

blood, and the power of his grace, he is refused the society of the "pious, merit-mongering, free-willers" around him. Jesus, however, was not ashamed of his children then, amidst the reproaches that were heaped upon him, and all who know the power of his truth refuse to be ashamed of him, when in their right minds. I say, when in their right minds, for sometimes shame adheres to them so close, that they would sooner say or do anything than their principles should be known. But though they may endeavour to smother the candle of life in their souls by the bushel* of "*fleshly fear*," the candle shall burn so bright and so powerful, that *fleshly fear* itself shall sooner or later be obliged to give way, and "their light shall shine before men." What Sampson said to the Philistines in his day, will apply, with equal propriety, to the world of carnal professors in all ages, "if ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle." If the Philistines had not been along with Samson's wife, they would not have understood his riddle, for it was to his wife he told the secret. And what was this riddle? "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." Yes, this is the riddle that our spiritual Samson, the Lord Jesus Christ, reveals to his wife the Church; the riddle which will be an everlasting task to Arminians, Infidels, and Carnal men: but the riddle which will cause God's Church to shout throughout eternity. A great writer† has somewhere such an observation as this, "Satan nei-

* Matt. v. 15.

† I think Toplady.

ther stole nor forced his way into paradise." He was by Christ observed, watched, and well known in his hellish plot to ruin our first parents, and through his permission Satan entered Eden: then the roaring lion, in the shape of a serpent, eat up all their innocency, perfection, and obedience; and by his mighty force overcame our earthly head. But this was the way, the only way, the high way, by which "the body of Christ" should become meat for his redeemed, and the way by which should be opened up the honey of eternal, electing, and sovereign love, which determined upon owning them as sons of God, in view of the Adam fall transgression. This "sweetness," this "meat," could never have been known, had Adam remained perfect. Salvation could never have been sung, had Adam remained perfect. Christ could not have been heard of, had Adam remained perfect. Heaven could never have been anticipated, had Adam remained perfect. Grace could never have been seen, had Adam remained perfect. Mercy could never have flowed, had Adam remained perfect. We should have only had a Creature righteousness, had Adam remained perfect; but now is imputed to us Creator righteousness. We should have only had Natural holiness, had Adam remained perfect; but now a way is opened up by which we have Spiritual holiness. We should have only had an Earthly nature, had Adam remained perfect; but now we are made "partakers of the Divine nature." Who then that feels the sweetening efficacy of these things, can refrain from joining in with the apostle, "God be

thanked that ye were the servants of sin," Rom. vi. 17. Thus, as the poet sings,

" Sin for my good shall work and win,
Though 'tis not good for me to sin."

This great secret the church of God learns by passing through affliction, persecution, and reproach; but if the Religious Philistines know anything about it, they derive all their light and knowledge from Christ's wife. Thus the " ungodly borroweth and payeth not again:" they light up the lamps of their profession from the oil of life in those they despise and persecute, but when the cry is made, " Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him," there will be no borrowing then, and their lamps will be gone out; and true believers will then know the meaning of that promise, " he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

Fourthly, Christ endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, rather than not do good to his people. When he went up to the temple to teach, " some said, he is a good man; others said nay: but he deceiveth the people." When he spoke of Moses' law, the people immediately cried, " thou hast a devil." When he referred to his atoning death, by which all the law's demands were paid, saying, " I lay down my life for the sheep," the pharisees exclaimed, " He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye him?" When one was brought unto him possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, and he healed him inso-much that the blind and dumb both spake and saw, the pharisees cried out " this fellow doth

not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." When he said, "my sheep shall never perish; they took up stones to stone him." When he was arraigned at Pilate's bar, "they blindfolded him, and struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, prophecy who is it that smote thee?" "And many other things blasphemously spoke they against him," Luke xxii. 65. Yet through all this, and a vast quantity more of the same character, the Son of God passed, fixed upon the good he was determined to communicate to his people. And all the followers of Christ must expect the same sort of treatment, "for if they have called the Master of the house, Beelzebub, they cannot be very kind or courteous to them of his household." "John came neither eating nor drinking, and they said, he hath a devil." Why was this? Because he had the truth of Christ in him, which all the devil's children hate being fond of their father. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, behold a man gluttonous, and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." Why was this? He had the truth of his Father's counsels in him concerning his people's salvation; and this the serpent's seed cannot bare, because God's "secret is only with them that fear him."

