

very rich. She was repeatedly advised not to sacrifice herself, and every argument was urged which was likely to be effectual. But eloquence was vain, and logic feeble talk. The remonstrants were eloquent to the air, and reasoned to the wind. She steadily rejected all their arguments and proposals, alledging, ‘*I have eaten the oath*, and turned the holy toolsee branch in my hair.’ When told that no compulsion should be employed to enforce the observance of her vows, she answered in disdain, “compulsion!! no! I shall *leap* into his arms.” And which at the conclusion she literally did. When reminded of her suffering, she exposed a hand already blistered to the bone, to shew her courage, of which not a single sinew quivered, although at times, severe and cutting pangs seemed to heave her breast. She however, without any assistance, composedly climbed up the funeral pile, placed herself by the side of her husband, clasped his putrid body with her limbs, and placed his head on her arm. The pile was fired—the victim’s hand was seen waving in the flames, and her voice but for the yell of the worshipping multitude, would probably have been heard calling upon the name of her God, and exulting amidst the flames of death—she *had ‘eaten the covenant.’* What has not the Redeemer done for his church which died in paradise, became putrified by sin, and must have been cast out as an abominable thing! But Immanuel had espoused her upon covenant conditions; and oaths, and promises, attended the making of this covenant. It was *made*, and *eaten*, and therefore unalterable. In consequence of this, he flew from heaven; he needed no compulsory measures, this he disdained. Lo I come—I delight to do thy will—*I shall leap into her arms.* He did so, and though dead, and putrid, and placed on the funeral pile which justice had reared, he ascended the ominous elevation, clasped his church in his arms, and endured all the flames that would have raged upon the dead body; he expired on the cross calling upon his God, and when the fury of the flames had ceased he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. But how came all this about?

He had '*eaten the covenant,*' and like the devotee, anticipated an eternity of joy and pleasure with the body, that was the object of his affections.

But observe further, that Jehovah takes great pleasure in viewing his covenant, and that eternal friendship is established by federal transactions. Nothing can interrupt the friendship, subsisting between the covenanters and the covenantees. And from this covenant is furnished the *feast of fat things*, which the Lord makes in his holy mountain. The Welsh *bara*, denotes *bread, sustenance*; and such is the covenant to the believer. God has not only '*eaten the covenant,*' but he has given it for his people to eat likewise; not for them to fulfil it, but to enjoy it as fulfilled, consummated, and finished. It is his bread which came down from heaven: and no doubt but what Christ had an eye to federal feasting, when he called himself the bread which came down from heaven, and that he was the pledge of everlasting friendship. It is the believer's staff and prop; he cleaves to it, shelters beneath it, stands in it, and feasts upon it. The gospel feast is the covenant of grace opening its treasures, and bestowing its blessings. We never ought to lose sight of the covenant, because it is of the utmost importance. It seems to me as if our Lord designed something more than a bare representation of his sufferings, when he instituted the supper, and that it is intended to teach us, among other things, the unending nature of divine friendship, as growing out of covenant arrangements, signed by promise, and sealed by his death. It was the bread and blood of the *new testament*, or covenant.

Again, this word, says Gill, and all the former ones, signify to *choose*, select, as well as those other meanings which we have noticed. And this well suits the idea of a covenant; suggesting that God has chosen, selected, ordained, and disposed all the *covenantees*; all their blessings, all their trials, and all their circumstances. May our language ever be "as the Lord has chosen us, so he shall choose *for* us."

