

THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION, STATED AND DEFENDED

(Sermon 2)

In Two Sermons, preached at a Lecture in Lime-Street.

[Ac 26:8](#) Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

Having, in my former discourse, proved both the credibility and certainty of the resurrection of the dead, I shall now proceed, III. To inquire **who they are**, and **what that is**, which shall be raised. This head of inquiry consists of two parts, and regards both the persons who, and what of those persons it is, which shall be the subject of the resurrection; and in this order I shall consider it. 1st. I shall inquire **who** they are which shall be raised from the dead. I shall not take notice of the Mahometan notion, that angels and brutes shall rise, since the former die not, and therefore cannot be said to be raised from the dead; and the spirit of the latter goeth downward to the earth, never to return more. Only men shall rise from the dead, but not all of them; for though "it is appointed unto men once to die," yet not unto all men: all men shall not die; some will be alive, and others dead, at the appearing of Christ to judge the world; when they that are alive shall, indeed, be changed from a state of mortality, to a state of immortality, but cannot be said to rise from the dead, because they die not. But then all the dead shall be raised; all that are in their graves shall come forth, whether these graves be in the earth or sea, and whether the persons be righteous or wicked. This was the generally received opinion of the Jews of old; but since, many of their greatest masters have departed from it, as in [Isa 26:14](#); [38:18](#); [Da 12:2](#), who not only exclude the Gentiles in general, but all wicked and ungodly persons whatever from having any part in the resurrection. In this they have been followed by the Socinians, though they care not to speak out their minds fully; and the Remonstrants have shown a very good liking of the same notion. I

shall a little consider this, seeing the greater part of the testimonies and arguments produced in my former discourse, chiefly relate to the resurrection of the just.

That the wicked shall rise, as well as the righteous, may be proved, 1. From express **texts of Scripture**. The prophet Daniel says, "That some of them who sleep in the dust of the earth [i.e. who are dead,] shall awake, [i.e. rise again,] to shame and everlasting contempt," [Da 12:2](#); who must be the wicked, since it will never be the case of the righteous, who will awake, or rise, to everlasting life. Our Lord Jesus Christ assures us, that "they that have done evil, shall come forth to the resurrection of damnation," [Joh 5:29](#), in which words he does at once describe the character of the wicked, asserts their resurrection, and fixes the end of it. The apostle Paul gives a full testimony to this truth, when he affirms, "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust," [Ac 24:15](#). 2. This doctrine may be evinced from the **justice** of God, which requires, that they who have sinned in the body, should be also punished in the body. The body is the seat of sin, as well as the soul, nor is any part free from it: if the tongue, which is but "a little member, is a world of iniquity," [Jas 3:5-6](#), as the apostle James says it is, what a world of iniquity must be in the whole body? And, indeed, there are but few sins but what are committed in or by the body. It may be considered not only as necessary to sin, but as a partner with the soul in sinning, and as an instrument by which it is committed; and, in either respect, is deserving of punishment. Now it is certain, that in this life the wicked do not receive in their bodies the full reward of punishment, since they have not greater afflictions than the righteous; nay, it is observed of them, that "they are not in trouble, as other men, neither are they plagued like other men," [Ps 73:5](#), wherefore it seems necessary, from the justice of God, that the bodies of the wicked should be raised, that they, with their souls, may receive the full and just recompense of reward. 3. That the wicked shall rise from the dead, may be concluded from the **general judgment**, when "the dead, small and great, shall stand before God, and be judged according to their works," [Re 20:12,15](#), when

"whosoever is not found written in the book of life, shall be cast into the lake of fire;" which can be understood of no other than the wicked; and if all men must "appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," [2Co 5:10](#), then must the wicked appear, that they may receive according to the bad things which they have done in their bodies; in order to which appearance before the judgment-seat, and to the reception of their evil things, there must be a resurrection of them from the dead. 4. The account which the Scriptures give of the **punishments** and **torments** of the wicked, and also the **effects** thereof, manifestly supposes a resurrection of their bodies: how will every eye see Christ when he appears, and all the kindreds of the earth wail because of him? why is the place of torment signified by a furnace and lake of fire, and by outer darkness, where will be weeping and gnashing of teeth? wherefore do the Scriptures speak of being cast into hell fire, with two eyes, or two hands, or two feet, if there will be no resurrection of the bodies of the wicked? If it should be said, that these expressions are either metaphorical or proverbial, there must be something literally true, to which they refer, and which is the foundation of them: besides, our Lord expressly exhorts his disciples to "fear him, which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," [Mt 10:28](#). 5. This notion, that the wicked rise not, must have a tendency to licentiousness, and open a door to all manner of sin, and take off all restraints from wicked persons, and embolden them in their vicious course of life; for what the apostle says of the resurrection in general, may be said of this, "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," [1Co 15:32](#). But from these several hints, it may be strongly concluded, that there will be a resurrection of the wicked, as well as of the righteous.

Indeed, there will be a difference between the resurrection of the just, and the resurrection of the unjust, in many respects: there will be a difference in the time of the one and the other; the dead in Christ shall rise first; "the upright shall have the dominion over the wicked in the morning of the resurrection;" wherefore "blessed and holy is

he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." (Re 20:6) And as they shall not rise at the same time, so neither altogether by the same means: they shall, indeed, be both raised by Christ; for "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," Joh 5:28-29. The saints will be raised by virtue of their union to Christ; "because he lives, they shall live also;" but the wicked will be raised merely by the power of Christ, in order to appear before him, and be judged by him, who is Lord of all. Moreover, though the bodies of the wicked will be raised immortal, and in such a state as to continue under perpetual punishment, yet they will not be free from sin, nor clothed with glory; whereas the bodies of the saints will not only be raised immortal and incorruptible, but powerful, spiritual, and glorious; yea, will be fashioned like to Christ's glorious body. In fine, the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked will differ in their end; "the righteous will rise to everlasting life, the wicked to everlasting shame and contempt." Hence the resurrection of the one is called "the resurrection of life;" and the resurrection of the other, "the resurrection of damnation." But now let us attend to the arguments and objections advanced against the resurrection of the wicked, which are taken partly from Scripture, and partly from reason. (1.) From some passages of Scripture; and the first that is objected is, Ps 1:5: "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." From hence some Jewish writers have concluded, that there will be no resurrection of the wicked, their souls perishing with their bodies at death. This notion may seem to be favoured by the versions of the Septuagint and Vulgate, with some others, who read the words thus: "Therefore the ungodly shall not rise again in judgment." But supposing, and not granting, that these versions may be agreeable to the Hebrew text, it will not follow, from hence, that the wicked shall not rise again; for it is not said absolutely, that "they shall not rise again," but that "they shall not rise again in Judgment;" that is, so as to appear in the congregation of the righteous at the day of judgment, when the righteous and the wicked will be separated, the one placed

at Christ's right hand, and the other at his left; they will not rise when the righteous do; for "the dead in Christ shall rise first:" the wicked, though they will rise again, yet not in the first resurrection, or in the resurrection of life, but in the resurrection of damnation. Moreover, the word here used does not intend the **resurrection of the wicked**, but their standing before God in a **judicial** sense when raised; and the meaning is, that they will not be able to stand, when the righteous Judge appears, with any degree of confidence, so as not to be ashamed, as the righteous will; but, being filled with confusion and horror of mind, will not be able to lift up their heads, or open their mouths, to justify themselves, or vindicate their cause, and so consequently must fall, and not stand in judgment.

