

THE REAL ANTIDOTE

Against

Arminianism

**{Undiluted, Uncompromised, Unfiltered &
Restored After 300 YEARS}**

or

A Succinct Discourse to Enervate and Confute
all the Five Points thereof, to wit,
Predestination Grounded upon Man's Foreseen
Works. Universal Redemption. Sufficient Grace
in All. The Power of Man's Free-will in
Conversion, and the Possibility of true Saints
Falling away totally and finally. All which are
demonstrated here to be Damnable Errors,
both by Scripture and Reason, &c. All
Undeniable & Uncontrollable.

Published for Public Good, by

Christopher Ness.

Author of the History and Mystery of the Old and
New Testament, and of many more Books, &c.

ORIGINALLY PRINTED – 1700.

COMPLETE & UNABRIDGED

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Editorial Note

Seizing some moments of leisure to pursue one of my favorite pastimes, I recently opened this book by Ness, and being of a rather antiquated mindset, I opted for the original 1700 Edition. A few minutes into my reading, I recalled how that in my library, I had at least two other more recent {current} editions of this book, which were both located after a brief search. What provoked my interest in consulting these other editions was a sharp statement {omitted in all subsequent editions} made in the title of the original 1700 Edition. Speaking of the Poison of Arminianism, Ness writes, {title page,} "ALL WHICH, {the fictitious tenents of Arminianism,} ARE DEMONSTRATED HERE TO BE DAMNABLE ERRORS, BOTH BY SCRIPTURE AND REASON, &c., ALL UNDENIABLE & UNCONTROLLABLE." It's this "damnable error" assertion by Ness which perked my curiosity, as it rather boldly sets forth the fact that Ness, along with those who endorsed this particular book {John Owen amongst them} were convinced that the errors of the Arminian System were ipso facto damnable tenents, which if persisted in, by all such as are "given over" to believe its lies, will be to their utter ruin. And, it is this assertion by Ness which I sensed would spawn immediate animosity by many religionists, {mostly in Calvinistic attire,} that are in the habit of embracing those who tenaciously hold treasonable theology as fellow 'believers,' under the mistaken notion that these 'weaker brethren' simply need to be taught the so-called Doctrines of Grace, which fraudulent perception is in essence destroyed by the statement of Ness, {to him of paramount importance, so as to include it in the title of his work,} which statement, interestingly enough, is omitted from every printed or digital edition current in circulation. From the scope of the entire book, it is apparent that Ness thoroughly understood and taught that the teachings known as Arminianism were not merely theological errors, not just a weaker gospel, nor just an interpretive viewpoint, &c., but that these teachings distorted the Gospel of Christ to the point that it becomes

a different gospel altogether. Those who believe the true Gospel know that these life and death issues lie at the very heart of the Gospel, for if one is an Arminian Conditionalist, he is dead in trespasses and sins; as those in Christ, believe in a salvation that is conditioned on his saving merits alone. After extensive comparisons I discovered that in fact close to about 25% of the original text had been omitted, whilst other portions were severely mutilated. In the case of the mutilations, where short paragraphs were added, sentences altered, pithy hymns inserted, or quotations injected, it is perceived that these were added, {one would hope,} not so much as to change the arguments of the book, nor to detract from its blunt force in destroying the entirety of the Arminian System, but to perhaps make the book more palatable and less offensive to the general reader? Whatever the motive, it failed miserably, for any truly observant reader in glancing over these "new" editions will be forced to recognize the fact that these editions have been downgraded to such an extent that they are scarcely recognizable, and bear only a slight resemblance to the book Ness himself wrote over 300 years ago. Thus it is, with a measure of gratification, and a thankful heart, that we are enabled to send forth this restored 1700 Edition; a book, in our estimation, worthy of restoration; broadcasting most sacred Gospel Truths, esteemed by all who are called out of darkness into Christ's marvellous light. Apart from a few Latin phrases, which we could not decipher, and Scripture references that we expanded within the text itself, this restored edition mirrors that of the original, which we now commend to the household of faith. May it please the LORD to add his special blessing to those who explore its pages.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF CHRISTOPHER NESS

Christopher Ness, 1621-1705, an English Nonconformist & Independent Minister of the Gospel, and author of a number of books, known principally, at the time of its publication, {though now for the most part forgotten,} for his large three volume work entitled, "History and Mystery of the Old and New-Testament," which contains much valuable material, and is said to have been of considerable assistance to Matthew Henry in compiling his well-known six-volume Commentary on the Old & New Testament. His book, "Antidote Against Arminianism," which though written a number of years prior to its publication date of 1700, would become the work he is now most associated with, being reprinted numerous times, although all the editions beyond the original 1700 edition, {which has up to now, never been reprinted,} have been heavily abridged, and very sloppily edited. "This little book {says Ness} hath cost me great study and labour to compose it, many ardent prayers, and many earnest wrestlings with God," his chief incentive being, as he perceived, "the sad sigh of our present times being that the Christian World is overrun, yea, overwhelmed with the flood of Arminianism," accompanied with a solemn caution, "lest this overflowing deluge of Arminianism should bring destruction upon us," and therefore the "great need that some servants of Christ should run to stop the further spreading of this plague and leprosy." To this end the book was written, and a spiritual warfare launched against this deluge of Arminianism, which, in one form or another, has plagued the Church throughout its existence.

Ness was born in 1621, at North Cave, in the East Riding of Yorkshire; his family it would appear possessing considerable wealth. He was educated at a private school at North Cave, being instructed in Biblical Truth, {besides the Latin tongue, Greek three years, and Hebrew one year,} under the choice schoolmaster, Lazarus Seaman,

{a Presbyterian, and member of the Westminster Assembly,} and at age sixteen, entered St. John's College, Cambridge, where he graduated sometime in 1645. During this time Ness says, in a letter written to a friend in 1693, that "though the plague {bubonic} broke forth in the University twice, to the breaking up of all the colleges, save some few to keep them, whereof I was one in St. John's, a most blessed time to me for improving my studies, &c." Having spent seven years at Cambridge, he bolted back into the safety of the countryside upon the outbreak of the Civil War, and there preached for a while at Cliffe or South Cliffe Chapel, under the oversight of his uncle William Brearcliffe, at that time vicar of North Cave, and it is in this hometown Yorkshire area, where most of his labours would continue for quite some time. He subsequently accepted a call to Holderness, and after a few years, to Beverley, where he taught school and preached occasionally. In 1656, he began to minister at Leeds, and in 1660 he became a lecturer under the staunch royalist, Dr. John Lake, afterwards Bishop of Chichester, but his earnest contending for the truths of Holy Scripture, eventually clashed with the Arminianism of Dr. Lake, for as the Bishop would attempt to poison his hearers in his morning lectures, by setting up free-will and creature-merit, Ness in the afternoon lecture, having his antidote well-prepared, would confound all in his lifting up of Christ, and faithfully preaching the doctrine of Free & Sovereign Grace. On Black Bartholomew's Day, 1662, {The Act of Uniformity prescribed that any minister who refused to conform to the Book of Common Prayer by St. Bartholomew's Day, 24 August 1662 should be ejected from the Church of England,} he was expelled and banished from any further preaching. For the remainder of the 1660's, it seems that Ness served as a school teacher and tutor in Yorkshire; and {after the religious storm of persecution somewhat subsided} once again was licensed as an Independent Minister in Leeds in 1672, where a new meeting house was opened for him shortly thereafter, preaching regularly there to a large auditory. According to Ness himself, this was "a far larger harvest-labour, having some thousands of hearers; in which place

the Lord was pleased to give me many souls as seals of my ministry, and some that became ministers themselves, very useful in their orb. All this enraged the Envious One, so that at the turn of times, I was forced from my pulpit at Leeds, which God had so blessed, &c., for preaching this doctrine, that all Divine Worship must have Divine Warrant; preaching privately ever after thereabout, where God opened a door." Ness was frequently in trouble, being excommunicated no less than four times, and his enemies {around 1674 or 1675} being at length wearied out by his perseverance, issued a 'writ de excommunicato capiendo' {Latin for "taking one who is excommunicated," being a written command to the sheriff to arrest any who have been excommunicated, and imprison them, until the time that they should become reconciled to the church,} against him, demanding his imprisonment, upon which he fled to London to avoid arrest, and for the next 30 years, in London, would continue to write his numerous books, whilst regularly preaching there to a private congregation of Nonconformists that assembled in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street. In regards to his removal to London, Ness reports that, "my Lord, having more work for me in this world, moved one of the Spiritual Court to give me timely notice; so that I made my escape to London, where I have laboured in God's vineyard ever since the year 1675, including my banishment into Kent, by the Recorder, for a year and a quarter, and my trial at Guildhall before the Lord Mayor, for daring to preach, &c." In 1684 he once again had to conceal himself from the officers of the crown, who had a warrant for his arrest on the charge of publishing an elegy on the death of his friend John Partridge, another Nonconformist minister. He died on December 26, 1705, aged exactly 84 years, having been "a labourer in my Lord's harvest, and a vine-dresser in my Master's vineyard, almost three-score years." He was buried at Bunhill Fields Cemetery, where no headstone was placed to mark the spot.

In his lifetime he wrote numerous books and pamphlets, amongst them, "A History and Mystery of the Old and New

Testament," 1690, in three volumes folio - "A Protestant Antidote Against the Poison of Popery," 1678 - "The Crown and Glory of a Christian," 1676 - "The Christian's Walk and Work on Earth," 1677 - "The Chrystal Mirror; or the Christian's Looking-glass, showing the treachery of the Heart," 1678 - "A Discovery of Antichrist, in his Rise, Reign, and Ruin," 1679 - "The Devil's Patriarch in the Life of Pope Innocent XL," 1680, which according to the publisher, John Dutton, was sold out in only two weeks - "A Whip for the Fool's Back, who did ridicule God's holy ordinance of Marriage, &c., along with a Key with the Whip to unfold the Mystery of Iniquity," 1682; and, "An Antidote Against Arminianism," 1700.

THE PREFACE

Candid Reader, observe these few considerations. Although this enchiridion, or small manual and portable Pocket Book, be very little in itself and substance, yet ought it not therefore to be despised; for.

First. We read how the mighty angel of the Covenant had a very little book open in his hand, Rev.10:2; yet this little book did contain in it, the great concerns of the Redeemer's little, little flock; a double diminutive as Christ calls them in Luke 12:32. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The Bible itself is but a little book in comparison of those vast Folio's of School Doctors and Popish Decretals, wherewith the world is pestered, &c., and that little book was not shut nor sealed, but it was open by the Lamb's Purchase. 'Tis the work of Antichrist to keep it shut. Yea, and it must also be eaten, "take it and eat it up," Rev.10:9, that is, it must go down and be hid in our hearts. "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart," Psal.119:11, then the simplest soul may have right conceptions of it. "But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Deut.30:14.

Secondly. This little book hath cost me great study and labour to compose it, that it might contain the very cream and quintessence of the best authors on this subject. Moreover, it hath cost me likewise many ardent prayers to God, and many earnest wrestlings with God, that I might not be one "of those that rebel against the light," Job 24:13, but

that in His light I might see light, Psal.36:9, and to have mine eyes anointed with Christ's eye-salve, Rev.3:18, that I might see clearly into these profound points, which hath so very much puzzled the Christian World. Insomuch that the orthodox do complain in our day, {only with a little difference,} as blessed Athanasius did in his day, who then sighed out those sad words, "the world is overrun with Arianism," so 'tis the sad sigh of our present times, the Christian world is overrun, yea, overwhelmed with the flood of Arminianism; which cometh, as it were, out of the mouth of the serpent, that he might cause the woman {the Church} "to be carried away of the flood" of it. Rev.12:15.

Thirdly. Lest this overflowing deluge of Arminianism should bring destruction upon us, there is great need that some servants of Christ should run to stop the further spreading of this plague and leprosy. Thus Moses, God's Servant, stood in the gap, and prevented the destruction of Israel. "Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them." Psal.106:23. And at another time this Moses, {who was quick-sighted by his great familiarity with God,} did soon see that Wrath was gone out from the Lord against Israel, then he commands Aaron to run, and take a censor and offer up an Atonement, &c., all which when Aaron had done, the Plague was stayed. "And he {Moses} stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed." Num.16:46-48. And the neglect of this duty the Lord

complains of, that He found none of His servants to stand in the gap, &c. "Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD." "Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life." Ezek.13:5,22. While I was considering these things, the Lord stirred up my spirit to do as is done in common conflagrations, when everyone runs with the best bucket he can get, wherewith to quench the devouring flames, and to stop them, that they may not lay waste all before them.

Fourthly. When I had completed this short compendium, {which I drew up many years ago,} I showed it to Dr. John Owen, Mr. Nicholas Lockyer and Mr. George Griffith, who all unanimously approved of it and wrote an epistle commendatory to it, subscribing it with all their three hands, which is too large here to insert, because I am confined to but four pages for my Preface, &c., but the truth of the premises I do hereby affirm.

Lastly. As a little map doth represent a large country at one view, which will take much time to travel over, so this book is much in a little. Read it seriously without partiality, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

So prayeth yours in the best of bonds,
CHRISTOPHER NESS, September 30th, 1700.

AN ANTIDOTE AGAINST ARMINIANISM

CHAPTER I

Of Arminianism in General

It hath ever been the lot of truth {like the Lord of it} to be crucified between right-hand and left-hand thieves. There is as much beyond the Truth, as on this side of it; as much vain curiosity in out-running the flock of Christ, and that Lamb that leads them, {which exposes men to the watchful and wrathful Canaanites,} as there is of affected ignorance in straggling and loitering behind, whereby they are in danger to be cut off by cursed Amalek. Truth hath evermore observed the golden mean, and the poet's counsel is good here, to keep a mediocrity, and the character of the sons of truth are such as have kept a middle course.

Truth's enemies, on all hands, are various. The Anti-Scripturists make the Bible a Legend of Lies, and Faith a Fable. The Familists cry down Ordinances as a Burden too heavy for a free-born conscience, and too low and carnal for a seraphic spirit. The Socinians decry the Divinity of Christ and his Satisfaction, as if his sufferings were exemplary only, not Expiatory. The Atheists deride all, and would lay waste Religion. The Romanists turn the true worship of God into will worship, and teach their own traditions for the commandments of God, spoiling God's institutions with man's inventions.

The Arminians, {not the least, though here the last of Truth's Adversaries,} do call the Justice

of God to the bar of Reason, and dare confidently wade in the deep ocean of Divine Mysteries, and in stating the Decrees of God, where blessed Paul could find no bottom, but cried out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom.11:33. They dare undertake to fetch the Apostle from off his nonplus, Rom.9:14, saying that, "God foresaw that Jacob would believe, and that Esau would not believe; therefore, the one was loved and the other hated." Thus Arminius' school teacheth deeper divinity than what Paul learned in the third heaven. And they do not only {with the Socinians} gratify the pride of man's reason, but also the pride of man's will, in extenuating and lessening both the guilt and filth of original sin; even as Popery, {their elder sister,} doth gratify the pride of outward sense.

Hence Dr. Leighton calls Arminianism, "the Pope's Benjamin, the last and greatest monster of the man of sin; the elixir of Anti-Christianism; the mystery of the mystery of iniquity; the Pope's cabinet, and such a fine-spun thread of Popery, that it can scarce be discerned; the quintessence of equivocation, and Spain's new-found passage into Brittany and the Low Countries." {Alexander Leighton, "Zion's Plea against Prelacy; An Appeal to Parliament," 1628.} And famous Mr. Fuller saith, "we must sadly confess that since the Synod of Dort, many English souls have taken a cup too much of Belgick Wine in a Spiritual Sense, whereby their heads have not only grown dizzy in matters of lesser

importance, but their whole bodies do stagger in the Fundamentals of their Religion." {Thomas Fuller, "Church History of Britain," 1655.}

Alike hereunto Sir Francis Rous {Master of Eton College} addeth, saying, "Arminianism is the spawn of Popery, which the warmth of favour may easily turn into frogs of the bottomless pit." {"I desire that we may consider the increase of Arminianism, an error that makes the grace of God lackey it after the will of man, that makes the sheep to keep the shepherd, and makes a mortal seed of the Immortal God. Yea, I desire that we may look into the very belly and bowels of this Trojan Horse, to see if there be not men in it ready to open the gates to Romish Tyranny and Spanish Monarchy; for an Arminian is the spawn of a Papist, and if there come the warmth of savour upon him, you shall see him turn into one of those frogs that rise out of the bottomless pit; and if you mark it well, you shall see an Arminian reaching out his hand to a Papist, a Papist to a Jesuit; a Jesuit gives one hand to the Pope, another to the King of Spain, and these men having kindled a fire in our neighbor country, &c." Francis Rous, denouncing the advances being made by both Popery and Arminianism in a speech to the House of Commons, Jan.26, 1628.} And what are the New Arminians but the varnished offspring of the Old Pelagians, that makes the grace of God to lackey it at the foot, {or rather at or to the will,} of man, that makes the sheep {as it were} to keep the Shepherd, that puts God into the same extremity

with Darius, Dan.6:14, who would gladly have saved Daniel but could not.

What else can their doctrine signify which they call a prescience or foreknowledge in God, the truth of which depends, not on the Decree of God, but on the free-will of the creature? This is to make the creature have no dependence on the Creator, and to fetter Divine Providence. Thus that fatal necessity, {which they from our absolute Decree would lay at our doors,} unavoidably remains at theirs, and {according to their scheme} God must say thus to miserable man, "Oh, my poor creature, that fatal fortune which hath harmed you must be endured more than bewailed, for it was from all Eternity, before my Providence; I could not hinder, I could not but consent to those fatal contingencies; and unavoidable fate hath, whether I will or not, pronounced the inevitable sentence." This is to make God like the heathen Jupiter, who himself could not deliver his Sarchedon out of his bonds, when he earnestly desired it, as Homer gives us the relation. What else is this but to overthrow all those graces of Faith, Hope, Patience, Thankfulness, &c., to expectorate {cast off} all vital godliness; and to pull the great Jehovah Himself out of His throne of glory, setting up Dame Fortune to be worshipped in God's stead?

These and many other great abominations have been discovered in the "chambers of imagery" in our days, which indeed are nothing but frothy exuberances of wanton wits, measuring supernatural mysteries and the abstrusest points of

Divinity, with the crooked measuring rod of degenerate reason. "This word saith Luther, hath undone many a soul, that must know a reason of all God's actings; yea, of those too high for us, and wherein reason is a fool; thus {saith he} men put themselves between the door and the hinges in searching into the secret Councils of God." Luther again, "how then should we be able to comprehend or understand the secret counsels of God's Majesty, or search them out with our human sense, reason, or understanding. Should we then admire our own wisdom? I, for my part, admit myself a fool, and yield myself captive." "Wisdom is too high for a fool, he openeth not his mouth in the gate." Prov.24:7. In these points it was once well said, "give me a mortified reason," for, to prescribe to God's Infinite Understanding, and to allow Him no reasons to guide His Determinations by, but what we are acquainted withal, is extremely arrogant and supercilious; to wit, such as carnal reason accounteth foolish and wicked. Reason saith, "out of nothing comes nothing," but faith says, "out of nothing, comes everything." {In reference to the fact that God created the universe and all of reality "out of nothing" - there was no prior existing substance besides God.}

Reason must neither be the rule to measure faith by, nor the judge of it. We may give a reason of our believing, to wit, "because it is written," but not of all things believed, as why Jacob was loved and Esau hated before they had done either good or evil. This was the Counsel of God's own will.

Touching such sublime mysteries our faith stands upon two sure bottoms; the first is, that the Being, Wisdom, and Power of God doth infinitely transcend ours; so may reveal matters far above our reach. The second is, that whatsoever God reveals is undoubtedly true, and to be believed, although the bottom of it cannot be founded by the line of our reason; because man's reason is not absolute, but variously limited, perplexed with his own frailty, and defective in its own actings.

CHAPTER II

Of Predestination, which is the First Point in Controversy.

That the reader may have clear views of the doctrine of Predestination, I shall, first, state that doctrine as revealed in the Bible; second, consider the Arminian's view of it, viz., that it is conditional upon the foresight of faith, works, perseverance, &c., and, thirdly, answer the objections brought by the Arminians against the Scriptural doctrine of Election and Predestination.

Predestination is the Decree of God, whereby {according to the counsel of His own will} He fore-ordained some of mankind to eternal life, and refused or passed by others for the praise of His glorious Mercy and Justice. Some are vessels of mercy, others are vessels of wrath. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory." Rom.9:21-23. In a great house various vessels both for use and ornament; vessels of honour, and vessels of dishonour, II Tim.2:20, and the Master of the house hath a right to, and can wisely use all his vessels, even as he shall think proper. God hath his use even

of Pharaoh and of the Church's greatest enemies; if it be but scullion work, to brighten vessels of mercy by them.

God hath appointed the Elect unto Glory; and He hath by the eternal and most free purpose of His will fore-ordained all the means thereunto; such as redemption by Christ, regeneration by the Holy Ghost, effectual calling and conversion, justification in the court of conscience by faith in Jesus' merits, sanctification in the heart by the Spirit, producing holy living and holy walking with God and man. And these blessed participators are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." I Pet.1:5. "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called, them he also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things?" Rom.8:30,31. We will say with the apostle, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation." I Thes.5:9.

It is called 'Destination,' as it comprehends a determined order of the means to the end, and 'tis called 'Predestination,' because God appointed this Order in and with Himself before the actual existence of those things so ordered. The Greek word signifies a fore-separating for God's special use; as Israel was separated from among all the nations of the world to be God's peculiar Inheritance. So God tells them, "I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people." Lev.20:24. Which the Septuagint reads, "I have separated you," to wit, in the fulness of Time, I have separated you from the common mass of sinful mankind to become vessels

of mercy, members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost, before all time, even from all Eternity. "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." Deut.7:6. In like manner, Predestination is taken strictly and synecdochically for Election itself. As Divine Prescience is sometimes largely taken for Predestination, "God hath not cast away His people which he foreknew," Rom.11:2, that is, whom He did predestinate; so, in like manner, predestination is taken strictly and in part for election itself. "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. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph.1:5. I shall handle it accordingly in this following treatise, using the words Election and Predestination promiscuously.

Predestination is also called a Divine Decree, {as the genus of it,} for it contains in it the Determinate Counsel of God, and the Counsel of His own will, in bringing to pass such ends by such and such means. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:27,28. "Being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Eph.1:11. The Election

and Predestination of the Lord is, in Scripture phrase, termed the "hand," the "determinate counsel," the "purpose," the "good pleasure" of God.

CHAPTER III

Of the Properties, and First Eternal.

This Divine Decree of Predestination hath various properties; it is eternal, unchangeable, absolute, free, discriminating, and extensive. The First Property of the Divine Decree; it is eternal, which is proved from the following reasons.

1. God's internal and immanent acts are the same with His essence; such an act is the Divine Decree; and, therefore, as God's essence is eternal, so His decree must be eternal also. Now the decree is God's decreeing, because whatever is in God is God; it is God Himself by one eternal act, decreeing and determining whatsoever should come to pass unto the praise of His own glory.

2. The second reason is deduced from the Simplicity of God, which is, God considered as one mere and perfect Act, without any composition or succession. There can be no more a new thought, a new intent, or a new purpose in God, than there can be a new God. Whatever God thinks, he ever thought, and always doth and will think. Whatever God purposes he always purposed, and ever and doth and will purpose. As God cannot know anything new, neither can he intend anything new, for His name is, I AM. {"And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Exod.3:14.} He takes not new counsels, as man, neither draws up new determinations.