2. The notion of a covenant, as derived from the greek *διαθηκη* *diatheekee*. This word mean to *dispose*,

*ordain, appoint, confederate.* *Disposition*, denotes order, arrangement, method. Thus, Rom. xiii. 2. "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the *ordinance* (disposition or appointments) of God." Here it seem to denote a digest of laws for the regulation of rational creatures, for the breach of which they are amenable. The covenant of grace is an arrangement, or *digest* of all spiritual things which guide the conduct of Jehovah, and for the breach of which he would be accountable. Hence the phrase, "my covenant will I not *break*, nor suffer my faithfulness to *fail*." So again, Acts vii. 53. "Who have received the law, *εις διαταγας αγγελων*, *by, or through* the *dispositions* of angels." This seem to be a military metaphor, indicating the manner in which a body of people are *disposed, arranged, or organized*. The divine monarch is represented as drawing up the militia of heaven on the top of Mount Sinai, where he reviews and employs them, at the publication of the law. The *dispositions* of angels were their *ranges, ranks, or files*; and the words spoken, seem to have been uttered in the midst, or amongst their angelic ranges, who probably joined in the divine accents; and thus the law was delivered *by, or through, their ranks, ranges, or dispositions*.

The unparalleled solemnities which attended the giving of the law, together with the divine arrangements or dispositions of the holy angels, were powerful motives and enforcements to obedience. Stephen's argument was pointed and effective. Apply these things to the subject under notice, and the sense is this; all the elect family of God were ranged, disposed, and drawn up in the covenant of grace from all eternity; not on Mount Sinai, but Mount Sion; not to hear the law, but to receive the charter of free grace. The objects of eternal love are not huddled together like a tumultuous mob or a promiscuous multitude, but like a family, or army, accurately numbered, disposed, ranged, and organized.

Further, the greek *diatheeke*, is sometimes explained by *συναμοσια sunomosia*, to *swear together*, to *confederate by oath*, from *συν together*, and *ομωω to*

*swear*. See Acts xxiii. 13. And this *transaction*, says Murray, so plainly intimated in divine revelation, is the basis of the whole future manifestation of the divine glory, discovered to, and applied for, the benefit of man. And as the word ELOHIM, intimates the *obligation* of that *transaction* among the divine three, so it always suggests the character of God, in revelation to us, in that view, as the most comfortable, and at the same time, awful light in which he can state himself to mankind; and may, with some propriety, be expressed by the *English* word, the SWEARERS. In a note, he observes, the root *elah*, means an *oath*, or adjuration, an execration made to affect the breaker of a covenant. And as the singular admits of this meaning, one that hath taken upon himself an oath, the plural, *Elohim*, must denote *more* than one under that obligation, or entering into covenant or agreement together. *Clear Display of the Trinity*. pp. 54, 55.

‘The Sythians, according to Heroditus, as quoted by Burder, formed their treaties by first pouring wine into a large earthen vessel, and then the contracting parties, cutting their arms with a knife, let some of their blood run into the wine, and stained their armour with it. After this, themselves, and all that were present, drank of the liquor, making the strongest imprecations against the person who should violate the treaty.’—*Burder*.

‘Xenophon tells us, that the easterns covenanted by *dipping their weapons in blood*; and by *pricking the flesh, and sucking each other’s blood*.’

‘Tacitus says, that when kings made a league, they took each other by the hand, and their thumbs being tied hard together, and the blood forced to the extreme parts, they pricked them, and each party *licked the blood*. This was accounted a mysterious covenant, being made sacred by their mutual blood.’—*Eastern Mirror*, pp. 118.

This may illustrate those phrases—“the blood of the everlasting covenant.” “The Lamb *slain* from before the foundation of the world.” “Without shedding of blood there is no redemption, &c.” The covenant is a

treaty or league made by the great Elohim, and rendered sacred by the blood of God. It is more sacred and inviolable than those covenants which are made by the *letting, sucking, and drinking* of blood; accompanied with all the oaths of execration which are designed to burst in tremendous fury upon the head of covenant-breakers. It is a covenant of *blood*, to mark the adhesive character of the covenanters, and a covenant of *salt* to denote its unending nature.

