

**Monergism**

**OF THE  
PUNISHMENT  
OF SIN IN HELL**

THAT THE WRATH OF GOD IS THE  
IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF THAT PUNISHMENT

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# Of the Punishment of Sin in Hell

by Thomas Goodwin

## Table of Contents

[CHAPTER I: The subject and general division of the discourse](#)

[CHAPTER II: The first sort of proofs from Scriptures](#)

[CHAPTER III: The passage in Rom. 9:22 explicated](#)

[CHAPTER IV: That this immediate wrath of God is in Scripture set forth unto us under the similitude of fire](#)

[CHAPTER V: life impressions of God's immediate wrath](#)

[CHAPTER VI: 1. God's justice.—2. Avenging wrath otherwise not satisfied](#)

[CHAPTER VII: Additional confirmations, drawn from the harmonies that are between it and other divine truths](#)

[CHAPTER VIII: The dreadfulness of this punishment argued](#)

[CHAPTER IX: The inferences and uses of the doctrine.—If God punisheth sins, he is not the author of it](#)

Of the punishment of sin in hell.—That the wrath of God is the immediate cause of that punishment

For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.—HEB. 10:30, 31

In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.—2 THES. 1:8, 9.

What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?—ROMANS 9:22.

## CHAPTER I

### **The subject and general division of the discourse**

We have seen how sinful and guilty every man is in his unregenerate condition; what last remains, is to consider the greatness of that punishment, which all this sinfulness deserves: a punishment so great that it cannot be comprehended by our thoughts, nor ever be sufficiently expressed. For what hell and destruction are, is a mystery, as well as what heaven is: and the true and proper notion or conception of either, are a riddle to the most of men. As 'eye hath not seen, ear not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man' (the natural man), 'what God hath prepared for those that love him;' so, nor what God hath prepared for them that hate him. For it is the same, and no other punishment but that which is 'prepared for the devil and his angels,' as Christ says. And what it can be that should torment them, or be the immediate executioner of vengeance on

them, the imagination of man, confined to worldly agents and instruments, cannot divine or take in.

Other scriptures go metaphorically to work in setting out this punishment by things outwardly, sensibly dreadful. But these scriptures (of all other) that are my texts, do more plainly, and without parables, declare it to us, in its immediate causes, and from them do leave us to infer the fearfulness.

For instance, other scriptures set it out to us as a 'prison,' 1 Peter 3:19, large enough, to be sure, to hold men and devils: 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God,' Ps. 9:17. As also by their being retained in chains of darkness, 2 Peter 2:4, where men must lie till they have paid the utmost farthing, Mat. 5:26; where is nothing but 'darkness, utter darkness,' 'blackness of darkness,' Jude 4, that is, an emptiness of all good, not a beam of light to all eternity; also a 'place of torment,' Luke 16:28, where there is not admitted 'one drop to cool one's tongue,' in the midst of the most raging scorchings. Also, I find it elsewhere expressed by the most horrid punishments and tortures that were found amongst the nations, cutting men in pieces, dividing them in the midst (*διχοτομήσει*, Mat. 24:49, 51), tearing them in pieces, Ps. 50:22; 'cutting them up to the backbone,' Heb. 4:12, 13;\* 'drowning men in perdition,' 1 Tim. 6:9, and that with 'millstones about their necks,' as Christ adds, Mat. 18:6, to make sure they never rise again; also unto a being cast 'bound hand and foot,' Mat. 22:13, 'into fire,' to be burnt alive; 'a furnace of fire,' twice in one chapter, Mat. 13:42, 49, 50; 'a lake of fire,' and so drowned over head and ears for ever; a lake 'fed with a stream of brimstone,' which (of all matter that feedeth fire) is the most fierce; then again, 'eternal fire,' and that never to be slacked or extinguished. And you may with the like analogy go over whatever else of torment is most exquisite to outward sense.

But these and all else you can imagine, are but shadows and similitudes (as I myself heard one upon the rack of terror of conscience cry out, in a like comparison, These are but metaphors to

what I feel), and indeed unto what the thing itself is. As to say of heaven, there are rivers of pleasures, a city whereof the streets are of gold, the gates of pearl, and such like, they are but metaphorical descriptions; for it is God himself that is the fountain of life. And oppositely it is said of the wrath to come, that 'God is a consuming fire,' Heb. 12:20.

But these scriptures which I have read, they all speak essences, quintessences. And as hell is said to be 'naked before the Lord, and without a covering,' Job 16:16, so do these words lay hell open nakedly, not unto our senses, but to the understanding of us, and then they leave us to infer how fearful! And although these scriptures consist of words that differ, yet they conspire together in the same scope and matter, viz., to set out damnation to us in the true and proper causes, and the real horridness thereof argued from those causes.

I shall confine myself to two heads; and in handling thereof, what the one of these scriptures is wanting in, the other will supply; in what the one is dark, the other explains.

The heads themselves I shall take as I find them in the first of these Scriptures, Heb. 10:31.

First, That God himself, by his own hands, that is, the power of his wrath, is the immediate inflicter of that punishment or destruction of men's souls in hell. It is a 'falling into the hands of God.'

Secondly, The dreadfulness of that punishment inferred and argued therefrom: 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'

Which two are the doctrinal parts of this discourse.

For the first, that God himself is the immediate inflicter, &c.

For explication. We must distinguish how that God performs two parts herein: 1. Of a judge, to give forth the sentence of his authority. 2. Of an avenger, a party injured and provoked, and, as such, the inflicter. My scope in this distinction is, that we may, in reading the scriptures that speak of this punishment, know how to put a difference, and not transfer the whole of God's agency in this matter unto that of sentencing it as a judge only. And besides that many scriptures do apart shew this distinction, there are some that still carry along with them both these agencies, or hand of God in it together, and yet as distinct; the one under the term of wrath and vengeance, the other under the notion of its being a judgment, the judgment of God and the judgment of hell-fire,\* as Mat. 23:33. Thus first the text Heb. 10 terms it somewhat 'vengeance and fiery indignation,' ver. 30, 27; then again judgment, as ver. 27, 'a fearful looking for of judgment,' and ver. 30, 'the Lord will judge,' &c. The like, Rom. 2:5, 8, 9, where all is reduced in like manner to these two, God's righteous judgment, and his wrath and indignation treasured up. Also, 2 Thes. 1, 'The righteous judgment of God,' vers. 5, 6, there is the sentence, and 'destroyed from the glory of his power' as the inflicting cause, ver. 9; likewise Rom. 9, as sovereign Lord he shews ἐξουσίαν, authority in this punishment, ver. 21, and then as the immediate inflicter, wrath and τὸ δυνατόν, the 'power of his wrath,' ver. 22. That speech of our Saviour about this matter, one evangelist, Luke 12:5, records it, 'Who is able, Ἐξουσίαν ἔχοντα, to cast into hell,' namely, as a judge who casts a malefactor into prison. The other, Mat. 10:28, 'Who is able, Τὸν δυνατόμενον, to kill the soul, and to destroy body and soul in hell.' Noting thereby that he useth his intrinsic power and force as the inflicter.

I shall be large in handling and proving this latter, as a great truth, concerning which I further premise, that I would not be understood to exclude other miseries, as inflicted by creatures used as God's instruments, accompanying this; but that which I contend for is, that principally and eminently above all such, it is the wrath and indignation of God himself, working immediately in and upon men's

souls and consciences, that is intended in these and other scriptures. This is the subject of the first section of this discourse.

And let it be noticed now at the entrance, that the same scriptures and reasons that shall be brought to prove this in this first section, will be found again to serve as new arguments by way of inference, to set out and infer the latter also; that is, the dreadfulness of it, as will appear in the second section.

## CHAPTER II

### **The first sort of proofs from Scriptures: first, those three prefixed as the texts**

Let us first see what the Scriptures speak more directly to this great point.

Heb. 10:28–31, He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

In order to the proofs from hence, observe the occasion of the apostle's mention of this punishment here, to be his having treated of the highest sin and kind of sinners, the sin against the Holy Ghost. By the occasion of which, he gives us to understand what for the substance is indeed the recompence of all manner of other actual sins, small and great; the punishment being in solido, one and the same to all, though with a vast difference of degrees. And therefore it



is said unto all that are found wicked at that day, whether of greater or lesser proportions and sizes of wickedness, 'Go into fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' The devil is the greatest of sinners, yet all go with him into the same torment, that is, for substance the same. And upon the like ground, what is here spoken by way of eminency concerning the punishment of these, the highest sort of sinners of the sons of men, is true of all others, there being but one common fire or punishment, in the substance of it, for all.

2. Observe the manner of his setting forth the dreadfulfulness of that punishment to us. It is only by way of insinuation; for seeing he could not express the soreness of it, he thought fit to suggest only who is the immediate author and inflicter of it, and so leaves it to our thoughts to infer how dreadful it is! This is general.

To argue the point in hand out of this text, let us take these things along with us.

1. You see he here brings in the great God, as an enraged enemy, challenging the execution hereof to himself. This 'vengeance belongeth to me,' or, as Rom. 12:19, 'Vengeance is mine, I will recompense;' as if he had said, Let me alone with it.

2. In that when he would set out the severeness of this punishment (which is his professed aim, ver. 29) as infinitely exceeding all those kinds of corporal deaths in Moses' law, he inferreth the soreness of this from God himself as the avenger. 'We know him that hath thus said, Vengeance is mine,' that is, what a great and powerful God he is. The saints only know God by faith in himself and his greatness, as Heb. 11, and that so as no other men in this life do. And by what we know of him, and the apprehensions we have of him, we cannot but forewarn what that punishment must needs be, when God himself shall thus solemnly profess himself to be the avenger. It is argued, you see, both from what this God is, and from that knowledge the saints have of him. They, and they alone, know him in his love, and have tasted and found that his immediate 'loving-kindness is better

than life;' and from the law of contraries, they know that his wrath must be more bitter than death. They are able to measure what he is in his wrath, by what he is in his love. And some of the primitive saints, especially the apostles, who 'had the first fruits of the Spirit,' knew and had tasted how good the Lord is in his love, by immediate impressions of it on their souls, in communion with himself. The like tenor of speech has that in 2 Cor. 5:11, 'We knowing the terror of the Lord.' It is termed his terror, as noting out that which is proper to him and his greatness, in his being able to punish and destroy sinners.

Moses, who in the Old Testament had seen the glory of God the most immediately of any man (and was therein a type of Christ), was thereby made sensible of this very thing as touching this punishment, and therefore complains in the very like language, Ps. 90, 'Who knows the power of thine anger?' lamenting how the generality of men did not know it, because indeed they knew not God. But we, says the apostle, have known him, &c.

3. And thereupon he further calls this punishment a falling into God's hands. That very phrase often notes out immediate execution, as in ordinary speech it doth. When a father or a master threatens a child or a young servant, already corrected by other hands at their appointment, yet when either would threaten more severely, they will say, Take heed how you fall into my hands, or come under my fingers, when they mean to correct them themselves.

4. And then that the apostle thereupon infers from this the dreadfulness thereof even from this, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God.' Reason tells us that the soreness of any torment, the fearfulness of any death, ariseth from the power, force, violence, or efficacy of that which is the immediate agent or cause inflicting it. As why do we argue burning or dying by fire a more terrible death is respect of torment than drowning in water? But that fire, being the immediate agent or instrument applied to that execution, hath a more fierce and violent working than water hath, which despatcheth

a man more easily. Now, therefore, the fearfulness and soreness of this punishment (and that with difference from that by creatures, compare for this vers. 28, 29) being here argued, that it is a falling into God's hands; and we knowing this withal, that he is in himself able to work by his fierce wrath more powerfully and exquisitely upon the reasonable soul of man sinful than all created agents whatever, and the soul itself being also capable of such a working upon by him; this doth strongly argue his own immediate execution by his own hands to have been intended.

5. In ver. 27, he termeth the immediate cause inflicting this punishment a 'fiery indignation devouring the adversaries.' Indignation or wrath is of some intelligent nature provoked. And whom should this refer to? or whose indignation can it be supposed but of this God, 'who himself' (as the apostle expounds, and comments upon it) 'hath said, Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord'? And this indignation is called fiery, because it works as fire; is in tormenting like to fire; or as a flaming sword, red hot, when it is made the instrument of one's death, which wounds and kills, and doth torment with a superadded anguish. For the further opening of which I shall at present only say two things.

(1.) That God compares himself in this respect unto a devouring or consuming fire in this very epistle: Heb. 12:29, 'Our God is a consuming fire.' There are two creatures which God assimilates himself unto in contrary respects. 1. To light, as often, and 'God is love,' 1 John 4; and both these are spoken of him in respect of what he is to the saints in glory. Light is of all creatures the most comfortable, and 'in his light it is we see light.' And the state of glory is therefore termed 'the inheritance of the saints in light,' Col. 1. The second is to fire, and this on the contrary in relation to what he is to men in hell. And the parallel runs upon what he is immediately unto both, by analogy of reason. Of all creatures, fire is the most dreadful, the most raging, subtle, and piercing in its operation; and so God in his wrath must be understood under that similitude to be, and therefore it is his wrath is termed 'fiery indignation.'

(2.) Those words in their coherence are an allusion to those extraordinary punishments executed under the old law. For in ver. 28 he enforceth his argument (the scope of which was to aggravate this punishment as *à minori*) from the instances of those punishments that did befall men that died for despising Moses's law. Some of them we read were destroyed by fire, and therein he more especially refers us to those examples of Nadab and Abihu, who 'perished through fire,' Lev. 10:1, 2, where the very words the apostle here used to set out this punishment by are used by Moses, and so more evidently shew the allusion to be made thereunto. 'There went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them,' says that text; and yet he argues from thence the surpassing soreness of this punishment above that from that fire, though it were a fire even from heaven itself that killed them. But more of this hereafter.

I come, secondly, to that other scripture, 2 Thes. 1:8, 9, 'in flaming fire, taking vengeance of them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.' Where it is to be observed, that though he mentions 'flaming fire,' and the ministry of his mighty angels, which accompany Christ's appearing, yet he clearly resolves the ultimate and immediate cause of wicked men's destruction into the immediate presence and glory of Christ's power: ver. 9, 'Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.' So as herein is set forth,

First, The punishment.

Secondly, The causes of that punishment.

1. For the punishment, there is, 1st, the nature of it; it is termed destruction; 2dly, the duration of it, everlasting destruction.

2. The causes of it; from or by 'the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power.' That particle *ἀπὸ*, which we translate from, is causal,

imports the efficient cause, as in all those salutations, 'grace and peace from the Father, and from Jesus Christ,' it doth, Rom. 1:7, 2 Cor. 1:2, that is, as from the fountain, the principal and sole authors and efficients of grace and peace. And thus the word is used in multitudes of places else. And accordingly we find in other scriptures also that God and Christ are the immediate causes of peace. Thus 2 Thes. 3:16, 'Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace,' &c., and chap. 2:16, 17, 'The Lord Jesus himself comfort your hearts.' Now, on the contrary, when in like manner he says, 'Everlasting destruction from his face, presence, and the glory of his power,' it may and is to be understood the Lord himself, personally by his own mere presence, and by the strength of his own power, inflicteth their destruction forever: they die by no other hand. This particle from (as in speech we often use it) hath led some from the true intent of the apostle. They thereupon supposing this the meaning, that they are punished with destruction from the presence, that is, out of the presence of Christ; as if this were the fulfilling that speech of Christ, 'Depart from me, into everlasting torment.' This, though it be true of this destruction spoken of here, in respect of Christ's local presence, consider him as he is man; yet, as Slater upon the place well says, to him that attentively considers the words, the causes of destruction are held forth herein. For, 1st, he says not simply, or alone, that they are punished from his presence, but further adds, from the glory of his power, the same particle ἀπὸ, or from, being therefore in common to be applied to the one as well as the other. Now the intent of the latter, from his glorious power, cannot note forth that they were punished out of, or from without his glorious power, as in respect of absence, but the contrary, that the presence and efficacy of it is to be that which is the author of their punishment, so that it imports nothing less than absence, or a withdrawment by God, or a throwing them out of his presence; but positively an efficiency or energy put forth by him, and so carries with it the relation and influence of an efficient cause. If indeed he had added, instead hereof, either from his glory, or from his blessedness, unto that other from his presence, it might have carried both unto pœna damni, the punishment of loss; that is, to note out what they had lost, and

wanted the communication of, and so their exclusion from the participation of God's face and blessedness (which is more ordinarily termed his presence), and together therewith had noted out an exclusion also of this sense which I argue for; but his saying also from the glory of his power, manifestly notes power put forth in execution, and inflicting that destruction, and glorifying himself on them thereby.

And, 2, further know that the word here used is not potestas, as of a judge, that is, authority, whereof John 5:27, 'The Father hath given the Son of man authority to execute judgment;' and in relation unto which, in ver. 5 of this chapter, he had termed it, 'The righteous judgment of God;' but the word is ἰσχύς, which signifies inward personal strength, vigour, robur, such as a giant hath in his own limbs.\* And, therefore, when their destruction is said to be from his power, as thus denoting personal strength, the intendment must needs be to denote a putting forth of that strength which is in himself to destroy them. Parallel with that in Rom. 9:22, 'What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known, on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction;' of which anon.

Yea, and 3, even this other phrase, destroyed from his presence, doth likewise as fully close with this sense, to note the efficient cause of their destruction. The word in the original is, from his face, ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου: now God's anger and wrath is as well, and very frequently expressed by his face in Scripture, as his favour useth to be; for the face as well holds forth anger and wrath, as favour and grace. Thus Lev. 20:6, 'I will set my face against that soul, and will cut him off;' that is, I will put forth mine anger to destroy him. And Lam. 4:16, where it is translated 'the anger of the Lord,' in the Hebrew, and in your margins it is, 'the face of the Lord.' As there is 'the light of God's countenance,' in which 'is life,' so the 'rebuke of God's countenance, at which we perish,' Ps. 80:16, even as the wax is said to melt 'at the presence of the fire,' Ps. 68:2, and often elsewhere.

So, then, to be destroyed from his face and presence, is all one as to say, from his anger and wrath. And we have both exegetically met in one scripture: Rev. 6:16, 'They said to the mountains, Fall on us, to hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;' and suitably this destruction here, in 2 Thes. 1, is said to be both from God and Christ, even as the happiness of heaven is immediately from the presence of God and Christ: Rev. 21:23, 'And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.' Thus, on the contrary, is it in hell; and so at the day of judgment it is 'the face of God,' and 'the face of the Lamb,' that the wicked most of all do dread, as that which is the inflicter of their torment.

As for any objection from those words, 'in flaming fire,' &c., I shall answer it afterwards.

## CHAPTER III

### **The passage in Rom. 9:22 explicated, only so far as concerns the execution**

Several particulars in the words that shew the power of God's wrath to be the inflicting cause, and immediately inflicting this punishment.—An explication of a fourth scripture, Rom. 2:8, 9, added, for the all

What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?—ROM. 9:22

I shall insist on this passage but so far as respects the execution of this destruction in hell, after much long-suffering past, and not to touch at all upon anything of that point of rejection from eternity, whether intended or not. But that the words should respect the execution in hell (which is the point only before us), I take that as clear, and much for granted. And the reason is, because it is the glory of heaven, which in the next words the apostle joins with it, and sets by it, as parallels illustrating each the other: so ver. 23, 'And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory:' in heaven, namely. The only thing which by the way I observe is, that the sin of the creature is that which prepareth or fitteth the creature for the execution of this punishment; and a difference may be observed in this (though otherwise a parallel), as put in cautiously by the apostle, that God himself prepareth the saints to glory, ver. 23; but the other are fitted, that is, by themselves, unto destruction, ver. 22, ere he destroyeth them.



The point before me is, that God's wrath and his power are to be the immediate inflictors of that destruction. There are several particulars in the words, which, taken singly, might perhaps be sufficient to prove this, but, laid all together, will become a strong evi<sup>c</sup>tion thereof.

1. That God's wrath and his power, or the power of his wrath, are spoken of as the inflicting or executing causes, is evident; for it is a power of efficiency here spoken of, as whereby God produceth this destruction, as a cause doth its proper effect; and accordingly he is said to make known and shew his power and wrath therein, like as the force and virtue of an efficient cause is made known and demonstrated, in and by the effect it produceth. And so is spoken to the same effect with what, in chap. 1:20, he had said, that his 'power and Godhead' is 'clearly seen from the creation of the world,' and 'understood by the things that are made.' He that is, ὁ δυνατός, 'the mighty one' (as the blessed virgin there, by way of eminency, styles him), Luke 1:49, is said to 'shew strength with his arm,' ver. 51. And here, 'to make known,' τὸ δυνατόν αὐτοῦ (a word suited to that other), his τὸ posse, or what is possible to be done by him. It is then a power of strength, and energy, or efficacy, with his own hands and arm, and that according to the utmost of his ability, as the word imports. And so the power here spoken of is an inflicting power, that works and effects this destruction; and not that of authority only, or a power of liberty to do as one pleaseth, as the potter with the clay; for that kind of power he had before ascribed to God in this matter, in the foregoing verse, which this word here is distinct from. And this is one step; unto which add,

2. It is his power joined with his wrath; that is, the power of his wrath, or his wrath in the power of it. For thus Moses, the man of God, Ps. 90:11, had long afore put them together, when he speaks of this very wrath in hell, of which here the apostle doth. For after he had, 1, set out the time and condition of man in this life, 'The days of our years are threescore years and ten,' &c.; and then, 2, 'we fly away', so expressing death, and our going into another world; then,

3, follows, 'Who knows the power of thine anger?' as that which succeedeth and seizeth after death upon the most of mankind dying in their sins. The apostle here mentions power and wrath apart; but Moses there maketh power an attribute of his wrath, and so considered, it hath a double meaning, and both serving our purpose: 1. That wrath stirs up his power, and draws it out unto this execution; and therefore wrath is the first of the two here mentioned. Yea, further, that it is his power, as it becomes heated, inflamed, and intended\* by wrath, that inflicteth this; and as a man in his anger strikes a greater blow, so may God be supposed to do, when represented as thus smiting in his sore displeasure. And 2. That God's very wrath and anger, if but shewn and revealed by him to men's souls, hath such a power in it, that that alone is enough to destroy them. The nearest resemblance that the Scriptures make of this wrath is that of fire (of which anon), and that as fire melting wax by the very presence of it. As therefore when we would express the power of fire, we say, the power of the heat that is in the fire, that thus melts and consumes, &c., its heat being in itself so fierce and vehement a quality, that when but applied it thus works; so here it is the power of his wrath, if it be 'kindled but a little,' that destroys, if but made known once or discovered. And as in the text, it is a shewing his wrath, and thereby his power in destroying is made known. It is but his being angry, and shewing it. And this is the greatness of God, that his very wrath discovered, should have this power; and how receptive the conscience is of it, I shall after shew. As 'in his favour' (if but manifested to men's souls) 'is life,' Ps. 30:5, so, in his anger, when discovered by himself, there is death. If the 'wrath of a king' be 'as the roaring of a lion,' and 'where the word of a king is, there is power,' then what is the terror and power of the wrath of the great God, that alone strikes dead! And thus understood, it is an argument of itself alone, that the power of his wrath doth speak an immediateness of God's execution.

A second particular is, that that which makes God willing, by reason of sin, to execute this, is thereby to obtain a glory unto his power by shewing his wrath. So as that although he hath already shewn his

power in creating the world at first, and upholding it by the word of his power, and other effects, that yet over and above, and besides all this, he takes the advantage of sin to shew, as the riches of his mercy in saving from sin, so the greatness of his power another way, namely, in destroying for sin. And accordingly, in that 2 Thes. 1:9, there is a peculiar glory attributed unto that power of his, from or by which men are destroyed, 'punished from the glory,' says that text, 'of his power,' or from his power, giving a demonstration, or shewing his glory therein; that is, unto that end, that it might be known how great and powerful a God he is in himself, by the judgment which he executes, as the psalmist speaks.

Now then from hence, ere we add the other two particulars, the argument riseth thus: that if God should execute this by creatures only, and not immediately by himself, he attained not the full of this his end, and that upon a double account.

1. Because, when all had been done that could have been by his powerful arming and setting on of creatures to punish the sinner, yet still himself being able to give a greater demonstration of power this way, if himself would take it in hand, and the soul of man being fully capable of his immediate workings upon it, and sin also deserving it, and the wrath of God being first or last to come upon impenitent sinners to the uttermost, therefore until this demonstration were given, he had not made a full proof of his power, which the apostle here professeth to be his aim.

And, 2, in that after all other instances and demonstrations of power given in creation, miracles, in conversion of souls, that is, take his creating part in it, &c., all which he hath done immediately himself, without the intervention of created influences, that he should, last of all, be willing to give forth anew, or shew forth his power afresh in this work also, and yet should not then give a demonstration of like immediate power, but execute it only at second hand by creatures alone; this would fall short, and hold no proportion with that power already shewn forth in those fore-passed works. And then this being

the last, or one of the last, after all his other works ended, purposely to shew forth his power in, it had not been such a demonstration of power, as in his last work (wherein he professeth to shew forth any attribute) he useth comparatively to give. For still his manner is, in the shewing forth of any attribute, to give greater demonstrations thereof in his latter works than in the former; of which more afterwards.

Add this to it, which heightens the argument, that the apostle specially singleth forth this attribute of power, and by way of eminency mentioneth it in speaking of this punishment, as that attribute, whereof God is willing to give fullest demonstration in this work, above any other attribute, or attributes in himself therein. In all the great works of God, some one special attribute hath still the honour given it, as being in a way of eminency put forth: as in man's salvation, 'mercy and grace,' Eph. 2:9; in man's glorification, 'riches of glory and mercy,' as here, ver. 23. But look down into hell, and it is his power which (as here in difference from those other) is said to be the predominant attribute that he would shew forth, and which appeareth there. And the comparing of these two, salvation and damnation, as they stand in an opposite parallel, this in ver. 22, and the other in ver. 23, doth confirm this observation, taking in withal that other passage in 2 Thes. 1:9, where they are said to be punished 'from the glory of his power,' which manifestly gives the glory unto his power in this work, above any attribute. His sovereignty is seen in salvation as much (if not more) as it is in destruction: 'I will have mercy on whom I will,' &c. But his power or omnipotency, that is said to be seen in destroying for sin. Whereof perhaps one reason is, because there is shewn in this, a duplicated power, a contrary stream of power running cross and thwart in its effects in this. For at the same instant (and that lengthened out for ever) God sets himself by his power to destroy the creature utterly, in respect of its well-being; whilst yet again, on the other hand, as great a power is requisite to uphold it in being and sense, and to prevent its sinking into its first nothing, or from failing before him, in respect of being to bear it. And in respect to continue the creature to be, &c., and to endure the

weight of God's power in wrath, to be dry stubble in a flame never consumed, this is more than for God to create. This puts the great God upon a double expense of power.

A third particular, in this Rom. 9:22, that contributes to this is, that as the cause inflicting is termed the power of his wrath, so the miserable subjects hereof are denominated 'vessels of wrath,' even as on the other side those saved are termed 'vessels of mercy.' Common use of speech tells us, that vessels ordained to be filled with such or such materials have their denomination from that matter they are ordained to contain, and are filled withal. You say this is a vessel of oil, that a vessel of wine. These here, you see, are said to be vessels of wrath. If you demand whose wrath? God's. 'What if God, willing to make known his wrath.' Now as touching its opposite here, vessels of mercy, all will acknowledge that when it is spoken of as in relation to heaven (as here it is) it importeth souls, their being set apart to be immediately filled with the love and mercy of God; that as God is love, so that they, as vessels, swim in that ocean for ever, that they dwell in God immediately, and are filled with fulness of him. And why should not then this other, of being vessels of wrath, be intended in the same sense also, and that sense be urged accordingly? especially seeing it is evident that one scope of the apostle here, was to make a parallel between the eternal glorification of the one, and eternal destruction of the other, and accordingly between what are to be the causes of them. And if so, the law of this parallel will also carry it to this, that as the saints in heaven have an immediate participation of God, that likewise in hell there shall be oppositely an immediate participation of God's wrath. In heaven, they are not said to be vessels of mercy because God shews them mercy only by created benefits or gifts bestowed, or because they have God's mercy communicated by creatures (though it must be affirmed that there is a confluence of these), but because God himself appears all in love, mercy, and kindness to them.

