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## P R E F A C E .

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THE compiler had prepared the substance of the following Memoir for publication in a religious periodical, immediately after the death of his venerable friend; but as it could not be inserted in the space usually allowed for such articles, he abandoned the idea of giving it publicity. He now, however, in compliance with the request of many friends, submits it to the public eye in its present form.

The deceased kept no journal, nor has his Biographer access, either to letters, or any further authentic sources of information, of the early part of his life or ministry; and the last twenty-one years of his life were spent in such retirement as to present nothing particularly worthy of remark. A paucity of materials has, therefore, necessarily confined his labors in very narrow limits.

The friends of the deceased were anxious to have a selection of his sermons published, so as to transmit to posterity his character as a preacher; but as he always expressed a great aversion to appear in print, the compiler could not gratify the request. He has, however, so far yielded to their wishes as to publish one sermon, on the power of God, that all admired and were anxious to possess. This may be taken as a specimen of his talent and style. Although, from its numerous *et ceteras*, it appears incomplete, and has lost the charm of eloquence it possessed when delivered in the pulpit; yet it is confidently hoped that it will be read with no ordinary satisfaction by all who ever *heard* it.

If the little work should afford any degree of pleasure or profit to his friends or the public, the author will have his reward.

SHAFTESBURY, JANUARY 26th, 1838.

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## MEMOIR, &c.

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### PART I.

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**F**ROM the earliest ages of the world it has been the practice of all civilized nations to memorialize, by monuments or written records, those who have been eminent for the use of arms, or the exercise of arts. Thus also, statesmen, philanthropists, and moralists, have been rescued from unmerited oblivion, and introduced to coming ages as the benefactors of their species. Hence originated the history of the life and times of eminent persons. When

the lives of the dead present any facts or incidents that can be turned to the advantage of the living, then their publication, if not called for, is fairly allowed. Under this impression the author is induced to lay before the Christian public a brief Memoir of the late Rev. JOHN JONES of BIRDBUSH, Wiltshire.

The deceased was born near Long-Town, in Herefordshire, April 4th, 1761. He was blessed with eminently pious parents of the Independent Denomination, who "brought him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." \*

"While he was yet young," Providence removed his parents to Abergavenny, where he was instructed in the elements of education, and then ap-

\* Ephesians vi. 4.

prenticed to a useful trade, as the means of his support. During the time of his servitude he was under their watchful eye and guiding hand. With them he sat under the faithful ministry of the Gospel, and saw, in their conduct and conversation, the religion of Jesus in living and delightful characters; for "they walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." †

He was the child of many "prayers and tears." Oft was he moved and melted by the things which he heard. His convictions of sin were early, deep, and durable; though unattended with any saving results; for not knowing these to be the Spirit's primary operations, he did all he could to stifle them, and his conscience was

† Luke i. 6.

again lulled into a fatal repose by the enemy of souls, who soothingly cried, "Peace, Peace, when there was no peace." † Restrained by parental authority from the profanation of the Sabbath, and from open acts of transgression, he, as is too commonly the case, mistook a decent observance of the outward forms of religion, and a circumspection of moral conduct, for religion; so that when moral and religious obligations were enforced, he would, with an evident self-complacency, exclaim, "all these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" §

The term of his apprenticeship being completed, he went to reside in Bristol for improvement in his trade, and in the hope of realizing property

† Jeremiah vi. 14.

§ Matthew xix. 20.



in the diligent exercise of it. This was to him a most important step. He was now, for the first time in his life, (unrestrained by parental authority—unchecked by any gracious principles,) thrown into the world, and stood exposed to the fearful operation of temptation on the innate principles of depravity, which he had long felt, but could not explain or subdue. The powers of corruption which had long been slumbering in his youthful bosom, were now roused to action—grew impatient of moral restraint, and struggled with fearful impetuosity for vent. The struggle, though severe, was not long. The place, the society, the circumstances, were all changed, and proved a snare. He fell a bleeding, helpless victim, at the feet of his deadly foe. Stript of the moral beauty of

which he had prided himself, he appeared filled with confusion and clothed with shame. All his former convictions were revived and fearfully deepened; and unsupported by a consciousness of moral rectitude, he appeared overwhelmed at a recollection of a neglected Bible, a deserted sanctuary, and a loss of purity and peace, and at the foreboding of merited vengeance.

To such young persons as have had an early religious education, and have been brought up in the fear of God, the author would affectionately and solemnly appeal. Remember the prayers and tears your parents have poured out before God on your behalf, and be anxiously concerned that they may be answered. On leaving the parental roof, and entering a fresh family for

the purpose of business, be especially careful with *whom* you associate. Remember that "evil communications corrupt good manners." \* Take warning from the fall and misery of the deceased, not to admit to your friendship any who are not decidedly religious. Choose none for companions who have not chosen Christ for their master, religion for their business, and heaven for their portion. Blessed be God, such are to be found in almost every place, if due care and diligence be used in seeking them. But should you be so unhappily situated that no pious youth can be found as a companion, be content to live a solitary life, as Joseph in Egypt, or as Daniel in Babylon, rather than sacrifice your principles, do violence to your feelings, and wound

\* 1 Corinthians xv. 33.

your reputation, by conforming to the world for the sake of a companion. He, like Enoch, who walks with God, will never want for company. Should your companions in business, your equals in age, or your local connexions, invite you to partake what they call their innocent pastimes, amusements, or pleasures, *your safety is in flight alone*. Let the voice of God be continually heard sounding in your ears. "Flee youthful lusts." \* "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." † "The wages of sin is death." ‡ Let it be your daily study and prayer that the early religious instruction you have received, may be carried out and matured, in the formation of religious habits; and that you may be useful in

\* 2 Timothy ii. 22.

† Proverbs i. 10.

‡ Romans vi. 23.

your day and generation. Seek early dedication to God. The Scriptures present many pleasing examples of youthful piety. Be actively engaged in the work of God; this is the best preservative against sin.

While in a state of mental conflict and self-reproach, that God, who unerringly makes all the dispensations of his Providence subservient to the purposes of his grace, threw in his way a youthful friend of exemplary piety. Referring to this circumstance, he says, "Though I did all I could to stifle these troubles of my mind, they still followed me, and were much increased by some conversation I had with a young friend who was truly serious. I was astonished at his piety, and struck with horror at the recollection of my own crimes."



Let pious young persons be concerned to *do* good, as well as be good. Let them take encouragement from this example, diligently and faithfully to seek to reclaim such as have unhappily gone astray from piety in principle or practice. Let them remember, “that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.” \*

Sin now stood unmasked, and appeared to him exceedingly sinful. His most persevering efforts were unavailing to pluck the sting from his conscience, or wipe the stain from his character. “For I believe, says he, nearly two months, guilt lay so heavy on my conscience, that I lived under the awful expectation of eternal misery, night and day. My crimes were so

\* James v. 20.

many, and their aggravations so great, that I was left almost without any hope of mercy. In this state of mind I was led to attend the ministry of the Rev. J. Hoskins,\* and was astonished to hear him describe the feelings of my troubled heart, and say, that in this way the Spirit of God worked upon the souls of men, to shew them their need of salvation by Christ. This gave me hope and some comfort, and from that time the gracious promises of pardon afforded support to my mind. The Lord enabled me to receive and believe his word, to rely upon the atonement of Christ for pardon, and upon his righteousness for acceptance with God.”

By this severe and perilous disci-

\* Pastor of the Independent Church, Castle-green, Bristol.

pline did covenant mercy bring him, who was once a Pharisee, and afterwards a blasphemer and injurious, to renounce both self-righteousness and unrighteousness, and throw himself prostrate before the throne of heavenly grace, exclaiming,

“The best obedience of my hands  
Dares not appear before thy throne;  
But faith can answer thy demands,  
By pleading what my Lord has done.”

“Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” †

It is, alas! the deep and daily lamentation of too many parents, that their children “walk in the counsel of the ungodly, and stand in the way of sinners.” \* But though this cannot be too deeply deplored, it is not to be

† Romans xi. 33.

\* Psalm i. 1.

wondered at. What else could reasonably be expected? "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."† The stream of youthful depravity may be traced to various sources, but the following appear the most probable. *A depraved nature is the primary source; a defective religious education, and the manner in which children are disposed of in life, are the secondary causes.*

It is not sufficient that parents require their children to read the Scriptures—learn religious creeds—and attend the family altar and the house of God. "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."\* Parents should act in matters of religion as in the common affairs of life. There they explain, where there are

† Galatians vi. 7.

\* Matthew xxiii. 23.

difficulties—encourage, where there is diffidence—admonish, where there is negligence—commend, where there is diligence—and reward, where there is success. This is the *daily* practice of all those who wish to see their children *do well* in this world. If parents were to adopt the same plan, and faithfully pursue the same course with the spiritual interests of their children, I cannot believe that so many of them would bring their parents' "gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." † Oh, no! God would bless their exertions, as he has promised. It must be admitted, with sorrow, shame, and tears, that the generality of even professedly religious parents, either neglect, or very partially conduct a strict religious education of their children. They have no

† Genesis xlii. 38.



regular system of instruction, or season to instruct. They satisfy their consciences by giving general hints occasionally, and by requiring an observance of the Sabbath, and the externals of public worship. There is no *direct* effort made for the conversion of their children. They are never *privately* conversed with on the nature, necessity, and advantages of religion, or the solemnities of another world. They are never *privately prayed with or for*. To the shame of religion, the dishonour of God, and the ruin of souls, in many instances there is no family altar—no catechetical instruction—no reading of the Scriptures—no appearance of piety at home! Is it any wonder that young persons coming *out* of, or going *into* such families, should become irreligious? Oh, no! The only won-

der is, that rich and sovereign mercy should "pluck any, as brands out of the fire." \* Let not parents who have wilfully neglected the souls and salvation of their children upbraid them for their follies, or lament their indifference or profaneness. The sin lies at *their own* door. This is not the way that Timothy and Doddridge were taught, and rose to eminence. Do not expect "to reap where you have not sown, and gather where you have not strawed." †

The manner in which parents dispose of their children in the world has contributed largely to the impiety of youth, and cannot be censured in terms of adequate severity. How many a youth, like the deceased, who has had a religious education, has been placed

\* Zechariah iii. 2.

† Matthew xxv. 24.

in a family where even the outward forms of religion are not observed; and in some instances where the master has been openly profane.\* And this, too,

\* An instance of this kind recently occurred. A boy was apprenticed to a man who was a profane swearer, and an habitual neglecter of the house of God. At his father's house there was a domestic altar, before which the Scriptures were read, and prayer and praise daily presented to God; but in his new situation there was no such observance. At first he thought that his father had been deceived in the character of his master, or he would never have put him there. During his first visit to his parents, these things became the subject of conversation. When the hour of prayer arrived, he united in prayer, as usual; and the father prayed very earnestly for his son's salvation. On rising from his knees, he addressed his mother in the following terms:—"Oh, mother, I have found it out now." "Found what out, my child," cried the astonished mother. "Why father prayed so earnestly for me to-night." "Well, what is it?" The poor little fellow replied—"Father, by placing me in such a family, has put me in the Devil's mouth, and now he is praying to God to prevent him swallowing me." This must have gone, as a dagger, to the father's careless heart. His only plea of justification

at a time when youth has most peculiarly needed pious counsel, encouragement, caution, and example, in forming habits for life. In this way many have been thrown into the gulph of depravity, or into the withering arms of infidelity. Like a ship in a storm, without pilot or compass, they are left to steer their own course through the tempest of human passions, and have made shipwreck of virtue, and come short of heaven. The only plea urged in justification of such *unjustifiable* conduct is, that the person, to whom the unhappy child is apprenticed, is respectable in his trade, business, or profession; and, therefore, *he* may be-

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was, that the person, though a great reprobate, was a superior tradesman. Oh, what immense risk of losing the soul for the sake of a trade! Parents, take the cutting reproof and bitter reproach, as a caution *where*, and with *whom*, you place your sons!

come so! Poor eminence, if virtue, the soul, and heaven be lost! Sad exchange! Surely this is too high a price for eminence in any art that is confined by the limits of time! Parents who act with such manifest inconsistency, must be deeply involved in the guilt and misery of their children.

It is much to be lamented that parents, when placing out a child in the world, do not call on the minister, on whose ministry he is to attend; introduce him; place him under his pastoral care, to observe his conduct, direct his enquiries, and encourage his heart. There are few, if any ministers who would not duly appreciate such anxiety, and faithfully improve it. Such a course would have a powerful and beneficial influence on the youthful character.



If this little book should fall into the hands of any who are parents, and be deemed worthy of perusal, the writer affectionately, but most earnestly, entreats them, when placing out their children, to make the solemn enquiries—Is the situation likely to blight or brighten my hopes? Will it *help*, or *injure*, my child's salvation? Oh, ye parents, should ye, for the sake of any secular advantage act contrary to your character, as the professed followers of the Son of God, and place your children in families that are not *decidedly* religious, and should they, having neither instruction, example, nor restraint, fall into sin and error; remember, *your* unfortunate child may never, like the deceased, be reclaimed and brought to God and glory; but may be suffered,

in vengeance to your folly and presumption, to pursue an unrestrained course of sin and ruin ! Should this be the case, (which may God mercifully prevent!) the perdition of your child will plant a sting of unavailing remorse in your conscience, and fix the stain of his blood on your hands !

## PART II.

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**THIS** was an eventful period in the history of **Dissenting** churches. An animating spirit had been breathed, through the ministry of **Whitfield** and **Wesley**, into our decaying **British** churches. There was a revival of the religion of the best days of nonconformity—there was a shaking among the dry bones—the fields were white already to harvest—the harvest was plenteous, but the labourers were few. The colleges were few--their resources limited—and the number of ministers provided, bore no adequate proportion to the spiritual wants of a growing

population, and the spirit of anxious enquiry. It now became a subject of grave consideration, both with ministers and churches, whether the people, perishing for lack of knowledge, should remain destitute of the ministry of the Gospel of the grace of God, merely for want of men educated specially for the purpose, or whether the word of life should be spoken to them by laymen of acknowledged piety and talent. Truth and piety triumphed over pride and prejudice; and it was confessed to be the duty of the churches to receive, and of ministers to set apart to the work of the ministry, such men as possessed the Scriptural qualifications for the office; whether they had received an academic education or not. This led to an introduction into the Christian ministry of a class of the most

laborious, zealous, and efficient ministers; and to this, under God, may be attributed the growing extent and prosperity of the Dissenting interest. For it is a fact, as interesting and important, as it is evident, that, from that time our colleges and churches have steadily increased in number, wealth, intelligence, and importance; and that at no period in the history of Protestant Dissent, were the ministers, as a body, more numerous, or more eminent for learning, piety, and usefulness, as pastors, preachers, and authors, than at the present time.