Fifthly, Christ laboured night and day rather than that his people should have one thing to do in order to get to heaven. Thus it is recorded of him that "he went about doing good," Acts x. 38. and "continued all night in prayer to God," Luke vi. 12. It was at such seasons that, as Dr. Watts sweetly sings,

“ Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witness'd the fervour of his prayer.”

Every sigh the dear Redeemer heaved, every groan which issued from his heart, every miracle he wrought, every sermon he preached, and every reproach he endured, was for the purpose of saving his people freely, fully, and everlastingly. And none who “ follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,” can hope in any other work than his.

Sixthly, Christ permitted himself to be betrayed by one of his professed friends, rather than deceive his people. Judas could not have betrayed Christ had not Christ permitted him, though Christ did not infuse this sin into him, for we read, when “ Satan entered into Judas” to strengthen him in his intention to betray Christ, then it was the Prince of Life said, “ that thou doest, do quickly.” And when one of Christ's disciples drew his sword to defend his master in Gethsemane's garden, Jesus said, “ put up thy sword into its place: thinkest thou not that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?” He taught the prophet, seven hundred years before he came in the flesh, to proclaim to his church concerning himself: “ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth,” Isaiah liii. 7. And Jesus did not open his mouth against Judas the betrayer, and his band; but “ knowing all things that should come upon

him, went forth," saying to them, "this is your hour, and the power of darkness." It is your hour when your wicked determinations shall be permitted to be done, and the hour when the powers of darkness shall be permitted to triumph; and if the powers of darkness were permitted to have dominion over Christ for a season, in order that he might crush the machinations of hell, and bring glory to himself and people, by a fuller display of his eternal power and Godhead, no wonder if Jehovah does see fit at times, to permit the enemies of his people to cry for a season, "ah, ah, so would we have it;" in order that his people may be stripped of every false covering, brought out of every lying shelter, and delivered from every false refuge; and that he may make to himself "a glorious name," by "raising up the poor out of the dust, and lifting up the beggar from the dunghill," while "the bows of the mighty men are broken," and "the proud helpers do stoop under him."

Seventhly. Christ passed through all the wrath of God rather than that one of his people should be lost. He said, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:" if my people cannot every one be delivered from the awful curse of thy holy law, except I endure it, "thy will be done." And as all the flood gates of divine vengeance, which the church deserved, fell upon him, he says, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water spouts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me." Depth of guilt called for a depth of punishment; depth of rebellion called for a depth of wrath; depth of sin called for a depth of suffering: all of which fell

upon Christ; and having suffered all the law demanded on the behalf of the church he cried, "It is finished: and gave up the ghost." "It is finished, I have suffered enough, justice is satisfied, the law is magnified, my people are made free, and God is glorified." Therefore, all who know the divine power of the Holy Ghost, arm themselves with Christ's sufferings, for they would rather pass through all the harrassing temptations of the devil, than not know the depravity of their nature, and the preciousness of Christ: they would rather pass through all the miseries of this world than not know what it is to triumph in Christ: they would rather have their names cast out as evil, and be persecuted for Christ's name sake, than give up the truth of Christ: they would rather be deceived in a thousand ways by others, than deceive themselves with false hopes of heaven, or deceive others by a false appearance: they would rather be falsely suspected and shunned as dangerous, than be without the inward smile of the Father, the internal shinings of Christ, and the secret earnestness of the Spirit: they would rather mourn the hidings of God's face, groan under darkness of mind, and sigh by reason of barren feelings and little faith, than walk in the sparks of their own kindling." They would rather be called Antinomians, than take any of the glory of salvation. And they would rather be deprived of all earthly comforts, earthly ease, or earthly honours, than not know that their "treasure is in heaven," and that "having nothing," they "possess all things" in Christ. Every man or woman that makes this choice is a Christian, and knows

what Peter means when he says, "Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." But where there is no cross there is no christianity; therefore a Christian is one, who, in the manner I have now described, takes up his cross daily and follows Christ.

