

Reprobation and Election

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Sermon IV

“Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” Romans ix. 13.

The doctrine of reprobation, is, I believe, but little understood; yet, it is much hated, and very generally rejected; but, ignorance, enmity, and rejection, cannot do away with the truth of it, nor lessen the importance of it. That there is a place of everlasting punishment, in which fallen angels and millions of human beings, will eternally dwell, is a thing as true, as it is awful; neither does the doctrine of reprobation either destroy creature accountableness, or make God the author of sin.

The doctrine of reprobation and election are seen throughout the bible; these doctrines appear in the case of Cain and Abel. True faith was bestowed upon Abel, but not upon Cain; yet, Abel was no better by nature than Cain, but the one sovereignly taken, the other sovereignly left. Noah, and his family were no better by nature than others, yet he and his family are preserved, and the world at large destroyed. Abraham is effectually called, and others who were at the same time, in the same state, are left, Isaac is chosen, and Ishmael is refused; Jacob is loved, and Esau is hated; the Israelites are delivered, and the Egyptians overturned in the Red Sea; the ancient nations of Canaan are driven out, and the Israelites settled in their land. Again, thousands of the Israelites had no saving knowledge of God; but some of the Israelites had a saving knowledge of God. Rahab, the harlot, obtained mercy, the rest were left to perish; Ruth, clave to Naomi, but Orpah went back to her people, and to her gods. The Gentiles received the gospel, when the Jews put it from them although as many, both of Jews and Gentiles, as were ordained to eternal life, believed;

Again, is not the endless punishment of fallen angels a solemn exemplification of whom he wilt, he hardeneth; is there the least shadow of hope for fallen angels, is it not written, that the smoke of their torment ascended for ever and ever; why then should it be thought a thing incredible, that he, who is in the sovereignty of his will, has left a part of one order of beings to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, should also, in the exercise of the same sovereignty, leave a part of another order of beings to suffer the same punishment? Do not the scriptures declare, that men stumble at the word being disobedient,

whereunto also they were appointed; that “reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them; that these were of old ordained to this condemnation; that the Lord hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil; that the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; that God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see; that Pharaoh was raised up that the Lord might shew forth his wonders in him; that all that dwell upon the earth shall worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; that whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire; that none can enter the holy city but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life*.

* 1 Pet. ii. 8, Jer. vi. 30, Jude 4, Prov. xvi. 4, Dan. xii. 10, Rom. xi. 8, Rom. ix. 17, Rev. xii.8; xx. 15; xxi. 27, Dan. iv. 35.

Do not these Scriptures show that the Lord hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. This high prerogative in God must by the Lord’s people be acknowledged, that they may know that it is the Lord alone who maketh them to differ from those who are left under the curse of a violated law. For all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and the Lord of Hosts doeth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?

Our object, then, on the present occasion, shall be to examine the nature and use of the doctrines of Reprobation and Election.

1st. Reprobation – There are in Reprobation some things which the Lord does do, and some things which he does not do. And in order to show, first, the sovereignty and justice of God in the condemnation of those that are lost, we may notice four things which he does do, and then, in order to show that God is not the author of sin, we may notice two things which he does not do. First, the things which he does do. The first is that he has made man an accountable creature; this he has done by giving him a law suited to the state in which he was created. Adam was not his own, nor his own supporter: he was the property of God, and was dependent upon God. Adam being thus the creature of God and dependent upon God, the nature and right of God over Adam was, to give him a law that should render him accountable to his maker, for the continuance of that conformity to the law which he was created; while the penalty of violating this law should be death, - death, spiritual, corporeal, and eternal. God was and is determined that not one jot nor tittle of this law shall fail; for the love, holiness, and righteousness, which we had by creation, the law still calls; this love, holiness, and righteousness, and an earthly paradise, are the inheritance we had by, or according to the law; therefore God did not make man accountable for what man did not by creation possess: but we have lost this inheritance by sinning, - for we sinned in Adam, - we have entailed upon ourselves the condemnation of the law; so that the law must recall its sentence: it (the law) must alter its very nature, so that human accountability to God must either be lessened or altogether cease to exist, before man can retain one particle of the love, holiness, righteousness, and happiness which he possessed before the fall. But the law is immutable. It always was holy, just, and good; and so it is now and always will be; and he that offendeth in one point, is guilty of the whole: and cursed is everyone that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.

This law, which in itself is holy, just, and good, brings no holiness, no love, nor any righteousness: it calls for these, “but there is none that doeth good; no not one;” all are gone out of the way and are altogether as an unclean thing. From the law and its awful penalty, Jesus hath delivered his people. But then there are what are called the bond children. These are a people “against whom the Lord hath indignation forever” (Mal. i. 4); for these no intercessor is found (John xvii. 9). They are under the law, and accountable

to God according to the law which they are under. Where there is no law, there is no transgression; for sin is the transgression of the law. One thing then, which the Lord does do in reprobation is, that he holds man accountable to himself according to the nature and extent of his holy and righteous law; and in this matter shall the thing formed say, Why hast thou made me thus?

The second thing which the Lord does do is, that he supports and bestows many blessings upon them in this life. Many of the reprobate fill high and honorable offices in this world, and have, to the fullest extent of the world, the good things of this life; for not many mighty, not many noble are called; - not but thousands and thousands are poor and miserable in this world, who will be infinitely more miserable in that world which is to come, - yet it is true that the Lord does support, feed, clothe, and bestow many blessings upon those who are vessels of wrath; and many important uses connected with the glory of Christ are made of them in this world.

The third thing the Lord does, is, that he awards the punishment which those who are lost shall undergo in a future world; the nature, extent and duration of which punishment are declared again and again. In the word of God it is spoken of as fire and brimstone. The breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it. It is thus a burning lake, a bottomless pit, utter darkness, and inconceivable pain. This punishment will extend to the whole person, - both soul and body - of each one that shall be lost, and will continue to eternity; it is therefore called everlasting destruction (2 Thess. i. 9); everlasting punishment (Matt. xxv. 46); everlasting burnings (Isa. xxxiii. 14); everlasting reproach (Jer. xxiii.40); everlasting contempt (Dan. xii. 2); eternal damnation (Mark iii. 29); eternal fire (Jude); the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched (Mark 19. 44). Everlasting destruction, punishment, reproach, contempt, condemnation, and eternal fire are then the fearful words descriptive of the state of the lost; what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

As the Lord thus holds the non-elect accountable to himself, bestows upon them many blessings in providence, and has awarded the punishment due to sin; so he himself will bring them to judgment, and death and hell. Sea and land shall give up their dead. Not one who is not sheltered in the rock of Ages - Christ Jesus, can escape; no other rock will be of any use then. God himself is the judge of sinners and of saints; at that day all shall know that there is a people cursed by the Father, condemned by the Savior, and given up by the Holy Ghost, to a reprobate mind.

These, then, are the things which the Lord does do in the reprobation of those who are lost, that is, he holds them accountable to himself, he supports them through this world, awards the punishment due to sin, and brings sinners to judgment: and who will dare to say that he is by any one, or all of these acts, either unrighteous, or the author of sin: he is "righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."

After noticing what the Lord does do in the reprobation of those that are lost, I now have to notice what he does not do in the reprobation of those who are lost.

1st. - he did not infuse sin into their nature. 2^{ndly} - he does not tempt men to sin.

First - he did not infuse sin into our nature. This was the work of the wicked one. How sin came into existence we know no further than the devil was a murderer from the beginning - that he abode not in the truth - that he is a liar and the father of it (John viii. 44); but how he who was created holy, could conceive and propagate a lie, is one of the secret things which belong to God. All the opinions in the world are of no use, for while it a truth clearly revealed that Angels did fall, yet how or in what way these once holy and happy beings were led to sin against their maker is a secret which no mortal can explain; therefore our

privilege is, to be content that it should continue a secret. Had it been needful for us to have known it, the Lord would have revealed it; and if it should be his will to continue it a secret forever, he will not allow his people when in glory to desire to know it.

We have to do with ourselves as to how we become sinners, and of this awful subject the Holy Ghost has for our instruction given us a detailed account, and nothing is more clear than that Adam and Eve did not sin through any influence from God. Falsehood was infused into our nature by the wicked one. He questioned the truth of God, and told Adam and Eve that they should be as Gods.

