

T H E
D O C T R I N E
O F
P R E D E S T I N A T I O N

TRULY and FAIRLY stated :

Confirmed from clear Scripture-Evidence, and
Defended against all the material Arguments
and Objections advanced against it.

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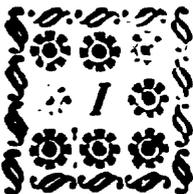


P H I L A D E L P H I A :

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T H E
P R E F A C E .


I AM very sensible, that the Subject of the ensuing Treatise, is none of the most acceptable in this Age, wherein we are so much degenerated and apostatized from the true Doctrines and Principles of the Reformation: Yet being convinced, that it is not only a Doctrine of Truth, but also a Truth of great Importance in the Christian System, I am willing to appear for the Defence of it, whatsoever Dis-esteem or Reproach it may expose me to, from such as cannot bear to see or hear it maintain'd with any Moderation of Temper. It is a Doctrine with which sundry other Doctrines of the Scripture are so inseparably connected, that they cannot, with any Consistency, be maintained without it; such as, Original Sin, the utter Impotency, or rather strong Aversion of the human Will to true Holiness, the irresistible Efficacy of Converting Grace, Free Justification by the imputed Righteousness of Christ alone, and the final Perseverance of the Saints. It is therefore a foolish Question which some ask, What need is there for preaching up this Doctrine, or meddling with it? It is necessary to stand up for it, against the Tide of Opposition, for the Sake of all these other Doctrines of God's Word, which must stand or fall with it. It is necessary for bringing

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Sinners

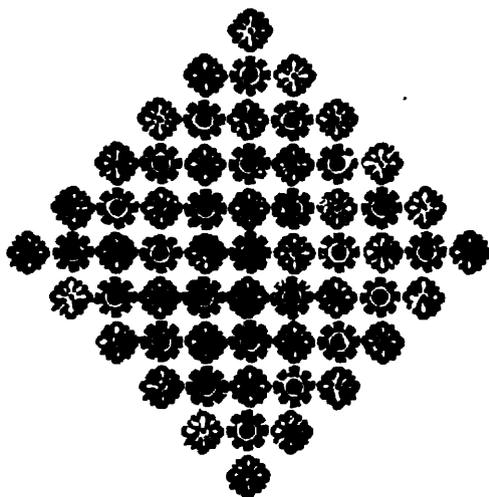
Sinners off from all Dependance upon themselves, to the meritorious Righteousness of Jesus Christ alone for their Justification, and to the super-natural efficacious Power of his holy Spirit for their Sanctification. It is necessary for stopping every Mouth from boasting before God, and that the apparent Heirs of Glory may ascribe the whole Praise and Glory of their Salvation to him. It is a strong Ground for the Consolation of Believers, and Argument for their Love. It is moreover necessary for the Glory of God's Sovereignty over his rebellious Creatures. On all these Accounts 'tis a Doctrine of great Use, tho' it be not very agreeable to proud, unrenew'd Nature, or may sometimes appear awful to true Believers, when their Evidences of a converted State are very dark to them.

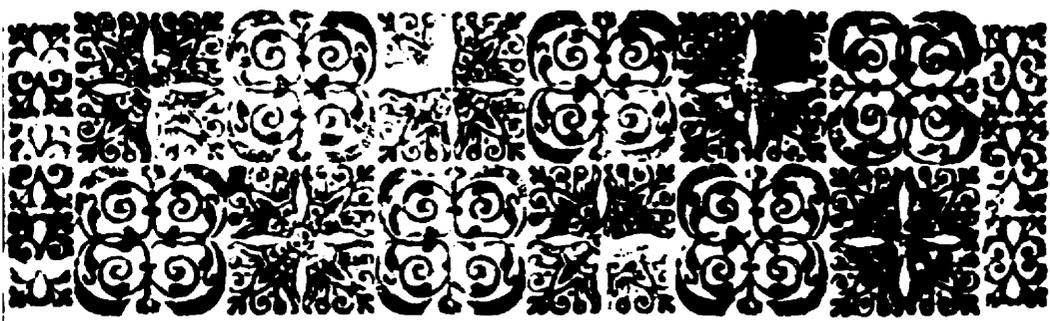
It is now some Years since I entertained Thoughts of publishing Something on this Subject; the chief Reason inclining me to it was, that there were so many small Pieces, in Opposition to the Doctrine, in People's Hands, abounding with a great Deal of Misrepresentations and false Reasoning, yet fair and plausible to the ignorant and unthinking; and so few, on the other Hand, in the Defence of it. There is, indeed, a great Deal well written upon it; but then it is generally in larger Volumes, along with other Subjects, so that People in common have not the Advantage and Benefit of it. It's true, there have been some small Pieces upon it of late, of good Use; Mr. Whitefield's Answer to Mr. Wesley's bold Sermon; and another Answer to the same Sermon, done by an anonymous Author, are both very good, so far as they go; but I judg'd it needful to treat the Subject more fully, and so have taken a larger Compass in shewing the Reasonableness of the Doctrine, confirming it from Scripture, and answering all Objections.

It is likely this Essay may come under the View of Persons of very different Sentiments about the Doctrine maintained in it. I would desire all to read it with Care and Attention, giving every Argument its due Weight, and carrying

carrying what you read along with you, from one Thing to another; so that when you have read it thro', you may have the Substance and Strength of what has been said, in your View. If this Method be taken, I persuade myself, that such as are most opposite to the Doctrines, and prejudiced against it, will at least be convinced, that it is not that horrid and monstrous Thing, which perhaps they had conceiv'd it to be: But whatever Influence this Treatise may have on the Opposers of the Doctrines, I hope it will, thro' the divine Blessing, be satisfying and confirming to others. I think the Doctrines of Election may be a comfortable Support to exercised Christians, concerning the true Interests of the Kingdom of Christ, at this Day, when there is such fierce Opposition made against the Revival of Religion and Success of the Gospel amongst us, tho' it is the Doing of the Lord. Bold Men set themselves with all their Might against it, and try to blacken it to the World with horrid Falshoods, and odious malicious Reflections: But God will carry on his own Designs, against all the feeble Attempts of Creatures.

I commit this little Piece to the Reader's serious Perusal, and the Blessing of the Almighty God.





The DOCTRINE of
PREDESTINATION,
 TRULY and FAIRLY stated.

IN order to speak clearly, and to Advantage, upon any Subject; and especially if it be much controverted in the World, it is in the first Place necessary, that it be exactly defined, and bounded by its proper Limits; that it be represented properly, as it is maintain'd by those who contend for it, that so both Parties may have the same fixed, determinate Idea of what they reason about, and speak both still to the self same Thing. Endless are the Confusions and Contentions that are introduced into the World, either for the Want of this Care in defining, and rightly understanding the Subject in Debate; or for 'Want of Honesty in an Opposite, when he will not keep close to the very Thing, tho' he doth understand what it is. It is the readiest Way to bring any Controversy to a right Issue, rightly to state and represent the Case, and then to keep close to it, as so stated, and not suffer another Thing, under the same Name, to be shuffled in, in its Place, thro' the Course of the Argument. In this
 Way,

Way, such Objections, as suppose the Case to be different from what it is, are easily answered, by reducing the Objector to the prefixed Limits, and so shewing his Argument to be Nothing to the Purpose in Hand. And I think there is no where more need of this Care and Attention, than about the Doctrine of *God's Decrees*, or *Predestination*, which is the Subject of this small Treatise. I know not any Doctrine more furiously opposed, without being rightly understood; or by being disingenuously and uncandidly misrepresented. I shall therefore, first of all, state the Doctrine truly, and then defend and confirm it.

I. As to the true State of the Doctrine, it may be taken up in these two or three Propositions.

1. That as God, from everlasting, was pleased, in his own free Sovereignty, to decree and determine, to create this World; and to make Man in it a reasonable Creature, in his own Image, holy and upright, every Way fitted and impower'd for that Duty which was due, from such a rational Creature, to the great God Creator, with full Ability to persevere and continue in that happy State of Integrity; and to enter into a Covenant of Life with him, wherein all the human Race were to be concern'd and engaged; and *Adam*, their first Father, constituted their publick Head and Representative; so that as he kept or broke the Covenant, they were to enjoy or lose the promis'd Blessings of it: And as God intallibly foreknew the Fall and Transgression of *Adam*, as what he had decreed to permit, and so the Depravity and Ruin of his Posterity consequent thereupon, according to the Covenant; with all the actual Sins which every Individual shou'd ever be guilty of; so he was likewise pleased, of his own mere Grace and free Favour, to decree and determine, to recover and save a Number, only known to himself, of that fallen wretched Race, thro' the Meditation of his own Son's Redeeming them, by answering the
Precept

Precept and Penalty of the broken Law for them ; and thro' the Sanctification of his eternal Spirit, making them fit for and capable of glorifying and enjoying him forever.

2. That God's determining and appointing to save any of fallen Mankind, or any in particular more than others, was not upon the Foresight of any Difference which he foresaw they wou'd make among themselves, by the better Improvement of any common Helps and Advantages, as the Reason of it : But it was purely of his own sovereign, free, wise Pleasure, and distinguishing Grace.

3. That the rest of fallen Mankind, not thus chosen and ordained to eternal Life, he was pleased, of his sovereign, wise and righteous Pleasure, as a just King and Lawgiver, to determine to leave in their fallen State ; and to punish them according to all the Sin and Disobedience, which they shou'd be guilty of, and chargeable with.

This is, briefly, a just View of the Case I am upon ; which I hope, with the divine Direction and Conduct, to maintain against all the Arguments commonly oppos'd to the Doctrine. I cannot indeed expect, that this Representation of it, will render it generally acceptable and agreeable, to those who have been long prejudiced against it ; but that is not the Question, whether we wou'd encline and desire to have it so ; but, whether it be truly and really so, whether we wou'd desire it shou'd be so, or not ? Many of the Laws and Commands of God are very contrary to the Will and Inclination of depraved Sinners ; but they are not the less truly the Commands of God for that. In the Defence of this Doctrine, I wou'd first shew, that it is a reasonable, and next, that it is a scriptural Doctrine ; and speak to the Arguments which may be urged, both for and against it, from both these Topics, of Reason and Revelation,

II. 1. Those who oppose the Doctrine of absolute Decrees, generally bring in a heavy Indictment against it, as big with the most glaring Absurdities, Inconsistencies, and Contradictions to the very Light of Reason: And these such as involve in them the grossest Impiety, and most horrid Blasphemy against the divine Majesty; as, that it is directly contrary to, and necessarily infers the exact Reverse of most of the glorious Perfections and Attributes, which Reason, as well as Scripture, teaches us to ascribe to the great God; that it makes him unjust, and tyrannically cruel: Some say (I dread to express it) worse than the very Devil; that it makes him the Author of Sin, chargeable with most if not all the Guilt of it; that it makes him a most gross, hypocritical Dissembler, &c. But sure, it is not the proper *Calvinistick* Doctrine, upon that Head, that these Men bring in all these awful and shocking Charges against; but some horrid Composition of their own Brain, which they will palm upon the *Calvinists*, whether they will or no: Or else they just resolve, to bring a popular Odium upon the Doctrine, by such vile, bold, and daring Methods; to impose upon such as are not well capable to reason clearly or closely, upon such a sublime Subject, that they may abhor the very Thoughts of it. I readily own, that whatsoever Notion infers any the least Imperfection in God, is unreasonable and worse than false. But let the Account I have given of this Doctrine, be but duly and unbiass'dly considered; and then tell me, if there is any Thing so dishonourable to God, or unreasonable in it: If there is, in which of the three Propositions, or Articles is it? Is it in the first, when it is said, that God decreed to permit *Adam's* Fall? But you must own, that he did permit it, *that is*, that he did not prevent it, if you own that *Adam* did fall; and consequently you must own, that God decreed to permit or suffer him to fall; for it's highly absurd to say, that

that he did permit it without determining to permit it; that is the same Thing as to say, that he took no Notice of it at all, till it was done; that it never once came under the View of his all-comprehending, all-discerning Mind, how *Adam* would behave himself in such Circumstances as he was in, when he did transgress, if left merely to his own Use of his original Powers: But this is to deny God's infinite and boundless Perfection. Well then, if he had this View and Knowledge of what *Adam* would do in such a Case, if thus left to himself; *that is*, that he would sin; he determin'd either to hinder or suffer it, to prevent or permit it. It's manifest he did not determine to prevent it, for if so, it would not have been: And his not determining or decreeing to prevent it, when he infallibly knew it would be if he did not, was decreeing to permit it. And then, upon this Decree to permit the Fall, proceeded God's certain Foreknowledge of it, as future. Moreover, this permissive Decree, and Foreknowledge of Man's Transgression and Apostacy, plainly appears, from God's having foreordain'd a Redeemer before the Foundation of the World, as according to *1 Pet. i. 18, 19, 20*. And now, seeing these Things are plainly so, *viz.* That God did thus determine to permit the Fall of Man, which, in his perfect and boundless Knowledge, he saw would be, if he did not hinder it by his immediate, super-added Influence; and consequently foresaw it, as a Thing that would surely be; so plain, that he must have a strange Art of managing his Reason, who will carefully follow these few Steps I have here taken, and not be constrain'd to yield his Assent: Then surely one would think, there was more Reverence and Honour due to the great and glorious Majesty of God, than for any poor Worms of the Dust, to bring in their bold Charges against him here; and say, that for these Things he is the Author of Sin, either in that he created Man at all, or in that

he did not prevent his Sin, when he could have done it. *Who art thou, O Man, that repliest against God!* Surely it becomes us, to entertain more honourable, exalting Tho'ts of God, than to give the least Way to such a vile Suggestion; even supposing our poor Mole-Eyes should not be able to discern, to our Satisfaction, how it could be otherwise. We may, on the one Hand, be clearly assured of God's permissive Decree, and certain Foreknowledge of Man's Sin; and on the other Hand, as well assured, that he is essentially, and infinitely holy: And tho' we should not be able to reconcile these together, yet he can; and that ought to silence and satisfy us: It does not well befit us, to put ourselves upon a Par with him; and think, that he can know Nothing, but what we must know too. But yet, I see no Need of leaving the Case at this Issue neither: For how unreasonable and ridiculous is the Ground of the Charge? God did not purpose and determine to prevent *Adam's* Sinning, when it was easy to his Power to have prevented it; well, and what then? Did not the Lord give him sufficient Power to have prevented it himself? And was not this enough to free the kind Creator from all Blame in the Case? Cannot God make a Creature perfect, and compleat in its Order and Rank, endowed with full Ability and Power to preserve its Glory unstain'd, and put it in a State of Probation and Trial, without a criminal Charge? Must he be call'd to answer at the Creature's Bar, for its own Miscarriage and voluntary Rebellion, in such a Case? Indeed, if we maintained, that God did not give *Adam* sufficient Power to preserve his Fidelity, and withstand the Temptation; or that God, by his immediate Energy, overpower'd him to a Compliance; then I confess, there would be no standing before the Argument: But as we assert no such Thing, nor any thing that will afford such a Consequence, how unfair and inexcusable is it, to give out as if we did? Which

is the Method of too many, either ignorantly or wilfully. And let me observe, that the *Arminians*, yea, Men of all Sorts of Religions in the World, are no less obliged to answer this Difficulty, than the *Calvinists*; for they must all acknowledge, that there is Sin in the World, and that God has permitted it, otherwise it could not be; yea, you must acknowledge yourselves to have been guilty of Sins, and such as you might have avoided. But dare you lift up your Face before God, and say to him, "I have done many Evils, even such as I had Power to refrain; but they are thy Sins and not mine, because thou didst not keep me from them." Would not your own Reason confound you with Shame, at the Thoughts of such a male-pert, senseless Speech to God? As little Reason is there, whatever less, for charging the righteous God in the Case of *Adam's* Transgression.