3. The third reason is taken from Christ. If Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, {as he is called, Rev.13:8,} then Predestination to life must needs be before time, because Christ is the Foundation of Election. We are elected in Him. "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world," Eph.1:4; and predestinated by Him, "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." Eph.1:5. Christ is the means! Now the end cannot be of a later date and determination than the means to that end; they having relations to each other. And if Christ be the eternal purpose of the Father, then the act of electing in Christ must needs be His eternal purpose also.

4. Scripture expressly proves the eternity of the decree, saying, it was "before the world began," II Tim.1:9; Tit.1:2; and "before the foundation of the world," Eph.1:4; and it was an "eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," Eph.3:11, so that we lay from all Eternity in the womb of our Father, before the time we came into our mother's womb.

5. It is the royal prerogative of the great Jehovah to order as well as appoint things that are coming and that shall come, which the vanities {or idols} of the Gentiles cannot do. "And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people, and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them." Isa.44:7. None can appoint God the time. He saith, "who is like me, and who will

appoint me the time?" Jer.50:44. Hence time is said to travel with those eternal decrees of God, and brings forth the accomplishment of them in their proper season; and the decree will bring forth, {"before the decree bring forth," Zeph.2:2,} and it is big-bellied until then. Everything hath its accomplishment in time, which was decreed to fall out from all eternity.

6. If human concerns have this encomium, that "these are ancient things," I Chron.4:22, how much more the Divine Decree, which is not the work of yesterday! If the negative part of predestination {the ungodly} were "of old ordained," Jude 4, then much more the positive, God's purpose of loving Jacob, as well as hating Esau, was before they had done "either good or evil." Rom.9:11.

Objection. Some may object, saying, we grant God's prescience or foreknowledge to be eternal, but not His predestination; that choice or election mentioned in I Corinthians 1:27-29, must be a temporal, not an eternal election.

Answer 1. This Prescience or Foreknowledge of things that shall come to pass doth go before the Decree of Predestination; thus the Apostle ranks them. "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. The Foreknowledge of all things that shall come to pass, must follow the

Decree. For things must first be decreed, and then foreseen in that being which they have in the Decree. In this sense prescience presupposes predestination. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Acts 15:18. God hath not an imperfect, but a thorough foreknowledge of all future things, both concerning the means and the end; not only as they may be, but also as they shall be, by His Divine Determination.

Answer 2. Prescience or Foreknowledge is taken for God's love from eternity. "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate," Rom.8:29; that is, "whom He fore-loved," so Zanchius reads it. Whom He foreknew, not only with the knowledge of observation, but with the knowledge of approbation also. The LORD foreknew them to be His. So it is Predestination itself; and to grant an eternal prescience without an eternal predestination, is to break the links of that golden chain in Romans 8:29,30. "God hath not," and God will not, "cast away His people which He foreknew." Rom.11:2.

Answer 3. The Lutherans grant a predestination eternal to the elect only, but to the non-elect only a prescience or naked foresight, {without any pre-ordination,} lest they should make God the Author of the creature's sin and ruin. But these men fear where no fear is; for the worst evil that ever was committed in the world, to wit, the murdering of the Prince of Glory, Jesus Christ, did not only fall under the foreknowledge of God, but also under His Determinate Counsel. "Him being

delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23. "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:28. This taking and apprehension of Christ was not barely foreknown but unchangeably determined.

Answer 4. Even suppose it be granted that the apostle speaks of a temporal election, or choice in First Corinthians 1:27, &c., yet that signifies no more than our vocation or calling; and temporal reprobation intimates no more than man's obduration. The accomplishment of both these is granted to be in time, so may not be confounded with this eternal decree of God; as these are but fruits and effects of that Eternal Decree.

Some inferences drawn from the foregoing. 1. Hath God given us a room in his heart before we did any good to him, even from all Eternity, then how should we give God a room, {yeah, the best room,} in our hearts, who never did evil to us? 2. Is God's love eternal? Then Satan cannot get beyond or between this love of God and us; for it was before the world was, and so before Satan was. 3. Augustine told a curious fool that asked what God did before the world was made, "that He made hell for such as him;" but this teaches us that God was choosing us to Himself before the world began. Oh, wonderful! 4. If so, believer, then thy saintship and sufferings have eternal glory wrapped up in them. All this comfort is lost in the contrary doctrine.

CHAPTER IV

Of the Second Property of the Divine Decree, it is Unchangeable.

This second property of the Divine Decree of Predestination is that it is unchangeable. Hence it is compared to "mountains of brass," Zech.6:1, and it is called the "immutability of his counsel." Heb.6:17. This is made evident by sundry reasons. Reason 1. The Divine Decree hath an unchangeable fountain, to wit, the unchangeableness of God. "He is in one mind, and who can turn Him?" Job 23:13. He desires and He doth it; no created being can interpose between the desire and the doing, to hinder their meeting together. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent." Num.23:19. "I am the Lord, I change not." Mal.3:6. With the Lord there is no "variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17. "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." Psal.33:11. "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the Counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." Prov.19:21. Man is a poor changeable creature and changes his mind oftener than his garment, both from the darkness of his understanding and the perverseness of his will. He frequently sees something that he saw not before, but there is no such imperfection in God. All things are naked before Him, dissected, or with their faces upward. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we

have to do." Heb.4:13. He knows all His works {their natures and circumstances} as perfectly in the beginning of the world as He will do at the end of it; and He abides still in one mind when His dispensations are changed, for He decreed the change of them from all eternity.

Reason 2. The decree of Election stands upon an unchangeable foundation, to wit, that Rock of Ages, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Heb.13:8. As the first Adam was the foundation stone in the Decree of Creation, so the last Adam, even our Lord Jesus Christ, is the foundation stone in the Decree of Election. God hath blessed us in Him, Eph.1:3; yea, and we shall be blessed. He hath chosen us in Him, Eph.1:4, pardoned us in Him, Eph.1:7, sealed us in Him, Eph.1:13, built us up in Him, Col.2:7, and completed us in Him, Col.2:10, "according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9. All those Acts of Grace are said to be in Christ, and Christ Himself was under Divine Ordination. He "verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world," I Pet.1:20, and is called the elect stone. I Pet.2:6. Christ is the first person elected. "Behold My servant whom I uphold, Mine elect." Isa.42:1. "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased." Matt.12:18. As Adam was the first person created, Christ was chosen as the Head, and we as his members; therefore are we said to be given to Christ. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them Me." John 17:6. Now, so long as this foundation standeth

sure, so long doth the superstructure remain unchangeable. The temple stood firmly upon those two pillars, Jachin and Boza, i.e., stability and strength; so the Decree of Election standeth sure upon Christ the Foundation; and none can pluck an elect soul from off this Foundation. None can pluck any of Christ's out of His hands. Christ will lose none that are given to him, but will fulfill his Father's will by taking care of them all. "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." John 6:39. "They shall never perish." John 10:28.

Reason 3. 'Tis unchangeable, because it is a decree written in Heaven, and so above the reach of either angry men or enraged devils to cancel. "The Lord knoweth them that are His," II Tim.2:19, they are "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven." Heb.12:23. Hence it is called "the Lamb's book of life," which contains a catalog of the elect, determined by the unalterable counsel of God, which number hath a fulfilling time, Rev.6:11, and can neither be increased nor diminished. This is to be rejoiced in above dominion over devils. "Rather rejoice, because your names are in Heaven," Lk.10:20; which, if our names may be written in Heaven today and blotted out tomorrow, there would be no such ground of joy. If the decrees of the Medes and Persians, which were but earthly writings, were unalterable, Dan.6:8, how much more the decrees of the great God, written in Heaven, must be

unchangeable. Must Pilate say, "what I have written I have written," John 19:22; that is to say, "my writing shall not be altered," and shall not God say so much more? "I know {saith Solomon} that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever." Eccl.3:14. Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." Isa.46:10-11. The sun may sooner be stopped in his course than God hindered in His work or in His will. Nature, angels, devils, men, may all be resisted, and so miss of their design; not so God, for "who hath resisted His will?" All those chariots of human occurrences and dispensations come forth from between those mountains of brass, the unalterable decrees of God, Zech.6:1, and should it be granted that one soul may be blotted out of this book of life {this writing in Heaven} then it is possible that all may be so; and, by consequence, it may be supposed that that Book may become empty and useless as waste paper; and that Christ may be a Head without a body.

Reason 4. 'Tis unchangeable, for the Decree concerning the end includes the means to that end, and binds them altogether with an irrefragable chain, which can never be broken. The predestinated, called, justified, glorified ones, are

the same. Rom.8:30. Therefore, "the purpose of God according to election must stand." Rom.9:11. God doth not decree the end without the means, nor the means without the end, but both together. As a purpose for building includes the hewing of stone, and squaring of timber, and all other materials for building-work; and as a decree for war implies arms, horses, ammuniton, and all warlike provisions; so here, all that are elected to salvation, are elected to sanctification too. God ordains to the means as well as to the end. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. God hath ordained that we should walk in good works. Eph.2:10. We are elected unto obedience, through the "sanctification of the Spirit," I Pet.1:2, and unto Faith, Tit.1:1, and God hath appointed theological virtue to be the way to Glory. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." II Pet.1:3. Therefore God hath promised to sanctify those whom He purposed to save. We teach with Augustine that Election is an ordaining to grace as well as to glory, and if grace and glory meet not both together, either God must be conquered or deceived.

In Predestination, therefore, the means of salvation are no less absolutely decreed than salvation itself. We may not conceive that God's decree runs after this form, "I will predestinate Peter to salvation, if it should so happen that he doth believe and persevere," but rather thus, "I do predestinate Peter to salvation, which, that he may

infallibly obtain; I will give him both faith and perseverance." Were it otherwise, God's Decree would not be absolute, and the Foundation would not stand sure, II Tim.2:19, yea, and God's gifts would not be without repentance, Rom.11:29, and men would not be beloved according to the Election. Rom.11:28. If God did not absolutely purpose to give those means that are provisional in the Execution of the Decree, {to wit, Faith and Perseverance,} to his elected ones, and if he should not bestow on them a power and a will to perform those engagements, all would be desolate. Hereupon the Covenant of Grace runs in this tenure, "I will be a God to you, and ye shall be a people unto me," that is, I will make ye so.

Inferences drawn from the foregoing. 1. A name written in Heaven, where no thief, no rust, no moth comes to destroy it, is better than to be enrolled in Metropolitan Corporations or at Princely Courts; 'tis a name better than of sons and daughters, to be a free citizen of Heaven. 2. Though we are changeable creatures, yet unchangeable love is towards us, that keeps faster hold of us than we of it. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal.3:6. 3. It is infinite condescension that the Great God should hold a poor lump of clay so fast in His Almighty hands, as to secure our interest to all eternity. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." I Pet.1:2-5. "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 greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John 10:28-29.

CHAPTER V

Of the Third Property of the Divine Decree, it is Absolute.

This Third Property of the Divine Decree is that it is Absolute in respect of the Efficient Impulsive Cause which cannot be anything out of God, as the following reasons evince.

Reason 1. If the Divine Decree be eternal it must be absolute; for nothing can be assigned before an eternal act, as the efficient cause of it. There cannot be a cause of Predestination assigned to God, out of God, because Predestination is an Immanent Act of the Divine Will; and so, not only the cause, but also the first cause of all created beings; and therefore cannot {in any good sense} be said to depend on foreseen transient acts in the creature; so, by consequence, must be an Absolute Act, unless we will make the volitions of God to come behind the created and temporary volitions of man, which is grossly absurd. And if those contingent acts {of the creatures believing and persevering} have a future existence before God's Decree, it does not only deny God to be the first Cause of all things, but it also quite disannuls the Eternity of God's Decree, which was proved to be Eternal in the 3rd chapter.

Reason 2. If God be God; if he be an Almighty, All-wise, All-free, and an All-disposing God, then His decree of Election must be absolute; for a conditional decree makes a conditional God, and plainly ungod's Him, by ascribing such imperfections

to Him as are unworthy His Majesty, and below His Divine Being.

As, first, it opposes His omnipotence. If some conditions be antecedent to the will of God, then the same are antecedent also to the power of God. This must be true, for his Power {as determined by his Will} is the Cause of all things; then it was not in God's power to save more than are to be saved; or to damn fewer than are to be damned; if the Decree of God be predetermined by contingent acts in men. If the actings of Divine Omnipotency depend upon the contingent actings in the creature, then God must say, I will elect all if they will believe; then must God think, they can believe without him, and so he is not Omnipotent. Is it not safer to say that God will give us this faith that brings us from the conditional to the Absolute Decree. Besides, the former hypothesis puts a lie upon Christ {who was Truth itself} both in saying, that he could of very stones raise up children unto Abraham, and that he could send legions of angels to deliver him from his enemies.

Secondly, it takes away the glory of the Divine Wisdom in ordering all occurrences of things; for if Peter must be willing to believe before God's decree concerning Peter, then Divine Wisdom doth not {at all} determine concerning the order of things. But if order is not absolutely ordained, and that which happens today might have happened yesterday; and the master of the ass might not have sent his ass to Christ upon that same day, when that prophecy of Christ's riding on an ass to Jerusalem {Zech.9:9}

was to be fulfilled; yea, and man might have fallen before the angels, and many such occurrences might have happened otherwise in the world, whatever the wisdom of God hath determined to the contrary.

Thirdly, it takes away the glory of God's Absolute Liberty and Independence; for if Peter believing and Judas not believing must be antecedent to the Decree of God concerning them, then Peter and Judas make themselves the formal objects of election and non-election, and God hath not an Absolute Dominion over His own creatures. The potter hath not an arbitrary freedom to make this lump of clay a vessel of honour and that a vessel of dishonour, according to his pleasure, but this difference will arise more from the quality of the clay than the will of the Potter, and God's will {herein} must be dependent on the will of man for its determinations. This plainly overthrows the Independency of God!

Fourthly, it takes away the glory of God's All-Disposing Providence. If the decree be not absolute, how can God {otherwise} be said wholly to dispose of lots that are cast into the lap? "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD." Prov.16:33. Shall we say that the lot of the apostleship fell to Matthias by chance, Acts 1:26, and that it was not rather absolutely ordained and ordered by the Lord, to whom the Apostles prayed, as in Acts 1:24, saying, "thou, Lord, which knoweth the hearts of all men, show whether {or which} of these two thou has chosen...and they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias." Acts 1:26.

Thus by the disposal of lots in the lap was Achan discovered to be Israel's curse, and Saul appointed to be Israel's king. Thus God is said to deliver the man into the hands of the hewer of wood, to be slain by the head of the ax flying from the helve upon his head. Joshua 7:14-18; I Sam.10:19-21. Man purposeth, but God disposeth; because God by an absolute decree hath foreordained all things that do come to pass. They fall not out casually and beyond God's Intention; thus it is said, "it behooved Christ to suffer," Lk.24:46, and to those things we are appointed, I Thes.3:3, and goodness and fortune cannot make void the council of God. "For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it, and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back." Isa.14:27. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa.46:10.

Reason 3. If the will of the Potter be an absolute will over his pots, much more is the will of God an absolute will over mankind. It is God's own comparison, for God compares not Himself to a goldsmith, because a goldsmith hath costly materials, such as silver and gold, which lays some obligation on him to make honourable vessels therewith. The Goldsmith makes curious vessels oft-times for the pride and luxury of men; yea, sometimes such as are redundant and superfluous; and men's adoring the gods of silver and of gold in those honoured vessels, doth truly change them into vessels of dishonor; but God compareth Himself to

a potter, because first, the materials of a potter are vile and sordid, to wit, clay, so more answerable to fallen mankind, out of which God maketh His choice. "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? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour." Rom.9:20-21. We are not only clay, Job 4:19, but sinful clay through the Fall. The very vessels of dishonor which the Potter makes are for the necessities and conveniences of the Household. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." II Tim.2:10. The Great Householder must have vessels of all sorts, some for inferior uses, as well as others for honourable uses. The Potter doth not make this difference among his pots for any foreseen inherent goodness in his clay, {for the whole lump before him is of an equal temper and quality,} but from the pleasure of His own will. Thus the potter's power over his materials is clearer from exception than that of the goldsmith, and illustrates more the absoluteness of God's will in His choice both in vessels of honour and vessels of dishonour.

Again, the distance between the clay and potter is but a finite distance, even the distance only between one creature and another, animate and inanimate; but the distance between God and mankind is infinite, not only the natural distance between God and us, as we are creatures, but also

the moral distance between us, as we are sinners. The potter also must have his clay made to his hand; he cannot make his own clay, though he may temper it for his work when he hath found it; but the great God creates His own clay. He created the earth out of which man was formed. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Gen.1:1. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." Gen.2:7. It follows then, that God hath not only as much more power over mankind as the potter hath over his pots, {which he maketh base or noble according to his own will,} if the potter by an absolute will disposes of his pots, much more hath God a right concerning His creatures.

Inferences drawn from the preceding. 1. If this absolute will of God be the universal cause of all things, then no event can fall beyond or beside. God's will and fortune {in the sense of the Gentiles} is but the devil's blasphemous spit upon Divine Providence. 2. God's absolute will cannot be resisted; as He hath willed, so shall it come to pass; and there is no hindering the execution of it. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa.14:24. "Our God is in the Heavens, he hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." Psal.115:3. "I know that Thou canst do everything." Job 42:2. 3. Then let us learn submission to the will of God. Proud, yet brittle clay, will be knocking their sides against the absolute will of God, till they break in pieces; so did Adonijah, I Kings 1:5, when Solomon must rule; I Chron.22:9,

and mark the end of it. I Kings 2:23-25. Oh, for the grace of humility to enable us to adopt the language of the prophet, "now, Oh, Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our Potter, and we all are the work of Thy hand." Isa.64:8.

CHAPTER VI

Of the Fourth Property of the Divine Decree, it is Free.

As the Divine Decree is not conditional but absolute, so 'tis not of necessity but free, as flowing only from the pleasure of God's will. God is a Free Agent, and cannot fall under any obligation, so as to necessitate Him in any of His emanations to the sinner; but he is graciously pleased of his own free love to oblige Himself.

Reason 1. The first argument to prove the freeness of the Divine Decree is that it is such a decree as passeth without any obligation to necessitate the passing of it, must needs have the property of freeness; and thus it was with the Divine Decree. If there be any obligation it must be either in respect of objects or acts or motives, but God was not obliged in any of these respects.

First. He was not obliged in respect of objects, for God was under no necessity of having either any elect or any reprobate, and was blessed in Himself from all eternity; and would have been blessed forever without either of these; and to affirm that God stood in need of any such objects is to deny the Perfection of God. God was infinitely blessed in himself, and needed not to have looked out of himself for any additional blessedness, and therefore it is called a humbling of himself to look down on things in Heaven, much more on things on earth. Psal.113:5. It must needs therefore be

granted that he needed them not, but would have been God blessed forever without them.

Second. He was not obliged by acts, as acts are necessary by a moral obligation. God was under no moral obligation to man. He had done man no wrong if He had never willed man to be, much less to be holy and happy. God was not bound to any of His actions concerning man, either Election, Vocation, Justification, &c., for God cannot be a debtor by any other way than as He makes Himself a debtor of His own good pleasure. As in His promises, His love moved Him to make them, and His truth binds Him to perform them, otherwise those actions would be actions of debt, and not acts of grace, contrary to the tenor of Scripture, which makes the whole work of man's salvation to flow wholly from the Free Grace of God.

Third. He was not obliged in respect to motives; neither in the creature, nor yet in Christ. Not in the creature, for the being of the creature {much more the faith and good works of the creature} was the effect of the decree of God, so could not be the motive of it. Nor could the Lord foresee repentance, faith, love, &c., in the creature, antecedent to His own purpose in the gift of it, but in his purpose and decree of giving them both. In the mass of corruption of what is styled man, {which even the Arminians, in a sense, assent unto,} nothing that is good can be foreseen, but what is caused by that Grace which was eternally prepared for them in the Decree of Predestination, and actually applied in the Effectual Vocation, so that

faith as foreseen is but a may-be, and the Decree or Will of God causeth it to become a shall-be; and therefore it cannot {in any good sense} be the moving cause of the Decree, for then must it be the cause of its own cause; but of this point much more, when I come to confute the conditional decree.

Neither is Christ Himself the moving cause of the Divine Decree, for Christ is the effect of God's eternal love, not the cause of it. "God so loved the world that He gave His Son." John 3:16. God's love gives Christ; Christ is not the cause of this eternal love, though he be the cause of our salvation, {which is the application of the Divine Decree,} but not of the Decree of love itself. Therefore we are said to be elected in Christ, but never for Christ; for Christ is an elect one Himself, as was shown before. God willeth to save us for Christ, but not for Christ willeth he us to be saved, according to that thesis in the schools, the root must be before the branch. Christ was first chosen, for the Head comes first out of the womb of Predestinating Love, and then the members. Yet, though he be first chosen to that glory which became him as an Head, he is not the cause why we are also chosen; even as the first Adam is not the cause why God did love me; so that I should be a man and have this natural being; though in and through him I come to have this being; so Christ is not the cause why God did love me, so that I should be a Christian and have a supernatural being, a life above nature, even the life of Grace, though I attain to it, and receive it through him, in him, and for his sake. The love of God as

immediately cometh from Himself to me, as to Christ; and He was foreordained to be our Head, I Pet.1:20, and we to be His members. Thus we are Christ's, and Christ is God's, I Cor.3:23-24, as the effect of His love to His elect from all eternity.

Reason 2. The second argument to prove the freeness of the Divine Decree is taken from the testimony of the Word of God in which it is affirmed to be a Free Act, an act of Grace and not of Debt, an act of Love and Special Favour, founded upon the mere good pleasure of God, must be accordingly believed to be so by us. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matt.11:26. "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Lk.12:32. It was a gracious purpose in God from all eternity. II Tim.1:9; Eph.1:5,9,11. Paul's repeated exclamation is, "the pleasure of His own will," "the counsel of His own will," but more fully in Romans 9:13,16, doth he exemplify this truth in Jacob and Esau. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated...it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Both Malachi the Prophet, Mal.1:3, and Paul the Apostle, make this instance of Jacob and Esau the fullest exemplification of free election. They do not bring in for an instance, that of Cain and Abel in the beginning of the old world; or that of Shem and Ham in the beginning of the new world, but this of Jacob and Esau. For they lay together in the same womb, and were born at the same time, {for Jacob took hold of Esau's heel,} so the contrary disposal of these two doth more illustrate the Free

Predestination of God than any other two whatsoever. Of Jacob there came a distinguished people from all the world, even a Church unto God; and of Esau there sprang forth a persecuting seed, yet before they had done either good or evil, Jacob was loved and Esau hated. God hath no regard to faith in the one, or of infidelity in the other, whereby they might be differenced the one from the other; they were at that time, {when God's oracle passed upon them,} already conceived in sin in their mother's womb, and, if there were any pre-eminence, Esau had it, as being the first-born. What then cast the balance? Nothing but the good pleasure of God. Thus the apostle determines it, {according to that wisdom given him, II Pet.3:15,} that God will "have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." Rom.9:18. Now, in opposition to this carnal reason saith, "it was because God foresaw what they both would be." But if that had been the cause, the apostle {divinely inspired} would have answered this objection, verse 16, "is there then unrighteousness with God," according to that hypothesis which would have been understood, II Pet.3:16, but easy to be understood, and would not have resolved all {as he doth} into the unsearchable will of God; and as Jacob's person was thus loved freely, so was his posterity, not because they were better than they; nay, but God loved them simply because He would love them. "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, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Deut.7:7-8.