And here we may remark that this covenant is made by the *eternal Three, and no more*. "For there are *three*, (and not more) that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are ONE. So that we see the creature had nothing to do in framing it, nor in fulfilling it. The family of God were *put* into it by adopting grace, or they would never have got into it by offered grace. We could never *get* in the covenant, but God has mercifully *put* us where we could not *get*. All spiritual mercies are made over to the church by covenant appointments, which appointments God has sworn to maintain. Thus Luke xxii. 29. The Father is said to *dispose, or appoint by covenant*, a kingdom to his Son, and Christ is said to *dispose, or appoint by covenant* a kingdom to his people. And Acts iii. 25. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the *covenant*—you stand in covenant arrangement, and God having raised his Son Jesus Christ, have sent him to bless you, in turning away *every one of you* from his iniquities. Not sent him with *offers* to all mankind, but to *bless* all the covenant ones with repentance, pardon, righteousness, and sanctification. He was to *do* the work and not *offer* the thing.

Lastly, Διαθεμηνος *diathemeenos*, which imports a *testament* or *will*, to dispose of things in a *testamentary form*. And the covenant of grace seems to be a *testamentary covenant*, or a covenant in which things are disposed of in the form of a *testament*. Thus, 'I appoint unto you' a kingdom, *i.e.* after a *testamentary manner*. 'Ye are the children of the prophets, and the covenant;' *i.e.* ye are blessed as *legatees*, being

included in his will or testament; and in consequence of this, God having raised up his Son as the testator, have sent us to publish or read over the will, that by his Spirit's influence ye might enjoy the fruit of mercy and blood, as the children of the living God. And as it was God's design in publishing the gospel to call and bless his own people, so it was to call *every one* of them.

Methodists charge us with inconsistency between sentiment and practice. 'If there is an elect number that must be saved, and no more, why (say they) do you preach the gospel? there can be neither necessity or propriety. If I believed such doctrine I would never attempt to preach.' Perhaps not; for if covenant grace embued your heart, and enriched your understanding, you would probably see your own insufficiency. But the argument operates upon my mind, in quite a contrary manner than can be intended by those who have the unhappiness to urge it. For 1. all things are said to be for the elect's *sake*, and therefore the gospel must be for their sake. Now if there were no elect people, preaching the gospel would be of no use whatever. Neither would there be any gospel if this was not the case. A fold is not for the sake of the goats and wolves, wheat for the sake of a barn, pots for a pottery, nor a building for the sake of a scaffold. And when the ransomed flock is completed and perfected, the fold will be taken away; when the wheat is gathered, the chaff will be burnt with unquenchable fire; when the vessels of mercy are all fashioned, the gospel wheel will be no more, the labourers discharged, and the pottery destroyed; when his building is consummated, the scaffold will be removed; when his gold is purified, the crucible will be thrown away, and his furnace in Zion will be taken down; when his jewels are collected, the pebbles will not be thought worth turning over; and when his children are all taken into his chariot, he will order his charioteer to drive *on*, and to drive *home*. When a chariot goes for an individual to a certain place, it is not to fetch *any* one, but *some* one, who is known and related to the owner of, or the

employer of the chariot; this accomplished, the end is answered, the chariot leaves the place and is seen no more. Such is the nature of the gospel, such are its designs, and such will be the results. It seems, therefore, that we may preach the gospel, and that consistently enough though all the family must get safe to glory. The end implies the means. A father is bound to bring his child from a land of slavery, this implies a conveyance. The potter must make and preserve his pots, but this implies a wheel and pottery; and so on of the rest. It is no use to set the fold when the sheep are gone, nor to keep up the scaffolding when the building is completed. 2. The design of preaching the gospel, is represented as being to bless the *covenantees*, and to turn *every one* of them away from their iniquities. When this is accomplished the end is gained. And so far from its being useless to preach the gospel if there is a certain number of covenant ones, that the gospel is of no use where there are no covenant ones to be benefited by it. 3. The design of a will or testament is to dispose of things in an orderly manner, and the view of publishing or reading the will is to declare the state of things as arranged by the testator, in order that the legatees may become acquainted with the nature and extent of their claims. It is, in short, read over for the sake of the legatees. If there was nobody that had any dependencies on the will it would not be read; nor is it read only where the friends and relatives either reside or meet. Now the gospel in its promulgation answers to this idea; I therefore, preach the gospel, believing that God has some of his children to bless and turn away from their iniquities. 4. I am fully persuaded that God will call and gather his people together, and that by the blood of the covenant he will bring them out of the pit wherein is no water; but could I think that salvation was as much for one as another, and that it could only be obtained by the creature's exercising faith and repentance while in a natural state, I would immediately desist from preaching the gospel; because I feel convinced that not a solitary individual would ever be saved, notwithstanding