And it is not nothing, that according to the same analogy of speech, unto this particular, in multitudes of scriptures in the New

Testament, this destruction is ὀνομαστικῶς, by way of singularity, eminency, and simply styled wrath, and the wrath of God. And so it bears away that denomination from all other punishments by creatures (except that by magistrates in God's stead, and who bear the image of God, Rom. 13:5), so bearing the name of its immediate cause.

The Baptist he began that style in the New Testament,—'the wrath to come,' Mat. 3,—by way of distinction from all that is executed in this life. And the whole New Testament afterwards much useth that phrase. As when the day of judgment is styled 'the day of wrath,' Rom. 2, and elsewhere. It is equivalent to say, 'a child of hell,' Mat. 23:15, and 'a child of wrath,' Eph. 2:3; to say, 'fitted to destruction,' as Rom. 9, and 'ordained to wrath,' 1 Thes. 5:9; to say, 'damnation hasteneth,' 2 Peter 2:3, and 'the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience,' Col. 3:6. As in like manner, on the contrary, 'saved from wrath,' Rom. 5, 'delivered from wrath through Christ,' 1 Thes. 1:10, is all one, and 'saved from death and hell,' elsewhere. And this is usually termed the 'wrath of God;' so John 3:36, Col. 3:6, and Eph. 5:6, Rom. 9:22.

That which I would observe from both is, that according to the general analogy or common speech in all languages, the punishment, as the effect, bearing the denomination of that which is the immediate instrument of the principal agent in that punishment (thus the torture by the rack is called the rack; whipping, the rod; so in deaths, crucifying was termed the cross; hanging, the gallows; thus it is in the punishments which men execute); that in like analogy of speech, this punishment should so generally be termed wrath, and the wrath of God, by way of eminency and difference from all other forerunning effects of wrath, executed by creatures in this life; this still strengthens the former notion, that is indeed the wrath of this God itself, in a way of eminent difference from what by creatures he doth in wrath pour out, that is the inflicter of that punishment.

I shall for the close of this cast in one Scripture testimony more, both to confirm this interpretation of wrath given upon Rom. 9, and the whole of the point in hand. It is

Rom. 2:8, 9, Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish unto every soul of man that doth evil, &c.

I observed afore from the second verse of this chapter, how that this punishment was termed both the 'judgment of God,' ver. 2, as denoting God to be the judge, and also 'wrath,' as of God the avenger. Now, in these words, ver. 8, 9, the apostle pursueth the latter more fully, when he says, 'Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish to every soul of man.' These are two pairs or conjugates of causes and effects: 1, 'indignation and wrath,' as the causes; 2, 'tribulation and anguish,' as the two effects; and that on the 'souls of men,' which are the vessels of this wrath and indignation, and subjects of that tribulation and anguish thence arising. And truly his instancing in the soul, which, though it often signifies the whole person, yet here seems purposely done, as being that in or of man, which alone is immediately capable of this indignation and wrath of God, and the impressions or effects of anguish therefrom, and is the proper seat of that anguish and tribulation; and that phrase of wrath, its being said to be 'treasured up,' in the 5th verse, suits this. For what is the treasury or magazine thereof, but the heart and bosom of God himself, in which it lies hid, as treasures use to do in some secret place? Even as the saints' life is said to be 'hid in God,' Col. 3:3, compare Deut. 32:24.

I shall but further superadd that noticed saying of Luther (which, out of deep experience of the wrath of God in his soul, at his first humiliation and conversion he had learned), The wrath of God is hell, the hell of devils and all damned spirits.

## CHAPTER IV

That this immediate wrath of God is in Scripture set forth unto us under the similitude of fire, and fiery indignation.—The examples of persons devoured by fire in the Old Testament, shadows of this punishment by the immediate wrath of God.—This the fire wherein the devil and his angels are tormented

There hath been nothing more divertive of the thoughts of men from apprehending, or so much as imagining God's immediate wrath to be a cause of that punishment in hell, than that the Scriptures do so often make mention of fire, &c., as the instrument thereof, and so men's conceptions do terminate therein, and go no further.

But I shall rather on the other hand make an argument of it, namely, that indeed the Scriptures do set out this immediate wrath of God under the similitude, resemblance, and representation of fire, and that sometimes, when hell-fire is spoken of, the wrath of God is intended thereby.

Unto which I yet preface this, that I must not, nor dare I say that there is no material fire in hell ordained for punishment to men's bodies, but that it is rational, that the body having sinned as well as the soul, it should have a meet recompence of reward suited thereto, as well as that the soul should. But yet so, as either of them have this meted out to them, according to their vastly differing share, and hand, and acting which they had in sinning; in which the soul is always the principal actor, and in some sins the sole agent and subject. To be sure, in heaven there is a confluence of created excellencies, suited to the bodies of saints, made spiritual, as well as God himself, the happiness of their souls; and sure I am that, on the contrary, it is distinctly said of each apart, that God destroys 'both body and soul' in hell, Mat. 10:28; and accordingly each of them, with a punishment suited unto each.

The passage of Scripture unto which the gathering will be of several others, for the proof of this my present assertion (which is the subject of this chapter) is that of our apostle in the 28th verse of this



Heb. 10, a little afore my text; he there setting forth the judgment to come, in the causes and effects of it to be,

A 'fiery indignation, devouring the adversaries.'

I did but touch upon it before, when I drew out other arguments from this text, but then reserved a fuller handling of this by itself.

The original hath it, the indignation of fire. But indignation is in and from the heart of an intelligent person provoked, which is God, as the text shews. Grotius therefore interprets it, 'the anger of God,' but adds, 'putting forth itself by fire.' I suppose he means by corporeal fire, as its instrument. But why not rather the anger of God himself, devouring his adversaries as fire, and so to relate to the manner of his anger its working, as represented under the similitude of fire, seeing God himself is in this epistle styled a consuming fire, which interprets this?

And in this expression of fiery indignation which devoureth, he hath particular reference unto those, of all other the most extraordinary judgments upon Nadab and Abihu: Lev. 10:2, 'There came out fire from the Lord, and devoured them.' They are in terminis the very words of the apostle here; and we may take in also (that so we may have two witnesses too, to confirm this our interpretation of the apostle's allusion) 'That two hundred and fifty princes perished by fire from the Lord in the rebellion of Korah,' Num. 16:35. This as for what examples is referred unto.

Now, to raise up our thoughts unto how much a sorer punishment the fiery indignation that remained for those gospel adversaries should be, he suggests how transcendently the gospel exceeds the ministration of Moses's law, in these words that follow: 'He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified,

an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace?' Moses's law (the old covenant, as joined with the law ceremonial), was sprinkled or consecrated with the blood of beasts, chap. 9:19–21. But the gospel of the new covenant, and the persons enlightened thereby, have been sanctified by the blood of the Son of God. If, then, such an extraordinary fiery judgment befell the despisers of this Moses's law, thus sprinkled, &c., what fiery indignation proportionably must it be that shall befall the treaders down, both of the book, covenant, and sacred blood of Christ! And in this lies the weight and strength of the apostle's argument.

That maxim of the judicial law which, is annexed, that despisers 'died without mercy under two or three witnesses,' is brought in for that grand circumstance's sake, whereby the apostle heighteneth both the iniquity of those persons destroyed by fire, who sinned before many thousand witnesses, the whole congregation of Israel; as likewise this other far transcending guilt of these adversaries, who had renounced Christ and his blood only, before the whole world and Christian church. So chap. 6:6, it is said they did put the Lord Jesus to an open shame, and they are the same persons whom he threatens this against here, and speaks of there.

But still, by what surpassing proportion may we estimate, or suppose (as the apostle calls us to do) how much this fiery indignation is sorer than that outward devouring them by fire. It is certain that Moses's law, and that sprinkling with beasts' blood, &c., which he argues from, held but the proportion of types, figures, and shadows; but the new covenant, and Christ's blood, &c., of the substance and reality comparatively to these. Then in like manner, his intent in proposing these examples of judgments by fire, was as of those that hold the proportion but of a type, a figure of this fiery indignation that is to come upon the treaders down of the blood of Christ. For indeed a mere bodily death, the sharpest (as those by fire were), is but as the shadow of death, unto the second death (the thing intended here), which is utterly another kind of thing.

In Heb. 10 ver. 1, he says of the good things of the gospel, that what the law held forth were but the shadows of those good things to come, as Canaan of heaven, chap. 4 &c.; the like, Col. 2:17. And why may it not be also said, that as all the good things under the law, the best were but shadows of those good things to come, so that the highest and worst of outward evil things executed then, were in like manner but shadows of those evil things which the gospel brings to light, as the punishment of sin? And we may see in his succeeding discourse in this same chapter, how he, having first instanced in the good, he after instanceth in the highest of evil, in these words I am upon, vers. 27–31. And in like manner the like extraordinary judgments then are expressly said to have 'happened to them as types;' so in Greek\* and margin, 1 Cor. 10:11: types not merely monitory of like events, but withal prefigurative of punishment of an higher kind, &c. What death could be outwardly sorer than to be destroyed of serpents? ver. 9, and those fiery too, Num. 21:6, the effects of whose stings are described to be as dolorous as being burnt alive, But under the gospel, sin and the law, and so God's wrath, these as the substance are set out to be the sting of that death to come, 1 Cor. 15:55. Again, ver. 10, 'destroyed of the destroyer.' Who was the destroyer then? Angels: so Heb. 11:38. And what destruction or destroyer under the gospel is it that is typified out by these? Even God himself, who, as by Christ, is said to 'kill the soul,' and 'destroy body and soul in hell.' So, ere the apostle took off his pen from prosecuting that argument, in the very same chapter he in full effect says as much, in setting before them how it was God's power and wrath, instead of those other destroyers, with which sinners have now to do. Ver. 22, 'Do you provoke the Lord to jealousy? are you stronger than he?' I might confirm this notion from other types, 1 Cor. 15:44, 45. This forelaid;—

To approach nearer to our purpose in hand, there are two things further to be done. 1. As touching the type itself, what kind of fire that was which devoured them; and the manner of their deaths.

The fire was another manner of fire than this our elementary common fire. This was fire from heaven, and therefore said to be a fire from the Lord that devoured them; it was such a fire, as blasts of lightning are, which strike, and blast, and shrivel the spirits of a living body in an instant, which is evident by the manner of their deaths. The Hebrew doctors say of it, that it was a fire which burnt their souls, not their bodies; their meaning is, their bodies were not consumed or devoured by it: for Lev. 10:5, it is said, They carried their bodies and coats into the tent, as untouched. It was therefore such a fire (as lightning is from heaven) which useth to strike, and lick up men's spirits in an instant, when yet in the mean time it consumes not, breaks not so much as skin or flesh, which our elementary fire preys first and most upon. It was therefore a far subtler fire than culinary or kitchen fire, which suitably served as the fittest and nearest type of this fiery indignation, and of the vengeance which it executes. And this was but the shadow.

The second is, What the substance answering to these types should be? This I shall set out by two things:

1. What is the thing or subject devoured by this fiery indignation? It is the immortal souls of men. These are the fuel which this fire doth prey upon. As to the truth of the thing itself, I need not insist on it; but the analogy of that as the shadow, and this as typified thereby, that is the matter afore me. Let it be considered, that the death and destruction of the immortal soul in man could not any other way be more lively shadowed forth than by such a devouring (as Moses's word is) or licking up the vital and animal spirits that run in the body, when yet the body itself remains unburnt; thereby demonstrating that it was such a fire as struck immediately at that which is the fountain of life itself in the body, and at that which is the bond, the vinculum, the tie of union between soul and body; for such are those spirits. And yet not so much as to singe the outward bulk or carcase of the body. There could have been nothing invented in the whole compass of nature, to have borne a resemblance so near to shadow forth the immortal soul, as those spirits running in man's

blood and arteries do, which some affirm to be the very animal and vital soul in man. Sure I am, they are as the oil whereby life is preserved and fed; and in the blood is the life, says Moses, our best interpreter in this. Neither doth this shadow hold a similitude in this particular only, but in another like case as evidently. The pouring forth of the blood of the beasts that were sacrificed under the old law was particularly ordained to signify Christ his 'pouring forth his soul unto death,' as Isaiah speaks; as well as in general, that the sacrifice of these beasts did typify forth Christ's sacrifice in the whole of it. And this was as near a representation of that particular as could any way be made, by what was corporeal in beasts, or else in the whole creation (for a sacrifice of mankind, or the blood of men, God liked not to be made to him in his worship) could possibly have been found to pourtray it forth.

The second thing is, that the substance shadowed forth by that fire was no other than the indignation or wrath of the great God himself, which is termed fiery indignation here.

For proof of which, I insist not, that some shew thereof this shadow itself doth cast, in Moses his saying again and again in terminis, that 'a fire from the Lord,' &c., which hath a great emphasis and resemblance of this in it. But for proof I ask,

First, Where shall we find, or how shall we imagine any created fire so to exceed that fire from heaven, recorded in that story; and so far exceeding it as the substance doth a shadow, or such as should melt down immortal souls? You may sooner invent or imagine a fire so much comparatively hotter than that of the sun itself (which is the contract of fire and light), and so much exceeding it, as should be able to shrivel up this sun into a burnt black coal, as to imagine any such created fire, so transcending this of lightning from heaven, as shall thus devour reasonable souls and immortal spirits, that in the substance of them (as being spirits) do bear the image of God. In what furnace will you think to find such a fire? Nowhere but in the

bosom of him who hath here said, Vengeance is mine, even of God himself.

2. To confirm this. What created fire can be conceived more subtile or powerful, than the angels themselves are conceived to be? whom, as Heb. 1:7, out of the Psalms, the apostle compareth to flames of fire, that is, in our European language, to lightning. Now then I ask, when Christ says, Mat. 25:41, 'Go into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels' (shewing that man's punishment shall be from the same hand that the punishment of those evil angels is), what fire can be supposed such, that can work on angelical natures, who themselves have power over fire; of fire of lightning from heaven, as in Job's case was seen. None other but that, which, as the apostle resolves us (if we will rest in it), that 'our God is a consuming fire,' Heb. 12:29. So that consideration, the state and condition of the devil, I cannot but celebrate that fore-cited conclusive speech of Luther's, *Ira Dei est infernus diaboli et omnium damnatorum*, it is the wrath of God that is the hell of the devil, and of all the damned: for there can be no other fire in which the devils can be tormented. Outward washings may as soon reach conscience, as Heb. 9:9, 1 Peter 3:21, as such created fire to torment an angel.

3. Let us consider other scriptures, which, as I said, do gather about this, to give testimony to this interpretation.

First, That of the prophet Isaiah, chap. 33:14, 'The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites: Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?' I shall afterwards have occasion to take notice of this scripture by way of use. In the mean time, observe, that it is God himself who is meant by this devouring fire here; for in a smart and quick retortion (and it is a most elegant one), the prophet gives answer, 'He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he shall dwell with him' (whom you, that are hypocrites, so much dread, and have cause enough to do so); with him shall an upright man dwell, who is, and will be unto you, in the state you are in, a

devouring fire. And thus they are reprov'd, and taught what it is to be hypocrites, by the opposite condition of the upright, and the differing event of being such. And further, that it is God himself there the prophet intendeth, as with whom the upright should dwell, the words following do also shew: ver. 16, 'He shall dwell on high' (namely, with that 'high and lofty One, that dwells in the high and holy place,' &c.). Do but punctually compare that Isa. 57:15 with this here; likewise ver. 17, 'Thine eye' (O thou upright soul) 'shall see the King in his beauty;' that is (as Christ says), 'the pure in heart shall see God.' The result is, that the same God, who appears all in flames, and as a devouring fire, unto hypocrites in hell, is all light and beauty to the upright in heaven. Like as unto a sound and vigorous eye, 'it is a pleasant thing to behold the sun,' as Solomon speaks, but to sore eyes it is a terror.

Add to this Ps. 21:8, 9, 'Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies, thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.' This the Chaldee paraphrast interprets of the fire of hell; and so you have all meet to interpret this fire to be meant of the wrath of God himself. 1st, God a consuming fire, Heb. 12:29; then, 2dly, God himself to be that devouring fire, Isa. 33:14; and, 3dly, his wrath interpreted to be that fire by the psalmist. And lo, how these all meet in this one saying, 'The fiery indignation that devours the adversaries!' which the apostle himself also interprets of God himself afterwards, 'We know him that hath said, Vengeance is mine; and it is a fearful thing,' &c.

Particularly for that scripture, even now cited, Isa. 33:14, if we consult the context, the occasion of bringing in that horrid outcry, 'Who among us,' &c. (as interpreters agree), was that the prophet had set forth in the verses before, that most wonderful and prodigious slaughter of the king of Assyria's host, when an hundred fourscore and five thousand (as 2 Kings 19:35) were in one night destroyed by an angel. And thereupon the prophet, in this passage, is

to be understood either to have related what an impression of dread this so unparalleled a judgment had made upon, and struck the hearts of the hypocrites in Zion with; as that which had made them to cry out thereupon, 'Oh how then shall we dwell with everlasting burnings?' that is, with God himself; for they may well be supposed to have reasoned thus with themselves: If one angel, that is but a ministering spirit to God, is able to blast and consume such a multitude in one night, how shall we have to do with God himself, who is that infinite immense devouring fire, and all those angels but as sparks, and his ministers? And so, according to this meaning, themselves are brought in, speaking by the prophet, as the men of Bethshemesh did upon the like judgments: 1 Sam. 6:20, 'Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?' Or else those words may be supposed to have been the prophet's own meditation and use of instruction, deduced from that example; which he uttereth, as forewarning the sinners in Zion to consider, that if God be so terrible in the judgments he executes by others, his angels, who are flames of fire, how will you endure to dwell with God himself, and have immediately to do with him for ever, who is a devouring fire and everlasting burnings? &c. And our Saviour's speech is not remote from this of Isaiah, when, speaking of hell, it is the 'fire prepared for hypocrites,' says he, Mat. 24:51. Even as here Isaiah professeth to speak this of, and unto the hypocrites in Zion, as the persons above all others forewarned when hell is threatened. Again, as in Isaiah, God himself is called the devouring and everlasting fire, so here in the text, his wrath is termed 'fiery indignation devouring.' And the word translated adversaries here, falls out also to be a word deciphering hypocrites or false professors, ὑπεναντίους, under-hand enemies, who are also said to look for, in their trembling consciences, this fiery indignation; even as of those hypocrites Isaiah also speaks, as being the expectants of hell. And again, our apostle, chap. 12:29, 'Our God is a consuming fire.' So as upon several accounts it is, that God himself and his wrath is, more eminently, that fire in hell the Scriptures sometimes speak of.



If it be objected out of my text, 2 Thes. 1:8, 9, is it not said, 'He cometh in flaming fire with his mighty angels'? Will he not then use corporeal fire, as also the might of his angels, and both as instruments of his execution, and their destruction; and to that very end mentions the might of his angels?

I answer, 1, This fire here is not mentioned as that which is the cause of their everlasting destruction, but as that which is a concomitant of Christ's appearing; and also a forerunner or harbinger to that judgment he comes to pronounce sentence of, whereof the destruction that follows is the final execution. Judges use for terror, and for a demonstration of their authority, work, and office they are employed in, to have visible instruments of death carried before them, as ensigns of their power; a company of halberds, or the like, for their guard to go before, and environ them round; which yet are not to be the immediate instruments of the execution of malefactors itself, but accompany their persons at the examination and sentence. And as to this or the like use, is this guard of angels, and of flaming fire mentioned, to be understood to serve; both these referring evidently unto that his appearing. 'Who shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire,' but not spoken of, as the causes of the destruction itself that follows.

The angels further serve to gather men from all the four corners of the world, Mat. 13:41, 42, to hale and bring them before the Judge; and after sentence to cast them into the place of torment, called there a furnace of fire; but not of their making, but God's. They do but deliver them into the dreadful place, wherein execution is acted and performed.

2. This fire which he appears with is to burn up this visible world, as a fore-running sign, to shew the fierceness of the fire of that wrath which shall after prey and seize upon the invisible world; that is, men souls and devils for ever. Not that men's souls are to be burnt up with no other fire than what the world is burnt withal, but that which burns the visible world, is an example and demonstration of that

other fire that is kindled in his anger, that shall in the end 'burn to the bottom of hell,' Deut. 32:22. This as to what may be objected out of that place.

3. I deny not from other scriptures a created fire in hell. Let but that also be allowed which some of the ancients also speak of, that there is a double fire there: one inward in men's souls, another outward. Gerson aptly applieth that place of the psalmist fore-cited, Ps. 21:19, unto that of this inward fire, 'Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven; the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.' The fire of an oven is a fit similitude of a fire within, as into which fire is put to heat it, and the heat made more intense by the cavity or hollowness of the place. Whereas, to be cast into a furnace of fire, as Christ speaks, or into a lake of fire, as Rev. 19, 20, 21, imports a fire without, into which the matter or persons to be burnt are cast.

And thus much for bare Scripture testimonies. Many other there are which might be collected to confirm this, but are scattered in several parts of this discourse in a duer place.

## CHAPTER V

A second sort of proofs.—Demonstrations from instances both of wicked men and holy men, who have felt in this life impressions of God's immediate wrath.—And that such impressions are evidences of what, in the fulness, is in hell

A second sort of proofs are demonstrations from instances in Scripture, of persons in this life, who have felt impressions of this wrath of God in their souls, upon God's rebuking them for sin. And these instances of experience upon record, being added to those foregone Scripture testimonies, will serve as ruled cases, joined unto maxims in law, alleged both of them for the proof of one and the same thing, and will give yet more clear demonstration what is

meant by wrath, and what hell is in the fulness of it, and, being joined to the former, do altogether give an abundant evidence of this great truth.

I say, 1, of men in this life. And if any should deny the truth hereof, or that which we have been prosecuting, themselves, perhaps, ere they die, may be made miserable examples, verifying of both, and out of their own woful experience, live to confess and acknowledge the truth herein; for God doth in this life single out some, both of his children and others, to whom he gives a taste what the one should for ever have undergone, but that Christ did it for them, and of what the other must undergo for ever without repentance; whereof those instances that follow are undeniable evidences.

And, 2, these terrors are wrought by God's immediate hand, and from immediate impressions and representations of his wrath, made by him on their souls, and to their consciences; for, as God puts joy into the hearts of his children in this life, by the immediate light of his countenance, as Ps. 4:6, 'Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us;' and verse 7, 'Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increaseth;' and again, 'Whom though we see not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious,' as the apostle speaks of those primitive saints; even so when he is pleased to rebuke man for sin, he doth the like, in a way of contraries, on men both good and bad; correcting them, by and with anguishments from the like immediate stroke of his own anger. God is the Father of all spirits, and of the spirits of his own children upon a double creation. And if the fathers of our bodies corrected us, Heb. 12:9, and had power to do it with bodily punishment, by bodily instruments, do we think that our souls, which lie naked before God, Heb. 4:13, are not as immediately subject and exposed to his correction, as a 'Father of spirits'? and if so, that then he may and doth sometimes choose to correct even his own children with no other rods but of his own, which are the immediate emanations, streamings, and dartings of his own displeasure, which, when they feel, they wax pale and wan, and

wander up and down like unto ghosts in hell, as if they were cut off by his hand; and that those anguishments which either of these feel are from God's immediate hand alone, those that have felt the smart thereof do readily acknowledge, for it is not in the power of any creature to strike so hard a stroke.

And you shall hear some of themselves by and by, speak out so much, whilst they were under the present sense thereof. These things premised,

There are two things to make this demonstration complete.

First. The instances themselves of persons in this life, on the evidence of which the main stress lies, for the proof of the assertion.

The second is, that such immediate impressions of divine wrath are evidences of what kind of torment it is, which in the fulness of it befallerh men in hell, and that both proceed from the same immediate cause.

The instances are of two sorts, that so we still may have under two or three witnesses this word established.

First, Of good and holy men.

Secondly, Of bad and wicked men.

1. For instances of holy men, there are divers of them. As of Job, see his complaints; chap. 6 ver. 2–12, 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinks up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me. Oh that it would please God to destroy me; that he would loose his hand and cut me off.' Which, with other passages in that chapter, I shall after open at large. Again, chap. 13:24, 26, 'Thou holdest me for thine enemy, thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the sins of my youth;' also, chap. 16 vers. 12–15, 'God, he also hath taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. His

archers compass me about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me as a giant.' I shall here only single out that of Heman, which is a most full one, and alone sufficient, and reserve the explicating that of Job's case wholly unto the setting forth the dreadfulnesse, which is the subject of the second section.

Heman complains at the third verse of that Ps. 88, 'My soul is full of trouble,' &c. And what was the matter of that trouble, and the inflicting cause thereof? Ver. 7, 'Thy wrath lies hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah.' Those words, thy wrath lies hard, &c., others read, sustains itself, or bears up itself upon me, which is as if a giant should with his whole weight stay himself upon a child. 'And thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves.' The waves of that immense ocean of wrath (for unto such waves he again compares these terrors in ver. 16, 17) he says they came over him continually, and overwhelmed his soul, as billows of the sea wallowing and tumbling upon a Jonah cast into them. And vers. 14–16, he sets out his condition such as wherein there was not only a privation of God's favour, and that God seemed to reject his soul as if he never meant more to look upon it, or regard it: so ver. 14, 'Why castest thou off my soul?' But further, positively, ver. 15, 'I suffer thy terrors;' and ver. 16, 'Thy fierce wrath goes over me, thy terrors have cut me off.' The blows which God gave his soul were so hard and sharp, that to his feeling they not only wounded or cut into, but cut off his soul at every stroke. The like follows ver. 17, and this put him into the condition of men in hell. 'I am free among the dead,' ver. 5, that is, of that society, number, and company; and as one of them that are 'cut off from thy hand,' or, as the margin renders it, 'by thy hand.' All which are as if he had said, They are not the strokes of creatures I feel, or of thine anger as conveyed by creature distresses, but of thine own immediate hand, and such as those that are in hell itself do feel from thee. These are notes and degrees beyond, and higher than the Ela of dolours from or by the hands of creatures, though set on by God. They are strains of another key, the doleful air of which doth sound another hand and stroke (purely divine) that

did immediately strike upon their heart-strings that spake these things. These are the resoundings of blows and strokes which God's own immediate hand gave upon the bare spirit of one wounded by him; he that attentively listens to them will soon perceive and esteem (as they said) this man stricken and smitten of God himself. Creature distresses give a far less report.

But that it was God's own immediate hand is more plainly by himself expressed, ver. 16, 'Thy terrors have cut me off,' and ver. 15, 'While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted, and ready to die from my youth up,' as in the same verse. Thy terrors, so he termeth them (he speaking to God), or the terror of thee; that is, 1st, from thee efficiently, and from thy hand setting them on; and, 2dly, of thee, as arising in me from and with dreadful apprehensions and thoughts of thee objectively, and of thy sore displeasure represented to my soul by thee. And so God's terrors are every way set forth in distinction from distresses from creatures, or such as are made mediately by or from creature-afflictions, although they also be from God. Thus, in like phrase of speech, it is appositely said, 1 Peter 3:14, 'Be not afraid of their terror;' he speaks it of men that were persecutors and threatened the saints. Their terror, objective, that is, the terror of them, or that terror which the apprehension of their power, greatness; strength, threatenings, &c., may possibly work in you. In a like sense thy terror here is spoken of God. And the other great apostle, speaking of this ultimate punishment of hell, he in like phrase termeth it 'the terror of the Lord,' 2 Cor. 5:11, that is, that terror which is peculiar and proper to him, in and to the souls of men, who is the terrible God (as he styles himself in Moses), and, says Nahum, 'Who can abide, or stand in the fierceness of his anger?'

There are, further, two effects which Heman there relateth, of this his having suffered these terrors, or that befell his spirit whilst these terrors were upon him. 1. That he was continually ready to die; the wrath that lay on him was so heavy as it even well nigh thrust his soul out every moment, and made the spirit to fail. And, 2, it made him not himself (as we say), put him out of his right mind. 'Whilst I

suffer thy terrors I am distracted;' for the intention of a soul taken up with, and extended by the wrath of God, is such, and is wound up so high, as the string is ready to crack. You usually term this in such persons deeply wounded trouble of conscience (but that is more common), whereas this dispensation requires a higher word; it is indeed the wrath of God, or the terror of God in conscience, making it as a fiery oven within itself, as the psalmist speaks. This for the instances of good men.

