

The First Cause of Good and Evil

SERMONS ON THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

III. LORD'S DAY.

Johannes VanderKemp (1664-1718)

Eccl. vii. 29. Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

Q. 6. Did God then create man so evil and perverse?

A. By no means; but God created man good, and after his own image, in righteousness and true holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love him, and live with him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise him.

Q. 7. Whence then proceeds this depravity of human nature?

A. From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise; hence our nature is become so corrupt, that we are all conceived and born in sin.

HAPPY is the man who knoweth the cause of things; for having such an insight into the nature of matters, he hath a wonderful delight in his contemplations. It tends more especially to render a person happy, that he knows the first cause of good and evil; since he learns thus to avoid the evil, and pursue the good, to praise the first cause of the good, and to detest the evil. If I know not the first cause of the good that I enjoy, I shall foolishly kiss my own hands: and if I understand not the origin of the evil that befalls me, I shall soon with the wicked Jews say, "The way of the Lord is not equal," Ezek. 33.17,20. The foul head spring of all the errors, that have deluged the heathen, Jewish and Christian world hath bubbled up only from an ignorance of the true causes of good and evil. Many of the ancient heathens imagined that there were two God's, a good God, who was the cause of all that was good, and an evil God, who was the author of all that was shameful, hurtful and painful; and in this they were followed by the Manichees, otherwise called Christians. Others thought that the cause of good and evil in man was the contrariety of his soul and body, two principles, or parts of man, which were opposed one to another. The ancient and modern Pelagians have adopted this opinion, and they say that the soul is created with a free will, and the body with a certain carnal concupiscence, and that the former is the cause of good, and the latter of evil. It is also natural to the sinner, through self love, to excuse himself, and to accuse his Maker of the evil. It is an evil disposition, which he hath inherited of his

father Adam, who said to the Lord, "The woman, whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat," Gen. 3.12. Therefore if the foolish sinner shall become wise and happy, he must learn to ascribe righteousness to his Maker, and accuse himself to his own shame, that he is himself the cause of his destruction, like Daniel, who said, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth to thee, but to us, confusion of faces," Dan. 9.7. Indeed nothing is more certain, than that God alone is the author of all happiness, and man the author of all his misery. Therefore the wisest of kings saith, Eccl. 7.29. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."

It is therefore the glory, the wisdom and happiness of the reformed church, that she teaches more than all others who are out of her pale, that the Lord God alone is the source of all good, and the sinner the cause of all his evil, that she may thus humble miserable man by the knowledge of his misery, which he hath procured to himself, and may induce him to seek deliverance, and a happy consolation of the Lord. For to this end doth the instructor show him how evil and perverse he is, in the fifth question; and that God is not the cause thereof, in the sixth question; but he himself through his parents, in the seventh question.

There are therefore two particulars here, that require our illustration.

I. That the wickedness of man doth not proceed from God, Question six.

II. But from man himself, Question seven.

I. We have taught in the foregoing discourse, that "we are by nature prone to hate God and our neighbour." Nearly all those who are out of our church take occasion hence to slander us, as though we taught that God was the author of sin, and of our wickedness and perverseness, because we receive our nature from God. But we protest against this in the strongest terms, and say that God neither is, nor can be the author of sin. We proclaim to the whole world with Elihu, "Far be it from God that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity," Job 34.16. Sin is more contrary to the nature of God, than darkness to light, and hell to heaven: "He is not a God who hath pleasure in wickedness," Psalm 5.4. "He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and he cannot look upon iniquity." Hab. 1.13. "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man," James 1.13. Neither can anyone infer from our doctrine by a just consequence, that we represent God as the author of our wickedness and perverseness; for although our nature is of God, it was not created by God so wicked; for "God made man good:" so our church teaches with the catechism from the word of God, which saith, Gen. 1. 31. "God saw all that he had made, and behold, it was very good."

And wherein doth that goodness consist? The Socinians say, in the essence and in the essential parts of man, without any original righteousness, and only in *puris naturalibus*, or that man was neither good nor evil, when he was created: they even maintain that man was created as

ignorant as a child, not knowing that he was naked. And the Jesuits and Remonstrants proceed so far, that they dare maintain that there was a certain carnal lusting in man immediately after his creation, and that his flesh and lusts strove and rebelled against his reason and spirit. If this were so, man would have come out of his Maker's hands a sinful, ignorant and unholy creature. And this reproach ought therefore not to be cast upon us, but upon our adversaries; for it will naturally follow from these heterodox assertions, that God made man evil and perverse. But it will appear more clearly anon.

We teach better things concerning the innate goodness of man. We say that it consists in a moral and virtuous goodness whereby man is qualified, as a reasonable creature, to glorify his Maker; for the goodness of every creature consists in its possessing such perfections, as belong to the nature of that creature, that it may express and declare, in a manner agreeable to its nature, the glorious perfections of its Creator. Man being a reasonable creature, and therefore much more excellent than other creatures, ought to glorify God in a reasonable manner, and thus more than other creatures. But how could he glorify his Maker in a reasonable manner, if he were created without original righteousness, in such ignorance, and with a certain lusting against his spirit? The reasonable creature cannot exist in a state of indifference, or be neither good nor evil, any more than he can be neither alive nor dead: he must necessarily be one or the other, either good or evil: and he cannot be good, unless he have a moral goodness, and be endued with a pure apprehension of God's perfections, and a sincere love to God, so as to know, love, enjoy and praise him. Solomon saith also, "that God made man upright," and he opposes that uprightness to "man's inventions which he hath sought out," and to his perverseness, Eccl. 7.29. And therefore the instructor saith, "that God did not create man so wicked and perverse, but good, and thus after his image."

The Lord God having created the heaven, the earth and the sea, with all that in them is, "did last of all form man out of the dust of the earth, and he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; thus man became a living soul," Gen. 2.7. "But as it was not good that man should be alone, God made Adam an help meet for him," even his wife, "out of one of his ribs," and brought her to him for his lawful wife. Adam also owned, took, and loved her as such, Gen. 2.18-25. God gave them both also the law of marriage, that they should cleave to one another," Gen. 2.24,25, "and be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," Gen. 1.28, and thus "hath God made of one blood all the nations of men, to dwell upon the face of all the earth," Acts 17.26. That man might be the chief ornament of all God's works, God created him after his image. Therefore the Father, acting after the manner of men, excited, as it were, the Son and the Holy Ghost, to perform some great work in the creation of man, saying, Gen. 1.26. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." It is absurd in the Papists to distinguish these two words so, as if "image" related to natural endowments, and likeness to graces and supernatural endowments, as though the image of God were not natural to man. Image and likeness denote the selfsame thing, and are joined together to express it with greater emphasis and