all the offers and tenders that I could make. Thus the very things that are alledged as an accusation, form the ground of sober and consistent practice. It is therefore presumed that men may preach the gospel, without being *worse than idiots* or *highway-men*, as some intemperate Wesleyans eloquently style us. At least it is hoped, the above reasons will blunt the point of the accusation, and prevent it from doing any mischief, though it has no capacity for doing *good*.

Having marked these things, I will now return again to the subject, directing the reader's attention to Heb. vii. 22. and viii. 15—18. where he will find the true notion of a covenant in the form of a *testament* or *will*. 'He is the surety of a better *testament*,' or covenant. 'He is the Mediator of the new *testament*,' *i. e.* covenant. 'Where a testament or *will* is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament (or will) is of force after *men* are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth,' because he may alter it, and either augment or diminish the number of legatees; but when he is dead no alteration can be made. Was I to offer salvation to any man I met with, or to people without distinction, I would either turn a Jew by affirming the testator is not dead, and therefore it is possible he might be named in the will if he would but make application, or else I would deny that there was any such thing as a *covenant will*. I would certainly do either one or the other; and in my view I should be much less subject to the charge of absurdity.

But in a controversy of this nature and magnitude, every thing entitled to consideration ought to have its full weight in our thoughts, and therefore I shall not conceal what some have taken to be the sense of the passages.

And first, Mr. Pierce, as quoted by Parkhurst and Doddridge, Heb. ix. 16, 17. "Mr. Pierce would render it, *of that sacrifice which was appointed by God to pacify*; and he brings a remarkable instance from *Appian*, where *διαθεμενος* signifies *pacifier*. He saith the scope of the writer requires it should be so trans-



lated here, (ver. 16.) and accordingly in the next verse he renders it, *the PACIFIER can do nothing as long as he liveth.*" Now I cannot see how this can affect the sense which I have chosen, because the testator *pacified* divine justice by his death; and as a proof of this, God is represented as saying "deliver *him* from going down into the pit, I have found a *ransom*"—I have received an *equivalent*—I am *pacified*—I am satisfied. And according to this, the obvious sense is, the *covenant, will, or testament* is confirmed by the death *του διαθεμενου* of the *pacifier*. see Ezek. xvi. 62, 63.

Mr. Parkhurst thinks it answers to the Hebrew *Berith*, which, he says, signifies the *purifier*; and that the *death* of the purifier answers to the *cutting off* the purifier, which he thinks was represented by the purification sacrifice. But to *pacify* is to *purify*. Sin has defiled all mankind; this has excited the displeasure of God; and to save his church, a purifier, *pacifier*, or testator was necessary. This was effected by the death of the purifier, *pacifier*, or testator; and it seems to me of little consequence whether his sacrifice is called a *purification-sacrifice*, a *pacification-sacrifice*, or a *ratification-sacrifice*. A purifying sacrifice is a pacifying sacrifice, and a pacifying sacrifice is a ratifying sacrifice. And this by no means *exclude* the idea of his being a testator, because his death was a redeeming-sacrifice, as well as a ratification of the covenant *will*.

Dr. Doddridge in his paraphrase says, 'where a covenant is, it necessarily imports the death of that by which the covenant is confirmed.' And seem to hint at the confirmation of covenants over dead sacrifices. Now though this is applicable to the covenant of grace, it does not seem to be the thought designed in the words. Nothing seem plainer to me than this, (viz.) the covenant of grace may be illustrated by a human will or testament, which is the *last* and *best*, and therefore called the *new* and *better* covenant, or will. This covenant, like a will, has all its objects named, and all their blessings specified; and like a will, it involves the death of the *testator*, with a view of giving

effect thereto; which was represented and typified in its legal ministration, by the sprinkling of blood and the mortality of the high priests, who were emblematical sureties, mediators, and testators.

