

3. If to offer things upon impossible terms is absurd, then offers of grace are so, because they are offered upon conditions which no man can perform; but it is absurd to offer things upon impossible terms, therefore offers of grace are absurd.

4. If it would be absurd to employ measures for the benefit of a certain class of people, which could only injure every body else, without benefiting those intended, then offers of grace must be regarded as absurd; but in the former instance it would be designated as absurd; I conclude it must in the latter.

5. If it would be absurd to offer things in time which require the alteration of things in eternity, in order to render the offers available, then offers of grace must be stamped with absurdity; because they require an alteration in the covenant of grace in order to place them upon the ground of *possible utility*. But the former would be absurd, because God is the Lord and change not; and so is the latter, for his covenant is ORDERED *in ALL THINGS and SURE*.

6. If it would be absurd to offer a person's property to any body as if there was *no will*, when the truth was, every thing would be disposed of according to the will of the testator, at a proper time, and by proper means, then offers of grace are absurd; because they represent things as if there was *no will*, but as if things were disposed of according to the good doings of the creature; when the fact is, no man can do spiritual good works before regeneration, and all spiritual blessings are disposed of in a covenant manner. Now in the case supposed it would be deemed sheer absurdity, and so it must in the latter by those who have their senses exercised to mark the agreement and discordance of things, and who are determined to let honest conviction guide their decisions.

Remarks. 1. I have not laboured to prove these six arguments, because they carry their own evidence with them. 2. That the different roots from which the Hebrew, *berith*, has been derived, and the different constructions of the greek, *diatheeke*, are so far from enervating the everlasting covenant, or obscuring any of its

features, that they actually exhibit it, in its various aspects, enlarge the field of perception, and cause the object inspected to vary its posture, for the present benefit of those whose interests it involve. 3. It will be obvious that the more the covenant of grace is studied, the more unscriptural and absurd offers of grace will appear. 4. When offers of grace and the covenant of grace are impartially compared, it will be found necessary to give up either one or the other; assuming, however, that we wish to follow the dictates of an unbribed conscience. 5. It will be evident, that all grace to human sinners is *covenant grace*. 6. That therefore *uncovenanted mercies* are unsanctified chimeras. 7. That all covenant grace is sure and *unconditional*, because God has said he will perfect, consummate, or finish his own covenant. 8. That faith and repentance are not conditions of the new covenant, because it has none to be performed by the creature. 9. Offers of grace must therefore fall to the ground in consequence of their being built upon the supposition of a conditional covenant.

THE SITUATION OF MANKIND.

The condition in which mankind is placed, must occupy an important connection with the dispensations of God. And there can be no doubt that if offers of grace are *true*, they must be adapted to the condition of those to whom they are tendered. If divine favours are offered and tendered, they must be offered to those who have *vision* adapted to the nature of the objects, a *sense* of their importance, a *capacity* to love them, and the *ability* to embrace them. Without these qualifications I am at a loss to conceive, how the Divine Being could introduce such a system without destroying the consistency of his character. For if there is no harmony in the relation between man's situation and the offers of grace, there can be no adaptation; and if no adaptation, no utility; and if no utility, no propriety; and if no propriety, no wisdom and prudence: and if not, it must be allowed, that either God has introduced a system which was framed in ignorance, and introduced without

judgment, or else that he is not the author of offered and unavailable mercy. To say that it was Adam's *duty* by the law of creation to accept the offers of mercy when none were made, is to affirm what no *wise* man will ever believe; because Adam's situation could not require the exercise of mercy, except he had been created a sinful miserable man. Offers of mercy therefore could not be made unto him, and as such he could not be under any obligation to accept them. Now if offers of grace do not arise out of the law of creation, they must out of some other law or covenant. This other law, if there is one, must arise out of a new relation, and be adapted to a new dispensation; and this new dispensation must be suited to the nature of this new relation: that is to say, the favours dispensed must agree with the nature and magnitude of the relation and situation of those for whom they are designed. We are therefore, taught to expect a conformity between offers of mercy and man's present condition. Let us then examine the point.