Another scripture, which may seem to countenance this notion, that the wicked shall not rise from the dead, is [Isa 26:14](#): "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise." But these words, as I have observed in my former discourse, are either to be understood of the people of Israel, and are expressive of the prophet's complaint of their present state, that they were dead, and of his distrust of their future resurrection, to which he has an answer returned in [Isa 26:19](#): "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise;" or they are to be understood of those wicked lords, who had formerly had the dominion over these people, but were now dead, and should not live again on this earth, or rise again to tyrannize over them: and, if we consider the words in either sense, they cannot support an argument against the resurrection of the wicked.

The words of the prophet Daniel, "And many of them who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," [Da 12:2](#), though they are a plain and full proof of the resurrection of the wicked, as well as of the righteous, yet are made use of by some Jewish writers against it. It is to be observed, that the prophet does not say that **all** of them, but many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; yea, it is said, that these many design only a **few**, and these the righteous, among the children of Israel. In answer to which, let it be observed,

that the word **many** may be understood universally of all that sleep in the dust of the earth; in which sense the word is used in **Ps 97:1**: "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof;" in the Hebrew text it is, let **many isles**, i.e., let all the isles be glad thereof. Or it may be considered in a comparative sense thus: they that sleep in the dust of the earth, and shall awake, are many in comparison of those few who will be alive and remain, when the dead are to be raised; for there will be some, though but a few, when compared with others, who shall not die, but be changed: or rather the words may be taken distributively after this manner; of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, many shall awake to everlasting life, and many to everlasting shame and contempt; which is just such a division of them, who are to be raised from the dead, as is given by our Lord, when he says, "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," **Joh 5:28-29**. **Many** can never design a **few** only, as it must, if only the Israelites, who were the fewest of all people, and the righteous among them, are the subjects of the resurrection: yea, if the righteous only of all nations should be raised, they are but a few in comparison of others. Besides, the prophet says, that "some shall awake to everlasting shame," which cannot be said of the righteous, but must design the wicked: therefore this prophecy is so far from being an argument against it, that it furnishes us with a very considerable one for the resurrection of the wicked.

There are some other passages of Scripture, besides these, which are made use of by another set of men against this truth; as **Ec 7:1**: "A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth." Now, say they, if the wicked rise again, the day of their death must be worse than the day of their birth. To which it may be answered, that the wise man is not speaking of the wicked or reprobate, of whom it may be said, in some sense, that it would have been better if they had never been born, or had died immediately, rather than have lived to aggravate their condemnation

by repeated iniquities, and with whom it certainly will be much worse after death, than now it is. The words respect the righteous, who are blessed in their death; for they die in the Lord, and rest from their labours, are free from sin and sorrow of every kind, and are with Christ, which is far better than to come into and be in this troublesome world.

Likewise the words of the apostle Paul, in [1Th 4:16](#) "And the dead in Christ shall rise first," are urged against the resurrection of the wicked; from whence it is observed, that those who rise again, are such who are "dead in Christ," and that these only are believers; and therefore the wicked shall not rise. To which it may be replied, that the apostle is indeed speaking of the resurrection of the saints, and not of the wicked, though not to the exclusion of their resurrection. It is certain that they are only believers who are dead in Christ; but then it is neither here, nor elsewhere said, that only believers, or that only such who die in Christ, shall rise; yea, besides, the apostle says, "that the dead in Christ shall rise first," which supposes that the wicked shall rise afterwards; for it would be an impropriety to say, that the dead in Christ shall rise first, if those who are not dead in Christ do not rise afterwards; a first resurrection supposes a second. I shall now proceed to consider the arguments and objections formed against the resurrection of the wicked, which are taken, (2.) From **reason**. It is said that God is very merciful, and therefore if he will not eternally save the wicked, yet it is not reasonable to suppose that he will raise them from the dead merely to torment them; it will be sufficient that they do not enjoy the happiness of the saints in heaven. To which I answer it is true, that God is very merciful, yet "he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." Though mercy is natural and essential to him, yet the blessed fruits and effects of it, as enjoyed by his creatures, are limited by, and dependent upon his sovereign will and pleasure; there are some of his creatures, of whom it is said, "He that made them will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them will show them no favour," [Isa 27:11](#). Besides, it ought to be observed, that God is a righteous God, as well as merciful, and that one perfection of his is not to be set against

another; though he is merciful, and delights in mercy, yet he is also "the Judge of all the earth, who will do right." I have before proved, that it is necessary, from the justice of God, that the bodies of the wicked should be raised, not merely to be tormented, but that God may glorify his righteousness in their just punishment.

It is also argued, that Christ is the meritorious cause of the resurrection; and therefore the wicked, or reprobate, shall not rise again, because "Christ has merited nothing for them."

To which I reply, the resurrection may be distinguished, as it is by Christ, into a resurrection of life, and a resurrection of damnation; that Christ is the meritorious cause of the former, but not of the latter. Christ is not only the exemplar, but the efficient and meritorious cause of the saints' resurrection; "he is the first-fruits of them that sleep; every one rises in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." They that are Christ's, rise by virtue of their union to him, and through the power of his resurrection; not so the wicked; they shall, indeed, be raised by Christ, but not by virtue of his death and resurrection, or through any merit of his, but by his almighty power; their resurrection will not be the effect of his merit, as Mediator, but of his divine power, as Lord of the dead and living.

It is further urged, that the wicked die an eternal death, and therefore do not rise from the dead; for, say they, it implies a contradiction to say that they die an eternal death, and yet are raised from the dead. To which it may be answered, that there is a twofold death, a temporal and an eternal one. Temporal death is a separation of the soul from the body, and is what may be called the first death. Eternal death is a separation of body and soul from God, and a casting of both into hell, which is what the Scripture calls the second death.

Now, this second or eternal death is consistent with the resurrection of the body; nay, the resurrection of the body is requisite unto it. If it should be said, as it is, that corporeal death is the punishment of sin, that punishment is not taken away in the wicked, and therefore corporeal death perpetually continues, and consequently there is no resurrection of the wicked from the dead. I answer, it is true that

corporeal death is one part of the punishment of sin, was at first threatened to it by God, and is inflicted on the wicked, as the just wages of it. It is true also that the punishment of sin is perpetual, and is not removed, or taken away from the wicked; nor is it by the resurrection of the wicked, for their bodies will be raised by the power of God, in such a state and condition, as to bear eternal punishment, which shall be inflicted upon them, and which they shall endure both in soul and body.

It is scarcely worthy of notice what is objected by some against an universal resurrection, that the earth will not be sufficient to contain all. This objection may be startling to such as suppose that all men, righteous and wicked, when raised, will be gathered together into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and be there judged; for if the whole earth cannot contain them, how should that valley? If it could be thought that there is any difficulty in the objection, it might be, in some measure, removed, by observing, that whereas "the dead in Christ shall rise first, they, with them that will be found alive, will be caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and shall be for ever with him;" and, it is to be hoped, it may be allowed there will be room enough for them. From the whole, notwithstanding all these objections, it may be strongly concluded, that there will be a general resurrection of all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, of all the wicked, and of all the righteous, in all nations. I now proceed,

2dly. To inquire what that *is* of man which shall be raised from the dead. Man consists of soul and body; it is not the soul, but the body, which is raised: not the soul, for the soul dies not, and therefore cannot be said to be raised from the dead; nor does it sleep with the body in the grave, and therefore needs no awakening, nor will it be awakened when the body is.