Lastly, Mr. Parkhurst thinks that the English word *dispensation*, or *institution*, may express more accurately the greek *diatheeke*; and has borrowed a passage from *Junius* as quoted by Leigh, in his *Crit. Sacra*. This may be the case when covenants are said to be made between God and men, or whenever men may be represented as acting parties. It may be employed to denote the Abrahamic, Sinaic, and gospel dispensations, and the respective institutions that were identified with the two former, and which accompanies the latter; but it is impossible that all the passages where the word occurs should be thus construed. In my judgment the above objections are not of much weight, and if they were, I could, without difficulty, more than quadruple its pressure in the opposite scale; and for the satisfaction of the reader, I will just throw in a few mites.

“The word *covenant* is called in Hebrew, *Berith*, which hath the signification of friendly parting and explaining the condition of agreement; for at the making of solemn covenants, beasts were killed and parted asunder, and the covenant makers went between the parts. The apostles, in greek, call it *diatheeke*, a *testament*, a *testamental covenant*, or *disposing of things by will at one's death*.”—*Wilson's Dictionary*.

“The word in the greek is *διαθεμενος* (*diathemenos*) of *διαθηκη* which signifies a *testament*, and which is of the same import with the Hebrew *ברית* *Berith*.”—*Keach on Heb. ix. 16*.

“TESTAMENT signifies 1st. an act of the last will of a person who hath death in his view, and disposes of his estate, and gives orders as to what he would have done after his decease.”—*Cruden's Concordance*.

“*ברית* is variously taken in scripture; sometimes *improperly* and sometimes *properly*. *Improperly*, it denotes, the following things, 1st. an immutable ordinance made about a thing; in this sense God mentions

his 'covenant of the day and his covenant of the night.' Jer. xxxiii. 30. That is, that fixed ordinance made about the uninterrupted vicissitudes of day and night; which chap. xxxi. 36. is called חֹק, that is *statute, limited, or fixed*, which nothing is to be added to, or taken from. In this sense is included the notion of a *testament*, or of a last irrevocable will. Thus God said, Num. xviii. 19. 'I have given thee, and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee, עֵלְמָ חַיָּא לְחֶם עֵלְמָ בְּדֵית מְלַח, *by a statute for ever; it is a covenant of salt for ever.*' This observation is of use, more fully to explain the nature of the covenant of grace, which the apostle proposes under the similitude of a *testament*, the execution of which depends upon the death of the testator. Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17."—*Witsius on the Two Covenants, vol. 1. p.p. 42, 43.*

"The word used in the new testament for covenant is διαθηκη, by which word the Septuagint interpreters almost always translate the Hebrew word, *berith*, in the old, and comes from a word which signifies to *dispose*, and that in a *covenant-way*. The word signifies both covenant and testament, and some have called it a *covenant-testament*, or a testamentary covenant."—*Gill's Body of Divinity, vol. 1. b. 2. p. 315.*

"This word (διαθηκη) is properly a *testamentary disposition* of things; as another greek word (συθηκη) is properly a covenant. For in the composition of the word, there is nothing to intimate a *mutual compact*." *Dr. Owen's Exposition of Hebrews, vol. 3. p. 531.* Again, "For the Lord Christ, as the great *testator*, did, by his death, *bequeath* to them all his good things as an *eternal legacy*.—And the way whereby we become interested in the unparalleled blessings is by *gratuitous adoption*." p. 533. Once more: the subject matter of the promise given, is a *covenant*, or rather (בריה) *Sept. διαθηκη*) a *testament*. For if we take 'covenant' in a strict and proper sense, it hath indeed no place between God and man.—The covenant of God is founded on *grace*, and consists essentially in a free undeserved *promise*. Such a covenant is here intended, as is ratified and confirmed by the death of him that

makes it, which is properly a *testament*;—it is a covenant in which he that makes it bequeathed his goods to others by way of a *legacy*.” pp. 429, 30.