1. Has, or has he not, a visual organ corresponding with the nature of offered grace. The reader will perceive that this is one important enquiry, and must be viewed in connection with the subject of discussion. Here is a proper place to ask of what are the offers composed? It will be answered, grace in its various exercises—regeneration, pardon, justification, and all evangelical blessings. I enquire again—are these blessings *spiritual* in their *nature*? I may presume upon an answer in the *affirmative*. I then ask, must they not be viewed by a spiritual mind? or, can a carnal man discover spiritual things? The scripture says, he *cannot*. And if we appeal to scripture as an umpire, we ought to be satisfied with its decisions. And if we are, we can be at no loss on this subject, for we are assured that the things of the Spirit must be spiritually discerned, and that this the natural man cannot do; that is, he has no *spiritual perception*.

Mr. *Hinton*, in his theology, asks this question,—‘Is he (that is, *man*) so altered, that the motives addressed to him have lost either their suitableness or their suffi-

ciency? The whole of the discussion depends upon an answer to the enquiry.'—p. 137. On the same page, he observes, 'I am required to have a good disposition: and I am endowed with an apparatus which enables me to have one, namely, a power of discerning truths, which, if duly regarded, will infallibly produce it.' As to the 'apparatus,' does Mr. H. mean to say, that he is possessed of *natural faculties*; such as the understanding, will, memory, &c. and that he is capable of exercising these faculties on spiritual objects, or exposing them to such objects, in order for them to be acted upon, and then to act upon him so as to produce a 'good disposition?' I conceive such is his meaning. I would next enquire in what condition is this apparatus? Mr. H. seem to think a very sound one. He says it has sustained no *structural* mischief. Now, if Mr. H. had all the members of his animal system dislocated by a fall, and his reasoning faculties deranged, would he consider that any *structural* mischief had been produced? And would he think a person a very clever logician, who was gravely to argue, that the offers which were made to him were sufficient motives to induce him to run a race? and that nothing hindered him but his stubborn perverseness? He might probably think so, but this would be a proof of his derangement. But suppose Mr. H. was to view another person in such a condition, would he affirm that nothing more was necessary than the restoration of the man's senses? Or, supposing he had his senses but not the *disposition*, yet that if he properly disposed of his dislocated system, he would have the disposition, and that nothing more was necessary? Then as to the question on which the whole subject depends. 'Is he so altered that the motives addressed to him have lost either their suitableness or sufficiency?' The '*motives*'—assuming, which is all that can be done when ideas are concealed in ambiguous language, which is a mode that some people choose, who think they must be *deep* because they are *dark*, or profound because they are obscure; but, assuming, that by motives are designed the offers and tenders of salvation, if men will but repent and believe, or exercise their apparatus, and likewise

the threatenings of the law if they will persist in their obstinacy and unbelief; that is, if they will not *adjust, fix, and work* the apparatus. ‘Is man so altered that these motives have lost either their suitability or sufficiency?’ I answer, that such motives were never addressed to man before the alteration took place, and that therefore, they cannot be said to have *lost*, either their suitability or sufficiency. The question thus reduced to simple form, stands thus—are offers and tenders of grace either *suitable* or *sufficient*? Suitable to the condition of those to whom they are addressed, and sufficient to make unregenerate men gracious persons, or sufficient to make saints of sinners. I answer, NO; in my view they are NOT. What induce me to think so, are the following considerations. 1. He has no mental perception; and I cannot conceive, how any motives addressed to a person, can be either suitable or available if he has not the means of seeing it. “Mine *eye* also affecteth *my* heart,” says Jeremiah. But how the heart can be affected in a moral point of view, by what the mind cannot conceive, is what I believe few people will ever comprehend. I will allow, that man has the same apparatus he had in Eden; I will grant also, that this apparatus is capable of being adjusted and directed towards different objects; and I will further admit, that the faculties of the mind have sustained no structural injury, if by structural injury is meant the annihilation of them, or of any part of them. But while I make these concessions, I conceive, 1. That an apparatus cannot be a self-moving combination of materials. 2. That they must therefore be acted upon. 3. That their action will be according to the nature and impetus of the agent. 4. Allowing the disposition to be the agent, their action must agree with the nature of the disposition. 5. That which is the moving cause cannot be acted upon by that which is moved. The disposition cannot be acted upon by the apparatus, because the operations of the apparatus are supposed to be conducted by the disposition. 6. The apparatus or faculties, therefore, cannot possibly change the disposition. 7. And if not, offers of grace cannot be adapted to

answer the end proposed, because a change of disposition is said to be one great end designed.