Or, is it Matter of just Prejudice against this Doctrine, that Mankind are said to have been considered, in the divine Decree, as universally fallen in *Adam*, in Consequence of his Breach and Violation of the Covenant of God, wherein he was appointed the Covenant-Head and Representative of his Posterity? But sure yourselves must acknowledge, that all Mankind did fall in *Adam's* Transgression, if you profess to believe the holy Scriptures: So long as the Fifth Chapter of *St. Paul's* Epistle to the *Romans* stands in the Bible, it will be impossible, with any Face of Modesty, to deny it; where we are told, that *by one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned.* And that *by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation.* When you say, that all Mankind are recovered again, out of the Condemnation and Ruin which the Sin of *Adam* brought upon them, by *Jesus Christ*; is it not an Acknowledgment, that they were all once fallen, and ruin'd by it? And inasmuch as

yourselves acknowledge it was so, you must acknowledge it was reasonable, and no-way inconsistent with the Perfections of God, that it should be so; or else you say, point blank, that God was, at least once, unrighteous. And now, seeing Mankind were fallen in *Adam*, which God's glorious Perfections will not suffer us to think it was any Way unreasonable or unjust in him; it necessarily follows, that it would have been no Way unreasonable or unjust in God, if he had so pleased, to have left them all in that fallen State, without restoring any. Seeing there was once a plain Forfeiture of all Rights and Privileges, according to Law and Justice, it was at the free Pleasure of the great Law-giver, to bestow them again upon any or not; unless you will say, that our Recovery by *Christ* was not of free and mere Grace, but what God was bound to order and bring about, or else oppose his own Nature and be unjust; and so, that herein he did what we have no Reason to thank him for: Which, to say, is not only a gross Inconsistency in itself, but such an Impiety against God, that few, I believe, wou'd be so bold as to venture upon it. It is ridiculous to talk of our being *redeem'd*, by God, out of a miserable State, which it was unjust for him, either to suffer us to come into, or yet to leave us in. There is no need of a Mediator and Redeemer, in such a Case. Then indeed *Christ* is dead in vain. Thus far we have made our Way clear. Well then, I say again, if it would have been no Way unbecoming God, if he had so pleased, to have determined to leave all Mankind in that fallen State; no Man will say, who duly considers what he says, that it would have been any Way unbecoming him, had he so pleased, looking upon them in this fallen, guilty, apostate State, to have made this Distinction among them, in his eternal Purpose; which I am defending: And so the proper Doctrine of Predestination, in the right Notion

of it, must be own'd to be entirely reasonable; and the very Method, for what we know, that God (unless he has told us the contrary) was pleas'd to take.

But to make all this yet clearer, I would give this farther brief Account, of the Reasonableness of Mankind's partaking in the sad Fruits of *Adam's* Transgression. I would account for it, from his being set up, as their publick Head and Representative, in the first Covenant. If this Constitution and Appointment of God, was reasonable, then all that was naturally consequent upon it, according to the Tenor of it, must be so too. To make it appear, that this Constitution was every Way just and reasonable, let it be considered, that it was in its own Nature adapted, and directly calculated to the great Good and Advantage of Mankind; securing to them a confirmed State of Innocence, and everlasting Happiness, upon their first Father's continuing obedient, so long as God saw fit to leave him in a State of Probation and Trial; so that none of them would have been any more in the Danger of a probationary State for themselves. *Adam* was sufficiently empower'd to manage this great Trust, endowed with full Ability to keep the Covenant; yea, with as full as any of his Offspring would have had, had they been to pass a Time of Trial for themselves: And his Motives to Care and Watchfulness, were as strong as theirs could have been, having his own eternal Interest as much engaged in the Case as theirs; so that their whole Stock, all their everlasting Concerns, were every whit as safe in his Hands as they would have been in their own. And seeing their Case was, his Way, as safe as if it had been in their own Management; and there was a rational Prospect of a glorious, unspeakable Advantage by it, tho' there was an awful Evil on the other Hand, in Case of Disobedience; yea, since the rational Hope, on the one Hand, was far greater than the Danger on the other, it was surely

a reasonable, wise and good Plan; and which, I am satisfy'd, we would all have admired, and praised the glorious God for, had our Representative fulfill'd his Part of the Covenant, and we now been enjoying the happy Consequences of it. If so, then how unreasonable and wicked must it be now, to quarrel with the Scheme and its glorious Author, on the Account of its being because it has eventually proved, thro' our Trustee's Default, to our Disadvantage? If it would have been just, and altogether right, had he obeyed; does his Sin and Disobedience make it wrong, and unjust? One Thing more may be observed here, to free the Subject of all Misapprehension, *viz.* That it's not imagined that the same Degree of Punishment is justly due to *Adam's* Posterity, merely on the Account of his Transgression, which was due to himself for it. Thus far only is certain in this Matter, that beside our being expos'd by it, to the various Miseries of this Life, and Death itself; we lost all Right and Title to the Life and Happiness which God promised in the Covenant, and the glorious moral Image of God in our Souls, *viz.* our original Righteousness: So that instead of being now naturally holy and upright, we are naturally depraved and sinful; which is the awful Foundation and Spring of our numberless actual Transgressions, where by we deserve an awfully aggravated Condemnation. I say, Persons, for their actual Sins, tho' they flow from their original Corruption, as the Spring and Fountain of them, deserve an awfully aggravated Condemnation, or unspeakably greater than the Law denounces only on the Account of *Adam's* Transgression, inasmuch as that Man or Woman cannot be found, whom it could justly be said, that they had never been farther guilty of actual Sin, than what was absolutely unavoidable from the original Depravity of their Nature. These Things may suffice, to evince the Reasonableness of the Doctrine, of all Mankind being fallen

fallen in *Adam*; and of their being consider'd 'as such, in the Decree and Purpose of God concerning their eternal States; which, as has been already shewn, proves the Reasonableness of the Doctrine of Predestination; forasmuch as God might justly have determined, either to save none, or to save all, or to save only a Part, as he pleased.

But farther, if any should yet be unwilling to yield the Reasonableness of Mankind's being so disinherited of all their spiritual and eternal Privileges; and their being liable to such a State of Misery, by *Adam's* Sin and Disobedience; whatever temporal Calamities they might in Justice and Reason be expos'd to by it: I would prove the Reasonableness of the Doctrine I am chiefly insisting upon, from Principles which they must unavoidably grant, if they are not lost to all the common Sense of Mankind. You must own, that all Mankind, except Infants, have actually sinned, whether you own it to be the Effect of *Adam's* Sinning or not; *All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God*: That it is so, in Fact, is too notorious to be denied. Yea, you must own, that Mankind are naturally inclined to Sin, and have a strong Bias and Propension that Way: These Things you must confess, account for them how you will: And I am apt to think, the Scripture Account, resolving the universal Depravity and sinful Propensions of the human Nature, into the Transgression of our first Parent as the Cause, will answer full as well as any you can give: It will be as satisfactory, as either *Plato's* pre-existent state in the Stars, or the eternal evil Principle of the *Manichees*; or yet the Imitation and Example of *Pergius*. However, that Mankind are so universally guilty of Sin, let it come how it will, is but too manifest. Moreover you must grant, that they justly deserve Punishment for their Sin, from the sovereign Law-giver of the rational World; to say otherwise,

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is to say, that Sin is not Sin ; Sin must be as good as Obedience and Duty, if the Sinner deserves no work for it ; which is an Absurdity, a little too big to swallow, that takes away all Distinction between moral Good and Evil, and destroys all the Notions of Justice in the World. You must also grant, that God, from all Eternity, certainly foresaw all the Sins of all Men, unless you have a God like yourselves, who knows now what he did not know before, by Information from others. Now, lay these few Things together, and then see if it doesn't follow, by an unavoidable, logical Necessity, that God might justly have decreed, and purpos'd from everlasting, to punish the sinful, disobedient Children of Men, and not to save any of them out of their guilty State : For if God from everlasting foresaw, that they would deserve to be thus cast off and punished ; then he might justly determine to deal so by them, unless you will say, it was unjust for him to determine to do what was just to do. And is the Justice of his determining to punish a Part of them only, according to the Rules of governing Justice, less conceivable, while he determines to save the rest, in a Way agreeable to the Glory of his Majesty and Government, thro' the Meditation and Redemption of his eternal Son ? Thus you may see, the Denying of *Original Sin*, does not overthrow the Doctrine of Predestination ; all that's gain'd by it, is a Certainty, that all such as die in their Infancy, were elected to eternal Life : But then, they were not chosen in Christ a Redeemer, not are they brought to Happiness thro' his Redemption ; which is a Notion that doesn't chime very well with the Scriptures, which every where represent the Attonement of Christ, as the only Way of eternal Happiness, to any of the human Progeny : Which I think is a farther evident Proof of *Original Sin*. And thus, I think, I have sufficiently clear'd the first Proposition.

2. In the next Place, is there any thing so horrid in the second Article, *viz.* That God's Decree and Purpose, to save any of the fallen, apostate Race, was not founded upon his Forelight of their good Works, and diligent Endeavours, as the Cause of it; but was purely owing to his own sovereign Pleasure and Grace. This is a Sentiment so far from being unreasonable, that I think the contrary is plainly so, absolutely consider'd, *viz.* that the imperfect, corrupted, and altogether selfish Endeavours, of rebellious, guilty Creatures, should be of such high Price with God, as necessarily to determine him to save them; so that he would be unjust, if he did not thereupon design and effectuate their Salvation. Is this a Notion, either so very reasonable in itself, or honourable to God? And yet this is the Principle that must be maintain'd, if the Doctrine I am defending be charged with being, in itself, unreasonable. To manifest a little the Unreasonableness of such a Notion, I would ask, If an entire and perfect Obedience to the Law of God, without the least Defect, would be any more than our Duty to him, he is such a glorious Being, and we his Creatures? If it would not (and no Man in his right Wits will say otherwise) then how can the very imperfect, the every Way corrupt, and contemptible Obedience, that's performed by guilty Sinners, make it so necessary for God to pardon their past Disobedience, as that he would be unreasonable and unjust, if he did not? According to this Principle, Pardon would not properly be pardon; it would not be an Act of meer Grace, and rich Mercy, but of just Debt. But who is there, that has the Front to demand it, as such, for all the good Works that ever he did? I believe you wou'd find hard Work of it, to bring the Notion into Practice, and very formally tell the great God, that "Tho' you had sinn'd against him, and contemned his Authority; yet you had done so well since, that you wou'dn't

“ wou’dn’t now be beholden to him for Pardon, you
 “ claim’d it as your due, on the Score of his essential
 “ Equity, which, he would be unjust, if he refus’d.”
 It is moreover a Notion, that entirely supercedes and
 takes away all Necessity of Christ’s Attonement and
 Satisfaction. What need of such a Propitiation and
 Ransom, if any thing that guilty Sinners cou’d do,
 could render it unjust in God, not to save them? And
 now, seeing these Things are plainly so, it as plainly
 and necessarily follows, that it was no Way unreason-
 able, nor unbecoming any of the divine Perfections,
 for God to make his own sovereign, absolute Good-
 Will and Pleasure, the Rule of his Determinations, of
 dispensing his saving Mercies to any fallen, guilty
 Sinners; and not their Works or Endeavours. Yea,
 I’ll add, it is highly presumable from Reason itself,
 and seems to be its very Dictate, that this was actually
 the Way of God’s Proceeding in the Case; as what
 was most suitable to his independent’ Sovereignty, for
 the maintaining, and Illustration of his exalted Glory;
 and to abase the Pride of all Flesh, that none should
 glory in his Presence; but as it is written, *He that
 glorieth, should glory in the Lord alone*: That his re-
 deem’d and saved People, should forever ascribe the
whole Glory and Praise to his sovereign, free, distin-
 guishing Grace, This Method, in the Case, was pro-
 ceeding like a God; as becomes the supream JEHO-
 VAH: Exalts both his own Glory, and the Happiness
 of saved Sinners, to the highest; while they are ever
 sensible, that as he might justly have saved none, so
 they have Nothing to ascribe to themselves in the Mat-
 ter, why he saved them more than any others. Hence
 their Hearts beat high with the tenderest, sweetest Re-
 sentments of Love and Wonder, with the highest
 Ascriptions of Glory and Praise, to him that sits upon
 the Throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever. So
 that, I believe, this Doctrine suits best with the Lan-
 guage

guage of Heaven, however it be relish'd on Earth. If we consider the hateful, horrid, and criminal Nature of Sin; what can there be in any Sinner, to engage to him the Love and Favour of a God of infinite Holiness, and incomprehensible Majesty; in whose Sight the Heavens are not clean; who *charges his Angels with Folly*? Now, tho' all these Considerations make it plainly appear, that it's every Way reasonable, yea, most becoming the adorable Majesty of God, that the Reason of his appointing any fallen Sinners, in particular, more than others, to eternal Life, should be wholly resolv'd into his sovereign Pleasure; that it should be entirely founded in himself, and not at all in them: Yet I'm apprehensive, that here lies the main Ground of the Quarrel; for tho' Sin has made Man extreamly poor, it hasn't made him humble, but much to the contrary; the unbroken Pride and Haughtiness of Sinners Hearts, will not allow it to be right or equitable at all, that it should be altogether at the free, sovereign Pleasure of God, whether to save them or not; unless they have it in their own Hand, they'll quarrel with God himself; altho' they deserve not so much as the least Ground for Hope, that ever he will save them. It would surely, better become such Hell-deserving Rebels as we, to be so humbly sensible of our vile Iniquities, as to acknowledge God's sovereign Right to dispose of us as he sees fit; that if he should abandon us to Misery forever, it would be but just and right, notwithstanding all that ever we could do; and if he saves us, it will be an Instance of the most glorious, free, sovereign Grace and Mercy, which he might righteously have denied. But these Things may suffice here, to show that this Part of the Doctrine also, stands free of all unreasonable Absurdity, and unbecoming Reflections on God. And if you wou'd have the whole Evidence again, in a narrow Compass, you may take it thus. God, the great

Creator and Upholder of all Things, is the rightful Law-giver, and moral Governor of the reasonable World; considering the infinite, boundless Glory and Perfections of his Nature, and his Right in and over us, as his Creatures, our Obligations of Love and Duty to him, are inconceivably great and infinite: Hence Sin and Disobedience against such infinite Majesty, and Obligations, is infinitely evil; deserving the Sinner's everlasting Rejection from God, with a super-added positive Punishment. All Mankind, thro' the Sin and Disobedience of their first Parent, are become destitute of original Righteousness, and all Right to the Life and Happiness promised in the first Covenant; and all such as are preserved to Years in the World, have sinned actually in their own Persons, and that far beyond what was absolutely unavoidable from their original Depravity; whence they in Justice deserve a far greater Punishment. God had as clear and certain a Knowledge of all this Apostacy, and Sin of Mankind, from all Eternity, as after it actually came to pass; so that in his Decrees concerning them, he considered them as in such a fallen, guilty State, deserving the Execution of his vindictive Justice; and altogether insufficient to do any thing, that might in the least satisfy its Demands, for the averting of the Stroke. And so, from the whole, it clearly appears, that God had as absolute, just, and great a Sovereignty over them, to appoint any Part of them for Life or Death, according to his own Pleasure, as the *Potter has over his Clay, of the same Lump, to make one Vessel to Honour, and another to Dishonour.*

And now, after all these Things, what can reasonably be said against the third and last of the Propositions? Which is, That God determin'd to leave a Part of these guilty Sinners, (*viz.* those whom he did not chuse to Salvation) in their fallen guilty State; and to execute Justice upon them for their Sins. To say, that

That this is unjust, &c. is to say, that Justice is Injustice, &c. All I shall farther observe here upon it, is, how injurious and unfair Treatment it is, to give out, as too many that oppose the Doctrine do, as tho' we maintain'd, That God doom'd Men to everlasting Perdition, without any Respect to, or Consideration had, of their Sin. We say, That the Reason why God chose some, and rejected others, *that is*, these rather than those, was not because of the greater Goodness of the one Part, and greater Sinfulness of the other, for all were *Clay of the same Lump*, without any Difference of this Kind among them, amounting to such Value, but *because it so seemed good in his Sight*. We assert, that none are doom'd to everlasting Perdition, but for their Sin: But then, it is not the Reason of the Difference that is made between them, and those that are chosen to everlasting Life.

