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NO. 5.

CHRIST A SURETY FOR SINNERS.

Heb. vii. 22. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

Man is naturally under a law, for obligation to obedience necessarily arises from his relation to God. A moral agent must be held accountable for his manner of life. Sin is a transgression of the divine law, and it has to the justice of the legislator the relation of a crime; but God did, by positive institution, appoint an additional relation between himself and man. The law of nature was reduced to a covenant form, and a positive precept was annexed; to this man voluntarily assented, and the treaty was sanctioned, with threatening to the party liable to failure from the party incapable of change. Of this covenant, commonly called the covenant of works, sin is a breach; and it has, of course, to justice the relation of a debt. It is a debt of a public nature, the unconditional remission of which would be an implication of the honor of the character to whom it is due. We are all sinners, and punished we must be, unless our criminal debt be paid.

For a discharge from this sentence, the covenant of works made no provision; but there is a better covenant, established upon better promises; and what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God himself hath effected by the mission of his Son, whom he hath

given for a covenant to the people.

It is the grand object of the Epistle to the Hebrews, to illustrate the mediatory character of Christ; and of this character an important part is held up to our view in the text. A surety is *one who engages to perform to another, instead of a third person, all the conditions specified in the bond to which he subscribes*. Such a surety was Jesus. The certainty of it is expressed in the words, "by so much," referring to the 20th verse: "And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest," by so much he became a surety. The former he had demonstrated, and the latter is a necessary inference. The bond to which he subscribed is also specified in the text; it was the better covenant or testament, Διαθήκη. The Sinai dispensation exhibited the two covenants: the covenant of grace was exhibited by types in the gospel given to the Israelites; and of the law of works given to Adam, the knowledge of which had become very limited, a new and a full edition was now published, with accompanying terrific emblems of the divine majesty, from the mount. The covenant of works is from* this fact designated the Sinai covenant.—Gal. iv. 24. The New Testament dispensation of grace excels the Old; and much more is the new covenant itself, when compared with the old, the better testament.

“For this cause, Jesus is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” This covenant, which glorifies God *most*, and secures the happiness of man *best*, is the bond which Christ subscribed as surety.

It is designed in this discourse to illustrate the nature of Christ's suretyship, to obviate objections to this doctrine, and to conclude with some practical inferences from the argumentative part of the discourse.

I. Illustrate the nature of Christ's suretyship. It will be necessary, in this illustration, to ascertain to whom and for whom Christ became surety; and secondly, the amount of the debt which he undertook to pay.

1st. Query: For *whom* did Christ engage as surety?

First. Christ did not become surety for God to sinners. To them the Almighty owes no debt; as a witness, Christ attests the promises, and the lodging of all their fullness in his hand encourages our faith in them; but the character of the promiser excludes the possibility of a greater guaranty for their performance. His veracity is essential to him: “God is truth;” he cannot be deceived in the selection of his means for the fulfillment of his promises:—“He knoweth all things.” His power to accomplish his resolutions cannot be reasonably questioned: “Faithful is he that promised, and is able also to perform.” Jesus is

the evidence and the gift, but *not* the surety, of the Father's love: “God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Sinners are, however, slow of heart to believe. Such pity as a father hath for his dear children, shows the Lord to his worshipers. He has confirmed his promises by visible *seals*;—Rom. iv. 11;—by solemn oath;—by the earnest, yea, the pledge of his Spirit. But the surety mentioned in the text belongs to the priestly office of Messiah, in which he peculiarly transacted with God in our behalf; he is, therefore,