But further, they are not *suitable*. For, 1. Man never had a *principle*, or disposition, suited to spiritual objects; and therefore, could not give the faculties a spiritual direction. What incline me to think thus, is, 1. A spiritual disposition must be produced by a spiritual principle; a spiritual principle is a spiritual blessing; and spiritual blessings were all given in Christ before the foundation of the world. We had all *natural* and *moral* blessings in *Adam*, *after* the world was founded, but *all* spiritual blessings before the foundations of the earth were laid. Spiritual blessings seem to be the result of pactional stipulations, and not the fruit of the law of creation. If Adam had this principle, how was it that he never knew of the headship of Christ? and how came he to lose it, and hide himself in the garden? and after he had lost it, (supposing that it could be lost) why did he not prefer the sheltering covert of the atonement to the thicket in paradise? If I mistake not, his duties and enjoyments arose out of the covenant of works, and not out of the covenant of grace. A covenant of *works* must look to natural principles for its fulfilment, and the covenant of grace must regard spiritual principles. Now Adam was not born under the covenant of grace, but created under the covenant of *works*. I conclude, therefore, that he had no spiritual, or supernatural blessings, and cannot help thinking but my conclusion is well supported; and if it is, the *suitableness* of offered mercy to carnal people cannot be pleaded for any longer. And then away go the scheme of offered mercy, Mr. H. himself being judge.

But 3. Supposing that my conclusion should not be so safe as I imagine it to be—I ask, do not the scriptures represent mankind in a situation, which must deny the suitability and utility of offered mercy? For, as I have said before, a man is without *sight*: “the election hath obtained it, and the rest were *blinded*.” Rom. xi. 7. “Having the understanding *darkened*, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance of them, because of the *blindness* of their heart.” Eph.

iv. 18. "Ye were sometime *darkness*, but now are ye light in the Lord." Eph. v. 8 No person will doubt but a mental blindness is intended, and as such no spiritual objects can be perceived. Now whether my eyes are destroyed, or whether they are sealed up by the eyelids, my darkness or blindness is complete; and what suitableness there could be between my eyes and corporeal objects, let suitable persons judge. If it was intended to work upon my mind, by the representation of objects, it would be obviously necessary to give me a seeing faculty, or restore that faculty to its functional office before the objects are represented; if not, there could be no suitableness between the objects and my condition. And it is plain, that there can be no more suitableness nor utility in offers of grace to blind sinners, than there would be in representing natural objects to people naturally blind. Should it be said, that only a *state* of darkness is intended, I answer, then the first thing necessary to render the motives suitable and sufficient, is to bring him out of darkness into marvellous light. There is no propriety nor utility in representing colours to a person enveloped in darkness.

2. *There can be no suitableness, nor utility in representing to a person what he has not the ability to discern nor understand.* Yet this is the case with sinners, because their understanding is *darkened*: "the natural man *understandeth* nor the things of the Spirit, neither can he *know* them, because they are spiritually discerned:" that is to say, he cannot know or understand those things of which he has no perception. He has no perception of spiritual things, therefore he cannot understand them; and if he cannot understand them, how can he consider of them? and if he cannot consider of them, where is either the suitableness or propriety, of submitting to his consideration, motives and things of which he has no right perception? And if they can only benefit him by his receiving them, and he cannot receive them without understanding them, where can be their sufficiency?

3. *If things are offered to me, and I have not the ABILITY to receive them, where will be their suitable-*

ness or sufficiency. But sinners have no ability to receive spiritual things by performing the conditions. Because, 1. No man can perform spiritual things until he is a spiritual person. 2. No man is spiritual until he is regenerated. Faith and repentance are spiritual exercises arising from a gracious disposition which God has freely bestowed. "By grace," says Paul, "are ye saved, *through* faith." What is faith? The instrument of perception and appropriation. From whence does it arise? Is it our own natural production? No, it is "*not of ourselves.*" Who then, and how come we to possess it? "*It is the GIFT of God, and not of works; not of our own production, lest any man should boast.* But how is this proved? "We are his *workmanship*, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." The drift of this part of Paul's argument is to show, that no good works, that is, no spiritual works can precede a new principle or state of grace. That faith as a principle cannot be produced by us, because we are not workmen but the workmanship of God. Now this proves, 1. That unregenerate men have no faith. 2. That they cannot produce it. 3. That therefore they cannot exercise it. 4. That as such they cannot believe and repent. 5. That therefore offers of grace, and tenders of salvation, can be of no use to carnal people—'neither suitable nor sufficient.' Nothing can be clearer than these deductions, and nothing can operate more directly against the sentiment of offered grace.