Now, tho' what has been already hitherto said, in explaining and vindicating the Doctrine of Predestination, might sufficiently furnish a careful, understanding Reader, with satisfactory Answers to the Objections, that are usually supposed to be deduced from Reason against it; yet, for the more full Satisfaction of all, I shall a little consider them particularly.

One Objection, that makes a mighty Noise in the World, is, *That it makes God the Author of Sin*. But 'tis as easy for me to deny this, as for the Objector to assert it; and asserting is all he can do, if he obliges himself to urge it against the Doctrine, only as I have presented and explain'd it in the preceding Pages. Let such Objectors shew us, what Part of it is justly imputable to such a Charge; and how it contains, or infers any such Blasphemy: Does it make God the Author of Sin, to say, that he decreed to suffer *Adam* to sin; when in the mean time we assert, that he gave him sufficient Power not to sin; and only suffered him, without any Compulsion, to abuse his Liberty? How
ridiculous

ridiculous and senseless is such a Charge for this? Such Objectors seem to think, or else to be willing to have it thought, that we maintain, that God either did not afford *Adam* sufficient Ability to persevere, or that by his superior Power he forced him to Sin. But let the Slander die with them. Yet I think I have met with an Author, that pretends to prove this vile Absurdity consequent upon the Score of bare Permission. 'Tis indeed would be a rare Art, could he make it do, free the whole World of the Blame of Sin all at once for if God cannot so much as permit Sin, without being the Author of it himself, then I think we are pretty clear, and all the Devils too. He proves it by a Simile: *Suppose a Man to be standing on the Top of a very high Wall, holding a Child over it by the Arm, well, he don't press it down, or force it to fall; but lets it go, and suffers it to fall (if it will, I suppose) and then the Demand is, Whether that Man was the Author of that Child's Fall, and Death?* I think it's no great Difficulty to answer the Question: I believe none would pretend to vindicate such a great Murder. But then I would demand, if the Cases are any Way like one another? If this Simile is supposed to be parallel to the Case it is brought to illustrate then our Opinion must be, that God at first so well held *Adam* by the Hand of his Power, as that it was impossible for him to sin; and then withdrew his Hand from him, so as that it was impossible for him not to sin: Whereas we assert the direct contrary of both. Before the Simile can be made in any tolerable Degree similar to the Case, many other Things must be supposed in it; particularly, that the Child is endow'd with such a Power, as that it is as easy for it to stand in the Air, as to fall to the Ground; that the Man has a rightful Sovereignty and Authority over it, put it in such a Situation, and make it its indispensable Duty to stand where he has put it; that it has cl

knowledge of its Duty, and Warning of its Danger ; and the like. These Suppositions I believe will pretty much alter the Case.

Another Objection, brought against the Doctrine, is, *that it makes God chargeable with the most unjust Cruelty, and sovereign Tyranny.* But I have already sufficiently vindicated it from this awful Charge ; unless it be unjust Cruelty to decree Justice ; which is a Contradiction in express Terms. Was it not just in God, to make Man free, as well as perfectly holy and upright ? To appoint *Adam* the Covenant-Head, and representative of his Offspring, as it has been explain'd ? To permit him to act, according to his original Freedom and Liberty ? To permit all Men to sin, as they do ? And to punish some of them, whom he pleases, for all the Sin they are guilty of ? If these things are all righteous and just enough ; was it unjust in God to fore-appoint and determine them ? Would those, who oppose the Doctrine of Predestination, but fairly represent it, and speak to it still as it is, they you'd surely be ashamed to offer such a Charge as this against it : And of this themselves seem to be sensible, and therefore they commonly so manage the Objection, as grossly to misrepresent the Doctrine ; as tho' it contain'd in it, that God, in his eternal Purpose, doom'd a Number of Mankind to Destruction, without any Consideration at all had of their Sin, whereby they would justly deserve it ; or that he purpos'd, by his irresistible Power, to compel them to sin, that so he might damn them with some Colour of Justice. Whereas we disclaim both the one and the other, with the utmost Abhorrence.

Again, it is objected, that this Doctrine *makes God partial, and a Respector of Persons* ; which is justly reputed a very ill Character in Men, and therefore cannot in the least belong to God. This Argument seems to be much depended on among the more ignorant :

rant: But those who make so much of it, ought to consider what that *Respecting of Persons* is, which is so criminal in Men. It is their making such a Difference between Persons, in their Temper and Conduct towards them, as is contrary to Right and Equity; on Account of some accidental Things or Circumstances wherein they may differ from one another; such as Nation, worldly Dignity, Relation, Gifts, Bribes, or the like. And I readily own, that Partiality and Respect of Persons, in this Sense, is very far from God. *He accepts not the Persons of Princes, nor regards the rich, more than the poor, Job xxxiv. 19.* He is not only far from doing Injustice to any, but he makes no Account at all of the little Differences among them, of Nation, worldly State and Condition, or the like, as a Reason of any of his Dealings towards them. And it is in this Sense, that *Respecting of Persons* is always taken in Scripture, where-ever it is condemn'd in Men, or deny'd concerning God. And sure the Doctrine I am defending, is so far from inferring any such Respect of Persons in God, that it's at the truth View directly contrary to it. Yet farther I would observe, there may be among Men a favouring of one more than another, which you may call *Respecting of Persons*, or if you will, Partiality, or by what Name you please; but it carries no ill Idea in it: Such, for Instance, as our Lord speaks of, *Matth. xx.* where the Lord of the Vineyard gave to some of his Labourers an undeserved Bounty, while he gave to others only what Justice necessarily required: And this is brought in by our Lord Jesus himself, for this very Case (see *vcr. 16.*) to vindicate God's making such a Difference among guilty Sinners, against such as make this Objection: And God's Defence here, is unanswerable, against all the Murmurings of such as he has not chosen to Salvation; *Friend, I do thee no wrong, whatsoever good I do to others; Is it not lawful for me*

do what I will with mine own? Is thine Eye evil, because I am good?

It is further objected, that according to this Doctrine, *it is God's Fault, and not theirs, that any perish; inasmuch as it was ever impossible for them to be saved, seeing they were under an irreversibile Appointment to Destruction, before ever they had a Being.* But what has been said already, will easily answer all the Difficulty that may seem to be in this Argument, *viz.* That God appointed them to be punished only for their Sins, whereby they in Justice deserve it: And surely their Sinning is not any Fault in God; nor yet his appointing them to deserved Punishment for it: But seeing all their Punishment will be only according to the Demerit of their Sin, their whole Destruction will properly be of themselves, and their own Fault. But if any should yet foolishly think, that the meer Necessity, or infallible Certainty of the Event, would render Sinners free of all the Blame of their Destruction, because it was always certain, that so it would be in the End. Let them try any other Scheme they please, and see if they can rid themselves of the Difficulty; for whatsoever at any Time is, was always infallibly certain to be, whether you allow a Decree concerning it, or not: So that you must either deny, that it's so much as possible for any Creature to perish justly, at all; or you must own, that the bare Certainty of the Event, that they will perish, does not free them from being the proper blameable Causes of their own Perdition: And its being certain by a divine Appointment, makes them no more clear of the Blame; because the Decree only is, to punish them for, and according to the Demerit of their Sins; which Sins, it lays no forcible Constraint, or Compulsion upon them, to be guilty of.

Again, it is said, *That if this Doctrine be true, then it follows, that God creates Men to damn them.* This

seems to be a ready-hand Argument, almost in every ones Mouth that denies the Doctrine.

Before we speak to any Words or Propositions, we ought to understand what is meant by them. Now as the Meaning I can conceive in this Sentence, [*God creates Men to damn them*] consistent with the Propriety of Speech, is, that their Damnation is God's End in creating them; the final Cause and Reason of his bringing them into Being: And this imports in it that God loves, and delights in the Punishment and Misery of Creatures, merely as such, and for its own Sake; which is a Thing most blasphemous to suppose of him. To suppose, that the Misery of any Creature, strictly and abstractly in itself, without any other Consideration, is agreeable and pleasing to God; yea, so agreeable, that he makes them for this very End, that he may have the Pleasure of punishing them; is indeed, to represent him like the very worst of Beings. But then I would ask, Does God's decreeing to punish Men for their Sin, as they deserve, for maintaining the Dignity of his Government, and the shewing forth of his infinite Holiness, Justice, and rightful Authority; does this, I say, bear in it any such Thing, as that he delights barely in the Misery of Creatures, so as to create them for the Sake of it? How irrational is such a Consequence! But if any will yet insist on it, as a just Consequence, I desire them to consider a little, how they will free their own Scheme of it; which is every whit as liable to the Charge: Unless they have stupid Ignorance, and blasphemous Presumption enough, to deny God's infinite Understanding and Fore-knowledge of all Things, it is just as reasonable to bring this Objection against the *Arminians*, as the *Calvinists*; and say, that *God creates Men to damn them*, if he knows before-hand, that he will damn them; if he fore-knew that they would die impenitent, in Unbelief; and thereupon has decreed their

their

their Damnation, before he has created them. The Truth in the Matter is this, God decreed to create all Men for the Manifestation of his own Glory, which is his End in all his Works; and looking upon Mankind in their Apostacy and Sin, he decreed to leave a particular Part of them in that State, and to punish them according to their Sin, for the Manifestation of the Glory of his Sovereignty, Holiness and Justice, and the right and infinite Obligations of his Authority, as a Law-giver over his reasonable Creatures. This View of the Case gives no Ground for the Charge contain'd in the Objection. Tho' God foresees that Mankind will sin against him, cannot he, notwithstanding, create them; and determine to punish them, or any Part of them, as their Sin deserves, for the Illustration of his Glory aforesaid; without being chargeable with creating them, just that he might damn them? To say so, is the same Thing as to say, that the Sin and Default of the Creature, must bind up God's Hands from doing that which is in itself every Way reasonable and Right; And in short, to say, that right is wrong. But I presume, I have been long enough on the first Method propos'd, for defending and confirming this Doctrine: And that, from what has been said, it sufficiently appears, at least, that it is a Doctrine, free of all unreasonable Absurdity in itself, and no way dishonourable to God. So that Reason has Nothing to say, why it may not be so. And if in the next Place we find, that God's infallible Word of Truth declares that it is so; this ought to put a final Conclusion to the Debate, and fully determine the Controversy. If there is Nothing in the Doctrine absurd, or contrary to Reason, why it may not be so; then when a Passage of Scripture is brought to prove that it is so, we mustn't be put off any more with this Answer, That "whatever the Scripture means, it can't mean Predestination." A great Asserter of

the *Arminian* Doctrine, I think, as good as owns the Reasonableness of the *Calvinist* Doctrine, I mean Bishop *Burnet*, when he says, “ It is one of the Points wherein all agree, that God might have condemn’d every Man to have Perished for his own Sins. * If God might have condemned all Men to Perdition for their Sins, then surely much more a Part of them only. But farther, Reason not only readily allows, that God might have form’d his eternal Purposes and Decrees, concerning fallen Man, according to this Doctrine; but (if duly attended to, without selfish Prejudice) it seems, as has been already hinted, powerfully to persuade us, that so the Case really is, as being most becoming God’s independent Sovereignty; and most expressive of the absolute Freeness, and glorious Riches of his Grace, to those that are saved; whereby the whole Glory of it is secured to himself, and no Ground afforded to the Hell-deserving Sinner, for any Thing, contrary to those humble Acknowledgments of his own Wretchedness that well become him: Whereas the contrary Doctrine leaves Room to the Sinner, to trust to something in himself, and ascribe something to himself, in the Matter of his Salvation. It sets too high a Value upon the despicable, religious Endeavours of corrupted Sinners; when it maintains, that God is thereby induced to receive the Sinner to Favour, notwithstanding all his Rebellions. And by thus representing the God, whom by Disobedience we have contemn’d and dishonour’d, as so rea-

* *Expos. XXXIX. Art. p. 167, F. l.* This great Man manages the Debate with the greatest Candour and Temper, of any I have met with, of the *Arminian* Side; and yet even he, is far from dealing so fairly as he ought, especially when he represents the Maintainers of absolute Predestination, as Maintaining, that the Decree lays a compulsory Force on the Creature to sin. On this Misrepresentation, much of his arguing for the *Arminians* proceeds. He lays hold on the *Supralapsarian* Scheme for it, and without sufficient Evidence, pretends that the *Sublapsarian* Scheme ultimately resolves and terminates in the same, as is represented.

ily and surely reconcil'd to us on such Terms, it depreciates his injur'd Honours, and takes off from the infinite Malignity, and due Horror of Sin. If Sin against God, is looked upon as a Thing that's so easily compensated; and the Breach occasion'd by it, so readily made up, on such low Conditions. What mean, unworthy Conceptions are we like to entertain of God's infinite Perfections, and adorable Attributes, when the Contempt of them by Sin is reckon'd such a small Matter? But

2. I proceed, with more express Evidence and Certainty, to prove and confirm the Doctrine from the divine Oracles, the infallible Scriptures of Truth. And here I shall first prove, That God has appointed, and chosen some of fallen Mankind to eternal Life and Salvation; and that merely of his own sovereign Grace and good Pleasure, and not upon the Foresight of any Goodness of theirs, whereby they would distinguish themselves from others, as the Reason of it. Next I shall prove, That the rest of Mankind, not thus chosen to Life, God has appointed to leave in their Sins, and to punish them for them, according to their Deserts. And then, I shall answer such Objections, as are supposed to be in the Scriptures against this Doctrine, and give the true Meaning of such Scripture-Passages, consistent with it.

