

THE DOCTRINE OF PARTICULAR ELECTION, BEFORE TIME.

**Asserted and Proved by God's Word, against
the Quakers, Papists and Arminians.**

**In Answer to a Challenge given the Author to
make good {by the Scriptures of Truth} the
above-said Doctrine. Wherein is Evidently
Discovered.**

- I. That the above-said doctrine, rightly understood and believed, {with application to one's self,} is the great enemy of sin, both in the heart and life of a true Believer; and that which keeps the Believer from despair, in the deepest desertion and temptation.
- II. That the doctrine of free-will and general redemption, &c., is an inlet to, and an encourager of sin; and which leads in the end to horrid despair, under powerful awakenings in the natural consciences of an unregenerate man.

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24:24.

By JAMES BARRY
An Unworthy Minister of the Gospel

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Brief Introduction by William Huntington.

I will not say of this author as Claudius Lysias said of Paul, that he was taken of the Jews, and would have been killed of them, if he had not come with an army and rescued him; but this I will say, that he has left behind him so good a report through faith, that many in our days would have judged it their wisdom to have left it in the ruins of the house, or confined it to the moles and to the bats, rather than revise a testimony that discovers their foundation even to the neck. Hab.3:13.

The author of this narrative was the son of a Protestant Bishop, the nephew of a Noble Lord, and was training up for the ministry, and expected to cut no mean figure in the same Establishment of which his father was a prelate; but God came with an army of terrors, and, with a few arrows from his quiver, bent him to his bow, and made him a son of consolation, to the chosen fraternity of Christ Jesus.

By the prejudices of education, he was {as well as myself} a most zealous bigot to the church of England; and, when his conscience was awakened, as he informs us, he tried her prelates, her cathedral walls, her liturgy, service book, ceremonies, and clergy, to the uttermost; and concluded, with an honest confession, that the whole of it was vanity, and, to a sinner wounded of God, vexation of spirit.

He made full proof of those celebrated treatises, {which in the general meet with a more cordial reception than the Bible,} viz., the Practice of Piety, by the advice of a Bishop; he went through stitch with the Whole Duty of Man, and made Baxter's Call to the Unconverted his bosom friend, and worked himself into such a conversion as that author describes. But when God laid judgment to the

line, and righteousness to the plummet, the hail swept away these refuges of lies. Isa.28:17. The Practice of Piety left him in possession of all his impiety; the Whole Duty of Man gave him up to stand or fall by his dead works; and Baxter's Call left him a stranger to the heavenly calling; and no wonder, for Baxter's Call and the calls of God widely differ.

I have read what is called the life and conversion of many, but very few of them went so far, in what they call a work of grace, as this author went in a state of nature. They went not in their profession far enough to know whether there was any such thing as a spirit of bondage or no; much less to a saving conversion from bondage to liberty. But this author, when he was awakened, went such lengths in a reformation, and {as he thought} conversion also, and grew into such a confidence in it, that his excellency mounted to heaven, and his head touched the clouds. Job 20:6. But when the commandment came, all confidence was rooted out of his tabernacle, and he was brought to the king of terrors. Job 18:14. As soon as the Law came, not the letter only, but the whole of the Law, the letter of it, the spirit of it, the bondage of it, the wrath of it, with the extensive demands of it, and the thundering curse of it {for that is the Law,} then sin revived, and he saw and felt the necessity of a perfect conformity to the thereunto.

Accordingly, he made it his only rule of life, not in word, but indeed and in truth; he fasted, he prayed, he worshipped, he watched, he worked, he abstained from all appearance of evil, gave all that he received to feed the poor, denied himself, and paid a strict attention to all the negative and positive parts of the Law, to see what could be done by that rule; and, upon proof, found that it discovered his

sin to such a dreadful degree, that the devil himself invaded him, the wrath of God pursued him, despair sunk him, the indignation of the Almighty drank up his spirits, a violent inflammation seized his body, his eyes waxed dim, his taste and smelling failed him, his very hearing was affected, his bodily frame made crooked by the intolerable burden of his sins, and his ghastly countenance frightful to behold, insomuch, that carnal persons said that evil spirits haunted him. This, he confessed, was all that the Law could do for him, and declares this to be the folly of those men who set the letter against the spirit of the Law, which must never be divided, seeing truth declares, that the Law genders to bondage; therefore let no man strip the letter of the Law from its gendering spirit. Such men as this author understand the Law, and handled it lawfully. But as to such who get into a pulpit, and tell people they "would as soon hear a person curse and swear as to hear them say, the Law is not a rule of life," know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. Besides, persons who belie and ridicule poor penitent sinners received to mercy, and advance a notion that they never can prove, show but very little signs of any regard paid to the rule they contend for. Opposing the truth, bellying and slandering the just, and injuring them in their reputation, and in the work of the Lord, cannot be called loving one's neighbour as one's self. Everybody knows that those that hate the just shall be desolate; anger or hatred being in God's account murder; and we know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him; therefore, such persons talking about the Law, as their rule of life, is nothing but a noise, just to blind the ignorant.

When the gentleman, at whose house the Gospel is preached at Peckham, brought this tract to

me, desiring I would print it, saying it was one after my own heart, I could not help crying out, while I perused it, with Naomi, saying, this is a near kinsman of mine; it is one of my next kinsmen. Thou shalt be the Coalheaver's cousin; thou art a fellow student, brought up at the same college, under the same tutor, fitted in the same furnace, and ordained by the same bishop; thou shalt not lay among the pots, nor be a spoil for the bats; thou shalt have the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and thy feathers with yellow gold, and fly about as in ancient times, telling the daughters of Zion what God did in thy days, and in the old times before us.

In a word, we have in this narrative the repeated cries of a chosen vessel when in infancy, childhood, and youth, and the providence of God perpetually answering them. Secondly, we have the Pharisee of the Pharisees, or what is called the true churchman. Thirdly, we have the true disciple of Moses in all his performances; the sensible sinner in all the agonies of the damned; and the rich displays of divine grace without the use of means. Fourthly, the noble lord his uncle, the bishop his father, and all friends, disowning him, and for ever casting him off, for turning, as they termed it, a fanatic and a schismatic, and for becoming a dissenter of God's own making, and for worshipping God according to the spirit he received, and the truth that God applied to his soul. And lastly, we have the happy man, the real convert, and the sound Christian, taking his final leave of parents, relations, and the world, and offering to die on a dunghill rather than defile his conscience, by returning to a religion that is taught by the precepts of men. If this be the work of the Lord, if this be real conversion, if this be the testimony of faith by which the deceased author yet speaketh, and if this good report be echoed from the

blood of sprinkling, which in his conscience spoke better things than that of Abel; then where are legions of our preachers got, who would deny their birth, parentage, and mimic an education, in order to bring in the service book, and obtain the vestment and dignity of an established divine which this author was purged from, by near four years discipline with the horrors of the damned.

His books were printed by Mr. Marshall in Newgate Street; but none of his works have fallen into my hands but the last mentioned. When he had finished the book which he entitled, *The Spirit of Prayer*, he sold the copy to the Printer, and strictly charged him not to alter the title, or the work; but the publisher sent it out with this title, *A Help to Prayer*. I cannot learn that Dr. Calamy, or any other writer of the *History of the Puritans*, took any notice of him, which is easily accounted for, God having stripped him of all confidence in the flesh, and wiped him out of the cathedral, his testimony could never gain him any credit among the Tories, Papists or rotten Arminians, whose craft is always in danger from such witnesses; therefore, when they become historians, they are sure to bury the names of such men, and their testimonies, in silence, lest the devil's interest should fall to the ground. Should any of the other books fall into my hands, they shall appear in the world again, if God permit.

Reader, I have sent the testimony out, title page, and the date of the year in which it was first printed, nearly as I found it; I have only altered here and there a mistake, which I think was the printer's. I have only added a title, and this preface to the work - pray forgive me this wrong - and have put here and there a little note, with the initials of W.H., S.S., which are the tokens in every epistle, so I write. That thou mayest read it to profit, and profit

by reading, is the prayer and desire of this author's cousin, and thy servant to command, William Huntington. Tower Hill, Nov.24, 1788. {As attached to Barry's Testimonial Treatise, entitled, A Reviving Cordial for a Sin-Despairing Soul.}

TO THE IMPARTIAL READER.

Courteous Reader,

I am to inform thee, that in the time of the Popish government, when Popery and Quakerism smiled so amicably on each other, as the two religions, if I might so call them, which are nearest of kin of all the religions visibly professed in these kingdoms, the people called Quakers sent me a thrasonical challenge in writing, {which was afterwards published in print,} to prove, from the Scriptures of truth, the four doctrines here following: 1. The doctrine of the resurrection of this fleshly body, which dies and turns to dust. 2. The doctrine of justification, by the alone righteousness of Jesus Christ, freely imputed. 3. The doctrine of imperfection in sanctification in the most mortified believer, while in this world. 4. The doctrine of particular unconditional election before time. All which the Quakers do stiffly and peremptorily deny, as by their printed book against me doth evidently appear. Their challenge I was resolved to answer in print, to let the world see what heterodox and heretical principles that deluded and seduced people do hold and teach for true religion. Besides my resolution herein, I oblige myself, by promise to my congregation, that I would, in the strength of Christ, prick the bladder of their blasphemous pride, by proving and making good, by the Scriptures of truth,

the above said doctrines. For my encouragement wherein, my congregation did unanimously stand by me, resolving that I should be at no other charge hereabout but the studying part. Paper was bought, the printer agreed with; and just as the press was ready to begin, the storm came suddenly on the Protestants in Dublin, that we were soon scattered asunder; the providence of God calling on us to secure our lives instead of printing books. The reason why I have been so long silent in this cause, is the want of that help which I had from my flock in Dublin. If any generous noble-spirited Christians, who love Christ's cause better than they do the mammon of this world, will step in to my encouragement, in supplying the room of my absent friends, they shall, in a very short time, see the four doctrines above mentioned cleared up and made good from God's word, notwithstanding all the Jesuitical craft and subtilty whereof that people seem to be masters. The reason why I have singled out the last of the four doctrines rather than any of the other three, is to discover and confute the Quakers' pernicious heterodoxy in the foundation principles of true Christianity is twofold.

First, because that in denying and opposing the doctrine of particular, unconditional election, before time, they do manifestly rob God of his sovereignty and praise.

Secondly, because of the natural tendency, which the denial of this doctrine of a particular, unconditional election, before time, and the holding and propagating its contrary, viz., the doctrine of free will to good in every man, of general redemption, and a temporary conditional election with falling from grace, hath to encourage men in living a licentious, loose life; and to necessitate men's final despair of salvation, when the natural

conscience in unregenerate men comes to be under powerful awakenings, for sin committed against the Law of God.

That I do the Quakers no wrong, in charging them with robbing God and encouraging men to live in sin; as also their laying a foundation for men's despair of ever being saved in their way of conditional and temporary election, will evidently appear to him who reads and compares with God's revealed will, what is discovered in this small tract; and in case any noble-spirited Christians will but encourage the work, as already hinted, I do not so much as doubt, but that the Spirit of God will enable me to demonstrate from God's own word that the Quakers, in denying the resurrection of the body, and the justification of a sinner by the alone righteousness of the Son of God freely imputed, without any regard had to any qualifications, inhering in the person of the sinner justified, do deny all sound and saving religion; and as touching their sinless perfection attainable in this life, whereof they make such brags, it shall be made plain that herein they both belie the Spirit of God, and contradict the experience of all saved believers, both in heaven and earth.

THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.

Chapter 1 – Election before Time.

God did, before all time, by his unchangeable counsel, most freely, unchangeably, and from all eternity, elect and choose unto himself, out of lapsed Adam's fallen posterity, a certain number of persons, which can neither be lessened nor increased, to partake of his special saving grace to salvation, by Jesus Christ his Son, to the praise of the glory of his own grace. What I have now asserted for truth, if God enables me to demonstrate and make good by Scripture, as I doubt not he will, then will it unavoidably follow {all the wit and malice of men and devils cannot overthrow it} that God had passed by and reprobated others. In the proposition now laid down there are three things to be considered, in order to a clearing up and making good the point in dispute. First, the act of God and the objects thereof, which are both held forth and intended in the Scriptures following. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph.1:4. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Jn.15:19. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." II Thes.2:13. In the Scriptures now quoted we have God electing or choosing, and then the objects of his election or choice, viz., particular persons on whom that election of God fixeth, viz., some particular persons. That God's act of election

hath fixed on some particular persons, not on all in general, as the enemies of election would fain have it, the following arguments will evince.

Argument 1. If God hath made a promise of life and salvation to some particular persons only, then hath he elected and chosen to himself a certain number of persons, to whom alone, excluding all others, that promise of grace and salvation shall be made good. But God hath made a promise of life and salvation to some particular persons only, excluding all others; therefore God hath elected and chosen to himself a certain number of persons, to whom, excluding all others, the promise of life and salvation shall be made good. That God hath made a promise of life and salvation to some particular persons only, excluding all others, is evident and plain to such as acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of Divine Authority. "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Gen.17:7.

Here the judicious and unprejudiced reader may plainly see that Abraham and his seed were particular persons, distinct from all other nations and people which were round about him; and these it pleased God, of his mere sovereign grace, to single out for his own peculiar use, that they may be a holy people, to bear his name, and to give him a pure and spiritual worship and service, which should be according to his own holy institution and divine appointment; and that they may be made partakers of the promised inheritance, which was the sure possession of the kingdom of heaven, of which the promised land of Canaan was but a type and shadow.