God did not fuse sin into our nature, nor does he tempt men to sin. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man (James i 13); and yet God did tempt Abraham (Gen. xxii. 1); but he did not tempt Abraham to sin, for the word tempt, as here used, simply signifies trial. God tried Abraham; and through the command of God seemed contrary to the law of God, yet Abraham would not have sinned in slaying Isaac, if the command of God had extended to Isaac's really dying, for what the Lord positively commands is right. The Lord commanded the Israelites to borrow jewels of silver, and jewels of gold (Ex. xi); the Lord gave the nations of the earth into the hands of Joshua, Gideon, David, &c.: these, without sinning in so doing, executed his solemn command. The Egyptians had, no doubt, held from the Israelites the due reward of their labor: we read of their task being doubled, but we do not read that their reward was doubled. The silver and the gold are Lord's and he will take the wise in their own craftiness.

The idolatrous nations of the earth would, if possible, have destroyed the Israel of God; therefore the God of Israel destroyed them: yet God tempteth no man to sin. Abraham slaying Isaac by the command of God, would have been right because God commanded it; but here is yet a twofold trial for Abraham: first, the slaying of Isaac would be against the promise that the seed of Abraham by Isaac should be as the sand of the sea shore, and as the stars for multitude. The Holy Spirit has, by the Apostle, explained to us how Abraham overcame this part of the trial. By faith, Abraham, when he was tried concerning the command of God to offer Isaac for a burnt-offering, accounted that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure (Heb. xi). But then here is his parental affection to Isaac; this is overcome also by the same faith that firmly believed in God. Thus God tempted, that is, - as the Holy Ghost by the Apostle has it, - tried Abraham. "Count it all joy" saith James (i. 2), "when ye fall into divers temptations," that is divers tribulations, as those shall wean from the world, and work for good. I again repeat, that the Lord neither infuses sin into our nature, nor tempts men to sin; yet no one can move even to do evil without his permission: but permission and approbation are two things. The legion of fallen angels could not enter the herd of swine without the sufferance of the Savior. It is in this permissive sense that I understand the following Scriptures: "the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart" - "whom he will, he hardeneth." Hardness of heart is one of the characteristics of man by nature; all men by the fall are in this state, and if men are left entirely to the hardening power of sin, it is hard to say to what extent they may go, as we see in the case of Pharaoh towards the Israelites, Saul, towards David, above all, the Jews towards the Lord Jesus and his Apostles, and the Roman Catholics, in after ages, towards the true followers of the Lamb. I do not, therefore, believe that the Lord hardens men influentially, or by any influence from himself, but that he sovereignly leaves them to the hardening power of sin; and in leaving whom he will, he thus permissively hardeneth whom he will.

Again it is written, of Shimei, "let him curse for the Lord hath bidden him" (2 Sam. xvi. 11). This Shimei was of the family of the house of David with perfect hatred, and was heartily glad of the opportunity to insult David to the greatest extent that he could; thus his inclination and determination to curse David, arose from himself. As Shimei wished to curse David, the Lord said, Go; not that the Lord approved of the conduct

of Shimei, nor do I believe that the Lord spoke to Shimei; yet it was David's comfort to know that Shimei could not thus persecute him, without the Lord's having thus permissively bidden him.

*Death and plagues around me fly,
Till he bid I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love see fit.*

Again, "Now therefore, behold the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets (1 Kings, xxii. 23); and the Lord said who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead. And there came forth a spirit and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith? And he said I will go forth and be a lying spirit in the month of all his prophets." Here the Lord bid the lying spirit do what he (the lying spirit), wished to do. Here we see the Lord governing by his power, but not inclining by any influence from himself the lying spirit to work deception.

Again (2 Sam. xxiv. 1), it is written, "The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah;" and in 1 Chron. xxi. 1 it is written, "Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel." Here it appears to me that the Lord moved David permissively, and Satan moved David influentially. God was the Governor, and Satan the agent; so that David's pride that prompted him to number Israel, was permitted, though not approved of, by the Lord. This pride was of the flesh, stirred up by the wicked one. It is in this permissive sense that I understand such Scriptures as "He hath given them the spirit of slumber." "Eyes that they should not see," &c., that is, he leaves them under the power of darkness.

Again: "Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men, that work iniquity, and let me not eat of their dainties," (Psal. cxli. 4); that is, (at least as I understand it), suffer not my heart to carry me away into delusions, sins, and vanities of the world. For let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. The Lord's people are taught to pray – "Lead us not into temptation." Now, though the Lord does not tempt any man, yet it must be acknowledged, that such is the sovereign authority of God, that he does by his providence place men in circumstances in which they are tempted to evil; and so it is written, "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places, thou castedst them down into destruction" (Psal. xxiii. 18); it is to these mysterious leadings of providence Agar alludes when he says, "give me neither poverty nor riches" (Prov. xxx. 8). To these same leadings of providence the psalmist refers, when he says, "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity" (Psal. cxxv. 5). Providence made Pilate governor in Judea; and the Lord told Pilate that he (Pilate), could have no power except it were given him from above. Pilate's office called upon him to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that did well: but Pilate found his situation both slippery and rugged, so that he stumbled and fell. In a word, the Lord tempteth no man, yet he has sovereignly permitted the fall of angles and men, all which he could, had it been his will, have prevented. These things have not occurred because he had no power to prevent, for his power is almighty; nor yet because he did not foresee that angles and men would fall, for all things in all worlds, past present, and to come, are naked and open unto him; nor yet because he was indifferent as to how matters went. We cannot ascribe indifference to God, - his eyes are upon the truth, and he is determined to maintain the truth, both of law and gospel. The conclusion to which I am hastening is this, - that while nothing contrary to holiness and righteousness can emanate from God, yet the existence and operations of sin shall be subservient to the counsels of his will. The Jews were hurried on by the wickedness of their own hearts to crucify Christ; yet they were so over ruled by the Lord that they could do no more than his counsels had determined should be done; angles and men, he would have abode by the counsels of his will, and have performed all his pleasure; and

therefore it is that the eternal misery of all that are lost, is according to his will; for all things are bounded by the counsel of his will – he worketh all things permissively and influentially, after the counsel of his own will. It is nowhere in the Bible said, that he willeth not the death of a sinner, though it is said he hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked. His pleasure is in his people; in them that hope in his mercy. I again say, that the eternal misery of the lost is according to the counsel of his will. This is not mere human assertion, for the word of God is clear and positive upon this awful subject. Notice attentively the following Scripture recorded in Romans, ix. 11: “Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?” Here we have creatures as dependent upon their Creator for their destiny, as clay in the hand of the potter. Secondly, that God manifests his power to punish according to his own will, and that he bears with the vessels of wrath until they have filled up the measure of their iniquity. God has determined the punishment of the lost; but that does not “mitigate their woes.” Sin exists and acts subservient to the will of God, but its subservience to his will does not lessen the evil of its nature, through it restrains its operations; - hitherto shalt thou come and no further – are words never to fall to the ground.

I again repeat that God is not the author of sin; and that nothing contrary to holiness and righteousness can emanate from God. Yet as both Prophets and Apostles have spoken of the Lord as so managing the wicked that they can only do what his hand and his counsel from everlasting, determined should be done, - as the Prophets and Apostles have thus spoken, we must follow their steps in this as well as in other departments of inspired truth.

Many in our day talk loudly concerning men going on in sin. They talk, prate, and preach about this side of the question wonderfully; but if anything be said concerning the sovereignty of God in permitting it, his power in overruling it and his will in determining the bounds, they immediately turn around upon us, and say, we make light of sin, and that we make God the author of sin, - which charges are as false as God is true.

Surely there must be some reason why it is declared that the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, that he bid Shimei curse David, that he put a lying spirit into the mouth of Ahab’s prophets, that he moved David to number Israel, that he has given unto thousands the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see. I have shown that he does not do these things by any influence emanating from himself, but that he does these things permissively. Are not then these things - namely that he hardened Pharaoh’s heart, bid Shimei curse David, and put a lying spirit into the mouth of Ahab’s prophets, - are not these things thus spoken to show that while on the one hand God is not the author of sin, yet on the other hand, that nothing can be done without his permission, - that is to say, that all creatures and things are so dependent upon him, that they must be subservient to the counsels of his will; so that he is perfectly at liberty to have mercy on whom he will have mercy?

The Savior knew that Judas would betray him, yet we do not find that he expostulated with Judas upon the awfulness of such an act, but bids him - what shall I say? – permissively – yes, I will say permissively – bids him go on with his awful work. “Then said Jesus unto him – that thou doest, do quickly” (John xiii. 27). The Savior said this to Judas after Judas had received the sop, and Satan had taken possession of his heart: so that Judas was already bent and prepared for his traitorous work. And while Judas was thus bent upon this deed, the Savior said, “What thou doest do quickly.” It must fall to some one’s unhappy lot to betray the Son of God. Sin pushes men on to all that is evil. God sovereignly permits, and yet restrains.

