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A

# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## BIBLE.

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### DEUTERONOMY.

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#### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

**T**HERE is the same cause, in perusing this *fifth* and *last* Book of the writings of Moses, to remind the Reader of what, in every one of the former, he hath been very earnestly desired not to lose sight of, that *Moses wrote of Christ*. And, indeed, if while going through the preceding writings of this inspired penman, the Reader hath not discovered Jesus in every page, there is but the more reason to implore grace, and the teachings of the Holy Ghost, in his attention to this concluding book of Moses, that he may now discover that it is *He, of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth*. May that Almighty Instructor, whose office alone it is to take of the things of Jesus, and shew them unto his people, be the Teacher both of him that writes and him that reads.

The Book of *Deuteronomy*, which signifies the *second law*, is probably so called, because that this is the *second* enumeration of the precepts which Moses had in commission to deliver to Israel. It is not, however, so properly a *second* law, as a *rehearsal* of the former. And the reason for this repetition is abundantly evident. All that generation was dead before whom Moses had rehearsed it on their coming out of Egypt. And as very many of the precepts had a peculiar reference to the conduct of the people after their arrival to the promised land, it became highly proper that the laws should be rehearsed in the ears of the generation which had sprung up in the place of their fathers, and before whom they had not as yet been delivered.

As the Book of Deuteronomy contains what one of the prophets calls the *great things of God's law*, it should be recollected by the Reader, that it doth not contain much of history. Indeed

the whole date of it, from beginning to end, comprizeth a period only of two months. One month previous to the death of Moses, and one after. See Joshua iv. 19, compared with Deut. i. 3.

The vast importance of this sacred book of God may be best implied from the singularity of the precept for attention to it, with which it was accompanied. It was to be read publickly every seventh year by the priest before all the people, at the feast of Tabernacles, see chap. xxxi. 10. The king himself, when the people were settled in Canaan, and the Lord had appointed a king over them, was to write a copy of it with his own hand, and read it all the days of his life. See chap. xvii. 18, 19. And as a more public memorial of it, to which the *people* might refer, great stones were to be made smooth with plaister, and the law engraven upon them. See chap. xxvii. 2, 3. All which imply the high esteem in which this sacred book was held. I only detain the Reader after this account just to add, that the honour and respect paid by our adorable Redeemer to this part of the divine word, is not inconsiderable; for all the answers with which he thought proper to repel the attacks of the devil, in the season of his temptations, were gathered from this book. Sweet testimony of its value, endeared as it is by so precious an example!

## CHAP. I.

### CONTENTS.

*This sacred book opens with an account of the children of Israel just as they are entering the borders of Canaan. They had nearly completed the fortieth year of their wilderness journey: and now, before they enter the promised land, Moses addresseth them in a long discourse. This chapter is the beginning of it, which goes on without much interruption, (excepting at the end of the fourth chapter) until the close of the thirtieth chapter.*

**T**HESE be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab.

The sacred historian seems to be the more particular in this enumeration of *places*, in order that we may have a clear account of the divine faithfulness to his promises. Numb. xiv. 33—35.

2 (*There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea.*)

It is equally to be observed, the *time* specified yet remaining to be fulfilled; to shew how exact the Lord is to his word, and to his promise. Reader! let you and I pause in the several parts of our pilgrimage state; and depend upon it, we shall find also, no less, how faithful

our God is. This is one of our God's precepts, and the observance of it is its own reward; to remember how the Lord hath dealt by us, that we may know the righteousness of the Lord. Micah vi. 5.

3 And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first *day* of the month, *that* Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the LORD had given him in commandment unto them;

I would beg the Reader yet further to remark, from the great particularity observed, that it is not a thing of small moment to notice, *where*, and *when*, and *how*, divine manifestations are made to us. This memorable spot, this memorable time and manner, no doubt were sweet to Israel, when Moses halted in the journey to speak to the people once more in the name of the Lord. And is it not sweet, very sweet to us, when Jesus at any time, or in any place, arrests our souls in our pilgrimage, to speak to us by the way, and to make known to us his loves? Song vii. 12.

4 After he had slain Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, which dwelt at Astaroth in Edrei:

5 On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying,

The repeating again those instances of divine mercy to Israel, in the destruction of their enemies, forms no improper preface to Moses's Sermon. When our Jesus had subdued our enemies by his victory on the cross, he came to speak peace to his disciples; to them that were nigh, and to them that were afar off. Luke xxiv. 36. Ephes. ii. 16, 17.

6 ¶ The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:

7 Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all *the places* nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

8 Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.

Is there not a good deal of gospel in this opening of Moses's discourse? Was not this the *Mount Sinai*? and as such, is it not a figure of the

bondage state of sin and Satan, under which God's people continue as long as they are looking to a covenant of works? And is not the land of Canaan, to which God calls him to go up and take possession, a figure of that rest which remaineth for the people of God? And is not this really and truly given in the covenant engagements of God in Christ Jesus? Reader! why should we shrink back when our God calls us, as he did Israel, to leave earth for heaven? Have we not dwelt long enough in this mount, which burneth with fire, with sin, and sorrow, and evils in abundance? Shall our Jesus call and say, Come up hither, to the land which I have taken possession of in your name, and shall we feel reluctant, and wish to put off the merciful call? Dearest Lord! do thou quicken our drowsy, earthly affections, and raise them to thyself, that we may be looking and longing for the day of thy coming. 2 Pet. iii. 12.

9 And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone:

Reader, do not overlook in this, as well as in numberless other instances, how inferior every character is to Jesus. Moses was faithful in all his house, we are told by the apostle, as a *servant*, but Jesus as the *Lord* of his own house. He indeed is able, and he alone, to bear the burdens of the sins and the infirmities of his people. Heb. iii. 3—6.

10 (The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye *are* this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.

What a delightful view doth the increase of Israel afford! Compare this verse with the account of Jacob's first going down into Egypt. Gen. xlv. 27. But what a more glorious view doth the apostle give of the church of Jesus, the true Israel of God! Rev. vii. 4—9.

11 (The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye *are*, and bless you, as he hath promised you!)

Observe, how the love and piety of Moses breaks out in the midst of his sermon, with a prayer to God. These are sweet breaks, when the soul, in the contemplation of God's love and mercy in Christ, leaves all other considerations to look up, with faith and hope, to an unseen but well-known Redeemer. Reader, do you know any thing of this in your experience? 1 Pet. i. 8.

12 How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?

It is sweetly said of Jesus, in his unequalled undertaking, "that of the people there was none with him." Isaiah lxiii. 3. Oh! thou precious bearer of the burdens of thy people! may I never lose sight of thee in this soul-strengthening character. Isaiah liii. 4.

13 Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.



14 And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken *is good for us* to do.

15 So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.

16 And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear *the causes* between your brethren, and judge righteously between *every* man and his brother, and the stranger *that is* with him.

17 Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; *but* ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment *is* God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring *it* unto me, and I will hear it.

18 And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.

All these verses refer to that period in Israel's history, in which at the advice of *Jethro*, and by the divine permission, Moses took into the administration of justice with himself, certain of the elders of Israel. See Exod. xviii. 13—26.

19 And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the LORD our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea.

20 And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the LORD our God doth give unto us.

21 Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up *and* possess *it*, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.

22 And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.

23 And the saying pleased me well: and I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe:

24 And they turned and went up into the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and searched it out.

25 And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought *it* down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, *It is* a good land which the LORD our God doth give us.

26 Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God:

27 And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.

28 Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people *is* greater and taller than we; the cities *are* great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there.

29 Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them.

30 The LORD your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes;

31 And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God bare thee, as a man doth bare his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.

32 Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your God,

33 Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents *in*, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.

34 ¶ And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying,

35 Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers,

36 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD.

37 Also the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither.

38 *But* Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.

39 Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

40 *But as for you*, turn you, and take your journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea.

41 ¶ Then ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against the LORD, we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill.

42 And the LORD said unto me, Say unto them, Go not up, neither fight; for I *am* not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies.

43 So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill.

44 And the Amorites, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, *even* unto Hormah.

45 And ye returned and wept before the LORD ; but the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you.

46 So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode *there*.

I did not think it needful to stop the Reader with any observations which arise out of these verses, having already dwelt upon the subject in the Commentary on the 13th and 14th Chapters of the Book of Numbers. If the Reader will consult what is there said, he will find that what suits the one is equally applicable to the other. And he will discover, moreover, that this part of Moses's sermon is a beautiful duplicate of that history. But while I refer the Reader to what hath been already brought before him on the subject, in order to avoid swelling the Commentary to an unnecessary length, I must beg to detain him with calling to his attention two or three leading points in this discourse of Moses, which were not in the history itself, but which serve to illustrate and explain it. It appears by that history, as if the idea of sending men to search the land had originated in the Lord's appointment; whereas by comparing this Scripture with what is there said, we discover that it was the fear and unbelief of the children of Israel, and the doubt they had in God's promise, that first suggested in them the thought; and that, then, the Lord, as if in gracious accommodation to the weakness of his people, permitted the thing to be. And had the spies been faithful and true to what they beheld of the promised land, and had brought back a good report, all might still have been well. But alas! what will not unbelief induce! Unbelief breeds fear, and fear begets sin. Reader! recollect what the apostle saith on this sin of Israel: *they could not enter in because of unbelief.* Heb. iii. 19. Compare this chapter with Numbers xiii. and xiv. I detain the Reader only one moment longer to observe, that it appears evidently, from this part of the sermon of Moses, that the whole wandering of the people forty years in the wilderness, instead of immediately entering into Canaan when they came out of Egypt, and were so near to it, arose wholly from their distrust and disbelief of God's promises. So very awful a thing is it to question or doubt the divine faithfulness. Reader! I would request you to pause over this view of the subject. Observe, it was not the breach of any particular command; it was not the commission of this or that particular sin, for which the Lord sentenced his people to wander in the wilderness; but it was simply their unbelief. It was the same dreadful malignity of mind, which in the gospel is threatened with everlasting exclusion from the heavenly Canaan. For "he that believeth not the record which God hath given of his Son, maketh God a liar;" and we are awfully told, that the wrath of God abideth upon him." See John iii. 36. Oh! for the grace of faith to give due credit to a most faithful covenant God in Christ.

#### REFLECTIONS.

WHAT a most beautiful representation doth this chapter afford of a faithful, laborious minister, in the character of Moses! Who can behold this aged servant of Jehovah, thus sermonizing even to the very close of

life, and going over again and again in relation, all the great things the Lord had shewn him and the people, without being struck with the loveliness of such a minister, and being led to admire yet more and more those holy principles which he laboured to impress upon the minds of the people.

But here again, as in every other instance, how doth the contemplation of the *servant* lead the heart yet more immediately to the *master*. It is thou, blessed Jesus, whose ministry is glorified even in the view of thy servant's zeal. Thou camest, full of grace and truth, to make known to thy people the everlasting counsel of peace in thy covenant righteousness and blood. And how art thou, even now, still reminding us, by thy Spirit, of the Lord's continual mercies and our unworthiness. Continue, dearest Lord, the sweet influences of thy ministry still, until, like Joshua, thou bringest us where Moses and the law cannot lead, even over the Jordan of death, to behold thy glory, and dwell with thee for ever.

## CHAP. II.

### CONTENTS.

*This chapter is a continuation of Moses's sermon. It is full of memorials, in bringing to the people's recollection the events with which God had distinguished his mercy towards them, while passing the borders of the Edomites and Moabites; with the recapitulation of what referred to the case of Israel's war with Sihon, King of the Amorites.*

**T**HEN we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea, as the LORD spake unto me: and we compassed mount Seir many days.

Many days indeed! The short distance from the Red Sea to Canaan, had the journey been direct, evidently proves, that the thirty-eight years of Israel's wilderness state, must have been at times very stationary. But, Reader, look at the history spiritually, and say, whether the wandering of the Lord's Israel here, from their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage of sin and Satan, when they are first brought acquainted with the liberty in Christ Jesus, to the time they enter Canaan, is not of this kind? We occupy much the same spot; are moving up and down in much the same wilderness state; sometimes apparently nearer our homes, and sometimes further remote. Oh! how sweet is it to have the pillar of cloud, even Jesus, always going before us, and the rock, even Jesus himself, following of us through all the way.

2 And the LORD spake unto me, saying,

3 Ye have compassed this mountain long enough; turn you northward.

4 And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they

shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore:

5 Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.

6 Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink.

It is a sweet lesson, spiritually considered, which the Lord's people may read here. *Mount Seir* is a type of the earth, and all its carnal pursuits and pleasures. These hath the Lord given to the children of men. David saith, that the men of the world have their portion in this life, it is all they seek; and all they desire. Psalm xvii. 14. In the common and necessary wants of life, the people of God are permitted to buy of them what they need, but no more. In all other matters that precept of the apostle holds good, and the observance of it carries with it its own reward; see 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

7 For the LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the LORD thy God *hath been* with thee; thou hast acked nothing.

Reader, let me beg of you to read this verse again and again; and then see, whether the sweet expressions it contains can be discovered by you in your own experience. Dearest Jesus! dost thou indeed know all my walkings, and all my wanderings? and shall I strive, shall I even wish, to conceal any thing from thee? No! my gracious and most compassionate God! I desire to fall before thee, under a deep sense that all I am, and all I have done, even my most secret sins, are in the light of thy countenance. Oh! how dear, how inconceivably dear to my soul, under this view, is the assurance that in thee and thy covenant righteousness, is the only remedy for poor lost sinners such as I am. Reader, turn to that scripture, 1 John i. 7—9.

8 And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from Elath, and from Ezion-gaber, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

Was not *Esau*, Jacob's brother? saith the Lord, Malachi i. 2. Yes! he was. And doth God distinguish now between men that are brethren in nature, and form them without alliance in grace? Hath he done so by you, Reader? Pause over the enquiry. And while, like Moses and the people, you turn away, and pass from the borders of nature, learn to

look up with increasing astonishment, wonder, and praise, every step you take at the distinguishing tokens of grace.

9 ¶ And the LORD said unto me, Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land *for* a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot *for* a possession.

Evidently this precept was intended to teach the people of God then, and through them the people of God in all ages, not to love the world neither the things of the world. They who are set out for Canaan, are to have no objects to allure or lead them out of the way. Sweet is that account of the Patriarchs, Heb. xi. 13—16.

10 The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims;

11 Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims.

12 The Horims also dwelt in Seir beforetime; but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the LORD gave unto them.

The *Emims*, means the terrible ones. The most profitable instruction to be gathered from these verses will be, I think, to remark how often places change their masters. Nations, like individuals, succeed one another in the events of life. Of all as well as one, it may be truly said, *here we have no continuing city.*

13 Now rise up, *said I*, and get you over the brook Zered. And we went over the brook Zered.

14 And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, *was* thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the LORD sware unto them.

15 For indeed the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed.

Reader, remark with me in how little a compass Moses comprizes the events of thirty-eight years. And is it not so now from the spiritual

*Kadish*, of our entering into grace, until we come over the brook *Zered*, when we go down to the chambers of the grave, how short to look back, but how numerous the events contained in the passage. Dearest Jesus! thou wentest over the brook *Kedron*, just before thy precious death. John xviii. 1.

16 So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people,

17 That the LORD spake unto me, saying,

18 ¶ Thou art to pass over through Ar, the coast of Moab, this day :

19 And *when* thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon *any* possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot *for* a possession.

The Reader should not overlook the mercies of God in providence over unawakened people, which these verses as well as the former ones in this chapter on the same subject record. Neither should he forget to remark, how the memory of the just is blessed in their children, ages after they are dead, as is here shewn in the case of *Lot*. Neither should the pious Reader overlook the sweet instruction which those precepts hold forth, in Israel's being tender to Moab, though Moab wished the ruin of Israel. Numb. xxii. 6. What saith our dear Redeemer on this subject? See Matt. v. 44, 45.

20 (That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt therein in old time; and the Ammonites call them *Zamzummims*;

*Zamzummims*, means designing crafty men.

21 A people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but the LORD destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead :

22 As he did to the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, when he destroyed the Horims from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day :

23 And the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, *even* unto Azzah, the Caphtorims, which came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.

The *Caphtorims* we have an account of, Gen. x. 14.



24 ¶ Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess *it*, and contend with him in battle.

25 This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations *that are* under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.

Here the Lord begins to give Israel an earnest of his promises. But what a delightful subject is this, when realised to the true believer in Jesus: when after all the skirmishes, conflicts, and trials, through the wilderness, the Lord gives his people to see that they are more than conquerors, through his grace helping them. Oh! for the earnest of the Spirit, which brings the believing soul, through faith, into the very suburbs of heaven! 2 Cor. v. 5.

26 And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying,

27 Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the highway, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left.

28 Thou shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: only I will pass through on my feet;

29 (As the children of Esau which dwell in Seir, and the Moabites which dwell in Ar, did unto me;) until I shall pass over Jordan into the land which the Lord our God giveth us.

Some have thought, and perhaps not improperly, that the offers and proposals made to *Sihon*, are not unsimilar to the proclamation of peace in the gospel of Jesus. When men are brought under the preached word, and see the privileges and enjoyments of the Lord's people, are there not evidences sufficient to shew the most carnal, that there must be somewhat very interesting in the joyful sound. Ezek. ii. 7.

30 But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as *appeareth* this day.

31 And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land before thee: begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land.

If we consult Gen. xv. 16, we shall there discover the best interpretation of this scripture.

32 Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz.

33 And the LORD our God delivered him before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people.

34 And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain:

35 Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took.

36 From Aroer, which *is* by the brink of the river of Arnon, and *from* the city that *is* by the river, even unto Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us: the LORD our God delivered all unto us:

37 Only unto the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not, *nor* unto any place of the river Jabbok, nor unto the cities in the mountains, nor unto whatsoever the LORD our God forbade us.

The imagination can hardly conceive the feelings of Israel on this victory. They who had so long journeyed in the wilderness in want and poverty, and surrounded with fiery flying serpents, they at once to enter into the possession of lands and houses full of goods, and to so great an extent as from Arnon to Gilead! But, Reader, while contemplating the mighty change of Israel in these things, do not stop here, but look forward, and conceive if it be possible, what a surprize will burst in upon the soul of one newly escaped, from both the wilderness of this world, and the prison of the body, when through being washed in the blood of Jesus, and regenerated by the Holy Ghost, the believer is introduced into the immediate presence and enjoyment of God and the Lamb! Well might the Apostle, under the sense of it, cry out, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 1 Cor. ii. 9.

## REFLECTIONS.

MY soul! cherish the thought (for it is a precious one) while beholding the revolutions of states and empires, recorded in this chapter, how happy the lot of those who belong to *a kingdom which cannot be moved*. What indeed can be wanting to give comfort to the heart of any man who hath a well-grounded assurance of an interest in the kingdom of God, and of Christ! Dearest King of Zion! do thou reign in my heart, in my soul, in my affections: and then am I sure thou wilt in thine own time, which is the best time, drive out before me all the *terrible ones*, and all the *crafty ones*, which now stand in my way to Canaan. Blessed Lord! let thy Holy Spirit wean my desires from every alluring object accursed, that I may covet nothing which belongs to the carnal, but having thee for my portion, in thee I may find every thing, and in every thing enjoy thee.

## CHAP. III.

## CONTENTS.

*The continuation of Moses's discourse is carried through this chapter. Here are described the victory Israel obtained over Og king of Bashan, with the division of his dominions, to the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh: the order given to Joshua, as the intended successor of Moses, to carry on the conquest of Canaan: Moses's earnest request at that time to the Lord, that he might go over Jordan with the people, and the Lord's refusal.*

**T**HEN we turned, and went up the way to Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei.

It is said in one of the Psalms, that the Lord led the people by a *right* way to a city of habitation. And so, no doubt, it was. But the way of God's people is sometimes rough and full of difficulty. This path that Israel was now in, was to the southward, on the east of Jordan. Psalm cxvii. 7.

2 And the LORD said unto me, Fear him not: for I will deliver him and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

God's promises are precious things, and especially when our faith is likely to be exercised. And, Reader, do observe, the Lord not only promised to deliver his people out of their enemies' hand, but to deliver the enemy into his peoples' hand. Such are the sweet assurances of grace. The Lord will not only rescue his servants from the hand of him that is stronger than them, but will finally bring Satan under their feet. Rom. xvi. 20.

3 So the LORD our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining.

4 And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

5 All these cities *were* fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; beside unwalled towns a great many.

6 And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children, of every city.

7 But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourselves.

8 And we took at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites the land that *was* on this side Jordan, from the river of Arnon unto mount Hermon;

9 (*Which* Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion; and the Amorites call it Shenir;)

10 All the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salcah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

This victory was considered so important (as no doubt it was) that we find the church celebrating it in a song of praise in one Psalm, and echoing to the same again in another. See Psalm cxxxv. 10—12, and Psm. cxxxvi. 17—21.

11 For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead *was* a bedstead of iron; *is* it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits *was* the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

The extraordinary stature and size of this man deserves the Reader's attention. Supposing a *cubit* to be about half a yard, then it will follow that this giant's bedstead was four yards and a half long, and two yards in breadth; and as if wood was not sufficiently strong to support him, the whole was made of iron. But, Reader, remark how alike strength

and weakness are when opposed by the arm of God. Oh! that every poor, timid believer, would keep in remembrance at all times his Almighty strength, which is ever engaged on the side of his people, and which is not unfrequently perfected in his people's weakness. Pray read that sweet scripture, Isaiah xli. 14—16, &c.

12 And this land, *which* we possessed at that time, from Aroer, which *is* by the river Arnon, and half mount Gilead, and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites and to the Gadites.

13 And the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, *being* the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was called the land of giants.

14 Jair the son of Manasseh took all the country of Argob unto the coast of Geshuri and Maachathi; and called them after his own name, Bashan-havoth-jair, unto this day.

15 And I gave Gilead unto Machir.

16 And unto the Reubenites and unto the Gadites I gave from Gilead even unto the river Arnon half the valley, and the border even unto the river Jabbok, *which is* the border of the children of Ammon;

17 The plain also, and Jordan, and the coast *thereof*, from Chinnereth even unto the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea, under Ashdoth-pisgah eastward.

18 And I commanded you at that time, saying, The LORD your God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all *that are* meet for the war.

19 But your wives and your little ones, and your cattle, (*for* I know that ye have much cattle,) shall abide in your cities which I have given you;

20 Until the LORD have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and *until* they also possess the land which the LORD your God hath

given them beyond Jordan : and *then* shall ye return every man unto his possession, which I have given you.

All these verses, and the events recorded in them, are but a recapitulation of the history which we had before in Numbers xxxii. to which I refer. I shall only, therefore, detain the Reader with observing, that the conduct of the *Reubenites* and *Gadites*, which called forth the reproof of Moses upon that occasion, savoured of what is but too often discoverable now among the Lord's heritage, I mean a love of indolence and rest, while Zion is in warfare. Moses, of all men, had an undoubted right to feel hurt ; for we know when he might have been adopted as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. Oh ! for more of this zeal and love to the cause of Jesus, in the present declining day of the church. See Heb. xi. 24—27.

21 And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto these two kings : so shall the LORD do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest.

22 Ye shall not fear them : for the LORD your God he shall fight for you.

What a delightful view is given us, in this charge of Moses to Joshua, of this man of God's zeal and affection for the Lord's cause. He appeals to Joshua's own knowledge of what had passed, to arm him for all that was to come. Reader ! one of the sweetest offices of the Holy Ghost is to act as the Remembrancer of Jesus. And when he graciously performs this office in reminding the believer how in times past the Lord hath sustained and comforted his people, doth he not take the most effectual method in giving confidence for all that is to come ? John xiv. 26.

23 ¶ And I besought the LORD at that time, saying,

24 O LORD God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand : for what God *is there* in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might ?

25 I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that *is* beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.

As this is a very interesting part in the life of Moses, and as the subject held forth to us in it is highly instructive, I would beg the Reader to pause over it, and remark with me some of the sweet considerations which arise out of it. And *first*, consider the mercy prayed for. It

was to see that good land, which was *Canaan*, the glory of all lands, as the Prophet called it. Ezek. xx. 6. But it was not simply the good land of Canaan, considered in respect to its fruitfulness and excellency, but that goodly mountain and Lebanon, which Moses longed to behold. And, if I mistake not, the reason was this: that goodly mountain was mount *Moriah*, that memorable spot where Abraham offered up Isaac, and which was to become yet infinitely more memorable in gospel-days, when Jesus, by the one offering of himself, should for ever perfect them that are sanctified. That Moses, under the divine illumination of the Holy Ghost, had such views of salvation, and was perfectly satisfied in all the great leading points of it, no one, I think, can doubt who compares his first vision of Jesus at the bush with what the apostle relates of his faith, under which all his ministry, he expressly tells us, was conducted. It was *by faith* that he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. It was *through faith* he kept the passover. And what faith, but faith in the promised and expected Redeemer? Hence the mercy he prayed for was to behold that memorable spot, which should be sacred in after ages to the ministry of the Lord Jesus. Heb. xi. 26, &c. But this is not all; for *secondly*, let us consider the arguments by which he pleaded for the mercy, and they were the Lord's past blessings, which are no doubt the strongest of all possible reasons to hope in the completion and fulfilment of all that are to come. It is true, the Lord had before threatened that he should not go over. But as the Lord had not sworn to it, as he did in the case of the spies, there appeared to be room for prayer. See the cases of Hezekiah and Jonah, 2 Kings xx. 1—6. Jonah iii. 4.

26 ¶ But the LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.

27 Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold *it* with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.

28 But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.

29 So we abode in the valley over against Bethpeor.

Observe with what humility and approbation the man of God speaks of the Lord's refusal. Oh! it is precious faith which enables the believer to lay passive in the hand of God, and know no will but his. Reader! do not overlook, however, the graciousness of the Lord's answer to Moses. Although his wisdom did not see fit to comply with his

request, he promised him a sight of the land, which might gratify him; and the taking him to himself, would amply make up for the loss of Canaan. But, passing by the consideration of the *man*, what a charming subject ariseth out of it in reference to his *office*. Moses, as the law-deliverer to the church, could not be permitted to bring the people into Canaan; for the law makes nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did; and Joshua, as a type of the Lord Jesus, can only bring his church to glory. Heb. vii. 19.

### REFLECTIONS.

AMIDST the various improvements which the perusal of this Chapter opens to my view, under the teaching of God the Holy Ghost, while I behold, as in the case of the kings of Sihon and Bashan, that giants are but as dwarfs when God fights the battles of his people; and that, while going forth in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of his righteousness, even his only, I shall be more than conqueror through him that loveth me: let me desire like Moses, with an eye of faith, to see that goodly land, and yet more especially Jesus, the Lord of it, who is the greater Joshua, gone before to take possession of it in the name of all his people. Oh! thou Lord of the country, and of the true tabernacle, which our God hath pitched and not man, grant, by the influences of thy Holy Spirit, that my soul may be ever longing, until faith is realized in vision, for the view of thee, and of thy glory. May my soul contemplate now by faith all ordinances, means of grace, and every institution of service, as pointing to thy Person, and having their consummation in thee; and when thou shalt give the order for my dismissal from this region of shadows, Lord grant that I may awake up after thy likeness, to be fully satisfied with thee.

## CHAP. IV.

### CONTENTS.

*This Chapter concludes the first part of Moses's Sermon, and a most pathetic and practical conclusion it is: in which he earnestly urgeth the people to the love and obedience of the Lord God of their fathers. In the close of the chapter Moses appoints certain cities of refuge for the manslayer on that side Jordan.*

**N**OW therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do *them*, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

Nothing can be more immediate, by way of application, from all that the man of God had said before, than the first word with which this chapter opens,—*now*. It is very frequently made use of in the gospel. Now (saith Paul) is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation. 2 Cor. vi. 2.

2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I



command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

It is worthy of remark, how jealous the Lord is of his name and glory; in both Testaments of Scripture the precept of neither adding to, nor diminishing from, is strongly formed. See Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

3 Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of Baal-peor: for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you.

Compare this with Numb. xxv. 4.

4 But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God *are* alive every one of you this day.

Reader! if your soul be united to Jesus, must not all spiritual life be derived from this union? Oh! the inexpressible preciousness of those words of Jesus: *because I live, ye shall live also.* John xiv. 19.

5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

6 Keep therefore and do *them*; for this *is* your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.

7 For what nation *is there so great*, who *hath* God *so nigh* unto them, as the LORD our God *is* in all *things that* we call upon him *for*?

8 And what nation *is there so great*, that hath statutes and judgments *so righteous* as all this law which I set before you this day?

Into what an astonishing degree of nearness, are believers now brought by the blood of Jesus! Reader! pause and contemplate your vast privileges; and ask your own heart that question, Am I indeed brought nigh, by the blood of Jesus? Ephes. ii. 13.

9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

It is refreshing to see, that while both Testaments enjoin the same precept, of keeping the soul diligently, (see Jude 21.) the apostle had it in commission to tell the church, that the Lord is the keeper of his people. 1 Pet. i. 5. And what is yet if possible, more endearing; Jesus committed all his people to the care of the Father, in the last evening of his discoursing with his disciples. John xvii. 11—15.

10 *Specially* the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and *that* they may teach their children.

11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

12 And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only *ye heard* a voice.

13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, *even* ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

14 And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach your statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.

The part of Israel's history, which Moses here referred to, hath been already commented upon. To that I refer: See Exod. xix. 18. But, Reader, we never can sufficiently attend to this interesting part of Israel's history, while connecting with it its typical object. Oh! how sweet, how very sweet is it, when at any time (considering how awful it would be in our poor nature, unconnected with Jesus, to stand before the Lord in *Horeb*, to answer the demands of God's righteous law;) we call to mind our high privileges, in seeing our persons fully justified by the redemption in Christ Jesus. Oh! thou dear Redeemer! give me to sing now, however in broken and imperfect strains it may be, till I come to chaunt it, in louder sweeter notes with the church above; *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive all glory, and honour, and thanksgiving, and praise; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed me to God by thy blood.* Rev. v. 9.

15 Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day *that* the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire:

16 Lest ye corrupt *yourselves*, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female,

17 The likeness of any beast that *is* on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that *flieth* in the air,

18 The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that *is* in the waters beneath the earth:

Moses lays great stress upon the prohibition to similitudes: not only condemning all *improper* resemblances, but *all* resemblances. "To what will ye liken me?" saith the Lord. Isaiah xl. 18—25. How sweet is pure gospel worship. See our Lord's short but most expressive statement of it. John iv. 23, 24.