It was choosing love that He bare unto them, and that is the best of the kind. That is the favour which God bears to His people. As a man loves his goods, and his servants with a common love, but his wife and children with a special love; and though Malachi instances only the desolation of Esau's Country as the evidences of God's hatred to Esau, yet the apostle saw more in it than the spoiling of his earthly inheritance, for in that very desolation {as an outward pledge} he reads God's Eternal Hatred towards him in the Decree of Reprobation.

Reason 3. The third reason to prove the freeness of the Divine Decree is, that if God hath in all ages given us examples of His free receiving some of mankind and rejecting others; this is plain from Scripture history. Of Adam's three sons, Cain, Abel, Seth, the eldest was rejected. Of Noah's three, Japheth, Shem and Ham, the youngest was rejected. Of Terah's three, Abraham, Nahor, Haran, the middlemost was rejected, for Nahor was an idolater, and Laban sware by Nahor's idol, Gen.31:53, not by the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, but by the other gods which Nahor served. Josh.24:2. Now why is this picking and choosing, this receiving and rejecting; eldest at one time, youngest at another time, and middlemost at a third

time? What is all this but to show that neither birth nor age, nor anything foreseen or existing in the creature, can produce any claim, but that all lies in the Free Election of God! We can give no reason, save the good pleasure of God, why Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar, {both engaged in the same warfare against Israel, the church of God,} had different dispensations of Heaven upon them; forasmuch as the one was hardened and the other humbled under the Mighty Hand of God; nor why Pharaoh's baker was hanged and his butler restored to his office again; why two men shall be in one bed, the one taken, and the other left; why two women shall be grinding at one mill, the one taken, the other left; why Aaron's rod, of all twelve, only blossomed. These and many more instances do sufficiently demonstrate the reason of all those differences. It is not anything that can be found in the creature; but 'tis only the Free Election of God.

Reason 4. The fourth argument is, if the fruits of the Divine Decree be freely given, then must the Decree itself be a Free Decree, but the antecedent is true, ergo, the consequent is true also. The proposition is evident, for if I give a book or a piece of money freely, then I must needs purpose to give them freely. This assumption is clear, for first, our vocation is from Free Love. Christ freely, and of His own sovereign will, called James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, and left their father uncalled with the hired servants. Mark 1:20. "He called unto Him whom He would." Mark 3:13. "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven,

but to them it is not given." Matt.13:11. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true." I John 5:20. "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight." Matt.11:26.

Second. Our Justification is from Free Grace. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom.3:24. Third. Our sanctification is from Free Grace. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." James 1:18. The sanctifying Spirit breathes where it listeth; and the wind at sea, is as much at our command as the fresh gales of this renewing Spirit. Fourth. Our glorification is free. Eternal life is the gift of God. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom.6:23. He doth not sell it for foreseen faith or works, but He freely gives it. Now if all these fruits of election be free, then the election itself to these fruits must be free also. If God call such as have no money to buy withal, Isa.55:1, and bids them drink of the Water of Life freely, Rev.21:6, if faith be the free gift of God, Eph.2:8, and it is given to us not only to be believe, but to suffer for his Name, Phil.1:29, then Predestination to faith must of necessity be also free, for God worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will. Eph.1:11.

Christian believer, there is much comfort and establishment to be drawn from a view of the freeness of the grace of God. 1. Admire free grace in this decree of predestination, and cry, "Lord, how

is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" John 14:22. 2. Thou makest not thyself to differ from others, but free grace does it for thee. Thou art a lump of clay in the hands of the Potter, no better than others; yea, pressed down to hell by Adam's fall; that God should lift thee up to Heaven, be thankful. 3. Rejoice with all thy might, as David did. Did David dance before the Lord with all his might? Did David say to Michael, "it was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel; therefore will I play before the LORD." II Sam.6:21. David was rejoicing for being chosen before Saul to an earthly kingdom, but thou art freely appointed to a Heavenly Kingdom. "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:20.

CHAPTER VII

Of the Fifth Property of the Divine Decree, it is Discriminating.

The Fifth Property of the Divine Decree, it is discriminating and particular. That it is discriminating and particular, not universal or general, may be proved from the following arguments.

Reason 1. The very word used, Election, confutes the universality of it. There can be no choice made, where all are taken, and nothing is left. That cannot in any good sense be called Election, which is equally extended to every individual. He doth not elect that doth not prefer some before others. God did not choose all the thirty-two thousand Israelites that were with Gideon, to save Israel by, out of the hand of Midian, but only the three hundred that lapped; and these were chosen from out of the thirty and two thousand. Judges 7:3-7. God did not choose all the nations, but only Israel, to be a special people to Himself. "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." Deut.7:6. Election must therefore be discriminating, and a making of some to differ from others. He cannot be said to choose, that takes all.

Reason 2. Scripture expressly states that only few are chosen, Matt.20:16, though many be called. It is only a little flock, Lk.12:32, and but one of a

tribe, and two of a family that are brought to Zion. "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you, and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion." Jer.3:14. "Have not I {saith Christ} chosen you out of the world," John 15:19, and the Lord calls Paul a chosen vessel unto Him, Acts 9:15, as a special {not common} favour vouchsafed to him, and how ill it sounds in the ears of a gospel-spirit to say that Pharaoh and Judas were elected as well as Paul and Barnabas; and that Simon Magus was elected as well as Simon Peter; all which a general election, which is the Arminian hypothesis, most necessarily asserts. How can these "reprobate silver" pieces be, in a Gospel sense, termed chosen vessels {as Paul was} to know God's will, and to see the Just One? Acts 22:14.

3. If Election be general under a condition of believing, then Pilate, Caiaphas, and Judas were elected under that condition; and so God is brought in to speak after this manner, "I have appointed to save Pilate, Caiaphas and Judas if they will believe in the death of Christ; but, if they shall believe, Christ shall not be crucified, for those are the very men appointed by my determinate counsel to put Christ to death." Acts 2:23; 4:28. Before that was done {according to this Arminian hypothesis} those men might have believed, and so God's Decree concerning Christ's Death would not have been Absolute, but depending on a Condition which those men might have fulfilled, to wit, believing in Christ's death, which had they done, they had believed in

that which then never would have come to pass at all. Thus carnal reason bespatters Divine Wisdom!

Reason 4. How can it be safely said that God ever intended the salvation of any others, but those who are, or shall be, effectually saved? This would frustrate the will of God, even His will of intention, and the will of man would anticipate the will of God, and would be contrary to the following scriptures, "our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased," Psal.115:3, and Job knew that God could do everything that He willed, "I know that thou canst do everything," Job 42:2, and no man can resist the will of God, Rom.9:19, for the Lord will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. And, if after all, O vain man, thou wilt still object, and say, "why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 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? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour." Rom.9:19-21. Thus it was, according to the sovereign will of Jehovah, that Jacob and Esau were discriminated the one from the other.

Reason 5. The Apostle {that was singularity taught of God} shows that there is this discriminating difference between man and man founded in the breast of God, that some are chosen to life, and therefore shall most certainly obtain it, whilst others are refused and left in a perishing condition, which they shall certainly not escape.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Rom.11:7. The difference is of God, according to the purpose of election; not as of Him that foresees faith or works, but as of Him that gives both. Thus were Jacob and Esau discriminated the one from the other. Rom.9:11.

Thus we may learn from the preceding. 1. It is distinguishing love that our Potter hath made us what we are, men and women, not toads or loathsome creatures, and not left in that perishing state. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground," Gen.2:7, "and out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast." Gen.2:19. 2. It is the will of God that some be poor and others rich, &c., so here, that some be vessels of honour, and others of dishonour. 3. Christ raised not all up that were dead, but Lazarus, &c., nor all that were born blind, but him mentioned in John 9. Bless God, for raising thee up from thy death of sin, and healing thy blindness, and not others! Thou wert alike undeserving with them! Thou wert, thou art still, in thyself, a sinner! And if thou art taught by grace, the last accents on thy faltering tongue will be the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

CHAPTER VIII

Of the Sixth and Last Property of the Divine Decree, it is Extensive.

The Sixth Property of the Divine Decree is that it is extensive. There is a general Decree that relates to all created beings, both animate and inanimate, celestial and terrestrial; this indeed extends itself to every individual in the whole creation, for as it gave a being to all things, so it preserves them in that being while they continue in the world. The Creator is not herein like the Carpenter that builds a house and leaves the Preservation of it to the care of others, but the work of Providence {which extends itself from angels down to worms} accompanies the work of Creation. But this special Decree of Predestination is not extensive {as the general is} to all individuals, but is discriminating and particular as before, and yet though it be not extended *ad singula generum*, yet it is *ad genera singulorum*, {not to individual classes, yet to classes of individuals,} though the exception lay not in the Gospel, {which is to be preached to every creature,} but in the Decree; yet is the Decree an extensive thing, as it extends itself.

First. To all sorts and ranks of men, to princes and peasants, to high and low, to rich and poor, to bond and free. It extends itself to kings, for among them hath God His chosen vessels, His David, His Solomon, His Hezekiah, His Manasseh. Though the Scriptures say that, "not many mighty, not many

noble, are called," I Cor.1:26, yet it doth not say, not any; for God hath had some great ones to own his ways in all ages. It extends to servants also, Tit.2:9,11, for God bestows His love on those in rags as well as those in robes; and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them. Matt.11:5. God is no respecter of persons.

Second. To all or both sexes is the Decree extended, to male and to female. God hath His elect ladies. "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth," and, "the children of thy elect sister, greet thee," II John 1:13, and both male and female are one in Christ Jesus. Gal.3:28. Electing Love hath appeared to both sexes in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. "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.

Thirdly. To all ages; to young and old, to children, and to those of riper years; yea, very infants lay in the womb of the Eternal Decree, before ever they came out of their mother's womb. Jeremiah was sanctified and ordained before he came from the womb. "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. John Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from the womb, Lk.1:15, and it is probable David believed that his child belonged to the Election of Grace, and that its soul was bound up in the bundle of life; for he

comforted himself thus, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." II Sam.12:23. David's going to the grave to the child could yield him but little comfort.

Fourthly. To all nations. Grace is not immured within the walls of one nation only, but is extended to Jew and Gentile, to Circumcision and Uncircumcision, to Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, Col.3:11, to some of every nation under Heaven. Acts 2:5. The partition wall, which was betwixt Jew and Gentile, is thrown down. Our Lord saith, "and other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring." John 10:16. This Predestinating Love effectually calls its sons out of all quarters. "For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not, for I am with thee, I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, give up; and to the south, keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." Isa.43:3-7. Yea, and while this wall stood, this predestinating love brought over it sundry proselytes to the Church, as Jethro, {who was the first proselyte that was added to the Church in the Wilderness, as it became a Church,} Exod.18:1-12, and many others.

Fifthly. To all generations doth it extend itself. Predestinating love is like a river that runs under ground, and breaks out in certain places above the earth. So fresh veins of election breaketh forth sometimes in one generation, and sometimes in another. It is not bound up as to time, neither before the Law, nor under the Law, nor after the Law; but, in every generation God hath His Church visible on the earth, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. As God is no respecter of persons, so neither is he of places, nations, or generations; but hath had, and he will have, His hidden ones to the world's end. Oh believer! There is ground for much rejoicing and strong consolation, in a view of the extensiveness of God's everlasting love.

1. If predestinating love extends itself to all degrees, then, they which are poor of wealth may be rich in faith, and a master's servant may be the Lord's freeman. 2. If to both sexes, then the weaker vessel may be a chosen vessel, an heir of the grace of life, and may be in Christ before, {as to being converted and brought to the faith of Christ,} the stronger vessel, as Junia was. Rom.16:7. 3. If to all ages, then believing parents may have faith for their dying children; they may belong to the Election of Grace; they may be bound up in the swaddling bands of the Covenant of Grace; so they are not as without hope for them. 4. If to all nations, then the ends of the earth may look towards Christ, {as He is lifted up on the pole of the everlasting Gospel,} and be saved. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none

else." Isa.45:22. 5. If to all generations, then predestinating love is an inexhaustible fountain crying always, "is there yet any of the house of the Lord amongst mankind that I may show the kindness of God unto," II Sam.9:3, as David's love did.

CHAPTER IX

In which are contained Arguments against the Conditional Decree.

Having stated the doctrine of Divine Predestination, as revealed in the Scriptures, and having, from the same source, proved that it is possessed of various distinguishing properties, such as eternal, unchangeable, absolute, free, discriminating, and extensive; I come now, secondly, to consider the Arminians' view of it, viz., "that it is conditional, upon the foresight of faith, works, perseverance," &c. To this I answer, that the Divine Decree of Predestination cannot be conditional, upon a foresight of man's faith, works, or perseverance, &c., because of these following reasons.

Argument 1. That which the Scriptures declare to be the cause and ground of our Election, that, and that only, must be the cause and ground thereof; but the Scripture propounds the good pleasure of God as the only cause and ground of our election, not any foresight of our faith, &c. That the Scriptures declare this, appears plain from Eph.1:5, "according to the good pleasure of His will," and from Eph.1:9, "having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure," and, "predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Also, from Matthew 11:25,26, "thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." But why so? It is "even

so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Again the Scriptures fully declare the same truth in Romans 9:11-15; Romans 11:5, and in II Tim.1:9, where our salvation and calling is stated to be, "not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." The time would fail me in enumerating more passages of Scripture, for the whole Bible as with one voice crieth aloud, election is of sovereign grace and not of works; flowing only from the absolute will and good pleasure of God.

Argument 2. That which makes election an action of debt ought not to be received, but this doctrine of a conditional decree doth so; ergo, &c., the proposition is proven thus, an action of grace, and an action of debt, are contradictory terms. If election be an act of grace, {and the whole work of salvation hath been proved to be wholly and solely from free grace,} then 'tis abominable and to be rejected to make it an act of debt. If the decree be conditional upon foreseen faith and perseverance, then is it an act of debt and not of grace, an act of justice and not of mercy. For a decree of giving glory to believers persevering, as their reward, can be nothing else but remunerative justice.

Argument 3. That which makes God go out of Himself in his immanent and eternal actings, ought not to be received, but the doctrine of a conditional decree doth so, ergo, the assumption is proved, for it makes God look upon this or that in the creature upon which the will of God is determined. This

makes man the author of his own salvation, and not God, and to assign a cause of God's will {outside of God} is not only absurd, but blasphemously ungodly the Great God, and makes {as it were} a mortal man of an Immortal God. For this doctrine of the conditional decree sets God upon His watch-tower of foreknowledge to espy what men will do; whether they will believe or not, obey or not, persevere or not, and according to the Lord's observation of their actings, so he determines His will concerning them. Thus the perfection both of the Divine Knowledge and Divine Will is with one breath denied, and such notions are fitter for the doting Anthropomorphites {that is, one who ascribes a human form or human attributes to a deity} than for any well instructed divine.

Argument 4. No temporal thing can be the efficient cause of our eternal election, which hath its existence from all eternity; but faith, obedience, &c., are temporal things, the former being wrought in us, and the latter performed by us, in their appointed time. Therefore, what is this, but to prefer time before eternity, and to set up a post-destination instead of a predestination? Yea, 'tis a plain denying the Eternity of the Decree, for if the sovereign volitions of God be placed behind the created and temporary volitions of man, those volitions of God cannot be eternal, the contrary whereunto was proven before.

Argument 5. That which is the fruit and effect of the Divine Decree cannot be the efficient cause thereof, but faith, perseverance, &c., are but the

fruits and effects of the Decree, ergo, that the assumption is true appears from many Scriptures. Such as are given to Christ in the Decree of Election, do come to, or believe in Christ; others do not come, do not believe; and the cause assigned is, because they are not of His sheep, because they are not given to Him. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." John 6:37. Coming to Christ is believing on Him. "Ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep." John 10:26. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. We may not {according to the Arminian notion} read it, "as many as believed were ordained unto life," for this would be setting the cart before the horse, as if the means were ordained before the end. We are predestinated that we should be holy, not because we are holy. Eph.1:4. We are foreordained to walk in good works, not because we do so. Eph.2:10. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, not because we are so. Rom.8:29. It is the election that obtains faith, and not faith that obtains election. Rom.11:7. And the Apostle, II Tim.1:9, excludes all works, {both foreseen and existing,} showing that God's gracious purpose is the original of all. Yea, Paul himself was chosen that he might know the will of God, not that he was foreseen to do so. "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." Acts 22:14. And he tells the Thessalonians, that "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the

truth," II Thes.2:13, so that we are elected to Faith, not for it, or from it. Paul obtained mercy to be faithful, I Cor.7:25, not because he was so, and Christ chooses us to bring forth fruit. "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." John 15:16. We may not make that an antecedent to election which is but the consequent of it.

Argument 6. That which sets up an inferior cause because a superior ought not be admitted, and the conditional decree doth so. 'Tis plain that God is the Cause of every cause, {even acknowledged by heathens,} the cause, and the first cause of all things, and there can be no being but from Him, as there can be nothing before Him. "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things." Rom.11:36. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts 17:28. "Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev.4:11. "The LORD hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov.16:4. God is the chief Efficient Cause, and the Ultimate End of all beings; but if any being be antecedent to the determinations of God's will, this would take away the dignity of the Supreme Cause, and make an act of man to be the superior cause of an act of God, yea, and of such an act as is immanent and eternal. It must needs therefore be a gross mistake to suppose a cause of the will of God either before it, besides it, or without it; and to place a possibly or 'may be,' {as faith and every created being only is,} which becomes a certainty or 'shall

be' merely because God hath decreed it to be so, before the Decree itself. Faith is a subordinate cause {*rather, an effect thereof, ed.,*} of salvation, not a meritorious cause, {*as sin is of damnation,*} but a dispositive cause, as it makes us meet partakers, {*rather, evident partakers, ed.,*} of the inheritance of the saints in light, but cannot be the supreme cause, {*rather, any case whatsoever, ed.,*} of election.

Argument 7. That which takes away the certainty and unchangeableness of the Divine Decree ought not to be received, and the conditional decree doth so. Therefore, if anything in man move God to choose man, then the purpose of God cannot remain firm by him which calleth, {*as in Rom.9:11,*} but must depends on some contingent act in man, be it faith, works or perseverance. If it depends on our persevering in faith, it cannot be firm and certain, as depending on such a Condition which to our last breath {*according to the Arminian doctrine of falling away*} is uncertain. What is this, but to make the Divine Decree more changeable than a decree in a court of equity, that is, for the plaintiff today, and against him tomorrow. For the Arminian hypothesis states the Decree of God after this changeable dress, viz., "I will save all if they will obey me; but I see they will sin. I must permit them, but I will condemn them all; yet this decree of condemnation shall not be peremptory. I will send Christ to redeem all, to save all again, if they will believe; but I see they will not. I will decree to save such as I foresee will believe, and persevere in

believing." Thus never any changeable picture made such changeable representations as this conditional decree doth of this Unchangeable Decree of God. This hath been proved before by many irrefragable arguments in chapter four.

Argument 8. That which makes us to choose God, before God chooses us, ought not to be received; and the conditional decree upon faith foreseen doth so. Therefore, the assumption is plain according to the Arminian Doctrine, for if God does not choose us until faith is foreseen in us, we by this faith make ourselves acceptable in the sight of God. But the Arminians go further still, for they say, "we must be foreseen, not only to believe, but also to persevere in believing," that is, not only to choose God for our God, but also to continue in that choice to the last moment of our existence before we can be fit objects of God's choice or election! Then it necessarily follows that we choose God before He chooses us, and we love Him before He loves us, contrary to these scriptures, "ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," John 15:16, "we love Him, because He first loved us." I John 4:19.

Argument 9. That which taketh away the mysteriousness of the Divine Decree ought to be rejected, and this doctrine of foreseen faith doth so. Therefore, it is a dangerous presumption for men to take upon themselves, with unwashed hands, to unriddle the deep Mysteries of God with their carnal reason; where the great apostle stands at the gaze, crying, "O the depth, how unsearchable," and, "who knoweth the mind of the Lord!" When Paul objects,

"is there unrighteousness with God?" Rom.9:14. Had Paul been of the Arminian persuasion he would have answered, "those are elected that are foreseen to believe and persevere!" This answer would not have been hard to understand, even by the unlearned {that is, the carnal} men of the world, who "wrest the Scriptures unto their own destruction." II Pet.3:16. Neither would it carry in it the least show of unrighteousness, but Paul was a fool, and these men are wiser than the Holy Ghost; for he tells us that our election proceedeth from the will of the Elector, and not from anything in the elected. The Sovereign Will of God is the supreme rule of all righteousness. "He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." Rom.9:18. Had foreseen faith and perseverance been the antecedaneous causes and conditions of election, there had been no mystery in it.

Argument 10. That Election which is shadowed out to us in God's love to Jacob {both person and nation} is the election according to truth; but that election was not upon foreseen faith or works. Therefore, first, Jacob the person. He was under electing love; all foresight of faith and works being excluded. "Jacob have I loved." Rom.9:13. To love Jacob is to will unto him the greatest good, even everlasting salvation, and all things which accompany the same. And this was before there was any difference between him and Esau, for they were both alike in the womb, both conceived in sin. Had it been upon a foresight of their works, that they had

God's Electing Love and Rejecting Hatred; then were they themselves the carvers out of their own eternal conditions which depended on their willing and running, and by this hypothesis, not upon the primitive good pleasure of God, upon which our willing, running and obtaining hangs as the apostle asserts. "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." Rom.9:11,12. Second, Jacob, the nation. Our Election is typified by God's election of Israel, which plainly appears to be no election upon foresight of any worthiness in Israel, but, {all such being excluded,} the reason is rendered, "I loved thee, because I loved thee," which is not the reason of a weak woman, but of a strong God. "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, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Deut.7:7-8. "Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land, but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the

LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people." Deut.9:5-6.

Argument 11. That which sets up the rotten Dagon of man's free-will, before or above the Ark of God's special Predestinating Grace, ought to be rejected; and the conditional decree doth so. Therefore, that it does so appears, inasmuch as their doctrine of the conditional decree is grounded upon a foresight of our wills, receiving or rejecting of grace proposed, and so man's will is made the first mover and advanced above God's will, and the act of predestination is put in the will and power of the predestinated, and not in that of the Divine Predestinator. Hereby the power of ordering man's salvation is wrested {as it were} out of God's hands, and put into the hands of our free-will. Then salvation is the work of the saved, and not of the Saver; and to will and to do is not of God's good pleasure. Phil.2:13. Thus men wickedly think that God is such a one as themselves, Psal.50:21, floating and fluctuating in His counsels, and hanging in pendulous suspense; yea, taking up new consultations, as dependent on the will of men, and the contingent acts flowing therefrom.

Argument 12. That which infers a succession of acts in God may not to be admitted, and election upon foresight doth so. Therefore, this is apparent in the proposition, for God is one Act, and in Him there can be no succession, for then He would not be the eternal and unchangeable "I AM." Foresight of faith necessarily presupposes a foregoing decree

concerning the being of that faith foreseen. For, first, God must decree faith to be; second, he foresees that faith; third, then decrees to save upon that foresight. So that this foresight necessarily comes between two decrees, the first before it, and the second after it.

