

# CHAPTER 15

## INTRODUCTION TO 1 CORINTHIANS 15

The apostle, in this chapter, recommends the Gospel, and gives a summary of it, proves the resurrection of Christ, and by various arguments establishes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and answers objections made unto it. He also sets forth the glory there will be upon the bodies of risen saints, and the change that will be made on living ones; and concludes with an exhortation to perseverance in faith and holiness. As his chief view is the doctrine of the resurrection, he introduces this by recommending the Gospel in general, or by observing that this is a principal doctrine which should be remembered and retained, because it was the Gospel which he had preached, and they had received, and had hitherto persevered in, (~~465D~~1 Corinthians 15:1) and besides was essential to salvation, and the means of it, by which they would be saved, if they retained it, except their faith in it was in vain, as it would be should they drop it, (~~465D~~1 Corinthians 15:2). And moreover, the apostle had received it by divine revelation, and had faithfully delivered it to them, and therefore it became them to hold it fast; the sum of which were the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, agreeably to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, (~~465B~~1 Corinthians 15:3,4) and then he reckons up the eyewitnesses of the latter, as first Peter, then the twelve disciples, then five hundred brethren at one time; next James, and all the apostles; and last of all himself, (~~465D~~1 Corinthians 15:5-8) of whom he speaks in a very diminishing style, describing himself as an abortive, affirming himself to be the least of the apostles, and unworthy to be in that office, or bear that name, giving this as a reason for it, because he had been a persecutor of the church of Christ, (~~465D~~1 Corinthians 15:9) wherefore he ascribes the dignity he was raised to entirely to the free grace of God; and yet he magnifies his office, and observes, that the gifts of grace bestowed upon him were not in vain, and that he was a more abundant labourer than the rest of the apostles, and had more success; but then he freely declares that all he had, and all he did, were by the grace of God, (~~465D~~1 Corinthians 15:10). But however, not to insist upon the difference between him and other apostles; he observes, that the subject matter of their ministry was the same, namely, a suffering and

risen Saviour, and who was also the object of the faith of the believing Corinthians, (~~4651~~ 1 Corinthians 15:11) wherefore the apostle proceeds to blame some among them for denying the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, seeing it was a principal part of the ministry of the Gospel, that Christ was risen from the dead, (~~4652~~ 1 Corinthians 15:12) whereas that would not be true, if there is no resurrection of the dead, (~~4653~~ 1 Corinthians 15:13) but that Christ is risen, is not only evident from the testimonies of eyewitnesses before produced, but from the absurdities that follow upon a denial of it, as that the preaching of the Gospel was a vain thing, and faith in it also, (~~4654~~ 1 Corinthians 15:14) yea, the apostles would be no other than false witnesses of God, testifying that he raised up Christ, when he is not risen, if the dead rise not, (~~4655~~ 1 Corinthians 15:15) which argument is repeated, (~~4656~~ 1 Corinthians 15:16) and other absurdities following such an hypothesis are added; as besides what was before mentioned, that faith becomes hereby a vain thing, such as have believed in him must be in an unregenerate state, and both under the power and guilt of sin, (~~4657~~ 1 Corinthians 15:17) nay, not only so, but such who are dead in Christ, or for his sake are lost and perished, (~~4658~~ 1 Corinthians 15:18) and even those of the saints who are alive must be the most unhappy and miserable of all mortals, (~~4659~~ 1 Corinthians 15:19). But inasmuch as it is a certain point that Christ is risen, it is as clear a case that the saints will rise, which is argued from Christ being the firstfruits of those that are fallen asleep in him, which secures their resurrection to them, (~~4660~~ 1 Corinthians 15:20) and from his being their covenant head, as Adam was to his posterity; so that as all his offspring died in him, all the saints will be quickened by Christ, death coming by the one, and the resurrection by the other, (~~4661~~ 1 Corinthians 15:21,22). And whereas it might be objected, if this is the case, why did not the saints, who were dead before the resurrection of Christ, rise from the dead when he did, or quickly after? To which it is answered, there is an order observed agreeable to the firstfruits and lump: Christ, the firstfruits, is first, and then they that believe in him, (~~4662~~ 1 Corinthians 15:23) and this will not be until the second coming of Christ, and the end of all things, when all the elect of God shall be gathered in; and then they will be raised and presented to the Father complete in soul and body, and all rule and authority among men will cease, (~~4663~~ 1 Corinthians 15:24). But in the meanwhile Christ must reign until all enemies are subject to him, and the last of all that will be destroyed by him is death; which is another argument proving the resurrection of the dead; for if death is destroyed, the dead must rise, and never die more, (~~4665~~ 1 Corinthians 15:25,26) That all things

will be put under the feet of Christ, every enemy, and so death, is proved from a testimony out of (<sup><4986></sup>Psalm 8:6). But to prevent a cavil, and secure the honour of God the Father, he is excepted from being subject to him, (<sup><4657></sup>1 Corinthians 15:27) so far is he from being so, that the Son shall be subject to him, and appear to be so as Mediator, by giving up the account of things to him; the end of which is, that God, Father, Son, and Spirit, may be all in all, (<sup><4658></sup>1 Corinthians 15:28). The resurrection of the dead is further argued from the sufferings of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, for the sake of him and his Gospel, and particularly this doctrine of it, which are first figuratively expressed under the notion of a baptism, (<sup><4659></sup>1 Corinthians 15:29) and then more literally and clearly signified by being in jeopardy, and exposed to danger of life continually, (<sup><4650></sup>1 Corinthians 15:30) and which is exemplified in the case of the apostle himself, who was liable to death daily, (<sup><4651></sup>1 Corinthians 15:31) of which he gives a particular instance in his fighting with beasts at Ephesus. Moreover, another absurdity would follow upon this, should this doctrine not be true; and that is, that a loose and licentious life, such an one as the Epicureans live, would be encouraged hereby, (<sup><4652></sup>1 Corinthians 15:32) from which the apostle dissuades; partly from the pernicious effect of it, which he shows by a passage cited out of one of the Heathens, (<sup><4653></sup>1 Corinthians 15:33) and partly from its being contrary to a righteous conversation, and from the stupidity, sinfulness, and ignorance, which such a course of life, upon such principles, declares, (<sup><4654></sup>1 Corinthians 15:34). And then the apostle proceeds to answer questions, and remove objections relating to the resurrection of the dead; which questions and objections are put, (<sup><4655></sup>1 Corinthians 15:35) which suppose the thing to be impossible and absurd, and to which answers are returned, first by observing, that grain which is sown in the earth first dies before it is quickened, and that it does not rise up bare grain as it was sown, but in a different form and shape, with additional circumstances greatly to its advantage; and has a body given by the power, and according to the pleasure of God, and suitable to the nature of the seed; by which is suggested, that in like manner the body first dies, and then is raised; and though the same body, yet it is raised in a different form with different qualities, by the power, and according to the will of God; and therefore seeing there are every year such innumerable instances in nature, of dead and putrefied grain being revived, it need not be thought incredible, impracticable, and absurd, that God should raise the dead, (<sup><4656></sup>1 Corinthians 15:36-38) and that the body, though the same shall rise different from what it was when laid in the grave, is illustrated by the

difference of flesh in men, beasts, fishes, and birds; which, though all of it flesh, differs from each other; and so will the flesh of the body, in the resurrection, differ from the flesh it is now clothed with, (~~4653~~1 Corinthians 15:39). And the same is further illustrated by the difference there is in the heavenly and earthly bodies, in the sun, and moon, and stars, and in one star from another; all which have respect to the same, showing not any difference there will be in risen bodies among themselves, but in risen bodies from what they now are, (~~4650~~1 Corinthians 15:40,41) as appears by the accommodation of these similes to the resurrection of the dead; and which differences are clearly expressed, the present bodies being corrupt, dishonourable, weak, and natural, the risen ones being incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual, (~~4652~~1 Corinthians 15:42-44). And that the risen bodies will be spiritual, the apostle proves, by comparing Adam and Christ together; the one had a natural body, the other had a spiritual body after his resurrection, (~~4655~~1 Corinthians 15:45) the order of which is given, the natural body of Adam was before the spiritual body of Christ, (~~4656~~1 Corinthians 15:46). Their original is also taken notice of, the one being of the earth, the other from heaven, (~~4657~~1 Corinthians 15:47) and so accordingly the offspring of the one, and of the other, are different; the offspring of the first Adam are earthly like him, and have a natural body, as he had; the offspring of the second Adam are heavenly, as he was, and will have a body like to his; for as they bear the image of the first man, from whom they naturally descend, by having a natural body like to his, so they must bear the image of the second man, the Lord from heaven, by having a spiritual body fashioned like to his glorious body, (~~4658~~1 Corinthians 15:48,49). And there is an absolute necessity for this, seeing bodies, in their present state, and case, as natural, mortal, and sinful, cannot be admitted into the possession of the kingdom and glory of the Lord, (~~4651~~1 Corinthians 15:50) but inasmuch as all will not die, and so be raised again, but some will be alive at the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, a difficulty arises how the living saints will come by spiritual bodies, in order to inherit the kingdom of God, without which they cannot inherit it: this difficulty the apostle removes, by making known a secret never divulged before, that at the same time the dead will be raised, which will be at the sounding of a trumpet; in a moment, at once the living saints will be changed, and become immortal and incorruptible, as the raised ones, (~~4651~~1 Corinthians 15:51,52) for so it must be that these corruptible and mortal bodies be clothed with incorruption and immortality, either by the resurrection of them, or a change upon them, when either way they will

become spiritual, (~~4153~~ 1 Corinthians 15:53). And hereby some prophecies in Isaiah and Hoses will have their accomplishment, (~~4154~~ 1 Corinthians 15:54,55) on the mention of which, some things in them are explained, as that sin is the sting of death, and the law is the strength of sin, which regard the prophecy in Hosea, (~~4155~~ 1 Corinthians 15:56) and the victory obtained over death, which is mentioned in the prophecy of Isaiah, is ascribed to God, who gives it through Christ, to whom thanks are returned for it, (~~4157~~ 1 Corinthians 15:57). And the chapter is concluded with an exhortation steadfastly to abide by the cause of Christ, and in his service; to which the saints are encouraged from this consideration, that they will find their account in it, (~~4158~~ 1 Corinthians 15:58).

**Ver. 1.** *Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel*, etc.] The apostle here passes on, and proceeds to a new subject, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which some in this church denied; and which he undertakes to prove, establish, and defend; and in order to lead on to it, observes, that what he was about to declare, make known, or put them in mind of, was no other than the Gospel he had formerly preached to them, they had received, professed to stand in, and were saved by, unless their faith was in vain. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead he calls “the Gospel”, that being a most important doctrine, and a fundamental article of it. The resurrection of Christ from the dead made a considerable part in the ministry of the apostles, to the grief of the Sadducees among the Jews, to the scorn of the Gentile philosophers, and to the faith, hope, and comfort of Christians: this is the sum and substance of the word of faith, or doctrine of the Gospel, upon which the whole depends; (see ~~5008~~ Romans 10:8,9) and the resurrection of the saints is connected with it, and assured by it. This indeed is the Gospel, good news, glad tidings that the bodies of the saints shall be raised again, and made like to the glorious body of Christ; and being reunited to their souls, shall live with him to all eternity; and were this out of the Gospel, it would not be Gospel, or good news; it would be an idle story, faith would be a vain thing, and hoping and believing Christians of all the most miserable. Moreover, says the apostle, the Gospel I declare, is

*which I preached unto you*; meaning, when he first came among them, and which had been so very useful to them for conversion and consolation; and therefore if he himself, or an angel from heaven, was to preach any other doctrine, it was to be rejected; and hence, much less should the false teachers be regarded: yea, adds he, it is the doctrine

*which also you have received*; when first enlightened and converted, with all gladness and joyfulness, with all readiness and cheerfulness, in the love of it, and by a full assent to it; and therefore having had such an experience of it, should not now depart from it: nay, he further says,

*and wherein ye stand*; as he hoped they did, at least it was what they ought to have done, and doubtless was the case of the majority of them, and whose example it became the rest to follow.