19 And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, *even* all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

It is remarkable, in nations unacquainted with the gospel, how prone the natives have been found to worship the heavenly bodies. Reader! think how precious the gospel is, which hath taught us to consider all these lights of the firmament, but as the servants of our Jesus. Psalm. xix. 1—6.

20 But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, *even* out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as *ye are* this day.

I would have the Reader observe with me, how Moses delights to harp upon that string of distinguishing mercy. The instances of it are very many, through all the parts of the history. See it repeated in this chapter, verses 32, &c. Reader! of all mercies, those which are distinguishing and personal are the highest and the best. See Deut. v. 3.

21 Furthermore the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, and sware that I should not go

over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance:

22 But I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan: but ye shall go over, and possess that good land.

It is to be questioned whether any thing in the annals of mankind, ever came up to the generous conduct of Moses upon this occasion; who in his love for Israel, passeth by his own personal humiliation. Never perhaps was he equalled in this instance, excepting by thee, thou blessed Jesus, who though rich, yet for our sakes didst become poor, that we through thy poverty might be made rich. 2 Cor. viii. 9.

23 Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, *or* the likeness of any *thing*, which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee.

24 For the LORD thy God *is* a consuming fire, *even* a jealous God.

25 When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt *yourselves*, and make a graven image, *or* the likeness of any *thing*, and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger:

26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong *your* days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

27 And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

28 And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

Observe the vast earnestness of the Sacred Preacher in the arguments he adopts to interest the feelings of the people; and how he dwells, gain and again, upon the same very powerful motives to induce them to obedience. But Reader! while attending to these things, think yet

more particularly, how our Almighty law-giver, and law-fulfiller, the Lord Jesus Christ, hath secured the faithfulness of his people. See to this purport that blessed promise, founded as it is, in covenant security. Jeremiah xxxii. 40.

29 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find *him*, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, *even* in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice ;

31 (For the LORD thy God *is* a merciful God ;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.

Reader! pause over those verses, and then call to mind that, concerning the dispersed of Israel, even now in the present hour this blessed promise hath not lost its force. The promise is sure. The event must take place. *The day shall come when the deliverer shall arise out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob.* Compare Isaiah lix. 20. with Romans xi. 26.

32 For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and *ask* from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been *any such thing* as this great thing *is*, or hath been heard like it ?

33 Did *ever* people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live ?

34 Or hath God assayed to go *and* take him a nation from the midst of *another* nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes ?

35 Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he *is* God ; *there is* none else beside him.

36 Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.

37 And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;

38 To drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou *art*, to bring thee in, to give thee their land *for* an inheritance, as *it is* this day.

39 Know therefore this day, and consider *it* in thine heart, that the LORD he *is* God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: *there is* none else.

40 Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong *thy* days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, for ever.

If we read these verses with an enlightened understanding, and paraphrase them in gospel terms, as they really ought to be read by every awakened and regenerated soul, how precious do the evidences of distinguishing grace manifest themselves under every one of them, to the believer's own experience. Reader! suffer me, for example's sake, only to suppose that *you* are the happy partaker of the covenant mercies of God in Christ; and may I not then say to you, as Moses did to Israel; Ask now of the days that are past, or of the thousands of the unawakened around you: did any of them ever hear the sweet voice of the Holy Ghost in his word! Hath your God taken you out of the midst of a sinful world, in which you dwelt at ease, while in your unregeneracy, like Israel in Egypt: and hath he caused you to hear his voice and endeared all his covenant mercies to your heart? Hath he undertaken to drive out all the enemies of your salvation before you, and give you an inheritance, among them that are sanctified? Oh! how precious is it to remark distinguishing mercies; and how powerfully do the arguments, like those of Moses to Israel, constrain the true believer in Jesus! Compare those two last verses, with that sweet one of the Apostles. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

41 ¶ Then Moses severed three cities on this side Jordan toward the sun rising;

42 That the slayer might flee thither, which should kill his neighbour unawares, and hated him not in times past; and that fleeing unto one of these cities he might live:

43 *Namely*, Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country, of the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead, of the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, of the Manassites.

God hath given commandment concerning those cities of refuge: Numb. xxxv. 9—34. But of such importance was the thing itself, that Moses in the very opening as it were, of his sermon, breaks off to follow up the Lord's precept concerning this thing. But is there not a gospel sense in it, and that of a very interesting nature? I think there is. Are not those cities of refuge all typical of Jesus? Is not every one a manslayer, that slays his own soul by sin? And if the avenger of blood, which is death, overtake the sinner (and death is hourly pursuing him) before the poor soul-murderer hath found refuge in the blood, and righteousness of Jesus; is not his ruin inevitable? Reader! do not overlook the sweet mercy read to us in these verses, in that the city of refuge was open every way. Yes! Jesus is the way for every poor sinner to find refuge in; and he is open to both the Israelite and the stranger, from all parts of the earth: they shall come (our Jesus saith) from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Precious salvation!

I do not insist upon the names Moses gave to those cities: yet considered with an eye to Jesus, and as the Man of God hath particularized them with names, which in their original acceptation are peculiarly apposite to some of the distinguishing characters of Jesus; I do not think it would be right wholly to pass them by unnoticed. Observe that *Bezer*, in the original, signifies a strong hold. And is not Jesus a shelter and strong hold from the storm, and a refuge from the tempest? Isaiah xxxii. 2. *Rameth*, signifies what is high or exalted. And to what an height of excellence and of glory, is the Lord Jesus in his redemption work exalted? Philip. ii. 6—11. *Golan* intimates great joy and glory. And is it not said that in Jesus shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory? Isaiah xlv. 25.

44 And this *is* the law which Moses set before the children of Israel:

45 These *are* the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt.

46 On this side Jordan, in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Mo-

ses and the children of Israel smote, after they were come forth out of Egypt:

47 And they possessed his land, and the land of Og king of Bashan, two kings of the Amorites, which *were* on this side Jordan toward the sun rising;

48 From Aroer, which *is* by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto mount Sion, which *is* Hermon,

49 And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the plain, under the springs of Pisgah.

The Man of God is particular in marking down the very spot, where he rehearsed and performed these things for Israel: because the place was truly memorable; for Israel now possessed, as it were, the earnest of the promised land. And there is somewhat striking also in the observation, that it was over against *Beth-peor*; that is, the idol temple of the God of the Moabites. And where so proper to shew God's people their mercies, as in the very face of the ungodly world? Oh! how ought the people of God to enumerate their mercies, and to mark down the several tokens of distinguishing grace, when they are in the very moment beholding that the Lord hath called them out from among the carnal, and manifested himself to them otherwise than he doth to the world. That is a precious Scripture of Paul's to this purpose, 1 Cor. iv. 7.

### REFLECTIONS.

SWEET and precious Chapter, when explained to my soul by the Holy Ghost, in reference to my adored Redeemer. May the Lord give me grace to read it with all possible reverence and affection; and may he open mine eyes to see the wondrous things of his law. Oh! may I be enabled to see the vast claims there are upon me, by virtue of my covenant relationship in Christ Jesus; and as powerfully find grace to live in them. And as I trust the Lord hath stretched forth his Almighty arm, and assayed, as in the case of Israel, to go and gather me from another nation, greater and mightier than I am; and hath brought me out: Oh! may the same most merciful God in Christ, which hath called me by his grace, support and keep me by his power. Dear Jesus! be thou my city of refuge, my hiding place, my security, my God, my portion! Lord, I come to thee, and do thou remember thy sweet promise, for thou hast said, all that the Father giveth thee shall come, and him that cometh thou wilt in no wise cast out.

## CHAP. V.

### CONTENTS.

*In this Chapter, Moses reassumes the subject of his Sermon. He brings to the remembrance of Israel that great event, of the giving of*



*the law at Horeb, when Moses acted as a Mediator between God and Israel. He repeats the ten commandments, and subjoins his observations upon them; reminds them of what they had said at that time, and takes occasion, once more, to enforce the great duty of obedience.*

AND Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them.

The chapter opens with the man of God calling the assembly of the people, and demanding audience to his words. Reader! it is sweet to mark our privileges in the gospel church. You and I have learnt, I hope, that the calling of assemblies, and the privilege of ordinances, however valuable in themselves, are nothing without the Spirit's gracious presence and influence. God's ministers may, indeed, like Moses, command attention, but unless the Lord himself give the hearing ear, we shall not hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Rev: ii. 11. 29.

2 The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

I wish the Reader to have a clear conception of the nature and design of this covenant here spoken of. It is not the Covenant of grace: for this was made in the council of peace between the Persons of the Godhead, and founded wholly on the divine fulfilment by Christ Jesus. I have given him (saith the Father, speaking of the Person of the Son,) for a Covenant to the people. Isaiah xlii. 6. Zech. vi. 13. But this covenant is explained to us by the apostle, when he expressly tells us that it was intermediate, and preparatory to the coming of gospel times; and that it was intended only to act as a schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ. It would swell the Commentary to an unnecessary length, and in some measure defeat the intention of this humble work, which is designed to lead the Reader from one Scripture to another, to quote all that the apostle, acting under the Holy Ghost, hath said upon this subject. I refer the Reader therefore to the passage itself, and cannot but earnestly request that he will not dismiss this chapter of Moses before he hath consulted the writings of the apostle on the subject. See Gal. iii. 15—25.

3 The LORD made not his covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even us, who are all of us here alive this day.*

It is a very interesting remark of Moses, in this verse, that the covenant here spoken of was not confined to the days of Abraham, or the Fathers; but that the law, to which Moses referred, was all subsequent to the covenant made, or rather revealed, to Abraham. A plain proof, as Paul in his comment upon it hath observed, that the proclamation of God's covenant of grace, made known to Abraham concerning Redemption by the Lord Jesus, and which the rite of circumcision was appointed as a sign and seal of for the confirmation of the faith, could not be rendered void, or become conditional, by the law given on Horeb, which was four hundred and thirty years after. A delightful con-

sideration to the believer, who would tremble at mount Sinai but for this, and now rejoices that he is come to Mount Zion. Heb. xii. 18—24.

4 The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire,

What is here said of face to face, the Chaldee paraphrase more agreeably to the analogy of faith, renders *word to word*.

5 (I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;) saying,

Who doth not see, in this view of Moses, a lively type of the Lord Jesus, the only Mediator between God and man. Yes! blessed Jesus! thou art indeed the only *day's-man*, capable of standing between a justly offended God, and perishing dying sinners. It was thou only, (then, and now, and for ever), couldst perform this gracious, merciful office! Lord, be thou my Mediator still; and while holding forth the spotless law of God, enable me to behold thy spotless righteousness, as having fulfilled the law for me, that I may have a clear apprehension, and as clear a faith, that thou art the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Rom. x. 4.

6 ¶ I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

7 Thou shalt have none other gods before me.

8 Thou shalt not make thee *any* graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters beneath the earth:

9 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me,

10 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

11 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

12 Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee.

13 Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work:

14 But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.

15 And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

17 Thou shalt not kill.

18 Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

19 Neither shalt thou steal.

20 Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

21 Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or any *thing* that *is* thy neighbour's.

I hardly think it necessary to comment upon these commandments afresh, after what was offered on this subject in the Commentary for the 20th Chapter of Exodus. I would only beg to point out to the Reader, that there is somewhat of a variation in this new edition of the Commandments, to what was first given in the Book of Exodus. It is a variation only of words however, not of meaning. Perhaps the Holy Ghost intended by this to teach the Lord's people, that when at any time from their strength of memory, they endeavour to comfort themselves, or be useful to others, in rehearsing any of the words of God, that they should not alarm themselves with unnecessary fears, if in their quotation

they adhere to the sense of the passage, though they may not express the very words of the writer. We have a great number of instances of this kind in the Scriptures. Thus for example; Paul's address before Agrippa, and the relation of the history itself to which that address refers, is not in words exactly the same; but the fact itself is. See Acts ix. with 26. So again, the Lord's prayer hath a variation; but yet the sum and substance is the same. Compare Matt. vi. with Luke xi.

22 ¶ These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

What a lively representation is here given, in this verse, of the terrors of the law! Oh! how sweet and precious is it to a soul, truly distressed, under the terrors of a broken law, to hear the mild and soul-reviving language of the gospel. Reader! have you ever entered, by faith in a dear Redeemer, into the full meaning and enjoyment of what the apostle saith, *Ye are not come to the mount that burned with fire.* Heb. xii. 18.

23 And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire), that ye came near unto me, *even* all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;

24 And ye said, Behold, the LORD our God hath shewed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth.

25 Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die.

26 For who *is there of* all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived?

27 Go thou near, and hear all that the LORD our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear *it*, and do *it*.

How much of gospel is in these verses! And how in these early ages was the great doctrine of a Mediator shadowed forth, even in the dispensation of the law! Reader! pause over the perusal of the fears and consternations which are so natural in a guilty mind. Depend upon it, in all ages, they have been, and ever must be, the same. Think then, in this view, what a precious and invaluable thing it must be, in the hour of God's tremendous judgments, to have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and to know him, and to rest in him, as the sure propitiation for our sins. 1 John ii. 1, 2.

28 And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee; they have well said all that they have spoken.

29 O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and their children for ever!

30 Go say to them, Get you into your tents again.

What a delightful view is here afforded us of the love and mercy of God our father! With what affection he speaks of his people; and with what earnestness he desires their salvation. My soul! ever keep in remembrance the everlasting love of him who so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And pray for continual grace to preserve alive in thy mind the recollection, that the united love of the Father, Son, and Spirit, are the joint causes of thy salvation.

31 But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do *them* in the land which I give them to possess it.

Beholding Moses, in this instance, as he really was, the type and figure of Jesus; and what a refreshing thought is it to the mind of the believer! Yes, Reader! there ever was, and is, and ever will be, One with the Father whom he heareth alway. Give him my soul thy cause, and fear not the final issue.

32 Ye shall observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

33 Ye shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye

may live, and *that it may be* well with you, and *that ye may prolong your days* in the land which ye shall possess.

How very suitable is the conclusion which the man of God makes of his solemn address. And hedged in, and surrounded as we are, in the gospel dispensation, think Reader how impossible it will be in any of us to escape, if we neglect so great salvation. Heb. ii. 3.

### REFLECTIONS.

OH! thou great law-giver, and law-fulfiller, of a better dispensation, founded upon better promises! May I behold thee in all thy precious offices and characters, while reading in this chapter thy servant Moses commanding the attention of the people. In the name of Jehovah thou camest *personally* once in the days of thy flesh; and now thou comest *spiritually* in the day of thy power, commanding all thy people to hear the gospel offer of thy blood and righteousness! Oh! give me grace to receive thy precious word, and cry out, with the affection of one of old, Oh! how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day! Blessed Jesus! may it be my portion to receive the law of faith, which is obeyed, not by works of righteousness, which I have done, or can do, but by thine own perfect obedience, in a law-fulfilling, and law-satisfying righteousness. And grant, gracious God, that while I see myself justified by thy blood and righteousness from all things by which I never could be justified by the law of Moses, may I be enabled, by the sweet influences of the Holy Ghost, so to live a life of faith, on thee and thy compleat salvation, that though dead to the law, as a covenant of works, I may not be without law unto God, but under the law to Christ.

## CHAP. VI.

### CONTENTS.

*This Chapter is a continuation of the same subject as the former. The man of God is exceedingly earnest in enforcing obedience to all the precepts contained in the covenant.*

**N**OW these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it:

As the religion of the Lord Jesus distinguisheth his followers from all others that are in the earth, so will it follow that his people are distinguished by their life and conversation from all others. It is a charming feature of character which the Jewish council, in the first age of the gospel, gave of the apostles, when it is said of them, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Acts iv. 13.

2 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God,

to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

3 ¶ Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it*: that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

Reader! do examine in your own heart for that which is among the first evidences of a renewed life, *the fear of the Lord*; for the sacred writer had it in commission to say, that it is the beginning of wisdom. And if you possess this filial, child-like fear, as distinguished from the fear of bondage, learn to give the Lord the glory of it. See Jer. xxxii. 40. compared with Rom. viii. 15. Moses adds a sweet note to the end of this verse, in taking in the consideration of the children, and the children's children. Yes! the promise of the covenant in Christ Jesus, is to be a God in Christ to our offspring. See that precious promise to this effect, Isaiah xlv. 3. lix. 21.

4 Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD:

What a blessed verse is this, which folds within its short, but mighty contents, the foundation of all our faith. Our God, though existing in a manner totally distinct from all his creatures in a threefold character of Person, is but one and the same Jehovah. For, as the apostle beautifully represents it, There are Three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; yet these three are but one. I would beg the Reader to remark with me, that though the verse be but short, yet no less than three times is the glorious name of Jehovah repeated in it. May we not suppose, that the very design of this was to convey the glorious truth of a threefold character of Persons in the divine unity? Happy the soul who hath an evidence in his own breast of the truth of this; in being enabled there to trace the tokens of the Father's love, and the Redeemer's grace, and the Spirit's fellowship. I detain the Reader only to make a short observation more upon this precious verse, and to ask him, whether the manner in which Moses calls upon Israel to attend to this leading truth, that our God is but one Lord, doth not carry with it a testimony, that as the people had been accustomed to receive tokens of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, they were not to lose sight, at the same time, of the unity of the divine essence. 1 John v. 7.

5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Reader! do you know any thing of this precept in your own experi?

ence? If so, bless the Holy Ghost for shedding abroad this love in your heart: for he is the author of it. 2 Thess. iii. 5.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

What can the imagination form of more loveliness, than that of beholding a pious parent encircled by his little family, to whom he is recounting the Lord's gracious dealings with his soul. Reader! only picture to yourself a father, or a master, thus engaged, and then ask, whether the blessing of the Lord must not rest upon such households! And observe moreover, the care that is taken, by the Jewish law-giver, acting in his high character under God, to enforce religion as a *personal* thing, as well as a *national* concern. The words of God were to be bound for a sign, to the man himself, and to all with whom he had to do; sweetly intimating thereby, that the whole life and conversation were to carry a suitable correspondence to the profession. Neither was this all. The posts of the house were to have the same inscription, that the stranger, and every one passing by, might know that the Lord's servant dwelt there. Reader! do not overlook the provision of the gospel, on these grand points. Our whole conversation is to be such as becometh the gospel of Christ. And whatsoever we do, in word, or deed, all is to be done to God's glory. Not merely on our doors, but in our hearts, Christ is to be formed, and dwell there. Lord! grant both Writer and Reader these decisive evidences that we are thine, Phil. i. 27. Col. i. 27.

9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

10 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not,

11 And houses full of all good *things*, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou



plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

12 *Then* beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

Observe, how the man of God speaks with confidence of the people's possessing Canaan, as if it were already in possession. Reader! do not overlook the sweet property of faith. And why should not true believers in Jesus speak with the same confidence of their heavenly inheritance, since he is gone before to take possession of it in their name? John xiv. 1, 2. Observe also what stress Moses lays upon the attention to a change of circumstances, when from a wilderness state they are brought into the full enjoyment of every earthly felicity. *Then* beware; as if, (and no doubt it is) this were the critical time--*then*, when in prosperity, the heart is lifted up, we are in most danger of forgetting God. Reader! look into the state of your own mind concerning this! Wise was the prayer of *Agur*, Prov. xxx. 7—9.

13 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shall swear by his name.

14 Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you;

15 (For the LORD thy God *is* a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

16 Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted *him* in Massah.

17 Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

18 And thou shalt do *that which is* right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers,

19 To cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath spoken.

These are so many beautiful repetitions of the same important precepts; and all leading to the same point, to intimate the jealousy of the Lord over his people. Reader! only pause and consider what evidences of divine love the life of every truly regenerated disciple of the blessed Jesus is marked with, in the original, free, and unpurchased mercy of

the Father; the tender and expensive testimonies of the Son, and the gracious tokens of the Holy Ghost; and then ask yourself whether such unequalled love hath not a just cause for jealousy; and especially, when you and I sometimes, and not unfrequently, allow even the slightest and most trifling things to carry away our mind and affection from the Lord God of all our happiness.

20 *And* when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What *mean* the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you?

21 Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand:

22 And the LORD shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes:

23 And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers.

24 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as *it is* at this day.

25 And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

What a most delightful subject seems to be opened to us in these verses. The Jewish children are naturally supposed to enquire into the peculiarities of their fathers' faith. And the fathers are supposed as naturally to be earnest in gratifying their infant minds in the information of the truth. Oh! that all christian parents, and masters of families, were but alive to this most interesting business! Reader! do turn to the gospel, and take a view of the children in the temple, when, under the divine teaching of the Holy Ghost, they were saluting the blessed Redeemer with Hosannas. This will afford somewhat of an idea of the loveliness of early piety. Matt. xxi. 9. 16. Psm. viii. 2. I only detain the Reader, just to observe, what Moses saith of the conduct of Israel, that it shall be *their* righteousness, (an imputed righteousness implied,) meaning, no doubt, that all their acceptance would be in God their Savior, and in his compleat righteousness; for the apostle tells us, that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Reader! do not fail to consult the apostle upon this important subject. Rom. x. 3.

## REFLECTIONS.

BLESSED God! may it be my happiness to be distinguished from all carnal and ungodly persons, and to carry about with me, wherever I go, all the distinguishing features of character which should mark thy people. I rejoice, gracious God, in the recollection of the unity of the divine essence, and while I pray for continual grace to live a life of faith in the constant enjoyment of communion and fellowship with all the Persons of the Godhead, may it be my joy and comfort, the conviction of this first and most glorious truth, the Lord our God is one Lord!

Oh! that all who in the present hour are tempted to question, whether the LORD JEHOVAH existeth in a plurality of persons or not, would read those numberless passages, where the word LORD which is *singular* and means the one glorious JEHOVAH is joined with the word GOD in the *plural*: as if for ever to silence the blasphemy of infidels and to strengthen and confirm the faith of believers. And oh! that all the seed of Abraham according to the flesh would consult their own scriptures on this glorious truth, that when they discover the sacred name of Jacob's God joined with words that are *plural*, they might no longer doubt whether a plurality of persons exist in Him who is the glorious God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! Hasten thou great deliverer, and arise out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

Lord! I beseech thee give me grace, that the vital religion of my adored Redeemer, may be with me a family religion, a personal religion, a religion manifested to all the world. May it be my glory, and delight, to let every one know whose I am, and whom I love, and desire to serve in the gospel of God's dear Son. Yes! thou blessed Redeemer, be thou my portion, my joy, my happiness, my delight; and be thou my Lord my righteousness, that I may speak of it every day, and all the day, and wear thy holy and dear name as a seal upon mine heart, and upon mine arm; and as frontlets between mine eyes. And do thou, dearest Lord, own me for thine, both now and when thou comest to make up thy jewels.

## CHAP. VII.

## CONTENTS.

*Moses continueth his discourse throughout this Chapter. In addition to the same general instructions to obedience, and adherence to the Lord, here are precepts of prohibition against Israel forming any alliance with his enemies.*

WHEN the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

There is somewhat wonderfully striking, in the distinguishing favour manifested to Israel. God not only chose Israel in preference to other nations, but to seven nations, the greatest and mightiest monarchies of the then known world. And what is the gospel state now? Not many mighty, not many noble, (says the apostle) are called. See Paul's observation upon it, compared with our dear Lord's precious conclusion: and then ask your own heart, what are your views of this distinguishing grace, as it respects yourself. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. Matt. xi. 25, 26.

2 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, *and* utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

If we consider this sweet chapter as it ought to be considered, *spiritually*; then will it follow, that as the enemies which opposed our fathers, in their possession of Canaan, were all typical of the spiritual foes which war against the Lord's Israel now, in their pursuit of an heavenly Canaan, we can do nothing less than vow an everlasting war against all the enemies of our salvation. Reader! what are the seven nations which come out against you, but those swarms of vain thoughts, worldly cares, lustful affections, the unbelief of the heart, the rebellion of the mind, and Satan and the world; all in colleague against the poor sinner at once? And who would make peace with those deadly foes, who had his own eternal welfare in prospect before him? I fear that the want of attention to this hath been the means of leading *some* Readers into a false conclusion, as if those precepts, which express the command of God to a total destruction of the enemies of the Lord's Israel, are very harsh. Seen in this point of view, it must immediately strike every sincere mind, that there can be no mercy shewn to those lusts of ours, and those enemies of our God, which would rob us of our crown, and the Lord God of his glory. See, with this explanation, that passage, 2 Sam. xii. 31.

3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

4 ¶ For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

I pause over these verses to remark, how awfully these truths of God are sometimes verified, in the carnal alliances which believers unhappily make with the ungodly. Be not unequally yoked, saith the Apostle, with unbelievers. And yet, some there are who, in direct defiance both to the precepts of God in this chapter, and to his servant's earnest advice, in following up his Lord's command, presume to do the reverse; pretending, the hope, that though the Lord hath forbidden it, they

may be the instruments of converting them, when the Lord hath declared they will rather be seduced and corrupted themselves. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18.

5 But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

Read the pious zeal of *Josiah*, upon this occasion, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3, 4.

6 For thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth.

Who can read this without crying out with Moses, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord?" And who but must wish to be of the number of Israel! Deut. xxxiii. 29.

7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye *were* the fewest of all people:

8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

I hardly know a passage in the Old Testament more sweetly expressive of the freeness and sovereignty of grace; and more encouraging at the same time to the mind of every poor enquiring sinner. Dear Jesus! and are all the numberless proofs of thy mercy towards thy people, the sole result of the Father's everlasting love, thine own most free and unmerited grace, and the blessed Spirit's fellowship? Lord! help me ever to keep these gracious testimonies in view, to comfort my soul in a dark and trying hour. 1 John iv. 19.

9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he *is* God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;

Precious character indeed, the faithful God! on whom I rest all my certain assurances of mercy and salvation in Jesus. Sweet consideration! our God abideth faithful; even, saith the apostle, though we believe not, he cannot deny himself. Reader, cherish the blessed expression! Did

not the apostle intend to express, that how ever poor and wretched our belief is, yet the Father must be faithful to his Son Jesus in all his covenant promises, which are all yea and amen in him. See 2 Tim. ii. 13. 2 Cor. i. 20.

10 And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

How awful are the expressions we sometimes meet with in scripture, in the midst of mercies. And is not that very gospel, which to some is the savor of life unto life, to others the savor of death unto death? 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16,

11 Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them.

12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hear-ken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers:

13 And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

14 Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.

15 And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all *them* that hate thee.

16 And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that *will be* a snare unto thee.

All these are so many beautiful recapitulations of the same important precepts and promises blended. Upon so grand and infinitely momentous a concern, we need line upon line, and precept upon precept.

17 If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations *are* more than I; how can I dispossess them?

18 Thou shalt not be afraid of them: *but* shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt;

19 The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out: so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid.

20 Moreover the LORD thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed.

Here again, as before, Israel is reminded of God's former mercies, as the surest encouragement to the expectation of future favors. Reader! I pray you mark it down in the history of your own life—the mercy I need to-morrow is best ensured in the mercy I received yesterday. Remember what was before said: “Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God. He is, he will be, faithful.” And nothing so sweet, as to look back and trace proofs of it, as we have come along the path of grace. The Holy Ghost acts in one of his dearest offices, when as the Remembrancer of Christ Jesus, he takes of the things of Jesus in his loving kindnesses which are past, and sheweth them to the people. John xiv. 26.

21 Thou shalt not be affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God *is* among you, a mighty God and terrible.

Do not overlook the frequency of the expression, neither the vast and infinite importance of it; for it is the foundation of every other comfort, wherein Jehovah calls himself by that distinguishing character, the Lord thy God. In this glorious covenant relationship, the Lord makes over, as it were, himself, with all his perfections, as engaged for the salvation of his people. All are pledged for the assurance of the faithful. And it should seem, if one might be allowed to say so, from the many other collateral testimonies of scripture, as if in nothing was the Lord more jealous of his honour, than when men question, or even doubt, his word and truth in this particular. He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar. 1 John v. 10.

22 And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.

23 But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed.

24 And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them.

25 The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold *that is* on them, nor take *it* unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it *is* an abomination to the LORD thy God.

26 Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: *but* thou shalt utterly detest it; and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it *is* a cursed thing.

The gracious promise of God to put out Israel's enemies, by little and little, merits the very particular consideration of all God's Israel now; for the battle is the same; and both the victory and glory are the Lord's. It is truly refreshing to remark, how intimate the correspondence is between the ancient church of God, in the wilderness state, and the church now. Did Jehovah Jesus, in his covenant capacity, go before his people then; and doth he not do it now? Is it not he that drives out all your enemies before you; and is he not doing it by little and little? Do you not know what it is to get, at times, an help from this great Captain of your salvation; and do you not equally know, at others, what it is to be compelled to cry to him, because you feel the enemy too powerful for your own strength? Oh! the *sad experiences* of the true believer's soul, when his several foes, like the seven nations of Canaan, all break in upon him; and make him go heavily under the remains of indwelling sin, the powers of darkness, and the world of wickedness on every side. And, Oh! the *sweet experiences* the believer can refer to of Jesus's love, when, though faint, he is yet pursuing; and, though humbled, he is yet rejoicing, in hope of the glory of God; when, in the strength of his glorious Captain, he is going on conquering and to conquer; and is convinced, that nothing shall separate him from the love of Christ. Oh! thou precious Jesus! do thou help thy people on; go on, dear Lord, before them, and put our enemies out, according to thy promise, by little and little, until they are all subdued. Oh! for faith to believe, what the Lord hath promised! See that sweet assurance, Isaiah xliii. 1—3.

#### REFLECTIONS.

My soul! pause over the review which thou hast made in this chapter, both of the enemies of Israel, and Israel's God driving them out before him. Bring home to thine own heart the circumstances of their



spiritual state, and examine thy case by Israel's. Have you discovered that the same foes are now opposing your eternal welfare, as opposed Israel's conquest of Canaan? Have you felt their power, seen their malice, and learnt your own total inability to fight your way through them? Have you, my soul, discovered Jehovah Jesus, as the glorious Captain of your salvation; as one mighty indeed to save; as the Lord your God in a covenant way, the Lord God that *can*, the faithful God that *will*, drive them out before thee, until they are all consumed? And hath thy God in Christ indeed begun for thee this holy war; and is he now going before thee, in subduing enemies both within and without; the powers of darkness and the world from without, and the corrupt lusts and affections from within; are these thy views and thy experiences? Then bless God for thy mercies, and let the precious precepts, and precious promises, beautifully blended as they are in this chapter, be thy comfort, and support thy mind through the teaching of the Holy Ghost, during the arduous, but certainly successful, war.

