrogative or affirmative form of address be adopted; i. e. whether we read 'Dost thou steal?' or 'Thou dost steal, dost commit adultery, &c.' It is a mere matter of punctuation. The interrogation gives the assertion rather more point. It has been questioned whether the apostle, in charging the Jews with sacrilege, had reference to the specific crime of temple-robbery, or more generally to the wicked and profane abuse and perversion of sacred things. Most probably to the latter, because there is no historical evidence of temple-robbery having been committed by them; and because the prophets represent the withholding from God his due, and the appropriation of sacred things to a common use, as a robbery of God. Malachi 3: 8, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." While the Jews, therefore,

* Cicero often uses the phrases *forma honesti, boni, veri*; and *artibus informare actatam*. See Grotius on this verse.

abhorred idols, which was one form of showing contempt for God, they evinced, without compunction, their want of reverence for the divine Being, in ways scarcely less offensive. That this abhorrence of idolatry was characteristic of the Jews after the captivity, is one of the most familiar facts in their history; and it is as great now as at any former period. Tholuck cites, as a striking illustration of their zeal on this subject, the fact that when Pilate was about to introduce into Jerusalem the likeness of the Emperor on the standards of the soldiers, they hastened in crowds to meet him at Cesarea, and to remonstrate with him on the subject. For several days they received no answer. When Pilate himself appeared, he threatened them with death, if they did not withdraw. But they threw themselves on the ground, and cried they would rather all perish than allow the images to enter the city; Josephus, *Antiq. L. 18. ch. 3*, and *De Bell. Jud. L. 2. ch. 9*. Yet these same people, who were thus fearful of the semblance of idolatry, could rob God by perverting to their own use, what belonged to the temple; and by offering the torn and the lame and the sick in sacrifice, *Mal. 1: 13*.

(23, 24) *Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law, dishonourest thou God? &c.* Another striking instance of their not acting agreeably to their advantages, while making a boast of the law, and of their peculiar relation to God, as their God, and theirs only; instead of acting worthily of this relation, they so acted, that the name of God was every day blasphemed; that is, the Gentiles were constantly led to speak and think evil of a God, whose worshippers were so wicked as the Jews. This assertion he confirms by the declarations of their own prophets; see *Ezek. 36: 20, 23*.

(25) *For circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law, &c.* It had obviously been implied in the previous reasoning of the apostle, that the Jews, being chargeable with the sins just mentioned, could not escape the righteous judgment of God; *for* circumcision is of no account, unless the law be obeyed; if that is broken, circumcision is uncircumcision. The connexion between this and the preceding verses is thus obvious. The design of this passage, vs. 25—29, therefore, is to show that circumcision afforded no security to the Jews. This rite was regarded by the Hebrews, and is considered by the apostle under

two different aspects. First, as an *opus operatum*, as a rite possessed of inherent efficacy or merit of its own; and, secondly, as a sign or seal of God's covenant. In the former view, Paul here, as well as elsewhere, (see Gal. 6: 15) says, "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing." In the latter, it had its legitimate and important value. As a seal it was attached, in the first place, to the national covenant between God and the Jews. It was a sign of the existence of that covenant, and a pledge, on the part of God, that he would fulfil its promises. If any Jew fulfilled his part of that covenant, and in that sense kept the law, his circumcision would profit him; it would secure to him all the blessings of Judaism. But it was also, in the second place, attached to the spiritual covenant made with Abraham. "It was a seal of the righteousness of faith," i. e. was designed as an assurance that he was regarded as righteous on account of his faith, and that he should be treated accordingly. To all those Jews who had the faith of Abraham, and thus kept the covenant, or law of justification, established with him, circumcision was in like manner profitable. It was the visible sign and pledge of the divine favour. On the other hand, if either the national or spiritual covenant was broken, circumcision was of no more use than the seal of a contract after all its binding parts had been obliterated. In other words, the validity of a covenant or contract depends on the performance of its conditions, not on the mere possession of its seal. Paul, therefore, tells the Jews that there was no inherent efficacy in circumcision, that it could avail them nothing unless they obeyed the law; if they were transgressors of the law, as he had just declared them to be, their circumcision was made uncircumcision. That is, it would do them no good; and though of the number of the people of God, they should be treated as though they were not.

(26) *Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?* In order to present the nature of this rite in its true light, he reverses the statement of the previous verse. Circumcision cannot profit any one if the law is broken; and the want of it cannot invalidate the promise, if the law is kept. In other words, circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God. The rite,

in itself considered, is of no avail. If a man should faithfully perform all the conditions of a contract, the absence of the seal would not, in the judgment of equity, invalidate his claim, any more than the possession of the seal, while the conditions remained unperformed, would entitle him to the specified reward.

The word *uncircumcision*, in the beginning of the verse, obviously means an *uncircumcised person*, by a common metonymy, but, in the latter clause, it is to be taken literally. The *righteousness of the law*, 'the prescriptions of the law;' its various demands. Paul does not say that any heathen does fully answer the demands of the law, the case is merely stated hypothetically to show the little weight due to circumcision. The last clause, *his uncircumcision shall be counted for circumcision*, is an example of a very common Hebrew idiom; according to which the preposition here rendered *for*, is placed after verbs signifying *to be*, *to become*, or *to be regarded*, where, in Greek, the nominative would be used. "They two shall be *for* one flesh," instead of *one flesh*, as our version renders it, Matt. 19: 5, "It became *to* a great tree," for 'it waxed a great tree,' Luke 13: 19; compare 1 Sam. 1: 13, "Eli counted her *for* one drunken," &c. &c. The apostle's meaning is obvious. 'The one shall be regarded and treated as though it were the other.'

(27) *And shall not uncircumcision, which is by nature, judge thee, &c.* Calvin and others make this verse part of the interrogation commenced in the preceding, and not a distinct question by itself. Either mode of interpretation is possible. As pointed and understood by our translators, this verse expresses more than the preceding one. The obedient Gentile would not only be accepted, although uncircumcised, but he would rise up and condemn the more favoured Jew. *Which is by nature*, i. e. which is natural. The interpretation which Grotius, who is followed by Koppe, gives of this clause, it obviously cannot bear. He connects the words *by nature* with the following clause, thus, 'if it fulfil by nature (i. e. by reason and the moral sense) the law, &c.' But the position of the words renders this interpretation impossible, if any regard is paid to the grammatical structure of the sentence. *Judge thee*, i. e. condemn thee, as this word is often used, see v. 1. Render thy condemnation and its justice more conspicuous. As

the men of Nineveh and the Queen of the south are to rise in judgment against the neglecters of Christ and his gospel and condemn them, Matt. 12: 41, 42. The Jew is here described as one 'who by the letter and circumcision transgresses the law.' The word for *letter* means not only an alphabetic character, but also any thing written; John 5: 7, "If they believe not his writings;" 2 Tim. 3: 15, "Thou hast known the sacred scriptures." It means here the *written law*, see v. 29, and ch. 7: 6, "Not according to the oldness of the letter," i. e. the old written law; 2 Cor. 3: 6, "Hath made us ministers, not of the letter, but of the spirit," that is, 'not of the written law, but of the spiritual dispensation.' The preposition rendered here *by*, "By the letter and circumcision," may often be rendered *with*, and should be so translated here; 'Who with the letter and circumcision,' that is, 'who, although possessed of the letter, i. e. the written law, and circumcision, art a transgressor of the law;' see ch. 4: 11. Heb. 9: 14, 'Who *with* an eternal Spirit, i. e. being possessed of an eternal Spirit, offered himself unto God;' 1 Cor. 14: 9. 2 Cor. 2: 4, "*With* many tears." The preposition in question, therefore, is often used to indicate the state, condition or circumstances in which any person or thing is placed, as 2 Cor. 3: 11, 'was *with* glory,' i. e. glorious, and 2 Cor. 6: 7, 8; see Wahl, p. 274. The words "letter and circumcision" might, by a common figure, be taken to mean literal circumcision; but this is, in the first place, unnecessary, and, in the second, not so well suited to the context, as nothing is said here of a spiritual circumcision, and as *the law* is too prominent a point in the advantages of the Jews to allow of the term which expresses it here, to be merged in a mere epithet.

(28, 29) *For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, &c.* These verses assign the reason why the external rite of circumcision can avail so little. God regards the heart, and not the external circumstances of men. This sentiment is expressed, first negatively, v. 28, and then affirmatively, v. 29. The word *Jew* is here, as in v. 17, to be taken in its religious sense. He is not a Jew, or a child of God, who is such by profession only, or in external appearance. Neither is the circumcision which is outward in the flesh, that on which the scriptures lay

so much stress, as when it is said "I will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your children, to love the Lord thy God," Deut. 30: 6. The sign is nothing without the spiritual blessing which it signifies. *But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly.* He only is really one of the people of God, who is such in heart; see 1 Peter 3: 4, where the word, which properly means *hidden, secret*, is also to be understood in the sense of *internal, inward*. *And circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter*, see Deut. 10: 16. The words *in the spirit, not in the letter*, are evidently explanatory of the circumcision of the heart of which the apostle is speaking; but they may be understood variously. *In the spirit* may mean *spiritual*, as relating to the spirit and not to the body, and *in the letter* would then mean *literal*; 'Circumcision of the heart which is spiritual and not literal.' Or *in the spirit* may be rendered *by the Spirit*. This gives a better sense, 'Circumcision of the heart which is effected by the Spirit, and not made after the direction of the written law;' compare Col. 2: 11. According to this view, the word rendered *letter*, retains the meaning it has in the preceding verses. The general sentiment, however, is, in either case, the same.

Whose praise is not of men, but of God. The word *whose* refers to the Jew just described. His excellence is internal, seen and acknowledged of God: not such as falls under the observation of men.*

Doctrines.

1. Membership in the true church, considered as a visible society, is no security that we shall obtain the favour of God. The Jews, before the advent, were members of the true and only church, and yet Paul teaches they were not on that account

* Many declarations might be quoted from Jewish authors to show that some of them at least were aware of the little value of the mere external rite of circumcision. There is a passage from R. Lipman, in libro Nizzachon, num. 21. p. 19, which, as Schoettgen remarks, he almost appears to have borrowed from the apostle. "The Christians mock us by saying, Women, who cannot be circumcised, are not to be regarded as Jews. But they are ignorant that faith does not depend on circumcision, but on the heart. Circumcision does not render him a Jew, who does not truly believe; and he who truly believes is a Jew, although he is not circumcised." And in the Talmud (Tract Nidda, fol. 20, 2) it is said, "The Jew is seated in the recesses of the heart." See SCHOETTGEN'S *Horae Hebraicae*, p. 500.

the more acceptable to God. Multitudes of Jewish converts were members of the apostolic church, and yet, retaining their former doctrines and spirit, were in the gall of bitterness, v. 17.

2. Mere knowledge cannot commend us to God. It neither sanctifies the heart, nor of itself renders men more useful. When made the ground of confidence, or the fuel of pride and arrogance, it is perverted and destructive, vs. 18—20.

3. Superior knowledge enhances the guilt of sin, and increases the certainty, necessity and severity of punishment, without in itself increasing the power of resistance. It is, therefore, a great mistake to make knowledge our sole dependence in promoting the moral improvement of men, vs. 18—20.

4. The sins of the professing people of God are peculiarly offensive to him, and injurious to our fellow men, vs. 22—24.

5. Here, as in the former part of the chapter, the leading idea is, that God is just. He asks not whether a man is a Jew or a Gentile, a Greek or Barbarian, bond or free, but what is his character? Does he *do* good or evil? vs. 17—24.

6. According to the apostle, the true idea of a sacrament is not that it is a mystic rite, possessed of inherent efficacy, or conveying grace as a mere *opus operatum*; but that it is a seal and sign, designed to confirm our faith in the validity of the covenant to which it is attached; and, from its significant character, to present and illustrate some great spiritual truth, v. 25.

7. All hopes are vain which are founded on a participation of the sacraments of the church, even when they are of divine appointment, as circumcision, baptism, and the Lord's supper; much more when they are of human invention, as penance, and extreme unction, vs. 26, 27.

8. Religion and religious services, to be acceptable to God, must be of the heart, mere external homage is of no account, vs. 28, 29.

Remarks.

1. The sins and refuges of men are alike in all ages. The Jew expected salvation because he was a Jew, so does the Catholic because he is a Catholic, the Greek because he is a Greek, and so of others. Were it ever so certain that the church to which we belong is the true, apostolic, universal

church, it remains no less certain that without holiness no man shall see God, v. 17, &c.

2. Having superior knowledge should make us anxious, first, to go right ourselves, and then to guide others right. To preach against evils which we ourselves commit, while it aggravates our guilt, is little likely to do others much good, v. 18, &c.

3. Christians should ever remember that they are the epistles of Jesus Christ, known and read of all men; that God is honoured by their holy living, and that his name is blasphemed when they act wickedly, vs. 23, 24.

4. Whenever true religion declines, the disposition to lay undue stress on external rites is increased. The Jews, when they lost their spirituality, supposed that circumcision had power to save them. 'Great is the virtue of circumcision,' they cried, 'no circumcised person enters hell.' The Christian church, when it lost its spirituality, taught that water in baptism washed away sin. How large a part of nominal Christians rest all their hopes on the idea of the inherent efficacy of external rites! v. 25, &c.

5. While it is one dangerous extreme to make religion consist in the observance of external ceremonies, it is another to undervalue them, when of divine appointment. Paul does not say that circumcision was useless; he asserts its value. So, likewise, the Christian sacraments, baptism and the Lord's supper, are of the utmost importance, and to neglect or reject them is a great sin, v. 26, &c.

6. If the heart be right in the sight of God, it matters little what judgment men may form of us; and, on the other hand, the approbation of men is a poor substitute for the favour of God, v. 29.

CHAPTER III.

Contents.

THIS chapter may be divided into three parts. The first contains a brief statement and refutation of the Jewish objections to the apostle's reasoning, vs. 1—8. The second, a confirma-

tion of his doctrine from the testimony of scripture; and a formal drawing out and declaration of his conclusion, that ‘by the works of the law no flesh living can be justified before God,’ vs. 9—20. The third, an exposition of the gospel method of justification, vs. 21—31.

CHAP. 3: 1—8.

Analysis.

THE first objection to Paul’s reasoning here presented is, that according to his doctrine, the Jew has no advantage over the Gentile, v. 1. The apostle denies the correctness of this inference from what he had said, and admits that the Jews have great advantages over all other people, v. 2. The second objection is, that God having promised to be the God of the Jews, their unfaithfulness, even if admitted, does not release him from his engagements, or make his promise of no effect, v. 3. Paul, in answer, admits that the faithfulness of God must not be called in question, let what will happen, vs. 4, 5; but he shows that the principle on which the Jews expected exemption from punishment, viz. because their unrighteousness commended the righteousness of God, was false. This he proves by showing first, that, if their principle was correct, God could not punish any one, Gentile or Jew, vs. 5, 6, 7; and secondly, that it would lead to this absurdity, that it is right to do evil that good may come, v. 8.

Commentary.

(1) *What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?* The conclusion at which the apostle had arrived at the close of the preceding chapter was, that the Jews, as well as Gentiles, are to be judged according to their works and by their knowledge of the divine will; and being thus judged, they are exposed to condemnation, notwithstanding their circumcision, and all other advantages. The most obvious objection to the mind of a Jew to this conclusion must have been, that it was inconsistent with the acknowledged privileges and superiority of his nation. This objection the apostle here presents. He states the difficulty himself, that he may have the opportunity of removing it. The word here rendered *advantage*, when used as a substantive, properly

means *that which is over, the excess*, and then *pre-eminence, superiority*. This is its meaning here, ‘what then is the pre-eminence of the Jew over the Gentile? according to your reasoning, there is no such thing;’ compare, on this word, Matt. 5: 47. 11: 9. Luke 7: 26. The second interrogation in this verse is nearly equivalent with the first; as circumcision may be taken as the sign of Judaism, ‘what is the profit of being a Jew?’ Still as Paul had considered circumcision in the preceding chapter as a distinct ground of confidence, and as the Jews attributed to it so much importance, it is probably to be understood here of the rite itself.

(2) *Much every way: chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God.* This is the answer to the objection presented in the first verse. It consists in a denial of the correctness of the inference from the apostle’s reasoning. It does not follow, because the Jews are to be judged according to their works, that there is no advantage in being the peculiar people of God, having a divine revelation, &c. &c. Paul, therefore, freely admits that the advantages of the Jews are great in every respect. The words rendered *chiefly*, may be variously explained. They may, by supplying the verb *is*, be rendered ‘the principal thing is;’ so Beza, Morus and others; see Luke 15: 22. 19: 47. Acts 25: 2. Or they may be taken, as by our translators, and rendered *chiefly, especially*; see Matt. 6: 33. 2 Peter 1: 20; or what is perhaps more natural, *in the first place*; ‘Their advantages are great, for first &c.’ That no enumeration follows, with *secondly*, is no objection to this rendering, for Paul often fails to carry out an arrangement with which he commences; see 1: 8. *Unto them were committed.* The construction of this clause, in the original, is one which frequently occurs in Paul’s epistles; see 1 Cor. 9: 17. Gal. 2: 7. 2 Thess. 2: 4. Titus 1: 3. *The oracles of God.* The Greek word for *oracles* is often used, in a restricted sense, for oracular or prophetic declarations; but in the Old and New Testament it occurs frequently in its general sense, for *words, any thing spoken*. See Num. 24: 4. Ps. 19: 14, “let the words of my mouth,” &c. Hence, in reference to divine communications of any kind; see Acts 7: 38. Heb. 5: 12, “The first principles of the oracles of God,” 1 Peter 4: 11. There is, therefore, no necessity for restricting the word here either to the prophecies

or promises of God. It is to be understood of all his divine communications, i. e. of the scriptures.

(3) *But what, if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?* This verse is very difficult. The apostle's manner of reasoning is often so concise, his transitions so abrupt, and his sentences at times so elliptical, that cases frequently occur in which his meaning is doubtful, and the reader has to choose between two or more possible interpretations. Thus, in the present instance, this verse may express either the sentiment of the apostle or of an objector. If the former, it may be variously explained. It may be a continuation of the answer to the objection contained in the first verse. 'The advantages of the Jews are very great, and even if, as I have proved to be the case, many of them are unfaithful, this does not invalidate the promises of God, or render less conspicuous the favours which they have received at his hand. Of them the Messiah has been born; through them the true religion is to be spread abroad; and they, as a nation, shall be ultimately restored, &c.' But this interpretation does not suit the context, nor the drift of the apostle's reasoning. He had not proved that some of them merely were unfaithful, and were to be cast off; it is not the subject of the rejection of the Jews so fully discussed in ch. 11, that he has here in hand, he had proved that they were *all* liable to condemnation; that their peculiar advantages could afford them no protection; that, as to the matter of justification, they and the Gentiles stood on the same ground. Paul's object, therefore, is not to reconcile their rejection as the people of God, with the divine promises and fidelity; this he does afterwards. It is the subject of justification of which he is now speaking.

It seems, therefore, more natural to consider this verse as expressing the sentiment of an objector, and that which follows as the apostle's answer. The objection is, that Paul's doctrine of the exposure of the Jews to condemnation, is inconsistent with God's promises. 'What if we have been unfaithful, or are as disobedient and wicked as you would make us appear, does that invalidate the promises of God? Must he be unfaithful too? Has he not promised to be our God, and that we should be his people? These are promises not suspended on our good or evil conduct.' In favour of this view, it may be urged,

that it was obviously one of the great grounds of confidence of the Jews, that they were the peculiar people of God. Their great objection to Paul's applying his general principles of justice to their case was, that they were not to be dealt with like other men. 'God has chosen us as his covenant people in Abraham. If we retain our relation to him by circumcision and the observance of the law, we shall never be treated or condemned as the Gentiles.' Traces of this opinion are to be seen in the New Testament, and its open avowal among the Jewish writers. Matt. 3: 9, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father." John 8: 33, "We be Abraham's seed." See ch. 2: 17. 9: 6, and other passages, in which Paul argues to prove, that being the natural descendants of Abraham is not enough to secure the favour of God. That such was the doctrine of the Jews, may be seen from the numerous passages from their writings, quoted by Eisenmenger, in his *Entdecktes Judenthum*, Part II. p. 293—4. For example, Abarbanel, in his book *Rosch Amanah*, fol. 5, says, that if a Jew commits all manner of sin, "He is, indeed, of the number of sinning Israelites, and will be punished according to his sins; but he has, notwithstanding, a portion in eternal life." The same sentiment is advanced in the book *Torath Adam*, fol. 100, in nearly the same words, and the reason assigned for it, "That all Israel has a portion in eternal life." This is a favourite Jewish phrase, and is frequently recurring in their writings. Justin Martyr, as quoted by Grotius on ch. 2: 13, attributes this doctrine to the Jews in the clearest terms, "They suppose that to them universally, who are of the seed of Abraham, no matter how sinful and disobedient to God they may be, the eternal kingdom shall be given." This interpretation, therefore, makes the verse in question present the objection which the Jews would be most likely to urge. A second consideration in its favour is, that the connexion with the following passage, vs. 4, 5, 6, is thus made much more natural and easy, as will appear from what follows. The words rendered *did not believe*, and *unbelief*, may, in perfect accordance with their meaning elsewhere, be rendered *were unfaithful*, and *unfaithfulness*. And this rendering is necessary to make the verse harmonious, and to express the apostle's meaning, 'What if some were unfaithful? Shall their unfaithfulness make

the faithfulness of God without effect? By the Jews being unfaithful, is not intended that they did not preserve the scriptures, which were committed to their care, but that they did not act agreeably to the relations in which they stood to God, were not faithful to their duties or advantages. It includes, therefore, every thing which the apostle had charged upon them as the ground of their condemnation. They were unfaithful to their part of the covenant between God and themselves.

(4) *God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, &c.* The objection presented in the preceding verse is, that the apostle's doctrine, as to the condemnation of the Jews, is inconsistent with the faithfulness of God. 'Is the faith of God without effect?' asks the objector.' 'By no means,' answers the apostle, 'such is no fair inference from my doctrine, let God be true, and every man a liar. There is no breach of the promises of God involved in the condemnation of wicked Jews. Those promises were made not to the natural, but to the spiritual seed of Abraham, and will all be accomplished to the letter, and, therefore, are not inconsistent with the condemnation of the unbelieving Jew.' All this, which is stated and urged at length in ch. 9—11, is included in the strong denial of the apostle that what he had taught was inconsistent with the divine faithfulness.

God forbid. These words, which occur so often in our version, are a most unhappy rendering of the original, which means simply *let it not be*, equivalent, therefore, with *by no means*, or *far from it*. It is a mode of expression constantly used to express a strong denial. The scriptures do not authorize such a use of the name of God, as this phrase shows to have been common among the English translators of the bible. *True*, as used in this verse, means *faithful*, as the context shows, and as the term elsewhere signifies, John 3: 33, &c.; and *liar* expresses the opposite, *unfaithful*. The sentiment is, let God be, i. e. be seen and acknowledged as faithful, let the consequences be what they may. 'This must be true, whatever else is false.' This disposition to justify God under all circumstances and at all events, Paul illustrates by the conduct of David, who acknowledged the justice of God in his own condemnation, and confesses, "Against thee only have I sinned; that thou mightest

be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged," i. e. that thy rectitude, under all circumstances, might be seen and acknowledged. In this quotation Paul follows the Septuagint translation of Ps. 51: 4. The Hebrew runs thus, 'That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.' The general sentiment is, in either case, the same, v. 12. God is just and will always be found to be so. It has been attempted to produce a strict agreement between Paul's language and the Hebrew, by taking the words rendered *in thy sayings*, as meaning *in thy causes*, and translating the passive form *when thou art judged*, actively, *when thou judgest*. But this the usage of the word will not allow; neither does it accord with the expression *that thou mightest overcome*, which cannot be said of a judge, though, as Wetstein shows, it is frequently said of him who succeeds in a trial. It is, moreover, unnecessary to attempt to force the passages into a verbal agreement. The sacred writers of the New Testament frequently quote passages from the Old, careful only to give the sense, without adhering strictly to the words.* According to that view of this passage, which makes v. 3 to express the sentiment of the apostle, the meaning of this verse must be somewhat differently presented. The Jews, Paul admits, have many advantages, v. 2. And even the unfaithfulness of a large part of their nation will not make God's promises of no effect. These promises cannot fail. Far from it, God must be faithful, let the consequences be what they may. Though, when stated thus generally, these verses seem to cohere naturally, yet, when they are considered in the form in which they are presented by the apostle, the other interpretation appears more consistent with the context, and the relation of the several parts of the passage to each other. 'My doctrine,' says Paul, 'is not inconsistent with the advantages of the Jews, which I admit to be various and great. But is it not inconsistent with the promises of God?' asks the Jew. 'By no means,' answers Paul; 'these are to be fully accomplished.' Here ends his answer; *how* the promises of God are consistent with the condemnation of the natural Israel, and their being

* Scimus apostolos in recitandis scripturae verbis saepe esse liberiores: quia satis habebant si ad rem apposite citarent; quare non tanta illis fuit verborum religio.—CALVIN.

judged according to the same general principles with the Gentiles, he shows at length in the appropriate place, towards the close of the epistle, ch. 9—11.

(5) *But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance? I speak as a man.* This is another cavilling objection of the Jew. 'Not only is God's fidelity pledged for our salvation, but the very fact of our being unrighteous will only render his righteousness the more conspicuous. And consequently it would be unjust in him to punish us for what glorified himself.' This passage is somewhat obscure from being presented in the interrogative form, and from being the language of the apostle, though expressing the sentiment of an objector. It is obvious, however, that the point of the argument is, that God cannot consistently punish those whose unrighteousness serves to display his own rectitude. It is easy to perceive that these objections all suppose the Jew to have felt secure, within the precincts of God's covenant with his forefathers. The fidelity of God rendered certain the bestowing of all promised blessings; and the unworthiness of the Jews, as it rendered the goodness and faithfulness of God the more conspicuous, was no reason why they should be condemned. The words *righteousness* and *unrighteousness* are generic terms, the one including all moral excellence, and the other just the reverse. What, therefore, before and after, is expressed by the more definite terms, *faithfulness* and *unfaithfulness*, *truth* and *falsehood*, is here expressed more generally. The word rendered *to commend*, signifies either to recommend, as one person to another, Rom. 16: 1; or to exhibit in a conspicuous manner; see 5: 8, "God commendeth his love towards us;" 2 Cor. 7: 11, "in all things ye have exhibited yourselves as clear in this matter;" Gal. 2: 18, "I make myself (exhibit myself) as a transgressor." This is obviously the meaning of the word in this case. 'If our unrighteousness render the righteousness of God conspicuous, what shall we say? What inference is to be drawn from this fact? Are we to infer that God is unrighteous who taketh vengeance? Far from it.' The word for *vengeance* is that which, in 1: 18. 2: 5, is rendered *wrath*, and here is obviously taken for its effect, i. e. *punishment*; 'who inflicts punishment.' In order to make it evident that he was not expressing

his own sentiments in using the language of this verse, Paul adds, *I speak as a man*. This phrase, which means, in general, 'as men are accustomed to speak' (or act), is of frequent occurrence, and is variously modified, as to its import by the context. It means, at times, 'in a manner adapted to the comprehension of men,' Rom. 6: 19; as when God is said to speak or act after the manner of men; or, secondly, 'as men generally speak and act,' i. e. wickedly, 1 Cor. 3: 3; or, as introducing an example or illustration from common life, 1 Cor. 9: 8. Gal. 3: 15; or, as in this instance, to intimate that the writer is not uttering his own sentiments, 'I speak as others speak,' 'I am using their language, not my own.' It was the Jew, and not the apostle who argued, that because our wickedness rendered the goodness of God the more conspicuous, therefore he could not punish us. Paul, in answer to this reasoning, and to the question whether, under such circumstances, God is unrighteous in taking vengeance, says :

(6) *God forbid, for then how shall God judge the world?*

The apostle denies that there is the least ground for this objection, and shows that if it is well founded, God cannot judge the world at all. By the world is not to be understood any one class exclusively, but men in general; though the Gentiles may have been specially intended. It is obvious that all men would escape punishment, if the principle were once admitted that God cannot punish any whose wickedness might be the occasion of magnifying any of his perfections. The Jews were sufficiently prepared to admit that the Gentiles are liable to punishment, and therefore must be convinced that a principle which exempted them from punishment must be false.

The word for *judge* may be taken either generally, 'how can he exercise the office of a judge over the world;' or, in the sense of *condemning*, 'how can he condemn the world.' *The world* would then mean specially the heathen, as opposed to the Jews, the nominal people of God. This term is often used in opposition to the church, or followers of Jesus Christ, as in John 15: 18, 'If the world hate you,' 'If ye were of the world,' &c. The former interpretation is, however, the more natural.

(7) *For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?*

This is a repetition, in a more definite form, of the sentiment of

the 5th verse. There the general terms righteousness and unrighteousness were used, here the more specific ones, *truth* and *falsehood*. The sentiment is the same. Paul assumes the person of the objector, and asks, 'Can I be justly treated as a sinner, when through my lie, or unfaithfulness to the covenant, the truth or fidelity of God is the more conspicuously displayed to his glory?' *The truth of God* may be taken as a general term of excellence; see 2: 8, where *truth* is the opposite of *unrighteousness*; or, in the sense of *veracity*, adherence to promises; compare ch. 15: 8. The word for *lie* is of course the opposite of the former, and means *perfidy*, want of fidelity. The particular term here used occurs no where else in the New Testament.

According to another interpretation, 'the truth of God' is taken for the true majesty of God; *lie* for idolatry, see Is. 57: 11. 59: 13, and *sinner* for idolater, see Gal. 2: 15. The sense would then be, 'If the divine majesty is the more displayed by my idolatry, why should I be punished as an idolater?' The apostle is thus made to personate a heathen, to show that the principle urged by the Jew in v. 5, was as available for the heathen as for him. Though this view of the passage gives a sense pertinent to the apostle's object, and consistent with the context, yet it attaches such remote significations to the several terms, that it is evidently forced and unnatural. *Hath more abounded*, i. e. 'appeared as more abundant,' 'been seen as such;' or the word may be taken in the sense of excelling, as in Matt. 5: 20, "unless your righteousness excel the righteousness of the scribes, &c.;" 1 Cor. 8: 8, "neither if we eat are we the better, &c." 'If God's truth is the greater, the more conspicuous, &c. to his glory;' i. e. so that he is glorified. *Why am I yet also judged as a sinner*; i. e. condemned, or punished as such.

(8) *And not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.* The sense of this verse is obvious, though the grammatical construction of the original is irregular. One of the simplest and most common methods of resolving the passage, is to supply the word *say*. 'Why not *say* at once (as some slanderously affirm that we say) Let us do

evil that good may come.* A second method is the following: 'Why not let us do evil that good may come, as some slanderously affirm that we teach.† Paul here, most probably, as often elsewhere, changes the construction of the sentence in his progress through it; see Gal. 2: 3—5. He seems to have intended to say, 'Why not let us do evil, &c.;" but having interrupted himself, he makes the latter clause grammatically dependent on the word *say* in the parenthesis, instead of connecting it with the words with which the sentence commences. It, therefore, stands thus, 'And why not (as some slanderously affirm that we say) that we may do evil that good may come. See Winer's Grammatik, p. 434. Our version skilfully avoids the difficulty, and presents the meaning clearly.

Whose condemnation, &c., that is, the condemnation of those who adopt the principle, that it is right to do evil that good may come; not those who slandered the apostle. This verse contains Paul's answer to the principle on which the wicked Jews hoped for exemption from punishment. 'Our unfaithfulness serves to commend the faithfulness of God, therefore we ought not to be punished. According to this reasoning,' Paul answers, 'The worse we are the better. For the more wicked we are, the more conspicuous will be the mercy of God in our pardon; we may, therefore, do evil that good may come.' Paul frequently, as here, recognizes the authority of the instinctive moral feelings of men. He has reduced the reasoning of the Jews to a conclusion shocking to the moral sense, and has thereby refuted it. Having thus demonstrated that the Jews cannot expect exemption on the ground of being the peculiar people of God, except on principles incompatible with the government of the world, and inconsistent with the plainest moral truths, he draws, in the next verse, the conclusion, that the Jew, as to the matter of justification, has no pre-eminence over the Gentile.

* *Ecliptica est oratio, in qua subaudiendum est verbum: plena erit, si ita resolves, Et cur non potius dicitur (quemadmodum exprobatnr nobis), quod faciendæ sint mala, ut eveniant bona?—CALVIN.*

† *Cur non agemus mala, ut inde tantum bonum, Dei scilicet gloria, proveniat? Est transpositio quales multæ apud Hebræos: μή ὄρα pro ὄρα μή cur non.—GRIECCIUS.*

Doctrines.

1. The advantages of membership, even of the external church, and of a participation of its ordinances, are very numerous and great, vs. 1, 2.

2. The great advantage of the Christian over the heathen world, and of the members of a visible ecclesiastical body over others not so situated, is the greater amount of divine truth presented to their understandings and hearts, v. 2.

3. All the writings which the Jews, at the time of Christ and his apostles, regarded as inspired, are really the word of God, v. 2.

4. No promise or covenant of God can ever be rightfully urged in favour of exemption from the punishment of sin, or of impunity to those who live in it. God is faithful to his promises, but he never promises to pardon the impenitently guilty, vs. 3, 4.

5. God will make the wrath of men to praise him. Their unrighteousness will commend his righteousness, without, on that account, making its condemnation less certain or less severe, vs. 5, 6.

6. Any doctrine inconsistent with the first principles of morals must be false, no matter how plausible the metaphysical argument in its favour. And that mode of reasoning is correct, which refutes such doctrines by showing their inconsistency with moral truth, v. 8.

Remarks.

1. We should feel the peculiar responsibilities which rest upon us as the inhabitants of a Christian country, as the members of the Christian church, and possessors of the word of God; as such, we enjoy advantages for which we shall have to render a strict account, vs. 1, 2.

2. It is a mark of genuine piety, to be disposed always to justify God and to condemn ourselves. On the other hand, a disposition to self-justification and the extenuation of our sins, however secret, is an indication of a want of a proper sense of our own unworthiness and of the divine excellence, vs. 4, 5.

3. Beware of any refuge from the fear of future punishment,

founded upon the hope that God will clear the guilty, or that he will not judge the world and take vengeance for our sins, vs. 6, 7.

4. There is no better evidence against the truth of any doctrine, than that its tendency is immoral. And there is no greater proof that a man is wicked, that his condemnation is just, than that he does evil that good may come. There is commonly, in such cases, not only the evil of the act committed, but that of hypocrisy and duplicity also, v. 8.

5. Speculative and moral truths, which are believed on their own evidence as soon as they are presented to the mind, should be regarded as authoritative and as fixed points in all reasonings. When men deny such first principles, or attempt to push beyond them to a deeper foundation of truth, there is no end to the obscurity, uncertainty and absurdity of their speculations. What God forces us from the very constitution of our nature to believe, as, for example, the existence of the external world, our own personal identity, the difference between good and evil, &c., it is at once a violation of his will and of the dictates of reason to deny or to question. Paul assumed, as an ultimate fact, that it is wrong to do evil that good may come, v. 8.

CHAP. 3: 9—20.

Analysis.

THE apostle having answered the objections to his argument in proof that the Jews, being sinners in the sight of God, are, as such, exposed to condemnation, draws in v. 9, the obvious conclusion, that they have, as to the matter of justification, no pre-eminence over the Gentile. He confirms his doctrine of the universal sinfulness of men, by numerous quotations from the Old Testament. These passages are descriptive of their depravity in the general, vs. 10—12; and then of its special manifestations in sins of the tongue, vs. 13, 14, and sins of conduct, vs. 15—18. The conclusion of all this reasoning, from consciousness, experience and scripture, is that "all the world is guilty before God," v. 19; and the necessary consequence, "no flesh can be justified by the deeds of the law," v. 20.

Commentary.

(9) *What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise.* 'What then,' asks the apostle, 'is the conclusion from all this reasoning as to the moral state and character of the Jews and Gentiles? Are we Jews better off, or more favourably situated than they? By no means.' Our version of the word rendered *are we better*, expresses, perhaps with sufficient accuracy, the meaning of the apostle. The word probably signifies here *do we excel*, and as the connexion shows, do we excel as to the point under discussion, are we more favourably situated as to obtaining the divine favour? That, as to other points, the Jews did excel, or had many advantages, Paul had freely admitted, but as to his justification before God, he and the Gentiles stood on precisely the same level. The word, however, here used, occurs no where else in the New Testament, and, in the particular form in which it appears, may be rendered as active, or passive, or middle. In the active form the word which literally signifies *to have*, or *hold before*, very often means *to excel*; but no example is produced of its having this sense in the middle form, which is here used. In this form it signifies *to have* or *hold before oneself* as a shield, or, figuratively, *a pretext* or *excuse*. Accordingly, many would so render it here, 'have we any pretext or defence, any thing to ward off the divine displeasure?' By no means, is the apostle's answer. This gives a good sense. The other version, 'do we defend, or shall we defend ourselves?' which the middle form admits, does not suit the context. Wetstein takes it as a passive, 'are we excelled?' but this too is not in harmony with the argument. In favour of the common interpretation, which gives to the middle form the same sense with the active, *do we excel*, is the concurrent testimony of all the ancient versions and Greek and Latin interpreters, and its suitableness to the context.

The reason why the Jews are declared to be no better off than the Gentiles, as far as justification is concerned, is given in the next clause. *For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.* The word rendered *to prove*, signifies *to bring a charge against any one*; and here, *to substantiate an accusation*. Paul had not only accused, but established the truth of the accusation, that the Jews

and Gentiles were all *under sin*. This latter phrase may signify *to be under the power of sin*; or *under its guilt*, as the word *sin* often signifies *guilt of sin*, see 1 Cor. 15: 17. John 15: 22; compare such passages as Gal. 3: 10. Rom. 7: 25. 6: 14. 7: 14, &c. &c. Both ideas are here probably included, Paul had proved that all were *sinner*s, that is, corrupt and exposed to condemnation.

Verses 10—18 contain the confirmation of the truth of the universal sinfulness of men, by the testimony of scripture. These passages are not to be found consecutively in any one place in the Old Testament, but are quoted from several. Verses 10—12 are from Ps. 14: 53; v. 13, from Ps. 5: 10; v. 14, from Ps. 10: 7; vs. 15—17, from Isaiah 59: 7, 8; and v. 18, from Ps. 36: 1. These passages, it will be perceived, are of two classes; the one general, descriptive of the whole human race as wicked; the other special, referring to particular prevalent sinful acts as evidence of the general sinfulness of men, on the principle ‘by their fruits ye shall know them.’ This method of reasoning is legitimate and common. The national character of any people is proved by a reference to the special acts by which it is manifested. It is not necessary that every inhabitant of France, for example, should manifest his gaiety by dancing, to make the argument good from the prevalence of this amusement, that gaiety is a national trait of the French character. So it is not necessary to prove that every man manifests his wickedness by shedding blood, to make the prevalence of this and kindred crimes a proof that men are, as a race, corrupt.

(10) *As it is written: There is none righteous, no, not one.* This is a general declaration of the universal wickedness of men. The two ideas contained in this proposition are expressed in the following verses. All are destitute of piety, v. 11; and all are consequently immoral, v. 12.

(11) *There is none that understandeth*, i. e. who sees things in their true nature; who has right apprehensions of God. Right views of truth are uniformly, because necessarily attended with right affections towards it. Hence, ‘understanding’ is in the scriptures so often used for religion, see on ch. 1: 21; and hence, as an amplification of the phrase, ‘there is none that understandeth,’ Paul adds, *there is none that seeketh after God*,

which expresses all those exercises of desire and worship, consequent on the discovery of the divine excellence.

(12) *They are all gone out of the way.* Blinded by sin to the perfections and loveliness of God and truth, they have turned from the way which he has prescribed, and which leads to himself, and have made choice of another way and of another portion. *They are together become unprofitable*, i. e. useless, worthless, corrupt. The last is the literal meaning of the Hebrew word used in the passage quoted, Ps. 14: 3. *There is none that doeth good, no, not one.* Universal corruption of morals is the consequence of universal apostasy from God, see ch. 1: 24, 26, 28.

(13, 14) These verses present that evidence of the sinfulness of men which consists in the universal prevalence, under some form or other, of evil speaking. *Their throat is an open sepulchre*, i. e. from their throat issue words as offensive and pestiferous as the tainted breath of an open grave; or, what from the next clause may appear probable, 'their throat is always open, and ready to devour like the insatiable and insidious grave.' They injure by deceit and slander, which is the poison of asps. *Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness*, i. e. of bitter execration, expressive of malignity towards men, and impiety towards God.

(15—17) Contain the argument for the apostle's doctrine, derived from the prevalence of sins of violence. *Their feet are swift to shed blood*; they frequently, and without compunction commit murder and violence. *Destruction and misery are in their ways*, i. e. mark their path. *The way of peace they have not known.* 'The way of peace' means the way which leads to peace or happiness. Here the happiness of others is principally intended. 'They do not pursue that course which is productive of happiness.' This clause, therefore, includes all the manifestations of an evil heart, which are seen in the numberless ways in which men injure their fellow creatures.

(18) Is again a general declaration of unrestrained wickedness. *There is no fear of God before their eyes.* They are not actuated by any regard to the will or displeasure of God. Religious considerations have no force in the government of their conduct.

(19) *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law.* The Hebrew word usually translated *law*, means *instruction*, and is used for any intimation of the will of God designed for the direction of men; see Is. 1: 8. 8: 16. Prov. 1: 8, &c. &c. It depends on the context whether reference be had to the general rule of duty which he has prescribed, or to some one of its parts more or less extended. In like manner the apostle uses the corresponding Greek word almost uniformly in the sense of the rule of duty; whether written in the heart, contained in the whole of the scriptures of the Old Testament, or in some of its parts. It is generally easy, from the context, to determine what law, or rather what part of the law, or rule of duty, he has in each case specially in view. Here it is obvious that *the law* means the scriptures which contain the will of God revealed for our obedience. These passages quoted above are taken not from the Pentateuch, or law, in its more restricted sense, but from the Psalms and Prophets; see John 10: 34. 1 Cor. 14: 21, &c. *Those who are under the law*, see 2: 12. 1 Cor. 9: 20. ‘What the scriptures say concerning the character of men, they must be understood as saying of those to whom they are specially directed.’ The Jews cannot pretend that the passages quoted above have reference to the Gentiles; being found in their own law, and addressed to them, they must be considered as indicating the light in which their character and conduct were viewed by God.

That every mouth may be stopped, i. e. that men may be deprived of all excuse, completely reduced to silence. *And the whole world become guilty before God.* The word rendered *guilty* is applied to one who has lost his cause, or who has been convicted, or found guilty. The result, therefore, at which the apostle has arrived, the conclusion of his argument, from consciousness, experience and scripture, is, that the whole world is *guilty before God*, i. e. in his judgment or estimation. *The whole world* must, in this connexion, include both Jews and Gentiles, because the preceding argument had related to both classes, and in what follows reference is also had to both.

(20) *Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, &c.* Compare Ps. 143: 2, “Enter not into judgment with thy servant (bring him not to trial); for in thy

sight (before thee as judge) shall no man living be justified," i. e. acquitted; not pardoned merely, but pronounced just, declared to be such as the law requires. This is the very idea of the word *just* or *righteous*, one who is *right*, or conformed to the rule of judgment.* Hence, *just works*, 1 John 3: 12, are works conformed to the law. *To justify*, then, is to declare just, to pronounce righteous according to the standard of the law. This is what the Psalmist says no man living can expect, when called into trial at the bar of God; it is what Paul says can be declared of no flesh on the ground of the deeds of the law. The word, as used in the Old Testament, does not, in its simple form, mean *to be pure* or *morally good*, so much as *to be in the right*; see Gen. 36: 26, "She is more in the right than I;" Job. 9: 15, "Though I were in the right I would not answer;" 13: 18, "I know that I am in the right," that the law is on my side. In its other forms (Piel and Hiphil) it signifies, to declare one to be in the right, or to be right according to the standard. Job 33: 32, "If thou hast any thing to say, speak, for I desire to justify thee;" to pronounce thee to be right, what the law requires; Is. 5: 23, "Which justify the wicked for reward," who pronounce the wicked to be in the right, "and who take away the righteousness of the righteous from him," i. e. who deprive those who are in the right, of the benefits of being so; Prov. 17: 15, "He that justifieth the wicked, and condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord." All these terms, righteous, righteousness, to justify, and to condemn, are forensic expressions, and are mutually illustrative. The first is the predicate of one who is what the law demands, or who is in the right; Ex. 9: 27, "The Lord is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong;" 23: 8, "A gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous," i. e. causes the plea of him who is in the right to be disregarded. A righteous judge, a righteous judgment, a righteous man, and a righteous action are such as are conformable to the law; see 2 Tim. 4: 16. John 7: 24. Luke 12: 57. Rom. 2: 13. *Righteousness*, consequently, means both the character and state of

* Δίκαιος is thus defined by Wahl: *omnibus numeris absolutus;—qui talis est, qualis esse debet.*

Gerecht, was so ist wie es seyn soll.—NEANDER, Geschichte der Pflanzung, &c. p. 506.

one who is righteous. Sometimes the one and sometimes the other idea is expressed by the term. It is that which the law demands; when spoken of men, it is that disposition or character which makes them what they ought to be;* and which entitles them to the benefits which belong to those who have fulfilled the law, see ch. 1: 17. It is, hence, often used for the state of those who are thus righteous, Is. 5: 23. Gal. 3: 21, &c. *To justify* is to declare just or righteous in the sense just stated; it is to pronounce one to be what the law demands, and, consequently, entitled to the benefits which belong to those who are thus righteous;† see the passages above quoted. Hence, ‘to be righteous before God,’ and ‘to be justified in his sight,’ are precisely synonymous, ch. 2: 13. And ‘to attribute righteousness,’ or to ascribe to any one the excellence which the law demands, and to recognize his claim to be treated accordingly, is the precise idea of justification, and is, therefore, interchanged with the term to justify. Rom. 4: 6, “Blessedness of the man to whom the God imputeth (ascribes) righteousness without works;” v. 11, “That righteousness might be imputed (ascribed) unto them also,” &c. &c. So also ‘to constitute righteous,’ Rom. 5: 19, is to justify; it is to regard and treat as having righteousness in the sense just described. *To condemn*, on the other hand, is to pronounce guilty, and to treat accordingly; it is to declare one to be such as the law forbids, and worthy of the punishment which it threatens, Ex. 22: 9. Deut. 25: 1. The word, used in those and other similar passages, means literally *to make or declare wicked*; Ps. 94: 21, “Who declare and treat the innocent as wicked;” compare Ps. 109: 7, “When he is judged, let him be condemned,” literally, *go out as wicked*; Job 27: 7, “Let mine enemy be as the wicked,” i. e. as one brought in guilty, regarded and treated as wicked. See Prof. Bush’s Commentary on the Psalms, Ps. 1: 1.

What Paul, therefore, affirms in this verse, is, that no man

* *Indoles ejus, qui talis est, qualis esse debet.*—W_{AHL}.

“By the name *δικαιοσύνη* (righteousness) was intended, in the Old Testament sense of the term, that perfect theocratical disposition and conduct, with which was connected, together with complete theocratical citizenship, and claim to all the benefits which belonged to the members of the theocracy, a title to perfect blessedness.”—NEANDER, *Geschichte der Pflanzung*, &c. p. 504.

† *Talem aliquem agnosco, declaro et tracto, qualem esse debet.*—W_{AHL}.

can, in the sight of God, be regarded as righteous, and entitled to be treated as such, on the ground of his obedience to the law. This assertion, considered as an inference from the preceding reasoning, is founded on two assumptions, both of which are involved in the very nature of the law. The first is, that the law demands perfect obedience; the second, that its penalty must be inflicted. The former must be assumed, because, otherwise, the mere proof that all men have broken the law, is no proof that the law may not acquit them, because only a certain amount of transgression would, on this supposition, lead to condemnation. The latter must also be taken for granted, for if there is no forfeiture of good consequent on transgression, what is the meaning of condemnation? There is no practical difference between being justified and being condemned, if the former does not include the communication of good, and the latter the infliction of evil. In proving all men to be sinners, Paul proved them to be liable to punishment, which, of course, implies that punishment is to be connected with sin; or that "the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness." This principle is the basis of all his reasoning. On this rests his argument from the universality of sin to the universality of exposure to wrath, v. 9, and the inference from the universal guilt of men to the necessity of the Saviour and his sacrifice which he proceeds to exhibit. 'Therefore,' says the apostle, 'seeing all men are sinners, and, being sinners, exposed to the wrath of God, it is impossible that they should be pronounced just by the very law which pronounces them unjust.' To prove a man a sinner, is to prove that the law condemns him for his works, of course it cannot justify him for his works. To say that a man is a sinner, therefore, is to say that he cannot be justified by the deeds of the law. *Deeds of the law* are, of course, such deeds as the law prescribes. The law, of which Paul here speaks, is the will of God revealed for man's obedience, the universal rule of duty, see v. 19. That it is not to be restricted to the Mosaic law, as though ceremonial works alone were intended, is evident, 1. Because Paul is here speaking of "the whole world," of "all flesh," of Gentiles as well as Jews. The former had nothing to do with the Mosaic law. Why should Paul affirm that they could not be justified by a law which was never obligatory upon them? 2. He had just used

the word *law*, not in reference to the Mosaic institutions, but to the scriptures of the Old Testament, which contained the whole revealed will of God. The works of which he speaks, are works prescribed by this law, and comprehend, of course, all moral duties. 3. The Jews never made the distinction between the moral and ceremonial law, which the opposite interpretation supposes. To them, obedience to the Mosaic ritual was as much a moral duty as any thing else could be. They certainly, therefore, would understand the apostle as meaning by the phrase "works of the law," works of obedience to God generally; consequently, this must be his meaning. 4. There is, in fact, no ground for the distinction in reference to this case; because obedience to the divine command is always a moral act, whether that command be a *positive* one, or have its foundation in the reason and nature of things. 5. The whole context and drift and object of the epistle require this interpretation. The works of the Jews and Gentiles, of which he had been speaking, were moral works; the law which they had broken was the moral law; it is that law which he proves can neither justify nor sanctify, which produces conviction of sin, which says, 'Thou shalt not covet,' which is 'holy, just and good,' and which is exceeding broad. 6. The argument of the apostle would otherwise be inconsistent and inconclusive. How can the universal sinfulness of men prove that ritual observances cannot save them? It proves that they cannot be justified on the ground of their own character and conduct, but not that this or that class of works is insufficient. Is it the doctrine of the New Testament, that mere ceremonial works cannot save us, but that moral obedience can? Is the deliverance which Christ has effected, a deliverance from the bondage of the Mosaic system merely? Is it the law of Moses only from which Christ died to redeem us? It would seem that but little insight into the meaning of the scriptures, or the nature of religion, were necessary to lead us to answer these questions in the negative. 7. The objections to Paul's doctrine all suppose the moral law to be here intended. In the sixth chapter, the objection, which the apostle answers, is not that the neglect of the law of Moses must lead to licentiousness, but that if good works are not necessary to salvation, as the ground of our acceptance, men will live in sin. 8. What is here said of works

of the law, is elsewhere said of works generally; 2 Tim. 2: 9, "Who hath saved us not according to (or on account of) our works;" Titus 3: 5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us;" Eph. 2: 9, "We are saved by faith not by works;" see Rom. 4: 2, &c. &c. This point has been dwelt on at greater length, because it is one of the hinges to the exposition of the epistle, and of the whole plan of the gospel. If, as Pelagius, Erasmus, Grotius, and a multitude of other commentators say, ceremonial works only are intended here, and in other similar passages, then is the gospel one thing; but if moral as well as ceremonial works are excluded by the apostle from being the ground of our justification, then is it another and a very different thing. Most of the arguments mentioned above are valid against the doctrine of many of the Catholic divines, that Paul has reference to works done before regeneration only, and not to those which flow from a renewed heart. Such works, however, are surely "works of righteousness," which, the apostle says, are not the ground of our acceptance. Besides, this distinction is altogether arbitrary. Paul does not make it. By the "works of the law," he intends those works which the law of God, or the whole rule of duty prescribes. These, of course, are all moral duties of every kind. To make the apostle mean that the moral law, as an external, objective, and authoritative presentation of the will of God, cannot call forth moral exercises really holy and acceptable, is to confound entirely the doctrine of justification and sanctification. The truth here suggested, Paul does, indeed, abundantly teach in the 6th and 7th chapters of this epistle; but it is at the expense of every sound rule of interpretation that this meaning is forced upon such expressions as those of this verse. The whole of the first five chapters of the epistle is employed in stating, illustrating and defending the great truth, that the ground of a sinner's acceptance is not in himself; it is nothing subjective, no state of mind, no works of morality or form, nothing produced in him or done by him; but something done for him, something out of himself which he must accept, and upon which he must rely. Paul does not make a distinction between 'works of the law' and 'good works.' The passage in Eph. 2: 9, 10, referred to in proof of

this point, contains no such sentiment. Paul says, "By grace are ye saved through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." There is no distinction here between 'works' and 'good works.' They are evidently the same. 'We are not saved for our works, though it is the will of God that we should walk in them, and he has created us anew in Christ Jesus for this very purpose.' Besides, Paul expressly excludes all works, without distinction, and works of righteousness by name, as any part of the ground of our acceptance, (see the passages quoted above). And yet 'righteousness' was, as Neander admits, the highest term of excellence* with the apostle. 'Works of righteousness,' therefore, are good works in the highest sense of the term. The distinguished writer just mentioned seems to understand Paul as teaching that the law, as an external rule of duty, was unable to produce, in fallen man, a righteousness of any avail before God; all works done under its influence are deficient in the right disposition; they lack the living principle of holiness. Had there been a law capable of producing the divine life in the soul, righteousness would have been of the law, Gal. 3: 21. But as this was out of its power, God has accomplished this object through the gospel of his Son; see *Geschichte der Pflanzung*, &c. p. 503—10. This is transferring what Paul teaches in ch. 6th and 7th, on the doctrine of sanctification, to what he says on justification. That Paul does teach that the law cannot produce spiritual life, is readily admitted; but this idea is foreign to the whole of the first part of the epistle, and is never presented by him in connexion with the doctrine of justification. It is entirely at variance with all his declarations and arguments, as to the insufficiency of all works of every kind, to recommend us to God, and of the absolute necessity of the works and death of Christ, to secure the divine favour, whence springs the fountain of spiritual life. Our holiness flows from our acceptance, and not our acceptance

* Auch von seinem christlichen Standpunkte galt ihm das Prädikat eines *δικαιος* als das höchste, welches einem Menschen ertheilt werden konnte. See p. 505 of his work just quoted. Accordingly, in a note to the passage here cited, he says he cannot admit that *ἀγαθός* in Rom. 5: 7, expresses a higher degree of moral excellence than *δικαιος*.

from our holiness.* The conclusion, then, at which the apostle has arrived, is, that by no obedience which men can render to the law of God, can they be justified in his sight.

For by the law is the knowledge of sin. As the law was not designed or adapted for the justification of sinners, Paul briefly stated its real object and use. The law produces the recognition of sin in its true nature and consequences. It leads to the conviction of its exceeding turpitude, and desert of punishment. When the law has produced this result, it has prepared us for the reception of the gospel.

Doctrines.

1. However men may differ among themselves as to individual character, as to outward circumstances, religious or social, when they appear at the bar of God, all appear on the same level. All are sinners, and being sinners, are exposed to condemnation, v. 9.

2. The general declarations of the scriptures descriptive of the character of men, before the advent of Christ, are applicable to men in all ages of the world, because they describe human nature. They declare what fallen man is. As we recognize the descriptions of the human heart, given by profane writers a thousand years ago, as suited to its present character, so the

* Neque vero me latet, Augustinum secus exponere; justitiam enim Dei esse putat regenerationis gratiam; et hanc gratuitam esse fatetur, quia Dominus immerentes Spiritu suo nos renovat. Ab hac autem opera legis excludit, hoc est quibus homines a seipsis citra renovationem conantur Deum promereri. Mihi etiam plus satis notum est, quosdam novos speculatores hoc dogma superciliose proferre quasi hodie sibi revelatum. Sed apostolum omnia sine exceptione opera complecti, etiam quae Dominus in suis efficit, ex contextu planum fiet. Nam certe regeneratus erat Abraham, et Spiritu Dei agebatur quo tempore justificatum fuisse operibus negat. Ergo a justificatione hominis non opera tantum moraliter bona (ut vulgo appellant) et quae fiunt naturae instinctu excludit, sed quaecunque etiam fideles habere possunt. Deinde si illa est justitiae fidei definitio, Beati quorum remissae sunt iniquitates, Pa. 32: 1; non disputatur de hoc vel illo genere operum; sed abolito operum merito sola peccatorum remissio justitiae causa statuitur. Putant haec duo optime convenire, fide justificari hominem per Christi gratiam; et tamen operibus justificari, quae ex regeneratione spirituali proveniant; quia et gratuito nos Deus renovat, et ejus donum fide percipimus. At Paulus longe aliud principium sumit: nunquam scilicet tranquillae fore conscientias, donec in solam Dei misericordiam recumbant; ideo alibi postquam docuit Deum fuisse in Christo, ut homines justificaret, modum simul exprimit, non imputando illis peccata.—CALVIN.

inspired description suits us, as well as those for whom it was originally intended, vs. 10—18.

3. Piety and morality cannot be separated. If men do not understand, if they have no fear of God before their eyes, they become altogether unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, vs. 10—12.

4. The office of the law is neither to justify nor to sanctify. It convinces and condemns. All efforts to secure the favour of God, therefore, by legal obedience, must be vain, v. 20.

Remarks.

1. As God regards the moral character in men, and as we are all sinners, no one has any reason to exalt himself over another. With our hands upon our mouth, and our mouth in the dust, we must all appear as guilty before God, v. 9.

2. The scriptures are the message of God to all to whom they come. They speak general truths which are intended to apply to all to whom they are applicable. What they say of sinners, as such, they say of all sinners; what they promise to believers, they promise to all believers. They should, therefore, ever be read with a spirit of self-application, vs. 10—18.

3. To be prepared for the reception of the Gospel, we must be convinced of sin, humbled under a sense of its turpitude, silenced under a conviction of its condemning power, and prostrated at the foot-stool of mercy, under a feeling that we cannot satisfy the demands of the law, that if ever saved, it must be by other merit and other power than our own, v. 20.

CHAPTER 3: 21—31.

Analysis.

HAVING proved that justification, on the ground of legal obedience or personal merit, is for all men impossible, Paul proceeds to unfold the method of salvation presented in the gospel. With regard to this method, he here teaches, 1. Its nature. 2. The ground on which the offer of justification is made. 3. Its object. 4. Its results.

I. As to its nature, he teaches, 1. That the righteousness which it proposes is not attainable by works, but by faith, vs.

21, 22. 2. That it is adapted to all men; Jews as well as Gentiles, since there is no difference as to their moral state, vs. 22, 23. 3. It is entirely gratuitous, v. 24.

II. As to its ground, it is the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, or Jesus Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice, vs. 24, 25.

III. Its object, the display of the divine perfections, and the reconciliation of the justice of God, with the exhibition of mercy to the sinner, v. 26.

IV. Its results. 1. It humbles man by excluding all ground of boasting, vs. 27, 28. 2. It presents God in his true character as the God and father of all men, of the Gentile no less than the Jew, vs. 29, 30. 3. It confirms the law, v. 31.

Commentary.

(21) *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, &c.* Having demonstrated that no flesh could be justified by the deeds of the law in the sight of God, the apostle proceeds to show how the sinner can be justified. With regard to this point, he teaches, in this verse, 1. That the righteousness which is acceptable to God is not a legal righteousness; and 2. That it had been taught already in the Old Testament. The words *but now* may be regarded as merely marking the transition from one paragraph to another, or as a designation of time, *now*, i. e. under the gospel dispensation. In favour of this view is the phrase, "to declare, *at this time*, his righteousness," in v. 26; compare also 1: 17. *Is manifested*, i. e. clearly made known, equivalent with the phrase *is revealed*, as used in 1: 17. The words *righteousness of God*, are subjected here to the same diversity of interpretation that was noticed in the passage just cited, where they first occur. They may mean, 1. A divine attribute, the justice, mercy, or general rectitude of God. 2. That righteousness which is acceptable to God, which is such in his estimation. 3. God's method of justification; see note on 1: 17. The last interpretation gives here a very good sense, and is one very commonly adopted. 'The method of justification by works being impossible, God has revealed another, already taught indeed both in the law and prophets, a method which is not legal (without law), i. e. not on the condition of obedience to the law, but on the condition of faith, which is applicable to all men, and perfectly gratuitous,' vs. 21—24. But

for the reasons given on ch. 1: 17, the second interpretation is to be preferred. The term *righteousness* is employed to designate all that excellence which is demanded by the law, and which entitles to all the blessings of a state of justification, and frequently includes the idea of this blessedness itself, i. e. the blessedness of the state of complete favour with God; see above, on v. 20. The phrase *righteousness of God*, then means that righteousness with its consequent blessings, of which God is the author, which is of avail before God, which meets and secures his approbation.* This interpretation is perfectly consistent with the context. 'As men cannot attain to righteousness by the deeds of the law, God has revealed in the gospel another righteousness, which is not legal, but which is to be attained by faith, which is offered to all men, Gentiles as well as Jews, and which is entirely gratuitous.'

The words *without the law* are to be connected with the phrase *righteousness of God*. It is a righteousness of God without the law, i. e. the works of the law; see the full phrase, v. 28; compare Gal. 2: 16. It is a righteousness not attainable by obedience to the law. *Being testified by the law and the prophets. Testified*, i. e. taught, because the teaching of in-

* "Δικαιοσύνη τοῦ Θεοῦ objective: *virtus Deo probata—pietas omnibus numeris absoluta et favore beneficiisque divinis digna: Virtue that is pure, perfect, acceptable to God, worthy of reward, or, merit with God, acceptableness to God, conduct, which is regarded by God as meritorious; Rom. 1: 17. 3: 21, 22, 25, 26. 10: 3.*"—WAHL'S Clavis, Nov. Test.

Δικαιοσύνη bezeichnete ihm (Paul) das vollständige Geeignetseyn zur Theilnahme, an allen Rechten und Gütern der Theokratie und demnach der Seligkeit, der ζωῆ. 'Paul understands by δικαιοσύνη, perfect fitness for a participation of all the rights and blessings of the theocracy (or Messiah's kingdom), and, consequently, of salvation, or ζωῆ.'—NEANDER, Geschichte der Pflanzung, &c. p. 505; compare the passage quoted above, p. 129.

So likewise STORR, in his dissertation on the word *δικαιος*, Opuscula, Vol. I. p. 213, 214. After stating that the righteousness (i. e. probitas et beatitas, excellence and blessedness), described by Moses (Rom. 10: 5), not being attainable by the law, Paul proposes to believers another, viz. 'the righteousness which is of faith,' or, more briefly, 'the righteousness of faith,' which is 'through faith,' or which is obtained on the condition of faith, he remarks, "Quumque igitur δικαιοσύνη πίστει sit divinae gratiae munus, quod non peti potest nisi precarium, etiam ἐκ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη Phil. 3: 9, brevius δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ, Rom. 3: 21 and 1: 17, nominatur." That is, "since 'the righteousness of faith' is a gift of divine grace, and must be sought as a favour; it is called also, 'the righteousness which is of God,' Phil. 3: 9, or, more briefly, 'the righteousness of God,' Rom. 3: 21 and 1: 17."

spired men was in the form of testimony; it was not the communication of what they themselves had discovered, but a declaration of what had been delivered to them by God. The Jews were accustomed to divide the scriptures into two parts, *the law and the prophets*, what did not belong to the former was included under the latter. Hence the phrase, as here used, is equivalent with *the scriptures*; see Matt. 5: 17. 7: 12. Luke 16: 10. Acts 13: 15, &c. &c. That the Jewish scriptures did teach the doctrine of gratuitous justification, Paul proves in the next chapter, from the case of Abraham and the testimony of David.

(22) *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ*, &c. In the preceding verse, Paul had taught negatively, that this righteousness, which is acceptable and available in the sight of God, was not to be attained by the works of the law, he here teaches, 1. That it is to be attained by faith in Christ. 2. That it is applicable to all men, Gentiles as well as Jews. Which is *by faith of Jesus Christ*, i. e. through, or by means of that faith of which Christ is the object. We are not justified on account of our faith, as though faith were the ground of our acceptance, for the ground is mentioned afterwards; but it is through faith. Such is almost uniformly the force of the Greek preposition here used, when connected with the genitive. *Faith of Christ* is of course equivalent to *faith in Christ*; see Mark 11: 22, "Have faith in God," literally 'of God;' Acts 3: 16, "Through faith in his name," literally 'of his name;' Gal. 2: 20, "I live by faith of the Son God," &c. &c.

*Unto all and upon all that believe.** The prepositions rendered *unto* and *upon*, do not here express different ideas, any more than those rendered *by* and *through*, in v. 30. The repetition expresses intensity. 'This righteousness is revealed or comes unto all, even all, absolutely all, without distinction of

* The words *καὶ ἐπὶ πάντας* are omitted in the MSS. A. C. 26, 31, 47, 66, 67, in the Coptic and Ethiopic versions, and by several of the fathers. Griesbach has left them out; so has Lachmann. But they are retained by most editors, as even the external evidence is in their favour; and it is much more probable that some transcribers would omit them as unnecessary, than that any should insert them if not genuine. Besides, such repetitions are agreeable to Paul's manner; compare v. 30 and Gal. 1: 1.

name or nation.' The only limitation is the exercise of faith. It is unto all believers. We have here the second attribute of the righteousness revealed in the gospel, mentioned in this verse, viz. its universal applicability. It is not to be restricted to any one class of men, but is as well suited to the Gentile as the Jew, to the bond as the free, to the wise as the unwise, to the poor as the rich. The reason why this righteousness is thus suited to all men, is, that *there is no difference* in their moral state or relation to God.

(23) *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* These clauses express very nearly associated ideas. The former presents more prominently the moral character of men; the latter its consequences. They are sinners, and have, therefore, forfeited the divine favour. Here again the fact that men are sinners is given as a conclusive reason why justification can only be by faith. The word rendered *glory* has been very variously explained. It may signify *approbation*, as in John 12: 43, "they love the approbation of men, better than the approbation of God;" so Grotius. Or it may be taken for the reward which God bestows, so often called in scripture *glory*; see ch. 2: 7. Others again make it equivalent to the term used in v. 27, and explain the clause thus, 'who have failed of attaining any ground of glorying before God.' This is very forced; as is also the interpretation which makes it mean 'the divine image.' The first or second interpretation, it matters little which, is to be preferred. As the word rendered *come short* is often used in reference to those who lose a race, the clause may be explained as an allusion to that game. The glory of God is the goal or the prize for which men contend, and which all have failed to win.*

(24) *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* The apostle continues his exhibition of the method of salvation by using the participle 'being justified,' instead of the verb, 'we are justified,' agreeably to a mode of construction not unusual in Greek, though much more frequent in the Hebrew. He says we are justified *freely by his grace*, that is, in a manner which is entirely gratuitous.

* Δόξα est meta, ad quam contendimus, id est, vita aeterna, quae in gloriae Dei participatione consistit.—BEZA.

We have not the slightest degree of merit to offer as the ground of our acceptance. This is the third characteristic of the method of justification which is by the righteousness of God. Though it is so entirely gratuitous as regards the sinner, yet it is in a way perfectly consistent with the justice of God. It is founded on "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," that is, of which he is the author.

The word translated *redemption* has two senses in the New Testament. 1. It means properly 'a deliverance effected by the payment of a ransom.' This is its primary etymological meaning. 2. It means deliverance simply, without any reference to the means of its accomplishment, whether by power or wisdom. Luke 21: 28, "the day of redemption, (i. e. of deliverance) draweth nigh;" Heb. 11: 25, and perhaps Rom. 8: 23; compare Isaiah 50: 2, "is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem," &c. &c. When applied to the work of Christ, as effecting our deliverance from the punishment of sin, it is always taken in its proper sense, *deliverance effected by the payment of a ransom.** This is evident, 1. Because in no case where it is thus used, is any thing said of the precepts, doctrines, or power of Christ, as the means by which the deliverance is effected; but uniformly his sufferings are mentioned as the ground of deliverance. Eph. 1: 7, "in whom we have redemption through his blood;" Heb. 9: 15, "by means of death, for the redemption of transgressions;" Col. 1. 14. 2. In this passage the nature of this redemption is explained by the following verse; it is not by truth, nor the exhibition of excellence, but through Christ 'as a propitiatory sacrifice, through faith in his blood.' 3. Equivalent expressions fix the meaning of the term beyond doubt. 1 Tim. 2: 6, "Who gave himself as a ransom for all;" Matt. 20: 28, "The Son of man came to give his life as a ransom for many;" 1 Peter 1: 18, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ," &c. &c. Accordingly, Christ is presented as a Redeemer, not in the character of a teacher or witness, but of a priest, a sacrifice, a propitiation, &c. &c.

* Dicitur de liberatione a peccatorum poenis, parata per Christum, qui vitam donens λύτρον quasi persolvit.—WAHL.

In Nov. Test., de redemptione a potestate diaboli, peccati et mortis per sanguinem Jesu, in pretium redemptionis solutum.—BRITSCHNEIDER.

That is in Christ Jesus, i. e. which is *by him*, as the preposition here rendered *in*, means in places almost without number; Acts 13: 39, "by him all that believe are justified, &c." Acts 17: 31, "by that man whom he hath ordained," &c. &c. Wahl, p. 523.

(25) *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, &c.* This clause contains the ground of our deliverance from the curse of the law, and of our acceptance with God, and constitutes therefore the second step in the apostles exhibition of the plan of salvation. He had already taught that justification was not by works, but by faith, and entirely gratuitous; he now comes to show how it is that this exercise of mercy to the sinner can be reconciled with the justice of God, and the demands of his law. The word rendered *hath set forth*, also signifies, in its ground form, *to purpose, determine*, Rom. 1: 13, compare 8: 28. If this sense be adopted here, the meaning would be, 'whom God hath purposed or decreed *to be* a propitiation.' But this requires that the words *to be* should be supplied, for which there is nothing to answer in the text. There is no reason for departing from the common interpretation which gives a perfectly good sense.

There are three interpretations of the word rendered *propitiation* which deserve attention. 1. It is very frequently understood to mean the propitiatory, or mercy-seat, over the ark of the covenant, on which the high priest, on the great day of atonement, sprinkled the blood of the sacrifices. Here it was that God was propitiated, and manifested himself as reconciled to his people. The ground of this interpretation is, that the original word here used, is employed in the Septuagint as the designation of the mercy-seat; Ex. 25: 18, 19, 20, and often elsewhere. The meaning would then be, 'that God had set forth Jesus Christ as a mercy-seat, as the place in which, or the person in whom, he was propitiated, and ready to forgive and accept the sinner.' But the objections to this interpretation are serious. 1. The use of the word by the Greek translators of the Old Testament, probably arose from a mistake of the proper meaning of the Hebrew term. The Hebrew word means properly *a cover*, but as the verb whence it comes means literally *to cover*, and metaphorically, *to atone for, to propitiate*, the Greek translators incorrectly rendered the noun *ἱλαστήριον*, the Latin *propitia-*

torium, and our translators *the mercy-seat*. It is, therefore, in itself, a wrong use of the Greek word. 2. This interpretation is not consistent with the analogy of scripture. The sacred writers are not accustomed to compare the Saviour to the cover of the ark, nor to illustrate his work by such a reference. This passage, if thus interpreted, would stand alone in this respect. 3. According to this view, there is an obvious incongruity in the figure. It is common to speak of the blood of a sacrifice, but not of the blood of the mercy-seat. Besides, Paul in this very clause speaks of "his blood;" see Deylingii Observations, P. II. sect. 41, and Krebs' New Testament illustrated from the writings of Josephus.

The second interpretation supposes the word for *sacrifice* to be understood. The word in the text is properly an adjective, and is applied to any thing designed to render God propitious. It, therefore, occurs frequently in such phrases as 'a propitiatory sacrifice,' 'propitiatory monument,' 'propitiatory death.' (Josephus, Ant. XVI. 7, 1. Lib. de Macc. sect. 17; see Krebs on this verse.) This sense of the word is greatly to be preferred, as more consistent with the context, more consonant with the scriptural mode of representation in reference to this subject, and perfectly consistent with usage. The elliptical form of expression is peculiarly common in terms relating to sacrifices, and offerings; (see Koppe and Tholuck.) It is only a modification of this interpretation to take the neuter form of the adjective here used, as a substantive, and render it *expiation* or *propitiation*, as is done in the Vulgate, and by Beza. The third interpretation takes the word as a masculine substantive, and renders it *expiator*, 'whom God has set forth as an expiator.' This also gives a good sense, but is neither so consistent with the context, nor congruous with the figure. The meaning, then, of this interesting clause is, that Christ was set forth in view of the intelligent universe as a propitiatory sacrifice, and as such is the ground of the justification of every one that believes.

Through faith in his blood. These words may be connected either with the immediately preceding or with those at the beginning of v. 24. According to the former method, the sense is, 'Christ is a propitiation through faith in his blood,' that is, which is available to those only who exercise this faith, and on this condition. According to the latter, 'We are justified

through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (we are justified) through faith in his blood.' So that this clause is coordinate with the last member of v. 24, and explanatory of it. The first method appears the more simple and natural of the two.

This whole passage is of peculiar interest and importance, as exhibiting very clearly the nature of justification. Paul teaches that we are justified in a manner which is entirely of grace, without any merit of our own; through, or by means of faith and on the ground of the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It is evident, from this statement, that he intended to exclude from all participation in the merit of being the ground of our acceptance with God, not only those works performed in obedience to the law, and with a legal spirit, but those which flow from faith and a renewed heart. The part assigned to faith in the work of our reconciliation to God, is that of an instrument; it apprehends or appropriates the meritorious ground of our acceptance, the work or righteousness of Christ. It is not itself that ground, nor the means of attaining an inherent righteousness acceptable to God. This is obvious, 1. Because our justification would not then be gratuitous, or without works. Paul would then teach the very reverse of the doctrine which he has been labouring to establish, viz. that it is not on account of works of righteousness, i. e. works of the highest order of excellence, that we are accepted, since these works would then be the real ground of our acceptance. 2. Because we are said to be justified by faith of which Christ is the object, by faith in his blood, by faith in him as a sacrifice. These expressions cannot possibly mean, that faith in Christ is, or produces, a state of mind which is acceptable to God. Faith in a sacrifice is, by the very force of the terms, reliance on a sacrifice. It would be to contradict the sentiment of the whole ancient and Jewish world, to make the design of a sacrifice the production of a state of mind acceptable to the Being worshipped, which moral state was to be the ground of acceptance. There is no more pointed way of denying that we are justified on account of the state of our own hearts, or the character of our own acts, than by saying, that we are justified by a propitiatory sacrifice. This latter declaration places, of necessity, the ground of acceptance out of ourselves; it is something done for us, not

something experienced, or produced in us, or performed by us. There is no rule of interpretation more obvious and more important, than that which requires us to understand the language of a writer in the sense in which he knew he would be understood by the persons to whom he wrote. To explain, therefore, the language of the apostle in reference to the sacrifice of Christ, and the mode of our acceptance with God, otherwise than in accordance with the universally prevalent opinions on the nature of sacrifices, is to substitute our philosophy of religion for the inspired teachings of the sacred writers.

To declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. Having stated the nature and ground of the gospel method of justification, he comes, in this clause, to state its object. 'God has set forth Christ, as a propitiatory sacrifice, to declare his righteousness.' It should be remembered that the object of the death of Christ, being very comprehensive, is very variously presented in the word of God. In other words, the death of Christ answers a great number of infinitely important ends in the government of God. It displays "his manifold wisdom," Eph. 3: 10, 11; it was designed "to purify unto himself a people zealous of good works," Tit. 2: 14; to break down the distinction between the Jews and Gentiles, Eph. 2: 15; to effect the reconciliation of both Jews and Gentiles unto God, Eph. 2: 16; "to deliver us from this present evil world," Gal. 1: 4; to secure the forgiveness of sins, Eph. 1: 7; to vindicate his ways to men in so long passing by or remitting their sins, Rom. 3: 25; to reconcile the exercise of mercy with the requirements of justice, v. 26, &c. &c. These ends are not inconsistent, but perfectly harmonious. The end here specially mentioned, is *to declare his righteousness*. These words here, as elsewhere, are variously explained. 1. They are understood of some one of the moral attributes of God, as his veracity, by Locke; or his mercy, by Grotius, Koppe and many of the moderns. Both of these interpretations are forced, because they assign very unusual meanings to the word righteousness, and meanings little suited to the context. 2. Most commentators, who render the phrase 'righteousness, or justification of God,' in ch. 1: 17. 3: 21, God's method of justification, adopt that sense here. The meaning would then be, that 'God had set forth Christ as a propitiation,

to exhibit his method of justifying sinners, both in reference to the sins committed under the former dispensation, and under the new.' 3. The great majority of commentators give it the sense of the general rectitude of God. This is recommended by the consideration that this is 'the common meaning of the word righteousness, that the phrase here used must be so understood in ch. 2: 5, where 'the unrighteousness of men is said to commend the righteousness of God,' and especially, that in the next verse, Paul subjoins the explanatory clause, "that he might be just, and the justifier of every one which believeth in Jesus." This, as Calvin remarks, is Paul's own definition of "the righteousness of God," of which he is here speaking. The meaning of the clause then is, that 'God has set forth Christ, as a propitiation, to make it plain that he is just, or righteous in the forgiveness of sins.' His pardoning mercy is thus vindicated from all appearance of interfering with the demands of justice.

For the remission of sins. The preposition which is here rendered *for*, may be variously explained. 1. It not unfrequently with the accusative, the case by which it is here followed, has the force which more properly belongs to it with the genitive, i. e. *through*. John 6: 57, "I live through the Father," Rom. 2: 24, &c. So Grotius, Beza and others. This would suit the context, if righteousness meant mercy, 'To exhibit his mercy by means of the remission of sins.' But this explanation of the word 'righteousness,' has been shown above to be objectionable. 2. It is taken to mean *as to, as it regards*. This also gives a good sense, 'To declare his righteousness, *as to, or as it regards* the remission of sins.' So Raphelius (*Observationes*, &c. p. 241), who quotes Polybius Lib. 5, ch. 24, p. 517, in support of this interpretation. This view is given by Prof. Stuart. But the preposition in question very rarely if ever has this force. No such meaning is assigned to it by Wahl, Bretschneider, or Winer. 3. The common force of the preposition is retained, *on account of*. This clause would then assign the ground or reason of the exhibition of the righteousness of God. It became necessary that there should be this exhibition, because God had overlooked and pardoned sin from the beginning. This is the most natural and satisfactory interpretation of the passage. So Bengel, Wahl and many others. 4. Others again make the preposition express the final cause or object,

‘To declare his righteousness for the sake of the remission of sins, i. e. that sins might be remitted.’ So Calvin* and Elsner. But this is a very questionable force of the preposition here used; see Winer’s Gram. p. 339. The third interpretation, therefore, just mentioned, is to be preferred. The word rendered *remission*, more strictly means *pretermission*, a *passing by*, or *overlooking*. Paul repeatedly uses the proper term for *remission*, as in Eph. 1: 7. Heb. 9: 22, &c., but the word here used, occurs no where else in the New Testament. Many, therefore, consider the selection of this particular term as designed to express the idea, that sins committed before the advent of Christ might more properly be said to be overlooked, than actually pardoned, until the sacrifice of the Redeemer had been completed; see Wolf’s Curæ. Reference is made to Acts 17: 30, where God is said to have overlooked the times of ignorance. But as the word used by the apostle is actually used to express the idea of *remission* in Greek writers (see Elsner), the majority of commentators adopt that meaning here.

The words *that are past*, seem distinctly to refer to the times before the advent of Christ. This is plain from their opposition to the expression, *at this time*, in the next verse, and from a comparison with the parallel passage in Heb. 9: 15, “He is the Mediator for the redemption of sins *that were* under the first testament.” The words rendered *through the forbearance of God*, may be variously connected and explained. 1. They may be connected with the words just mentioned, and the meaning be, ‘Sins that are past, or, which were committed during the forbearance of God;’ see Acts 17: 20, where the times before the advent are described in much the same manner. 2. Or they may be taken, as by our translators, as giving the cause of the remission of these sins, ‘They were remitted, or overlooked through the divine forbearance or mercy.’ The former interpretation is better suited to the context. The meaning of the whole verse, therefore, is, ‘God has set forth Jesus Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice, to vindicate his righteousness or justice, on account of the remission of the sins committed under the former dispensation,’ and not under the former dispensation only,

* Tantundem valet prepositio causalis, acsi dixisset, remissionis ergo, vel in hunc finem ut peccata deleat.

but which are committed at the present time, as the apostle immediately adds.

(26) *To declare*, I say, *at this time*, *his righteousness*, &c. This verse is an amplification and explanation of the preceding. The words there and here rendered *to declare*, properly mean *for the manifestation*. Paul changes the preposition without altering the sense, as both (εἰς and ὑπὲρ) are familiarly used to express the design or object for which any thing is done; see Winer, p. 337, 342. This clause is evidently co-ordinate with the second member of the preceding verse. 'Christ was set forth as a sacrifice for the exhibition of the righteousness of God, on account of the remission of the sins of old, for the exhibition of his righteousness at this time, &c.' There are two purposes to be answered by this sacrifice, the vindication of the character of God in passing by former sins, and in passing by them now. *At this time*, therefore, as opposed to the time 'of forbearance,' is the gospel dispensation.

That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. This clause is, as before remarked, the explanation and definition of the righteousness of God just spoken of. It depends, in sense, upon the first clause of the 25th verse, 'Whom God hath set forth as a propitiatory sacrifice, in order that he might be just in the justification of those that believe.' It is obvious, therefore, that this clause expresses more definitely the idea intended to be conveyed by the phrase "to declare his righteousness." Christ was set forth as a sacrifice for the manifestation of the righteousness or justice of God, that is, that he might be just, although the justifier of the ungodly. The word *just* expresses the idea of uprightness generally, of being or doing what the nature of the case demands. But when spoken of the conduct of a judge, and in reference to his treatment of sin, it must mean more specifically that modification of general rectitude, which requires that sin should be treated according to its true nature, that the demands of law or justice should not be disregarded. A judge is unjust when he allows a criminal to be pronounced righteous, and treated accordingly. On the other hand, he acts justly when he pronounces the offender guilty, and secures the infliction of the penalty which the law denounces. What the apostle means to say, is, that there is no such disregard to the claims of justice

in the justification of the sinner who believes in Christ. This is seen and acknowledged, when it is known that he is justified neither on account of his own acts or character, nor by a mere sovereign dispensing with the demands of the law, but on the ground of a complete satisfaction rendered by his substitute, i. e. on the ground of the obedience and death of Christ. The gratuitous nature of this justification is not at all affected by its proceeding on the ground of this perfect satisfaction. It is, to the sinner, still the most undeserved of all favours, to which he not only has not the shadow of a personal claim, but the very reverse of which he has most richly merited. It is thus that justice and mercy are harmoniously united in the sinner's justification. Justice is no less justice, although mercy has her perfect work; and mercy is no less mercy, although justice is completely satisfied.

'Just *and* the justifier, &c.' In the simple language of the Old Testament, propositions and statements are frequently connected by the copulative conjunction whose logical relation would be more definitely expressed by various particles in other languages; as Malachi 2: 14, "Against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, *and* she was thy companion," i. e. *although* she was thy companion. "They spake in my name, *and* (although) I sent them not;" see Gesenius' Lexicon. In like manner the corresponding particle in the Greek Testament is used with scarcely less latitude. Matt. 12: 5, "The priests profane the Sabbath, *and* (and yet) are blameless; Rom. 1: 13, "I purposed to come unto you, *and* (but) was let hitherto;" Heb. 3: 9, "Proved me, *and* (although *they*) saw my works;" see Wahl's Lex. and Winer's Gram. p. 365. So, in the present instance, it may be rendered "That God might be just, *and yet*, or *although* the justifier, &c." *Him which believeth in Jesus*, literally 'Him who is of the faith of Jesus;" so Gal. 2: 7, "They which are of faith," for believers; Gal. 2: 12, "They of the circumcision," i. e. the circumcised; see Rom. 2: 8. 4: 12, &c. &c. *Faith of Jesus*, faith of Jesus is the object; see v. 22. Our version, therefore, expresses the sense accurately. He whom God is just in justifying, is the man who relies on Jesus as a propitiatory sacrifice.

(27) *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what*

law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith. In this and the following verses, the apostle presents the tendency and results of the glorious plan of salvation, which he had just unfolded. It excludes boasting, v. 27. It presents God in his true character, as the God and Father of the Gentiles as well as the Jews, vs. 29, 30; and it establishes the law, v. 31. The word rendered *boasting*, is used to express the idea of self-gratulation with or without sufficient reason. In the former case, it is properly rendered *rejoicing*, as when Paul speaks of the Thessalonians being his "crown of rejoicing." In the latter, the word *boasting* best answers to its meaning. The word sometimes means the act of *boasting* or *rejoicing*; at others, by metonymy, the ground or reason of boasting, as in Rom. 15: 17. Either sense suits this passage. It may mean all boasting is prevented, or all ground of boasting is excluded. Paul means to say that the result of the gospel plan of salvation is to prevent all self-approbation, self-gratulation and exaltation on the part of the sinner. He is presented as despoiled of all merit, and as deserving the displeasure of God. He can attribute, in no degree, his deliverance from this displeasure to himself, and he cannot exalt himself either in the presence of God, or in comparison with his fellow-sinners. As sin is odious in the sight of God, it is essential, in any scheme of mercy, that the sinner should be made to feel this, and that nothing done by or for him in any measure diminishes his personal ill-desert on account of his transgressions. This result obviously could not follow from any plan of justification, which placed the ground of the sinners acceptance in himself, or his peculiar advantages of birth or ecclesiastical connexion; but it is effectually secured by that plan of justification, which not only places the ground of his acceptance entirely out of himself, but which also requires, as the very condition of that acceptance, an act involving a penitent acknowledgement of personal ill-desert, and exclusive dependence on the merit of another.

The expressions "by what law?" "the law of works," and "law of faith," especially the last, are peculiar, as the word *law* is not used in its ordinary sense. The general idea of a *rule of action*, however, is retained. 'By what rule? By that which requires works? Nay; by that which requires faith;' compare ch. 9: 31.

(28) *Therefore* we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.* The word rendered *we conclude*, means, more properly, *we are persuaded*; see 8: 18. 2 Cor. 10: 7. This verse may be considered as immediately connected with the preceding, and as stating a persuasion, founded, among other reasons, on the truth there presented. The idea would then be, 'We are persuaded that the doctrine of justification is true, because it thus effectually excludes all boasting.' Or it may express the conclusion from the whole of the preceding exhibition; which is probably the correct view of its connexion. The great truth of which Paul declares his firm conviction, therefore, is, that a man is justified by means of faith, and not on account of obedience to the law.†

(29, 30) *Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also; seeing it is one God who shall justify, &c.* We have here the second result of the gospel method of justification; it presents God as equally the God of the Gentiles and the Jews. He is such, because 'it is one God who justifies the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.' He deals with both classes on precisely the same principles; he pursues, with regard to both, the same plan, and offers salvation to both on exactly the same terms. There is, therefore, in this doctrine, the foundation laid for a universal religion, which may be preached to every creature under heaven; which need not, as was the case with the Jewish system, be confined to any one sect or nation. This is the only doctrine

* Instead of οὖν, the MSS. A. D. F. G. 5, 9, 33, 38, 47, the Vulgate and Coptic versions, with several of the fathers, read γὰρ. This reading is adopted by Griesbach, Mill, Bengel, Knapp, and Lachmann. The sense may then be presented thus, 'Boasting is excluded by the law of faith, for we are persuaded that a man is justified, &c.'

† Luther rendered the word πίστις, allein durch den Glauben, *by faith alone*, which produced a great outcry among many of his Catholic opposers, though the sentiment is plainly implied here, as well as in Gal. 2: 16, and every where else where Paul treats of the doctrine of justification at all. The Catholic versions, even before Luther, insert the word *alone*. So in the Nuremburg Bible, 1483, "Nur durch den Glauben." And the Italian Bibles of Geneva, 1476, and of Venice, 1538, *per la sola fede*. The fathers often use the expression 'man is justified by faith alone,' so that Erasmus says, (De Ratione Concionandi, L. III.) "Vox sola, tot clamoribus lapidata hoc saeculo in Luthero, reverenter in Patribus auditur." See Koppe and Tholuck on this verse.

which suits the character of God, and his relation to all his intelligent creatures upon earth. God is a universal, and not a national God; and this is a method of salvation universally applicable. These sublime truths are so familiar to our minds that they have, in a measure, lost their power; but as to the Jew, enthralled all his life in his narrow national and religious prejudices, they must have expanded his whole soul with unwonted emotions of wonder, gratitude and joy. We Gentiles may now look up to heaven, and confidently say, "Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and though Israel acknowledge us not."

The expressions '*by* faith,' and '*through* faith,' evidently do not differ in their meaning, as Paul uses them indiscriminately, sometimes the one, as in 1: 17. 3: 20. 4: 16, &c. &c., and sometimes the other, as in 3: 22, 25. Gal. 2: 16, &c. &c., and as each of the prepositions employed in the original is used to express the means by which any thing is done.

(31) *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.* This verse states the third result of this method of salvation; instead of invalidating, it establishes the law. As Paul uses the word *law* in so many senses, it is doubtful which one of them is here principally intended. In every sense, however, the declaration is true. If the law means the Old Testament generally, then it is true, for the gospel method of justification contradicts no one of its statements, is inconsistent with no one of its doctrines, and invalidates no one of its promises, but is harmonious with all, and confirmatory of the whole. If it means the Mosaic institutions specially, these were shadows of which Christ is the substance. That law is abolished, not by being pronounced spurious or invalid, but by having met its accomplishment, and answered its design in the gospel. What it taught and promised, the gospel also teaches and promises, only in clearer and fuller measure. If it means the moral law, which no doubt was prominently intended, still it is not invalidated, but established. No moral obligation is weakened, no penal sanction disregarded. The precepts are enforced by new and stronger motives, and the penalty is answered in him, who bore our sins in his own body on the tree. To whom be glory now and forever.

Doctrines.

1. The evangelical doctrine of justification by faith, is the doctrine of the Old, no less than of the New Testament, v. 21.

2. Justification is pronouncing one to be just, and treating him accordingly, on the ground that the demands of the law have been satisfied concerning him, vs. 24, 25, 26.

3. The ground of justification is not our own merit, nor faith, nor evangelical obedience; not the work of Christ in us, but his work for us, i. e. his obedience unto death, v. 25.

4. An act may be perfectly gratuitous as it regards its object, and at the same time proceed on the ground of a complete satisfaction to the demands of the law. Thus justification is gratuitous, not because those demands are unsatisfied, but because it is granted to those who have no personal ground of recommendation, vs. 24, 26.

5. God is the ultimate end of all his own acts. To declare his glory is the highest and best end which he can propose for himself or his creatures, v. 25.

6. The atonement does not consist in a display to others of the divine justice; this is one of its designs and results, but it is such a display only by being a satisfaction to the justice of God. It is not a symbol or illustration, but a satisfaction, v. 26.

7. All true doctrine tends to humble men and to exalt God; and all true religion is characterized by humility and reverence, v. 27.

8. God is a universal Father, and all men are brethren, vs. 29, 30.

9. The law of God is immutable. Its precepts are always binding, and its penalty must be inflicted either on the sinner or his substitute. When, however, it is said that the penalty of the law is inflicted on the Redeemer, as the sinner's substitute, or, in the language of scripture, that "he was made a curse for us," it cannot be imagined that he suffered the same kind of evils (as remorse, &c.) which the sinner would have suffered. The law threatens no specific kind of evil as its penalty. The term death in scripture designates any or all the evils inflicted in punishment of sin. And the penalty, or curse of the law (in the language of the bible), is any evil judicially inflicted in

satisfaction of the demands of justice. To say that Christ suffered, therefore, to satisfy the law; to declare the righteousness of God, or that he might be just in justifying him that believes in Jesus; that he bore the penalty of the law, are all equivalent expressions, v. 31.

Remarks.

1. As the cardinal doctrine of the bible is justification by faith, so the turning point in the soul's history, the saving act, is the reception of Jesus Christ as the propitiation for our sins, v. 25.

2. All modes of preaching must be erroneous, which do not lead sinners to feel that the great thing to be done, and done first, is to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, and to turn unto God through him. And all religious experience must be defective, which does not embrace distinctly a sense of the justice of our condemnation, and a conviction of the sufficiency of the work of Christ, and an exclusive reliance upon it as such, v. 25.

3. As God proposes his own glory as the end of all that he does, so ought we to have that glory as the constant and commanding object of pursuit, v. 25.

4. The doctrine of atonement produces in us its proper effect, when it leads us to see and feel that God is just; that he is infinitely gracious; that we are deprived of all ground of boasting; that the way of salvation, which is open for us, is open for all men; and that the motives to all duty, instead of being weakened, are enforced and multiplied, vs. 25—31.

5. In the gospel all is harmonious; justice and mercy, as it regards God; freedom from the law, and the strongest obligations to obedience, as it regards men, v. 25, 31.

CHAPTER IV.

Contents.

THE object of this chapter is to confirm the doctrine of justification by faith. It is divided into two parts. The first, from v. 1 to 17 inclusive, contains the argumentative portion. The second, v. 18 to 25, is an illustration of the faith of Abraham.

CHAP. 4: 1—17.

Analysis.

PAUL, from the 21st verse of the preceding chapter, had been setting forth the gospel method of salvation. That this is the true method he now proves, 1. From the fact that Abraham was justified by faith, vs. 1—5. That this was really the case he shows, first, because otherwise Abraham would have had ground of boasting, even in the sight of God, v. 2; second, because the scriptures expressly declare that he was justified by faith, v. 8.

Verses 4, 5, are designed to show that being justified by faith, is tantamount with being justified gratuitously, and, therefore, all those passages which speak of the gratuitous forgiveness of sins, may be fairly cited in favour of the doctrine of justification by faith.

2. On this principle he adduces Ps. 32: 1, 2, as his second argument, for there David speaks, not of rewarding the righteous as such, or for their righteousness, but of the free acceptance of the unworthy, vs. 6—8.

3. The third argument is designed to show that circumcision is not a necessary condition of justification, from the fact that Abraham was justified before he was circumcised; and, therefore, is the head and father of all believers, whether circumcised or not, vs. 9—12.

4. The fourth argument is from the nature of the covenant made with Abraham, in which the promise was made on the condition of faith, and not of legal obedience, vs. 13, 14. 5. And the fifth, from the nature of the law, vs. 15—17.

Commentary.

(1) *What shall we then say that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?* The connexion of this verse with the preceding train of reasoning is obvious. Paul had taught that we are justified by faith; as well in confirmation of this doctrine, as to anticipate an objection from the Jew, he refers to the case of Abraham. ‘How was it then with Abraham? How did he obtain justification?’

The words rendered *as pertaining to the flesh*, may be more

properly rendered *as to*, or *through the flesh*. And instead of being connected with the word *father*, they should stand at the end of the verse, ‘what hath Abraham our father found through the flesh?’ Such is their position in the original; and although the sense is good, which is afforded by connecting them as in our version, yet the Greek will hardly admit of it.

The word *flesh* in this connexion is variously explained. It is rendered by some* *naturally, by himself*; and to the same amount by Grotius, *by his own powers*. This, however, is, confessedly, a very unusual signification of the term. Others again suppose that the reference is to circumcision; ‘through the flesh,’ is then equivalent to ‘circumcision which is in the flesh.’ But there is no ground for this specific reference in the context. Paul often uses the word *flesh* in a general way for every thing external, relating to ceremonies, legal observances, &c.; see Gal. 6: 12, “As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh;” Gal. 3: 3, “Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh;” Phil. 3: 3, 4, where Paul says he ‘has no confidence in the flesh,’ and adds, “If any other man thinketh he hath whereof to glory in the flesh, I more.” He then enumerates his Hebrew descent, his being a Pharisee, his blameless legal righteousness, as all included in this comprehensive expression. By the term, in this instance, is to be understood all the advantages of Abraham, and all his works, as the context shows. The point of the apostle’s question is, ‘Has Abraham obtained justification or the favour of God by the flesh?’ To this a negative answer is supposed, for which the next verse assigns the reason, ‘For if Abraham was justified by works, &c.’ The phrase *by works*, therefore, is substituted for *through the flesh*, as being, in this case, perfectly equivalent to it.

(2) *For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.* The apostle’s mode of reasoning is so concise as often to leave some of the steps of his argument to be supplied, which, however, are almost always sufficiently obvious from the context. As just remarked, a negative answer is to be supposed to the question in the first

* Quid dicemus Abraham patrem nostrum invenisse secundum carnem? quidam interpretes quaeri putant quid secundum carnem adeptus sit Abraham. Quae expositio si placeat, tantundem valebit secundum carnem, ac naturaliter, vel ex seipso. Probabile tamen est epitheti loco Patri conjungi.—CALVIN.

verse. Abraham has not attained the favour of God through the flesh. The force of *for* at the beginning of this verse is then obvious, as introducing the reason for this answer. The passage itself is very concise, and the latter clause admits of different interpretations. ‘If Abraham was justified by works, he might indeed assert his claim to the confidence and favour of his fellow-men, but he could not have any ground of boasting before God.’ This view, however, introduces an idea entirely foreign from the passage, and makes the conclusion the very opposite of that to which the premises would lead. For if justified by works, he would have ground of boasting before God. The interpretation quoted in the margin from Calvin,* is altogether the most satisfactory and simple. ‘If Abraham was justified by works he hath whereof to glory; but he hath not whereof to glory before God, and, therefore, he was not justified by works;’ which is the conclusion which Paul intended to establish, and which he immediately confirms by the testimony of the scriptures. The argument thus far is founded on the assumption, that no man can appear thus confidently before God, and boasted of having done all that was required of him. If the doctrine of justification by works involves, as Paul shows it does, this claim to perfect obedience, it must be false. And that Abraham was not thus justified, he proves from the sacred record.

(3) *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.* The connexion of this verse with the preceding is this. Paul had just said Abraham had no ground of boasting with God; *For what saith the scripture?* Does it refer the ground of Abraham’s justification to his works? By no means. It declares he was justified by faith; which Paul immediately shows is equivalent to saying that he was justified gratuitously. The passage quoted by the apostle, is Gen. 15: 6, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him (i. e. imputed to him) for righteousness.” This is an important passage, as the phrase “to impute faith for righteousness,” occurs repeatedly in Paul’s writings. The primary meaning of the word here rendered *to count to*, or

* *Si enim Abraham.* Epicherema est, id est imperfecta ratiotatio, quae in hanc formam colligi debet, Si Abraham operibus justificatus est, potest suo merito gloriari: sed non habet unde gloriatur apud Deum: ergo non ex operibus justificatus est.—CALVIN.

impute, is to reckon, or number; 2 Chron. 5: 5, "Which could not be numbered for multitude;" Mark 15: 28, "He was numbered with transgressors;" see Is. 53: 17, &c. &c. 2. It means *to esteem, or regard as something*, that is, to number as belonging to a certain class of things; Gen. 31: 15, "Are we not counted of him strangers;" Is. 40: 17, &c. &c.; compare Job 19: 11. 33: 10, in the Hebrew. 3. It is used in the more general sense of *purposing, devising, considering, thinking, &c.* 4. In strict connexion with its primary meaning, it signifies *to impute, to set to one's account*; that is, to number among the things belonging to a man, or chargeable upon him. It generally implies the accessory idea, 'of treating one according to the nature of the thing imputed.' Thus, in the frequent phrase *to impute sin*, as 2 Sam. 19: 19, "Let not my Lord impute iniquity unto me," i. e. 'Let him not lay it to my charge, and treat me accordingly;' compare 1 Sam. 22: 15, in the Hebrew and Septuagint; Ps. 32: 2, (Septuagint, 31) "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity," &c. &c. And in the New Testament, 2 Cor. 6: 19, "Not imputing unto men their trespasses;" 2 Tim. 4: 15, "*I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge," &c. &c. These, and numerous similar passages, render the scriptural idea of imputation perfectly clear. It is laying any thing to one's charge, and treating him accordingly. It produces no change in the individual to whom the imputation is made; it simply alters his relation to the law. All those objections, therefore, to the doctrine expressed by this term, which are founded on the assumption that imputation alters the moral character of men; that it implies an infusion of either sin or holiness, rest on a misconception of its nature. It is obviously, so far as the mere force of the term is concerned, a matter of perfect indifference, whether the thing imputed belonged antecedently to the person to whom the imputation is made or not. It is just as common and correct to speak of laying to a man's charge what does not belong to him, as what does. That a thing rarely can be *justly* imputed to a person to whom it does not personally belong, is a matter of course. But that the word itself implies that the thing imputed must belong to the person concerned, is a singular misconception. These remarks have, of course, reference to the meaning of the word only. Whether the bible actually teaches

that there is an imputation of either sin or righteousness, to any to whom it does not personally belong, is another question. That the bible does speak both of imputing to a man what does not actually belong to him, and of not imputing what does, is evident from the following, among other passages, Levit. 17: 4. What man soever killeth an ox and bringeth it not to the door of the tabernacle, &c., "blood shall be imputed to that man;" that is, blood-guiltiness or murder, a crime of which he was not actually guilty, should be laid to his charge, and he should be put to death.* On the other hand, Levit. 7: 18, if any part of a sacrifice is eaten on the third day, the offering "shall not be imputed to him that made it." Paul, speaking to Philemon of the debt of Onesimus, says, "put that on my account," i. e. impute it to me. The word used in this case is the same as that which occurs, Rom. 5: 13, "Sin is not imputed where there is no law;" and is in its root and usage precisely synonymous with the word employed in the passage before us, when the latter is used in reference to imputation. No less than twice also, in this very chapter, v. 6 and v. 11, Paul speaks of 'imputing righteousness,' not to those to whom it personally belongs, certainly, but to the *ungodly*, v. 5, to those who have no works, v. 6.†

* *Sanguis imputabitur viro illi. Sanguis hic est caedes; perinde Deo displicebit, ac si ille hominem occidisset, ac mortis reus judicabitur.*—ROSENMUELLER.

Als Blutschuld soll es angerechnet werden diesem Manne.—GERENIUS.

† Prof. STORR of Tübingen, De vario sensu vocis *δικαίος*, &c. in Nov. Test., in his Opuscula Vol. p. 224, says, "Since that innocence or probity (expressed by the word righteousness) does not belong to man himself, it must be ascribed or imputed to him. In this way the formula 'righteousness which is of God,' Phil. 3: 9, and especially the plainer expressions 'to impute faith for righteousness,' Rom. 4: 5, and 'to impute righteousness' are to be understood." We readily admit, he says, that things which actually belong to a man may also be said to be imputed to him, as was the case with Phineas, &c., and then adds, "Nevertheless, as he is said not to impute an action really performed, Lev. 7. 2 Sam. 19, &c., who does not so regard it, as to decree the fruit and punishment of it; so, on the other hand, those things can be imputed, Lev. 17: 4, which are not, in fact, found in the man, but which are so far attributed to him, that he may be hence treated as though he had performed them. Thus righteousness may be said to be imputed, Rom. 4: 6, 11, when not his own innocence and probity, which God determines to reward, is ascribed to the believer, but when God so ascribes and imputes righteousness, of which we are destitute, that we are treated as innocent and just."

Verbum *λογίζεσθαι* monstrat gratiam, Rom. 4: 4; nam *δικαιοσύνην* nostram esse negat.—STORR, p. 233.

The idea of imputation is one of the most familiar in all the bible; and is expressed in a multitude of cases where the term is not used. When Stephen prayed, Acts 7: 60, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge," he expressed exactly the same idea that Paul did, when he said, 2 Tim. 4: 16, "*I pray God* it may not be laid to their charge," although the latter uses the word *impute* (λογισθῆσιν), and the former does not. So the expressions "his sin shall be upon him," "he shall bear his iniquity," which occur so often, are perfectly synonymous with the formula, "his sin shall be imputed to him;" and, of course, "to bear the sins of another," is equivalent to saying, "those sins are imputed." The objection, therefore, that the word *impute* does not occur in reference to the imputation of the sin or righteousness of one man to another, even if well founded, which is not the fact, is of no more force than the objections against the doctrines of the Trinity, vicarious atonement, perseverance of the saints, &c., founded on the fact that these *words* do not occur in the bible. The material point surely is, Do the ideas occur? The doctrine of "the imputation of righteousness" is not the doctrine of this or that school in theology. It is the possession of the church. It was specially the glory and power of the Reformation.* Those who differed most

* The testimony of the learned Rationalist, BRETSCHNEIDER, may be received with less prejudice than the declaration of sounder men. Speaking of the Confessions published at the time of the Reformation, especially those of the Lutheran church, he says, "The symbolical books, in the first place, contradict the scholastic representation of justification, followed by the Romish church, that is, that it is an act of God by which he communicates to men an inherent righteousness (*justitia habitualis, infusa*), i. e. renders them virtuous. They described it far more as a forensic or judicial act of God, that is, as an act by which merely the moral relation of the man to God, not the man himself (at least not immediately), is changed." "Hence, justification consists of three parts; 1. The imputation of the merit of Christ. 2. The remission of punishment. 3. The restoration of the favour and the blessedness forfeited by sin."*

"By the *imputatio justitiæ* (or *meriti*) Christi, the symbolical books understand that judgment of God, according to which he treats us as though we had not sinned, but had fulfilled the law, or as though the merit of Christ was ours; see *Apel. Art. 9, p. 226, Merita propitiatoris—aliis donantur imputatione divina, ut per ea, tanquam propriis meritis justii reputemur, ut si quis amicus pro amico solvit aes alienum, debitor alieno merito tanquam proprio liberatur.*"—BRETSCHNEIDER'S *Entwickelung aller in der Dog. vorkommenden Begriffe*, p. 631, 632, &c.

* He adds this note. "The imputation of the merit of Christ, was regarded as the ground of justification, and is, therefore, most prominently presented."

elsewhere, were perfectly agreed here. And it is happily a doctrine stated *totidem verbis* in the sacred scriptures.

But to return to the phrase, 'Faith is imputed for righteousness.' It is very common to understand *faith* here to include its object, i. e. the righteousness of Christ; so that it is not faith considered as an act, which is imputed, but faith considered as including the merit which it apprehends and appropriates. Thus hope is often used for the thing hoped for, as Rom. 8: 24, "Hope that is seen, is not hope," &c.; and faith for the things believed, Gal. 1: 23, "He preacheth the faith," &c. &c. Although there are difficulties attending this interpretation, it cannot, with any consistency, be exclaimed against, by those who make faith to include the whole work of the Spirit on the heart, and its fruits in the life; as is done by the majority of those who reject this view of the passage.

Besides this interpretation there are three other views of the passage, founded on three different acceptations of the comprehensive word rendered *righteousness*. 1. It may mean, as it usually does in Paul's writings, 'all that the law demands,' 'complete obedience.' 2. It may be taken in a much more limited sense, as when this or that good action is said to be righteousness, i. e. right, worthy of approbation. 3. It may mean justification, the introduction of one into the state and privileges of the just. If the first sense of the word be adopted, the meaning of the clause is, 'Faith is counted or imputed as though it were perfect obedience. It is taken instead of the perfect righteousness which the law demands.' Thus uncircumcision is said to be imputed for circumcision, i. e. the one is regarded and treated as though it were the other. Thus, too, the heave-offering was reckoned as though it were the corn of the threshing floor, and the fulness of the wine press, Num. 18: 27; and so frequently in the scriptures. According to this view, faith is not merely the instrument, it is the ground of justification, it is taken for what it is not, it is regarded as perfect obedience. It must be admitted that, as far as the mere force of the words are concerned, this interpretation is natural, being perfectly consistent with usage. But, on the other hand, although this view of the passage, considering this clause by itself, is possible, it is by no means necessary, nor the only one

which the words will naturally bear; and it is utterly irreconcilable with the apostle's doctrine and object, and with numerous other passages of scripture. 1. It contradicts all those passages in which Paul and the other sacred writers deny that the ground of justification is any thing in us, or done by us. These passages are too numerous to be cited; see ch. 3: 20, where it is shown that the works which are excluded from the ground of justification are not ceremonial works merely, nor works performed with a legal spirit, but all works, without exception, works of righteousness, (Titus 3: 5) i. e. all right, or good works. But faith considered as an act, is as much a work as prayer, repentance, almsgiving, or any thing of the kind. And it is as much an act of obedience to the law, as the performance of any other duty, for the law requires us to do whatever is in itself right. 2. It contradicts all those passages in which the merit of Christ, in any form, is declared to be the ground of our acceptance. Thus in ch. 3: 25, it is Christ's propitiatory sacrifice; ch. 5: 18, 19, it is his obedience or righteousness; in many other places it is said to be his death, his cross, his blood. Faith must either be the ground of our acceptance, or the means or instrument of our becoming interested in the true meritorious ground, viz. the righteousness of Christ. It cannot stand in both relations to our justification. 3. It is inconsistent with the office ascribed to faith. We are said to be saved by, or through faith, but never on account of our faith, or on the ground of it. (It is always *διὰ πίστεως*, or *ἐκ πίστεως*, but never *διὰ πίστεως*.) The expressions "through faith in his blood," 3: 25, "by faith in Jesus Christ," &c., admit of no other interpretation than 'by means of faith in the blood of Christ, or, in Christ himself, as the ground of confidence.' The interpretation, therefore, under consideration, is at variance with the very nature of faith, which necessarily includes the receiving and resting on Christ as the ground of acceptance with God; and, of course, implies that faith itself is not that ground. 4. We accordingly, never find Paul, nor any other of the sacred writers, referring his readers to their faith, or any thing in themselves as the ground of their confidence. Even in reference to those most advanced in holiness he directs them to what Christ has done for them, not to any thing wrought in them as

the ground of their acceptance.* 5. Paul by interchanging the ambiguous phrase, 'faith is imputed for righteousness,' with the more definite expressions, 'justified through or by means of faith;' 'justified through faith in his blood,' fixes the sense in which the clause in question is to be understood. It must express the idea that it was by means of faith, that Abraham came to be treated as righteous, and not that faith was taken in lieu of perfect obedience. See this subject more fully discussed in Owen on Justification, ch. xviii.

According to the second view, the word *righteousness* is taken in a much more limited sense, and the phrase 'to impute faith for righteousness,' is understood to mean 'faith was regarded as right, it was approved.' This interpretation also is perfectly consistent with usage. Thus Ps. 106: 31, it is said of the zeal of Phineas, "It was counted to him as righteousness." This, of course, does not mean that it was regarded as complete obedience to the law, and taken in its stead as the ground of justification. It means simply that his zeal was approved of. It was regarded, says Dr. Owen, "as a just and rewardable action."† In like manner, Deut. 24: 13, it is said of returning a pledge, "It shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God." Agreeably to the analogy of these passages, the meaning of this clause may be, 'his faith was regarded as right, it secured the approbation of God:' how it did this, must be learned from other passages.

The third interpretation assumes that the word translated *righteousness* means here, as it does in many other passages, *justification*. The sense then is, 'Faith was imputed to him for justification,' i. e. that he might be justified, or in order to

* See a beautiful passage to this effect in NEANDER'S *Gelegenheitschriften*, p. 23. After stating that the believer can never rest his justification on his own spiritual life, or works, he adds, "It would, indeed, fare badly with the Christian, if on such weak ground as this, he had to build his justification, if he did not know that 'if he confesses his sins, and walks in the light, as he is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses from all sin.' Paul, therefore, refers even the redeemed, disturbed by the reproaches of conscience, amidst the conflicts and trials of life, not to the work of Christ IN THEMSELVES, but to what the love of God in Christ has done FOR THEM, and which, even notwithstanding their own continued sinfulness, remains ever sure."

† *Divinitus approbatum erat, tanquam justè factum.*—TUCKNEY, *Praelectiones*, p. 212.

his becoming and being treated as righteous;* see 10: 4, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness," i. e. in order that every one that believes may be regarded as righteous. Nothing is more familiar than this use of the preposition (*εἰς*) here used by the apostle. It points out the design with which any thing is done, as "unto repentance," that men may repent, Matt. 3: 11; "unto death," that we may die, Rom. 6: 3. So 'unto salvation,' Rom. 10: 1; 'unto condemnation,' Luke 24: 20. Or it indicates the result; Rom. 10: 10, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness," i. e. so that he is justified, regarded and treated as righteous; see Wahl, p. 429, 431. This view of the passage expresses accurately the apostle's meaning. It was not as 'one who works,' but as a believer that Abraham was regarded in his justification. It was not works, but faith that was imputed to him, in order to his being introduced into the number and blessings of the righteous. Faith, therefore, was not the ground of his justification, but the means of his being justified.

(4, 5) *Now to him that worketh the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt, but to him that worketh not, &c.* These verses are designed, in the first place, to vindicate the pertinency of the quotation from scripture made in v. 3; by showing that the declaration 'faith was imputed for righteousness,' is a denial that works were the ground of Abraham's acceptance; and, secondly, that to justify by faith, is to justify gratuitously, and, therefore, all passages which speak of gratuitous acceptance, are in favour of the doctrine of justification by faith.

Now to him that worketh, that is, either emphatically 'to him who does all that is required of him;' or to 'him who seeks to be accepted on account of his works.' The former explanation is the better. The words then state a general proposition, 'To him that is obedient, or who performs a stipulated work, the recompense is not regarded as a gratuity, but as a debt.'†

* Hac phrasi præcipue spectatur *fnis et effectum*, ut ex imputatione hac justus habeatur, et absolvatur; uti peccatum alicui imputari dicitur non ut illud habeat, sed propter illud puniatur.—TUCKNEY, p. 215.

† Michaelis and Tholuck understand this verse thus, 'To him that worketh, the reward is not imputed, it is a matter of debt.' According to this view, it lies in the very force of the word *imputed*, in Paul's sense of the term, that the thing reckoned to any one does not properly belong to him. See THOLUCK.

(5) *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, to him faith is counted for righteousness.* “To him that worketh not,” i. e. who makes no pretence of earning or meriting a reward, but renouncing all dependence on his works, “believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly,” to him, from the nature of the case, acceptance is a gratuity. It lies in the nature of the faith of which Paul speaks, that he who exercises it should feel and acknowledge that he is ungodly, and consequently undeserving of the favour of God. He, of course, in relying on the mercy of God, must acknowledge that his acceptance is a matter of grace, and not of debt. The meaning of the apostle is plainly this: ‘To him that worketh the reward is a matter of debt, but to him who worketh not, but believes simply, the reward is a matter of grace.’ Instead, however, of saying ‘it is a matter of grace,’ he uses as an equivalent expression, “to him faith is counted for righteousness.” That is, he is justified by faith. To be justified by faith, therefore, is to be justified gratuitously, and not by works. It is thus he proves that the passage cited in v. 3, respecting Abraham, was pertinent to his purpose as an argument against justification by works. It, at the same time, shows that all passages which speak of gratuitous acceptance, may be cited in proof of his doctrine of justification by faith. The way is thus opened for his *second* argument, which is derived from the testimony of David.

It is to be remarked that Paul speaks of God as justifying the *ungodly*. Of course they are regarded and treated as righteous, not on the ground of their personal character; and it is further apparent that justification does not consist in making one inherently just or holy; for it is as *ungodly* that those who believe are freely justified for Christ’s sake. It never was, as shown above, the doctrine of the Reformation, or of the Lutheran and Calvinistic divines, that the imputation of righteousness affected the moral character of those concerned. It is true, whom God justifies he also sanctifies, but justification is not sanctification and the imputation of righteousness is not the infusion of righteousness. “These be the first principles” of the doctrine of the Reformers. “The fourth grand error of the Papists in the article of justification,” says an old divine, “is concerning that which we call the form thereof. For they, denying and deriding the imputation of Christ’s right-

eousness (without which, notwithstanding, no man can be saved), do hold that men are justified by infusion, and not by imputation of righteousness: we, on the contrary do hold, according to the scriptures, that we are justified before God, only by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and not by infusion. And our meaning, when we say that God imputeth Christ's righteousness unto us, is nothing else but this: that he graciously accepteth for us, and in our behalf, the righteousness of Christ, that is, both as to his obedience, which, in the days of his flesh, he performed for us; and passive, that is, his sufferings, which he sustained for us, as if we had in our own persons both performed and suffered the same ourselves. Howbeit, we confess that the Lord doth infuse righteousness into the faithful; yet not as he justifieth, but as he sanctifieth them, &c." Bishop Downname, who lived in the age, and possessed the spirit of the Puritans; see his work on justification, p. 261. Tuckney, one of the leading members of the Westminster Assembly, and principal penman of the Shorter Catechism, in his Praellectiones, p. 213, says, "Although God justifies the ungodly, Rom. 4: 5, i. e. him who was antecedently ungodly, and who, in a measure, remains, as to his inherent character, *unjust* after justification," yet it has its proper ground in the satisfaction of Christ, &c. On p. 220, he says, "The Papists understand by justification the infusion of inherent righteousness, and thus confound justification with sanctification: which, if it was the true nature and definition of justification, they might well deny that the imputation of Christ's righteousness is the cause, or formal reason of this justification, i. e. of sanctification. For we are not so foolish or blasphemous as to say, or even think, that the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, renders us formally or inherently righteous, so that we should be formally or inherently righteous with the righteousness of Christ. Since the righteousness of Christ is proper to himself, and is as inseparable from him, and as incommunicable to others, as any other attribute of a thing or its essence itself."

