

The Everlasting Gospel,
commanded to be preached by
Jesus Christ, Judge of the living and dead,
unto all creatures, (Mark xvi. 15,)
concerning
The Eternal Redemption
found out by sin, whereby
Devil, Sin, Hell and Death
shall at last be abolished, and
The Whole Creation Restored
to its primitive purity:
Being a testimony
against the present anti-christian world

Paul Siegvold

1700

TO THE READER.

THERE have been many books published in our language upon the subject of the restitution of all fallen intelligences; some of them fraught with learning and criticism, as Dr. Burnet's piece on the state of the dead; the Chevalier Ramsay's philosophical principles of natural and revealed religion; and above all of this kind, the treatise of Mr. Stonehouse, late vicar of Islington: a work which is worthy of the notice of the learned world, and to which I do not know that there has ever been an answer attempted.

While the above gentlemen have written on this great subject for the learned, others have no less laudably employed their talents for the service of the bulk of mankind, by bearing their testimony to the universal and efficacious love of God to his rational creatures, in plain popular styles among whom we find Mr. Jeremiah White in the last century, and Mr. Winchester of late; the latter of whom has not only presented to the

world, the evidence of the restoration of all things, in his dialogues, lectures on prophecy, and numerous other tracts; but has also favoured mankind with the first edition of Mr. *Seigvolck's* book, that has been printed in *Old England*.

Notwithstanding the opposition which some mistaken (but otherwise good) men have made to the universal doctrine, the first impression of this piece is sold off; so that a copy of it has been hardly to be procured for above twelve months past, though it was published only in 1792. A proof this, that mankind begin to have their eyes more opened, and their hearts more expanded, than formerly; and that, instead of the contracted sentiments which have long set Christians at bitter variance with each other, they now begin to think themselves the children of one common Father, whose mercy, whose *tender* mercy, is over all the works of his hands. — May this view of the IMMORTAL GOD, in Christ Jesus, increase, until discord and hatred are banished from the earth.

I have found this little book very useful to myself. I did not, like Mr. Winchester, receive my first conviction of the truth of the universal doctrine from it; but it was the mean of fully establishing my mind in it. I remember particularly, that the seventh chapter, which treats of the word *eternity*, and the different eternities, or ages, mentioned in the scriptures, was very satisfying to me; as was the eleventh chapter, which treats of this present world, the world to come, and the still, or silent eternity.

I know of no book that is more calculated to disseminate the universal doctrine among *good* men, than this; for every one who has *tasted* that GOD is Love, will here find something that meets and accords with the warm and holy benevolence of his soul; and to them I do most heartily recommend it; being fully assured, that however such may differ in other things, they all bear in, their hearts *good will towards men*.

They will not, therefore, be offended at my subscribing myself,
A Friend to all Mankind,

WILLIAM VIDLER

London, June 8th, 1795.

PREFACE.

THE little work here presented to the readers of the "Library," is perhaps the most remarkable treatise contained in the whole volume. It was originally written in German, and was, I believe, first published in Peterson's "Mystery of the Restitution of all things," vol. I., which appeared in 1700. In this very valuable work, the Universalist Historical Society, possesses the original edition of *Seigvolck's Everlasting Gospel*. During the former part of the last century, it went through several editions. It was republished at Leipsic in 1705, and again in 1713. In 1730 a new edition appeared at Frankfort and Leipsic, and another in 1743, at Altona.

It first appeared in English at Germantown, near Philadelphia, in 1753. It was probably brought to this country by some of the German Baptists, who are known to have sympathised with its author in the faith of universal salvation. This edition was printed by Christopher Sower, and purports to have been "translated into English by John S—," probably a son or brother of the printer. There is every reason to suppose that it was thus introduced to the readers of English, through the influence of Dr. George de Benneville,

who came to this country about 1740, and was at this time residing in the immediate neighbourhood of Germantown. His long-trying and active zeal in the cause of Universalism, renders it in the highest degree probable, that he was deeply concerned in this publication. His previous residence for several years in Germany had, it is likely, made him acquainted with this treatise there. Rev. Elhanan Winchester, who published an edition of Seigvolck's Everlasting Gospel in London, 1792, uses the following language in reference to its translation in America: "This little book, which I now send abroad in this country, was originally written in the German language in the beginning of the present century and printed in Pennsylvania in 1753. I am well acquainted with the good man at whose instance and expense it was translated and printed. He had lived to see the little spark rise into a flame, and the small seed into a large tree; and may he still live many years, until this glorious system, so grand, so worthy of God, shall have prevailed to bring all the different sects of Christians to be of the same spirit, mind and judgment." I know not to whom this allusion would so naturally apply, as to Dr. Benneville, for whom it is known Mr. Winchester entertained the highest respect and the warmest friendship. I can, therefore, indulge no doubts that the Everlasting Gospel was translated and first published at the instance and expense of that remarkable man.

The edition published in London, by Mr. Winchester, was exhausted in less than two years, as we learn from the preface of a second edition, published by Rev. Mr. Vidler, in 1795. He says, "notwithstanding the opposition which some mistaken (but otherwise good) men have made to the universal doctrine, the first impression of this piece is sold off; so that a copy of it has been hardly to be procured for above twelve months past, though it was published only in 1792."

Of the author of this work, I regret that I have it in my power to say very little. Mr. Whittemore, in his *Modern History of Universalism*, p. 128, note, says, on the authority of a friend in Ohio, that "Seigvolck was born and educated in Harford-schles in Holland; and flourished in the time of William, Prince of Orange. He was not a regular clergyman, as appears from his own preface to his *Universal Gospel*, which was originally written in Low Dutch, and shortly after translated into the German language. He was contemporary with three others, who preached the same doctrine; Fisher, Shetz and Shepherd, as appears from letters of correspondence between them. Shetz was considered a more able advocate of the doctrine than Seigvolck. They preached much in the Low Countries, and made many proselytes among the Hollanders. They were greatly persecuted, till the Prince of Orange gave them toleration, and arrested the civil arm which was about to be raised against them." Of the truth of this account Mr. Whittemore expressed some doubts, which were certainly well founded.

In the first place, Seigvolck was not contemporary with William, Prince of Orange, if William I. the younger, generally called the Prince of Orange, be meant; for he was assassinated in 1584, while Seigvolck could not have been born till nearly a century after this date. But not to dwell on this point, I nowhere find the slightest intimation, except in the quotation above, that Seigvolck was a *Hollander*, or that this work was written originally in Low Dutch. In the German I discover no traces of its being a translation, nor does Peterson drop a hint that it is so. Speaking of the delay in bringing out the first volume of his work, he says, "Still I see the providence of God in this,—as also in other things—that I have meanwhile received an excellent treatise on the subject, which is very precious and may properly be called a compendium of this whole work, and which I here

communicate.”

Nor do I find any thing in Seigvolck’s “own preface” or elsewhere to show that he was “not a regular clergyman.” Nothing of this kind appears in his work, so far as I have observed. What is said of his correspondence with Fisher, Shetz, and Shepherd, may perhaps be true. There were such men at least in Germany about the time of Seigvolck, who maintained the doctrine of Universalism. There is in the Franklin Library, Philadelphia, a volume in German, entitled, “Golden Rose, or a Witness of the Truth, &c., by Christopher Schurz,” one of the individuals mentioned above. The preface to the first part was written at Umstadt, September, 1724; the preface of the second part is dated Offenbach on the Maine, October, 1730. Among other things, it contains a correspondence between Shurtz and Fischer, the latter of whom appears to have been a magistrate. They had a mutual friend in an individual by the name of David Schaeffer, (in English Shepherd.) Both Fischer and Schaeffer died before the publication of the volume referred to, which contains an elegy on Fischer, and alludes in a touching manner to the death of Schaeffer, which seems to have happened about six months earlier. These warm hearted friends must have died between 1727 and 1731, though the date is not to be made out accurately. The last letter I find from Fischer is dated May, 1727. Schaeffer wrote a work, entitled, *Everlasting Gospel*, which I have never seen, but which, in company with this of Seigvolck, and that of Schurtz above alluded to, was made the subject of undoubtedly the earliest printed attack on Universalism in America. I refer to Rev. R. Pomp’s Examination of the Doctrine of the Everlasting Gospel, published in German at Philadelphia in 1774.

It is worthy of remark, that I observed in the “Golden Rose” no allusion to Seigvolck or his writings. In all the correspondence it contains, there is nothing that bears his name. I find letters signed by “P. P.” “A. J.” “J. D. S.” “J. P. S.” “H. V. B.” but I know no reason why we should suppose any of them to have been written by our author. His name, as it appears in the German, is *George Paul Seigvolck*, though in the translation, the *George* is, I know not why, omitted.

While I have no hesitation, therefore, in regarding the account of our author, communicated to Mr. Whittemore, as in almost every particular incorrect, I am quite at a loss what to think of him. Of the period when he lived, and the language in which he wrote, we are, I presume, satisfactorily informed, but of the place of his residence, of his profession, and even of his *name* we are by no means certain. John Otto Thiess, in his valuable little treatise “On the Scriptures and Church Dogma of the Eternity of Hell Punishments,” tells us that Seigvolck’s real name was George Kleinnicolai. His words are, “George Kleinnicolai published, under the name *George Paul Seigvolck*, the *Everlasting Gospel*,” &c. The accuracy and fidelity of Thiess are such as to satisfy me on almost every point, and perhaps should do so on this, but there are circumstances which render it almost incredible that he should be correct here. It would be singular indeed if Seigvolck had been *ashamed* of the great truth he advocated, or *afraid* of what men could do to him for maintaining it. There is nothing in the work before us, that could give the slightest countenance to such a suspicion, but, on the contrary, much to show that he was willing, if need be, both to suffer reproach and persecution for the sake of that blessed Gospel, in which he rejoiced. Then it is very strange that he should live and be engaged in controversy, as he was more or less, for near half a century, and yet, so far as appears from the writings of the day, not be suspected of passing under a fictitious

name. Mosheim, the ecclesiastical historian, mentions him, in a letter found at the end of the second volume of his Sermons, and drops no hint that he was not the veritable person whose name he bore. The Everlasting Gospel was first published, as I have said, in the year 1700. In the second volume of Peterson's "Mystery of the Restitution of all Things," we find a laboured review of a treatise, entitled, "Plain Instruction," by J. Haenfler, preacher, in the fortress of Custrin, which Thiess ascribes to Seigvolck, or rather to Kleinnicolai. This piece is called "Fundamental Considerations upon Haenfler's Tract," &c. and was published in 1702. It fills more than ninety folio pages. In 1711, we find him in the field again, and in controversy with several writers, who had been called out by the publication of Peterson's volumes. This work he entitled, "Vain Strife against Truth and Innocence." Another work of his appeared in 1717, entitled, "Presentation of what *the restitution of all things*, Acts iii. 21, must mean." About 1728, J. Laurence Mosheim, the celebrated ecclesiastical historian, gave to the world his "Thoughts on the Doctrine of the end of Hell-punishments." To this Seigvolck replied in 1729, in a work entitled, "Modest and Fundamental Thoughts upon Mosheim's Thoughts," &c. It is of this work that Mosheim probably speaks in the letter above referred to. Though wishing to seem exceedingly cool and unaffected, it is apparent from the whole tone of the letter, that he was not a little stung by it. During the same year he also published "Decisions of some of the most Important Questions relating to the Kingdom of Christ." The controversy with Mosheim seems to have been continued, or revived again, some years after, for we have in 1746 another volume from Seigvolck, which relates to this subject, entitled, "Scriptural and Rational Consideration of the grounds both for and against the Absolutely Endless Misery of the Transgressors against God, and their final Restoration to Holiness and Happiness." A very active controversy was kept up for some years in which several individuals on both sides engaged.

Now it seems to me very strange that Seigvolck should have been thus, for almost fifty years, before the public as a controversialist, and yet have passed, this whole time, under a fictitious name, and so far as appears, without the slightest reason. But I shall leave the subject with the facts now stated, to the judgment of the reader, confessing at the same time, that I am quite unable to decide the point. Thiess shows a great familiarity with the history of Universalism in Germany during the period in which Seigvolck lived and wrote, and his statements are certainly deserving of great confidence; at the same time I confess myself unable to account for the facts stated above, on the supposition that *George Paul Seigvolck* is only an assumed name. I had hoped to receive ere this, some works from Germany, which would probably have settled all doubts on the subject, but I have been disappointed.

I turn for a moment from the author to his work. It has without doubt some faults. The author's mind was too much inclined to the notion of a millenium then drawing nigh, and therefore to some fanciful views quite inconsistent with sound criticism, and the laws of interpretation. At the same time, this little volume contains a great amount of thought, and some of the clearest and most scriptural views of the divine character and government. You can hardly turn to a single page that does not embody some great and precious truth, and so fortified by apt quotations from the inspired word, that it must be difficult for any candid mind to read without being impressed by it. The work has, therefore, had no little influence in extending the doctrine of the final holiness and happiness of all mankind. Mr. Winchester says, "It was the first book that ever I saw,

which treated upon the subject of the Universal Restoration, and it was by reading a little therein that I first began to turn my thoughts and attention to the system which I now hold. Indeed, the arguments pressed upon my mind in such a manner that I could not get rid of them; and though I strove long against them, yet they conquered me in about three years. I think it was in the year 1778 that I first saw this book, and the first piece I published upon the object, was a sermon delivered April 22nd, 1781. * * I cannot help, therefore, having a great regard for this work, as it proved the first mean of my conviction, and at length brought me to embrace this most glorious and universal plan of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Mr. Vidler says, "I have found this little book very useful to myself. I did not, like Mr. Winchester, receive my first conviction of the truth of the universal doctrine from it; but it was the mean of fully establishing my mind in it. I remember particularly, that the seventh chapter, which treats of the word *eternity*, and the different eternities or ages, mentioned in the Scriptures, was very satisfying to me; as was the eleventh chapter, which treats of this present world, the world to come, and the still or silent eternity. I know of no book that is more calculated to disseminate the universal doctrine among good men than this; for every one who has tasted that *God is Love*, will here find something that meets and accords with the warm and holy benevolence of his soul; and to them do I most heartily recommend it; being fully assured, that however such may differ in other things, they all bear in their hearts *good will towards men.*"

The copy here followed is that of the London edition. It differs somewhat in words and phrases, from that of Germantown, though it is the same translation. The translator was evidently a German, and some of his expressions, and even the structure of many of his sentences, are quite too literal to be English. Many of these blemishes Mr. Winchester has silently corrected, but apparently without any knowledge of the original. Hence it happens that it is not always quite true to the author's own expression, though preferable to the edition of 1753. Had I the leisure, I would revise it by a careful comparison of the translation with the original German, though it may be well doubted whether the improvement would pay for the trouble. Mr. Winchester also, for the most part, quoted entire the passages of Scripture which, the author barely referred to, and moreover, added some proof texts which the author had omitted.

It might, perhaps, have been for the advantage of the general reader, had this little work been accompanied by a few notes more fully opening some things which are here left obscure, or correcting some errors which it undoubtedly contains. But want of time forbids my undertaking such a task at present, and the work is therefore commended as it is, to the candid and prayerful consideration of the reader.

T. J. SAWYER

New York, Feb. 28, 1844

MR. WINCHESTER'S PREFACE.

THIS little book which I now send abroad in this country, was originally written in the German language in the beginning of the present century, and translated into English, and printed in Pennsylvania in the year 1753. I am well acquainted with the good man at

whose instance and expense it was translated and printed. He has lived to see the little spark rise into aflame, and the small seed into a large tree, and he may still live many years, until this glorious system, so grand, so worthy of a God, shall have prevailed to bring all the different sects of Christians to be of the same spirit, mind, and judgment. Then shall the glorious prophecy of Isaiah be fulfilled, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Chap. lii. 8. And also that part of our blessed Saviour's prayer, "That they all (who believe on me) may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me. St. John xvii. 21, 23.

The divisions and animosities among Christians are great hindrances to the conversion of the world to Christianity, and until unity of spirit and harmony of sentiment take place in a much greater degree than at present, we cannot expect the knowledge of the Lord to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. But that such a glorious event shall take place before the conflagration, is to me as plain as express prophecies can make it, and may the Lord hasten it in his time!

The system held out in the following pages appears to me the only one that in the least bids fair to unite the two great bodies of Christians, that have so long and so bitterly opposed each other, *viz.* those who assert that Christ died for all, and yet that there shall be but few, comparatively, that shall finally derive any saving benefit therefrom; and those who assert that all for whom the Saviour died shall indeed be saved, but that he died only for a few. For it seems highly improbable that either of these sects should ever so far change their ground, as to go over to the opinions of the other; since one party charges the tenets of the other with want of benevolence, and the other as successfully returns the charge by representing their antagonists as entertaining dishonourable thoughts of the wisdom and power of the Deity. Therefore if a reconciliation takes place between them, it must be on some middle ground where both may meet without giving up their favourite opinions; and this appears to me to be no other but the system of the Universal Restoration; and whenever it shall universally prevail, it will bring this most desirable event to pass.

This book I esteem as valuable on three accounts; First, it was written at a time when this system was but little known, having been in a great measure lost during the long night of popish darkness, which overspread the Christian world for so many ages. This little book was at first like a light shining in a dark place, but now the day is broke, and the light shines in a most glorious manner.

Secondly, The author throughout the whole writes like a sincere Christian, appears to have the most glorious ideas of God, of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the divine perfections of the Deity, and of the way of salvation; and he constantly appeals to the sacred Scriptures for the proof of what he writes. And he appears to me as one that had a very serious regard to truth, and to the general welfare of mankind; and while he holds forth the glorious system of the Restoration for the comfort of the fearful, he speaks in such a manner of the terrors of the Lord, and the punishments of the future state, as is sufficient to alarm the consciences of the careless and secure.

Thirdly, It was the first book that ever I saw which treated upon the subject of the Universal Restoration, and it was by reading a little therein, that I first began to turn

my thoughts and attention to the system which I now hold forth. Indeed the argument pressed upon my mind in such a manner, that could not get rid of them; and though I strove long against them, yet they conquered me in about three years. I think it was in the year 1778 that I first saw this book, and the first piece I published upon the subject was a sermon delivered April 22nd, 1781, to which I added a list of the passages of the Scripture which I judged to be most in favour of the Restoration, and answers to the principal objections most commonly brought against it.

I cannot help therefore having a great regard for this work, as it proved the first mean of my conviction, and at length brought me to embrace this most glorious and universal plan of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

As some of my friends in this country have read, and greatly admired this book, and others who have only seen a part of it quoted in my Lectures have expressed their wishes to have the whole, I have in compliance with their earnest requests, undertaken to republish it, and hope it may be blest to the comfort and salvation of many souls.

I have in some places corrected the language a little, and have made a few small alterations, but in general have followed my author exactly, as he never appears to me to vary from what I judge to be the truth of the gospel.

May the blessing of heaven attend this publication to all who read it, is the earnest desire of one who takes pleasure to subscribe himself a friend to the whole human race.

ELHANAN WINCHESTER.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

BELOVED READER:

GOD, who wills not that any one perish, but that every one turn to repentance, always used this method, that, before he visited the world, or certain nations, with his judgments, he first poured out upon them all the riches of his long-suffering, love, goodness, and mercy, in such a measure as is allotted to every age; to try thereby, as it were, to his utmost, whether some might be persuaded to forsake their sinful ways, and to be saved from the destruction otherwise waiting for them.

Thus he gave divers preachers of righteousness to the antediluvian world, and waited full an hundred and twenty years for their repentance. Before God executed the judgment of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivity upon his people of Israel, he did not only first bestow upon them all manner of bodily good, but also sent them many of his faithful servants and prophets, who delivered unto them many excellent prophecies concerning the *Restorer of all things*, the Lord Messiah. Yea, before he passed the next by far more dreadful judgment upon this nation, he first sent them even his only and most beloved Son, disclosing unto them by him most perfectly *his infinite love towards all his creatures*; which also afterwards he did by his holy apostles.

Now, since verily the future great and terrible day is nigh at hand, wherein the anger of the hitherto so patient LAMB is to be kindled against the present anti-christian world, Rev. vi. 16, 17, what wonder, then, that God, who willeth not the death of a sinner, is opening at this time all the treasures of his everlasting love towards all his creatures? His design in so doing is, with respect to the wicked, to try his utmost, and to see whether

by these means he may bring some of them to repentance, so that they may begin to love again that God who with his eternal love and mercy so tenderly loves them, and thus escape the future terrible judgment, and be able to stand before the Son of man. But as to the little flock of his faithful, or the bride of Jesus, which is on her pilgrimage in the church militant here on earth, he is leading them now upon Mount Tabor, there to let them see their future transfiguration, yea, the abyss of his perfect love, thereby powerfully to strengthen them against their approaching sufferings, because they will soon be led with their bridegroom, to Mount Golgotha, there to be crucified with him. For, verily, the perfect deliverance of the children of God will not come till they have been first put to the test in *Laodicea*, and the empire of darkness has exercised its most extreme fury on them.

Now, for the above-mentioned purpose it is, that this simple testimony of the *everlasting and endless love of GOD* towards all his creatures, is recorded in this present little book. If thou, *beloved reader*, makest proper use of it, (to the end whereof I wish thee the necessary light of the Holy Spirit) thou wilt reap abundance of benefit from it in time and eternity, and not know how to thank God, the infinite love, enough for it.

But if thou turnest into lasciviousness, that which is declared unto thee in order to bring thee to repentance and true amendment of life, and if thou dost pervert it to fortify thyself in thy carnal security; then will, O man, thy doom be just in the day of judgment, nay, even in this world, may thy outward state and condition here be whatsoever it will, emperor, king, prince, count, baron, gentleman, citizen or peasant, rich or poor, learned or unlearned. I and all the children of love, who by the enlivening knowledge of the everlasting love of God, which is represented unto thee in this treatise, quite plain, and without obscure enigmatical or proverbial sayings; we, I say, who are not made careless by such love of God, but daily more and more sanctified and mightily encouraged for our spiritual combat against the devil, world, sin, hell, and death, we will assist in condemning thee. Yea, this little book, which now is given thee as a mean of life, shall then become thy death, a worm which will gnaw thee day and night, an unextinguishable fire. The Lord preserve thee from it, if thou desirest to be preserved.

