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SEED THOUGHTS,

OR

SELECTIONS

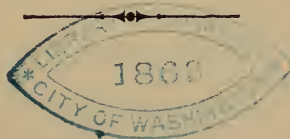
FROM

CARYL'S EXPOSITION OF JOB.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

BY THE

REV. J. E. ROCKWELL, D.D.



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INTRODUCTION.

IN the course of a series of morning readings of the Scriptures in connection with Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, I met with the first notice of Caryl's Exposition of Job. The passage which attracted my attention is as follows: "There is a work which few men possess, and which we are assured that no man alive ever ventured to read through. It is in two mighty folios, containing together between four thousand and five thousand pages of closely-printed matter, in double column. The grandfathers of our grandfathers liked to write such books, and even liked to read them. With patient diligence the author returned from day to day during half a life to his task, slowly building, brick by brick, the vast monument of his industry, his learning, his fame, and, it may be, sometimes of his folly. But the readers were of like sort. They had none of the modern fancy for small books which one may hold in the hand without wearying it as he lounges in his easy-chair. They liked to see a great book, which required an effort to lift, and which, therefore, remained a fixture upon their tables for months or years, while with strong powers of digestion they returned day by day to take in a fresh morsel of the ponderous meal. There belongs to these days a story of this very book, that the son of a reverend divine left his father engaged thereon when he departed on a voyage to India,

and on his return, found him still engaged on the first volume, though the pile of leaves to the left of the reader had indeed considerably increased, and that to the right diminished.”

All this work is upon the Book of Job, whose patience the author seemed bent on affording the world an opportunity of exemplifying. It is by Joseph Caryl, “sometimes preacher to the honourable Society of Lincoln’s Inn, and more lately of St. Magnus, near London Bridge.” It was published in 1672, “Printed by Samuel Simmons, and to be sold at his house, next door to the Golden Lion, in Aldergate street.”

The sarcastic Warburton says that “Job was strangled by Caryl,” and Owen calls this process of exposition a mode of treating the word of God which partakes more of *entombing* than of exhibiting it. Nevertheless, the patience which the work exacts will in the end be rewarded, as well as that of Job. It is not only an elaborate, but a most learned, sound and pious work—a mine from which he who has courage to explore it will come back laden with precious things. In a foot-note the author asks, “How is it that such books ever become scarce? Why should not all the copies have lasted as well as our own, which is in a perfectly fresh and sound condition? People do not willingly destroy such books as these; what becomes of them?” Shortly after reading the above, and having my interest in the work more thoroughly awakened by reading the extracts from it which are found in Kitto, I met with the Exposition in looking over the shelves of an old book-store, and it has been in my library for more than twelve years.

The copy which I possess is in twelve quarto volumes, well preserved, and has evidently been carefully studied. On a fly-leaf of the twelfth volume, in the hand of one who was its owner in the year 1740, is written these words: "Lector, si cupis Dominum Cognoscere Libri"—"Reader, if you seek for the Lord, inquire in this book." The first volume was issued in 1651, and the last in 1666. There must have been some delay in the printing of this work, as the first preface was dated November 3, 1643, and the usual parliamentary notice concerning its publication was issued in May, 1645. Each volume of this work contains from five hundred to one thousand pages. The title-page of the first volume reads as follows:

AN
 EXPOSITION
 WITH
 PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS
 UPON
 The Three First Chapters of the Book of JOB.

Delivered in xxi Lectures at MAGNUS,
 near the Bridge, *London*.

By JOSEPH CARYL, Preacher to the Honourable Society of
 Lincoln's Inn.

James 5: Verse 10, 11.

Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering, affliction and patience.

Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.

LONDON:

Printed for Luke Fawn, at the Parrot in Paul's Church Yard, and
 H. Cripps and L. Lloyd, in Pope's Head Alley, MDCLI.

In his preface to the last volume the learned and pious author remarks: "Through the all-disposing providence of God and the importunate call of not a few friends, I began this work; and now, after twenty-four years of travel, making twelve stages (in so many parts the whole has come forth), I am come to the end of it." The fact that several editions of his work were published within a few years shows the value which was set upon it in those days. Besides the folio copy alluded to by Kitto, and the edition in twelve volumes first issued, Horne, in his Introduction to the Study of the Bible, speaks of it as having been published in six books, and adds, "I have never had an opportunity of examining it, but Wachi eulogizes it in very high terms. It is now very little read or even consulted, few readers being able to wade through two large folio volumes."

But little has been recorded of the life of Caryl. He was a learned Nonconformist minister, who lived and laboured during the time of Cromwell, and who was so much in favour with him as to have been appointed one of his chaplains, in connection with Dr. Owen, to attend him to Scotland. In Neal's History of the Puritans we meet with this brief notice of his life:

"Mr. Joseph Caryl, M. A., the ejected minister of St. Magnus, London Bridge, was born of genteel parents, in London, 1602, educated in Exeter College, and afterward preacher in Lincoln's Inn. He was a member of the Assembly of Divines, and afterward one of the triers for the approbation of ministers, in all of which stations he appeared a man of great learning, piety and modesty. He

was sent by the Parliament to attend the king at Holmly House, and was one of their commissioners in the treaty of the Isle of Wight. After his ejection in 1662, he lived privately in London, and preached to his congregation as the times would permit. He was a moderate Independent, and distinguished himself by his learned Exposition upon the Book of Job. He died universally lamented by all his acquaintances, February 7, 1672-3, and in the seventy-first year of his age."

In a foot-note by the editor it is added of the Exposition: "This work was printed in two volumes folio, consisting of upward of six hundred sheets, and there was also an edition in twelve volumes 4to." "One just remark," says Mr. Granger, "has been made on its utility: that it is a very sufficient exercise for the virtue of patience, which it was chiefly intended to inculcate and improve."

In a second note by the American editor it is said: "It is not amiss to add that very few works of equal magnitude contain so much piety and good sense. This commentary—for such it may be termed—is highly prized, and a copy is never to be met with in a London catalogue but at a high price. It is one of the scarcest theological books, and, on account of its size, not likely to meet a reprint."

This voluminous exposition of Job, of which such a variety of opinions is held, was first delivered by Caryl in the form of lectures to his people, few of which could have occupied less than an hour in the delivery, and many must have occupied an hour and a half. Many a congregation of modern times, accustomed to brief essays on some moral or religious subject, and looking anxiously for the last leaf

of the sermon if it exceed half an hour, would have deserted such a preacher; and many others, who prefer to hear political discussions or popular harangues, mingled with pleasant stories and occasional flashes of wit, would have soon wearied of hearing these long and connected unfoldings and enforcements of gospel truths. But in those days "the word of God was precious," and Christians were fed and nourished by its glorious truths. Year after year they listened to that learned and godly pastor while he opened to their minds the Scriptures, and Sabbath after Sabbath came to see what new riches he had brought up from the mine in which all the week he had been busily at work. His sermon would never have drawn together a crowd in modern times. Probably the most judicious of homiletical critics would have called him prosy, and pronounced his style unsuited to the wants of the Church. There is much of apparently needless repetition, though the attentive reader will find that each repetition is designed to bring out a fresh thought, or to give to the first some new light. Each turn of the diamond presents a new series of brilliant refractions of the sunbeam that falls upon it.

There is much that appears prolix and dry, yet the patient reader will often be startled with some unexpected and precious display of gospel truths, when the author seems to dwell and insist upon some text that in his estimation might be passed over with but a moment's notice. There is a quaintness of speech which may sometimes excite a smile, but it also serves to fix more indelibly in the mind the thought which it embodies. There is a marvellous facility of what might be called in a good sense "double

entendre," which startles the reader with the power of the text of which he had never dreamed before. The author often indulges in a play on words, which is exceedingly rich and instructive. When speaking of the sin of rebelling against the light he says, "As God sometimes brings judgments upon men in perfection, so men sin against God sometimes in perfection." He often uses the same word several times in the same sentence, but at each repetition brings out a new truth. When commenting on the verse (Psalm xcii. 12), "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree," etc., he says, "Here is not only a mention of growing, but of flourishing, and here's flourishing three times mentioned; and 'tis growing and flourishing not only like a tree, but like a palm tree (which flourisheth under oppression), and like a cedar (not growing in ordinary places, but) in Lebanon, where were the goodliest cedars."

The lectures of Caryl abound in proverbial and pithy sayings, which are scattered in rich profusion through the whole work, many of which appear in the selections here made. The Exposition, which is a monument of his genius and piety—and, many would say, of his folly—though voluminous and full of repetitions and often prolix, is still a vast treasury of sound and learned criticism, of able and suggestive comments, and of pious and profitable reflections. It is too vast for any man to undertake to read through. Yet every page on which the eye rests contains some wise and pithy sentiment which may well be remembered, and often may serve as a subject for long and serious study. As a commentary on the Scriptures it is eminently thorough and scholarly; as a system of theology it is sound and com-

plete; and as a work of practical and experimental religion it is exceedingly rich and instructive. It is marvellous with what readiness and skill the learned author has pressed in other portions of the holy Scriptures to explain and illustrate the text of Job. His Exposition is indeed a thorough commentary upon the Bible.

In each volume there is an Index of Texts, used for his illustrations of the Book of Job. These indices extend over five or six pages each, with three closely-printed columns to each page. Frequently there is to be met a full and rich exposition of the texts thus quoted, serving to throw fresh light upon them in their new relations, bringing clearly to light the gospel in that most ancient of the biblical writings, and making thus a valuable commentary upon the whole of the sacred volume. This vast work is too voluminous ever to be reproduced from the press; nor, perhaps, is it desirable that it should be. Yet there is a mine of precious thoughts which will well repay the exploration on the part of those who have access thereto. There are valuable suggestions which will give to the thoughtful food for contemplation and subjects for investigation. There are instructions for the advanced Christian, comforting words for the afflicted, and clear and vivid statements of gospel doctrine which all may read with profit.

The collation and arrangement of the few out of many thoughts which are here brought together has been a work full of pleasure and profit. If it shall prove so to others, the labour expended thereon will not have been in vain.

J. E. R.

EDGEWATER, STATEN ISLAND, October, 1868.

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF JOB.

THE main subject of the Book of Job is contained in one verse of the 34th Psalm: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Two questions are handled and disputed fully and clearly:

1st. Whether it doth consist with the justice and goodness of God to afflict a righteous and sincere person, to strip him naked, to take away all his outward comfort; or whether it doth consist with the goodness and justice of God that it should go ill with those that are good and well with those that are evil.

2d. Whether we may judge of the righteousness or unrighteousness, of the sincerity or hypocrisy, of any person by the outward dealings and present dispensations of God toward him.

The whole argument or dispute of the friends of Job may be reduced to this one syllogism: "He that is afflicted, and greatly afflicted, is certainly a great, open sinner or a notorious hypocrite." But Job, thou art afflicted, and greatly afflicted—therefore, certainly thou art, if not a great, open sinner, a notorious hypocrite. Besides this, there are many discourses falling in collaterally which concur to make up the subject of the book.

1st. We have the character of a discreet and faithful master and father in a family.

2d. We have the character of a faithful, zealous and just magistrate.

3d. We have a great discovery made in the secrets of Nature.

4th. Here are discourses of Christian morals, of the duties of equity from man to man, of the duties of piety which man oweth to God, and of the duties of sobriety and temperance toward himself.

Lastly, here are many discoveries made of God in himself and his attributes—in his power, wisdom, justice, goodness and faithfulness. In a word, this book is a summary of all knowledge, human and divine.

Respecting the *division* of this book, we may regard it—

1st. As a dialogue, having eight collocutors or speakers; or,

2d. As a disputation, with opponents, respondents and a moderator.

3d. We may divide the book into three parts, and so it sets forth—1st, Job's happy condition; 2d, his calamity; 3d, his restoration.

As for the *scope* or use of this book—

First. It aims at our instruction, and that in divers things:

1st. It instructs us *how to handle a cross*; how to behave ourselves when we are in a conflict, whether outward or inward; what the postures of the spiritual war are, and with what patience we ought to bear the hand of God and his dealings with us.

2d. God would have us learn that *afflictions come not by*

chance—that they are all ordered by Providence, in the matter, in the manner and in the measure.

3d. Another thing we are to learn from this book is this: the *sovereignty of God*—that he hath power over us, over our estates, our bodies, our families and our spirits; that he may use us as he pleases, and we must be quiet under his hand; when he cometh and will take from us all our comforts, we must give all glory to him. This book is written for this especially, to teach us the sovereignty of God and the submission of the creature.

4th. It teaches us that God doth sometimes afflict his children out of prerogative; that though there be no sin in them, which he makes the occasion of afflicting them, yet for the exercise of his grace in them, for the trial of their graces and to set them up for patterns to the world, God may and doth afflict them. *Though no man be without sin, yet the afflictions of many are not for their sins.*

5th. There is this general instruction which God would have us learn out of this book—that the most justly-possessed and best-secured estate in outward things is uncertain; that is, there is no trusting to any creature comforts.

6th. God would show his people the *strength and stability of faith*. How unconquerable it is—what a kind of omnipotency there is in grace! God would have all the world take notice of this in the Book of Job, that a godly person is in vain assaulted by friends or enemies, by men or devils, by wants or wounds; though he be even benighted in his spirit, though God himself take away the light of his countenance from him, yet God would have us learn and know that over all these a true believer is more than conqueror. For

here is one of the greatest battles fought that ever was between man and man, between man and hell, yea, between God and man; yet Job went away with the victory. True, grace is often assaulted; it never was or ever shall be overthrown.

7th. This also we may learn—that God never leaves or forsakes his totally or finally.

8th. Lastly, the book teaches us that the judgments of God are often secret, but they are never unjust; that though the creature be unable to give a reason of them, yet there is an infinite reason for them. These are the general uses from the general scope and intendment of the book by way of instruction.

Secondly. This book serves to convince and reprove—

1st. That slander of worldly men and of Satan, who say that the people of God serve him for their own end.

2d. It is to convince and reprove all those who judge of the spiritual estate of those that are under the hand of God in sore afflictions by some unbecoming and rash speeches which may fall from them in the time of these their conflicts when troubles and sufferings are upon them.

3d. To convince and confute those who judge of men's spiritual estates by God's dealing with them in their outward estates.

4th. To convince and confute that cursed opinion that a man may fall finally and totally away from grace and from the favour of God. God hath showed by this history that such an opinion is a lie. Certainly God would have all the world know that free grace will uphold his for ever.

5th. To convince all those of pride and extreme presump-

tion who think to find out and to trace the secrets of God's counsels, the secrets of God's eternal decrees, the secrets of all his works of providence; whereas God showeth them in this book that they are not able to find out or comprehend his ordinary works; they are not able to comprehend the works of creation: how are they able then to find out the counsels of God in his decrees and purposes and judgments?

Thirdly. There is much for consolation—

1st. That all things do work for the good of those that love God.

2d. That no temptation shall ever take hold of us but such as God will either make us able to have, or make a way of escape out of it. We can be in no condition cast so low but the hand of God can reach us, find us, send in deliverance and raise us up again.

Lastly. There are two general exhortations—

1st. We are exhorted to the meditation and admiration of the power and wisdom of God from all the creatures.

2d. To glorify God in every condition, to have good thoughts of God, to speak good words for God in every condition. We are drawn to this by considering how Job (though sometimes in vehemency of spirit he overshot himself, yet he recovers again and again) breathes sweetly concerning God, showing that his spirit was full of sweetness toward God, even when God was writing bitter things against him, as when he saith, "Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him;" than which nothing could express a more holy or submissive frame of heart in reference to the dealings of God with him.

SEED THOUGHTS.

ABUNDANCE.

ABUNDANCE cannot satisfy. He only is well who hath enough, and he is best who hath (in temporals) the least, enough.

AMAN doth not live more days, nor more cheerfully any day, because he lives plentifully.

AS there are some graces of a Christian which come not to trial till we are in want, so there are other graces which come not to trial till we have abundance. Want trieth our patience and our dependence upon God, and abundance trieth our temperance, our humility, our liberality, yea, and our dependence upon and faith in God for the sanctifying blessing and making comfortable to us, which we have.—JOB xxii. 28.

IT is hard to abound in riches and not to trust in them.

TO see man rich in purse and poor in spirit is a great wonder.

THE godly do not please themselves that they have much good laid up for many years in their own stock, in their lands, in their houses, in their purses, in their shops; but they please themselves that they have good laid up for many years, yea, for eternity, in the promises of God.

SOME of the choice servants of God have been afraid, when they have seen much of the world come in, lest God should put them off with such worldly things; when their table hath been full of fatness and dainties, when they have had houses and lands, gold and silver plenty, they have been troubled lest God should say to them, "There is your all." It is said of Luther, when he had a considerable present sent to him from a great prince (the duke of Saxony, I remember), this came from his heart: "I hope God will not put me off with these things. With gifts from princes I shall be

hungry as long as I live if I have nothing to feed upon but what is of the world, and poor as long as I live if I have no other treasure but what is earthly ;” and thereupon protested he would not be satisfied with the best things of this world, though content with anything.

ACQUAINTANCE WITH GOD.

A GODLY man is (as we may say) one of God’s acquaintances.



THOUGH God doth not refuse acquaintance with many poor souls when their necessities drive them to him, yet it is best to acquaint ourselves with him for the love we bear to him or the desire we have to enjoy him, rather than for the need we have of him.



TILL we do acquaint ourselves with God we can have no peace with him.



OUR daily holy walking is a daily acquainting ourselves with God ; every step of a holy life is both toward and with God.

GOD is ready to give peace, or to be at peace with those that acquaint themselves with him.

ADVOCATE.

SIN hath made a breach ; there needs a Mediator to heal it. God and sinful man are two, and they cannot be made one but by a third. Christ appears for us in heaven (Heb. ix. 24). He appears as an attorney in court for his client.



CHRI^ST is very ready to speak for and plead the cause of poor sinners before God his Father. Christ is easy to be entreated ; he is found of them that seek him not ; then surely he will be found of those that seek him.



WE are sure all shall go well with us in the court of heaven while we have Christ our Advocate with the Father. And that we may have fulness of confidence to come to God by Christ, let us consider these five things :

1st. Christ is most wise to manage our cause—so wise that he is the wisdom of the Father.