[1.] It *dies* not, and therefore cannot be said to rise from the dead. There were some Christians in Arabia who held that the soul died with the body, and, at the resurrection, revived and returned to its own body; but it is an immaterial and immortal substance, which never dies. I do not propose to give you an elaborate discourse on

this subject, and go through the argument of the soul's immortality; this would require greater abilities than I am master of, and a larger compass than is allowed me for my subject. I shall just mention two or three things upon this head, in proof of the soul's immortality; which may be taken,

1. From the *nature* of the soul itself. It is of the same nature with angels, who are immaterial and incorporeal spirits, and so not subject to corruption and death; they die not: yea, the soul of man has a likeness to God; it bears a resemblance to the divine nature.

The image of God in man chiefly and principally consists in the soul; it is of God's immediate creation; it comes from him and is the very breath of him. If we consider its several powers and faculties, especially the understanding and will, we may well conclude it to be an immortal and never-dying substance. The mind or understanding not only apprehends and perceives things corporeal, temporal, and corruptible, but also such things as are immaterial, incorporeal, eternal, and incorruptible; such as angels, yea, God himself, which it could not do, was it not itself an immaterial, incorporeal, and immortal substance.

It is capable of considering an endless eternity, though it is easy to observe the difference there is in the mind or understanding of man, with respect to that eternity, which preceded the creation of the world, and that which is to come; when it considers the former, it is quickly overwhelmed, it flutters and hangs its wing, and is obliged to descend: but when it fixes its thoughts upon the latter, how readily does it apprehend how it shall proceed without end; and with what pleasure does it roll over the millions of ages in it! The reason of this difference is, because it is not from eternity, and has a beginning, but will continue to eternity, and have no end? And, besides that large stock of knowledge of various things, which men of the greatest understandings are furnished with, there is a natural and continual desire of knowing more, which will never be satisfied in this life; and this was one of the chief arguments Socrates used when in prison, to prove to his scholars the immortality of the soul, for this desire is not implanted in vain: the soul therefore must

remain after death, when it will arrive to a more perfect knowledge of things. The will has for its object universal good, and especially God, who is the chief good, which it desires to enjoy for ever: its actions are free, and cannot be forced by any creature; no creature has a power over it, to force it or destroy it; it acts independently of the body, in willing and nilling, choosing and refusing; it uses no corporeal organ: yea, when the body is sick and infirm, and ready to die, the will is then active and vigorous, and shows itself to be so, either by a willingness or unwillingness to die; nay, generally speaking, the more severe affliction is, and the nearer the approach of death, the more active is the will to be freed from agonies and pains, either by a restoration to health, or by a removal by death; which shows that the soul does not sicken and grow languid, as the body does, nor dies with it.

The soul is a pure unmixed and simple substance: it is not composed of matter and form; nor is it a material form, educed out of the power of matter, as the souls of brutes, but is altogether spiritual and immaterial; it is not a body made up of the four elements, fire, water, earth, and air, which is capable of being resolved into them again, as our bodies are; it has nothing contrary to itself, which can be destructive of it; it is neither hot nor cold, moist or dry, hard or tender: it is not as an accident in a subject, which, when the subject is destroyed, is destroyed with it; if it has any subject on which it depends, it must be the body; but it is so far from being dependent on the body, and perishing with it, that, on the contrary, when the soul departs, the body perishes. The soul has no other cause of its being but God; on him it depends, and by him it is preserved. He indeed could, if he would, annihilate, or reduce it to nothing; but, since it is evident he will not, we may conclude it is immortal, and will never die. 2. The immortality of the soul may be proved from the *law of nature*, the religion of mankind, the consciousness of sinful actions, and the fears and terrors of mind arising from thence, and also from the justice of God. "The consent of all nations," Cicero says, "is to be reckoned the law of nature;" and according to him, it is "the agreement of all nations, that the soul remains after death,

and is immortal." This, in general, may be true, and deserves notice, and is no inconsiderable proof of the soul's immortality; but it must be owned, that there are many exceptions to it: some, even of the philosophers denied it, and others of them, who gave into it, spoke very doubtfully and confusedly of it, and delivered their sentiments about it, to use the words of Minutius Felix, *corrupta et dimidiata fide*, with a corrupt and divided faith, as though they did but half believe it.

The immortality of the soul, is no doubt, discoverable by the light of nature, and was originally the belief of men; but as this light became dim by sin, and as men departed from the true religion, and went further off from the professors of it, so they became vainer in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, and lost not only the knowledge of this, but many other truths. Thales the Milesian is said to be the first who taught it; though others say, that Pherecydes the Scyrian was the first who asserted it. Some ascribe it to the Chaldeans and Indian Magi, and others to the Egyptians, as the first authors of it, who, perhaps, received it from the posterity of Abraham the Chaldean, who dwelt among them. However, it is certain, that there is in man a natural desire after immortality, which is not in any but immortal creatures; as it is also natural to him to be religious, hence some have chosen rather to define man a religious than a rational animal: all nations profess some religion, and keep up some kind of religious worship; the most blind and ignorant, barbarous and savage, are not without it. Now, to what purpose is their religion? and why do they worship a deity, if there is no future state? If the soul remains not after death, but at death perishes with the body, they need not be solicitous about the worship of God, and the performance of religious exercises, but say, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die;" nor to be diligent in the exercise of virtue, or be concerned at the commission of sin. But, on the other hand, it is evident that there is a consciousness of sin in men, or there is in men a "conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing, one another." There are dreadful horrors, terrors, and stings of con-science, which wicked

men are, at times, attended with; they are seized with such dread and trembling, with such panic fears, they cannot get rid of.

If these, as some say, were the *effects of education*, it is strange that they should be so general and extensive as they are, and more strange that none have been able to shake them off entirely; and stranger still, that those who have run the greatest lengths in infidelity and atheism, should not be able to free themselves from them. Hobbes, that bold advocate for infidelity, who endeavoured to harden himself and others, in the disbelief of a future state, would be very uneasy, if, at any time, he was alone in the dark. These things not only show that there is a divine Being, to whom men are accountable for their actions, but that there is a future state after death, in which men shall live, either in happiness or in misery. And, indeed, this is necessary from the justice of God, who is the Judge of all the earth, and will do right, in regarding the good, and punishing the wicked. It is easy to observe, that in this life, good men are afflicted, and the wicked prosper: there are innumerable instances of this kind; the veracity, justice, and faithfulness of God are not so manifestly seen in bestowing favours and blessings upon good men, according to his promises, and in punishing wicked men, according to his threatenings; it seems reasonable then to suppose, that the souls of men are immortal, that their bodies shall be raised from the dead, and that there will be a future state, in which good men shall be happy, and wicked men miserable. 3. The soul's immortality may be proved from the *Scriptures* which expressly declare that the body may be killed, the soul cannot; [Mt 10:28](#); [Ec 12:7](#); and that when "the dust shall return to the earth, as it was, the Spirit shall return to God that gave it." It may be concluded, from all those scriptures, [Isa 55:3](#); [Mt 22:32](#); [Joh 6:40,47](#), which speak of an everlasting covenant which God has made with his people, "for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" and from all the promises of everlasting life, which he has made unto them; as also from the account it gives of the eager desires of the saints after future happiness, [Php 1:23](#); [2Co 5:6-8](#), and of their assurance of enjoying it upon their dissolution, as well as from their particular

commendation of their souls, [Ps 49:15](#); [Ac 7:59](#); [Lu 23:46](#), or spirits, into the hands of God at death, recorded in these writings. And, to add no more, we may be fully satisfied, by the sacred oracles, [Lu 16:22-23](#); [Re 6:9](#); [1Pe 3:19](#), that the souls of men, immediately upon the dissolution of their bodies, enter upon a state either of happiness or misery; all which proves the permanency of the soul after death, its separate existence, its future state or condition, either of pleasure or pain. From the whole it follows, that if the soul dies not, it cannot be said to be raised from the dead, or be the subject of the resurrection.