However Protestant Dissenters may be despised or reviled, it is an incontrovertible fact, that they have been the instruments, in the hand of God's good Providence, of producing an extensive revival of religion in the

Church, as by law established. The people, through the length and breadth of the land, were deserting the parish church, and flocking to the Dissenting chapel, and crowding around the minister with all the earnestness of anxious enquirers after salvation. This revolution in the feelings, principles, and practice of the people, created great alarm in the high church party, and forced upon their attention the enquiries, "What is the cause of this general declension?" "What shall we do that it spread no further among the people?"\* It was soon discovered, that though the great and distinguishing principles of Protestantism, as established at the Reformation, were still confessed in the creeds, that there was a lamentable departure from the

\* Acts iv. 16, 17.



spirit of them in the preaching and practice of the great body of the clergy;—that dry morality was substituted for the doctrine of salvation through a crucified Saviour;—that the clergy had become secular in their habits, and careless of their flocks; and that the people, though very strongly attached to the Established Church, loved the truth better than mere ceremonies; and valued their souls more than a particular form of worship; and therefore sought, in the Dissenting chapel, that which they could not find in the parish church. It was at the same time seen, with all the clearness of a self-evident proposition, that if the progress of Dissent could be checked at all, and the Church of England saved from utter extinction, as a religious institution, it could only be done by filling

the pulpits of the parish churches with men not only of solid learning, but of *decided piety and fervent zeal*, who would feed the flock of Christ with the great truths of salvation—watch for souls as those that must give an account to God; and be an example to all, in the doctrine, spirit, and practice of Christian piety. The experiment was tried, and was crowned with success. Men of talent and piety were presented with livings, curacies, and lectureships; and wherever there was an evangelical ministry, there was a well filled church; while the “orthodox” addressed little else but massive pillars and empty pews. A taste and a preference for evangelical preaching, led to an introduction and gradual increase of evangelical clergymen; the one naturally creates the other. Thus

a second Reformation was effected; not indeed in the principles of the Church, but in the practices of Churchmen. Thus, also, vital religion was revived and restored, in the bosom of the Established Church, to what it was in the days of the holy, bleeding martyrs. Do Dissenters regret this? *They do not!* They have the hallowed satisfaction of being instrumental in the gracious change; and “so that Christ is preached,” souls are saved, and God is glorified, they “do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” \*

The revival of religion in Dissenting churches at this period had a still more extensive influence, and produced more permanent results. It roused into unceasing activity all the slumbering energies of Christian charity. Hence

\* Phillipians i. 18.

sprung those great and glorious institutions, the Bible, the Missionary, the Tract, and the School Societies, that are the highest glory of our own land, and are destined, by the benevolence of God, to be the instruments of regenerating, ennobling, and felicitating all the nations of the earth.

No sooner had the deceased been called by grace himself than his heart yearned over the miseries, and panted for the salvation of others. Bowing before the throne of mercy, he daily cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" \* The misery he had escaped, and the happiness he had won, awoke his love, inflamed his zeal, and led him, under a deep sense of infinite obligation to rich and sovereign mercy, to say,

"All that I have, and all I am,  
Shall be for ever thine."

\* Acts ix. 6.

Seeing that the harvest of souls was truly plenteous and the labourers were few, he resolved to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry; and being approved of by his pastor and brethren in Christ, he commenced preaching in the villages around Bristol, under their auspices. He did not, however, remain long in the list of lay preachers. His commanding talents soon brought him into public notice, and his services were eagerly sought by the churches of Christ. He had, as occasion required, filled the Dissenting pulpits in Bristol and its vicinity with honor and acceptance. Amongst these, was Pill, near Bristol; here he frequently exercised his ministry; and the high estimation in which his character and talents were held, may be judged from the pleasing fact, that, on the

death of the very respectable pastor, the Rev. Wm. Vaughan, he received a unanimous and most pressing invitation to take the pastoral charge of the bereaved church. After conferring with his pastor and friends; and earnest prayer for divine direction, on a subject in which his own comfort, the good of the church, and the glory of God, were all deeply involved, he considered his call to the Christian ministry, to be genuine and divine; from these circumstances:—*First*, “Because the people of God had called him to it;” and *Secondly*, “because God,” they said, “had abundantly blessed his labours to the good of their souls.” Consequently, he accepted their invitation, relinquished his secular pursuits, and “gave himself continually to prayer and the ministry of the word,”\* and

\* Acts vi. 4.



commenced his regular labours, as the minister of their choice, in January, 1792. On July the 4th of the same year, he was publicly set apart to the pastoral office, by the Rev. John Hey of Bristol, and the Rev. Wm. Bishop of Gloucester. His eminent ability gave his new connexion just ground to believe that he was destined to fill a more commanding and extensive sphere than Pill, and reason to fear that his continuance among them would be of but short duration. "The thing that they feared soon came upon them." \*

At the close of the same year he removed to Uley, in Gloucestershire.† Here he laboured with great success for five years. This may, indeed, be

\* Job iii. 25.

† The compiler regrets that he has neither documents nor information to justify or explain the removal.

regarded as the most useful and happy period of his ministerial life. Here he had the satisfaction of seeing a new sanctuary raised, and a numerous church (not a few of whom were the fruits of his own ministry) rise up about him. "They were his joy." Though the situation was retired, "he could not be hid," "for he was a burning and a shining light." \* He threw the vast energies of his mighty mind into his work, and soon became the Apollos of the neighbourhood. His celebrity, as a preacher, having reached the ears of that excellent judge of pulpit eloquence, the late venerable Rowland Hill, he was invited to supply Surry Chapel. The best comment on his preaching abilities and acceptance, is the flattering fact, that he became a

\* John v. 35.

regular supply, both at Surry Chapel and Bristol Tabernacle, and continued so for many years.

This ultimately broke up his connexion with Uley. For on one of his visits to the Metropolis, the late Rev. Matthew Wilks expressed to him his anxious desire to introduce him to the church at Plymouth Dock, vacant by the death of the Rev. Andrew Kinsman. He reluctantly engaged to officiate for six weeks. Though they had been destitute of a pastor for five years, and had, as may be supposed, from having a great variety of supplies, become fastidious, yet such was the powerful effect produced by his first visit, that he received a unanimous and very pressing invitation to become their minister. "The hearts," says the call, "of a numerous congregation,

are fixed upon you, and our wishes, as a church, are centred in you." Their anxiety to secure his valuable services is strikingly displayed by the readiness with which they consented to all the conditions proposed by him; and amongst them, to build him a new chapel capable of containing 1500 people. The state of his mind at this interesting, yet critical moment, is best expressed by himself. In his first letter to them after receiving the call, he says, "If it please God to remove me from hence, I trust he will enable me to depart in such a manner as to carry the affectionate regrets, without the bitter censure of my people with me! We have lived together in peace, and I believe, that whenever the voice of God bids me leave them, it will say, 'Go in peace.'" All matters being

finally arranged to their mutual satisfaction, he accepted the call; and in his formal and final reply expressed himself in the following terms:—"The important business entered upon by us has lain with peculiar weight upon my head and heart ever since its commencement. In no transaction of my life have I felt more sensibly the need of divine direction than in this, and I think I may add, that in none have I ever been led more fervently to crave it. Oh! that it may appear in the issue of this affair that God has been your and my director. The more I reflect upon the state of my mind, with respect to my present situation, prior to the reception of your call, as well as the unanimity with which your invitation is given, the more I am constrained to think that it proceeds from

God. It is no small comfort to me that all the ministers whom I have consulted, agree in their sentiments upon this subject; they have each of them said to the same purpose as the Rev. Matthew Wilks, who, when writing to me upon the business; used the following expressions:—‘There is something so singular in this call, that I am greatly surprised, and am persuaded that the hand of God must be in it. I beseech you to give it a serious consideration and accept it.’ I trust I have given it a serious consideration, and committed it to the great Head of the Church, begging that he will direct my ways. And now, brethren, with a mind deeply impressed with the importance of it, and a heart violently agitated betwixt hopes and fears concerning the consequences, yet humbly



hoping that I am following the voice of God, I venture to say, I accept your call.”