force, and to show that the image was exceedingly like God, and a likeness that expressed and depicted God in man: one thing can be like another, as one egg may be like another, but it is not therefore an image of that other. But an image is something, which is fashioned after something else, and is therefore like it. Man was then made in the image of God, because God was the pattern after which he was made; and if I may so speak, because God depicted himself in man, and made man like himself. Not that God gave his essence and life, as he hath it in himself, to man; for in this manner "hath he given only to his Son to have life in himself," John 5.26. The Son of God alone is "the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person," Heb. 1.3. Neither is God a body after which the body of man was formed, as the ancient Anthropomorphists imagined; for "God is a spirit," John 4.24. But God made man so after his image, that he expressed a certain likeness of his communicable attributes in him, whereby he became "a partaker of the divine nature," 2 Peter 1.4. Not that God transferred his attributes to man, for he would then have made him a God: but that man was made after them, so as to possess a certain likeness to them, and that he obtained a certain sketch of those divine perfections.

We must inquire more particularly wherein that image and likeness, in which man was made, consists. The soul, the spirit of man, which hath in itself an ability to act from itself, though in dependence on God, with understanding and will, is an image of God, and exhibits a certain likeness of God. Some maintain that the image of God doth not consist in the essence of the soul, but that the soul is only the panel, on which the image is expressed: we may assert that the soul is the panel of the moral and virtuous goodness of man. But that the soul itself is not the image of God, but only the panel and subject of God's image, this we do not assert, because the nature of the thing and the word of God forbid it. For the essence and the spirituality of the soul are matters, in which it is like God, "who is a spirit," John 4.24. Are not the heathens, who are destitute of the moral and virtuous goodness of God's image, still "the offspring of God," so far as he is a spirit, which cannot be expressed by an image? Acts 17.28,29. We may "not curse, nor kill any man, because he is made in the image and likeness of God," Gen. 9.6. James 3.9. Not because he was once made in the image of God; but because he is still God's image: for otherwise the reason why we may not kill or curse any man ceaseth. Doth the sinner now "come short of" the image and "glory of God," according to Rom. 3.23, it is with respect to the virtuous goodness, in which he was created.

This moral and virtuous goodness is indeed the principal and most glorious part of God's image. It is also called original righteousness, and consists (1) in the knowledge of God, and of divine things. We must now "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him," according to Paul, Col. 3.10. He hath certainly respect to the image in which man was created in the beginning: he saith that it consisted in knowledge: he supposeth that this knowledge is obscured, and that the image of God is now become old, and that we must be again renewed after that same image. The first man was therefore not so simple and ignorant:

for we must be renewed in knowledge after the image of that man: if he had been created in a childish ignorance, he would have been ridiculously foolish; for a full grown man, as Adam was when he came out of his Maker's hands, who is childish, is contemptible: surely "the soul without knowledge is not good," Prov. 19.2. If Adam were created in such ignorance, how did he know the nature of the animals, and of his wife? Gen. 2. 19-23. He certainly knew God, he was accustomed to his visits, Gen. 3.8, and was acquainted with his law, Gen. 2.16,17. 3.2,3, surely not only by divine revelation, but also by creation; for if that law be still written in the hearts of his posterity; according to Rom. 2.14,15, how much more was it then written in his heart, when he came new and pure out of the hands of his Maker. After the fall, his eyes were indeed opened, and he knew that he was naked," Gen. 3.7, but this doth not imply that he knew not before that he was without any clothing; for otherwise sin would have made him wiser, and the lying promises of Satan, "that his eyes should be opened, and that he should like God know both good and evil," Gen. 3.5. would not then have been detestable. It remains therefore certain that Adam knew God, and his obligation to him; by the image of God, by which he knew, as by a beam from God's own light, what God knew, and what he would reveal to him. For the knowledge that depicts God, is not barely a common and literal apprehension of divine things, but "a seeing of the light in God's light," Psalm 36.9, and "an in-shining of God into the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God," 2 Cor. 4.6. Now such a knowledge and seeing of God must necessarily produce a divine holiness in the soul; for "we, beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory," 2 Cor. 3.18. And therefore the moral goodness of God's image consists also (2) "in true righteousness and holiness," by which man surrendered himself with a perfect heart to the Lord, to do his will, according to that law and truth of God, which his understanding represented to him to be holy, just and good. That the image of God consisted in this also, the apostle teacheth us when he saith, Eph. 4.24. "And put on me new man, which after God is created in true righteousness, and holiness." So our translators render the Greek words, according to the usual style of the scriptures: but others, following more the order of the Greek words read, "in righteousness and holiness of truth." The sense is the same: righteousness and holiness are two words, which design one and the same thing, but with great beauty, and with a strong emphasis, as if we should say, a righteous holiness, and a holy righteousness. But if we will distinguish the words, and consider each as signifying something different from the other, we must then refer righteousness, not to a right to demand life, inasmuch as Adam had not that right, and it moreover doth not now flow from the image of God, but from the imputed righteousness of Christ; but we must refer the righteousness of the image of God to our neighbour, and the holiness to God: and so these two words express the whole sum of the law, which was innate to man with the image of God.

Man being endowed with such a rational and virtuous soul, was also created lord of all the creatures, that he might govern and make use of them, as the vicegerent of God, under him, and to his service: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea," &c. saith the Lord, Gen. 1.26,29. The Socinians, who will not allow that man had

any original righteousness before the fall, and are nevertheless forced to believe that man was created after the image of God, say that the image of God consisted only in dominion. But how could man govern the creatures according to the will of God, if he had no virtuous goodness? The creature would have groaned against him, as it doth now against its sinful and rigorous lord, Rom. 8.19-22. That the image of God consists nevertheless partly in dominion, and that this dominion is not only a consequence of the image, this Paul teacheth us, when he saith that "the man," on account of his dominion over the woman, "is the image and glory of God;" and that "the woman, on account of her dominion under and by reason of the man" is the glory of the man," 1 Cor. 11.7. Inasmuch as this excellency of the soul presently extended itself to the body, and the image of God pertaineth to the whole man, therefore man was immortal, not only according to the soul, but also according to the body, which being created of the dust of the earth, and consisting of flesh and blood, could die; but would, through the sustaining power of God, have continued alive for ever, if man had not sinned. For how could such a destructive and horrible evil as death befall man, while he was not guilty of any iniquity? Death was threatened only in consequence of sin, Gen. 1.17, and "the wages of sin is death," Rom, 6.23. God did not, moreover, pronounce the sentence of death upon Adam, until he had sinned, Gen. 3.13. That the image of God consists in immortality, this Paul saith, 1 Cor. 15.49, where he teaches that when we shall receive our immortality again, "we shall bear the image of the heavenly."