[2.] The soul *sleeps* not with the body until the resurrection, and therefore needs no awakening, and cannot be said to be raised or awakened when the body is. The Socinians, and some of the Arminians say, that the soul, after death, is in a deep sleep, is insensible of happiness or misery, and destitute of all sense and operation. For the confutation of which sleepy notion, let the following things be considered: 1. That sleep belongs to the *body*, and not to the soul. Sleep is a binding up of the external senses, or a cessation of them from operation, the vapors filling the nerves and sensorii meatus; and so hindering the influx of the animal spirits. The immediate cause of it is thought to be the rest or immoveableness of the animal spirits in the ventricles of the brain: but what is all this to the soul, which is an immaterial and incorporeal substance, and has none of these things, as nerves, animal spirits, sensorii meatus, or ventricles of the brain? therefore sleep cannot belong to it, it has no place in it, nor can it be predicated of it. 2. When the body is asleep, the *soul* is *awake* and *active*, as is evident in abundance of instances from dreams and visions of the night: when deep sleep falleth upon man, the soul understands and perceives, devises and contrives, reasons and discourses, chooses and refuses, grieves and rejoices, hopes and fears, loves and hates, and the like. Of like nature are ecstasies and raptures, when the body lies, as it were, dead, senseless, and void of motion: such was the apostle's case, when he says, "He knew not whether he was in the body, or out of the body," [2Co 12:4-5](#), and yet his soul was capable

of receiving divine things, of seeing such sights, and hearing such words, which was neither lawful nor possible for him to express.

3. The soul being freed from the body, must be more active than when in it, especially as it is corrupted with sin, whereby it becomes a clog and an incumbrance to it, and a weight about it, so that it cannot, as it would, perform spiritual duties; "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak:" but now, when it is freed from the body, and joined to the spirits of just men made perfect, it must be more capable of serving God with spiritual joy and pleasure. 4. The soul separate from the body is most like to the angels, and its state, condition, and employment, much resemble theirs; now, nothing is more foreign to angels than sleep and inactivity, who always behold the face of God, stand ready to do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word; and no sooner do they receive orders from him, but they do his pleasure; they are continually before the throne of God, praising his name, celebrating the divine perfections, and "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." 5. If the souls of believers were, after death, to remain in a state of insensibility and inactivity, then the case of *departed saints* would be much worse than that of the living; for though the saints are now disturbed with a wicked and unbelieving heart, afflicted with Satan's temptations, and exercised with a variety of sorrows, yet at times they have communion with God through Christ, the discoveries of his love to their souls, the light of his countenance, and the comfort of his Spirit; they have the word and ordinances to refresh and support them, and are employed in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; all which is both edifying and delightful to them, and which saints departed are deprived of, if this is their case, that their souls sleep with their bodies until the resurrection. If this be true, it would have been much better for the apostle Paul, and I am sure, more to the advantage of the churches of Christ, if he had continued upon earth to this day, than to be sleeping in his grave, senseless and inactive. Certainly this great man knew nothing of this when he said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain: but if I live in the

flesh, this is the fruit of my labour; yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless, to abide in the flesh, is more needful for you," [Php 1:21-24](#). Had the apostle known that he must have remained in a state of inactivity and uselessness, deprived of the communion of Christ and his church, it would have been no difficulty with him to determine which was most eligible, to live or die; nor can it be imagined, that the desires of any of the saints would be so strong after a dissolution, as they sometimes are, when they say, we are "willing rather to be absent from the body," if they did not believe that they should be immediately "present with the Lord," [2Co 5:8](#). This notion, then, makes the condition of saints departed worse than that of the living, whereas the wise man says, "I praised the dead, which are already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive," [Ec 4:2](#): the reason is, because "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them," [Re 14:13](#). As soon as dead, they enter upon a state of happiness and joy, and are employed in praising God, and singing the Lamb's new song. 6. This notion is *contrary* to many places of Scripture, [Ec 12:7](#); [2Co 5:1,8](#) which assure us, that the soul after death returns to God that gave it, has a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, into which it is received, when dislodged from the earthly house of its tabernacle, where it is present with the Lord, enjoying uninterrupted communion with him, "in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore." This was what Christ promised the thief upon the cross, when he said to him, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise," [Lu 23:43](#), which would not have been true, if his soul slept with his body until the resurrection. The apostle John says, that he "saw under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held," [Re 6:9-10](#), and we may be assured, that these souls were not asleep; for of them he says, "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

The advocates for soul-sleeping, make use of several passages of Scripture to support their opinion; particularly such as speak of persons sleeping when they die, of which there are many instances, as [2Sa 7:12](#); [1Ki 1:21](#); [Job 7:21](#); [Da 12:2](#); [1Co 15:18](#); [1Th 4:14](#); [Joh 11:11-12](#); [1Co 15:51](#). This is a way of speaking which was much used in the eastern countries, and is expressive of the death of the body and its lying in the grave, because sleep is the image of death; so to sleep with the fathers, is to die as they did, and be buried where they were; and to sleep in the dust, or in the dust of the earth, or in the grave, is to die, be buried, and lie there, which can be understood of the body only, and not the soul. When we read of any who fell asleep in Christ, or that sleep in Jesus, the meaning is, that they died in the Lord.

When Christ said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," he meant that he was dead; and when the apostle Paul says, "We shall not all sleep," he designs nothing else than that we shall not all die, for those who are alive at Christ's coming, will be changed. If this mode of expression, and the scriptural instances of it, prove any thing in this controversy, they prove too much; for if they prove that the soul sleeps with the body, they prove that the soul dies with it, since by sleep is meant no other than death.

Again, they urge all those scriptures in favour of their notion, as [Mt 13:40-41,49-50](#); [25:46](#); [Lu 14:14](#); [2Ti 4:8](#), which represent the happiness of the saints, and the misery of the wicked, as not taking place until the last day, the end of the world, the resurrection of the just, and the day of judgment, when the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous unto life eternal; and therefore, during that time, their souls must be asleep.

To which it may be replied, that there is a twofold state of the righteous and the wicked, after death, respecting their happiness and misery; the one is inchoate (in an early stage), or but begun; the other is full, consummate and perfect. Now, it is of the latter that these scriptures speak, but not of the former; and it is allowed that the righteous will not be in the full possession of glory until the last day,

when their bodies will be raised and united to their souls, and both together enter into the full joy of their Lord; nor will the wicked receive the full measure of their punishment until the judgment is over, when both soul and body shalt be cast into hell. But then immediately upon death they both enter on a state of happiness or misery; the righteous, as soon as they are absent from the body, are present with the Lord; and the wicked are no sooner dead, but in hell they lift up their eyes.