**Ver. 2.** *By which also ye are saved*, etc.] It was the means of their salvation, and had been made the power of God unto salvation to them. Salvation is inseparably connected with true faith in Christ as a Saviour, and with a hearty belief of his resurrection from the dead, which is the earnest and pledge of the resurrection of the saints; and because of the certainty of it in the promise of God, through the obedience and death of Christ, and in the faith and hope of believers, which are sure and certain things, they are said to be saved already. To which the apostle puts in the following provisos and exceptions; the one is,

*if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you*; or rather, “if ye hold fast, or retain”; that is, by faith, the doctrine preached to you, and received by you, particularly the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; for the salvation that is connected with it does not depend upon the strength of the memory, but upon the truth and steadfastness of faith: it is the man that perseveres in the faith and doctrine of Christ that shall be saved; and everyone that has truly believed in Christ, and cordially embraced his Gospel, shall hold on, and out to the end; though the faith of nominal believers may be overthrown by such men, as Hymenaeus and Philetus, who asserted, that the resurrection was past already; but so shall not the faith of real believers, because the foundation on which they are built stands sure, and the Lord has perfect knowledge of them, and will keep and save them. The other exception is,

*unless ye have believed in vain*: not that true faith can be in vain; for that is the faith of God’s elect, the gift of his grace, the operation of his Spirit; Christ is the author and finisher of it, and will never suffer it to fail; it will certainly issue in everlasting salvation: but then as the word may be heard in vain, as it is by such who are compared to the wayside, and to the thorny and rocky ground; and as the Gospel of the grace of God may be received in vain; so a mere historical faith may be in vain; this a man may have, and not the grace of God, and so be nothing; with this he may believe for a

while, and then drop it: and since each of these might possibly be the case of some in this church, the apostle puts in these exceptions, in order to awaken the attention of them all to this important doctrine he was reminding them of.

**Ver. 3.** *For I delivered unto you first of all*, etc.] Not only in the first place as to order; but among the chief and principal things, as the words will bear to be rendered, this was insisted on in his ministry; this was one he after relates, even a crucified Christ, or the doctrine of his dying for the sins of his people; and which he mentions to lead on to his resurrection; which he meant to improve, and does improve, in a very strong manner, in favour of the resurrection of the saints. This doctrine of a crucified Saviour, which he at first determined only to make known among them, and did make known, was what he fully and faithfully delivered to them, as he had received it:

*that which also I received*; not from men, but from Christ; for from him he had the doctrines of the Gospel, as well as the ordinances of it; and he delivered nothing to be believed and practised, but what he had received, and which ought to be the practice and conduct of every Gospel minister; whatever they have received they should deliver, and nothing else: and especially the following important doctrine,

*how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures*; that is, of the Old Testament, the writings of Moses, and the prophets, according to Scripture promises, Scripture types, and Scripture prophecies; particularly (~~Gen~~ Genesis 3:15 ~~Psa~~ Psalm 22:1-31 ~~Isa~~ Isaiah 53:1-12) (~~Dan~~ Daniel 9:24-27) which declare that his heel was to be bruised, that he should be brought to the dust of death, should pour out his soul unto death, and be stricken and cut off in a judicial way, and that for sins; not his own, but for the sins of his people, in order to atone for them, procure the pardon of them, take them away, make an end of them, and abolish them; all which he has done, as the Gospel declares, and the apostle affirms; and thereby was accomplished what Moses and the prophets did say should come to pass. Every promise, type, and prophecy recorded in the law, in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning his sufferings and death, had their fulfilment in him; nothing was more clearly prefigured and foretold, and nothing more punctually and fully answered.

**Ver. 4.** *And that he was buried*, etc.] That is, according to the Scriptures; for as he died and rose again according to the Scriptures, he was buried according to them; which speak of his being in hell, in “sheol”, in the grave,

and of his making his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, (<sup><1960></sup>Psalm 16:10 <sup><2809></sup>Isaiah 53:9) and which had their accomplishment through Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, who begged the body of Jesus, wrapped in linen, and laid it in his own new tomb. And besides these Scripture prophecies of his burial, Jonah's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly was a type of it, and according to which our Lord himself foretold it, (<sup><0124></sup>Matthew 12:40). Now since this was prophesied of, and typified, and had its actual accomplishment, it was very proper for the apostle to take notice of it, both to confirm the certainty of Christ's death, and the truth of his resurrection, which his death and burial are mentioned, in order to lead on to, and next follows:

*and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures:* that he should rise again from the dead was very plainly hinted or expressed in several prophecies which speak of the rising of his dead body, of its not being left in the grave so long as to see corruption; and which therefore could not be in it more than three days; and of his lifting up his head after he had drank of the brook by the way; of his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, which suppose his resurrection, (<sup><2359></sup>Isaiah 26:19 <sup><1960></sup>Psalm 16:10) (<sup><3985></sup>Psalm 68:18 110:1,7). And that he should rise again the third day, is not only suggested in (<sup><2002></sup>Hosea 6:2) but was prefigured by the deliverance of Isaac on the third day after Abraham had given him up for dead, from whence he received him, in a figure of Christ's resurrection; and by Jonah's deliverance out of the whale's belly, after he had been in it three days. The Jews take a particular notice of the third day as remarkable for many things they observe <sup>f315</sup>, as

“of the third day Abraham lift up his eyes, (<sup><0124></sup>Genesis 22:4) of the third day of the tribes, (<sup><0428></sup>Genesis 42:18) of the third day of the spies, (<sup><0126></sup>Joshua 2:16) of the third day of the giving of the law, (<sup><0196></sup>Exodus 19:16) of the third day of Jonah, (Jonah 1:17) of the third day of them that came out of the captivity, (<sup><1585></sup>Ezra 8:15) of the third day of the resurrection of the dead, as it is written, (<sup><2002></sup>Hosea 6:2) “after two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.”

From which passage, it is clear, that they under stood the prophecy in Hosea of the resurrection of the dead; and it is observable, that among the remarkable third days they take notice of, are the two instances of Isaac's and Jonah's deliverances, which were Scripture types of Christ's



resurrection. From which observations they establish this as a maxim <sup>f316</sup>, that

“God does not leave the righteous in distress more than three days.”

That Christ did rise again from the dead, in pursuance of those prophecies and types, the apostle afterwards proves by an induction of particular instances of persons who were eyewitnesses of it.

**Ver. 5.** *And that he was seen of Cephas*, etc.] Or Simon Peter; for Cephas was a name given him by Christ, (<sup><4042></sup>John 1:42). This was not another Cephas, one of the seventy disciples, as Clemens suggests <sup>f317</sup>, but the Apostle Peter himself, to whom it is certain the Lord appeared. Not that he was the first person by whom Christ was seen after his resurrection, for he first appeared to Mary Magdalene, (<sup><4169></sup>Mark 16:9) but the testimony of the women the apostle omits, and it seems as if Peter was the first of the men that saw Christ when risen, (see <sup><4264></sup>Luke 24:34). Whether he was one of the disciples that went to Emmaus, to whom Christ joined himself, and entered into discourse with, is not certain; it should rather seem, that the appearance here referred to was when he was alone;

*then of the twelve*; though there were then but eleven of them, Judas being gone from them, and having destroyed himself; and at the first appearance of Christ to them, there were but ten present, Thomas being absent; and yet because their original number, when first chosen and called, were twelve, they still went by the same name; (see <sup><4324></sup>John 20:24 <sup><4423></sup>Genesis 42:13). The appearance or appearances here referred to are those in (<sup><4309></sup>John 20:19,26). The Vulgate Latin reads the “eleven”; and so the Claromontane exemplar.

**Ver. 6.** *After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once*, etc.] Not at, or near Jerusalem, for the number of the disciples that were together there, made but about an hundred and twenty, (<sup><4415></sup>Acts 1:15) but in Galilee, where Christ, in the days of his flesh, had most chiefly conversed, most frequently preached and wrought his miracles, and where the number of his disciples and followers were very large: here he promised his disciples to go before them, and show himself to them after his resurrection, as he accordingly did, (<sup><4162></sup>Matthew 26:32 2:7,16,17). And this being signified by the apostles to the brethren there, it is no wonder that there was such a number of them gathered on that occasion:

*of whom the greater part remain unto this present*; and so might be personally applied unto for the truth of this, was it necessary; it being but about five or six and twenty years ago at the writing of this epistle:

*and some were fallen asleep*; were dead, as it might be reasonably thought there were among so many, and in such a length of time; though doubtless these had surviving friends, relations, and acquaintance, to whom they had communicated this important case, and who were ready to attest what they had heard them in the most solemn manner declare.

**Ver. 7.** *After that he was seen of James*, etc.] Not James the son of Zebedee, and brother of John, though he was seen by him with other disciples, (<sup><430></sup>John 20:19 21:1,2) who was now dead when the apostle wrote this, having been killed by Herod many years ago, (<sup><411></sup>Acts 12:2) and so not quite so proper a witness to be mentioned; but James the son of Alphaeus, and brother of our Lord, a man of great fame and credit with the Jews, and still living, and therefore a proper and pertinent evidence. This appearance was made unto him when alone; and though the Scripture elsewhere makes no mention of it, there is no room to doubt it, since the apostle here affirms it. As for the account of the appearance of Christ to this James, immediately, after his resurrection, recorded by Jerom as he found it in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, it seems to be fabulous. His account is this <sup>f318</sup>,

“the Gospel written according to the Hebrews, which was lately translated by me into the Greek and Latin tongues, and which Origen often uses, relates, after the resurrection of the Saviour, that when the Lord had given the linen cloth to the priest’s servant, he went to James, and appeared to him: for James had sworn that he would not taste any bread from the time he had drank the cup of the Lord, until he saw him rising from the dead. Again, a little after, bring me, says the Lord, the table and the bread; and it is immediately added, he took the bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave it to James the just, and said unto him, my brother, eat thy bread, for the son of man is risen from the dead.”

*Then of all the apostles*; at the Mount of Olives, when he led them out of Jerusalem, as far as Bethany, blessed them, and was parted from them, and ascended to heaven out of their sight, (<sup><280></sup>Luke 24:50,51) so that this was the last appearance of him on earth after his resurrection.

**Ver. 8.** *And last of all he was seen of me also*, etc.] Either when the apostle was caught up into the third heaven; or when he was in a trance in the temple at Jerusalem; or rather at the time of his conversion, when he not only heard the voice of Christ, but saw him in the human nature; for he expressly says, that he appeared unto him, and he calls it the heavenly vision, (<sup>4466</sup>Acts 26:16,19). This was a sight of Christ in heaven, not on earth, such an one as Stephen had, and was a corporeal one; otherwise it would have been impertinent to have mentioned it, with the rest of the ocular testimonies of Christ's resurrection. Not that this was the last time that Christ was seen, or to be seen, for he was seen after this by the Apostle John in a visionary way, and will be corporeally seen by all the saints at the last day; but Paul was the last of the apostles and brethren before named, and he had his vision of Christ after them all; and perhaps it might be a more clear, full, and distinct one than any of the rest, as the last things are sometimes the most excellent. The apostle adds, as of

*one born out of due time*: or "as an abortive"; not that he was really one, but like one: several learned interpreters think the apostle refers to a proverbial way of speaking among the common people at Rome, who used to call such supernumerary senators in the times of Augustus Caesar, who got into the senate house by favour or bribery, "abortives"<sup>f319</sup>, they being generally very unworthy persons; and therefore calls himself by this name, as being in his own opinion a supernumerary apostle, and very unworthy of that office: though others rather think that he refers to a "posthumous" birth, to one that is born after the death of his father; because that the rest of the apostles were all chosen, and called, and sent forth, whilst Christ, their everlasting Father, was living on earth, but he not till after his death, resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven: but it seems best to understand him of an abortion, a miscarriage, or birth before its time; and may respect either the manner of his conversion, which was done both suddenly, immediately, and at once, by a sudden light from heaven, when he little thought of it, and had no expectation of it, which is commonly the case of abortions; and also powerfully and irresistibly, being effected by mighty and efficacious grace, as births before the full time are often occasioned by blows or outward force, and are violent extrusions of the foetus; or else the state and condition in which he was when Christ was first seen by him: as to his bodily state, as soon as ever he saw the light about him, and the object by it, he was struck blind, and continued so some days, like an hidden untimely birth, and like an infant that never saw light,

(~~1016~~ Job 3:16). And as to his spiritual estate, his soul was like an unshapen foetus, Christ being not yet formed in him, his image stamped on him, and his grace implanted in him; yea, it may be applied to the present apprehensions he had of himself, and which he expresses without a figure in the next verse, though in a beautiful manner, with a view to what he here says, when he observes that he was “the least of the apostles, and not meet to be called” one; as an abortive, or one born before its time, is imperfect in one respect or another, is not come to its proper size and shape, and scarcely is to be reckoned in the class and number of men.

**Ver. 9.** *For I am the least of the apostles*, etc.] Referring not to the littleness of his stature, but to the figure before used, and as expressing not the opinion of others concerning him, but the true and real sense he had of himself, for which he himself gives the strongest reason that can be given; and by “apostles” he means not only the twelve, but all other ministers of the Gospel that were sent forth by Christ to preach it: nor need this be wondered at, when he says, that he was less than the least of all saints, (~~1018~~ Ephesians 3:8) though when his person and doctrines were traduced by false teachers, and attempts were made to disgrace his ministry, and render it useless, in vindication of himself, and without vanity, he does not stick to assert, that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles, (~~1019~~ 2 Corinthians 11:5 12:11) and yet here adds,

*that am not meet to be called an apostle*; not only to be one, but to bear the name of one. No man was meet or fit for such an office of himself; none of the apostles were any more than himself; but his meaning is, that though he was chosen, and called, and qualified by the gifts and grace of God for this office, yet he was unworthy to be called by the name of an apostle of Christ, for the reason following,

*because I persecuted the church of God*: he not only consented to the death of Stephen, the first martyr, and held the clothes of them that stoned him; but he made havoc of the church, haling men and women to prison, and continued to breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord; and had letters of commission from the high priest in his pocket, to seize any of this way at Damascus, and bring them bound to Jerusalem, when Christ met him in the way, and was seen by him: according to his own account, he shut up many of the saints in prison, gave his voice against them when they were put to death, punished them oft in every synagogue, compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceeding mad

against them, persecuted them to strange cities; (see ~~400~~ Acts 7:1-9:43 26:1-32). This he mentions both for his own abasement and humiliation, and to magnify the grace of God, to which he ascribes all he was, had, and did, as in the next verse.