Thus on the one hand God is not the author of sin; yet the existence and operations of sin are not contrary to his will, but subservient to it. That he sovereignly placed a part of the angelic host in a fallible state, that he created man holy and upright, yet placed him in a fallible state. Angels and men having a conditional standing, they fell. That the Lord so placed them for ends of his own glory, - that their eternal condemnation will be according to his holy law, and his sovereign will. He has thus made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil, and those ministers who in their ministry keep back the doctrine of eternal reprobation, I say eternal, for the reprobate are a people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever: not because they are by nature and practice any worse than others, but because the Lord hath sovereignly rejected them – ministers who keep back the doctrine of eternal reprobation, keep back a part of the truth; they take not forth the precious from the vile – rightly divide the word of God, nor show up that difference which the Lord hath made between the Egyptians and Israel. Between these (the Egyptians and Israel) there is a great gulph fixed, across which no bridge ever was, or ever can be made. And of this gulph men must be told, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

The justice of God in the reprobation of angles and men, is founded in his right to do what he will with his own creatures. He created and supports them, and creatures are not their own – they are the Lord's. In the several relations in which he has been pleased to place them – some of the angels he sovereignly placed in a fallible state, some he sovereignly secured – he placed Adam and Eve in a fallible state, and they fell, and all men have sinned in Adam. In this state of sin some are eternally left, and some are loved with an everlasting love; - chosen in Christ, appointed to salvation, and shall obtain eternal life. And by what law can it be proved that in these things God is unjust? For where there is no law there can be no transgression; and woe unto him that striveth with his maker. "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth, but shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what makest thou?" (Isa. xlv. 9).

The great Creator has made all things for himself, and being infinite in wisdom, he cannot err; being self-existent, he is independent of all but himself; being almighty, he can never fail to accomplish all his purposes, and establish all his counsels; and being holy, sin must be infinitely and eternally hateful to him. While he was at liberty to prevent or permit the existence of sin, he has permitted its existence, not from any necessity, but purely of his own will: he works all things influentially and permissively, after the counsel of his own will; and thrice happy is that man who is brought to submit to his truth, receive his salvation, having renounced all confidence in the flesh, walking with God, resting in the finished work of Christ, and glorying in the Lord alone.

Concerning the doctrine of reprobation, I come to this four-fold conclusion, - 1st. that God has sovereignly permitted the existence of sin for ends of his own glory. 2^{ndly}, that the justice of God in permitting the existence of sin, and that to the final condemnation of fallen angels, and millions of the human race – the justice of God in this permitting sin to exist, is founded in his right to do what he will with his own creatures. 3^{rdly}, that God is not the author of sin. 4^{thly}, that a scriptural reception of the doctrine of Reprobation does not tend to make light of sin, but brings the creature into the dust of self-abasement; constrains him to tremble at the word of God, hate sin, seek for mercy, and fly for refuge to the hope set before him in the Gospel.

I shall here merely notice one out of the many charges brought against the doctrine of Reprobation, which is, that it engenders a spirit of hatred to our fellow-creatures. This is what many say – but where is the truth of this saying? I think it can easily be proved, that most of the hatred is in, and exercised by, not those who receive, but those who refuse the doctrine of Reprobation. The prophets and apostles held and preached this doctrine of Reprobation, and I think they cannot be very well charged with hatred to their fellow-creatures; for no class of men had such real spiritual love to the souls of men as had the prophets

and apostles; and yet, they were hated of all men, and most of all by the free will and universal-charity men of their day. The same spirit that compassed sea and land to make proselytes, put the prophets of God to death, crucified the Lord of life and glory, slew the apostles and millions beside, and it is clear to those who know the truth, that hatred to the true spirit and real gospel of God, is as universal as ever it was. And although external persecution has, through a kind and over-ruling Providence, in a great measure ceased, yet the wicked one, the world, and the carnal mind are not in reality changed. They are only changed from one mode of attack to another – the enemy is transformed into an angel of light, and his ministers, as ministers of righteousness. It matters not to the enemy whether he carries on his work by storm or stratagem – his business is either by fraud or force to destroy. The enemy was not allowed to do any bodily violence to Adam and Eve. No, he went with every pretension of friendship, informing them of a way in which they might better themselves and be as gods. He in ten thousand ways is the great deceiver of fallen men. His object was to get Adam and Eve away from the truth as it is in Jesus, and that under the pretension of bringing men to the truth.

He who is Truth itself came and declared the truth, and was by the very men who pretended that if they had lived in the days of their fathers, they would not have persecuted the prophets – by these very men was He who was the Truth itself called a deceiver; they called him, who was God and the Son of God, and made a priest by an immutable oath, a blasphemer; called him who was and is heir of all things, king of kings, and lord of lords, an usurper. He who hated sin with infinite hatred was called a wine bibber, a gluttonous man, a friend (in the bad sense) of publicans and sinners: he who is the Lord of the Sabbath, yea the true Sabbath itself, a violator of the Sabbath; yea, that he in whom dwelt all the fullness of the godhead bodily, had a devil, and was mad; that he who is eternal life itself, was not fit to live; that he who upheld heaven and earth, was worthy of a place in neither; that he who had befriended millions of millions, ought not be befriended by any; that he who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, was the vilest man that ever lived. Barabbas, the murderer, whom they piously pardoned, was an amiable creature compared with Jesus of Nazareth. So much for the love of free-will and universal-charity men.

The real, sovereign, eternal truths of the gospel meet with the same treatment now, from thousands of thousands who profess the Christian name; yet they seem very much to pity the poor heathen who are worshipping stocks and stones, and so did the universal-charity men of old, and compassed sea and land to make proselytes, and declared that they (the Pharisees) were not idolaters, for that had one Father, even God. So that they worshipped the God of heaven and earth, but the doctrines they held in their hands and in their hearts, were false doctrines, so that the Lord said of their service, who hath required this at your hands? Men are not to be blamed for pitying their fellow-creatures, who are lost to all the privileges of education, civilization, and morality. A sympathy for them in these respects is truly praiseworthy, and ever a concern for the salvation of as many both at home and abroad, as the Lord our God shall call, is honorable, just, and good; but then let the Lord be God, let his truth be received, his sovereignty be acknowledged, and his counsels proclaimed, for all goodness that comes not, and is not supported in this way, will evaporate as the early dew, and pass like the morning cloud into nothingness (Hosea vi. 4).

The Savior's weeping over Jerusalem and declaring his willingness to have gathered the people together under the wings of his ministry, are circumstances often adduced by professors to establish the doctrines of free-will and universal offers of the gospel.

As it is the glory of God to conceal a thing, and the honor of kings (viz. those who are kings and priests to God) to search out a matter (Prov. xxv. 2); let us now see if we can find out the meaning of these scriptures. In so doing I will mention two scriptures that appear in the letters of them to contradict each other; "and when he was come near he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at