Again, they endeavour to improve all those scriptures to their advantage, as [Ps 30:9](#); [88:10-12](#); [115:17-18](#); [Isa 38:18](#), which describe men, after death, as incapable of praising God; such as these, "What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? Shall it declare thy truth? Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah. Shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence; for the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee. They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth." From which it is inferred, that if the souls of the saints, after death, are not employed in praising God, they must be asleep, or be destitute of sense and operation; for what work else can they be employed in? To this it may be answered, that though the saints, whilst their bodies are in their graves, and before the resurrection, do not, and cannot praise God in and with their bodies, of which only these scriptures can be supposed to speak; since nothing but the body goes down into the pit, or is laid in the grave, yet their souls may and do praise God, in like manner as the angels do; with whom, in the book of the Revelation, they are sometimes joined and represented as with them, "glorifying God, praising his name, singing hallelujahs, and ascribing salvation to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever," [Re 5:11-13](#); [7:9-12](#).

Likewise, though the saints, after death, do not praise God before men; and in the midst of his church militant, as they did when in the

land of the living, to which these passages of Scripture refer; yet they may, and do praise him before the angels, and in the midst of the church triumphant; so that, from hence, there is no reason to conclude that the souls of believers, after death, till the resurrection, are in a state of inactivity, or sleep with their bodies. Therefore, seeing the soul sleeps not, it is not what will be awakened at the resurrection, or be the subject of it. I go on, To prove that it is the *body*, which dies, that shall be raised. This is not annihilated, or reduced to nothing by death; it is not a new, airy, ethereal or celestial body, which shall be united to the soul at the resurrection, but it will be the same numerical body, which dies, that shall be raised again; all which I hope to make appear, in the following part of my discourse.

1st, The body is not *annihilated*, or reduced to nothing by death. This is asserted by Socinus and his followers, but is contrary both to reason and Scripture. The body is not made out of nothing, nor will it be reduced to nothing; it consists of the four elements, and will be resolved into the same; and though it may, after death, pass under many changes and alterations, yet the matter and substance will always remain in some form, and in some place or another. Death is a separation, or a disunion of soul and body, but not an annihilation of either; by death the whole composition is dissolved, but neither part of it is reduced to nothing; the dust, or the body, which is of the dust, returns to the earth, as it was, and the soul or spirit, to God that gave it. Death is sometimes expressed by *returning to the dust*; but to return to the dust, and be reduced to nothing, are two different things, unless it can be thought that dust is nothing. It is sometimes signified by *seeing corruption*; but corruption is one thing, and annihilation another; corruption supposes the thing in being, which is corrupted, annihilation takes away the being of it; notwithstanding corruption, the matter and substance may remain, though the form and quality may be altered, but annihilation leaves nothing. Death is sometimes figuratively expressed by *sowing seed in the earth* and its rotting and corrupting there, by *pulling down a house, and putting off a tabernacle*. Now, though the seed sown in the earth dies,

corrupts, and rots, yet it is not reduced to nothing; it neither loses its being, nor its nature, but in due time being quickened, buds and puts forth its seminal virtue; a house may be pulled down, and a tabernacle unpinned, and the several parts be separated one from another, and yet the matter and substance of them all remain and continue. If the body is annihilated by death, Christ will lose that which is a part of his purchase, and what is united to him, and the Spirit his dwelling place; for Christ has bought the bodies of his people, as well as their souls, and which, with their souls, are the members of him, and in which the Spirit of God dwells, as in his temple. Besides, if the body was reduced to nothing by death, the resurrection of the body would not be properly a resurrection, but a creation of a new body; and, indeed, this notion of annihilation is designed to make way for the introduction of that, the truth of which I shall presently examine.

As for those scriptures which speak of the dead as though they were not; as when Rachel is represented weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, "because they were not," [Jer 31:15](#), the meaning is not, that they no where existed, had no being, or were reduced to nothing, but they were not in the land of the living, existing among men, and conversing with them; seeing it is said of Enoch, that "he was not, for God took him," [Ge 5:24](#); though he was not on earth, yet he was in heaven with God; his body was not annihilated, but he was taken up, soul and body to heaven. When the apostle says: "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them," [1Co 6:13](#); he does not design a destruction of the substance of the body, or of any part of it, as the belly; but respects the use of it, which shall be no more employed in receiving meats, to supply the natural wants of the body, though it will be necessary in the resurrection, as a constituent part of the body, and for the beauty of it. 2dly, It is not a new, *aerial*, *celestial* body, or a *spiritual* body, as to nature and substance, which shall be united to the soul at the resurrection. It is allowed that the body will be different from what it now is, as to the qualities of it, but not as to its substance, when the apostle compares the body to seed sown

in the earth, [1Co 15:37-38](#), which is not quickened, except it die and says of it, "And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain,*** it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." He does not design a substantial difference between the body, which is laid in the grave, and that which is raised, but only a difference of qualities, as is between the seed, which is sown in the earth, and the plant, which springs from it; which two differ not in their specific nature, but in some circumstances and accidents. That this is the apostle's meaning, is evident, when he says: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power, [1Co 15:42-43](#). The body of Christ is compared to a grain of wheat, "which is cast into the earth, and dies, and then springs up, and brings forth fruit," [Joh 12:24](#), and yet it was not a spiritual body, as to substance, but a body consisting of flesh and bones, even the same he had before his death, and such will the bodies of the saints be after the resurrection. The apostle, indeed, says, that the body, which is "sown a natural body," will be "raised a spiritual one" [1Co 15:44](#), but by a spiritual body he does not mean that the body will be changed into a spirit and lose its former nature and substance, but that it will now be subject and subservient to the spirit or soul: it will be employed in spiritual service, and be delighted with spiritual objects, and will not be supported in a natural way, and by natural helps and means; such as meat, drink, clothes, sleep, and the like, but will live in the manner that angels do. Hence the children of the resurrection are said to be like unto the angels. Again, when the apostle says, "That flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption," [1Co 15:50](#), he does not design the human body, simply considered, but as attended with sin and corruption, or with frailty and mortality; for flesh and blood, neither as sinful nor as mortal shall enjoy the heavenly state; therefore, in order to that, "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." If it should be a new aerial, celestial, or spiritual

body, different in substance from what the body now is, which shall be united to the soul, it would not be a resurrection, but a creation; besides it is not consistent with the justice of God, that new bodies should be created, and which having never sinned, as those must be supposed to be, which are of God's immediate creation, be united to the souls of the wicked, and be everlastingly punished with them. Nor can they be said to be truly human bodies, which are without flesh, blood, and bones; nor can they be said to be properly men, who are incorporeal; and, indeed, the same persons that have sinned, cannot be said to be *punished*, nor the same persons, who are *redeemed*, to be *glorified*, unless the same body be raised; which I shall,

***(See Greek in book), naked grain, the same with (See Hebrew in book) in T. Bab.

Sanhedrim, fol. 90, 2, where the resurrection of the just is represented by naked wheat buried in the earth, which springs up again with many clothings. It seems probable, that it was usual with the Jews to express the doctrine of the resurrection by this metaphor, since both Christ and the apostle Paul make use of it.