The image of God, in which man was created, had its ends, and served (1) "That man might rightly know his Creator." For to this end was his understanding filled with such a clear light, that he might behold God in his glory and loveliness. (2) "That he might love him heartily." For God's law of love was innate to him with the image of God through that righteousness and holiness. When he pursued this through the image of God, it served also, that he might (3) "live with God in eternal happiness." For when he knew and loved God so, the Lord could not but manifest his pleasure in him by a reciprocal love, and this would render him happy. By such a conduct, so worthy of God, he fulfilled the law of the covenant, which promised him eternal happiness; for which end he had also the tree of life, in order to seal that happy life to him by a sacrament, Gen. 2.9. But the chief end of the divine image was, (4) "that he might glorify and praise God:" for since he knew that God was the most worthy, and since he loved and enjoyed him as such he could not but exalt him in the highest degree.

The Remonstrants imagine that these things could not be the ends of God's image, no, not according to our opinion, because God would then have failed of his end by the fall of Adam, and of all mankind in him, and because we teach that God created the greatest part of mankind to be damned; but this is a horrible calumny: we do not teach that God created man to be damned, as if the creation of man were a cause of his damnation: sin alone is the cause of his damnation, on account of which God punisheth him, as he threatened according to his eternal decree, in which he purposed to pass by certain persons with his grace, and to punish them justly: but besides this,

we say, that when God created man in his image, he did not intend to effect that all men should live with him in eternal happiness: for this would then undoubtedly be accomplished; since he always obtains his end by his almighty power, on account of the unchangeableness of his counsel: for "he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. 1.11. We must also distinguish between the end of the worker and of the work. The end of God's work, to wit, the creation of man in his image, was indeed, that he might, by knowing and loving God, live with him in eternal happiness: for the image of God qualified him for this end, and urged him to pursue it: but this was not the end of the Worker, even of God: for he intended to render the glory of his justice, mercy and grace, wonderful in fallen men, and for this end he suffered them to fall. See Rom. 11.32. And God hath also obtained this end.

The Jesuites assert that this image was a supernatural gift, bestowed upon man in order to restrain the furious lusts of the flesh, as it were, with a golden bridle: and therefore that man, having lost that image, is now indeed without that supernatural gift; but that his nature is not therefore so corrupt, as we teach. In opposition to which we say, that the image of God, and particularly that virtuous goodness, or original righteousness, did not constitute any essential part of man, by which he was made man, as his soul and body do; but it is evident that this righteousness, and permit me to say in a good sense, supernatural grace was nevertheless natural to man, that is, his nature could not have been good, if he had not been created in the image of God. For (a) the image of God was innate to man with his nature, Gen. 1.26,27. (b) His nature would not otherwise have been created good, since a man without knowledge, righteousness and holiness is sinful and hateful to God. See this Eph. 4.18. (c) Man could not then have pursued nor obtained the end of his creation; for how can he, who is naturally without knowledge, and filled with fleshly lusts, warring against his spirit, know, love and praise God aright? (d) Adam, though fallen, hath transmitted the remains of God's image with his nature, to his posterity; for "the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law," Rom. 2.14,15. How much more would he then, if he had continued to stand, have transmitted the divine image itself to his seed? but this would not have been possible, if the image of God had not been natural to him. What our adversaries object here, that man could not then have fallen, is of no force, because Adam, although naturally good, was nevertheless created changeable, and was capable of being seduced. Were not the angels created naturally good and holy? and some of them nevertheless fell.

How dare our adversaries then reproach us in such a shameless manner, and say that we teach that man was created by God so wicked and perverse? They give us reason to suspect them of such a wicked opinion. For if man were created so ignorant, and with a certain evil lusting, then God created him wicked and perverse, inasmuch as ignorance, and lusting after evil is wicked and perverse. They will doubtless allow that man fell through his natural inclinations to evil, (admitting that these inclinations were not sinful in themselves.) Ought not man then to be excused, since he only followed his natural and innate inclination? yea, ought not God to be accused, since he created

man with such an inclination, and no better? but our adversaries have need of such cloaks of shame, if they will defend with any plausibility their unviolated reason, and indifferent freewill.

Is man nevertheless so wicked and perverse, and did not God create him so, but good and in his image, "whence then proceeds this depravity of human nature?" We ought to know this, it concerns us, that knowing the ground of our disease, we may seek in a right manner to be healed. The wisest of kings had found that "man himself had sought out many inventions," Eccl. 7.29. And the instructor, explaining this more particularly from the word of God, leads us to "the fall of our first parents, whereby our nature is become so corrupt."

If we will form proper conceptions of our corruption through the fall of Adam, we must know that God entered into a covenant of works with Adam, and that Adam was able to keep the covenant. We have shown before on the second Lord's Day the nature and reality of this covenant. We must now see that he could keep the covenant. For God would not otherwise have made a covenant with him, it would indeed have been to no purpose. Adam's understanding and will being endued with original righteousness, he was able to know and love God perfectly, and thus to fulfil the condition of the covenant. He needed without doubt, God's preventing influence: but we may nevertheless say, that he had an ability to continue in the covenant, on account of his habitual virtuousness, in consequence of his having been created in the image of God, as a man in health hath an ability to do his daily work, although he needeth the ordinary influence of God for that also, according to Acts 17.28. For that God created man independent in his actions, so that, when left to himself, he could do his duty without the preventing influence of God, is a most absurd imagination: for man would then have been made a God, who could govern himself, of and by himself.

We must also know that Adam and Eve, the first human couple, were our parents, of whom God hath made the whole race of men, as we have shown before. Now when God entered into a covenant with Adam, he established it with Eve also, yet so that she was reckoned in her husband. And therefore the misery of their posterity is generally referred more to Adam than to Eve. But God did not enter into a covenant with Adam, as a private person, who should stand or fall only for himself, but also as the father, and as the head of all mankind, who should descend from him, and for whom he should stand and fall: as kings and princes enter into covenants with one another, not only for themselves, but also for their children and subjects, who exist now, and will exist hereafter. And in this manner did God establish the covenant of works with Adam, and in him, as the head, with the whole human race. For the appendix of the covenant of works, to wit, the law of marriage, Gen. 1.28., 2.24,25, was given to Adam, and in him to all his posterity. See this Matt. 19.3,4,5,6, Eph. 5.31. All Adam's posterity were created in him after the image of God, as the remains of that image in the Gentiles still manifest, Rom. 2.14,15. Paul requireth, Rom. 5.14-19, that we should consider Christ as the head of believers in the covenant of grace, after the example of Adam: but how shall we understand this, unless Adam be also the head of his posterity in the covenant of works.