The first Place of Scripture I shall adduce for the Proof of *Absolute Election*, is *Acts* xiii. 48. where, after an Account of the Opposition made to the Apostles *Paul* and *Barnabas*, at *Antioch*; and the strong Endeavours us'd by some, to prejudice the People against the Doctrine which they preach'd, it is said, that *as many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed*. The plain Sense of these Words is, that notwithstanding all the Means used in that Place, to hinder the People from believing the Apostles Doctrine, yet a considerable Number did believe; because God had ordained them

them to eternal Life, and so gave them Faith to believe, in Spite of all the Arts of Men used with them to the contrary; and therefore it was impossible for the Enemies of Christianity to keep them in Unbelief. And this is perfectly agreeable to the Sense of our blessed Lord, *Matth. xxiv. 24.* when he says, *that false Christs and false Prophets shou'd arise, showing such Signs and Wonders, that if it were possible, they would deceive the very Elect:* Clearly implying, that God has elected some to everlasting Salvation, and the necessary Means of it; whom it is therefore utterly impossible for false Teachers, with all their Powers, finally to deceive and keep from believing in the true Redeemer. If any should say, that the Reason why these were ordained to eternal Life, and had Grace given them to believe, was because they were more religiously disposed, and better than the rest: This is not only contrary to the Scope of the Place, and the Mode of expressing the Matter in the Text, but we find, in the next Verse but one, that there were some of the most religious that believed not; we are told that these Opposers *stirred up the devout* (that is, the religious) *and honourable Women, as well as the chief Men of the City, to persecute the Apostles;* but they could not have the same Influence upon those whom God had ordained to eternal Life; *it was impossible for them to deceive the Elect.*

Another very clear, and most express Passage to our Purpose, is in *Rom. xi. 5, 6, 7.* *Even so then, at the present Time also, there is a Remnant, according to the Election of Grace. And if by Grace, then it is no more of Works; otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then is it no more Grace. ----- What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for but the Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.* Here the Apostle observes, that as in the Time of the greatest Defection of the People of Israel

in *Elijah's Days*, God had reserved to himself a Remnant of *Seven Thousand*; even so, at that present Time, when the greater Body of the *Jewish Nation* had rejected Christ, there was also a Remnant, according to the Election of Grace, that did believe: This believing Remnant of the *Jewish Nation*, were those who were elected and chosen out of it, to Faith and Salvation: And this Election, whereby they were thus chosen, was an Election of Grace. Well, you'll say, perhaps, you own all this, that God had elected a Remnant of the *Jews* to Faith in Christ, and Salvation by him; but then the Reason of God's electing them, was their good Works; whereby he foresaw, they would render themselves more worthy of his Choice than the rest. But don't you see, that the Apostle expressly bars against such an Imagination, when he says, *It is an Election of Grace; and that if it be of Grace, then it is no more of Works: Or else Grace is not Grace.* He tells you, that the Election of Works, which you contend for, is not the Election of Grace which he asserts: *If it be of Works, it is no more Grace.* An Election of Grace, and of Works both, is a downright Inconsistency, if we allow St. Paul to be Judge. *Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; there were many of Israel, who were left to Unbelief; that were seeking for Righteousness and Life as much as the others, that were, notwithstanding, sanctify'd by Faith: Tho' they were thus equal among themselves; yet there was an Election among them that obtained it, when the rest were blinded; that is, left to their own Blindness.* I can't see how the Doctrine of Absolute Election can well be asserted in more strong, plain, and express Terms, than the Apostle uses for it in these Verses. It can't be said, that all he means by the Election of this Remnant, was only God's Purpose of affording them the Privilege of the Gospel, and outward Means of Grace: For all the rest had these Advantages af-
 farded

forded them, as well as they, according to the Word of our Lord, *Matth. xx. 16.* *Many were called, but few,* (i. e. a Remnant of them only) *were chosen* which manifestly shews, that they were elected to the saving Benefit of those Means, in Consequence of which, they actually did obtain it: When the rest who had, the same Advantage of these outward Means, and were seeking for Justification and Life as well as they, did not obtain it; but were left in their Blindness and Unbelief. To conclude this Argument, the Apostle here asserts an *Election of some*, out of others to *Eternal Life*; and asserts it to be an *Election of Grace*, in such a full Sense, as that it cannot be of *Works* in any Sense. So that you may see here a flat Contradiction between the inspir'd Apostle and the *Arminians*. They say, *Election is on the Account of Works foreseen*; he says, *it is not of Works, but wholly of Grace*. They say, *it may be of Works, and of Grace both*; he says, *it cannot, without destroying the Nature of both*.

For another Proof, you may look as far Back as the viiith Chap. of this Epistle to the Romans, 28, 29, 30 Ver. ---- *All Things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his Purpose. For whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son. ---- Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Those whom the Apostle terms the *Called, according to God's Purpose*, he tells us, *ver. 28.* are those *that love God*; and *ver. 30.* they are those who are *justified*; and in the End, will be as surely *glorified*. So that by *Calling* here, the Apostle means, being *called effectually, to Faith and Holiness, by the Spirit of God, or saving Conversion*. And he tells us, that those who are thus effectually called, and converted by God in Time, are so called

by him, in Pursuance of his *preceeding Purpose and Decree* concerning them; for *they are called according to his Purpose*. He *predestinated*, or fore-appointed them to be conformed to the *Image of his Son*; to be made like Christ in Holiness. And as this Purpose and Fore-appointment of God, made their Sanctification and Justification infallibly certain; so it equally secures their final Glorification. For *whom he did predestinate, them he called, justified, and glorified*. And those who are predestinated, and fore-appointed of God to Holiness and Happiness, are said to be those whom he foreknew: By God's Foreknowing them, we are not to understand, his having a bare, speculative Foreknowledge of them, and of what they would be before their effectual Calling; for in this Sense he foreknew all others, as well as them; but his having had a special Love to them, and gracious Design to do them good, beyond the rest of Mankind: Or it signifies his fore-knowing them as his own; as those whom he had chosen, and distinguished for himself, in his eternal Purpose, according to what is said, *2 Tim. ii. 19. The Lord knoweth them that are his*. Thus you see, this Place is a clear Proof of an Election and Predestination to Grace and Salvation; and that represented so sovereign, and entirely of God, as not to be founded on any Qualification in the Creature: Ensuring both the Sinner's *true Conversion* to Holiness, and his *final Perseverance* to the heavenly Glory: And all this, according to God's Purpose, and not their own Management or Behaviour.

The 9th Chapter of this Epistle is very plain and express on this Argument. In the Beginning of it, the Apostle speaks with Reference to the Unbelief of the general Part of the *Jewish Nation*, their Rejection of the true *Messiah*; declaring his great Grief on that Account. And then in the 6th *Ver.* he comes to speak to a Difficulty which seem'd to occur, concerning

God's leaving the main Body of the *Jews* to Unbelief, and so casting them off from being any longer his People, taken from his Word of Promise to *Abraham*, and often afterwards, that *he would be a God to him, and to his Seed after him forever*. It would seem, at that Time, when God had cast off that People, all but a very small Remnant, and removed his Church to the *Gentiles*, as if he had broke his Word, and his Promise had not been fulfill'd, or taken Effect. To this the Apostle answers, that that was no Argument, that *the Word of God had taken no Effect*; and he clears it up, by shewing, that the Word of Promise peculiarly respected those of *Abraham's* Offspring who belong'd to the Election of Grace; saying, *they are not all Israel which are of Israel*; that is, they are not all the *Israel* which God had principally in his Eye in the Promise, who belong to *Israel* by natural Relation, or External visible Union: The peculiar *Israel*, or Children of the Promise, were those whom the Lord had elected and chosen among them to everlasting Life, and to these the Promise was always made good, whether they were more, or fewer: The Promise, indeed being a plain Intimation, that a large Number, belonging to the Election of Grace, should be of *Abraham's* Progeny, was the Foundation of a visible Church among them, and gave them all a Right to the visible Privileges of it, till they made a Forfeiture themselves. But the Promise, in the Full Import of it, by Way of Engagement on God, related only to those whom he had chosen among them; that this is the Apostle's Meaning here, appears plainly from all that follows. For the Illustration and Confirmation of this Case, he shews, that God put a great Limitation upon the Seed of *Abraham*, to which he particularly design'd the Promise; in his Words to *Abraham* himself, saying, *In Isaac shall thy Seed be called*. Hereby the Lord signified to him, that there was a greater Number of the

the Election to be of his Posterity in *Isaac's* Line, than in the Line of *Ishmael*, or of any of his other Sons that he should ever have, as he had several by a second Marriage; and therefore God would take a more special Care of *Isaac's* Offspring. And indeed, no other Account can be given, for his distinguishing Concern about them, more than the rest of *Abraham's* Posterity; or for his affording greater Advantages to one Nation than another, at this Day, but because of a much greater Number of his elect Ones being among them; because he knows whom he has chosen. And then the Apostle comes to give another Instance of the same Kind, viz. the Distinction which God made between the two Branches of *Isaac's* Offspring, *Ver. 10.* and Sequ. *And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our Father Isaac: (For the Children being not yet born, neither having done any good or Evil, that the Purpose of God according to Election might stand, not of Works, but of him that calleth) it was said unto her, The Elder shall serve the Younger.* Here the Apostle shews, that tho' God had said, that the Seed of *Abraham*, which he chiefly intended in the Promise of being their God, was to be in *Isaac's* Line; yet he intended one Part of *Isaac's* Seed more than the other; which he intimated to *Rebecca* before her Twin-Children were born, when he said, *the Elder shall serve the Younger.* And thus he observes, there was a distinguishing Purpose and Decree of God concerning them (before they had done any good or evil) according to Election; which Purpose of Election is not of Works, but of him that calleth, according to his own sovereign Pleasure. The Apostles Meaning is plainly this, that God's chusing *Jacob*, and a great Number of his Posterity, more than *Esau* or his Posterity, was not on Account of any good Works to be performed by any of them, more than by the others, as the Reason of it; any more than it was on Account of good Works

already done, before they were born, when neither of them had done either good or evil. So, tho' the Apostle's Words very likely refers to the respective Posterities of those two Brothers, as well as to their own Persons; yet they respect their spiritual Interest more than their temporal; and signify, that God had many more of his Elect in the Posterity of *Jacob* than of *Esau*, at least while they continued two visibly distinct Bodies; and therefore he took more Care of *Jacob's* Posterity, taking them into, and keeping them in a visible Church Relation to himself, while he suffered the Posterity of *Esau* to degenerate into Heathenism and Pagan Idolatry; so casting them off from so much as any visible Relation to him, as his Church: And this directly answers the Apostle's Purpose; which is to shew, that God had a peculiar elect Seed among the Seed of *Abraham*, and of *Isaac*, which he principally design'd, and referr'd to, in the Promise; and therefore it was no Argument, that the Word of God had fail'd or taken no Effect; tho' great Bodies of their natural Seed were neglected, and separated from his Church; and it was as reasonable to suppose the same Thing of *Jacob's* Seed. This Election, he asserts, was *not of Works, but purely of him that calleth, as he pleases.* And so, *ver. 14.* and Sequ. he goes on, to answer the grand Objection, which he saw wou'd readily be laid against the Doctrine, *viz.* That it makes God unjust, cruel, partial, and all what not: *What shall we say then? says he, Is there Unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy, and I will have Compassion on whom I will have Compassion.* He observes, that God had sufficiently answered the Objection himself, in these his Words to *Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 19.* Which clearly signify, that *all had sinned, and justly deserved the Execution of his Wrath; and so were become Objects of meer Mercy, which he might*

might bestow or withhold, according to his own sovereign Pleasure, without any Unrighteousness: And, indeed, this is the Answer that will stand forever; and wherewith God will one Day silence all the Quarrellings of haughty Creatures. And in these Words he declares, that as he justly might, so he really has reserved this royal Sovereignty to himself, of bestowing Mercy to guilty Creatures, just as himself pleases; that *he will have Mercy and Compassion on whom he will.* From whence the Apostle clearly infers, *ver. 16. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.* i. e. The Election of any guilty Sinners, is not at all of themselves, as being better inclin'd and behav'd than others; but altogether of God, whō bestows Mercy as he pleases; *who will have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and who will have Compassion on whom he will have Compassion.* But I presume I need prosecute the Argument no farther from this Chapter; it is fully clear already, beyond all reasonable Contradiction, that it maintains the very Doctrine I have undertaken to prove.

And it is no less clearly maintain'd in the first Chapter to the *Ephesians*: *According as he hath chosen us in him, (viz. Christ) before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy, and without Blame before him, in Love: Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will; ver. 4, 5.* The Election which the Apostle here speaks of, was more than a chusing of them to external Church Privileges, even an Election to eternal Salvation; for he says, *God had predestinated them to the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself: And (as he says, Rom. viii. 17.) if Children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ.* Moreover he describes them, as those that were in a State of saving Grace, *ver. 3, saying, God hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings, in heavenly Places in Christ Jesus:*

Jesus: And then immediately adds, According as he hath chosen us in him, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy. Their being blessed with all spiritual Blessings in Christ, was according to God's fore-going Choice of them; it was the Fruit of a gracious and eternal Purpose to that End; and they were chosen, not because they would be holy, but that they should be holy; their Goodness was not the Cause, but the Effect of their Election. And ver. 5. they were predestinated, or fore-appointed, to be the Children of God, not according to their good Works or Dispositions, but according to the good Pleasure of his Will; not to their own Praise, but to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace; as it follows ver. 6. And very expressly, to the same Purpose, he says, ver. 11. In whom also we have obtained an Inheritance, being predestinated according to the Purpose of him, who worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will. We are not predestinated to the heavenly Inheritance, says he, according to the Purpose of one, who proceeds according to the Will and Behaviour of others; but according to the Purpose of him, who does all Things after the Counsel of his own Will.

Another Place of Scripture, very expressly asserting an absolute Election, you may see in 2 Tim. i. 9. *God hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began.* The plain Meaning of these Words (if they can be made plainer) is, as if the Apostle had said, "God hath saved us. and effectually called us out of a State of Sin to Holiness; and this is not to be ascribed to any Works or Endeavours of ours, as the Reason of it, but to his own sovereign Purpose and Grace, or free Favour; which Grace was made sure to us in Christ, by the Father's Engagement to him in the eternal Covenant of Redemption, before

the World began." This is a natural and easy Paraphrase upon the Words, tho' indeed they don't need any: I'm very sure, if they were found any where else but in the Bible, every one wou'd readily acknowledge, they contain'd the *Calvinist* Doctrine of Election. See also *2 Theff.* ii. 13, 14. *1 Pet.* i. 2. *Job.* xv. 16. with many other Places of Scripture, which it is needless to mention.

But beside these direct and immediate Testimonies of Scripture to the Doctrine, it may be farther clearly prov'd, from such Scripture Passages, as declare the Absoluteness and Sovereignty of God's Proceeding, in the effectual Calling, and Conversion of Sinners, to himself. If God, in the Regeneration and Conversion of Sinners, proceeds in an absolute, sovereign Way, calling whom he will, without regarding their previous Motion and Behaviour, as the Reason of his Proceeding, on which it is suspended; then his choosing of them must be absolute, and sovereign too; for actual Renovation in Time, is just the Fruit and Execution of the eternal Purpose; and therefore the one must exactly answer to the other. Many are the Places of Scripture, which plainly teach us, that God's renewing and converting of any Sinners, is wholly owing to his sovereign, distinguishing Favour and Mercy, and not to any distinguishing Goodness of their own. I shall just only select a few. What can be more Express to this Purpose, than those Words? *Tit.* iii. 3, 4, 5. *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour toward Man appeared, not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. In the same Manner the Apostle speaks in the 2d Chapter to the Ephesians;*
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And you hath he quickened, who were dead in Trespasses and Sins ; wherein, in Time past, you walked according to the Course of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience. Among whom also we all had our Conversation in Times past, in the Lusts of our Flesh, fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh, and of the Mind, and were by Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by Grace) ye are saved. O Sirs, Thousands that are now in Heaven, would have been in Hell, had God waited for their good Works, or preparing themselves for his Grace, before he had laid hold of them by converting Power. And what great Excellency is there in all the good Works (falsly so called) of an unregenerate Sinner, when he has done them, to engage God to save him? How clearly is the free, absolute Sovereignty of God, in effectual Calling, declar'd, 1 Cor. i. 26 to 30. For ye see your Calling, Brethren, how that not many wise Men after the Flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish Things of the World, to confound the wise ; and God hath chosen the weak Things of the World, to confound the Things which are mighty ; and base Things of the World, and Things which are despised, hath God chosen ; yea, and Things which are not, to bring to nought Things that are ; That no Flesh should glory in his Presence. Here you see, God calls just whom he will, among the guilty Children of Men : Some of the high and mighty of the World ; but more generally he has order'd it, that those whom he designs to call, shall be poor and mean in all worldly Respects : And the general Reason is, to dash down all human Pride, that no Flesh should glory in his Presence ; but that he that glorieth, should glory only in the Lord, ver, 31. And it is remarkable, how

the Apostle alters the Term, after he had begun with *Calling*, he puts in *Chusing* in the Place of it ; because temporal Vocation exactly corresponds to eternal Election, as the certain Consequent and Evidence of it ; and the one is as free and absolute as the other, so that it was equal which of the Terms he us'd. Numbers of Scripture Instances prove this Truth. What good Works of Obedience to Christ had *Paul* done ? Or what good Dispositions had he towards him, before he reach'd him by his powerful Grace, to induce the Lord to chuse and call him ? Were not great Numbers of his Nation, as good as he, left to perish in Unbelief ? What were the good Works and Dispositions of *Abraham*, more than others, when God called him, as he was serving other Gods on the other Side of the Flood, with the rest of his Father's House ? *Josh. xxiv. 2.* of whom the Lord says, *Isai. li. 2.* *I called him alone, and blessed him.* This Argument is so clear, and certain in all its Parts, that I think it would be quite superfluous, to bestow any more Pains upon it.