The people of the Jews was but a small people when God fixed his love on them, and called them. "For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God; the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen." Deut.7:6-8. The same promise which was made to Abraham and his seed under the Old Testament dispensation is confirmed by the New Testament.

And evident it is, that as God chose and called Abraham under that dark dispensation, with whom he entered into a covenant of grace; the benefit of which was to be of equal extent to himself and his children, even so many of them as were the children of the promise. So under the Gospel dispensation, God, who is a free agent, acting all he doth in a way of sovereignty, saw fit to make known, by the Gospel, that among the Gentiles also he had a select and chosen people, on whom he had decreed to confer the riches of his free grace, through the plenteous redemption that is in his Son Jesus Christ; and that pursuant to his own immutable decree and purpose, electing and choosing them before time began. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:39.

Here is that promise formerly mentioned, which looks at Abraham and his children, and also discovers the gracious design of God to make a

certain number of the Gentiles actual partakers of the self-same grace and blessing.

The manner of the apostle's expressing himself is full of clearness and perspicuity, proving that the promise of that grace and salvation is not designed for all and singular the Gentile sinners that then were, or in after times should be in the world; but he limits and restrains the promise to a certain peculiar number, lest sinners should mistake the apostle, and conclude, that because he had laid down an universal term, saying, "and to all that are afar off," he, by way of explanation shows what the Spirit means by that universal term, adding, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call," in which he plainly shows, and invincibly proves, that none of the Gentile sinners shall ever partake of God's special grace, but such as are {in time} effectually called out of a state of nature to a state of justification and sanctification; the which is never granted to any but in the right of a covenant-promise, which covenant-promise respects that gracious act of God, electing and choosing in Christ his Son, as many of Adam's posterity both of Jews and Gentiles, as his own sovereignty pleased; according to that of the apostle, "moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Rom.8:30. And our Saviour himself, in John designs the Gentiles, whom God had in his electing love given in charge to him, in those expressions, "and other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Jn.10:16.

Argument 2. If among the many thousands of people who hear the Gospel preached, but some, and that very few comparatively, are savingly

converted, receive mercy, are justified and sanctified, and are made to persevere in a course of faith and holy life; then God hath elected and chosen only a certain peculiar number of men to life and salvation. But among the many thousands of people who hear the Gospel preached, but some only are savingly converted, receive mercy, are justified, are sanctified, and do finally persevere in a course of faith and holy life. Therefore God hath elected and chosen only a certain peculiar number of men to life and salvation. There is nothing more evident than that the greatest number, even of those people who are outwardly called by the Gospel, do slight and contemn the Gospel and the grace set forth therein; witness that of our Saviour, "for many are called, but few are chosen." Matt.20:16. That parable of the king who made a great supper, to which the king by his servants invited the guests, notwithstanding which, many of them made blind excuses and shifted it off. By which practice in the guests we are to understand, that great slight and contempt which worldly minded sinners put on the Lord Jesus and his great salvation, wrought for the elect, which God proclaims in the Gospel, the which they undervalue, preferring the accommodations of this perishing world before that great and precious salvation. Luke 14:16-19. "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." Rom.9:27.

Now then, if among those many who are externally called, and the very many who make a profession, there are but very few who savingly believe, repent, and finally persevere in a course of faith and holy life; then it is beyond all controversy that those few who so believe, repent, &c., are particular persons whom free grace elected to that

state of believing and persevering; and the rest, who were by far the greater number, were left to inward blindness and hardness of heart, according to Romans 11:7-8, "what then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded, according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day."

Argument 3. If God hath chosen persons by name, to be partakers of life and salvation by Christ his Son, then hath he chosen particular persons. But God hath chosen persons by name to be partakers of life and salvation by Christ his Son. Therefore God hath chosen particular persons, &c. The major proposition is not questioned; the minor or assumption is secured by the express testimony of the Spirit. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev.13:8. "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Lk.10:20. "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life." Phil.4:3.

Argument 4. If Jeremiah and Jacob, &c., were particular persons chosen and loved of God before they were born, then God did elect and choose particular persons to life and salvation; but Jeremiah and Jacob, &c., were particular persons, chosen and loved of God before they were born. Therefore, God did elect and choose particular persons to life and salvation. That Jeremiah and Jacob, &c., were particular persons, no man of sense will deny; that

they were beloved of God before the natural birth, the word of God is full and express. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." Jer.1:5. "At the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people." Jer.31:1. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Rom.9:11.

Argument 5. If God knows his elect from all others, before he calls them in conversion, then hath God elected particular persons to Life and Salvation. But God knows his elect from all others, before he calls them in conversion. Therefore God hath elected and chosen particular persons to life and salvation. That God's precognition or foreknowledge, joined with his purpose of grace to save his elect, goes before his actually calling them in effectual conversion, is beyond dispute. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren; moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Rom.8:29-30. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." II Tim.2:19.

Argument 6. If they who believe in time, were, before their believing, ordained to eternal life, then did God elect and choose particular persons unto life and salvation. But they who believe in time, were, before their believing, ordained to eternal life. Therefore God hath elected and chosen particular

persons unto life and salvation. That God's pre-ordination of persons to life and salvation doth precede or go before believing and repentance, is plain. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Rom.11:7. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." Jn.10:26. From which Scriptures it is most plain, that none do or can, in time, believe and repent to salvation, but such persons as are theretofore appointed by God's gracious purpose.

Argument 7. If the term, elect, doth signify and pre-suppose a calling or choosing some particular persons or things, out from among other persons or things, then hath God out of so many elected some particular persons unto eternal salvation. But the term, elect, doth signify and presuppose a calling or choosing some particular persons or things out from among other persons or things. Therefore God hath, out of many, called and chosen some particular persons unto eternal life.

Argument 8. If the Lord Jesus did lay down his life but for a certain particular number of sinners, then did God elect and choose a particular number to life and salvation. But the Lord Jesus did lay down his life for a certain particular number of sinners. Therefore God did elect and choose a particular number to life and salvation. That the Lord Jesus did lay down his life for a certain particular number, is obvious and plain to him that can but read. "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep." Jn.10:15. With this accords that of Paul to Titus, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and

purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit.2:14. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Eph.5:25. The sheep of whom Christ speaks can be understood to be no other but believers, even such as died in the faith before his incarnation, with the believers of that present day, and all who in time to come were to believe in him, and these are the souls, who were by the Father committed to the pastoral care and charge of Christ the great Shepherd of the sheep, as sheep are committed to the care and charge of an under shepherd. For these Christ lays down his life; to these he, by his Spirit, actually applies the virtue of his death, over these he watches, and to these only, excluding all others, he gives eternal life.

That these were given to Christ by the Father to be redeemed and brought to glory, appears from John, "and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Jn.6:39. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world, thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." Jn.17:6. And verse 2, "as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Mark this, Reader! "To as many as thou hast given him." This plainly proves that God did commit to the care and faithfulness of Christ his Shepherd, a certain particular number to be justified and saved by him; and therefore not all the race of fallen mankind, as Papists, Arminians, Quakers, Free-willers, &c., vainly teach and hold.

Another consideration, which is full of clearness, to convince and satisfy any right in their minds, that not Adam's posterity in general, as the

heretics above named would fain have it, but a certain particular and definite number were elected and chosen by God, and by him given to Christ his Son, to be redeemed and saved; Christ's refusing to concern himself for any others, in the discharge of his office of intercessor, as appears from John 17:9, "I pray for them," that is, for the elect, for whom he had undertaken as guarantor and surety, "I pray not for the world," that is, those of the world who were by God left in a reprobate state and condition, as is evident from John 17:14. "I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world; even as I am not of the world." Here are two distinct parties described by Christ, the one is prayed for, the other is not; the one is hated, the other hates; the very practice of the latter denotes the persons to be children of another father, distinct from those they hate. There is nothing more discovers men to be the children of the devil, than their hating righteousness, and not loving those who appear to be godly. "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." I Jn.3:10. As love to God, his truth, and such as bear his image, is an infallible character of an elect child of God. John 13:35. I John 3:14; 4:7. So to hate God, his truth, and such as bear his holy image, is the indelible character of a reprobate designed for eternal destruction. I John 3:10.

The second thing in the proposition to be considered, is the end and design of God in that act of his in electing and choosing, which is twofold. First, as it respects the creatures elected, viz., that they might partake of the special grace of God here on earth, and of eternal glory in the kingdom of heaven, through Christ his Son, according to that of

Paul, Eph.1:4, "according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Thes.2:13-14. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thes.5:9.

Secondly, with respect to God, electing, viz., that the glory of his sovereign, free, and rich grace, might be extolled and praised forever, according as the apostle expresses it in Ephesians 1:6, "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." Eph.1:11-12.

The third thing in the proposition to be considered, is to take notice of the properties in that act of God, electing. Those properties are in number three. First, God in electing and choosing some sinners to himself out of the corrupted mass of fallen mankind, on whom he purposed to show mercy; he did elect and choose them most freely; there was nothing at all in the objects elected and chosen, that could move God wherefore he should elect one sinner more, or sooner than another; for as fallen into sin, and equally obnoxious to the curse of the Law and the wrath to come, were all the sons and daughters of Adam looked on by God, when he fixed his electing love on some, and actually rejected and

passed others by, on whom the most High God, as an Uncontrollable Sovereign, purposed to execute the fierceness of his wrath for sin. The reason or impulsive cause of this difference, which the tremendous God saw fit to make between sinners, equally guilty and obnoxious to the curse and wrath of God, is not to be sought out of God himself. An example and lively instance hereof we have in Romans 9:11, which the wise God hath seen fit should be recorded, on purpose to stop the mouth of carnal reason, which is so wretchedly prone to question and dispute against his sovereignty over his creatures. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

The wise God foreseeing the pure blind reasonings and cavillings of carnal men's unsanctified brains, against the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, in disposing of the eternal concerns of his rational creatures, fallen by sin into a state and condition of misery, through their own default; hath seen good, for the vindication of his own prerogative, to make known to the sons of men, and that by the unerring wisdom and unquestionable authority of so great a man as Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, the reason of God's method in proceeding to elect some of fallen mankind, to a state of life and salvation, through a Redeemer, and reprobating others, leaving them forever to perish in that sin and misery, into which they did, without any constraint, wilfully plunge themselves, to be no other than his own most free and holy will, seeing that he alone is the undoubted Sovereign of the world, who hath an indisputable right to determine

what to do with, or how to dispose of sinning rebels, without being any way liable to the controlment of any of his creatures, especially such of them as, by sin, have forfeited their very being to the Divine Justice; and who, while in an unreconciled state, are not capable of knowing him, or of being subject to his Divine Law.

The good will and pleasure then of the blessed God, is the source and fountain whence the great disparity between the elect and the reprobate world doth spring, not anything in the creatures themselves, as Arminian cavillers dream and conceit it doth. This will evidently appear, if the reader will but, with a becoming modesty and unprejudiced judgment, read the whole chapter at length, and, with fervent prayer to God for the wisdom of his Spirit, look narrowly into, and with sobriety consider the 11th and the 16th verses, where it plainly appears, that the two conceited qualifications, of which the enemies of election are usually proud, and which they hold and teach, are the procuring cause of the difference between the good and the evil men on earth, viz., the free will in man, and the good works which unregenerate men do but conceit they do; they are both met with, and equally discarded by God, from having any room or place among the causes which put God either upon choosing the elect, or rejecting the reprobate. Mark the 11th verse, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." With this agrees Ephesians 2:8,9, "for by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." And Titus 3:5, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us," &c. Vain unregenerate man would fain persuade himself that his worse than

threadbare rags of polluted morality, negative and positive, is a covering sufficient not only to hide his ulcerous and plague-sores of guilt and vileness, from the pure and all-seeing eyes of an infinite Majesty, but also to deck and adorn his soul, so as to bespeak him an object fit for a Holy God to behold with delight. O horrid delusion! Worse than frenzy, or madness itself, this being but a temporary malady, which may, by the use of ordinary means, be holpen, but that, the bane and destruction of the immortal soul, which nothing but the despised grace of God in Christ can cure; such miserably deluded souls will not find it easy to believe, that to think so highly of their own qualifications is the greatest bar or hindrance which keeps them from salvation. Read also, with care, verse 16, "so then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy."

Let the adversaries of the doctrine I am now vindicating, but consider that man has fallen into sin and misery of his own accord, is the object of election and reprobation; and let them, if they can, tell or show me how a natural man, in his lapsed, guilty state, can possibly either will or act anything but what is, both for matter and manner, most vile and abominable in the sight of that God who is purity and holiness itself in the abstract. And if so, wherefore then should the most just and holy God be conceived to elect men for that which he can do no other than hate and loath, as the best duties of an unregenerate person are both contrary to the nature of God, and also repugnant to his just and holy Law?

When unregenerate men talk and brag of their duties and qualifications, as that which must recommend them to God, and purchase for them a right to the crown that fades not away, they think

and speak as men in a midnight dream, not understanding what they say, or whereof they affirm; and the head-spring of this their boasting of their qualifications, is the profound ignorance and luciferian pride which sways their unrenewed spirits, having never passed under the killing severity of the Law of God, set home on the conscience by the spirit of bondage, to prepare them for healing by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Until this work of the Lord pass on the soul, no child of Adam can possibly prize the Son of God, or see himself to be utterly undone, till, with the rich man in the parable, the unquenchable flames of hell discover his misery to him. Luke 16:23. From what hath been observed from the Scriptures now referred to, plain it is, that God, in electing some and reprobating others of Adam's posterity, cannot, without blasphemy, be said to elect or choose any man to a state of life and glory for anything of good which he foresaw would be in the sinner, fallen into a state of sin and misery; and therefore, if there was nothing of foreseen good in the creature elected, for which God had respect to him more than to another, it must unavoidably follow, that in God electing, not in the sinner elected, is the impulsive or moving cause, viz., his own sovereign good pleasure.