But although Adam possessed such a glory and excellency, he nevertheless fell into a deep abyss of horrible misery through his disobedience, by which, contrary to the command of God, enforced with the promise of life, and the threatening of death, he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, by which he also broke the covenant, as the Lord saith, Hoses 6.7: for that tree was prohibited to him, as a trial of his obedience.

But how could these exceedingly wise and holy persons, who had such an ability, be guilty of such a base conduct. The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, saith Paul, 2 Cor. 11.3. from Gen. 3.1-6. "The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field," saith Moses, Gen. 3.1. But although he were ever so subtle, and more so than any beast of the field, he could nevertheless not perform such an evil and subtle work of himself, for he was irrational and speechless: but the devil having apostatized from God, and being subjected by him to eternal punishment, without any hope of mercy, inflamed with hatred against God, and envy against the happy man, and with an ambitious desire to rule over him, made use of, and possessed this beast for that purpose, and so enticed man by means of it. For "the devil was a murderer of man from the beginning," John 8.44 and he is on this account himself called "the great dragon, and the old serpent," Rev. 12.9. It is therefore detestable in a certain person * to say that the devil was the first author of sin, according to the declaration of scripture, and nevertheless to teach that neither the serpent nor the devil could deceive man, and thus to deride the whole account of Moses. Perhaps he could not speak otherwise, after he had once determined that the essence of a spirit was simply thought, and that it hath no power at all to act upon that which is bodily.

* The author hath respect here to Dr. Balthazer Becker, a pastor of the reformed church of Amsterdam. He was a great admirer of the Cartesian philosophy, and was so far misled by it, as to deny all the accounts, which the scripture gives of the power of the devil, and evil spirits: as also the existence of ghosts and wizards. He published these sentiments in a book, which he intitled, The world bewitched. He was deposed from his pastoral office on account of these opinions; but persevered in them until his death.

The devil being exceedingly subtle, and abusing also the subtle nature of the serpent, conducted his temptation in a most subtle manner. For (1) it was subtle in him, that he did not tempt man from within, by acting upon his imagination, with wicked injections: for he would then have met with an immediate repulse: there were no traitor's as yet in the mind of man, with whom he could correspond and conspire to destroy him. But he attacked man from without, that he might penetrate into his soul by means of his sight and hearing, and effect a total confusion there. (2) He appears not to man in a terrifying form, but conceals his hideousness under the serpent, which was not a disagreeable object to upright man; by which he might induce him to think that he was favoured with a message from God by an angel of light through the means of this serpent, in an extraordinary manner; for the wise man knew that the serpent was not endued with reason, and that he had not a man's voice. (3) He doth not tempt him in opposition to any command of the moral law of love, which was written upon his heart; for he knew very well that his soul would be immediately seized with horror, and would forthwith resist such an attack; but he assails him with the positive and probationary command, that he should not

eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because man might be more easily brought to this, since there was neither good nor evil in eating or not eating of that tree, considered in itself and without respect to the divine prohibition. (4) It was also exceedingly crafty in the devil, that he did not attack the man first, but the woman, who was the weakest, and that when she was in her weakest condition and alone, that he might by her seduce the man. (5) He doth not tempt her to sin forthwith, and like an open enemy; for he would then have been soon resisted; but he tempts in a very gradual manner, and with subtle reasons, that he may conceal his deceit. He doth it (a) by asking a question. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" He speaks not of the tree of knowledge, but of every tree of the garden, in general: he feigns as though he were a stranger who knew of nothing; and that he may not create suspicion, he asks as one who was ignorant, and wished for information, that he may thus obtain an opportunity of entering into a discourse with her, and of causing her to stagger, and doubt whether God, when he permitted her to eat of every tree, forbade her to eat just of that one tree. He offers to her for consideration hereby, whether she had not misunderstood, or whether she rightly remembered the words of God. (b) The woman not thinking that it was her enemy who was before her, enters into a discourse with him, and declares to him how kindly God had permitted them to eat of every tree, but that he had forbidden them to eat of the tree of knowledge, and had threatened them with death in the severest terms, if they did eat. The subtle serpent, the father of lies, that he may rid her of the fear of the danger, which attended her eating of the forbidden tree, denies the threatening and saith, "Ye shall not surely die," and perhaps he feigns as though he were a good angel, who was sent by God to inform her that her time of probation was at an end, that God had therefore revoked that command and his threatening, and that she had consequently no reason to fear death, inasmuch as God did now freely permit them to eat of that tree, as well as of the rest. (c) But God had nevertheless forbidden them to eat of that tree, and those holy persons did not wish to act contrary to the divine prohibition, although it were not dangerous; and why then should they eat of the tree? was there no danger in eating, there was no advantage neither. Therefore the subtle deceiver saith, that they should derive a great advantage from eating: "In the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil." He endeavours to persuade them that they were yet very simple persons, who knew but little; but that by eating of that tree they should attain to a great, yea, to a godlike knowledge, which was exceedingly desirable for man: yea, he endeavours to insinuate to the woman that the tree was on this account called the tree of knowledge. And that she may believe him, and eat of the fruit without scruple, he swears, and appeals to the allknowingness of God, to satisfy her, "God doth know" saith he.

The woman having entered into such a discourse with her enemy, listened attentively to his false sophistry, doubted whether God had so strictly forbidden her to eat, or whether she had rightly understood him, believed the devil, dismissed her fear of death, coveted the good which he had falsely promised her, and stirred up her desire by "seeing that the tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eye, and desirable to make one wise, and she took of the fruit, and ate, and gave also

to her husband with her, and he did eat." Thus the woman was deceived by the devil, and she, perhaps solicited by the devil, deceives her husband: in what manner Moses relates not: but we may reasonably suppose that she proposed the arguments of the serpent to him with a womanly and sweet voice, by which Adam suffered himself to be enticed, and thus imitated the sin of his wife. Therefore when it is said, 1 Tim. 2.14, "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived was in the transgression," we must understand it so that he was not deceived first, nor immediately by the devil, but by the woman.

We cannot believe that our parents fell on the same day, on which they were created. For the many events which happened on that day left no time for the fall, which is related briefly, but happened more circumstantially; since on that day the beasts of the field were created, Adam was made, Eve formed of one of his ribs, while Adam was in a deep sleep, marriage, and the law of marriage instituted and the covenant of works established. Besides this, God pronounced all things good at the end of the sixth day, Gen. 1.31. Add to this, that "God rested on the seventh day from all his works, and was refreshed," Exod. 31.17, which God would not have done, if man had fallen on the sixth day, for "that grieved him at his heart," Gen 6.6. It is also improbable that man continued not a certain space of time, mid at least not a few days or weeks in his happy state, that he might employ himself in contemplating God, loving him, and delighting himself in glorifying him. He was undoubtedly accustomed to God's drawing near to him, since he knew it by "the cool" or wind "of the day." Gen. 3.8.