3dly. Endeavour to prove. Job fully expresses his faith in this doctrine, when he expresses, "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me," [Job 19:26-27](#). He believed that the same body, which should be destroyed by worms, should be raised again, in which he should see God, and behold him with the self-same eyes of his body he then had, and not with the eyes of another, or of a stranger; and this firmly believed, though his body would be destroyed by worms, and his reins be consumed within him. The apostle Paul strongly asserts this truth, [1Co 15:53-54](#), when he says, "This mortal, [this, and not another, pointing to his own mortal body,] must put on immortality, and this corruptible must put on incorruption: so when this corruption shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, death is swallowed up in

victory;" which would not be true, if another, and not the same body was raised from the dead. Again, in another place, he says, [Php 3:21](#), that Christ will "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body;" but if the same body is not raised, it will not be our vile body, but another, which will be changed, and fashioned like to Christ's body. For the further confirmation of this truth, let the following things be observed: 1. The signification of the word *resurrection*. This properly signifies a raising up of that which is fallen; the same body, which fell by death, is raised by the power of God; this is the proper sense of the word, and the just meaning of it in this article, nor can it have any other; for if the same body is not raised, which fell, but another is given, it will not be a resurrection, but a creation. 2. The resurrection of the body is expressed by such *figurative* and *metaphorical* phrases, which manifestly show that it will be the same body which will be raised that dies; as when it is expressed by the *quickenning of seed*, which is sown in the earth, and by an *awaking out of sleep*. Now, as it is the same seed that is sown in the earth, and dies, that springs up, and shows itself in stalk, blade, and ear: the same, I say, as to the nature and substance; for wheat produces wheat, and not any other grain, though with some additional beauty, verdure, and greenness; it loses nothing that it had, though it grows up with that it had not before: so the same body that dies, is quickened and raised, though with additional glories and excellencies; the very same it that *is sown in corruption, is raised in incorruption*: and the very same it that *is sown in dishonour, is raised in glory*; the very same it that is sown in weakness, is raised in power; and the very same it that *is sown a natural body, is raised a spiritual body*; or else there is no meaning in the apostle's words. Likewise, as death is compared to a sleep, so the resurrection is expressed by an awaking out of it. Now, as it is the same body that sleeps that is awaked out of it, so it is the same body that falls asleep by death, that will be awaked in the resurrection. 3. The *places* from whence the dead will be raised, and which will be summoned to deliver them up, and out of which they will come, deserve our notice. Our Lord says, [Joh 5:28-29](#), "All that

are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." Every one that reads those words, will easily conceive that the meaning of our Lord is, that the same bodies which are in the graves shall come forth out of them. If other bodies should be produced by God from other matter, and united to souls, they cannot, with truth, be said to come forth from the graves; none but the same bodies, which are there laid, can be supposed to come forth from thence at the resurrection. It is a trifling objection to this doctrine, made by a late writer, that word *bodies* is not used in the text. What of men is laid in the graves but their bodies? And what can be expected to come forth from thence but their bodies? And what but the same bodies? It is a very silly question that is put by the same writer, when he asks, "Would a well-meaning searcher of the Scriptures be apt to think, that if the thing here intended by our Saviour, were to teach and propose it as an article of faith, necessary to be believed by every one, that the very same bodies of the dead should be raised; would not, I say, any one be apt to think, that if our Saviour meant so, the words should rather have been *panta ta swmata a en toiv muhmeioiv*, i.e. *all the bodies that are in the graves, rather than all who are in the graves*; which must denote persons, and not precisely bodies?" To which I reply, that supposing it our Lord's design, as I verily believe it was, to express this article of our faith, that the same bodies of the dead shall be raised, there was no need that the word *bodies* should be expressed; it was enough to say, that all that are in their graves shall come forth; and every well meaning searcher of the Scriptures will be easily induced to think, that our Lord designs that the same bodies of men that are laid in the graves shall come forth; nor is any thing more usual in common speech, than to denominate men sometimes from one part, and sometimes from another; as when we say, they are mortal, or wise, or foolish. Again, we are told, in the sacred writings, that "the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them."([Re 20:13](#)) Now, if the grave and sea, at the awful summons, shall deliver up the dead which are in them, they must deliver the very same which are laid in them; for what else can such

expressions design? 4. The subject of the resurrection is the body, and that such as it is in this life, vile and mortal. Christ will "change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his glorious body;" and "he that raised up Christ his Son from the dead, shall quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit, that dwelleth in you."(Php 3:21; Ro 8:11) These bodies must be the same we carry about with us now; for what else can be called vile and mortal? Surely not bodies a-new created, which are said to be spiritual and celestial, and which never sinned, and so not subject to mortality. This also destroys an observation of a writer of great note, that the word *s?mata*, *bodies*, is not used through the New Testament, when mention is made of the resurrection of the dead. His words are these: "He Who reads with attention this discourse of St. Paul's, (meaning 1Co 15) where he discourses of the resurrection, will see, that he plainly distinguishes between the dead that shall be raised, and the bodies of the dead; for it is, *uczoi*, *pantev*, *oi*, are the nominative cases to *egezontai*, *zwopoihdhsontai*, *egezdhsontai*, all along, and not *swmata*, *bodies*: which one may, with reason, think, would some where or other be expressed, if all this had been to propose it as an article of faith, that the very same bodies shall be raised. The same manner of speaking the Spirit of God observes, all through the New Testament, where it is said, raise the dead, quicken or make alive the dead, the resurrection of the dead." Now, not to take notice of the dead bodies of the saints, who were raised after the resurrection of Christ, of whom it is said, Mt 27:52, "And many bodies of the saints which slept arose;" the observation will appear to be wrong, if we consider the passages now mentioned, where Christ is said "to change our vile body," Php 3:21; Ro 8:11, or "the body of our humility," which belongs to, and is expressive of the resurrection of the dead; and where God is said to "quicken your mortal bodies:" besides, in the discourse of the apostle Paul, concerning the resurrection, in 1Co 15, a question is asked, "How are the dead raised? and with what body do they come?"(1Co 15:35,44) And an answer is given, "It is sown a natural body, and it is raised a spiritual body." Besides, how can the apostle plainly distinguish, as this author says he does in this

discourse, between the dead that shall be raised, and the bodies of the dead, if the bodies of the dead all along are not mentioned? 5. The *instances* of resurrections that are already past, prove that it will be the same body which will be raised at the general resurrection. The saints which arose at the resurrection of Christ, rose with the same bodies which were laid in the graves; for it is said, that "the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose." Our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead with the same body which hung upon the cross, and was laid in the grave as is evident, from the print of the nails in his hands and feet; nor was it an aerial or spiritual body, as to its substance, for it consisted of flesh and bones, which a spirit does not, and might be felt and handled. Now, Christ's resurrection was an exemplar of the saints; their bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body. Enoch and Elijah were translated into heaven in the very same bodies they had when here on earth; and those which will be alive at Christ's second coming, will be changed, and caught up, in the very same bodies in which they will be found, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall be for ever with him. Now is it reasonable to suppose, that our Lord, who partook of the same flesh and blood with the children of God, should be raised and glorified in the same body, and not they in their same bodies, for whose sake he assumed his; or that some of the saints should have the same bodies they had whilst here, and others not. 6. If the same body is not raised, how will the *end* of the resurrection be answered, which is the glorifying of God's grace, in the salvation of his people, and of his justice in the damnation of the wicked? Hence the one is said to "come forth to the resurrection of life," and "the other to the resurrection of damnation." How shall every one "receive the things done in his body," according to that he hath done, "whether it be good or bad," if the same bodies are not raised, who have done good or evil? Where would be the justice of God, if other bodies, and not those which Christ has purchased with his blood, the Spirit has sanctified by his grace, and which have suffered for the name of Christ, should be glorified? as also if other bodies, and not those which have sinned