Second. A surety for sinners to God. God condescended to enter into a covenant with man in the person of the first Adam; the condition of this agreement was violated by man; its promises are forfeited, and its penalty is incurred. To enter into another covenant, a mediator was necessary; and without a *surety* for sinners to God, such an arrangement could be of no avail. It is in the covenant of grace Christ is surety. He is the one mediator between God and men; and since he cannot be security for God unto us, we must recognize him as the surety for sinners to God. If it shall appear from the scriptures that Jesus represented sinners in his covenant with God; that he was really charged with the sins of others; that thus charged, he suffered; and that his obedience and sufferings have for sinners the place of a ransom for wretched prisoners: it cannot be denied that he

acted as surety to God in behalf of sinful men. Christ was a public representative and spiritual head, as Adam was a public representative and natural head.—“There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, and the last Adam a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” The sins of men were imputed to him:—“He was made sin for us who knew no sin.” He was consequently esteemed guilty. “He was made a curse for us.” Justice requires his punishment: “Ought not Christ to have suffered?” He did suffer with our sins really charged to his account: “Christ also suffered for us—who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.” These sufferings had to our sins the relation of a ransom to a debt.—“Forasmuch as ye know ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ.” Sinners thus purchased are considered as his property who paid the ransom.—“Ye are no more your own: ye are bought with a price.” The ransomed of the Lord cheerfully acknowledge this in their songs of praise and shouts of triumphant joy.—“And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.”

From this induction of particulars, the truth of the illustration is confirmed. Jesus, the surety of the better testament, was the public representative of sinners. He was as really charged with their sins, as the indorser of the bond is with its contents. Thus charged, he was esteemed guilty: he was thought worthy of death, and executed. His services and sufferings are the price paid for the ransom of sinners. The elect are, consequently, his peculiar purchased property; and to this truth the ransomed joyfully assent. His suretyship, therefore, must have been for sinners to God.

But, thirdly, Jesus did not undertake to become surety for all sinners. There is a certain definite number specified in the bond to which he entered in their behalf.

If the covenant engagement into which Christ entered with God, in the stead of sinners, included a specific number, and that each of these, and none else, shall certainly inherit the purchased possessions, the doctrine of particular redemption cannot reasonably be denied; and this is the scriptural account of the subject.

Christ Jesus is surety in the covenant of grace; this is the better testament; it is the only bond into which he entered with God in our behalf. The debts of those included in it he has discharged; he has paid nothing for any other. These were designed to be the only partakers of that liberty which he hath purchased in order to make his people free. This covenant has not long since

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been the subject of more particular discussions. The characters included in it were designated from eternity:—"He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." They were *given* over to Christ, that he might redeem them; otherwise he could not even have had the right of redemption:—"The men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me." They are the seed of Christ, to whom salvation is promised, in consequence of the atonement. It cannot be extended to any other. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed." There shall all, without exception, be eternally glorified. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: whom he called, them he also justified: whom he justified, them he also glorified." These alone can sing the song of the ransomed, a song which could not be true in the mouths of the damned.—"Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Christ, therefore, in the covenant of grace became surety to God for elect sinners. The first interrogation being thus answered, we shall proceed to consider the

2d. For *what* did Jesus become surety in the elect's stead?

Divine things cannot be perfectly illustrated by comparison with human transactions. It is particularly dangerous to suppose that we can have a full view of Christ's relation to elect sinners, by the illustration of any connection in which one man can stand to another. The inspired writers found it necessary to se-

lect many of these, in order to throw light on this interesting, this mysterious subject; and yet we see but in part: as through a glass darkly. Sinners are, in one place, represented as at enmity with God; in another, they are described as guilty of crime; and in a third, as deeply involved in debt. Answerable to these descriptions, Jesus is represented as a mediator to produce reconciliation between God and man; as a substitute to make atonement for the guilty; and a surety to pay the debt charged to our account.

It is necessary to keep this in remembrance, while we endeavor to answer the question, For what did Jesus become surety in the room of sinners?

Immanuel engaged to pay the elect's debt; whatever was found against them in the book of God, he undertook to pay. What this was, is to be determined by the original contract which they had violated; and the whole matter of which, as it respected the elect, was introduced into that new bond to which Jesus is surety. By the covenant of works, men are charged with a commission to be performed, and with a heavy penalty for disobedience. All men are, from the moment of their existence, under the whole precept and penalty of that covenant. At the fall, it is true, the representation ceased, so that no future act of the representative Adam could be charged to his posterity. From that moment, he became a private character: but what he had done while in a public capacity, was not thereby annulled; much less was the