A second instance is of bad and wicked men. What was it caused Judas to hang himself? The prophecy of the psalmist, and the apostle's reference to it, have resolved us, that it was the curse or wrath of God entering into his soul. The psalm is the hundred and ninth, which was penned on purpose about him; the apostle's reference and application is in Acts 1:20. In the psalm it is said, ver. 18, 'as he loved cursing,' that is, sin, which is that accursed thing before God, so 'the curse of God came into his bowels (or inwards) like water, and like oil into his bones,' and filled all within him full of anguish and torment; and so was fulfilled that saying, 'indignation and wrath,' namely, of God, caused 'tribulation and anguish' in his soul. The similitudes or allusions there are elegant: that as there are spiritual oils which men's bodies being anointed withal, they soak into the bones, &c.; they cool, refresh, and repair spirits and strength, and allay fervent heats and pains, into which more inward parts, other medicines, more crass and druggish, cannot soak or come. In the way of a contrary virtue or effect, he compares the curse of God on his soul unto a spiritual oil, of a piercing, penetrating violence, that strikes in as quicksilver, into the bones and nervous parts, and fills them with unsufferable torments. He compareth also this curse, and the effects of it, unto such painful diseases as are caused by sharp corroding waters in the bowels, as of the gout in the bowels, which when it possesses those inwards, is mortal and intolerable. The apostle's allusion elsewhere is correspondent to both these of the psalmist, when he says, The word of God (through the power of the Spirit) is a 'savour of death unto death' in some men's hearts, as 'of life unto life,' in others, 2 Cor. 2:16. The meaning

whereof is, that look as venomous and sulphurous vapours and damps in mines and caverns, arising out of the earth, do strike up such scents or smells as often kill, by extinguishing the spirits of those that descend into them, such exhalations of hell and wrath doth the Spirit of God, by the word preached, exhale and draw forth, and cause to ascend in some men's consciences, which gives them the very scent of hell itself. They are the savour or odour of death aforehand, unto death and damnation, and so are vapours of the same kind, out of the same matter that is laid up in the mine or treasury itself, as those out of the earth use to be.

The second thing requisite to be added for the completing the demonstration is, that such immediate impressions of divine wrath in this life are sure and certain evidences, I say not as to what persons, but of what kind of torment it is, which in the fulness of it befalleth men in hell, and that both do proceed from the same immediate cause. This needs not much probation, for the instances afore given carry their own evidence with them of this thing to any intelligent reader. And this general reason for it will readily occur to any one's thoughts, that surely God will not punish them in hell with a punishment of a lesser sort or kind (for we speak not now of comparisons of degrees) than what his dispensation reacheth forth unto some men in this life,—for that is the proper day and time and season of wrath, and of the fierceness of his wrath,—in which the fruits of their own doings are every way in their full ripeness and maturity to be returned to them; and these inflictions in this life are but the buds and blooms that precede, yet both from the same root and cause. Now to be punished by God's wrath but mediately, through the force only of created instruments, &c., as of material fire, or the like (if that were all the punishment there), this were certainly by a lower kind or sort, than to be punished immediately from the wrath of God itself, as will abundantly appear in the second section, when I shall set out the dreadfulfulness of such a punishment.

But let us particularly weigh the instances themselves, as we have singly and apart delivered them.



1. Those dispensations to wicked and bad men, as Judas, &c.
2. The same as they are exemplified in good and holy men, as Heman, &c.

And either of them will afford an argument for the proof of this proposition in hand.

These direful impressions of God's immediate wrath, when they do befall wicked men, what are they to them? Not only pledges or fore-runners of that punishment to come (for such all sorts of afflictions are unto wicked men), but further, these are spices and grudgings, and lesser intermitting fits of those future fiery, burning, and continued calentures and fevers; yea, earnest-pennies of hell, and so of the same kind with what in full men shall there receive.

As we use to say and speak of those glorious joys, which some saints aforehand have the privilege to partake of, that they are pure drops of those rivers of pleasure, flowing immediately from the same fountain of life: so we may as confidently say of those breakings forth of wrath upon wicked men's souls here, that they are the sippings of that 'cup of wrath without mixture,' (as the Revelation distinguisheth it from those in this life, Rev. 14:10), whereof the wicked must 'drink the dregs,' though it be to eternity, unto the bottom. And therefore we may make a true and warrantable measure of what all such men are to look for in hell, by what some few of them do partake of here.

And the argument is strong every way, from the one of these unto the other. For as heaven and hell are parallel in a way of contraries, as out of Romans 9:22, 23 hath been shewn, so those unspeakable glorious joys, and these contrary extraordinary horrors and anguishes, on the other hand, do hold parallel also, in being (in their several kinds) prelibations and tastes of what is to come in the other world. And in this very posture and tendency doth the apostle set these two dispensations together in this life, in a parallel way (as in Romans 9 he doth the other), whilst in the same scripture, 2 Cor.

2:15, 16, he compares those joys, common in those times, in them that are saved, to the breakings forth, at the opening of the gospel, as of spikenard, of 'a sweet odour or savour of life unto life' (namely of the life to come) aforehand, sensing\* their souls with some of those perfumes that are fetched from that country, and only grow there; and on the contrary such also he declares those precursory savours or odours of death in their kind to be, which do arise from the threatenings of the same word in horrors upon many that perish, which he pronounceth to be the very evaporations of that 'lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death,' in styling them the odour or 'savour of death unto death;' so speaks he. These men often smell the scent of hell in their consciences, and the spirits of it do strike up into their souls. The very ashes and smoke of that Vesuvius or Etna of hell (I allude unto the last words of Deut. 32:22) do fall upon them, which lighting upon men in this life, do, as those ashes of the furnace (Exod. 9:8, 9, 10) miraculously did, they cause sores and blains upon men's consciences. And however, if the apostle did therewithal intend the more common dispensations by the word, and so both the ordinary and extraordinary, of which we now speak, yet still take and compare those extraordinary joys in the one, as a savour of life, with the extraordinary horrors, that are the savour of death unto the other, and in their proportion there is still the like reason of both, as to the matter in hand; and an alike presignificancy in either of those two eternal estates.

Again, that each of these are alike by and from God, and by his more immediate hand dispensed. This I take from Philip. 1:28, and submit the interpretation of it: where, exhorting Christians unto an holy courage and confidence in their appearings, for the cause of Christ, before their persecutors' tribunals, 'In nothing be terrified by our adversaries,' says he. And upon such a bold undauntedness on their part, two effects, he tells them, do often follow; and both from God alike, as two wonderful contrary effects. First, in themselves, God elevateth and raiseth up that their confidence of faith into a glorious assurance and taste of heaven and salvation, whither they are a-going; so, in these words, 'which is a token to you' (yourselves) 'of

salvation;' but, on the contrary, which is 'an evident token' (namely, in their persecutors' consciences) 'of perdition,' if they repent not, 'and that' (namely, both these effects) 'of God.'

Two things I observe:

1. That these two contrary effects run parallel still, and that in order to, and of their being tokens either of salvation or perdition, as in that other place, 2 Cor. 2. And so that as the joys put into the hearts of these confessors are the 'first-fruits of the Spirit,' Rom. 8, and therefore of the same kind with what fruit and harvest they reap in heaven; and thereupon also a spirit of glory is said to 'rest upon them' in such a case, 1 Peter 4:14; it being itself initial glory, and the first-fruits of glory, in a way of glory. Thus, on the contrary, those terrors God strikes their adversaries' hearts withal, are like tokens and evidences of hell, no other than the suburbs, the first-fruits of hell, and shadow of death.

And, 2, I observe (which is that for which I quote it) that both these extraordinary effects are alike wrought in the hearts of either, by the same or like hand, namely, impressions from God. The apostle therefore adds ἀπὸ τοῦ κοίνου unto both, 'and that of God,' he being the immediate author of the one as well as of the other; and both unto a like, though contrary, purpose. And the reason why God thus often takes that season and occasion to put forth his immediate power in the consciences of either at such a time is, because his glory is in no passages of providence in and upon earth so highly interested and engaged as upon such trials, wherein both his truth and children are brought to the bar at once, and therefore is then pleased to discover something more than ordinary (though secretly) in the spirits of men: 'Have they no fear,' says the psalmist, 'that eat up my people like bread?' one would think so, they look so big, and fall to so heartily to devour them. Yes, says the psalmist, answering it, 'there were they in great fear.' There; that is, upon such an occasion, at such a time. And yet the same psalmist tells us that there was no cause of fear (compare for that Ps. 14:4 with Ps. 54:4), that is,

not from creatures. What was the matter, then, or whence comes this great fear? 'God is in the generation of the righteous,' says the psalmist; thence was their fear, and 'that of God.' So the apostle in that very case. God takes part with his children, and so strikes and terrifies their adversaries' souls, as he comforts theirs. And this is to them an 'evident token,' and as the first baptisms, washings, or sprinklings 'of that perdition' which their souls will be everlastingly drowned in (as the apostle's allusion is in Timothy) if they turn not.

The truth and real verification of both these so immediate effects by God and from God (he as with a double-edged sword striking contrary ways at once), multitudes of instances of both kinds the story of the martyrs doth relate; and particularly in the examples of those persecuting emperors Galerius and Maximinus, as Eusebius hath recorded them. Insomuch as that lamentable outcry in the sixth seal, Rev. 6:16, 'Which the kings of the earth, and mighty men' (the persecutors) are brought in so loudly uttering, in 'saying to the mountains, Fall on us, and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb,' Mr Mede and others have applied (as the time and order of the visions of that prophecy require) unto those great persecutors in the Roman empire, whom authentic antiquity hath related to have been terrified and struck with horror by God and the Lamb, in prodigious extraordinary ways of confusion; and those terrors, such as stories have related them, as were the liveliest representations of that great day of wrath, ver. 17; and are therefore set out under the notion thereof, as having been to them the very imperfect beginnings of it. This for the argument from the instances of wicked men.

II. The argument is as strong, though not so direct, from the instances of holy men.

For, 1, this dispensation to them is not only an argument in common with other afflictions of this world, in their being a 'manifest token of the judgment of God,' 2 Thes. 1:9; and that therefore a sure and certain judgment is to come upon the wicked, as he there argues. But this kind being a judgment of a spiritual nature (as immediate

infiCTIONS of wrath are), and properly belonging unto souls as they are the subjects of the other world, it argues therefore upon a more proper account, that the punishment to come is of the same kind therewith. And such they must needs be, unless we will suppose that God whips his own children in this world with scorpions, but wicked men in the other world, but as with rods in comparison of them. For it must be acknowledged that these, God's own blows, from his own immediate hand, are sorer, and cause wounds of a deeper blue than what are given by him through creatures. Surely God hath not laid up gentler rods for the wicked in hell than he puts in use towards his children: 'Have I smote thee as I smote thee?' Isa. 27:7. 'I will correct thee in measure,' Jer. 30:1; not so them. The equity of those ruled cases (which the reader may consult), Jer. 25:15, 16, 17, 28, 29, Luke 23:31, and 1 Peter 4:12, 17, do hold in this, and give us warrant in like manner to argue, that if his own children do drink of so bitter a cup here, then surely you, the wicked of the earth, shall much more drink of the very same. And these scriptures alleged, and the strength of this our inference, are all resolved into that of Ps. 78:8, 'In the hand of the Lord is a cup, whereof the wicked of the earth shall' (finally) 'drink the dregs.' And the force therefore lies in this, that if such kind of judgments and fiery trials as these (I allude unto that speech of the apostle), thus falling upon their spirits from God himself, do begin at some of 'the household of God,' then 'where will the ungodly and sinners appear?' For his own people do but begin in this cup to them who are to drink the dregs, whereof themselves have but the droppings.

2. This dispensation of impressions of wrath, when it doth befall either the godly or the wicked, although there are differing ends and purposes from God towards either; yet as they are one and the same in substance (as other afflictions are), so also they meet in this one and the same issue, namely, to be an evidence and demonstration what hell itself in the extremity of it is. For as in the wicked they are imperfect testimonies of what they shall undergo, to the end they may repent, so in the godly they are evidences of what they have deserved, in common with those and all wicked men; and to shew

that they are alike 'children of wrath, even as others,' Eph. 2:1; also unto them, they are sensible experiments of what they should have undergone, but that Christ hath saved them from the wrath to come, that so they may be thankful, and love much. And many other holy ends there are; yet still so as these contrary lines do centre in this, that hell is pre-libated and tasted by the one as well as the other.

But for a clear eviſion that theſe terrors in the godly are no other than the very ſhadow of death, or vive and lively reſemblances of what men feel in hell; hear what themſelves ſay of it, whiſt under the ſenſe thereof. Firſt Heman, for all the reſt, while you find him as with his mouth put in hell, into the very duſt of death, bemoaning himſelf thus, Ps. 88:5, 'I am free among the dead, like the ſlain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more; and that are cut off from' (or by) 'thy hand.' When he ſays ſlain, it is in language the ſame which Chriſt uſeth of that execution, Luke 19:27, 'Slay them before me.' And the whole of it is all one as to ſay, My condition is like unto a man's that is in hell, and in ſome reſpects the ſame. Not that it had the ſame conſequents, all effects of deſpair that wrath hath upon the damned; but in reſpect it is God's hand that inflicteth it, and alſo the ſame wrath itſelf he felt. And David, who had experimented them, expreſſly terms them 'the pains and ſorrows of hell,' Ps. 18:5, and 116:3, and elſewhere. And Jonah ſays the like whiſt he was in the whale's belly for his rebellion againſt God; compare for this Heman's ſpeeches, Ps. 88:6, 7, 16, 17, with theſe of Jonah, chap. 2:2, 4. And ſo you have out of their own mouths this aſſertion verified, and the conſequence we have inſiſted on confirmed.

## CHAPTER VI

A third sort of proofs from reasons:—1. God's justice.—2. Avenging wrath otherwise not satisfied.—A demonstration added

I come now to the reasons of it, which will shew the necessity of this course, namely, of God's taking it into his own hands. It might be wondered at that the great God, having an host or army of creatures ready to be his avengers, should, over and above what they might do, himself set his hand to this. But God and Christ are so far from esteeming this a staining of their glory, as earthly judges think it would be to execute any themselves, that this being a trophy of regaining honour debased by the creature, they account it a part of their glory. Thus God here challengeth it to himself, 'Vengeance is mine,' as a glory he would not give to any other. And Christ is so far from accounting that he 'staineth his raiment with their blood,' Isa. 63, as that he glories to 'tread the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone.' He glories in it.

There are two reasons drawn from the final causes of this punishment, which makes this dispensation necessary: 1. It is for the glory of his justice; 2. It is an act of avenging wrath, retributing vengeance. Which two do centre in this as a third, that it is to be destruction to the persons it falls upon as the issue of both; all which can never be attained but by an execution made by God's own immediate wrath.

I shall found these reasons, as I did the other proofs, upon what I find foundations for in these very texts I have chosen.

1. It is an act of justice; so in this Heb. 10, 'I will repay;' and 2 Thes. 1:6, 'It is a righteous thing in God, *Τό δίκαιον ἀναποδοῦναι*, to repay again,' or recompense, and ver. 9. *Οἱτινες δίκην τίσουσιν*, who shall 'pay or lay down a punishment justly sentenced,' which in Heb. 2:2 is

called a 'just recompence of reward;' and Rom. 6:23, the wages or reward of sin. And this is the last payment, and all that for ever, sin in them, or God for sin, shall have, and therefore that whereby the glory of God is to be fully recovered.

2. It is an act of avenging wrath, as in both these places is expressed.

Let us see what evidence of reason each of these apart do afford, much more put together.

1. Justice. Concerning that the assertion is, that if there be a satisfaction made for man's sin unto God's justice, but so far as it may be attained upon the creature to be punished in hell, God himself will set his immediate hand to it; and justice requires this.

(1.) I say, a satisfaction, so far as may be attained upon the creature that hath sinned, and which is to be the subject of this punishment. I put this in, because otherwise it must be affirmed of Christ alone, that he gave full satisfaction unto God's justice, in whom there was ἔνδειξις δικαιοσύνης Θεοῦ, a 'manifestation or demonstration of God's justice for sins that were past,' Rom. 3:25; yet still, as although a full satisfaction can never be had from or upon the creature (therefore in hell they always suffer), yet God doth recover what can be had, and payeth himself out of them as far as it will go; as those phrases, 'paying the utmost farthing,' Mat. 5:26, and, selling them, and all they had, to make money thereof, Mat. 18:25, do shew.

(2.) In this case that which justice will require unto any tolerable equitable satisfaction in this punishment is, that as exact a proportion be observed as possibly there may be, and as the subject is capable of. The justice of God, as it is 'according to truth,' so exactness and equity; and the work of God is perfect in every kind, and performed in due weight, number, and measure, but above all else, where justice is professed. You may hear justice speak in Isaiah, chap. 59, 'According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, recompense to his enemies.' There is an according and an



accordingly to that, so as all due measures and rules of proportion every way shall be observed. Which measures being set out in this matter will evidently demonstrate that God's immediate hand is necessarily required thereto.

[1.] Let the demerit of sin be weighed. And for that in the general, I refer unto the first of these treatises of the heinousness of sin, and we shall find, that although the crasser part of sin is an inordinate lusting after, or enjoyment of things created, or sinful comforts in creatures, yet that the great and foundation-evil of it lieth in an aversion or turning off from God, and therein and thereby there is a reflecting upon God an immediate slight or undervalue, to an infiniteness of dishonour and contempt cast upon his goodness, blessedness, that is to be had in him; as also to his sovereignty, prerogative, supremacy, holiness, &c., which are shewn forth and laid at stake of every of his laws, whereof sin is the transgression. Now if indeed it could have been supposed that sin were nothing else but that gross and crass part spoken of, the enjoyment of creatures, then a punishment by creatures only, might equivalency have been even with that its obliquity of debasing its own excellency unto creatures; but it being an immediate reflection upon God himself, none can fill up the proportion of a meet and full punishment, which justice doth require for this, but God himself. I may make use of Eli's speech: 1 Sam. 2:25, 'If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him and revenge it; but if against God, who shall entreat for him?' thus he. And upon the same or like ground of reason, I infer, if one creature wrong another, a creature of the same kind can revenge it. If a man shed man's blood, so far as it is wrong to the bare creature, 'by man shall his blood be shed;' so says the law in relation to man's day in this world; but if man sin against God, who shall recompence it when God's day comes wherein he is to be glorified? None, so as to give satisfaction to his most exact justice, but God himself.

Yea, further, if we retained to that opinion of many learned men, that Adam's enjoyment of God for ever, in that holy estate of innocency,

should have been of God, but as manifested in and by creatures and his holy law, and not as in himself or as in heaven, &c., yet this would not serve for a rule whereby to estimate or make proportion, that therefore this punishment should oppositely be only from God by and through creatures. For whatever his enjoyment should have been, whether of God mediately, or of God as in himself immediately, I dispute not; yet, to be sure, when God was cast off by him, or is by us immediately and directly reflected upon, even God as God, which is that whereby every man's sin is heightened, in Rom. 1:21, the meaning whereof is, that God as in himself is debased by sin. So that, as the apostle says in the like case, Rom. 5:15, 'Not as the offence, so is the free gift.' On the contrary, upon the like ground, not as was the case or merit of Adam's righteousness, so is the demerit of sin; and so, nor of punishment. Because there is so transcendent an undueness, yea, an injury done to the great God himself by the creature in sinning, over and above the proportion of all created grace or obedience. For all obedience was due, and all man's reward in obeying was from the mere goodness of God, which he and his obedience and all depended upon; and so the proportion thereof is no way to be looked at, either as the measure of the evil of sin, or of what is to be the punishment thereof. Sin, we are sure, is so great an evil, as no mere creature, but Christ God-man, and his obedience or suffering, could have satisfied God for in the behalf of another. And why may it not also be said, that as none but he, that was subjectivè God, could satisfy God for the demerit of sin, committed against God objectivè, so that sin is such an evil as cannot, in the sinner himself, be thoroughly punished unto the satisfaction of justice but by God himself efficiently; that is, God to be the inflicter thereof immediately?

[2.] A second equitable rule of proportion, that justice, requiring the fullest satisfaction that may be had, will exact, is, that the principal author and actor in the sin should principally bear the punishment. This not only vengeance (which is the second topic) doth in a more eminent manner aim at and affect, but justice doth call for it also; the justice both of God and men. Now the principal in sin is known to be

the soul of man. Which I shall urge when I come to show how vengeance also seeketh to wreak itself thereon. That which serves to my present purpose (which is this, that in the point of satisfaction, to be made unto God's justice, it is most proper for God himself to punish sin in the soul) in order thereunto, is,

1st, To inquire what it is in the soul or spirit of man, which God, when he comes to deal strictly and downrightly, as a judge of men's souls, hath principally to do withal? All must acknowledge that it is conscience that hath to do with God as a judge; for it must be that in man, which is the most proper seat of the guilt of sin, which guilt is the obligation unto judgment and punishment; and this to be men's consciences, the Scriptures hold forth, and every man's own soul feels. Hence also to be purged from an evil conscience, is all one, and to be perfectly acquitted from the guilt of sin. And for God no more to remember our sins, or to be atoned with us as a judge, is all one as to say that we on our parts have no more conscience of sins, Heb. 10:2, 3, 10, 11, 17 verses compared. Conscience is that part of the soul, whereby God as the judge, arraigneth every man. It is the hand which a guilty soul holds up at God's bar for all the rest of man, and is God's witness within man against himself, Rom. 2:15, and that in order unto judgment, as follows in ver. 16.

Again, 2dly, I inquire, when it shall come to the execution of the punishment sentenced, what is it in the soul or spirit of man that is most directly and naturally capable of anguish and torment, and what that part is, which God may most properly strike a man's soul in, when he would rebuke him for sin? Certainly, still a man's conscience. All beasts have one tender part above any other that most grieves them if smitten. This, in guilty man, is conscience. We see it in Cain and Judas, God burnt them both in this hand; in the hand of conscience in this world.

Having by these two enquiries stated the principal, both in guilt and in being the seat of the execution, I shall for the proof hereof, as also in order to the clearer making forth the argument before us, namely,

that justice requires God's immediate hand, &c., I shall in a more ample manner set together these five ensuing assertions.

1. That conscience and the intellectual, or understanding power in man's soul, are God's engagee, and the principal in a double respect: 1st, conscience is responsible for the whole in man; or, if you will, principal in the obligation, as being that which, by its own acknowledgment of a judgment made unto God when he shall come to judge, binds over itself, and with itself, the whole soul for the payment; and upon that account is to be reckoned the chief obligee: and therefore the execution is justly to be served upon it, and through it upon the whole soul. 2dly, If we take in together with conscience, the understanding part in man, the intelligentia, or the spirit of the mind in the summity of it; that is really to be accounted also the principal, in respect of its share in the very acts of sinning, so as justly the guilt of every act is refunded upon it as the principal actor. For it is betruſted by God with the steering and management of the whole soul, with the conduct of it as the general. By reason of that light God at first ſeated in it, it was appointed for ever to be the guide and leader of the will and affections. And therefore God juſtly requireth the account, or the defaults and miſcarriages of the whole, at its hands. According to the inquiry of thoſe rules declared concerning rulers of the people: Jer. 5:4, 5, 'Theſe have known the way of the Lord,' &c. As alſo from that other like to it, given forth touching the prieſts, and which we find ſo often inculcated in Ezekiel, 'I will require their blood at the prieſt's hands.' And all theſe founded upon one and the ſame common ground, common unto conscience with theſe, namely, conscience and knowledge there being the guides; and yet, in that conscience gives but an ineffectual weak warning againſt ſin (which ſhould powerfully ſway the whole) and the ſpirit of the mind, or the practiſe understanding, doth ſtill wickedly give ſecret conſent unto ſin, hence therefore that denunciation in Ezekiel holds, that God will 'require the blood of the ſoul at his hands;' although the ſoul (the will and affections) do periſh too, in their iniquity, as it is there ſpoken. And, for this cauſe it becomes juſtice to puniſh this chief agent and offender, or this

great minister of state in sinning, and to make these the seat of the execution, above any or all other faculties.

2. It will furthermore agree with the rules of justice, yea, it will be a special trophy unto justice, to have sin itself in the guilt of it, made as far as possibly, to be its own tormentor and instrument of the highest punishment in and unto the soul that hath sinned. There is no sword like unto that, will justice say, to slay a sinner withal. It is of all other the most proper and exquisite way of punishing. For the sinner to eat (for ever) of the fruit of his own ways, and to be filled with their own devices, and their iniquity to slay them, Prov. 1:32. This is the justest and highest doom which wisdom itself can invent, or God's power execute. The very same doth Jeremiah also speak, chap. 2:19, 'Thine own wickedness shall correct thee: know, therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God.' Certainly for the sinner to feel, in the most intimate and immediate manner that may be, the bitterness of the guilt of sin, and to find that that, above all other punishments that can be inflicted, is the sharpest and severest, this is a transcendent strain of justice indeed. Now this is most exquisitely accomplished through that proper capacity which conscience and the intellectual part in man have as to this very thing. And in their being the seat of the guilt of sin, they are thereby further fitted to become the vessel or receptacle of this the highest punishment. This is in a great measure verified by that in Isa. 59:11, 12, 'We roar all like bears.' And what was it that caused this? 'For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us, for our transgression are with us,' they dwell with and possess us, and we possess them; as Job also speaks, 'And as for our iniquities, we know them.' It was their very knowing of their sins, as set on by God, that made them thus roar, which is the loudest and wildest tone of grief and note of insufferable torment. And observe, how that that knowledge had two things in contemplation, which caused the roaring. 1st, Sin, together with the wrath of God, 'our transgressions are multiplied before thee.' And so they had God in their eye as a judge, which those words shew, 'We look for salvation, but it is far from us,' ver. 11; and, 2dly, 'They testify against us.' This

was the accusation of their own consciences themselves. So as it was conscience which was the seat, the habitation as it were, where these two took up their dwellings, continually quartered upon and possessed. Jeremiah says the same, to 'see and know how bitter a thing it is to sin,' &c. And though these scriptures speak not immediately of hell, yet they do clearly point out to us what and wherein the most exquisite punishment of sin lieth, and by what effected, namely, knowledge of sin and wrath, whether it be in men in forerunning anguish in this life, or hereafter in hell in the fullness of it.

3. It is not, nor can it be the mere spiritual evil that is in sin, as sin is sin, and an opposite to true holiness, and as it stands in a contrariety to the holiness and goodness of God; that is not it which men in hell shall spiritually know and see, so as to lay to heart the evil thereof in that respect. No, for that is the peculiar effect of grace, and proper to the saints, even as to see the beauty that is in holiness as it is holiness, likewise is—it is therefore sin in the bitter effects thereof only, whereby souls still remaining wholly sinful (as those in hell do), can come to know this bitterness of sin.

Now, to prosecute this; the evil of sin is not sufficiently or perfectly felt, no, not in the effects of it, by the conscience of a sinner (so as it may be), until it be felt in that which is the highest, and most transcendent, and proper, most immediate and first-born effect thereof, of all other. And that is no other than the wrath and indignation of the all-powerful God. For that his wrath shall break in upon the sinner, and so considered, it is the most proper effect of all other of the demerit of sin, God being stirred up and provoked thereunto by sin. 'Do you provoke the Lord to jealousy?' 1 Cor. 10:22. The like, Jer. 7:19. Sins are as a heap of charcoal, wicked men's consciences the oven, and God's wrath the fire. Let this fire be put into this coal, and let both meet in a guilty conscience, and it instantly becomes a fiery oven within itself. And as concerning all other punishments, I may say it, that all other, of what kind, or from whomsoever, although they are all the effects and deserts of sin,

according to that in Jeremiah: 'Thy way and thy doings have procured these things to thee, and this is thy wickedness'; as it follows therein, Jer. 4:18. Yet still these are all of them deficient, and fall short in representing unto the heart and conscience the demerit of sin, even so far as by the effects it may be known, and the soul yet further is capable to feel. But if once the wrath and indignation of the great God come into the soul and conscience, this, when felt, doth bear some answerable proportion, as an effect, unto so great an evil as sin is, which it hath deserved; and when revealed unto and impressed upon the sinner's conscience, it hath also the fullest dimensions of such an evil (even to the sinner also), as sin justly deserveth, as far as any way the creature is capable. Then it is that the sinner feels and takes in the evil of sin, not as in secondary outward effects only (and such all other punishments whatsoever are in comparison to the wrath of God, and therefore fall short), but in this case it feels immediately the demerit of sin, in that which is the cause, the only cause, the highest cause of all other secondary punishments which sin hath also deserved, whereof it also is the cause. And this dispensation of immediate wrath riseth up unto the exactest demonstration of the evil that is in sin, which any way from effects can be made or given unto the creature.

