

The Church of Jesus Christ

Seen in

Biblical Types

and

Metaphors

By Benjamin Keach

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Introduction

One who has a reason to hope that he is walking in these great old truths herein set forth by that distinguished disciple and follower of Jesus Christ, Benjamin Keach, gathered, edited and published this small work.

These articles are **abridged**, but not altered in any way to take from or add unto the Keach' s concepts. Keach included many statements dealing with secular items and other none spiritual concepts. These I have left out in an effort to reduce the size of the work and to keep our minds on the spiritual side of these wonderful truths.

Keach's grand and beautiful truths reflect the mainline Particular Baptist Ecclesiology during the 1600s. You will find the church set forth as a gospel assembly, a general gospel assembly, made up of all the particular churches, and then in the total redemptive sense, the elect of all ages. However, you will not find the concept of the universal, invisible church made up by an invisible Holy Spirit baptism. The mainline Particular Baptists did not hold to that Protestant concept. However men as John Bunyan, ect. did hold to that concept. Nevertheless, we must remember, they were not a part of the mainline Particular Baptist movement of the 1600s. For further information about this, you are directed to B. R. White's studies on **Particular Baptist Organizations**, and his excellent work **on The Particular Baptist Records to the 1660**. Mr. White was at one time the Curator of The Historical Society of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland. In addition, please see a certain Debtor to Mercy's **The Biblical, Grammatical, Historical and Baptist View of Ekklesia**.

I trust that indeed, I am such a debtor.

A Short Account of the Life of Benjamin Keach

(Taken from Cathcart's *The Baptist Encyclopedia*, 1881)

Keach, Rev. Benjamin, was born in Stokehaman, England, Feb. 29, 1640. He found peace through Christ in his fifteenth year; and being unable to discover infant baptism or baptism by sprinkling in the Bible, and being fully satisfied that every believer should be immersed, he was baptized after the Savior's example by John Russell, and united with a neighboring Baptist church. This community, perceiving his remarkable talents, encouraged him, when he was eighteen years old, to exercise his gifts as a minister.

At first he was an Arminian about the extent of the atonement and free will, but the reading of the Scriptures and the conversation of those who knew the will of God more perfectly relieved him from both errors. In 1668, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, he was ordained pastor of the church of Horsleydown, Southward, London. The congregation increased so rapidly after Mr. Keach became pastor, that they had repeatedly to enlarge their house of worship.

Mr. Keach soon became a famous disputant on the Baptist side; he had taken Richard Baxter in hand, to the serious injury of the bishop of Kidderminster, and others had felt his heavy blows.

The Rev. John Tredwell, of Lavingham, a friend of Mr. Keach, was blessed in his ministry by the conversion of several vicious persons, who united with his church; this stirred up the indignation of the Rev. Wm. Burkitt, the commentator, a neighbor of Mr. Tredwell, who cast many unjust reflections upon the Baptists and their doctrines. Mr. Tredwell wrote Mr. Burkitt giving some reasons why he should abandon the unchristian course he was pursuing. Mr. Burkitt, at a time when Mr. Tredwell and his people were gathered in the sanctuary for public worship, with a number of his parishioners, entered the meeting-house, and demanded that Mr. Tredwell and his church should hear his view of the points in dispute. Mr. Tredwell, taken aback somewhat by "such a riotous and tumultuous challenge," agreed to let him speak against Baptist beliefs and usages, provided that he should have an opportunity to reply. For nearly two hours Mr. Burkitt sustained infant baptism, and then he and his "riotous company departed without giving Mr. Tredwell an opportunity of making any return, except to a few of his own persuasion that were left behind." Mr. Burkitt speedily published the substance of the address so rudely intruded upon the Baptist minister and his people. Mr. Keach, as a valiant defender of the faith, was invited to reply to Mr. Burkitt's arguments, which he did effectively in "The Rector Rectified and Corrected." Mr. Burkitt was rector of Dedham.

He was challenged by some Episcopal ministers to discuss baptism at Gravesend, near London. As he went to that place in a boat with some friends, he incidentally alluded to the proposed meeting in a way that permitted a stranger, an Episcopal minister, to know that he was Mr. Keach. This person attacked him about infant baptism, and received such a complete drubbing that as soon as the boat touched land he started for his Episcopal brethren and informed them of the arguments which Mr. Keach would use and of his method of putting them. The result of the interview between Mr. Keach's fellow-traveler in the Gravesend boat and his brethren was that they went away as quickly as possible, leaving Mr. Keach without an antagonist.

Mr. Keach was often in prison for preaching and his life was frequently in danger. Some cavalry sent down to Buckinghamshire to suppress the religious meetings of Dissenters, found Mr. Keach preaching, and swore that they would kill him. He was seized and bound and laid on

the earth, and four of the troopers were ready to trample him to death with their horses, but just as they were going to put spurs to their horses an officer who perceived their object rode up and stopped them. He was taken to prison, from which he obtained a release after suffering great hardships.

In 1664, he wrote "**The Child's Instructor**." For the heresies against the Episcopal Church in the little work he was arrested and bound over under heavy penalties to appear at court. The assizes began at Aylesbury Oct 8, 1664. The judge was Lord Chief Justice Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, who acted like Jeffreys at the "Bloody Assizes". He abused Mr. Keach outrageously, he threatened the jury, and he evidently wanted to have Mr. Keach executed if he could terrify him into making some unwise statements. The jury brought in a verdict that Mr. Keach was guilty in part. And when asked to explain their verdict the foreman said, "In the indictment he is charged with these words, 'When the thousand years shall be expired, then shall all the rest of the *devils* be raised, but in the book is, 'Then shall the rest of the dead be raised.'" The Judge informed the Jury that they could bring him in guilty of all the indictments but that sentence. They brought in the prompted verdict. And immediately the judge said "Benjamin Keach, you are here convicted for writing, printing, and publishing a seditious and schismatical book, for which the court's judgment is that you go to jail for a fort night without bail, and the next Saturday stand upon the pillory at Aylesbury in the open market for the space of two hours, with a piper upon your head with this inscription, "For writing, printing, and publishing a schismatical book entitled "**The Child s Instructor, or a New and Easy Primer**," and the next Thursday to stand in the same manner and for the same time in the market of Winslow, and then your book shall be openly burnt before your face by the common hangman in disgrace of you and your doctrine. And you shall forfeit to the king's majesty the sum of twenty pounds, and shall remain in Jail until you find sureties for your good behavior and appearance at the next assizes, there to renounce your doctrines and make such public submission as shall be enjoined upon you.' The sheriff was as rigorous in executing this infamous sentence as the Judge was insolent in pronouncing.

On the pillory at Aylesbury, Mr. Keach defended himself and the truth with great boldness. The Jailer frequently interrupted him, and finally the sheriff himself threatened to have him gagged. The people, contrary to custom, had no words of mockery for the good, persecuted minister, and no offensive missile was hurled at him. An Episcopal minister who ventured to assail Mr. Keach in the pillory was immediately reproached by the people with the ungodliness of his own life, and his voice was drowned in laughter. At Winslow, where he lived, he suffered the same shameful penalty, and a copy of his little book was burned.

Mr. Keach was a zealous Baptist, he aided ministers who came to him from all parts of his country, he had many meeting houses built, and his works in defense of Baptist principles were read all over the kingdom. Before his death men spoke of him as the "famous" Mr. Keach, and he is still described by writers as a man of great celebrity. His two most popular works are "**Tropologia or a Key to open Scripture Metaphors**," and "**Gospel Mysteries Unveiled, or an Exposition of all the Parables**." The latter work is more frequently offered for sale in the catalogues of the great London second hand bookstores than any production of Richard Baxter, John Howe, or Jeremy Taylor. Mr. Keach was the author of forty-three works. He died July 18, 1704, in his sixty-fourth year. He was a devout Christian who led a blameless life and died in the triumphs of faith.

.1.
**THE CHURCH AS CHRIST'S BRIDE IN
TWO PARTS AS A VIRGIN AND A WIFE**

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A VIRGIN

" I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ," 2 Cor. XI. 2

A chaste Virgin. This simile alludes to the legal type of the High Priest, who might marry none but a Virgin. Lev. xxi. 15.

Note. The Church, or a gracious soul, is by the apostle compared to an espoused Virgin: " I have espoused you," *i. e.* I have been an instrument or spokesman in the hand of my blessed Lord and Master herein.

I. The Church of God and every sincere Christian is kept pure from idolatry, viz., the inordinate love of the world, and all Antichristian worship. Hence the forty-four thousand upon mount Sion are said to be Virgins; "these are they which were not defiled with women," that is, with the mother of harlots, mystical Babylon, nor with any of her daughters; for they are Virgins, that is, true and chaste to Christ. Rev. IV. 4.

II. So the Church, and each sincere Christian, is dearly beloved by the Lord, who is said to rejoice over his people, " as a young man rejoiceth over his bride," Isa. Ixii. 4, 5.

III. So, the Church longeth for the return of the Bridegroom, when Christ will take her to himself. " The marriage of the Lamb is come," &c., Cant. viii. 14, Rev. xix. 7, 8.

IV. So all sincere souls wonderfully prize every precious token of Christ's special favor to them. " Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine," Cant. i. 2.

V. So is the Church the wife of Christ.

.2.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A WIFE

" *Thy Maker is thy Husband.*" Isa. liv. 5 " *I will show you the Bride, the Lamb's wife*" Rev. xxi. 9

BY the metaphor, espousals, which is the most pleasant metaphor of all, the spiritual union between Christ and the Church is expressed, Hos. ii. 19, 20. From the names of husband and Wife, metaphors also are taken, Isa. liv. 5, where God calls himself to a, the husband of the Church, and hence Zion is said to be *Beulah*, that is married, Isa. Ixii. 4, 5.

Note, The Church of Christ is the Wife of Christ.

I. So the Church, and every true Christian, hath made a solemn contract or covenant with, and is married to the Lord Jesus, Rom. vii. 1—4.

II. So a gracious soul in this spiritual marriage gives itself to Christ, and Christ gives himself to the soul. I will be thine, saith Christ, to love thee, thine to save thee, thine to crown thee, and make thee happy; I, with all my riches, and rich treasures of grace and glory, will be fully thine, and forever thine. And on the other hand, the soul by way of return gives itself unto Christ: I will be thine, saith every sincere convert, I will be for thee, and not for another. Hence it is said, " They gave themselves to the Lord," 2 Cor. viii. 5. Blessed Jesus, saith the soul, such as I am and have, I give to thee; I am a poor sorry piece, infinitely unworthy to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord, O how undeserving then of thy acceptance ! My best is too bad, my all is too little for thee: but since it is thy pleasure to accept of such a gift, I do with my whole soul give myself, my strength, my time, my talents, and all I have, am, or can do, for the glory of thy holy name.

III. So all true Christians renounce sin, self, and the law in point of justification, and all lovers whatsoever, and keep themselves chaste and faithful to Christ. " Wherefore brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is risen from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God," Rom. vii. 4.

IV. So the Church obeys and reverences the Lord Jesus Christ, and owns him to be her Lord.

V. So the Church, and each true Christian, strives to please 'the Lord Jesus, " That ye may walk worthy of the Lord in all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work," &c. Col. i. 10.

VI. So the soul by marrying of Christ, is interested into all Christ's riches; he hath a sure, a new covenant-right to whatsoever Christ hath; the riches both of grace and glory are become his hereby.

VII. So the Church, and each true Christian, by entering into a marriage relation with the Lord Jesus, is brought into a very near union and conjunction with him. " For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall join unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church," Eph. v. 31. Hence the apostle saith, " He that is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit," 1 Cor. vi. 17. This is a most blessed union, a full union, a lasting union ; (1.) a full union. The whole person of Christ is joined to the whole person of a believer, and the whole person of a believer is joined to the whole person of Christ. Not only Christ's human nature is joined to a believer but his divine nature also ; and so not only the body of a believer is joined to Christ but his soul is joined also. This may administer much

consolation to dying saints: the body as well as the soul, is the Lord's, and therefore shall not be lost, he will raise it up at the last day. From hence Christ sympathizeth with his people, he feels and is sensible of all their sorrows, and he looks upon their sufferings as his sufferings. " I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not," Matt. xxv. 35, 36. " In all their afflictions he was afflicted," Isa. lxiii. 9.

VIII. The Church, and every true believer, by being espoused and married to Christ, the Lord Jesus, hath a near, a dear, a strong, and most intimate affection towards him. A saint is filled with most sweet peace, joy, and delight, and takes most precious complacency in Christ; he is more than father, mother, sons, or daughters. " He is fairer than the sons of men." " The chiefest often thousand." " Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth that I desire besides thee." " Thou hast ravished my heart, (saith Christ,) my sister, my spouse. How fair and pleasant art thou, O love, for delight! Turn away thine eyes, for they have overcome me." " He shall rest in his love." And on the other hand, what saith the Spouse, the Wife of Christ? " I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste." " He is altogether lovely." " Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love." Psalm. xlv. 2, Cant. v. 10, Psalm. lxxiii. 25, Zeph. iii. 17, Cant. v. 16. The saints, saith one, are called Christ's Spouse, because of the unparalleled love that is between them; and, saith another, Christ calls himself our Bridegroom, that he might insinuate the greatness of his love, which decays not with time ; and he calls us his spouse, not his Wife, noting, that our love to him should be always new, always lively and vigorous.

IX. So a gracious soul, if Christ be offended, and withdrawn from him, is greatly cast down and grieved. " Thou hidest thy face, and I was troubled; I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone. My soul failed when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer," Cant. v. 6. " Where is the sounding of thy bowels, and thy mercy towards me ? Are they restrained ?" "**Be** not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember our iniquity for ever; behold, we beseech thee, we are thy people," Isa. lxiii. 15, and Ixiv. 9.

X. So in like manner, no sooner is a soul espoused or married to Christ, but all his debts to law and justice fall upon Christ, and he pays all; he stands between wrath and us, justice and us ; he keeps off all danger of arrests, and fear of imprisonment; he hath riches enough. All is cleared the day the soul closes in with him, though whole mountains of guilt were upon us before.

XI. So, the Church being married to Christ, the Lord Jesus, the Prince of heaven and earth, is raised to the greatest honor imaginable; she is made hereby a princess, and hence called a queen. " On thy right-hand did stand the queen, in gold of Ophir," Psalm. xlv. 9. The saints also have the attendance of Christ's servants, the holy angels. " They are sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of eternal life," Heb. i. 14.

XII. Christ frees his people from all inordinate and unnecessary care. " Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you," 1 Pet. v. 7. He manageth all our concerns in heaven, always appearing before God for us. "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," I John ii. 1, and he manageth all our affairs on earth, in a way of grace, and divine Providence; works all our works in us, and for us, Isa. xxvii. 12. He gives and loves, saves and feeds us, and will never leave us, till he hath brought us to heaven. " He became poor, (but we were no losers thereby,) for by his poverty we are made rich," 2 Cor. viii. 9.

XIII. So, the Church is fruitful to Christ, bringing forth many sons and daughters to him, whom she takes care of, feeds, and nurseth, as the mother does her children. " For thus saith the Lord, Behold I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and dandled upon her knees, as one whom his mother comforteth," &c. See Mother. Isa. Ixvi. 12, 13.

XIV. " So the secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant," Psal. xxv. 14. " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of men to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit," 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

But the Church cannot lose her Husband. Christ " dieth no more," Rom. vi. 9. He is immortal, Rev. i. 18, and therefore she can never be a widow, nor her children fatherless. " I will not leave you comfortless," the word is, orphans, John xiv. 18. He is an everlasting Husband.

INFERENCES

I. Stand and wonder ! Doth Christ espouse and take to wife such a poor and contemptible creature as mankind! What disproportion is there between a king and a beggar, between an ant and an angel ? A far greater disproportion there is between Jesus Christ and sinners. He is high and great; but we are base and vile. He is blessed and glorious; we are wretched and miserable. He is a mighty King, King of kings; and we poor slaves and vassals, yea, the worst of slaves, vassals and slaves to sin and Satan.

II. From hence you may perceive the unspeakable nearness there is between Christ and his people ; can there be a sweeter and more glorious union than this! If we consider the properties of it, it is a spiritual, a real, an operative, an enriching, an intimate, an indissoluble union, to be bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. What can any soul desire more? What greater happiness, what more glorious, saith one of the ancients, than this union ?

III. What doctrine can yield greater comfort to believers, who are thus happily espoused and married to Jesus Christ! We say, such and such are well disposed of, happily married; O soul, how well art thou disposed of! What! married to Christ, to the Son of God, to the King of heaven and earth !

IV. This may show the saints their duty, and put them in mind of their covenant. Soul, thou hast vowed, and canst not go back.

V. And may be of use, especially to all that stand related as husband and Wife in the Church, for husbands to make Christ their pattern in their carriage and deportment towards their Wives; and likewise Wives to make the Church their example in their behavior towards their husbands, as the apostle giveth direction, Eph. v. 21, 33.

VI. Lastly; What terror doth this speak to the enemies of the Church! If the Church be the Wife of Christ, what will they do that so much abuse her, and continually seek her life ? Let them know, he will appear in wrath and vengeance to save and deliver her, and will tear them in pieces in a short time.

3. THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A BUSH ON FIRE

" And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a Bush, and he looked, and behold, the Bush burned, and was not consumed," &c., Exod. iii. 2

According to Ainsworth, and divers other expositors, by the Bush is meant the Church of God in great affliction, the severe trials of God's people being often set forth in the holy scriptures by Fire, by a flame of Fire, and sometimes by a smoking furnace; as in Abraham's vision, Gen. xv. 17, "And behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp, that passed between the pieces." By the smoking furnace was signified to Abraham, Israel's great affliction in Egypt; and by the lamp, the law of God that afterwards was given ; or, as some understand it, the lamp of deliverance, or that salvation God would work, for them, &c., for that the salvation of God is like to a lamp that burneth, Isa. lii. 1.

Quest. Why is the Church of God compared to a Bush, to a burning Bush ? The scripture usually sets out the Church by things whose natures or qualities are excellent, things that are of great worth, &c. And why should she be compared to a Bush, to a bramble-Bush ? for so Ainsworth and others read it.

Answ. Some of the reasons of it, according to our weak judgments, are hinted in the following parallels.

I. So likewise the Church of God was then, and is now, a thing of small value, of little or no esteem in the eyes of wicked men; it was no more regarded by proud Pharaoh, and many of the Egyptians, than a sorry bramble-Bush. Hence the apostle speaketh of the Church, as being very contemptible in the sight of men. " We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day," 1 Cor. iv. 13.

II. So the true Church of God is not clothed with outward beauty, nor arrayed in purple and scarlet, decked with gold, precious stones, and pearls, like the mother of harlots, Rev. xvii. 4, but seemeth low, base, and contemptible to a carnal eye, her beauty being all hidden: " The king's daughter is glorious within," Psal. xlv. 13. And it is from hence the world values her no more. As Christ made himself of no reputation, Phil. ii. 7, so the Church for a while remaineth among men in a like state ; no carnal eye that seeth her, doth at all desire her.

III. So the people of God, considered abstractively, as they are in themselves, what are they ? What worth or excellency is in them ? All the beauty and glory of the Church is from Christ. They are naturally vile sinners, and are called thorns, briars, and pricking brambles, Mic. vii. 4 ; and though converted and changed by the power of God's grace, yet there remaineth something still of the old man and evil nature in them. And God, in other places of scripture, where he compareth them to a vine, to Lilies, to a Garden, to golden Candlesticks, &c., speaks of them with respect to what they are by his special grace in Christ Jesus. But here, in comparing them to a Bush, he hath respect, as we conceive, to what they are in themselves, and by nature, to set forth their own unworthiness, that so he might thereby raise Moses' wonder, to see the mighty condescension of the blessed God, in having regard to a poor and undeserving people, to dwell in them, and in keeping and preserving them in the midst of such fierce and cruel enemies, when a small spark might easily consume and destroy them in an instant, but that he stretcheth forth his glorious arms of grace and divine power for their succour and relief.