It is of no use for Mr. H. to say, there is only a moral injury sustained by the fall, and that man is able to do all that God requires. I ask the Rev. gentleman, what was the *character* of Paul's inability—he *could not* do the things that he would. Will Mr. H. say, it was a *moral* inability when he was the subject of a new creature? He had the *will*, and therefore could not lack the principle nor disposition. To say, he *might* if he *would* is a flat contradiction to the apostle. And according to Mr. H.'s notion, it could not be a *natural* inability, because I should imagine Paul had an 'apparatus,' as much adapted to moral objects as Mr. H. But something was the matter with the apostle's apparatus, for it seems

he could not make it act. If it betrayed no symptoms of *structural* injury, it certainly did of *functional* disease. He could not do as he pleased with it at all events. The obvious meaning is this, the new creature, with which the apostle identified himself, sometimes struggled with a power and weight which baffled its utmost exertions: and this at once overthrows the notion of man's inability consisting *only* in the *will*. To say, that a man could if he would, when he cannot have the will, is like saying, he could if he could, which is arguing in a circle. I wonder that Mr. H. and those of whom he seem to be the organ, should cleave with such tenacity to *identical* propositions.

A sinner may have his defects pointed out, his true character represented, the ground of his condemnation clearly explained, his real situation proved, the nature and method of salvation submitted to his notice, and urged upon his attention; but whenever he is *exhorted* to spiritual acts, that very moment his imbecility is not only questioned but *denied*, or the exhortation be characterized as insignificant and absurd. For if a proposal or overture is made to all mankind in the gospel, it must be an offer of advantage or benefit; and if so, it must be made upon those grounds by which it is attainable; because, a proposal, however good in itself, can offer no advantage to me if I am not prepared to meet its conditions.

Now these conditions must be either *naturally* moral or *evangelically* spiritual, or neither of them, or else both of them united. The first supposition is overthrown by a long train of facts and reasoning; the second, is destroyed by its own attributes; the third, is a nameless nothing; and the fourth, as untenable as its complexity would be undefinable. We must deny that spiritual mercies are offered upon conditions which are not of a spiritual character, because that would be disregarding the relation, order, character, and fitness of things; but we cannot suppose that the Divine Being can ever do that. And we must be fully convinced that if they are made on any other conditions than what can be accomplished by the exer-

cise of a natural disposition, they can be of no avail, because the conditions can never be fulfilled. To deny this, is to equalize and confound nature and grace, and to pour contempt on the nature and fitness of things. If it is affirmed, that natural men can perform spiritual things, it will be found necessary to deny facts, ridicule observation, despise experience, and pervert the word of God. Reason must be insulted, the understanding abused, and feebleness, fickleness and folly, must occupy the place of strength, stability, and sapiency in the divine economy. And according to my conception, men must do one of these things—submit to the consequences—have recourse to theological *finesse*, or abandon the sentiments of offered grace. Now to my mind the consequences are *insufferable*, the subterfuge is *despicable*, therefore the last must be *adviseable*; I may add it is *lawful*, and perhaps *honourable*.

The following arguments are thought to be conclusive.

1. If colours are not sufficient to produce a new state of feeling, when exhibited before blind people, than offers of grace are insufficient to produce spiritual feeling; the reason is, because the latter are addressed to the understanding, and the understanding is blinded. A mere natural man can no more perceive *spiritual things*, than a blind man can perceive natural things. But colours are not sufficient to produce a new state of feeling when exhibited before blind people, therefore offers of grace are not sufficient to produce spiritual feeling in natural men.

2. If representing by language invaluable advantages to people, who had not the sense of hearing, would not be *suitèd* to alter their disposition or course of living, offers of grace cannot be suited to produce a saving change in carnal men, because they are *deaf*. Isa. xlii. 18. xliii. 8. To hear things that are morally good and profitable, they have but little inclination, for their ears are *heavy*, but to hear things that are spiritual and divine, they have no *capacity*. But in the first case the motives addressed by language would be unsuitable and insufficient, and by the rule of comparison they must be so in the last.