(6) *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works.* Paul's first argument in favour of gratuitous justification was from the case of Abraham; his second is from the testimony of David. The immediate connexion of this verse is with v. 5. At the

conclusion of that verse, it was said, to him who had no works faith is imputed in order to his justification, i. e. he is justified gratuitously, even as David speaks of the blessedness of him, whom, although destitute of merit, God regards and treats as righteous. *Describeth the blessedness*, i. e. pronounces blessed. *To whom God imputeth righteousness without works*, that is, whom God regards and treats as righteous, although he is not in himself righteous. The meaning of this clause cannot be mistaken. 'To impute sin' is to lay sin to the charge of any one, and to treat him accordingly, as is universally admitted; so 'to impute righteousness,' is to set righteousness to one's account, and to treat him accordingly. This righteousness does not, of course, belong antecedently to those to whom it is imputed, for they are ungodly and destitute of works. Here then is an imputation to men of what does not belong to them, and to which they have in themselves no claim. To impute righteousness is the apostle's definition of the term *to justify*. It is not making men inherently righteous, or morally pure, but it is regarding and treating them as just. This is done, not on the ground of personal character or works, but on the ground of the righteousness of Christ. As this is dealing with men, not according to merit, but in a gracious manner, the passage cited from Ps. 32: 1, 2, is precisely in point, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." That is, blessed is the man, who, although a sinner, is regarded and treated as righteous. As the remission of sin is necessarily connected with restoration to God's favour, the apostle speaks of it as the whole of justification; not that the idea of remission exhausts the whole idea of justification, but it necessary implies the rest. In like manner, in Eph. 1: 7, it is said "In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin;" which does not imply that forgiveness is the whole of redemption, that the gift of the Spirit, the glorification of the body, and eternal life, which are so constantly spoken of, as fruits of Christ's work, as parts of "the purchased possession," (Eph. 1: 14,) are to be excluded.

(9) *Cometh this blessedness upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also?* &c. The apostle's third argument, commencing with this verse and continuing to the 12th, has special reference to circumcision. He had proved that

Abraham was not justified on account of his works generally; he now proves that circumcision is neither the ground nor condition of his acceptance. The proof of this point is brief and conclusive. It is admitted that Abraham was justified. The only question is, was it before or after his circumcision? If before, it certainly was not on account of it. As it was before, circumcision must have had some other object.

‘Cometh *this blessedness.*’ There is nothing in the original to answer to the word *cometh*, although some word of the kind must be supplied. The word rendered *blessedness* means more properly ‘declaration of blessedness.’ ‘This declaration of blessedness, is it *upon*, i. e. is it about, does it concern the circumcision only?’ The preposition (*ἐπι*) used by the apostle, often points out the direction of an action, or the object concerning which any thing is said. This question has not direct reference to the persons to whom the offers of acceptance are applicable, as though it were equivalent to asking, ‘Is this blessedness confined to the Jews, or may it be extended to the Gentiles also?’ because this is not the subject now in hand. It is the ground or condition of acceptance, and not the persons to whom the offer is to be made, that is now under consideration. The question, therefore, is, in substance, this, ‘Does this declaration of blessedness relate to the circumcised, as such? Is circumcision necessary to justification?’ which is the blessing of which Paul is speaking.

For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. *For* merely indicates the resumption of the case of Abraham. The preceding verses are occupied with the testimony of David, which decided nothing as to the point of circumcision. To determine whether this rite was a necessary condition of acceptance, it was requisite to refer again to the case of Abraham. To decide the point presented in the question at the beginning of the verse, the apostle argues from the position already established. It is conceded or proved that Abraham was justified by faith; to determine whether circumcision is necessary, we have only to ask, under what circumstances was he thus justified, before or after circumcision?

(10) *How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision or uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.* Of course, his circumcision, which was long sub-

sequent to his justification, could not be either the ground or necessary condition of his acceptance with God.

(11) *And he received the sign of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised, &c.* As Paul had shown that circumcision was not the condition of justification, it became necessary to declare its true nature and design. *The sign of circumcision*, i. e. circumcision which was a sign (genitive of apposition); as “the earnest of the spirit,” for ‘the spirit which is an earnest,’ 2 Cor. 1: 20. *The seal of the righteousness of faith, &c.* The phrase *righteousness of faith* is a concise expression ‘for righteousness which is attained by faith,’ or, as it stands more fully in Phil. 3: 9, “the righteousness of God, which is by faith.” The word *righteousness*, in such connexions, includes, with the idea of excellence or obedience, that of consequent blessedness. It is the ‘state of acceptableness with God.’ The circumcision of Abraham was designed to confirm to him the fact, that he was regarded and treated by God as righteous, through faith, which was the means of his becoming interested in the promise of redemption. This was a faith which Abraham had, *being yet uncircumcised*, literally, *by* or *with* uncircumcision; see ch. 2: 27, where the same preposition is used, as it is here, to indicate the state or condition in which a person is; Wahl, p. 275.

That he might be the father of all that believe, though they be not circumcised, &c. ‘That he might be;’ the form of expression in the original (*ὅτι ἐὰν ἀβραάμ*) may signify either the design or result. If the former, as it is taken in our version, the meaning is, that the annunciation of the justification of Abraham before his circumcision, was with the design that he might be the father of uncircumcised believers. If the latter, the sense is, ‘He was thus justified, hence he is, &c.’ Either method suits the context; the latter seems, however, the more natural. The word *father* is often used to express the general idea of dependence, as of a disciple on a master, (hence applied to teachers in religion, *Abbas*, *Papa*, *Pope*, *Pater*, the *Fathers*, &c.; see *Gesenius Lex.*) of a follower on a leader, &c. Hence, the inventor or author of any thing is called a *father*; Gen. 4: 20, “The father of all those who handle the organ.” Abraham is called the “Father of the faithful,” as their leader, from being

the first conspicuous example of faith recorded in the scriptures, and from being the head of the family of God, i. e. of his peculiar people. As the church, under the Old Testament, stood in this relation to Abraham, it was not disowned by those introduced into it, when the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles was broken down. To be a child of Abraham is to be like him, to have the same faith that he had, Gal. 3: 7; and, of course, as their head, leader and example, Abraham is the father of all those who believe. The Jews were accustomed to speak in the same way of Abraham; Michlal Jophi on Malachi, 2: 15; by *the one* there mentioned, "Abraham is intended, for he was one alone, and the father of all who follow and imitate him in faith." Bechai, fol. 27, he is called "The root of faith, and father of all those who believe in one God." Jalkut Chadasch, fol. 54, 4, "On this account Abraham was not circumcised until he was ninety-nine years old, lest he should shut the door on proselytes coming in;" see Schoettgen, p. 508.

Of all that believe, though they be not circumcised, literally, 'of all believing with (or in) uncircumcision;' see the previous clause, and ch. 2: 27. That righteousness might be imputed unto them also. The connexion and design of these words are not very clear, and they are, therefore, variously explained. They may be considered as explanatory of the former clause, and, therefore, connected with the first part of the verse. The sense would then be, 'Abraham was justified, being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the father of believers, although uncircumcised, that is, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.' But the logical connexion is not thus very plain, as the justification of Abraham was not designed to secure the justification of others. This clause is most commonly regarded as a parenthesis, designed to indicate the point of resemblance between Abraham and those of whom he is called the father. 'He is the father of uncircumcised believers, since they also are justified by faith as he was.' *Righteousness was imputed to them; see above, vs. 3, 6.*

(12) *And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk, &c.* "Father of circumcision" means 'the father of the circumcised.' As, in Hebrew, the expression occurs "father to," as well as "father of," Paul uses the former expression here, 'Father to

them;’ see 2 Sam. 7: 14. Heb. 1: 5. The meaning of this verse is doubtful. Agreeably to our version, which adheres closely to the Greek, the meaning is, ‘Abraham is not the father of the uncircumcised believers only, as stated in v. 11, but he is the father of the circumcised also, provided they follow the example of his faith.’ According to this view, as the 11th verse declares him to be the father of believing Gentiles, this presents him as the father of believing Jews, i. e. of those Jews which have some better bond of connexion with him than circumcision merely. But, according to another interpretation, this verse includes both classes of his spiritual seed. ‘He is the father of the circumcision, and not of the circumcision only, but of those also who follow his faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised.’ The construction in the Greek is in favour of the former method. The expression is, ‘To those who are not of the circumcision only, but, &c.’ instead of being, ‘Not to those only who are,’ &c., as the latter interpretation would require; compare v. 16.

Verses 13—16 contain two additional arguments in favour of the apostle’s doctrine. The first, vs. 13, 14, is the same as that presented more at length in Gal. 3: 18, &c., and is founded on the nature of a covenant. The promise having been made to Abraham (and his seed), on the condition of faith, cannot now, consistently with fidelity, be made to depend on obedience to the law. The second argument, vs. 15, 16, is from the nature of the law itself.

(13) *For the promise, that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, &c.* The word *for* does not connect this verse with the one immediately preceding, as a proof of the insufficiency of circumcision. It rather marks the introduction of a new argument in favour of the general proposition which the chapter is designed to establish. As Abraham was not justified for his circumcision, so neither was it on account of his obedience to the law. The promise here spoken of, is, that Abraham and his seed should be the heirs of the world. The word *heir* in scripture frequently means *secure possessor*, Heb. 1: 2. 6: 17. 11: 7, &c. This use of the term probably arose from the fact, that among the Jews, possession by inheritance, was much more secure and permanent than that obtained by purchase. As no such promise as that

mentioned in this verse is contained, in so many words, in the Old Testament, the apostle must have designed to express what he knew to be the purport of those actually given. The expression, however, has been variously explained. 1. Some understand the *world* to mean the land of Canaan merely. But in the first place, this is a very unusual, if not an entirely unexampled use of the word. And, in the second place, this explanation is inconsistent with the context; for Paul has reference to a promise of which, as appears from v. 16, believing Gentiles were to partake. 2. Others understand the apostle to refer to the promise that Abraham should be the father of many nations, Gen. 17: 5, and his posterity as numerous as the stars of heaven, Gen. 15: 5; promises which they limit to his natural descendants, who, being widely scattered, may be said, in a limited sense, to possess the world. But this interpretation is irreconcilable with v. 16. 3. Besides the promises already referred to, it was also said, that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed, Gen. 12: 3. This, as Paul explains it, Gal. 3: 16, &c., had direct reference to the blessings of redemption through Jesus Christ, who was the seed of Abraham. And here too, he speaks of blessings of which all believers partake. The possession of the world, therefore, here intended, must be understood in a manner consistent with these passages. The expression is frequently taken in a general sense, as indicating general prosperity and happiness. "To be heir of the world" would then mean to be prosperous and happy, in the best sense of the words. Reference is made, in support of this interpretation, to such passages as Matt. 5: 5, "The meek shall inherit the earth;" Ps. 25: 13, "The seed of the righteous shall inherit the earth;" Ps. 37: 11. The promise then, to be the heir of the world, is a general promise of blessedness. And as the happiness promised to believers, or the pious as such, is, of course, the happiness consequent on religion, and is its reward, the promise in this sense may include all the blessings of redemption. So in Gal. 3: 14, Paul uses the expression "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles," as equivalent to saying, 'that all the blessings of the gospel might come upon them.' 4. Or the promises in question may have reference to the actual possession of the world by the spiritual seed of Abraham, and Christ their head. The declaration that Abraham

should be the father of many nations, and that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude, included far more than that his natural descendants should be very numerous. If they who are of faith, 'are the seed of Abraham, and heirs of the promise,' Gal. 3: 9, 29, then will the promise, as stated by the apostle, have its literal accomplishment; when the kingdoms of this world are given to the saints of the most high God (Dan. 7: 27), and when the uttermost parts of the earth become the possession of Christ. In this sense, the promise includes the universal prevalence of the true religion, involving, of course, the advent of Christ, the establishment of his kingdom, and all its consequent blessings.*

The promise to Abraham and his seed was not *through the law, but through the righteousness of faith*. That is, it was not on condition of obedience to the law, but on condition of his having that righteousness which is obtained by faith. *Through the law*, is, therefore, equivalent to *through the works of the law*, as appears from its opposition to the latter clause, 'righteousness of faith.' By the *law*, is to be understood the whole rule of duty, as in other passages of the same kind; see 3: 20. In this sense, it of course includes the Mosaic law, which, to the Jews, was the most prominent portion of the revealed will of God, and by obedience to which especially, they hoped for the mercy of God. The parallel passage, Gal. 3: 18, &c., where the law is said to have been given four hundred years after the covenant formed with Abraham, shows it was one part of the apostle's design to convince the Jews, that as Abraham was not justified by his circumcision, v. 11, so also it was not in virtue of the Mosaic economy; and, therefore, the promise could not be made to depend, on the condition of obedience to that dispensation. This idea, although included, is not to be urged to the exclusion of the more comprehensive meaning of the word *law*, which the usage of the apostle and the context show to be also intended. It was neither by obedience to

* *Bemidbar* R. 14, f. 202, "The garden is the world which God gave to Abraham, to whom it is said: thou shalt be a blessing." *Thanchuma*, p. 165. "God gave to my father Abraham the possession of heaven and earth." *Midrasch Mischle*, 19. *Mechila* in Ex. 14: 31, "Abraham our father did not obtain the inheritance of this world and the world to come, except through faith."—
WETSTEIN.

the law, generally, nor to the particular form of it, as it appeared in the Mosaic institutions, that the promise was to be secured.

(14) *For if they who are of the law, be heirs, &c.* The original condition being faith, if another be substituted, the covenant is broken, the promise violated, and the condition made of none effect. "They who are of the law" sometimes, as v. 16, means the Jews, i. e. those who have the law; compare v. 12, "Those of circumcision," &c. But here it means *legalists*, those who seek justification by the works of the law; as 'those who are of faith' are *believers*, those who seek justification by faith; compare Gal. 3: 10, "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse," i. e. as many as seek acceptance by their own works. The apostle's meaning, therefore, obviously is, that if those who rely upon their own works, are the heirs of the promise, and are accepted on the condition of obedience to the law, the whole covenant is broken, *faith is made void*, and *the promise made of none effect*. "Is made void" is rendered useless; see 1 Cor. 1: 17, "The cross of Christ is made useless," 9: 15, &c.; compare 1 Cor. 15: 17, "Your faith is vain," not only without foundation, but of no use. *The promise is made of none effect*, i. e. is invalidated; see ch. 3: 3, 31.

(15) *Because the law worketh wrath, &c.* This verse is not to be connected with the 14th, as the punctuation in our version would intimate, as though it contained a proof of the declaration there made, that faith and the promise would be invalidated, if works were made the ground of acceptance. For although it is true, that this conclusion would follow, from the nature of the law, inasmuch as it requires perfect obedience, and all who trust in it are under the curse, and of course not the heirs of the promise; yet this idea is not presented as a proof that the promise must fail. That was proved in a different way in the previous verse. The argument from the nature of the law is intended to bear on the general proposition that justification is not by works. This verse, therefore, contains the fourth argument in the apostle's reasoning in support of his main doctrine.

Worketh wrath, i. e. causes men to suffer wrath or punishment. This, however, the law does in two ways, and, therefore, there are two methods of explaining this verse. The law is condemnatory, its sanction or penalty is an essential part of it, and it is only in virtue of law that sin is punished; for sin is

not imputed or punished where there is no law; or, where there is no law there is no transgression. The idea and argument then are, that it is the office of the law to condemn and not to justify. As it requires perfect obedience, and says, "cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them," all who are under the law are under the curse. For sinners, therefore, salvation by the law is from its very nature impossible. According to this view, the argument of the apostle is analagous to that in Gal. 3: 10. But there is another way in which the law works wrath; it excites and exasperates the evil passions of the heart. Not from any defect, indeed, in the law itself, but from the nature of sin. This idea the apostle frequently presents, 7: 5, &c., 8: 3. The meaning then is, that the law which, instead of freeing men from sin, incidentally renders these transgressions more numerous and conspicuous, and thus brings them more and more under condemnation, is not, from its nature, capable of securing the justification of men. This is perhaps the most commonly received view of the passage. So Calvin,* Tholuck, &c. The former, however, seems more natural and better suited to the context.

For where there is no law there is no transgression. The meaning given to this clause depends upon the view taken of the preceding one. Calvin and others understand it as explaining the method in which the law works wrath, or calls down the displeasure of God. It is because sin, by the knowledge imparted by the law, is rendered less excusable, and deserving of severer punishment.† *Transgression* is understood emphatically, for the contumacious violation of the known will of God.‡ But, according to the former of the two explanations:

* Nam quum Lex nihil quam ultionem generet, not potest afferre gratiam. Quae enim est naturae nostrae visioitas, quo magis docemur, quid rectum sit ac iustum, eo apertius nostra iniquitas detegitur, maximeque contumacia: atque hoc modo gravius Dei iudicium accersitur.

† Ea autem est, quia cognitione iustitiae Dei per legem percepta eo gravius peccamus in Deum, quo minus excusationis nobis superest.

‡ Atque ut uno verbo dicam, transgressio hic non est simplex delictum, sed destinata in violanda iustitia contumaciam significat.—CALVIN.

Much to same effect, BENGEI says, "Non dicit: *ne peccatum quidem*,—*transgressio* expressius refertur ad legem, quae violatur. *Transgressio* iram conicitat." And GROTIUS' comment is, Non dicit: *non esse peccatum*, sed non esse ὁμολογία i. e. *contemptum legis* a Deo non per collectiones sed expressum datae.

given of the first clause, this more naturally expresses the general idea that law and transgression are correlative terms; the latter implies the former. If there were no law there could be no transgression, and, therefore, no punishment. It is the law, therefore, which gives sin its condemning power. This being the case, it is obvious that the law which secures the punishment of sin, cannot be the means of the sinner's justification.

(16) *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed, &c.* This and the following verse contain the conclusion from the previous reasoning, and especially from the two preceding arguments. The expression in the original is simply *therefore of faith*. It matters little, as to the sense, whether the words *we are heirs* be supplied from v. 14, or the word *promise* from v. 13th. 'Therefore the promise is of faith,' that it might be of grace, see vs. 4, 5, i. e. not of works; for if of works, as Paul had just shown, the covenant would be broken, and the promise invalidated. If this condition be insisted upon, no one, from the very nature of the law, can be saved. But being of faith and gratuitous, it is sure to all the seed. The words rendered *to the end*, are the same as those which occur, v. 11, and express either the design or result. The sense may therefore be, 'It is of faith, in order that it might be sure, &c.' or, 'It is of faith, and hence is sure, &c.' *To all the seed*, i. e. all the children of Abraham, as well those *which are of the law*, i. e. Jews, see Acts 10: 45, &c., as those *which are of the faith of Abraham*, i. e. the Gentiles, whose only bond of union with Abraham is the possession of the same faith which he had; see Gal. 3: 7, &c. *Who is the father of us all*. It is in this sense that Abraham is the father, the head and leader of all believers who are his children, because they are like him, and heirs of the promise made to him, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. Gal. 3: 29, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

(17) *As it is written, I have made the father of many nations*, Gen. 17: 5. This declaration, the apostle informs us, contains a great deal more than the assurance that the natural descendants of Abraham should be very numerous. Taken in connexion with the promise, that "in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed," it refers to his spiritual as well as his

natural seed, and finds its full accomplishment in the extension of the blessing promised to him, to those of all nations who are his children by faith. This clause is very properly marked as a parenthesis, as the preceding one, "who is the father of us all" must be connected immediately with the following words, *before him whom he believed*, even *God who quickeneth the dead*, &c. The original here is very difficult. The two most probable explanations are the following, 1. That which resolves the sentence much in the same manner as in our own version,* "Before God, in whom he believed," i. e. he is the father of us all, in the sight or estimation of that God in whom he believed; compare Luke 1: 3 and Ex. 6: 12. 34: 34, in the LXX. 2. The construction of the sentence is explained in the manner just stated, but the word rendered *before* is translated *by* or *through*. The sense then is, 'He is, or is made the father of all *by* that God in whom he believed.' But this interpretation is destitute of sufficient philological support. Neither the Greek nor the corresponding Hebrew term means *by* or *through*. In 2 Sam. 7: 16, the passage referred to by Koppe, the common sense may well be retained. The first explanation is, therefore, to be preferred.

God is here described as *quickeneth the dead, and calling those things which be not as though they were*. This passage is very variously explained. It may be considered, 1. As a description of the omnipotence of God. The promise made to Abraham seemed impossible of fulfilment, yet he believed in that Almighty God 'who quickens the dead, and calls, i. e. commands and controls, things that are not as though they were.' The words rendered *as though they were*, are by some rendered *into being*, or *so that they are*. But this they will hardly admit of. See Elsner in loc. and compare Is. 41: 4. 48: 13, "I call unto them, they stand up together." 2. It may be explained more in reference to the divine omniscience. God foresaw how numerous would be the spiritual seed of Abraham. He was declared to be the father of many nations in the sight of that God who sees the end from the beginning, who wakes up the dead, and before whom the future and the present, the non-existent and the already existing are alike. Both these ideas

* Κατέναντι οὗ ἐπίσταυσε Θεοῦ, for, κατέναντι Θεοῦ, ὃ ἐπίσταυσε.

may be united; the object of Abraham's faith was the Almighty and All-seeing God, who sees and controls the living and the dead, the future and the present, with equal ease. The idea of the divine power is so prominently presented in the following verses 19—21, that it certainly should not be omitted here.

3. The word to *call* is taken in its common New Testament sense, for *calling into the kingdom of Christ*, ch. 8: 30. Gal. 1: 6. 5: 8, &c. &c. The sense then is, 'Who calls those who are not yet in being to be the children of Abraham (i. e. into the kingdom of Christ), as though they were already in existence;' thus Abraham was already, in the sight of God, the father of many nations of spiritual children. It seems, however, most in accordance with the apostle's manner, and most suited to the context, to consider the passage as a general description of the divine perfections. When Paul speaks of God, especially as the object of faith, it is not unusual for him to add some descriptive clause, declarative of some of his attributes or acts, as the special ground of confidence; compare v. 24.

Doctrines.

1. If the greatest and best men of the old dispensation had to renounce entirely dependence upon their works, and to accept of the favour of God as a gratuity, justification by works must, for all men, be impossible, vs. 2, 3.

2. No man can glory, that is, complacently rejoice in his own goodness in the sight of God. And this every man of an enlightened conscience feels. The doctrine of justification by works, therefore, is inconsistent with the inward testimony of conscience, and can never give true peace of mind, v. 2.

3. The two methods of justification cannot be united. They are as inconsistent as wages and a free gift. If of works, it is not of grace; and if of grace, it is not of works, vs. 4, 5.

4. As God justifies the ungodly, it cannot be on the ground of their own merit, but must be by the imputation of a righteousness which does not personally belong to them, and which they received by faith, vs. 5, 6, 11.

5. The blessings of the gospel, and the method of justification which it proposes, are suited to all men; and are not to be confined by sectarian limits, or bound down to ceremonial observances, vs. 9—11.

6. The sacraments and ceremonies of the church, although in the highest degree useful, when viewed in their proper light, become ruinous when perverted into grounds of confidence. What answers well as a sign, is a miserable substitute for the thing signified. Circumcision will not serve for righteousness, nor baptism for regeneration, v. 10.

7. As Abraham is the father of all believers, all believers are brethren. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free among them as Christians, vs. 11, 12.

8. The seed of Abraham, or true believers, with Jesus Christ their head, are the heirs of the world. To them it will ultimately belong; even the uttermost parts of the earth shall be their possession, v. 13.

9. To speak of justification by obedience to a law which we have broken is a solecism. That which condemns cannot justify, v. 15.

10. Nothing is sure for sinners that is not gratuitous. A promise suspended on obedience they could never render sure. One entirely gratuitous needs only to be accepted to become ours, v. 16.

11. It is the entire freeness of the gospel, and its requiring faith as the condition of acceptance, which renders it suited to all ages and nations, v. 16.

12. The proper object of faith is the divine promise; or God considered as able and determined to accomplish his word, v. 17.

Remarks.

1. The renunciation of a legal self-righteous spirit is the first requisition of the gospel. This must be done, or the gospel cannot be accepted. 'He who works,' i. e. who trusts in his works, refuses to be saved by grace, vs. 1—5.

2. The more intimately we are acquainted with our own hearts and with the character of God, the more ready shall we be to renounce our own righteousness and to trust in his mercy, vs. 2, 3.

3. Those only are truly happy and secure who, under a sense of ill-desert and helplessness, cast themselves upon the grace and promise of God, vs. 7, 8.

4. Nothing is more natural, and nothing has occurred more extensively in the Christian church, than the perversion of the

means of grace into grounds of dependence. Thus it was with circumcision, and thus it is with baptism, the Lord's supper; thus too with prayer, fasting, &c. &c. This is the rock on which millions have been shipwrecked, vs. 9—12.

5. There is no hope for those, who, forsaking the grace of God, take refuge in a law which worketh wrath, v. 15.

6. All things are ours if we are Christ's. Heirs of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, v. 13.

7. As the God in whom believers trust, is he to whom all things are known, and all things are subject, they should be strong in faith, giving glory to God, v. 17.

CHAP. 4: 18—25.

Analysis.

THE object of this section is the illustration of the faith of Abraham, and the application of his case to our instruction. With regard to Abraham's faith, the apostle states, first, its object, viz. the divine promise, v. 18. He then illustrates its strength, by a reference to the apparent impossibility of the thing promised, vs. 19, 20. The ground of this confidence was the power and veracity of God, v. 21. The consequence was that Abraham was justified by his faith, v. 22. Hence it is to be inferred that this is the true method of justification; for the record was made to teach us this truth. We are situated as Abraham was; we are called upon to believe in the Almighty God, who, by raising up Christ from the dead, has accepted him as the propitiation for our sins, vs. 23—25.

Commentary.

(18) *Who against hope believed in hope*, that is, who against all apparent ground of hope, confidently believed. *In hope*, with hope, or confidently, Acts 2: 26. 1 Cor. 9: 10, &c. &c. *That he might become the father of many nations.* This clause, as it stands in the Greek, may express either the design with which he believed, or the result of his believing, or finally the object of his faith.● 'He believed in order that he might be the father;' or, 'He believed, and hence became the father, &c.;' or, 'He believed that he should be the father, &c.' The last would seem best to suit the context, but it is not so

consistent with the construction of the passage. *According to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be.* This is a reference to the promise which was the object of Abraham's faith. It is a quotation from Gen. 15: 5. The word *so* refers to the stars of heaven, mentioned in the passage as it stands in the Old Testament. The promise, therefore, particularly intended by the apostle, is, that Abraham should be the father of many nations, or that his seed should be as numerous as the stars. It has already been seen, however, that the apostle understood this promise as including far more than that the natural descendants of Abraham should be very numerous; see vs. 13, 17. The expression in the text is a concise allusion to the various promises made to the ancient patriarch, which had reference to all nations being blessed through him. The promise of a numerous posterity, therefore, included the promise of Christ and his redemption. This is evident, 1. Because Paul had been speaking of a promise, v. 16, in which believing Jews and Gentiles were alike interested; see Gal. 3: 14. 2. Because Paul asserts and argues that the seed promised to Abraham, and to which the promise related, was Jesus Christ, Gal. 3: 16. 3. So Abraham himself understood it, according to the declaration of our Saviour; John 8: 56, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." He looked forward under the greatest discouragements to the Redeemer as yet to come; we have the easier task to look back to the same Deliverer, who has died for our sins, and risen again for our justification, v. 25.

(19) *And not being weak in faith, he considered not his own body, now dead, &c.* The 18th verse had stated it was contrary to all appearances that Abraham believed; this verse states the circumstances which rendered the accomplishment of the promise an apparent impossibility, viz. his own advanced age, and the age and barrenness of his wife. These circumstances he did not consider, that is, he did not allow them to have weight, he did not fix his mind on the difficulties of the case. Had he been weak in faith, and allowed himself to dwell on the obstacles to the fulfilment of the divine promise, he would have staggered.*

* The fact that Abraham, many years after the promise of the birth of Isaac, had several children by Keturah, can create no difficulty, as the effect of the divine power doubtless remained.

(20) *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, &c.* The word rendered *to stagger*, signifies, in the middle voice, *to contend with any one, to be in strife with one's self, to doubt or hesitate.* Matt. 21: 21, "If ye have faith, and doubt not, &c." 'He was not in doubt *as to* the promise, &c.;" see the same use of the preposition (*sic*), Acts 25: 20. Luke 12: 21, &c. &c. *But was strong in faith, giving glory to God*, that is, giving God credit for veracity and power, influenced by a reverential conviction of the truth and ability of him who had given the promise. *To give glory to God is to feel and act in a manner becoming the divine character, see 1 Sam. 6: 5; and also in such a way as to cause him to be honoured by others, Josh. 7: 19, &c. &c.* To believe the divine declarations, is, therefore, the highest honour we can render God, and to disbelieve them is a great offence to the divine majesty; compare 1 John 5: 10.*

(21) *And being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform.* This verse is an amplification and explanation of the last clause of the preceding one. He gave glory to God by being fully persuaded that he was able to perform his promise. The ground of Abraham's confidence, therefore, was not the nature of the thing promised, nor the facility of its attainment, but the divine character and attributes.

(22) *Therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.* The *it* of course refers to the extraordinary faith spoken of above. It was imputed to him in order to his being regarded and treated as righteous; see above on v. 3.

(23) *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him.* This and the following verses contain the application of the case of Abraham to our instruction. Paul says that the record concerning the justification of Abraham, was not made merely that we might know that he was a righteous man; or, as though justification by faith were something peculiar to him.

* Quod addit, *dedisse gloriam Deo*, in eo notandum est, non posse Deo plus honoris deferri quam dum fide obsequiamur ejus veritatem; sicuti rursum nulla ei gravior contumelia inuri potest quam dum respuitur oblata ab ipso gratia, vel ejus verbo derogatur auctoritas. Quare hoc in ejus cultu præcipuum est caput, promissiones ejus obedienter amplecti; veraque religio a fide incipit.—CALVIN.

(24) *But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe, &c.* The fact that faith was imputed to Abraham for his justification was placed on record that we might learn the true method of justification. As all men are sinners, and consequently stand in the same relation to God, the method in which he justifies one, is the same as that in which he justifies all; see 3: 9, 22. The object of our faith is described as God *that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.* The object of Abraham's faith was the Almighty and Omniscient God, who had promised to raise up to him a seed in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. The object of our faith is this same God considered as recognizing Jesus our Lord to be this long promised seed and deliverer, by raising him from the dead.

When we are said to believe in God who raised up Christ, it of course implies that we believe that Christ was thus raised up. As the resurrection of Christ was the great decisive evidence of the divinity of his mission, and the validity of all his claims, to believe that he rose from the dead is to believe he was the Son of God, the propitiation for our sins, the Redeemer and the Lord of men; that he was all he claimed to be, and had accomplished all he purposed to effect; compare Rom. 10: 9. Acts 1: 22. 4: 33. 1 Cor. 15, and other passages, in which the resurrection of Christ is spoken of as the corner-stone of the gospel, as the great fact to be proved, and which, being proved, involves all the rest.

(25) *Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.* This verse is a comprehensive statement of the gospel. Christ was delivered *unto death* for our offences, i. e. on account of them, and for their expiation; see Is. 53: 5, 6. Heb. 9: 28. 1 Peter 2: 21. This delivering of Christ is ascribed to God, Rom. 8: 32. Gal. 1: 3, and elsewhere; and to himself, Tit. 2: 14. Gal. 2: 20. It was by the divine purpose and counsel he suffered for the expiation of sin; and he gave himself willingly to death. "He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."

And was raised again for our justification, i. e. that we might be justified. The resurrection of Christ was necessary for our justification, inasmuch as it was the formal acceptance of his sufferings, as the expiation for our sins. Had he not risen.

we should be yet under condemnation, 1 Cor. 15: 17. But as he rose from the dead, he was accepted of the Father, and appeared as the first fruits, i. e. the forerunner and pledge of the resurrection and complete salvation of all his people. In the epistle to the Hebrews the apostle presents this idea under another form. As it was necessary, on the great day of atonement, that the High Priest should not only slay the victim at the altar, but enter into the most holy place, and sprinkle the blood upon the mercy-seat; so our High Priest, having suffered in the outer-court, has passed into the heavens with his own blood, there to appear for our justification; that is, to secure for us the continued application of the merits of his death. Either, therefore, as the evidence of the acceptance of his sufferings as our substitute, or as a necessary step towards securing the application of their merit to our benefit, the resurrection of Christ was essential to our justification.

Doctrines.

1. Faith is an operative assent to the divine testimony, not the reception of truth, as something which can be proved by our own arguments, vs. 18, 20.

2. When faith is genuine it is founded on correct apprehensions of the divine character, and has a controlling influence over the heart and life, vs. 20, 21.

3. The method of salvation has never been changed; Abraham was not only saved by faith, but the object of his faith was the same as the object of ours, vs. 24, 17.

4. The resurrection of Christ, as an historical fact, established by the most satisfactory evidence (see 1 Cor. 15), authenticates the whole gospel. As surely as Christ has risen, so surely shall believers be saved, v. 25.

Remarks.

1. The true way to have our faith strengthened is not to consider the difficulties in the way of the thing promised, but the character and resources of God who has made the promise, v. 19.

2. It is as possible for faith to be strong when the thing promised is most improbable, as when it is probable. Abraham's faith should serve as an example and admonition to us. He

believed that a Saviour would be born from his family when his having a son was an apparent impossibility. We are only called upon to believe that the Saviour has been born, has suffered and risen again from the dead: facts established on the strongest historical evidence, vs. 20, 24, 25.

3. Unbelief is a very great sin, as it implies a doubt of the veracity and power of God, vs. 20, 21.

4. All that is written in the scriptures is for our instruction. What is promised, commanded or threatened (unless of a strictly personal nature), although addressed originally to individuals, belongs to them only as representatives of classes of men, and is designed for all of similar character and in similar circumstances, v. 23.

5. The two great truths of the gospel are that Christ died as a sacrifice for our sins, and that he rose again for our justification. Whosoever, from the heart, believes these truths shall be saved, v. 25. Rom. 10: 9.

6. The denial of the propitiatory death of Christ, or of his resurrection from the dead, is a denial of the gospel. It is a refusing to be saved according to the method which God has appointed, v. 25.

CHAPTER V.

Contents.

FROM verse 1 to 11 inclusive, the apostle deduces some of the more obvious and consolatory inferences from the doctrine of gratuitous justification. From the 12th verse to the end, he illustrates his great principle of the imputation of righteousness, or the regarding and treating "the many" as righteous, on account of the righteousness of one man Christ Jesus, by a reference to the fall of all men in Adam.

CHAP. 5: 1—11.

Analysis.

THE first consequence of justification by faith is, that we have peace with God, v. 1. The second, that we have ready

access to his presence, a sense of his present favour and assurance of future glory, v. 2. The third, that our afflictions, instead of being inconsistent with the divine favour, are made directly conducive to the confirmation of our hope; the Holy Spirit bearing witness to the fact that we are the objects of the love of God, vs. 3—5. The fourth, the certainty of the final salvation of all believers. This is argued from the freeness and greatness of the divine love. Its freeness being manifested in its exercise towards the unworthy; and its greatness in the gift of the Son of God, vs. 6—10. Salvation is not merely a future though certain good; it is a present and abundant joy, v. 11.

Commentary.

(1) *Therefore being justified by faith, we have* peace with God*, that is, we are reconciled to God. We are no longer the objects of the divine displeasure, his favour having been propitiated by the death of his Son, v. 10. As a consequence of this reconciliation, we have conscious peace with God, that is, we have neither any longer the present upbraidings of an unappeased conscience, nor the dread of divine vengeance. Both of these ideas are included in the peace here spoken of. It is peculiarly an evangelical doctrine, that pious affections are the fruit of this reconciliation to God, and not the cause of it. Paul says this peace is the result of justification by faith. He who relies on his works for justification can have no peace. He can neither remove the displeasure of God, nor quiet the apprehension of punishment. Peace is not the result of mere gratuitous forgiveness, but of justification, of a reconciliation founded upon atonement. The enlightened conscience is never satisfied until it sees that God can be just in justifying the ungodly; that sin has been punished, the justice of God satisfied, his law honoured and vindicated. It is when he thus sees justice and mercy embracing each other, that the believer has that peace which passes all understanding; that sweet quiet of

* Instead of εἰρήμην *we have peace*, εἰχμην *let us have* is read in the MSS. A. C. D. 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, 34, 36, 37, 42, 44, 46, 55, 66, in the Syriac, Coptic, Vulgate versions, and by several of the fathers. The latter reading is adopted by Lachmann. But as the external authorities are nearly equally divided, and as the common reading gives a sense so much better suited to the context, it is retained by the majority of critical editors.

the soul in which deep humility, in view of personal unworthiness, is mingled with the warmest gratitude to that Saviour by whose blood God's justice has been satisfied and conscience appeased. Hence, Paul says we have this peace *through our Lord Jesus Christ*. It is not through ourselves in any way, neither by our own merit nor our own efforts. It is all of grace. It is all through Jesus Christ. And this the justified soul is ever anxious to acknowledge.*

(2) *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, &c.* It would seem obvious, from the use of the word *also*, that this verse expresses a distinct idea from the preceding. The passage admits of different explanations. By putting a comma after *access*, and changing *into* for *in*, which the original admits of, the meaning of the verse is, "We have access to God, by faith in that grace (i. e. system or doctrine of grace) in which we stand." This gives a very good sense, and is recommended by the consideration that wherever *access* is elsewhere spoken of, it is not access into a state of grace, but access to God; see Eph. 2: 18, and also by implication, in Eph. 3: 12; see also 1 Pet. 3: 18. 2. The most common and natural construction, however, is to connect the word *grace* with *access*, i. e. "access into this grace." *Grace*, then, or *favour* expresses the same idea as *peace with God*, in the preceding verse; and the difference between the two verses is to be found in the word *access* or *introduction*. The meaning then is, 'We are not only indebted to Jesus Christ for peace with God, but also for our introduction into this state of favour;' which includes, of course, liberty of access to God.† 3. The word *grace* may be taken metonymically for its effects, that is, for the blessings or benefits which God graciously bestows. 'We have not only peace, but free access to all the blessings of the divine favour.' The second interpretation

* *Pacem habemus*. Singularis justitiæ fidei fructus. Nam si quis ab operibus conscientiæ securitatem petere velit (quod in profanis et brutis hominibus cernitur), frustra id tentabit. Aut enim contemptu vel oblivione Divini judicii sopitum est pectus, aut trepidatione ac formidine quoque plenum est, donec in Christum recubuerit. Ipse enim solus est pax nostra. Pax ergo conscientiæ serenitatem significat, quæ ex eo nascitur, quod Deum sibi reconciliatum sentit.—CALVIN.

† Non tantum gratiam ipsam Dei restitutam debemus Christo, sed etiam ejusdem cognoscendæ et fide amplectendæ occasionem, vim atque facultatem.—KOPPE.

seems the most natural, and is the one most commonly received. *Wherein we stand*, i. e. which we now possess or enjoy.* Or the phrase may be taken in a forensic sense, as in Ps. 1: 5. 130: 3, 'In which state of grace we stand acquitted or justified.' The word *wherein* must refer to *grace*, the immediate antecedent, and not to faith the more remote one. The figurative language here used is peculiarly expressive and appropriate. As those only who were in the favour of ancient monarchs could freely approach them, and even such had generally to be led forward by an 'introducer;' so Christ, our introducer, secures access for us into the favour and presence of God. We come not of ourselves, but, abashed and humbled, are led along by our kind mediator. Chrysostom, on Eph. 2: 18, remarks, "Paul does not say access (*πρόσδοον*) but introduction (*προσαγωγή*), for we do not come of ourselves, but are led by him (Christ); for 'no one,' he says, 'cometh unto the father but by me;' and again, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.'"

And rejoice in hope of the glory of God. There are two benefits specified in this verse. The first, our present introduction into a state of favour and free access to God; and the second, the joyful hope of *the glory of God*, that is, the glory of which God is the author. The word *glory* is often used in reference to future blessedness, to show that the happiness to be enjoyed hereafter is connected with the exaltation of all our powers, and of our sphere of activity.

(3) *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.* Not only have we this introduction into the divine favour, and this hope of future glory, but we glory in tribulations also. Since our relation to God is changed, the relation of all things to us is changed. Afflictions, which before were the expressions of God's displeasure, are now the benevolent and beneficent manifestations of his love. And, instead of being inconsistent with our filial relation to him, they serve to prove that he regards and loves us as his children; Rom. 8: 18. Heb. 12: 6. Tribulations, therefore, although for the present they are not joyous but grievous, become to the believer matter of joy and

* Non igitur qui subito impetu ad credendum impellitur fidem habet, ut inter fideles numeretur; sed qui constanter et fixo (ut ita loquar) pede residet in statione divinitus sibi ordinata, ut semper Christo adhaereat.—CALVIN.

thankfulness. The way in which afflictions become thus useful, and consequently the ground of rejoicing, the apostle immediately explains. They give occasion for the exercise of the Christian graces, and these, from their nature, produce hope, which is sustained and authenticated by the witness of the Holy Spirit. *Tribulation worketh patience.* The word rendered *patience* signifies also *constancy, perseverance.* Tribulation gives occasion to exercise and manifest a patient and persevering adherence to truth and duty under trials.

(4) *And patience, experience; and experience, hope.* The word translated *experience* means properly, 1. *Trial or experiment.* 2 Cor. 8: 2, "Great trial of affliction," i. e. trial made by affliction. 2. It means the result of such trial, *evidence, experience.* 3. By another remove, *that which has been tested and approved.* As one or the other of these significations is adopted, the clause is variously interpreted. It may mean, 'The endurance of afflictions leads to the trying or testing of one's own heart;' or 'It occasions the experience of the divine goodness, or of gracious exercises;' or 'It produces a state of mind which is the object of approbation;' or 'It produces evidence, viz. of a gracious state.' This last seems most consistent with Paul's use of the word; see 2 Cor. 2: 9, "That I may know the proof (evidence) of you; whether ye be obedient, &c.;" Phil. 2: 22, "Ye know the proof of him, &c." This sense suits the context also. 'Tribulation calls forth the exercise of patience; and the exercise of this patience or constancy affords evidence of our being in the favour of God, and therefore produces hope.'

(5) *And hope maketh not ashamed.* The hope which true believers entertain, founded on the very nature of pious exercises, shall never disappoint them, Ps. 22: 5. The ground of this assurance, however, is not the strength of our purpose, or confidence in our own goodness, but the love of God. The latter clause of the verse assigns the reason why the Christian's hope shall not be found delusive; it is because *the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto us.* 'The love of God' is his love to us, and not ours to him, as appears from the following verses, in which the apostle illustrates the greatness and freeness of this love by a reference to the unworthiness of its objects. *To shed abroad* is to com-

municate abundantly, and hence to evince clearly, Acts 2: 17. 10: 45. Tit. 3: 6. This manifestation of divine love is not any external revelation of it in the works of Providence, or even in redemption, but it is *in our hearts*. And this inward persuasion that we are the objects of the love of God, is not the mere result of the examination of evidence, nor is it a vain illusion, but it is produced by the Holy Ghost. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God," Rom. 8: 16. 2 Cor. 1: 21, 22. Eph. 1: 14. As, however, the Spirit never contradicts himself, he never bears witness that "the children of the Devil" are the children of God; that is, that the unholy, the disodient, the proud or malicious are the objects of the divine favour. Any reference, therefore, by the immoral, to the witness of the Spirit in their favour, must be vain and delusive.

(6) *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* This and the following verses to the 11th, contain an illustration of the freeness and greatness of the love of God, designed to prove the certainty of the salvation of believers. The *for* either connects this verse with the close of the 5th, as introducing the illustration of the love there spoken of; or the logical connexion is with the declaration of the 2d, "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God;" and of the 5th, "hope maketh not ashamed." This latter, from the context of the passage, seems the more natural. *When we were without strength* or *weak*. The word thus translated may mean *destitute of resources* or *miserable*; see Prov. 22: 22. 31: 5, 9, where the Greek word used by Paul, is used in this sense by the LXX. Or it may mean *morally weak*, i. e. *wicked*. In favour of this latter interpretation is the context. The *weak* are the *ungodly* of this verse, and the *sinner*s of verse 8. It is probable both ideas were in the apostle's mind, and that he intended to express, by the word, the weakness and misery consequent on sin, or our helplessness as sinners. *In due time*,* i. e. at the appointed and appropriate time; see Job 5: 26. Is. 60: 22. Mark 1: 15. Gal. 4: 4. *Christ died for the ungodly.* The preposition rendered *for*, in such connexions, signifies not

* Calvin connects this clause with the preceding, and translates thus: Quum adhuc essemus infirmi secundum rationem temporis.

merely *for the benefit of*, but *in the place of*. This appears to be its meaning in verse 7, which fixes its meaning here; compare Matt. 20: 28, "To give his life a ransom for (*dñri*) many," with 1 Tim. 2: 6, "Who gave himself a ransom for (*ivēg*) all;" see Bretschneider's Lexicon. Christ died not merely *for us*, but *in our place*; his suffering being substituted for ours. This gift of the Son of God to die for the ungodly, is the highest conceivable proof of his love.

(7) *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.* The greatness and freeness of the love of God is illustrated in this and the following verse, by making still more prominent the unworthiness of its objects. 'It is hardly to be expected that any one would die, in the place of a merely righteous man, though for a good man, this self-denial might possibly be exercised. But we, so far from being good, were not even righteous; we were sinners, ungodly and enemies.' The difference between the words *righteous* and *good*, as here used, is that, which in common usage, is made between *just* and *kind*. The former is applied to a man who does all that the law or justice can demand of him, the latter to him who is governed by love. The just man commands respect; the good man calls forth affection. Respect being a cold and feeble principle, compared to love, the sacrifices to which it leads are comparatively slight.*

As the word *righteous* is so frequently used in scripture as an epithet of general excellence, the righteous meaning the good, the godly, many understand this passage thus: 'Hardly for a good man would one die, though perhaps for such a man, one might possibly be willing to die, but God commendeth his love, &c.†' But though this is the meaning of the word *righteous* when opposed to *wicked*, it does not follow that it is its meaning when contrasted with *good*. The antithesis requires a restriction of its meaning here; see Matt. 20: 15, "Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" 1 Peter 2: 18, "Not only to the

* Si vir *bonus* is est, qui prodest quibus potest, nocet nemini, recte *justum* virum, *bonum* non facile reperiemus.—CICERO de Officiis, Lib. III. C. 15.

† Rarissimum sane inter homines exemplum exstat, ut pro justo mori quis sustineat; quanquam accidere possit. Verum ut id demus, pro impio tamen mori qui velit, nemo hominum reperietur.—CALVIN.

good and gentle, but also to the forward." Instead of *righteous*, the Syriac version reads *unrighteous*. 'For an unrighteous man, one would scarcely die, &c.' But this reading has no authority and greatly mars the sense.

(8) *But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* 'Commendeth,' i. e. renders conspicuous; see 3: 5. What renders the love of God so peculiarly conspicuous is his sending his Son to die, not for the good, nor even for the righteous, but for sinners, for those who were deserving of wrath instead of love. The word *sinners* expresses the idea of moral turpitude and consequent exposure to the divine displeasure. It was *for*, or *in the place of* those who were at once corrupt, and the enemies of God, that Christ died.

(9) *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.* This and the following verse draw the obvious inference from the freeness and greatness of the love of God, as just exhibited, that believers shall be ultimately saved. It is an argument *a fortiori*. If the greater benefit has been bestowed, the less will not be withheld. If Christ has died for his enemies, he will surely save his friends. *Being justified*. To be justified is more than to be pardoned; it includes the idea of reconciliation or restoration to the favour of God and the participation of the consequent blessings. This idea is prominently presented in the following verse. We are justified *by his blood*. This expression, as remarked above (ch. 4: 3), exhibits the true ground of our acceptance with God. It is not our works, nor our faith, nor our new obedience, nor the work of Christ in us, but what he has done for us; ch. 3: 25. Eph. 2: 13. Heb. 9: 12. Having by the death of Christ been brought into the relation of peace with God, being now regarded for his sake as righteous, *we shall be saved from wrath through him*. He will not leave his work unfinished; whom he justifies, them he also glorifies. The word *wrath*, of course, means the effects of wrath or punishment, those sufferings with which the divine displeasure visits sin; Matt. 3: 7. 1 Thess. 1: 10. Rom. 1: 18. Not only is our justification to be ascribed to Christ, but our salvation is *through* him. Salvation, in a general sense, includes justification, but when distinguished from it, as in this case, it means the con-

summation of that work of which justification is the commencement. It is a preservation from all the causes of destruction; a deliverance from the evils which surround us here, or threaten us hereafter; and an introduction into the blessedness of heaven. Christ thus saves us by his Providence and Spirit, and by his constant intercession, ch. 8: 34. Heb. 4: 14, 15. 7: 25. Jude v. 24. 1 John 2: 1.

(10) *For if when we were yet enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, &c.* This verse contains nearly the same idea as v. 9, presented in a different form. The word *enemies* is applied to men not only as descriptive of their moral character, but also of the relation in which they stand to God, as the objects of his displeasure. There is not only a wicked opposition of the sinner to God, but a holy opposition of God to the sinner. The preceding verse presents the former of these ideas, and this verse the latter most prominently. There it is said, though *sinner*s, we are justified; and here, though *enemies*, we are reconciled. And this is the principal difference between the two verses. *To be reconciled to God*, in such connexions, does not mean to have our enmity to God removed, but his enmity to us taken out of the way, to have him rendered propitious, or his righteous justice satisfied. This is evident, 1. Because the reconciliation is ascribed to the death of Christ or his blood, v. 9. But, according to the constant representations of scripture, the death of Christ is a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, or to propitiate the favour of God, and not immediately a means of sanctification. The former is its direct object: the latter an incidental result. This is the very idea of a sacrifice. 2. The object of the verse is to present us as enemies or the objects of God's displeasure. 'If while we were the objects of the divine displeasure,' says the apostle, 'that displeasure has been removed, or God propitiated by the death of his Son, how much more shall we be saved,' &c. That is, if God has been reconciled to us, he will save us. 3. This is the proper meaning of the word,* 2 Cor. 5: 18, 19. See also

* Διαλλάσσω, the word used in Matt. 5: 24, is employed in the same sense as καταλλάσσω, the word used here. The former Passow defines, Die Gesinnung eines andern aus Feindschaft in Freundschaft verwandeln, ihn mit einem andern aussöhnen; 'To change the feelings of another from enmity to friendship, to reconcile him to another.' And, in the middle voice, Sich selbst mit einem andern ver-

Matt. 5: 24, "First go and be reconciled to thy brother," i. e. go and appease his anger, or remove the ground of his displeasure; compare Heb. 2: 17, "He is a priest to make reconciliation (*εἰς τὸ ἰλάσκεσθαι*) for the sins of the people." It is the appropriate business of a priest to propitiate God, and not to reform men. See also 1 Sam. 29: 4, "Wherewith should he reconcile himself (*διαλλαγῆσεται*) to his master? *should* it not be with the heads of these men?" Eph. 2: 16, "That he might reconcile (*ἀποκαταλλάξῃ*) both unto God by the cross," not remove their enmity to God, but secure for them his favour and access to the Father, v. 18. 4. The context obviously requires this sense here. "Being reconciled by the death of his Son," evidently corresponds to the phrase "Being justified by his blood;" the latter cannot mean that our feelings towards God are changed, but is admitted to express the idea that we are forgiven and restored to the divine favour. Such, therefore, must be the meaning of the former. Besides, it is the object of the apostle to illustrate the greatness and freeness of the love of God from the unworthiness of its objects. While sinners, we are justified; while enemies, we are reconciled. To make the passage mean, that when enemies, we laid aside our enmity and became the friends of God, would be to make it contradict the very assertion and design of the apostle.

We shall be saved by his life. This rather unusual mode of expression was doubtless adopted for the sake of its correspondence to the words *by his death* in the preceding clause; and is a striking example of Paul's fondness for such antithetical constructions; see ch. 4: 25. Gal. 3: 3. 2 Cor. 3: 6. The meaning is obvious. 'If while we were enemies, we were restored to the favour of God by the death of his Son; the fact that he lives will certainly secure our final salvation.' 1. His life is a pledge and security for the life of all his people; see John 14: 19, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" Rom. 8: 11. 1 Cor. 15: 23. 2. He is able to save to the uttermost, "because he ever lives to make intercession for us;" Heb. 7: 25, &c. &c. 3. At his resurrection all power in heaven and earth was

söhnen, 'to reconcile oneself to another,' i. e. to change his feelings towards us from enmity to friendship. The latter word he defines *to reconcile*, and in the middle, *sich unter einander versöhnen*, 'to effect a mutual reconciliation.'—See STORR'S *Zweck des Todes Jesu*, sect. 4. GRORIUS *De Satisfactione Christi*, ch. 7.

committed to his hands, Matt. 28: 18; and this power he exercises for the salvation of his people; Eph. 1: 22, 'He is head over all things for the benefit of his church;' Rev. 1: 18. Heb. 2: 10. 1 Cor. 15: 25, &c. &c.; see also the passages cited on the last clause of v. 9. There is, therefore, most abundant ground for confidence for the final blessedness of believers, not only in the amazing love of God by which, though sinners and enemies, they have been justified and reconciled by the death of his Son, but also in the consideration that this same Saviour that died for them still lives, and ever lives to sanctify, protect, and save them.

(11) *Not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* That is, 'Not only are we secure of future salvation, but we now rejoice in God as our reconciled Father and portion.' This includes all other good. If God be for us, who can be against us? If we have the infinite fountain of blessedness, it matters little what streams may fail. *Through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Paul never forgets to acknowledge that all the blessings of redemption are through Jesus Christ; not only reconciliation and salvation, but present joyful intercourse with God, Heb. 4: 16.

By whom we have now received the atonement, or reconciliation, as the Greek word here used is always elsewhere rendered, Rom. 11: 15. 2 Cor. 5: 18, 19, and in which sense our translators probably used the word *atonement*. To receive reconciliation and to be reconciled, are, of course, synonymous expressions. This clause, therefore, is but a repetition of verse 10, 'We rejoice in God through Jesus Christ, by whom, i. e. by whose death, we have been restored to the divine favour.' Paul says we have *now* received reconciliation; because reconciliation is a present good, and pledge of future blessedness. "If children, then heirs," Rom. 8: 17.

Doctrines.

1. Peace with God is the result of that system of religion alone, which, by providing at once for the satisfaction of divine justice and the sanctification of the human heart, is suited to the character of God and the nature of man. All history shows that no system other than the gospel has ever produced this peace, v. 1.

2. All the peculiar blessings of redemption are inseparably connected and grow out of each other. Those who are justified have peace with God, access to his presence, joy under the most adverse circumstances, assurance of God's love, and certainty of final salvation; see the whole section, and compare ch. 8: 30.

3. The Holy Ghost has intimate access to the human soul, controlling its exercises, exciting its emotions, and leading it into the knowledge of the truth, v. 5.

4. The assurance of hope is founded on the consciousness of pious affections, and the witness of the Holy Spirit; and is a grace to which believers may and ought to attain, vs. 4, 5.

5. The perseverance of the saints is to be attributed not to the strength of their love to God, nor to any thing else in themselves, but solely to the free and infinite love of God in Christ Jesus. The praise is, therefore, no more due to them, than commendation to a helpless infant, for its mother's sleepless care. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, &c." vs. 6—10.

6. Redemption is not by truth or moral influence, but by blood, vs. 9, 10.

7. The primary object of the death of Christ was to render God propitious, to satisfy his justice; and not to influence human conduct, or display the divine character for the sake of the moral effect of that exhibition. Among its infinitely diversified results, all of which were designed, some of the most important, no doubt, are the sanctification of men, the display of the divine perfections, the prevention of sin, the happiness of the universe, &c. &c. But the object of a sacrifice, as such, is to propitiate, vs. 9, 10. Heb. 2: 17.

8. All we have or hope for, we owe to Jesus Christ; peace, communion with God, joy, hope, eternal life; see the whole section, and the whole bible.

Remarks.

1. If we are the genuine children of God, we have peace of conscience, a sense of God's favour, and freedom of access to his throne. We endure afflictions with patience. Instead of making us distrustful of our heavenly Father, they afford us new proofs of his love, and strengthen our hope of his mercy. And

we shall have also, more or less of the assurance of God's love by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, vs. 1—5.

2. None of these fruits of reconciliation with God can be obtained until the spirit of self-righteousness and self-dependence is removed. They are secured through faith, and by Christ Jesus, and not by our own works or merit, v. 1; &c.

3. The hope of the hypocrite is like a spider's web; the hope of the believer is an anchor to his soul, sure and steadfast, v. 5.

4. Assurance of the love of God never produces self-complacency or pride; but always humility, self-abasement, wonder, gratitude and praise. The believer sees that the mysterious fountain of this love is in the divine mind; it is not in himself who is ungodly and a sinner, vs. 8—10.

5. As the love of God in the gift of his Son, and the love of Christ in dying for us, are the peculiar characteristics of the gospel, no one can be a true Christian, on whom these truths do not exert a governing influence, vs. 9: 10; compare 2 Cor. 5: 14.

6. True religion is joyful, vs. 2, 11.

CHAP. 5: 12—21.

Analysis.

1. *Scope of the passage.* The design of this section is the illustration of the doctrine of the justification of sinners on the ground of the righteousness of Christ, by a reference to the condemnation of men for the sin of Adam. That such is its design, is evident, 1. From the context. Paul has been engaged from the beginning of the epistle in inculcating one main idea, viz. that the ground of the sinner's acceptance with God is not in himself, but the merit of Christ. And in the preceding verses he had said, "we are justified by his blood," v. 9; by his death we are restored to the divine favour, v. 10; and through him, i. e. by one man, we have received reconciliation, that is, are pardoned and justified, v. 11. As this idea of men's being regarded and treated not according to their own merit, but the merit of another, is contrary to the common mode of thinking among men, and, especially, contrary to their self-righteous efforts to obtain the divine favour, the apostle illustrates and

enforces it by an appeal to the great analogous fact in the history of the world. 2. From an inspection of vs. 12, 18, 19, which contain the whole point and substance of the comparison. The verses 13—17 are virtually a parenthesis; and verses 20, 21, contain two remarks, merely incidental to the discussion. The verses 12, 18, 19, must, therefore, contain the main idea of the passage. In the 12th, only one side of the comparison is stated; but in vs. 18, 19, it is resumed and carried out. ‘As by the offence of one all are condemned, so by the righteousness of one all are justified.’ This, almost in the words of the apostle, is the simple meaning of vs. 18, 19, and makes the point of the comparison and scope of the passage peculiarly clear. 3. The design of the passage must be that on which all its parts bear, the point towards which they all converge. The course of the argument, as will appear in the sequel, bears so uniformly and lucidly on the point just stated, that the attempt to make it bear on any other, involves the whole passage in confusion. All that the apostle says, tends to the illustration of his declaration, ‘as we are condemned on account of what Adam did, we are justified on account of what Christ did.’ The illustration of this point, therefore, must be the design and scope of the whole.

It is frequently and confidently said that the design of the passage is to exalt our views of the blessings procured by Christ, by showing that they are greater than the evils occasioned by the fall.* But this appears not only improbable, but impossible. 1. Because the *superabounding* of the grace of the gospel is not expressly stated until the 20th verse. That is, not until the whole discussion is ended; and it is introduced there, merely incidentally as involved in the apostle’s answer to an objection to his argument, implied in the question, For what purpose did the law enter? Is it possible that the main design of a passage should be disclosed only in the reply to an incidental objection? The pith and point of the discussion would be just what they

* “The *main design* of this passage is indeed plain. It lies, one may say, on the very face of it. It is this, viz. ‘to exalt our views respecting the blessings which Christ procured for us, by a comparison of them with the evil consequences which ensued upon the fall of our first ancestor, and by showing that the blessings in question not only extend to the removal of these evils, but even far beyond this; so that the grace of the gospel has not only abounded, but superabounded.’”—PROF. STUART’S Romans, p. 200. So also Mr. Barnes.

are now, had no such objection been suggested or answered; yet, if this view of the subject is correct, had the objection not been presented, the main design of the passage would have been unexpressed and undiscoverable. 2. The idea of the superiority of the blessings procured by Christ, to the evils occasioned by Adam, although first expressly stated in v. 20, is alluded to and implied in vs. 16, 17. But these verses, it is admitted, belong to a parenthesis. It is conceded on all hands, that vs. 13, 14, are designed to confirm the statement of v. 12, and that vs. 15, 16, 17, are subordinate to the last clause of v. 14, and contain an illustration of its meaning. It is, therefore, not only admitted, but frequently and freely asserted that vs. 12, 18, 19, contain the point and substance of the whole passage; vs. 13—17, being a parenthesis. Yet, in these verses, the superabounding of the grace of Christ is not even hinted. Can it be that the main design of a passage should be contained in a parenthesis, and not in the passage itself? The very nature of a parenthesis is, that it contains something which may be left out of a passage, and leave the sense entire. But can the main design and scope of an author be left out, and leave his meaning complete? It is, therefore, impossible, that an idea contained only in a parenthesis, should be the main design of the passage. The idea is, in itself, true and important, but the mistake consists in exalting a corollary into the scope and object of the whole discussion. The confusion and mistake in the exposition of a passage, consequent on an entire misapprehension of its design, may be readily imagined.

2. *The connexion.* The design of the passage being the illustration of the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, previously established; the connexion is natural and obvious. 'WHEREFORE as by one man we have been brought under condemnation, so by one man we are brought into a state of justification and life.' The *wherefore* (*ὁὐα ῥεῖρο*) is consequently to be taken as illative, or marking an inference from the whole of the previous part of the epistle, and especially from the preceding verses. '*Wherefore* we are justified by the righteousness of one man; even as we were brought into condemnation by the sin of one man.' It would seem that only a misapprehension of the design of the passage, or an unwillingness to admit it, could have led to the numerous

forced and unauthorized explanations of these words. Some render them *moreover*; others *in respect to this*,* &c. &c.

3. *The course of the argument.* As the point to be illustrated is the justification of sinners on the ground of the righteousness of Christ, and the source of illustration is the fall of all men in Adam, the passage begins with a statement of this latter truth. 'As on account of one man, death has passed on all men; so on account of one, &c.' v. 12.

Before, however, carrying out the comparison, the apostle stops to establish his position, that all men are regarded and treated as sinners on account of Adam. His proof is this. The infliction of a penalty implies the transgression of a law; since sin is not imputed where there is no law, v. 13.

All mankind are subject to death or penal evils; therefore all men are regarded as transgressors of a law, v. 13.

This law or covenant, which brings death on all men, is not the law of Moses, because multitudes died before that was given, v. 14.

Nor is it the law of nature written upon the heart, since multitudes die who have never violated even that law, v. 14.

Therefore, as neither of these laws is sufficiently extensive to embrace *all* the subjects of the penalty, we must conclude that men are subject to death on account of Adam; that is, it is for the offence of one that many die, vs. 13, 14.

Adam is, therefore, a type of Christ. As to this important point, there is a striking analogy between the fall and redemption. We are condemned in Adam, and we are justified in Christ. But the cases are not completely parallel. In the first place, the former dispensation is much more mysterious than the latter; for if by the offence of one many die, *MUCH MORE* by the righteousness of one shall many live, v. 15.

In the second place, the benefits of the one dispensation far exceed the evils of the other. For the condemnation was for one offence; the justification is from many. Christ saves us from much more than the guilt of Adam's sin, v. 16.

In the third place, Christ not only saves us from death, that is, not only frees us from the evils consequent on our own and Adam's sin, but introduces us into a state of positive and eter-

* See Prof. Stuart and Mr. Barnes.

nal blessedness, v. 17. Or this verse may be considered as an amplification of the sentiment of v. 15.

Having thus limited and illustrated the analogy between Adam and Christ, the apostle resumes and carries the comparison fully out. 'THEREFORE, as on account of one man all men are condemned; so on account of one all are justified, v. 18. For as through the disobedience of one many are regarded and treated as sinners; so through the righteousness of one many are regarded and treated as righteous,' v. 19. This then is the sense of the passage, men are condemned for the sin of one man, and justified for the righteousness of another.

If men are thus justified by the obedience of Christ, for what purpose is the law? It entered that sin might abound, i. e. that men might see how much it abounded; since by the law is the knowledge of sin. The law has its use, although men are not justified by their own obedience to it, v. 20.

As the law discloses, and even aggravates the dreadful triumphs of sin reigning, in union with death, over the human family, the gospel displays the far more effectual and extensive triumphs of grace through Jesus Christ our Lord, v. 21.

According to this view of the passage, it consists of five parts.

The first, contained in v. 12, presents the first member of the comparison between Christ and Adam.

The second contains the proof of the position assumed in the 12th verse, and embraces vs. 13, 14, which are therefore subordinate to v. 12. *Adam, therefore, is a type of Christ.*

The third, embracing vs. 15, 16, 17, is a commentary on this declaration, by which it is at once illustrated and limited.

The fourth, in vs. 18, 19, resumes and carries out the comparison commenced in v. 12.

The fifth forms the conclusion of the chapter, and contains a statement of the design and effect of the law, and of the results of the gospel suggested by the preceding comparison, vs. 20, 21.

Commentary.

(12) *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, &c.* The force of *wherefore* has already been pointed out, when speaking of the connexion of this passage with the preceding. 'It follows from what had been said

of the method of justification, that as by one man, &c.' It indicates the point towards which the whole discussion, from the commencement of the epistle, tends, and the grand conclusion from all the apostle's reasoning. *As by one man.* The word *as* obviously indicates a comparison between the case of Adam and something else. Since, however, the other part of the comparison is not immediately stated, various explanations of this verse have been proposed. It is, however, so obvious, that the comparison here commenced is resumed and stated in full in vs. 18, 19, that the great body of commentators, with whom Prof. Stuart also agrees, consider the verses 13—17 as a parenthesis, designed for the confirmation and illustration of the statement in v. 12. Thus, too, the passage is pointed in our common English version.

By one man sin entered into the world, i. e. one man was the cause of all men's becoming sinners. To make these words mean nothing more than that sin commenced with Adam, that he was the first sinner, is obviously inconsistent with the force of the words **BY ONE MAN**, and with the whole context and design of the passage. See the expressions "through the offence of one," v. 15; "the judgment was by one," v. 16; "by one man's offence," v. 17; "by the offence of one judgment came," v. 18; "by one man's disobedience," v. 19. These expressions so clearly parallel with the declaration "By one man sin entered into the world," make it too plain to admit of doubt, that the clause before us expresses the idea that Adam was the cause of all men's becoming sinners, and not merely that sin began with him, or that he was the first sinner. This is rendered, if possible, still more obvious by the constant contrast or comparison, through the whole passage, of Adam and Christ; *by* one man came sin; *by* one man came righteousness; *by* the offence of one came death; *by* the righteousness of the other came life; &c. &c. That Adam was the cause of sin and death, is, therefore, as clearly expressed, as that Christ is the cause of righteousness and life; and is expressed, not merely hinted at, in this verse.*

* The words **BY ONE MAN** have most unaccountably been left out of view by Prof. Stuart in his commentary on this verse. He makes no special remark about them, except to show why Adam and not Eve was mentioned by the apostle, p. 205. In discussing the question whether this verse expresses any *causal* connexion between the sin of Adam and the sin and condemnation of the race, they are not at all re-

But admitting that the words *by one man sin entered into the world*, express clearly the idea that one man was the cause of all men's becoming sinners, they may still be variously explained. 1. Many, not only of the older, but also of the modern commentators and theologians, understand *sin* here to mean corruption; so Storr,* Flatt, Bretschneider, &c. This clause then teaches that Adam was the cause of the corruption of our nature, which all men have derived from him. 2. Others, taking the word *sin* in its ordinary signification, understand the passage as teaching that Adam was the cause or occasion of all men's being led to commit personal or actual sin, either from the force of example or circumstances, or divine constitution.

ferred to. On p. 213, he says, "It does not follow, because v. 19 asserts an influence of Adam upon the sinfulness of men, that the same sentiment must therefore be affirmed in v. 12; certainly not that it should be directly asserted in the same manner." He "readily concedes" that there is an indirect intimation of such a connexion in this verse; but he finds it only in the expressions "*sin entered into the world, and so passed,*" or, as he expresses himself on p. 215, the sentiment "is probably *hinted* at, as I have already shown, by other words (other than *καὶ οὐτως*) in the same verse, viz. *εἰσῆλθῆς* and *διῆλθῆς*." He therefore, in giving the meaning of this verse, repeatedly leaves its main idea out of his statement. "As Adam sinned and brought death upon himself, so death in all other cases, in like manner, is the inseparable attendant upon sin; and death is universal, because sin is so," p. 215. This is the more remarkable as he had before stated, and frequently repeats, that v. 12 contains the first member or protasis of a comparison, of which the second, or apodosis, is found in vs. 18, 19. Thus, on p. 204, "*Ὡςπερ*, as, of course introduces a comparison; *Ὡςπερ* standing before the *protasis*, which appears to extend through the verse. But where is the *apodosis*?" After giving several answers to this question, he adds, "I find a full apodosis only in vs. 18, 19, where the sentiment of v. 12 is virtually resumed and repeated, and where the apodosis regularly follows after a *οὕτω καί*." And accordingly, when he comes to those verses, he says, "Matters being as I have already declared, it follows or results from them, that the comparison commenced in v. 12, will hold, viz. that as all have been introduced to sin and death by Adam, so righteousness and life are provided for all by Christ." The 12th verse, then, does teach that Adam was the cause of all men's becoming sinners, as Christ is the cause of all becoming righteous. But how can this be reconciled with the statement that the pith and purpose of v. 12, is "As Adam sinned and brought death upon himself, so death is in all other cases, in like manner, the inseparable attendant upon sin; and death is universal, because sin is so?" p. 215.

* "Ἡ ἀμαρτία steht hier metonymisch für die Ursache der Sünde, oder die Quelle der einzelnen Versündigungen." Brief an die Hebr. 641. FLATT, on this verse, explains it, "Das Sündigen oder sittliche Verdorbenheit," "Der Hang zum Bösen." "Die fehlerhafte Disposition des Menschen."

3. Others understand the declaration that 'through Adam all men became sinners,' to mean that on his account all men are regarded and treated as sinners.

It will hardly be denied that this expression must be understood in the same way with the obviously parallel phrase, "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," in v. 19, and the corresponding ones in the other portions of the passage. It must also have the same meaning as the words "for all have sinned" at the close of this verse; and "sin was in the world," i. e. men were sinners, in v. 13. Which of the three interpretations just stated is to be preferred, will, therefore, be most properly considered when we come to the last clause of the verse. It is probable that Paul meant to express, in the first instance, the general idea that all men fell in Adam; which includes the idea both of the loss of holiness, and of subjection to the penal consequences of sin. It will appear, however, in the sequel, that the latter is altogether the more prominent idea; and, consequently, that the third interpretation expresses most accurately the true meaning of the passage.

And death by sin, i. e. sin was the cause of death. The death here spoken of is not mere natural death, but the penalty of the law, or the evils threatened as the punishment of sin. This is evident, 1. From the consideration that it is said to be the consequence of sin. It must, therefore, mean that death, which the scriptures elsewhere speak of, as the consequence and punishment of transgression. 2. Because this is the common and favourite term with the sacred writers, from first to last, for the penal consequences of sin. Gen. 2: 17, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," i. e. thou shalt become subject to the punishment due to sin; Ezek. 18: 4, "The soul that sinneth it shall die;" Rom. 6: 23, "The wages of sin is death;" ch. 8: 13, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Such passages are altogether too numerous to be quoted, or even referred to; see, as further examples, Rom. 1: 32. 7: 5. James 1: 15. Rev. 20: 14, &c. &c. 3. From the constant opposition between the terms life and death throughout the scriptures; the former standing for the rewards of the righteous, the latter for the punishment of the wicked. Thus, in Gen. 2: 17, life was promised to our first parents as the reward of obedience; and death threatened as the punishment of disobedience. See Deut. 30: 15,

“I have set before thee life and death;” Jer. 21: 8. Prov. 11: 19. Ps. 36: 9. Matt. 25: 46. John 3: 15. 2 Cor. 2: 16, &c. &c. 4. From the opposition in this passage between the life which is by Christ, and the death which is by Adam, vs. 15, 17, 21, ‘Sin reigns unto death, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.’ As, however, natural death is a part, and the most obvious part, of the penal evils of sin, it no doubt was prominent in the apostle’s mind, as appears from vs. 13, 14. Death, therefore, in this passage, means the evil, and any evil which is inflicted in punishment of sin. The amount of this evil is different, no doubt, in every different case of transgression.

And so death passed upon all men, that is, all men became exposed to penal evils, or the penalty due to sin. The force of the words rendered *and so*, has been much disputed. The question is, does the apostle mean to say that ‘Adam was the cause of men’s becoming sinners and liable to death, and so (i. e. hence it is) that death passed on all, since all sinned?’ Or does he mean, ‘that as Adam sinned and died, so also, in like manner, all men die, because all have sinned?’ In other words, do these words intimate a special connexion between the sin of Adam, and the sin and condemnation of the race; or do they teach merely the inseparable connexion between sin and death? That the latter cannot be the meaning of the passage, appears sufficiently plain from the following considerations. 1. The very force and position of the words are unfavourable to this interpretation. Paul says *and so* (*και οὕτως*), and not *so also* (*οὕτω και*), nor *in like manner* (*ὡσαύτως*). That is, he says ‘By one man, men became sinners, and exposed to death, *and so* death has passed on all men, &c.’ And not, ‘As Adam sinned and died, *so also* all men die because all have sinned.’ Had he meant to express the analogy between the case of Adam, and that of his posterity, such would obviously have been his mode of expression. Let any one compare the construction in vs. 18, 19. “*As* (*ὡς*) by the offence of one, *so also* (*οὕτω και*) by the righteousness of one.” “*As* (*ὡσπερ*) by the disobedience of one, *so also* (*οὕτω και*) by the obedience of one.” In neither case is the position of the words as it is in this verse. They do not, therefore, answer to the *as*, at the beginning of the verse, as introducing the second member of the comparison; see 1 Cor.

11: 12, "*As* the man, *so also* the woman;" 12: 12, "*As* the body is one, *so also* is Christ;" 15: 22, "*As* in Adam all die, *so also* in Christ, &c." This interpretation, therefore, cannot be reconciled with the construction of the sentence. 2. It fails to present the main idea of the verse. If the *so*, in the middle of the verse, answers to the *as* at the beginning of it, then this verse does not contain the first part of a comparison between Adam and Christ, but merely a comparison between Adam and his posterity. 'As the one sinned and died, *so also* the others.' But it is admitted by Prof. Stuart and others, who defend this interpretation, that v. 12 *does* contain the first member of a comparison between Adam and Christ, which is resumed and repeated in full, in vs. 18, 19; consequently the *as* at the beginning of the verse, does not answer to the *so* in the middle of it, but to the *so also* in vs. 18, 19.* 3. According to this interpretation, the words BY ONE MAN are completely *otiant*; they are overlooked and forgotten, though they contain the very marrow of the verse. It is by *one man* that men became sinners, and so, in this way it was, by means of this one man, death passed upon all men. These words, therefore, do express the connexion between the sin of Adam, and the sin and condemnation of his race. So Grotius, Bengel, Storr, Flatt, Tholuck, and a multitude of the older and later commentators understand the words in question.

For that all have sinned. These words obviously assign the reason why all men are exposed to death. Instead of rendering the Greek words ἐφ' ᾧ *for that*, the Latin version, and many of the older commentators and theologians, Arminians as well as Calvinists, translate them *in whom*. 'By one man all men became sinners, and hence death passed upon all men, *through that one man*, in whom all sinned.' This, no doubt, is the true meaning of the whole verse. But it is not necessary, in order to defend this interpretation, to adopt the rendering *in whom*, against which there are strong philological objections; especially the remoteness of the antecedent. Our common version, there-

* "The form of the sentence completed would be "ὄσπερ κ. τ. λ.—ὄτω και κ. τ. λ. But the latter member is here wanting."—PROF. STUART, p. 204. But if his exposition of και ὄτω, in v. 12, is correct, the latter member of the sentence is not wanting, but the 12th verse is complete in itself.

fore, is to be preferred. 'All die for that, or because that, all have sinned.'

With regard to these important words, we meet with the three interpretations mentioned at the beginning of this verse. I. All men have personally and actually sinned. Then the sentiment of the verse is either, as just stated from Prof. Stuart, 'As Adam sinned and died, so in like manner death has passed on all men, because all have sinned.' According to this view, the connexion of Adam's sin with the sin and death of his posterity is not stated, though it may be intimated by the peculiar form of the expressions. Or the meaning is, 'As Adam was the cause or occasion of men becoming sinners, so death passed on all, since all have, in consequence of his obedience, been led into sin.' The objections to this interpretation will be presented in the sequel, in the form of arguments in favour of another view of the passage. II. According to the second interpretation, the words mean *all have become corrupt*. Then the sense of the verse is, 'As by Adam, sin (corruption of nature) was introduced into the world, and death as its consequence, and so death passed on all men, because all have become corrupt; even so, &c.' The principal objections to this interpretation are, 1. It assigns a very unusual, if not an unexampled sense to the words. The word rendered *have become corrupt*, not occurring elsewhere with this signification. 2. It destroys the analogy between Christ and Adam. The point of the comparison is not, 'As Adam was the source of corruption, so is Christ of holiness;' but, 'As Adam was the cause of our condemnation, so is Christ of our justification.' 3. It is inconsistent with the meaning of vs. 13, 14, which are designed to prove that the ground of the universality of death, is the sin or offence of Adam. 4. It would require us, in order to preserve any consistency in the passage, to put an interpretation on vs. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, which they will not bear. Although the sentiment, therefore, is correct and scriptural, that we derive a corrupt nature from Adam, as it is also true that Christ is the author of holiness, yet these are not the truths which Paul is here immediately desirous of presenting.

III. The third interpretation, therefore, according to which the words in question mean *all men are regarded and treated as sinners*, is to be preferred. The verse then contains this

idea, 'As by one man all men became sinners and exposed to death, and thus death passed on all men, since all were regarded as sinners on his account,' **EVEN** so by one man, &c. The grounds of this interpretation are the following. 1. The word translated *have sinned* may, in strict accordance with usage, be rendered *have become guilty*, or *regarded and treated as sinners*. Gen. 44: 32, is in Greek, "I shall have sinned" (*ἡμαρτηκώς ἔσομαι*), which expresses the same idea as the English version of the passage; "I shall bear the blame to my father for ever," that is, 'I shall always be regarded as a sinner.' The same phrase occurs, 43: 9, "Then let me bear the blame," the precise idea of being regarded as a sinner; 1 Kings 1: 21, "I and my son Solomon shall be sinners," i. e. regarded and counted as such. In our version, therefore, it is correctly rendered, "Shall be counted offenders." (In Greek, *ἔσομαι ἐγὼ καὶ, κ. τ. λ. ἁμαρτωλοί.*) In Job 9: 29, "If I be wicked" is the opposite idea to "thou wilt not hold me innocent," v. 28, and therefore means, 'If I be condemned or regarded as wicked.' Indeed there is no usage more familiar to the student of the bible, than one nearly identical with this. "He shall be clean," "he shall be unclean," "he shall be just," "he shall be wicked," are expressions constantly occurring in the sense of 'he shall be so regarded and treated.' See Storr's *Observationes*, p. 14. The interpretation, therefore, which has been given of these words, instead of being forced or unusual, is agreeable to one of the most common and familiar usages of scripture language.*

2. It is so obvious as to secure almost universal assent, that v. 12 contains the first part of a comparison between Adam and Christ, which is interrupted, and then resumed and repeated in vs. 18, 19. It will be seen that those verses teach that 'judgment came upon all men on account of the offence of one man;' that 'on account of the disobedience of one man, all were regarded as sinners.' To this corresponds the plain declaration of v. 16, 'We are condemned for one offence.' If then these verses express the same idea with v. 12, as is freely admitted by Prof. Stuart and others, we are forced to understand verse 12 as teaching, not the acknowledged truth that men are actual sinners,

* Even WAHL, in his *Lexicon*, so explains them, "*ἁμαρτανών, peccati culpam sustineo*, Rom. 5: 12, coll. v. 19, ubi *ἁμαρτανώς κατεστάνην*. Ita LXX. et Ν^ΩΠ, Gen. 44: 32."

but that they have been treated as sinners on account of one man.

3. This interpretation is demanded by the connexion of this verse with those immediately following. The vs. 13, 14, introduced by *for*, are confessedly designed to prove the assertion of v. 12. If that assertion is 'all men are regarded as sinners on account of Adam,' the meaning and pertinency of these verses are clear. But if verse 12 asserts merely that all men are sinners, then vs. 13, 14 must be regarded as proving that men were sinners before the time of Moses; a point which no one denied, and no one doubted, and which is here entirely foreign to the apostle's object. The vs. 13, 14, present insuperable difficulties, if we assign any other meaning than that just given to v. 12.

4. What v. 12 is thus made to assert, and vs. 13, 14 to prove, is in vs. 15, 16, 17; 18, 19, assumed as proved, and is employed in illustration of the great truth to be established. "FOR IF through the offence of one many be dead," v. 15. But where is it said, or where proved, that the many die for the offence of one, if not in v. 12 and vs. 13, 14? So in all the other verses. This idea, therefore, must be taught in v. 12, if any consistency is to be maintained between the several parts of the apostle's argument.

5. This interpretation is required by the whole scope of the passage and drift of the argument. The scope of the passage, as shown above, is to illustrate the doctrine of justification on the ground of the righteousness of Christ, by a reference to the condemnation of men for the sin of Adam. The analogy is destroyed, the very point and pith of the comparison fail, if any thing in us be assumed as the ground of the infliction of the penal evils of which the apostle is here speaking. That we have corrupt natures, and are personally sinners, and therefore liable to other and further inflictions, is indeed true, but nothing to the point. In like manner it is true that we are sanctified by our union with Christ, and thus fitted for heaven, but these ideas are out of place when speaking of justification. It is to illustrate this doctrine, or the idea of imputed righteousness, that this whole passage is devoted; and, therefore, the idea of *imputed sin* must be contained in the other part of the com-

parison, unless the whole be a failure. Not only does the scope of the passage demand this view, but it is only thus that the argument of the apostle can be consistently carried through. We die on account of Adam's sin, v. 12; this is true, because on no other ground can the universality of *death* be accounted for, vs. 13, 14. But if we all die on Adam's account, how much more shall we live on account of Christ, v. 15. Adam indeed brings upon us the evil inflicted for the first great violation of the covenant, but Christ saves us from all our numberless sins, v. 16. As therefore, for the offence of one, we are condemned, so for the righteousness of one we are justified, v. 18. As on account of the disobedience of one we are treated as sinners, so on account of the obedience of one we are treated as righteous, v. 19. The inconsistency and confusion consequent on attempting to carry either of the other interpretations through, must be obvious to any attentive reader of such attempts.

6. The doctrine which the verse thus explained teaches, is one of the plainest truths of all the scriptures and of experience. Is it not a revealed fact, above all contradiction, and sustained by the whole history of the world, that the sin of Adam altered the relation in which our race stood to God? Did not that sin of itself, and independently of any thing in us, or done by us, bring evil on the world? In other words, did we not fall when Adam fell? If these questions are answered in the affirmative, the doctrine contained in the interpretation of v. 12, given above, is admitted.

7. The doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin, or, that on account of that sin, all men are regarded and treated as sinners, was a common Jewish doctrine at the time of the apostle, as well as at a latter period. He employs the same mode of expression on the subject which the Jews were accustomed to use. They could not have failed, therefore, to understand him as meaning to convey by these expressions the ideas usually connected with them. And such, therefore, if the apostle wished to be understood, must have been his intention; see the Targum on Ruth 4: 22, "On account of the counsel given to Eve (and her eating the fruit), all the inhabitants of the world were constituted guilty of death." R. Moses of Trana, Beth Elohim, fol. 105, i. e. "With the same sin with which Adam sinned,

sinned the whole world.” Many such passages may be seen in Wetstein, Schoettgen, Tholuck and other commentators.*

8. It may be well to remark that this interpretation, so far from being the offspring of theological prejudice, or fondness for any special theory, is so obviously the true and simple meaning of the passage required by the context, that it has the sanction of theologians of every grade and class of doctrine. Calvinists, Arminians, Lutherans, Rationalists, agree in its support. Thus Storr, one of the most accurate of philological interpreters, explains the last words of the verse in the manner stated above. “By one man all are subject to death, because all are regarded and treated as sinners, i. e. because all lie under the sentence of condemnation.” The phrase *all have sinned*, v. 12, he says is equivalent to *all are constituted sinners*, v. 19; which latter expression he renders, “sie werden als Sünder angesehen und behandelt,” that is, they were regarded and treated as sinners; see his Commentary on Hebrews, p. 636, 640, &c. (Flatt renders *these words* in precisely the same manner.) The Rationalist Ammon also considers the apostle as teaching, that on account of the sin of Adam all men are subject to death; see Excursus C. to Koppe’s Commentary on the Ep. to the Romans. Zachariae in his *Biblische Theologie*, Vol. VI. p. 128, has an excellent exposition of this whole passage. The question of the imputation of Adam’s sin, he says, is this, “Whether God re-

* KNAPP, in his Theological Lectures (German Edition), p. 29, says, “In the Mosaic account of the fall, and in the Old Testament generally, the imputation of Adam’s sin is not mentioned under the term imputation, although the doctrine is contained therein.” “But in the writings of the Talmudists and Rabbins, and earlier in the Chaldee Paraphrases of the Old Testament, we find the following position asserted in express words, ‘that the descendants of Adam would have been punished with death (of the body) on account of his sin, although they themselves had committed no sin.’” On the next page, he remarks, “We find this doctrine most clearly in the New Testament in Rom. 5: 12, &c. The modern philosophers and theologians found here much which was inconsistent with their philosophical systems. Hence many explained and refined so long on the passage, until the idea of imputation was entirely excluded. They forgot however that Paul used the very words and expressions in common use on this subject at that time among the Jews, and that his immediate readers could not have understood him otherwise than as teaching this doctrine.” And he immediately goes on to show, that unless we are determined to do violence to the words of the apostle, we must admit he teaches that all men are subject to death on account of the sin of Adam. This is a theologian who did not himself admit the doctrine.

garded the act of Adam as the act of all men, or, which is the same thing, whether he has subjected them all to punishment, on account of this single act." This, he maintains, the apostle asserts and proves. On this verse he remarks, "The question is not here immediately about the propagation of a corrupted nature to all men, and of the personal sins committed by all men, but of universal guilt (Strafwürdigkeit, liability to punishment), in the sight of God, which has come upon all men; and which Paul in the sequel does not rest on the personal sins of men, but only on the offence of one man, Adam, v. 16." Neither the corruption of nature, nor the actual sins of men, and their liability on account of them, is either questioned or denied, but the simple statement is, that on account of the sin of Adam, all men are treated as sinners. Zachariae, it must be remembered, was not a Calvinist, but one of the modern and moderate Theologians of Göttingen. Whitby, the great advocate of Arminianism, says, on these words, "It is not true that death came upon all men, *for that, or because* all have sinned. (*He contends for the rendering in whom.*) For the apostle directly here asserts the contrary, viz. that the death and the condemnation to it, which befell all men, was for the sin of Adam only; for here it is expressly said, that *by the sin of one man many died; that the sentence was from one, and by one man sinning to condemnation; and that by the sin of one, death reigned by one.* Therefore, the apostle doth expressly teach us that this death, this condemnation to it, came not upon us for the sin of all, but only for the sin of one, i. e. of that one Adam *in whom all men die*, 1 Cor. 15: 22." Such extracts might be indefinitely multiplied from the most various sources. However these commentators may differ in other points, they almost all agree in the general idea, which is the sum of the whole passage, that the sin of Adam, and not their own individual actual transgressions, is the ground and reason of the subjection of all men to the penal evils here spoken of. With what plausibility can an interpretation, commanding the assent of men so various, be ascribed to theory or philosophy, or love of a particular theological system? May not its rejection with more probability be attributed, as is done by Knapp, to theological prejudice? Certain it is, at least, that the objections against it are almost exclusively of a philosophical or theological, rather than of an exegetical or philological character.

(13, 14) *For until the law sin was in the world, &c.* These verses are connected by *for* with v. 12, as introducing the proof of the declaration that death had passed on all men on account of one man. The proof is this; the infliction of penal evils implies the violation of law; the violation of the law of Moses will not account for the universality of death, because men died before that law was given. Neither is the violation of the law of nature sufficient to explain the fact that all men are subject to death, because even those die who have never broken that law. As, therefore, death supposes transgression, and neither the law of Moses nor the law of nature embraces all the victims of death, it follows that men are subject to penal evils on account of the sin of Adam. It is for the offence of one that many die.

In order to the proper understanding of the apostle's argument, it should be borne in mind that the term *death* stands for penal evil; not for this or that particular form of it, but for any and every evil judicially inflicted for the support of law. Paul's reasoning does not rest upon the mere fact that all men, even infants, are subject to natural death; for this might be accounted for by the violation of the law of Moses, or of the law of nature, or by their inherent native depravity. This covers the whole ground, and may account for the universality of natural death. But no one of these causes, nor all combined, can account for the infliction of all the penal evils to which men are subjected. The great fact in the apostle's mind was, that God regards and treats all men, from the first moment of their existence, as out of fellowship with himself, as having forfeited his favour. Instead of entering into communion with them the moment they begin to exist (as he did with Adam), and forming them by his spirit in his own moral image, he regards them as out of his favour, and withholds the influences of the Spirit. Why is this? Why does God thus deal with the human race? The fact that he does thus deal with them is not denied by any except Pelagians. Prof. Stuart does not deny it. Why then is it? Here is a form of death which the violation of the law of Moses, the transgression of the law of nature, the existence of innate depravity, separately or combined, are insufficient to account for. Its infliction is antecedent to them all; and yet it is of all evils the essence and the sum.

Men begin to exist out of communion with God. This is the fact which no sophistry can get out of the bible or the history of the world. Paul tells us why it is. It is because we fell in Adam; it is for the one offence of ONE MAN that all thus die. The covenant being formed with Adam, not only for himself, but also for his posterity (in other words, Adam having been placed on trial not for himself only, but also for his race), his act was, in virtue of this relation, regarded as our act; God withdrew from us as he did from him; in consequence of this withdrawal we begin to exist in moral darkness, destitute of a disposition to delight in God, and prone to delight in ourselves and the world. The sin of Adam, therefore, ruined us; it was the ground of the withdrawing of the divine favour from the whole race; and the intervention of the Son of God for our salvation is an act of pure, sovereign and wonderful grace.

Whatever obscurity, therefore, rests upon this passage, arises from taking the word *death* in the narrow sense in which it is commonly used among men; if taken in its scriptural sense, the whole argument is plain and conclusive. Let *penal evil* be substituted for the word *death*, and the argument will stand thus, 'All men are subject to penal evils on account of one man; this is the position to be proved, (v. 12). That such is the case is evident, because the infliction of a penalty supposes the violation of law. But such evil was inflicted before the giving of the Mosaic law, it comes on men before the transgression of the law of nature, or even the existence of inherent depravity, it must, therefore, be for the offence of one man that judgment has come upon all men to condemnation.' The wide sense in which the sacred writers use the word *death*, accounts for the fact that the dissolution of the body (which is one form of the manifestation of the divine displeasure), is not only included in it, but is often the prominent idea.

Until the law. That the law of Moses is here intended is plain from v. 14, where the period marked by the words *until the law*, is described by saying *from Adam to Moses*.

Sin was in the world, that is, men were regarded as sinners. These words must have the same meaning as *all have sinned* in the preceding verse. They neither mean that men were corrupt, nor that they were actual sinners, but that they were treated as sinners. This is obvious from the next clause, 'Be-

fore the time of Moses men were treated as sinners, but they are not so treated where there is no law.' *Sin is not imputed where there is no law.* That is, sin is not laid to one's account and punished; see ch. 4: 8, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin;" see remarks on ch. 4: 3, and the frequently recurring equivalent expressions, "His iniquity shall be upon him," as in Num. 15: 31; "He shall bear his iniquity," Lev. 5: 1. The principle here advanced, and on which the apostle's argument rests, is that the infliction of penal evils implies the violation of law. The only question then is, what law have *all* mankind violated so as to become subject to death? The answer follows in the next verse.

There are three other interpretations of this passage and of the object and purport of Paul's argument which deserve to be noticed. I. It is admitted that these verses are intended as a confirmation of the apostle's statement in v. 12, as the "*for* with which they are introduced very clearly shows. What has he said? That *all* have sinned, and that *all* are under sentence of death. How is this elucidated and confirmed? By taking a case in which one might be disposed to say, it would be difficult to prove that men are sinners. To meet this difficulty, which might easily arise, he avers that men were sinners before the giving of the Mosaic law; although they are not themselves prone to acknowledge their guilt in such circumstances (where there is no revealed law), or they make but little account of it," Prof. Stuart, p. 216. He accordingly understands the clause *sin is not imputed*, as meaning, is not regarded by the sinner himself, is not appreciated or laid to heart. But to this whole interpretation there are insuperable objections, 1. As remarked above, it leaves out of view the main idea of v. 12, as expressed by the words *BY ONE MAN*. That verse does not state "that *all* have sinned, and *all* are under sentence of death" merely, but that all are regarded as sinners and are exposed to death on account of *ONE MAN*. This is the very pith and point of the verse, and is, therefore, the thing to be proved, and not merely that all men are sinners. 2. It puts a sense upon the phrase *sin is not imputed*, which it has in no other passage. The question is not merely whether the word rendered to *impute* may not, in certain connexions, mean to *regard* or *lay to heart*, but whether the phrase *sin is not im-*

puted can, especially in such a connexion, have this sense. No similar example has been produced. And it is so contrary to Paul's usage, and to the constant meaning of the common phrase *to impute sin* in the scriptures, that Tholuck justly describes this interpretation as a desperate resource.* 3. This interpretation not only proceeds on the assumption of an erroneous view of v. 12, and of the relation of vs. 13 and 14 to it; but it also ascribes to those verses a sense entirely inappropriate to the context. It supposes the apostle to reason thus. 'All men are sinners. No;' answers the Jew, 'because before the law of Moses there was no law, and, therefore, no sin. Yes;' replies Paul, 'they were sinners, although not aware of it where there is no law.' But this view of the passage requires us to assume either that the Jews thought those who were destitute of the law of Moses were not sinners, when every one knows they regarded them as pre-eminently such; or that Paul is here answering a silly cavil which the objector himself knew to be senseless; an employment of his time to which the apostle no where else condescends. Besides, it is not true that sin is not regarded, that there is no sense of right or wrong, where there is no law. This is in direct opposition to the fact and to Paul's doctrine, ch. 2: 14. This objection is, in a measure, obviated by saying the declaration is to be taken in a modified sense; so that the meaning is, men are not so well aware of their sins without a law as with one. This no doubt is the case; but the necessity of thus *modifying* the meaning of the expression, only renders it more obvious that a sense is ascribed to it inconsistent with the context.

II. A second interpretation, which is adopted by a large number of commentators and theologians, supposes that the word *death* is to be understood of natural death alone. The reasoning of the apostle then is, 'As on account of the sin of one man all men are condemned to die, so on account of the righteousness of one all are made partakers of life,' v. 12. The proof that all are subject to death on account of the sin of Adam is given in vs. 13, 14. 'The infliction of the specific penalty

* Noch ist eine gewaltsame Hülfe zu erwähnen, die Manche diesem Ausspruche des Apostles zu bringen gesucht haben. Sie haben dem *ἐλλογῆν* eine andere Bedeutung beigelegt. Sie haben es in der Bedeutung *achten, Rücksicht nehmen* genommen.

of death, supposes the violation of a law to which that particular penalty was attached. This could not be the law of Moses, since those die who never violated that law; and, in short, all men die, although they have never broken any express command attended by the sanction of death. The liability of all men, therefore, to this specific form of evil, is to be traced not to their own individual character or conduct, but to the sin of Adam.' Some of those who adopt this view of the passage are consistent enough to carry it through, and make the *life* which is restored to all by Christ, as here spoken of, to be nothing more than the life of the body, i. e. the resurrection from the dead.* It will be observed that this interpretation is, as to its main principle, identical with that presented above as correct. That is, it assumes that v. 12 teaches that God regarded the act of Adam as the act of the whole race, or, in other words, that he subjected all men to punishment on account of his transgression. And it makes vs. 13, 14 the proof that the subjection of all men to the penal evil here specially in view, to be, not the corruption of their nature, nor their own individual sins, but the sin of Adam. It is, however, founded on two assumptions; the one of which is erroneous, and the other gratuitous. In the first place, it assumes that the *death* here spoken of is mere natural death, which, as shown above, is contrary both to the scriptural use of the term and to the immediate context. And, secondly, it assumes that the violation of the law of nature could not be justly followed by the death of the body, because that particular form of evil was not threatened as the sanction of that law. But this assumption is gratuitous, and would be as well authorized if made in reference to any other punishment of such transgressions; since no definite specific evil, as the expression of the divine displeasure was made known to those who had no external revelation. Yet, as Paul says, Rom. 1: 32, the wicked heathen knew they were worthy of death, i. e. of the effects of the divine displeasure. The particular manner of the exhibition of that displeasure is a matter of indifference. It need hardly be remarked that it is not involved either in this or the commonly received interpretation of this passage, that men, before the time of Moses, were not

* See WHITBY on this passage.

punishable for their own sins; although this strange misconception is frequently to be met with.*

III. A third interpretation is that adopted by certain writers, who deny the doctrine of imputation, and who suppose that the apostle is labouring to prove that the corruption of nature derived from Adam is the ground of the universality of death. They make the apostle reason thus, 'As sin is not imputed where there is no law, that is, as men are, comparatively speaking, not responsible for their offences when involved in ignorance and destitute of a revelation, and yet as even under such circumstances, death reigned over them, the ground of the universality of death is to be sought not in their own transgressions, but in their participation of the corrupt nature of Adam.' So Tholuck, and Schott in his *Opuscula*. But it is obvious, in the first place, that the argument, as thus stated, is entirely inconclusive. It is true, indeed, that the sins of men are aggravated by being committed under the light of an express revelation of the divine will, and of course that the heathen are less guilty in the sight of God than the equally immoral Jew or Christian. But as this is only a comparative, and not an entire freedom from responsibility, it forms no ground of an argument, that the heathen did not die for their own sins, but in virtue of the depraved nature which they inherited from Adam. 2. This argument is in direct contradiction to Paul's own declarations, that the heathen were not only partially responsible for their sins, but were "worthy of death" (1: 32) on account of them; see also ch. 2: 14. This interpretation, therefore, cannot be adopted. No one, however, ought to do these distinguished writers the injustice of supposing them to teach that men from Adam to Moses were not responsible for their own offences. They affirm the reverse in direct terms. "This non-imputation," says Tholuck, "does by no means imply the absence of guilt, since Paul says explicitly that the heathen are without

* See PROF. STUART, p. 216, and the last paragraph of p. 223; and MR. BARNES, p. 119. The former says, "How can it be in any way rendered probable, or even plausible, that men were sinners *only by imputation*? It is fairly out of the question. The attempt to establish such an interpretation must fail." The latter says, "It is utterly absurd to suppose that men from the time of Adam to Moses were sinners *only by imputation*." In these positions, we suppose all men living, or who ever did live, agree.

excuse," p. 187. And he argues to show that ignorance, &c. when unavoidable, diminish the aggravation of sin, while he freely admits that all men have sufficient knowledge of the will of God to render them inexcusable.

These are but a few of the various attempts to get over the difficulties presented in these verses (13, 14). These interpretations are all of them forced and unsatisfactory. We are driven back, therefore, to the view of the passage first presented, as the only one consistent with the meaning of the words, and in harmony with the design and argument of the apostle.

(14) *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses.* That is, men were subject to death before the law of Moses was given, and consequently not on account of violating it. There must be some other ground, therefore, of their exposure to death.

*Even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.** That is, who had not sinned as Adam did. The question is, what is the point of dissimilarity to which the apostle here refers? Some say it is that Adam violated a positive command to which the sanction of death was expressly added, and that those referred to did not. The principal objections to this interpretation are, 1. That it destroys the distinction between the two classes of persons here alluded to. It makes Paul, in effect, reason thus, 'Death reigned over those who had not violated any positive law, even over those who had not violated any positive law.' It is obvious that the first clause of the verse describes a general class, and the second clause, which is distinguished from the first by the word *even*, only a portion of that class. All men who died from Adam to Moses, died without violating a positive command. The class, therefore, which is distinguished from them, must be contrasted with Adam on some other ground than that which is common to the whole. 2. This interpretation is inconsistent with the context, because it involves us in all the difficulties specified above, as attending the sense which it requires us to put upon vs. 13, 14, and their connexion with v. 12. We must suppose

* Sicut Adamus, quum legem transgressus est, mortuus est; pariter etiam mortui sunt, qui non transgressi sunt, vel potius non peccarunt, nam Paulus verba variat, de Adamo deque ceteris loquens.—BENNET.

these verses designed to prove that all men are sinners, which, as just shown, is at variance with the context, with the obvious meaning of v. 12, with the scope of the passage, and the drift of the argument. Or, we must adopt the interpretation of those who confine the word *death* to the dissolution of the body, and make the apostle argue to show that this particular evil is to be referred not to the personal sins of men, but to the sin of Adam. Or, we are driven to the unsatisfactory view of the passage quoted above from Tholuck. In short, these verses, when the clause in question is thus explained, present insuperable difficulties.

Others understand the difference between Adam and those intended to be described in this clause, to be, that Adam sinned personally and actually, the others not. In favour of this view it may be argued, 1. That the words evidently admit of this interpretation as naturally as of the other. Paul simply says, the persons referred to did not sin as Adam did. Whether he means that they did not sin at all, that they were not sinners in the ordinary sense of that term; or that they had not sinned against the same kind of law, depends on the context, and is not determined by the mere form of expression. 2. If v. 12 teaches that men are subject to death on account of the sin of Adam, if this is the doctrine of the whole passage, and if, as is admitted, vs. 13, 14 are designed to prove the assertion of verse 12, then is it necessary that the apostle should show that death comes on those who have no personal and actual sins to answer for. This he does. 'Death reigns not only over those who have never broken any positive law, but even over those who have never sinned as Adam did; that is, who have never in their own persons violated any law, by which their exposure to death can be accounted for.' All the arguments, therefore, which go to establish the interpretation given above of v. 12, or the correctness of the exhibition of the course of the apostle's argument, and design of the whole passage, bear with all their force in support of the view here given of this clause. The opposite interpretation, as was attempted to be proved above, rests on a false exegesis of v. 12, and a false view of the context. Almost all the objections to this interpretation, being founded on misapprehension, are answered by the mere statement of the case. The simple doctrine and argument of the apostle is, that **THERE**

ARE PENAL EVILS WHICH COME UPON MEN ANTECEDENTLY TO ANY TRANSGRESSIONS OF THEIR OWN, AND AS THE INFLICTION OF THESE EVILS IMPLIES A VIOLATION OF LAW, IT FOLLOWS THAT THEY ARE REGARDED AND TREATED AS SINNERS ON THE GROUND OF THE DISOBEDIENCE OF ANOTHER. In other words, that it was by the offence of one man that judgment came on all men to condemnation. It is of course not implied in this statement or argument that men are not now, or were not from Adam to Moses, punishable for their own sins, but simply that they are subject to penal evils which cannot be accounted for on the ground of their personal transgressions. This statement, which contains the whole doctrine of imputation, is so obviously contained in the argument of the apostle, and stands out so conspicuously in the bible, and is so fully established by the history of the world, that it is frequently and freely admitted by Prof. Stuart* and the great majority of commentators.

Who was a figure† of him that was to come. The word

* See his analysis of vs. 15, 16, 17, his whole commentary on v. 15, and many admissions in his exposition of vs. 16, 17, 18. On page 227, he says, "If θάνατος means, as I have already stated it to mean, *evil of any kind* in this world and in the next, then it is true that Adam did, by his offence, cause θάνατος to come on all without exception, inasmuch as all are born destitute of holiness, and in such a state that their passions will, whenever they become moral agents, lead them to sin. All too are heirs of more or less suffering. It is true, then, that *all* suffer on Adam's account; that all are brought under more or less of the sentence of death." Of course, to be born destitute of holiness, &c. is not on account of our personal transgressions. And these are penal evils, part of "the sentence of death;" or, as Prof. Stuart expresses himself on p. 241, "part of the penalty of the law." Again, on p. 228, he says, "All, in some respect or other, are involved in it (the sentence): as to more or less of it, all are subject to it." "In like manner, all receive some important benefits from Christ, even without any concurrence of their own." It is therefore without *any concurrence of their own*, that men are subject to the penal evils spoken of. This is the whole doctrine of imputation, as taught by the strictest Calvinistic divines.

Mr. Barnes makes the same admission in nearly the same words. See p. 122, last sentence.

† Πῶς τύπος; φησιν· ὅτι ὡσπερ ἐκείνος τοῖς ἐξ αὐτοῦ, καίτοιγε μὴ φαγοῦσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου, γέγονεν αἴτιος θανάτου τοῦ διὰ τὴν βρωσὴν εἰσαχθέντος, οὕτω καὶ ὁ χριστὸς τοῖς ἐξ αὐτοῦ, καίτοιγε οὐ δικαιοπραγήσασι, γέγονε πρόξενος δικαιοσύνης, ἣν διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ πάσιν ἡμῖν ἐχαρίσατο, διὰ τοῦτο ἄνω καὶ κάτω τοῦ ἐνὸς ἔχεται, καὶ συνεχῶς τοῦτο εἰς μέσον φέρει.—CHRYSOSTOM. "How a type! he says, because *as* he was the cause of the death introduced by eating (the forbidden fruit), to all who are of him, although they did not eat of the tree; *so* also is Christ the procurer of the righteousness which, by means of the cross, he

translated *figure* means properly *a print*, or impression of any thing, John 20: 25, where it is used of the print of the nails; then more generally an image, model, likeness, type. The simple meaning is that Adam was like Christ. *Him that was to come*, i. e. the Messiah, who is called the second Adam, 1 Cor. 15: 45; and from the fact, that he had been long expected, "He that was to come," Matt. 11: 3. The point of resemblance between Adam and Christ, is to be gathered from the context. It is this; each stood as the head and representative of all connected with them. By the offence of the one all connected with him are subject to death; and by the righteousness of the other all connected with him are justified and saved.*

As Paul commenced this section with the design of instituting this comparison between Christ and Adam, and interrupted himself to prove, in vs. 13, 14, that Adam was really the representative of his race, or that all men are subject to death for his offence; and having, at the close of v. 14, announced the fact of this resemblance by calling Adam a type of Christ, he again stops to limit and explain this declaration, by pointing out the real nature of the analogy. This he does principally, by showing in verses 15, 16, 17, the particulars in which the comparison does not hold. And in vs. 18, 19, which are a resumption of the sentiment of v. 12, he states the grand point of their agreement.

(15) *But not as the offence, so also is the free gift.* The cases, although parallel, are not precisely alike. In the first place, it is far more consistent with our views of the character

graciously gives to us all, for those that are of him; on this account he first and last makes *the one* so prominent, continually bringing it forward." This is an interesting passage coming from a source so different from the Augustinian school of theology. Every essential point of the common Calvinistic interpretation is fully stated. Adam is the cause of death coming on all, independently of any transgressions of their own; as Christ is the author of justification without our own works. And *the many*, in the one clause, are all who are of Adam; and *the many*, in the other, those who are of Christ.

* The Jew was accustomed to call the Messiah the second Adam. Neve Schalom, B. IX. c. 5, 8, "The last Adam is the Messiah, he will be higher than Moses; and their declaration is also true, who say, he will be higher than the ministering angels of God," &c. The author of that book also says that the Messiah will remove sin, and restore the life forfeited by it, and that he will do all this as the antitype of Adam.

of God, that many should be benefited by the merit of one man, than that they should suffer for the sin of one. If the latter has happened, **MUCH MORE** may we expect the former to occur. The attentive reader of this passage will perceive constantly increasing evidence that the design of the apostle is not to show that the blessings procured by Christ are greater than the evils caused by Adam; but to illustrate and confirm the prominent doctrine of the epistle, that we are justified on the ground of the righteousness of Christ. This is obvious from the sentiment of this verse, ‘If we die for the sin of Adam, *much more* may we live through the righteousness of Christ.’

The expression *but not as the offence, so also in the free gift*, is singularly concise and by itself obscure. But viewed in the light of the context, it is sufficiently plain. The *offence* includes not only the idea of the sin, but of the punishment of Adam; and the *free gift* is not only the righteousness of Christ, considered as a gracious gift of God, but also its reward. The former, therefore, is equivalent to the word *fall*; and the latter to its opposite, *gracious restoration*. The context shows this to be the full meaning of the words. As, however, the *sin* is the most prominent idea in the one phrase, and the *righteousness* in the other, these alone seem to be intended in the next clause, their consequences being left out of view.

For if through the offence of one many be dead, that is, if on account of the offence of the one many die. The dative, which is the case in which the word for *offence* (παράπτωματι) here occurs, is used very frequently to express the ground or reason of a thing. Rom. 11: 20, “Because of unbelief they were broken off,” &c. *Many*, or rather *the many*, evidently means the multitude, the mass, the whole race; as the words *many* and *all* are interchangeably used throughout the passage.

It is here, therefore, expressly asserted that the sin of Adam was the cause of all his posterity’s being subjected to death, that is, to penal evil. But it may still be asked whether it was the occasional or the immediate cause? That is, whether the apostle means to say that the sin of Adam was the occasion of all men being placed in such circumstances that they all sin, and thus incur death; or that by being the cause of the corruption of their nature, it is thus indirectly the cause of their con-

demnation; or whether he is to be understood as saying that his sin is the direct judicial ground or reason for the infliction of penal evil? It has been frequently said that this is all theory, philosophy, system, &c. But any one may see that it is a mere exegetical question; what is the meaning of a given phrase? Does the dative here express the occasional cause, or the ground or reason of the result attributed to the offence of one man? It is a mere question of fact; the fact is all; and there is neither theory nor philosophy involved in the matter. If Paul says that the offence of one is the ground and reason of the many being subject to death, he says all that the advocates of the doctrine of imputation say. That this is the strict exegetical meaning of the passage, appears from the following reasons; 1. That such *may* be the force and meaning of the words as they here stand, no one can pretend to doubt. That is, no one can deny that the dative case can express the ground or reason as well as the occasion of a thing. 2. This interpretation is not only possible, and in strict accordance with the meaning of the words, but it is demanded, in this connexion, by the plainest rules of exposition; because the sentiment expressed by these words is confessedly the same as that taught in those which follow; and they, as will appear in the sequel, will not bear the opposite interpretation. 3. It is demanded by the whole design and drift of the passage. The very point of the comparison is, that as the righteousness of Christ, and not our own works, is the ground of our justification; so the sin of Adam, antecedently to any sins of our own, is the ground of the infliction of certain penal evils. If the latter be denied, the very point of the analogy between Christ and Adam is destroyed. 4. This interpretation is so plainly the correct and natural one, that it is, as shown above, freely admitted by the most strenuous opponents of the doctrine which it teaches.

Much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man hath abounded unto many. Had Paul been studious of uniformity in the structure of his sentences, this clause would have been differently worded. 'If by the offence of one many die, much more by the free gift of one shall many live.' The meaning is the same. The force of the passage lies in the words *much more*. The idea is not that the grace is more abundant and efficacious than the offence and its conse-

quences; this idea is expressed in v. 20, but if the one dispensation has occurred, much more may the other; if we die for one, much more may we live by another. The first clause of the verse may be thus interpreted, 'the grace of God, *even* the gift by grace;' so that the latter phrase is explanatory of the former. If they are to be distinguished, the first refers to the cause, viz. the grace of God; and the second to the result, viz. the gift by grace, i. e. the gracious or free gift. *Which is by one man, Jesus Christ*; that is, which comes to us through Christ. This free gift is of course the opposite of what comes upon us for the sake of Adam. Guilt and condemnation come from him; righteousness and consequent acceptance from Jesus Christ. What is here called the free gift, is, in v. 17, called the gift of righteousness. *Hath abounded unto many*; that is, has been freely and abundantly bestowed on many. Whether the many, in this clause, is co-extensive numerically with the many in the other, will be considered under v. 18.

(16) *And not as it was by one that sinned,** so is *gift*, &c. This clause, as it stands in the original, *and not as by one that sinned, the gift*, is obviously elliptical. Some word corresponding to *gift* is to be supplied in the first member. Either *offence*, which is opposed to the *free gift* in the preceding verse; or *judgment*, which occurs in the next clause. The sense then is, 'The gift (of justification, see v. 17) was not like the sentence which came by one that sinned.' So Prof. Stuart, who very appositely renders and explains the whole verse thus, " 'Yea, the [sentence] by one who sinned, is not like the free gift; for the sentence by reason of *one* [offence] was unto condemnation [was a condemning sentence]; but the free gift [pardon] is of *many* offences, unto justification, i. e. is a sentence of acquittal from condemnation.' " The point of this verse is, that the sentence of condemnation which passed on all men for the sake of Adam, was for *one* offence, whereas we are justified by Christ from *many* offences. Christ does much more than remove the guilt and evils consequent on the sin of Adam.

* Instead of ἀμαρτήσαντος, the MSS. D. E. F. G. 26, the Latin and Syriac versions read ἀμαρτήματος. The common text is retained by most editors, even by Lachmann.

† The words *all men* are expressed in v. 18, where this clause is repeated. "By the offence of *one*, judgment came on all men to condemnation."

This is the second particular in which the work of Christ differs from that of Adam.

For the judgment was by one to condemnation. By one does not here mean *by one man*, but *by one offence*, as is obvious from its opposition to the phrase *many offences* in the same clause. "A judgment to condemnation" is a Hebraic or Hellenistic idiom, for a condemnatory judgment, or sentence of condemnation.* The word rendered *judgment* properly means the decision or sentence of a judge, and is here to be taken in its usual and obvious signification.

It is then plainly stated that 'a sentence of condemnation has passed on all men on account of the one sin of Adam.' This is one of the clauses which can hardly be forced into the meaning that the sin of Adam was the occasion merely of men's being condemned, because it was the means of their being led into sin. Here again we have a mere exegetical question to decide; not a matter of theory or deduction, but simply of exposition. What does the phrase 'A sentence of condemnation by, or for one offence,' in this connexion, mean? The common answer to this question is, it means that the one offence was the ground of the sentence. This answer, for the following reasons, appears to be correct. 1. It is the simple and obvious meaning of the terms. To say *a sentence is for an offence*, is, in ordinary language, to say that it is on account of the offence; and not that the offence is the cause of something else, which is the ground of the sentence. Who, uninfluenced by theological prejudice, would imagine that the apostle, when he says that condemnation for the offence of one man has passed on all men, means that the sin of Adam was the occasion of our sins, on account of which we are condemned? The preposition (*ἐκ*), here translated *by*, expresses properly the idea of the origin of one thing from another; and is, therefore, used to indicate almost any relation in which a cause may stand to an effect. The logical character of this relation depends, of course, on the nature

* See 1 Cor. 15: 45, 'The first Adam was made (*εἰς ψύχην ζῶσαν*) to a living soul.' 'The last Adam to a quickening spirit.' Or the preposition (*εἰς*) may express the grade or point to which any thing reaches, and *εἰς κατάκριμα* be equivalent to *εἰς τὸ κατακρίνεσθαι*, a sentence unto condemnation; a decision which went to the extent of condemning. So, in the next clause, *εἰς δικαίωμα* unto justification, a sentence by which men are justified.—See WAHL, p. 428.

of the subject spoken of. In the phrases "faith is by hearing," ch. 10: 17; "by this craft we have our wealth," Acts 13: 25; "our sufficiency is of God," 2 Cor. 3: 5, and a multitude of similar cases, the general idea of causation is expressed, but its precise character differs according to the nature of the subject. In the former of these examples the word indicates the instrumental, in the latter the efficient cause. But when it is said that "a man is not justified by works," Gal. 2: 16; that the purpose of election "is not of works," Rom. 9: 11; that our salvation is not "by works of righteousness which we have done," Tit. 3: 5; and in a hundred similar examples, the preposition expresses the ground or reason. We are not elected or justified or saved on account of our works. In like manner, when it is said we are condemned *by*, or *for* the offence of one, and that we are justified for the righteousness of another, the meaning obviously is, that it is *on account* of the offence we are condemned, and *on account* of the righteousness we are justified. If it is true, therefore, as is so often asserted, that the apostle here, and throughout this passage, states the fact merely that the offence of Adam has led to our condemnation, without explaining the *mode* in which it has produced this result, it must be because language cannot express the idea. The truth is, however, that when he says "the sentence was by one offence," he expresses the mode of our condemnation just as clearly as he denies one *mode* of justification by saying it "is not by works;" and as he affirms another by saying it is "by the righteousness of Christ." 2. This interpretation is not only the simple and natural meaning of the words in themselves considered, but is rendered necessary by the context. We have, in this verse, the idea of pardon on the one hand, which supposes that of condemnation on the other. If the latter clause of the verse means, as is admitted, that we are pardoned for many offences, the former must mean that we are condemned for one. 3. The whole point of the contrast lies in this very idea. The antithesis in this verse is evidently between the *one offence* and *the many offences*. To make Paul say that the offence of Adam was the means of involving us in a multitude of crimes, from all of which Christ saves us, is to make the evil and the benefit exactly tantamount. 'Adam leads us into offences from which Christ delivers us.' Here is no contrast and

no superiority. Paul, however, evidently means to assert that the evil from which Christ saves us, is far greater than that which Adam has brought upon us. According to the simple and natural interpretation of the verse, this idea is retained, 'Adam brought the condemnation of *one* offence only: Christ saves us from that of *many*.' 4. Add to these considerations the obvious meaning of the corresponding clauses in the other verses, especially in v. 19, and the design of the apostle in the whole passage, so often referred to, and it seems scarcely possible to resist the evidence in favour of this view of the passage. 5. This interpretation is so clearly the correct one, that it is conceded by commentators and theologians of every shade of doctrine.* It is plainly involved in Prof. Stuart's translation of the passage; and on p. 226, he says, "The condemnation which comes upon us through Adam, has respect only to one offence." In his comment on v. 15, quoted above, he freely admits that penal evils are inflicted on all men on account of Adam, antecedently to any concurrence of their own; and this verse, he says, "repeats the same sentiment, but in a more specific manner." Every thing is thus admitted which any advocate of the doctrine of imputation can wish.