4. Of this immediate wrath (as it is an evil of punishment), the conscience and intellectual part in man's soul is not only capable to be made the vessel, the receptacle thereof, but it lies immediately exposed unto it. It is bare and naked unto him with whom we have to do, Heb. 4:13, as in respect to God's knowledge, so of God's punishing, as I have elsewhere shewn. Conscience is an open door or inlet; or as an open window is to the sun, so is it to God, for him to come in at any time, that whenever God will but take upon him to perform and execute the part of a judge and avenger, a conscience that is guilty, lies exposed nakedly and barely unto his anger, to receive the strokes and impressions of it. For I ask, What is God's justice against sin, but his just anger against sin (as Rom. 3:5, the original hath it)? And what is a guilty conscience, but that in man that is naturally suscipient or apprehensive of it? And these two are

suited as faculty and object, and are (as it were) made one for the other; there needs no third or other thing (if God but please to hold forth his anger, and apply the corrosive to the sore, so this unto the soul) to convey his own displeasure by; conscience hath an ear to hear what God will speak, without any medium to convey the voice. Look as faith is a principle peculiarly fitted to take in God's free grace, and Christ's righteousness, such is conscience (when guilty) unto God's wrath, immediately susceptible of it. If God will but set a man's sins in order before him, and withal say unto conscience, I am angry; yea, look but angrily, and present himself as such; then conscience instantly, like the sensible plant, is struck, shrinks, and falls down. For if God be angry but a little, as Ps. 2:12, and rebuke us in his anger, Ps. 6:1, then, at the very rebuke of his countenance we perish, Ps. 80. And it is most certain that God can reveal his anger to the soul immediately, as well as his favour. And what is this punishment we are speaking of, but the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, revealed, as before others, so principally to a man's own soul? as ver. 9. And what is that judgment, but God's judgment expressed, as in sentencing, so in shewing his anger and wrath against sin? as the whole stream of that Scripture shews. It is therefore the wrath and face of God and the Lamb, when discovered, which a guilty conscience flies from, Rev. 6:16. That, as Luther says, *Animus sibi malè conscius potius ad diabolum ipsum ferretur, quam ad Deum accederet*; it had rather be brought before the devil, and see his face, than see God's. Terror of conscience, what is it, but all one with God's wrath in conscience? See it in its contrary. Peace (which we call peace of conscience), which passeth understanding, is rather denominated the peace of God which passeth understanding, Philip. 4:7, than peace of conscience, although conscience be the subject pacified, and whose peace and quietus est it is. And in like manner, terror is styled the terror of the Lord, 2 Cor. 5:11. And these things may perhaps afford as true a light towards the understanding of that maxim of the apostle, Rom. 2:8, 9, indignation and wrath (viz. of God), tribulation and anguish unto every soul (as the seat of their anguish), of man that doth evil, as any other; and withal shew how it comes to pass, that this tribulation is executed from that wrath, even



by the reception of conscience. For of conscience also the following words, ver. 15, do there speak, and that as in order unto judgment, ver. 16.

5. I add, as a corollary from this, that conscience, though it be thus naked and open to God and his wrath, yet it is so great a secluse, so fast and privy a cabinet, so intimate a power and principle in and unto the soul itself, and so entirely reserved unto God himself, who is the Lord thereof, as it is not immediately subjcible to, or to be broke open by, creatures; no, not those who are superior spirits to it, either angels or devils; they are not able to terrify the conscience, until it hath been first made raw and tender by God. God only made the heart, and God only knows the heart, and God only can come at and strike at the root of the heart. The devils or angels can come but into an outward room, the fancy, and cast in images thereinto; the fancy being the soul's looking-glass, wherein it vieweth its own thoughts, and from which it takes off into itself the species that are cast in there. Also they may stir bodily passions (both which I have elsewhere shewn), but they cannot enter into the closet of the soul. God only is intimior intimo nostro, as the ancients express it; God only is greater than our hearts, as the apostle expresseth it. Conscience is a book so fast clasped, as it is God's prerogative alone to open it, which he then at that day will do; and thereunto that likewise may be applied, 'He openeth, and none shuts; and he shuts, and none opens.' That speech holds as true of conscience, as of any other thing. And as it is a book which he alone can open, so in which he alone can write over every man's sins, not with ink, but with wrath, which, like aquafortis, every letter of it shall eat into the soul, according unto that in Job, 'Thou writest bitter things against me, and causest me to possess the sins of my youth,' Job 13:26. Let no man therefore imagine that devils are the greatest tormentors of men, or of their consciences in hell; or if any would affirm it, I would demand, who it is that torments the consciences of devils themselves? Certainly none but God. They now believing there is a God, do tremble; but in hell they fear him, and for ever have to do with him. And it is as sure, that the same God, with whom those

spirits and their consciences have for ever to do, the consciences of men shall also.

And as for all other mediate or outward ways of judgments executed, in which the wrath of God is revealed from heaven but as at the second hand, take the sorest and severest of them that ever God executed by creatures; yea, suppose all of the several kinds of providential judgments (I call them such which are executed upon men in this world a forehand), which God hath, as judge of all the world, in his riding circuit through all ages since the fall, revealed his wrath from heaven by, against all sorts of unrighteousness of men (as the apostle, speaking of these judgments, says in Rom. 1:18), suppose, I say, they were let fly upon any one sinner all at once, yet would they not reach or touch that man's conscience, further than as God should, over and above the efficacy of them, strike the conscience itself with his anger and displeasure, revealed more or less by himself therewith. And although in all such judgments, his goings forth are as of a judge, and he accompanies such judgments more or less, but as with some ordinary light and glimmerings of an angry deity, yet his coming as a judge upon men's consciences, at the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God (as if he had never revealed his wrath before), this is another manner of coming, and shewing himself a judge indeed, rendering indignation and wrath upon the souls of men; and of that judgment it is the same apostle in the second chapter treats, as of that other in the former.

And I may say of all the former, in comparison to this latter, that they all are but as the batteries of the out-works, and as bullets shot against the walls in a seige, which may indeed terrify the inhabitants, and make them tremble, Deut. 32; and so these the soul, as by remote effects in the suburbs of it, Rom. 2. But the latter is as shooting in of grenadoes, which have been laid up with him in his treasury, carrying fire from thence in them, the fire of his fierce and sorest indignation; and these himself alone can shoot into the inwards of men's souls. And this is as shooting fire into the very magazine, into that which is the most inward in the soul, and

fortified against the entrance of all created powers; the magazine where all the gunpowder lies, that is, the guilt of a man's sins; so as there needeth nothing else to blow up all. If his wrath doth but touch, it takes and sets all on fire.

Yea, give me leave upon the same ground, and by the like reason, further to say, that all the material fire in hell, by which the soul shall and will suffer, by way of a compatibility (as it is termed), or suffering by and with the body an unspeakable torment, and this for the sins a man is guilty of; yet these flames nor these punishments (taken materially, and abstracted from this revelation of God's wrath), would not break into conscience, not until God did therewithal break in with the fire of his wrath, and make the conscience and intellectual spirit of the mind a fiery oven within itself, as the psalmist expresseth it in Ps. 21:9, almost in these very words.

This being the state of matters between God the judge of all, and the souls and consciences of sinners, as touching that due and equitable punishment for sin, and the execution thereof, which men's souls are capable of, I shall now complete the reason why the justice of God should move him to be willing; yea, and that there is in respect unto divine justice a kind of requisiteness (if not necessity), for the great God to take this course, to punish the sinner by the revelation of his own immediate wrath; and this I shall do, by gathering together what hath been said, from which the arguments for both these two assertions that follow lie fair.

1. That God for his justice' sake should be willing; for conscience being the principal engagee obliged unto God as a judge, and the understanding power in man the eminent transgressor, and both lying so naked and immediately exposed unto God's wrath, and capable to receive the revelation of it, an anguish made thereby in his soul is the most proper, natural, suitable reward unto sin, to pay the sinner home in his own coin, as also the most ready, direct, and short way for God to take.

If therefore we suppose justice be left to have but its free and full course, if justice (according to the prophet's language, and God's own rule and direction given unto us) run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream, in its proper natural channel, and so as to fall into that most capacious vessel or receptacle that is in man to receive it; again, if divine justice hath a will to put and lay its charge and execution where principally it is to be laid, even against the principal, whether in the obligation for sin, or in the guilt of the act of sinning; or if it be deemed that divine justice will take a recovery where the fullest and fairest advantage lies, and recover his principal debt of that which is the principal debtor, and from that in man which is capable to afford the most due satisfaction and punishment, as being that which is the treasury of all the guilt of sin, and most exquisitely capable to suffer, and thereby to make fullest payment for all: then we may conclude that assuredly God is willing to wreak his just anger, and in his wrath to break forth upon the conscience and intellectual faculty of the sinner in hell, by the immediate revelation of his wrath, and that upon all the accounts forementioned thereby to punish it. And we may well suppose that his justice is willing to do this, because 'God is' (as the psalmist with an emphasis) 'judge himself,' Ps. 50:6, and judgeth for himself, Prov. 16:4, and for the recovery of his own glory, and revelation of his righteous judgment. And this course of immediate wrath being a way above all other so natural, so ready, so direct, so compendious, and so suited to the demerit of sin (as hath been shewn), we may well think that God will be rather willing to shew his wrath (as the apostle speaks) this way (if we could suppose there might be another), because this so falls in with, and agrees unto the rules and proportions of justice fore-mentioned, which are most near and sacred to him.

2. The second assertion, that it is also requisite, yea, necessary (I speak it, as in relation to justice attaining its ends). For all mediate punishments executed by creatures being deficient, as unto that wherein the very essence of this punishment lies, they all not reaching the inwards of the spirit of the mind and conscience; and

seeing that without God's wrath revealed therewith by God himself, all such punishments would not complete the justice of God in a punishment in any tolerable measure suitable: then if justice will have its perfect work, and bring its suit against the sinner unto the ultimate issue, it is requisite God himself put his immediate hand to the execution, otherwise this work of justice will not be perfect (as yet every of his works in their kind are said to be), and so he should not only fall short of satisfying his justice, but also by not doing that towards it which is in his power to do, and which he is Lord of, he should not in any tolerable measure content it. Especially if we further consider, that when all is done that can be, this punishment will not arise to a perfect satisfaction (for the creature's punishment will not afford it, and therefore it doth for ever suffer), but only unto what may be had out of them towards it. I shut this point up therefore with this, that if God be judge himself, he will do this work himself, which none else can perform for him, and without which all else would be utterly imperfect and defective. For, upon what hath been afore argued, I may say of all other punishments and punishers, although set by God upon a man, what the apostle says of those legal ordinances, though instituted by God for his worship, that they could not make the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. So, nor all outward torments, take them alone without God's wrath accompanying them, they cannot make a perfect or complete punishment as pertaining to the conscience.

And all this also shews one sufficient reason of difference, why earthly kings and judges leave the execution of traitors and offenders wholly unto others, because they have no more power, as in respect of execution, to inflict a condign punishment than other men; but others can do it as exquisitely, and their justice be as fully satisfied thereby; but it is not so here. And for these causes God is so far from staining his glory thereby (which other judges would esteem to be so) as that is the only way fully to recover his glory. And so much for that argument drawn from satisfying of justice.

A second reason is drawn from satisfying of vengeance, or avenging wrath as against enemies, which heightens justice. Thus in many places in the Old and New Testament, Deut. 32, Rom. 12:19, 2 Cor. 10:6, Rev. 6:10, in which last place God is styled both a judge and an avenger; 'judge and avenge,' say the saints there. A judge most commonly doth acts of justice in the behalf of others; but an avenger is one that doth, or seeks justice in his own cause, and in his own behalf and interest; therefore the next a-kin, seeking the life of a murderer, was termed an avenger of blood. Now God is more nearly concerned in this, than any creature can be, in what may concern vengeance in them for whatever injury. This is therefore *pœna vindictæ*, as of one enraged and provoked; patience having been abused, as Rom. 9:22, and so is turned into fury.

Now there are two properties of vengeance, from whence I argue this, being put together.

First, That it is the property of revenge to vent itself upon that which is principal in the injury, and to make that the vessel of its wrath; it will never be satisfied else. Now that is the soul of man, which is the chief seat and subject of the corruption of sin, the chief cause of the act proceeding from thence, and that in which the guilt arising from both doth principally abide. The body is but instrumental in what the soul doth; yea, and in some, and the greatest sins, the soul hath the sole and immediate hand. This soul therefore, which is the chiefest vessel of sin, must be the chief vessel of wrath. 'Indignation and wrath upon every soul of man that doth evil,' Rom. 2:8, whereof this undeniable instance is given by God, that the soul is it that suffers for the whole man until the resurrection, as the instance of the rich man shews; and it must be no less an immediate sufferer, although not the alone sufferer; but much more, after the day of judgment, unto eternity.

A second thing which vengeance affecteth is, that the person that wrought the injury die by the hand of himself, that is, the avenger: It loves to do that work itself. And this especially holds good in this

cause of God, and seeing it is to recover glory to God by shewing vengeance, he comes to be glorified, rendering vengeance from the glory of his power.

I need not go about to form up any argument from hence, for these two things, especially the latter, do speak home unto the point, and, being added unto what hath been spoken in the former head of justice, may be sufficient.

There is a third thing which (as I said) both divine justice and vengeance do conspire in, and that is, the utter destruction of that which is the principal offender (which is the soul), it is the nature of vengeance to work the destruction of that it is set against. And in this case of sin, God's justice also doth the same; the demerit of sin is such, as it exciteth vengeance to it. And therefore in both these places which are my texts, destruction is mentioned as the issue and product of this revenge and wrath. So in 2 Thes. 1:6, 7, 'to render vengeance on them, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction.' And Rom. 9:22, 'to make known the power of his wrath on those vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.' Destroyed they shall be, though not in regard of being, for they are to be vessels of wrath, and therefore to be still kept whole, in respect of being, else they could hold no wrath; and that is another property of vengeance, to have the party made sensible of its misery, and that his enemy is even with him; and therefore God upholds their being, but destroys their souls in regard of well-being. Now that is never, till it be stripped of every comfort, and every corner of the soul be filled with misery; for if any corner be empty, it is not destroyed, it will not die.

Now, this third or last thing doth of itself afford at least a demonstration, *ab effectis*, from the event and effects of this punishment, that therefore it is God's immediate hand that inflicts this punishment; which demonstration is to be added unto the former reason, which was drawn from the causes of it. For I argue, asking this question, What is able to fill the soul of man with good or evil? The soul, which was created in so large a capacity as to be filled

with God, and with none but God himself, he only is able to fill the vast corners of it with either. Creatures like itself may afflict and torment it much, especially whilst in the body, so much as to cause it to desire death and a being out of the body, but the soul they are never able to destroy. The soul is a castle so strong built, as it can bear the assaults of all its fellow-creatures, and sustain itself and not sink into destruction. Nothing can destroy the well-being of the soul but God's power; for it is said, They may kill the body, but God only can kill the soul. And else, according to that argument of Christ, 'Fear not them that can kill the body only,' &c., they were to be feared as God himself is, if they could kill the soul as God can do; for Christ says, God is therefore to be feared, and only to be feared, because he can destroy both body and soul. And he redoubleth it with an emphasis: 'Fear him, yea, I say unto you, Fear him,' Luke 12:5. Indeed, one evangelist says, 'Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell,' which expresseth no more but an act of authority to sentence and cast into hell as the judge doth into prison. Yet the other evangelist puts it upon this, because he is able to kill the soul, and that only he is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. He says, not barely to cast into hell, as by way of authority, but adds, kills and destroys in hell when they are cast thither; for God is both judge and avenger, and therefore if it be destruction, it is evident he only can and must do the execution. And, therefore, in the text, 2 Thes. 1:8, 9, their being punished with everlasting destruction is attributed to the glory of his power. These are some of the reasons of this great point.

## CHAPTER VII

A fourth sort of additional confirmations, drawn from the harmonies that are between it and other divine truths

I shall in the last place cast in some harmonies, or congruities and correspondencies, which this holds and makes up with other divine



truths; and in such harmonies and concords, there is much of reason, at least to confirm, if not demonstrate, truths in divinity.

1. To begin where I left. Hereby it comes to pass, that as the souls of men and other spirits were immediately made and created by God, who is therefore in a peculiar respect, and with an opposite distinction to the fathers of our bodies, said to be the Father of spirits, and the God of the spirits of all flesh, so that their last termination or end should be into and by his immediate hands also, this makes up a congruous and suitable dispensation. That look as they receive their first being from him, likewise they should return to him, as Ecclesiastes speaks, as to their sole and immediate author and creator; and so receive from him, as a Father of spirits, their portion at his immediate hands. And man's ultimate end, either way, is called their portion, Ps. 11:6, Mat. 24:51, whether it be in blessedness, as their inheritance out of his love, or misery as the wages of their sin. And thus hereby God himself is made the end, and the beginning or terminus, the Alpha and Omega of souls, to whom be glory for ever!

2. Thereby also there comes to pass an answerableness and a proportion held between the two conditions of heaven and hell, which the apostle seems to make the ultimate aim and determination of God's counsels, unto which all in this world are but preparations, as he calls them. Thus Rom. 9:22, 23, for the shewing forth of his own immediate glory: 'What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?'

3. And thirdly, also, it is said, that after that Christ the judge of all, hath delivered up his administration and kingdom unto his Father, then God should become all in all, 1 Cor. 15:28; not in respect of being, that is, not as if the being of all things shall return into God again, as some have wickedly dreamed, or that God's blessed being

and the creatures should become one; that can never be. It is a contradiction to say a creature made out of nothing should come to be of itself; and such God in his being is, but all in all in respect of immediate dispensation. And so look as to the vessels of mercy, he will then be all in all, so that they shall not need the light of the sun and the moon, &c. (that is, the comfort of any creature, though all created excellencies in the spirit and quintessence of them shall be there), why should it not be also meant that the same God, which makes up a parallel, seeing men's sins deserve it, shall be all in all in hell too, in a contrary way to the other?

4. And the rather this may be thought, because when God shall have caused this visible world to pass away, the earth and the heavens we now behold, as some judicious divines have inclined to think from Job 14:12, and other scriptures, either by turning them into nothing or into their first chaos; and so there being none, that is, of this old world left, but pure heaven and hell, which are as two spiritual places or worlds, and therein these two sorts of creatures rational, either those who are wholly spirits, as angels good and bad, or the spirits of men, whose bodies are raised spiritual and so fitted for that other kind of world, both of which are capable of happiness or woe from him; that then these two sorts of intelligent natures, God and they being left thus alone, the brutish part of the world being done away, should have to do with him for ever immediately, either in a way of wrath or blessedness. And so God shall be all in all in either worlds; and this is be the final ending and catastrophe of all. But these I urge not, but only mention.

## CHAPTER VIII

The dreadfulness of this punishment argued from all and each of the particulars treated of in the former chapters.—That it is a falling into the hands of God immediately.—That it is the destruction of the soul.—That it is for the glory of God, and the manifestation of his power.—That it is satisfaction of God's justice and avenging wrath.—The

dreadfulness of it argued also from those instances of good and bad men, their having suffered those kinds of terrors in this life.—And lastly, that it is a falling into the hands of the living God

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.—  
HEB. 10:31

The second thing at first propounded to be handled, was the dreadfulness of this punishment. 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' Which being an inference from the foregoing words, and not a simple affirmation only, do come in with an amazing kind of implication, wherein the apostle leaveth it to our own thoughts to conceive of, and is as if he had said, How dreadful must it needs be! which I leave to your own thoughts to conceive of, I not being able, says he, to utter or express the terror of it.

Hence the genuine and natural way of handling this part, is to set it forth by way of inference or corollary from that former point, which we have despatched. I shall therefore accordingly draw forth demonstrations of the dreadfulness thereof from those fore-cited scriptures, or grounds already laid in the fore-gone chapter, which doth afford sufficient topics unto this head.

First, Let us take the main doctrine itself, as in the general it is uttered here, that it is a falling into the hands of God himself, and not of creatures only; and a being punished from his presence and the glory of his power immediately, as 2 Thes. 1:9. And then extend and widen your apprehensions to take in how fearful this must be, which I shall demonstrate by a comparative gradation, raised thus:

I. If it were but a giving us up into the hands of mere creatures to afflict, and they assisted by God, but with the common and ordinary concurrence of his power, which joins with and upholds the agency of all things in their workings, whether in comforting us or in distressing of us: this the lowest degree of supposition. And yet consider how dreadful this supposition would render to our thoughts

such a punishment to be, if God should be but as the looker-on, and withal the setter of them on; or, as in the Scripture phrase, Mat. 18:34, but only deliver us up to these tormentors. As when it is termed a being cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, suppose it were a lake of material corporeal fire only, wherein thy body is cast, and thy soul, no otherwise to suffer than by what the spirits of that body it is united to and dwells in, is by that fire made sensible of. And suppose, withal, the spirits thereof were kept up, in their utmost sensibleness, of what torment that fire could inflict, and thy body continually flaming (as the bush in Exodus) and yet never burnt up, how terrible is it for flesh and blood to think but this of it! Or, to use another comparison, if a man were bound hand and foot, with his mouth set open, and were cast into a pit, wherein, as in the apostle's sheet let down from heaven, were all manner of creeping things, toads, serpents of all sorts, fiery scorpions, cockatrices, vipers, adders, snakes, &c., flies, hornets, lice, pismires, and frogs, &c.; and that these should bite and sting thee with exquisite pain and torment, also creep in at thy mouth, down into thy inwards, gnaw and swell thee there. How did but one sort of these creatures, when sent by God, afflict Pharaoh and all the Egyptians! A man in this case should endure not only the pains mentioned, but beyond them the torture which antipathy, contrariety, and natural abhorrency works, which is of all other most exquisite, and turns nature backward (as of Jordan it is said) into a recoil, and wresteth it against itself and throws it off its hinges. I need not instance how, by this way of antipathy, a cock makes a lion roar, a mouse the elephant to tremble, a serpent or a toad, a spider, sets the whole of nature in man into an inconsistency; a man knows not how to bear up, sustain himself, or be himself. But, besides, what pains or torments these, or any of these, can inflict;—

II. Let us proceed in our supposition a step further. If God should so far further assist as to set his wisdom a-work, and that only to find out and invent, what mixture of torments from creatures would be most exquisite of all others. As if a king (whose wrath is compared to the roaring of a lion, who yet sets but others to torment) should but

order ten men to invent torments for one poor man, as the Sicilian tyrants did. Hence, *Majus tormentum Siculi non invenire tyranni*. And then consider, for the exaggeration of this unto your thoughts,

1. That the nature of man is so framed as it is capable to receive discomfort as well as comfort from every creature. The least creature hath a sting in it as well as honey, unto something or other in man's nature, if it be applied and turned against it.

2. God knows all the ingredients in the creatures' natures; as also, it is said, he knows our frame, and so therewith the suitableness of sense in man's nature thereunto. Think, then, what punishment from their mixture can he invent and temper, and put all the venoms (the dregs) into one cup, as the psalmist speaks. And as by some lesser proportion we may estimate this by what those that know the secrets of nature can effect, above what other men, as Solomon did.

3. Now, raise up your apprehensions from these two steps of comparison thus first laid. If, as the psalmist says, he that made the eye shall not he see? speaking of that infinite omniscience in God himself above what is in the creatures, say I then in this case, if the creatures that God hath made may thus be supposed able to work anguish to a man, dolour and misery, what then can God, the great God that made all these himself, immediately inflict! As the prophet Isaiah slighteth the Egyptians and their assistance, Isa 31:3; thus, their horses are flesh, not spirit, and the Egyptians that ride them are men, and not God; so we may of all these suppositions, and still say, these are but of what creatures can do, who are creatures, and not God; flesh, and not spirit.

III. That we may yet heighten the dreadfulnes of this immediate hand of God, let us make a third supposition beyond the former, that God not only should use his ordinary concurrence with creatures, but (as sometimes he hath done), arm those creatures with his own wrath, over and above the activity of their ordinary sphere of workings, heating that sword of created powers he strikes with red-

hot in the furnace of his fiery indignation, and so intending the power of creatures beyond their strength, yet still so as to use them as the sole instruments of that anguish wrought, conveying his anger with them but as at second-hand; and so, as the man so afflicted is sensible, not of the stroke of the creatures only, but of God, and his wrath accompanying and seconding it through them. This would be yet more dreadful than the former, and yet still fall short of what the doctrine hath held forth, that himself is the avenger, and strikes immediately.

1. This latter is more dreadful to suppose than the former, yea, is not a bare supposition; for if God conveys his wrath with the least affliction, and in his providences fights against a man, and the heart is thereby made sensible of his wrath therein, this, as it often falls out, so it useth wonderfully to inflame and rage in man's spirit, even as a poisoned arrow useth to do the flesh, which itself alone would only pierce and wound, but as it is an arrow; but if further dipped in poison, or, as the apostle's comparison is, Eph. 6, made a fiery dart, it works a further anguish and torment. Now there is no creature but if armed with God's wrath, or if it be but a messenger and a representer of God's anger, but it is infinitely more dreadful than of itself otherwise it is. What is less than the shaking of a leaf, which seems itself to tremble? But if God send faintness of heart and terror with it, and by it, into a man's heart, the very 'sound of the shaking of a leaf chaseth them,' Lev. 26:36. Every grass-blade, burnished with God's wrath, strikes terror into the heart, as that flaming cherub did into Adam's. This is experimented in men troubled in mind, unto whom, *Iratumque refert quolibet herba Deum*. Every creature presents an angry God, and strikes trembling of heart into them. 'They fear where no fear is.' The light, which of all creatures is the most amiable and pleasantest, yet to a spirit wounded the beams thereof are dreadful; and when it is day, he wisheth it were night, and that darkness might for ever cover him; and why should the light arise, says he, to disclose my rebellion against my maker? Thus Job 4:20, 'Wherefore is the light given to him that is in misery?' even as on the contrary to a soul God's face shines on, every creature strikes

up comfort and gladness into it. He hears the thunder (which made Caligula tremble), It is my Father's voice, says he; views the stars, These are mine, saith he. The greatest afflictions to such an one do turn into joy, knowing he hath a treasury of love in the bosom of his Father that sent them. The perfect contrary is here.

2. This latter supposal of God's arming the creatures with his displeasure, and conveying it by them, falls yet lower, and is less than God's immediate wrath from himself, even as God's love, conveyed by ordinances and means, is a far lower dispensation than the immediate communication thereof from himself. God's power, though never so great, yet in working by and through an instrument, is abated, lessened, stinted in working. You may have read and heard (perhaps) the comparison between God's power and the creatures, in respect of torment, thus expressed, that the one is but as if a child should strike a blow in comparison of a giant. But to the case in hand; I have used to raise it thus: A giant that can of himself give a great blow immediately, if he yet should take but a straw to strike withal, the stroke would prove but small, and yet it would be greater than if a child should strike with it. Why? Because his power is limited and enervated by the instrument he strikes withal. Now, what are all the creatures, though in God's hand, but as straws in a giant's? And yet how terrible is his wrath when conveyed by them! I conclude this with allusion to that speech of Rehoboam, 1 Kings 12:10. The weight of God's little finger is heavier than that of the whole creation; and if they be able, or God by them, to scourge as with whips, then God himself immediately with scorpions.

Having thus considered how the immediateness of God's working doth comparatively exceed that of the creatures, or of himself by the creatures, in the

Fourth place, let us go on more sadly, in a positive way, to consider what his immediate power is, what the strength of those hands is which men must fall into. And how may this amaze you! As it is said of God's wisdom, 'There is no end of it, no searching of his

understanding,' so nor of his power. And how can I discover or unbare that arm before you? I begin to do it thus: God had begun to enter into a contest with Job, and touched him but with his little finger, and Job soon felt him, and cries out, 'If I speak of strength,' or think that way to grapple with him, 'he is strong,' Job 9:19. If but his little finger be so strong, as Job found it, what is his fist, which Ezekiel next sets forth the strokes of his wrath by? And what God himself there speaks against covetous and bloody men, Ezek. 22:13, 14, do you apply to every sin you live and go on in. Says God, 'I will strike with my fist at thy dishonest gain. And can thy heart endure, or thy hands be made strong, in the day in which I shall have to do with thee?' Let every one that heareth or readeth this, who yet go on in their sins, consider with themselves, Am I able to stand it out and encounter this God? And encounter him thou must, if thou goest on in thy sins. Or, Can my heart endure? sayest thou. The apostle puts the very same consideration upon the Corinthians' spirits, when guilty of idolatry. (And it is the same case of uncleanness, or any other known sin). 'Do you provoke the Lord to jealousy? are you stronger than he?' 1 Cor. 10:22; as if he had said, Do you not consider what a powerful God you have to do withal, and that immediately? Can you grapple with him, think you, or make your part good with him? Hear yet further by what way it is that the apostle sets forth to us the strength of God; and let us make a further estimate thereby as to the matter in hand. The apostle, in the same epistle, though upon another occasion, chap. 1:25, had said that 'the weakness of God is stronger than the strength of men;' in which speech he evidently puts our thoughts upon making of a measure of what is to be accounted more or less stronger or weaker in God, in respect of the putting forth his power by what the Scriptures do express of him, after the similitude of man, as in Job the comparison is of his little finger, and in Ezekiel of his fist; whereof the one is weaker (in man) and the other stronger. Now, in man, what is weaker than his breath, which will scarce blow away a straw? (and his weakness is usually expressed by this, that 'his breath is in his nostrils.')