contract dissolved. He and his posterity were still held bound to give obedience to its precepts, and to suffer under its penalty. Jesus is the second Adam. He voluntarily undertook to become a federal head. The amount of the debt he perfectly knew; nor was he ignorant that he who became surety for a stranger should smart. He foresaw the necessity of paying the damages arising from the defaulture, as well as of discharging the original amount, before he could expect the promises of conferring on men an eternal inheritance, could be fulfilled. He, as the surety, became a substitute to suffer merited punishment in the law room of elect sinners, as a debt due to the moral Governor of the universe, for the dishonor offered to his authority by human disobedience. This was a tribute of primary importance. Without presupposing its payment, no act of obedience to the original conditions of the contract could be acceptable. The sufferings of Messiah in the flesh commenced from his birth. They, interwoven with his obedience during his life, and consummated in his death, are a complete fulfillment of all the divine demands against the party for whom he was surety; and a full price for all the blessings of eternal happiness, together with every thing necessary to prepare the ransomed ones for the glory that should be revealed, and for their introduction into those mansions which the exalted Mediator is now preparing for all the heirs of the everlasting inheritance.

There was a complete transfer of all the sins of all the indivi-

duals specified in the covenant of grace, to Jesus Christ. "He was made sin for us." Being thus charged with guilt, he must suffer. "Ought not Christ to have suffered?" These sufferings procured for them a perfect acquittal from their sins and the consequences of sin: "By his stripes we are healed."

The perfect holiness of nature and of life which the covenant of works demanded, Christ presented in the room of his people. "He was made under the law to redeem those who were under the law." Nor does this covenant apply to any who is vitally united to Christ. We are no more under the law, but under grace.

Christ, in his suretyship, engaged to answer all demands himself. He did not become surety to God for any thing to be done by the elect themselves. In the conditional part of the covenant, they were to have remained absolutely passive.

Neither faith, repentance, nor any part of their evangelic obedience, belongs to the conditions of the covenant. There is, indeed, a certain connection, by virtue of the divine institution, established between graces and duties for all those who are within the covenant. They *shall* believe, and repent; they shall be justified and sanctified. But Christ never became surety for their obedience in a single act. This belongs to the promissory part of the covenant. The Father engaged to the Son, upon condition he should make his soul an offering for sin, that the elect should believe, should repent, and obey. "They shall

look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn. God shall cause the seed of Jacob to take root. Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." The promises are absolute. So are all promises ultimately; they have a connection with certain duties; but what appears in one place the condition of a promise, is itself the matter of an absolute promise elsewhere. The blessings promised are all purchased by Christ. Phil. i. 29: "To you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer in his name." Faith, and suffering in the behalf of truth, the most difficult part of evangelical obedience, are here represented not as ingredients in the payment of the bond, but as parts of the benefits purchased. The ultimate condition of all the promises of God is the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From this illustration, it appears that Jesus, as the surety of the better testament, became bound to the Father, in the stead of a certain number of mankind sinners, for the payment of their criminal debt, and the purchase of holiness and happiness for them, by his services and sufferings.

(To be continued.)

THE PROVIDENCE OF THE MEDIATOR.

(Continued from p. 108.)

"Heaven open'd wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound!
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of glory, in his powerful word
And spirit, coming to create new worlds."
MILTON.

The conclusion to which the conflict between Carthage and

Rome was brought, was evidently the most advantageous to the interests of the Church of God. At the commencement of the second Punic war, however, the probabilities of success were nearly all in favor of Carthage. As far as the foresight of man could penetrate, the ultimate safety of Rome did not amount to one probability in a thousand. Yet, by the overruling hand of Providence, events took place, which, in the course of time, altogether changed the aspect of affairs.

In such a case, where the prospective interests of the church were so intimately connected with the events produced, it would be highly culpable to overlook the agency of the Redeemer; and to attempt to account for them on the principles of human wisdom and valor, or what are called the chances of war, would be the very spirit of infidelity. In referring the issue of the struggle between these belligerent powers to the providence of the Mediator, that thus he might promote the good of his church, we have been instructed by the scripture doctrine, that "all power in heaven, and in earth" is given unto him.