The free gift is of many offences unto justification, that is, the free gift is justification. The construction of this clause is the same as that of the preceding one, and is to be explained in the same way. As, however, the logical relation of a sentence to an offence, is not the same as that of pardon to transgressions,

* "Justly indeed on account of one offence many are subjected to punishment; but by the divine grace many are freed from the punishment of many offences, and rendered happy."—KOPPE. His own words are, *Jure quidem unius delicti causa poenas subeunt multi; ex gratia vero divina a multorum delictorum poenis liberantur beanturque multi.*

Κατάχρημα setzt also nicht nothwendig eigene Verschuldung voraus, so wie das Gegentheil *δικαίωμα* nicht eigene *δικαιοσύνη* voraussetzt. Um einer einzigen Sünde willen wurden Alle dazu verurtheilt, den *θάνατος*, v. 15, 17, zu leiden.—FLATT. That is, "Condemnation does not necessarily presuppose personal transgression, any more than the opposite, justification, presupposes personal righteousness. On account of one single sin all are condemned to suffer death."

Damnatio, qua propter Adamum tenemur, unius peccati causa damnatio est. "The condemnation which we suffer on account of Adam, is a condemnation on account of one sin."—STORR, *Opuscula*, Vol. I. p. 252. "For the judgment (Gr. sentence) was by one *sin* to condemnation, we being all sentenced to death on account of Adam's sin."—WHITBY.

the preposition (*ἐκ*) cannot express precisely the same idea here as in the foregoing clause. Though it is proper to say we are condemned *on account of* our offences, we cannot say we are pardoned or justified *on account of* them in precisely the same sense. Our translators render the word, therefore, in the first instance *by*, and in the second *of*. Prof. Stuart renders it accurately, "The free gift (pardon) is of many offences;" i. e. the free gift which we receive, is the pardon of many offences. Or, as he also expresses it, "The justification effected by Christ, has respect to many offences." The sentiment of the verse then is, 'While, on account of Adam, we suffer the sentence of condemnation pronounced on one sin, we are freed through Christ from the condemnation of many.'

(17) *For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more, &c.* It is doubtful whether this verse is a mere amplification of the idea of v. 15, which, in import and structure, it so much resembles; or whether the stress is to be laid on the last clause *reigning in life*; so that the point of the difference between Adam and Christ, as here indicated, is, Christ not only delivers from death, but bestows eternal life; or, finally, whether the emphasis is to be laid on the word *receive*. The idea would then be, 'if we are thus subject to death for an offence, in which we had no personal concern, how much more shall we be saved by a righteousness which we voluntarily embrace.*' The decision of these questions is not at all material to the general interpretation of the passage. Both of the ideas contained in the two latter views of the verse are probably to be included.

For if by one man's offence death reigned by one. That is, if on account of the offence of one man many are subject to death. This clause is a repetition, in nearly the same words, of the second clause of v. 15, *if through the offence of one many be dead*, and is to be explained in the same way. The dative

* Ut miseria peccati haereditate potiaris, satis est esse hominem, residet enim in carne et sanguine: ut Christi justitia fruaris, fidelem esse necessarium est, quia fide acquiritur ejus consortium.—CALVIN.

† Instead of the reading *τῷ τοῦ ἐνὸς παραπτώματι*, A. F. G. have *ἐν ἐνί*, and D. E. *ἐν τῷ ἐνί*. The common reading, however, is generally retained, and is confirmed by a comparison with v. 15, where this precise form of expression also occurs. Lachmann reads *ἐνί*, but admits *ἐνὸς* to be of equal authority.

(παρρησίᾳ) has the same force here which it has there. See the remarks on that verse.

MUCH MORE *they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.* The phrase *abundance of grace* is explained by the following one, *gift of righteousness*; ‘*grace even the gift of righteousness*,’ which is the gift or favour of which the apostle is speaking throughout the whole passage. That righteousness here does not mean holiness, is evident from the constant use of the word by Paul in a different sense in this epistle; from the fact that it is pardon, justification, justifying righteousness, not sanctification, that Paul in the context represents, as the blessing received from Christ; and because it is in this verse opposed to the reigning of death, or state of condemnation on account of the offence of Adam. Prof. Stuart, therefore, in accordance with the great majority of commentators, very correctly states the sentiment of the verse thus: “For if all are in a state of condemnation by reason of the offence of one, much more shall those towards whom abundance of mercy and pardoning grace are shown, be redeemed from a state of condemnation, and advanced to a state of happiness.” The general sentiment of the verse is thus correctly exhibited, but some of the more prominent terms do not appear to have their full force assigned to them. *They which receive the abundant grace* expresses more than that this grace is manifested to them; all such do not reign in life. This phrase evidently implies the voluntary reception of the offered boon. *The gift of righteousness* too, is something more than pardoning grace. It is that which is expressed in v. 15 by the *free gift*; and in v. 16 by *the free gift unto justification*. It is, therefore, the gift of justification; or what is but another method of stating the same idea, it is the righteousness of Christ by which we are justified, since the gift of justification includes the gift of Christ’s righteousness. The meaning of the verse consequently is, ‘If on account of the offence of one man we are condemned, much more shall those who receive the righteousness graciously offered to them in the gospel, not only be delivered from condemnation, but also reign in life by one, Jesus Christ;’ that is, be gloriously exalted in the participation of that life of holiness and communion with

God, which is the end of our being, and of which Christ alone is the author.

By one, Jesus Christ. As it was by one man, antecedently to any concurrence of our own, that we were brought into a state of condemnation, so it is by one man, without any merit of our own, that we are delivered from this state. If the one event has happened, much more may we expect the other to occur. If we are thus involved in the condemnation of a sin in which we had no personal concern, much more shall we, who voluntarily receive the gift of righteousness, be not only saved from the consequences of the fall, but be made partakers of eternal life.

(18) *Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came on all men to condemnation; even so, &c.* The words rendered *therefore* mark the resumption of the comparison commenced in v. 12. The carrying out of this comparison was interrupted, in the first place, to prove, in vs. 13, 14, the position assumed in v. 12, that all men are subject to death on account of the sin of Adam; and, in the second place, to limit and explain the analogy asserted to exist between Christ and Adam, at the close of v. 14. This is done in vs. 15, 16, 17. Having thus fortified and explained his meaning, the apostle now states the case in full. The word *therefore*, at the beginning of v. 12, marks an inference from the whole doctrine of the epistle; the corresponding words here are also strictly inferential. It had been proved that we are justified by the righteousness of one man, and it had also been proved that we are under condemnation for the offence of one. *Therefore* as we are condemned, even so are we justified.

It will be remarked, from the manner in which they are printed, that the words *judgment came*, in the first clause of this verse, and the *free gift came*, in the second, have nothing to answer to them in the original. That they are correctly and necessarily supplied, is obvious from a reference to v. 16, where these elliptical phrases occur in full.

The construction in these clauses, *the judgment was to condemnation*, and *the free gift was unto justification of life*, is the same as that in the second clause of v. 16, and is to be explained in the same manner. 'The sentence was condemnation,' i. e. condemnatory. This came upon all men by the offence of one; that is, on that account they were condemned.

‘The free gift was justification of life.’ This also comes on all by the righteousness of one; that is, on this ground they are justified. The expression *justification of life*, means that justification which is connected with eternal life, or of which that life is the consequence.

Besides the common interpretation of this verse, there are two others, either of which may be adopted without materially altering the sense. I. Instead of saying “by the offence of one,” it may be rendered *by one offence*; and instead of “by the righteousness of one,” *by one righteousness*. The common interpretation, however, seems preferable, 1. Because the comparison is between Christ and Adam, rather than between the sin of the one and the righteousness of the other. 2. Because the expression *one righteousness* is awkward and unusual. 3. Because the natural opposition between the *one* and *all* is otherwise lost. “It is by the offence of *one* that *all* are condemned.” II. The other interpretation requires the word rendered *offence* to be rendered metonymically *fall*, or *condemnation*; and that rendered *righteousness* to be translated *justification*. The verse would then stand, ‘For as by the condemnation of one, all are condemned; even so by the justification of one, all are justified.’ See Storr’s *Opuscula*, Vol. I. p. 146. The only advantage gained by this interpretation, is, that the connexion between this verse and the following becomes rather more obvious. ‘We share in the condemnation of Adam, *for* by his disobedience we are constituted sinners. And we share in the justification of Christ, because by his obedience we are constituted righteous.’ The apparent tautology in these verses is thus avoided. Still as the ordinary signification of the words in question is *offence* and *righteousness*; and as ‘condemnation of Adam,’ and ‘justification of Christ,’ are not the ordinary modes in which the apostle expresses himself, and are not so consistent with the language of the preceding verses, there seems to be no sufficient reason for departing from the translation given in our common version.

There are two important questions yet to be considered in reference to this verse. The first is, What is the force of the phrase *by the offence of one*, judgment came *on all men to condemnation*? There is no dispute as to the meaning of the expression “judgment came on all to condemnation;” it is

admitted to mean, what alone it can mean, that all are condemned; see above on v. 16. But the question is, What is the relation between the offence of Adam and the condemnation of men? Or, what is the force of the words *by the offence of one*? According to the common and, as it is believed, the only correct view of the passage, these words state that the offence of Adam was the ground of the condemnation of men, and not merely the occasion of it. The preposition which is rendered *by* (*διὰ*) is not the same as that which is so translated in v. 16. It is readily admitted that this preposition has, with the genitive, the meaning *by means of*, and with the accusative, *on account of*. With the former case it expresses the means by which any thing is done, and, with the latter, the ground or reason for which it is done. As the genitive is used here and in the following verse, it may be argued that Paul does not mean to say that the offence of Adam was the ground of our condemnation, but that it was the occasion of it merely; or, in general terms, the cause of it, without indicating the nature of that cause. This is by far the most plausible argument against the ordinary interpretation of the passage as given above, though it is not noticed or urged by Prof. Stuart. It may, however, be satisfactorily answered. While it is admitted that the preposition in question with the genitive, properly indicates the *means to an end*, yet, from the nature of the case, that *means* may be the ground or reason on which any thing is done. Thus, in v. 12 of this chapter, Paul says "death was *by* sin," i. e. sin was the means or cause of death, yet it was such by being the ground or reason of its infliction. The sense, therefore, is accurately expressed by saying 'death was on account of sin;' and the phrase is so rendered by Prof. Stuart on p. 207. In ch. 3: 24 we are said to be justified "through the redemption" of Christ, i. e. *by means of* it; yet here the means is of the nature of the ground or reason of our justification. The same remark may be made in reference to the frequent phrases "through his blood," Eph. 1: 7. Col. 1: 20, &c.; "through his death," Rom. 5: 10. Col. 1: 22; "by the cross," Eph. 2: 16, &c.; "by the sacrifice of himself," Heb. 9: 26; "through the offering of the body of Jesus," Heb. 10: 10; in all these, and a multitude of similar cases, the preposition in question retains its appropriate force with the genitive, as indicating the means, and yet in all of them

the means is the ground or reason. Thus also, in this immediate connexion, we have the expressions “*by* the righteousness of one” all are justified; and “*by* the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” We have, therefore, in this single passage no less than three cases, vs. 12, 18, 19, in which this preposition with the genitive indicates such a means to an end, as the ground or reason on account of which something is given or performed. All this is surely sufficient to prove that it *may*, in the case before us, express the ground why the sentence of condemnation has passed on all men. That such, in this connexion, must be its meaning, appears, 1. From the nature of the subject spoken of. To say that one man has been corrupted by another, may indeed express very generally that one was the cause of the corruption of the other, without giving any information as to the mode in which the result was secured. But to say that a man was justified by means of a good action, or that he was condemned by means of a bad one; or plainer still, in Paul’s own language, that a condemnatory sentence came upon him by means of that action; according to all common rules of interpretation, naturally means that such action was the reason of the sentence. 2. From the antithesis. If the phrase “by the righteousness of one all are justified” means, as is admitted, that that righteousness is the ground of our justification; the opposite clause, “by the offence of one all are condemned,” must have a similar meaning. 3. The point of the comparison, as frequently remarked before, lies in this very idea. The fact that Adam’s sin was the occasion of our sinning, and thus incurring the divine displeasure, is no illustration of the fact that Christ’s righteousness, and not our own merit, is the ground of our acceptance. There would be some plausibility in this interpretation, if it were the doctrine of the gospel that Christ’s righteousness is the occasion of our becoming holy, and that on the ground of this personal holiness we are justified. But this not being the case, the interpretation in question cannot be adopted in consistency with the design of the apostle, or the common rules of exposition. 4. This clause is nearly identical with the corresponding one of v. 16, “the judgment was by one (offence) to condemnation.” But that clause, as shown above, is made, almost by common consent, to mean that the offence was the ground of the condemnatory sentence.

Such, therefore, must be the meaning of the apostle in this verse; compare also vs. 15, 17, 19.

The second question of importance respecting this verse, is, whether the *all men* of the second clause is co-extensive with the *all men* of the first? Are the *all* who are justified for the righteousness of Christ, the *all* who are condemned for the sin of Adam? In regard to this point, it may be remarked, in the first place, that no inference can be fairly drawn in favour of an affirmative answer to this question, from the mere universality of the expression. Nothing is more familiar to the readers of the scriptures than that such universal terms are to be limited by the nature of the subject or the context. Thus, John 3: 24, it is said of Christ, "all men come to him;" John 12: 32, Christ says "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Thus the expressions "all the world should be taxed," "all Judea," "all Jerusalem," must, from the nature of the case, be limited. In a multitude of cases, the words *all*, *all things*, mean the all spoken of in the context, and not all without exception; see Eph. 1: 10. Col. 1: 20. 1 Cor. 15: 22, 51. 2 Cor. 5: 14, &c. &c.

2. This limitation is always implied when the scriptures elsewhere speak of a necessary condition connected with the blessing to which all are said to attain. It is every where taught that faith is necessary to justification; and, therefore, when it is said "all are justified," it must mean all believers. "By him," says this apostle, "*all that believe* are justified from all things, &c." Acts 13: 39.

3. As if to prevent the possibility of mistake, Paul, in v. 17, says it is those who "receive the gift of righteousness" that reign in life.

4. Even the *all men*, in the first clause, must be limited to those descended from Adam "by ordinary generation." It is not absolutely all. The man Christ Jesus must be excepted. The plain meaning is, all connected with Adam, and all connected with Christ.

5. A reference to the similar passage in 1 Cor. 15: 22, confirms this interpretation, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive;" that is, shall be made partakers of a glorious resurrection and of eternal life. Thus the original word ($\zeta\omega\sigma\tau\omicron\iota\eta\theta\acute{\eta}\sigma\omicron\upsilon\sigma\sigma\alpha\iota$) and the context require the latter clause of that verse to be understood. The *all* there intended are immediately called "they that are Christ's," v. 23, i. e. all connected with him, and not numerically

the *all* that die in Adam.* 6. This interpretation is necessary, because it is impossible, with any regard to scriptural usage or truth, to carry the opposite interpretation through. In this whole passage there are two classes of persons spoken of, those connected with Adam and those connected with Christ. Of the former, it is said "they die," v. 15; "they are condemned," vs. 16, 18; "they are made sinners," v. 19, by the offence of one man. Of the latter it is said, that to them "the grace of God and the gift by grace hath abounded," v. 15; "that they are freely justified from many offences," vs. 16, 18; "that they shall reign in life through Christ Jesus," v. 17; "that they are regarded and treated as righteous," v. 19. If these things can be said of all men, of impenitent sinners and hardened reprobates, what remains to be said of the people of God? It is not possible so to eviscerate these declarations as to make them contain nothing more than that the chance of salvation is offered to all men. To say that a man is justified, is not to say that he has the opportunity of justifying himself; and to say that a man shall reign in life, is not to say he may possibly be saved. Who ever announces to a congregation of sinners, that they are all justified—they are all constituted righteous—they all have the justification of life? The interpretation which requires all these strong and plain declarations to be explained in a sense which they confessedly have no where else in the bible, and which makes them mean hardly any thing at all, is at variance with every sound principle of construction. It is not within the bounds of possibility that "the many (i. e. all) shall be constituted righteous;" that is, as it is correctly explained by Prof. Stuart, "justified, pardoned, accepted and treated as righteous," means nothing more than that acceptance is proffered to all men. Paul's doctrine, therefore, is, 'As on account of the offence of Adam, all connected with him are condemned; so on account of the righteousness of Christ, all connected with him have the justification of life.'

(19) *For as by one man's disobedience many were made*

* Such is the common and, no doubt, the correct interpretation of the passage, 1 Cor. 15: 22. It is so understood by Prof. Stuart, who, on p. 524 of his Commentary on the Romans, incidentally refers to it, and remarks, that Paul is there speaking "of the resurrection of Christians only."

sinner, so by the obedience of one shall many be made *righteous*. This verse presents the doctrine of the preceding one in a somewhat different form. As in the doctrine of justification, there are the two ideas of the ascription of righteousness, and treating as righteous; and in the doctrine of the fall, the ascription of guilt (legal responsibility), and the treating all men as guilty; so either of these ideas is frequently presented more prominently than the other. In v. 18 it is the latter, in each case, which is made most conspicuous, and in v. 19, the former. In v. 18 it is our being *treated* as sinners for the sin of Adam, and our being *treated* as righteous for the righteousness of Christ, that is most prominently presented. In v. 19, on the contrary, it is our being *regarded* as sinners for the disobedience of Adam, and our being *regarded* as righteous for the obedience of Christ, that are rendered most conspicuous. Hence, Paul begins this verse with *for*. 'We are treated as sinners for the offence of Adam, *for* we are regarded as sinners on his account, &c. &c.' Though the one idea seems thus to be the more prominent in v. 18, and the other in v. 19, yet it is only a greater degree of prominency to the one, and not the exclusion of the other, that is in either case intended.

By one man's disobedience. The disobedience here is evidently the first transgression of Adam, spoken of in v. 16, as *the one offence*. The *obedience* of Christ here stands for all his work in satisfying the demands of the law; his obedience unto, and in death; that by which the law was magnified and rendered honourable, as well as satisfied. From its opposition to the disobedience of Adam, his obedience, strictly speaking, rather than his sufferings, seems to be the prominent idea.* The words *the many* in both clauses of this verse, are obviously equivalent to *the all* of the corresponding clauses of v. 18, and are to be explained in the same manner.

With regard to the first clause of this verse we meet again

* "Paulus unterscheidet in dem Werke Christi diese beiden Momente, das Thun und das Leiden."—NEANDER. 'Paul distinguishes, in the work of Christ, these two elements, doing and suffering.' *Geschichte der Pflanzung*, &c. p. 543. In the paragraph which follows this statement, Neander presents the old distinction between the active and passive obedience of Christ, very nearly in its usual form. On p. 546, he says, "Dies heilige Leben Christi will Gott als That der ganzen Menschheit betrachten." 'God regards the holy life of Christ as the act of all men.'

the three interpretations to which reference has so frequently been made. I. That the disobedience of Adam was the occasion of men's becoming sinners. II. That through that disobedience all men were corrupted, that is, that they have derived a corrupt nature from Adam, which is the immediate ground of their suffering penal evils. III. That it is on account of his disobedience they are regarded and treated as sinners. With increasing clearness it may be made to appear that here, as elsewhere throughout the passage, the last is the apostle's doctrine.

1. It is in accordance with one of the most familiar of scriptural usages, that the words *to make sinners*,* are interpreted as meaning, *to regard and treat as such*. Thus, *to make clean, to make unclean, to make righteous, to make guilty*, are the constant scriptural expressions for *regarding* and *treating* as clean, unclean, righteous, or unrighteous; see on v. 12.

2. The expressions *to make sin*, and *to make righteousness*, occurring in a corresponding sense, illustrate and confirm this interpretation. Thus in 2 Cor. 5: 21, Christ is said to be "made sin," i. e. regarded and treated as a sinner, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," i. e. that we might be regarded and treated as righteous in the sight of God, on his account.†

3. The antithesis is here so plain as to be of itself decisive. "To be made righteous" is, according to Prof. Stuart, "to be justified, pardoned, regarded and treated as righteous." With what show of consistency then can it be denied that "to be made sinners," in the opposite clause, means to be regarded and treated as sinners. If one part of the verse speaks of justification, the other must speak of condemnation.

4. As so often before remarked, the analogy between the case

* This interpretation, which is demanded both by the usage of the terms employed (see on Rom. 8: 4), and the antithesis in this verse, is now almost universally adopted by all classes of commentators.—See WAHL'S Lexicon under the word *ἀμαρτία*.

† The word (*κατεστάθησαν*) rendered *were made*, in its ground form signifies *to place*, and is often equivalent very nearly with the simple verb *to be*. James 4: 4, "Whosoever therefore will be the friend of the world, is an enemy of God;" see also 3: 6. It also signifies *to constitute* in the sense of *appointing* to office, Luke 12: 14. Acts 7: 10, &c. &c.; or in that of *making a person or thing something*. In this case it may be rendered simply, *they are*. 'By one man's disobedience many are sinners, or are constituted such, or are made such.' The idea is the same.

of Adam and Christ requires this interpretation. If the first clause means either that the disobedience of Adam was the occasion of our committing sin, or that it was the cause of our becoming inherently corrupt, and on the ground of these sins, or of this corruption, being condemned; then must the other clause mean that the obedience of Christ is the cause of our becoming holy, or performing good works on the ground of which we are justified. But this confessedly is not the meaning of the apostle. If then the same words, in the same connexion, and the same grammatical construction must have the same meaning, the interpretation given above must be correct.

5. The design of the apostle to illustrate the great doctrine of the gospel, that men, although in themselves ungodly, are regarded and treated as righteous for Christ's sake, demands this interpretation. 6. This view of the passage so obviously required by the usage of the words and the context, is, as remarked above on v. 16, adopted by commentators of every class of theological opinion. See the passages there quoted. "*The many* are here again *all*, who, from the opposition to the one, are in this place, as in v. 15, denominated from their great number. These have without exception become sinners (*ἀμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν*), not in reference to their own inward corruption, of which Paul is not here speaking, but in reference to their guilt (Strafwürdigkeit) and actual punishment on account of Adam's sin."* Even Flatt, whose general view of the passage would lead to a different interpretation, gives, as a correct exhibition of the meaning of the apostle, "As on account of the disobedience of one the many are treated as sinners, so on account of the obedience of one shall the many be treated as righteous." Storr also renders the first clause, "They were regarded and treated as sinners;" this, he says, must be its meaning from its opposition to the words "were constituted righteous," which obviously express the idea of justification, and also from the use of the word condemnation in the corresponding clause of v. 18. These writers are referred to in preference to Calvinistic commentators, to show how entirely destitute of foundation is the reproach, that the interpretation given above is the result of theological prejudice.

* ZACHARIAE *Biblische Theologie*, Vol. II. p. 388.

It will be observed that no part of the argument in favour of this view of the passage, and of the doctrine which it teaches, rests on the mere force of the expression "by the offence of one;" or on the assumption that the word rendered *were made* expresses the idea of imputation; and, therefore, no part of it is answered by any remarks directed to these points. Because it is true, and acknowledged, that the declaration "all men are treated as sinners on account of the sin of one man" includes the idea of imputation, does it hence follow that the word *treat* means to impute? And what answer is it to the argument from such a declaration, to show that such is not the meaning of the word? Yet we see commentators laying stress upon the fact that the word rendered *were made* in this clause is never used "to express the idea of *imputing that to one which belongs to another.*"* No one ever supposed that it was so used. The simple question is, what is the idea expressed by the whole clause? If *to constitute righteous* means to justify, pardon, regard and treat as righteous, as Prof. Stuart admits it to be the case, does not *to constitute sinners* mean to condemn, to punish, to regard and treat as sinners? An affirmative answer to this question it must be very difficult for any man to withhold. Yet this is all that the doctrine of imputation requires.

The meaning then of the whole passage is this: BY ONE MAN sin entered into the world, or men were brought to stand in the relation of sinners to God; death, consequently passed on all, because for the offence of that one man, they were all regarded and treated as sinners. That this is really the case is plain; because the execution of the penalty of a law cannot be more extensive than its violation; and consequently if all are subject to penal evils, all are regarded as sinners in the sight of God. This universality in the infliction of penal evil cannot be accounted for on the ground of the violation of the law of Moses, since men were subject to such evil before that law was given; nor yet on account of the violation of the more general law written on the heart, since *even* they are subject to this evil who have never personally sinned at all. We must conclude, therefore, that men are regarded and treated as sinners on account of the sin of Adam.

* See PROF. STUART, p. 237, and MR. BARNS, p. 127.

He is, therefore, a type of Christ. The cases, however, are not entirely analogous; for if it is consistent with the divine character, that we should suffer for what Adam did, how much more may we expect to be made happy for what Christ has done. Besides, we are condemned for one sin only on Adam's account; whereas Christ saves us not only from the evils consequent on that transgression, but also from the punishment of our own innumerable offences. Now, if for the offence of one, death thus triumphs over all, how much more shall they who receive the grace of the gospel (not only be saved from evil), but reign in life through Christ Jesus.

Wherefore, as on account of one, the condemnatory sentence has passed on all the descendants of Adam; so on account of the righteousness of one, gratuitous justification comes on all who receive the grace of Christ; for as on account of the disobedience of one, we are regarded as sinners; so on account of the obedience of the other, we are regarded as righteous.

It may be proper to add a few remarks on the preceding interpretation of this whole section. 1. The first is, that the evidence of its correctness is cumulative, and is, therefore, not to be judged exclusively by what is said in favour of the view presented of any one of its parts. If it is *probable* that v. 12 asserts, that all men became subject to death on account of one man; this is rendered still plainer by the drift and force of vs. 13, 14; it is rendered almost certain by v. 15, where it is asserted, that for the offence of one the many die; by v. 16, where it is said that for one offence all are condemned; by v. 17, which affirms again that the ground of death's reigning over all is to be found in this one offence; and it would appear to be raised almost beyond the reach of doubt by v. 18, where the words of v. 16 are repeated, and the analogy with the method of our justification expressly asserted; and by v. 19, in which this same idea is reiterated in a form which seems to set all efforts at misunderstanding or misinterpretation at defiance.

2. The force of a remark previously made, may now be more fully appreciated, viz. that the sentiment attributed to v. 12, after having been proved in vs. 13, 14, is ever after assumed as the ground of illustrating the nature, and confirming the certainty of our justification. Thus, in v. 16, FOR IF by the offence of one many be dead, &c.; and v. 17, FOR IF by one

man's offence, &c.; in v. 18, **THEREFORE AS** by the offence of one all are condemned, *even so* by the righteousness of one all are justified; and, finally, in v. 19, **FOR AS** by one man's disobedience, &c.

3. In connexion with these remarks, it should be remembered, that the interpretation given to the several clauses in this passage is the simple natural meaning of the words, as, with scarcely an exception, is admitted. The objections relied upon against it are almost exclusively of a theological, rather than a philological or exegetical character. This interpretation too is perfectly consistent with itself, harmonious with the design of the apostle, and illustrative of the point which he proposed to explain. If all these separate sources of proof be properly considered, and brought to bear, with their mutually sustaining force, on a candid mind, it can hardly fail to acknowledge that the commonly received view of this interesting portion of the word of God, is supported by an amount and force of evidence not easily overthrown or resisted.

4. This interpretation is old. It appears in the writings of the early Christian fathers; it has the sanction, in its essential features, of the great body of the Reformers; it has commanded the assent of men of all parties, and of every form of theological opinion. The modern Rationalist, certainly an impartial witness, who considers it a melancholy proof of the apostle's subjection to Jewish prejudices, and the devout and humble Christian unite in its adoption. An interpretation which has stood its ground so long and so firmly, and which has commended itself to minds so variously constituted, cannot be dismissed as a relic of a former age, or disparaged as the offspring of theological speculation.

5. Neither of the opposite interpretations can be consistently carried through. They are equally at variance with the design of the apostle, and the drift of his argument. They render the design and force of vs. 13, 14 either nugatory or unintelligible. They require the utmost violence to be done to the plainest rules of exposition; and the most unnatural interpretations to be given to the most perspicuous and important declarations of the apostle. Witness the assertion, that "receiving the abundance of grace and gift of righteousness," means to be brought under a dispensation of mercy; and that "to reign in life by one,

Jesus Christ," is to be brought under a dispensation of life. Thus, too, "the free gift of justification of life has come upon all men," is made to mean that all are in a salvable state; and "all are constituted righteous," (i. e. "justified, pardoned, regarded and treated as righteous") is only to have the offer of pardon proffered to all. These are but a tithe of the exegetical difficulties attending the other interpretations of this passage, which make the reception of either the severest of all sacrifices to prejudice or authority.

(20) *Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound, &c.* Paul, having shown that our justification was effected without the intervention of either the moral or Mosaic law, was naturally led to state the design and result of the renewed revelation of the one and the superinduction of the other. *The law* stands here for the whole of the Old Testament economy, including the clear revelation of the moral law, and all the institutions connected with the former dispensation. The main design and result of this dispensation, considered as *law*, that is, apart from the evangelical import of many of its parts, was *that sin or offence might abound*. There is an ambiguity here in the original, which does not exist in our version. The Greek may mean either that the design of the introduction of the law was that sin might abound; or, simply, that such was the result. Which idea is to be preferred depends on the view taken of the word rendered *abound*. This word may, according to a very common usage, mean, *to appear, or be seen as abounding*; see ch. 4: 5, "Let God be true," i. e. let it be seen and acknowledged that he is true. Agreeably to this view, the meaning of the clause is, that the great design of the law (in reference to justification) is to produce the knowledge and conviction of sin. Taking the word in its usual sense, the meaning is, the result of the introduction of the law was the increase of sin. This result is to be attributed partly to the fact that by enlarging the knowledge of the rule of duty, responsibility was proportionably increased, according to ch. 4: 15; and partly to the consideration that the enmity of the heart is awakened by its operation and transgressions actually multiplied, agreeably to ch. 7: 8. Both views of the passage express an important truth, as the conviction of sin and its incidental increase are alike the result of the operation of the law.

It seems, however, more in accordance with the apostle's object, and with the general, although not uniform force, of the particle (*iva*) rendered *that*, to consider the clause as expressing the design, rather than the result simply of the giving of the law.

The word *entered* is hardly an adequate translation of the original term (*παρεσῆλθες*). The latter expresses, in Gal. 3: 4, the idea of *surreptitious entrance*, and here probably that of *superinduction*. The law was superinduced on a plan already laid. It was not designed for the accomplishment of man's salvation, that is, either for his justification or sanctification, but for the accomplishment of a very subordinate part in the great scheme of mercy. The Jews, therefore, erred greatly, both by over-estimating its importance and mistaking its design. It was never intended to give life.

But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That is, great as is the prevalence of sin, as seen and felt in the light of God's holy law, yet over all this evil the grace of the gospel has abounded. The gospel or the grace of God has proved itself much more efficacious in the production of good, than sin in the production of evil. This idea is illustrated in the following verse.

(21) *That as sin hath reigned unto death, &c.* That is, as sin has powerfully prevailed, and is followed by death as its necessary consequence. The word *reigned* expresses strongly the extended authority and power of sin over the human family; a power which is deadly, destructive of all excellence and happiness.

Even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. The words "righteousness unto eternal life" should not be separated by a comma as is commonly done in our bibles. And the word translated *righteousness* should be rendered *justification*, as appears by a comparison with the preceding verses. "Justification unto eternal life" is the same with the "justification of life" in v. 18; both expressions mean 'that justification which is connected with eternal life.' It will be remarked that these words answer to the *death* spoken of in the preceding clause. As death is the consequence and attendant of sin, so the justification of life is the consequence and attendant of the grace of the gospel.

BY JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. To him, and him alone, do we owe it that the reign of sin and death has not produced universal and perpetual desolation. He has brought deliverance from both, and introduction into eternal life.

‘Grace *much more* abounds than sin,’ 1. Because we have reason to believe, taking into view those who die in infancy and the probable future state of the church, that the number of the saved will greatly exceed that of the lost. 2. Because Christ does far more than merely repair the evils of sin. He not only delivers us from its power and penalty, but exalts our natures and persons to a state to which we have no reason to suppose they would otherwise ever have attained. 3. Through the redeemed church is to be manifested in ages to come, to principalities and powers, the manifold wisdom of God. The results of redemption no tongue can tell, no heart conceive.

Doctrines.

I. The doctrine of imputation is clearly taught in this passage. This doctrine does not include the idea of a mysterious identity of Adam and his race; nor that of a transfer of the moral turpitude of his sin to his descendants. It does not teach that his offence was personally or properly the sin of all men, or that his act was, in any mysterious sense, the act of his posterity. Neither does it imply, in reference to the righteousness of Christ, that his righteousness becomes personally and inherently ours, or that his moral excellence is in any way transferred from him to believers. The sin of Adam, therefore, is no ground to us of remorse; and the righteousness of Christ is no ground of self-complacency in those to whom it is imputed. This doctrine merely teaches, that in virtue of the union, representative and natural, between Adam and his posterity, his sin is the ground of their condemnation, that is, of their subjection to penal evils; and that in virtue of the union between Christ and his people, his righteousness is the ground of their justification. This doctrine is taught almost in so many words in vs. 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. It is so clearly stated, so often repeated or assumed, and so formally proved, that very few commentators of any class, fail to acknowledge, in one form or another, that it is the doctrine of the apostle.

It would be easy to prove that the statement of the doctrine

just given, is a correct exhibition of the form in which it was held by the great body of the Reformed churches and divines. A few quotations from men of universally recognized authority, as competent witnesses on this subject, must suffice. Turretin (*Theol. Elench. Quaest. IX. p. 678*) says, "Imputation is either of something foreign to us, or of something properly our own. Sometimes that is imputed to us which is personally ours; in which sense God imputes to sinners their transgressions. Sometimes that is imputed which is without us, and not performed by ourselves; thus the righteousness of Christ is said to be imputed to us, and our sins are imputed to him, although he has neither sin in himself, nor we righteousness. Here we speak of the latter kind of imputation, not of the former, because we are treating of a sin committed by Adam, not by us." The ground of this imputation is the union between Adam and his posterity. This union is not a mysterious identity of person, but, 1. "Natural, as he is the father, and we are the children. 2. Political and forensic, as he was the representative head and chief of the whole human race. The foundation, therefore, of imputation is not only the natural connexion which exists between us and Adam, since, in that case, all his sins might be imputed to us, but mainly the moral and federal, in virtue of which God entered into covenant with him as our head." Again, "We are constituted sinners in Adam in the same way in which we are constituted righteous in Christ." Again, (Vol. II. p. 707) *to impute*, he says, "is a forensic term, which is not to be understood physically of the infusion of righteousness, but judicially and relatively." Imputation does not alter the moral character; hence the same individual may, in different respects, be called both just and unjust; "For when reference is had to the inherent quality, he is called a sinner and ungodly; but when the external and forensic relation to Christ is regarded, he is pronounced just in Christ." "When God justifies us on account of the righteousness of Christ, his judgment is still according to truth; because he does not pronounce us just in ourselves subjectively, which would be false, but in another putatively and relatively." Tuckney, (*Praelectiones*, p. 234) "We are counted righteous through Christ in the same manner that we are counted guilty through Adam. The latter is by imputation, therefore, also the former." "We are not so foolish or

blasphemous as to say, or even to think, that the imputed righteousness of Christ makes us formally and subjectively righteous;" see further quotations from this writer on ch. 4: 5. Owen (in his work on Justification, p. 236) says, " Things which are not our own originally, inherently, may yet be imputed to us, ex justitia, by the rule of righteousness. And this may be done upon a double relation unto those whose they are, 1. Federal. 2. Natural. Things done by one may be imputed unto others, propter relationem foederalem, because of a covenant relation between them. So the sin of Adam was imputed unto all his posterity. And the ground hereof is, that we stood in the same covenant with him who was our head and representative." On p. 242, he says, " This imputation (of Christ's righteousness) is not the transmission or transfusion of the righteousness of another into them which are to be justified, that they should become perfectly and inherently righteous thereby. For it is impossible that the righteousness of one should be transfused into another, to become his subjectively and inherently." Again, p. 307, " As we are made guilty by Adam's actual sin, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us; so are we made righteous by the righteousness of Christ, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us." On page 468, he says, " Nothing is intended by the imputation of sin unto any, but the rendering them justly obnoxious unto the punishment due unto that sin. As the not imputing of sin is the freeing of men from being subject or liable to punishment." It is one of his standing declarations, " To be *alienae culpae reus* MAKES NO MAN A SINNER." Knapp (in his Lectures on Theology, sect. 76) says, in stating what the doctrine of imputation is, " God's imputing the sin of our first parents to their descendants, amounts to this: God punishes the descendants on account of the sin of their first parents." This he gives as a mere historical statement of the nature of the doctrine and the form in which its advocates maintained it. Zachariae (*Bib. Theologie*, Vol. II. p. 394) says, " If God allows the punishment which Adam incurred to come on all his descendants, he imputes his sin to them all. And, in this sense, Paul maintains that the sin of Adam is imputed to all, because the punishment of the one offence of Adam has come upon all." And Bretschneider, as quoted above on ch. 4: 3, when stating the doctrine of the Reformers,

as presented in the various creeds published under their authority, says, that they regarded justification, which includes the idea of imputation, as a forensic or judicial act of God, by which the relation of man to God, and not the man himself was changed. And imputation of righteousness they described as "That judgment of God, according to which he treats us as though we had not sinned but had fulfilled the law, or as though the righteousness of Christ was ours." This view of justification they constantly maintained in opposition to the Papists, who regarded it as a moral change consisting in what they called the infusion of righteousness.

Though this view of the nature of imputation both of sin and righteousness, is so familiar, yet as almost all the objections to the doctrine are founded on the assumption that it proceeds on the ground of a mysterious identity between Adam and his race on the one hand, and Christ and his people on the other; and that it implies the transfer of the moral character of the acts imputed, it seemed necessary to present some small portion of the evidence which might be adduced, to show that the view of the subject presented above is that which has always been held by the great body of the Reformed churches. The objections urged against this doctrine at the present day, are precisely the same which were urged by the Catholics against the Reformers; and the answers which we are obliged to repeat, are the same which the Reformers and their successors gave to those with whom they had to contend.

It will be seen how large a portion of the objections are answered by the mere statement of the doctrine. 1. It is objected that this doctrine "contradicts the essential principles of moral consciousness. We never did, and never can feel guilty of another's act, which was done without any knowledge or concurrence of our own. We may just as well say we can appropriate to ourselves, and make our own, the righteousness of another, as his unrighteousness. But we can never, in either case, even force ourselves into a consciousness that any act is really our own, except one in which we have had a personal and voluntary concern. A transfer of moral turpitude is just as impossible as a transfer of souls; nor does it lie within the boundary of human effort, that we should repent of Adam's sin." Prof. Stuart, p. 239. This idea is repeated very fre-

quently in his Commentary on this passage, and the Excursus IV. V. "To say Adam's disobedience was the occasion, or ground, or instrumental cause of all men becoming sinners, and was thus an evil to them all, and to say that his disobedience was *personally theirs*, is saying two very different things. I see no way in which this last assertion can ever be made out by philology." Compare Mr. Barnes, p. 119. Prof. Stuart further says, p. 212, that if verse 12 speaks of the imputation of Adam's sin, it could not be said men had *not* sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression. "So far from this must it be, that Adam's sin is their very sin, and the ground why death reigns over them." Mr. Barnes says, p. 119, "If the doctrine of imputation be true, they had not only *had* sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, but had *sinned the very identical sin*. It was precisely *like* him. It was the very thing itself." In like manner, on p. 96, he says, "But if the doctrine of the scriptures was, that the entire righteousness of Christ was set over to them, was really and truly theirs, and was transferred to them in any sense, with what propriety could the apostle say that God justified the ungodly? &c." "They are eminently pure, and have a claim not of grace, but of debt, to the very highest rewards of heaven." It will be at once perceived that these and similar objections are all founded on a misapprehension of the doctrine in question. They are all directed against the ideas of identity of person, and transfer of moral character, neither of which is, as we have seen, included in it; they are, moreover, not only inconsistent with the true nature of the doctrine, but with the statements and arguments of these writers themselves. Thus Prof. Stuart, p. 239, says, "That 'the son shall not die for the iniquity of the father,' is as true as that 'the father shall not die for the iniquity of the son;' as God has most fully declared in Ezek. 18." According to this view of the subject, "for the son to die for the iniquity of the father," is to have the sin of the father imputed to him, or laid to his charge. The ideas of personal identity and transfer of moral character are necessarily excluded from it, by its opponents themselves; who thus virtually admit the irrelevancy of their previous objections. The fact is, that imputation is never represented as affecting the moral character, but merely the relation of men to God and his law. To impute sin is to regard

and treat as a sinner; and to impute righteousness is to regard and treat as righteous.

2. It is said that this doctrine is nothing but a theory, an attempt to explain what the apostle does not explain, a philosophical speculation, &c. &c. This again is a mistake. It is neither a theory nor a philosophical speculation; but the statement of a scriptural fact in scriptural language. Paul says, 'for the offence of one man all men are condemned;' and 'for the righteousness of one all are regarded and treated as righteous.' This is the whole doctrine.

3. It is asserted that the word impute is never used in the bible in reference to reckoning or charging upon a man any thing which is not strictly and properly his own. But this has been shown to be incorrect; see ch. 4: 3. It is used twice in ch. 4, of "imputing righteousness" to those without works, to the ungodly, &c. But if the objection were well founded, it would be destitute of any force; for if the word means so to ascribe an action to a man as to treat him as the author of it; it would be correct and scriptural to say that the sin or righteousness of one man is imputed to another, when that sin or righteousness is made the ground of the condemnation, or justification of any other than its personal authors.

4. It is denied that Adam was the representative of his posterity, because he is not so called in scripture, and because a representative supposes the consent of those for whom he acts. But this is a mistake. It is rare that a representative is appointed by the choice of all on whom his acts are binding. This is the case in no country in the world; and nothing is more common than for a parent or court to appoint a guardian to act as the representative of a minor. If it is competent for a parent to make such an appointment, it is surely proper in God. It is a mere question of fact. If the scriptures teach that Adam was on trial not for himself only, but also for his posterity; if the race fell when he fell; then do they teach that he was in fact and form their representative. That they do teach the fact supposed, can scarcely be denied; it is asserted as often as it is stated, that the sin of Adam was the ground of the condemnation of men.

5. It is said that the doctrine of imputation is inconsistent with the first principles of justice. This objection is only

of force against the mistaken view given above. It has no weight against the true doctrine. It is on all hands admitted that the sin of Adam involved the race in ruin. This is the whole difficulty. How is it to be reconciled with the divine character, that the fate of unborn millions should depend on an act over which they had not the slightest control, and in which they had no agency? This difficulty presses the opponents of the doctrine more heavily than its advocates. The former have no advantage over the latter; not in the amount of evil inflicted; because they make the evil directly inflicted on account of Adam's sin much greater than the others do; not in the provision made for the redemption of the race from this evil; because both maintain that the work of Christ brings the offer of life to the whole race, while it infallibly secures the salvation of a multitude which no man can number. The opinion of those writers not only has no advantage over the common doctrine, but it is encumbered with difficulties peculiar to itself. It represents the race as being involved in ruin and condemnation, without having the slightest probation. According to one view, they "are born with a corrupt disposition, and with loss of righteousness, and subjection to pain and wo," by a mere arbitrary appointment of God, and without a trial, either personally, or by a representative. According to another view, men are born without any such corrupt disposition, but in a state of indifference, and are placed on their probation at the very first moment of moral agency, and under a constitution which infallibly secures their becoming sinners. Besides, it is not the scriptural view of the subject. Paul represents the evils which came on men on account of the offence of Adam as a condemnation; not as an arbitrary infliction, nor as a merely natural consequence. We are bound to acquiesce in the truth as taught in the scriptures, and not to introduce explanations and theories of our own. The denial of this doctrine involves also the denial of the scriptural view of atonement and justification. It is essential to the scriptural form of these doctrines, that the idea of legal substitution should be retained. Christ bore our sins; our iniquities were laid upon him, which, according to the true meaning of scriptural language, can only signify, that he bore the punishment of those sins; not the same evils indeed, either in kind or degree; but still penal, because

judicially inflicted for the support of law. It matters little whether a debt be paid in gold or copper, provided it is cancelled. And as a comparatively small quantity of the former is of equal value with a great deal of the latter, so the temporary sufferings of Christ are of more value for all the purposes of punishment, than the eternal sufferings of all mankind. It is then no objection to the scriptural doctrine of sacrifice and atonement, that Christ did not suffer the same kind or degree of evil, which those for whom he died must have endured in their own persons. This idea of legal substitution enters also into the scriptural view of justification. In justification, according to Paul's language, God imputes righteousness to the ungodly. This righteousness is not their own; but they are regarded and treated as righteous on account of the obedience of Christ. That is, his righteousness is so laid to their account or imputed to them, that they are regarded and treated as if it were their own; or "as if they had kept the law." This is the great doctrine of the Reformation, Luther's *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*. The great question between the Papists and Protestants was, whether men are justified on account of inherent or of imputed righteousness? For the latter, the Protestants contended as for their lives, and for the life of the church. See the passages quoted above on ch. 4: 3, and the Confessions of that period.*

* Apol. art. 9, p. 226, Merita propitiatoris—aliis donantur *imputatione divina*, ut per ea, tanquam propriis meritis justis reputentur, ut si quis amicus pro amico solvit aes alienum, debitor alieno merito tanquam proprio liberatur.

F. Concordantiae, art. 3, p. 687, Ad justificationem tria requiruntur: gratia Dei, meritum Christi et fides, quae haec ipsa Dei beneficia amplectitur; qua ratione nobis Christi justitia imputatur, unde remissionem peccatorum, reconciliationem cum Deo, adoptionem in filios Dei et haereditatem vitae aeternae consequimur.

F. C. III. p. 684, Fides non propterea justificat, quod ipsa tam bonum opus, tanque praeclara virtus sit, sed quia in promissione evangelii meritum Christi apprehendit et amplectitur, illud enim per fidem nobis applicari debet, si eo ipso merito justificari velimus.

F. C. III. p. 688, Christi justitia nobis imputatur, unde remissionem peccatorum consequimur.

Bretschneider, Dog. Vol. II. p. 254, says that, according to the creeds of the reformation, justification "is that act of God in which he imputes to a man the merit of Christ, and no longer regards and treats him as a sinner but as righteous." "It is an act in which neither man nor God changes, but the man is merely freed from guilt, and declared to be free from punishment, and hence the relation only between

6. As the term *death* is used for any and every evil judicially inflicted as the punishment of sin, the amount and nature of the evil not being expressed by the word, it is no part of the apostle's doctrine that eternal misery is inflicted on any man for the sin of Adam, irrespective of inherent depravity or actual transgression. It is enough for all the purposes of his argument that that sin was the ground of the loss of the divine favour, the withholding of divine influence, and the consequent corruption of our nature.*

II. Whatever evil the scriptures represent as coming upon us on account of Adam, they regard as penal; they call it death, which is the general term by which any penal evil is expressed.

It is not however the doctrine of the scriptures, nor of the Reformed churches, nor of our standards, that the corruption of nature of which they speak, is any depravation of the soul, or an essential attribute, or the infusion of any positive evil. "Original sin," as the Confessions of the Reformers maintain, "is not the substance of man, neither his soul nor body; nor is it any thing infused into his nature by Satan, as poison is mixed with wine; it is not an essential attribute, but an accident,† i. e. something which does not exist of itself, an incidental quality, &c." Bretschneider, Vol. II. p. 30. These confessions teach that original righteousness, as a punishment of Adam's sin, was lost, *and by that defect* the tendency to sin, or corrupt disposition, or corruption of nature is occasioned.‡ Though they speak of original

God and man is altered." This, he says, the symbolical books maintained in opposition to the Romish church, which makes justification a moral change.

* TURRETIN Theologia Elenct. Vol. I. p. 680, Poena quam peccatum Adami in nos accersit, vel est *privativa*, vel *positiva*. Quoad primam dicimus Adami peccatum nobis imputari immediate ad poenam privativam, quia est causa privationis justitiæ originalis, et sic corruptionem antecedere debet saltem ordine naturæ: Sed quoad posteriorem potest dici imputari mediate quoad poenam positivam, quia isti poenæ obnoxii non sumus, nisi postquam nati et corrupti sumus.

† Accidens: quod non per se subsistit, sed in aliqua substantia est et ab ea discerni possit.

‡ F. Concor. I. p. 643, Etsi enim in Adamo et Heva natura initio pura, bona et sancta creata est; tamen per lapsum peccatum non eo modo ipsorum naturam invasit, ut Manichæi dixerunt—quin potius cum seductione Satanae per lapsum, justo Dei judicio (in poenam hominum) justitia concreata seu originalis amissa esset, *defectu illo*, privatione seu spoliatione et vulneratione, (quorum malorum Satan causa est) humana natura ita corrupta est, ut jam natura, una cum illo defectu et corruptione, &c.

sin as being, first, negative, i. e. the loss of righteousness; and, secondly, positive, or corruption of nature; yet by the latter, they state, is to be understood, not the infusion of any thing in itself sinful, but an actual tendency or disposition to evil resulting from the loss of righteousness. This is clearly expressed in the quotation just made. It is, therefore, in perfect consistency with his own views, and with those of the Protestant creeds, that President Edwards teaches in his book on original sin; "It is agreeable to the sentiments of the best divines, that all sin comes from a defective or privative cause (p. 28); and that he argues against the idea of any evil quality being infused, implanted, or wrought into our nature by any positive cause or influence whatever, either of God or the creature, &c." With equal consistency and propriety, he goes on to state that "the absence of positive good principles," and "the withholding of special divine influence," and "the leaving of the common principles of self-love, natural appetite, which were in man in innocence," are sufficient to account for all the corruption which appears among men. See Prof. Stuart, p. 546. Goodwin, one of the strictest of the Puritanical divines (Vol. III. p. 323), has a distinct chapter to prove, "That there is no necessity of asserting original sin, to be a positive quality in our souls, since the privation of righteousness is enough to infect the soul with all that is evil." Yet he, in common with the Reformers, represents original sin as having a positive as well as a negative side. This, however, results from the active nature of the soul. If there is no tendency to the love and service of God, there is, from this very defect, a tendency to self and sin. How large a portion of the objections to the doctrine of original sin is founded on the idea of its being an evil positively infused into our nature, "as poison is mixed with wine," may be inferred from the exclamation of Prof. Stuart, in reference to the passage just quoted from President Edwards. He says it is "A signal instance, indeed, of the triumph of the spontaneous feelings of our nature, over the power of *system!*" It would seem from this, that he has no objection to the doctrine as thus stated. And yet, this is the form in which, as we have just seen, it is presented in the creeds of the Reformers, and the works of the "best divines."

It will be at once perceived that all such questions as the following, proceed on an incorrect apprehension of the point at

issue. It is often asked 'If Adam's first sin is propagated to us, why not all his other sins and the sins of all our ancestors?' No one properly maintains that Adam's *first* sin, his act of eating the forbidden fruit, is propagated to any one. This is a sheer impossibility. We derive from Adam a nature destitute of any native tendency to the love and service of God; and since the soul, from its nature, is filled, as it were, with susceptibilities, dispositions or tendencies to certain modes of acting, or to objects out of itself, if destitute of the governing tendency or disposition to holiness and God, it has, of course, a tendency to self-gratification and sin. There is surely nothing incredible or inconceivable in the existence of a native tendency to delight in God, any more than in the existence of a tendency or disposition to delight in beauty, or social intercourse, or in our own offspring. Men have still an innate sense of right and wrong, a natural sense of justice, &c. Why then may not Adam have been created with an analogous tendency to delight in God? And if this disposition presupposes a state of friendship with his Maker, or if it is the result of special divine influence, why may not that influence be withheld as the expression of God's displeasure for the apostasy and rebellion of man? This is perfectly analogous to the dealings of God in his providence, and agreeable to the declarations of his word. He abandons sinners to themselves, as a punishment of their transgressions; he withholds or withdraws blessings from children in punishment, or as an expression of his displeasure for the sins of their parents. There is, therefore, nothing in this doctrine at variance with the divine character or conduct. On the contrary, it has in its support the whole tenor of his dealings with our race from the beginning of the world. The objections, therefore, founded on the supposed absurdity of the propagation of sin, and especially of Adam's *first sin*, all rest on misapprehension of the doctrine in dispute.

Nor is the objection any better supported, that the doctrine of corruption of nature makes God, from whom that nature proceeds, the author of sin. Our nature is not corrupted by any positive act of God, or by the infusion, implanting or in-working of any habit or principle of sin; God merely withholds judicially those influences which produced in Adam a tendency or disposition to holiness; precisely as a monarch often, from

the purest and wisest motives, withholds favours from the children of traitors or rebels, or bestows them upon the children of patriots and public benefactors. There is in every human being a tendency to act upon the same principle. We are all disposed to regard with less favour the children of the wicked, than the children of the good. If this principle is recognized even in the ordinary dealings of divine providence, we need not wonder at its being acted upon in that great transaction, which decided the fate of the world, as Adam was not on trial for himself alone, but also for his posterity.

As little weight is due to the objection, that the law of propagation does not secure the transmission of bodily defects or mental and moral peculiarities of parents to their children. This objection supposes that the derivation of a corrupt nature from Adam is resolved into this general law; whereas it is uniformly represented as a peculiar case, founded on the representative character of Adam, and not to be accounted for by this general law exclusively. It is constantly represented as resulting from the judicial withholding of the influences of the Holy Spirit from an apostate race. See the Confessions of the Reformers quoted above. *Defectus et concupiscentia sunt poenae*, Apologia, l. p. 58. That the peculiarities, and especially that the piety of parents, are not transmitted by the law of propagation from parents to children, does not, therefore, present a shadow of an objection to the common doctrine on this subject.

The notorious fact, however, that the mental and moral peculiarities of parents are transmitted to their children, frequently and manifestly, though not with the uniformity of an established law, answers two important purposes. It shows that there is nothing absurd or out of analogy with God's dealing with men, in the doctrine of hereditary depravity. And also, that the doctrine is consistent with God's goodness and justice. For if under the administration of the divine Being, analogous facts are daily occurring, it must be right and consistent with the perfections of God.

The most common and plausible objection to this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with the nature of sin and holiness to suppose that either one or the other can be innate, or that a disposition or principle, which is not the result of choice, can possess a moral character. To this objection, President Edwards

answers, "In the first place, I think it a contradiction to the nature of things as judged of by the common sense of mankind. It is agreeable to the sense of the minds of men in all ages, not only that the fruit or effect of a good choice is virtuous, but the good choice itself from which that effect proceeds; yea, and not only so, but the antecedent good disposition, temper or affection of mind, from whence proceeds that good choice, is virtuous. This is the general notion, not that principles derive their goodness from actions, but that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed; and so that the act of choosing that which is good is no farther virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle or virtuous disposition of mind; which supposes that a virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice: and that, therefore, it is not necessary that there should first be thought, reflection and choice, before there can be any virtuous disposition. If the choice be first before the existence of a good disposition of heart, what signifies that choice? There can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous principle, but from mere self-love, ambition or some animal appetite." Original Sin, p. 140. It is certainly according to the intuitive judgment of men, that innate dispositions are amiable or unamiable, moral or immoral, according to their nature; and that their character does not depend on the mode of their production. The parental instinct, pity, sympathy with the happiness and sorrows of others, though founded in innate principles of our nature, are universally regarded as amiable attributes of the soul; and the opposite dispositions as the reverse. In like manner the sense of justice, hatred of cruelty and oppression, though natural, are moral from their very nature. And the universal disposition to prefer ourselves to others, though the strongest of all the native tendencies of the mind, is no less universally recognized as evil.

The opposite opinion, which denies the possibility of moral dispositions prior to acts of choice, is irreconcilable with the nature of virtue, and involves us in all the difficulties of the doctrine, that *indifference* is necessary to the freedom of the will and the morality of actions. If Adam was created neither holy nor unholy, if it is not true that "God made man upright," but that he formed his own moral character, how is his choice

of God, as the portion of his soul, to be accounted for? Or what moral character could it have? To say that the choice was made from the desire of happiness, or the impulse of self-love, affords no solution of the case; because it does not account for the nature of the choice. It assigns no reason why God, in preference to any other object, was chosen. This desire could only prompt to a choice, but could not determine the object. If it be said that the choice was determined by the superior excellence of God as a source of happiness; this supposes that this excellence was in view of the mind an object supremely desirable; but the desire of moral excellence is, from the nature of the case, a moral or virtuous desire; and if this determined the choice, moral character existed prior to this determination of the will, and neither consisted in it, nor resulted from it. On the other hand, if the choice was determined by no desire of the object as a moral good, it could have no moral character. How is it possible that the choice of an object which is made from no regard for its excellence, should have any moral character? The choice, considered as an act of the mind, derives its character entirely from the motive by which it is determined. If the motive be desire for it as morally excellent, the choice is morally good, and is the evidence of an antecedent virtuous disposition of mind; but if the motive be mere self-love, the choice is neither good nor bad. There is no way, on the theory in question, of accounting for this preference for God, but by assuming the self-determining power of the will, and supposing that the selection of one object, rather than another, is made prior to the rise of the desire for it as excellent, and consequently in a state of indifference.

This reasoning, though it applies to the origin of holiness, is not applicable to the origin of sin; and, therefore, the objection that it supposes a sinful disposition to exist in Adam, prior to his first transgression, is not valid. Because an act of disobedience performed under the impulse of self-love, or of some animal appetite is sinful; it does not follow, that an act of obedience performed under a similar impulse, and without any regard for God or moral excellence, is virtuous.

The objection, however, which has now been considered, though by far the most common and plausible against the doctrine of original sin, cannot, with any consistency, be urged by

Prof. Stuart and others who think with him, because he repeatedly and expressly disclaims the principle on which it is founded. He frequently and pointedly admits the existence of moral dispositions antecedent to moral acts; and speaks of them as attributes of the mind which may be innate or concreated. Thus, p. 540, he says, "We necessarily draw the inference that men are born destitute of such a disposition to holiness as Adam had in his primitive state; and this, from the fact that they never, before regeneration, do any thing which is truly good and holy, but always sin, in all their actions of a moral nature. This makes a wide difference between their present natural state, and the original condition of Adam. And in this natural state they are born, as we have reason to conclude, in consequence of Adam's sin." Again, on p. 541, he says, men "are despoiled of that holiness which belonged to him (Adam) in his original state;" "they are destitute of that righteousness which he had, &c." On page 549, he says, "We are born destitute of that original disposition to holiness which Adam, before his fall, possessed." "To enter heaven, and to enjoy the sacred pleasures of that blessed place, there must be a *positive* taste for them; and a special preparation for satisfaction in them. If now infants are saved (which I do hope and trust is the case), then they must have such a relish implanted in their souls for the holy joys of heaven, as will *fit* them to be the happy subjects of those joys. Is there nothing then, which Christ, by his Spirit, can do for them, in imparting such a taste? Is there no *imperfection* of nature to be removed? Is there no *positive* blessing to be bestowed?" In the same connexion, he says that infants who die before they can contract *actual* guilt in their own persons, "still need a new heart and a right spirit." One feels disposed, on reading these passages, to repeat the exclamation of the author respecting President Edwards, "A signal instance, indeed, of the triumph of the spontaneous feelings of our nature" (or rather of Christian consciousness) "over the power of system!"

Of all the facts ascertained by the history of the world, it would seem to be among the plainest, that men are born destitute of a disposition to seek their chief good in God, and with a disposition to make self-gratification the great end of their

being. Even reason, conscience, natural affection, are less universal characteristics of our fallen race. For there are idiots and moral monsters often to be met with; but for a child of Adam, uninfluenced by the special grace of God, to delight in his Maker, as the portion of his soul, from the first dawn of his moral being, is absolutely without example among all the thousands of millions of men who have inhabited our world. If experience can establish any thing, it establishes the truth of the scriptural declaration, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." It would seem no less plain, that this cannot be the original and *normal* state of man; that human nature is not now what it was when it proceeded from the hand of God. Every thing else which God has made answers the end of its being; but human nature, since the fall, has uniformly worked badly; in no one instance has it spontaneously turned to God as its chief good. It cannot be believed that God thus made man; that there has been no perversion of his faculties; no loss of some original and guiding disposition or tendency of his mind. It cannot be credited that men are now what Adam was, when he first opened his eyes on the wonders of creation and the glories of God. Reason, scripture and experience, therefore, all concur in support of the common doctrine of the Christian world, that the race fell in Adam, lost their original rectitude, and became prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward.

This doctrine has so strong a witness in the religious experience of Christians, that it is not wonderful that it has been almost universally received. Individual opponents and objectors have indeed, from time to time, appeared, but it is believed that no organized sect, bearing the Christian name, the Socinians excepted, have ever discarded it from the articles of their faith. It is so intimately connected with the doctrines of divine influence and redemption, that they have almost uniformly been held or rejected together. It has indeed often been said, because the term *original sin* was first used by Augustine, that the doctrine itself took its origin with him; although perfectly synonymous expressions occur so constantly in the writings of the earlier fathers. Equally destitute of foundation is the assertion, so often made, that Augustine was driven to his views on this subject by his controversy with Pelagius. He had arrived at all

the conclusions on which he ultimately rested at least ten years before any controversy on the subject.* He was led to these results by the study of the scriptures, and by his own personal experience. His earlier views on the intimately related doctrines of depravity, ability, dependence and grace, were all modified as he became more thoroughly acquainted with the word of God, and with his own heart. When he passed what Neander calls the moral crisis of his religious history, he saw clearly the depth of the evil which existed within him, and had corresponding views of the necessity and efficacy of the grace of God, by which alone this evil could be removed. With regard to Pelagius, the case was just the reverse. His views of depravity being superficial, he had very high ideas of the ability of man, and very low conceptions of the operations of the Spirit of God. The latter, as the author just referred to strikingly remarks, was the representative and champion of "the general, moral and religious consciousness of men;" the other, "of the peculiar nature of Christian consciousness." A doctrine which enters so much into the experience of all Christians, and which has maintained its ground in all ages and sections of the church, must have its deep foundations in the testimony of God, and the consciousness of men.

III. It is included in the doctrines already stated, that mankind have had a fair probation in Adam, their head and representative; and that we are not to consider God as placing them on their probation, in the very first dawn of their intellectual and moral existence, and under circumstances (or "a divine constitution") which secure the certainty of their sinning. Such a probation could hardly deserve the name.

IV. It is also included in the doctrine of this portion of scripture, that mankind is an unit, in the sense in which an army, in distinction from a mob, is one; or as a nation, a community, or a family, is one, in opposition to a mere fortuitous collection of individuals. Hence the frequent and extensive transfer of the responsibility and consequences of the acts of the heads of these communities to their several members, and from one member to others. This is a law which pervades the whole moral gov-

* See NEANDER'S *Geschichte der Christlichen Religion und Kirche*, Vol. II. P. 3; and the instructive account of Augustine and Pelagius inserted in the *Biblical Repository*, Vol. III., translated by Mr. Woods.

ernment and providential dispensations of God. We are not like the separate grains of wheat in a measure; but links in a complicated chain. All influence the destiny of each; and each influences the destiny of all.

V. The design of the apostle being to illustrate the nature and to confirm the certainty of our justification, it is the leading doctrine of this passage, that our acceptance with God is founded neither on our faith nor our good works, but on the obedience or righteousness of Christ, which to us is a free gift. This is the fundamental doctrine of the gospel, vs. 18, 19.

VI. The dreadful evil of sin is best seen in the fall of Adam, and in the cross of Christ. By the one offence of one man, what a waste of ruin has been spread over the whole world! How far beyond conception the misery that one act occasioned! There was no adequate remedy for this evil but the death of the Son of God, vs. 12, 15, 16, &c.

VII. It is the prerogative of God to bring good out of evil, and to make the good triumph over the evil. From the fall has sprung redemption, and from redemption results which eternity alone can disclose, vs. 20, 21.

Remarks.

1. Every man should bow down before God under the humiliating consciousness that he is a member of an apostate race; the son of a rebellious parent; born estranged from God, and exposed to his displeasure, vs. 12, 15, 16, &c.

2. Every man should thankfully embrace the means provided for his restoration to the divine favour, viz. "the abundance of grace and gift of righteousness," v. 17.

3. Those that perish, perish not because the sin of Adam has brought them under condemnation; nor because no adequate provision has been made for their recovery; but because they will not receive the offered mercy, v. 17.

4. For those who refuse the proffered righteousness of Christ, and insist on trusting to their own righteousness, the evil of sin and God's determination to punish it, show there can be no reasonable hope; while, for those who humbly receive this gift, there can be no rational ground of fear, v. 15.

5. If without personal participation in the sin of Adam, all men are subject to death, may we not hope that, without personal

acceptance of the righteousness of Christ, all who die in infancy are saved ?

6. We should never yield to temptation on the ground that the sin to which we are solicited appears to be a trifle (merely eating a forbidden fruit); or that it is but for *ONCE*. Remember the *ONCE* offence of one man. How often has a man, or a family been ruined for ever by *ONCE* sin! v. 12.

7. Our dependence on Jesus Christ is entire, and our obligations to him are infinite. It is through his righteousness, without the shadow of merit on our own part, that we are justified. He alone was adequate to restore the ruins of the fall. From those ruins he has built up a living temple, a habitation of God through the Spirit.

8. We must experience the operation of the law, in producing the knowledge and conviction of sin, in order to be prepared for the appreciation and reception of the work of Christ. The church and the world were prepared by the legal dispensation of the Old Testament for the gracious dispensation of the New, v. 20.

9. We should open our hearts to the large prospects of purity and blessedness presented in the gospel; the victory of grace over sin and death, which is to be consummated in the triumph of true religion, and in the eternal salvation of those multitudes out of every tribe and kindred which no man can number, v. 21.

CHAPTER VI.

Contents.

As the gospel reveals the only effectual method of justification, so also it alone can secure the sanctification of men. To exhibit this truth is the object of this and the following chapter. The sixth is partly argumentative, and partly exhortatory. In verses 1—11, the apostle shows how unfounded is the objection, that gratuitous justification leads to the indulgence of sin. In vs. 12—23, he exhorts Christians to live agreeably to the nature and design of the gospel; and presents various considerations adapted to secure their obedience to this exhortation.

CHAP. 6: 1—11.

Analysis.

THE most common, the most plausible, and yet the most unfounded objection to the doctrine of justification by faith, is, that it allows men to live in sin that grace may abound. This objection arises from ignorance of the doctrine in question, and of the nature and means of sanctification. It is so preposterous in the eyes of an enlightened believer, that Paul deals with it rather by exclamations at its absurdity, than with logical arguments. The main idea of this section is, that such is the nature of the believer's union with Christ, that his living in sin is not merely an inconsistency, but a contradiction in terms, as much so as speaking of a live dead man, or a good bad one. Union with Christ, being the only source of holiness, cannot be the source of sin. In v. 1 the apostle presents the objection. In v. 2 he declares it to be unfounded, and exclaims at its absurdity. In vs. 3, 4 he exhibits the true nature and design of Christianity, as adapted and intended to produce newness of life. In vs. 5—7 he shows that such is the nature of union with Christ, that it is impossible for any one to share the benefits of his death, without being conformed to his life. Such being the case, he shows, vs. 8—11, that as Christ's death on account of sin was for once, never to be repeated; and his life, a life devoted to God; so our separation from sin is final, and our life, a life consecrated to God.

Commentary.

(1) *What shall we say then?* What inference is to be drawn from the doctrine of the gratuitous acceptance of sinners, or justification without works by faith in the righteousness of Christ?

Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? i. e. be more conspicuously displayed. The form in which the objection to the apostle's doctrine is here presented, is evidently borrowed from the close of the preceding chapter. Paul had there spoken of the grace of the gospel being the more conspicuous and abundant in proportion to the evils which it removes. It is no fair inference from the fact that God has

brought so much good out of the fall and sinfulness of men, that they may continue in sin. Neither can it be inferred from the fact that he accepts of sinners, on the ground of the merit of Christ, instead of their own (which is the way in which grace abounds), that they may sin without restraint.

(2) *God forbid*, in the Greek, *let it not be*. Paul's usual mode of expressing denial and abhorrence. Such an inference is not to be thought of. *How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* How can good men be bad men? or, how can the dead be alive? It is a contradiction and an absurdity, that those who are dead to sin should live in it. There are two points to be here considered. The first is the sense in which Christians are said to be dead to sin; and the second, the proof (vs. 3, 4) that such is really the case with all true believers. The words rendered *dead to sin*, may mean either *dead as it respects sin*, or *dead on account of sin*; see this latter force of the dative in ch. 5: 15. 11: 20, &c. In favour of the second interpretation it is urged, 1. That this phrase must express the same idea with the subsequent clauses, *buried with him*, v. 4; *associated in his death*, v. 5; *dead with Christ*, v. 8. 2. That it must have this meaning in v. 10, where it is said of Christ *he died unto sin*, i. e. on account of sin. 3. The other interpretation, 'How shall we, who have renounced sin, live any longer therein?' is not suited to the apostle's object; because it does not give any adequate answer to the objection presented in v. 1. In order to answer that objection it was necessary to show, not merely that the believer had renounced sin, but that the doctrine of gratuitous justification effectually secures this renunciation. According to the second interpretation, this answer is plain and conclusive. 'How shall we, who have died on account of sin, live any longer therein? If we are regarded and treated by God, in virtue of our union with Christ, and if we regard ourselves as having suffered and died with him on account of sin, we cannot but regard it as hateful and deserving of punishment.'*

The objections to this interpretation, however, are serious.

1. It is not consistent with the common and familiar import of

* The reader may see this view of the passage defended at length by STORR, *Brief an die Hebraer*, p. 515; and by FLATT, on the passage itself, in his *Commentary on this Epistle*.

the expression *to be dead to any thing*, which occurs frequently in the New Testament, as Gal. 2: 19, "dead to the law;" 1 Pet. 2: 24, "dead to sins;" Rom. 7: 4, &c. &c. In all cases the meaning is *to be free from*. Sin has lost its power over the believer, as sensible objects are not able to affect the dead. 2. The opposite phrase *to live therein*, requires this interpretation. 3. The object of the apostle does not require that a formal argumentative answer should be supposed to commence in this verse. He simply denies the justice of the inference from his doctrine stated in v. 1, and asks how it is possible it should be correct? How can a Christian, which is but another name for a holy man, or one dead to sin, live any longer therein?

(3) *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death?* In this and the following verse we have something more in the form of argument in answer to the objection in question. The apostle reminds his readers that the very design of Christianity was to deliver men from sin; that every one who embraced it, embraced it for this very object; and, therefore, it was a contradiction in terms to suppose that any should come to Christ to be delivered from sin in order that they might live in it. And, besides this, it is clearly intimated, that such is not only the design of the gospel, and the object for which it is embraced by all who cordially receive it, but also that the result or necessary effect of union with Christ is a participation in the benefits of his death.

Were baptised into Jesus Christ. In the phrase *to be baptised into any one*, the word (*εἰς*) rendered *into* has its usual force as indicating the object, design or result for which any thing is done. To be baptised into Jesus Christ, or unto Moses, or Paul, therefore, means to be baptised in order to be united to Christ, or Moses, or Paul, as their followers, the recipients of their doctrines, and expectants of the blessings which they have to bestow; see Matt. 28: 19. 1 Cor. 10: 2. 1 Cor. 1: 13. In like manner, in the expression *baptised into his death*, the preposition expresses the design and the result. The meaning, therefore, is, 'we were baptised in order that we should die with him,' i. e. that we should be united to him in his death, and partakers of its benefits. Thus "baptism unto repentance," Matt. 3: 11, is

baptism in order to repentance; "baptism unto the remission of sins," Mark 1: 4, that remission of sins may be obtained; "baptised into one body," 1 Cor. 12: 13, i. e. that we might become one body, &c. The idea of the whole verse, therefore, is, 'That as many as have been baptised into Jesus Christ, have become intimately united with him, so that they are conformed to him in his death, and participate in the blessings for which he died.' Much to the same effect the apostle says, Gal. 3: 27, "As many as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ," i. e. have become intimately united to him. Paul uses the expression *baptised into Christ*, not for the mere external or formal profession of the religion of the gospel, but for the cordial reception of it, of which submission to the rite of baptism was the public and appointed expression. The meaning, therefore, is, that those who have sincerely embraced Jesus Christ, have done it so as to be united to him, conformed to his image and the design for which he died. Christ died in order that he might destroy the works of the devil, 1 John 3: 8; to save his people from their sins, and to purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, Tit. 2: 14. Every Christian, therefore, who becomes a follower of Christ, does so for the very purpose of being delivered from sin.

(4) *Therefore we are buried by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up, &c.* 'Such being the nature and design of the gospel, if we accept of Christ at all, it is that we should die with him; i. e. that we should attain the object for which he died, viz. deliverance from sin;' or, to use the apostle's figurative expression, that as Christ was raised from the dead, we also might walk in newness of life.

The words *into death* are evidently to be connected with the word *baptism* (βαπτισμα εις τον θανατον); it is *by a baptism unto death* that we are united to Christ, as stated in the preceding verse. We are said to *be buried with Christ*; i. e. we are effectually united to him in his death. The same idea is expressed in v. 8, by saying "we are dead with him;" and in v. 5, by saying, we are "planted together in the likeness of his death." It does not seem necessary to suppose that there is any allusion to the mode of baptism, as though that rite was compared to a burial. No such allusion can be supposed in the next verse, where we are said to *be planted* with him. Baptism is, through-

out this passage, as in Gal. 3: 27, taken for the reception of Christ, of which it is the appointed acknowledgement. The point of the comparison is not between our baptism and the burial and resurrection of Christ; but between our death to sin and rising to holiness; and the death and resurrection of the Redeemer. As Paul had expressed, in v. 2, the idea of the freedom of believers from sin, by the figurative phrase "dead to sin," he carries the figure consistently through; and says, that by our reception of Christ we became united to him in such a way as to die as he died, and to rise as he rose. As he died unto sin (for its destruction), so do we; and as he rose unto newness of life, so do we.

Christ is said to have been raised up *by the glory of the Father*. Some would render these words ($\delta\iota\alpha\ \delta\acute{o}\xi\eta\varsigma$) as though the accusative, instead of the genitive, was used, *on account of the glory, &c.* But this is inconsistent with usage. They either are equivalent to *glorious Father*, see ch. 1: 23, 25; or the word rendered *glory* may be used for *power* or *might*, as in the Septuagint, Is. 12: 2. 45: 24. Compare Col. 1: 11.* *Even so we also should walk in newness of life.* These words express the design for which we receive Christ or were baptised unto him; it is that we should exhibit that new life which we receive from him, and which is analogous to his own, inasmuch as it is unending and devoted unto God; see vs. 9, 10, where this idea is more fully expressed.

(5) *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, &c.* As the preceding verse had declared the object of our union with Christ to be newness of life; this verse exhibits the necessary connexion between the means and the end, by showing that we cannot be united to Christ in his death, without being united to him also in his resurrection.

For if we have been planted together. The original word here used means properly *connate, born together*; but it is applied variously to things intimately united, as things growing together, Amos 9: 13. Zacharia 11: 2, in the Septuagint; compare Luke 7: 8; to branches of the same tree, limbs of the same body, &c. &c. The idea, therefore, here expressed by it, is an

* *Per gloriam Patris.* Id est insignem virtutem, qua se vere gloriosum declaravit, et veluti gloriæ suæ magnificentiam illustravit.—CALVIN.

intimate and vital union with Christ, such as exists between a vine and its branches.* Compare John 15: 1—8.

In the likeness of his death; i. e. in a death similar to his. We die as he died. This results from the fact of our intimate union with him. Hence, in v. 6, we are said “to be crucified with him;” and in v. 8, “to be dead with him.” If we are so united to Christ as to die with him (i. e. to obtain the benefits of his death), we also die as he died. This accounts for the introduction of the word *likeness*, expressive of a comparison between our death to sin and the death of Christ. But we experience this similar, or spiritual death, only because of the union with Christ, in virtue of which his death was, in the sight of God, equivalent with our death.†

We shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. The future tense *shall*, does not here express obligation merely, but also and mainly the certainty of the result. ‘If united to Christ in his death, we shall be also in his resurrection. That is, we shall experience a resurrection similar to his, viz. an entrance on a new, glorious and perpetual life.’ That a spiritual resurrection is here principally intended, seems very plain, both from the preceding and succeeding context. And yet the idea of the future resurrection of the body is not to be entirely excluded. Paul, in ch. 8: 11, brings the resurrection of the body forward as a necessary consequence of our union with Christ, or of our having the Spirit of life dwelling in us. The meaning probably is, that if we are true Christians, baptised into the death of Christ, united and conformed to him in this respect, the necessary result will be that the life of Christ will be manifested in us by a holy and devoted life here, by a life of glorious immortality, and by the resurrection of the body hereafter. All this is included in the *life* consequent on our union with Christ.

* *Insitio non tantum exempli conformitatem designat, sed arcanam conjunctionem, per quam cum ipso coaluimus, ita ut nos Spiritu suo vegetans, ejus virtutem in nos transfundat. Ergo ut surculus communem habet vitæ et mortis conditionem cum arbore, in quam insertus est: ita vitæ Christi non minus, quam et mortis participes nos esse consentaneum est.—CALVIN.*

† *Nihil aliud voluit notare apostolus, quam efficaciam illam mortis Christi, quæ in carnis nostræ interitu se exerit; alteram quoque resurrectionis, ad renovandam in nobis meliorem Spiritus naturam.—CALVIN.*

(6) *Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, &c.* This verse is either an amplification or confirmation of the preceding. 'If united with the Lord Jesus,' says the apostle, 'in his death, we shall be in his life, for we know that we are crucified with him for this very reason, viz. that the body of sin might be destroyed.' In this view of the passage it is little more than an amplification of v. 5. But it may also be viewed thus, 'We are sure we shall be conformed to the life of Christ, because we know that our old corruptions have been destroyed by his death, in order that we should no longer serve them.' This verse then assigns the reason for the assertion contained in the last clause of the fifth.

The phrase *old man*, may mean either our corruptions, or ourselves, our former selves. According to the latter meaning, Paul would say, '*We*, our former selves, were crucified with Christ;' according to the former, 'Our corrupt affections were destroyed, &c.' The apostle generally uses the expression in this sense, "Put ye off the old man which is corrupt, &c.," Eph. 4: 22; "Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man," Col. 3: 9; compare Rom. 7: 22, where the sanctified affections are called the *inward man*; Eph. 3: 16. 4: 24. According to all these passages, the *old man* is the old, i. e. the original and natural state of the heart. As the scriptures, however, describe the moral change of the heart as a new birth, and speak of those thus born again as new creatures, 2 Cor. 5: 17. Gal. 6: 15, so the phrase in question may designate men considered as in their unrenewed state. The *old man* would then mean our former selves, 'We, as sinners, were crucified with Christ that sin might be destroyed.' This, although not so agreeable to scriptural usage, seems better suited to the context. There is probably no allusion in the use of the word *crucified*, either to the slowness or painfulness of that particular mode of death, as though the apostle meant to intimate that the destruction of sin was a gradual and painful process. This indeed is true, but is not here expressed. The simple expression "dead with him," is substituted for this word in v. 8, and in Gal. 2: 20, "I am crucified with Christ," contains no such allusion. It is more probable, as Calvin remarks, that the word is used to intimate

that it is solely in virtue of our participation in the death of Christ, that we are delivered from the power of sin.*

That the body of sin might be destroyed. The expression *body of sin* is probably a mere paraphrase for sin itself, see Col. 2: 11; yet it is no doubt used with design, as sin is spoken of as a person that dies, whose members we are to mortify, and whom we are no longer to serve. The destruction of sin results from the death of Christ, inasmuch as we are thereby reconciled to God, and brought under the influence of all the considerations which flow from the doctrine of redemption, see v. 14; and because his death secures for us the Holy Spirit, who is the source of all holiness, ch. 8: 3, 4, 9.

That henceforth we should not serve sin, i. e. be slaves to it. This clause expresses at once the result and design of the destruction of the power of sin. Paul's whole argument then in these two verses is, 'Such is the nature of our union with Christ, that if we partake of the benefits of his death, and are conformed to him in this respect, we shall certainly be conformed to his life; because by his death the power of sin is destroyed.'

(7) *For he that is dead is free from sin.* The meaning of this verse is somewhat doubtful. It may be considered as merely a statement of a general truth, designed for the illustration and confirmation of what Paul had just said. 'Death puts a final stop to all activity in this world. He that dies is entirely separated from all former pursuits and objects; they have lost all power over him, and he all interest in them. To be dead to sin, therefore, expresses a full and final separation from it.' Or the meaning may be this, 'What has just been said is true, for he that is dead with Christ is judicially free from sin; its power and authority are destroyed, as effectually as the authority of a husband over his wife (ch. 7: 3, 4), or of a master over his slave (v. 18), is destroyed by death.' There are three ways, therefore, in which this verse may be explained. 1. As expressing a mere general truth. 2. By supplying, after the word *dead*, the words *to sin*, 'He that is dead to sin, is free from it.' 3. By supplying the words *with Christ*, 'He that is dead with

* Ac nominatim allusit ad crucem, quo expressius indicaret non aliunde nos mortificari, quam ex ejus mortis participatione.—CALVIN.

Christ is free from sin.' This last method seems the preferable one, on account of the relation of this verse to vs. 6, 8, "He that is dead (with Christ) is free from sin, for if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him."

Is free from sin; literally is justified from sin. In support of the former of these versions reference is made to the apocryphal book Sirach 26: 29. Acts 13: 39; compare also v. 18 of this chapter, and 1 Peter 4: 1. But although this rendering is possible, there appears to be no sufficient reason for departing from the proper and almost uniform meaning of the original word. *Is justified from sin* means, is pardoned, is freed from the guilt and punishment of sin by justification. This verse then assigns a very important reason for the truth which the apostle had so frequently stated, viz. that the believer could not live in sin. 'For he that is dead with Christ is thereby justified, and freed from the punishment of sin; he is thus reconciled to God; and as reconciliation and communion with God are the true sources of holiness, he is also freed from sin.' This interpretation is confirmed by the next verse, in which our dying with Christ is represented as securing our living with him. See Gal. 2: 19, 20. 6: 14. Col. 2: 3. 3: 3. 1 Peter 4: 1. In all these passages, with more or less distinctness, the death of Christ, and believers dying with him, are represented as the ground and cause of their living unto God.

Verses 8—11. These verses contain the application of the truth taught in the preceding passage. 'If we are dead with Christ, we shall share in his life. If he lives, we shall live also. As his life is perpetual, it secures the continued supplies of life to all his members. Death has no more any dominion over him. Having died unto, or on account of sin once, he now ever lives to, and with God. His people, therefore, must be conformed to him; dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.' This passage does not contain a mere comparison between the literal death and resurrection of Christ, and the spiritual death and resurrection of believers, but it exhibits the connexion between the death and life of the Redeemer and the sanctification of his people.

(8) *Now if we be dead with Christ, &c.* If the truth stated in the preceding verses be admitted, viz. that our union with Christ is such that his death secures our deliverance from the

penalty and power of sin, *we believe we shall also live with him*. That is, we are sure that the consequences of his death are not merely negative, i. e. not simply deliverance from evil, moral and physical, but also a participation in his life. *To live with Christ*, therefore, includes two ideas, association with him, and similarity to him. We partake of his life, and consequently our life is like his. In like manner, since we die *with* him, we die *as* he died. So too when we are said *to reign with him, to be glorified together*, both these ideas are included; see ch. 8: 17, and many similar passages. The life here spoken of is that "eternal life" which believers are said to possess even in this world; see John 3: 36. 5: 24; and which is manifested here by devotion to God, and hereafter in the purity and blessedness of heaven. It includes, therefore, all the consequences of redemption. We are not to consider the apostle as merely running a parallel between the natural death and resurrection of Christ, and the spiritual death and resurrection of his people, as has already been remarked, but as showing that, in consequence of union to him in his death, we must die *as* he died, and live *as* he lives. That is, that the effect of his death is to destroy the power of sin; and the result of his living is the communication and preservation of divine life to all who are connected with him. This being the case, the objection stated in v. 1 of this chapter is seen to be entirely unfounded. This life of Christ to which we are conformed is described in the following verses, first as perpetual, and, secondly, as devoted unto God.

(9) *Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more*. The perpetuity of Christ's life is presented, 1. As the ground of assurance of the perpetuity of the life of believers. We shall partake of the life of Christ, i. e. of the spiritual and eternal blessings of redemption, because he ever lives to make intercession for us, and to grant us those supplies of grace which we need; see ch. 5: 10. John 14: 19. 1 Cor. 15: 23, &c. &c. As death has no more dominion over him, there is no ground of apprehension that our supplies of life shall be cut off. This verse, therefore, is introduced as the ground of the declaration "we shall live with him," at the close of v. 8. 2. The perpetuity of the life of Christ is one of the points in which our life is to be conformed to his.

(10) *For in that he died, he died unto sin once, &c.* This

verse is an amplification and explanation of the preceding. Christ's life is perpetual, inasmuch as his dying unto sin was for once only; but as he lives, he lives forever in the presence, and to the glory of God. It is evident that Christ's dying *unto sin* must be understood in a different sense from that in which we are said to die *unto sin*. The dative (ἐν ἁμαρτίᾳ) probably here, as so often elsewhere, expresses the ground or reason for which any thing is done; see on v. 2, 'He died on account of sin.*' The phrase, therefore, is to be understood as those in Gal. 1: 4. Rom. 4: 25, &c. &c., where he is said to have died *for sin*, i. e. for its expiation and destruction. This sacrifice, unlike the impotent offerings under the law, was so efficacious that it never need be repeated; and therefore Christ, having once suffered death, is never again to be subject to its dominion, Heb. 9: 28. 1 Pet. 3: 18.

But in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. The structure of this sentence is antithetical, agreeably to Paul's manner, see on ch. 5: 10; and this accounts for the form of the expression *he liveth unto God*, which is opposed to the phrase *he died unto sin*. Christ lives to the glory of God and in communion with him. This is the second point in which our life is to be conformed to his. It is to be not only perpetual, i. e. without relapse into spiritual death, but also devoted to the service and enjoyment of God.

(11) This verse contains an inference from the preceding discussion, and an application of it to the case of Christians. If Christ has died for the destruction and expiation of sin, and if all who belong to him are united to him in his death so as to have their sins expiated and destroyed; and if, moreover, their head, in whom they live, has risen to a new and endless life of glory and holiness, then let Christians view their relation to Christ in its true light, and live accordingly.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves as dead indeed unto sin, &c.† That is, regard yourselves as having died with Christ for deliverance from the guilt of sin, see vs. 5, 6, 8; and also for the destruction of its power, see vs. 6, 7. *But alive unto God.*

* Or it may be the *dativus detrimenti*. He died for the destruction of sin.

† The MSS. A. D. E. F. G. and several of the ancient versions and fathers omit the word *εἶναί* in the middle of this verse, and the words *ἐν ᾧ χυρίῳ ἡμῶν* at the end.

Let believers consider themselves partakers not only of the death of Christ, but also of his life. As his life is perpetual and devoted unto God, so also must theirs be. *Through Jesus Christ our Lord.* It is through Christ that we die unto sin, and live unto God. It is not we that live, but Christ who liveth in us, Gal. 2: 19. The words rendered *through Christ* may be more literally translated *in Christ*, i. e. it is in virtue of union with him that we die unto sin and live unto God.*

Doctrines.

1. Truth cannot lead to unholiness. If a doctrine encourages sin it must be false, vs. 1, 2.

2. There can be no greater contradiction and absurdity than for one who lives in sin to claim to be a Christian, v. 2.

3. Antinomianism is not only an error; it is a falsehood and a slander. It pronounces valid the very objection against the gospel which Paul pronounces a contradiction and absurdity, and which he evidently regards as a fatal objection, were it well founded, vs. 2, 3, 4, &c.

4. Baptism includes a profession of the religion taught by him in whose name we are baptised, and an obligation to obey his laws, vs. 3, 4.

5. The grand design of Christianity is the destruction of sin. When sincerely embraced, therefore, it is with a view to this end, v. 3.

6. The source of the believer's holiness is his union with Christ, by which his reconciliation to God, and his participation of the influences of the Holy Spirit are secured, vs. 4, 6.

7. The fact that Christ lives is sufficient security that his people shall live in holiness here and in glory hereafter, v. 8.

8. The only proper evidence that we are the partakers of the benefits of the death and life of Christ, is our dying to sin and living to God, v. 11, and the whole section.

9. The gospel, which teaches the only true method of justification, is the only system which can secure the sanctification of men. This is not only the doctrine of this section, but it is the leading truth of this and the following chapter.

* *Cæterum retinere malui verba Pauli: In Christo Jesu, quam cum Erasmo vertere: Per Christum, quia illo modo melius exprimitur insitio illa, quæ nos unum cum Christo facit.*—CALVIN.

Remarks.

1. As the most prominent doctrinal truth of this passage is, that the death of Christ secures the destruction of sin wherever it secures its pardon; so the most obvious practical inference is, that it is vain to hope for the latter benefit, unless we labour for the full attainment of the former, vs. 2—11.

2. For a professing Christian to live in sin, is not only to give positive evidence that he is not a real Christian, but it is to misrepresent and slander the gospel of the grace of God, to the dishonour of religion and the injury of the souls of men, vs. 2—11.

3. Instead of holiness being in order to pardon, pardon is in order to holiness. This is the mystery of evangelical morals, v. 4, &c.

4. The only effectual method of gaining the victory over our sins is to live in communion with Jesus Christ; to regard his death as securing the pardon of sin, as restoring us to the divine favour, and as procuring for us the influences of the Holy Spirit. It is those, who thus look to Christ not only for pardon but holiness, that are successful in subduing sin; while the *legalist* remains its slave, vs. 6, 8.

5. It is a consolation to the believer to know that if he has evidence of being *now* a Christian, he may be sure that he shall live with Christ. As long and as surely as the head lives, so long and so surely must all the members live, v. 8, &c.

6. To be in Christ is the source of the Christian's life; to be like Christ is the sum of his excellence; and to be with Christ is the fulness of his joy, vs. 2—11.

CHAP. 6: 12—23.

Analysis.

PAUL having shown, in the preceding section, that union with Christ secures not only the pardon, but the destruction of sin, exhorts his brethren to live agreeably to the nature and design of the gospel, vs. 12, 13. As an encouragement in their efforts to resist their corruptions, he assures them that sin shall not have dominion over them, because they are not under the law, but under grace, v. 14. This is another fundamental principle in the doctrine of sanctification. Holiness is not attained,

and cannot be attained by those who, being under the law, are still unreconciled to God. It is necessary that we should enjoy his favour in order to exercise towards him right affections. This doctrine is not justly liable to the objection, that we may sin with impunity if not under the law, v. 15. The true situation of the Christian is illustrated by a reference to the relation between a servant and his master. Believers, before conversion, were the servants of sin; after it, they are the servants of righteousness. Formerly, they were under an influence which secured their obedience to evil; now they are under an influence which secures their obedience to good. The consequence of the former service was death; of the present, life. The knowledge of these consequences tends to secure the continued fidelity of the Christian to his new master, vs. 16—23.

Commentary.

(12) *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, &c.* ‘Seeing that the design and nature of the gospel are such as stated in the preceding section, those who profess to have embraced that system, or to be united to Christ, should show the evidence of their union by holiness of life.’ *To reign*, of course, signifies to exercise uncontrolled authority. The exhortation is, that Christians should not recognise or yield to this authority of sin. The words *mortal body* admit of various interpretations. They may be a mere paraphrase for *you*, ‘Let not sin reign in you.’ So, in the next verse, *your members* may stand for *yourselves*. 2. Others take the word *mortal* in the same figurative sense in which the word *dead* is used, i. e. for *corrupt*. But, in this sense, *mortal* nowhere else occurs. 3. Others again take *body*, in the sense of *flesh*, for *corrupt nature*. But this also is contrary to usage. It is most probable, therefore, that the words are to be retained in their literal and proper meaning. “Let not sin reign in, or over your body.” This includes the idea that the body is the instrument of sin; or that it is by the actions of the body that the existence and dominion of indwelling sin is, in a great measure, manifested;* and especially that a great part of sin

* *Cupiditates corporis sunt fomes, peccatum ignis.*—BENGL.

CALVIN says, *Nuper admonui vocem Corporis non pro carne et cute et ossibus accipi, sed pro tota hominis massa, ut ita loquar. Id certius colligere licet ex præ-*

consists in yielding to the appetites or desires of the body. This latter idea is clearly expressed in the following clause, *that ye should obey it* (sin) *in the lusts thereof* (the body). We should not allow sin to reign; that is, we should not obey it, by yielding to the desires of the body.*

(13) *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, &c.* The word rendered *to yield unto*, means, *to give up to the use and control of*; see Matt. 26: 53. *Your members* includes the faculties of the mind as well as the members of the body; compare Col. 3: 5, “Mortify your members which are upon the earth, &c.” The expression is a paraphrase for *yourselves*; which word is substituted for it in the next clause. There is, however, an obvious reference to the preceding verse and the expression *your body*. The exhortation, therefore, is not to yield ourselves up to sin as instruments for doing evil. The word rendered *instruments*, though it most frequently means *arms*, is used for *implements* of any kind and for any purpose.

But yield yourselves unto God, give yourselves up to the use and control of God. *As those that are alive from the dead*. This clause, which is descriptive both of the state and character of believers, is evidently derived from the preceding representation of Christians as being dead with Christ unto sin, and living with him unto God. They are required to act as those who are partakers of the life of Christ; as those whom God has quickened and made to sit together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus, Eph. 2: 5, 6. *And your members, your faculties of mind and body, as instruments of righteousness unto God*. This clause is simply explanatory of the former. The construction is a little doubtful. This member of the sentence may be intimately connected with the preceding, and the word *θεῷ* *unto God*, be taken as the dative of advantage, ‘Yield yourselves unto God and your members, as instru-

senti loco: quia alterum membrum quod mox subjiciet de corporis partibus, ad animum quoque extenditur.

* There is great diversity of readings in the MSS. in the latter part of this verse. The common text which is expressed in our version is, εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν αὐτῇ ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ. Griesbach omits all after ὑπακούειν, which leaves the sense incomplete. Others retain αὐτῇ, but reject what follows. And others discard only αὐτῇ ἐν. The meaning then is ‘to obey the lusts thereof.’ This reading is given by Knapp and Lachmann.

ments of righteousness, for his service.' Or the verb of the foregoing clause may be repeated, 'Yield yourselves unto God, and yield your members, &c., to him.' The sense is the same.

(14) *For sin shall not have dominion over you, &c.* This clause is variously explained. Some make the future here to express obligation, 'Sin ought not to have dominion over you.' But this is not the natural force of the words; and, in this case, it is not only unnecessary, but inconsistent with the context, inasmuch as the following clause "ye are not under law, &c." would, in a great measure, lose its force. The common interpretation gives a much better sense, 'Live devoted to God, be faithful in your efforts to live to his glory, for you shall be successful; sin shall not have dominion over you.' Then follows the ground of this assurance.

For ye are not under the law, but under grace. To be under the law means to be under its authority, see Gal. 4: 2, 4; and to be under its constraining influence, see Rom. 2: 9. Both ideas are here included. We are not under the authority of the law, nor have we a legal spirit. We are not only free from its objective authority, but from its subjective influence. That *the law* here does not mean the Mosaic law or dispensation merely, is evident, 1. From the absence of the article in the Greek. Paul would have said, 'ye are not under *the* law,' and not so generally, 'ye are not under law,' had he referred especially to the law of Moses. 2. The sense afforded does not suit the context. Freedom from the Mosaic institutions is no security that sin shall not have dominion over us. 3. The opposition to the word *grace* shows that this cannot be the apostle's meaning. *Grace*, here, as in ch. 5: 2, means state of favour. *To be under grace*, therefore, is to be under a gracious dispensation, or in a state of reconciliation with God. *To be under law*, on the other hand, means to be in a legal state, or under a legal dispensation. 4. This interpretation is inconsistent with the apostle's doctrines and reasoning throughout the epistle. It is not the Mosaic law and ceremonial works which he declares to be insufficient, but any law and any works. As the form, however, in which a legal spirit manifested itself in the days of the apostles, was by a desire to enforce the law of Moses, the expression has often a special reference to the Old Testament economy; see Gal. 4: 11. The law means the whole rule

of duty of which the Mosaic institutions were for a long time a prominent part; but to restrict the term in this connexion to that part, is inconsistent with the scope of the apostle's argument, and with the nature of the gospel as the means of deliverance, not from ceremonial observances only, but from the obligation of the law as a rule of justification.

Believers, therefore, are not under the law as the rule which prescribes the condition of their acceptance with God; nor are they under the influence of a legal spirit. They are under grace, inasmuch as they are under a dispensation which proffers to them gratuitous acceptance, and, being reconciled to God, they are under the constraining influence of his love. The great principle of evangelical obedience is therefore taught in this passage. Holiness is not the result of the law, but of the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. While under the law, our spirit is legal and slavish; and our works are works of constraint and fear. When under grace, our spirit is filial and free (ch. 8: 15); and our works spontaneous and cordial. Paul teaches this doctrine at length in the next chapter, and shows that the freedom from the law, which the legal moralist says must lead to licentiousness, is essential to holiness.

(15) *What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.* Paul evinces constantly his anxiety to avoid misapprehension, and to show that freedom from the law is very different from being free from moral obligation. He, therefore, for the second time, denies that the liberty of the gospel is a liberty to sin. As the illustration and confirmation of the principle of v. 14, are formally resumed at the beginning of the next chapter, the apostle contents himself here with proving the unsoundness of the objection presented in this verse, by showing that it is as impossible for the Christian to live in sin, as for the slave of one man to be obedient to another; or for a man to serve two masters at the same time.

(16) *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, &c.* 'Know ye not that those who obey sin are its slaves; hurried on from one degrading service to another, until it works their ruin; but that those who serve holiness are constrained, though sweetly, to constancy and fidelity, until the glorious consummation of their course?' As a servant or slave is under an

influence which secures obedience to his master, so also, in spiritual or moral relations, a man who serves sin is under an influence which secures the continuance of his obedience, and he who serves holiness is under an influence which effectually secures the constancy of his service. This being the case, it is not possible for the Christian or servant of holiness to be found engaged in the service of sin. The language and the construction are here nearly the same as in v. 13. To yield ourselves as servants unto any one, is to give ourselves up to his authority and control. All unrenewed men give themselves up to sin under one form or another. They are, therefore, its slaves, kept faithful to this service, and reap its final reward. Christians, on the other hand, give themselves up to holiness, and are kept faithful and receive their reward. This is more fully expressed in the next clause.

Whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. The expression *servants of obedience* is very unusual. From the opposition, however, between *sin* and *obedience*, the latter must mean *holiness* or *goodness* in general, although no precisely similar use of the word occurs; see ch. 5: 19. In like manner, from the antithesis between *death* and *righteousness*; the one being the result of sin, and the other of obedience, it is evident that the latter must be taken metonymically for the effects of righteousness, i. e. the favour of God, happiness, the opposite of death. If the words *unto death* be left out of the former of these clauses, as the corresponding words in the original are wanting in several MSS., the whole sense is different. *Obedience unto righteousness* would then most naturally mean *righteous obedience*, or obedience which tended to the complete fulfilment of the law; see ch. 1: 24, "Lusts unto uncleanness," i. e. unclean lusts. The two words in the second clause would then answer to the word *sin* in the first. 'Whether the servants of sin or of righteous obedience.' Both external and internal authority, however, are in favour of the common reading.*

(17) *But God be thanked that ye were the servants of*

* The words *σις δάναρον* are omitted in the MSS. D. and E., in the Syriac versions, and in some of the Latin fathers. Mill and Griesbach approve of the omission; but Knapp, Lachmann, and most other editors retain them.

sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart, &c. As it is the apostle's object to show that believers cannot live in sin, inasmuch as they have become the servants of another master, he applies the general truth stated in the preceding verses more directly to his immediate readers, and gives thanks that they, being emancipated from their former bondage, are now bound to a master whose service is perfect liberty. The expression in the first member of this verse is somewhat unusual, although the sense is plain. 'God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but, &c.' for 'God be thanked, that ye, being the servants of sin, have obeyed, &c.'

But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you. The construction of the original is here doubtful and difficult. It may be resolved thus, 'Ye have obeyed that form of doctrine (τύπω) into which ye have been delivered, i. e. to which ye have become subjected.* The word (παραδίδωμι) rendered *to deliver*, being often used in a similar construction (τινὰ εἰς τι) in the sense of subjecting one to the power of some person or thing. That the word for *form* is in the accusative (τύπον) is to be accounted for by its being *attracted* to the case of its relative. Or the sentence may be thus explained, 'Ye have obeyed that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you.' Compare Rom. 3: 2. Gal. 2: 7. Heb. 11: 2. '*Which was delivered unto you,*' for '*which ye had (or possessed) delivered.*' The grammatical structure of the sentence is in this case entirely different from that assumed in the former explanation, but the sense is much the same. The general idea is, ye have obeyed the doctrines which ye have received.

Form of doctrine. *Form*, i. e. type, image, model, rule. The word has all these meanings. The last seems the best

* The original is ὑπακούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδασχῆς. This may be resolved thus ὑπακούσατε τῷ τύπῳ διδασχῆς, εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε, *obediuntis illi doctrinae rationi, cui subditi estis.* So Fritzsche and Wahl. But as ὑπακούω is often followed by an accusative with εἰς, the passage may be resolved thus, ὑπακούσατε εἰς τὸν τύπον διδασχῆς, ὃν παρεδόθητε, i. e. *παροδοθέντα ἔχετε*, see Winer's Grammatik, p. 213. The construction is then the common one, in which a verb, which, in the active form, governs the dative of the person, has, in the passive, that person as the subject. See Rom. 3: 2. Gal. 2: 7. There is still, however, in this case, an attraction to be assumed, as well as in the other explanation.

suited to this passage. They were obedient to the gospel as a rule of faith and practice. If even in ordinary cases a servant is obedient to his master, there is little reason to apprehend that Christians, who, *from the heart* have become obedient to the gospel, will relapse into the service of sin.

(18) *Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.* Having been emancipated from one master, they became subject to another. The illustration is the same as in the preceding verses. It is absurd that a slave just emancipated should voluntarily return to his former bondage; so it is absurd to suppose that the Christian, delivered from the bondage of sin, should return to it.* For the service to which he is introduced, is, in fact, liberty in its highest and truest sense. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," John 8: 36.

(19) *I speak after the manner of men on account of the infirmity of your flesh, &c.* As the original word here used in the phrase *I speak after the manner of men* (ἀνθρώπων λέγω) may signify *accommodated to human strength, easily borne*, see 1 Cor. 10: 13, many understand the apostle as meaning, 'I require nothing unusual or difficult to be performed.' But this interpretation is neither so well suited to the context, nor so agreeable to the usual force of the similar expressions so often used by the apostle. The common interpretation is therefore to be preferred. 'I say what is common among men,' i. e. I use an illustration borrowed from the common affairs of life. The apostle appears to have felt that the illustration was inadequate and beneath the dignity of his subject. He, therefore, states why he used it. He was forced to borrow a comparison from the relations of men *on account of the infirmity of their flesh*. This, according to the familiar scriptural idiom, means *carnal infirmity*. The two ideas of weakness and corruption are commonly united in the scriptural use of the word *flesh*. The apostle, therefore, means to intimate that it was on account of a want of spiritual apprehension on the part of his readers, or because of a weakness arising from their being corrupt, that he

* Absurdum est, ut post manumissionem quis in servitutis conditione maneat. Observandum, quomodo nemo possit justitiæ servire, nisi Dei potentia et beneficio prius a peccati tyrannide liberatus.—CALVIN.

was obliged to use such figures. What he seems to have regarded as incongruous, is the comparison of the believer's devotion to God and holiness, to a slavery, while it is a voluntary and delightful service. The point of the comparison, however, is merely the devotion and constancy of the obedience.

For as ye have yielded your members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness. The word *for*, at the beginning of this clause, connects it with v. 18; the first part of this verse being parenthetical. 'Being free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness, *for* as ye yielded your members to sin, so now have ye yielded them to righteousness.' The last clause of the verse Paul expresses exhortatively instead of declaratively, as the regular structure of the sentence would seem to require. Although the general sense of these clauses is perfectly obvious, there is some doubt as to the precise meaning of the apostle. The words *unto iniquity* and *unto holiness*, in the two members of the sentence, evidently correspond to each other. The preposition *unto* (*eis*) probably points out the result. 'Ye served uncleanness unto iniquity, i. e. so as to become iniquitous; even so ye serve righteousness unto holiness, i. e. so as to become holy.' See ch. 4: 3. 10: 1, 10, &c. &c. This is the most natural interpretation. It is, however, possible to understand the phrases "iniquity unto iniquity" and "righteousness unto holiness," as expressing the ideas of intensity and progress. Compare the expressions "death unto death," i. e. very deadly, and "life unto life," &c.

(20) *For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.* This verse may be understood either as a mere statement of the fact, that when the servants of the one master they were not the servants of the other; or as referring to the state of feeling of those intended. 'When the servants of sin, ye felt indeed free from all the restraints of righteousness; ye enjoyed a kind of liberty, but what is the fruit of such liberty?' v. 21. According to this latter view, freedom from righteousness is regarded as a kind of advantage in the sinner's estimation, which Paul shows in the next verse to be of no value. The former view, however, seems the most simple and natural, as well as most consistent with the context, and with the use of *for* at the beginning of the verse. As a motive for

obedience to the exhortation contained in v. 19, Paul reminds them that they were formerly the servants of a far different master, of the nature and results of whose service he speaks in the next verse.

(21, 22) In these verses the apostle refers to the different character and results of the service of sin and holiness, as a reason for continued devotion to God. *What fruit had ye then in those things of which ye are now ashamed?* &c. As thus translated and pointed, this clause can hardly have any other meaning than, 'What was the result of your former service or mode of life?' The answer to this question is found in the latter part of the verse, *the end of those things is death*. This supposes the words for *those things* or *works* to be supplied, as they are not expressed in the text. This interpretation gives a good sense, and is consistent with the use of the phrase *to have fruit of*, in the sense of deriving benefit from. Others, however, as Luther, Koppe, Tholuck, Lachmann, make the question end with the word *then*, and the answer begin with *whereof*. 'What fruit had ye then? *such* whereof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death.' This also gives a good sense. A third method is to take the phrase *to have fruit* as synonymous with *to bear fruit*. The sense then is, 'What was the character of your former service? What fruit did ye bear? or, what works did ye perform? Such whereof ye are now ashamed, &c.' This interpretation, though suited to the context, is not so consistent with the common and natural import of the phrase 'to have fruit.' The first view of the passage is perhaps, on the whole, to be preferred.

For the end of those things is death. The sense of this clause depends on the preceding. If the first interpretation of the former part of the sentence be adopted, *those things* must refer to the works of which the converted sinner is now ashamed. *End* means the result, that to which the things in question lead. *Death* here, as in v. 23 and elsewhere, stands for all the evils consequent on sin.

(22) *But now being made free from sin, and become the servants of God, &c.* 'When the servants of sin, ye were employed in a way which ye now blush to remember, and which could end only in hopeless degradation and misery; but now being free from that bondage, and bound in sweet bonds to God,

ye are enriched with holiness here, and have the certain prospect of eternal life hereafter.' *Being free from sin*, i. e. emancipated from bondage to it; see the corresponding phrase *free from righteousness*, v. 20. *Become the servants of God*, i. e. having become slaves to God. It is the use of this word which led Paul to state why he was led to employ such an illustration, in some respects so little suited to the relation of the believer to God. The service is not slavish either in its motive or character. Still, it is faithful and well secured, and these ideas are the point of the comparison.

Ye have your fruit unto holiness. Fruit unto holiness may be either *fruit which is holiness*, or *fruit which tends to holiness*, i. e. produces it. This is most natural.* The result of the service of God is sanctification here, and eternal life hereafter. *And the end eternal life*. Not only is this service the most elevated and blessed in its own nature, but its certain consummation is eternal life. Life in all the senses in which Christ causes his people to live.

(23) *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*. The reason stated in this verse, for the declaration of the preceding, is, that sin earns and deserves death. There is as much an obligation in justice, that death should be the consequence of sin, as that the labourer should have his hire. The result of the other service is equally sure, although on other grounds; such is the purpose of God. Hell is always merited, heaven never. The connexion between sin and misery is that between labour and its just reward; the connexion between obedience to God and eternal happiness, is merely that of grace and congruity. 'Vessels of mercy prepared unto glory.' The preparation is of grace as well as the reward. *Through Jesus Christ our Lord*. Jesus Christ and his gospel, then, instead of being the ministers of sin, as their opposers so confidently asserted, effectually secure what the law never could accomplish, an obedience consisting in holiness and resulting in eternal life.

* Quomodo duplicem peccati finem ante proposuit, ita nunc justitiae. Peccatum in hac vita malae conscientiae tormenta affert, deinde aeternam mortem. Justitiae praesentem fructum colligimus, sanctificationem: in futurum speramus vitam aeternam.—CALVIN.

Doctrines.

1. The leading doctrine of this section, and of the whole gospel, in reference to sanctification, is, that grace, instead of leading to the indulgence of sin, is essential to the exercise of holiness. So long as we are under the influence of a self-righteous or legal spirit, the motive and aim of all good works are wrong or defective. The motive is fear, or some merely natural affection, and the aim, to merit the bestowment of good. But when we accept of the gracious offers of the gospel, and feel that our sins are gratuitously pardoned, a sense of the divine love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, awakens all holy affections. The motive to obedience is now love, and its aim the glory of God, v. 14, &c.

2. Paul teaches that it is not only obligatory on Christians to renounce the service of sin, but that, in point of fact, the authority and power of their former master are destroyed, and those of their new master experienced, whenever they embrace the gospel. This is the very nature of the change. The charge, therefore, that the gospel leads to the service of sin, is an absurdity, vs. 15—18.

3. Religion is essentially active. It is the yielding up of ourselves, with all our powers, to God, and the actual employment of them as instruments in doing good. Nothing can be at a greater remove from this, than making religion a mere matter of indolent profession; a saying Lord, Lord, v. 12, &c.

4. Both from the nature of things, and the appointment of God, the wages of sin is death. It renders intercourse with God, who is the fountain of life, impossible. It consists in the exercise of feelings, in their own nature, inconsistent with happiness; it constantly increases in malignity and in power to destroy the peace of the soul. Apart from these essential tendencies, its relation to conscience and the justice of God, renders the connexion between sin and misery indissoluble. Salvation in sin is as much a contradiction, as happiness in misery, vs. 21, 23.

5. Eternal life is the GIFT of God. It does not, like eternal death, flow, as a natural consequence, from any thing in us. With the holy angels, who have never lost the favour of God, this may be the case. But the tendency of all that belongs to

us, is to death; this must be counteracted; those excellences, in which life consists and from which it flows, must be produced, sustained and strengthened by the constant, condescending and long-suffering grace of the Holy Spirit. The life thus graciously produced and graciously sustained, is at last graciously crowned with eternal glory, vs. 22, 23.

Remarks.

1. We should cultivate a sense of the divine favour as a means to holiness. We must cease to be slaves before we can be children. We must be free from the dominion of fear before we can be under the government of love. A self-righteous spirit, therefore, is not more inconsistent with reliance on the righteousness of Christ, in order to justification, than it is with the existence and progress of sanctification. Whatever tends to destroy a sense of the divine favour, must be inimical to holiness. Hence the necessity of keeping a conscience void of offence; and of maintaining uninterrupted our union with Christ, as our sacrifice and advocate, v. 14, &c.

2. Those Christians are under a great mistake, who suppose that despondency is favourable to piety. Happiness is one of the elements of life. Hope and joy are twin daughters of piety, and cannot, without violence and injury, be separated from their parent. To rejoice is as much a duty as it is a privilege, v. 14, &c.

3. Sinners are slaves. Sin reigns over them; and all their powers are delivered to this master as instruments of unrighteousness. He secures obedience with infallible certainty; his bonds become stronger every day, and his wages are death. From his tyranny and recompense there is no deliverance by the law; our only hope is in Jesus Christ our Lord, vs. 12, 13, 16, &c.

4. Christians are the servants of God. He reigns over them, and all their powers are consecrated to him. He, too, secures fidelity, and his bonds of love and duty become stronger every day. His reward is eternal life, vs. 12, 13, 16, &c.

5. It is of God, that those who were once the servants of sin, become the servants of righteousness. To him, therefore, all the praise and gratitude belong, v. 17.

6. When a man is the slave of sin, he commonly thinks him-

self free; and when most degraded, is often the most proud. When truly free, he feels himself most strongly bound to God; and when most elevated, is most humble, vs. 20—22.

7. Self-abasement, or shame in view of his past life, is the necessary result of those views of his duty and destiny which every Christian obtains, when he becomes the servant of God, v. 21.

CHAPTER VII.

Contents.

THE apostle, having shown in the preceding chapter, that the doctrines of grace do not give liberty to sin, but on the contrary are productive of holiness, in this chapter first illustrates and confirms his position that we are not under the law, but under grace, and shows the consequences of this change in our relation to God. While under the law, we brought forth fruit unto sin; when under grace, we bring forth fruit unto righteousness. This occupies the first section, vs. 1—6. The second, vs. 7—25, contains an exhibition of the operation of the law, derived from the apostle's own experience, and designed to show its insufficiency to produce sanctification, as he had before proved it to be insufficient for justification. This section consists of two parts, vs. 7—13, which exhibit the operation of the law in producing conviction of sin; and vs. 14—25, which show that in the inward conflict between sin and holiness, the law cannot afford the believer any relief. His only hope of victory is in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAP. 7: 1—6.

Analysis.

THIS section is an illustration of the position assumed in v. 14 of the preceding chapter; we are not under law, but under grace. Paul remarks, as a general fact, that the authority of laws is not perpetual, v. 1. For example, the law of marriage binds a woman to her husband only so long as he lives. When he is dead, she is free from the obligation which that law im-

posed, and is at liberty to marry another man, vs. 2, 3. So we, being free from the law, which was our first husband, are at liberty to marry another, even Christ. We are freed from the law by the death of Christ, v. 4. The fruit of our first marriage was sin, v. 5. The fruit of the second is holiness, v. 6.

The apparent confusion in this passage arises from the apostle's not carrying the figure regularly through. As a woman is free from obligation to her husband by *his* death, so we are free from the law by *its* death, is obviously the illustration intended. But the apostle, out of respect probably to the feelings of his readers, avoids saying the law is dead, but expresses the idea that we are free from it, by saying we are dead to the law by the body of Christ.*

Commentary.

(1) *Know ye not brethren (for I speak to them that know the law), how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?* 'The sentiment of this verse, viz. the obligation of the law is not perpetual, is expressed very generally, and not precisely in the form suited to the illustration which follows.† The illustration is, that the law of marriage ceases to bind a woman when her husband is dead; but Paul here says, the law has dominion over a man so long as he lives. The general thought is all that is intended to be here expressed; and this received its form probably before the precise illustration was determined in the apostle's own mind. It is not necessarily to be inferred from the expression, *I speak to them that know the law*, that the Jewish Christians are specially referred to. The principle stated being so familiar, the apostle might assume that any class of his readers knew enough of law to be aware of its truth.

* *Cæterum nequis conturbetur, quod inter se comparata membra non omnino respondent: præmonendi sumus, apostolum data opera voluisse exigua inversione deflectere asperioris verbi invidiam. Debuerat dicere, ut ordine similitudinem contexeret: Mulier post mortem viri soluta est a conjugii vinculo, Lex, quæ locum habet mariti erga nos, mortua est nobis: ergo sumus ab ejus postestate liberi. Sed ne offenderet Judæos verbi asperitate, si dixisset legem esse mortuam, deflectione est usus, dicens nos legi esse mortuos.—CALVIN.*

† *Nim ignoratis. Sit generalis propositio, Legem non in alium finem latam esse hominibus, quam ut præsentem vitam moderetur: apud mortuos nullum ei superesse locum. Cui postea hypothesin subjiciet, nos illi esse mortuos in Christi corpore.—CALVIN.*

The original leaves it doubtful whether the last clause of the verse is to be rendered "as long as *he* lives," or "as long as *it* lives." The decision of this point depends on the context. In favour of the latter, it may be said, 1. That it is better suited to the apostle's design, which is to show that the law is dead or abrogated. 2. That in v. 6 (according to the common reading) the law is spoken of as being dead. 3. And, especially, that in vs. 2, 3, the woman is said to be free from the law, not by her own, but by her husband's death; which would seem to require that, in the other part of the comparison, the husband, i. e. the law, should be represented as dying, and not the wife, i. e. those bound by the law. But, on the other hand, it must be admitted that to say the *law lives*, and *the law dies*, are very unusual modes of expression, and perfectly unexampled in Paul's writings, if the doubtful case in v. 6 be excepted. 2. This interpretation is inconsistent with verse 2. It is not the law that dies; "The woman is bound to her husband as long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead, &c." 3. Throughout the passage it is said that we are dead to the law (v. 4), delivered from the law (v. 6), and not that the law is dead. The common interpretation, therefore, is to be preferred. 'The law has dominion as long and no longer than the person lives to whom it has respect. For example, the law of marriage ceases to be binding when one of the parties is dead.'

The word *law*, in this verse, seems to be used generally. It is not the law of Moses, nor the moral law, nor the law of marriage particularly; but the apostle's remark has reference to laws in general. The particular example is given in vs. 2, 3, and the application of the remark to Christians is made in v. 4.