2d. Christ is an eloquent Advocate, a powerful

Orator. As no man ever spake like him to man, so no man ever spake like him to God.

3d. Christ is a faithful Advocate. His intercession is a part of his priestly office. We have a faithful High Priest, therefore a faithful Advocate.

4th. Christ is a merciful Advocate. He lays our cause to heart; our cause is his cause. He hath espoused the interests of his people, and does all upon his own account. Christ had an ability of sufficiency to be merciful to us as God, though he had never been made like unto us by becoming man, but he had not that ability (as some speak) of idoneity or fitness to be merciful. His being made like unto us hath given him a double idoneity for the tenderness of his heart toward us. First, in that he himself suffered, being tempted; his passions in the flesh were great. Secondly, in that himself suffers still in all our temptations; his compassions with our flesh are great. Now an advocate who either hath had a trouble of experience in his own person, or is full of the sense of his client's trouble, will certainly do his utmost to relieve him, because in his relief himself is relieved also.

5th. Christ is the favourite of the Judge; it is a great advantage to have one pleading for us at the bar who is a favourite of the bench. Christ is

highly in favour with the bench. God hath testified from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Judge is our Advocate, Friend and Father.

Lastly, that we may be well assured that he will do his utmost for us, our Advocate calls us his friends. As the Judge is his friend before whom he pleads, so every saint is his friend for whom he pleads. Some will do more for friendship than for a fee. We know it is so with Jesus Christ; he pleads for his people because they are his friends. This Job makes use of here: "He will plead for a man with God and the son of man for his friend." As if Job had said, "I know that I have a friend in Christ, and Christ looks on me as his friend, and therefore I have highest confidence that he will plead my cause and take off this scandal."—
JOB xvi. 21.



THE Mediator between God and man hath been known in all ages under a twofold nature—both God and man.

ADVICE.

THE good which others do by our advice and counsel is reckoned as done by ourselves.

IT is a wise course in advising others to show ourselves ready to follow the same advice. It was a speech of one of the ancients, "I never taught my people anything but what I had first practiced and experimented myself." Doctrine is sooner followed by the eye than by the ear. He that, like the Pharisees, saith and doeth not, shall find but few to do what he saith. It is very sinful to give counsel which we will not take. Our works ought to be the practice of our words, and as practicable as our words. Woe unto those of whom it may be said, as Christ of the Pharisees (Matt. xxiii. 3), "Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not ye after their works."—JOB v. 8.



IT wins exceedingly upon others to take our counsel when it appears we are ready to follow the same.



COUNSEL ourselves. It puts strength into a rule when he that gives it is ready to enliven it by his own practice.



COUNSEL is the extract of reason, both about what we are to do or leave undone.

HASTINESS in counsel always makes waste,
and so doth hastiness in action.



THEY who will not take time to consult about
what they do may have time enough to repent
of what they have done.

AFFLICTIONS.

AFFLICTION is the trial and touchstone of sincerity. When God doth afflict you, then he doth bring you to the touchstone to see whether you are good metal or no; he doth bring you then to the furnace to try whether you be dross or gold. Affliction is the great discoverer that unmasks us. Some will hold on with God as long as the sun shineth, as long as it is fair weather. But if the storm arise, if troubles come—whether personal or public—then they pull in their heads, then they deny and forsake God, then they draw back from and betray his truth. While religion and prosperity go together, it is hard to say which a man follows; but when once they are forced to a separation, where the heart was will soon be manifest.—JOB i. 11.

AFFLICTIONS *send the people of God home to God.* “Then Job fell down and worshipped.” Afflictions are a great advantage to the servants of God; for when the world frowns most, then they beg most for the smiles of God; when the world is strange to them and will not look on them, then they get more familiarity and close communion with God. When God is striking, then Job is praying; when God is afflicting, then Job falls to worshipping. Grace makes every condition work glory to God, and God makes every condition work good to them who have grace.—JOB i. 20.



IF *we bless God in our afflictions, then our afflictions are blessings unto us.* We have so much blessing in our afflictions as we can bless God for our afflictions. Here is an heavenly alchemy: Whatsoever affliction you touch with blessing God, you turn that affliction to a blessing. If you have an iron yoke of affliction upon you, do but touch it with blessing God, it turneth it into gold. When you have a heavy cross upon you, ready to weigh you down, do but touch it with this word from the heart, and it makes it as a crown of glory upon your head.—JOB i. 21.

WHEN *God afflicteth us with sufferings we ought to afflict ourselves, to humble our souls for sin.*

Smarting times are good repenting times, and worldly sorrow should get the company of godly sorrow. It is not safe to be alone with worldly sorrow that works death ; but if we mingle a few tears for sin and our unkindness to Christ with these tears, then they will refresh us. No question but Job at this time (of his affliction) fell a-searching of his heart and a-trying of his ways, renewing his repentance and assuring of his peace with God.. When afflictions cause us to return thus within our own hearts, they have then a secret influence, a blessed operation upon us.—JOB i. 20.



A CROSS without a Christ never made any man better, but with Christ all are made better by the cross.



NATURALLY every man seeks the reason of his sorrows and afflictions out of himself. When man is afflicted, he is not willing to own himself as the cause of his afflictions, or to acknowledge that they spring from his sin.—JOB v. 6.

AFFLICTIONS *come from God.* When God gives, it is an act of bounty, and when he takes, it is an act of justice, for he is sovereign Lord in both. Every evil of affliction or of trouble is said to be the Lord's doing, because it cannot be done without the Lord. Wicked men in all their plots and all their successes are either the rod of God to chasten his people for their sins, or else they are God's furnace to try his people's graces and purge them from their sins. Hence we should in all our afflictions look beyond the creature. In all the evils we either feel or fear, let our hearts be carried up unto God.—JOB i. 20.



GOLD is never wronged by being tried.



IT is not correction, but the hand of God in it and with it, which makes us happy.



WHEN God lays the rod of correction upon his child, he aims at the purging out of his sin, at the preventing of his sin, at the revealing of a fatherly displeasure against him for sin.

EVERY *affliction is a messenger from God.* It hath somewhat to say to us from heaven, and God will not bear it if his messenger be despised how much soever.



WHEN God lays his hand upon us, he would have us lay it to our hearts. Some err by neglecting the hand of God as light, and others by fainting under it as too heavy. As a good heart takes notice of or will not despise a little the least comfort, so it will take notice of and not despise the least cross.



AFFLICTIONS are but the higher services and employments of grace.



AFFLICTIONS, blessed and made effectual by God, make a gracious change in man. How many ignorant men have, with correction, received instruction! How many proud men been made humble, and of carnal spiritual! How many unruly spirits have been brought in compass, and stubborn ones subdued with a rod! The rod and the word work miracles when God works with them.—JOB xi. 12.

GOD takes the most eminent and choicest of his servants for the choicest and most eminent afflictions. They who have received most grace from God are able to bear most afflictions from God.

AFFLICTION doth not hit the saints by chance, but by direction. God doth not draw his bow at a venture. Every one of his arrows goes upon a special errand, and touches no breast but that against whom it was sent. It is not only the grace but the glory of a believer when he can stand as a butt-mark and take affliction quietly.

A GODLY man may see two things in the heaviest strokes of his affliction, which may provoke him to thanksgiving—at least which may stop him from all immoderate complaining. First, that God hath a respect to his good in his heaviest afflictions, and that the issue shall certainly be good to him; and secondly, that how heavy soever his stroke is, his sin hath deserved a heavier, and that God could have made it heavier, even his little finger heavier upon him than his loins have been.—
JOB xxiii. 2.

ALL the afflictions of this life are less than our sins.

AFFLICTION is called a rod because of the smart of it, in regard to the hand that useth it and the end for which it is sent.

AFFLICTION doth not separate from Christ. When Job could call nothing in or of the world his, he could call Christ his; though he could not say, My health, my strength, my riches, my friends, my beauty—for all these had departed from him—yet he could say, *My Redeemer*, for Christ was not departed from him. This was Paul's assurance and the triumph of his faith (Romans viii. 35). Unless saints were conquered, yea, unless Christ himself were conquered, they cannot be separated from Christ.—JOB xix. 25.

WHEN prayer is sent out with a cry to God in affliction, it is a wonder if it be not presently heard. As affliction puts us upon crying to God, so crying puts God upon doing for us.

SAINTS have affliction days, and the wicked an eternity of affliction.

WE can never be brought so low by any affliction or disease but God can bring us up again. How easily can God command a resurrection from affliction who can command it from the grave! And therefore he, by a resurrection from the grave, represented to Ezekiel the resurrection of his people Israel from their affliction. Both or all things are alike easy to Him to whom nothing is hard.—JOB xxx. 19.

AS frost and cold kill the weeds and worms which eat the roots and hinder the growth of herbs, corn and plants, so afflictions kill our lusts—those worms and weeds that breed and grow in our hearts, always hindering the fruitfulness, sometimes to the utter unfruitfulness, of the seed of the Word sown among us and upon us. So when we are in the winter of affliction let us not be impatient nor unquiet; let us not think that the past will ruin and undo us. Cold weather doeth good as well as hot.—JOB xxxviii. 28.

THE scope of God in the afflictions of his people is not their hurt, but good; it is not to destroy them for their sin, but to destroy sin in them; it is not to withdraw himself from them, but to draw them nearer to himself. All the hurt that the Lord intends us by any affliction is but to get out our dross and to fetch out our filth—to bring us from those things that will undo and ruin us for ever. And how great an argument of the goodness of God is it that he designeth the evils which we suffer in these dying bodies to heal the evils and help on the good of our immortal souls! That's all the hurt that the Lord means us. And the Lord's heart is so much in this design (the return of those he afflicts from their iniquity) that he seems confident of it that when they are in affliction surely they will return. And therefore the prophet (Isaiah ix. 10) speaks of the Lord as defeated and disappointed of his purpose when he seeth such as he has afflicted continuing in their sins. Remember, the Lord therefore suffers you to be bound in fetters that you may be loosed from your sins; he therefore suffers you to be holden in the cords of affliction that you might let go your transgressions. Take heed you be not found disappointing him of his purpose.—JOB xxx. 10.

GOD doth usually reveal himself most to his people after great sufferings.



GRACE never grows more in a gracious heart than in a day of trouble.



A BELIEVER thrives (as to the inner man) in affliction, how much soever he loseth and goeth backward as a man.



O BLESSED afflictions, which make us less to ourselves and all creatures less to us! We are never so much in God's eye as when we are least in our own, nor have we ever so much of God as when we expect little or least from man. Say, therefore, it is well with the righteous when they are in the deeps of affliction; for it is but to bring them off their mountain of pride, that they may be exalted in the strength and love of God, even upon the mountains of his holiness and their glory for ever.



A FFLICTIONS (as in the prodigal's example) put us upon thoughts of returning to God.

AFFLICTIONS bring the saints nearer to God. Troubles abroad cause the soul to look inward and homeward.

IT is our duty to pray most, and usually we pray best, when 'tis worst with us; when we are nigh the mire and dust, prayer is not only most seasonable, but most pure.

BRIBERY.

BRIBE-TAKING hands are blotted hands, not only because to take bribes is a blot, but because the taking of them makes many a blot both in the mind of the taker and in the matter or business which he undertaketh.

A TRAVELLER coming to Rome, and viewing many famous structures and goodly houses there, asked who built them? It was answered, "These are the sins of Germany." The meaning was, the money bought for pardons out of Germany built these houses. So we may say of many fair places and goodly dwellings, These are bribes and oppressions; such a man built these by iniquity.

SOME have built houses with what they have gotten by bribes, and many, by taking bribes, have gotten enough to build houses.



BIBES may build houses, but bribe-takers cannot protect them. The tabernacles of bribery shall be consumed.—JOB xv. 34.



MANY give bribes to undo others, and all who receive bribes undo themselves.

CHARITY.

CHARITIES done in faith as a holy offering to God produce a sure increase. To give with a right heart to the poor is the best way of growing rich.



CHARITY, especially spiritual charity, is very liberal and open-hearted. Job instructed not only his own, but he instructed others. He did not confine his doctrine and advice to his own walls, but the sound thereof went wherever he went. He instructed many.

THERE are four special acts of spiritual charity ; so we may call and distinguish them. First, instructing the ignorant ; secondly, encouraging of the weak and slothful ; thirdly, supporting of those that are ready to fall ; and, fourthly, comforting those that are ready to faint.—JOB iv. 1.



IT is a duty of those that are full to give to their empty brethren. It is their sin if they give not, and it is their shame if they are not most free in giving to those who are most modest in asking.

CHASTISEMENTS.

CHASTISEMENTS are usually taken for those afflictions which God layeth upon his own children. He layeth judgment upon the wicked and punishments upon the ungodly, but properly and strictly that which falls upon his own people is called chastisement.



CHASTISEMENT is for amendment. The evil of affliction is brought upon us that we may take heed of and turn from the evil of sin. Therefore, to go on offending while God is chastening is to add rebellion to our sin.

THE chastisements of God upon us are our documents. He speaketh by the rod beyond all the eloquence of words (Micah vi. 9). Hear ye the rod. The voice of God is his rod; that speaks so loud from heaven in many strokes that the profanest sinners are sometimes forced to hear and acknowledge it.

THE cross is a school in which they who are dull in hearing what God speaks to them in his word are wonderfully quickened up by his rod. "The words of the wise are as goads;" and surely these goads of affliction are pricking, piercing words for the promoting and putting on of a lazy soul in God's work.—JOB xxxiii. 19.

FEW hear when they are spoken to until they feel as well as hear; and therefore the Lord first sends them into trouble that they may hear, and having by that means opened their ears to hear, he brings them out of trouble. When we are truly humbled by affliction we are near deliverance from affliction. The plaster must be kept on till the wound be healed. The Lord will not leave off scourging or correcting his people till he hath

brought them to such a posture that they are fit for mercy.



THE godly never increase more in knowledge than under the cross.

CHRIST.

CHRIST doth not only plead our cause for us, but pays our debts. He entered into bond for us, and took all our debts and duties, whatsoever we owe to God, upon himself, to see all performed, that we might go free and accepted.—JOB xvii. 3.



TO a soul in bitterness everything is bitter except Christ, and to a darkened soul no sun shines bright but the Sun of Righteousness.



AS the needle in the compass is in continual motion till it points toward the north, where (it is conceived) there are rocks of loadstone with which it sympathizeth, so the soul is in continual motion until it points to Christ, who (we are sure) is that living Rock with which all believers sympathize, and the true loadstone which attracts all believers to him.—JOB iii. 3.

A GODLY man is an epicure in Christ. In the thoughts of Christ he sits down and would take his fill. He saith to his soul, Dost thou see that Christ and take notice of these promises? Thou hast goods laid up in him, in them for many years, yea, for eternity. Soul, take thine ease; take it fully; thou hast riches, thou hast an estate that can never be spent. Soul, eat, drink and be merry. His flesh is meat indeed and his blood is drink indeed. Joy in Christ is joy indeed—unspeakable joy here, and fulness of joy hereafter.

CHRIST is not only the principle of holiness, but also the pattern of holiness to his people. They that say they abide in him must walk as also he walked. His works (except those which were miraculous and works of mediation between God and us) are our rule as well as his Word. Look to Jesus when you are in sufferings and have a race of patience to run; let your eye always be upon Christ, and draw the lines of your carriage, both in your spirits and outward actions, according to what you see in him. We must follow his steps both in the matter and manner of our sufferings. Therefore Christ saith, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."—JOB v. 1.

CHRIST saves to the uttermost because he suffered to the uttermost. He was not spared one blow, one drop, one sigh, one sorrow, one shame, one circumstance of all or any one of those which Justice could demand as a satisfaction for man's sin. Yea, though (in a sense) he cried to his Father that he might be spared, yet he was not.



THERE is no stability in any state out of Christ. When Adam fell, if God should have repaired him again and set him up in the same condition wherein he was, yea in a better (if a better could be had), without a Mediator, and so tried his obedience once more; or should every particular man have stood for himself and not one for all, certainly, as we fell at first in a lump all together, so we should have all fallen single (as it were), by retail, one for another! There is no assurance on any estate this side Christ. Christ is called the "surety of the covenant," because he undertakes for us that we shall do our parts, that we shall be faithful and believing, that we shall be holy and humble, that we shall do what God expects from those whom free grace shall save. Christ undertakes for all the grace and holiness and faithfulness which is re-

quired in believers. He gives no command but what himself helps us to fulfil, nor calls he for any duty but what himself works in and for us.—JOB iv. 18.



LET us be much in remembrance of Christ humbling and abasing himself for us. What can kill pride if the humblings of Christ do not? Oh how many of us school and catechise our souls with the remembrance of Christ in his abasements! What an humble Christ and a proud Christian, an humble Master and a proud disciple! Did Christ empty himself and make himself of no reputation, and shall we who are but emptiness be lifted up with a reputation of ourselves, with a reputation which others have of us? Did he abase himself to the form of a servant, and shall we lift up ourselves as if we reigned as kings? He humbled himself and became obedient to the death of the cross, and what have we to glory in but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ? Think often and much of the humblings of Christ, and then you will think of yourselves as mere nothings. This is the most effectual means through the Spirit to bring down the swellings of the heart and to hide pride from man.—JOB xxxiii. 17.

SINNERS under a fourfold consideration may hide themselves in Christ: 1st, if humbled sinners; 2d, if confessing sinners; 3d, if reforming sinners; 4th, if believing sinners. Christ is a hiding-place to all such sinners.—JOB xxxiv. 32.

CONFIDENCE.