least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes” (Luke xix. 41, 42). This is one scripture; the other is this, “In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so Father for so it seemed good in thy sight” (Luke x. 21). Here is the Savior weeping over the city, saying, if thou hast known the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes; and then rejoicing in spirit that the mysteries of the kingdom were hidden from some and revealed to others. If the Jews had known these things that belonged unto their peace as a nation, they would not have persecuted and crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. ii. 8). It is to their peace as a nation the Savior alludes; but the scriptures must be fulfilled, for it was written that he should be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that his soul should be an offering for sin, that they should pierce his hands and his feet, these and many, many more things were written of him and the scriptures cannot be broken. What then can be the meaning of the Savior, saying, if thou hadst, known the things that belong to thy peace, and how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Now the meaning of these scriptures appears to me to be this, that as the Lord Jesus condescended to be found in fashion as a man, although he was not a man of the least shadow of sinful passions like ourselves, yet he had in him all the noble sympathies of sinless humanity, and it may be said that even by virtue of these noble sympathies he went about doing good; he had compassion on the multitude when they were faint in the wilderness; wept at the grave of Lazarus; he was grieved with, and looked with holy anger upon, the Pharisees, because of the hardness of their hearts in envying the man with the withered hand being healed on the Sabbath day (Mark iii. 5). They would that the poor man’s withered hand should have continued so, rather than it should be said that it was healed by Jesus of Nazareth. It may be said in an extensive sense, that he did good unto all men, especially to the household of faith; to these (the household of faith) he revealed the mysteries of the kingdom, but to others he did not reveal these mysteries, for he came to declare the name of his heavenly Father unto his brethren. Yet though he went about doing good, the chief priests, scribes, and rulers, pretender to the people that this Jesus of Nazareth was an enemy to their nation, for, said they, he is a deceiver, and usurper, a wine-bibber, a blasphemer, and hath a devil, and that if he were suffered to go on, the Romans to whom they were already in bondage, would come and take their place and nation, and that, therefore, this Jesus of Nazareth ought to be put to death. These chief priests, scribes, and rulers, had such influence among the people that many believed that Jesus was what his enemies said he was. Saul, who was afterwards called Paul, was at this time at college, and such a character did his theological tutors give of Jesus of Nazareth, that he was determined when he got out of college to put a stop to the progress of the name of Jesus. Paul says that “he verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus” (Acts xxvi. 9). What kind of men then must have been his tutors? Why similar to almost all the theological tutors of the colleges of the present day, their heads stuffed with learned lumber, and their hearts the habitation of devils, prompting them to keep back the great and infinitely important doctrines of eternal election, divine predestination, the covenant ordered in all things and sure, and bringing forward the vile traditions of free-will, duty-faith, general offers, and the like; so that they send their man-made ministers out, verily thinking that they ought to do many things contrary to these very high doctrines, which doctrines, say they, are very dangerous. This is the old story only a little modified, for they said Jesus, was a dangerous man that he was a wine-bibber, and so it is now. Gospel ministers are said to be dangerous men, that their doctrines have a dangerous tendency, and as with the master so with his servants, as with Jesus so with his doctrines, they are despised and rejected of men.

But to return. The Jews then declared Jesus to be an enemy to them and their nation; and whereas such were the Savior’s feelings as man towards them, that he wept when he contemplated the misery to which they as a nation were to be subjected; and what can be more pathetic than the strains in which he describes their destiny as a nation; saying “If thou, even thou, at least hadst known in this thy day the things which

belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes; for the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation." These were the Savior's noble sympathies as man. It was from the same good feeling that he said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth he chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" These, I again say, were his noble sympathies and good feelings toward them as men; but these his noble sympathies toward the Jews as a nation must not be confounded with his sovereign will concerning those for whom he died. Not that these sympathies he exercised among men were contrary to the will of God in the eternal security of his people. No; for it was the will of God that Christ should be a man of special love; but these natural sympathies ended with his life; mind I speak of those noble sympathies, that were purely natural and necessary to him through the days of his flesh; but when he died all his cries and tears, his sorrows and natural sympathies with men ceased so that he has no more to weep at the grave of a Lazarus, nor over the city devoted to destruction; no more to weary and sit on the well asking for a draught of cold water. Sorrows are forever fled.

*No more the cruel spear,
The cross and nails no more;
For hell itself shakes at his name,
And all the heavens adore.*

As the Savior was a man of special love and general sympathy, so are his people (only in an inferior degree) in these respects like unto him. They sympathize with their fellow-creatures generally, and their desire, as far as lieth in them, is to do good unto all men; but then these sympathies will end with their life in this world; and though they have many ties in nature, and objects of endearment, yet when the body dies, the soul is as completely severed from these natural objects and natural ties, as though it had never been connected with them. If these ties were not thus severed, not one soul in heaven could be happy. One would be lamenting the absence of parents, another the absence of a wife, another the absence of a husband, others the absence of their children. There would be none who would not have to lament the absence of some who were connected with them in the ties of nature. On the other hand, there would (that is, if those natural sympathies could go with the soul into heaven,) be partiality among the saints in glory. One would be preferred before the other, because of the natural ties existing between them in this world. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood (in its natural state) cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. xv. 50). Even the Savior's natural, yet truly noble and general sympathies, must end with his life; and the reason is obvious, viz. that these natural sympathies, so essential in this world, would be too weak to bear up under that eternal weight of glory that shall rest upon Christ and the church.

Did not the Savior allude to the cessation of these natural sympathies when he said to Mary Magdalene, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended." She had washed his feet with tears, and wiped them with her hair; but the burning sands could not now be scorching to his sacred feet; he could not hunger nor thirst, nor be weary any more for ever; all communion was now to be spiritual. We do not find that he needed or accepted after his resurrection one act of natural sympathy. When he turned in with the two disciples at Emmaus he blessed the bread, brake it, and vanished out of their site. When the disciples were affrighted as he stood in the midst of them, and supposed that it was a spirit, he said, "Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have;" and they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he did eat before them; by which means he silenced their fears, and assured them who he was, He said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and put thy finger into the print of the nails,

and be not faithless but believing." I do not believe that Thomas did literally reach forth his hand, for I believe that it was the power that attended the word that caused Thomas to exclaim, "My Lord and my God." These instances do not do away with the truth of the observation that the Savior's natural and general sympathies with human nature, or men in general, ended with his life. These sympathies in him were sinless, but in fallen man they are not sinless. These sympathies in men are by a variety of circumstances called into exercise. It is by virtue of these sympathies that men contend for universal redemption, duty-faith, free-will, and general exhortation. These sympathies in fallen men being altogether corrupted by sin, men, in and by their natural sympathy towards their fellow-creatures, go on in rebellion against the sovereignty of God. Some think it right altogether to reject, and others to keep back, the great doctrines of eternal election and divine predestination. These are led by misguided nature, and not by saving grace, and in this way they are deceived, taking the sympathies of nature for the signs of salvation; but these are false tokens, and differ materially from the true token which the Lord gives to his Rahabs, which token is the three-fold cord of eternal truth, the Father's eternal love, the Savior's eternal redemption, and the Holy Spirit's all-sufficient grace. These meet and are all one in Christ Jesus, and received into the heart and understanding of the true believer. By this three-fold cord the believer is tied to Jesus. This three-fold cord who can break? These truths received into the soul by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit are the true token but with these great truths nature is at variance, even enmity against God in that revelation he has made of himself in the eternal election of his people in Christ Jesus. The true Christian often feels the workings of his natural and misguided sympathies. Let him read of Hagar and her son Ishmael being sent away with a bottle of water or of Esau deprived of his birthright, and how often, when reading these and the like accounts in the Bible, does the believer feel his natural sympathies rising against the very truths he is reading? The true believer knows what the workings of these natural sympathies are, but he is not led by them as the greater part of professors are.

I again observe, that the Lord Jesus was sinless; so that though he sympathized with men generally, yet not so as to keep back any part of the truth of God. His natural sympathies were in perfect accordance with law and gospel. The Savior was under the law, and the law demands love to men in general. Mind, this is only natural love, yet in him it was sinless; and when he died, his servitude under the law was accomplished; his natural love to men in general then ended, but his special, that is, his love to his people, remains. To them he is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

Yet it must not be forgotten that he was found in fashion as a man; and according to his feelings as man, how often would he have gathered the Jews under the wings of his ministry, but the rulers would not allow it; for they agreed that if any man did confess Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. His weeping over the city, saying, "If thou hadst known the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes;" this is not expressive of any derangement in the counsel of God; it was the will and purpose of God that Christ, as a man among men, should be a man of general sympathy. So, also, the Savior's weeping over Jerusalem, and on another occasion saying "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children as a hen doth her chickens, and ye would not." Now as it was the will of God that Christ should be, in the days of his flesh, a man of general sympathy, these his good feelings as man towards the Jews, in opposition to their bad feelings towards him; for he rendered not evil for evil, and when he was reviled he reviled not again; - these his good feelings as man towards men in general were not contrary to, but in perfect accordance with, the law and gospel of God. Allow, then, these Scriptures to be expressive of his sympathies as man, we shall then find that they are not a variance with that scripture which says, "in that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Thus if it were not the will of God that those things should be hidden from the Jews, and that they should be left to themselves as to

oppose the Savior's gathering the people together, to speak unto them the word of truth; if these things were not in subservience to the will of God, how could the Savior rejoice, and thank his heavenly Father that these things were hidden from some, and revealed to others; and not because one was better than another, but because it seemed good in the sight of the Lord that it should be so.

The Savior's weeping over Jerusalem, Jerusalem, &c., may be farther illustrated by feelings to which no true gospel minister is a stranger; he feels the importance of the value of immortal souls, sympathizes in the calamities of his fellow creatures, fain would he gather the many thousands around him, and speak unto them the words of eternal truth; but could he assemble the whole world, he dares not say that God loved them all, that Christ died for them all, that the Holy Spirit strives with them all; he must leave this delusive work to those who are not led by the Spirit of the Lord, but by the misguided sympathies of fallen nature. But the man of God must proclaim the eternal counsels of heaven, saying, the Lord is good, his mercy endures forever; he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens; that except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. That he that began the good work will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ, &c. He must proclaim these things, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear; the minister knows not who among them may be the Lord's, therefore preach "the gospel (only let it be the gospel of God) to every creature, for thou knowest not whither shall prosper this or that."