against God, blasphemed the name of Christ, and have persecuted his saints, should suffer eternal vengeance, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power? Where would be the veracity of God, either in his promises or threatenings, if the good things he has promised, are not bestowed upon the same persons to whom he has promised them, and if the punishment he has threatened, is not inflicted on the same persons to whom he has threatened it? For how they can be the same persons, without having the same bodies, I do not understand. Besides, what a disappointment will it be to the saints, who are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body, from all weakness and corruption, if not that, but another body, shall be given them, and be united to their souls, and be glorified with them! In fine, if the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament hold forth, does not intend the resurrection of the same body; it is no other, nor better, than a *transmigration of souls* into other bodies, which was the old Pythagorean notion.

It is a low and mean quibble, that a man has not the same body at one time as at another, because he may be taller or bigger, fatter or leaner at one time than at another. It is true, that the body has not always the same fleeting particles, which are continually changing and altering, but it has always the same constituent parts; so that a man may be always said to have the same body, and to be the same man; it is the same body that is born that dies, and the same that dies that shall rise again. The several alterations and changes it undergoes, with respect to tallness or largeness, fatness or leanness, do not destroy the identity of the body. If this quibble would hold good in theological controversies, and in philosophical disputes, it might also in political affairs; and so one that owes another a sum of money, and has given his note or bond for it, after a term of time, may deny that he owes the other any thing, or that he ever borrowed any thing of him, and that it is not his hand writing, since he has not the same body he had before. A murderer, taken up some years after the murder is committed, may plead he is not the same man, and that

it was not done with the same hands he has now, and therefore, in justice he ought not to suffer. And the same may be observed in ten thousand other instances, whereby confusion must be introduced into commonwealths, and justice and order everted in governments. This observation may be sufficient to stop the mouths of such impertinent cavillers, who are ready to ask such questions as these; whether the body, at the resurrection, will have all the individual particles of matter it ever had? or whether it will be raised, as when it was at such an age, or in such a plight? or as it was emaciated by distempers, or as laid in the grave? It is enough that it will have the constituent parts it ever had, which is sufficient to support the identity of it. I shall now proceed, IV. To consider the *particular concern* which God the Father, Son and Spirit have in this stupendous work. It is a work that a creature is unequal to, and incapable of. It is always ascribed to God; it is God that raises and quickens the dead. If it was ever referred to a creature, it might well be judged incredible; but it need not be thought incredible that God should raise the dead. Now, as all God's works, *ad extra*, are common to all the three Persons, and this being such an one, they are all three concerned in it. And, 1. God the *Father* is concerned herein. The resurrection of Christ is frequently attributed to him, and so is the resurrection of the saints, and they are sometimes mentioned together; the former as the pledge and earnest of the latter, as saith the apostle, [1Co 6:14](#), "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power;" that is, God the Father has raised up the Lord Jesus, and we may be assured that he will also raise up us, since as he is able to raise the one, he is able to raise the other, and that by his own absolute, original, and underived power; which assurance of faith, in the doctrine of the resurrection, the apostle expresses in another place, in stronger terms, "We having the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believe, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak, knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you," [2Co 4:14](#), where also the resurrection of the saints is ascribed to God the Father, who

is manifestly distinguished from the Lord Jesus, whom he raised up, and by whom he will raise up the saints; not that Christ is the Father's instrument, or medium of operation, by which he will raise the dead; for,

2. *Christ*, as God, being equal with the Father, is a coefficient cause of the resurrection; "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will," [Joh 5:22](#). He is "the resurrection and the life," i.e., the Author of the resurrection unto life; he is the Prince of life, has the keys of hell and death in his hands, and can open the grave at his pleasure, and call forth the dead; at whose all-powerful and commanding voice, all that are in the graves shall come forth; which will be a further proof both of his omnipotence and omniscience; this will show that he is the Almighty, since he can "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself;" ([Php 3:21](#)) and that he knows all things, and is that living Word, before whom every creature is made manifest, and all things are naked and open; for if he was not omniscient, he could not know where every particle of matter is lodged; and, if he was not omnipotent, he could not collect them, range them in their proper places, and unite them together. That he is equal to this work, we may conclude from the resurrection of his own body; he had power to lay down his life, and take it up again; he raised up the temple of his body, after it had been destroyed three days, and so was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." ([Ro 1:4](#)) As he is the Mediator, he is the meritorious and procuring cause of the resurrection; there is an influential virtue in his resurrection, not only on the justification and regeneration of his people, but also upon their resurrection from the dead. He is the "first fruits of them that slept;" the pledge and earnest of the saints' resurrection; they are, in a sense, risen with him, and shall certainly be raised by him, in virtue of their union to him, as their risen Lord. As man, his resurrection is the pattern and exemplar of the saints; their bodies shall be fashioned like to his; as his body was raised

incorruptible and immortal, powerful and glorious, so shall theirs, in such manner, as never to die more, or see corruption, or be attended with distempers and death. 3. God the *Holy Ghost* has a joint and equal concern with the Father and the Son in this amazing work. The resurrection of Christ, is the act of all the three Persons: the Father glorified his Son by raising him from the dead: he "raised him from the dead, and gave him glory." Christ of himself took up the life, which he had laid down; and though he was "put to death in the flesh," yet he "was quickened by the Spirit." (1Pe 1:20; 3:18) So the resurrection of the saints from the dead, will be the act of all the three Persons, not only of the Father and the Son, but also of the Spirit; for "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you," Ro 8:11. The bodies, as well as the souls of the saints, are united to Christ, by virtue of which union the Spirit of Christ dwells in them; not in their souls only, but in their bodies also; "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?" 1Co 6:19. Now, as the union between Christ and his people is not dissolved by death, so neither does the Spirit of God forsake the dead bodies of the saints, or neglect to take care of them; the dust of the saints is under his peculiar care and guardianship; and, at the last day, the Spirit of life from God, shall enter into them, and they shall live and stand upon their feet. Thus all the three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, will be concerned in the resurrection of the just.

The means by which God will do this great work, and the time when he will do it, the Scriptures are not altogether silent about. As to the *means*, we are told, that "all that are in the graves shall hear his (i.e., Christ's) voice, and shall come forth," Joh 5:28-29; 1Th 4:16; 1Co 15:52), "that the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise;" and that the "trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible;" but whether by the voice of Christ and the archangel, the shout, and the trumpet of God, we

are to understand' so many several distinct things, or one and the same thing, is not easy to determine. The voice of the archangel, who shall descend with Christ, may be called the voice of Christ, because formed at his command; the same may be signified by the trumpet of God, which shall be sounded, and that may be signified by the shout which shall be made, either by the archangel alone, or by all the angels with him, and this shout no other than some violent claps of thunder, which are the voice of God; like those which were heard when God descended on Mount Sinai, and gave the law from thence, which, perhaps, were formed by the ministry of angels; and this the apostle Peter may design, when he says: "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," [2Pe 3:10](#). Or by the voice of Christ, may be meant an audible and articulate voice of his, so powerful, as to reach all that are in their graves, such as that was which was heard at the grave of Lazarus, where "he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth;" or as that which Saul heard from heaven, saying "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" or as John heard, which he says, "was as the voice of many waters." Or, perhaps, the voice of Christ may design the power of Christ, which shall be exerted upon, and shall be felt and perceived by all that are in their graves, when the archangel shall sound the last trumpet, attended with the shout of all the rest of the angelic host.