The sacred volume also furnishes us with practical instruction on this subject; illustrations of the practical application of the Mediatorial power, in behalf of the church, in similar instances, are recorded. Of these, the case of Cyrus is remarkably striking. This ambitious prince had no knowledge of the true God, and of course could have no design to serve him by promoting the

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(Concluded from p. 166.)

Heb. vii. 22. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

II. Objections answered.

This doctrine is of vast importance in the system of grace. Against it has error erected her batteries, and commenced a furious attack upon these walls of salvation from every quarter. To every objection we cannot now attend. Many have been already obviated in these discourses, and many will occur hereafter in the sequel of them. Armed with truths however, we may, though unequal in strength, engage every opponent of this principle. To a few of their arguments let us now, brethren, attend.

I. *Object.*—"The principle of substitution is entirely inadmissible. However lawful it may be to exact of a surety the debt of another, to punish the innocent instead of the guilty is utterly unjustifiable. A human court of jurisprudence, that should act upon the principle of vicarious punishment, would be a grievance to society. Shall man be more just than his Maker?"

The sum of this objection is, man cannot deal with man, upon the principle of vicarious satisfaction for crimes; therefore it is inadmissible into the transactions of Christ with God. Some would dispute the principle of the objection, but I have no hesitation to grant it in its fullest extent. But I shall attempt to show that it has no application to the point in dis-

pute. The premises cannot support the conclusion.

Reasoning from analogy is generally dangerous. We are often led to mistake illustrations for demonstrations. Analogical reasoning is certainly conclusive as far as the analogy holds good: but further than this it is erroneous. A sober mind impressed with a sense of the divine greatness will hesitate to oppose a doctrine seemingly scriptural by arguments drawn from human transactions. You say, my friends, it is unjust in a human judicatory to admit the execution of a virtuous member of society in the room of a criminal who has been legally convicted. I grant it. But why is this unjust? Produce the reasons, and be yourselves the judges whether they will apply to the sufferings of Jesus for our transgressions. The reasons you have to offer I presume are the following:

1. It is unjust in the court to admit one man to suffer for another, because no man has a right to give his life away. What he had no right to give, the law had no right to receive from him.
2. By such a substitution no end of importance is answered either to society in general or to the constituted authorities. In either case the law has but its sentence executed and society loses a member. Yea,
3. There is a real injury done to society by the execution of a virtuous member. His benevolence diffused happiness through the circle of his ac-

quaintance, his example was an incitement to virtue, and his exertions were signally useful to his friends and the world. His loss is felt to be great. 4. This is not all, but the peace of society is again endangered by the return of the criminal into its bosom. And 5. He may by the perpetration of new crimes expose himself to justice and at last lose his life. Thus would both members be lost to the community.

Will these reasons, which are indeed conclusive against the adoption of the principle into our courts, apply against the sacrifice of Immanuel to atone for a guilty world? You cannot pretend it.

1. He as the Lord of all had an indisputable right to assume the human nature and dispose of his life at pleasure. 2. The dignity of his character rendered the substitution honorable to the supreme authority and no society suffered by it. Nay, 3. So far from being a loser by the death of this glorious character, that wisdom determined it for their good. He did not suffer his exertions in behalf of society for a moment to cease. While they were buffet- ing and scourging him, while he suffered on the cross excruciating torments, yea, while lying in the grave, he regulated the most minute concerns of creation. His shoulders upheld the fabric of the universe. And 4. Instead of endangering the happiness of society by restoring into its bosom the criminal acquitted, there is provision made by the substitute for changing his principles of action, which, without possibility of failure, will render him a benevolent and an honorable member.

And lastly, So far from there being any danger that the person acquitted shall again become guilty and suffer death, and thus society lose two of its members, that both the substitute and he for whom he suffered shall live for ever and ever. Instead of being lost to the general community, they shall shine brighter than the stars in the firmament—Jesus as the Head, and the former criminal as a constituent member, of the general assembly of happy rationals, world without end. Argue not therefore against the atonement of Jesus from the impropriety of introducing the principle of substitution into courts of human jurisprudence.