(2) *For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth, &c.* This and the following verse are a simple illustration of the principle stated in v. 1. The word *for*, therefore, has the force which it so often has in such connexions, being equivalent to *for example*. 'Death puts an end to the authority of laws; *for example*, the woman, &c.' *Is bound by the law.* The law here is the law of marriage, and not specially or exclusively the Mosaic law on that subject. *But if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.* "Law of her husband;" i. e. the law which bound her to her husband; or

which respects her husband. The words rendered *loosed from* are so used in v. 6. Gal. 5: 4.

(3) *So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress, &c.* This verse is but an amplification of the preceding one. ‘While her husband lives, the woman is bound by the law of marriage, for she is an adulteress, if, while he is living, she be married to another man; but that his death frees her from this law is plain, for she is not regarded as an adulteress, if her husband being dead, she be married to another.’ Laws, therefore, are not necessarily of perpetual obligation.

(4) *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, &c.* *Wherefore* this being the case, i. e. as the woman is freed from the marriage contract by the death of her husband, in like manner ye are free from the law by the death of Christ.* And, moreover, as the woman is at liberty to marry the second time, so are we. Freed from the demands of our first husband (the law), we may be married to him who has risen from the dead. That is, freed from the law, as a rule of justification, we are at liberty to accept of the offers of gratuitous acceptance made to us in the gospel. As before remarked, the meaning of the apostle would be rather plainer, if, at the beginning of this verse instead of saying *ye are dead to the law*, he had said *the law is dead to you*. As the woman is freed from her husband when he dies, so are we freed from the law when it is

* There is a mixture of metaphors here. The law is compared at once to the marriage contract, and to the first husband. But as freedom from the marriage contract is tantamount to freedom from the first husband, the meaning of the apostle is sufficiently obvious.

Lex velut maritus noster fuit, sub cuius iugo detinebamur, donec mortua est.

Post legis mortem Christus nos assumpsit, id est, a lege solutos adjunxit sibi.

Ergo Christo e mortuis suscitato copulati adhaerere ei soli debemus: atque ut aeterna est Christi vita post resurrectionem, ita posthac nullum futurum est divortium.—CALVIN.

THOLUCK gives a different view of this passage. He considers the apostle as having virtually stated in the previous verses, that “the law is dead to us,” i. e. that “its demands are satisfied;” he, therefore, regards him in this to state, as the natural consequence of this fact, that “we are dead to the law,” i. e. that we are free from a legal spirit. This, however, though perfectly true, is not in keeping with the context. The main idea of the passage is, that we are freed from the law, and are in a state of grace; see v. 6.

dead, i. e. satisfied. But this is a mode of expression which he seems studiously to avoid. And the idea of our freedom from the law is as well expressed by saying *we are dead to the law*, as by saying *the law is dead to us*. In illustration of the phrase *dead to the law*, see v. 6. ch. 6: 2. Gal. 2: 19. 1 Peter 2: 24.

We are said to be freed from the law *by the body of Christ*, i. e. by the sacrifice of that body, or by his death. Paul uses the expressions "the blood of Christ," Eph. 2: 13; "his flesh," Eph. 2: 15; "his cross," v. 16; "his body," Col. 1: 22, as all equivalent to "his death." The demands of the law are satisfied by the sufferings of Christ. He has redeemed us from the curse of the law, by bearing its penalty or curse in our place, Gal. 3: 13. To those, therefore, who are in Christ Jesus, the law, as a covenant of works, or rule of justification, is no longer in force, Rom. 8: 2.

That ye should be married to another, to him who is raised from the dead. This clause expresses the design of the redemption just spoken of. We are not delivered from the law, that we should be free from all restraint, or be our own masters, but that we should be united to him through whom alone the original design of the law, the sanctification of men, can be effected. As the apostle had spoken of Christ, by implication at least, as being dead, when he spoke of his body, there was a propriety in his saying *who is raised from the dead*. It is a living husband, to use the apostle's figure, which every believer has in Christ. And as he ever lives, the union is perpetual; there is to be no more either divorce or death.*

That we should bring forth fruit unto God. This is the design of our union with Christ. The object, here expressed in a manner suited to the figurative language of the context, is the same which is so often elsewhere stated as the grand design of the redemption of Christ, viz. the sanctification of his people.

The law, of which the apostle is here speaking, is evidently not the Mosaic law merely. It is not the doctrine of this and of similar passages, that Christ has delivered us from the Jewish

* Sed ultra progreditur apostolus, nempe solum fuisse legis vinculum, non ut nostro arbitrio vivimus, sicuti mulier vidua sui juris est, dum in coelibatu degit; sed alteri marito nos jam esse devinctos: imo de manu (quod aiunt) in manum a lege ad Christum transiisse.—CALVIN.

economy, and left us at liberty to embrace the simpler and more spiritual system of the gospel. The law of which he speaks, is that which says, "The man which doeth these things shall live by them," ch. 10: 5. Gal. 3: 10; that is, which requires perfect obedience as the condition of acceptance. It is that which says, "Thou shalt not covet," v. 7; without which sin is dead, v. 8; which is holy, just and good, v. 12; which is spiritual, v. 14, &c. &c. It is that law by whose works the Gentiles cannot be justified, ch. 3: 20, from whose curse Christ has redeemed not the Jews only, but also the Gentiles, Gal. 3: 13, 14. It is plain, therefore, that Paul here means by the law, the will of God, as a rule of duty, no matter how revealed. From this law, as prescribing the terms of our acceptance with God, Christ has delivered us. It is the legal system which says, "Do this and live," that Christ has abolished and introduced another, which says, "He that believes shall be saved." Since, however, as remarked above (ch. 6: 14), the Old Testament economy, including the Mosaic institutions, was the form in which the law, as law, was ever present to the minds of the apostle and his readers; and since deliverance from the legal system, as such, involved deliverance from that economy, it is not wonderful that reference to that dispensation should often be made; or that Paul should at times express the idea of deliverance from the law, as such, by terms which would seem to express only deliverance from the particular form in which it was so familiar to his readers. So, too, in the epistle to the Galatians, we find him constantly speaking of a return to Judaism as a renunciation of the method of gratuitous justification, and a recurrence to a reliance on the righteousness of works. The reason of this is obvious. The Old Testament dispensation, apart from its evangelical import, which lay, like a secondary sense, beneath the covert of its institutions, was but a re-enactment of the legal system. To make, however, as is so often done, the whole meaning of the apostle to be, that we are freed from the Jewish law, is not only inconsistent, in this place with the context, and irreconcilable with many express declarations of scripture, but distinctive of the whole evangelical character of the doctrine. How small a part of the redemption of Christ is deliverance from the Mosaic institutions! How slight the consolation to a soul, sensible of its ex-

posure to the wrath of God, to be told that the law of Moses no longer condemns us! How void of truth and meaning the doctrine, that deliverance from the law is necessary to holiness, if the law means the Jewish economy merely!

(5) *For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, &c.* The apostle having, in v. 4, stated that believers are freed from the law by the death of Christ, in this and the following verse he shows the necessity and the consequences of this change. 'We have been thus freed, *because* formerly, when under the law, we brought forth fruit unto death; but now, being free from the law, we are devoted to the service of God,' The force of *for*, at the beginning of this verse, is therefore obvious. The former legal state of believers is here described by saying, *they were in the flesh*. In the language of scripture, the word *flesh* expresses, in such connexions, one or the other of two ideas, or both conjointly. First, a state of moral corruption, as in ch. 8: 8, "Those that are in the flesh;" secondly, a carnal state, i. e. a state in which men are subject to external rites, ceremonies and commands; or, more generally, a legal state, inasmuch as among the Jews, that state was one of subjection to such external rites. Gal. 3: 3, "Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Compare Gal. 4: 9, where the expression "weak and beggarly elements" is substituted for the phrase "the flesh," see Rom. 4: 1. In the present case, both ideas appear to be included. The meaning is, 'When in your unrenewed and legal state.' The opposite condition is described (v. 6) as a state of freedom from the law; which, of course, shows that the second of the two ideas mentioned above, was prominent in the apostle's mind when he used the words "in the flesh."

The motions of sin, i. e. emotions or feelings of sin, for sinful feelings. *Which were by the law* (τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου). The obvious ellipsis in this clause may be variously supplied. 'Which are *made known* by the law,' according to ch. 3: 20; or 'which are *caused to abound* by the law,' according to ch. 5: 20; or 'which are *produced* by the law,' according to v. 8 of this chapter. The last mode of explanation is decidedly to be preferred, because more consistent with the context, and with Paul's object, which required him to show that the law, instead of producing holiness, was incidentally the cause of sin.

Did work in our members to bring forth sin unto death. In our members is little more than a paraphrase for *in us*; see ch. 6: 12, 13. *To bring forth.* The infinitive (εἰς εὖ καρποφορῆσαι) here expresses the result. 'Sin so wrought that we brought fruit, &c.' *Fruit unto death.* Death is here again personified; *to death* (dativus commodi), the advantage of death; as opposed to the words *to God*, at the close of v. 4. The fruit which sin produced belonged, as it were, to death. Such was our condition when under the law. Our present state is prescribed in the next verse.

(6) *But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead;* wherein we were held, &c.* Our former state was one in the flesh; our present one of freedom from the law. If the common reading be adopted, the meaning of this passage is, 'We are delivered from the law, it being dead, &c.' But the true reading, as stated in the margin, requires the second clause to be rendered thus, *we being dead*. The meaning then is, 'We are now delivered from the law, being dead in respect to that by which we were formerly held, &c.' There is apparently a transposition of the members of the sentence; their natural order seems to be this, 'But now, being dead as it respects the law, by which we were formerly held, we are free, so that, &c.'

That we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of the letter. The result of deliverance from the law is here described. The phrases *newness of spirit*, and *oldness of the letter*, according to a common Hebrew idiom, mean *a new spirit* and *old letter*. The word rendered *letter* means something written; then the law as written, or the written law; ch. 2: 27. 2 Cor. 3: 6, "ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit (i. e. not of the law, but of gospel);

* Our version, which is founded on the received text, assumes the reading *ἀποθανόντος*, which, however, is found in none of the manuscripts. The true reading is probably *ἀποθανόντες*, which is found in the MSS. A. C. 1, 2, 4, 7, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 52, 55, 65, 66; in both the Syriac versions, and in the Armenian, Coptic, and Ethiopic; in almost all the Greek, and in some of the Latin fathers. It is adopted in the Complutensian edition, and in those of Erasmus, Aldus, Colinaeus, Stephens, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, Knapp, and Lachmann. The MSS. D. E. F. G., the Latin Vulgate (*nunc autem soluti sumus a lege mortis, in qua detinebamur, &c.*), and some of the Latin fathers read *τοῦ θανάτου*.

for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life;" i. e. the law condemns, but the gospel secures life. The sense of this passage, therefore, is, 'We serve God in the exercise of a new spirit, or in a new spiritual state; and not in bondage to the old written law, or in our old legal state.' It is evident that the clause *in the oldness of the letter* is substituted by the apostle for the expressions *under the law* and *in the flesh*; all which he uses to describe the legal and corrupt condition of men, prior to the believing reception of the gospel.

This clause may be differently explained. As the word *God* is not used by the apostle after *serve*, he may intend to say, 'We serve a new spirit,* and not an old letter;' i. e. 'We serve the gospel, and not the law;' compare 2 Cor. 3: 6. Or the result of the change is, that 'We serve the Holy Spirit, and not the old written law.' The interpretation first given, however, is much the most simple, and most consistent with the context. Believers, then, are free from the law by the death of Christ; they are no longer under the old covenant which said "Do this, and live;" but are introduced into a new and gracious state, in which they are accepted, not for what they do, but for what has been done for them. Instead of having the legal and slavish spirit, which arose from their former relation to God, they have the feelings of children.

Doctrines.

1. The leading doctrine of this section is that taught in v. 14 of the preceding chapter, viz. that believers are not under a legal system; and that the consequence of their freedom is not the indulgence of sin, but the service of God, v. 4.

2. This deliverance from the law is not effected by setting the law aside, or by disregarding its demands; but by those demands being satisfied in the person of Christ, v. 4. ch. 10: 4.

3. As far as we are concerned, redemption is in order to holiness. We are delivered from the law that we may be united to Christ, and we are united to Christ, that we may bring forth fruit unto God, v. 4, &c.

* The preposition *ἐν* being considered redundant before the dative, as it may be in 1 Cor. 2: 6, and elsewhere.

4. Legal or self-righteous strivings after holiness can never be successful. The relation in which they suppose the soul to stand to God, is, from its nature, productive of evil, and not of holy feelings, v. 5.

5. Actual freedom from the bondage and penalty of the law, is always attended and manifested by a filial temper and obedience, v. 6.

6. The doctrine concerning marriage, which is here incidentally taught, or rather which is assumed as known to Jews and Christians, is, that the marriage contract can only be dissolved by death. The only exception to this rule is given by Christ, Matt. 5: 32; unless indeed Paul, in 1 Cor. 7: 15, recognises wilful and final desertion as a sufficient ground of divorce, vs. 2, 3.

Remarks.

1. As the only way in which we can obtain deliverance from the law is by the death of Christ, the exercise of faith in him is essential to holiness. When we lose our confidence in Christ we fall under the power of the law, and relapse into sin. Every thing depends, therefore, upon our maintaining our union with Christ. "Without me, ye can do nothing," v. 4.

2. The only evidence of union with Christ is bringing forth fruit unto God, v. 4.

3. As deliverance from the penalty of the law is in order to holiness, it is vain to expect that deliverance, except with a view to the end for which it is granted, v. 4.

4. Conversion is a great change; sensible to him that experiences it, and visible to others. It is a change from a legal and slavish state, to one of filial confidence; manifesting itself by the renunciation of the service of sin, and by devotion to the service of God, v. 6.

5. A contract so lasting as that of marriage, and of which the consequences are so important, should not be entered into lightly, but in the fear of God, vs. 2, 3.

6. The practice, common in many of the Protestant countries of Europe, and in many states of this Union, of granting divorces on the ground of cruel treatment, or 'incompatibility of temper,' is in direct contravention of the doctrines and precepts of the bible on this subject, vs. 2, 3.

CHAP. 7: 7—13.

Analysis.

PAUL, having shown that we must be delivered from the law in order to our justification (chs. 3, 4), and that this freedom was no less necessary in order to sanctification (ch. 6. ch. 7: 1—6), comes now to explain more fully than he had previously done, what was the use and effect of the law. This is the object of the residue of this chapter. The apostle shows first, vs. 7—13, that the law produces conviction of sin, agreeably to his declaration in ch. 3: 20; and, secondly, vs. 14—25, that it enlightens the believer's conscience, but cannot destroy the dominion of sin. This section, therefore, may be advantageously divided into two parts. Paul introduces the subject, as is usual with him, by means of an idea intimately associated with the preceding discussion. He had been insisting on the necessity of deliverance from the law. Why? Because it is evil? No; but because it cannot produce holiness. It can produce only the knowledge and the sense of sin; which are the constituents of genuine conviction. These two effects are attributed to the operation of the law, the former in v. 7, the latter in v. 8. These ideas are amplified in vs. 9, 10, 11. The inference is drawn in v. 12, that the law is good; and in v. 13, that the evil which it incidentally produces is to be attributed to sin, the exceeding turpitude of which becomes thus the more apparent.

Commentary.

(7) *What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Far from it, &c.* The apostle asks whether it is to be inferred, either from the general doctrine of the preceding section, respecting the necessity of deliverance from the law, or from the special declaration made in v. 5, respecting the law's producing sin, that the law was itself evil? He answers, by no means; and shows, in the next verse, that the effect ascribed to the law, in v. 5, is merely incidental. *Is the law sin?* means either, *Is the law evil?* or *is it the cause of sin?* see Micah 1: 5, 'Samarina is the sin of Jacob.' The former is best suited to the context, because Paul admits that the law is incidentally productive of sin.

Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law. The word

rendered *nay* very often signifies *on the contrary*, and may be so translated here. 'So far from the law being evil, it is, on the contrary, of the greatest use, for I had not known sin, but by the law.' *I had not known sin.* The will of God, which is the rule of right and wrong, is the source of all knowledge of what is morally good or evil. This law is revealed partially in the very constitution of our nature; and more fully in the scriptures. The more enlarged and spiritual our views of this law, the clearer our knowledge of the extent and evil of sin.

For I had not known lust, except the law had said thou shall not covet. The meaning of this member of the sentence depends upon the sense given to *for*. It may be confirmatory, or merely illustrative. If the former, the sense is, 'I had not known sin, but by the law, *for* I had not known that the mere inward desire was evil, had not the law said, &c.' Or retaining the same force of this particle, 'I had not known the real inward fountain of sin, viz. concupiscence, except the law had said, &c.' According to this view, which is the one most commonly adopted, the word rendered *lust* (ἐπιθυμία) refers to the corrupt disposition of the heart, considered as the root or source of sin.* If *for* (γὰρ) be considered as merely illustrative, the sense is this: 'I had not known sin except by the law; *for example*, I had not known concupiscence, had not the law said, &c.' According to this view, concupiscence does not differ from the more general term *sin*, except as being adduced as an example of the evils to the knowledge of which the law leads. It seems probable that the first interpretation is the more correct of the two. At least, that the apostle designedly referred to an inward, spiritual

* Ich erkannte die Sünde überhaupt nicht, weil ich auf die innere Wurzel derselben nicht aufmerksam geworden war.—THOLUCK.

Ideo dixi, Paulum hic altius conscendere, quam ferat communis hominum captus. Nam politicae quidem leges consilia se, non eventus punire clamant: philosophi etiam subtilius tam vitia quam virtutes locant in animo: sed Deus hoc praecepto ad concupiscentiam usque penetrat, quae voluntate occultior est: itaque vitii loco non censetur. Nec tantum apud philosophos veniam obtinuit, sed hodie acriter contendunt Papistae, in regenitis non esse peccatum. Atqui Paulus se reatum suum deprehendisse ex hoc latente morbo dicit. Unde sequitur quicumque eo laborant, minime esse excusabiles, nisi quatenus culpam Deus ignoscit. Tenenda interim est illa distinctio inter pravas libidines, quae ad consensum usque perveniunt, et concupiscentiam, quae sic corda titillat et afficit, ut in medio impulsu subsistat.—CALVIN.

sin, in order the more clearly to confirm his declaration. That certain outward actions were wrong, he and all other Pharisees knew, and were ready to admit; but that God took cognizance of the heart, and of its most secret workings, and even of its *habits* or dispositions, they were less disposed to imagine; and were, therefore, deplorably ignorant of the extent and turpitude of their depravity in his sight.

(8) *But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, &c.* This verse is not to be connected logically with the last member of the preceding one. It is rather co-ordinate with it, and is a virtual answer to the question, Is the law evil? To this question, Paul replies, in v. 7, No; on the contrary, it leads to the knowledge of sin. And then, in v. 8, he adds, it is not evil in itself, although incidentally the cause of sin in us. *Sin* in this passage, must mean the sinful disposition of the heart, or *our corrupt nature*,* because it is said to produce all kinds of concupiscence; that is, every kind of evil desire. These desires are the fruit and evidence of this corrupt state of the heart. *Taking occasion.* The word rendered *occasion* (*ἀφορμή*) is used for any thing which affords an advantage for the performance of any thing else. The word *occasion* or *opportunity*, referring properly to mere fitness of time, is not so appropriate a translation as the more general term *advantage*.

The words *by the commandment* may be connected either with the preceding or the following clause. If the former mode of construction be adopted, the passage means, 'Sin, taking advantage of the commandment, wrought in me, &c.' If the latter, 'Sin, taking advantage, by the commandment wrought in me, &c.' Our version is commonly pointed according to the former method, with a comma after *commandment*. The original, however, is in favour of the latter; and so is the context. Paul's object is to show that *by the law* sin is excited and aroused; and, in the following verses, he uses similar expressions, as "by it slew me," v. 11; "working death in me by that which is good," v. 13. The apostle, therefore, teaches, that the effect of the law operating upon our corrupt hearts, is to arouse their evil passions, and to lead to the desire of the

* Ἄμαρτία non potest esse hoc loco peccatum ipsum—sed ipsa potius prava et ad peccandum proclivis indoles, vitiosa hominis natura, vitiositas ipsa.—Korff.

very objects which the law forbids. This is a matter of universal experience. The same sentiment is, therefore, often met with in profane writers.* *Nitimur in vetitum, cupimusque negata*, 'We strive for what is forbidden, and desire what is denied,' has become a proverb.

For without the law, sin was dead.† To say that a thing is dead, is to say that it is inactive, unproductive and unobserved. All this may be said of sin prior to the operation of the law. It is comparatively inoperative and unknown until aroused and brought to light by the law. There are two effects of the law included in this declaration, the excitement of evil passions, and the discovery of them. Calvin makes the latter much the more prominent.‡ But the context, and the analogous declarations in the succeeding verses, seem to require the former to be considered as the most important. The law, then, is not evil, but it produces the conviction of sin, by teaching us what sin is, v. 7, and by making us conscious of the existence and power of this evil in our own hearts, v. 8.§

In the following verses, 9—11, we find an amplification and confirmation of the sentiment of vs. 7, 8, showing more fully the operation of the law. Paul is here describing his own experience. This is obvious, not only because he uses the first person singular throughout the passage, but because the exercises here detailed are more or less distinctly those of every true Christian; and, consequently, those of the apostle. Paul describes, in figurative language, his state before the operation of the law upon his mind, and after it began to produce its proper effect. In the former state, he was alive, and sin was dead; in the latter, sin became alive, and he died.

* See numerous examples quoted by WERTSTEIN.

† This clause is by many connected with the following verse. So Bengel, Lachmann and other editors. CALVIN renders it as a general proposition, "Without the law sin is dead." As the verb is not expressed in the original, the context alone can decide what tense ought to be preferred.

‡ Ad cognitionem praeicipue refero, acsi dictum foret: Detexit in me omnem concupiscentiam: quae dum lateret, quodammodo nulla esse videbatur.

§ Ehe dem Menschen ein νόμος entweder von aussen gegeben wird, oder in ihm selbst sich entwickelt, so ist die Sündhaftigkeit zwar in ihm, als Anlage, aber sie ist todt, d. h. sie ist ihm noch nicht zum Bewusstseyn gekommen, weil noch kein Widerstreit zwischen seiner Sündhaftigkeit und einem Gebote in ihm entstehen konnte.—USTERI Lehrbegriff Pauli, p. 25, as quoted by THOLUCK.

(9) *For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.* The word *for* connects this verse logically with the two preceding. 'The law produces conviction of sin, *for I was alive, &c.*' *Without the law*, i. e. the law being absent, as it is opposed to the expression, *when the commandment came.* This phrase describes the state of Paul, and of every Christian, before conviction of sin. He was without a proper apprehension of the nature and extent of the law, which is real ignorance of it. Of course, as the law is the rule of duty, he was unaware of the number and magnitude of his sins. In this state he was alive. *Life* is a common figure not only for activity, but happiness, including, among other ideas, those of peace and security. The meaning here is, 'I was at peace with myself; unaware of the dreadful opposition of my heart to the nature and requirements of God; and consequently unapprehensive of the danger to which, by that opposition, I was exposed.'

But when the commandment came, &c. That is, when I obtained proper views of the nature and extent of the law, then two consequences followed, sin revived, and I died. As by sin's being dead was meant that it was inactive and unobserved, so by its reviving must be intended, that it was roused from its torpor; its opposition to all that is good was excited by the clear exhibition of the law, and consequently it was no longer an unobserved or unknown evil. The sense of its existence, power, and turpitude, became clear and strong. The result of this effect of the law, Paul expresses by saying, *and I died.* That is, 'I became miserable; because aware of the evil that was in me, and of the danger to which I was exposed.' Self-satisfaction and sense of security fled before the light of the law.*

(10) *And the commandment which was unto life, I found to be unto death.* Life and death are here, as often elsewhere, opposed to each other; the one standing for happiness, the other for misery. The commandment, which was designed and adapted to lead men to happiness and the true end of their being, becomes productive of misery, by making them sensible of their corruption and exposure to condemnation. Throughout the whole of this passage it is to be remembered that Paul

* *Mors peccati vita est hominis; rursus vita peccati mors hominis.*—CALVIN.

attributes to the law, not only the knowledge of sin, but the excitement of it. It produces "the motions of sin," or sinful desires, v. 5; it works all manner of concupiscence, v. 8; it revives sin, v. 9; it seduces into sin, v. 11. In the death, therefore, which it produces, the idea of sin as well as misery is to be included; and in the life, to which it was designed to lead, the ideas of holiness and happiness are both embraced.

(11) *For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.* This verse assigns the reason of the law's being the cause of death, and hence is connected by *for* with v. 10. The proper pointing of this passage is doubtful. In our version it is commonly pointed thus, "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, &c." But for the reasons assigned on v. 8, the words *by the commandment* should be connected with the subsequent, rather than with the antecedent clause. It was by the commandment that sin deceived, &c. The law is therefore the cause of death, not directly, or in virtue of its own nature or tendency, but incidentally only. Sin makes it such; for the evil disposition of the heart avails itself even of the law to lead us into sin. The word rendered *to deceive*, means also *to seduce*; which sense is better suited to this passage. The idea, therefore, is the same as that before expressed, 'our corrupt hearts make even the law the means of causing us to sin.' *And by it slew me*, i. e. rendered me miserable, at once unholy and unhappy. 'It made me sensible that I was sunk in hopeless corruption and ruin.'

(12) *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good.* The conclusion from the forgoing exhibition of the effect of the law is, that it is not to be blamed for the evil which it incidentally produces. In v. 9, Paul uses the words *law* and *commandment* as perfectly synonymous; here they are distinguished. The law collectively, and each command separately, are alike holy, &c. The word *holy*, in the first clause, expresses general excellence, freedom from all fault; and contains all that is expressed by the three terms of the second clause, where *holy* means pure, *just* means reasonable, and *good*, benevolent, or tending to happiness. The law is in every way excellent.

(13) *Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid, &c.* With a view to prevent the possibility of its

being supposed that he thought disrespectfully of this holy law of God, the apostle again denies that it is directly the cause of sin, but shows that our own corruption is the real source of the evil. *Made death*, agreeably to what has been said above, means ‘made the cause of sin and misery.’ The law is not this cause.

But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. The grammatical construction of this part of the verse is, in the original, very doubtful, and, in our version, inaccurate. It will be observed that it consists of two clauses, each beginning with *that*; “that it might appear” (ἵνα φανῆ); and “that it might become” (ἵνα γίνηται). The latter of these clauses may depend upon the former; and the participle *working* (καρτερυαζομένην) be taken Hebraically for a verb. The sense is then plain and good. ‘The law is not the cause of death, but sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good; that thus it might become exceeding sinful.’ So Calvin,* and others. This, however, does violence to the text, as the participle cannot properly be taken here as a verb. Others, therefore, make the clauses coordinate, both depending upon the first words of the sentence. ‘The law is not the cause of death, but sin *is*, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; *that is*, that it might become exceeding sinful, &c.’ So Beza,† and others. There are several other methods by which the construction may be explained; but the general sense remains the same. *That it might appear working*, i. e. might be apprehended in its true character from its effects. Sin, therefore, and not the law, is the cause of death. And the turpitude and enormity of sin are made the more conspicuous by the law, inasmuch as it makes even that which is in itself good a source of evil.

Doctrines.

1. The law, although it cannot secure either the justification or sanctification of men, answers an essential part in the economy

* Imo peccatum, ut appareat peccatum, per bonum operatur mihi mortem; ut fiat supra modum peccans peccatum per mandatum.

† Ut appareat esse peccatum, mihi per id quod bonum est efficiens mortem, id est ut peccatum fieret admodum peccatum per illud præceptum.

of salvation. It enlightens conscience and secures its verdict against a multitude of evils, which we should not otherwise have recognized as sins. It, therefore, produces that state of mind, which is a necessary preparation for the reception of the gospel, vs. 7, 8.

2. Conviction of sin, that is, an adequate knowledge of its nature, and a sense of its power over us, is an indispensable part of evangelical religion. Before the gospel can be embraced as a means of deliverance from sin, we must feel that we are involved in corruption and misery, v. 9.

3. The law of God is a transcript of his own nature, holy, just and good. The clearer our views of its extent and excellence, the deeper will be our sense of our own unworthiness, vs. 9, 12.

4. Sin is exceeding sinful. Its turpitude is manifested by the fact, that the exhibition of holiness rouses it into opposition; and that the holy law itself is made incidentally to increase its virulence and power, v. 13.

5. Sin is very deadly. It extracts death from the means of life, and cannot exist unattended by misery, vs. 10—13.

Remarks.

1. How miserable the condition of those whose religion is all law! vs. 7—13.

2. Though the law cannot save us, it must prepare us for salvation. It should, therefore, be carefully and faithfully preached, both in its extent and authority, vs. 7, 8.

3. It must be wrong and productive of evil, so to describe the nature of evangelical religion, as to make the impression that it is a mere change in the main object of pursuit; the choice of one source of happiness in preference to another. It is a return to God, through Jesus Christ, for the purpose of being delivered from sin and devoted to his service. Its first step is the conviction that we are sinners, and, as such, dead, i. e. helpless, corrupt and miserable, vs. 7, 13.

4. Nothing is more inconsistent with true religion than self-complacency. Because the more holy we are, the clearer our views of God's law; and the clearer our views of the law, the deeper our sense of sin, and, consequently, the greater must be our humility, vs. 12, 13.

5. If our religious experience does not correspond with that of the people of God, as detailed in the scriptures, we cannot be true Christians. Unless we have felt as Paul felt, we have not the religion of Paul, and cannot expect to share his reward, vs. 7—13.

CHAP. 7: 14—25.

Analysis.

THE apostle, having exhibited the operation of the law in producing conviction of sin, comes now to show its effect on the mind of the believer. It cannot secure his sanctification. The cause of this inability is not in the evil nature of the law, which is spiritual, v. 14; but in the power of indwelling sin, "I am carnal," says the apostle, "sold under sin," v. 14. As this is not only a strong, but an ambiguous expression, Paul immediately explains his meaning. He does not intend to say that he was given up to the willing service of sin; but that he was in the condition of a slave, whose acts are not always the evidence of his inclination. His will may be one way, but his master may direct him another. So it is with the believer. He does what he hates, and omits to do what he approves, v. 15. This is a description of slavery, and a clear explanation of what is intended by the expression "sold under sin." There are two obvious inferences to be drawn from this fact. The one is, that the believer, while denying the sufficiency of the law, and maintaining the necessity of deliverance from it, bears an inward testimony to its excellence. He feels and admits that the law is good, v. 16; for it is the law which he approves, and the transgression of it he hates, as stated in the preceding verse. The second inference is, that acts thus performed, are not the true criterion of character. "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," v. 17. The acts of a slave are indeed his own acts, but not being performed with the full assent and consent of his soul, they are not fair tests of the real state of his feelings. The propriety and truth of this representation of the state of the believer, and of the influence of the law, is re-asserted and confirmed in vs. 18—20. The law presents duty clearly; the heart and conscience of the believer assent to its excellence; but what can the law do in destroying

the power of our inward corruptions? These evil principles remain, as far as the law is concerned, in full force. The authoritative declaration that a thing must not be done, does not destroy the inclination to do it.

The result, therefore, is, that notwithstanding the assent of the mind to the excellence of the law, the power of sin remains, so that when we would do good, evil is present with us, v. 21. We delight in the law after the inward man, but this does not destroy the power of sin in our members, vs. 22, 23. This inward conflict the law can never end. It only makes us sensible of our helpless and degraded condition, v. 24; and drives us to seek victory, whence alone it can be obtained, i. e. as the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, v. 25.

Commentary.

(14) *For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.* The connexion between this verse and the preceding passage seems to be this. It had been asserted in v. 5, that the law was incidentally the cause of sin. This result, however, was no reflection on the law; for it was holy, just and good, v. 12. As the fact, that the law excites sin, is consistent with its being good, so is also the fact that it cannot destroy the power of sin. The law indeed is spiritual, but we are carnal. The fault is again in us. According to this view, *for*, at the beginning of this verse, is rather a particle of transition, or, at most, of illustration; and not of confirmation or inference. Paul, according to our version, says, *We know* (οἶδαμεν); the original, however, admits of the rendering *I know indeed* (οἶδα μὲν); which is more consistent with the use of the first person singular throughout the chapter. The former reading is commonly adopted.

The law is spiritual. The word spiritual is here expressive of general excellence, and includes all that is meant by holy, just and good, in v. 12. This use of the word is easily accounted for. The Spirit of God is the source of all excellence; hence, the term *spiritual*, when applied to any thing of which he is the author, implies that it derives its nature and character from the Spirit. *Carnal*, on the other hand, is applied to any thing which derives its nature and character from the flesh. Hence, “things of the Spirit,” “fruits of the Spirit,” &c., are

good things, or good fruits, ch. 8: 5. Gal. 5: 22; and "things of the flesh," "works of the flesh," &c., are evil works. As it is the doctrine of the scriptures that men are entirely depraved, or destitute of holiness, in their natural state, the word *flesh*, which is the scriptural designation of men (as in the frequent expressions, "all flesh," "no flesh living," &c.), is used for that which is corrupt, or for human nature considered apart from divine influence, ch. 8: 1—11. John 3: 5, 6, and other passages too numerous to be cited. To be carnal, therefore, when spoken of men, means to be under the government of the flesh, or of natural principles merely; and to be spiritual is to be under the government of the Spirit. When spoken of things, to be *carnal* is to be corrupt; to be *spiritual* is to be holy or excellent. The law is thus excellent. It is an emanation from the Spirit of God; a transcript of his nature, and of course partakes of his character. But we are carnal, under the government of a corrupt nature. There is, therefore, a necessary opposition between the character and requirements of the law, and our hearts. This, and not any evil in the law, is the true reason why the law cannot effect our deliverance from sin. The evil is too deep to be destroyed by the mere objective presentation of excellence.

Sold under sin, that is, a slave to sin. As slaves were procured by purchase, a person sold to another was his slave. The expression in the text is ambiguous. It may mean that one is entirely devoted to the service of sin, as in v. 7 of the preceding chapter. In this sense it is entirely inapplicable to the Christian. Paul says expressly, the believer is in this sense no longer the servant (Gr. slave) of sin, but the servant of righteousness. The phrase in question, however, may also mean, that one is subject to a power which, of himself, he cannot resist; against which he may and does struggle, and from which he desires to be free; but which, notwithstanding all his efforts, still asserts its authority. This is a state of bondage. It is in this sense that Paul says he was sold under sin. This appears clearly from the following verses, which are explanatory of this clause.

(15) *For that which I do, I allow not, &c.* This is an explanation and confirmation of the preceding declaration. 'I am

sold under sin, *for* that which I do, I allow not, &c.’ The original word rendered *I allow*, properly signifies *I know*, and as it is used in different senses in the scriptures, its meaning in this case is a matter of doubt. Retaining its ordinary sense, the word may be used here popularly, as in the common phrase, ‘I know not what I do,’ expressive of the absence of a calm and deliberate purpose, and of the violence of the impulse under which one acts.* Or the meaning may be that what is done, is done thoughtlessly. As, however, the word often expresses the idea of approbation, the interpretation best suited to the context is, ‘What I do, that I approve not;’ compare Ps. 1: 6, “The Lord knoweth (i. e. approves) the way of the righteous;” Ps. 36: 10. 1 Cor. 8: 3, &c.

For what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. This is a further description of this state of bondage. As the expressions *what I would* and *what I hate* are in antithesis, the former must mean what I love or delight in. This use of the Greek word (ἡδέω) is accommodated to the corresponding Hebrew term, and occurs several times in the New Testament. Matt. 27: 43, “Let him deliver him, if he will have him (εἰ ἡδέλῃ αὐτόν), i. e. if he delights in him;”† Matt. 9: 13. 12: 7. Heb. 10: 5, 8, and Ps. 21: 9. 39: 7, in the Septuagint. The word *will*, therefore, does not express so much a mere determination of the mind, as a state of the feelings and judgment. ‘What I love and approve, that I omit; what I hate and disapprove, that I do.’ This may not be metaphysical, though it is perfect correct language. It is the language of common life, which, as it proceeds from the common consciousness of men, is often a better indication of what that consciousness teaches, than the language of the schools. We do not find the bible making that broad distinction between the various faculties of the soul, as though they were so many different agents, which is so common with the philosophers. The language of the apostle, in this passage, expresses a fact of consciousness, with which every Christian is familiar. Whether the conflict here described is that which, in a greater or less degree, exists in every man, be-

* Inscius et invitus facio, quae facio.—KOPPE.

Non cum pleno mentis proposito, &c.—MORUS.

† Compare Ps. 22: 9, וַיַּרְא יְהוָה יְצִיחוֹ. LXX. ὄτι ἡδέλῃ αὐτόν. “Seeing he delighted in him.”

tween the natural authoritative sense of right and wrong, and his corrupt inclinations; or whether it is peculiar to the Christian, must be decided by considerations drawn from the whole description, and from the connexion of this passage with the preceding and succeeding portions of the apostle's discourse. It is enough to remark here, that every Christian can adopt the language of this verse. Pride, coldness, slothfulness and other feelings which he disapproves and hates, are, day by day, re-asserting their power over him. He struggles against their influence, groans beneath their bondage, longs to be filled with meekness, humility, and all other fruits of the love of God, but finds he can neither of himself, nor by the aid of the law, effect his freedom from what he hates, or the full performance of what he desires and approves. Every evening witnesses his penitent confession of his degrading bondage, his sense of utter helplessness, and his longing desire for aid from above. He is a slave looking and longing for liberty.

Two consequences flow from this representation of the experience of the Christian. First, the fault is felt and acknowledged to be his own; the law is not to be blamed, v. 16. Second, this state of feeling is consistent with his being a Christian, v. 17.

(16) *If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.* Paul here asserts that his acting contrary to the law, was no evidence that he thought the law evil; for what he did, he disapproved. But to disapprove and condemn what the law forbids, is to assent to the excellence of the law. There is a constant feeling of self-disapprobation, and a sense of the excellence of the law in the Christian's mind. He is, therefore, never disposed to blame the extent or severity of the law, but admits the fault to be in himself. *I consent to,* literally, I speak with, agree with, concede to.

(17) *Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* Now then, that is, under these circumstances, or, this being the case. Or the meaning may be *but now*, i. e. since I became a Christian. The former explanation is to be preferred on account of the connexion of this verse with v. 15, from which this passage is an inference. 'If the case be so, that I am sold under sin and am its unwilling slave; if I do what I disapprove, and fail to accomplish what I love; it is

clear that it is not properly and fully I that do it, my real self;* my better feelings or renovated nature is opposed to what the law forbids.' This is not said as an exculpation, but to exhibit the extent and power of indwelling sin, which it is beyond our own power, and beyond the power of the law to eradicate or effectually control. This feeling of helplessness is not only consistent with a sense and acknowledgement of accountability, but is always found united with genuine self-condemnation and penitence. There are, in general, few stronger indications of ignorance of the power and evil of sin, than the confident assertion of our ability to resist and subdue it. Paul groaned beneath its bondage, as if held in the loathsome embrace of a "body of death." The apostle's object, therefore, is not to apologize for sin, but to show that the experience detailed in v. 15, is consistent with his being a Christian. 'If it is true that I really approve and love the law, and desire to be conformed to it, I am no longer the willing slave of sin; to the depth and power of the original evil is to be attributed the fact that I am not entirely delivered from its influence.' This is obviously connected with the main object of the whole passage. For if sin remains and exerts its power, notwithstanding our disapprobation, and in despite of all our efforts, it is clear that we must look for deliverance to something out of ourselves, and that the mere preceptive power of the law cannot remove the evil.

(18, 19, 20) These verses contain an amplification and confirmation of the sentiment of the preceding verses. They reassert the existence, and explain the nature of the inward struggle of which the apostle had been speaking. 'I am unable to come up to the requirements of the law, not because they are unreasonable, but because I am corrupt; there is no good in me. I can approve and delight in the exhibitions of holiness made by the law, but full conformity to its demands is more than I can attain. It is not I, therefore, my real and lasting self, but this intrusive tyrant dwelling within me, that disobeys the law.' This strong and expressive language, though susceptible of a literal interpretation, which would make it teach

* Ego quidem in utroque, sed magis ego in eo, quod approbavam, quam in eo quod in me improbavam.—*AUGUSTINE, Confess. Lib. VIII. ch. 5.*

not only error but nonsense, is still perfectly perspicuous and correct, because accurately descriptive of the common feelings of men. Paul frequently employs similar modes of expression. When speaking of his apostolic labours, he says, "Yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me," 1 Cor. 15: 10. And in Gal. 2: 20, he says, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." As no one supposes that the labours and life here spoken of were not the labours and life of the apostle, or that they did not constitute and express his moral character; so no Christian supposes that the greatness and power of his sin frees him from its responsibility, even when he expresses his helpless misery by saying, with the apostle, "It is not I, but sin that dwelleth in me."

(18) *For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing, &c.* Paul is here explaining how it is that there is such a contradiction between his better principles and his conduct, as just described. The reason is, that in himself, he was entirely depraved, "In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." As Paul is here speaking of himself, he limits the declaration that there was no good in him. In its full sense, as he was a renewed man, this could not be true; he therefore adds, "in my flesh." Agreeably to the explanation given above, v. 14, these words evidently mean, 'in my nature considered apart from divine influence,' i. e. 'in me viewed independently of the effects produced by the Spirit of God.' This is Paul's constant use of the word *flesh*. As he ascribes all excellence in man to the Holy Spirit, in men, when destitute of that Spirit, there is "no good thing." To be "in the flesh," is to be unrenewed, and under the government of our own depraved nature; to be "in the Spirit," is to be under the guidance of the Holy Ghost; ch. 8: 8, 9. So too, in scriptural language, a *natural* man is a depraved man; and a *spiritual* man is one that is renewed; 1 Cor. 2: 14, 15. It need hardly be remarked that *in the flesh* cannot here mean in the body. Paul does not mean to say that in his body there was no good thing, as though the body were the seat of sin in man, and that exclusively. He constantly uses the phrase *works of the flesh*, in reference to sins which have no connexion with the body, as envy, pride, seditions, heresies, &c., Gal. 5: 19, 20.

For to will is present with me, but to perform that which

is good I find not. To will indeed.* As *will* is here opposed to *performance*, it must have a somewhat different sense from that which it has in v. 15, where it is opposed to the word *to hate*. There it means to approve or love; here it means to purpose or desire. 'I have the purpose or desire to obey the law, but the performance I find not.' *I find not*, i. e. I do not find to be present; I cannot attain.

(19) *For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do.* This is a repetition, nearly in the same words, of v. 15. Paul re-asserts that he was unable to act up to his purpose and desires. For example, he doubtless desired to love God with all his heart and at all times; but how constantly was his love colder, and less operative than the law demands. This verse is, therefore, but an amplification of the last clause of v. 18. *I would* (θέλω), means either *I approve or love*, as in v. 15; or *I purpose*, as in v. 18. The numerous passages† quoted by commentators in illustration of this and the preceding verses, though they may serve to throw light upon the language, are expressive of feelings very different from those of the apostle. When an impenitent man says 'He is

* The words οὐχ εὐρίσκω are omitted in MSS. A. C. 47, 67, in the Coptic version, and by some few of the fathers. These authorities read εὐὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι εὐὸ καλόν, οὐ. This reading is adopted by Mill, Griesbach, and Lachmann. The common text is retained by most editors on the authority of the great majority of MSS. versions and fathers.

† The following are a few examples of this kind selected from the multitude collected by Grotius and Wetstein.

Quid est hoc, Lucili, quod nos alio tendentes alio trahit, et eo, unde recedere cupimus, repellit? Quid colluctatur cum animo nostro, nec permittit nobis quidquam semel velle? Fluctuamus inter varia concilia, nihil libere volumus, nihil absolute, nihil semper.—SENECA, Ep. 25.

Sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque cupido, mens aliud suadet. Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.—OVID, Metam. VII. 19.

Vos testor, omnes coelites, hoc quod volo, me nolle.—SENECA, Hippol. V. 604.

Ἐρεῖ γὰρ ὁ ἁμαρτάνων οὐ θέλει ἁμαρτάνειν, ἀλλὰ κατορθῶσαι, ὅηλον ὄντι, ὃ μὲν θέλει, οὐ ποιεῖ, καὶ ὃ μὴ θέλει, ποιεῖ.—ARRIAN'S Epict. 2. 26. "Since the sinner does not wish to err, but to act correctly, it is plain that what he wills he does not, and what he wills not he does."

Μανθάνω μὲν, εἴα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά,

Θυμὸς δὲ χρείστων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων.—EURIPIDES, Medea, V. 1077.

"I know indeed that what I am about to do is evil;

But passion is too strong for my purposes."

sorry for his sins,' he may express the real state of his feelings; and yet the import of this language is very different from what it is in the mouth of a man truly contrite. The word *sorrow* expresses a multitude of very different feelings. Thus, also, when wicked men say they approve the good while they pursue the wrong, their approbation is something very different from Paul's approbation of the law of God. And when Seneca calls the gods to witness, 'that what he wills, he does not will,' he too expresses something far short of what the language of the apostle conveys. This must be so, if there is any such thing as experimental or evangelical religion; that is, if there is any difference between the sorrow for sin and desire of good in the mind of a true Christian, and in the unrenewed and willing votaries of sin in whom conscience is not entirely obliterated.

(20) *Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* The same conclusion from the same premises as in v. 17. 'The things which I do, when contrary to the characteristic desires and purposes of my heart, are to be considered as the acts of a slave. They are indeed my own acts, but not being performed with the full and joyful purpose of the heart, are not to be regarded as a fair criterion of character.'

(21) *I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.* This verse has been subjected to a greater variety of interpretations than any other in the chapter, or perhaps in the whole epistle. The construction in the original is doubtful; and besides this difficulty, there is no little uncertainty as to the sense in which the word *law* is to be here taken. The question is, whether Paul means the law of God, of which he has been speaking throughout the chapter, or whether he uses the word in a new sense, for a rule, course, or law of action. Our translators have assumed the latter. If the former sense of the word be preferred, the passage may be thus interpreted. 'I find, therefore, that to me wishing to do good, evil (the law as the cause of evil) is present with me.' See Koppe. This is very unnatural. Or thus, 'I find, therefore, that to me wishing to act according to the law, i. e. to do good, evil is present with me.'* The considerations, however, in favour of

* KNAPP'S Prologus in locum, Rom. 7: 21, in his Scripta Varii Argumenti. The several interpretations of the passage are given and discussed by this writer.

the second explanation of the word *law* appear to be decisive.

1. The other interpretation does not afford a sense suited to the context, as appears from Paul's own explanation of his meaning in the following verses. 'I find,' he says, 'this law, that while wishing to do good, I do evil, v. 21; that is, I find that while I delight in the law of God, after the inward man, there is another law in my members which causes me to sin,' vs. 22, 23. Here it is evident, that the apostle means to explain what he intended by saying in v. 21, that he found or experienced a law which caused him to go counter to his better judgment and desires. 2. Having used the word *law* by itself for the divine law throughout the chapter, he, for the first time, in v. 22, calls it "the law of God," to mark the distinction between the law intended in v. 21, and that intended in v. 22. 3. This sense of the word is not unusual, it occurs repeatedly in the immediately succeeding verses.

The meaning of the verse is, 'I find, therefore, this law, that to me wishing to do good, evil is present.*' This passage thus expresses the result at which the apostle had arrived. There was this inward conflict in his mind between good and evil which the law could not terminate. He found, that while wishing to do good, he was still subject to evil, and from this subjection nothing but the grace of God could deliver him. This is more fully explained in the following verses.

(22) *For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, &c.* In the preceding verse Paul had said, "I would do good;" the same desire after conformity to the requisitions of God is here expressed with more distinctness. *I delight in the law* is a stronger expression than *I consent to it*, v. 16. As *I*, in the language of the apostle, includes, as it were, two persons, the new and the old man, the flesh and the spirit, it is necessary to limit the proposition whether he says, "In me there is no good thing," or "I delight in the law of God." The former was true only *as to his flesh*; the latter only *as to his inward man*.

* There is here assumed a trajection of the particle *ἔτι*, which should stand before the second, instead of before the third clause of the sentence. BEZA thus renders the verse, *Comperio igitur volenti mihi facere bonum hanc legem esse impositam, quod mihi malum adjaceat.* CALVIN'S explanation is, *Fideles dum ad bonum nituntur, quandam in se tyrannicam legem reperire, quia eorum medullis et ossibus infixata est vitiositas legi Dei adversa et repugnans.*

That this phrase is here expressive of real complacency and delight in the divine excellence as exhibited in the law, seems evident from the following reasons. 1. Because the delight is restricted to the *inward man*, and not spoken of the soul generally. As the term *inward man* meant at first the soul in opposition to the body, and as the former is superior to the latter, it naturally became expressive of excellence, and when opposed to something in the soul, indicates its renewed or better feelings. Compare Eph. 3: 16, "Strengthened with might, by his Spirit, in the inner man;" i. e. their holy affections being confirmed. 1 Peter 3: 4, "Hidden man of the heart." 2 Cor. 4: 10, "The inward man is renewed day by day." In all these and similar passages, the phrase includes the idea of excellence. When opposed to the body, it is the soul; but when opposed to something in the mind, as in this passage to the "law in the members," it means the better feelings or principles. 2. When the bible makes this opposition between a good and evil principle in man, it uniformly attributes the former to the Holy Spirit, especially when any one is spoken of as hating evil and rejoicing in God. 3. A comparison of the terms "inward man," "law of the mind," "the new man," "the Spirit," as opposed to "the law in the members," "the old man," "the flesh," shows that the former are all employed to designate holy feelings, or the soul considered as renewed; and the latter the reverse. This is peculiarly obvious from what is said in v. 25, where "the flesh" is opposed to "the law of the mind." 4. What is here said of the "inward man" and "the law in the members," is elsewhere said of "the Spirit" and "the flesh." The conflict which is described here, is described also in ch. 8: 13. Gal. 5: 17. Col. 3: 9, 10; precisely the same things are predicated of the evil principle in all these cases, especially in the passage in Galatians. If, therefore, the contest between "the flesh and Spirit" is peculiar to the renewed man, so is also that of which Paul speaks in this chapter.

(23) *But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, &c.* Another, i. e. other than the "inward man" or "law of the mind." With the one he delighted in the law of God, with the other he was opposed to it. These principles war against each other; exactly as in Gal. 5: 17, the flesh and spirit are represented as being contrary the

one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. This law is said to be *in my members*, i. e. in me; compare ch. 6: 13, 19. As he had spoken of the good principle as “the inward man,” it was natural to speak of the evil principle as being *outward*. *In my members*, therefore, is equivalent to “in my flesh,” in my unsanctified nature. What in vs. 17, 20 is ascribed to ‘indwelling sin,’ is here attributed to ‘the law in the members.’ The latter is, therefore, but a figurative expression of the same idea. This evil is called a law from its controlling influence; it regulates the conduct as though it had a right to do so. The *law of the mind* is evidently but another expression for the “inward man.” This form of expression was adopted from its natural opposition to the phrase “law in the members.”*

Bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. The law in my members brings me into captivity to the law of sin; that is, to itself. The form of expression is rather unusual, although the sense appears sufficiently plain from the context. There does not seem to be any adequate reason for making a distinction between “the law in the members” and “the law of sin;” the latter designation is rather explanatory of the former. Indwelling sin wars against the renewed principle, and brings the soul into captivity to itself. This, therefore, is but another form of expressing the idea that he was sold under sin, was its unwilling and unhappy captive, constantly resisting its power and longing for deliverance from its tyranny. Hence the exclamation,

(24) *O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death.* The expression *body of this death* has been very variously explained. It may be equivalent to *this body of death*, by a very common Hebraism, according to which the pronoun, which properly belongs to the governing word, is attached to the word governed; as *idols of his silver, mountain of his holiness, for his idols of silver,*

* Interior homo non anima simpliciter dicitur, sed spiritualis ejus pars, quæ a Deo regenerata est: *Membrorum* vocabulum residuam alteram partem significat. Nam ut anima est pars excellentior hominis, corpus inferior; ita spiritus superior est carne. Hac ergo ratione, quia spiritus locum animæ tenet in homine; caro autem, id est corrupta et vitata anima, corporis; ille interioris hominis, hæc membrorum nomen obtinet.—CALVIN.

&c. "This body of death" may then mean, this body which is destined or obnoxious to death, i. e. this mortal body. But it is clearly foreign from the spirit of this passage to consider the apostle as here wishing for deliverance from the body. He had been speaking of the burden of sin, and it is from this burden that he longs to be delivered. *Body of death* is, therefore, better understood as 'body which causes death;' and *body* may then be taken for *flesh*, i. e. corrupt nature, which, however, is contrary to usage; or it may be taken metaphorically for sin considered as a body. This is the more natural, as Paul had just spoken of "members" and of sin as something "outward," in contrast to the "inward man." The meaning then is 'Who will deliver me from this body, i. e. mass of death, this weight which tends to death.' This strong expression of the hatefulness of sin, and of earnest desire to be delivered from it, seems to be clearly descriptive of the exercises of a renewed mind.

(25) The burden of sin being the great evil under which the apostle and all other believers labour, from which no efficacy of the law, and no efforts of their own can deliver them, their case would be entirely hopeless but for help from on high. "Sin shall not have dominion over you," is the language of the grace of God in the gospel. The conflict which the believer sustains is not to result in the victory of sin, but in the triumph of grace. In view of this certain and glorious result, Paul exclaims, *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*. This is evidently the expression of a strong and sudden emotion of gratitude. As, however, his object is to illustrate the operation of the law, it would be foreign to his purpose to expatiate on a deliverance effected by a different power; he, therefore, does not follow up the idea suggested by this exclamation, but immediately returns to the point in hand.

So then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin. *Mind* and *flesh* are here opposed. As the latter, according to the constant usage of the apostle, signifies that which is corrupt in man, his unsanctified nature; the former must mean here, as in v. 23, that nature as renewed. In every believer, and in no one else, there are these two principles, grace and sin, the flesh and spirit, the law in the members and the law in the mind; these are contrary the one to the other. '*I myself*,' says the apostle, or 'I one and the same

man, feel both of those principles within me. With the one, I serve the law of God; with the other, the law of sin, that is, sin itself, which, as a law in my members, essays to control my conduct.' This, in few words, is the sum of what the apostle has said from v. 14. Such is the state in which the law leaves the believer; such the effect of the mere objective and preceptive presentation of truth. The law excites in the unrenewed mind opposition and hatred; in the pious mind complacency and delight; but in neither case can it break the power of sin, or introduce the soul into the true liberty of the children of God.

Having gone through the exposition of this passage, it is time to pause and ask, Of whom has Paul been speaking, of a renewed or unrenewed man? Few questions of this kind have been more frequently canvassed, or more intimately associated with the doctrinal views of different classes of theologians. The history of the interpretation of the latter part of this chapter, is one of the most interesting sections of the doctrinal history of the church. A brief outline of this history may be found in the Dissertation of Knapp above referred to, and somewhat more extended in the commentary of Tholuck. It appears that during the first three centuries, the fathers were generally agreed in considering the passage as descriptive of the experience of one yet under the law. Even Augustine at first concurred in the correctness of this view. But as a deeper insight into his own heart, and a more thorough investigation of the scriptures, led to the modification of his opinions on so many other points, they produced a change on this subject also. This general alteration of his doctrinal views cannot be attributed to his controversy with Pelagius, because it took place long before that controversy commenced. It is to be ascribed to his religious experience, and his study of the word of God.

The writers of the middle ages, in general, agreed with the later views of Augustine on this as on other subjects. At the time of the Reformation, the original diversity of opinion on this point, and on all others connected with it, soon became manifested. Erasmus, Socinus, and others, revived the opinion of the Greek fathers; while Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, &c. adhered to the opposite interpretation. At a later period, when the controversy with the Remonstrants occurred, it com-

menced with a discussion of the interpretation of this chapter. The first writings of Arminius, in which he broached his peculiar opinions, were lectures on this passage. All his associates and successors, as Grotius, Episcopius, Limborch, &c., adopted the same view of the subject. As a general rule, Arminian writers have been found on one side of this question, and Calvinistic authors on the other. This is indeed the natural result of their different views of the scriptural doctrine of the natural state of man. Most of the former class, going much farther than Arminius himself ever went, either denying that the corruption consequent on the fall is such as to destroy the power of men to conform themselves to the law of God, or maintaining that this power, if lost, is restored by those operations of the Holy Spirit which are common to all, found no difficulty in considering the expressions, "I consent to" and "delight in the law of God after the inward man," as the language of a person yet in his natural state. On the other hand, those who held the doctrine of total depravity, and of the consequent inability of sinners, and who rejected the doctrine of "common grace," could not reconcile with these opinions the strong language here used by the apostle.

Although this has been the general course of opinion on this subject, some of the most evangelical men, especially on the continent of Europe, have agreed with Erasmus in this view of this passage. This was the case with Francke, Arnold, Bengel, &c., of a previous age; and with Knapp, Flatt, Tholuck, &c., of our own day; not to mention the distinguished writers of England and our own country,* who have adopted the same view. There is nothing, therefore, in this opinion, which implies the denial or disregard of any of the fundamental principles of evangelical religion. Still, that the view of the passage which so long prevailed in the church, and which has been generally adopted by evangelical men, is the correct one, seems evident from the following considerations.

I. The *onus probandi* is certainly on the other side. When the apostle uses not only the first person, but the present tense, and says, "I consent to the law that it is good," "I delight in the law of God," "I see another law in my members warring

* See particularly PROF. STUART'S Commentary and Excursus on this chapter.

against the law of my mind," &c. &c., those who deny that he means himself, even though he says *I myself*, or refuse to acknowledge that this language expresses his feelings while writing, are surely bound to let the contrary very clearly be seen. Appearances are certainly against them. It should be remembered that Paul uses this language, not once or twice, but uniformly through the whole passage, and that too with an ardour of feeling indicative of language coming directly from the heart, and expressing its most joyful or painful experience. This is a consideration which cannot be argumentatively exhibited, but it must impress every attentive and susceptible reader. To suppose that the apostle is personating another, either, as Grotius* supposes, the Jew first before the giving of the law, and then after it; or as Erasmus thinks a Gentile without the law, as opposed to a Jew under it; or as is more commonly supposed, an ordinary individual under the influence of a knowledge of the law; is to suppose him to do what he does nowhere else in any of his writings, and what is entirely foreign to his whole spirit and manner. Instead of thus sinking himself in another, he can hardly prevent his own individual feelings from mingling with, and moulding the very statement of objections to his own reasoning; see ch. 3: 3—8. One great difficulty in explaining his epistles arises from this very source. It is hard to tell at times what is his language, and what that of an objector. If any one will examine the passages in which Paul is supposed to mean another, when he uses the first person, he will see how far short they come of affording any parallel to the case supposed in this chapter.† In many of them he undoubtedly means himself, as in 1 Cor. 3: 5, &c. 4: 3, &c.; in others the language is, in one sense, expressive of the apostle's real sentiments, and is only perverted by the objector, as in 1 Cor. 6: 12; while in others the personation of another is only for a single sentence. Nothing analogous to this passage is to be found in all his writings, if indeed he is not here pouring out the feelings of his own heart.

II. There is no necessity for denying that Paul here speaks

* *Ego*, id est, genus Israeliticum cum vixit ante legem—in Aegypto scilicet. See his comment on v. 9.

† The passages referred to by Knapp are 1 Cor. 3: 5, &c. 4: 3, &c. 6: 12. 10: 29, 30. 13: 11, 12. 14: 14, 15. Gal. 2: 18—21.

of himself, and describes the exercises of a renewed man. There is not an expression from beginning to the end of this section, which the holiest man may not and must not adopt. This has been shown in the commentary. The strongest declarations, as, for example, "I am carnal, and sold under sin," admit, indeed, by themselves, of an interpretation inconsistent with even ordinary morality; but, as explained by the apostle, and limited by the context, they express nothing more than every believer experiences. What Christian does not feel, in the very centre of his soul, that he is carnal! Alas, how different is he from the spirits of the just made perfect! How cheerfully does he recognise his obligation to love God with all the heart, and yet how constantly does the tendency to self and the world, the law in his members, war against the purer and better law of his mind, and bring him into subjection to sin! If, indeed, it were true, as has been asserted, that the person here described "*succumbs to sin* IN EVERY INSTANCE *of contest*,"* the description would be inapplicable not to the Christian only, but to any other than the most immoral of men. It is rare indeed, even in the natural conflict between reason and passion, or conscience and corrupt inclination, that the better principle does not succeed, not once merely, but often. There is, however, nothing approaching even to the implication of such a sentiment in the whole passage. Paul merely asserts that the believer is, and ever remains in this life, imperfectly sanctified; that sin continues to dwell within him; that he never comes up to the full requisitions of the law, however anxiously he may desire it. Often as he subdues one spiritual foe, another rises in a different form; so that he cannot do the things that he would; that is, cannot be perfectly conformed in heart and life to the image of God.

It must have been in a moment of forgetfulness, that such a man as Tholuck could quote with approbation the assertion of Dr. A. Clarke; "This opinion has most pitifully and shamefully, not only lowered the standard of Christianity, but destroyed its influence and disgraced its character." What lamentable blindness to notorious facts does such language evince! From the days of Job and David to the present hour,

* PROF. STUART, p. 558.

the holiest men have been the most ready to acknowledge and deplore the existence and power of indwelling sin. Without appealing to individual illustrations of the truth of this remark, look at masses of men, at Augustinians and Pelagians, Calvinists and Remonstrants; in all ages the strictest doctrines and the sternest morals have been found united. It is not those who have most exalted human ability, that have most advantageously exhibited the fruits of this power. It has been rather those who, with the lowest views of themselves and the highest of the efficacy of the grace of God, have been able to adopt the language of Paul, "What I would, that do I not;" and who, looking away from themselves to him through whom they can do all things, have shown the divine strength manifested in their weakness.

III. While there is nothing in the sentiments of this passage which a true Christian may not adopt, there is much which cannot be asserted by any unrenewed man. As far as this point is concerned, it depends, of course, on the correct interpretation of the several expressions employed by the apostle.

1. What is the true meaning of the phrases "inward man" and "law of the mind," when opposed to "the flesh" and "the law in the members?" The sense of these expressions is to be determined by their use in other passages, or if they do not elsewhere occur, by the meaning attached to those which are obviously substituted for them. As from the similarity of the passages, it can hardly be questioned, that what Paul here calls "the inward man" and "law of the mind," he, in Gal. 5: 17 and elsewhere, calls "the Spirit;" it is plain that he intends, by these terms, to designate the soul considered as renewed, in opposition to the "flesh," or the soul considered as destitute of divine influence. 2. It is not in accordance with the scriptural representation of the wicked, to describe them as consenting to the law of God, as hating sin and struggling against it, groaning under it as a tyrant's yoke, as delighting in the law of God, i. e. in holiness; doing all this, not as men, but as men viewed in a particular aspect, as to the inward or new man. This is not the scriptural representation of the natural man,* who does

* The passages which are sometimes referred to, as justifying the application of the language of the apostle to unrenewed men, are very unsatisfactory. When God says of the wicked, Is. 58: 2, "Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know

not receive the things of the Spirit of God, and cannot know them, 1 Cor. 2: 14. On the contrary, the carnal mind is enmity against God and his law. They, therefore, who are in the flesh, that is, who have this carnal mind, hate and oppose the law, Rom. 8: 7, 8. The expressions here used by the apostle, are such as, throughout the scriptures, are used to describe the exercises of the pious, "whose delight is in the law of the Lord," Ps. 1: 2. 3. Not only do these particular expressions show that the speaker is a true Christian, but the whole conflict here described is such as is peculiar to the sincere believer. There is, indeed, in the natural man, something very analogous to this, when his conscience is enlightened, and his better feelings come into collision with the strong inclination to evil which dwells in his mind. But this struggle is very far below that which the apostle here describes. The true nature of this conflict seems to be ascertained beyond dispute, by the parallel passage in Gal. 5: 17, already referred to. It cannot be denied, that to possess the Spirit is, in scriptural language, a characteristic mark of a true Christian. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," Rom. 8: 9. Those, therefore, who have that Spirit, are Christians. This being the case, it will not be doubted that the passage in Galatians, in which the spirit is represented as warring against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit, is descriptive of the experience of the true believer. But the conflict there described is identical with that of which the same apostle speaks in this chapter. This is evident, not merely from the fact that one of the antagonist principles is, in both cases, called *flesh*, but because the description is nearly in the same words. In consequence of the opposition of the flesh and spirit, Paul tells the Galatians they cannot do the things that they would; and he says here of himself, that in consequence of the opposition between the flesh and the law of his mind, what he would he did not. The same conflict and the same bondage are described in each case; if the one be descriptive of the exercises of a true Christian, the other must be so also.

my ways, &c.," the meaning is, that while they indulge in sin, they make much ado about religion, are very zealous for its forms or doctrines, &c.; see also Mark 6: 20. John 5: 35.

IV. The context, or the connexion of this passage with the preceding and succeeding chapters, is in favour of the common interpretation. The contrary is, indeed, strongly asserted by those who take the opposite view of the passage. Tholuck seems to admit that, were it not for the context, the whole of the latter part of the chapter might well be understood of the believer; see his remarks on v. 14. And Prof. Stuart says, "I repeat the remark, that the question is not, whether what is here said *might* be applied to Christians; but whether, from the tenor of the context, it appears to have been the intention of the writer that it *should be* so applied. This principle cannot fail to settle the question concerning such an application," p. 558. It may be proper to pause to remark, that such statements involve a renunciation of the arguments derived from the inapplicability to the real Christian, of what is here said. Every thing is here admitted to be in itself inapplicable to him, did but the context allow it to be so applied. Yet every one is aware that no argument is more frequently and strongly urged against the common interpretation, than that the description here given is, in its very nature, unsuitable to Christian experience. On the same page which contains the passage just quoted, Prof. Stuart says, "As, however, there is no denying the truth of these and the like declarations,* and no receding from them, nor explaining them away as meaning less than *habitual victory* over sin; so it follows that when vs. 14—25 are applied to Christian experience, they are wrongly applied. The person represented in these verses, *succumbs to sin in EVERY INSTANCE* of contest." This is certainly an argument against applying the passage in question to the Christian, founded on the assumption that it is, from its nature, entirely inapplicable. And the argument is perfectly conclusive, if the meaning of the passage be what is here stated. But it is believed that this is very far from being its true meaning, as shown above. This argument, however, it appears, is not insisted upon, every thing is made to depend upon the context.

Many distinguished commentators, as Alfonso Turretin, Knapp, Tholuck, Flatt, Stuart, consider this chapter, from v. 7 to the end, as a commentary upon v. 5, in which verse the state of

* 'He who loveth Christ, keepeth his commandments,' &c.

those who are in "the flesh" is spoken of; and the first part of the next chapter as a commentary on v. 6, which speaks of those who are no longer under the law. Accordingly, verses 7—25 are descriptive of the exercises of a man yet under the law; and ch. 8: 1—17 of those of a man under the gospel, or of a believer. It is said that the two passages are in direct antithesis; the one describes the state of a captive to sin, ch. 7: 23, and the other the state of one who is delivered from sin, ch. 8: 2. This is certainly ingenious and plausible, but is founded on a twofold misapprehension; first, as to the nature of this captivity to sin, or the real meaning of the former passage (ch. 7: 14—25); and, secondly, as to the correct interpretation of the latter passage, or ch. 8: 1—17. If ch. 7: 14—25 really describes such a captivity as these authors suppose, in which the individual spoken of 'succumbs to sin in every instance,' there is, of course, an end of the question, and that too without any appeal to the context for support. But, on the other hand, if it describes no such state; but, as Tholuck and Prof. Stuart admit, contains nothing which *might* not be said of the Christian, the whole force of the argument is gone; verses 7—25 are no longer necessarily a comment on v. 5; nor ch. 8: 1—17 on v. 6. The antithesis, of course, ceases, if the interpretation, to which it owes its existence, be abandoned. The matter, after all, therefore, is made to depend on the correct exposition of the passage, vs. 14—25, itself. A particular interpretation cannot first be assumed, in order to make out the antithesis; and then the antithesis be assumed to justify the interpretation. This would be reasoning in a circle. In the second place, this view of the context is founded, as is believed, on an erroneous exegesis of ch. 8: 1—17. The first part of that chapter is not so intimately connected with the latter part of this, nor is it designed to show that the Christian is delivered from "the law of sin and death" *in his members*. For the grounds of this statement, the reader is referred to the commentary on the passage in question. Even if the reverse were the fact, still, unless it can be previously shown that vs. 14—25 of this chapter describe the state of a man under the law, there is no ground for the assumption of such an antithesis between the two passages, as is supposed in the view of the context stated above. Both passages might describe the same individual under different

aspects; the one exhibiting the operation of the law, and the other that of the gospel on the renewed mind. But if the exposition given below of ch. 8: 1—17 is correct, there is not a shadow of foundation for the argument derived from the context against the common interpretation of ch. 7: 14—25.

The whole tenor of the apostle's argument, from the beginning of the epistle to the close of this chapter, is not only consistent with the common interpretation, but seems absolutely to demand it. His great object in the first eight chapters, is to show that the whole work of the sinner's salvation, his justification and sanctification, are not of the law but of **grace**; that legal obedience can never secure the one, nor legal efforts the other. Accordingly, in the first five chapters, he shows that we are justified by faith, without the works of the law; in the sixth, that this doctrine of gratuitous justification, instead of leading to licentiousness, presents the only certain and effectual means of sanctification. In the beginning of the seventh chapter, he shows that the believer is really thus free from the law, and is now under **grace**; and that while under the law he brought forth fruit unto sin, but being under grace, he now brings forth fruit unto God. The question here arises, why is the holy, just and good law thus impotent? Is it because it is evil? Far from it; the reason lies in our own corruption. Then, to show how **this** is, and why the objective and authoritative exhibition of truth cannot sanctify, the apostle proceeds to show how it **actually** operates on the depraved mind. In the first place, it enlightens conscience, and, in the second, it rouses the opposition of the corrupt heart. These are the two elements of conviction of **sin**; a knowledge of its nature, and a sense of its power over ourselves. Hence the feeling of self-condemnation, of helplessness and misery. Thus the law slays. This is one portion of its effect, but not the whole; for even after the heart is renewed, as it is but imperfectly sanctified, the law is still unable to promote holiness. The reason here again is not that the law is evil, but that we are carnal, v. 14. Indwelling sin, as the apostle calls it, is the cause why the law cannot effect the sanctification even of the believer. It presents indeed the form of beauty, and the soul delights in it after the inward man; but the corrupt affections, which turn to self and the world, are still there; these the law cannot destroy. But though the law

cannot do this, it shall eventually be done. Thanks to God, through Jesus Christ, our case is not hopeless.

The apostle's object would have been but half attained, had he not thus exhibited the effect of the law upon the believer's mind, and demonstrated that a sense of legal bondage was not necessary to the Christian, and could not secure his sanctification. Having done this, his object is accomplished. The eighth chapter, therefore, is not so intimately connected with the seventh. It does not commence with an inference from the discussion in vs. 7—25, but from the whole preceding exhibition. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Why? Because they are sanctified? No; but because they are not under the law. This is the main point from first to last. They are delivered from that law, which, however good in itself, can only produce sin and death, v. 2. In view of this insufficiency of the law, God, having sent his Son as a sacrifice for sin, has delivered them from it, by condemning sin in him, and has thus secured the justification of believers. Through him they satisfy the demands of the law, and their salvation is rendered certain. This, however, implies that they do not live after the flesh, but after the Spirit, agreeably to the doctrine of the sixth chapter, for salvation in sin is a contradiction in terms.

There is, therefore, no such antithesis between the seventh and eight chapters, as the opposite interpretation supposes. It is not the design of the latter to show that men are delivered from indwelling sin; or that the conflict between the "law in the members" and "the law of the mind," between the flesh and Spirit, ceases when men embrace the gospel. But it shows that this consummation is secured to all who are in Christ, to all who do not deliberately and of choice walk after the flesh, and make it their guide and master. In virtue of deliverance from the law, and introduction into a state of grace, the believer has not only his acceptance with God, but his final deliverance from sin secured. Sin shall not triumph in those who have the Spirit of Christ, and who, by that Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body.

If then the context is altogether favourable to the ordinary interpretation; if the passage is accurately descriptive of Christian experience, and analogous to other inspired accounts of the exercises of the renewed heart; if not merely particular expres-

sions, but the whole tenor of the discourse is inconsistent with the scriptural account of the natural man; and if Paul, in the use of the first person and the present tense, cannot, without violence, be considered otherwise than as expressing his own feelings while writing, we have abundant reason to rest satisfied with the obvious sense of the passage.

Doctrines.

1. No man is perfectly sanctified in this life. At least, Paul was not, according to his own confession, when he wrote this passage, vs. 14—25.

2. The law is spiritual, that is, perfect, deriving its character from its author, the Spirit of God. It is, therefore, the unerring standard of duty, and the source of moral light or knowledge. It should, therefore, be every where known and studied, and faithfully applied as the rule of judgment for our own conduct and that of others. Evangelical doctrines, therefore, which teach the necessity of freedom from the law as a covenant of works, i. e. as prescribing the terms of our justification before God, derogate neither from its excellence nor its authority. It is left to do its proper work in the economy of redemption; to convince of sin, and be a guide to duty, v. 14, &c.

3. The mere presentation of truth, apart from the influences of the Spirit, can neither renew nor sanctify the heart, v. 14, &c.

4. Inability is consistent with accountability. "To perform that which is good I find not," that is, I cannot, v. 18. Gal. 5: 17. As the scriptures constantly recognise the truth of these two things, so are they constantly united in Christian experience. Every one feels that he cannot do the things that he would, yet is sensible that he is guilty for not doing them. Let any man test his power by the requisition to love God perfectly at all times. Alas, how entire our inability! yet how deep our self-loathing and self-condemnation!

5. The emotions and affections do not obey a determination of the will, vs. 16, 18, 19, 21. A change of purpose, therefore, is not a change of heart.

6. The Christian's victory over sin cannot be achieved by the strength of his resolutions, nor by the plainness and force

of moral motives, nor by any resources within himself. He looks to Jesus Christ, and conquers in his strength. In other words, the victory is not obtained in the way of nature, but of grace, vs. 14—25.

Remarks.

1. As the believer's life is a constant conflict, those who do not struggle against sin, and endeavour to subdue it, are not true Christians, vs. 14—25.

2. The person here described hates sin, v. 15; acknowledges and delights in the spirituality of the divine law, vs. 16, 22; he considers his corruption a dreadful burden, from which he earnestly desires to be delivered, v. 24. These are exercises of genuine piety, and should be applied as tests of character.

3. It is an evidence of an unrenewed heart to express or feel opposition to the law of God as though it were too strict; or to be disposed to throw off the blame of our want of conformity to the divine will from ourselves upon the law as unreasonable. The renewed man condemns himself, and justifies God, even while he confesses and mourns his inability to conform to the divine requisitions, vs. 14—25.

4. The strength and extent of the corruption of our nature are seen from its influence over the best of men, and from its retaining more or less of its power, under all circumstances, to the end of life, v. 25.

5. This corruption, although its power is acknowledged, so far from being regarded as an excuse or palliation for our individual offences, is recognised as the greatest aggravation of our guilt. To say, with the feelings of the apostle, "I am carnal," is to utter the strongest language of self-condemnation and self-abhorrence, vs. 14—25.

6. Although the believer is never perfectly sanctified in this life, his aim and efforts are ever onward; and the experience of the power of indwelling sin, teaches him the value of heaven, and prepares him for the enjoyment of it, vs. 14—25.

CHAPTER VIII.

Contents.

PAUL had now finished his exhibition of the plan of salvation. He had shown that we are justified gratuitously, that is, by faith in Jesus Christ, without the works of the law. He had proved that, so far from this freedom from the law leading to the indulgence of sin, it is necessary to our sanctification, because the law is as inadequate to the production of holiness in the sinner, as it is to secure pardon or acceptance with God. That such is the insufficiency of the law, he proved by exhibiting its operation both on the renewed and unrenewed mind. Having accomplished all this, he leaves, in the chapter before us, the field of logical argument, and enters on the new and more elevated sphere of joyous exultation. As, however, there is always warmth of feeling in the apostle's argument, so also is there generally logical arrangement in his highest triumphs.

His theme here is the security of believers. The salvation of those who have renounced the law and accepted the gracious offers of the gospel is shown to be absolutely certain. The whole chapter is a series of arguments most beautifully arranged in support of this one point. They are all traced back to the great source of hope and security, the unmerited and unchanging love of God in Christ Jesus. The proposition is contained in the first verse. There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus; they shall never be condemned or perish.

1. Because they are delivered from the law; all its demands being fulfilled in them by the mission and sacrifice of Christ, vs. 1—4. 2. Because their salvation is actually begun in the regeneration and sanctification of their hearts by the Holy Spirit. Those who have the Spirit of Christ have the Spirit of life, vs. 5—11. 3. Not only is their salvation begun, but they are the children of God, and if children, they are heirs, v. 12—17. 4. The afflictions which they may be called to endure, are not inconsistent with this filial relation to God, because they are utterly insignificant in comparison with the glory that shall be revealed in them; and under these afflictions they are sustained both by hope and the intercessions of the Holy

Spirit, vs. 18—28. 5. Because they are predestinated to the attainment of eternal life; of which predestination their present sanctification or effectual calling is the result, and, therefore, the evidence, vs. 28—30. 6. Because God has given his Son to die for them, and thereby to secure their justification and salvation, vs. 31—34. 7. Because the love of God is infinite and unchangeable; from which nothing can separate us, vs. 35—39. Thus from the proximate cause of salvation or the indwelling of the Spirit, does the apostle rise with ever-increasing confidence to the great source and fountain of all, in the love of God.*

Although, according to this view of the chapter, it is one whole, it may, for the sake of convenience, be divided into three sections.

CHAP. 8: 1—11.

Analysis.

THIS section contains the development of the first two of the apostle's arguments in favour of the position, that those who are in Christ Jesus shall never be condemned. The immediate reason is assigned in the second verse, they are delivered from the law. For in view of the insufficiency of the law, God sent forth his Son as a sacrifice for sin, v. 3, and thus secured the justification of all believers, v. 4. Being thus delivered from the law, they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and this possession of the Spirit is incipient salvation: because the carnal mind, which, of course, all who are in the flesh possess, is death; whereas a mind under the government of the Spirit is life and peace. Such is the very nature of the case. Holiness is salvation, vs. 5—7. The reason that death is the necessary consequence of being carnally minded, is the essential opposition between such a state of mind and God. Hence, those who have this state of mind are the objects of the divine displeasure, vs. 7, 8. As, however, believers are not under the government of the flesh, but of the Spirit, their salvation is secured even to the resurrection of the body. For if the Spirit

* The same general view of the design of this chapter, and of the course of the apostle's argument, is given in the analysis of this epistle by STEPHEN DE BRAIS.

of him, who raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in them, he shall also quicken their mortal bodies, vs. 9—11.

Commentary.

(1) *There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* It is a matter of considerable importance to the understanding of this chapter, to decide what is its precise relation to the preceding part of the epistle. The word *therefore* indicates that what follows is an inference: but from what? From the conclusion of the seventh chapter, or from the whole previous discussion? The latter seems to be the only correct view of the context; because the fact that there is no condemnation to believers, is no fair inference from what is said at the close of the preceding chapter. Paul does not mean to say, as Luther and others explain v. 1, there is nothing worthy of condemnation in the Christian, because, with his mind, he serves the law of God. Nor does he mean, at least in the first few verses, to argue that believers shall not be condemned, because they are freed from the dominion of sin. But the inference, in the first verse, is the legitimate conclusion of all that Paul had previously established. Believers shall be saved, because they are not under the law, but under grace,* which is the main point in all that Paul has yet said. There is, therefore, *now*, i. e. under these circumstances, viz. the circumstances set forth in the previous part of the epistle.

To be in Christ Jesus signifies to be intimately united to him, in the way in which the scriptures teach us this union is effected, viz. by having his Spirit dwelling in us, v. 9. The phrase is never expressive of a merely external or nominal union. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," 2 Co. 5: 17. See John 15: 4, &c. 1 John 2: 5. 3: 6. To be in Christ, and to have fellowship with him, are, with the apostle John, convertible expressions; see also Rom. 16: 7, 11.

Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. These words may be understood, 1. as descriptive of the character of those who are in Christ; 2. as assigning the reason why there is no condemnation to them, viz. because they walk not, &c.;

* In the Greek the participle is here used, which often has the force that this interpretation would assign to it. Rom. 10: 3, *Being ignorant*, i. e. because they were ignorant. *Seeking*, i. e. because they sought, &c.;

or, 3. as describing the condition on which the blessing depends, 'There is no condemnation to them, provided they walk not, &c.' The first and last of these views may be united, and express the real meaning of the apostle.

To walk after is, in scripture language, *to regulate the life and conduct according to, to follow as a guide or leader*, Acts 21: 21. Eph. 2: 2, &c. &c. The *flesh* is our corrupt nature. *Spirit* is either the Holy Spirit, or as opposed to *flesh*, our hearts considered as renewed. The former is much to be preferred, for this is the sense of the word through the whole passage. The meaning of this clause then is, 'Those who are in Christ do not regulate their conduct according to the dictates of their own corrupt hearts, but follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.' If the Spirit dwells in us, he regulates our opinions, feelings and external conduct. The apostle does not mean to say, in opposition to the preceding chapter and to all experience, that believers never yield to the suggestions of the flesh; but he simply expresses what is the constant aim and general character of the Christian's life.*

(2) *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, &c.*

¶ This verse assigns the reason why there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, as is evident from the use of *for*, with which the verse commences.

The law of the Spirit is here opposed to *the law of sin and death*, mentioned in the other clause of the verse. The interpretation of the one phrase, therefore, must decide that of the other. There are three different views which may be taken of the verse. 1. The word *law* may be used here as it is in vs. 21, 23 of ch. 7, for *a directing power*; and *Spirit*, by metonymy, for that which the Spirit produces, i. e. sanctified affections; and the words *of life* may mean, producing life. The sense would then be, 'The power of the renewed principle which tends to life, has delivered me from the power of sin which tends to

* The whole of this clause is found in the majority of the Greek MSS. Some, however, as C. D. F. G. omit it, as do also several of the versions, as the Coptic and Ethiopic. Other MSS. as A. D. (the latter as corrected), and the Vulgate and Syriac versions omit only the latter part. MILL, SENLER, GRIESBACH, KNAPP, and LACHMANN consider the whole clause as spurious. BENGEI and MORUS only the latter portion of it. In the midst of such contrariety in the MSS. and versions, there can be no certainty as to the true reading. The same words occur again in v. 4.

death.' In other words, 'The law of the mind has delivered me from the law of sin which is in the members.' So Beza and many others. 2. The word *law* is taken in nearly the same sense; but *Spirit of life* is understood to mean the Holy Spirit, considered as the author of life. The sense then is, 'The power of the life-giving Spirit has delivered me from the dominion of the law of sin and death in my members.' So Calvin* and others. 3. According to the third view, *the law of the Spirit of life* is the gospel, i. e. the law of which the life-giving Spirit is the author. Of course, the other member of the verse, instead of describing the corrupt principle in men, means the law of God, which, as Paul had taught in ch. 7, is incidentally the cause of sin and death. The sense of the passage then is, 'The gospel has delivered me from the law.' So Witsius, &c.

This last seems decidedly to be preferred for the following reasons: 1. Although the two former interpretations are consistent with Paul's use of the word *law*, neither of them so well suits the context, because neither assigns the reason why believers are not exposed to condemnation. Paul asserts that those who are in Christ are restored to the divine favour. Why? Because they are sanctified? No; but because they have been freed from the law and its demands, and introduced into a state of grace.† 2. It is not true that believers are delivered from the law of sin in their members. If the terms *law of the Spirit* and *law of sin* are to be understood of the good and evil principle in the Christian, how can it be said that by the former, he is, in this life, delivered from the latter? This would be in direct contradiction to ch. 7 and to experience. 3. The terms here used may naturally be so understood, because the word *law*, in its general sense, as *rule*, is applicable,

* *Legem spiritus improprie vocat Dei Spiritum, qui animas nostras Christi sanguine aspergit, non tantum ut a peccati labe emundet quoad reatum; sed in veram puritatem sanctificet.*

† There are two ideas included in the general proposition contained in the first verse. The first is, that believers are justified; and the second, as implied in the former, that they shall be finally saved. The first is the most prominent, as far as the proper force of the words is concerned, and gives form to the first and most important argument in support of the general proposition. This argument is, that they are freed from the covenant of works. Hence there is to them no condemnation. The subsequent arguments then come in naturally in support of the second idea of the first verse, 'Believers are not only justified, but shall finally be saved, because their salvation is begun, because they are the children of God, &c. &c.'

and is applied to the gospel, Rom. 3: 27, especially when standing in antithesis to the law of works. The gospel is called the law of the Spirit, because he is its author; see the phrase "ministration of the Spirit," 2 Cor. 3: 8. In the other member of the verse the law is called *the law of sin and death*, because productive of sin and death. This is no more than what Paul had said expressly of the law in the preceding chapter, vs. 5, 13, &c. 4. This interpretation alone assigns an adequate ground for the declaration of the preceding verse. That declaration, the result of all that Paul had yet proved, is, that believers, and believers alone, are perfectly safe; and the reason assigned is the sum of all the argument from the commencement of the epistle. They are not under the law, but under grace; the law of the Spirit has freed them from the old law of works. 5. The next verse favours, if it does not absolutely demand, this interpretation. It gives the reason why believers are thus freed from the law, viz. it was insufficient for their salvation, "it was weak through the flesh."

The words *in Christ Jesus* may belong to the whole preceding clause. "The law of the Spirit of life which is by Christ Jesus." Or as the absence of the article, in the original, would seem to require, with the verb which follows, "Has made me free through Christ Jesus," (Winer's Gram. p. 120). According to this interpretation, then, the meaning of this verse, in connexion with the preceding, is, 'There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, because they have been freed by the gospel from the dominion of that law, which, although good in itself, is the cause of sin and death.' Being thus delivered from the bondage and curse of the law, and a corresponding legal spirit, and introduced into a state of favour with God, their sins are gratuitously pardoned for Christ's sake, they become partakers of the Spirit of God, holy affections spring up in their hearts, and all the divine attributes are pledged for their salvation.

(3) The connexion between this and the preceding verse is obvious. We are freed from the law because the law was weak, i. e. inadequate for the purpose of our salvation. This connexion serves to show that the interpretation just given of the second verse is correct.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through

the flesh, &c. The Greek,* which is placed in the margin, admits either of the version here given, *the impossibility of the law* being taken for *what was impossible to the law*; or it may be explained thus, *as to or on account of the impotence of the law, &c.* The latter method is decidedly to be preferred. 1. Because the grammatical construction is in its favour. The whole clause stands absolutely, or may be governed by a preposition understood. 2. Because the sense is incomplete according to the other view. "What the law could not do, *that God did*, sending his son." There is nothing in the original to answer to the words marked in italics. The attentive reader will perceive that the verse in our translation does not make the sense complete. According to the second view, nothing need be supplied. 3. Because the meaning thus afforded is good and suited to the context. 'We are freed from the law, for in view of, or on account of its inadequacy, God having sent his Son, &c.' What is here said of the insufficiency of the law generally, is said especially of the form in which it appeared in the Mosaic institutions in Acts 13: 39. Gal. 3: 21. Heb. 7: 18, 19, and is indeed proved at length in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

This inadequacy of the law, however, Paul says, arises from no inherent defect, but from the corruption of men. *In that it was weak through the flesh.* The same sentiment as that taught in the preceding chapter, vs. 7—25. *In that*, i. e. because that, see Heb. 2: 18. Paul uses the word *flesh* here in its common sense for corruption, or human nature considered as corrupt, see above on Rom. 7: 14. *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, &c.*; HIS OWN SON; him who was a partaker of his own nature. This is the meaning of the word *Son* as applied to Christ; see ch. 1: 4. John 1: 14. 5: 17, &c. 10: 30—39. The greatness of the gift and the urgency of the necessity are therefore presented in the strongest light by these few words.

In the likeness of sinful flesh, i. e. in a nature similar to the nature of sinful men. So in Phil. 2: 7, Christ is said to have come "in the likeness of men." The similarity extended to all points except sin; Heb. 2: 17. 4: 15. John 1: 14, where

* Τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου.

also the word *flesh* is used as here for the nature in which Christ appeared. We have in this verse a distinct reference to the two natures of the Redeemer. The Son of God in human nature; see Gal. 4: 4.

And for sin. These words are to be connected with the preceding. God not only sent his Son in our nature, but he sent him *for sin*. That is, either generally on account of sin, or, more specially, *as a sin offering*. This latter is to be preferred, for the original words* are frequently so used, both in the Old and New Testament. The full phrase is *a sacrifice for sin*. See precisely these words in Heb. 10: 6. Lev. 6: 25. Num. 8: 8. Ps. 40: 6. This sense too is best suited to what follows.

Condemned sin in the flesh. The phrase *condemned sin* may be understood to mean *he destroyed sin*, or *he punished sin*. In either case the words *in the flesh* may mean *in human nature*. According to the former view this clause means 'He destroyed sin in our corrupt nature;' and the whole point of the verse is, that because the law could not effect our sanctification, God sent forth his Son on account of sin, and destroyed it in us. According to the other view, the meaning is, 'That God sent his Son as a sin-offering and thus punished sin in the flesh,' i. e. either in *his* flesh, of which mention had just been made, or *in human nature*, a nature like our own. That the latter is the true meaning, appears evident, 1. Because the word rendered *condemned* never means simply *to destroy*† or *remove*. The other interpretation, therefore, is contrary to usage. 2. This interpretation best suits the other part of the verse. A *sacrifice* has reference rather to the guilt of sin, than to its impurity; it procures pardon immediately, sanctification

* *Ἐπεὶ ἁμαρτίας*.—See SCHLEUSNER'S Thesaurus of the LXX. on the word *ἁμαρτία*.

† This is the only place in which WAHL assigns to *καταργέω* the sense of *destroying* in the New Testament. In John 12: 31. 16: 11, to which Tholuck refers, something more is meant than that the prince of this world is destroyed. He is condemned and, by condemnation, deprived of power. Tholuck, who wishes apparently to include doth ideas, seems to consider the former as the more prominent. "The idea," he says, "is very common in the New Testament, that sin was punished in the appearing of Christ, or that the punishment of sin was borne by Christ."

only mediately. By the sacrifice of Christ, sin was, therefore, condemned, rather than destroyed or removed. 3. The following verse requires this interpretation. Sin was condemned in Christ, in order that we might be justified. 4. The whole context requires it. Paul's object is not to show that we are not exposed to condemnation, because we are delivered from the law of sin in our members, and that we are thus delivered because the power of sin, 'which the law could not destroy, God has destroyed by the mission of his Son.' This view of the context we have already endeavoured to show is not correct. The apostle argues thus, 'There is no condemnation to believers because they are not under the law. They are free from that legal system, because God, seeing its insufficiency, sent his Son as a sacrifice for sin, and thus condemned sin, that we might be free from the demands of the law, or might thus satisfy its claims.'*

It is not meant to be denied in the interpretation just given of this important verse, that the deliverance of believers from sin is the result of the mission and sacrifice of Christ, or that this idea was not uniformly associated in the apostle's mind with their justification. All that is intended is to show that, in this connexion, where freedom from condemnation, deliverance from the law, the sacrifice of Christ, and condemnation of sin are spoken of; the main idea is the justification and not the sanctification of believers.

(4) *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, &c.* These words express the design and result of the sacrifice of Christ. *The righteousness of the law*† means that which the law demands. 'That the demands of the law might be fulfilled in us,' may, however, mean either that we might obey the law, or that we might be freed from its demands, that is, be justified. That the latter is the true meaning here, seems evident, 1. Because this interpretation alone suits

* See STORR's Brief an die Hebräer, 491.

Deus (id quod lex non poterat, nempe condemnare peccatum salvo peccatore) condemnavit peccatum.—BENGEI. There is no condemnation to us (v. 1), though there is to sin. We are not punished, but sin is punished in the person of Christ, and thus we are freed from the law.

† Δικαίωμα may also mean *sentence*, in which sense Storr takes it here, 'That the judgment of the law might be fulfilled on us, sin was punished in Christ.'

the context, if the view given of the previous verses is correct. All the arguments, therefore, in favour of that view, support this interpretation, and need not be repeated. 2. Because in scriptural language the pardon of sin is the direct object of the sacrifice of Christ, and, therefore, this verse, which expresses this object, must mean we are justified rather than that we are sanctified. 3. The latter part of the verse would, as Calvin remarks, in the other case be superfluous. Why should it be said that the law is obeyed by those who obey the law, that is, who walk after the Spirit? But there is, if the second interpretation is correct, a necessity for this additional clause, as a caution, that the blessing of gratuitous forgiveness is confined to those who are holy. This verse, therefore, expresses nearly the same idea with the first. It is there said, 'there is no condemnation to us who walk after the Spirit,' and here, that 'the demands of the law are fulfilled in us who thus walk.' They are fulfilled by the sacrifice of Christ and the punishment of sin in him. He was made sin, or treated as a sinner, for us, that we might be made righteousness, or treated as righteous in him, 2 Cor. 5: 21.* 4. There is another argument of much weight, and that is, it is not true that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled by believers in this life. This language appears too strong if it refers to what the Christian himself does. For an exposition of the latter member of this verse, see above v. 1. These words are here added to show that those only can hope for the benefit of Christ's death who experience its proximate results in this life, in their own sanctification. The bible gives no hope of heaven to those who live in sin.

(5) *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, &c.* The immediate object of this and the following verse is to justify the necessity of the limitation of the blessings of Christ's death, to those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The *for*, therefore, connects this verse, not with the main idea, but with the last clause of the preceding. Men must be holy, because sin is death, whereas holiness is

* THOLUCK says that BUCER is the only one of the evangelical commentators who refers this verse "to the subjective side of justification," i. e. to sanctification.

life and peace. The necessity of *spirituality*, therefore, lies in the very nature of things.

They who are after the flesh, those who are in the flesh, the carnal, are expressions of like import, and describe those who are governed by the flesh, or by their nature considered as corrupt. The corresponding series, *they who are after the Spirit, who are in the Spirit, the spiritual*, describe those who are under the government of the Holy Ghost. Of the former class it is said they mind the *things of the flesh*, of the latter, *they mind the things of the Spirit*. The word rendered *they mind* expresses primarily the exercise of the intellect *they attend to*, but, secondarily, and by implication, the exercise of the affections, of which the other is the result. Hence, in Col. 3: 2, it is correctly rendered in the passage, "Set your affection on things above." See also Phil. 3: 19. The same may be said of the word *mind* as used by our translators. The idea evidently is, that the objects of attention, desire and pursuit to the carnal are corrupt and worldly; while to the spiritual they are the things which the Spirit proposes and approves.

(6) *For to be carnally minded is death, &c.* This is the next step in the apostle's argument. *For* is here a mere particle of transition, and is equivalent to *but*, 'They who are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh, *but* to mind the things of the flesh, or to be carnally minded is death.' It is clear that *to be carnally minded* is exactly what is meant by the corresponding phrase in the preceding verse. This state of mind, this desire and pursuit of carnal things is, in its own nature, destructive. It leads to all the scriptures mean by death, alienation from God, unholiness and misery.

To be spiritually minded. A spiritual state of mind, the desire and pursuit of spiritual things is, in its own nature, life and peace. God has so constituted the human soul that the exercise of all right feelings is attended with happiness, and the exercise of evil ones with misery. To be entirely sinful, therefore, is to be entirely miserable.

(7) The ground of this assertion is, that God is the end and portion of the soul. To be separated from him is, therefore, to be separated from all that is suited to its nature and capacity. But a carnal state does effect this separation from God, and is, therefore, destructive. This idea Paul expresses by saying,

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, &c. The words* here rendered *the carnal mind* are the same as those which, in v. 6, are rendered *to be carnally minded*; of course the two expressions in our version must be considered as synonymous. This state of mind, this desire and pursuit of carnal thing is said to be hostile to God. This may be understood, either, as though Paul employed these abstract terms for concrete ones, as with him is very common, and then the sense would be, ‘Those who are thus carnally minded are opposed to God, i. e. are not subject to his law and cannot be.’† Or the abstract terms may be retained in their proper force, and then the meaning is, ‘The desire and pursuit of the things of the flesh is enmity to God.’ There is no great difference; for when we say that sin is enmity to God, we at the same time say that the sinner is an enemy of God. The latter part of the verse, (*for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*), which is explanatory of the former, is rather in favour of the first interpretation; for it is not common to speak of abstract qualities disobeying the law, &c. What is here said of the “carnal mind,” is said, 1 Cor. 2: 14, of the natural man, so that there can be no theological point gained by denying the applicability of the apostle’s language here to the agent. See Rom. 7: 18, &c. Gal. 5: 17, where the same inability is asserted even of the regenerate.‡

(8) The necessary consequence of this opposition of a mind governed by the flesh, or of a state of mind resulting from the predominance of the flesh to God is, that those who are in this state are the objects of the divine displeasure. *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.* To be *in the flesh*, as before remarked, is to be under the government of the *flesh* or corrupt nature, to be destitute of the grace of God. It is an expression applied to all unrenewed persons, as those who are not *in the flesh* are *in the Spirit*.

The words *cannot please God* may mean either cannot do what is pleasing to God, or cannot be acceptable to him, i. e.

* Τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός.

† So KOPPE and FLATT.

‡ En liberi arbitrii facultas quam satis evehere sophistae nequeunt. Certe Paulus disertis verbis hic affirmat quod ipsi pleno ore detestantur, nobis esse impossibile subicere legis obedientiae nostros affectus.—CALVIN.

are the objects of his displeasure. The latter is best suited to the context, as all that is said in vs. 7, 8 is designed to show the truth of the declaration in v. 6, "to be carnally minded is death." It is so, because the carnal mind is enmity against God, and, therefore, those who have this state of mind are hateful in his sight. But to be the object of the divine displeasure, is to be miserable. In verses 9, 10, 11, Paul applies to the Romans what he had said generally, and shows how it is that, in the fullest and widest sense, "to be spiritually minded," or possessed of the Spirit, is life and peace, v. 6.

(9) *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you.* To be in the flesh and in the Spirit are expressions already explained. Paul was persuaded that those to whom he wrote were renewed or spiritual persons; yet he expresses the case hypothetically, 'Ye are renewed, *if so be* ye have the Spirit of God, for if you have not that Spirit you are none of his.' The particle,* however, rendered *if so be*, sometimes means *since*. If this sense of the word be adopted, the meaning would be, 'Ye are spiritual, *since* the Spirit of God dwells in you, for if, &c.† The latter part of the verse, however, favours the common rendering, as it assigns the reason for the conditional mode of expression adopted in the second clause of the verse.

Spirit of God dwell in you. It need hardly be remarked, that *Spirit of God* cannot, with any regard to the usage of scriptural language, be explained here as meaning *pious feelings*, metonymically called *Spirit*, because produced by his agency. The expression and context alike show that it must be understood of the Holy Ghost. God is said to *dwell* wherever he constantly manifests his presence. Hence, he dwelt in the tabernacle, the temple, in Zion, &c. In the New Testament the church is called *a habitation of God*, Eph. 2: 22, &c., and individual Christians are said to be his temple, 1 Cor. 3: 16. 6: 19. The indwelling of the Spirit in Christians is spoken of in the passages referred to, and in many others, as 2 Tim. 1: 14. 2 Cor. 6: 16, &c.

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none

* Εἴπερ, see the use of this particle, 2 Thess. 1: 6.

† So CHRYSOSTOM, ERASMUS and BEZA.

of his. It is evident that what was just called the Spirit of God, is here called the Spirit of Christ; see Gal. 4: 6. Phil. 1: 19. 1 Pet. 1: 11; of course, the latter phrase cannot mean *the disposition of Christ*, but the Holy Spirit. He is called the Spirit of Christ, 1. Because possessed by Christ without measure, John 3: 34. Acts 10: 38. Is. 42: 1, &c. 2. Because he is given or sent by Christ, John 1: 33. 15: 26. 16: 7. Luke 24: 49, &c. &c. How exalted must have been Paul's views of the person of Christ, when he, in one breath, calls the Holy Ghost the Spirit of God, and in the next, the Spirit of Christ. And how high the claims of the Redeemer himself, who, in the passages quoted, claims the prerogative of sending this Spirit to whomsoever he will.

The possession of the Holy Ghost is declared to be absolutely necessary to our being Christians or acceptable to God, because that Spirit is the source of all good. To be destitute of the Spirit, therefore, is to be destitute of every thing well-pleasing in the sight of God. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. 12: 3.

(10) *And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, &c.* The connexion between this verse and the preceding is better seen if *but* instead of *and* is used.* 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his, *but* if Christ be in him, then he is a partaker of the life of which Christ is the author,' &c. As in the vs. 7, 8, Paul had confirmed the declaration that "to be carnally minded is death;" he, in vs. 10, 11, illustrates the proposition, that "to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

If Christ be in you is evidently of the same import with the preceding expressions, *to have the Spirit of Christ* and *the Spirit of God dwelling in us*, which shows that the manner in which Christ dwells in his people is by the communication to them of the Holy Spirit. The possession of this Spirit is a pledge of life in its fullest sense, even to the resurrection of the body. Hence, Paul says, "*the body is dead, indeed, on account of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness;*" that is, 'To have the Spirit of God is to have life, for although the body is destined to die on account

* In the Greek the word is *δέ*.

of sin, still the soul lives, in consequence of its justification and renovation, and even our mortal bodies are hereafter to be restored to life by that Spirit that dwelleth in us,' v. 11.

The body is dead because of sin. This expression and the whole verse have been very variously explained; some understanding them of a spiritual, and others of a temporal death and resurrection. According to the former view, *body* is understood as equivalent to the word *flesh*,* signifying corrupt nature; and *death* means *devoid of power*; and the phrase *because of sin* is rendered *as to sin*. But this interpretation does violence to usage and the context. *Body* very rarely, if ever, has the sense thus ascribed to it, and when connected with the word *dead*, it certainly never has. In the very next verse, too, we have the words *mortal bodies*, which do not admit of being understood figuratively. The meaning, according to the common interpretation, is natural and consistent with the apostle's object. *The body, indeed, is dead*, i. e. must die, is obnoxious to death,† (see Wahl's Lexicon on the Greek word here used). The body, indeed, notwithstanding the indwelling of the life-giving Spirit, is destined to death *on account of sin*. Sin is the cause of all infirmities and sorrows, and, finally, of the dissolution to which our bodies are subject in this world. This fact is inconsistent neither with our being in favour with God, nor with our being partakers of the life of Christ. This is evident from two considerations; first, our souls already participate in this life; and, secondly, our bodies shall be raised up again, and share forever in that blessedness of which Christ is the author. The former of these considerations is presented in the next clause of the verse, *but the Spirit is life because of righteousness*. If *body*, in one part of this antithesis, be understood of the external frame, *Spirit* must mean the soul. 'Though the body dies, the soul lives.' *To live* evidently includes, as it almost

* So CALVIN. Porro ante admoniti sunt lectores ne per vocabulum *Spiritus*, animam nostram intelligant, sed regenerationis Spiritum; quem Vitam appellat Paulus, non modo quia vivit et viget in nobis, sed quia vivificat nos suo vigore, donec extincta mortali carna perfecte demum renovet: sicut e converso vox *Corporis*, crassiorem illam massam designat quae nondum Spiritu Dei est purificata a sordibus terrenis, quae nihil nisi crassum sapiunt, nam corpori tribuere peccati culpam alioqui absurdum esset.

† Τὸ φῦσις νεκρὸν.—ARRIAN in *Epict.* l. 3, c. 10.

uniformly does when spoken of in relation to the results of Christ's work, the idea of a holy and happy existence in the favour of God. The soul thus lives *because of righteousness*. From the opposition of this word to *sin*, in the other clause, its primary reference must be to the moral renovation of the soul. We shall continue in the enjoyment of the life just spoken of, because the principles of this new and immortal existence are implanted within us. Regeneration is the commencement of eternal life. The present possession of the Spirit is an earnest of the unsearchable riches of Christ, Eph. 1: 14. In this view the verse is directly connected with the main object of the chapter, viz. the security of all who are in Christ Jesus. To such there is no condemnation, because they have been freed from the law which condemned them to death; and because the work of salvation is already begun in them. They *have* eternal life, John 6: 47. Intimately connected with this meaning of the word rendered *righteousness* in this place, is the other idea which the word expresses, viz. justification. The soul shall live, in the fullest sense of the term, because it is reconciled to God and regarded of him as righteous for Christ's sake. Though both ideas are probably to be included, the former is the more prominent.

(11) *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you.* Such paraphrases for *God* as that which this verse contains, are very common with the apostle (see Rom. 4: 24, &c.), and are peculiarly appropriate when the force of the argument, in some measure, rests on the fact to which the descriptive phrase refers. Because God had raised up Christ, there was ground of confidence that he would raise his people up also. Two ideas may be included in this part of the verse; first, that the very possession of that Spirit, which is the source of life, is a pledge and security that our bodies shall rise again; because it would be unseemly that any thing thus honoured by the Spirit, should remain under the dominion of death; and, secondly, that the resurrection of Christ secures the resurrection of those that are his, according to Paul's doctrine, in 1 Cor. 15: 23.

He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies. This clause cannot, with any regard to usage or the context, be understood of a moral resurrection, or

deliverance from sin, as it is explained by Calvin and many others. See the analogous passage, 2 Cor. 4: 14.

By his Spirit that dwelleth in you, or, as it must be rendered according to another reading, "*On account of his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*"* The sense in either case is good. According to the former, the meaning is, that the resurrection of believers will be effected by the power of the Spirit of God; and according to the latter, that the indwelling of the Spirit is the ground or reason why the bodies of believers should not be left in the grave. The internal evidence is decidedly in favour of the first reading. 1. Because Paul uses precisely these words elsewhere, "By the Holy Spirit, &c.," 1 Tim. 1: 14, &c. 2. Because throughout the scriptures in the Old and New Testaments, what God does in nature or grace, he is said to do by his Spirit. Passages are too numerous and too familiar to be cited. 3. Because the Jews seem to have referred the resurrection of the body specially to the Holy Ghost.† As the external authorities are nearly equally divided, the case must be considered doubtful. If the latter reading be adopted, this clause would then answer to the phrase *on account of righteousness* in the preceding verse. On account of the indwelling of the Spirit, expressing the same general idea under another form. Our souls shall live in happiness and glory because they are renewed, and our bodies too shall be raised up in glory because they are the temples of the Holy Ghost. In the widest sense then is it true, that to be in the Spirit, is to be secure of life and peace.

It will be remarked, that in this verse, and elsewhere, God is said to have raised up Christ from the dead, whereas, in John 10: 17, 18, the Saviour claims for himself the power of resuming his life. So here (according to the common reading) we are said

* For the reading with the accusative *διὰ τὸ ἐνοικοῦν αὐτοῦ πνεῦμα*, WETSTEIN quotes D. E. F. G. and a great many more modern MSS., the Syriac and Latin Vulgate versions, and several of the fathers. This reading is approved by ERASMUS, STEPHENS, MILL, BENDEL, GRIESBACH, and KNAPP. For the other form *διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος, κτλ.* are quoted, the MSS. A. 10, 22, 34, 38, 39; the editions of COLINÆUS, BEZA, the Complutensian, and a great many of the fathers. LACHMANN agrees with the received text.

† WETSTEIN quotes such passages as the following, from the Jewish writers, "Tempore futuro Spiritus meus vivificabit vos." "Spiritus Sanctus est causa resurrectionis mortuorum," &c.

to be raised up by the Holy Spirit; in John 6: 40, Christ says of the believer, "I will raise him up at the last day;" and in 2 Cor. 4: 14, and in many other places, the resurrection of believers is ascribed to God. These passages belong to that numerous class of texts in which the same work is attributed to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and which, in connexion with other sources of proof, show conclusively that "these three are one;" and that the persons of the Adorable Trinity concur in all works *ad extra*.

Doctrines.

1. As the former part of this chapter is an inference from the previous discussion, and presents a summary of the great truths already taught, we find here united the leading doctrines of the first portion of the epistle. For example, justification is by faith, v. 1; believers are not under the law, v. 2; the law is insufficient for our justification; God has accomplished that object by the sacrifice of his Son, vs. 3, 4; and this blessing is never disconnected with a holy life, v. 4.

2. The final salvation of those who are really united to Christ, and who show the reality of their union by good works, is secure. This is the doctrine of the whole chapter. This section contains two of the apostle's arguments in its support. 1. They are free from the law which condemned them to death, vs. 2, 3, 4. 2. They are partakers of that Spirit which is the author and earnest of eternal life, vs 5—11.

3. Jesus Christ is truly divine. He is "God's own Son," i. e. partaker of his nature. The Holy Ghost is his Spirit, and he dwells in all believers, vs. 3, 11.

4. Jesus Christ is truly a man. He came in the likeness of men, v. 3.

5. Christ was a sacrifice for sin, and his sufferings were penal, i. e. they were judicially inflicted in support of the law. 'God punished sin in him,' v. 3.

6. The justification of believers involves a fulfilling of the law; its demands are not set aside, v. 4.

7. Every thing in the bible is opposed to antinomianism. Paul teaches that justification and sanctification cannot be disjoined. No one is, or can be in the favour of God, who lives after the flesh, vs. 5—11.

8. The necessity of holiness arises out of the very nature of things. Sin is death, whereas holiness is life and peace. God has made the connexion between sin and misery, holiness and happiness, necessary and immutable, v. 6. The fact that holy men suffer, and that even the perfect Saviour was a man of sorrows, is not inconsistent with this doctrine. Such sufferings never proceed from holiness. On the contrary, the divine Spirit was, and is a well-spring within of joy and peace, to all who are sanctified. In itself considered, therefore, moral purity is essentially connected with happiness, as cause and effect.

9. All unrenewed men, that is, all "who are in the flesh," are at once the enemies of God and the objects of his displeasure. Their habitual and characteristic state of mind, that state which every man has who is not "in the Spirit," is enmity to God, and consequently is the object of his disapprobation, vs. 6, 8.

10. The Holy Ghost is the source of all good in man. Those who are destitute of his influences are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; for no man can call Jesus Lord, that is, can really recognise his authority, but by the Holy Ghost, vs. 5—8.

11. Death and the other evils, to which believers are exposed, are on account of sin, v. 10. They are no longer, however, the evidences of God's displeasure, but of his parental love, Heb. 12: 6.

12. The redemption of Christ extends to the bodies as well as the souls of his people, v. 11.

Remarks.

1. There can be no safety, no holiness, and no happiness to those who are out of Christ. No safety, because all such are under the condemnation of the law, vs. 1, 2, 3; no holiness, because only such as are united to Christ have the Spirit of Christ, v. 9; and no happiness, because "to be carnally minded is death," v. 6. Hence those who are in Christ, should be very humble, seeing they are nothing, and he is every thing; very grateful, and very holy. And those who are out of Christ should at once go to him, that they may attain safety, holiness and happiness.

2. The liberty wherewith Christ has made his people free, is a liberty from the law and from sin, vs. 2, 5. A legal spirit

and an unholy life are alike inconsistent with the Christian character.

3. Believers should be joyful and confident; for the law is fulfilled; its demands are satisfied as respects them. Who then can condemn, if God has justified? v. 4.

4. There can be no rational or scriptural hope without holiness, and every tendency to separate the evidence of the divine favour from the evidence of true piety is anti-christian and destructive, vs. 4—8.

5. The bent of the thoughts, affections and pursuits is the only decisive test of character. "They who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, &c." v. 5.

6. It is, therefore, a sure mark of hypocrisy, if a man, who professes to be a Christian, still minds earthly things, that is, has his affections and efforts supremely directed towards worldly objects.

7. We may as well attempt to wring pleasure out of pain, as to unite the indulgence of sin with the enjoyment of happiness, vs. 6, 7.

8. How blinded must those be, who, although at enmity with God, and the objects of his displeasure, are sensible neither of their guilt nor danger! vs. 7, 8.

9. The great distinction of a true Christian, is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Hence his dignity, holiness and happiness, vs. 9—11.

10. If the Spirit of God dwells in the Christian, how careful should he be lest any thing in his thoughts or feelings should be offensive to this divine guest!

11. Christians are bound to reverence their bodies and preserve them from all defilement, because they are the members of Christ, and the temples of the Holy Ghost, v. 11.

CHAP. 8: 12—28.

Analysis.

THIS section* contains two additional arguments in support of the great theme of the chapter, the safety of all who are in

* It was remarked above, that the division of this chapter into sections is merely arbitrary. For although there are several very distinct topics introduced, yet the whole is intimately interwoven and made to bear on one point. In passing too

Christ. The first is derived from their adoption, vs. 12—17, and the second from the fact, that they are sustained by hope and aided by the Spirit under all their trials; so that every thing eventually works together for their good, vs. 18—28.

Paul had just shown that believers were distinguished by the indwelling of the Spirit. Hence he infers the obligation to live according to the Spirit, and to mortify the deeds of the body, v. 12. If they did this they should live, v. 13. Not only because, as previously argued, the Spirit is the source of life, but also because all who are led by the Spirit are the children of God. This is a new ground of security, v. 14. The reality of their adoption is proved, first, by their own filial feelings; as God's relation and feelings towards us, are always the counterpart of ours towards him, v. 15. Secondly, by the testimony of the Spirit itself with our spirits, v. 16. If children, the inference is plain that believers shall be saved, for they are heirs. Salvation follows adoption, as, among men, heirship does sonship. They are joint heirs with Jesus Christ, v. 17.

It is no wise inconsistent with their filial relation to God, nor with their safety, that believers are allowed to suffer in this world; 1. Because these sufferings are comparatively insignificant, vs. 18—23. 2. Because they are sustained by hope. 3. Because the Spirit itself intercedes for them. In amplifying the first of these considerations, the comparative insignificance of the sufferings of this present state, the apostle presents in contrast the unspeakable blessedness and glory which are in reserve for believers, v. 18. To elevate our conceptions of this glory, he represents, 1. The whole creation as looking and longing for its full manifestation, v. 19, &c. 2. All those who have now a foretaste of this blessedness, or the first fruits of the Spirit, as joining in this sense of present wretchedness and earnest desire of the future good, v. 23.

These afflictions then are not only thus comparatively light in themselves, but they are made still more tolerable, by the constant and elevating anticipation of the future inheritance of the

from one argument to another, the apostle does it so naturally, that there is no abruptness of transition. The connexion, therefore, between the last verse of the preceding section and the first verse of this, and between the last of this, and the first of the following, is exceedingly intimate. It is only for the sake of convenient resting places for review, that the division is made.

saints, vs. 24, 25. And not only so, but the Spirit also sustains us by his intercessions, thus securing for us all the good we need, vs. 26—28. The salvation, then, of believers is secure, notwithstanding their sufferings, inasmuch as they are children, and are sustained and aided by the Holy Spirit.

Commentary.

(12) *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh.* We have here an example of what the rhetoricians call *meiosis*, where less is said than is intended. So far from being debtors to the flesh, the very reverse is the case. This passage is an inference from the exhibition of the nature and tendency of the *flesh*, or the carnal mind, as hostile to God and destructive to ourselves, vs. 5, 8. As this is its nature, and believers are no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit, they are under the strongest obligations not to live after the one, but after the other.

(13) The necessity of thus living is enforced by a repetition of the sentiment of v. 6. To live after the flesh is death; to live after the Spirit is life. *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit, &c.* The necessity of holiness, therefore, is absolute. No matter what professions we may make, or what hopes we may indulge, justification or the manifestation of the divine favour is never separated from sanctification. *Ye shall die* in the comprehensive scriptural sense of that word, Rom. 6: 21, 23; see Gal. 6: 8. *But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* The use of the word *mortify*, to put to death or destroy, seems to have been suggested by the context. Ye shall die, unless ye put to death the deeds of the body; see Col. 3: 5. The destruction of sin is a slow and painful process.

*Deeds of the body.** It is commonly said that *body* is here equivalent with *flesh*, and, therefore, signifies *corruption*. But it is very much to be doubted whether the word ever has this sense in the New Testament. The passages commonly quoted in its behalf, Rom. 6: 6. 7: 24. 8: 10, 13, are very far from

* Instead of *σώματα*, D. E. F. G., the Vulgate and many of the early writers have *σάρξ*, which BERNZI and GRIESBACH approve. Although this reading looks like a gloss, it has much in its favour from the weight of these MSS., and the usual mode of speaking of this apostle.

being decisive. If the common reading, therefore, is to be retained (see note), it is better to take the word in its literal and usual sense. *The deeds of the body* is then a metonymical expression for sinful deeds in general; a part being put for the whole. Deeds performed by the body, being, by implication, taken for evil deeds.

The destruction of sin is to be effected *through the Spirit*, which does not mean the renewed feelings of the heart, but, as uniformly throughout the passage, the Holy Spirit which dwells in believers; see v. 14, where this Spirit is called "Spirit of God." *Ye shall live*, i. e. enjoy the life of which the Spirit is the author; including, therefore, holiness, happiness and eternal glory.