Now, estimate the strength of God according unto what is said in the Scriptures of God (and that as to this point of destroying us) after the manner of



men. 'By the very breath of his nostrils we are consumed,' Job 4:9. His power is such that he needs put forth no more (as it were) to destroy us. His very weakness is enough. Job had in the same verse first said, 'By the blast of him we perish,' but because a blast imports some forcibleness, the utmost might of what is in a man's breath, and it is a man's putting forth his breath with a more than ordinary violence; therefore, by way of diminution and correction, he adds, 'by the breath of his nostrils;' that is (still measuring it as spoken after the similitude and manner of men), by the most ordinary and weakest putting forth of his power. And yet we see if he puts forth no more, he blows us to destruction when his intent is to destroy. And why? For of us the Scriptures use a comparison suitable thereto, in saying that we are but 'as the dust of the balance:' Isa. 40:15, 'Yea, all the nations (put all together) are but as the small dust of the balance;' as that little that is left in the balance, when what is weighed is taken forth, which is easily blown away with a man's breath. Again, yet lower, in man, his nod is of less force than his breath; and yet, 'lo, at the rebuke of his countenance we perish,' Ps. 80:16; 'He can look on one that is proud, and abase him, and his eye can cast about rage and destruction,' Job 40:11–13. He had said before, verse 9, 'Hast thou an arm like God?' He riseth from the power of his nod, the weakness of his power, unto the power of his arm; and so may we, from his looks to his breath, from that to his little finger, from that to his fist, from that to his arm and hands, in which his strength is said to lie, Luke 1:51. Oh think how dreadful, then, it must needs be to 'fall into those hands' (as here in the text); into those hands, I say, that 'measure the waters in the hollow of them,' that 'span the heavens,' and at the same time comprehend also 'all the dust of the earth' in one grasp, as one of us doth a little pebble; and verse 15, 'takes up the isles as a very little thing,' as you would do hazel nutshells out of a pail of water. Now for thee, a poor grasshopper, to be taken into those hands, and to be gripped, and crushed, and squeezed with the might thereof; but the Scripture expressions go further yet: to have this God, like a mill-stone, fall upon thee with his whole weight, which is Christ's comparison, Mat. 21:44. 'Thy wrath lies hard upon me,' said Heman. You see in

summer little green flies creeping upon green leaves, which, if a man doth but touch, they die. Such a slight creature art thou in comparison to this God. Or further (as Job's comparison is), that this great and mighty God should run upon thee as a mighty giant with his full force, the utmost of his force, as a man doth upon his enemy; yet so Job speaks of it, chap. 16:14. And in another place, the same Job, that he should 'take thee about the neck' and throttle thee. Oh what do we, poor 'potsherds of the earth, striving with our Maker!' as Isaiah speaks, chap. 45:9; or, as Christ spake from heaven, will flesh think to kick and spurn against such iron pricks and pikes, which run up into the soul whilst it strikes upon them.

And that we may yet further have a thorough sensibleness of our obnoxiousness and exposedness to this great God, let us withal consider his absolute sovereignty over us, as well as his power. What an inconsiderable portion doth any one soul (and every one is singly to deal with him for his own particular) bear unto this infinity of being and glory! To whom not one nation, but all nations; and not only all nations that are now extant in the world, but that ever have been, or shall be, are counted 'as nothing,' yea, 'less than nothing.' What a little thing is this island of ours to the whole body of nations! And yet all isles are to him but a little thing, as Isaiah speaks. Lord, think thou, what am I to thee, or any man, that thou shouldst regard him! Yea, and being sinful, why should any man (as he is of himself) think that God should have any stick or demur within him, to withhold himself from destroying him every moment! For, lo, even the greatest of men, that have been of greatest wisdom, parts (being sinners), he hath in his distance and greatness laid them aside, and regarded them not at all: Job 37:24, 'He regards not the wise in heart.' What is all or any excellency in thee to him!

There is therefore no way but to turn unto him, and seeing you must fall into his hands, prevent him by putting yourselves into his hands. This great arm of his may be held: Isa. 27:5, 'Let them take hold of my strength; fury is not in me.' There is an arm also of another one, that is, Christ, who can deal with God for thee, and overcome him.

Isa. 53:1, 'To whom is the arm of the Lord (so he termeth Christ) revealed?' Thus you have seen and heard something of the greatness of this God, and that but in general, as he is the author of this punishment, and thereby this punishment aggrandised unto us, and yet how little do we know of him! as Job speaks.

Secondly, Subjoin hereunto the consideration of what is the eminent subject of this punishment, the soul of man, and that the issue of this punishment is no less than the destruction of that soul. And these two (which I join together) will afford further reflections, to help us to conceive of the fearfulness of this punishment. And the consideration hereof cometh in most pertinently next unto the foregoing, wherein the power of the agent was spoken to, but now in this the capacity of the subject or patient, and the receptivity thereof of impressions from this worker.

That the soul is the immediate vessel of this wrath, that I spake to before: Mat. 10:28, 'Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.' The former part of which words evidently import, 1, that the soul alone, and immediately in itself, and not only in respect of what it suffers with or from the body's suffering, is the subject of this punishment, though the body also is; and, 2, Christ concludes, that it is the destruction of both body and soul.

You know also the rule, that the measure of every agent's working upon another must be taken from the capacity of the subject which the impression is made upon, as well as from the power of the agent that works. Fire works more fiercely upon oil and brimstone, than upon stones, or upon dust or sands. You may discern this in the parts of your own body. Rheum falling upon the lungs doth not torture so, as falling upon a tooth, a joint, or eye. How also are the inward parts capable of more exquisite torment, as by the stone, &c., bred in them, than the outward are, by any cuttings or wounds?

Now, the soul of a man is capable of more exquisite impressions from God's hand, in that it is an intelligent spirit, and in the substantial faculties of it assimilated to him, made in his image, a spirit as God is, that hath an understanding, and other faculties to receive and take in from him what he is pleased to pour forth into it by them, and is accordingly more sensible thereof, than the senses of the body are or can be supposed to be from creatures. The prophet Nahum seems to have considered this, chap. 1 ver. 5, 6, when, setting out God's wrath to men in the effects of it, he first considers how it works upon inanimate creatures, that are at such a distance (in respect of the kind of their being) from God's: 'It kindleth a fire,' says he, 'which maketh the hills to melt, and the earth is burnt up at his presence; yea, the world, and all that dwell therein' (which he will one day burn up with fire). Now from these the prophet infers and raiseth up our thoughts. Doth he work thus upon insensible creatures, as the hills, and the earth, and the whole world? Do the elements melt with fervent heat? Are the heavens shrivelled up as a scroll of parchment before him, by the violence of that fire which he sends forth? Consider, then, oh consider, ye sons of men, how will the fire of his wrath work upon your intellectual souls! And as unto this scope and coherence with the former, I understand what follows, ver. 6, 'Who can stand before his indignation? who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?' He here turneth his speech, and applieth it to men. For the souls of men being in their beings and kind nearer of kin to him, spirits, as he is the great Spirit, and the Father of spirits, which were made only for God, and to be filled with God, have accordingly a more intimate sense of his workings on them. And it is as if he had said, If, then, he sends forth such a fire as melts and dissolves the earth, mountains of iron or brass, how much more will it be able to melt wax! And such are men's souls to God, comparatively to other creatures. Christ speaking of his soul, when he had thus to do with God, in the day of his anger, Ps. 22:14 (that psalm was all made of him) 'My heart is melted like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels.' And towards this sense doth Sanctius seem to understand that complaint of Job's, uttered to his friends, concerning those terrors of God which he felt within him: Job 6:4, 11

verses compared, 'Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh,' my nature or constitution, 'of brass,' that I should be able to encounter with this indignation of the Almighty? Stones and brass have no sense in them (or but a dull sense, if their opinion should hold true, *de sensu rerum*), they have no blood nor spirits to make them sensible of these arrows of God's anger he had spoken of, ver. 4. Ay, but Job meaneth to say, I have a soul made of other metal, suited to God, the great Spirit, whose arrows I feel, which is exquisitely sensible of all his actings. Take the statue of a man made of brass, or cut out of stone, and slash and cut him, and he feels it not; but cut the same limbs that answer to these in a living man, made of flesh and blood, with the same knife, and what torture is it! You may see this, and aggravate it to yourselves, by what inferior spirits to this great Father of spirits, as angels and devils can work upon man's soul, that is a spirit like themselves, being yet inferior to them. When Saul had but one evil spirit sent from the Lord, how distracted and terrified was he, though in the midst of the enjoyments of a kingdom! 1 Sam. 14:14. Also that great apostle, that had his spirit fortified, as having been newly feasted with the joys of heaven, and that not as at a distance only, but as a spectator, that stood by, present there, 2 Cor. 12; yet one angel, 'Satan, buffeting him,' he was so disturbed and put to it, as he knew not what to do, or how to bear it; only God told him, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' Well, but do men's souls in hell 'fight with flesh and blood,' yea, or 'with principalities and powers' chiefly? No; that is but whilst they are the 'rulers of this world,' as there it is added. And yet if these spirits have such power over our spirits to buffet and terrify them, what hath God, the Father of them?

Again, consider how the soul is capable of more joys and sorrows than the bodily senses are, and this by how much it doth exceed them in its eminency and capacity. The soul is able to drink up all the pleasures the whole creation can afford the bodily senses, or they bring in; to drink them up (I say) even at one draught, and yet would in the midst of it still cry, Give, Give. Now, as it is in the body of a man, look whatever part is capable of more pleasure, it is also

capable of more pains. So the soul proportionably; look how capable it is of greater joys (as it is from God), it is as much of sorrows also, unto the same extension and intension of them.

Add, II., as to this point, that as the soul is thus vastly capable of more sorrow and anguish, so further, that these souls to be punished are filled with sin, and in that respect termed 'vessels of wrath fitted to destruction,' Rom. 9:22. Take a barrel of wood, and of itself it will burn as it is wood; but if withal it be pitched within, and full of tar and combustible matter, it will burn more ragingly. Of unfruitful branches, apostatising from Christ, it is said, John 15:6, that they are 'cast into the fire, and they are burned;' that is, they burn to purpose, make a mighty fire. That clause, 'and they are burned,' is added by way of auxesis or emphasis; else it needed not. We see when sins were but laid upon Christ by imputation, who in himself was separate from sinners, and had no conscience of sin, how yet the anger of God against sin dealt with him, as undertaking to be a surety for sin. And 'can you drink,' says Christ, 'the cup that I am to drink of?' that is, so as to bear it and not be overcome with it. Now, in Luke 23:31, you may see how Christ infers from his sufferings, as being the sufferings of one who had not been himself personally guilty of sin, what therefore, with difference, those in whom sin is inherent must expect. 'Weep for yourselves,' says he, 'for if they do those things to the green tree, what will be done in the dry?' that is, who are fit combustible matter for the fire, and, as the prophet says, 'are as stubble fully dry,' Nahum 1:10: and of the terribleness of God's anger he had before discoursed (as was even now observed) in all that chapter.

Again, III., in the soul, some faculties are more capable of anguish from his wrath than other, even as in the body some parts are more of pain. If a man would avoid a scalding drop to be let fall upon any part, of all other he would fence his eye. You see how a mote, a fly troubleth it; a scalding drop of oil would much more. So it is in the faculties of the soul. You read there is the 'spirit of the mind,' Eph. 4:23. Now God will wound even that, and aims at it in this

punishment. 'A wounded spirit who can bear?' says Solomon. If a man's flesh be torn and cut, he may yet bear up himself, but if his bones be broken, 'who can stand?' Now the immediate strokes of God are so compared by David, as unto the breaking of the bones, in comparison of other dealings of God with, and inflictions from God towards us.

The next thing which I mention, but as an appendix to this head, is, that it is the destruction of the soul. So Christ and the apostle again and again. They are said to be lost; and though men may metaphysically dispute that it is better to be, though in hell, than not to be, yet Christ hath said, 'it were better not to have been born.' I shall say no more as to this head than what the apostle expresseth this by, in 1 Tim. 6:9, in saying, that men are 'drowned in perdition and destruction.' One would think for him to have expressed death and destruction, it might have been enough to have said that a man were drowned, or sunk down to the bottom of waters, or the like materials that would suffocate a man; but to say he is 'drowned in perdition' itself, or that 'perdition and destruction' are the pit, the lake he is plunged into, what can be said beyond it? And yet here he is not content with one single word to express that by either, as to have said, 'drowned in perdition,' but must double it, and add another word, destruction, also. Destroyed, therefore, over and over; drowned over head and ears, as we say, and all that is in them drowned and sunk into perdition; the whole soul, yea, the whole man. No part above water: destroyed with a double destruction; both for object doable, and also for the subject of it, both body and soul. So Christ says.

The third head that affords matter of exaggeration to our thoughts, whereby to infer the fearfulness of this punishment, is taken from the ends or final causes mentioned in that first section: the ends, I say, which God hath in, and is provoked by unto this punishment. And as I then singly argued from each of them the immediateness of God's hand therein, so now I shall from each of the same, the dreadfulness hereof. There were three attributes of God in special, and his glory in

common, which God aimeth at the manifestation of, in this ultimate guerdon or reward for sin. 1. The manifestation of the glory (that is in common); then particularly, 1st, of his power; 2dly, the satisfying of his justice; 3dly, of his wrath. The scriptures I then had recourse to, do specify all these. I shall speak to these in this section, and to the other in the following.

1. In general, that he aimeth at his glory in it (which is God's general aim, and is common to these and all other attributes) is evident. His glory (as it is to be manifested to us) is but the result or shine of all or any of his attributes, manifested in that place of Prov. 16:4, 'The Lord hath made all things for himself,' that is, for his glory (for that is himself, 'My glory I will not give to another') it follows, 'yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.' The day of evil there is the day of punishment, the wicked themselves also making and preparing themselves by sin thereto; but so as thereupon God manifests his glory upon them, as well as upon all things else, which he hath made in their several seasons and kinds. And Solomon doth mention this of punishment, as one eminent instance of all things else whatever that are for his glory, and which will be ordered then by him thereunto in a special manner; and because (it being so great an evil) men might think otherwise, yea, but, says Solomon, God seeks and will have a glory out of this punishment, as well as out of all things else, of which ye all acknowledge that God made them for himself. And so in that 2 Thes. 1:9, they are said to be 'punished from the glory of his power;' that is, from his power, glorifying himself on them, as I before expounded it. And as it is for the glory of this his power, so by the same reason of all or any of those other attributes, he is pleased to put forth therein.

I shall premise two maxims, from whence forelaid the inference for the dreadfulnes of this will more readily rise, in an infinite height, unto our more serious and sober apprehensions.

1. The first, that all things which God doth for his own glory, he will perform them like himself, that is, like God, and so make the utmost



of everything that that subject matter, whatever it be, will afford of glory to him. This rule is ascertained to us, as from the nature of God, so from that saying of the apostle, Rom. 1:21, where he condemns the Gentiles, that they 'glorified him not as God,' that is, in such a manner as was worthy of him; they came not up to that height of glory, so great a God must have given unto him from creatures. Now, if it be the sin of creatures that they fall short in glorifying God as God, then be assured that if God himself undertakes and professeth to do a thing for his glory, he will, in the whole of it, and issue thereof, either glorify himself as God, or never begin to essay or meddle with it, but would have let it alone for ever.

2. From hence take this also along with you, to carry it in your view through each particular that follows: that then, if God seeks to glorify himself in a way of punishment, that punishment must be answerably great and proportioned to raise up a glory unto God, such as shall 'glorify him as God' in that way. For it is the punishment or the judgment itself which he executes (as the psalmist says) out of which this glory must spring. This punishment, as it is a punishment, is that wherein God will be glorified as God; that is, it is the soil which this crop of his glory is to grow up out of, and the crop or harvest of glory can be but what the fertility of that soil, as such, affords. These things in general forelaid.

Now, 3, the greatness or vast comings in of that glory God reckons upon from this may rise up in your view by these particulars.

(1.) Had it not been that, in comparison of other works of his, an infinitely exceeding revenue of glory would have arisen unto him from this, God would never have set his heart or hand to this work of all other; I say it again, he would never have set his hand to this work of all other. For as he is Creator, he hath a love to all, and hates nothing that he hath made; he loves no such bloody work for itself, nor would have ever imbrued his hands in the destruction of his creature, had it not been for an exceeding weight of glory; and as being justly provoked thereto, it becometh a just prize on that hand

presented to him, which he will be sure withal to manage and perform with the utmost righteousness. It is certain that this is to him opus alienum, a work strange to his nature, as the prophet speaks. He does not naturally nor willingly (says the Lamentation) 'afflict or grieve the children of men,' Lam. 3:33. Men's quarrellings and cavils hereabout did put him long since to his oath, and he hath cleared himself by oath in Ezekiel: 'As I live, I will not the death of a sinner;' that is, not simply, as if I delighted in it for itself, as a God that is cruel (which was objected); and therefore I say peremptorily it must be an infinite mass of glory, after much long suffering and impenitency of men, that moves him to it. And if so, then, according to the principles even now mentioned, do you that are impenitent sinners look to it, for ex vestro corio (I allude to Job's speech, skin for skin), out of the blood of your souls, and their destruction, shall this tribute and tax of glory be raised, according unto what your sinfulness shall be found to have been. And oh, then, do you collect how fearful it is like to be! View it in a contrary, and indeed though an instance far transcending the proportion of this, yet in respect of holding some likeness to God's proceeding in this, will conduce to heighten our thoughts about this. It is a consideration that helps our faith (and it is a great one) that for God to deliver up his own Son to death, and for himself to bruise him (you have it all in a short saying, Isa. 53:10, 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him'), and that this should be the object of his good pleasure, there must have been some incomprehensible vast design of glory to accrue therefrom, to be attained by doing it, some high end and far transcending design that was to be the issue and product of it; which, as you know, was the glory of his mercy and love in the salvation of men: 'Glory to God on high, good will to men.' And this is as great an evidence and argument to our faith that God is resolved to save sinners as can be given. For what hath been thus done to Christ is past recalling, not to be recompensed any other way than by saving many by the knowledge of him, as God there speaks. Now as this instance of the highest kind serves to evidence this thing to us, so, though in a far lesser proportion, you may take somewhat a like illustration, at least in the point in hand; that certainly it must be a great surpassing mass

of glory that will come in unto him by this punishment for sin, which should any way gain him to be so much as willing to it, against which otherwise he hath so much in his own nature, who had it withal in his absolute power to have given effectual grace to all as well as to some; which latter all acknowledge he hath done, even as it was in his power to have saved the world without Christ's death, Mark 14:36. O ye sons of men, know and understand your God, and be moved thereby to turn unto him; and the more by this, that it must and will prove an infinite punishment that is coming upon you, because, were it not an immense sum of glory would accrue to him out of it, and that but upon your final impenitency; he that is a God so good in himself would never else bring it upon you. And according to that first maxim premised, it must be the soreness of the punishment from whence that glory must arise.

(2.) Consider herewith how that he hath reserved this, as his last work in that other world, when this world shall come to be folded up as a garment, and a final conclusion be put to all these other dispensations and works of glory that are now on foot. And as Solomon told us that he hath 'made the wicked for himself and for the day of evil,' so Job also tells us, that 'the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and shall be brought forth at (or to) the day of wrath.' Reserved by God till after all his other works of wonder are ended and gone, then to be brought forth as a trophy of his glory. Both themselves and all their sins are reserved till then, and laid up amongst God's treasures, to be then made public. The salvation of his elect and the destruction of the wicked are the last and only works that then remain, and do remain, and are purposely kept unto that time, when he means to shew himself to be God indeed, and to make all men and angels know that he is God. It is an argument of the tearfulness of that punishment the devils shall undergo, Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4, that he hath 'reserved them in everlasting chains unto the judgment of the great day.' It is a certain rule that God's latter works do still exceed and put down the former, so far as the former shall not in comparison be remembered, Isa. 65:17, Jer. 3:16. When God would make his apostles (as to this world) the greatest spectacle of

misery that (excepting what he made his own Son, who was the first born among many brethren), he ever put upon saints, prophets, or martyrs, that had preceded and were before them, how doth the apostle express his design in it, 1 Cor. 4:9? 'I think,' says he, 'that God hath set forth us the apostles last as it were, men appointed to death, for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men:' alluding to those gladiators brought up last upon the stage as a spectacle to the people. The thing I cite it for is, that the greatest work in that kind he appointed to be at last, as also was that which immediately preceded it, the coming of his Son in the last days. And but this of punishing the wicked in his last, and very last, of all that he will do for ever.

(3.) Especially let us withal consider besides how all his actings and works whereby to glory himself for ever shall be reduced and contracted to these two. He gives over all other of providence and spiritual dispensations by ordinances, and sets down and betakes himself to these two alone. God hath nothing else to do in the other world; and he hath no other revenue of manifested glory that remains extant; he lives and reigns eternally in or upon these two; and yet this is, then, when he is resolved to the utmost to be glorious. And yet all is but what comes out of these two works, the salvation of the elect and destruction of the wicked.

(4.) Again, consider these two are uniform works, and unvarying, and 'without shadow of turning.' In this world he makes a variety and interchange of providences, which are exercised in such works as he sometimes takes up and then lays down again at pleasure; he 'sets one thing against another,' as Solomon speaks. Every day and age produceth a variety and alteration. And this is because his glory, that appeareth but imperfectly in some one (as in this and that particular), may have an additional perfection in some other, that so all that variety may, like small pieces in tapestry, make that piece of work complete. And yet we see how in this mixture, and often but in some one single work or piece wrought and done but once, how much of God's glory appears to the wonderment of men and angels.

Whereas now this last work of punishing wicked men (as likewise that other of salvation), are but as one continued dispensation, of one woof, and uniform for ever, without change, variety, or interruption. The whole stream of God's activity contracts itself unto and runs in these two channels, and no more, in omne volubilis ævum. And how strong must you needs suppose these two streams each of them to be, whenas the manifestation of the Deity doth now run so strongly in a thousand rivulets. This in general, from the manifestation of his glory.

I named three attributes in particular, which God doth more eminently shew forth in this great and last work of his

First, His power.

Secondly, Justice.

Thirdly, Avenging wrath, to the end to gain a glory to himself out of all these.

First, His power. That you have in two places: Rom. 9:22, 'What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known?' His power, you see, is mentioned distinct from his wrath, though indeed it will provoke to be the power of his wrath; but I shall distinctly speak of it. You have it also mentioned as that attribute which shall be most glorified hereby in 2 Thes. 1:9, 'Who shall be punished with destruction from the glory of his power.' I afore spake some things of the greatness of God's power as in relation to this punishment, in shewing how fearful it is to fall into the hands of God, in the first head or demonstration in this section. I shall only here add,

1. This general rule concerning it, that the drawing forth of power or activity by God in any work, is still but what is proportionable and answerable to the work; that is, the effect shall be answerable in greatness to the power that is said to be put forth. It is certain God over-acts nothing. Now the effect wherein this power of his is put forth, is here said to be destruction; and therefore that destruction

must be conceived proportioned to the power that is said to be exerted. There was never work which God ever did, wherein he professed to shew forth a transcendency of power, or of any other attribute, but it was wonderful and glorious in its kind. All his attributes are himself, and so as great as himself. This visible world, in its kind, what a glorious building is it, consisting of heaven and earth! and to what end was it that he professed he made it? You have it Rom. 1:20, that by the creation of the world might be 'understood his eternal power and Godhead.' And if he that created and raised up such beings out of nothing shall profess yet further to make his power known, and will use that power, and put it forth in destroying, to shew forth the glory of it, how great will that destruction be which must bear a proportion to such a manifestation! That after God hath in so great and so various works preceding this, sufficiently, as we might think, shewn himself God, in point of power, or what a powerful God he is; that yet after all, as if in all these he had not given so full proof or demonstration of power, and as not satisfied with all the former as not enough, he should be after all willing, as the apostle says here, at last to begin a new work, which should make the ears of the whole creation tingle, on purpose to make his power known: this is it swallows up my thoughts into astonishment, knowing both that, according to the rule before given, his last works ordained to shew forth any attribute, must infinitely exceed the former, that served to the making known thereof; and that again puts a new amazement into my thoughts, to think how, or wherein so much a greater proportion of power should be spent! If it were barely to annihilate, and bring the creature to its first nothing, there needs not an extension of power; it were but withdrawing that word of his power that holds up and bears up all things, Heb. 1:3, and these, as all, would fall to nothing. But over and above, you read here of such a destruction as draws out his power positively, and makes his power known afresh. Specially, when again I consider as to this particular, that to destroy the well-being of anything is, in the ordinary experience of us creatures, more easy than to give being. A man that cannot make alive the least of creatures, not the least fly or flea, can yet with an easy touch destroy them. I hinted before some respects

wherein this destruction might exceed, in respect of power concurring to it, that of the creation. In the creation there was but a single expense of power, namely, of merely raising up out of nothing; but in this a double. For the wrath of God, exerted in the fierceness of it, hath a tendency to bring, and would, if no other power intervened, bring the sinner unto nothing; as that speech of Jeremiah doth imply, chap. 10:24, 'Correct me not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing;' as also that of Nahum, 'Who can stand in the fierceness of his anger?' So as under this his pressure of the creature unto nothing, for God to uphold that creature in being, is equivalent unto a continual educing it out of nothing again. Oh what destruction must that then be in the execution of it, in which God will positively put forth more power than in creating, and thereby, after all other works of power shewn, get himself the name among the whole creation of being a powerful God indeed! But of this destruction, more hereafter. Thus much for that of power.

The second attribute is justice, which he will to the utmost shew forth in this punishment. So in the text, 'The Lord shall judge his people;' and 2 Thes. 1:9, (δικην τίσουσιν)' They shall lay down, or pay a punishment;' and ver. 6, 'It is a righteous thing in God to recompense tribulation,' &c. And indeed, God's power herein is not put forth simply out of sovereignty, or for itself, but is drawn out by justice and wrath, to execute what they are provoked unto. I before gave this as one reason why God himself must execute this punishment, because else the punishment will not come up to satisfy his justice; but now I make use of the same to infer the dreadfulfulness thereof: that it is the felling into the hands, as of a potent God, so of a just God recompensing for sin, and extending his mighty power to inflict a punishment, which should in justice hold proportion with the demerit of sin, that so the exactness of his justice might appear.