**Ver. 10.** *But by the grace of God I am what I am*, etc.] As he was what he was by the grace of God in a private capacity, upon a level with other Christians, being a chosen vessel of salvation, not by works, nor on account of faith, or any holiness of his, but by grace; being regenerated, called, sanctified, justified, pardoned, and adopted by it; being a believer in Christ through faith, as a gift of God's grace, and having a good hope of eternal glory the same way; so he was what he was, as a minister of the Gospel, as an apostle, as in that high office purely by the grace of God: he was not made one by men, nor by his education, learning, and industry, nor through any merits of his own, but by the free favour and sovereign will of God, bestowing on him gifts and grace, by which he was qualified for apostleship, and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ:

*and his grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain*; by "grace", in the former clause, is meant the good will and free favour of God, from whence all the blessings of goodness arise; here the gifts of grace, particularly such as qualify for the ministry. For what qualifies men for the preaching of the Gospel is not human learning, nor natural parts, nor internal grace, neither separately nor altogether: but peculiar gifts, which lie in an understanding of the Scriptures, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and in an aptitude to explain and teach them to the edification of others: and these gifts are not of nature, nor acquired by art and industry, but are of grace; are gifts freely bestowed by God, and are not in vain, at least should not be; they are not to be wrapped up in a napkin, and hid in the earth; they are not to be neglected, but to be stirred up and improved by prayer, meditation, reading, constant study, and frequent use, as they were by the apostle; and by a divine blessing were not without their use, to the good of souls, and the glory of God. Hence as what he was, so what he had, was by the grace of God, and likewise what he did, as follows:

*but I laboured more abundantly than they all*; meaning, not the false apostles, who were loiterers, and not labourers, but the true apostles of Christ; not than them all put together, but than anyone of them singly considered; he laboured in the Lord's vineyard, in the word and doctrine, preaching in season and out of season; he travelled over a greater part of

the world, preached oftener, and wrote more than any of the rest; was the instrument of converting more souls, and he planted more churches, endured more hardships and sufferings than any of the other apostles;

*Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me;* he attributes all to the grace of God, and nothing to himself; it was the grace of God that made him an apostle of Christ, and preacher of the Gospel; it was that which being bestowed on him qualified him for it; it was that which enabled him to labour and toil, to do and suffer all he did, and which gave success to all his ministrations. He is exceedingly careful to magnify the free favour of God, and the gifts of his grace; and means not the grace that was in him, but the grace that was without him, though with him.

**Ver. 11.** *Therefore whether it were I or they,* etc.] By whom Christ was seen first or last, we were all eyewitnesses of him; or whether I am the least, and others the chief of the apostles; or whether I have laboured more abundantly than they all, this matters not:

*so we preach;* we agree in our ministry to preach Christ, and him only, and with one heart and mouth assert, that he died, was buried, and rose again the third day:

*and so ye believed;* these several truths relating to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Thus the apostle, after he had made a digression upon his own character, as one of the witnesses of Christ's resurrection, returns to the subject he set out upon in the beginning of the chapter, in order to lead on to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which he proves by the resurrection of Christ, in the following verses. One of Stephen's copies read, "so we believed"; and so the Ethiopic version seems to have read; (see ~~4TH~~ 2 Corinthians 4:13).

**Ver. 12.** *Now if Christ be preached that he arose from the dead,* etc.] As he was by the Apostle Paul, when at Corinth, and by all the rest of the apostles elsewhere.

*How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?* Who these were is not certain, whether Hymenaeus and Philetus, whose notion this was, were come hither, or any of their disciples; or whether they were some of the followers of Simon Magus and Cerinthus, who denied the resurrection; or rather, whether they were not Jews, and of the sect of the Sadducees, who though they believed in Christ, retained their old principle, that there is no resurrection of the dead, cannot be affirmed: however, it is

certain that they were such as were then at Corinth, and went under the Christian name; and it is highly probable were members of the church there; and who not only held this notion privately, but broached it publicly, saying, declaring, affirming, and that openly, before the whole church, what were their opinions and sentiments: it was indeed but some of them, not all that were chargeable with this bad principle, which the apostle asks how, and with what face they could assert, then it had been preached, and so fully proved to them, that Christ was risen from the dead; and if so, then it is out of question that there is a resurrection of the dead; for their notion, as it is here expressed, was not only that there would be no resurrection of the dead, but that there was none, nor had been any: though the apostle's view is also to prove the future resurrection of the dead, and which is done by proving the resurrection of Christ, for his resurrection involves that of his people; for not only the saints rose in, and with Christ, as their head representatively, and which is the sense of the prophecy in (~~3012~~ Hosea 6:2) but because he is their head, and they are members of him, therefore as sure as he the head is risen, so sure shall the members rise likewise; nor will Christ's resurrection, in a sense, be perfect, until all the members of his body are risen: for though the resurrection of Christ, personally considered, is perfect, yet not as mystically considered; nor will it till all the saints are raised, of whose resurrection Christ's is the exemplar and the pledge: their bodies will be raised and fashioned like unto Christ's, and by virtue of union to him, and as sure as he is risen, for he is the firstfruits of them that slept. Besides, as he became incarnate, obeyed, suffered, not for himself, but for his people, so he rose again on their account, and that they dying might rise also; which if they should not, one end at least of Christ's resurrection would not be answered: add to this, that the same power that raised Christ from the dead, can raise others, even all the saints; so that if it is allowed that Christ is raised, it need not be thought incredible that all the dead shall be raised; and particularly when it is observed, that Christ is the efficient, procuring, and meritorious cause of the resurrection from the dead, as well as the pattern and earnest of it.

**Ver. 13.** *But if there be no resurrection of the dead*, etc.] If there is no such thing as a resurrection of any, if the thing is not possible, if it never has been, is, or will be true in fact:

*then is Christ not risen.* The apostle argues from a general, to a particular; from the general resurrection of the dead, to the particular resurrection of Christ; and from a negation of the one, to a negation of the other; for what

does not agree with the whole, does not agree with the part; and what is true of the whole, is true of the part; but if the resurrection of Christ is not true, many are the absurdities that must follow upon it, and which the apostle next enumerates.

**Ver. 14.** *And if Christ be not risen*, etc.] If this is a truth, and must be taken as granted, as it must be, if there is no resurrection at all:

*then is our preaching vain*; false, empty, delusory, unprofitable, and useless; not only that part of it which more especially concerns the resurrection of Christ, but even the whole of it; preaching Christ as the Son of God, which was the subject of the apostle's ministry, and which he set out with, is to no purpose, if he is not risen; for one considerable proof of his sonship depends upon his resurrection, which is the declaration of it; for who can believe him to be the Son of God, if he is detained under the power of the grave? one reason why he could not be held of death, and the pains and cords of it, any longer than was necessary, and was his pleasure, was because he was the Son of God, as well as surety of his people, who had paid the whole debt: so the preaching of his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, is of no use and avail, if he has not abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, first in himself, and then for his people:

*and your faith is also vain*; either the grace of faith, by which they believed on Christ, or the doctrine of faith; or since this is repeated, (<sup><4657></sup>1 Corinthians 15:17) the one may be meant here, and the other there. The doctrine of faith they had given their assent to, not only respecting the resurrection of Christ, but any other truth relating to his person and office, must be vain and empty, and without any foundation; even that faith which is one, uniform, harmonious, and consistent, which was once delivered to the saints; which they are to stand fast in, to strive, contend, and fight for, and not part with at any rate, upon any account whatever; and yet this, and the preaching and belief of it, are useless and insignificant things, if Christ is not risen; such wretched absurdities must follow upon the denial of that truth.

**Ver. 15.** *Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God*, etc.] The apostles were chosen to be witnesses of the resurrection of Christ; he appeared to them, and was seen by them for this purpose; and they were sent into all the world, to bear their testimony to this truth, which they accordingly did: now if Christ is not risen, they have bore a false testimony; and what



greater scandal, or a more odious character can be fixed upon a man, than to be a false witness? but God forbid that such an imputation should be fastened upon the holy apostles of Christ, who cannot be thought to have any sinister end in publishing such a falsehood; who were sure on account of declaring it, and abiding by it, to meet with nothing but hatred, reproach, persecution, poverty, and death; but this is not all, nor the worst; for if they are false witnesses, they are false witnesses of God; they are of his suborning; he selected them as witnesses; he must put this lie into their mouths, and send them into the world under his authority to publish it; than which to say nothing can be thought of more blasphemous and execrable; and yet this must follow, upon a denial of the resurrection of Christ:

*because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be the dead rise not*; it may be read, “we have testified against God”, as the Vulgate Latin does; for as it must be bringing a false testimony from God, so it must be bearing a false testimony against him, to say that he raised Christ from the dead, when he is not risen; which must be the case, if there is no resurrection of the dead.

**Ver. 16.** *For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised.*] This is a repetition of the argument in (<sup><415B></sup>1 Corinthians 15:13) made partly to show the importance of it, and partly to observe other absurdities, following upon the conclusion of it.

**Ver. 17.** *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain*, etc.] As before in (<sup><415A></sup>1 Corinthians 15:14) not only the doctrine of faith, but the grace of faith in Christ; even that faith, which is the faith of God’s elect; the pure gift of his grace, and the operation of his power; which Christ is the object, author, and finisher of; and which he prays for, that it may not fail; and to which salvation is so often promised in the sacred Scriptures; and yet is vain, than which nothing can be more absurd: it follows,

*ye are yet in your sins*: in a state of nature and unregeneracy, under the power and dominion of sin, being neither regenerated nor sanctified; for regeneration is owing to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and is a branch of the power, virtue, and efficacy of it: but if Christ is not risen, there never was, is, or will be any such thing as regeneration and sanctification; things, if ever wrought by the Spirit, are done by him in virtue, and in imitation of the resurrection, as well as the death of Christ: moreover, if Christ is not risen, his people are under the guilt of their sins; there is no expiation nor remission of them, nor justification from them; for

though he was delivered as a sacrifice to atone for their offences, and his blood was shed to obtain the forgiveness of their sins, yet he must be raised again for their justification, and be exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, as to give repentance, so remission of sins, or they will never enjoy these blessings; for notwithstanding his sufferings and death, if he lies under the power of the grave, they must remain under the power and guilt of sin, and be liable to everlasting punishment for it.

**Ver. 18.** *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ*, etc.] That is, who are dead, and have died in Christ: death is often represented by a sleep, and that more than once in this chapter; and doubtless with a view to the resurrection, which will be an awaking out of it, since it will not be perpetual: some understand this of such only who were fallen asleep, or died martyrs for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; as Stephen, James the brother of John, and others; but rather it designs all such as die in Christ, in union with him, whether in the lively exercise of faith, or not; of whom it must be said, if Christ is not risen, that they

*are perished*: soul and body; for if there is no reason to believe the resurrection of the dead, there is no reason to believe the immortality of the soul, or a future state, but rather that the soul perishes with the body, and that there is no existence after death: though should it be insisted on that the soul survives, and shall live without the body to all eternity, it must be in a state of misery, if Christ is not risen, because it must be in its sins; and neither sanctified nor justified, and consequently cannot be glorified, so that the whole may be said to be perished; the body perishes in the grave, the soul in hell; but God forbid that this should be said of those, who have either died for Christ, or in him: can it be that any that are in Christ, that are united to him, one body and spirit with him, should ever perish? or those that are asleep in him be lost? no, those that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him at the last day, who shall be for ever with him, and for ever happy.