In the next place we will look how the Christian is armed with the righteousness of Christ. And in noticing this, I would observe, the believer is armed on the right hand with the perfection of Christ's salvation, and on the left-hand, with the effects of his salvation. The perfection of Christ's salvation consists in these two things. First, his giving such a satisfaction for sin, as that the law cannot make a second demand upon the sinner; as that holiness cannot be at war with the sinner; and as that God cannot frown upon the sinner. And, secondly, his bringing in that righteousness by which his people shall be everlastingly justified, immutably perfect, and infinitely glorious. In order to know whether the law can make a second demand upon a believer, let us enquire what right the law has to make any demand at all? Its right to make a demand upon a sinner, is by his being under it, for "what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law:" and by a sinner's breach of it, for "the law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient." Now, it is evident that a believer is free from all the law's demands; for, first, he is "not under the law but under grace." By nature he was under the law, therefore, how came he from under it? The apostle says, "we are

delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held:" dead in all its demands upon us, dead in all its requirements from us, and dead in all its denunciations against us. Why is it so dead? Because "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." This, then, is how we are virtually delivered from under the law. Then the apostle speaks of another death, saying, "ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ: that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Here the apostle refers to the killing letter of the law, revealed in the conscience, by its spirituality being opened up to view by the Holy Ghost: so that seeing we have nothing to bring of our own for the law's satisfaction, we rejoice in finding one who has stood in our law room, fulfilling its demands, obeying its mandates, and "magnifying it, making the law everlastingly honourable" on our behalf. So that the law being magnified for us, we being slain to all hopes of salvation by it, and Christ having paid all the law's demand, by becoming the "end of it" for righteousness to us who believe, it can never make a second demand upon us. But can holiness ever be at war with us? Holiness can never be at war with us if we have no sin chargeable upon us, for, says the psalmist, "the foolish shall not stand in thy sight, thou hatest all workers of iniquity:" therefore it is sin that holiness hates. Then is there any sin chargeable upon a believer in Christ? None at all: for it is written "He (Christ) was made sin for us:" not he was made

a sinner, but what is much more blessed, he was "made sin for us," so that having the same human body, and the same human soul as his people, all the sin of their persons was put to his person; thus God "laid on him the iniquity of us all," and "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree," or, as the margin renders it, "to the tree," for his Godhead was the altar, and his sufferings terminated before he expired, or he could not have said, "that he laid down his life of himself." And "removing the iniquity of his chosen land in one day:" "he hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." So that having cast all our sins into the ocean of his blood, they can never be again charged upon us.

But can God be ever angry with us who believe, on account of sin, in the same manner as he is said to be "angry with the wicked every day?" No, he never can; because his anger with the wicked every day arises from his hatred to their persons on account of sin; which proves that the wicked, here referred to, must be those whom God the Son never redeemed by his blood, and whose sins remain chargeable upon themselves. Whereas God "rests in his love," as one well satisfied with the atonement his Son has made for the sins of his elect. So that though "wrath," "anger," and "displeasure," are predicated of God, when he chastiseth his people for their sins, yet this "wrath," "anger," or "displeasure," is not against the persons of his people, for "he hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor seen perverseness in Israel," but against their sins. He therefore chastiseth them not because he is angry with them, but because

he loves them. For, says the apostle, "we have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? for they, verily, for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure," according to their own angry passions, "but he for our profit." Christ "hath put away sin:" if so, the law cannot curse us, holiness cannot be at war with us, and God cannot frown upon us: though he often chastiseth us for our follies, because he loves us, and is determined upon our profit; therefore sin is among the ALL things which shall work together for good* "to them that love God, and to the called according to his purpose."

But has Christ brought in that righteousness by which his people are rendered everlastingly justified? He has, for the apostle thus writes, "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." If, then, there is no condemnation, neither in time nor yet in eternity, there must be everlasting justification. And how is this? "The Messiah was cut off, but not for himself, and brought in everlasting righteousness," Dan. ix. And the apostle says, this "righteousness is unto all, and upon all, that believe." So that the law not only cannot curse us who believe, but must honour us; holiness not