Now, to heighten our apprehensions of the dreadfulfulness of this punishment from this particular, consider,

1. The infinite demerit of sin. Which is not enough known or considered by the miserable subjects thereof, because indeed God himself, in his holiness, and in his greatness, is not known by them. Now, because men will not otherwise know, nor be sensible of sin, in the spiritual evil of it against God, therefore it is that God is put upon it thus to make men know it, and what God himself is; for men to sin against him by such dreadful effects, as in justice shall hold proportion with their sin and the desert thereof. And God professeth he will herein be exact, Heb. 2:2, so as 'every transgression shall receive a just recompence of reward;' not such or such sins, some few more eminent sins only, but every transgression shall have a reward proportionate. 'He that is the Judge of all the world, shall not he be exact?' as Abraham in another case, Gen. 17. Yes; in this ultimate punishment he will be sure to be, as Isaiah speaks, chap. 28 ver. 17, 'To lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet,' as carpenters do when they would fit things one to another, and make things uniform and correspondent, and square them adequately to an hair's breadth, as we say. And thus God will do in judging; he will bring his line and his plummet, take measure of the heinousness of every sin, and mete a punishment adequate thereto. And if so, then this punishment, how dreadful will it be! 'If thou wilt be severe to mark what is done amiss, who will be able to stand?' says the psalmist, Ps. 130:3. The heinousness of sin is measured by the greatness of that glory whereof it is the debasement; and that debasement done to him, further measured by this, that it is by so mean things as we creatures are to God; and so is estimated by the worth of that person against whom it is committed, which therefore could by no other means be expiated, but by the debasement and emptying of as great a glory, due to the person of the Son of God, appearing in our nature as one person therewith. Sin, the apostle tells us, Rom. 7:13, is 'above measure sinful.' And hence, accordingly, this punishment is estimated to be above measure fearful. Thus Jer. 30:11, and Isa. 27:7, 8, God putting this very difference between his punishing godly men, his own children, and his punishing wicked men, 'Hath he smitten him as he smote those that smote him?' No; for he puts this difference in the 8th verse, he smites his own in



measure. You may thus take the compass, the magnitude, and the depth of it by this, that therefore oppositely his punishing the other exceeds all measure. Sin is the creature's proper work, and punishment is God's work. 'Vengeance belongeth unto me,' says the text; he challengeth it as his. Now it is certain God will shew himself as perfect and as exact in his work as man and Satan have been in theirs; he will not be exceeded or outgone by them. 'The Lord is known,' says the psalmist, 'by the judgment that he executeth,' Ps. 9:16. If the creature be so wicked as to bring forth so heinous an evil (in genere moris) as sin is, which is malum catholicum, a catholic evil, and accordingly hath the name of all evil given it, as virtually and transcendently containing all that God or man calls evil, then be assured that God who is so just will be as sure to bring forth, by way of return upon the creature, a punishment that shall be, in genere poenæ, in its kind, malum catholicum, an universal evil also. And such Ezekiel terms it, speaking of the evil of punishment; it is 'an evil, and an only evil,' Ezek. 7:5; that is, such an evil as shall be nothing but evil, and that shall contain the spirit, the quintessence of all evil in it. Therefore, Ps. 75:8, 'In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and it is full of mixture;' as if an artist that knows the nature of all simples should temper a cup that is full of all sorts of poisons, and which is a compound of the bitterest, loathsomest ingredients this earth puts forth. Even thus hath God strained the quintessence of all evils into one cup; and it follows there, 'the wicked of the earth must drink the dregs of it;' which phrase also argues such a mixture as this we speak of; the bitterest of all is at the bottom, and it is eternity to the bottom, and they must not nor shall not leave a drop, but suck out the dregs, as the prophet's phrase is, Ezek. 23:34. Thou hast a 'cup of abomination,' and when thou hast 'filled up thy measure,' then will God take a measure of thy cup, and fill the same proportion of dregs and mixture to thee in a cup of his tempering.

2. Consider that in the manifestation of this attribute of justice there must, of all other (next unto that of mercy), be a more special glory intended and designed by God himself, unto which this punishment must bear an eminent proportion, as being the matter wherein it

appears. I said before, that if God professed to manifest any attribute of his whatever, it still hath been done in such effects of wonder as all the creation is set admiring of. Now of all other attributes, these two of justice and mercy are the prime, which he sets the greatest value upon the manifestation of. And therefore still look how they are more eminent, or by how much the more eminently he intends to manifest them above other attributes, by so much must the effects in and by which he manifesteth them exceed and excel all other works.

Now that these are the brightest jewels in that crown of his glory, and which he intends most to embellish, may be seen in this: 1. That he hath chosen the choicest and most excellent of his creatures as the stuff or materials in which to set these forth; namely, angels and men, and Christ himself the head of all. That look as curious engravers, when they would shew their best art and chiefest workmanship, they call out the choicest materials, as either precious stones, cedar, or marble, to work upon; and so embroiderers, the finest stuff or cloth for the groundwork they would embroider gold or pearls upon; thus hath God singled forth angels and men, the chief of, and more noble creatures (in the stuff they consist of) than the rest of his whole creation. Power and wisdom is seen in other creatures, but vindictive justice, as also grace and saving mercy, only on men and angels. And, 2, although he hath shewn forth more of wisdom and power in the frame and fabric of men and angels than in the whole of heaven and earth, yet still, comparatively, more of justice and mercy in these two, than that all or any of the other attributes shewn forth in and upon them comes unto; whereof this is sufficient evidence, that they have the name of 'vessels of mercy' and 'vessels of wrath,' Rom. 9. You read nowhere that they are termed vessels of power or vessels of wisdom, which is a token that they are filled with these, in that they carry away the denomination (which is usually à principaliori), as if no attributes else in comparison seemed to appear. And yet how much of power and wisdom is seen in the fabric of man, David tells us, 'I am wonderfully or fearfully made.' So then, those that shall prove to be the miserable vessels of this his wrath and justice, shall be so filled with the punishment whereby this

justice is made known, as shall deservedly bear the name of wrath and judgment engraven upon it of all other attributes. 'The day in which he will judge the world,' Acts 17:31, is elsewhere called the day of destruction, the day of wrath, the day of judgment, &c. It beareth its denomination from this very work we speak of.

And further, consider how he hath given out beforehand, almost six thousand years before, concerning this work above all works else, and hath posted it upon Enoch's pillars (you know the tradition I allude to) as you use to do citations, Jude 14, 15, or as you do *indicere diem*, set a day for the most solemn works. 'Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied hereof, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all,' &c. And further and besides, God speaks of preparations to have been all along made by him during the time of this world against that day. The persons are a-fitting, Rom. 9; the punishment a-preparing, 'prepared for the devil and his angels,' even from their very first fall. Now certainly God would never raise up in us, by such words given out by himself, so great expectations, if the reality, the execution, the thing itself, should not answer to all these. Yea, after all his other works of wonder finished and perfected, he professeth to come on purpose to be glorified. And in what? as well in rendering vengeance in the destruction of wicked men as in the glorifying his saints, 2 Thes. 1:6–10, 'Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you that are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power: when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, in that day.' He carries on the glorifying himself and of his power in the one as well as in the other.

Yea, and to render the solemnity of this work and day yet greater, he calls a general assembly of all men and angels that are or have been,

or of men that yet shall be, in either worlds, to be present and see the execution.

To conclude. It is therefore called 'the great day,' as that 'reserved to the judgment of the great day,' Jude 6, and other speeches. And why the great day, but from this work of that day that shall be done upon it, which this day shall then bring forth and produce; as days have their style and denomination from the work of the day, *opus diei in dis suo*. So this (as was said) is called the day of destruction, wrath, &c. And if so, then that style of greatness must be from the greatness of the work that shall be done thereon. And so the judgment of the great day, because great will the judgment be that is to be executed on that day.

Lastly. God hath in the mean time suffered his glory to be debased, himself to be the least regarded in the world, sin and the devil to carry all before them, and sinners to have the glory; relieving himself in the mean time that he hath a treasure of glory to be broken up at that day, Rom. 2:3, when he will come on purpose to be glorious. He hath suffered an eclipse of six thousand years, that in the end he may break forth with a redoubled glory. And all that glory must come in this way, even from this punishment he shall execute. And it must be a recovery of greater glory than he should have had by man's holiness in that first state by creation, or God would never have let sin have come into the world; he meant not to be a loser.

I come next to argue this from the third attribute, his wrath; or if you will, his power and justice, as intended and heightened to extremities by wrath; and though he will be just in what he doth, yet it is justice put on by wrath. He recompenseth sin, not only as rector universi, judge of all the world, and so upon the account of public rules given forth, to vindicate the equity and righteousness of which, he punisheth the transgressions of them; but over and above he doth it as resenting an injury, a personal affront given to himself, his person; and this draws forth his wrath and vengeance on his own behalf.

As it is termed vengeance, so zeal, in Heb. 10:27, and 1 Cor. 10:22, 'Do you provoke the Lord to jealousy?' In Nahum 1:2, see what a conglomeration there is of attributes and effects.

God is jealous; that is the first. He compares that in God unto that in man, which, Solomon tells us, is the 'rage of man,' Prov. 6:34.

Again, 2, The Lord revengeth, the Lord revengeth. That is the effect, and he says it twice, as speaking of one who is inflamed with anger.

Then, 3, to shew how fiercely in revenging he executes it, even with fury, he adds, 'The Lord revengeth and is furious'; who yet professeth elsewhere of himself, 'Fury is not in me;' that is, of myself it is not, Isa. 27:4. But as he is provoked by sin and impenitency, so fury is in him. 'The Lord is furious.'

Then, 4, follows the subject thereof, and what they are to him whom his fury waxeth so hot against, enemies and adversaries: 'The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.' Which accords with this text, 'Vengeance is mine, I will recompense the adversaries,' ver. 27,

And, 5, if any urge, Yea, but is not God merciful, and slow to anger? Yes, says he, ver. 3, the Lord is slow to anger. But he brings it into shew that in this case it is that very patience of his, which in the issue works up unto that fury, *Læsa patientia fit furor*.

And then, 6, he further warns them to consider, that in the execution of this fury to the utmost, his power comes to be engaged, The Lord is great in power.

And lastly, He will not at all acquit, the wicked that lives and dies in his sins; which is a clause or proviso he still puts in, even when he speaks the greatest things of his mercy. See Exod. 34:6, 7.

And although the very reading this description of God as an avenger shews forth alone its own dreadfulness, yet further, to clear and

enlarge upon it, consider,

1. How it is justice heightened by wrath to a fury, and all of these whetting on and drawing out the greatness of power. And to this purpose we find, as was observed, power and wrath joined, in Rom. 9:22 and Ps. 90, 'Who hath known the power of thine anger?' His jealousy draws out his strength, and his power works in a way of wrath. Take a man; let his blood, his fury be up, and thereby all his spirits are intended and stirred, and he is able to strike a greater and heavier blow than at another time; as Samson, in his fury against the Philistines, he pulls down the pillars of the house. Now bring this to God, and though his power is the same, and not greater, when he executeth vengeance on his enemies, than at all other times; yet being attributed to him after the manner of men, it imports to us something of analogy (whereby the working of his power in such a case is set out) which it holds with what is in men in the like case.

And so shews (1.) that if ever he did or will upon any occasion, or can be supposed to shew forth power and strength, it will be in this, for he is in fury; and in that fury talks of the greatness of his power, which in men in their fury useth to be at the highest; and they shew forth their strength in no acts so much as those which they do in fury.

(2.) That comparatively therefore unto other works of his, wherein he shews forth power, he is to be supposed to shew forth more of power in this. Consider, therefore, if God shewed forth power in creating the world, &c., yet according to this analogy I may say of all those kinds of works whatever (speaking after the manner of men), that he did them coolly as it were; but this he doth in fury, and so may well be supposed to put forth more of power in these, in that respect, than in those other.

2. Avenging wrath is more than simple anger. A man is angry with a friend, and so is God often with his children; and then he 'stirs not up all his wrath,' as Ps. 78. But the butt and mark which revenge

shoots its arrows at, is an enemy, as both out of Nahum and the twenty-seventh verse of this chapter was observed. And not only so, but such as are irreconcilable enemies; for that is the state of men in hell, and the posture of their spirits there towards God, to be fixed in malice. Now when vengeance in God shall be extreme, who shall be able to bear it?

3. Justice hath a mixture of pity mingled with it; but when it is a case of revenge, there is a decorum put upon the extremity of justice. It is the revenge of an injury, which, though in the creature, who itself is a subject of God's (who only hath the sovereignty of power), it is therefore inglorious and unworthy; yet, in God, who is the supreme, in case of wrong and injury to himself, this hath a glory in it: 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.' No wonder, then, if it be termed 'severity,' Rom. 11:23; and James 2:13, expressly, 'judgment without mercy;' and perhaps in that respect also it is, that, Rev. 14:10, it is termed, 'wrath without mixture;' that is, pure wrath which hath no mixture, not a drop to cool one's tongue. And again, 'wrath to the uttermost,' as 1 Thes. 2:16, the apostle speaks of that wrath which, upon the destruction of Jerusalem (the type of the day of judgment), befell that nation. And so it is set forth in the language of the wrath at the great day, as Grotius hath observed, which is wrath to the uttermost; and as God is said to 'rest in his love' shewn to his children, Zeph. 3:17, so his wrath satisfies itself in accomplishing vengeance: Ezek. 7:8, 9, 'I will accomplish mine anger upon thee; and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and I will recompense thee for all thine abominations. And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; I will recompense thee according to thy ways, and thine abominations that are in the midst of thee, and ye shall know that I am the Lord that smiteth;' and therefore is often called a sacrifice, as Mark 9:49.

And this answers an objection may be made. Did not David expressly choose rather to 'fall into the hand of God than man?' 2 Sam. 24:14. The answer is at hand in the same place: 'for his mercies are great;' that is David's reason for it there. And so indeed the difference lies in

chastising anger, and avenging wrath, and David there speaks of God's chastising his children in this world; but in the world to come you see the case is altered. It is the falling into the hands of an avenger, who in that execution professeth to shew no mercy: 'He that made them will have no pity on them.'

Lastly, Consider how wrath sets all that is in God against a man, whets and sharpens the whole activity of every attribute. What is the reason that in the text, when this dreadful execution is spoken of, the attribute of the living God is mentioned rather than power? &c. The life of God speaks the whole of his attributes. The whole of his nature and Godhead, as it is active and working, this life imports. In hell, God draws out all his forces, all his attributes into the field, whereof wrath is the leader and general. All his perfections conspire either to stir up and enkindle wrath, or to assist him in the execution. How power is drawn forth and intended, I shewed before. Wisdom, that marshals all into order, 'sets both thy sins in order,' in the view of thy conscience, Ps. 50:21, and 'sets his terrors in battle array against thee;' it is Job's expression, chap. 6:4, and the same word in both places. And as it marshals all, so whets on to vengeance: Prov. 1:25, 'Ye have set at nought all my counsel; I will therefore laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh.' It is wisdom speaks this, ver. 20. 'Be not deceived,' saith the apostle, 'God is not mocked,' Gal. 6:7. It imports two things:

1. That sinners think to illude and deceive God. As what is it else to think to defer repentance to the last, and then to come and flatter, and look to be saved, as if they had served him from the very first moment of their lives? They herein think to go beyond God.

2. That in such cases God's wisdom takes it and resents it to the height. Nothing adds unto provocation more, in a man that is wise, than to perceive how another man thinks to go beyond him, and impose upon his wisdom. And it is wisdom in a man that makes him he would not be mocked, deceived, or trifled withal; this principle riseth up in God's heart, the judge of all the world. Again, his



holiness cries out to him against the sinner: Thou art a pure God, and I can endure to behold no iniquity; and the 'eyes of my glory have been provoked' by this sinner continually. Then says justice too, I must be satisfied to the utmost farthing, and have the last drop of blood that is in their souls; and this their punishment executed on their own persons is all I shall have or can recover for all the dishonour hath been done thee; for Christ, through their unbelief, hath not taken off one farthing of their debt, but all is left and remains upon their own score. And I can no other way recover glory, but by having it out of them; and therefore it is that an eternity is required, because, but by an eternity of suffering it is that they can come to satisfy: Prov. 27:20, 'Hell and destruction are never full,' or satisfied, as the next words shew the meaning to be. Then says truth and righteousness, Their whole lives have been contrary to my love, the whole actings and courses of them have been but a making a lie, a web of hypocrisy, continually woven and vended: Rev. 22:15, that 'love and make a lie;' and Rom. 3:13, 'their tongues are full of falsehood and deceit;' and again, 'give them their portion with hypocrites,' whom of all else I hate, says truth. Then boils up jealousy, Every creature hath been an idol, and made their god, and set up in God's stead, and they have been inflamed with them, as of idolaters the prophet speaks; 'idols of jealousy' have all their lusts been, and the glory due to me hath been given to them. But you will say, Will not mercy at last speak a good word for them? Will it not allay and moderate all these? No; but turn as fiercely against them as any other attribute, and plead, I indeed did a long while restrain all these other attributes that were provoked every moment, 'whom God endured with much long-suffering,' says Rom. 9:22; and that they have lived so long free from wrath hath been by means of me, I waiting for their repentance, which hath cost me millions. I have spent riches on them, in forbearance of them, all which now is to be reckoned to them in wrath. You have it Rom. 2:4, 5, 'They have despised the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth them to repentance; but, after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves wrath,' &c. And says grace, I was presumed on,

and made a stale to and defender of their lusts, and was 'turned into wantonness,' Jude 4.

And thus all in God is set (as it were) on fire against a sinner, and (as I may so speak) do turn all in him into fury. And look as to God's people, all in God is assimilated into love towards them, and they live and dwell in love, and see nothing else as it were in God but love. 'God is love,' says the apostle, namely, to his own, 1 John 4:16. Nothing else appears, or rather, all that is in him appears in that hue, under that dye, with that tincture. So here, on the contrary, all in God is turned into fury: *læsa patientia fit furor*. Though he is not so of himself,—'Fury is not in me,' says he, Isa. 27,—but sin hath made him such.

A fourth head of demonstrations is taken from the instances given both of good and bad men. Which instances, as I then alleged to prove the immediateness of God's inflicting it, so now I shall from thence present some inferences of the fearfulness hereof. Do but sit down a little with Job and Heman, who were the instances of good men; or go to that roll which the Scriptures have recorded of Cain, and Judas, and others, or which ecclesiastical stories or present examples of our age have afforded, of men in horror; weigh and perpend their cries and roarings, and consider what a sad spectacle such instances afford.

1. Of good men. Heman I insisted in before, and acquainted you with his complaints, as sad as man can utter. I reserved that of Job specially for this place, as I then professed all the while that he had but afflictions common to men; and although he was every way surrounded with them, as being visited with a loathsome disease, his body filled with dolours and pains, his children lost, servants destroyed by fire from heaven, his estate quite gone unto an extremity of poverty, his wife abhorring his breath, and tempting him to blasphemy, all this while the text tells us, chap. 2:10, that 'in all this did not Job sin with his lips,' but was quiet and patient, as the Holy Ghost in the New Testament takes notice of him: James 5, 'You

have heard of the patience of Job.' Well, but God himself in the end came in upon him with his immediate wrath. And now will you hear of his impatience too? He was not pricked to the quick till now. But then he begins to curse the day of his birth, chap. 3:1–3, and at that rate talks all along that chapter. For brevity, let us only consult his lamentations, in chap. 6 vers. 2–4, 'Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together, for now it would be heavier than the sand, therefore my words are swallowed up.' The rest that follows, I shall add by and by. What was it caused this sudden outcry and alteration in Job's spirit, from that still and sedate frame we left him in before? What was it? The thoughts of his lost estate, children, wife's unkindness, or the pains of his bones and body, &c., or his downfall from a petty kingdom? Did these begin now at length so sadly to return upon him, so as in the end his spirit should begin to take them in, and lay them at length to heart, which at first he in an holy gallantry had made so light of? Oh no; he had fully concocted and digested all that had been occasioned from all or any of these, and had quieted himself with one or two good cordials, namely, that 'the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, and blessed be the name of the Lord,' chap. 1:21; and again, 'Shall we receive good from the hand of the Lord, and not evil?' chap. 2:10, which had carried away all that sorrow might have been stirring in him from these. What might be the matter then that was the cause of these so high disturbances? The next words, ver. 4, do inform as, 'For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinks up my spirits; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.' Let us go on duly to weigh and consider these passages of his.

Heman, in his horrors, had complained, Ps. 88:7, that 'God's wrath lay hard or heavy on him,' and says no more of it. But Job here, in like manner feeling the like weight thereof, goes about to express how heavy and how great the burden was of his grief, that was caused thereby. And he calls for a mighty scale to weigh it in, such a scale as might be large enough to contain all the sands of the sea. 'Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamities laid in the balance together; for now it would be heavier than the sand of the

sea.' His meaning is, that to have his grief and calamity put in one of the scales, and the sand of the sea in the other, his calamity would be infinitely heavier. His invention was heightened by what he really felt; the greatness of it made him eloquent; for as love, so deep sense of misery useth so to do. And he pitcheth, as you see, upon the weightiness of sand, to express it by, which is of all things the weightiest, as Solomon tells us: Prov. 27:3, 'A stone is heavy, and the sand is weighty.' Yea, and 'the sand of the sea;' which, take both those sands within the sea at the bottom of it, and those also scattered without on the shore, they do make an immense balk and body condensated, if they were gathered together into one heap (as the waters were into one place when God made the sea). Job had a most sublime fancy, as the high strains of that whole book shew; and this is in view a comparison vast and great enough (one would think) as could be used. But yet further, observe how he breaks off that attempt of his to express it by this or by any such comparisons, though in appearance never so hyperbolical. Which breaking off his next speech utters, 'My words,' says he, 'are swallowed up!' As a small thing is swallowed up of a greater, as a drop of the ocean, as one small scattered sand would be in the bulk of all those sands of the sea when cast in amongst them, so were all these his vast expressions and comparisons he had used, although thus great (which yet from all rhetoricians would have had the name of hyperboles, far exceeding the reality), but yet in his sense and feeling were swallowed up by the thing itself. I feel my words fall short, says he; so Broughton paraphraseth on those words, and therefore he cuts himself off from using any more or higher decipherings of it of any kind, if any could have been found, as being all but mere metaphors, too light, and holding no weight with that far exceeding weight of misery he felt (as the apostle, on the contrary, comparing present afflictions and the glory to come together speaks), but Job here, he gives it clean over as a thing unexpressible. And instead of all essays that way, he chooseth rather to speak and shew the cause thereof, the same which I in this treatise have endeavoured to do. And thereby he sets forth in a reality the dreadfulness of it indeed; and more than by all things whatever that his grief could have been compared unto.

This you have in these words, 'For the arrows of the Almighty are within me.' He had sores without in his body, and afflictions in his outward man or condition; fears without, and terrors within. He complains not, that you hear, of them at all. Oh, but they, are these arrows that are within me, says he, 'the arrows of the Almighty;' that is, which none but an Almighty hand could shoot, and shoot so deep; such arrows as could come out of no other forge or quiver. The soul of a man is a spirit of a vast depth, and God, and God alone, can shoot up into it unto the arrow head. And yet again, besides the strength of the arm that shoots them, and the forkedness of the arrows themselves, they were all as arrows that are dipped in poison, envenomed with the guilt of his sins, which as chap. 13:23 and 26, God had now set on upon his soul, 'Thou makest me possess the sins of my youth.' Thus it follows in the next words, 'and the poison thereof drinks up my spirit.' They do not only let out the spirits (which wounds made by other arrows use to do), but they 'drink them up.' The strength and violence of the venom of them had such an efficacy on his very soul, and the very spirit and life thereof, as they drank all up. Again it follows, 'And the terrors of God have set themselves in array against me. God drew forth his wrath, as it were, into a well-ordered army, into rank and file, at once to fall upon him. If one man had a whole army set against him, and each armed man therein were to shoot a bullet or an arrow into him at once, and if, withal, we could make the supposition that that man should have his life still renewed after each wound given, so as never to die, and yet they still to renew to shoot all at once every moment, how dreadful is this to any one's thoughts thereof! But yet these are but men, not God, whose arrows he says these were. 'Oh that he would destroy me!' says Job; that is, kill me outright; so vers. 8, 9, 'Oh that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me, and that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off.' Well, but Job, canst thou not stir up thy spirits, and harden thyself against all these present sorrows? 'The spirit of man will bear its infirmity,' if it be steeled with resolution. To this Job himself gives answer by way of pre-occupation to this effect: that if death indeed, or a being utterly cut

off, should come upon me with all that host of fears (whereof elsewhere Job tells us death is the king), I could harden myself against that; yea, and to endure the pains of the most exquisite tortures any kind of death could inflict, if thereby God would thus cut me off; then indeed (if such news of death were brought me) 'I should yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow,' so ver. 10. And let it be the worst death he can put me to, for so it follows, 'let him not spare.' Oh but they are these arrows of his own within me! these I cannot bear: so ver. 12, 'Is my strength the strength of stones, or my flesh brass,' that I should be able to endure and bear up myself against these encounters? Oh no. Read on those his expressions further roared forth by him in chap. 16 vers. 12–14, 'He hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by the neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground. He breaketh me with breach upon breach; he runneth upon me like a giant.' What should I instance in more, or how to comment on them?

That which, in the second place, is proper next to be done, is to provoke those that are secure sinners, &c., and others also that are awakened, to raise but up their thoughts from the consideration hereof, to infer and gather how dreadful this punishment in hell must be, above all that these dispensations can represent unto us. And this is most strongly inferred from these examples, whether they be the examples of good men, as Job was, or bad men, as Cain and Judas were, in both which I formerly instanced in.

I shall make inference from each of these apart, as in the first section I also did in arguing from them, the immediateness, &c.

First, From these of good men. If you consider that all these terrors which Job and Heman endured from God were yet all in love, out of so solid and substantial a love, permanent, and abiding in God's heart all this while towards them, and that all these were but chastisings of them for trial, and 'to make them partakers of his

holiness.' And besides, what manner of anger was it towards them? It was but anger which love stirred up; and those his afflictions were accompanied and joined all with everlasting kindness and thoughts of peace all the while. According to that in Isa. 54:8, 'In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.' Yea, those two known cordial recipes, so frequently made use of, and commonly taken by most Christians in their distresses, and cited by two apostles, James 1:12, chap. 5:11, Heb. 12:5, and Christ himself from heaven, Rev. 3:19. 'Happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty,' were first spoken and directed unto this our Job whilst in the midst of these afflictions, in chap. 5:17, and are particularly applied to that his condition in the worst of it by the Holy Ghost, James 5:11. Yea, and all this that was upon Job was in itself (how great soever it seemed to his sense) but the touch of God's little finger, Job 1:11. Oh think, then, how great will that vengeance be which is pure wrath, Rev. 14, which is out of fury, as was shewn, which is the fiery indignation of patience abused, boiled up into fury. This that befell them is said to be but a little wrath, and for a moment. And yet (as also it is said, Ps. 2:12) if God be angry but a little, who is able to abide it! Then what will this last and extreme vengeance reserved for hell be? These chastisements of Job's and Heman's were, in comparison of what awaits men in hell, but as rods of birch or rushes, which we use to whip our children withal: Ps. 89:32, 33, 'Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.' These were all rods of mercy's own gathering and making, the stripes whereof are not so deep but they may be and were healed again; as in the same book you also find it, chap. 5:18, 'He maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole;' and so was Job in the issue thus healed; and Heman likewise, and made thereby one of the wisest men in the world, 1 Kings 4:31. Yea, but these wherewith wicked men in hell are eternally lashed and cut off, are rods of revenge's making; 'rods of iron' (as the psalmist in that second Psalm speaks), 'to break them in

pieces like a potter's vessel,' never to be set together again or made whole. Again, those strokes on the children of God are in measure, as Isa. 27:7, 8, but of these in hell it may be and is said that wrath cometh upon them without measure. Again, in the midst of these corrections he remembers mercy, but in this of hell there is 'judgment without mercy,' James 2:13. In those other stripes given his children God himself is afflicted, and feels every stroke he gives them, as Jer. 31:20, and Isa. 64; but in these in hell, vengeance and justice do satisfy themselves in their deserved damnation. It is styled a sacrifice to him, Mark 9:48, 49, compared, and elsewhere.

Secondly, The same inference may be much more raised from those instances given of bad men suffering in this life the like terrors to those mentioned. If we but consider that when they fall and seize upon them in the greatest extremity, that yet then they are, in comparison to what remains to them in hell, but as the sippings of the top of that cup here, the dregs whereof are reserved for them there, to drink to the bottom: as Ps. 75:8, 'In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.' Those words, he poureth out the same, and but the dregs thereof, are an opposition each to other, shewing how that in this life God promiscuously poureth forth the same from the upper part thereof, both upon good and bad. And that all that is but the overflowings of what is uppermost, but the dregs, the brackish, bitter stuff, is reserved for hell; and the truth is, men can bear but the sippings thereof here. Should they drink but a little deeper, their souls would be giddy, and reel out of their bodies in a moment. As the joys of heaven cannot be inherited by flesh and blood, so nor the torments of the fulness of this wrath. But in hell their bodies shall be nealed (as we speak of glass) that they may endure this fire. All the terrors of conscience here are, as is said of the joys of the saints, but the earnest-pennies, farthing-tokens, in comparison to that great, immensely vast treasure of wrath to come you have heard the Scriptures speak of. All here is but the shadow of death, and yet if that can wither men's



souls so, what will the blackness of darkness do? as the apostle speaks of this. The utmost threatened here is, that 'the anger of the Lord shall smoke' against a man, Deut. 29. It is but smoke; but in hell it breaks forth into raging flames of the fiercest fires, Luke 16:24, that fill every corner, and break out at all the windows of the soul.