Again, the Doctrine of Absolute Election appears from the only Way of fallen Sinners Salvation, as it is laid down and declar'd in the Gospel, *viz.* The Way of believing only and entirely in the Merit and Righteousness of the Lord Jesus, for actual Reconciliation with God. The Argument here may be thus form'd. That Doctrine, which leaves no Room for guilty Sinners to rest and depend on any thing, but the Merit and Attonement of Jesus Christ only, for the reconciled Favour of God, and their Acceptance with him ; (the contrary of which, does give Room to Sinners to rest, and depend also, on something else, for Reconciliation and Acceptance with God) must be true, and its contrary false, according to the Scriptures : But the Doctrine of absolute Election leaves no Room for guilty Sinners to rest and depend on any thing, for the recon-

reconcil'd Favour of God, and their Acceptance with him, but the Merit and Attonement of Jesus Christ only: And the contrary Doctrine does give them room to rest, and depend also, on something else for it, *viz.* something in them, or done by them; Therefore the Doctrine of absolute Election is true, and the contrary Doctrine false, according to the Scriptures.

The Scripture clearly teaches us, to look only to the Merit and Attonement of Christ's Obedience and Sufferings, for actual Justification before God, and Reconciliation with him: And it is as clear, that the Doctrine, of Sinners being chosen in Christ, and fore-appointed to Justification and eternal Life thro' him, of God's mere, sovereign, free Grace, agrees very well with this; it cuts all the Sinews of Self-Dependance, and leaves the Sinner no other Foundation to cast himself upon, but the sovereign Mercy of God, thro' a redeeming Saviour. And I think it's as clear again on the other Hand, that the opposite Doctrine, of a conditional Election, founded either upon the actual Existence of some Good in, or done by the Sinner, or upon the Fore-Sight of it to be in him, or done by him, lays a Foundation for Self-Dependance, and so tends to keep undone Sinners from closing with Christ in the Way of the Gospel. This delusive Opinion makes poor Creatures swell very big with a Conceit of themselves, and what they do; when they imagine their Qualifications and Doings are of such Price with God, it makes them halve the Procurement of their Salvation between Christ's Righteousness and their own, which he will never bear: It makes them patch their filthy Rags and menstrous Cloaths, to his compleat, unspotted Robe, for a joint Recommendation of them to God's Acceptance. Indeed I can't see a material Difference between *Arminian* Protestants and the *Papists*, about the Doctrine of Justification. And I find two great Bishops, one of each

each Sort, of my Mind. Says Bishop *Burnet*, in his *Exposition* (more properly *Perversion*) of the 39 Articles of the *Church of England*, Page 126. "This Matter was so stated by many of the Writers of the *Church of Rome* (after the Reformation) that as to the Main of it, we have no just Exception to it." The Bishop of *Meaux*, in his *Exposition* of the Doctrine of the *Catholick Church*, Page 93, after he has been explaining their Sense of Justification, and Merit of good Works, says, "And indeed we must acknowledge, that the learned of their Party (meaning the Reform'd) do not contend so much of late about this Subject, as they did formerly; and there are but few, who do not now confess, there ought not to have been a Breach upon this Point. But if this important Difficulty about Justification, upon which their first Authors laid all their Stress, be not look'd upon now, as essential, by the wisest Persons amongst them, we leave them to think, what they ought to judge of their Separation; and what Hopes there would be of an Union, if they wou'd but overcome their Prejudice, and quit the Spirit of Contention." Thus we see Protestants and Papists cordially shaking Hands, and agreeing again, in one of the most material Matters of Difference. And all the Contest remaining, is, which Side has made the Approach to the other. The one says, *You have come to us*: The other says, *No, but you have come to us*. And this, I believe, will be judged but a small Matter for Brethren to fall out about. However, I think I might venture, in a Court of Equity, to undertake to obtain Sentence upon this Plea, in Favour of the *Romish Gentleman*.

The last Argument I shall offer, for Confirmation of this Doctrine, shall be taken from the declared Scope and Design of God in the Gospel; which is (as it is highly reasonable) to secure the whole Glory of

Sinners Salvation to himself; and forever hide Pride from Man: He assures us, he has so concerted the Scheme, and laid the Plan, that the saved Sinner shall not have the least Ground to boast, or glory: Which evidently proves, that Election is not conditional, founded on Sinners good Works or Disposition; but absolute, founded on God's good Pleasure. For upon the conditional Scheme, the justify'd, converted Person, has it to ascribe to himself, that he, more than another, is in such an happy State. The Reason cannot be God's distinguishing Love and Grace to him, beyond others; but his own distinguishing Goodness: For the others are supposed to have had as much Love and Kindness from God, as he; Whence then came the Difference that is between them? Not from God, for he made no Difference; but from himself. And does not this give some Ground for boasting of himself in the Case? To arrogate some Glory and Praise to himself? But the true Gospel-Way of Salvation, will not, in the least, admit of any such Thing. It is cross to God's declared View, and Design in it. See *Eph. ii. 8, 9. For by Grace ye are saved, thro' Faith; and that not of yourselves: It is the Gift of God: Not of Works, lest any Man should boast.* The Way which God has laid for Sinners Salvation, is such, that it precludes and bars against all Boasting in those that are saved; and therefore it is not of *Works*, but thro' *Faith*, which is a Soul-humbling, Self-emptying Grace, and a Gift of God's royal Bounty, which he bestows at pleasure, *Rom. iii. 27.* After the Apostle has clearly laid down the true Gospel-Way, of guilty Sinners Justification and Salvation, thro' the alone Righteousness of Christ, imputed in a Way of believing; he asks, *Where is boasting then?* and answers, *It is excluded. Not by the Law of Works, but by the Law of Faith.* All boasting is entirely excluded, by that Method which God has established. And hence we may, with abundant Evidence,

dence, conclude, that that Doctrine, which affords any Room for Glorifying and Boasting, is not of God, being directly contrary to the Plan and Design of the Gospel.

Having now, I think, with great Clearness, from God's Word of Truth, prov'd the Doctrine of absolute, unconditional Election; I proceed in the next Place to prove, That those of guilty Mankind, whom God did not thus chuse to everlasting Life and Salvation thro' Christ, he determined to leave in their guilty State, and inflict upon them their deserved Punishment. And upon this Branch of Predestination, I need be but short, because it is abundantly proven already, by the Proof of the former; for the one is a necessary Consequence of the other. If God determin'd to deal with guilty Mankind, in such a sovereign Way as has been prov'd, making his own righteous, sovereign Pleasure, the only Rule of his Proceedings towards them, then it necessarily follows, that such as he did not ordain to Life, he did ordain to deserved Death. To suppose an absolute and certain Election of a Part of guilty Sinners, to be redeem'd and saved, and yet, that the rest are not reprobated or rejected, are very inconsistent Notions. For seeing all Mankind were looked upon and consider'd, by God in his Decrees, as under a righteous Sentence of Condemnation to Punishment for their Sin; then sure such as he did not determine to deliver out of that Condemnation and Ruin, were left in it, to suffer the Law. To say, *That they were all elected conditionally, tho' the others were absolutely,* is as contrary to those Scriptures that have been adduced, as to deny an absolute Election altogether. For they assert Election to be universally absolute, contrary to such a Distinction of a two-fold Election: It is a Notion, especially contrary to those Passages, which declare the Absoluteness of *Effectual Calling*, in all those that are so called: And those Pas-
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sages which declare, that all that are saved, are saved in such a Way, as excludes all Self-glorying and Self-depending. But I proceed to offer a few other Proofs from the Scripture, for the Confirmation of this Head. And first I argue thus, Those who were not given in Charge by the Father to Jesus Christ, to be redeem'd and sav'd by him, were left in their Sins, and ordain'd to suffer the Law for them themselves.

But those who were not certainly elected to Salvation, were not given in Charge by the Father to Jesus Christ, to be redeem'd and sav'd by him: Therefore they were left in their Sins, and ordain'd to suffer the Law for them themselves. That those, who were not certainly elected to Salvation, were not given in Charge by the Father to Jesus Christ, to be redeem'd and sav'd by him; is plain from this, That all those, who were so given in Charge to Jesus Christ, to be redeem'd and sav'd by him, shall certainly be saved by him; and were certainly and infallibly ordain'd to be so. This is clearly prov'd from the Words of Christ, *Job. vi. 38, 39. For I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own Will, but the Will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's Will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose Nothing, but should raise it up again at the last Day.* These Words I think, plainly say, that all such, as are not in the End actually sav'd by Jesus Christ, if he be faithful to his Trust, were not committed to his Charge to be redeem'd by him, and consequently they were left under the condemnatory Sentence of the Law.

Another Proof, that those whom God has not absolutely elected to Salvation, he has left to perish, and abandon'd from his saving Care, you have, *Rom. xi. 7.* where after the Apostle has said, that *the Remnant of Israel, which God had reserved to himself, according to the Election of Grace, had obtain'd Righteousness and Life,* he adds, *And the rest were blinded.* Very full
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and express to the same Purpose are those Words, *1 Pet. i. 8. Christ is a Stone of Stumbling, and Rock of Offence, even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. God appointed to leave them to Blindness, Stumbling and Disobedience; which Things are always consequent upon God's leaving any to themselves.*

This Doctrine, of Sinners *Rejection or Reprobation* in the eternal Purpose of God, is indeed, I acknowledge, a very awful and solemn one; especially to those who don't find in them the comfortable Evidences of Election; and might reasonably excite in them a deep Concern about the great Concerns of their Souls, and stir them up to take no peaceful Rest, till they find in themselves the hopeful Tokens of God's electing Love, in a supernatural Work of renewing, sanctifying Grace in their Souls. But then let us take Care, that we don't charge God foolishly and wickedly in the Case, as if he were cruel and unrighteous. What if God was willing to shew his Wrath, and to make his Power known, upon *the Vessels of Wrath, fitted to Destruction, and worthy of Death, who can justly find fault with him? What if he had reprobated all apostate Mankind, as well as all apostate Angels, who cou'd say, he had done wrong? Every Mouth must have been stopped, all the World being guilty before him.*

But I come to speak to the Objections, commonly urged from the Scriptures against the foregoing Doctrine, in both its Branches. And here I shall first take Notice of the Method, which those, on the other Side of the Question, put a main Confidence in, for the overthrowing of this Doctrine; by going about to prove a *Universal Redemption; that Christ dyed equally for all, and every Individual of Mankind; for one as much as another.* This, they think, they can very easily prove from such Places of Scripture, as speak of *his Dying for all Men; for all the World; the whole World;*

World; for every Man; and the like. But these universal Expressions of Scripture, will not amount to sufficient Proof of what they bring them for; for all so plain as they think they are for them. If such universal Terms of Scripture, must of Necessity be understood in such a large Extent as they might seem to carry in them; we shall then as easily prove many other Things from Scripture, which no Man of common Sense, will believe to be intended in it: For Instance, as readily and plainly as they will prove, that Christ laid down his Life for *every* individual Person of *Adam's* Race; as plainly, I say, will I prove, that every individual Person of *Adam's* Race will have Praise from God at the Day of Judgment; from 1 Cor. iv. 5. where the Apostle says, *Then shall every Man have Praise of God.* As plainly and fully will I prove, that after *John Baptist's* Preaching, every Individual of Mankind press'd into the Kingdom of God; from *Luke* xvi. 16. *Since that Time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every Man presseth into it.* And by the same Rule you may have it prov'd, that every human Creature spoke of the Faith of the Christians at *Rome*, Rom. i. 8. *Your Faith is spoken of throughout the whole World.* These few Examples, instead of great Numbers which might be produced, are sufficient to shew, that such universal Terms in Scripture, must be often understood under very great Restrictions; and quite in another Sense than our Opposites will allow, when they are us'd concerning the Death of Christ. Some of those Places of Scripture, where such universal Terms are us'd, concerning Christ's Death, and the Effects of it, only signify the Virtue and Efficacy of it, to those who partake of the Benefits of it. Some others signify, that his Death was design'd promiscuously for some of all Nations, and of all Ranks and Conditions of Men, as not confin'd to any one particular Nation, or Degree of Mankind. Others again
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only mean, that Christ is the only Saviour, that none are saved but thro' his Death. In the first Sense, we are to understand *Rom. v. 18.* The Design of that whole Chapter is to shew, That Christ's Death and Satisfaction, is of *sufficient* Virtue, for the justifying and saving of the *most guilty* Sinners. For this Purpose, the Apostle observes the Efficacy of *Adam's Sin*, and breaking the Law, to the condemning of those to whom it was charged and imputed, declaring, that much more is Christ's fulfilling the Law, effectual to the compleat Justification of those to whom it is imputed, notwithstanding their former Condemnation. And so when he says, that *as by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation: Even so, by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification of Life.* His Meaning is, That as the Offence and Disobedience of *Adam* prevail'd, to the condemning of those to whom it reach'd, and was imputed; even so, the Righteousness of Christ was sufficiently effectual, to the full Justification of those to whom it was imputed, from the Guilt of that Offence, and all others; so as to entitle them again to eternal Life. So that the Apostle's Design, is not at all to run a Parallel between *Adam's Offence* and Christ's Righteousness, in the Extent of their Influence and Effects; but to compare the one with the other, as to the Efficacy of their Influence; in Respect of which he observes, that Christ's Righteousness is *much superior*, as it justifies to Life, even after *Adam's Offence* has condemn'd to Death. And thus the Phrase, *all Men*, in both Parts of the Verse, is to be understood with this Limitation, *viz. All Men, on whom it came*: In the first Part of the Verse, *Judgment came upon all Men*, on whom it came, to Condemnation; i. e. so as to condemn them: In the latter Part, *the free Gift came upon all Men*, on whom it came, to Justification of Life; i. e. so as to justify them.

them to Life. I presume, if *every Man* had been in the Text, instead of *all Men*, the *Universalists* would have tho't it every whit as strong for their Purpose, as they do now. And you may see how that this Phrase must be understood the same Way, in *Mark* viii. 25.* Where it is said, of the Man that had been blind, to whom Jesus Christ gave Sight, that *he saw every Man clearly*; which can't be understood of the Extent of his Sight, that he saw every Man that was in the World; but of the Strength and Efficacy of his Sight, that he saw every Man, whom he did see, clearly. It is indeed true, that *by the Offence of Adam*, Judgment came upon every Individual of his Posterity, except the human Nature of Jesus Christ, to *Condemnation*: And this Verse is a clear and certain Proof of it. But then I conceive, it is not the *Universality* of the Term here, that proves it: It is as fully prov'd from the next Verse, as from this; where it is only said, that *by his Disobedience, many were made Sinners*; because the Imputation of his Sin *at all*, is Evidence enough, that it is imputed to *all and every one* that descends from him, in the ordinary Way of Generation; seeing his Relation was the same to all, as the natural and common Parent of the human Race. But farther, there is this plain Reason, evincing, that the Universal Term here, must be understood in this limited Sense, *viz.* Because if it be understood in the large, extensive Sense, in which the *Arminians* will have it, it will prove a great deal too much for them; not a *universal, conditional Redemption*, which they contend for, but a *universal, absolute Redemption and Salvation*. It will then prove, that *every Individual* of the human

* I accommodate myself here, to those who understand only the *English Translation*: The Term, in the Original, is in the plural Number, *all Men*, as well as in *Rom.* v. 18. But it is equal as to the Sense, which of the Ways it is rendered.