IV. The Church of God is the chief place for the saints of God to dwell or make their abode in, who in the song of songs are called birds : " The time of the singing of birds is come," &c., Cant. ii. 12. Which saith Reverend Mr. Ainsworth, signifies the saints, who feeling the comforts of God's Word and Spirit, do sing the praises of God, with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. " They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord ; and from the uttermost parts of the earth we have heard songs, even glory to the righteous," Isa. xxiv. 16. And indeed in our judgment the godly are compared to birds principally upon this consideration, *i. e.*, in respect to their singing, which is laid down in several places of scripture as an undoubted duty; I wish that Christians, who are not in the practice thereof, would consider of it. But to proceed, how safe is the bird, when she getteth into the Bush ? so are the saints, when they are got into the Church; God being a wall of Fire round about her, and her defence and glory on every side, Zech. ii. 5.

V. So it is a strange sight, a prodigy, a mercy to a wonder, enough to astonish all true thinking Christians, to see the Church of God, the unworthy, frail, polluted, weak, and declining Church, as set on Fire, yea, all on a flame, as it were, many fires being kindled on her by wicked adversaries, and yet she is not consumed! How many plots and hellish contrivances were there on foot against poor Israel in Egypt ? First; they made a law, that the midwives should kill all their men-children, when they did their office. Secondly; when that would not take, because the midwives feared God, and saved the men-children alive : " They feared God, it is said, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded," &c., Exod. i. 17. Then they thought of another way, another plot was set on foot, a new fire, as it were, was kindled, which was, to cast all the men-children into the river " And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive," Exod. i. 22: Hence poor Moses was cast into the flags, who afterwards was an instrument in the hand of God, by working many signs and wonders, and appeared to help and deliver Israel, one that Pharaoh little thought of. Thirdly; but this not taking so effectually neither, they were most cruelly oppressed by hard servitude, and forced to make their full tale of bricks, and yet straw is denied them; which made the lives of God's people bitter unto them. Fourthly, and lastly; When they desired liberty to go and worship God, this was denied them, by no means would Pharaoh consent to it, but made his hands heavier and heavier upon them. Thus were they in the Fire and furnace of affliction, and yet graciously preserved, notwithstanding their enemies were so many, so cruel, and so mighty above them. And this was that great sight that God in a figure showed to Moses; and this great sight is to be seen at this day, in this and other nations. O what hellish plots and contrivances have been on foot for many years last past, especially for the space of two or three years! How many Fires have been kindled to consume the poor Church of God in England, and other adjacent nations! What plots and sham-plots have the Popish enemies set on foot, since the time that Dr. Oates first discovered the grand and hellish intrigue. And yet how wonderfully hath God wrought to save us to this day, notwithstanding we are an unworthy people, and as little deserving this divine favour, in ourselves, as ever any were, who ever lived in any age of the world ! The strange and perfidious actings of the enemy to destroy us, and the strange and wonderful workings of divine Providence to preserve us, have been so admirable, that succeeding ages, who shall read the history of these times, will doubtless, scarcely believe them, but rather conclude they are mere romances.

VI. So such as roughly and unadvisedly touch and handle the Lord's people, do but prick and wound themselves thereby; as most plainly appeared in the case of Pharaoh, and the Egyptians. What became of them ? Those that afflict God's people, shall be afflicted, nay, wounded. " And I will undo all that afflict thee," Zech. iii. 19. God knoweth how to make Jerusalem a burthensome stone for all people : " All that burthen themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the earth should be gathered together against it," Zech. xii. 3. Hence Christ gave

persecuting Saul warning of the danger: " It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," Acts ix. 5. Those that kick against God's Church, do but kick against the pricks; they do but hurt, wound, and undo themselves thereby. • As for disparities, they are many, and so obvious to all, that I shall pass them by; for though the Church of God is here represented by a bramble-Bush, yet she is in Christ's sight as a lily among thorns ; and her worth and glory through the Lord Jesus is so great, that she very far surpasseth all the people and families of the earth. Nothing of all created things doth Christ think good enough to set forth and illustrate the beauty and excellency of his Church and people by, however unworthy she is in her own sight, or **in** the eyes of the sinful world..

INFERENCES

I. Admire the grace and love of God, the Almighty Jehovah, that inhabiteth eternity, that he should out of his abundant favour, good will, and his great condescension, dwell in a poor bramble-Bush! who is able to conceive this rich and undeserved favour.

II. It also informeth us, how it comes to pass that the poor saints and Church of God are preserved to this day: it is because God is among them. God dwelleth in the Bush: the Lord dwelleth in Sion, to comfort, revive, uphold, save, and deliver her in the day of trouble.

III. It may serve to humble us, and lay as low in our eyes. What are the best of God's people, by nature, and in themselves, but as a Bush, briar, or thorny hedge ? it is God who hath made us to differ from others.

IV. It may deter the wicked, and for ever be a warning to them, to forbear persecuting God's people; for that it will prove at last to their utter ruin; they kick but against the pricks.

V. Remember the good will of him, and seek his blessing, that dwelt in the Bush.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A GOLDEN CANDLESTICK

" The golden Candlesticks are the seven Churches." Rev. i. 20

MR. Brighton, and others, understand this metaphor of golden Candlesticks, is taken from the Candlesticks that were in the tabernacle erected by Moses ; and the resemblance between these holds good in two or three particulars, which take as follow.

I. So the Church holdeth out the light of God's word to all that dwell therein, in which respect the apostle calleth the Church the pillar of truth, 1 Tim. iii. 15, because she holds out the truth to be seen, saith Weemse,* the expression being taken from the custom of many nations, who are used to write their laws in tables, and so to hang them upon pillars of stone, that the people whom it concerned to know them, might see and read them ; as amongst us, proclamations are nailed to posts in market towns.+

The Church holds out her light three ways.

1. By her doctrine; she having divers approved ministers belonging to her, that she calleth forth to preach and publish the word of truth. Hence the law is said to " go forth to Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."
2. By her holy discipline.
3. By her godly example and conversation: " Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," Matt. v. 16. Walk as the children of the light," Eph. v. 8. The Church ought to meet publicly, to make a public profession.

II. So the Church is very precious in God's sight: "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, above

Exercit., Divin, Exer. 9. +Dr. White, Way to the True Church, p. 80. Curs. Theol, Part. 2. Col. 324.

all people," Exod.xix.5,6, Mal.iii.17. Hence they are called his jewels. This Candlestick only belongs to the prince of heaven and Earth; they are Christ's Churches.

III. The Church of God is not only of use to hold out the light of God's word; but it is also richly adorned with several choice and heavenly graces, that make it, and every member thereof, who truly fears God, amiable in Christ's sight, 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

IV. So when a Church is removed out of its place, the light of God's Word is many times removed from a nation or people likewise; which severe judgment hath befallen the people of Asia long ago, by God's taking away or removing those seven famous golden Candlesticks, or Churches, that once were there.

INFERENCES

Let the saints and people of God take heed how they walk before him: it behoves them to strive to recover themselves from whence they are fallen, lest he remove their Candlestick out of its place.

.4. THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A CANDLESTICK

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.5. THE CHURCH CALLED THE CITY OF GOD

"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God, Selah," Psalm. lxxxvii. 3

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High," Psalm. xlvi. 4

"We have a strong City," &c., Isa. xxvi. 1

"Look upon Zion, the City of our solemnity," &c., Isa. xxxiii. 20

"And they shall call them the people, &c, And thou shalt be called a City sought out, not forsaken," Isa. lxii. 12

"Ye are a City set on a hill, that cannot be hid," Matt. v. 14

IN these places of the Holy Scriptures, Zion, or the Church of God, is called a City. Zion was a fort or mount in Jerusalem, and the temple was built upon it; hence the church of the Jews was called, as some conceive, by this name Zion, because there they assembled: but after, it was a name or title given to the Church, whether Jews or Gentiles. "Ye are come to mount Zion, to the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," Heb. xii. 22.

God's people may be called by the name of Zion, or Jerusalem.

1. Because we were naturally like Jerusalem, the forts of the Jebusites, viz., sinners and enemies to God.
2. Because by grace we are overcome and conquered, like as Jerusalem was, by the true David.
3. Because the Church is fortified by the Almighty for his own use, and chief place and residence in this nether creation.
4. In respect of her renown and glory. As Jerusalem was renowned above all Cities, so God's Church is now above all people and societies in the world.
5. Because it is viewed and gazed upon by all strangers; she may well be compared to a looking glass, as Zion signifies.
6. In respect of her laws; for as the law and public worship were at Jerusalem; so Christ's laws and public worship are maintained in the Church. Hence God is said to love the gates of Zion, more than all the dwelling-places of Jacob, Psalm. lxxxvii. 2.

Observe. The saints, or Church of God, is the City of God, or may fitly be compared to a City.

In opening of this metaphor, we shall show the nature, trade, government, privileges, and glory of the City of God.

I. The Church is built by Christ, for a habitation for God: "Upon this rock will I build my Church," &c., Matt. xvi. 18. "In whom ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 22.

II. The Church of God hath strong walls about it. "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks," Isa. xxvi. 1. The Church hath a threefold wall about it.

First; The wall of God's providence. "Hast not thou made a hedge (or wall) about him?" Job i. 10. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem; so the Lord is round about them that fear him," &c., Psalm. cxxxv. 2.

Secondly; The protection of the holy angels: "The angels of the Lord encamp round about them that fear him," &c., Psalm. xxxiv. 7.

Thirdly; God in an extraordinary manner, is as "A wall of fire round about her," Zech. ii. 5; every one of his attributes is a gracious defense to the Church.

III. The Church of God is famous upon this account: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion; on the sides of the north, the city of the great King," Psalm. xlviii. 2. "Ye are as a City set upon a hill," Matt. v. 14.

IV. The Church of God is built up of many living stones, consisting of divers particular societies, or spiritual houses. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Cornerstone: in whom all the building fitly framed together, grows to an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit," Eph. Ii: 19--22. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together," Psalm. cxxii. 3.

V. The Church of God also has special laws, institutions, and customs belonging to it, (by which it is in all things governed,) which are con-rained in the holy scripture, the great charter and statute book of the Church.

VI. The Church of God is not without a good government, and a supreme magistrate, viz., the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the chief Judge and Lawgiver, or Head of this spiritual corporation.

VII. So the Church of God hath inferior officers under Jesus Christ, which the citizens by the appointment of Christ are required to substitute and ordain to govern and keep all things in good order. "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and Some pastors and teachers," &c., Ephes. iv. 4--12.

VIII. The Church or City of God hath a spiritual trade belonging to it, which all the citizens do and always ought to follow, by which they are also greatly enriched.

IX. The saints or citizens of Zion are all merchants, who trade daily to heaven; they fetch their blessed merchandize from thence;" "Our conversation is in heaven," Phl. 3:20. Hence Solomon compares the Church to merchant's ships. See Merchant's ships. Saints have, like other merchants, their correspondent Jesus Christ, who makes glorious returns of all they venture, or send to heaven: for every duty rightly performed, he makes returns of mercy; for tears of godly sorrow, he returns them the oil of joy. "Thou wilt," saith holy David, " put my tears into thy bottle." By which means the spiritual citizens grow rich in faith, hope, experience, &c. See the Parable of the Merchant Man.

Now touching the trade, traffic, or merchandize of this city, upon which its wealth and prosperity doth wholly depend, take what follows:

First. Their trade is heavenly. "*Wherefore*, holy brethren,, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ, Heb.3:1,2. And as they are all merchants, and use one trade, so they all deal with one and the same Benefactor, from whom they have quick returns; they fetch their goods from afar. Something touching the excellency of the trade of the city of God, I shall hint in a few particulars.

Secondly. As touching her commodities, or the merchandize which her citizens deal in.

First, Negatively.

1. They are not prohibited goods; 2. They are not counterfeit goods; 3. They are not temporal and corruptible goods.

Secondly. Affirmatively, and more directly, they are,

1. Soul-enriching commodities, things that are of very great worth and value. "The merchandize of wisdom is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold," Prov. iii. 14.

2. They are needful things, such things as we cannot be without. Some things that merchants of a city deal in, and fetch from afar, though they are of great value, yet we may very well submit, and live comfortably without them, as pearl, and precious stones, &c. But there is an absolute necessity of all those things the citizens of this city trade in and for.

3. They are such commodities as will make the nations and persons that buy them happy for ever; and indeed there is no true happiness without them.

Quest. What is the traffic of this city of God ?

Answ. The first thing that I shall mention, is the truth; this she offers to sale: "Buy the truth, and sell it not," Prov. xxiii. 23. The Church is called "The pillar and ground of truth," 1 Tim. iii. 15. Truth is only to be found in this city, or in the warehouses of the citizens of Zion, viz., the word of God, and the hearts of believers.

The second thing, is a soul-converting Gospel, and blessed ordinances, "The law goeth forth of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem," Micah iv. 2.

The third thing they deal in, are the gifts and soul-enriching graces of the Spirit, hope, love, humility, &c. Things of very great worth.

The fourth is justification; every true sinner makes it his business to get this precious treasure.

The fifth thing is the peace of God, which passes all our understanding, one of the rarest commodities in the world.

The sixth thing is, union and communion with God. "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John i. 3.

The seventh thing is, peace of conscience: "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, towards God, and towards men," Acts xxiv. 16.

The eighth thing is, sanctification, or a holy life; they who trade not in this commodity, are none of the true sons and citizens of Zion.

Ninthly. The pearl of great price, worth more than ten thousand worlds.

Tenthly. The last thing that I shall mention is, eternal life, a crown of glory that fades not away, 1 Pet. i. 4.

X. The City of God, whose trade lies in spiritual merchandize fetched from afar, hath a most glorious river belonging to it, which may indeed he said to run through every street thereof, viz., the Holy Spirit, and Word of God. The Spirit in several places of scripture is called a river, and

by means of these blessed streams are all divine and sacred commodities which the godly deal in, brought home to their very doors, viz., gifts, graces, pardon, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, &c., which are very excellent merchandize. And were it not for this river, what would become of this City? We should soon be impoverished and undone. It is the Holy Spirit that enriches and cheers the hearts of all gracious souls. "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the City of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High," Psalm. xlvi. 4. It may not be amiss here to consider, See River, under the third Head of Metaphors.

1. From whence this river comes; 2. The nature of the waters; 3. The divers streams thereof.

First; The river comes,

1. From a rock, Numb. xx. 8, 11. This rock was first smitten, and then the water came out abundantly.
2. It comes from an infinite inexhaustible fountain; it is said to proceed from the throne of God and the Lamb," Rev. xxii. 1.

Secondly; Touching the nature of this river; though we have spoken of it under the third Head of Metaphors, yet we will touch a little upon it here. It hath besides other properties of spiritual water, these divers qualities,

1. It will heal all the diseases of the inward man; it will soften, and make very tender and pliable, and break in pieces a hard heart.
2. It will cure the soul of spiritual blindness; nay, it will open the eyes of him that was born blind.
3. It will infallibly cure all spiritual consumptions, that spiritual waste or decay of faith, love, zeal, hope, &c., which seize sometimes upon many Christians.
4. It will bring down the swelling of pride, and make a man very humble, and little in his own eyes; the more of the spirit, the more humble.
5. It will cure all manner of spiritual deadness or deafness, making a man very lively and diligent to hear the good counsel and instruction, as Lydia experienced, Acts xvi. 14.
6. It is good against the tremblings of the heart, and will make a man hold and courageous in the cause of Christ, in evil times. "We cannot but speak the things which we have both seen and heard," Acts iv. 20.
7. It is an excellent remedy to purge out all noxious and evil humors of the soul, from whence many distempers flow, making a man sound at heart, and holy in life.
8. It will effectually restore a lost appetite, and make a man relish well the food of God's Word, causing it to be sweeter to him than honey, or the honey-comb, Psalm. cxix. 103.
9. It will preserve from the plague of sin, of what sort soever it be, though a Christian be amongst infected persons every day.
10. It will revive a fainting and drooping spirit.
11. It will set and make whole all broken bones, as David and thousands others have found by experience.
12. It will cure the leprosy, and all old running ulcers, and all fresh wounds of the soul, though ever so deep, stinking, and loathsome.
13. It is good against weakness of the hands, and feebleness of the knees, 1 Thess. v. 14.
14. It is sovereign good against spiritual barrenness, making the godly to bring forth much fruit, 2 Pet. i. 9.
15. It will clear the sight, and make a man see afar off.
16. It infallibly cures the sleepy disease, or the spiritual lethargy of the soul, so that they shall

not sleep as others do, 1 Thess. v. 6.

17. It cures all diseases of the tongue and mouth, and an unsavory breath, that common sign of a foul stomach, James iii. 5, 6.

18. It cures all spiritual lameness; it causes a lame man to leap as an hart, and never halt any more between two opinions, Isa. xxxv. 6.

19. It perfectly cures all distempers of the head, occasioned by error, and erroneous principles, that corrupt the understanding.

20. It is water of life, he that drink of it shall never die, John iv. 14.

Thirdly; this river hath three special streams, 1. The stream of ordinances. 2. The stream of heavenly graces. 3. The stream of divine promises. Sinners come to these waters, 0, come before the stream be turned another way. **See River and Water of Life.**

XI. The Church is the habitation of God. "The Lord dwelleth in Zion, in Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel, in Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion," This is for the everlasting honor and renown of the Church. "*The Lord dwelleth in Zion. Sing praises, for the Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever,*" Psalm. ix. 11, Isa. viii. 18, Psalm. lxxvi. 1, 2, 3, and cxxxii. 13, 14. "Though he be the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, yet he dwelleth with them that are of an humble and contrite spirit," Isa. lvii. 15. The special and most gracious presence of God is with his people.

XII. So the Church of God hath many glorious privileges and immunities belonging to it, which unconverted sinners have no right to. The first privilege, or part of that freedom that belongs to the City of God, is pardon of sin. "The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick; the people that shall dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity," Isa. xxxiii. 24.

1. This is a glorious privilege and freedom, if we consider the abominable and heinous nature of sin, which is opened under the third head of metaphors.
2. Because of that which is couched and comprehended under the blessing of pardon; when God absolves a poor sinner, he not only forgives, but also forgets, their sins and iniquities he remembers no more.
3. Because it is a freedom from the guilt of it.
4. Because it is a freedom from the power and dominion of it, Rom. vi. 14.
5. It is a freedom from the punishment of it, Rom. viii. 1, John v. 24.
6. Because it is a purchased freedom, it was obtained by a great sum, viz., the sum of God's great love and grace, with the sum of Christ's blood. Remission is through Christ's atonement.
7. Because it is a sealed freedom, it is made over to the soul by the King's own seal, the Spirit of God, that great seal of heaven, Eph. i. 13, 14.
8. Because it is a lasting freedom; the sins of believers are forgiven for ever, they shall never be laid to their charge.

The second privilege of this city is, Gospel-fellowship, free access to the Lord's table, and communion with the saints: "They are made to sit down together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 6.

The third privilege is right to the ministry; they may all lay claim to the ministers and ministry of the word: "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all are yours." 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. They, and all their gifts and gracious endowments, are the saints.

The fourth privilege is, their undoubted right to the City-stock, or the Church's patrimony.