II. *Object.* "The scriptures we confess represent Jesus making atonement, but it is universal. Redemption extends to all men, and to the whole world. Why then restrict to certain individuals that God has designed for all the race of Adam?"

The universal salvation to which this doctrine will lead has already been the subject of a particular discourse. We shall not now detain you with remarks on it. The leading features of Arminianism, have also been examined in the discourses already delivered on the plan of that covenant which is well ordered and sure. And in all our religious exercises, we endeavor to oppose the objections offered from that quarter to the system of grace.

The application of the word all, in conversation or in writing is determined by the connection. You all hear me. By this I mean all that are in the house; not all the inhabitants of this city

or of the whole world. "They who seek the Lord shall understand all things." Not that they shall ever be omniscient, but they shall understand all things the knowledge of which is necessary for their welfare. Keep this in remembrance, and you cannot be at a loss in carefully searching the scriptures, how to apply the expressions of universality which they contain. There are two covenants: that which gendereth bondage, and that which bringeth salvation. God the supreme Lord is a party in each. In the former the first ADAM is the head and representative of a certain number of intelligent beings, viz. all who descend by ordinary generation from his loins. In the latter, Jesus the second Adam is the representative also of a certain number of intelligent creatures—such of the human family as were given him to be his spiritual seed. When the context shows the reference of the universal adjective all, to be the first covenant, then certainly all mankind are included—but when reference is to the system of salvation, only those are included who belong to the latter establishment. Thus, as in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall be made alive. As the all who die in Adam is not all creatures but all his own posterity, neither is the all who shall live in Christ all Adam's posterity but his own seed.

But what would be the consequence were the principle of the objection true? Jesus the surety of the better testament has made atonement for many who shall never be acquitted. He ransomed millions who shall never have

their liberty. He purchased happiness for myriads who shall be forever miserable. Blessed Jesus, are such doctrines worthy of thee? Hast thou veiled thy divinity and become a humbled Mediator? Hast thou endured the complicated distress which arises from Satan's attack, the world's obloquy, thine enemies' triumph, thy friends' desertion, thy Father's frowns? Hast thou offered thy life in bloody torments as a sacrifice of atonement for sins, and shall the objects of thy love be everlastingly wretched? Shall any of thy ransomed ones be for ever imprisoned in misery and despair? Has thine omniscience been deceived or thine omnipotent arm rendered ineffectual? No. Thus saith the Lord, "I know my sheep. They shall hear my voice. They shall never perish. My Father who hath given them to me, is greater than all, and none (no man, no devil,) is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

III. *Object.*—"The doctrine of particular election, is essential to the Christian system. The doctrine of the atonement is a fundamental article of our faith. We do not contend for its universality; but it is indefinite. It satisfied justice and magnified the law. It opened a door through which God might honorably commence a treaty with sinners; but Christ paid no specific price exclusively for the elect. The person of the Mediator was a substitute, but he was not a substitute as a public representative. This would be to exclude the grace of the Father from the system of salvation."

This objection is partly founded

upon the distinction supposed to exist between the covenant of grace and a covenant of redemption—a distinction which is both unscriptural and impossible. The covenant which secures our salvation is one. It has one Head, even Christ, the second Adam. Every saint, it is true, may say, “he hath made with me an everlasting covenant;” but it is true, only in Christ, and that from eternity. “He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.” In this covenant, Jesus is surety. Out of it, he is surety for none. Thus, it could not be indefinite. The person of the Mediator, and the mediatorial character, are inseparable. His assumption of humanity was a public official act. His obedience, was the obedience of the second Adam. His sufferings were so also. The number he represented is his spiritual seed. That seed is defined in the covenant of which he is surety. When he treated with God, in our room, the elect had an existence in the divine decree. To us there is a past, a present, and a future. It is not so with God. All the elect were with him in the purposes of his own mind from all eternity. Every individual was given unto Christ. In their room and for their good, he did what he did. He was sent not to render salvation possible; but to render them actually safe. Provision was made for no other, and if any are consequentially or indirectly benefited by his death, it is not on their own account, but for the elect’s sake, who live among them or are to descend from them. If he is head over all things, it is for his body the church. There was an