CONFIDENCE is an act beyond faith; a soul confiding walks in a higher region of grace and comfort than a soul believing; there may be believing when there is not this confiding. As patience is hope lengthened, so confidence is hope strengthened. Assurance is the highest degree of faith, and confidence is the highest degree of assurance. It carries with it—first, cheerfulness, opposite to sorrow; secondly, courage, opposite to fear and despondency of spirit; thirdly, boldness and adventurousness, opposite to cowardice. Confidence having a good cause and a good call, will take a bear by the tooth or a lion by the beard. Fourthly, it notes boasting, or a kind of a spiritual wise bragging, opposite to sinful modesty or a concealment of what God hath done for us. Or take it thus: confidence is the noblest exercise of faith, which, looking steadily upon God in himself, and

in Christ through the promises, raises the soul above all fears and discouragements, above all doubts and disquietments, either about the removing of evil or the obtaining of good. Hence, confidence is called the rest of the soul; therefore such as attain to confidence are said to be in peace, in *perfect peace* (Isaiah xxvi. 3). And this act of confidence or trust is proper and peculiar to God; no creature must share in it. This is worship commanded in the first precept. Whatsoever we confide in, unless it be in subordination unto God, we make it our god. And it is one of the highest acts of the soul, not only as we respect the taking in our own comforts, but also the giving out glory to God. This confidence is well coupled with holy fear; the more we fear God, the more we trust him. Such fear is the mother and nurse of confidence; but confidence is directly contrary, yea, contradictory, to carnal fear. He that trusts God indeed leaves both soul and body, temporal and eternal estate, with him, without even sending a fearful thought or a jealous look after either.—JOB iv. 6.



THAT'S a sad confidence that proceeds from ignorance, and a sad fearlessness that hath no ground but carelessness.

TRUST or confidence in God settles the heart in all conditions. When there was an unquietness upon the soul of David he first questions his soul about it: "Why art thou disquieted, O my soul?" and then directs trust in God. So the prophet promiseth (Isaiah xxvi. 3): "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." He that is carried and tossed thus about with every wind of trouble and gust of sorrow shows he hath not cast out this anchor of hope upon the Rock, Jesus Christ.



IT is a great part of the happiness of our lives to have a confidence or quietness of spirit about the things of this life; nor is anything more uncomely for or uncomfortable to a saint than distrustful thoughts and fears. To carry a troubled mind and a troubling frame of spirit about us, lest some evil should befall us, is more grievous than the present suffering of evil. Distrust is one of the worst diseases or sicknesses of the mind, and to be anxious about our earthly enjoyments is as bad as to trust upon them. As our hopes should be above the creature, so likewise should our fears be.

CONFESSION OF SIN.

TIMES of affliction are special times of confession and repentance. Usually in prosperity men will not be at leisure to search their hearts and take notice of their sins. Therefore the Lord draweth them to confession by drawing them from the world, by laying them upon sick beds, or by bringing them into straits.

A MAN had better fall into the hands of the most cruel tyrants in the world than into the hands of his own conscience. The awakened conscience carries in it as a thousand witnesses, so a thousand terrors.

THE holiest man on earth hath cause to confess that he hath sinned.

EVERY confession of the evil we do is a new obligation not to do it any more.

HOLY confession of sin leads the way to gratuitous pardoning of sin.

TO dig in the earth and hide our sins in the napkin of our excuses is worse than to hide our talents in the napkin of our idleness.



SOME confess sin in general terms only because they know not what their sins are, or have quite forgot them.

CONSCIENCE.

THAT man can never want music whose conscience speaks in concert and is harmonious with himself.



A GOOD conscience is the best pillow to sleep upon and the best dish to feed upon.



NOTHING beside the blood of Christ can stop the voice and still the cry of an awakened conscience.



WHEN our own book of conscience has nothing but good in it, we need not fear and not much care who writes books against us.

IT is better to have the reproaches of all the men in the world fall upon us than the reproaches of conscience. Better that all the men in the world should call us hypocrite and wicked than that conscience should tell us so.



CONSCIENCE is a very busy faculty of the soul, and it hath many offices. First, conscience is a register, to take notice of and record what we do. Secondly, conscience is a witness against us when we do amiss. Thirdly, conscience is a judge, and gives sentence; it sits upon a throne as God's deputy to award life or death. Fourthly, conscience has the office of a tormenter; it is that worm which dieth not and a fire that never goeth out. The damned shall feel the sting and teeth of conscience for ever, though here they have bribed it and blinded it that it might not trouble them.

CONVERSION.

IN conversion, not only the acts, but the state and nature, of a man are changed. He who before was nothing but a bundle of unrighteousness, becomes a righteous man; that is, he has a righteous principle planted in him and abiding with him.

BARE reason is farther from grace than sense is from reason. It is as easy to change a beast into a man, or to make a beast understand reason, as to change a sinner into a saint or to make a believer of an infidel. Conversion is not the change of actions only, but of nature.



GOD must convert the sinner, not the preacher. 'Tis God who both thrusteth man down by a gracious work of repentance and self-abhorrence, and raiseth him up by a powerful work of faith and holy confidence in Jesus Christ. When man has done his best, he can do nothing effectually; only God can.



A CARNAL man will never submit quietly to duty till God hath changed his nature and made him a new man, or until his mind is renewed after the image of God. Conversion is first a change of our nature and then of our way. This makes conversion so difficult a work. Good education and human instruction may change a man's way, but nothing less than the power of God can change his nature.

CONSISTENT CONDUCT.

NEVER brag of your good meanings, or that you have good hearts when your hands are foul. The heart may keep in its filthiness while the hands are washed, but if the heart be washed the hand will not keep its filthiness.



IT is very possible for a man that hath a clear heart to foul his fingers, but he will not wear them foul.



THE preparation of the heart will be seen at the fingers' ends; purity of spirit cannot consist with impurity of life.



THERE is no holiness in having a show of goodness, but the very shows of sin are evil.



THE two heads of religion, or the two main hinges on which all religion turneth, are purity of doctrine and clearness of practice. Holiness of life and soundness of opinion constitute a perfect man.—JOB xi. 4.

THERE are two things which exceedingly declare the holiness of a man's spirit: First, when he can patiently bear loads of evils and wrongs in his own case, or which have but a private respect. Secondly, when he is ready to take fire in the cause of God. When we are angry with sin, we are angry and sin not.



WHEN Alexander the Great met a common soldier whose name was Alexander, he said to him, "Be sure thou do nothing unworthy the name of Alexander." The apostle exhorts, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." It is a great argument, seeing all who profess the gospel are called Christians from Christ, that therefore they should adorn that most worthy name by worthy walking.



TO be plain and simple, to have a spirit without tricks and turnings, without knots and riddles, is better and more honourable than the highest titles of honour. Integrity is our perfection under the covenant of grace, and simplicity is our greatest excellency. 'Tis the fundamental excellency of

God himself, and so it is of his people. That which is truly simple is truly perfect in its kind, and therefore the same word signifies both simple and perfect; this is the glory of grace and the grace of glory. How glorious are we when this precious stone of integrity, this spiritual Thummim fixed in our hearts, sparkleth in all our ways!



THEY who are truly humbled and touched with a clear sight and deep sense of their sins, will do whatsoever the Lord commandeth and as he commandeth.

COMFORT.

HE only can comfort us in outward afflictions who can command the creature, and he only can comfort us in our inward grief who can convince the conscience. None can do either of these but God, therefore consolations are from God. Luther spake true, "It is easier to make a world than to comfort the conscience."



TO minister comfort to the sorrowful is a greater point of charity than to minister bread to the hungry or clothing to the naked.

CHRIST is the true Noah. Lamech spake of Noah (Gen. v. 29): This man shall comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands. It was not in Noah to comfort, but as God made him a comfort, and he was said to comfort as a type of Christ. Christ is true comfort; he is comfort clothed in our flesh. Noah sent a dove out of the ark, which returned with an olive branch. Jesus Christ sends the Holy Ghost, who is the Comforter, with the olive branch of true peace to our wearied souls.

THERE are three things which should much comfort us in our afflictions. First, that they cannot last always; they will have an end. Secondly, that they are medicinal and healthful; they are for our good while they continue upon us. Thirdly, we may expect that as they will surely have an end, so they will end comfortably. God will not only bring our troubles to an end, but he will give us sweet fruit at the end of them as a recompense for all our trouble.

COMPASSION.

TO weep for those that are in hard days, to be grieved for those that are pinched and pinned with poverty, is a duty to which we are called under a threefold consideration :

1st. As men, being of the self-same nature, mould and matter with them that are troubled or poor.

2d. As being ourselves subject to the same special troubles wherewith others are troubled.

3d. We should compassionate the troubles of many as being of the same faith with us.



HE that hath helped others out of their afflictions may probably look for pity in and help out of his affliction.



THOSE who have experienced the compassions of God to themselves (as every gracious soul hath), cannot but be moved with compassion to others.



EVERY helpless and comfortless soul is as an orphan without parents, as a widow without a husband. To relieve such is pure religion.

AS it is the support and comfort of the whole Church, as also every believer, to remember that Jesus Christ bears their burdens with them, so it is a great stay and comfort to suffering saints that their fellow-brethren are affected with their condition and take compassion on them.



OUR verbal compassions of the poor are poor things, and our tears but dry things, unless we give them bread. The heart of Christ was full of trouble for us that were sick and in trouble; but he stayed not then; he took care to deliver us out of our trouble, to cure us of our sicknesses and to make us happy for ever. He did not only pity us in our poverty, but took a course to make us rich and to set us up in a good and plentiful estate again.



A TRUE friend can hardly be discovered in prosperity, and a false friend can hardly be hid in adversity.



WE have not done our duty in pitying the distressed unless we come to real assisting them. We satisfy not our obligation to the bond and law

of love by giving comfortable words. As that faith which is alone without works doth not justify us, so the pity which is alone without works doth not justify our faith. Such empty pity will go for little better than cruelty, and not to help will be interpreted oppression.

EXPERIENCE.

EXPERIENCE is the mistress of truth. Truth is called the daughter of time, because experience bringeth forth many truths and the word of God is made visible in the works of God. In experiences the promises of God stand forth, and in experiences the threatenings of God stand forth and show themselves. All the experiences that we have in the world are only so many exemplifications of the truths contained in the promises or threatenings of the word.—JOB v. 3.



THE experience we have of God's power and mercy in saving us out of former troubles breeds and nourishes hope against future times of trouble. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experi-

ence, and experience hope. Graces have a generation one from another, though all have but one generation from Christ at once. We have here the genealogy of hope in their descents. Experience is the next or immediate parent of hope. So the poor hath hope. Thus it is begotten. God who doth deliver us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in him we trust, that he will yet deliver us. An armed, daring Goliath should be looked upon as vanquished already when we can but remember a vanquished lion and bear.—JOB v. 16.

DAYSMAN.

THERE are five things belonging to a daysman or an umpire :

1. He must be agreed upon and chosen by both parties ; for unless he be accepted by both of them, he can have no power to determine for or against either of them.

2. He must hear both sides speak, and allege what they can for themselves before he determines.

3. He must beat out the matter by interrogatories and questions ; he must not stay upon the bare narrative of the persons.

4. He must have power to conclude and determine of the differences between them.

5. Both parties must be bound, at least by promise, to stand to the determination which he shall make.

There is indeed a Daysman betwixt God and man, but God himself hath appointed him. God hath referred the difference betwixt himself and man unto Jesus Christ; and his own good-will and free grace moving him thereunto, he stands engaged in the bonds of everlasting truth and faithfulness to perform what Jesus Christ, as Mediator, should ask for us. Unto him we may safely commit our cause and our souls with that assurance of the apostle (2 Tim. i. 12), "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Christ, God-man, is umpire between God and man. What we trust him with shall not miscarry; he will make our cause good and our persons acceptable before God in that great day.—JOB ix. 33.

DEATH.

SLEEP is a short death, and death is but a long sleep.



WHEN the saints die, they have a change and no change, as a worthy among us once said when he was ready to die, "I shall change my place, but not my company. I shall have a new house, but my old society." The saints converse with God; they live with God while they live in the world; they converse with Christ and have communion with the Spirit; they converse (among men) chiefly with good men on earth; and with all these they shall have converse in heaven. Here is no change. Yet the saints have a great change, and a blessed one, when they die. They change from all outward evils—all their troubles shall be removed; they change also from spiritual evils—all their corruptions shall remove; there shall not be so much as any sin or any remnant of sin remaining in them when they remove from hence. Here is a happy change. Yea, they shall have not only no sin within them, but no temptation without them; no Satan to tempt, as well as no corruption to side with temptation.—JOB xiv. 14.

THE saints receive their call to death as a call to rest; and though the body for a while lie down in the dust, yet they know what is prepared for the soul, and when they two meet together again both shall be called to an everlasting rest.—JOB xiv. 15.



TO have death, the king of terrors, and the living, the ever-living God, falling upon a poor creature at once, is a ten thousand deaths at once.



THAT which makes a man die with true courage and step with holy boldness into the grave is believably to remember that Jesus Christ died and lay in the grave, not only before us, but for us, and that he hath worsted and conquered that king of terrors upon his own ground, the grave.



DEATH is good to those that are good. Death carries them beyond the reach of affliction, and freeth them from all the evils of this life.



THEY who live like the wicked shall die like the wicked, and live with them—if theirs may be called a life—for evermore.

SOME translate death into such terrible shapes, and represent it to themselves under such affrighting forms, that they live in bondage through the fear of death all their days. Do as the Spirit of God teacheth you. Clothe it with pleasant expressions; call it the undressing and unclothing of of yourselves; call it rest; conceive it under the notion of sleep, and then you will not fear, but welcome it.—JOB xiv. 12.

DELIGHT IN GOD.

FALSE and carnal spirits will express a great deal of desire after salvation. Oh they like salvation, heaven and glory well, but they never express any longing desire after God and Jesus Christ. They love salvation, but they care not for a Saviour. Now that which faith pitcheth most upon is God himself: he shall be my salvation; let me have him, and there's salvation enough. It pleased holy David more (Ps. xviii. 1, 2) that God was his strength than that God gave him strength—that God was his deliverer than that he was delivered. It pleased David and it pleases all saints more that God is their salvation (whether temporal or eternal) than that he saves them.—JOB xiii. 16.

AS it is the spirit of sinfulness to delight in sin, so it is the spirit of godliness to delight in God.



THEY who have seen and tasted how gracious the Lord is, will be calling for more such sights and tastes; and the more they have had of these sights and tastes, the more they will desire them. As it is the property of a godly man to delight in God, so he doth promise, yea, assure himself, of more delights in God could he but get and keep his heart more to the meditation of God.

DELIVERANCE FROM TROUBLE.

THE Lord can deliver us as often as we need deliverance; in six troubles, yea, in seven. This should bear up our hearts in the multiplied returns of troubles. Though (as rheumatic old age is described, Eccles. xii. 2) the clouds return after the rain—that is, though one evil follows or treads upon the heel of another—though as soon as one black cloud is dissolved and we begin to say (as in nature), This was a rainy day, but the next will be fair, yet the next proves more overcast and lower-

ing than that; even in such a case know God hath a wind in his fist which he can let out to scatter those clouds before they dissolve; or, if they dissolve, he hath a sun at command to dry up the fallen rain. The Lord hath a succession of mercies for our succession of sorrows. Say not then, We have got off this trouble, but what if another come? If another come, you have the same God, and he can give you another deliverance.—JOB v. 19.



GOD saves and delivers his people from all evil, even while they are in the midst of trouble. If God be with us, though all evils are upon us, yet no evil touches us. The presence of the Chief Good is banishment to every evil. To be kept from the evil of trouble is a deliverance from trouble while we are in trouble.



NOT only our eternal deliverance, but even our temporal deliverances and mercies, are purchased by the blood of Christ. A believer doth not eat a bit of bread but he hath it by virtue of the purchase of Christ. Christ hath bought all good for us, and Christ hath bought us out of all evil.

EXAMPLE.

IT was the error of the old Pelagians that error was not traduced into the nature of man by the fall of the first man, but that sin is continued by imitation. Children (say they), seeing their parents or others do evil, take it by example. Now, though this hath been justly condemned as a gross error, and the contrary asserted both as a scriptural and experimental truth, that the whole mass of mankind is by nature steeped in sin, and that we have the root of every evil matter in ourselves, yet it is a truth also that we do ill by example, and that sin is mightily increased by imitation. What one does others are apt to do, and the most of men go where they see others go, rather than where they ought to go; yea, they begin to conclude that they may go safely enough in a bad way if they see others go before them in it.



THERE is a great power in example. What is done persuades as well as what is spoken.

EXPOSITION OF SCRIPTURE.

TRANSLATE the sense of Scripture into your lives, and expound the Word of God by your works. Interpret it by your feet and teach it by your fingers; that is, let your workings and your walkings be Scripture explications.



THE teachings of the Spirit, the teachings of God himself, are chiefly to be looked after and prayed for, that we may know the mind of the Spirit, the will of God in Scripture.



I HAD rather know five words of Scripture by my own practice and experience than ten thousand words of Scripture—yea, than the whole Scripture—by the bare exposition of another.



HE hath his pulpit in heaven who teacheth hearts the heart of Scripture. Paul was a learned Pharisee and much versed in the law, and yet he saith of himself before his conversion that he was without the law. But when Christ came to him, then the commandment came to him.

A WALKING or breathing commentary goeth infinitely beyond the written or spoken commentary.

IT is easy to paddle in a clear stream till it runs muddily, but it will not be for any man's ease or peace to do so in the clear, crystal streams of the holy Scriptures. We should labour to deliver our minds plainly concerning the mind of God, that what we utter may not be found a darkening of his counsel, but as much as is in us a clearing of it.

FAITH.

WE must often believe where knowledge is shut out—believe where we cannot understand. Abraham by faith followed the call of God, not knowing where he went.

IF God works marvels and we believe him not, hath he not reason to marvel at our unbelief? God loves and values the faith of man so highly that sometimes he bids a miracle for it rather than go without it.—JOB v. 9.

THE eye of faith is usually quickest in a dark night, and while trouble is near at hand, behold Christ near at hand. He can never be without help who carries help about him or within him.—JOB vi. 14.



FAITH is the soul's taster. Faith is the mouth of the soul, which not only tasteth but cheweth the promises and manifestations of God to his people, and so makes meat of them.



AS faith is one principal piece of our spiritual armour whereby we overcome temptation, so it fetches in that which is the whole of the armour of God, even the strength of God.



A GODLY man takes God as his own, and appropriates him by faith in all his relations. Faith takes not only a share in God, but all of God. A believer doth, as it were, engross God to himself, yet desires and endeavours that all as well as himself may have their part and portion in God—yea, God for all their portion.