From the whole the following deductions are clear. 1. That there is a covenant of grace. 2. That this covenant is eternal. 3. That it was made by the eternal Three. 4. That in it every spiritual mercy is contained. 5. That these mercies are all disposed, arranged, and settled upon certain individuals. 6. That these individuals are all named in the Lamb’s book of life, like soldiers in a roll, citizens in a registrar, or legatees in a will. 7. That God has sworn to keep this covenant inviolable. 8. That it has been sealed and ratified by the blood of Christ. 9. That therefore it must remain fixed and unalterable. The blessings can never be disposed of in any other manner, nor to any other persons than those who are named in the will. And observe, that as no more names can be added, so none can be blotted out. Rev. xxii. 19. is no exception to this deduction.

From this view of the subject it will be clearly seen, 1. That the administration of Jehovah’s moral government, arises out of covenant transactions. 2. That the salvation of the church is the grand object pursued by this administration. 3. That therefore every circumstance or motion must have a relation to, and dependency on that grand object. 4. Every thing must serve either immediately or remotely, to accomplish this glorious purpose, so that all things are for the *elect’s sake*, and are working together for their good. 5. That in the administration of spiritual things, God has instituted nothing but what is adapted to the nature and character of the covenant. 6. That offers of grace and general invitations are inconsistent therewith. This is proved from their *character, tendency, inutility, and absurdity*.

*First. Their character.* 1. *Offers of grace are characterized by their undistinguishing regards.* Covenant grace, respects the objects of discriminating affection. “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I

hated." "There is a remnant, according to the election of grace." "I have loved *thee* with an everlasting love." "Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant." Surely this must be discrimination. And if Wesleyanism is characterized by its indiscriminating principles, it must be at variance with the covenant of grace. The sagacity of its adherents who rise a little above the credulous and unthinking part of the religious community perceive this, and very cautiously abstain from making it a *pulpit subject*, or give but garbled statements, making it a nose of wax, a dead letter, a dumb rule, an obscure doctrine.

2. *Offers of grace are characterized by LEGAL OBEDIENCE.* Hence, the conditions are faith and repentance, to be exercised by all men in order to obtain the proffered benefits. The covenant of grace is signalized by the freeness of its communications. In the covenant of grace there is no mention nor hint of any conditions on the part of *man*, nor are there any terms of obedience prescribed for the creature, but it is entirely made up of *free, full and gratuitous promises*. "God himself," says Owen, "is the principal party covenanting; and therefore what he doth is (*ex mera gratia et voluntate*) from mere grace and good will." "And this," says John, "is the promise that he hath promised us, even *eternal life*;" *i. e.* this is the grand, copious, paramount, and unconditional nature of the covenant of grace—the free promise of eternal life. And hence the appellation, 'covenant of promise'—'heirs of promise'—'promise of life'—'promise of eternal life'—'children of the promise'—and that famous passage, Acts ii. 39. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." That is to say, the blessings of the covenant of grace are made over or conveyed in the form of a promise, which blessings belong to you as is now manifested by your penitence, and to others as well as yourselves, whether near or afar off, even to as many as shall be called by the Lord our God. The inferences are plain.

3. *Offers of grace are identified with CONTINGENCIES.* They are characterized as being connected with *uncertainties*. Any man may have them if he pleases, and no man is obliged to have them. But the covenant of grace is *ordered* in all things and *sure*. It has its *heirs*, its *children*, its flock and family. This is his covenant seed which is to serve him, and that is to be accounted for a generation; even “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.” The promise is of *faith*, is received by faith, and not obtained by conditions, that it might be by *grace*, to the end that it might be sure to all the *seed*. Rom. iv. 24. Now the children of the *promise*, (i. e. covenant of grace) are counted for the seed. Rom. ix. 8. Here then is a glaring and a daring opposition made by the votaries of offered grace to the well ordered covenant of mercy.