**Ver. 19.** *If in this life only we have hope in Christ*, etc.] The object of a believer's hope is not any creature, man, or angel; nor any creature enjoyment, as gold and silver; nor any creature righteousness, moral, legal, and civil; nor any external privilege, or profession of religion; but Christ alone as a surety, Saviour, and Redeemer; his person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and fulness: and what they hope for in him are, all grace, and the supplies of it; the forgiveness of their sins, the justification of their persons,

eternal life and salvation; grace here, and glory hereafter; for all which they have great reason and encouragement to hope in him; but if their hope in him was only in this life, or whilst this life lasts; if they had not hope in death, that they should live again, and after death for the resurrection of their bodies; or if they hoped in Christ only for the things of this life, or as the Arabic version renders it, “if we from Christ, and by him, expect happiness in this world only”; if our hope in him is bounded with this life, and confined to the things of it, and does not reach to the things of another life, the things of eternity, the invisible glories of another world, to be enjoyed in soul and body;

*we are of all men the most miserable*; which may have respect not only to the apostles, though eminently true of them, who had little of the comforts of this life, being continually exposed to hardships and persecution for the sake of Christ; were set forth as a spectacle to angels and men; were accounted the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; and suffered many indignities, and great reproach and affliction, and that for asserting the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; but is also true of all others that hope in Christ, and believe in him; for these not only deny themselves the pleasures, honours, and profits of this world, but are exposed continually to the hatred, reproach, and persecution of it; they are chastised by God as other men are, that they may not be condemned with the world, and yet they must be condemned, if Christ is not risen; they are harassed and distressed by Satan, who follows them with his temptations and suggestions, which are so many fiery darts, which give them great pain and uneasiness, when others are unmolested by him; they groan under a body of sin they carry about with them, and desire and long to be unclothed, that they might be clothed upon with glory and immortality; and yet these very desires and earnest longings after a blessed eternity do but add to their misery, if there is no foundation for them, and they will at last be frustrated: these are the sad conclusions, and wretched absurdities that must follow, upon the denial of the resurrection of the dead, and of Christ.

**Ver. 20.** *But now is Christ risen from the dead*, etc.] As was before proved by ocular testimonies, and before preached and asserted; and now reassumed and concluded, from the glaring contradictions, and dreadful absurdities that follow the denial of it:

*and became the firstfruits of them that slept*; who were already fallen asleep; respecting chiefly the saints that died before the resurrection of

Christ; and if Christ was the firstfruit of them, there is no difficulty of conceiving how he is the firstfruits of those that die since. The allusion is to the firstfruits of the earth, which were offered to the Lord: and especially to the sheaf of the firstfruits, which was waved by the priest before him, (<sup><R31D></sup>Deuteronomy 26:2, <sup><R31O></sup>Leviticus 23:10,11) and to which Christ, in his resurrection from the dead, is here compared. The firstfruits were what first sprung out of the earth, were soonest ripe, and were first reaped and gathered in, and then offered unto the Lord; so Christ first rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and presented himself to God; as the representative of his people; for though there were others that were raised before him, as the widow of Sarepta's son by Elijah, the Shunammite's son by Elisha, and the man that touched the prophet's bones when put into his grave, and Jairus's daughter, the widow of Naam's son, and Lazarus by Christ; yet as these did not rise by their own power, so only to a mortal life: but Christ, as he raised himself by his own power, so he rose again to an immortal life, and was the first that ever did so; he was the first to whom God showed, and who first trod this path of life. The firstfruits were the best, what was then ripest, and so most valuable; Christ is the first, and rose the first in dignity, as well as in time; he rose as the head of the body, as the firstborn, the beginning, that in all things he might have, and appear to have, as he ought to have, the pre-eminence. The firstfruits sanctified the rest of the harvest, represented the whole, gave right to the ingathering of it, and ensured it; Christ by lying in the grave, and rising out of it, sanctified it for his people, and in his resurrection represented them; they rose with him, and in him; and their resurrection is secured by his; because he lives, they shall live also. The firstfruits were only such, and all this to the fruits of the earth, that were of the same kind with them, not to tares and chaff, to briars and thorns; so Christ, in rising from the dead, is only the firstfruits of the saints; of such as are the fruits of his death and of his grace, who have the fruits of his Spirit in them, and are filled with the fruits of righteousness by him; just as he is the firstborn from the dead, with respect to the many brethren, whom he stands in the relation of a firstborn: once more, as the allusion is particularly to the sheaf of the firstfruits, it is to be observed, that that was waved before the Lord, the morrow after the sabbath, (<sup><R31I></sup>Leviticus 23:11) which, as the Jews <sup>f320</sup> interpret, was the morrow after the first good day, or festival of the passover; the passover was on the fourteenth day of the month; the festival, or Chagiga, on the fifteenth, and which, in the year that Christ suffered, was a sabbath day also; and the morrow after that, the sheaf of the firstfruits was waved; now

Christ suffered on the passover, rested in the grave on the seventh day sabbath, and on the morrow after that, rose from the dead, the very day that the first fruits were offered to the Lord: so that the allusion and phrase are very appropriately used by the apostle.

**Ver. 21.** *For since by man came death*, etc.] The first man, by sin, was the cause of death; of its coming into the world, and upon all men, by which corporeal death is here meant; though the first man also by sin brought a moral death, or a death in sin on all his posterity; and rendered them liable to an eternal death, which is the just wages of sin; but since the apostle is treating of the resurrection of the body, a bodily death seems only intended:

*by man came also the resurrection of the dead*; so God, in his great goodness and infinite wisdom has thought fit, and he has so ordered it, that it should be, that as the first man was the cause of, and brought death into the world, the second man should be the cause of the resurrection of life. Christ is the meritorious and procuring cause of the resurrection of his people; he by dying has abolished death; and by rising from the dead has opened the graves of the saints, and procured their resurrection for them, obtained for them a right unto it, and made way for it: and he is the pattern and exemplar, according to which they will be raised; their vile bodies will be fashioned, and made like to his glorious body; and whereas both in life and in death they bear the image of the first and earthly man, in the resurrection they will bear the image of the second and heavenly one: he also will be the efficient cause of the resurrection; all the dead will be raised by his power, and at the hearing of his voice; though the saints only will be raised by him, in virtue of their union to him, and interest in him, being members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

**Ver. 22.** *For as in Adam all die*, etc.] The apostle here shows who he meant in the former verse, by the one man the cause of death, and by the other the author of the resurrection of the dead, and that he intended Adam and Christ; all men were in Adam seminally, as the common parent of human nature, in such sense as Levi was in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedek met him, and in him paid tithes unto him; and they were all in him representatively, he being the federal head of all his posterity, and so a type and figure of Christ that was to come; and being in him, they all sinned in him, and so died in him, the sentence of death passed on them in him; they became subject to a corporeal death, which has ever since

reigned over mankind, even over infants, such who have not sinned after the similitude of his transgression; this was the doctrine of the Jewish church; (see Gill on “<sup>4812</sup>Romans 5:12”), to which may be added one testimony more; says <sup>f321</sup> one of their writers,

“by the means of the first Adam **l kl hty m hsnqn**, “death was inflicted by way of punishment on all”.”

*even so in Christ shall all be made alive*: not made spiritually alive, for Christ quickens whom he will; not all in this sense, some die in their sins; nor are all entitled to an eternal life; for though Christ has a power to give it, yet only to those whom the Father has given to him; it is true indeed, that all that are in Christ, chosen in him and united to him, are made alive by him, and have the gift of eternal life through him; but the apostle is not speaking of such a life, but of a corporeal one: to be quickened or made alive, is with the Jews, and other eastern nations, a phrase of the same signification with being raised from the dead, and as the context here shows; and not to be understood of the resurrection of all men, for though there will be a resurrection of the just and unjust, yet the one will be the resurrection of life, and the other the resurrection of damnation; now it is of the former the apostle here speaks, and expresses by being made alive: and the sense is, that as all that were in Adam, all that belonged to him, all his natural seed and posterity, all to whom he was a federal head, died in him, became mortal, and subject to death through him; so all that are in Christ, that belong to him, who are his spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he is a covenant head, and representative, shall be raised to an immortal life by him; or as all the elect of God died in Adam, so shall they all be quickened, or raised to life in and by Christ.

**Ver. 23.** *But every man in his own order*, etc.] Not of time, as if the saints that lived in the first age of the world should rise first, and then those of the next, and so on to the end of the world; nor of dignity, as that martyrs should rise first in the order of martyrs, and preachers of the word in the order of preachers, and private Christians in the order and rank of private Christians; or of age, as the elder first, and then the younger; or of state and condition, as married persons in the order of married persons, and virgins in the order of virgins; these are all foreign from the sense of the words; the order regarded is that of head and members, the firstfruits and the harvest. There seems to be an allusion to the ranging and marshalling of the Israelites, everyone by his “own standard”; which both the Targums of

Onkelos and Jonathan render *hysqj l* [ , “by or according to his own order”: and so the Septuagint *κατα ταγμα*, the word here used; and the sense is, that every man shall be raised from the dead, according to the head under which he is ranged and marshalled. Christ the head is risen first; next all those that are under him, as an head, will rise from the dead; the dead in Christ will rise first; and then a thousand years after that, those who are only in their natural head, by whom death came to them, and have lived and died in a natural estate, will rise last; but as the apostle is only upon the resurrection of the saints, he carries the account and observes the order no further than as it concerns Christ and his people:

*Christ the firstfruits*; he rose first in order of time, dignity, causality and influence; (see Gill on “~~4139~~ 1 Corinthians 15:20”).

*afterwards they that are Christ’s*; not immediately after; for now almost two thousand years are elapsed since the resurrection of Christ, and yet the saints are not raised; and how many more years are to run out before that, is not to be known; but as there was an interval between the firstfruits, and the ingathering of the harvest; so there is a considerable space of time between the resurrection of Christ as the firstfruits, and the resurrection of his people, which will be the harvest; and that will be at the end of the world, according to (~~4139~~ Matthew 13:39) the persons who shall rise first and next after Christ, are they that are his; who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and were given to him by his Father as his spouse, his children, his sheep, his portion, and his jewels; who were purchased and redeemed by his blood, are called by his grace and regenerated by his Spirit, and who give up themselves to him, and are possessed by him: and the interest that Christ has in them here expressed, carries in it a strong argument of their resurrection; which may be concluded from their election in Christ, which can never be made void; from the gift of their whole persons to Christ by his Father, with this declaration of his will, that he should lose nothing of them, but raise it up at the last day; from his redemption of their bodies as well as their souls; from the union of both unto him; and from the sanctification of both, and his Spirit dwelling in their mortal bodies as well as in their souls: the time when they will be raised by Christ is,

*at his coming*; at his second and personal coming at the last day; then the dead in Christ will rise first, and immediately; and he will judge the quick and dead, those that will be found alive, and those that will be then raised

from the dead: when this will be no man knows; yet nothing is more certain, than that Christ will come a second time; and his coming will be speedy and sudden; it will be glorious and illustrious, and to the joy and salvation of his people; since their bodies will then be raised and reunited to their souls, when they, soul and body, shall be for ever with the Lord. The Vulgate Latin reads the words thus, “they that are Christ’s, who have believed in his coming”; both in his first and second coming; but there is nothing in the Greek text to encourage and support such a version and sense.

**Ver. 24.** *Then cometh the end*, etc.] Or “after that the end”, the end of all things; either at the close of the thousand years, when the wicked dead will be raised last, and the final state of all men will openly take place; the end of the righteous will be peace and everlasting joy, and an uninterrupted communion with Christ, and enjoyment of life eternal, of the ultimate glory, and consummate happiness in soul and body; and the end of the wicked will be destruction and death, everlasting punishment in hell, where will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth for evermore: or at the beginning of the thousand years; immediately upon Christ’s second and personal coming, will be the end of the world; the heavens shall pass away, the elements shall melt, and the earth and all its works be burnt up; though these shall not be annihilated or destroyed, as to their being and substance, but only as to their present form and qualities; they shall be renewed, out of them shall arise new heavens, and a new earth, whereon righteous persons, and only righteous persons, will dwell, even all the righteous that will be raised at Christ’s coming, or shall then be bound alive, where they shall reign with him during the thousand years; and then there wilt be an end of preaching the Gospel, and of administering ordinances, there being no more elect souls to be gathered in; nor will saints stand in need of edification and comfort from such means; then will also be the end, the accomplishment of all the purposes, promises, and prophecies of God, relating to the state and condition of his church and people in all the periods of time, and to their complete glory and happiness; the number of God’s elect in regeneration, sanctification, and glorification will now be complete, the saints will be all perfected, and the church be as a bride prepared and adorned for her husband; and their salvation in soul and body consummate, there wilt be nothing wanting; then that which is perfect will be come, their bodies being raised and reunited to their souls, and both with the Lord: so the word “end” denotes the accomplishment, completion,



and perfection of things; (see <sup><42257></sup>Luke 22:37) ( <sup><5106></sup>Romans 10:4). Moreover, there will now be an end of all sin and sorrow of the saints; of all troubles and afflictions, inward or outward, and of death itself; and also of the kingdom of Christ, in its present form and manner of administration: the kingdom or church of Christ will not consist then of nominal and real Christians, of foolish and wise virgins, hypocrites and saints, but only of the latter; nor will it be governed by such laws and ordinances as now; nor will these be in the hands of such officers, as pastors and teachers, as at present, who are appointed to explain, enforce, and execute them: and this end of all things at the coming of Christ, will be