Precious, precious Jesus! thou, whom the Father hath given as a leader and commander to thy people, to thee do I look up; and on thy dear arm would I wholly lean. Never, never, blessed God, do thou suffer me to make peace with any of these enemies, or for a moment enter into any league of amity with them. Here, Lord, in thy strength do I vow, that thy foes shall be my foes, and thy people my people. And as my eyes are towards thee, and my whole reliance is on thy great salvation, do thou carry me on, and bear me through all opposition, until thou hast put them all out before me; and then bring me into thine holy mountain, to behold thy glory, and to sit down, according to thy blessed promise, on thy throne, as thou hast overcome, and art sat down with thy Father on his throne. Even so, Amen.

## CHAP. VIII.

### CONTENTS.

*The subject of Moses's Sermon is continued through this chapter. The man of God makes use of some of the most persuasive arguments to enforce an observance of the holy precepts he had given to Israel.*

**A**LL the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers.

Nothing can be more important to consider, both in a legal and in a gospel sense, than what Moses here mentions; that *all* God's commands are alike to be regarded, and not with a partial attention. The apostle hath settled the vast consequence of this in a single verse, when he says, 'Whoever keepeth the whole law, but yet offendeth in one point, is guilty of all. James ii. 10.'

2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee,

to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no.

Sweet precept! Oh! that the blessed Remembrancer of Christ Jesus, even God the Holy Ghost, may graciously do this precious office, both in the Writer's and the Reader's heart, and bring continually to our forgetful minds the tokens of divine love, which have been manifested towards us through all our wilderness state!

3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Reader! search and see whether these marks are in your experience. Are you indeed humbled under a sense of your own need and Jesus' fullness? Hath the Lord caused you to hunger *spiritually* (for this is the sweet sense of the passage interpreted upon gospel terms) and hath a gracious God indeed fed *you* with that blessed food which neither you, nor your fathers after the flesh, nor any of the sons of Adam, ever knew naturally; even Jesus the living bread, which, as he himself hath explained it, is the real manna which our Father, and not Moses, gave his people in the wilderness? And have you been sensibly and fully brought to this conclusion, that the life of the soul is Jesus? See John vi. 32.

4 Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

Was not this a standing miracle, that the garments of the Israelites should not wear out during forty years? There were no shops for supply in the wilderness. The people brought with them indeed what cloaths they had; but these could not have remained, had not God so miraculously made them last. Exod. xii. 34. But will not the Reader call to mind, in this place, Jesus' care for his people, when he sent them out without purse, or scrip, or shoes, and they lacked nothing? Luke xxii. 35.

5 Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

6 Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

Reader! I charge it upon you, as one of the most blessed improvements in our adoption character, that we esteem correction an evidence of fatherly relationship and love; and the want of it as a sign of bastardy. See those Scriptures, Heb. xii. 5—10. Rev. iii. 19.

7 For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into

a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills ;

8 A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates ; a land of oil olive, and honey ;

9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any *thing* in it ; a land whose stones *are* iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

There was a striking contrast to Israel, considered only in a natural sense, between the land of Canaan and the wilderness. But take it in a gospel sense, and how is the description heightened ! The law was a shadow of good things to come : And therefore the goodly land, to which Jesus brings his people, is a land not simply of brooks of water, but there is a river proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb, the streams thereof make glad the city of our God. It is watered with the gifts and graces of the Spirit. It hath the bread of life, which is Jesus. And it hath all the fruits of Jesus's righteousness, which the delicious pomegranates and other fruits of Canaan represented. And all the ordinances of the gospel church, like the bowels of the earth, bring forth what is far more precious than gold that perisheth.

10 When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

11 Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day :

12 Lest *when* thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt *therein* ;

13 And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied ;

14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage ;

15 Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, *wherein were* fiery serpents, and

scorpions, and drought, where *there was* no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;

17 And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand hath gotten me this wealth,

18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is* he that giveth the power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day.

19 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish.

20 As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

I bring the whole of these verses into one point of view for shortness sake, and, because the doctrine of the whole is one and the same; namely, that the Lord's grace ought never to be made the occasion of ingratitude. But, in a gospel sense, the precept riseth to an infinitely higher strain. Whoever would ascribe to human merit what divine mercy alone hath wrought, is literally robbing God. And is not every one doing this who joins any thing to the finished salvation of the Lord Jesus, arising from his own supposed attainments? See Paul's pious and humble resolution, Phil. iii. 8, 9.

#### REFLECTIONS.

OH! thou matchless instructor of the Lord's people, blessed Spirit! do thou graciously condescend to keep alive in my soul, by thy divine teaching, the remembrance of myself, and my own poor and low estate by nature, which thou hast taught me; and during the whole of my wilderness state, through which thou art bringing me, give me also to keep in view the infinite fulness, suitableness, and all-sufficiency of salvation in the Lord my righteousness.

Very gracious hast thou been to me, O Lord! Thou hast indeed humbled me, and proved me, and shewn me what was in my heart,

and given me in part to see what still remains there of sin and unbelief. Thou hast fed me, as thou didst Israel of old, with the manna of salvation, and with the bread of life. All the chastisements of thy grace have been as the chastisements of a kind and wise father: and thou hast brought me into a fulness of mercies, and the riches of redemption, in Christ Jesus.

Lord, keep me by thy grace from all spiritual pride and self-confidence. Never, dearest Lord, never may I be prompted to say, or think, that any thing in me hath in the least contributed to the obtaining so great salvation; that neither my might, nor my hand, hath wrought it; but may I be ever ready to ascribe the whole to the sovereignty and freedom of thy grace. Like one of old may the uniform language of my lips correspond to the feelings of my heart, and may his sentiments be mine; not by works of righteousness which I have done, but according to thy mercy, Lord, thou hast saved me, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, shed on me abundantly, through Jesus Christ my Savior. And therefore not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but to thy holy name be all the praise.

## CHAP. IX.

### CONTENTS.

*Moses is still discoursing to the Israelites: and the leading point in the Sermon of this Chapter, is to impress upon the minds of the people, what the Lord's people in all ages need to be perpetually reminded of, that the distinguishing mercy of God is not for any merit in them, but purely from the free grace and pleasure of God. Moses particularizes certain instances of Israel's transgression in proof.*

**H**EAR, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven.

Whether this chapter is the beginning of a new sermon is not so clear. Our dear Lord, in the course of his preaching, sometimes did, as Moses in this place, call up the renewed attention of the audience in a similar manner. He that hath ears to hear, let him ear. And we find similar attention demanded concerning the Holy Ghost speaking to the church. See Matt. xi. 15. Rev. ii. 29.

2 A people great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak!

It is worthy observation, that Moses follows up the report of what the spies had said, concerning the *Anakims*, when they went up to search the promised land: but with very different views. They did it through fear, and to discourage the people. Moses did it through faith, and to animate Israel. Great, and mighty, and formidable, as Israel's enemies

might be, the Lord of Hosts was mightier. And the more powerful their foes, the more evident would be their victory, in proof that the Lord was their God.

3 Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God *is* he which goeth over before thee ; *as* a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.

Sweet thought! Reader, if you are truly spiritual do not lose sight of it. He that is a consuming fire to thine enemies to destroy them, is a wall of fire to thy soul to preserve thee. And observe, the sacred historian doth not say, the Lord thy God will enable thee to consume them; but the Lord himself will destroy them, and bring them down before thee. Yes, blessed Jesus! It is thine own arm which bringeth salvation. Oh! may I never lose sight of this, but be ever ready to say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. Isaiah xlv. 24.

4 Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.

5 Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6 Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou *art* a stiffnecked people.

It is a precious consideration, in the view of distinguishing grace, that it originates in covenant mercy in Jesus. No one cause but the real cause, the sovereign will and pleasure of God, can be assigned. Jesus sweetly expresses the whole of it when he saith, Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Matt. xi. 26.

7 Remember, *and* forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilder-

ness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD

This is one of the most precious offices of the Holy Ghost, when he graciously brings to our remembrance the things of Jesus, in reminding us of our need of him, by reason of our sin. And I would very earnestly desire the Reader to remark with me, how Israel of old carried with him the same feature of character as Israel now. Israel was rebellious from the hour of his deliverance from Egypt. Reader! it is not merely from a state of nature, that your rebellion and my rebellion hath been shewn; but, after the Lord has brought us out of spiritual Egypt. It is an humbling, but truly profitable thought, because it tends to endear Jesus to the heart, that after the work of regeneration is wrought sin still works, and frequently manifests how much it reigns in the affections. "I knew (saith God) that thou wouldst be a transgressor from the womb." Isaiah xlviii. 8.

8 Also in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you.

Here the man of God particulariseth the instances of Israel's rebellion. *Horeb*, of all places, should have called forth obedience. For there the Lord confirmed the authority of his holy law, by the awful demonstration of the mount burning with fire. But alas! neither the mount burning with fire, nor all the threatenings of everlasting burning, can deter from the commission of sin, unless Almighty grace restrain. Reader! do you know this? do you really believe it? If not, may He who alone can convince of sin, be your teacher. John xvi. 8.

9 When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, *even* the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water:

10 And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them *was written* according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

11 And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, *that* the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, *even* the tables of the covenant.

These are so many beautiful repetitions of what was mentioned before, Exod. xix. 16—21.

12 And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted *themselves*; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.

Observe, how the Lord, as if to call forth the tenderness of Moses, denominates the people as Moses's people. Was not this typical of Jesus? Are we not his people, and the sheep of his pasture? Psm. cxv. 7.

13 Furthermore the LORD spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:

14 Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.

15 So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the covenant *were* in my two hands.

16 And I looked, and, behold ye had sinned against the LORD your God, *and* had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the LORD had commanded you.

17 And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes.

Moses seems to dwell upon this most interesting passage in Israel's history, as if to remind the people of sovereign grace. And is it not a very striking feature, typically considered, of Jesus's intercession for his people?

18 And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

It is not so clearly proved as to leave the point unquestionable, whether Moses means a *second* continuance and abstinence of forty days and nights in the mount as before. The particular manner of wording the expression, that he *fell down before the Lord*, in the same way as he did when he was forty days and forty nights in the mount with the



Lord; this seems as if he meant to say, that his intercession was similar in manner not in time. Moreover, if Moses really was a *second* time forty days and forty nights in the mount, there is no mention made of his employment the second time like the first. See Exod. xxiv. 18. And as Moses was eminently a type of the ever-blessed Jesus, we see a manifest propriety in the *first* forty days; but, considered as a type of Jesus in his fasting, the *second* would lessen its effect on this account. I do not, however, venture to speak decidedly upon the subject; but leave the Reader to his own judgment under the Spirit's teaching. See Matt. iv. 2.

19 For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the LORD was wroth against you to destroy you. But the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also.

20 And the LORD was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him: and I prayed for Aaron also the same time.

21 And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, and ground it very small, *even* until it was as small as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.

See Commentary on Exod. xxxii. 7—35.

22 And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath.

*Taberah*, means *burning*. *Massah*, the *temptation*. *Kibroth-hattaavah*, the graves of lust.

23 Likewise when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.

24 Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.

I would again remind the Reader, in this place, of that sweet office of the Holy Ghost as the Lord's Remembrancer. Moses was acting in this instance as his instrument. And when at any time our sins and rebellions are brought to our remembrance, whatever is the *instrument*, may we have grace to consider in it the Holy Spirit's work. This will open a blessed source of improvement.

25 Thus I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I fell down *at the first*; because the LORD had said he would destroy you.

26 I prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O Lord God, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

27 Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin:

28 Lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness.

29 Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power and by thy stretched out arm.

What a beautiful strain of earnestness in prayer is here read to us, of Moses's pleading with God in his covenant relation and character. Would the Reader see another yet more beautiful example of the same kind, let him turn to the 17th chapter of John's Gospel.

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#### REFLECTIONS.

LEARN, my soul, from the view of Israel's rebellion, all the way through their eventful history, what nature is in its highest attainment. And may the blessed Spirit convince me yet more and more, that it is not in the days of my unregeneracy only, that I am to look back for evidences of the sin of my nature, but since the Lord brought me out of spiritual Egypt I have had many *Horebs*, many *Taberahs*, and many *Massahs*, as well as Israel.

Blessed Jesus! let those views of the sin of my nature tend yet more to endear thee, who art the Lord my righteousness, to my heart. And while I beseech thee to drive out all my enemies before me, keep me, by such tokens of sin in my nature as every day's experience affords, humble in my own sight; and most gladly to refer all the victory, all the glory, and all the praise, to thine arm, which alone bringeth salvation.

## CHAP. X.

## CONTENTS.

*In the continuation of Moses's Sermon, the man of God, in this chapter, makes a beautiful digression from complaining, as in the former chapter, of Israel's rebellion, to remark in this the unmerited examples of the Lord's mercy. He points out some evidences of it in restoring the tables; continuing the priesthood; separating the tribe of Levi; and regarding Moses' intercession for them. He takes occasion, from all these things, in the close of the chapter to exhort them to obedience.*

**A**T that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood.

*At what time did Moses mean? I conceive, at that very time when by Israel's daring rebellion, the people had most reason to expect God's judgments; then it was the Lord gave renewed tokens of his mercy. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Well might the prophet, in the view of divine mercy, exclaim, Who is a God like unto thee? Micah vii. 18.*

2 And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakedst, and thou shalt put them in the ark.

Reader! how hath the Lord undertaken to enforce the observance of his precepts now. Consult the promise of God by the prophet, and then look into your own heart, and see whether that *you* yourself are an instance of its truth: for this is the great object of enquiry after all: hath the Lord indeed, by his Holy Spirit, written his law in *your* heart? Jer. xxxi. 31—34, compared with the apostle's comment upon the passage, Heb. viii. 8—12.

3 And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand.

No doubt Moses obeyed the command, and hewed the tables. It is not a strained idea to observe, that *hewing* the stone might have a figurative reference to the conviction of the Spirit on the heart of stone; and putting them into the ark, might be symbolical of bringing a soul, under the effects of a broken and contrite spirit to Jesus. Dearest Jesus! it is in thee, and in thy person, poor sinners find a refuge from every storm, and a covert from every tempest.

4 And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the

LORD spake unto you, in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me.

It is God's writing, and that is the best authority. The same as was before, for nothing can be added to it, or taken from it: and when the Son of God came, he made no alteration in it. He fulfilled indeed the whole in his righteous person: but suffered not a jot, or tittle of the law to fail. Matt. v. 17, 18.

5 And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the LORD commanded me.

May it not be said both of the law and of the gospel, *there it is*. And as a fulfilled law, in the person of Jesus, was pointed at in this: may not believers say, when looking unto Jesus, *there it is*, in his sacred person, ratified and confirmed. There stands the sinner's surety: the law-satisfying, the law-answering sponsor of his people. And the prophet had it in commission to describe him as having finished transgression, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Dan. ix. 24.

6 And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera: there Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.

7 From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbath, a land of rivers of waters.

This is an historical part, introduced in the midst of Moses's sermon. On what account is not said: but it forms an interesting part, to intimate the progress of Israel's history. See Numb. xxxiii. 31—33. For an interesting account of Aaron's death, see Numb. xx. 23—29.

8 At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day.

9 Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD *is* his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him.

In the gospel church all true believers are set apart, and are made kings and priests unto God and the Father. Rev. i. 6. Reader! is the Lord your inheritance? Can you say as David, Psm. xvi. 5?

10 And I stayed in the mount, according to

the first time, forty days and forty nights, and the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also, *and* the LORD would not destroy thee.

Moses dwells much upon this circumstance of his intercession and his success. Is it not intended by the Holy Ghost, to remind the Reader, again and again, of the intercession of Jesus? Heb. vii. 25.

11 And the LORD said unto me, Arise, take *thy* journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land which I swore unto their fathers to give unto them.

It is beautiful to observe in how many instances Moses was a type of Christ. Here he is represented as going before his people. Exod. xxiii. 23.

12 ¶ And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,

13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

Nothing can be more persuasive than the address which Moses makes from what he had said before, to prevail upon Israel to the love of God. It is a highly finished exhortation, and truly pathetic. Observe, the man of God makes the whole sum and substance of our duty to God, to consist in fearing the Lord, walking in his ways, loving him, serving him, and keeping his commandments. But who is sufficient for these things? Alas! in ourselves we have not power of ourselves to help ourselves, and all our sufficiency is of God. But is not the precept designed to act as our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ? Here again, adored Redeemer, as in all other cases, so in this, thou art our strength, and our sufficiency. United to thee, in thy righteousness we are accepted; and in thy fear and love we shall live, go up and down in thy name, and walk humbly with our God. Micah vi. 8.

14 Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *is* the LORD's thy God, the earth *also*, with all that therein *is*.

15 Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, *even* you, above all people, as *it is* this day.

It is very precious to trace all mercies to their source. The infinite greatness of God, and the infinite littleness of man, are in these verses most suitably brought together, by way of demonstrating, to the full,

the wonderful properties of distinguishing grace. Nothing but distinguishing grace can be the cause assigned for God's mercy. The love of God is the source, the first, the predisposing, the original, and only cause. The blood of Jesus, the price given for the purchase; and the Holy Spirit, the whole cause of application. Reader! dwell upon that very sweet expression *only*; the Lord's delight, his pleasure, his will, is the cause of my happiness. This will be to give God the glory, and bring heartfelt comfort to the soul.

16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked.

Paul explains the gospel circumcision, to which the Jewish rite all along had a reference, see Rom. ii. 29. Col. ii. 11. Gal. vi. 15.

17 For the LORD your God *is* God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.

What a sublime representation is here given, in the compass of a short verse, of the greatness of Jehovah. And what a sweet relief is it to the mind of the faithful, when at any time they are overpowered with the greatness of the Godhead, to call to mind that we are not only permitted to look up, but to draw near, through him who is our way, and truth, and life. Blessed Jesus! thou day's-man of thy people! may I through thee draw near at all times, to a gracious God and Father in Jesus. Eph. ii. 18.

18 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

19 Love ye therefore the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

This is a most charming precept, and comes home to the heart of every poor Gentile who was once afar off, and indeed a stranger to God and Christ; but is now no more a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God. Eph. ii. 19, 20.

20 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.

21 He *is* thy praise, and he *is* thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen.

What is cleaving to the Lord, in New Testament language, but being joined to the Lord in one spirit? 1 Cor. vi. 17.

22 Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the LORD

thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Jacob's whole house and family were no more: Exod. i. 5. See how God's promise was fulfilled, Gen. xv. 5, compared with Numb. i. 46.

### REFLECTIONS.

THINK, my soul, from the perusal of this Chapter, what a gracious God thou hast to do with, who when thou hadst broken both tables of the commandment, hath graciously condescended to furnish thee afresh: and hath put his written law, as a covenant, ratified and fulfilled in the person of his dear Son, in the ark of mercy, as an everlasting security for thy perfect obedience. And think again, with heartfelt thankfulness and praise, that in thy glorious Surety and Representative, all that the Lord thy God requireth of thee he hath answered. Jesus is indeed the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Blessed Spirit! do thou circumcise my heart, and cause me to be no more stiff-necked. Unless purified by thee, and preserved by thy subduing influence, what am I but a mass of corruption, and still remaining in the uncircumcision of carnal nature? Oh! for thy purifying, preserving, and renewing influences, that being called out of the state of a stranger in Egypt, as all my fathers were, I may be found among the number of the children of God, and my lot may be among the saints!

## CHAP. XI.

### CONTENTS.

*We may consider the contents of this Chapter to be the conclusion of one branch of Moses's Sermon, in the arguments he had been bringing forward to enforce Israel's love and obedience to the Lord. Blessings and cursings are held forth in order to accomplish this great end. The man of God is very particular in reminding Israel of the many signal instances of favour the Lord had shewn the people, and he carries this subject to a most extensive view.*

**T**HEREFORE thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always.

The charge to Israel was special and distinguishing. Israel was set apart, and distinguished, from all other nations of the earth. No people knew the Lord by signs and wonders, by holy worship and ordinances, as Israel did. What nation (as Moses told them) had the Lord so nigh as Israel? Deut. iv. 7. Reader! I charge it upon your mind, in the view of this subject, to consider how infinitely this argument is heightened since the Son of God, in substance of our flesh, came and tabernacled among us. Oh! what nearness are believers now brought to, in the blood and righteousness of Jesus! How beautifully the apostle dwells upon this, 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

2 And know ye this day : for *I speak* not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched out arm,

3 And his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt, unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land ;

4 And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots ; how he made the water of the Red sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and *how* the LORD hath destroyed them unto this day ;

5 And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until he came into this place ;

6 And what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben : how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that *was* in their possession, in the midst of all Israel :

7 But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the LORD which he did.

This is a charming line of distinction which the man of God hath drawn between the ignorance and unconsciousness of children, and the experience of men. In recapitulating those mighty acts of God, he appeals to facts which their eyes had seen, and which their knowledge of allowed no debate concerning, in proof of mercy shewn them : what the Lord did *for* them against their enemies ; and what the Lord did *to* them in numberless providences during their wilderness state. Hence therefore, it is as if he had said, I appeal to your own judgments ; is not this a most gracious God, and justly entitled to all the love, and reverence, and obedience of a people so highly favoured. But Reader ! when you have paid all possible attention to this view of Israel of old, pause over the subject, and consider how increased is the argument, as it may be applied to Israel now. If the Reader himself be an object of divine grace, may I not say, in the language of Moses, Know you this day, for I speak not to the unconscious, unawakened state of childhood, who have never experienced the grace of God in Jesus, but it is to you I speak, whose eyes have seen, and whose hands have handled, the word of life. What spiritual foes hath the Lord your God driven out, and consumed before you, and what great acts of grace in quickening mercy, converting mercy, and renewing mercy, hath the Lord ma-



nifested to you otherwise than he doth to the world? Oh! what a volume is opened to every man's view, in the history of his own heart, who reads God's love to Israel of old with the New Testament explanation, as the truth is in Jesus.

8 Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it;

9 And that ye may prolong *your* days in the land, which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

Let not the Reader overlook the expression in these verses that Israel was to go in to possess the land. Not as if they were to fight for it, but as if it was already conquered. The reason was, the Lord their God had promised Canaan to his people. He undertook to drive out the present possessors, and to bring them in. And therefore so promised, the thing itself was as good as accomplished. But, considered as this really was, a type of the heavenly Canaan, the subject riseth higher to our view, and becomes abundantly more interesting, Jesus hath in reality already conquered for his people. He hath purchased their redemption by his blood. He is gone before to take possession of the promised land in their name, and will come again, and bring them into the possession of it, with himself, that where he is, there they may be also. See his sweet promise to this effect, John xiv. 3.

10 For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, *is* not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst *it* with thy foot, as a garden of herbs:

11 But the land, whither ye go to possess it, *is* a land of hills and valleys, *and* drinketh water of the rain of heaven:

12 A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God *are* always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

These verses afford a delightful view, even considered as an history of the promised land. It is beautiful to remark the several characters here drawn by the pencil of Moses, under the direction of the Holy Ghost. Canaan was not as Egypt, even beheld as to its situation by nature. Egypt owed its fruitfulness to great labour and art: but Canaan was watered by the rain of heaven. The river Nile did not overflow its banks to water Egypt but once in the year, and all the rest of the year the country of Egypt became a dry soil. The Prophet gives an account

of this, that Egypt had no rain, Zech. xiv. 18. No doubt, as Israel had been long in bondage, the Fathers well recollected their labour and toil in the gardens of their masters, and how they had been compelled to sow the seed, and water it with their feet; meaning, perhaps, to fetch water from the *Nile*. Sweetly therefore the man of God draws the contrast to this servitude, in the spontaneous fruitfulness of Canaan, which had the eye of the Lord their God upon it from one end of the year to the other. Canaan had no river excepting the sacred stream of Jordan, in which, in after ages, the Son of God was baptized. So that, as the Prophet elegantly described it, there was no navigable channel for a galley with oars, or gallant ship, to pass by. No enemy could approach by water. But, saith the Prophet, there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. His presence made up all deficiencies. See Isaiah xxxiii. 20—23. But we lose still greater beauties in this passage if we stop here. Canaan, considered as a type of heaven, is yet more delightful to contemplate. Of the *heavenly* Canaan it may be truly said, it is not like the *earthly* Egypt of our fallen state. The land which the believer is going to possess hath not only the eye, but the presence of the Lord God upon it for ever. Jesus is there. His person, his love, his redemption, his relations, offices, character; all are the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And if the Reader will pursue this train of reasoning through all the various parts in which it is capable of being traced, he will discover a most pleasing subject opening to his meditation. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

13 And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,

14 That I will give *you* the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain, and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

15 And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat, and be full.

God's promises, even in a temporal sense, with respect to earthly blessings, serve to shew the wonderful superintendence of the Lord over his people. But we are certainly authorized to accept Israel's history, as forming from beginning to end a subject truly spiritual. And here we find the promise of rain to be sweetly descriptive of the effusion of the Spirit. Isaiah xlv. 3, 4. Ezek. xxxiv. 26.

16 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;

17 And *then* the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven that there be no

rain, and that the land yield not her fruit, and *lest* ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

God's withholding the influences of his Spirit, is here figuratively set forth. See a proof of this: Amos iv. 7, 8.

18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

20 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD swear unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

I have often admired the Lord's affectionate regard to the happiness of Israel, as set forth in these precepts, and have figured to myself the Jewish family following up the command of the Lord, in forming around them their little circle, to speak to their children and little ones of the Lord's gracious dealings. And what can afford a sight more lovely or more engaging, than to behold the father of a family recounting to his children and household around him, what the Lord hath done for his soul. That is a sweet comment of David upon this scripture: Psm. xxxiv. 11.

22 For if you shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;

23 Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves.

24 Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.

25 There shall no man be able to stand before you: *for* the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you.

The extent of Israel's country, great as it was, was nothing compared to the extent of God's love for them. The boundaries here mentioned, if spiritually considered, have a delightful reference to what the apostle observes of the boundless love of God in Christ. Ephes. iii. 18, 19.

26 ¶ Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse:

27 A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day:

28 And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

29 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal.

30 *Are* they not on the other side Jordan, by the way where the sun goeth down, in the land of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champaign over against Gilgal, beside the plains of Moreh?

31 For ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein.

32 And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day.

It is truly refreshing to attend to the practical exhortation which Moses makes, from what he had before said on this interesting subject, if interpreted upon gospel principles. There is indeed a blessing and a curse set before us in the gospel of Jesus. And if any man like the Jews of old, is at a loss to discover on whom the whole blessing rests, and the curse of rejecting; and would ask as they did of Jesus, What shall we do that we might work the works of God: the Redeemer hath himself answered it; "This is the work of God that ye believe in him whom he hath sent." John vi. 28, 29.

## REFLECTIONS.

DEAREST Jesus! be thou everlastingly adored for all the great things which mine eyes have seen of thy wonders of grace, in the rescue of thy people from more than Egyptian bondage in sin and death. Oh! give me yet more and more to see and know my vast privileges, and be ever ready to ascribe the whole where alone it is due, to thine arm, and thy power, which alone bringeth salvation.

Oh, for an ardent zeal to be looking for that city of Canaan whither thou art gone before. Blessed Jesus! may the recollection that thou art there, prompt my soul to be sending forth its warmest affections and desires after the attainment of it, knowing that while I am present in the body I am absent from the Lord.

And do thou, Holy Spirit, whose grace and influence alone can effectually direct and incline my heart to a right judgment in all things, do thou sweetly constrain my soul into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Jesus Christ; that while thy servant is here setting before me, the blessing and the curse, life and death, and good and evil: Jesus himself who is the sum and substance of all blessings, all mercies, all good, may be my choice and my portion for ever.

## CHAP. XII.

## CONTENTS.

*This chapter differs in some degree from what went before. It is certainly the continuation of Moses's Sermon, but is not so much in a way of exhortation as in precept. He here directs to the observance of certain duties which the Lord had appointed to be regarded in Canaan; such as the throwing down all the idolatrous monuments the people should find in the land; appointing a certain spot to be peculiarly dedicated to the service of the Lord; cautiously abstaining from the use of blood in their sacrifices; and eating their holy things in the precise place which the Lord had commanded; together with observing due attention to the person of the Levite; and being so exceedingly tenacious of their attachment to the God of their Fathers, as not even to enquire after the mode of worship which the idolaters of Canaan followed.*

**THESE** are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.

Sweet thought arising out of this verse, that our religion founded in Jesus the chief corner stone, is of daily obligation and of never ceasing importance. If Jesus be the statute of my soul this day, so is he to-morrow, and so will he be for ever. Heb. xiii. 8.

2 Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their

gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree :

3 And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire ; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place.

He that is at peace with God in Christ, is at war with all the enemies of God and Christ. Reader ! if your body be really a temple of the Holy Ghost, all idol worship is your abhorrence. See 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17.

4 Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God.

Nothing can be truly reared to God's honor but what hath God's glory in view. Sweet was that precept given with this view. An altar *to* God must be *of* God. If man lifts any thing of his own upon it he hath polluted it. Exod. xx. 24. John iv. 24.

5 ¶ But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, *even* unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come :

Was not this precept of being expressly particular to have but one spot to serve God in, intended to shew the unity of the Godhead in the Trinity of the persons ; and at the same time to indicate that there is but one way to God in the righteousness of the Saviour ? John xiv. 6.

6 And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks :

7 And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

It is to Jesus the believer must bring all his offerings. He alone sanctifies both the gift and the giver. In his name he rejoiceth all the day. Matt. xxiii. 19. Psm. lxxxix. 16.

8 Ye shall not do after all *the things* that we do here this day, every man whatsoever *is* right in his own eyes.

9 For ye are not as yet come to the rest and

to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you.

10 But *when* ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and *when* he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety;

11 Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD :

Is not this typical of the striking distinction between a state of nature and a state of grace? Before a sinner hath found rest to his soul, he is doing after the things which appear right in his own eyes. But when he hath found him who is the Rest, wherewith he causeth the weary to rest, then he is freed from the apprehension of his enemies triumphing over him, and all his views of strength and rest in Jesus, are found in him and presented in him. Isaiah xxviii. 12. Matt. xi. 28, 29.