LET us not pin our faith or our consciences upon men, how great or how ancient soever they are. We must not reverence any man's person to the prejudice of the truth. Believe what is said because you judge it true; do not believe it true because such or such a man has said it. How strictly and religiously is this to be observed in hearing the word of God and the doctrines of faith! In that case be sure and lay aside all that concerns the speaker, and weigh what he speaks alone and single in the balance of the sanctuary.—JOB xxxii. 9.

NOTHING but faith in God can make us stand still when we are ready to fall.

HE that hath not faith, hath nothing to get a mercy with, and he that hath not a broken heart, hath nothing to put a mercy in.

FAITH gives the soul a view of Christ in all his excellency and glory, in his love and in his loveliness, in his righteousness and holiness. Faith gets a view of Christ in all his beauty, and beholding him we rejoice with joy unspeakable.

FRIENDSHIP.

THIS is the great difference between the love of God and that of most men: God is the best friend to us at all times (he is best to us in the best times; if we had not him to friend, it would be very ill with us when we have most friends); but God is best of all to us in the worst times; a best friend to us when we have no friends; he is our spring when the rain falls, but he is our surest, sweetest spring when there is no rain nor dew upon the face of the earth. Therefore he is compared (as in Jer. ii. 30, in other places) unto a living fountain, where you may be sure to find living water in the hottest season. This infinitely commends the love of God beyond that of men, who, at the best, are but broken cisterns, which leak out the comforts they are trusted with, and for the most part are like Job's brooks—they turn aside and pass away when we have most need of them.—JOB vi. 21.



RUTH was a true pattern of a faithful friend and brother, though a daughter. I went out full (said her mother-in-law), but the Lord hath brought me home empty. But though she was

emptied of the world, yet Ruth's heart was full of love to her: "I will not leave thee. God do so to me and more also if aught but death part thee and me." So saith faithfulness among Christian friends. It is one of the greatest duties and commendations of Christian profession to stick to and stand by one another; be it foul weather or be it fair, blow the winds high or low, let it be stormy or calm—ever to be the same.—JOB vi. 21.



ADVERSITY and affliction are the touchstone of friendship.

THE FAMILY.

AFAMILY well visited and ordered is usually a prosperous family.



SIN spoils the comforts and cankers the blessings of a family. Sin brought into a house rots the timber and pulls down the house, or it undermines the foundation and blows up the house. The sin of families is the ruin and consumption of families.—JOB v. 24.

IT is a great and special point of godly wisdom well to order and visit a family. Families are the principles or seeds of a commonwealth. As every man is a little world, so every house is a little kingdom. A family is a commonwealth in a little volume, and the rules of it are an epitome of all laws by which whole nations are governed. The apostle makes it a special character of his bishop that he must be one who rules his own house well, and subjoins the reason: "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" (1 Tim. iv. 5). And therein wraps up this truth, that he who knows how to rule his own house well is in good posture of spirit for public rule.—JOB v. 24.

FROWARD MAN.

"WITH the froward thou wilt show thyself froward." That is, if men will be winding and turning and thinking to catch others, or overreach the Lord himself with tricks and turnings of wit, the Lord will meet and answer them in their own kind. He can turn as fast as they; he can put himself into such intricate labyrinths of wisdom and craft as shall entangle and ensnare the most

cunning wrestler or tumbler of them all. He will Cretize the Cretians, supplant the supplanters of his people.—JOB xiii. 5.



WHEN once the heart is free, not only bent and inclined, but set and resolved to do a thing, then it is far enough from any fear in doing it. And when some men have ventured to sin once and come off (as to any sensible hurt) safe, they will venture again and again, and so often till at last they are persuaded there is no venture in sinning, and that there is no more (possibly not so much) of hazard in transgressing or in disobeying.

GOD.

THE knowledge of God cometh down from God. We know him when he makes himself known to us, and usually he doth not make his fulness known to us till we make our emptiness known to him.



MAN'S inability to reach the perfection of creatures should teach him his utter inability to reach God in his perfection.

GOD is himself most just and pure. Justice and purity are not qualities in God, but they are his very nature. A man may be a man and yet be unjust, but God cannot be God and yet be unjust. A man may be a man and yet be impure, but God cannot be God and yet be impure; so that justice and purity are not accidents or qualities in God, but his very essence and being. Destroy or deny the justice and purity of God, and you put God out of the world as much as in you lies; for he cannot be God unless he be both just to others and pure to himself.—JOB iv. 17.

GOD is usually the last, but he is the best refuge. When we have told over the story of our sorrows and sad condition, and poured our wants into the bosoms of our most faithful friends, yet this apostrophe is the sweetest to the soul when we can turn to God: Oh remember me! He who knows not how to complain to God, or to speak out his sorrows and his griefs in the ear of Christ, shall gain little (though he receive much) by complaining to the creature. But so long as we have a God to turn to and spread our cause before, though men turn from us and forget us, yet it is enough that we have said, *O Lord, remember me!*—JOB vii. 7.

ONE God helping is more than all men opposing.

IF at any time we have any unbecoming thoughts of the justice of God, either that he afflicts the good without reason or prospers the wicked against it, all this ariseth from our ignorance or the shortness of our sight. We have not a full or perfect prospect of things; we see but a little way backward; we are not wise to compare what is past with what is present, nor can we at all infallibly foresee anything future or discern what shall be. Whereas God at once hath all things before him; he seeth what is past as well as what is present, and what shall be hereafter as well as what hath been; and so the completeness and indefectibility of his own justice in all. And when we in the great day shall see all the works of God in the world brought and presented together as in one view, we shall then say, from the evidence of sight as now we ought from the evidence of faith, that the Almighty hath not in any one thing perverted judgment. And therefore the apostle doth most excellently and appositely call that day, "The day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God."—JOB xxxiv. 13.

THE power of God is primitive or underived power. His power is of himself—yea, his power is himself. God doth not rule by deputation or commission. All ruling power is fundamentally in him, as also the rule of that power, both which in God are one.

As the power of God is underived or proceeds only from himself, so it is absolute and unlimited. His is, in the strictest sense imaginable, *supreme power*. None may presume to say to him, “What doest thou?” ’Tis his prerogative to do what he will; and how much soever he acts by prerogative, he will do only that which is right. We may consider the absolute supremacy of God in a fivefold exercise of power:

1st. In commanding. He commandeth what he pleaseth to be done; nor may his commands be disputed. They must be obeyed, because his.

2d. In prohibiting. He forbiddeth whatsoever displeaseth him to be done. And how pleasing, how right soever anything is in our eyes, yet if he forbiddeth it, we must for ever forbear it. We all know by our own smart how dangerous it is to eat of a forbidden tree.

3d. In suffering. I mean it not of any suffering of evil in himself (God is infinitely above that),

but of his suffering others to do evil, or of his suffering any evil to be done. God doth permit that which is naught, wicked and unrighteous to be done in the world, and yet himself remains altogether holy, righteous, just and good. This is a great part of the transcendency of his power.

4th. In rewarding. God hath absolute power to reward—1st, when he will; 2d, for what he will; 3d, in what kind he will; 4th, in what degree or measure he will; 5th, for how long he will. He can give (which none of the princes of the earth can) everlasting reward.

5th. In punishing. God hath absolute power to punish, and the absoluteness of his power in punishing may be exemplified in those five particulars wherein his power of rewarding was. And forasmuch as there is such a supremacy, such an absoluteness of power in God, take these three inferences from it:

First. How freely should we yield ourselves to the commands of God, not questioning this as unequal nor saying that is hard. We are more apt to find fault with the work which God requires us to do, than to remember that it is a great fault not to do it.

Secondly. Seeing God hath charge of all the

earth, we should as readily submit to his dispensations, works and dealings as to his commands.

Thirdly. If the Lord be supreme, then let us set him up as supreme in all things. Let his ends be above our ends. Let us design God in all we do. He who is over all ought to be honoured by all. All our actions, as so many lines, ought to centre in his honour who is the centre of power.—JOB xxxiv. 13.

GRACE.

A GODLY man labours to exalt God, both in his thoughts and in his words, when God depresses and humbles him most. Grace prompts the heart to indite a good matter, and bids the tongue be as the pen of a ready writer, to advance God, when sense feels nothing but smart and sees nothing but sorrow round about. Grace is in her heights when she can lift up God highest while he is casting us down and laying us lowest. When we can honour God frowning as well as smiling upon us, smiting and wounding as well as kissing and embracing us, then we have learned to honour God indeed.—JOB ix. 10.



A GRACIOUS spirit is a teachable spirit.

GRACE will preserve itself in the midst of the greatest opposition. It is such a fire as no water can quench or wholly put out. True grace will keep itself sound and clean among those that are leprous and unclean. It is such a thing as overcomes and masters all the evil that is about it. God hath put such a mighty power into grace that if it once possess the heart in truth—though there be but little of it, though there be but as much as a grain of mustard-seed—not all the wickedness in the world, no, not all the devils in hell, can dispossess it. As all the water in the salt sea cannot make the fish salt, but still the fish retains its freshness, so all the wickedness and filthiness that is in the world cannot destroy, cannot defile true grace; that will bear up its head and hold up itself for ever.—JOB i. 1.



A GRACIOUS heart is willing to know and see the worst of himself. He would have God teach him what iniquity he hath done. A godly man never thinks he seeth his sin enough. How little soever he sins, he thinks he sins too much, and how much soever he sees his sin, he thinks he sees it too little.

GRACE is as much magnified in working in us as in saving us without works. That's the reason why we are so often called to duty, though we have no power.



ALL our mercies flow out from the grace of God. That's the fountain, yea that's the ocean, which feeds and fills all the channels of mercy which stream to us as our happiness in this world, and for our everlasting happiness in the world which is to come.



GRACIOUS men do not always hold out the same gracious frame of spirit. There was a time when Job was far from striving with God, or speaking anything which had the least shadow or favour of it. Yet in the process of the business Job did not only speak such things as had a shadow of striving with God, but were real strivings and uncomely pleadings with him. His heart did not retain that first sweet, submissive frame throughout the affliction which appeareth to admiration at the beginning of it. The state of grace abideth always. 'Tis not (as some affirm) losable; 'tis not, like the best things of the world, perishing. But

though a state of grace abideth always, yet every man's grace (if any man's) doth not always abide in the same state. The heat of grace may be cooled, the height of it abated, the strength of it weakened and the beauty of it faded. Such changes and varieties are found upon the most gracious frame of spirit, which the best of saints have in this world. We have only this to hold to: *The state of grace is unchangeable*, and we are waiting for such a *frame of grace* as shall never change.



NO man can merit the least favour from God; his is free grace. All good cometh to us through the Son of his love, and it was merely of his love that ever his Son came to us and died for us.

GROWTH IN GRACE.

A TRULY humbled and repenting soul is as careful to avoid the act of sin for time to come as to be freed from the guilt of sin past. He that loves God cannot live in the doing of any one thing which God hates, but as he expects good out of all the promises, so he hath respect to all the commandments.

CONTINUED and repeated acts, though small, produce great effects. A believer finds no growth in grace or in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by some one exercise, either in prayer or hearing the Word; yet by a constant attendance upon the Lord in these duties he grows to a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.—JOB xiv. 19.



TRUE grace increaseth by the ordinary use of it —much more by the extraordinary trials of it. A believer thrives (as to the inner man) in affliction, how much soever he loseth and goeth backward as a man.

HAPPINESS.

A GODLY man is happy in the largest sense, in all senses, because his is not this or that particular good, but all good. And he is not happy only at this or that particular time, but at all times. He is as happy when he is suffering under the hand of God as when he is serving God—as happy in his passive as in his active obedience.

HAPPINESS is the enjoyment of good commensurate to all our desires. Happiness is the sum of all our desires and the aim of all our endeavours, and when we have attained perfect happiness, we shall be at a full point both of our desires and endeavours.



GLORIFIED saints shall for ever feed their eyes with unutterable delights in beholding the glory of Jesus Christ.

THE HEART.

THE heart of man is the ark or cabinet in which the Word must be laid up. As Christ hath been the ark of the law to protect and cover us from the condemning power of it, so the hearts of believers must be the ark of the law, where it must be laid up with a readiness of mind, to yield ourselves up to the commanding power of it.



THE heart is God's peculiar. As he only hath the lock and key of the heart to shut or open it, so he only hath a window to look into it.

THE tongue should always be the heart's interpreter, and the heart should always be the tongue's suggester. What is spoken with the tongue should be first stamped upon the heart and wrought off from it.



A HARD heart is Satan's cushion.



IF your hearts are disorderly, it is a kind of cursing God. Remember not only to keep your hearts when you are praying, and when you are hearing, and when you are in holy duties, but remember to keep your hearts when you are feasting and refreshing yourselves, when you are in your callings, when you are buying and selling.

HEAVEN.

IN heaven saints shall have their interest in God clear, undoubtedly clear, to them for ever. There are very few who see God always for themselves in this life, or whose hearts are cleared from all scruples and fears about their interest in Christ. This is reserved for glory, where love shall be perfected.—JOB xix. 27.

SAINTS glorified shall ever behold and see the glorious body of Jesus Christ.



OUR complete happiness consists in the vision of God. Christ placeth the future happiness of the saints in the vision of his mediatorial glory: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory that thou hast given me."

HELL.

WE find this word "Sheol" taken five ways in Scripture:

1st. Strictly and properly for the place of the damned (Prov. xv. 11). God looks through the darkness of hell, which is utter darkness.

2d. It is put metaphorically for great and extreme dangers or miseries, which seem irrecoverable and remediless. These are figuratively called hell, because hell properly taken is a place from whence there is no recovery. When David praises the Lord (Ps. lxxxvi. 13) for delivering his soul from the lowest hell, he meaneth an estate on earth of the lowest and deepest danger imaginable. Mercy helped him at the worst.

3d. The word signifies the lowest parts of the earth without relation to punishment (Ps. cxxxix. 8): "If I go down into hell, thou art there." He had said before, "If I ascend into heaven, thou art there." By heaven he means the upper region of the world, without any respect to the state of blessedness, and hell is the most opposite and remote in distance, without respect to misery. As if he had said, Let me go whither I will, thy presence finds me out.

4th. It is taken for the state of the dead, whether these dead are in the grave or no (Ps. xxx. 3; Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19; Gen. xxxvii. 35); in all which places to go out of the world is to go to Sheol. Jacob said, "He would go down into the grave to his son mourning," yet Jacob thought his son was devoured by a wild beast. He could not go down into the grave to his son, for the bowels of a wild beast are his supposed grave; but he meaneth only this—I will even die, as he is dead.

5th. Sheol signifies the place where the body is laid after death, namely the grave (Prov. xxx. 16). Man hath a dimension of earth fitted to the dimensions of his body; this portion or allotment is his Sheol. Yet it signifies the grave only in general as it is natural to mankind, not that grave which

is artificial and proper to any particular man ; this the Hebrew expresses by another word : “ He that goeth down to his grave goeth to his long home—to a house out of which he is never able to see or make his way.”—JOB vii. 10.



HELL is large to take in, but strait to let out —so strait that it will not let one out for ever.

HERESY.

HERESY hath these three things in it :
1st. In regard of the matter, it must be in regard of some great and fundamental truths. The word heresy is by some derived from choosing, by others from taking away, because it takes us off from Christ or from the foundations of saving knowledge.

2d. Heresy is accompanied with pertinacy and obstinacy after clear light is offered. It is possible one may have an error about things fundamental, and yet be no heretic. An heretic is condemned of himself (Tit. iii. 10), but he will not be convinced by another. Not that he doth formally and

in terms give sentence against or condemn himself, but equivalently he doth, as the apostle (Acts xiii. 46) speaks to the unbelieving Jews: "Seeing ye put the word from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life," etc. These men did not judge themselves such formally; they came not to the apostles and said, We willingly submit ourselves to hell and wrath. No, they thought very well of themselves and judged themselves worthy of eternal life. But their practice judged them and gave a real sentence against them, while they acquitted themselves. Thus also a heretic (whoever hath a high opinion of himself and his opinions) is condemned of himself.

3d. In heresy there is taking of pleasure and delight; therefore heresy is numbered among the lusts of the flesh (Gal. v. 20). Heretics desire to disperse and vend their opinions. A man only in an error will weep over his opinions, and it grieves him that he differs and goes contrary unto others. But he that stiffly maintains an error insults over others and delights to maintain his opposition; he triumphs and boasts of his war, though he can never obtain victory. Truth only is victorious, and some learned critics observe as much from the form of the Greek word (Tit. iii. 11). So then heresy is

not only an error in judgment but a pertinacy in the will, and it takes in delight at the affections.—
JOB vi. 24.



GOD is able to stop those seas of error and give a bound to those floods of false doctrine which are ready to overflow the face of the world. The sea or flood of the Arian heresy (which denied the deity of Christ, or made him barely a man by nature, only clothed with wonderful powers and privileges—this heresy, I say, like a sea or flood) had almost overwhelmed the whole world, yet God compassed these black waters with bound and gave them a commandment which they could not pass; and though in this age they strive to return and overflow the earth, yet both the waters of this heresy and of all other damnable heresies (as the Apostle Peter calls them), which abound in these days and threaten us with a fearful inundation, are compassed with bounds which they shall not exceed.

HOLINESS.

THE holiness of man consists in his conformity unto God.



GOD is the objective cause of holiness; looking upon him we become holy. “We (saith the apostle, 2 Cor. iii. 18) all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord (that is, we looking upon that glory, holiness and excellence which is in the Lord), are changed into the same image;” that is, we are made conformable unto him. We receive (as it were), the engravings of holiness in our souls by beholding the Holy One. The eye of faith (as well, yea more than the eye of sense) affects the heart. Vision assimilatēs both in nature and in grace, yea and in glory too. In heaven we shall be perfectly holy, because we shall perfectly (in Christ, who is the express image of his person) see God, and so be like him. And proportionably here, such as our visions of God are, such is our likeness unto God.



SEEING God is everywhere present, we should be everywhere holy.

THEY who want holiness must go to God for it, for he is the Holy One. Are any of your hearts unholy? Whither will you go? To what coast will you trade for holiness? Or where shall you find the merchandise of it? Go whither you will—to what holy ordinance, to what holy duty, to what holy minister you will—your vessels will return unfreight and empty of holiness if you tread not to the holy God. We must deal with ordinances and by ordinances; but if we have only to deal with them, neglecting to meet with God, we shall make nothing of them; we shall not traffic in them to any spiritual enriching or advantage. They are conduit pipes, not springs, on the well-head.—JOB vi. 10.