4. *Offers of grace are characterized by IMPERFECTION.* The perfection of a thing, consists in its being suited to accomplish the end proposed, without extraneous assistance. Such is the covenant of grace. “This is the covenant that I will *make*,” (συνγέλω, *perficiam consummabo*) ‘*I will perfect*,’ or *consummate*, to the exclusion of all additions and alterations.—*Owen*. This is the firm administration of the covenant which *I will strike*. To which three words answer, is in this scripture, *I will perfect, make, and dispose*.—*Poole*. Now this is done by his putting his laws in their hearts, by his regenerating and sanctifying influences, and thus preparing them for the reception of promised blessings which they had in Christ before the world began. ‘The word,’ says Dr. Owen, ‘in the prophet is, *I will give*; we render it *I will put*. But there are two things intimated in the word;—the freedom of the grace promised; it is a *mere grant*, or *donation of grace*: and—the *efficacy* of it: this is what *emphatically* (διδες ἰ. ε. εἶμι,) *I am doing* in this my covenant; namely, *freely giving* that grace whereby my laws shall be implanted in the minds of men.’ God is said to find fault with the old covenant, because of its imperfection, and abolished it accordingly; supply-

ing its place by a new covenant which he perfects, consummates, or finishes himself. Now offers of grace supposes a covenant, if there is one, to be an imperfect covenant, requiring and entreating the creature to act, in order that it may accomplish its designs. The offers are therefore ineffective, and a covenant that employs defective measures, cannot be perfect; as such, *offers of grace* must be hostile to the *covenant of grace*. They are things that cannot be identified therewith.

5. *Offers of grace are characterized as INSTRUMENTS OF MISCHIEF.* They are said to encrease the damnation of hell where they are not effectual. They make it my duty to hear the overtures—I cannot receive these overtures because dead in trespasses and sins, and quickening grace is infused only into those who have an interest in covenant grace; if therefore I have no interest in this covenant, the offers must be ineffectual; and I must have my damnation increased by doing my duty. It is said to be my duty to attend the preaching of the gospel—I do so, and my obedience multiplies my crimes and give additional energy to the agonizing pangs of eternal misery. The gospel is thus a tremendous curse to all those who are not elected. It damns me for not hearing it, and if I do hear it, then it encreases my condemnation. Offers of grace, therefore, are instruments of cruelty to all those who have not the privilege of being written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. Quite the contrary is the covenant of grace. It *bles*s but *curse* not. It does good without the capacity of doing evil, bestowing its favours sovereignly and effectually. Guilt is never incurred by its administration, because they are blessings *given* without being *rejected*. They find the way to the bosom, and do good like a medicine. The covenant of grace damns no man for not receiving its favours, because it never makes an offer of them. It secures its own objects without injuring those who are not within its limits. This is its glory; the contrary would be its dishonour.

*Second.* The *tendency* of offered mercy is repugnant to the covenant of grace.

1. *It has a tendency to conceal the real state and condition of fallen humanity.* Man is represented as able to perform the conditions if he think proper, so many assert and many believe; take an example by no means singular. A person in the methodist connection, and who is well known to me, lately remarked to his neighbour, ‘ he never thought religion was such an *easy thing*. He had always looked upon it as a very *hard thing*, before he went to *chapel*; but when he went there, he found himself *quite* mistaken, for it wanted nothing but the *will*, and he believed every body might be saved if they *would*, and go to heaven if they thought *proper*.’ Now only mark what a nice easy thing offers of grace make religion to consist in, and how completely it conceals the sinner’s true state and situation. And observe, further, if offers of grace are true, the man spoke consistent enough. For it does want *nothing* but the will; every man has a will, and if he is a self-determining creature he can be religious when he pleases, because he can turn his will to any point like a feather fixed upon a swivel. But the gospel represents the man as under the curse of the law, without strength, and even dead in trespasses and sins, and then displays the riches of quickening mercy, and not the tenders of inefficient grace.