12 And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that *is* within your gates; foras much as he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

They that can rejoice *in* Christ, will always find cause to rejoice *before* Christ. 2 Cor. ii. 14.

13 Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest :

14 But in the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.

So important a thing was it to have an eye to this one spot for offerings, that it is here repeated again. And what could this refer to but Jesus? Reader! do not overlook this, unless Jesus be in every presentation of our persons or services, our offering is too polluted and our nature too defiled to find acceptance before God. Dear Lord! be thou the all in all, in every prayer of mine, whether morning, noon, mid-day, or evening oblation! Colossians iii. 11.

15 Notwithstanding thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee: the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the roebuck, and as of the hart.

16 ¶ Only ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water.

Was not this prohibition of blood evidently intended to point to the infinitely preciousness of the blood of Jesus? All along from the very first of creation, had the Holy Ghost an eye to this, in his sacred word! Gen. ix. 4.

17 Thou mayest not eat within thy gates thy tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill offerings, or heave offering of thine hand:

18 But thou must eat them before the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto.

It is worthy observation, what attention is shewn, in the appointment of every religious rite, to the place of offering. And the reason is plain. It is Jesus, as the sum and substance of all which is referred to. *In* him every service had its fulfilment, *to* him all pointed, and *from* him the whole efficacy was derived. Blessed Redeemer! may I never lose sight of thee in all places, in all thy churches, in all thine ordinances, in all thy ways and works! And do thou dearest Lord be in my heart and in the heart of all thy people, the hope and only hope of glory! Colos. i. 27.

19 Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon thy earth.

I admire the tenderness of our God to his Levites. Was not Jesus the first of the order of Levites? Was not he indeed a stranger, when he came to seek and save that which was lost? Oh! Lord, give me grace to recognize thee in every stranger, and for thy sake to forget not the stranger, conscious that as thyself, so thy people, they are all strangers in the land of Egypt. Deut. x. 19.

20 When the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy



border, as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

21 If the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

22 Even as the roebuck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them: the unclean and the clean shall eat *of* them alike.

23 ¶ Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood *is* the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.

24 Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water.

25 Thou shalt not eat it: that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do *that which is* right in the sight of the LORD.

26 Only thy holy things which thou hast, and thy vows, thou shalt take and go unto the place which the LORD shall choose:

27 And thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of the LORD thy God: and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of the LORD thy God, and thou shalt eat the flesh.

28 Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest *that which is* good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God.

The same observation meets us here as before, only with this addition, that as from its importance it is again repeated, our attention and regard to it should be but the more increased. If from the re-

newal of it the Lord Jesus becomes more dear, sweet is the exhortation how often soever repeated, which under God's grace induceth this effect.

29 When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land;

30 Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them; after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.

31 Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

32 What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

I take occasion from this precept to remark, how needful it must be for the heart to be established in grace, that we may not be carried about with diverse and strange doctrines. Alas! if our religion be not of the heart, there can be no stability, no dependance in our faith. But if I love the Lord Jesus because I really and truly know him: this is life eternal. Lord! confirm me in this faith. John xvii. 3.

### REFLECTIONS.

HOLY and Eternal Spirit! be graciously pleased of thine infinite mercy so to write thy statutes and judgments upon my mind and in my heart, that I may live to Jesus in the enjoyment of them all the days of my pilgrimage upon the earth. Thou, dearest Lord, art both the law-giver and the law-fulfiller of thine own sacred will. Oh! may I behold thee as the end of the law for righteousness to me, and to every one that believeth; and while, through the influences of the blessed Spirit, I live a life of faith to God and upon God, may I feel an holy jealousy to throw down all the idols of the heart wherever I find them.

Dearest Lord! make that place peculiarly sacred to my soul, which hath Jesus for its object. Here would I dwell, for ever dwell, under the shining of thy divine countenance! Here would I bring my poor offerings, and here alone present my sacrifices, seeking the acceptance both of my person and offering in him and his precious righteousness, who is the altar, the offering, and the high priest of all his people. And as I am not yet come to that rest which is thyself, blessed Jesus,

in glory, and only behold thee now by faith; Lord help me until the vail be removed, to walk more by faith and less by sight, that I may not do according to what the world is doing, whatsoever seemeth right in a man's own eyes; but that forgetting things that are behind, and reaching forth to those which are before, I may press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Return to thy rest, to thy Jesus, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee!

## CHAP. XIII.

### CONTENTS.

*This Chapter is a continuation of the same subject as the former. Particular and special precepts are contained in it to arm against the motives to idolatry; the persons tempting to it are to be stoned, and even the cities where this sin is committed, are to be razed to the earth.*

**I**F there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder.

To those who know not the deceitfulness of the human heart, or the melancholy state of blindness and ignorance to which we are fallen, the precept in this verse may appear strange. But Reader! danger of deception concerning true and false prophets was not peculiar to the Israelites. Observe what Paul saith of the last times concerning apostacy, and then pause over the subject, and pray for grace to resist every temptation of this kind. See 1 Tim. iv. 1.

2 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

3 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

But is it not yet more strange, that the Lord should permit the prediction of false teachers to come to pass? The answer is at hand. God hath given the reason: It is to prove the believer. And what is the believer's security but the Spirit's work in the heart? If, my brother, you are taught of God the Holy Ghost who and what Jesus is, there will never be any danger of going after other gods. That precious promise which God held forth for his glory in the last days is then fulfilled in your experience, and you need not ask your neighbour to teach you to know the Lord. Sweet and blessed testimony this of God the Holy Ghost, and abundantly needful now more than ever, in the present period of the church. Jeremiah xxxi. 31—34. Compared with Heb. viii. 8—11.

4 Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.

Precious thought to cleave unto the Lord. Reader! pause over it and examine whether this be your case. Deut. x. 20.

5 And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn *you* away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.

Here is a line drawn to testify our faithfulness to God. To wink at the daring attempt of any one that strives to seduce us from our attachment to Jesus is the greatest of crimes, and is in fact taking part with it. What a beautiful picture hath the Holy Ghost given us of the zeal of *Phinehas* on a similar occasion, and what a blessed commendation follows it: Num. xxv. 7. 13. But Reader, when you have looked at the zeal of *Phinehas*, call to mind what is said of Him whom *Phinehas* typified. Isaiah lix. 17, 18. John ii. 17.

6 ¶ If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which *is* as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;

7 *Namely*, of the gods of the people which *are* round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the *one* end of the earth even unto the *other* end of the earth;

8 Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him:

9 ¶ But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

10 And thou shalt stone him with stones, that

he die: because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

I include these verses within one general observation, to preserve the thread of the narration unbroken. I beg the Reader to observe with me, the striking expression made use of in this precept; after all the tender relations and charities of life are enumerated, the man of God adds, the friend, which is as a man's own soul; intimating what our dear Lord taught, that even our own flesh, the eye, or the right hand; the one must be plucked out and the other cut off, if either come in competition with our attachment to our covenant God in Christ. For who is so near or so dear as he that is a Brother born for adversity, or the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother? Reader! is Jesus indeed thus precious to you? If so, no secret or open temptations will be sufficient to rob you of your happiness, or your God of his glory. See those Scriptures, Prov. xvii. 17. xviii. 24. Matt. v. 29, 30. 1 Cor. x. 13.

11 And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you.

How often this promise is fulfilled and fulfilling in the sad examples around, who shall number?

12 ¶ If thou shalt hear *say* in one of thy cities, which the LORD thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying,

13 *Certain* men, the children of Belial, are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known;

14 Then shalt thou enquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, *if it be truth, and the thing certain, that* such abomination is wrought among you;

15 Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that *is* therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword.

16 And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every

whit, for the LORD thy God: and it shall be an heap for ever; and it shall not be built again.

17 And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand: that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers;

18 When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do *that which is right* in the eyes of the LORD thy God.

The sacred writer rises by a gradation from the sin of individuals to that of a whole city, and here in this instance, like as in the case of Sodom, God is so jealous of his honor, that rather than his glory shall be tarnished, all shall be swept away with the besom of destruction. Reader, pause over this solemn account, call to remembrance your own apostacy, unbelief, denials of God and the like, and then look up to Jesus, as the only means whereby thou art preserved to this day, amidst all the idols which you have set up at various times in the heart. Oh, how precious is it to behold that Lamb of God, which hath taken away the sins of his people. John i. 29.

#### REFLECTIONS.

MY soul! behold to what temptations thou art exposed, not only from false prophets and false teachers, but also from false friends and relations. How hath the God of this word blinded the minds of men and brought them over to his interests! How doth that prince of the power of the air, as he is called by the apostle, still work in the children of disobedience! And how doth he govern them, direct them, and influence them, by his secret insinuations, to dishonour God themselves, and prompt others by their counsel and example! Are not evil spirits and evil men of every description and character his ministers? And what are all those acts of men which we behold going on in life, in drunken clubs, riotous pastimes, revels, banquetings, interpreters of dreams, fortune-telling, and the like, but so many sabbaths of his, and festivals to draw souls aside from the Lord God of their fathers. "My soul! come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor be not thou united." But dearest Lord! arm me with thy grace, and the power of thy Holy Spirit, that I may flee from idolatry, and be found among the number of the faithful, in cleaving to thee, O Lord, with full purpose of heart.

### CHAP. XIV.

#### CONTENTS.

*Moses is prosecuting the same subject of God's laws through this Chapter. Here are precepts concerning the persons of the children of*

*Israel, concerning their diet, of what may be eaten and what not; together with the tythes of divine service, and of rejoicing in them before the Lord, and of the third year's tythes of alms.*

**YE** are the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.

2 For thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that *are* upon the earth.

There is a vast deal of gospel in this, and if read under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, with an eye to the covenant mercies of God in Christ, it will not fail to bring sweet comfort to the soul. My brother! let me ask you or rather beg you to ask your own heart, are you of the children of the Lord your God? Are you distinguished from the ungodly world in being set apart for God's glory, the purchase of Jesus's blood, the subject of the Holy Ghost's work? If you say *yes* to these and the like questions, will you not say also, I am distinguished no less by his grace from all the ungodly customs of a world professedly at enmity with God. Oh! for that sweet evidence which Jesus points at: John xv. 18, 19. If I were to detain the Reader any longer upon those two verses, it would be just to remark to him, that the Holy Ghost hath graciously drawn the line of distinction between believers and unbelievers, at the loss of friends. While they sorrow as those that have no hope, because if they lose their earthly father they know nothing of an heavenly one; true believers in Christ Jesus know, that if all earthly connections cease, their Father, their Saviour, their sanctifier, ever liveth, who is the father of the fatherless, and the husband of the widow. Compare Jeremiah ii. 27, with xlix. 11. Thess. iv. 13—18.

3 ¶ Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing.

4 These *are* the beasts which ye shall eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat,

5 The hart, and the roebuck, and the fallow deer, and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the wild ox, and the chamois.

6 And every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, *and* cheweth the cud among the beasts, that ye shall eat.

7 Nevertheless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof; *as* the camel, and the hare, and the coney: for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof; *therefore* they *are* unclean unto you.

8 And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it *is* unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase.

Concerning these precepts we had them before in Levit. xi. 2. to the Commentary on which I refer, and shall only just observe upon the repetition of them here; that though since the coming of the Lord Jesus nothing is unclean in itself which God hath cleansed; and, as the apostle saith, every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving, 'when it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer; yet, though Jesus's followers are called unto liberty, they dare not, they cannot indeed, neither do they desire to use that liberty for an occasion to the flesh. Reader! is Jesus your portion? Do you know what it is to eat spiritually of his flesh, and to drink spiritually of his blood? If so, you are but little concerned what perishing food your perishing body is sustained with. 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4, 5. Gal. v. 13. Romans xiv. 2, 3. 17. 21.

9 These ye shall eat of all that *are* in the waters: all that have fins and scales shall ye eat:

10 And whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye may not eat; it *is* unclean unto you.

11 *Of* all clean birds ye shall eat.

12 But these *are they* of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray,

13 And the glede, and the kite, and the vulture after his kind,

14 And every raven after his kind,

15 And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk, after his kind,

16 The little owl, and the great owl, and the swan,

17 And the pelican, and the gier eagle, and the cormorant,

18 And the stork, and the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

19 And every creeping thing that flieth *is* unclean unto you: they shall not be eaten.

20 *But of* all clean fowls ye may eat.

21 Ye shall not eat *of* any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that *is* in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest



sell it unto an alien : for thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not see the a kid in his mother's milk.

The same observations will meet us here concerning the food of fish and of birds, as under the foregoing of beasts. Spiritually considered, and with an eye to the gospel dispensation, the whole are of importance, meaning that all uncleanness is forbidden : and these things are not only commanded to be abstained from in the deed, but even in the very word : and not once to be named among the Lord's heritage, as becometh saints. Ephes. v. 3.

22 ¶ Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.

23 And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks ; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.

24 And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it ; *or* if the place be too far from thee, which the LORD thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the LORD thy God hath blessed thee :

25 Then shalt thou turn *it* into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose ;

26 And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth : and thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thine household.

It is delightful to remark what provision God hath made for his ministers, for his poor, for those who are by his providence brought into straits and difficulties. That is an universal precept and as fully to be observed now, as when it was at first given. Deut. xv. 11.

27 And the Levite that is within *thy* gates ;

thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.

It is pleasing to observe the care God hath for the Levite. Was not this with an eye to Jesus?

28 At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay *it* up within thy gates;

29 And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee), and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which *are* within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

God is a bountiful master. He giveth liberally and well may his people. Reader! I have found the truth of that saying; Prov. xi. 24.

#### REFLECTIONS.

BLESSED Lord! give me to see that thou hast *chosen* me to be one among thy people, that thou hast *adopted* me into thy family, that thou hast *sanctified* me by thy grace, and that I am thine in an everlasting covenant which cannot be broken: and help me to live to thy glory that I may be distinguished as thy people are distinguished, and then shall I live to thy praise and honour all the day long.

Lord! teach me to learn from the precepts in this chapter, how pure and holy all thy people ought to live, repeating things which are without. May I never wallow in those corruptions which the ungodly and carnal wallow in! May it be my meat and my drink to do thy will! May I use a sparing enjoyment of mere creature comforts, but constantly keep in view, and make it by grace the mark of my conduct, that *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

### CHAP. XV.

#### CONTENTS.

*We have in this Chapter a continuation of Moses's discourse. Here are contained, the order for the release of debtors every seventh year: cautions to the people not to withhold lending to their needy brethren, on account of the year of release being at hand: some particularities respecting the Hebrew servant, and concerning the offering of the firstlings of their cattle to God.*

**A**T the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.

2 And this *is* the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth *ought* unto his neighbour shall release *it*; he shall not exact *it* of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release.

I call upon the Reader in a very particular manner in the opening of this chapter, to remember the motto which I have so often endeavoured to bring to his recollection, that *Moses wrote of Christ*; for here Jesus is evidently preached; and if the Holy Ghost shall be mercifully pleased to reveal him to the Reader's view, he may and will discover, so much of the Lord Christ in this chapter, as will prove to him, that the law is our schoolmaster unto Christ. Let the Reader observe, in the account of this year of release, that it is called *the Lord's release*. And what is the release of poor insolvent debtors to the laws of God, when by sin they are rendered totally incapable of paying what they owe both to the law and justice of God, and they are through the infinite mercy of God's covenant love in Jesus, justified from all things, and though bond sinners, are set at happy liberty in Christ Jesus; what is such a deliverance and freedom, but the Lord's release—God's acceptable year of salvation? Oh! thou dear and precious Redeemer! who doth not, or who will not see thee in thy gracious character, when thou didst declare that the year of thy redeemed was come, when thou camest to set at liberty them that were bruised, and to let the oppressed go free? Luke iv. 18, 19.

3 Of a foreigner thou mayest exact *it again*: but *that* which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release;

What is a foreigner? Paul hath told us, Eph. ii. 12. Reader! do you not see from hence, that covenant blessings, and covenant mercies, are peculiar blessings and mercies. Lord! give me grace to be very earnest in searching for the tokens of being interested in the covenant; and then, grace to prize them in proportion to their infinite importance. Reader! examine yourself by that mark, Rom. viii. 14. Read also with it, Rom. ix. 4—8.

4 Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:

5 Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.

Spiritually considered, what a mercy would this be, when that scripture shall be fulfilled, in which it is said, God's people shall all be righteous: Isaiah lx. 21. In Jesus the very poorest are so. But it should seem to refer to the latter day glory. Who doth not join in that prayer of the Psalmist, Psm. liii. 6?

6 For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

Is not this strictly true, in gospel days, when the servants of Jesus impart of their golden treasure, the word of God, to the darkened nations of the earth? What loan is like this? And what power over men is equal to that which, under God's teaching, brings them into captivity to the law of Christ? 2 Cor. ix. 12—14.

7 ¶ If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

8 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, *in that* which he wanteth.

Reader! dwell particularly on that endearing word, *thy brother*, while reading this precept. Then, turn thy thoughts to Jesus, *a brother born for adversity*; and call to mind, in every instance of a real brother in Jesus who is in distress, that he is his image, and representative. Read that scripture with this; and may God the Holy Ghost give energy to it, both in your mind and mine. Few have ever entered into the full meaning of it. Matt. xxv. 40.

9 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

10 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

What a gracious provision hath the Lord of our salvation made, in guarding against evil! The heart is wicked, and David saith of himself that it was the transgression of the wicked which spake within his own heart, that shewed him the fear of God was not before him. Psm. xxxvi. 1. And Paul confesseth for himself, that until the law came, in all its spirituality and power, as extending to the thoughts of the

heart, he did not know sin. Rom. vii. 7. Reader! what are your views of this subject?

11 For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

Reader! look around thee, and behold this day how God's word is verified. Blessed Jesus! give me grace to keep in view thine unequalled poverty, and to consider the path of honest humble poverty as dignified by thy bright example. 2 Cor. viii. 9.

12 And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

Observe, it is a *brother* that is here spoken of: one included in the covenant promises. To every one of this character there is a year of release, whether male or female. Coloss. iii. 11.

13 And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty;

14 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: *of that* wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

And doth not Jesus when he sends forth his brethren in the freedom of his salvation, send them forth enriched with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus? Eph. i. 3.

15 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day.

Sweet remembrance! Lord give me grace ever to keep in view the wormwood and the gall, that the honey and the honeycomb of the gospel, even Jesus himself, may be the more precious to my soul. Song i. 4.

16 And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee;

17 Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust *it* through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise.

18 It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant *to thee*, in serving thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.

Do I not see Jesus in this scripture? Was it not him who though Lord of all, and equal with the Father, yet made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant? And was it not Jesus whose ear was thrust through to be the servant of Jehovah in redemption work for ever, until all his people are brought home to glory. Dearest Lord! oh! communicate to my soul unceasing grace, unremitting knowledge, to contemplate thee as cheerfully engaging in the service of thy Father, when accomplishing the great ends of salvation. Oh! do thou give to me a portion of the same humble spirit, that I may cry out with one of old, 'Truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, thou hast loosed my bonds.' Psm. cxvi. 16.

19 All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock, thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.

20 Thou shalt eat *it* before the LORD thy God year by year in the place which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.

21 And if there be *any* blemish therein, *as if it be* lame, or blind, *or have* any ill blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the LORD thy God.

22 Thou shalt eat it within thy gates: the unclean and the clean *person shall eat it* alike, as the roebuck, and as the hart.

Here is a repetition of the law concerning the redemption of the firstlings of the flock. See Exod. xiii. 2. 15. But let not the Reader overlook the grand object intended from it. Jesus is the first-born among many brethren. He was devoted to the Lord's service from the womb. And how highly expedient was it that his holiness and immaculate purity should be represented by an unblemished offering. Reader! God the Holy Ghost give you and me grace, that our poor offerings may all be brought with an eye to Jesus! Malachi i. 13, 14.

23 Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water.

## REFLECTIONS.

BEFORE I close the chapter, let me pause again and review the divine mercy in the appointment of the year of release. Let me contemplate the Father's everlasting love, the Redeemer's unequalled grace, and thy rich mercy, O thou eternal Spirit! from whose teaching alone it is that I behold, in this ancient representation, the everlasting free grace of Jehovah in the finished righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh! thou, who in the fulness of love didst come to give liberty to the captive, sight to the blind, and to proclaim the year of release to all thy redeemed! Hail, precious Saviour! blessed for ever be thy name, that when our poor fallen nature lay bound in the prison house, to have remained there for ever, as debtors to the infinite justice and law of our God, thou camest full of grace and truth, didst restore us to our freedom, and not only didst send us out in happy liberty, but also full of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost. By what name shall I call thee? or in what endearing point of view shall I look up to thee, O thou compassionate Redeemer, who in the accomplishment of this great work didst consent to have thy ear bored to the door of thy Father's house, that I might be freed for ever? Add one blessing more, O Lamb of God, to these unspeakable mercies, and cause the purchase of thy blood and service to be dedicated to thy glory: that as I am no longer my own, but bought with a price, I may glorify God in my body, and in my spirit, which are his.

## CHAP. XVI.

## CONTENTS.

*The servant of God is prosecuting the subject of divine laws through this as in the foregoing Chapter. We have here the precept for the observance of the three yearly feasts: of the Passover; of Pentecost; and of tabernacles. Beside these, here is a direction for the offerings of the people at those feasts, and the prohibition of making groves and images.*

**O**BERVE the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

2 Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there.

3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, *even* the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste; that thou

mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

4 And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coasts seven days; neither shall there *any thing* of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.

5 Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee:

6 But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.

7 And thou shalt roast and eat *it* in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents.

8 Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day *shall be* a solemn assembly to the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work *therein*.

The Holy Ghost hath evidently shewn his divine approbation of the observance of the typical representation of Jesus's sufferings and death, as our Paschal Lamb, by the frequent mention of it. This was largely set forth, Exod. xii. but here it is again repeated. It is sweet to the believer to reflect, that in ages so remote, and at so long a period before the coming of Jesus, the representation of our deliverance by him should be shadowed out in the church. Reader! do you really and truly believe what the apostle saith, that Christ is our Passover, and that he was sacrificed for us? Oh! then let us keep the feast, and let us eat with holy joy the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth! 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

9 ¶ Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from *such time as* thou beginnest *to put* the sickle to the corn.

10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill



offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give *unto the LORD thy God*, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

11 And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that *is* within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that *are* among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there.

12 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes.

Reader! is it not a subject of heartfelt satisfaction, and demanding a most grateful acknowledgment to our God, that as the observance of the Passover happened at the very time Jesus our Passover was offered upon the cross; so the feast of weeks, which represented the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, happened at the very time when the blessed Spirit came down at first in an open display at the day of Pentecost, upon the minds of the Apostles and first followers of the Lord? Could any thing more decidedly point out the wisdom of God in this ordination? See Luke xxii. 1, compared with Acts ii. 1.

13 ¶ Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine:

14 And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that *are* within thy gates.

15 Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.

Moses doth not repeat in this place what sacrifices were to be observed in keeping this feast of tabernacles. These were particularly appointed, Num. xxix. 12.

16 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which

he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

17 Every man *shall give* as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

Here the whole three feasts are brought within one precept for their observance. And who is there but must, in a gospel sense, desire to honour Jehovah in the observance of ordinances and means of grace, which keep in view the sacrifice of Jesus, the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and that God hath tabernacled among us in substance of our flesh? These things are indeed great joy to all people. Luke ii. 10.

18 ¶ Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

19 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

20 That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Though it seems that these appointments, were of a civil and political kind, and therefore make a digression from what went before, yet they serve to shew the gracious attention of God toward his people. Rom. xiii. 1.

21 ¶ Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.

22 Neither shalt thou set thee up any image; which the LORD thy God hateth.

Is it not astonishing that a people so highly favored of God should need such precepts as these to keep them from idolatry? But alas! even in gospel days, and under a better dispensation, established upon better promises, what a tendency there is to set up the idol under one form or other, in the human heart.

#### REFLECTIONS.

BLESSED God! give me grace to observe, with holy joy and thankfulness, the solemn seasons of thine appointment, in communication of

thy mercies. I would pray indeed for the leadings of the Holy Spirit, to observe the mouth of *Abib*, which pointed to Jesus, and his one, all-sufficient sacrifice, all the year; and since Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us, I would, all the year, keep the feast. And no less, thou blessed Holy Spirit, would I beseech thee to pour upon me thy precious influence, that every day may be the renewal of the day of Pentecost to my soul. Oh! that thou wouldst come down as showers on the new-mown grass, to revive my drooping, languishing heart, by the soul-strengthening communications of thy love. And dearest Lord, when I appear before thee in thy courts, and house of prayer, oh! constrain my heart that I may not appear before thee empty. But, having so much communicated to me of thy fulness, my poorer brother may partake of my overflowing cup; and I may by grace be able, both in temporals and spirituals, to comfort others with the same comforts where-with I myself am comforted of God.

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## CHAP. XVII.

### CONTENTS.

*The subject of the divine laws is continued through this Chapter. Moses under God's authority, points out the unblemished state required of the animals to be offered in sacrifice; of the punishment of idolaters: of controversies in judgment: of the election of a king: and of special duties required of him.*

**THOU** shalt not sacrifice unto the LORD thy God *any* bullock, or sheep, wherein is blemish, or any evilfavouredness; for that *is* an abomination unto the LORD thy God.

I hope the Reader will not overlook, in the frequent notice which he must have made in the several parts of Moses's writings, concerning the unblemished state of the animals to be offered in sacrifice, how exceedingly concerned the Holy Ghost was, to direct the view of Israel to Jesus, the Lamb without blemish and without spot. For as all the sacrifices of the Jews were types of him, nothing can be more pointed than this one feature. Oh my soul, may it be never thy lot, to offer the blind and the lame in sacrifice! Mal. i. 8.

2 ¶ If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant,

3 And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;

4 And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of *it*, and enquired diligently, and behold, *it be true*, and the thing certain, *that* such an abomination is wrought in Israel:

5 Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, *even* that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die.

6 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

7 The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you.

Observe, how tenacious the Lord God was of his people's faithfulness, and how exemplary the punishment of idolatry. Oh! that many in the present hour, who are tempting the Israel of God by apostacy, would lay this to heart. 2 Tim. iii. 6.

8 ¶ If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, *being* matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose;

9 And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment:

10 And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the LORD shall choose shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee:

11 According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judg-

ment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, *to* the right hand, nor *to* the left.

12 And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the LORD thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel.

13 And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

The apostle Paul from the case of the presumptuous man here noticed, takes occasion to draw a very striking inference in his Epistle to the Hebrews, in those who tread underfoot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and are guilty of doing despite to the Spirit of grace. When the law is thus spiritualized and explained by the gospel, and the apostle's authority in this instance certainly justifies its being done, it is very sweet and delightful. See Heb. x. 28, 29.

14 ¶ When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that *are* about me;

God foreseeing what Israel would do, makes a provision for their conduct. But as God was their king, the very idea of desiring another was rebellious. See 1 Sam. xii. 1—19. Hosea viii. 4.

15 Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: *one* from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother.

Reader! is there not somewhat here which hath an eye to Jesus? Is he not of our brethren? Is he not indeed our king? Zech. ix. 9.

16 ¶ But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses; forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

Jesus chose the humblest of animals when he rode triumphant to the temple. Matt. xxi. 5.

17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

Solomon's transgression of this precept cost him very dear. 1 Kings xi. 1—3.

18 And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of *that which is* before the priests the Levites:

19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:

20 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, *to the right hand, or to the left:* to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.

Observe, it was not enough to have it written *for* him, he must do it with his own hand: and the highest honour he could arrive at, was the sacred employment here enjoined him. But this was not all. Writing it was not enough, he was to meditate therein. Reader! in how many families is the word of God a reproach, when the Bible is made to rest upon their shelves unused from day to day. Will not God's word be a swift witness against such in the day of judgment? Blessed Jesus! may thy word dwell in my heart richly in all wisdom, and may it be my meditation all the day.

#### REFLECTIONS.

BLESSED Jesus! thou art the unblemished spotless offering of my soul, and while I desire of thine own, O my God, to bring the best and choicest offerings, in token that all I am, and all I have is thine: it is Jesus himself, my sin-offering, my only righteousness, with which I would come to thine altar. And oh! how sweet and lovely art thou dearest Redeemer, in all thy person, offices, and characters! In purity, in comeliness, thou art not only fairer than the children of men, for grace is poured into thy lips, but thou dost infinitely transcend the angels. And is it not on behalf of thy people that thou appearest to our view, and art presented by faith to our God in the everlasting righteousness of thy spotless purity and holiness? Dearest Jesus! be thou ever my sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor!

Blessed Spirit! help me to look up to thee in the perusal of this chapter, and seeing thou didst enjoin the king of Israel to copy with his own

hand the sacred word, and to read therein all the days of his life; Oh! give me grace to meditate therein day and night; and like thy servant of old, may I be enabled to say, " Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I may be occupied in thy words. Lord, make the law of thy mouth dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver."

## CHAP. XVIII.

### CONTENTS.

*This is a very interesting Chapter, because the Holy Ghost in after ages of the Church, explained a striking passage in it as immediately pointing to Jesus. Besides this prominent feature, here are certain laws appointed respecting the Church revenue: the maintenance for the priests and Levites: cautions again repeated in relation to idolatry: and certain regulations in respect to prophecy.*

**T**HE priests the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and his inheritance.

2 Therefore shall they have no inheritance among their brethren: the LORD is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them.

The separation of the priests and Levites, evidently shews in what light God views his servants who minister in holy things. How much is it to be wished, that all such were indeed set apart, both by the divine appointment and ordination of the Lord, and from the necessity of wordly commerce with man, for these things bring a snare. This precept and the Lord's provision for his priests and Levites we have before: Numb. xviii. 9—11.

3 ¶ And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep; and they shall give unto the priest the shoulder, and the two cheeks, and the maw.

This sacrifice was a peace offering. See Chap. xii. 6.

4 The firstfruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him.

5 For the LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.

The apostle Paul gives the best comment upon this passage, and indeed the subject in general: He that waiteth at the altar should be partaker of the altar. 1 Cor. ix. 11—14. I would only observe upon

it, that as the Lord himself hath undertaken by this precept to provide for his servants, bad must be the mind that refuseth to comply: and, on the other hand, most unworthy must be that servant, who takes advantage of this, to exact from his brethren more than what is just and right.