(14) *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* This is the reason why all such shall live; that is, a new argument is thus introduced in support of the leading doctrine of the chapter. Believers shall enjoy eternal life, not only because they have the Spirit of life, but because they are the sons of God. *To be led by the Spirit and to walk after the Spirit*, present the same idea, viz. to be under the government of the Spirit, under two different aspects, Gal. 5: 18. & Pet. 1: 21. The former phrase refers to the constant and effectual influence of the Holy Ghost in regulating the thoughts, feelings and conduct of believers. *Are the sons of God.* The term *son*, in such connexions, expresses mainly one or the other of three ideas, and sometimes all of them united. 1. Similarity of disposition, character or nature; Matt. 5: 9, 45, "That ye may be the children (Gr. sons) of your Father which is in heaven." So, too, "sons of Abraham" are those who are like Abraham; and "children of the devil" are those who are like the devil. 2. Objects of peculiar affection. Rom. 9: 26, Those who were not my people, "shall be called sons of the living God;" 2 Cor. 6: 18, "Ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty." So frequently elsewhere. 3. Those who have a title to some peculiar dignity or advantage. Thus the "sons of Abraham" are those who are heirs with Abraham of the same promise, Gal. 3: 8, seq. John 1: 12. 1 John 3: 2, "Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, &c." The term may indeed express any one of the various relations in which

children stand to their parents, as derived from them, dependent on them, &c. &c. The above, however, are the most common of its meanings. In this passage the first and third ideas appear specially intended. 'Believers shall live, because they are the peculiar objects of the divine affection, and are heirs of his kingdom,' vs. 15, 16. That those who are led by the Spirit are really the sons of God, appears from their own filial feelings, and from the testimony of the Spirit.

For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, &c. That is, 'The Holy Spirit, which you have received, does not produce a slavish and anxious state of mind, such as those experience who are under the law; but it produces the filial feelings of affection, reverence and confidence, and enables us, out of the fulness of our hearts, to call God our Father.'

The phrase, the *spirit of bondage*, may mean a feeling or sense of bondage, as "spirit of meekness," 1 Cor. 4: 21, may mean meekness itself; and "spirit of fear," 2 Tim. 1: 7, fear itself. This use of the word spirit is not uncommon. Or it may mean the Holy Spirit as the author of bondage. 'Believers have not received a spirit which produces slavish feelings, but the reverse.' The context is decidedly in favour of this view: because Paul has been speaking of the Holy Spirit as dwelling in Christians. This Spirit is that which they have received, and is the author of their characteristic feelings. In the words *again to fear* there is an evident allusion to the state of believers prior to the reception of the Spirit. It was a state of bondage in which they feared, i. e. were governed by a slavish and anxious apprehension of punishment. In this state are all unconverted men, whether Jews or Gentiles, because they are all under the law, or the bondage of a legal system.

Spirit of adoption; the spirit which produces the feelings which children have. Adoption is for sonship. *By which we cry, Abba Father*, i. e. which enables us to address God as our Father. *Abba* is the Syriac and Chaldee form of the Hebrew word for *father*, and, therefore, was to the apostle the most familiar term. As such, it would doubtless, more naturally and fully, express his filial feeling towards God, than the foreign Greek word. It is rare, indeed, that any other than

our mother tongue becomes so inwoven with our thoughts and feelings, as to come up spontaneously when our hearts are overflowing. Hence, expressions of tenderness are the last words of their native language which foreigners give up, and in times of excitement and even delirium, they are sure to come back. Paul, therefore, chose to call God his Father, in his own familiar tongue. Having used the one word, however, the Greek, of course, became necessary for those to whom he was writing. The repetition of two synonymes may, however, be employed to give fuller utterance to his feeling. It is a very common opinion that Paul used both words, to intimate that all distinction between different nations was now done away.* The preceding explanation seems more natural and satisfactory.

(16) *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* ‘Not only do our own filial feelings towards God prove that we are his children, but the Holy Spirit itself conveys to our souls the assurance of this delightful fact.’

The Spirit itself is, of course, the Holy Spirit. 1. Because of the obvious distinction between it and *our spirit*. 2. Because of the use of the word throughout the passage; and 3. Because of the analogy to other texts which cannot be otherwise explained. Gal. 4: 6, “God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father;” Rom. 5: 5, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us,” &c.

Beareth witness with our spirit, that is, ‘beareth witness, together with our own filial feelings, to our spirit.’† Although it is very common for compound verbs to have the same force with the simple ones, yet, in this case, the context requires the force of the preposition to be retained, as two distinct sources of confidence as here mentioned, one in v. 15, the other in this verse. *Beareth witness to*, means *confirms* or *assures*. ‘The Spirit of God produces in our spirit the assurance that we are the children of God.’ How this is done, we cannot fully un-

* Significat enim Paulus, ita nunc per totum mundum publicatam esse Dei misericordiam, ut promiscue linguis omnibus invocetur: quemadmodum Augustinus observat. Ergo inter omnes gentes consensum exprimere voluit.—CALVIN.

† The Greek is *συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν*.

derstand, any more than we can understand the mode in which he produces any other effect in our mind. The fact is clearly asserted here as well as in other passages. See Rom. 5: 5, where the conviction that we are the objects of the love of God, is said to be produced "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." See 2 Cor. 1: 22. 5: 5. Eph. 1: 13. 4: 30; and in 1 Cor. 2: 4, 5, and 1 John 2: 20, 27, and other passages, the conviction of the truth of the gospel is, in like manner, attributed to the Holy Spirit.

(17) *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, &c.* This is the inference from our adoption in favour of the great theme of the chapter, the safety of believers. If the children of God, they shall become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. The words *to inherit*, *heirs* and *inheritance*, are all of them used in a general sense in the scriptures, in reference to the secure possession of any good, without regard to the mode in which that possession is obtained. They are favourite terms with the sacred writers, because possession by inheritance was much more secure than that obtained by purchase or by any other method. There are three ideas included in these words accessory to that which constitutes their prominent meaning; the right, the certainty and the unalienable character of the possession. Hence, when the apostle says, believers are the heirs of God, he means to recognize their title, in and through the Redeemer, to the promised good, as well as the certainty and security of the possession. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise," Gal. 3: 29. In Gal. 4: 7, we have the same argument as in the passage before us, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ;" see Col. 3: 24. Heb. 9: 15. Eph. 1: 14, &c. *Joint heirs with Christ.* These words are intended to designate the inheritance which believers are to receive. It is not any possession in this world, but it is that good of which Christ himself is the recipient; we are to be partakers of his inheritance. This idea is frequently presented in the scriptures. "Enter ye into the joy of your Lord," Matt. 25: 21; "That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom," Luke 22: 30; "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, &c." Rev. 3: 21, and in many other places.

If so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together. That, at the beginning of the second clause, expresses merely the result. ‘If we suffer, then also shall we be glorified.’ The union of believers with Christ, in suffering as well as in glory, is what he and his apostles taught them to expect. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and *follow me*, Matt. 16: 24; “If we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*. If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*,” 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12. The blessedness of the future state is always represented as exalted; it is a glory, something that will elevate us in the rank of beings, enlarging, purifying and ennobling all our faculties. To this state we are to attain “through much tribulation,” i. e. attain it as Christ did. And this is what the apostle here intends to say, and not that the participation of Christ’s glory, is a reward for our having suffered with him.*

(18) *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared, &c.* ‘If children, then heirs, for I do not think our present sufferings inconsistent with our being either the children or heirs of God. 1. Because they are comparatively insignificant, vs. 18—23; and 2. Because we are sustained under them, vs. 24—28.’ Without much altering the sense, the *for* may be considered as referring to the last clause of the preceding verse. ‘We shall be glorified with Christ, *for* these present afflictions are not worthy of thought.’ In 2 Cor. 4: 17, Paul speaks much in the same manner of the lightness of the afflictions of this life in comparison with *the glory that shall be revealed in us*. We are not only the recipients of a great favour, but the subjects in which a great display of the divine glory is to be made to others, Eph. 3: 10. It is a revelation of glory in us; see Col. 3: 4. 1 John 3: 2.

The apostle, fired with the thought of the future glory of the saints, pours forth the splendid passage which follows (vs. 19—23), in which he represents the whole creation groaning under its present degradation, and looking and longing for the revelation of this glory as the end and consummation of its existence.

* Nos Christi coheredes esse, modo ad cernendam hereditatem eadem, qua ipse via progressus est, ipsum sequamur.—CALVIN.

(19) *For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.* This and the following verses are evidently intended to exalt our conceptions of the future glory of the children of God, in order to illustrate the truth of the declaration, that, in comparison with that glory, the evils of the present state are not worthy of a thought. *The earnest expectation.* This is a strong expression. The Greek word is etymologically expressive of the gesture of expectation, a looking with outstretched neck.* Whatever may be the use of the word in some other places, it is evidently used here with emphasis, and is, therefore, properly rendered an *earnest expectation*.

What is meant in this passage by the *creature*, and afterwards by the *whole creation*, is a very difficult question. As the usage of the term admits of various interpretations, the decision of the point must rest on the context. With which well authorized sense of the word rendered *creature* (κτίσις) will the context best agree? To answer this question we must know what the context means. It will, therefore, be better to defer any remarks on this point, until after the examination of the few next succeeding verses.

The first thing asserted of this *creature* is, that it *waits for the manifestation of the sons of God*. That is, for the time when they shall be manifested in their true character and glory, as his sons. "Beloved now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him," 1 John 3: 2. The period thus designated is one for which the whole creation longs, because it is to share in the glory then to be revealed. From this verse, and from v. 23, it is plain that the *creation* and sons of God are distinct.

(20) *For the creature was made subject to vanity, &c.* There are in this verse three reasons expressed or implied, why the creature thus waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. The first is, that it is now in a miserable condition, "subject to vanity." 2. That this subjection was not voluntary, but imposed by God. 3. That it was never designed to be final.

The creature *is subject to vanity*. As remarked above (ch. 1: 21), vanity and wickedness are very nearly associated ideas

* Ἄνωκαταδοκία from καταδοκέω, *capite erecto specto*.

in the scripture; *vain* or *foolish* being often synonymous with *corrupt* or *wicked*.* *Vanity*, therefore, is interchanged with *corruption* in the next verse, and expresses both the ideas of frailty (corruption), and consequently misery. It is the opposite of the glorious state expected, and, therefore, expresses every thing which distinguishes unfavourably the present from the glorious future. To this state the creature was made subject, *not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope*. *Not willingly*, i. e. not of its own accord. The state of corruption is one to which it was loth to be made subject, and from which it would fain be delivered. Or, not by its own free act, but the act of another. Which idea should be preferred depends on the manner in which the next clause is understood.

By reason of him who hath subjected.† The original may mean either, *on account of him, &c.*, or *by him*. If the former rendering be preferred, the passage means, ‘The creature was made subject to its present degraded condition, not from any fondness for it, but out of regard to the authority of God.’‡ If the latter meaning is, ‘This subjection was not the result of the voluntary act of the creature, but was effected by God.’ The former is best suited to the *usual* force of the preposition here used, when connected with the accusative, but the latter gives the better sense; and is by no means inconsistent with the use of the preposition in question (John 6: 57. 15: 3, &c.; see Wahl), and is, therefore, to be preferred. The words *in hope* may be connected either with the immediately preceding clause, *God hath subjected it in hope*; or with the previous member of the sentence, ‘*The creature was made subject to vanity* (not voluntarily, but by God) *in hope*.’ That is, the subjection was not hopeless;§ see Acts 2: 26. The latter mode is much to be preferred on account of the following verse.

* “I have not sat with vain persons,” Ps. 26: 4. “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,” Eccl. 1: 2. “In the vanity of their minds,” Eph. 4: 17.

† Διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα.

‡ Obedientia exemplum in creaturis omnibus proponit, et eam addit ex spe nasci, quia hinc soli et lunae, stellisque omnibus ad assiduum cursum alacritas: hinc terrae ad fructus gignendos sedulitas obsequii, hinc aeris indefessa agitatio, hinc aquis ad fluxum promptus vigor, quia Deus suas quibusque partes injunxit, &c.—CALVIN.

§ Submittit se jugo, hac tamen spe, fore, ut et ipsa liberetur tandem ab eo.—KOPPE.

(21) *Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, &c.* This verse, according to our version, assigns the reason why the subjection of the creature was not hopeless. This reason is, that the creature was to share in the glorious redemption. The particle, however, rendered *because*, may be rendered *that*, and the verse then indicates the object of the hope just spoken of. The subjection was with the hope *that* the creature should be delivered. In either way the sense is nearly the same. *The creature itself also* is another of the forms of expression which show that Paul speaks of the creation in a sense which does not embrace the children of God. *Bondage of corruption*, i. e. bondage to corruption. The state of frailty and degradation spoken of above.

Delivered, or liberated into the liberty, is an elliptical form of expression for 'Delivered and introduced into the liberty.' *Liberty of glory*, as the words literally mean, or *glorious liberty*, refer to that liberty which consists in, or is connected with the glory which is the end and consummation of the work of redemption. This word often is used for the whole of the results of the work of Christ as far as his people are concerned. (See v. 18.) The creature then is to be a partaker in some way, according to its nature, of the glories in reserve for the sons of God.*

(22) *For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.* This verse is a repetition and confirmation of the preceding sentiment. 'The creature is subject to vanity and longs for deliverance; for we see from universal and long continued experience the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain.' It is, however, as Calvin remarks, the pains of birth, and not of death. After sorrow comes the joy of a new existence. The word *together* may have reference to the *whole creation* which groans together,

* Porro non intelligit, consortes ejusdem gloriæ fore creaturas cum filiis Dei, sed suo modo melioris status fore socias: quia Deus simul cum humano genere orbem nunc collapsum in integrum restituet. Qualis vero futura sit integritas illa tam in pecudibus quam in plantis et metallis, curiosius inquirere neque expedit, neque fas est. Quia præcipua pars corruptionis est interitus: Quærent arguti, sed parum sobrii homines, an immortale futurum sit omne animalium genus: his speculationibus si frenum laxetur, quorsum tandem nos abripiant? Hac ergo simplici doctrina contenti simus, tale fore temperamentum, et tam concinnum ordinem, ut nihil vel deforme vel fluxum appareat.—CALVIN.

all its parts uniting and sympathizing; or it may refer to the sons of God, 'For the whole creation groans together with the sons of God.' On account of the following verse, in which Christians are specially introduced as joining with the whole creation in this sense of present misery and desire of future good, the former method of understanding the passage seems preferable. *Until now*, from the beginning until the present time. The creature has always been looking forward to the day of redemption.*

(23) *And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, &c.* 'Not only does the whole creation thus groan, but we ourselves, we Christians, who have a foretaste of heavenly bliss, the first fruits of the glorious inheritance, we groan within ourselves, and long for the consummation of glory.' The *first fruits* were that portion of the productions of the earth which were offered to God. From the nature of the case, they contained the evidence and assurance of the whole harvest being secured. The idea, therefore, of an earnest or pledge is included in the phrase, as well as that of priority. This is the general if not constant use of the word in the New Testament. Thus Christ is called "the first fruits of them that slept," 1 Cor. 15: 20, not merely because he rose first, but also because his resurrection was a pledge of the resurrection of his people. See Rom. 11: 16. 16: 5. 1 Cor. 16: 15. James 1: 18. In all these places both ideas *may be*, and probably ought to be retained. In the passages before us, what is here called the first fruits of the Spirit, is elsewhere called the earnest of the Spirit, Eph. 1: 14, &c. The phrases, therefore, *the Spirit which is the first fruits*, and *the Spirit which is an earnest*, are synonymous. The Spirit is the first fruits of the full inheritance of the saints in light. The expression in the text, therefore, is descriptive of all Christians, and not of any particular class of them; that is, it is not to be confined to those who first received the influences of the Spirit, or were first converted.

Even we ourselves, or, and we ourselves. These words are

* Particula Hactenus, vel ad hunc usque diem, ad levandum diurni languoris taedium pertinet. Nam si tot saeculis durarunt in suo gemitu creaturae, quam inexcusabilis erit nostra mollities vel ignavia, si in brevi umbratilis vitae curriculo deficiamus?—CALVIN.

by many understood to refer to the apostle himself. 'Not only Christians generally, but I myself.' But it is not Paul's manner to distinguish himself thus from other Christians. The passage is more natural and forcible according to our version. 'Not only the whole creation, but we Christians, even we, &c.' *Groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.* What in the previous verse he had called the manifestation of the sons of God, he here calls the *adoption*; the time when it shall appear what we shall be, as the apostle John expresses it. *The redemption of the body* is not so in opposition with *the adoption* that the two phrases are equivalent. The adoption includes far more than the redemption of the body. But the latter event is to be coincident with the former, and is included in it, as one of its most prominent parts. Both expressions, therefore, designate the same period. 'We wait for the time when we shall be fully recognised as the children of God, i. e. for the time when our vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God.' How much stress Paul laid upon the redemption of the body is evident not only from this passage, and that in Phil. 3: 21, just quoted, but also from the whole of 1 Cor. 15, especially the latter part of the chapter. The time of the resurrection of the body, or the manifestation of the sons of God, is the time of the second advent of Jesus Christ. See 1 Cor. 15: 23, "Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's, at his coming." 1 Thess. 4: 16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive, &c." This is the period towards which all eyes and all hearts have been directed among those who have had the first fruits of the Spirit since the fall of Adam; and for which the whole creation groaneth and is in travail even until now.

Having now examined those verses which are necessary for understanding what Paul means by the *creature* or *whole creation* in this interesting passage, we are better prepared to investigate that point. It is by no means our intention to enter at length on this subject, because it is unnecessary, and because it would be foreign to the design of this work. Those who

wish to see this matter canvassed at length, may consult the works referred to in the margin.*

As remarked above, our principal guide, in the interpretation of this passage, is the context, and analogous passages in other parts of scripture. The usage of the word (*κτίσις*) employed by the apostle, throws but little light on the subject. It means properly the *act of creating*. Rom. 1: 20, "*from the creation of the world:*" and then, by metonymy, it means *that which is created*; Rom. 1: 25, "Who serve *the creature* more than the Creator;" Col. 1: 15, Christ is called "the first born of *every creature*," i. e. 'the head of the whole creation;' Rev. 3: 14, he is called the "beginning of the creation of God," that is, as before, 'The head of the creation.' It is also used of rational creatures exclusively. Mark 16: 15, "Preach the gospel to *every creature*;" Col. 1: 23, "Which was preached to *every creature* under heaven." The phrase *new creature* does not seem to belong here, as, from the connexion in which it occurs, it may mean simply *a great change, a new creation*. These are all the senses in which the word is used in the New Testament.† Whether, therefore, it means here the rational or irrational creation, can only be determined by the context. It is not our object even to enumerate in detail the various interpretations of this passage. There are but two which have much plausibility. The first is that which makes *the creature* to mean mankind generally, the whole human family, the rational creation on earth. The second supposes it to mean the irrational creation, considered as a whole. The former of these views is presented somewhat differently by its advocates. Some make the whole creation to mean *the world*, i. e. *unconverted men*; and others, the *human family*, without reference to the distinction between Christians and others. But this seems to be inconsistent with the marked distinction which Paul makes between the *creature* and the sons of God, which seems to im-

* PROF. STUART'S Dissertation on Rom. 8: 18—25, Biblical Repository, Vol. I. p. 363. KEIL'S Opuscula Academica, p. 194. NORSSELT'S Opuscula Academica, Fasciculus I. p. 113. THOLUCK and FLATT on the Romans, particularly the latter, who discusses the matter at great length.

† 1 Pet. 2: 13, *πάση ἀνθρώπων ἡ κτίσει* is rendered "To every ordinance of man;" by others, "To every human creature."

ply that the latter were not a part of the former; see vs. 19, 23. It is most common, therefore, among the advocates of this view of the passage, to understand by *the creature* mankind in opposition to the children of God.* The only question is, does this view suit the context? Can what is here said of the *creature*, be said of mankind generally? We think not.

1. It cannot be said of the world of mankind, that they have an earnest expectation and desire for the manifestation of the sons of God. The common longing after immortality, to which reference is made in defence of the application of this verse to men in general, is very far from coming up to the force of the passage. "The manifestation of the sons of God" is a definite scriptural event, just as much as the second advent of Christ. It can, therefore, no more be said that the world longs for the one event than for the other. Yet had the apostle said the whole creation was longing for the second advent of the Son of God, can any one imagine he meant they were merely sighing after immortality? He evidently intends, that the creature is looking forward, with earnest expectation, to that great scriptural event which, from the beginning, has been held up as the great object of hope, viz. the consummation of the Redeemer's kingdom.

2. It cannot be said, in its full and proper force, that mankind were brought into their present state not by their own act or "willingly," but by the act and power of God. The obvious meaning of v. 20 seems to be, that the fact that the creature was subjected to its present state not by itself, but by God, is the reason, at once, why it longs for deliverance, and may hope to obtain it. Such exculpatory declarations respecting men, are not in keeping with the scriptural mode of speaking either of the conduct or condition of the world. The spirit of this verse might almost be expressed thus, 'It is not so much the creature's fault as God's, that it is subject to vanity.' Nothing approaching this can, of course, be said of the world of sinners.

* HAMMOND, LOCKE, LIGHTFOOT, SEMLER, AMMON and others may be quoted in favour of this interpretation. WETSTEIN expresses the same view briefly and plausibly thus: *Genus humanum dividitur in eos, qui jam Christo nomen dederunt, quique primitiæ vocantur hic et Jac. 1: 18, et reliquos, qui nondum Christo nomen dederunt, qui vocantur creatura, vid. Marc. 16: 15. Et Judæi sentiunt onus legis suæ: et gentes reliquæ tenebras suas palpant, prædicatione evangelii tanquam e somno excitatæ; ubique magna rerum conversio expectatur.*

3. A still greater difficulty is found in reconciling this interpretation with v. 21. How can it be said of mankind, as a whole, that they are to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and made partakers of the glorious liberty of the children of God? And, especially, how can this be said to occur at the time of the manifestation of the sons of God, i. e. at the time of the second advent, the resurrection day, when the consummation of the Redeemer's kingdom is to take place? According to the description here given, the whole creation is to groan under its bondage until the day of redemption, and then it also is to be delivered. This description can, in no satisfactory sense, be applied to mankind, as distinguished from the people of God.

4. This interpretation does not suit the spirit of the context or drift of the passage. The apostle is represented as saying, in substance, "The very nature and condition of the human race point to a future state; they declare that this is an imperfect, frail, dying, unhappy state; that man does not and cannot attain the end of his being here; and even Christians, supported as they are by the earnest of future glory, still find themselves obliged to sympathize with others in these sufferings, sorrows and deferred hopes."* But how feeble and attenuated is all this, compared to the glowing sentiments of the apostle! His object is not to show that this state is one of frailty and sorrow, and that Christians must feel this as well as others. On the contrary, he wishes to show that the sufferings of this state are utterly insignificant in comparison with the future glory of the sons of God. And then to prove how great this glory is, he says the whole creation, with outstretched neck, has been longing for its manifestation from the beginning of the world; groaning not so much under present evil as from anxiety for future good.

Such are the principal objections to the former of the two interpretations mentioned above. It is easy, however, to object. Can the other view of the passage be carried through more satisfactorily? Can what Paul says of the *creature* be understood of the irrational creation?

1. In order, as just remarked, to show the greatness of the future glory of saints, Paul in the use of a strong, but common

* PROF. STUART'S Commentary on the Romans, p. 340.

figure, represents the whole creation as longing for it. There is nothing in this unnatural, unusual, or unscriptural. On the contrary, it is in the highest degree beautiful and effective; and at the same time, in strict accordance with the manner of the sacred writers. How common is it to represent the whole creation as a sentient being, rejoicing in God's favour, trembling at his anger, speaking abroad his praise, &c. How often too is it represented as sympathizing in the joy of the people of God! "The mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands," Is. 55: 12. It may be objected that such passages are poetical; but so is this. It is not written in metre, but it is poetical in the highest degree. There is, therefore, nothing in the strong figurative language of v. 19, either inappropriate to the apostle's object, or inconsistent with the manner of the sacred writers.

2. It may, with the strictest propriety, be said, that the irrational creation was subjected to vanity not willingly, but by the authority of God. It shared in the penalty of the fall, "Cursed is the earth for thy sake," Gen. 8: 17. And it is said still to suffer for the sins of its inhabitants. "Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth," Is. 24: 6. "How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein?" Jer. 12: 4. This is a common mode of representation in the scriptures. How far the face of nature was affected, or the spontaneous fruitfulness of the earth changed by the curse, it is vain to ask. It is sufficient that the irrational creation was made subject to a frail, dying, miserable state by the act of God (not by its own), in punishment of the sins of men. This is the representation of the scriptures and this is the declaration of Paul. While this is true of the irrational creation, it is not true of mankind.

3. The third and principal point in the description of the apostle is, that this subjection of the creature to the bondage of corruption is not final or hopeless, but the whole creation is to share in the glorious liberty of the children of God. This also is in perfect accordance with the scriptural mode of representation on this subject. Nothing is more familiar to the readers of the Old Testament, than the idea that the whole face of the world is to be clothed in new beauty when the Messiah appears. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad

for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose," &c. &c. Is. 35: 1. 29: 17. 32: 15, 16. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them," Is. 11: 6. Such passages are too numerous to be cited. The apostle Peter, speaking of the second advent, says, the present state of things shall be changed, the heavens shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," 2 Peter 3: 7—13. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heavens and the first earth were passed away," Rev. 21: 1; see Heb. 12: 26, 27. It is common, therefore, to describe the advent of the Messiah, as attended with a great and glorious change of the external world. Whether this is intended merely as an exornation, as is doubtless the case with many of the prophetic passages of the Old Testament; or whether it is really didactic, and teaches the doctrine of the restoration of the earth, to more than its pristine beauty, which seems to be the meaning of some of the New Testament passages, is perfectly immaterial to our present purpose. It is enough that the sacred writers describe the consummation of the Redeemer's kingdom as attended with the *palingenesis* of the whole creation. This is all Paul does; whether poetically or didactically, is too broad a question to be here entered upon.

4. In further confirmation of this interpretation it may be remarked, that this doctrine of the renewal of the external world, derived from the language of the prophets, was a common doctrine among the Jews. Abundant evidence of this fact may be seen in Eisenmenger's *Entdecktes Judenthum* (Judaism Revealed), particularly in chapter 15th of the second part. The following passages are a specimen of the manner in which the Jewish writers speak on this subject. "Hereafter, when the sin of men is removed, the earth, which God cursed on account of that sin, will return to its former state and blessedness as it was before the sin of men," p. 828. "At this time the whole creation shall be changed for the better, and return to the perfection and purity which it had in the time of the first man, before sin was." See this latter quotation and others of a similar import in Tholuck. In the early Christian church this

opinion was prevalent, and was the germ whence the extravagances of the Millenarians arose. Almost all such errors contain a portion of truth, to which they are indebted for their origin and extension. The vagaries, therefore, of the early heretics, and the still grosser follies of the Talmudical writers on this subject, furnish presumptive and confirmatory evidence, that the sacred writers did teach a doctrine, or at least employed a mode of speaking of the future condition of the external world, which easily accounts for these errors.

5. This interpretation is suited to the apostle's object, which was not to confirm the truth of a future state, but to produce a strong impression of its glorious character. What could be better adapted to this object than the grand and beautiful figure of the whole creation in an agony of earnest expectation for its approach ?

6. This is the common interpretation, which, other things being equal, is a great recommendation, as the most obvious sense is almost always the true one.

7. The objections to this view of the passage are inconclusive.

1. It is objected that it would require us to understand all such passages, as speak of a latter day of glory, literally, and believe that the house of God is to stand on the top of the mountains, &c. &c. But this is a mistake. When it is said "The heavens declare the glory of God," we do not understand the words literally, when we understand them as speaking of the visible heavens. Neither are the prophetic descriptions of the state of the world at the time of the second advent explained literally, even when understood didactically, that is, as teaching that there is to be a great and glorious change in the condition of the world. But even this, as remarked above, is not necessary to make good the common interpretation. It is sufficient that Paul, after the manner of the other sacred writers, describes the external world as sympathizing with the righteous, and participating in the glories of the Messiah's reign. If this be a poetic exaggeration in the one case, it may be in the other. Again, it is objected that the common interpretation is not suited to the design of the passage. But this objection is founded on a misapprehension of that design. The apostle does not intend to confirm our assurance of the truth of future glory, but to exalt our conceptions of its greatness. Finally, it is said to be very

unnatural that Paul should represent the external world as longing for a better state, and Christians doing the same, and the world of mankind be left unnoticed. But this is not unnatural if the apostle's design be as just stated.

There appears, therefore, to be no valid objection against supposing the apostle, in this beautiful passage, to bring into strong contrast with our present light and momentary afflictions, the permanent and glorious blessedness of our future state; and, in order to exalt our conceptions of its greatness, to represent the whole creation, now groaning beneath the consequences of the fall, as anxiously waiting for the long expected day of redemption.

(24, 25) The apostle, intending to show that the present afflictions of believers are not inconsistent with their being the children of God, and are therefore no ground of discouragement, refers not only to their comparative insignificance, but also to the necessity which there is, from the nature of the case, for these sufferings. 'Salvation, in its fulness, is not a present good, but a matter of hope, and of course future; and if future, it follows that we must wait for it in patient and joyful expectation.' While, therefore, *waiting* for salvation is necessary from the nature of the case, the nature of the blessing waited for, converts expectation into desire, and enables us patiently to endure all present evils.

For we are saved by hope. At the close of the preceding verse Paul had spoken of believers as "*waiting for the adoption.*" They thus wait, because salvation is not a present good, but a future one. We are saved *in* hope, i. e. in prospect. The dative, in which form the word for *hope* here occurs, does not in this case express the means by which any thing is done,* but the condition or circumstances in which it is.† It is, therefore, analogous to our forms of expression, *we have a thing in expectation or prospect.* Salvation is a blessing we have in hope, not in possession; if it be the one, it cannot be the other, *since hope that is seen is not hope.* It lies in the nature of hope that its object must be future. The word *hope* is here

* Or as THOLUCK says, Paul does not represent hope as the $\delta\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\alpha\nu\nu$ $\lambda\eta\pi\tau\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\nu$ of salvation; this office he always assigns to faith.

† WILNER'S Grammatik, p. 176.

used objectively for *the thing hoped for*, as in Col. 1: 5, "The hope that is laid up for you in heaven;" Heb. 6: 18. Eph. 1: 18, &c. The latter clause of the verse, *for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for*, is only a confirmation of the previous declaration that it lies in the nature of hope to have reference to the future.

(25) *But if we hope for that we see not*, &c. That is, 'If hope has reference to the unseen and the future, then as salvation is a matter of hope, it is a matter to be waited for.' It results, therefore, from the nature of the plan of redemption, that the full fruition of its blessing should not be obtained at once, but that, through much tribulation, believers should enter into the kingdom; consequently their being called upon to suffer, is not at all inconsistent with their being sons and heirs. *Then do we with patience wait for it.* There is something more implied in these words than that salvation, because unseen, must be waited for. This no doubt, from the connexion, is the main idea, but we not only wait, but we wait *with patience* or *constancy*. There is something in the very expectation of future good, and, especially, of such good, the glory that shall be revealed in us, to produce not only the patient, but even joyful endurance of all present suffering.

(26) *Not only so.* Not only does hope thus cheer and support the suffering believer, but *likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities.* *Likewise*, literally *in the same way*. As hope sustains, so, in the same manner, the Spirit does also. Not that the mode of assistance is the same, but simply as the one does, so also does the other. In this case at least, therefore, the word thus rendered is equivalent with *moreover*. The translation *likewise* suits the context exactly. *Helpeth*, the word thus rendered, means *to take hold of any thing with another*, to take part in his burden and thus to aid. It is, therefore, peculiarly expressive and appropriate. It represents the condescending Spirit as taking upon himself, as it were, a portion of our sorrows to relieve us of their pressure.* *Our infirmities*† is the

* Magna est vis Graeci verbi συναρτιλαμβάνουσαι, quod scilicet partes oneris quo nostra infirmitas gravatur, ad se recipiens Spiritus non modo auxiliatur nobis et succurrit, sed perinde nos sublevat acsi ipse nobiscum onus subiret.—CALVIN.

† For ταις ἀσθενείαις, the singular τῆ ἀσθενείᾳ is read by MSS. A. C. D. 10, 23, 31, 37, 47, and the Syriac and Latin versions. LACHMANN has the singular.

appropriate rendering of the original, which expresses the idea both of weakness and suffering. Heb. 4: 15, "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities;" 2 Cor. 12: 5, "I will not glory, but in mine infirmities."

For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit, &c. This is said as an illustration and confirmation of the previous general declaration; it is an example of the way in which the Spirit aids us. 'He helpeth our infirmities, for he teaches us how to pray, dictating to us our supplications, &c.' The necessity for this aid arises from our ignorance, we know not what to pray for. We cannot tell what is really best for us. Heathen philosophers gave this as a reason why men ought not to pray!* How miserable their condition when compared to ours. Instead of our ignorance putting a seal upon our lips and leaving our hearts to break, the Spirit gives our desires a language heard and understood of God. As we do not know how to pray, the Spirit teaches us. This idea the apostle expresses by saying *the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us*. The simple verb (ἀντιγγιλάω), rendered *he maketh intercession*, properly means *to meet*, then *to approach any one to make supplication*, Acts 25: 24. This supplication may be against any one, Rom. 11: 2, or for him, v. 34. Heb. 7: 25. Hence, *to intercede for*, is to act the part of advocate in behalf of any one. This Christ is said to do for us in the last two passages cited, as well as in Heb. 9: 24. 1 John 2: 1, and John 14: 16, for Christ calls the Holy Spirit "*another advocate*," i. e. another than himself. This office is ascribed to the Spirit in the last passage quoted in John 14: 26. 15: 26, and 16: 7, as well as in the passage before us. As the Spirit is thus said, in the general, to do for us what an advocate did for his client, so he does also what it was the special duty of the advocate to perform, i. e. to dictate to his clients what they ought to say, how they should present their cause.† In this sense the present passage is to be understood. 'We do not

* *Diogenes*, L. VIII. 9. Pythagoras οὐκ ἔφη εὐχασθαι ὑπὲρ ἑαυτῶν διὰ τὸ μὴ εἰδάναι τὸ συμπέρον.—WETSTEIN.

† See KNAPP'S *Dissertation De Spiritu Sancto et Christo Paracletis*, p. 114, of his *Scripta Varii Argumenti*. Or the translation of that *Dissertation* in the *Biblical Repertory*, Vol. I. p. 234.

know how to pray, but the Spirit teaches. He excites in us those desires which, though never uttered except in sighs, or which, though too big for utterance, are known and heard of God.* It is doubtful whether Paul means to say these groanings cannot be uttered, or simply, that they are not uttered; desires which vent themselves only in sighs. The Greek word admits of either sense, and either is suited to the context.

(27) Though these desires are not, or cannot be clothed in words, the eye of him who searches the heart can read and understand them there. *And he who searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit.* The conjunction ought to be rendered disjunctively. ‘The groanings cannot be uttered, but they are neither unintelligible nor neglected.’ *He who searcheth the hearts* is a common paraphrase for God, and here most appropriate. As no man knoweth the thoughts of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him; to read those unexpressed emotions of the soul, is the prerogative of that Being to whose eyes all things are naked and opened. “I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins,” Jer. 17: 10; see Ps. 7: 9. Rev. 2: 23, &c. &c.

Knoweth the mind of the Spirit. Not simply understands, but recognises and approves, as he knows “the ways of the righteous,” Ps. 1: 6. The former idea, that of *understanding*, though the more prominent, does not exclude the other.† *The mind of the Spirit*,‡ i. e. those feelings or that state of mind of which the Spirit is the author, the desires which the Spirit calls forth in our souls. *The Spirit* must necessarily be that Spirit which intercedes for the saints; and which, in the preceding verse, is expressly distinguished from our souls. The

* *Interpellare autem dicitur Spiritus Dei, non quod ipse re vera suppliciter se ad precandum vel gemendum demittat, sed quod in animis nostris excitet ea vota, quibus nos sollicitari convenit: deinde corda nostra sic afficiat, ut suo ardore in coelum penetrent.—CALVIN.*

“As a mother dictates its prayers to her child, so the Holy Ghost to us, who repeat them with a faltering tongue.”—St. MARTIN *l’homme de désir*, p. 280, as quoted by THOLUCK.

† Hic verbi *Novisse* adnotanda est proprietas: significat enim, Deum non ut novos et insolentes illos Spiritus affectus non animadvertere, vel tanquam absurdos rejicere: sed agnoscere, et simul benigne excipere ut agnitos sibi et probatos.—CALVIN.

‡ Τὸ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος.

interpretation, therefore, which makes "*the mind of the Spirit*" mean *the desires of our spirit*, though it would give a very good sense, is irreconcilable with the context.

Because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. This is the reason why God is said to *know*, i. e. not only to understand, but to approve the mind of the Spirit, or those unutterable longings which the Spirit excites. Being produced by the Spirit of God himself, they are, of course, agreeable to the will of God, and secure of being approved and answered. This is the great consolation and support of believers. They know not either what is best for themselves or agreeable to the will of God; but the Holy Spirit dictates those petitions and excites those desires which are consistent with the divine purposes, and which are directed towards blessings the best suited to our wants. Such prayers are always answered. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us," 1 John 5: 7.*

(28) *And we know all things work together for good to them that love God, &c.* This may be regarded as virtually, though not formally, an inference from what Paul had taught concerning afflictions. As they are comparatively insignificant, as they call forth the exercises of hope and give occasion for the kind interposition of the Holy Spirit, far from being inconsistent with our salvation, they contribute to our good. It seems, however, more natural to consider the apostle as presenting the consideration contained in this verse, as an additional reason why the afflictions of this life are not inconsistent with our being the sons of God. These afflictions are real blessings. *All things*, as is usually the case with such general expressions, is to be limited to the things spoken of in the context, i. e. the sufferings of the present time. See 1 Cor. 2: 15, where the spiritual man is said to understand "all things;" Col. 1 20, where Christ is said to reconcile "all things unto God;" and Eph. 1: 10, with many other similar passages.† Of course, it

* Quare si orationes nostras acceptas Deo volumus, rogandus ipse ut eas moderetur ad suum arbitrium.—CALVIN.

† Tenendum est, Paulum non nisi de rebus adversis loqui: acsi dixisset Divinitus sic temperari quaecunque sanctis accidunt, ut, quod mundus noxium esse putat, exitus utile esse demonstret. Nam tametsi verum est, quod ait Augustinus, pec-

is not intended that other events, besides afflictions, do not work together for the good of Christians, but merely that this idea is not here expressed by the apostle.

Those to whom afflictions are a real blessing are described, first, as *those who love God*; and secondly, as *those who are called according to his purpose*. The former of these clauses describes the character of the persons intended; *they love God*, which is a comprehensive expression for all the exercises of genuine religion. The latter clause declares a fact, with regard to all such, which has a most important bearing on the apostle's great object in this chapter, *they are called according to his purpose*. The word *called*, as remarked above (1: 7), is never, in the epistles of the New Testament, applied to those who are the recipients of the mere external invitation of the gospel. It always means *effectually called*, i. e. it is always applied to those who are really brought to accept of the blessings to which they are invited. 1 Cor. 1: 24, "But to those who are called," i. e. to true Christians. Jude 1, "To those who are sanctified by God the Father, and are preserved in Jesus Christ *the called*," 1 Cor. 1: 2, &c. The word is, therefore, often equivalent with *chosen*, as in the phrase "called an apostle," 1 Cor. 1: 1. Rom. 1: 1, and "called of Jesus Christ," Rom. 1: 6. And thus in the Old Testament, "Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called," Is. 48: 12; see Is. 42: 6. 49: 1. 51: 2. Those who love God, therefore, are those whom he hath chosen and called by his grace to a participation of the Redeemer's kingdom. This call is not according to the merits of men, but according to the divine *purpose*. "Who hath saved us, and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," 2 Tim. 1: 9. Eph. 1: 11. Rom. 9: 11. The design of the apostle, in the introduction of this clause, seems to have been two fold. First, to show, according to his usual manner, that the fact that some men love God is to be attributed to his sovereign grace, and not to themselves; and, secondly, that if men are called, according to the eternal purpose of God, their salvation is secure. By this

cata quoque sua, ordinante Dei providentia, sanctis adeo non nocere, ut potius eorum saluti inſerviant: ad hunc tamen locum non pertinet, ubi de cruce agitur.

—CALVIN.

latter idea, this clause is associated with the passage that follows, and with the general object of the chapter. That the *calling* of men does secure their salvation is proved in verses 29—30.

Doctrines.

1. True Christians are the sons of God, objects of his affection, partakers of his moral nature, and heirs of his kingdom, v. 14.

2. The relation of God to us is necessarily the counterpart of ours to him. If we feel as friends to him, he feels as a friend towards us; if our sentiments are filial, his are parental, v. 15.

3. God, who is every where present and active, manifests his presence, and communicates with his creatures in a manner accordant with their nature, although in a way that is inscrutable, v. 16.

4. Assurance of salvation has a twofold foundation. The experience of those affections which are the evidences of true piety, and the witness of the Holy Spirit. The latter can never be separated from the former; for the Spirit can never testify to what is not the truth. He can never assure an enemy that he is a child of God, v. 16.

5. Union with Christ is the source of all our blessings of justification and sanctification, as taught in the previous chapters, and of salvation, as taught in this, v. 17.

6. Afflictions are not inconsistent with the divine favour, nor with our being the sons of God, vs. 18—25.

7. The future glory of the saints must be inconceivably great, if the whole creation, from the beginning of the world, groans and longs for its manifestation, vs. 19—23.

8. The curse consequent on the fall has affected the state of the external world. The consummation of the work of redemption may be attended with its regeneration, vs. 20—22.

9. The present influences of the Spirit are first fruits of the inheritance of the saints; the same in kind with the blessings of the future state, though less in degree. They are a pledge of future blessedness, and always produce an earnest longing for the fruition of the full inheritance, v. 23.

10. As, for wise reasons, salvation is not immediately consequent on regeneration, hope, which is the joyful expectation

of future good, becomes the duty, solace and support of the Christian, vs. 24, 25.

11. The Holy Spirit is our Paraclete (John 14: 16) or advocate, we are his *clients*, we know not how to plead our own cause, but he dictates to us what we ought to say. This office of the Spirit ought to be recognised, sought, and gratefully acknowledged, v. 26.

12. Prayer to be acceptable must be according to the will of God, and it always is so when it is dictated or excited by the Holy Spirit, v. 27.

13. All events are under the control of God; and even the greatest afflictions are productive of good to those who love him, v. 28.

14. The calling or conversion of men, involving so many of their free acts, is a matter of divine purpose, and it occurs in consequence of its being so, v. 28.

Remarks.

1. If God, by his Spirit, condescends to dwell in us, it is our highest duty to allow ourselves to be governed or led by him, vs. 12, 13.

2. It is a contradiction in terms, to profess to be the sons of God, if destitute of the filial feelings of confidence, affection, and reverence, v. 15.

3. A spirit of fear, so far from being an evidence of piety, is an evidence of the contrary. The filial spirit is the genuine spirit of religion, v. 15.

4. Assurance of hope is not fanatical, but is an attainment which every Christian should make. If the witness of men is received, the witness of God is greater. As the manifestation of God's love to us is made in exciting our love towards him, so the testimony of his Spirit with ours, that we are the sons of God, is made when our filial feelings are in lively exercise, v. 16.

5. Christians ought neither to expect nor wish to have suffering with Christ disconnected with their being glorified with him. The former is a preparation for the latter, v. 17.

6. The afflictions of this life, though in themselves not joyous but grievous, are worthy of little regard in comparison with the glory that shall be revealed in us. To bear these trials properly,

we should think much of the manifestation of the sons of God, v. 18.

7. As the present state of things is one of bondage to corruption, as there is a dreadful pressure of sin and misery on the whole creation, we should not regard the world as our home, but desire deliverance from this bondage and introduction into the liberty of the children of God, vs. 19—22.

8. It is characteristic of genuine piety to have exalted conceptions of future blessedness, and earnest longings after it. Those, therefore, who are contented with the world and indifferent about heaven, can hardly possess the first fruits of the Spirit, v. 23.

9. Hope and patience are always united. If we have a well-founded hope of heaven, then do we with patience and fortitude wait for it. This believing resignation and joyful expectation of the promises are peculiarly pleasing in the sight of God and honourable to religion, vs. 24, 25.

10. How wonderful the condescension of the Holy Spirit! How great his kindness in teaching us, as a parent his children, how to pray and what to pray for! How abundant the consolation thus afforded to the pious in the assurance that their prayers shall be heard, vs. 26, 27.

11. Those who are in Christ, who love God, may repose in perfect security beneath the shadow of his wings. All things shall work together for their good, because all things are under the control of him who has called them to the possession of eternal life according to his own purpose, v. 28.

CHAP. 8: 29—39.

Analysis.

THIS section contains the exhibition of two additional arguments in favour of the safety of believers. The first of these is founded on the decree or purpose of God, vs. 29—30; and the second, on his infinite and unchanging love, vs. 31—39. In his description of those with regard to whom all things shall work together for good, Paul had just said that they were such who are called or converted in execution of a previous purpose of God, v. 28. If this is the case, the salvation of believers is secure, because the plan on which God acts is con-

nected in all its parts; whom he foreknows, he predestinates, calls, justifies and glorifies. Those, therefore, who are called, shall certainly be saved, vs. 29, 30. Secondly, if God is for us who can be against us? If God so loved us as to give his Son for us, he will certainly save us, vs. 31, 32. This love has already secured our justification, and has made abundant provision for the supply of all our wants, vs. 33, 34.

The triumphant conclusion from all these arguments, that nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ, but that we shall be more than conquerors over all enemies and difficulties, is given in vs. 35—39.

Commentary.

(29) *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, &c.* The connexion of this verse with the preceding, and the force of *for*, appears from what has already been said. Believers are called in accordance with a settled plan and purpose of God, *for* whom he calls he had previously predestinated: and as all the several steps or stages of our salvation are included in this plan of the unchanging God, if we are predestinated and called, we shall be justified and glorified.

Whom he did foreknow. As the words *to know and foreknow* are used in three different senses, applicable to the present passage, there is considerable diversity of opinion which should be preferred. The word may express *prescience* simply, according to its literal meaning; or, as *to know* is often *to approve and love*, it may express the idea of peculiar affection in this case; or it may mean to *select or determine upon*. Among those who adopt one or the other of these general views, there is still a great diversity as to the manner in which they understand the passage. These opinions are too numerous to be here recited.

As the literal meaning of the word *to foreknow* gives no adequate sense, inasmuch as all men are the objects of the divine prescience, whereas the apostle evidently designed to express by the word something that could be asserted only of a particular class; those who adopt this meaning here supply something to make the sense complete. *Who he foreknew would repent and believe, or who would not resist his divine influence, or some such idea.* There are two objections to this

manner of explaining the passage. 1. The addition of this clause is entirely gratuitous; and, if unnecessary, it is, of course, improper. There is no such thing said, and, therefore, it should not be assumed, without necessity, to be implied. 2. It is in direct contradiction to the apostle's doctrine. It makes the ground of our calling and election to be something in us, our works; whereas Paul says that such is not the ground of our being chosen. "Who hath called us not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, &c.," 2 Tim. 1: 9. Rom. 9: 11, where the contrary doctrine is not only asserted, but proved and defended.

The second and third interpretations do not essentially differ. The one is but a modification of the other; for whom God peculiarly loves, he does thereby distinguish from others, which is in itself a selecting or choosing of them from among others. The usage of the word is favourable to either modification of this general idea of *preferring*. "The people which he foreknew," i. e. loved or selected, Rom. 11: 2; "Who verily was foreordained (Gr. *foreknown*), i. e. *fixed upon, chosen* before the foundation of the world," 1 Peter 1: 20. 2 Tim. 2: 19. John 10: 14, 15; see also Acts 2: 23. 1 Peter 1: 2. The idea, therefore, obviously is, that those whom God peculiarly loved, and by thus loving distinguished or selected from the rest of mankind; or to express both ideas in one word, those whom *he elected* he predestined, &c.*

He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. To predestinate is to destine or appoint beforehand, as the original word is used in Acts 4: 28, "To do whatsoever thy hand and counsel determined before to be done;" "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children," Eph. 1: 5; "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. 1: 11. In all the cases in which this predestination is spoken of, the idea is distinctly recognised, that the ground of the choice which it implies is not in us. We are chosen in Christ, or according to the free purpose of God, &c. This is a *fore-ordina-*

* Dei præcognitio, cujus hic Paulus meminit, non nuda est præscientia, ut stulte fingunt quidam imperiti: sed adoptio, qua filios suos a reprobis semper discrevit. Quo sensu Petrus dicit fideles in sanctificationem Spiritus fuisse electos secundum præcognitionem Dei.—CALVIN.

tion, a determination which existed in the divine mind long prior to the occurrence of the event, even before the foundation of the world, Eph. 1: 4; so that the occurrences in time are the manifestations of the eternal purpose of God, and the execution of the plan of which they form a part.

The end to which those whom God has chosen, are predestined, is conformity *to the image of his Son*, i. e. that they might be like his Son in character and destiny. He hath chosen us "that we should be holy and without blame before him," Eph. 1: 4. 4: 24. "He hath predestined us to the adoption," i. e. to the state of sons, Eph. 1: 5. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," 1 Cor. 15: 49; see Phil. 3: 21. 1 John 3: 2. As Paul, in verse 17, had spoken of our suffering with Christ, and in the subsequent passage was principally employed in showing that though in this respect we must be like Christ, it was not inconsistent with our being sons and heirs, so here, when we are said to be conformed to the image of Christ, the idea of our bearing the same cross is not to be excluded. We are to be like our Saviour in moral character, in our present sufferings and future glory. As this conformity to Christ includes our moral likeness to him, and as this embraces all that is good in us, it is clear that no supposed excellence originating from our own resources, can be the ground of our being chosen as God's people, since this excellence is included in the end to which we are predestined.*

That he might be the first born among many brethren. This clause may express the design or merely the result of what had just been said. 'God predestinated us to be sons, *in order that* Christ might be, &c.' or 'He made us his sons, hence Christ is, &c.' *The first born* generally expresses merely the idea of pre-eminence. Ps. 89: 27, "I will make him my first-born," i. e. I will highly distinguish him. Col. 1: 15, "First-born of every creature," i. e. the head of the creation. As all those who are called are destined to bear the image of Christ, to share in the dignity, purity and blessedness of the children of God, the result will be, that Christ, who partakes of

* Neque simpliciter dixit ut conformes sint Christo, sed *imagini Christi*: ut doceret vivum et conspicuum exemplar in Christo, quod omnibus Dei filiis proponitur.—CALVIN.

our nature, and is not ashamed to call us brethren, will be the glorious head and leader of the sons of God, a multitude which no man can number.*

(30) *Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called.* Those whom he had thus fore-ordained to be conformed to the image of his Son in moral character, in suffering, and in future glory, he effectually calls, i. e. leads by the external invitation of the gospel, and by the efficacious operation of his grace, to the end to which they are destined. That the *calling* here spoken of is not the mere external call of the gospel, is evident both from the usage of the word, and from the necessity of the case; see 1 Cor. 1: 9, "God is faithful by whom ye were called to the fellowship of his Son," i. e. effectually brought into union with him. In the same chapter, v. 24, "To those which are called, Christ the power of God," &c. The called are here expressly distinguished from the rejecters of the external invitation. 1 Cor. 7: 15, 18, in which chapter *calling* is repeatedly put for effectual conversion, "Is any man *called* being a servant, &c." Heb. 9: 15, "That they which are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Rom. 9: 12. Eph. 4: 4. 1 Thess. 2: 12, and many similar passages.† This use of the word, thus common in the New Testament, is obviously necessary here, because the apostle is speaking of a call which is peculiar to those who are finally saved. Whom he *calls* he justifies and glorifies; see on verse 28.

Whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. The past tense here used may express the idea of *frequency*.‡ Whom he calls, he is wont to justify; and whom he is wont to justify, is he accustomed to glorify. So that the meaning is the same as though the present tense had been used, 'Whom he calls, he justifies, &c.;' see James 1: 11. 1 Peter 1: 24, where the same tense is rendered as the present, "The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away." Or the past is employed, because Paul is speaking of that God, who sees the end from the beginning,

* Itaque sicut primogenitus familiae nomen sustinet: ita Christus in sublimi gradu locatur, non modo ut honore emineat inter fideles, sed etiam ut communi fraternitatis nota sub se omnes contineat.—CALVIN.

† See above on ch. 1: 7, and v. 28 of this chapter.

‡ See WINER'S Grammatik, p. 228.

and in whose decree and purpose all future events are comprehended and fixed; so that in predestinating us, he at the same time, in effect, called, justified and glorified us, as all these were included in his purpose.*

The justification here spoken of, is doubtless that of which the apostle has been speaking throughout the epistle, the regarding and treating sinners as just, for the sake of the righteousness of Christ. The blessings of grace are never separated from each others. Election, calling, justification and salvation are indissolubly united; and, therefore, he who has clear evidence of his being called, has the same evidence of his election and final salvation. This is the very idea the apostle means to present for the consolation and encouragement of believers. They have no cause for despondency if the children of God, and called according to his purpose, because nothing can prevent their final salvation.

(31) *What shall we say to these things?* That is, what is the inference from all that has hitherto been said? *If God be for us*, if he has delivered us from the law of sin and death, if he has renewed us by his Spirit which dwells within us, if he recognises us as his children and his heirs, and has predestinated us to holiness and glory, *who can be against us?* If God's love has led to all the good just specified, what have we to fear for the future? He who spared not his own Son will freely give us all things. This verse shows clearly what has been the apostle's object from the beginning of the chapter. He wished to demonstrate that to those who accede to the plan of salvation which he taught, i. e. to those who are in Christ Jesus, there is no ground of apprehension; their final salvation is fully secured. The conclusion of the chapter is a recapitulation of all his former arguments, or rather the reduction of them to one, which comprehends them all in their fullest force; **GOD IS FOR US**. He, as our judge, is satisfied; as our Father he loves us; as the Supreme and Almighty controller of events, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, he has determined to save us; and as that Being, whose love is as unchanging as it is infinite, he allows nothing to separate his children from himself.

* **BENZEL** says, Loquitur in praeterito, tanquam a meta respiciens ad stadium fidei, et ex aeterna gloria in ipsam quasi retro eternitatem.

It has been objected that if Paul had intended to teach these doctrines, he would have said that apostacy and sin cannot interfere with the salvation of believers. But what is salvation, but deliverance from the guilt and power of sin? It is, therefore, included in the very purpose and promise of salvation, that its objects shall be preserved from apostacy and deadly sins. This is the end and essence of salvation. And, therefore, to make Paul argue that God will save us if we do not apostatize, is to make him say, those shall be saved who are not lost. According to the apostle's doctrine, holiness is so essential and prominent a part of salvation, that it is not so much a means to an end as the very end itself. It is that to which we are predestinated and called, and therefore if the promise of salvation does not include the promise of holiness, it includes nothing. Hence, to ask, whether if one of the called should apostatize and live in sin, he would still be saved, is to ask, whether he shall be saved if he is not saved. Nor can these doctrines be perverted to licentiousness without a complete denial of their nature. For they not only represent sin and salvation as two things which ought not to be united, but as utterly irreconcilable and contradictory.

(32) *He that spared not his own Son, &c.* That ground of confidence and security which includes all others, is the love of God; and that exhibition of divine love which surpasses and secures all others, is the gift of HIS OWN SON. Paul having spoken of Christians as being God's sons by adoption, was led to designate Christ as his own peculiar Son, in a sense in which neither angels (Heb. 1: 5) nor men can be so called. That this is the meaning of the phrase is evident, 1. Because this is its proper force; *own Son* being opposed to *adopted sons*.* 2. Because the context requires it, as Paul had spoken of those who were sons in a different sense just before. 3. Because this apostle, and the other sacred writers, designate Christ as Son of God in the highest sense, as partaker of the divine nature; see Rom. 1: 4.

But delivered him up for us all. He was delivered up to death; see Gal. 1: 4. Rom. 4: 25. Is. 53: 6. 38: 13, (in the LXX.) and Matt. 10: 21. *For us all*; not merely for our

* Ἰδιος τοῦ Θεοῦ.

benefit, but *in our place*;* see Rom. 5: 6, 7, 8, &c. *Us all*, in this connexion, can only be understood of all those of whom Paul had been speaking, all who love God and are called according to his purpose.

How shall he not with him freely give us all things? If God has done the greater, he will not leave the less undone. If he has given his Son to death, he will not fail to give the Spirit to render that death effectual. This is the ground of the confidence of believers. They do not expect to attain salvation because they are sure of their own strength of purpose, but because the love of God towards them is free and unbounded, and having led to the gift of his Son, will not withhold those lesser gifts which are necessary for their final security and blessedness.†

(33) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* This and the following verse show how fully the security of believers is provided for by the plan of redemption. What is it they have to fear under the government of a just and powerful God? There is nothing to be dreaded but sin; if that be pardoned and removed, there is nothing left to fear. In the strongest manner possible, the apostle declares that the sins of believers are pardoned, and shows the ground on which this pardon rests. To them, therefore, there can be neither a disquieting accusation nor condemnation. *Who can lay any thing?* &c., i. e. no one can, neither Satan, conscience, nor the law. If the law of God be satisfied, "the strength of sin," its condemning power, is destroyed. Even conscience, though it upbraids, does not terrify. It produces the ingenuous sorrow of children, and not the despairing anguish of the convict. Because it sees that all the ends of punishment are fully answered in the death of Christ, who bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

God's elect, i. e. those whom God has chosen; see v. 29. The word *elect* is sometimes used in a secondary sense for *beloved*, which idea is implied in its literal sense, as those chosen are those who are peculiarly beloved. This sense may be given to it in 1 Peter 2: 4, "elect and precious" may be

* That this idea is expressed by the preposition ὑπὲρ whenever the death of Christ is spoken of as being *for men* cannot, says KOPPE on this passage, be doubted.

† Christus non nudus, aut inanis ad nos missus est; sed coelestibus omnibus thesauris refertus, nequid eum possidentibus ad plenam felicitatem desit.—CALVIN.

‘beloved and precious;’ Col. 3: 12, “as the elect of God” may be equal to the beloved of God. But there is not a single passage where the word occurs, in which it may not be understood in its proper sense. “Many are called and few chosen,” Matt. 20: 16; “for the elect’s sake,” 24: 22; “the chosen of God,” Luke 23: 35; “according to the faith of God’s elect,” Tit. 1: 1; 1 Peter 1: 1, 2, “elect according to the foreknowledge of God;” see 1 Pet. 2: 9. Luke 18: 7, and every other passage in which the word occurs. This being the proper meaning of the term, and that which is in strict accordance with the scriptural representation of men under the Old as well as New Testament, as being chosen of God to be the recipients of peculiar blessings, it ought not to be departed from here, especially as the context renders its being retained necessary to the full expression of the apostle’s meaning. The persons against whom, he says, no accusation can be brought, are those who were chosen, predestinated, called and justified.

It is God that justifieth. This and the corresponding phrases in the next verse are frequently pointed interrogatively, so as to be read thus. “God who justifies? Who is he that condemneth? Christ who died? &c.” The sense is the same, but the force and beauty of the passage is thus marred. As we are all to stand before the tribunal of God, and our eternal destiny is to depend on his judgment, if he acquits, if he, for Christ’s sake, pronounces us just, then we are secure.

(34) *Who is he that condemneth?* i. e. no one can condemn. In support of this assertion there are, in this verse, four conclusive reasons presented; the death of Christ, his resurrection, his exaltation and his intercession. *It is Christ that died.* By his death, as an atonement for our sins, all ground of condemnation is removed. *Yea rather, that is risen again.* The resurrection of Christ, as the evidence of the sacrifice of his death being accepted, and of the validity of all his claims, is a much more decisive proof of the security of all who trust in him than his death could be. See on ch. 1: 4. 4: 25. Acts 17: 31. 1 Cor. 15: 17, &c.

Who is even at the right hand of God, i. e. is associated with God in his universal dominion. Ps. 110: 1, “Sit thou on my right hand,” i. e. share my throne; Eph. 1: 20. Rev. 3: 21. “As I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his

throne." Heb. 1: 3, "Who sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high." From these and other passages in their connexion, it is evident that Christ is exalted to universal dominion, all power in heaven and earth is given into his hands. If this is the case how great the security it affords the believer! He who is engaged to effect his salvation is the director of all events, and of all worlds.

Who also maketh intercession for us, i. e. who acts as our advocate, pleads our cause before God, presents those considerations which secure for us pardon and the continued supply of the divine grace; see on v. 26. Heb. 7: 25. 9: 24. 1 John 2: 1. He is our patron, in the Roman sense of the word, one who undertakes our case; an advocate, whom the Father heareth always. How complete then the security of those for whom he pleads!* Of course this language is figurative; the meaning is, that Christ continues since his resurrection and exaltation to secure for his people the benefits of his death, every thing comes from God through him, and for his sake.

(35) *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* This is the last step in the climax of the apostle's argument; the very summit of the mount of confidence, whence he looks down on his enemies as powerless, and forward and upward with full assurance of a final and abundant triumph. No one can accuse, no one can condemn, no one can separate us from the love of Christ. This last assurance gives permanency to the value of the other two.

The love of Christ is clearly Christ's love towards us, and not ours towards him. The latter indeed would give a good sense, 'Nothing can induce us to give up our love to the Redeemer.' But this interpretation is entirely inconsistent with the context and the drift of the whole chapter. Paul was speaking of the great love of God towards us as manifested in the gift of his Son, and of the love of Christ as exhibited in his dying, rising and interceding for us. This love, which is so great, he says is unchangeable. Besides, the apostle's object in

* Porro hanc intercessionem carnali sensu ne metriamur: Non enim cogitandus est supplex, flexis genibus, manibus expansis Patrem deprecari: sed quia apparet ipse assidue cum morte et resurrectione sua, quae vice sunt aeternae intercessionis, et vivae orationis efficaciam habent, ut Patrem nobis concilient, atque exorabilem reddant, merito dicitur intercedere.—CALVIN.

the whole chapter is to console and confirm the confidence of believers. The interpretation just mentioned is not in accordance with this object. It is no ground of confidence to assert or even to feel that we will never forsake Christ, but it is the strongest ground of assurance to be convinced that his love will never change. And, moreover, verse 39 requires this interpretation; for there Paul expresses the same sentiment in language which cannot be misunderstood. "No creature," he says, "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." This is evidently God's love towards us.

† *Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, &c.** This is merely an amplification of the preceding idea. Nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ, neither tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, &c. That is, whatever we may be called upon to suffer in this life, nothing can deprive us of the love of him who died for us, and who now lives to plead our cause in heaven, and, therefore, these afflictions, and all other difficulties, are enemies we may despise.

(36) *As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, &c.* A quotation from Ps. 44: 22, agreeably to the LXX. translation. The previous verse of course implied that believers should be exposed to many afflictions, to famine, nakedness and the sword; this, Paul would say, is in accordance with the experience of the pious in all ages. We suffer, as it is recorded of the Old Testament saints, that they suffered.

(37) *Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors,† &c.* This verse is connected with the 35th. 'So far from these afflictions separating us from the love of Christ, they are more than conquered.' That is, they are not only deprived of all power to do us harm, they minister to our good. They swell the glory of our victory. *Through him that loved us.* The triumph which the apostle looked for, was not to be effected by his own strength or perseverance, but by the grace and power of the Redeemer. 1 Cor. 15: 10. Gal. 2: 20. Phil.

* Sicut enim nebulae quamvis liquidum solis conspectum obscurent, non tamen ejus fulgore in totum nos privant: sic Deus in rebus adversis per caliginem emittit gratiae suae radios, nequa tentatio desperatione nos obruat: imo fides nostra promissionibus Dei tanquam alis fulva sursum in coelos per media obstacula penetrare debet.—CALVIN.

† Wir überwinden weit.—LUTHER.

4: 13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

(38, 39) In these verses the confidence of the apostle is expressed in the strongest language. He heaps words together in the effort to set forth fully the absolute inability of all created things, separately or united, to frustrate the purpose of God, or to turn away his love from those whom he has determined to save.

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, &c. &c. It is somewhat doubtful how far the apostle intended to express distinct ideas by the several words here used. The enumeration is by some considered as expressing the general idea that nothing in the universe can injure believers, the detail being designed merely as amplification. This, however, is not very probable. The former view is to be preferred. *Neither death.* That is, though cut off in this world, their connexion with Christ is not thereby destroyed. "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand," John 10: 28. *Nor life,* neither its blandishments, nor its trials. "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord. So that living or dying we are the Lords," Rom. 14: 8.

Nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers. Principalities and powers are by many understood here to refer to the authorities of this world as distinguished from angels. But to this it may be objected that Paul frequently uses these terms in connexion to designate the different orders of spiritual beings, Eph. 1: 21. Col. 1: 16; and secondly, that corresponding terms were in common use among the Jews in this sense. It is probable, from the nature of the passage, that this clause is to be taken generally, without any specific reference to either good or bad angels as such. 'No superhuman power, no angel, however mighty, shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God.' *Neither things present, nor things to come.* Nothing in this life, nor in the future; no present or future event, &c.

(39) *Nor height, nor depth.* These words have been very variously explained. That interpretation which seems, on the whole, most consistent with scriptural usage and the context, is that which makes the terms equivalent to *heaven and earth.* 'Nothing in heaven or earth;' see Eph. 4: 8. Is. 7: 11, "Ask

it either in the depth or the height above," &c. &c. *Nor any other creature.* Although the preceding enumeration had been so minute, the apostle, as if to prevent despondency having the possibility of a foot-hold, adds this all-comprehending specification, *no created thing* shall be able to separate us from the love of God. This love of God, which is declared to be thus unchangeable, is extended towards us only on account of our connexion with Christ, and therefore the apostle adds, *which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*; see Eph. 1: 6. 2 Tim. 1: 9.

Doctrines.

1. God chooses certain individuals and predestinates them to eternal life. The ground of this choice is his own sovereign pleasure; the end to which the elect are predestinated, is conformity to Jesus Christ in his moral character, and in his sufferings and glory, v. 29.

2. Those who are thus chosen shall certainly be saved, v. 30.

3. The only evidence of election is effectual calling, that is, the production of holiness. And the only evidence of the genuineness of this call and the certainty of our perseverance, is a patient continuance in well doing, vs. 29, 30.

4. The love of God, and not human merit or power, is the proper ground of confidence. This love is infinitely great, as is manifested by the gift of God's own Son; and it is unchangeable, as the apostle strongly asserts, vs. 31—39.

5. The gift of Christ is not the result of the mere general love of God to the human family, but also of special love to his own people, v. 32.

6. Hope of pardon and eternal life should rest on the death, the resurrection, universal dominion and intercession of the Son of God, v. 34.

7. Trials and afflictions of every kind have been the portion of the people of God in all ages; as they cannot destroy the love of Christ towards us, they ought not to shake our love towards him, v. 35.

8. The whole universe, with all that it contains, as far as it is good, is the friend and ally of the Christian; as far as it is evil, it is a more than conquered foe, vs. 35—39.

9. The love of God, infinite and unchangeable as it is, is manifested to sinners only through Jesus Christ our Lord, v. 39.

Remarks.

1. The plan of redemption, while it leaves no room for despondency, affords no pretence for presumption. Those whom God loves he loves unchangeably; but it is not on the ground of their peculiar excellence, nor can this love be extended towards those who live in sin, vs. 29—39.

2. As there is a beautiful harmony and necessary connexion between the several doctrines of grace, between election, predestination, calling, justification and glorification, so must there be a like harmony in the character of the Christian. He cannot experience the joy and confidence flowing from his election, without the humility which the consideration of its being gratuitous must produce; nor can he have the peace of one who is justified, without the holiness of one who is called, vs. 29, 30.

3. As Christ is the first born or head among many brethren, all true Christians must love him supremely, and each other as members of the same family. Unless we have this love, we do not belong to this sacred brotherhood, v. 29.

4. If the love of God is so great and constant, it is a great sin to distrust or doubt it, vs. 30—39.

5. Christians may well hear with patience and equanimity the unjust accusations, or even the condemnatory sentences of the wicked, since God justifies and accepts them. It is a small matter to be judged of man's judgment, vs. 33, 34.

6. If God spared not his own Son, in order to effect our salvation, what sacrifice on our part can be considered great, as a return for such love, or as a means of securing the salvation of others, v. 32.

7. The true method to drive away despondency is believing apprehensions of the scriptural grounds of hope, viz. the love of God, the death of Christ, his resurrection, his universal dominion and his intercession, v. 34.

8. Though the whole universe were encamped against the solitary Christian, he would still come off more than conqueror, vs. 35—39.

9. Afflictions and trials are not to be fled from or avoided, but overcome, v. 37.

10. All strength to endure and to conquer comes to us through him that loved us. Without him we can do nothing, v. 37.

11. How wonderful, how glorious, how secure is the gospel! Those who are in Christ Jesus are as secure as the love of God, the merit, power and intercession of Christ can make them. They are hedged round with mercy. They are enclosed in the arms of everlasting love. "Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen!"

CHAPTER IX.

WITH the eighth chapter the discussion of the plan of salvation, and of its immediate consequences, was brought to a close. The consideration of the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews commences with the ninth, and extends to the end of the eleventh. Paul, in the first place, shows that God may consistently reject the Jews, and extend the blessings of the Messiah's reign to the Gentiles, 9: 1—24; and in the second, that he has already declared that such was his purpose, vs. 25—29. Agreeably to these prophetic declarations, the apostle announces that the Jews were cast off and the Gentiles called; the former having refused submission to the righteousness of faith, and the latter having been obedient, vs. 30—33. In the tenth chapter, Paul shows the necessity of this rejection of the ancient people of God, and vindicates the propriety of extending the invitation of the gospel to the heathen in accordance with the predictions of the prophets. In the eleventh, he teaches that this rejection of the Jews was neither total nor final. It was not total, inasmuch as many Jews of that generation believed; and it was not final, as the period approached when the great body of that nation should acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, and be reingrafted into their own olive tree.

Contents.

In entering on the discussion of the question of the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, the apostle assures

his brethren that he was led to entertain this opinion from no want of affection or respect for them or their national privileges, vs. 1—5. That his doctrine on this subject was true, he argues, 1. Because it was not inconsistent with the promises of God, who is perfectly sovereign in the distribution of his favours, vs. 6—24. And secondly, because it was distinctly predicted in their own scriptures, vs. 25—29. The conclusion from this reasoning is stated in vs. 20—33. The Jews are rejected for their unbelief, and the Gentiles admitted to the Messiah's kingdom.

CHAP. 9: 1—5.

Analysis.

As the subject about to be discussed was of all others the most painful and offensive to his Jewish brethren, the apostle approaches it with the greatest caution. He solemnly assures them that he was grieved at heart on their account; and that his love for them was ardent and disinterested, vs. 1—3. Their peculiar privileges he acknowledged and respected. They were highly distinguished by all the advantages connected with the Old Testament dispensation, and, above all, by the fact that the Messiah was, according to the flesh, a Jew, vs. 4, 5.

Commentary.

(1) *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, &c.* There are three ways in which the words *in Christ*, or *by Christ*, may here be understood. 1. They may be considered as part of the formula of an oath, *I say the truth, by Christ*. The preposition rendered *in* is so used in Matt. 5: 34, &c. Rev. 10: 6. But in these and similar cases it is always in connexion with a verb of swearing. In addition to this objection, it may be urged that no instance occurs of Paul's appealing to Christ in the form of an oath. The instance which looks most like such an appeal is 1 Tim. 5: 21, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, &c." But it is evident from the mention of the angels, that this is not of the nature of an oath. Paul merely wishes to urge Timothy to act as in the presence of God, Christ and angels. This interpretation, therefore, is not to be approved. 2. The words *in Christ* may be con-

nected with the pronoun *I*. ‘*I in Christ*, i. e. as a Christian, or, ‘In the consciousness of my union with Christ, I declare, &c.’ So the words are used in a multitude of cases, “You in Christ,” “I in Christ,” “We in Christ,” being equivalent with *you, I, or we, as Christians*, i. e. considered as united to Christ. See 1 Cor. 1: 20, “Of whom are ye in Christ,” i. e. ‘By whom ye are Christians, or united to Christ;’ Rom. 16: 3, 7, 9. 1 Cor. 3: 1, and frequently elsewhere. 3. The words may be used adverbially, and be translated *after a Christian manner*. This also is a frequent use of this and analogous phrases. See 1 Cor. 7: 39, “Only in the Lord,” i. e. only after a religious manner. *After the Lord* being equivalent with *in a manner becoming, or suited to the Lord*. Rom. 16: 22, “I salute you in the Lord.” Phil. 2: 29, “Receive him therefore in the Lord;” Eph. 6: 1. Col. 3: 18.* The sense of the passage is much the same whether we adopt the one or the other of the last two modes of explanation. Paul means to say that he speaks in a solemn and religious manner, as a Christian, conscious of his intimate relation to Christ.

I say the truth, I lie not. This mode of assertion, first affirmatively and then negatively, is common in the scriptures. “Thou shalt die, and not live,” Is. 38: 1; “He confessed and denied not,” John 1: 20. *My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost*. There are also three ways in which the words *in the Holy Ghost* may be connected and explained. 1. They are often considered as belonging to the first clause and standing in a parallelism with the words *in Christ*, and being also an oath. But in this way the construction is unnatural, and the sense not only unusual but revolting. 2. They may be connected with the words *bearing me witness*. The sense would then be, ‘My conscience beareth me witness together with the Holy Ghost.’ That is, not only my own conscience, but the Holy Spirit assures me of my sincerity. 3. They may be connected with the word *conscience*. ‘My conscience under the influence of the Holy Ghost;’† my sanctified conscience. There seems little ground of preference between the last two; either gives a good sense.

* See WAHL’s Clavis, p. 526. The preposition *by* is used, he says, *De norma cui insistit vel quam tenet aliquis in agendo*.

† WAHL’s Clavis, p. 523.

(2) *That I have great heaviness, &c.* This it is which Paul so solemnly asserts. He was not an indifferent spectator of the sorrow, temporal and spiritual, which was about to come on his countrymen. All their peculiar national advantages, and the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom which they had wickedly rejected, were to be taken away; they were, therefore, left without hope either for this world or the next. The consideration of their condition filled the apostle with great and constant heaviness. The sincerity and strength of this sorrow for them he asserts in the strongest terms in the next verse.

(3) *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, &c.* The word *anathema*, which is used in this verse by the apostle, properly means *something set up or consecrated*, and is applied frequently to votive offerings. A secondary application of the word was to those persons who were devoted to destruction as sacrifices for the public good. And as, among the Greeks, the lowest and vilest of the people were selected for that purpose, it became a term of execration, and expressed the idea of exposure to divine wrath. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word to which it answers, occurs very frequently, and probably the root originally meant *to cut off, to separate*. Hence, the substantive derived from it, meant *something separated or consecrated*. In usage, however, it was applied only to such things as could not be redeemed,* and which, when possessed of life, were to be put to death. It is evident from the passages quoted in the margin,

* Lev. 27: 28, 29, "No devoted thing that a man shall devote unto the Lord of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing (אֲנָתָהּ *ánáthema*) is most holy unto the Lord. None devoted, which shall be devoted from among men, shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death."

Deut. 7: 26, "Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thy house, lest thou be a *curse* thing (ánáthema) like it, but thou shalt utterly detest it, and utterly abhor it; for it is a *curse* thing." The sacred writer is here speaking of the images, &c. of the heathen, which were devoted to destruction.

Joshua 6: 17, "And the city shall be (ánáthema) *accursed*, even it and all that is therein, to the Lord, &c." Verse 18, "And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the *accursed* thing, lest ye make yourselves *accursed*, when ye take of the *accursed* thing, and make the camp of Israel a *curse*, and trouble it."

1 Sam. 15: 21, "And the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, &c." In Hebrew, simply אֲנָתָהּ of which the words in italics are a paraphrase.

that the word usually designates a person or thing set apart to destruction on religious grounds; something accursed.

In the New Testament the use of the Greek word is very nearly the same. The only passages in which it occurs besides the one before us, are the following; Acts 23: 14, "We have bound ourselves under a great curse, (we have placed ourselves under an anathema) that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul." The meaning of this passage evidently is, 'We have imprecated on ourselves the curse of God, or we have called upon him to consider us as anathema.' 1 Cor. 12: 3, "No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed (anathema);" 1 Cor. 16: 22, "Let him be anathema maranatha;" Gal. 1: 8, 9, "Let him be accursed (anathema)." In all these cases it is clear that the word is applied to those who were regarded as deservedly exposed, or devoted to the curse of God. In this sense it was used by the early Christian writers, and from them passed into the use of the church. "Let him be anathema," being the constant formula of pronouncing any one, in the judgment of the church, exposed to the divine malediction.

Among the later Jews this word, or the corresponding Hebrew term, was used in reference to the second of the three degrees into which they divided excommunication (see Buxtorf's Rabbinical Lexicon). But no analogous use of the word occurs in the bible. Such being the meaning of this word in the scriptures, its application in this case by the apostle admits of various explanations. The most common interpretations of the passage are the following.

1. As those men or animals pronounced anathema in the Old Testament were to be put to death, many consider the apostle as having that idea in his mind, and meaning nothing more than 'I could wish to die for my brethren,' &c. But the objections to this interpretation are serious. 1. Even in the Old Testament the word expresses generally something more than the idea of devotion to death. An anathema was a person devoted to death *as accursed*; see the passages quoted above. And in the New Testament this latter idea is always the prominent one. 2. The connexion is unfavourable to this interpretation. The phrase is, "accursed *from Christ*." How are the words *from Christ* to be explained? Some say they should be rendered by

Christ. 'I could wish myself devoted to death by Christ.' But this is an unusual use of the preposition (*ἀπὸ*) which our version correctly renders *from*; and the whole expression is besides unusual and unnatural. Others, therefore, say that the passage should be rendered thus, 'I could wish from Christ, that I might be devoted to death.' But this, too, is an unusual and forced construction.

2. Others think that Paul has reference here to the Jewish use of the word, and means only that he would be willing to be cut off from the church or excommunicated. In this view the word *Christ* is commonly taken for the *body of Christ* or the church. But, in the first place, this is not a scriptural use of the word anathema, and is clearly inapplicable to the other cases in which it is used by the apostle; and, in the second place, it gives a very inadequate sense. Excommunication from the church would not be a great evil in the eyes of the Jews.

3. Others render the verb which, in our version, is translated 'I could wish,' *I did wish*. The sense would then be, 'I have great sorrow on account of my brethren, because I can sympathize in their feelings, for I myself once wished to be accursed from Christ on their account.' But, in the first place, had Paul intended to express this idea he would have used the aorist, the common tense of narration, and not the imperfect.* 2. It is no objection to the common translation, that the imperfect indicative, instead of some form of the optative, is here used, and that too without an optative particle; for such cases are common,† e. g. Acts 25: 22. 3. This interpretation does not give a sense pertinent to the apostle's object. He is not expressing what was his state of mind formerly, but what it was when writing. It was no proof of his love for his brethren that he once felt as they then did, but the highest imaginable, if the ordinary interpretation be adopted. 4. The language will hardly admit of this interpretation. No Jew would express his hatred of Christ and his indifference to the favours which he offered, by saying, he wished himself accursed from Christ. Paul never so wished himself before his conversion, for this supposes that he recognized the power of Christ to inflict on him the imprecated curse, and that his displeasure was regarded as a great evil.

* That is, *ἠξάμην* *εἴθε* instead of *ἠχόμην*.—NORSELT.

† MATTHIÆ'S Grammar, sect. 608.

4. The common interpretation, and that which seems most natural, is, 'I am grieved at heart for my brethren, for I could wish myself accursed from Christ, that is, I could be willing to be regarded and treated as anathema, a thing accursed, for their sakes.'* That this interpretation suits the force and meaning of the words and is agreeable to the context, must, on all hands, be admitted. The only objection to it is of a theological kind. It is said to be inconsistent with the apostle's character to wish that he should be accursed from Christ. But to this it may be answered, 1. Paul does not say that he did deliberately and actually entertain such a wish. The expression is evidently hypothetical and conditional, 'I could wish, were the thing allowable, possible or proper.' So far from saying he actually desired to be thus separated from Christ, he impliedly says the very reverse. 'I could wish it, were it not wrong; or, did it not involve my being unholy as well as miserable, but as such is the case, the desire cannot be entertained.' This is the proper force of the imperfect indicative when thus used; it implies the presence of a condition which is known to be impossible.†

2. Even if the words expressed more than they actually do, and the apostle were to be understood as saying that he could wish to be cut off from Christ, yet, from the nature of the passage, it could fairly be understood as meaning nothing more than that he was willing to suffer the utmost misery for the sake of his brethren. The difficulty arises from pressing the words too far, making them express definite ideas, instead of strong and indistinct emotions. The general idea is, that he considered himself as nothing, and his happiness as a matter of no moment, in view of the salvation of his brethren.‡

* Sensus est: optabam Judaeorum miseriam in meum caput conferre, et illorum loco esse. Judaei, fidem repudiantes, erant anathema a Christo.—BENGL.

† BUTTMANN'S Larger Grammar, by Prof. Robinson, p. 187. MATTHIAE, sect. 508, 509. And WINER'S Grammar, p. 233, who thus translates the passage before us, "Vellem ego (si fieri posset): ich wünschte (wenn es nur nicht unmöglich wäre). THOLUCK says, "The indicative of the imperfect expresses exactly the impossibility of that for which one wishes, on which account it is not, properly speaking, really wished at all. The optative admits the possibility of the thing wished for, and the present supposes the certainty of it."

‡ Utrum privationem duntaxat omnis boni, et destructionem vel annihilationem sui, an etiam perperionem omnis mali, eamque et in corpore et in anima, et sempernam, optaret, aut in ipso voti illius paroxysmo intellectui suo observantem ha-

(4) The object of the apostle in the introduction to this chapter, contained in the first five verses, is to assure the Jews of his love and of his respect for their peculiar privileges. The declaration of his love he had just made, his respect for their advantages is expressed in the enumeration of them contained in this verse. *Who are Israelites*, i. e. the peculiar people of God. This includes all the privileges which are afterwards mentioned. The word *Israel* means *one who contends with God, or a prince with God*. Hos. 12: 3, "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God." As it was given to Jacob as an expression of God's peculiar favour, Gen. 32: 28, its application to his descendants implied that they, too, were the favourites of God. *To whom pertaineth the adoption*. As Paul is speaking here of the external or natural Israel, the *adoption* or *sonship* which pertained to them, as such, must be external also, and is very different from that which he had spoken of in the preceding chapter. They were the sons of God, i. e. the objects of his peculiar favour, selected from the nations of the earth to be the recipients of peculiar blessings, and to stand in a peculiar relation to God. Ex. 4: 22, "Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Israel is my son, even my first born;" Deut. 14: 1, "Ye are the children of the Lord your God;" Jer. 31: 9, "I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first born."

And the glory. These words are variously explained. They may be connected with the preceding, as explanatory of the adoption or as qualifying it, and the two words be equivalent to *glorious adoption*. But as every other specification in this verse is to be taken separately, so should this be. In the Old Testament that symbolical manifestation of the divine presence which filled the tabernacle and rested over the ark, is called *the glory of the Lord*. Ex. 40: 34, "A cloud covered the tent of the congregation; and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle;" Ex. 29: 43, "There will I meet with the children of Israel, and *the tabernacle* shall be sanctified by my glory;" Lev. 16: 2, "I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat;" 1 Kings 8: 11, "The glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord;" 2 Chron. 5: 14. Hag. 2: 7. Rev. 15: 8.

buerit, quis scit, an Paulus ipse interrogatus definiret? Certe illud *ergo* penitus apud illum in pausa erat: tantum alios, honoris divini causa, spectabat.—BENGE.

By the Jews this symbol was called the *Shekinah*, i. e. the presence of God. Besides this, the manifestation of God's presence in general is called his glory; Is. 6: 4, "The whole earth is full of his glory," &c. It is probable, therefore, that Paul intended by this word to refer to the fact that God dwelt in a peculiar manner among the Jews, and in various ways manifested his presence, as one of their peculiar privileges.

The covenants. The plural is used because God at various times entered into covenant with the Jews and their forefathers; by which he secured to them innumerable blessings and privileges; see Gal. 3: 16, 17. Eph. 2: 12. *The giving of the law*, (ἡ νομοθεσία) *the legislation.* The word is sometimes used for the *law itself* (see the Lexicons); it may here be taken strictly, *that giving of the law*, i. e. the solemn and glorious announcement of the divine will from Mount Sinai. The former is the most probable; because the possession of the law was the grand distinction of the Jews, and one on which they peculiarly relied; see ch. 2: 17. *The service* means the whole ritual, the pompous and impressive religious service of the tabernacle and temple. *The promises* relate, no doubt, specially to the promises of Christ and his kingdom. This was the great inheritance of the nation. This was the constant subject of gratulation and object of hope. See Gal. 3: 16, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made;" v. 21, "Is the law against the promises of God?" So in other places the word *promises* is used specially for the predictions in reference to the great redemption, Acts 26: 6.

(5) *Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, &c.* The descent of the Jews from men so highly favoured of God as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was justly regarded as a great distinction. *And of whom.* The *and* here shows that *whom* refers, not to the fathers, but to the Israelites, to whom pertained the adoption, the law, the service, and of whom Christ came. This was the great honour of the Jewish race. For this they were separated as a peculiar people, and preserved amidst all their afflictions. As it was true, however, only in one sense, that Christ was descended from the Israelites, and as there was another view of his person, according to which he was infinitely exalted above them and all other men, the apostle qualifies his declaration by saying *as concern-*

ing the flesh. The word *flesh* is used so often for human nature in its present state, or for *men*, that the phrase *as to the flesh*, in such connexions, evidently means *in as far as he was a man*, or *as to his human nature*, ch. 1: 3. In like manner, when it is said Christ was manifested or came in the flesh, it means, he came in our nature, 1 Tim. 3: 16. 1 John 4: 2, &c.

*Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.** There is but one interpretation of this important passage which can, with the least regard to the rules of construction, be maintained. Paul evidently declares that Christ who, he had just said, was, as to his human nature, or as a man, descended from the Israelites, is, in another respect, the supreme God, or God over all, and blessed for ever. That this is the meaning of the passage is evident from the following reasons. 1. The relative *who* must agree with the nearest antecedent. There is no other subject in the context sufficiently prominent to make a departure from this ordinary rule, in this case, even plausible. "Of whom Christ came, who is, &c." Who is? Certainly Christ, as every one must acknowledge.† 2. The context requires this interpretation, because, as Paul was speaking of Christ, it would be very unnatural thus suddenly to change the subject and break out into a doxology to God. Frequently as the pious feelings of the apostle led him to use such exclamations of praise, he never does it except when God is the immediate subject of discourse. See ch. 1: 25, "Who worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for evermore;" Gal. 1: 5. 2 Cor. 11: 31. Besides, it was the very object of the apostle to set forth the great honour to the Jews of having Christ born among them, and this, of course, would lead to his presenting

* On this passage, see PROF. STUART'S able Letters to Dr. Channing. NOBEL'S Opuscula, Fasciculus I. p. 158, seqq. FLATT, THOLUCK, and other critical commentators.

As this is one of the most explicit and incontrovertible passages in support of the deity of Christ, it is a matter of thankfulness that there is not the shadow of reason for doubting the accuracy of the reading. All the MSS., all the versions and fathers give the passage precisely as in the common text. See MILL'S note in his New Testament.

† The phrase ὁ ὢν is used here for ὅς ἐστι, as in John 1: 18, ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς; 3: 13, ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ; 2 Cor. 11: 31, ὁ ὢν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, the very words which occur in the text. In all these cases, too, it will be observed, that the ὁ ὢν refers to the immediate antecedent.

the dignity of the Redeemer in the strongest light. For the greater he was, the greater the honour to those of whose race he came. 3. The antithesis, which is evidently implied between the two clauses of the verse, is in favour of this interpretation. Christ, according to the flesh, was an Israelite, but, according to his higher nature, the supreme God. See the strikingly analogous passage in ch. 1: 3, 4, where Christ is said, according to one nature, to be the Son of David, according to the other, the Son of God. 4. No other interpretation is at all consistent with the grammatical construction, or the relative position of the words. One proposed by Erasmus is to place a full stop after the words *Christ came*, and make all the rest of the verse refer to God. The passage would then read thus, "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came. God blessed for ever. Amen." But this is not only opposed by the reasons already urged, that such doxologies suppose God to be the immediate subject of discourse; or are preceded by some particle which breaks the connexion, and shows plainly what the reference is, &c.; but, apart from these objections, no such doxology occurs in all the bible. That is, the uniform expression is, "Blessed be God," and never "God be blessed."* The word for *blessed* always stands first, and the word for *God* after it with the article. Often as such cases occur in the Greek and Hebrew scriptures, there is, it is believed, no case of the contrary arrangement. In Psalm 68: 20 (Septuagint 67: 19), the only apparent exception, the first clause is probably not a doxology, but a simple affirmation as in the Old Latin version, *Dominus Deus benedictus est*. In the Hebrew it is, as in all other cases, *Blessed be the Lord*, and so in our version of that Psalm. See also, Ps. 31: 21. 72: 18, 19. 41: 13. 68: 35. 89: 52. Gen. 9: 26. Ex. 18: 10, and a multitude of other examples. In all these and similar passages, the expression is *blessed be God*, or *blessed be the Lord*, and never *God blessed*, or *Lord blessed*. This being the case, it is altogether incredible, that Paul, whose ear must have been perfectly familiar with this constantly recurring formula of praise, should, in this solitary instance, have departed from the established usage. This passage, therefore,

* In the Greek version of the Old Testament the constant form of the doxology is εὐλογητός ὁ Θεός, or εὐλογητός κύριος ὁ Θεός, never the reverse. And so in Hebrew, always יהוה ברוך.

cannot be considered as a doxology, or an ascription of praise to God, and rendered *God be blessed*, but must be taken as a declaration, *who is blessed*; see ch. 1: 25, "The Creator, who is blessed for ever." 2 Cor. 11: 31, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for evermore." A second method of pointing the verse, also, proposed by Erasmus, and followed by many others, is to place the pause after the word *all*. The verse would then read, "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all. God be blessed for ever." This avoids some of the difficulties specified above, but it is subject to all the others. It breaks unnaturally the connexion, and makes a doxology out of a form of expression which, in the scriptures, as just stated, is never so used.

5. There is no reason for thus torturing the text to make it speak a different language from that commonly ascribed to it; because the sense afforded, according to the common interpretation, is scriptural, and in perfect accordance with other declarations of this apostle. Titus 1: 3, "According to the commandment of God our Saviour." "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and (even) our Saviour Jesus Christ," Tit. 2: 13; see Phil. 2: 6. Col. 2: 9, &c. &c.

Over all is equivalent with *most high, supreme*. The same words occur in Eph. 4: 6, "One God, who is above all." This passage, therefore, shows that Christ is God in the highest sense of the word.* *Amen* is a Hebrew word signifying *true*. It is used as in the New Testament often adverbially, and is rendered *verily*; or, at the close of a sentence, as expressing desire, *let it be*, or merely approbation. It does not, therefore, necessarily imply that the clause to which it is attached contains a wish. It is used here, as in Rom. 1: 25, for giving a solemn assent to what has been said. "God who is blessed for ever, Amen." 'To this declaration we say, Amen. It is true.'

Doctrines.

1. The Holy Ghost is ever present with the souls of the people of God. He enlightens the judgment and guides the conscience, so that the true and humble Christian often has an assurance of

* 'Ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων Θεός is, in the writings of the Greek fathers, the constantly occurring expression for the supreme God.

his sincerity and of the correctness of what he says or does, above what the powers of nature can bestow, v. 1.

2. There is no limit to the sacrifice which one man may make for the benefit of others, except that which his duty to God imposes, v. 3.

3. Paul does not teach that we should be willing to be damned for the glory of God. 1. His very language implies that such a wish would be improper. For in the ardour of his disinterested affection, he does not himself entertain or express the wish, but merely says, in effect, that were it proper or possible, he would be willing to perish for the sake of his brethren. 2. If it is wrong to *do* evil that good may come, how can it be right to wish to *be* evil that good may come? 3. There seems to be a contradiction involved in the very terms of the wish. Can one love God so much as to wish to hate him? Can he be so good as to desire to be bad? We must be willing to give up houses and lands, parents and brethren, and our life also, for Christ and his kingdom, but we are never required to give up holiness for his sake, for this would be a contradiction.

4. It is, in itself, a great blessing to belong to the external people of God, and to enjoy all the privileges consequent on this relation, v. 4.

5. Jesus Christ is at once man and God over all, blessed for ever. Paul asserts this doctrine in language too plain to be misunderstood, v. 5.

Remarks.

1. Whatever we say or do, should be said or done as in Christ, i. e. in a Christian manner, v. 1.

2. If we can view, unmoved, the perishing condition of our fellow men, or are unwilling to make sacrifices for their benefit, we are very different from Paul, and from him who wept over Jerusalem, and died for our good upon Mount Calvary, vs. 2, 3.

3. Though we may belong to the true church, and enjoy all its privileges, we may still be cast away. Our external relation to the people of God cannot secure our salvation, v. 4.

4. A pious parentage is a great distinction and blessing, and should be felt and acknowledged as such, v. 5.

5. If Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, if he has a nature

like our own, how intimate the union between him and his people; how tender the relation; how unspeakable the honour done to human nature in having it thus exalted! If Jesus Christ is God over all and blessed for ever, how profound should be our reverence, how unreserved our obedience, and how entire and joyful our confidence! v. 5.

6. These five verses, the introduction to the three following chapters, teach us a lesson which we have before had occasion to notice. Fidelity does not require that we should make the truth as offensive as possible. On the contrary, we are bound to endeavour, as Paul did, to allay all opposing or inimical feelings in the minds of those whom we address, and to allow the truth, unimpeded by the exhibition of any thing offensive on our part, to do its work upon the heart and conscience.

CHAP. 9: 6—24.

Analysis.

THE apostle now approaches the subject which he had in view, the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles. That God had determined to cast off his ancient covenant people, as such, and to extend the call of the gospel indiscriminately to all men, is the point which the apostle is about to establish. He does this by showing, in the first place, that God is perfectly free thus to act, vs. 6—24, and in the second, that he had declared in the prophets, that such was his intention, vs. 25—33.

That God was at liberty to reject the Jews and to call the Gentiles, Paul argues, 1. By showing that the promises which he had made and by which he had graciously bound himself, were not made to the natural descendants of Abraham as such, but to his spiritual seed. This is plain from the case of Ishmael and Isaac; both were the children of Abraham, yet one was taken and the other left. And also from the case of Esau and Jacob. Though children of the same parents, and born at one birth, yet "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated," is the language of God respecting them, vs. 6—13. 2. By showing that God is perfectly sovereign in the distribution of his favours; that he is determined neither by the external relations, nor by the personal character of men, in the selection

of the objects of his mercy. This is proved by the examples just referred to; by the choice of Isaac instead of Ishmael, and especially by that of Jacob instead of Esau. In this case the choice was made and announced before the birth of the children, that it might be seen that it was not according to works, but according to the sovereign purpose of God, vs. 6—13.

Against this doctrine of the divine sovereignty, there are two obvious objections, which have been urged in every age of the world, and which the apostle here explicitly states and answers. The first is, it is unjust in God thus to choose one, and reject another, at his mere good pleasure, v. 14. To this Paul gives two answers; 1. God claims the prerogative of *sovereign* mercy; saying, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," vs. 15—16; 2. He exercises this right, as is evident from the case of Pharaoh, with regard to whom he says, "For this same purpose have I raised thee up," vs. 17—18. The second objection is, if this doctrine be true, it destroys the responsibility of men, v. 19. To this also Paul gives a twofold answer; 1. The very urging of an objection against a prerogative which God claims in his word, and exercises in his providence, is an irreverent contending with our maker, especially as the right in question necessarily arises out of the relation between men and God as creatures and Creator, vs. 20, 21. 2. There is nothing in the exercise of this sovereignty inconsistent with either justice or mercy. God only punishes the wicked for their sins, while he extends undeserved mercy to the objects of his grace. There is no injustice done to one wicked man in the pardon of another, especially as there are the highest objects to be accomplished both in the punishment of the vessels of wrath, and the pardon of the vessels of mercy. God does nothing more than exercise a right inherent in sovereignty, viz. that of dispensing pardon at his pleasure, vs. 22—24.

Commentary.

(6) It has already been remarked (ch. 3: 3), that it was a common opinion among the Jews, that the promises of God being made to Abraham and to his seed, all connected with him as his natural descendants, and sealed, as such, by the rite of circumcision, would certainly inherit the blessings of the Messiah's reign. It was enough for them, therefore, to be able to

say, "We have Abraham to our father." This being the case, it was obvious that it would at once be presented as a fatal objection to the apostle's doctrine of the rejection of the Jews, that it was inconsistent with the promises of God. Paul, therefore, without even distinctly announcing the position which he intended to maintain, removes this preliminary objection.* In vs. 2, 3, in which he professed his sorrow for his brethren and his readiness to suffer for them, it was, of course, implied that they were no longer to be the peculiar people of God, heirs of the promises, &c. &c. This, Paul shows, involves no failure on the part of the divine promises. *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, &c.* That is, 'I say nothing which implies that the word of God has failed.† The *word of God* means any thing which God has spoken, and here, from the connexion, the promise made to Abraham, including the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ. *Hath taken none effect*, literally, *hath fallen*, i. e. failed. "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail," literally, *to fall*, Luke 16: 17. So this word is used frequently. The reason why the rejection of the Jews involved no failure on the part of the divine promise, is, that the promise never contemplated the mere natural descendants of Abraham. *For they are not all Israel which are of Israel*, i. e. all the natural descendants of the patriarch are not the true people of God, to whom alone the promises properly belong.

* It is indeed peculiarly worthy of remark, as characteristic of the apostle's tenderness and caution, that he does not at all formally declare the truth which he labours in this chapter to establish. He does not tell the Jews at once they were to be cast off; but begins by professing his affection for them, and his sorrow for their destiny; thus simply, by implication, informing them that they were not to be admitted to the Messiah's kingdom. When he has shown that this rejection involved no failure on the part of God in keeping his promises, and was consistent with his justice and mercy, he more distinctly announces that, agreeably to the predictions of their own prophets, they were no longer the peculiar people of God. The remark, therefore, which Calvin makes on v. 2, is applicable to the whole introductory part of the chapter. *Non caret artificio, quod orationem ita abscondit, nondum exprimens qua de re loquatur; nondum enim opportunum erat, interitum gentis Judaicae aperte exprimere.*

† Οὐχ' οἶον δὲ, ὄτι is sometimes taken for οὐχ' οἶόν τε, and rendered, *it is not possible*; at others, for ὡς ὄτι, or for the full phrase οὐ τοῖον δὲ (λέγω) οἶον, ὄτι non tale vero dico quale (hoc est) excidisse verbum divinum.—WINKER.

(7) *Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children.* In this and the following verses the sentiment is confirmed, that natural descent from Abraham does not secure a portion in the promised inheritance. The language of this verse is, from the context, perfectly intelligible. The seed or natural descendants of Abraham are not all his children in the true sense of the term; i. e. like him in faith and heirs of his promise. So in Gal. 3: 7, Paul says, "They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

But in Isaac shall thy seed be called. As the word rendered *called* sometimes means *to choose*, Is. 48: 12. 49: 1, the meaning of the phrase may be, 'In Isaac shall thy seed be chosen.' 'I will select him as the recipient of the blessings promised to you.' 2. *To be called* is often equivalent to *to be, to be regarded*, as Is. 62: 4, "Thou shalt not be called desolate," i. e. thou shalt not be desolate. Hence, in this case, the text may mean, 'In Isaac shall thy seed be,' i. e. he shall be thy seed. Or, 3. '*After Isaac shall thy seed be called*,' they shall derive their name from him.* Whichever explanation be preferred, the meaning of the verse is the same. 'Not all the children of Abraham were made the heirs of his blessings, but Isaac was selected by the sovereign will of God to be the recipient of the promise.'

(8) *That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God.* The simplest view of this verse would seem to be, to regard it as an explanation of the historical argument contained in the preceding verse. 'The scriptures declare that Isaac, in preference to Ishmael, was selected to be the true seed and heir of Abraham, *that is, or this proves*, that it is not the children of the flesh that are regarded as the children of God, &c.' This suits the immediate object of the apostle, which is to show that God, according to his good pleasure, chooses one and rejects another, and that he is not bound to make the children of Abraham, as such, the heirs of his promise. It is very common, however, to consider this passage as analogous to that in Gal. 4: 22—31; and to regard the apostle as unfolding the analogy between the history of Isaac and Ish-

* Opera Isaaci continget tibi posteritas et secundum nomen ejus appellabitur.—W_{AHL}.

mael, and that of the spiritual and natural children of Abraham; Isaac being the symbol of the former, and Ishmael of the latter. As Ishmael, "who was born after the flesh" (Gal. 4: 23), i. e. according to the ordinary course of nature, was rejected, so also are the children of the flesh; and as Isaac, who was born "by promise," i. e. in virtue of the promised interference of God, was made the heir, so also are they heirs, who in like manner are the children of the promise, that is, who are the children of God, not by their natural birth, but by his special and effectual grace.* The point of comparison, then, between Isaac and believers is, that both are born, or become the children of God, not in virtue of ordinary birth, but in virtue of the special interposition of God. In favour of this view is certainly the strikingly analogous passage referred to in Galatians, and also the purport of the next verse. Besides this, if Paul meant to say nothing more in this and the following verse, than that it appears from the choice of Isaac that God is free to select one from among the descendants of Abraham and to reject another, these verses would differ too little from what he had already said in vs. 6, 7. It is best, therefore, to consider this passage as designed to point out an instructive analogy between the case of Isaac and the true children of God, he was born in virtue of a special divine interposition, so now, those who are the real children of God, are born not after the flesh, but by his special grace.

The children of the promise. This expression admits of various explanations. 1. Many take it as meaning merely *the promised children*, as *child of promise* is equivalent to *child which is promised*. But this evidently does not suit the application of the phrase to believers as made here, and in Gal. 4: 28. 2. It may mean, according to a common force of the genitive, *children in virtue of a promise*. This suits the context exactly. Isaac was born not after the ordinary course

* Verum aliud præterea mysterium sub hac imagine latet, quod proprius accedit ad quaestionem quam præ manibus habemus; nimirum veros fideles, qui per fidem non solius Abrahami sed et Dei ipsius filii heredesque facti sunt, non naturæ, quæ tota carnalis est, viribus regenitos esse; at divina quadam et supernaturali virtute, quæ promissionem in illis comitatur, quemadmodum Isaac ex Sara vetula sterilique matrona, Deo quod promiserat efficiente, procreatus est.—
DE BRAIS.

of nature, but in virtue of a divine promise; Gal. 4: 23, where the expressions *born after the flesh*, and *born by promise* are opposed to each other. It is of course implied in the phrase *children in virtue of a promise* that it is by a special interposition that they become children, and this is the sense in which Paul applies the expression to believers generally. "Who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John 1: 13. 3. There is a third explanation of the phrase which is more comprehensive, *those to whom the promise pertains*. This would include both the others just mentioned, and also a third idea, *those to whom the promise belongs*, or who are the heirs of the promised blessing. This idea seems to be included in the apostle's use of the expression. Gal. 4: 28, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise," and 3: 29, "Ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise;" see too Gal. 3: 18, 22. Rom. 4: 16, "To the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." Though this idea seems to have been in the apostle's mind, the second explanation is most in accordance with the context. *Are counted for the seed*, i. e. are regarded and treated as such. 'Not the natural descendants of Abraham are the children of God, but those who are born again by his special interposition, are regarded and treated as his true children.' See the same form of expression in Gen. 31: 15.

(9) *For this is the word of promise, at this time will I come and Sarah shall have a son*. This verse is evidently designed to show the propriety, and to explain the force of the phrase *children of the promise*. Isaac was so called because God said *at this time I will come*, &c. This is not only a prediction and promise that Isaac should be born, but also a declaration that it should be in consequence of God's coming, i. e. of the special manifestation of his power; as, in scriptural language, God is said to come, wherever he specially manifests his presence or favour, John 14: 23. Luke 1: 68, &c.

(10) *And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, &c.** Not only the case of Isaac and Ishmael

* As this passage is elliptical or irregular in its construction in the original, it has been variously explained. 1. 'Not only did Sarah experience, or show this, but Rebecca also, &c.' And then the 12th verse comes in regularly, "For the children not being yet born, it was said to her, &c." 2. Rebecca, in v. 10, may be

demonstrates the sovereignty of God in the choice of the recipients of his favour, but that of Rebecca evinces the same truth in a still clearer light. It might be supposed that Isaac was chosen on account of his mother, but in the case of Jacob there is no room for such a supposition. Jacob and Esau had the same mother, the same father, and were born at one birth. The choice here was certainly a sovereign one.

(11) *For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, &c.* The force of *for* is clear by a reference to the preceding verse, and the object of the apostle. 'Not only does the case of Isaac and Ishmael evince the sovereignty of God, but that of Rebecca and her children does the same, in a still more striking manner, *for* the decision between her children was made previous to their birth, for the very purpose of showing that it was not made on the ground of works, but of the sovereign pleasure of God.' This is an example which cannot be evaded. With regard to Ishmael, it might be supposed that either the circumstances of his birth or his personal character was the ground of his rejection, but with regard to Esau neither of these suppositions can be made. The circumstances of his birth were identical with those of his favoured brother, and the choice was made before either had done any thing good or evil. The case of Ishmael was, indeed, sufficient to prove that having Abraham for a father was not enough to secure the inheritance of the promises, but it could not prove the entire sovereignty of the act of election on the part of God, as is so fully done by that of Jacob and Esau.

*Neither having done good or evil.** The design of the introduction of these words is expressly stated in the next clause.

taken as the case absolute, 'Not only so, but also as to Rebecca, when she had conceived, &c.; it was said to her, &c.' 3. The most common method, probably, is to supply simply *this*, 'Not only *this* (happened) but Rebecca also, when she had conceived, &c.; it was said to her, &c.' The regular construction would be, 'Not only so, but also to Rebecca it was said.' Paul having interrupted himself by the parenthesis in v. 11, changes the grammatical construction at the beginning of v. 12. This with him is not unfrequent; see Rom. 2: 8. Gal. 2: 5.

* These words are sometimes cited as proof against the doctrines of original sin; as though that doctrine implied that moral action commenced prior to birth. No such idea, however, is included in it. It might, with as much propriety, be argued because there are no acts of selfishness, anger or pride, before birth, that these dispositions are not natural in man. The doctrine of original sin teaches

It was to show that the ground of choice was not in them, but in God; and this is the main point in regard to the doctrine of election, whether the choice be to the privileges of the external theocracy, or to the spiritual and eternal blessings of the kingdom of Christ.

That the purpose of God, according to election, might stand. This is the reason why the choice was made prior to birth. The original* here admits of various interpretations, which, however, do not materially alter the sense. The word rendered *purpose* is that which was used in the previous chapter, v. 28, and means here, as there, *a determination of the will*, and of itself expresses the idea of its being sovereign, i. e. of having its ground in the divine mind and not in its objects. Hence, in 2 Tim. 1: 9, it is said, "Who hath called us not according to our works, but according to his own purpose, &c.; see Eph. 1: 11. 3: 11. The words *according to election* are designed to fix more definitely the nature of this purpose. 1. The word *election* often means the act of choice itself, as 1 Thess. 1: 4, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." In this sense, the clause means, 'The purpose of God in reference to election, or in relation to this choice.' This view of the passage is perfectly consistent with the context. The choice was made prior to birth, in order that the true nature of the purpose of God in reference to it might appear. Or, 2. The word may mean *liberty* or *freeness*, and may here qualify adjectively the term *purpose*. *The purpose according to liberty* being *the free purpose*; see similar modes of expression in Rom. 11: 21, "branches according to nature" for *natural branches*; 2 Cor. 8: 2, "deep poverty," literally, "poverty according to deepness." This is, perhaps, the most common

that man's nature is depraved, and the truth of the doctrine is evinced by the certainty and uniformity with which men sin, as soon as they are capable of moral action. In like manner, the uniformity with which anger, pride and self-love manifest themselves, is regarded as proof that these are natural passions. All that Paul means to say is, that there was no ground of distinction in the conduct of the children which could account for the choice of one in preference to the other. Whether both were possessed of natures prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward; or, on the contrary, prone to love and obedience towards God, his language leaves entirely undecided.

* "ἵνα ἡ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόβασις τοῦ θεοῦ μὲνη.

interpretation.* But as the word does not occur in this sense in the New Testament, the former mode of explanation is perhaps to be preferred. *Should stand*, i. e. should be established and recognized in its true character, that is, that it might be seen it was *not of works, but of him that calleth*. This purpose of God, in reference to election, or the choice itself, is *not of works*, i. e. does not depend on works, but on *him that calleth*. That is, as plainly as language can express the idea, the ground of the choice is not in those chosen, but in God who chooses. In the same sense our justification is said to be “not of works,” Gal. 2: 16, and often; i. e. is not on the ground of works; see Rom. 11: 6. 2 Tim. 1: 9. The language of the apostle in this verse, and the nature of his argument are so perfectly plain, that there is little diversity of opinion as to his general meaning.† It is almost uniformly admitted that he here teaches that the election spoken of is perfectly sovereign, that the ground on which the choice is made is not in men, but in God. The opposers of the doctrine of personal election endeavour to escape the force of this passage, by saying that the choice of which the apostle speaks, is not to eternal life, but to the external advantages of the theocracy; and that it was not so much individuals as nations or communities which were chosen or rejected. With regard to this latter objection, it may be answered, 1. That the language quoted by the apostle from the Old Testament, is there applied to the individuals Jacob and

* WAHL'S LEXICON, KOPPE, FLATT, &c. CALVIN'S explanation is, *Propositum Dei quod solo ejus beneplacito continetur.*

† Witness the language of the most strenuous opponents of the doctrine of election.

Unde sensus totius loci sic constituitur; ut apparet, quicquid Deus decernit, libere eum decernere non propter hominis meritum, sed pro sua decernentis voluntate.—KOPPE. Ut benevola Dei voluntas maneret, ut quae non a meritis cujusquam pendeat, sed benefactore ipso.—NOESELLT. Dass der Rathschluss Gottes fest stehe, als ein solcher, der nicht abhänge von menschlichen Verdiensten, sondern von dem gnädigen oder freien Willen Gottes. ‘That the decree of God might stand firm, as one which depended not on human merit, but the gracious or free will of God.’—FLATT. And even THOLUCK makes Paul argue thus, “Dass wie Gott, ohne Anrechte anzuerkennen, die äussere Theokratie und mancherlei Vortheile übertrug wem er wollte, er so auch jetzt die innere dem überträgt, oder den darein eingehen lässt welchen er will.” ‘That as God, without recognizing any claims, committed the external theocracy and many advantages to whom he pleased, so also now he commits the internal to whom he will, or allows whom he will to enter it.’

Esau; and that Jacob, as an individual, was chosen in preference to his brother; and that Paul's whole argument turns on this very point. 2. That the choice of nations involves and consists in the choice of individuals; and that the same objections obviously lie against the choice in the one case as in the other. With regard to the former objection, that the choice here spoken of is to the external theocracy and not to eternal life, it may be answered, 1. Admitting this to be the case, how is the difficulty relieved? Is there any more objection to God's choosing men to a great than to a small blessing, on the ground of his own good pleasure? The foundation of the objection is not the character of the blessings we are chosen to inherit, but the sovereign nature of the choice. Of course it is not met by making these blessings either greater or less. 2. A choice to the blessings of the theocracy, i. e. of a knowledge and worship of the true God, involved, in a multitude of cases at least, a choice to eternal life; as a choice to the means is a choice to the end. And it is only so far as these advantages were a means to this end, that their value was worth consideration. 3. The whole design and argument of the apostle show that the objection is destitute of force. The object of the whole epistle is to exhibit the method of obtaining access to the Messiah's kingdom. The design here is to show that God is at liberty to choose whom he pleases to be the recipients of the blessings of this kingdom, and that he was not confined in his choice to the descendants of Abraham. His argument is derived from the historical facts recorded in the Old Testament. As God chose Isaac in preference to Ishmael, and Jacob in preference to Esau, not on the ground of their works, but of his own good pleasure, so now he chooses whom he will to a participation of the blessings of the kingdom of Christ: these blessings are pardon, purity and eternal life, &c. &c. That such is the apostle's argument and doctrine becomes, if possible, still more plain, from his refutation of the objections urged against it, which are precisely the objections which have ever been urged against the doctrine of election.

(12) *It was said to her the elder shall serve the younger.* These words are to be connected with the 10th verse, according to our version, in this manner, "Not only *this*, but Rebecca also, when she had conceived, &c., it was said to her, &c."

According to this view, although the construction is irregular, the sense is sufficiently obvious. As it was said to Rebecca that the elder of her sons should serve the younger, prior to the birth of either, it is evident that the choice between them was not on account of their works. It has been said that this declaration relates not to Jacob and Esau personally, but to their posterity, 1. Because in Gen. 25: 23, whence the quotation is made, it is said, "Two nations are within thy womb, and *the one* people shall be stronger than *the other* people; and the elder shall serve the younger." 2. Because Esau did not personally serve Jacob, although the descendants of the one were subjected to those of the other. It is no doubt true that the prediction contained in this passage has reference not only to the relative standing of Jacob and Esau as individuals, but also to that of their descendants. It may even be allowed that the latter was principally intended in the annunciation to Rebecca. But it is too clear to be denied, 1. That this distinction between the two races presupposed and included a distinction between the individuals. Jacob was made the special heir to his father Isaac, obtained as an individual the birth-right and the blessing, and Esau as an individual was cast off. The one, therefore, was personally preferred to the other. 2. In Paul's application of this event to his argument, the distinction between the two as individuals was the very thing referred to. This is plain from the 11th verse, in which he says, "The *children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, &c." It is, therefore, the nature of the choice between the children that is the point designed to be presented. As to the objection that Esau never personally served Jacob, it is founded on the mere literal sense of the words. Esau did acknowledge his inferiority to Jacob, and was in fact postponed to him on various occasions. This is the real spirit of the passage. This prophecy, as is the case with all similar predictions, had various stages of fulfilment. The relation between the two brothers during life; the loss of the birth-right blessing and promises on the part of Esau; the temporary subjugation of his descendants to the Hebrews under David, their final and complete subjection under the Maccabees; and especially their exclusion from the peculiar privileges of the people of God, through all the early periods of their history, are all included. Compare the prediction of the

subjection of Ham to his brethren; and of Japheth's dwelling in the tents of Shem, Gen. 9: 25—27.

(13) *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* These words are quoted from Malachi 1: 2, 3, where the prophet is reproving the Jews for their ingratitude. As a proof of his peculiar favour, God refers to his preference for them from the first, "Was not Esau Jacob's brother, saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, &c." This passage, as well as the one quoted in v. 12, and just referred to, relates to the descendants of Jacob and Esau, as well as to the individuals themselves; the favour shown to the posterity of the one, and withheld from that of the other, being founded on the distinction originally made between the two brothers. The meaning, therefore, is, that God preferred one to the other, or chose one instead of the other.* As this is the idea meant to be expressed, it is evident that in this case the word *hate* means *to love less, to regard and treat with less favour.* Thus in Gen. 29: 33, Leah says, she was hated by her husband; while in the preceding verse, the same idea is expressed by saying, "Jacob loved Rachael more than Leah," Matt. 8: 24. Luke 14: 26, "If a man come to me and hate not his father and mother, &c." John 12: 25. The quotation from the Prophet may be considered either as designed in confirmation of the declaration that the elder should serve the younger; or it may be connected in sense with the close of the 11th, 'God is sovereign in the distribution of his favours, as it is written, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated;' the distinction made between these two individuals being cited as an illustration and confirmation of the apostle's doctrine.

The doctrine of the preceding verses is that God is perfectly sovereign in the distribution of his favours, that the ground of his selecting one and rejecting another is not their works, but his own good pleasure. To this doctrine there are two plausible objections; first, it is not consistent with the divine justice, v. 14; second, it is incompatible with human responsibility, v. 19. To the former the apostle answers first, God claims distinctly

* *Quanquam illic etiam commemorantur benedictiones terrenae, quae Israelitis contulerat Deus: non tamen aliter accipere convenit quam illius benevolentiae symbola. Caeterum ubi est ira Dei, illic mors sequitur; ubi dilectio, illic vita.—CALVIN.*

in his word this prerogative, v. 15; and secondly, he obviously exercises it, as is seen in the dispensations of his providence, v. 17.*

(14) *What shall we say then, is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.*† The apostle, according to his usual manner, proposes the objection to his own doctrine in the form of a question, denies its validity, and immediately subjoins his reason; see Rom. 3: 5. Gal. 3: 21. The obvious objection here presented is, that it is unjust in God, thus, according to his own purpose, to choose one and reject another. This Paul denies, and supports his denial by an appeal, in the first place, to scripture, and the second, to experience. It will be remarked that these arguments of the apostle are founded on two assumptions. The first is, that the scriptures are the word of God; and the second, that what God actually does cannot be unrighteous. Consequently any objection which can be shown to militate against either an express declaration of scripture, or an obvious fact in providence, is fairly answered. And if, as is almost always the case, when it militates against the one, it can be shown to militate against the other, the answer is doubly ratified.

(15) *For God saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.* The connexion and argument are obvious. 'It is not unjust in God to exercise his sovereignty in the distribution of his mercies, for he expressly claims the right.' The passage quoted is from the account of the solemn interview of Moses with God. In answer to the prayer of the prophet for his people and for himself, God answered, "I will proclaim my name before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, &c." Ex. 33: 19. It is, therefore, a formal declaration of a divine prerogative. The form of expression *I*

* Est enim predestinatio Dei vere labyrinthus, unde hominis ingenium nullo modo se explicare queat: atque adeo importuna est hominis curiositas, ut quo periculosior est cujusque rei inquisitio, eo audacius perrumpat: ita ubi de predestinatione sermo habetur, quia modum sibi imponere non potest, sua temeritate velut in profundum mare statim se demergit. * * * * Haec ergo sit nobis sancta observatio, nequid de ipsa scire appetamus, nisi quod scriptura docet: ubi Dominus sacrum os suum claudit, viam quoque ultra pergendi mentibus nostris praeccludimus.—CALVIN.