If any one should undertake rashly to contradict the eternal truth set forth in this treatise, or to write against it, he may do it at his peril; but then I would have him to know, that the empty vapours of the glosses of his reason will never be able to obscure the bright sun-beams of so many clear testimonies of the holy Scripture, which treat of the everlasting love of God towards all his creatures; (especially as they are exhibited in the 12th chapter of this treatise) and that I count him too feeble and unable to thrust that God from his throne, who is everlasting love towards all his creatures, and to enthrone a strange God, who is to be worshipped as endless fury towards most of his creatures.

And if any body shall go so far as to calumniate this testimony of eternal truth, and to persecute my person, as much as lies in his power, he must know, that I will not be revenged on him in any other way, than by offering him up day and night to the endless and tender love of God, together with all the rest of corrupt creatures, being prisoners in the centre of wrath, to the end that they may every one of them, by Christ Jesus, the Son of eternal love, be brought back again into the centre of eternal love, from whence they are fallen, and thus enjoy for ever and ever, that God who is nothing else but love! Yea, Amen, so be it, Lord Jesus, thou eternal and universal Saviour, Amen!

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL.

CHAPTER I.

GOD, IN HIS WORD, DESCRIBES HIMSELF AS THE EVERLASTING, ESSENTIAL LOVE, AND THE RESULT THEREOF.

NONE can better describe God, than God himself, or the Holy Spirit of God which testifies of him in the sacred Scriptures. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." St. John i. 18.

"The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

The Holy Spirit describes God, or the Divine Being, thus, that he is a *spirit*. St. John iv. 24

Light, without *darkness*, I John i. 5. "The Father of Lights, from whom every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh down, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James i. 17. *A consuming fire*. Heb. xii. 29; Deut. iv. 24.

But all descriptions of the Divine Being, that we find in the holy Scriptures, together with all that may be believed, thought, or uttered of God, centre in this one word, *Love*; which the Spirit of truth attests by St. John, saying, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. GOD IS LOVE, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 John iv. 8-16.

If GOD IS LOVE essentially, and so that God and Love is one and the same thing, it undeniably follows, that whatsoever God doth, (though in our eyes it should appear to be the most terrible affair) proceeds from Love, because God, who does it, is Love itself: as, on the contrary, whatsoever Satan doth, let it appear never so good and useful, proceeds from hatred against God and his creatures.

All works, that are not works of love, in their very principle, or spring from it as their centre, are not the works of God; because God, as the essential, everlasting, unchangeable love, can do no other but works of love. As the tree is, so are its fruits. St. Matt. vii. 16-18; iii. 33.

All creatures, considered in themselves, without their coherent corruption, are productions of the eternal love of God.

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." Rom. xi. 36. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created." Rev. iv. 11.

Therefore, since God cannot hate himself, he cannot hate his creatures, or that in them which his hands have made. "For thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made; for never wouldst thou have made any thing if thou hadst hated it." Wis. xi. 20.

So that whatsoever GOD, who is Love, doth and purposeth with his creatures, as noble productions of his love, both in this and in the future ages, must proceed from love, and thus with respect to the creatures, all the purposes of God must have something good and salutary for their ultimate end. "For the Lord will not cast off for ever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." Lam. iii. 31–33.

Now, as it is the love of God that made the creatures, that through Christ redeemeth them from sin and the curse, that sanctifieth and purgeth them from all disorder, that protects and preserves them, and bestows all manner of good upon them; even so it is the same love which punisheth the creatures when they are found in rebellion against their Maker, and do not continue in the order in which he first created them. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." Rev. iii. 19. Hence all punishments wherewith God visits his creatures, as far as they come from him, and are considered according to their first principle, are works of divine love.

If all punishments determined by God for the creatures, be they never so dreadful, are (when considered according to their inmost centre and principle) works of divine love, it necessarily follows from hence, that even the most dreadful punishments which God, in the age or ages to come, will inflict on bad angels and men, as far as they proceed from him, are grounded on no other principle than that of love; since God, who condemneth and sentenceth the corrupt creatures to such punishments, is the essential, everlasting, and unchangeable love, and nothing else but pure love, and will remain such unto all endless eternities, and therefore, all, whatsoever comes from him, must proceed from love. If such punishments, on God's side, had any other ground but love, then would that God, who punisheth his creatures from such a ground, be no God; because the true and only God, besides whom none other is to be found, is nothing else but pure love, and who therefore can do nothing else but what springs from the centre of love, and returns into the same.

"Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God." Isa. xlv. 6. And this God, besides whom there is no other, is love. 1 John iv. 8, 16.

Hence it follows, without contradiction, that not one of those punishments which God has determined for the depraved creatures can be intended for the never-ceasing, and endless perdition and torment of those intelligences that had their origin from the unchangeable love of God; but they must needs aim at, and be designed for, their final preservation, melioration, and restoration, let them last as long as they will: because the deepest ground of all punishments determined by God, for the creatures, so far as they are his doing, is his infinite and unchangeable love. And it is impossible that love should, without end, plague and torment that which it loves; but by all pains and torments, seeks, and can seek, nothing else but the amendment of its beloved object. *For love thinketh no evil*; 1 Cor. xiii. 5, much less does evil, or designs to do it.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT THE WRATH OF GOD IS, AND HIS JUSTICE IN PUNISHING.

As the whole Divine Being is pure love, so are likewise all the attributes of God; as for instance, his wisdom, omnipotence, holiness, mercy, truth, &c. at the bottom nothing else but love. If any thing could be said of God, which is not grounded upon love, or is contrary to it, God would have something in himself, which would make him to be no God, because the true and only God is entirely an ocean of love.

From hence may be easily conceived what God's wrath is, and his justice in punishing, of which the holy Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testament, make mention

so frequently: namely, such wrath and punishing justice of God, is, as all other divine attributes, nothing else but his essential love, which, as it shows itself *pure with the pure*, 2 Sam. xxii. 26, 27, that is, deals most kindly, lovingly, and bountifully with those creatures who stand in their right order, in true humility, and subjection to God: so with the *froward it will show itself froward, or unsavory*, Psalm xviii. 25, 26. That is, with the perverse, rebellious, and proud creatures, who do not stand in that true order wherein God would have them, but are disobedient, and will not be subject unto him; with such it will deal hardly, and as it were act perversely with them: “for God resisteth the proud,” 1 Peter v. 5, and he will torment them by all manner of bodily and spiritual plagues, both in this, and the next age, until they shall be subdued, and shall acknowledge their offences, humbling themselves with their whole heart, before the righteous God, and in so doing shall be made partakers of the sweet effluence of his infinite and everlasting mercy and love.

So God is terrible, both in this and the other world, for this end only, that at the last he may be gracious and merciful to those to whom he has been terrible. In short, God, when he is angry, doth a *strange work*, both in this and the next age, to the end that afterwards he may do his *proper works*, which are those of love, grace and mercy.

“For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.” Isa. lvii. 16.

“He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever.” Psal. ciii. 9.

“For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.” Rom. xi. 32.

See also Deut xxviii. from verse 15, to the end, compared with chap. xxx. 2–6, &c. compared with Lev. xxvi. ver. 14–45.

God always continues the same towards all his creatures, and his nature, which is love, is unchangeable, therefore all the anger of God, both in this world and that which is to come, hath only love for the foundation of its working; yea, it is in reality nothing else but his essential and ever abiding love, which must compel those creatures by terrible judgments to obey him, that will not be brought to it by fair and gentle means; nevertheless so, that the obedience to which they are brought in such a dreadful manner, doth not remain forced: which is to be concluded from this, that the whole creation shall at last praise God, see Rev. v. 13, compared with Psal. cl. 6. And the reason for it will indisputably be, because that all shall *taste and see that the Lord is good*, and that it is well with those that obey him. Psal. xxxiv. 8.

Hence it clearly appears, that it is impossible, that the wrath of God, and his justice in punishing, (since they have nothing else but the essential love of God, for their deepest principle,) should be designed for, and tend towards the endless perdition of those creatures that were produced from God’s everlasting love, and which God, as such, can no more hate than he can hate himself; but that God in all these punishments, can have no other final view than the rooting out of sin, and the mending and restoration of the corrupt creatures.

And in such a sense it is that God is called in the holy Scriptures a *consuming fire*, not as if he intended entirely to consume his creatures, or to plague and torment them without end; but because he will consume the evil in and about his creatures, which by their wilful turning away from God, they have brought upon themselves, and mixed with their being, and which he will at last extirpate out of his whole creation, and every

individual creature, and annihilate it: which certainly cannot be done without great pain to the corrupt creatures, whose whole will is so coherent with the evil. The whole creation “shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Rom. viii. 21. “Then shall be brought to pass the saying, that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting! O grave, or hell, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin.” 1 Cor. xv. 54–56. “Death the last enemy shall be destroyed.” ver. 26.

“Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.” St. John i. 29, where I would have you consider in the original, the force of the expression. *Sin of the world*, and the word *take* or *bear away*, which properly signifies, *to make that something which now exists, to be hereafter no more*. Such a Saviour and Redeemer we have in the person of Christ, who will take away the sin of the world; that is, he will by the power of his most precious blood, shed for the sins of the whole world, bring things at last to such a pass, that no sin at all, and consequently, not the least evil will be any more found in the world, or in the creatures of God, but be totally destroyed and swallowed up in victory, together with the wages of the first and second death, depending thereon.

CHAPTER III.

EVERY THING THAT GOD WILLETH, MUST ABSOLUTELY BE FULFILLED AT LAST; AND WHAT IS TO BE CONCLUDED THEREFROM.

Every divine will, let it be *conditional* or absolute, is in great earnest, and of almighty power, and must therefore infallibly and actually be fulfilled at one time or another, be it never so long delayed.

“Whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that did he in heaven, and in earth, and in the seas, and all deep places.” Psal. cxxxv. 6.

“And he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?” Dan. iv. 35. He “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” Eph. i. 11.

Now since God in his word so earnestly declares, and hath confirmed the same by a most solemn oath, that he hath “no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, nor in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live:” Ezek. xviii. 23, 32; xxxiii. 11. That he is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Pet. iii. 9.

That he “will have all men to be saved, or restored, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Tim. ii. 4. That at last he will make all things new, nothing excepted. Rev. xxi. 5. It unavoidably follows, that his divine will must needs be finally accomplished in respect to all, and every one of his creatures, whose death and destruction he willeth not, whom he will have to be saved, and which he will make new. If it be not done in the present time, as indeed it is not but to the smallest number of the corrupt creatures, it must necessarily be done in the age to come, at least before that period when Christ, after all things shall be subdued to him, and subordinate under him, that is, restored to that true order, in which they were created by him in the beginning, shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, even the whole restored creation; to the end that the most Holy God, who cannot unite himself with anything that is impure, may be *all in all*, and fill all with his glory. See 1 Cor. xv. 24–28. Col. 1. 16, compared with Gen. i. 81.

The holy Scripture declares that wicked men both can and do oppose and resist God; St. Matt, xxiii. 37., xxii. 3. St. John v. 40., Acts vii. 51. As also that no creature can resist the will of God; Rom. ix. 19., Dan. iv. 35. Though here seems an apparent contradiction, yet both these positions may well consist together; and here may be said, *Distinguish between the times, and the Scriptures will agree.*

The creatures may withstand the will of their Creator; but this is not to be understood in such a manner, as if there was an ability and power in them, whereby they might as it were, repel and conquer the power and might of God that works in and upon them, so that the same could never get its last end with such rebellions creatures. For it is only with God's permission, and as long as he thinks fit that the creature is suffered to withstand or resist God, for reasons best known to him, and to the end that the creatures, who will not voluntarily choose the salvation and well-being offered to them, may taste of the bitter fruits of their disobedience, and on themselves learn to know the difference between good and evil, which before they would not believe, when God in his word did set it before their eyes; which, through the wisdom and mercy of God, will at last have this good effect upon the malicious creatures, that they will, as conquered, give themselves up to their Creator, justify the punishment of their transgressions, and praise the most holy justice of God manifested therein, and consequently humble themselves before the Supreme Being, who is able to subdue all, however great, mighty, haughty or malicious they may be; and thus by the grace of God, which they will embrace anew after they have suffered their punishment, they shall be divested of all their obstinacy.

Of this only true and certain way for the restoration of all stubborn and rebellious creatures, God has showed us a very remarkable instance in Nebuchadnezzar, as a pattern of the rest of obdurate men and creatures. The confession of this haughty monarch, concerning the most High King of Heaven, after he had felt the weight of his punishing hand, will ever hold true. "He doeth according to his will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? All his works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." Dan. iv. 35, 37.

It is therefore clear, that no creature can resist the Creator to all endless eternity, or as long as GOD is to remain GOD, but only to a certain period or age, be that short or long, 10, 100, 1000, 10,000, 20,000, 40,000 or more years, yet at last it must come to an end.

For if it was possible for the creatures to resist their Creator in such a manner as to repel and conquer his Almighty and Divine power, by the power of their iniquity, and consequently without God's permission and the withdrawing of his might, to withstand him, and to continue in obstinacy, bitterness, hatred and enmity against him, and what is more, to all endless eternity, and as long as GOD shall exist, (as has been commonly taught) it would indisputably follow, that the creature, and that which is evil, is as strong, or stronger than GOD, and that which is good; or that the will of GOD is not in earnest, when he with so many solemn expressions declares, that he heartily desires the salvation of all men; that he is not pleased with the destruction, death, and misery of his creatures; but rather earnestly requires, that they should repent and live; and that he will make all things new. But neither can be thought of God without the greatest blasphemy, as it would entirely overthrow the whole Divine Being, make God to be no God, but an impotent idol, or a hypocrite; and consequently quite open the way to all iniquity and

atheistical mockery.

CHAPTER IV.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE THAT TWO CONTRARY THINGS SHOULD BE BOTH OF ENDLESS DURATION.

It is as impossible that there should be two endless contrary things, as that there should be two real contrary Deities, a good God, and a bad one, or two sorts of contrary creatures, both of truly divine original, some being made good by God, and others bad.

For an absolute and merely infinite duration, which has neither beginning nor end, is, according to the confession of all divines, yea, of every reasonable man, a property peculiar to the uncreated Being only. But such an infinite duration, which although it has a beginning, yet shall have no end, can only be the property of those creatures that are of divine original. For as these, according to the language of Scripture, are of divine origin, and therefore are rooted in God, or in his almighty creating power, which has no beginning, they can also be everlasting, their existence or duration can also be without end in God. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being. For we are also his offspring." Acts xvii. 28.

But whatsoever has not its eternal root in God, or in his eternal creating power, but is sprung up in the creature in this world, by its voluntary turning away from God, and against his holy will, and consequently is an abomination and displeasure to the Most High, and is only suffered by him, such as sin, and the punishment depending thereon, these things cannot possibly be of an absolutely endless existence, and duration, or remain so long as GOD shall exist; but must of necessity cease at last, and be annihilated.

For as God is a Being to those creatures which he created good, and which exist through his will, whereby they may subsist and be preserved without end; so he is, on the contrary, to iniquity and sin, (which against his will is sprung up in and sticks to the creatures) a consuming fire, whereby all sin and perverseness in the creatures must be at last consumed, annihilated and separated from them in the highest degree, in order to restore them to their primitive purity; in the same manner as fire does not consume and destroy the gold, but only the dross and that which is impure.

Now all those who pretend that the degeneracy and sin found in fallen angels and men, together with the punishment following it, are of an absolutely endless existence, and will continue so long as God exists, make sin either a God, or a creature of divine original; but how much this resembles the heresy imputed to the Manichees, is left to their own judgment: or they deny that God is entirely a consuming fire to sin: because, according to their pretence, he either cannot or will not destroy it in most of the creatures; and consequently represent him either an impotent God, or one who takes delight in sin and the punishment of it. For what man will suffer that continually before his eyes which is loathsome, or an abomination to him, if he has it in his power to remove it? Since God, therefore, has so earnestly declared in his word, that all sin is an abomination unto him, and that he takes no pleasure in the punishment of it; yea, that his end, in sending his Son, is utterly to destroy sin and death, and essentially to restore an eternal righteousness to all mankind, who all both sinned and died in Adam; so that "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, onto justification of life." Rom. v. 18. It is evident, that all those who by their tenets maintain, that God will suffer sin and the punishment of death

in and upon his creatures to all endless eternity, which by his almighty power he can destroy, and hath solemnly promised that he will destroy, make the most true and holy God a liar and a hypocrite, and contrary to his own plain words accuse him of taking delight and pleasure in sin, and the punishment of death depending thereon.

CHAPTER V.

THE DIABOLICAL NATURE, AND THAT WHICH MAKES FALLEN ANGELS TO BE DEVILS, MUST BE WELL DISTINGUISHED FROM THEIR ANGELICAL NATURE IN WHICH THEY WERE CREATED; AND THE RESULT THEREOF.

Two things are to be considered in all fallen and corrupted creatures. First, that nature in which God created them in the beginning; and, secondly, the degeneracy and sin, which through the creature's own fault has intermixed with that nature.

For instance, the soul and body, with all their powers and faculties, viz. the faculty to understand, to will or desire, to love, to act, to see, to hear, to smell, to feel, to taste, &c., may be truly called the nature of man, in which God created him. But what is called sin, vice and degeneracy, and which coheres, and is intermixed with, the human nature, since the fall, is this, that man's understanding is darkened; his will, desires, and affections, are not fixed upon God and everlasting things, but upon the creatures, and those things, which are transitory and vain; and that man, according to his perverse will and desires, and the blindness of his mind and understanding, does not apply the rest of the faculties of his soul, and his body with all its limbs, to that use which is agreeable to God, but, on the contrary, to such things as displease him. Sin, therefore, consists in nothing else but disorder and abuse; and when a man is converted, and of a sinner is made a godly and holy man, he goes over from the disorder and abuse of his nature, to the true order and right use of it. St. Paul thus expressed the difference: "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." Rom. vi. 19. "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Chap. xii. 1.

Now, as sin, which cleaves to the depraved creatures, is the only thing which God hates, so it appears impossible for him to hate in itself the being or nature of his creatures, let them be never so corrupt; but as he loved them when he created them, he will love them to all endless eternity, because, as creatures, they are the productions of his eternal, unchangeable love. "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things." Rom. xi. 36. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created." Rev. iv. 11. "For thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made: for never wouldst thou have made any thing if thou hadst hated it." Wisdom xi. 24.

Although creatures that are endued by God with a free will, may spoil themselves through the abuse of that free will, yet no creature of itself can annihilate that being or nature which God gave it, or make something so quite different of it, that nothing of a creature of God shall remain. For as no creature can give itself a being, so neither can it take away or annihilate its own being. And as it is only the Omnipotence of God which is able to produce conscious intelligent beings, so also nothing less than the same almighty power is able to take away the existence of those creatures which he hath made. As long,

therefore, as a creature remains a creature, so long something remains in it which God truly loves, viz. that being which he gave it; suppose the same to be never so disordered and corrupt.

Now all this is to be well considered with respect to fallen angles: for then we shall be able to discern the deepest ground for the mystery of their restoration, and consequently comprehend it the more easily.

I mean, we must learn well to distinguish between that angelical nature in which God created them, and the iniquity and sin, which, through their own fault, has intermixed with such nature, the source whereof is their perverse self-will, that caused them to leave their centre and principle of humility (wherein alone a creature can be happy) and to withdraw themselves from their obedience and subjection to God, and to rely on themselves, willing to live independent of God, nay indeed, to be themselves God. For each an independence as admits of none superior, or where one needs not to be ruled by the will and command of another, is, and always must be an essential property of the great GOD and Creator of all things, and cannot by any means belong to a creature, nor can be ceded to it by God, who *will not give his glory to another*. Isai. xlii. 8; xlviii. 11.

Therefore the Scripture very emphatically says of the devil, that he *abode not in the truth*, St. John viii. 44. And that *the angels kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation*. Jude 6.

Now this perverse self-will in the fallen angels, together with all the iniquity that is in it, and produced thereby, is the proper diabolical nature, or that which makes them devils and enemies of GOD; and this alone is the thing which is an abomination to him, and what he hates in them.

But that an angelical nature in itself, in which God first created the fallen angels, and to which the iniquity, degeneracy, and perverseness so closely cleave, or rather have quite penetrated through, and intermixed with, that I say is no devil, but according to the confession of all reasonable men, a good creature of God, a production of eternal love, which the Creator as truly loves, as he loves the being and nature of men, yea, as himself, and will love to all endless eternity; and consequently, by virtue of such his everlasting, unchangeable, and almighty love, will of necessity bring it once into the right order again. For, as by CHRIST he has *created all things that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, &c.* Col. i. 16. (to which likewise indisputably belongs to all fallen angles) even so it has also been the good pleasure of God to *reconcile all those things* (which were created by Christ) *unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven*; ver. 20. that is, by the power of his blood, shed for the sins of all, to make them fit and capable of being restored from their disorder to their first right and true order, though every one in his own time, so that at last not only the wrath of God may be turned away from the creatures, but also the enmity of the creatures themselves, cease, and the sorrow which the good and holy creatures of God really feel for their fallen and corrupt fellow creatures, may be no more; but universal joy, and everlasting praises to God may be caused and raised in the whole creation. The words of God, that he *will make all things new*, Rev. xxi. 5. are true, whether men believe them or not: their unbelief will not make the promise void. For as every thing was very good when first created by God, for *God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good*. Gen. i 31. So when he shall *make all things new*, there will be neither sin, death, nor hell, nor sorrow, crying, nor pain, throughout the whole creation, which

shall then be wholly *delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.* Rom. viii. 21.