3. If exhortations, exhibitions, illustrations, denunciations, &c. would be insufficient to make a dumb man speak, then offers of grace are insufficient to answer the ends proposed, because sinners are told they must ask for the offers, they must pray, repent, and reform. Now sinners cannot speak spiritually, and to give spiritual language is the work of God, and represented as a new covenant gift. Zeph. iii. 9, 10. "Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my *suppliants*, even the daughter of my dispersed shall bring my offering." See also Isa. xix. 18. Now, as in the former case the motives would be insufficient and unsuitable, so in the latter case. A dumb person must have his mouth opened before he can speak, and we know it is God's work to open the mouth of the dumb, as much as it is to open the ears of the deaf, or the eyes of the blind.

4. If natural objects are not suited, nor are sufficient to act upon *dead* people, then offers of grace are not suited nor sufficient to act upon carnal men in a spiritual manner. The reason is, they are dead in trespasses and sins; they have no more consciousness of spiritual things than dead people. Eph. ii. 1. But in the case supposed, the motives would be useless and insufficient, and as the comparison is scriptural and complete, offers and tenders of mercy, must, by fair consequence, be so too.

5. If offering money, friends, and estates, would be insufficient to raise a person from the dead, then offers of grace must be insufficient to raise a person out of his grave of sin and death; the reason is, because in both cases it requires the infusion of life, which is an act of divine power. But in the first instance, the motives addressed would be unsuitable and insufficient, and therefore I imagine they must in the second.

6. If food placed before the dead is not suited to the condition of the dead, neither are offers of grace suited to the condition of unquickened persons; because in both cases there is an absence of sensibility; natural in

the one, and spiritual in the other. But food is not suited to the dead, therefore offers of grace are not suited to carnal men.

We are in the habit of smiling at the custom of heathen nations, where the practice of placing food upon the tombs of the dead is pursued with unremitting diligence and religious fervour; but however we may admire the feelings which accompany the rite, we know their motives are founded in ignorance, and therefore carefully abstain from such practice ourselves. Now why should we laugh at them if we act quite as ridiculous ourselves? And this must be the case, if sinners are in the exact situation as represented by scripture, and we are determined to place before them spiritual provision; and further, not contented with merely placing it before them, we actually *offer* it to them, exhort them to partake of it, and even threaten them if they do not. Perhaps it will be said, 'the parallel will not agree in every respect.' Very likely not; similitudes seldom run on all fours. But though there may not be a *circumstantial* agreement in the case before us, there is, nevertheless, a *substantial* one. For 1. a sinner is as destitute of spiritual life, as a dead body is of animal life. 2. His moral powers are buried in trespasses and sins, like a dead body in the earth. 3. He is as unconscious of spiritual things as a dead man is of natural things. 4. A dead person cannot use the members of his body, although death may not have produced any *structural* mischief. Neither can a sinner exercise his moral powers in a spiritual manner, although the absence of moral feeling may have produced no *structural* mischief. 5. Omnipotent power is necessary to quicken a dead body, and a dead sinner. A sinner is to all intents and purposes senseless, helpless, thoughtless, and motionless in a spiritual point of view, and is therefore fitly represented by the emblem of death. I hope it will not be thought that the apostle has been so hasty and inhuman, as to bury mankind before they are dead. If he has, need we be surprised that there are so many *resurrection-men*, and that they should be so anxious to extract people from their

graves who have been buried alive? Could I think the apostle had been so incautious or so mistaken, I would certainly make an effort to get the necessary qualifications for myself. But I must say that I entertain no such ideas at present, and this much I can affirm, that it was not *my* case. I was dead enough, and buried deep enough, and bound fast enough, to have remained for ever in a state of unconsciousness, had it not have been for the quickening and delivering voice of him who said, 'Lazarus, come forth' — 'loose him and let him go.'