The fifth and last head, which represents the dreadfulnes of all this unto an infinity, is, that it is a 'falling into the hands of the living God.' The living God. The former exaggerations have been raised from falling into the hands of the great, powerful, just, and avenging God; but this further of the living God. Which, of all other attributes, the apostle hath singled forth to set out the dreadfulnes of it by, and is therefore most of all to be heeded by us, as having as much weight in it to the thing in hand as any of the other. The living God notes out, not only God's activity, and how the whole of his life and being is engaged and active in this punishment (as was noticed), but further, both that, 1, he shall execute this to eternity; and, 2, that during that whole space of eternity he will permanently continue to inflict it. His being the living God notes out, 1, eternity; 2, with a continuation of acting till that while; and so his being the living God both threatens and effecteth, 1, an eternal, and, 2, a continual death in those that are the subjects thereof. And to imply so much it is that he hath that denomination, specially and so eminently given him here, when this punishment is spoken of.

First, consider thy soul is an immortal soul as to the duration of it, and that this great God is the living God. And sin in thee, and the injury of it to God, is an eternal stain, which hell fire cannot eat out or satisfy God for, but in an eternity of time; and therefore whilst God lives, and thou livest, he will inflict it on thee. That is one meaning.

Again, God's life, as it is in itself a continual act, so in its being attributed to him with respect to this punishment, it imports his continued acting therein without cessation or intermission. For he doth it as the living God. Job, whilst he endured the terrors of the

Almighty, complains they were so incessant that God 'suffered him not to take breath:' Job 9:18, he followed his strokes so thick, 'with one breach,' as he there speaks, 'upon another.'

You have both these set forth in one and the same scripture: Rev. 14:10, 11, 'He shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. And they have no rest day nor night.' First, they have no rest day nor night; that shews they have no intermission. And then, that the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever shews the eternity. Yea, and further, to strike our dull hearts with the sense of this eternity, if one ever be not enough, another is added, for ever and ever. Which eternity, as you know, our Saviour is still careful to indigitate, when he speaks of hell, in love and warning unto men's souls, that they might be moved by the moment thereof to endeavour to escape it.

Now, it being thus, this infinitely superadds unto all the former. The former heads have given demonstration to us, wherein the substance of this great punishment consists, and then comes in this as the fatal and final rolling stone upon the grave or sepulchre of souls. And with the grave hell is oft paralleled. Or these two imports thereof are as two millstones hung about the necks of those that are plunged into this lake, to sink them down for ever; for these two things mentioned do work in the spirits of those that undergo it, perfect fear and perfect despair. The effects of both which make up a perfection of misery in such a state.

1. Perfect despair. Hope was given to reasonable and intelligent natures (and in peculiar unto them) to be as a breathing hole in time of misery, to keep up life in such an one whereby to sustain itself. And the reasonable soul being in its duration eternal, and having an eternity of time to run through and sail over, hath this privilege, denied to beasts, to take a prospect or foresight of time that is yet to come, and if it can spy out any space or spot of time in which it shall

have happiness or ease, or outlive its misery, it will not utterly die; yea, it will harden itself against present misery with this thought, that, however, it shall not always be thus with me. But on the contrary here, by reason of this ability of foresight, it comes to pass that a wretched soul in hell, viewing and turning over all the leaves of time to eternity, both finds that it shall not outlive that misery, nor yet can it find one space or moment of time of freedom and intermission, having for ever to do with him who is the living God. And then it dies and dies again, and sinks into a gulf of despair for the future, as well as it is swallowed up with present sense of wrath.

2. Perfect fear. Which these likewise cause, and keep up within that soul, and that continually, of all their misery that is yet to come. And the nature of fear is to outstrip a man's misery, and to take them up before they come, as hopes use to do our comforts, so as by reason thereof it comes to pass that the soul is not only tormented by what it at present feels, but with the thought of all that is to come, which still further strikes the soul through and through. So as this thought, that it will be with me thus for ever and ever, makes it completely miserable. Yea, hereby the soul doth come all along in every instant to endure and be possessed in fears and dreadful apprehensions of all that woe that in eternity is yet to come, as well as that at present.

## **CHAPTER IX**

The inferences and uses of the doctrine.—If God punisheth sins, he is not the author of it.—Let us be firmly persuaded of the reality of this wrath to come.—Let us adore and fear the greatness of God, and be moved to turn to him.—Let us consider what it is to die, and what the state of the other world is.—Let believers learn highly to value that salvation which Christ obtains for them

If God in his wrath be the immediate inflicter of that punishment for sin, then certainly he is not the author of sin. Fulgentius, among other highly evincing demonstrations of it, casts in this: *iniquitatis cujus est ultor, non est autor*; God is not the author of sin, whereof he is the avenger; which maxim is founded upon an high principle of reason and equity. God puts the whole of this matter so far off from himself, that he lays all, both sin and punishment, wholly upon man; so as although the punishment itself be from his own just wrath, that is provoked to inflict it, yet even thereof he thus speaks, 'Do they provoke me to anger?' (it is true they do) but 'do they not provoke themselves, to the confusion of their own faces?' So as he ascribes his own wrath, that inflicts that punishment, wholly to themselves, returns even that upon themselves. As if he had said, I am angry indeed, &c., it is true, yet they are more the provoking causes of that anger than myself. They spite but themselves, when they sin against me. Like unto which is that speech also, Romans 2:4, 5, 'Thou treasurest up wrath unto thyself.' Thou to thyself; although it be God's wrath in his breast that is treasured up, yet the treasuring of it up is ascribed unto themselves.

God will send his Son Jesus Christ on purpose to clear all such imaginable suspicions and suppositions that men or devils can cast upon him, for condemning of men, or executing this punishment himself. 'Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.' His work at that day is to convince, yea, and to convince is named first, as well as to execute judgment. And it is certain that in order thereto he will speak all fairness, equity, justice, and reason, it were not conviction else; and he will have all his saints and angels about him, as judges and witnesses. He will have all the world to hear it, and how equal it is for him to execute so sore a vengeance. And as he will convince them of their deeds to be ungodly and deserving it, so of their hard speeches; and that, whatever his decrees were, they

themselves were ungodly, and their deeds ungodly, and ungodlily committed. Mark but how he doth ungodly them. And he will convince them, and stop their mouths for ever. Christ sent him in the parable speechless to hell, Mat. 22:12. And this is one great service the man Christ Jesus is to do for God at the latter day: and if he should not do this satisfyingly, and clear all these things, he must shut up his books, and come off the bench, and proceed no further, either to sentence or execution.

Let our meditation upon what hath been delivered be what Moses hath prompted to us; and let us make the same use thereof which he also did.

The 90th Psalm was penned by Moses (as the title shews, A prayer of Moses the man of God), and it was composed by him in his latter days, after he had seen his forty years, a whole generation in a nation of men removed out of this world, and their 'carcasses fallen in the wilderness,' a spectacle so sad, as perhaps not any one man in the world hath seen, or age afforded, but at the flood, before or since, in so short a compass of time. His song is a funeral elegy, or meditation of death, made upon that whole generation, ver. 3, 'Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.' And vers. 5, 6, 'Thou carriest them away, as with a flood. In the morning, they are like grass which groweth up; in the morning, it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening, it is cut down, and withereth.' And God from that time began also to stint and limit man's years to that measure which it hath held to unto this day: ver. 10, 'The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years; yet is their strength but labour and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.' Our souls fly away like birds when the shell is broke; and then hell follows (as the Revelation speaks, chap. 6:8), as in reality, so in Moses's discourse. And that was it which was the matter of deepest and saddest thoughts in this meditation unto him of any other. Ver. 11, it follows, 'Who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.' Which he utters,

1. By way of lamentation. He sighing forth a most doleful complaint against the security and stupor he observed in that generation of men in his time, both in those that had already died in their sins, as well as of that new generation that had come up in their room, who still lived in their sins, Oh, says he, 'Who of them knoweth the power of thine anger!' namely, of that wrath which followeth after death, and seized upon men's souls for ever; that is, who considers it, or regards it, till it take hold upon them? He utters it,

2. In a way of astonishment, out of the apprehension he had of the greatness of that wrath: 'Who hath known the power of thine anger?' that is, who hath or can take it in according to the greatness of it? which he endeavours to set forth, as applying himself to our own apprehension, in this wise, 'Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.' Where those words thy fear are taken objectivè, and so is all one, and the fear of thee; and so the meaning is, that according to whatever proportion our souls can take in, in fears of thee and of thine anger, so great is thy wrath itself. You have souls that are able to comprehend vast fears and terrors; they are as extensive in their fears as in their desires, which are stretched beyond what this world or the creatures can afford them, to an infinity. The soul of man is a dark cell, which when it begets fears once, strange and fearful apparitions rise up in it, which far exceed the ordinary proportion of worldly evils (which yet also our fears usually make greater than they prove to be); but here, as to that punishment, which is the effect of God's own immediate wrath, let the soul enlarge itself, says he, and widen its apprehension to the utmost; fear what you can imagine, yet still God's wrath, and the punishment it inflicts, are not only proportionable, but infinitely exceeding all you can fear or imagine. 'Who knoweth the power of thine anger?' It passeth knowledge.

Now the use Moses makes of all this doctrine of death and wrath, in the next following ver. 12, is this: 'So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.' This he spake to God in behalf of that present generation that then survived; and by spreading before them all these considerations, thereby also

exhorteth them to that which is the only true wisdom, even to turn unto the Lord, so to escape that wrath that is to come. And he, as an holy man, that knew the terror of the Lord, doth thus persuade men; and oh let our souls be persuaded by it. And to this end,

Use 1. I would first persuade you to believe, that there is this wrath to come. 'We knowing the terror of the Lord;' that is, ourselves being assured by believing that such a wrath is in the heart and breast of God against impenitent sinners, as also understanding what and how dreadful that wrath is; we do 'persuade men,' 2 Cor. 5:11. And for men to apprehend and believe it, is the first most effectual engine to persuade them by. God did not, ere he placed these souls of ours in our bodies, first carry them down to hell, and then up to heaven, that so we having a fore-knowledge of either by sight and sense, might then be left to act in this world accordingly; but God hath left only the revelation of both these unto faith, in this world, by the word. Heb. 11:7, it is said, 'Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.'

You know how the day of this great wrath to come, the day of judgment, is assimilated by Christ to the days of Noah, Mat. 24:37–39, and that, among other, in respect of the security and unbelief that is and will be, afore it comes, in the hearts of men about it (which is Christ's special scope there). And the place in the Hebrews cited answerably, reckoneth that faith of Noah (who being forewarned of the flood, was moved with fear, and prepared an ark to save himself and his family) amongst those other instances of saving faith which that chapter doth enumerate, as that which had this wrath to come signified thereby in his eye, shewing withal the foundation of the condemnation of that world to lie in this, that though Noah declared this wrath to come unto them by his preaching and example (for as he was a preacher of righteousness, so of this wrath, as Enoch also had been), yet they believed it not, because it was unseen, as the words of that seventh verse are. For these things then happened in

types of what was to fall out concerning this great wrath to come, that destruction of the old world being but the shadow of this, as expressly it is interpreted to be: 1 Peter 3:20, 'The spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing. The like figure whereunto is baptism, which now also saves us.' If the ark was of salvation, then the flood of damnation; and that, then, as the word also now evidently shews. This wrath, it is a thing to come, as that of the flood then was to them, styled therefore the wrath to come; and so it is a thing not seen, and so is reckoned amongst the objects of faith.

Men, indeed, have some lesser stitches in conscience aforehand, both from it and about it, but little do they imagine that these will or should ever become the matter of such torturing aches as they rise up to in the end. Men do as little imagine this of these fore-running warnings, or secret gripings and twitches, as the old world did then that the usual clouds of heaven that cause storms would ever have swelled to the drowning of the world. Nor indeed doth this fall out to men's souls until the curse or wrath of God enters, 'like oil into their bones,' as the psalmist speaks of Judas. Ps. 109:18.

For this wrath is in the mean time a thing hidden in the breast and bosom of the Almighty, and is therefore termed 'a treasure of wrath;' a treasure, because hid, so treasures use to be (they are termed 'hidden treasures,' Prov. 2:4, and elsewhere). And for the same reason, the coming of it upon men is called the 'revelation of the righteous judgment of God,' Luke 19:42. As the things belonging to men's peace, so their destruction are 'hidden from their eyes.' Though 'damnation slumbers not,' 2 Peter 2:3, but is on its march, and proceedeth in its approaches towards them, every hour nearer and nearer, yet men slumber in respect of the belief thereof, and not so much as dream of it in their slumber, 1 Thes. 5:3, 6, 9. The apostle's complaint there is the same in effect with that of Moses: 'Who knows the power of thine anger,' so as to 'apply his heart to wisdom?'



The Baptist, who began the publishing of the gospel, he began it with fore-warning men of his wrath, and styled it 'the wrath to come.' And Christ, whose office was to preach that gospel, seconds him therein, and terms it hell fire, &c. Now observe how he speaks to the pharisees about it: 'O ye generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?' Mat. 3:7. It is vox admirantis; as if he had said, It is strange that the preaching of wrath to come should any way startle your so hardened hearts as to see you here attending at my sermons; and that the consideration thereof should any way arrest or make any dint upon your souls. The reason of his wonder was, because indeed men believe it not, or very slightly. 'Who hath demonstrated it unto you?' as his word is. And Christ useth the very same word about this matter, Luke 12:5, 'I will forewarn you' (or demonstrate to you) 'whom you shall fear, even him that can destroy in hell.' All this still tends to shew how hidden it is from the most of men. The very same unbelief is more darkly, and in other terms expressed in the Old Testament: Deut. 32:29, 'Oh that they would consider their latter end!' and Eccles. 11:8, 9, 'Remember the days of darkness, for they are many; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.'

Now to help you a little in the belief of this:

Besides what the Scriptures speak hereof,

1. Consult thine own heart. Thou hast a busy principle within thee. Conscience, that like a spy sent in from an adverse party into another's quarters, observes and takes notice of all that passeth; not thy actions or speeches only, but what is done in thy privy chamber, or closet of thy soul; and not only so, but thou mayest hear the noise of his pen still a-running, and punctually writing that which it observeth; and there is not a motion, a lust, a desire, a purpose, an end, a flying thought, but it diligently doth set down, and can give thee the sense thereof, and thou canst not stop the course hereof. And what is the meaning of all this, but that thy judgment is continually a-preparing, thine examination a-taking all thy life long?

For where there is a register, a clerk of the assize thus busy at work, there is a judge, whose officer he is. Be wary, therefore, what thou dost. Thou art surprised and undone if thou heedest not, for all this is in order unto judgment. And as letters written with onion or lemon juice appear not at the present, so may not the impresses of these sad lines against thee; yet bring but thy soul to this fire we have been speaking of, and every character, tittle, yea, accent or aggravation of sin, will be made visible and legible. And hence it is the books are said to be opened, Rev. 20.

2. Again, do you not hear daily the noise of cannon shot from heaven let off, and the bullets fly about your ears, and see them strike this man and that man in your view? It is the apostle's conviction to the Gentiles, Rom. 1:18, that therefore there is a treasury of wrath to come, which he speaks of, chap. 2:4, because at present even in this world, 'the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, that withhold the truth in unrighteousness.' The meaning whereof is, there is no sort or kind of unrighteousness or ungodliness, but in the instance or example of some man or other, God hath by some manifest judgment shewn his wrath against it, in the view and observation of the very heathens themselves, of and whom it is he speaks this. There was never a nation of the heathens, but the stories of it would have afforded a theatre of God's judgments against all sorts of evils in one person or other, singled out by decimation (as it were) in this world, to shew thereby that there was an hidden wrath to come in the other world, which would fall upon all the rest, who yet escaped at present. Those few and scattered instances manifested a treasury, a magazine of wrath in heaven; his phrase is from heaven, that is, in and from God, which the heathens also were sensible of; witness their Sacrifices of atonement directed unto heaven. And this to be the apostle's scope is clearly seen, in that he prosecutes this in the following chap. 2, vers. 1–5, 'Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit

such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.' And unto this account you may put the enumeration of those instances of judgment made by the other apostles, as those upon the angels that fell, and on the old world, on Sodom and Gomorrah, Korah, &c., whereof though some were outward and temporal punishments, yet because they were evidences of that wrath to come upon like impenitent sinners, both these apostles do to that purpose allege them, and make use thereof to beget this belief in us. For so expressly the one begins his discourse thereof: 2 Peter 2:3–5, 'Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.' Then the other apostle adds, Jude, ver. 7, 'They suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.' Consider also what his wrath hath been to whole nations; and how he says he will one day turn 'all the nations into hell that forget God,' as the psalmist tells us, Ps. 9:17. He hath prisons large enough, and chains strong enough to hold them all. When the Jews saw one hundred and eighty thousand of the Assyrian's host killed in a night before the very walls of Jerusalem, 'fearfulness surprised the hypocrites;' their hearts melted with terror to think what the wrath of God must be for ever, Isa. 33:14, &c.

Use 2. Then learn to adore and fear the greatness of our God, to the end to turn to him.

Where he shews favour, 'his favour is life,' Ps. 30:5; yea, his loving-kindness is better than life:' Ps. 63:3, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee?' There needs no other there.

On the contrary, if he be provoked, there needs no other judge or avenger but himself. I may say, the weapons of his warfare within himself are mighty to revenge all disobedience. This great general needs not borrow, nor call in the aid of his creatures (though in respect of their being his militia, he is styled 'the Lord of hosts'), to make war and destroy. That very face of his gives life, and strikes dead and kills. 'In thy presence is fulness of joy,' Ps. 16:11. And 'from his presence is destruction,' 2 Thes. 1:9. 'Oh hide us,' say they, Rev. 6:16, 'from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.' They point to the fountain of their anguish, and speak what above all was it they dreaded. It is greatly observable what and how God talks to Job to this very purpose. Says God to Job, chap. 40, 'Wilt thou contend with me?' So, ver. 2, he begins to dare him: Come, says he, let this be among other one trial of thy power (who had been a prince, &c.) in comparison of mine; take upon thee (as I mean to do), and be judge of all the world; put on thy judge's robes, and thy biggest looks. Thus ver. 10, 'Deck thyself with majesty and excellency, and array thyself with glory and beauty.' And particularly try, try what thou canst do or effect, when thou art most angry, by thy mere looks. 'Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath,' ver. 11. Throw sparkles of thy most fiery indignation from thine eyes. Canst thou look a man dead, and cover a man's face for ever with confusion? 'Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low.' So ver. 12, 'Hide them in the dust together,' be they never so many,' and bind their faces in secret;' that is, cover them with confusion of face, with a look or rebuke of thy face; make them run into holes or seek mountains to cover them, to avoid the terror of thy looks. Now all this I can do, says God, with a mere look, whenever I please. And I can as easily save also, as I can thus destroy (which thou canst not do

thine own soul), as the next verse insinuates, 'Then will I confess thine own hand can save thee.' You see he resolves saving and destroying into the same power of his, and maketh the same estimate of either, which the apostle also doth: chap. 4:12, 'There is one lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy.'

My exhortation therefore in fine is, let us not fear creatures, but 'fear him, and make him your dread;' and learn to know what a God ye walk before every day, and have for ever to do withal. Christ, that came out of his bosom, knowing him, doth (Luke 12:4 and 5, compared with Mat. 10:26 and 28), upon knowledge of this God, make this same exhortation: 'I say to you,' says he, and 'I will forewarn you' (he says it twice, and it is as if he had said, Take it from me that know him), 'fear him that is able to destroy body and soul.' The apostle succenturiates, 'We know him that hath said, Vengeance is mine,' so here, Heb. 10. And again, we 'knowing the terror of the Lord,' 2 Cor. 5:11, which they know, by an estimate taken from his goodness, that his wrath must be answerable. And Moses also, that had seen his back-parts and his glory, he cries out, 'Who knows the power of thine anger?' Hypocrites and carnal professors (as those were whom God professedly takes to task, Ps. 50) think to play with the great God, and deal with him anyhow (as we say), as with a man that is their fellow. They know him not: Ps. 50:21, 'These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; and thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thyself.' And what things they had done and were guilty of (see if thou hast not been guilty of the same or like) the 18th, 19th, and 20th verses shew: 'When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son.' And God was silent or long-suffering. The like you have, Isa. 57:11, 12, 'Of whom hast thou been afraid, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?' &c. But mark what is the issue of all this; in Ps. 50:21 it follows, 'But I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee.' They had never felt the smart of his

anger in all their lives, and little thought that the lion was in him; but it follows, 'Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.' Oh take heed and turn to him, or on the sudden he will start up like a mighty lion and tear your souls in pieces, as a giant might do cobwebs, and prey upon the blood of your very souls, and break the bones thereof as a lion could of the most silly creature. Add to this,

Use 3. Consider what it is to die, and what the state and condition of the other world is. It is to have to do with God immediately, either in wrath or love, and from his own hands, as well as from the immediate sentence of his mouth, to receive thy weal or woe. That we come naked into this world, and go as naked out of it, was Job's meditation first; after that David's: Ps. 49:15, 'We shall carry nothing away,' that is, of what belongs to this world; then after him Solomon the son: Eccles. 5:15, 'As he came forth of his mother's womb (speaking of man), naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.' The effect of which divine meditation comes to this, to put secure and careless man upon the consideration of his immortal soul's condition, which first cometh into this world naked, as well as his body. And, poor thing! the meaning of its first cry (if the soul itself could then speak out its mind) is, I am an empty thing, and have brought nothing with me; who will shew me any good? But after its being grown up, it begins to find the world richly furnished with all things to enjoy, as the apostle's phrase is, 1 Tim. 6:17. But yet again, when he goes out of this world, he is then turned out of house and home as perfectly naked as he came into it; and, as Rev. 18:14, 'The fruits that thy soul lusted after, and all things which are dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.' Death is therefore compared unto the breaking or failing of a merchant or tradesman proving bankrupt: Luke 16:9, 'Then when ye fail,' &c., says Christ; of which I have elsewhere spoken.

Now, if this be thy case as to this and that other world, think with thyself what thine eternal soul must then betake itself unto, and also

unto whom in that other world. My doctrinal part hath informed you that it is God himself, God immediately: Eccles. 12:7, 'The spirit returns unto him that gave it.' To explain which, there was that evident difference put in the making man's soul at first from that of his body, that God made the body out of the earth, but the soul was breathed in by God; and therefore not out of any pre-existent matter, as the souls and forms of all other living things are. And upon this dissolution or separation of each from other, it is that Solomon says, 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the soul to God that gave it;' that is to say, the same common law befalls either in their kind, that to other things in their kind, they are reduced unto their first principles. And so look as the body is materially resolved into the earth, which was the first matter of it, so, according to some kind of analogy thereunto (and so far as the soul is capable of a like return unto God), the soul returns to God that gave it, as having been the immediate original of it, not materially, as a spark is out of the fire, but as the immediate efficient. It came from God by way of gift, God gave it; that is, freely and voluntarily produced it by a sole single free act of his will and power, whereby he created it out of nothing; and so in the whole of it, it was an entire and mere gift of his. And, therefore, in the beginning of his exhortation, verse 1 of this chapter, he had aforehand laid this as a foundation for it, 'Remember thy Creator,' or 'Creators;' and is so stiled, because he is in a more special manner thy Creator, than of our bodies, or of other creatures; and that because himself immediately gave thy soul in such a manner as he produced not our bodies, nor material substances. And hence it is it returns to him, as the immediate judge or arbiter of its eternal condition. It returns to Elohim, which, as à Lapide and Fordinandus have observed in their comments, signifies also a judge as well as a creator, and so was chosen out here, as a word more fitly serving that his scope, than any other name of God's. Now then, think what it is to die; it is to return to God, so as eternally and immediately to have to do with him.

And then withal consider the different dispensations of this great God towards you in this world, and that next. In this world men's

souls having creature-comforts, God communicates himself unto them thereby, and by reason of his patience and longsuffering to them added hereto, they hear not of, nor from him immediately; the most of men do not otherwise than in these mediate ways. 'I was altogether silent,' says God, Ps. 1. He answers them neither good nor bad. And thus, though he is not far off from any of us, but men live and move in him, in respect of his power to uphold them, as Acts 17:28, or, as ver. 25, 'He giveth life and breath unto all things' (which clause doth interpret that other, ver. 28), yet as to converse with, or intimate knowledge of him, he is the 'unknown God,' ver. 23, and men live without God, in that respect, in this world, as Eph. 2:12.

But although men thus live without God here, they shall not live (I might say not die rather, for it is a death) without God in the world to come. I beseech you, think with yourselves, how your converse with this great God in this world is (I express it by that of men with a lion comparatively), but as through a grate (as that of the spouse's with him is said to be but through a lattice, Cant. 2:9). And he keeps to the laws of his ordinary providence; he breaks not forth immediately, but lies still and quiet, and through his patience suffereth and permitteth men to walk by him, and do all their heart's desire, and lets them alone. But, brethren, when you come to die, it is as if one were turned in unto that lion with the grate open; and those repagula of his patience removed, your poor souls, your naked souls, are upon him immediately, and must (in a clean contrary way to what the saints do) dwell with him for ever. The consideration of this struck dread and horror into the hearts of the sinners of Zion, as it may well do in any soul that hath not communion with God. Isa. 33:14, 'The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites: who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?' (I opened that place before, and shewed that this devouring fire was God himself.) These speak one to another as men affrighted use to do, and as struck on the sudden with apprehensions of the greatness of that God, whom their consciences (now awakened) told them they had to do withal for ever. And they look trembling one upon the other, and the common



cry and voice among them thereupon is, Whose portion will this prove to be? For it will be the portion of some; or, who of us, or all creatures, is able to bear it, or endure it? And upon this conference (as I may term it), and inquisition among themselves, God by the prophet steps out and answers them, but in a clean contrary way, and to their further confusion, and tells them, there are those that shall dwell with me thus immediately, unto whom I will be glory and happiness, who shall walk in the comfort of this fire which you thus dread; and who (like the three children in that fiery furnace) shall be refreshed therein. So it follows, 'He that walks righteously, and speaks uprightly, he shall dwell on high.' And therefore it further follows, 1, as a promise to the upright and pure in heart, ver. 17, 'Thine eyes shall see the King in his glory.' And, 2, with a further threatening to the hypocrites, 'Thine heart,' who art an hypocrite, 'shall meditate terror,' ver. 18.

Now then again, seeing you have thus to do with the great God alone for ever, let every one of us 'prepare to meet our God,' Amos 4. This necessarily puts you upon seeking of him here in this world, and to seek that face and favour of his, in which alone is life. You must therefore also give up your souls unto him here, to live in him, as in your chiefest good, and not in your lusts; and to live to him as your highest end and constant interest, and as whose glory should act and steer you in all your ways, and not unto yourselves. And therefore you, that have neglected this great God, or served him but in formality and hypocrisy (which in Scripture hath the denomination of those that forget God), who never knew what it is to have intimate communion and fellowship with him through faith, in prayer and other converses, joined with hearty love unto him, and to the interest of his glory, think, oh think with yourselves, when you come to die, that you must go to him, and be with him for ever, in that sense I have given. Think with thyself thus: My soul will be turned naked out of this world, and there is nothing, no, not a rag of any of the comforts I pursue after here, which shall be carried with it from hence; but it is the great God I must be turned naked unto, and appear before; and if my soul be found naked of his image too (which

to have renewed in me was the only errand he sent my soul for into this world), and if I bring not that along with me, as my current token, ticket, and pass into the other world, there will not be a dwelling-place of bliss for me, to receive me into; not such an one as the apostle speaks of for the comfort of the saints: 2 Cor. 5:1, 3, 'We know that if our earthly tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God; if so be we shall not be found naked,' ver. 3, that is, devoid of his image, as also of Christ's righteousness. But instead thereof, this great God will be unto me as a furnace, and I must dwell with those everlasting burnings spoken of, even for ever.

And then think with thyself again, What communion or correspondency hath my soul kept and held with God? What acquaintance hath it had with him? For otherwise it will be strange you should commend your souls into his hands (as Christ did, and the saints use to do when they die), and that with a desire and intention to live that eternity with him which is to come, and yet not to have lived at all with him, or to him here. How dost thou think thou canst look him in the face at thy first appearance before him? If they should take thy soul away from thee this night, as Christ's speech is, Luke 12:20, how canst thou think God should then at first look on thee, much less take thee into eternal, immediate bosom-communion with himself for ever? I pray, upon what acquaintance? And so may God also say unto thee. Oh, therefore, 'remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth;' learn to know and fear him; 'acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace. Receive the law, I pray thee, from his mouth,' &c., Job 22:21, 22.