He commenced his stated labours at the close of 1797, with the most cheering prospects of comfort and usefulness. In the following year he was united to an amiable and pious lady, who still survives him. In her he found a true help-mate. She was the cheerful and intellectual companion of his noon, and the comfort and solace of the evening of his days.

Though his settlement at Dock, (now Devonport,) was brought about by many apparently approving circumstances, and was commenced under the most favorable auspices, yet it must, in justice, be recorded among the many instances of unhappy ministerial changes. “I was,” he said, “be-

loved by the people of my charge, useful among them, happy with them, and had an extensive field for labor." He was eminently suited to the place, and the place to him. He had, therefore, no justifiable cause of removing; though when urgently pressed by the church at Dock, and strongly recommended by some eminent ministers, he, in an unguarded moment, consented to do so, under the specious plea of occupying a more commanding sphere of usefulness, and enjoying a more liberal support. On tendering his resignation to the church at Uley, he was very naturally asked, "What reason have you for taking such a step?" He mentioned the only reason he could assign. To this it was replied—"Mr. Jones, had you, in *confidence*, only hinted that you were about to change

your state, we could and would most cheerfully have made a suitable provision for you. We will do so now, if you will consent to remain with us. Whatever they have offered you at Dock, we will guarantee the same. Surely you have not made up your mind to leave us on such grounds, and even without the slightest intimation of any dissatisfaction on your part, till you actually tender your resignation. This is conduct that we neither expected nor deserved at your hands, as we have uniformly studied to meet your wishes and promote your comfort." "This," he said, "went like a dagger to my heart, and with shame and tears I added, No! it is too late now. I have accepted the call, and I must go." Speaking of this event, the compiler has often heard him say, "I never repented of it but

once, and that has been ever since. It was by far the happiest part of my ministerial life.”

When we reflect on the principles by which ministers and churches profess to be governed, on a settlement—consider the bond of union between them—call to mind the solemnities of ordination—and view the lamentable consequences which frequently follow the removal of a minister from a sphere of usefulness and comfort, a very strong case ought *clearly* to be made out, to justify the act. It is not denied, or insinuated, but that such cases very frequently arise, though it must be confessed, that in too many cases of removal, it appears an act of policy, not of principle; a gratifying self, not glorifying God; and that the wishes of men, not the will of God, are regarded as the rule of action.

Surely neither ministers nor churches who are instrumental in removing a minister from the place to which Providence led him, and where the Head of the Church has owned and blessed his labors, can be guiltless before God of inflicting injury on His Church, under the pretence of doing good. The injury is two-fold: the loss of an efficient minister, and the difficulty of obtaining a suitable successor; sometimes ending in the division of the church, and almost destruction of the congregation. It is too commonly thought, that if a minister is very acceptable and useful in one situation, that he must be equally so in any other he may occupy. This does not necessarily follow. It was not the case with either Christ or his Apostles; for in some instances, the former was ordered

to quit the country; and the latter, to leave the city; though at other places, both were gladly received. It is so still. The minister who is eminently useful to souls in one sphere, may be “as one that beateth the air,” \* in another. He may charm, but not secure—please, but not profit—convince, but not convert. It follows then, as most agreeable to reason and revelation, that where a minister *is* successful in his work, and has his health, and a *sufficient* support, that *there* he should abide, till Providence open the way, *without his seeking*, and call him hence. †

\* 1 Corinthians ix. 26.

† The deceased was, from his own painful experience, cautious, almost to a fault, in giving advice to a minister who wished to remove. On one occasion, a minister in the West of England consulted him on the subject of his removal, and wished him to recommend him to a destitute church. He spoke



The practice of some ministers and influential laymen of recommending to destitute congregations almost every minister who solicits their patronage, as an act of personal respect or kindness to a destitute brother, without considering his fitness for *that* situation, or his qualification for *any* situation as pastor of a Christian church, is false in principle, and mischievous in practice, and cannot be too severely reprobated, as one of the fertile

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in very strong terms of dissatisfaction with his present charge, and expressed his fixed intention of leaving it. "Go home, sir," said he, "and try to improve the people of your present charge; for if they are half as bad as you represent them, they are in danger of being eternally lost; and I must say, that I seriously fear you have not served them faithfully. Don't be so anxious to get away from them. If Jesus Christ, as the Head of the Church, wants you for a better place, He will know where to find you!"

sources of contention and division in the church. For however destitute a man may be of the essential qualifications of a Christian minister, the fact of his being recommended, and actually employed as a minister to a particular church, would create him some admirers and friends; and if he be disapproved of by the more judicious, and by the majority, this may be, and often is, turned into the occasion of internal convulsion, or actual division in the church: in either case, a deep injury is inflicted on the church, and reproach brought on religion, by such unnatural and unnecessary enmities. And all this brought about by an injudicious recommendation. The peace and prosperity of the church ought to be regarded as too sacred and precious to be sacrificed at the shrine of personal

respect, or benevolence to the poor. As ministers are solemnly charged by the highest authority to "lay hands suddenly on no man," \* the same principle should guide them in their recommendations. No man ought to be *recommended* to whom ordination cannot conscientiously be given; and the churches, if they act consistently with their own dignity, purity, prosperity, and peace, *ought to receive none*, as their teachers, who cannot produce such testimonials. If this rule was generally adopted and acted on, as a governing principle of conduct, it would soon give a fatal blow to a giant evil, and prevent our churches from being laid waste by the cruel inroads of men, either without character or without talents.

\* 1 Timothy v. 22.

After having laboured at Devonport for twelve years with honor, acceptance, and success, circumstances he could neither foresee nor prevent, (and which it is unnecessary here to relate,) transpired, which embittered his life, blighted his ministry, and eventually broke up his connexion with the congregation. The feelings of his numerous friends on this painful occasion, may be seen to advantage in the fact, that in their deep anxiety to retain him as their minister, they decided on building a new chapel, and most urgently pressed and invited him to continue the exercise of his ministry amongst them; this he prudently declined, as it could not afford him any satisfaction to foster a division, however justifiable, among the people whom he had for so many years “en-

deavoured to keep in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace ;” \* he therefore resigned his pastoral charge, and left, without the shadow of a stain on either his personal or ministerial character.

Well would it have been for the credit of religion, the peace of the church, and the comfort of ministers, if all those placed in such trying circumstances as he was, had acted with the same prudence, forbearance, and principle. But, alas! what a different spectacle is frequently presented in the various religious denominations! Instead of bearing with each other's infirmities—forgiving each other's faults—and being helpers of each other's joy, “bearers of one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ,” † and

\* Ephesians iv. 3.

† Galatians vi. 2.

“making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love;” \* circumstances and subjects that “ought not once to be named among those as becometh saints,” † are allowed to create variance and dissension in the church, and between the pastor and people. The discontented, the ambitious, the self-willed, the capricious, on being reproved for a fault, thwarted in a purpose, or checked in a career of mischief, stir up a spirit of strife, and become the unenvied centre and main-spring of disaffection. And as “every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand;” ‡ so the church that is the scene of internal convulsion, is

\* Ephesians iv. 16.

† Ephesians v. 3.