I here anticipate an objection; it is this, the prophet was commanded to prophecy among the dry bones, and there is no more unfitness in preaching to dead sinners than there was in prophesying to the dry bones. This may be thought ingenious, but the objection vanishes, when it is recollected, 1. That their death was not of a moral but political character, and that the reanimation of the bones was an emblem of their assuming a political appearance. 2. There is a great difference between prophesying of future prosperity to people who are rational, and capable of understanding natural things, and in offering salvation to those who have no capacity. 3. The prophet only declared facts to be *credited*, and not offered things to be *received*. 4. The means by which political life was infused, was not by offers, but by his *spirit*. We have no account of Ezekel's offering to quicken them provided they would get up and perform certain conditions before they were quickened, which should have been the case to have made it tell in favour of offered grace; but there is much to illustrate the preaching of sovereign grace; for 1. He prophesied to the *dead*; the gospel is preached to men who are dead in trespasses and sins. 2. His prophecy was a statement of what God had said, so is the gospel. 3. His prophecy contained no offers that I can find, neither does the gospel. 4. He was commanded to prophecy, but not to offer the matter of his prophecy. Ministers are commanded to preach the gospel, but they are no where commanded to *offer* the blessings of the gospel 5. Pro-

phecying was honoured as the means of restoration, and the gospel is honoured as the means of salvation. Hence the gospel is said to be preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. God will always honour his own commands, because they are founded in wisdom, given in authority, preserved by his care, and accomplished by his agency. But when, and where does God honour offers of mercy? It does not seem clear to me, that God has ever called any person by such means. That many people have been called savingly, where salvation is tendered to all conditionally, I have no doubt; but that any one ever fulfilled the conditions is erroneous to believe, and that they have ever been the means of conveying spiritual life to the dead, is extremely questionable, and in my thoughts excessively improbable. The advocates for offered grace will probably ridicule this idea, and talk about presenting me with an innumerable multitude of cases to subvert it. We are often taken with *numbers*, but let the case be thoroughly sifted, and if there are any that will stand the test, they will resemble the proud Assyrian's army,—be so few, that a *child* may write them. Among the ranks of Fullerites and Wesleyans whom I have heard mention the loving kindness of the Lord in calling them by his grace, I have never heard one of them, even so much as *hint* about their being called by offers of grace, and much more affirm that to be the case.

I have no doubt but what cases might be *got up*, in order to prove the usefulness of offered grace in regeneration; and I have no doubt but there might be found some persons who would come forward in a voluntary manner to strengthen the evidence, but then the question is, could they offer sufficient evidence to be safely relied on? It will perhaps be said, I require an unnecessary *quantum* of evidence, and that I should admit the same cases with less evidence on other points towards which I might be favourably inclined. To this I reply, I require no more evidence than what any fair examiner has a right to claim. I should require evidence both internal and external in proof of the

person's being a new creature in Christ Jesus, and then I should require a statement of the circumstances connected with the commencement of such a blessed work. And if I can find a single instance, in which it can be proved—fairly and indisputably proved, that a person has been regenerated by performing faith and repentance, or while in the act of exercising them, I will immediately admit that salvation stands upon different ground than what I have hitherto imagined, and that it may possibly be administered by general offers and invitations. 'But it may be the means of awakening or rousing their minds to seek after salvation.' But so may other things, which in themselves are very unlawful; and if every thing ought to be used for the conversion of God's people which in any instance have been the means of leading to sober reflection, iniquity would be established by a *law*. And then men ought to swear, lie, cheat, rob, defraud, &c. because these are circumstances that have led to men's conversion. And if so, good men who use every measure to convert and regenerate their neighbour or the heathen, ought to use them too. What a topic for speculation! but no sober minded men would urge the use of such measures, nor have they any ground to plead for offers of grace as being useful to bring the family out of darkness into marvellous light. The objections I have been examining seem to cut a different way than could have been designed, by those who have had the temerity to use them.

REGENERATION.

I shall define regeneration in a restricted sense, to be, *an immediate act of divine power put forth upon an elect sinner, who is dead in trespasses and sins, by which act, a principle of spiritual life is implanted in the soul, and the person become a new creature in Christ Jesus.* My limits will not allow a copious illustration of this important article. I shall therefore only aim at two things; to give the true idea of regeneration in as concise a manner as I possibly can,

and then contrast it with offers of grace. I submit the following proposition.

The nature of regeneration exclude all preparatory exercises of the person, wrought upon by divine power. This exclusive proposition, I will support and illustrate by scripture and metaphor. The first passage I shall notice is 2 Pet. i. 4. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by them ye might be partakers of the divine nature." I conceive that by the *divine nature* is meant that divine principle which is brought into the soul at regeneration, called by another apostle the *seed of God*. Now we are said to be made *partakers* of this, which seem to imply, its absence, and its positive communication. What I wish particular to be noticed, is, that regeneration consist in something being brought into the soul by divine power, which was not there before. The reader will notice,

1. That *the principle of grace is called the DIVINE NATURE*. This is no doubt to mark its author, spirituality and tendency, and also to point out the difference between the holiness we possessed in Adam and the holiness we possessed in Christ.