*when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father*; not the kingdom of nature, which he has as the Son of God, as God equal with the Father, in right of nature, and upon the foot of creation, all being made by him; and which kingdom reaches to all creatures, angels, and men; this he did not receive from his Father, nor is he in it subordinate to him, but rules and works conjunctly with him in it; nor is he accountable to him in the administration of it; nor will he ever deliver it up to him: nor the kingdom of glory, which was prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world, is freely given to them by their Father, which they are called unto, and have a meetness for it, and a right unto it; this Christ has in his hands for them, and will not deliver it up to his Father, but introduce the heirs of it into it, quickly upon his coming; but the mediatorial kingdom is here meant, the kingdom of saints, over which Christ is appointed and set as King; even the whole church and general assembly of the firstborn, written in heaven. These were all given to Christ, put into his hands, and made his care and charge by his Father; and he undertook to preserve, protect, and save them; and had, as Mediator, all power in heaven and in earth, and everything subservient to support his kingdom and interest as such, given him; and he has been from the beginning of the world ruling in the midst of his enemies, subduing the people under him, and causing his people in the day of his power to be willing to serve him; writing his laws in their hearts, putting his Spirit within them, to cause them to walk in his statutes and keep his judgments; saving them out of the hands of their enemies, protecting and keeping them in safety, and providing every good thing for them; and continually delivering one or another of them from the power of darkness, and translating them into his own kingdom; and now having completed the number of them, in whose hearts he has reigned by his Spirit and grace, he will deliver them up to the Father from whom he

received them; even everyone of them; all the children he gave unto him, and all of them; their bodies as well as their souls being now raised from the dead, as it was his Father's declared will they should be, when he gave them to him; and they will be delivered up and presented by him to his Father, perfectly holy, entirely faultless, and without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and now this does not suppose that he will then cease to reign over his church and people; for, as the Father is the everlasting King, and reigned in and over the church, whilst this kingdom was in the hands of Christ, so Christ will continue to reign over it, when he shall have delivered it to the Father; he will no more cease to reign then, than the Father does, during the present administration of the government of the church; Christ will then be so far from ceasing to reign, that he will reign more visibly and gloriously than ever, though in a different manner to what he does now; now he rules over his people in the midst of his enemies, but then he will rule in the midst of his saints; now he reigns in their hearts by his Spirit, and through the use of the word and ordinances, but then he will reign in person among them, displaying the glory of his majesty, without the use of such means, signs, and symbols. Nor does this imply any inferiority in Christ, as God, to the Father; since this is to be understood of him as Mediator, who as such is the Father's servant, and a righteous and faithful one he is, who will give a good account of the persons committed to his care and government, and of his administration; and in which sense it will be allowed the Father is greater than he; but this no way militates against his proper deity, and equality with the Father. The Ethiopic version, contrary to all copies and other versions, reads, "when God the Father shall have delivered up his own kingdom". The Jews <sup>f322</sup> speak of

"ten kings that have ruled, from one end of the world to another; the first King is the holy and blessed God, the second Nimrod, the third Joseph, the fourth Solomon, the fifth Ahab, the sixth Nebuchadnezzar, the seventh Cyrus, the eighth Alexander the Macedonian, the ninth will be the King Messiah, according to (<sup>2025</sup>Daniel 2:35) and of the tenth King they say, "then shall the kingdom return to its author"; or to him that was the first King, and he shall be the last; as is said, (<sup>2346</sup>Isaiah 44:6, <sup>3849</sup>Zechariah 14:9)."

and this will be,

*when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power;* which since it is expressed in such universal terms, may very well be thought to

reach to, and include all sort of rule, authority, and power whatever; when this time and state of things take place, all civil rule, authority, and power, will cease; even that which is now of God, and to which we are to be subject for the Lord's sake, and for conscience sake; and which is now encouraged and supported by Christ, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice; this will be pulled down and utterly destroyed by him, the stone cast out of the mountain without hands; when the kingdom and the greatness of it will be given to him and to his saints; when the kings and princes of the earth will be no more, have no more rule and authority among men, but be upon a level with the meanest peasants, and shall be brought to the tribunal of Christ, and be judged by him: then also will all ecclesiastical rule, authority, and power be laid aside; there will be no more apostles, prophets, evangelists, nor bishops, elders, pastors, and teachers; who are now set over the churches in the Lord, to rule them according to the laws of Christ, by ministering the word faithfully, and administering the ordinances truly; and to whom when they rule well, subjection and honour are due; but all this will be no more, when the end comes, and the kingdom is delivered to the Father: nor will there be any more domestic, or family rule and government, as of the husband over the wife, the parent over the child, or the master over the servant; all will be upon an equal foot: nor any angelical authority and power, which angels may now exercise under God, over kingdoms, provinces, states, or particular persons: and especially all diabolical rule, authority, and power will be abolished, which Satan has usurped, or has been given him by men, as the god of this world; he, the prince of the world, was cast out through Christ's death, and by the preaching of the Gospel in the Gentile world; his principalities and powers were then spoiled and triumphed over; though he has still retained some sort and show of government, but then there will not be the least appearance of any; during the thousand years he will be cast into and shut up in the bottomless pit, and not suffered to go out and deceive the nations any more; and at the end thereof, though he will make one and his last onset, on the city of the saints, it will be fruitless, and he and all his shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and there lie in torment for ever and ever: not the persons of these several powers shall be destroyed, but they shall be divested of the power and authority which they now have, either by right or usurpation.

**Ver. 25.** *For he must reign,* etc.] That is, Christ must reign; he is set as King over God's holy hill of Zion; he is King of saints; he is made and

declared to be both Lord and Christ; he is exalted at the right hand of God as a Prince, where he sits and rules and reigns; and his sitting at God's right hand is here explained by his reigning, for reference is had to (~~<B0>~~Psalm 110:1) he must reign because it is the unalterable will, and unchangeable decree and purpose of God, that he should reign; and because he has promised it, and prophesied of it; and because the state and condition of his people require it, who otherwise could not be saved, nor dwell safely: and so he must and will,

*till he hath put all enemies under his feet*; and made them his footstool; meaning either all the elect of God, who in a state of nature are enemies in their minds, by wicked works, to himself and to his Father; whom he conquers by his grace, subdues their rebellious wills, of enemies makes them friends, brings them to his feet, and to a subjection to his sceptre, to his Gospel and ordinances; and he must reign till he has brought every elect soul into such an obedience to himself: or rather antichrist and his followers, and all wicked and ungodly men, with Satan and his angels; who will be destroyed with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming; and will be cast down by him into hell, and there be ever objects of his wrath and vengeance: and till all this is done he must reign; not that he shall cease to reign afterwards, but that he shall reign notwithstanding these enemies of his and his people, who would not have him to reign over them; and will reign until they are subdued or destroyed; and when they are entirely vanquished and overcome, who can doubt of his reigning then? or what, or who will there be to hinder it? The Alexandrian copy, and others, read, "his enemies"; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions.

**Ver. 26.** *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*] Not eternal death; for though that is abolished by Christ with respect to his own people, who shall never be hurt by it, and over whom it shall have no power; yet the wicked will always be subject to it, and under the dominion of it: but a corporeal one is here meant; which is an enemy, the fruit, effect, and wages of sin; the penalty and curse of the law; is contrary to human nature, and destructive of the work of God's hands: it is, indeed, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, become the friend of his people; it is disarmed of its sting, and ceases to be a penal evil; it is the saints' passage to glory, what frees them from the troubles of this world, and is their way to the joys of another; but yet in itself is formidable to nature, and disagreeable to it: and it is the last enemy; it is so both in its rise and duration; it appeared as an enemy last; Satan was the first enemy

of mankind, who attacked, tempted, and ruined the first parents of human nature, and all their posterity in them; and by this means, sin, the next enemy, came into the world of men; and, last of all, death, with its numerous train of calamities, either going before, attending, or following of it: and as it was the last enemy that came into the world, it is the last that will go out of it; for when the saints are rid of Satan, and clear of sin, they will remain in the grave under the power of a corporeal death till the resurrection, and then that will be “destroyed”: for the saints will be raised to an immortal life, never to die more, and to an enjoyment of everlasting life, in the utmost glory and happiness; and though the wicked when they rise, they will rise to damnation, to shame and contempt, yet their worm will never die, nor their fire be quenched; they will always live, though in torment, there will be no more corporeal death, neither among the righteous nor the wicked; it will be utterly abolished: and thus the apostle, though he seems to digress from his subject awhile, by relating the several things which will either immediately or quickly follow the second coming of Christ; yet at the same time has it in view, and proves the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which must needs be, or death cannot be said to be destroyed, and by degrees returns to his subject again.

**Ver. 27.** *For he hath put all things under his feet*, etc.] This is a reason proving that all enemies, and death itself, shall be put under the feet of Christ, and is taken out of (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 8:6) which is spoken of one that is styled man, and the son of man; and is to be understood not of Adam in a state of innocence; for the word there used signifies a frail mortal man, which he then was not, nor could he be called the son of man; and though the earth was subdued and subject to him, and he had dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and every living thing that moveth on the earth, yet all creatures were not subject to him in this large sense, in which it is here and elsewhere explained by the apostle; and much less of man in his fallen state, who instead of having all things under his feet, is become like the beasts that perish; many of them: are unsubdued to him, and he is even in fear of them, and he himself is subject to corruption and vanity: but of the man Christ Jesus, who took and bore all the sinless infirmities of human nature; is often called the son of man; of whom God was mindful, and whom lie visited in his state of humiliation, at the time of his death, resurrection, and exaltation; who was made through sufferings of death a little lower, or a little while lower than the angels, but now crowned with glory and honour; in whose days God ordained strength and

praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, to the confusion of his enemies; and has put all things under his feet, which may elude all things animate and inanimate, the whole creation and universe of things, the world and its fulness, the earth and all that is therein, the beasts of the forest, and the cattle of a thousand hills; he is heir of the world, and has a right to it, and to dispose of it, not merely as the Creator, but as Mediator; it is put in subjection to him to make use of, and what is in it to subserve his mediatorial kingdom and his glory; when his ends are answered by it, the earth and all that is therein shall be burnt up, and a new earth arise out of it, in which Christ and his people will dwell: the air and all that is therein are under him; the fowls of it are at his dispose; he it was that rained feathered fowls as the sand of the sea, about the camp of the Israelites in the wilderness, and commanded the ravens to feed Elijah in distress; and who holds the winds in his fist, lets them loose, calls them in, and commands them at pleasure; as he also does the sea, and the boisterous waves of it, and has dominion over the fishes in it; one of those supplied him with money, to pay his tribute; and multitudes of them, more than once, were gathered together, and taken up by his order and direction; and at the last day, the sea at his command will give up the dead that are in it; yea, this may extend to all rational creatures, angels and men, friends or foes: good angels, principalities and powers, are subject to him, as appears by their attendance on him: at his incarnation, ascension, and second coming; by their ministration to him in the wilderness, and in the garden; by their employment under him, for the good of the heirs of salvation; by their dependence on him, as their Creator and head, and by their adoration of him as their Lord and God. Evil angels, the devils, are also put under his feet, as is evident from his overcoming Satan, and baffling all his temptations; by his dispossessing the devils out of the bodies of men, and giving his disciples also power over them; by his spoiling them at death, and triumphing over them in his ascension; by delivering his people out of their hands, and power, in conversion; and by his binding of Satan during the thousand years, and by casting him and his angels into everlasting fire prepared for them. Elect men are made subject to him, by the power of his grace upon them; and yet their subjection to him, to his Gospel ordinances, and the sceptre of his kingdom; is voluntary and from their hearts; it proceeds from a principle of love to him; and is universal, being a regard unto, and a compliance with all his precepts; and evil men are also under his dominion and control; he rules them with a rod of iron; he disappoints their counsels, restrains their wrath, overrules their evil designs and actions

against his people for good; and will one day gather them all before him, pass the righteous sentence on them, and send them into everlasting punishment. Moreover, this may reach to everything that is for the glory of Christ as Mediator, and for the good of his church, and to every enemy of his or theirs, as the world, sin, Satan, and the last enemy, death; to prove the subjection of all which to Christ, this testimony is produced: and respects Christ as Mediator, and the Father's delivering all things into his hands, and giving him all power in heaven and in earth, and rule over all creatures and things;

*but when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him;* that is, when David, or the Holy Spirit by him, said the above words, in (<sup>4186</sup>Psalm 8:6) nothing is more clear and evident, than that God the Father, who made all things subject to Christ as Mediator, is himself not subjected to him; since his power as such must be greater than his: this exception is made to secure the government, power, and honour of the Father; for though he has made his firstborn higher than the kings of the earth, yet not higher than himself; and though he has set him his King over his holy hill of Zion, yet not over himself; and though it is his will that all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father, yet not above him, or more than he; nor has he quitted the government, either in the world or in the church, by subjecting all things to Christ: and this exception is also made to confirm the universal power and empire of Christ, for an exception to a general rule does but the more establish it; and since the Father is only excepted, it is a clear case, that he has left nothing that is not put under him; (see <sup>4188</sup>Hebrews 2:8) but it must be observed, that though the Holy Spirit is not mentioned, yet he is equally excepted; since he is the one God with the Father, and was jointly concerned in the mission, unction, and installation of Christ, as Mediator; nor can he be reckoned among the all things put in subjection to Christ, for they regard only creatures, and many of these enemies, with neither of which the Spirit of God can be numbered; and though the gifts and graces of the Spirit are put into Christ's hands, and are at his dispose, yet the person of the Spirit can never be thought to be put under his feet.