‡ Matthew xii. 25.



soon divided; and the weaker division retreats, (either for the sake of peace, or for the purposes of faction,) pitches its tent, unfurls its banner, and commences actual hostilities against its former companions in the Christian warfare. Sometimes it happens in a village or town where there is barely room for one respectable congregation, that that is rent by faction, and becomes two distinct congregations of the same, or of different denominations; and as rival parties, "have no dealings with each other," but breathing a spirit of bitterness and wrath, present religion under a mask of the most horrid deformity; and, instead of attracting by its loveliness, and winning from the world by its kindness, has had a repulsive effect on all within the infected sphere. These things

are as leprous spots on the face of Christianity; and have done more to mar its beauty, lessen its excellency, check its progress, and degrade its authority, than all the attacks of its open enemies. When the love of power is the ruling passion, or proselyting, the darling pursuit, neither the rights of man, nor the laws of God, are respected. The worst passions of our fallen nature are often obeyed and gratified, under the disguise of serving God and saving souls. Would that men, professing godliness, would display the same diligence and energy in doing good, that they do in doing harm; in promoting concord, that they do in creating strife; in keeping the unity of the Spirit, that they do in making division; then "the wilderness and the solitary place would be glad for them;

and the desert would rejoice and blossom as the rose." \* Let those who *cause* or *encourage* division in Christian churches, hear and tremble at the words of Jesus—"Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" †

Well would it be for the honor of ministers, the heads of colleges, and the committees of religious societies, if they were to examine the circumstances that give rise to what is termed a *new* interest, and enquire, before they give it sanction or support, whether it originated in *necessity*, or is the base offspring of *disaffection*. A new interest is justifiable, on Christian principles, only when there is a departure from sound doctrine in the existing congregation; or when the accommodation and amount of religious instruc-

\* Isaiah xxxv. 1.

† Matthew xviii. 7.

tion are manifestly insufficient to the spiritual wants of the population.

Having resigned his pastoral charge at Devonport, he visited several destitute churches, from whom he received pressing invitations to the pastoral office. He was induced by his friend, the late Rev. James Weston, of Sherborne, to pay a visit to Bird-bush, Wiltshire, the scene where the venerable Peter Ince, (better known, perhaps, as the praying shepherd,) one of the non-conforming ministers, once laboured; the people, the place, the prospects, were all most congenial to his feelings; and though invited to become the pastor of numerous and wealthy congregations in crowded cities, he preferred the rural charge of Bird-bush. He received a unanimous invitation, and without hesitation

accepted it, and entered upon his labours in the beginning of 1809; where he continued to labour, with fidelity and various success, till the day of his death.

PART III.  

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It now only remains for the author to give his readers an outline of the general character of the deceased, in the various relations of life.

As a man, he was possessed of intellectual powers of a very superior order. His mind was both capacious and comprehensive. This was strikingly evidenced by his prompt, luminous, and correct decision on every subject submitted to his consideration. Rarely was he required to correct his opinions. He read much, thought much, and retained all. His stores of information on all subjects were rarely equalled,



never surpassed. From the sublime mysteries of Creation, Providence, and Redemption, down to the common arts of human life, he would speak with all the ease and fluency of a master quite familiar with his subject. He was an excellent judge of human nature. Few men ever made more correct estimates of men or things.

As a friend, he possessed many social virtues, but none more eminent than his hospitality and the fidelity of his friendship. It may justly be said of him, that he never divulged a secret, or betrayed a friend. He was not only fond of society, but was formed for it. His conversational powers were of the first order. The exhaustless stores of his information, and his truly felicitous mode of narration, rendered him alike engaging and instructive to the aged

and the young—the learned and the rude—the gay and the grave—as the company or occasion required. And though it must be confessed, “he liked to have his own way,” yet he was the life and centre of the social circle; and those who enjoyed his society once, wished to do so again; for none but the wilfully ignorant ever left his company without pleasure and profit.

As a Christian, it may be truly said, that “he walked with God.” † His gift in prayer was very eminent, and the exercise bespoke a heart that lived near to God, and that realized the blessedness of communion with him. In him, prayer appeared not a mere formal act, but the element and happiness of his mind. It was his lot to enjoy much of the Divine presence and

† Genesis v. 22.

favor. He lived happy in God through Christ. Amid all the changes and desolations of time, hope was to him "the anchor of his soul;" and a lively "faith, the substance of things hoped for." The balm of his soul was the everlasting covenant of Grace. This was the remedy which he applied to all the woes of life. And though he frequently betrayed a degree of impatience, (which is natural to all men,) yet when the event which tried him appeared to come from the hand of God, not a murmur was heard; his soul was all submission; and he would cry, "Why should a living man complain?" "Father, not my will, but thine be done."

As a Preacher, he was deservedly held in high estimation. Few ministers ever acquired greater popularity, though none ever sought it less. His

discourses were all well studied, both as to sentiment and language, and were usually written at considerable length.\* An impediment in his speech forbad him introducing any thing unnecessary; and his fidelity, omitting any thing essential. Thus by persevering exertion, and admirable management, he rose superior to a defect in the organs of speech, which would have proved fatal to public speaking in almost any one else; and it may be fairly said, that in his sermons there was neither deficiency nor redundancy. They were distinguished by completeness of arrangement, simplicity of diction, and felicity of Scrip-

\* His sermons rarely exceeded forty minutes. The reason he assigned for such brevity was, "No body likes long sermons or long prayers but those who make them, and then only when they make them themselves."

ture illustration. But their greatest charm was the rich savour of Christ and salvation that was breathed through the whole. His manner was peculiarly solemn and impressive. His hearers felt that they were in the presence of the legate of the skies, and

“Truth from his lips revail’d with double sway,  
And fools who came to scoff, remain’d to pray.”

Many, very many, were the seals of his ministry; he was eminently useful in building up believers in the faith of the Gospel, and hastening their growth to the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus. His models of Theology, if indeed he had any uninspired models, were Charnock, Howe, Owen, Flavel, and Henry. These were his constant companions; and, perhaps, no man was ever more correctly acquainted with the works of these illustrious men.

Though he wrote many articles for religious periodicals, he appears as an author only in an "Essay on True Zeal," read before the Devon Association, and published at their request.

His last illness. It had always been his earnest prayer that he might not, through infirmity, be laid aside; and a gracious Providence indulged his humble prayer. For with the exception of an occasional interruption of health, he was enabled to discharge his ministerial duties to within a fortnight of his death. He had a presentiment that he should one day die through a disease of the head; and it is rather a singular coincidence that the immediate cause of his death was a brain fever, superinduced by a severe attack of gout. From the moment he found his head to be the seat of active disease,



he pronounced himself to be a dead man. He however viewed the advance of the last enemy to the attack with all the comfort and confidence of a soul certain of victory, and ripe for glory ; resignation to the will of God strongly marked his last moments. He said to the writer of this memoir, in reference to the probable issue of his malady, "Life cannot be very desirable to a poor old, infirm man ; and I bless God that I am not afraid to die. No, no, Jesus has taken away the sting of death. The Lord who has led me, and fed me all the days of my unprofitable life, will not, I am confident, forsake me in my last moments. No, he hates putting away." Speaking of the solemnity of the death of a minister, as a steward departing to give an account of his stewardship to God, he said,

with gushing tears, "I see and feel much, very much, in my past life, over which I sorrow and repent before God; but it is a source of indescribable satisfaction to my mind, as a dying man and minister, that of all the faults and follies for which I may be censured by man, or stand charged with at the tribunal of my God, *that I have not corrupted any part of the Word of God.* No, blessed be God, 'I have kept the faith' without wavering." The faith and hope he professed through life, were his solace and support in approaching death. In the last interview his friends had with him, he spoke freely of his interest in Christ—of the preciousness of his atoning blood and sovereign grace—of his unshaken confidence in him for salvation, and of his immense obligations to redeeming love.