Let none of us think that our first parents were guilty of a small sin in eating of the forbidden tree; for it was an exceedingly great and dreadful sin. Paul calls it "a sin, transgression, offence, disobedience," Rom. 5, They transgressed by this sin the whole law of love, loving the creature more than the Creator: they broke God's covenant of friendship: they despised his threatening of death, and contemned the promised life: they believed the devil more than their gracious Creator: they refused the blessed enjoyment of God, and sought their pleasure in the forbidden creature: they fell from God to his malicious enemy, the devil; yea, they wished to be Gods, and like God, for which they are derided, Gen. 3.22, and that at the suggestion of the wicked spirit, who hid himself in a beast. All this was so much the more aggravated, because God had created them exceedingly glorious, and had given them a noble, wise and holy soul, which could govern all the other creatures; they were able to abstain from the forbidden tree, the command was not difficult to observe, nothing compelled them to eat of it, they had all things richly in the garden to enjoy. But that which causes this sin to appear still more detestable, is the misery which they procured by it, not only to themselves, but also to all their posterity.

But although this sin was so detestable, it did nevertheless not happen without the providence of God. If "even a sparrow fall not to the ground without the will of God," how much less then could man, who was created perfect, and all mankind fall into such a grievous sin and misery? God did not compel man to sin, nor move him to it, yea, he did not deprive him of his natural abilities,

and habitual powers: but it is certain that God decreed to permit his fall. How could the Mediator otherwise have been "foreordained, and slain from the foundation of the world," 1 Peter 1.20. Rev. 13.8. Further, we cannot doubt but that God suffered the devil to tempt him; for even "the Spirit of God led Jesus into the wilderness, that he might be tempted by the devil," Matt. 4.1. We must also allow that God did not powerfully influence man, to preserve him from falling, but that he left him to himself; for he should otherwise not have fallen: God was also not obliged to bestow such a powerful influence upon man. It is true, man fell necessarily, but not by a necessity of compulsion, but of consequence: since neither the decree of God, nor his permission of Satan, nor his withholding of his active influence either moved or compelled him inwardly; but he fell by himself, and by his own free choice, and by seeking out many inventions. We know that many inexplicable difficulties occur here: but we also know that not only the word of God, but reason also teacheth us that God is an independent sovereign, that nothing happens without his will, that man depends upon God in all that he doth, and that there cannot be any religion that doth not contain unsearchable mysteries, and that if we exempt this fall from the providence and government of God, we will deprive him of his sovereign jurisdiction, and introduce the fortune of the Epicureans, or the fate of the Stoics.

The Lord also remembered this sin, by punishing it severely: not only the devil was cursed in his instrument; but our first parents also were punished with death, according to the divine threatening, Gen. 2.17. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." There is no reason why we should not understand death here in its greatest extent, of temporal, spiritual, and eternal death: they did not indeed die temporally on the day on which they sinned: but the Lord may, consistently with his justice and truth, moderate and defer punishment: the sentence of death was pronounced upon them that same day: yea, on that very day they began to die by all the evil occurrences, which were presently denounced and inflicted upon them, Gen. 3.16-24. They died also spiritually; for they were instantly deprived of the image of God, "their understanding was darkened, and they were alienated from the life of God." Eph. 4.18. This soon appeared, since they knew not that God was all-knowing and every where present, when "they thought to hide themselves from him among the trees of the garden, and "Adam covered his transgression, and hid his iniquity in his bosom," Job 31.33. The man excused himself, and blamed his wife, who had deceived him, yea, blamed God, who had given him such a deceiving wife: and the woman shifted the blame from herself upon the serpent; Gen. 3.12,13. Let us not ask here, how a single action could do all this, since a wise man doth not lose all his wisdom by one foolish action; for this sin of Adam was a bond of iniquity, which disordered the whole human constitution. They deserved by this one sin to be deprived of the divine image, since they did not make a good use of it. When man withdrew from his obedience to his Creator and Lawgiver, and apostatized to the creature, to sin and Satan, he was then justly condemned to become a slave of the creature and of Satan "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage," 2 Peter 2.19. Our first parents undoubtedly deserved eternal death: and they soon experienced the bitter beginnings of it; "they

hid themselves for fear of the Lord among the trees of the garden," Gen. 3.8-10. They endeavoured, though in vain, to escape from the wrath of God, which was kindled against them on account of their sin: they felt indeed that they deserved "to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, and that he would take vengeance in flaming fire," 2 Thess. 1.8,9; for they were forthwith driven from his presence and "from the tree of life, out of Paradise, the entrance of which was guarded by Cherubims with a flaming sword," Gen. 3.22,23,24. Since it was now "impossible for the law" to justify them, because "it was become weak through the flesh," they should not have escaped the wrath to come, if God had not, according to his inconceivable grace, entertained thoughts of peace toward them, and promised them the seed of the woman, the Mediator, in his humiliation and exaltation, in order to conquer Satan, and to procure them regeneration, justification, sanctification, perseverance and salvation. And therefore we must believe that they were delivered from the curse of the law, and were rendered partakers of all the benefits of the Mediator with eternal salvation.

"By this fall and disobedience our nature is become so corrupt, that we are all conceived and born in sin," saith the instructor. This corruption of our nature is usually called by divines [*theologians*] "Original (or hereditary) sin," because we inherit it of our parents by our conception and birth. Hear what David saith, Psalm 51.5. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." We do not inherit the sin of our immediate parents, but of Adam, and we inherit particularly his first sin by our birth of our parents: for it was only that first sin, by which he broke the covenant of God for himself and his posterity. See Rom. 5.12,18.