actual transfer of sin from his people to him; “He was made sin for us,”—of punishment; He suffered the just for the unjust; He actually paid the price of their salvation; “The church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Christ’s death was not merely an atonement which rendered it possible to save men in consistency with divine justice; but was as a meritorious price paid for the church and all her covenant mercies, so that justice cannot but confer salvation, in its full extent, upon all for whom he was surety. Rom. iv. 4. To him that worketh, the reward is not of grace, but of debt. Christ claims this reward of debt. It was on its account he suffered—For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross. Nor does this exclude the grace of the Father from our salvation. From that grace the whole system originates. It is not represented in scripture as consisting, principally, in giving us salvation upon Christ’s making the atonement; but in giving Christ to be the atonement for us, that we might be saved. This gift is the grand evidence of God’s love. John iii. 16. “God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Christ did not appear in order to put men in a salvable state, but in order to save them; “We are saved from wrath through him.” He did not come, merely to open a door through which God might treat with sinners, but himself concluded a treaty with God in the sinner’s stead. The person of Immanuel and his public cha-

racter are inseparable. God-man, the Messiah, never had an existence, and never shall have an existence, in a private unofficial capacity.

IV. *Object.*—"Do not object, that upon such a view of suretyship to preach the gospel is an absurdity. Men need an atonement and cannot do without it. They have no strength to embrace it without the purchase of grace be universal. And if they had strength they cannot reasonably believe in Christ, unless they have a previous revelation of their election. Let ministers no longer preach the gospel to sinners, or exhort them to receive a Savior."

Upon mere human principles, the preaching of the gospel is indeed foolishness; but this does not hinder it from becoming the power of God to believers. Had God made a revelation of the covenant of grace which concealed every thing respecting the manner of its administration, it would certainly be absurd in any man to call upon another to believe in Christ and be saved. The scriptures reveal the method of administration however, as well as the plan of the covenant itself. And the Surety authorized to administer it, has commissioned his servants to preach the gospel to every creature. Had those who made this objection seen Peter fishing for money to pay his tribute, they would have concluded he was in a state of intellectual derangement. He had his Master's command however, and was successful. Had they seen Moses proposing to furnish all Israel with water from the rock in Horeb, by striking it with his rod,

this would have also appeared a ridiculous project. But Moses was commanded, and did so in the sight of the elders of Israel and all the people did drink. Brethren, were I divinely authorized to preach to the stones of the field, I would obey. He could bless my ministry, and even from among these raise up children to Abraham. I know while I address you, that my preaching can, as mine, do nothing for your salvation; but I am equally certain that my ascended Master can make it a savor of life unto life unto many. Here I might stop.

But the principles of revealed religion, although they exceed reason, do not contradict it. None is solicited to believe what is not previously true, or to receive what is not certainly offered. The administration of the covenant is committed to Christ. He purchased all its blessings, and to himself the Father hath committed the distribution of them among his people. In him it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell—and out of that fullness we receive grace for grace. This administration is conducted by the Redeemer so as to be adapted to the nature of his children. They have souls and bodies—both these are in the transgression, and have felt the influence of the curse. Both are purchased by the Surety, and shall be eternally glorified. The covenant is administered to both. There is an internal and external administration. The one he carries on by his Spirit, the other by his word and his ordinances. The Spirit, to whom the effectual application of purchased blessings is committed, knows ex-

actly for whom they are designed. He was a concurring party in the counsel of peace, and knows all things. It is not so with the ministers of the word, by whom he makes an external administration of the covenant of grace. They go where they are sent. If their commissions confine them to the lost sheep of the house of Israel they dare not go elsewhere; and when they are sent through all nations, they make no distinctions, but preach the gospel to sinners as such. When the internal administration is as extensive as the elect, and no more, the external may extend to all sinners. Ministers of Christ are ambassadors for him. They must act according to their instructions. The plan of the covenant they are to propose and illustrate. To it they demand the attention of men. They are to call upon them to examine it. They require of them cordially to embrace its offers. The offer they make is Christ and salvation. They declare that there is an infallible connection between embracing the offer and eternal felicity. They do not call upon sinners to believe themselves already in a state of grace:—but they urge them to fly from the wrath to come. They point out to them the gates of salvation. They show to them the door of hope standing open. And above the gate they can see engraven, in characters which the storms of the north can never efface, *who-soever cometh shall not be cast out*. There is no necessary connection between the most faithful preaching and conversions.—Christ who taught with authority, held out his hands all day to a