Argument 13. That Doctrine of Election, which states God as a Potter, framing his clay according to his mere pleasure, ought to be admitted and the contrary to it rejected; but the conditional decree doth not so. Therefore, the Potter doth set apart several lumps of clay for several uses out of his mere will, he doth not say, if all his clay lumps be fit to receive noble forms, he will fashion them accordingly, and if not he will turn them otherwise, for then the difference would proceed from the quality of the clay, not from the will of the Potter.

Argument 14. Much more might be added, such as foreseen faith can have no place in dying infants, yet of such is the kingdom of Heaven, and their names are written in the book of life, Rev.20:12, and if glorified, they must be predestinated, for Romans 8:30 is reciprocal and of equal extent. Believers cannot be the object of Election, for there be many believers that are not elected {as those with temporary faith} and many elected that are not believers, as infants.

Argument 15. Christ foresaw that the men of Tyre and Sidon would have repented, &c., Matt.11:21, yet no decree depended on it.

Argument 16. A conditional decree makes a conditional God, seeing the Decree is God Himself decreeing.

Argument 17. Then salvation of any is uncertain, for a conditional proposition affirms not anything certainly.

CHAPTER X

Objections Against the Absolute Decree.

The objections which the Arminians raise against this doctrine follow to be answered. I have stated and proved the doctrine of Absolute Divine Predestination. I have also considered, and, I trust, scripturally refuted the Arminian's notion of it, that it is conditional. I shall now, thirdly, answer a few of the principal objections brought by them against this Divine Absolute Decree of Unconditional Predestination. The Arminians deal with this doctrine as the heathen emperors did with primitive Christians in the ten first persecutions, who wrapped them up in the skins of beasts, and then exposed them to be torn to pieces by their fierce band dogs; so do the Arminians with this great truth. They first dress it up in an ugly shape, with their own false glosses upon it, and then they let fly at it one cynical sarcasm after another, saying, this doctrine of absolute predestination goes to accuse and charge God with injustice, dissimulation, hypocrisy, &c.

Objection 1. Of injustice, in giving to equal persons unequal things; contrary to that scripture which saith, "that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34. Answer 1. This is objected against Paul's doctrine, "what shall we say then, is there unrighteousness {is there injustice} with God? God forbid." Rom.9:14. And seeing the apostle brings it in as the cavil of carnal reason against God's Decree, in that we have sufficient ground to reject it. God must not lose the honour of His righteousness,

because the reason of it appears not to our shallow understandings. We may not reprehend what we cannot comprehend. The justice of God must not be measured by the standard of our reason; what is this but speaking wickedly for God, and talking deceitfully for Him, Job 13:7, and plainly robbing Him of all righteousness that is not consonant with our model? We must not devise a righteousness for God {that is the work of his own will, which is never severed from his wisdom} much less draw it down to the determinations of God's greatest enemy, to wit, carnal reason. The work of God, and the wisdom of God, must ever be viewed as inseparably united.

2. God is righteousness itself; and darkness may sooner come from the sun {which is the fountain and source of light} than any unrighteous act from God, who is the abstract of righteousness, as he is the highest good, so he is the first and ultimate cause of light and life. God's will is the rule ruling; but never as regulated by man's depraved reason. God's ways are always equal, though men think otherwise of them. "Yet ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal," Ezek.18:25, and though they be sometimes secret and past finding out, Rom.11:33, yet are they always just. God is the origin of all good, as He is also the Foundation of justice and equity. God is too kind to do us harm, and too just to do us wrong.

3. He who exercises his legal rights as regards to his own property is entirely just in doing so. Jacob and Esau were equal in the womb, yet had an

unequal disposing decree concerning them, which was God's right and power to do. This the apostle demonstrates, first, from the testimony of Moses, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." Exod.33:19. It is His absolute right to do so! And, secondly, from the example of the potter, who hath power over his pots, yet less than God over his creatures. Now that which the pot cannot do with the potter, that man may not do with his Maker. But the pot {supposing it could speak} could not blame the potter of injustice in appointing equal lumps to unequal ends.

4. God's decree is not an act of injustice, but of Lordship and Sovereignty. Justice always presupposes debt, but God {who was perfect in Himself from all eternity} could not be a debtor to man, who had his all from God. The decree is not a matter of right and wrong, but of free favour, for Grace is God's own, to dispense as he pleases, doing in all situations exactly what pleases Him. "Is it not lawful for Me to do what I will with Mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" Matt.20:15. If the Lord gives grace to some and not to others, it is no wrong in Him that is not bound to give to any.

5. God is not a respecter of persons, because He doth not choose men for the sake of their works, but before Jacob and Esau had done either good or evil. He finds all alike, and nothing to cast the balance of His choice but His own mere good

pleasure; not as partial judges, that respect the rich for their bribes more than the poor, when their causes are equal, or worse, but God is a Free Agent, and under no law in giving grace.

Objection 2. Of cruelty, as if God were worse to His creatures than tigers to their young, than rat-catchers who stop up all holes, and then hunt them with their dogs, to make them fly; or lastly, than Tiberius who {because it was unlawful to execute a virgin} caused the hangman first to deflower them, and then strangle them.

Answer 1. This is charging God foolishly, seeing no act of God can be a means to damn men. Men's own acts are the cause of it; to wit, the fulfilling their own lusts. The negative will of God {and no more is the Decree of non-election} cannot be the cause of man's destruction, but the positive will of man does it. As reprobation gives not such a grace as infallibly to make them better, so it works nothing in them by which they are made worse.

2. 'Tis a mere fallacy, as if the decree of non-election was the procuring cause of man's damnation, which is an antecedent only, but not the cause, as sin is the consequent of reprobation, but not the effect of it; so sin is the cause of damnation, and only the consequent of God's Reprobation. David's order to Solomon concerning Joab and Shimei was not the cause why either the one or the other came to an untimely end; but it was treason against Solomon in Joab, and running from Jerusalem in Shimei, which procured their deaths. I

Kings 2:5,28,40-42. Death precedes resurrection, but procures it not.

3. It is a false hypothesis to suppose that God, in the decree of Reprobation, doth by an effectual means intend to bring men to damnation, as in the decree of Election to bring others to salvation, for salvation is a favour not due any, so God may absolutely give or deny it; but damnation is a punishment, so hath relation to a fault. Means to salvation is the gift of free grace, but damnation comes of man's own voluntary sin, and is the fruit or wages of it. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom.6:23. It is God that fits Peter for salvation, but Judas fits himself for damnation.

4. God doth not make the creature to damn it, for if that were God's End, he gives it a nature and quality to fit it for that end, but that comes from the voluntary defection of men's own will, to fit themselves for destruction. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Rom.9:22. God endures it, but does not infuse it. Judas fitted himself for his own place, Acts 1:25, and the carnal Jews filled up the measure of their fathers. Matt.23:32. Vessels of wrath fill their measure of sin, and then God fills them with such a measure of wrath. As man is from God, he is adapted for salvation; so not made for damnation.

5. Should God constrain the creature to sin, and then damn him for it, he would be delighting in

the destruction of his creature, contrary to Ezekiel 18:23 & 33:11. "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord GOD, and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" 18:23. "Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" 33:11. God did not thrust Adam unwillingly into his sin, as he thrust him {after it} out of Paradise, but his sin came freely from himself. God's delight is not terminated in the destruction of his creature, but in the manifestation of his justice and glory. "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein." Hos.14:9. Man's punishment is from God, as a Judge, but man's destruction is from himself, as a sinner.

6. God doth not reprobate innocent creatures; for no man is worthy, and hence all may be predestinated unto death. God might have reprobated all fallen mankind, as he did all the fallen angels, without cruelty, for none deserved better at God's hands. 'Tis not cruelty in the Potter to make vessels of dishonor. Thus this harsh word was urged to Christ. "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." John 6:66.

Objection 3. It is objected against the Absolute Decree, that it makes God guilty of dissimulation in calling upon such as are under the

negative part of it to repent, &c., just as if God should bid blind men, {whose eyes he had closed,} to judge of colors, or those whose feet He had bound, to rise up and walk.

Answer 1. The non-elect's not repenting is not only from want of power, {"no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," John 6:44,} but also from want of will. "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." John 5:40. None are damned because they can do no better, but because they will do no better. If there were no will there would be no hell; and this will be the very hell of hells, that men have been self-destroyers. That never dying worm is nothing else but a continual remorse and furious reflection of the soul upon its own {once} willful folly, as well as upon its {now} woeful misery, but more of this in its place.

2. Paul did not dissemble in bidding the Philippians to work out their own salvation, yet tells them {withal} that they could neither will nor do of themselves, Phil.2:12-13, no more than he sets up a tyrannical power in God, when he tells us that God does all things out of mere will and pleasure.

3. Man had a power in Adam, God gave him knowledge in his understanding, rectitude in his will, and purity in his affections, &c., and these are all lost by the Fall. God must not lose His authority to command because man by reason of sin hath lost his ability to obey. A landlord may require his rent, when his tenant disenables himself to pay it.

4. While God commands, he gives power to obey. God's commands are not like those in James

2:16, bids be warmed, fed and clothed, but gives not wherewith; for here is something given as well as required. When God bids, he does not only bid, but empower those that are thus bidden, as when Christ had the man stretch out the hand that was withered, and Lazarus to come forth out of the Grave. The call and command of God is the conduit pipe of strength and ability; as when Paul was bid to receive his sight, he was enabled the same moment to look up, Acts 22:13, and being commanded to wash away his sins, had the blood of Christ ready provided to do it, "and now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16.

5. God commands us what we are unable to perform, to convince us of our weakness; as we bid our little children rise, which by their own fault fell, to convince them of their inability, and that they may know, they are the more beholden to us to help them up again. The duty is ours, but the ability is from the Lord.

6. The declaring will of God shows that it is the duty of all {as well of Judas and Cain, as of David and Peter} to repent, for it declares what ought to be. The decreeing will of God determines what shall be, not that all shall repent and believe, but such only as receives his Special Grace to do so. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." II Tim.2:25. God doth intend it should be their known duty to repent, not that they shall do so, for this would overthrow his

Omnipotency, "who hath resisted his will."
Rom.9:19.

7. God commands to try, not to deceive; as Abraham to offer up Isaac, and Pharaoh to let Israel go. These two wills may have a consistency without fraudulency; the one says, thou shalt not murder, and the other that Christ shall be murdered. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23. Besides, the decreeing will of God can have no dissimulation in it.

But it may be more truly said, that it is the Arminians who charge God with folly and dissimulation, by their representing Him as disappointed in his purpose, and by their bringing Him in as speaking thus, "I do indeed earnestly desire to save you, but ye so hinder that I cannot do what I desire; I would, if ye would; therefore since I am, by you, frustrated of my intention, I will change my purpose of saving you, and my consequent will shall be a determination to destroy you?"

What is this but to make God unwise {as well as unable} to manage his own platforms and designs in the world; and to rank him with Jupiter that knew not how to deliver his Sarpedon out of bonds, and with Neptune that knew not how to hinder Ulysses return to his country; yea, and with Darius that would gladly have delivered Daniel, but could not. Hence, Conrad Vorstius, the Arminian, saith, "things may happen that may bring God to grief, having tried all things in vain!" This is to speak with the

Koran, "God and his angels wish well to Mahomet, but cannot free him from death." And with the blind Talmud, "that God lamented over fallen man, and over the burnt temple, pouring out two tears every day into the ocean, and for grief smiting his breast with both his hands." This is a thinking wickedly that God is such a one as our selves. "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes." Psal.50:21. Fond men that goes not wisely about our works, so oft fail of our purpose; and to will that Judas and the Jews should believe in Christ's Death, {which if they had done, Christ had not died,} is to will that they should believe in nothing. Thus is the only wise God abased by the blasphemous notions of men, fitter for Anthropomorphites than true Gospellers.

Objection 4. God's decree cannot be Absolute and Infallible, because it might have been frustrated by the possibility of Adam's standing. Answer 1. It is granted, that Adam's standing was possible respecting himself, but not respecting God. To say that Adam might not have sinned is a categorical and simple proposition, and will hold good, Adam being considered in himself as clothed with the freedom of his will; and to say also, that it could not be but that Adam would sin is equally true, considering Adam was subordinate to the Divine Decree foreordaining and determining what Adam would do out of the freedom of his own will.

2. As it respects man, Adam might have stood as well as fallen; for God gave not His creature a law only, but also furnished him with power sufficient to keep that law if he would; and if man had not been mutable, he had been God and not man. Man is mutable, God alone is immutable; in this He, the Lord, is distinguished from all created beings. Yet as it respects God, it was not possible man should stand; for in God's decree it was certain that man, {"for in the day that thou eatest thereof - a affirmation already so determined by Decree - thou shalt surely die," Gen.2:17,} being left to the mutability of his own will, {upon Satan's tempting and God's decreeing,} would voluntarily incline to evil, and this was a certainty or necessity of infallibility.

3. Adam sinned freely in respect of himself, but necessarily in respect of God. He acted as freely therein as if there had been no decree, and yet as infallibly as if there had been no liberty. God's decree took not away man's liberty; man in the Fall, while fulfilling the decree of God, yet freely exercised the proper motions of his will. God decreed that man should act freely in the Fall, and not by any compulsion from his Decree; though God decreed it to be, yea, and concurred also as the Universal Cause, yet man exercised the proper motions of his own will. Saith Austin, "the liberty of man {though subordinate to God's Decree} freely willeth the self-same thing, and no other than what it would have willed, if {upon supposition of an impossibility} that there had been no Decree."

4. It was a truth from eternity, {before there was either man or sin,} that man should certainly sin, yet the sin itself was but possible in itself; nevertheless that possibility passed into futurition by the will of God, for God wills that sin should be because it is good sin should be, but God wills not the sin itself, for sin itself is not good. Thus then God, by decreeing Adam's sin, did not subtract from Adam any grace that he had; for he decreed that he should sin voluntarily. He diminished not that power with which he was endued with, only he super-added not that grace whereby Adam would infallibly not have fallen; which grace was no way due to man, neither was God bound to bestow it on him. So it was according to God's will {not from it} for what God simply would not have done, that cannot be done at all.

5. If man can determine his own will, and not destroy the liberty of it, how much more may God do so that is more inward with us, than we with ourselves. God only is *intimior intimo nostro*, {closer to our innermost,} as the ancients express it; God only is greater than our hearts, as the apostle expresses it. The will is its own free mover, yet is not the first mover; 'tis only a second free agent, and God the first. So the subordinate Free Agent {the thing being yet to do} may either do or not do the same act, although which of the two man will freely incline to, be infallibly foreordained. Thus Adam might stand in respect of himself; yet certainly fall, in respect of God.

6. The Jews might have broken Christ's bones, in respect of their own free-will in such actions, yet was it not possible they should do so; as the will of man is subordinate to the will of God. "A bone of Him shall not be broken." John 19:36. It was possible, in a sense, that Christ should be delivered from His passion by legions of angels, Matt.26:53, yet impossible in respect to God, for God had decreed that Christ should die. "But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Matt.26:54. It was possible, in respect of the thing, that God might have pardoned sinners without a Christ; but impossible, inasmuch as God had decreed Christ to be the ransom. To argue on the Arminian hypothesis of free-will, 'tis possible none may be saved or none may be damned; yet then either Heaven or Hell would be superfluous things.

Objection 5. The Fifth objection is, that Predestinarians cannot agree about stating their decree; some stating it before the Fall, as the Supralapsarians; and others after the Fall, as the Sublapsarians.

Answer 1. The Arminians, by the law of retaliation, may be called Submortuarians, for their holding no full election till men die; and Postdestinarians, for placing the Eternal Decree behind the race of man's life. This plainly inverts the apostle's order, Rom.8:30, putting Predestination behind Vocation and Justification. Surely when believers die they are the subjects of glorification, not of election. Paul expected then a crown of

righteousness, II Tim.4:8, and Christ should have said {upon this hypothesis} to the penitent thief, "this day thou shalt be fully elected," not, "thou shalt be with me in Paradise." And may they not also be styled Relapsarians, for saying that the elect may totally and finally fall away; and that he who is a child of God today may be a child of the devil tomorrow?

2. Those notions of 'sub' and 'supra' are but the fictions of our intellect, {as Dr. Davenant saith,} human conceptions of the order of the Divine Decree, which so far transcends our understanding, that our weak capacities cannot comprehend it but after the manner of men; and those two opinions of 'sub' and 'supra' do not differ in reality, but only as means of developing the truth; for if mankind be considered in a common equal estate to be the object of Predestination, there is no such material difference as is pretended, seeing that all men are looked upon on equal footing both ways, especially when one of these persuasions doth not speak exclusively of the other.

3. The Arminians do worse in founding the Divine Decree, in making Believers the adequate object of Election; which cannot be, for there be many that believe, yet are not the elect ones, {as Simon Magnus, &c., that believed, yet had not the faith of God's elect,} and there be many that are elected yet believe not, as children. This mistake makes them say that he who perseveres is not more elected than the apostate, only he is longer so.

4. Yet far worse is their Platform in marshalling this Eternal Immanent Act of God into First, Second, Third and Fourth; which must needs {saith Dr. Davenant} be a weak imagination of man's brain; and so uncertain, that amongst many who give us such delineations, not two of twenty can be found agreeing in numbering and ordering their Decrees; but where one makes four, another maketh five, six or seven, &c., and that which one sets the first, another sets the last; therefore here one thief accuses another. Till themselves be better agreed, they should not upbraid us with differences.

5. Those several states of man, before and after the Fall, are not in the Divine Understanding as they are in ours, by a succession of acts, one after another; but God by one single act orders all things; and the Divine Order in the Decree is a representative of all those states at once. They are not sub-ordinanda but co-ordinanda; not this after that, but altogether in one instant of eternity; therefore we should not contend about priority and posteriority in God, which are but human conceptions.

Objection 6. The positive part of the Divine Decree {Absolute Election} makes men remiss in duty; saying, "let me live as I list; if I am elected to salvation I shall certainly be saved."

Answer 1. God's Decree establishes means, means to build and means to destroy, just as the Gospel builds believers in Christ, even whilst hardening others unto destruction, for the Lord doth not only ordain the end, but the means to that end.

'Tis a mere fallacy of division to sever the means from the end, as in Acts 27:31, "except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." A Decree was past for their safety, that not a man of them should perish, verse 22, yet they must abide in the ship. It was true in the connection of the end and the means, but not in an absolute sense, either that the shipmen should not abide in the ship, or that there was any real possibility that any men in the ship should not be saved.

2. Ludovicus the Eleventh King of France under this temptation was convinced in his sickness of this fond saying by his wife's physician, who told him, "if your time be come, no physick {I can give} will do you good." The king pondering that saying, cries out, "must I use means for the good of my body, and not of my soul?" Hereupon became he {upon further conference and taking physick} to be cured of soul and body.

3. God's Decree doth not nullify the property of secondary causes in natural things, but includes them, and disposes of them to their proper end; and so in things spiritual, God decrees that the earth should be fruitful, this doth not exclude, but include that the sun must shine upon it, showers must water it, and the husbandman must till it, as his God instructs him. Isa.28:26. God decrees that fifteen years shall be added to Hezekiah's life; this made him neither careless of his health, nor negligent of his food; he said not, "though I run into fire, or into the water, or drink poison, I shall nevertheless live so long," but God's Providence, in the due use of

means, co-wrought so as to bring him on to that period of time pre-ordained for him. Man's industry is subservient to God's Decree; it is called, "the life of thine hand." Isa.57:10. We may not tempt the Lord our God.

4. The golden chain has so linked the means to the end, and sanctification in order to salvation, {"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,} that God doth infallibly stir up the elect to the use of means, as well as bring them to the end by that very means. Therefore he promises to sanctify whom he purposes to save. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek.36:26-27. Two of those links {to wit, Predestination and Glorification} are kept fast in God's Hand, but the middle links are let down from Heaven to us on Earth, that we should catch hold on them. We may not pluck those parts of the chain out of God's Hands, or break the Chain to make it useless. The elect lady must look to herself, II Jn.1:8, though the Decree be absolute, the execution of it is not, which two may not be confounded.

5. The Arminian eternal prescience infers as absolute a certainty and necessity of events, as our Predestination doth; for things must be foreordained

to be before they can be foreseen that they shall be. Men may argue thus from their ground, "if I be eternally foreseen to believe, I shall believe and be saved." And yet on the contrary they teach men to say, "I can repent when I will; I may be elected whenever I please, though I at present am living in lewdness, for I have a free-will to repent even on my deathbed, so I may be saved." This is the doctrine that will make men remiss indeed, but, for an elect soul, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, to read the heart of his covenant God towards him as loving him everlastingly, effectually, absolutely, and peculiarly; and, in consequence of His everlasting unchangeable love, bestowing on him, and giving for him, His greatest, His best gift, even Jesus Christ; let him indeed live as he listeth, for this will be his language, aye and his practice also, "for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." This doth constrain and unite our hearts to God forever. "That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Lk.1:74-75. "For ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." I Cor.6:20. "We love him, because he first loved us." I Jn.4:19.

Objection 7. The doctrine of absolute reprobation makes men desperate, "let me do what I can, if I am to be damned I shall be damned, for I am under a fatal necessity."

Answer 1. This is to suck poison out of a sweet flower, and to dash against the Rock of Ages; this is

to stumble at the Word, whereunto they were appointed, I Pet.2:8, and like profane beasts to fall into the pit that was dug for better purposes. Why hath God ordered all things by an Absolute Decree forever? It is "that men should fear before Him," and not make such desperate inferences. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever, nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it, and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." Eccl.3:14.

2. The stoical opinion of fate puts God in subjection to nature, {as in Homer's Jupiter & Neptune, who were overpowered by fate,} but the absolute Decree puts nature in subjection to God, and does not necessitate men to do so much evil, and no more good than they do, {as before largely,} for God as an Infinite Cause can influence the will of Man, and determine it so as not to destroy the Liberty of it, because he determines it in a way suitable to its own nature, power and glory. God acting freely as the First Cause, and Man acting freely as the Second Cause, in Concurrence, not by Constraint. "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will." Prov.21:1.

3. No man may judge himself a reprobate in this life, {excepting in that sin unto death,} and so grow desperate; for final disobedience and unbelief {the infallible evidence of reprobation} cannot be discovered till death. We are not to question the secret will of God, {which is the rule of events,} but to mind his revealed will, {which is the rule of

endeavours,} and to lay our souls under his Commands. One may fulfil the secret will of God and do ill, as Judas and the Jews in killing Christ, Acts 2:23, and one may cross the secret will of God, and do well, as David in praying for the life of the child, which God had decreed should then die. We must look into our own bosoms, and so know what we are in the bosom of God.

4. The Arminian doctrine {that God foresaw what good courses I would take of my free-will, so did elect me} is miserable comfort to one whose heart is privy to myriads of deviations from God, and to tell men {as Arminians do} that they may be justified and sanctified, &c., yet {for all this} may become reprobates, and be damned in the end, is desperate doctrine indeed. Whereas our doctrine is only liable to false inferences, as Christ's was, {"and they that heard it said, who then can be saved?" Luke 18:26,} not of itself, but by corrupt consequences drawn from it.

CHAPTER XI

THE SECOND POINT.

Universal Redemption, in the sense of the Arminians cannot be a Gospel Truth, for these following arguments and reasons.