† Prodigiosus certe humani ingenii furor, quod injustitiae potius Deam insinulet, quam ut se coarguat coecitatis.—CALVIN.

will do what I do, or I do what I do, is here, as in Ez. 16: 23. 2 Sam. 15: 20, designed to convey the idea, that it rests entirely with the agent to act or not, at his pleasure. The ground of decision is in himself. In the connexion of this verse with the former, therefore, it is obvious that Paul quotes this declaration to prove that God claims the sovereignty, which he had attributed to him. In order to avoid the force of this passage many deny that it expresses the sentiment of the apostle. They consider this and the following verses as the objections of a Jewish fatalist. A mode of interpretation so obviously inconsistent with the context, and even the proper force of the words, that it is mentioned only to show how hard it is to close the eyes against the doctrine which the apostle so clearly teaches.

(16) *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor him that runneth, &c.* If the ground of the decision or choice of the objects of mercy be in God, as asserted in v. 15, then it is not in man, is a conclusion which flows of course from the previous declarations. The word *it* refers to the result contemplated in the context, viz. the attainment of the divine favour, or more definitely, admission into the Messiah's kingdom. This result, when attained, is to be attributed not to the wishes or efforts of man, but to the mercy of God. That one, therefore, is taken, and another left, that one is introduced into this kingdom and another not, is to be referred to the fact asserted in the preceding verse, that "God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." This seems plainly to be the apostle's meaning. It is said, however, that the efforts here declared to be vain are those of the self-righteous; that Paul intends to say that the Jews, by the works of the law, could not attain the favour of God, &c. But no such sentiment is expressed by the apostle; it is all supplied by the commentator. The sentiment, moreover, is not only not expressed, but it is in direct contradiction to the language and design of the apostle. He says the ground of choice, or of admission into the kingdom of Christ is not in us; this interpretation says it is in us. Paul says it is in God; this interpretation says, it is not in God.*

* *Altero sophistico sed putido cavillo Pauli sententiam eludere conatus est Pelagius, non esse quidem volentis et currentis duntaxat, quia misericordia Dei adjuvat. Quem non minus solide quam argute Augustinus refellit: quia si ideo electionis causa esse negatur voluntas hominis, quia non sola, sed tantum ex parte*

These words, however, are not intended to teach that the efforts of men for the attainment of salvation are useless; much less do they teach that such efforts should not be made. They simply declare that the result is not to be attributed to them; that the reason why one man secures the blessing, and another does not, is not to be found in the greater ardour of desire, or intensity of effort in the one, than in the other, but the reason is in God. This doctrine is consistent, not only with the duty of all to strive to enter into life, but also with the connexion between these efforts and the desired end. Because although the result depends on God, he may and does bring it to pass in the use of the means which he has appointed for the purpose. The question, however, of the use of means, is foreign to this discussion. Paul has no reference to that subject. He simply declares that election is founded on the good pleasure of God, and not on any thing in man.*

(17) *For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, &c.* The connexion of this verse is with the 14th, rather than with the one immediately preceding. Paul is still engaged in answering the objection proposed in the 14th verse. There is no injustice with God, because he saith to Moses, 'I will have mercy, &c.' v. 15, and because the scripture saith to Pharaoh, for this purpose, &c. v. 17. His second answer to the objection is, that God, in point of fact, does exercise this sovereignty, as is evident from the case of Pharaoh. Pharaoh was no worse than many other men who have obtained mercy; yet God, for wise and benevolent reasons, withheld from him the saving influences of his grace, and gave him up to his own wicked heart, so that he became more and more hardened, until he was finally destroyed. God did nothing to Pharaoh beyond his strict deserts. He did not make him wicked; he only forebore to make him good, by the exertion of special and altogether unmerited grace. The reason, therefore, of Pharaoh's being left to perish, while others were saved, was not that he was worse than others, but because God has mercy on whom he will have mercy; it was because, among

causa est; sic etiam vicissim dicere licebit, non esse misericordiae, sed volentis et currentis.—CALVIN.

* *Simpliciter autem accipe, neque in voluntate nostra, neque in conatu esse situm, ut inter electos censeamur: sed totum id divinae bonitatis, quae nec volentes nec conantes, ac ne cogitantes quidem ultro assumit.—CALVIN.*

the criminals at his bar, he pardons one and not another, as seems good in his sight. He, therefore, who is pardoned cannot say it was because I was better than others; while he who is condemned must acknowledge that he receives nothing more than the just recompense of his sins. In order to establish his doctrine of the divine sovereignty, Paul had cited from scripture the declaration that God shows mercy to whom he will; he now cites an example to show that he punishes whom he will.

Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up. This is what God said to Pharaoh, as recorded in Ex. 9: 16. The meaning of the declaration may be variously explained. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word used in the passage quoted, means literally, *I have caused thee to stand*. This is understood by some as meaning *I have called thee into existence*. 2. By others, *I have preserved thee*. 3. By others, *I have raised thee up as king*. 4. By others, *I have placed and continued thee as my adversary*. Either of these interpretations admits of being defended on philological grounds more or less satisfactory. The first is sufficiently suitable to the force of the word used by the apostle, but does not agree so well with the original passage in Exodus. For the second, it may be urged that verbs in the form (Hiphil) used in the passage quoted, signify frequently the continuance of a thing in the state which the simple form of the verb expresses. Thus the verb meaning *to live*, in this form, signifies *to preserve alive*, Gen. 6: 19, 20. 19: 19, &c. Besides, the particular word used in Ex. 9: 16, signifies *to preserve, to cause to continue*, in 1 Kings 15: 4. 2 Chron. 9: 8. Prov. 29: 4, &c. The third interpretation is too definite, and supplies an idea not in the text. The fourth, which is only a modification of the second, is perhaps the nearest to the apostle's intention. 'For this purpose have I raised you up, and placed you where you are; and instead of cutting you off at once, have so long endured your obstinacy and wickedness.'^{*}

That I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared in all the earth. This is the reason why

^{*} Ego te suscitavi, et quasi adversarium mihi constitui potentissimum, &c.—
Dr BRAIS.

God dealt with Pharaoh in the manner described. It was not that he was worse than others, but that God might be glorified. This is precisely the principle on which all punishment is inflicted. It is that the true character of the divine lawgiver should be known. This is of all objects, when God is concerned, the highest and most important; in itself the most worthy, and in its results the most beneficent. The ground, therefore, on which Pharaoh was made an object of the divine justice, or the reason why the law was in his case allowed to take its course, is not to be sought in any peculiarity of his character or conduct in comparison with those of others, but in the sovereign pleasure of God. This result of the argument Paul formally states in the next verse.

(18) *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* This is the conclusion, not merely from the preceding verse, but from the whole passage, vs. 14—17. This perfect sovereignty in the selection of the objects of his mercy and of his judgment, Paul had attributed to God in v. 11, and, in the subsequent verses, had proved that he claims and exercises it, both in reference to the recipients of his favour, v. 15, and the subjects of his wrath, v. 17. The doctrine, therefore, is fully established.

The latter clause of this verse, *whom he will he hardeneth*, admits of various explanations. The word may be taken either in its ordinary meaning, or it may be understood in its secondary sense. According to the latter view, it means *to treat harshly, to punish*. This interpretation, it must be admitted, is peculiarly suited to the context, 'He hath mercy on whom he will, and he punishes whom he will.' Nor is it entirely destitute of philological support. In Job 39: 16, it is said of the ostrich, "She treateth hardly her young."* But, on the other hand, it is liable to serious objections. 1. It is certain that it is a very unusual sense of the word, and opposed to the

* Our version is "She is hardened against her young," but this is not accurate. The Hebrew is $\text{וַיִּשְׁקָהּ בְּחֵץ וּבְקֶלֶבֶת}$, and the LXX. translate $\alpha\pi\sigma\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\upsilon\varsigma \tau\acute{\alpha} \tau\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\upsilon\alpha \dot{\iota}\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma$.

The interpretation mentioned in the text is given by WAHL in his Lexicon, and is defended by BENÉL thus, "*Indurat dicit pro non misereatur, per metonymiam consequentis, et si τὸ non misereri quodammodo durius sonat. Sic, sanctificatus est, pro, non est impurus, 1 Cor. 7: 14, ἐξῆρασθε, pro, non tradidistis, Jos. 22: 31.*"

meaning in which it frequently occurs. There should be very strong reasons for departing from the usual meaning of an expression so common in the scriptures. 2. It is inconsistent with those passages in the Old Testament which speak of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. 3. It removes no difficulty; for what, according to the usual sense of the word, is here said, is frequently said elsewhere.

The common sense of the word is, therefore, doubtless, to be preferred, *whom he will he hardens*. This is by many understood to express a direct and positive influence of God on the soul in rendering it obdurate. But, in the first place, this interpretation is by no means necessary, as will presently be shown; and, in the second, it can hardly be reconciled with our ideas of the divine character.

2. Others think that this phrase is to be explained by a reference to that scriptural usage, according to which God is said to do whatever indirectly and incidentally results from his agency; on the same principle that a father is said to ruin his children, or a master his servants; or that Christ is said to produce wars and divisions. Thus Is. 6: 10, the prophet is commanded to make the heart of the people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, &c., as though to him were to be ascribed the incidental results of his preaching. In the same way the gospel is the cause of death (not of misery only, but of insensibility also), to those who hear and disregard it. 3. Nearly allied to this mode of explanation is that which rests on the assumption that God is said to do what he permits to be done. Reference is made to such passages as the following. 2 Sam. 12: 11, "I will give thy wives unto thy neighbour," i. e. I will permit him to take them. 2 Sam. 16: 10, "The Lord hath said unto him, curse David." Is. 63: 17, "O Lord why hast thou caused us to err from thy ways, and hardened our hearts from thy fear." Deut. 2: 30, "For the Lord thy God hardened his spirit (Sihon's), that he might deliver him into thy hand." 1 Kings 11: 23, "The Lord stirred up another adversary." Ps. 105: 25, "He turned their hearts to hate his people." In 2 Sam. 24: 1, God is said to have moved David to number the people; but in 1 Chron. 21: 1, Satan is said to have provoked David to number Israel. From these and similar passages it is evident that it is a familiar scriptural usage, to ascribe to God

effects which he allows in his wisdom to come to pass. Hence, almost every thing is, at times, spoken of as if it was produced by divine agency, although, in a multitude of other places, these same results are referred, as in some of the examples cited above, to their immediate authors. According to this mode of representation, God is understood as merely permitting Pharaoh to harden his own heart, as the result is often expressly referred to Pharaoh himself, Ex. 8: 15, 32, &c.*

4. But there seems to be more expressed by the language of the text than mere permission, because it is evidently a punitive act that is here intended, and because this view does not suit the other passages in which God is said to give sinners up to the evil of their own hearts, Rom. 1: 24, 28.† It is probable, therefore, that the judicial abandonment of men “to a reprobate mind,” a punitive withdrawing of the influences of his Holy Spirit, and the giving them up to the uncounteracted operation of the hardening or perverting influences by which they are surrounded, are all expressed by the language of the apostle. In this God does no more than what he constantly threatens to do, or which the scriptures declare he actually does, in the case of those who forsake him; and nothing more than every righteous parent does in reference to a reprobate son. This, in connexion with the principle referred to above (in No. 2), seems as much as can fairly be considered as included in the expressions.

(19) *Thou wilt then say unto me, why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?* This is the second leading objection to the apostle’s doctrine. If it is true, as he had just taught, that the destiny of men is in the hands of God, if it is not of him who willeth, or of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy; what can we do? If the fact that one believes and is saved, and another remains impenitent and

* Ex quibus verbis liquido constat Pharaonis, atque adeo reprobis cujusvis, animum verbi divini monitis duriter et præfracte restitisse, quia contumaciam ejus cum posset Deus virtute supernaturali, de qua modò dictum est, frangere et emollire, de industria noluit arcanam illam sui Spiritus gratiam huic homini donare, sine qua fieri nequit, quin humanum ingenium, innata malitia, se ipsum adversus omnes prophetarum et apostolorum exhortationes obdurat.—DE BRUIS.

† Caeterum Indurandi verbum, quum Deo in scriptura tribuitur, non solum permissionem (ut volunt diluti quidam moderatores) sed divinæ quoque iræ actionem, significat.—CALVIN.

is lost, depends on God, how can we be blamed? Can we resist his will? It will at once be perceived that this plausible and formidable objection to the apostle's doctrine is precisely the one which is commonly and confidently urged against the doctrine of election. There would be no room either for this objection, or for that contained in the 14th verse, if Paul had merely said that God chooses those whom he foresees would repent and believe; or that the ground of distinction was in the different conduct of men. It is very evident, therefore, that he taught no such doctrine. How easy and obvious an answer to the charge of injustice would it have been to say, God chooses one and rejects another according to their works. But teaching as he does the sovereignty of God in the selection of the objects of his mercy and of the subjects of his wrath, declaring as he does so plainly, that the destiny of men is determined by his sovereign pleasure, the objection, how can he yet find fault? is plausible and natural. To this objection the apostle gives two answers; 1. That it springs from ignorance of the true relation between God and men, as Creator and creatures, and of the nature and extent of the divine authority over us, vs. 20, 21; 2. That there is nothing in his doctrine inconsistent with the divine perfections; since he does not make men wicked, but from the mass of wicked men, he pardons one and punishes another, for the wisest and most benevolent of reasons, vs. 22, 23.

(20) *Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, &c.* In these words we have both a reproof and an answer. The reproof is directed against the irreverent spirit, whence such cavils always arise. After the clear proof given in the preceding verses, that God claims this sovereignty in his word, and exercises it in his providence, it argues great want of reverence for God to assert that this claim involves the grossest injustice. It is very common with the sacred writers, and with Christ himself, when questions or cavils are presented, to direct their answers more to the feeling which the question indicated, than to the question itself. Tholuck refers, in illustration of this remark, to John 3: 3. Matt. 8: 19, 20, 22. 19: 16. 22: 29. But in this case, besides this reproof for a miserable mortal attempting to call his Maker to account, instead of considering that the mere fact that God

claims any thing as his right, is evidence enough that it is just, there is a direct answer to the difficulty. The objection is founded on ignorance or misapprehension of the true relation between God and his sinful creatures. It supposes that he is under obligation to extend his grace to all. Whereas he is under obligation to none. All are sinners, and have forfeited every claim to his mercy; it is, therefore, perfectly competent to God to spare one and not another; to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour. He, as their sovereign Creator, has the same right over them that a potter has over the clay. It is to be borne in mind, that Paul does not here speak of the right of God over his creatures as creatures, but as sinful creatures; as he himself clearly intimates in the next verses. It is the cavil of a sinful creature against his Creator, that he is answering; and he does it by showing that God is under no obligation to give his grace to any, but is as sovereign as the potter in fashioning the clay.

Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? See Isaiah 45: 9. In this clause Paul presents mainly the idea of God's right, and in the subsequent verses he shows that nothing unjust is included in the right here claimed. We are justly in his hands; and it is the height of irreverence and folly for us to call him to account for the manner in which he may see fit to dispose of us.

(21) *Hath not the potter power over the clay, out of the same lump, to make one vessel, &c. &c.* The word rendered *power* means also *authority* and *right*. In this case it means, *the lawful power or right*; he not only can do it, but he has a perfect right to do it; see the use of the Greek word in Matt. 21: 23. 1 Cor. 8: 9, and frequently elsewhere. This verse is merely an illustration of the idea contained in the last clause of the preceding. The Creator has a perfect right to dispose of his creatures as he sees fit. From the very idea of a creature, it can have no claim on the Creator; whether it exists at all, or how, or where, from the nature of the case, must depend on him, and be at his sovereign disposal. The illustration of this truth which follows, is peculiarly appropriate. When the potter takes a piece of clay into his hands, and approaches the wheel, how entirely does it rest with himself to determine the form that clay shall take, and the use to which it shall be

destined? Can any thing be more unreasonable, than that the clay, supposing it endued with intelligence, should complain that the form given it was not so comely, or the use to which it was destined not so honourable as those which fell to the lot of a different portion of the same mass? Are not these points on which the potter has a most perfect right to decide for himself, and regarding which the thing formed can have no right to complain or question? And so it is with God; the mass of fallen men are in his hands, and it is his right to dispose of them at pleasure; to make all vessels unto honour, or all unto dishonour, or some to one and some to the other. These are points on which, from the nature of the relation, we have no right to question or complain.

(22, 23) *But what if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, &c.?* These verses contain Paul's second answer to the difficulty presented in the 19th verse. He had shown in vs. 20, 21, that in virtue of his relation to men as his sinful creatures, God is at perfect liberty to dispose of them at his pleasure, pardoning one and punishing another, as seemeth good in his sight. He now shows that in the exercise of this right there is nothing unreasonable or unjust, nothing of which his creatures have the least right to complain. The punishment of the wicked is not an arbitrary act, having no object but to make them miserable; it is designed to manifest the displeasure of God against sin, and to make known his true character. On the other hand, the salvation of the righteous was designed to display the riches of his grace. Both in the punishment of the one class, and the salvation of the other, most important and benevolent ends were to be answered. And since for these ends it was necessary that some should be punished, while others might be pardoned, as all are equally undeserving, it results from the nature of the case that the decision between the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy must be left to God. The apostle would, moreover, have it remarked that even in the necessary punishment of the wicked, God does not proceed with any undue severity, but, on the contrary, deals with them with the greatest long-suf-

fering and tenderness. Such seems to be the general purport and object of these difficult verses.

The attentive reader will perceive that even with the insertion of the word *what* which has nothing to answer to it in the original, and with a sign of interrogation at the end of v. 24, the construction of the passage in our version remains ungrammatical and the sense incomplete. As the difficulty exists in the Greek text and not merely in our translation, the explanations which have been proposed are very numerous. Many of these are presented and canvassed by Tholuck and Wolf, particularly the latter. There are three views taken of the connexion, which are the most plausible. 1. The two verses are considered as both referring to the rejection of the wicked, for which v. 22 assigns one reason, and v. 23 another. 'What if God, willing to show his wrath, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, so that also he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, &c.' The treatment of the wicked was not only to display the divine displeasure against sin, but also, by contrast, his mercy towards his people.* But, in order to make the two verses cohere in this way, it is necessary to transpose the words at the beginning of the 23d verse, and read *that also*, instead of *and that*, which alters the sense materially, while for such a transposition there is no authority. Besides this, it makes v. 23 too subordinate to v. 22; that is, it makes God's dealings towards the vessels of mercy merely an incidental topic, instead of having equal prominence with his treatment of the vessels of wrath. From the context we are led to expect a vindication of his course, not only in the destruction of the latter, but in the salvation of the former.

* So among others CALVIN, who translates verse 23 thus, *Ut notas quoque faceret divitias gloriæ suæ in vasa misericordiæ, quæ præparavit in gloriam.* And in his comment he remarks, *Est autem secunda ratio quæ gloriam Dei in reprobis interitu manifestat; quod ex eo luculentius divinæ bonitatis erga electos amplitudo confirmatur.*

Much in the same way WINKER explains the passage, connecting the *καὶ ἵνα* of v. 23, immediately with the verb *ἠνείκεν* of v. 22, "Wenn Gott beschliessend mit aller Langmuth die Gefässe seines Zornes trug • • auch in der Absicht, den Reichthum • • zuerkennen zu geben." "If God willing • • • bore with all long-suffering the vessels of wrath • • • also with the view to make known the riches, &c." Gram. p. 443.

2. A second method is to make the second clause of v. 22 and the beginning of v. 23 depend on the first words of v. 22. 'God willing to show his wrath and make his power known, and (willing) that the riches of his glory should be known, &c.' This gives a good sense, though the construction is suddenly and rather violently changed at the beginning of v. 23, "that he might make known," stand for the infinitive, "to make known."

3. Tholuck makes v. 24 parallel with v. 23, and explains the passage thus, 'God, willing to manifest his wrath, bore with the vessels of wrath; and that he might make known his mercy, called us, &c.' This gives a very good sense, but assumes the construction to be irregular to a very unusual degree. Though the second method be somewhat irregular, it seems, on the whole, the least objectionable, and gives a sense obviously consistent with the context.

The two objects which Paul here specifies as designed to be answered by the punishment of the wicked, are the manifestation of the *wrath of God*, and the exhibition of his power. The word *wrath* is used here as in ch. 1: 18, for the divine displeasure against sin, the calm and holy disapprobation of evil, joined with the determination to punish those who commit it.* The power of God is conspicuously displayed in the destruction of the wicked, no matter how mighty or numerous they may be. Though the inherent ill-desert of sin must ever be regarded as the primary ground of the infliction of punishment, a ground which would remain in full force, were no beneficial results anticipated from the misery of the wicked, yet God has so ordered his government that the evils which sinners incur shall result in the manifestation of his character, and the consequent promotion of the holiness and happiness of his intelligent creatures throughout eternity.

God treats the wicked, not as a severe judge, but with much long suffering. The expression *vessels of wrath* no doubt suggested itself from the illustration of the potter used in the preceding verse; though the term *vessel* is used not unfrequently in reference to men, Acts 9: 15. 1 Pet. 3: 7. *Vessels of wrath*,

* Ira Dei non, perturbatio animi ejus est, sed judicium quo irrogatur poena peccato. August. De Civit. Dei, l. 15. c. 35.

i. e. vessels which deserve wrath, or which are to be objects of wrath; as *vessels of mercy*, are those which are to be the objects of mercy; or these phrases may mean *vessels destined to wrath* and *destined to mercy*, corresponding to the expressions *vessels unto honour* and *unto dishonour*, of the preceding verse. This last explanation, on account of the context, seems the most probable.

*Fitted to destruction.** The word here used admits of being taken either as passive or middle, and may, therefore, be rendered as it is in our version, or *who have fitted themselves* for destruction. If the passive sense be adopted then, the meaning may be, *prepared by God* for destruction; or the participle may be taken rather as a verbal adjective, *fitted for destruction*, expressing merely the idea of being ready for that end. In favour of this latter view, it may be noticed that in the next verse, when speaking of the vessels of mercy, the active voice is used, “which God had before prepared unto glory;” as if designedly to mark the difference between the two cases. If the other explanation (*prepared by God*) be adopted, then, of course, the words must be taken in a sense modified by the nature of the subject, and other passages of scripture. Wicked men are prepared for destruction by God, not as being created for that purpose, but as being devoted to it on account of their sins, and borne with until they are ripe for their doom. This explanation is adopted not only by the stronger Calvinists, but by many of the neological commentators.† There seems, however, no valid objection to the interpretation *prepared* or *fit* for destruction; and which is the rather to be preferred, because the apostle, being here engaged in vindicating the divine proceedings, would naturally speak of the objects of the divine

* Similar modes of expression are very common among the Jewish writers. *Moed Katon*, fol. 9, 1. *Exiit filia vocis, dixitque eis; vos omnes ordinati estis ad vitam seculi futuri.* *Megilla* fol. 12, 2. *Memuchan*, Esther 1: 14, i. e. Haman. *Cur vocatur nomen ejus Memuchan? quia ordinatus est ad poenas.* *R. Bechai* in *Pentateuch*. fol. 132. *Gentes ordinatae ad gehennam; Israel vero ad vitam.* Fol. 220, 4, *Duas istas gentes vocat Salomo duas filias, dicitque ad gehennam ordinatas esse.* *Bechoroth*, fol. 8, 2. *R. Joseph docuit, hi sunt Persae, qui preparati sunt in gehennam.* WETSTEIN on Acts 13: 48.

† *Vasa sunt in exitium comparata; id est devota et destinata exitio.*—CALVIN. *Homines facti ad perniciem summam illam et gravissimam.*—KOPPE. Which, however, he says, amounts only to this, *Certo inevitabili fato perituri.*

wrath as being fitted for destruction, in the sense of deserving it, &c.

(23) *And that he might make known the riches of his glory, &c.* See the preceding verse for the different views of the grammatical connexion of this verse with v. 22. The sense is plain, ‘What right have men to complain, if God punishes the wicked, and manifests the riches of his glory on the objects of his mercy?’ The word *glory* is used in reference to any thing in God which is the foundation of praise. Hence, it is used for each of his attributes, as, for example, for his power, Rom. 6: 4. John 11: 40; for his mercy, Eph. 3: 16, and here; or for all his attributes collectively, as in 2 Cor. 4: 6, “To give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, &c.” Such, too, may be its force in this passage, as it is not mercy only, but wisdom, power, goodness, &c., which are manifested in the salvation of his people.* The word is also frequently employed in reference to the future blessedness of the saints. Eph. 1: 18, “To know what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.” This sense is given to the word, in this case, by Tholuck, but inconsistently with the context. As the *wrath* and *power* of God are manifested in the destruction of the wicked, so are the *riches of his glory* in the salvation of his people.

On the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. On the phrase *vessels of mercy*, see the preceding verse. The word rendered *he had afore prepared* has this signification frequently; indeed, it is its common and proper meaning. But as to *prepare beforehand* and *to predestine* are very nearly related ideas, the word is also used in this latter sense. Eph. 2: 10, “Which God had before ordained that we should walk in them.” This meaning is commonly adopted here,† “Which God had fore-ordained unto glory;” see the parallel passage in Acts 13: 48, “As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.” The other signification of the word, however, gives a very good sense. ‘Which he had before prepared, by his providence and grace unto glory.’

(24) *Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only,*

* *Gloriae*: bonitatis, gratiae, misericordiae, sapientiae, omnipotentiae, Eph. 1: 6.—BENGEI.

† See WAHL'S *Clavis* on the word ἀγοστρομάζω.

but also of the Gentiles. We are the vessels of his mercy, even we whom he hath called, i. e. effectually introduced by his Spirit into the kingdom of Christ; see ch. 8: 28, 30. How naturally does the apostle here return to the main subject of discussion! How skilfully is the conclusion brought out at which he has continually aimed! God chose Isaac in preference to Ishmael, Jacob in preference to Esau, it is a prerogative which he claims and exercises, of selecting from among the guilty family of men whom he pleases as the objects of his mercy, and leaving whom he pleases to perish in their sins, unrestricted in his choice by the descent or previous conduct of the individuals. He has mercy upon whom he will have mercy. He calls men, therefore, from among the Gentiles and from among the Jews indiscriminately. This is the result at which the apostle aimed. The Gentiles are admitted into the Messiah's kingdom, vs. 25, 26; and the great body of the Jews are excluded, v. 27.* This conclusion he confirms by explicit declarations of scripture.

Doctrines.

1. No external circumstance, no descent from pious parents, no connexion with the true church, can secure admission for men into the kingdom of Christ, vs. 6—12.

2. Paul teaches clearly the doctrine of the personal election of men to eternal life, an election founded not on works, but on the good pleasure of God. The choice is *to eternal life*, and not to external privileges merely. 1. Because the very point to be illustrated and established through this and the two following chapters, is the free admission of men into the Messiah's kingdom and its spiritual and eternal blessings. 2. Because the language of the apostle seems of itself to preclude the other idea, in vs. 15, 16, and especially in v. 18, "Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth." This is not applicable to the reception of men to a state of peculiar external privileges or their rejection from it. 3. The case of Pharaoh is not an illustration of the refusal to admit some men to peculiar privi-

* Ex disputatione, quam hactenus de libertate divinæ electionis habuit, duo consequantur: nempe Dei gratiam non ita inclusam esse in populo Judaico, ut non ad alias quoque nationes emanare, et in orbem universum effundere se posset: deinde ne sic quidem alligatam esse Judæis, ut ad omnes Abrahae filios secundum carnem sine exceptione perveniat.—CALVIN.

leges. 4. The choice is between the vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath; vessels of mercy chosen *unto glory*, not unto church privileges, and vessels of wrath who were to be made the examples of God's displeasure against sin. 5. The character of the objections to the apostle's doctrine show that such was the nature of the choice. If this election is to eternal life, it is, of course, *a choice of individuals*, and not of communities. This is still further proved by the cases of Isaac and Ishmael, and Jacob and Esau, between whom, as individuals, the choice was made. 2. From the illustration derived from the case of Pharaoh. 3. From the objections presented in vs. 14, 19. 4. From the answer to these objections in vs. 15, 16, 20, 23, especially from the passage just referred to, which speaks of the vessels of mercy prepared unto glory; which cannot be applied to nations or communities. *This election is sovereign*, i. e. is founded on the good pleasure of God, and not on any thing in its objects. 1. Because this is expressly asserted. The choice between Jacob and Esau was made prior to birth, that it might be seen that it was not founded on works, but on the good pleasure of God, v. 11. The same is clearly stated in v. 16, "It is not of him that willeth or of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;" and also in v. 18, "Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will, &c." The decision rests with God. 2. Because otherwise there would be no shadow of objection to the doctrine. How could men say it was unjust if God chose one and rejected another according to their works? And how could any one object, as in v. 19, 'that as the will of God could not be resisted, men were not to be blamed,' if the decision in question did not depend on the will of God, but on that of men? How easy for the apostle to have answered the objector, 'You are mistaken, the choice is not of God, he does not choose whom he wills, but who he sees will choose him. It is not his will, but man's that decides the point.' Paul does not so answer, but vindicates the doctrine of the divine sovereignty. The fact, therefore, that Paul had to answer the same objections which are now constantly urged against the doctrine of election, goes far to show that that doctrine was his. 3. That the election is sovereign, is taught elsewhere in scripture. In 2 Tim. 1: 9, it is said to be "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." Eph. 1: 5, it is said

to be "according to the good pleasure of his will," i. e. his sovereign pleasure. 4. This view alone harmonises with the doctrine, that all good thoughts and right purposes and feelings proceed from God, which is clearly taught in the scriptures. For if the purpose not to resist 'common grace,' is a right purpose, it is of God, and, of course, it is of him that one man forms it, and another does not. 5. This doctrine is alone consistent with Christian experience. "Why was I made to hear thy voice?" No Christian answers this question by saying, because I was better than others.

3. The two leading objections against the doctrine of election, viz. that it is inconsistent with the divine character, and incompatible with human responsibility, are answered by the apostle. It cannot be unjust, because God claims and exercises the right of sovereign choice. It is not inconsistent with human responsibility, because God does not make men wicked. Though, as their Creator, he has a right to dispose of wicked men as he pleases, he only, of the same corrupt mass, chooses one to honour, and the other to dishonour, vs. 14—23.

4. Scripture must ever be consistent with itself. The rejection of the Jews could not be inconsistent with any of God's promises, v. 6.

5. The true children of God become such only in virtue of a divine promise, or by the special exercise of his grace. They are born not of the will of the flesh, but of God, v. 8.

6. Though children prior to birth do neither good nor evil, yet they may be naturally depraved. They neither hunger nor thirst, yet are hunger and thirst natural appetites. They exercise neither love nor anger, yet are these natural passions. They know probably neither joy nor sorrow, yet are these natural emotions, v. 11.

7. The manifestation of the divine perfections is the last and highest end of all things, vs. 17, 22, 23.

8. The fact that the destiny of men is in the hands of God (that it is not of him that willeth, or him that runneth), is not inconsistent with the necessity of the use of means. The fact that the character of the harvest depends on the sovereign pleasure of God, does not render the labour of the husbandman of no account. The same God who says, "I will have mercy on whom I will,"

says also, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." The sovereignty of God and the necessity of human efforts are both clearly taught in the scriptures. At times the former, as in this chapter, at times the latter doctrine is most insisted upon. Neither should be forgotten or neglected, as both conspire to produce the right impression on the mind, and to lead us to God in the way of his own appointment, v. 16.

9. Men, considered as the objects of election, are regarded as fallen. It is from the corrupt mass that God chooses one vessel to honour and one to dishonour, vs. 22, 23.

10. The judicial abandonment of men to their own ways, the giving them up to work out their own destruction, is a righteous but dreadful doom, vs. 18, 22, also ch. 1: 24, 26.

Remarks.

1. If descent from Abraham, participation in all the privileges of the theocracy, the true and only church, failed to secure for the Jews the favour of God, how foolish the expectation of those who rely on outward ordinances and church-relations as the ground of their acceptance, vs. 6—13.

2. The doctrine of the sovereignty of God in the choice of the objects of his mercy should produce, 1. The most profound humility in those who are called according to his purpose. They are constrained to say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory." 2. The liveliest gratitude, that we, though so unworthy, should from eternity have been selected as the objects in which God will display "the riches of his glory." 3. Confidence and peace, under all circumstances, because the purpose of God does not change; whom he has predestinated, them he also calls, justifies and glorifies. 4. Diligence in the discharge of all duty, to make our calling and election sure. That is, to make it evident to ourselves and others, that we are the called and chosen of God. We should ever remember that election is to holiness, and consequently to live in sin, is to invalidate every claim to be considered as one of "God's elect."

3. As God is the immutable standard of right and truth, the proper method to answer objections against the doctrines we profess, is to appeal to what God says, and to what he does. Any objection that can be shown to be inconsistent with any

declaration of scripture, or with any fact in providence is sufficiently answered, vs. 15, 17.

4. It should, therefore, be assumed as a first principle that God cannot do wrong. If he does a thing, it must be right. And it is much safer for us, corrupt and blinded mortals, thus to argue, than to pursue the opposite course, and maintain that God does not and cannot do so and so, because in our judgment it would be wrong, vs. 15—19.

5. All cavilling against God is wicked. It is inconsistent with our relation to him as our Creator. It is a manifestation of self-ignorance, and of irreverence to God, v. 20.

6. What proof of piety is there in believing our own eyes, or in receiving the deductions of our own reasoning? But to confide in God, when clouds and darkness are round about him; to be sure that what he does is right, and that what he says is true, when we cannot see how either the one or the other can be, this is acceptable in his sight. And to this trial he subjects all his people, vs. 20—24.

7. If the manifestation of the divine glory is the highest end of God in creation, providence and redemption, it is the end for which we should live and be willing to die. To substitute any other end, as our own glory and advantage, is folly, sin and self-destruction, vs. 17, 22, 23.

8. The fact that God says to some men, "Let them alone;" that "he gives them up to a reprobate mind;" that he withholds from them, in punishment of their sins, the influences of his Spirit, should fill all the impenitent with alarm. It should lead them to obey at once his voice, lest he swear in his wrath that they shall never enter into his rest, vs. 17, 18.

9. We and all things else are in the hands of God. He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice, vs. 14—24.

CHAP. 9: 25—33.

Analysis.

THE conclusion at which the apostle had arrived in the preceding section, was, that God was at liberty to select the objects of his mercy, indiscriminately, from among the Gentiles and

Jews. This conclusion he now confirms by the declarations of the Old Testament, according to which it is clear, 1. That those were to be included in the kingdom of God, who originally were considered as aliens, vs. 25, 26; and 2. That, as to the Israelites, only a small portion should attain to the blessings of the Messiah's reign, and of course, the mere being a Jew by birth was no security of salvation, vs. 27—29. The inference from all this is, that the Gentiles are called, and the Jews, as Jews, are rejected, vs. 30, 31. The reason of this rejection is that they would not submit to the terms of salvation presented in the gospel, v. 32. As it had been long before predicted, they rejected their Messiah, taking offence at him, seeing in him no form or comeliness, that they should desire him, v. 33.

Commentary.

(25) The first part of the general conclusion, contained in the 24th verse, is, that the Gentiles are eligible to the blessings of Christ's kingdom. This the apostle confirms by two passages from the prophecies of Hosea, which express the general sentiment, that those who, under the old economy, were not regarded as the people of God, should hereafter (i. e. under the Messiah) become his people. The first passage cited is from Hosea 2: 23, which in our version is, "I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to *them which were* not my people, thou art my people." The Hebrew, however, admits of the rendering given by the apostle, as the word translated *to have mercy* may signify *to love*. The difficulty with regard to this passage is, that in Hosea it evidently has reference not to the heathen, but to the ten tribes. Whereas, Paul refers it to the Gentiles as is also done by Peter, 1 Pet. 2: 10. This difficulty is sometimes gotten over by giving a different view of the apostle's object in the citation, and making it refer to the restoration of the Jews. But this interpretation is obviously at variance with the context. It is more satisfactory to say, that the ten tribes were in a heathenish state, relapsed into idolatry, and, therefore, what was said of them, is of course applicable to others in like circumstances, or of like character. What amounts to much the same thing, the sentiment of the prophet is to be taken generally, 'those who were excluded from the theocracy, who were regarded and treated

as aliens, were hereafter to be treated as the people of God.' In this view, it is perfectly applicable to the apostle's object, which was to convince the Jews, that the blessings of Christ's kingdom were not to be confined within the pale of the Old Testament economy, or limited to those who, in their external relations, were considered the people of God; on the contrary, those who, according to the rules of that economy, were not the people of God, should hereafter become such. This method of interpreting and applying scripture is both common and correct. A general truth, stated in reference to a particular class of persons, is to be considered as intended to apply to all those whose character and circumstances are the same, though the form or words of the original enunciation may not be applicable to all embraced within the scope of the general sentiment. Thus what is said of one class of heathen, as such, is applicable to all others, and what is said of one portion of aliens from the Old Testament covenant, may properly be referred to others.

(26) *And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said to them, ye are not my people, &c.* This quotation is more strictly conformed to the Hebrew, than the preceding. It is from Hos. 1: 10. The sentiment is the same as before.

(27, 28) The second part of the apostle's conclusion, v. 24, is that the Jews, as such, were not to be included in the kingdom of Christ, which of course is implied in all those predictions which speak of them as in general cut off and rejected. Two such passages Paul quotes from Isaiah. The first is from Isaiah 10: 22, 23. *Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved, for he will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make in the earth.* This passage is nearer the LXX. translation than the Hebrew. The general sense is the same in both, and also in the apostle's version, 'However numerous the children of Israel might be, only a small portion of them should escape the judgments of God.' This being the case, it is evident that the mere being a Jew was never considered sufficient to secure the divine favour. The portion of the prophecy contained in v. 27, is the principal point, 'Only a few of the Jews were to be saved.' What is contained in v.

28, is an amplification, or states the converse of the preceding proposition. 'Most of the Jews should be cut off.' The passage in Isaiah, therefore, is strictly applicable to the apostle's object.*

Our version of v. 28 is consistent with the original.† But it may also be rendered, "He will execute and determine on the judgment with righteousness, for a judgment determined on, will the Lord execute in the earth." The word (λογον) rendered *work* in our version, means properly *a word, something spoken*, and may refer to *a promise*, or *threatening*, according to the context. Here of course a threatening is intended; the judgment threatened by the prophet in the context. The word (συντελεῖν) rendered *he will finish*, means *bringing to an end*, and here perhaps *executing at once, bringing to an end speedily*. And the term (συντεμνωσιν) translated *cutting short*, may mean *deciding upon*. See Dan. 9: 24, "Seventy weeks are *determined* (συντεμνήθησαν) upon my people." But the ordinary sense of the word is in favour of our version and so is the context.‡ If it were allowable to take the same word in different senses in the same passage, the verse might be rendered thus, 'For he will execute the judgment, and accomplish it speedily, for the judgment determined upon will the Lord execute in the earth.' This same word is used in one of these senses, Dan. 9: 24, and in the other in v. 26 of the same chapter. See, too, an analogous example in 1 Cor. 3: 17, "If any man (φθίσις) defile the temple of God, him will God (φθίσει) destroy." Here the same word is rendered correctly, first *defile*, and then

* Sed quia id de suo tempore vaticinatus est propheta; videndum, quomodo ad institutum suum Paulus rite accommodet. Sic autem debet: Quum Dominus vellet a captivitate Babylonica populum suum liberare, ex immensa illa multitudine ad paucissimos modo liberationis suae beneficium pervenire voluit; qui excidii reliquiae merito dici possent prae numero illo populo quem in exilio perire sinebat. Jam restitutio illa carnalis veram ecclesiae Dei instaurationem figuravit, quae in Christo peragitur, imo ejus duntaxat fuit exordium. Quod ergo tunc accidit, multo certius nunc adimpleri convenit in ipso liberationis progressu et complemento.—
CALVIN.

† CALVIN translates it much in the same way, Sermonem enim consummans et abbrevians, quoniam sermonem abbreviatum faciet Dominus in terra.

‡ See KOPPE and WETSTEIN for a satisfactory exhibition of the *usus loquendi* as to this word.

destroy. We may, therefore, render the last clause of the verse either as in our version or as given above.*

(29) The second passage quoted by the apostle is from Is. 1: 9, *Except the Lord of hosts had left us a seed we had been as Sodom, been made like unto Gomorrah.* The object of this quotation is the same as that of the preceding, viz. to show that being Israelites was not enough to secure either exemption from divine judgments or the enjoyment of God's favour. The passage is perfectly in point, for although the prophet is speaking of the national judgments which the people had brought upon themselves by their sins, and by which they were well nigh cut off entirely, yet it was necessarily involved in the destruction of the people for their idolatry and other crimes, that they perished from the kingdom of God. Of course the passage strictly proves what Paul designed to establish, viz. that the Jews, as Jews, were as much exposed to God's judgments as others, and consequently could lay no special claim to admission into the kingdom of heaven.

Paul here again follows the Septuagint. The only difference, however, is that the Greek version has (*σπέρμα*) *a seed*, instead of *a remnant*, as it is in the Hebrew. The sense is precisely the same. The Hebrew word means *that which remains*; and *seed*, as used in this passage, means the seed preserved for sowing. The figure, therefore, is striking and beautiful. *Lord of Hosts* is a frequent designation for the Supreme God in the Old Testament. As the word *host* is used in reference to any multitude arranged in order, as of men in an army, of angels, of the stars, or of all the heavenly bodies including the sun and moon, so the expression *Lord of hosts* may mean Lord of armies, Lord of angels, or Lord of heaven, or of the

* The passage in the Hebrew is difficult. It may be literally translated, "The consumption is determined upon, it flows on bringing judgment; for consumption, even the thing determined upon, will the Lord God of hosts execute in the midst of the whole land." See GeseNIUS. The common version expresses the sense nearly in the same form, "The consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness, for the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined in the midst of the whole land." As, however, the word rendered *determined* signifies also *cut off*, the whole passage admits of a rendering in accordance with that given by the apostle. "For the consumption shall be cut short, overflowing in righteousness. For a consumption, and that a short one, will the Lord make, &c." See SCHELLING, as quoted by ROSENUELLER on Isaiah 10: 22, 23.

universe as a marshalled host; see 1 Kings 22: 19, "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne and all the host of heaven standing by him;" 2 Chron. 18: 11. Ps. 103: 21. Ps. 148: 2, "Praise ye him, all his angels, praise ye him, all his hosts." In other passages the reference is, with equal distinctness, to the stars, Jer. 33: 22. Deut. 4: 19, and frequently. It is most probable, therefore, that God is called Lord of hosts in reference to his headship over the whole heavens, and all that they contain, Lord of hosts being equivalent to Lord of the universe.

(30) Having proved that God was free to call the Gentiles as well as the Jews into his kingdom, and that it had been predicted that the great body of the Jews were to be rejected, he comes now to state the immediate ground of this rejection. *What shall we say then?* This may mean either, 'What is the inference from the preceding discussion?' and the answer follows, 'The conclusion is, the Gentiles are called and the Jews rejected;' or, 'What shall we say, or object to the fact that the Gentiles are accepted,' &c. &c. So Flatt and others. But the former explanation is better suited to the context, especially to v. 32, and to the apostle's common use of this expression; see v. 14, ch. 7: 7. 8: 31.

That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained, &c. The inference is, that what to all human probability was the most unlikely to occur, has actually taken place. The Gentiles, sunk in carelessness and sin, have attained the favour of God, while the Jews, to whom religion was a business, have utterly failed. Why is this? The reason is given in v. 32; it was because they would not submit to be saved on the terms which God proposed, but insisted on reaching heaven in their own way. *To follow after righteousness*, is to press forward towards it as towards the prize in a race, Phil. 3: 14. The word (*δικαιοσύνη*), rendered *righteousness*, might more properly be rendered *justification*, the consequence of having fulfilled the law; a state of favour with God. It, therefore, includes all the blessings consequent on union to Christ; see Gal. 2: 21. 3: 21. 5: 5. This the Gentiles did not seek after, they cared nothing about the favour of God and the blessings therewith connected. But still they *attained to righteousness*, i. e. as before, *justification*, all the consequences of being righteous in the estimation of God.

Even the righteousness which is of faith, i. e. even that justification which is attained by faith. In all these clauses, however, the word *righteousness*, as expressing the sum of the divine requisitions, that which fulfils the law may be retained. 'The Gentiles did not seek this righteousness, yet they attained it; not that righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God (acceptable to God) by faith,' Phil. 3: 9. They obtained that which satisfied the demands of the law, and was acceptable in the sight of God. It is very probable that Paul included both ideas in the word which he used, that is, both the excellence which satisfied the law, i. e. righteousness, and its consequence, i. e. justification.

(31) What the Gentiles thus attained, the Jews failed to secure. The former he had described as "not following after righteousness;" the latter he characterizes as those who *follow after the law of righteousness*. The expression *law of righteousness* may be variously explained. *Law* may be taken in its general sense of *rule*, as in ch. 3: 27, and elsewhere. The meaning would then be, 'They followed after, i. e. they attended diligently to, the rule which they thought would lead to their attaining righteousness or being justified, but they did not attain unto that rule which actually leads to such results.' Or, 2. The word *law* may be redundant, and Paul may mean to say nothing more than that 'The Jews sought righteousness or justification, but did not attain it.' This, no doubt, is the substance, though it may not be the precise form of the thought. In favour of this view is a comparison with the preceding and succeeding verses, and the fact that the word is elsewhere nearly redundant, as "law of sin," ch. 7: 23, for *sin* itself. 3. *Law of righteousness* is often understood here as equivalent to *legal righteousness*, or, *righteousness which is of the law*. This, however, is rather forced, and not very consistent with the latter clause of the verse, "Have not attained to the law of righteousness," which can hardly be so interpreted. The term, however, may have one sense at the beginning of the verse and a different one at the close; and the passage be thus rendered, 'Israel, following after the righteousness which is of the law, hath not attained to the true rule of righteousness.' This suits the context, and is in accordance with

Paul's manner.* The first interpretation, however, is probably the most correct.

(32) The reason why the Jews failed of securing the divine favour is thus stated. *Because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.* In other words, they would not submit to the method of justification proposed by God, which was alone suitable for sinners, and persisted in trusting to their own imperfect works. The reason why one man believes and is saved, rather than another, is to be sought in the sovereign grace of God, according to Paul's doctrine in the preceding part of this chapter, and ch. 8: 28. 2 Tim. 1: 9, &c.; but the ground of the rejection and condemnation of men is always in themselves. The vessels of wrath which are destroyed, are destroyed on account of their sins. No man, therefore, can throw the blame of his perdition on any other than himself. This verse, therefore, is very far from being inconsistent with the doctrine of the divine sovereignty as taught above. The force of the word rendered *as it were*, may be explained by paraphrasing the clause thus, 'as though they supposed it could be obtained by the works of the law.† See 2 Cor. 3: 5. 2: 7, 'They sought it as (*being*) of the works of the law.' *For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.* That is, they did as it had been predicted they would do, they took offence at the Messiah and at the plan of salvation which he came to reveal.

(33) What it was they stumbled at, the apostle declares in this verse, and shows that the rejection of the Messiah by the Jews was predicted in the Old Testament. *As it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* This passage is apparently made up of two, one occurring in Is. 28: 16, the other in Is. 8: 14. In both of these passages mention is made of a stone, but the predicates of this stone, as given in the latter passage, are transferred to the other, and those there mentioned omitted. This method of quoting scrip-

* Jam priori loco Legem justitiæ per hypallagen posuisse mihi videtur pro justitiæ legis: in repetitione secundi membri alio sensu sic vocasse justitiæ formam seu regulam. Itaque summa est, quod Israel in legis justitiæ insistens eam scilicet quæ in lege præscripta est, veram justificationis rationem non tenuerit.—CALVIN.

† WAHL'S Lexicon N. T. p. 678. WINER'S Grammatik, 497.

ture is common among all writers, especially where the several passages quoted and merged into each other, refer to the same subject. It is obvious that the writers of the New Testament are very free in their mode of quoting from the Old, giving the sense, as they, being inspired by the same Spirit, could do authoritatively, without binding themselves strictly to the words. The former of the two passages here referred to, stands thus, in our version, "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste," which is according to the Hebrew. The other passage, Is. 8: 14, is, "And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both houses of Israel."

Isaiah 28, is a prophecy against those who had various false grounds of confidence, and who desired a league with Egypt as a defence against the attacks of the Assyrians. God says, he has laid a much more secure foundation for his church than any such confederacy, even a precious, tried corner stone; those who confided on it should never be confounded. The prophets, constantly filled with the expectation of the Messiah, and, in general, ignorant of the time of his advent, were accustomed, on every threatened danger, to comfort the people by the assurance that the efforts of their enemies could not prevail, because the Messiah was to come. Until his advent, they could not, as a people, be destroyed, and when he came, there should be a glorious restoration of all things; see Is. 7: 14—16, and elsewhere. There is, therefore, no force in the objection, that the advent of Christ was an event too remote to be available to the consolation of the people, when threatened with the immediate invasion of their enemies. This passage, therefore, is properly quoted by the apostle, because it was intended originally to apply to Christ. The sacred writers of the New Testament so understood and explain it; see 1 Peter 2: 6. Matt. 21: 42. Acts 4: 11; compare also Ps. 118: 22. 1 Cor. 3: 11. Eph. 2: 20, and other passages, in which Christ is spoken of as the foundation or corner stone of his church. The same interpretation of the passage was given by the ancient Jews.*

The other passage, Is. 8: 14, is of much the same character.

* MARTINI Pugio Fidei, Lib. II. cap. 5, p. 342, and the passages quoted by Rosenmüller and Gesenius on Is. 28: 16.

God exhorts the people not to be afraid of the combination between Syria and Ephraim. The Lord of hosts was to be feared and trusted, he would be a refuge to those who confided in him, but a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to all others. This passage too, as appears from a comparison of the one previously cited with Ps. 118: 22, and the quotation and application of them by the New Testament writers, refers to Christ. What is said in the Old Testament of Jehovah, the inspired penmen of the New do not hesitate to refer to the Saviour; compare John 12: 41. Is. 6: 1. Heb. 1: 10, 11. Ps. 102: 25. 1 Cor. 10: 9. Ex. 17: 2, 7. When God, therefore, declared that he should be a sanctuary to one class of the people, and a rock of offence to another, he meant that he, in the person of his Son, as the Immanuel, would thus be confided in by some, but rejected and despised by others. The whole spirit, opinions and expectations of the Jews were adverse to the person, character and doctrines of the Redeemer. He was, therefore, to them a stumbling block, as he was to others foolishness. They could not recognize him as their fondly anticipated Messiah, nor consent to enter the kingdom of heaven on the terms which he prescribed. In them, therefore, were fulfilled the ancient prophecies, which spoke of their rejection of Christ, and consequent excision from the people of God.

Doctrines.

1. Exclusion from the pale of any visible church does not of itself imply that men are without the reach of divine mercy, vs. 25, 26.

2. As the world has hitherto existed, only a small portion of the nominal members of the church, or of the professors of the true religion, has been the real people of God, vs. 27, 28, 29.

3. Error is often a greater obstacle to the salvation of men than carelessness or vice. Christ said that publicans and harlots would enter the kingdom of God before the Pharisees. In like manner the thoughtless and sensual Gentiles were more susceptible of impression from the gospel, and were more frequently converted to Christ, than the Jews, who were wedded to erroneous views of the plan of salvation, vs. 30, 31.

4. Agreeably to the declarations of the previous portion of this chapter, and the uniform tenor of scripture, the ground of

the distinction between the saved and the lost, is to be found not in men, but in God. He has mercy on whom he will have mercy. But the ground of the condemnation of men is always in themselves. That God gave his saving grace to more Gentiles than Jews, in the early ages of the church, must be referred to his sovereign pleasure; but that the Jews were cut off and perished, is to be referred to their own unbelief. In like manner, every sinner must look into his own heart and conduct for the ground of his condemnation, and never to any secret purpose of God, v. 32.

5. Christ crucified has ever been either foolishness or an offence to unrenewed men. Hence, right views of the Saviour's character and cordial approbation of the plan of salvation through him, are characteristic of those "who are called;" i. e. they are evidences of a renewed heart, v. 33.

Remarks.

1. The consideration that God has extended to us, who were not his people, all the privileges and blessings of his children, should be a constant subject of gratitude, vs. 25, 26.

2. If only a remnant of the Jewish church, God's own people, were saved, how careful and solicitous should all professors of religion be, that their faith and hope be well founded, vs. 27—29.

3. Let no man think error in doctrine a slight practical evil. No road to perdition has ever been more thronged than that of false doctrine. Error is a shield over the conscience, and a bandage over the eyes, vs. 30, 31.

4. No form of error is more destructive than that which leads to self-dependence; either reliance on our own powers, or on our own merit, v. 32.

5. To criminate God, and excuse ourselves, is always an evidence of ignorance and depravity, v. 32.

6. Christ declared those blessed who were not offended at him. If our hearts are right in the sight of God, Jesus Christ is to us at once the object of supreme affection, and the sole ground of confidence, v. 33.

7. The gospel produced at first the same effects as those we now witness. It had the same obstacles to surmount; and it

was received or rejected by the same classes of men then as now. Its history, therefore, is replete with practical instruction.

CHAPTER X.

Contents.

THE object of this chapter, as of the preceding and of the one which follows, is to set forth the truth in reference to the rejection of the Jews as the peculiar people of God, and the extension to all nations of the offers of salvation. The first verses are again, as those at the beginning of ch. 9, introductory and conciliatory, setting forth the ground of the rejection of the Jews, vs. 1—4. The next section contains an exhibition of the terms of salvation, designed to show that they were as accessible to the Gentiles as the Jews, vs. 5—10. The plan of salvation being adapted to all, and God being the God of all, the gospel should be preached to all, vs. 11—17. The truth here taught (the calling of the Gentiles, &c.) was predicted clearly in the Old Testament, vs. 18—21.

CHAP. 10: 1—10.

Analysis.

WITH his usual tenderness the apostle assures his brethren of his solicitude for their welfare, and of his proper appreciation of their character, vs. 1, 2. The difficulty was, that they would not submit to the plan of salvation proposed in the gospel, and, therefore, they rejected the Saviour. This was the true ground of their excision from the people of God, vs. 3—4. The method of justification, on which the Jews insisted, was legal, and from its nature must be confined to themselves, or to those who would consent to become Jews. Its terms, when properly understood, were perfectly impracticable, v. 5. But the gospel method of salvation prescribes no such severe terms, it simply requires cordial faith and open profession, vs. 6—10. This, he

shows, in the next verses, is the doctrine of the scriptures, and from it he infers the applicability of this plan to all men, Gentiles as well as Jews.

Commentary.

(1) *Brethren, my hearts desire, and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.** As the truth which Paul was to reiterate in the ears of the Jew was, of all others, to them the most offensive, he endeavours to allay their enmity, first, by assuring them of his affection, and secondly, by avoiding all exaggeration in the statement of their case. He had no pleasure in contemplating the evils which impended over them, his earnest desire and prayer was (*σις σωτηριαν*) *that they might be saved*; literally *to salvation*, as expressing the end or object towards which his wishes and prayers tend; see ch. 6: 22. Gal. 3: 17, and frequent examples elsewhere of this use of the preposition *σις*.

(2) *For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God.* So far from desiring to exaggerate the evil of their conduct, the apostle, as was his uniform manner, endeavoured to bring every thing commendable and exculpatory fully into view. The word *for* has here its appropriate force, as it introduces the ground or reason of the preceding declaration. ‘I desire their salvation, *for* they themselves are far from being unconcerned as to divine things.’ *Zeal of God* may mean very great zeal, as *cedars of God* mean great cedars, according to a common Hebrew idiom; or *zeal of which God is the object*; the latter explanation is to be preferred. John 2: 17, “The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.” Acts 21: 22, “Zealous of the law.” Acts 22: 3, “Zealous of God.” Gal. 1: 14, &c. &c. The Jews had great zeal about God, but it was wrong as to its object, and of consequence wrong in its moral qualities. Zeal when rightly directed, however ardent, is humble and amiable. When its object is evil, it is proud, censorious and cruel. Hence, the importance of its being properly guided, not merely to prevent the waste of feeling and effort, but principally to prevent its

* Hinc videmus, quanta sollicitudine sanctus vir offensionibus obviavit. Adhuc enim, ut temperet quicquid erat acerbatis in exponenda Judaeorum rejectione, suam, ut prius, erga eos benevolentiam testatur, et eam ab effectu comprobat, quod sibi eorum salus curae esset coram Domino.—CALVIN.

evil effects on ourselves and others. *But not according to knowledge.** Neither enlightened nor wise; neither right as to its objects, nor correct in its character. The former idea is here principally intended. The Jews were zealous about their law, the traditions of their fathers, and the establishment of their own merit. How naturally would a zeal for such objects make men place religion in the observance of external rites; and be connected with pride, censoriousness, and a persecuting spirit. In so far, however, as this zeal was a zeal about God, it was preferable to indifference, and is, therefore, mentioned by the apostle with qualified commendation.

(3) *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not, &c.* The grand mistake of the Jews was about the method of justification. Ignorance on this point implied ignorance of the character of God, of the requirements of the law, and of themselves. It was, therefore, and is, and must continue ever to be a vital point. Those who err essentially here, err fatally; and those who are right here, cannot be wrong as to other necessary truths. The phrase *righteousness of God* admits here, as in other parts of the epistle, of various interpretations. 1. It may mean *the divine holiness* or general moral perfection of God. In this way the passage would mean, 'Being ignorant of the perfection or holiness of God, and, of course, of the extent of his demands, and going about to establish their own excellence, &c.' This gives a good sense, but it is not consistent with the use of the expression *righteousness of God* in other similar passages, as ch. 1: 17. 3: 21, &c. And, secondly, it requires the phrase to be taken in two different senses in the same verse; for the last clause, 'Have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God,' cannot mean, 'They have not submitted to the divine holiness.' 2. The term may mean *that righteousness of which God is the author*, that which he approves and accepts. This interpretation is, in this case, peculiarly appropriate, from the opposition of the two expressions,

* *Judaei habuere et habent zelum sine scientia, nos contra, proh dolor, scientiam sine zelo.*—FLACIUS, quoted by BENGEL. *Melius est vel claudicare in via, quam extra viam strenue currere, ut ait Augustinus. Si religiosi esse volumus, meminerimus verum esse, quod Lactantius docet, eam demum veram esse religionem quae conjuncta est cum Dei verbo.*—CALVIN.

righteousness of God and their own righteousness. ‘Being ignorant of that righteousness which God has provided and which he bestows, and endeavouring to establish their own, they refused to accept of his.’ The sense here is perfectly good, and the interpretation may be carried through the verse, being applicable to the last clause as well as to the others. A comparison of this passage with Phil. 3: 9, “Not having my own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God,” is also in favour of this interpretation. For there the phrase *the righteousness which is of God* can only mean that which he gives, and with this phrase the expression *the righteousness of God*, in this verse, seems to be synonymous.* 3. Thirdly, we may understand the word rendered *righteousness* in the sense of *justification*, “justification of God” being taken as equivalent to ‘*God’s method of justification.*’ ‘Being ignorant of God’s method of justification, and going about to establish their own, they have not submitted themselves to the method which he has proposed.’ Between this and the preceding interpretation there seems little ground of preference. The cause of the rejection of the Jews was their rejection of the method of salvation through a crucified Redeemer, and their persisting in confiding in their own merits and advantages as the ground of their acceptance with God.

(4) *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* The precise connexion of this verse with the preceding depends on the view taken of its meaning. The general import of the passage is sufficiently obvious, but its exact sense is not so easy to determine, on account of the ambiguity of the word (τέλος) translated *end*. The word may signify, 1. *The object to which any thing leads.* Christ is, in this sense, the end of the law, inasmuch as the law was a schoolmaster to lead us to him, Gal. 3: 24; and as all its types and

* The expression *τὴν ἐκ Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην*, seems to be Paul’s own explanation of the more ambiguous phrase *τὴν Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην* of the present passage.

Observe antithesin Dei justitiæ et hominum. Primo videmus opponi inter se quasi res contrarias, et quæ simul stare nequeunt: unde sequitur, everti Dei justitiam simulac propriam statuunt homines. Deinde ut inter se respondeant antitheta non dubium est vocari Dei justitiam quæ ejus donum est: sicuti rursum dicitur hominum justitiâ, quam petunt a seipsis, vel se ad Deum afferre confidunt. Justitiæ ergo Dei non subjicitur qui vult in seipso justificari: quia justitiæ Dei obtinendæ principium est abdicare se propria justitiâ.—CALVIN.

prophecies pointed to him, "They were a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ," Col. 2: 17. Heb. 9: 9. The meaning and connexion of the passage would then be, "The Jews erred in seeking justification from the law, *for* the law was designed, not to afford justification, but to lead them to Christ, in order that they might be justified." To Christ all its portions tended, he was the object of its types and the subject of its predictions, and its precepts and penalty urge the soul to him as the only refuge. So Calvin, Bengel, and the majority of commentators.*

2. The word may be taken in the sense of *completion* or *fulfilment*. Then Christ is the end of the law, because he fulfils all its requisitions, all its types and ceremonies, and satisfies its preceptive and penal demands. See Matt. 5: 17, "Think not I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil;" and Rom. 8: 4. The philological ground for this interpretation is slight. 1 Tim. 1: 5 is compared with Rom. 13: 10, in order to prove that the word ($\tau\epsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$) here translated *end*, is equivalent to the word ($\pi\lambda\eta\rho\omega\mu\alpha$) which is there (Rom. 13: 10) rendered *fulfilling*. The sense, according to this interpretation, is scriptural.

3. We may take the word in its more ordinary sense of *end* or *termination*, and understand it metonymically for *he who terminates or puts an end to*. The meaning and connexion would then be, "The Jews mistake the true method of justification, because they seek it from the law, whereas Christ has abolished the law, in order that all who believe may be justified." Compare Eph. 2: 15, "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments;" Col. 2: 4, "Blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us, &c.;" Gal. 3: 10, 12. Rom. 6: 14. 7: 4, 6, and the general drift of the former part of the epistle. In sense this interpretation amounts the same with the preceding, though it differs from it in form. Christ has abolished the law not by de-

* Indicat legis praeposterum interpretem esse, qui per ejus opera justificari quaerit, quoniam in hoc lex data est, quo nos ad aliam justitiam manu duceret. Imo quicquid doceat lex, quicquid praecipiat, quicquid promittat semper Christum habet pro scopo; ergo in ipsum dirigendae sunt omnes partes.—CALVIN.

Lex hominem urget, donec is ad Christum confugit. Tum ipsa dicit: *asylum ce nactus, desino te persequi, sapie, salvus es.*—BENGL.

stroying, but by fulfilling it. He has abolished the law as a rule of justification, or covenant of works, and the whole Mosaic economy having met its completion in him, has by him been brought to an end. Either this or the first interpretation is probably the correct one. In favour of the former is the ordinary import of the word here used by the apostle; and in favour of the latter is the drift of the early part of the epistle, which was to show that through Christ we are delivered from the law and introduced into a state of grace. It matters little which view is preferred.* The word *law* is obviously here used in its prevalent sense throughout this epistle, for the whole rule of duty prescribed to man, including for the Jews the whole of the Mosaic institutions. The *law* is intended in every sense in which *law* has been fulfilled, satisfied or abrogated by Jesus Christ. *For righteousness to every one that believeth.*† The general meaning of this clause, in this connexion, is, ‘So that every believer may be justified.’ The way in which this idea is arrived at, however, may be variously explained. 1. The preposition (*eis*) rendered *for*, may be rendered *as to, as it relates to*. ‘Christ is the end of the law, as it relates to righteousness or justification.’ 2. It may be understood of the *effect* or *result*, and be resolved into the verbal construction with *that* or *so that*; ‘Christ is the end, &c., so that righteousness is to every believer; or so that every believer is justified.’ 3. It may point out the *end* or *object*. ‘Christ fulfils the law in order that every one that believes, &c.’ The Jews, then, did not submit to the method of justification proposed by God, or to the righteousness which he had provided, for they did not submit to Christ, who is the end of the law. He is that to which the law leads, or he has abolished the law, so that every one that believes may be justified.

(5) *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law.* That is, concerning the righteousness which is of the law, Moses thus writes. In the last clause of the preceding verse it was clearly intimated that faith was the condition of salvation under the gospel. ‘To every one, without dis-

* The third interpretation is, perhaps, the most generally adopted by modern commentators; see WAHL'S Clavis on the word *τέλος*, and also KOPPE and FLATT.

† *Εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι.* See WAHL'S Clavis on the preposition *εἰς*.

tion, that believeth is justification secured.' On this the apostle connects his description and contrast of the two methods of justification, the one by works and the other by faith, with the design to show that the former was in its nature impracticable, while the other was reasonable and easy, and adapted to all classes of men, Jews and Gentiles, and should therefore be offered to all.

The righteousness which is of the law. The word rendered righteousness may here again be variously explained. 1. The method of justification, or of becoming righteous. This suits the context; 'Moses describes the legal method of justification thus.' But this does not agree so well with the clause "which is of the law." 2. It may mean that excellence which arises from obedience to the law, and which is opposed to that which is obtained by faith. The righteousness which is of the law is, then, that which consists in legal obedience. 3. It may have its appropriate and familiar sense, the state of one who is free as to the demands of justice or law. In the former sense it means that which actually answers those demands, in the latter it expresses the condition of one who is just, as in Is. 5: 23, "Who take the righteousness of the righteous from him." In this view the phrase "righteousness which is of the law," or rather the words thus translated, mean *the justification or state of justification which arises from the law*. This, then, would be opposed to that which arises from faith. It is evident that this word was of such large import, as used by the apostle, that sometimes one and sometimes another of its phases was in his mind, and that these are changed repeatedly in the same passage. Thus, in the passage before us, it is easy to understand the *righteousness which is of the law*, and *righteousness which is by faith*, as meaning the justifying excellence or merit which is obtained in the one instance from the law, and in the other by faith. But this does not so well answer in the immediately succeeding verse, "The righteousness which is by faith, speaketh in this wise;" where the meaning would seem to be, the method of justification by faith says or demands simply cordial belief and open profession. The passage quoted by the apostle is Levit. 18: 5, "The man that doeth those things shall live by them." The language of Moses is an accurate description of the legal method of justification.

The man who did all that was required by the Mosaic institutions would, on the ground of his obedience, be rewarded with all the blessings which that economy promised. And the man who should do all that the law of God, by which he is to be ultimately tried, demands, would live on the ground of that obedience. It is plain that the word *live* is used, in its familiar biblical sense, to denote a *happy existence*. ‘He shall be happy, and happy in God. He shall have that life which consists in intercourse with him who is our life.’*

(6, 7) *But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not, &c.* On the import of the phrase, “the righteousness which is of faith,”† see the preceding verse. It is clearly implied in that verse that the attainment of justification, by a method which prescribed perfect obedience, is for sinful men impossible. It is the object of this and the succeeding verses, to declare that the gospel requires no such impossibilities; it neither requires us to scale the heavens, nor to fathom the great abyss; it demands only cordial faith and open profession. In expressing these ideas the apostle skilfully avails himself of the language of Moses, Deut. 30: 10—14. It is clear that the expressions used by the ancient lawgiver were a familiar mode of saying that a thing could not be done. The passage referred to is the following, “For this command which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” The obvious import of this passage is, that the knowledge of the will of God had been made perfectly accessible, no one was

* *Zhōseas* ex mente Judaeorum interpretatur de vita aeterna, ut *Targum Levit.* 18: 4, et versio *Syra* Matt. 19: 16. *Sanhedrim*, f. 59. *Avoda Sora*, f. 31. *Midrash Thehillim*. *Bemidbar*, R. XIII. R. Meir: dixit, Qui fecerit ea homo: non dicitur, Sacerdos, Levita, Israëlita, sed homo; ut discas, etiam gentilem, si proselytus fiat, et legi det operam, intelligi. *Tanchuma*, p. 124. *Bava Kama*, f. 38, 1.

† *Quae ex fide est justitia*. Metonymia suavissima, i. e. homo justitiam ex fide quaerens.—BENGE.

required to do what was impossible; neither to ascend to heaven, nor to pass the *boundless* sea, in order to attain it; it was neither hidden, nor afar off, but obvious and at hand. Without directly citing this passage, Paul uses nearly the same language to express the same idea. The expressions here used seem to have become proverbial among the Jews. To be "high," or "afar off," was to be unattainable; Ps. 139: 6. Prov. 24: 7, "To ascend to heaven," or "to go down to hell," was to do what was impossible, Amos 9: 2. Ps. 139: 8, 9. As the sea was to the ancients impassable, it is easy to understand how the question 'who can pass over the sea?' was tantamount with, 'Who can ascend up into heaven?' Among the later Jews the same mode of expressions not unfrequently occur.*

Instead of using the expression, 'Who shall go over the sea for us?' Paul uses the equivalent phrase, 'Who shall descend into thee deep?' as more pertinent to his object. The word (*ἄβυσσος*) rendered *deep*, is the same which elsewhere is rendered *abyss*, and properly means *without bottom*, *bottomless*, and, therefore, is often applied to the sea as fathomless, Gen. 1: 2. 7: 11 (in the Septuagint), and also to the great cavern beneath the earth, which, in the figurative language of the scriptures, is spoken of as the abode of the dead, and which is often opposed to heaven. Job 28: 24, "The abyss says it is not in me;" compare the enumeration of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth, in Phil. 2: 10, and elsewhere; see also Gen. 49: 25, God "shall bless thee with the blessings of heaven above, blessings of the abyss which lieth under." In the New Testament, with the exception of this passage, it is always used for the abode of fallen spirits and lost souls, Luke 8: 31. Rev. 17: 8. 20: 1, and frequently in that book, where it is appropriately rendered *the bottomless pit*. The expression is, therefore, equivalent to that which is commonly rendered *hell* in our version. Ps. 139: 8, "If I make my bed in hell." Amos 10: 2, "Though they dig into hell," &c., and was no doubt chosen by the apostle, as more suitable to the reference to the resurrection of Christ, with which he meant to connect

* *Bava Mezia*, f. 94, 1. Si quis dixerit mulieri, si adscenderis in firmamentum, aut decenderis in abyssum, eris mihi desponsata, haec conditio frustranea est.—
WERTSTEIN.

it, than the expression used by Moses in the same general sense, "Who shall pass over the sea."

Paul connects each of the questions, virtually borrowed from the Old Testament, with a comment designed to apply them more directly to the point which he had in view. *Say not who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down, &c.* The precise intent of these comments, however, may be differently understood. 1. The words *that is* may be taken as equivalent to *namely* or *to wit*, and the apostle's comment be connected, as an explanatory substitute, with the questions, 'Say not who shall ascend into heaven? to wit, to bring Christ down; or who shall descend into the deep? to bring him up again from the dead. The sense would then be, 'The plan of salvation by faith does not require us to do what cannot be done, and which is now unnecessary; it does not require us to provide a Saviour, to bring him from heaven, or to raise him from the dead; a Saviour has been provided, and we are now only required to believe, &c.' 2. The words *that is* may be taken as equivalent to the fuller expression, *that is to say*, 'To ask who shall ascend into heaven?' is as much as to ask, who shall bring Christ down from above? And to ask, 'Who shall descend into the deep?' is as much as to ask, who shall bring Christ again from the dead?' The comments of the apostle, may, therefore, be regarded as a reproof of the want of faith implied in such questions, and the passage may be thus understood, 'The plan of salvation by faith requires no impossibilities, it requires no one to ascend into heaven, as though Christ had not come down already; or to descend into the deep, as though Christ had not risen from the dead; but it requires simply faith, &c.' The whole passage is evidently rhetorical and ornate. The simple and obvious meaning is, as stated above, to declare that the gospel method of salvation demanded nothing but faith and confession.

Instead of regarding the apostle as intending to state generally the nature of the method of justification by faith, many suppose that it is his object to encourage and support a desponding and anxious inquirer. 'Do not despairingly inquire who shall point out the way of life? No one, either from heaven or from the deep, will come to teach me the way. Speak not thus, for Christ is come from heaven, and arisen from the dead for your

salvation, and no other Saviour is required.’* But this view does not seem to harmonize with the spirit of the context.

It has been questioned whether Paul meant, in this passage, merely to allude to the language of Moses in Deut. 30: 10—14, or whether he is to be understood as quoting it in such a manner as to imply that the ancient prophet was describing the method of justification by faith. This latter view is taken by Calvin, De Brais, and many others. They suppose that in the passage quoted in the 5th verse from Lev. 18: 5, Moses describes the legal method of justification, but that here he has reference to salvation by faith. This is, no doubt, possible. For in Deut. 30: 10, &c., the context shows that the passage may be understood of the whole system of instruction given by Moses; a system which included in it, under its various types and prophecies, an exhibition of the true method of salvation. Moses, therefore, might say with regard to his own law, that it set before the people the way of eternal life, that they had now no need to inquire who should procure this knowledge for them from a distance, for it was near them, even in their hearts and in their mouths.† But, on the other hand, it is very clear that this interpretation is by no means necessary. Paul does not say, ‘Moses describes the righteousness which is of faith in this wise,’ as immediately above he had said of the righteousness which is of the law. There is nothing in the language of the apostle to require us to understand him as quoting Moses in proof of his own doctrine. It is, indeed, more in accordance with the spirit of the passage, to consider him as merely expressing his own ideas in scriptural language, as in v. 19 of this chapter, and frequently elsewhere. ‘Moses teaches us that the legal method of justification requires perfect obedience: but the righteousness which is by faith requires no such impossibility, it demands only cordial faith and open profession.’

(8) *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith*

* See KNAPP'S Diatribe in Locum Rom. 10: 4—11, &c., p. 543 of his *Scripta Varii Argumenti*.

† Si de sola lege sermo esset, frivolum fuisset argumentum: quum nihilo sit factu facilius lex Dei ante oculos posita, quam si procul abesset. Ergo non legem solam designat, sed totam in genere doctrinam, quae evangelium sub se comprehendit.—CALVIN.

which we preach. As the expressions *to be hidden, to be far off*, imply that the thing to which they refer is inaccessible or difficult, so *to be near, to be in the mouth and in the heart*, mean to be accessible, easy and familiar. They are frequently thus used; see Jos. 1: 8, "This law shall not depart out of thy mouth," i. e. it shall be constantly familiar to thee; Ex. 13: 9, "That the law may be in thy mouth;" Ps. 37: 31. 40: 8. The meaning of this passage then is, 'The gospel, instead of directing us to ascend into heaven or to go down to the abyss, tells us the thing required is simple and easy. Believe with thy heart and thou shalt be saved.' *The word is nigh thee*, i. e. the doctrine or truth contemplated, and by implication, what that doctrine demands. Paul, therefore, represents the gospel as speaking of itself. The method of justification by faith says, 'The word is near thee, in thy mouth, i. e. the word or doctrine of faith is thus easy and familiar.' This is Paul's own explanation. The expression *word of faith* may mean *the word or doctrine concerning faith*, or *the word to which faith is due*, which should be believed. In either case it is the gospel or doctrine of justification which is here intended.

(9) *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, &c.* The connexion of this verse with the preceding may be explained by making the last clause of v. 8 a parenthesis, and connecting this immediately with the first clause. 'It says, the word is nigh thee; it says, that if thou shalt confess and believe, thou shalt be saved.' According to this view, this verse is still a part of what the gospel is represented as saying. Perhaps, however, it is better to consider this verse as Paul's own language, and an explanation of the "word of faith" just spoken of. 'The thing is near and easy, to wit, the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess, &c.' The two requisites for salvation mentioned in this verse are confession and faith. They are mentioned in their natural order; as confession is the fruit and external evidence of faith. So in 2 Peter 1: 13, calling is placed before election, because the former is the evidence of the latter. The thing to be confessed is that Jesus Christ is Lord. That is, we must openly recognise his authority to the full extent in which he is Lord; acknowledge that he is exalted above all principality and powers, that angels are made subject to him, that all power in

heaven and earth is committed unto him; and of course that he is our Lord. This confession, therefore, includes in it an acknowledgement of Christ's universal sovereignty, and a sincere recognition of his authority over us. To confess Christ as Lord, is to acknowledge him as the Messiah, recognised as such of God, and invested with all the power and prerogatives of the Mediatorial throne. This acknowledgement is consequently often put for a recognition of Christ in all his offices. 1 Cor. 12: 3, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Phil. 2: 11, "Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." 'To preach the Lord Jesus,' or 'that Jesus is the Lord,' Acts 11: 20, is to preach him as the Saviour in all his fulness. Rom. 14: 9, "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." The necessity of a public confession of Christ unto salvation is frequently asserted in the scriptures. Matt. 10: 32, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Luke 12: 8. 1 John 4: 15, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."

The second requisite is faith. The truth to be believed is that God hath raised Christ from the dead. That is, we must believe that by the resurrection of Christ, God has publicly acknowledged him to be all that he claimed to be, and has publicly accepted of all that he came to perform. He has recognised him as his Son and the Saviour of the world, and has accepted of his blood as a sacrifice for sin. See Rom. 4: 25. 1: 4. Acts 13: 32, 33. 1 Pet. 1: 3—5. 1 Cor. 15: 14, et seqq. Acts 17: 31, "Whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." To believe, therefore, that God has raised Christ from the dead, involves the belief that Christ is all that he claimed to be, and that he has accomplished all that he came to perform. *In thy heart.* Faith is very far from being a merely speculative exercise. When moral or religious truth is its object, it is always attended by the exercise of the affections.

(10) *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* This is the reason why faith and confession are alone necessary

unto salvation; because he who believes with the heart is justified, and he who openly confesses Christ shall be saved. That is, such is the doctrine of scripture, as the apostle proves in the subsequent verse. Here, as in the passages referred to above, in which confession is connected with salvation, it is evident that it must be not only open but sincere. It is not a mere saying, Lord, Lord, but a cordial acknowledgement of him, before men, as our Lord and Redeemer. *Unto righteousness, or justification*, i. e. so that we may be justified. And *unto salvation* is equivalent to saying 'that we may be saved.' The preposition rendered *unto* expressing here the *effect* or *result*. Acts 10: 4. Heb. 6: 8. By faith we secure an interest in the righteousness of Christ, and by confessing him before men, we secure the performance of his promise that he will confess us before the angels of God.*

Doctrines.

1. Zeal, to be either acceptable to God or useful to men, must not only be right as to its ultimate, but also as to its immediate objects. It must not only be about God, but about the things which are well pleasing in his sight. The Pharisees, and other early Jewish persecutors of Christians, really thought they were doing God service when they were so exceedingly zealous for the traditions of their fathers. The moral character of their zeal and its effects were determined by the immediate objects towards which it was directed, v. 2.

2. The doctrine of justification, or method of securing the pardon of sin and acceptance with God, is the cardinal doctrine in the religion of sinners. The main point is, whether the ground of pardon and acceptance be in ourselves or in another, whether the righteousness on which we depend be of ourselves or of God, v. 3.

3. Ignorance of the divine character and requirements is at the foundation of all ill-directed efforts for the attainment of salvation, and of all false hopes of heaven, v. 3.

4. The first and immediate duty of the sinner is to submit to

* *Caeterum viderint quid respondeant Paulo, qui nobis hodie imaginariam quandam fidem fastuose jactant, quae secreto cordis contents, confessione oris, veluti re supervacanea et inani, supersedeat. Nimis enim nugatorium est, asserere ignem esse, ubi nihil sit flammae neque caloris.—CALVIN.*

the righteousness of God; to renounce all dependence on his own merit, and cordially to embrace the offers of reconciliation proposed in the gospel, v. 3.

5. Unbelief, or the refusal to submit to God's plan of salvation, is the immediate ground of the condemnation or rejection of those who perish under the sound of the gospel, v. 3.

6. Christ is every thing in the religion of the true believer. He fulfils, and by fulfilling abolishes the law, by whose demands the sinner was weighed down in despair; and his merit secures the justification of every one that confides in him, v. 4.

7. Christ is the end of the law, whether moral or ceremonial. To him both, as a schoolmaster, lead. In him all their demands are satisfied, and all their types and shadows are answered, v. 4.

8. The legal method of justification is, for sinners, as impracticable as climbing up into heaven or going down into the abyss, vs. 5—7.

9. The demands of the gospel are both simple and intelligible. The sincere acceptance of the proffered righteousness of God and the open acknowledgement of Jesus Christ as Lord, vs. 6—9.

10. The public profession of religion or confession of Christ is an indispensable duty. That is, in order to salvation, we must not only secretly believe, but also openly acknowledge that Jesus is our prophet, priest and king. Though faith and confession are both necessary, they are not necessary on the same grounds, nor to the same degree. The former is necessary as a means to an end, as without faith we can have no part in the justifying righteousness of Christ; the latter as a duty, the performance of which circumstances may render impracticable. In like manner Christ declares baptism, as the appointed means of confession, to be necessary, Mark 16: 16; not, however, as a *sine qua non*, but as a command, the obligation of which providential dispensations may remove; as in the case of the thief on the cross, v. 9.

11. Faith is not the mere assent of the mind to the truth of certain propositions. It is a cordial persuasion of the truth, founded on the experience of its power or the spiritual perception of its nature, and on the divine testimony. Faith is, therefore, a moral exercise. Men believe with the heart, in the

ordinary scriptural meaning of that word. And no faith, which does not proceed from the heart, is connected with justification, v. 10.

Remarks.

1. If we really desire the salvation of men, we shall pray for it, v. 1.

2. No practical mistake is more common or more dangerous than to suppose that all zeal about God and religion is necessarily a godly zeal. Some of the very worst forms of human character have been exhibited by men zealous for God and his service; as, for example, the persecutors both in the Jewish and Christian churches. Zeal should be according to knowledge, i. e. directed towards proper objects. Its true character is easily ascertained by noticing its effects whether it produces self-righteousness or humility, censoriousness or charity; whether it leads to self-denial or to self-gratulation and praise; and whether it manifests itself in prayer and effort, or in loud talking and boasting, v. 2.

3. We should be very careful what doctrines we hold and teach on the subject of justification. He who is wrong here, ruins his own soul; and if he teaches any other than the scriptural method of justification, he ruins the souls of others, v. 3.

4. A sinner is never safe, do what else he may, until he has submitted to God's method of justification.

5. As every thing in the bible leads us to Christ, we should suspect every doctrine, system, or theory which has a contrary tendency. That view of religion cannot be correct which does not make Christ the most prominent object, v. 4.

6. How obvious and infatuated is the folly of the multitude in every age, country and church, who, in one form or another, are endeavouring to work out a righteousness of their own, instead of submitting to the righteousness of God. They are endeavouring to climb up to heaven, or to descend into the abyss, vs. 5—7.

7. The conduct of unbelievers is perfectly inexcusable, who reject the simple, easy and gracious offers of the gospel, which requires only faith and confession, vs. 8—9.

8. Those who are ashamed or afraid to acknowledge Christ

before men, cannot expect to be saved. The want of courage to confess, is decisive evidence of the want of heart to believe, vs. 9, 10.

CHAP. 10: 11—21.

Analysis.

THE object of the apostle in the preceding comparison and contrast of the two methods of justification was to show that the gospel method was from its nature adapted to all men; and that if suited to all it should be preached to all. In v. 11 the quotation from the Old Testament proves two points. 1. That faith is the condition of acceptance, and 2. That it matters not whether the individual be a Jew or Gentile, if he only believes. For there is really no difference, as to this point, between the two classes; God is equally gracious to both, as is proved by the express declarations of scripture, vs. 12, 13. If then the method of salvation be thus adapted to all, and God is equally the God of the Gentiles and of the Jews, then to accomplish his purpose, the gospel must be preached to all men, because faith cometh by hearing, v. 14—17. Both the fact of the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles, and the disobedience of the great part of the Jews, were clearly predicted in the writings of the Old Testament, vs. 18—21.

Commentary.

* (11) *For the scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* This passage is cited in support of the doctrine just taught that faith alone was necessary to salvation. There are clearly two points established by the quotation; the first is, the universal applicability of this method of salvation; WHOEVER, whether Jew or Gentile, believes, &c.; and the second is, that it is faith which is the means of securing the divine favour; WHOEVER BELIEVES on him shall not be ashamed. The passage, therefore, is peculiarly adapted to the apostle's object; which was not merely to exhibit the true nature of the plan of redemption, but mainly to show the propriety of its extension to the Gentiles. The passage quoted is Is. 28: 16, referred to at the close of the preceding chapter.

(12) *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, &c.* This verse is evidently connected logically with the *whosoever* of v. 12, ‘*Whosoever* believes shall be saved, for there is no difference between the Jew and Gentile.’ That is, there is no difference in their relation to the law or to God. They are alike sinners, and are to be judged by precisely the same principles (see ch. 3: 22); and consequently if saved at all, are to be saved in precisely the same way. *For the same Lord over all is rich unto all who call upon him.* This is the reason why there is no difference between the two classes. Their relation to God is the same. They are equally his creatures, and his mercy towards them is the same. It is doubtful whether this clause is to be understood of Christ or of God. If the latter, the general meaning is what has just been stated. If the former, then the design is to declare that the same Saviour is ready and able to save all.* In favour of this latter, which is perhaps the most common view of the passage, it may be urged that Christ is the person referred to in the preceding verse; and secondly, that he is so commonly called Lord in the New Testament. But, on the other hand, *the Lord* in the next verse refers to God; and secondly, we have the same sentiment, in the same general connexion, in ch. 3: 29, 30, “Is he the God of the Jews only? &c. It is the same God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.” *The same Lord over all*, in this connexion, means ‘one and the same Lord is over all.’ All are equally under his dominion, and may, therefore, equally hope in his mercy. The words *is rich* may be either a concise expression for *is rich in mercy*, or they may mean *is abundant in resources*. He is sufficiently rich to supply the wants of all; whosoever, therefore, believes in him shall be saved.†

Unto all who call upon him, i. e. who invoke him or worship him, agreeably to the frequent use of the phrase in the Old and New Testament, Gen. 4: 26. 12: 8. Is. 64: 6. Acts 2: 21. 9: 14, &c. This religious invocation of God implied, of course, the exercise of faith in him; and, therefore, it amounts

* *Omnes enim ejusdem Christi jugum ferunt: cujus Domini tantæ sunt opes, ut suis omnibus ditandis et beandis abunde sufficiant.*—DE BRAIS.

† *Dives, et largus, quem nulla quamvis magna credentium multitudo exhaurire potest; qui nunquam necesse habet restrictius agere.*—BENGL.

to the same thing whether it is said, 'Whosoever believes,' or, 'Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord' shall be saved. This being the case, the passage quoted from Joel, in the next verse, is equivalent to that cited from Isaiah in verse 11. The meaning, then, of this verse is, 'That God has proposed the same terms of salvation to all men, Jews and Gentiles, because he is equally the God of both, and his mercy is free and sufficient for all.'*

(13) *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* As this verse is not introduced by the usual form of quotation from the old Testament, *as it is written, or as the scripture, or the prophet saith*; it is not absolutely necessary to consider it as a direct citation, intended as an argument from scripture (compare v. 11.) Yet, as the passage is in itself so pertinent, it is probable that the apostle intended to confirm his declaration, that the mercy of God should be extended to every one who called upon him, by showing that the ancient prophets had held the same language. The prophet Joel, after predicting the dreadful calamities which were about to come upon the people, foretold, in the usual manner of the ancient messengers of God, that subsequent to those judgments should come a time of great and general blessedness. This happy period was ever characterized as one in which true religion should prevail, and the stream of divine truth and love, no longer confined to the narrow channel of the Jewish people, should overflow all nations. Thus Joel says, "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c., and whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered," Joel 2: 28, 32. **WHOSOEVER**,† therefore, betakes himself to God as his refuge, and calls upon him in the exercise of faith as his God, shall be saved, whether Gentile or Jew, (see 1 Cor. 1: 2). This is Paul's doctrine, and the doctrine, with one accord, of all the holy men who spake of old, as the

* Nullum erit discrimen gentis aut nationis. Et addit firmissimam rationem: nam si is, qui mundi totius est Creator et opifex, omnium hominum est Deus: omnibus benignum se exhibet, a quibus pro Deo agnitus et invocatus fuerit.—CALVIN.

† Hoc monosyllabon, *ἄγε*, toto mundo pretiosius, propositum (v. 11), ita repetitur (v. 12, 13), et ita confirmatur ulterius (v. 14, 15), ut non modo significet, quicumque invocarit, salvum fore, sed Deum velle se invocari ab omnibus salutariter.—BENGEI.

Spirit gave them utterance. This being the case, how utterly preposterous and wicked the attempt to confine the offers of salvation to the Jewish people, or to question the necessity of the extension of the gospel through the whole world. Thus naturally and beautifully does the apostle pass from the nature of the plan of mercy, and its suitableness to all men, to the subject principally in view, the calling of the Gentiles, or the duty of preaching the gospel to all people.

(14, 15) *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? &c. &c.* Paul considered it as involved in what he had already said, and especially in the predictions of the ancient prophets, that it was the will of God that all men should call upon him. This being the case, he argues to prove that it was his will that the gospel should be preached to all. As invocation implies faith, as faith implies knowledge, knowledge instruction, and instruction an instructor, so it is plain that if God would have all men to call upon him, he designed preachers to be sent to all, whose proclamation of mercy being heard, might be believed, and being believed might lead men to call on him and be saved. This is agreeable to the prediction of Isaiah, who foretold that the advent of the preachers of the gospel should be hailed with great and universal joy. According to this, which is the common and most natural view of the passage, it is an argument founded on the principle, that if God wills the end, he wills also the means; if he would have the Gentiles saved, according to the predictions of his prophets, he would have the gospel preached to them.* Calvin's view of the object of the passage is the same, but his idea of the nature of the argument is very different. He supposes the apostle to reason thus. The Gentiles actually call upon God; but invocation implies faith, faith hearing, hearing preaching, and preaching a divine mission. If, therefore, the Gentiles have actually received and obeyed the gospel, it is proof enough that God designed it to be sent to them. This interpretation is ingenious and affords a good sense; but it is founded on an assumption which the Jew would be slow to

* Qui vult finem, vult etiam media. Deus vult ut homines invocent ipsum salutariter. Ergo vult ut credant. Ergo vult ut audiant. Ergo vult ut habeant prædicatores. Itaque prædicatores misit.—BENGL.

admit, that the Gentile was an acceptable worshipper of God. If he admitted this, he admitted every thing, and the argument becomes unnecessary.

(15) *As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.* The word here rendered *preach the gospel*, is the same as that immediately afterwards translated, *bring glad tidings*. The word *gospel*, therefore, must be taken in its original meaning, *good news, the good news of peace*. The passage in Is. 52: 7, which the apostle faithfully, as to the meaning, follows, has reference to the Messiah's kingdom. It is one of those numerous prophetic declarations, which announce in general terms the coming deliverance of the church, a deliverance which embraced, as the first stage of its accomplishment, the restoration from the Babylonish captivity. This, however, so far from being the blessing principally intended, derived all its value from being introductory to that more glorious deliverance to be effected by the REDEEMER. *How beautiful the feet* of course means, how delightful the approach. The bearing of this passage on the object of the apostle is sufficiently obvious. He had proved that the gospel should be preached to all men, and refers to the declaration of the ancient prophet, which spoke of the joy with which the advent of the messengers of mercy should be hailed.

(16) *But they have not all obeyed the gospel, for Isaiah saith, Lord who hath believed our report?* This is a difficult verse, as it is not easy to see its connexion with the apostle's object. It may be viewed as an objection to his doctrine, confirmed by the quotation of a passage from Isaiah. 'You say the gospel ought to be preached to all men, but if God had intended that it should be preached to them, they would obey it; which they have not done.' This view of the passage would have some plausibility if Calvin's representation of Paul's argument were correct. Did the apostle reason from the fact that the Gentiles believed that it was God's intention they should have the gospel preached to them, it would be very natural to object, that as only a few have obeyed, it was evidently not designed for them. But even on the supposition of the correctness of this view of the argument, this interpretation of v. 16, is barely possible, for the quotation from Isaiah cannot be under-

stood otherwise than as the language of the apostle. It is better, therefore, to consider this verse as virtually a parenthesis, 'The gospel must be, and has been widely proclaimed, though indeed all have not obeyed it, as had been predicted by Isaiah; when he exclaimed Lord who hath believed our report?' The word rendered *report* is that which in the next verse is rendered *hearing*. It properly means the *faculty of hearing*, then *something heard*, and thus is put for *discourse, doctrine or instruction*.

(17) *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Though this verse receives its form from the preceding, it is logically connected with vs. 14, 15. The conclusion from what had there been said is, 'Faith is founded on instruction, and this instruction supposes a divine communication.' If men therefore are to believe, they must hear the message of God; and that such a message is delivered of course supposes that God has spoken, and has spoken what is to be delivered, as his word, to all those who are expected to believe. It seems to be the apostle's object to show that such a *report* as could be the ground of faith, could only proceed on the basis of a divine communication, and therefore as such a *report* was actually to be made to the Gentiles, it implied that the divine message, the word of God, or the gospel, was designed for them as well as for the Jews.

(18) *But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, &c.* The concise and abrupt manner of argument and expression in this and the verses which precede and follow, renders the apostle's meaning somewhat doubtful. This verse is frequently considered as referring to the Jews, and designed to show that their want of faith could not be excused on the ground of want of knowledge. The sense of the passage would then be, 'As faith cometh by hearing, have not the Jews heard? Have they not had the opportunity of believing? Yes, indeed, for the gospel has been proclaimed far and wide.' So Koppe, Flatt, Tholuck, &c. But there are several objections to this view of the passage. In the first place, it is not in harmony with the context. Paul is not speaking now of the rejection of the Jews or the grounds of it, but of the calling of the Gentiles. 2. The 16th verse refers to the Gentiles. "They have not all obeyed the gospel," and therefore this

verse, "Have they not heard?" cannot, without any intimation of change, be naturally referred to a different subject. 3. In the following verse, where the Jews are really intended, they are distinctly mentioned, "Did not Israel know."

Paul's object in the whole context is to vindicate the propriety of extending the gospel call to all nations. This he had beautifully done in vs. 14, 15, by showing that preaching was a necessary means of accomplishing the clearly revealed will of God, that men of all nations should participate in his grace. 'True, indeed, as had been foretold, the merciful offers of the gospel were not universally accepted, v. 16, but still faith cometh by hearing, and therefore the gospel should be widely preached, v. 17. Well, has not this been done? has not the angel of mercy broke loose from his long confinement within the pale of the Jewish church, and flown through the heavens with the proclamation of love?' v. 18. This verse, therefore, is to be considered as a strong declaration that what Paul had proved ought to be done, had in fact been accomplished. The middle wall of partition had been broken down, the gospel of salvation, the religion of God, was free from its trammels, the offers of mercy were as wide and general as the proclamation of the heavens. This idea the apostle beautifully and appositely expresses in the sublime language of Ps. 19, "The heavens declare the glory of God, day unto day uttereth speech, there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard, their line is gone through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." The last verse contains the words used by the apostle. His object in using the words of the Psalmist was, no doubt, to convey more clearly and affectingly to the minds of his hearers the idea that the proclamation of the gospel was now as free from all national or ecclesiastical restrictions, as the instructions shed down upon all people by the heavens under which they dwell. Paul of course is not to be understood as quoting the Psalmist as though the ancient prophet was speaking of the preaching of the gospel. He simply uses scriptural language to express his own ideas, as is done involuntarily almost by every preacher in every sermon.*

* CALVIN'S view of this passage is peculiar, *Quærit, an Deus nunquam ante gentes vocem suam direxit, et doctoris officio functus sit erga totum mundum.— Accipio igitur ejus citationem in proprio et germano prophetæ sensu, ut tale sit ar-*

It will be perceived that the apostle says, "Their *sound* has gone, &c.;" whereas in the 19th Ps. it is, "Their *line* is gone," Paul follows the Septuagint, which, instead of giving the literal sense of the Hebrew word, gives correctly its figurative meaning. The word signifies *a line*, then *a musical chord*, and then metonymically, *sound*.

(19) *But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy, &c.* Another passage difficult from its conciseness. The difficulty is to ascertain what the question refers to. Did not Israel know what? The gospel? or, The calling of the Gentiles and their own rejection? The latter seems, for two reasons, the decidedly preferable interpretation. 1. The question is most naturally understood as referring to the main subject under discussion, which is, as frequently remarked, the calling of the Gentiles and rejection of the Jews. 2. The question is explained by the quotations which follow. 'Does not Israel know what Moses and Isaiah so plainly teach?' viz. that a people who were no people should be preferred to Israel; while the latter were to be regarded as disobedient and gain-saying. According to the other interpretation, the meaning of the apostle is, 'Does not Israel know the gospel? Have not the people of God been instructed? If, therefore, as was predicted, they are superseded by the heathen, it must be their own fault.' Calvin thinks there is an evident contrast between this and the preceding verse. 'If even the heathen have had some knowledge of God, how is it with Israel, the favoured people of God, &c.?' But this whole interpretation, as intimated above, is inconsistent with the drift of the context, and the spirit of the passages quoted from the Old Testament.

First Moses says, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, &c. The word *first* seems evidently to be used in reference to Isaiah, who is quoted afterward, and should not be connected, as it is by many, with Israel. 'Did not Israel first learn the gospel? &c.' So Storr, Flatt, &c. Better in the ordinary way, 'First Moses, and then Isaiah, says, &c.' The

gumentum : Deus jam ab initio mundi suam gentibus divinitatem manifestaret, et si non hominum praedicatione, creaturarum tamen suarum testimonio.—Apparet ergo, Dominum etiam pro eo tempore, quo foederis sui gratiam in Israele continebat, non tamen ita sui notitiam gentibus subduxisse, quin aliquam semper illis scintillam accenderet.

passage quoted from Moses is Deut. 32: 21. In that chapter the sacred writers recounts the mercies of God, and the ingratitude and rebellion of the people. In v. 21 he warns them, that as they had provoked him to jealousy by that which is not God, he would provoke them to jealousy by them that are no people. That is, as they forsook him and made choice of another God, so he would reject them and make choice of another people. The passage, therefore, plainly enough intimates that the Jews were in no such sense the people of God, as to interfere with their being cast off and others called.

(20, 21) *But Esaias is very bold, and saith, &c.* That is, according to a very common Hebrew construction in which one verb qualifies another adverbially, *saith very plainly or openly*. Plain as the passage in Deuteronomy is, it is not so clear and pointed as that now referred to, Is. 65: 1, 2.

Paul follows the Septuagint version of the passage, merely transposing the clauses. The sense is accurately expressed. 'I am sought of *them that* asked not *for me*, I am found of them that sought me not,' is the literal version of the Hebrew, as given in our translation. The apostle quotes and applies the passage in the sense in which it is to be interpreted in the ancient prophet. In the first verse of that chapter Isaiah says, that God will manifest himself to those "who were not called by his name;" and in the second, he gives the immediate reason of this turning unto the Gentiles, "I have stretched out my hand all the day to a rebellious people." This quotation, therefore, confirms both the great doctrines taught in this chapter; the Jews were no longer the exclusive or peculiar people of God, and the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom were thrown wide open to all mankind. With regard to Israel the language of God is peculiarly strong and tender. *All day long I have stretched forth my hands. The stretching forth the hands* is the gesture of invitation, and even supplication. God has extended wide his arms, and urged men frequently and long to return to his love; and it is only those who refuse, that he finally rejects.

Doctrines.

1. Christianity is, from its nature, adapted to be an universal religion. There is nothing, as was the case with Judaism,

which binds it to a particular location or confines it to a particular people. All its duties may be performed, and all its blessings enjoyed, in every part of the world, and by every nation under heaven, vs. 11—13.

2. The relation of men to God, and his to them, is not determined by any national or ecclesiastical connexion. He deals with all, on the same general principles, and is ready to save all who call upon him, v. 12.

3. **WHOSOEVER** will, may take of the water of life. The essential conditions of salvation have in every age been the same. Even under the Old Testament dispensation, God accepted all who sincerely invoked his name, v. 13.

4. The preaching of the gospel is the great means of salvation, and it is the will of God that it should be extended to all people, vs. 14, 15.

5. As invocation implies faith, and faith requires knowledge, and knowledge instruction, and instruction teachers, and teachers a mission, it is evidently not only that God wills that teachers should be sent to all those whom he is willing to save, when they call upon him, but that all parts of this divinely connected chain of causes and effects are necessary to the end proposed, viz. the salvation of men. It is, therefore, as incumbent on those who have the power, to send the gospel abroad, as it is on those to whom it is sent, to receive it, vs. 14, 15.

6. As the rudiments of the tree are in the seed, so all the elements of the New Testament doctrines are in the Old. The Christian dispensation is the explanation, fulfilment, and developement of the Jewish, vs. 11, 13, 15.

Remarks.

1. Christians should breathe the spirit of an universal religion. A religion which regards all men as brethren, which looks on God, not as the God of this nation, or of that church, but as the God and father of all, which proposes to all the same conditions of acceptance, and which opens equally to all the same boundless and unsearchable blessings, vs. 11—13.

2. It must be very offensive to God, who looks on all men with equal favour (except as moral conduct makes a difference), to observe how one class of mortals looks down upon another, on account of some merely adventitious difference of rank,

colour, external circumstances, or social or ecclesiastical connexions, v. 12.

3. How will the remembrance of the simplicity and reasonableness of the plan of salvation, and the readiness of God to accept of all who call upon him, overwhelm those who perish from beneath the sound of the gospel! v. 13.

4. It is the first and most pressing duty of the church to cause all men to hear the gospel. The solemn question, implied in the language of the apostle, **HOW CAN THEY BELIEVE WITHOUT A PREACHER?** should sound day and night in the ears of the churches, vs. 14, 15.

5. "How can they preach except they be sent?" The failure of the whole must result from the failure of any one of the parts of the system of means. How long, alas! has the failure been in the very first step. Preachers have not been sent, and if not sent, how could men hear, believe, or call upon God? vs. 14, 15.

6. If "faith comes by hearing," how great is the value of a stated ministry! How obvious the duty to establish, sustain and attend upon it! v. 17.

7. The gospel's want of success, or the fact that few believe our report, is only a reason for its wider extension. The more who hear, the more will be saved, although it be but a small proportion of the whole, v. 16.

8. How delightful will be the time when literally the sound of the gospel shall be as extensively diffused as the declaration which the heavens, in their circuit, make of the glory of God! v. 18.

9. The blessings of a covenant relation to God is the unalienable right of no people and of no church, but can be preserved only by fidelity on the part of men to the covenant itself, v. 19.

10. God is often found by those who apparently are the farthest from him, while he remains undiscovered by those who think themselves always in his presence, v. 20.

11. God's dealings, even with reprobate sinners, are full of tenderness and compassion. All the day long he extends the arms of his mercy even to the disobedient and the gainsaying. This will be felt and acknowledged at last by all who perish, to

the glory of God's forbearance, and to their own confusion and self-condemnation, v. 21.

12. Communities and individuals should beware how they slight the mercies of God, and especially how they turn a deaf ear to the invitations of the gospel. For when the blessings of a church relation have once been withdrawn from a people, they are long in being restored. Witness the Jewish and the fallen Christian churches. And when God ceases to urge on the disobedient sinner the offers of mercy, his destiny is sealed, v. 21.

CHAPTER XI.

Contents.

THIS chapter consists of two parts, vs. 1—10, and 11—36. In the former, the apostle teaches that the rejection of the Jews was not total. There was a remnant, and perhaps a much larger remnant than many might suppose, excepted, although the mass of the nation, agreeably to the predictions of the prophets, was cast off, vs. 1—10. In the latter, he shows that this rejection is not final. In the first place, the restoration of the Jews is a desirable and probable event, vs. 11—24. In the second, it is one which God has determined to bring to pass, vs. 25—32. The chapter closes with a sublime declaration of the unsearchable wisdom of God, manifested in all his dealings with men, vs. 33—36. In the consideration of the great doctrinal truths taught in this chapter, Paul intersperses many practical remarks, designed to give these truths their proper influence both on the Jews and Gentiles, especially the latter.

CHAP. 11: 1—10.

Analysis.

THE rejection of the Jews is not total, as is sufficiently manifest from the example of the apostle himself, to say nothing of others, v. 1. God had reserved a remnant faithful to himself, as was the case in the times of Elias, vs. 2—4. That this remnant

is saved, is a matter entirely of grace. vs. 5, 6. The real truth of the case is, that Israel as a nation is excluded from the kingdom of Christ, but the chosen ones are admitted to its blessings, v. 7. This rejection of the greater part of the Jews, their own scriptures had predicted, vs. 8—10.

Commentary.

(1) *I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid, &c.* When we consider how many promises are made to the Jewish nation as God's peculiar people; and how often it is said, as in Ps. 94: 14, "The Lord will not cast off his people," it is not wonderful, that the doctrine of the rejection of the Jews, as taught in the preceding chapters, appeared inconsistent with these repeated declarations of the word of God. Paul removes this difficulty by showing in what sense the Jews were rejected, and in what way the ancient promises are to be understood. All the Jews were not cast off, and the promises did not contemplate all the Jewish people, as shown above in the ninth chapter, but only the true Israel. There was, therefore, no inconsistency between the doctrine of the apostle, and the declarations of the Old Testament.

There must be an emphasis laid upon the question in this verse, 'Hath God *entirely* cast off his people? or hath God cast off his *whole* people? Has he rejected all? By no means. Such is not my doctrine.' The question may also be understood as meaning, 'Has God cast off his true spiritual people?' But this is not so consistent with the spirit of the passage, nor with the proof, afforded in his own case by the apostle, that the objection suggested by the interrogation was unfounded. The fact that he, a Jew, was not rejected, was evidence rather that the whole nation was not cast off, than that the true Israel were excepted. The distinction between the external and the spiritual Israel seems to be first referred to in the next verse. *For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin;* (see Phil. 3: 5.) The apostle is thus particular in his statement, to make it appear that he was not a mere proselyte, but a Jew by birth, and consequently, as he did not teach his own rejection from the kingdom of God, he could not be understood as teaching that God had cast off all his ancient people.

(2) *God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.* This verse admits of two interpretations. The words *his people* may be understood, as in the preceding verse, as meaning *the Jewish nation*, and the clause *which he foreknew* as by implication assigning the reason for the declaration that God had not cast them off. The clause, according to this view, is little more than a repetition of the sentiment of the preceding verse. 'It is not to be inferred from what I have said of the rejection of the Jews, that God has cast away all his chosen people. Multitudes are excepted now, as in the days of Elias.' The second interpretation requires more stress to be laid upon the words *which he foreknew*, as qualifying and distinguishing the preceding phrase, *his people*. 'God has indeed rejected his external people, the Jewish nation as such, but he has not cast away his people whom he foreknew.' According to this view, *his people* means his elect, his spiritual people, or the true Israel. This interpretation seems decidedly preferable, 1. Because it is precisely the distinction which Paul had made, and made for the same purpose, in ch. 9: 6—8, 'The rejection of the external Israel does not invalidate the promises of God, because those promises did not contemplate the natural seed as such, but the spiritual Israel. So, now, when I say that the external Israel is rejected, it does not imply that the true chosen Israel, to whom the promises pertained, is cast away.' 2. Because this is apparently Paul's own explanation in the sequel. The mass of the nation were cast away, but "a remnant, according to the election of grace," were reserved, v. 5. Israel, as such, Paul says in v. 7, failed of admission to the Messiah's kingdom, "but the election hath obtained it." It is, therefore, evident that *the people which God foreknew*, and which were not cast off, is "the remnant" spoken of in v. 5, and "the election" mentioned in v. 7. 3. Because the illustration borrowed from the Old Testament best suits this interpretation. In the days of Elias, God rejected the great body of the people; but reserved to himself a remnant, chosen in sovereign grace. The distinction, therefore, in both cases, is between the external and the chosen people.

Which he foreknew. On the different senses of the word rendered *he foreknew*, see ch. 8: 29. Compare Rom. 7: 15. 2 Tim. 2: 19. 1 Cor. 8: 3. Gal. 4: 9. Prov. 12: 10. Ps. 101: 4.

1 Thess. 5: 12. Matt. 7: 23. The examples, however, are numerous and familiar, in which the word which signifies literally *to know*, means *to approve, to regard with affection, to love*. And as to love one more than others involves the idea of selection, so the verb signifies also *to select, determine upon*; see the compound word here rendered *to foreknow*, in 1 Pet. 1: 20. Compare 1 Pet. 1: 2, and other passages quoted in Rom. 8: 29. It depends on the context, which sense of the word is to be adopted. The idea of simple prescience obviously does not suit the passage. Others, therefore, prefer rendering the phrase *which he before loved*; others, *which he had chosen*. This idea is included in the other, and is the best suited to the context. 'The people which God foreknew' means, therefore, 'his chosen people'; "the remnant according to the election of grace," i. e. graciously elected; or, as explained in v. 7, "the election," i. e. those who are chosen. Paul therefore teaches, that God has indeed rejected the Jews as a nation, but not his chosen people. From among the multitude, whom, for their rejection of the Messiah, he has cast away, he has reserved those whom he had chosen for himself. The illustration which the apostle cites is peculiarly appropriate. *Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias?* Literally, *in Elias*, i. e. in the section which treats of Elias, or which is designated by his name. Another example of the same method of reference to scripture is supposed to occur in Mark 12: 26, "In the bush God spake unto him," i. e. in the section which treats of the burning bush. *How he maketh intercession to God against Israel*. The word rendered 'to make intercession,' signifies *to approach* to any one, it may be *for* or *against* another; see ch. 8: 26.

(3) *Lord, they have killed thy prophets and digged down thine altars, and I am left alone, &c.*; see 1 Kings 19: 10. Paul gives the sense and nearly the words of the original. The event referred to was the great defection from the true religion, and murder of the prophets of God, during the reign of Ahab. The circumstance to which the apostle specially refers is, that the prophet considered the defection entire, and himself the only worshipper of the true God left; whereas, in fact, there were many who remained faithful.

(4) *But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, &c.*; 1 Kings 19: 18.

Answer of God (χρηματισμός), *divine response or oracle*; see the use of the corresponding verb (χρηματίζω), Heb. 12: 25. 11: 7. Matt. 2: 12. Luke 2: 26. Acts 10: 22. It is probable that the number *seven thousand* is to be taken for an indefinitely large number. Those who remained faithful to God are described as those who did not bow the knee to Baal. This was a Phœnician or Canaanitish deity, frequently worshipped by the idolatrous Hebrews. The word Baal properly means *Lord, Ruler*, and probably designates the same deity which among the Chaldeans was called Bel or Belus. The name is almost always masculine. The Septuagint prefix the feminine article to it in Hosea 2: 8. Jer. 2: 8. 19: 5. Zephaniah 1: 4, but in no one of these places is there any thing in the Hebrew to indicate that a female deity is intended. As Paul prefixes the feminine article, it may be explained either by supposing the word for *image* to be understood, as our translators have done and read, "Who have not bowed the knee to *the image* of Baal;" or by taking the word as of the common gender, and used as the name of both a male and female deity. These false gods were either the sun and moon, or the planets Jupiter and Venus.* In 1 Kings 19: 18, the passage quoted by the apostle, the word is masculine, as is evident from the last clause in the verse, "All the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." Tholuck thinks the feminine form is used contemptuously.†

(5) *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* As, in the days of Elias, there was a number which, although small in comparison with the whole nation, was still much greater than appeared to the eye of sense, so at the present time, amidst the general defection of the Jews, and their consequent rejection as a people, there is a remnant graciously chosen of God, who are not cast off. The phrase *election of grace*, agreeably to the familiar scriptural idiom, means *gracious election*. *Gracious*, not

* See GESSENIUS, Hebrew Lexicon on the words *Baal* and *Bel*. And also his Commentar über den Jesaia, vol. 3. Zweyte Beylage, p. 327.

† He refers to a remark of Jerome on Hosea 10: 5, who says that the form מַלְאִכִּים is used *ad irrisionem*. He remarks further, that in Arabic the feminine form is used for a false god, and by the Rabbins, מַלְאִכִּים means *false gods*.

Foeminenum, subaudito σικότι, *imagini* Baal, ad contentum, antitheto, *viros*.—
BENGEI.

merely in the sense of *kind*, but *gratuitous*, *sovereign*, not founded on the merits of the persons chosen, but the good pleasure of God. This explanation of the term is given by the apostle himself in the next verse. *Remnant according to the gracious election* is equivalent to *remnant gratuitously chosen*; see ch. 9: 11, and vs. 21, 24 of this chapter. Paul, therefore, designs to teach that the rejection of the Jews was not total, because there was a number whom God had chosen, who remained faithful, and constituted the true Israel or elected people, to whom the promises were made.

(6) *And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.* This verse is an exegetical comment on the last clause of the preceding one. If the election spoken of be of grace, it is not founded on works, for the two things are incompatible. It evidently was, in the apostle's view, a matter of importance that the entire freeness of the election of men to the enjoyment of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, should be steadily kept in view. He would not otherwise have stopped in the midst of his discourse to insist so much on this idea. This verse serves to illustrate several declarations of the apostle in the preceding chapter. For example, v. 11, in which, as here, men are said to be chosen in a sovereign manner, and not according to their works. It is obvious that *foreseen* works are as much excluded as any other. For a choice founded upon the foresight of good works, is as really made on account of works as any choice can be, and, consequently, is not of grace, in the sense asserted by the apostle. In the second place, the choice which is here declared to be so entirely gratuitous, is a choice to the kingdom of Christ. This is evident from the whole context, and especially from v. 7. It was from this kingdom and all its spiritual and eternal blessings that the Jews, as a body, were rejected, and to which "the remnant according to the election of grace" was admitted. The election, therefore, spoken of in the ninth chapter, is not to external privileges merely.

The latter part of this verse is simply the converse of the former. *But if of works then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.* If founded on any thing in us, it is not founded on the mere good pleasure of God. If the one

be affirmed, the other is denied. This latter clause is left out of so many of the ancient MSS. and versions, and passed over in silence by so many of the fathers, that the majority of editors are disposed to regard it as spurious. Internal evidence, and a comparison with similar passages, as Rom. 4: 4. Eph. 2: 8, 9, are rather in its favour.*

(7) *What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for: but the election hath obtained it, &c.* This verse is by many pointed differently, and read thus, "What then? Hath not Israel obtained that which he seeketh for? nay, but the election have, &c." The sense is not materially different. The apostle evidently designs to state the result of all he had just been saying. Israel, as a body, has not attained the blessing which they sought, but the chosen portion of them have. The rejection, therefore, is not total, and the promises of God made of old to Israel, which contemplated his spiritual people, have not been broken. It is clear, from the whole discourse, that the blessing sought by the Jews was justification, acceptance with God and admission into his kingdom; see ch. 10: 3. 9: 30: 31. This it is which they failed to attain, and to which the election were admitted. It was not, therefore, external advantages merely which the apostle had in view. The *election* means *those elected*; as the *circumcision* means *those who are circumcised*.

And the rest were blinded. The verb ($\epsilon\pi\omega\upsilon\lambda\omicron\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\nu$) rendered *were blinded* properly means in its ground form, *to harden, to render insensible*, and is so translated in our version, Mark 6: 52. 8: 17. John 12: 40. In 2 Cor. 3: 14, the only other place in which it occurs in the New Testament, it is rendered as it is here. It is used in reference to the eyes in the Septuagint, Job 17: 7, "My eyes are dim by reason of sorrow." Either rendering, therefore, is admissible, though the former is preferable as more in accordance with the usual meaning of the

* These words are omitted in the MSS. A. C. D. E. F. G. 47, *a prima manu*; in the Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic and Vulgate versions; by several of the Greek and all the Latin fathers. They are considered spurious by ERASMUS, MILL, WETSTEIN and GRIESBACH. They are also omitted by LACHMANN. They are retained by BENDEL, KNAPP, &c. Their omission is much more easily accounted for than their insertion; and it is certainly in accordance with the apostle's manner to state, affirmatively and negatively, the same proposition.

word, and with Paul's language in the previous chapters. "And the rest were hardened," that is, were insensible to the truth and excellence of the gospel, and, therefore, disregarded its offers and its claims. They were abandoned to the perverseness of their own hearts and given over to a reprobate mind.

(8) *According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, ears that they should not hear.* This passage, as is the case with ch. 9: 33, is composed of several found in different places, in the Old Testament. In Isaiah 6: 9, it is said, "Hear ye indeed, but understand not; see ye indeed, but perceive not;" v. 10, "Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears." Deut. 29: 4, "Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." Isaiah 29: 10, "For the Lord hath poured out upon you, the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes." The spirit, and to some extent, the language of these passages, Paul cites in support of his present purpose. They are in part descriptive of what had occurred in the times of the prophet, and in part of what should occur in after times, and are, therefore, quoted in reference to the character and conduct of the Jews in the days of Christ; (see Matt. 13: 14.) The import of such citations frequently is, that what was fulfilled in the days of the prophet was more completely accomplished at the time referred to by the New Testament writer. So, in this case, it was more fully accomplished at this period of the Jewish history than at any other, that the people were blinded, hardened and reprobated. And this the ancient prophets had frequently predicted should be the case. These quotations also serve to show, that this hardening, and consequent rejection of the Jews, was an event which, with regard to multitudes, had frequently occurred before, and, therefore, demonstrated that their being cast away militated with none of the divine promises.

God hath given to them. In the Hebrew and Greek of the Old Testament, Is. 29: 10, it is, "The Lord hath poured upon you." The sense remaining the same. Something more in this connexion is probably intended by this expression than that God permitted them to become hardened and insensible to divine truth. Here, as in ch. 9: 18, the idea probably is, that God judicially abandoned them, with withdrawing and with-

holding the influences of his Spirit, and giving them up to a reprobate mind. The words *even unto this day* may, as by our translators, be connected with the last words of the preceding verse, 'The rest were blinded even unto this day.' Or they may be considered as a part of the quotation, as they occur in the passage in Deut. 29: 4.