6 And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourned, and come with all the desire of his mind unto the place which the LORD shall choose;

7 Then he shall minister in the name of the LORD his God, as all his brethren the Levites *do*, which stand there before the LORD.

8 They shall have like portions to eat, beside that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony.

There is a great tenderness manifested of the Lord's attention in this precept, in the provision for the free-will service of the Lord's ministers. Oh! do thou blessed Spirit, who hath the hearts of thy people at thy command, incline many such in our day to be instant in the work, to win souls to Jesus. 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

9 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10 There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

12 For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13 Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.

14 For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so *to do*.

It is wonderful to observe, how much Moses was led to speak to the people against the idolatry of the neighbouring nations around them. As if the Lord meant to convey by the frequency of his precepts on this



subject, the extreme jealousy he had for his honour. I cannot help adding, from the view here given of God's displeasure, at the pretended diviners of what is to come, how cautious our children should be made of listening to the pretended prognostications of modern fortune-tellers. Alas! that such ignorance should have remained in the world to the present period! What Paul saith of the ignorance of preceding ages in general, may, by a parity of reasoning, be peculiarly applied to this part of the science in the present. "The times of such ignorance God hath winked at, but now hath commanded all men every where to repent." Acts xvii. 30.

15 ¶ The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.

Of all the striking prophecies in God's word, directly and plainly pointing to the Lord Jesus, this seems to be among the highest. And so interesting is it, that we find it spoken of in quotations frequently. It is quoted by *Peter*, Acts iii. 22. by *Stephen*: Acts vii. 37. and by the people at large, after the miracle Jesus manifested in multiplying the bread: John vi. 14. But while I beg the Reader not to lose sight of this, because it certainly is among the strongest if not the very clearest prophecy concerning the Lord Jesus, which is in the whole law of God: I do beg of him also, not to overlook two or three most striking distinctions of character, by which this prophecy pointed him out. As for example: he was to be raised up by God, not of himself, for no man taketh this honour unto himself but he that was called of God, as was Aaron. Heb. v. 4, 5. He was to be raised up of his brethren. Dearest Jesus! though thou wast "God over all, blessed for ever," yet didst thou condescend to take upon thee our nature, and to be made like unto thy brethren, that thou mightest be a merciful and faithful high priest, Heb. ii. 16—18. And he was to be like Moses; that is, in the greatness and authority in which he came, only with this striking distinction which the apostle hath drawn; Moses was the servant, but Jesus the Lord himself. Heb. iii. 2, 3.

16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken.

We have an awful account of this: Exod. xx. 18, 19.

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth: and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

Are not all the sweet words which we hear of God spoken to us by our Lord Jesus Christ? Doth not that verse decide this great and precious truth? John i. 18.

19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him.

The best comment upon this passage, is the great question Paul asketh the Church of the Hebrews, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. ii. 2, 3.

20 ¶ But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?

22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

And what is the distinguishing mark to the church now? See those two sweet scriptures: Isaiah viii. 20. Rom. viii. 14. To which I add a third: "It is the spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." 1 John v. 6.

#### REFLECTIONS.

I WOULD pass by numberless other passages, how interesting soever they may be in themselves, to attend to this most engaging one, which contains the Father's promise of raising up a prophet to his people, whom they should hear; because his blessed Spirit is pledged and engaged to make such willing to hear in the day of his power. To thee would I look up, O thou great prophet, thou Lord God of the prophets, who hast indeed been raised up, in confirmation of the Father's promise, from among thy brethren! Thou camest, blessed Jesus, fully furnished and complete to the precious office, as the prophet of thy people! In all the great truth of salvation thou hast taught thy people, and thy people hast thou caused to hear thee by the sweet and constraining influences of thy Spirit. And how hast thou brought our dark, ignorant, and blind-minds, acquainted with the mysteries of thy kingdom! How hast thou revealed the Father's love to our hearts! How made known thy precious love! And how shed abroad the blessed Spirit's fellowship in the minds of thy people! Oh thou divine prophet! continue to my soul all thy sweet offices. Speak to me, blessed Jesus, speak to me in all my doubts, under all my fears, and when distressed

by reason of the enemy! Is it not thine to do all this, and to speak a word in season to weary souls? And if God my Father hath graciously said, this great, this Almighty prophet shall be heard, be it my portion to hear thy voice, and to rejoice in this assurance, that Jesus hath been anointed as my prophet, to guide me, and to instruct me in the knowledge of himself, and his great salvation.

## CHAP. XIX.

### CONTENTS.

*Our ever adored Redeemer told the Pharisees in the days of his flesh, that on the two great commandments, of the love of God and the love of our neighbour, hung all the laws and the prophets; and accordingly, Moses having in the foregoing chapters largely pointed out the first of these, proceeds now, in this chapter, to enforce the duties of the second table of the commandments.*

**W**HEN the LORD thy God hath cut off the nations, whose land the LORD thy God giveth thee, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses;

2 Thou shalt separate three cities for thee in the midst of thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.

This is a very sweet chapter if read under the Holy Ghost's teaching, and spiritually considered as leading to Jesus. And I take occasion here again in the opening of it to remind the reader once more, that it was of Jesus Moses wrote. If the reader will consult Exod. xxi. 13. he will there find, God's gracious promise concerning his merciful provision for sins of inadvertency in unintentional murder. And if he will then refer to Deut. iv. 41, 42. he will observe this promise fulfilled. I beg the Reader to consult the Commentary on the passages. But when the Reader hath made his observation on these passages, I would call upon him to remark, that the provision here made for the like occasions hath a reference to the state of Israel, *after* that Israel should become settled in Canaan. Yes! in Canaan as well as in the wilderness, it is Jesus alone who is the city of refuge to his people. Reader! do you not know that even in heaven itself Jesus will be the everlasting covering of his people, their house, their habitation, their joy, their all in all to all eternity! Sweetly and securely from their union with his person, their interest in his righteousness, and their acceptance in his blood, are their souls brought into the everlasting city of refuge, and guarded from every trouble and from every possibility of evil.

3 Thou shalt prepare thee a way, and divide the coasts of thy land, which the LORD thy God, giveth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every slayer may flee thither.

It is said that the Jewish magistrates were very particular respecting the observance of this law, and that once in a year a day was set apart to examine whether the ways which led to the cities of refuge were in good repair, and free from all obstructions; and that the poor fugitive which was fleeing from the avenger, might not be at a loss to know the path, a post of direction was placed at the corner of the road leading to those cities, with the word *Miklat*, that is *refuge*, engraven in great letters upon it. Whether this be literally true I presume not to say; but one thing I know, ministers of the gospel ought to be very diligent to see, not only one day in a year, but every day and all the day, that no stumbling-block be placed in the way of a poor sinner, who is fleeing to Jesus for his life. Oh, thou dear Redeemer! how gracious is it that our coasts are so divided in our land, that every way there is an opening to thee in thy blood and righteousness! Blessed be the Lord! his word is nigh unto us, and his invitation for ever sounding in our ears. Oh! for grace to flee unto thee, thou Lamb of God which takest away the sin of thy people. Rom. x. 8. John i. 29.

4 ¶ And this is the case of the slayer, which shall flee thither, that he may live: Whoso killeth his neighbour ignorantly, whom he hated not in time past;

5 As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the ax to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die: he shall flee unto one of those cities, and live:

6 Lest the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and slay him: whereas he *was* not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not in time past.

7 Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt separate three cities for thee.

It is beautiful to remark the rich provision of gospel mercies, not only for sins of notorious perverseness, but of ignorance. Alas! who can tell how oft he offendeth! But in Jesus, whom those cities of refuge represented, there is alone security for all. 1 John i. 7.

8 And if the LORD thy God enlarge thy coast, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto thy fathers;

9 If thou shalt keep all these commandments

to do them, which I command thee this day, to love the LORD thy God, and to walk ever in his ways; then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, beside these three:

10 That innocent blood be not shed in thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance, and *so* blood be upon thee.

It is worthy remark, that this precept of forming three cities more, in case of the enlargement of Israel's borders, was never fulfilled as it respected Israel only. But, had it not an eye to the enlargement of the church, when both Jew and Gentile were brought into one? See Isaiah liv. 2, 3. And in this sense was not the precept intended to shew, that the cities of refuge were as many to the Gentiles as to the Jews, and all typically referred to one and the same blessed object? Coloss. i. 20.

11 But if any man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally that he die, and fleeth into one of these cities:

12 Then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.

13 Thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt put away *the guilt of* innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee.

To explain those verses upon gospel principles, we must have recourse to what was originally said concerning murder: Gen. ix. 6. There should seem from hence, to be an open and daring attack upon the majesty of God himself in every instance of premeditated murder. Blood must therefore answer for blood. But this extends only to the punishment of the present state. In relation to the privileges of salvation by Jesus, we know that there is redemption in his blood for all manner of sin; and even some among the crucifiers of the Lord Jesus, were called by the apostle to the participation of this rich mercy on the day of Pentecost. Acts. ii. 23, 38, 39.

14 Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it.

This precept is again repeated and a curse annexed to it: Deut. xxvii. 17.

15 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that

he sinneth : at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

16 ¶ If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him *that which is* wrong;

17 Then both the men, between whom the controversy *is*, shall stand before the LORD, before the priest's and the judges, which shall be in those days;

18 And the judges shall make diligent inquisition : and, behold, *if* the witness *be* a false witness, *and* hath testified falsely against his brother ;

19 Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother : so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

20 And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.

The wisdom of those laws is too obvious to need a comment ; they have been already noticed : Numb. xxxv. 30. But what a sweet thought is it to the believer's experience, that in divine things there are the Holy Three which bear record in heaven, and there is the evidence of three which carry a corresponding testimony to his heart ; namely, the Holy Ghost as the *first* great witness in the spirits of his people ; his sacred word as the *second* ; and the believer's heart as the *third*, in which the evidence is given ; and all these three agree in one, in their united testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus. 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

21 And thine eye shall not pity ; *but* life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Was not the suretyship of Jesus pointed out in this law ? Did not Jesus when redeeming his people, give an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth ? Was not this literally indeed the case, when he who knew no sin became sin for us, and was made a curse for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him ?

#### REFLECTIONS.

HERE let me gaze on thee again and again, thou dearest Jesus, who art indeed the only City of refuge for all thy people, and who art placed in every avenue and way by which a poor slayer of himself and of his own soul by sin, may find shelter from the avenger. And while I look on thee as my sure hiding place from all the anger of my Father's broken law, and from all the accusations of my own guilty conscience, and

from all the malice of Satan; Oh! may the Holy Ghost give speed to my flight and earnestness to my desires, that before the avenger of blood can reach me, I may have taken shelter in thy person and righteousness. Oh! thou blessed Refuge of poor sinners, how fitly art thou prepared, how completely suited to all the wants of thy people! My soul even now, seems to feel an holy triumph in the security it finds by faith in thee! No plague shall come nigh my dwelling. In thee I feel a growing confidence of my everlasting security. Cease then your pursuits, ye ministers of evil, for my Lord hath shut me in like Noah in the ark, and housed me from your malice; and I am persuaded through his grace keeping me, that neither life nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## CHAP. XX.

### CONTENTS.

*This chapter relates to the military government of Israel among those who were more immediately appointed to fight the Lord's battles. Here are directions for their conduct, inspiring them with courage and making provision for those whose hearts failed them. While this chapter may be read with much profit, if considered with an eye to our spiritual foes in the cause of God, soldiers, and those whose profession in arms calls them to warfare, may derive under the Holy Ghost's teaching, much to animate them in their conflicts, while fighting under the captain of their salvation, Christ Jesus.*

**W**HEN thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

Observe the two great arguments made use of in this verse to give confidence to the people, the presence of their God and the past experience the people had had of his power, exercised towards them in their deliverance from Egypt. Let the Reader consider this in a spiritual sense, and beg for grace to make use of it in all the circumstances of his warfare. If I have Jesus with me that's all I need, and if I can look back and behold his deliverance in past extremities, that becomes a sure pledge for all future occasions. See that sweet scripture: Isaiah xxxiii. 20—22.

2 ¶ And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people,

3 And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and

do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them;

4 For the LORD your God *is* he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

There appears a great propriety in the appointment of God's priests to encourage God's people. They who are supposed to be most frequent at a throne of grace may be supposed to know most of the mind of the Lord. And are not ministers peculiarly called upon amidst the spiritual army of the Lord Jesus, to be always forward in animating the faithful soldiers of Jesus, to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Reader! do you not look beyond both ministers and people to contemplate Jesus in all this, as the great High Priest of our profession, going on before, conquering and to conquer, and calling upon his holy army to follow him to glory? Heb. xii. 1, 2.

5 And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man *is there* that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

6 And what man *is he* that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not *yet* eaten of it? let him *also* go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.

7 And what man *is there* that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.

8 And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man *is there that is* fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.

9 And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.

The cases here stated of exception, to disqualify from war, seem to have been intended in great mercy, that men of timid minds might find excuse from war, and yet not incur the reproach of their brethren. But is there not a spiritual sense veiled under it? We cannot follow Jesus in



the regeneration to the holy war, unless we deny self in every point of view, and take up his cross. See that Scripture of the Lord's own words upon this subject: Luke xiv. 25—27.

10 ¶ When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.

11 And it shall be if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, *that* all the people *that is* found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.

12 And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:

Observe the grace of God beautifully set forth in the proclamation made to sinners, in the gospel of salvation. If sinners will throw down their arms and receive the Lord Jesus all shall be well. It is only the incorrigible and contumacious on whom ruin will fall. How ought the ministers of Jesus to be unceasingly employed as his ambassadors, in beseeching sinners to be reconciled, and to be at peace with God? 2 Cor. v. 20.

13 And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword:

14 But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, *even* all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

15 Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities *which are* very far off from thee, which *are* not of the cities of these nations.

Is not this total destruction of the enemies of the church, a lively emblem of the everlasting overthrow of the ungodly in the day of God's vengeance? 2 Thess. i. 7—9.

16 ¶ But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee *for* an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:

17 But thou shalt utterly destroy them; *namely*, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:

18 That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the LORD your God.

The nations here excepted from mercy, are evidently types of the open and determined foes of the church of Jesus. There can be no coalition, no agreement between Christ and Belial. The seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent have an everlasting war. Lord! grant that under the supposed idea of mercy, I may never fancy myself more charitable than my God, and thus be found cherishing in my bosom the sworn foes to God and his Christ. Reader! is there not another instruction of a spiritual nature to be gathered from this passage? Instead of looking wholly *without* to the enemies of Jesus for the destruction of the Canaanites, may not you and I look *within*, and behold in the lusts of our nature both the foes of God and of our own souls also? And shall you and I give quarter to these deadly enemies of our peace, and which have nailed Jesus to the cross? Shall we wish to save any alive of this kind that breatheth? Oh my God! root them out and utterly destroy them, and do thou reign alone in my heart, the Lord of every passion.

19 When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an ax against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ *them* in the siege:

20 Only the trees which thou knowest that they *be* not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued.

There seems much mercy in this precept, and it is not confined we may suppose to trees only, but of a general tendency, in war to preserve all that can be consistently done, that there may be no waste of any of the good things of God's providence. It is one of the distinguishing characters of the gospel church, that neither violence nor destruction shall be heard within her borders: Isaiah lx. 18.

#### REFLECTIONS.

READER! let us not shut the book after the perusal of this Chapter, without first looking up for grace to bless the Lord for our happy lot, in being brought within the peaceable kingdom of Jesus who hath gone before us, and driven out the enemies of our salvation before our face. But while we bless his holy name for the privileges we enjoy as a people, in the consciousness that in our own hearts enemies are found, which

too often oppose our way in the path of grace; let us see that we give no truce to those everlasting foes which wage war against our God and against his Christ. Yes, dearest Jesus! I would say, do not I hate them, O Lord, of every description and character that hate thee, and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? Yea I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies.

Let the military character, and especially the ministers of Jesus, learn from this chapter where their strength and confidence is to be found, and in the sure presence of a gracious covenant God in Christ, and long experience of his faithfulness always derive courage to animate themselves and the holy army of God's people in their warfare with the enemies of their salvation. If the Lord of hosts be with us, the God of Jacob will be our refuge.

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## CHAP. XXI.

### CONTENTS.

*Provision is made in this chapter for various circumstances, of such things as might arise in the government of Israel. Here are appointments for the discovery of murder: for the marriage of captives taken in war: for preserving the birth-right of inheritance to the eldest son of a wife not beloved: for the punishment by stoning of a rebellious son: and for the taking down the bodies of malefactors before sun-set. Such are the contents of this chapter.*

**I**F one be found slain in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him:

2 Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain:

3 And it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke;

4 And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley:

I pause at these verses to remark the particularity of feature in the beast, which was doomed as a victim on this occasion; that it must be one which hath not been wrought with. Is not this typical of him who was doomed to have his blood shed as expiatory, to do away human offences, both those that are known and those that are secret? Did not

the Son of God, with whom nothing had been wrought of labour or of sin, come down to the valley of this our world, and was he not taken by the elders and rulers of the people, and crucified and slain?

5 And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the LORD thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the LORD; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be *tried*:

6 And all the elders of that city, *that are next* unto the slain *man*, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley:

7 And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen *it*.

8 Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them.

9 So shalt thou put away the *guilt* of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do *that which is right* in the sight of the LORD.

Was not this washing over the head of the beast, in allusion to the same thing as the high priest on the day of atonement? And in the address to God, in which the distinguishing feature of character, as the Redeemer of his people, is expressly kept in view; was it not, as all the expressions of the law, intimating that without shedding of blood there was no remission? And if so, doth not the Reader behold in all this Jesus doing away all our murderous sins, by which we have destroyed ourselves, (though from our blindness like the one slain in the land, and it be not known by whom), we long remain unconscious of it. See Leviticus xvi. 29. and with the apostle's commentary upon it, Heb. ix. 7—12.

10 When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,

11 And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife;

12 Then thou shalt bring her home to thine

house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails;

13 And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.

14 And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.

I pass over the natural history of the things here mentioned, to attend to the spiritual doctrine which seems to be veiled under it. And here, methinks, I see the Lord Jesus gathering from the Gentile world a bride for himself, to form one with the Jewish. Surely we are his right by lawful captivity, for we were enemies to God by wicked works, and if he hath brought us home to his house, we desire grace to renounce all our former idolatry, by the marks of paring the nails and shaving the head, and putting off the old man of our captivity which is corrupt, and putting on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. Dearest Jesus! do thou betroth me to thyself in faithfulness, in loving-kindness, in judgment, and in mercy! And let me remain in thine house for ever, for thou hatest putting away: so shall the king desire the beauty of his spouse, for he is thy Lord, (I would say) and may my soul worship him! Psm. xlv. 11.

15 ¶ If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, *both* the beloved and the hated; and *if* the first born son be her's that was hated;

16 Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit *that* which he hath, *that* he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, *which is indeed* the firstborn;

17 But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated *for* the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he *is* the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn *is* his.

There is somewhat beside the moral sense of this passage, of a spiritual signification connected with it to be understood. As in the case of the great Father of the Israelites, the Lord himself was pleased to determine even before the children were born, that the elder should serve the

younger, lest Israel should be led by caprice to do that which the Lord in wisdom was only competent to determine, the Lord passeth it into a law to prevent all abuses on this ground. But the Reader will not forget to observe the extent of the precept in this instance, it reached only to *temporal* possessions. Lord, let that be my portion which Paul speaks of: Ephes. i. 3.

18 ¶ If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and *that*, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:

19 Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;

20 And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son *is* stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; *he is* a glutton and a drunkard.

21 And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

It is very worthy observation, how exceedingly jealous the Lord hath manifested himself for the honor of his law. The ties of nature were all to give way when the honour of God stood in competition. See Zech. xiii. 3.

22 And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree:

23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

Whether the former observations in this chapter, which I ventured to make concerning the ever blessed Jesus, be well founded or not, yet here I presume to speak with more confidence; for the Holy Ghost hath graciously taught the church by the ministry of his servant the apostle, that Christ was made a curse for us, and in him this law had its grand completion. Precious Jesus! didst thou indeed hang on the accursed tree, at once a spectacle to heaven and earth, as if undeserving the notice or regard of either, when in thy spotless soul thou hadst done no sin, and no guile was found in thy mouth, and this on purpose that we might be made the righteousness of God in thee! Oh matchless love!

Oh unequalled condescension! Lord! enable me to carry about with me in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and may thy life, O Jesus, be manifested in my mortal flesh. Gal. iii. 13. 2 Cor. v. 21.

### REFLECTIONS.

READER! may it be your happiness and mine, while perusing this chapter, to remark the superiority of the gospel to the law. Evidently we here see by the provision made for certain cases to which no outward restraints could reach, how infinitely transcending that spiritual worship is, to which believers in Jesus are called, who are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ. The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in a better hope did, by which we draw nigh to God.

But chiefly, Reader, in the perusal of this Chapter, may you and I derive grace from the great glorifier of Jesus, to behold him shadowed forth in those services of the law. Blessed spirit of truth! do thou guide our souls into all truth. Say, Holy Lord! is it not Jesus whose blood shed in the valley of this world, opens a source for the discovery of all our soul-murdering transgressions, by which we destroy ourselves? And is he not our peace in making peace, for us with our God, with our consciences, with our neighbours, with the world, with all things? Is he not the holy Warrior which hath conquered sin and death, and brought home our souls as captives to his salvation? Is it not he, who, for the love he hath to our persons, hath betrothed us to himself for ever and ever? And was he not content to be made a curse for us when he hung on the tree and sustained the whole pressure of our sins, that in his righteousness we might be blessed! Hail, holy, blessed, dearest Jesus! be thou my strength and song, for thou art become my salvation; my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour!

## CHAP. XXII.

### CONTENTS.

*In this chapter we have certain laws respecting moral conduct, in the tenderness required to be shewn to the brute creation: of distinction in apparel: and of the deportment towards the married and unmarried women, together with special laws for particular cases.*

**T**HOU shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.

2 And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again.

3 In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all lost thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself.

4 Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift *them* up again.

The law given by Moses carries with it in every precept the most decisive evidences of its coming from God, for the whole speaks in a language not to be mistaken. But while I beg the Reader to notice this, I would beg of him also to remark with me, how Jesus in his commentary on the law of his servant Moses, carries up the precept to the gospel standard, in his unequalled manner. *Here* Moses is enjoined to point out the mercy to the brethren of Israel and their cattle. *There*, the Lord Jesus points out the mercy he would have shewn to our enemies. See Matt. v. 43—48.

5 ¶ The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Probably this precept was meant to distinguish God's people from their idolatrous neighbours, among whom, and probably for the gratification of their lusts, the distinction of the sex in their dress was not preserved. And it is possible, it might have a further object of a religious and spiritual nature. The apostle seems to have the same idea in view, when he speaks of the different dresses of the sexes in his Epistle to the Corinthians. 1 Cor. xi. 12, 13.

6 If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, *whether they be* young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young:

7 *But* thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee: that it may be well with thee, and *that* thou mayest prolong *thy* days.

All I would desire the Reader to remark with me upon this precept is this, that if a gracious God judged it proper, to give such a demonstration of his mercy, over all his works, so as to issue a precept to his people to be merciful: what an argument is this for believers in Jesus to repose themselves with full confidence on a God so gracious and merci-



ful. Doth God take care for oxen? saith the apostle: or to use an higher authority; If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more shall he not clothe you, O ye of little faith! Matt. vi. 30.

8 When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

So sacred in the sight of God was the shedding of blood. No doubt, in all these precepts, the grand object was, to keep in view the blood of atonement by the Lord Jesus.

9 Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.

10 Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.

11 Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, *as* of woollen and linen together.

12 Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest *thyself*.

Similar commands we meet with in Levit. xix. 19. Certainly there must have been somewhat of a spiritual meaning couched under these things; and what more likely to be intended by it, than that the heart should not be sown with diverse doctrines: that the man who plows spiritually, should not mingle any thing idolatrous with the true worship of the God of Israel: and put not on the woollen garment of his own poor righteousness, with the linen robe of God's righteousness. Precious Jesus! do I not see in this, a clear reference that the souls of thy people, may never mingle ought of their own, with the perfect and complete robe of thy salvation; which, like the garment that covered thy sacred body in the days of thy flesh, was without seam, wove from the top throughout. John xix. 23. And Lord, far be it from me, to make fringes to thy vesture, or fancy my poor offerings can add to thy complete glory, in the great work of salvation! 1 Cor. iii. 11—13.

13 If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,

14 And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid:

15 Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth *the tokens* of the

damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate:

16 And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;

17 And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech *against her*, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these *are the tokens of my daughter's virginity*. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 And the elders of the city shall take that man and chastise him;

19 And they shall amerce him in an hundred *shekels* of silver, and give *them* unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days.

20 But if this thing be true, *and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel*:

21 Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

It is interesting to behold, how great provision the Lord was pleased to make, in order that the Israel of God, should be as distinguished among the unclean nations around them, as the Lord had distinguished them from others by his grace. And if we consider the perpetual tenderness which the Lord manifested towards them, to keep them from spiritual fornication, we shall only be led to honour yet more the jealousy of God over his people. Hosea iii. 3.

22 ¶ If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, *both* the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put evil away from Israel.

23 If a damsel *that is* a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;

24 Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel because she cried not, *being* in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

25 ¶ But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die:

26 But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; *there is* in the damsel no sin *worthy* of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so *is* this matter:

27 For he found her in the field, *and* the betrothed damsel cried, and *there was* none to save her.

28 ¶ If a man find a damsel *that is* a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

30 ¶ A man shall not take his father's wife, nor discover his father's skirt.

Some of the laws in this book of Leviticus, were before given: Levit. xx. 10. The repetition in this place, only serves to intimate their importance. And it is a very solemn consideration, equally important to be regarded under the New Testament as under the Old, that while marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled, whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. Heb. xiii. 4.

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#### REFLECTIONS.

HOLY Spirit of truth! enable me to see the precious designs of thy blessed will, in the compassion thou hast manifested by those precepts of tenderness, by which thy people are to shew their affection to their brethren, in their regard to whatever is theirs. And as the one great character by which they are known, is, that they dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the nations: may I never mingle any thing with the garment of Jesus's righteousness, but be found wholly the Lord's, both towards him and all that are in the world. Lord, keep my soul chaste

and inviolable to thee, and spotless among men. Oh! preserve me blameless to the day of thy coming, and may I walk in love, as Christ also hath loved me and given himself for me, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour: but fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be once named, as becometh a saint of Jesus; and may the peace of God, rule in my heart, to the which I am also called, and be thankful.

## CHAP. XXIII.

### CONTENTS.

*This chapter is but a continuation of the same subject as in the former. Here are certain laws for the preservation of Israel, as an holy people to the Lord, without blemish and without imperfection; laws, also, for the keeping in purity the camp, and the persons of the Lord's people; against whoredom, usury, the breach of vows, and encroachments on another's property.*

**H**E that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

2 A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

3 An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever:

4 Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.

5 Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee.

6 Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever.

The disqualification to the privileges of God's people, is expressed by these marks, which imply defect. Who shall say, except the great searcher of hearts, what are the causes of prevention, to unite souls re-

ally and spiritually to the congregation of the Lord. And, perhaps, as the prospect of the holy seed in the person of the Messiah, was the great object unto which all Israel looked forward, with the hope that it might be in their household and family; the Lord was pleased, by this precept, to manifest how important a matter it was, that there should be no intercourse by marriages with the idolatrous neighbours around them. In after ages we find the breach of this precept deeply lamented by the fathers; see Nehemiah xiii. 1—3, 23—25.

7 Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land.

8 The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the LORD in their third generation.

It is remarkable from the first, in the instances of the fathers of both houses, Jacob as the head of Israel, and his brother Esau as the head of Edom, how the Lord drew the line of separation: see Malachi i. 2—4.

9 ¶ When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing.

The precept here is comprehensive, and includes all; it is from every wicked thing.

10 If there be among you any man, that is not clean by reason of uncleanness that chanceth him by night, then shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come within the camp:

11 But it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall wash *himself* with water: and when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp *again*.

12 Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad:

13 And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon; and it shall be, when thou wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee:

14 For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee:

The precept becomes more particular. But it hath a reference to uncleanness of every kind. The sanctity of the camp evidently arose from the divine presence. The apostle makes a very beautiful observation upon it, when describing the absolute necessity of our Lord's sanctifying the people, when he says, that he suffered without the gate. Heb. xiii. 11—13.

15 Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee:

16 He shall dwell with thee, *even* among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.

Wherefore was this merciful precept introduced here, but to shew us, that as the land of Israel was like a city of refuge, none who took shelter in it, should be dragged thence. And is not this spiritual? If you and I have taken shelter from the service of the hard masters we once served, Sin and Satan, and are come to Jesus and the promised land; we must not be given up to our former captivity. If the Son of God hath made us free, we shall be free indeed. John viii. 36.

17 There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel.

Is not the same said with respect to spiritual Israel now? Rev. xxii. 15. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

18 Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. Prov. xv. 8. And the Lord declares, that he hates robbery for burnt-offering. Isaiah lxi. 8.

19 Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:

As an Israelite received his inheritance from God it was not alienable. Herein we have a type of the promised inheritance in Jesus. Blessed be God! this is not forfeitable. I may be poor; I may be in want; I may be compelled to borrow; but my new birth-right in the Redeemer is not mine to sell.

20 Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless

thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

The stranger is here introduced in similar circumstances, to shew the line of distinguishing grace.

21 ¶ When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.

23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; *even* a free will offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

The Lord's people were not obliged to vows; but they were obliged, when they had at any time made them, to their faithful observance. Eccles. v. 2. 4.

24 ¶ When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put *any* in thy vessel.

25 When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.

Did not the Lord, by these precepts of freedom, and liberty to partake of the fruits of the vine and of the field one among another, not only teach the brotherly love and affection, by which his people should be known and distinguished: but was it not intended also, to shew that our blessings are common blessings, for all freely to partake in the Lord Jesus? The disciples were not reprov'd in the days of our Lord's flesh, for eating of the ears of corn, as they walked through the fields, but because it was done on the Lord's day. Matt. xii. 2.