TO follow God is our duty. Godliness is godlikeness or an imitation of God, and practical Christianity is nothing else but our imitation of Christ; and that not only in doing, but in suffering.



HOLINESS consists in a complete uniformity or in conformity to the whole will of God. Some are *first-table* Christians—others are *second-table* Christians. Some are zealous for prayer, who

are extreme cold in doing justice; some are extreme honest and just to men, righteous in all their dealings, but they care not for prayer, nor have they any delight in communion with God. The law of God is one entire thing, and so must man's obedience be. He that offends in one point is guilty of all.—JOB xvi. 17.

HOPE.

NO man would be stirring, much less bestir himself about any business, were it not for the hope of getting. And as it is the hope of attaining that puts us upon doing, so it is the hope of attaining that puts us upon suffering. Who would suffer for Jesus Christ if he had not a hope of attaining somewhat better than he can lose by his sufferings? Therefore Jesus Christ hath set that hope before us. To suffer rightly for Jesus Christ is so honourable that we should suffer willingly, though we get nothing by it. Yet he hath set a reward before us—a crown by his cross; he hath assured us all our losses—even our loss of life for his sake—shall turn to our gain and profit. Hope of attaining is the motive to every undertaking. No wise man will meddle with doing that which is

either impossible to be done, or altogether unprofitable when it is done. Was it not for hope the heart would faint—first, in labouring; secondly, in suffering; thirdly, in waiting. Hope is like a helmet upon the head when we are in danger of blows (2 Thess. v. 8), and like an anchor, both sure and steadfast, when we are in storms.—JOB xli. 9.

THE loss of hope is the greatest loss. When God would show man's worst condition, he saith his hope is in vain; that pincheth worst of all, and that's it which will pinch hypocrites most at last, who were in hope of enjoying God. But not only their labour, but their hope shall be in vain. This loss of hope will grieve more than the loss of heaven.

LET a night be never so dark or tempestuous, yet the hope of the morning is a mercy and a light. How sick, then, are they who are hopeless? Everlastingness is the head of the arrow, the sting and poison of all miseries; it is, indeed, the sting of hell. That hell is such a night as shall never see the dawning of day, hath more torment and pains in it than all the pains of hell. As that

which makes heaven so full of joy is that heaven is above all fear, so that which makes hell so full of terror is that hell is below all hope. Heaven is a day that shall never see any approaches of night; so hell is a night that shall never see any dawning of day.—JOB iii. 3.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

WE cannot make pure prayer with our own breath, parts and gifts. The Holy Spirit breathes pure prayer into and draws it out of our hearts.



AS it is the office of Christ to intercede for us with God, so it is the office of the Holy Ghost to make those intercessions in us which we put up to God.



THERE is a threefold influence or work of the Spirit of God upon the soul of man :

First. To enlighten or to give the light of the knowledge of his own glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Secondly. To convert, to work faith and repentance together with love, humility, etc.

Thirdly. To refresh and comfort. These are unspeakable influences of joy distilled from the Spirit upon believers, and when God will let them down from heaven, who can let them, what can let them? All the troubles and sorrows, all the pains and tortures that man can invent or inflict upon the believer, cannot bind these influences of the Spirit nor hinder joy in believing. The greatest evils in this life cannot shut up or shut out that comfort which the Spirit speaketh. The most churlish winds that can blow from the coldest quarters of the world cannot chill, much less kill or blast, these fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. The soul grows green like a garden of pasture in the spring; the soul buds, blossoms and brings forth these blessed fruits abundantly when fed with these dainties and delicacies of the Spirit. Those great floods of trouble and persecution which the serpent anywhere and at any time calls out of his mouth, cannot prevail against the least drop of consolation wrought in the heart by the Spirit's influences. Paul and Silas were bound in the prison, but then their persecutors could not bind the sweet influences of the Spirit from comforting them, nor daunt them by any terror from triumphing in Christ.

They could sing in prison, yea they sung at midnight.—JOB xxxviii. 31.

HUMAN JUDGMENT.

WE are more ready to judge the sins of others great than our own.



WE are ready to judge their sins great who are the greatest sufferers. The worst of sinners never suffered more in this world than the best of saints.



SUPPOSITIONS and conjectures are no fit grounds upon which to build a judgment concerning the faultiness of others. We must not censure upon *I hear so, I suppose so, I think so*, but *I know it so*. Many have run into great sin by judging the sins of others great.—JOB xxii. 5.



WISE men may err in judgment and in speech. Job's friends spake many truths, but did not apply them truly to Job's case. The best men may not only miss, but mistake their mark. They who

are in the light—yea who are in the light in the Lord—have yet some darkness in them, and may both do and speak from that darkness.



WE are very apt to judge one another, but very backward to judge ourselves.



IF we consider the sum of what Eliphaz and his two friends spake of God, we shall find Eliphaz in this great mistake—affirming that all the sufferings and afflictions which befall man in this world are laid upon him by God as a punishment for sin. And all these joined in two other mistakes: First. That all wicked men sooner or later are visibly punished for sin in this life. Secondly. That though a good man may possibly suffer grievous afflictions in this life, yet God always delivers him out of them before he departs this life. Hence it must needs follow that if a man for long continuance of time, especially if all his life long, be continued in great calamity, that man must be judged wicked, though no apparent wickedness can be charged upon or proved against him. Upon these unsound principles they were all confident to infer against Job that he was a hypocrite, and that all

those troubles which befell him were inflicted by the righteous hand of God as a punishment for his sin.—JOB xlii. 7.

HUMILITY.

THE way for us to humble ourselves for our own sinfulness is to look and consider the purity and holiness of God. If we set ourselves before him, we shall see how vile and corrupt we are. The Pharisee could pride himself in his comparison with men (Luke xviii). But, Pharisee, art thou as God? pure and holy and just as he? Look upward, and pride will down.—JOB ix. 2.



IF the best man's faults were written in his forehead, it would make him pull his hat over his eyes.



A GODLY man's thoughts are lowest of himself. No man ever received a fairer or more valuable certificate from God than Job did, and yet no man could speak more undervaluingly of himself than Job did.—JOB ix. 14.

THE more holiness any soul hath, the more humility it hath.

THE better any man is, the more he is willing to know the worst of himself.

THERE is no greater argument of height in grace than low thoughts of ourselves.

THE dealings of God with man aim mostly to humble him or make him see his own vileness.

WHEN our hearts are truly humbled, mercy and deliverance are at hand. Job was no sooner made deeply sensible of his vileness but mercy came. The only skill of this *excellent wrestler* (as one calls him) was to cast himself down at God's foot. There is no way of getting in to God or prevailing with him but by submitting to him. The Lord layeth down his rod when we lay down our pride, and casts his sword out of his hand when we cast ourselves at his feet.—
JOB xl. 4.

THE more we know God, the more humble we are before him.

HYPOCRISY.

HYPOCRITES are well compared to a rush, because in windy weather they set whichever way the wind sets. They take no harm by a storm, because they yield to every turn; let the wind blow which way it will, the rush neither breaks body nor branch. Hypocrites keep their standing because they never stand. A great man being asked how he kept his honour and preferment in so many changes of wind and weather, of times and princes, answered, "*By being a willow and not an oak.*" He that can sway seldom breaks. Hypocrites in the Church and State live by the same principles.—
JOB viii. 12.



WE ought to reprove and not flatter sin in others; yet they who are extremely severe against a sin in others usually favour either the same or a worse in themselves.



AN hypocrite never doeth good out of love to God, but out of design for himself.

AN hypocrite is not worse than other wicked men because he has more sin than they, but because he hides his sin. Nor doth the greatness of his sin lie simply in this, because he hides how sinful he is, but because he appears holy, which he is not.



WE may wrong a wicked man by calling him a hypocrite, but we cannot wrong any hypocrite by thinking him all that's wicked.



HYPOCRITES in heart grow more wicked while the hand of God—his afflicting hand—is upon them. The more they are under the rod, the more they rebel. If they did not heap up sin, they should not heap up wrath.



HYPOCRITES cry not to the Lord, though he makes them cry. They are readier to find fault with God than with themselves in the day of adversity. They neither cry the cry of godly sorrow for their sin, nor the cry of godly prayers to help out of their affliction. They who are false with God in times of peace, seldom, if at all, repent, or duly apply themselves to God to help them in times of trouble.

IDLENESS.

SLOTHFUL persons are to be numbered among thieves. They who will get nothing for themselves by labour steal all they have from others.



TO nourish idle persons is to nourish theft. To succour lazy poor is not so much a relieving of their wants as a strengthening of their vices.



A PLAYING life is the life of a beast.



ADAM was not put into that pleasant garden only to take his pleasure and to eat the fruit of it, but to dress and keep it.

INABILITY.

WE may be called to do what is not in our power to do. The apostle exhorts (Phil. ii. 12), "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." He seems to give a strange reason in the next verse: "For it is God that worketh in you

both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Our inability to work doth not exempt us from working, we having a promise from God to make us able. We are commanded to do what we have not so much as a will to do, because God is engaged in us both to will and to do; and that not according to any predisposition of ours, but of his own good pleasure. Our Master in heaven shows us our duty, and then helps us to perform it.

THE JUDGMENT.

THAT there shall be a general judgment hath been known and believed in all ages. As Scripture authorities are full of it, so there are many rational demonstrations of it. For, first, the judgments that have been shown that there shall be a judgment. Secondly, the lesser external days argue it, so do internal judgment days. There is a day of judgment kept in the conscience of man, which tells that God will keep a day of judgment at last concerning all men. Thirdly, judgment hath not been fully executed in any age of the world. Fourthly, as the Lord will have a time to acquit himself and to declare the righteousness of his judgments, so he will have a time to quit the

integrity of his people and to set them right in the eye of all the world. He will have a day in which there shall be a fresh edition of the works of all his saints, with a comment of their own upright and honest meaning upon them, not racked and wire-drawn with the malice and misconception either of enemies or mistaken friends.



THE great work of judgment is appropriated to the Son as a part, or as the completion, of his mediatorial office. And it is but equal that judgment should be put into the hand of the Redeemer, and that he should come in all his glory when he comes to sit in judgment, because he hath been judged and condemned, because he hath borne shame and dishonour while himself stood in judgment. Christ did not only die for us, but he was condemned to death as an evil-doer. There was not only pain in his death, but shame. He in this humbled himself indeed, and, which is more, he became obedient, and (which is the lowest obedience) he became obedient unto death (and which is the lowest and most ignominious death), the death of the cross. The apostle makes this threefold humiliation the ground of his threefold exaltation

(Phil. ii. 9, 10): "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him," etc. He exalted him above the grave in his resurrection, above the earth in his ascension, above the heavens in his session at the right hand of the Father.

This honour of Christ the Redeemer to be the Judge of the world carries a twofold effect in it, according to that twofold distribution of those who are the objects of this judgment:

First. It carries terror to the wicked who know not God and who have not obeyed the gospel. There is nothing in condemnation more dreadful than to be condemned by a Redeemer. They who are without Christ are without hope; how hopeless, then, and helpless are they who are cast out by Christ! Who can stand before his wrath as a Judge, who as a Redeemer came to deliver us from the wrath to come? There are five things in this Judge which make his wrath most dreadful:

1st. He is such a Judge as the power of the most powerful cannot daunt.

2d. He is such a Judge as the wealth of the wealthiest cannot bribe.

3d. He is such a Judge as the wit and subtlety of the wisest cannot elude.

4th. He is such a Judge as there is no appealing from his sentence. What he sets down shall stand for ever.

Second. This carries comfort and speaks joy to the saints. How sweet is it to remember that their Redeemer is their Judge. For,

1st. He being their Judge, the judge is their friend.

2d. He is their kinsman, their brother.

3d. Their Judge is also their priest and propitiation. He shall judge them who hath satisfied for them, and knows how all reckoning and accounts stand between God and their souls; for he it is that hath by his own blood balanced and made them up.

4th. The Judge is their advocate and intercessor.

Lastly. The Judge is he who was judged in their behalf, and seeing he was condemned, bearing their sins, he will not lay those sins again upon them who have laid hold on him, and so condemn them. All these considerations laid together show how sweet it is for saints to remember that the Redeemer shall stand upon the earth to judge them.—JOB xix. 25.

JUSTIFICATION.

NO man can be justified by his works. He that mixeth but one sin with a thousand good actions cannot be justified by his works; how, then, shall he be justified by his works who hath not one perfectly good action among a thousand sins? He that would be justified by his works must not have one ill action among all his actions. One fly in the box of ointment corrupts all; one defect makes a sinner, but many good actions cannot make one righteous.—JOB ix. 3.

MAN hath nothing of his own to justify him before God. First, because the best of his righteousness is imperfect. God never took cockle-shells for payment; he must have pure gold, and he seeth well enough what poor stuff, what base coin the best of our righteousness is, and therefore cannot admit any of it in justification. Secondly, all the righteousness wrought by man is a due debt. How can we acquit ourselves of any evil we have done by any good which we can do, seeing all the good we do we ought to have done, though we have never done any evil?

“**I**F I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.” Observe hence that famous gospel doctrine, No man can be justified before God by the works of the law. It is as noble a proof of free justification in the Old Testament as any in the New.



THE saints have been acquainted with this truth from the beginning—that man is nothing in himself and that free grace doth all.—JOB ix. 20.



THEY who would make themselves most holy appear most unholy before God. Thoughts of our own purity render us impure. We are never so black before God as when we are whitest in our own eyes. We find the Pharisee (Luke xviii.) washing himself in snow-water and making his hands very clean. He tells us that he had fasted, and prayed, and given alms and paid tithes (this is to wash ourselves in snow-water), but the Lord plunged this Pharisee in the ditch; he cast him for a wicked man. The poor Publican plunged himself in the ditch, and judged himself fit to be thrown into the mire. But he went down to his house justified, rather than the other.—JOB ix. 31.

JUSTIFICATION (considered in the gospel notion) is that gracious sentence of God wherein, with respect to Christ apprehended by faith, he absolveth the believer from sin and death, and doth repute him just and righteous unto eternal life. This doctrine of free justification is the foundation and corner-stone of all our comfort. For whereas there is a double change in the state of the sinner—first, a relative change; secondly, an absolute and real change—the one is made in sanctification, the other in justification. Sanctification is a real change, subduing corruption, destroying the power of sin in us. But justification is not a physical or real change in the person; it doth not make him that is unrighteous righteous in himself, nor is man at all justified (in this sense) by any self-righteousness, but it is only a relative change as to his state. To justify is a law term, signifying the pronouncing or declaring of a man righteous; so that justification is an act of God upon us or toward us. Sanctification is an act of God in us. This blessed grace of sanctification always followeth the grace of justification as an effect or fruit of it; and though it may be easily distinguished from it, yet it can no more be separated or divided from it than heat from fire or motion from life.—JOB xxv. 4.

GOD does not justify a sinner for anything that he finds or sees in us.

LIFE.

THE life of man is nothing else but a coming and a returning. It is but a flood and an ebb, and then we are carried into the ocean of eternity.



AS a man would give skin for skin, one outward thing for another, so a man will give all outward things for his life.



IF life be worth all, then hereby we may take measure of the love and bounty of Christ to poor sinners, who not only spent himself in all to his life, but spent life and all that they might not perish.



SOUL and life are sometimes taken promiscuously or indifferently for the same thing, yet there is a very great difference between soul and life. The life is nothing else but the union between soul and body, but the soul is a spiritual

substance, distinct from the body while remaining in it and subsisting itself alone when separated from it.

THE LIVING REDEEMER.

“**F**OR I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.” For the clearing of these words I shall premise two general veins of interpretation :

First. The Jewish writers interpret this context of a metaphysical resurrection in reference to Job’s outward condition, or of his resurrection from a state of affliction. We have this sense of a resurrection illustriously held forth (Ezekiel xxxvii.), when the return of the people of Israel out of Babylon is described by the reviving of dry bones. Now I say the Rabbins generally, as also some of our learned expositors, run upon this strain here, conceiving that Job therefore calls God his Redeemer, because he had to that day preserved him alive in the midst of so many deaths and dangers, and also because he had a sure hope that he should, through the power of God, survive them and be restored to such a state of honour and riches as he

had enjoyed in the former part of his life. This they call his resurrection and redemption.

Three special reasons may be urged against this opinion :

1st. The height and spiritualness of Job's language tell us that his hopes were fixed above this world's felicity.

2d. Though his expressions in the letter may be fitted to this inferior sense, yet if we remember what hath been touched more than once in the former passages of this book, we find that Job had disclaimed, as it were, all hope of restoration unto any temporal happiness in this life, affirming that his hope was gone, and that he was worse than a tree cut down, of which there is hope that it will grow again, and that as he had no desire, so no expectation, of recovering his former beauty and greatness.

3d. He saith that he should see God with the same eyes—that he should see him for himself and not another ; which argueth that he intended not a resurrection of his outward estate ; for what doubt could there be that, if he were raised from affliction, but that he should see God with the same eyes, and that he himself should see him ? But to believe the restoring of the same body or the identity of

the eyes of the body after all had mouldered into dust, this was a high act of believing. From these reasons it appears that Job holds forth his faith in a resurrection not to a temporal good in this life, but to eternal life. The argument of Job is this: "He that waits by faith in the Redeemer for the resurrection of his body to eternal life after death hath done its worst is not a wicked man or an hypocrite, as you have charged me. But such is my faith. I believe in the Redeemer, and I look to rise (after this body is consumed and eaten of worms) to an eternal happy life. You accuse me as rejected of God, yet I know that God is my Redeemer and that he lives for ever; and therefore do not think, because I have no hope in this life, that I therefore despair of life. For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and shall stand upon the earth at the latter day."

The word which we translate Redeemer comes from a root which is applied three ways in Scripture: First, to buying again that which was alienated by sale or mortgage; secondly, to the rescuing or bringing back those who had been taken prisoners, by force or power, or by a price or ransom; thirdly, this word is applied to the avenging of their death who have been wrongfully slain. God

(Numb. xxxv. 12) is the avenger of blood, or the redeemer of blood, because he came to take vengeance on such as had unjustly shed the blood of his kinsman.