Race, are *actually justified* to eternal Life, by the *Righteousness* of Christ: And we are sure, that *whom he justified, them he also glorified*, Rom. viii. 30. Thus you see the true Sense of this Text, and manifest Design of the whole Context, destroys all Foundation of an Argument for *Universal Redemption*.

The proper Import, and Design of those Words, 1 *John* ii. 2. *He is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World*, is, that the Death of Christ was a Propitiation, or Attonement, not only for People among the *Jews*, or for those who were then Believers in those Parts of World; but also for some, be they more or less, in all Parts and Ages of the World: For he was to be God's Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth.

When the Apostle says, 1 *Tim.* ii. 6. That *Christ gave himself a Ransom for all*; it appears from the Context, that he means Persons of all Ranks and Degrees; for he brings it in as an Argument to enforce his Exhortation, to *pray for Kings, and all that are in Authority*. The same universal Term he manifestly intends in the same Sense, in the 1st Verse, when he says, *I exhort therefore, that first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks, be made for all Men*. He can't mean sure, that they shou'd pray for the Millions of Men that were dead, and gone to their own Place before that Time: Neither can he intend, that they should pray for such as the Apostle *John* excludes from an Interest in our Prayers, 1 *John* v. 16. *There is a Sin unto Death: I do not say, that a Man shall pray for it*; that is, for such as are guilty of it: But he explains his Meaning, to be for Men of all Stations and Degrees, the high as well as the low; adding, *for Kings, and for all that are in Authority*. When the Apostle says, *Heb.* ii. 9. That *Christ tasted Death for every Men*; the Meaning is, for every Man that is saved; to signify, that *none* are sav'd but thro'

Christ's Death, that his Death is the *only Purchase* of Salvation for any Man. In the same limited Manner we must understand the same Term, *Col. i. 28. We preach Christ, warning every Man, and teaching every Man*; that is, warning and teaching every Man, to whom we have Opportunity to preach. So *1 Cor. iv. 5. When the Lord comes to Judgment, every Man shall have Praise of God*; that is, every Man that is saved, or has been truly godly. Another Place of Scripture which is brought in, to serve the Cause of *Universal Redemption*, is, *2 Pet. ii. 1.* where the Apostle speaks, of some who should privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction. But the Apostle only speaks of the Lord's having bought them, as what might have been hop'd concerning them as well as others. The Gospel Revelation of a Saviour, that dy'd to redeem Sinners, affords Ground to all, to whom it comes, to hope, that his Death might have been design'd for them, as well as others, (tho' it was not intended for *all and every one* alike) seeing it does not point out the Persons in particular, for whom he did not intend the Benefits of his Death. And so, concerning these Persons here, the Apostle mentions it as a high Aggravation of their Crime, that they should deny that Redeemer, of whom they had no Reason to conclude to the contrary, but that he had *bought and redeemed them*; when they had the same Ground for Hope, this Way, that any others had, before they had the special Evidences of it in renewing Grace.

Thus, I have considered some of the most material Passages of Scripture, which are advanced in Favour of *Universal Redemption*. And I think any considerate Person might see, from what has been said, that they come far short of answering the Design they are advanced for. And any other Passages of the like Strain, are to be understood the same Way. I have already

already mention'd a Place of Scripture, *John* vi. 39. which proves, that all those, who were given to Christ to redeem, he will surely save and finally glorify; unless it may be said, he was unfaithful to his Charge: For it was *the Will of him that sent him, that he should lose none of them, but raise them up again at the last Day*; and so put the finishing Stroke to their full Glorification: Which confirms a *particular* Redemption, in Opposition to a *universal*. In the 10th Chapter of *John*, our Lord speaks of a *peculiar People*, which he had both among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, whom he calls his *Sheep*; for whom, he says, he laid down his Life. And *John* xvii. he speaks of those whom the Father had given him, as *distinct* from the rest of Mankind: For *theſe*, he says, *he prays, and not for the World*, ver. 9. and ver. 19. he says, *For their Sakes I ſanctify myſelf*; that is, it is for their Sakes that I set myself apart to the Office and Charge of a Redeemer, and devote myself to be a Sacrifice.

I shall only farther point out, as briefly as may be, some Absurdities attending the Doctrine of *Universal Redemption*; and so dismiss it. If God sent his Son to die for Sinners, with an equal View and Design to save them all by it, intending as much the Salvation of one as another, without any Difference; then it will follow, that those who are saved, are no more beholden or obliged to God, than those that perish: And it was not from him that they were saved, any more than others, but from themselves; and so he shall not have the Glory of it; nay, he is rather beholden to them, for letting him have his End. Again, it will follow, that God in a great Measure comes short of obtaining his End and Design, and that in the greatest Affair that ever he undertook, so far as we are acquainted: An End which he was so intent upon, that *he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to the Death, that he might obtain it*. The End which he was intently

tently set upon, was the Salvation of all the human Race, and yet he is greatly disappointed of it; for great Numbers forever perish. Now how can any Man reasonably persuade himself, that God really proposed to himself, and intended such an End, and yet did not make it sure, and ascertain the Attainment of it? Was it not easy to his Power to do it? Has he not *the Hearts of all Men in his Hand*? Would it have done them any Injustice, to have persuaded them by almighty Power, and made them willing to be happy? But seeing he has not done so, it is plain, that the Salvation of all, was not the End and Design he had in view, in sending his Son into the World to die. Would he have left a Design he had so much at Heart, upon the precarious Bottom (to say the best of it that any can say) of the *Free-will* of corrupted Creatures, that were no way well affected towards him, but awfully disaffected? Nay farther, it will follow, that it might have so happened, as that he would have entirely lost his End altogether: For, for-all so seriously as he intended it, and was set upon it; yet it seems he did not make it certain, no, not as to the Salvation of any one Soul, but left it altogether to themselves. One would think by this, that he was not very Intent upon it, for all the great Pretences of some, by this Doctrine, to magnify his Love and Good-Will to Men. And it may be consider'd, which Doctrine magnifies the Love of God most? That which renders the Salvation of a considerable Number infallibly certain; or that which leaves it altogether uncertain, as to any? leaving it entirely to the *good Pleasure* of their depraved Wills? I believe it will be found, that *more* will be saved in *that* Way, than would have been in *this*: For I think, upon this Score, none at all would be saved. However, it's plain, that great Multitudes do finally oppose and contradict this supposed Intention of God; and what hinders, but all the rest might do so

too, according to this *universal* Scheme; and so not so much as one be saved after all; for all are alike opposite to the Way of Salvation, by Nature? But you'll say, perhaps, there was no Danger of such a great Disappointment, and Frustration of God's End as this; for he fore-knew who would comply with the Gospel and be saved; and so knew that he would not altogether fail of his Design. But this is so far from clearing the Doctrine, that it introduces a new Absurdity. For how can it be conceiv'd, that God could really intend, and design the Death of Christ, and the Benefit of it, for those who he infallibly knew would never be Partakers of it? Is it not, an Absurdity, mayn't I say Impossibility, in the very Nature of the Thing? To what Purpose, was the Death of Christ design'd for them; or for what Advantage? Not to save them, for that the Lord knew would never be: And every designing of an End, includes in it some Degree of Expectation, which could not be in this Case. Was it to purchase sufficient Grace for them, that so they might be sav'd if they would? Well, but the Lord knew, that they would not make the saving Use of it; and why then was it intentionally purchas'd for them; sure you will not say, it was to make their Guilt and Punishment the greater? Let the Admirers of *Universal Redemption* consider a little, how they will digest and solve these Things. But to proceed,

The Opposers of the Doctrine of *Absolute Decrees*, argue farther against it, from some Places of Scripture, which they suppose declare a general Will, and Desire in God, of the Conversion and Salvation of all Sinners; and how much he would be pleas'd with it: Which they suppose, is contrary to his having purpos'd not to give to some the Grace necessary and sufficient for their Conversion, but to leave them to perish in their Sins. I shall a little consider the principal Passages which they advance to this Purpose, and shew, that

that they intend nothing contrary to this Doctrine. One of them is, *1 Tim ii. 4. God will have all Men to be saved, and to come unto the Knowledge of the Truth.* If *all Men* here, be understood for *every individual Man in the World*; then God's willing them to be saved, can't mean his having will'd and purpos'd, that they shall be sav'd; for then they all wou'd be sav'd, because he can easily fulfil all his Purposes, and surely will do so. For *his Counsel shall stand, and he will do all his Pleasure, Isai. xlvi. 10. The Counsel of the Lord standeth forever, and the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations, Psal. xxxiii. 11.* But if the Words be taken in this unlimited Sense, the Meaning of the Place must only be, that the Salvation of *all Men*, in the Way of Faith and Holiness, would be a Thing very agreeable to the approving, and preceptive Will of God; as he delights in Holiness, and the Happiness which is connected with it; and that Sin, for which it is that any perish, is disagreeable and hateful to his holy Nature: And yet, all this is no Way inconsistent with his determining to punish Sinners for their Sin. But I think it is plain, from the Context, that by *all Men* here, we are to understand, *Men of all Characters and Degrees*; for the Words are brought in as an Argument to encourage Christians to *pray for Kings, and for all that are in Authority.* And in the same Sense, the Term *all Men*, is intended in the first Verse, as I have made appear before.

Another Place is, *2 Pet. iii. 9. The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.* I think it is pretty manifest, that the Persons the Apostle speaks of here, are the *Elect of God*: The Persons to whom he writes these Epistles, are consider'd under that Character, in his first Epistle, *Chap. i. 2.* he calls them *Elect, according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit.*

Spirit unto Obedience, and to the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ. And in the first Verse of this Chapter we are inform'd, that he *writes this second Epistle to the same, or same Sort of Persons:* And of the same he speaks in the Verse under our present Consideration, joining himself, as being also an elect Person, with them; saying, *The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward; i. e. towards us, the Election of his Grace, not willing that any, viz. of us, should perish, but that, we, all should come to Repentance, and be called in.* The Apostle's Design, in the Words, is, to shew the Reason of God's delaying to put an End to the present State of this World, and bring on the general Judgment; in answer to the *Scoffers, that, he says, should be in the last Days, saying, Where is the Promise of his Coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep, all Things continue as they were from the Beginning of the Creation, ver. 3, 4.* In answer, I say, to these *Atheistical Scoffs,* he observes, that God had done as great, unlikely, and unexpected Things already, as the shutting up the Scene of this World in such a solemn Manner, tho' they wilfully neglected to take Notice of them. He had not only, by the Word of his Power, created the Heavens and the Earth out of Nothing at first, but a long Time after, had destroyed the Earth, and its ungodly Inhabitants, by a Flood of Water: And so it was no incredible, nor unlikely Thing, that he should, at last, burn it with *Fire at the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men;* and notwithstanding it had stood so long, in much the same State, after the People of God had spoke of this, as what would surely be, he observes, that a long Space of Time with us, is but little with God; and then says, *The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise, (as some Men count Slackness) but is long-suffering to us-ward, &c.* that is, The Lord's deferring the End of the World, and last Judgment so long, is not thro' Forgetfulness, or careless Neglect

of his Promise to that Purpose; but the true Reason of it, is, that *all his Elect* may be brought in, *not being willing that any of them should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, be converted and saved; and therefore he will not come to Judgment, at a Time when there are any of them on the Earth, unconverted; nor until the last of the whole Number is fitted for Glory.

There is another Scripture, that is always brought in upon this Head of Argument, *Ezek. xxxiii. 11.* Where the Lord declares, with the Solemnity of an Oath, *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no Pleasure in the Death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his Way and live.* When the Lord says, *he has no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked*; the plain Sense of the Words is, that the Death and Misery of Sinners is *not a Pleasure* to him in itself, or for its own Sake, meerly as it is a Misery to the Creature. But this doesn't say, but that their Death and Punishment may be agreeable and pleasing to him, under other Considerations; as it is an Execution of Justice, and Manifestation of his own Glory. If it were not so, Would he inflict Punishment upon any of them? Would he displease and make himself uneasy? And when he says, *That it is a Pleasure to him, that the Wicked turn from his Way, and Live.* The Meaning is, that Righteousness and Holiness in his Creatures, and the Happiness consequent upon it, is the Object of his Approbation and Liking, a Thing, in itself, agreeable and pleasing to his holy Nature. But this, sure, is no Proof, that he equally and alike design'd the Sanctification and Salvation of all Sinners. If it prov'd any thing this Way, it would prove, that he design'd it certainly for them all, if his Power could effect it.

The Words of our Lord, *Matth. xxiii. 37.* are often brought in upon this Head, where he says of *Jerusalem, How often would I have gathered thy Children*

dren together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not! If we understand the Lord Jesus to speak here, of his Willingness to have gather'd them, with Reference to his divine Nature, as God, the Words only prove, that Sinners Compliance with the Gospel, and turning to Holiness, is a Thing, in itself, agreeable and pleasing to God's holy Nature; Holiness being the Object of his Love and Complacence; that his Dealings with that People, in the Course of his Ministry among them, tended in their own Nature to bring them thus to their Duty; and that their Unbelief and Impenitency was owing to the Perverseness and Corruption of their own Wills, as the Cause of it. But if we suppose him to speak of his Willingness, meerly as Man, in his human Nature, then I see no Inconvenience in allowing, that it may signify an intense and passionate Desire in him of their Conversion and Happiness: But surely no such Passions, or uneasy long Desires, and especially for Things which will never be effected, are to be ascribed to the divine Nature. For my Part, I can't apprehend what Sort of a Will and Desire, for the Conversion and Salvation of all Men, it is, which those who deny *absolute Predestination* suppose to be in God, any Way consistent with his Perfections: They suppose it includes much more, than that the Holiness and Happiness of his Creatures is a Thing in itself, lovely and agreeable to him; that it is his preceptive and approving Will, that they should be holy and consequently happy: which is very consistent with the Doctrine they oppose, from this Topick of a general Will: And they can't allow it to include so much as a real Purpose, that all shall be sanctified and saved; because then all would be so; which is contrary to Fact: Or else God's Purpose would be frustrated, and he would come short of what he certainly intended should come to pass, which is highly absurd. But they seem to

fancy a Sort of an uneasy Wishing and longing Desire in God, for that which notwithstanding will never be; and if this be not to make God such a One as ourselves, I know not what is: Does it not argue God to be subject to the Weaknesses of Creatures? and not only so, but that he suffers himself to be made uneasy, and to be cross'd in his Desires, by that which he could easily prevent? which is what no wise Man would allow in himself: And therefore, tho' God may sometimes condescend to speak to Sinners in such Language as they use to one another, when they would express the Greatness and Ardency of their Desire for any thing; yet we are not hence to imagine, that there are any such human Passions and Creature-Weaknesses in him: The Design of such Modes of speaking in God is only to signify, how desirable and excellent a Thing it is, in itself, for Creatures to love, to obey and honour him; and how much it is both their Duty and Interest to do so: And the Reason why this is express'd in such a Manner, as imports weak Passions in Men when they speak so, is, because it is the most suitable Way of Dealing with such Creatures as we are, best adapted to our Capacity and Condition; it is a Method that has the most suitable Tendency in itself to work upon and prevail with rational Creatures, expressing best to their Capacity the Excellency and Necessity of Holiness, and the horrid hateful Nature of Sin; for tho' it is the super-natural Power of God's Spirit, that prevails with any Sinners to be holy; yet, as a wise Agent, he makes use of the most suitable and best adapted Means for that Purpose, dealing with Men in a Way suited to their rational Nature, and human Capacities. Thus it is we are to understand the various Expostulations and Entreaties of God in the Scriptures.