God, as hath been already observed, in electing and reprobating men, looks on them as fallen and guilty creatures, who had wrought their own misery, by their voluntary breach of his Royal Law. To none of them was the Most High any way obliged. He might have sent them all to the same place and condition of the fallen angels, whose conduct and example they followed in rebelling against their holy Sovereign. And which of all the reprobates now in hell will it avail, to dispute the point of God's sovereignty with him, or to inquire

why or wherefore he hath left them in that sad and deplorable state of sin and misery? Pertinent to the business in hand, is that query which Augustin puts in his book of the City of God, "who made the reprobate," saith he, to which he himself replies, "who," saith he, "but God?" Again he queries, "why did God make the reprobate?" To which he answers, "because," saith he, "it was his will." Again he queries, "why," saith he, "was it God's will to make the reprobate a reprobate?" He answers the caviling querist, or saucy and pragmatistical inquirer, with that of Paul, Rom.9:20, "nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?"

If Augustin were now living on earth should read the reply which Grevincovius, that blaspheming proud Arminian, made to the query which Paul put to the called Corinthian, who excelled in the gifts of God, I Cor.4:7, "for who maketh thee to differ, and what hast thou, that thou hast not received." To which Grevincovius most arrogantly and blasphemously replies, "I myself make myself to differ." I say, if Augustin were to read this Arminian's answer to Paul, it would not be difficult to guess at what rate Augustin would treat his insolence.

If the abused grace of God changed him not before death, it is most dreadful to think, and seriously to consider, how little the free-will and learning, of which he was greatly proud, do now avail him at the bar of the great Judge; no doubt but he finds, in woeful experience, what an unequal match, he is, for the great Jehovah to dispute matters with. Oh, that men of his spirit and pernicious principles were wise, to consider things aright, before they see and feel their folly in the unquenchable flames of God's wrath in hell.

Let it be further considered, how express the Spirit of God is in charging on Adam and all his offspring, without exception, the breach of his Law, and, on that very account, accounting them all guilty criminals, and unclean polluted sinners, who, by their voluntary apostasy, have forfeited his favour and lost his blessed image, wherein the glory and happiness of the rational creature consisted, as the apostle witnesseth. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," Rom.3:23, and in verse 19, "now we know, that what things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." The conclusion whereof he sets down in verse 20, "therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the Law is the knowledge of sin." With Paul concur all the prophets, and the other penmen of Holy Scriptures, setting forth the wretched condition of all mankind by the apostasy of Adam, the natural and federal head of his children.

The condition then of all Adam's posterity being such, as renders every sinner culpable before God, and not only so, but utterly incapable of willing or acting the least part of that duty which God's Law requires to a helping or recovering himself out of that his misery; it is most plain and obvious to every enlightened understanding, that by the tenure of the first Adam's covenant, all are born heirs of the curse and wrath of an offended God; and are, by reason of that spiritual impotency, which is inflicted on Adam's nature as a punishment for breaking God's Law, as altogether unable to believe in an atoning Saviour when set forth by God in the Gospel of his grace, as they are to perform the condition of that holy Law of God, the violation and breach whereof

hath cast and condemned, at God's bar, the whole race of mankind.

Man's wretchedness and misery then is of himself; he can truly and justly blame none for it but himself. Gen.3:17; Eccles.7:29; Hos.13:9. This granted, it unavoidably and by necessary consequence follows, that God is most just and righteous in sealing, to the day of his wrath, with the black character of reprobation, that part of Adam's posterity, on whom he hath fixedly resolved to glorify that adorable and tremendous attribute of his incensed justice, for breaking his just and righteous Law. And where is the man who will undertake to prove God unjust and unrighteous, in case he had dealt with the elect themselves as he hath done with the reprobates, viz., seal them up to the judgment of the great day of his wrath! God is debtor to none of Adam's children, unless to damn and forsake them forever, for their devil-like apostasy and rebellion.

In this adorable and tremendous dispensation of his, in reprobating the greatest part of mankind, and electing to himself, out of the fallen and corrupted mass, some few of mankind, on whom he purposed to glorify the riches of his grace, through Christ his Son, he acts towards both in way of absolute sovereignty; so that as the reprobates cannot say they have not merited that curse and misery which is like to be their portion forever, so neither shall the elect be ever able to attribute their salvation to any other cause besides the sovereign free and rich grace of God, which, had it pleased God, might have fixed its hold on the reprobates, making them the elect, while they themselves were overlooked and passed by.

For my own part, I must ingenuously confess, that I am so far from reflecting on God, as any way

unjust or partial, for dealing with Adam's children as he doth, that I am rather astonished to think that any of Adam's apostate offspring should ever escape that curse and wrath, to which they were all equally born heirs apparent, Eph.2:3, "and were by nature, the children of wrath, even as others." This was the state and condition of the elect themselves, as they are the natural offspring of Adam. But the banner of God's free grace, and undeserved love and pity, hath been, by the arm of divine sovereignty, effectually, displayed over them, when in their blood and wretchedness, even then when God first laid the foundation of their salvation in election. According to Ephesians 1:4-7, and Ephesians two to the 10th verse, well may every justified believer cry out with Paul, Rom.11:33, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

In this bottomless profundity, or depth, of God's unsearchableness, the wit and corrupt reason of unregenerate men, with all their acquired parts, are swallowed up and confounded; by reason whereof it comes to pass, that many times such as are admired for their great reason and learning, will not allow the Creator of the world that privilege which they readily grant to a man like themselves, viz., to decree or act anything but what their blind reason and perverted judgment can see a reason for. Oh, what an age do we live in, wherein the immensity and unsearchableness of God is, on every occasion of men's disputing principles of religion, called on to hold up the hand at the bar of those men's carnal reason, who indeed have lost the use of right reason.

Of such men I would gladly know, whether they can, with all their mother wit, decked and

adorned with all their academical learning, fathom the depth of the created ocean, or tell the exact number of the stars, and what influence they have on human bodies? If they can tell how the soul and body of man are united? Or how the bones grow in the womb of the woman with child? With many other secrets in nature, not only difficult, but even impossible to be found out by the wit and learning of Adam's children; witness the many learned philosophers, wherewith the world abounded, whose wit and learning came vastly short in finding out and tracing the Almighty in his works of Creation and Providence, from whence I argue, from the lesser to the greater. If all the mother wit and acquired parts and learning of the children of Adam could never find out many secrets in the works of Creation and Providence, how much more impossible is it for them to find out the Almighty Creator himself to perfection?

The query which Zophar the Naamathite put to Job, will never be answered by any creatures in earth or heaven any other way than in the negative, Job 2:7, "canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" And from what source or fountain men's atheistical and saucy reflections on God, for making such a difference between Adam's children, in saving but few in comparison, and damning the rest, should spring, I cannot tell, unless from their profound ignorance of the immense and incomprehensible perfection of God's Being, and their not owning and believing his absolute sovereignty over his creatures. I appeal to the conscience of every savingly enlightened man, who reads this, whether this wilful and affected ignorance of God, and their denying his absolute sovereignty over his creatures, be not the very portal or door at which the horrid

profaneness and matchless debaucheries of this worst of ages, which now lays the kingdoms open to utter ruin, have entered the stage.

This is that which the devil, and his busy agents the Romish Jesuits, aimed at, when, in the late reign of King James, they obtained the king's royal prohibition, forbidding ministers, both non and con to meddle, in preaching, with the doctrine of election and reprobation. They well knew how subservient the keeping the people ignorant of the doctrine of election would be to open the floodgates to profaneness and debauchery, and consequently prepare England for a ready reception of cursed and damning popery.

The denying the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in electing and reprobating lapsed and guilty rebels, and teaching and maintaining, both in pulpit and print, free-will to good in unregenerate men, as also the doctrine of general redemption, is a doctrine which is altogether unscriptural; and because of men's violence and peremptoriness in teaching and propagating the same, and their obstinacy in refusing to receive and submit to the contrary doctrine, which is according to the Scriptures, the only doctrine which designs the destruction of sin in the hearts and lives of true believers, and the promoter of true holiness, God most justly punisheth such people with a giving them up, not only to believe the most nonsensical lies for true religion, but even to wallow like swine in the mire of the grossest immoralities, even to an excelling the very pagan world.

To illustrate the point I am now defending against the Quakers and Arminians, viz., that God, in electing some and reprobating others, doth act therein most freely, as an absolute sovereign; let them give me leave to put this question to their

reason and conscience, such as it is. Suppose that all the several parties in the city, who differ in their mode or way of worshipping God, should, in their respective meetings, instead of worshipping God, lay all their heads, hearts, and hands together, to contrive and carry on a plot against the king and the fundamental laws of the kingdom, with a full intent to destroy both the one and the other; to which plot all the several parties do, as one man, harmoniously and unanimously agree; the law condemns not only the practice as traitorous and treasonable, but sentences the very persons, all and singular, who are proved to have had any hand in such a plot, to a shameful and cruel death.

The plot comes to be discovered, and upon discovery, the king, who hath the executive power of the law in his own hand, considers the matter, and finding that all these several parties, whom he took to be loyal subjects, are turned rebels; as most evidently appears by the unnatural plot lately engaged in by them all, against both his person and government; for which both he and they know full well the law condemns them all alike.

The king, to whom the executive power of the Law belongs, according to his prerogative, nominates two select parties out of all the rest, viz., Quakers and Arminians, to whom he resolves to extend his favour, in giving to them his royal pardon; the other several parties, distinct from them, he resolves to leave to the sentence of the Law, to undergo the deserved penalty thereof, for that horrid and unnatural rebellion. I would fain know what the Quakers and Arminians could object against the king of England, for passing an act of indemnity, or free pardon, on the people called Quakers and Arminians, and leaving all the other parties to suffer death?

Seeing that herein the king acts by prerogative, not according to desert, for the Quakers and Arminians deserved death as well as the rest who are excluded out of the pardon; my reason tells me, that the Quakers and Arminians would be so far from charging the king with injustice or partiality, that they would rather sound forth his praise, for saving them by his favour and mercy, no way deserved, whom, in strictness of justice, he might have left to the sentence of the Law.

And in case any of the criminals condemned to die, should offer to murmur against the king, for making such a difference between his equally guilty subjects, would not the Quaker and the Arminian both plead the king's prerogative for saving themselves, when, at the same time, and by the same sovereignty, he passes by the rest; and shall the King of kings be disputed against and reflected on for acting, in matters of the like nature, by his own undoubted prerogative?

If any should be so saucy and bold, as to demand a reason why or wherefore the king of England should leave seven or eight several parties out of his royal pardon, and extend the benefit thereof only to two select parties, who were both as liable to death, by the Law, as the others; the answer is ready, it is the king's sovereign will and pleasure to make the two select parties, nominated in his pardon, objects of his pity and mercy, and the rest to be the objects of his incensed justice, to undergo that death and misery which they, by rebellion, brought upon themselves.

Now in all this, "hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?" Rom.9:21. Reader, I pray consider, that the lump in the place now quoted, intends no other than men and women,

whom God, the absolute sovereign of the world, decreed to create; the making vessels is God's creating mankind with a purpose to authorize their fall. His making one vessel to honour, and the other to dishonour, is God's creating one with a fixed purpose to recover him out of that fallen state into which he was to fall, and that by sovereign grace; the other he leaves to die and perish in that wretched state into which he, of his own default, fell.

In this procedure God is altogether free; neither can the creature, so left by God, any way reflect on God, as dealing unjustly or unequally with him; and the reason is, because God is under no tie or obligation to give grace to that creature, who, of his own accord, did abuse and throw away that stock of grace whereby he was rendered capable of keeping the Law of his Maker; and who, by the instinct of his vitiated and corrupted nature, doth obstinately oppose and resist the message of salvation propounded in the Gospel.

So that the point in controversy between me and the adversaries already named, is in this comparison propounded in the verse last quoted, lively set forth; from which it is apparent, that the design of the apostle is to prove that God, as the undoubted sovereign of the world, who acts what him pleaseth, and that according to the counsel of his own most holy will, decreed to make some of the corrupted mass to be vessels of mercy, and of the rest vessels of wrath; and that by electing some unto himself, upon whom he purposed to bestow his love, with all the means tending to fit and prepare those persons so elected and chosen, for the actual enjoyment of that love; such as a Redeemer, to die for them; faith whereby they should be made partakers of that Redeemer, with all the saving graces of the Spirit promised in the Covenant of

Grace, with final perseverance in grace to the end; the rest, as hath been before observed, he left, or passed over, purposing to leave them in that wretched and deplorable condition into which they causelessly plunge themselves.

Neither is God therefore the cause why the reprobate are sinful and wicked, but his own will, which, being left to its own natural freedom, did most freely and readily choose that which was by God's Law forbidden, upon pain of God's displeasure and curse.

The second property in God's act of election is its unchangeableness; and, therefore, most certain it is, that he or she whom God hath once purposed to love and save, shall never finally, or totally, fall away from grace, or miscarry eternally. "The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." Psal.33:11.