2. *It has a tendency to foster the pride and carnality of the heart.* If I am told what a great deal I can do, how I can pray, repent, act faith when I please, and command blessings when I think proper, it must nourish my pride, feed my vanity, suit my natural taste, and hide folly from my eyes. At least it seems but ill calculated to bring down the lofty looks and abase the proud thoughts.

3. *It exalts the creature as well as Christ.* For if I am to perform certain conditions, I must be entitled to share in the meed of praise that may arise out of my salvation. Yea, more, I must stand first, because I made the first motion, and put myself in a proper posture for salvation. Now God says, his “glory will he not give to another.” “The Lord *alone* shall be exalted in that day.”



4. *It tends to IMMORALITY.* For if a natural man is told he has power to repent and be saved when he please, he will naturally say when called upon to repent or to be morally religious, 'there is time enough yet.' 'It is all in good time yet.' He will be like a careless tradesman, who never think about adjusting his books, nor balancing his accounts till the long winter evenings of old age, which employ, will serve to drive away *ennui* from the mind. In vain you tell him about a day of grace, he will hint, 'there is an *eleventh* hour.' In vain you preach the uncertainty of life, he will tell you 'he is not more likely to die than other men, and he intends seeking God when he is dying.' 'God is merciful, and judgment is his strange work.' In short, no arguments can ever wrench sin from his heart, his language will be, 'I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.' True, offers of grace may pretend to cut off the tributary streams, but it secretly feeds the spring. It may with other things now and then, succeed in lopping off a few boughs, but it waters and dungs the roots of all. When the messenger of the covenant came, he laid the axe to the *root* of the tree, and thoroughly purged his floor. Not by offering grace, but by preaching discriminating truths.

*Third.* I move on, to notice their *inutility*.

1. *They are of no use to REGENERATE a man.* This is the work of God, and is accomplished by his Almighty power.

2. *They can be of no service before regeneration.* You may tell the blind to see, but that will never open their eyes; you may inform the dumb there are great advantages held out on the easy conditions of asking for them, but that will not invest them with the privilege of speech. Objects are of no use to the blind, nor language to the dumb, nor an estate to the dead. Nor are offers of grace any use to unregenerate men. But the covenant of grace imparts sight to the blind, ears to the deaf, and life to the dead; and by the blood of the everlasting covenant, the prisoners are sent forth, the lame leap as an hart for joy, and the stammerer speak plain.

3. *They are not of any use to regenerated persons, nor are they ever made to them.* To offer mercy to a person who has obtained it, is only to offer what he has got — an uncertain thing for a certain—a bird in the bush for one in the hand. Moreover to offer a person those things upon impossible conditions which he has as a free gift by covenant interest, is like offering an estate to the owner, provided he will but comply with certain terms. Beside, an estate is not *offered* to an heir at law, but is made over to him in a legal manner. It is not *offered* but *conveyed*. Spiritual mercies are not offered indiscriminately upon legal conditions, but are conveyed to the chosen family by the line of heirship. “If a son,” said Paul, “then an heir,” &c.

If they are of no use to neither the regenerated nor the unregenerated—the born nor the unborn—the living nor the dead, to what class of people can they be serviceable? Where are they to be found, and how are we to know them? What connection had they with the headship of Adam, and what relation to Christ, the chosen representative of all the high-born family? Now until there can be such a class of characters discovered, offers of grace will be of no other use than to harrass the elect in time, and to aggravate the misery of those who are left to themselves through all eternity.

*Lastly. Their ABSURDITY.*

1. If to offer the property of a person to men indiscriminately, when it was designed only for certain persons mentioned in the will, would be absurd; then offers of grace are absurd: because the treasures of grace are designed for certain individuals whose names are written in the *testamentary-covenant*. But it would be grossly absurd to offer a person's property to all, when it was given to some as a legacy.

2. If to offer upon conditions what was freely *given* is absurd, then offers of grace are absurd, because they represent that as conditional which was freely given in covenant transaction. But the former would be characterized as absurd, so must the latter, or all accuracy of idea be destroyed.