In a peculiarly solemn manner he committed his faithful, devoted wife, his friends, his people, his body, and his soul, to the care of his covenant God; imploring every needful favor for Christ's sake; and exclaimed,

“The holy triumphs of my soul,  
Shall death itself outbrave;  
Leave dull mortality behind,  
And fly beyond the grave.”

then sunk exhausted. For the last two days he was unable to commune with his friends, yet in a paroxysm of anguish, he frequently cried, “Lord, support my faith! Lord, give me patience under thy hand. Give me patience. God of my mercies, thy will be done. Precious Saviour! None but Christ.” When unable to utter a word, he continued lifting up holy hands, expressive of mental communion with God; and like Hannah, his

lips were seen almost constantly to move, and doubtless, like her's, his prayers were heard in heaven. His malady rapidly increased, and committed fearful ravages on his manly frame, under which he gradually sunk, till on Friday, September 17th, 1830, in the 70th year of his age, and the 42nd of his ministry, he fell asleep in Jesus, and his emancipated spirit winged its happy flight to receive the imperishable reward of fidelity, in the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world.

On the 24th, his mortal remains were carried by devout men and deposited in a tomb at the end of his dwelling-house; a spot his own heart had desired, and his own hand had adorned with yews and other shrubs, as the place of his burial. Though the day

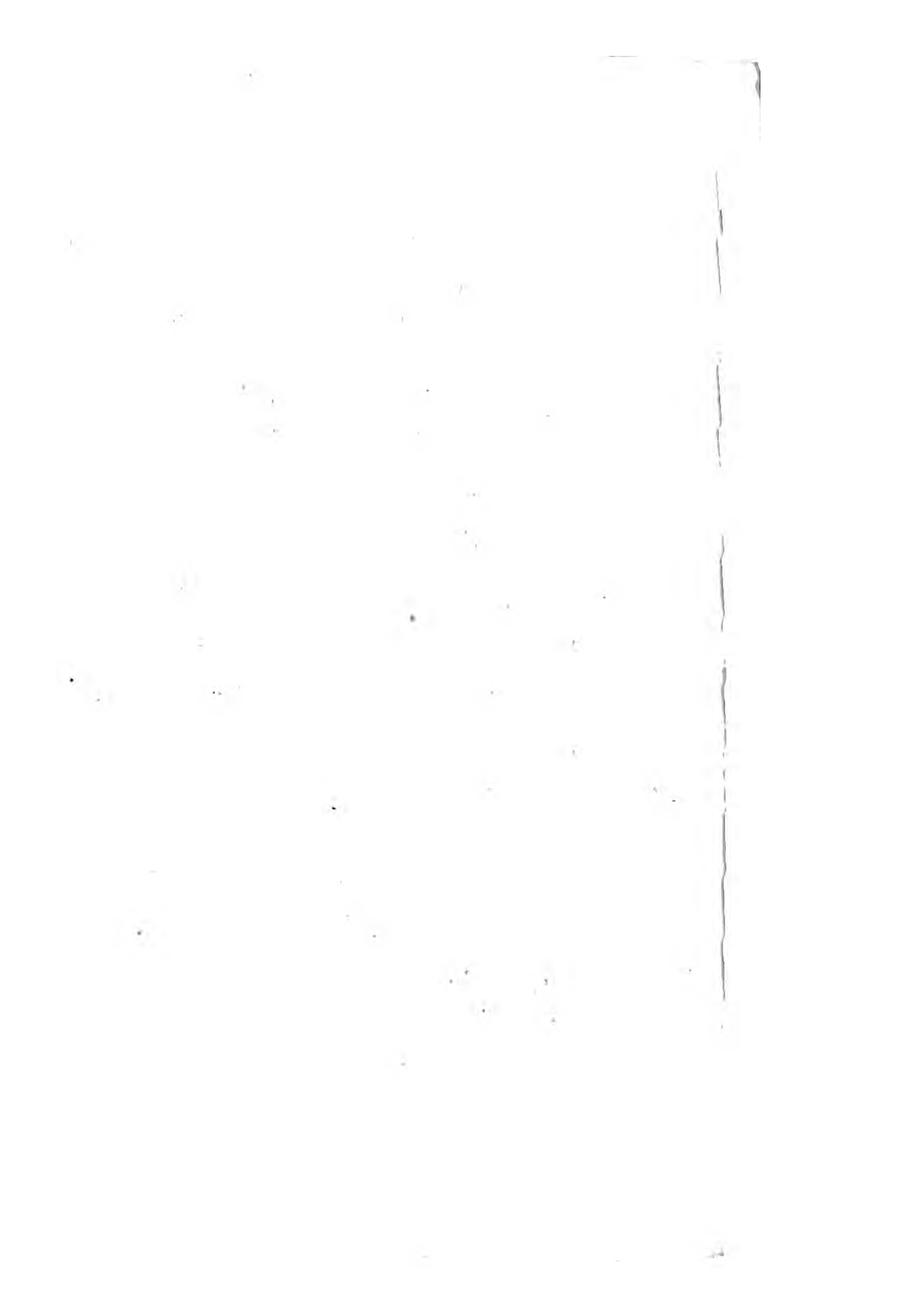
was peculiarly unfavorable, yet at an early hour crowds were seen flocking to the sanctuary. At eleven o'clock, a vast assemblage of friends and neighbours, clad in sable garments, and with countenances strongly marked with grief, appeared within the walls of the sanctuary, anxious to pay the last tribute of affection and respect to him, who, for the space of twenty-one years, had served them faithfully in the Gospel. At twelve, the procession moved from the house to the adjoining chapel; the spectacle was most affecting. The narrow case containing the lifeless body of the late pastor, was placed in front of the pulpit, uncovered. Every eye, as the falling tear permitted, was fixed on it. A most solemn silence ensued, as though, by the consent of all, he was

about, once more, to ascend the pulpit he had so long, and so ably filled. The moment was awful. But he came not forth—he obeyed not the call! No, he is gone—the animating spirit is fled; and when the scene too plainly said, “He is dead,” his body only appears before you for the last time, grief thrilled through every heart. “They wept sore, but most of all because they should see his face no more, till the heavens be no more.” Thus closed the earthly career of the once famous **JOHN JONES**.

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The compiler delivered an Oration at the grave; and Mr. **KEYNES** of Blandford, preached the Funeral Sermon, from Hebrews xii. 23, “*And to the spirits of just men made perfect.*”





## FUNERAL ORATION.

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MY dear Christian friends, the providence of God has this morning assembled us together within these hallowed walls, † to pay our last tribute of affection and respect to the mortal remains of the late venerable pastor of this Christian church. Honors done to the memory of great persons deceased, have, by the wisdom of all nations, been counted decencies; and when the deceased have been public blessings to society, then, especially, such rites

† Owing to the inclemency of the weather, the address was delivered in the chapel, not at the grave, as was designed.

have been most fitly called debts. Rarely or ever were such last honors more justly due, or more sincerely paid, than in the present instance. This numerous assembly, clad in the garb of sorrow, with countenances of deep grief, bespeaks, in the most eloquent terms, the high estimation in which the deceased was held, and would constrain an uninterested spectator to exclaim, "Behold, how they loved him!"