All men who rashly dare exclude one of the fallen creatures, be it never so corrupt, from the endless mercy and all renewing love of God, are not yet grounded in that *love to enemies*, which is so highly recommended to us by the universal Saviour of the world, (see St. Matt. v. 44–48; St. Luke vi. 27–36;) which distinguishes true Christians from unbelievers and is the surest sign of our being the children of God. They are not grounded in humility, because they have not that deep sense of their own misery and most abominable condition by nature, that they ought to have; and consequently cannot duly pity other corrupt creatures as they ought, considering them as God's creatures. They are respecters of persons, and so not altogether made partakers of the divine nature; since with God, who is everlasting love towards all his creatures, as such, no respect of persons finds place, Acts x. 34; Rom. ii. 11; Col. iii. 25. They do not yet know what that Scripture meaneth "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, *that he might have mercy upon all*;" Rom. xi. 32. And indeed God's mercy is not only towards all men, but also according to the plain testimony of truth, *over all his works*, Psalm cxiv. 9; to which indisputably the fallen angels belong, who in the beginning were even some of the most glorious and chief works of God, the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures calling them principalities, powers, and rulers. Ephes. vi. 12.

Those men do not understand how necessary that knowledge is, which St. Paul wishes all believers to "be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;" (or as the original may signify, *to know that the love of Christ far surpasseth all knowledge*;) that they might be filled with all the fulness of God, in such a manner as to see that it extends over the whole creation, and every individual creature, Ephes. iii. 18, 19. From whence it follows, that those cannot be filled with all the fulness of God, who will not comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of God, and that it is broader, longer, deeper, and higher, than all sin which is to be found in the creatures, with the corruption depending thereon; yea, who will not know, that the love of Christ infinitely surpasseth all knowledge of men and angels, but dare presumptuously confine it within the narrow limits of their own knowledge, and tenets taught by corrupt human reason. In short, these men who murmur against the goodness of the heavenly Father of the family, and complain of his everlasting love and mercy, may find both their pictures drawn, and their lessons given them, in St. Matt. xx. 10–16, and St. Luke xv. 28–32.

Now if that man, who, regardless of all remonstrances, would audaciously exclude but one creature from the endless mercy of God, deserves such a censure, what shall we say of those, who with great assurance, dare exclude from it so many thousands of millions of creatures, that through the blood of Christ are all made fit for redemption and reconciliation? Ah! may these poor men be prevailed upon, by the wounds of Jesus Christ, the universal Saviour of the world, and by the everlasting mercy and love of God, which will most tenderly embrace them too, to pity, in this case, their own souls, and to consider what an abominable arrogance it is, to make the love of God, which has no limits, much less than the love of men, who are bound to love even their worst enemies, and to recompense all evil with nothing but good; and yet with all their love they are no more to be compared with God, and his love, and mercy, than the least worm that

creeps on the ground, and is trodden under foot, is to be compared to the highest angel in heaven, or one single drop of water to the vast ocean. Let them consider, what a terrible sin and rashness it is, only to acknowledge Jesus Christ, the universal Saviour of the world, by whom all things in heaven and earth were created, and are to be reconciled, to be an actual Saviour and Redeemer of about the thousandth part of mankind, and consequently rob him of almost all his glory, by leaving him for his real property no more than that very small number or handful of elect or first-born men unto salvation, (St. Matt. xxii. 14: chap. vii. 14;) and by excluding all the rest of the unspeakable multitude of men and creatures, to all eternity, from any real participation of the tender mercy and love of God, and the redemption of his beloved Son, although it evidently appears from Scripture to be designed for all. For, although it is too true, that a great part of mankind, like Esau, will, through their own fault, be entirely deprived of, and lose the great prerogative of their birth-right, and so far be castaway; yet it is utterly false, that therefore they will be altogether excluded from all enjoyments of the tender mercies of God, and be doomed to endless torments, and never, never feel the virtue of Christ's atoning blood. Can this be the perfect, ancient, and eternal Gospel, which Christ has commanded to be preached to *every creature*, St. Mark xvi. 15; or to the whole creation? which his apostles *preached to every creature which is under heaven?* Col. i. 23. Yea, was it this which Christ himself preached to the spirits in the infernal prison, when he announced to them that the judgment passed upon them had been only intended for the destruction of the flesh, or that which was carnal, sinful, and diabolical in them, but that they should *live again according to God in the spirit?* 1 Pet iii. 19, 20, compared with chap. iv. 6. I can never believe this partial gospel to be that which Christ commanded to be preached to every creature, let who may, can, and will; but I rather hold it, if not for a quite perverse and new, yet at least for a corrupt, mutilated, and wrongfully circumscribed gospel, contrived and introduced by depraved and self-wise human reason, in order to obscure and suppress the true gospel of our eternal Redeemer, which alone has the power to make men godly and happy from the bottom of their hearts, when the other only serves to propagate bigotry, slavish fear, and hypocrisy. And I am apt to think, if even an angel from heaven was to preach the before-mentioned curtailed gospel to the zealous apostle Paul, who in his writings has left us the most excellent testimonies of the impartial and universal love of God, he would denounce an anathema against him. Gal i. 8, 9.

Therefore all such of every sect and religious party in Christendom, who will not suffer the true ancient gospel of Christ to be preached, which, according to our Saviour's plain words, is designed for *every creature*, but with all their might endeavour to suppress it, in order to establish the new invented, partial, and mutilated gospel, which hardly extends to a thousandth part of God's creatures; all such, I say, will have great reason to be afraid of the forementioned anathema of the apostle Paul.

Those men discover a terribly envious spirit, and an intolerably diabolical pride, by grudging most creatures the endless mercy of God, and endeavouring totally to deprive them of it; but let them take care that thereby they do not incur the danger of being themselves for a long period excluded from the real enjoyment of it. This is certain, that in so doing, they commit a sin which deserves such a punishment.

For in the same manner as they behave towards their fellow creatures, that are in the estimation of God as good as themselves, even so will God behave himself towards

them; and with the same measure that they mete unto their brethren, it shall be measured unto them; yea, *good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall be given into their bosom*, (St. Luke vi. 38.) See also to this purpose St. Matt, xviii. 33, 35. Let them reflect upon the terrible and just threatning which God has annexed as a conclusion to the book wherein he so plainly declares, that every creature *which is in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them*, shall praise and glorify God and the Lamb for ever and ever, Rev. v. 13; and that he will *make all things new*, chap. xxi. 5. He says, If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. Chap. xxii. 19.

Oh, how eagerly will all those upon whom this terrible judgment lights, wish that it may be true, what has been testified unto them of the everlasting riches of God's love; and that on the other hand, all opposite dogmas which convert the everlasting love of God into endless fury and wrath, though propagated by themselves in this world, may be false! but for their just punishment, they will have no full assurance, and consequently no comfort of it in their hearts, during all that terrible long period wherein God will entirely hide his face from them. See Prov. i. 24–32.

If we ponder well our own natural wretchedness, and the condition we are in under the fall, it should, methinks, bring pretty low; nay, utterly destroy that pride and envy of ours, which causeth us to endeavour rashly to exclude from the everlasting mercy of God, so many millions of angelical and human creatures. For without the mercy of God, we are not only as bad as the most wicked wretch on earth, but we are also nothing better than the devil and his angels. Nay, one may in truth say, that man, in some measure, has discovered greater wickedness against God's most holy majesty than the devils themselves. For the evil spirits have never yet opposed God in endeavouring to work out their own salvation, because the economy and proper periods for it are not yet come, and consequently they have had no opportunity of committing this most heinous of all sins; though they have opposed God, and still continue to oppose him, in his endeavours to deliver mankind from their lower, and to translate them into the kingdom of his beloved Son; but this is hardly to be wondered at, considering the most depraved state they are in. But men, on the contrary, most vehemently resist the Holy Ghost in the work of their own salvation, from their youth, not only in ignorance, but too often knowingly and wilfully. Not to mention, that things cannot go worse among the devils, in their dark infernal regions, than they go among men of this wicked world. Ah, what discord is there among them! How do they plague and torment one another! What contentions, quarrels, seditions, vexation and oppression of the poor and needy! What wars and bloodshed do we not continually hear of! But that this is not the case with the devils (of which men ought to be ashamed) and that they do not fall out among themselves our Saviour himself declares, St. Matt. xii. 26, alleging at the same time the reason for it, because then their kingdom would not stand. There is another thing wherein men are frequently far more criminal than devils, and that is, in profane language, cursing, swearing, blaspheming, and execrating themselves: when an evil spirit spake to Jesus, with how much reverence he addressed him, "I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God!" St. Mark i. 24. And far from execrating themselves, or wishing damnation to come upon them, as wicked men frequently do, they earnestly besought our Lord that

he would not torment them nor send them into the abyss. Chap. v. 7. St. Luke viii. 28, 31.

So it clearly appears, that in many cases the iniquity of men surpasses that of the devils themselves. A truly penitent, afflicted and contrite heart would infallibly despair at this terrible sight of human wickedness, when it comes to have a full view thereof as well in itself as in others, if the universal and most impartial mercy of God in Jesus Christ our eternal Redeemer, and through his all-sufficient merits, was not its comfort. In such a state men learn to set the true value upon the precious pearl of this evangelical truth, and begin to conceive that the origin of all railing against, and contradicting this blessed doctrine, is either that gross, or subtle pharisaical spirit in mankind, that cannot so easily be rooted out, even in the disciples of Christ; and this spirit prevents men from knowing, feeling, and acknowledging that more than diabolical wickedness which lies in our corrupt nature, and consequently while under the government of such a temper, they can neither understand nor duly esteem that adequate and grand remedy designed by God for the curing and taking away of this great evil. So far indeed I allow a preference to fallen men before the apostate angels; that God offers his mercy first to men, since his justice requires that the *deceived* should be restored before the *deceivers*; but the ground for this preference does not lie in ourselves, but in the endless mercy and most holy justice of God. For in our depraved and corrupt estate, we need not imagine ourselves to be one whit better than the fallen angels, or to deserve the least preference before them.

That which makes them devils, and an abomination in God's eyes, namely, their *perverse self-will*, which will not bow under God, but would be entirely independent, not subject to the divine law; that same *perverse self-will*, is the thing in us which renders us as abominable in the sight of God as the fallen angels themselves. This perverse self-will is the true *devil* in all fallen sinful creatures, this is that which constitutes angels, devils, who otherwise would be good creatures of God. Hence it is that such men as follow their perverse self-will, (which may insinuate itself into the most sacred things) and suffer it to reign in themselves, and to prevail over them, are called in Scripture by the same names which are given to evil angels. They are for instance called *adversaries*, or *Satans*, which means the same, St. Matt. xvi. 23; 1 Tim. v. 14. Yea, *diaboli*, that is devils, or *calumniators*, &c., St. John vi. 70; 1 Tim. iii. 6, 7. Therefore all fallen men as far as they are under the dominion of sin, or their perverse self-will, are nothing else but *diaboli incarnati*, or *incarnate devils*. Whosoever will not know this, nor own himself to be according to the fallen nature as bad as the devil himself, such an one does not know as yet his sinful state as he ought to do; he is far from being rightly grounded in true humility, and there is as yet a great deal of the abominable seed of spiritual pride in his heart, let him think never so much of his holiness and humility. He has never yet begun truly and in reality to practise the earnest command of his Saviour, to *hate himself* or *his own life*, St. Luke xiv. 86, (to wit, in his own corrupt nature, which deserves as much to be hated as the devil himself) and therefore does not know how to esteem sufficiently the everlasting mercy of God, and the precious blood of our universal Redeemer. For if he but knew the horrible wickedness of his own evil nature, and had come duly to esteem the endless mercies of God and all-sufficient merits of Christ, he really would not grudge one of the fallen creatures a part in the boundless love of God, and that grace of Jesus Christ which is able to deliver souls from hell, but would wish them all to partake of it

as freely as he himself attained it, even if there was not one word of it mentioned in the Bible; whereas the Scripture abundantly testifies of this boundless, infinite, everlasting love, and the whole creation declares it to us as it were with living voices, if we would but hear it.

Now our ever-loving God, who has begun to have mercy on fallen men, who, in their sinful nature, are *incarnate devils*, and has already made great numbers of them holy children of God, resembling the angels in heaven, and will continue so to do; the same everloving God, I say, will in his own time have pity also upon the rest of mankind, who in this life have forfeited their spiritual birthright; and not upon them only, but even on the fallen angels themselves, when they will begin to humble themselves truly before God. And then it will be as easy for him to make them holy angels again, as it was to make angel-like men and children of God of so many thousands of fallen men or incarnate devils. And that this will certainly come to pass in the fulness of the ages or periods appointed for it, will admit of no doubt, if we consider the promise of God, that he *will make all things new*. Rev. xxi. 5. And that he hath *prepared all things that are in heaven, and on the earth* for this renovation or actual reconciliation, by *reconciling them to himself by the death of his Son, who hath made peace by the blood of his cross*. See Rom. v. 10; Col. i. 20.

To conclude, let us further consider, that it will be as easy a matter for the everlasting mercy of God to forgive the fallen angels their sins, whenever they will begin to humble themselves before him, as it is for him to forgive us ours. For let their sins be ever so great, ever so many, or ever so grievous, yet both have but one source, that is, as above said, *self-will* and *pride*. And as the nature of things does not admit of any other source of evil, so there is no other God, but he who himself is mercy and love.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE EVERLASTING VALIDITY AND EFFICACY OF THE MERITS OF CHRIST, AND THE ETERNAL REDEMPTION FOUND OUT BY HIM; AND THAT THE SAME IS INFINITELY MORE POWERFUL THAN ALL SIN, AND CORRUPTION SPRINGING THEREFROM.

NONE, it is to be hoped, who claims the name of a *Christian* among all religious parties of Christendom, let them otherwise be never so much divided, will deny Christ, our Redeemer to be stronger and far more powerful than the devil, and the grace of redemption and salvation procured by him through his merits and sufferings to be infinitely more efficacious than all sin, together with the corruption and misery springing therefrom. For whosoever would deny this, would not only declare himself an infidel, but even a blasphemer against Christ. Besides, the nature of the thing requires it, that a saviour or deliverer be stronger than the enemy whose prisoners he is to take away by force; and the plain word of God declares JESUS CHRIST to be such a Saviour and Deliverer. See Isai. xlix. 25, 26; Hosea xiii. 14; St. Luke xi. 21, 22; 1 John iv. 4; Rom. v. 20.

But there is a doctrine propagated and believed by many, which is quite inconsistent with what is advanced above; namely, "That although Christ has redeemed all men, or through his blood bought and reconciled them unto God, yet none really partake of his redemption but those who in this life believe in him, and by faith endure to the end; and that all the rest of mankind, who do not come to believe in Christ in this life, but

continue in unbelief to the end of their days, will not only be terribly punished in the age to come," which is true, "but that they will, moreover, with all evil angels, be separated from God to all endless eternity, even so long as God shall exist, and shall suffer endless torments, and never share in the redemption of Christ."

How is it possible now, I pray, according to this doctrine, that Christ should be stronger than the devil? How can the grace procured and purchased by his merits, sufferings and death, be more efficacious than sin and all corruption and misery springing from it? For our Saviour declares in plain terms, and daily experience confirms it, that by far the smallest number of men find in their life time the narrow way of repentance and faith, and through the straight gate go into eternal life; but that, on the contrary, most of them go the broad way of perdition, and become a prey to the jaws of hell. See St. Matt. vii. 13, 14; St. Luke xiii. 23, 24; St. Matt. xxii. 14. Ah! if no more men are really partakers of the redemption of Christ, than those, who in this life come to be united to him, he will hardly be a Saviour to the millionth part of mankind; and Satan will, according to his wish and pleasure, keep the greatest number captives in his empire to all endless eternity. And according to this scheme, how can *Christ* be said to be stronger than his enemy the devil? But you will perhaps reply, that the strength of Christ manifests itself, and may be known by his really delivering and snatching out of the jaws of Satan the few elect. But pray, is Christ to be only a Saviour of the elect? Is he not also a propitiation for the *sins of the whole world*? I John ii. 2. And has he not bought with his blood those who *bring upon themselves swift destruction*? 2 Pet. ii. 1.

If a man was to give out of himself against his enemy, who had led a million of his people captive, that he was stronger than such an enemy, and that he would heat and spoil him of all his prisoners, because he heartily pitied the poor souls; and coming thereupon to the battle, was to deliver, of a million of prisoners, about three, or at the most ten, leaving all the rest in slavery, because the enemy had too well secured them; pray, would you believe such a man to be much stronger than his enemy, since of a million of prisoners, he had actually delivered about three or ten? Would you not be apt to say, that he had boasted much more of himself than he was able to perform, and justly conclude, that he must want either strength or power to overcome the enemy, or mercy and compassion towards the poor captives? Now, such a bragging, yea, unmerciful, or infirm man do we generally make of Christ, by teaching and acknowledging on the one hand, that he is an universal Redeemer, but on the other hand, perversely pretend, that but the smallest number of men, viz. the few elect (who, compared to the rest of mankind, are hardly as ten to a million) in reality partake of his redemption, and that all the residue of fallen men and other creatures are to be wholly excluded therefrom to all endless eternity. Certainly if Christ is no other than such a Saviour to as, I say again, the devil, who according to the common opinion, will for ever, world without end, and as long as Christ is to be Christ, keep in his power and under his dominion by far the greatest part of men, of whom we at the same time own that Christ has an earnest desire to redeem them, must be many thousand times mightier than he. Verily if this was the case with our Redeemer, he must either fall short of power to conquer the devil, or want pity and compassion towards those poor souls that are kept prisoners by the devil.

It may be you will make me another objection, and say, that Christ neither wants for force to conquer his enemy, nor mercy towards the captives; but that the reason why so few men are really delivered by him, is, because they resist his grace, and spontaneously

desire to remain the infernal tyrant's slaves. To this I answer, But what is then such resistance and obstinacy in most men against the grace of Jesus Christ offered them? What is the blindness and hardness of their hearts, according to which they themselves choose to continue in the service of the devil? Are they not altogether the workings of Satan? Are they not all chains and snares wherewith he has bound and entangled poor men? Now if Christ, who is to be an universal Saviour of mankind, will in most men never, to all endless eternity, and as long as God is to remain God, destroy such works of the devil; if he will never break and untie the chains and fetters wherewith Satan hath bound the greatest part of mankind; it will still follow, that Christ must be either unmerciful, and not willing to do it, or that he is not able to perform what he would desire. But how absurd, nay, how great a blasphemy is it to make the devil, and that which is evil, stronger than Christ, and that which is good, and sin more powerful than the grace of God?

Thanks be to God, that in Christ we have such a Redeemer, who, although he is a *special Saviour of those that believe*, 1 Tim. iv. 10, because he will grant them to sit with him upon his throne, Rev. iii. 21, and make them partakers of all his glories, to which dignity and high degree of salvation, none of those will ever attain who must be humbled and brought to Christ by the judgment of the next age; yet he is nevertheless not a mere titular, but a real *Saviour of all* the rest of men: who *also by the blood of his covenant* sendeth forth his prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water, Zech. ix. 11, that is out of the state of the damned, where not one drop of comfort is to be found. He has *the keys of hell, and of death*, Rev. i. 18, and consequently is able to cast into, and discharge therefrom whomsoever he pleases; and he will actually *ransom them from the power of the grave (or hell) and will redeem them from death*, in such a manner, as to be a plague to death, and total destruction to the grave (or hell.) Hosea xiii. 14. That is, he will continue so long to redeem from hell, till not one prisoner more shall be left in its jaws and in the power of the devil, and death, and all the power of Satan shall be destroyed and wholly annihilated. Then shall be completely fulfilled what is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. Oh, death where is thy sting! Oh, grave (or hell) where is thy victory! The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. iv. 54-57.

If but one soul was to remain in the power of the devil, death, or hell, to all endless eternity, as long as God shall exist, then the devil, death, and hell, would for ever have something to boast of against God, and to upbraid him with not being able really to spoil them of all their prisoners, to the very last, but that he was obliged to leave them something, and consequently give up the conquest to them. And thus *death* would not be entirely swallowed up in victory to all endless eternity, but would always keep something of his sting; and hell would not quite lose the field of battle, but would be for evermore able to make a scorn of those who should say, *hell, where is thy victory?* For it might at least boast of one soul of which Christ could not deprive it, though he had shed his blood for it. With how much more right now could the devil, death and hell, mock Christ and his believers, if they were to ask them, "O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory?" in case these enemies could (according to the common pretence, whereof the Scripture knows nothing) keep at pleasure the greatest part of mankind for their prisoners as long as God shall exist?

It is plain that by Christ, the universal Saviour, all captivated men are to be actually snatched out of the power of the devil and his angels; and this, when it is fully accomplished, will be an occasion to oblige *Lucifer* and his angels also to humble themselves entirely before Christ Jesus, which, (except the incarnation of our Saviour, and what he did and suffered on earth to work out the salvation of his creatures) will be the greatest wonder that ever was wrought in the creation. And this the holy Scripture clearly foretels, when it says, that *all things under the earth*, that is, not only damned men, but even the fallen spirits, shall at last *bow the knee in the name of Jesus*, and *confess* with their inmost *heart* as well as *tongue*, that *He*, and not Satan, *is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*. Phil. ii. 10, 11.

Then they, together with all the rest of creatures, shall praise God with loud hal-lujahs and inexpressible joy. See Rev. v. 13, compared with Psalm cxlv. 9–11; cl. 6.

For, when now the whole armour of this strong man shall be taken from him, and all his spoils divided, that is, all men who were made a prey of by him, restored to God, and brought again to the company of his saints, and Satan be thus entirely conquered by Christ, and reduced to the condition of a king without subjects or dominions, what then will he do else, but after the manner of an utterly routed enemy, be obliged to prostrate himself before his conquerer, and pray for mercy!

And this total subduing will make way for the restoration of *Lucifer* and his angels.

For, as the most high God could not hare mercy upon them, nor could deliver them out of their most wretched condition, as long as through pride they wanted to be like him, or even above him; so may they be helped when all the stays of their pride are consumed, and reduced to ashes in the lake of fire and brimstone, and of proud and haughty devils they are become humbled spirits, that bow down in the dust before God and Christ, praying for mercy: for God resisteth only the proud, and without the least respect of person, giveth grace to all humble creatures. 1 Pet. v. 5; Isa. Ivii. 15.