Again, to be a redeemer is taken in two ways :

1st. More largely for a deliverer or helper ; so 'tis one of the names of God, and to redeem is both his work and his honour.

2d. More strictly to redeem, and the title Redeemer is applied to Jesus Christ, to whom also, I conceive, we may apply all those works of redemption which in the Old Testament are ascribed to God. For he was God the Redeemer from the beginning, long before he was God manifest in the flesh. In this strict sense the word Redeemer suits Christ fully, for God signifies one that is near to us in consanguinity, and such were under special obligation to redeem (Ruth iii. 12). In this strict sense, besides him there is no redeemer. For though God the Father in the Son by the Holy Spirit be our Redeemer, yet properly, and according to the signification of the word, Jesus Christ alone is our Redeemer, who, taking our nature upon him and becoming our brother, had right to redeem us, even as being God in our nature he had full power to redeem us.

The blood of Christ may be considered two ways in the work of redemption :

First. As the price of our redemption. "We are bought with a price" (1 Cor. vi. 20); "not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter i. 20).

Secondly. The blood of Christ carries the right of redemption. Blood implies nearness of relation. As God made all nations of men of one blood, so he hath made Christ and us of one blood (Heb. ii. 14). "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same." Christ as God had power to redeem us, but as being (Immanuel) God with us, one with us, a kinsman and brother, he not only had a right, but was obliged to redeem us.

To clear the point a little further, there are five things concurring to complete the office and service of our Redeemer :

1st. The Redeemer must be a kinsman.

2d. He must redeem upon that ground or notion.

3d. He must deliver those who were under restraint or captivity from the hand of their enemies and oppressors.

4th. He must not pay any price to the oppressor.

5th. He must pay the price to the true Lord, or into his hands, to whom the redeemed originally or of right do belong.

These five considerations meet in Christ our Redeemer. Mankind fallen may be looked upon in two ways :

First. As under the power of sin and Satan.

Secondly. As under the power and justice of God. When Christ came to redeem us, he paid nothing to the devil but blows. "He spoiled principalities and powers," but he did not make their satisfaction. We owed the devil nothing; he was only an executioner to vex and afflict us; but he paid the price to the Father, under whose justice we were fallen, and so he exactly fulfilled all the duties and sustained all the parts of a Redeemer to the utmost.

Further, Job doth not only profess faith in a Redeemer, but in *his* Redeemer—*my* Redeemer liveth. Every word in this confession is precious and weighty. Here he useth an appropriating word, yet he doth not engross the Redeemer to himself, excluding others, but he takes his part with others. Those pronouns, *mine*, *thine*, *his*, are words of love, and drop like honeycomb with sweetness of affection. The first work of faith is to believe that Christ is

a Redeemer; the second is to believe and rely upon Christ as a Redeemer; the third is to see an interest in Christ as *my Redeemer*. The faith of Job did not run upon generals, but was fixed, set down and resolved to live and die by his *living Redeemer*. As if he had said, Though I am mortal and dying, as also you my friends are, yet my Redeemer liveth. He speaks of his life without any distinction of time, past or to come; God is for ever "I Am."

Again, when he saith, My Redeemer liveth, we must look on Christ not only as having life, but as the Lord and Prince of life. Christ as the eternal Word hath life in himself, so also hath life to bestow at his pleasure or upon whom he pleaseth.

Again, the words, "My Redeemer liveth" note the strength, activity and power of Jesus Christ—not a mere being or substance only, but might and strength. As if he had said, "Though I am weak, poor and miserable, though my life be so low and my body so dispirited that I may more fitly be numbered among the dead than among the living, yet my Redeemer liveth and is mighty." And thus Job ascribed efficiency and strength to him as well as life.

From this part of Job's confession observe—

First. Affliction doth not separate from Christ.

When Job could call nothing in or of the world his, he could call Christ his.

Secondly. Observe that a believer may arrive at an assurance, at the full assurance, of his interest in Jesus Christ the Redeemer. Faith acts upon a sure ground; 'tis bottomed on the knowledge of a sure word—not upon an opinion—and it is not satisfied until it can say, Jesus is mine and I am his.

Thirdly. Observe that Jesus Christ was the Redeemer from the beginning. Christ speaks of the times as high as Abraham: "Before Abraham was, I am." And the apostle Jude speaks higher of him, that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of the coming of Jesus Christ to judge the world; therefore certainly he was acquainted with the promise of Jesus Christ to redeem the world.

Fourthly. Learn that there is but one Redeemer. One is all, as the apostle testifies (Acts iv. 12): "Neither is there any name under heaven whereby we must be saved, but only by the Lord Jesus."

Fifthly. Note we have a living Redeemer. "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more." In this life of Christ our comfort lives. First, in that he liveth to us; that is, for our good, both in a temporal salvation from troubles, and in an eternal salvation from sin and condemnation. Sec-

ondly, that we live in him ; he is our life, and our life is as safe as his. From this double comfort, issuing out of this great truth, I shall only intimate this single duty incumbent upon all believers—*Live to Christ.*

The second article of Job's confession is not only that his Redeemer liveth, but that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. As the whole gospel-time is called the last time or the latter days, so there is a latter day which is more special and particular, and that is the day of the resurrection or the day of judgment, which we may call the last of the latter days.

1st. The vulgar translation renders the clause, "He shall stand at the latter day," in the first person, as Job's profession of his faith about his own resurrection.

2d. This clause is understood by some metaphorically: "He shall stand"—that is, Christ shall conquer all his enemies.

3d. These words (as others conceive) at least intimate to us the incarnation of Christ.

4th. Others conceive these words speaking Job's faith in the resurrection of Christ from the earth.

5th. Yet (as I conceive) these words are more strictly to be understood of his coming to raise all

flesh out of the dust, and then to proceed in judgment with them. Our bodies shall be raised out of the dust in the latter day by the power of Christ. Then they who are dead shall be redeemed from the power of the grave, and they who are found alive shall be redeemed from all the troubles and sorrows of life. Then Christ will wipe all tears from the eyes of every afflicted Job; then he will heal all the sores of his Jobs; then he will make all his Jobs like himself; they that lay on a dung-hill scraping their sores with a potsherd, when Christ appears shall appear with him in glory. Yea, when the Redeemer shall stand upon the earth in the latter day, he will marry all his Jobs to himself; he will take them from the dust and lay them in his bosom for ever. Therefore, well might Job, and well may any saint in his or in a worse condition than his, rejoice and triumph in this faith: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth."—JOB xix. 25.

MAGISTRATES.

MEN in power should not satisfy themselves with what will pass among or be countenanced by men, but consider what is right in itself, what is right in the sight of God, and that they are in the sight of God. A bad business may pass very well among men, and we may have advocates who will answer for us and stop the mouths of all gainsayers; but can they stop the mouth of conscience? Can they blind the eyes of God or impose upon him? God is the Judge of all the earth, and he will at last sit in judgment upon all the judges of the earth.—JOB xxxi. 21.

A GODLY magistrate will do just and righteous things, though all the world rise up against him.

BY how much magistrates are lifted up above the fear of men, and by how much all other men ought to fear them, by so much should they be carried out more than other men in the fear of God.

SOME men are set to rule men who keep no rules. A wise man would not set them over his dogs.

MEDITATION.

MEDITATION turns the promises of God into marrow.

MEDITATION is the inward view of a thing, or the beholding of it with the intellectual eye; it is the continual turning of things over in the mind to behold the excellences and perfections that are in them.

THERE are two things which should be the daily meditation of saints, or they should be continually acquainting themselves with them: First, the cross of Christ, that they may know how and be willing to suffer for him; secondly, the yoke of Christ, that they may know how and be willing to serve him.

MINISTERS.

'TIS enough to make all ministers of Christ tremble and cry out in the apostle's words, "Who is sufficient for these things?" to remember that when they speak to men, they speak in God's stead.

GOD hath not made his ministers lions to scare his flock, nor bulls to gore them, but shepherds to feed them and watch over them.

'TIS not enough barely to receive Christ's messengers; they must be received as the messengers of Christ.

NATIVE DEPRAVITY.

MAN being naturally unclean, his children and posterity are unclean too. The copy cannot be better than the original, nor the effect nobler than the cause. This flesh hath an ill name all the Scriptures over. The son of an Ethiopian is also an Ethiopian. Our father was an Ammonite, and so are we. The natural constitution of everything is transmitted by natural generation. Man is him-

self unclean, and all his issue is like himself. God created man pure, in his own likeness, after his image, and man begets man impure, in his own likeness, after his image. There are two things in this uncleanness :

1st. There is a privation of that comeliness and beauty which was stamped upon man in his original creation.

2d. The actions which he brings forth are unclean.

There are seven considerable properties in this uncleanness :

1st. It is an internal uncleanness, for even the mind and conscience are defiled.

2d. It is an abiding uncleanness. All the water in the ocean cannot wash it out ; all the fire in hell cannot burn it out.

3d. It is an abounding uncleanness. It is not in the hand or face only, but in and upon the whole man ; it goes quite through.

4th. It is an active or powerful uncleanness, stirring up an unholy war in man against the holy will of God.

5th. It is a diffusive or infectious uncleanness, like a leprosy or plague—first, by way of propagation from Adam ; secondly, by way of imitation ;

and so one man doing evil, another seeth and catcheth it, he is infected and defiled with it.

6th. It is a bewitching and ensnaring uncleanness. All the bodily beauty in the world did never entice so many as the deformity and foul face of sin hath.

7th. It is a murderous and mortal uncleanness. There is no escaping death if we live in it; it is the ruin as well as the dishonour of man.—JOB xiv. 4.

OLD AGE.

THAT old age is venerable, not which hath white hair, but which whiteneth with virtuous and worthy actions.



OLD age hath no glory without wisdom to do righteous things, and when an old man is without righteousness his old age is not his crown, but his reproach.



OLD age is a blessing, and good indeed when we are old in goodness or grow old doing good. Better to die young than to live to old age, and then die in sin.

SOME old men have nothing of old age in them but the infirmities of it.

OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

HE that seeth our ways and counteth all our steps cannot be a stranger to what we are, to what we are doing or have done.



A GRACIOUS heart considers himself much and always under the eye of God. And as it shows a very holy frame of heart to do so, so it is an excellent means to keep the heart in a steady frame of holiness.



AS the Lord marks all our paths, so it will be our wisdom to mark our own paths.

OPPORTUNITIES.

SATAN observeth and watcheth his time to fasten his temptations most strongly upon the soul. As the mercies of God are exceedingly endeared to us by the season in which they come to us, when they come to us in our special need, how sweet is a

mercy then! And as our obedience is exceedingly commended to God when it is upon a fit day—when it is on a day wherein he calls for and expects it—and as our sins are exceedingly aggravated by the season and time wherein they are committed, what! sin upon this day—a day of trouble, a day of humiliation? As Elisha rebuked Gehazi (2 Kings v. 26), Is this a time to receive money? Is this a time for thy heart to run out sinfully after the world?—so likewise the temptations of Satan are exceedingly embittered by the season, and he knows well enough what seasons will make them most bitter; and what can more embitter a cup of sorrow than to have it brought upon us in a day of rejoicing?

Thus he did with Christ. It is observed that when Christ had fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward was hungry, then the tempter came. He lays hold of this advantage. He would not come till he was hungry, to persuade him to turn stones into bread. What a strength had this temptation from the season! Had Christ been full, there would not have been such an edge upon, such a weight in, this temptation. How many doth Satan tempt to turn stones into bread when he comes to them in their hunger! Thou art in a

strait, like to starve and perish; procure thyself meat and provision by unlawful and sinful ways—this is indeed to turn stones into bread.

It were well if we could be wise in this respect to imitate Satan—to choose out our day to do good when there is the greatest probability of success, as he chose out his day to do mischief. It is the apostle's rule, "As you have opportunity to do good." If we could be wise to lay hold of opportunities, it would be a wonderful advantage to us. As a word fitly spoken is a word upon the wheel, so a work fitly done is a work upon the wheel; it goeth on—takes upon the heart both of God and man. Let us consider whether now we have not a season—whether this be not a day that holds forth to us a glorious opportunity. Let us therefore be as quick in our day to do good as Satan was in that day to do hurt.

This is a day wherein great things are doing and grievous things are a-suffering by many of our brethren; therefore you should be working this day. This is a day in which sons of Belial—men that will not have Christ's yoke—are combining to break it and cast his cord from them. Then join this day to help Christ, else, as Mordecai said to Esther, "If thou altogether holdest thy peace at

this time (this was a day for Esther to work in), then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another quarter, but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed." So I may say to you in reference to the present opportunity: if you altogether hold your peace, hold your purses and hold your hand at this time, enlargement will come to the Church some other way, but you may be destroyed who think to hold and keep your peace, either by saying or doing nothing; if ever you will appear, this is a day to appear in to do good. Let us be wise to manage and improve our day, so that it may never be said of us as our Lord did of Jerusalem, "If ye had known, even in this your day, the things which belong unto your peace!" —JOB i. 13.

PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.

THAT which hath fastened so many errors to the pope's chair, and from thence scattered them over all the world, is an opinion that he in his chair cannot err; his supposed spirit of infallibility hath made him the great deceiver, and deceived him. He that thinks he cannot err, errs in thinking so, and seldom speaks or thinks or does anything but it is

an error. He is most secured from error who suspects he hath erred, and humbly acknowledges that he may.—JOB vi. 24.



WISDOM is no man's peculiar, and a great opinion of our own wisdom savours of great folly. The very head of that monster, papal pride, appears in this point. The pope thinks himself to be the man, that he is the people, that all the wisdom and judgment of the world is contracted into him and fastened to the pummels of his chair, whence he would be believed to utter oracles with a spirit of infallibility.—JOB xii. 2.



THE great cheat which the pope hath put upon the world is, that the Spirit of God is tied to the pummels of his chair, so that there he cannot err. But as particular men, so whole councils of learned and aged men have erred.



TRUE wisdom is not the birth of time nor the peculiar of a party, but the free gift of the Spirit of God, who is most free both in what he giveth and to whom he giveth.

THE pope challengeth to himself that though he may err in his private actions, as he is a man, yet as he is (*in cathedrâ*) seated in the apostolic chair, as he is the visible head of the Church, he cannot err; his will is the rule. We see what rule it is by the rule which it has given. Who can say that is clean which brings forth an unclean thing, or straight and true which brings forth that which is crooked and erroneous? Sinful actings bespeak sinful men, and his actings have been sinful enough to speak him (what is written of him) "the man of sin."

PARDON OF SIN.

PARDONED sins cannot hurt the sinner, and though it troubles him that he hath sinned, yet his sins cannot trouble him. He who is once purged hath no more conscience of sin. This is the glory of the gospel. Free grace in justification takes all our sins off the file as if they were not at all. Pardon is the blotting of transgressions out of God's book, and if they are once blotted out of God's book, we need not care who writes them in their book, nor what books men or devils write against us.—JOB xxxi. 37.

THE greatest sins fall within the compass of God's pardoning mercy. The grace of the gospel is large as any evil of sin the law can charge us with. Whatever the law can call or show to be sin, the gospel can show a pardon for it; whatever the law can bind us with, the gospel can unloose. The mercy-seat covered the whole ark. The mercy-seat noted the forgiveness of sins, and if you read the description of it (Exodus xxv.), you shall find that it was exactly to a hair's breadth of the same dimensions with the ark wherein the Law was put, intimating that there was mercy and pardon for sin, let it come out of any part of that Law laid up in the ark.



THE sin-pardoning mercy of God is one of the highest and most spiritual arguments by which the soul is kept from sin.

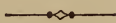


BE not discouraged, though your sins are great, when you come to ask the pardon of them. As the greatness of sin puts a very great damp upon the spirit of man in asking pardon, so the greatness of God should take off that damp. There is nothing wherein God doth more exceed man than in

pardoning sin. If sin be great, the mercy of God is great too—ininitely greater than the sin of man ; if sin be great, remember we have a great High Priest (Heb. iv. 14) ; not only a Priest, but a High Priest, and a great High Priest : therefore fear not to ask the pardon even of the greatest sin in his name and for his sake.

PASSIONS.

PASSIONS in the mind are like a tempest in the air. They disturb others much, but ourselves more.



HE that fills his own mind with passionate thoughts will soon fill the ears of others with unprofitable words.



TO show much reason and little passion is our wisdom.



FEAR will not be blown away with a breath. Our passions are never truly quieted nor attempered but by reason.

PATIENCE.

PATIENCE ascends by three steps to the perfection of her work. The first is a silent (not a sullen) submission in resignation of ourselves to the disposal of God. Secondly, a kind of thankful acceptance, or kissing of the rod which smites us. The third step is spiritual joy and serious cheerfulness under sorrowful dispensations.



THE Lord waits to be gracious. He waits the working of this or that means, of a second or third means, and he waits the working of them all over and over again, or oftentimes. Here is patience with long-sufferance.

PERSEVERANCE.

PERSEVERANCE is at once the duty and the privilege of the saints.



IT is not the hold which we have of God, but that which he hath of us, that makes us hold on our way. We should quickly let go our hold of God, if God had not infinite faster hold of us.

TRUE grace lives, and therefore it must needs grow. The grain of mustard seed proves a great tree.

TO persevere is best when we persevere in good, and to persevere is worst when we persevere in evil.

PRAYER.