What is God's election of some to life eternal, and the means leading thereto, but the birth or product of his own counsel? "The purpose of God, according to election, must stand." Rom.9:11. And, oh! What an unspeakable cause of rejoicing is this very consideration to that man or woman, who find in themselves the fruits or effects of the new birth, to think and believe that they in particular are chosen to life eternal, by him who cannot change that purpose of his wherewith he hath purposed to save so poor and miserable a sinner, as the effectually called sinner looks on himself to be.

Neither is the poor weak believer to doubt but that those sins and backslidings, both of his heart and life, for which he will be but too apt to fear, and conclude God will at length cast him off, were all perfectly known to God, even then when he elected him to salvation; notwithstanding which, God fixed his love, and embraced the poor sinner in the bosom

of his irreversible decree, when nothing of loveliness, but rather the contrary, appeared to the eye of God's precognition, or fore-knowledge, in the soul, so pitched on by his decree.

Whom God once loves with that electing love, he loves them to the end. Jer.31:8; Mal.3:6; John 13:1; Rom.11:29. And as God's act in electing is without change, so, in the third place, it was from eternity; though the work of effectual calling and saving conversion be in time, yet God's decree and purpose of bestowing that grace and mercy on the elect sinner was before time. So witnesseth the apostle, Acts 15:18, "known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." Eph.1:4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." II Thes.2:13, "from the beginning hath God chosen you." Rev.17:8, "whose names are written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world."

The electing love of God is from one eternity to another; as it did commence before time, so when time shall be swallowed up of endless eternity, this love of God to his elect and chosen in Christ will be, and continue, the same forever. And, therefore, let that believer, who feels himself inwardly and frequently annoyed with those discouraging fits of fickleness and inconstancy, in walking with God in the way of new obedience, take sanctuary here by faith, applying to himself the sweet benefits of these properties of God's electing love, filling both his head and heart with the thoughts and fixed persuasion that the blessed God, who is the infinite sovereign of the world, who acts all things which pleaseth himself, according to the counsel of his own will, hath, of his own good pleasure, chosen him a poor, unworthy, empty, nothing creature, to be a vessel of mercy, through Jesus Christ, to the praise of the

glory of his own grace; and that love, wherewith God hath loved him, began towards him before he had an actual being, yea, before the world was; and as that love of God was set on him before time began, so when time itself shall be no more, that love of God to him shall still be endless, like God himself. Nothing more conduceth, under God, to heart-settlement, in the ways of God, than to be well versed in understanding and believing, with application to one's self, these fundamental principles of Gospel religion. And this one thing I desire the reader to remember, and carefully to observe, viz., that if there were no other argument to evince and make good the truth I have now asserted, than the arduous and elaborate endeavours of Satan and his busy agents, both in preaching and printing against the doctrine of election and reprobation, it were sufficient. The devil and the pope knew full well how destructive and pernicious to both their kingdoms, the bringing sinners to the scriptural knowledge and right believing this doctrine will be.

And, therefore, for preventing hereof, the opposing doctrine must be exposed in the blackest hue, as a doctrine which makes men proud, secure, and careless of good works, and which leads men to loose living, and in the end to final desperation, and as the truth itself is shot at by the Romish and Arminian archers, so the most zealous and bold assertors and maintainers of it are set out in the most odious and black colours, which envy and malice itself can devise; but notwithstanding all the craft and envy of the devil and his most subtle and industrious tools, the doctrine of particular election before time, is plainly held forth and asserted in the writings of Moses, the Prophets, and the holy Apostles, and in case divine providence calls to a

suffering condition for a defence of it, I do not doubt but God hath a sealed number in these kingdoms, known to himself, who will be enabled to seal the truth of it with their dearest blood. An objection or two lies in the way to be answered, before I can proceed to what remains behind.

Objection 1. The doctrine of particular election puffs men with pride. Answer. The contrary to this the devil himself knows to be true. For I doubt not but Satan hath made his observations, that none of all God's called children have more abounded with humility and self-abasement, than those who have had the highest assurance of God's electing love; none but these can rightly admire and adore the grace and love of God in Christ Jesus. "To me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given," &c, cries that great apostle of the gentiles. Eph.3:8. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." I Tim.1:15. "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am." I Cor.15:9,10. It is to be observed, that among all the apostles none was more highly advanced, in respect of extraordinary manifestations and Gospel revelations, than Paul was; and yet, among all the apostles, none more abased; no greater admirer of free grace than he was; and indeed, not only Paul, but others also, both under the Old Testament and under the New, whom free grace singled out to be vessels of mercy; these were still addicted to go out of themselves in a way of self-abasement, and crying up the riches of God's grace and mercy, every way free and undeserved by them. And herein I appeal, most freely, to the personal experience of every regenerate believer now living,

whether they do not find in themselves, that the nearer they come to know and perceive the love of God to themselves in particular, the more vile they are in their own esteem; and the more the sight and sense of their own nothingness grows and abounds, the more are they inwardly stirred up to adore and magnify the riches of God's free grace, who hath vouchsafed to regard such poor contemptible worms as they judge themselves to be.

Objection 2. The doctrine of particular election cuts off the force and strength of all threatenings and warnings which are recorded in the Scriptures as a curb and bit, to restrain men from sin. Answer. The ever-blessed and holy God, who decreed to elect and choose a particular number to salvation, hath decreed also the means of bringing them to that end, whereof those threatenings and warnings, scattered here and there in God's Word, are a part; the which the good Spirit of God makes effectually useful to work and increase in the elect, {called to the state of grace,} the filial and reverential fear of God; as also to caution them against all kind of declinings in the way of holy walking with God, in the way of new obedience to his holy commandments; the which God hath revealed in his Word to be the only way in which true believers must go to an actual possessing the purchased inheritance, according to Psalm 1:1-3. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

These divine threats and warnings are, through the saving influence of the Spirit of grace, made a powerful bit and curb, to restrain the savingly converted from returning, with approbation and delight, to former and forsaken folly; and not only so, but to keep them more close to their duty in a Gospel dependence on Christ, their Mediatorial Head, for all manner of supplies, till they come to glory. Those threats and warnings, if they were ten thousand times more than they are, will never curb or restrain any reprobate from loving and liking sin. It is true, that through the common operation of the Spirit of God, such threats and warnings may, for a time, influence a hypocrite to a keeping him from the external gross acts of sin, and a putting him on doing many things which are morally good in themselves. But, alas! What will this avail, while the state of the man is unchanged, and his heart unrenewed. Sad instances hereof are recorded in God's Word. Witness Pharaoh, Exod.7:4, and Judas, Matt.26:15; Matt.27:5, with many other reprobates, whose names are left on record in the book of God, who were neither restrained from sin, nor yet kept back from running headlong to hell, with this bit in their mouths. The Spirit of God, by the holy prophet, gives a full description of the natural disposition of wicked hypocrites, as touching the incorrigibleness of their hearts, in going on in sin, not only under God's rod, but also under his favourable dispensation, which, one would think, should win them to repentance. "O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return. Therefore I said, surely these are poor; they are foolish, for they know not the way of

the LORD, nor the judgment of their God." Jer.5:3-4. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Rom.2:4-5; Rev.16:9-11; Isa.26:10-11.

Objection 3. If I be elected to life eternal, before time, I may live as I list; I need neither to believe, to repent, or to use the means of obtaining salvation; and though I live after the flesh, I shall be saved, being elected. Answer. To this threadbare objection, which is commonly in the mouths of all cavillers against the doctrine of election, I answer in two particulars. First, this objection doth not, in the least, find any encouragement from the doctrine of particular election before time, as will evidently appear by the inseparableness of the end and the means, asserted and held forth in the Word of God, and constantly maintained by the orthodox against Papists, Arminians, &c. He who hath elected to life eternal, he hath also elected to the means; such as believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, held forth and proclaimed in the Gospel; repenting for sinning against God; advancing in practical godliness, and persevering in the same to the end. From whence it plainly appears, that he who makes this objection is either wilfully ignorant, not in the least understanding the doctrine of election according to divine revelation, or, which is unspeakably worse, an affected caviller and a wicked subverter of the Gospel.

Suppose I should query of the Papist, the Arminian, the Quaker, and Free-willer, who are all agreed in opposing and decrying the doctrine of particular election before time, and perseverance to

the end, whether they believe that God hath decreed, or absolutely determined in himself, how long he or they shall live or continue in this world? The answer will undoubtedly be in the affirmative, viz., that God hath decreed or determined, in himself, how long he or they are to live or continue in this world. If then, say I, you believe that God hath decreed in himself how long you are to live or continue in this world, what need you to mind any of the concerns of this world for the support of human life? Why will you so insatiably covet the perishing riches and the transitory pleasures of the present world, seeing God hath decreed how long you are to live? The answer again will be, the LORD that hath decreed how long I am to live in this world, he hath also decreed, and in his revealed will commanded me, to exercise my reason, and my other natural faculties, in order to procure and make use of the ordinary means, such as food, raiment, physic, and the like; whereby, in an ordinary way, the life and health of the body are secured and maintained. Here, in the concerns of the body, they are sharp and witty enough, even to an outdoing thousands of the children of God. But in the concerns of the soul they are as corrupt and heterodox as they are sound and rational in the other.

If a Papist or an Arminian should fix his purpose of building a house in such or such a place, it cannot be rationally supposed that he intends to build without materials; and therefore my reason tells me, that in order to accomplish that his purpose, he hath also purposed to provide all the several materials necessary for such a purpose. "He who in good earnest wills the end, he also wills the means leading to that end," is a sure rule both in logic and divinity. And why these Popish Arminian cavillers should not allow it its proper place in the

doctrine of election before time, I can understand no other reason for, than either because God hath judicially smitten them with blindness of mind that they should not be able to understand or believe this amazing doctrine of election before time, or else because God hath left them, as he did Pharaoh, to harden themselves, that they might, with the greater acuteness and stubbornness, oppose and withstand his sovereignty in electing some and reprobating others of the same fallen and corrupted mass, and that before time.

Secondly, as there can be no argument more cogent and irrefragable to evince and prove a man to be either a fool or a madman, than his resolving to expect the accomplishment of an end, such as building a house, or living in the world, without the use of the proportionate means leading to such ends; so there is no argument which more strongly proves a man or woman to be of the number of reprobates, than to expect or hope to go to heaven in the continued and approved neglect of believing in the Son of God, repenting of sin, living a holy life, and persevering in the same to the end of life.

Objection 4. The doctrine of election before time doth not only encourage to sin, but it leads people to final desperation; for preventing of which all imaginable care ought to be taken to suppress and decry it. Answer. To this horrid and blasphemous objection, I shall, in Christ's strength, answer in four particulars. And, first, I do boldly affirm, in the name of the ever blessed Trinity, that this blasphemous objection did originally spring from that spirit which charged the Son of God with casting out devils by Beelzebub, which, if I mistake not, is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost; and such as peremptorily, with allowance and approbation, persist in making and liking the same

against the doctrine of election, so plainly revealed and so positively asserted by the Holy Ghost; I am not afraid to declare and pronounce the children and successors of those Pharisees, now in hell, who vented that unpardonable blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Matt.12:24,32. Let all caviling adversaries, who bring this objection against the doctrine of God's absolute and free election before time, have a care they be not found ranked among those mighty sinners who, in the height of their wickedness, run themselves most desperately upon the thick bosses of the Almighty's buckler. Job 15:26.

Secondly, if the doctrine of election be such a dangerous doctrine as leads to licentiousness, and which, in the end, brings men to desperation, I would fain know how it comes to pass that the enemies of this doctrine are such slaves to their brutish lusts, and why so many of them die in despair when under powerful awakenings and common convictions in their guilty consciences?

Thirdly, I do with greatest confidence and certain assurance, grounded on the word of God, and backed with my own personal experience, affirm, that as the right knowledge and believing of the doctrine of election before time, with a particular application thereof to one's self, is the only doctrine that sets the heart of a true believer against all sin, and which secures and keeps the believer from desperation in the time of the deepest desertion and most violent temptation; so the doctrine of free-will and general redemption is a doctrine which encourages to sin, and which necessarily leads to desperation. Here two things are to be demonstrated. First, that the doctrine of election before time rightly understood, and particularly applied by faith, is the only doctrine which engages

the heart of a sound believer against all known sin, and which fortifies and secures the believer against desperation in the time of the deepest desertion and the most violent temptation. Secondly, that the doctrine of free-will and general redemption, is a doctrine which encourageth to sin, and which necessarily leads to desperation. The first of these will evidently appear to him that rightly considers and believes the particulars following.

First, the purpose and design of God the Father in electing, which was, that his elect and chosen, who were fallen into sin and misery in Adam, their natural and federal head, might be delivered, and, by strong hand, rescued out of that state of sin and misery, and made effectual partakers of that liberty and redemption, purchased by Christ his Son, the Sponsor and Surety of his elect.

Secondly, the design of Christ, the Surety and Sponsor of the elect, in the whole work of mediation, which he undertook to go through for the elect, which his Father had chosen in him, which was to purchase for, and in time to apply actually to the elect, the saving benefit of that freedom and redemption purchased by himself.

Thirdly, the design and office of the Holy Ghost, which is to sanctify and renew the souls of the elect in effectual calling, and to carry on and maintain the work of grace, begun in the believer to the end.