Original sin is either our natural guilt, or our natural pollution, flowing from our natural guilt. Our natural guilt is called imputed original sin, and our natural pollution is called inherent original sin. Imputed original sin is Adam's first sin, which is imputed by God to every individual of his posterity in consequence of the broken covenant of works, on account of which every individual is declared guilty. The most of those who are out of our church, as the Pelagians, Socinians, Mennonites, and Remonstrants, deny this imputed original sin; yea, the Jansenists also opposed it, although they admit inherent original sin. But the word of God teacheth us this imputed original sin: for the covenant of works, which we have explained and proved before, was made not only with Adam, but in him, as the head of the covenant, with all mankind also, who should descend from him, from which it necessarily follows that Adam did not break that covenant only for himself, but also for all his posterity, and that he rendered both himself and us guilty. Further, "we are children of wrath by nature," Eph. 2.3. Children, who have not yet any actual sin, are subject to every kind of misery, and to death. How can God conduct toward them with so much severity, if they have no sin? is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid: it must then be on account of Adam's sin. Paul explains this at large, Rom. 5.12-22. His design is to show that believers obtain reconciliation and righteousness by one Christ verses. 8-11. He explains this by the connexion between Adam and us his members in his first sin, and the manner in which we become guilty by that sin;

therefore he saith, verse. 14, that "Adam was a figure of him who was to come." In what manner was he a figure? "as by the disobedience of that one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous," verses. 17,18,19. From which it therefore evidently appears, that the sin of Adam was reckoned our sin, as the righteousness of Christ is reckoned the righteousness of believers. He saith also to the same purpose, verse. 12. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men." Therefore the sin of Adam is the cause of the death of all men, yea, even of the death of children, who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, verse. 14. How is this possible if Adam's sin be not imputed to all? The apostle saith also, verse. 12. "in whom," namely Adam, "all have sinned:" surely not actually, but in him, considered as their head. And if we translate the words *ep̄ hoo pantes eemarton*, not "in whom," but "because all have sinned," as many do, the sense will be the same, and teach us that all have sinned by Adam's sin, and are therefore worthy of death. He illustrates this further, when he saith verses. 15-19, "Through the offence of one, many be dead. The judgment is by one who sinned. The judgment was by one to condemnation. By the offence of one man death reigned by one. By the offence of one judgment came upon all man to condemnation. By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Who can preserve the force of these words without admitting such an imputed guilt? It is not just, say our adversaries, that another man's sin, which we ourselves have neither committed, nor consented to beforehand, should be imputed to us, and that we should be reckoned guilty on account of that sin. But how will it consist with the justice of God, that he inflicts so many) and such grievous judgments, yea, death itself upon children, if they inherit not the guilt of Adam's sin, and have not themselves any actual sin? Moreover, we must not consider Adam's sin, as the sin of any other private man, but as the sin of all mankind in Adam, as their covenant head.

Inasmuch as the sin of Adam corrupted his nature, therefore our nature is also become corrupt through his sin imputed to us: which corrupt nature constitutes our inherent original sin, whereby all the children of Adam being deprived from their birth of the image of God, having their understanding darkened, their conscience defiled, being disinclined to that which is good and prone to evil, possess a wicked disposition of heart, the active source of every wicked desire, and of every sinful action: Surely this inherent original sin consists not in a mere deprivation of the divine image, but also in a wicked disposition of the heart: therefore it is called "the old man, the body of sin, flesh, the law of sin," Rom. 6. and 7. The Pelagians, Socinians, Remonstrants and Mennonites, deny also this inherent original sin. The Jansenists, who deny imputed original sin, confess nevertheless the inherent; but the Jesuits, who acknowledge imputed original sin, deny the inherent: they will indeed allow that man is now destitute of the divine image, which was given to him before the fall as a golden bridle, to restrain the lusts of the flesh: but they believe not that he hath such a wicked disposition. But all this is (a) directly contrary to the word of God, which teacheth us this inherent original sin: Adam, created at first in the image of God, which he lost by sin, "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image," Gen. 5.1,3. Adam was sinful, and his son was

born after that sinful image of him. "Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil, and that continually," Gen. 6.5, and indeed "from his youth," Gen. 8.21. Man is called "a transgressor from the womb," Isaiah 48.8. And it is thus with all men, who proceed from Adam by ordinary generation, Mary, the mother of the Lord not excepted. Job asserts it: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job 14.4. The Saviour also saith, John 3.6. "That which is born of flesh is flesh" (b) The general prevalence of ignorance and concupiscence manifests also our inherent original sin; for if it were not natural to man, and innate to him, it would not be so general, and cleave so fast to him; at least his unviolated freewill, of which our adversaries boast so much, would subdue it at last, and the world would become better. (c) The necessity of the new birth, the circumcision and baptism of children manifests the depravity and impurity of the first birth. (d) Let the actions of children speak, their wicked humors soon show the depravity of their nature. They do not surely derive this depravity from evil examples, which they imitate, for they are often guilty of sins which they do not observe in others: why do they not imitate good examples as well as evil, if their nature do not cleave to sin? Though godly parents educate their children ever so carefully by good examples, admonitions and chastisements, they experience nevertheless to their sorrow that their depravity still cleaves to their children. The children are indeed called holy, 1 Cor. 7.14. but not with respect to the covenant of works but of grace, into which they are admitted with their believing parents: for they are otherwise unclean, as Paul saith in the same text, who doth not therefore deny inherent original sin, but confirms it.

But a greater difficulty occurs here, to wit, in what manner the soul which is created immediately by God becomes so sinful. It is absurd to say, that the soul is propagated by the parents: for the soul is created immediately by God in the body, Eccl. 12.7. Zech. 12.1. It is also a spirit, which cannot be produced by a bodily generation: and although the parents produce the body only, and not the soul, they can nevertheless with great propriety be said to produce a man into the world, as well as those who kill the body only, and not the soul, may be said to kill a man. I declare that I cannot comprehend how the soul is created holy in a sinful body, and becomes polluted by the sinful body, nor how the corruption of the soul proceeds from a polluted seed, or from a sinful and irregular conduct of the parents in generation, for we should not then inherit so much the sin of Adam, as the sin of our immediate parents, and their irregular conduct, which is contrary to the word of God; for that saith that we inherit the sin of Adam, and particularly his first sin, and that "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," Ezek. 18.20. Neither may it be said, that the essence of the soul consists in thought, that it had evil thoughts in its mother's womb, and polluted itself in that manner: for this is contrary to Rom. 9.11. and it would still remain a difficulty, whence such a sinful thinking should proceed. Such an assertion is also dangerous, as appears in the Pelagians, who, while they maintained this opinion, denied original sin, and were therefore condemned in the council of Milevum. But we must look higher here, and consider God as a judge, who imputing the sin of Adam justly to his posterity, and pronouncing them guilty in consequence thereof, withholds his image from them, and surrenders them to the power of sin and