#### REFLECTIONS.

MY soul! while thou beholdest the many disqualifications, by which men are kept off from the congregation of the Lord's people, think of thy privileges, and bless God that thou art neither an Ammonite nor an Edomite, though a Gentile, and not of the original stock of Israel; and yet permitted to come into the congregation by the new and living way, opened for sinners in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. Lord! give me grace that I may not associate with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them; and may I be always found cleansed from all

my pollutions in the blood of Jesus. Dear Lord! I thank thee, that when by thy Holy Spirit, I was enabled to flee to thee, from the rigorous and hard service of Satan; thou hast not given me back again into his power, but hast graciously promised that sin shall not have dominion over me, for I am no longer under the law, as a covenant of works, but under grace. May I not hope, blessed Jesus, that as sin hath reigned unto death, so shall grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord?

## CHAP. XXIV.

### CONTENTS.

*The Chapter before us is a continuation of certain laws, appointed to be observed in certain cases. Here are directions concerning divorces; of the permission for the newly married to refrain from war; concerning pledges; men-stealers; leprosy; hire of wages; of justice, and of charity.*

**W**HEN a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house.

2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's *wife*.

3 And *if* the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her *to be* his wife;

4 Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that *is* abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

Our blessed Lord's comment upon this law throws a full light upon the subject of divorces in general. The permission of such acts, carries with it the evidence of the hardness of the human heart. Matt. xix. 8. But what a precious thought is it to the true believer in Jesus, that his union with him admits of no divorce. No, not even our backsliding, for he saith himself, "I have betrothed thee to me for ever. And though thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again unto me, saith the Lord." Jer. iii. 1. Hosea ii. 19.



5 When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: *but* he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

This precept very properly follows the one respecting divorces. Absence from the object we love begets coolness; and it would be well to be considered by the married, whether much of the infidelity we hear of in common life, doth not begin in this. But whether this be so or not, well I know that the absence of my affections, from the Lord my husband, and the earthly concerns, which so much carry away my soul from frequent communion with Jesus, are the sad causes why my unworthy and unfaithful heart, is living so far from him. Oh! for more constant enjoyment of thy presence, dearest Redeemer!

6 ¶ No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for he taketh *a man's* life to pledge.

This precept had much of mercy in it, because the nether, or upper millstone, was daily needed to grind the borrower's food. But, do I not see here a fence thrown up, to secure to a believer, his inheritance both in the upper and the nether springs of all our mercies in Jesus? Reader, depend upon it, if Jesus be your portion, or as this verse expresseth it, your *life*, you cannot pledge him, neither can any take him from you. Sweet thought! in all our wants, in all our poverty, borrowings, and distresses, though the creditor be come to take our two sources of comfort from us, in the upper and the nether springs of Jesus's love; the vessels of grace shall be filled, and we shall have enough and to spare. See that sweet scripture, and read the spiritual illustration of it in proof, 2 Kings iv. 1—7.

7 ¶ If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

Beside the cruelty to the body, in selling a child or youth from his friends, there was yet greater cruelty to the soul, in causing an Israelite to be sent out of his land, whereby he was in danger of going after other gods. This was what David so much condemned in Saul's conduct towards him: See 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.

8 ¶ Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, *so* ye shall observe to do.

9 Remember what the LORD thy God did unto

Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt.

Leprosy was a disease of so singular a nature, and to be treated so differently from all others, that we cannot hesitate to conclude, what both Jewish and Christian writers indeed have all agreed in, that it had a reference to somewhat of a spiritual allusion. The priest, and not the physician, was to be consulted upon it. All the laws concerning it, were of a religious kind. Seen therefore with an allusion to the sin of the soul, how apt a representation were all the appointments concerning it, which pointed to the atonement by blood, as the only cure. 1 John i. 7. The case of *Miriam* is very striking in point. See Num. xii. 10.

10 ¶ When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge.

11 Thou shalt stand abroad, and the man to, whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee.

12 And if the man *be* poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge:

13 In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment; and bless thee: and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God.

These directions concerning poor debtors, shew the mercy of the Lord. Without going into all the minute circumstances of the case, respecting our insolvency towards God, I would ask the Reader, whether he doth not discern some very interesting points, which shew us our mercies in Jesus. Yes! Reader, however poor, however insolvent, however obliged to give our pledge by day, all the people of Jesus sleep in the sure covering of the Lord's righteousness. It may serve to teach us also, how much these creditors resemble the great and Almighty Creditor, who are blessed in their kind and compassionate remembrance of their poorer brethren. 1 John iii. 14.

14 ¶ Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant *that is* poor and needy, *whether he be* of thy brethren, or of thy strangers *that are* in thy land within thy gates:

15 At his day thou shalt give *him* his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he *is* poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.

The justice, to say nothing of the mercy, of this precept, is too obvious. The Lord grant, that no cry of my poor brother, or of a stranger, may ever go up to my God against me. Reader! think only what a discordant thing it would be, if while you are sending up a prayer for mercy, another should be sending up a prayer for justice upon your head. Read that scripture: James v. 4.

16 ¶ The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

The Lord hath reserved to himself this privilege, of punishing the sin of the fathers upon the children, but he hath no where given this authority to others. Exod. xx. 5.

17 Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, *nor* of the fatherless; nor take thee the widow's raiment to pledge:

18 But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

The consciousness of our past ruined state, when in the awakened condition of a poor sinner, a stranger to God and to Christ, is the best of all possible arguments, to induce compassion to the souls of the unawakened. Oh! that the Reader, if the Lord hath in mercy called him out of darkness and the shadow of death, may feel somewhat of the Psalmist's spirit: Psm. lxxvi. 16.

19 ¶ When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

20 When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

21 When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean *it* afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

22 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a

bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing. .

All these are additional arguments, to manifest the tender mercies of the Lord. We have a beautiful example of obedience to these precepts in the instance of *Boaz*. And, as in that instance, we have a lively type of the ever-blessed Jesus, I hope the Reader will not fail to consult it in this place and meditate upon it. Ruth ii. 15, 16. And are we not strangers, when we glean in the scriptures of Jesus? Lord, do thou command thy servants to let fall handfuls purposely for us, and give us to glean even among the sheaves.

### REFLECTIONS.

I BESEECH my God and Saviour, that he will enlighten the eyes of my understanding, that in reading those precepts of his holy law, I may be led to view somewhat either leading to Jesus, or pointing to him, in every one. If, dearest Lord, thou hast betrothed me to thyself, thou wilt not give me a writing of divorcement, though I am altogether unworthy of thy love, for thou hatest putting away, and thou hast said I shall be thine for ever. Lord, give me grace to imitate thy tenderness, and in all my concerns with my poorer brother, forget not that thou hast condescended to call me thy brother; and even to strangers, may I never forget, that when in the bondage of sin and corruption, thou didst seek me out and free me, I was a stranger in the land of Egypt. Oh! for grace to manifest my love to thee, in the remembrance of all thine afflicted, tried, and distressed family. The Lord Jesus help me by his sweet constraining love, to do by others as he hath done by me; and to put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering: that it may be manifest to my own heart, and to all with whom I have to do, that the same mind is in me, which was also in Christ Jesus.

## CHAP. XXV.

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*The subject in this Chapter is similar to the former. Here are laws of direction, for the punishment of evil-doers: respecting the ox in his labour: the disgrace of him that refuseth to build up his brother's name: the punishment of the immodest woman: laws respecting weights and measures: a precept for the blotting out the memory of Amalek.*

**I**F there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that *the judges* may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

2 And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to

lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number.

3 Forty stripes he may give him, *and* not exceed : lest, *if* he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.

No doubt in all instances, strict examination took place before punishment. The limitation of the number of stripes prevented the effects of rigour. The Jews have a tradition, that while the stripes were laying on, the judge of the court read those words of scripture; Deut. xxviii. 58, 59, and Deut. xxix. 9. And in after ages, Psm. lxxviii. 38. The apostle Paul tells us, that he suffered this punishment to the extreme point five times. 2 Cor. xi. 24. But what saith another apostle on the subject; 1 Pet. iv. 13, 14.

4 ¶ Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out *the* corn.

Paul hath given the best comment upon this passage. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10.

5 ¶ If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.

6 And it shall be, *that* the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother *which* is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.

7 And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.

8 Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and *if* he stand *to it*, and say, I like not to take her;

9 Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall

answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.

10 And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

I venture to think that this precept had in it somewhat more, than merely what is contained in the obvious letter of it. If it be remembered, that the promise of the woman's seed, bruising the serpent's head, had not in those early ages been so clearly and fully revealed, in what stock or tribe the promised seed should spring, this will serve to shew, why it was that the whole nation of the Jews were so very anxious to have children. And, therefore, the preserving the name in Israel was principally with this view. But if we turn to the example of *Boaz*, in the case of *Ruth*, where this precept was fully carried into effect, and read what the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to record concerning this thing: and if we do not forget, at the same time, that *Boaz* after the flesh, was a progenitor of the Lord Jesus Christ; the subject will then open to our view in all its glory. See *Ruth* iii. 9, to the end, and chap. iv. throughout. Blessed Jesus! thou art indeed our near kinsman, our *Goel*-Redeemer! and thou hast not only married our nature, but hast redeemed our mortgaged inheritance, when all other brethren were incompetent to do it.

11 ¶ When men strive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets:

12 Then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye shall not pity *her*.

For the honor of women, we should hope this precept was seldom violated, or the punishment made necessary.

13 ¶ Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small.

14 Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small.

15 *But* thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

16 For all that do such things, *and* all that do unrighteously, *are* an abomination unto the Lord thy God.

It were much to be wished that these precepts were kept in view by all persons concerned in trade.

17 ¶ Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;

18 How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, *even all that were* feeble behind thee, when thou *wast* faint and weary; and he feared not God.

19 Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance to possess it, *that* thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget *it*.

This short account of Amalek, and the punishment of that people, comes in very properly upon the close of the foregoing precepts; for it was both a just weight and just measure, that Israel should requite Amalek, for his conduct towards them on their first coming out of Egypt. Exod. xvii. 14—16. It is worthy remark, how Saul offended the Lord, at least four hundred years after this appointment, in not fully following up the precept: see 1 Sam. xv. 2—9. But, I would have the Reader look a little further, than to the mere history of Amalek, and view in it somewhat typical of God's people, in their conflicts with the enemies of their salvation, in all ages. Amalek, represents all those foes of our souls, which oppose us as Amalek did Israel, the moment God is bringing us out of *spiritual* Egypt. Hence Reader! behold the propriety of utterly destroying them from under heaven. Lord! I would say, enable me to slay all my lusts, all the corruptions both within and without; all the powers of darkness, and of the world, which oppose my way to thee, thou blessed Jesus!

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#### REFLECTIONS.

I DESIRE grace to bless my compassionate God, that my stripes have fallen far short of my sins, and I may truly say to my soul with one of old, Know, therefore, that God hath exacted of thee less than thy iniquity deserved. It is thou, dearest Jesus, who hast been wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon thee, and with thy stripes I have been healed. Lord! grant me the teachings of thine holy Spirit, that in all my dealings with men, I may bring no reproach upon thy cause, nor have divers weights and divers measures, but a just balance, which is thy delight. And for all the Amalekites and enemies of my salvation, Lord! endue me with strength and holy resolution, that mine eye may not spare, however delicately they may seem, but by the arm of my God, may I hew them in pieces before the Lord my Saviour.

## CHAP. XXVI.

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*As the man of God is drawing to a conclusion on the subject of laws, in this chapter he points out the form of words to be used in offering the basket of first-fruits; and the prayer with which the offering is to be brought; and then follows up both, with reminding the people once more, in whose name and authority he had acted, in the delivery of the commandments.*

AND it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein;

2 That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there.

There seems to have been a double design in this precept. In presenting the first of every thing to the Lord, we not only acknowledge the right of his sovereignty, but we deny ourselves. The prophet Micah saith, "My soul desired the first ripe fruit." Micah vii. 1. The giving that to God, which the heart seems most itself to desire, is therefore a blessed proof of self-denial. But beside these things, is there not an eye to Jesus in this appointment? Is he not expressly called the first fruits by the apostle? 1 Cor. xv. 20. And it is remarkable, that the day the first fruits of barley were to be offered, corresponded to the day when Jesus arose from the grave. And so again, on the day in which the first fruits of the wheat-harvest were presented to the Lord, corresponded to the day when Jesus sent down the first fruits of the Holy Ghost. Compare Deut. xvi. with the Evangelists on the resurrection, and Acts ii. 1, 2.

3 And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the country which the LORD sware unto our fathers for to give us.

Nothing could be more proper, than that every Israelite with his own mouth, should confess that the Lord had fulfilled his promise, in bringing him to the land he had said. Reader! and will not every true Israelite of the spiritual seed of Jesus say this, when he cometh to that rest, which remaineth for the people of God? Heb. iv. 9.

4 And the priest shall take the basket out of



thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the LORD thy God.

Jesus is both our priest, and altar, and offering. It is he which sanctifieth all the gifts of his people.

5 And thou shalt speak and say before the LORD thy God, A Syrian ready to perish *was* my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous :

Jacob was in fact a Syrian, for he lived many years in Padan-aram. And Laban, his father-in-law, was a Syrian, consequently his daughters sprung from thence. It is good to remind the spiritual Israel of the hole of the pit, whence they were digged. Isaiah li. 1.

6 And the Egyptians evil intreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage :

7 And when we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression :

8 And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders :

9 And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, *even* a land that floweth with milk and honey.

10 And now, behold, I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God :

11 And thou shalt rejoice in every good *thing* which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.

I hope the Reader will not fail to read these verses with profit, if while he beholds the trainment of Israel, and remembers their history, he looks back and connects with it his own. Do you know my brother, what the spiritual oppressions of Egyptian bondage under Sin and Satan mean? Do you remember the wormwood and the gall? Can you recollect the time, the place, the memorable spot, and the Lord's answers to prayer, when from the depth of sin, you cried to the depth of di-

vine mercy, and found Jesus who brought you out of darkness, and brought you in to his marvellous light? If you can enter into an apprehension of these things, you will not fail, under divine teaching, to enter into a real enjoyment and participation of the Israelite's thankful approach to God, with the first fruits of his land. Oh! the sweetness of that scripture when the heart of a believer can fully adopt it for his own. Psm. cvii. throughout.

12 When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, *which is the year of tithing*, and hast given *it* unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;

This law was pointed out before: Deut. xiv. 28, 29.

13 Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of *mine* house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten *them*:

14 I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away *ought* thereof for any unclean *use*, nor given *ought* thereof for the dead: *but* I have hearkened to the voice of the LORD my God, *and* have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.

15 Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

The Jews have a tradition, that these words were spoken with a low voice, in token of humility. And, indeed, if we read with an eye to the pure gospel of Jesus, there is a great propriety in so doing. Remember what Jesus saith: Luke xvii. 10. The blessing implored for all Israel at the close of the prayer, is very sweet. So should the faithful in Christ Jesus, constantly pray for the whole church of Jesus. That is a delightful resolution of the prophet, and worthy of universal imitation: Isaiah lxii. 1. And that is a positive precept of the Lord, particularly to his priests and ministers: Isaiah lxii. 6, 7.

16 ¶ This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

17 Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice:

18 And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that *thou* shouldest keep all his commandments;

19 And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.

I would have the Reader attend to the expressions in these verses, with an eye to the original covenant of grace, and he will then enter into a proper apprehension of them. That original covenant was, that in the seed of Abraham, should all the nations of the earth be blessed. "He saith not (saith the apostle Paul) and to *seeds*, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." Gal. iii. 16. When God, therefore, is here said to avouch himself to be the Lord God of Israel, it is that in Christ, God promiseth to bless his people, and to accept them in him. And his people avouch God to be their God in Christ; depending upon the fulfilment of all his promised covenanted mercies in him. Those expressions of making Israel high in name, in honour, and in praise; and an holy people above all nations, are all very striking characters of the Israel of God. And who is, or ought to be, so holy, so high, so honourable, in their birth, their state, their life, their conversation, as those who have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ? Who so peculiar as those, whom the Lord God of heaven and earth hath made his *Segullah*, that is, his chosen ones, his peculiar people. Reader! may it be your happiness and mine, to do as Israel did, avouch God to be our God, and may he avouch us to be his people.

#### REFLECTIONS.

BLESSED Jesus! thou art the first fruits indeed, and the first and last, and best offering of my soul; for acceptance with my God. Early do I desire to bring thee in the first of every year, and the first of every day, and the first of every morning of the day, and close of the day, as the sole cause of my rejoicing: for in the moment I do this, I desire with the Israelite to cry out, A Gentile ready to perish was my father, and from the Egypt of sin and death, hath the Lord brought out my

soul. He remembered me in my low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever. And will the Lord, indeed, condescend to avouch me for his own? Shall I be of his chosen ones! Will the Father of mercies look upon me as accepted in the beloved, and mark me as the object of his peculiar love? Hath my Jesus purchased me with the peculiar price of his blood? Hath the Holy Ghost visited my soul with the influences of his peculiar grace? Am I, indeed, the object of the united mercy of the Holy Three in One: and are the peculiar blessings of the covenant, the portion of my soul? Lord! grant me grace this day to avouch myself, with all I have, and all I am, to be thine for ever. Take my two mites (for soul and body are nothing more, compared to this vast treasury) and accept them, O Lord, in Jesus, for of thine own do I give thee. Witness for me, ye angels of light, that I will know no other God but the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that I desire to be distinguished from all the nations of the earth, that are not the Israel of God, as separated from them; and that henceforth I will make mention of his righteousness, even his only, who is the God of my life, and will be my portion for ever.

## CHAP. XXVII.

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*As Moses had now nearly concluded every thing relating to the precepts; he enjoins the people in this chapter to adopt a means of keeping alive in their remembrance the great things of God's law, by writing it upon stones. And the chapter is concluded in aiming to impress the whole still more upon their minds, by causing the Levites to pronounce curses upon all that disobeyed the divine commands.*

**A**ND Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day.

2 And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaister them with plaister:

3 And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey; as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee.

4 Therefore it shall be when ye be gone over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaister them with plaister.

If the Reader will recollect, similar methods of perpetuating the law of God, were observed after the delivery on Mount Sinai. Exod. xxiv. 4.

5 ¶ And there shalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up *any* iron *tool* upon them.

6 Thou shalt build the altar of the LORD thy God of whole stones; and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the LORD thy God:

I beg the Reader not to overlook the plainness to be observed in the building of this altar: nothing of human art or labour was to be joined with it, nor any human tool to pollute it. And as Christ is our altar, was not this manifestly teaching that his purity would be sullied, if we bring to it any thing of our own to mingle with it? He is the stone cut out of the mountain without hands: Dan. ii. 34.

7 And thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the LORD thy God.

The feast of peace-offerings, carried with it a token of the peace and amity between God and his people. The feast of the Lord's Supper in the Gospel Church is to the same amount, for it is a feast upon a sacrifice, in token that Jesus hath made our peace in the blood of his cross: he is our passover, sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

8 And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.

9 And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the LORD thy God.

10 Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.

The repeated charges and cautions given, imply the vast importance of the thing itself. Deut. xxx. 11—15.

11 And Moses charged the people the same day, saying,

12 These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin:

13 And these shall stand upon mount Ebal to

curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

The Mount Ebal, and the Mount Gerizzim, stood near each other, a valley being between them. It is worthy remark, that in the Gospel state, when Jesus went up into the mountain, it was only to *bless* his people. The tribes were divided in six to each, for blessing the people, and for pronouncing the curses. Perhaps *they* both had an allusion to the Gospel state, for the law is our schoolmaster unto Christ: and ministers are by the terrors of the law to persuade men. 2 Cor. v. 11.

14 ¶ And the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice,

Probably from the number of Israel, many Levites was engaged in this service.

15 Cursed *be* the man that maketh *any* graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth *it* in a secret *place*. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen.

16 Cursed *be* he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.

17 Cursed *be* he that removeth his neighbour's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen.

18 Cursed *be* he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen.

19 Cursed *be* he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.

20 Cursed *be* he that lieth with his father's wife; because he uncovereth his father's skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen.

21 Cursed *be* he that lieth with any manner of beast. And all the people shall say, Amen.

22 Cursed *be* he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.

23 Cursed *be* he that lieth with his mother-in-law. And all the people shall say, Amen.

24 Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbour secretly. And all the people shall say, Amen.

25 Cursed *be* he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen.

26 Cursed *be* he that confirmeth not *all* the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.

I detain not the Reader with observations concerning the several curses here pronounced, or entering into the particulars of them. It is enough to remark, that they express their several sentences of condemnation to the several breaches of the law: and as the law pronounceth a curse upon every one that continueth not in *all things* that are written in the book of the law, to do them; it is evident that, as all men have sinned, and come short of God's glory, so all men come under the sentence of condemnation. But what a precious thought is it to the true believers in Christ, that though condemned in ourselves by reason of sin, we are freed from the curse by virtue of the righteousness and obedience of Jesus! Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

#### REFLECTIONS.

How sweet and refreshing to my soul are the views of Jesus, as the high priest and altar, and offering of my heart, in the moment that I read the solemn charges of God's law, and the dreadful penalty of disobedience. My soul indeed cannot but subscribe with full consent to God's justice, in all these sentences of curses on the breach of his holy law; while my heart flies to the gracious offer of mercy in Jesus. And in the very moment I am constrained to say Amen, to every tittle of God's righteous law, Oh! how precious is it, dearest Jesus, to view thee as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Thou art the altar my soul would flee to, for thou art my great deliverance, when both law and justice challenge me before God. Be thou my God, my guide, my peace, my joy, and my consolation for ever!

### CHAP. XXVIII.

#### CONTENTS.

*This Chapter is a continuation of the former, and is in fact part of it. The curses having been proclaimed in the foregoing, the blessings are subjoined in this. But I conceive that this Chapter is partly prophetic, for many of the things spoken of, were fulfilled in the successive periods of the church. The christian Reader will find, under God the Holy Ghost's teaching, much of gospel veiled under the several parts of it, which I hope the Lord will bless to his perusal.*

AND it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe *and* to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth :

2 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

3 Blessed *shalt* thou *be* in the city, and blessed *shalt* thou *be* in the field.

4 Blessed *shall be* the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

5 Blessed *shall be* thy basket and thy store.

6 Blessed *shalt* thou *be* when thou comest in, and blessed *shalt* thou *be* when thou goest out.

7 The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

8 The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto, and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

9 The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.

10 And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD: and they shall be afraid of thee.

11 And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in



the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

12 The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

13 And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do *them*:

14 And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Though I propose to make but a short observation on the whole of these blessings, for the sake of being brief, and that I may not increase the bulk of the present Commentary too much; yet I do beg the Reader to remark with me, the greatness and extensiveness of the blessings here promised. They relate to almost all the circumstances of life, and if read with a view to spiritual, as well as temporal mercies, they are enough to animate every true believer's heart; because, all the promises in Christ Jesus are yea, and Amen; and he himself, is the one, great, and comprehensive mercy of the whole covenant. Blessings are promised to the true seed of Israel, in all their outward concerns, in their persons, in their households, in the city, and in the field; whether at home or abroad, whether in trade or in labour, whether in their journeys, or in their stated resting places, both in lying down, and rising up. And is not Jesus all this, and infinitely more to his people? Oh! how precious is it to found all our mercies *in* him, and to see him, and enjoy him in every one. Psm. lxxii. 17. But while I beg the Reader to remark with me, the gospel application of these mercies, I would beg of him not to overlook their temporal application in the history of the Jewish nation. Through a series of ages, Israel was blessed, and distinguished with the divine favor, during the reigns of their successive Kings from the time of Joshua to the Babylonish captivity. See Joshua, the books of Samuel, the books of the Kings, and the books of the Chronicles.

15 ¶ But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his sta-

tutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

16 Cursed *shalt thou be* in the city, and cursed *shalt thou be* in the field.

17 Cursed *shall be* thy basket and thy store.

18 Cursed *shall be* the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

19 Cursed *shalt thou be* when thou comest in, and cursed *shalt thou be* when thou goest out.

Very awful are these denunciations. Wherever the sinner goes, however he is circumstanced, however employed in the midst of the greatest temporal possessions, the basket may be full, the wine presses running over with new wine; yet, if the curse of God be upon the whole, they are of no value; misery is in all. Reader! pause over this account, and then look into life. Doth not this explain to us, why we see so many miserable in the midst of affluence? "To the pure," saith the apostle, "all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure." Titus i. 15. The original curse upon the ground, being not taken off to the unregenerate heart, still remains to bring forth thorns and thistles; and these cannot but produce an everlasting source of disquietude; for the curse of God is in the house of the wicked. Prov. iii. 33. Reader! if you are sitting down to the enjoyment of covenant mercies, do not fail to eye Jesus in every one. Even in the contrast of the carnal man's misery we view our privilege. Oh! what a relish doth the conscious love and favor, and good-will of him that dwelt in the bush, give to our mercies. Even our afflictions with him are like the spiced wine of the pomegranate. Song viii. 2.

20 The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.

21 The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.

22 The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.

23 And thy heaven that *is* over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that *is* under thee *shall be* iron.

24 The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

25 The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

26 And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray *them* away.

27 The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.

28 The LORD shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart:

29 And thou shalt grope at noon day, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save *thee*.

30 Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.

31 Thine ox *shall be* slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass *shall be* violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep *shall be* given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue *them*.

32 Thy sons and thy daughters *shall be* given

unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail *with longing* for them all the day long; and *there shall be* no might in thine hand.

33 The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed *always*:

34 So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

35 The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.

36 The LORD shall bring thee and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.

37 And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.

38 Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather *but* little in; for the locust shall consume it.

39 Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress *them*, but shall neither drink *of* the wine, nor gather *the grapes*; for the worms shall eat them.

40 Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint *thyself* with the oil; for thine olive shall cast *his fruit*.

41 Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity.

42 All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.

43 The stranger that *is* within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.

44 He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.

The picture of misery is drawn more horrible in these verses, from describing the particular features of the curses, the Lord threatens to send after the sinner. If the Reader will attend to them minutely, he will find, that they extend to almost every possible state to which our poor nature can be exposed. To sickness, to famine, to the destruction of the sword, to captivity in the enemies country, to the loss of children; in short, to every personal evil. In the book of Ezekiel, the Lord speaks of his four sore judgments, but here they are four-fold. Ezek. xiv. 21. But Reader! if we read them spiritually, how do those distresses rise in magnitude to our view. If our miseries are ever so great, yet if they are bounded within the limits of the life of man on earth, in the grave the weary are at rest. But if souls are cursed with an everlasting curse, and when they lie down in the grave, sin is their grave-fellow, and follows them to eternity, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Oh! the wretched, wretched state of the ungodly! when that wrath of God shall light on the sinner, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Romans i. 18.

45 Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:

46 And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.

47 Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all *things*;

48 Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all *things*: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

49 The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, *as swift* as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

50 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall

not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:

51 And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which *also* shall not leave thee *either* corn, wine, or oil, *or* the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he hath destroyed thee.

52 And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land; and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

53 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:

54 *So that* the man *that is* tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave:

55 So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.

56 The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter,

57 And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for

want of all *things* secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.

58 If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, **THE LORD THY GOD**;

59 Then the **LORD** will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, *even* great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

60 Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.

61 Also every sickness, and every plague, which *is* not written in the book of this law, them will the **LORD** bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

62 And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the **LORD** thy God.

63 And it shall come to pass, *that* as the **LORD** rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the **LORD** will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

64 And the **LORD** shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even* wood and stone.

65 And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the **LORD** shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:

66 And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee;

and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life :

67 In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even ! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning ! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

68 And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, thou shalt see it no more again : and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy *you*.

I desired the Reader to remark with me in the opening of this Chapter, that there should seem to be somewhat prophetic in its contents. And if he compares what is here said, with the history of the Jewish nation, in their Babylonish captivity, he will discover strong leading particulars in proof of that idea. And if he carries on his enquiries to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, after the return of the Lord Jesus to glory, and to the dispersion of the Jews, even to the present hour ; he will not perhaps be much in error in the application of great part of the threatenings in this Chapter, to events so very striking and memorable. But while we view the desolations of God's anger in the history of our elder brethren the Jews, and bend to the lowest possible humiliation, in acknowledging that we are no better than they, are we not encouraged by the Holy Ghost, to hope that blindness in part hath happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in ? Are we not prompted very earnestly, and frequently, to be looking up to a faithful covenant God in Christ, that that precious promise shall be fulfilled when the deliverer shall arise out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob ? Hasten Lord, I would say, thy coming. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly ! do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion ; build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Oh ! that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion ; when God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad. Psm. li. 18. Psm. liii. 6.

#### REFLECTIONS.

Oh, my soul ! let the awful review of the calamities here held forth to disobedient Israel, endear, with increasing love and affection, the person of thy ever-adored Redeemer ; and his great salvation to thee ; and may the perusal of this Chapter under the Holy Ghost's teaching, constrain thee into his love, and to cleave unto him with full purpose of heart, for he is thy life. Oh ! precious, precious Jesus, what eternal praises are thy due ! Oh ! what unspeakable mercies do I behold in that one view of Jesus, a God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. I see, I feel, I stand



convinced, that to this one cause, every blessing in time, and to all eternity is owing. Lord! keep me, hold me, establish me in this most precious assurance, and may I never dare to taste a single joy until I see Jesus in it. If thou, dearest Lord, will give it me, it will be sanctified. But without thee, the best of creature comforts will prove a snare.

My unawakened brother! if God in mercy should cause my humble Commentary to meet the eye of one of this character, will you not in the perusal of this Chapter, stand convinced that the judgments of God are sure judgments; and the least of them most awful indeed! And is not God the faithful God, as fully pledged to perform his written threats to the ungodly, as he is pledged to perform his promises to his people. Oh! that grace may open the eye, convince the heart, awaken the affection, and induce sinners to flee from the wrath to come: for depend upon it, there is, there must be a day coming, when indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, will fall upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.