Fourthly, the design of the Gospel in revealing and discovering the mystery of God's love and grace to his elect and chosen, which is, that believers might, by virtue of Christ's death savingly applied, die unto all sin, and that they might, by virtue of Christ's resurrection, walk in newness of life before God.

Fifthly, the design of divine providence towards true believers, which is to purge them from the remains of indwelling sin more and more, and to make them more and more to abound in holy conformity to Christ their mystical Head.

All these, as so many lines in a center, do meet in the doctrine of particular election, the which, when the believer seriously considers, and the Spirit through faith applies to himself, he is so far from being drawn either to sin or desperation thereby, as that he finds the quite contrary in himself, viz., an admirable aversion and repugnancy to yield consent to the flattering solicitations of sin, and an anchor hold, which powerfully keeps him from descending into the darksome valley of desperation, which is, as I may say, the very entrance into hell itself.

When the believer is at any time attacked by Satan, his enticing instruments, or by indwelling corruption, to yield to the motions of sin, he fetches arguments against sin from the doctrine of God's election thus, "hath God from all eternity fixed his gracious purpose of delivering and rescuing me out of that state of sin and misery, into which the apostasy of Adam, my natural and federal head, plunged me, and that by choosing out and fixing on his own Son to be a Surety and Saviour to purchase a liberty, and to work out a perfect and complete redemption for me; and shall I, can I, with approbation, yield my full consent to grieve and offend this freely and this dearly-loving God? I cannot do it; neither can all the craft and policy of my spiritual enemies ever work me to a willingness to go back into that state of spiritual captivity, under Sin and Satan, from which the grace of God, in election and effectual calling, hath set me free."

Secondly, "hath Christ the Son of God pursuant to his Father's holy decree and gracious

purpose, and in compliance with so noble and glorious a design as redeeming captive sinners, and reconciling them to his Father, consented to become a mediator for me, to work out a work of perfect redemption for me, that I might be set at liberty from the Law's curse, from the dominion of sin, and the usurpation and tyranny of the devil, and shall I consent to commit sin against such bowels of mercy and love? I cannot do it."

Thirdly, "hath the Holy Ghost, who, in conjunction with the Father and the Son, had a hand in my election to eternal life, vouchsafed to take on him the office of a sanctifier, to sanctify and renew the elect in effectual calling, and who hath begun in me the work of special sanctification, and will never finally leave me till he hath perfected his work begun in me; and shall I, can I, willingly grieve and offend that Holy Spirit, by whom I am sealed to the day of redemption? I cannot do it."

Fourthly, "is the Gospel appointed by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be a word of revelation, to discover to me how the heart of God, his Christ, and Holy Spirit stood affected towards the elect, and toward me in particular, from eternity and to endless eternity; and not only so, but the same might be a rule of direction to me, all my days, to discover the false ways I am to shun and avoid, as also the paths I am to walk in, in order to a pleasing the Holy Trinity, and coming safe to heaven; and shall I, can I, consent to abuse so sweet and excellent a Gospel? I cannot do it."

Fifthly, "is the design of divine providence, in all its various dispensations to the elect, and to me in particular, to purge believers from the remains of indwelling corruption, and to make them more and more to abound in holy conformity to Christ their mystical Head; and shall I abuse it by sinning

against it, and taking an occasion therefrom to be vain and secure in my conversation? I cannot do it."

And as the true believer is enabled, being taught and guided by the Holy Ghost, to fetch arguments against sin from the five sacred topics now mentioned; so is he, in like manner, enabled, being savingly influenced by the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost in him, to fetch from the above-named topics arguments to keep him from final desperation, in the most violent hurricane of temptation which can attend on a deserted or an afflicted condition.

To evince and clear up this truth, for the comfort and encouragement of the poorest believer, in an hour of sore distress, when the waters of affliction reach even to the very soul, to a sensible endangering the extinguishing the little grace lodged in the soul; let it be seasonably and seriously considered, that the believer, when he finds Satan, his wicked instruments, and indwelling corruption, all conjunctly together, pressing and working his soul within to despair of mercy and salvation, he falls on arguing from the sweet doctrine of God's election thus, "shall I, can I, who am secured of life eternal by the gracious and unchangeable decree of the immutable God, despair of mercy and salvation, as Satan, the wicked world, and my own carnal reason, would have me do? I cannot do it. If it were possible that my sinking soul should drop through the very jaws of despondency into hell itself, from thence would God's unchangeable purpose of grace fetch and deliver it."

Secondly, "shall I, or can I, for whom Christ the Son of God hath undertaken, as a sponsor and surety, and for whom he hath wrought a perfect reconciliation by his own mediatorial righteousness, in which no spot or defect ever was, or ever shall be,

found by God, angels, or men, despair of mercy and salvation, as devil, wicked men, and my own carnal reason would fain persuade me to do? I cannot do it."

Thirdly, "shall I, to and for whom the Holy Ghost is become a sanctifier and a renewer of my nature, and who, by his saving influential presence, dwells in me, never finally to leave me till his good work of grace begun in my soul in effectual calling, be completely perfected, despair of mercy and salvation, as the devil, wicked men, and my own carnal reason would have me do? I can by no means do it."

Fourthly, "shall I, who have all the sweet and precious promises of the Gospel, of God's love and grace to comfort and assure me, that God, Christ, and the blessed Spirit, will never, never fail or forsake me, despair of mercy and salvation as mine enemies would persuade me to do? I cannot do it."

Lastly, "shall I, who have the divine providence engaged for me, to uphold me, to purge out the remains of indwelling sin in me, and to forward me in conforming to my mystical Head, Christ, in holiness, despair of mercy and salvation as my enemies would have me? I cannot do it." This is the use which a true believer makes of the doctrine of God's election before time, while faith in the believer is in its right exercise; none will stumble at it, so as eternally to perish, but such as are not, by that act of God's electing decree given to Christ before time, to be actually redeemed in time.

Secondly, the doctrine of free-will and general redemption, is a doctrine which encourageth to sin, and which necessarily leads to desperation. I shall offer two things to consideration for evincing and clearing up this for truth; the which I desire the reader to weigh and consider without prejudice.

First, the use which all unregenerate men make of the doctrine of free-will, which sad experience teacheth, is this, I will turn to God by repentance; I will believe in an atoning Saviour; I will fall on the work of reformation, and thereby prevent my perishing by the deserved judgments of God, when I see my own time, and when I am thereto disposed. Who sees not, except one spiritually blind, how greatly this doctrine doth encourage to sin? For, saith my carnal reason, as often it hath while I was in a state of nature, if I do not return to God upon his call and invitation this day, this month, this year, I fully purpose and resolve to do it the next; for God hath implanted in my soul a principle of free-will whereby I am enabled to answer his call, by repenting, believing, and reforming; the which, when I do, though not at present, God will have mercy on me, and I shall be accepted, being secured by that general redemption provided for all who so repent, believe, and reform. Woeful and sad experience convinceth me, that many god-provoking follies and vanities of youth, in my heart and life, have been indulged by this deceiving cursed doctrine. Oh, how often hath carnal reason within me cried out, when the common notions of the Spirit of God hath touched my conscience, to call on me to convert and turn to God? I will repent, I will convert, I will turn to God tomorrow, tomorrow. As Augustin confesseth of himself, he often put God off with his free-will, "tomorrow, tomorrow," till at length he grew both ashamed and weary of his graceless tomorrow, crying out to the Almighty, in the very hour of his effectual conversion. "How long, O Lord, shall I cry tomorrow, tomorrow? Why, O Lord, should I not be converted this very day?"

And as an unregenerate man takes encouragement from this principle to go on in sin, so it leads him to desperation; of this also my sad experience hath fully convinced me, as plainly appears by the near approach I made to hell, in my own apprehensions, while I bordered so near the confines of final desperation, finding in myself how vastly short my personal qualifications came of answering the Law's demand, as a condition of life and salvation, I found that nothing could possibly quiet or satisfy my wounded despairing conscience, but what doth effectually appease and satisfy that Holy God, against whom I have so many thousands of times offended, which can be nothing short of an infinite righteousness; which righteousness can be had nowhere but in Christ, and no way to be experienced but in a way of believing, of which mystery my blind and perverted reason was as ignorant as a beast; and not only so, but my heart and soul were zealously set against looking for life and salvation in any other way than that of free-will and general redemption.

This principle, so every way quadrating with my legal, frame of heart, which was acted by no other principle but do, and live. Here it might not be amiss or unseasonable, for the relief and encouragement of a poor tempted soul, who, as touching this very point of election, may, by walking in darkness, having no light of comfort in his own spirit, to answer or resolve this needful question. How shall a poor, bewildered, tempted soul, come to know that itself in particular was elected of God before time?

To this question, about which many of God's called ones are not a little distressed in their own spirits, I shall answer in three particulars. First, the way to know thou art elected before time, is to go

about it in a right way or manner. By this I mean, thou art not to attempt to pry into the secret counsels of the Most High concerning this matter, knowing that secret things belong to God, and to none else, until he pleaseth to reveal, them. "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." Deut.29:29. Therefore, in order to know this mystery to thy comfort, do as thou wouldest do, if thou wert to bring both ends of a bottom of thread or yarn to meet together; the way is not to begin at that end which is hid in the very center of the bottom, but to take the end which is outmost and next to thee, and by thus doing thou wilt soon bring both ends to meet; whereas, if thou go about it in any other way, as by cutting or raveling the bottom to hasten the work, thou wilt but fret and vex thyself, and which is worse thou wilt mar and spoil the work. Do not then attempt, as the devil and carnal reason would have thee, to climb up to heaven to inform thyself of this matter; God's work must be done in the way of his own appointment; which is, that thou begin first with thy own heart. "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down from above; or, who shall descend into the deep, that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom.10:6-9. See, examine, and search thy own soul, to find out whether his Holy Spirit hath ever been at work there. The cause must be known by its

proper effects, not the effects by the cause. II Cor.13:5; Gal.6:4; II Pet.1:10.

Election, the thing thou wouldest fain be resolved about, is the cause {this is a secret in God's breast} which can be known by thee no other way, ordinarily, but by its effects, which are faith in thy heart, and obedience to Christ's commands in thy life and conversation. If the Spirit of God hath called thee to embrace Christ, held forth in the Gospel; and if the fruits of thy fleeing to Christ do discover themselves in thy life and conversation, thou hast no ground or reason to question thy election, but what the devil and thy carnal reason suggest. "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Thes.2:13-14. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Jn.10:16. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." John 10:26. In the Scriptures now quoted, election to eternal life is held forth as the cause of faith; and faith, or believing in Jesus, as the undoubted fruit or effect of election.

Secondly, art thou frequently tempted to doubt of; and question, thine election to eternal life? This is an undoubted argument, that the devil discerns in thee the fruits and effects of God's electing love to thy person, which puts him upon tempting thee to question and doubt of God's love to thee. Where the devil knows he hath the full and quiet possession of a sinner, there he suggests, that

the man is a good Christian; his faith is a good faith, and God is his father, and that he is elected and shall be saved, notwithstanding he lives after the flesh.

On the contrary, where the devil sees and discovers the fruits and effects of God's grace and love appear, there he pesters the soul with infernal suggestions and temptations, to put the soul on misbelieving and questioning the truth of God's grace bestowed on the sinner; thou art but a painted hypocrite, thou art none of God's elect; it is in vain for thee to hope or expect to go to heaven. Thus he dealt with the believer's Redeemer, "if thou be the Son of God," &c. Matt.4:3-6. And if the adversary hath done this to the green tree, what will he not attempt to do to the dry? Luke 23:31.

Thirdly, dost thou find thine heart fixedly resolved, come life come death, to cast thy soul at the foot of Divine Sovereignty, in the way of duty, shunning all known sin, and pressing after holiness, resting entirely on the grace and merit of Christ after life and salvation? Thou art to know, for thine everlasting comfort and encouragement, that no reprobate ever was, or ever shall be, able to do this. Time will discover that thou art one of God's elect; go on in the strength of thy God, fear not.

CHAPTER II.

OF REPROBATION.

By what hath been discoursed out of the holy Scriptures, concerning the act of God's election of some to life and salvation by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his own grace; it unavoidably, and by necessary consequence, follows, that the same Sovereign God hath reprobated, or rejected,

the rest, not so elected; and that, from all eternity, having decreed never to recover them by converting grace, but hath fixedly purposed for sin to damn them; and that for the praise of the glory of his own justice. Nothing can be more plain than that, if God hath elected and chosen a certain number out of the whole corrupted mass or lump of fallen mankind, in whose salvation he hath purposed to glorify his mercy and free grace by Jesus Christ, then hath he refused or passed by the rest, as will most evidently appear in all the parts of it.

The decree of reprobation hath in it four parts, to each of which I will speak as plainly and as briefly as I can. First, God hath refused or rejected some particular persons, on whom he purposed never to have mercy; this is most evident from the Scriptures following. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." John 10:26. "But the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Rom.11:7. "Therefore hath he mercy, on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Rom.9:18. In which Scriptures it is plain and conspicuous to everyone savingly enlightened, that there are two distinct or differing parties intended or spoken of; some, whom Christ chose to himself, known and distinguished by the term, sheep; and others, whom Christ denies to be so. These are those intended in Matthew 25:32,33, termed goats, opposed to the sheep of Christ. Some, whose understandings were savingly enlightened to know the glorious mysteries of the Covenant of Grace, in order to salvation; and others not at all enlightened, but left to abide in that spiritual darkness and blindness of mind, which they brought into the world with them. Some, whom God's powerful grace mollified and softened to saving repentance, in order to mercy; and others, whom God sees fit to harden,

that is, to leave them to that sin of their own, which hardens them.