This general sympathy of a gospel minister – a sympathy which if it were the Lord's will would lead him to preach the gospel to assembled myriads – this sympathy in the minister and man of God is not to be confounded with his special love to God, the truth of God, and the children of God. For notwithstanding the children of God are brought to know that some must be lost, yet they, the children of God, are bound to give thanks, that God hath from the beginning chosen them to salvation, to rejoice that their names are written in heaven, that they are blessed with all spiritual blessings according as they are chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; thus a line of distinction is to be drawn between their good feeling toward men in general, and their special love to the truth and to each other; their natural sympathy towards men in general will terminate with their mortal life, but their special love, which is the love of God in them, will be in them forever.

How delusive then is that doctrine which on the ground of the sinless sympathies of the manhood of Christ, builds the system of universal redemption, and its natural concomitants, universal invitation, a chance for all, &c. Men being led by the misguided sympathies of their fallen nature, take an unscriptural view of the sinless sympathies of the manhood of Christ, and preach him up in the natural sympathies of his manhood, in a way that contradicts and beclouds the eternal counsels of his will in the salvation of the church. Surely these ministers of confusion and delusion must, if they ever think about it, be rather at a loss to account for the same person and (a person that could not err) one time weeping over Jerusalem, saying, "if thou hast known the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from your eyes," and on another occasion to rejoice that these things were hidden from some and revealed to others; but admit the one expressive of the sympathies of his manhood with men in general, and the other expressive of his delight in the sovereign and immutable will of God; these scriptures then harmonize. But, as before noticed, his natural sympathies with men in general ceased with his servitude under the law, he now sitteth in the heavens, his hand is in the neck of his enemies, and "he will laugh at their calamities and mock when their fear cometh."

Here it may be asked, does not this statement do away with the truth that he still sympathizes with his people? No, certainly not; for they are so one with him, that he that touches them touches the apple of his eye; and although his present and personal bliss cannot be violated by anything that his people may

suffer, yet his sympathy, that is, his infallible pity and compassion, extends to them in all circumstances, bodily pain, adversity in temporal affairs, temptations, soul trouble; yea even if any sin (and there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not) he is their advocate with the Father, pleading for them his own blood: but that natural sympathy which he exercised towards men in general in the days of his flesh, has forever ceased, as will the natural sympathy of the saints with men in general when they depart this world. Those persons whom they pitied and sympathized with in this world, they will neither pity nor sympathize with at the last day; that is to say, those that shall be found on the Savior's left hand, and many of whom, for aught we know, the Savior in the days of his flesh, as man, pitied and sympathized with, shall at the last day, by the terrible sentence he shall pass, be sent down to perdition; and neither the Savior nor the saints will at that day have any pity for, nor sympathy with, those that shall be lost. As for the saints, they will be delivered from all the ties of mortal nature; they will be all one in nature, mind, and state: by virtue of union to Christ Jesus the Lord, they shall be like him, and see him as he is: they there neither marry, nor are given in marriage; distinction of sex is done away forever, and they will be in this respect as the angles of God. The saints of God will be above and beyond all temporal relationship. Their relationship is nothing less than heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, kings and priests to God, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

There are two more things in the words uttered by the Savior when he wept over Jerusalem, which I must here notice. 1st. What is meant by the things that belong unto their peace. Secondly. The reason assigned for their calamities, in these words, *because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation*, 1st. the peace, which cannot mean that peace which is established by the Mediator's blood, because this peace is unconditional, inviolable, and eternal, and all the Lord's elect are sure to be brought to the enjoyment of it; and so it is written, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isa. liv. 13). The things therefore belonging to the peace of the Jews were national; the Savior wept over them as a nation; and to their peace as a nation he alludes when he speaks of the things that belong to their peace, we shall find out the things that belonged to their peace as a nation, in the reason assigned for their then approaching calamities; which is, that they knew not the day of their visitation. Here this question will arise, was it criminal in the Jewish teachers not to know the day of their visitation, that is, was it criminal in them not to know that Christ was the true Messiah? *Yes, certainly it was!* Well, now we have made the assertion, let us prove the truth of it; we must begin by saying, that where there is no law there is no transgression; now then what was the law of the office of the Jewish priests and teachers? and if they violated this law, then they were transgressors; well then, the law runs thus: "the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth" (Mal. ii. 7). Now these Jewish teachers ought, according to their office, to have known the laws of Moses and doctrines of the prophets concerning Christ, and the descriptions given of Christ in the Old Testament, to have pointed him out to the people as the true Messiah. This is what the law of their office called upon them to do, but this law they violated, the penalty of which is thus written: "Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way, and all the people shall say, Amen." The matter comes to this, either they (the Jewish teachers) did not know the laws of Moses and the doctrines of the prophets, or they did not; if they did not, then they proudly and presumptuously assumed an office in the house of God, which they did not understand, and that for the sake of filthy lucre; and if they did know the laws of Moses and doctrines of the prophets, I mean in the letter of them, and yet did not faithfully state them to the people, then they come under the curse of the violation of another law of their office, and the curse is thus written: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully" (Jer. xlvi. 10). So then as the Jewish teachers knew not, or pretended to know not, that Christ was the true Messiah, they were very guilty. Their sin appears to have been chiefly ambition, they were fond of power and pride, for they loved to be called Rabbi, Rabbi; and presumption in presuming upon an office, the import of which they did not understand; and also covetousness, their aim being to

accumulate the good things of this life; such were the Jewish teachers, and what, under such teachers as these, must be the state of the people?

Such was the state of the people in general, that they loved to have it so, and is not the state of the greater part of professors of the present day strongly analogous? To what kind of teachers do they seek? Not to those who proclaim the eternal counsels of God shining forth in the salvation of a chosen world; but to those who nurse their free-will pride, duty-faith presumption, hypocritical pretensions to universal charity, and who either deny altogether, or say but little about the great truths of eternal election and divine predestination; they have itching ears, but not circumcised ears; they build colleges and make ministers by wholesale, and thus heap to themselves teachers, who are destitute of the Spirit, and whose knowledge of the way of salvation is merely theoretical, and whose sermons are the offspring of studious brains but not of an experienced heart; they stir up the passions of nature, but bring not Christ into the heart; they please the senses but do not quicken the soul; they speak Christ, but do not give entire pre-eminence to his cross; they admit he has done great things, but not all things essential to our eternal security; that he pleads for sinners, but without their consent cannot prevail; these teachers say more about human doings, than divine donations; more about what we ought to do, than about what the Lord has done. These are the teachers chosen by the greater part, even of those who profess to believe that salvation is of grace; but the Lord knoweth them that are his, and none of the ransomed can ever be lost, - "the righteous shall hold on his way."

And now having shown that Reprobation is a doctrine of the Bible; that in Reprobation there are some things which the Lord does do, namely, that he holds men accountable to him according to his holy law, that he bestows upon them many of the comforts of this life, that he awards the punishment due to sin, and that he himself will bring them to judgment; these are the things which the Lord does do, the things which he does not do, are, that he does not infuse sin into men, nor tempt to sin; nothing can emanate from him contrary to the purity of his nature. God is not the author of sin. Having also shown that a scriptural reception of the doctrine of Reprobation, does not engender hatred to our fellow-creatures, but that the hatred has been exercised not by those who have received, but by those who have rejected the doctrine, and that a line of distinction is to be drawn between natural sympathies (which are good in their place) and special and spiritual love; having shown these things, I now pass on to the great doctrine of eternal election.

Of the great act of election, we may notice the grace of it, the justice of it, and the publicity of it: first the grace of it.