disobedient and gausaying people. But his own sheep did hear and will yet hear his voice. They hear and say, “The desire of our soul is to thy name and to the remembrance of thee.” This indiscriminate dispensation of the word preached lays an equal foundation for the faith of all—elect or non-elect. The elect believe, but not of themselves. Their faith is the gift of God, and thus boasting is excluded. The reprobate reject because they did not chose the gift offered; and this fact will serve to stop every mouth. Shall they who reject the offer answer in judgment, I was not elected the reply is, you did not know that, and certainly you did act upon that consideration. All those who received Christ can say, I did not previously know my election any more than you. Still Pagans reply, “We never heard the gospel.” The reply is, if you had, you would have all rejected its offer. The experiment has been made in millions of instances, but none accepted the offer, until a supernatural influence was exerted upon them. Let every mouth be stopped. The whole world is guilty, and let ministers still preach the gospel, and leave the consequences to God.

III. INFERENCES.

1. *Inference*.—The satisfaction Christ made for sin is full and infinitely complete. There remains nothing to be added to it, my brethren, by your penitence or your prayers. You who expect to pay a part of the debt by your own industry only dishonor the Surety of the better testament. And you who feel your inability to do any thing of yourselves, are welcomed

to a Surety who has done all himself. You have experienced that your services avail nothing for justification. Your tears of repentance need washing in Christ's blood: but of the sufficiency of his atonement the scriptures offered you indubitable evidence. The merit of his obedience and sufferings is to be ascertained from the dignity of the substitute and the degree of his sufferings in our room. And each of these is infinite. The person is Immanuel. In him unite all the glories of divinity, all the sympathies of sinless humanity. All the attributes of divinity are necessarily his. His sufferings were infinitely great—greater than the damned can ever suffer. They never have a clear sight of the hateful nature of sin. It is not infinitely disagreeable in itself to their nature. The pains which he suffered in his body from the hands of Jews and Romans were singularly great—but by far the smallest part of his sufferings. These did principally consist in the agonies of his soul: when he began to be amazed and exceeding sorrowful in a profuse and bloody sweat; all the waves of the divine vengeance were then going over him—he drank the whole contents of the cup of wrath put into his hand; it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he had it to say, I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. With such a sacrifice God is well pleased. He hath declared his satisfaction in raising him from the dead and placing him on the throne of his glory. He always declares of him;

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” Yes, sinners, he is crying, “Behold me, behold me.” Listen, and obey his voice; and debtors as you are, apply to him for a discharge. He will never answer you with a “Seek ye my face in vain.”

2. Brethren, consider that all his services were of a public nature. It has been supposed that Jesus, as man, was under a law for himself, and will continue so forever. But the sentiment is horrible and must be opposed with resolution.

No, brethren, all his services are for his people, and no way for himself. His assuming a human nature was a public official act by which, for you, he answered the law's demands of a holy nature. By his incarnation he lifted up our nature from the dust to a subsistence in Godhead; and presented instantly to his Father a man holy, harmless, and undefiled. This human nature never was a human person, consequently not subject to the moral law for itself. A human nature never subsisting distinct from God, is a being wholly supernatural, and consequently subject to no law by a natural tie. He was made under the law to redeem those who were under the law, and for no other purpose independent of this. Therefore, brethren, his whole services are yours. For you he was born, for you he lived, for you he died; yea, he is risen again for your justification, and for you he is entered into glory with this parting address—“I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go, I shall come again to re-

ceive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

3. We may infer from the preceding discussion that the work of redemption is the chief of the ways of God. The chief end of God's works is to make an expression of the intrinsic glory of his perfections. He made all things for himself. The inanimate parts of creation display his invisible power and godhead; the heavens declare his glory, and day unto day uttereth speech concerning him. The creatures of men and angels reveal him as the God of life, possessed of infinite excellence as well as of infinite power. But what are all these displays to that which he makes of himself in the surety of the better testament. In the world are the prints of his footsteps. On man in his original state was his image drawn;—but in Messiah God becomes visible. All the rays of the divine glory are in him concentrated. He is the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person. In him it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. He is white, ruddy, chief among ten thousands—yea, he is altogether lovely. O! that while beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we may be changed into the same image!