IN prayer there is a reasoning with God, and the reasonings and pleadings that are in prayer are the life and strength of prayer. The prayers of the saints recorded in Scripture are full of arguments. I shall show it in one example, as a taste of the rest: Jacob, in his distress at the approach of his brother Esau, flees to God in prayer (Gen. xxxii.), and he doth more than speak in prayer; he argues, yea he wrestles, with God in prayer. The sum of it is set down (v. 11): "Deliver me, I pray thee!" To the undertaking of this deliverance he urgeth the Lord by no fewer than seven arguments: First, from God's covenant with his ancestors, "O God of my father Abraham," etc.; as if he had said, Remember those names with whom thou madest solemn covenants of protection, both to

them and their posterity. The second is from God's particular command for this journey, "Thou saidst unto me, Return;" I departed not on my own head, but by thy direction, and therefore thou canst not for thy honour but free me from danger, seeing at thy word I am fallen into it. Thou, O Lord, art ever engaged to give me defence while I yield thee obedience. Thirdly, he puts him in mind of his promises. Thou saidst, "I will deal well with thee," and that includes all other promises made unto him; these he makes as a bulwark to defend him, as his anchor in the storm. This anchor must fail and this bulwark be broken down before danger comes to me. If thy promise stand, I cannot fall. The fourth is the confession of his own unworthiness. Faith is always humble, and while we are most confident in God's word we are most distrustful of our own undesert: "I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies." Though I am thus bold to urge thy covenant, yet I am as ready to acknowledge my own undesert. Thou art a debtor by the promise thou hast made me, not by any performance of mine to thee. Fifthly, he seeks to continue the current of God's favour by showing how plentifully it had already streamed unto him, which he doth by way of antithesis, setting his former poverty in opposi-

tion to his present riches : “ With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands ;” that is, thou hast blessed me abundantly, and shall my brother’s malice blast all? Am I increased only to make him abound? The sixth argument is the greatness and eminence of his peril : “ I fear lest he come and slay the mother upon the children”—a proverbial speech in the holy Scriptures, like that of cutting off branch and root in one day, both denoting total excision or an utter overthrow. Seventhly, he shuts up by reinforcing the mention of the promise which he urgeth more strongly than before. There it was only, “ Thou saidst I will deal well with thee ;” but here it is, “ Thou saidst, In doing good I will do thee good”—that is, as it is rendered in our translation, “ I will surely do thee good,” and therefore let not my brother do me evil. We see Jacob’s prayer was a reasoning with God, and himself in the issue got not only a new blessing but a new name: Israel, a prince with God, a prevailer both with God and men.—JOB ix. 14.



PRAYER without faith is like a gun discharged without a bullet, which makes a noise, but doth no execution.

ANSWER of our prayer is the grant of God. Nothing stands between us and our desires but his will. If he sign our petition, no creature can hinder us of our expectation.



THE return of prayer is the soul's solace and satisfaction.



IN seeking God we must look to receive all from his free grace and undeserved favour. Mercy in God is the spring of all mercies received by man. In all our approaches to God we should reflect upon ourselves, not only as having many wants and no worthiness, but as having many sins and (of our own) no goodness.—JOB viii. 5.



A PRAYING soul is an expecting soul.



DO not think your prayers are lost because your afflictions are not removed, or that God doth not hear you because he doth not presently relieve you. God forbears when he doth not deny. He answers to our profit when he doth not to our feeling.

GOD is a sure paymaster, and yet he expects we should seek him before he pays.



THE will of God is the rule, not only of things to be done by us, but of things which we are to ask of God to do for us.



IN prayer we prevail with God, but the strength whereby we prevail with God comes from God; yea, he doth not only give us strength in prayer to act by, but he acts that strength in prayer.



WINGED prayers have usually a winged answer—they are answered speedily.



INWROUGHT prayer, or prayer that hath a spirit in it, carrieth all before it. Surely that prayer which is acted by the Holy Spirit nothing can bind or hold from prevailing.



GODLY men are ever answered in effect though not in kind.

GOD certainly hears what we speak, but we many times do not hear what he speaks, though he speaks peace to us. God always hears the prayer of faith and answers it, but we do not always hear what the answer is.

JOB thought he was not heard because he had not present deliverance, and in that sense indeed he was not heard; and thus many of the saints may pray and not be heard—that is, they may pray and have not present deliverance. But how may we know that we are heard at any time, especially then when we have not present deliverance? I answer it, in four things:

1st. By the quietness of our spirits. 'Tis a sign prayer is answered when we are satisfied, though the thing be not given in which we prayed for. Hannah, having poured out her soul before the Lord, went her way and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad (1 Sam. i. 18). The text saith nothing of the answer of her prayer at that time. But the peace and satisfaction which she had in her own spirit about it was an argument that the thing was granted, as indeed it was.

2d. Though we receive not the mercy presently, yet if we receive fresh strength to bear the want of

it, that's an answer. So Paul was answered. God did not remove the messenger of Satan from him, but he said, "My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength is made perfect in weakness;" though I remove not the evil, yet my power shall support thee under it.

3d. We are answered when, though the evil be not removed, yet we have faith and patience to tarry the Lord's leisure for the removal of it. When patience hath a perfect work (either in expecting or suffering) we are perfect and entire, wanting nothing, though we have not what we want.

Lastly. He is answered in prayer that is more heavenly or more in heaven after prayer. He that is edified in his holy faith hath certainly prayed in the Holy Ghost (Jude 20); and sure enough, every such prayer is heard.



NOTHING is tunable nor takes the ear and heart of Christ like the voice of prayer and praise from a gracious heart.



PRAYER is as it were a battle fought in heaven —not in wrath or revenge, but with faith and holy submission.

THERE is a threefold strength needful in prayer, and God by his Spirit puts these three strengths in us :

First. The Spirit helps us with strength of argument to plead with God.

Secondly. The Spirit helps us with strength of faith in taking hold upon God.

Thirdly. The Spirit helps us with strength of patience in waiting upon God till we receive what we prayed for.

PELAGIANISM.

IT was the ancient error of the Pelagians that the sin of man came only by imitation. They denied that a man had a stock of corruption in his nature, or that his nature was corrupted ; but seeing others sin, he sinned—an opinion which carries its condemnation in its own face as well as in our hearts. And though similitudes are no proofs, yet the reason of a similitude is. Man's sinning is therefore compared to sparks flying, to show how naturally he sins. A spark flies upward without any guide to lead it the way, and a bird would fly though she should never see another bird fly. And if a man could live so as never to see any one ex-

ample of sin all his days, yet that man out of his own heart might bring forth every sin every day. Example quickens and encourages the principles of sin within us, but we can sin without any extrinsic motion or provocation, without pattern or precedent from without.—JOB v. 7.

PREACHING.

WE should well consider the state of every person to whom we speak, and apply our speech or doctrine accordingly. Christ would not put his new wine into old bottles, but attempered his speech to the tempers and capacity of his hearers. The dividing of the Word is the dividing of it spiritually to the several states and conditions of men, giving to such a word of instruction, to others a word of reproof, to a third sort words of comfort. Paul would have Timothy a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. He would have him to know to whom he uttered words, to know when he spake to sinners and when to saints, when he spake to the afflicted and when to them that were in a comfortable state. And thus as every man who uttereth words, so ministers of the gospel especially should be well advised to whom they utter them. For as

the same garments will not serve everybody to wear nor the same bed to lie upon, so the same Word will not suit every soul. When we have duly weighed the matter which, the persons to whom, the season when, the measure how much and the manner in which we ought to speak, then we are like to speak to purpose, and shall be above the reproof which Job gives to Bildad: "To whom hast thou uttered words?"—JOB xxiv. 4.



TWO things are the grace and excellency of a speaker: First, to speak boldly and freely, to speak the truth out—not to clip nor straighten it. Secondly, to speak plainly, to open the truth and not to intricate nor involve it.

PERFECTION.

THERE is a twofold perfection ascribed to the saints in this life—a perfection of justification and perfection of sanctification. The first of these in a strict sense is a complete perfection. The saints are complete in Christ; they are perfectly justified; there is not any sin left uncovered, nor any guilt left unwashed in the blood of Christ, nor

the least spot but is taken away. His garment is large enough to cover all our nakedness and deformities. By one offering Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Then there is a perfection of holiness or sanctification, and that is called so either in regard of the beginning of, or in regard of desires after and aims at, perfection. The saints in this life have a perfect beginning of holiness, because they are begun to be sanctified in every part (1 Thess. v. 23), though every part be not throughout sanctified. When sanctification is begun in all parts, it is a perfect work beginning. They are likewise perfect in regard of their desires and intendments. Perfect holiness is the aim of the saints on earth—it is the reward of the saints in heaven.—JOB i. 1.



IF any say, “Why doth God call us to a perfection of sanctification in this life if it be not attainable in this life?” I answer, he doth it—first, to show how holy he is; secondly, to show how holy we ought to be; thirdly, he doth it that we might run to Christ, who is the Lord our righteousness, we being altogether short of righteousness and short in righteousness may go to him and have a complete and perfect righteousness.—JOB xxxiv. 5.

POPULARITY.

THE affections and opinions of men are very variable. How great a change did Christ himself find! He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; yet one day the Jews cry, Hosanna; they will needs make him a king; he had much ado to keep himself from a crown; the air echoes with "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Yet presently after the cry was, Crucify him, crucify him; he is not worthy to live; he could not keep himself (by all his power as a man) from the cross. A murderer is preferred before him: "Not this man, but Barabbas."—JOB xvii. 6.



LIVE not upon the breath of men, upon popular air, or the speech of the people.



WHEN Job did swim in the full streams of riches and honours, all respected him; but no sooner were the waters fallen and his worldly greatness ebbed or abated, but all sorts of men, especially the worst of men, abated their respects to him. No sooner was he afflicted, but slighted and derided.—JOB xxx. 1.

PRIDE.

MAN naturally preferreth himself, not only above other men, but even before God himself. A principle of pride dwells in our hearts by nature, which at some times and in some cases breeds better thoughts of ourselves than of God himself. We know it was the first sin of man that man desired to be like God. The first temptation was baited with a parity to the divine powers: Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. This also was the language of Lucifer (Isaiah xiv. 13, 14). And the practice of the man of sin is thus prophesied that he shall exalt himself above all that is called God. But the heart of man is more mad and hath outgrown these simple principles. For in troubles and temptations, when things go not according to his mind, he sometimes has thoughts that he is not only like God, but that he is more just than God, and that if he had the ordering of things he would order them better than God, and if he had the punishing of offenders, justice should proceed more freely and impartially than it doth.—JOB iv. 17.



PRIDE is such a weed as often grows in the best soil.

PRIDE is a bad mother of many bad children, these three especially: first, boasting of ourselves; secondly, contending with others; thirdly, despising of others.

PROMISES.

WHILE a believer reads the Book of God, he sees great riches, many precious things in the promises, and whatever good he finds there, there is nothing of it too good for him; he may know it all for his own good. Those sweet delicious promises of the pardon of sin, of the love of God, of the freeness of grace, of the glory to come, the promises of Christ and of all that is Christ's,—all these things are his; when he reads them he may set his mark upon them and know for his good—know them as his own proper good.—JOB v. 27.



LET us be sure to stick to the commandments of God, for we may be sure God will stick to his promises. To keep commandments is our work—to keep promises is God's work; though we may fail much in our work, God will not fail at all in his work. To believe this is our highest and truest work of faith.

THERE are four things ascribed to God in Scripture which may assure us he will be just in performing all his promises: First, he remembers them all (Ps. cxi. 5); secondly, he is unchangeable and in one mind (Job xxiii. 13, 14); thirdly, he is the Almighty, and ever furnished with power to perform them; fourthly, he is most faithful, and will not deny nor falsify them (Heb. x. 23).



A WORD from God is as sure as his deed; our hope upon promises as good as possession.

PROVIDENCE.

THE very confusions that are in the world are an argument for the power of God. For seeing the world continue in the midst of such confusions, it shows there is a mighty power balancing those confusions so exactly that they cannot ruin the world. If there were not an overruling power in God, wicked men ruling would soon ruin all. There are mysteries of Providence as well as of faith, and many are as much troubled to interpret what God doeth as what he hath spoken.—JOB ix. 24.

THE common blessings of God are not dispensed without a special providence. Nature works not without the God of Nature.—JOB v. 10.



THE providence of God watches over all his creatures. All their motions are by his permission or commission. They stir not without his leave. The providence of God is his watch, and therefore it is called the eye of Providence; and Providence hath such an eye as never slumbers nor sleeps, and therein lieth our security that we have a providential eye open for us when ours are shut and we asleep.



SOME providences of God put the wisest to a stand. Not only are fools and wicked men, but men of the greatest experience and understanding in the ways of God, so puzzled that they know not what to say or how to answer. The Lord is pleased to give us hard texts and chapters in his works, as he doth in his Word.



THOUGH providences appear cross to promises and prophecies, yet they never frustrate either.

THE date of God's order for disposing the creation is from the beginning, yea from everlasting. As the model of the creation what things should be was with him from everlasting, so was the model of providence how all things should be governed and disposed of. The government of the world is as much of God as the giving of it a being. Creation was a work that ended in six days, but providence is a work that never ends; thus God always worketh, though always at rest.



PROVIDENCE is creation continued.

PRUDENCE.

PRUDENCE uses to go softly—wisdom keeps a kind of state in her pace and loves to go step by step, not headlong. A prudent man sets his head before his feet in consultation, but he loves to go upon his feet—not upon his head—in action.



HASTY counsels are successful counsels. They who will not take time to consult about what they do, may have time enough to repent

about what they have done. And they who will not take the time for doing what they consult, lose all the time they took for consultation.

REDEMPTION.

TO redeem properly is to take a man out of the power of another by price or by greater power. Redemption is an act of special favour, and it notes a special distinction by favour. When God threatened Pharaoh with swarms of flies, and promised that his own people should be free, this act of divine discrimination is called redemption. "And I will put a division (Heb. a redemption) between my people and thy people;" that is, those armies of flies which invade thy people shall not meddle with my people. To see one perish with, and ourselves saved from, the sword is redemption in war. To see others hunger-starved and ourselves still fed, is redemption from famine, though ourselves were never in the hands or between the teeth of famine. A people divided from the troubles of others are redeemed from those troubles. Such redemption our Saviour speaks of (Matt. xxiv. 40, 41): "Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, the other left.—JOB v. 20.

AS Christ will not save presumptuous sinners who believe without repenting, so neither will he save incredulous sinners who repent without believing.

JESUS CHRIST came to save us from our sins, not to save us in our sins.

REPENTANCE.

NEVER think to have help for the cure of your souls by the diseases of your bodies; usually we find that sick persons repent not, or theirs is a sickly repentance.

WILL the heart be prepared we cannot pray; until iniquity be purged out prayer is not accepted; unless all three be done, we have not repented, or our repentance must be repented of. Except we repent thus we cannot be saved, and only that repentance is not to be repented of which is unto salvation.

THERE is no way for us to get our sin covered but by revealing it, nor hid but by confessing it.

HOW pitifully are they mistaken who put off repentance till their bodies be in pain—till they are sick and weak! They do it upon this ground, because they think when they are in pain they shall do it with more ease. Observe, if Satan thinks to have such an advantage upon a holy man (as Job) as to make him blaspheme when he is in pain, dost thou think pain will be an advantage to thy repentance? It is said that at the pouring out of the fourth vial (Rev. xvi. 9), when God did smite the inhabitants of the earth and scorched them with great heat, that they blasphemed the name of God (they did that which Satan presumed Job would do), and they repented not to give him glory.

AS in true repentance there is a change from a bad to a good mind, and from a perverse to a right and righteous way; so there is a change from a troubled to a quiet mind, and from a painful to a pleasant and delightful way.

NEITHER a weeping eye nor a confessing tongue, nor (in case of wrong done to man) a restoring hand, will be taken for repentance without a broken heart.

REPENTANCE is a grace of the gospel wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Word and Spirit, turning the whole man from all sin to God in the sincere and universal obedience of his holy will.—
JOB xlii. 6.



THE whole body of gospel duty moves upon these two feet—faith and repentance.



REPENTANCE for and continuance in sin cannot consist in the same subject.

RESTITUTION.

THAT which is ill-gotten must be restored. Put it out of thy house, out of thy family; it will be a fire to burn, a moth to consume, a canker to fret all thy comforts. That which is ill got will poison that which is well got.

RESURRECTION.

THE resurrection is a birth-day to the world. The earth and sea shall be in travail and be delivered. They took dead men into their womb, and shall (by the power of God) return them living.

IN the morning of the resurrection we shall all put on fresh suits—fresh suits of flesh and robes of glory upon them, such as shall never change, much less wear out.—JOB xiv. 4.



THE total consumption of the body of man is no impediment in the way of faith to stop us from believing the resurrection. Job speaks in such language as might represent the greatest difficulty to faith, and yet conquers it. As death shall triumph over my body, so my faith shall triumph over death.—JOB xix. 26.



THE body after the resurrection shall be true flesh, or shall have true flesh. There will be an adding somewhat to that which was before, not a taking away of that that was before. The flesh shall be refined and purified; it shall not be laid aside or annihilated.

RETRIBUTION.

GOD doth sometimes give the riches of wicked men to poor godly men whom they have oppressed. Job himself (Job xxvii. 16) gives us this truth in express terms. When speaking of a wicked

man he saith, "Though he heap up silver as the dust and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it (let him prepare it, let him scrape it together as fast as he can), but the just shall put it on and the innocent shall divide the silver;" that is, those just and innocent persons whom he hath wronged shall by a divine retaliation enter upon his estate. The wicked grind the faces of the poor to make themselves bread, but at last the poor shall make bread of their corn and grist. We may see the track and footstep of this judgment in our days. How many sons of violence who have made many persons—yea, families—hungry, naked and desolate, are now made desolate and naked! God hath so wrought and answered us by terrible things in righteousness, that oppressed innocents have been put into the houses and fed upon the fatness of unrighteous oppressors.—JOB v. 5.

SACRIFICES.

BEFORE the giving of the Law, the father or the elder of the family was as a priest to the whole family, and he had the right and the power to perform all holy family duties, as the duty of sacrificing and the like.

SACRIFICES in themselves were nothing either to God or to man; they had no power in them either to pacify God or purge the soul of man. But look upon the sacrifice as it was an institution, and there God saw his Son Jesus Christ in it and was well pleased, and likewise man beheld and believed Christ in it and was purged. When the sacrifice was offering, man saw Christ suffering; this took away his sin and pacified his conscience. God saw the death of his Son, and that satisfied him; and man saw the death of his Saviour, and that justified him.—JOB i. 5.