Although the offer of God's grace in the said manner will be very acceptable news to *Lucifer* and his angels, at the time of their deepest abasement and humiliation by Christ; (which doubtless will yet require many thousand years) nevertheless the doctrine of his restoration, and the means for it, are, in his present situation, not at all agreeable to him; but the distant prophecies of his subjection are to him most dreadful tidings. For as he is a proud and haughty spirit to the highest degree, who is by no means willing to be subject to God, but would fain be his equal, or rather above him, who with all his might opposes, and if possible, would dethrone the Most High; therefore it is intolerable for him to be foretold, according to divine truth, that by Christ all his power, his whole empire, and all his subjects, not one excepted, shall be taken from him, and he himself brought down so low as to lie in the dust like a vile worm before Christ, and to worship him; which at present he would reckon his greatest shame, and would much rather that Christ and his followers, together with the rest of mankind, should worship him, or take his will for their law. Therefore is this gospel a most frightful lecture to him, to hear that once he shall be entirely thrown down from his high places, and brought again into the right order of God's creatures, which is humility and subjection under God and Christ. Eph. i. 10.

That the doctrine that Christ will entirely vanquish the devil, is intolerable to him, the following parable may serve to illustrate.

Suppose a poor, miserable, naked beggar man, was to be presented to a grand, proud, and tyrannical monarch in the world, who was in possession of a vast empire, having many millions of subjects; and it should be foretold him by divine authority, that this man, so worthless and contemptible in his eyes, should one day or another, conquer his whole empire and strip him of all his subjects, so that at last he would be obliged to fall down naked at his feet, to acknowledge him his lord, and depend on his mercy: can any one imagine this would be an agreeable prophecy to the said grand, proud and tyrannical monarch!

Would he not rather fret and fume, and treat them in the most barbarous manner, as mutineers and rebels, who should foretel such a revolution?

An instance of this we see in Herod, he only supposing in a foolish manner, that Jesus the new-born King of the Jews, might be a rival to him and his sons, what cruel means he made use of to prevent the imaginary mischief! See St. Matt. ii. Now the doctrine of the restoration of all creatures, is a thousand times more terrible news to the devil; by which he is foretold, that Jesus, *that most despised and rejected one*, see Isaiah liii. 3, who when he dwelt on earth was despised and abhorred, whom Satan, through his instruments, did in the most terrible manner revile, mock, spit upon, persecute and torment; and who is still abused in his name, character, and followers, by the children of the devil: that he, I say, shall at last conquer the whole empire of Satan, spoil him of all his subjects and dominions, and oblige him to fall at his feet, who once *was numbered with the transgressors*, Isa. liii. 12, and worship him in the humblest manner.

In short, this doctrine tends utterly to destroy the kingdom of the devil, and all that is diabolical, such as pride, envy, and fury; and therefore the hearing of it, must be the gteatest mortification to Satan imaginable.

From what has been said, it may easily be concluded, that it is no wonder if Satan is enraged against this holy gospel, and endeavours with all his power to suppress it, using especially for his instruments the hypocritical *Pharisees* of this age, false theologers, and the naturally and legally pious people, and such as are but half converted, whose minds are not yet free from wrath, and who look upon God as an endless furious being towards all his creatures, because their souls had never yet a due sense of his infinite love and mercy towards all his works. Nay, I am afraid that even many, otherwise well-meaning souls, will be stirred up to fight against this holy doctrine, particularly those who hold the traditions of their fathers for indisputably divine truths, which they have been obliged to swear to, and call them *the hedge about the Lord's vineyard*: for finding some of them diametrically opposite to this blessed gospel of the universal and impartial love of God, they will perhaps be enticed to declare it to be fanaticism, and a long condemned heresy, which they think themselves obliged to guard against. But if the whole world, and all those that are reckoned the wisest and most pious, were to rise up against it, this holy truth will, nevertheless, make its way through all opposition, and be applauded by the children of truth.

Ye that stigmatize the propagators of this doctrine in the world, do but consider what is represented thereby! It is the most *tender* and at the same time most just *mercy of our God*, whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us; in order to give also at last light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace! St, Luke i. 78, 79. Pray what harm can this do? you may protest against it as much as you please, the words of Solomon's song on our side, describing the

majesty of the love of God, will nevertheless be found true, viz. "Love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel (or hard) as the grave, (or hell, to give it battle, and carry the day) the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." Sol. Song, viii. 6, 7.

Now, as the representation of God's universal and everlasting love must needs, for the above-mentioned reasons, be hateful to the malevolent devil; so on the contrary, that doctrine cannot but very much please him, which teaches that he will to all eternity, or while God exists, keep, as his subjects and slaves, the far greater part of mankind, though purchased by the blood of Jesus our Saviour; which consequently, according to his wish and pleasure, in general, and very near entirely sets at nought the intent of Christ's redemption, and the divine love and mercy manifested thereby. And which teaches that the greatest part of mankind, and all the fallen angels, shall always continue rebels in heart against God, without ever being brought down in true humility to worship God and Christ *in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him*, and will have no other subjects and worshippers than such as those. St John iv. 23, 24

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE WORD ETERNITY, AND THE DIFFERENT ETERNITIES, OR AGES, MENTIONED IN THE SCRIPTURES.

THE words *for ever*, *for ever and ever*, *everlasting*, *eternal*, expressed in the Hebrew language by *ad*, *olam*, *olamim*; and in the Greek language *aion*, *aionios*, *aionion*, *eis*, *tous aionas ton aionon*, &c. have not always the same, but different significations in the Holy Scriptures, as is well known to the learned.

We may say, that in genera), these words are used for every long and hidden duration or continuance of things, whether this duration be final and endless; or of such a nature, that, as it is not without beginning, rooted in the everlasting and incorruptible being of God, and his creating power, but has had its beginning from the creature, and so must of necessity cease at last, and have an end; or infinite, that is of such a nature that, as it had no beginning, either in respect to the real existence or being of the thing itself, or in regard to its root and origin, so necessarily has no end, or may at least be without end or any cessation.

Therefore, whenever we find the word *eternal*, or *everlasting*, in the holy Scriptures, we are not immediately to conclude that an absolutely endless duration must be intended; but we ought first of all to look upon the nature and property of the things that are said to be *eternal* or *everlasting*, and consider whether their nature will admit of an *endless*, or only of a *limited* duration, and explain the word *everlasting* accordingly.

That this is a true and irrefutable rule to be observed, in all explanations and expositions, we are taught, as school-boys, by the canon of logic; saying, *prædicata, intelligenda runt secundum substratum materiam*: Or, *Talia sunt prædicata, qualia permittuntur esse a suis subjectis*; that is, "that what is said of a thing must be understood in such a manner as the nature of the thing will allow of." Such, for instance, is the term *power*, which is lodged in one person to command, or rule others. For this power is not the same in all persons that have any command or government; it being of one kind in an absolute emperor, monarch or king, and of another in a prince, and it is still differ-

ent in an earl, count, baron, or gentleman. Nay, power may be different in a mayor or magistrate of a city, from that in a justice of the peace in the country; and yet there is some kind of power in all these. So it is with respect to the word *for ever*, or *everlasting*; all things which the Holy Spirit, in the sacred Scriptures, call *everlasting*, are, in a sense, really so, that is, they have such an existence and duration as is grounded on their nature, and especially on the will of God. For this the word *everlasting* really signifies, and nothing else, as I shall endeavour to show incontestibly before I have done. For the word *everlasting* is of a quite different extent when it is used to express the duration of the being of God, than when it is attributed to those creatures that have their being from God, and to the good which is derived from him; and again, it is still different when it is applied to sin, and the evil of punishment depending thereon, as coming from the creature alone without God. Now, if I say that the word *eternal*, when applied to God in the Scriptures, signifies an absolutely endless duration, because, God having no beginning, can have no end: and that when it is used of the creatures that have their being from God, as also of their good and blessed condition which they derive from him, it then signifies such an eternal duration, which, as to the real existence or being of things, has had its beginning, but is, or may be, without end; because God, in whose incorruptible, creating power, such things are rooted, has neither beginning nor end. If any should infer from hence, that the word *eternal*, or *everlasting*, must also signify an absolutely endless duration, when it is used to express the continuance of sin and the evil of punishment depending thereon, in this and the next state; such a conception would be more absurd than it would be to imagine the power of a country justice of the peace to be the same with that of an absolute monarch or king.

Therefore to form a true and distinct idea of the words *for ever*, *for ever and ever*, *everlasting*, and *eternal*, wherever they occur in Scripture, we have to observe, that all the *eternities* or *ages* mentioned therein, are chiefly divided into three sorts, and may be distinguished accordingly; as in some measure appears from the preceding paragraph, and is well known to people of understanding.

The last sort of eternities mentioned in Scripture, may be called *Æternitas absolute infinita a parte ante et post*, that is, an absolutely endless eternity; or, such a duration as has neither beginning nor end. This is always the meaning of the word *eternal* or *everlasting*, when it is applied to the Divine Being and his attributes; since God is JEHOVAH, or that supreme self-existent Being, which, as he never had a beginning, but has been in and of himself from *everlasting*, giving all other things their existence, so neither can he ever have an end."

Gen. xii. 33, "And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of JEHOVAH, the *everlasting* God."

Exodus xv. 18. "JEHOVAH shall reign *for ever and ever*."

Psalms xc. 2. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from *everlasting to everlasting* thou art God."

Psalms xciii. 2. "Thy throne is established of old; thou art from *everlasting*."

Jer. x. 10. "But JEHOVAH is the true God; he is the living God, and an *everlasting* King."

Rev. iv. 9, 10. "And when those living animals give glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth *for ever and ever*, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth *for ever and ever*"

&c.

The second sort of ages or eternities that the holy Scriptures speak of, we may call *Æternitas infinita a parta post*; that is, such an endless eternity or duration, which, although it has a beginning, yet will never have an end. This is intended by the word *everlasting*, when it is applied to the existence of those rational creatures which God hath made, and to the good which comes from God. Such is, for instance, the beatitude and glory of believers in the world to come. For, although the good that is to be found in the creatures, together with their existence, as distinct beings, has not always been, but has had a beginning, nevertheless it has absolutely an eternal root in God, in his almighty and incorruptible creating power, which is as ancient as God himself, because it is the same with God; and therefore his creatures, which, according to his wisdom, by his power, and for his pleasure, he hath created, may, and doubtless shall be preserved in existence to all ages, or while God exists, and their final state of happiness shall be of the same duration.

Isaiah xlv. 17. "Israel shall be saved in JEHOVAH with an *everlasting* salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded *world without end*."

Dan. xii. 3. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars *for ever and ever*."

St. John iii. 15, 16. "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have *everlasting* life."

Ver. 36. "He that believeth on the Son hath *everlasting* life."

Chap. iv. 14. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into *everlasting* life."

Chap. v. 24. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath *everlasting* life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life."

Chap. vi. 27. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto *everlasting* life."

Ver. 40. "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have *everlasting* life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

Ver. 47. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath *everlasting* life."

Ver. 54. "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath *eternal* life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Ver. 68. "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of *eternal* life."

Chap. x. 28. "And I give unto them *eternal* life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand."

Chap. xii. 25. "He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life *eternal*."

Ver. 50. "And I know that his (the Father's) commandment is life *everlasting*."

Chap. xvii. 2. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give *eternal* life to as many as thou hast given him."

Ver. 3. "And this is life *eternal*, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

All these passages, and many more that might be brought, intend the second kind of eternities or ages: viz. those that have a beginning, but shall never have an end.

The third sort of eternities mentioned in the holy Scriptures, may be called *Æernitas periodica*; that is, such an age or duration of things which is limited within a certain period of time, longer or shorter, that has its certain beginning and end; since the things to which such an *aion*, or *for ever*, are ascribed are not to last to an endless duration. In this sense the words *for ever*, *everlasting*, &c. are very frequently used in the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament.

Here we will only allege some of the plainest and chiefest places. As for instance, the Holy Spirit calls a man's life-time here on earth an *eternity*, or *for ever*, Exod. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17; 1 Sam. i. 22; Philemon ver. 15.

Secondly, the Levitical priesthood, and divine worship of the Old Testament, which was instituted by God only for a certain time, viz. until the time of Reformation, as the Holy Ghost expresses it, Heb. ix. 10, that is, until the coming of Christ, who is the end of the law. This time, or period, is called an *eternity*, or *for ever*, in the following passages: Exod. xii. 14, 17; chap. xxvii. 21; chap. xxviii. 43; chap. xxix. 28; chap. xxx. 21; chap. xxxi. 16, 17; chap. xl. 15; Levit. iii. 17; chap. vi. 13, 18, 22; chap. vii. 34, 36; chap. x. 9, 15; chap. xvi. 29, 31, 34; chap. xvii. 7; chap. xxiii. 14, 21, 31, 41; chap. xxiv. 3, 9; Numb. x. 8; chap. xv. 15; chap. xviii. 8, 11, 19, 23; chap. xix. 10; chap. xxv. 13; Deut. xviii. 5. These are all said to be *for ever*, *everlasting*, or *perpetual*, and yet were only for a certain period, as is evident to all Christians.

Thirdly, the time before Christ's incarnation, and the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles, in the whole world, is called (*chronois aioniois*) the *eternal age*, Rom. xvi. 8-5. And the apostle says that Christ appeared in the end of (*ton aionon*) the *eternity*, or *age*, Heb. ix. 26.

Fourthly, in general, and in a complex sense, the periods of time, or the ages, both of this present and the next world, which in some measure both subsist together, and succeed one another, and being linked like one chain, and reach even unto that eternity, when the Son of God, after the consummation of all his works, shall deliver up the kingdom to his Father, and himself, though without the least diminution of his glory, be subject unto him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all, in that only endless and still *eternity* of God, into which at last, all limited or periodical *eternities* shall be changed; or, in the sweetest manner return, as into the head-spring from which they flowed. Heb. xi. 3, compared with Ephes. i. 21; chap. ii. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 28; Rev. xi. 15.

Fifthly, this present wicked world or age, which is to have an end at the coming of Christ, is called by the same word that is rendered elsewhere *for ever*, or *eternity*. St. Matt. xii. 32; chap. xiii. 22, 39, 40, 49; chap. xxiv. 3; chap. xxviii. 20. St. Mark iv. 19; St. Luke i. 70; chap. xvi. 8; chap. xx. 34; St. John ix. 32; Acts iii. 21; xv. 18; Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. i. 20; chap. ii. 6, 7; chap. iii. 18; chap. viii. 13; chap. x. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Gal. i. 4; Eph. i. 21; chap. vi. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 17; 2 Tim. i. 9; chap. iv. 10; Tit. i. 2; chap. ii. 12.

N.B. In all these last places of Scripture, the English translation now in use has the word *world*, but the Greek original has the word *aion*, or some of its derivatives, which is nothing like *world*, but properly signifies the present *age*, which must end, though it is called by the same name which is applied to the life to come, and is rendered *for ever*, or *eternity*; but whereby, in these places, can be understood nothing more than the duration or continuance of the time of this wicked age of the world, which is only to last till the coming of Christ.

CHAPTER VIII.

TO WHICH SORT OF ETERNITIES THE ETERNITY OF THE EVIL, AND THE PUNISHMENT DEPENDING THEREON, ETERNAL DAMNATION, AS IT IS CALLED, BELONGS.

As soon as the evil or sin is severed from the creatures, the punishment thereof ceases.

For *sin is the sting of death*, 1 Cor. xv. 56. Now when this sting comes to be destroyed, then the pain and wounding of death discontinues too; as a fire must go out as soon as it wants combustibles.

On the contrary, so long as the evil, or sin, subsists in the creatures, either within or without, or at least within, so long the punishment of sin will continue upon them both in this and the next world: so long will the wrath of God abide on them; for his indignation resteth upon sinners, so long as they continue in sin.

“He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” St. John iii. 18.

“He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” ver. 36.

“God is angry with the wicked every day.” Psal. viii. 11.

“Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin: neither say thou before the angel that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the works of thine hands!” Eccles. v. 6.

Now, since many thousands of millions of the fallen creatures do not only go on in wickedness to the end of their days in this world, but will also be wicked in the world to come; so it follows that not only in this world or age, but particularly in that which is to come, as being under the severe but just judgment of God, they must be punished according to their deeds done in the body.

Many and terrible are the plagues and punishments which God often in this world inflicts on wicked creatures; but they are nothing to those punishments and torments that will come upon them hereafter. The Scriptures speak of them in the most dreadful terms and phrases, which are enough to make one’s hair stand erect. But ah! how horrid and insupportable will they be to endure in reality!

See Deut. xxxii. 34, 35, 40, 41; Psal. vii. 12, 13; Psal. xi. 6; Psal. lxxiii. 17–20; Isaiah xxx. 33; chap. xxxiii. 14; chap. l. 11; chap. lxxv. 13–15; chap. lxxvi. 24; Ezek. xxii. 14; St. Matt. iii. 12; chap. v. 22, 29, 30; chap. vii. 19; chap. x. 28; chap. xiii. 40–42, 49, 50; chap. xviii. 8, 9, 34; chap. xxiii. 14, 33; chap. xxiv. 51; chap. xxv. 30, 41, 46; St. Mark iii. 29; chap. ix. 42–49; St. Luke xii. 46–48; chap. xiii. 25–28; chap. xvi. 23–26; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9; Heb. ii. 2, 3; chap. vi. 8; chap. x. 29–31; 1 Peter iv. 17, 18; 2 Pet. ii. 8, 17; chap. iii. 7; Jude ver. 13–15; Rev. xiv. 10, 11; chap. xix. 3, 20; chap. xx. 10, 14, 15; chap. xxi. 8; chap. xxii. 15, 18, 19.

But the punishments of the wicked creatures in the future state will not only be terrible beyond description, but they will also last *eternally*, that is, they will be of a true *aionion* duration, according to their nature. Therefore as I do sincerely believe an *eternal* happiness, so sincerely do I believe an *eternal* damnation; that is, a future condemnation of the wicked, to those punishments of the next world which according to the dialect of the Holy Ghost, may be justly called *eternal* or *aionion*. See St. Matt iii. 12; chap. xviii. 8; chap. xxv. 41, 46; St. Mark iii. 29; chap. ix. 43–48; 2 Thess. i. 9; Jude ver. 7; Rev.

xiv. 11; chap. xix. 3; chap. xx. 10. So that in truth no person can accuse me of denying that eternal damnation, wherewith God in his word, has threatened the wicked, without sinning against the ninth commandment, which if any one does, I heartily pray God to forgive him.

But since the very same Spirit of Truth, which so very solemnly threatens the devils and all hardened sinners with eternal damnation, doth also on the other hand in holy writ, with great emphasis testify of God's everlasting and unbounded love towards all his creatures of the eternal and general redemption of our Saviour, and, in short, of the final renovation and restoration of all corrupt creatures, and consequently of their universal and happy subjection in the kingdom of God and of Christ, where every creature shall praise God: as has been already shown, and shall be most clearly demonstrated in the 12th chapter of this treatise, you must needs think that as a simple scholar of heavenly wisdom, I am obliged to take both for divine and consistent truths. And therefore I reckon the *eternity of the evil, and the punishment depending thereon*, neither to the first, nor to the second, but to the third sort of eternities described in the foregoing chapter; because such evil, and the punishment thereof, has no *everlasting* root in God, (as the creatures themselves, and the good that is imparted to them by God have) but is of the creatures, and during the created ages sprung up in them of their own creaturely will.

It may be some will say, that the protestations that I believe an eternal damnation, art nothing but a mere pretence and play-work, since my maintaining the Restoration of all things obliges me to believe that such eternal damnation must at last come to an end, and that consequently, my pretended *true eternity of punishments* in the next world, is: no eternity at all. To this I answer, that no man, let him be whosoever he will, must pretend to set up for a reformer of the language of the eternal wisdom of God, which calls *olamim, aionas* or *eternities*, not only the absolutely endless duration of the Divine being himself, and of those things which may subsist in him without end, but also such durations of things which are bounded within certain periods of time, as has been fully proved in the preceding chapter, so that the matter is as clear as day-light.

Can the Spirit of Truth justly call a man's life-time on earth, an *aion, age, forever, or eternity*, which very often falls short of fifty years? With how much more justice may he call that period *eternity*, wherein the evil angels and men, shall, by a just judgment, be banished from the presence of God; which doubtless will contain our short life-time many hundreds of times multiplied? For which reason also, this frightful, long, but just period of the manifested wrath of God, is called in some places of Scripture, not merely *aion, or eternity*; but is expressed by *aionas ton aion*, that is *age of ages, or eternity of eternities*. Rev. xiv. 14; chap. xix. 3; chap. xx. 10. Lord God preserve us from all this eternity! It will be too long to those that come into it, and we have no occasion, contrary to truth, to make it still longer than the Spirit of Truth hath made it.

Some pretend, that the eternity of evil, and the eternal damnation depending thereon, must be an absolutely endless eternity, and last as long as the being of God himself, because it is in some places of Scripture, compared with the eternal happiness of the children of God, and its duration expressed in the same words; so that if the eternity of damnation was to cease, we must conclude that of eternal glory must have an end too. St. Matt. xxv. 46; Rev. xiv. 11; chap. xix. 3; chap. xx. 10, compared with chap. xi. 15; chap. xxii. 5.

As plausible as this objection seems to be, so empty it is, if we go to the bottom thereof. We will at present answer to it, first, That all such as advance this objection against the eternal and universal redemption, turn their own weapon against themselves, and unknowingly participate of a great error, which they will never own themselves to be guilty of; for, let these people only consider, that if we are obliged to conclude, according to their opinion, that the eternity of pain and the eternity of glory must be of an exactly equal extent and length, because they are both compared together in the Scriptures, and their duration is expressed in the same words; then it must also necessarily follow, that the evil and punishment depending thereon, must have been from all eternity, and either without any beginning at all, or must at least have an endless root in God, and consequently be itself God, or his creature. This latter is the case with the eternal glory and happiness. For, although the creature's real enjoyment of the eternal happiness and glory begins here in time, yet the eternal happiness and glory, or the glorious kingdom of God itself, is without any beginning, and existed in and with God, ever since God himself has been, that is, from all inconceivable eternity; and must therefore, certainly, exist so long as God himself, who is the only source of all true beatitude and glory, shall exist. See St. Matt. xxv. 34, compared with Ephes. i. 4.