## CHAP. XXIX.

### CONTENTS.

*There is a great solemnity in this chapter. Israel is presented as a body, by way of proof, that the Lord's covenant meets their most hearty and cordial consent. Here is a general recital of some of the leading objects of the covenant; and the chapter concludes with pointing out the striking distinction between the things which are secret, which belong unto the Lord, and those which are revealed, which belong unto his people.*

**T**HESE are the words of the covenant, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

2 ¶ And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;

3 The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles:

It must have been a very interesting moment this, when Moses, acting as the minister of Jehovah, made this appeal to the people. There is nothing we need more, than to be reminded of past mercies. And hence, one of the most precious offices of the Holy Ghost is, when he mercifully acts as our Remembrancer, to bring to our recollection the tender manifestations of Jesus's love. John xiv. 26. Reader! hath the Holy Spirit indeed brought to your remembrance, all that the Lord your God hath done for you in Egypt? Do you call to mind the great temp-

tations, and signs, and miracles of grace? Oh! how delightful the subject, thus to look back, and behold the way the Lord our God hath been bringing his people out of this wilderness. Deut. viii. 2—5.

4 Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.

We shall do well, Reader, to ask our hearts whether this be our case. Oh! gracious God, above all blessings give me Jesus and his Holy Spirit, that I may perceive what my mercies are, and enjoy him, and all things in him. “From all blindness, hardness of heart, and ignorance of thy word and commandment, good Lord deliver me!”

5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.

6 Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink: that ye might know that I *am* the LORD your God.

What less than a standing miracle was this, that Israel was fed, clothed, and strengthened through forty years, when their garments waxed not old, and the very sandals, with which they came out of Egypt, did not wear out amidst the rugged road of the wilderness. And what is it now, but the continuation of the same miraculous power, which is displayed in sustaining the spiritual Israel through all their wilderness state, by which their souls are fed with the bread of life, and the garments of salvation by Jesus remain unsullied, through a world of sin and corruption both within and without them.

7 And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan; came out against us unto battle, and we smote them:

8 And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh.

9 Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

Israel is reminded of what hath been already done on this side Jordan, by way of confirming the faith of the people, in what the Lord will do on the other side. Reader! depend upon it, the earnest of the Spirit in the heart, is a sure pledge of salvation. If my God accepts me in Jesus *now*, he will not condemn me *then*, when, rising from the bed of death, I shall stand before his throne. 2 Cor. v. 1 Rom. viii. 1.

10 ¶ Ye stand this day all of you before the

LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, *with* all the men of Israel,

11 Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that *is* in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water:

It was the same feature of the old church as it is of the new, (for they are both one and the same church in Jesus) that there was no distinction of person, age, or character. None too great not to need salvation; none too humble to be excluded from it. Paul sweetly includes all when he saith, there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, but Christ is all and in all. Coloss. iii. 11.

12 That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day:

13 That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and *that* he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

14 Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath;

15 But with *him* that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with *him* that *is* not here with us this day:

It is a delightful thought, that in the gospel church, as in the Jewish, the absent soul is as much included as the one that is present. If absent in body, yet present in spirit. Jesus, the great head of his people, with whom the covenant is made, is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Hence he saith himself, "that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me." All are beheld in him from the beginning. See those precious scriptures, John xvii. 2. John vi. 37. Isaiah viii. 18.

16 (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we came through the nations which ye passed by;

17 And ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which *were* among them:)

18 Lest there should be among you man, or

woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood;

19 And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:

20 The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven.

21 And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law:

What a very awful scripture is contained in these verses! Observe how the sinner is described: he turns away from God: he grows confident in sin: he bids defiance to danger: and is ripe for ruin. Observe the awfulness of the divine judgments upon him. As he turns from the LORD, and doth not like to retain God in his knowledge, God gives him up to a reprobate mind, to work all uncleanness with greediness. Rom. i. 28. Reader! if the LORD gives up the sinner it is all over. "Let Ephraim alone, he is joined to his idols," is one of the most awful sentences in scripture. If God ceases to correct, depend upon it judgment is at hand. Hosea iv. 17. Ezek. xvi. 42.

22 So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it;

23 *And that* the whole land thereof *is* brimstone, and salt, *and* burning, *that* it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and his wrath:

24 Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what *meaneth* the heat of this great anger?

25 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:

26 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and *whom* he had not given unto them:

27 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

28 And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as *it is* this day.

The judgments upon Israel, must excite the astonishment and enquiry of all nations; Wherefore hath the Lord dealt so by his people? How is it that the glory of all lands, and the distinguished people of all nations, are thus dealt with? See God's tender expostulation: Hosea xi. 8. Reader! do not overlook the spiritual instruction in this chapter. The horrible consequences of God's broken law are set forth in this striking manner, to demonstrate our ruin by sin, in order to demonstrate as fully the riches of that grace which brings salvation by Christ: and, all leads to this conclusion, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. v. 21. Well may every believer, in the review of this subject, cry out with the apostle, "Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Rom. xi. 33.

29 The secret *things* belong unto the LORD our God: but those *things which* are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that *we* may do all the words of this law.

This seems to be the opening of a new subject in these words, unless we explain them as in answer to the further enquiry of the inquisitive mind, who from beholding the desolations of Israel stands amazed, that after such a profusion of miracles as the Lord had manifested towards Israel, on bringing them out of Egypt, he should now cast them off, and cause them to be wanderers through the earth. If thoughts such as these should arise in any mind, the Holy Ghost hath given a most satisfactory answer to it, not only in this last verse of this chapter, but also in his servant the apostle's writings, to which I refer the Reader, Rom. ix. throughout.

## REFLECTIONS.

DEAREST Jesus! it is thou that art the covenant of thy people, for *with* thee, as their great head, the covenant is made; *in* thee it is fulfilled; *by* thee it is compleated; and *from* thee, the full assurance of the blessings of it must come. Thou art given as a covenant to the people by the Father: and thou art the every thing belonging to it. Oh! may I behold in thee, how all thy people stand complete in thy righteousness. For it is not confined to the captains of the tribes, nor the elders, nor the officers: but our little ones and our wives, the stranger that is in our camp, and the hewer of wood, and the drawer of water, are all equally interested in the fulness and preciousness of thy salvation.

Endue my soul with suited strength, that I may never forsake the covenant of my God, nor turn my back upon the Lord of my mercies. Lord! grant, I pray thee, that there may never be in me an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God; but daily, while it is called to day, may my soul be strengthened with thy Spirit's might, lest I should be hardened with the deceitfulness of sin. And Oh! do thou, blessed God, confirm me in all the privileges of thy covenant, that those things which are so graciously revealed, may belong to me and to my children for ever.

## CHAP. XXX.

## CONTENTS.

*This is a very interesting chapter. It contains much solemn exhortation: but it is full of divine mercies, as if the Lord intended to manifest to Israel, after what had been delivered of threatenings in the two preceding chapters, that it is in mercy the Lord delighteth. Here is a provision made for the penitent sinner to return, and life and death are set before him.*

**A**ND it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call *them* to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,

2 And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

3 That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.

4 If *any* of thine be driven out unto the out-

most *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:

5 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.

It is a sweet feature of the old church, and which the Reader should never overlook, that it had an eye all along to the dispersion of Israel, and to their gathering again. See Levit. xxvi. 44, 45.

6 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

It is not enough to deliver from wrath, and to save from punishment; but in order to make a poor sinner happy, he must be qualified to enjoy. The circumcision of the heart, is the precious and blessed work of God the Holy Ghost, who only can accomplish this. Hence the apostle tells us, that Christ is made of God to us, not only wisdom to enlighten, but righteousness to justify, sanctification to purify, and redemption to secure from every evil. 1 Cor. i. 30.

7 And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.

The line is here drawn, as it is in many other parts of the word of God, between the righteous and the wicked. Isaiah lxxv. 13—15.

8 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.

9 And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:

10 If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, *and* if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

These are all so many beautiful repetitions of God's mercy and love to his people. I would beg the Reader in this place to remark with me, how the Holy Ghost, by his servant Moses, hath altered the phrase concerning Jehovah. In the former chapters, while the Lord is holding forth his denunciations against Israel's rebellion, he is proclaimed in his great and incommunicable character of Jehovah. But in this chapter, when Moses is commanded to proclaim him in his covenant relationship, as a God of grace, he is called, no less than twelve times, Jehovah Alehim; that is the Lord thy God. How delightful is it to behold God under this precious title, and to know our interest in him.

11 ¶ For this commandment which I command thee this day, it *is* not hidden from thee, neither *is* it far off.

If we read those words with an eye to that blessed dispensation, to which the law ministered, for the law is our school-master unto Christ, we shall find that there is much gospel in them. It is indeed in the gospel, that we are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. Ephes. ii. 13.

12 It *is* not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

13 Neither *is* it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

14 But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

We cannot err in the application of these things to the Lord Jesus and his Gospel; because the Holy Ghost hath directly done so by the ministry of his servant the apostle. He calls it the righteousness which is by faith. I pray the Reader to compare the two passages together: Rom. x. from the 4th verse to the 10th. When he hath done this, I would recommend him to pause over both, and see whether Moses did not in this place very plainly preach Christ. Since the Son of God came down from heaven, we need not say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, to bring God's will to us? And since the Son of God, after redemption-work was finished by him, returned to glory, we need not say, Who shall go up from the deep. Jesus hath opened the communication between the two worlds; and Jesus himself is the word, both the written and the uncreated word, which is nigh unto his people in the mouth, and in the heart, *the hope of glory*. Oh! precious salvation! may I esteem this holy word more than my necessary food. Job. xxiii. 12. And yet more, Jesus the uncreated word, John i. 1.

15 ¶ See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;

16 In that I command thee this day to love



the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply : and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

17 But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them ;

18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, *and that* ye shall not prolong *your* days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing : therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live :

Reader! while you and I attend to the close of Moses's Sermon, and hear the solemn appeal which the animated preacher makes to heaven, that he had executed his commission, and fully discharged his duty in referring the people to their choice: let us learn to bless God, that we are not only taught these things, but that we have the promise of grace, to enable us to perform them. Blessed be God! Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises. The law made no provision for defect or inability. The law made nothing perfect. But the bringing in this better hope, hath done it in Jesus, by the which we draw nigh unto God. Heb. vii. 19.

20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, *and* that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he *is* thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

I beg the Reader to take particular notice of what is included in the parenthesis, that he is thy life and the length of thy days. Is not this clearly referring to the Lord Jesus? Who is the life of his people, but he that hath said, I am the way, and the truth, and the life?—No man cometh unto the Father but by me? Dearest Lord! be thou my life and my portion for ever. John xiv. 6.

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#### REFLECTIONS.

BEHOLD! my soul, the earnestness with which Moses, the man of God follows up his Sermon, in the warm and impassioned manner he adopts in the close of it, so as to persuade the Israelites to duty and

obedience. But, alas! what persuasion can operate until grace pleads in the soul? When thou hast fully viewed the solemn picture, and art become as fully satisfied from thine own-feelings, that nothing less than sovereign grace, can be competent to restrain the corrupt passions of man's fallen nature; then, my soul, from Moses turn thy view to contemplate the Lord Jesus Christ: and behold in him the only possible source to enable sinners both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Oh! thou ever-blessed Jesus, that art the first cause and final end of all the hopes, the strength, the ability, the holy desires of thy people. In thee we behold an adequate relief for all our wants. It is thou and thou alone, which by the influence of thine Holy Spirit in the minds of thy people, dost first awaken eternal life; and as thou begettest, so thou alone canst maintain, support, preserve, and carry it on from day to day in the soul. Oh! enable me to cleave unto thee, for thou art my life, and the length of my days; thou art my hope, and my portion for ever. Do thou, by the sweet constraining influence of thine Holy Spirit, keep me close to thyself, that I may live upon thy fulness, have the lively actings of faith upon thy person, and live to thy praise here, until thou shalt bring me home, to rejoice in thy glory for ever.

## CHAP. XXXI.

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*The man of God, having finished his sermon to the people, in this chapter makes a particular address to Joshua, whom the Lord had appointed as his successor: enjoins him to be valiant for God, and assures him of the divine favour: Moses gives the law which he had written to the priests, commanding it to be read every seventh year. By the Lord's foretelling Moses, he admonishes them of their degeneracy. He writes a song and rehearseth it in the ears of the people, which song is contained in the succeeding chapter.*

**A**ND Moses went and spake these words unto all Israel.

There is somewhat very interesting in this view of Moses, and in the subject of his long sermon. The law, as a prelude to the gospel, is always interesting; for by the law, saith an apostle, is the knowledge of sin. Rom. iii. 20. And certain it is, that the law is the truest schoolmaster unto Christ. Gal. iii. 24.

2 And he said unto them, *I am* an hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in: also the LORD hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan.

The age of Moses is twice recorded by him; once in this place, and again, chap. xxxiv. 7. And it is very remarkable, that as this period of 120 years, if divided into three parts, makes 40 each: so at every one of these portions, he was placed by the Lord in a different situation. The *first* forty years of his life he lived in the court of Pharaoh; the *second* as a shepherd, when sojourning with his father-in-law the priest of Midian; and the *third* in the wilderness, as a leader of the Lord's

people. How strange and mixed are the events in the life, even of the most eminent of God's servants! Who would have thought, that the poor child Pharaoh's daughter took up and nursed for her own, and who was apparently exposed to immediate danger, should have been in the very same moment, all along designed by the Lord for the deliverance of his people. But Reader! turn your thoughts from hence to an infinitely higher character than Moses, even Moses's Lord; and in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ behold, from equally slender appearances, the foundation of the sinner's hope. Who that beheld the Son of God, in the days of his appearing, when brought into the temple in substance of our flesh, would have conceived that this was He who was appointed of God, to deliver his people from sin and death by an everlasting salvation? None but those to whom, like Holy Simeon, the Holy Ghost made him known, could have conceived such mighty things were hid under the humblest appearance. Luke ii. 26—29.

3 The LORD thy God, he will go over before thee, *and* he will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them: *and* Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as the LORD hath said.

Observe, how Moses dwells upon the sweet title of the Lord thy God: Not Jehovah alone, but Jehovah in covenant with Israel. Oh! it is precious to connect these things. And is there not somewhat referring to the Lord Jesus, in what is said here of Joshua? Not only the Lord thy God shall go over before thee, but it is said, that *Joshua* shall go over before the people. Is not this typical of Jesus our Joshua?

4 And the LORD shall do unto them as he did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and unto the land of them, whom he destroyed.

5 And the LORD shall give them up before your face, that ye may do unto them according unto all the commandments which I have commanded you.

6 Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

Faith in the Lord's promise, and faith in the Lord's person, are the tokens, on the part of his people, of the Lord's being with them, by his Holy Spirit enabling them to believe, and to depend upon him.

7 And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn

unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.

8 And the LORD, he *it is* that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

The inability of Moses to go over Jordan, and the ability of Joshua, should be well noticed by the Reader. As Moses' natural strength was not diminished, certain it is, his want of strength was not the cause: neither was the personal power of Joshua the reason of these things. But if we look at Moses as typical of the law, and Joshua as typical of Jesus and his gospel: then we see how impossible it was for the law to bring souls to God, and how suited alone that Almighty Joshua is, to plant his people in his holy mountain. For the law made nothing perfect; but a better hope did, by which we draw nigh unto God. Heb. vii. 19.

9 ¶ And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.

Moses is the writer of those five books which bear his name; but it should seem, that over and above the sacred volume of these five books, he wrote the law to deposit in the ark separately: laying it up in the ark, not only for its security, and to imply its sacredness, but it carried with it this also, that in Jesus, which that ark typified, the whole law is kept and completed. He saith himself, by his type David, thy law is within my heart; or as it might have been read, in the midst of *my bowels*, meaning part of himself. Psm. xl. 8.

10 And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,

11 When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

12 Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that *is* within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law:

13 And *that* their children, which have not known *any thing*, may hear, and learn to fear the

LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

The law was read, no doubt, by the Israelites in their *houses*, among their children and families. Deut. xi. 18—20. And we know, that Moses was read in the *synagogue* every Sabbath-day. Acts xv. 21. But this reading once in every seventh year, which was the year of release, it was to be in the *whole assembly of Israel*, in a more express and public manner. But Reader! is there not somewhat typical here? Yes! and very sweet it is. The year of release pointed to the year of release in Jesus. In this release by the Lord Jesus from sin and destruction, from the breaches of the law, and all its condemning power; Jesus, who is the sum and substance of the law, having fulfilled it in his own person for his people, is constantly read and constantly made over to them, in all his offices, relations, and character; and hence his gospel is expressly called, the acceptable year of the Lord. Luke iv. 18, 19. And it is worthy observation, that not only the males were required, as in the three great feast days of the year, to go up to Jerusalem, but in this year of release, the women, and children, and strangers were to be present. Teaching as expressly as possible, that neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female, are separately interested, but all are one in Christ Jesus. Gal. iii. 28. Reader! pray observe the sweetness and tenderness of that part of the precept, that the children which have not known any thing: Any thing of what? Apply it to the year of release in Jesus, and what is its gracious contents, but that our little ones, who receive from us in our fallen state, the seeds of sin, may be very early made acquainted, both with their ruined state by nature, and the only way of recovery by grace, in that merciful scheme of salvation, which is alone in the Lord Jesus. Oh! for grace to all parents, to record a memorial of this among their offspring!

14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation.

Moses is again admonished of his death. Reader! it is a blessed thing, to be as the Apostle, who died daily. Is it your case? How stands your heart affected to death? If in Jesus, surely you know somewhat of this spirit. 1 Cor. xv. 31.

15 And the LORD appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud: and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.

This must have been a very refreshing season, to the servants of the Lord: of that glorious appearing of the *Shechinah* latterly, we do not read so much, as when the people came first out of Egypt. Reader! you and I have no cause to envy our fathers of the church in the wilderness, on account of those manifestations. Jesus hath since that period

tabernacled among us in substance of our flesh. Oh! that you and I may, by faith, be enabled to say, *and we have seen his glory.* John i. 14.

16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go *to be* among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them.

17 Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God *is* not among us?

18 And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.

How gracious is God, even in his judgments. Though he foresaw Israel's backsliding, and in consequence gives Moses a commission to forewarn them of it, yet he provides means also for their recovery. But Reader, let not you and I stop here. Though our God foresaw our rebellion and unworthiness, and though he knew we should be backsliders from the womb, yet this did not stop the spring of mercy in Jesus, he sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. 1 John iv. 10.

19 ¶ Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.

20 For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant.

21 And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for

I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear.

22 Moses therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.

The Lord's mercy is again magnified, in causing all the grand leading points of Israel's history to be incorporated in this song; the particulars of which are all of a gospel tendency, and will meet us in the following chapter. What is here said serves to shew us, that though it is called Moses' Song, the work is, in fact, of the Holy Ghost.

23 And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them: and I will be with thee.

24 And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished,

25 That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying,

26 Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.

We should compare this passage, in order to see the gospel sense of it, with that memorable one in the New Testament. Rev. xi. 19.

27 For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?

28 Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them.

29 For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt *yourselves*, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do

evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

30 And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended.

The melancholy prediction of the man of God, which we have lived to see fulfilled, so long and so awful as it is, in the dispersion of the Jews, would be enough to overpower the mind of every serious and truly awakened soul, were we not comforted with the assurance the Holy Ghost hath given concerning their recovery. It is the cry of every faithful believer, Oh! that the deliverer may arise, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob! Lord! call home thy banished ones. Rom. xi. 26.

### REFLECTIONS.

READER! pause over this Chapter, and behold in Moses the dying circumstances of all mankind. Both saints and sinners, ministers and people, even Moses, the highly favoured servant of the Lord, must go down to the grave, though as to the circumstances attending his death, he was peculiarly favoured in going up to the mount, to give forth his soul, as some have thought, upon the very mouth of God. Here again, dearest Jesus, let my soul, from the view of the universal condition of mankind, turn my thoughts to thee, who by thy precious death hast overcome death, and by thy triumph over death and the grave, hast opened to thy people everlasting life. Sweet and refreshing is the thought, amidst the humbling prospect of dissolution, that Jesus ever liveth; and though all our circumstances around are perishing, and we ourselves involved in the same, yet the hour is hastening, when death shall be swallowed up in victory!

In the view of Israel's perverseness, Lord, give me grace to behold the universal taint of all mankind. Am I better than they? No: in no wise. All are included under sin. Oh! thou precious sin-bearing Lamb of God! let every thing and every view, both of the sin of others and my own, tend to endear thy person, and thy righteousness, to my heart, convinced that there is salvation in no other, neither is there any other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

## CHAP. XXXII.

### CONTENTS.

*This chapter is almost filled with that beautiful song of Moses, which, from its containing so much of gospel in it, hath warned and instructed the mind of God's people in all ages. Having finished his sermon, the dying pastor gives out this hymn at the close of it, before he dismisses his congregation, and is dismissed himself with the blessing. Here are contained some of the many gracious dealings of the Lord with Israel. Here are contained also, some of their many grievous dealings with the Lord. Here are blended promises and threatenings. The chapter concludes with the Lord's command to his servant Moses, to go up into the Mount preparatory to his death.*



**G**IVE ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak ;  
and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

There is great elegance, as well as piety, in the whole of this song. The calling upon things inanimate to hear, when, perhaps, the intelligence of man disregards, is uncommonly striking. And will not both heaven and earth be witness against us, if we neglect so great salvation? The heaven shall declare God's righteousness. Psm. l. 6.

2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass :

Apply this to the gospel, and observe how suited the figure is. The gospel is from heaven, so is the rain. The gospel is a blessing wherever it comes : so is the rain. The gospel acts sweetly and unperceived in the mind of him that receives the truth in the love of it ; so doth the dew and the rain. Believers are born from above : so doth the rain come down from above. The people of God are numerous, though comparatively a little flock : so are the dew drops of the morning. See those sweet scriptures, Psm. cx. 3. Micah v. 7. John i. 13. Psm. lxxii. 6. Job xxxviii. 28.

3 Because I will publish the name of the LORD :  
ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

Precious thought ! that doctrine will descend as the rain, and under divine influences will work its way, like the soft insinuating dew, which proclaims Jehovah in all his threefold personality of character and covenant-offices. For what is God's greatness to his people, but his great salvation in Jesus? When Moses desired to see the glory of the Lord, God said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee. Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19.

4 *He is the Rock*, his work *is* perfect : for all his ways *are* judgment : a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he.

No less than six times in this chapter, and eighteen times in other places of the Old Testament, is the Lord distinguished by the title of a Rock ; as if to shew the firmness, durableness, and everlasting strength of the Lord, in his covenant relations to his people. And I beg the Reader to remark with me, the attention of Moses in this description of our covenant God. It would have been a striking account of Jehovah, had the man of God represented him under any of his glorious perfections, for all the attributes of God, are so many standards of character, to distinguish the excellency of his nature. But in this place he is speaking of him in a more endearing view ; and how shall he do it more effectually than by assuring his people, that his faithfulness is like the rock of ages. Holy Lord ! enable me, and enable the Reader, always to keep this view of thy immovable, and unchanging love to thy people, in remembrance. See that precious confirmation of this, Deut. vii. 9.

5 They have corrupted themselves, their spot

*is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.*

Alas! what a striking difference, when we look into our own nature, there is between our corruptions and the Lord's purity. Observe, the charge is, not that God made man corrupt, for God made man upright, but that he hath destroyed himself. Eccles. vii. 29. Hosea xiii. 9. Their spot is not the unavoidable spot, which compared to the unsullied holiness of God, all-created excellence hath: but it is the spot of sinful fallen nature. Oh! the happiness of those children of our God, who have been washed in that fountain which taketh out all spots! 1 John i. 7. Rev. vii. 14.

6 Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? *is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?*

Reader! suppose you drop the view of Israel for a moment, and fancy this expostulation addressed to yourself, at any time when causing the Lord to serve with your sins, and wearying him with your iniquities. Is not God your Father by adoption and grace in Christ Jesus? Hath he not chosen you in Christ; called you in Christ; justified you in Christ; fed you, taught you, purchased you, redeemed you, sanctified you; and for which of these acts is it, that a pressing temptation leads you thus to requite him?

7 Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

No subject more affecting than the remembrance of past mercies. It is the sweetest of all subjects, the most improving of all plans of education, when a father can take his children by the hand and recount unto them the mercies of his God and their God, to him and to them, and to their father's before them. And especially when a parent can speak of mercies in grace, as well as providence: of redemption, as well as preservation. Oh! the joy of an awakened parent, thus to relate the Lord's dealings with his soul. The church doth this, after recounting a long series of mercies. Psm. cvii. 43. Reader, can you say any thing of the like in your own experience? If so, you will not need my advice to tell it to your children, and your children's children. Psm. ciii. 17.

8 When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

9 For the LORD's portion *is* his people; Jacob *is* the lot of his inheritance.

The sweetest of all subjects, and the most interesting of all histories, is that which makes a man acquainted with himself. In looking back to the original formation of God's church and people, we behold a plan reaching into eternity. Their husband was set up from everlasting. Prov. viii. 23. At the creation and division of the earth, the boundaries of men, as well as of the church, were all fixed by infinite wisdom. But there can be no question from the whole account in the Bible, which is but a brief history of the church, that the bounds of all other of the sons of men, were intended to minister to God's church and people. God hath made of one blood all nations of men; and they are all the works of his hands: but here he peculiarly calls Israel his portion. The Israel of the Lord are as the garden of the Lord, amidst the world's wilderness. This people, the Lord saith, I have formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise. If the Reader wishes to see some very striking scriptures to this purpose, he will find them, Isaiah xliii. 21. Deut. vii. 6—8. Matt. xi. 25, 26. What a rapturous thought is it to the soul, that is conscious of an interest in it, that God hath a people, and that he himself belongs to that people, and is of the Lord's portion. There is but one thing more to make it compleat, and that is, when the soul that is the Lord's portion, can call the Lord his portion also. See Psm. xvi. 5. Songs vi. 3.

10 He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

Our God may be said to have taken all his people from a wilderness state, when calling them by his grace; for what the Apostle saith of the church of Ephesus, is equally applicable to every individual: we were by nature, children of wrath even as others. Ephes. ii. 3. With respect to Israel of old, nothing could be more descriptive, than that of God's finding them: for they were apparently lost in the bondage of Egypt, and groaning under their oppression. Reader! let you and I look back, and behold the spiritual bondage of our Egypt, when under Sin and Satan. Did not our Jesus find us there when he passed by and saw us cast out, and no eye but his to pity us? Ezek. xvi. 5, 6. And how hath he led us about, nursed, and brought us up, and taught us by his Holy Spirit, the great things of salvation, and with that tenderness kept us as the apple of his eye. Oh! thou gracious God and Saviour, lead me frequently to review the ruined state of my nature, that the tokens of thy grace may be more abundantly precious. Isaiah li. 1, 2.

11 As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:

12 So the LORD alone did lead him, and *there* was no strange god with him.

The figure here made use of, of the eagle, is uncommonly beautiful and striking; and especially, if, as some naturalists have said, the eagle,

not only protects, feeds, and nourisheth her young, but is much engaged in instructing them. The young eagles, like other young birds, are much disposed to sleep in their nests: but the old eagle stirs them up. When they are awakened she flutters over them, as if to teach them the use of their wings. And as if this was not enough, she carries them on her wings, until they are well able to use their own. All this is uncommonly striking, in illustration of the care of God over his people. For Israel lay in Egypt, like the young eagles in their nest, stupid, indolent, and unawakened; as those that were in love with their slavery, and unwilling to be brought out of it. Hence the Lord is said to have borne them on eagles wings, when by the ministry of Moses, he brought them out. Exod. xix. 4. And, if we carry on the similitude further, in allusion to the Lord's bringing them out in this manner, as nothing from beneath could possibly hurt the young eagles on the back of the old bird, until the shot or the spear had pierced through the body of the dam, to pass through, and wound or destroy the young: so when Jehovah undertook the salvation of his people, every thing manifested the security of their redemption; as Jesus hath said, Because I live, ye shall live also. John xiv. 19. Reader! is there nothing in all this, which bears a resemblance to the same Lord's dealings with your soul? Hath not your God and Savior found *you* in a desert land, and amidst all the dangers of a waste and howling wilderness; hath he not borne you, as upon eagle's wings; fed you, nourished you, taught you, protected you! Oh! for grace in the review of mercies, to say with one of old, Bless the Lord, Oh, my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Psm. ciii. 1—5.

13 He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock;

14 Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.

See! what a good house our God keeps! They that sit down at his table, will find both plenty, and of the best. But are not gospel mercies veiled under these figures? It is true, our fathers in the wilderness, had all these things in abundance. But yet in a gospel sense: the pure milk of the word, and the wine of the grape, imply the feast of fat things in God's holy mountain. Isaiah xxv. 6.

15 But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked; thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered *with fatness*; then he forsook God *which* made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

*Jeshurun*, means the upright. But alas! how changed!

16 They provoked him to jealousy with strange *gods*, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

17 They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new *gods that* came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

18 Of the Rock *that* begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

What a melancholy picture of rebellion, folly, and sin, to forget God, to forsake him, to be unmin'ful of the rock of his strength. Alas! who should have conceived the possibility of the thing itself. But this is not all, Israel added provocations to neglect, and took up with dunghill deities. And observe their character; these gods were not only contemptible in themselves, but gods they knew not. Moreover, they were newly risen up, as if gods, like mushrooms, came up in a night. Neither was this all, they were devils, and such as their fathers feared not. How striking is that expostulation of God by the prophet: Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but my people have changed their glory, for that which doth not profit? Jerem. ii. 11. Reader! Is there nothing in all this, in which your heart, and mine, can find a too just resemblance.

19 And when the LORD saw *it*, he abhorred *them*, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

Of all sin, and sinners, nothing is so aggravated as in those instances, where a nearness of affection should have induced the reverse. An holy God must hate sin, as sin, wherever it be found. But in his children, it appears in the strongest colours. Psm. lv. 12, 13.

20 And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end *shall be*: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.

21 They have moved me to jealousy with *that which is* not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with *those which are* not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

22 For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

24 *They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.*

25 The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling *also* with the man of gray hairs.

The judgments here threatened, will be found in correspondence to their sin. They forsake God, and he withdraws the favor of his countenance from them. They provoke him to jealousy with strange gods; and Israel shall be provoked to jealousy with the call of the Gentiles. The Apostle Paul, under the Holy Ghost, explains it so in the conversion of the Gentiles. Rom. x. 19. And when we consider the happy state of Israel when in Canaan, and compare it with the desolations of Israel in their captivity in Babylon, their ruin in Jerusalem, after our Lord's return to glory, and their dispersion at the present hour over the earth; who can help remarking the just judgments of the Lord, as here awfully described, falling upon that people! See Jeremiah lii. 4—11. Matt. xxiv. 15—21.