Here we have no continuing city! Oh, what a world of change do we inhabit! Vanity is impressed in deep and legible characters on every thing beneath the sun! No element, no order of existence, no station of life, is exempt. The dawn changes into day; fountains, into streams—streams, into rivers—rivers, into seas; plants,

into trees ; buds, into blossoms—blossoms, into fruit ; spring, into summer ; time, into eternity ; childhood, into youth—youth, into manhood—manhood, into old age ; one generation passeth away after another. The wise man dieth, as also the fool ; so subjects and sovereigns ; children and parents ; servants and employers ; people and pastors. If piety or talents could have saved from death, our friend would still be living. But no, there is no exemption. Death has sovereign dominion over all ; for it is appointed to all men once to die. Our friend, the Rev. John Jones, *is dead*. See there ! within the narrow limits of that coffin, are deposited the mortal remains of the husband, the friend, the pastor. Cold is the heart—closed the eye—silent the tongue—motionless the hand. The no-

ble and well furnished mind that once animated that dead body, is departed for ever. See there the lifeless body of your minister—your pastor! Who that was ever favored with his ministry, or honored with his friendship, can see that coffin, or look into that grave, and call to remembrance who and what he once was, and what and where he *now* is, dry eyed! To view such a scene without sorrow and tears would outrage common decency and insult religion; for Judaism, Heathenism, and Christianity, have alike pronounced grief and tears on such an occasion, as seasonable, sacred, and just. But oh! could he see your tears, and read your throes of anguish, he would say, weep not for me, thou wife of my bosom, ye people of my charge, ye friends of my choice. Though we have

the high sanction of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and of the Son of God himself, for lamentation over the tomb of our departed friend, yet we are called on by their example, and by our own religious principles, to moderate our grief and tears. All, all cry aloud, "Weep not as those who have no hope." The event is the will of God, and it is our duty to acquiesce in and piously submit to it, for "He does all things well." It is a comfort to know that our departed friend was not cut off in an unprepared, though in some respects, an unexpected moment. No! He was ready, and willing, and waiting to go! He was not cut off in the bloom of youth or the infancy of his ministry amongst you, but had faithfully served you for thrice seven years, and was brought to a good old age,

and is gathered to the fathers, as a sheaf of corn in his season, fully ripened by the influence of grace for the enjoyments of glory. Though his body lies here cold and dead, we have good reason to believe that his soul, purified from all the impurities and infirmities of mortality, has joined the spirits of just men made perfect—has entered the rest and received the kingdom and crown prepared for the faithful. Follow him in his happy flight, borne on angels' wings to the gates of heaven. See him there, met, welcomed, greeted by his spiritual children in glory before him; by holy ministering angels; and by the Holy One of Israel, who, amidst adoring hosts of cherubim and seraphim, addressed him saying, "*Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,*" then placed



the crown of fidelity to death on his head! How glorious the change! The days of his mourning are ended—his eyes have shed their last tears—his heart has felt its last pang—he has met and vanquished the last foe. Hear his high raised shout of triumph, “Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory, through my Lord Jesus Christ!” The object of his most empasioned desire is realized. He sees his adorable Lord and master as he is, in all his glories, and is like him! His blessedness is complete—his joys are full—his pleasures for evermore!

Men and brethren, see, for the last time, till the heavens shall be no more, the remains of your late venerable pastor! I solemnly charge you, I affection-

ately and most earnestly beseech you, one and all, that ye prepare to meet him at the right hand of God! Keep in mind and reduce to practice, the great truths he so long and so ably addressed to you all, that you may meet him at the tribunal of God with joy, not with grief and despair. If there be any here present before God, who have neglected or misimproved his ministry; any, who have stifled the convictions his discourses produced in their minds; any, who have made light of the truths of salvation he addressed to their ears, and commended to their consciences; to all such I would say, let not him who has so often been your friend at the throne of grace, be your enemy at the throne of judgment, by appearing as a witness against you. Oh, let this sad, this affecting specta-

cle, your minister and friend, (whom your sinful indifference and impenitence have often pained and grieved,) now dead in that coffin, placed in that grave, alarm your conscience, awake your anxiety, revive your convictions, lead you to God! Oh, that the impressive voice from his tomb, "Prepare to meet thy God," may effect that which his voice from the pulpit failed to do—your saving conversion to God.

To such as valued and improved his ministry and lament his death, to them I would say, you are not the first church bereaved of its pastor, nor is this your *first* bereavment. You have already lost an INCE and a M'GIBBON, and the Lord raised up a JONES. Be of good cheer, though the under shepherds are in succession removed, the Chief Shepherd lives for ever. Be of one mind;

live in peace. Strive together for the faith. Be instant, earnest, and believing in prayer, and *the Lord will still provide.* Bless God for all the benefits you have derived from the ministry of your late pastor, and be concerned to follow him as far as he followed Christ; and to follow him especially to the right hand of God, and to be enthroned there in glory everlasting. He now waits to receive you as his crown of rejoicing in the day of Christ! Oh, disappoint him not! I solemnly charge you, hold fast the profession of your faith. Be faithful unto death and ye shall have the crown of life. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

We now commit to this grave all that is mortal of our dear departed friend, in the Scriptural hope and firm belief, that he will rise again to all the honors and felicities of an endless life ; and that this body that is now “ sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption : that is sown in dishonor, shall be raised in glory : that is sown in weakness, shall be raised in power : that is sown a natural body, shall be raised a spiritual body. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be

brought to pass the saying that is written, *Death is swallowed up in Victory.*" Then shall departed souls return and occupy their revived bodies. Then shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and have their destiny irrevocably fixed, in the heights of joy, or in the depths of woe. The Lord grant that you may all obtain mercy in that day! *Amen.*

# A S E R M O N

PREACHED BY THE LATE

REV. JOHN JONES,

AUGUST 4th, 1795.

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HABAKKUK iii. 4.

“ He had horns coming out of his hand :  
and there was the hiding of his power.”

THIS chapter is termed a prayer of Habakkuk. It is a meditation with himself, and an intercession for the church. It contains many grand ideas of the majesty of God, and lofty expressions of his power. It is justly deemed one of the most elegant parts



of the word of God; and our text is thought to be one of the best turned periods that ever was written. It is natural, but unexpected. "He had horns coming out of his hand." We should have expected that the pen would have ended by saying, in them was the declaration of his power; but in them was "the hiding of his power:" what a striking term! Leaving this, we take our subject, and

I. The terms in our text are obscure, and therefore we will explain it.

II. The doctrine of our text is wonderful, and therefore we will illustrate it.

III. The subject of our text is useful, therefore we will improve it.

I. THE TERMS IN OUR TEXT ARE OBSCURE, THEREFORE WE WILL EXPLAIN IT. The word horn is equi-

vocal, or a term which hath divers meanings.

1st. Sometimes it means strength or power. So when Moses compares Joseph to a young bullock, and says, "That his horns shall be like the horns of an unicorn," the meaning is, that he is endowed with much power. So when it is said, "I will make the horn of David to bud," I will make his power to increase. Hence the beast in the Revelations is said to have ten horns, *i. e.* kingdoms or powers.

2nd. The term horn signifies glory, honor, rays, or brightness; as when Job says, "I have defiled my horn in the dust." I have parted with all my glory and dignity, and been brought into contempt. Some, by the term horns in our text, understand that glorious brightness which appeared to

Israel when God stood on Mount Sinai ; and however glorious it was, it was so far from being a full discovery of it, that it was only the concealing, or hiding of it.

3rd. By the horns here, understand the two tables of the law, which had a brightness and glory impressed upon them. "Out of his right hand went a fiery law." But though they revealed much of his will, they did not fully discover it. In them was the hiding of his power, till grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

4th. Others, by the horns, understand all the displays of power which God gave to Israel in their deliverance out of Egypt ; their journey through the wilderness ; and their possession of Canaan ; and this seems to be the true meaning of the text. The prophet

is here meditating on the mighty acts which God had done for his people in order that his own faith may be established.

(i.) Upon his glorious appearance on Sinai. "The Holy One from mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens." (Verse 3.)

(ii.) The plagues which he inflicted upon Egypt. "Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet." (Verse 5.)