If the eternity of the evil is in every respect to answer to the extension of the eternity of glory in and with God, then the extension of the eternity of the evil, must be backwards as well as forwards, and consequently has been from all inconceivable eternity, and ever since God himself has existed; the holding of which would resemble the heresy of the ancient *Manichees*, as much as one egg does another.

Again, if any one would say, that the equality of these two eternities, of the evil and of the good, is not backwards, but forwards, that is, although the evil, to wit, sin and punishment depending thereon, was not without beginning, as the eternal happiness, considered in itself, and according to its nature was; yet that the eternity of the evil is without end; and forwards, of the same extension with the eternity of glory; he must know, that if this extension is not to be the same, as well backwards as forwards, it wants a great deal of being every way alike; and, if my adversary is obliged, to avoid falling into heresy, to shorten it one way, why should not I have liberty, for good and weighty reasons, to cut it short another way?

I answer, *secondly*, that it is altogether false that the Scripture always, whenever it uses the words *aion*, *aionios*, or *for ever*, of two contrary things, thereby necessarily understands an equally long duration of both. I will here only allege three plain passages of Scripture which prove the contrary. Please to look into the Greek text of St. Matt. xiii. 32; St. Luke xx. 34, 35; Ephes. i. 21. In these places *this present world*, and the *future*, or *next world*, are compared together, where it is said in the Greek, according to the Scripture style, *en toulo to aioni, oute en to mellonti; ton aionos toutou, ton aionos ekinou; en to aioni toutou, en to mellonti*; that is, *this eternity*, or *age*, and *the eternity*, or *age to come*. But by this *eternity*, or *age*, nothing else is meant but *this world*, or the *present period of time*, which has begun with the fall of man, and will end with the coming of Christ; and by the next world is intended that period of *Christ's future reign in his manifested glory*. But if by the words *aion*, *aionios*, *eternity*, or *eternal*, we are always to understand an equally long duration, even when they are used of contrary things, it must necessarily follow from the above quoted texts of Scripture, that the future world, wherein Christ is foreign in his glory, is to last no longer than this present

wicked world; for the periods of both worlds are expressed by the Holy Spirit, according to his usual way of speaking, by one and the same word, namely, *aion*, *eternity*, or *age*, as is also the duration of the future damnation and happiness, St. Matt. xxv. 46. But who of the opposers of the Restoration of all things will allow of this, especially as long as by the future world they understand an endless eternity, according to the common hypothesis?

Thirdly and lastly, if our adversaries will absolutely have it so, that the glorious reign of Christ with his elect, and the state of damnation and unhappiness of the poor creatures cast into the fiery lake, must be two equally long eternities, and we should even grant them this too, they would gain nothing at all by it against the blessed doctrine of the Restoration. That economy, therefore, and sort of government of Christ and his elect, during which all enemies must be put under Christ's feet, and all rebellious creatures in reality made subject unto God and Christ, after the abolition of death, and sin which is the sting of death; that economy, I say, will certainly have an end; namely, at that period when Christ's aim is obtained, and the Son himself shall be subject to Him that put all his under his feet. But hereby is not meant that the kingdom of Christ shall cease, which, according to the word of God is to have no end. St. Luke i. 33. But it will rather through such subjection of Christ under God his Father, get an infinitely greater lustre. So that we must well distinguish between *the particular government of Christ and his elect*, and *the kingdom of Christ and his believers* as one with the kingdom of his heavenly Father. The *first* will certainly cease, and consequently the eternities of eternities, or ages of ages, appointed for it will end; but the latter is to last for evermore, or to all eternity. Now, as long as the said eternities or ages of the particular government of Christ are to last and succeed one another, so long will also last the eternities or ages of pain in the fiery lake: for as soon as all eternities are conquered, and every creature is brought to true obedience and subjection under God and Christ, he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father. Therefore both these eternities are of an exactly like long duration.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE DIFFERENT SORTS OR DEGREES OF DAMNATION: THAT IS, OF THE FIRST AND SECOND DEATH, OR OF THE PRISONS OF THE SEA, DEATH, HELL, AND OF THE FIERY LAKE.

ALL punishing justice, if it be worthy of the name of justice, requires that the punishment be in proportion and according to the nature of the sin, and the situation of the sinner. So we find that even in this world a righteous judge inflicts no greater punishment on a malefactor than his crime deserves; nay, his severest punishments are usually mitigated, and mixed with some mercy.

Now, since those men, who in their unaltered sinful condition are carried off into the other world, and after their departure abide under the wrath of God, (St. John iii. 36,) are not all alike wicked, but some have sinned a great deal more than others, and consequently, through the growth of their inward iniquity are become more conformable unto the devil than others; so it follows of itself, that the punishments which the Divine justice will inflict upon the depraved creatures in the next world, will be unequal, and in proportion to the heinousness and greatness of their crimes; some punishments being very severe and long, and others more tolerable and shorter. This the holy Scripture plainly evidences in several places. St. Matt. v. 22; chap. x. 15; chap. xi. 22, 21. St. Luke

x. 12, 14; chap. xli. 47, 48. Wisdom, vi. 5–8.

All punishments inflicted on the creatures for their sin, or whereby their sin is as it were rewarded, both in this, and in the next world, are comprehended in this one word, *Death*, as the Scripture says, *The wages of sin is death*. Rom. vi. 23.

By this we may see the truth of the divine threatening, and how precisely it was fulfilled, and is daily fulfilled before our eyes, when God threatened our first parents, that in the self-same day, that they should eat of the forbidden fruit, they should *surely die*. Gen. ii. 17, compared with chap. iii. 6–10, &c. For, from the moment they sinned, they incurred God’s wrath and displeasure, lost the Divine image, got an evil conscience, which put them in fear, anxiety and terror; and, in short, they brought upon themselves all sorts of spiritual and bodily plagues and torments. All this is called, in the language of the Holy Ghost, *death*, and is the wages of sin, or that wherewith sin pays those, who like soldiers, serve and obey it. St. John viii. 34. “Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin.”

So that if we take the word *death* in its most extensive and complete sense, the beginning of it is not only when we die bodily, and our souls are separated from their bodies; but it had its beginning with all men, in the very moment when sin entered into our nature; because *death* is as naturally in *sin*, as pain is in sickness. Rom. v. 12. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned.”

Wherefore the holy Scripture speaks very emphatically of such men as are converted to God in this time of grace, that they have *passed from death unto life*, St. John v. 24; Ephes. ii. 1. “And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.” See also ver. 5, and Col. ii. 13. Consequently they must have been really in death before their conversion, when they were the servants of sin. “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” Rom. viii. 6.

Now as death has begun in man with sin, so the more sin increases in man, the more the power and violence of death increases also: in the same manner as the pain and corruption of the body increaseth with the sickness. “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were by the law did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” Rom. vii. 5.

And if men take sin with them out of this world into the next, they likewise carry death with them. If they come to the highest degree of sin and wickedness, (which in the Scripture is called the *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*, and the *sin unto death*. See St. Matt. xii. 31, 32; St. Mark iii. 28, 29; St. Luke xii. 10; 1 John v. 16,) and thereby take upon themselves the perfect resemblance of the devil, who seduced them to sin, then they will be banished with him into the outermost regions of darkness and death; that is, precipitated into the lowest hell, or the lake burning with fire and brimstone. St. Matt. viii. 12; chap. xxii. 13; chap. xxv. 30; Deut. xxxii. 22, compared with Rev. xx. 10; ver. 15, chap. xxi. 8.

If I was to give a general and scriptural description of death, which is the wages of sin, that is, of all that which the Holy Ghost means by death, both in this and the other world, it would be as follows:

“Death, as the wages of sin, is nothing else but the miserable and wretched condition of creatures lying under the dominion of sin, and consequently under the wrath of God, eating of the *fruit of their own way*, Prov. i. 31, and of *the flesh*, to which they sowed,

reaping corruption. Gal. vi. 8, that is, feeling and experiencing through God's just judgment, both in this and the next world, all sorts of spiritual and bodily plagues, flowing quite naturally from their sin and wickedness, and being in proportion and according to the nature thereof; in order that they may be thus convinced, how bad and abominable that is which they have chosen for themselves against the will of God: and so at last, to the everlasting praise and glory of God's justice and mercy, made by these rough and severe means truly subject to God the Father of all spirits, and to his most beloved and only begotten Son Jesus Christ, whom he has appointed Lord over all things, both in this age, and which is to come." See 1 Cor. xv. 25, 28, compared with Psal. cxlv. 8–10; Psal. cl. 6; Rev. v. 13; Ephes. i. 20–22; Phil. ii. 9–11; Heb. ii. 8.

This description takes in all the different kinds of death which divines generally distinguish by *bodily*, *spiritual*, and *eternal* death: since the painful separation of soul and body, with all foregoing bodily afflictions, (which is usually called *natural death*;) then the want and loss of the divine image and the grace of God, (being called the *spiritual death*;) and lastly, the woful condition of the damned in hell, either in soul alone, or both in soul and body, (which generally goes by the name of *eternal death*;) are in a manner but parts of death, if we take the word in its completest sense.

Concerning the *bodily* or *natural* death in particular, whereby the soul and body of man are separated, it may be justly called according to Scripture, first, with respect to believers, *a passage from death into the true eternal life, a putting off all mortality, or a perfect deliverance from the body of death*, which in this world they were obliged to bear, and carry about them as an heavy burden. And in this view the natural death is so far from being terrible to the righteous, that it is desirable. See 2 Cor. v. 1–9; Phil. i. 23; Rev. xiv. 13; Isaiah lvii. 1, 2; Wisdom iii. 1–4.

But, secondly, with respect to the wicked and unbelievers, we may rightly call it, *a passage out of one miserable land if death into another which is much more miserable and terrible.* See St. Luke xvi. 22, 23.

But the most proper division of death is to distinguish it according to the Scripture, by the *first* and *second* death. It is true that we do not find the name of *first death* in Scripture, but the denomination of *second death* implies it. For if there is a *second death*, there must necessarily be a *first death*, which is antecedent to the second; because, without it, the name of *second* death would be without any meaning. But as the term *second death*, is four times mentioned in Scripture, (see Rev. ii. 11; chap. xx. ver. 6, 14; chap. xxi. 8.) it is certainly used with design, and implies a *first death*.

Knowing from what has been said above, that death inseparably hangs together with sin, and as naturally follows upon it, as the wages follow any service, and that sin and death are as much connected as pain and sickness; besides, the holy Scriptures having given us a precise definition of the second death, viz. that it is *a lake burning with fire and brimstone*, (see Rev. xx. 14; chap. xxi. 8.) we may easily comprehend what is meant by the *first death*.

The *first death*, therefore, is nothing else but that miserable and painful condition both of soul and body, which men are in while they are under the dominion of sin, and at the same time under the wrath of God; which wretched state began the moment they fell into sin, and if they are not redeemed from it in this present time of grace, it will continue after the separation of body and soul, under many dreadful punishments and torments, and will grow worse and worse, till at the last judgment, they are either

delivered from it through the endless mercies of God, being sufficiently humbled, and so found written in the Book of Life. Rev. xx. 12, 15; 1 Pet. iii. 19; compared with chap. iv. 6; Hosea xiii. 14. Or, if the Divine Justice finds it adequate to their iniquity, they are from the first death dommitted to the second, to receive the full measure of the wrath of God burning over them. Rev. xx. 14, 15; chap. xxi. 8.

This *first death*, if represented by the figure of a tyrant, has as it were, two chief provinces and regions where it bears sway, and exercises its power, viz., First, the province of this present wicked world, and the time before the separation of the soul and body, where men in this world are under the dominion of sin and the power of death. And secondly, the woful rendezvous, or place of torment of the impure souls of the deceased, and the time after the separation of soul and body, until the great day of judgment, where men, going oot of this world in an unconverted condition, must remain under the wrath of God and in death, not seeing life.

That not only the unhappy state of men after their decease, but also their sinful condition by nature in this world, where they are servants to sin, is a part of death, the Scripture tells us in plain words, calling such a state, *darkness and the shadow of death*, St. Luke i. 79. Yea, representing them as dead who live in sin, St. Luke xv. 24, 32; Ephes. ii. 1–5; Col. ii. 13; 1 John iii. 14: and that such who live in sensual pleasure are dead while they live. 1 Tim. v. 6. They are called *living* because they enjoy as yet a natural life, common with brutes: but they are *dead*, because they want the spiritual life, (Ephes. iv. 18,) which properly distinguishes men from brutes, and makes them truly men, that is, creatures in the image of God.

The doleful regions of the *first death*, into which unbelievers are banished after their dissolution, have many denominations in holy Scripture. They are, for instance, called, *The lower parts of the earth*, Psal. lxiii. 9. *The nether parts of the earth*, Ezek. xxxi. 14–18; chap. xxxii. 18–32. *The pit wherein is no water*, Zech. ix. 11. *The grave, or hell and death*, Psal. xlix. 14, 15; Hosea xiii. 14. *The sides of the pit*, Isaiah xiv. 15, compared with verse 9 and 19. *The darkness and deep*, Psal. lxxxviii. 6, compared with Psal. lxxi. 20. *Darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*, St. Matt. viii. 12; chap. xxii. 13; chap. xxv. 30. *Darkness and the shadow of death*, where such have rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High, sit bound in affliction and iron. Psalm cvii. 10, 11. *The prison*, 1 Pet. iii. Isai. xliii. 7. *Hell*, or the place of torment, where the souls of the wicked are *tormented* as in a *flame* of fire, without being able to come at the least drop of water to quench their thirst, which place is separated from the delightful mansions of the blessed by a great gulph. See St. Luke, xvi. 23–28. To these names may be added that of the *abyss* or *bottomless pit*, wherein Satan will be kept prisoner during the blessed *thousand years* of the reign of our Lord and Saviour on the earth. Rev. xx. 2, 3, 7.

All which different names and denominations, show plainly enough that the woful regions of the *first death* must contain several prisons: and in a certain place of Scripture, they are expressly divided into three headquarters, viz. the *Sea*, *Death*, (so called in a particular manner,) and *Hell*. Rev. xx. 13.

And the difference of these places of confinement designed for the wicked after their departure out of the world, (one being doubtless worse than the other) is grounded on the different degrees of their iniquity, where every convict will be ordered by the righteous Judge of all flesh to a prison of death proportionable to his crime. This is exemplified

to us in the conduct of worldly magistrates, by their not committing all prisoners to the same place of confinement, but every one to a gaol, or part thereof, suitable to his offence.

The *second death*, following the first, is that most wretched, most woful, and most unhappy condition of evil men and angels lying under the dominion of sin and the wrath of God, in the *fiery lake*, whom no foregoing judgments have been able to tame, and who therefore, according to their last doom, must receive the full measure of their well deserved punishments, be absolutely excluded from all the grace and mercy of God, during that very long and terrible age wherein the anger of the Most High is to burn against them. See Rev. xix. 20; chap. xx. 14, 15; chap. xxi. 8; chap. iv. 10, 11; St. Matt. iii. 13; chap. xxv. 41, 46; Isaiah xxxiii. 33.

They shall be as unclean dogs cast out of the palace of the King of Heaven, and entirely forsaken of God, and banished from his presence into the most dreadful pain and punishment. See Rev. xxii. 15; St. Matt. viii. 12; chap. xxv. 30; chap. xxiv. 51; Prov. i. 24–32; Isaiah lxv. 13, 14; 2 Thess. i. 9.

So great will be God's wrath upon those who shall be sentenced to the second death, that even the saints of the Lord will not be permitted to intercede for them, not until they have felt the wrath of God in its highest degree; whereof we have instances in some wicked and obdurate men in this world. See 1 John v. 16, compared with Jer. vii. 16; chap. xi. 14; chap. xiv. 11.

Though not all men, dying in an unsanctified condition of soul, and who are after their decease sentenced to the prisons of the *first death*, will become a prey to the *second death*, but some, and without doubt such as are not wicked to the same high degree, nor have had the same means of grace towards their salvation here on earth, as others, will be, through the endless mercies of God preserved from it, as the holy Scripture plainly shews, after having received a sufficient number of stripes for their sins, and being under such punishment cleansed by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, which even penetrates into the pit wherein is no water; yet all those that get into the prisons of the *first death*, will be greatly tormented through fear of the *second death*; in the same manner as all confined malefactors who deserve to die, most always be in expectation of the punishment of death, though some of them, in consideration of certain circumstances, and through powerful intercession, may not suffer death, but be sentenced to a more tolerable punishment.

That some whose names were not written in the book of life at our Lord's second coming, shall yet be preserved from being cut into the *lake of fire*, or the *second death*, is evident from this, that the book of life shall be opened, after the second resurrection at the general judgment, and many shall be found written therein, and shall be saved from the *second death*, who were not worthy of a part in the first resurrection, nor of reigning with Christ. See Rev. xx. 12, 15; 1 Cor. iii. 15; St. Luke xii. 47, 48.

But the being entirely free from all tormenting fear of the second death, is a peculiar privilege of the faithful conquerers, who during their life time here on earth have been united to Christ, and have suffered him continually to destroy in them the dominion of the devil and sin. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Rev. ii. 11. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Chap. xx. 6.

Such, dying in the Lord are henceforth *blessed*, come into no judgment, and therefore into no prison of the first death in the next world, and, consequently cannot be hurt by the second death; (when even the thoughts thereof are a torment to the prisoners of the first death) for they are perfectly passed from death unto life. (See Rev. xiv. 13; St. John v. 24; chap. viii. 61.) When, in the judgment of men, they are said to die, they themselves die not, but it is death which quite dies in and on them, namely, *the body of death*, to whom they wish no better than entire destruction.

From this we may see that the unhappy state of men leaving this world in unbelief, which we commonly express by the word *hell*, or *damnation*, implies much: namely, as Christ says of his Father's house, the dwelling place of the blessed dead, which is generally called *heaven*, that therein are *many mansions*; (See St. John xiv. 2) so it is with the habitation of Satan and all unclean spirits in the other world, or the abode of unhappy deceased men; there is not only one, but several gaols and prisons, where every man dying in wickedness will be sent to a prison adapted to his degree of iniquity, there to continue so long, till, according to the true saying of our Saviour, he has paid *all that is due*, even to the *uttermost farthing*, or *the very last mite*. St. Matt, xviii. 34; chap. v. 26; St. Luke xii. 59. That is, until he has suffered his due punishment, which is to extend itself to every idle word. St. Matt. xii. 36. And this is the meaning of the words, *He that believeth not shall be damned*; St. Mark vii. 16; that is, he shall be condemned by the divine justice of God, (which is grounded on his eternal love) to such a punishment in the next world, as is adequate to the measure of his iniquity of which he would not suffer himself to be freed in this time of grace.

We may very well express by the words *heaven* and *hell*, if taken in their full latitude, the happy and unhappy state of men deceased, either in faith or unbelief; and need not superstitiously interpose a purgatory, since the ultimate end of all punishments, which God, (who is love, and whose anger is grounded on love) inflicts on the apostate creatures, both in this and the next world, is, to bring them at last to such a pass, that by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, shed for the reconciliation of the whole world, sin may be destroyed, and *purged out of them*. In which sense, all punishments of God, both here and in the other world, may be called purgatories, and we have no reason to look for purgatory only in the world to come; we may find enough of it in this present world, under all sorts of punishments and afflictions.

But if we will not be made good in this gentle purgatory here, then God, who has bestowed so much on his creatures, and therefore cannot let them be irrecoverably lost, must necessarily after our decease, cast us into one which will burn to the lowest hell, and be able to tame and soften the most wicked wretches, if they were even as bad as the devil himself. God will hold it out with them; let them try if they will not believe it. But may the Lord, through his infinite love, preserve all those that will take warning, from such hardness of heart; and grant that we may much rather choose the afflictions of this life, and the reproach of Christ for our purgatory, which are temporal and light, and will procure for us *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17; from which all others that must be drawn to God by the judgments of the next world alone will be forever excluded; although, to the praise of God's endless mercy, they will obtain some grace, after they have been sufficiently humbled.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE DIFFERENT DECREES OF ETERNAL GLORY; OR OF THE FIRST BIRTH, AND AFTER BIRTH TO SALVATION.

As there are many degrees of damnation and unhappiness in the other world, so there are also many degrees of happiness and glory. 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24, 39, 40–42; Psalm xlv. 14, 15; Sol. Song vi. 8, 9.

The several degrees of happiness in the other world do not only consist, as is most commonly thought, in the difference of the heavenly and divine brightness in which the glorified bodies of the blessed will hereafter shine; but they go much farther, as shall be shewn immediately.

The difference of glory in the next world consists chiefly in the *first birth*, and *after birth* unto salvation. And consequently there are *first born*, and *after born* in the state of salvation.

The *first-born* unto salvation, to whom belongs the heavenly birth-right, are no other than such men, among the fallen creatures, (who must needs be regenerated and created anew, if they would come again to God) who suffer themselves to be regenerated *first*, and, through faith, to be united with Christ *here* in this time of grace, so called in the properest sense.

These are therefore called in Scripture, *The Church of the first-born, who are written in heaven*. Heb. xii. 23. *The first fruits of God's creatures*. James i. 18. *Such as have the first fruits of the Spirit*. Rom. viii. 23. Besides many more glorious names which they have to shew their pre-eminence above all the rest of mankind, who will at last be saved too by our Universal Redeemer. They are, for instance, called the *Bride of Christ*. Psalm xlv. 9–11; Sol. Song iv. 8, 9, 11; chap. v. 1; St. John iii. 29; Rev. xix. 7; chap. xxii. 17. *The friends of Christ*. St. John xv. 14, 15. They are called his *mother and his brethren*. St. Matt. xii. 49, 50; St. Mark iii. 34, 35; St. Luke viii. 21. His *brethren*. St. Matt. xxv. 40; chap. xxviii. 10; Rom. viii. 29; Heb. ii. 11, 12, 17. *The spirits of just men made perfect*, Heb. xii. 23.

But the Scripture speaks also of a difference between these first-born unto salvation, dividing them, especially in Rev. xi. 18, into three classes; viz. *The servants of God, or the prophets; the saints; and those that fear the name of the Lord*; and these last are again subdivided into *small and great*. This difference is doubtless grounded, partly, on the different degrees of sanctification to which they attain here; and partly, on the different measure of the spiritual gifts of grace wherewith they are adorned and favoured by God, through Jesus Christ. See Rom. xii. 3–8; 1 Cor. xii. 4–31.