Argument 1. God the Father's Election, God the Son's Redemption, and God the Holy Ghost's Sanctification, must all be of equal extent and latitude, but universal redemption, in the Arminian sense of it, makes these unequal. The proposition is clear, for as the Father, Word, and Spirit are One, as in Essence, so are they One in willing, working, and witnessing the redemption of sinners. Upon earth blood is not alone, nor witnesses alone, but where Water and Spirit are also; so in Heaven the Word witnesses not alone, but the Father and Holy Ghost also, these three agreeing in one. "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one." I Jn.5:6-8. Whom the Father elects, the Son redeems, and the Holy Ghost sanctifies. If then there be a universal redemption there must be a universal election, and a universal sanctification also, and so, by consequence, a

universal salvation. That the Son redeems no more than the Father elects is evident from two scriptures. The first is John 5:23, which declares the Son must be honoured as equal with the Father; but, to say that the Son redeemed all, and the Father elected but few, is to give greater honour to the One than to the Other, and to make an inequality in their operations. The second scripture is John 17:9,10, "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." They were the Father's by Election, and they became the Son's by Gift and Redemption. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." John 17:6. Christ redeems only those whom the Father gave unto Him to redeem. Hence God's "book of life" wherein the number of the elect is recorded, is called also the Lamb's Book of Life, intimating that the number of those elected by the Father is commensurate with those redeemed by the Son. And that Christ redeems no greater number than the Spirit sanctifies, appears likewise from I John 5:6,7, for there must be water to sanctify where there is blood to redeem. Christ's oblation is not of larger extent than the Spirit's Operation. Thus it is most apparent that all the three Persons in the Trinity have one Object and one Design of love. The Son's design for Redemption hath not a greater latitude than the Father's for Election, and the Spirit's for Sanctification. They are equal in essence, equal in honour, and equal in operation.

Argument 2. The Benefits of Christ's Death and Resurrection are of equal Extent in their objects, but the Benefit of Christ's Resurrection is not extended to all, ergo, nor the Benefit of his Death, the Assumption {to wit, that the Benefit of Christ's Resurrection is not extended to all and every one alike, but is peculiar to Believers} is acknowledged even by the Arminians. The proposition therefore is only to be proved. That the benefits of Christ are of equal extent in their objects is evident from Romans 8:33,34, if we partake of Christ's Death, we must of his Resurrection too. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Rom.6:5. They are both put together, and added to the latter, "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect," for whom Christ died? Who can condemn those for whom Christ was raised? There is an equal extent both of the one and of the other. Those for whom Christ died and rose again cannot be condemned. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom.4:25. They are both so joined together that they cannot be severed either in act, object or effect, for no man is made partaker of the Death of Christ but by his Resurrection. I Cor.15:17. Those that have the fruit of Christ's battle have the fruit of his victory also; but this cannot be said of all men, for on some the wrath of God abideth, John 3:36, which the Death of Christ never took away from them. Christ did not die for those for whom he did not overcome Death.

Argument 3. The benefit of Christ's Death and Intercession are of equal extent in their objects; but the benefit of Christ's Intercession is not to all. This is expressly declared in Scripture. "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine." John 17:9. Christ's Intercession is "not for the world" at large, but only for those whom His Father hath given Him; and reason confirms this, for if Christ interceded for Judas, Pilate, &c., then He would have had a repulse, and was not always heard of the Father, which is contrary to John 11:42. Again, Christ is a High Priest, and the two parts of His priestly office, {Oblation and Presentation,} cannot be separated one from another, and they which have a part in the former have part in the latter also. For the presentation doth necessarily imply the oblation, and gives a perpetual force and vigor to it in the sight of God. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb.9:12. It is not enough to prepare the Price of Redemption, but it must be presented also to the Father. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb.9:24. Yea, Arminius himself grants that Presentation is a part of the Oblation. Christ must be an Intercessor for those whom he is a Reconciler, and his Intercession in Heaven is not a vocal praying, but a personal presenting of himself and his merits to the Father on the behalf of those whom he

personated on the Cross, as the High Priest of Israel in slaying the Sacrifice put not the sins of the Gentiles upon the head of the beast, but the sins of Israel only; and in his going into the Holy of Holies he did not represent the Gentiles to God, but only the twelve tribes of Israel written upon his breastplate. Thus Christ is only a Priest to satisfy {both in his Oblation and Presentation} for those only to whom he is a Prophet to teach, and a King to rule; otherwise we shall make an inequality in his sacred offices, as well as in the Persons of the Trinity. We cannot say that there be some for whom Christ offered Himself upon earth, but doth not offer himself for them in Heaven; this would make Christ but a half-priest to some, and therefore not a faithful High Priest, contrary to sundry Scriptures. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied, by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isa.53:11-12. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb.9:11-12. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into

the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God." Heb.10:19-21.

Argument 4. Those for whom Christ died have Christ for their Surety; but all have not Christ for a surety, ergo, Christ died not for all. The proposition is evident, for every sinner must die for eating forbidden fruit, either in himself, or in his Sponsor and Surety. "The wages of sin is death," and herein consists the Suretyship of Christ, that He died for us. Rom.6:23. The very phrase of dying for one demonstrates it. The word 'dying for one' paraphrases David's desire, "I would that I had died in thy stead, and thou remained alive," II Sam.18:33; otherwise Christ's Death had not been a counter ransom, "even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt.20:28. Thus Christ is "made a curse for us," that is, in our stead. Thus Judah was surety for Benjamin's safety, Gen.44:32, and Christ is the Surety of the New Covenant, Heb.7:22, taking upon him our sins in his Death, and was made Sin for us, which intimates a commutation of persons, the one being accepted in the room of another. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." I Pet.2:24. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." II Cor.5:21. The assumption is plain, for were Christ a

surety for all, then He offered up a satisfaction for all, in becoming sin, and bearing the curse and wrath of God in their stead. But this is not done for all. 1. God will require of some the utmost farthing, Matt.5:26, unless his Satisfaction was rejected as insufficient. 2. Many were already in Hell at that time when Christ died. 3. Christ knows not workers of iniquity, Matt.7:23, so as he knows his sheep, to lay down his life for them, John 10:11-15, the latter is the evidence of the former. 4. Christ could not intend to waste the Blood of his Covenant {whereof he was the Surety} upon Cain and Pharaoh {damned long before his death} in direct opposition to the Eternal Decree of his own Deity, for there cannot be a surrogation of Christ's Person in the room and place of the damned.

Argument 5. If the Covenant of Grace be not to all, then Christ died not for all; but the antecedent is true, therefore, &c., the consequence is proved thus. Christ's blood is called "the blood of the covenant," Heb.9:20, and "the blood of the New Testament." Matt.26:28. The Covenant and the Seal of the Covenant have a necessary connection together, even as men's covenants are insignificant without a seal. "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words." Exod.24:8. Moreover, "where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

Heb.9:16-17. The New Testament and New Covenant are undoubtedly synonymous, and are in Scripture of the same sense and signification. The assumption {to wit, that the Covenant of Grace is not to all} is evident, and some are without the Covenant. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Eph.2:12. Salvation is of the Jews, John 4:22, for 'tis made with the House of Israel only. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD." Jer.31:31-32. 'Tis only with those in whom the Promise {not only required, as in that of works, but absolutely promised} is effectually wrought, to wit, a putting his Fear in their hearts, and writing his Law in their minds, which the Election only obtains. And if we enquire after the first giving of this Covenant in Paradise, Gen.3:15, none dare say, that God entered into a Covenant of Grace with the Seed of the Serpent, but only with those whose heel the Serpent hurteth; and it would seem a mocking of mankind to make a Covenant with all, and not to make it known to the greatest part of them. The Word of Reconciliation is not preached to all. "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." Psal.147:19-20. "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." Acts 14:16. "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." Acts 16:6.

Argument 6. If Christ died for his sheep, for his friends, and his church only, then he died not for all. This is plain from several Scriptures. "The good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep...I know my sheep, and am known of mine...and I lay down my life for my sheep." John 10:11-15. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends." John 15:13-14. "Feed the church, which He hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. "Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it." Eph.5:25. "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. Christ died for such as were Paul and Titus, not such as were Pharaoh and Judas, who were "goats" and not "sheep." Matt.25:33. Christ died to save "his people from their sins," Matt.1:21, and therefore His name was called Jesus or Saviour. The children of God are called the "redeemed of the Lord." Psal.107:2. Now since those for whom Christ died are such as "hear His voice and follow Him," to whom He "gives eternal life," John 10:27-28, such as He sanctifies and cleanses, and presents to Himself "without spot or

wrinkle," Eph.5:27, and such as He hath "redeemed from all iniquity," Tit.2:14, such as are His people, His chosen, His children, &c., it cannot be intended for all unless we say that Pharaoh, Judas, &c., were of the sheep, friends, and church of Christ, or that Christ missed of his end intended in his Death. Redemption and Remission of Sins are the inheritance of the saints, and of such as are made heirs of the Kingdom of Christ. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Col.1:12-13. 'Tis true that Christ died for enemies, Rom.5:10, but it was to reconcile them to God; such as Paul, {who had been the enemy to Christ,} and the believing Romans, who being Gentiles, Christ called "other sheep," John 10:16, {though then not actually converted,} because in his Eternal Decree he purposed to give them Faith, by which they might be gathered to his fold; so that promise {to come} was already present in the Eternal Purpose, for the Father had given them to Christ from all Eternity; but Pharaoh, Judas, &c., can in no such sense be called the Saints of Christ or Friends of God, as Abraham and the Disciples were.

Argument 7. Those for whom Christ's death was intended, to them it must be applied; but it is not applied to all, therefore it was not intended for all. The proposition is thus proved, if the application of Christ's death be according to the Intention of God, concerning the latitude and extent of it, then it

is applied to all for whom it is intended; but the antecedent is true, therefore, &c., the truth of the antecedent appears thus, that which is according to the will and purpose of God is according to the intention, but the application of the Death of Christ is according to the will and purpose of God concerning the latitude of it, therefore, the application of Christ's Death is according to God's Intention as to the latitude of it. The assumption is proved, if the efficacy of the revenues of Grace be according to the will and purpose of God concerning the latitude of it, then is also the application of the Death of Christ, &c., but the former is true, for the good pleasure and purpose of God is the ultimate cause ruling and measuring the efficacy, so this efficacy must be according to God's good pleasure and purpose in the extent of it. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matt.11:26. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...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." Eph.1:5,11. The end and design cannot be severed from the action to accomplish that end. Christ's aim being to bestow what he obtains, he obtains nothing but what He applies.

Argument 8. If Christ died for all, then must all be reconciled to God; but all are not reconciled. Noting but sin hinders Reconciliation. II Cor.5:19; Rom.5:19. Christ's Death merits Reconciliation with

God as it is a ransom and propitiation, so that all for whom Christ died must be reconciled to God. The death of Christ is the cause, and reconciliation the effect following the cause. The assumption is evident, for then if all be reconciled, all must be saved, and nothing can be laid to the charge of any. Take away the sin, and you acquit the sinner. But to grant such an acquittance and reconciliation to all brings in many absurdities. Paul rejoiced in his Reconciliation by Christ, Rom.5:11, {"and not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement,"} which he would not have done, had it been a common benefit to Herod and Pilate, as well as to himself. For upon this hypothesis it follows. 1. That Cain, Pharaoh, &c., were reconciled to God by Christ's death when they were {at the time of Christ's dying} in the torments of hell, and never to be delivered therefrom. 2. That God damns reconciled persons. 3. That God takes double pay for one fault, in punishing both the Surety and the debtor. 4. That Christ's reconciling of some is ineffectual, &c., but these things are not so; for to those for whom Christ died repentance is granted and remission of sins, Acts 5:31; to them is given freedom from the slavery of sin, and regeneration to newness of life, Rom.6:6; on them is bestowed purifying grace, "purifying their hearts by faith," Acts 15:9; they have the blood of Christ to purge their conscience from dead works, that they may serve the living God, Heb.9:14, and theirs is life eternal, "I give to them eternal life, and they shall

never perish." John 10:28. All these fruits are evidences of our reconciliation by Christ's death.

Argument 9. Those whom Christ died for, have the greatest Love of Christ; but all have not the greatest Love of Christ, ergo, &c., the proposition is clear from John 15:13 & I John 3:16. Friends cannot be more loved, than by dying for them. Herein is the Love of Redemption advanced above the Love of Creation; in the latter, God gave the creature to man; but in the former, Himself; than which no greater love can be shown. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13. The assumption is clear also, for Pilate, Judas, yea, Cain and Pharaoh, {then in Hell,} could not have the greatest love of Christ in his Death, seeing that the chief evidence hereof is to give men grace here, and glory hereafter; praying for them, and together with himself freely giving us all things, Rom.8:32, all spiritual blessings in Christ. Eph.1:3. Love {especially, greatest love} is a willing to one the greatest good, which cannot be a common kindness, but special and peculiar favour. "Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people, O visit me with thy salvation." Psal.106:4. "Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name." Psal.119:132. If Christ willed the greatest good to Esau, how can it be said, "Esau have I hated?" Yet under this greatest love of Christ dying for him, according to this hypothesis.

Argument 10. If Christ died for all mankind and obtained reconciliation for them, then all infants are reconciled, their sin is forgiven them, and so by consequence are saved dying in their infancy; but this cannot be affirmed of all infants, ergo., the assumption is proved. It is the Judgment of the Catholic Church, that the Infants of Pagans {God's secrets being still referred to himself} are destitute of Supernatural and Saving Grace, and they are not only born children of Wrath, Eph.2:3, but are altogether strangers to the Covenant of Grace, and upon this account are esteemed unclean, I Cor.7:14, so dying are bound under the damnable guilt of Original Sin. This is acknowledged by the Romanists themselves. But if all were reconciled by Christ's Death, then none of them could be born children of wrath, and subject to the curse, and it would be a privilege to them to be killed in their cradles, rather than to be kept alive and brought up in Paganism, whereby they must undoubtedly perish to all eternity. Besides, if all be reconciled, then none can be born outside the Covenant, contrary to Ephesians 2:3,12.

Argument 11. That cannot be a truth which the Scripture nowhere affirms; and it nowhere asserts that Christ died for all men, much less for every man individually, {between which two there is a vast difference,} therefore it is not a truth. To explain the assumption, it is true Christ is said to "give His life a ransom for all," but not for all men, or for every man individually. The Scripture is the best expounder of itself, and the "all" is rendered

“many” in Matthew 20:28 & Mark 10:45. “For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Matt.26:28. And it is so frequently restrained to Christ’s sheep, friends, church, believers, chosen, and such as are given to Christ, that it must mean some of all sorts; which, in equivalent terms, is clearly expressed in Revelation 5:9, “and they sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Rev.5:9. And I cannot see how the Arminians can have any part in that new song there mentioned, which say they are no more beholden to Christ for their redemption than Cain and Judas was. Therefore the word “all” must be taken for all the elect, all Christ’s church, all Christ’s children that the Father hath given Him, &c., not all men universally, and every man individually. Those places, I Tim.2:4,6; Tit.2:11,14, &c., plainly show that it is some of all sorts, princes, peasants, kings and servants, and of such only as he brings to the knowledge of the Truth, {whereby the universality of the expression is plainly restrained in the connection of the clause,} for God gives not, nor {so much as} offers the knowledge of Truth to all.

Argument 12. That which opposes the Attributes of God ought not to be received; and Universal Redemption doth so. Therefore, the

assumption appears. First, it opposes God's justice. If Christ redeemed Pharaoh and Judas, &c., then redeemed souls are unjustly damned. This hypothesis sets the death of Christ in direct opposition to God's Justice, and how could Christ die for the sin of Judas when Christ's death was his very sin? As if Christ should say, "Father, receive into thy favour those whom I know thou wilt never do so," being before of old ordained to destruction. Jude 1:4. This is to make religion a laughing stock! Second, it opposes God's wisdom, as if God should love and hate the same person at the same time. Esau must be loved if Christ is given to die for him, yet hated, as being ordained to death from all eternity; and what is this but child's play, in giving Judas a ransom with one hand, and sending him to his place for his {satisfied for, and remitted} sin, with the other hand?

Third, it opposes God's power. If Christ died intentionally {as to God} for all, then God's intentions are frustrated, since all are not saved. Then God is not Omnipotent if crossed in his designs by the work of his own hands. And to say that freedom was obtained by Christ's death for those who are not set free is ridiculous, and again making a laughing stock of religion.

Objections Against Particular Redemption Answered.

Objection 1. It is Objected, though the Application be not so, Christ obtained for all, though it be not applied to all. Answer 1. This Distinction cannot hold true in God, who grants nothing but what he bestows, for he cannot repent of that which he grants. 2. The End cannot be severed from the Action; if God willed that Redemption might be obtained of him, it was, that it might be applied to some; and if to some and not to all, then there is some disparity in the impetration itself, and in the intention of it, and not in the Application only, and so the distinction falls. 3. This distinction hath no place in the purpose of Christ, for therein they are both united, Christ's aim being to bestow what he obtains, and he obtains nothing but what he applies, for doth he apply anything which he did not obtain. God and Providence do not work together in vain. 4. It is absurd to say that Redemption is obtained, when both he that obtains, and he of whom it is obtained, do know it shall never be applied; nor ever profit those for whom {they say} it is obtained. 5. It bespatters the invaluable Price of the Blood of God, as if Christ should obtain Food for such as were never to be fed with it, and Freedom for those that were never to be freed by it; then Christ obtains of his Father that which will never profit. This is a goodly purchase? 6. If Christ made God acceptable, and not pacified, then God is not a pure act, neither is he unchangeable, both which absurdities this

distinction implies. 7. Then Christ is only a Preparer, but not a Giver of Salvation, and he purchased a power in that placability for God; and not for us, contrary to John 1:12, "but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," that is, to them he gave power - heavenly honour to become the sons of God. 8. If Christ made God appeasable only, then was Redemption Work {like the casting of a dice} an uncertain thing, whether it had been applied to any or no. 9. If we grant a severing of Impetration and Application in some, we may suppose a separating them in all, and so make Christ to die in vain, and to be such a Mediator as reconciles God to nobody, which cannot be. 10. If there be an impetration of Redemption to some without the Application of it, then is Christ but a half Mediator to those; which is a mere chimera, and not to be found in Scripture. 11. The Intention of God cannot be conditional {on our believing} for our believing adds nothing to the Intrinsic Sufficiency of Christ's Satisfaction, neither doth our not believing diminish it. God laid on Christ the Iniquity of us all, and made him sin for us, from his absolute Will, whether we believe or no; if otherwise our act of Faith must perfect the Satisfaction of Christ, and causatively make it ours. 12. Faith is indeed a element of our salvation, a faith 'tis absolutely promised by God, and procured by Christ's Death; and shall the Application of good obtained, depend on a contingency, not made known to the tenth part of the World, and not at all to Infants that die in

Infancy? 13. This distinction cannot hold true in infants, for they must say, either that they are all damned dying in Infancy, or that the Impetration of Salvation for them differs not from the Application of it. 14. To say that Christ died for all, and obtained Redemption for all upon this Condition, if they do believe; is plainly to yield that Christ died for Believers only, and to say, God grants Redemption if men do believe, is plainly to hold out that the Grant is only to Believers to whom it is given. 15. They are both joined together. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom.4:25. "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. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isa.53:11-12. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for

us." Rom.8:32-34. 16. Christ's Intercession is that what he obtains may be applied. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." John 17:25-26. 17. If there be a deed of heavenly citizenship, there must be a personal claim to that station; especially where Faith is equally purchased along with the Privilege.

Objection 2. What everyone is bound to believe must be true, and it is the duty of all men to believe; therefore Christ must have died for all men.

Answer 1. The Arminians boast much of this argument, as if it were invincible. Suppose we grant this position, would it not be poor comfort for a distressed soul to believe that Christ died for it no more than for Judas, and for all the damned in Hell? They would still be but miserable comforters and physicians of no value, to such a soul. "Christ died for all, thou are a man, therefore he died for thee." Such a false premise might comfort Cain and Judas in their despair, but never the children of God.

2. But in Truth, the minor of this Argument is false, for they to whom the Gospel never came, they who have never heard of the death of Christ, are not bound to believe that Christ died for them. Where there is no Law, there is no Transgression.

3. Neither is every one that hath the Gospel bound to believe it absolutely, but on this condition, if they be weary and heavy laden with sin, the

penitent, the hungry and thirsty soul, &c., it is such only which Christ calls to him, and such only are bound to believe, not all promiscuously. For if Men abide in Impenitency, they are bound to believe that the Death of Christ belongs not to them. The proclamation by the Gospel Trumpet of Redemption for sin through Christ's blood is not a joyful sound to them; for they know not their need of it.

4. The Argument is a plain paralogism, and a sophistical fallacy, having four terms in it, for the word 'believe' in the major proposition, is taken for a fiducial embracing of the Truth with the Heart, which is Faith properly; but in the minor, or assumption, it is only a certain practical collection, {which is not faith but imprudently,} as if it were the Intention of God, that this or that man, {suppose Judas, &c.,} should believe.

5. We are all bound to believe, that what God reveals is true, and "thus saith the Lord" is the Object of Faith; but God nowhere reveals, or saith that it is his Intention that Judas shall believe, or that all should believe.

6. The word 'all' and 'every' must have its Limitation; to wit, every one that is Penitent, Hungry, Thirsty, &c., otherwise it could not be morally and theologically true, for it is revealed, that Christ died for sheep, friends, church, &c. Christ "is the Saviour of the body." Eph.5:23.

7. Christ is a Deed of Gift, but this Deed runs not in a universal or unlimited sense, but it is bestowed upon the, "faithful in Christ Jesus," Eph.1:1, to whom alone the promise belongs; plus,

that which is God's, as a gift to bestow, cannot be man's duty to perform as a condition of salvation.

8. 'Tis true, the Commission is to "go preach the Gospel to every Creature," and accordingly we hold out a proclamation of Christ to all promiscuously, but it is not, because Christ is intentionally given to all, but because we know not the Elect from the Reprobate, which is a Secret.

Objection 3. The words "all" and "every," often used in Scripture, must be taken universally.

Answer 1. "All" and "every" must not be taken for a universal affirmative collectively, and for every man individually, in the common quoted scriptures, but distributively, as in Matthew 9:35, where we are told that Christ went about healing every sickness and every disease among the people; that is, any and every kind of disease, for Christ healed not every disease individually. Also in Colossians 1:28, where "every" is taken distributively three times over, and must be restricted to those to whom Paul preached.

2. The word "all" in I Timothy 2:4, cannot be taken collectively, and for every man individual man, for the word of God forbids us to pray for those that sin the sin unto death, I Jn.5:16, therefore 'pray for all men' cannot be taken for all individually.

3. The word "all" in I Timothy 2:4, cannot be taken collectively, for then either all shall be saved, if God will have it so; or God fails of his own will, which is absurd. God faileth not, for he cannot be disappointed in His own will, for he works all things after the counsel of it. It must therefore be meant

not the will of his purpose, but of his precept, whereby he commands men of all sorts, and excludes none, for there is no exception in the Gospel. We know not the exception in the Decree; hence Paul doubts not to tell the jailor {who was a bloody boisterous fellow} that if he believed, he should be saved. Acts 16:24-31. Again, in I Timothy 2:6, {"who gave Himself a ransom for all,} is rendered in the parallel text of Titus 2:14, "who gave Himself for us." Now, who are the persons called "us" in this text? Are they not particularized as "redeemed from all iniquity, purified and made a peculiar people?" For "all" of this description Christ gave Himself a ransom, and for none else.