If there is in the present day a remnant of true believers, it is according to the election of grace; in this grace there are in every sense freeness and fullness, and if by the great act of election, great things have been done for a number which no man can number, then it is a doctrine of vital importance, and is one of the essential parts of the all truth into a knowledge and reception of which the Holy Spirit will lead all those of whom he is the teacher. Let us then here notice a few of the things the Lord has done by the great act of eternal election; first, he by this act took a number of the human race into such relation to himself that they are his children, he is their Father, he their God, and they are his people; hence while they are in a state of nature, they are called children, - "all they children shall be taught of the Lord." Now mind here they are called the Lord's children before they are taught by the Lord, therefore because they are sons (by eternal election) God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father (Gal. iv. 6). Again, while they are in a state of nature, they are called the Lord's people, - "thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power;" here we see their being made willing to be saved in the Lord's own way, is a happy consequence of their being his people; they are also called sheep, even while they are wandering from

God; - "other sheep I have, which are not of this fold;" and who are these other sheep, but those of the elect of God among the Gentiles. Again, they are while in the ruins of the fall, called the Tabernacle of David; the Lord began in the Apostolic age to take out of the Gentiles a people for his name, "to this agree the words of the prophet as it is written; after this I will return, and build again the Tabernacle of David which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up" (Acts xv. 15, 16). The Tabernacle of David that is, the elect of God, once stood in Adam with the non-elect, and with them they fell; but the Lord will set up his elect again, not in the first Adam, but in the second Adam, in whom they shall be for an habitation of God through the Spirit. In consequence of election, they are, while in their state by nature called the Lord's children, his people, his sheep, the Tabernacle of David, that is, of Christ; they are by nature children of wrath (deservedly) even as other, "but God, who is rich in mercy, and for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when dead in sin, quickened them together with Christ, by grace they are saved" (Eph. ii.). As election has given the relation to God, this eternal union to Christ, so it has set to their account, the Savior's atonement for sin; a blessing of infinite value and eternal duration, delivering from the lowest hell, and carrying to the highest heaven; turning sinners into saints, and qualifying them for the presence of infinite purity, taking away guilt and disease, and giving them innocence and health; without this atonement there is no hope, and without election there is no interest in this atonement.

Imputed righteousness is another blessing obtained by election-union to Christ; in this righteousness the Lord's people are honorable in the eye of the law; answer to the claims of justice, realize the purpose of mercy, are entitled to the realms of bliss, and shall forever glory in the Lord, - "in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory"; "whom he justified them he also glorified."

Spiritual life is another blessing of election. In the experience of this, they feel that they are sinners, that they are helpless, ruined, and altogether undone in and of themselves; that the law of God is holy, just, and good, but that they are carnal, sold under sin; that the Lord Jesus alone can deliver them, plead their cause, and bring them to the regions of life, light, and love; by this life in them they believe in, pray to and seek after the Lord; this life is in Christ, and they in him, for he is their life, "and when Christ who is our life shall appear, they also shall appear in glory with him."

The covenant of mercy is another blessing of election, for if no mediator, nor persons for whom he was to mediate, had been chosen, no covenant would have been entered into for their security. As Jesus was the chosen head and mediator of a chosen people, so concerning him, "the Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." And concerning them the Lord hath said, this people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise," that he will write him laws in their hearts, that their sins, and their iniquities he will remember no more. The Holy Ghost, by the Apostle Peter, calls these people a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, and that as they are formed (not for themselves) but for the Lord, so they shall shew forth not their own praises, for they have nothing of their own to praise, they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord, for he it is who calls them by his grace out of darkness into his marvelous light. The perfections of God, his covenant transactions and relations to his people, are his praises, these the praises of the Lord's people show forth feebly on earth, but more fully in heaven; the praise wherewith the Lord praises his people; for it is written of the church, that her husband, he also praises her; this praise is not of men but of God; he praises the church in the comeliness he hath put upon her, saying "thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee."

In a word take away eternal election, you take away everything; for those who have any spiritual blessings are blessed with all spiritual blessings according as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; the nature, purpose, extent of these blessings, are by the apostle given in a few words, which words

are these, viz., “that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” These words imply all that we can need, and all that the Lord can give. It is by the blood of Christ that we are to be holy, he is our sanctification, his blood cleanseth us from all sins; by his righteousness we are to be without blame, for it is by him that we are justified from all things, and it is by him that we dwell in love, not mere creature-love, but the love of God; all the blessings essential to bring us to this state of celestial purity, perfection, and glory, were bestowed according to election. Take away, then, the great act of eternal election, and not one spiritual blessing can be had by any one son or daughter of Adam. Many may, and many do seem to themselves and to others to be real Christians, but then, they are seeking to be saved contrary to the order of truth, either totally disbelieving or making light of the great act of eternal election; and in this unscriptural way many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. The election of grace will obtain, and the rest will be blinded (Rom. xi. 7). From these who shall be blinded, shall be taken away even that which they seem to have (Luke viii. 18). All the Lord’s people shall be taught of the Lord, and be brought to know that all the blessings of their salvation were bestowed upon them in the Lord Jesus, and that according to election; those blessings were bestowed upon them freely and fully, and are the freeness and fullness of this election in Christ in any manner or degree unnecessary. Let us try this matter by the rules of eternal truth. And, first, to what are angels indebted for the security and their bliss; think this matter over for a moment, did the Lord prevent them from falling partly or wholly on account of any good works of their? Where is the man who dares to say that the angels are in the least measure whatever indebted to anything of their own, for the security and the glory they now enjoy? They are objects of their maker’s choice, and

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*To him and him alone,
The angels owe their bliss,
They sit around his gracious throne,
And dwell where Jesus is.*

If then angles are indebted to election, for they are called elect angels (1 Tim. v. 21), for the security and the glory they have, what must be the language of guilty and mortal man? For no mere creature ever had a conditional standing but it lost, that is to say, a state, the continuation of which depended upon the creature continuing to do his duty. Angels that were thus placed lost their glory, Adam and Eve were thus situated, and they fell; the Jewish nation was under a conditional covenant, which nation is now scattered to the four winds. If then freeness and fullness were needed in that favor by which unfallen angels were secured, what must be the freeness and fullness of that love, mercy, and grace, by which fallen men are made heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, are redeemed from all evil, justified from all things, complete in Christ, taught by the Holy Spirit, and have infinite, eternal, and unlosable possessions.

Let us notice these highly favored of the Lord, under the following circumstances, and then ask if each circumstance does not show the necessity of freeness and fullness in the grace of God? First, their fall in Adam; in him they sinned, were condemned and died; thus in Adam by his transgression they became guilty before God, were condemned by his holy law, and are dead in sin, and driven entirely and forever out of paradise, Now what can these dry bones do? They cannot return to the paradise, whence they were driven, and no law of human works can now be given by which life can be obtained. Angels cannot plant another paradise, and the Lord will not, and had not electing grace embraced a number of these dry bones, all must have been swept away into the fire of vindictive wrath. But let us trace this awful subject a little further, and mark in few words the progress of these creatures up to the judgment day, and see if we can find any place or period in their history when election grace is not needed. The next thing then is that they are conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity; exemption to this none can boast. The next step is that they are born as wild asses’ colts, what but grace can tame and same then there? The next step is that they go

astray from the womb, speaking lies, carrying with them a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; and is there one moment during their life on earth in which they are something in themselves, that can entitle them to one mercy, or can they perform one act by which and for which they can claim one favor at the hands of their maker? Yes, when the Ethiopian can change his skin or the leopard his spots. And now pass on to a dying hour, what but grace in its freeness and fullness can be adequate to their necessities in this eventful moment? And what can raise them to a life of glory at the last day, but that abundant grace of which it is written "where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Law and justice will claim the resurrection of the unjust; yet it will be to pass the final sentence of condemnation upon them all; both the just and the unjust must appear before the judgment seat of Christ: the just to be received to the kingdom of glory, the unjust to be sent down to perdition; and no one can give an account of any good deeds done in the body, but those in whom the Lord wrought life, light, and salvation. These with one voice shall say, the Lord hath brought forth our righteousness, come let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God. Nothing but that indissoluble union to Christ given by eternal election, can make us heirs of God, interest us in the Savior's work, deliver us from our fall in Adam, carry us through and away from all the evils of life and death, and land us where the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick.