**Ver. 28.** *And when all things shall be subdued unto him,* etc.] For all things as yet are not put under him in fact; though in right God the Father has given to him an authoritative power over all things, and a right to dispose of them at his pleasure; but all things are not actually and in their

full extent subject to him, yet they will be when the last enemy is destroyed: and

*then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him*; which must be interpreted and understood with great care and caution; not in the Sabellian sense, of refunding of the characters of the Son, and so of the Father unto God; when they suppose these characters, which they imagine to be merely nominal, bare names, will be no more, and God shall be all; but as the Father will always remain a father, so the Son will remain a son; for, as the Son of the Highest, he will reign over his people for ever, and he the Son, as a priest, is consecrated for ever, more: nor in the Eutychian sense, of the change of the human nature into the divine, in which they fancy it will be swallowed up, and God will be all; but Christ will always continue as a man; he went up to heaven as such, and he will return as a man, and be visible to all in the human nature, and in that be the object of the wonderful vision of the saints to all eternity: nor in the Arian sense, according to the divine nature, as if he was in that inferior to the Father, when he is equal with him, has all the perfections he has, and the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; it is much better and safer to understand it as it commonly is of him, as man; though in this sense, he was always subject to his Father, ever since he was incarnate, whereas this seems to respect something peculiar at this time. Others therefore think, that the church, the mystical body of Christ, is here meant, which in all its members, and these both in soul and body, will be presented and delivered up to God; but the words are spoken of him under whom all things are put, which is not true of the church; and though that is sometimes called Christ, yet never the Son; and besides, the church has been always subject to God, though indeed, it will not be in all its members, and in every respect subject until this time: it is best, therefore to understand it of the Son's giving up the account of his mediatorial kingdom and concerns to his Father; when it will appear that he has in the whole of his conduct and administration been subject to him; that he has in all things acted in his name, done all by his power, and to his honour and glory; and now having accomplished all he undertook and was intrusted with, gives in his account, delivers up his charge, and resigns his office; all which will be plain proofs of his subjection: when I say he will resign or lay aside his office as Mediator, my meaning is not that he will cease to be God-man and Mediator; but that he will cease to administer that office as under God, in the manner he now does: he will be the prophet of the church, but he



will not teach by his Spirit, and word, and ordinances as now, but will himself be the immediate light of the saints, he will be a priest for ever, the virtue of his sacrifice and intercession will always remain, but he will not plead and intercede as he now does; he will also reign for ever over and among his saints, but his kingdom will not be a vicarious one, or administered as it now is; nor be only in his hands as Mediator, but with God, Father, Son, and Spirit:

*that God may be all in all*; for by God is not meant the Father personally, but God essentially considered, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the one true and living God; to whom all the saints will have immediate access, in whose presence they will be, and with whom they shall have uninterrupted fellowship, without the use of such mediums as they now enjoy; all the three divine Persons will have equal power and government in and over all the saints; they will sit upon one and the same throne; there will be no more acting by a delegated power, or a derived authority: God will be all things to all his saints, immediately without the use of means; he will be that to their bodies as meat and clothes are, without the use of them; and all light, glory, and happiness to their souls, without the use of ordinances, or any means; he will then be all perfection and bliss, to all the elect, and in them all, which he now is not; some are dead in trespasses and sins, and under the power of Satan; the number of them in conversion is not yet completed; and, of those that are called many are in a state of imperfection, and have flesh as well as spirit in them; and of those who are fallen asleep in Christ, though their separate spirits are happy with him, yet their bodies lie in the grave, and under the power of corruption and death; but then all being called by grace, and all being raised, and glorified in soul and body, God will be all in all: this phrase expresses both the perfect government of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, over the saints to all eternity, and their perfect happiness in soul and body, the glory of all which will be ascribed to God; and it will be then seen that all that the Father has done in election, in the council and covenant of peace, were all to the glory of his grace; and that all that the Son has done in the salvation of his people, is all to the glory of the divine perfections: and that all that the Spirit of God has wrought in the saints, and all that they have done under his grace and influence, are all to the praise and glory of God, which will in the most perfect manner be given to the eternal Three in One. The Jews have some expressions somewhat like this, as when they say <sup>f323</sup> of God,

“things future, and things that are past, are together with thee; what is from everlasting and to everlasting, or from the beginning of the world to the end of it, these are “all” of them in thee, and thou art “in” them “all”.”

So **I K**, “all”, is with the Cabalistic doctors <sup>f324</sup>, the name of the Lord. And he is so called because all things are in him; “Jovis omnia plena”.

**Ver. 29.** *Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead*, etc.] The apostle here returns to his subject, and makes use of new arguments to prove the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and reasons for it from the baptism of some persons; but what is his sense, is not easy to be understood, or what rite and custom, or thing, or action he refers to; which must, be either Jewish baptism, or Christian baptism literally taken, or baptism in a figurative and metaphorical sense. Some think that he refers to some one or other of the divers baptisms of the Jews; (see <sup><890></sup>Hebrews 9:10) and particularly to the purification of such who had touched a dead body, which was done both by the ashes of the red heifer burnt, and by bathing himself in water; and which, the Jews say <sup>f325</sup>, intimated **μυτμη τυγ τι**, “the resurrection of the dead”: wherefore such a rite was needless, if there is no resurrection; to strengthen this sense, a passage in Ecclesiasticus 34:25 is produced, **βαπτίζομενος απο νεκρου**, “he that washeth himself after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again, what availeth his washing?” but the phrase there used is different; it is not said, he that baptizeth or washeth himself for the dead, but from the dead, to cleanse himself from pollution received by the touch of a dead body: it is also observed, that the Jews, as well as other nations, have used various rites and ceremonies about their dead, and among the rest, the washing of dead bodies before interment; (see <sup><495></sup>Acts 9:37) and this by some is thought to be what is here referred to; and the reasoning is, if there is no resurrection of the dead, why all this care of a dead body? why this washing of it? it may as well be put into the earth as it is, since it will rise no more; but how this can be called a baptism for the dead, I see not: rather therefore Christian baptism, or the ordinance of water baptism is here respected; and with regard to this, interpreters go different ways: some think the apostle has in view a custom of some, who when their friends died without baptism, used to be baptized in their room; this is said to be practised by the Marcionites in Tertullian’s time, and by the Corinthians in the times of the Apostle John; but it does not appear to have

been in use in the times of the Apostle Paul; and besides, if it had been, as it was a vain and superstitious one, he would never have mentioned it without a censure, and much less have argued from it; nor would his argument be of any weight, since it might be retorted, that whereas such persons were mistaken in using such a practice, they might be also in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead: others are of opinion that such persons are intended, called Clinics, who deferred their baptism till they came upon their death beds, and then had it administered to them; but as this practice was not in being in the apostle's time, and was far from being a laudable one; and though the persons to whom it was administered were upon the point of death, and nearer the dead than the living, and were as good as dead, and might be intended by them, for their advantage, when dead and not living; yet it must be a great force and strain on words and things, to reckon this a being baptized for the dead: others would have the words rendered, "over the dead"; and suppose that reference is had to the Christians that had their "baptisteries" in their places of burial, and by being baptized here, testified their faith and hope of the resurrection of the dead; but this was rather a being baptized among the dead, than over them, or for them; and moreover it is not certain, that they did make use of such places to baptize in; to which may be added, that the primitive Christians had not so early burying grounds of their own: others would have the meaning to be, that they were baptized for their dead works, their sins, to wash them away; but this baptism does not of itself, and no otherwise than by leading the faith of persons to the blood of Christ, which alone cleanses from sin, original and actual; nor is this appropriate to the apostle's argument. Others imagine, that he intends such as were baptized, and added to the church, and so filled up the places of them that were dead; but the reason from hence proving the resurrection of the dead is not very obvious: those seem to be nearer the truth of the matter, who suppose that the apostle has respect to the original practice of making a confession of faith before baptism, and among the rest of the articles of it, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, upon the belief of which being baptized, they might be said to be baptized for the dead; that is, for, or upon, or in the faith and profession of the resurrection of the dead, and therefore must either hold this doctrine, or renounce their baptism administered upon it; to which may be added another sense of the words, which is, that baptism performed by immersion, as it was universally in those early times, was a lively emblem and representation of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and also both of the spiritual and corporeal resurrection of the saints.

Now if there is no resurrection, why is such a symbol used? it is useless and insignificant; I see nothing of moment to be objected to these two last senses, which may be easily put together, but this; that the apostle seems to point out something that was done or endured by some Christians only; whereas baptism, upon a profession of faith in Christ, and the resurrection from the dead, and performed by immersion, as an emblem of it, was common to all; and therefore he would rather have said, what shall we do, or we all do, who are baptized for the dead? I am therefore rather inclined to think that baptism is used here in a figurative and metaphorical sense, for afflictions, sufferings, and martyrdom, as in (~~4TH~~ Matthew 20:22,23) and it was for the belief, profession, and preaching of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, both of Christ and of the saints, that the apostles and followers of Christ endured so much as they did; the first instance of persecution after our Lord's ascension was on this account. The Apostles Peter and John, were laid hold on and put in prison for preaching this doctrine; the reproach and insult the Apostle Paul met with at Athens were by reason of it; and it was for this that he was called in question and accused of the Jews; nor was there any doctrine of Christianity more hateful and contemptible among the Heathens than this was. Now the apostle's argument stands thus, what is, or will become of those persons who have been as it were baptized or overwhelmed in afflictions and sufferings, who have endured so many and such great injuries and indignities, and have even lost their lives for asserting this doctrine,

*if the dead rise not at all?* how sadly mistaken must such have been!

*why are they then baptized for the dead?* how imprudently have they acted! and what a weak and foolish part do they also act, who continue to follow them! in what a silly manner do they expose themselves to danger, and throw away their lives, if this doctrine is not true! which sense is confirmed by what follows: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, "for them", and so the Vulgate Latin version; and the Ethiopic in both clauses reads, "why do they baptize?"

**Ver. 30.** *And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?*] Not only they that have suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ, and for this article of it, have acted very injudiciously and indiscreetly; but we, also, who are on the spot, whether ministers or private Christians, must be highly blameworthy, who continually expose ourselves to dangers, and are for Christ's sake killed all the day long, are every moment liable to innumerable injuries,

tortures and death; who in his senses would act such a part, if there is no resurrection of the dead? such, as they must be of all men the most miserable, so of all men the most stupid.

**Ver. 31.** *I protest by your rejoicing*, etc.] Some copies read, “our rejoicing”; and so the Ethiopic version, which seems most natural and easy; since it follows,

*which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord*; who in him could rejoice and glory in afflictions and sufferings, which he endured as a preacher of the Gospel for his sake; and which being certain and evident, and what might be depended upon, he makes a protestation by it, saying,

*I die daily*; which is to be understood, not in a spiritual sense of dying unto sin; he was dead unto sin, as to its damning power, through the death of Christ, and as to its governing power, through the Spirit and grace of Christ, but still it was living and dwelling in him; but in a corporeal sense: he instances in himself in particular, who was one that was in jeopardy or danger of his life every hour; he always bore in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and was continually delivered to death for Jesus’ sake; death was always working in him, he expected it every day, and was ready for it; he did not count his life dear unto himself, but was very willing to lay it down for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; which he would never have done, if he had not good reason to believe the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

**Ver. 32.** *If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus*, etc.] This is one of the particulars of the jeopardy and danger of life he had been in: some understand this in a figurative sense, and think that by “beasts” are meant Satan, the roaring lion, and his principalities and powers; or men of savage dispositions, persecuting principles, and cruel practices; as Herod is called a fox, by Christ, and Nero a lion, by the apostle; and suppose his fighting with them at Ephesus designs his disputations with the hardened and unbelieving Jews, his concern with exorcists, the seven sons of Sceva, and the troubles he met with through Demetrius the silversmith, and others of the same craft; the reason of such an interpretation is, because Luke makes no mention of anything of this kind, that befell the apostle in his history of the Acts of the Apostles: but to this it may be replied, that Luke does not relate everything that befell him and the rest; and his omission of this is no sufficient argument against it; besides, a literal sense not to be departed from, unless there is a necessity

for it; and especially when it is suitable to the context, and to the thread and reasoning of the discourse, as it is certainly here; the literal sense best agrees with the apostle's argument. There were two sorts of usages among the Romans in their theatres; sometimes they cast men naked to the wild beasts, to be devoured by them, as wicked servants, deadly enemies, and the vilest of men <sup>f326</sup>; and so the Syriac version renders the words here, "if as among men, *atwyj l tydtça*, "I am cast to the beasts": and seems to represent it as a supposed case, and not as matter of fact, in which the difficulty about Luke's omission is removed, and the argument in a literal sense is just and strong: sometimes they put men armed into the theatre to fight with beasts <sup>f327</sup>, and if they could conquer them and save themselves it was well, if not, they fell a prey to them; it is this last custom that is here referred to: and if regard is had to what befell thee apostle at Ephesus, when Demetrius and his craftsmen made the uproar mentioned in (~~4102~~ Acts 19:21-41) this could not be in reality, but only in the purpose and design of men; and certain it is, that though he was not then had to the theatre, yet Demetrius and his men intended to have hurried him there, as they did Gaius and Aristarchus his companions; and he himself was desirous of going thither, had he not been prevented by the disciples, and by the Asiarchs his friends, who had the command of the theatre where these practices were used; and then the sense is this, if after the manner of men, or in the intention and design of men, and as much as in them lay, "I have fought with beasts at Ephesus"; though if this epistle was written, as it is said to be, before that commotion by Demetrius, no respect can be had to that; but rather to something in fact before, at the same place, when the apostle did actually fight with beasts, and was wonderfully and providentially preserved; and may he what he refers to, in (~~47008~~ 2 Corinthians 1:8-10) when he despaired of life, had the sentence of death in himself, and yet was delivered; and then his sense is, if "after the manner of brutish men", the Romans, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus": which I was obliged to do, or deny the Gospel preached;

*what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?* instead of its being a glorious action, it was a fool hardy one; and if he had died in it, what profit could he have had by it, if he rose not again; or if there is no resurrection of the dead? instead of incurring such dangers, and running such risks, it would be more eligible to sit down and say with the Epicureans,

*let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*; which words seem to be taken out of (~~23213~~ Isaiah 22:13) and are used in favour of the doctrine of the

resurrection, showing that the denial of it opens a door to all manner of licentiousness; and are not spoken as allowing or approving of such a conduct; nor as his own words, but as representing a libertine, and pointing out what such an one would say, and might justly infer from such a tenet, that there is no resurrection of the dead.