1. The stock of prayers; sincere souls have a right to all the prayers of the Church.
2. To that store and spiritual provision, viz., the bread of life, &c., that is laid up in her. "God will bless the provision of Zion, and satisfy her poor with bread," Psalm. cxxxii. 15.
3. The stock of promises. God hath promised to bless, comfort, strengthen, beautify, build up, and save Sion, and consequently every saint and member thereof; for all those, and many more like promises, are directly made to every sincere soul or Citizen of Sion.

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The fifth privilege is, free access to the throne of grace, Eph. ii. 18.

Sixthly, a dwelling place there. There is a glorious privilege; they dwell near the King, behold him in the galleries every day; they dwell in God's courts, nay, in his house: "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee, Selah," Psalm. lxxxiv. 4. "They that are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God, they shall bring forth fruit in old age," &c., Psalm. xcii. 13.

1. It is a strong and sure dwelling-place: "He shall dwell on high, his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks," Isa. xxxiii. 16.
2. It is a rich and glorious dwelling-place.
3. It is a pleasant dwelling-place.
4. It is an honorable dwelling-place.
5. It is and shall be a peaceable habitation. "Look upon Zion, the City of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken," Isa. xxxiii. 20.

Seventhly, They have a right and privilege to choose their own officers; every free Citizen hath his voice at every election. No minister, bishop, or deacon, may be imposed upon them without their own free consent.

Eighthly, They have a right to all the blessings and privileges of the river, the streams whereof make glad all the inhabitants, the nature of whose water you have heard.

Ninthly, They have a right to the City-guard, which always attends them, whither soever they go, or whatsoever they do, when they are about their proper work, which are the good angels.

Tenthly, The last privilege I shall mention is, sonship. "But to as many as received him, to them gave he power, [or privilege,] to become the sons of God," John i. 12. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 16.

XIII. The Church hath a common stock or storehouse belonging to it, called the unsearchable riches of Christ, out of which all poor decayed Christians have their wants supplied, Eph. iii. 8. That grace that is treasured up in Christ, is always ready to be given forth to his poor children;

being utterly undone, and by this means they are kept from ruin, and "My God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus," Phil. iv. 19.

XIV. The Church, or City of God, hath also a strong and faithful militia, or spiritual watch, which are the holy angels. These are called watchers, or watchmen, Dan. iv. 23. And in other places, the Lord's host, or the armies of heaven, who are mighty in power, one of them being able to destroy all the Church's enemies. These keep the saints day and night; they encamp about them, and see that no evil come unto them. Besides them, God is said to watch over his people continually, who is called, "the Watchman of Israel, and the Savior thereof in the day of trouble." "Unless the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain," Psalm. cxxvii. 1, 2. Besides, there are the ministers of the Gospel, who are called watchmen. See the sixth Head of Metaphors.

XV. The City of God is famous in respect of its towers, and places of security. "Walk about longing to it, not only for ornament, Zion, and go round her; mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following: For this God is our forever and ever, and He will be our guide until death." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower," &c. Psalm xlvi. 12, 13, 14. Every one of the blessed attributes of God are so many towers of safety to his Church. See **Strong Tower** in the first head of metaphors.

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," Jude 4. These ill and loose professors bring a great reproach upon the Church of God; but there is a day coming, when the Church shall be freed of them. "There shall be no Canaanite in the house, or City of God," Zech. xiv. 21.

XVI. So the City of God, notwithstanding all the holy and eminent saints and servants of God who dwell therein, yet hath in it some wicked and ungodly ones, who by craft and hypocrisy get a being there, though when known they be turned out, as the incestuous person, I Cor. v. "Hymeneus and Alexander" were, 1 Tim. i. 20

XVII. So the Citizens of Zion have an honorable respect, and high esteem for God's Church, as appears particularly in David: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy," Peal. cxxxvii. 5, 6. Many reasons may be given, why the godly are so much taken with Zion..

Because it is the place of their birth; they were born, or rather born again in her. "And of Zion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her, and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writes up his people, that this and that man was born there, Selah," Psalm. lxxxvii. 5, 6.

Because it is the City of their Father, and so their blessed inheritance; all the glorious immunities thereof are theirs.

It is a City redeemed or purchased by Christ's most precious blood, he gave himself for it. "Ye are bought with a price," 1 Cor. vi. 20.

God builds it, and for God; it is the place He hath chosen, he esteems highly of it. "He is said to rejoice in Zion, he loves the very gates thereof, more than all the dwelling-places of Jacob," Psalm. lxxxvii. 2. It is a splendid and most glorious City; her foundation is laid with precious

stones, yea, the choicest sapphires; her streets are paved with that which is more rare than the purest gold.

XVIII. So some of the citizens of Zion, who are diligent and industrious in the improvement of grace, and the means of godliness, grow very rich in faith and good works, rich in spiritual and divine knowledge, rich in heavenly experience. The diligent hand maketh rich, with the blessing of God. And these rich saints are also soon discovered, and taken notice of, Prey. x. 22.

1. So those who are spiritually rich, James ii. 5; rich in faith, rich merchants of mount Zion, the City of God, trust, they can stay patiently, in expectation of the good of the promise, as Abraham, who was strong or rich in faith, when others cannot rely upon a bare promise, or take God's single word for the accomplishment of this or that, Rom. iv. 20

2. So those who are rich citizens of Sion, rich in grace, have a stock of blessed experience, as David had. They have a stock of faith, much faith, with others have but little faith, a stock of good works, having done much for God, and for His Church.

3. So rich citizens of Sion have abundance of rare and precious things in their warehouses, viz., their hearts, as love, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Gal. v. 22.

4. So rich citizens of Sion, though they work hard for God: "I labored more abundant than they all," 1 Cot. xv. 10, yet their work is sweet and pleasant to them, because they work not for life, or for a livelihood; they rest not upon the doing, but live by faith, Gal. ii. 20. But poor saints live more upon doing than believing; they have but little of that, or any other grace..

5. So rich saints are more adorned with garments of humility, "With the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price," Pet. iii. 4. They can deny them. selves, are patient under sufferings, endure all things contentedly for Christ's sake; they have much wisdom, as "An ornament of grace upon their head, and chains of gold about their neck," Prey. i. 9.

6. So rich saints, such as have much grace, who are great dealers, and have got much by trading in spiritual things, bring up their children more virtuously, and give them better education; they give them better counsel, better examples than others; they train them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, taking God for a pattern herein, who maketh the Word and rod a blessing to his children, Gen. xv. xii. 19, Eph. vi. 4, Psalm. xciv. 11, 12.

7. So those who are spiritually rich, have many a good table, in comparison of fat precious morsels, yea, blessed variety of choice more than the poor do. They are often feasted by Christ, and are with him in the house of wine, and delight themselves in fatness; their good conscience is to them a continual feast, Cant. ii. 4, Prey. xv.15.

8. So those who are spiritually rich, can best bear up under cross providences, persecution, and losses for Christ's sake.

9. So those that are rich, in spiritual experience, in faith, and good works, can do much for weak Christians by prayer, by advice, and good counsel. Moses did mighty things by prayer for Israel, Exod. xvii. 11. "The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," James v. 16.

10. So those who are strong, and very rich in faith, and all other graces, are helped to bear up and pass through difficulty, in time of want and scarcity, better than weak or poor Christians

will; only God hath for their comfort and encouragement promised supply their wants, and will if sincere, also relieve them, that they shall not faint or perish in the years of famine, Phil. iv. 19, Psalm. lxxxiv. 11.

XIX. The City of God, in comparison of great Babylon, is but a small City notwithstanding to all her glory, grandeur, and greatness, (as you have heard) she is but little · "There was a little City and but few men in it," ECU. ix. 14, Luke xii. 32. This City is the Church of God, &c. Babylon is a great City. In comparison of the wicked, Christ's flock is but a handful of people, as it were, Rev. xvii. 18.

XX. The City of God, this little City, is besieged; "The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged City," Isa. i. 8, and marvellous it is. so small a City should hold out so bravely unto this day, especially considering what mighty enemies have and do besiege her.

Objection. But here it may be objected, hath it not been overcome ? Is it not said, that "*The* holy City was trodden under foot ?" Rev. xi. 2.

Answ. It is only the outward court. God hath had his Church in all ages, though forced for a time to fly into the wilderness, from the face of the dragon, Rev. xii. 6.

Quest. Who besieges this City ?

Answ.

1. By the devil, called a great king, and the king of the bottomless pit.
2. By antichrist, the first-born of Satan. He hath for above twelve hundred years laid siege against it, using all manner of engines, craft and cruelty, to batter her down, and finally to destroy her, Rev. xii.
3. She is besieged by the world, by wicked men, men of earthly and carnal principles, who abhor Zion, and say, "let her be defiled, raze her, even the foundation thereof," Psal. cxxxvii. 7.
4. She is besieged by sin, and the flesh, a secret enemy, who fain, in a clandestine way would betray her; this enemy, doth her the most mischief.
5. She is besieged by a multitude of false teachers; these likewise have done great hurt and damage to the Church of God, who labor by evil doctrine to poison all her inhabitants, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.
6. And besides all this, there have been sad divisions within her also: she has been as a City divided, and yet she stands.
7. There have been sad breaches made in her wall, so that many have been let in that way, who should have been kept out.
8. Many that seemed to be for her, have deserted her, and joined with the enemy, and yet still she holds out.
9. And, which is worst of all, few of those who have been in the City have bravely acquitted themselves, by zeal and holiness, to defend her, and yet she holds out still.

Quest. From whence is it that she is helped to bear up against all these sore and grievous assaults, batteries, and calamities?

Ans. 1. This City, as you have heard, is built upon a rock, it has a sure foundation, which cannot be removed, Matt. xvi. 18.

2. The Lord of Hosts hath fought for her; it is he that hath been on her side, he hath defended Mount Zion, and the hill thereof; he hath taken part with her, and doth at this day, Psalm. cxxv. 2, Isa. xxxi. 4, 5.

3. She holds out, because God hath decreed her standing, and that her enemies shall not prevail, Zech. xii. 8, 9.
4. She is defended, because she is the place which the Lord loves, and hath purchased with the blood of his own dear Son, Psalm. lxxiv. 2.
5. Because it is the place where God's honor dwells; "I have loved the habitation of thy house, the place, where thy honor dwells," Psalm. xxvi. 8.
6. Again, she still remains, because she is, though a little City, yet a strong City: "We have a strong City." She hath strong fortifications, strong walls and bulwarks, Isa. xxvi. 1.
7. It is, because God's own habitation, as you have heard, is in her; God is "A wall of fire round about her, and the glory in the midst of her," Zech. ii. 5, Psalm. cxxxv. 21.
8. She is defended by reason of the strong tower she hath in her; so long as her tower stands, how can she be battered down? Zech. ii. 5. And her tower is impregnable. The enemy may sooner pull the sun out of the firmament, than undermine or batter down, deface or demolish the tower of Zion, which is the name of the Lord, Prov xviii. 10. See strong Tower.
9. She is defended, because in her are the laws, statutes, ordinances, and holy institutions of her King, the Lord Jesus, where he is worshipped and adored in spirit and truth, Isa. ii. 3.

INFERENCES

- I. Hence all that dwell in Zion may be provoked to a diligent improvement of their great privileges, to the end they may be enriched with all those spiritual riches, and dignified with that honor that appertains to a true denizen thereof.
- II. Take comfort and encouragement also, whatever the attempts of the enemies are, yet about all her glory shall be a defense. All those whose feet stand within her gates, may read honor, safety, and salvation as it were written upon her walls, Isa. iv. 5.
- III. Let it be your delight to prefer her above your chiefest joy; as she is called the holy City, so be ye also holy, that you may declare yourselves unto what City is it you do belong, Psalm. cxxxvii. 6.
- IV. How may this call home all those that are gone astray, and invite all that profess good will unto Zion, to let their feet stand within her gates, for the Lord hath de. sired it for his habitation. Holy David made this his one thing desirable, viz., to dwell in God's house, to be a denizen of this City; and why should not you ? Psalm. xxvii. 4.
- V. Let it be a warning to all Zion's enemies, to take heed how they lift up their hands against her; or reproach God, and them that dwell in heaven; let them lay down their arms, and fight against her no more. "The Lord shall roar also out of Zion, and utter his voice out of Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain," &c. Joel iii. 16, 17.

.6.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A DOVE

" O my Dove, that art in the cliffs of the rock," &c.. Cant. ii. 14

" O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-Dove unto the multitude," &c; Psal. lxxiv. 19

THAT is, thy Church and people, who worship none but thee, as the turtle-Dove, that never entertains conjunction with another; and who in their affliction, like a Dove, express their grief in sighs and solitary groans to thee; and which is unarmed, weak, simple, and meek, like the turtle-Dove, which is esteemed the least among the species of Doves, as Aristotle says. The Chaldee renders it, " the soul of such as learn thy law," the word a turtle-Dove being of some affinity with law. Christ calls his Church a Dove, by which metaphor, saith Glassius, its simplicity, chastity, &c., is denoted.

That the spouse of Christ, or a gracious soul, is or may fitly be compared unto a Dove.

I. THE saints of God are injurious to none, they seek the hurt of no man, they are and ought to be harmless, " The children of God, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation," Phil. ii. 15.

II. The saints make their abode in the Rock Christ; they build only in him, and upon him, Exod. xxxiii. 22, and indeed in the cliffs of this Rock they rest, viz., in the wounds, piercings, dyings, and crucifyings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. Gracious souls, or sincere Christians, do not feed upon the sensual pleasures, and carnal delights of this world, as the ungodly do ; nor will they feed upon, or receive in the detestable carrion of men's traditions ; they hate idolatry, false worship, and every evil way, and only feed and live upon the pure grain of God's holy Word, Psal. cxix. 104, 120.

IV. The saints of God are persecuted and molested by all the sons of Belial; they are chased like a Dove or partridge upon the mountains, 1 Sam. xxvi. 20.

V. The godly have no other way, when molested by Satan, and wicked men, but to fly to God : " At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee," Psal. lvi. 3.

VI. The sincere Christian looks not upon himself as secure, until he be got into Christ. " The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run into it, and are safe," Prov. xviii. 10. They, like Noah's Dove, fly to the ark.

VII. The sincere Christian, and spouse of Christ, is very chaste to the Lord Jesus, will own no other head or husband, they defy the Pope, that first-born of Satan, and all others who pretend to headship, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction over their consciences.

VIII. The saints of God have a single and lovely eye in Christ's sight: they strive to be like the Dove, resisting pride, lust, and wanton-ness. and to be adorned with meekness and modesty. having always their eyes upon Jesus Christ; not daring to lift up their eyes to other lovers, but by holy intention wait upon him alone in all their devotion, Isa. viii. 17, Psal. xv. 15.

IX. God's children love communion and fellowship one with another, that they may mutually be comforted and edified in faith: " They fly like a cloud, and as Doves to their windows, that is, to the house or Church of God," Isa. lx. 8.

X. A gracious soul mourns when it hath lost the sight of Jesus Christ: " Thou hidest thy face and I was troubled," saith David ; " I did mourn as a Dove," saith Hezekiah, " mine eyes fail with looking up. I shall not see the Lord in the land of the living," Isa. xxxviii. 11, 14, " They shall be on the mountains, like Doves in the valleys, every one mourning for his own iniquity " Ezek. vii. 16.

XI. The Church is also very fruitful to Christ, (1.) In respect of bringing forth children : "This and that man, it shall be said was born in her," Psal. lxxxvii. 5. (2) In respect of bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, and good works.

XII. Christians, or gracious souls, love to be by the sweet streams of living water ; by that river that makes glad the city of God, Psal. xlvi. 4. They love to drink of the promises and consolations of the Spirit.

XIII. The saints are gloriously adorned with the righteousness of Christ, and with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and when the Sun of Righteousness shines, and sends forth his resplendent beams and rays upon them, then their graces appear and shine most glorious, Psal. xlv.

XIV. The Godly are required to offer up themselves, both body and soul, as an acceptable sacrifice unto God, Rom. xii. 1; and many of them have been commanded, and readily have yielded themselves up to God, in a way of suffering, for Christ's sake; and none but those who are God's own sincere children, are accepted in offering up themselves, either in a way of doing or suffering, Prov. xv. 8.

XV. The saints of God are of themselves in many things silly and foolish, wanting that heart, courage, and magnanimity of spirit, to stand up for God, his truth, interest, and people, as they ought to do.

I. Is Christ's Church, and so consequently every gracious person, compared to a Dove, being meek, humble, harmless, chaste, and single-hearted to the Lord Jesus Christ ? &c. Then we may assure ourselves, that she that delights in prey, rapine, and blood, as doth the Romish Church, is none of the Dove or Church of Jesus Christ.

II. Are the eyes of a Dove by the rivers of water ? Do they delight in springs, fountains, and pure rivers ? And in this are they an emblem of the godly, who hate all filthy, loathsome, and detestable traditions of men, and delight only in the pure, unmixed, and crystal streams of God's holy institutions ? Then all those, who, like ravens, and other foul and unclean birds of prey, delight in ditches, and in long-standing, stinking pools of this false church, where they defile themselves in searching for the detestable carrion of idolatry, are none of Christ's Dove-like people.

III. And let those that are the people of God labour to be like the Dove, who is neat, and will not defile itself; let them see they keep their hearts chaste to Christ and avoid all pollution of sin in their conversation, *2 Cor.* vii. 1.

IV. This also may inform the godly that it is no marvel if they be persecuted and molested by the wicked.

V. And in the midst of all their afflictions, persecutions, and temptations, this may comfort them; God hath prepared for his poor Doves a strong place of defence and shelter, viz., the Rock Christ, whither let us in all times of danger fly by faith and prayer.

.7.

**THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A FAMILY
OR HOUSEHOLD**

" You have I known above all the families of the earth," Amos iii. 2

" The House of God, which is the Church of the living God," 1 Tim. iii. 15

As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, but especially to the Household of faith.
Gal. vi. 10

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the Household of God," Eph. ii. 19

A HOUSE in the holy scripture is sometimes put for the Family or Household, and sometimes for the structure or building itself. In both these respects, the Holy Ghost runs the Parallel, in respect of the Church.

I. So in the Church of God, there is a mixture of good and bad, sheep and goats, sincere Christians and hypocrites; like as in a field there is a mixture of wheat and tares; and in a floor of grain, there is chaff as well as corn. However, when any appear unsound, drossy, and ungodly, she turneth them out. When the Family of Christ consisted but of twelve men, there was a Judas amongst them.

II. So in the Church of God there are little children young men, and fathers; there are weak and stronger Christians, some that stand in need of milk, some that are fit for strong meat; some that need to be led, and carried in arms; some that are teachers and rulers, and others that are taught and ruled, 1 John ii. 12,14, Heb. v. 11—14.

III. So God, the great and good Master of this heavenly Family, doth and will provide for all and every soul that belongs to him. " Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, and neither do they spin. Therefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which is to-day, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" Matt. vi. 25—30. " The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that fear the Lord, shall want no good thing," Psalm. lxxxiv. 11. "He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." " My God shall supply all your wants," &c., Phil. iv. 19. " Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you," &c.

IV. So is the Church under the government of Christ; and every member is subject to that authority, order, and rule, which he hath left therein.

V. So doth the blessed God defend and preserve his Church, whose power is infinite. " So will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending, also he will deliver."

VI. So each member of the Church is privy to all such things as are done publicly therein; and many things done therein do so particularly relate to the Family, that it is an evil thing, and justly to be reprov'd, for any member to divulge or make such private matters known to others.

The Church of God in this respect, as well as in some others, should be " As a spring shut up, as a fountain sealed," &c. Cant. iv. 12.