(iii.) His dividing the land. "He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting." (Verse 6.)

(iv.) His dividing the sea. "Was the LORD displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the riv-

ers? was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses, and thy chariots of salvation?" (Verse 8.)

(v.) The sun's standing still. "The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear." (Verse 11.)

(vi.) The destruction of the Canaanites. "Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger." (Verse 12.)

These were the horns, or displays of power, which went out of his hand; and mighty as they were, they were nothing to what he is able to do: it was only "the hiding of his power." So much may serve to clear the obscurity, and to explain the terms of our text.

**II. THE DOCTRINE OF OUR TEXT IS WONDERFUL, AND THEREFORE WE WILL ILLUSTRATE IT.** All the wonderful displays of divine power which we have seen or heard of, are far from discovering to us the extent of the power of God. They shew us that he has power, but still the extent of it lies concealed; it is but "the hiding of his power."

This wonderful doctrine may be illustrated by viewing the power of God. 1st. In Creation. 2nd. In Government. 3rd. In Redemption.

1st. We have some bright displays of the power of God in Creation. In the beginning, God made all things. The heavens are the works of his fingers: the sun and the moon are things which he has made.

(i.) He made it of nothing. Men

can make wonderful things out of matter already formed. But God made the matter of light, of air, of fire, earth and sea. View the multitudes of beings produced from this barren womb, and they proclaim the power of God.

(ii.) Consider the various productions of the earth, from the large elephant to the small gnat: of the sea, from the whale to the smallest fish.

(iii.) Consider the grandeur of them; view the glorious sun and the beautiful earth, &c.

(iv.) The intelligence of angels and men.

Do I, in all this, behold the full exertion of divine power? Was it with difficulty that he formed all these things? No. It was with the greatest ease. He only spake, and they were



made. With ease he “stretched out the heavens as a curtain, and spread them as a tent to dwell in.” When I see “the heavens, which declare the glory of God, and the firmament, which sheweth his handy work,” I consider them as “horns coming out of his hand ;” but they are so far from shewing me all that his hand is able to do, that they are but “the hiding of his power,” &c.

2nd. We have displays of the power of God in the Government of the world. I cannot enter into this subject, but only glance at it.

(i.) See his power, as a governor, in the judgments he has inflicted on the ungodly. The deluge. Here the fountains of the great deep are broken up, and the windows of heaven are opened, and every soul, save Noah and his family, is drowned. See the

fire and brimstone consuming Sodom, &c. See his hand stretched out upon Egypt, &c. See what he did by Sennacherib's army, &c. But all these "horns coming out of his hand" are only "the hidings of his power." He is able to punish with great severity, and is able to inflict upon his foes pains far more intolerable, &c. &c.

(ii.) See his power, as a governor, in the protection he has afforded to his church. 1. Noah. 2. Lot. 3. Israel in Egypt. The Jews in Esther's days. But all these acts are far from shewing what God is able to do, they are only "the hidings of his power," &c.

3rd. This doctrine is illustrated by considering the work of Redemption. Here are "horns coming out of his hand;" and we may see displays of the power of God,

(1.) In the person Redeeming.

1. His conception out of the ordinary course of nature, by the power of the Holy Ghost. "Behold a virgin shall conceive." This prevented his humanity from the taint of sin.

2. The union of the two natures displays his power. Here we behold Creator and creature making but one person. He that is of the seed of David is God over all, blessed for ever. This, indeed, is the brightest display of divine power that has ever been made to angels or men ; therefore Christ is emphatically termed, "the wisdom and power of God," &c. But is this the utmost bound of the power of God? Is he able to do nothing greater? Shall we here limit the Holy One of Israel? No. Though this is the largest horn that ever came out of his

hand, yet it contains only "the hiding of his power." Paul tells us, "he can do more than we can think." I can think of no greater display of divine power than the union of the natures in Christ. Yet I know that God is able to do abundantly above what I can think.

(2.) We discover his power in the doctrine of redemption; but here I cannot dwell, therefore, I leave you to consider the persons who spread; the nature of the doctrine; the opposition it met with; and the success it obtained. This will form a strong "horn coming out of his hand;" but yet it is only "the hiding of his power."

(3.) The display of power in the doctrine of the redemption, is the application of it to a man's mind. The planting of grace in the heart, is always

spoken of as an act of the power of God. When it is expressed by light, it is resembled to that power which formed the sun. When by regeneration, it is as much as the power of God in forming an infant, and fashioning the frame of a man. When it is called a resurrection, it is as much as the rearing of a body again out of putrid matter. When it is called creation, it is like the power which brought a world out of nothing. In creation, nothing is changed into something; in conversion, hell is changed into heaven; which is more than the turning nothing into a glorious angel. Hence it is called, "the exceeding greatness of his power in us that believe." 1st. It goes against our Inclinations. 2nd. Habits; and 3rd, Temptations. Yet all this mighty change is easily per-

formed by God; nor does it shew me all that he is able to do, it is only "the hiding of his power," &c. View the preservation of grace in the heart, and it is a display of power, like the bush burning, but not consumed.

Thus I have endeavoured to illustrate to you the wonderful doctrine of the unbounded power of God. Look where you will, you have sermons upon this subject. View the heavens, they preach his power; see the earth, it shews his strength. Recollect the history of the world, and every page is marked with his power. If we view the person of the Redeemer, and the application of redemption, we see his might. If you view the wonderful formation of your bodies, or the more wonderful powers of your soul, they give lectures on the power of God.

But yet, all these things joined together, do not fully declare it, they only hide his power. Nay, could I open to you the glories of heaven, and shew you the brilliant throne of God—the glorified body of Christ—the crowns which martyrs wear—the white raiment with which the saints are clothed—and could give you a view of the angels and seraphim. Could I likewise open to you the caverns of hell, and shew the chains of darkness worn by devils—the worm that dieth not, the fire which is not quenched, and the gloomy prison of damned souls. These would, indeed, be “horns coming out of his hand;” but yet in them there would be “the hiding of his power.” We must say of them all, as Bildad did to Job, “Lo, these are a part of his ways; but how little a portion is heard



of him ; and the thunder of his power, who can understand ?”

We have observed,

III. THAT THE DOCTRINE OF THE TEXT IS USEFUL, THEREFORE WE WILL IMPROVE IT.

1st. 'Tis of use to teach us the fear of the Lord, therefore let us improve it, like Jeremiah, who said, “Thou art great, and thy name is great in might, who would not fear thee, O king of nations?” “Do we provoke him to jealousy?”

2nd. The subject is of use to teach us confidence in God; and, therefore, let us improve it, by confiding in him in the darkest season. Thus did Habakkuk, (verse 17,) “Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* fruit *be* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall



yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and *there shall be* no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

He is endowed with the same power now as when he delivered Israel from Egypt, Daniel, &c. "Oh Lord, there is nothing too hard for thee; thou art wonderful in counsel, and mighty in working," &c.

3rd. The subject is of use to teach us enlargement in prayer; and therefore, let us improve it, by asking much at the hand of God. Christ makes this improvement of it. "Thine is the power." So Paul. "He is able to do abundantly above all that ye can ask or think." Do you pray for great grace? Consider him "who is able to make all grace abound toward you."

Do you pray for the subduing your depraved passions? Consider the “working of his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.” Do you pray to be kept from turning back? Consider him “who is able to keep you from falling.” Many other uses flow from the subject, but I name no more; I leave them to your pious minds, and fruitful inventions; being well persuaded, that what I have lisp'd to-night, is so far from being a declaration of the power of God, that it is only “the hiding of his power.” May God add his blessing. *Amen.*



FINIS.