**Ver. 33.** *Be not deceived*, etc.] By such as deny the doctrine of the resurrection, and by their reasonings about it; or by such libertines who go into the denial of it, and argue from thence in favour of their licentious course of life:

*evil communications corrupt good manners.* This is a sentence taken out of Menander, an Heathen poet, showing how dangerous is the conversation of evil men, and what an influence bad principles communicated and imbibed, have on the lives and practices of men. This the apostle cites not out of ostentation, or to show his reading, learning, and acquaintance with such sort of writers; but partly to observe, that this was a truth obvious by the light of nature, and partly because such a testimony might be more regarded by the Corinthians, who might be fond of such authors, and what was said by them; just as when he was at Athens among the philosophers there, he cites a passage out of Aratus, (~~4178~~ Acts 17:28) as he does another out of Epimenides concerning the Cretians, (~~3012~~ Titus 1:12).

**Ver. 34.** *Awake to righteousness, and sin not*, etc.] The apostle represents the Corinthians as inebriated with bad principles and notions, and as fallen asleep, and as greatly remiss, and declined in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; and therefore calls upon them to awake out of sleep, to watch and be sober, and attend to “righteousness”; to the justice of God, which requires the resurrection of the dead, and makes it necessary that men may receive the things done in the body, whether good or evil; for as it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that sin against him, and trouble his people; so it is but just, that those bodies which Christ has purchased with his blood, who have served him, and suffered for his sake, should be raised again, that, together with their souls, they may enjoy the happiness provided for them; and to the righteousness of Christ, to look unto it, lay hold on it, exercise faith upon it, desiring to be found in it living and dying; and to works of righteousness, to a holy life and conversation, a living soberly, righteously and godly; and not spend their time, and give up themselves to vain speculations and notions; which

were so far from being edifying, that they were very detrimental to themselves and others. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “awake, ye righteous”: for righteous persons, good men, the wise as well as foolish virgins, sometimes fall asleep, and need awaking out of it; which is done by one providence or another, or by the ministry of the word, and whenever to purpose, by the powerful and efficacious grace of God: the words may be rendered, “awake righteously”; or as the Syriac version reads, “awake your hearts righteously”; and as the Arabic, “with a due awaking”; that is, as it becomes you, and as it is just, right, and proper you should: “and sin not”; not that they could be, or that it could be thought they might be without sin in them, or without sin being done by them; but that they ought not to live a sinful course of life, which the denial of the resurrection led unto, or indulged in; or not sin by denying that doctrine, and giving themselves up to a vicious life in consequence of it:

*for some have not the knowledge of God*; are like the Gentiles that are without God, and know him not; they know not, or, at least, do not own the truth of God in his word, declaring and testifying the doctrine of the resurrection; they err in that point, not knowing the Scriptures, the sense of them, and this truth contained in them; nor the power or God in raising the dead, nor the justice of God, which makes it necessary that the dead should be raised:

*I speak this to your shame*; that there should be such ignorant persons in their community; that there were any of such bad principles as to deny the resurrection of the dead, and of such dissolute lives as to give up themselves to sensual lusts and pleasures: that such were continued in the church, kept company with, indulged and caressed; and that there was so great a corruption in doctrine, discipline, and conversation, among them.

**Ver. 35.** *But some man will say*, etc.] Or “some one of you”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; for there were some among them members of this church, that denied the resurrection of the dead, (~~4615D~~ 1 Corinthians 15:12) a weak believer indeed may be designed, one of the babes in Christ in this church, that could not digest such strong meat, but had some doubt and difficulties in his mind about this point, though he did not absolutely deny it: but by the manner in which the objections and queries are put, and the sharpness in which the apostle answers them, it looks rather that an infidel as to this doctrine is intended, one of those Epicureans, who said, (~~4615D~~ 1 Corinthians 15:32) “let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die”; or



some Heathen philosopher, a mere natural man, that rejected this doctrine because not agreeable to his carnal reason, and laughed at it as monstrous and ridiculous:

*how are the dead raised up?* This query is put, not as though the person merely hesitated, and was in some suspense about this matter, or with a desire to be informed; but as denying the thing, and as objecting to it as a thing impossible, and impracticable; suggesting it could not be, it was a thing incredible that those dead bodies which have been laid in the earth for so many hundred, and some, thousands of years, and have been long ago reduced to dust, and this dust has undergone a thousand forms; that such whose bodies have been burnt to ashes, or destroyed by wild beasts, and digested by them, should ever be raised again. Such a doctrine must be past all belief:

*and with what body do they come?* out of their graves, as you say, and appear on the earth at the last day: will they come forth with the same bodies, or with other? with earthly or heavenly ones? mortal or immortal? with bodies different from one another, and from what they now are?

**Ver. 36.** *Thou fool*, etc.] Not transgressing the law of Christ, which makes him that calls his brother a fool in danger of hell fire; for the apostle said not this in anger, and from a malevolent disposition, as that rule supposes, but out of zeal for truth, and to reprove the stupidity and folly of such a bold objector; in opposing the veracity and power of God, in setting up his reason above divine revelation, and in not attending even to natural philosophy itself; in which professing to be wise he might be justly called a fool, and therefore sends him to the husbandman to learn of him how to answer his own queries:

*that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die*; and which is more especially true of a grain of wheat: our Lord observes the same, (see Gill on “~~49124~~ John 12:24”), and designs by the simile his own death, and resurrection, and the fruit following thereon. This seed being cast into the earth corrupts, rots, and dies, and then is quickened, and rises up in stalk, blade, and ear. Which shows that the dissolution and corruption of the body by death is so far from being an objection to its resurrection, that it is necessary to it, even as the dying and putrifying of the seed, or grain of wheat, is necessary to its quickening and rising up again; and that if God is able to quicken a seed or grain that is rotten and entirely dead, and cause it to rise up in verdure and with much fruit, as he does every year in millions

of instances, why should it be thought incredible that God should quicken dead bodies, when the one is as much an instance of his power as the other? The Claromontane exemplar reads, “except it die first”; and so the Vulgate Latin version.

**Ver. 37.** *And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be,* etc.] The sower, for instance, does not take a stalk of wheat in its blade, and ear, and full corn in the ear, encompassed with the husk, and sow it in the earth, which is the body or form in which it appears when it rises up again, and is come to its full growth:

*but bare grain (or naked grain) it may chance of wheat, or some other grain;* wheat, or any other grain, is cast into the earth naked, beat out of the husk; and that selfsame grain rises up again, clothed with additional verdure, beauty, and fruitfulness; and so the body which comes out of its mother’s womb naked, and returns naked again, (<sup><3002></sup>Job 1:21) to which the apostle seems to allude, will rise again the same body, though with additional glories and excellencies; so that if it should be asked, how is it possible that a dead body can be raised up again? the possibility of it may be seen, in the quickening and raising up of a grain of wheat, that first rots and dies; and if it be inquired with what body the dead will be raised, it may in some measure be observed in this instance, that though it will be the same body, yet with different and excelling qualities: this simile seems to have been much in use among the Jews, to illustrate this doctrine, and we have some traces of it still in their writings <sup>f328</sup>:

“Cleopatra the queen asked R. Meir, saying, I know that the dead shall live, for it is written, “they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth”, (<sup><19726></sup>Psalms 72:16) but when they rise, shall they rise naked, or shall they rise in their clothes? to which he replied, much more than wheat: for as wheat is buried, **hmwr** [ , “naked”, it comes forth, (or springs up,) with many clothings; and how much more the righteous, who are buried in their clothes?”

and again <sup>f329</sup>,

“says R. Eliezer, all the dead shall stand in the resurrection of the dead, and shall rise with their garments on; from whence do you learn this? from the seed of the earth, especially from wheat; for as wheat is buried “naked”, and comes forth with many clothings, much more the righteous, who are buried in their clothes.”

**Ver. 38.** *But God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him,* etc.] It is not the husbandman, nor the sun, nor the rain, that give the grain of wheat, or any other, its verdure and beauty, the form in which it springs up, its stalk, blade, and ear, but God by his own power, and of his sovereign will and pleasure; and he does not create this new form, but gives it; and does not barely give it, but gives the body to it: to the selfsame grain, and not another: so the resurrection of the dead is God's work; it is an instance of his power, and of his sovereign will; and is to his people a branch of that eternal life, which is his pure gift through Jesus Christ; all that glory in which the body will arise springs from his free grace, and is bestowed upon the selfsame body, which was carried about here, and laid in the grave: and to every

*seed its own body*; which is suitable and natural to it, according to its kind; (see <sup><0011></sup>Genesis 1:11) as cummin to cummin, anise to anise, wheat to wheat, barley to barley, and not on the contrary; showing, that it is the same body that is raised that dies, though it is in a more glorious, and with more excellent qualities; which is manifest from express passages of Scripture; (see <sup><8126></sup>Job 19:26,27 <sup><6152></sup>1 Corinthians 15:42-44,53,54) from the signification of the word resurrection, which is a raising up of that which is fallen and if the same body that falls by death is not raised, but another is given, it will not be a resurrection, but a creation: and also from the figurative phrases by which it is expressed, as here by the quickening of seed cast into the earth, and elsewhere by awaking out of sleep; now as it is the same seed that is sown that springs up again, and the same body that sleeps that awaked out of it, so it is the same body that is interred in the earth, and falls asleep by death, that will be quickened and awaked at the resurrection: and it is clear from the places from whence the dead will be raised, the repositories of them, as death and hell, or the grave, and the sea; for none but the same bodies that are laid in the grave, or cast into the sea, can be said to come forth out of them, or be delivered up; by them: and from the subject of the resurrection, the bodies of men, their vile and mortal bodies, which can be no other than their present ones; and from the end of the resurrection, which is that some may come to life, and others to damnation; and from the justice of God, which requires that the same bodies Christ has purchased, find who have served and suffered for him, should be glorified; and the same that have done evil against him, and abused themselves and his people, be punished: this might be argued from the translations of Enoch and Elijah in their bodies to heaven, in which they

were on earth; and from the resurrection of the bodies of the saints at Christ's resurrection, and the change that will be on the bodies of living saints at the coming of Christ; for it is not reasonable to suppose, that some of the saints shall have their own bodies, and others none at all, or not the same they lived in here: this may be further confirmed, from the resurrection of Christ's body, which was the same he had before; it was not changed into a spirit, but consisted of flesh and bones, as it had done; and had on it the very print of the nails, and spear in his hands, feet, and side; and to this the bodies of the saints are to be fashioned: add to all this, if it is not a resurrection of the same body, but new ones are created, to which the soul will be united, it will not be a resurrection, but a transmigration of souls into other bodies; but as every seed has its own body, so will every soul have its own body, though greatly different as to its qualities, and much improved for the better, as in seed sown: and this is the sense of the ancient Jews <sup>f330</sup>,

“says R. Chijah, **μωqy hwhd apwg awhhhd**, “that that selfsame body that was shall rise”, is clear from what is written, thy dead men shall live, (<sup><2369></sup>Isaiah 26:19) and it is not written, shall be created; from whence it is evident that they shall not be created, but shall be quickened:”

and again <sup>f331</sup>,

“in the time to come, the holy blessed God will quicken the dead, and raise them **μrp[m]**, “out of their own dust”, that they may not be a building of dust, as they were at first, when they were created out of dust itself, a thing which is not stable, according to (<sup><0017></sup>Genesis 2:7) and at that time they shall be raised out of the dust, out of that building, and shall stand in a stable building, that they may have stability, or duration.”