(9, 10) *And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap, &c. &c.* This quotation is from Ps. 69: 22, 23. There is nothing in the Psalm which forbids its being considered as a prophetic lamentation of the Messiah over his afflictions, and a denunciation of God's judgments upon his enemies. Verse 9, "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up," and v. 21, "They gave me vinegar to drink," are elsewhere quoted and applied to Christ. Viewed in this light, the Psalm is directly applicable to the apostle's object, as it contains a prediction of the judgments which should befall the enemies of Christ. *Let their table be* is only another and a more forcible way of saying, *their table shall be*. Is. 47: 5, "Sit thou silent and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans," for 'Thou shalt sit, &c.' And so in a multitude of cases in the prophetic writings. In the Psalm indeed, the future form in the Hebrew is used, though it is correctly rendered by the Septuagint, and in our version as the imperative, in these passages. The judgments here denounced are expressed in figurative language. The sense is, their blessings shall become a curse, blindness and weakness, hardness of heart and misery shall come upon them. This last idea is forcibly expressed by a reference to the dimness of vision, and decrepitude of old age; as the vigour and activity of youth are the common figure for expressing the results of God's favour.

Even if the Psalm here quoted be considered as referring to the sorrows and the enemies of the sacred writer himself, and not to those of Christ, it would still be pertinent to the apostle's object. The enemies of the Psalmist were the enemies of God; the evils imprecated upon them were imprecated on them as such, and not as enemies of the writer. These denunciations are not the expression of the desire of private revenge, but of the just and certain judgments of God. And as the Psalmist declared how the enemies of God should be treated, how dim their eyes should become, and how their strength

should be broken, so, Paul says, it actually occurs. David said, let them be so treated, and we find them, says the apostle, suffering these very judgments. Paul, therefore, in teaching that the great body of the Jews, the rejecters and crucifiers of the Son of God were blinded and cast away, taught nothing more than had already been experienced in various portions of their history, and predicted in their prophets.

Doctrines.

1. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. The people whom God had chosen for himself, he preserved amidst the general defection of their countrymen, vs. 1, 2.

2. The apparent apostacy of a church or community from God, is not a certain test of the character of all the individuals of which it may be composed. In the midst of idolatrous Israel, there were many who had not bowed the knee unto Baal. Denunciations, therefore, should not be made too general, vs. 2—4.

3. The fidelity of men in times of general declension is not to be ascribed to themselves, but to the grace of God. Every remnant of faithful men, is a remnant according to the election of grace. That is, they are faithful, because graciously elected, v. 5.

4. Election is not founded on works, nor on any thing in its objects, but on the sovereign pleasure of God; and it is not to church privileges merely, but to all the blessings of Christ's kingdom, vs. 6, 7.

5. It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth. Israel, with all their zeal for the attainment of salvation, were not successful, while those whom God had chosen attained the blessing, v. 7.

6. Those who forsake God, are forsaken by God. In leaving him, they leave the source of light, feeling and happiness, v. 7.

7. When men are forsaken of God all their powers are useless, and all their blessings become curses. Having eyes, they see not, and their table is a snare, vs. 8—10.

Remarks.

1. As in the times of the greatest defection, there are some who remain faithful, and as in the midst of apparently apostate

communities, there are some who retain their integrity, we should never despair of the church, nor be too ready to make intercession against Israel. The foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his, vs. 1—4.

2. Those only are safe whom the Lord keeps. Those who do not bow the knee to Baal, are a remnant according to the election of grace, and not according to the firmness of their own purposes, vs. 5, 6.

3. All seeking after salvation is worse than useless, unless properly directed. Those who are endeavouring to work out a righteousness of their own, or to secure the favour of God in any way by their own doings, are beating the air. Success is to be obtained only by submission to the righteousness of God, v. 7.

4. As the fact that any attain the blessing of God is to be attributed to their election, there is no room for self-complacency or pride; and where these feelings exist and are cherished in reference to this subject, they are evidence that we are not of the number of God's chosen, v. 7.

5. Men should feel and acknowledge that they are in the hands of God; that, as sinners, they have forfeited all claim to his favour, and lost the power to obtain it. To act perseveringly as though either of these truths were not so, is to set ourselves in opposition to God and his plan of mercy, and is the very course to provoke him to send on us the spirit of slumber. This is precisely what the Jews did, vs. 7, 8.

6. Men are commonly ruined by the things in which they put their trust or take most delight. The whole Mosaic system, with its rites and ceremonies, was the ground of confidence and boasting to the Jews, and it was the cause of their destruction. So, in our day, those who take refuge in some ecclesiastical organization instead of Christ, will find what they expected would prove their salvation, to be their ruin. So, too, all mis-improved or perverted blessings are made the severest curses, vs. 9, 10.

CHAP. 11: 11—36.

Analysis.

As the rejection of the Jews was not total, so neither is it final. They have not so fallen as to be hopelessly prostrated. First, God did not design to cast away his people entirely, but, by their rejection, in the first place, to facilitate the progress of the gospel among the Gentiles, and ultimately to make the conversion of the Gentiles the means of converting the Jews, v. 11. The latter event is in itself desirable and probable. 1. Because if the rejection of the Jews has been a source of blessing, much more will their restoration be the means of good, vs. 12, 15. (The verses 13, 14, are a passing remark on the motive which influenced the apostle in preaching to the Gentiles.) 2. Because it was included and contemplated in the original election of the Jewish nation. If the root be holy, so are the branches, v. 16.

The breaking off and rejection of some of the original branches, and the introduction of others of a different origin, is not inconsistent with this doctrine; and should lead the Gentiles to exercise humility and fear, and not boasting or exultation, vs. 17—22. As the rejection of the Jews was a punishment of their unbelief, and not the expression of God's ultimate purpose respecting them, it is, as intimated in v. 16, more probable that God should restore the Jews, than that he should have called the Gentiles, vs. 23, 24.

This event, thus desirable and probable, God has determined to accomplish, vs. 25, 26. The restoration of the Jews to the privileges of God's people is included in the ancient predictions and promises made respecting them, vs. 26, 27. Though now, therefore, they are treated as enemies, they shall hereafter be treated as friends, v. 28. For the purposes of God do not alter; as his covenant contemplated the restoration of his ancient people, that event cannot fail to come to pass, v. 29. The plan of God, therefore, contemplated the calling of the Gentiles, the temporary rejection and final restoration of the Jews, vs. 30—32.

How adorable the wisdom of God manifested in the plan and conduct of the work of redemption! Of him, through him, and

to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen, vs. 33—36.

Commentary.

(11) *I say then have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid, &c.* This verse begins with the same formula as the first verse of the chapter, and for the same reason. As there the apostle wished to have it understood that the rejection of God's ancient people was not entire, so here he teaches that this rejection is not final. That this is the meaning of the verse seems evident, 1. From the comparative force of the words *stumble* and *fall*. As the latter is a much stronger term than the former, it seems plain that Paul designed it should here be taken emphatically, as expressing *irrevocable ruin* in opposition to that which is *temporary*. The Jews have stumbled, but they are not prostrated. 2. From the context; all that follows being designed to prove that the fall of the Jews was not final. This is indeed intimated in this very verse, in which it is implied that the conversion of the Gentiles would lead to the ultimate conversion of the Jews. The word (*πρωτον*) rendered *should fall* is used here as elsewhere to mean *should perish, become miserable*, Heb. 4: 11. The word *that* may express either the design or result, 'They have not stumbled in order that they might fall,' or 'They have not stumbled so as utterly to fall.' The former is commonly preferred here by those who suppose the verse to mean that the object of the rejection of the Jews was not to render them miserable, but to do the Gentiles good. 'Has God caused or allowed them to stumble, for the sake of punishing them? By no means, but, &c.' This interpretation, which is adopted by Flatt, Tholuck, &c., although it is suited to the verse, considered separately, is not so agreeable to the context, and the design of the apostle. It is not his object in what follows, to prove that God had not cast off his people for the simple purpose of causing them to suffer, but to show that their rejection was not final.

But through their fall salvation has come unto the Gentiles. The stumbling of the Jews was not attended with the result of their utter and final ruin, but was the occasion of facilitating the progress of the gospel among the Gentiles. It was, therefore, not designed to lead to the former, but to the

latter result. From this very design it is probable that they shall be finally restored, because the natural effect of the conversion of the Gentiles is to provoke the emulation of the Jews. That the rejection of the gospel on the part of the Jews was the means of its wider and more rapid spread among the Gentiles, seems to be clearly intimated in several passages of the New Testament. "It was necessary," Paul says to the Jews, "that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles," Acts 13: 46. And in Acts 28: 28, after saying that the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled in their unbelief, he adds, "Be it known, therefore, unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the them." The Jews, even those who were professors of Christianity, were, in the first place, very slow to allow the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles; and in the second, they appear almost uniformly to have desired to clog the gospel with the ceremonial observances of the law. This was one of the greatest hinderances to the progress of the cause of Christ during the apostolic age, and would, in all human probability, have been a thousand fold greater, had the Jews, as a nation, embraced the Christian faith. On both of these accounts the rejection of the Jews was incidentally a means of facilitating the progress of the gospel. Besides this, the punishment which befell them on account of their unbelief, involving the destruction of their nation and power, of course prevented their being able to forbid the general preaching of the gospel, which they earnestly desired to accomplish. 1 Thess. 2: 15, 14, "They please not God and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to preach to the Gentiles that they might be saved."

For to provoke them to jealousy. As the result and design of the rejection of the Jews was the salvation of the Gentiles, so the conversion of the latter was designed to bring about the restoration of the former. The Gentiles are saved in order to provoke the Jews to jealousy. That is, this is one of the many benevolent purposes which God designed to accomplish by that event. This last clause serves to explain the meaning of the apostle in the former part of the verse. He shows that the rejection of the Jews was not intended to result in their being finally cast away, but to secure the more rapid progress of the

gospel among the heathen, in order that their conversion might re-act upon the Jews, and be the means of bringing all, at last, within the fold of the Redeemer.

(12) *Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?* Although there is considerable difficulty in fixing the precise sense of the several clauses of this verse, its general meaning seems sufficiently obvious. 'If the rejection of the Jews has been the occasion of so much good to the world, how much more may be expected from their restoration.' In this view it bears directly upon the apostle's object, which, in the first place, is to show that the restoration of the Jews is a probable and desirable event. There is in the verse a twofold annunciation of the same idea. In the first, the sentence is incomplete. 'If the fall of them be the riches of the world, *how much more their recovery?* if their diminishing, how much more their fulness?''* The principal difficulty in this passage results from the ambiguity of the words (*ἄσθημα* and *ἄληθωμα*) rendered *diminishing* and *fulness*. The former may mean *fewness* or *inferiority, a condition worse than that of others, or worse than a former one*. Those who adopt the former of these senses understand the verse thus, 'If the few Jews, who have been converted, have been such an advantage to the Gentiles, how much more will the great multitude of them, when brought to Christ, be a source of blessing.' But to this interpretation it may be objected, 1. The word has rarely the meaning here assigned to it. Passow gives it no such signification in his Lexicon. The cognate verb signifies *I am inferior in strength or condition to any one*. 2 Peter 2: 19. 2 Cor. 12: 13. The adjective means *inferior, worse*; 1 Cor. 11: 17, "Ye come together not for the better but for the worse." The only place in which the word here used occurs elsewhere in the New Testament, is 1 Cor. 6: 7, "There is utterly a fault among you," or as it might be rendered, 'It is an injury to you.' Such too is the meaning of the word in the Old Testament; Is. 31: 8, "His young men shall be discomfited," which expresses the sense of the original, and so does the Septuagint,

* Eadem sententia duplici formula exprimitur. In priori deest apodosis, qua demum addita accurate membra invicem respondent, &c.—KOPPE.

which employs the word used by the apostle, 'His young men shall be brought into an inferior condition,' i. e. shall be conquered. 2. This interpretation does not suit the context. Paul does not say that the conversion of the few Jews who had become Christians, had been the occasion of good to the Gentiles, but the rejection of the great body of the nation. 3. It does not at all suit the first clause of the verse. *The fall of them* answers to and explains *the diminishing of them*. As the former clause cannot receive the interpretation objected to, neither can the latter.

The word rendered *fulness* has various senses in the New Testament. It properly means *that with which any thing is filled*, as in the frequent phrase *the fulness of the earth*, or *of the sea*, &c. So *fulness of the Godhead*, all that is in God, *the plenitude of Deity*. It then naturally is used for *the fulness* or *abundance of blessings that is in any one*. John 1: 16, "Of his fulness have all we received;" Eph. 3: 19, "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Thirdly, it means *abundance, multitude*, especially when followed by a genitive expressing the particulars of which the multitude consists, as *fulness of the Gentiles*, i. e. the multitude of the Gentiles, v. 25 of this chapter. It also means *the complement* or *supplement of any thing, the remaining part*; see Matt. 9: 16. So in Eph. 1: 33, the church may be called *the fulness* of Christ because he is the head, the church the residue, or complement, by which the mystical body is completed. Of these several meanings, Storr selects the last, and explains the verse thus, 'If the ruin of the unbelieving Jews has been a source of blessing to the Gentiles, how much more shall the remaining portion of the nation, i. e. those converted to Christianity, be the means of good.' But, 1. This interpretation destroys the obvious antithesis of the sentence; "the remaining part" does not answer to the word rendered *ruin*, as it obviously should do. 2. It is not in accordance with the context, which is not designed so much to set forth the usefulness of the Jews then converted, as to declare the blessings likely to be consequent on the final conversion of the whole nation. 3. A comparison of this, with the 15th verse, is unfavourable to this interpretation. These verses evidently express the same idea, and, therefore, illustrate each other. 'If the casting away of

them be the occasion of reconciling the world, what will the receiving of them be, &c.' v. 15.

The common interpretation, therefore, is to be preferred. 'If the injury or ruin of the Jews has been the occasion of good to the Gentiles, how much more shall their full restoration or blessedness be?' According to this view, the word rendered *fulness* means *abundance*, i. e. abundance of blessings. This agrees with the antithesis, 'If the fall, then the recovery; if the ruin, then the blessedness, &c.' 2. It suits the context and the design of the apostle, and 3. It is in strict accordance with the obviously parallel passage in the 15th verse just quoted.

(13) *For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles.* This and the following verse, without being strictly a parenthesis, contain a transient remark relating to the apostle's own feelings and mode of acting in reference to the subject in hand. This passage is connected with the last clause of the preceding verse, in which Paul had said that the conversion of the Gentiles was adapted and designed to bring about the restoration of the Jews. These two events, instead of being at all inconsistent, were intimately related, so that both ought to be kept constantly in view, and all efforts to promote the former had a bearing on the accomplishment of the latter. This being the case, the Gentiles ought to consider the restoration of the Jews as in no respect inimical to their interests, but as on every account most desirable. Paul, therefore, says, that what he had just stated in reference to the effect on the Jews, of the conversion of the Gentiles, he designed specially for the latter; he wished them to consider that fact, as it would prevent any unkind feelings towards the Jews. He had the better right thus to speak, as to him especially, "the gospel of the uncircumcision had been committed." He himself, in all he did to secure the salvation of the Gentiles, or to render his office successful, had an eye to the conversion of the Jews. The word ($\delta\omicron\zeta\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omega$) rendered *I magnify*, means first *to praise, to estimate and speak highly of a thing*; secondly, *to render glorious*, as ch. 8: 30, "Whom he justifies them he also glorifies;" and so in a multitude of cases. Either sense of the word suits this passage. The latter, however, is much better adapted to the following verse, and, therefore, is to be preferred, 'I endeavour to render my office glorious by bringing as many Gentiles as

possible into the Redeemer's kingdom; if so be it may provoke and arouse my countrymen.* The object of the apostle, therefore, in these verses, is to declare that he always acted under the influence of the truth announced at the close of the 12th verse. He endeavoured to make the conversion of the Gentiles a means of good to the Jews.

(14) *If by any means I may provoke to emulation, them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.* This is the reason (of course one among many) why Paul desired the conversion of the Gentiles. If the two events, the salvation of both classes were intimately related, there was no ground of jealousy on either part. The Gentiles need not fear that the restoration of the Jews would be injurious to them, as though the happiness of one class were incompatible with that of the other.

(15) *For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?* Although Paul here returns to the sentiment of the 12th verse, this passage is logically connected with the preceding. The apostle had said, that even in labouring for the Gentiles, he had in view the salvation of the Jews, for if their rejection had occasioned so much good, how desirable must be their restoration. *If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world.* The reconciliation here spoken of is that which Paul so fully describes in Eph. 2: 11—22. A reconciliation by which those who were aliens and strangers have been brought nigh; reconciled at once to the church, the commonwealth of Israel, and to God himself, "by the blood of Christ." This event has been facilitated, as remarked above, by the rejection of the Jews, what will the restoration of the Jews then be, *but life from the dead?*† That is, it will be a

* Sic gentes alloquitur: Quum sim vobis peculiariter destinatus apostolus ideoque salutem vestram mihi commissam singulari quodam studio debeam procurare, et quasi rebus omnibus omissis unum illud agere: officio tamen meo fideliter fungar, si quos e mea gente Christo lucrifecero: idque erit in gloriam ministerii mei, atque adeo in vestrum bonum.—CALVIN.

† Quum ergo vitam ex morte, et lucem ex tenebris mirabiliter Deus eduxerit, multo magis sperandum esse ratiocinatur, ut resurrectio populi quasi emortui gentes vivificet.—CALVIN.

Totius generis humani sive mundi conversio comitabitur conversionem Israelis.—BENGL.

Quum ad evangelium accesserint etiam Judæi, mundus quasi reviviscat.—BEZA.

most glorious event; as though a new world had risen; not only glorious in itself, but in the highest degree beneficial for the Gentiles. De Brais and many others suppose that the apostle refers to the future declension of the Gentile church, from which the restoration of the Jews shall be the means of arousing them. Of such an allusion, however, there is no intimation in the text. The most common and natural interpretation is that which considers the latter clause as merely a figurative expression of a joyful and desirable event. The conversion of the Jews will be attended with the most glorious consequences for the whole world.

(16) *For if the first fruits be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so also are the branches.* Under two striking and appropriate figures, the apostle expresses the general idea, 'If one portion of the Jewish people is holy, so also is the other.' With regard to this interesting passage, the first point to be settled is the allusion in the figurative expression in the first clause. The Jews were commanded to offer a certain portion of all the productions of the earth to God, as an expression of gratitude and acknowledgement of dependence. This offering, called the first fruits, was to be made, first, from the productions in their natural state (Ex. 23: 19); and, secondly, from the meal, wine, oil and dough, as prepared for use. Num. 15: 20, "Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the Lord a heave offering in all your generations;" Nehemiah 10: 37. Deut. 18: 14. If the allusion of the apostle is to the former of these offerings, then the *first fruits* must refer to a portion of the harvest or vintage presented to God, and the *lump* to the residue of the grain or grapes. If the allusion be to the second, then the *first fruits* mean the portion of dough offered to God, and the *lump* the residue of the mass. The latter is undoubtedly most consistent with the meaning of the word (*φύγμα*) used by the apostle, which can hardly be understood as referring to heaps of grain, or other productions of the earth. In either case, however, the purport of the illustration is the same.

A second question is, who are intended by the first fruits and the root, and by the lump and the branches, in these two figures? With respect to this question, the following are the most common and plausible answers. 1. The first fruits are understood to mean the Jews first converted to the Christian

faith, who became, as it were, the root of the Christian church. According to this view of the passage, the apostle designs to say, 'Since the first converts to the gospel were Jews, it is evident that the nation, as such, is not cast off by God; as a portion of them is holy (or have been accepted of God), so may the residue be.' 2. By the first fruits and the root may be understood the patriarchs, the forefathers of the Jews; and by the lump and the branches, the residue of the nation or the Jews as a people. That this latter is the true meaning of the passage seems very evident. 1. Because this interpretation alone preserves the propriety of the figure. How can the unconverted Jews or the Jewish nation be called the branches of the portion that became followers of Christ? The Gentile Christians might be so called, but not the Jewish people, as such. On the other hand, nothing is more natural than to call the ancestors the root, and their descendants the branches. 2. This interpretation best suits the design of the apostle. He wishes to show that the conversion of the Jews, which he had declared to be so desirable for the Gentiles, was a probable event. He proves this by referring to the relation of their ancestors to God. If they were the peculiar people of God, their descendants may be regarded as his also, since the covenant was not with Abraham only, but also with his seed. 3. This is the apostle's own explanation in v. 28, where the unconverted Jews, or Hebrew nation, as such, are said to be "beloved for the father's sake." 4. This interpretation alone can be consistently carried through the following verses. The Gentile Christians are not said (v. 17) to be grafted into the stock of the converted Jews, but as branches with them, they are united to a common stock. And the stock into which the branches, now broken off, are to be again grafted, is not the Jewish part of the Christian church, but the original family or household of God.

The word (*ἅγιος*) rendered *holy*, which properly means *separated*, is used in two general senses in the scriptures, 1. *Consecrated*; 2. *Pure*. In the former of these, it is applied, times without number, in the Old Testament, to persons, places and things considered as peculiarly devoted to the service of God. So the whole Jewish people, without reference to their moral character, are called a holy people. So, too, the temple, tabernacle and all their contents were called holy, &c. The use of

the word in this sense, in reference to places and things, is not unfrequent in the New Testament. Matt. 4: 5, where Jerusalem is called the "holy city;" see Matt. 7: 6. 24: 15. 27: 53, and often. It is, however, rarely so used in relation to persons. In the vast majority of instances, when thus applied, it means *morally pure*; yet, in some cases, it signifies *devoted to God*. Luke 2: 23, "Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy unto the Lord." Perhaps, too, in the expressions "the holy prophets," Luke 1: 70, and "holy apostles," Eph. 3: 5, the reference is rather to their relation to God as persons devoted to his service, than to their moral character. In 1 Cor. 7: 14, the children of professing Christians are called "holy," not in reference to their moral condition, but their relation to the church. In like manner, in this passage, the Jews, as a people, are called holy, because peculiarly consecrated to God, separated from the rest of the world for his service.*

The connexion of this verse with the preceding, its import and bearing on the apostle's object is therefore clear. The restoration of the Jews, which will be attended with such beneficial results for the whole world, is to be expected, because of their peculiar relation to God as his chosen people. God, in selecting the Hebrew patriarchs and setting them apart for his service, had reference to their descendants as well as to themselves, and designed that the Jews as a people should, to the latest generations, be specially devoted to himself. They stand now, therefore, and ever have stood, in a relation to God, which no other nation ever has sustained; and, in consequence of this relation, their restoration to the divine favour is an event in itself probable, and one, which Paul afterwards teaches (v. 25), God has determined to accomplish.

(17—24) The object of these verses is to make such an application of the truths which Paul had just taught as should prevent any feeling of exultation or triumph of the Gentile Christians over the Jews. It is true that the Jews have been partially rejected from the church of God, that the Gentiles have been introduced into it, and that the Jews are ultimately

* Non est mirum, si in patre suo Judaei sanctificati sint. Nihil hic erit difficultatis, si sanctitatem intelligas nihil esse aliud, quam spirituales generis nobilitatem, et eam quidem non propriam naturae, sed quae ex foedere manabat. * * * Electi populi dignitas, proprie loquendo, supernaturale privilegium est.—CALVIN.

to be restored; these things, however, afford no ground of boasting to the Gentiles, but rather cause of thankfulness and caution. Paul illustrates these truths by a very appropriate figure.

(17) *And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, &c.* The purport of this passage is plain. Some of the Jews were broken off and rejected; the Gentiles, though apparently little susceptible of such a blessing, were introduced into the church, and made to partake of all its peculiar and precious privileges. The Jewish church is compared to the olive tree, one of the most durable, productive and valuable of the productions of the earth, because it was highly favoured, and, therefore, valued in the sight of God. The Gentiles are compared to the wild olive, one of the most worthless of trees, to express the degradation of their state, considered as estranged from God. As it is customary to engraft good scions on inferior stocks, the nature of the product bring determined by the graft and not the root, it has been thought that the illustration of the apostle is not very apposite. But the difficulty may result from pressing the comparison too far. The idea may be simply this, 'as the scion of one tree is engrafted into another, and has no independent life, but derives all its vigour from the root, so the Gentiles are introduced among the people of God, not to confer but to receive good.' It is however said, on the authority of ancient writers and of modern travellers, to have been not unusual to graft the wild on the cultivated olive.*

It is plain from this verse that *the root* in this passage cannot be the early converts from among the Jews, but the ancient covenant people of God. The ancient theocracy was merged in the kingdom of Christ. The latter is but an enlargement and elevation of the former. There has, therefore, never been other than one family of God on earth, existing under different institutions, and enjoying different degrees of light and favour. This family was composed of old of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and their descendants. At the advent its name and circumstances

* COLUMELLA *de Re rustica*, V. 9. Solent terebrari oleae laetae, in foramen talea viridis oleastri demittitur, et sic velut inita arbor foecundo semine fertilior exstat.

PALLADIUS *de Re rustica*, XIV. 53. Foecundat sterilis pinguis oleaster olivas, et quae non novit munera ferre docet.

were changed, many of its old members were cast out, and others introduced, but it is the same family still. Or, to return to the apostle's illustration, it is the same tree, some of the branches only being changed.

(18) *Boast not thyself against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.* The truth which the apostle had just taught, that the Jews were the channel of blessings to the Gentiles, and not the reverse, was adapted to prevent all ungenerous and self-confident exultation of the latter over the former.

(19) *Thou wilt say then, the branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.* The Gentiles are not authorised to infer from the fact that the Jews were rejected and they chosen, that this occurred on the ground of their being in themselves better than the Jews. The true reason of this dispensation is assigned in the next verse.

(20) *Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, &c.* The fact that they were broken off is admitted, but the inference impliedly drawn by the Gentiles is denied. It was not for any personal considerations that the one was rejected and the other chosen. The Jews were rejected because they rejected the Saviour, and the only tenure by which the advantages of a covenant relation to God can be retained is faith. The Gentiles, therefore, will not be secure because Gentiles, any more than the Jews were safe, because Jews. Instead therefore of being high-minded, they should fear.

(21) *If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.* The Gentile has even more reason to fear than the Jew had. It was in itself far more probable that God would spare a people so long connected with him in the most peculiar manner, than that he should spare those who had no such claims on his mercy. The idea intended to be expressed by this verse probably is, that the Jews, from their relation to God, were more likely to be spared than the Gentiles, inasmuch as God is accustomed to bear long with the recipients of his mercy before he casts them off; even as a father bears long with a son before he discards him and adopts another.

(22) *Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell severity; but on thee goodness.* The effect, which the consideration of these dispensations of God

should produce, is gratitude and fear. Gratitude, in view of the favour which we Gentiles have received, and fear lest we should be cut off, for our security, does not depend upon our now enjoying the blessings of the church of God, but is dependent on our *continuing in the divine goodness or favour* (Rom. 3: 4. Tit. 3: 4), that is, on our doing nothing to forfeit that favour; its continuance being suspended on the condition of our fidelity. There is nothing in this language inconsistent with the doctrine of the final perseverance of believers, even supposing the passage to refer to individuals; for it is very common to speak thus hypothetically, and say that an event cannot, or will not come to pass, unless the requisite means are employed, when the occurrence of the event had been rendered certain by the previous purpose and promise of God; see Acts 27: 31. The foundation of all such statements is the simple truth, that he who purposed the end, purposed also the means; and he brings about the end by securing the use of the means; and when rational agents are concerned, he secures the use of the means by rational considerations presented to their minds, and rendered effectual by his grace, when the end contemplated is good. This passage, however, has no legitimate bearing on this subject. Paul is not speaking of the connexion of individual believers to Christ, which he had abundantly taught in ch. 8 and elsewhere to be indissoluble, but of the relation of communities to the church and its various privileges. There is no promise or covenant on the part of God securing to the Gentiles the enjoyment of these blessings through all generations, any more than there was any such promise to protect the Jews from the consequences of their unbelief. The continuance of these favours depends on the conduct of each successive generation. Paul, therefore, says to the Gentile that he must continue in the divine favour, “otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”

(23) *And they also, if they bide not in unbelief, shall be grafted in, &c.* The principle which the apostle had just stated as applicable to the Gentiles, is applicable also to the Jews. Neither one nor the other, simply because Jew or Gentile, is either retained in the church or excluded from it. As the one continues in this relation to God, only on condition of faith; so the other is excluded by his unbelief alone. Nothing

but unbelief prevents the Jews being brought back, "for God is able to graff them in again."* That is, not merely has God the power to accomplish this result, but the difficulty or impediment is not in him, but solely in themselves. There is no inexorable purpose in the divine mind, nor any insuperable obstacle in the circumstances of the case, which forbids their restoration; on the contrary, the event is, in itself considered, far more probable than the calling of the Gentiles.

(24) *For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more, &c.* The simple meaning of this verse is, that the future restoration of the Jews is, in itself, a more probable event than the introduction of the Gentiles into the church of God. This, of course, supposes that God regarded the Jews, on account of their relation to him, with peculiar favour, and that there is still something in their relation to the ancient servants of God and his covenant with them, which causes them to be regarded with special interest. As men look upon the children of their early friends with kinder feelings than on the children of strangers, God refers to this fact to make us sensible that he still retains purposes of peculiar mercy towards his ancient people. The restoration of this people, therefore, to the blessings of the church of God is far from being an improbable event.

(25) *For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part has happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* Although the interpretations given of this and the following verses are very numerous, they are all modifications of one or the other of the two following general views of the passage. 1. Many understand the apostle as not predicting any remarkable future conversion of the Jewish nation, but merely declaring that the hardening or blinding of the nation was not such as to prevent many Jews entering the Christian church, as long as the Gentiles continued to come in. Thus all the true Israel, embracing Jews as well as Gentiles, should ultimately be saved. 2. The second general

* Frigidum apud homines profanos argumentum hoc foret. . . . At quia fideles quoties Dei potentiam nominari audiunt, quasi praesens opus intuentur, hanc rationem satis putavit valere, ad percollandas eorum mentes.—CALVIN.

view supposes the apostle, on the contrary, to predict a great and general conversion of the Jewish people, which should take place when the fulness of the Gentiles had been brought in, and that then, and not till then, those prophecies should be fully accomplished which speak of the salvation of Israel. The former of these views was presented, in different forms, by the great body of the authors who lived about the time of the Reformation; who were led by the extravagancies of the Millenarians, who built much on this passage, to explain away its prophetic character almost entirely.*

The second view has been the one generally received in every age of the church, with the exception of the period just referred to. That it is the correct interpretation, appears evident for the following reasons. 1. The whole context and drift of the apostle's discourse is in its favour. In the preceding part of the chapter, Paul, in the plainest terms, had taught that the conversion of the Jews was a probable event, and that it would be in the highest degree beneficial and glorious for the whole world. This idea is presented in various forms, and practical lessons are deduced from it in such a way as to show that Paul contemplated something more than merely the silent addition of a few Israelites to the church during successive ages. 2. It is evident that Paul meant to say that the Jews were to be restored in the sense in which they were then rejected. They were then rejected not merely as individuals but as a community, and, therefore, are to be restored as a community; see vs. 11, 15. How can the latter passage (v. 15), especially, be understood of the conversion of the small number of Jews which, from age to age, have joined the Christian church? This surely has not been as "life from the dead," for the whole world. 3. It is plain from this and other parts of the discourse that Paul refers to a great event: something which should attract universal attention. 4. In accordance with this

* WOLFUS, in his *Curæ*, gives an account of the authors who discuss the meaning of this and the following verses, as *Calovius* in *Bibliis Illustratis*; *Buddeus* in *Institute Theol. Dog.* p. 672. *Wolfus* himself says, 'Contextus suadet credere, Paulum id hic tantum agere, ut conversi e Gentilibus non existent, Judaeis omnem spem ad Christum in posterum perveniendi præcisam esse, sed ita potius statuant, ipsis non minus ceteris Gentilibus, nondum conversis, viam patere, qua ad Christum perducantur.'

idea, is the manner of introducing this verse, *I would not have you ignorant brethren*; see 1 Cor. 10: 1. 12: 1, and elsewhere. Paul uses this form of address when he wishes to rouse the attention of his readers to something specially important.

5. The gradual conversion of a few Jews is no *mystery* in the scriptural sense of the word. The term properly means *that which is secret or hidden*. It rarely is used to express the idea that a thing is obscure, or incomprehensible, but is applied either to all the doctrines of the gospel; Rom. 16: 25. 1 Cor. 2: 7. 4: 1. Eph. 6: 19, &c. &c.; or to some one doctrine, considered as previously unknown and undiscoverable by human reason, however simple and intelligible in its own nature. Thus the fact that the Gentiles should be admitted into the church of God, Paul calls a *mystery*, Eph. 3: 4. 1: 9. Any future event, therefore, which could be known only by divine revelation, is a *mystery*. The fact that all should not die, though all should be changed, was a *mystery*, 1 Cor. 15: 51. In like manner here, when Paul says, "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this *mystery*," he means to say that the event to which he referred, was one, which, depending on no secondary cause, but on the divine purpose, could be known only by divine revelation. This description is certainly far more suitable to the annunciation of a prophecy, than to the statement of a fact which might have been confidently inferred from what God had already revealed.

6. The words *all Israel*, in the next verse, cannot, as the first interpretation mentioned above would require, be understood of the *spiritual* Israel; because the word is just before used in a different sense, "blindness in part has happened unto Israel." This blindness is to continue until a certain time, when it is to be removed, and then all Israel is to be saved. It is plain that *Israel* in these cases must be understood as referring to the same class of persons. This is also clear from the opposition between the terms *Israel* and *Gentile*.

7. The words ($\alpha\chi\rho\iota\varsigma\ \sigma\tilde{\iota}$), correctly rendered in our version *until*, cannot, so consistently with usage, be translated *as long as*, or *so that*, followed as they are here by the aorist subjunctive; see Rev. 15: 8. 17: 17; compare Heb. 3: 13.

8. The following verses seem to require this interpretation. The result contemplated is one which shall be a full accomplishment of those prophecies which predicted the salvation of the Jews.

The reason given in vs. 28, 29, for the event to which Paul refers, is the unchangeableness of God's purposes and covenant. Having once taken the Jews into special connexion with himself, he never intended to cast them off for ever. The apostle sums up his discourse by saying, 'As the Gentiles were formerly unbelieving, and yet obtained mercy, so the Jews who now disbelieve shall hereafter be brought in, and thus God will have mercy on all, both Jews and Gentiles.' From all these considerations it seems obvious that Paul intended here to predict that the time would come when the Jews as a body should be converted unto the Lord; compare 2 Cor. 3: 16.

Lest ye should be wise in your own conceits. This is given as the reason why the apostle wished the Gentiles to know and consider the event which he was about to announce. This clause may mean either, 'Lest ye proudly imagine that your own ideas of the destiny of the Jews are correct.' Or, 'Lest ye be proud and elated, as though you were better and more highly favoured than the Jews.' The former is perhaps most in accordance with the literal meaning of the words (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς φρόνημοί); see Proverbs 3: 7. *Blindness in part*, i. e. partial blindness; *partial* as to its extent and continuance; because not all the Jews were thus blinded, nor were the nation to remain blind for ever. The word (πρωσῆσις) rendered *blindness* is more correctly rendered, in Mark 3: 5, *hardness*; compare Eph. 4: 16; see v. 7, and ch. 9: 18.

Until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. See v. 12 for the various meanings of the word (πλήρωμα) rendered *fulness*. The sense which best suits this passage is *multitude*; see Gen. 48: 19, "His seed shall become a multitude of nations;" and Is. 31: 4, where, in Hebrew, the word for *fulness* is used. The clause then means, 'Until the multitude of the Gentiles be converted.' It does not necessarily imply that all the Gentiles are to be thus brought in before the conversion of the Jews occurs, but that this latter event was not to take place until a great multitude of the Gentiles had entered into the kingdom of Christ.

(26) *And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written.* Israel here, from the context, must mean the Jewish people, and *all Israel* the whole nation, in opposition to the part spoken of

above. Now, part of the Jewish people is rejected; then, the whole shall be gathered in. The nation, as such, shall acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, and be admitted into his kingdom.

In support of this declaration, Paul appeals to a prediction in Isaiah 59: 20, *There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.* The apostle's version of this passage agrees neither with the Hebrew nor the Septuagint. It differs, however, but little from the latter. Instead of *out of Zion*, the Greek version has *for the sake of Zion*, and the English *to Zion*. The last is the most literal, the second is also correct, but the first (*out of Zion*) is not consistent with the force of the Hebrew preposition used by Isaiah. It is most probable, therefore, that the apostle borrowed those words from Ps. 14: 7. In the latter part of the verse the departure from the Hebrew is more serious. In our version we have a literal translation of the Hebrew, "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob." Paul follows the Septuagint, with which also the Chaldee paraphrase agrees. This agreement of the ancient versions has led critics to suppose that the ancient translators found a different reading in the Hebrew text from that which we have at present.* This is the more probable, because the Hebrew phrase, as it now stands, is very unusual, *to the converts of transgression.* But even according to the present text, the passage contains the general meaning which the apostle attributes to it. 'The Goël, the deliverer, should come for the salvation of Zion.'

The apostle informs us that the deliverance which God promised to effect, and which is spoken of by the prophet in the passage above cited, included much more than the conversion of the few Jews who believed in Christ at the advent. The full accomplishment of the promise, that he should turn away ungodliness from Jacob, contemplated the conversion of the whole nation as such to the Lord. We are, of course, bound to receive the apostle's interpretation as correct, and there is the less difficulty in this, as there is nothing in the original passage at all incompatible with it, and as it accords with the nature of God's covenant with his ancient people.

* וְלִשְׁבִי for וְלִשְׁבִי

(27) *For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.* This verse is not a quotation from any one passage in the Old Testament, but rather a declaration, on the part of the apostle, of the purport of God's promises or covenant with his people. The first clause occurs in Is. 59: 21, immediately after the passage quoted above, and also in Jer. 31: 33. The latter clause may be considered either as the substance of the passage in Jeremiah, or as borrowed from Is. 27: 9, where, in the Septuagint, these same words occur. In either case the general idea is the same. 'The promise of God contemplated the taking away of the sins of his covenant people, and their consequent restoration to his favour.' The words *when I shall take away their sins* may, according to the context, mean either *when I have punished their sins*, or, *when I have removed them*. Neither is inconsistent with the context in this case, as the apostle may mean that God would restore the Jews after he had punished them for their iniquities, or when he had converted them from their unbelief; see Is. 4: 4.

(28) *As concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.* In this and the few following verses, the apostle sums up what he had previously taught. The Jews, he says, were now, as far as the gospel was concerned, regarded and treated as enemies for the benefit of the Gentiles, but, in reference to the election, they were still regarded as the peculiar people of God on account of their connexion with the patriarchs. *They are enemies*, whether of the gospel, of the apostle, or of God, is not expressed, and, therefore, depends on the context. Each view of the clause has its advocates; the last is the correct one, because they are *enemies* to him, by whom, on one account, they are *beloved*. The word may be taken actively or passively. They are inimical to God, or they are regarded and treated as enemies by him. The latter best suits the context. They are now aliens from their own covenant of promise.

As concerning the gospel, that is, the gospel is the occasion of their being regarded as enemies. This is explained by a reference to vs. 11, 15. By their punishment the progress of the gospel has been facilitated among the Gentiles; and, therefore, the apostle says, it is *for your sakes* they are thus treated.

On the other hand, as it regards *the election* or the covenant of God, they are still regarded with peculiar favour, because descended from those patriarchs to whom and to whose seed the promises were made. This is but expressing in a different form the idea which the apostle had previously presented, viz. that the covenant made with Abraham was inconsistent with the final rejection of the Jews as a people. God foresaw and predicted their temporary defection and rejection from his kingdom, but never contemplated their being for ever excluded; see vs. 16, 25—27.*

(29) *For the gift and calling of God are without repentance.* God is not a man that he should change. Having chosen the Jews as his people, the purpose which he had in view in that choice can never be altered; and as it was his purpose that they should ever remain his people, their future restoration to his favour and kingdom is certain. Having previously explained the nature of God's covenant with his ancient people, Paul infers from the divine character that it will be fully accomplished. *Calling* is equivalent to *election* as appears from the context, the one word being substituted for the other, and also from the use of the cognate terms, (see ch. 8: 28. 1: 7, &c. &c.) The general proposition of the apostle, therefore, is, that the purposes of God are unchangeable; and, consequently, those whom God has chosen for any special benefit cannot fail to attain it. The persons whom he hath chosen to eternal life, shall certainly be saved; and the people whom he chooses to special national or external privileges cannot for ever be deprived of them. As in the whole context Paul is speaking not of individuals, but of the rejection and restoration of the Jews as a body, it is evident that the calling and election which he here has in view, are such as pertain to the Jews as a nation, and not such as contemplate the salvation of individuals.†

* Paulus autem docet, ita (Judaeos) fuisse ad tempus Dei providentia excaecatos, ut via evangelio ad gentes sterneretur: caeterum non esse in perpetuum a Dei gratia exclusos. Fatetur ergo—Deum non esse immemorem foederis, quod cum patribus eorum pepigit, et quo testatus est, se aeterno consilio gentem illam dilectione complexam esse.—CALVIN.

† Dona et vocatio Dei sine poenitentia sunt. Dona et vocationem posuit per hypallagen pro beneficio vocationis: neque etiam de qualibet vocatione intelligi hoc debet, sed de illa, qua posteros Abrahae in foedus adoptavit Deus: quando de hac

(30, 31) *For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so, &c.* These verses contain a repetition and confirmation of the previous sentiment. The cases of the Gentiles and Jews are very nearly parallel. Formerly the Gentiles were disbelieving, yet the unbelief of the Jews became the occasion of their obtaining mercy; so now, though the Jews are disobedient, the mercy shown to the Gentiles is to be the means of their obtaining mercy. As the gospel came from the Jews to the Gentiles, so is it to return from the Gentiles to the Jews. Paul had before stated how the unbelief of the Israelites was instrumental in promoting the salvation of other nations, and how the conversion of the Gentiles was to re-act upon the Jews. The 31st verse is thus rendered in our translation, and, no doubt, correctly. *Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.* The particle rendered *that*, expresses here the result rather than the design. They now are disbelieving, not *in order that* they might obtain mercy through your mercy; but such is the result. *Through your mercy.* The dative (ἐλέει), in which form the words thus translated occur, here, as in v. 30 and often elsewhere, expresses the cause or occasion. As, however, in the original, the particle (ἵνα) *that* stands after these words, and not, as in our version, before them, the verse is very often differently pointed,* so as to give an entirely different sense. The comma is placed after the word rendered *mercy*, which is thus connected with the preceding clause. Calvin so renders the passage, ‘They disbelieve, because ye have obtained mercy.’ Luther, ‘They would not believe in the mercy which you have obtained.’ Others, ‘They disbelieve, that ye might obtain mercy.’ But the reason for this pointing, derived from the position of the particle in question, is not sufficient, as it is not unusual for it to be thus transposed, see 2 Cor. 2: 4; and the sense thus obtained is not so consistent with the context. Paul

specialiter erat instituta disputatio. Sicuti nomine electionis a paulo ante arcanum Dei consilium notavit, quo Judaei olim a gentibus discreti fuerunt.—CALVIN.

* The original is οὕτω καὶ οὗτοι νῦν ἠπειθήσαν τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐλέει, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθῶσι. So many editions point the passage; LACHMANN'S among the number. The Latin Vulgate translates thus, “Ita et isti nunc non crediderunt in vestram misericordiam: ut et ipsi misericordiam consequantur.”

had repeatedly remarked that the conversion of the Gentiles was to be the occasion of the restoration of the Jews, as the disbelief of the latter had been the occasion of good to the former. And this seems obviously his meaning here, from the opposition between the phrases *their unbelief* and *your mercy*. The construction of the passage, therefore, adopted by our translations is to be preferred to the other.

(32) *For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.* The word (συνέλασις) rendered *hath concluded*, means *hath delivered over to the power of*. Ps. 31: 8, "Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy;" Ps. 78: 50, "He gave their life over to the pestilence." In both these cases the Septuagint employ the word here used by the apostle. So, too, Gal. 3: 22, "The scripture hath concluded all under sin," i. e. declared all to be delivered up to the power of sin. The meaning of the passage, therefore, is, that God has delivered all men unto unbelief, i. e. has permitted all thus to sin; or, has delivered them over, in the sense in which, in ch. 1: 28, he is said to deliver men up to the evil of their own hearts. The object of Paul seems to be to direct the attention of his readers to the fact, that God's dealings with men, Jews and Gentiles, had been such as to place them upon the same ground. Both were dependent on sovereign mercy. Both had sunk into a state whence no effort and no merit of their own could redeem them, and whence, if saved at all, it must be by grace. Besides this, it seems to be intimated that the design of this dispensation was to display the divine mercy, and, consequently, the fact that the Jews were unbelieving and sinful, instead of rendering their case hopeless, made them fit subjects for the display of the goodness of God. At least their case was no worse than that of the Gentiles who had already obtained mercy.* As, therefore, all men had forfeited every claim to the divine mercy, and all were in the same condition of unbelief, God had determined to display his goodness by having mercy upon all (that is, upon the Jews as well as the Gentiles), and thus bring all ultimately to one fold under one shepherd.

(33—36) The apostle having finished his exhibition of the

* Pulcherrima clausula, qua ostendit non esse cur de aliis desperent qui spem aliquam habent salutis.—CALVIN.

plan of redemption, having presented clearly the doctrine of justification, sanctification, the certainty of salvation to all believers, election, the calling of the Gentiles, the present rejection and final restoration of the Jews, in view of all the wonders and all the glories of the divine dealings with men, pours forth this sublime and affecting tribute to the wisdom, goodness and sovereignty of God. Few passages, even in the scriptures, are to be compared with this, in the force with which it presents the idea that God is all, and man is nothing. It is supposed by many that these verses have reference to the doctrines taught in the immediate context; and that it is the wisdom of God, as displayed in the calling of men, Gentiles and Jews, which Paul here contemplates. Others restrict them still further to the display of the mercy of God, of which the apostle had just been speaking. But the passage should be applied to that to which it is most naturally applicable. The question is, what called forth these admiring views of the dispensations of God? The truth that he would ultimately restore his ancient people? or the whole exhibition of the economy of redemption? As the passage occurs at the close of this exhibition, as it expresses precisely the feelings which it might be expected to produce, and as there is nothing to restrict it to the immediate context, it is most natural to consider it as referring to all that the apostle had hitherto taught.

The principal ideas presented in this passage are, 1. The incomprehensible character and infinite excellence of the divine nature and dispensations, v. 33. 2. His entire independence of man, vs. 34, 35. 3. His comprehending all things within himself; being the source, the means, and the end of all, v. 35.

(33) *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways are past finding out.* Although it is not probable that, in such a passage, every word was designed to be taken in a very precise and definite sense, yet it is likely that Paul meant to express different ideas by the terms *wisdom* and *knowledge*, because both are so wonderfully displayed in the work of redemption, of which he had been speaking. All-comprehending knowledge, which surveyed all the subjects of this work, all the necessities and circumstances of their being, all the means requisite for the accomplishment of the divine

purpose, and all the results of those means from the beginning to the end. Infinite wisdom in selecting and adapting the means to the object in view, in the ordering of the whole scheme of creation, providence and redemption, so that the glory of God, and the happiness of his creatures are, and are to be, so wonderfully promoted. *His judgments are unsearchable.* That is, his decisions, purposes or decrees. Ps. 119: 75. In this sense this clause differs from the following. The plans and purposes of God are unsearchable, and *his ways*, his methods of executing them, are incomprehensible. Or both clauses may be understood as containing the same general idea, God's dealings are beyond the comprehension of mortals.

(34) *For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Who hath been his counsellor?* See Is. 40: 13. Jer. 23: 18. This and the following verse confirm the declaration of the preceding, and assert the entire independence of God. His judgments and ways are unsearchable, for who has ever entered into his counsel, or known his purposes? He derives knowledge from none of his creatures, but is in this, as in all things else, independent of them all.

(35) *Or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed to him again?* This is not to be confined to giving counsel or knowledge to God, but expresses the general idea that the creature can do nothing to place God under obligation. It will be at once perceived how appropriate is this thought, in reference to the doctrines which Paul had been teaching. Men are justified, not on the ground of their own merit, but of the merit of Christ; they are sanctified, not by the power of their own good purposes, and the strength of their own will, but by the Spirit of God; they are chosen and called to eternal life, not on the ground of any thing in them, but according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, God, therefore, is the Alpha and the Omega of salvation. The creature has neither merit nor power. His hopes must rest on sovereign mercy alone.

(36) *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* The reason why man can lay God under no obligation, is that God is himself all and in all; the source, the means and the end. By him all things are; through his power, wisdom and goodness all things

are directed and governed; and to him as their last end all things tend. For the display of his character, every thing exists and is directed as the highest and noblest of all possible objects. Creatures are as nothing, less than vanity and nothing in comparison with God. Human knowledge, power or virtue, are mere glimmering reflections from the brightness of the divine glory. That system of religion, therefore, is best in accordance with the character of God, the nature of man, and the end of the universe, in which all things are of, through and to God; and which most effectually leads men to say, **NOT UNTO US, BUT UNTO THY NAME BE ALL THE GLORY!**

Such is the appropriate conclusion of the doctrinal portion of this wonderful epistle; in which more fully and clearly than in any other portion of the word of God, the plan of salvation is presented and defended. Here are the doctrines of grace; doctrines on which the pious in all ages and nations have rested their hopes of heaven, though they may have had comparatively obscure intimations of their nature. The leading principle of all is, that God is the source of all good, that in fallen man there is neither merit nor ability; that salvation consequently is all of grace, as well sanctification as pardon, as well election as the bestowment of eternal glory. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Doctrines.

1. There is to be a general conversion of the Jews, concerning which the apostle teaches us, 1. That it is to be in some way consequent on the conversion of the Gentiles, vs. 11, 31. 2. That it will be attended with the most important and desirable results for the rest of the world, vs. 12, 15. 3. That it is to take place after the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in; that is, after the conversion of multitudes of the Gentiles, (how many, who can tell?) v. 25. Nothing is said of this restoration being sudden, or effected by miracle, or consequent on the second advent, or as attended by a restoration of the Jews to their own land. These particulars have all been added by some commentators, either from their own imagination or from their views of other portions of the scriptures. They are not taught by the apostle. On the contrary, it is *through the mercy shown to the Gentiles*, according to Paul, that the Jews are to

be brought in, which clearly implies that the former are to be instrumental in the restoration of the latter. And he every where teaches, that after their restoration to the church, the distinction between Jew and Gentile ceases. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, Col. 3: 11; all classes are merged in one, as was the case under the direction of the apostles in the first ages of the church.

2. The church of God is the same in all ages and under all dispensations. It is the society of the true people of God, together with their children. To this society the ancient patriarchs and their posterity belonged; into this society, at the time of Christ, other nations were admitted, and the great body of the Jews were cast out, and into this same community the ancient people of God are to be again received. In every stage of its progress, the church is the same. The olive tree is one, though the branches are numerous and sometimes changed, vs. 17—24.

3. The web of Providence is wonderfully woven. Good and evil are made with equal certainty, under the government of infinite wisdom and benevolence, to result in the promotion of God's gracious and glorious designs. The wicked unbelief and consequent rejection of the Jews are made the means of facilitating the conversion of the Gentiles; the holy faith and obedience of the Gentiles are to be the means of the restoration of the Jews, vs. 11, 31.

4. All organized communities, civil and ecclesiastical, have a common responsibility, a moral personality in the sight of God, and are dealt with accordingly, rewarded or punished according to their conduct, as such. As their organized existence is confined to this world, so must the retributive dispensations of God respecting them be. Witness the rejection, dispersion and sufferings of the Jews, as a national punishment for their national rejection of the Messiah. Witness the state of all the eastern churches broken off from the olive tree for the unbelief of former generations. Their fathers sinned, and their children's children, to the third and fourth generation, suffer the penalty as they share in the guilt, vs. 11—24.

5. The security of every individual Christian is suspended on his continuing in faith and holy obedience; which is indeed

rendered certain by the purpose and promise of God. In like manner the security of every civil and ecclesiastical society, in the enjoyment of its peculiar advantages, is suspended on its fidelity as such, for which fidelity there is no special promise with regard to any country or any church, vs. 20—24.

6. God does sometimes enter into covenant with communities, as such. Thus he has covenanted to the whole human race that the world shall not be again destroyed by a deluge, and that the seasons shall continue to succeed each other, in regular order, until the end of time. Thus he covenanted with the Jews to be a God to them and to their seed for ever, and that they should be to him a people. This, it seems, is a perpetual covenant, which continues in force until the present day, and which renders certain the restoration of the Jews to the privileges of the church of God, vs. 16, 28, 29.

7. It is the radical principle of the bible, and consequently of all true religion, that God is all and in all; that of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. It is the tendency of all truth to exalt God, and to humble the creature; and it is characteristic of true piety to feel that all good comes from God, and to desire that all glory should be given to God, vs. 33—36.

Remarks.

1. The mutual relation between the Christian church and the Jews should produce in the minds of all the followers of Christ, 1. An abiding sense of our obligations to the Jews as the people through whom the true religion has been preserved, and the blessings of divine truth extended to all nations, vs. 17, 18. 2. Sincere compassion for them, because their rejection and misery have been the means of reconciling the world to God, i. e. of extending the gospel of reconciliation among men, vs. 11, 12, 15. 3. The banishment of all feelings of contempt towards them, or exultation over them, vs. 18, 20. 4. An earnest desire, prompting to prayer and effort, for their restoration, as an event fraught with blessings to them and to all the world, and which God has determined to bring to pass, vs. 12, 15, 25, &c.

2. The dealings of God with his ancient people should, moreover, teach us, 1. That we have no security for the con-

tinuance of our privileges but constant fidelity, v. 20. 2. That, consequently, instead of being proud and self-confident, we should be humble and cautious, vs. 20, 21. 3. That God will probably not bear with us as long as he bore with the Jews, v. 21. 4. That if for our unbelief we are cast out of the church, our punishment will probably be more severe. There is no special covenant securing the restoration of any apostate branch of the Christian church, vs. 21, 24, with 16, 27—29.

3. It is a great blessing to be connected with those who are in covenant with God. The promise is “to thee and thy seed after thee.” “The Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,” Deut. 7: 9. The blessing of Abraham reaches, in some of its precious consequences, to the Jews of this and every coming age, vs. 16, 27—29.

4. The destiny of our children and our children’s children is suspended, in a great measure, on our fidelity. “God is a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him.” What words of woe for unborn thousands, were those, “His blood be on us and on our children!” As the Jews of the present age are suffering the consequences of the unbelief of their fathers, and the nominal Christians of the eastern churches suffer for the apostacy of previous generations, so will our children perish, if we, for our unbelief as a church and nation, are cast off from God, v. 19—24.

5. As the restoration of the Jews is not only a most desirable event, but one which God has determined to accomplish, Christians should keep it constantly in view even in their labours for the conversion of the Gentiles. This Paul did, vs. 13, 14. Every effort to hasten the accession of the fulness of the Gentiles is so much done towards the restoration of Israel, v. 25.

6. Christians should not feel as though they were isolated beings, as if each one need be concerned for himself alone, having no joint responsibility with the community to which he belongs. God will deal with our church and country as a whole, and visit our sins upon those who are to come after us. We should feel, therefore, that we are one body, members one of another, having common interests and responsibilities. We

ought to weep over the sins of the community to which we belong, as being in one sense, and in many of their consequences, our sins, vs. 11—24.

7. As the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, those to whom he has given the Holy Spirit, and has called unto holiness, may rejoice in the certainty of the continuance of these blessings, v. 29.

8. Does the contemplation of the work of redemption, and the remembrance of our own experience, lead us to sympathize with the apostle in his adoring admiration of the wisdom and goodness of God, and to feel that, as it regards our salvation, every thing is of him, through him, and to him? vs. 33—36.

9. As it is the tendency and result of all correct views of Christian doctrine to produce the feelings expressed by the apostle at the close of this chapter, those views cannot be scriptural which have a contrary tendency; or which lead us to ascribe, in any form, our salvation to our own merit or power, vs. 33—36.

CHAPTER XII.

Contents.

THIS chapter consists of two parts. The first, vs. 1—8, treats of piety towards God, and the proper estimation and use of the various gifts and offices employed or exercised in the church. The second, vs. 9—21, relates to love and its various manifestations towards different classes of men.

CHAP. 12: 1—8.

Analysis.

As the apostle had concluded the doctrinal portion of the epistle with the preceding chapter, agreeably to his almost uniform practice, he deduces from his doctrines important practical lessons. The first deduction from the exhibition which he had made of the mercy of God in the redemption of men, is that they should devote themselves to him as a living

sacrifice, and be conformed to his will and not to the manners of the world, vs. 1, 2. The second is, that they should be humble, and not allow the diversity of their gifts to destroy the sense of their unity as one body in Christ, vs. 3—5. These various gifts were to be exercised, not for selfish purposes, but in a manner consistent with their nature and design; diligently, disinterestedly and kindly, vs. 6—8.

Commentary.

(1) *I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, &c.* As the sum of all that Paul had said of the justification, sanctification and salvation of men is, that these results are to be attributed, not to human merit nor to human efforts, but to the mercy of God, he brings the whole discussion to bear as a motive for devotion to God. Whatever gratitude the soul feels for pardon, purity and the sure prospect of eternal life is called forth to secure its consecration to that God who is the author of all these mercies.

That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. All the expressions of this clause seem to have an obvious reference to the services of the Old Testament economy. Under that dispensation, animals free from blemish were presented and devoted to God; under the new dispensation a nobler and more spiritual service is to be rendered; not the oblation of animals, but the consecration of ourselves. The expression *your bodies* is perhaps nearly equivalent to *yourselves*; yet Paul probably used it with design, not only because it was appropriate to the figure, but because he wished to render the idea prominent that the whole man, body as well as soul, was to be devoted to the service of God. "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," 1 Cor. 6: 20. The apostle carries the figure out; the sacrifice is to be *living, holy and acceptable*. The first of these epithets is generally considered as intended to express the contrast between the sacrifice here intended, and the victims which were placed lifeless upon the altar; thus believers, in 1 Peter 2: 5, are called "living stones" in opposition to the senseless materials employed in a literal building. The word *living*, however, may mean *perpetual, lasting, never neglected*; as in the phrases "living

bread," John 6: 51, 'bread which never looses its power;' "living hope," 1 Pet. 1: 3, 'hope which never fails;' "living waters," "a living way," &c.; (see Wahl's Lexicon under the word ζῶω.) The sacrifice then which we are to make is not a transient service like the oblation of a victim which was in a few moments consumed upon the altar, but it is a living or perpetual sacrifice never to be neglected or recalled. The epithet *holy* has probably direct reference to the frequent use of a nearly corresponding word (קֹדֶשׁ) in the Hebrew scriptures, which, when applied to sacrifices, is commonly rendered *without blemish*. The word *holy* is then in this case equivalent to *immaculate*, i. e. free from those defects which would cause an offering to be rejected. The term *acceptable* is here used in the same sense as the phrase "for a sweet smelling savour," Eph. 5: 2. Phil. 4: 18. Lev. 1: 9, i. e. *grateful, well-pleasing*; a sacrifice in which God delights.

Your reasonable service. There is doubt as to the grammatical construction of this clause. The most natural and simple explanation is to consider it in apposition with the preceding member of the sentence, as has been done by our translators, who supply the words *which is*. This consecration of ourselves to God, which the apostle requires, is a *reasonable service*. The word (λογικήν) rendered *reasonable* is variously explained. The simplest interpretation is that which takes the word in its natural sense, viz. *pertaining to the mind*; it is a mental or spiritual service in opposition to ceremonial and external observances. Compare the phrase (λογικὸν γάλα), 'milk suited, or pertaining to the mind,' 1 Pet. 2: 2. Others understand these words as expressing the difference between the sacrifices under the Christian dispensation and those under the Old. Formerly animals destitute of reason (ἄλογα ζῶα) were offered unto God, but now men possessed of a rational soul.* But this interpretation is neither so well suited to the meaning of the word, nor does it give a sense so consistent with the context; compare 1 Pet. 2: 5.

(2) *And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, &c.* Not only is God

* In V. T. offerebantur animantia ratione destituta, sed jam offerendi sunt homines ratione præditi.—SCHOTTGEN.

to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, as required in the preceding verse, but there must be a corresponding holiness of life. This idea is expressed in the manner most common with the sacred writers. Regarding men universally as corrupted and devoted to sin, *the world* is with them equivalent to *the wicked*; to be conformed to the world, therefore, is to be like unrenewed men in temper and in life. The word accurately rendered *conformed*, expresses strongly the idea of similarity in character and manners; and that rendered *transformed* expresses with equal strength the opposite idea. *This world*. The origin of this term, as used in the New Testament, is no doubt to be sought in the mode of expression so common among the Jews, who were accustomed to distinguish between the times before, and the times under the Messiah, by calling the former period *this world*, or *this age* (עוֹלָם הַזֶּה), and the latter, *the world*, or *age to come* (עוֹלָם הַבָּא). The former phrase thus naturally came to designate those who were without, and the latter those who were within the kingdom of Christ; they are equivalent to the expressions *the world* and *the church*; the mass of mankind and the people of God; compare 1 Cor. 2: 8. Eph. 2: 2. 2 Cor. 4: 4. Luke 20: 35. Heb. 2: 5. 6: 5. There is, therefore, no necessity for supposing, as is done by many commentators, that the apostle has any special reference, in the use of this word, to the Jewish dispensation; as though his meaning were, 'Be not conformed to the Jewish opinions and forms of worship, but be transformed and accommodated to the new spiritual economy under which ye are placed.' The word (*αἰών*) here used, and the equivalent term (*κόσμος*) commonly translated *world*, are so frequently used for the mass of mankind, considered in opposition to the people of God, that there can be no good reason for departing from the common interpretation, especially as the sense which it affords is so good in itself and so well suited to the context.

By the renewing of your mind. This phrase is intended to be explanatory of the preceding. The transformation to which Christians are exhorted, is not a mere external change, but one which results from a change of heart, an entire alteration of the state of the mind. The word rendered *mind* is used, as it is here, frequently in the New Testament, Rom. 1:

28. Eph. 4: 17, 23. Col. 2: 18, &c., in all these and in similar cases it does not differ from the word *heart*.

That ye may be able to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. The logical relation of this clause to the preceding is doubtful, as the original (*εις τὸ δοκιμάζειν*) admits of its being regarded as expressing either the design or the result of the change just spoken of. Our translators have adopted the former view, 'Ye are renewed, in order that ye may be able to prove, &c.' The other, however, gives an equally good sense, 'Ye are renewed so that ye prove, &c.;' such is the effect of the change in question. The word rendered *to prove* signifies also *to approve*; the sense of this passage, therefore, may be either 'that ye may try or prove what is acceptable to God,' i. e. decide upon or ascertain what is right; or, 'that ye may approve what is good, &c.' The words *good, acceptable* and *perfect*, are by many considered as predicates of the word *will*. As, however, the expression 'acceptable will of God' is unnatural and unusual, the majority of modern commentators, after Erasmus, take them as substantives; 'that ye may approve what is good, acceptable and perfect, viz. the will of God.' The last phrase is then in apposition with the others. The design and result then of that great change of which Paul speaks is, that Christians should know, delight in and practice whatever is good and acceptable to God; compare Eph. 5: 10, 17. Phil. 4: 8.

(3) *For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, &c.* The apostle connects with the general exhortation contained in the preceding verses, and founds upon it an exhortation to special Christian virtues. The first virtue which he enjoins upon believers is modesty or humility. This has reference specially to the officers of the church, or at least to the recipients of spiritual gifts. It is very evident from 1 Cor. 12 and 14, that these gifts were coveted and exercised by many of the early Christians for the purpose of self-exaltation. They, therefore, desired not those which were most useful, but those which were most attractive; and some were puffed up, while others were envious and discontented. This evil the apostle forcibly and beautifully reproveth in the chap-

ters referred to, in the same manner that he does here, and much more at length. He showed his readers that these gifts were all gratuitous, and were, therefore, occasions of gratitude, but not grounds of boasting; they had nothing but what they had received. He reminds them that the design for which these gifts were bestowed, was the edification of the church, and not the exaltation of the receiver; that, however diversified in their nature, they were all manifestations of one and the same Spirit, and were as necessary to a perfect whole as the several members of the body, with their various offices, to a perfect man. Having one Spirit, and constituting one body, any exaltation of one over the other, was as unnatural as the eye or ear disregarding and despising the hand or the foot. As this tendency to abuse their official and spiritual distinctions was not confined to the Corinthian Christians, we find the apostle, in this passage, giving substantially the same instructions to the Romans.

Through the grace given unto me. The word *grace* in this clause is by many understood to mean the apostolic office, which Paul elsewhere speaks of as a great favour;* compare ch. 1: 5. 15: 15. Eph. 2: 2, 8. But this interpretation appears here too limited; the word probably includes all the *favour* of God towards him, not merely in conferring on him the office of an apostle, but in bestowing all the gifts of the Spirit, ordinary and extraordinary, which qualified him for his duties, and gave authority to his instructions.

Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. The word *to think* is an inadequate translation of the Greek (*φρονησῖν*), inasmuch as the latter includes the idea of the exercise of the affections as well as of the intellect; see ch. 8: 5. Col. 3: 2. Phil. 3: 19. *To think of one-self too highly*, is to be puffed up with an idea of our own importance and superiority.

But to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. There is in the first member of this clause a beautiful paronomasia in the original (*φρονησῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονησῖν*), which is lost in a translation. The word ren-

* Tantundem valent ejus verba acsi dixisset: Non loquor a me ipso, sed legatus Dei, quae mihi mandata ille injunxit, ad vos perfero. Gratiā (ut prius) vocat apostolatū, quo Dei bonitatem in eo commendat, ac simul innuat, se non irrupisse propria temeritate, sed Dei vocatione assumptum.—CALVIN.

dered *soberly* properly means *to be of a sane mind*; and then *to be moderate* or *temperate*. Paul speaks of one who over-estimates or praises himself as being beside himself; and of him who is modest and humble as being of a sane mind, i. e. as making a proper estimate of himself. "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause," 2 Cor. 5: 13, i. e. 'If we commend ourselves, it is that God may be honoured; and if we act modestly and abstain from self-commendation, it is that you may be benefited.' *To think soberly*, therefore, is to form and manifest a right estimate of ourselves, and of our gifts. A right estimate can never be other than a very humble one, since, whatever there is of good in us is not of ourselves but of God.

The expression *measure* or *proportion of faith* is variously explained. Faith may be taken in its usual sense, and the meaning of the clause be, 'Let every one think of himself according to the degree of faith or confidence in God which has been imparted to him, and not as though he had more than he really possesses.' Or *faith* may be taken for what is believed, or for knowledge of divine truth, and the sense be, 'according to the degree of knowledge which he has attained.' Or it may be taken for *that which is confided* to any, and be equivalent to *gift*. The sense then is, 'Let every one think of himself according to the nature or character of the gifts which he has received.' This is perhaps the most generally received interpretation, although it is arrived at in different ways; many considering the word faith here as used metonymical for its effects, viz. for the various (*χαρίσματα*) *graces*, ordinary and extraordinary, of which it is the cause. This general sense is well suited to the context, as the following verses, containing a specification of the gifts of prophesying, teaching, ruling, &c., appear to be an amplification of this clause.

(4, 5) *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, &c.* In these verses we have the same comparison that occurs more at length in 1 Cor. 12, and for the same purpose. The object of the apostle is in both cases the same. He designs to show that the diversity of offices and gifts among Christians, so far from being inconsistent with their union as one body in Christ, is necessary to the perfection and usefulness of that body. It would be as

unreasonable for all Christians to have the same gifts, as for all the members of the human frame to have the same office. This comparison is peculiarly beautiful and appropriate; because it not only clearly illustrates the particular point intended, but at the same time brings into view the important truth that the real union of Christians results from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as the union of the several members of the body is the result of their being all animated and actuated by one soul. Nothing can present in a clearer light the duty of Christian fellowship, or the sinfulness of divisions and envyings among the members of Christ's body than the apostle's comparison. 'Believers though many are one body in Christ, and every one* members one of another.'

(6) *Having therefore gifts differing according to the grace given unto us, &c.* In this and the following verses we have the application of the preceding comparison to the special object in view. 'If Christians are all members of the same body, having different offices and gifts, instead of being puffed up one above another, and instead of envying and opposing each other, they should severally discharge their respective duties diligently and humbly for the good of the whole, and not for their own advantage.' It is a common opinion that the apostle, in specifying the various gifts to which he refers, meant to arrange them under the two heads of *prophesying* and *administering*; or that he specifies the duties of two classes of officers, the prophets and deacons (*διάκονοι*). To the former would then belong prophesying, teaching, exhortation; to the latter, ministering, giving, ruling, showing mercy. This view of the passage, which is adopted by De Brais, Koppe and others, requires that the terms prophet and deacon should be taken in their widest sense. Both are indeed frequently used with great latitude; the former being applied to any one who speaks as the mouth of God, or the explainer of his will; and the latter to any ministerial officer in the church, 1 Cor. 3: 5. Eph. 3: 7. Col. 1: 7, 23, &c. Although this interpretation is consistent with the usage of the words, and in some measure simplifies the

* The Greek phrase ὁ καθείς for εἰς ἑκάστος is a solecism, not occurring among the Classics it is said, though it is to be met with in 3 Macc. 5: 34; compare Mark 14: 19. John 8: 9. Rev. 4: 8.

passage, yet it is by no means necessary. There is no appearance of such a systematic arrangement; on the contrary, Paul seems to refer without any order to the various duties which the officers and even private members of the church were called upon to perform. The construction in the original is not entirely regular, and, therefore, has been variously explained. There is no interpretation more natural than that adopted by our translators, who, considering the passage as elliptical, have supplied in the several specifications the phrases which in each case the sense requires.

Having therefore gifts differing according to the grace given unto us, i. e. as there are in the one body various offices and gifts, let every one act in a manner consistent with the nature and design of the particular gift which he has received. *Whether prophecy*, let us prophesy *according to the proportion of faith*. The first gift specified is that of *prophecy*, with regard to the precise nature of which there is no little diversity of opinion. The original and proper meaning of the Hebrew word rendered *prophet* in the Old Testament, is *interpreter*, one who explains or delivers the will of another. And to this idea the Greek term also answers. It matters little whether the will or purpose of God which the prophets were called upon to deliver, had reference to present duty or to future events. They derived their Hebrew name not from predicting what was to come to pass, which was but a small part of their duty, but from being the interpreters of God, men who spoke in his name. We accordingly find the term *prophet* applied to all classes of religious teachers under the old dispensation. Of Abraham it is said, "He is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee and thou shalt live," Gen. 20: 7. The name is often applied to Moses as the great interpreter of the will of God to the Hebrews, Deut. 18: 18; and the writers of the historical books are also constantly so called. The passage in Ex. 7: 1 is peculiarly interesting, as it clearly exhibits the proper meaning of this word. "And the Lord said unto Moses, See I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet," i. e. he shall be thy interpreter. In ch. 4: 16, it is said, "He shall be a mouth to thee;" and of Jeremiah, God says, "Thou shalt be my mouth," Jer. 15: 19; compare Deut. 18: 18. Any one, therefore, who acted as the mouth of

God, no matter what was the nature of the communication, was a prophet. And this is also the sense of the word in the New Testament;* it is applied to any one employed to deliver a divine message, Matt. 10: 41. 13: 57. Luke 4: 24. 7: 26—29, "What went ye out to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger, &c." John 4: 19, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet," i. e. an inspired man. Acts 15: 32, "And Judas and Silas, being prophets, also themselves exhorted the brethren and confirmed them." 1 Cor. 12: 28, "God hath set in the church, first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; &c." 1 Cor. 14: 29—32, "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted. For the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual (inspired), let him acknowledge, &c." From these and numerous similar passages, it appears that the prophets in the Christian church were men who spoke under the immediate influence of the Spirit of God, and delivered some divine communication relating to doctrinal truths, to present duty, to future events, &c., as the case might be.† The point of distinction between them and the apostles, con-

* In common Greek, also, this is the meaning of the word. The *μάντις* was the immediate receiver of the divine influence, and declarer of the oracles, and the *προφήτης* was the interpreter. Hence *μουσῶν προφήται* the interpreters of the *Muses*. These two words, however, *μάντις* and *προφήτης*, are frequently used indiscriminately, the latter being applied to any person who spoke under a divine influence. As poets were supposed to speak under a certain kind of inspiration, they too were called prophets. Paul used the word in this sense when he wrote to Titus, Tit. 1: 12, "A prophet of their own said, the Cretans are always liars, &c."

† *Προφήτης*, vates, i. e. vir divinus, qui afflatu divino gaudet et cui numen regegit, quae antea incognita erant, maxime ad religionem pertinentia.—WÄHL.

Sunt qui *prophetiam* intelligunt divinandi facultatem, quae circa evangelium primordia in ecclesia vigeat. . . . Ego vero eos sequi malo, qui latius extendunt hoc nomen ad peculiare revelationis donum, ut quis dexte ac perite in voluntate Dei enarranda munus interpretis obeat.—CALVIN.

On the nature of the office of prophet, see KOPPE'S Excursus III. appended to his Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians; and WINER'S Realwörterbuch, under the word *Propheten*. Both these treatises are rationalistic, yet both contain the materials for a fair examination of the subject.

sidered as religious teachers, appears to have been that the inspiration of the apostles was abiding, they were the infallible and authoritative messengers of Christ; whereas the inspiration of the prophets was occasional and transient. The latter differed from the teachers (*διδάσκαλοι*), inasmuch as these were not necessarily inspired, but taught to others what they themselves had learned from the scriptures or from inspired men.

Agreeably to this view of the office of the prophets, we find the sacred writers speaking of the gift of prophecy as consisting in the communication of divine truth by the Spirit of God, intended for instruction, exhortation, or consolation. "Though I have *the gift* of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge," 1 Cor. 12: 2; "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men *to* edification, and exhortation, and comfort," 1 Cor. 14: 4; "If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all, &c." v. 24.

The gift of which Paul here speaks, is not, therefore, the faculty of predicting future events, but that of immediate occasional inspiration, leading the recipient to deliver, as the mouth of God, the particular communication which he had received, whether designed for instruction, exhortation, or comfort. The apostle required that those who enjoyed this gift should exercise it *according to the proportion of faith*. This clause admits of different interpretations. The word (*ἀναλογία*) rendered *proportion*, may mean either *proportion*, or *measure, rule, standard*. Classic usage is rather in favour of the former of these meanings, &c.* The latter, however, is necessarily included in the former; and the word is defined by Hesychius, *measure, canon or rule*. The choice between the two meanings of the word must depend on the sense given to the word *faith*, and on the context. *Faith* may here mean inward confidence or belief; or it may mean the gift received, i. e. *that which is confided* (τὸ πεπιστευμένον); or, finally, that which is believed, i. e. truths divinely revealed. If the first of these three senses be adopted, the passage means, 'Let him prophesy according to his internal convictions; that is, he

* PASSOW defines it, Gleichheit, Uebereinstimmung, richtiges Verhältniss, Proportion.

must not exceed in his communication what he honestly believes to have been divinely communicated, or allow himself to be carried away by enthusiasm, to deliver, as from God, what is really nothing but his own thoughts.' If the second sense (of *πίστις*) be preferred, the clause then means, 'Let him prophesy according to the proportion of the gifts which he has received;*' i. e. let every one speak according to the degree and nature of the divine influence, or the particular revelation imparted to him.' If, however, *faith* here means, as it does in so many other places, the *object of faith* or *the truths to be believed*; (see Gal. 1: 23. 3: 23, 25. 6: 10. Eph. 4: 5. 2 Thess. 3: 5, &c. &c.) then *according to the analogy* signifies *agreeably to the rule or standard*, and the apostle's direction to the prophet is, that in all their communications they are to conform to the rule of faith, and not contradict those doctrines which had been delivered by men whose inspiration had been established by indubitable evidence. In favour of this view of the passage is the frequent use of the word *faith* in the sense thus assigned to it. 2. The fact that similar directions respecting those who consider themselves prophets or inspired persons occur in other passages. Thus Paul says, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord;" 1 Cor. 14: 37. This was the standard; and no man had a right to consider himself inspired, or to require others so to regard him, who did not conform himself to the instructions of men whose inspiration was beyond doubt. Thus too the apostle John commands Christians, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world," 1 John 4: 1. And the standard by which these prophets were to be tried, he gives in v. 6, "We are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us; and he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." It was obviously necessary that Christians, in the age of immediate inspiration, should have some means of deciding between those who were really under the influence of the Spirit of God, and those who were either enthusiasts or deceivers. And the test to which the apostles directed them

* Pro ratione ejus quod ipsi creditum et manifestatum est.—WETSTEIN.

was rational and easily applied. There were some men to whose divine mission and authority God had borne abundant testimony by "signs and wonder, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit." As God cannot contradict himself, it follows that any thing inconsistent with the teachings of these men, though proceeding from one claiming to be a prophet, must be false, and the pretension of its author to inspiration unfounded. Accordingly, the apostle directed that while one prophet spoke, the others were to judge, i. e. decide whether he spoke according to the analogy of faith; and whether his inspiration was real, imaginary or feigned. 3. This interpretation is also perfectly suitable to the context. Paul, after giving the general direction contained in the preceding verses, as to the light in which the gifts of the Spirit were to be viewed, and the manner in which they were to be used, in this and the following verses, gives special directions with respect to particular gifts. Those who thought themselves prophets should be careful to speak nothing but truth, to conform to the standard; those who ministered should devote themselves to their appropriate duties, &c.* Although this interpretation has so much to recommend it, and is on the whole to be preferred, still the sense afforded by the second of the three views of the passage mentioned above, is also good and consistent with the context. *Faith*, however, must then be taken in the very unusual sense of "the gift or grace bestowed," *quod creditum est*; a sense which even v. 3 can hardly authorize.

(7) *Or ministry*, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching. The terms *minister* and *ministry* (διάκονος and διακονία, *deacon* and *deaconship*), are used in the

* Neque mihi etiam satis solida videtur ratio quae objicitur, frustra id dicturum fuisse apostolum iis, qui per Spiritum Dei non poterant Christum dicere anathema. Nam quum alibi (1 Cor. 14 : 32), testetur, Spiritum prophetae prophetis esse subiectum, et jubeat priorem, qui loquebatur, tacere, si cui sedenti revelatum fuerit; eadem ratione admonere hic potest eos, qui in ecclesia prophetant, quo suas prophetias ad fidei normam conforment, necubi aberrent a linea. *Fidei* nomine significat prima religionis axiomata, quibus quaecunque doctrina deprehensa fuerit non respondere, falsitatis sic convincetur.—CALVIN.

Es kann indess auch πίστις objective stehen von der christlichen Lehre, von welcher die προφητεία nicht abweichen dürfe. Aehnlich ermahnt der Apostel die Thessalonicher, die προφητείας nicht gering zu schätzen, indess doch zu prüfen, was daran gut sei und nur dies zu behalten.—THOLUCK.

New Testament both in a general and a restricted sense. In the former, they are employed in reference to all classes of ecclesiastical officers, even the apostles; see 1 Cor. 3: 5. 2 Cor. 6: 4. Eph. 3: 7. 6: 21. Col. 1: 7, 23. 1 Tim. 4: 6. Acts 1: 17, 25. 20: 24. Rom. 11: 13. 1 Cor. 12: 5. 2 Cor. 4: 1, &c. &c. In the latter, they are used in reference to a particular class of officers, to whom were committed the management of the external affairs of the church, the care of the poor, attention to the sick, &c.; see Acts 6: 1—3. Phil. 1: 1. 1 Tim. 3: 8—13, &c. It is doubtful in which of these senses the latter of the above mentioned words is here used by the apostle, most probably in the restricted sense. The apostle exhorts different classes of officers to attend to their own peculiar vocation, and to exercise their own gifts, without intruding into the sphere of others, or envying their superior endowments. The deacons, therefore, were to attend to the poor and the sick, and not attempt to exercise the office of teachers.

He that teacheth, on teaching. Teachers are elsewhere expressly distinguished from *prophets*, 1 Cor. 12: 28, 29, "God hath set some in the church; first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" And in this passage they are not to be confounded, nor is teaching to be regarded, in this place, as one part of prophesying. As remarked above on v. 6, the teachers seem to be distinguished from prophets, inasmuch as the former were not necessarily inspired, and were a regular and permanent class of officers. Those who had the gift of prophecy were to exercise it aright; those who were called to the office of deacons were to devote themselves to their appropriate duties; and those who had the gift of teaching were to teach.

(8) *He that exhorteth, on exhortation.* The word (*παρακαλέω*) here used means to *invite, exhort* and to *comfort*. Our translators have probably selected the most appropriate sense. There was probably no distinct class of officers called exhorters, as distinguished from teachers, but as the apostle is speaking of gifts as well as offices (both are included in the word *χαρίσματα*), his direction is, that he who had the gift of teaching should teach, and that he who had a gift for exhortation should be content to exhort.

He that giveth, let him do it *with simplicity*; *he that ruleth, with diligence*; *he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness*. These directions have reference to the manner in which the duties of church officers and of private Christians ought to be performed. In this connexion, the former no doubt are principally, though not exclusively intended. *He that giveth, with simplicity*. This direction, considered in reference to the deacons, whom, no doubt, Paul had principally in view, contemplates their duty of *imparting* or *distributing* to the necessity of the saints. This duty they are required to perform with *simplicity*, i. e. with purity of motive, free from all improper designs. This same word is rendered *singleness of heart* in Eph. 6: 5. Col. 3: 22, and occurs, in the same sense, in the phrase "simplicity and godly sincerity," 2 Cor. 1: 12. Considered in reference to private Christians, this clause may be rendered *he that giveth, with liberality*; see 2 Cor. 8: 2. 9: 11, 13.

He that ruleth, with diligence. Here again the right discharge of ecclesiastical duties is principally intended; 1 Thess. 5: 12, "We beseech you brethren to know (esteem, love) them that are over you in the Lord;" 1 Tim. 5: 17, "The elders that rule well." Some of the presbyters were teachers and others rulers, according to their gifts. Those who were called to exercise the office of ruler were required to do it (*ἐν σπουδῇ*) with *diligence*, i. e. with attention and zeal. This is opposed to inertness and carelessness. The government of the church, in correcting abuses, preventing disorders, and in the administration of discipline, calls for constant vigilance and fidelity.

He that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. As the former direction (he that giveth, with simplicity) had reference to the care of the poor, this relates to the care of the sick and afflicted. These were the two great departments of the deacons' duties. The former was to be discharged with honesty, this with cheerfulness; not as a matter of constraint, but with alacrity and kindness. On this the value of any service rendered to the children of sorrow mainly depends.

Doctrines.

1. The great principle that truth is in order to holiness, which is so frequently taught in the scriptures, is plainly im-

plied in this passage. All the doctrines of justification, grace, election and final salvation, taught in the preceding part of the epistle, are made the foundation for the practical duties enjoined in this, v. 1.

2. The first great duty of redeemed sinners is the dedication of themselves to God. This consecration must be entire, of the body as well as the soul; it must be constant and according to his will, v. 1.

3. Regeneration is a renewing of the mind, evincing itself in a transformation of the whole character, and leading to the knowledge and approbation of whatever is acceptable to God, v. 2.

4. God is the giver of all good, of honours and offices as well of talents and graces; and in the distribution of his favours he renders to every man according to his own will, vs. 3, 6.

5. Christians are one body in Christ. This unity is not only consistent with great diversity of gifts, but necessarily implies it; as the body is one from the union of various members designed for the performance of various functions, vs. 4, 5.

6. The different offices of the church are of divine appointment, and are designed for the benefit of the whole body, and not for the advantage of those who hold them, vs. 6—8.

Remarks.

1. The effect produced upon us by the mercies of God, in redemption, and in his providence, affords an excellent criterion of character. If they lead us to devote ourselves to his service, they produce the result for which they were designed, and we may conclude that we are of the number of his children. But if they produce indifference to duty, and cherish the idea that we are the special favourites of heaven, or that we may sin with impunity, it is an evidence that our hearts are not right in the sight of God, v. 1.

2. While Christians should remember that the service which they are called upon to render is a rational service, pertaining to the soul, they should not suppose that it consists merely in the secret exercises of the heart. The whole man and the whole life must be actively and constantly devoted to God, v. 1.

3. Those professors of religion who are conformed to the world cannot have experienced that renewing of the mind, which produces a transformation of character, v. 2.

4. Self-conceit and ambition are the besetting sins of men entrusted with power, or highly gifted in any respect, as discontent and envy are those to which persons of inferior station or gifts are most exposed. These evil feeling, so offensive to God, would be subdued if men would properly lay to heart that peculiar advantages are bestowed according to the divine pleasure; that they are designed to advance the glory of God, and good of his church, and not the honour or emolument of those that receive them; and that very frequently those which are least attractive in the sight of men, are the most important in the sight of God. It is here as in the human frame; not the most comely parts are the most valuable, but those which are the least so. The vital parts of our system never attract the praise of men, and are never the source of vanity or pride, v. 3.

5. As Christians are one body in Christ, they should feel their mutual dependence and their common interest in their head, from whom life, intelligence, enjoyment and every good comes. They should sympathize in each other's joys and sorrows; the hand should not envy the eye, nor the eye despise the foot. How can they, who are destitute of this common feeling with their fellow Christians, be partakers of that Spirit by which true believers are constituted really and not merely nominally one? vs. 4, 5.

6. Real honour consists in doing well what God calls us to do, and not in the possession of high offices or great talents, vs. 6—8.

7. No man's usefulness is increased by going out of his sphere. It is a great mistake to suppose because one possession or employment may, in itself considered, afford better opportunity of doing good than another, that, therefore, any or every man would be more useful in the one than in the other. The highest improvement of the individual, and the greatest good of the whole, are best secured by each being and doing what God sees fit to determine. If all were the same member, where were the body? 'God is not the author of confusion, but of order, in all the churches of the saints,' vs. 6—8.

8. No amount of learning, no superiority of talent, nor even the pretension to inspiration, can justify a departure from the analogy of faith, i. e. from the truths taught by men to whose inspiration God has borne witness. All teachers must be

brought to this standard; and even if an angel from heaven should preach in contradiction to the scriptures, he should be regarded as anathema, Gal. 1: 8. It is a matter of constant gratitude that we have such a standard whereby to try the spirits whether they be of God. Ministers of Christ should see to it, that they do not incur the curse which Paul denounces on those who preach another gospel, v. 6.

9. Private Christians, but especially ecclesiastical officers, are required to discharge their respective duties with singleness of heart, and in the exercise of those virtues which the peculiar nature of their vocation may demand, vs. 6—8.

CHAP. 12: 9—21.

Analysis.

HAVING treated of those duties which belong more especially to the officers of the church, the apostle exhorts his readers generally to the exercise of various Christian virtues. There is no logical arrangement observed in this part of the chapter, except that the general exhortation to love precedes the precepts which relate to those exercises which are, for the most part, but different manifestations of this primary grace. The love of the Christian must be sincere, and lead to the avoiding of evil and the pursuit of good, v. 9. It must produce brotherly affection and humility or kindness, v. 10; diligence and devotion, v. 11; resignation, patience and prayer, v. 12; charity and hospitality, v. 13; forgiveness of injuries, v. 14; sympathy with the joys and sorrows of others, v. 15; concord and lowliness of mind, v. 16; and a constant endeavour to return good for evil, vs. 17—21.

Commentary.

(9) *Let love be without dissimulation, i. e. sincere, not hypocritical, and not consisting in words merely.* The love here intended, is probably love to all men, and not to Christians exclusively, as in v. 10, *brotherly affection* is particularly specified. Much less is love to God the idea meant to be expressed.

Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. The words rendered *to abhor* (ἀποστρέφω) and *to cleave to*

(καλλάομαι) are peculiarly forcible, and express the highest degree of hatred on the one hand, and of persevering devotion on the other. The latter word, in the active form, properly means *to glue*, and, in the middle, *to attach one's self to any person or thing*. The words *evil* and *good*, in this passage, may be understood of moral good and evil; and the exhortation be considered as a general direction to hate the one and love the other. But the great majority of commentators, out of regard to the context, take the terms in a restricted sense, making the former mean *injurious*, and the latter *kind*.* The sense of the whole verse would then be, 'Let love be sincere; strive to avoid what is injurious to others, and earnestly endeavour to do whatever is kind and useful.' As the words themselves admit of either of these interpretations, the choice between them depends upon the context. The latter is, on this ground, perhaps, to be preferred.

(10) *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.* 'As to brotherly love, be kindly affectioned one towards another.' This exhortation seems to have special reference to Christians. The word (φιλόστοργος) used by the apostle, expresses properly the strong natural affection between parents and children (στοργή), but is applied also to tender affection of any kind. Here, no doubt, the idea is, that Christians should love each other with the same sincerity and tenderness as if they were the nearest relatives.

In honour preferring one another. This passage, thus translated, cannot be understood otherwise than as an exhortation to humility; and such is the interpretation generally given to it. But the word (προησίστασθαι) rendered *to prefer* never occurs in this sense elsewhere. It means properly *to go before, to lead*, and then, figuratively, *to set an example*. And the word translated *honour* may mean *deference, respect*, and even *kindness (observantia et omnia humanitatis officia quae aliis debemus*. Schleusner). The sense of the clause may then be, 'as to respect and kindness (τιμῆ) going before each other, or setting an example one to another.' This interpretation, which is given by most of the recent commentators, is not only

* Voces boni et mali non habent generalem significatum; sed pro malitiosa iniquitate, qua nocetur hominibus, malum posuit; bonum autem pro benignitate, qua ipsi juvantur.—CALVIN.

better suited to the meaning of the words, but also to the context. The idea is, that Christians should not only love one another, but endeavour to excel each other in all acts of mutual respect and kindness.*

(11) *Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.* The love to which the apostle exhorts his readers is not inactive or cold; on the contrary, it manifests itself in diligence, zeal and devotion to God. The word rendered *business* (σπουδή) properly means *haste, zeal, activity*. The exhortation has not the reference which our version would naturally suggest, viz. to the active performance of our several vocations; it refers rather to religious activity. ‘As to activity or diligence (i. e. what relates to this point) do not grow weary or be indolent; on the contrary, be fervent in spirit.’ The word *spirit* is by many understood of the Holy Spirit; it most naturally refers to the mind; compare Acts 13: 25, where it is said of Apollos “being fervent in spirit (i. e. zealous), he spake and taught diligently.” This clause, therefore, stands in opposition to the preceding. Instead of being inactive, we should be zealous.

Serving the Lord, i. e. doing service to the Lord, influenced in our activity and zeal by a desire to serve Christ.† This member of the sentence thus understood, describes the motive from which zeal and diligence should proceed. Compare Eph. 6: 5—8, especially the expressions *as unto Christ, as the servants of Christ, as to the Lord, &c.*; and Col. 3: 22, 23. Instead of *serving the Lord*, there is another reading, according to which the passage must be rendered *serving the time*‡ (tempori servientes. Calvin), i. e. making the most of every opportunity (see Eph. 5: 16); or, as others understand it, ‘bear-

* The Vulgate translates the clause thus, *Honore invicem praevenientes*. JAS-
PIS, *Humanitate mutua sese officiis debitis praestandis alter alterum vincit*. Much
to the same effect, FLATT, THOLUCK and others.

† *Domino servire omnia quidam officia complectitur: at hic non docet Paulus, quid sit agendum, sed quomodo, ex animo, sincere, aperte, candide, tanquam Domino Jesu Christo, qui omnia videt, qui renes et corda scrutatur, servientes.*

‡ Καίρω instead of κυρίω is read only in the MSS. D. F. G. All the other
MSS. and the Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Vulgate and Syriac versions have κυρίω.
Mill and Griesbach prefer the former; but Wetstein, Bengel, Knapp, Lachmann,
the latter. This diversity of reading is not surprizing, as ΚΩ was a frequent con-
traction both for κυρίω and καιρω.

ing what you are called to bear, submit to circumstances.' But the expression *to be time servers* (*temporibus servire*) is generally used in a bad sense. The external authority is greatly in favour of the reading on which our version (*serving the Lord*) is founded, and it gives a sense much more suitable to the context.

(12) *Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.* These exhortations refer to nearly related duties; Christians are to be joyful, patient and prayerful. However adverse their circumstances, hope, patience and prayer are not only duties, but the richest sources of consolation and support. 'Rejoicing *on account* of hope, or in the joyful expectation of future good.' This hope of salvation is the most effectual means of producing patience under present afflictions; for if we feel "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," it will not be difficult to bear them patiently. Intercourse with God, however, is necessary to the exercise of this and all other virtues, and therefore the apostle immediately adds *continuing instant in prayer*. The original could hardly be better translated; as the Greek term (*προσκαρτερέω, intentus sum rei*) expresses the idea of perseverance and ardour in the prosecution of any object. There are no attributes of acceptable prayer more frequently presented in the scriptures than those here referred to, viz. perseverance and fervour, which, from their nature, imply faith in the ability and willingness of God to grant us needed good, Acts 1: 14. 6: 4. Eph. 6: 18, &c. &c.

(13) *Distributing to the necessity* of saints; given to hospitality.* These virtues are the immediate fruits of the love enjoined in vs. 9, 10. The word rendered to distribute (*κοινωνέω*) signifies, intransitively, *to become a partaker with*; and, transitively, *to cause others to partake with us, to communicate to*. It is commonly followed by a dative of the person to whom the communication is made, Gal. 6: 6. In this case the construction may be the same as in the preceding verses, 'as to

* Instead of *χρησίων*, D. F. G. and some Latin MSS. and fathers read *μνησίων*, which MILL prefers, but it can hardly afford a good sense; 'contributing to the remembrance of the saints' is an unexampled phrase to signify 'be mindful of them.'

the necessity of the saints be communicative;' or '*give to the necessity of the saints, sharing with them, i. e. communicating to them;*' see Wahl, p. 845. As intimately connected with this injunction, the apostle adds *given to hospitality*, as our translators aptly render the strong expression (διδωκοντες) of the original. The value which the early Christians placed upon the virtue of hospitality is plain from Paul's enumerating it among the requisite qualifications of a bishop, Tit. 1: 8. During times of persecution, and before the general institution of houses of entertainment, there was peculiar necessity for Christians to entertain strangers. As such houses are still rarely to be met with in the east, this duty continues to be there regarded as one of the most sacred character.

(14) *Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not.* The exercise of love, and the discharge of the duties of benevolence, are not to be confined to the *saints* or people of God, but the same spirit is to be manifested towards our enemies. The word (ευλογεω) rendered *to bless*, signifies both *to pray for good to any one* and *to do good*; here, from the context, the former meaning is to be preferred, as it is opposed to *cursing*, which signifies *to imprecate evil on any one*. The command, therefore, is that, so far from wishing or praying that evil may overtake our persecutors and enemies, we must sincerely desire and pray for their good. It is not sufficient to avoid returning evil for evil, nor even to banish vindictive feelings; we must be able sincerely to desire their happiness. How hard this is for corrupt human nature, every one who is acquainted with his own heart well knows.* Yet this is the standard of Christian temper and character exhibited in the scriptures, Matt. 5: 44.

* Ardua res est, fateor, et naturae hominis penitus contraria; sed nihil tam arduum, quod non virtute Dei superetur, quae nobis nunquam deerit, modo ne ipsam invocare negligamus. Et quanquam vix unum reperias qui tantos in lege Dei progressus fecerit, ut praeceptum istud impleat; nemo tamen filium Dei jactare se potest, aut Christiani nomine gloriari, qui non animum istum ex parte induerit, et cum affectu adverso quotidie pugnet. Dixi hoc esse difficilius quam remittere vindictam, ubi quis laesus fuerit. Quidam enim licet manus contineant, neque etiam agentur nocendi libidine, cuperent tamen aliunde hostibus suis accidere cladem vel damnum. Deus autem verbo suo non tantum manus coercet a maleficiis, sed amarulentos quoque affectus in animis domat; neque id modo, sed etiam vult de eorum salute esse sollicitos qui nos injuste vexando sibi exitium accersunt.—CALVIN.

(15) *Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.* Love produces not only the forgiveness of enemies, but a general sympathy in the joys and sorrows of our fellow men, and especially of our fellow Christians. The disposition here enjoined is the very opposite of a selfish indifference to any interests but our own. The gospel requires that we should feel and act under the impression that all men are brethren, that we have a common nature, a common Father, and a common destiny. How lovely is genuine sympathy! How much like Christ is the man who feels the sorrows and joys of others, as though they were his own!

(16) *Be of the same mind one towards another; mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.* The phrase (τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν) used by the apostle expresses the general idea of *concord, unanimity*; whether of opinion or feeling depends on the context; see 2 Cor. 13: 11. Phil. 2: 2. Rom. 15: 5. Here the latter idea is the prominent one. 'Be of the same mind,' i. e. be united in feeling, interests and object, let there be no discord or disagreement. This idea is then amplified in the following clauses; do not be aspiring, but be humble. Ambition and contempt for lowly persons or pursuits, are the states of mind most inconsistent with that union of heart by which all Christians should be united.* Erasmus and others understand this clause to mean, 'Think of others as well as you do of yourselves,' (*nemo putet alium se minorem*). But this gives too restricted a sense, and is no better suited to the context than the common interpretation given above. The command is, that we should be united; feeling towards others as we would have them feel towards us.

Mind not high things, i. e. do not aspire after them, do not desire and seek them; see the use of the Greek word here employed in ch. 8: 5. Col. 3: 2, (τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε). *But condescend to men of low estate.* The general idea expressed by these two clauses is obviously this, 'Be not high-minded, but humble.' The precise meaning of the latter, however, is a matter of much doubt. The word (συναγάγω) rendered *condescend*

* Quo circa illud τὸ αὐτὸ non intelligo *idem* quod alii de nobis sentiunt, sed *idem* quod nos de nobis ipsi sentimus, vel quod alios de nobis sentire postulamur.—
DE BRAS.

properly means, in the passive or middle voice, *to allow one's self to be carried along with others*, i. e. influenced by them, as in Gal. 2: 13, "Insomuch as Barnabas also was (allowed himself to be) carried away with their dissimulation." And 2 Peter 3: 7, "Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." Many retain this sense of the word here, and consider the exhortation to be, 'not to withdraw themselves from their unfortunate brethren, but to allow themselves to be carried along with them before the judgment seat or into their various trials.' But this seems to be pressing the meaning of the word, in this case, too far, as this interpretation is not suitable to the context. Others, therefore, understand the word in an unusual sense, it is true, but still in one nearly allied to the other meaning, viz. *to associate with*: 'Do not be aspiring, but associate with the lowly.' This gives a perfectly good sense, and one consistent with the context. The Greek commentators and our translators express much the same idea, 'Do not be high-minded, but condescend to the lowly,' i. e. sympathize with them, put yourselves on a par with them.* The words (τοῖς ταπεινοῖς) rendered *to men of low estate*, admit of being taken as neuter, and translated *lowly things*. This would suit well the former part of the sentence, 'Mind not high things, but condescend to humble affairs, i. e. be humble.' So Calvin† and many others. But this interpretation is not consistent with the usage of the Greek terms. We can say in English, 'condescend to humble things,' but the original word is never used in the sense of following after, or practising any thing good. The interpretation adopted by our translators is therefore, on the whole, to be preferred. 'Do not aspire after high things, but condescend to, and associate with the humble.'

Be not wise in your own conceits. This precept is intimately connected with the preceding, since ambition and con-

* Demitte animos vestros, atque eo loco vos esse existimate, quo sunt, qui tanquam humiles contemnuntur.—WETSTEIN.

† Non arroganter de vobis sentientes, sed humilibus vos accommodantes. Vocem *humilibus* in neutro genere accipio, ut antithesis ita compleatur. Hic ergo damnatur ambitio, et quæ sub magnanimitatis nomine se insinuat animi elatio: siquidem præcipua fidelium virtus moderatio est, vel potius submissio, quæ honorem semper malit aliis cedere quam præripere.

tempt of others generally arise from overweening ideas of our own persons and attainments. No species of pride is more insidious or more injurious than the pride of intellect, or a fancied superiority to those around us, which leads to a contempt of their opinions, and a confident reliance upon ourselves. The temper which the gospel requires is that of a little child, docile, diffident and humble; see ch. 11: 25. Prov. 3: 7. Is. 7: 21.

(17) *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.* Paul having, in the preceding verses, enjoined the duties of love, condescension and kindness towards all men, comes, in this and the following passages, to forbid the indulgence of a contrary disposition, especially of a spirit of retaliation and revenge. The general direction in the first clause is, not to retaliate; which is but a lower exercise of the virtue afterward enjoined in the command to “overcome evil with good.”

Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Our translation of this clause is not very happy, as it suggests an idea foreign to the meaning of the original. Paul does not mean to direct us to make provision for ourselves or families in an honest manner, which is probably the sense commonly attached to the passage by the English reader, but to act in such a manner as to command the confidence and good opinion of men. In this view, the connexion of this with the preceding member of the verse is obvious. ‘We must not recompense evil for evil, but act in such a way as to commend ourselves to the conscience of all men.’ There should not, therefore, be a period after the word *evil*, since this clause assigns a motive for the discharge of the duty enjoined in the first. The word (*προνοήσαι*) rendered *to provide*, signifies also *to attend to, to care for*.* The sense then is, ‘Do not resent injuries, having regard to the good opinion of men,’ i. e. let a regard to the honour of religion and your own character prevent the returning of evil for evil. Thus Paul (2 Cor. 8: 20, 21) says of himself, that he wished others to be associated with him in the distribution of the alms of the church, “having regard for what was right (*προνοούμενοι*

* Προνοήσαι *operam do, ut καλὰ ἐνώπιόν τινος*, i. e. iis, quae honesta sunt iudice aliquo, i. e. operam dare rebus, quae placent alicui et gratiam ejus conciliant. —WÄHL.

καλά), not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.”*

(18) *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* The retaliation of injuries necessarily leads to contention and strife, while peace is the natural result of a forgiving disposition. The command in this verse, therefore, is naturally connected with that contained in v. 17. So far from resenting every offence, we should do all we can to live at peace with all men. This, however, is not always in our own power, and, therefore, the apostle says, *as much as lieth in you*, i. e. as far as it depends on you, let peace be cultivated. This Paul considers, however, as a result not always to be attained, for he says, *if it be possible* live peaceably with all men. From the wickedness of others this is often impossible; and Paul's own example shows that he was far from thinking that either truth or principle was to be sacrificed for the preservation of peace. His whole life was an active and ardent contention against error and sin. The precept, however, is plain, and the duty important. As far as it can be done consistently with higher obligations and more important interests, we must endeavour to promote peace, and for this end avoid giving offence and avenging injuries.

(19) *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather give place unto wrath, &c.* This is a repetition and amplification of the previous injunction, not to recompense evil for evil. There are three interpretations of the phrase *give place unto wrath* which deserve to be mentioned. According to the first, the wrath here intended is that of the injured party, and *to give place to* is made to signify, to allow it to pass, i. e.

* Summa est, dandum sedulo esse operam, ut nostra integritate omnes aedificentur. Ut enim necessaria est nobis conscientiae innocentia coram Deo; ita famae integritas apud homines non est negligenda. Nam si Deum in bonis nostris operibus glorificari convenit, tantumdem decedit ejus gloriae, ubi nihil laude dignum in nobis homines conspiciunt.—CALVIN.

† Der Christ soll nicht Anstoss suchen, er soll nicht durch das, was nicht aus dem christlichen Geist gekommen ist, Anstoss veranlassen. Daher spricht der Erlöser den μακαρισμός nur über diejenigen, die um seines Namens willen verfolgt werden. ‘The Christian should not seek offence, nor should he occasion it by any thing which does not proceed from a Christian spirit. The Redeemer, therefore, pronounces a blessing only upon those who are persecuted for his sake.’—THOLUCK.

tions in plainer and more general terms.* The sentiment which the verse thus explained expresses, is also more in harmony with the spirit of the gospel.

(21) *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* It is only by disconnecting this verse from the preceding, and considering it as nearly independent of it, that any plausibility can be given to the first interpretation mentioned above of v. 20. That it is not thus independent of it almost every reader must feel. 'We are not to conquer evil by evil, but to treat our enemies with kindness. Thus we shall most effectually subdue them. Do not therefore allow yourself to be overcome of evil (i. e. to be provoked to the indulgence of a spirit of retaliation), but overcome evil with good, subdue your enemies by kindness, not by injuries.†

Doctrines

1. Love is the fulfilling of the law; it leads to the avoiding of every thing injurious to our neighbour, and to sedulous attention to every thing adapted to promote his welfare, v. 9.

2. The relation in which Christians stand to each other is that of members of the same family. As, however, it is not a relation constituted by birth, nor secured by the adoption of a name, there is no evidence of its existence but that which con-

* *Vincere dulce et praeclarum est.* Optimam autem vincendi rationem sapientissime docet Salomo (Prov. 25 : 21) jubens nos esurientibus inimicis cibum, sitientibus potum praebere : quia beneficiis eos devincientes fortius superabimus, quam qui hostem a vallo et moenibus flammis superjectis arcent et repellunt.—*DE BRAIS.*

Among the numerous striking classical illustrations of the sentiment of this verse quoted by WETSTEIN, are the following. *Justinus*, XI. 12, 8, Tunc Darius se ratus vere victum, cum post praelia etiam beneficiis ab hoste superaretur. *Caesar* ap. Cic. ad Atticum, IX. 8, Haec nova sit ratio vincendi, ut misericordia nos muniamus, id quemadmodum fieri possit, nonnulla mi in mentem veniunt, et multa reperiri possunt. *Seneca* de Beneficiis, VII. 31, Vincit malos pertinax bonitas, nec quisquam tam duri infestique adversus diligenda animi est, ut etiam vi victus bonos non amet. 32, Ingratus est—huic ipsi beneficium dabo iterum, et tanquam bonus agricola cura cultuque sterilitatem soli vincam. *De Ira*, II. 32, Non enim ut in beneficiis honestum est merita meritis repensare, ita injurias injuriis; illic vinci turpe est, hic vincere.

† Hic nobis omnino certamen est cum perversitate; nam eam si retaliare conamur, confitemur nos ab ea victos: contra si bonum pro malo reddimus, eo facto prodimus invictam animi constantiam. Et sane hoc est pulcherrimum victoriae genus, &c.—*CALVIN.*

sists in the exercise of that 'brotherly affection' (that spiritual *σρογγή*) which brethren in Christ feel for each other, v. 10.

3. Religion is the soul of morality, without which it is but a lovely corpse. Our moral duties we must perform as "serving the Lord." The religious affections and emotions do not supersede those of a simply benevolent or social character, but mingle with them, and elevate all social and relative duties into acts of religion and genuine morality, v. 11.

4. The source of our life is in God; without intercourse with him therefore we cannot derive those supplies of grace which are requisite to preserve the spirit of piety in our hearts, and to send a vital influence through the various duties and avocations of life. Hence the absolute necessity of being "instant in prayer," v. 12.

5. God has made of one blood all men that dwell upon the face of the earth. There is in this fact of a common origin and the possession of a common nature a sufficient ground for the inculcation of an universal sympathy with all our fellow men. As he is no true Christian who is destitute of a genuine sympathy for his fellow Christians, so he is very far from being a man such as God approves, who does not "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep," v. 15.

6. A wrong estimate of ourselves is a fruitful source of evil. Viewed in relation to God, and in our own absolute insignificance, we have little reason to be wise or important in our own conceits. A proper self-knowledge will preserve us from pride, ambition, and contempt of others, v. 16.

7. Abstaining from evil is but one half of duty. It is not enough to avoid imprecating evil upon our enemies; we must sincerely desire and pray for their welfare. Nor is it sufficient not to recompense evil for evil, we must return good for evil, vs. 17—21.

8. The prerogatives of judgment and vengeance belong to God, we have no right therefore to arrogate them to ourselves, except in those cases in which, for his glory and the good of society, he has given us authority. All condemnation of others for self-gratification, and all private revenge is inconsistent with the gospel, vs. 11—21.

Remarks.

1. Christians should never forget that faith without works is dead. It is not more important to believe what God has revealed, than to do what he has commanded. A faith therefore which does not produce love, kindness, sympathy, humility, the forgiveness of injuries, &c. can do us little good, vs. 9—21.

2. It is peculiarly characteristic of the spirit of the gospel that it turns the heart towards others, and away from our own interests. Self is not the Christian's centre; men are loved because they are men, Christians because they are Christians; the former with sincere sympathy and benevolence, the latter with brotherly affection. The happiness and feelings of others, the gospel teaches us to consult in small, as well as in great matters, anticipating each other in all acts of kindness and attention, vs. 9—13.

3. The benevolence of the gospel is active and religious; it leads to constant efforts, and is imbued with a spirit of piety, v. 11.

4. We must remember that without Christ we can do nothing; that it is not we that live, but Christ that liveth in us. If, therefore, we attempt to discharge the duties here enjoined apart from him, we shall be as a branch severed from the vine; and unless we are "instant in prayer," this union with Christ cannot be kept up, v. 12.

5. Alms-giving and hospitality, in various ages of the church, have been unduly exalted, as though they were the whole of benevolence, and the greater part of piety. While we should avoid this extreme, we should remember that we are stewards of God, and that 'Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, hath not the love of God dwelling in him,' v. 13. 1 John 3: 17.

6. One of the most beautiful exhibitions of the character of our Saviour was afforded by his conduct under persecution. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter;" "when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not." Even martyrs dying for the truth have not always been able to avoid the prediction of evil to their persecutors; so much easier is it to abstain from recompensing evil for evil, than

really to love and pray for the good of our enemies. This, however, is Christian duty, such is the spirit of the gospel. Just so far, therefore, as we find our hearts indisposed to bless those who curse us, or inclined to indulge even a secret satisfaction when evil comes upon them, are we unchristian in our temper, vs. 19—21.

7. Nothing is so powerful as goodness; it is the most efficacious means to subdue enemies and put down opposition. Men, whose minds can withstand argument, and whose hearts rebel against threats, are not proof against the persuasive influence of unfeigned love; there is, therefore, no more important collateral reason for being good, than that it increases our power to do good, vs. 20—21.

CHAPTER XIII.

Contents.

THE chapter treats mainly of our political duties. From v. 1 to v. 7 inclusive, the apostle enforces the duties which we owe to civil magistrates. From v. 8 to v. 13, he refers to the more general obligations under which Christians are placed, but still with special reference to their civil and social relations, From v. 11 to the end of the chapter, he enjoins an exemplary and holy deportment.

CHAP. 13: 1—14.

Analysis.

THE duty of obedience to those in authority is enforced, 1. By the consideration that civil government is a divine institution, and, therefore, resistance to magistrates in the exercise of their lawful authority is disobedience to God, vs. 1, 2. 2. From the end or design of their appointment, which is to promote the good of society, to be a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well, vs. 3, 4. 3. Because such subjection is a moral, as well as civil duty, v. 5. On these grounds the pay-

ment of tribute or taxes, and general deference, are to be cheerfully rendered, vs. 6, 7.

Christians are bound not only to be obedient to those in authority, but also to perform all social and relative duties, especially that of love, which includes and secures the observance of all others, vs. 8—10. A pure and exemplary life as members of society is enforced by the consideration that the night is far spent and that the day is at hand, that the time of suffering and trial is nearly over, and that of deliverance approaching, vs. 11—14.

Commentary.

(1) *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.* The expression *every soul* is often used as equivalent to *every one*; it is at times, however, emphatic, and such is probably the case in this passage. By *higher powers* is most commonly and naturally understood those in authority, without reference to their grade of office, or their character. We are to be subject not only to the *supreme* magistrates, but to all who have authority over us. The abstract word *powers* or *authorities* (*ἐξουσίαι*) is used, as the corresponding terms in most languages, for those who are invested with power, Luke 12: 11. Eph. 1: 21. 3: 10, &c. &c. The word (*ὑπερέχων*) rendered *higher* is applied to any one who, in dignity and authority, excels others. In 1 Peter 2: 13, it is applied to the king as supreme, i. e. superior to all other magistrates. But here one class of magistrates is not brought into comparison with another, but they are spoken of as *being over* other men who are not in office. It is a very unnatural interpretation which makes this word refer to the character of the magistrates, as though the sense were, 'Be subject to good magistrates.' This is contrary to the usage of the term and inconsistent with the context. Obedience is not enjoined on the ground of the personal merit of those in authority, but on the ground of their official station.

There was peculiar necessity, during the apostolic age, for inculcating the duty of obedience to civil magistrates. This necessity arose in part from the fact that a large portion of the converts to Christianity had been Jews, and were peculiarly indisposed to submit to the heathen authorities. This indispo-

sition (as far as it was peculiar) arose from the prevailing impression among them that this subjection was unlawful, or at least highly derogatory to their character as the people of God, who had so long lived under a theocracy. In Deut. 17: 15, it is said, "Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose; *one* from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou shalt not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother." It was a question, therefore, constantly agitated among them, "Is it lawful to pay tribute unto Caesar, or not?" A question which the great majority were at least secretly inclined to answer in the negative. Another source of the restlessness of the Jews under a foreign yoke, was the idea which they entertained of the nature of the Messiah's kingdom. As they expected a temporal Prince, whose kingdom should be of this world, they were ready to rise in rebellion at the call of every one who cried, "I am Christ." The history of the Jews at this period shows how great was the effect produced by these and similar causes on their feelings towards the Roman government. They were continually breaking out into tumults, which led to their expulsion from Rome,* and, finally, to the utter destruction of Jerusalem. It is, therefore, not a matter of surprise that converts from among such a people should need the injunction, "Be subject to the higher powers." Besides the effect of their previous opinions and feelings, there is something in the character of Christianity itself, and in the incidental results of the excitement which it occasions, to account for the repugnance of many of the early Christians to submit to their civil rulers. They wrested no doubt the doctrine of Christian liberty, as they did other doctrines, to suit their own inclinations. This result, however, is to be attributed not to religion, but to the improper feelings of those into whose minds the form of truth without its full power had been received.

For there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. This is the ground of the command in the first clause. We must obey our rulers, because government is of divine appointment. It is not a matter which men

* Suetonius, Claud. 25, says, *Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes (Claudius) Roma expulit*; see Acts 18: 2.

may or may not have at pleasure; it is the will of God that it should exist, and that those who exercise it should be obeyed within the sphere of their legitimate authority. It is doubtful whether the word *power*, in the first clause of this sentence, is to be taken as abstract or concrete, i. e. whether the meaning is, 'There is no government or authority but of God,' or 'There is no magistrate who is not of God;' every civil magistrate is to be considered as clothed with divine authority. There seems to be little difference, as to the real sense of the passage, between these two modes of interpretation. The main idea obviously is, that government is of divine appointment, and consequently those who resist it disobey God. In the second clause, *the powers that be are ordained of God*, the sense may be either, all governments are ordained of God, or, all magistrates are thus ordained. Some commentators insist strenuously on the one mode, and some on the other. But as just remarked, the sentiment is in either case the same. As the expression *higher powers*, at the beginning of the verse, is almost universally understood of the persons who exercise authority, it would seem most natural to understand the same word in the same manner through the remainder of the verse. All magistrates of whatever grade are to be regarded as acting by divine appointment; not that God designates the individuals, but that it being his will that there should be magistrates, every person, who is in point of fact clothed with authority, is to be regarded as having a claim to obedience, founded on the will of God. In like manner the authority of parents over their children, of husbands over their wives, of masters over their servants, is of God's ordination.

(2) *Whoso, therefore, resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God.* This is an obvious inference from the doctrine of the preceding verse. If it is the will of God that there should be civil government, and persons appointed to exercise authority over others, it is plain that to resist such persons in the exercise of their lawful authority is an act of disobedience to God.

And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. This also is an obvious conclusion from the preceding. If disobedience is a sin, it will be punished. The word (*ἔτιμα*) rendered *damnation*, means here simply punishment, which is

also the old meaning of the word *damnation*. As this word, however, has become restricted to the final and eternal condemnation of the wicked, it is now unsuited to this passage and some others in which it occurs in our version; see 1 Cor. 11: 29. Paul does not refer to the punishment which the civil magistrate may inflict; for he is speaking of disobedience to those in authority as a sin against God, which he will punish.

It is clear that this passage (vs. 1, 2) is applicable to men living under every form of government, monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical, in all their various modifications. Those who are in authority are to be obeyed within their sphere, no matter how or by whom appointed. It was to Paul a matter of little importance whether the Roman emperor was appointed by the senate, the army, or the people; whether the assumption of the imperial authority by Caesar was just or unjust, or whether his successors had a legitimate claim to the throne or not. It was his object to lay down the simple principle, that magistrates are to be obeyed. The extent of this obedience is to be determined from the nature of the case. They are to be obeyed as magistrates, in the exercise of their lawful authority. When Paul commands wives to obey their husbands, they are required to obey them as husbands, not as masters nor as kings; children are to obey their parents as parents, not as sovereigns; and so in every other case. This passage, therefore, affords a very slight foundation for the doctrine of passive obedience.

(3) *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil.* This verse is not to be connected with the second, but with the first, as it assigns an additional reason for the duty there enjoined. Magistrates are to be obeyed, for such is the will of God, and because they are appointed to repress evil and to promote good. There is a ground, therefore, in the very nature of their office, why they should not be resisted.

Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. That is, government is not an evil to be feared, except by evil doers. As the magistrates are appointed for the punishment of evil, the way to avoid their authority is not to resist it, but to do that which is good. Paul is speaking of the legitimate design of government, not of the abuse of power by wicked men.

(4) *For he is the minister of God for thee for good, &c.* This whole verse is but an amplification of the preceding. ‘Government is a benevolent institution of God, designed for the benefit of men; and, therefore, should be respected and obeyed. As it has, however, the rightful authority to punish, it is to be feared by those that do evil.’ *For good*, i. e. to secure or promote your welfare. Magistrates or rulers are not appointed for their own honour or advantage, but for the benefit of society, and, therefore, while those in subjection are on this account to obey them, they themselves are taught, what those in power are so apt to forget, that they are the servants of the people as well as the servants of God, and that the welfare of society is the only legitimate object which they as rulers are at liberty to pursue.