These first-born and first-fruits are represented as being *sealed to the day of redemption, sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise*. Eph. i. 13, 14; chap. iv. 30. There is a *mark set upon them*. (See Ezek. iv. 4.) They are sealed with the seal of God *in their forehead*. Rev. vii. 2–8. *The name of God is written upon their foreheads*. Rev. xiv. 1; chap. iii. 20; chap. xxii. 4. *Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his*. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

It is to these *first-born* alone, that the promises of the celestial kingdom and priesthood in the future age belong, (see St. Matt. xxv. 34. Rev. v. 10; chap. xx. 4–6; chap. xxii. 5,) together with all the unspeakable prerogatives and glories which our Lord and Saviour has promised to those who are convened to him on earth, love him with all their hearts, and are his constant followers, whereof, especially the book of the Revelations is

full. See Rev. ii. 7, 10, 11, 17, 26–28; chap. iii. 5, 12, 20, 21; chap. liv. 13; chap. xxi. 7; chap. xxii. 3–5, 14.

This was represented in the Old Testament by the first-born children of the holy patriarchs, who by virtue of their birth-right were entitled to the sovereignty or dominion, as also to the priesthood over the rest of their brethren, and the whole family; Gen. xlix. 8, compared with chap. xiv. 31–34; chap. xxvii. 19, 28, 29, 33–40.

In the place of the *first-born*, God afterwards adopted the Levites among the children of Israel; and the whole tribe of Levi, instead of the first-born, were entrusted with the oracles of God, and invested with the sacerdotal office, as the government of state or royalty was transferred to the tribe of Judah. Numb. iii. 12, 40–51; chap. viii. 5–26; Gen. xlix. 8–10; 1 Chron. v. 1, 2.

And we find that the high prerogative of the spiritual *birth-right* was even prefigured in the Old Testament in general, by all the *first-born* and *first-fruits*, both of clean beasts, and of the fruits of the earth, which God would have sanctified unto him in a special manner, as appears by many places in the *Pentateuch*. Exod. xiii. 2, 12–16; chap. xxii. 29, 30; chap. xxiii. 19; chap. xxxiv. 19, 20, 26; Lev. xxvii. 36; Numb. iii. 13; chap. viii. 16, 17. See St. Luke ii. 22–24; Rom. xi. 16. The *first born* to salvation are those few who in their lifetime find the narrow way to eternal life, and penetrate through the straight gate; whereas such as go the broad way of the flesh, leading to perdition, are *many*, yea, the greatest number. St. Matt. vii. 13, 14. St. Luke xiii. 24. The *first-born* are the *few elect*, compared with the many who are called, but on the account of their unbelief and disobedience are rejected. St. Matt. xxii. 14; St. Luke xix. 24. These, after the sad example of Esau, (*who for one morsel of meat sold his birth-right*) are deprived of the enjoyment of the inexpressible privileges and glories of the heavenly birthright. Heb. xii. 16, 17, compared with Gen. xxv. 33, 34; chap. xxvii. 33–38.

By the *after-born* to salvation, are chiefly meant all the rest of mankind, who in their life-time neglect repentance, and the purification of their souls, selling like Esau, their birth-right for a mess of pottage of lentiles; that is, giving it in exchange for the vanities of this world, and must therefore, after their departure hence, remain under God's wrath, and by the long-lasting and terrible judgments of the next world be humbled and made fit for the participation of some enjoyment of the endless mercies of God, through Christ the universal Saviour and Reconciler of all fallen creatures, and thus, in their way be *regenerated* unto life, *after* the already glorified *first-born* children of God. To the *after-born* belong too, as a supplement, the fallen angels, as we have shewn above.

Although the phrase, *after-born to salvation*, is not to be literally met with in the Bible, yet the thing itself is grounded therein. For, if it be true, that at the last judgment many of the dead that are given up by the *sea*, *death*, and *hell*, as prisons of the first death, will be found written in the book of life; (see Rev. xx. 12, 13, 15, compared with 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20; chap. iv. 6,) and shall be delivered from the full power of the second death; (between whom and the first-born, that have part in the first resurrection, and are to reign with Christ during the blessed thousand years, or the day of his glorious marriage, the Scriptures expressly distinguishes; see Rev. xx. 5, compared with ver. 12, 18, 15,) yea if it be true, that at last will follow a Universal Restoration of all apostatized creatures through a general subjection, solemnly promised in Scripture; (1 Cor. xv. 24–28; Phil. ii. 10, 11; Rev. v. 13,) then must be true too, that all these together may be justly called *after-born unto salvation*, because they are not of the number of the *first-born*, but will,

a long time *after* the glorification of these, be made truly subject unto God, and Christ, and in their way be born again unto life eternal.

Now, of these *after-born* to salvation there are chiefly two sorts. For some are *after-born out of the first death*; and others *after-born out of the second death*.

The *after-born out of the first death* are, as aforesaid, those deceased, who, after the blessed thousand years of Christ's marriage, at the last judgment, will be given up by the *sea, death, and hell*, and be found written in the book of life. (See Rev. xx. 15, compared with Hosea xiii. 14, and Zech. ix. 11.) And so through the endless mercy of God be saved from the second death and from its full power over them; though the ideas of it will have been great torment to them in the prisons of the first death.

The forerunners of these *after-born* were the spirits unto whom Christ, at his descent into hell, preached the Gospel of their Redemption. 1 Peter iii. 19, 20; chap. iv. 6; Psalm lxxviii. 18; Eph. iv. 8–10; Col. ii. 15.

The *after-born out of the second death*, are all the rest of mankind, and the fallen angels, who, under all the foregoing dreadful judgments of the first death, will continue in their wickedness, and therefore must be humbled in the fiery lake, by the most horrible and consummate judgments of the second death, and be brought at last to bow every one of their knees before Christ, and so have their share too in the *eternal redemption obtained by him for us*. Phil. ii. 10, 11; Rev. v. 13; Heb. ix. 12.

That there may be a difference again between these *after-born out of the second death*, as to the time of their restoration, seems very probable by what is said, Rev. xx. 10, compared with ver. 15; as also chap. xxi. 8. For in the first place it is said of some that are cast into the fiery lake, that with the devil they shall be tormented therein for ever, and ever; but in the other two places, which likewise speak of such as will be cast into the lake burning with fire and brimstone, we do not find this addition, but it is only said that they are *cast* into the lake of fire, and that they shall have their *part therein*. This has, without doubt, a particular signification, since the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures neither inserts nor omits any thing without design.

The very last of all that will be restored are the *blasphemers against the Holy Ghost*, and the seducers of the whole race of men, to wit, *Lucifer and his angels*. St. Matt. xii., 31, 32; St. Mark iii. 28, 29; St. Luke xii. 10; Rev. xx. 10, compared with chap. xi. 15; chap. xxii. 5. These will be obliged to remain prisoners under the divine wrath, without remission of sins, during the whole eternity or age of Christ's reign with his people in the world to come, and through God's just judgments, shall not be restored until that point of time, or just before it, when the future age or world is to be changed into that still or silent eternity, wherein God is to be *all in all*, after Jesus Christ shall have subdued every thing to himself, and brought all into order and harmony. 1 Cor. xv. 28.

Although these *after-born* to salvation, who, in due season, by Christ, the universal Saviour, will be delivered both from the first and second death, will also, after such redemption, receive a blessing with *Esau*, (see Heb. xi. 20, compared with Gen. xxvii. 34–40) and will partake of some beatitude, which the Scripture describes in this manner, *In the name of Jesus they shall bow their knees, &c.* Phil. ii. 10, 11. *Shall be subdued unto Christ*, and thus become the subjects of God, 1 Cor. xv. 28; and shall praise God and the Lamb, Rev. v. 13; yet they will be excluded to all endless eternity, from all the before-mentioned glories, peculiar to the *first-born*, namely, from the *reigning with Christ*, and the *celestial priest-hood*, both during the aforesaid blessed *thousand years*,

and all the succeeding *ages of ages*: and thus, in some measure, they will undergo an absolutely endless punishment; that is, they will suffer *pœnam damni*, or sustain the loss of the quite particular prerogative annexed to the *spiritual birth-right*, as *Esau* lost his birth-right. Heb. xii. 16, 17. However, so, that at last, having sufficiently regretted their irreparable loss, they will be very well content with that share of salvation which the infinite grace of God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our universal Redeemer, will give them: and will rejoice at the *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, which the *first-born* shall receive, and will humble themselves to the utmost before them and their glorious head, Jesus Christ. Rev. iii. 9.

Now this entire deprivation of the *birth-right*, together with all the inexpressible pains which they shall have suffered for their sins, both in the *first* and *second death*, will be punishment enough for them: from which eternal damnation most graciously keep us, good Lord God.

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURE MEANETH BY THIS PRESENT WORLD, THE WORLD TO COME, AND THE STILL OR SILENT ETERNITY.

THE holy Scripture in many places speaks of *this*, or the *present world*; see St. Matt. xii. 32; chap. xiii. 22, 39, 40, 49; chap. xxiv. 3; St. Mark iv. 19; St. Luke xvi. 8; chap. xx. 34; Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. i. 20; chap. ii. 6, 7; chap. iii. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Gal. i. 4; Ephes. i. 21; chap. vi. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 17; chap. iv. 10; Tit. ii. 12.

In some passages *the world to come* is mentioned; St. Matt. xii. 32; St. Mark x. 30; St. Luke, xviii. 30; chap. xx. 35; Ephes. i. 21; Heb. vi. 5.

And once at least, the *still eternity*, which God inhabiteth is named. “Thus saith the High and lofty One, that inhabiteth *eternity*, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place,” &c. Isaiah lvii. 15. And some think there is an intimation of the stillness or quietness of that eternity, in chap. xxxii. 17, 18.

By *this world*, the Scriptures in general mean nothing else but this present *aion*, or *period of time*, which in so far as it is called the *wicked world*, had its beginning with the apostacy of the creatures, especially the fall of our first parents, whereby sin and death were introduced into the world; and will last until the coming of Christ, when he will judge the anti-christian race of men, and consume and destroy *Antichrist with the spirit of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming*. See Dan. vii. 26, 27; 2. Thess. ii. 8, compared with Rev. xix. 11, 20, 21; St. Matt. xiii. 39–42. In this period of time, that which is evil always had the sway over that which is good, and will have it to the coming of Christ: see Rev. xiii. 6–8, &c., so that we must not expect constantly better times, but rather that things will grow worse and worse the nearer the coming of the Lord approaches. St. Matt. xxiv. 37–39; St. Luke xvii. 26–30; chap. xviii. 8; 1 Thess. v. 2, 3; 2 Tim. iii. 1–5; ver. 13; Rev. iii. 10; chap. vi. 11; chap. xii. 12. Howbeit I will not deny, but that before the end of this wicked world, or age, there may be made a good beginning and preparation towards a downright reformation in the church of God, through the power of the gospel of the kingdom, which may be preached throughout the whole world; (though under many tribulations and persecutions) for which indeed the words of our Saviour, St. Matt. xxiv. 14; St. Mark xiii. 10, afford us good hopes.

But this is certain, that there will not be a thorough reformation before *the coming of the Son of Man*: and the reason of it is this, because the devil is the prince or god of this world, or age; see St. John xiv. 30; St. Luke iv. 6; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Ephes. vi. 12, and consequently, worketh in the children of disobedience, Ephes. ii. 2, who always were the most numerous in the world, and will be so until the day of the coming of the Lord; but then, and not before, the power of the devil, and the anti-christian kingdom of the beast and the false prophet, will have an end, according to the plain testimonies of Scripture. 2 Thess. ii. 8; Rev. xix. 20, 21.

This *aion*, or period of time, is again subdivided by the holy Scripture into two special periods, or *worlds*: viz. into the *wicked world before the flood*, or into the *old world*, 2 Pet ii. 5; chap. iii. 6; and into the *present wicked world*, Gal. i. 4, or the age of the world *after the flood*, under the four empires, represented by the four beasts in Daniel's prophecy, which began soon after the deluge, and will, as aforesaid, end at the coming of Christ. See Dan. ii. 31-45; chap. vii. wholly.

By the *world to come*, the holy Scripture does not mean properly and absolutely an endless eternity, but those *aionas*, or long lasting periods of time, which although they exist already, with respect to Christ and his saints, received by him into glory, yet the full manifestation thereof is to succeed the period of this present wicked world, and will only begin with the coming of Christ, and the commencement of his glorious kingdom, Rev. xi. 15-18; chap. xii. 10, compared with Dan. vii. 14, 26, 27; and will reach to that point of time when both the *first* and *second death* will be entirely abolished, and the Son of God, after all things have been put in subjection under him, (nothing excepted, but his heavenly Father) shall deliver up the kingdom, or the whole restored creation, (which shall until then be under his government,) to God his Father, and himself be *subject unto him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all*. Heb. ii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

In all these periods of time, the Good, namely, Christ, with his first born brethren, as kings and priests, will for ever and without interruption, rule over the bad, as his and their enemies, and effect the entire *restoration of all things*; that is, he will subdue and reconcile all things unto himself and his heavenly Father, and bring them into that harmony and order, wherein every thing was created in the beginning. See Rev. xi. 15; chap. v. 10; chap. xxii. 5; Dan. vii. 18, 27; 1 Cor. xv. 28; Phil. ii. 10, 11; Col. i 20; Acts iii. 21; Gen. i. 31.

Now, to those periods of time of the holy and righteous world to come, and its manifestation, belong, first, the *thousand years* of Christ's marriage day; the age commonly called the *Millenium* or *Sabbath of Rest*, when Satan shall be bound and confined in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, the first resurrection shall take place, and the first born saints shall reign with Christ on the earth a *thousand years*. See Rev. xx. 1-6; compared with chap. v. 10, and chap. ii. 26, 27; chap. iii. 21.

Also, secondly, to the *next world*, particularly belong all the other *aionos ton aionon*, or *many long lasting periods of time*, which are to succeed the above mentioned thousand years; during which periods all things will be subdued and restored, and at the close of which, Christ will resign the kingdom to the Father, *that God may be all in all*.

By the *still* or absolutely *endless eternity*, wherein God dwelleth, is meant in holy Scripture, that *eternal and endless duration of the uncreated and Divine Being, and the most perfect and unvariable beatitude which he possesses*. Which, with respect to God,

has been without beginning, from all inconceivable eternity, and still is going through all created eternities both of this and the next world, and is their very source and principle, but with respect to the creatures, it will not manifest itself in the most perfect manner, till at that point of the created eternities, when Christ after the entire restoration of all things, will give up the kingdom to his heavenly Father, and be subject to him who put all things under him, that God may be ALL IN ALL. In this *still eternity* which will then be manifested to the creatures, and which will, as it were, swallow up the future world, and wherein God is to reign in that true order as is most agreeable to him, there will be no more sensible knowledge nor hearing of that which is called *Devil, Sin, Death, Wrath, or Hell*, than there was when all creatures were yet hid in the eternal creating power of the everlasting God, or when in the beginning of the creation, they were yet altogether very good. Because every thing that is diabolical, namely, sin and the first and second death following it, will in the most consummate manner be destroyed, and swallowed up in victory, and the whole creation shall be most perfectly delivered from all evil; and the kingdom, power, and glory shall be given to him to whom it belongs for ever and ever. Amen. See Isaiah lvii. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 24–28; ver. 54–56 compared with ver. 26. See also Rom. viii. 19–23, compared with Gen. i. 31; Job xxxviii. 7; Rev. xxi. 1–5; St. Matt. vi. 13.

The divine subjection of the Son of God, following upon the next world, and belonging to the still eternity, will by no means lessen the glory of Christ and his saints, but will rather be an occasion of something much more excellent and glorious than his former blessed reign, during the thousand years, and in the succeeding eternities of eternities. For as long as these ages last, so long will sin, or at least imperfection, be in many creatures; which at this time will not be fit in general to be ruled immediately by God, and therefore must be governed by mediators. But when the Son of God shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and himself be subject to him that put all things under him, then will neither sin nor imperfection any more be found in any of God's creatures; but they will be as immediately governed by God himself, as the humanity of Jesus Christ is governed by the Godhead, every one according to his nature; and therefore there will be no farther need of government by the mediatorial economy, the design whereof had been merely that *all things might be subdued unto Christ, and under him to God*. 1. Cor. xv. 24, 25, &c.; Phil. ii. 10, 11. Now, when this design shall be completely obtained, then will also cease the means ordered for the obtaining it; namely, the particular sort of government of Christ and his saints, during the thousand years, and the ages of ages following; but the glory of Christ and of his saints in the *future universal subjection in the still eternity*, will be without end.

Whosoever rightly looks into, and well understands this mystery of the difference between *this world*, the *next world*, and the still, or absolutely *endless eternity*, to him the centre of the holy Scripture, and of all the prophecies contained therein are open; because they are partly fulfilled in this world, partly in the future world, and all the rest will be accomplished in the still eternity, in so far as there is a difference between it and the world to come.

From this principle we may also very easily and with the greatest importance answer the objection that is made against the *general restoration*, from St. Matt. xii. 31, 32. It is indeed true, that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, except the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; those who are guilty of that sin shall have no

forgiveness neither in this world or age, nor in the world or age to come, but are in danger of eternal damnation, according to St. Mark iii. 29.

By the world or age to come, in the first mentioned place, without doubt is meant the whole time from the beginning of the Millenium to the last judgment. For within this time not only many millions will be converted to God, and receive forgiveness of their sins, but also many of those that have been lying in the *sea*, in *death*, and in *hell*, as miserable prisoners of the *first death*, will at last, at the opening of the books of judgment, be found written in the book of life, and thus obtain remission of their sins, and be delivered from the full power of the *second death*. See Rev. xx. 12, 13, 15, compared with Hosea xiii. 14; Zech. ix. 11; 1 Cor. iii. 15.

But the blasphemers against the Holy Ghost, and all such who have committed the sin unto death, for whom we are commanded not to pray; 1 John v. 16; and such who have sinned wilfully after having received the knowledge of the truth; Heb. x. 26–29; such who have crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame; Heb. vi. 6; the professed enemies of Christ and his believers, and among those particularly the *blaspheming beast*, and *false prophet*, who in this world have so long and continually been afflicting and persecuting Christ and his followers, will then, in virtue of God's most holy justice, be treated in the very same manner as they have treated the servants of Christ here: they will be rejected, esteemed accursed, and will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death, partly before and partly after the thousand years, without any grace or mercy; and consequently will obtain no forgiveness of their sins, but be obliged to suffer what their deeds deserve, as the Scripture plainly testifies. See St. Matt. xxv. 41, 46; Rev. xix. 20; chap. xx. 15; chap. xxi. 8; chap. xiv. 9–11.

But it does by no means follow from hence that these sinners can never be cleansed from their sins, and made truly subject unto Christ and God, before or at the expiration of those *ages of ages* which shall succeed the thousand years, or the *age to come*, when such sinners, together with all other rebellious creatures, shall have been sufficiently punished for their wickedness in the burning lake. Then, instead of contradicting Christ in a presumptuous manner, as they did not only in this world, but even in the day of judgment, (see St Matt. xxv. 44; chap. vii. 22;) they shall most humbly bow their knees before him, and become heartily subject unto him, and through him be reconciled unto God. See Phil. ii. 10, 11; 1 Cor. xv. 24–28; Col. i. 20.

CHAPTER XII.

CONTAINING THE CLEAREST SENTENCES OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES WHICH TREAT OF THE GENERAL RESTORATION OF ALL MEN AND CORRUPT CREATURES.

As the centre of the whole Bible, whereat all its contents aim is this, *That in the beginning God created every thing very good; and that by Christ, who is the wisdom and power of God, by whom all things were made at first, all whatsoever is corrupted through sin, must at last be made good again:* so may any one whose eyes are opened to see clearly into this point, find a great many testimonies of this eternal truth both in the books of the Old and New Testament. But we will for our present purpose, only allege some of the plainest sentences.

First, some very plain texts of Scripture, treating of the final restoration of all corrupt men.

Rom. v. 18-21. "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. For as by *one* man's disobedience, *many* were made (or represented) sinners; so by the obedience of *one* shall (the same) *many* be made (or represented) righteous. Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound: but where sin, abounded, *Grace did much more abound*: That, as sin hath reigned unto death, *even so might grace reign* through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Rom. xi. 32. "For God hath concluded *them all* (or shut them up together) in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all."

1 Cor. iv. 22, 23. "For as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive. But every man in his own (or in his particular) order."

These texts of Scripture most evidently show and foretel us, that as really as sin and condemnation came upon and entered into all men, even so really and certainly will righteousness and life come again into all corrupt men by Jesus Christ: even that true life of God, which alone is the real life of men: and that they shall at last altogether actually enjoy the mercy of God as truly and really as they have felt the power of sin, and have been concluded under unbelief. In short, *That as sin hath reigned* in and *unto death, even so shall grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord*. Now, sin hath reigned in such a manner, that it has actually made all men its subjects, and brought death upon them; therefore, without contradiction, grace must also reign in such a manner as to bring all men again to its obedience, and consequently restore in them righteousness and eternal life. And, indeed, so much the more, because it is expressly said, that grace is not only to abound as much as sin, but even to *abound much more* than sin.

But how can grace be said to abound much more than sin, if, according to the common hypothesis we avow on the one hand, that it is able to justify and save *all* men, but on the other hand deny that it will actually justify and save *all* men? For sin was not only able to make all men unrighteous, and to bring death upon them, but it has actually made them *all* in general unrighteous, and brought death upon them.

1 Tim. iv. 10. "We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour (or Restorer) of all men, especially of those that believe."

As really, now, as all true believers are delivered from sin and death by this universal Saviour, so really and certainly must all the rest of mankind be finally delivered therefrom; since otherwise God would be but a titular and not an actual Saviour or Restorer of all the rest of men. For it is not only requisite that a Saviour and Redeemer pay the ransom for the prisoners, but that he also set them actually free from their imprisonment.

St. John xii. 31, 32. "Now is the judgment of this world; (or, now sentence passeth upon this world, and it is, as it were condemned together with its prince;) now shall *the prince of this world be cast out*. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men unto me*."