Secondly, God hath from eternity rejected or refused these. This is plain from the Scriptures following. "There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." Jude 4. "Whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." Rev.17:8. "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." I Pet.2:8. From all which it is manifest that God did, as a just judge, purpose and decree to give up the reprobates to the obstinacy of their own mind, and their wilful disobedience against his Son Jesus Christ; that so they might not only ripen themselves for, but even pull down, the judgments of God upon themselves.

Thirdly, God hath decreed to damn these persons for sin. This is plain from the following Scriptures. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov.16:4. "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed." II Pet.2:12.

Fourthly, God's reprobating some persons from eternity, and that in order to damn them for sin, is for the praise of the glory of his own justice. This is so plain and obvious, that he who runs may read it. "What, if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endureth, with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Rom.9:22.

Against this doctrine of election and reprobation of particular persons, the Quakers, Papists, Arminians, Free-willers, and others, who, in this point, are all one with them, object several things; out of which I will single the chief and most

material of their objections, which, to ignorant and injudicious minds, seem to be of great force against the doctrines now laid down; to which I shall give plain and clear answers from God's word, to the end the fallaciousness and deceit of these men might appear, open-faced, to all men.

Objection 1. They object, that to hold and affirm, that God hath from eternity elected and chosen a particular number to himself out of the corrupted mass of fallen mankind, on whom he decreed, unchangeably, to show mercy, leaving the rest with a full purpose never to recover them to life and salvation, reflects on God the highest cruelty imaginable. Answer. To this seeming plausible objection, I shall reply in the particulars following. First, I have made it evident, from God's own word, that God hath, undeniably, elected a certain particular number to himself out of the corrupted mass of fallen mankind, on whom he, unchangeably, decreed to show mercy, leaving the rest, not so elected, in that state of sin and misery, into which they, voluntarily, run themselves.

Secondly, by way of query; I desire to know by what Scripture the Quakers, or any who are their abettors in this point, can justify their bringing in lies to plead for God; or wherein doth it appear that his truth stands in need of being upheld by the figments of their vertiginous brains? Job puts such a like question to his three friends, who all seemed to take part with God against himself. "Will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his person? Will ye contend for God? Is it good that he should search you out, or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?" Job 13:7-9.

What do these heretical pretenders to an infallible spirit less than mock God, who, in pretence of making God more merciful and pitiful than he

himself hath revealed in his word he will be, or than the wicked in hell will find him to be, strike at, and audaciously dispute against the Justice and Sovereignty of God.

These pleaders for God will, forsooth, have God to be so tender, compassionate, and kind, as to love all his creatures with an equal love; and consequently, that to fix his love on a small and particular number, to whom his special grace and favour should be extended, and to pass by the greatest number, on whom to resolve never to show mercy, is altogether inconsistent with the tender, kind, and merciful nature of God. Now, whether these men do not, in pretence of pleading for God, cause, as much as in them lies, both his attributes, his counsels, and his word, to clash and contradict each other, I leave to the judicious and unprejudiced reader to judge.

I demand from John Burnyeats, and the rest of the Quakers who joined with him in challenging me to make out, by the Scriptures of truth, that doctrine which I am now defending against them, why or wherefore God was so strict and severe, as to confine those angels, which, of their own accord, fell from that state of innocency and blessedness, wherein they were created, to those chains of darkness wherein they are to be kept to the judgment of the great day, and that without extending the benefit of a redeemer to them.

Was it because the angels were not his creatures? Certainly they will not say so; for without dispute, the angels were in their nature far more glorious and excellent creatures than was Adam and his posterity in their state of innocency. Was it because God's arm could not reach to help and deliver them? They dare not say so. Neither was it because God had no bowels of mercy and

compassion in him towards his creatures; this cannot be supposed to be the reason; for, alas, this, viz., the tender and merciful nature of God to his creatures in general, is the argument whereby they would overthrow the doctrine of particular election. What is the reason then? Did the angels fall by sin and apostasy? Yes, they cannot deny it, unless they deny the Scriptures to be the Scriptures of truth. And were those angels, all of them, sent forthwith to hell for their apostasy and rebellion? This they cannot deny. Was not the least dram of mercy shown to one of that numberless number which fell? They dare not affirm there was, or ever shall be; if they do, it lies at their door to prove it.

If then the reason why the apostate angels are eternally lost, is not because they stood not related to God as creatures, nor because the hand of God was not strong enough to prevent their sinking into hell; nor yet because God wanted bowels of mercy and compassion; the reason then must be, because the glorious God did, before time, decree and purpose with himself, not to recover those creatures whom he foreknew would causelessly rebel and apostatize from that state of holiness and happiness, in which he decreed to make them. If then the adversaries I now contend with, will acknowledge God to be just and righteous in leaving the angels, which by transgression fell, so as never to show them favour more; I desire to be informed by what Law the Sovereign Majesty of heaven can be justly charged with cruelty, for saving but a small remnant of apostate Adam's offspring, seeing that Adam was every way as voluntary and free in sinning against God, as were the angels which fell. Surely, had it pleased God, he might have cast both Adam and his children into the same lodging with Beelzebub and his apostate train, there to

endure to endless eternity, the torments due to their rebellion and disobedience. And in that God hath been pleased to extend mercy to any of Adam's posterity, it is mere grace and mercy, every way undeserved, the which he was no way bound to show to Adam and his children, any more than he was obliged or bound to help or commiserate the fallen angels.

If John Burnyeats, or any of his friends, who oppose the doctrine of particular election, can prove by the Scriptures that God hath given, or is by any Law bound to give, special saving grace to rebels, who have fallen by their causelessly abusing and losing the grace given in Adam, their natural and federal head, any other than what he bestows on his elect, and that in the right of election, I will readily submit and yield the cause.

Objection 2. The Scriptures of truth are express and positive in affirming, that the salvation discovered and held forth in the Gospel, is designed by God, and proclaimed by the apostle, to all men in general, without any distinction or limitation of persons; and therefore, to restrain that salvation to a stinted number, is most injurious and wicked. Answer. These caviling objectors do, at a very easy rate, wrest and pervert the sense of the Holy Spirit, not knowing what they say, nor whereof they so rashly affirm; where they meet with universal terms, from them they infer universal principles; witness the Scriptures following, II Cor.5:14; I Tim.2:6; Heb.2:9, where the apostle saith that Christ died for all; and that he gave himself a ransom for all men; and that he tasted death for every man. They from hence infer and conclude, as they think, that, beyond all peradventure, the end and design of God's sending his Son into the world, and the Son's laying down his life, was on full purpose that general

redemption might be procured for and granted to all and singular the sons and daughters of lapsed Adam; and where the apostle Peter shows that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, II Pet.3:9, they would fain persuade themselves and all others, that, without any restriction or limitation, the sense must be, that God wills not that any sinner should be damned.

And so foolishly fond are they of the general redemption, which, from the fore-cited Scriptures, they highly conceit themselves able to demonstrate and prove against all gainsayers, that they, with great care, set down the terms, all, every, and any, in great capital letters, that the reader might observe and take notice of them.

That those universal terms, all, every, and any, are to be restrained and limited to a particular and select number only, which can be no other than that number which the Scriptures positively affirm God elected and chose to himself out of the corrupted mass, as hath been above observed, is beyond contradiction.

The objection consists of two members, or branches; first, the design of God, in preparing and intending redemption and salvation for all men in general; secondly, God's commanding to preach it to all in general, without exception. On these two mistaken grounds the Quakers, and the other heretics who in this point join with them against the word and churches of Christ, do ignorantly and falsely infer, that the benefit of the second Adam's obedience and righteousness is, in God's imputing and applying it, as extensive as was the disobedience and rebellion of the first, which, say they, was to all the posterity of Adam. The places of Scripture from which they draw this their

unscriptural inference are those of Paul, "therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom.5:18. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Heb.2:9.

The ground of these men's losing themselves in this controversy, is their using Scriptures without reason, and reason without Scripture; the which whoever doth, will be sure to run himself and his followers into a labyrinth of dark and uncertain interpretations of the most plain text of Scripture; whence come, most commonly, chimerical and enthusiastical notions, which are attended as really with a satanical energy, to deceive earthly minded people, as the true word of God is attended with a divine energy and power, to teach and guide God's elect to the saving knowledge of God in Christ.

Here they seem, to the ignorant and unwary reader, to have Scripture on their side, when opposing those who assert and defend the doctrine of particular election against these universalists, viz., those Scriptures above quoted; in which God seems to have intended the redemption purchased by his Son for every individual son and daughter of Adam, and that because the term set down is universal.

But now, these men inhering in the bare letter of the Scriptures, and laying aside the use of reason, the which they should make use of in distinguishing terms, they themselves, and their poor deluded proselytes, lose the true sense of the Scriptures, never looking farther than the bare letter, never

regarding whether they take the sense of the Spirit with them, yea or not.

And hence it is, that, with such unbridled licentiousness, some men do, with highest confidence, positively affirm, that the salvation of the Gospel is purchased and intended for all and singular the posterity of the first Adam; and that a universal offer thereof is, accordingly, made to each man and woman. Whereas, indeed, when the judicious and unprejudiced reader joins Scripture and sanctified reason together, accompanied with self-denial, and sincere and hearty prayer to God's throne of grace, for the obtaining from God the true sense of the Scriptures so much boasted of, he will plainly see how egregiously they are mistaken in both the one and the other; for neither doth God intend the death of his Son for salvation to any of Adam's children, save those whom he elected, and from eternity chose in Christ; neither doth God make such an universal tender of it to all men as the Quakers rashly and boldly affirm he doth.

This lies on me to demonstrate and make good against these boasting universalists; the which, that I might do to the satisfaction of the judicious and unprejudiced reader, I shall propound my argument dilemma-wise, thus. The terms all, any, and every, on which they ground their unscriptural assertion, are to be taken either in a universal sense, intending every individual of mankind; or else they are to be taken in a limited and restrained sense, as intending some of all sorts, ranks, and degrees of men indifferently.

If, by the universal terms above named, some of all sorts, ranks, and degrees of men indifferently is to be understood, then the assertion of the adversaries is manifestly false, and consequently the doctrine of particular election is true.

If by those universal terms all men and women without exception be intended, as the adversaries will have it, then must I be allowed to demand of them, how any of Adam's children come to be damned?

For seeing that God willed that Christ should redeem all the children of Adam who fell by his transgression, I would fain know how any created power can effect the hindering God of bringing about his own purpose, or frustrate the end and design of Christ in laying down his life; for undoubtedly if God should absolutely will and purpose the salvation of every individual son and daughter of Adam, it is not to be questioned, but that he being the El Shaddai, the Mighty God, every way perfect and all sufficient, would find out ways and means to effect and bring about his own purpose, seeing that he works all things according to the counsel of his own most holy will, as Paul witnesseth, Eph1:11, "in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

It is in the work of regeneration as it is in the work of the first creation, God clothes his word with a creating power; so that whenever, and wherever, he sends forth that creating voice of his mighty spirit, neither devil nor self, nor any other enemy or impediment, whether internal or external, shall ever be able to give any stop to his intended work; as the Lord himself tells his church by the prophet. "Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand, I will work, and who shall let it?" Isa.43:13. Whom God in justice and righteousness will damn and sentence to the flames of his deserved wrath for sin, who can rescue and save them? Whom God in sovereign mercy and grace purposeth to save and deliver, who can hinder

or prevent him? "My sheep," saith the Lord Jesus, "hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is stronger than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." John 10:27.

Here, it is plain, that, from the invincible power of God and Christ, the certainty of the life, and salvation of the elect is inferred and proved. That many of Adam's children are already in hell, and that many more will be lodged there, the Scriptures affirm, and the Quakers cannot deny. How comes this to pass, seeing God, if we must believe the Quakers, designed a general redemption for all mankind, and that the Son of God laid down his life to ransom them from the curse and wrath of God, due for their sin. To say that God willed their salvation, but that their own obstinacy and wickedness hindered that his will should be accomplished on them, is, in effect, to say, that God did seriously and efficaciously will and purpose that all the children of Adam should be saved; but indeed the greatest part of Adam's posterity fell by the power of Satan and their own rebellious will.

Now, whether to think or say, that either the power of the serpent, or the corruption in a sinner's nature can, or ever did, or shall, overturn or prevent the efficacious will of God being accomplished, be not impious and blasphemous, I leave to every impartial and sober reader to judge. Thus the first member or branch of the objection appears to be rotten and unsound; neither is the second any better, which affirms that God makes a general offer of that salvation to every individual sinner in the world; the which, if it be true, as the Quakers affirm,

they are highly obliged to show how it comes to pass that the greatest part of the world by far should remain in darkness, I mean with respect to the very external means of salvation, the which God hath seen fit to deny to many nations in the world; to which also the very letter of the holy Scripture bears witness. A few instances hereof I lay down, that the reader may plainly see how vain these foolish boasters are in their imaginations, who would fain impose on all, that God doth love all the children of Adam with an equal love, and that the offer of his grace, in general, is made to all, without any exception or limitation; wherein they prove themselves as false in their sayings as they appear vain in their deluded imaginations.

They say, and boldly affirm, that the tender of salvation is made to all alike; I say, they belie the Spirit of God, in presence of pleading for God, by whose instinct and immediate inspiration they would make the world believe they themselves, above all men, are guided; and not only so, but they egregiously thwart and contradict the very letter of the Scripture, which they seem to own and acknowledge to be holy, true, and the rule and standard of trial of all matters in religion wherein they and Christians differ.