But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; a revenger to execute wrath (εἰς δέστυν, i. e. for the purpose of punishment) *upon him that doeth evil.* As one part of the design of government is to protect the good, so the other is to punish the wicked. The existence of this delegated authority is, therefore, a reason why men should abstain from the commission of evil. *He beareth not the sword in vain*, i. e. it is not in vain that he is invested with authority to punish. As the common method of inflicting capital punishment was by decapitation with a sword, that instrument is mentioned as the symbol of the right of punishment, and, as many infer from this passage, of the right of capital punishment.*

(5) *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* That is, subjection to magistrates is not only a civil duty enforced by penal statutes, but also a religious duty and part of our obedience to God. *For wrath*, i. e. from fear of punishment. *For conscience sake*, i. e. out of regard to God, from conscientious motives. In like manner Paul enforces all relative and social duties on religious grounds. Children are to obey their parent, because it is right in the sight of God; and servants are to be obedient

* Insignis locus ad jus gladii comprobandum; nam si Dominus magistratum armando gladii quoque usum illi mandavit, quoties sotes capitali poena vindicat, exercendo Dei ultionem, ejus mandatis obsequitur. Contendant igitur cum Deo qui sanguinem nocentium hominum effundi nefas esse putant.—CALVIN.

to their master, as unto Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, Eph. 6: 1, 5, 6.

(6) *For, for this cause, pay ye tribute also.* This verse may be connected by the words (*διὰ τοῦτο*) rendered *for* to the preceding, thus, 'Wherefore (i. e. for conscience sake), ye should pay tribute also.' But it is better to consider this clause as containing an inference from the foregoing exhibition of the nature and design of civil government. 'Since government is constituted for the benefit of society, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of those that do well, ye should cheerfully pay the contributions requisite for its support.'

For they are the ministers of God, attending continually on this very thing. This clause introduces another reason for payment of tribute. Magistrates are not only appointed for the public good, but they are the ministers of God, and consequently it is his will that we should contribute whatever is necessary to enable them to discharge their duty. The word (*λαϊτουργοί*) rendered *ministers* means public servants, men appointed for any public work, civil or religious. Among the Greek democratical states, especially at Athens, those persons were particularly so called who were required to perform some public service at their own expense. It is used in scripture in a general sense for servants or ministers, Rom. 15: 16. Heb. 1: 7. 8: 2. The words *to this very thing* are by many considered as referring to the collection of tribute, as though the meaning were, 'They are servants appointed by God, to attend to this very business of tax gathering.' But it is much more common and natural to understand these words as referring to the service which, as the ministers of God, magistrates are called upon to perform. 'They are the servants of God, attending continually to this ministry.' The same idea would be expressed by saying, 'They are appointed by God for the public service;' and this is the reason why the necessary contributions should be faithfully and cheerfully made. Taxes then are to be paid for the public service, and for the public service they are to be employed.

(7) *Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.* 'Such being the will of God, and

such the benevolent design of civil government, render to magistrates (and to all others) what properly belongs to them, whether pecuniary contribution, reverence or honour.' The word *all* seems, from the context, to have special reference to all in authority, though it is not necessary to confine it to such persons exclusively. The word (φóρος) *tribute* is applied properly to land and capitation tax; and (τέλος) to the *customs* levied on merchandise. The words (φóβος and τιμή) *fear* and *honour* are generally considered in this connexion as differing only in degree, the former expressing the reverence to superiors, the latter the respect to equals.

(8) *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another, &c.* That is, acquit yourselves of all obligations, except love, which is a debt which must remain ever due. This is the common, and, considering the context which abounds with commands, the most natural interpretation of this passage. Others, however, take the verb (ἀφιέλστω) as in the indicative, instead of the imperative mood, and understand the passage thus, 'Ye owe no man any thing but love (which includes all other duties), for he that loves another fulfils the law.' This gives a good sense when this verse is taken by itself, but viewed in connexion with those which precede and follow, the common interpretation is much more natural. The idea which a cursory reader might be disposed to attach to these words, in considering them as a direction not to contract pecuniary debts, is not properly expressed by them; although the prohibition, in its spirit, includes the incurring of such obligations when we have not the certain prospect of discharging them. The command, however, is, 'Acquit yourselves of all obligations, tribute, custom, fear, honour, or whatever else you may owe, but remember that the debt of love is still unpaid and always must remain so, for love includes all duty, since he that loves another fulfils the law.'*

(9) *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt*

* *Amare*; debitum immortale. Si amabitis, nil debitis nam amor implet legem. Amare, libertas est.—BENGL. Argute et eleganter dictum: dilectionis debitum et semper solvitur et semper manet.—WETSTEIN.

A grateful mind,

By owing owes not, and still pays, at once

Indebted and discharged.—MILTON'S *Paradise Lost*, IV. 55.

not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* This verse is evidently a confirmation of the declaration at the close of the preceding one, that love includes all our social duties. This is further confirmed in the following verse.

(10) *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* That is, as love delights in the happiness of its object, it effectually prevents us from injuring those we love, and, consequently, leads us to fulfil all the law requires, because the law requires nothing which is not conducive to the best interests of our fellow men. He, therefore, who loves his neighbour with the same sincerity that he loves himself, and consequently treats him as he would wish, under similar circumstances, to be treated by him, will fulfil all that the law enjoins; hence the whole law is comprehended in this one command, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

(11) *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.* From this verse to the end of the chapter, Paul exhorts his readers to discharge the duties already enjoined, and urges on them to live a holy and exemplary life. The consideration by which this exhortation is enforced, is, that the night is far spent and that the day is at hand, the time of deliverance is fast approaching. The words (*καὶ τοῦτο*) rendered *and that* are by many considered as elliptical, and the word (*ποιεῖτε*) *do* is supplied; ‘And this *do*.’ The demonstrative pronoun, however, is frequently used to mark the importance of the connexion between two circumstances for the case in hand (Passow, Vol. 2, p. 319), and is, therefore, often equivalent to the phrases *and indeed, the more, &c.* So in this case, ‘We must discharge our various duties, *and that* knowing, &c., i. e. the rather, because we know, &c. ;’ compare Heb. 11: 12. 1 Cor. 6: 6. Eph. 2: 8. *Knowing the time*, i. e. considering the nature and character of the period in which we now live. The

* The words οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις are omitted in the MSS. A. D. E. F. G. 1, 2, 29, 34, 36, 38, 39, 41, 43, 46, 47, 52, and in the Syriac version. They are rejected in the Complutensian edition, and in those of Mill, Bengel, Griesbach, Knapp and Lachmann.

original word (*καιρός*) does not mean *time* in the general, but a portion of time considered as appropriate, as fixed, as short, &c. &c. Paul immediately explains himself by adding, *that now it is high time to awake out of sleep*; it was the proper time to arouse themselves from their slumbers, and, shaking off all slothfulness, to address themselves earnestly to work. *For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.* This is the reason why it is time to be up and active, salvation is at hand. There are three leading interpretations of this clause. The first is, that it means that the time of salvation or special favour to the Gentiles, and of the destruction of the Jews, was fast approaching. So Hammond, Whitby and many others. But for this there is no foundation in the simple meaning of the words, nor in the context. Paul evidently refers to something of more general and permanent interest than the overthrow of the Jewish nation, and the consequent freedom of the Gentile converts from their persecutions. The night that was far spent, was not the night of sorrow arising from Jewish bigotry; and the day that was at hand was something brighter and better than deliverance from its power. A second interpretation very generally received of late is, that the reference is to the second advent of Christ. It is assumed that the early Christians, and even the inspired apostles, were under the constant impression that Christ was to appear in person for the establishment of his kingdom before that generation passed away. This assumption is founded on such passages as the following, Phil. 4: 5, "The Lord is at hand;" 1 Thess. 4: 17, "We that are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air;" 1 Cor. 15: 51, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," &c. &c. With regard to this point, we may remark, 1. That neither the early Christians nor the apostles knew when the second advent of Christ was to take place. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, nor the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall the coming of the Son of man be," Matt. 24: 36, 37. "They (the apostles) asked of him, saying, Lord wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power," Acts 1: 6, 7. "But of the times and seasons, brethren,

ye have no need that I write unto you; for ye yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," 1 Thess. 5: 1, 2. 2. Though they knew not when it was to be, they knew that it was not to happen immediately, nor until a great apostacy had occurred. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by (or concerning) the coming of the Lord Jesus, and our gathering together to him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind * * * as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, &c." 2 Thess. 2: 1—3, and v. 5, "Remember ye not that when I was yet with you I told you these things?" Besides this distinct assertion that the second advent of Christ was not to occur before the revelation of the man of sin, there are several other predictions in the writings of Paul which refer to future events, which necessarily imply his knowledge of the fact, that the day of judgment was not immediately at hand, 1 Tim. 4: 1—5. Rom. 11: 25. The numerous prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the future conversion of the Jews, and various other events, were known to the apostles, and precluded the possibility of their believing that the world was to come to ~~an~~ end before these prophecies were fulfilled. 3. We are not to understand the expressions *day of the Lord*, *the appearing of Christ*, *the coming of the Son of man*, in all cases in the same way. The *day of the Lord* is a very familiar expression in the scriptures to designate any time of the special manifestation of the divine presence, either for judgment or mercy; see Ez. 13: 5. Joel 1: 15. Is. 2: 12. 13: 6, 9. So also God or Christ is said to come to any person or place, when he makes any remarkable exhibition of his power or grace. Hence the Son of man was to come for the destruction of Jerusalem, before the people of that generation all perished; and the summons of death is sometimes represented as the coming of Christ to judge the soul. What is the meaning of such expressions must be determined by the context, in each particular case. 4. It cannot, therefore, be inferred from such declarations as "the day of the Lord is at hand;" "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh;" "the judge is at the door;" &c., that those who made them supposed that the last advent and final judgment were to take place immediately. They expressly assert the

contrary as has just been shown. 5. The situation of the early Christians was, in this respect, similar to ours. They believed that Christ was to appear the second time without sin unto salvation, but when this advent was to take place they did not know; they looked and longed for the appearing of the great God their Saviour, as we do now; and the prospect of this event operated upon them as it should do upon us, as a constant motive to watchfulness and diligence, that we may be found of him in peace. There is nothing, therefore, in the scriptures, nor in this immediate context, which requires us to suppose that Paul intended to say that the time of the second advent was at hand, when he tells his readers that their salvation was nearer than when they believed.

The third and most common as well as natural interpretation of this passage is, that Paul meant simply to remind them that the time of deliverance was near; that the difficulties and sins with which they had to contend would soon be dispersed as the shades and mists of night before the rising day. The *salvation*, therefore, here intended, is the consummation of the work of Christ in their deliverance from this present evil world, and introduction into the purity and blessedness of heaven. Eternity is just at hand, is the solemn consideration that Paul urges on his readers as a motive for devotion and diligence.

(12) *The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.* The general sentiment of this verse is very obvious. Night or darkness is the common emblem of sin and sorrow; day or light that of knowledge, purity and happiness. The meaning of the first clause, therefore, is, that the time of sin and sorrow is nearly over, that of holiness and happiness is at hand. The particular form and application of this general sentiment depend, however, on the interpretation given to the preceding verse. If that verse refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, then Paul means to say that the night of persecution was nearly gone, and the day of peace and prosperity to the Gentile churches was at hand. But if v. 11 refers to final salvation, then this verse means that the sins and sorrows of this life will soon be over, and the day of eternal blessedness is about to dawn. The latter view is to be preferred.

Paul continues this beautiful figure through the verse. *Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.* That is, let us renounce those things which need to be concealed, and clothe ourselves with those which are suited to the light. *The works of darkness* are those works which men are accustomed to commit in the dark, i. e. all evil works; and *armour of light* means those virtues and good deeds which men are not ashamed of, because they will bear to be seen. Paul probably used the word (*ἔκλα*) *armour* instead of *works*, because these virtues constitute the offensive and defensive weapons with which we are here to contend against sin and evil; see Eph. 6: 11.

(13) *Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness; not in chambering and wantonness; not in strife and envying.* This verse is an amplification of the preceding, stating some of those works of darkness which we are to put off; as v. 14 states what is the armour of light which we are to put on. The word (*εὐσχημόνως*) rendered *honestly* means *becomingly, properly*. There are three classes of sins specified in this verse, to each of which two words are appropriated, viz. intemperance, impurity and discord. *Rioting and drunkenness* belong to the first; the word (*κῆμος*), appropriately rendered *rioting*, is used both in reference to the disorderly religious festivals kept in honour of Bacchus, and to the common boisterous carousing of intemperate young men, (see Passow, Vol. 1, p. 924). The words *chambering and wantonness* include all kinds of uncleanness; and *strife and envying* all kinds of unholy emulation and discord.

(14) *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, i. e. be as he was.* *To put on Christ* signifies to be intimately united to him, so that he, and not we, may appear, Gal. 3: 27. ‘Let not your own evil deeds be seen (i. e. do not commit such), but let what Christ was appear in all your conduct, as effectually as if clothed with the garment of his virtues.’

And make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. That is, let it not be your care to gratify the flesh. By *flesh* in this passage is generally, perhaps, understood the *body*; so that the prohibition is confined to the vicious indulgence of the sensual appetites. But there seems to be no sufficient reason for this restriction. As the word is constantly

used by Paul for whatever is corrupt, and in the preceding verse the sins of envy and contention are specially mentioned, it may be understood more generally, 'Do not indulge the desires of your corrupt nature.'

Doctrines.

1. Civil government is a divine institution, i. e. it is the will of God that it should exist and be respected and obeyed, v. 2.

2. While 'government is of God, the form is of men.' God has never enjoined any one form obligatory on all communities; but has simply laid down certain principles, applicable to rulers and subjects under every form in which governments exist, vs. 1—7.

3. The obedience, which the scriptures command us to render to our rulers, is not unlimited; there are cases in which disobedience is a duty. This is evident, first, from the very nature of the case. The command to obey magistrates is, from its nature, a command to obey them as magistrates in the exercise of their rightful authority. They are not to be obeyed as priests or as parents, but as civil rulers. No one doubts that the precept, "Children obey your parents in all things," is a command to obey them in the exercise of their rightful parental authority, and imposes no obligation to implicit and passive obedience. A parent, who should claim the power of a sovereign over his children, would have no right to their obedience. The case is still plainer with regard to the command, "Wives submit to your own husbands." Secondly, from the fact that the same inspired men, who enjoin, in such general terms, obedience to rulers, themselves uniformly and openly disobeyed them whenever their commands were inconsistent with other and higher obligations. "We ought to obey God rather than men," was the principle which the early Christians avowed and on which they acted. They disobeyed the Jewish and Heathen authorities whenever they required them to do any thing contrary to the will of God. There are cases, therefore, in which disobedience is a duty. How far the rightful authority of rulers extends, the precise point at which the obligation to obedience ceases, must often be a difficult question, and each case must be decided on its own merits. The same difficulty exists in fixing the limits of the authority of parents over their children, hus-

bands over their wives, masters over their servants. This, however, is a theoretical rather than a practical difficulty. The general principles on which the question in regard to any given case is to be decided are sufficiently plain. No command to do any thing morally wrong can be binding; nor can any which transcends the rightful authority of the power whence it emanates. What that rightful authority is, must be determined by the institutions and laws of the land, or from prescription and usage, or from the nature and design of the office with which the magistrate is invested. The right of deciding on all these points, and determining where the obligation to obedience ceases, and the duty of resistance begins, must, from the nature of the case, rest with the subject, and not with the ruler. The apostles and early Christians decided this point for themselves, and did not leave the decision with the Jewish or Roman authorities. Like all other questions of duty, it is to be decided on our responsibility to God and our fellow men, vs. 1—7.

4. The design of civil government is not to promote the advantage of rulers but of the ruled. They are ordained and invested with authority to be a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well. They are the ministers of God for this end, and are appointed for "this very thing." On this ground our obligation to obedience rests, and the obligation ceases when this design is systematically, constantly and notoriously disregarded. Where unfaithfulness on the part of the government exists, or where the form of it is incompatible with the design of its institution, the governed must have a right to remedy the evil. But they cannot have the moral right to remedy one evil, by the production of a greater. And, therefore, as there are few greater evils than instability and uncertainty in governments, the cases in which revolutions are justifiable must be exceedingly rare, vs. 3—7.

5. The proper sphere of civil government is the civil and social relations of men and their temporal welfare; conscience, and of course religion, are beyond its jurisdiction, except so far as the best interests of civil society are necessarily connected with them. What extent of ground this exception covers, ever has been, and probably will ever remain a matter of dispute. Still it is to be remembered that it is an exception; religion and

morality as such are not within the legitimate sphere of the civil authority. To justify the interference of the civil government, therefore, in any given case with these important subjects, an exception must be made out. It must be shown that an opinion or a religion is not only false, but that its prevalence is incompatible with the rights of those members of the community who are not embraced within its communion, before the civil authority can be authorized to interfere for its suppression. It is then to be suppressed not as a religion but as a public nuisance. God has ordained civil government for the promotion of the welfare of men as members of the same civil society; and parental government and the instruction and discipline of the church, for their moral and religious improvement. And the less interference there is between these two great institutions in the promotion of their respective objects the better. We do not find in the New Testament any commands addressed to magistrates with regard to the suppression of heresies or the support of the truth; nor, on the other hand, do we meet with any directions to the church to interfere with matters pertaining to the civil government, vs. 3—6.

6. The discharge of all the social and civil duties of life is to the Christian a matter of religious obligation, vs. 5—7.

Remarks.

1. The Christian religion is adapted to all states of society and all forms of civil government. As the Spirit of God, when it enters any human heart, leaves unmolested what is peculiar to its individual character, as far as it is innocent, and effects the reformation of what is evil, not by violence, but by a sweetly constraining influence; so the religion of Christ, when it enters any community of men, does not assail their form of government, whether despotic or free; and if there is any thing in their institutions inconsistent with its spirit, it is changed by its silent operation on the heart and conscience, rather than by direct denunciation. It has thus, without rebellion or violent convulsions, curbed the exercise of despotic power, and wrought the abolition of slavery throughout the greater part of Christendom, vs. 1—14.

2. The gospel is equally hostile to tyranny and anarchy. It

teaches rulers that they are ministers of God for the public good; and it teaches subjects to be obedient to magistrates not only for fear but also for conscience sake, v. 5.

3. God is to be recognised as ordering the affairs of civil society. "He removeth kings, and he setteth up kings;" by him "kings reign, and princes decree justice." It is enough, therefore, to secure the obedience of the Christian, that in the providence of God, he finds the power of government lodged in certain hands. The early Christians would have been in constant perplexity, had it been incumbent on them, amidst the frequent poisonings and assassinations of the imperial palace, the tumults of the pretorian guards, and the proclamation by contending armies of rival candidates, to decide on the individual who had *de jure* the power of the sword, before they could conscientiously obey, vs. 1—5.

4. When rulers become a terror to the good, and a praise to them that do evil, they may still be tolerated and obeyed, not however, of right, but because the remedy may be worse than the disease, vs. 3, 4.

5. Did genuine Christian love prevail, it would secure the right discharge, not only of the duties of rulers towards their subjects and of subjects towards their rulers, but of all the relative social duties of life; for he that loveth another fulfilleth the law, vs. 7, 8.

6. The nearness of eternity should operate on all Christians as a motive to purity and devotedness to God. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, now is our salvation nearer than when we believed, vs. 13, 14.

7. All Christian duty is included in putting on the Lord Jesus; in being like him, having that similarity of temper and conduct which results from being intimately united to him by the Holy Spirit, v. 14.

CHAPTER XIV.

Contents.

As in chapter 12, Paul had insisted principally upon moral and religious duties, and in chapter 13, on those of a political character, he here treats particularly of the duties of church mem-

bers towards each other, in relation to matters not binding on the conscience. There are two points specially presented; the first is the manner in which scrupulous Christians, who make conscience of matters of indifference, are to be treated, vs. 1—12; and the second, the manner in which those who are strong in faith should use their Christian liberty, vs. 13—23.

CHAP. 14: 1—23.

Analysis.

SCRUPULOUS Christians, whose consciences are weak, are to be kindly received, and not harshly condemned, v. 1. This direction the apostle enforces in reference to those who were scrupulous as to eating particular kinds of meat, and the propriety of neglecting the sacred days appointed in the law of Moses. Such persons are not to be condemned, 1. Because this weakness is not inconsistent with piety; notwithstanding their doubts on these points, God has received them, v. 3. 2. Because one Christian has no right to judge another (except where Christ has expressly authorized it and given him the rule of judgment); to his own master he stands or falls, v. 4. 3. Because such harsh treatment is unnecessary; God can and will preserve such persons, notwithstanding their feebleness, v. 4. 4. Because they act religiously, or out of regard to God in this matter; and, therefore, live according to the great Christian principle, that no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself, but whether he lives or dies belongs to God, vs. 6—9. On these grounds we should abstain from condemning or treating contemptuously our weaker brethren, remembering that we are all to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, vs. 10—12.

As to the use of Christian liberty, the apostle teaches that it is not to be given up or denied; that is, we are not to make things sinful which are in themselves indifferent, v. 14. But it does not follow that because a thing is not wrong in itself, it is right for us to indulge in it. Our liberty is to be asserted, but it is to be exercised in such a way as not to injure others. We must not put a stumbling block in our brother's way, v. 12. This consideration of others in the use of our liberty is enforced, 1. From the great law of love; it is inconsistent with Christian

charity, for our own gratification, to injure a brother for whom Christ died, v. 15. 2. From a regard to the honour of religion. We must not cause that which is good to be evil spoken of, v. 16. 3. From the consideration that religion does not consist in such things, vs. 17, 18. 4. Because we are bound to promote the peace and edification of the church, v. 19. 5. Though the things in question may be in themselves indifferent, it is morally wrong to indulge in them to the injury of others, vs. 20, 21. 6. The course enjoined by the apostle requires no concession of principle, or adoption of error; we can retain our full belief of the indifference of things which God has not pronounced sinful; but those who have not our faith cannot act upon it, and therefore, should not be encouraged so to do, vs. 22, 23.

Commentary.

(1) *Him that is weak in faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations.* This verse contains the general direction that weak and scrupulous brethren are to be kindly received, and not harshly condemned. *Weak in faith*, i. e. weak as to faith (*πίστις*). *Faith* here means persuasion of the truth; a man may have a strong persuasion as to certain truths, and a very weak one as to others. Some of the early Christians were, no doubt, fully convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, and yet felt great doubts whether the distinction between clean and unclean meats was entirely done away. This was certainly a great defect of Christian character, and arose from the want of an intelligent and firm conviction of the gratuitous nature of justification, and of the spirituality of the gospel. Since, however, this weakness was not inconsistent with religion, such persons were to be *received*. The word (*προσλαμβάνομαι*) rendered *receive*, has the general signification *to take to one-self*; and this is its meaning here. ‘Him that is weak in faith take to yourselves as a Christian brother, treat him kindly;’ see Acts 28: 2. Rom. 15: 7. Philemon vs. 15, 17.

There is much more doubt as to the meaning of the words (*μὴ εἰς διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν*) translated *not to doubtful disputations*. The former of the two important words of this clause means *the faculty of discrimination*, 1 Cor. 13: 10; *the act of discerning*, Heb. 5: 14, and then *dijudication, judgment*. It may also signify *doubt* or *inward conflict*; see the use of

the verb in ch. 4: 20. It is taken in this sense in our version, *not to the doubtfulness of disputes*, i. e. not for the purpose of doubtful disputation. The word rendered *disputations* means also *thoughts, opinions*. The clause may therefore mean *not to the judging of (his) opinions*, i. e. not for the purpose of judging his opinions; do not act the part of a judge over him. This sense seems to be decidedly preferable on account of the context, as Paul enforces this direction by showing them that they had no right to sit in judgment on their brethren in such matters.

(2) *For one believeth he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.* This is an illustration of the weakness of faith to which the apostle refers in v. 1. It was a scrupulousness about the use of things considered as unclean, and with regard to sacred days, v. 5. There were two sources whence the early Christian church was disturbed by the question about meats. The first, and by far the most important, was the natural prejudices of the Jewish converts. It is not a matter of surprise that, educated as they had been in a strict regard for the Mosaic law, they found it difficult to enter at once into the full liberty of the gospel, and disencumber their consciences of all their early opinions. Even the apostles were slow in shaking them off; and the church in Jerusalem seems to have long continued in the observance of a great part of the ceremonial law. These scruples were not confined to the use of meats pronounced unclean in the Old Testament, but, as appears from the Epistles to the Corinthians, extended to partaking of any thing which had been offered to an idol; and, in these latter scruples, some even of the Gentile converts may have joined. The second source of trouble on this subject was less prevalent and less excusable. It was the influence of the mystic ascetic philosophy of the east, which had developed itself among the Jews in the peculiar opinions of the Essenes, and which, among the Christian churches, particularly those of Asia Minor, produced the evils which Paul describes in his Epistles to the Colossians (ch. 2: 10—23), and to Timothy (1 Tim. 4: 1—8), and which subsequently gave rise to all the errors of Gnosticism. There is no satisfactory evidence that the persons to whom Paul refers in this passage were under the influence of this philosophy. The fact that they abstained from all meat,

as seems to be intimated in this verse, may have arisen from the constant apprehension of eating meat which, after having been presented in sacrifice, was sold in the market place, or which had in some other way been rendered unclean.* Every thing in the context is consistent with the supposition that Jewish scruples were the source of the difficulty; and as these were by far the most common cause, no other need be here assumed.

(3) *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him.* There is mutual forbearance to be exercised in relation to this subject. The strong are not to despise the weak as superstitious and imbecile; nor the weak to condemn those who disregard their scruples. Points of indifference are not to be allowed to disturb the harmony of Christian fellowship. *For God hath received him*, i. e. God has recognised him as a Christian, and received him into his kingdom. This reason is not designed to enforce merely the latter of the two duties here enjoined, but is applied to both. As God does not make eating or not eating certain kinds of food a condition of acceptance, Christians ought not to allow it to interfere with their communion as brethren. The Jewish converts were perhaps quite as much disposed to condemn the Gentile Christians, as the latter were to despise the Christian Jews; Paul, therefore, frames his admonition so as to reach both classes. It appears, however, from the first verse, and from the whole context, that the Gentiles were principally intended.

(4) *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.* If God has not made the point in question a term of communion, we have no right to do so; we have no right to exercise the office of judge over the servant of another. This is the second reason for mutual forbearance with regard to such matters as divided the Jewish and Gentile converts. It cannot fail to be remarked how differently the apostle speaks of the same things under different circumstances. He who circumcised Timothy, who conformed in many things to the law of Moses, and to the Jews

* Josephus states in his life (ch. 23) that certain Jewish priests, while at Rome, lived entirely upon fruit, from the dread of eating any thing unclean.

became a Jew, and who here exhorts Christians to regard their external observances as matters of indifference, resisted to the uttermost as soon as these things were urged as matters of importance, or were insisted upon as necessary to acceptance with God. He would not allow Titus to be circumcised, nor give place even for an hour to false brethren, who had come in privily to spy out our liberty. (Gal. 2: 3, 5.) He warned the Galatians that if they were circumcised, Christ would profit them nothing; that they renounced the whole method of gratuitous justification, and forfeited its blessings, if they sought acceptance on any such terms. How liberal and how faithful was the apostle! He would concede every thing, and become all things to all men, where principle was not at stake; but when it was, he would concede nothing for a moment. What might be safely granted, if asked and given as a matter of indifference, became a fatal apostacy when demanded as a matter of necessity or a condition of salvation.

To his own master he standeth or falleth, i. e. it belongs to his own master to decide his case, to acquit or to condemn. These terms are often used in this judicial sense, Ps. 1: 5. 76: 7. Luke 21: 36. Rev. 6: 17. *Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand*, i. e. he shall stand, or be accepted, for God has the right and the will to make him stand, that is, to acquit and save him.* This clause seems designed to urge a further reason for forbearance and kindness towards those who differ from us on matters of indifference. However weak a man's faith may be, if he is a Christian, he should be recognised and treated as such; for his weakness is not inconsistent with his acceptance with God, and, therefore, is no ground or necessity for our proceeding against him with severity. The objects of discipline are the reformation of offenders and the purification of the church; but neither of these objects requires the condemnation of those brethren whom God has received. "God is able to make him stand;" he has not only the power but the disposition and determination. Compare ch. 11: 23, "For God is able to graft them in again."

* Gott als der oberste Richter kann erklären, dass er ins Reich Christi eingehen dürfe, auch wenn er noch jenen schwachen Glauben haben sollte, und die Menschen ihn deswegen für verworfen erklären sollten.—THOLUCK.

(5) *One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike.* As the law of Moses not only made a distinction between meats as clean and unclean, but also prescribed the observance of certain days as religious festivals, the Jewish converts were as scrupulous with regard to this latter point as the former. Some Christians, therefore, thought it incumbent on them to observe these days; others were of a contrary opinion. Both were to be tolerated. The veneration of these days was a weakness, but still it was not a vital matter, and, therefore, should not be allowed to disturb the harmony of Christian intercourse, or the peace of the church. It is obvious from the context and from such parallel passages as Gal. 4: 10, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years," and Col. 2: 16, "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of sabbath days," that Paul has reference to the Jewish festivals, and, therefore, his language cannot properly be applied to the Christian sabbath. The sentiment of the passage is this, 'One man observes the Jewish festivals, another man does not.' Such we know was the fact in the apostolic church, even among those who agreed in the observance of the first day of the week.

Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. The principle, which the apostle enforces in reference to this case, is the same as that which he enjoined in relation to the other, viz. that one man should not be forced to act according to another man's conscience, but every one should be satisfied in his own mind, and be careful not to do what he thought wrong.

(6) *He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, &c.* That is, both parties are actuated by religious motives in what they do; they regulate their conduct by a regard to the will of God, and, therefore, although some from weakness or ignorance may err as to the rule of duty, they are not to be despised or cast out as evil. The strong should not contemn the scrupulous, nor the scrupulous be censorious towards the strong. This is a fourth argument in favour of the mutual forbearance enjoined in the first verse. *He that eateth, eateth to the Lord; for he giveth God thanks, &c.* That is, he who disregards the Mosaic distinction between clean and unclean meats, and

uses indiscriminately the common articles of food, acts religiously in so doing, as is evident from his giving God thanks. He could not deliberately thank God for what he supposed God had forbidden him to use. In like manner, he that abstains from certain meats, does it religiously, for he also giveth thanks to God; which implies that he regards himself as acting agreeably to the divine will.

(7) *For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.* This verse is an amplification and confirmation of the preceding. The principle on which both the classes of persons just referred to acted, is a true Christian principle. No Christian considers himself as his own master, or at liberty to regulate his conduct according to his own will, or for his own ends; he is the servant of God, and, therefore, endeavours to live according to his will and for his glory. They, therefore, who act on this principle, are to be regarded and treated as true Christians, although they may differ as to what the will of God, in particular cases, requires. *No man dieth to himself*, i. e. death as well as life must be left in the hands of God, to be directed by his will and for his glory. The sentiment is, we are entirely his, having no authority over our life or death.

(8) *For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.* The same sentiment as in the preceding verse, rather more fully and explicitly stated. In v. 7, Paul had stated, negatively, that the Christian does not live according to his own will, or for his own pleasure; he here states, affirmatively, that he does live according to the will of Christ and for his glory. This being the case, he is a true Christian; he belongs to Christ, and should be so recognised and treated. It is very obvious, especially from the following verse, which speaks of death and resurrection, that Christ is intended by the word *Lord* in this verse. It is for Christ, and in subjection to his will, that every Christian endeavours to regulate his heart, his conscience and his life. This is the profoundest homage the creature can render to his Creator; and as it is the service which the scriptures require us to render to the Redeemer, it of necessity supposes that Christ is God. This is rendered still plainer by the interchange, throughout the passage (vs. 6—9), of the terms *Lord* and *God*. 'He that eateth, eateth to the

Lord, for he giveth God thanks. We live unto the Lord; we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and rose that he might be the Lord, &c.' It is clear that, to the apostle's mind, the idea that Christ is God was perfectly familiar.

(9) *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived,* that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living.* The dominion which Christ, as Mediator or Redeemer, exercises over his people, and which they gladly recognise, is the result of his death and resurrection. By his death he purchased them for his own, and by his resurrection he attained to that exalted station which he now occupies as Lord over all, and received those gifts which enables him to exercise as Mediator this universal dominion. The exaltation and dominion of Christ are frequently represented in the scriptures as the reward of his sufferings, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, &c." Phil. 2: 8, 9. This authority of Christ over his people is not confined to this world, but extends beyond the grave. He is Lord both of the dead and the living.

(10) *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.†* In this and the following verses to the 13th, Paul applies his previous reasoning to the case in hand. If a man is our *brother*, if God has received him, if he acts from a sincere desire to do the divine will, he should not be condemned, though he may think certain things

* The common text reads *καὶ ἀπέθανε καὶ ἀνέστη καὶ ἀνέζησεν*; most corrected editions read *καὶ ἀπέθανε καὶ ἐζήσεν*; and some omit *καὶ* before *ἀπέθανε*. The words *καὶ ἀνέστη* are omitted in the MSS. A. C., in the Coptic, Ethiopic, Syriac and Armenian versions, and by many of the fathers. They are rejected by Erasmus, Bengel, Schmidt, Knapp, Lachmann and others. The words *καὶ ἀνέζησεν* are omitted by some few MSS. and fathers; *καὶ ἐζήσεν* are read in MSS. A. C. and in forty-four others. They are adopted in the Complutensian edition, and in those of Mill, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, Knapp, Lachmann, &c. &c. These diversities do not materially affect the sense. The words *ἀνέστη* and *ἀνέζησεν* have very much the appearance of explanatory glosses.

† Instead of *χριστοῦ*, at the close of this verse, the MSS. A. D. E. F. G. read *θεοῦ*, which is adopted by Mill and Lachmann. The common reading is supported by the great majority of the MSS., all the ancient versions, and almost all the fathers. It is therefore retained by most critical editors.

right which we think wrong; nor should he be despised if he trammels his conscience with unnecessary scruples. The former of these clauses relates to scrupulous Jewish Christians; the latter to the Gentile converts. The last member of the verse applies to both classes. As we are all to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, as he is our sole and final judge, we should not usurp his prerogative or presume to condemn those whom he has received.

(11) *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess.* This quotation is from Isaiah 45: 23, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." The apostle, it will be perceived, does not adhere to the words of the passage which he quotes, but contents himself with giving the sense. *As I live*, being the form of an oath, is a correct exhibition of the meaning of the phrase, *I have sworn by myself*. And since, to swear by any being, is to recognise his power and authority over us, the expressions *every tongue shall swear* and *every tongue shall confess* are of similar import. Both indeed are parallel to the clause *every knee shall bow*, and are but different forms of expressing the general idea that every one shall submit to God, i. e. recognise his authority as God, the supreme ruler and judge. The apostle evidently considers the recognition of the authority of Christ as being tantamount to submission to God, and he applies without hesitation the declarations of the Old Testament in relation to the universal dominion of Jehovah, in proof of the Redeemer's sovereignty. With him, therefore, Jesus Christ was God.* This verse may be considered as intended to confirm the truth of the declaration at the close of the one preceding, 'We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; for it is written, to me every knee shall bow.' And this seems the natural relation of the passage. Calvin understands this verse, however, as designed to enforce humble submission to the judgment of Christ. 'We should not judge others, since we

* Caeterum, quae (Jes. 45: 23) de Jehova dicuntur, eadem ad Christum (si vera sit lectio τοῦ Χριστοῦ, v. 10) transferri ab Apostolo, non est mirandum, cum hunc illi arcissime conjunctum cogitandum esse, perpetua sit tum Judaeorum, quotiescunque de Messia loquuntur, tum imprimis Pauli et Joannis sententia.—Korff.

are to be judged by Christ; and to his judgment we must humbly bow the knee.' This is indeed clearly implied, but it is rather an accessory idea, than the special design of the passage.

(12) *So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.* 'As, therefore, God is the supreme judge, and we are to render our account to him, we should await his decision, and not presume to act the part of judge over our brethren.'

(13) *Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.* After drawing the conclusion from the preceding discussion that we should leave the office of judging in the hands of God, the apostle introduces the second leading topic of the chapter, viz. the manner in which Christian liberty is to be exercised. He teaches that it is not enough that we are persuaded a certain course is, in itself considered, right, in order to authorise us to pursue it. We must be careful that we do not injure others in the use of our liberty. The word (*κρίνω*) rendered *judge*, means also *to determine, to make up one's mind*. Paul uses it first in the one sense, and then in the other. 'Do not judge one another, but determine to avoid giving offence.' The words (*πρόσκομμα* and *σκάνδαλον*) rendered *a stumbling-block* and *an occasion to fall* do not differ in their meaning; the latter is simply exegetical of the former.

(14) *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.* 'The distinction between clean and unclean meats is no longer valid. So far the Gentile converts are right. But they should remember that those who consider the law of the Old Testament on this subject as still binding, cannot, with a good conscience, disregard it. The strong should not, therefore, do any thing which would be likely to lead such persons to violate their own sense of duty.' *I know and am persuaded by* (in) *the Lord Jesus*, i. e. this knowledge and persuasion I owe to the Lord Jesus; it is not an opinion founded on my own reasonings, but a knowledge resulting from divine revelation. *That there is nothing unclean of itself.* The word (*κοινός*) rendered *unclean*, has this sense only in Hellenistic Greek. It means *common*, and as opposed to (*ἅγιος*) *holy* (i. e. separated for some

special or sacred use), it signifies *impure*; see Acts 10: 14, 28. Mark 7: 2, &c. *But to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean*, i. e. though not unclean in itself, it ought not to be used by those who regard its use as unlawful. The simple principle here taught is, that it is wrong for any man to violate his own sense of duty. This being the case, those Jewish converts who believed the distinction between clean and unclean meats to be still in force, would commit sin in disregarding it; and, therefore, should not be induced to act contrary to their consciences.

(15) *But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.* That is, though the thing is right in itself, yet if indulgence in it be injurious to our Christian brethren, that indulgence is a violation of the law of love. This is the first consideration which the apostle urges to enforce the exhortation not to put a stumbling-block in our brother's way. The word (λαϊσῖται) *is grieved* may mean *is injured*. Either sense suits the context, 'If thy brother, emboldened by thy example, is led to do what he thinks wrong, and is thus rendered miserable, &c.' Or, 'If thy brother, by thy example, is injured (by being led into sin), thou walkest uncharitably.' This interpretation is perhaps better suited to the latter clause of the verse. *Destroy not* (μὴ ἀπόλλυς). These words have been variously explained. The meaning may be, 'Do not do any thing which has a tendency to lead him to destruction.' So De Brais, Bengel, Tholuck, Stuart and many others. Or, 'Do not injure him, or render him miserable.' So Elsner, Koppe, Flatt, Wahl and others. There is no material difference between these two interpretations. The former is more consistent with the common meaning of the original word, but the latter is better suited to the context; as this clause answers to the first member of the verse. 'If thy brother be aggrieved, thou doest wrong; do not grieve or injure him.' *For whom Christ died.* This is most effectively added. 'If Christ so loved him as to die for him, how base in you not to submit to the smallest self-denial for his welfare.'

(16) *Let not your good be evil spoken of*, i. e. 'Do not so use your liberty, which is good and valuable, as to make it the occasion of evil, and so liable to censure.' Thus Calvin and

most other commentators. This interpretation is better suited to the context than that which makes *the good* here intended, to be the Christian religion generally; 'Let not religion be reproached on account of dissension on such minor points.' The general idea, however, is the same. 'Do not subject the truth to unmerited obloquy.'

(17) *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* This is a new reason for forbearance; no principle of duty is to be sacrificed, nothing essential to religion is to be disregarded, for religion does not consist in external observances, but in the inward graces of the Spirit. It has already been remarked (v. 4), that with all his desire of peace, no one was more firm and unyielding when any dereliction of Christian principle was required of him, than the apostle. But the case under consideration is very different. There is no sin in abstaining from certain meats, and, therefore, if the good of others require this abstinence, we are bound to exercise it. The phrase *kingdom of God* almost uniformly signifies the *kingdom of the Messiah*, under some one of its aspects, as consisting of all professing Christians, of all his own people, of glorified believers, or as existing in the heart. "The kingdom of God is within you;" see also 1 Cor. 4: 20. This last sense best suits this passage, 'Religion does not consist in the external observance, but in the graces of the Spirit.' *Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.* The last words, *in the Holy Ghost*, pertain to the whole clause. Religion consists in that righteousness, peace and joy, of which the Holy Ghost is the author. The word *righteousness* is to be taken in its common sense, *moral excellence, goodness; peace*, not exclusively concord with brethren, but that inward peace of conscience, and peace with God, which is the attendant on reconciliation (Rom. 5: 1); *and joy* resulting from a sense of the divine favour and the anticipation of future blessedness.

(18) *For he, that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of men.* This verse is a confirmation of the preceding. These spiritual graces constitute the essential part of religion; for he that experiences and exercises these virtues, is regarded by God as a true Christian, and must commend himself as such to the consciences of his fellow

men. Where these things, therefore, are found, difference of opinion or practice in reference to unessential points should not be allowed to disturb the harmony of Christian intercourse. It is to be observed that the exercise of the virtues here spoken of, is represented by the apostle as a service rendered to Christ; “he that in these things serveth Christ, &c.,” which implies that Christ has authority over the heart and conscience.

(19) *Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another.* That is, let us earnestly endeavour to promote peace and mutual edification. *The things which make for peace* is equivalent to peace itself (τὰ εἰρήνης—εἰρήνην); and *things wherewith one may edify another* is *mutual edification* (τὰ εἰς οἰκοδομῆς—οἰκοδομήν). This verse is not an inference from the immediately preceding, as though the meaning were, ‘Since peace is so acceptable to God, therefore let us cultivate it;’ but rather from the whole passage. ‘Since Christian love, the example of Christ, the comparative insignificance of the matters in dispute, the honour of the truth, the nature of real religion, all conspire to urge us to mutual forbearance, let us endeavour to promote peace and mutual edification.’*

(20) *For meat destroy not the work of God.* This clause is, by De Brais and many other commentators, considered as a repetition of v. 15. “Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.” *The work of God* then means a Christian brother; see Eph. 2: 10. Others much more naturally refer the passage to the immediately preceding verses, in which the nature of true religion is exhibited. *The work of God*, in that case, is *piety*, and the exhortation is, ‘Do not, for the sake of indulgence in certain kinds of food, injure the cause of true religion, i. e. pull not down what God is building up.’ The figurative expression used by the apostle (μὴ καθύλης, *pull not*

* Quantum potest revocat nos a nuda ciborum consideratione ad illa majora, quæ primum locum in omnibus actionibus nostris habere, adeoque illis præesse debent. Edendum est enim, ut vivamus; vivendum, ut serviamus Domino. Ille autem Domino servit, qui benevolentia et comitate proximum aedificat. His enim duobus, concordia et aedificatione continentur fere omnia caritatis officia. Id ne parvi fiat, repetit quam posuerat sententiam, cibum corruptibilem rem indignam esse, cujus causa dissipetur Domini aedificium. Ubicunque vel scintilla est pietatis, illic opus Dei cernere est; quod demoliuntur qui sua importunitate perturbant infirmam adhuc conscientiam.—CALVIN.

down), shows that the reference is to the preceding verse; compare Gal. 2: 18.

All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. The ground on which forbearance is urged, is not that the things in question are in themselves evil, but solely that the use of them is injurious to others. ‘All articles of food are in themselves innocent, but it is wrong in any man so to use them as to give offence, i. e. as to cause others to stumble.’ *With offence* (διὰ προσκόμματος), i. e. *offensively*, so as to give offence. The same sentiment occurs in 1 Cor. 8: 9, “But take heed, lest by any means this liberty become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.”

(21) *It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.* That is, abstaining from flesh, wine, or any thing else which is injurious to our brethren, is right, i. e. morally obligatory; (καλόν, *id quod rectum et probum est*). The words *stumbleth, offended, made weak*, do not, in this connexion, differ much from each other. Calvin supposes they differ in force, the first being stronger than the second, and the second than the third. The sense then is, ‘We should abstain from every thing whereby our brother is cast down, or even offended, or in the slightest degree injured.’ This, however, is urging the terms beyond their natural import. It is very common with the apostle to use several nearly synonymous words for the sake of expressing one idea strongly. The last two words (ἡ σκανδαλίζεσθαι ἢ ἀσθενεῖν) are indeed omitted in some few manuscripts and versions, but in too few seriously to impair their authority. Mill is almost the only editor of standing who rejects them.

There is an ellipsis in the middle clause of this verse which has been variously supplied. ‘Nor to drink wine, nor to (drink) any thing;’ others, ‘not to (do) any thing whereby, &c.’ According to the first method of supplying the ellipsis, the meaning is, ‘We should not drink wine, nor any other intoxicating drink, when our doing so is injurious to others.’ But the latter method is more natural and forcible, and includes the other, ‘We should do nothing which injures others.’ The ground on which some of the early Christians thought it incumbent on them to abstain from wine, was not any general ascetic prin-

ciple, but because they feared they might be led to use wine which had been offered to the gods; to which they had the same objection as to meat which had been presented in sacrifice.*

(22) *Hast thou faith? have it thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth.* Paul presents in this verse, more distinctly than he had before done, the idea that he required no concession of principle or renunciation of truth. He did not wish them to believe a thing to be sinful which was not sinful, or to trammel their own consciences with the scruples of their weaker brethren. He simply required them to use their liberty in a considerate and charitable manner. He, therefore, here says, 'Hast thou faith? (i. e. a firm persuasion of the lawfulness of all kinds of meat) it is well, do not renounce it, but retain it and use it piously as in the sight of God.' Instead of reading the first clause interrogatively, *Hast thou faith?* it is more commonly, and perhaps more properly read, *Thou hast faith.* It is then presented in the form of an objection, which a Gentile convert might be disposed to make to the direction of the apostle to accommodate his conduct to the scruples of others. 'Thou hast faith: thou mayest say; well have it, I do not call upon thee to renounce it.' By *faith* here seems clearly to be understood *the faith* of which Paul had been speaking in the context; a faith which some Christians had, and others had not, viz. a firm belief "that there is nothing (no meat) unclean of itself." *Have it to thyself* (*κατὰ σαυτὸν ἔχε*), keep it to yourself. There are two ideas included in this phrase. The first is, keep it privately, i. e. do not parade it, or make it a point to show that you are above the weak scruples of your brethren; and the second is, that this faith or firm conviction is not to be renounced, but retained, for it is founded on the truth. *Before God*, i. e. in the sight of God. It is to be cherished in our hearts, and used in a manner acceptable to God. Being right in itself, it is to be piously, and not ostentatiously or injuriously paraded and employed.

* *Augustinus* de moribus Manichaeorum, II. 14, Eo tempore, quo haec scribat apostolus, multa immoliticia caro in macello vendebatur. Et quia vino etiam libabatur Diis gentilium, multi fratres infirmiores, qui etiam rebus his venalibus utebantur, penitus a carnibus se et vino cohibere maluerunt, quam vel nescientes incidere in eam, quam putabant, cum idolis communicationem.—WETSTEIN.

Blessed is he that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth. That is, blessed is the man that has a good conscience; who does not allow himself to do what he secretly condemns. The faith, therefore, of which the apostle had spoken, is a great blessing. It is a source of great happiness to be sure that what we do is right, and, therefore, the firm conviction to which some Christians had attained, was not to be undervalued or renounced. Compare ch. 1: 28. 1 Cor. 16: 3, for a similar use of the word (*δοκιμάζω*) here employed. This interpretation seems better suited to the context and to the force of the words than another which is also frequently given, 'Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself, i. e. give occasion to others to censure him for the use which he makes of his liberty.' This gives indeed a good sense, but it does not adhere so closely to the meaning of the text, nor does it so well agree with what follows.

(23) *But he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* That is, however sure a man may be that what he does is right, he cannot expect others to act on his faith. If a man thinks a thing to be wrong, to him it is wrong. He therefore who is uncertain whether God has commanded him to abstain from certain meats, and who notwithstanding indulges in them, evidently sins; he brings himself under condemnation. Because whatever is not of faith is sin; i. e. whatever we do which we are not sure is right, is wrong. The sentiment of this verse therefore is nearly the same as of v. 14. "To him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." There is evidently a sinful disregard of the divine authority on the part of a man who does any thing which he supposes God has forbidden, or which he is not certain he has allowed.* This passage has an obvious bearing on the design of the apostle. He wished to convince the stronger Christians that it was unreasonable in them to expect their weaker brethren to act according to their faith; and that it was sinful in them so to use

* The principle of morals contained in this verse is so obvious that it occurs frequently in the writings of ancient philosophers. Cicero de Officiis, lib. 1, c. 9, Quodcirca bene præcipiunt, qui vetant quidquam agere, quod dubites, æquum sit, an iniquum. Aequitas enim lucet ipsa per se: dubitatio cogitationem significat injuriæ.

their liberty as to induce these scrupulous Christians to violate their own consciences.*

Doctrines.

1. The fellowship of the saints is not to be broken for unessential matters; in other words, we have no right to make any thing a term of Christian communion which is not inconsistent with piety. Paul evidently argues on the principle that if a man is a true Christian he should be recognised and treated as such. If God has received him, we should receive him, vs. 1—12.

2. The true criterion of a Christian character is found in the governing purpose of the life. He that lives unto the Lord, i. e. he who makes the will of God the rule of his conduct, and the glory of God his constant object, is a true Christian, although from weakness or ignorance he may sometimes mistake the rule of duty, and consider certain things obligatory which God has never commanded, vs. 6—8.

* The three verses which, in the common text, occur at the close of chapter 16, are found at the close of this chapter in the MSS. A. and in all those written in small letters on Wetstein's catalogue, from 1 to 55, except 13, 15, 16, 25, 27, 28, 50, 53, (two of these, 27, 53, do not contain this epistle, and 25, 28 are here defective). To these are to be added many others examined by later editors, making one hundred and seven MSS. in which the passage occurs at the close of this chapter. Of the versions, only the later Syriac, Slavonic and Arabic assign it this position; with which, however, most of the Greek fathers coincide. Beza (in his 1st and 2d editions), Grotius, Mill, Hammond, Wetstein, Griesbach, consider the passage to belong to this chapter.

On the other hand, the MSS. C. D. E. and several of the *codd. minusc.* the early Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic and Vulgate versions, and the Latin fathers, place the contested verses at the close of chapter 16. This location is adopted in the Complutensian edition, by Erasmus, Stephens, Beza (in his 3d, 4th and 5th editions), Bengel, Koppe, Knapp, Lachmann and others.

These verses are left out in both places in the MSS. F. G. 57, 67, 68, 69, 70. And are found in both places in A. 17, and in the Armenian version. The weight due to the early versions, in deciding such a question, is obviously very great; and as these versions all coincide with the received text and some of the oldest MSS. in placing the passage at the close of the epistle, that is most probably its proper place. The doxology, which those verses contain, so evidently breaks the intimate connexion between the close of the 14th chapter and the beginning of the 15th, that it is only by assuming with Semler that the epistle properly terminates here, or with Tholuck and others that Paul, after having closed with a doxology, begins anew on the same topic, that the presence of the passage in this place can be accounted for. But both these assumptions are unauthorized, and that of Semler destitute of the least plausibility.—See KOPPE'S *Excursus II.* to this epistle.

3. Jesus Christ must be truly God, 1. Because he is the Lord, according to whose will and for whose glory we are to live, vs. 6—8. 2. Because he exercises an universal dominion over the living and the dead, v. 9. 3. Because he is the final judge of all men, v. 10. 4. Because passages of the Old Testament which are spoken of Jehovah, are by the apostle applied to Christ, v. 11. 5. Because, throughout this passage, Paul speaks of God and Christ indiscriminately, in a manner which shows that he regarded Christ as God. To live unto Christ is to live unto God; to stand before the judgment seat of Christ is to give an account unto God; to submit to Christ is to bow the knee to Jehovah.

4. The gospel does not make religion to consist in external observances. "Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat are we the better; neither if we eat not are we the worse," vs. 6, 7.

5. Though a thing may be lawful, it is not always expedient. The use of the liberty which every Christian enjoys under the gospel, is to be regulated by the law of love; hence it is often morally wrong to do what, in itself considered, may be innocent, vs. 15, 20, 21.

6. It is a great error in morals, and a great practical evil, to make that sinful which is in fact innocent. Christian love never requires this or any other sacrifice of truth. Paul would not consent, for the sake of avoiding offence, that eating all kinds of food, even what had been offered to idols, or disregarding sacred festivals of human appointment, should be made a sin; he strenuously and openly maintained the reverse. He represents those who thought differently as weak in faith, as being under an error from which more knowledge and more piety would free them. Concession to their weakness he enjoins on a principle perfectly consistent with the assertion of the truth, and with the preservation of Christian liberty, vs. 13—23.

7. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. It is wrong to do any thing which we think to be wrong. The converse of this proposition, however, is not true. It is not always right to do what we think to be right. Paul, before his conversion, thought it right to persecute Christians; the Jews thought they did God service when they cast the disciples of the Saviour out of the synagogue.

The cases, therefore, are not parallel. When we do what we think God has forbidden, we are evidently guilty of disobedience or contempt of the divine authority. But when we do what we think he has required, we may act under a culpable mistake; or, although we may have the judgment that the act in itself is right, our motives for doing it may be very wicked. The state of mind under which Paul and other Jews persecuted the early Christians was evil, though the persecution itself they regarded as a duty. It is impossible that a man should have right motives for doing a wrong action; for the very mistake as to what is right vitiates the motives. The mistake implies a wrong state of mind; and, on the other hand, the misapprehension of truth produces a wrong state of mind. There may, therefore, be a very sinful zeal for God and religion (see Rom. 10: 2); and no man will be able to plead at the bar of judgment his good intention as an excuse for evil conduct, v. 23.

Remarks.

1. Christians should not allow any thing to alienate them from their brethren, who afford credible evidence that they are the servants of God. Owing to ignorance, early prejudice, weakness of faith, and other causes, there may and must exist a diversity of opinion and practice on minor points of duty. But this diversity is no sufficient reason for rejecting from Christian fellowship any member of the family of Christ. It is, however, one thing to recognise a man as a Christian, and another to recognise him as a suitable minister of a church, organized on a particular form of government and system of doctrines, vs. 1—12.

2. A denunciatory or censorious spirit is hostile to the spirit of the gospel. It is an encroachment on the prerogatives of the only Judge of the heart and conscience; it blinds the mind to moral distinctions, and prevents the discernment between matters unessential and those vitally important; and it leads us to forget our own accountableness, and to overlook our own faults in our zeal to denounce those of others, vs. 4—10.

3. It is sinful to indulge contempt for those whom we suppose to be our inferiors, vs. 3, 10.

4. Christians should remember that living or dying they are

the Lord's. This imposes the obligation to observe his will and to seek his glory; and it affords the assurance that the Lord will provide for all their wants. This peculiar propriety in his own people Christ has obtained by his death and resurrection, vs. 8, 9.

5. We should stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and not allow our consciences to be brought under the yoke of bondage to human opinions. There is a strong tendency in men to treat, as matters of conscience, things which God has never enjoined. Wherever this disposition has been indulged or submitted to, it has resulted in bringing one class of men under the most degrading bondage to another; and in the still more serious evil of leading them to disregard the authority of God. Multitudes who would be shocked at the thought of eating meat during Lent, commit the greatest moral offences without the slightest compunction. It is, therefore, of great importance to keep the conscience free; under no subjection but to truth and God. This is necessary, not only on account of its influence on our own moral feelings, but also because nothing but truth can really do good. To advocate even a good cause with bad arguments does great harm, by exciting unnecessary opposition; by making good men, who oppose the arguments, appear to oppose the cause; by introducing a false standard of duty; by failing to enlist the support of an enlightened conscience, and by the necessary forfeiture of the confidence of the intelligent and well informed. The cause of benevolence, therefore, instead of being promoted, is injured by all exaggerations, erroneous statements, and false principles on the part of its advocates, vs. 14, 22.

6. It is obviously incumbent on every man to endeavour to obtain and promote right views of duty, not only for his own sake but for the sake of others. It is often necessary to assert our Christian liberty at the expense of incurring censure and offending even good men, in order that right principles of duty may be preserved. Our Saviour consented to be regarded as a sabbath-breaker, and even "a wine-bibber and friend of publicans and sinners;" but wisdom was justified of her children. Christ did not in these cases see fit to accommodate his conduct to the rule of duty set up, and conscientiously regarded as correct by those around him. He saw that more good would arise from

a practical disregard of the false opinions of the Jews, as to the manner in which the sabbath was to be kept, and as to the degree of intercourse which was allowed with wicked men, than from concession to their prejudices. Enlightened benevolence often requires a similar course of conduct, and a similar exercise of self-denial on the part of his disciples.

7. While Christian liberty is to be maintained, and right principles of duty inculcated, every concession consistent with truth and good morals should be made for the sake of peace and the welfare of others. It is important, however, that the duty of making such concessions should be placed on the right ground, and be urged in a right spirit, not as a thing to be demanded, but as that which the law of love requires. In this way success is more certain and more extensive, and the concomitant results are all good. It may at times be a difficult practical question, whether most good would result from compliance with the prejudices of others, or from disregarding them. But where there is a sincere desire to do right, and a willingness to sacrifice our own inclinations for the good of others, connected with prayer for divine direction, there can be little danger of serious mistake. Evil is much more likely to arise from a disregard to the opinions and the welfare of our brethren, and from a reliance on our own judgment, than from any course requiring self-denial, vs. 13, 15, 20, 21.

8. Conscience, or a sense of duty, is not the only, and perhaps not the most important principle to be appealed to in support of benevolent enterprises. It comes in aid, and gives its sanction to all other right motives, but we find the sacred writers appealing most frequently to the benevolent and pious feelings; to the example of Christ; to a sense of our obligations to him; to the mutual relation of Christians and their common connexion with the Redeemer, &c. as motives to self-denial and devotedness, vs. 15, 21.

9. As the religion of the gospel consists in the inward graces of the Holy Spirit, all who have these graces should be recognised as genuine Christians; being acceptable to God, they should be loved and cherished by his people, notwithstanding their weakness or errors, vs. 17, 18.

10. The peace and edification of the church are to be sought at all sacrifices except those of truth and duty; and the work of

God is not to be destroyed or injured for the sake of any personal or party interests, vs. 19, 20.

11. An enlightened conscience is a great blessing; it secures the liberty of the soul from bondage to the opinions of men, and from the self-inflicted pains of a scrupulous and morbid state of the moral feelings; and it promotes the right exercise of all the virtuous affections and the right discharge of all relative duties, v. 22.

CHAPTER XV.

Contents.

THIS chapter consists of two parts. In the former, vs. 1—13, the apostle enforces the duty urged in the preceding chapter, by considerations derived principally from the example of Christ. In the latter part, vs. 14—33, we have the conclusion of the whole discussion, in which he speaks of his confidence in the Roman Christians, of his motives for writing to them, of his apostolical office and labours, and of his purpose to visit Rome after fulfilling his ministry for the saints at Jerusalem.

CHAP. 15: 1—13.

Analysis.

THE first verse of this chapter is a conclusion from the whole of the preceding. On the grounds there presented, Paul repeats the command that the strong should bear with the infirmities of the weak, and that instead of selfishly regarding their own interests merely, they should endeavour to promote the welfare of their brethren, vs. 1, 2. This duty he enforces by the conduct of Christ, who has set us an example of perfect disinterestedness, as what he suffered was not for himself, v. 3. This and similar facts and sentiments recorded in the scripture are intended for our admonition, and should be applied for that purpose, v. 4. The apostle prays that God would bestow on them that harmony and unanimity which he had urged them to cultivate, vs. 5, 6. He repeats the exhortation that they should

receive one another, even as Christ had received them, v. 7. He shows how Christ had received them, and united Jews and Gentiles in one body, vs. 8—13.

Commentary.

(1) *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.* The separation of this passage from the preceding chapter is obviously unhappy, as there is no change in the subject. ‘As the points of difference are not essential, as the law of love, the example of Christ, and the honour of religion require concession, we that are fully persuaded of the indifference of those things about which our weaker brethren are so scrupulous, ought to accommodate ourselves to their opinions, and not act with a view to our own gratification merely.’ *We that are strong* (δυνατοί), *strong* in reference to the subject of discourse, i. e. faith, especially faith in the Christian doctrine of the lawfulness of all kinds of food, and the abrogation of the Mosaic law. *Ought to bear*, i. e. ought to tolerate (βαστάζειν). The *infirmities*, that is, the prejudices, errors and faults which arise from weakness of faith. Compare 1 Cor. 9: 20—22, where the apostle illustrates this command by stating how he himself acted in relation to this subject. *And not to please ourselves*; we are not to do every thing which we may have a right to do, and make our own gratification the rule by which we exercise our Christian liberty.

(2) *Let each one of us please his neighbour, for his good for edification.* The principle, which is stated negatively at the close of the preceding verse, is here stated affirmatively. We are not to please ourselves, but others; the law of love is to regulate our conduct; we are not simply to ask what is right in itself, or what is agreeable, but what is benevolent and pleasing to our brethren. The object which we should have in view in accommodating ourselves to others, however, is their good. *For good to edification* most probably means with a view to his good so that he may be edified. The latter words *to edification*, are, therefore, explanatory of the former; the good we should contemplate is their religious improvement; which is the sense in which Paul frequently uses the word (οικοδομή) *edification*; ch. 14: 19. 2 Cor. 10: 8. Eph. 4: 12, 29. It is not, therefore, a weak compliance with the wishes of others, to

which Paul exhorts us, but to the exercise of an enlightened benevolence; to such compliances as have the design and tendency to promote the spiritual welfare of our neighbour.

(3) *For even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.* ‘For even Christ, so infinitely exalted above all Christians, was perfectly disinterested and condescending.’ The example of Christ is constantly held up not merely as a model but a motive. The disinterestedness of Christ is here illustrated by a reference to the fact that he suffered not for himself, but for the glory of God. The sorrow which he felt was not on account of his own privations and injuries, but zeal for God’s service consumed him, and it was the dishonour which was cast on God that broke his heart. The simple point to be illustrated is the disinterestedness of Christ, the fact that he did not please himself. And this is most affectingly done by saying, in the language of the Psalmist (Ps. 69: 10), “The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me;” that is, such was my zeal for thee, that the reproaches cast on thee I felt as if directed against myself. This Psalm is so frequently quoted and applied to Christ in the New Testament, that it must be considered as directly prophetic. Compare John 2: 17. 15: 25. 19: 28. Acts 1: 20.*

(4) *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.* The object of this verse is not so much to show the propriety of applying the passage quoted from the Psalms to Christ, as to show that the facts recorded in the scriptures are designed for our instruction. The character of Christ is there portrayed that we may follow his example and imbibe his spirit. The words *through patience and consolation of the scriptures* may be taken

* Quod si regnet in nobis Christus, ut in fidelibus suis regnare eum necesse est, hic quoque sensus in animis nostris vigeat, ut quicquid derogat Dei gloriæ non aliter nos excruciet, quam si in nobis residerit. Eant nunc, quibus summa votorum est, maximos honores apud eos adipisci qui probris omnibus Dei nomen afficiunt, Christum pedibus conculcant, evangelium ipsius et contumeliose lacerant, et gladio flammaque persequuntur. Non est sane tutum ab iis tantopere honorari, a quibus non modo contemnitur Christus, sed contumeliose etiam tractatur.—CALVIN.

together, and mean, ‘through that patience and consolation which the scriptures produce;’ or the words *through patience* may be disconnected from the word *scriptures*, and the sense be, ‘that we through patience, and *through* the consolation of the scriptures, &c.’ The former method is the most commonly adopted, and is the most natural.* *Might have hope*; this may mean that the design of the divine instructions is to prevent all despondency, to sustain us under our present trials; or the sense is that they are intended to secure the attainment of the great object of our hopes, the blessedness of heaven. Either interpretation of the word *hope* is consistent with usage and gives a good sense. The former is more natural.†

(5) *Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Jesus Christ.* ‘May God, who is the author of patience and consolation, grant, &c.’ Here the *graces*, which in the preceding verse are ascribed to the scriptures, are attributed to God as their author, because he produces them by his Spirit through the instrumentality of the truth. Paul prays that God would grant them that concord and unanimity which he had so strongly exhorted them to cherish. The expression (ἐν αὐτῷ φρονεῖν) *to be like minded* does not here refer to unanimity of opinion, but to harmony of feeling; see ch. 8: 5. 12: 3. *According to Jesus Christ*, i. e. agreeably to the example and command of Christ; in a Christian manner. It is, therefore, to a Christian union that he exhorts them.

(6) *That ye may with one mind and with one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* This harmony and fellowship among Christians is necessary in order that they may glorify God aright. To honour God effectually and properly there must be no unnecessary dissensions among

* The MSS. A. C. 1, 29, 30, 34, 36, 38, 39, 41, 43, 47, read διὰ before εἰς παρακλήσεως, which would render the second mode of explaining the passage stated in the text the more probable. The Complutensian edition, Bengel and Lachmann adopt this reading, though the preponderance of evidence is greatly against it.

† Patientia fidelium non est illa durities, quam præcipiunt philosophi: sed ea mansuetudo, qua nos libenter Deo subijcimus, dum gustus bonitatis ejus paternique amoris dulcia omnia nobis reddit. Ea spem in nobis alit ac sustinet, ne deficiat.—CALVIN.

his people.* *God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* means either that God who is the Father of the Lord Jesus; or, the God and Father of Christ. The latter is the more correct rendering. This expression occurs frequently in the New Testament; see 2 Cor. 1: 3. 11: 31. Eph. 1: 3. 1 Pet. 1: 3. It means that God whom Jesus Christ acknowledged and served, and who stood to him in the relation of a Father.

(7) *Therefore receive ye one another, as Christ also hath received us,† to the glory of God.* The word (προσλαμβάνετε) *receive* has the same sense here that it has in ch. 14: 1. ‘Take one another to yourselves, treat one another kindly, even as Christ has kindly taken us to himself.’ The words *to the glory of God* may be connected with the first or second clause, or with both. ‘Receive ye one another that God may be glorified;’ or, ‘as Christ has received us in order that God might be glorified;’ or, if referred to both clauses, the idea is, ‘as the glory of God was illustrated and promoted by Christ’s reception of us, so also will it be exhibited by our kind treatment of each other.’ The first method seems most consistent with the context, as the object of the apostle is to enforce the duty of mutual forbearance among Christians, for which he suggests two motives, the kindness of Christ towards us, and the promotion of the divine glory. If instead of “hath received us” the true reading is “hath received you,” the sense and point of the passage is materially altered. Paul must then be considered as exhorting the Gentile converts to forbearance towards their Jewish brethren, on the ground that Christ had received them, though aliens, into the commonwealth of Israel.

(8) *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises*

* Ac quo magis commendabilem reddat consensionem in Christo, docet quantopere sit necessaria: quando non vere a nobis glorificatur Deus, nisi in ipsius laudem corda omnium consentiant, et lingue etiam concinant. Non est ergo quod jactet quispiam, se Deo gloriam daturum, suo more: tanti enim Deo est servorum suorum unitas, ut inter dissidia et contentiones gloriam suam personare noñt. Haec una cogitatio satis cohibere debebat insanam contendendi rixandique lasciviam quae multorum animos hodie nimis occupat.—CALVIN.

† For ἡμεῖς, ὑμεῖς is read in the MSS. A. C. D. (ex emendatione), E. F. G. 1, 21, 23, 29, 30, 37, 38, 39, 43, 52, 61; in both the Syriac, in the Coptic, Gothic, Latin and Armenian versions, and in several of the fathers. It is adopted in the Complutensian edition, and in those of Griesbach, Mill, Knapp and Lachmann.

made *unto the fathers*. This verse follows as a confirmation or illustration of the preceding. *Now I say*, i. e. this I mean. The apostle intends to show how it was that Christ had *received* those to whom he wrote. He had come to minister to the Jews, v. 8, and also to cause the Gentiles to glorify God, v. 9. The expression *minister of the circumcision* means *a minister sent to the Jews*, as ‘apostle of the Gentiles’ means ‘an apostle sent to the Gentiles.’ *For the truth of God*, i. e. to maintain the truth of God in the accomplishment of the promises made to the fathers, as is immediately added. Christ then had exhibited the greatest condescension and kindness in coming not as a Lord or ruler, but as an humble minister to the Jews, to accomplish the gracious promises of God. As this kindness was not confined to them, but as the Gentiles also were received into his kingdom and united with the Jews on equal terms, this example of Christ furnishes the strongest motives for the cultivation of mutual affection and unanimity.

(9) *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy*. The grammatical connexion of this sentence with the preceding is not very clear. The most probable explanation is that which makes (δοξάσαι) *glorify* depend upon (λέγω) *I say*, in v. 8. ‘I say that Jesus Christ became a minister to the Jews, *and I say* the Gentiles glorify God;’ it was thus he *received* both. Calvin supplies *δὲν* and translates, “The Gentiles *ought* to glorify God for his mercy;” which is not necessary, and does not so well suit the context. The *mercy* for which the Gentiles were to praise God, is obviously the great mercy of being received into the kingdom of Christ, and made partakers of all its blessings.

As it is written, I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name, Ps. 18: 49. In this and the following quotations from the Old Testament, the idea is more or less distinctly expressed, that true religion was to be extended to the Gentiles, and they therefore all include the promise of the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom to them as well as to the Jews.

(10) *And again, Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people*. This passage is commonly considered as quoted from Deut. 32: 43, where it is found in the Septuagint precisely as it stands here. The Hebrew has, “praise his people, O ye Gentiles,”

at least according to the common reading; according to some few MSS. the Hebrew express the same sense as the Septuagint. There is another difficulty in the way of supposing that this is a quotation from Deut. 32: 43; the sacred writer is not there speaking of the blessing of the Jews being extended to the Gentiles, but seems rather in the whole context to be denouncing vengeance on them as the enemies of God's people. Calvin and others therefore refer this citation to Ps. 67: 3, 5, where the sentiment is clearly expressed though not in precisely the same words.

(11) *And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.* This passage is from Ps. 117: 1, and strictly to the apostle's purpose.

(12) *And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to rule over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust,* Is. 11: 1, 10. This is an explicit prediction of the dominion of the Messiah over other nations besides the Jews. Here again the apostle follows the Septuagint, giving however the sense of the original Hebrew. The promise of the prophet is that from the decayed and fallen house of David, one should arise whose dominion should embrace all nations, and in whom Gentiles as well as Jews should trust. In the fulfilment of this prophecy Christ came, and preached salvation to those who were near and to those who were far off. As both classes had been thus kindly received by the condescending Saviour, and united into one community, they should recognise and love each other as brethren, laying aside all censoriousness and contempt, neither judging nor despising one another.

(13) *Now then the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.* Paul here, as in v. 5, concludes by praying that God would grant them the excellencies which it was their duty to possess. Thus constantly and intimately are the ideas of accountableness and dependence connected in the sacred scriptures. We are to work out our own salvation, because it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, according to his good pleasure. *The God of hope*, i. e. God who is the author of that hope which it was predicted men should exercise in the root and offspring of Jesse.

Fill you with all joy and peace in believing, i. e. fill you with that joy and concord among yourselves, as well as peace of conscience and peace towards God, which are the results of genuine faith. *That ye may abound in hope.* The consequence of the enjoyment of the blessings, and of the exercise of the graces just referred to, would be an increase in the strength and joyfulness of their hope; *through the power of the Holy Ghost*, through whom all good is given and all good exercised.

CHAP. 15: 14—33.

Analysis.

THE apostle, in the conclusion of his epistle, assures the Romans of his confidence in them, and that his motive for writing was not so much any idea of their peculiar deficiency, as the desire of putting them in mind of those things which they already knew, vs. 14, 15. This he was the rather entitled to do on account of his apostolic office conferred upon him by divine appointment, and confirmed by the signs and wonders and abundant success with which God had crowned his ministry, vs. 15, 16. He had sufficient ground of confidence in this respect, in the results of his own labours, without at all encroaching upon what belonged to others, for he had made it a rule not to preach where others had proclaimed the gospel, but to go to places where Christ was previously unknown, vs. 17—21. His labours had been such as hitherto to prevent the execution of his purpose to visit Rome. Now, however, he hoped to have that pleasure on his way to Spain, as soon as he had accomplished his mission to Jerusalem with the contributions of the Christians in Macedonia and Achaia for the poor saints in Judea, vs. 22—28. Having accomplished this service, he hoped to visit Rome in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. In the mean time he begs an interest in their prayers, and commends them to the grace of God, vs. 29—33.

Commentary.

(14) *And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge,*

*able also to admonish one another.** Paul, with his wonted modesty and mildness, apologises, as it were, for the plainness and ardour of his exhortations. They were given from no want of confidence in the Roman Christians; and they were not an unwarrantable assumption of authority on his part. The former of these ideas he presents in this verse, and the latter in the next. *That ye also are full of goodness*, i. e. of kind and conciliatory feelings, and *filled with all knowledge*, i. e. abundantly instructed on these subjects, so as to be able to instruct or admonish each other.† It was, therefore, no want of confidence in their disposition or ability to discharge their duties, that led him to write to them; his real motive he states in the next verse.

(15) *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace given to me of God.* It was rather to remind than to instruct them, that the apostle wrote thus freely. The words (*ἀπὸ μέρους*) *in some sort* are intended to qualify the words *more boldly*, ‘I have written somewhat too boldly.’ How striking the blandness and humility of the great apostle! The preceding exhortations and instructions, for which he thus apologises, are full of affection and heavenly wisdom. What a reproof is this for the arrogant and denunciatory addresses which so often are given by men who think they have Paul for an example! These words (*in some sort*), however, may be connected with *I have written*; the sense would then be, ‘I have written in part (i. e. in some parts of my epistle) very boldly.’ The former method seems the more natural. When a man acts the part of a monitor, he should not only perform the duty properly, but he should, on some ground, have a right to assume this office. Paul, therefore, says, that he reminded the Romans of

* For ἀλλήλους *each other*, ἄλλους *others* is read in the MSS. 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23, 29, 32, 35, 38, 43, 46, 48, 52, 54, 62, 63; in the Syriac version, and by many of the Greek fathers. The Complutensian editors, Beza, Wetstein and Griesbach adopt this reading.

† *Duae monitoris praeicipuae sunt dotes, humanitas quae et illius animum ad iuvandos consilio suo fratres inclinet, et vultum verbaque comitate temperet: et consilii dexteritas, sive prudentia, quae et auctoritatem illi conciliet, ut prodesse queat auditoribus, ad quos dirigit sermonem. Nihil enim magis contrarium fraternis monitionibus, quam malignitas et arrogantia, quae facit ut errantes fastuose contemnamus, et ludibrio habere malimus, quam corrigere.—CALVIN.*

their duty, because he was entitled to do so in virtue of his apostolical character; *because of the grace given to me of God.* Grace here, as appears from the context, signifies the *apostleship* which Paul represents as a favour; see ch. 1: 5.

(16) *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.* This is the explanation of the *grace* given to him of God; it was the favour of being a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. Compare Eph. 3: 1, "Unto me, who am the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach, among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ." The word (*λαϊτουργός*) rendered *minister*, means a public officer or servant; see ch. 13: 6, where it is applied to the civil magistrate. It is, however, very frequently used (as is also the corresponding verb) of those who exercised the office of a priest, Deut. 10: 8. Heb. 10: 11. As the whole of this verse is figurative, Paul no doubt had this force of the word in his mind, when he called himself a *minister*, a sacred officer of Jesus Christ; not a priest, in the proper sense of the term, for the ministers of the gospel are never so called in the New Testament, but merely in a figurative sense. The sacrifice which they offer are the people, whom they are instrumental in bringing unto God.

Ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. This is the apostle's explanation of the preceding clause. 'He was appointed a minister of Christ to administer, or to act the part of a priest in reference to the gospel, that is, to present the Gentiles as a holy sacrifice to God.' Paul, therefore, no more calls himself a priest in the strict sense of the term, than he calls the Gentiles a sacrifice in the literal meaning of that word. The expression (*ἱεουργοῦντα εἰς εὐαγγέλιον*) rendered *ministering the gospel* is peculiar, and has been variously explained. Erasmus translates it *sacrificans evangelium*, 'presenting the gospel as a sacrifice;' Calvin, *consecrans evangelium*, which he explains, 'performing the sacred mysteries of the gospel.' The general meaning of the phrase probably is 'acting the part of a priest in reference to the gospel.'

The sense is the same, if the word (*εὐαγγέλιον*) *gospel* be made to depend on a word understood, and the whole sentence be resolved thus, 'That I should be a preacher of the gospel (*εἰς εἰς εἶναι με κηρύσσοντα εἰς εὐ.*) to the Gentiles, a minis-

tering priest (i. e. a minister acting the part of a priest) of Jesus Christ,' Wahl's Clavis, p. 740. Paul thus acted the part of a priest that *the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable*. The word (*προσφορά*) *offering* sometimes means the act of oblation, sometimes the thing offered. Our translators have taken it here in the former sense; but this is not so suitable to the figure or the context. It was not Paul's act that was to be acceptable, or which was 'sanctified by the Holy Spirit.' The latter sense of the word, therefore, is to be preferred; and the meaning is, 'That the Gentiles, as a sacrifice, might be acceptable;' see ch. 12: 1. Phil. 2: 17. 2 Tim. 4: 6. *Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost*. As the sacrifices were purified by water and other means, when prepared for the altar, so we are made fit for the service of God, rendered holy or acceptable, by the influences of the Holy Spirit. This is an idea which Paul never omits; when speaking of the success of his labours, or of the efficacy of the gospel, he is careful that this success should not be ascribed to the instruments, but to the real author. In this beautiful passage we see the nature of the only priesthood which belongs to the Christian ministry. It is not their office to make atonement for sin, or to offer a propitiatory sacrifice to God, but by the preaching of the gospel to bring men, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, to offer themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.*

(17) *I have therefore whereof to glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God*. That is, 'seeing I have received this office of God, and am appointed a minister of the gospel to the Gentiles, I have (*καύχησιν*) ground of confidence and rejoicing.' As, in the previous verses, Paul had asserted his divine appointment as an apostle, he shows, in this and the following verses, that the assertion was well founded, as God had crowned his labours with success, and sealed his ministry with signs and wonders. He, therefore, was entitled, as a minister of God, to exhort and admonish his brethren with

* Et sane hoc est Christiani pastoris sacerdotium, homines in evangelii obedientiam subigendo veluti Deo immolare: non autem, quod superciliose hactenus Papistae jactarunt, oblatione Christi homines reconciliare Deo. Neque tamen ecclesiasticos pastores simpliciter hic vocat sacerdotes, tanquam perpetuo titulo: sed quum dignitatem efficaciamque ministerii vellet commendare Paulus, hac metaphora per occasionem usus est.—CALVIN.

the boldness and authority which he had used in this epistle. This ground of *boasting*, however, he had only *in* or *through Jesus Christ*, all was to be attributed to him; and it was in *reference to things pertaining to God*, i. e. the preaching and success of the gospel, not to his personal advantages or worldly distinctions. There is another interpretation of the latter part of this verse which also gives a good sense. ‘I have therefore ground of boasting, (i. e. I have) offerings for God, viz. Gentile converts.’ (The words τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν are understood as synonymous with the word προσφορά of the preceding verse, προσερχθέντα being supplied). The common view of the passage, however, is more simple and natural.

(18, 19) In these verses the apostle explains more fully what he had intended by saying he had ground of confidence or boasting. It was that God had borne abundant testimony to his claims as a divinely commissioned preacher of the gospel; so that he had no need to refer to what others had done; he was satisfied to rest his claims on the results of his own labours and the testimony of God. *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me.* That is, ‘I will not claim the credit due to others, or appeal to results which I have not been instrumental in effecting.’ It is to be remarked that the apostle represents himself as merely an instrument in the hands of Christ for the conversion of men; the real efficiency he ascribes to the Redeemer. This passage, therefore, exhibits evidence that Paul regarded Christ as still exercising a controlling agency over the souls of men, and rendering effectual the labours of his faithful ministers. Such power the sacred writers never attribute to any being but God. *To make the Gentiles obedient*, i. e. to the gospel; compare ch. 1: 5, where the same form of expression occurs. The obedience of which Paul speaks is the sincere obedience of the heart and life. This result he says Christ effected, through his instrumentality, *by word and deed*, not merely by truth, but also by those means which Christ employed to render the truth effectual. What is to be understood by this expression, or how the truth was rendered effectual, is explained in the next verse.

(19) *Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God*, i. e. by miracles and by the influences

of the Holy Ghost. This passage is, therefore, analogous to that in 1 Cor. 2: 4, "My speech and preaching was not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." That is, he relied for success not on his own skill or eloquence, but on the powerful demonstration of the Spirit. This demonstration of the Spirit consisted partly in the miracles which he enabled the first preachers of the gospel to perform, and partly in the influence with which he attended the truth to the hearts and consciences of those that believed; see Gal. 3: 2—5. Heb. 2: 4.

So that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. That is, I have been so aided and blessed of God, that throughout a most extensive region I have successfully preached the gospel. God had given his seal to Paul's apostleship by making him so abundantly useful. *I have fully preached* expresses, no doubt, the sense of the original (πρὸς τέλος εὐαγγελίζω), to bring the gospel (i. e. the preaching of it) to an end, to accomplish it thoroughly; see Col. 1: 25. In this wide circuit had the apostle preached, founding churches, and advancing the Redeemer's kingdom with such evidence of the divine co-operation, as to leave no ground of doubt that he was a divinely appointed minister of Christ.

(20, 21) In further confirmation of this point, Paul states that he had not acted the part of a pastor merely, but of an apostle or founder of the church, disseminating the gospel where it was before unknown, so that the evidence of his apostleship might be undeniable; compare 1 Cor. 9: 2, "If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you; for the seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord;" and 2 Cor. 3: 2, 3, *Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation;* that is, 'I have been desirous of not preaching where Christ was before known, but in such a way as to accomplish the prediction that those who had not heard should understand.' The motive which influenced him in taking this course was *lest he should build upon another man's foundation.* This may mean either, lest I should appropriate to myself the result of other men's labours; or, lest I should act the part not of an apostle (to which I was called), but of a simple pastor.

(21) *But, as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand.* That is, I acted in the spirit of the prediction, that Christ should be preached where he had not been known. It had been foretold in Is. 52: 15, that Christ should be preached to the Gentiles, and to those who had never heard of his name; it was in accordance with this prediction that Paul acted. There is, however, no objection to considering this passage as merely an expression, in borrowed language, of the apostle's own ideas; the meaning then is, 'I endeavoured to preach the gospel not where Christ was named, but to cause those to see to whom he had not been announced, and those to understand who had not heard.' This is in accordance with the apostle's manner of using the language of the Old Testament; see ch. 10: 15, 18. But as, in this case, the passage cited is clearly a prediction, the first method of explanation should probably be preferred. A result of this method of interweaving passages from the Old Testament, is often, as in this case and v. 3, a want of grammatical coherence between the different members of the sentence; see 1 Cor. 2: 9.

(22) *For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.* That is, his desire to make Christ known where he had not been named, had long prevented his intended journey to Rome, where he knew the gospel had already been preached.

(23) *But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you, &c.* The expression *having no more place* (*μηκέτι τόπον ἔχω*), in this connexion, would seem obviously to mean 'having no longer a place in these parts where Christ is not known.' This idea is included in the declaration that he had fully preached the gospel in all that region. Others take the word (*τόπον*) rendered *place* to signify *occasion, opportunity*, 'Having no longer an opportunity of preaching here;' see Acts 25: 16. Heb. 12: 17.

(24) *Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you; for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.* *Whensoever* (*ὡς ἔαν* for *ὡς ἄν*), *as soon as*; 'As soon as I take my journey, &c.' The

words in the original corresponding to *I will come unto you, for* are omitted in many MSS.* The sense is complete without them, 'As soon as I take my journey into Spain, I hope to see you on my way.' If the word *for* be retained, the passage must be differently pointed, 'Having a great desire to see you, as soon as I go to Spain, (for I hope on my way to see you, &c. &c.) but now I go to Jerusalem.' Whether Paul ever accomplished his purpose of visiting Spain, is a matter of doubt. There is no historical record of his having done so, either in the New Testament, or in the early ecclesiastical writers; though most of those writers seem to have taken it for granted. His whole plan was probably deranged by the occurrences at Jerusalem which led to his long imprisonment at Cesarea, and his being sent in bonds to Rome. *To be brought on my way*; the original word means, in the active voice, to attend any one on a journey for some distance, as an expression of kindness and respect; and also to make provision for his journey; see Acts 15: 3. 20: 38. 1 Cor. 16: 6. 2 Cor. 1: 16.

(25) *But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints*, i. e. to supply the wants of the saints, distributing to them the contributions of the churches; see Heb. 6: 10; compare also Matt. 8: 15. Mark 1: 31. Luke 4: 39, in which places the word (διακονέω) signifies *to set food before any one*; and, hence, more generally, *to supply his necessities*.

(26, 27) *For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem*. Having mentioned this fact, the apostle immediately seizes the opportunity of showing the reasonableness and duty of making these contributions. This he does in such a way as not to detract from the credit due to the Grecian churches, while he shows that it was but a matter of justice to act as they had done. *It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are*, i. e. 'It pleased them *I say* (γὰρ *redordiendae orationi inservit*), they did it voluntarily, yet it was but reasonable they should do it.' The ground of this statement is

* The MSS. A. C. D. E. F. G., the Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic and Latin versions, some of the Greek and most of the Latin fathers omit ἐλεύσομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, and most of these authorities omit γὰρ. Mill, Griesbach and Knapp, omit both; Lachmann retains γὰρ.

immediately added: *for if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in carnal things.* ‘If the Gentiles have received the greater good from the Jews, they may well be expected to contribute the lesser.’ The word (λαϊκουργῆσαι) rendered *to minister* may have the general sense of *serviug*; or it may be used with some allusion to the service being a sacred duty, a kind of offering which is acceptable to God.*

(28) *When, therefore, I have done this, and sealed unto them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.* The word *sealed* appears here to be used figuratively, ‘When I have *safely delivered* this fruit to them;’ compare 2 Kings 22: 4, “Go up to Hilkiah the High Priest, and sum (seal σφραγίσον) the silver, &c.” Commentators compare the use of the Latin words *consignare*, *consignatio*, and of the English word *consign*.

(29) *And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.* The *fulness of the blessing* means the abundant blessing. Paul was persuaded that God, who had so richly crowned his labours in other places, would cause his visit to Rome to be attended by those abundant blessings which the gospel of Christ is adapted to produce. He had, in ch. 1: 11, expressed his desire to visit the Roman Christians, that he might impart unto them some spiritual gift to the end that they might be established.

(30) *Now I beseech you, brethren, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.* As the apostle was not immediately to see them, and knew that he would, in the meantime, be exposed to many dangers, he earnestly begged them to aid him with their prayers. He enforces this request by the tenderest considerations; *for our Lord*

* Nec dubito, quin significet Paulus sacrificii speciem esse, quum de suo erogant fideles ad egestatem fratrum levandam. Sic enim persolvunt quod debent caritatis officium, ut Deo simul hostiam grati odoris offerant: sed proprie hoc loco ad illud mutuum jus compensationis respexit.—CALVIN.

† The words τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ are omitted in the MSS. A. C. D. F. G. 67, in the Coptic and Ethiopic versions, and by some of the Latin fathers. MILL, GRIESBACH and LACHMANN leave them out. The sense remains the same, “I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.”

Jesus Christ's sake, i. e. out of regard to the Lord Jesus; 'whatever regard you have for him, and whatever desire to see his cause prosper in which I am engaged, let it induce you to pray for me.' *And for the love of the Spirit*, i. e. 'for that love of which the Holy Spirit is author, and by which he binds the hearts of Christians together, I beseech you, &c.' He appeals, therefore, not only to their love of Christ, but to their love for himself as a fellow Christian. *That ye strive together with me* (*συναγώμισασθαι μοι*), i. e. that ye aid me in my conflict by taking part in it.' This they were to do by their prayers.

(31) *That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea.* There are three objects for which he particularly wished them to pray; his safety, the successful issue of his mission, and that he might come to them with joy. How much reason Paul had to dread the violence of the unbelieving Jews, is evident from the history given of this visit to Jerusalem, in the Acts of the Apostles. They endeavoured to destroy his life, accused him to the Roman governor, and effected his imprisonment for two years in Cesarea, whence he was sent in chains to Rome. Nor were his apprehensions confined to the unbelieving Jews; he knew that even the Christians there, from their narrow minded prejudices against him as a preacher to the Gentiles, and as the advocate of the liberty of Christians from the yoke of the Mosaic law, were greatly embittered against him. He, therefore, begs the Roman believers to pray *that the service which* (he had) *for Jerusalem might be accepted of the saints.* The words *service which I have*, &c. (*ἡ διακονία μου ἡ εἰς ἱερουσαλήμ*) means *the contribution which I carry to Jerusalem*; see the use of this word (*διακονία*) in 2 Cor. 8: 4. 9: 1, 13. Paul laboured for those whom he knew regarded him with little favour; he calls them *saints*, recognises their Christian character, notwithstanding their unkindness, and urges his brethren to pray that they might be willing to accept of kindness at his hands.

(32) *That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and that I may with you be refreshed.* These words may depend upon the former part of the preceding verse, 'Pray that I may come;' or, upon the latter part, 'Pray that I may be delivered from the Jews, and my contributions be accepted, so that I may come with joy, &c.' *By the will of God*, i. e. by

the permission and favour of God. Paul seemed to look forward to his interview with the Christians at Rome, as a season of relief from conflict and labour. In Jerusalem he was beset by unbelieving Jews, and harrassed by Judaizing Christians; in most other places he was burdened with the care of the churches; but at Rome, which he looked upon as a resting-place rather than a field of labour, he hoped to gather strength for the prosecution of his apostolic labours in still more distant lands.

(33) *Now the peace of God be with you all.* As he begged them to pray for him, so he prays for them. It is a prayer of one petition; so full of meaning, however, that no other need be added. *The peace of God*, that peace which God gives, includes all the mercies necessary for the perfect blessedness of the soul.

Doctrines.

1. The sacred scriptures are designed for men in all ages of the world, and are the great source of religious knowledge and consolation, v. 4.

2. The moral excellences which we are justly required to attain, and the consolations which we are commanded to seek in the use of appropriate means, are still the gifts of God. There is, therefore, no inconsistency between the doctrines of free agency and dependence, vs. 5, 13.

3. Those are to be received and treated as Christians whom Christ himself has received. Men have no right to make terms of communion which Christ has not made, v. 7.

4. There is no distinction under the gospel between the Jew and Gentile; Christ has received both classes upon the same terms and to the same privileges, vs. 8—12.

5. The quotation of the predictions of the Old Testament by the sacred writers of the New, and the application of them in proof of their doctrines, involves an acknowledgement of the divine authority of the ancient prophets. And as these predictions are quoted indiscriminately from all parts of the Old Testament, it is evident that the apostles believed in the inspiration of all the books included in the sacred canon by the Jews, vs. 9—12.

6. Christian ministers are not priests, i. e. they are not appointed to "offer gifts and sacrifices for sins." It is no part of

their work to make atonement for the people; this Christ has done by the one offering up of himself, whereby he has for ever perfected them that are sanctified, v. 16.

7. The truth of the gospel has been confirmed by God, through mighty signs and wonders and the power of the Holy Ghost. Infidelity, therefore, is a disbelief of the testimony of God. When God has given satisfactory evidence of the mission of his servants, the sin of unbelief is not relieved by the denial that the evidence is satisfactory. If the gospel is true, therefore, infidelity will be found not merely to be a mistake, but a crime, v. 19.

8. The success of a minister in winning souls to Christ may be fairly appealed to as evidence that he preaches the truth. It is, when clearly ascertained, as decided an evidence as the performance of a miracle; because it is as really the result of a divine agency. This, however, like all other evidence, to be of any value, must be carefully examined and faithfully applied. The success may be real, and the evidence decisive, but it may be applied improperly. The same man may preach (and doubtless every uninspired man does preach) both truth and error; God may sanction and bless the truth, and men may appeal to this blessing in support of the error. This is often done. Success therefore is of itself a very difficult test for us to apply; and must ever be held subject to the authority of the scriptures. Nothing can prove that to be true which the bible pronounces to be false, vs. 18, 19.

9. Prayer (and even intercessory prayer) has a real and important efficacy; not merely in its influence on the mind of him who offers it, but also in securing the blessings for which we pray. Paul directed the Roman Christians to pray for the exercise of the divine providence in protecting him from danger, and for the Holy Spirit to influence the minds of the brethren in Jerusalem. This he would not have done were such petitions of no avail, vs. 30, 31.

Remarks.

1. The duty of a disinterested and kind regard to others in the exercise of our Christian liberty is one of the leading topics of this, as it is of the preceding chapter, vs. 1—13.

2. The desire to please others should be wisely directed, and

spring from right motives. We should not please them to their own injury, nor from the wish to secure their favour; but for their good, that they may be edified, v. 2.

3. The character and conduct of Jesus Christ are at once the most perfect model of excellence and the most persuasive motive to obedience. The dignity of his person, the greatness of his condescension, the severity of his sufferings, the fervour of his love towards us, all combine to render his example effective in humbling us in view of our own short-comings, and in exciting us to walk even as he walked, vs. 4—13.

4. We should constantly resort to the scriptures for instruction and consolation. They were written for this purpose; and we have no right to expect these blessings unless we use the means appointed for their attainment. As God, however, by the power of the Holy Ghost, works all good in us, we should rely neither on the excellence of the means nor the vigour and diligence of our own exertions, but on his blessing, which is to be sought by prayer, vs. 4, 5, 13.

5. The dissensions of Christians are dishonourable to God. They must be of one mind, i. e. sincerely and affectionately united, if they would glorify their Father in heaven, vs. 5—7.

6. A monitor or instructor should be full of goodness and knowledge. The human heart resists censoriousness, pride, and ill feeling in an admonisher; and is thrown into such a state by the exhibition of these evil dispositions, that the truth is little likely to do it any good. As oil poured on water smooths its surface and renders it transparent; so does kindness calm the minds of men, and prepares them for the ready entrance of the truth. Besides these qualifications, he who admonishes others should be entitled thus to act. It is not necessary that this title should rest on his official station; but there should be superiority of some kind, of age, excellence, or knowledge, to give his admonitions due effect. Paul's peculiar modesty, humility and mildness, should serve as an example to us, vs. 14, 15.

7. We should be careful not to build improperly on another man's foundation. Pastors and teachers must of course preach Christ where he had before been known; but they should not appropriate to themselves the results of the labours of others, or boast of things which Christ has not wrought by them. The

man who reaps the harvest, is not always he who sowed the seed. One plants and another waters, but God giveth the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase, vs. 19, 20.

8. It is the duty of those who have the means, to contribute to the necessities of others, and especially to the wants of those from whom they themselves have received good, vs. 26, 27.

9. The fact that men are prejudiced against us, is no reason why we should not do them good. The Jewish Christians were ready to denounce Paul and to cast out his name as evil; yet he collected contributions for them, and was very solicitous that they should accept of his services, v. 31.

10. Danger is neither to be courted nor fled from; but encountered with humble trust in God, v. 31.

11. We should pray for others in such a way as really to enter into their trials and conflicts; and believe that our prayers, when sincere, are a real and great assistance to them. It is a great blessing to have an interest in the prayers of the righteous.

CHAPTER XVI.

Contents.

IN this concluding chapter, Paul first commends to the church at Rome the deaconess Phebe, vs. 1, 2. He then sends his salutations to many members of the church, and other Christians who were then at Rome, vs. 3—16. He earnestly exhorts his brethren to avoid those who cause contentions; and after commending their obedience, he prays for God's blessing upon them, vs. 17—21. Salutations from the apostle's companions, vs. 22—24. The concluding doxology, vs. 25—27.

CHAP. 16: 1—27.

Commentary.

(1) *I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea.* Corinth, being situated on a narrow isthmus, had two ports, one towards Europe,

and the other towards Asia. The latter was called Cenchrea, where a church had been organized, of which Phebe was a *servant* (διάκονος), i. e. *deaconess*. It appears that in the apostolic church, elderly females were selected to attend upon the poor and sick of their own sex. Many ecclesiastical writers suppose there were two classes of these female officers; the one (πρεσβυτέρας, corresponding in some measure in their duties to the elders), having the oversight of the conduct of the younger female Christians; and the other whose duty was to attend to the sick and the poor. See Suicer's Thesaurus, under the word διάκονος, and Bingham's Ecclesiastical Antiquities, 11, 12. Augusti's Denkwürdigkeiten der christl. Archäologie.

(2) *That ye receive her in the Lord.* The words *in the Lord* may be connected either with *receive*, 'receive her in a religious manner and from religious motives;' or with the pronoun, *her in the Lord*, her as a Christian. The apostle presents two considerations to enforce this exhortation; first, regard for their Christian character; and, secondly, the service which Phebe had rendered to others. *As becometh saints*; this expression at once describes the manner in which they ought to receive her, and suggests the motive for so doing. *And that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you.* They were not only to receive her with courtesy and affection, but to aid her in any way in which she required their assistance. The words (ἐν ᾧ ἂν πράγματι) *in whatsoever business*, are to be taken very generally, *in whatever matter*, or in whatever respect. *For she hath been a succourer of many and of myself also.* The word (προστάτις) *succourer* means a *patroness*, a *benefactor*; it is a highly honourable title. As she had so frequently aided others, it was but reasonable that she should be assisted.

(3) *Salute Priscilla* and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus*, i. e. my fellow labourers in the promotion of the gospel. Aquila and Priscilla are mentioned in Acts 18: 2, as having left Rome in consequence of the edict of Claudius. After remaining at Ephesus a long time, it seems that they had returned

* Instead of Πρίσυλλαν, Πρίσκαν is read in the MSS. A. C. D. E. F. G., and in many *codd. minusc.*; and this reading is adopted in the editions of Bengel, Mill, Wetstein, Griesbach, Knapp, Lachmann.

to Rome, and were there when Paul wrote this letter, Acts 18: 18, 26. 1 Cor. 16: 19. 2 Tim. 4: 19.

(4) *Who have for my life laid down their own necks*, i. e. they exposed themselves to imminent peril to save me. On what occasion this was done is not recorded. *Unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.* Their courageous and disinterested conduct must have been generally known, and called forth the grateful acknowledgements of all the churches interested in the preservation of a life so precious as that of the apostle.

(5) *The church that is in their house.* These words (*καὶ τὴν κατ' οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίαν*) are understood, by many of the Greek and modern commentators, to mean *their Christian family*; so Calvin, Flatt, Koppe, Tholuck, &c. The most common and natural interpretation is, 'the church which is accustomed to assemble in their house;' see 1 Cor. 16: 19, where this same expression occurs in reference to Aquila and Priscilla. It is probable that, from his occupation as tent-maker, he had better accommodations for the meetings of the church than most other Christians.

Salute my well beloved Epenetus, who is the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ.* This passage is not irreconcilable with 1 Cor. 16: 15, "Ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia;" for Epenetus may have belonged to this family. So many of the oldest MSS. and versions, however, read *Asia* instead of *Achaia* in this verse, that the great majority of editors have adopted that reading. This, of course, removes even the appearance of contradiction.

(6, 7) *Greet Mary; who bestowed much labour upon us. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners.* It is very doubtful whether Junia be the name of a man or of a woman, as the form in which it occurs (*Ἰουνίαν*) admits of either explanation. If a man's name, it is Junias; if a woman's, it is Junia. It is commonly taken as a female name, and the person intended is supposed to have been the wife or sister of Andronicus. *My kinsmen*, i. e. relatives and not merely of the same nation; at least there seems no sufficient

* *Asia* is read in MSS. A. C. D. E. F. G. 6, 67; and in the Coptic, Ethiopic and Latin versions. Mill, Bengel, Griesbach, Knapp and Lachmann adopt this reading.

reason for taking the word in this latter general sense. *Fellow prisoners.* Paul, in 2 Cor. 11: 23, when enumerating his labours, says, "In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft, &c." He was, therefore, often in bonds, (Clemens Romanus, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, sect. 5, aays seven times) he may, therefore, have had numerous fellow prisoners. *Who are of note among the apostles.* This may mean either they were distinguished apostles; or, they were highly respected by the apostles. The latter is most probably the correct interpretation, 1. Because the word *apostle*, unless connected with some other word, as in the phrase "messengers (apostles) of the churches," is very rarely applied in the New Testament to any other than the original messengers of Jesus Christ. The word has a fixed meaning, from which we should not depart without special reason. 2. Because the article (*ὁ τοῦ ἀποστόλου*) among *the* apostles, seems to point out the definite well-known class of persons almost exclusively so called. 3. The original, of course, admits this interpretation, it is the simple meaning of the words. The passage is so understood by Koppe (*magna eorum fama est apud apostolos*), Flatt, Bloomfield, and perhaps the majority of commentators. *Who also were in Christ before me*, i. e. who were Christians before me.

(8—15) *My beloved in the Lord.* The preposition *in* (*iv*) here, as frequently elsewhere, points out the relation or respect in which the word to which it refers is to be understood; *brother beloved both in the flesh and in the Lord*, Phil. v. 16, both in reference to our external relations, and our relation to the Lord. And thus in the following, v. 9, *our helper in Christ*, i. e. as it regards Christ; v. 10, *approved in Christ*, i. e. in his relation to Christ; an approved or tried Christian; v. 12, *who labour in the Lord*; and, *which laboured much in the Lord*, i. e. who, as it regards the Lord, laboured much; it was a Christian or religious service. The names *Tryphena*, *Tryphosa* and *Persis*, are all feminine. The last is commonly supposed to indicate the native country of the person who bore it, as it was not unusual to name persons from the place of their origin, as *Mysa*, *Syria*, *Lydia*, *Andria*, &c.; such names, however, soon became common, and were given without any reference to the birth-place of those who received them. *Chosen in*

the Lord, i. e. either one chosen by the Lord; or, as is most probable in this connexion, *chosen*, (i. e. approved, precious; see 1 Peter 2: 4) in his relation to the Lord, as a Christian.

(16) *Salute one another with a holy kiss.* Reference to this custom is made also in 1 Cor. 16: 20. 1 Thess. 5: 26. 1 Peter 5: 14. It is supposed to have been of oriental origin, and continued for a long time in the early churches;* after prayer, and especially before the celebration of the Lord's supper, the brethren saluting in this way the brethren, and the sisters the sisters. This salutation was expressive of mutual affection and equality before God.

(17) *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.* While he urges them to the kind reception of all faithful ministers and Christians, he enjoins upon them to have nothing to do with those who cause divisions and offences. There were probably two evils in the apostle's mind when he wrote this passage; the divisions occasioned by erroneous doctrines, and the offences or scandals occasioned by the evil conduct of the false teachers. Almost all the forms of error which distracted the early church, were intimately connected with practical evils of a moral character. This was the case to a certain extent with the Judaizers; who not only disturbed the church by insisting on the observance of the Mosaic law, but also pressed some of their doctrines to an immoral extreme. See 1 Cor. 5: 1—5. It was still more obviously the case with those errorists, infected with a false philosophy, who are described in Col. 2: 10—23. 1 Tim. 4: 1—8. These evils were equally opposed to the doctrines taught by the apostle. Those who caused these dissensions, Paul commands, Christians first, *to mark* (*σκοπεῖν*), i. e. to notice carefully, and not allow

* Justin Apol. II. ἀλλήλους φιλήματι ἀσπαζόμεθα παυδάμενοι τῶν εὐχῶν; 'After prayers we salute one another with a kiss.' Tertullian de Oratore; Quæ oratio cum divortio sancti osculi integra? Quem omnino officium facientem impedit pax? Quale sacrificium sine pace receditur? By *peace* is here intended the kiss of peace, for he had before said, Cum fratribus subtrahant osculum pacis, quod est signaculum orationis. In the Apostolic Constitutions it is said (l. 2. c. 57), "Then let the men apart, and the women apart, salute each other with a kiss in the Lord." Origen says, on this verse, "From this passage the custom was delivered to the churches, that after prayers the brethren should salute one another with a kiss."—See GROTIUS and WARTBUR.

them to pursue their corrupting course unheeded; and secondly, to avoid, i. e. to break off connexion with them.*

(19) *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.* These men are to be avoided because they are wicked and injurious. The description here given is applicable, in a greater degree, to errorists in all ages. They are not actuated by zeal for the Lord Jesus; they are selfish, if not sensual; and they are plausible and deceitful. Compare Phil. 3: 18, 19. & Tim. 3: 5, 6. The words (*χρηστολογία* and *εὐλογία*, *blandiloquentia* et *assentatio*) rendered *good words* and *fair speeches*, do not in this connexion materially differ. They express that plausible and flattering address by which false teachers are wont to secure an influence over the *simple*. The word (*ἄκακος*) *simple*, signifies not merely *innocent*, but *unwary*, he who is liable to deception. (Prov. 14: 15, *ἄκακος πιστεύει παντὶ λόγῳ*, *the simple believes every thing.*)

(20) *For your obedience is come abroad unto all men, &c.* This clause admits of two interpretations; the word *obedience* may express either their *obedience to the gospel*, their faith (see ch. 1: 8), or their *obedient disposition*, their readiness to follow the instructions of their religious teachers. If the former meaning be adopted, the sense of the passage is this, ‘Ye ought to be on your guard against these false teachers, for since your character is so high, your faith being every where spoken of, it would be a great disgrace and evil to be led astray by them.’ If the latter meaning be taken, the sense is, ‘It is the more necessary that you should be on your guard against these false teachers, because your ready obedience to your divine teachers is so great and generally known. This, in itself, is commendable, but I would that you joined prudence with your docility.’ This latter view is, on account of the concluding part of the verse, most probably the correct one; see 2 Cor. 10: 6. Phil. v. 21.

I am glad, therefore, on your behalf; but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning

* *Observa autem sermonem ad eos haberi qui in pura Dei doctrina instituti erant: impium et sacrilegum divortium est, qui in Christi veritate consentiunt, distrahere. Sed impudens calumnia est, pacis et unitatis praetextu conspirationem in mendacia et impiis doctrinas defendere.—CALVIN.*

evil. That is, 'Simplicity (an unsuspecting docility) is indeed good; but I would have you not only simple but prudent. You must not only avoid doing evil, but be careful that you do not suffer evil.' Grotius' explanation is peculiarly happy, *ita prudentes ut non fallamini; ita boni ut non fallatis*; 'so prudent as not to be deceived; and so good as not to deceive.' The word (ἀκέραιος from α et κερῶω) *simple*, means *unmixed, pure*, and then *harmless*. 'Wise as to (sic) good, but simple as to evil;' or, 'wise so that good may result, and simple so that evil may not be done.' This latter is probably the meaning. Paul would have them so wise as to know how to take care of themselves; and yet harmless.

(20) *And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.* As the evils produced by the false teachers were divisions and scandals, the apostle, in giving them the assurance of the effectual aid of God, calls him the *God of peace*, i. e. God who is the author of peace in the comprehensive scriptural sense of that term. *Shall bruise* is not a prayer but a consolatory declaration that Satan should be trodden under foot. As Satan is constantly represented as "working in the children of disobedience," the evil done by them is sometimes referred to him as the instigator, and sometimes to the immediate agents who are his willing instruments. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.* This is a prayer for the favour and aid of Christ, and of course is an act of worship, and a recognition of the Saviour's divinity.

(21—24) These verses contain the salutations of the apostle's companions to the Roman Christians, and a repetition of the prayer just mentioned. *I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.* Tertius was Paul's amanuensis. The apostle seldom wrote his epistles with his own hand; hence he refers to the fact of having himself written the letter to the Galatians as something unusual; Gal. 6: 11, "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with my own hand." In order to authenticate his epistles, he generally wrote himself the salutation or benediction at the close; 1 Cor. 16: 21, "The salutation of me Paul, with mine own hand;" 2 Thess. 3: 17, "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand; which is the token in every epistle: so I write." *Gaius mine host, and of the whole church.*

i. e. Gaius, who not only entertains me, but Christians generally; or, in whose house the congregation is accustomed to assemble. *Erastus the chamberlain of the city*, (οἰκονόμος) the treasurer of the city, the *quaestor*.

(25, 27) These verses contain the concluding doxology. *Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, &c.* As the apostle interweaves with his doxology a description and eulogium of the gospel, he renders the sentence so long and complicated, that the regular grammatical construction is broken. There is nothing to govern the words (τῷ δυναμένῳ) *to him that is of power*. The words *be glory for ever*, (which are repeated at the end in connexion with ᾧ) are, therefore, most probably to be supplied. *To him that is able to establish you*, i. e. to render you firm and constant, to keep you from falling. *According to my gospel*. The word (κατά) *according to* may be variously explained. It is by many taken for (ἐν) *in*, ‘establish you in my gospel;’ but this the proper meaning of the words will hardly allow. 2. It may be rendered *agreeably to my gospel*, in such a manner as the gospel requires; or 3. *Through*, i. e. by means of my gospel. The second interpretation is perhaps the best. *And the preaching of Jesus Christ*. This may mean either ‘Christ’s preaching;’ or, ‘the preaching concerning Christ;’ either interpretation gives a good sense, the gospel being both a proclamation by Christ, and concerning Christ. The apostle dwells upon this idea, and is led into a description and commendation of the gospel. *According to the revelation of the mystery*. These words may be considered as co-ordinate with the preceding clause; the sense then is, ‘Who is able to establish you agreeably to (or through) my gospel, agreeably to (through) the revelation of the mystery, &c.’ It is, however, more common and natural to consider this clause as subordinate and descriptive. ‘The gospel is a revelation of the mystery which had been hid for ages.’ The word *mystery*, according to the common scriptural sense of the term, does not mean something obscure or incomprehensible, but simply something previously unknown and undiscoverable by human reason, and which, if known at all, must be known by a revelation from God. In this sense the gospel is called a mystery, or “the wisdom of God in a

mystery, that is, a hidden wisdom," which the wise of this world could not discover, but which God has revealed by his Spirit, 1 Cor. 2: 7—10. 4: 1. Eph. 6: 19. Col. 1: 25—27. 2: 2, &c. In the same sense any particular doctrine, as the calling of the Gentiles, Eph. 3: 4—6; the restoration of the Jews, Rom. 11: 25; the change of the bodies of living believers at the last day, 1 Cor. 15: 51; is called a mystery, because a matter of divine revelation. According to this passage, Paul speaks of the gospel as something "which had been kept secret since the world began;" (χρόνος αἰωνίου), i. e. hidden from eternity in the divine mind. It is not a system of human philosophy, or the result of human investigation, but it is a revelation of the purpose of God. Paul often presents the idea that the plan of redemption was formed from eternity, and is such as no eye could discover and no heart conceive, 1 Cor. 2: 7—9. Col. 1: 26.

(26) *But is now made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets;* that is, 'this gospel or mystery, hidden from eternity, is now revealed; not now, for the first time indeed, since there are so many intimations of it in the prophecies of the Old Testament.' It is evident that the apostle adds the words *and by the scriptures of the prophets*, to avoid having it supposed that he overlooked the fact that the plan of redemption was taught in the Old Testament; compare ch. 1: 2. 3: 21. *According to the command of the everlasting God*, that is, this gospel is now made manifest by command of God. Paul probably uses the expression *everlasting (αἰωνίου) God*, because he had just before said that the gospel was hid from eternity. 'It is now revealed by that eternal Being in whose mind the wonderful plan was formed, and by whom alone it could be revealed.' *Made known to all nations for the obedience of the faith.* 'Made known among (sic, see Mark 13: 10. Luke 24: 47) all nations.' *For the obedience of faith*, i. e. that they should become obedient to the faith; see ch. 1: 5. This gospel, so long concealed, or but partially revealed in the ancient prophets, is now, by the command of God, to be made known among all nations.

(27) *To the only wise God be glory through Jesus Christ for ever, Amen.* There is an ambiguity in the original which is not retained in our version. 'To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever.' The construction

adopted by our translators is perhaps the one most generally approved. 'To him that is able to establish you, to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory.' In this case the relative $\tilde{\varphi}$ to whom, in verse 27, is pleonastic. Others explain the passage thus, 'To the only wise God made known through Jesus Christ, to whom (i. e. Christ) be glory for ever.' The former construction appears the more natural. As Paul often calls the gospel the "wisdom of God" in contrast with the wisdom of men, he here, when speaking of the plan of redemption as the product of the divine mind and intended for all nations, addresses his praises to its author as the ONLY WISE GOD, as that being whose wisdom is so wonderfully displayed in the gospel and in his all other works, that he alone can be considered truly wise.*

Remarks.

1. It is the duty of Christians to receive kindly their brethren and to aid them in every way within their power, and to do this from religious motives and in a religious manner; as becometh saints, vs. 1, 2.

2. The social relations in which Christians stand to each other as relatives, countrymen, friends, should not be allowed to give character to their feelings and conduct to the exclusion of the more important relation which they bear to Christ. It is as friends, helpers, fellow labourers in the Lord, that they are to be recognised; they are to be received in the Lord; our common connexion with Christ is ever to be borne in mind, and made to modify all our feelings and conduct, vs. 3—12.

3. From the beginning females have taken an active and important part in the promotion of religion. They seem more than others to have contributed to Christ of their substance; they were his most faithful attendants, 'last at the cross, and first at the sepulchre;' Phebe was a servant of the church, a succourer of Paul and of many others; Tryphena, Tryphosa and Persis laboured much in the Lord, vs. 1, 2, 3, 6, 12.

* Der Gedanke, dass Gott von Ewigkeit her jenen Plan und den ganzen Verlauf seiner Realisirung geordnet, konnte den Apostel sehr natürlich zu die Betrachtung leiten, wie wenig der kurzsichtige Mensch die Zweckmässigkeit eines solchen Weitplans zu durchschauen vermöge, und so kommt der Apostel dazu, gerade hier Gott das Prädicat des Alleinweisen beizulegen.—ТРОЛУСК.

4. It does not follow, because a custom prevailed in the early churches, and received the sanction of the apostles, that we are obliged to follow it. These customs often arose out of local circumstances and previous habits, or were merely conventional modes of expressing certain feelings, and were never intended to be made universally obligatory. As it was common in the east (and is so, to a great extent at present, not only there but on the continent of Europe), to express affection and confidence by 'the kiss of peace,' Paul exhorts the Roman Christians to salute one another with a holy kiss; i. e. to manifest their Christian love to each other, according to the mode to which they were accustomed. The exercise and manifestation of the feeling, but not the mode of its expression, are obligatory on us. This is but one example; there are many other things connected with the manner of conducting public worship, and with the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper, common in the apostolic churches, which have gone out of use. Christianity is a living principle, and was never intended to be confined to one unvarying set of forms, v. 16.

5. It is the duty of Christians to be constantly watchful over the peace and purity of the church, and not to allow those who cause divisions and scandals, by departing from the true doctrines, to pursue their course unnoticed. With all such we should break off every connexion which either sanctions their opinions and conduct, or gives them facilities for effecting evil, v. 17.

6. False teachers have ever abounded in the church. All the apostles were called upon earnestly to oppose them. Witness the epistles of Paul, John, Peter, and James. No one of the apostolical epistles is silent on this subject. Good men may indeed hold erroneous doctrines; but the false teachers, the promoters of heresy and divisions, as a class, are characterised by Paul as not influenced by a desire to serve Christ, but as selfish in their aims, and plausible, flattering and deceitful in their conduct, v. 18.

7. Christians should unite the harmlessness of the dove with the wisdom of the serpent. They should be careful neither to cause divisions or scandals themselves, nor allow others to deceive and beguile them into evil, v. 19.

8. However much the church may be distracted and troubled,

error and its advocates cannot finally prevail. Satan is a conquered enemy with a lengthened chain; God will ultimately bruise him under the feet of his people, v. 20.

9. The stability which the church and every Christian should maintain is a steadfastness, not in forms or matters of human authority, but in the gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ. God alone is able thus to make his people stand; and, therefore, we should look to him and depend upon him for our own preservation and the perservation of the church; and ascribe to him and not to ourselves all glory and thanks, vs. 25, 27.

10. The gospel is a mystery, i. e. a system of truth beyond the power of the human mind to discover, which God has revealed for our faith and obedience. It was formed from eternity in the divine mind, revealed by the prophets and apostles, and the preaching of Jesus Christ; and is by the command of God to be made known to all nations, vs. 25, 26.

11. God alone is wise. He charges his angels with folly; and the wisdom of men is foolishness with him. To God, therefore, the profoundest reverence and the most implicit submission are due. Men should not presume to call in question what he has revealed, or consider themselves competent to sit in judgment on the truth of his declarations or the wisdom of his plans. **TO GOD ONLY WISE, BE GLORY THROUGH JESUS CHRIST FOR EVER. AMEN.**

The subscriptions to this and the other epistles were not added by the sacred writers, but appended by some later and unknown persons. This is evident, 1. Because it cannot be supposed that the apostles would thus formally state (as in this case) what those to whom their letters were addressed must have already known. The Romans had no need to be informed that this epistle was sent by Phebe, if she actually delivered it to them. 2. They are frequently incorrect, and at times contradict the statements made in the epistles to which they are appended. Thus the subscription to the first Epistle to the Corinthians states that it was written from Philippi, whereas Paul, ch. 16: 8, speaks of himself as being in Ephesus when he was writing. 3. They are either left out entirely by the oldest and best manuscripts and versions, or appear in very different forms. In the present case many MSS. have no subscription at all; others simply, "To the Romans;" others, "To the Romans written from Corinth;" others, "Written to the Romans from Corinth by Phebe;" &c. &c. These subscriptions, therefore, are of no other authority than as evidence of the opinion, which prevailed, to a certain extent, at an early date as to the the origin of the epistles to which they are attached. Unless confirmed from other sources they cannot be relied upon.

THE END.