Here again it is incontestibly shewn, that a little before our Saviour's passion, it had been firmly decreed in heaven by an irrevocable sentence passed upon this world, that the certain fruits and effects of the sufferings and death of Christ should be, that Satan, or the prince of this world, should be entirely divested and cast out of his pretended ungodly

sovereignty over mankind: and that, on the contrary, Christ lifted up, or crucified, should at last actually *draw all men*, who before had been subject to the devil, *unto himself*, and thus of necessity, bring them again into their order and subjection under God.

St. Luke xxiii. 34. "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

St. John xi. 41, 42. "Father, I thank thee, that thou hast heard me: and I know that *thou hearest me always*."

In the first of these sentences, Christ prays for the worst of villains under the sun, namely, for his persecutors, and those who crucified him; and consequently for all such too, as have crucified him in his faithful members from the beginning of the world, and those who still persecute and crucify him, and will continue to do so, to the end of this world, or wicked age. Now, his prayer is this, that the heavenly Father will readily forgive their sins, or, that he will once again bring them into the right order of repentance and faith, wherein their sins may be forgiven them. And that this prayer and intercession of Christ, as well as all others which he ever made and does still make, must at last be fully heard and granted, our dear Saviour once for all assures us in the second sentence, taken from St. John xi. 41, 42.

St. Matt. vi. 13. "Deliver us *from evil*: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, *Amen*."

Among the most evident proofs of the blessed general restoration of all mankind, we may also with very good reason reckon this mysterious prayer of our Lord, especially the last petition of it. For it is indisputably true that the Lord hath obliged us to pray therein, for all men, without any exception. But what is it that we are to desire for them? That his name may be sanctified by them; his kingdom come into them; and his will be done by and through them, &c. but especially, that he may *deliver* every one of them *from evil*, that is, actually free them from sin and the power of the devil, or from all pain and woe following upon sin, both in this and the next world. In short, that God may, through Jesus Christ, the universal Saviour, justify, convert, and save them. And, indeed, all for this reason; as the conclusion shews, because the kingdom, or sovereignty over all mankind, belongs by no means to the devil, but solely to our dear Lord and God. He alone has the power, and is able to deliver mankind from evil. And lastly, because to him alone, and to no other being, belongs, and will be forever attributed, the glory and honour of this great work, for the execution of which all creatures will bless and praise him to all eternity. See Psal. cxiv. 10, 11; Psal. cl. 6; Rev. v. 13.

You will say, It is true enough that in the Lord's prayer, we pray that God may convert and save all men, without any exception at all, but that does not argue that with respect to all men this will be really done; because the greatest part of them frustrate on themselves the effect of this prayer, by their own constant impenitence.

But hear, ye that make this objection, pray what then, is the meaning of the word, *Amen*, which we are obliged to put as a seal to this most excellent prayer? Is it not as much as to say, *Verily, so be it*? And therefore, must not all the petitions of the Lord's prayer, but especially the last, be certainly granted in favour of every man, as truly and really as the children of God pray for, and desire the good things expressed therein, according to his earnest will, and as surely as they cannot pray in vain? And that we may never doubt of the final accomplishment of the united prayers of the saints, our blessed Saviour has said, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that

the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name I will do it.” St. John xiv. 13, 14.

And again, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” Chap. xvi. 23, 24.

And St. John says, “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 heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” 1 John v. 14, 15.

From whence infallibly follows, that although many thousands of men hinder the efficacy of this prayer on themselves in this world, and become a prey to the jaws of hell, yet they will not be able to hinder it for ever and to all endless eternity. That which is good will at last surely conquer that which is evil. God knows how to make those willing that are at present unwilling to be converted unto him; so that such prodigal sons through his grace will be glad to return to their Father’s house, after they have long enough felt the torments and miseries of the fiery lake, if it be never so long before it be brought about.

But if it was an unquestionable truth, as our adversaries pretend, that most men will remain distant from God, and will frustrate on themselves the granting of this prayer, to all endless eternity, then Christ would have taught us to pray not only wavering or double minded, but even in unbelief and lying, and consequently such a prayer as the Spirit of Christ absolutely rejects and condemns, James i. 6–8, compared with 1 Tim. ii. 8, namely, he would have earnestly commanded us to pray for all men without exception, that God might at last convert and save them, and always to add *Amen!* to the end that we might by no means doubt but this our prayer of universal love would be heard, (which universal love that is to extend itself even to the worst of enemies, and from which this prayer is to flow, our Saviour inculcates a little before he gives the instruction in the duty of prayer, see St. Matt. v. 44–48) though nevertheless it was already decreed by God from all eternity, and we were obliged to believe it as a truth, that the greatest part of men, of whom he had foreseen, that during this short lifetime, they would remain in unbelief, and hinder on themselves the efficacy of this prayer, and should therefore not only be greatly punished in the next world (which is true) but that they also should forever and without end remain in the power of sin and the devil, and never be converted.

But, far be it from all believers to impute such a blasphemy to their Redeemer, to have taught them with a feigned faith to pray for things which they think can never be done, and which at the bottom they do not believe. May the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, for endeavouring to make God’s children believe such a calumny against their gracious God and dear Redeemer. Since, therefore, we are commanded to pray for the salvation of all men, *without wrath or doubting*, and to *ask in faith, nothing wavering*, we may be assured that it is the absolute will of God that all men shall *be saved, and come in the knowledge of the truth*. See 1 Tim. ii. 1–8; James i. 6.

Note well, To the texts of Scripture which prove the restoration of all fallen men, may very reasonably be reckoned also those that treat of God’s universal love towards all men; of his earnest will to have them saved in general, and without the least exception; as also those that speak of universal redemption, &c. As for instance, Ezek. xviii. 23, 32; chap. xxxiii. 11; St. Matt. xviii. 11, 14; St. John i. 29; chap. iii. 16, 17; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; 1

Tim. ii. 4–6; Heb. ii. 8, 9; 2 Pet. ii. 1; chap. iii. 9; 1 John ii. 2.

From these important articles of faith we may certainly infer the actual restoration of all men; because it is impossible for God to will any thing in vain to all endless eternity; and it is absolutely false, and the utmost derogation of Christ's redemption, to pretend, that he should have shed his most precious and divine blood quite in vain, and without the least blessed effect for but one of his creatures. Not to mention, that God has also most plainly foretold, that the condition of salvation, namely, righteousness flowing from repentance and faith, onto which salvation is infallibly annexed, shall at last be fulfilled with respect to all men, who by Adam's sin are become unrighteous, as has been shewn above, from Rom. v. 18–21.

To the arguments for the restoration of fallen men, belong also with good reason, the places of Scripture that treat either of a past or future *deliverance of some souls out of a middle state of pain*, which is owned by many who oppose the entire and general Restoration. As, 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20; chap. iv. 6; Ephes. iv. 8, 9; Psalm lxviii. 18; 1 Cor. iii. 15; Rev. xx. 12, 13, 15, compared with Hosea xiii. 14; Zech. ix. 11; 1 Sam. ii. 6; Rev. i. 18. Those who understand the above cited texts, of a deliverance from a middle state, which they allow of as aforesaid, while at the same time they deny the entire restoration of all men, out of the fiery lake, must, I say, at least grant us thus much, that from the redemption out of a middle painful state, we may with, some probability conclude the redemption of such as are cast into the fiery lake, or lowest hell.

But whosoever pondereth that with God there is no respect of persons, will easily conceive, that our conclusion is not only probable, but most true and just. For why should God, who is no respecter of persons, neither in the execution of his justice nor in the display of his mercy, deliver some from a painful condition by Jesus Christ, and not at last others also? It is enough that he punishes some more severely and longer than others, which must be, on account of his most holy justice; because some have sinned more than others.

Secondly, Plain texts of Scripture, treating of the final restoration of all corrupt creatures, and consequently not only of men, but likewise of the fallen angels, (aiming at least plainly at the latter) who in the beginning were of the number of the principal creatures of God.

Psal. cxlv. 9. "*Jehovah* is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

Wisd. xi. 23–26; xii. 1. "But thou hast mercy upon all; for thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men, because they should amend. For thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made: for never wouldst thou have made any thing if thou hadst hated it. And how could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy will? or been preserved, if not called by thee? But thou sparest all, for they are thine, O Lord, thou lover of souls. For thine incorruptible Spirit is in all things."

Rev. iv. 11. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created."

In these passages we are plainly told, that the mercy of God, or his tender love, does not only extend itself to men, but universally towards all creatures, that through the will of God have their being, and stand in need of mercy; and consequently also towards the fallen angels, as far as they are creatures of God; which tender love of God must necessarily at last effect or bring about the restoration of all corrupt creatures, for it is not a weak or faint, but an almighty love.

Rom. ii. 36. "Out of him, (God) and through him, and into him, are all things: to him be glory for ever. Amen." Thus this important text may be very well rendered. Now if *all things* (to which indisputably belong as well all fallen angels as corrupt men) that are come forth out of GOD, who is love essentially, or out of his everlasting creating power, and are upheld by him, shall return into the same *God* of love, or be pervaded and quite swallowed up by his loving spirit, what, then, will become of sin, which separates God and the creature, and the unhappiness hanging together with it; will it not of necessity, by this returning or reflux of the creatures into God (however without destroying the true difference between the being of the Creator and that of the creatures) be lost and entirely abolished?

Col. i. 16-20. "For by him (Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God) were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. And (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."

This passage teaches us the extent of the reconciliation made by Christ, namely, that it extends itself over the whole creation. Therefore the fallen angels must also necessarily have their share in it, for they do incontestibly belong to the *invisible things* created by Christ, and consequently to *all things*, or the *things in heaven* reconciled by him. And though it is true that this reconciliation chiefly concerns corrupt men and angels, that through sin are separated from GOD, nevertheless all the rest of the creatures partake of and are benefited by it. It affords for instance, matter of much joy to the holy angels, when, by virtue of this reconciliation, the apostatized creatures are conveyed to GOD, and thereby anew received into the communion and friendship of these holy spirits, (St. Luke xv. 10; 1 Pet. i. 12; Heb. xii. 22.) It will also be by the energy of this reconciliation, that in time to come the curse which through sin was brought upon the creation, and has mixed itself with it, (Gen. iii. 17; Rom. viii. 20-22,) will be entirely removed from all the rest of the creatures.

Ephes. i. 8-10. "He (God) hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together (or rehead) all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, (or, in the heavens) and which are on earth, even in him."

This is another plain testimony of the blessed restoration of all rebellious creatures (that were corrupted through sin) under Christ their true and lawful head; and by the *things in heaven*, which are to be gathered together in Christ, or subdued again under him as their chief, no other creatures than the fallen angels can be meant, who also in several other places in the holy Scriptures are expressly reckoned amongst the *things in the heaven*, (Rev. xii. 7; Eph. vi. 12; ii. 2.) since they were not only formerly celestial creatures, but have even to this day their seat in a certain part of the heavens, viz. in the air; which place they will not lose till just before the blessed millenium, when they will be thrown down from heaven to the earth, from thence into the bottomless pit, and

finally into the fiery lake. See Rev. xii. 7–9, compared with Ephes. ii. 2; Rev. xx. 3, 10.

Heb. ii. 8. “Thou hast put all things under his feet: For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.”

1 Cor. xv. 24–28. “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death. For he hath put all things under his feet: but when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son of man also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

Here we have two more unexceptionable evidences, that *all things* that were created by Christ, shall be made subject unto him, and indeed so subject, that all things will be put under him in that true order in which God in the beginning created them: for this is the import of the original word *upetaxen*.

But that is by no means the true order of the creatures to live in sin, which is altogether *ataxia*, or disorder, and consequently to lie under the wrath of God, and in the fiery lake, or second death. In short, it is to be such a subjection, wherewith *death* (as is expressly added) that is, all that may be called by that name, and therefore not only the *first*, but in particular the *second death*, or *fiery lake*, and consequently sin as the sting of death (1 Cor. xv. 54–56,) will be entirely *abolished*, destroyed, and swallowed up in victory; such a subjection as will be that of Christ’s humanity, with his saints under God, yea, such a subjection, according to which, God, who is to be *all in all in all things*, may be *all* too in those creatures that before had been enemies of Christ, and had been lying in the fiery lake; because the expression of *God’s being all in all in the creatures*, necessarily implies a state of perfect happiness, and shews that the whole mass of the creatures being made subject unto God and Christ, will be thus pervaded by God’s Spirit, and, as one might say, in a sort *deified*, (or made partaken of the divine nature.) God with them, and they with God, in a manner will be but *one spirit*, as the holy Scripture expressly saith of such as *are joined unto the Lord*, or are subject unto him in truth. 1. Cor. vi. 17, compared with St. John xvii. 21–23; 1 John iv. 16. But this is impossible to be so long as the creatures remain in sin and death; for then they are forsaken of God, and separated from him, which will be the highest degree of punishment in hell. Now if it is true that all creatures, and consequently also the enemies of Christ that are cast into the fiery lake, will be brought into that state of subjection just now described, wherein God will be *all in all*, then it must also be true that sin and all pain following it, which is found in the creatures, and of course the fiery lake too, must at last be altogether annihilated, because, without such an annihilation God cannot be all in all. If any one would object here, that the present forced subjection of the devils under Christ and his people, mentioned in St. Luke x. 17, 20, is likewise expressed by the word *upotasseta*, or to be subordinate; and that from hence appears, that, according to the Holy Spirit’s judgment, this is the right subjection of evil spirits and damned men, and that consequently there is no occasion to interpret the places mentioned Heb. ii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 24–28, of a different sort of subjection of the damned: To this I answer. That we must make a distinction between the *commenced* and the *accomplished* or perfect subjection

of the apostatized creatures. It is indeed in some measure already the right subjection or subordination of evil spirits and men, when they are in such a manner overcome by the power of the spirit of Christ and his believers, that they are obliged to begin outwardly to bow under them, and to shew them a forced obedience. But it is false that this should be that *perfect* subjection which God requires of his creatures, (among which even the fallen angels are indisputably to be reckoned) since it is only a *commenced* subjection, and will make way for that finally *perfect* and *accomplished* subordination, which according to our Saviour's own words, is this, when the creatures *worship God in spirit and in truth*, and so are not subject to him in a forced and affected manner, but willingly and gladly: for such and no other worshippers and subjects God seeketh. St. John iv. 23, 24, compared with St. Matt. iv. 10. It is evident that St. Luke x. 17, 20, speaks only of a commenced subjection, which makes that which is evil begin to bow a little under that which is good, though at the same time the evil in itself continues to be evil; whereas, Heb. ii. 8, and particularly 1 Cor. xv. 24–28, speaks not only of a merely begun, but *consummate* subjection or subordination of all creatures, and therefore also of the fallen angels and damned men, as I have shown above from the import of the phrase of *God's being all in all* in the creatures.

Phil. ii. 9–11. "God also hath highly exalted him, (Christ) and given him a name which is above every name; that at (or in) the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and (N. B.) things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Rev. v. 13. "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and (N. B.) under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

Psalm cxlv. 10. "All thy works shall praise thee, O JEHOVAH, and thy saints shall bless thee."

Psalm cl. 6. "Let every thing that hath breath praise *Jah*;" (or properly, "Every thing that hath breath shall praise *Jah*.") Hallelujah.

These sentences again afford us a fine explanation of the before described general subjection of all creatures, according to which every creature, or work of God, and consequently also Lucifer with his angels, shall acknowledge Christ for their Lord, and bless God, and praise him, which cannot be as long as the creatures are in a state of condemnation, wicked, and enemies of God.

1 John iii. 8. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Whatsoever, therefore, is a work of the devil, and belongs to the serpent's head, or to that government established by him through self-will, in opposition to the kingdom of God, must be destroyed by the Son of God: for that is his office. Now sin in all creatures, as well in Lucifer himself and his angels, as in man seduced by him, is not a work of God, but of the devil, (and belongs to the hellish serpent's head) which Lucifer, by the turning away of his will from God, and thus becoming a devil, has first brought into himself, and the rest of the rebellious angels, and afterward also into man: Therefore must Christ at last annihilate and utterly destroy sin, together with death, and all unhappiness as its reward, in all creatures, as well apostate angels as fallen men. For if he was not to do this in *all* fallen creatures, he would not destroy *all* the works of the devil, but leave

many satanical works undestroyed, and consequently he would not completely execute his office; but be it far from us to think thus of him. For Christ must, as was said before, *bruise the serpent's head*. Gen. iii. 15; and in an unlimited manner *abolish* or undo sin, for which purpose he made a sacrifice of himself, according to Heb. ix. 26. After which bruising of the serpent's head, and abolishing of sin, no other but altogether holy angels and righteous men will remain, in whom *God may be all in all*.

Rev. xxi. 5. "And he that sat upon the throne, said, Behold, I make all things new. And he I said unto me. Write; for these words are true and faithful."

This promise is adapted to what we read, Gen i. 31; and shews again that we have no right to exclude one individual creature of all those that are fallen into sin and lie under the curse, from the renovation and final restoration, because the promise absolutely declares that *all things shall be made new*.

St. Mark xvi. 15. "And he (Jesus) said unto them, (his disciples) Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

That is, Go ye forth into all the world, and proclaim, wnerver ye go, the glad tidings that such a Saviour is come, who both can, and really will, in that order of repentance and faith appointed by God for that purpose, lake away all sin, and all wretchedness hanging together with it, from all creatures labouring under the same. And that the apostles preached no other Gospel but this, which concerneth all creatures, St. Paul declares in plain terms, Col. i. 23: "If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached (or, is preaching) to every creature under heaven."

Now by what has been said, let all pious Christians, nay, all reasonable men in the world, judge who they are that in the plainest and simplest manner, without false glosses of blind and carnal reasoning, understand the above cited clear testimonies; whether those who hope from them for a general restoration of all things; or those who in a rash manner exclude from the pitying love of God, the universal reconciliation of Christ, and the final renovation, (which in the said texts are extended in an unlimited manner, over God's whole creation,) many thousands of millions of rational creatures.

Of all the places brought from the holy Scriptures against the restoration of fallen angels, that which we find in Heb. ii. 16; is reckoned none of the least considerable, which in the common English translation runs thus, "For verily he (Christ) took not on him *the nature* of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." From which words the inference is drawn, that since Christ has not taken on him the nature of angels, he consequently cannot have redeemed and reconciled those of them that did not keep their principalities, but rebelled against their Maker, incurring thereby his indignation; and that therefore, they being not redeemed nor reconciled by Christ, can never be restored by him. But let me have never so much regard for the translators of the Bible, yet I must own that the rendering of these words in the aforesaid manner, does not at all express the meaning of the original; which better agrees with the following marginal reading of most large Bibles:— "For verily, he, (Christ) taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold."

Now, Christ's *not taking hold of angels*, does no more signify *his not taking the nature of angels on him*, than *his taking hold of the seed of Abraham* signifies *his taking human nature upon him*. But when it is said of Christ in this place, that *he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham*, it naturally means, that he chooseth, appropriateth unto himself,

and regardeth as his own and his peculiar people, the spiritual seed of Abraham. (Gal. iii. 29.) that is, all believers from among the Jews and Gentiles, and that he taketh hold of them as something extraordinary and very precious; that he does not only hold them fast himself, but has also recommended them to the particular care of his heavenly Father, out of whose hands none is able to pluck them. St. John, x. 29. Yea, that he taketh hold of them by receiving them into his most intimate communion and fellowship, even his spiritual consanguinity, and *taking them for his brethren*, according to the foregoing eleventh, and twelfth verses, and following seventeenth verse; in making them joint heirs with him, partakers of his glory, kings and priests in (he world or age to come, which God hath not put in subjection unto angels, as we read ver. 5; but unto his Son, and his first born brethren, who are also called *God's elect and the bride of Christ*. In short, *Christ taking hold of the seed of Abraham*, proves the prerogative of the faithful above all creatures both in heaven and in earth.

And what is further the purport of the words, *He taketh not hold of angels*? This we may easily conceive from what has been said. It is not, as I have already observed, that Christ did not take upon him an angelical nature; but it means briefly, that Christ has not chosen the angels for such high degrees of glory as those who among men believe in him; that they are not of Christ's brethren, nor are we to have a share in the government and priesthood of the world to come, being only ministers for the heirs of salvation.

Another very strong argument, that this is the most natural and unconstrained sense of the above cited text of Scripture, is because we do not find so much as one place in the whole Bible, where by the *seed of Abraham* is understood the *human nature*, or whole race of men in general. And why should *angels* here intend *the nature of the angels* considered in itself?

What has been said, I think, is sufficient to shew evidently, that it is not possible that from the text in question, there can be the least objection raised against the fallen angels being at last restored by Christ. And I am of opinion, that on the contrary, there is rather hid in it a proof for their final restoration. For to that exceeding great and more than angelical glory of Christ's elect in the next world, or age, belongs indisputably too, that *they shall judge angels*; 1 Cor. vi. 3. Which words divines commonly understand of the judgments and punishments unto which the elect will help to condemn the evil spirits, and which is the true sense of that place, but whether it be the entire sense of it, is another question. Now the aim of all punishments in the world or age to come, unto which Christ and his bride will sentence all creatures that have rebelled against him, is this, that they may humble themselves before him, and thus be put in a condition, that at last through the power of his blood, shed for the whole world, and consequently for all creatures in which sin is found, they may be cleansed therefrom, and the diabolical image destroyed, and so may be made subject unto God in truth. Yea, as sure GOD is GOD, that is essentially and invariably *Love* towards all his creatures, and is to be such to all endless eternity, so sure it is, that all his judgments can have no other aim but that which was just now mentioned; let people say what they will against it.

And when this scope of the divine judgment upon the fallen angels (after the example of the proud, but afterwards humbled king of Babylon, (Dan. iv. 31–34, compared with Isai. xiv. 1'4;) shall be obtained, as certainly one day or other it must, according to the plain testimony of the word of God, which says (Phil. ii. 10, 11;) that even *all things under the earth*, (viz. damned angels and men, as all divines understand it) *shall bow*

their knees before Jesus Christ, and confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father: when, I say, this shall be accomplished, then the fallen angels will be no longer proud devils, but humbled spirits, and truly in such a condition, that God by the Son of his eternal love (by whom both the visible and invisible things were created, Col. i. 16;) can save them from perdition. For God's maxim, which necessarily flows from his being, is once for all, that *God resisteth the proud* creatures only, and *giveth grace to the humble*, (1 Pet. v. 5,) and indeed without respect of persons, (Rom. ii. 11. Col. iii. 25;) be they now called men or angels.