Again, think with thyself, What do I pursuing after the things of this life with my dearest affections, and utmost intentions? Alas, I am to live for ever with God, and not with these. The apostle sets forth a manifesto upon it, 1 Tim. 6:7, 'We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain (or manifest, says he, τὸ δῆλον) we carry nothing out;' and thereby provokes them to pursue with might and main after godliness, which alone is great gain, and only current money in the other world. And this is the manifest coherence of those two sayings,

following immediately one the other in those two verses, vers. 6, 7, 'But godliness with contentment is great gain. For (says he) we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out;' the latter being a motive to the former. And therefore also upon the same ground it follows, 'Trust in the living God, and not in riches' (so neither in learning, wisdom, credit, &c.), ver. 17. For why? It is the living God whom you are to have to do withal for ever. Although he hath for the present given you, and provided all things in this world richly to enjoy (as it follows there), yet he hath reserved himself for you to enjoy in the other world. And it is the living God in my text likewise, into whose hands you fall, as of a judge and avenger, if you fall short of godliness, Heb. 10. And it is this living God you must be made happy in and by for ever.

The great theme and subject of Ecclesiastes, you know, is, that 'all is vanity and vexation of spirit.' Now you may observe, how Solomon, upon this very ground and account I have now been pressing, doth set a fresh stamp upon, and his last seal unto that truth, that all is vain, Eccles. 12:8, even from this ground, that a man's spirit returns unto God that gave it, ver. 7. Read and observe the coherence of those two verses, ver 7, 8, 'Then shall the dust return unto the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity.' He had in the beginning of this book pronounced them vanities: chap. 1, 'Vanity of vanities,' &c. And he had all along proved them vain at best, as they are enjoyed in this world, unto those who enjoy them most abundantly, most freely. But now when in the conclusion he had brought man himself, that is, the enjoyer of them, and discoursed him into his grave, laid him in the dust, and said thereupon that his soul must immediately go to God, then he cries out anew, having reserved it for the conclusion of all, and that also upon an account greater than all the former: 'Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity;' and thereupon infers as the close, 'Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for God shall bring every work unto judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.' You may observe how the apostle in a parallel manner also

speaks, 'It is appointed for all men to die, and after this the judgment,' Heb. 9:27, just as Solomon here.

Let me next deal strictly, or at downright blows with you. I first serve every soul here with an arrest, that he was once a child of wrath: Eph. 2:3, 'Children of wrath by nature as well as others.' Let every man clear himself of it unto God as he can; all were born such, and continue such until now, 1 John 2:9, if they have not become otherwise, by an escape made, from the sense of this danger, which is termed by the Baptist, a 'flying from the wrath to come,' Mat. 3:7; an 'escaping the damnation of hell,' by Christ, Mat. 23:33, as the murderer did when he ran to the city of refuge from the attack of the avenger of blood (as in Heb. 6:18 the allusion is), a flying for refuge unto Christ. Which escape is made by a solid, and serious, and overpowering apprehension of that estate to be such, as that a man continuing therein, he apprehends he is every moment obnoxious to this wrath, which drives him unto Christ as a deliverer from that wrath, joined with a giving a man's self up to him. Both which, through the power of the Holy Ghost accompanying them, do work a change of heart and life in him, an actual turning of the soul unto God, from all sin to godliness. And until a man be thus ingrafted into Christ, and thereby made a new creature in him, 'all this wrath,' as Christ says, John 3:36, 'remains or abides upon him.' Which word remains imports, as was said, his condition to have been originally, and in itself, and from the beginning, uninterruptedly under wrath; until saving faith, which is accompanied with regeneration and true repentance, puts the difference. So as there needs no more to be inquired of such a man, but what have you to say for the alteration of your estate? without which it is one and the same that it was at the first; he continues under condemnation until now, wrath remains. As we use to say, an outlawry, a sentence of death remains upon a man till pardoned. He says not only that the wrath of God is coming upon such a man, as the apostle's phrase is, but it abides, &c.; the apostle indeed says, it comes, as in respect to the execution of it, but Christ says, it abides on a man, in respect of a man's being bound over unto it, until the Son doth make him free.

Then again, think with yourselves, how that this wrath of God is declared to be 'against all ungodliness and unrighteousness' of any kind, continued in a way of disobedience. And be thy sins small or great, yet whilst thou art in that estate, this wrath is in their proportion due unto all that ungodliness and unrighteousness in thee, and remains upon thee for them. First, against all ungodliness, though it be but in deadness, averseness unto, and running aside from God unto the creature; whereupon follow neglects, contempts of him, enmities to him, and thence omission of duties towards him, and 'not glorifying him as God,' as there ver. 21. And, secondly, all unrighteousness unrepented of and continued in; the enumeration of the particulars of which you may have in the same chapter: vers. 29, 30, 'Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,' &c. And to strike thy heart yet more, think what sins the apostle more especially singleth out, as those for which he specially indigitates that 'the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.' Col. 3:5, 6, Even 'fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience;' that is, that live in them in a way of rebellion and disobedience unto God.

And consider, they are not heathens only, whom the wrath of God is poured forth upon; though so, Ps. 79:6, 'Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee;' and Ps. 9:17, 'All the nations that forget God shall be turned into hell;' but it is also those that live under and 'obey not the gospel,' and those especially. In 2 Thes. 1:7–9, the subjects of this wrath are reduced to these two: those that know not God,' they were these heathens; and those that 'obey not the gospel,' that is, who professing it, and living under the means of it, even the children of the kingdom (as they are called, Mat. 8:12, and Mat. 13:41), there 'shall be gathered out of the kingdom' (that is, the visible professors of religion, in the strictness of it), 'all things'

(that is, persons) 'that do offend, and do iniquity,' or are workers of it. Those first, and especially, that have given scandal by doing iniquity openly, and repented not, and then those that secretly do iniquity, that are found workers of it in any kind, they shall be gathered, says Christ, 'and cast into a furnace of fire;' and hypocrites especially, they are made the measure and standard of all other that are cast into it, both by Christ and the prophet Isaiah.

But not only these, but in Mat. 12:22, 'He that but wanteth the wedding-garment;' not the positive doers of iniquity only, but that want true grace, sincerity of faith, and love unto Jesus Christ; the wanting all those graces, Col. 3:12, Gal. 6:15, which as a garment he should have put on, as in those places, that came to such a wedding, the wedding of so great a person. And when there, he says to such a one, 'Friend' (it is an upbraiding speech, such an one as Christ used to Judas, Mat. 25:40, because he had professed himself to be a friend, but is discovered to be a false and feigned one), 'how comest thou hither?' here is no room for thee. And though Christ is said to spy out but one such among that company, yet it is the case of many: for, that the conclusion of that parable, ver. 14, importeth, 'many are called, few are chosen;' and so that one person is professedly made but the instance or example of what Christ will do with all others that are such, who will prove many. And it is said that he was speechless, or strangled as with an halter (as the original word signifies), through obstupescence of spirit. Now of this man, and all other such, Christ the King saith, ver. 13, 'Bind him hand and foot' (that he may not be able to help himself, or deliver himself), 'and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' And the true reason is, because if men's estates be found unrenewed or unregenerate (as this man's was through want of true grace), then the sins of their whole lives do abide upon their score, and are charged upon them. And every such an one, even the finest-spun hypocrite, hath sins enough (if he had no other) in those very deficiencies and fallings short of true and spiritual grace, which he wholly wants. And the highest and most sublimated work of the Spirit, which a man remaining unregenerate is any way capable of,

through heavenly enlightenings, and tastings of the powers of the world to come, stirring up but self only, and the affections thereof towards spiritual things, is capable of being discovered, not only that it is a deficient work, and short of true holiness at that day; but also when all the inward obliquities, motives, ends, purposes, affections, that are in such men's hearts, that were the influencers and guides of their ways and actions, are discovered, it will be found that they all are matter of wrath, as truly as their other sins; and their persons will be proved to have continued under the wrath of God abiding on them, as well as grosser sinners. And that there will be the discovery of these things in such men, is the genuine scope of that passage, Heb. 4:13, 14, 'The word of God' (understand it whether of Christ, or the word of Christ) 'is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart: neither is there any creature' (that is, of the heart of man) 'that is not manifest in his sight, with whom we have to do.' For unto such professors among the Jews, as had been enlightened, &c., as chap. 6, of whom you also read up and down in that epistle, and yet still remained in real and spiritual unbelief, as ver. 11 of this very chapter compared with Jude ver. 5, is this passage particularly directed, and of them intended.

Consider, moreover, that the longer thou goest on in this estate, or in thy sin, the more of wrath thou 'treasurest up unto thyself,' as Rom. 2. Every moment sins do add unto that heap; and all thy sins are barrelled up in thy conscience, as gunpowder fully dry, and an answerable proportion and measure of wrath is laid up in God's heart; and when these meet, and that it comes to pass that the fire of God's wrath breaks forth out of his heart into thine, then thy soul is blown up in an instant, and a fire kindled that burns for ever in hell.

And meditate also how frail thy life is, how thin and slight a screen of flesh there is betwixt all this wrath and thy bare soul; which, if worn, or any way sliced through, the soul runs out. Nay, that venomous spider, thy soul, dwells but in a cobweb, which, if broken, or any

violence be done it, it instantly flies away into the other world. Job, in several places, delights to compare our lives and condition in this world unto a candle or lamp. Now let the candle be let alone to burn itself out fairly to its full length, yet some last but a very little while, and those of the greatest size cannot long. Oh, but how many intervening casualties are there, that afore do put it out? The 'candle of the wicked shall be put out, and destruction cometh upon them,' Job 21:17, that is, ab extrinseco, from without. How many thieves in the candle, or fatal accidents, do men meet with, that unawares consume it; Immoderate sorrows and cares swale it; intemperance, like too much oil poured thereon to feed it, choketh and extinguisheth it; too much intention of mind turns the flame downwards upon itself, and so it evaporates. Often another man's breath, in seasons of malignity (which fall out more or less every year), blows and puffs it out. A friend's breath comes in with an infectious vapour, and throws his soul out who visits him; yea, an unskilful or else a mistaking hand of a physician, who undertakes to snuff and brighten it, unwarily clean snuffs the candle out. Yea, men strong and vigorous 'go to the grave in a moment,' as in the same 21st chapter of Job, ver. 13. Yea, as Ps. 55:15, they 'go quick to hell:' it is an allusion to Korah, Dathan, &c., Num. 16:30, 33, of whom it is said twice, 'They went alive to hell.' Many die so suddenly, that they are in hell in a trice, and as it were ere quite dead. And truly the most of men live in this world like silly sheep in a pasture, as David's similitude is: Ps. 49:14, 'They are put into hell like sheep;' (so some\*). It notes out their security in respect of that slaughter which comes upon them. This man dies, then that, then another, and they regard it not; even as the sheep do not, when the butcher (as his pleasure is) takes out first one, then another, and carries them to the shambles, whilst the rest feed on, and know not that they themselves are a-fattening to the day of slaughter also.

Let us consider also what millions of transgressions are we guilty of in one day! Oh, then, what in thy whole life! And what a reckoning will the sins of thy whole life come to, when every commandment shall bring in their bills! And that thou hast to deal with a God who.



1. Hath all thy sins before him: Isa. 65:6, 'Behold, it is written before me, but I will recompense,' &c.

2. That will never forget anyone of them: Amos 8:7, 'The Lord hath sworn, Surely I will never forget any of their works.'

3. With a God who will bate thee nothing: 'Every transgression shall receive a just recompence of reward.' He 'spared not his own Son,' Rom. 8; and will not thee, unless by regeneration thou hast a portion in his Son. Think with thyself what a case thou art in, if thou must answer justice for all and every one of these.

The most of these things hitherto by way of use spoken by me, are no other than what David himself spends one whole psalm together upon; it is Ps. 49, and styles it the 'meditation of his heart,' ver. 3, which caused me to entitle that former about what it is to die, a meditation rather than an use, as I had done that of Moses also, Ps. 90. This of David's I shall here add, to set the deeper seal and weight upon all that hath been treated.

He begins the psalm, and shews the moment of these matters, though in view but ordinary, with as solemn a preface and proclamation, calling upon attention and heed hereto, as anywhere we find in Scriptures.

1. In the first verse he summons all the world into a ring about him: 'Hear ye this, all the people; give ear, all the inhabitants of the world.'

And, 2, particulariseth forth his auditors into all sorts of conditions: ver. 2, 'Both low and high, rich and poor together.' For why? What he was to utter to them did as much concern the one as it did the other, and behoved them all alike to look to, as being that which especially concerned them in respect unto their being in the other world, how different soever their condition was in this.

And, 3, he cries up the matter itself as the greatest wisdom, ver. 3, and a deep mysterious parable and dark saying: ver. 4, 'My mouth

shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear unto a parable; I will open my dark saying upon the harp.' Now, what should this matter be? It was to declare two things, which take up that whole psalm.

The first, how in the style of a be it known to all men (for we have seen he publisheth it to all), he aloud declares, I for my part am not afraid to die, and go into that other world. Which confidence of his he greatens by this supposition superadded, that if, when he should come to die, all the sins of his whole life were presented before his view, yet notwithstanding he should not be afraid. Thus, ver. 5, 'Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquities of my heels shall compass me about?' A strange confidence, which yet he found reason for from God; for he challengeth all or anything to bring in reason to the contrary. Let them all say, 'Wherefore should I fear?' And yet his other psalms as well as his story tells us what an infinite number of sins were upon his score, and how sensible he was thereof. And that this bold speech of his relates specially to the day of death, or days wherein he might have cause to fear it (though I will exclude no other times of trouble that were yet to come before in this life to be intended by him, which interpreters wholly carry it unto). That this is his scope, I shall make appeal to the whole drift of what follows throughout the psalm, which concerns the state of wicked men in their death, which I shall by and by shew. But specially I argue it from the reference and correspondency this speech hath with and to verse 15, 'God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me. Selah.' There you have the reason or ground of this his confidence, which he had at first uttered in verse 5, perfectly expressed, as that which he opposed unto all therefores or wherefores to the contrary; yea, though they should be fetched from his very sins, that might (if anything) make him afraid. But there in that resolve of his, ver. 15, he centres and landeth this which he had so confidently uttered in verse 5. And all the rest of his discourse that comes between, is apparently about the opposite condition of wicked men; as that they must die, and what their estate is in and after death. All which was but to illustrate this confidence of his.

He plainly in this verse 5 puts himself into the supposition, as if he were then to die, and as if death ('the king of terrors,' Job 18:19) were setting down his siege about him, and that all 'the iniquities of his heels,' or ways (which are death's strongest forces: 'The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law,' 1 Cor. 15:56), were as an army formed up, 'encompassing him round' (which out of Psalm 40:12 I have shewed to have been his case, and the very metaphor he there also useth). But now David was so steeled, as though he placed himself thus aforehand in the full view and face of all these, single and alone in the midst of them. He yet outdares them all, as the apostle did, Rom. 8:33, strengthened with this, 'for the Lord will receive my soul;' which phrase of speech to be the same that a dying saint useth, you all know. And this part of his speech, ver. 5, might have come in as comfortable an use as any other of that former doctrine, the innumerable number of sins; but that this other part that now follows doth properly belong unto what hath been now last insisted on, and so I rather placed both here.

The second thing is the opposite state of wicked men in their lives, and in relation to their dying, and also at and after death, by which he both illustrates and expounds his meaning in ver. 5 to be to utter his own blessed condition at his death, verse 15; and to that purpose it is he further dilates upon the death of wicked men in the rest of the psalm, and which is indeed a kind of summary of what in the former meditation I have pressed.

During their lives, 'they trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches,' verse 6, and yet they see (as the word is, verse 10), that they cannot redeem their own or others' precious souls from bodily death, or obtain of God by a ransom, that they should live for ever, 'for he sees the wise man die like as the fool, and so leave their wealth to others;' thus in verses 7–10. That which therefore (miserable wretches) they relieve themselves with against this is, 'their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names, and their posterity approve their

sayings, though, when he dies, he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend after him,' &c. And whither goes he when he dies? 'His soul' (so it is in the original, and varied in the margin) 'shall go to the generation of his fathers' (to the company of those giants of the old world, from whom hell hath its name so oft in the Proverbs). And where are they all? The 'spirits in prison.' So the apostle resolves us, speaking of the men of the old world, 1 Peter 3:19. 'And they shall never see light' or comfort more, says the psalmist; but as for me (says David, verse 15), 'God shall receive me' into the bosom of his love and bliss. And then, again, upon their dying, 'they are laid as sheep in the grave; death shall feed on them,' and prey upon them; the first death upon their bodies in the grave, the second death upon their souls. 'And their beauty shall consume in the grave,' so as at the morning (as there) of the resurrection, the greatest personages that have had such a gleam of glory to attend them whilst they lived, accompanied perhaps also with dominion over others, shall then rise such ugly shabby death-eaten and hell-eaten creatures (as we use to say moth-eaten), all their beauty being preyed upon (that is his word) and consumed. And such shall appear in judgment, where the upright whom they despised' shall have dominion over them, ver. 14. 'But,' says David, 'God shall redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me. Selah.'

And, for the further illustration of all this, and how it relates unto death, I shall only cast in a manifest parallel between what David here had meditated about the condition of wicked men at death, with what our Lord himself hath seconded it withal, in expressions fully herewith agreeing, treating of wicked men's dying also, Luke 12:16–21. It is the parable of that rich man whose soul was taken away that night. 1. Says David, 'Their inward thought is,' &c., ver. 11; and says Christ, 'He thought within himself,' so ver. 17. 2. 'Whilst he lived he blessed himself,' so David, ver. 18, namely, in those his inward thoughts about his goods and posterity. And the like speaks Christ, to be the inward speech and applauding himself, of his rich man: 'He says to his soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease and be merry.' Again, 3, of this man Christ says,

'Thou fool, this night,' &c. ver. 20; and David of his, 'This their way is their folly,' ver. 10. 4. And finally, the reason of that their folly, which both Christ and David give, do centre in one and the same: 'This night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall these things thou hast provided be?' thus Christ, ver. 20; and David, correspondent, 'His soul shall go,' &c. They shall never see light, ver. 19, and he shall carry nothing away, but leave his wealth to others,' vers. 10, 17.

But still withal let us remember what David's conclusion is concerning himself at his death, and which he placeth in the midst as the centre of his discourse, which hath all this other about wicked men round about it, and to the end to magnify the mercy thereof to himself. 'But God shall redeem my soul, and shall receive me. Selah.' The mercy of both which the last use of all that next follows doth concern, and so shuts up this discourse.

Use 4. Let all believers from hence learn how to set a due and full value upon that salvation which they profess to expect, and which God hath designed to give them.

Our great and gracious God, the more to bind and oblige the redeemed of the sons of men unto himself, hath twisted their salvation of a double cord of love. 1. A privative one, seen in what they are snatched out of, which is termed a being 'saved from wrath,' Rom. 5; a 'delivering from wrath,' 1 Thes. 1:10; an 'escaping the damnation of hell,' Mat. 23:33; a not so much as 'entering into condemnation,' John 5:24. 2. The other a positive part, 'the glory to be revealed,' the greatness of which no tongue can utter or heart conceive. That blessedness or glory conferred on the elect angels, and that favour shewn them, hath not this privative part of salvation to greaten it, further than as by way of prevention, in that God upheld them from falling into the merit or desert of it, whereas we men are all become guilty before God, were actually under wrath, 'children of wrath even as others,' one as well as another, Eph. 2. And the weight of this, he in that scripture would have them put into the scale

whenever they thought of salvation, 'By grace ye are saved,' so as with a note of remark it follows, ver. 8. God hath thus doubled the mercy of salvation to us, on purpose to make it salvation indeed; 'so great salvation!' as the apostle speaks, Heb. 2, which duplication is seen in all parts of our salvation as well as this, as might be largely shewn.

There are many gracious saints that have had no impressions of wrath, no fears and terrors of hell, set upon their souls in their first humiliation; nay, the consideration thereof hath had but small influence into their hearts by way of motive in turning them unto God, but it hath been pure free love hath taken their hearts and swallowed up their thoughts. Yet mark what I shall say unto thee in this case, although, indeed, the less thou hast been moved in thy turning to God with such fears or impressions of hell, it be in some respect the better, for the more kindly hath God's work been in that respect upon thee; and it also argues a special tenderness in God's heart towards thy soul to have restrained the roughness of the east wind from blowing on thee, as the prophet speaks. Yet let me withal say, that the more any one hath after conversion taken into consideration this wrath, I do not mean by terrors, but by a practical meditation of it, and his own desert thereof, the more, when joined together with the former, of God's pure love, it will move his heart to thankfulness to God for saving him. And the more thine heart hath this way been enlarged, the more God's love, which thou art either assured of or reliest on, must needs be greatened to thee, yea, and prove the higher incentive of love unto God again from thee. Whereas, on the contrary, that I may give a caution, because there seemeth to be such an ingenuity in grace, its working in that first respect mentioned, that wrath hath had no influence at all, hence such persons are apt too much to neglect, or not to mind the consideration of God's wrath at all, no, not so much as in this latter way mentioned; but thinking to keep up an ingenuity of love, they entertain not this at all in their meditations. But sure this is far more blameworthy than that other is commendable, and that by how much there comes thereby to be a loss, of so much and of so great a part of

God's love purposely thereby designed to be shewn; I term it a loss, for what is not seen, and the heart considers not, nor is sensible of, is as if it had not been. And further, I add, that this valuing of God's love herein shewed, at its own full rate in both respects, is a matter of greater moment than the working of thy love to him in so ingenious and kindly a way, as thou supposest, without all or any consideration of hell or wrath, can arise unto; and this, by how much God's love to us, in the full latitude of it, is a thing more precious than our love to him. Of the two, God had rather have us apprehend his love towards us in the utmost extent thereof, than have our love, or love from us to him, to work but in that one way of ingenuousness; yea, and in the issue you will all find, that if you join the considerations of both together, they will concur to work an higher ingenuity of love, than that other way alone can do.

If we will come to comprehend with all saints the height, and depth, &c., of the love of God and Christ, in all the dimensions of it, we must take that course and way in our meditations about it, which God himself hath laid out and designed on purpose to set it forth and greaten it unto us by; which he hath done as well by so great a deliverance from so great a wrath due to us, as by conferring so rich an inheritance of glory upon us. And look as God hath two such vast contrivances of infinite weight each of them, the one in his right hand, the other in his left, for the manifestation of his love, so we should have two scales in the hand of our faith to weigh each by; and of the two, it may perhaps be hard to say which is the more massy, that is, in the apprehensions of some of those who have been deeply humbled for sin, and under sense of wrath, though I think glory carries it by far.

I observe, that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ himself, though but made a surety for sin, and though it was impossible he should be holden of wrath or anything he was to suffer, Acts 2:24, yet he doth consider, as well for his blessing God, as also to his own comfort, in Ps. 16:7 and 10, a psalm made wholly of him, and magnify the delivering part of salvation: 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor

suffer thine holy One to see corruption;' I say, he considers this as well as the joy which followed thereon, which yet also follows there, ver. 11, 'Thou wilt shew me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.' He reckons up both, as two distinct parts of favour shewn in that salvation of his, which is both the cause and pattern of ours. And that it was to bless God for both these, which he thus distinctly and apart mentions, his preface to both, ver. 7, 'I will bless the Lord,' &c., shews. Thus as man. And there is this further evidence of it, that look as what any one exerciseth faith for, and prays for much before it is obtained, that proportionably he is thankful for after. And the same is seen in Christ in this very particular; for as we read in that psalm, that he exercised faith for this deliverance as well as for that glory; so, in like manner, Heb. 5:7, that 'he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in what he feared.' And hence it came to pass, that we find him after his deliverance so greatly blessing God for it. So you read of his praising God for the same in Ps. 22 from ver. 2 to the end, and in express words, ver. 25, even as well as you may read his prayer for this deliverance in the former part of that psalm.

If he who, but for us and our sakes, needed no deliverance, then how much more lies this upon us, the persons saved, and unable to save ourselves, distinctly to remember both these parts of our salvation with infinite praise and blessing of God's great name! 'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name, and forget not all' (that is, not any of) 'his benefits,' says the psalmist in his own person, Ps. 103:1, 2. And what sort of benefits were they? It follows, ver. 3, 4, 'Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who redeemeth thy life from destruction:' there is salvation from sin and hell, the privative part; 'Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies' (over and above deliverance), 'and satisfieth thy mouth with good things:' there you see also is the positive part. You might observe the very same in this 40th Psalm, 'Thou shalt redeem me,' &c., and, 'Thou shalt receive me.'



By all that hath been spoken, although you are saved from it, yet, look down into hell a little, as it hath been set out to you; and think with yourselves, Hath God delivered me from so great a death, and given me such a deliverance as this, from a death so dreadful and eternal also! How would the devils and spirits in prison prize an escape and deliverance from wrath present and to come, if they could be supposed capable thereof, yea, if they had no more! A nobleman or favourite that hath run into great and high treasons, to have but mere life given him, how would he value it, though he never saw the court more, nor were never restored unto his estate and dignities, had he but wherewithal to live! If a man were in danger to be drowned, and a rope were thrown him and a crown, and bidden take his choice, with promise, Thou shalt be king of all the world, if thou come to shore safe with the crown on thy head; of the two he would in this case take hold of the rope, and refuse the crown. And why? Because it is salvation and his life. But for a man to be both wafted safe to the shore, and then arriving there, to have this crown besides, how great salvation would this be valued! stupendous grace and love!

These things the saints should consider chiefly unto two ends and purposes:

1. To be thankful to God and Christ.

2. To comfort their own souls.

1. To be thankful both to God and Christ.

(1.) To God the Father. It was his part to contrive the whole design of our salvation, to the end to set forth his love to us. And the Scripture spreads before us the love of the Father herein upon this double consideration: 1, that he appointed us not to wrath, which otherwise we should have in the issue and execution, by reason of sin fallen under; 2, that he ordained us to salvation. You have an express scripture for both these, setting forth the love of God the Father hereby: 1 Thes. 5:9, 'God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to

obtain salvation.' Here are first, two parts of the mercy vouchsafed: 1, deliverance from wrath; 2, salvation. Then the love of the Father in his not appointing us to wrath (and so not to leave us under it), as well as appointing us to salvation, and both as appointments of God, the one as well as the other.

And then in the second epistle, chap. 2:13, he provokes them unto thankfulness for this, 'But we are bound to give thanks unto God for you, who hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth;' which he speaks with reference to what was done to others (ver. 12 compared). Let me speak to you then in the apostle's language: Oh what thanks are yourselves then bound (if the apostle gave them for others) to give unto God for yourselves, to whom God hath given faith and holiness, upon both these respects!

(2.) To Jesus Christ for that hand which he had in this our deliverance from wrath, thus expressly, 1 Thess. 1:10, 'Ye wait for his Son from heaven, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.' Here again you have these two parts of salvation set together. 1. His coming from heaven, which they waited for with hopes of his carrying them thither, as he tells them, chap. 4:17, 'We shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.' Then, 2 (which the apostle adds with an emphasis), 'Even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.' Take in that, too, says he, and forget it not, to endear your Jesus to you; and for ever know him by this character, it is that Jesus who delivered you from the wrath to come. It was the Father's work, indeed, to appoint and ordain this deliverance, and us unto the benefit of it through faith; but it was our Jesus, his Son's work, to effect and accomplish it; it was his soul that paid for all.

And the manner or way how he delivered us from this wrath, heightens this his love yet more; for he delivered us from it by being 'made himself a curse for us,' Gal. 3:23.

2. The second thing I propounded was, to comfort your souls in the consideration of this salvation and deliverance. Thus Christ, Ps. 16:9, 10, for his deliverance, 'Therefore my heart is glad, my flesh also shall rest in hope; for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, thou wilt shew me the path of life,' &c. And David in the 49th Psalm, which led on to this, doth comfort himself also, ver. 15, when of wicked men he had said, 'Like sheep they are put into hell' (as some read it), 'Death shall feed on them;' he then for his own particular comforts himself with this, 'But God shall redeem my soul from the power of hell, for he shall receive me.' And the apostle to the Thessalonians, 1st epistle, chap. 5, having, ver. 9, set before them (as was before opened) that God had not appointed them to wrath, but to obtain salvation, he subjoins, ver. 11, 'WHEREFORE COMFORT YOURSELVES TOGETHER.'

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## MONERGISM BOOKS

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