As for the *time*, when the dead shall be raised, it cannot be exactly fixed, nor does it become us curiously to inquire into it; "It is not for us to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power," [Ac 1:7](#) As no man knows the day and hour of judgment, so no man knows the day when the dead will be raised. In general, it is said, that "it will be in the last day, and at the coming of Christ," [Joh 6:39-40,44,54; 11:24; 1Co 15:23; 1Th 4:16](#), at which time the dead in Christ shall rise first; that is, they shall rise before the wicked, which will be the first resurrection. Not that the martyrs shall rise before the rest of the righteous, but all the righteous shall rise at Christ's coming; but whether, their rising will be successive, or be at once, in a moment, is not very material.

The change that will be made on the living, will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; but it is not so manifest, that the resurrection of the dead will be so quick and sudden, but rather that it will be successive; since it is said, "Every man in his own order shall be raised," [1Co 15:23](#), which may be understood either of order of time, so that they that died first, shall be first raised; or of dignity, so that those who have been the most eminent for gifts, grace, usefulness, &c. shall be first called forth out of their graves, which, perhaps, may be the different glory that will be upon the saints at the resurrection, of which the apostle speaks, saying, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead." [1Co 15:41-42](#).

There are many curious and needless questions which are asked concerning the resurrection, and the state of those who are raised; as, whether abortions, or untimely births, shall be raised? at what age, and in what stature the dead shall rise? whether with their present deformities or not? whether there will be any distinction of sexes? and whether persons shall know one another? But these I shall not give myself the trouble to answer, but pass on to that which will be more useful; which is, V. And lastly, To show the *importance* and use of this doctrine. . 1st, I shall consider the *importance* of it. It is a fundamental article of the Christian faith; it is called "the foundation of God, which stands sure," [2Ti 2:19](#), though some deny it, and others endeavour to sap it, but none can destroy it: it is reckoned among the first principles of the doctrines of Christ, [Heb 6:1-2](#), and is joined with eternal judgment, which it precedes, and in order to which it is absolutely requisite. The resurrection of Christ stands and falls with it; for, "if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain," [1Co 15:13-14](#).

The whole gospel is connected with it; if there is no truth in this, there is none in that. As the doctrine of the resurrection receives confirmation from the doctrines of personal election, the gift of the persons of the elect to Christ, the covenant of grace, redemption by

Christ, union with him, and the sanctification of the Spirit, so these can have no subsistence without supposing that. If the dead rise not, there can be no expectation of a future state "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished," [1Co 15:18](#) And so there is no difference between them and the brutes, as *the one dieth, so dieth the other*; and if this be the case, "if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," [1Co 15:19](#). Besides, as has been observed, the resurrection is absolutely necessary to eternal judgment: without it the judgment cannot proceed; for, how should "every one receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," if his body is not raised? To say no more, practical religion much depends upon the truth of this doctrine; the denial of it must open a door to all manner of licentiousness. The opposers of this doctrine have been observed, in all ages, to be very bad livers; and, indeed, it need not be wondered at; it is a natural consequence, "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," [1Co 15:32](#). On the other hand, where this doctrine is firmly believed, and strictly attended to, there will be a studious concern to glorify God, by a becoming life and conversation. This may be observed in the experience and practice of the apostle Paul, which he delivers in these words, "And have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the just and unjust; and herein (says he,) upon this account, do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men," [Ac 24:15-16](#). 2dly, I shall now consider the *use* of this doctrine; whatever is important, and of moment, must be useful. This doctrine is of use, 1. For *instruction*. It serves to enlarge our views of the divine perfections; as the immutability of God in his purposes; his Faithfulness in his promises; his omniscience, which extends to all creatures, and every thing that belongs to them; and his omnipotence, which nothing can withstand. Those who deny the resurrection, must not only be ignorant of the Scriptures but of the power of God, as the Sadducees were. This doctrine teaches us to think highly of Jesus Christ, as God over all, blessed for ever, as possessed of all divine perfections;

since he is the resurrection and the life, the first-fruits of them that slept; he is the efficient cause by whom, and the meritorious cause through whom, and the exemplar according to whom the resurrection of the saints will be. The concern which the Holy Spirit has in our resurrection, may serve to endear him to us, and teach us not to grieve him, by whom we are "sealed unto the day of redemption," i.e. of our bodies from corruption and death; he not only sanctifies our bodies, and dwells in them, but has the care of our dust, and will quicken it at the last day. What an instruction is this doctrine to faith and trust in God, Father, Son, and Spirit? If God can and will raise the dead, what is it he cannot do?

Faith should not stagger at any thing which God has promised to perform, or be discouraged at any difficulties in its way, or at any trials and afflictions it meets with. The consideration of this, that God quickens the dead, [Ro 4:17-20](#), quickened Abraham's faith, so that he "staggered not at the promise through unbelief," though there were difficulties attending it insuperable to nature. And when the apostles had the sentence of death in themselves, they were directed not to trust in themselves, "but in God, which raiseth the dead, who, (say they,) delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us," [2Co 1:9-10](#). Moreover, this doctrine may teach us, that all due and proper care ought to be taken of our bodies, both whilst living, and when dead. All proper care ought to be taken of them whilst living; though they are not to be pampered, they are not to be starved: they are to be fed and clothed, according to the blessings of life, which God bestows upon men, provided the bounds of moderation and decency be observed; for to transgress these by luxury and intemperance, is not to use our bodies well, but to abuse them: and when the body is dead, care ought to be taken that it be decently interred, which may be confirmed by the examples of Abraham, Joseph of Arimathea, and others.

2. This doctrine is of use for *consolation*. The day of the resurrection will be a day of consolation to the saints. Hence the Syriac version reads those words of Martha, "I know that he shall rise again, in the

resurrection at the last day," [Joh 11:24](#), thus: "I know that he shall rise again, in the consolation at the last day." Then will be the consummation of the saints' joy and comfort, and a believing view of it now must be very delightful to them; as they are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, so they may lift up their heads with joy, because this their redemption draweth near. The consideration of this doctrine must be a great support to saints under trials and afflictions, under diseases and distempers of body, in the views of death, and the several changes the body shall undergo after death; I say, it must be a very comfortable consideration, that, in a little time, all these trials will be ended; there will be no more diseases, nor death: and though the body, for a while, shall be the food of worms, and return to its original dust, yet it shall be raised immortal and incorruptible, powerful and glorious: "This mortal must put on immortality, and this corruption must put on incorruption;" and in our flesh shall we see God, and enjoy the company of angels and saints. To conclude: this doctrine must be of great use to support persons under the loss of near relations; when they consider, that though they are dead, they shall rise again; though they have parted with them, it is but for a time; and therefore they should not "sorrow, even as others, which have no hope," [1Th 4:14,17-18](#), "for if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him; wherefore we may comfort one another with these words, and so shall we be ever with the Lord."