4. The word "all" is not taken strictly always, for every man individually, as in Hebrews 2:9, Christ is said to "taste death for every man," which in the very next verse is restricted to "sons brought to glory," and in Hebrews 2:11, to "sanctified" ones.

5. When we say that all men travel such a way to London, we do not mean that every man travels thither, but such as do travel thither, travel such a way. The prophet said that "all men are liars," Psal.116:11, take the word strictly, and he must be a liar that made this statement. Thus other Scriptures frequently restrain.

6. I Corinthians 15:22, {"for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,"} is meant of the resurrection, and only of those that belong to Christ, {"they that are Christ's," verse 23,} or the sense is that no man is made alive but by him; as Aristotle taught all men philosophy, i.e.,

no man learned philosophy but by him, not all individually.

Contrary Scriptures are to be considered both at once, and by the scope of the whole are to be interpreted; 'tis not 'concordia discors' {discordant harmony} betwixt Romans 3:28 & James 2:24, but 'discordia concors' {harmonious discord.} Luther said that words must give place to matter, matter is not for words, but contrary, words for matter.

Objection 4. God gave Christ to the world, John 3:16, and for the sins of the "whole world." I John 2:2.

Answer 1. The word "world" is of various significations. A decree went out that "all the world should be taxed," Luke 2:1, that is, the Roman Empire and such countries in subjection thereto. The faith of the church of Rome was "spoken of throughout the whole world," Rom.1:8, that is, throughout all the churches, and among all the saints in the world. When the Pharisees said to Christ, "behold, the world is gone after Him," John 12:19, by reference we find that they meant "much people" who went out of Jerusalem to meet the Lord, crying, "Hosanna." John 12:12,13. The Pharisees themselves, who so said, they were not gone after Christ; therefore the whole world was not gone, they themselves not being gone. The word "world," John 3:16, cannot be meant of the world containing, for that is not a subject capable of salvation, nor of the world contained in a strict sense; for so birds, beasts and fishes, and all inanimate things are comprehended, which cannot have everlasting life;

nor can it be the world of men, but as God is the Preserver of man and beast. Psalm 36:6. There is God's love to creatures; God's love to men; and, thirdly, God's love to good men. God's love was the cause of sending Christ. Not the first of these, nor the second properly, but as an evidence that some out of mankind were destined for redemption, which was not granted to the fallen angels, and the word "whosoever" plainly restrains this love of God to some, not to others. Whosoever {in this world} believeth, &c., and in verse 17, 'tis meant the saved world, which must be God's People; for many of the world were damned, at the time of God's sending Christ, and some had been so for 4000 years; as he was not sent to reverse God's Decree, {for then the pains of Hell were not Endless,} so nor did his Death cross the Decree. It must therefore be properly God's love to good men, the third Love, not such as he found so, but such as he made so, out of his Love to them.

2. It must be meant of that world whereof Abraham is said to be the heir, Rom.4:13, which is explained to be all believers, verse 11, both Jews and Gentiles in every nation throughout the world. There is a world of believers, Rev.5:9; and as manna was only for Israel, so Christ, the true manna, the Bread from Heaven, gives life to the world of believers only. John 6:33. Christ was believed on in the world of believers only, I Tim.3:16; the reconciled world. II Cor.5:19. There is also the world of unbelievers. "All men have not faith," II Thes.3:2, "all the world wondered after the beast," and "they

worshipped the dragon." Rev.13:3,4. "The whole world lieth in wickedness." I John 5:19. The believing world is a world in the world {"these are in the world," John 17:11,} and they are taken and chosen out of the world. They are in the world, and sojourning among the inhabitants of it as strangers and pilgrims only, this not being their rest, their home; their desires being towards a better country. Heb.11:13-16. And that they are taken and chosen out of the world and given to Christ is clear from John 15:19, "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." Also from John 17:6, "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," and thus, "I pray for them; I pray not for the world." John 17:9.

3. World cannot be taken for all and every man, for then he would send his word to them, and work his Grace in them; that this Love of God might not be fruitless, and it must follow that either God loves the damned in Hell, or that he loved them while in the world, but he is now changed.

4. It is granted that God hath a respect for all mankind. "We trust," saith Paul, "in the living God, who is the Saviour," i.e., the Preserver, "of all men, especially of those that believe." I Tim.4:10. "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all His works." Psalms 145:9. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; and sendeth rain

on the just and on the unjust." Matt.5:45. All this implies not eternal preservation, but only temporal providence and preservation, for the wages of sin would have been paid at the birth of it, and the world {through confusion by sin} would have fallen about Adam's ears, had not Christ been the Glorious Undertaker.

5. The word "world" is sometimes in Scripture put for Gentiles in opposition to Jews, and so it is in I John 2:2. John wrote to the Jews, and ministered unto the circumcision, Gal.2:9, and he says unto them, "Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," that is, not for the Jews only, but for the Gentiles also. This passage also signifies the fact that the sins of no man in the whole world are remitted, but alone by Christ, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. All that are redeemed are redeemed by Christ alone; but the elect only are given to Him; they alone have an interest in Him, are redeemed by Him, and they shall be glorified with Him. The Jewish nation considered themselves as the peculiar people of God; and so they were, for to them "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." And Christ was a Jew, "of whom concerning the flesh Christ came." Rom.9:5. The Jews were always taught to appropriate the Messiah exclusively to themselves, to the utter rejection of the Gentiles, who were called "strangers," "uncircumcised,"

"common," "unclean," "dogs," &c., and it was unlawful for a Jew to keep company or have any dealings with a Gentile. Matthew 10:5; Mark 7:17; Acts 10:28; 11:3. The salvation of the Gentiles is in various parts of Scripture called a "mystery," "hidden mystery," the "mystery of Christ which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men," "that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs." Eph.3:4-6; Col.1:27. But when this mystery was revealed and made fully known by the divine mission to Paul, who was by Christ sent to preach to the Gentiles, Acts 26:17-18, when it was declared by the vision of the unclean beasts and the Lord's consequent commission to Peter, Acts 10:9-15, then the contentions of the circumcision ceased. Acts 11:2. They found "the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile was "broken down," the latter, who before were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise," being now "brought nigh by the blood of Christ." They glorified God saying, "then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Jesus Christ is not only the propitiation for the sins of us Jews, but for the Gentiles also. Eph.2:11-18.

6. Christ was sufficient as a Medicine to save the whole world, just as the brazen serpent was to heal all Israel, yet only those that looked up were healed; so 'tis only these that are granted grace to apply this medicinal remedy that are given life in Christ. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that

hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." I Jn.5:11-12.

Objection 5. Surely Christ hath as much efficacy to save, as Adam to damn. "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.

Answer 1. There is a difference between a necessary extension and a voluntary one. The efficacy of Adam's sin was extensive necessarily, but salvation by Christ is of free grace, wholly of God's pleasure, and is therefore called the free gift. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." Rom.5:15.

2. Christ is nowhere compared to Adam in the extent of his object, but only in the efficacy of his obedience; and more merit is required to the saving of one soul, than of demerit for the losing of ten thousand.

3. As all the offspring of Adam did fall by his Sin, so all the offspring of Christ are saved by his Death. All and everyone are not in Christ radically, as they were in Adam; and all are not given to Christ; but "as many" {saith Christ} "as thou hast given me." John 17:2. The Seed of the woman could not be made the head and root of the seed of the serpent; Christ represented not Cain, Pharaoh, &c., then God had been well pleased with Christ for them,

Matt.3:17, Eph.5:2, and they should not have been damned as Adam represented all mankind; as all {that are in Adam} die, so all {that are in Christ} are made alive. I Cor.15:22.

4. That the apostle might not be misunderstood, and the word "all" in Romans 5:18 taken universally, the term of comprehension is varied in the following verse, and "all" is rendered "many." "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." This verse is spoken of such as receive much Grace and Justification, verse 17, which the Arminians cannot say, all and every man do.

Objection 6. In Romans 14:15, it is said, "destroy not him for whom Christ died." And, in II Peter 2:1, persons are described as "denying the Lord that bought them."

Answer 1. Everlasting destruction cannot be intended by the word destroy in Romans 14:15, and the context shows this, for the Apostle throughout the chapter, is exhorting the believing Romans not to contemn or condemn one another on account of things indifferent; neither to destroy the weak believer's peace of mind by doing anything {which although it be indifferent, and not evil in itself} may yet prove a stumbling-block to him. Destroy not {by thy conduct in eating meat esteemed by thy brother unclean} the peace of mind of one of the weaklings of that flock "for which Christ died." Destroy is not there to condemn but to scandalize {which as much as in us lies} leads them to destruction, II Cor.10:8, for to destroy them absolutely is not in man's power.

2. The persons spoken of in II Pet.2:1, as "denying the Lord that bought them," are described by the apostle thus, false teachers, hypocritical professors, tares among the wheat, Matt.13:25, in whom was never the root of the matter; not bought and redeemed by Christ from eternal death, but had merely escaped, or abstained, from the pollutions of the world through a theoretical knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. II Pet.2:20. To answer certain purposes, they made an outward profession of the Gospel, which obliged them for a space to be outwardly moral; associated with the people of God, insinuated themselves into churches, privily introduced therein damnable heresies. Many followed their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth was evil spoken of, and they made merchandise of true believers. They continued thus for a while, and then either their sheep's clothing was stripped off them, or they threw it off themselves, and returned back again into the world. They were all this while goats, and not sheep; ravening wolves, not gentle lambs. And Peter closes the chapter concerning them by saying, "it is happened to them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to its own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." II Pet.2:1-3,17-22.

3. The Apostle, II Pet.2:1, does not appear to be there speaking concerning the purchase of the Redeemer's blood, as the name or title, "Lord," is nowhere else applied to Christ in the New Testament, but to the Father, as in Luke 2:29; Acts

4:24; II Tim.2:22; and especially in Jude. 4, where "the only Lord God" is distinguished from "our Lord Jesus Christ." And even though it could be proved to apply to Christ in the above text, it may be explained upon the principle that it is no unusual thing with the inspired writers to speak of things not as they actually are, but according to the profession of the party. Thus, for instance, Matt.13:12, "whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath," that is, "which he seemeth to have," as explained in Luke 8:18. Thus apostates are said to be "twice dead" which would seem to import that they had been spiritually alive, though in fact that was never the case, but merely what they professed to be.

4. So that, if we even grant the premises, it only follows that such as think themselves redeemed, or are thought so by others, may blaspheme and perish; yet this makes not all the world redeemed; this can by no means establish the doctrine of Universal Redemption.

**THE THIRD AND FOURTH POINT, OF
FREE-WILL IN THE FALLEN STATE,
AND OF EFFECTUAL VOCATION OR
CONVERSION TO GOD.**

The Arminians not only deny election to be an eternal, peculiar, unconditional, and irreversible act of God; and assert that Christ died equally and indiscriminately for every individual of mankind; for them that perish no less than for them that are saved; but they also aver that saving grace is tendered to the acceptance of every man; which he may or may not receive, just as he pleases. That the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit in conversion is not invincible but is suspended, or depends for its efficacy on the will of man. That notwithstanding Christ's death, it was possible {in respect of free-will} that all should perish; that now, by His death for all, true grace is given to all; which they may improve, hold fast, and be saved; or despise, neglect, cast away, and be lost!

Arminianism implies that the fruit of Christ's death depends on the contingent assent of man's Free-will, that notwithstanding his Death, it was possible in respect of Free-will that all should perish; that now by his Death for all, true Grace is given to all; that all Pagans are reconciled to God, that in Man is no Original Sin, but all are born in a State of Innocency. Some affirm, that Nature without Grace will save, through the direction of right reason; others say, that Grace depends on Nature. Others, that the Fall took not away the Power of the Mind,

but it's exercise only; so that the Mind is as bound in Fetters only, and that in the first acts of Grace {as well as in posterior acts} Nature and Grace do concur, and walk hand in hand together; but what is all this seeming Zeal for God? In maintaining General Redemption, lest God should mock in his Promises; and Free-will to Good, lest God should mock in his Precepts, but a speaking wickedly for God and an accepting of his Person. "Will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his person, will ye contend for God?" Job 13:7-8. 'Tis indeed an Advancing of his Mercy, but not of his Truth in the former, and of the will of Man, {embalming a dead corpse,} above the will of God in the latter. The will of Man is naturally a self-determining power and principle, and bears God's Image, as it hath a dominion over the whole man; but since the Fall hath the strong Bias of Sin upon it. Freedom is Radically and Originally in the Will {not in the understanding} and 'tis an essential Property of it, that it cannot be compelled by any created external agent in its own free choice, yet in the commanding Act it may suffer force, even as the Martyrs were dragged against their wills to idol-worship, and Christ tells Peter, thou shalt "carry thee whither thou wouldest not." John 21:18. Now 'tis no wonder, if many mistakes arise about this great Engine of the Almighty, seeing the soul knows not itself but by reflection, and though we know its Qualities and Operations, yet we cannot know its essence.

Man is considered in a fourfold state. 1. The state of Creation or Generation, therein he had free-will either to good or evil, but was necessitated to neither. 2. The state of Degeneration, wherein he is a servant to sin, and necessitated to evil. 3. The state of Regeneration, wherein he is freed from the slavery and dominion of sin, but not from the necessity of it. 4. The state of Glorification, wherein man is both freely and necessarily good, perfect and content. In the first estate, man is free; in the second, a slave; in the third, set free; and in the fourth, having a glorious liberty. The controversy is concerning the second state, wherein we say, that man is under a necessity of sinning, yet free from coercion; he is free to evil, but not to good; which appears by these following arguments.

Argument 1. That there is no free-will to good in the fallen estate, is proved from the Fall itself; if man, in the Fall, lost his free-will to good, then it cannot be found in the fallen estate, but the antecedent is true, ergo, &c., to prove the antecedent, were it not so, it could not properly be called a Fall, for the Fall implies the loss of that original righteousness and perfection wherein man was created. And if the Fall did deprave the other faculties of the soul, and deprive them of their primitive lustre, then must the will also be a sharer in that depravation. Now the depravity of the will itself by the Fall doth further appear by considering the good it hath lost, and the evil it hath gained, through Adam's sin. The good it has lost is six-fold. Power, order, stability, prudence, obedience, and

liberty. The evil it hath gained is {in opposition to the obedience it lost} a threefold rebellion. Against the counsel of the mind; against the controls of conscience; against the commands of God; besides all the other vices wherein original sin consists. This king of the Isle of Man, {the will,} when he came first out of God's mint, was a curious silver-piece, and shone most gloriously, {being clothed with excellent jewels and properties,} but now being fallen among thieves, is robbed of all, hath ashes for beauty, &c., and is a tyrant upon a dunghill; yea, is free from righteousness, and a very slave to sin. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh, for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." Rom.6:17-20. Before the Fall, the will had liberty both to good or evil, to do or not to do; but since the Fall, the will is evil, only evil, and continually evil, Gen.6:5, the whole heart now is evil extensively, only evil intensively, and continually evil protensively.

Argument 2. If Conversion be a new creation, then fallen man hath not a free-will to good, but the antecedent is true, ergo, &c., that the antecedent is true appears. A convert is called a "new creature,"

or a "new creation." Gal.6:15. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Cor.5:17. Creation is a production of something out of nothing; but if there be a free-will to do good in man before conversion, then is there something of its own nature spiritually good in unconverted man towards the work of conversion; so can it not be called a new creature. Sure I am that every experienced soul finds the contrary in that work; the whole frame is out of frame in the unconverted state and man is a confused chaos, a vast emptiness, when this Creating Power comes upon him. Yea, a greater power is required to recreate this little world, than at first to create the greater; for in this, though there be no pre-existing good matter, yet is there resisting evil matter. The Creation of the great world was the work of God's Word, Psal.33:6; of His fingers, Psal.8:3; or of His hands. Psal.102:25. But to restore {the little world} man, requires God's arm. "He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts." Nay, Christ set his sight to it, in his sweating drops or clods of blood, Luke 22:44, it cost Christ both tears and blood, and blood often, at his circumcision, in his agony, and during his sufferings unto death. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John 5:17. New qualities and operations are created in us, {though the substance and faculties of the soul remain,} both the will to will well, and the power to do well, are ascribed to this Creating Almighty Power in the effectual conversion of souls

to God. "It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil.2:13.

Argument 3. If Conversion be a new-beggetting, or generation, then fallen man hath no free-will to good. To give light and proof to this argument, we must know that Generation is the motion to a being, and a proceeding into a being; this presupposes that there is no being before; for we are not, we are nothing before we be begotten; as it holds true in generation, so likewise in Regeneration. "Of His own will begat he us." James 1:18. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13. It is not said that God begat us of our wills, {yet this should be said were there in us a free-will to good,} but of God's will; and till then we are not. I Cor.1:28. Unconverted men are things that are not, nothing creatures. 1. Fallen man is a natural nothing. We are all "naught" as Austin saith, for what is the great womb whence all things come but nothing? 2. A moral nothing. Vanity and nothing is writ upon us by sin naturally, but we are morally worse than nothing, that is miserable; as nothing at the first was the mother of all things, so sin is now the mother of nothing. "Man is vanity," or as in Hebrew, Adam is Abel, that is, vanity, Psal.39:5; and a lie. Psal.62:9. "The heart of the wicked is little worth." Prov.10:20. Neither for use nor service; as a shadow is not useful for war, nor a statue for prayer, so fallen man is unfit for the service of God, for his best actions are sin. Sinners toil for vanity, Hab.2:13, they dream of catching golden fishes, as

the man in Theocritus did; sin disappoints us of our end, to wit, happiness, as man labors for the wind, Eccles.5:16, and is but in a dream. Isa.29:7,8. All this shows that we are nothing, and have not a free-will to good, till begotten of God.

Argument 4. If Conversion be a New Birth, then fallen man hath not a free-will to good. The truth of this appears, as we cannot have a birth of ourselves; a babe cannot be born of itself; nothing can have its original from itself, for it would then be before and after itself; it would be and would not be, at the same time. Thus are we taught to look up above ourselves for our new birth. "Except a man be born again," or from above, John 3:3; we are born, not of the flesh, "but of the Spirit." John 3:6. Our first birth is of the earth, earthy; our second birth is from the Lord, heavenly. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13. "Born of God." I John 3:9. As men, we may contribute to a natural birth, but nothing towards a second, heavenly and spiritual birth. There be children potentially in the loins of many men that never beget children; yet in this there is a disparity, for though as men we be possible members of Christ, yet are we not actual, nor ever shall be, unless begotten and born of God wholly.

Argument 5. If Conversion be a quickening of one that is dead in sin, then fallen man hath no free-will to good. This is proved from Ephesians 2:1, "and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." He doth not say half dead, as the man

was that fell among thieves, Luke 10:30, but wholly dead, as to spiritual life. There is no manner of good in us. Rom.7:18. And "we are not sufficient of ourselves to think" a good thought, II Cor.3:5, till Christ, {who is Life and a Quickening Spirit,} come to quicken us. "Without Him we can do nothing," John 15:5, he doth not say, many things or few things, but absolutely nothing. From Christ is our fruit found, Hos.14:8; both the bud of good desires, the blossom of good purposes, and the fruit of good actions. Aaron's rod {a dry stick without a root} is a fit emblem; it budded, blossomed, and brought forth almonds. This was not done by any inward principle or power of nature, but it was solely and wholly the work of God. So Ezekiel's dry bones were made to live; nothing of that life was from themselves, but all from God. Thus it is in this spiritual vivification; we cannot contribute anything to this glorious work; we have no internal principle whereby to dispose ourselves to will that which is truly good; we cannot so much as call Christ Lord, but by the Spirit. I Cor.12:3. If there be no life, but through union with Christ, then till we be engrafted into that blessed and bleeding vine, we cannot bring forth fruit unto God. And it is not any natural power or principle in us that can engraft us into Christ, for faith is an engrafting grace, and that is "the gift of God," Eph.2:8, the grace by which the just live, Hab.2:4, and by which Christ dwells in our hearts. Eph.3:17. Till then we are dead, and have no free-will to good. 'Tis indeed sometimes called a sleep, but 'tis the sleep of death. Psal.13:3.

Argument 6. If Regeneration or Recovery from the state of degeneration, be a resurrection, then fallen man hath no free-will to good. That regeneration is a resurrection is manifest from the following scriptures, "verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." John 5:25. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Eph.2:5-6. It requires as much power to raise, quicken, and make alive a sinner dead in trespasses and sins, as to raise Christ from the dead, Eph.1:19,20. To raise up Christ, and to work faith in us, requires "the exceeding greatness of His power." Eph.1:19. Here are three gradations, power, greatness of power, and as if that were too little, the Apostle adds, "according to the working of His mighty power." The original words imply not only a working, but an effectual force in working; such strength as in the arms of valiant men who can do great exploits. Nay more, it is beyond all this, it implies a power that can do all things, an Omnipotent Power. Surely, had there been an internal principle in us toward this great work, or any free-will in us to good, Paul would not have used those gradations, nor such emphatical, significant expressions. This work of Regeneration would not then have required the effectual, forcible power of the valiant arm of God; even such a power as raised up Christ from the dead, by which he was "declared

to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” Rom.1:4. I need say nothing of the raising up of Ezekiel’s dry bones, wherein the Spirit was the west wind, that wholly and solely caused new life in them; nor of the raising of Lazarus out of the grave, which cost Christ a prayer above all his other miracles working, and Lazarus contributing nothing to the work.

Argument 7. If moral persuasion be altogether insufficient of itself to recover man from his fallen state, then fallen man hath no free-will to do good. This appears because then God would be only a moral cause of man’s conversion, but man needs more from God, and God therein is more to man, therefore, &c., if moral persuasion could recover man, then faith would be an easy work, and not require such mighty power as has just been proved. Eph.1:19, &c. Causes are of three sorts. 1. A moral cause, which is improperly and metaphorically only a cause, because it produces not properly an effect, only it proposes arguments to induce and persuade. 2. A physical cause which really and truly produces an effect; this the schools call an effectual cause. 3. A miraculous cause is that which works above the course of nature in producing effects. God in man’s conversion cannot be only a moral cause, for these reasons.

Reason 1. Then the working of Faith in us needs not the putting forth of any such energetical power, as was in raising of Christ from the dead. God did more to Christ, than morally persuade him to

come out of the grave; and Christ did more to the raising of Lazarus; besides as such like suasions are alone ineffectual, so dead carcasses are incapable of them alone; in Christ saying, "Lazarus, come forth," John 11:43, a mighty power went along with the command, which gave effect thereto.

Reason 2. Moral persuasions cannot be sufficient to bring forth supernatural effects; as when a child hath an apple held out by its Father to come to him, the child is only allured, but not enabled thereby to come. 'Tis not enough to persuade a prisoner to come forth, but his chains must be struck off, and the prison doors must be opened, Acts 12:6-10, so must have a physical cause also. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil.2:13.

Reason 3. Yet man is more than a prisoner, and stands therefore in need of a better plaster for his sore than moral suasion, for he is dead in sin, so must have an effectual vivification by Quickening Grace, which moral persuasion can never accomplish.

Reason 4. Then God hath no greater influence in converting man than Satan hath in perverting him to his destruction; he hath a persuading slight, but no enforcing might; he may solicit, but he cannot compel; hence we are bid to resist him with peremptory negatives, and then he cannot touch us with his deadly touches. Now to ascribe no more power to the Creator than to his creature {Satan} is to narrow it below Divine Majesty, and to derogate exceedingly from Omnipotency.