VII. So, it is a great honor to the Church of God, when it is well and wisely governed. In this respect Solomon was a type of Christ, and his Family a type of the Family of the faithful, or Church of God. The Lord Jesus ought to be acknowledged as the Head, and chief Governor; and next to him, the bishop or pastor thereof must be obeyed, and submitted to in all things, in the Lord. " Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls," Heb. xiii. 17. There is nothing that doth more beautify the Church of God, than good order. What is any society of men, without rule, and good government? Strict discipline must be kept up in Christ's Family. Every member ought to know his place, and to strive to behave himself well. To this very end Paul wrote to Timothy, " That thou mayest," saith he, " know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God," &c. 1 Tim. iii. 15. All the saints should live in perfect peace, unity, and sweet concord together as children of the same Father, and heirs of the same crown and kingdom. Hence the apostle exhorteth the saints, to " endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace," Eph. iv. 3. Nothing is at this day more grievous to a sincere soul, than to see the great divisions, and want of love, that is amongst us; nor doth any thing more encourage our Popish adversaries. Jovianua the Emperor, was much troubled at the divisions that were amongst Christians in his time, and showed his dislike at their contentions, in these words: ' I tell you truly, " I cannot bear with contention, but such as are for concord and unity I willingly " honor and embrace: and certain I am, that such as strive for truth and peace, Christ " will embrace, discord amongst brethren being one of those things he chiefly hates, " Prov. vi. 16."

VIII. So in the Church, or spiritual Family, there is a special order and discipline to be learned and kept up, and every one is to know his place, work, and business, some of which we shall briefly hint in this place.

1. The first thing that I shall mind is, the choice of officers, viz., elders and deacons: They should be chosen according to the rules and directions God hath left in his word, viz., Men fitly qualified: "A bishop must not be soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, nor self-willed, not a brawler, not covetous, not a novice. He must be blameless, one that rules well his own house, apt to teach, a lover of good men, sober, just, temperate, able by sound doctrine to convince gainsays," 1 Tim. iii. 3—8, Tit. i. 5, 6, 7. There are directions also given about their wives.

2. Every member hath his peculiar vote in choosing of their officers; after election, they are to be ordained, by prayer, and laying on of hands. Acts vi. 6, and xiii. 3.

3. The pastor or bishop is to feed the flock, to be faithful and laborious in preaching the word of life, exhorting, reproving, comforting, according as he finds occasion, 1 Tim. iv. 12, 16.

4. It behoveth him, together with the Church, to be careful whom they receive into the Family, viz., none but such as are converted, true penitent and believing persons, as near as they can.

5. They ought to know the state of the flock, and to watch over every member thereof, Prov. xxvii. 23, Heb. xiii. 17.

6. The members of the Church ought to study their duty,

(1.) To their pastor, to provide for him a sufficient maintenance, that he may not be encumbered with worldly affairs, and thereby made unfit for his great work and business **he is** called to, 1 Cor. ix. 9—14. See Planters, Laborers, &c.

(2.) To pray for him, and show him all due respect, as the steward and ambassador of Christ, Eph. vi. 19.

(3.) As to their duties one to another, as fellow-members of God's Church, it is needful for them to know how they should carry and behave themselves towards their offending Brethren. And as touching this, it is necessary to consider, 1. The rule touching **private** offences. 2. Touching public and scandalous offences and offenses.

1. Touching Private offences, Christ hath left us directions, in Matt. xviii. 15, 16, " if thy brother offend thee, tell him his fault between thee and him alone; but if he will not hear thee, take two or more, &c. But if he still neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church, : But if he will not hear the Church, then he is fit for Church-dealing, or excommunication. " Let all take heed they do not make public any evil or offence of their brethren, that is private; for this is an utter fault, and a violation of the law of Christ, and order of His house.

2. Touching public and scandalous sins and offenders, such as expose the name of God to a reproach, as fornication, covetousness, idolatry, drunkenness, rioting, &c. These, without thorough and unfeigned repentance, ought forthwith to be delivered up to Satan, or put out of the Church, into the kingdom of Satan, from whence they came, 1 Cor. v. 5. And truly it cannot be known quickly who hath true repentance, that fall into such great sins, until there be some time of trial. Reformation of life is the chief part of repentance; therefore, to clear the name of God from reproach, and the better to bring the offender to the sense of his sin, the ordinance of excommunication ought, in my judgment, immediately upon conviction, to pass against him.

3. In the administration of justice and judgment in the Church, special care ought to be taken, that with all wisdom and impartiality persons may be dealt withal. Let the Church and pastor see to it, that the rich be no more spared than the poor. Levi was not to know his father in judgment.

IX. So the Church of God is the chief place of public devotion; there the word of God is and ought to be read. And hence Paul saith to the Colossians, " when this epistle is read amongst you, cause it to be read also in the Church, (*mark,*) of the Laodiceans," Col. iv. 16,17. There the word of God is truly and duly preached, and the sacraments administered. " Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty. God hath shined." " To the intent, that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God," Psalm. 1. 2, Eph. iii. 10. Hence God is said to " love the gates of Zion," viz., the place of his visible worship, " more than all the dwellings of Jacob," Psalm. Ixxxvii. 2. Can there be a greater reproach to a Church, or anything more provoking to God, than to have prayer, and other branches of public worship and devotion, wholly neglected among them ?

X. So the whole Church, I mean each community of Christians, yea, every particular member thereof, ought to be called together, and they diligently to obey that call, at all times, when prayer or any other part of Church-service, devotion, and worship is to be performed. " Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is," &c., Heb. x. 25. " They were all with one accord in one place," Acts ii. 1.

XI. The whole Family of Christ, the great Prince of heaven and earth, I mean the whole universal Church, both militant and triumphant, is exceeding great, the one part of which is in heaven, and the other on earth: " For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole Family **in** heaven and earth is named," &c., Ephes. iii. 15, 16.

XII. So the Lord Jesus, the Head and Governor of his Church, hath strictly commanded, and doth exceedingly commend the grace of love in and among all his Family. The Church is never more desirable or comely in this world, than when the love of each member doth abound one towards another; when ministers love the people, and the people heartily love them. and when every one, in the station wherein God hath set him, is ready and willing to do any office of love. How amiable upon this account is the Church of God!

This shows, that the Church of God are a choice and peculiar people, such who have given up themselves in the order and fellowship of the Gospel, walking together in love, as a holy, religious, and united Family, according to the order and discipline Christ hath left in his word, having sweet acquaintance and intimacy one with another.

And now to conclude with this head, from the whole we may infer,

1. That God's Church is most dear and precious in his sight, or a people that he hath most choice love and affections to, and takes great care of.
2. That the Church of God under the Gospel-dispensation, is not national, parochial, &c.
3. That the Church of God are a people separated from the world, in respect of the worship, traditions, and sinful customs thereof, &c., non-conformity to the world in these respects is an indispensable duty : " Be not conformed to this world." Rom. xii. 2. " Come out from amongst them, and be ye separated, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing," &c., 2 Cor. vi. 17.
4. That the true Church of God is a number of sincere and godly Christians, who have solemnly covenanted, and given up themselves, to walk in the true order and fellowship of the Gospel, according to the exact rule of God's word, amongst whom the word of God is truly preached, and the sacraments are duly and in a right manner administered.
5. That God's Church hath many enemies, and yet in despite of them all, shall abide, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against her: and though for a time she may be low, and under great sufferings, yet she shall arise to a great degree of glory in the latter day.

.8.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A FLOCK OF SHEEP

" Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, and where thou makest thy Flock to rest at noon," &c.. Cant. i. 7 " Fear not, little Flock ; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke xii. 32.

The Church, or saints of God, are compared unto a Flock of Sheep.

I. So the saints of God are a people tamed, as it were, by God's Spirit, from their natural wildness and perverseness, made gentle, willing to come into Christ's fold, cleansed from impurity of heart and life.

II. So the saints of God are holy; they are taught to be simple concerning evil: " Be ye, saith Christ, as innocent as doves," Matt. x. 16. They seek the hurt of no man; not like Romish wolves, who delight in nothing more than in blood and rapine, shedding the blood of those who do not wrong or injure them, but desire to live peaceably in the land.

III. So the saints and people of God are meek and patient under God's hand, both when they suffer for their sins, or for the trial of their graces; as appeared in Job, David, Stephen, &c. " I held my peace, I opened not my mouth, because Lord, thou didst it, Psal. xxxix. 9.

IV. The Saints are very profitable many ways; they benefit the world receives by them, or for their sakes, is very great; they are called " the light of the world, and the salt of the earth ;" now the profit the world receives in both these respects, is not little. Had there been ten of those Sheep in Sodom, God had not destroyed it; besides, the angel told Lot, he could do nothing till he was out of the city. What a blessing was Joseph to his master, whilst he abode in his house, and Jacob to Laban ? They yield the world much profit, by the doctrine.

V. So amongst the Flock of Christ are some likely some fat and strong, and some fat and rich saints, and some poor and lean ones, who do not thrive; you may take it both in a temporal and spiritual sense: there are also some whom God rebukes and threatens, who are grown so headstrong, that they are waxed wanton and haughty, that they oppress and abuse the poor; and these God saith he will destroy; they being grown fat. like Jeshurun, kick against the Lord. and will not live in subjection to his Church, nor abide in the fold, Ezek. xxxiv. 16.

VI. So the sheep of Christ in the last day shall be separated from the goats, for " Before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right-hand, and the goats on his left," Luke xxv. 32, 33.

VII. Sheep may be lost, and torn in pieces, and utterly destroyed by lions, bears, &c. But none of Christ's sheep can be lost or perish; though the enemy may kill or destroy their bodies yet he cannot destroy their souls. Matt. x. 28. "My Sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand: my Father that gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand," John x. 27, 28.

Touching other properties and things relating to Christ's Sheep, see the metaphor, Christ the Good Shepherd.

They preach, by the fervent prayers they daily put up to Almighty God and their holy and good examples: " Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven," Matt. v. 16.

VIII. So believers, and the Church of Christ, are obedient to him: " My Sheep, saith he, hear my voice, and they follow me; and the voice of a stranger they will not follow," John x. 4, 5. " Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel," Psal. lxxiii. 24. Christ's precepts are the saint's directory, and his practice their pattern for imitation. Hence Paul exhorteth the Corinthians to follow him. as he followed Christ, 1 Cor. xi. 1.

IX. So the saints of God are subject to manifold weaknesses, temptations, and afflictions, which moved the Almighty to great compassion and sorely to rebuke the shepherds of Israel, for their cruelty and great remissness towards his Flock : " The diseased have ye not strengthened neither have ye healed that which was sick," &c. And therefore saith, *he* would himself take the work into his hands ; " I will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick, &c.

X. So the saints or Flock of Christ must not be over-driven, they must be led gently along; and God taketh care to lay no more upon them than they can bear. " No temptation hath taken you, but such as is common to man ; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able; and will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. x. 13. He will not lay upon us more than is right.

XI. So the saints are subject to go astray from God, and to wander from his precepts, viz. decline in their zeal, faith, and affection to him, and in ways, and to get wandering thoughts after the world; and sometimes they wander, through the neglect and carelessness of the under-shepherds : " My sheep, saith the Lord, wandered through all the mountains, and none did search or seek after them," Ezek. xxxiv. 6. " I have gone astray like a lost Sheep, seek thy servant," &c. Psal. cxix. 176.

XII. So Christ's Flock must be fed in good pastures, viz. with sound and wholesome truth, good doctrine, food that is fit and proper for them; they must not have the chaff of men's traditions, nor the corrupt glosses of cloudy doctors, that lived in the dark times of the Church. It behoves Christ's ministers to take heed they suffer not the Sheep under their charge to suck in the poison of error and heresy; for nothing rots and spoils Christians more than that. The spouse from hence enquireth of Christ, " Where he feedeth his Flock ?" Cant. i. 7, that is, where his blessed Gospel was truly and constantly preached, and his holy ordinances duly administered, lest she should turn aside by the Flocks of his companions, that is, such as call themselves so. Christ directs her to " go forth by the footsteps of the Flock, and **feed** their kids beside the shepherds' tents:" that is, to follow the doctrine and foot **steps** of the primitive church, for that alone is our rule in all God's holy worship. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want: he maketh me to lie down in green pastures, **he** leadeth me beside the still waters," Psal. xxiii. 1, 2.

XIII. So the saints and church of God have a blessed resting-place in the time of the greatest heat, temptation, affliction, and persecution, or whatsoever may cause disquiet, and grieve them. Cant. i. 7, in the midst of which, saith Mr. Ainsworth, Christ giveth sweet repose unto his Sheep ; they have peace in him, though tribulation in the world, John xvi. 33. " They shalt not hunger, nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them," &c., Isa. xlix. 10. " Under the

shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be over-past," Psal. Ivii. 1. Hence Christ is said to be as the " Shadow of a great rock in a weary land," Isa. xxxiii. 2.

XIV. So God's poor Flock have many strong and cruel adversaries, who would soon tear them in pieces, and utterly destroy them, were it not for the precious love and care of Jesus Christ. " We are killed all the day long, and accounted as Sheep for the slaughter," Rom. viii. 36, hence called the " Flock of slaughter," Zech. xi. 4.

XV. So the saints of God do greatly love to assemble together : " They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another," &c., Mal. iii. 16. " They that fear thee, saith David, will be glad when they see me, because I have hoped in thy word," Psal. cxix. 74. It is a hard thing to divide Christ's choice Sheep, their hearts are knit one to another, as Jonathan's was to David's. And if wicked men, like dogs and wolves, do endeavour to scatter them by persecution, they will soon get together again ; as is signified, "And being let go, they went to their own company," Acts iv. 3.

XVI. So the godly and faithful in Christ Jesus are very subject, as they are in themselves, to contract much guilt and pollution, sin being of a defiling nature; and therefore it is they are washed by their Shepherd: " If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me," John xiii. 8. The believing Corinthians are said to be washed, they were before very unclean and filthy: " Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," " Who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," 1 Cor. vi. 11, Rev. i. 5.

XVII. So the sincere and truly gracious soul can live by faith in a time of want and scarcity, when the hopes of other men die, and pine away. And though the world frown upon them, and they cannot see which way by an eye of sense they should subsist, yet they make a good shift to live upon the providence of God, who careth for them, and are very contented and satisfied with such pasture as God is pleased to put them into. "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be on the vine; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall: yet will I rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation," Hab. iii. 17, 18.

XVIII. So in the Church of Christ are some evil and corrupt members, or such who are none of Christ's Sheep, hypocrites, such as are unsound at heart, who are also called goats, Matt. xxv. 33.

XIX. So the Church of God is fruitful; from a few they have often increased to a great multitude, Acts ii. 40, 41. Nay, though there have been many of them slaughtered by the persecuting butchers of Babylon, yet they have rather multiplied the more; from whence that maxim grew, **The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.**

.9.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A GARDEN

" A Garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse," &c. " Awake, O north wind ; and come thou south wind, and blow upon my Garden," &c.. Cant. iv. 12, 16

" I am come into my Garden, my sister, my spouse," Cant v. 1.

The Church of Christ is or may fitly be compared to a Garden.

I. The Church of God, and every believer, or member thereof, is taken out of the common mass of mankind, to be a chosen and select people to Christ.

II. The people of God, and soul of every believer, naturally were as barren, blind, sinful, enemies to God, and every way as vile and rebellious as any other sinners in the world. " And were by nature the children of wrath, as well as others, Eph. 11:3, "Who had made thee to differ from another?" &c.

III. So no spiritual good thing can grow or spring up in our hearts, until the seed of grace be sown in us, or a divine principle of life be implanted

IV. So must our hearts, like fallow ground, be digged up with powerful convictions of the Word and Spirit, that so grace may the better take root in us. Hence it is said of God's vineyard. When he was resolved to bring judgment upon it, " It shall not be pruned, nor digged," Isa. v. 6. Hence God calleth upon them to plow up their fallow ground, and " Sow not among thorns," Jer. iv. 3.

V. So the Church of God, or every Christian, is hedged or walled in. " Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about all he hath, on every &c., Job i. 10. God is said to be a " Wall of fire round about Jerusalem-." See vineyard. Zech. ii. 5.

VI. So in the Church are many choice, pleasant, and profitable plants, of God's own right-hand planting : " It is sown with holy right seed, ye men of Israel are his pleasant plants," Jer. ii. 21. All choice and saving graces, and gifts of the Spirit are found in God's Garden.

VII. So must the Church of God have much pains bestowed upon it, it must be kept diligently, Prov. iv. 23. As God spares for no cost and pains, so should his servants be industrious, or else the Church will soon decay.

VIII. The Church is not without some corrupt members in it, which injure it, like as thorns and nettles do a Garden, which as they are discovered, are plucked up, and cast out. And also in the hearts of the best Christians, weeds are apt to spring up, from that root of bitterness that naturally is within them, whereby many are troubled and defiled, which if not pulled up, will hinder their growth in grace.

IX. The Church of God, though it be as it were but a little spot, a small remnant, in comparison of the world, is highly prized by Jesus Christ; he esteems of his own people above all the people of the earth. Hence he calleth them his inheritance, his jewels, his peculiar one, 1 Pet. ii. 9. " I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee:therefore will I give men for thee, and people

for thy life." Isaiah xliii. 3,4. Wicked men are like barren mountains; they are the King's waste, such whom he sets but little by.

X. So from the Church of God that was first planted in Judea, many blessed Churches proceeded in a little time. By means of the fruitfulness of that one spiritual Garden, seven Gardens more were planted in Asia, viz., Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, besides many others, which we read of, Rev. 1:11.

XI. God's Garden must be often watered by the divine rain, or dew of heaven, viz., the Word and Spirit of God: " My doctrine shall drop as the rain," Deut. xxxii. 1, 2. And without these waterings from above, the fruit of the Church will soon fail; all our growth and greenness is continuances.

XII. So the door of the Church must be carefully kept by such as have the charge of it, viz., the ministers or pastors thereof, or the danger is great; it behoveth them to take care who they let in. Christ's Garden should be as a Garden enclosed, and fountain sealed to all unbelievers. But yet let them be ever so careful, some deceivers or hypocrites will, as in former times, creep in; it was so when the chief Gardner himself was on the earth and there was a Judas among the twelve apostles.

XIII. So the Lord Jesus, who is the Owner and only Proprietor of his Church, loves to take his walks in it: "I am come into my Garden, my sister, my spouse." Cant. v. 1. He is said to " walk in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." " Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see whether the vines flourish, whether the tender grapes appear, and the pomegranates bud forth; there will I give thee my loves," Cant. Viii. 12.

XIV. So in the Church, sin, which may be compared to a worm, or hurtful vermin, doth exceeding much detriment. A Christian seem, very green, amiable, and fair to the eye, like some plants full of leaves; but there is some cursed worm, some secret lust, that mars his root, and in time he withers, and dies, and is plucked up, and cast away. This may be a caution to all to take heed.

XV. So in the Church, those flowers or precious saints Jesus Christ seeth are fully ripe for heaven, he crops off by death, and taketh them to himself. A godly man dies when he is ready and ripe for death. When a holy man dies, saith Mr. Caryl, it is harvest-time with him. Though in a natural capacity, he may be cut down whilst he is green, or cropped in the bud or blossom; yet in his spiritual capacity he never dies before he is ripe : God ripens his speedily, when he intends to take them out of the world speedily.

XVI. So the Church never thrives, nor flourisheth, but when the Sun of Righteousness shineth in a gracious manner upon it; when the rain or spiritual dew descends, the south wind of the Spirit bloweth, and the Sun of Righteousness sweetly shineth, what a fragrant scent doth the Church of God, and gracious ones then send forth ! hence Christ calleth for the " South wind to blow upon his Garden, that the spices thereof may flow forth," Cant. iv. 16.