As another Topick of Argument against the Doctrine of God's *Decrees*, the Opposers of it seem to think,

think, that *all Men* have *sufficient Power* to do that which is required as *necessary to Salvation*, and with which Salvation is *certainly* connected; or, at least, that they have sufficient Power to *ensure to themselves* such supernatural Power as is necessary for that Purpose: And this is what is commonly call'd *Universal sufficient Grace*. For the Support of this Opinion, they refer to such Places of Scripture in which God commands *all Men*, where the Gospel comes, *to be holy as he is holy, to repent and believe in Jesus Christ, to make themselves new Hearts, &c.* Hence they argue, that *all* have Power some Way to do these Things; because, they say, it would be *unjust for God to require more of Men than they can perform.* To this I answer, That these Men seem entirely to over-look, in this Way of Reasoning, the Ruin brought upon the human Offspring, by the Fall and Apostacy of *Adam, the Covenant-Head and Representative of all Mankind*: He indeed, until he sinn'd, was furnish'd with *sufficient Ability* to do whatsoever God did, or ever should require of him; at least, had he not sinn'd, his Ability would always have been encreas'd equally with his Obligations: There was a *full Proportion* between his Power and the Law he was under. And so it would have been with all his Posterity, had he *fulfill'd* the Conditions of the Covenant; but as, by his Transgression, they lost *all Right and Title* to *that Happiness and Life of Communion with God*, which was secur'd to them in the Covenant, upon his Obedience: so they lost God's moral Image, and the Power of holy Obedience; and it was at God's *free sovereign Pleasure* to confer Happiness again, and the Grace necessary to it, as he pleas'd: And as God was then under *no Obligation* to afford Strength answerable to the Law, so neither was he *oblig'd* to bring down the Requirements of his Law to the Level and Capacity of the fallen ruin'd Creature: Tho' Man, by his own Default, has lost

his Power of Obedience, that is no Argument, that God must lose his Right and Claim: The Creature's Sin, and Wretchedness thereby, can't dissolve his Obligations of Duty to God: God's Law must still remain the same, as a perfect and eternal Rule of Righteousness, let Creatures change and alter as they will. If it be ask'd, *For what End the Law of God is set before us, and his Commands laid upon us in his Word, if we have not Ability to fulfil?* I answer, *For various Ends:* To teach us what is our Duty to God; what we ought to be aiming at and endeavouring after: To shew us our Sins and Transgressions; *For by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin*, Rom. iii. 20. as the Crookedness of a Line is discover'd by laying it to a strait one: To teach us our utter Inability to fulfil the Law, and obtain Life by our Obedience; (for which Purpose our Saviour referr'd One to the *Keeping of the Commandments*, Matth. xix. 17. whom he found big with the Conceit that he could do much) that so we may see our Necessity of getting Righteousness and Strength from Christ, a Mediator: And thus the Law is given, as a School-Master to bring us to Christ; it is a Means whereby the Lord brings in his Elect to the Redeemer by Faith: And it is given as a Rule of Life to the renew'd Children of God, to direct them how they are to honour and glorify him.

If it be objected to the above Account, of Sinners *Inability* to do what is now requir'd of them under the Dispensation of the new Covenant, that *Adam* had not a Power of Believing in a Redeemer, of repenting and renewing his Heart, as having no need of it; and the Exercise of it being inconsistent with his State of Innocence; and therefore we cannot be said to have lost it in him, seeing it was not given him while he stood in the Character of our *Representative*. To this it may be easily reply'd, That tho' he had not his Power for such Acts and Purposes as these, in his innocent State;

State; yet, had we, in our guilty State, that Power restor'd, which he had, we would be able to believe in the Redeemer, to repent, &c. The Impossibility of his putting forth such Acts, was not from the Want of inherent Power, but the Inconsistency of them with his Condition: It was inconsistent with his State of Innocence, to have had any Occasion for administering Phytick, to recover his Health; yet that is no Argument, that he had not *sufficient Ability* for it.

I would just farther refer it to the Consideration of those, who offer this Argument against God's *Decrees*, and yet, in the mean time, acknowledge, that *no Man in this Life can fulfil the Law of God perfectly*, how they are consistent with themselves: For herein themselves acknowledge, that *God requires more of Men, than they can now perform, since the Fall*; and sure they will not own, that *it is so*, and say, *it is unjust* too.

For farther Proof of this *Universal Power* or *Grace*, they urge the Invitations of the Gospel to believe in Christ, and its Promises to such as do believe; such as *Isai. xlv. 22. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the Ends of the Earth*: And *Rev. iii. 20. Behold, I stand at the Door, and knock; if any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, &c.* Such Invitations, they think, infer, that there is a Power in Man to comply with them, otherwise they would be vain and needless. But this is a vain Argument; For tho' Sinners are without Strength, thro' the *Darkness* of their Minds, and *Obstinacy* of their Wills; yet such Invitations are needful, to shew them their *Duty*, and the only Way in which they can ever be happy; and to afford them a Ground and Warrant for believing in *Jesus Christ*, and resting their Souls upon him for *Salvation*: By these Invitations, and Promises to *Believing*, the holy Spirit encourages, and persuades *convinced Souls* to close with Christ, as their Saviour, and cast themselves upon his *Meditation* and *Attone-*
ment,

ment, with humble joyful Confidence. The Spirit of God, by his Power, brings a Sinner to believe in Christ, in a Way agreeable to his Nature as a reasonable Creature; and so makes use of the Offers and Promises of the Gospel, as the Soul's Warrant for laying Claim to Christ, as his Saviour, and believing in him for his Salvation. Likewise, these Invitations and Promises are of great use for the Comfort of true Believers, shewing that there is a sure Connection between Believing and Salvation. When *Moses* tells the People of *Israel*, *Deut. xxx. 19. That he had set Life and Death before them, Blessing and Cursing*, and bids them *chuse Life*; The Words may be easily understood in the same Sense with the fore-mention'd Passages, to signify, that there is a certain and inseparable Connection between true Holiness and eternal Life, tho' this Holiness is the Effect of a super-natural divine Power, exerted only *in whom the Lord pleases*: And the Lord proposes this Holiness, which is connected with Happiness, to Sinners Choice, to import the Reasonableness and Necessity of their chusing it; and that he may deal with them in a Way agreeable to the Nature of reasonable Beings. But yet, I think it is plain from the Context, that the *Life and Death* there spoken of, was *temporal Prosperity and Adversity*; which Life was promised to *that* People, upon their strict Adherence to the outward Prescriptions of the Law that was given them: And it will be readily own'd, that they might thus chuse and perform Obedience without *special renewing Grace*: And, in this Sense, *Righteousness and Life* are to be frequently understood in the Old Testament.

It is farther argued, for this *Universal Grace*, from the Parable of the *Talents*, *Matth. xxv.* But we are not to understand by these *Talents*, *Universal sufficient Grace*; whereby *all Men* are enabled to convert themselves, if *they will*; and savingly to renew and change
their

their Wills: But other Gifts and Bounties of divine Providence, such as natural Endowments of Mind, good Education, Health, worldly Goods, outward Gospel-Privileges, and the like; which God distributes to Mankind in various Measures, *as he pleases*. Those who made such Improvement of their *Talents*, signify the *truly gally*, who are *effectually* renew'd by God's Power, *according to his Purpose*. The Person that made no Improvement, signifies *unconverted Sinners*, who do not *sincerely* love and honour God. The Account taken of these Servants, at their Lord's Return, and his different Retributions to them, according to their *past Conduct*, are design'd to teach us, that the Lord Jesus *will surely come at last to Judgment*, that we *must all appear* before his Judgment-Seat, to give an *Account of the Deeds done in this Life*, and that *our past Behaviour here*, both in Heart and outward Practice will be the *Rule*, according to which the *Sentence of Judgment* will pass upon us: Tho' the Reward of Happiness, *to the Godly*, will not be given them for *their Godliness*, as the Cause of it; yet it will be given to *them only*, who have been thus qualified and fore-prepared by the Lord for it; and that, in different Degrees, according to their different Degrees of Care, Zeal and Diligence in the Ways of God, after their *Conversion*. On the other Hand, all the *Ungodly* shall be condemned to Punishment, according to the Demerit of their *Works*; and to different Degrees of Punishment, according to their different Deserts. And thus, the *Works, the Dispositions and Conduct* of Men in this Life, will be the *Rule*, according to which the *final Awards* will be made at the *last Day* to all *Mankind*, tho' not the *meritorious or procuring Cause* of them to *all*, but *only* to the *Wicked*. These Things I take to be the very Scope and Design of the Parable; and so the *universal Men* have no Service at all to their Cause from it. It is meer trifling to ask, as some do,

If the Servant, that was punish'd, had made as good use of his Talent, as the rest did of theirs, would not have been as well accepted? That is, whether finally impenitent Sinners would not have been accepted of Jesus Christ, as well as true Believers, and sincerely godly Persons, had they been true Believers, and sincerely godly as well as they? I am free enough, to answer in the Affirmative: Had they been such, it would have been a certain Evidence, that they had been elected to Holiness and Salvation, as well as the others; for true justifying and sanctifying Faith, is not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God, given according to his Purpose and Grace, which was made sure to all Believers in Christ Jesus, before the World began. But then the Question does not at all touch the Matter in Debate, viz. Whether unrenewed Sinners have had as sufficient inward Grace given them, to be true Believers and godly Persons, as those who are really such. Considering that Sinners Impotency consists chiefly in their Enmity, their Inability in the Opposition of their Wills to God's Will, I think it is plain, that no Grace is sufficient, but that which is actually effectual: Their Wills are not just in Equilibrio, in an even Ballance between Holiness and Sin, as much inclin'd to the one Side as the other, so as that they might bring their Wills to a Compliance with, and Complacence in the Ways of God, by their own Reason; or by the Help of some divine Assistances, which they might also reject: But their Wills are strongly set against the New-Covenant Way of Salvation, and the holy Law of God, in its spiritual Nature and Extent; and therefore, No Man can come unto Christ, except the Father draw him, Joh. vi. 44.

Again, they argue in another Method from the general Calls, Invitations, and Offers of the Gospel, reasoning after this Manner: *It would, say they, be the biggest Instance of Dissembling and Deceit, for God to call Sinners to repent and turn from their evil Ways,*

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with such Appearance of real Sincerity and Earnestness, if he had before infallibly decreed, that a great many of them should not repent and turn (not to communicate the Grace of Conversion and Repentance to many, it should be.) And what greater Insincerity and Illusion, say they, can well be imagin'd, than for God to make such a general, unlimited Offer of Christ, and Salvation thro' him, as Rev. xxii. 17. Whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely; when he has already purpos'd, not to give Salvation to many? How can such an open Declaration agree with such a secret Purpose? Would there not be a direct Opposition between his outward Expressions and inward Sentiments? Which is downright Falsifying and Hypocrisy.

But all this plausible Reasoning, on which some of the greatest Patrons of the Arminian Scheme bestow a great Deal of Eloquence, is grounded on a mistaken Apprehension of the Nature and true Import of these Calls and Gospel-Offer: God's Calls to Sinners, to repent and turn to him, to believe in Christ, &c. are only so many Significations of what is Sinners Duty, and what is agreeable to God's holy Nature, pleasing and approveable in his Sight: These Calls do not signify what is God's Purpose concerning Men, but what is their Duty to him; and that he loves Holiness in his Creatures, that *the righteous Lord loves Righteousness*: And so, in all such Calls and Commands, there is an entire Agreement between God's Words, and his Will signify'd by them: For he does indeed *will these Things*, as the Matter of Sinners Duty, and loves them, as agreeable to his own holy Law. This just View of the many Calls of God in Scripture to Sinners, for their Repentance, and Conversion to Holiness, destroys all the Force of the Argument taken from them, as tho' they were inconsistent with God's secret Will and Purpose, to leave many in their Sins without converting Grace; for they import *Nothing* in their true Design

contrary to it. And when God condescends to use Arguments and Exhortations with Sinners, about what he requires, it is, that he may deal with them as reasonable Beings, and convert his *Elect*, in a Way agreeable to their rational Nature.

As to the Offers of Christ made to all where the Gospel comes, and Promises of Salvation, thro' him, to all such as truly believe in him: It is most certain, that God does will and purpose to save all such as truly accept of his Son Jesus Christ, and believe in him, as he is propos'd and set forth, in the Gospel Revelation of him; for he declares, that *all such shall be saved*: But then, we are to consider this Faith in Christ as *the Gift of God*, according to *Eph. ii. 8.* and a Grace of his *powerful Operation or Working*, *Col. ii. 12. Eph. i. 19. 2 Thess. i. 11.* bestow'd *only* upon, and wrought *only* in those whom he has *chosen*; and therefore called *the Faith of God's Elect*, *Tit. i. 1.* And thus, the *Promises of the Gospel* run exactly parallel with the *Election of Grace*, and do not import any thing contrary to it. Indeed, to say, that God does *not* really design to save *all* who shall believe in Christ, notwithstanding he has declar'd that *he will*, were to impute the *grossest Falshood and Deceit* to him; but there is no such Thing in the *Doctrine* which the Argument is brought against. It is true, the *Offer* of Christ, as a Saviour, is *made to all*, to be accepted and believed in, for their Salvation in particular, wherever the News of the Gospel-Salvation is sent: But then, this *Offer* does not signify or import, that God design'd him, and the saving Benefits of his Death, *equally for all*; but that, inasmuch as all have *equal Need* of him, and God has not reveal'd, or any Way pointed out who they are, whom he has *not chosen* to Salvation thro' him, so as they might be known either to themselves or others, it is the great Duty of *all*, to accept of him with *all their Hearts*, according to the
Decla-

Declarations concerning him in the Gospel, *freely and willingly* to comply with the Way of Salvation thro' his Attonement, casting a fiducial Dependance upon him, *and him only*, for their eternal Life; for which Faith, the infallible Promise of Salvation, to all such as so receive him, is sufficient Warrant and Encouragement. And it was necessary that the *Offer* should be thus *universal*, when it was not reveal'd, who in particular *were elected* to Salvation thro' him, that so the *Elect* might be brought to believe in him, upon a rational Ground and Foundation; for they could not know, that they *were chosen* to Life, thro' him, more than any others, before their Believing; and therefore, could not have had a Ground for Faith to go upon, were it not for the Promise to *whosoever believes*, and the Declarations, that it is *every one's Duty* cordially to comply, and be pleased with that Way of Salvation, thro' an attoning Mediator; and upon the Encouragement of this Promise, to cast a Reliance, and the whole Dependance of their Souls, for Salvation, upon him. In this Manner it is, that the *Offers of Christ* in the Gospel, are *general and universal*: Not importing, that *he died alike for all*, or that he was *equally design'd for all*, in the Purpose of God; but that, seeing *none* have any Reason certainly to conclude against themselves, that they were *rejected* in the divine Purpose; and seeing *Acceptance and eternal Life*, thro' Christ, is promis' to *all* that believe; it is the Duty of *all*, with their whole Hearts, to *embrace* him as he is propos'd, and *believe* in him: And yet, *none* will so believe in him but the *Chosen of God*, who are called according to *his Purpose*. And thus, as God is entirely consistent with himself in the Case, so are the Ministers of the Gospel consistent with themselves, in maintaining God's *absolute Decrees*, and yet making such general Offers of Christ, as a Saviour, to all that hear them, calling upon them to accept of and believe in him,

using

using Arguments with them for that Purpose, and promising Life and Salvation, in his Name, to all that truly comply with the Gospel, and believe in him: And tho' they don't know the *Elect of God* among their Hearers, he does, and will apply this Gospel to their Hearts, so as to bring them to believe in Christ, and become *truly godly*. These Considerations, if duly weighed and attended to, I think, may be abundantly satisfactory in this Case.