Lastly, we may infer, that the happiness of the saints in heaven will exceed any thing they could have enjoyed, had man never fallen. The life, which the covenant of works promised, and that which the Surety of the covenant of grace purchased, are substantially the same—the enjoyment of God to all eternity. But to the latter are many delightful adjuncts

which that would have wanted. The ransomed of the Lord find this cup of glory sweetened by the remembrance of their former sins, their griefs, and their tribulations. This gives a high relish to their present portion. For their happiness, they see themselves indebted to one who gave the most convincing evidence of his love; and to him they bear the relations of brothers and sisters; they are even his bride. It is a delightful circumstance in their state that they see with their bodily eyes their own nature, in the midst of the throne; and while the second Person of the Trinity lasts, this light shall never be removed from them. The light which they see in the New Jerusalem is from him, for the Lamb as well as the Lord God is the light thereof. And his efficacious intercessions in their behalf they witness without intermission. He speaks in heaven in their behalf—his blood speaks better things; these are his words on which their happiness depends: "I will, Father, that they whom thou hast given me may be with me that they may behold my glory." The Lord himself shall feed them and shall lead them to the fountains of living waters which flow from his throne.

You will join with me, my brethren, in exclaiming with Paul the apostle, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness! God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory." Already there are many witnesses of his glory in heaven. How joy

ful the welcome given him to his throne by the spirits of the just made perfect. Yea, there are already near him, as pillars in the temple of his God to go no more out, many complete persons soul and body, the first fruits of a more abundant harvest. While *we* are worshiping in a temple made with hands, *they* are with him in his higher house; while *we* drink of the streams of his love, they are lead to the fountain. Let us hail them with a cheer, while "by faith we are in sight of the haven, and although ourselves still tossing on the boiling deep, let us see with benevolent joy their anchor safely cast within the vail." Hear them, Christians, saying with a loud voice, to the Surety of the better covenant, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, Amen and Amen?

THE FORM OF PRESBYTERIAL
CHURCH-GOVERNMENT.

(Concluded.)

Of Congregational Assemblies, that is, the Meeting of the ruling Officers of a particular Congregation, for the Government thereof.—The ruling officers of a particular congregation have power, authoritatively, to call before them any member of the congregation, as they shall see just occasion.

To inquire into the knowledge and spiritual estate of the several members of the congregation.

To admonish and rebuke.

Which three branches are

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proved by Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. Ezek. xxxiv. 4.

Authoritative suspension from the Lord's table, of a person not yet cast out of the church, is agreeable to the scripture:

First, Because the ordinance itself must not be profaned.

Secondly, Because we are charged to withdraw from those that walk disorderly.

Thirdly, Because of the great sin and danger both to him that comes unworthily, and also to the whole church? And there was power and authority, under the Old Testament, to keep unclean persons from holy things.

The like power and authority, by way of analogy, continues under the New Testament.

The ruling officers of a particular congregation have power authoritatively to suspend from the Lord's table a person not yet cast out of the church:

First, Because those who have authority to judge of, and admit, such as are fit to receive the sacrament, have authority to keep such as shall be found unworthy.

Secondly, Because it is an ecclesiastical business of ordinary practice belonging to that congregation.

When congregations are divided and fixed, they need all mutual help one another, both in regard of their intrinsical weaknesses and mutual dependence, as also in regard of enemies from without.

Of Classical Assemblies.—The scripture doth hold out a presbytery in a church. A presbytery consisteth of ministers of the word, and such other publick officers as are agreeable to and