THERE was never any way in the world, from first to last, to help a sinner but by a sacrifice, and who was the sacrifice? Surely Jesus Christ was the sacrifice. It was not the blood of bulls and goats that could take away sin; these only pointed at Jesus Christ, who alone did it by bearing our sins and by being made a sacrifice for them. To typify or show this we read in the law of Moses that the sin of the offender was laid upon the sacrifice, and a sacrifice for sin was called sin by the prophet long before Christ came (Daniel ix. 24). We shall make an end of sin—that is, when Christ

shall come in the flesh he shall make an end of all sacrifices for sin, and so the apostle called it after Christ had come and suffered in the flesh (1 Cor. v. 12). The sacrifice was called sin because the sin of the person who brought it and in whose behalf it was offered was laid upon the sacrifice; there was, as it were, a translation of the sin from the person to the sacrifice. And there is no atonement of sin but by a sacrifice. So the Lord ordained the offering up of a whole burnt-offering for the taking away of sin, that sinners might see what they had deserved—even to die, and not only so, but to be wholly burnt and consumed in the fire of his wrath. They who rest not upon the sacrifice of Christ once offered, must be a sacrifice themselves always offered to the justice and wrath of God.—JOB xlii. 8.

SALVATION.

THE Arminians maintain a propitiation made or a sacrifice offered by Christ for all, yet they dare not say it is effectual for all. Christ died (say they) for those he doth not save, but Christ prayed for none but those that shall be saved. They are not for a universal intercession; though they are for

a universal sacrifice or propitiation ; and their reason is, because they cannot deny but many shall perish for ever, which they could not did Christ but pray for them. We believe that his sacrifice is as effectual as his intercession, and that therefore he died for none but those for whom he prays, his intercession being for the drawing out and bringing home the benefit of his sacrifice to those and to all those for whom he offered himself to God.



NOTHING can hide us from the wrath of God but the mercy of God.

SANCTIFICATION.

TO sanctify in Scripture notes two things :

1st. The infusion of a holy habit—the infusion of a new principle into the soul.

2d. A preparation of the soul to holy duties.

When it is said Job sent and sanctified them, it is not meant as if Job did infuse holy habits into his children—as if it were in his power to make them gracious indeed ; that is impossible. It is only the work of the Spirit of God. But this it is: he sent them to prepare themselves, to advise and

warn them to prepare themselves, that they might be ready for that duty, for the duty of sacrificing. And this preparation for holy duties is often called sanctifying, as Gen. xxxv. 2, etc.—JOB i. 5.



HE that is a holy person himself, desires to make others holy too.

SLANDER.

TO commend a man with a “but” is a wound instead of a commendation. “Thou hast instructed many, but,” etc. How many are there who salute their friends very fair to their faces, or speak them very fair behind their backs, yet suddenly (as Joab to Amasa) draw out this secret dagger and stab their honour and honesty to the heart! As it is said of Naaman (2 Kings v. 1), “He was an honourable man and a mighty man of valour, *but he was a leper.*”—JOB iv. 5.



THE most innocent persons are often charged with the foulest and sinfulest crimes. Who is there of so unspotted a conversation that he may not be spotted with accusation? Who while his conscience is pure may not have much dirt cast in his face?

SATAN.

NOW what doth Satan when he walks up and down the world? Doth he walk like an idle vagrant that hath nothing to do? Doth he walk with his hands in his pockets, as having no business? Doth he walk merely to take the air or to take his pleasure, to see and be seen? No; when Satan walks about the world, his walking is working; he goeth about to tempt, to try and lay snares and baits to catch and captivate the souls of men.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

IT is harder to know the nature than the number—what, than how many, our sins are. For as some have whole books written full of sermon-notes by them who have not one line of a sermon written upon their hearts or ways, so a man may have a whole book written full of sin-notes, and yet not one sin making impression upon his heart. There are but few who know what they are.—JOB xiii. 23.



THE reason why we are so proud of ourselves is because we are so ignorant of ourselves.

MANY are apt to overvalue and overrate their own abilities, as if they had engrossed all knowledge, and had the monopoly of wisdom in their own hearts—as if all must borrow or buy of their store, and light their candle at their torch.



THEY who think all are blind who see not with their eyes, are yet blind and have never seen themselves. It is the emptiness of knowledge, not the fulness of it, which makes so great a sound.

SEPULCHRES.

SOME take in their life more care for their sepulchres than they do for their souls. Great men build desolate places; they will be sure to have stately monuments, and they have gold. They will be sure to fill their graves with treasure; they will be buried richly, or they will have their riches buried with them. But what care did these take for their poor souls in the mean time, where they should lie? When all things are disposed of, this choice piece is for the most part left unprovided for. The great business of the saints on earth is to

get assurance of a place for their souls to lodge in when they die. It troubles them not much what lodgings their bodies have, if they can put their spirits into the hands of Christ.

SIN.

IT is not safe to let sin lie a moment unrepented of or unpardoned upon our own consciences or the consciences of others. If a man's house be on fire, he will not only rise in the morning, but he will rise at midnight, to quench it. Certainly, when you have guilt on your souls, you have a fire in your souls; your souls are on a flame; therefore you have need to rise and rise early, and get up as soon in the morning as you can, to get it quenched and put out.—JOB i. 5.



THERE is no created excellency but if left to itself will quickly undo itself. There is no trusting to any estate out of Christ.



SIN despoils the creature of all its comfort and honour at once.

WICKED and ungodly men, while they satisfy their own lusts, are but doing the work of Satan and executing his designs. “Ye are of your father, the devil, and his lusts ye will do,” saith Christ to the Jews. While they do their own, they fulfil the lusts and designs of Satan.

TO be a wicked man is no easy task ; he must go to plough for it. Wicked men in Scripture are called sons of Belial ; that is, such as will not endure the yoke. They will not endure the yoke of Christ, though it be an easy yoke ; but they are content slavishly to yield their (otherwise) proud and delicate necks to Satan’s yoke, to tug and sweat at his plough all their days.—JOB iv. 8.

THOUGH a man doth not formally commit or bring forth every sin, yet virtually and radically a man hath every sin in him, or it is possible for any sin to be formed and shaped out of the nature of man. And as the spark lies closely in the fire or flint till you smite or blow them up, so sin lies secretly in our hearts till some temptation or occasion smites and brings it out.

TO be kept from sin is a greater blessing than are outward blessings. When Eliphaz had reckoned up all the comforts which repenting Job is promised, "Thou shalt be delivered in six troubles and in seven; sword and famine shall not hurt thee, peace and plenty shall dwell within thy walls and lodge in every chamber; yet (saith he) I will tell thee of a blessing beyond all these: Thou shalt not sin." It is more mercy to be delivered from one sin than from sword and famine. Grace is better than peace, and holiness than abundance. Riches, honour and health are all obscured in this one blessing—a holy, a gracious and an humble heart.—JOB v. 25.



THE sins of youth may prove the sufferings of old age.



THE punishment of sin may come long after the committing of sin; the one is the seed-time and the other is the reaping-time.



OUR sins spring not out of the dust, but out of the dirt and filth of our own corruptions.

THEY who are sensible of the evil of sin will pay heartily for the pardon of sin. He that is greatly in debt, and fears every hour to be arrested and cast into prison, is trying all friends to get security and protection. Sinning is a running in debt with God, and it brings us under the danger of his arrest every moment. Forgiveness cancels the bond, when the sin is pardoned, the debt is paid and the soul discharged.—JOB vii. 21.

SIN begins with turning the heart from God, and sin ends with turning the heart against God. The first step in sin is a neglect of God, the second is contempt of God, the third and last is a war with God.—JOB xv. 25.

SIN runs against reason, and causeth us to act not only wickedly, but foolishly.

SIN hath by so much the greater evil in it by how much it is committed against the greater goodness. As good things received bind us stronger unto duty, so good things abused bind us stronger under guilt.

SOME sins are not only in themselves a contempt of God, but they are committed in contempt of God. When men sin presumptuously and with a high hand, when they sin with a command shining in their eye, with a threat sounding in their ear, they even send a defiance to Heaven and bid God do his worst.



SUPPOSE sin appear not in a full body, yet if it put out but a little finger, we must have nothing to do with it.



SIN promiseth gold, and pays with dross; it promiseth bread, and pays with stones; it promiseth honour, and pays with disgrace; it promiseth a paradise, and payeth with a wilderness; it promiseth liberty, and payeth with bondage; in a word, it promiseth all manner of content, and pays us with utter disappointment and dissatisfaction. If any man have a mind to be fed with mallows, and lodged in caves, and torn with bushes, and stung with nettles, and scorched with everlasting burnings, let him but hearken to the voice, believe the promises and take the word of sin.—JOB xxx. 7.

THAT sin may be avoided, we must avoid whatever leads to or occasions it. He that feareth burning must take heed of playing with fire. He that feareth drowning must keep out of deep water. He that feareth the plague must not go into an infected house. Would they avoid sin who present themselves to the opportunities of it, and bring their corruptions and temptations as it were into an interview? “I (saith Job) have made a covenant with mine eyes.”—JOB xxxi. 1.



THERE are three eminent evils in sin: First. There is a pollution in sin; it defiles. Secondly. There is a dishonour in sin; it dishonours. Thirdly. There is a deceitfulness in sin; it would make us believe we shall be and receive that which it is not able to perform.



EVERY step in sin is a step to misery; and the farther any man proceedeth on in sin, the farther he wanders from God, and the farther he wanders from God, the nearer he comes to misery. Every motion toward sin is a hasting into the arms and embrace of death.

ALL sin is either against ourselves, strictly called intemperance; or against God, strictly called impiety; or against man, strictly called unrighteousness.

SINCERITY.

HE that is sincere desires not to be open, but silently satisfieth his soul with the consciousness of doing his duty, and takes more content in knowing his own integrity than in knowing that others know it. Like the earth, he keeps his richest minerals and most precious gems of grace and goodness below in his bowels, or at the centre of his heart, and will not let them be seen till a kind of necessity digs them out. Every true Moses whose acquaintance and fiducial familiarity with God hath stamped upon him the impressions of divine light, is so far from affecting to dazzle the eyes of others with it that he rather puts a veil of gracious modesty upon it, and will not let so much as the light of his good works be seen, but as thereby (in which Christ commands it) he may glorify his Father which is in heaven.—JOB xxxiv. 30.

A SOUL that is sincere and well-bottomed upon the grace of God in Christ is unconquerable.

SINNERS.

WICKED men make the blessings of God fuel to their lusts, and beat their outward comforts into the weapons of an unholy war against him.



THEY take little care for their souls who take overmuch for their bodies. They who desire to please appetite cannot endeavour to please God.



WICKED men take more pains to go to hell and eternal destruction than godly men do in the way of eternal life and salvation. A wicked man cannot go to hell with ease; he goes with pain to eternal pains.—JOB xv. 20.



WHERE can a sinner be hid from Him who is everywhere? Or what thing can be our covering from Him in whose sight all things are open? Then let none think they have made a good market in sinning when they have hid their sins from the eyes of men. What will it avail to hide yourselves from men, when you lie open and manifest to the eye of God?—JOB xxxiv. 22.

HE makes an ill market who puts off his soul at any price.

SOUL.

THE marriage of the soul and body together is life; the breaking of this marriage bond is death.



WHAT is the body without the soul but a lump of clay? As soon as ever the soul departs, life departs; yet such is the folly of most men that all their care is for the life of the body, which is (at best) a dying life. They utterly neglect the soul, which, as it is the life of the body, so itself never dieth. The soul is the jewel, the body is but the cabinet; the soul is the kernel, the body is but the shell. Will you be solicitous about the cabinet or the shell, and slight the jewel or throw away the kernel?

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

THE absolute sovereignty of the Lord over us is enough to acquit him from doing us any wrong, whatsoever he doeth with us. Job saith only this, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away."

He is the sovereign Lord, therefore I have no reason to complain. He doeth it upon whom I have laid no engagement—upon whom I have no tie at all to do this or that for me. He doeth it who may resolve all the reason of his own actions into his own will; he is the Lord. God cannot injure his creatures; therefore the apostle hath recourse to that only in the ninth chapter of Romans for the answer of all cavils and objections against God's dealings with man: "Hath not the potter power over the clay?"—JOB i. 21.

GOD is the only Lawgiver, and we must receive the law from his mouth. He that will please God must shut all of his own imaginations out of doors and have nothing to do with them. 'Tis not what man hath a mind to do, but what the mind of God is he should do, that pleaseth him, or is either a worship or service acceptable to him. We never dishonour God more than when we take upon us to serve him our own way, and, leaving his rule, make a rule for ourselves.

MAN is never displeas'd with what God doth till he forgetteth what himself is.

GOD electeth those in whom he seeth no good, nor doth he elect any for their goodness, either because he seeth them good or foreseeth they will be good. He beholdeth no excellency, beauty or worthiness in them. He elects according to the pleasure of his own will. Man's goodness is not the cause, but the effect, of God's election. The election of God maketh men good, but it doth not find them so.

TEARS.

THE voice of tears is very significant, yet God only knows the special signification of it. Man knows only the general, that it signifies sorrow.



TEARS are powerful orators.



GOD reads our hearts in those lines which tears draw on our faces.

THE TONGUE.

THE tongue is a little member, and yet it falls heavy.

THE tongue is the scholar of the heart, and speaks what that dictates. A man is justly condemned by evil words because they testify that he is evil.

THERE is a speedy passage between the heart and the tongue. Evil thoughts are soon formed up into evil words.

HE hath a mighty command over his spirit that can command his tongue, especially when he is provoked. It is a real part of perfection not to offend in word.

TRUST.

PURE spiritual trust is the highest exercise of faith, whereby looking upon God in himself and in his Son, through the promises, the soul is raised above all fears or discouragements, above all doubts and disquietments, either for the removing of that which is evil or the obtaining of that which is good.—JOB xiii. 15.

TRUST in God is the best ease to the soul, and a remedy of evils before the remedy comes.

A BELIEVER seeth God good to him or a friend to him, when he receiveth nothing but evil from his hand and sees nothing but frowns upon his face.

NOTHING fixes the soul but trust in God. We are unquiet, yea we boil with unquietness and toss as the angry sea with the winds, till we trust fully upon God, upon his wisdom and power, upon his goodness and faithfulness, and can say, "Let him do as seems good in his eyes."

WHEN we can once stay our minds on God, we are quiet; but when we must bring God to our mind, and must have God go our pace, or come at our time and work in our way (none of which he will do, what ado soever we make to have it so), oh how restless and troubled are we, even like the troubled sea when it cannot rest!

WHEN things are not clear to us, when we have no light about what God is doing or what he will do, yet it is our duty to trust and wait upon God.

TRUST in God though you are in darkness, though you see no light; this is light before light, pardon before pardon. Trust God in temptations, and you are above temptations while you groan under the burden of them. Trust God in weakness, and you are strong. When in rest with our weakness upon Christ, the power of Christ rests upon us.



WE can never trust God too much nor creatures too little.



MANY trust God (as they do some men) no further than they can see him.

TRUTH.

TRUTH is the meat of the mind, the nourishment of the understanding.



HE is a soul physician of no value who makes wrong applications of truths, as well as he who applies that which is false. The Word of God must be rightly divided; every soul must have his own portion. The children's bread is not for dogs.

WHEN truth is honoured and applauded, it is easy to own, but it is our greatest honour to own a dishonoured and despised truth.



IT is no new thing for him that speaks truth to be counted a liar, nor for him that speaks seriously to be counted a mocker.—JOB xi. 3.



HE that judgeth himself to be in the truth should not leave it because others call it error.



HE that hath truth on his side need not fear the opposition of many—no, nor the opposition of all men.



A LONG train of followers will do us no good if our cause be bad.



ONE man and the truth are strong enough to oppose a multitude in error and a multitude of errors.

THE WILL.

THE will of man is as perverse as his understanding is blind. Man hath not only a wound or a weakness in his will unto that which is good, but he hath a rebellion in his heart against that which is good; and that not by some occasional disgust or sudden gust of passion, but he is naturally set and resolved against that which is good.—
JOB xxxiii. 14.



MAN hath not only an inability to know, but an enmity against the knowledge of that which is spiritual.



MAN would have everything go according to his own mind. He would have his mind the measure, both of all that he is to do for God and of all that God doth to him. We love to do all things according to our own minds, and we love to have all things done according to our own minds.—
JOB xxxiv. 33.

WORSHIP.

WE must worship God aright—first, for the outward manner of his commands and institutions, else we dishonour him while we intend to worship him; secondly, the inward manner must be according to the command of God. The Lord searcheth the heart; he knoweth what is within, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth—that is, according to the truth of the rule made known in his Word, and in truth of heart.



GOD is not only to be praised with joy and thankfulness, but with fear and reverence, for with him is terrible praise. We should not be afraid to praise God—no, we should be most forward to praise him—but we should have a holy fear upon our hearts when we praise him. Praise is the work of heaven, from whence fear shall for ever be banished; and even in this life, praise, which is the work of heaven on earth, should be performed with such a spirit of love and joy as is without all base, tormenting fear. We should have so much love to God, in and for all the good things he doth for our souls especially, yea and for our bodies too,

in dealing out daily mercies, that it should cast out all that fear that hath torment in it. Yet there is a fear which should possess our spirits while we are praising God; a fear of reverence, I mean, which fear (I doubt not) will remain in heaven for ever. Glorified saints shall praise God with that fear: that is, having an everlasting awe of the majesty of God upon their hearts. He is fearful in praises; and therefore let us so praise him as remembering our distance, so praise him as to fear of miscarrying in the duty, and so, instead of praising him, instead of honouring, grieve him.



A BODY exercised and a soul sitting still is not worship.



THE Scripture assureth us that God looks upon or reckoneth prayer as an honour done to him. 'Tis an eminent part of worship—'tis the giving of him glory.

YOUTH.

THE strength of a young man profits little if he have not the virtues and good qualities of an old man.

WE ought not to despise what young men say because of their youth. If old men be not always wise, their wisdom may be with the young. That which is the true glory of gray hairs doth sometimes crown the youthful head—wisdom (I mean) and ripeness of understanding. It was said of a godly woman, “She had a youthful body but an aged mind.” Samuel was young in years, but in grace elder than Eli; Jeremiah was young, but how wise did the inspiration of God make him! Daniel was young, yet wiser than all the magicians and astrologers; Timothy and Titus were young, yet honourable for prudence and piety. Therefore, as we should not always accept what old men say because of their age, so let us not slight what young men say because of their youth.—JOB xxxii. 9.



MODESTY should bridle young men from being over-forward to show themselves, but it must not shut or seal up their lips.