For satisfaction herein, let the reader peruse, and with serious consideration weigh in the balance of God's sanctuary, what is recorded in Psalm 147:19-20. "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD." Whether the place now quoted doth not evidently prove, that when God chose, called, and settled a church unto his own peculiar use and service, to whom he gave his word and ordinances for a rule of

faith and holy obedience, he did not leave the other nations of the earth, out of whom he chose his people with a peculiar love and favour, in their native darkness and blindness, is a matter to be inquired into. That of our Saviour in Matthew 20:16, "many are called, but few chosen," doth also give countenance to the point in hand; he doth not say that all are called, but many; in which text there are three sorts of men offered to consideration. First, some who are not called at all. Secondly, some who are called with a common or external call, but not elected. And, thirdly, some who are called, not only with the common and external call, but also with the internal and efficacious call of the Spirit, and that because elected and chosen to life and salvation. Now, that these three sorts of people were equally beloved of God, and their salvation equally intended, who but children of darkness and deceit dare to affirm or believe? That of Paul also, Acts 14:16, "God, who in times past suffered the Gentiles to walk in their own way," backs and confirms the present truth; and doth not the account we have by travelers, who correspond with the most parts of the world, inform us, that the greatest part of the nations have not so much as the name of Jesus Christ among them; and even in these kingdoms, where Popery, Arminianism, and Quakerism prevail, doth not sad experience teach us how deplorable a condition the generality of the kingdom is in, as touching the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, or the proper means appointed by God for the saving discovery of his justifying righteousness to the souls of men; such as the pure and unmixed word of truth read and powerfully preached to them, for calling them out of darkness into the marvelous light of the knowledge of God in Christ; for want of an orthodox teaching ministry, these kingdoms, especially

England and Ireland, are near to a harvest ripeness, ready for the sickle of God's judgments, through the affected ignorance of the Lord Jesus Christ, which reigns in the minds and hearts of the greatest part, even of England's and Ireland's professors; with the occult and spiritual idolatry of men's souls, whereby the Son of God and his pure Gospel worship are shut out of men's hearts and affections, that the statutes of Omri, and their carnal secular interests, might bear the sway. To which I will add, that deluge of open debauchery and atheistical oppression and prophaneness, which like a land flood, over-runs the nations; the which, if not very speedily prevented by those who have the reforming power put into their hands by God, will pull down from heaven such sore and desolating judgments as will make England, with her hypocritical formal professors, an abhorring to all nations. More might be offered to consideration from God's word to the same purpose; as the sad and deplorable condition the Ephesians, Philippians, and other countries were in before the apostles were sent among them.

The ancestors and forefathers of whom God suffered to live and die like brutes, and worse, serving dumb idols, those teachers of lies, serving divers lusts, atheists, without the knowledge or hope of God in the world. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph.2:1-3. To them God sent no Prophet or Apostle, no Law or Gospel, which should be a saving

discovery of Gospel truth to them, till God sent Paul to their offspring. Now, can it in truth be said, that God did equally love and will, or design the salvation of both the fathers and their posterity, seeing the message of salvation were denied to the fathers, and freely given to their posterity?

As touching the learned, or rather silly and impertinent question, wherein the Quakers desire to be resolved, viz., what Gospel of glad tidings it is which I and others, who hold the doctrine of particular election, have to preach to those for whom Christ died not? Answer. This silly question is grounded on a false supposition, that faith is required of all men; the which I never taught, neither do I now own to be true. For, I do not think or believe, that such as never heard of Christ, or who never had the means of knowing him, are required to believe that Christ died to redeem them.

Secondly, they are grossly, if not willfully, mistaken, in thinking and saying, that I press on all I preach to, that it is their duty to believe that Jesus Christ died for them all, without any limitation or restriction. I do not believe that those people to whom the glad tidings of the Gospel are preached, are any of them required absolutely, and without restriction, to believe that Christ died to redeem them. All who ever attended on my ministry, and who are able to give a judgment, will witness for me, that the scope and drift of my preaching is, to convince and awaken sinners out of their natural state, by opening up to them, from God's word, the happy sinless state wherein God created them in Adam, their natural and federal representative; how they came to fall from that happy state; and what the sad and wretched effects of that fall was to Adam, the head, and now is to all his children in their unrenewed state. This I do instrumentally, by

opening up to sinners the sense and design of the Law, which is to discover sin, and to damn the transgressors of it before God, to let sinners know how spotless that obedience and righteousness must be, which answers its own demand, in order to its justifying them at the bar of a holy God; as also how weak and unable it is to help a lapsed transgressor. It points out and requires duty, but can afford no ability or strength to do that duty; and all this, in order to bring dead sinners to a sight and sense of their need of a Redeemer. I labour to make them sensible, that out of Christ no life or salvation is ever to be expected; and that until Christ the Son of God be received by a true faith, they themselves, with all their threadbare polluted morality, and all those advantages wherein they bless and count themselves happy, are all under the curse of God; and living and dying so, they must, as certainly as God is just and his Law holy, look to be eternally separated from God and Christ for ever and ever. No civility, no goodness of natural temper, no morality, no zeal for that which they take to be the best religion, no learning or shining parts, whether natural or acquired, no riches or greatness in this world, will ever avail to keep them back from being, by the Law's powerful sentence, sent down to hell.

When I find and perceive that the Spirit of God hath, by the Law set home on the conscience, brought the sinner, with the prodigal, to a sense of his undone condition; when I hear him cry out, not in a rotary and formal customary way, which, God knows, is too much in use and fashion in this sleepy hypocritical age, in the bitterness of his soul, "men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?" I then open up, as God's messenger, the mystery of God's Covenant of Grace held forth in the Gospel, wherein is discovered the incomprehensible all-sufficiency of

the Lord Jesus Christ, to save and reconcile to God, the greatest and vilest of sinners. I presently fall on directing and sending the poor sin-sick wounded sinner to the Son of God, with his wounds and plague-sores, to be healed, pressing him to believe in the Son of God, out of whom no salvation is to be found. Hereto I add the peremptory command of God himself, that the poor despairing soul believe on the Son of God, I John 3:23; Mark 16:16, by these methods and ways of God's own appointment, God is pleased to work saving conversion and effectual faith in the souls of elect sinners.

To what hath been offered out of God's own word, to prove the doctrine of particular election, before time, I here set down the judgment of the most orthodox protestant churches concerning the same; not that I think the word of God stands in any need of human testimony to help it out, but rather to show forth the sweet harmony which is between the holy Scriptures and the saints of God, in the holy and orthodox confessions of their faith, concerning the present so much controverted and impugned doctrine of election and reprobation before time; as also to shame those nominal protestants, both non and conformists, who have so apparently turned the back upon their own articles of faith, whereby both the one and the other party hath, not a little, strengthened the foundation of the Jesuits hope of bringing England's neck once more under the papal yoke; from which I heartily wish, and sincerely pray, that God will ever keep us, &c.

I begin with the Church of England. "Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath constantly decreed, by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out

of mankind, and to bring them, by Christ, to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called, according to God's purpose, by his Spirit, working in due season; they {through grace} obey the calling; they be justified freely; they be made sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity." Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, Article 17, of Predestination and Election.

Secondly, the Confession of Faith agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster. "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated to everlasting life, and others to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished." "Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of the glory of his grace." "As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called

unto faith in Christ, by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power, through faith unto salvation." "Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only." "The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or with-holdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice." The Assembly's Confession of Faith, chapter 3. Of the Eternal Decree of God. To this the Church of Scotland hath fully agreed. With this also agrees the articles of Faith of the Church of Ireland, in bishop Usher's time. See those articles, and Usher's Body of Divinity.

"Question. What are the parts of predestination? Answer. Election and reprobation. Question. What is election? Answer. It is the everlasting predestination or fore-appointing of certain angels and men unto everlasting life and blessedness, for the praise of his grace and goodness. Question. What is reprobation? Answer. It is the eternal predestination or fore-appointment of certain angels and men unto everlasting dishonour and destruction; God, of his own free-will, determining to pass them by, refuse or cast them off; and, for sin, to condemn and punish them with eternal death." See Usher's Body of Divinity, page 91-92.

The Church of France, in the 12th Article of the Confession of her Faith, hath these words, viz., "we believe that God, out of that corruption and general curse, into which all men were plunged, doth free those whom, in his eternal and immutable counsel, he elected of his mere goodness and mercy

in our Lord Jesus Christ, without the consideration of works, leaving the rest in the same corruption and damnation; to show forth in these his justice, and in them the riches of his mercy; for none of them are better than others, because God hath separated them, &c.”

The Synod of Dort, in the 7th Canon, doth lay down this plain and clear definition of election, thus, viz., “election is the unchangeable purpose of God, by which, before the foundation of the world, according to the free good pleasure of his will, of his mere grace, he hath chosen, out of all mankind to salvation in Christ, a certain and set number of men, neither better nor more worthy than others; but lying in the common misery with others, and fallen from original righteousness into sin and destruction, by their own fault,” &c. And, in the 15th Canon of reprobation, they say thus, viz., “the holy Scripture doth manifest and commend unto us this eternal and free grace, especially when it doth further witness, that not all men are elected, but that some are not elected, or are passed by in the eternal election of God, viz., those whom God, according to his free, just, unreprieveable, and immutable good pleasure, decreed to leave in the common misery, into which they had cast themselves, by their own fault, and not to give them saving faith, and the grace of conversion.”

It were almost endless to insert all the confessions and the judgments of the orthodox, in all ages, who have held, and, with an unshaken confidence, maintained to the death, the very same faith, concerning the doctrine of election and reprobation; on whom, with the penmen of holy writ, the frothy Arminians of the age we live in, who are more crafty than truly wise, do not spare to cast the basest reflections; as if they were no way worthy to

compare with themselves for either learning, parts, or piety. But, whatever others think, for my part, I am neither afraid nor ashamed to tell them, that the advances they are daily making towards the scorners seat, in contemning and undervaluing the bright shining ones gone to glory, is to me an invincible argument, not only of their being destitute of true saving grace, but that this their priding it over the best of men is a sure prognostic of their own destruction, when the overflowing scourge, threatened in Isaiah 28:15, comes on England. The Arminian drugs of free-will in fallen man, general redemption, falling from grace, with temporary conditional election, revived and sown in England by the Jesuits art, and propagated by too many preachers of the two parties above-mentioned, have proved the most successful expedients, to lay England open to utter ruin, that ever those incendiaries of the world could devise. And, indeed, the poisonous drugs now mentioned have so epidemically overspread the nation, that I cannot see how the land can be cured in an ordinary way, any other way than by the preachers of both parties, who have imbibed those poisonous principles, and, by preaching, conveyed them insensibly into the heads and affections of the people; vomiting up, by sound repentance, those cursed principles, as some have done their doctrine of passive obedience and nonresistance; the which had they not done, the land, before this time, would, in all probability, have been turned into an Aceldama, or a Papal Slaughterhouse, vomiting up, I say, by sound repentance, the cursed principles above-mentioned, and labouring in preaching up the soul-saving doctrine held forth in the 39 Articles of Queen Elizabeth, and the Assembly's Confession of Faith, on which they have so shamefully and apostatically

turned the back, to undeceive the people, who, by their means, have been so sadly corrupted in their principles, and, by reason of those principles, so wretchedly engulfed in the quagmire of debauchery and open prophaneness.

It will prove their own, and the nation's great advantage, to endeavour, seasonably and cordially, to retrieve the ground they have lost, by their modish compliance with the corrupt and erring humor of the two last reigns; and that by sounding, in their respective pulpits, a timely retreat, and exhorting the people, with them, to a cordial reception of their abdicated articles of religion; from which the infernal craft of England's enemies, and their own supine incautiousness, have drawn them aside. It is infinitely better for such manifest corrupters of the true protestant doctrine, to own their errors, and repent of them here, while the gate of mercy is open; and all true protestants hearts and arms are open, ready to receive them, on their return from the communion of the worst and most pernicious of the church's and poor England's enemies, than to own and repent of their errors and prevarications in hell; of which place such men cannot but know it is said, there is no redemption or returning from hell. This the inhabitants of that place know experimentally, to their endless and remediless sorrow and grief. From which place, should it please the holy Sovereign of the world, to send the most gigantic disputers against the doctrine of God's free election of particular persons before time, which are now tongue-tied in that place of torment, to London, to relate what they know, by sad experience, since death arrested them, they would be forced, I doubt not, to declare, that no wit or parts, natural or acquired, no courage or magnanimity of mind, no morality or personal

qualifications acquirable by any of Adam's children, is, or can be, armour proof against the vindictive proceedings of an angry and a sin-revenging God, against those Papists, Arminians, Socinians, Free-willers, &c., now in hell, who, when on earth, did bend all their wit and learning to run down and ridicule the doctrine I am now vindicating. It will be well for their successors, who are yet this side hell, if this plain dealing with them prove an occasion of awakening them, and putting them upon a serious consideration of the present state they are in, and the way they walk in, that being savingly convinced both of the wretchedness of the one, and the destructiveness of the other, they may be driven, by a holy despair of ever being saved in an unregenerate state, and walking in ways of their own devising, to shelter themselves under the shadow of that mediatorial spotless righteousness of the Son of God, by a sound faith, and an evangelical repentance, which the Spirit and Word of the ever blessed God assures me is the only way to escape hell and eternal ruin; which is all the harm I dare to wish them, and the greatest enemies I have now living. I conclude my treatise with an Apologetical Reply, &c.