XVII. The Church hath its winter as well as its spring and summer-season; nay, and the nipping frosts, and north winds of temptations and afflictions, are as profitable to the saints, as the summer of comfort, peace and prosperity; for God seeth need of the one, as well as the other, to destroy those weeds of corruption, or indwelling sin, that is in our hearts. " If need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations," 1 Pet. i. 6.

There are divers disparities: Christ's Garden excelleth all other Gardens. They are the plantations of men ; this is planted by Christ: their fruit is temporal and fading; this is spiritual and lasting : they that plant other Gardens, cannot make them grow ; but Christ **can**. And many others might be minded, which I here omit.

INFERENCES

I. THIS shows what a vast difference there is between the Church, and the World. What is a howling and barren wilderness, to a choice and lovely Garden ?

II. Bless God that this precious Garden is not spoiled, and its hedge of divine providence not removed, nor plucked up.

III. Let us pray, though it be surrounded about at this day with cruel enemies, that it may never be moved, taken, and trodden down, by Romish wolves, or other ravenous beasts of prey.

IV. Let the adversaries tremble, whose evil intent is fully discovered, how they proceed in their designs against God's Church, Christ's spiritual Garden, since it is so prized by him, and his own proper inheritance, he alone being the proprietor thereof. How often doth he say, " My Garden, my vineyard ?" It appears it is his.

1. In that he bought the ground with the price of his precious blood, to make a Garden of it.
2. He hath at his own charge planted and sown it.
3. He keeps it, and waters it, and watcheth over it night and day, Isa. xxvii. 2 3.
4. It is he only who gathereth the fruit of it. Woe therefore to them that adventure to crop, and pull up, and destroy any of its choice flowers! They that touch God's people Christ's lilies, touch the apple of his eye.

V. Let the saints of Christ also learn from hence to be fruitful, Christ hath been at great cost and pains in order thereunto. And that you may be so,

1. See that you be plants of his own planting, otherwise you will be plucked up.
2. See that you be well-rooted : such bring forth most fruit.
3. Take heed of the worm at the root.
4. Take heed whom ye choose for Garden-dressers, and look to your hedge or wall of Church discipline.

You must know your bounds, the Garden of Christ must not be opened into other men's fields. Keep your communion entire ; remember, you are bounded by Christ's laws and institutions; take heed you do not, with Ephraim, mix yourselves with other people.

.10.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A HOUSE

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God," &c. 1 Tim. iii. 15

"But Christ over his own House, whose House are we," &c., Heb. iii. 6

THE Church of Christ is compared to an House; the great God, whose throne is above, hath also a dwelling-place here below.

I. The Church is the habitation of the Holy Ghost: " I will dwell in them, and walk in them," &c., 2 Cor. vi. " For he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you," John xiv. 17. " That good thing which was committed to thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us," 2 Tim. i. 14. " Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you," 1 Cor. iii. 16.

II. The Church is built upon a sure foundation, viz., Jesus Christ, " Another foundation can no man lay," &c., 1 Cor. iii. 11. " Upon this Rock will I build my Church," Matt. xvi. 18.

III. So the Church doth consist of several members, who are called or compared to stones: " Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood," 1 Pet. ii. 5. And these stones are also well hewed and squared, by the word and "Spirit of God.

*** See Vartue's Parallels, p. 400.**

IV. So the Church or House of God hath some famous pillars, beams, and rafters, as the Holy Ghost calleth them: " The beams of our House are cedars, and our rafters of fir," Cant. i. 17. The righteous are compared to cedars in Lebanon; these trees are tall and durable. Cedar was used in building Solomon's temple, a type or figure of the Church; which denotes the strength, usefulness, beauty, and excellency of the saints, or some among them, who are called pillars, Gal. ii. 9, " And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars," &c. And Christ saith, " Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God," Rev. iii. 12.

V. So in the House of God, the prophets, apostles, pastors, deacons, &c., are of great use, though of different offices; and all for the support of every part of the spiritual building; and, the least member cannot be spared, Ephes. iv. 7,12. Some are strong, and some are weak; some have five talents, and some but two; yet one ought not to despise the other, Matt. xxv. As in a material House, beams, and rafters, though divers in strength and use, yet all have a firm connection amongst themselves, to make up one complete structure; even so in Christ's Church, though there be divers members, severally gifted and placed, as we see in the body natural, yet, as the apostle there shows, verse 25. " There should be no schism in the body," 1 Cor. xii. 24; but such a conjunction of one another, as they have of themselves a holy sympathy in supporting, suffering, and rejoicing.

VI. So the Church and temple of God, being built for the glorious Prince of heaven and earth, is most richly and curiously adorned with the precious gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost: for as the materials of the House are silver, gold, and precious stones; so its ornaments or furniture doth infinitely excel, it being the king's palace: " The king's daughter is all glorious within," Psal. xlv. 13.

VII. So the Church is a place of security. God having made such a blessed wall about her: " And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place in Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all her glory shall be a defence. I will, saith God, encamp about mine House, because of the army, because of him that passeth by," &c. He hath promised to be " A wall of fire round about her," Zech. ii. 5.

VIII. The Church of God is a sweet place of spiritual repose. Sion is called a peaceable habitation, and sure dwelling, and a quiet resting-place, Isa. xxxii. 20.

IX. So the Church or House of God hath a way that readily leads to it. In a strict sense, Christ is both the way and the door. If any enquire more directly, how they may find the way into the Church, if they take the counsel of the Holy Ghost, they cannot miss. "Thus saith the Lord, stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein," &c., Jer. vi. 16. This good old way is the way of repentance, faith, and baptism; the saints of the primitive time walked all in this way, and knew no other door into the Church: " And they that gladly received the word, were baptized; and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls," Acts ii. 41, 42.

X. So the Church of God is the principal place of public devotion: there prayers are made, the word is preached, and the sacraments are duly administered.

XI. So the Church of God will soon decay, if it be not often repaired by a wise and careful discipline.

I. Cut the Church, or House of God, is called God's building; the choice preparing of the matter, and the framing and jointing every part, as to the manner, is of God.

II. But this spiritual House consists of believers, who, though they were once without life, yet now are quickened, who are therefore called " living stones, built up a spiritual house," 1 Pet. ii. 3.

III. But it is impossible that ever the House of God should be without inhabitants: " For the Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it," Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14. And as for sanctified ones, they are not only dwellers in it, but the very materials of it; so that it can never be without them. It being also founded upon a rock, cannot fall. " The gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Matt. xvi. 18.

IV. But the House of God hath stood ever since it was erected, notwithstanding the many plots and designs of Satan, and his instruments, by one means or other, if possible, to have destroyed it, so as that there might not have appeared so much as the dust or stones; no, nor so much as any sign left in any part, or among any people in the world, whether there had been such a building or no. But blessed for ever be Jehovah, that it may yet be said, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following, for this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death," Psalm xlviii. 12—14.

I. This calleth aloud upon all the members of God's House, to strive more and more, not only to be a meet habitation for God, but to beautify and adorn this house by their holy and heavenly conversations. Holiness becometh thy House, O Lord, for ever.

II. Let all take heed how they defile or deface this House, either by plucking out a stone or a pin, or touching a hair of the head of any that are of this building.

III. Let all God's people examine what their zeal is for God's House, or whether they do truly prize the very dust and stones thereof.

.11.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO AN INN

" And brought him to an Inn," Luke x. 34

BY the Inn, most expositors, which I have met with, understand that Christ means the Church, who may be fitly compared to an Inn.

I. So the Church is a place to entertain Christians, whilst they pass through the wilderness of this world, to the land of promise; or through the valley of tears, to the mount of joy.

II. In the Church are pastors, or faithful ministers, who wait to receive all poor sinners, who come to take up their lodging there, and make them very welcome.

III. Therefore, the Church is a place of soul-refreshment to all spiritual travelers and pilgrims. There is both the sincere milk of the word, and strong meat, all things ready the soul needs, 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. Some are for one sort of diet, some for another. In the Church also is sweet repose, there Christ giveth rest to the weary.

IV. So the Church, notwithstanding all the care that is taken by officers, doth sometimes receive or take in false professors, such as are unsound at heart, hypocrites, and deceitful workers.

V. So is the Church of God ; hence, David longed after the courts of God's house, Psalm. Ixxxiv. 2.

VI. So the Church militant is no long abiding place ; Christians stay in it but for a short time; it is a place of refreshment, as it were, for a night. Here we have no continuing city, we are strangers, as all our fathers were ; when we come to heaven, we shall abide with the Church triumphant for ever, Psalm. xxx. 5, Heb. xiii. 14.

I. The Church is a place for the poor, for such as have no money, and they are welcome thither. The doors of this Inn are always open to all sincere souls, whether they be poor or rich.

II. But he that comes to take up his lodging in the Church, or spiritual Inn, if he be sincere, desireth not to go out from thence any more; he desireth to dwell therein as long as he liveth: though our abiding in this World is but compared to a night. " One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell **in** the house of the Lord all the days of my life," Psalm. xxvii. 4. 111. The Church was never yet so full, but that there was room for all those that were weary and heavy laden. All that ever truly traveled towards Sion, have found entertainment there; nay, though the servants of the Lord have been sent into the streets and lanes, to fetch in the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind, and they do accordingly, yet there is room, Matt. xxii. 3—4. As there can be no want of any accommodation, of spiritual food, so there is no want of room. All that have been called by the Word and Spirit, and compelled by grace to come in, in all ages, have had blessed entertainment; and as God hath enlarged and increased converts, so he hath enlarged and increased the Church, by three thousand at a time, Acts ii. 41.

IV. However, the saints that are in the spiritual Inn, the Church, " Are no more strangers and foreigners," Eph. ii. 19, but therein make their abode for though it be said, it is but for a night, or a day, &c., yet it is as long as they live; and they get very great acquaintance with those that dwell therein.

I. BLESS God, that he hath provided such a place of refreshment for poor weary travelers.

II. You that look upon yourselves to be strangers and pilgrims in this world, may learn from hence where to take up your lodging.

III. Also, it may inform God's people, and faithful ministers, what care they ought to take in receiving men and women into the Church : innkeepers will examine all suspicious persons.

.12.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A LILY

" *As the Lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters.*" Cant. ii. 2

CHRIST calleth his Church his love, and compares her to a Lily among thorns.

By daughters are meant, as some conceive, other Churches, who pretend they are the spouse of Christ. Daughters, saith the learned Wendelin, are either nations, strangers to the Church of Christ, which nevertheless are joined to us by the common ligaments of humanity, and descend from the same Creator, and therefore called daughters; or else such as profess their names among the citizens of Zion, the Church of Christ. But as the Church is compared to a Lily; so, with the greatest elegance, *the* daughters are compared to thorns.

I. So there is nothing sweeter to Christ, than the Church, the spouse: " Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. The smell of thy ointment is better than all spices, spikenard, and saffron, calamus, and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with the chief spices " Cant. iv. 7, 10, 14. The Church and faithful children of God, are unto Christ a sweet savour. And it is said, " Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean fowl and offered burnt-offerings on the altar ; and the Lord smelled a sweet savour." Gen. viii. 20, 21.

II. So, nothing is more fair and white, or purer in Christ's sight than the Church. " My undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. Thou art all fair, my love, and there is no spot in thee." Hence said to be " clothed in fine linen, clean and white," Christ, her blessed bridegroom, gave himself for her, " that he might sanctify and cleanse her, with the washing of water, by the word; that he might present her to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that she should be holy, and without blemish " Eph v 25, 26, 27.

III. The Church is fruitful; nothing more fruitful, saith Wendelin; the which being planted in the field of one Jerusalem, in the days of old, watered by the apostolic men, with the dew of the Word, and miracles; the Sun of Righteousness shining upon it, and infusing of his divine heat into it, Mal. iv. 2. In what Part of the world, in the space of a few years, hath it not taken root?

* *Plin. lib. xxi. cap. 6.*

in the former **age**, after the Roman winters of the Alpine snow had for some ages depressed this flower, and reduced its leaves to admirable paucity, insomuch that they were scarcely visible to the world, and had circumscribed its roots into a narrow space, how great and swift were the increasings of it, the heavens, which before seemed shut, again bedewing of it 1 Then that word, saith he, we saw fulfilled, which was promised in times past to Israel: " I will be as the dew unto Israel, and he shall grow as the Lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon," Hos. xiv. 5, 6. Germany, England, France, Italy, Spain, Poland, Hungary, Denmark, Sweden, hath, and what country of Europe hath not, within a few years, seen the roots and branches thereof spread, and smelt its odor! The Popish waves, flames and axes, could neither suffocate, burn, not cut up the flower, leaves, nor root of this Lily. The shadow of the Highest hath restrained the flames; his Spirit bound up or constrained the waves ; his right-hand with held the axes, that grinning and grinding dragon, that the beast and false prophet could do nothing, &c.

IV. So the Church and people of God are the tallest or highest people in the world," they dwell on high," Isa. xxxiii. 16. Christ's spouse is secure in that most high and heaven-threatening rock, Matt. xvi. 18, not to be overthrown by any of the enemies' battering rams, nor to be reached by any power of the dragon. This is that " chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, peculiar people," 1 Pet ii. 9, who are said to dwell on high : and though they now seem to creep low upon the ground, and wander as it were in darkness ; yet dwelling in God, they rest secure, &c., and shall in due time be exalted above the hills, and the highest mountains of the earth, Mic. iv. 1, 2.

V. The Church and spouse of Christ is very glorious; her clothes are said to be wrought gold. " She shall be brought to the king in raiment of needlework," Psal. xlv. 14. Hence said to be as fair as the moon, as clear as the sun. The Church, with every sincere soul, is gloriously adorned, furnished with beauteous accomplishments:

- (1.) with the imputed righteousness of Christ, a transparent and sparkling ornament.
- (2.) The gifts of the Holy Spirit, which may answer to the leaves of the Lily.
- (3.) The graces of the Spirit, which may answer to the grains within the Lily, which, as St. Peter layeth them down, are seven, 2 Pet. i. 5—8. Yet notwithstanding all this glory, with which Christ's spouse is adorned and beautified, she is not proud ; but, as taught by the seven grains of the Lily, or graces of the Spirit, doth humbly hang down her head. Her chiefest beauty is internal: " The king's daughter is all glorious within," Psal. xlv. 14.

VI. So God's Church, when his blessing is upon it, thrives marvelously in a short time. To make this appear, consider in the primitive time, when the dew of grace fell upon the Christian world, what abundance of Lilies sprung up suddenly; at one sermon, Acts ii. 4.

VII. The Church of God grows in the field of this world, amongst base and vile sinners, who are compared to thorns and briars, Isa. xxvii. 4.

VIII. The Church, like the Lily, growing a-amongst the ungodly and persecuting world, are greatly wronged thereby. The inhabitants of Canaan, that Israel drove not out, were said to be " pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides," by which they were sorely perplexed and vexed, Numb. xxx. iii. 55. There is a time coming, when the Lily, the Church of God, shall be injured by these cursed thorns no more: " There shall be no more a pricking briar to the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn," Ezek. xxviii. 24. Moreover, the Church should be as Lilies among thorns for beauty and purity ; they ought to out do and excel the ungodly, as far as the Lily doth the thorn : as beautiful as a Lily among thorns, saith Mr. Ainsworth, as innocent as Doves among ravenous birds.

I. THE Church is a heavenly or supernatural flower, a plant of God's right hand planting.

II. God taketh great care of his people, he has made a fence about them, nay, he himself is as a wall of fire on every side, arid doth keep his Church, and water it every moment, Zech. ii. 5. " He keepeth it night and day, lest any should hurt it," Isa. xxvii. 3. " Not one hair of your heads shall perish," Matt. x. 30.

III. The Church's beauty and glory is increasing : " The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. Her glory shall never fade, but she shall be made an eternal excellency.

INFERENCES

- I. THIS may teach all true Christians to admire and exalt the free grace of God, in making so great a difference between them, and the wicked amongst whom they live.
- II. It shows also what care he taketh of them, in preserving them whilst they grow among thorns, who do not only prick them by persecution, but would utterly root them up.
- III. They are hereby called upon, not to rest satisfied with the name of Christians only, but to be earnest with the Lord, that whilst the wicked do daily manifest themselves to be as thorns, they may be as Lilies, holy and heavenly-born souls, growing up more and more in grace and holiness.

.13.

THE CHURCH OF GOD COMPARED TO THE MOON

" She is fair as the Moon" Cant. vi. 10

THE Moon is called in Hebrew Lebanah, of her whiteness, and bright shining. The state of the Church, all expositors agree, it signified hereby.

The Church may in many respects be compared to the Moon.

I. The Church hath all her light from Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, Mat. iv. 2.

II So the Church receiving light from Christ, she shines forth in brightness and glory. The sun gives light, but receives none; the Moon both gives light, and receives light: so Christ, as God, hath his light in himself; but as Mediator, hath his light from the Father, to communicate it to the Church, that the Church may give light to the world. " Ye are the light of the world," Matt. v. 14.

III. So the Church gives her light forth to enlighten sinners, whilst the night of this world lasteth.

IV. So the Church, though pure and holy, yet in herself is not without spots of sin. No saint is without blemishes. " If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 John i. 8.

V. So the Church is under various states and changes. She doth not always shine as at full Moon, or send forth a full brightness, but is sometimes so obscured, that she appears hardly visible; she was forced into the wilderness, from the face of the dragon, and Romish beast. Rev. xii. 6 ; yet it is certain, the Church is always in being. Thinkest thou that thou canst persuade us, that the state of the Church is such that it cannot be obscured, so that the perfidiousness of enemies, and antichrist, can do nothing against it ? they cannot indeed destroy the Church, hut they can bring it into a narrower compass, and drive it into holes. The Church, saith Augustin, is like the Moon, which sometimes shines wholly, being enlightened with the sunbeams, and sometimes is deprived of a great part of her light; so the Church shines sometimes most gloriously, and sometimes is so obscured that she *hardly appears at all*.

INFERENCES

I. Hence we may learn to look, and earnestly expect to receive all our light as well as life from Christ, the light of the world, and earnestly pray with David, that he would lift up the light of his countenance upon us, Psalm. iv. 6. That forasmuch as we have no light but what is communicated from him unto us, he would dart continually his glorious beams into our hearts, that we may indeed be as shining lights in this dark world, Matt. v. 16.

II. This may also humble the most glittering saints, to consider that they cannot shine so bright, in this world, but that their spots may be discernible to themselves and others, which may excite them to apply themselves daily to the Sun of Righteousness for cleansing, Mal. iv. 2.

III. To keep clear, and shine as much as possible, that the poor, benighted, dark world may obtain benefit by them, and confess it to the glory of God. " Let your light so shine, &c. Matt. v. 16.

IV. Take comfort from hence, notwithstanding your various changes, ebbings, and flowings in this world, for that the enemy may as soon change the ordinances of the Moon, as make an utter end of God's Church, as you have heard.

V. What a dreadful doom will such be sure to have, that love darkness so, as that they do not only contemn, oppose, and endeavour to pull the Moon, viz., the Church, out of her orb ; but so wicked are they, they slight and contemn the sun, from whence she receives all her shining brightness. Let such read, Job v. 14, " They meet with darkness in the day time, and grope in the noon-day, as in the night:" " To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever," except grace prevent by giving them repentance, 2 Pet. ii. 17.

.14.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO AN OLIVE-TREE "

His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the Olive-Tree, Hosea xiv. 6

THE Church of God is compared in this place to an Olive-Tree.

I. So the Church of God, and every sincere soul, is green and flourishing. Greenness notes life and sap to be in the branches; the branches of the divine Olive, viz., the saints, are never without spiritual moisture or the sap of grace in their hearts and lives: " His leaves shall not fail," Psalm. i. 3. Hence, David said, " He was like a green Olive-Tree in the house of the Lord, Psalm. liii. 8.