He loves one creature as well as another; although he makes of the one a more glorious vessel than of the other. In this he cannot be hindered neither by the multitude nor heinousness of the sins before committed by the creatures. For, *where sin aboundeth, grace and love shall much more abound*, viz. then when the creature acknowledged its sin and by the powerful grace of God leaves off sinning. In fine, that will be done, which is spoken in Rev. xxi. 5. God will *make all things*, that are old and spoiled, *new* again. "*These words are true and faithful.*" Amen.

CHAPTER XIII.

INQUIRY, WHETHER THIS SACRED TRUTH MAY MAKE MEN CARELESS? OF THE EXCELLENT USEFULNESS OF IT: AND WHAT IS TO BE THOUGHT OF THE CONTRARY DOCTRINE.

THE *right comprehension* of this holy truth of the Restoration of all Things, cannot make one single man careless, or give him the least occasion or license to sin. For, how can such a doctrine make one careless, which teacheth that the wrath of God abideth on a man as long as he continueth in sin; and that in proportion to the growth and increase of sin in man, so for his torment, the anger of God increases more and more incessantly; insomuch that this tormenting fire cannot be quenched before its combustible, namely sin, is destroyed? which point is the very heart and marrow of this doctrine. If one was to teach, that God would not punish men for their sins in the next world, such doctrine would tend to make them careless. But that cannot be said of us, who believe and maintain the blessed doctrine of the restoration of all things in a scriptural manner, and teach with our beloved Lord Jesus, the universal Saviour and Reconciler of the world, that a man must give an account for every idle word in the day of judgment, unless he repents of it in this life; and consequently, much more for all other and greater sins; and shall not only suffer a certain and most painful punishment for them all in the next world, but also, by the neglecting of this present time of grace, he will deprive himself of the enjoyment of an unspeakable glory; viz. of the heavenly birth-right, or the joint-government with Christ in the world to come, and the celestial priesthood, for ever and ever, so that he will never be able to obtain it again, if even he was to seek carefully with the bitterest tears of repentance to recover it. (Heb. xii. 16, 17, compared with Gen. xxvii. 34–38; Prov. i. 24–31; St. Luke xiv. 24.) Yea, if all the holy angels and elect of God were to make intercession for him in this respect, it would be to no purpose. 1 John v. 16.

But by believing and teaching that all corrupt creatures shall be made good again, and all that is called sin, death, devil, and hell, shall be annihilated or entirely destroyed, we no more make men careless, than Christ and his apostles made men careless, who taught and commanded to teach the same: (St. Mark xvi. 15, compared with Col. i. 23;

Gal. i. 8, 9;) as has been shewn sufficiently in the preceding chapter from many plain testimonies of God's word.

If the terrible judgments of the next world, wherewith God threatens all obdurate sinners, were only to last as long as this life-time, it would be a motive more than sufficient to keep all discreet and prudent people from all carnal security. For what discreet person, who has but a little honesty left, would choose to commit for twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years all imaginable wickedness, if he certainly knew that he was at last to die an ignominious death for it, that he was to be hanged, broke on the wheel, or burnt alive? Now, can the fear of such a short punishment, the lasting whereof is altogether disproportionate to the lasting of the sin, in a discreet person overcome or entirely check the inclination to sin?. How much more then ought it to restrain a man from sin, when we teach according to truth, that if he does not repent from his heart of all his transgressions in this lime of grace, and earnestly follow Christ in self-denial, and regeneration, he will in the world to come, not only be excluded to all endless eternity from all the inexpressible glories annexed to the spiritual birth-right, but that moreover he will be obliged to remain daring a terrible long periodical eternity, or perhaps during all those ages of the next world, that is, many thousands of years; in the most horrid and intolerable pain; though at last being humbled in a dreadful manner, he may and will, through the endless mercy of God, obtain some portion of grace after all.

But whose hearts can endure, or whose hands can be strong, in the time that God shall deal thus with them for their sins? Who can bear the thought of enduring such a long and dreadful punishment, for a short life of sin?

The sinners of the old world that perished by the deluge, afford us an undeniable instance of the amazing length of future misery; they were shut up in the woeful prison of the *first death*; almost two thousand and four hundred years, in darkness, misery, and despair, before the Gospel of the grace of God was preached to them by Christ. (1 Pet. iii. 19; chap. iv. 6.) Ah! do but think what they must have suffered during all that terrible long period! I dare say that it made them lose all their appetite for sin. Now, since the pains of the *first death* are so terrible and lasting, how dreadful beyond conception, and of what long continuance must the intolerable pains of the *second death* be! that lake of fire and brimstone! O how it will torment such who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, and make the clear light of the Gospel (which did not shine so bright to sinners of old as it does to us) subservient to their carnal carelessness, and to fortify themselves thereby in their works of darkness, and in all manner of iniquity! See Heb. x. 26–31; Jude ver. 4; 2 Pet. ii. 1–3; Rev. xxi. 8.

But whosoever is of opinion, that, in order to preserve people from all carelessness, it is necessary to threaten them with such painful punishments as are *absolutely endless*, and to last as long as God exists, such a one thinks wrong: For that would not be the truth, and the untruth is not a proper mean for the conversion and salvation of men. God *sanctifieth* us only *through his truth*. St. John xvii. 17.

If absolutely endless punishments had been true, Christ would certainly have held them forth plainly to impenitent sinners: but we do not find that he has done so. With *eternal* or *aionion* punishments indeed he has threatened them; but what is to be understood by that word has been mentioned before, and is best explained by himself, saying, "Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, (namely out of the prison,) till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." (St. Matt. v. 26; St. Luke xii. 58, 59.)

“And that servant who knew his Lord’s will, and prepared not himself, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes,” &c.; ver. 47, 48. Now, this cannot mean as long as God shall exist, but shows incontestibly, a certain term or end of the confinement in the infernal prison; which end will be upon the complete suffering of all well deserved punishments for every sin, of which men do not repent in this time of grace, even idle words and bad thoughts not excepted. St Matt xii. 36; chap. xv. 19; 1. Cor. iv. 5; Heb. iv. 12.

Therefore it remains true that this holy doctrine of the *final Restoration of all Things*, is rather the most effectual remedy against all carelessness; and whosoever looks rightly into this truth, will be most powerfully incited thereby to repentance and sanctification.

For, in the *first* place, it demonstrates the absolute necessity of sanctification with the greatest emphasis.

Secondly, it shows the unutterably great preeminence in glory, which those who suffer themselves to be sanctified and cleansed from all sin in their life-time here, will enjoy in the next state above all the rest, who in this time have neglected their sanctification.

Thirdly, it opens most perfectly the sole source and spring of all power to attain unto true sanctification, by representing according to its *breadth, length, depth, and height*, the boundless love of God in Christ Jesus; and showing the everlasting, universal, and eternally efficacious merits of our Saviour, and his immense fulness, from which we derive all power for the mortifying of our sins, and becoming truly godly. And, consequently, this enlivening knowledge of the infinite love of Christ tends to fill us *with all the fulness of God*. Ephes. iii. 18, 19.

Fourthly, it banishes from the heart all servile or painful fear, which very much hinders a man’s progress in Christianity, (Rom. viii. 15; 2 Tim. i. 7; 1 John iv. 18;) and instead of it, brings a filial fear and love into the soul. For who would not love and adore such a God, whose love towards all his creatures is so immensely great, that he cannot rest, as one may say, till he has recovered all that was lost, and drawn it into the communion of his beatitude! And who would not at the same time in a child-like manner fear that God, who, indeed, on the one hand, is gracious to such as love him, but also, on the other hand, punishes, without respect of persons, all such as sin, and continues his judgments so long, as till the proud and obstinate creature humbles itself before him, approving of the punishment of its transgressions, and suffering the most holy justice of God, as a sharp two-edged sword, to cut off from it the very being and root of sin, in a severe but necessary process! Now, I cannot conceive, how, on the contrary, that doctrine can bring forth such good fruits, according to which we represent to ourselves God, (who is universal and eternal love) as merely endless fury towards most of his creatures, that is, as no God at all.

Fifthly, it shows us the exceeding great and almighty power of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and thereby exceedingly encourages us in our combat against sin. For, if Christ be really such a Saviour, who both can and will actually at last eradicate sin and death out of all creatures; why should not this Almighty Saviour be also able to sanctify us through and through, and to deliver at now from all unrighteousness?

In the mean while we may allow, that as every thing which is good, even so this holy truth may be abused and misapplied by the wicked to their own ruin and destruction. (2 Cor.ii. 15, 16; Jude, ver. 4; Rom.ii.4–6; chap. iii. 5–8; Tit. i. 15, 16.) But this cannot

prejudice the truth itself, nor make that to be false which is true. Nay, it will rather serve to make the wicked stand the more inexcusable in the day of judgment, and vindicate the divine justice in condemning them for not repenting, though the whole counsel of God was revealed to them. Do not most of those that are called *protestant Christians*, to this day, make a wrong use of the sacred gospel doctrines, and of the faith set forth thereby? But what *protestant minister* will allow that the doctrine of the protestants is hurtful, because it is misapplied?

This holy truth of the restoration of all things delivers all who receive it in the love of it, from all their hard thoughts of God, and from all their anxious scruples about the *universal love, mercy, holiness, justice, wisdom, omnipotence, and truth* of God, because it represents all the divine attributes in the finest harmony. For, according to this doctrine, how can any person have the least doubt of God's earnest *love and mercy* towards all men, yea, towards all his creatures in general, that want to be pitied by him, when he hears, that God is not only *willing* to deliver all from their misery, but that at last he also *will* deliver every one without exception, and grant them all really to enjoy his tender mercies? Do you not think that there is a sufficient inference to be drawn from this doctrine what a *holy* Being that God must be who can have no communication with any thing that is unholy, and cannot suffer the corrupt creatures to come before his face, till they are most perfectly cleansed from all their sins, so that neither spot or wrinkle thereof can be any more discerned upon them? Ah! how ought men to use all earnest endeavors to be sanctified by times, in order to be soon received into the communion of this holy God, and not be so long banished from him! And whosoever farther considers, with what unspeakably great glory this God rewards all such as make good use of this present time of grace, and how severely he punishes all impenitent sinners and hypocrites for all their sins, not the least excepted, both by the *first and second death*, and indeed in such a manner, that in proportion to and according to the nature of the sin, both in severity and duration of the punishment are exactly ordered, (as Christ teaches us in St. Luke xii. 47, 48; St. Matt. xi 22, 24; St. Luke x. 12, 14;) and at last will serve to humble the wicked creatures to the utmost before their Creator, and to dispose them to suffer sin to be entirely separated from them. Whosoever, I say, considers this, will own with me, that this God is a most *just* Being, who loves righteousness. And must he not be *infinitely wise* who knows how to bring all his divine counsels to pass without suffering any part of his plan to fail? And must not this God also be *Almighty*, who can in such a manner cast down to the ground all creatures that oppose him, let them be never so strong and numerous, so that at last they must give up the victory, and with all their heart become subject to him? And lastly, if you will also be certain how *true* the holy Scriptures are, which contain the uttered and written words of God, and how all things therein foretold shall be entirely accomplished, do but consider the holy doctrine of the restoration of all things, and you will see how it is nothing else but a most exact and perfect fulfilling of the Scriptures, and of every thing that God has manifested therein, concerning his *love, mercy, holiness, justice, wisdom, power, &c.*

By means of this holy doctrine likewise many points in controversy among the different sects in Christendom may be determined and decided, and consequently a good foundation laid for the uniting the Christian world, which at present is divided into so many parties. For instance, this holy truth most plainly shews what God's *punishing justice* is, namely, not a tyrannical revengefulness, having for its aim nothing else but

the pain and misery of the creatures; but such an holy attribute of the supreme God, which is grounded in his eternal love, and by virtue whereof he must indeed at last let the disobedient creatures, that will not be ruled by his Spirit, forcibly feel what they choose, or punish them both in this and the next world according to equity, as long as they continue in their wickedness: however so, that not the pain itself, which the creatures feel through their own fault, much less an endless duration of such pain, but an eternal destruction of sin, and the entire separation of it from the creatures, is the ultimate end of their punishment, which also at last must be actually obtained.

O how venerable does this right idea of God's punishing justice make it to an enlightened soul! How gladly does the soul bow under it in this time of grace, suffering this holy justice to mortify all that is evil, and to sever it from the soul, though the operation be painful, so that it may not experience the severity of this holy justice in the next world, when the fire of the divine wrath will be all in a blaze.

This holy doctrine likewise shews the right foundation of *divine election* and *eternal reprobation*, and demonstrates both to *Lutherans* and *Calvinist's* as well wherein each party is right, as what they want of the: full understanding of this important point. The doctrine of the *Lutherans* is orthodox, which teaches that God with great earnest will have all men saved, and that he also really saves those who during this time of grace come to believe in Christ, and persevere in faith, and that from eternity he has predestinated them for eternal life. But it is without foundation, that therefore they want to exclude to all endless eternity, from all participation of the divine mercy, the rest in general that do not believe to this elect: and this is owing to their not discerning the great difference between *the prerogative of the heavenly birth-right*, to which is annexed an exceeding great glory, and the *common portion in the blessed subjection* in the kingdom of God. So also what the *Calvinist's* teach, that those shall be actually saved, whom God will have to be saved, is indeed a scriptural truth: But the additional conclusion is good for nothing: That since but a few men *are* saved, consequently God *will have* but the least number saved. Or, although he does in some sort desire the salvation of all men (as some among them own) yet, say they, he will not really give faith to all men, which in reality is the same with the former. But the holy doctrine of the *restoration of all things*, shews them, that at last all men will actually be made subject unto God, and consequently, every one in his degree, be made happy. Therefore they must indeed in good earnest hold fast the before-mentioned truth, but amend the rest of their doctrine in the following manner, and make this conclusion: Those whom God will have to be saved, will actually be saved. Now God plainly declares in his word, that he *will have all men to be saved*; therefore all men will be really saved at last; though indeed in such a manner, that only the *elect*, or *first-born*, will enjoy the prerogative of the *birthright*, or the joint government with Christ in the world to come, and the rest of men be forced to undergo the judgment of the *first death*, and perhaps of the *second death* also, and at last, when they are purged from their sins, be obliged to take up with but a common portion of happiness.

This sacred doctrine is further capable to decide the dispute between us and the *Roman Catholics* about *Purgatory*: For it shews the truth of the *purification of souls* after their departure out of this world, without the least prejudice to the doctrine of Christ's merits or any other important article of faith. The truth of the purification of souls in the next world, as far as it is grounded in the holy Scripture, we must necessarily grant

to the *Roman Catholics*, if we would convince them of the rest of their errors respecting *purgatory*; for this we shall never be able to do as long as we deny what the Scriptures affirm concerning it.

The contrary doctrine, which is diametrically opposite to the blessed restoration of all things, teaches: *That but the smallest number, and perhaps not a thousandth part of the fallen creatures, will be really brought again to God, by the universal redemption of Christ; and that the greatest part by far, must remain in everlasting misery so long as God exists.* But far be it from me to impute this doctrine to all protestants in general; for I am persuaded, that, on the contrary, there are many among them, who either entirely approve of the blessed doctrine of the restoration; or if for the present they have not a perfect knowledge of it, yet understand some truths leading to it, and do not dispeople the glorious kingdom of Christ in such a manner as is done by the doctrine just now mentioned. But, however, the number of those being but too great, who with all the faculties of their souls stick close to the said doctrine, and in an unjustifiable manner cry down the holy doctrine of the blessed restoration as a *dangerous heresy*, condemned long ago, though it manifestly exalts the majesty of God in every respect, and aims at the entire destruction of the empire of sin; I cannot help, before I come to a conclusion, admonishing and desiring them in a few words, to take care that their own doctrine be not such as they undeservedly describe ours to be, and not to be too rash in judging and condemning other servants of Christ with their doctrine, which they neither understand nor will understand, and which is so far from teaching any thing that is bad, that it speaks of nothing but what is good. I ask them upon their conscience, whether their above mentioned doctrine, according to which, God and Christ are to have but the smallest number of souls for their share, the most being obliged to remain to all eternity in the empire and under the power of the devil; I ask them, I say, whether this doctrine does not make sin and darkness stronger and more powerful than God, the redemption of Christ, and the Light, I dare say, they will not own it, but it is so in reality, as has been shewn in different places of this treatise. They think, indeed, that men can be most effectually roused from the slumber of their carnal security, and incited to repentance, by confining the real extent of God's mercy only to this short lifetime, and making it of none effect, and depriving all corrupt creatures of it after their decease, to all endless eternity. But they only imagine and think so; and the effects of their good intention are but indifferent. For as this doctrine gives people a notion that immediately after death either a full endless damnation, or the perfect joys of heaven are to begin; it makes them think that if they do but find some good motions within themselves, not leading a vicious life, they must be sufficiently converted, so that it would be impossible for God in the condition they are in to let them be damned forever, but that immediately after their decease he must necessarily receive them into heaven. Therefore they remain indolent in the exercise of their Christian duties, and their highest degree of perfection is but a pharisaical honesty; but they know nothing of an earnest diligence in sanctification, or a cleansing of themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. And all this is generally occasioned by such teachers who are mortal enemies of the blessed restoration, and who at the same time condemn and persecute true Christianity and piety.

Now, as the doctrine of endless damnation and torment, is no true motive for sanctification, so it is likewise void of all comfort: for if a man's conscience begins to waken, especially at the end of his life, when the devil uses all his power to bring a soul to the

utmost despair, and it begins to see that it is not only as bad as the most wicked of men, but as the devil himself, nay, worse, on account of its having so long resisted God in his working out of its salvation: and that therefore it cannot be saved, except the devil himself was to be saved: (and that really there is in some measure a more than diabolical iniquity in man, has been shown in another place of this treatise: for which reason also some men, viz. the Beast and False Prophet, will be cast into the fiery lake a thousand years sooner than the devil himself, according to Rev. xix. 20, compared with chap. xx. 10.) What can the enemies of the Restoration say to such a soul at that time! will their doctrine be able to save it from despair? I say, no. Is it not the blessed doctrine of the Restoration which alone is able to comfort the poor creature, by representing in the most lively manner the everlastingness of God's mercy, and praising most gloriously the infinite power of the merits of Christ, as far surpassing all the might of sin: shewing plainly at the same time the proper end of all God's judgments both in this and the next world to be no other than the destruction of sin and the final and general well-being of all creatures, and by declaring most comfortably, what a great advantage it will be to the souls to submit here in this time under God's holy justice, and to suffer themselves here to be condemned and judged according to their deserts, but then at once to sink down into the abyss of the everlasting mercy of God, and he ever-efficacious merits of Christ? All which is impossible to be effected by the common doctrine of the partial mercy of God, limited only within the time of this world, which doctrine also represents the punishing justice of God as having also for its ultimate end the everlasting pain of the wicked creatures.

Lastly, Let me ask, whether the doctrine opposite to that of the blessed Restoration, does not give occasion to atheistical minds to make that cursed mockery which they do of the Scriptures, even to the denying of the being of God? Since indeed, on the one hand this doctrine speaks of a great many glorious things in God; of his love, mercy, grace, omnipotence, truth, &c. but on the other hand, mixes such dogmas therewith, which in a great measure contradict all the former good and glorious things that were spoken in praise of the Godhead, and represent God, consequently, under such a character as it is impossible that any reasonable man should conceive as becoming the Deity, and which may easily make men fall entirely into atheism. For instance, it praises in God,

First, That he has made many glorious promises in his word, and that he is to perform great matters; for example, That he will make *all things new* again that have been spoiled; that he is *willing to convert all men to himself, and to save them*, as also, that he will *destroy the whole kingdom of the devil, &c.* But at last all the great things that God is to do, mean nothing else, according to this doctrine, than that God indeed has promised to do all this, but that in reality only the least part of it shall be fulfilled.

Secondly, The doctrine of endless damnation makes also many fine words of God's compassionate heart, and of his universal love and mercy; but if one comes to examine the affair closely, it amounts to this, *that in reality God is not so merciful and compassionate at a sinful man.* For instance, *David*, who was a man as we are, had so much compassion for his son Absalom, that he wished to have died for him, because Absalom died in his sins, and did not go to a very good place; (2 Sam. xviii. 30; chap. xix. 4.) but of our God, who is love and mercy essentially, people would have us believe that with the hour of death *all his mercy for a man has ceased to all endless eternity.* But Jesus Christ himself, the eternal truth, and not our own reason, has taught us to make a quite

different conclusion. (St. Matt. vii. 11; St. Luke xi. 13.) Which also follows from what the great God also says of himself, Jonah iv. 10, 11.

Thirdly, The before-mentioned doctrine does likewise speak in praise of God, that indeed he hates nothing in his creatures but only what is evil, namely, sin; but that he very much loves the creature itself, or that which is good. Wherefore it is said, that, *Diabolus entitative bonus*, or the devil himself according to his being, is good, and so far as he is the creature of God is not excluded from his love. But then, if it is true, what this doctrine adds, that God by punishing his wicked creatures has not for his ultimate end and aim the recovery and restoration, but the endless torment of the creature, then no natural man, who is acute, can possibly make any other conclusion, than that God does not only abhor the evil, but even that which is good, namely, the creature, or the works of his hands. And is it not an easy matter for such a man, when he hears so many contradictory positions, which are altogether given out for true and salutary words of God, to fall away so far as to believe nothing at all for the future of the truth of Scripture? But eternal glory be to the Most High, for having given us to know and to taste with great certainty, from his word, by the revelation of his good Spirit, his majestic, most holy, and alone adorable *Being of Love*, out of whom, through whom, and into whom are all things. By this knowledge, we may be most powerfully preserved from all wickedness and atheism of these latter abominable times. Yea, honour, glory, and praise be to him for ever and ever. *Amen! Hallelujah!*

THE END.