Satan, as God often punisheth one sin with another, Psalm 81.11,12. Rom 1.21-32. But how do we then inherit the sin of our parents by our birth? according to Psalm 51.5. We will understand this, when we consider that our parents propagate us under a broken covenant of works, and so as children of our sinful father Adam, who begat a son after his own disposition, and "after his image and likeness," Gen. 1.3. We are born of our parents not simply in a natural, but also in a moral state under Adam, not only as our natural, but also as our moral head in the covenant of works. The marriage law; Gen. 1.28. "Be fruitful and multiply," was added to the covenant of works, that children might be born under that covenant of works. If Adam had continued to stand, the image of God would have been transmitted to us, his posterity by our birth; but now the sinful image of Adam is transmitted to all who proceed from his loins, by their birth under the broken covenant of works. And thus our parents serve as instruments of God's justice to "conclude all under the disobedience of Adam," Rom. 11.32. If we understand the matter thus, we shall presently see that Mary also was born with original sin, and not her Son the Lord Jesus; inasmuch as he was not born in consequence of the law, "Be fruitful and multiply," and so not under the covenant of works, and cannot be reckoned in Adam as the head of the covenant, although he may, as his natural head: and therefore he is opposed to Adam in a moral and covenant relation, Rom. 5.14-19 1 Cor.15.22-47,48,49, although he is referred to Adam, as his first father in a natural relation, Luke 3.23-38. God saith, Ezek. 18.20. "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father." From this passage our adversaries conclude, that the children of Adam do not inherit his sin by their birth, and that they cannot be punished on account of it. But we cannot conclude this from that text: for our fathers besides Adam do not stand nor fall for us, as covenant heads in the covenant of works. It is not a general case, that the son doth not bear the iniquity of the father, since God sometimes "visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children" Exod. 20.5. But in Ezek. 18.20, there is a mitigation of that righteous vengeance, on account of the covenant of grace. The son bears the iniquity of the father by virtue of the covenant of works, but not on account of the covenant of grace. See this Jer. 31.28-31.

APPLICATION.

Behold, hearers, so glorious were ye created, and after the image of God, and so wretched and abominable are ye become through your birth! Do ye see it in yourselves? doth it affect you with grief? do ye humble and abase yourselves on account of it, as the matter requires? Surely ye do not, who are still such as ye were at your birth, and who have never yet departed out of Adam, and out of the covenant of works, and entered into Christ, the second Adam, and into the covenant of grace. For,

I. Ye have never yet come to yourselves, so as to see your natural guilt and abominable corruption, to bewail it, and to humble yourselves on account of it. Yea, as miserable and hatefully wicked as ye have been from your birth, ye are nevertheless proud and haughty on account of it. Ye know wonderfully well how to boast of your noble parentage, to relate from what family ye have

sprung, this and that great personage was your kinsman; and ye consider not that your first father sinned, and was a covenant breaker, and that ye are by your natural birth "of your father the devil." John 8.44. Ye boast of your good heart, of your great understanding, and your noble virtues, and require that every one should esteem and love you, and when they do not, ye are angry: do ye perceive that any one hath an esteem for you, your heart is immediately tickled, and swells with pride, as a bladder with wind, and ye speak, with a lofty air. Your foolish imagination, that ye are something, emboldens you to draw near to God, like the Pharisee, Luke 18.11,12, in an arrogant manner, and to display your specious virtues before him: and ye doubt not but that God will be favourable to you, yea, ye think that if he did not bestow heaven upon you, he would deal unjustly by you; and so ye possess your father's disposition, who "would be like God," Gen 3.3,22. Do ye once see your damnable sins, it doth not however render you concerned, but ye presently turn away from beholding them, and excuse them as weaknesses, which ye ought not much to regard.

2. Ye know indeed that ye are not as ye ought to be, and as your father Adam was before the fall: but ye never inquire by what means ye have become so miserable: ye do not concern yourselves therewith, but regard it as a matter, which hath happened long since, and which is far off, and doth not relate to you. Yea, many of you are still so ignorant, that they know not even from the word of God, and as a truth, that man is so miserable on account of Adam's sin through his birth: how should they then know from a thorough contemplation of themselves, their own misery and the causes of it?

3. Are ye ever led to a fair view of your iniquity, either by a wise reprove, or by the conviction of your own consciences, ye seek presently for the cause of the sin, which is discovered to you, yet ye do not find the true cause, but a false one, which ye do then pretend, in order to excuse yourselves: one thinks, or says, the flesh is weak, and he doth not see the wickedness of his flesh; another alleges, the devil is busy, and he says with Eve, "the serpent deceived me," Gen. 2.13. It is as though the devil did every sin through the sinner, as he deceived the woman through the serpent, and as though the sinner himself were not abominable, and did not commit sin: a third pretends custom, he knows not that he doth it, as if custom would excuse him, and as if it did not greatly aggravate his iniquity, that he was accustomed to sin, and it was become, as it were, his nature: a fourth will lay the blame upon his calling, that it is difficult and that it cannot be followed without a profanation of the name and day of God, or without cheating and wronging others: but such a calling is not lawful and is itself sinful; he will then also accuse his neighbour, he brought me to it, saith the sinner, when his iniquity is found, which is hateful: or his parents have done it by an evil example, or a careless education: they have eaten sour grapes: or he excuses himself with the conduct of the man or the woman, yea, what is still more abominable, the sinner is so winked, that he dares with Adam blame his Maker for his sin, and say that he is the cause of it, Gen 3.12. A man hath not made himself, saith he often. O wicked monster, that thou wilt excuse thine own hateful heart and conduct, and accuse others, yea, even thy pure Maker.

4. Do ye know that the sinner is become so evil and perverse through the fall of Adam, ye know it only as a truth, which occurs in the word, but ye do not see it in yourselves; for ye have never yet looked into yourselves, in order to condemn yourselves with detestation and concern. All men are considered by you as abominable, according to the word of God: but when ye come to yourselves, ye then think that ye are not so wicked as this and that one, but rather somewhat better. Ye are perhaps so expert in the word of righteousness, that ye are able to refute all the objections of the adversaries: but when ye are only a little concerned about your evil character, and fearful of eternal perdition, how do your hearts rise up in displeasure against the Lord, and say within you, with the wicked Jews "The way of the Lord is not equal," Ezek. 18.25,29, and "why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Rom. 9.19. This is not a subtle injection of Satan into you, but it is a dictate of your own evil hearts, and ye cherish that wicked thought; yea, rise up against the Lord and seek to disengage yourselves from him and his service.

Is it not thus with you? attend only to the workings, the thoughts and imaginations of your hearts, to the words of your mouths, and your whole conversation, and ye will see it. Do not make light of it by thinking, I know that it is sad enough, and not meddling any further with it: but stand still a while by it, and see your great misery, that ye come short of the image and glory of God, Rom. 3.23. Ye have the sinful image of your father Adam, Gen. 5.3, whereby ye have apostatized from God to yourselves, yea, to his enemy: "your actions and birth are of the land of Canaan, your father was an Ammonite, and your mother a Hittite:" your birth is hateful and loathsome, Ezek. 16.3,4,5. Ye are "a seed of evildoers, and transgressors from the womb," Isaiah 1.4., 48.8. Your hearts work up nothing "but mire and dirt," Isaiah 57.20. Ye are "by nature children of wrath," Eph. 2.3. And know that if ye remain as ye are, heaven will be shut against you, as Paradise was against your parents: for "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie," Rev. 21.27.