II. The Church is fruitful now, but shall be much more fruitful unto God hereafter ; her beauty shall be as the Olive-Tree in this respect. She shall abound in children, and abound in grace, and true holiness.

III. So the Church brings forth good fruit, not only a great quantity, but fruit that excels in its nature or quality, viz., faith, love, meekness, patience, charity, &c., even all the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22; or as they are in another place called the fruit of righteousness, Jam. iii. 17; grace is of a mollifying, feeding, strengthening, and healing nature; grace makes the lamp of profession to burn clear, whereby others see, or have much light. See Oil.

IV. A saint *is* for peace. They are peacemakers ; they desire nothing more than peace with God, and peace with men : " I am for peace," saith David, Psalm. cxx. 7. He that hath the fruit of the Olive, viz., grace, shall soon see the dove, viz., the Spirit, bringing the Olive-branch: but, as Noah's dove did not bring the Olive-branch, till the waters were abated ; so the flood of iniquity must be abated, the waters of wickedness sink and be dried up, before a man can receive a sure sign or token of peace and reconciliation with God.

Hence, let saints, who are planted in the house of the Lord, labor to be like the Olive-Tree, not only to bring forth much fruit as to quantity, but good and right fruit, in respect to its quality.

.15.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A VINE

"Thou hast brought a Vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it," &c.

"Behold, and visit this Vine," &c. Psalm. lxxx. 8, 14 "

"For our Vines have tender grapes," &c. Cant. ii. 15.

"And flourish as the Vine," Hos. xiv. 7

THE Church is compared to a Vine.

I. So the Church, although she do not seem so beautiful to carnal eyes, yet she is very fruitful to God. " The trees of the Lord," that is, the saints of God, " are full of sap," full of divine virtue, or good fruits, Psalm. civ. 16.

II. So the Lord's spiritual Vine hath in former times exceedingly spread her branches forth ; the mountains are said to be covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars : " She stretched out her branches to the sea, and her boughs unto the river," Psalm. lxxx. 8—11. Israel, God's ancient Vine, grew wonderfully ; and so did the Gospel-Vine, how did it in a little time spread forth its spiritual branches, eastwards, and westwards, over many nations, and kingdoms ! She extended her boughs into Parthia, Media, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Pamphiha, Lybia, Spain, Italy, England, &c.

III. So God takes much pains with his Church ; it is " pruned and purged, that it may bring forth the more fruit," John xv. 2.

IV. So the Church is in herself but weak, and needs to be borne up by Christ. God is the strength of his people; he wholly supports them.

V. So the Church, though she have many members, yet all receive a sufficiency of grace and divine virtue of the root, viz., the Lord Jesus, to make them fruitful.

VI. So are the members of the visible Church, if unfruitful, good for naught, but *to* be cut down, and cast into the fire, as our Savior himself showeth, John xv. 4. " Therefore thus saith the Lord, as the Vine-tree that is amongst the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire to be consumed ; so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem: I will set my face against them; they shall go out of one fire, and another fire shall consume them: And ye shall know that I am the Lord," &c. Ezek. xv. 6.

.16.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A MERCHANT-SHIP

"She is like unto Merchant-Ships," Prov. xxxi. 14

" O thou afflicted, and tossed with tempests, and not comforted. " Isa. liv. 11

THE Church of God in these scriptures, as expositors observe, is compared to a Ship, to a Merchant-Ship.

I. THE Church of God trades to heaven, she fetcheth her spiritual merchandise from thence:" Our conversation is in heaven," Phil. iii. 20.

II. The Church of God hath a most expert and skilful pilot, viz., Jesus Christ, to steer her course through the seas of this world, that so she may not be split upon, the rocks of human inventions, nor the sands of false doctrine, error, and heresy.

III. So the Church of God is often tossed with tempests, or subject to, and vexed with the incursions of an envious and persecuting world, the ungodly being compared to the troubled sea, Isa. Ivii. 20.

IV. So the Church of God is guided in her passage to heaven, by the compass of God's Word, in respect of doctrine, discipline, and conversation: "Thy Word is a light unto my paths," Psal. cxix. 105.

V. So the Church takes in many Christians and professors, and those of several sorts and degrees, who all declare they are bound with the spiritual Ship, to the land of promise.

VI. So the Church of God hath the Gospel-net, which by the hands of the mariners, and skilful fishers of men, is cast into the sea, or multitude of people, by which means many men are converted, and taken into this spiritual Ship, Matt. xiii. 47, Mark i. 17.

VII. So the Church, under the powerful and sweet influences of the Spirit, which is compared to the wind, John iii. 6, 7, is carried gloriously along towards her desired haven; but if this spiritual wind blow not, she is becalmed.

VIII. So what common dangers befall God's Church, all the members thereof are more or less exposed and liable to the same. Let enemies come, let persecution arise against it, there are no sort of men or members, whether sincere or not, whilst they remain in the Church, or hold fast their profession, let them promise themselves what safety they will, who can be secure, or exempted from violence. Though as in a Ship, some speed oft-times better than the rest; as Baruch and Jeremiah, who had their lives given to them for a prey, when thousands were cut off, yet went into exile, Jer. xlv. 5. " Whosoever," saith the Apostle, " will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution, through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." 2 Tim. iii. 12. Hypocrites, in a day of common danger and persecution, are in the like circumstances with those who truly fear God; Satan, that arch-pirate, and his emissaries, will favour them no more than others, until they renounce their religion, &c.

IX. So in an hour of trouble and persecution, every Christian should do his best to secure and save the Church of God from sinking, or from being cast away, or lost. Every one should have their hearts up to God, and their hands to work wisely, for her and their own safety, Isa. Ixiv. 7.

X. So the Church of God, by daily trading to heaven, greatly enricheth poor sinners. What she receiveth from Christ, her Merchants or ministers offer to sale, to the nation or nations where she lives : truth, peace, pardon, the pearl of great price, and other excellent merchandise, she furnish-eth the world with, Prov. xxiii. 23.

XI. So the Church's safety consisteth in her being truly constituted, according to the apostolical prescriptions, or that pattern left in the Gospel by Christ, and the primitive saints: Heb. vi. 1, 2. and in having Christ for her governor, or chief Pilot, who, as Jerom observes, sits at the stem, and guides her course as he sees good: and lastly by having hope, that precious grace of the Spirit, for the Anchor : " Which hope we have as the Anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," &c., Heb. vi. 19. The nature of which is opened under the fifth head of metaphors, concerning the graces of the Spirit, to which we refer you.

I. This may inform us, that trouble and persecution must be expected. No ship sets out to sea, but meets with storms and tempests at one time or another; and therefore the mariners look for them, and provide accordingly, to secure the ship, and save themselves; and so should spiritual seafaring men do.

II. It may also be matter of comfort to the godly. What assurance is here of safety! Christ, who guides the ship, can at his pleasure still the seas, and make the greatest storm in a moment to be a calm. " He stilleth, as the Psalmist saith, the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumults of the people," Psal. Ixv. 7. Therefore though Satan, that cruel pirate, and other malicious enemies of the Church, seek daily to sink this spiritual ship ; and though he be a spirit, and therefore of great power against us, yet he is nothing to God, who is the creating Spirit. That which is said of Behemoth, is no less true of him : " He that made him, can make his sword approach unto him," Job xl. 19. Let therefore the power and rage of our enemies be ever so great, and their opposition at this day ever so fierce against us, yet we have the assurance from our blessed Saviour, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against the Church: she shall never be broken to pieces, nor suffer shipwreck. " O thou tossed with tempests, and not comforted!"

.17.

THE CHURCH THE TEMPLE OF GOD

" *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God,*" 1 Cor. iii. 16

" *For ye are the Temple of the living God, as God, hath said, I dwell in them, and walk in them,*" &c. 2 Cor. vi. 16

THE Church is the anti-type of Solomon's Temple, and we shall therefore run the parallel with respect to that.

I. So the Church of God is built with spiritual stones, who are well hewed and polished by the Word and Spirit, before added to, or laid into the heavenly building, 1 Pet. ii. 3—6, Acts ii. 40. 41.

II. So in the building of the Church, there should, be no need of the hammer, or the axe, to square and hew by repentance, the stones of this building, being every way prepared, and made fit before. Conversion is the polishing work, and those that receive unconverted persons, violate the holy rule of God's word, for that maketh work for the hammer and axe in the Temple. Hence Solomon saith, " Prepare thy work without, and make ready the things in the field, and after build thy house," Prov. xxiv. 27.

III. To show, that in the building of the Church of God, the Gentiles as well as the Jews, are concerned ; they all concur together, to build up an holy Temple in the Lord, Eph. ii. '21.

IV. To show the beauty and glory of the Church, which is adorned with the gifts and graces of the Spirit. The Church is inwardly pure, very rich and beautiful. Hence the king's daughter is said to be all glorious within, Psalm. xlv. 13.

V. So in the Church, the light of the Gospel, and the blessed spirit, shines gloriously ; these let light in, in great abundance.

VI. So in the Church, God hath placed degrees of officers, some greater and higher in glory than others; as apostles, pastors, teachers, &c., Eph. iv. 11.

VII. To note, saith Mr. Guild, the protection of the Church by the ministry of angels, though they be not seen, and its peaceable, victorious, and flourishing state under the same.

VIII. So did Christ his Church unto the Father. John xvii.

IX. Which signifies that joy of heart, and heavenly melody, that is in the Church, amongst the faithful and sincere converts thereof, Eph. v. 19.

X. So in the Church is God's Word and covenant of grace, born by Christ, and by his true ministers, by preaching and publishing the same.

I. The Church is built with living, sensible, and lively stones, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

II. These stones are hewn and polished by the hand of the Spirit.

III. The Church of God can never be destroyed ; the gates of hell shall never prevail against it, so as utterly to overthrow it. Matt. xvi. 18, though it is not denied, but the outward courts have been trodden down by the Popish Gentiles, Rev. xi. 2.

Between the second temple, twit in the days of Nehemiah, and the Church of God built in the latter days.

I. Signifying the Church of God should be greatly defaced and spoiled, and the outward courts trodden down by the mystical Babylonians, and afterwards rebuilt, or rather, repaired again, Rev. xi. 2, 3.

II. Signifying, that the Church of God should be rebuilt in a troublesome time, and that great opposition should be made against them.

III. Signifying, that the rebuilding of God's Church should be of such as had been a long time in spiritual captivity, under the mystical Babylonians, or mother of harlots.

IV. Signifying, that those whom God would raise up to repair the waste places of Sion, in the latter days, should be poor, weak, inconsiderable persons, very unlikely to perfect so great a work as reformation is. What was Luther, and others whom God employed, to the holy apostles, who were the first builders ?

V. So the rebuilders in these latter days have been greatly reproached and contemned by the enemies of Christ; those that are truly religious, called feeble, weak, and foolish ones, &c., nay heretics, schismatics, and many other reproachful names have been, and still are daily given to them, and their work much slighted and despised also.

VI. So the builders of God's Church in these latter days, have had much Popish rubbish to remove, much filth of human inventions, and traditions of that Church being in their way; some stones being almost quite lost amongst this and instead of a stone of Sion, they take a stone of

VII. So the builders of God's house, or reformers in religion, have often been hindered or obstructed in these latter days.

VIII. So have many souls been very backward about the work of reformation, or repairing the house of God; they have dwelt in their cieled houses, and let the house of God, as is were, lie waste.

IX. So the enemies now, as in former times, strive to hinder the repairing of God's house; yet the work of reformation shall in due time be perfected, to the joy of all sincere Christians.

X. So the work in these days goes on, not so much by the power of men, or human help, as by the power of God, and his Spirit.

XI. So the Church of God in the latter day, will be far more glorious than it was ever yet since the beginning of the world, which will be accomplished, as will be showed in respect of these following.

1. God will destroy all the enemies of His Church. "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces, out of heaven God will thunder upon them ; for evil doers shall be cut off:" " Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be, but the meek shall possess the earth," &c. " And all that lift up a hand against Zion, shall be torn in pieces." God will plead the controversy of his Church, and undo all that afflict her. " The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, shall smite the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces: then the iron, and the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, shall be broken together, and become as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor," 1 Sam. ii. 10, Psal. xxxvii. 10, 11, Zech. xii. 2, Dan. ii. 34.

2. God will utterly destroy all idolatry, and all false worship, and by this means will restore his own appointments, in the purity of them. .Rev. xiv. 8, and xviii. 1, 2, 3—21, Isa. Ix. 1, 2, xxv. 6, 7, and Iviii. 12.

3. God, to make her glorious, will unite all her children together in love : " They shall serve the Lord with one consent; and no more divisions shall be amongst them," Isa. xi. 13, Ezek. xxxvii. 16—19, Zeph. iii. 8, 9, Zech. xiv. 9, " There shall be one Lord, and his name one."

4. God will enlarge her borders. " The children of the barren shall say again in my ears, the place is too strait for me, give me room that I may dwell," Isa. xlix. 20. The fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, they shall come like doves to the windows, Isa. Ix. 3, 4, 5.

5. The Jews shall be called, and both Jews and Gentiles shall make but one sheep-fold : " And there shall be one Sheep-fold, and one shepherd," Ezek. xxxvii. 22, John x. 16, Isa. xix. 19, to the end.

6. The glory of the Church will be great in respect of knowledge. "All the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea, .Numb. xiv. 21, Isa. xi. 9, Hab. ii. 14.

7. Her glory shall be great in respect of the abundance of peace which shall be in the world in that day : God will make wars to cease to the ends of the earth; such a day never was in the world yet. Psal. xlvi. 8, 9, and Ixxii. 7, Isa. ii. 4, Mic. iv. 3,4.

8. " The mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above the mountains, and lifted up above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it," Mic. iv. 1, Isa. ii. 12. The saints in that day shall possess the gates of their enemies, Jer. xxx. 20.

9. The glory of the Church will be great in respect of holiness. God will bring his people into the fire, and make his Church very pure, Isa. i. 25, 26, 27, Mal. iii. 2, Psal. cx. 2, 3, Zech. xiii. 8, 9. " There shall be no Canaanite in the house of the Lord, no unclean person shall dwell therein."

10. Her glory shall be great by Christ's coming to her. " Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty," Isa. xxxiii. 17. " He shall be King over all the earth. I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion." God will dwell with men in a more glorious manner than he ever yet dwelt with them.

11. In that her glory shall abide, and the kingdom shall not be left to another people, Dan. ii. 44, and vii. 27.

INFERENCES

I. Let us pray for the day of Sion's glory, and never give God rest, until he hath made Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth: " Thy kingdom come," &c.

II. Let not the godly be discouraged, whatever troubles they are now attended with; clouds of darkness shall soon fly away : " At even-tide there shall be light," Zech. xiv. 7.

18.

THE CHURCH COMPARED TO A VINE

"Thou hast brought a Vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it," &c.

"Behold, and visit this Vine," &c. Psalm. lxxx. 8, 14".

"For our Vines have tender grapes," &c. Cant. ii. 15.

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II. So the Lord's spiritual Vine hath in former times exceedingly spread her branches forth; the mountains are said to be covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars: "She stretched out her branches to the sea, and her boughs unto the river," Psalm. lxxx. 8—11. Israel, God's ancient Vine, grew wonderfully; and so did the Gospel-Vine, how did it in a little time spread forth its spiritual branches, eastwards, and westwards, over many nations, and kingdoms! She extended her boughs into Parthia, Media, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Pamphiha, Lybia, Spain, Italy, England, &c.

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.19.

The Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

BAPTISM A BURIAL

Expounded and practically improved, Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ," that is, into the profession of his faith, confession of his name, and communion with his Church, " were baptised into his death." Rom. vi. 4 " Buried with him in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him," &c., Col. ii. 12

for the opening of this metaphorical text, we will show

1. The literal signification of the word Baptism
2. The metaphorical signification thereof
3. "What Burying literally and tropically is
4. Give a symbolical parallel between Baptism and a Burial
5. Produce some inferences from the whole

In showing the signification of the word Baptism, we will with all impartiality give the judgment of the learned. The word is Greek, and we are to seek its meaning from the learned in that tongue, of whose writings we have carefully examined the most noted, some of which are, Scapula, and Stephanus, Pasor, Minshew, and Leigh's *critica sacra*, Grotius, Vossius, Causabon, Selden, Mr. Daniel Rogers, Mede, Chamier, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Hammond, Dr. Cave, Hesychius, Budaeus, Beza, Erasmus, Buchanan, Luther, Illyricus, Zanchy, Glassius, &c., who with all the learned of any note, that are impartial, agree with one voice, that the primary, proper, and literal signification of *Baptiso*, is, *mergo, immergo, submerge, obruo, item tingo, quod fit immergendo* ; that is, to drown, immerge, plunge under, overwhelm, as also to dip, which is done by plunging. And it is certain the ancients so understood it, as appears by their constant practice of dipping such as were baptized; as Tertullian says of his trine-immersion, *ter mergitamur*, that is, thrice are we dipped. And that the change of the rite to *Aspersio*, or sprinkling, was invented to accommodate the tender bodies of infants, in these northern parts, when the practise of Baptising them prevailed, is generously confessed by Vossius, and most of the learned.

In a less proper or remote sense, because things that are washed are dipped in, or covered all over with water, it is put for washing, Luke xi. 38, Heb. ix. 10, Mark vii. 4. And we dare modestly assert, that no Greek author of any credit, whether Heathen or Christian, has ever put Baptising for sprinkling, or used those words promiscuously. The Greeks have a peculiar word to express sprinkling, viz., which they use when they have occasion; as might be abundantly shown, if needful.

From this proper signification arise some metaphorical notations : as,

1. From the signification of *drowning*, (they are the words of Vossius,* in Thes. Theol.) it is put for affliction, because they that are afflicted are as it were drowned in the gulph of calamities. Matt. xx. 22, Mark x. 38,, Luke xii. 50. Baptism denotes not every light affliction, but that which is vehement and overwhelming: as there are waves of persecutions and tribulations mentioned in scripture; so such as are drowned and overwhelmed by them, may seem to be baptized,. Matt. xx. 22, 23, Mark x. 38, 39, Luke xii. 50. The reason of the metaphor is taken from many and deep waters, to which calamities are compared, Psal. xviii. 16, " He drew me out of great waters," Psal. xxxii. 6, and Ixix. 1, 2, &c.

2. It is put for the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, and other believers, in the primitive Church, because of the analogical immersion or dipping, (for so, as we have proved, *baptizen* signifies) for the house where the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles was so filled, that they were, as it were, drowned in it or the reason of the metaphor may be from the great plenty and abundance of those gifts, in which they were wholly as it were immersed, as the baptized are dipped under water, Acts ii. 3, Matt. iii. 11, Mark i. 8, Luke iii. 16, John i, 33, Acts i. 5, and xi. 16. When fire is added, it is a symbol of external manifestation.

3. It is put for the miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Bed sea, 1 Cor. x. 2, which was a type of Gospel-baptism.

These reasons of the metaphor are evident and convincing demonstrations, that the signification of Baptism is to dip or plunge ; for sprinkling can bear no analogy with them.

The word is expressed in the Old Testament by the Hebrew *Tabbal*, which the Septuagint (or the seventy learned interpreters) render by *Baptiso*, to dip ; as these texts show, Gen. xxxvii. 31, Exod. xii. 22, Lev. iv. 6,17, and xiv. 16, ix. 9, Deut. xxxiii. 24, Numb. xix. 18, 2 Kings v. 14, &c. Hence also the Baptized are said to be dead and buried in allusion to the putting of dead men into the earth, and covering them therewith; to which we proceed. What Burial in a natural sense is, every man knows : and in our text it is a metaphor, the symbolical analogy of which with Baptism follows in the parallel.