2. *This divine nature must be incorruptible*. It can never be destroyed by force nor decayed by duration. Whatever is divine must be *imperishable*.

3. This divine nature can never be lost. The hand that introduce continue to shield it, and the good effects began will be carried on and finished. Observe, if Adam was the subject of the *divine nature*, how came it to perish in his bosom, or to be lost through inattention? Had he been the subject of the same grace as the believer in Christ, he would no doubt have been as *secure*. He could no more have fell from his innocence than a saint can fall from the situation in which he is placed by regenerating grace. The reason why Adam *fell*, and his *believing* posterity *stand*, is, because Adam possessed nothing *more* than natural holiness, and the believer nothing *less* than the *divine nature*.

4. *It seems to be a free and undeserved communica-*

tion. Made partakers, saith the apostle. This seems to suggest that it is given to the *destitute*, and that it is given as a rich and sovereign favour ; he has *made* us partakers. He viewed the condition and *conferred* the favour. Not *offered* it.

5. *This communication was not merited, claimed, or governed, by either faith, or repentance, or both united.* The promises of the everlasting covenant seem to be the source and cause of divine grace being implanted. Covenant promises were given that we might be partakers of the divine nature ; and if our safety was settled by the covenant of grace in eternity, how can it be determined by offers of grace in time ?

Lastly. *The creature is entirely passive, and the principle is introduced by DIVINE POWER.* “According as his *divine power* has given unto us,” says Peter, “all that pertain unto life and godliness.” *Mark*, the principle is given and implanted by divine power, and not offered upon the conditions of human power being exercised. That the creature cannot be the cause, nor the means, nor in any manner assist *divine power* in regeneration, observe the following things. 1. The power of God is perfect in itself, and therefore can need no assistance. 2. The sinner is ‘without strength,’ and therefore cannot render any. 3. He is dead, and therefore is as passive in his regeneration, as he will be in his resurrection. I will only observe if this statement is true, and divine power is the only active cause of regeneration, the point to which I have been directing the reader’s attention is gained, and offers of grace, duty-faith, and general invitations, must fall to the ground.

The second scripture which I shall notice, is John i. 12. “Which were born, not of blood, (*gr. bloods*) nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Assuming that regeneration is the same in all ages, the following remarks seem pretty clear.

1. *Regeneration is a work wrought upon the sons of God.* Spiritual relationship is the ground of all spiritual communications and favours.

2. *That their new birth is not owing to any cause*

of an earthly or carnal nature. Not by the influence of long and dignified ancestry, for they were born not of *bloods*. Nor yet by physical efforts, for the will of the *flesh*, is explicitly denied having any influence whatever in their divine birth. Nor can the greatest efforts of the greatest men signified by the *will of man*, (i. e. the *great* man) be of any use. It is a work *too* great for the greatest man. Men may speak great swelling words about their free-will, and fine doings, but nothing short of omnipotent power will ever form a man for God's glory.

3. *That it is entirely of God.* Jehovah is the *sole* cause and agent in this *great* and *mighty* work. He is the *primeval* cause, the *procuring* cause, and the *procreative* cause. They were born, *not* of blood, *nor* of the will of the flesh, *nor* of the will of man, *BUT*—what a *turn*! what a reverse! what a blow at the system of offered grace! This *but*, loosens all the materials, and destroys all the strong holds of arminianism. *But* of God. What a thunderbolt has Christ hurled at all such carnal doctrine. Arminianism and Fullerism must receive a most terrible concussion; for it 'smites the *great* house with breaches, and the little house with clefts,' and renders them both alike *untenable*. I will now illustrate this subject by two or three metaphors.

First. Regeneration is compared to creation. "The new man," said the apostle, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iii. 24. It will be seen that this metaphor illustrates the point before us in a very easy and forcible manner. The reader cannot fail to notice the following things.

1. To create, is to bring something into existence that had not a being before. Regeneration, if it answers to the figure, must denote something brought into *existence*.

2. When God created the heavens and the earth, he did not work upon matter that was in existence before, this would have been *modifying* the heavens and the earth, and not *creating* them. When God regenerates a sinner, he does not work *old nature* into