Election, then, is of grace; the Lord's people were freely, fully, and eternally chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world; the man who expects to get to heaven, independent of the great act of eternal election is not yet spiritually convinced of sin, nor of the true character of the salvation of the Gospel; and the man who professes to believe in, and yet makes comparatively light of eternal election, such a one, whether he knows it or not, is making light of God; making light of the Father who chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world; of Christ who said, "ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you;" and of the Holy Ghost, who hath testified, and said, that "we are saved, and called with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus, before the world was." But it then repeated that according to the riches of his grace, and good pleasure of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Let us now notice the justice of this great act of eternal election. The justice of it is founded in the sovereignty of God; the dependence of all things upon him is entire, his possession of all things is entire, and his dominion of all things is entire; let these truths be established, and then ask where is the creature that can with propriety say unto him, What doest thou? Shall creatures who are totally dependent, boast of sovereignty? not their own, and yet boast of liberty to do as they will? over ruled by Almighty power, yet boast of directing their own steps? whereas it is the Lord and the Lord alone that worketh permissively and influentially, all things after the counsel of his own will; all things are dependent upon him, he upholds all things by the word of his power; all worlds, beings, and things must, were it his will sink into their original nothingness. His possession also of all things is entire. But do not misunderstand me here, for although creatures that are sinful, are dependent upon him, and he has entire dominion over sin, the same as he has over everything else, yet sin cannot be called a part of his possession, except in the case of its imputation to the Lord Jesus, but then he was not defiled by it. Sin is that which the Lord from the purity of his nature infinitely hates, and never owns, as anything belonging to him. Sin is of the devil, let it come in what shape it may.

What I contend for, I simply this, that as the great Creator was perfectly at liberty to create any kinds of worlds, beings, and things he thought proper, or not to create any at all, which he pleased, (and be it remembered that he hath made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil,) as he was and is thus at liberty to permit, decree, and direct all things whatever, as seems good in his sight; by what law I ask, is he unjust, in choosing one part of the human race to salvation, and leaving the other to perish? for where is no law, there is no transgression; we might with equal propriety say he was unjust, in leaving one

part of the angelic host to fail, and preserving the others to life and glory, as to say he is unjust, in choosing some and leaving others of the human race to perish; yet he is no respecter of persons, on account of any mere creature doing of theirs, for by the works of the law, shall no flesh living be justified in his sight. Cornelius believed the truth, contended for the truth, and gave alms for the truth's sake; and thirsted, and prayed for an increasing knowledge of the truth; by which conduct he proved to Peter, that he was one of those who are accepted in the beloved. God respects his people because he loves them, and he loves them because he will.

I again say, if no law can be found, by which the Lord in choosing one and leaving another, can be proved to be unjust; then, not only shall the charges brought against election fall to the ground; but shall be returned upon the heads of those who live and die siding in this matter with him, who is called the accuser of the brethren; but if the Lord thus work all things after the counsel of his own will; so that all his counsels are established; and that even the Jews to crucifying Christ, did not only what his hand and counsel had determined should be done; if he raised Pharaoh up, that he might show his wonders in him; and that all shall be permitted to fill up the measure of their iniquity; if all things are thus subservient to his will, thou wilt say, why does he yet find fault? for if his dominion be thus entire, who can overturn, nay who can resist his will, seeing all things must be subservient to it; "nay but O man who art thou, that repliest against God: shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another unto dishonor?" Thus the Lord shows the justice of his conduct from his indisputable right to do what he will with the creatures of his power; he permitted the fall of angels and men, because he would; he has preserved one part of the angelic host, and saved a part of the human race because he would; "even so Father, because it seemed good in thy sight," is a sufficient explanation of every difficulty in the destiny of creatures, and enough to answer every enquiry as to why things are as they are; the Lord will assign no further reason than that of his own will, in saving one, and leaving another to perish; he loves Jacob, because he would; he hated Esau, because he would. Saints and angels in heaven will never want any other reason assigned, as to why they are thus honored, than that of the sovereign will of God; fear not, little flock, and the reason why they are not to fear, is, that it is their Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom.

Eternal election, then, is of grace, and the justice of this great act is founded in the sovereignty of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

Let us now proceed to notice the publicity, of the great act of eternal election; it is popular throughout the upper world; angels know that they are elect angles, and saints know, all of them shall know that their names were written in the lamb's book of life, slain from the foundation of the world; - that the kingdom was prepared for them, from the foundation of the world; that they have obtained this inheritance, being predestinated according to the good pleasure of him, who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

It is often said, as an objection to election being said much about; that it is a secret, with which we have but little, or nothing to do; but if it be true, that we have but little or nothing to do with it, why did the prophets, the Lord himself, and his apostles, so largely and loudly proclaim it? - for this doctrine came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and again, why are the Lord's people exhorted to make their calling and election sure, that is, to get it made sure in their own consciences? but no, say our modern Calvinists, we have but little or nothing to do with it, yet both the Old and the New Testament show that not only did the saints of old receive this doctrine, but abundantly gloried in it. "Praise the Lord (says the Psalmist) for he is good, sing praises unto his name for it is pleasant;" now then where is the secret of this praise; Goodness and glory? - why the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure (Ps. cxxxv. 3, 4). And now what does the

New Testament say upon this subject; “we are bound to give thanks always to God for you brethren beloved of the Lord: because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth” (2 Thes. ii. 13). And does not the master himself say to his disciples, Rejoice, that your names are written in heaven; but if the great act of eternal election be not clearly and constantly proclaimed, how can it be expected, that the hearers will be concerned about the important matter, as to which class they belong; and how shall they either learn their election of God, or rejoice therein. These are ends, at which every real gospel minister aims. If this be true, and as the Lord lives it is: for Jesus came to lay down his life for his sheep, and sent his apostles to preach his gospel for the gathering in of his people, try by this rule nine-tenths of the teachers of the present day, and you will find that they are nothing but deceivers, carrying on their own work in such a pious, meek, and feasible way, that if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect. I do not mean that they are all designedly deceivers, that is to say, religious hunters after the good things of this life; no! I believe the greater part of them are sincere, but then it is only the sincerity of the flesh, it does not center in, arise from, nor is it regulated by the truth of God; it is regulated by what they believe to be the truth of God; and they think they are doing God’s service; but to the Lord’s people, who know the truth, it is evident that these blind charity-men are, to their religion, from beneath, and not from above; nevertheless, even these in all their proceedings, shall be subservient to the will of God; with him is strength and wisdom, the deceived and the deceiver are his, he will lead these unauthorized counsellors away (from his people) spoiled, and the wisdom of these unrighteous judges he will turn into foolishness (Job xii. 16,19). Beware then of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, the sheep’s clothing is the name of the Lord Jesus; they shall come in his name, and shall deceive many. Beware of false prophets that come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly, they are ravaging wolves; taking away or keeping back eternal election; and thus as far as words can do it, break open the fold, let the sheep out, and bring the goats in; but of most of them, perhaps, it may be said they know not what they do, and if it be the Lord’s will may he forgive them.

Let us here notice the sense in which Reprobation and Election are secrets. Reprobation is a secret as to who are the persons, and this in the present state of things, is wisely and mercifully concealed, - for although, next to our own salvation; nothing can be more pleasing than to see those who are near to us in the ties of nature, and whom we justly and tenderly love, brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; Yet to have before our eyes constantly the certain and final destruction of any of our fellow-creatures with whom (not to mention those nearest to us in the ties of nature) we, from time to time associate, would be altogether incompatible with the constitution of society, and relative duties of life; and as to the persons themselves, it would drive them to desperation; the Lord concealed from the disciples and from Judas himself, his awful destiny, until Judas hanged himself and went to his own place; in the same sense then, reprobation is a secret with which we have nothing to do, but this does not do away with the doctrine itself; for that some are left eternally to perish, is a truth as clear to the children of God, as their own existence; and if this doctrine is not to be preached, why is it revealed? It is a doctrine of the bible, and a doctrine which the Lord has owned in ten thousand instances, and has by it awakened the dead, arrested the careless, undeceived the deceived; divided the precious from the vile, brought rebels to his feet, and caused sinners to tremble at his holy word.

Reprobation, then, is a secret as to persons, but not as to the doctrine itself. Election is a secret as to those persons who are yet in the state of nature, but the doctrine itself, - to those who read the bible under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, stands prominent throughout the bible.

There is one point in which our antagonists, seem very much to exult, and think themselves in this part of their fortifications invulnerable, and the point is this, that if men are lost, it is their own fault; this position I deny, and assert that it is not their own fault, - nor so the scriptures anywhere blame them for being lost;

or say it was not their own fault, this it may be asked, whose fault is it; to which I answer, there is no fault in the matter; as sinners they will be where they ought to be, and God will pass sentence upon them in righteousness. God will not alter the nature of his holy law, and they cannot alter their state: then, if they cannot alter their state, it is not their own fault that they are lost, and as to the Lord he is holy and righteous in all his ways and works; no one can deny but we are what we are by nature, of necessity; we fell in Adam, were conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; all this we are of necessity; this is a very humbling truth, but it is a bible truth. And who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin" (Prov. xx. 9). And those who are pure in their own eyes, are only deceiving themselves, for the Holy Ghost declares they are not washed from their filthiness (Prov. xxx. 12). As it regards the wicked works of men they are willful, and as such, men are left as it regards their works, without excuse, seeing they act willingly and willfully; and yet as much of necessity as though they had no will in the matter; and as willingly as though there was no necessity in the business. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps" (Prov. xvi.9). Was it Pharaoh's fault that he was raised up, that the Lord might show forth his wonders by him; was it Judas's fault that he was destined to betray the King of kings?