I. WHEN one is Baptized he ought to be dead to sin, that is, converted by the power of God's Word to Gospel truth, which always makes the soul loathe and detest sin ; and then that soul may be said indeed to be dead to sin. This may be evidenced by this consideration, that Baptism is an illustrious symbol of the death of Christ our Savior, who died for us. " I am he that was dead, and am alive ; behold, I live for evermore." The true administration of this sacrament visibly figures it to us; and to that end it was instituted, viz., to confirm that great and glorious truth of his being really a man, and so capable of suffering or passing through the death of the cross, Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5, into which death we are Baptized ; and then being dead to sin, and to this world, we are to live in newness of life amongst the saints in the kingdom of God.

II. When one is buried, he ought to be covered all over with earth or else it is no burial. When one is Baptized, he ought to be covered all over with water, or else it is no Baptism. Which fully appears:

1. From the nature of Burial.
2. From the proper and metaphorical significations of the word, as is largely opened.

3. From scripture practice, which always was by dipping, as all the learned that are impartial acknowledge.
4. From the constant practice of antiquity, who retained the right form until *Clinical Baptism*, viz., such who deterred their Baptism till their sick bed came to be used about Cyprian's time, in the third century.

These *Clinici*, so called because they were baptized to their bed, were such as delayed their baptism until their deathbeds, because they believed it would take away all sin, and that there was no pardon if they sinned after receiving it, yet not daring to go out of the world without this great badge of Christianity, deferred it till they thought they were in danger of death, and since they could not without peril of life be dipped, sprinkling was invented to serve the turn. For a like reason, as was said before, they changed the mode of administration with respect to infants, when their baptism was introduced, out of regard to their tender constitutions, especially in cold countries and seasons. This was the original of sprinkling, and sprung purely from the abuse of Baptism, and the want of a right subject as by divine and, shall be demonstrated in a particular sheet, impartially, and from undoubted authority.

One may with as much reason be said to be Buried, when clay or earth is thrown upon his head only, as to be Baptized, when water is poured upon his head or face and if the one be no burying, it is as certain the other is no Baptism. And he that affirms, that sprinkling may represent or symbolically express the death, Burial, and resurrection of Christ, does at the same time speak without colour of truth, word of sense, and against all the reason in the world. As breaking of the sacramental bread, visibly betokens that Christ's body was broken, and as the pouring forth of the sacramental wine, represents the gushing forth of his blood, so the sacramental dipping in water, viz, Baptism, represents his death and Burial, and the coming from under the water, his resurrection, 1 Cor. xv 2, 3, 4

III The immersion of the party baptized, precedes his emersion, or coming out of the water, which symbolizes or answers to two things:

1. The resurrection of Christ,
- 2 Our rising again to newness of life " Buried with him in Baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him," &c, as in the text

INFERENCES

I From the whole we may rationally conclude, that the administration of this great ordinance by sprinkling, (which comports not with the literal nor metaphorical signification of the word, nor those great mysteries represented by it, viz, the death, Burial, and resurrection of Christ) is disorderly, and should be rectified.

II It is a motive to excite us to admire and reverence the great grace and goodness of Christ, who hath given us such a visible symbol of his death, Burial, and resurrection, not only to confirm our faith, but also to prevent our being deceived by any seducing spirits

III It is not to be wondered at, that such as deny the man Christ Jesus, but preach up the light within to be a Savior, should reject these two great ordinances stated in the scripture, viz, Baptism and the Lord's supper, because such as deny thy substance, are necessitated to deny the

sign Persons of this judgment may be easily confuted for whenever the term Baptism is mentioned, and God or Christ represented as the Agent, it must be understood of the Baptism of the Spirit, in the sense before spoken of. Whenever Baptism is mentioned as the act of any apostle or minister of the Gospel, it denotes water Baptism, because these have neither power nor commission to Baptize with the Spirit, and with fire And when ever the Baptism of blood and suffering is mentioned, it must be understood of persecutors, or ungodly men, who murder, destroy, or afflict the godly , for neither God, without blasphemy, nor good men, without a wrong application of the term, may be said to Baptize that way So that when we meet with the act of Baptism, as the act of a good man, we must of necessity understand it of water-Baptism, in the same method and mode of administration, as was practised by the apostles and primitive Christians , and that being a positive institution, with respect to the subject and manner of administration, is not to be deviated from, upon any pretence whatsoever, unless we will suppose the laws of the Almighty to be in the power of man, so as that he may dispense at pleasure with them , which is not to be done without sufficient authority from God himself, which is no where to be found

IV If the laws of the great unerring Sovereign of all things ought to be observed without variation, unless it be by his express direction then we are to conform exactly to his order, in this part of the evangelical law, and to practise it no otherwise than he has prescribed, because it was once so delivered to the saints.

V. We would caution all that would approach to this sacred evangelical ordinance, unless they be dead to sin, that is, such as truly and really hate wickedness, and the empty vanities of the world ; and unless they have a prospect of, and long to have an interest in that never-fading inheritance, promised by our dear Lord Jesus to his children; not to profane this blessed institution: because, if they want the due qualifications of serious and converted souls, viz., faith, repentance, and good lives, they are hereby entitled, not real members of Christ, but hypocrites, and incur as great a hazard, as such do who eat and drink unworthily of the Lord's supper.

.20.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

" For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread," 1 Cor. xi. 23 " And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said. Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you : This do in remembrance of me," Verse 24

THE Papist's affirm, that after the words which they call the words of consecration, spoken by their Mass-priest, the bread is changed into the real body of Jesus Christ; and many of the blessed martyrs, in Queen Mary's days, were burned to ashes for denying this transubstantiation. Which absurd and monstrous conceit of theirs hath been learnedly confuted by many ancient and modern writers, so that it may be thought needless to add any thing here upon that account; yet that we may make our way the more plain to these metaphorical and figurative expressions used by our Saviour, when he instituted the holy sacrament of the Supper, saying, " This is my body," something briefly we shall offer, in confutation of their pernicious doctrine ; which may soon be done, for they confute themselves, in saying, that the sacrament is a feast for our souls, and not for our bodies : now what is my soul the better, when I eat the very body of Christ ? Christ is eaten and received spiritually : " Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life," and I will, saith Christ, " Raise him up at the last day," John vi. 54. Therefore the eating of Christ's flesh cannot intend the receiving of the sacrament of the Lord's supper : for if it did, it would be a very easy way for the vilest sinner to go to heaven.

But to come directly to the business in hand: either Christ spoke figuratively, when he said, " This is my body," or he did not ? And that the words cannot be taken in a proper sense, is evident; for it is impossible for words to express any thing more plainly, than that by this is meant the bread. It is said, that " Christ took bread, and brake it, and gave it, and said. Take, eat, this is my body ;" where this necessarily relates to that which Christ took, brake, and gave. Also the apostle saith positively thrice in a breath, that it is bread : " As often as ye eat this bread," &c., 1 Cor. xi. 26. " And whosoever shall eat this bread," John vi. 15. " The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ?" 1 Cor. x. 16. Also the participation of the sacrament is called, " Breaking of bread," Acts ii. 46, and xx. 7, which Popish authors themselves understand of the sacrament. Now can any be so ignorant and foolish, to believe it is Christ's proper and real body, which the Holy Ghost calleth so often bread, after it is blessed, &c.

Object. By this, say some of the Papists, is neither intended the bread, nor Christ's body ; but in general, this substance which is contained under this species.*

Answ. " What do they mean ? Are there any more substances under those species, besides the bread first, and afterwards the body of Christ ? Do not they affirm, as soon as ever it ceaseth to

be bread, it becometh the real body of Christ ? Then surely if it be a substance, according to what they say, it must either be bread, or the body of Christ, or no substance at all."

Object. Christ's body is after the manner of a spirit, taking up no room, so that head, hands, feet, are altogether in the least crumb of the host.

Answ. " In arguing thus, as a learned man observes, they plead for the propriety of words, and

Bellarmin. *de Each.* 1. 3. c. 12.

destroy the propriety of things. How can they say it is properly a body, which wants the essential properties of the body, which is to have quantity, and take up room; take away this, and the body may properly be a spirit, for it is that only which differenceth it from a spirit."

But further, to show how idle and absurd it is to take our Saviour's words in a proper sense, we shall show that it is utterly against sense and reason, as well as contrary to scripture, as you have heard.

First, It is against sense. What greater evidence can there be of things, than what sense affordeth ? But if this which the Papists affirm, about the consecrated bread being the real body of Christ, be true, the senses of all the world are deceived; for since the great argument for Christianity, as all agree, was the words that Christ spoke, and the works which Christ did; now how could we be sure he did so speak, or so work, if we may not credit the reports of our eyes and ears ? This was St. Luke's great evidence of the truth of what he wrote, that it was delivered to him by eye-witnesses, Luke i. 1, 2, and St. John's: " What we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled of the word of life," I John i. 1. And St. Paul's for the resurrection, " That he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, then of above five hundred brethren at once," 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6. Even Thomas's infidelity yielded to this argument, " That if he did thrust his hand into Christ's side, he would believe," John xx. 25. Christ judged this was a convincing argument, when the apostle thought they had seen a spirit: " Handle me, and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have," Luke xxiv. 39.

But now if after the words of consecration, there is under the species of bread, the nature and properties of flesh, then are the senses of the wisest of mortals deceived: and if our senses be deceived here, they are not, as a late author, Dr. Tillotson, observes, to be trusted in any other thing; no, not when they are most sure that we see father, or mother, or wife, or children. Can we be sure, " This is my body," is written in Matt. xxvi. 26, Mark xiv. 22, Luke xxii. 19, 1 Cor. xi. 24? For may not those words be some other words ? Why should we trust our eyes ? What if we should tell the Papists, these words, " This is my body," are neither in this chapter, nor anywhere else written in the New Testament, and grow confident of it, and tell them the words are This is not my body; it is the bricks that were laid to build Babel, it is the gates of Solomon's porch: this is the shew-bread that Abimelech gave to David, the bottles that Abigail took from Nabal ? If they tell us, We are strangely deceived, and the sense of all that we can read will give it against us ; may not we tell them as well, when they say, This is the real body of Christ, when it is nothing but a wafer-cake. That they are strangely deceived, and that the senses of all, that can either see, taste, smell, or feel, will give it against them ? This being so, what reason is there

for them to burn us, because we cannot see the bread to be Christ's real body, more than there is for us to kill them. because they cannot see that it is the gates of Solomon's porch.

Secondly, It is against reason. And shall any conclude, that is any principle of the Christian religion, that is contrary to, and utterly against reason? For it would make us believe things that are absolutely impossible, and gross contradictions. Though some things may be above reason, yet they themselves confess no principle of religion can be against it.

Obj. But they say. We imagine many things impossible, that really are not so; and further intimate, If we can prove any real impossibilities, which this doctrine forceth them to believe, they will yield to us: for they with us condemn the Lutheran opinion, that Christ's body is every where, because it is impossible ; and therefore expound those words, " I am the vine, I am a door," &c., figuratively, as we do, because it is impossible for him who is a man, to be a vine, or a door, &c. See Mr. Pool, p. 107.*

Answ. It is no less impossible for the bread to be Christ's real body. " Why might not the vine, as well as the wine, be by transubstantiation converted into Christ's real substance ? I think, saith Mr. Pool, the mother as good as the daughter. And especially since Christ saith, I am the vine, might not they have devised another transubstantiation, "to make Christ's words good?"

But to proceed to show how irrational and absurd their notion is, and what they hold, as you heard, that Christ's whole body is present in every crumb of the bread, &c., and yet do affirm,

See a book called Scripture Mysteries, p. 279.

Christ's body is entire and undivided, and also believe it is really in heaven, in such a proportion or bigness as he had upon earth. Now then, saith Mr. Pool, according to their doctrine, the same body of Christ is bigger than itself, and longer than itself, and which is worse, Christ is divided from himself. I know not what can be more impossible, than to say. That all Christ is at Rome, and all at London, and all in heaven, and yet not all in the places between.

Object. "All this, the Papists say, may be done by God's Almighty power."

Answ. Then by the same Almighty Power, it is possible for any other man to be "in so many places: for it matters not that Christ should be invisible in so many " places, and another should be there visibly; or that Christ is there in so little a bulk, " and another must be in a greater. And if this be so, what monsters follow from " hence ? Can any devise greater absurdities than they believe, if in very deed they " believe what they say, and daily affirm? Suppose now John to be by divine power " at the same time at Rome, at Paris, and at London: wherever John is alive, it follows he must have power to move himself, or else no living creature. Then John " at Rome may walk towards London, and the same John at London may walk towards " Rome: and so they may meet, shall I say, the one the other, and you may be sure " it will be merry meeting; it were worth enquiring, how long they will be ere they " come together. Then again, at Rome all the parts of John may be excessively hot, " and at London excessively cold, and at Paris neither hot nor cold. This is beyond " all romances that ever were devised. Besides, John may be sorely wounded at " Rome, and yet at London may sleep in a whole skin; John may be feasting at Rome, " and fasting at London, in the same moment.

Object. You talk at this rate, because you measure God by yourselves, whereas he can do more than you or I can do.

"Answ. There are some things, which it "is no dishonour to God to say he cannot do them, because they are either sinful, (so God cannot lie,) or absolutely impossible. God himself cannot make a man to be alive and dead at the same time; God cannot make the whole to be less than a part of it; he cannot make three to be more than threescore; he cannot make a son beget his father; he cannot make the same man to be born at several times, as Papist authors confess, and therefore in like manner he cannot make the same body to be in two several places, for this is not one jot less impossible than the other: but they must believe, Christ may have ten thousand bodies at one time, or so many as there are priests to consecrate the bread, and distinct congregations to celebrate the holy Supper."

Object. These indeed are great difficulties to human reason, but reason is not to be believed against scripture.

Answ. True, but this is their hard hap, this doctrine of theirs is against scripture, as well as reason, in as much as it is highly dishonourable to Christ, whose honour is the great design of scripture. What a foul dishonour is it to him, to subject him to the will of every mass-priest, who, when he pleaseth can command him down into bread ! And what a dishonour is it, that the very Body of Christ may be eaten by rats and worms, and may be cast up by vomit, and the like, as Aquinas, affirms,* and that their church in her missals hath put this amongst other directions, That if worms or rats have eaten Christ's body, they must be burned ; and if any man vomit it up, it must be eaten again, or burned, or made a relic? And yet this is no more than their doctrine will force them to own: for if they will believe Christ's own words in one place, as well as in another, he assureth us, that whatsoever, without exception, " Entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast forth into the draught," Matt. xv. 17.

Object. What dishonour is this more to Christ, than to have fleas suck his blood when he was on earth.

Answ. Very great dishonour ! For though in the days of his flesh it was no dishonour to him, as it was necessary for us that he suffered so many indignities, and died, yet now being risen from the dead, " He dieth no more : " and it must needs be a great wrong, injury, and dishonour to him, to be crucified again, and to be brought back to those reproaches which he long since left; and all this to no purpose, and without any profit to us. Again the scripture approveth and useth this argument, that his body cannot be in two places at one and the same time.

*Sum. quaest. 8^o. Art. 3.

It is the angels' argument, " He is not here, he is risen," Matt. xxviii. 6, plainly implying, that he could not be here and there too. Or must we say, the argument used by the angels of God is weak or deceitful, that theirs may be strong and true ?

Object. Have we not many examples in holy scripture, which show that Christ may be in divers places at one time ? Was he not in heaven when he appeared to St. Paul, Acts ix. 3. Paul saith, " He was seen last of all of him," and yet was he not then in heaven ? *

Answ. What sight it was that Paul had of Christ, is not declared ; however, it is evident it was a vision that he had of him, for so he calleth it: but that this proves the body of Christ to be in two places at once, doth not in the least appear. Stephen also saw Christ ; and if it should be granted, as some affirm, that he saw his real glorified body, doth it follow, the body of Christ was then in two places ? The heavens might be opened, and his sight so strengthened that he might have a sight of the blessed Jesus, whom Stephen said, he saw " Standing on the right-hand of God," Acts vii. 56.

Object. The Papists say, Christ's real body is in the eucharist invisibly, and so the angels might mean, he was not there visibly, when they said, " He is not here, he is risen."

Answ. To this saith Mr. Pool, If a man being sought after, should hide himself in some corner or hole of the house, and pursuers should ask for him ; could any with a good conscience say, he is not here, because he is invisible ? None sure but a Papist, who is so well skilled in equivocation, would give such an answer. Our Saviour every where makes these two opposites. his being in the world, and going to heaven. John xiii. 1. The hour was come, that he should " Depart out of this world unto the Father." It seems they could have taught him the art of going thither, and remaining here at the same instant. They have an excellent faculty, as he had, who said, since he could not give content in going, nor staying ; he would not go, , nor stay : for they know how a man may both go from a place, and stay in it, at the same time. I know not what can be more plain, if they did not wilfully shut their eyes. Christ saith expressly, " Me you have not always with you ." that is, his bodily presence ; for as touching his divine presence, so he is always with his people unto the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20. Besides, their doctrine destroys the truth of Christ's human nature. We read of Christ, " He was in all points like unto us, sin only excepted." His body was like ours, and therefore impossible it should be in a thousand places at once, which according to their doctrine it is. This turns Christ's body into a spirit; nay, indeed they make his body more spiritual than a spirit; for a spirit cannot be in several places, divided from itself. The soul of man, if it be entire both in the whole, and in every part of the body ; yet it is not divided from itself, nor from its body, nor can it be in two bodies at the same time, as all confess; much less can it be in ten thousand bodies at once. Whenever any angel comes to earth, he leaves heaven. So that this quite destroys the truth of Christ's human body.

Object. Much of what we say here, the Papists say, was true of Christ's body in the days of his infirmity; but when he was risen from the dead, then he received a spiritual body, as it is said ours shall be at the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv.

Answ. This is but a fig leaf, for they ascribe these monstrous properties to Christ's body before its resurrection; for they say, the flesh and blood of Christ were really in the sacrament which the disciples received whilst Christ lived. Secondly, Christ's resurrection, though it heightened the perfection, yet it did not alter the nature and properties of his body, nor give it the being of a spirit; for after he was risen, he proves that he was no spirit by this argument, " Handle me, and see : for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have," Luke xxiv. 39. By this it appears, that their doctrine destroyeth the truth of Christ's human body ; at least it destroys the main evidence of it against those who affirmed that Christ had only a phantastical body, namely, that he was seen, and felt, and heard; for the Papists say, that sense is not to be believed. Again, this

doctrine of theirs destroyeth the truth of Christ's ascension into heaven; for he is not ascended, if he hath not left this world, but is here in the sacrament. Nothing can be more clear, than that Christ did visibly and locally leave this world, when he went up into heaven, Acts i. 9, 10. That being once there, " The heavens must receive," or contain "him, until the time of the restitution of all things," Acts iii. 21. And that at the last day he shall come visibly and locally from heaven, 2,

Dr. Preston of the Saint's Qualifications, p. 478.

Thess. i. 7. But that he shall come down a thousand times in a day, at the command of every mass-priest, or that he should have such power as to make the body of his Savior, is such a dream as the scripture speaketh not one syllable of, nor can any rational man believe it. Besides, their doctrine destroyeth the very essence of a sacrament, which consists of two parts, an outward element or sign, and the inward grace signified by it.