There is another Argument, commonly insisted on by those on the other Side of the Question, taken from God's Appointment of a Gospel-Ministry, Ordinances of Worship, and Means of Grace in his Church, as if they were *altogether vain and useless*, on Supposition of such *eternal Decrees*. According to the Calvinist *Doctrin*e of Predestination, (say they) *it is quite needless for Ministers to preach, and as needless for People to hear, or to perform any religious Duty whatsoever; and the Reason is, because they cannot alter the Purpose of God concerning them, whatever it be, do they well or ill; they will fare as well, let them live as they list, as if they did never so well; and so they had e'en as good take their Swing: Nay, it had been much better for all the Reprobate, that they had never had the Privilege of the Gospel; because, according to the Scripture, the Condemnation and Misery of those that perish, will be much aggravated by it.*

This is an awful Charge indeed; and if it be just, the *Doctrin*e is certainly most insufferable; which takes off all Restraints from the most profligate Course of Life, farther than what proceed from our temporal Interest in this World; and Arguments from private temporal Interest, do often sway more to the most inhuman Crimes, than moral Honesty. But I hope to make it appear, that the Objection is *most false and groundless*: And to this Purpose, let these few Things be consider'd:

First, Supposing there were no Arguments for a pious godly Life, to be had from our own eternal Interest; yet there are Reasons of another Nature, of sufficient Weight and Force in themselves, to induce us to it, and engage us to endeavour after it. Is not the great God, who is infinitely good and glorious, worthy of the greatest Esteem, profoundest Subjection, and highest Adorations of all the rational Creation? And has he not an inviolable Right and Claim to these Things from us, as our Creator and Preserver? And is not Conformity to God, and to obey and honour him, the greatest Honour and Glory of a created Being? These Arguments, I know, have little Weight with apostate Creatures, whose Understandings are darkned, and all their other Faculties wholly corrupted; but that is not for Want of sufficient Weight in their own Nature: Nothing can ever dissolve God's Title to the Homage and Obedience of his Creatures.

Secondly, I would have two or three Particulars consider'd and weigh'd together: First, that the *Elect* are elected to Salvation, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit; *whom he did predestinate, them he also called*. And this effectual Calling and sanctifying Grace, wrought in the Heart by the holy Spirit, is the certain Fruit and Evidence of eternal Election; whereby those who are the Partakers of this Grace, may, and frequently do come to a comfortable Satisfaction, as to their Election of God.

Again, you are to observe, that the *Elect* themselves, before their Conversion and effectual Calling, have no Notices or Evidences at all of their being elected, more than others: which must needs be a very uneasy and distressing Condition, when the Spirit of God touches the Conscience. And then, in the next Place, let it be consider'd, that God has appointed the Preaching of the Gospel, and other religious Exercises, such as, reading the holy Scriptures, and other good Books, Prayer,

Prayer, &c. to be the Means whereby he ordinarily converts and sanctifies his *Elect*, and affords them the comfortable Tokens of his electing Love. He has appointed these Ordinances and Means, as the ordinary Channels wherein to communicate his special Grace to those whom he has chosen. Now if these Things be duly adverted to, I think it will be clear, that there is Use, and great Use too, for the Preaching of the Gospel, and other Exercises of Religion, in a Consistency with God's *absolute Decrees*: And that there are sufficient Reasons, to engage Persons to a very careful Observance of them, and of all the Commands of God; for the Ordinances of God are the Means which he sees fit in his Wisdom to make use of, for the Conversion and Sanctification of his *Elect*, which Work of Grace is the only Evidence of our belonging to God, as his elect People: And therefore one can hardly think, that any, but such as are stupidly unconcerned about their Souls everlasting States, could reason in earnest in the Strain of the Objection I am now upon: Surely, one that is any Way duly thoughtful, about a Matter of such vast Moment as his eternal Well-being, would readily think with himself to this Purpose; 'Oh, what would I not give, to have some comfortable, distinguishing Evidences of being chosen of God, and appointed to Life: Well, his Ways and Ordinances are the Means he uses for this Purpose; the Channels in which he is wont to communicate his special Grace to those he designs to save; I must wait upon, and look to him in that Way of Hope, and keep at the Pool where he uses to come and heal diseased Souls; it may be, he will-some time meet with me, in his own Way, which he has appointed for visiting his chosen, and fulfil in me all the Good-Pleasure of his Goodness, and the Work of Faith with Power, and cause me to rejoice in his Love: These Ways of Religion are not only the Ways in which

' which there is only reasonable Ground of Hope to
 ' meet with such Blessings, but they are the Commands
 ' and Institutions of God, recommended with his aw-
 ' ful Authority; and therefore, to disregard and neg-
 ' lect them, will be to disobey and contemn God still
 ' the more, and also will expose me to a more awful
 ' Punishment.' Consider now, if this be not a just
 and right Way of Reasoning in the Case: Nay, I am
 convinced, that the *Calvinist* Doctrine, rightly under-
 stood, and really believ'd, will make People much
 more careful, serious and diligent Observers of the
 Ways of God, than the contrary Doctrine will; for
 it tends much more to bring them to a solemn solici-
 tous Concern of Heart about their eternal State, and
 consequently to make them more earnest in all the
 most hopeful, probable Ways of meeting with Satisfac-
 tion about it.

Thirdly, Tho' it is true, that such as are rejected in
 the Purpose of God, will never be converted in the
 Use of all the Means of Grace; yet, seeing they do
 not know the secret Purpose of God concerning them,
 but have the same Reason to entertain Hopes that they
 may be chosen to Life, that any other unconverted
 Persons have, it would be a high and provoking Con-
 tempt of God for them, to neglect the Ordinances,
 which he has appointed as Means, for the communica-
 ting special Grace and sweet Consolation to his Elect;
 and which he therefore, by his sovereign Authority,
 requires all, who have the Opportunity, to attend
 upon: And they shall find it, if guilty of it, brought
 into the Account against them, at the great Day,
 when *every Man shall be judged according to his Works,*
 and they shall receive, proportionably, the *greater*
Punishment.

Fourthly, As to the *Elect converted*, their Hearts are
 so renew'd, as to love God above all, and to make Obe-
 dience to his Will their hearty Choice; Believing in
 K Jesus

Jesus Christ, his Love is shed abroad in their Hearts, and sweetly constrains them to serve and honour him, to whom they are under such endearing Engagements. The Consideration of God's having elected them to eternal Glory, when he might justly have rejected them as well as any others; the Hope and Prospect of that eternal Glory with him, and the Consideration of his having sent his Son to answer the Law for them, and suffer in their Room, that they might be deliver'd from deserved Misery, and made happy in the Enjoyment of himself forever; their Apprehensions of his Glory and infinite Excellency in himself, and his Right in and over them as his Creatures; all these Things are powerful Arguments with them, to love and praise God; it is their Desire and Delight to glorify and honour him. Moreover, the Lord Jesus takes them for his peculiar Charge; it is a Part of his Office, as Mediator, to bring them safe to Glory thro' all Dangers; accordingly, his holy Spirit dwells in them, as a Sanctifier and Comforter: thus they are engaged to God, in the Way of Holiness, by the most inviolable Cords and loving Bands: So that the Doctrine of *absolute Election* is far from destroying Holiness of Life: It is a strong Excitement to it, in all the renew'd Children of God, who love him, when they are enabled to see the hopeful Evidences of their own Election. And therefore, such as say (as some, no less wickedly than foolishly, do) that *if they were persuaded of the Truth of the Doctrine of Predestination, they would never be at any Pains or Care to serve God more*, had just as good say plainly, *they have no Love to God*, and that *they are entire Strangers to the Nature of true Godliness*.

Fifthly, Consider, the Method of Reasoning in the Objection, is such as you would not allow to be just, in other Cases of the like Nature. Can you think, it would have been just Reasoning in King *Hezekiah* to say, *that because the Lord had ordain'd he should live*

Fifteen Years longer (2 Kin. xx. 6.) *he had no more need of either Food or Physick?* The Prophet *Ijaiah* was of another Mind, when he ordered a *Lump of Figs to be laid to the Boil*, ver. 7. This shews us, that God brings about his Purposes in the Use of suitable Means, and that it is therefore necessary for us to observe them. Was ever any thing more absolutely and positively fix'd in the Purpose of God, than the Time and Manner of Christ's Death? *John* vii. 30. & viii. 20. & xii. 32, 33. Was he therefore unwise for using any Means for his Preservation from the Hands of his Enemies? Of which we have frequent Instances, *Job*. viii. 59. *Luk*. iv. 29, 30. *Job*. xi. 53, 54. Was *St. Paul* so inconsistent with himself, when, tho' God had told him, that both he and all that were in the Ship with him, should be saved thro' all the Hazards of their Voyage; yet, when the Ship-men were about to go off in the Boat and leave the rest in the Distress, he said to them, *except these abide in the Ship, ye cannot be saved?* *Acts* xxvii. In like Manner, it may be as truly and reasonably said, that *except the Elect be converted and sanctified, they cannot be saved from Hell*; because of the certain Connection God has made between the Means and the End. And none have any Reason to expect *converting Grace*, while they prophanely neglect the *Means of Grace*.

As to the latter Clause of the Objection, that *the Non-elect, who have had the Opportunity of the Gospel, will be more miserable than if they had not*: I answer, It is very likely it will be so, with the most of them: But then, I think, if they improv'd the Gospel, as they might do, tho' they would not be converted and saved by it, yet they would not be the more, but perhaps the less miserable for it. If it be enquir'd, *For what End the Gospel is sent to such as God has not purpos'd to save?* I answer, It is chiefly for *the Elect's Sake* that are among them; that thereby they may

be brought in to Christ, and prepar'd for the heavenly Glory.

I shall now conclude the Answer to the whole Objection with a *general Remark* or two. Seeing the Doctrine, in itself, does not take away our Obligations to a religious Life, but affords sufficient Motives and Arguments for it, then it is no Argument against the Truth of the Doctrine, tho' some ungodly Men should abuse it to a Liberty to sin: Other Doctrines of the Gospel are liable to the same abuse, as well as this. Thus St. Paul observes, that some might be ready to infer from the Gospel-Doctrine of *Justification*, as he laid it down, that they might *continue in Sin, that Grace might abound*, Rom. vi. 1. That some would be ready to object against him, that he made *Christ the Minister of Sin*, i. e. one that gave Liberty and Encouragement to Sin, Gal. ii. 17. And that some did actually affirm that he said, *Let us do Evil, that Good may come*, Rom. iii. 8. Again, The Lord Jesus, who came to *destroy the Works of the Devil*, and purchase to himself a *peculiar People, zealous of good Works*, will have his End; tho' some Men, of corrupt Minds, should abuse his Truth, to the awful Aggravation of their Guilt in the Day of his appearing. And I think we have little Encouragement, to go to the *Arminian Scheme* for the Advancement of true practical Religion, if we consider what Advancement this Way, it has produced since it came in Fashion.

What is farther brought as an Objection, by some, I think is hardly worth taking Notice of, *viz.* That *some will be apt to take Occasion, from the Doctrine of Predestination, to live in a slothful Negligence and Security, from a Presumption that they are elected, and so cannot miss of Salvation: And others will be apt to fall into Despair, from a fearful Apprehension, that they are not elected.* As I hinted already, we are to distinguish between the Abuse unreasonably made of a Doctrine, and

and its *natural Tendency*, in itself: And what is there in this Doctrine, that leads to either of these *wide Extreams*? How can it lead any to a *groundless Presumption* and *slothful Negligence*; when, according to it, none have Reason to persuade themselves *they are elected*, until they are renew'd and sanctify'd; and then they cannot be careless about the Honour and Obedience due to God? *How shall they that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein?* Rom. vi. 2. All the Gospel-Arguments to a Life of Holiness, and this of their Election among the rest, do then effectually engage their Hearts to it. Indeed, if they knew their Election before their Conversion, before they believ'd in Christ and lov'd God, no doubt they would abuse it to Sloth and Licentiousness, till God chang'd their Hearts: But they have no sure Evidence of their Election till they are brought to a better Disposition. And how can it bring any to *Desperation*, when they cannot know that they are *not elected*? For Persons to conclude positively, that *they are appointed to Destruction*, is to conclude without Reason, and a Pretending to know the un-reveal'd Secrets of God's Breast.

Some think the Words of the Lord Jesus; *Luke xix. 42.* are contrary to this Doctrine; where he says of *Jerusalem*, *If thou hadst known, in this thy Day, the Things that belong to thy Peace! but now they are hid from thine Eyes.* Which Words, they suppose, import, that the Inhabitants of that City had, before that Time, had such inward Assistance from God, as put it in their Power to convert themselves; but which were then forever withdrawn from them, for their Abuse of them, so that their Case was then beyond all Hope. And in this same Sense they suppose, that *all Men have a Day of Grace*, in some Part of their Life, or, as they rather chuse to term it, *a Day of Visitation*. But this Opinion is without any Foundation in the Text: How can the Words signify, that their Day there

there spoken of, was a Time in which they had sufficient inward Grace; when they clearly imply, that they did not so much as know the Things that belong'd to their Peace in that Day? The true Import of our Lord's Words is, That they had had, in that Day of his publick Ministry among them, sufficient outward Means of Conviction, that he was the true *Messiah*; sufficient to prevail with them, as rational Creatures, to acknowledge and own him as such; notwithstanding of which, they rejected and persecuted him, and would, in a little Time put him to Death; for which they should, before long, be punish'd with utter Ruin, both of their City and Nation, as it follows in the next Words. And so the Words also signify, that there was less Probability and reasonable Hope of their being converted to God, after all such Means, had been so long quite lost upon them, than there was before, according to God's ordinary Way of Working.

And now I have gone thro' all the contrary Arguments and Objections, of any Consequence, that I know of; and upon the whole, must desire the careful Reader, seriously to look back and consider, if the Doctrine of *absolute Predestination*, as it has been stated and represented, be not entirely agreeable to Reason, clearly founded on Scripture, and perfectly consistent with every Part of it, and consequently a most certain Truth of God. Let us not be wilfully resolv'd against admitting reasonable Evidence, but *quit ourselves like Men*, and use our Understandings, with humble Application to God, on whom all Creatures are dependant, for a right Judgment and a sound Mind. Don't say, you won't believe it, just because you don't like it: That is both the Shame and Crime of a reasonable Being; and the greatest Folly in the World; for if it be a Truth, it will be so, whether you like it and believe it, or not. And let us also consider, what is the proper Use, and native Tendency of the Doctrine: And

so, let us humbly lie low, as guilty Criminals, before the Foot-stool of God's Sovereignty, acknowledging his Right to *dispose of us*, for Life or Death, *as he pleases*. Let us not be stupidly easy in our Minds, without the Experience of supernatural, sanctifying Grace in our Hearts; the only Evidence of our Election, and Mean of solid Comfort, *without which no Man shall see the Lord*. Let us seek and long for it, in all the Ways of God's Commands and Ordinances, where it is most likely to be found; and not treasure up greater Loads of Wrath to ourselves, against the Day of Wrath, by Disobedience to the great Law-giver's Authority. Let such of us, as God has given the Tokens of his special Love unto, in our Sanctification, give the *Glory and Praise to him alone*: And still endeavour, to live answerable to the Obligations of such wonderful, distinguishing Love and Grace. Let us give up all Confidence of our own Ability, and Dependence on our own Righteousness and good Doings, to entitle us to Happiness; casting ourselves only on the Mediation and Attonement of the Son of God, as he is reveal'd and propos'd in the Gospel; seeking for that living Faith in him that brings Joy and Peace to the Soul, that works by Love and the freest Obedience: Such as these are the Things, which this Doctrine naturally leads to; and so, it agrees to the great Design of God in the *New-Covenant*, the Illustration of the greatest Glory of his *Free Grace*, in the Salvation of guilty Sinners: Whereas the contrary Scheme defaces and sinks it down: But God will have the Glory, and it's fit he shou'd: The whole Glory, from first to last; he has secur'd to himself. As he laid the Foundation of Sinners Salvation in pure, free, and rich Grace, so, at the last Day, *he will bring forth the Head-stone thereof with Shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace unto it, Zech.*

iv. 7.

F I N I S.

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