Therefore, when persons say with reference to those who are lost, that it is their own fault; thereby meaning, that they might have prevented it, when they say this, they utter falsehood, deny the Scriptures, and give but sorry evidence of the eyes of their understanding ever having been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, for where he is the teacher, the haughtiness of man is brought low, and the Lord alone is exalted.

Let us now, by way of conclusion, assign the following reasons, why the doctrine of eternal election is to be with other great truths, prominently, and constantly preached.

1st. Because it is asserted throughout the bible, there is neither a book, nor an epistle from Genesis to Revelation; wherein the doctrine of election is not either literally stated, or clearly implied. As to the book of Genesis, I had almost said, it is full of it; in Genesis we are told of a difference between Cain and Abel, a difference which none but the Lord could make, in this book it is we are informed, of Isaac, and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau; and of the sufferings and exaltation of Joseph; in Exodus we see, and are assured, that it was the Lord that put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel; and in Leviticus that atonement, and the offerings were for Israel; and in Numbers, that the priestly blessing was to rest upon Israel (Numb. vi. 22); and in Deuteronomy, that the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob (not Esau) is the lot of his inheritance; in Joshua, discriminating mercy takes Rahab, and leaves the city of Jericho to destruction; in Judges the Lord gives victory to Israel from time to time, by the hands of Deborah, Gideon, Samson, &c., in the book of Ruth, why did Orpah kiss her mother-in-law and return to her gods, and yet Ruth clave unto Naomi, and felt an interest in Naomi's God; in 1st of Samuel, it is written, "the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake; because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people" (Chap. xii. 22.); in 2nd Samuel, an everlasting covenant ordered in all things, and sure; in the 1st of Kings the glory of Solomon, and peace and prosperity of Israel, and the one widow to which Elijah was sent; 2nd book of Kings, the one leper cleansed, and Israel reformed by means of Hezekiah; in the 1st book of Chron., it is written, "remember his marvelous works ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones;" in the 2nd book of Chron. Repentance bestowed upon Manasseh (Chap. xxxiii.); in Ezra, the return (not of the Babylonians, but of the Israelites) to build a temple of the Lord; in Nehemiah it is written, that it grieved them (the enemies) that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel (Chap. ii. 10); in Ester it is written of Mordecai, that he was accepted of the multitude of his brethren: seeking the wealth of people, and speaking peace to all his seed (Chap. 10.); and as for Job, he knew that his Redeemer lived; and that, therefore he should live too; that the Lord was of one mind, and none can turn him; and as for the rest of the prophets, the evangelists,

and epistles, they are so full of the doctrine of eternal election, that he who has ears to hear, and eyes to see, may run as he listens, or reads.

Those, therefore, who deny the doctrine of election, deny the bible; and those who in their ministrations keep the doctrine of election back; keep back a part, and a very material part of the gospel. One reason then, why, election must be largely and loudly proclaimed is because it is proclaimed throughout the scriptures: indeed this, strictly speaking, includes every reason why it should be proclaimed, as it were, upon the house tops.

The 2nd reason I shall mention, is, because the gospel cannot be scripturally preached without it. All the blessings of salvation are bestowed according to election. Christ wrought salvation for all the election of grace, and so it is written, that his great work was to save his people from their sins. Again, the Holy Spirit descends according to the will of the Father, so that without election, neither a scriptural account of the origin nor medium of salvation can be given, neither can the operations of the Holy Spirit be scripturally described; those who do not preach up eternal election, do not preach the gospel of God.

The 3rd reason why election must be preached is, because the Lord has a people to be gathered, and faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and election is one of the first doctrines of the bible; a doctrine that shall not return void, for all that the Father hath given to Christ, shall come to him, and none but the Lord knows who these are, and none but these will ever come into willing submission to his truth; therefore, for their encouragement, it is written, "him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." None can come, except it were given of the Father. Election does not set aside the use of the means, but ensures the continuation of them, until all the objects of election from the least to the greatest, that is, from the most mean and obscure in this world, to the most exalted and popular; it does not mean from the least sinner, to the greatest, for there is no such thing under the sun as either a little sin, or a little sinner, the rich, and the poor of the Lord's people, meet in Christ: and the brother of high degree, may rejoice that he is made low; and the brother of low degree, in that he is exalted. Election shall take away all distinction and difference among the heirs of glory: being all equally interested in the one true God.

4thly. Election must be preached that the Lord's people may renounce all confidence in the flesh. Election leaves no room either for the religion or the irreligion of the flesh, Christ shall profit us nothing, and man who thinks he can be saved without eternal election, must have some confidence in the flesh, however strongly he may in words deny it. Shut election out, you must bring the doings of the creature in, and so make salvation conditional, and thus it is not of grace alone, nor of works alone, but a mixture, but we have no such custom, neither the churches of God, for if it be of grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace, mix they must not and cannot, it is by grace and grace alone.

5thly. That the Lord's people may be separated from the world, for there is no separation from the spirit of the world where election is not spiritually and experimentally received. He who is at war with election is at war with his maker, and who in his right mind would be engaged in this unequal war? Whoever hardened himself against God and prospered? How can two walk together except they are agreed? If we are at war with truth when on earth, how can we dwell with the God of truth in heaven? The Lord looks on the heart.

6thly. Election must be preached that the Lord's people may know their election of God, this of all knowledge is the most precious, all who are taught of God are brought into soul-trouble upon this important matter; they soon find, learn, and know, that the salvation of the gospel is adequate to all their needs and suited to all their circumstances; but, then, the question with them is, whether they are the

persons for whom this salvation is intended. It is no use for persons to tell them they have nothing to do with election, they know they have to do with it. They know that the Lord hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth, and that salvation neither in whole nor in part is of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that shows mercy to whom he will show mercy, and in this state of anxiety the Lord will keep them as seems good in his sight, for there is a set time to favor Zion, then will the Lord say concerning each, and that effectually, Loose him and let him go.

7thly. Election must be preached, that believers may be refreshed, strengthened, and built up in their most holy faith, for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, by which we are enabled to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

These, then, are a few of the reasons why the great act of eternal election must be prominently and constantly preached; and is it not desirable, that, that should be proclaimed which is asserted throughout the bible, given by inspiration of God, and opens up the unsearchable riches of that grace, by which we are made heirs of God, joint heirs with the Lord Jesus? Is it not desirable, that the gospel should be preached in its purity, that the Lord's people should be gathered in, that they should renounce all confidence in the flesh, that they should be separated from the spirit of the world, that they should know, and rejoice in their eternal election of God; this is the gospel by which God is glorified, as it, indeed, and of a truth crowns the Redeemer, Lord of all, which no other system in reality does.

However unpopular the great set of eternal election may be in this world, it shall be known to all the redeemed of the Lord; and at the last day, to assembled worlds. Holy angels shall then attend the great Redeemer in his approach to earth, when he will rise in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from all the indignities of death, and the grave, all the objects of his choice; these redeemed by, and washed in his own blood, filled with his own Spirit, clothed in his righteousness, conformed to his image, children of his Father, encircled, and ennobled by his love, shall see his face without a fear, sing his praise without confusion, upheld by omnipotence, and in the presence of the Lord, shall witness the resurrection, trembling appearance, and awful destiny of all whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life; those who trifle with eternal truth now, will (if grace prevent not) tremble then, and those who tremble now, shall triumph then, (Isa. lxvi. 2.); the days of their mourning shall be ended.

The Savior's fame is not temporary, but permanent; not ephemeral, but eternal; not local, but universal, not partial, but perfect; not merely human but divine; he is the chosen head, of a chosen people; we cannot have a full Christ, unless we have election; and the more we have of him the more we have of God, by him all enemies are conquered, and real friendship enjoyed, by him the Father receives us to himself, by him the Holy Spirit dwells in us, by him is that rest which is glorious; nothing can be brought against him, nor against those who are one with him; his name, and fame, like a mighty river, will go flowing on, until all, for whom he died, shall be quickened, cleansed, and satiated; he is the sun that will never go down, may it be our happy lot to have an increasing assurance, that we are living under the canopy of that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure.

FINIS.

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