These things being well considered, it is evident these words, " This is my body," ear to be taken figuratively, i. e., this is a sign of my body, or this is the sacrament of my body; so that from the manner of the words spoken by Christ, there is no necessity to take them as the Papists do, seeing it is so frequent with the Holy Ghost to use metaphors in this kind; I need not name them, considering it is the subject of our present work. " The seven kine are seven years; the seven ears of corn are seven years;" the stars are the angels of the seven churches; the seven heads are seven mountains, &c. Christ is called a rock, a lamb, a lion, a door, together with many other things, which we have spoken unto. See the second head of Metaphors, Similies, &c.

The saints are called sheep, branches, &c. " The meaning of all this is, saith Dr. " Preston, they are like such and such things ; but yet it is the manner of the scripture-" speech, and therefore, saith he, it is not necessary those words should be taken in a pro-" per sense, as they are by the Papists.*

" Object. But, saith the worthy doctor, you will object: yea, but in a matter of this " moment, as a sacrament, the Lord speaks distinctly and expressly ; there he useth no " metaphor, though in other cases he doth.

" Answ. To this, saith he, I answer briefly: It is so far from being true, that he useth " them not in the sacrament, that there are none of all the sacraments but it is used, " viz., in the sacrament of circumcision, " this is the covenant," &c. In the sacrament " of the passover, which were the sacraments of the old law, the lamb is called " the passover. In this very sacrament, to go further, for instance, take but the " second part of it, " This is the cup of the New Testament in my blood:" here are not " one but divers figures. The cup is taken for the liquor in it; the wine in the cup " is taken for Christ's blood; " This is the New Testament," &c. that is, the seal of the " New Testament." Here is figure upon figure, saith Mr. Pool, and yet the Papists have the impudence to reproach us for putting in but one figure, which they confess the Holy Ghost frequently maketh use of. Wonder, O heavens ! and judge O earth, whether these men do not strain at gnats, and swallow camels, &c.

This openeth a way for us to our next work, which is to run the parallel concerning those figurative and metaphorical expressions of the Lord Jesus Christ, used at the institution of the

holy eucharist. Matt. xxvi. 26, " Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to his disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body."

METAPHOR

I. Christ took Bread after he had supped, &c.

II. Christ blessed the Bread: " he took the Bread, and gave thanks."

III. Christ brake the Bread. Corn, we know, is bruised, or ground in a mill, that so it may become meet Bread for our bodies.

IV. Christ gave the Bread to his disciples: " He took Bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples."

V. The disciples took the Bread. Note by the way, it is called Bread when Christ took it, it is called Bread after he blessed it, and it was Bread the disciples took.

VI. The disciples ate the Bread. Bread will do us no good, unless it be taken and eaten.

VII. Bread is the stay and staff of man's natural life . " I will break the staff of Bread," Ezek iv. 16 It is that which preserves the life of the body.

VIII. Bread is the best of earthly blessings; hence in scripture it is sometimes put for all good things, Isa. Iv. 1, 2.

IX. Bread is of a satisfying nature ; hence God saith, -" He will satisfy his poor with Bread."

X. Bread is made of seed, or was corn, which before it riseth or yields increase is sowed or is sown becomes fruitful with a great increase, viz., , and dies and bringeth forth much fruit.

PARALLEL

I. This, in the judgment of some divines, notes God's choosing or taking Christ from among men, to be a sacrifice for our sins.

II. Christ sanctified himself; he was set apart to that glorious work and office he came to do.

III. Christ was bruised or pierced for our sins, he was broken as it were in the mill of God's wrath, which was due to us for our sins, that he might become meet food for our souls : " It pleased the Father to bruise him," Isa. liii. 10.

IV. Signifying not only his giving himself for us, but his giving himself freely with all his benefits to us.

V. Which holds forth our taking or accepting of Christ the Bread of Life, as the only food of our souls.

* See a Popish Book called, *The portraiture of the true church*, p. 152.

VI. Unless we receive Christ by a lively faith, and feed upon him, that is, fetch all our comforts from him, relying wholly by faith upon him, he will avail us nothing to eternal life : " Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," John vi. 53.

VII. Christ is the stay or staff of the life of our souls. "When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear," &c.. Col iii. 3. Christ preserveth the life of our inward man. "Because I live, ye shall live also "

VIII. Christ is the best and choicest blessing that ever God gave to his people; he comprehends all other good he that hath Christ hath every thing [^] "All things are yours" 1 Cor. 9.9 iii.22, why so ? because they had an interest in Christ, Christ was theirs. Hence he is called the " Chiefest among ten thousand," Cant. v. 10.

IX. Christ received by faith, most sweetly fills and satisfies the soul of a believer. "He that eateth of the Bread of life, and drinketh of the water of Life, shall hunger or thirst no more," John iv. 14. Such have what they desire.

X. The Lord Jesus, like a seed of corn, did die, that so he might not remain alone, in the perfect enjoyment of himself, but for us. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat dies, it abideth alone; but if it die, it thereby bringeth forth much fruit," John xii elect; he was content, when his hour was come, wheat fall into the ground, and to yield himself up to death. He died, and rose die,. All that ever were, to raise up with him all his or shall be quickened, and 24. raised out of a state of death by sin, were, and shall be quickened by the death and resurrection of Christ. Such hath been the fruit of the preaching of Christ crucified, that multitudes of sinners thereby through the Spirit have been converted to God, whence also hath sprung forth a seed to serve him, whom he hath accounted to the Lord for a generation, of all which he will not suffer one gram to be lost, but will raise it up at the last day.

A parallel much like this might be run, in respect of the Cup or spirit of the wine. **See Wine.**

INFERENCES

I. The apostle saith, " That what he received of the Lord Jesus, he delivered to the saints: how the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took Bread, and blessed it," &c. " And in like manner took the Cup, when he had supped," &c., 1 Cor. xi. 23—25. From whence we infer, that whatsoever we do in the worship of God, we must see we have a command from God to warrant our practice, and also exactly to do it according to the pattern he hath left us, or directions he hath given us; we must not add to, nor diminish from, nor alter any thing of the words of the institution; if we do. God will not hold us guiltless.

II. This rebukes the Papists, who deny the people the holy Cup of our Lord, and give the sacrament, or holy ordinance, only in one kind, when nothing is more clear, than that Jesus Christ gave his disciples the Cup, as well as the Bread.

Quest. Why did Christ institute this holy ordinance, and give it to his disciples, the very night in which he was betrayed ?

Answ. 1 To strengthen their faith in an hour of temptation, that was just at the door, and ready to come upon them. When is a cordial more necessary, than when the patient is ready to faint, and his spirits fail ? Christ saw what a sad qualm was coming upon his poor saints, and therefore gives them this soul-reviving cordial, to bear up their spirits

2. Because the last words of a dying friend are mostly kept in mind, or tokens of love given by him are chiefly borne in remembrance.

Quest. Who ought to partake of the holy eucharist ?

Answ. 1. None but such who are true converts, or who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; for this is an outward sign of an inward grace received. Those who have not spiritually received Christ by faith, ought not to come to the holy Supper of the Lord.

2. It appertaineth to none, but such converts as are baptized. " Those that received the word were baptized; and they continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and prayer," Acts ii. 40, 41, 42. We read of none that received the Lord's supper, but baptized persons.

3. Such who are fallen into any gross and scandalous evil, and under the suspension or sentence of the Church, ought not to partake of the holy Supper of the Lord, until they have repented, and given satisfaction to the Church, and are received again into fellowship.

4. Those who cannot discern the body of the Lord broken, so as to look unto and behold Jesus Christ crucified for them, but eat it as common bread, ought not to come to this ordinance; such, amongst others, if they come, are unworthy receivers.

Quest. What is required of persons who come to partake of this holy ordinance?

Answ. They ought to examine themselves; it requires due preparation, which doth consist in these four or five particulars.

1. A sincere confession of those sins, which we find out upon diligent search and examination.

2. Godly sorrow for the same, manifested by putting away the filth of the flesh. We must come with clean hands, and a pure heart.

3. We ought to forgive those who have offended us. Christ commands us to be reconciled to our brother. The apostle exhorteth us to lay aside all malice. We must not " Keep the feast with the leavened bread of malice and wickedness," 1 Cor. v. 8.

4. Faith in the death and blood-shedding of Jesus Christ.

5. We ought to do it in remembrance of his death.

(1.) With an affectionate remembrance. The sight of our eyes ought to affect our hearts.

(2.) A sorrowful remembrance, in contemplation of what our sins brought upon our dear Saviour: they were the thorns, as I may say, that crowned him, and the nails that fastened him to the cross.

(3)1 With a sin-loathing and self-abhorring remembrance.

(4.) With a thankful remembrance. Though we have cause of sorrow, considering the nature of our sin, and horrid evil thereof; yet there is great cause of joy and thanksgiving, to behold a Saviour, who in bowels of love died to redeem and save us from them.

Quest. How may a Christian, with much comfort, upon examination, receive the Lord's Supper ?

Answ. 1. If there be no sin in thy heart or life, which thou regardest, or dost allow thyself in, bearest with, or connivest at.

2. If thou dost loathe sin, as well as leave it; when it is not only out of thy conversation, but out of thy affection also. To hate and loathe sin, is more than to leave it; persons never willingly leave or forsake what they love.

3. If thou canst say in truth, that thou wouldest be made holy, and dost labour after it, as well as to be made happy; to be thoroughly sanctified, as well as to be saved; live to God here, as well as live with God hereafter; to have sin mortified as well as pardoned.

4. If Christ be most precious to thee, and hath the choicest room in thy heart. If upon trial thou findest these things are in very deed wrought in thee, thou mayest with much comfort come to the sacrament.

Quest. Of what use is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper ?

Answ. 1. It shows the horrid nature and evil of sin, in that nothing could expiate it, nor satisfy the justice of God, or make a compensation for it, but the blood of Jesus Christ.

2. It shows the wonderful love of God to poor sinners, in giving up his own dear Son, to die the cursed death of the cross for us.

3. It shows the wonderful love of Jesus Christ, who freely laid down his life for our sakes. " Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend;" " but Christ hath laid down his life for us, when we were enemies to him by wicked works," John xv. 13, Rom. v. 8—10.

4. It tends to increase our love to Christ, and our faith in him.

5. It shows us that Christ is our Life, and how and by what means we come to be saved.

6. It seals the covenant of grace to us, giveth us, in the right use of it, much assurance that Christ is ours.

7. There is a mystical conveyance or communication of all Christ's blessed merits to our souls through faith held forth hereby, and in a glorious manner received, in the right participation of it.

8. It may animate and encourage us to suffer martyrdom, when called to it, for his sake.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER

"For Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Cor. v. 7

THE Passover, or Paschal Lamb, being a most eminent type of the Messiah, of which see our sacred Philology, in the chapter of sacred Rites, where you have the reason of its typical and metaphorical representation, we shall here run an apt parallel betwixt that illustrious type, and the most holy Antitype.

I. Shadowing forth the perfection and innocence of Christ, in whose lips was found no guile;" As a Lamb, without blemish, and without spot."

II. Signifying the experience Christ should have of our miseries, whereof even a day's continuance yields sufficient proof; as also that perfection of Christ in like sort: and that in fullness of time he should come and suffer; a Year being a perfect revolution of the sun's course. Guild.

III. Christ was taken from amongst mankind: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." &c. Heb. ii. 14.

IV. Christ was separate from sinners.

V. So Christ died, saith Mr. Ainsworth, in that season, viz., in the evening of the day: also in the evening of time, in the latter age of the world.

VI. Signifying, that we must apply Christ's blood; and where Christ is received, and the soul sprinkled by faith, sanctification outwardly will appear in the practice of the life, 1 Cor. i. 30.

VII. Signifying, saith Mr. Guild, * the agony of Christ in the garden, and the wrath of his Father, which he did endure both in soul and body. It was a sign either of the Spirit of God, which is compared to fire, through which Christ offered himself; or of the fire of God's wrath, which he suffered when he was made a curse for us, Heb. ix. 14.

VIII. This signifies our full communion with Christ, whole and undivided, 1 Cor. xiii., Gal. ii. 20.

Moses Unveiled, p. 62.

IX. *Os nullum illius agni frangi voluit Dens, &c.* It signifies, that not a bone of Christ should be broken, as it was prophesied of him.

X. Christ is spiritually to be received, and fed upon. " My flesh is meat indeed," &c., John vi. 55.

XI. Noting, that we should be well prepared, when we come to the sacrament. *Guild.*

XII. Signifying, that in Christ nothing is unprofitable, or to be rejected ; and that we ought to eat with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

XIII. Which typified forth the bitter sorrows and sufferings of Christ; and that we should eat our Passover with a sense of, and bitter sorrow for our sins, wherein we were captivated.

XIV. Showing the unity that ought to be among God's people, they being all fellow-commoners in, and partakers of the privileges and blessings of Christ. Every church and family of the faithful, yea, every particular soul hath a whole Christ.

XV. To signify how we should prepare our hearts, 1 Cor. xi. 28.

XVI. To signify, first, the superabundant virtue of Christ's death, for the house may be too little for the Lamb, but not the Lamb for the house, as also the sweet communion of the saints in love, the joyful vocation also of the neighbor-Gentiles, and their admission into the fellowship of the faith, being inwardly circumcised, &c.

XVII. This signifies the girding the loins of our minds with justice, strength, and verity.

XVIII. This was to figure out the preparation of the Gospel of peace, wherewith our feet should be always shod.

XIX. They that come to Christ, must be ready to walk in the way of salvation, with the staff of true faith in their hands, as strangers and pilgrims, to make a daily progress towards the land of everlasting happiness.

XX. It shows, that first Christ was made a sacrifice to God, and a sacrament to us. *Guild.*

TYPE

I. The Passover signified Christ who was to come.

II. The Passover only fed the body.

III. The Lamb being slain and eaten, perished, and nothing of it remains.

IV. That was a Type or shadow.

DISPARITY

I. Our Passover shows he is come, And hath been crucified for us.

II. Christ spiritually feeds the soul.

III. But Christ, though he was slain, and became thereby spiritual food for our souls, yet he is no whit impaired thereby, but liveth and abideth for ever in perfect bliss and happiness, and remaineth as perpetual nourishment to his chosen.

IV. Christ is the Antitype and substance of it.

INFERENCES

GOD gave special charge to the Israelites, concerning their eating the Passover, He was greatly provoked by the neglect of it " But that man that is clean, and is not on a Journey, and forbearth to keep the Passover, even that man shall be cut off from his people " &c, Numb ix 13 What then will become of them who refuse to come to Christ, and eat of this spiritual Passover? Also it may stir up such sincere and godly souls to look about them, and cause them to tremble, who live in the great neglect of coming to the holy Supper of the Lord Surely there is as good ground and reason for you to obey the Lord Jesus in this ordinance, as there was for Israel to obey Moses in keeping the Passover nay, I may show much greater

1 From the consideration of what the one was a sign of, and what the other shows forth, and is a sign of.

2 From the consideration of the excellency of Christ, whose law this is, above Moses, who received that law, and delivered it to Israel

3 From the threats that are denounced against those who refuse to hear Christ in whatsoever he shall say to them " If the word spoken by angels was steadfast," &c " If they escaped not, that refused him that spake on earth, how shall we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven ? '

And for further motives consider,

1 The strict and positive injunction of Christ, " Do this in remembrance of me." He that said, "Do not steal, do not commit adultery," &c, "Repent, believe, pray always, be holy," &c, said, "Do this," &c

2 It is a perpetual ordinance, till Christ come the second time Paul received it from Christ, after his coming in Spirit according to his promise, &c And the primitive saints continued in it after that time likewise, therefore the coming he spake of, must intend his second coming at the last day

3 Consider the great need there is to remember Christ's death, and of those profitable instructions and blessings comprehended in this ordinance

4 Is not the neglect of a known duty a great sin?

5 Is not this in effect to set light by Christ, and to cast contempt upon his commands, and in effect to say there is no need of them? What signifies, say some, the eating a little bread, and drinking a little wine" Wilt thou take upon thee to teach Christ, and exalt thy own wisdom above his, who is the most wise God ?

6 Consider how faithful and ready the saints in former ages were to walk in the commandments of God , and is it not left upon record to their everlasting commendation? "Moses did all things according to the pattern showed him in the mount," &c "Zachanah and Elizabeth walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless"

7 Dost thou know what spiritual blessings thou lovest by thy neglect hereof, is not loss of communion with Christ a great loss ?

8 Is not universal obedience a demonstration of grace? "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments," Psalm. cxix 6 "If ye love me, keep my commandments," John xiv. 15

9 Will not the thoughts of a willful neglect of known and indispensable duties, be bad deathbed companions ?

10 This preacheth the Gospel to the very sight of your eyes, is it not necessary to make use of all means God hath ordained for your establishment in the truth of the Gospel?

11 Will not omission of known duties exclude men and women the kingdom of heaven? Read Matt xxv. Is it not for sins of omission, that Christ will condemn and sentence many souls to eternal burnings in the great day ?

THE CHURCH CALLED THE CITY OF GOD

"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God, Selah," Psalm. lxxxvii. 3

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High," Psalm. xlvi. 4

"We have a strong City," &c., Isa. xxvi. 1

"Look upon Zion, the City of our solemnity," &c., Isa. xxxiii. 20

"And they shall call them the people, &c, And thou shalt be called a City sought out, not forsaken," Isa. lxii. 12

"Ye are a City set on a hill, that cannot be hid," Matt. v. 14

IN these places of the Holy Scriptures, Sion, or the Church of God, is called a City. Sion was a fort or mount in Jerusalem, and the temple was built upon it; hence the church of the Jews was called, as some conceive, by this name Zion, because there they assembled: but after, it was a name or title given to the Church, whether Jews or Gentiles. "Ye are come to mount Sion, to the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," Heb. xii. 22.

God's people may be called by the name of Sion, or Jerusalem.

1. Because we were naturally like Jerusalem, the forts of the Jebusites, viz., sinners and enemies to God.

2. Because by grace we are overcome and conquered, like as Jerusalem was, by the true David.

3. Because the Church is fortified by the Almighty for his own use, and chief place and residence in this nether creation.

4. In respect of her renown and glory. As Jerusalem was renowned above all Cities, so God's Church is now above all people and societies in the world.

5. Because it is viewed and gazed upon by all strangers; she may well be compared to a looking glass, as Zion signifies.

6. In respect of her laws; for as the law and public worship were at Jerusalem; so Christ's laws and public worship are maintained in the Church. Hence God is said to love the gates of Zion, more than all the dwelling-places of Jacob, Psalm. lxxxvii. 2.

Observe. The saints, or Church of God, is the City of God, or may fitly be compared to a City.

In opening of this metaphor, we shall show the nature, trade, government, privileges, and glory of the City of God.

I. The Church is built by Christ, for a habitation for God: "Upon this rock will I build my Church," &c., Matt. xvi. 18. "In whom ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 22.

II. The Church of God hath strong walls about it. "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks," Isa. xxvi. 1. The Church hath a threefold wall about it.

First; The wall of God's providence. "Hast not thou made a hedge (or wall) about him?" Job i. 10. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem; so the Lord is round about them that fear him," &c., Psalm. cxxv. 2.

Secondly; The protection of the holy angels: "The angels of the Lord encamp round about them that fear him," &c., Psalm. xxxiv. 7.

Thirdly; God in an extraordinary manner, is as "A wall of fire round about her," Zech. ii. 5; every one of his attributes is a gracious defense to the Church.

III. The Church of God is famous upon this account: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion; on the sides of the north, the city of the great King," Psalm. xlviii. 2. "Ye are as a City set upon a hill," Matt. v. 14.

IV. The Church of God is built up of many living stones, consisting of divers particular societies, or spiritual houses. "Now therefore ye are no ⁷³more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Cornerstone: in whom all the building fitly