Argument 8. The eight argument further illustrates this truth, that more than a moral suasion is necessary to recover fallen man. If Christ be all in all in matters of salvation, then man is nothing at all as to that work, and hath not in himself a free-will to good, so must stand in need of more than moral suasion, but the antecedent is true, Col.3:11, Christ is "all in all," ergo, the consequent. This is manifest for these reasons following.

Reason 1. Christ's first work {in order to salvation} is to bore the ear, which before is stopped like the deaf adder's to the voice of the charmer. Psal.58:4,5. Christ gives the understanding ear. "Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." Deut.29:4. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened, burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required." Psal.40:6. "He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity." Job 36:10. "The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary, he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back," Isa.50:4-5, which passages, although spoken of Christ, hold good concerning His people. This moral persuasion cannot remove, as we naturally reject the Counsel of God. Luke 7:30.

Reason 2. Christ opens not only the ear, but the heart also. Acts 16:14. The Lord opened the

heart of Lydia, not she her own heart; which she might have done had she a free-will to good. The key of the heart {as doth the keys of the Heavens, of Hell, and of the Womb} hangs at Christ's girdle. "He that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Rev.3:7. Moral persuasion will never prove effectual to open the heart of man.

Reason 3. Besides Christ there is no Saviour. Isa.43:11; Hos.13:4. But free-will Arminianism makes man a co-saviour with Christ; as if there was a halving of it between the grace of Christ and the will of man, and the latter dividing the spoil with the former; yea, deserving the greater share, for if Christ be only a monitor, and persuade to good, then man's own will is the principal author of its own goodness; and he makes himself to differ from others, and hath something, that he received not at conversion, of which to boast before God. "Who maketh thee to differ from another, and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" I Cor.4:7. Persuasion leaves the admonished will to its own indifferency, not changing it at all; so man becomes his own saviour, not Christ only; how then is Christ all in all? Then Christ is not our Creditor, but we are debtors to free-will.

Argument 9. The ninth argument, {still adding more lustre and light to the former,} is, if fallen man must be drawn to goodness, then hath he no free-will to good.

That moral persuasion will not bring a soul to Christ; that man cannot come himself, but must be drawn, is proved from John 6:44, "no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32. Drawing is a bringing of anything out of its proper course and channel by a violent and overpowering influence from without, and not from an innate power or principle from within. There is scarce anything, therefore, in nature which hath not a power of attracting some other. The fire draws vapors to it; the sun draws the fire; plants draw moisture; the moon draws the sea, and the North Pole the sea-man's compass. In Song 1:4, it is not said lead, but "draw." In drawing there is less will and more power than in leading; and though God draws us strongly, yet He doth it sweetly. As we are drawn, we have not a free-will to good, else man fell in his understanding only, not in his will; yet are we, as it were, volunteers, Psalm.110:3, a willing people; not that Christ finds us so, but makes us so "in the day of His power," and then He speaks to us with a strong hand. Isa.8:11. We are naturally haters of God, and at enmity with Him, Rom.1:30; 8:7, but Divine Grace doth violence to the corrupt qualities of the soul, and puts the will on moving when its corruptions are removed; the Spirit gives a new power to the soul, and then acts and influences that power to good; so draws, {as it were, a camel through the eye of a needle, Lk.18:25,} a God-hater to love Him. This is more than a bare persuasion to

a stone to be warm, and to go out of its place, for God takes away the "heart of stone," and gives a "heart of flesh." "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezek.36:26. This goes far beyond a mere entreaty. Socrates said, "he was but as a midwife to his scholars," {as helping forth the birth already conceived,} as he drew forth that which was already naturally in them; but this is a begetting us anew in Christ Jesus through the Gospel, I Cor.4:15, and Christ finds nothing that is good in us. Rom.7:18. God gives the very power of coming to Christ. Man's will is made passively willing to follow; attending Grace, but not going before it. Grace is, "I will, and they shall," and the will is a subordinate agent under Grace; and it being moved, afterwards does not move itself.

Argument 10. If the soul of man be passive in effectual vocation, then is there in fallen man no free-will to good.

The spirit of grace is compared to a precious liquor that is infused; and the called and chosen of God are styled vessels of mercy. Now a vessel is a passive receiver of this precious liquor that is poured into it. "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications." Zech.12:10. "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," Rom.5:5, poured out and infused into God's vessels. The will of man, {in respect of

this first reception of Grace,} hath neither concurrence nor co-operation active, but is actuated to an obediential subjection, and is made capable and apt to receive impression; as the atmosphere is passive when it receives light, so Adam's body was passive when God inspired it with life; though it was formed and organized, yet was it lifeless and breathless. Gen.2:7. And as the soul of Nebuchadnezzar {when deprived of reason} received the impression of the Agent {God Almighty} in causing his reason to return to him again, Dan.4:36, so in this case, Christ infuses Grace into us against our wills, and apart from the influences of Divine Grace 'tis an hell to us to be brought from hell, though it be an hell to us to stay after God hath opened our eyes and touched our hearts. Corrupt nature neither can, nor will contribute anything to destroy itself in its own corruptions. We are without ability in ourselves to put forth any causal virtue in order to such an effect, and accordingly we have no power to resist the impression and effect which proceedeth from a Supernatural Cause. In the first work, the will moveth not itself, but is only moved by God. The will, as a creature, must obey its Creator; yet as a sinful depraved will, it obeys not willingly till "made willing," Psal.110:3, in the day of God's power, so 'tis not a collateral agent. The water descends naturally, yet in order to prevent a vacuum it ascends. Man's will is the untamed heifer, or wild asses colt; Christ the Rider tames it, and brings it to his yoke.

Argument 11. To deny Grace, Special Grace, and God's Gracious Dispensations is abominable; and the doctrine of free-will denies these.

The advocates for free-will say, "if a man improves his naturals, God is bound to give him spirituals." What is this but turning grace into debt, and a symbolizing with the Jesuits? And to say that the reason why one believes and another does not believe arises from the co-operation of the free-will of him that believeth, is quite to destroy Special Grace peculiar to the elect. All which is contrary to these Scriptures, John 6:37,45; Rom.8:14; I Cor.1:23,24; I John 4:13, and very many others. Neither can there be {if this hypothesis be granted} any gracious Dispensation, either in respect of person, place, time or means, all which God freely makes choice of. God's dispensations towards his people are all of free grace.

1. Of person; the LORD quickens whom he will. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5:21. The heart of one sinner is caused to melt as wax before the fire and receive God's seal, while the heart of another remains as immovable as marble, and as the rock that cannot be shaken. This is the work of God's Gracious Dispensation. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Rom.9:18. If this were not so then wise men would be evangelized, not the poor and foolish, for they have the best understanding to guide their free-wills.

2. Of the place; no child can choose the place where to be begot or born in, nor we for our Conversion. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John 3:8.

3. Of the time; a child cannot choose the time of its begetting or birth, no more than of the place; so nor we of our New Birth. God may drop in grace, even with the first breathings of life, and regenerate a babe before it be brought forth; as John Baptist, who was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. Luke 1:15. And others He may cast into the womb of the new birth when in the very act of dropping out of the world, at the eleventh, yea, at the twelfth hour, as the penitent thief. Oh, who can order the ways of grace, and set bounds to the Spirit of God in its breathings on man!

4. And of means; "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." Psal.8:2. The Philippians were initially influenced by a woman. Acts 16:14. As the likeliest persons have not always children, so a child cannot choose its own father, nor we, as to who shall point us to Christ. All these are Special Dispensations of God's good will to men, and so depends not on the free-will of man.

Argument 12. Free-will brings with it so many absurdities that it cannot be received. Absurdity 1. It makes man the proximate and immediate cause of his own salvation. 2. It puts grace into man's power, not man's will under the Power of Grace. 3. It robs God of the honour of making one to differ

from another, and ascribes it to man. 4. It allows man a liberty of boasting to God, saying, "God, I thank thee that thou gavest me power to will, {yet thou gavest that to Judas as well as me,} but I thank myself for the act of willingness, since I received from thee no more than Judas did." 5. It exempts the creature from the power of God, as if man, spider-like, would spin a thread of his own, and hope to climb up to Heaven, by the thread spun out of his own bowels, saying "the will inclines to that which is good," as if he were bidden and able to that which he willed. 6. It maketh man the cause why God willeth this or that; so God must attend on the will of man, and not be infallible in His decrees, nor working all things according to the counsel of His own will. Eph.1:11. "But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." Psal.115:3. 7. It supposes a power of believing {in all the blind nations of the world} on Jesus Christ, of whom they have not heard, Rom.10:14, but, especially in those under the Gospel, contrary to Scripture. "He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Matt.13:11. 8. Then the Apostle James lied in saying "every good gift" is from God, James 1:17, if there be something in man already prior to Conversion. 9. Then Paul was mistaken also, as he should have said, "it is of man that willeth and runneth," and not, "of God that showeth mercy." Rom.9:16. They dare give the power of will and belief to ruined man, by which imaginary conceit,

man has the ability to will and to change himself into a god.

Objections in Favour of Free-Will Answered.

Objection 1. There is a law written in the hearts of fallen mankind. Romans 2:15. Answer 1. This is conscience bearing witness of right and wrong. 2. Adam begat a son "in his own image," Gen.5:3, not only as a man, but a sinner. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." John 3:6. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Job 14:4. Adam's sin brought forth original corruption in us, which spreads over the whole man, and puts the whole frame, out of frame, so that it cannot do anything that accompanies Salvation. There is an Impotency in the will of the flesh; while we are Christ-less we are without strength. Romans 5:6. Man had Divine Wisdom to direct, and Divine Willingness to follow that direction; but now has nothing which is able to direct, nothing willing to follow that direction. 3. Those reliques in the Gentiles are sufficient only to leave them without excuse, Rom.1:20, and may stir them up to external work, as to matter, but not as to form, either in the mind or manner of right doing; all their works are but glistering sins, being faulty at the root, for "without faith it is impossible to please" God. Heb.11:6. 4. The devils have more light than men, yet are they altogether dead in sin, though they believe and tremble, James 2:19, and though they confess Christ, Luke 4:34, they sin freely, yet

cannot avoid it, but must sin; and though it be necessary, yet it is sin, and voluntary too.

Objection 2. Why is man blamed for resisting the Spirit, if there is no free-will? Acts 7:51; Matt.23:37; Heb.10:29. Answer 1. They resisted the outward means {as is declared in the following words} not the inward work. The inward work of the Spirit cannot be resisted; as the creature can neither hinder nor further his own creation, nor the child his own generation, nor the dead man his own resurrection, so neither can fallen man hinder or further his conversion. They resisted the preaching of the Gospel by persecuting the ministers of it. The word "resist" often signifies a rushing against, and falling upon in a rude and hostile manner, and fitly expresses their ill-treatment of Christ and his ministers by falling upon them and putting them to death. That is the resistance here particularly designed. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted, and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." Acts 7:52. 2. That resisting the Spirit of Grace, Heb.10:29, is the sin against the Holy Ghost, for which {he saith} there is no sacrifice. Yet that Grace they resisted was not the Grace of Regeneration, Adoption, &c., peculiar to the elect, and will not authorize the Arminian Universal Grace. 3. Matthew 23:37. This scripture, so common in the mouths and so frequently found in the writings of Arminians, so readily produced by them on almost every occasion; this scripture, taken in its context,

will advantage them nothing. "How often would I have gathered," &c., "but ye would not." This gathering does not design a gathering of Jews to Christ internally by the Spirit and Grace of God, but a gathering of them externally, to hear him preach, so that they might be brought to an assent unto him as the Messiah. "How often would I," saith Christ, is only an outward call to Jerusalem, i.e., her rulers believed not, yet many of her children were gathered to Christ, to wit, as many as Christ would call unto himself; the city is one thing, and her children another, so this proves not the point. 4. 'Tis one thing to resist, and another to overcome; the latter is denied, not the former.

Objection 3. Why doth God say, "what could I do more to My vineyard?" Isaiah 5:4. Answer 1. God did enough in making man upright, and if he hath lost his uprightness, {man now hath a treacherous heart inventing evil against God, and against his own soul,} he must thank himself, and not blame God, who is not bound to restore it. Grace is the Lord's own; and he giveth it to whom he will. 2. This was said to Israel, a type of the Church, God dealt not so with other nations. "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel." Psal.147:19. "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." Acts 14:16. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Eph.2:12. Thus, this is quite far from the notion of Universal Grace. 3. 'Tis only

meant of external helps, which the prophet reckons, a warm sun, good air, fruitful rain, vital juice, &c., not signifying inward grace. 4. Neither doth he speak of Grace that God gives to particular men peculiarly, as Saving Grace, the Power of believing, &c., but of that given to an entire nation altogether. 5. It cannot be said, God had done all he could strictly {though all they could challenge} for he could have given them Saving Grace, to will and to do, &c. "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." II Cor.4:13. "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?" Acts 11:17. 6. The Pagans, and the world that lies in wickedness are not God's Vineyard, and have not sufficient Grace {wanting sufficient means} much more their children, and so in Universal Grace.

Objection 4. Then God mocks in his commands, if he would reap where he hath not sown. Answer 1. God's commands are the rule of our duty, not the measure of our ability. God bids us make a new heart, Ezekiel 18:31, yet promises to give it. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and

do them." Ezek.36:25-27. So in Deuteronomy 10:16, the Lord says, "circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked," Deut.10:16, yet promises to do this for them, "and the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Deut.30:6. We are bid work out our Salvation, but with power from God. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil.2:12-13. 2. God seriously declares in those commands what is pleasing to himself, and what is our duty, and what he will work in the elect, for the Election obtains those graces required. We do not learn in the Law what we are able to do, but what we were able before the Fall. 3. Commands are upon devils, which can do nothing else but sin, yet would it not be sin, were they under no command; much more unbelievers that can outwardly reform.

Objection 5. Man is a rational creature; his will cannot be determined by anything from without, it being a self-determining principle. Answer 1. Irresistible Grace takes not away that natural liberty which the will hath by Creation, but the depravity of it only; knocking off its fetters, but not destroying its nature. God gives not such an insolvency of will, as to will whether God will or no. 2. Man never enjoys his will so much, as when God's will over-

rules it. If man can determine his own will, and not destroy the liberty of it, then much more may God who is the Maker of it. The Watchmaker can turn any wheel. God can invincibly turn the will without violation to its natural freedom, which was his own gift. 3. 'Tis free in natural and civil things, yea, and in outward acts of spiritual things too, as assisted by Grace; yet can it not do them in a spiritual manner without the assistance of Special Grace, nor anything immediately that accompanies Salvation. 4. To will is from nature, to will well is from Grace. Spiritual fruit must spring from a spiritual root. Saith Austin most elegantly, "the wheel doth not therefore run that it may be round; but first the wheel or bowl is made round, and then they run; so man doth not work or act that he may be made a new Creature, and walk in God's way; but first he is made God's workmanship, drawn by Divine Grace, and then acts, and brings forth fruit to God."

OF FINAL PERSEVERANCE

The fifth and last point of Arminianism implies that Saving Grace is not an abiding principle, but that those who are loved of God, ransomed by Christ, and born again of the Spirit, may, {let God wish and strive ever so much to the contrary,} throw all away, and perish eternally at last. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints will therefore be considered in this last chapter; and the position to be defended is, that true and saving grace cannot be totally and finally lost. For the better understanding of this I shall enquire. First, what is saving grace? Second, what is it to fall totally and finally? Third, what arguments can be assigned, or reasons given, to evidence that this special saving grace cannot be totally and finally lost?

First Inquiry. What is this Saving Grace? Answer First, negatively. It is not the grace of nature or natural grace, which is two-fold. A. In the pure estate, wherein this free spiritual gift of original knowledge and righteousness which was infused into the soul so soon as it had its being in pure nature, therefore 'tis called both grace and natural grace. B. In the fallen estate, 'tis the remainder of the image of God {after the Fall} in the soul of man. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts

the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." Rom.2:14-15.

Secondly, neither is it supernatural common grace, which is called supernatural, as not attainable by the power of nature or free-will; and common, because given both to the elect and non-elect. As dexterity in callings, such as given by the Spirit to Bezaleel and Aholiab, "then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded." Exod.36:1. Likewise superficial illuminations, {such as given to hypocrites,} ministerial gifts, {such as given to Judas,} a delight in hearing the Word, {such as the stony ground hearer, Matt.13:20; and Herod also,} who did many things, and even heard John preach gladly. Mark 6:20. These tastes of heavenly things are given to servants as well as to sons, and differ from saving grace in its subject, original, efficacy, property, duration, event, and final issue.

1. In its subject, which is proper and peculiar to the elect only, and is no wider than election itself.
2. In its original, common grace flows from Christ as a Redeemer, but not as their Redeemer; and from the Spirit of Christ assisting but not as indwelling.
3. In its efficacy, common grace may qualify for a common profession only, where there is a "form of knowledge," Rom.2:20, and a "form of godliness," II Tim.3:5, which doth neither renew the heart, nor raise it above a common frame, yet may do much

for God {with the stony ground} and suffer much for God {with the thorny ground} and yet not be Special Grace, "which the world cannot receive," John 14:17, and which lives, revives and reigns, so that sin cannot have dominion. Rom.6:14. Gifts are but as dead graces, but graces are living gifts. 4. In its property or nature, common grace is but the ornament, not the substance of a Christian. Gifts indeed, may beautify grace, but grace only sanctifies gifts, as the gold beautified the temple, but it was the temple that sanctified the gold, Matt.23:17, for the eminency of gifts, and the prevalency of sin, a form of godliness and the power of sin may dwell and consist together. 5. In its duration, we acknowledge that common grace may wither away; it is not a gift that God repents not of, as that gift of effectual calling is. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom.11:29. The greatest flood of spiritual gifts may decay to less than a drop, whereas the least drop of saving grace shall increase to a river. Thus the Spirit {in gifts of prowess and government} departed from Saul, I Sam.16:14, and ministerial gifts, {as the right arm and right eye, Zech.11:17,} may fail and be withered up. 6. In its event and final issue, common grace aggravates condemnation. As a sinking ship, the more it is laden with gold the deeper it sinks; so men, the more they are laden with gifts without grace the deeper they sink into hell. As a harlot may have children but no credit or comfort from them, because they are bastards, so bastard graces, {which Christ begets not in us,} such as false hope, faith, love, &c., {if

we are not one with Christ, and married to Him,} never end in joy. Parhelia or mock suns, as they continue not in the cloud, so they give no true light of themselves. This is not children's bread, but crumbs falling to those under the Table. Our purblind souls had need say therefore, {along with blind Isaac,} "come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, the voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." Gen.27:21-22. We may bless ourselves with thoughts of embracing beautiful Rachel {as Jacob did} when in the morning {of the Resurrection} it proves but bleary-eyed Leah.

Thirdly, and now positively, Supernatural Saving Grace, which is the Sanctification of the Spirit, renewing in us the image of God, and guiding and strengthening us to obedience, and in obedience even to the end. Rom.6:14; II Cor.12:9; I Cor.15:10. This is the effectual working of the Spirit of God on the hearts of the elect, to quicken them when dead in sin, and to give them a certain continued connection of all spiritual blessings, which manages them onward even to a state of glory. "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. He "hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Col.1:12. Insomuch that Sanctification is the beginning of Glorification. The effects of it doth accompany

salvation, being permanent effects; both on the soul in justification and adoption, and in the soul in calling, sanctification, and perseverance to glorification. This grace differs not from glory in kind, but only in degree. Grace is glory militant, as glory is grace triumphant. Therefore it is called "the riches of his grace," Eph.1:7, and "the riches of his glory," Rom.9:23, as it is the most glorious feature of the Father of Lights flowing immediately from his blessed Face. This is that grace which cannot be totally and finally lost; fail it may, but so fall it cannot. II Pet.1:10. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil.1:6.

Second Inquiry. What is it to fall totally and finally? Answer 1. To fall totally is to have grace altogether dead in us, both in the act and in the habit; no life either in branches, stalk, or root; no seed remaining in us, nor root of the matter. 2. Finally to fall is never to rise again, never to recover by repentance, {that second plank after shipwreck,} but to die in sin un-repent-ed of and un-pardoned.

Third Inquiry. What scriptural arguments can be assigned, or reasons given, to evidence that this special saving grace cannot be totally and finally lost? Answer. The following are the arguments and reasons assigned why the chosen of God cannot totally and finally fall away from Grace.

1. The first argument is taken from God the Father in His electing love. If the love of the Father to His chosen ones is an unchangeable love, Jer.31:3; if with Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, James 1:17; if none can pluck out of the Father's hand, John 10:29, then His chosen ones cannot totally and finally fall away. Neither the force nor fraud of hell can prevail against the Father's Electing Love, which runs parallel with the longest line of eternity, therefore the consequence must be true also. This is further illustrated in that "God is love," I John 4:8, then everlasting love must needs flow from an Everlasting God. Hence Paul, having spoken of some apostates falling away, comforts the minds of believers, saying, that their standing is firm, because of election, or rather because of electing love. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." II Tim.2:19. This he compares to a foundation and a seal, {two things of the greatest validity and security,} believers standing as upon a stable rock, and being placed as upon a mountain of brass, so that they cannot totally and finally fall; for the Father is not inconstant in his love. The LORD doth not love today and hate tomorrow. "The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." Zep.3:17.

Argument 2. The second argument is taken from God the Son in His redeeming love, {as from God the Father in his Electing Love,} which is

unalterable. Thereby are all the members of Christ glued unto Christ their Head, I Cor.6:17, and none can pluck them out of Christ's hand. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28. Neither principalities, nor powers shall be able to separate them from the love of God in Christ, Rom.8:38-39, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against His Church. Matt.16:18. If one member may be broken off from Christ, then all may; one having no more privilege than another in respect of their state and standing; so Christ may be supposed, upon this hypothesis, to be a Head without a body, or any members, and Christ also might have died in vain; both which are grossly absurd!

Besides the certainty of this Redemption appears further, inasmuch as Christ purchased perseverance for his, if he purchased for them all spiritual blessings, Eph.1:3, then this great blessing of perseverance, and Christ will not lose one of his purchased inheritance. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." I Pet.2:9. Christ prayed for the perseveration of his own; that Peter's faith should not fail, Lk.22:32, and that his disciples should be kept from evil, John 17:15; yea, and all believers, verse 20, and what Christ prays for, he is always heard therein. John 11:41-42. "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." John 6:39. Christ also promises perseverance to his own purchased possession, that he will in no wise cast believers out after they come in unto him. The gates of hell shall not prevail against them. "I will be his Father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men, but my mercy shall not depart away from him." II Sam.7:14-15. He will not utterly withdraw His mercy from them under their severest correction, Psal.89:31-33, but his faithfulness shall not fail towards them. He performs it also to all those that the Father hath given unto him, John 17:12, and loses not one of them. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." John 13:1. He is a Saviour to all parts of the body. Eph.5:23. Saints are in Christ's hands. "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand, and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words." Deut.33:3. And it is as easy to pluck a star out of Heaven as a saint out of Christ's hands. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28. They are all, and they shall all be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto eternal salvation. "Sanctified {set apart} by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." Jude 1:1. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." I Pet.1:5.

Argument 3. The third argument is taken from God the Holy Ghost, in his Sanctification, Love. If the operation of the Spirit on the hearts of believers be a sure and certain operation, then true believers cannot totally and finally fall away.