Alas! friends, endeavour to escape from your destruction, and to surmount your miserable condition and situation. And for this purpose.

1. Look upon Adam's condition as yours. Ye were indeed contained in his loins, ye have sprung from him, and were born under his covenant, and the covenant of works was established with you in him, and ye do yet daily enter into that covenant, when ye say inconsiderately with the carnal Israelites, Exod. 19.8. "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do:" and when ye rest and seek your life in your doings. Yea, ye have broken the covenant in Adam, and ye break it daily, when ye commit the same sin that Adam committed by transgressing the law of God, aiming at high things, seeking the creature more than God, listening to the suggestions of Satan, and following them. Do not all the judgments which were threatened and inflicted by God on account of the sin of Adam, lie also upon you, as they respect the man, the woman and the earth?

2. Compare your condition before the fall with your condition since. How glorious was it before the fall! Ye were, like the image of God, perfectly wise, holy, without any sinful emotions, lords of all things, immortal, provided in the perfect garden of pleasure with an abundance of all things, created to know, to love your Creator, and to live with him in eternal happiness, to glorify and praise him. But ye are now foolish, abominable, slaves of the creatures and of sin, ye must seek your bread with much anxiety, and must every moment expect and fear death, yea, everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. Be grieved and lament on account of your fathers, yea, on account of your own sins, which have procured all these things to you. Ye have more reason than the church had to complain, Lam. 5.16. "The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us that we have sinned."

8. Endeavour to obtain a thorough knowledge of your sinfulness, and woeful misery. Attend not only to your evil actions, but descend to the bottom of your hearts, which are indeed more abominable than your sinful actions: behold there the headspring of all your abominable deeds. Observe all the workings, motions, and inclinations of your hearts, whence they arise, and whither they would lead you. So David acted, when he confessed his heinous sins. He considered his iniquity and sin in which he was conceived and brought forth," as the cause of those sins, and he humbled himself on account of it, Psalm 51.5. And beware of "covering your transgressions like Adam, by hiding your iniquity in your bosom," Job 31.33. Do not esteem any sin small: the least, like Adam's eating of the fruit, is a bond of iniquity: every sin, yea, even the least deserves death and the curse; for "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. 3.10. Do but see this, subdue your pride, bemoan and humble yourselves.

4. Flee to the second Adam, the Son of God, that he may take away your evil iniquities. God, willing to manifest kindness to sinners, and to glorify himself as a gracious God; and this being impossible by the law of the covenant of works "gave his Son to be a covenant to the people, a light to the Gentiles," Isaiah 49.6. He took sin on him, satisfied for the guilt of it, and obtained the righteousness of God: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and that for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us," Rom. 8.3,4. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," Rom. 5.19. "God sets him forth to you," that ye may seek "reconciliation in him through faith," Rom. 3.25. He calls to you, that ye may "come to him, and that he may make an everlasting covenant with you, and give you all the sure mercies of David," the Messiah, (Isaiah 55.1,2,3.) Do not refuse, but betake yourselves to Christ, cast yourselves upon him, accept of him, and endeavour to "receive of his fullness, and grace for grace." John 1.16.

5. Take good heed that ye do not destroy nor deface the image of God still more with respect to that which remains of it. Do not injure your neighbour, who is made after the image of God: for ye should violate the image of God in him, Gen. 9.6, James 3.8,9. Beware that ye do not, by

hardening yourselves, and accustoming yourselves to sin, lay waste your conscience, (in which there is still something of the image of God left, and which reminds you of your duty, and convinceth you of sin and the wrath of God), but stir up, and animate your conscience continually, endeavour to be renewed again after the image of God. "Make yourselves a new heart, and a new spirit," Ezek. 18.31. Cast yourselves upon Christ, the image of the invisible God, that he may be formed in you; for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," 2 Cor. 5.17. Look Steadfastly at his holy and beaming glory, that ye may be "changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. 3.18.

6. Lest ye should be ensnared again, beware of the wiles of the devil: "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Peter 5.8. "He beguiled Eve," as wise and holy as she was, "through his subtlety," 2 Cor. 11.3, it will not then be difficult for him to seduce you, who harbour his abettors, your corruptions in you: endeavour therefore to learn his devices. Suspect such questions as, should this and that be true, or a sin? representations of the creatures of God, and of sins, calculated to allure the mind, excitations to aim at high things, unfavourable thoughts of God, as if he had no inclination to do you good, and particularly blasphemous, and unnatural injections; I say, suspect all these, as proceeding from the devil, and resist them at the first attack, and repel them from you, as ye would shake fire from your clothes. If ye enter into a conversation with him, he will ensnare you, before ye are aware, as he did Eve: reject him again and again, like the Saviour, Matt. 4.11. "Resist the devils and he will flee from you," James 4.7.

7. Parents, who are favoured by God with children, oppose betimes the corruption of your children: inform them of their corruption and damnable condition, and how they must be delivered by Christ. Ye have connected them by their birth with Adam, endeavour therefore to connect them also with Christ: "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," saith Paul, Eph. 6.4. So Abraham conducted, Gen. 18.17,18. David, Prov. 4.8,4,5,6, and the mother and grandmother of Timothy, 2 Tim. 1.5., 3.15.

How happy are they who have fled to the second Adam, and sheltered themselves under the shadow of his wings! Whatsoever they had lost in the first Adam they obtain again in him: "Of God they are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption," 1 Cor. 1.30. Adam was seduced by the wicked one, but, partakers of Christ, "the Lord will establish and keep you from the wicked one," 2 Thess. 3.3. Adam, and ye in Adam, broke the covenant of God: but "the Lord hath now made another," and better "covenant with you, which cannot be broken," and which is everlasting, that he will not turn away from you, to do you good; he hath put his fear into your hearts, so that ye shall not depart from him," Jer. 32.40. Ye lost the image of God in Adam, but in the Son of God ye are "again become partakers of the divine nature," 2 Peter 1.4. And how will his image be glorified in your immortality, and eternal happiness! For "as ye have borne the image of the earthy, ye shall also bear the image of the

heavenly," 1 Cor. 15.49. Yea, "ye shall behold the face of God in righteousness; ye shall be satisfied, when ye awake, with his likeness," Psalm 17.15. Adam was dismissed out of Paradise, but the second Adam, Jesus the King will call you into the Paradise of God, the third heaven, and how happy will ye be, when he will say, according to Matt. 25.34. "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" Amen.

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