An Apologetical Reply to the slanderous charge given against me, to some of the London Ministers, by that malcontent party which schismatically separated from the church in C., whereof I was the then lawful pastor.

The charge was, that I was a man of an independent judgment, a great enemy to Mr. Baxter, declaring that Mr. Baxter is damned in hell; a man who openly declared, that Christ hath but two or three true and

faithful ministers, in and about London, who preach Christ in truth; and who bid a public challenge to Mr. Williams, and all the Baxterians, to dispute certain positions held and asserted by Mr. Baxter, and such as go his way; and, to add no more, one who is an universal decryer of all the duties of holiness in a Christian's life and conversation, crying out, in the pulpit, away with your holiness, to hell with your duties and personal qualifications! This charge consists of five branches, or parts, to each of which I will speak as distinctly as I can, and that with as great seriousness and regard to conscience, as if I were to make the present defense at the bar of the Great Judge.

I begin with the first, viz., my being an independent. I have this to say for myself, first, the congregational way of church government is the principle which, according to my present light, I apprehend to be nearest to the platform of Gospel Churches, planted by the apostles, which, to own and practice, I am fully convinced, is my duty; for which, I humbly hope and charitably believe, none of my brethren of the Presbyterian persuasion dare to censure or blame me, until I can see that I am herein mistaken and out of the way.

Secondly, as touching my judgment herein, I do affirm, and that in truth, God knows I lie not, I honestly and fairly acquainted my now reproachers, what I was in my judgment, as to this very point, when they first discovered an inclination to call me to take the pastoral charge of their souls; about this, they and I had several occasional discourses pro and con for and against it; and, in conclusion, they, with the rest of the covenanters with God, in a church way, did own themselves fully convinced, that the congregational way of church government was most certainly the way of the Gospel; and as such, they

freely closed with me. If what I have now asserted be denied, I shall, by authentic testimonies, make the same good to their faces.

I come to the second branch of the charge, viz., my being a great enemy to Mr. Baxter, &c. In answer whereto, I positively affirm, that I never in my life had any prejudice against Mr. Baxter, save only to dislike and caution my flock against some notions of his, wherein I conceived him to be heterodox in the foundation principle of justification. I, told my auditory, as plainly as I could speak, that, in mentioning Mr. Baxter's name, my design was not to meddle in judging him, as touching his eternal state; only what of corruption I found in his books, I judged it my duty to take notice thereof, and to caution my hearers, who had his books, to beware of such notions. And what I did herein, I did it, God and my conscience know, in faithfulness to Christ, and the souls of those committed to my pastoral charge by the great Shepherd of the sheep.

But to say that Mr. Baxter was damned in hell, I abhor the very hearing or thoughts of such a thing; neither dares anyone living, except a cauterized and brazen-faced sinner, to charge such a slander on me; so far was I from uttering such an uncharitable, I may say infernal expression, that I plainly spoke the contrary as my judgment of him, declaring, that I hoped Mr. Baxter was with Christ in glory, and that I dare to think no otherwise. As for what of corruption which is mixed with his writings, I told my auditory, I looked on that as a part of the wood, hay, and stubble, intended by the apostle in I Cor.3:12, of which Mr. Baxter will, I doubt not, suffer the loss in the great day, though he himself be saved; he holding Christ the foundation firm and steadfast to the end, as in charity I hope he did.

The third branch of the charge is, that I affirmed, that Christ had but two or three right Gospel ministers, who preach Christ truly, in and about London. To this I answer in the negative, viz., that I never thought or spoke such a thing, either in or out of the pulpit, in all my life. The occasion of this slander was this; I was, in a sermon, bewailing the small number of right Gospel preachers; at which time, and on which occasion, I said, that a great many preached up the pope, that man of sin. Others, said I, preach up the national hierarchy, and its interest, instead of the kingdom of Christ. Others there be, said I, who preach up Moses, and obedience to his do, and live, in the room of Christ's Mediatorial spotless righteousness, for justification and life; so that, in comparison, it is undeniably true, that Christ hath but few who preach him and his immaculate righteousness, as the only meritorious and procuring cause of justification and salvation. This is what I said then, and truly I see but small reason to think or say otherwise. I question not but the orthodox in and about London will readily harmonize with me herein, but that I did limit the true ministers of Christ to any certain definite number; or that I mentioned the names of any ministers, by way of distinction, I utterly deny. And I have very good reason to judge it no breach of the Law of charity, to believe that the secret design of the reporters hereof, was to incense and provoke the spirits of godly ministers, and their respective congregations, against me. And hereby to prepare them for a more facile and ready reception of the other black and scandalous reproaches which were to be brought on the stage on purpose to do my business; as one of their confederates was heard to say he would do.

I come to the fourth branch of the charge, which is, that I should bid a public challenge to Mr. Williams, and the rest of Mr. Baxter's followers, to dispute certain positions held and asserted by Mr. Baxter, and those who go his way. To which I reply, that this is as true as the rest, and did, I am very sure, proceed from the same lying spirit which coined and forged their other lying stories against me; the design whereof was not only to corroborate that their design in its foundation, but also to draw over Mr. Williams and others, whom they knew to be impatient to hear any opposition given to any notions of Mr. Baxter's, to them; to help and encourage them to break that church whereof themselves were an essential part, and to force my flight from my station in C. to which their own electing voice called me.

The occasion of this slander was thus; I did, one day, in preaching, lay down this position, viz., that an elect sinner is, in effectual calling, freely justified from all charge of sin, both original and actual, by the alone mediatorial righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, freely imputed by God; and that without any regard had to any conditions performed by, or qualifications inhering in, the person of the sinner, as con-causes with Christ in justification. This, said I, is a truth so clearly laid down and asserted in the Gospel, and so backed with the witness of God's Spirit in the hearts of all assured believers, that all the disputers in the world, who oppose the same, will never be able to overthrow it, be their wit and parts ever so sharp and admired. And whether I be mistaken herein, I freely appeal to the judgment and determination of all orthodox Protestants, who, in the point of justification, are not more or less tainted with the Popish-Arminian leaven of free-will and general redemption. But to bid a

challenge to Mr. Williams, or any other, to dispute matters of controversy in religion, I do most solemnly profess, I never spake such a thing, either in or out of the pulpit.

The fifth and last branch of the black charge brought in against me, was, that I am a universal decryer of all religious duties in the life and conversation of a christian; crying out, in the pulpit, away with your holiness, &c. The design of my accusers in this, was, to represent and expose me as a rank Antinomian; and so I should prove, were the accusation true. But to let all who read this see with what a virulent and malicious spirit the contriver and presenter of this black charge against me has acted, I here sincerely and conscientiously set down the very words I spake, from which the occasion was taken to represent me in such black colors. The thing was thus, the subject I was then upon, leading me to discover the sad and deplorable condition the poor sinner is in while in a state of unregeneracy, I had these expressions, whose design and tendency was to awaken and convince the sinner of his misery by nature, by way of observation, viz., that where God sets the Law on work in the conscience of an unconverted sinner, it will, like the avenger of blood, pursue the guilty sinner, till it either drive the sinner to Christ, the only city of refuge, or till the sinner be lodged in hell.

To bring the matter home more particularly and closely to an awakened conscience, labouring, with Adam, to cover the sinner with the fig-leaves of self-righteousness, both negative and positive, thereby to be justified and saved, I addressed myself to this sinner in these words, "thou convinced rebel sinner, who art now under the Law's arrest, and sinking under the heavy weight of thy sins, hoping to relieve and lick thyself whole with thy

conditions and qualifications, as if thereby thou couldest make amends to the offended justice of God, for all thy violations of his righteous Law; know and consider it thou must, that the just and righteous Law of God, whose terrible sentence, in thy guilty conscience, thou art now striving to fly and shun in this way of works, is like a strict creditor, who will not accept, for payment, any coin which appears short and deficient, either in quantity or quality. It will not hear of a sinner's being justified by any works, but such as are exactly commensurate to its own just and holy demands. Now, said I, either see that thy conditions and qualifications, whereunto thou trustest for life and salvation, be spotless, and exactly commensurate to the Law's demand; or in case they be not, then away with thy fig-leaf holiness, to hell with thy duties and personal qualifications. Look to the Lord Jesus Christ by an eye of faith, cast thy weary sinking soul on him for life and salvation, or thou wilt perish eternally. John 3:36; 8:24. This is what I said then; Christ knows I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.

When I have to do with believing Christians, I press them to the duties of practical holiness and good works, as if they were to be justified and saved by them; but still with this seasonable caution, that believers do never join their works of sanctification with Christ's justifying righteousness in the work of justification.

Besides the black charge brought against me, to which I have spoken by way of apology, mine accusers, the better to palliate their own black and horrid crimes, charge me with defectiveness in my life and conversation, as not practicing what I preach. To this I reply in four particulars. First, by way of concession, or grant, my life and

conversation is not according to my preaching. In a sense I own it. I do humbly acknowledge, with shame and grief, that I find myself vastly short of that perfection of devoutness which, in preaching, I press as a duty on myself and others; and the Searcher of hearts best knows of how great a concern it is to me, to reflect on the vast disparity which I sensibly perceive is between what I am, and what I ought to be, in point of conformity to Christ, in life and conversation; which lays me under an indispensable necessity of subscribing to that, "I know and approve better things, but follow or incline to things which are worse," and to that of Paul, Romans 7:24, "O wretched man that I am," &c.

Secondly, by way of negation. If my accusers intend and mean, that I give myself up to a course of dissolute and loose living, or that I allow myself in the approved practice of any immorality, which is incompatible with a regenerate state, or which is inconsistent with a holy profession; I absolutely, through special grace, deny the charge, and do bid my invidious bespatterers, and all such as do uncharitably credit such malicious reports of me, a fair and sober challenge, to make good such a charge against me, by any authentic witness, which is not known to be prejudiced against me, if not one or more of them who have plotted to overthrow my reputation and ministry.

Thirdly, if short coming in living up to what I preach and profess, be a sufficient warrant for church members to prevaricate and run away, like children of Belial, throwing off the yoke of duty in the church; I would gladly know how it is possible for any churches to be kept up on earth, considering that the instruments, by whose ministry God sees fit to gather and build up churches, to fit them for glory, are frail men, not sinless spirits.

For my own part, albeit I am far from pleading for any sin, though but the least infirmity, whereof either I myself, or any other know me guilty, I must needs say, that I never yet could find that ever God the Father, in the Old Testament, or Christ his Son, in the New, did call or send any to be prophets or apostles, who were exempt or free from personal failings, or who were ever able to live up, perfectly, to the doctrine they preached to others; yea, it is most evident to any intelligent reader, that a considerable part of the canon of holy Scripture is occupant about discovering, acknowledging, and bewailing the sinful miscarriages and short-comings of the penmen thereof; as the learned and godly well know.

Fourthly, and lastly, supposing that my brethren knew and could prove me guilty of as great falls as ever any pardoned sinner fell into; is it not the duty of church members to endeavour my recovery, by coming to me in the spirit of meekness and brotherly love, to call on me, and to stir me up to repentance and reformation? Knowing that the holiest of saints, even those of the highest attainments in grace, while in the body, are obnoxious to the sorest temptations; and by reason thereof, and the remains of indwelling corruption, are liable to the sorest falls thereby.

The word of God proves, that so to do is the undoubted duty of church members, one towards another, Lev.19:17, Gal.6:1, but this my schismatical brethren never did to me, though never so earnestly courted, and lovingly entreated thereto, and that both in and out of the pulpit; as can be sufficiently proved, if need be.

Satan and his plotting agents knew full well, that the old trade, "report, and we will report it," Jer.20:10, was the most likely and effectual way to

accomplish their ungodly design, which was to unchurch the church, and, for future, to render my ministry useless; in order whereto, the pastor must first be attacked, according to Zech.13:7, "smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

This apology I thought not only expedient, but my duty to publish, for the true information of those, especially dissenting ministers, who have, from the character given them of me by those I here intend, sucked in prejudice against my name and ministry. And to occasion their seriously considering, how every way unbecoming the Gospel it is, for one Christian, especially such as are called to sacred office, to be open-eared, and of too credulous a temper, in listening to, and improving, to the great prejudice of those whom the Law of charity commands them to love, any reports, which look like a design to blacken or stain the reputation of a brother, especially a poor stranger, who, for Christ and the Gospel, hath lost his all; and who, for witnessing against the spreading errors of the times, is surrounded and besieged with enemies of all sorts. To frown on, and carry it strange to such, will neither please God, credit religion, or help to make a dying bed easy and comfortable. Exod.22:21; Deut.10:19; Matt.7:12; Col.3:12-15. Flattery begets friends, speaking truth causeth enemies. Compare Isaiah 30:10 with Amos 5:10.

The occasion of this slander, as the daughter of our author informed me, was this; the second wife Mr. Barry married was found to be a leper literally, which he knew not till after marriage, and the first child he had by her was born a leper; on which account he never would cohabit with her afterwards. He was greatly disgusted at her for not informing him before marriage of her disorder. She became his enemy because he refused cohabitation. And it was a great grief of mind to him, to see the child live

nineteen years in such a rotten condition, and at that age die of it. These things his enemies improved to their advantage. But what man of God could, with conscience, throw a stone at him for this? W. H. S. S.

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