The truth of this will appear in that the Spirit's Operation is compared in Scripture. 1. To an earnest. 2. To a seal. 3. To a witness. First. To an earnest. "God hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." II Cor.5:5. 'Tis the earnest penny of our salvation, not the pawn or pledge, which is to be returned again. The earnest is a part of the bargain, and the first fruits of Heaven which we have here, a sure and certain promise. Now the earnest would quite be lost if the pillars of salvation stand not, and he that hath received the earnest be not saved; and if such an one be damned, he carries the earnest of the Spirit along with him into hell, which must needs be absurd.

Secondly, to a seal. Assurance is God's seal, as Faith is our seal. Faith is our seal; assurance of faith is God's seal. "He that believeth hath set to his seal that God is true." John 3:33. "After that ye believed ye were sealed." Eph.1:13. They first believed and then were sealed, i.e., fully assured. God honours our sealing to His truth, by His sealing with his Spirit; as the earnest makes the bargain, so the seal ratifies and confirms it. And the broad seal of Heaven must needs be more unalterable than that of the Medes and Persians.

Thirdly, to a witness. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself," I John 5:10, and there can

be no exceptions taken to this witness who abides forever in the elect, and is called the Spirit of Truth, and the Eternal Spirit, Heb.9:14, a witness that can neither die nor lie. "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:17. "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." I John 2:27. So that believers, whose bodies are called "the temple of the Holy Ghost," I Cor.6:19, cannot become a habitation of devils, as this would make Satan rejoice and insult over God {as if stronger than He} could he so dispossess Him, as he is dispossessed by Him. Luke 11:21-22.

Argument 4. The fourth argument in defense of final perseverance respects spiritual enemies. If no spiritual enemy can prevail against a true believer totally and finally, then a true believer cannot totally and finally fall away. 1. Satan cannot make believers fall so, for that wicked one cannot touch them with any of his deadly touches, I Jn.5:18, but God treads him under their feet. "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." Rom.16:20. The seed of the serpent may nibble at the heels of the seed of the woman, but cannot mortally wound the heart, Gen.3:15, for his armour is taken away, Lk.11:21, and his works are destroyed. Heb.2:14.

Christ in them, the hope of glory, is stronger than he that is in the world. I John 4:4.

2. The world cannot, for Christ gives them faith to conquer the world, I John 5:4, and overcomes the world for them in himself, John 16:33, and makes them kings unto God, viz., gives them a royal spirit to live above the frowns and flatteries of the world; he makes them to be higher-region men, above all storms and the flatteries of the world, Prov.15:24, having the moon {the emblem of the world} and all things under their feet. Rev.12:1.

3. Nor their fleshly lusts, which have not dominion over those that are under the dominion of Grace. Rom.6:14. Though all real Shulamites find the presence of the two armies, Song.6:13, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, Gal.5:17, so that they cannot be as they would; yet the issue of the contest is not doubtful. The army of the Spirit wars against them, Gal.5:17, so that they cannot be as sinful as sometime they would, and though a troop may for a time overcome Gad, coming upon him like bees {as David's phrase is, Psal.118:12,} yet Gad, Gen.49:19, shall overcome at the last. "They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about, but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns, for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall, but the LORD helped me. The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation."

Psal.118:11-14. They become more than conquerors, {to wit, triumphers,} over all their spiritual enemies, through Christ who loves them, for no created power can prevail against them. Rom.8:35-39. Then, "thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." II Cor.2:14.

Argument 5. The fifth argument is taken from the nature of saintship. If saintship be a service, subjection, sonship and marriage, then saints cannot fall away totally and finally.

1. It is a service. The service of God transcends all other services; men take a servant for a year, and an apprentice for seven years, but our Heavenly Master for term of life. We are to serve God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives. "That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Luke 1:74-75. A servant of God is like the Jewish servant that was bored through the ear, in token of perpetual servitude. Deut.15:17. Religion is a perpetual obligation.

2. 'Tis a subjection. It sets up God to be our King, and our allegiance is for life, as it cannot be disclaimed. Mal.1:14; Psal.48:2; Matt.5:35. Born of God by the grace of God; and, if we be born subjects into the kingdom of this gracious Lord and King, we must die His subjects, for there is no flying out of his territories. The Law will pass upon us if we disown it. Matt.19:27.

3. 'Tis a sonship. And this goes beyond the two former similitudes, for a servant may be at liberty when his time is expired; a subject may change his earthly sovereign by removing out of his native country; yet a son cannot change his father, and he abides in the house forever. John 8:35. Now as God hath begotten us of His own will by the Spirit of Regeneration, he is our Father, Jer.31:9, and because of this relationship subsisting, he makes known His love to our souls. Gal.3:26. Therefore shall we persevere, for God is our Father, and we are called the children of God.

4. 'Tis a marriage state, and that is for life too, and in this state God hates putting away. Mal.2:16. "I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies." Hos.2:19. "For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." Isa.54:5. "I am married unto you, and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion." Jer.3:14. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice." John 3:29.

Argument 6. In respect to the saints themselves, for if the names of the saints are written in Heaven; if they are kept for Heaven by the power of God, as Heaven is kept for them; and if they are compared to things that neither fade nor fail, then

they cannot totally and finally fall. That it is so appears. 1. Their names are written in Heaven. Phil.4:3; Dan.12:1. "Rejoice because your names are written in Heaven." Lk.10:20. To be enrolled in the book of life must needs hold our perseverance, for there is no blotting or blurring of that book; Satan cannot, {for 'tis out of his reach,} and God will not, for then his work would not be perfect and glorious, if it should admit of blotting, but this was spoken to in the first point. 2. Saints are kept as in a double garrison, or as with a guard. Heaven for them, and they for Heaven. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. I Pet.1:4,5. Christ is their Lord-keeper, and if God had intended the loss of one saint, he would not have invested Christ with all power in Heaven and Earth, {so that nothing can over-match Christ,} to undertake for His children, and to save them to the very uttermost. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt.11:27.

3. Saints are compared to a tree that fades not, "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," Psal.1:3, to a cedar in Lebanon, "the righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon," Psal.92:12, to Mount Zion that cannot be moved but abideth forever, Psal.125:1, and to a house built on a rock. Matt.7:24. Though they fall, God raises them

up. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand." Psal.37:24. The Lord is with them in their old age, "and even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you, I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you," Isa.46:4, and is their guide even unto death, Psal.48:14, so that they cannot totally and finally be lost.

Argument 7. The final perseverance of the saints may be argued, seventhly, from the unchangeableness of the Covenant of Grace. That the Covenant is unchangeable is proved thus, that which stands upon two unchangeable bottoms, made betwixt two Unchangeable Persons, and ratified before an unchangeable witness, must be itself unchangeable, and the Covenant of Grace is so.

First, it stands upon two unchangeable bottoms, even the Word and Oath of God. When God made promise to Abraham, he swore by Himself, he being "willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath" that "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Heb.6:17-18. God's Word is as gold purified, which {chemists say} will lose nothing of its weight, though cast a thousand times into the fire. We commonly say that the bare word of an honest man is as good as a bond. How much more the Word of the God of truth that cannot lie? And this Word is confirmed with an

oath, when God swears by His holiness that He will not alter the thing that is gone out of His lips.

Secondly, 'tis made between two unchangeable persons. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal.3:6. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Heb.13:8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev.1:8. In this covenant there is a mutual stipulation. The Father, in covenant, gave to Christ a people, both Jews and Gentiles. "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." Isa.49:6. "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." John 17:6. God the Son confederates to take man's nature upon Him in the fullness of time, and shed so much blood, tears and prayers for us, Psal.40:6-7, and in that nature to obey, magnify, and make honourable the Law, and to answer the demands of Justice in our room and stead, by the shedding of His own most precious blood. "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is

written of me, to do thy will, O God." Heb.10:5-7. Hence it is called the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant. Heb.13:20.

Thirdly, 'tis ratified before an unchangeable witness, to wit, the Holy Ghost. "There be three that bear witness in Heaven." I John 5:7. Indeed the Father and the Son, are their own Witnesses, John 5:32-37, yet the Holy Ghost is the Witness of that Covenant Agreement and Stipulation which was between them; as Christ hath a greater witness than that of man, so hath the covenant, even the witness of the Eternal Spirit, Heb.9:14, as eternal, so unchangeable, thus the covenant is called "everlasting," and "the sure mercies of David." Isa.55:3. "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, for this is all my salvation, and all my desire." II Sam.23:5. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Heb.13:20-21. "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee." Isa.54:10. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall

not depart from me." Jer.32:40. The covenant is sure and certain on God's part, who cannot fail in his good will to the elect, and sure also on their part, who shall have no will to depart from God. The latter is equally covenanted for with the former. Therefore though the covenant permits a fall, yet it always ensures repentance after that fall, as in David and Peter, &c., so that the falls of the elect cannot be total and final. The covenant doth absolutely promise the grace of perseverance, and all things that accompany salvation to the elect, even to the end of their lives.

Argument 8. The eight argument is taken from the nature of Saving Grace. If saving grace be of a permanent nature, and not subject to corruption, then the elect cannot fall from it totally and finally. Saving grace is called a "seed" remaining in those that are born of God, I John 3:9, and immortal and "incorruptible seed," I Pet.1:23, which abides in us forever. Christ never dies in his people, no more than he doth {or can do} at the right hand of God, John 14:16, and the joy of it none can take away from us. John 16:22. Grace never differs from itself, though a gracious man doth from himself. This Fire burns always on God's Altar. "And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out, and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings." Lev.6:12. Corresponding with this is the Vestal Fire of the Poets, which the vestal virgins, {lighted first from the sun,} kept alive in its place night and day,

and if at any time it be covered up under Ashes, we are bid to stir it up again. II Tim.1:6. The plenary habits of Saving Grace cannot be lost, though respecting its acts and operations it may admit {though not an utter loss, yet,} an intermission, as in sleep we lose not the faculty but the use of sense; and in drunkenness {or in some transporting passion} men lose not the faculty, but the use of reason. Degrees and measures of grace {formerly attained to} may be lost. "Thou hast left thy first love." Rev.2:4. He had not lost the habit, neither wholly the exercise of grace, but only that vigour and heat that once appeared in him.

Argument 9. The ninth argument is taken from the type of a true Christian, to wit, the Israelites, {a type of God's spiritual Israel,} who were not to alienate their inheritance in the land of promise. Lev.25:23-24. "And Naboth said to Ahab, the LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." I Kings 21:3. If this was so in the type, then must it hold true also in the anti-type, to wit, that a true Christian cannot alienate his inheritance in Heaven. Now the deeds concerning this inheritance are written and sealed, and part possession is given accordingly both by way of seisin, in part here in this life, and in part respited till hereafter. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, {there's possession of the state of Grace,} that they shall not depart from me." Jer.32:40. There is the guaranteed estate of glory, and this

state of reversion is put into Christ's hands for us as a Feossee, {i.e., a trustee who holds an estate in hand, for the use of a beneficial owner,} in Trust. "For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." II Tim.1:12. Christ is able to keep the deposit {though we be not} committed unto him against that day. We may forfeit all, as Adam did, and we in him. Christ is not only our Goal, or near Kinsman, who has redeemed our mortgaged inheritance for us, but he is our Feossee or Officer in trust also, keeping Heaven for us and us for Heaven; and He abideth faithful, II Tim.2:13, both in drawing, that we should come to Him, and in holding, that we should not depart from Him, so as not to sin unto death, but be saved to the uttermost, Heb.7:25, for he is the Supervisor of his own will, himself seeing all his legacies bestowed according to it. "And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Heb.9:15. Even now Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding on our behalf, and saying, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which thou hast given me." John 17:24.

Argument 10. The tenth argument is taken from the contrary, for if those that fall totally and finally be not {nor ever were} true believers, then it follows {by the rule of contraries} that such as are true believers cannot do so. The truth of this appears from John 8:31, for those only are Christ's true disciples which continue in His word; and such as wholly fall away have but the flashing of a temporary faith, which, {like a land flood,} fills the country with inundations, yet at last comes to nothing. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." I John 2:19. They were no more of the Church than wens and botches be of the body. All true believers continue to the end with the Church, holding "fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Heb.3:6,14. Those are God's house and partakers of Christ indeed, and they only.

Argument 11. The eleventh argument is taken from the subject of prayer. Whatsoever true believers ask of the Father in the Name of Christ, according to his will, shall assuredly be obtained, especially when they ask of God in the Name of Christ the Grace of Perseverance. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." John 14:13. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us, and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we

desired of him." I John 5:14-15. "Whatsoever" and "anything" are comprehensive expressions. The assumption is manifest from the constant petition of every praying soul, "lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil," where daily perseverance in Grace is begged therein. Not to be left in temptation but to be delivered from it, God's promises are the ground of our prayers, as God is faithful and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able. I Cor.10:13. The seed of Jacob never seeks the Lord in vain. "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth, I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain, I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." Isa.45:19. "Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my hope." Psal.119:116. "My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word." Psal.119:25. These are the petitions of the believing soul, who is convinced that his strength is perfect in weakness, his wisdom is folly in the abstract, and that he is not safe from falling one moment but as supported by the arm of Omnipotence.

Argument 12. The last argument for the final perseverance of the saints is taken from the whole concurrent voice of Scripture testimony. "The word of the Lord shall stand forever." Isa.40:8. Dr. Moulin and others have computed the texts of Scripture, which declare the doctrine of the saints' final perseverance, at over six hundred. The few following may, however, suffice {merely as an example} to establish it as a Gospel Truth. "For the gifts and

calling of God are without repentance." Rom.11:29. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28. "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. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom.8:30-32. "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." I John 2:27. "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." II Cor.1:21-22. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal.3:6. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Jer.32:40. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in

the last time." I Pet.1:3-5. Now if all these things are true, as they most certainly are, then shall the whole Church finally persevere in grace, and be eternally saved.

Objection 1. To teach that Grace cannot be lost will beget looseness in professors. Answer 1. Grace must be considered either in its being or well-being of it. 'Tis either radical and fundamental, tending to the being of a Saint, as Faith, Hope and Love. Or Secondary, flowing from these for his well-being only, as Joy of Faith, Confidence of Hope, Zeal and Fervency of Love; these are the lustre and radiance of the radical. The beams of the Sun, as those the body of it; the leaves of the Trees, as those the sap and substance; the back of Steel, that may be put on the bow or taken off, as the former are the bow itself. The latter we may lose, and perhaps irrecoverably, Psal.51:12, but not so the former, which like the good housewife's candle never goes out. Prov.31:18. The root remains though the reins be consumed. Job 19:27,28. 'Tis a well of Water springing up to Everlasting Life. John 4:14; 7:38. There is Grace that is certain, and the feeling of Grace that is uncertain.

2. There is a Divine Purpose to be holy even to the End. This is a Law that is written in every renewed will, and is always present according to the Apostle's phrase. 2dly, there is a Divine Performance or Prosecution of this Purpose, which is not always found in a Gracious Heart. "For I know that in me, {that is, in my flesh,} dwelleth no good thing, for to will is present with me; but how to perform that

which is good I find not." Rom.7:18. This ebbs and flows according to the Spirit's influence on us, for our life is not hid in ourselves, but it is hid with Christ in God, Col.3:3, which requires our daily Dependence on his Spirit. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil.1:6. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil.2:13. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil.4:13. In the practical part a partial decay may befall our judgments, as in the bewitched Galatians, Gal.3:1; and our affections, as in the cooling Ephesians. Rev.2:4. Christ's Spouse may fall asleep in the abatement of her acts, yet her heart waketh. Cant.5:2. Grace seems to be lost when it is not so indeed, some have sought for that which they have had in their Hands, for so Mary did Christ.

3. The Sun may be Eclipsed, yet wade out of it into his former lustre; the Tree may lose all its leaves and fruit in Winter, yet have fresh buddings at Spring; the Sea may ebb and retire from its banks, yet the next tide returns to them again; the Babe may live, though it springs not always in the Womb. Uzziah by his leprosy lost his present status to his crown and kingdom, but not his hereditary right. Nebuchadnezzar, when deposed, was as a Tree that is lopped, yet his root springs up again in his returning to the throne. The Romans {saith the historian} lost several battles, but never any war. Israel flies once and twice before their enemies, yet conquered they the Land of Promise. "Gad, a troop

shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last." Gen.49:19. Hot water hath a principle in itself to reduce it, {when removed from the fire,} to its natural coldness; thus some saints may be spiritually sick, even nigh unto death, Phil.2:27, but not altogether without hopefulness. "When Jesus heard that, he said, this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." John 11:4. They may fall as Mephibosheth, II Sam.4:4, to lame them; and as Eutychus, Acts 20:9, to hurt them; but not as Eli to kill them. That is great displeasure where such a rout {a disorderly retreat of defeated troops} is, as admits of no rallying.

4. Sin makes a forfeiture of all into God's hands, that he might make a seizure if he so pleased, as two tenants for non-payment of rent forfeit their leases, and their landlord may seize on the one, and not on the other. We incur Divine Displeasure {in every act of sin} demeritorious, {deserving censure,} though not effective; and yet though God does not disinherit us according to our demerit, nor blot us out of the Book of Life, yet doth he withdraw his favour, and embitter all our comforts, as with Peter, "and Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly." Matt.26:75. He makes relations {that should be comforts} to become scourges unto us, as with David. "Thus saith the LORD, behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give

them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, the LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." II Sam.12:11-13. The LORD may fill us with anguish, which is a strong and sufficient curb to any more outbursts as from our flesh; seeing the evil we smart under, after sin, is commensurate to the pleasure found in sin. "For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me." Psal.38:2-4. Could David have foreseen the evil consequences of his sin {which Nathan foretold him of} he might have said to his sin, "a dear bought sin thou art like to be to me." Yea, sometimes {as need is} God adds apprehensions of eternal wrath, Psal.88:6,7, without any hope of being eased. Upon these considerations this doctrine begets no looseness in any of the Reformed Churches.

Objection 2. It is said of some that they made shipwreck of faith and conscience, I Tim.1:19, a prodigal {a child} yet dead in sin. Answer 1. That Scripture, I Tim.1:19, holds out no more than what is granted, that as a false faith may be lost in the whole, so a true faith may be lost in part; though a shipwreck be sustained, yet there is no life lost, as in Acts 27:22, "and now I exhort you to be of good

cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship."

Answer 2. That of the prodigal is but a parable, as it may illustrate, but cannot prove; besides he was but a lost and dead son in his father's account only, and seemingly in his own; so God's children may {in their own sense, and in the opinion of others} seem lost, yet truly and indeed not be so.

Answer 3. If one ceases to be a son because he commits sin, then saints, as oft as they sin, so oft are they out of sonship, and liable to death eternal, the wages of sin, and so can have neither certainty nor comfort in their estate, unless it could be shown what sins rend this relation, and what not; so come to the Popish notion of mortal and venial sins.

Objection 3. Angels and Adam did fall from Grace, ergo, &c. Answer 1. That Grace which was Creation-love was losable, but that which flows from Redemption-love is not so, for neither Angels nor Adam were under the Grace of the New Testament, nor were they righteous by Faith in Christ, nor were they at all justified before God.

2. The case is altered now in the New Covenant made with the Elect, {both Men and Angels,} as they stood not by a Mediator, as Saints do now. Neither did Christ pray for them, as in John 17:15-20, nor promise to them that the Gates of Hell should not prevail against them. "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Luke 22:32.

3. The Example of Angels is nothing to the point or question concerning men, nor is that of

Adam to the point, for he had not that Evangelical Justifying Faith, which {we say} cannot be utterly lost.

Objection 4. Saul, Judas and Esau all lost Grace. Answer 1. They could not lose what they never had, what they had were only illuminations, and such as Balaam {the Sorcerer} had.

2. The Romanists in the vulgar Latin, read I Sam.9:2, concerning Saul, that he was born elect; yet their own copy reads, as ours do, "a choice young man and a goodly," {a goodly aspect, a comely man, tall and well-shaped,} for Grace consists not in the beauty of the body, but of the soul.

3. Judas was only elected to the Apostleship, {not to Salvation,} and that by one who knew how to make a good use of evil men, even of vessels of dishonour in his household.

4. Who can say that profane Esau {for so he is branded} ever had a true grace granted unto him.

Objection 5. David and Peter fell totally, and Solomon finally. Answer 1. They all fell foully, yet none of them finally, because they were all granted repentance, and are called holy men of God by the Holy Ghost. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." II Pet.1:21. Neither did they fall totally, because that Grace remained in them, by which they repented. Thus where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound. A seal though dim and defaced will pass in Acts of Record for evidences for Heaven.

2. That Solomon fell not finally, appears in being called Jedidiah, beloved of God, II Sam.12:24-25, which is not a name given to any reprobate. 2. He is of the holy prophets that sits down in the Kingdom of God. Luke 13:28. 3. He was a type of Christ, so never was any reprobate. 4. God took not his Mercy clean from him. "I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men, but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee." II Sam.7:14-15. 5. Ecclesiastes is his Book of Repentance, and never any that repented could perish. Luke 13:3. 6. 'Goheleth nephesh' signifies his being joined again to the Church by Repentance, which is the Hebrew Word for Ecclesiastes, a soul added to the Congregation.

3. The Romanists own Cornelius Lapede saith that Peter lost not Grace by sin, and so answers Bellarmine, yea, he answers himself accordingly, lest Peter's fall should cut off the entail of the Pope's inheritance; to say nothing of David, who wrote so many penitential psalms.

Objection 6. Hebrews 6:5 & 10:26; Ezek.18:24-26, proves a falling from Grace. Answer 1. Suppose saints should do so, this proves not that they will or may do so. As for Ezekiel 18:24, it is to be understood of hypocrites. Ezekiel 3:20.

2. 'Tis spoken, Heb.6:5, &c., of such as only taste, but digest not; that have their minds

informed, not their hearts transformed; sanctified in profession, not in power.

3. 'Tis spoke of that Sin unto Death, {for which, there is no sacrifice,} from devilish malice, not human frailty. Saints can never thus sin to waste conscience unto death. Also, to fall from the Doctrine of the Gospel and a Profession thereof, and to fall from the Grace and Favour of God, or from the grace of faith, are very different things indeed. When such fall away, they are no proofs nor instances of the final apostasy of real saints.

Objection 7. Saints may lose Grace totally, but not finally. Answer 1. As Christ once dead, dies no more; so in his members, the Life of Grace cannot die totally, as described in Romans 6:8-10. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." The seed of grace remains. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." I Pet.1:23. "That his spirit might be saved," I Cor.5:5, that remained still in him, though foully fallen, as Paul saith of Eutyclus, "he is not dead." Acts 20:9.

2. Then there must be a new engrafting into Christ, and a renewing of Baptism as oft as this is done. Grace is but once given to the saints, Jude 3, as we are but once born, so but once born again.

3. Those saints may fall so, as to lose a right to a thing, yet not the inherited possession itself.

The Spirit blows upon the sparks that lurk under the ashes of sin.

Objection 8. Then to what purpose be admonitions, &c.? It destroys humility, &c. Answer

1. None say saints cannot sin, save that unto death, I John 1:8,9 with 3:9, so useful enough.

2. He was not proud that said, "God will deliver me from every evil work." II Tim.4:18. "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom.8:37-39.

3. But rather those that boast of having sufficient Grace, both in converting and confirming work.

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