* Do not think that this remark is calculated to encourage sin. It cannot, or God would not have left it upon record. My reasons for making it are, first, to comfort God's children who are distressed on account of the workings of sin; secondly, to shew the aboundings of grace, because the Lord overrules the wretchedness and depravity of our nature, to lead us to know the amazing worth of the Great Mediator; and thirdly, because not morality, but only a sight of Jesus' worth, and an earnest of interest therein, can raise us above the power, the guilt, the desert, or the effects of sin.

only cannot make war with us, but must approve of us; God not only cannot frown upon us, but must accept us. It does not say the believer is not accused, or that he does not condemn himself. He is accused before God, day and night, by the devil, the world accuses him, and conscience accuses him; yea, the world condemn him, and he condemns himself. But God the Father does not condemn, but honourably acquits him; God the Son does not condemn him, but casts the mantle of his righteousness over him; God the Holy Ghost does not condemn him, but justifies him through faith in Christ. Therefore the apostle gives the challenge, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" The devil accuses, the world accuses, self accuses; but who can charge sin upon the elect? that is to say, who can impute sin to another? Only God. Does he do it to his elect? No: says the apostle, "it is God that justifieth," and "he is of one mind," therefore what he has done is done for ever; then the believer is everlastingly justified. I have often admired those declarations of Christ, recorded John xvii. 3. and xix. 30. In the first Christ says, before he crosses Cedron's brook, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." What work was this? It was bringing in everlasting righteousness for his people; and on Calvary's cross he cries, "it is finished." What was finished? The removal of all his church's sins. So that when he "put sin away" on his people's behalf, there was nothing left for them to have but everlasting righteousness. Blessed thought! for thee, dear believer, for if thou canst not see thy interest in it, thou

hast been brought by the Lord to submit to it, and he who submits to the righteousness of Christ is one who knows Christ in the teachings of his Spirit, if not in the assurance of faith. Therefore Christ is in thee the hope of glory, and all is well for thee in time and to eternity. Has Christ brought in a righteousness by which his people shall be immutably perfect? He has, for, saith the apostle, "ye are complete in him:" and "Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Has Christ brought in a righteousness by which his people shall be infinitely glorious? He has, for "we shall see him as he is, and be like him." Now we read that "Christ is exalted far above all principalities and powers." If, then, we are to be like him, we must have the same exaltation; therefore we shall be above angels, and must be like Christ, infinitely glorious. Then Christ's salvation is a perfect salvation, and faith realizing interest in this, it becomes the believer's right-hand armour, which secures him from the curses of the law, the vengeance of justice, and the terrors of death. While love to the brethren from love to Christ, feeling for them amidst their weaknesses and infirmities, and assisting them when it is in his power, living out of the world from a vital interest in Christ, a fighting with sin by an holy power derived from Christ, resisting the tempter by an humble confidence in Christ, and a readiness to every good word and work, so far as he judges it will contribute to the glory of Christ from a feeling oneness with Christ—becomes the Christian's left-hand armour; by which he condemns the

world, shuns the devil, and proves his conformity to Christ.

Lastly, we have to observe how the believer is armed with the light of Christ. In Christ he beholds the harmony of Jehovah's attributes, and the perfections of his nature, for, in his atoning death, "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." In Christ he beholds the blood that washes him, the righteousness that clothes him, and the hope that secures him. In Christ he beholds the counsels of heaven concerning his present peace and everlasting bliss. In Christ he beholds the fulness that supplies his needs, and the perfection that hides his faults. In Christ he beholds the mercy that heals him, the grace that governs him, and the love that melts his heart. In Christ he beholds the springs of his delight, the resting place of his affections, and the object of his faith. In Christ he beholds the Father's smile, his only home, and best inheritance. In Christ he finds breadth enough to keep him from falling out of God's love, length enough to keep him from wandering from God's eye, depth enough to keep him from despairing of God's bounty, and height enough to sing for ever of his grace. In Christ he beholds certainty without contingencies, freeness without conditions, and immutability without a change. In Christ he beholds the law in all its requirements, justice in all its demands, and salvation in all its fulness. In Christ he beholds the nourishing virtue of the vine, the beauties of the rose, and the loveliness of the lily. While Mount Lebanon's majesty, Mount Carmel's fruitfulness, and Bashan's fatness, contri-

bute but faintly to point out the stability of gospel promises, the richness of gospel truths, and the glory of gospel doctrines as seen in him; so the glorious robes, the mitre, and the breast-plate of Aaron, feebly unfold the Glory of his Godhead, the Royalty of his Person, and the Safety of his People engraven on his heart.