26 I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:

27 Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, *and* lest they should say, Our hand *is* high, and the LORD hath not done all this.

Here is a little brightening up in those verses. But Reader! pause, to remark with me, how our God over-rules the malice of their enemies, to work for his people's good. We have striking examples in holy writ, where God's people make use of this plea to find God's favor. See Exod. xxxii. 11, 12. Joshua vii. 9. And may we not from hence, and from our own experience, draw this certain conclusion, that the Lord absolutely lays the foundation, sometimes, of the peculiar mercies he manifests to his hidden ones, on the very malice of their enemies! That is a very strong passage in the Psalms in proof: Psm. cv. 25:

28 For they *are* a nation void of counsel, neither *is there any* understanding in them.

29 O that they were wise, *that* they understood this, *that* they would consider their latter end!

Even people void of understanding, in divine truths, may consider the sure consequence of sin. The wages of sin is, and must be death. Rom. vi. 23.

30 How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up?

31 For their rock *is* not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves *being* judges.

32 For their vine *is* of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes *are* grapes of gall, their clusters *are* bitter:

33 Their wine *is* the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

34 *Is* not this laid up in store with me, *and* sealed up among my treasures?

35 To me *belongeth* vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in *due* time: for the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

36 For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that *their* power is gone, and *there is* none shut up, or left.

37 And he shall say, Where *are* their gods, *their* rock in whom they trusted,

38 Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, *and* drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, *and* be your protection.

There are two ways of reading those verses. If we consider the words, How should one Israelite chase a thousand? we must then view the salvation of Israel, as effected by God. But if we consider the words, rather as corresponding to a deserted state by reason of Israel's sin, it will then appear, that the timidity of Israel ariseth, in that the Lord hath given them into the hands of their enemies. See Isaiah xxx. 17. The contrast drawn between the confidence of God's enemies, and the God of his people's confidence in those verses is beautiful. But Reader, remark with me, the graciousness of God, and the Lord's pity over his people, when they are brought down to a low estate. See Leviticus xxvi. 40—43.

39 See now that I, *even I am* he, and *there is* no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand.

Observe how God asserts his own sovereignty. It is worthy the Reader's observation, how Moses in the close of his day of grace, is reminded of what the Lord said to him, on the first opening of that day: "I am, that I am." Exod. iii. 14. Reader! do not overlook the person of Jesus in this. John viii. 59. How precious to a dying believer, the revelation, that He that was, and is, and is to come, is the eternal I am, who begun, hath carried on, and will complete his great salvation; being the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Heb. xiii. 8. I would have the Reader to observe in those verses, the Lord's awful declarations upon the enemies of his people. And it is an awful thought; Is not God, as much pledged to execute his threats, as to fulfil his promises? Doth he say, If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha, and can it be otherwise? 1 Cor. xvi. 22. I beg the Reader to remark with me, how graciously the song concludes. It is full of joy and peace, to God's people. God will enlarge the borders of his people: he will avenge them of all their enemies; and the glory of God shall be upon them. If we read those words in a gospel sense, they are still more beautiful and refreshing. In Jesus shall all the house of Israel be justified, and shall glory: the multitude of the isles shall stretch out their hands unto God. And while his people rejoice, their enemies shall be destroyed: the God of peace will bruise Satan under their feet shortly. Rom. xvi. 20.

40 For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

41 If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

42 I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh: *and that* with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

43 Rejoice, O ye nations, *with* his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, *and* to his people.

44 And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun.



45 And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel :

46 ¶ And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.

47 For it *is* not a vain thing for you ; because it *is* your life : and through this thing ye shall prolong *your* days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

48 And the LORD spake unto Moses that self-same day, saying,

When Moses had finished his song, which he delivered not only in the hearing of the people, but particularly of Joshua, his successor, as if that he might be a witness both for the Lord and for himself, he makes a short observation upon the whole : and as a dying pastor, again, and again, affectionately entreats them to be wise unto salvation after his departure. See a beautiful example of this kind in Paul. Acts xx. 28—37.

49 Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, *unto* mount Nebo, which *is* in the land of Moab, that *is* over against Jericho ; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession :

50 And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people ; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people :

What can a true believer in Jesus desire more, when he hath finished his day as an hireling, and seen the Lord's Christ like Simeon, than to depart in peace according to God's word. What is there worth living for ! nay, rather what is there not worth dying for ! Oh for the spirit and desires of holy Paul ! Philip. i. 23.

51 Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin ; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.

52 Yet thou shalt see the land before *thee* ; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.

There is great mercy in the Lord's reminding Moses of Aaron's death. But how precious is it to the believer in Jesus, to recollect in his dying hours, that Christ hath gone before to the grave, and through that passage to glory. Oh! for faith, lively faith, to be conformed to the lovely image of Jesus in all things. There can be no doubt, but that the view Moses had of the promised land, was accompanied with an assurance in the covenant righteousness of redemption by the promised seed, that though he entered not upon the possession of an earthly Canaan, he should enjoy the heavenly Jerusalem. Dear Lord! let this be the portion of both writer and reader, if it be thy heavenly will, and then it matters not on what mount, in what place, at what time, or in what manner the summons for our dismissal is given. To live will be Christ, and to die will be gain. Philip. i. 21.

### REFLECTIONS.

PAUSE, and behold, the beautifulness of holiness, and of praise, in the conduct of a dying pastor, like Moses; and in the outlines of this hymn, behold how becoming it is to be faithful. Heaven and earth must witness at the last day for every faithful servant of Jesus, if he hath kept back nothing that was profitable for the people; and though the people be not gathered, yet he hath delivered his own soul.

Reader! may it be your happiness and mine, in viewing the Lord's love to his church, and the series of mercies manifested towards his people, to discover, in a spiritual sense, the same gracious hand bringing us out of Egypt, and bearing us as upon eagles wings all the way through of our eventful journey. Oh! thou most gracious God! in every view which my soul is enabled to take of thy love towards me; and in all thy three-fold characters of Person, thou hast been my Father, and the guide of my youth. My Saviour, and the Redeemer of my soul; my Sanctifier, and the helper of all my ways. Oh! grant that I may not, like Israel of old, forget the God of my mercies, and lightly esteem the rock of my salvation. Do thou perfect that, gracious God, concerning me, which thou hast begun, for thou art indeed a rock, and thy work is perfect. It is of thine own free grace thou hast planned salvation, by thine own power thou hast formed it, and wilt execute it. In thine everlasting love, in the eternal purposes of thy counsel, by the blood and righteousness of Jesus, and by thine own grace, and the influences of the Holy Ghost, in the hearts of thy people, thou wilt accomplish and complete it: and shall I doubt thy gracious purposes concerning me? Be thou my rock, my Jehovah Jesus, to which I may always resort; for thou hast promised to help me; therefore into thine hands do I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth.

## CHAP. XXXIII.

### CONTENTS.

*The man of God here finisheth the whole of his ministry with Israel. Nothing remained after the Song but to bless Israel in the Lord's name; and this he doth partly in a spirit of prophecy, in telling each*

tribe of Israel of some of the most remarkable events which would follow them; and partly in a spirit of prayer, of what he hoped the Lord would bless them with. He concludes the Chapter with a most animated apostrophe, both of the blessedness of the God of Israel, and of the Israel of God.

AND this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the Man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.

I beg the Reader in the opening of this Chapter, finally, and fully to remember once more the motto to be kept in view through all Moses's writings, *Moses wrote of Christ*. And while I request the Reader to be looking out for the Lord Jesus in every verse; I desire him no less to remark with me, the superiority of the Lord Jesus over his servant Moses. The man of God closes his life and ministry, with praying for the blessing of the people. Jesus commands it. His language is, *Father I will*. John xvii. 24. Reader! take a leisurely, and close survey of the man of God, closing his ministry, and figure to yourself if you can, any thing more interesting. Such should be the close of all faithful ministers! What can be more sweet and endearing, than to behold a faithful pastor, in such a spirit and frame of mind, taking a last farewell, in looking up to his great Head, and looking round upon the people, pouring out praise and prayer. Reader! do not forget to look at the ever blessed Jesus, as represented, Luke xxiv. 50, 51.

2 And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand *went* a fiery law for them.

Moses begins his blessing, with looking first at him that blesseth. What *begins* in God, will *end* in God. Mount Seir, and Mount Paran, were two mountains some little distance from Mount Sinai. And it is probable, that when the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, the reflection of the glory shined upon those two mountains. The first giving of the law was accompanied with splendor, and the retinue of angels: for the law is said to be given by the disposition of angels. Acts vii. 53. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2. The second revelation of the fulfilled law by the Son of God, when he shall come again without sin unto salvation, it is said, will be accompanied with angels. Jude xiv. 15. The law is called a fiery law, because, it was given out of the midst of the fire of Mount Sinai. Deut. iv. 33. And is it not equally a fiery law now, under the gospel, when it is brought home to the sinner's heart, in a way of conviction, by the Spirit of judgment, and the Spirit of burning. Compare Isaiah iv. 4. with John xvi. 8.

3 Yea, he loved the people; all his saints *are* in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; *every one* shall receive of thy words.

Sweet and beautiful expression, to denote God's love and care of his people. They are within his grasp; they are held, and upheld by him. And tell me, my brother, if you and I are of his people, and in his hand, who, or what shall unclasp the arms of omnipotency? Rom. viii. 35. Oh! precious, precious thought! Lord enable me to live more upon it.

4 Moses commanded us a law, *even* the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.

5 And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people *and* the tribes of Israel were gathered together.

If Moses be meant here as the king of Jeshurun, we may admire the modesty of the man. He never assumed the title himself; he did not affect to be called so; and seemed to be not anxious to preserve his name in the earth. For we never hear of the sons of Moses, but we do of the sons of Aaron.

6 ¶ Let Reuben live, and not die; and let *not* his men be few.

It is remarkable that Moses begins with Israel's eldest son. By birth-right, no doubt, this was his privilege. Yet he had forfeited it. See Gen. xlix. 3, 4. It is hardly possible to consider the family of the Reubenites, taking up their rest on this side Canaan, without finding the soul going forth in prayer to God, Lord grant that I may not, like Reuben, sit down short of Jesus's kingdom! Heb. xi. 14—16.

7 And this *is the blessing* of Judah; and he said, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help *to him* from his enemies.

Observe, *Simeon* is passed over, whose turn by right of heirship, in the line of Jacob's sons it was. But perhaps as this tribe was in after ages incorporated with that of Judah; and Moses, by the spirit of prophecy, knowing this would be the case, meant to include both. Or whether, because the father, Jacob himself had marked his son Simeon with disgrace, Moses omitted him, I do not presume to say. Gen. xlix. 5. But of Judah there is much to say. The tribe of Judah is honored above all others, because our Lord sprang out of Judah, according to the flesh. Heb. vii. 14. The blessing is very peculiar, that the Lord would hear his voice, alluding perhaps to the very person of the Lord Jesus, in his office of intercessor. And that he would bring him to his people, perhaps referring to the time of Jesus appearing upon earth, for the salvation of his people. And that he would be an help to him from his enemies: probably having the conquest of the spiritual Judah in view, in his destruction of sin, Satan, and death! These scriptures are all express in point, if so; John xi. 42. Gen. xlix. 10. and Psalm lxxxix. 20.

8 And of Levi he said, *Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah:*

9 Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

10 They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar.

11 Bless, LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

Moses dwells much upon the tribe of Levi. But it is remarkable, that though he himself was of that tribe, yet he never once mentions his relationship. It is precious to remark the humility of Moses. And yet more so, when we connect with it the grace of the Lord in him, from whom that humility originated. The prayer of Moses for the blessing of Levi in the priesthood is striking. The *Urim* and the *Thummim*, signified lights and perfections, qualities eminently necessary to be joined to the priesthood. But where among the sons of Levi, must we look for them? With thee only, blessed Jesus, who art indeed the holy one, and the only holy one of Jehovah: can we find these things, and with thee, they are for ever. The waters of Meribah, and Massah, were monuments of the fallibility of human priesthood. Perhaps the period alluded to, of Levi's faithfulness, was as related. Exod. xxxii. 27, 28.

12 And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him; and the LORD shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

The tribes are not mentioned regularly, according to the priority of birthright; but perhaps Moses was directed by the Holy Ghost. I would have the Reader take particular notice of the title of Benjamin, *the beloved of the Lord*. Benjamin was the beloved Son of his Father Jacob. But the beloved of the Lord infinitely surpasseth the highest love of men. Doth not the Reader behold in this, somewhat typical of him, who is the only begotten and beloved Son, who lay in the bosom of the Father before all worlds? Compare Isaiah xlii. 1. with Matt. iii. 17.

13 And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD  
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*be* his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath,

14 And for the precious fruits *brought forth* by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon,

15 And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the last-  
ing hills,

16 And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and *for* the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let *the blessing* come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.

17 His glory *is like* the firstling of his bullock, and his horns *are like* the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they *are* the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they *are* the thousands of Manasseh.

The blessing of Joseph is very striking, and deserves the closest attention, from the interest all true believers in Christ have in it. It is true, Joseph was separated from his brethren when sold into Egypt, and separated from his Father's house: but the spiritual illustration of this, and the typical reference it had to the person of the Lord Jesus, in all which Joseph was as an eminent a type of Jesus as almost any one character in the scripture, demands, that we should look much beyond Joseph the Son of Israel, for the real, spiritual meaning of this blessing of the man of God. Joseph, as the head of a tribe of Israel, was indeed much blessed with the precious things of heaven, and the precious things put forth by the sun, and by the moon: but it was *the* good will of him that dwelt in the bush, (even Jesus, who appeared to Moses at the bush), which sanctified and crowned the whole. But what I would more particularly desire the Reader to take notice of in this blessing of the man of God is, that he prayed all those mercies might be in the lot of Joseph, on account of *his dweller* in the bush. The words might be rendered, and perhaps ought strictly to have been so rendered, for the good will of him, *my dweller* in the bush. As if Moses meant to say, my dweller is him that dwelt there, when first he manifested himself to me, as my covenant head and Savior, who had undertaken, and in the fulness of time, would appear for the accomplishment of salvation. Hence the man of God, when in the full prospect of death, dwells so sweetly upon it, and seeks all blessings upon the head of Joseph, on this sole account. Here Reader! is the great secret of religion. If the good

will of Jesus be in our mercies, this puts a sweetness, and gives an enjoyment to all. But if this be wanting, it is not all the precious things brought forth by the sun, or the precious things put forth by the moon, can give real comfort to the soul. Reader! pray be diligent in your seeking for this coronet mercy, to crown the whole in your experience.

18 And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and, Issachar, in thy tents.

*Zebulun*, and *Issachar*, were the sons of Jacob, by *Leah*; hence Moses hath included both under one blessing. If we interpret the prophecy according to gospel terms, perhaps it will be found that the going out, and abiding in the tents, implies both the propagating the gospel abroad, and rejoicing in it at home. See Isaiah ix. 1, 2.

19 They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck *of* the abundance of the seas, and *of* treasures hid in the sand.

This verse throws a further light upon the former. The mountain of the Lord, hath always been considered in scripture terms, as referring to the gospel of Jesus. Isaiah xxv. 6—8. Micah iv. 1, 2.

20 And of Gad he said, Blessed *be* he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head.

It was said of Gad, by Jacob his Father, that a troop should overcome him, but that he should overcome at the last. Gen. xlix. 19. And is not Gad, a figure of all God's people, who are variously exercised: and as it should seem frequently overcome by troops of sins, troops of oppressors, troops of enemies from the world, the flesh, and the devil? but yet, concerning whom, victory is not doubtful, for they shall certainly at last overcome every foe, by the blood of the Lamb. Rev. xii. 11.

21 And he provided the first part for himself, because there, *in* a portion of the lawgiver, *was he* seated; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the LORD, and his judgments with Israel.

The seat here spoken of, probably referred to the situation of Gad, on the other side Jordan. Deut. iv. 43. Joshua dismissed the Gadites with a blessing after the war was over; see Joshua. Joshua iv. 12. with xxii. 7, 8.

22 And of Dan he said, Dan *is* a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan.

Taking this blessing in a temporal sense, perhaps it might refer to the victories of Samson, who sprung from this tribe; or to the tribe itself, whose exploits are rehearsed. Judges xviii. But if we read the pro-

mise, with an eye to spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, to leap from Bashan, may imply the victory believers obtain over all their foes, when coming from Zion, the hill of Jehovah. Jesus complained in his unequalled sufferings, that the strong bulls of Bashan, had beset him around; meaning no doubt, the chief priests and elders of God's house. See Psm. xxii. 12. compared with Psm. lxxviii. 15, 16.

23 And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD: possess thou the west and the south.

There is much of gospel in this blessing of *Naphtali*. And no doubt, Moses had an eye to spiritual things in his prophecy of it. And what is it to be full with the blessing of Jehovah, but, in his three-fold character of Person, to enjoy the Father's love, the Redeemer's grace, and the Holy Ghost's fellowship? Reader! may it be your portion and mine, to have this fulness, and we shall then possess a Naphtali's portion. It may not be unacceptable to the Reader, to add, that *Caper-naum*, of which we hear so much in our Lord's days, belonged to Naphtali.

24 And of Asher he said, *Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil.*

25 Thy shoes *shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.*

*Asher's* blessing, is one of the general blessings of all the spiritual seed of Israel. As the day of God's people is, so shall be their strength. Once known, and they must be acceptable to the brethren of the Lord Jesus, for they are accepted of the Father, in the beloved. Ephes. i. 6. And what could be more suited, as a general close to the blessing of the tribes of Israel, than a general assurance to all Israel, of favor and acceptance, both with God and man: and grace suited to every occasion. Gracious God! let these blessings be the portion of both writer and Reader, and let Jesus to crown the whole be our's, and all will be well!

26 ¶ *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.*

It is remarkable, how holy men of old, when under the Spirit of the Lord, break out in the midst of their office of blessing his people, with blessing the God of his people. Thus dying Jacob, in the midst of blessing his children, cries out, I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. Gen. xlix. 18. And here Moses breaks out in a commendation of the God of Jeshurun. Reader! observe with me how very sweet and striking this, and the following three last verses of Moses are, in praising the God of Israel, and in commending the Israel of God. They are the last words of this great man, and the last words of great men, are always particularly to be attended to. In this verse, he pours out his praises upon Israel's God. There is none like him, saith Moses. And



he instanteth this, in those two grand distinctions of character, his sovereignty, and his glory. How sweet, how very sweet and dear are those perfections to the contemplation of his people. By the one, they are secured in his power, and by the other, in his love. Oh! that you and I, Reader, may know our covenant God in Christ, in both.

27 The eternal God *is thy* refuge, and underneath *are* the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy *them*.

28 Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob *shall be* upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew.

29 Happy *art* thou, O Israel: who *is* like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who *is* the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

The man of God, having poured out his praises on Israel's God, now bestows his commendation on Israel. They have the eternal God for their refuge. Jehovah is engaged in all his covenant relations for their defence. He will protect, and govern, and bless, and rejoice over them; nay, he will not only protect, and govern, and bless them, but he will destroy their enemies. And when he hath thrust out all before them, they shall dwell securely in their God; they shall abound with a fulness of all blessings; corn and wine shall be their sustenance, and their heavens shall drop down dew. If we read these things as temporal mercies, we must read them with certain limitations. It is sad to consider how Israel, in after ages, forfeited these things by their disobedience and ingratitude. But if we read them spiritually, and with an eye to the gospel church of the Lord Jesus, (and which no doubt, is the chief sense of the words), to what a degree of greatness and sublimity do the blessings then rise to our view? Reader! look at the gospel church of the Lord Jesus; and see the Israel of God in him! Here indeed, the eternal God is the refuge of his people; for in the covenant of redemption, in the blood and righteousness of Jesus, all the perfections of the Godhead are made over in an everlasting covenant, which cannot be broken, for the eternal security of his people. And God is not only the support and security of his people; but he is their refuge, their hiding place, their everlasting, and eternal home. Hence one of old, calls the Lord his hiding place, and bids his soul to return to his rest. See Psalms xlv. 1. xxxii. 7. xc. 1. cxvi. 7. And how is the church of the Lord Jesus provided for? Every individual believer of it, hath the charter of all these blessings secured to him, in the blood of the covenant. God the Father is his, in all his covenant relations. Jesus, in his person, offices, and character; and the Holy Ghost, with all his gracious influences. These mercies are the fountain of Jacob here spoken of, because they are fountain mercies indeed, which send off streams in-

numerable, to make glad the city of God. These are the heavens which drop down their dew upon the church, and every individual believer of it, to refresh, to comfort, to enlarge, and make fruitful. Well might the man of God, in a review of these things, and well may every one interested in them, echo to the same, and cry out, as he did, Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord!

### REFLECTIONS.

PAUSE, my soul, over the perusal of this most delightful Chapter, and while the man of God is pronouncing these blessings over the people of Israel: see, whether you can now, by virtue of an union with the true spiritual Lord of Israel, claim an interest in these mercies, and call yourself by the name of Jacob, and surname yourself by the name of Israel.

Israel of old, was a chosen generation, for God the Father chose them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. And if I belong to Israel now, have I not been chosen in him, and ordained by him to be of the chosen generation, an holy nation, a peculiar people, to shew forth the praises of him who hath called me out of darkness into his marvellous light. My soul! is it so with thee? Am I the purchase of Jesus' blood, the subject of the Holy Ghost's fellowship: and do I enjoy communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ? Then shall I, as Israel, dwell in safety. My God will thrust out the enemy from before me, and will say, destroy them. The eternal God is my refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

### CONTENTS.

*Here is related to us, the account of Moses' death. To whose pen we are indebted for the relation of it, under the Holy Ghost, is not said. The Lord gives his servant a view of the promised land: to which is added, the account of his death and burial, the mourning of Israel for Moses, and the appointment of Joshua as his successor.*

AND Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan,

Moses' ascension to the top of *Pisgah*, for the purpose of seeing the holy land, opens to our contemplation a very interesting subject. Do not all believers in Jesus, truly behold with an eye of faith, that upper brighter world, of which this Canaan was a type? what is it to see the land that is very far off, when, once the eye of the soul hath seen the King in his beauty, but to see God's covenant love in Jesus, his grace, his salvation, his sure promises, as yea and Amen, and firmly made over to the soul, in the blood and righteousness of a Redeemer? Reader,

if the Lord gives to you, and to me, that firm and well-founded assurance in Jesus, of an interest in him, so that we die as we have lived, upon those sure principles; is not this to ascend, like Moses the top of Pisgah, and by faith, behold the glory that shall be revealed.

2 And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the uttermost sea,

3 And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.

4 And the LORD said unto him, This *is* the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see *it* with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

Observe, it is said, that the *Lord* shewed it to him. Yes! every view and every renewed view, as well as the first manifestations of divine favor flow from God's grace, not our deserts. Hence Paul prays for the Ephesian church, that God would give them the spirit of wisdom, and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus. Ephes. i. 17, 18.

5 ¶ So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

Here we arrive to the close of all in Moses. He felt that sentence which passeth upon all men, because all have sinned. Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Gen. iii. 19. But Reader! observe his character. He is said to have been the servant of Jehovah, the saint of God. And we know from the authority of the Holy Ghost, that precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Psm. cxvi. 15. The expression of Moses' death in the original, is, as if Moses had died upon the very mouth of the Lord. The Jews say, that he breathed out his soul from the body, as with a kiss of love from the Lord. Certain it is, that it was according to the word of the Lord. According to the interest and union he had with the uncreated word: precious death!

6 ¶ And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

Concerning his burial, we have but a short account. But, short as it is, nothing can be more honourable. The Lord himself buried him, and no eye was privy to it. Probably to prevent any superstitious notions concerning him. We are informed by the Holy Ghost, in his servant Jude's Epistle, that the devil disputed with Michael concerning his body. Jude ix. Sweet thought to the believer! the same power that buried Moses, raised Jesus; and the same power which raised Jesus from the dead, is engaged to quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us. Rom. viii. 11. Reader! if Jesus be now your living head, fear not

to go down to the grave, in your dying moment: for he speaks to you, as he once did to the Patriarch, concerning the Egypt of the soul: Fear not to go down into Egypt, I will go with thee. Gen. xlv. 3. In that hour, and down that valley, Jesus thy Almighty head will go with thee. He loves thee living, dying, and forever. Oh! for strong, ardent, lively faith, to believe the record God hath given of his Son. 1 John v. 11.

7 ¶ And Moses *was* an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

The promise, Thou shalt go down to the grave in a good old age, was remarkably fulfilled, in the instance of Moses. If the Reader will consult the genealogy of Moses he will discover, that his father, grandfather, and great grandfather, were all older when they died than himself. *Anram* his father was 137 years at his death. *Kohath* his grandfather 133, and *Levi* his great grandfather 137. See Exod. vi. 16—20.

8 ¶ And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping *and* mourning for Moses were ended.

The mourning of Israel for Moses, was decent and proper. We are not commanded to refrain from mourning, only we are not to sorrow as ~~without~~ without hope. Oh! what a difference hath the death and resurrection of Jesus put in the circumstances of death! To true believers in Christ, our charnel-house is but our chamber-house, whither we retire after the example of the Lord Jesus, to rest the wearied limbs of mortality. And what a sweet perfume hath his sacred body given to the dust of death! Reader! never forget that the first clear and distinct views of the future mansions of the blessed, were seen from the tomb of Jesus. John xx. 17.

9 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.

We are here first introduced into an acquaintance with Joshua, as the successor of Moses. Joshua is well known before as a faithful follower of the Lord, but not as the leader of the Lord's people. Moses must first be buried before that Christ can be fully known and received. Moses must die in Moab, to our view, before that Christ can be sought after to bring us over Jordan. The law can go no further than Jordan. It is Jesus alone in his blessed gospel, which brings life and immortality to light.

10 ¶ And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,

11 In all the signs and the wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt to

Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land,

12 And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.

Very honourable testimony is given to Moses, as a servant of Jehovah; and the Holy Ghost confirms it in another part of the sacred writings; when pointing out the superiority of the Lord Jesus in his divine office and character. Heb. iii. 5, 6. And here, Reader, we drop Moses. He hath served his generation, and by the will of God, is fallen asleep, and hath seen corruption; but he to whom Moses ministered saw no corruption: but when he had finished redemption work on earth, returned to glory there to complete the whole, by appearing in the presence of God for us. Hail, holy, blessed, dearest Jesus! may our eyes unceasingly gaze on thee, now thou art returned to thy kingdom above, angels, principalities, and powers, being made subject unto thee.

#### REFLECTIONS.

FAREWELL, Moses! thou faithful servant of the most high God! thou highly favoured, highly honored herald of my ever adored Redeemer! Thy memory shall be ever dear to me: for under the sweet and precious influences of the Holy Ghost, thou hast informed me of things which I knew not, and brought to my knowledge such truths as are past finding out. But chiefly do I desire to honour thy memory, in acting as a schoolmaster to bring me to Jesus. Here I value thee as more precious than gold; for whatever tends to reveal to my soul the person and righteousness of God my Saviour, would I esteem more than my necessary food.

The very thought of Jesus fires my soul. And when I trace in the eventful history of Moses, and in his writings, that he pointed only to Jesus, I long to have my soul brought yet more and more under the Holy Ghost, in his teaching to discover Jesus.

And do I not see in Moses himself, and in all his ministry, somewhat, which by faint figures, or more pointed similitudes, testifies of Jesus! If Moses acted as the messenger of Jehovah; became, as occasions required, the prophet, the priest, the king of Jeshurun: if Moses stood between Jehovah, and the people as the Mediator: if this man led out the Lord's people, delivered them from Pharaoh, wrought miracles, subdued kingdoms, appointed statutes, established ordinances, gave a law to Israel, and taught precepts to Jacob; what were all these and as many more, but so many representations of the Lord Jesus?

Didst not thou, blessed Jesus, act as the messenger of Jehovah, when thou camest to our spiritual Egypt, to deliver thy people out of captivity? In all thy ministry, righteousness, and salvation, wast not thou the sent, the sealed, the anointed of thy Father? And wast not thou the great prophet, priest, and king of thy people? If Moses stood between Jehovah and Israel, as a Mediator, how much more thou? for Moses never could have stood, but as thy representative, none but thyself could turn away divine wrath, or make atonement but in thy blood.

If Moses, acting as the minister of Jehovah, opened a way through the Red Sea, what was this, but as typical of that new and living way, which thou hast opened in thy blood and righteousness, for thy ransomed ones to pass over, when mountains of sin on every side, and the enemy, like Pharaoh, is behind, hastening on to destroy thy chosen? And if Moses' meekness forsook him not, amidst all the contumacy, ingratitude, and rebellion of Israel, what was Moses' meekness compared to thine, Oh, thou patient Lamb of God, who, when thou wast reviled, reviledst not again; but in all the backslidings, coldness, and departures of thy people, never leavest nor forsakest them, but having loved thine own, which are in the world, thou lovest them unto the end! Hail! thou first, and best, and chiefest among ten thousand! thou holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens! If I forget thee, dearest Jesus, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: yea, if I prefer thee not above my chief joy! And Reader! may you, and every ransomed soul, publish his name, declare his doings among the people, ascribe ye greatness unto our Christ; let every one, the fathers unto the children, declare his truth!

And now, Reader, having taken leave of Moses, and his sacred writings, I would desire grace to set up my *Ebenezer*, that hitherto the Lord hath helped me. May a gracious God accept every thing that hath been here humbly offered, by way of Commentary upon those Five Books of Moses, and which the Lord hath made, or shall hereafter make profitable to his people; for that is the Lord's, and of his own, do I with all humility of soul offer him. And may he as graciously pardon and blot out every thing that is amiss; for that is wholly mine; and I desire to take shame and confusion of face in the recollection. And finally, I beg once more to recommend all that is here offered, to the Reader, with myself, and poor services to his prayers, that a covenant God in Christ, through the influences of the eternal Spirit, may abundantly bless and own this feeble attempt to promote the Lord's glory in the heart of the Reader, both while the unworthy writer is spared, a monument of sovereign mercy upon earth, and a long time after the hand that now writes, shall have returned to its original dust. To the sacred Three in One be endless, undivided praises. Amen.