Thus in Christ, the believer beholds glory enough to ravish his eyes for ever, blessedness enough to fill his soul for ever, and life enough to make him live for ever; and God having so shined into his heart, as to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, he has the truth of Christ bound round his mind, hope in Christ for an helmet upon his head, faith upon Christ for a shield to ward off the devil's fiery darts, love to Christ for a breast-plate upon his heart, the word of Christ as a sword in his hand with which he fights, the two shoes of God the Father's *will*, and God the Spirit's *shall*, fixed upon his feet by which he walks to Christ, in Christ, and with Christ; and the artillery of prayer pouring from his soul, the devil may roar, the world may oppose, and the flesh may resist, but he can shout victory in the midst of tribulation; and when his fighting days are over, he will "possess within the vail a life of joy and peace."

CHAPTER V.

Observations upon a few Texts which appear to favour Arminianism.

“To the law and to the testimony.”—Isaiah viii. 20.

As “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,” “that the man of God may be perfect,” (fully established in the truth) “and thoroughly furnished unto all good works,” it becomes God’s people not to twist or rend the sacred word from its true meaning; nor to endeavour to make it bend to any system, rather than every system should bend to it. There are some blessed portions which clearly set forth the truths of eternal, unconditional, and irreversible election; full, discriminating, and complete redemption; irresistible, sovereign, and effectual calling; free, immutable, and everlasting justification; and certain, constant, and final perseverance to heaven; while some equally blessed portions appear, at first sight, to favour opposite sentiments, but which, upon examination, really do not. For the sake, therefore, of those who may be perplexed thereupon, I will notice the following.

I Cor. viii. 11. “Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died.”

It appears, from the whole of the chapter whence this verse is taken, that though the persons to whom the apostle wrote at Corinth, were

called by grace, yet so little was the knowledge some possessed of divine things, that they had not learnt that "an idol is nothing in the world;" and from being constantly among those who worshipped idols, as well as from deeply-rooted prejudice, instead of eating the meat offered to idols as not effected by this superstition, they eat it with much awe and dread, and so wounded their weak consciences. The apostle, however, refers to some who possessed knowledge enough to see the folly of idols and idolaters, and looked upon the meat offered to idols as no more than common food, and knew that eating the same made them "neither better nor worse." Therefore he exhorts the stronger brother not to wound the feelings of the weaker, by too bold an use of the liberty produced by this knowledge; for, says he, "if any man," whose conscience is weak and knowledge small, "see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple," whatever contempt may be felt by such an one for an idol, yet he offends his weaker brother, or the brother's weak conscience is wounded; therefore the weaker brother loses those comforts, joys, and tranquillity of mind, he would otherwise have had; and so his peace and communion with the stronger brother perish. As to the weaker brother's life in and from Christ perishing, this is impossible, for says Christ, "my sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands; my Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none can pluck them out of my Father's hands." And it would be well for the Lord's people at all times to bear in mind the apostle's words, "ye that are strong ought to

bear the infirmities of the weak ;” not only by spiritual communion, but by a cautious walk ; for frequently babes in grace are staggered and distressed by the life of their elder brethren, when, at the same time, their elder brethren may not altogether be living in sin. The apostle in another place exhorts believers to abstain from “ foolish talking and jesting,” as being inconvenient, Eph. v. 4. ; and in like manner in this place he says, seeing the distressing effects of eating meat in the manner referred to, “ If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth.”

2 Peter ii. 1. “ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you ; who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.” Here the apostle does not mean that the false teachers, of whom he speaks, were bought by the precious blood of Christ ; but that ancient Israel was bought by the Lord, and ancient Israel being bought, the false prophets who were among them were bought too. Israel was bought in a fourfold sense ; first, by the destruction of Pharoah and his host ; thus God gave the lives of the Egyptians for the life of his own people, and so the Psalmist sings, “ he redeemed them from the hand of the enemy ; and the waters covered their enemies,” Psalm cvi. 10, 11. Secondly, by the destruction of the Canaanitish nations, for “ there was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gideon : all other they took in