So on those words, “I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal”, (<sup><6329></sup>Deuteronomy 32:39) they observe <sup>f332</sup>, that

“as wounding and healing are **dj ab**, “in one”, (and the same body,) so death and life are **dj ab**, “in one and” the same.”

**Ver. 39.** *All flesh is not the same flesh*, etc.] Or “equal”, as the Syriac version renders it; though all flesh is flesh, as to the nature and substance of it; agrees in its original, being by generation; and is supported by food, and

is alike frail and mortal; all flesh is grass, rises out of it, or is maintained by it, or withers like that, yet not of equal worth, value, and excellency: “but” there is “one” kind “of flesh of men”; which is superior to, and more excellent than any other; being animated by a rational soul, and is set in the first place; so we read of **çya rçb**, “the flesh of man”, for mankind, (<sup><1820></sup>Job 12:10) (see <sup><1832></sup>Exodus 30:32).

*Another flesh of beasts*; as sheep and oxen, and other beasts of the field;

*another of fishes*: which may be observed against the Papists, who distinguish between flesh and fish, as if there was no flesh of fishes; and on their fast days prohibit flesh, but allow the eating of fish; thus flesh is attributed to fishes, as here, in (<sup><1811></sup>Leviticus 11:11) upon which text Aben Ezra observes, lo, fish is called flesh; but as our doctors say, according to the custom of those times; and so it is by the Jews, who say <sup>f333</sup>,

“all flesh is forbidden to boil in milk, **µygd rçbm**, “except the flesh of fishes”, and locusts; and it is forbidden to set it on a table along with cheese, except “the flesh of fishes”, and locusts:”

*and another of birds*; the fowls of the air. This is another similitude, illustrating the resurrection of the dead; and is not designed to point out the difference between the raised bodies of the righteous, and the wicked; as if the former were signified by the flesh of men, and the other by the flesh of beasts, fishes, and birds; nor among the wicked themselves, with whom there will be degrees of punishment; nor among the saints, as if the flesh of one should differ from that of another. The intent of this simile is only to show, that the resurrection of the dead will be in real flesh, in their own flesh, in the selfsame flesh, as to substance, with which they were clothed when on earth; but that it will, as to its qualities, be different from it, as one sort of flesh is now from another; and that if God can, as he does, make different sorts of flesh, and yet all for kind are flesh, there is no difficulty in conceiving, that God is able to raise the dead in their own flesh, and yet different from what it now is; being free from all weakness, frailty, corruption, and mortality.

**Ver. 40.** *There are also celestial bodies*, etc.] Or bodies in the heavens, as the sun, moon, and stars:

*and bodies terrestrial*; or bodies on earth, animate and inanimate, men, beasts, trees, minerals, etc.

*But the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another:* though both sorts are bodies, yet their qualities differ, and there is a greater glory in the one than in the other. This is another similitude, serving to help our ideas of this doctrine of the resurrection of the body; that though it is the same in substance, yet different in qualities; and does not design any difference between the bodies of good men and bad men, elect and reprobate; as if the one were intended by the celestial bodies, and the other by the terrestrial; and much less degrees of glory in the saints themselves, who, imagine them in as low a form as can be, can never be compared to terrestrial ones; but it shows the difference there will be between the raised bodies and the present ones; which will be as great as that which now is between celestial and terrestrial bodies.

**Ver. 41.** *There is one glory of the sun,* etc.] Which is the greater light, the fountain of light, and whose glory exceeds that of the other heavenly bodies:

*and another glory of the moon;* which is the lesser light, and receives its light from the sun, and consequently its glory is inferior:

*and another glory of the stars;* which though very bright and sparkling, and are innumerable, have a lesser glory, at least to our appearance, than the sun and moon: the Jews have a notion<sup>f334</sup>, that

“all the stars and the orbs are endued with a soul, and with knowledge, and understanding; and that they live, and stand, and know him that said, and the world was; and everyone of them, “according to his greatness”, wtl [m ypl w, “and according to his dignity”, praise and glorify their Creator, as the angels; and as they know God, so they know themselves, and the angels that are above them; for the knowledge of the stars and the orbs is lesser than the knowledge of angels, and greater than the knowledge of men:”

*for one star differeth from another star in glory;* all which is to be understood, not as if the glory of the sun meant the glory of Christ, the sun of righteousness, who excels in glory, even in his human nature; and the glory of the moon, the glory of the church, who receives her's from Christ; and the glory of the stars; the glory of particular saints; and as if there will be, in the resurrection state, degrees of glory among them: for what peculiar glory can be thought to be upon the body of one, that is not upon another, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of

their Father? and admitting there was any truth in this, it is not the truth of this text; the only design of which, as the above, is to show, that as not only celestial and terrestrial bodies differ from each other, but even heavenly ones, so at the resurrection, the bodies of the saints then will differ in glory from their present ones; though these are now the members of Christ, are presented to God an holy sacrifice, and are washed with pure water.

**Ver. 42.** *So also is the resurrection of the dead,* etc.] This will be the case and condition of risen bodies, they will be as different from what they now are, though they will be the same in substance, as a stalk of wheat in its blade and ear, and full corn in the ear, is from the naked grain, when cast into the earth; or as the flesh of men is from the flesh of beasts, fishes, and birds; or as celestial bodies from terrestrial ones; or as the glory of the sun differs from the glory of the moon and stars; or as one star differs from another star in glory; that this is the apostle's sense is clear from the induction of particulars following, by which he explains in clear terms what he before signified by similitudes:

*it is sown in corruption;* it should be observed, that the word sown, in this and the following verses, does not merely relate to the interment of the body, but also to its generation; and includes its state, condition, and character, during life; as well as points out what it is at death, and its sepulture in the earth: it is from first to last a corruptible body; it is born frail and mortal, and liable to corruption and death; it is corrupted with sin, and so a vile body; there is a world of iniquity in one of its members, the tongue, and what then must there be in all its parts? but besides this moral corruption, in which it is during the present state, it is liable to a natural one; from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, it may be covered with wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores; a right arm may be dried up and withered away, and a leg may corrupt and mortify, and so any other part; the whole is supported by corruptible things, by meat that perisheth; and which if it did not corrupt and perish, would not be nourishing; and as meats are for the belly, and the belly for meats, in a short time God will destroy both it and them; the whole frame and texture of the body will be dissolved by death, and be brought to worms, corruption, and dust; and in this case will lie in the grave till the resurrection morn:

*it is raised in incorruption:* the very same body that was sown, generated, lived, and died, shall be raised again, but different from what it was; it will

be incorruptible; its parts will be no more subject to corruption; it will not be supported by corruptible things; it will be immortal, and never die more, and will be clear of all its moral corruption; it will no more be a vile body, but fashioned like to the holy and glorious body of Christ.

**Ver. 43.** *It is sown in dishonour*, etc.] Its original is dishonourable, it comes, as the Jews often say <sup>f335</sup>, *hhwrs hpj m*, “from a filthy drop”; its generated brought forth in a manner we are ashamed of; it is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; it is unclean, and born of the flesh: and when born, is in such a condition, as is to the loathing of it; some of its members are less honourable; and so uncomely as always to need a covering; it is subject to various blemishes, defects, and imperfections, and few bodies are without one or another; and liable to many injuries and affronts, as the body of our Lord himself was, who gave his back to the smiters, his cheek to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting; and in death, it is nauseous, filthy, and very dishonourable, so that the nearest relation and friend cannot take pleasure in it, but desires to bury it out of sight; and amidst the greatest funereal pomp and splendour, it is laid in the grave in dishonour, to be the companion of corruption and worms: but in the resurrection,

*it is raised in glory*; in perfect beauty and comeliness, without the least blemish, defect, or imperfection; nor will there be any part of it that will occasion shame; it will be metamorphosed, and fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; it will shine as the sun, and be as the brightness of the firmament: and so the Jews understand the passage in (<sup>2718</sup>Daniel 12:3) they say <sup>f336</sup> that

“God will beautify the bodies of the righteous in time to come, as the body of the first man when he entered into the garden of Eden; and that the soul, whilst it is in its dignity, is sustained by the superior light, and is clothed with it; and when it enters into the body in time to come, it enters with the light; and then will the body shine as the brightness of the firmament, according to (<sup>2718</sup>Daniel 12:3).”

It is sown in weakness; it comes into the world in great weakness; what is weaker than the body of a new born babe? it cannot move, nor help itself in any respect; and how weak and defenceless is the body of man, when adult; as he is subject to various diseases and disorders, which weaken his



strength in the way, and is surrounded with natural infirmities, arising from hunger, thirst, nakedness, labour, etc. so he is not armed, as many other creatures are, for defence and offence; nor can he resist and overcome many things which do him hurt, much less can he resist death, or retain his spirit then; and through weakness at last dies, and is devoid of all strength, and as such is laid in the grave, where there is no work that he can do: but

*it is raised in power*; it is raised by the power of God, and with great power in itself; being able to subsist without food, and of moving itself from place to place, with great agility; and capable of the highest services before God and the Lamb, without weariness; nor will it be ever more liable to weakness or death; death shall have no more power over it; nor shall it be encompassed or attended with any infirmity whatever.

**Ver. 44.** *It is sown a natural body*, etc.] Or an animal one, being generated as animals are, and supported with food as they be, and die at last as they do: (see <sup><0089></sup>Ecclesiastes 3:19-21).

*It is raised a spiritual body*; not as to substance, but as to its quality; it will not be changed into a spirit; our Lord's risen body, to which ours will be conformed, was not a spirit, but, as before, consisted of flesh and bones: but the body will then be subject to the spirit and soul of man; it will be employed in spiritual service, for which it will be abundantly fitted and assisted by the Spirit of God; and it will be delighted with spiritual objects; it will be like the angels, those excellent spirits; it will live as spirits do, without natural helps and means, as meat, drink, clothes, sleep, and, as they, will never die:

*there is a natural*; or "animal body", such as the first man's was, and those are that descend from him by ordinary generation; and

*there is a spiritual body*; such as the body of Christ now is, and as will be the bodies of the risen saints; the phrase is Jewish, *ynj wrh Pwgh*, "the spiritual body"<sup>f337</sup> and the flesh of the righteous, being *μynj wr μrçb*, "spiritual flesh"<sup>f338</sup>, are to be met with in their writings.

**Ver. 45.** *And so it is written*, etc.] In (<sup><0027></sup>Genesis 2:7)

*the first man Adam was made a living soul*: in the Hebrew text it is, man, or Adam, became, or was made a living soul; that is, as the apostle says, "the first man Adam": he calls him, as the Jews<sup>f339</sup> frequently do, *^wçarh*

**ḡda**, “the first man”; he was the first man that was made, and the first parent of mankind, and the head and representative of all his posterity, and so the first in time, causality and dignity; whose name was Adam, so called by God in the day he was created, because he was formed **hmdah ḡm**, “from the ground, or earth”; when God breathed life into the earthly mass, or lump; and being animated with a rational soul, it became an animal body, or a living creature; and so the apostle proves, from the first man that was upon earth, that there is a natural, or animal body; a body animated by a soul, and which was supported by eating and drinking, by sleep and rest; and was capable of dying, and should die, in case of sin; and which was the state of it in its first creation, whilst in innocence, and before the fall; and this is all he meant to prove by this Scripture; for what follows is not mentioned as therein written, or elsewhere, but as the apostle’s own assertion:

*the last Adam was made a quickening spirit*: by “the last Adam” is meant Jesus Christ, called Adam, because he is really and truly a man, a partaker of the same flesh and blood as the rest of mankind; and because he is the antitype of the first man Adam, who was a figure of him that was to come; and therefore called Adam, for the same reason as he is called David and Solomon: he is said to be “the last”, in distinction from the first Adam, with respect to him he stood, **ḡwrj a**, last upon the earth, as in (~~18925~~ Job 19:25) to which passage some think the apostle here alludes; and because he appeared in the last days in the end of the world, and is the last that shall rise up as a common head and representative of the whole, or any part of mankind: now he is made “a quickening spirit”; which some understand of the Holy Spirit, which filled the human nature of Christ, raised him from the dead, and will quicken our mortal bodies at the last day; others of the divine nature of Christ, to which his flesh, or human nature, was united; and which gave life, rigour, and virtue, to all his actions and sufferings, as man; and by which he was quickened, when put to death in the flesh, and by which he will quicken others another day: though rather I think it is to be understood of his spiritual body, of his body, not as it was made of the virgin, for that was a natural, or an animal one; it was conceived and bred, and born as animal bodies are; it grew and increased, and was nourished with meat and drink, and sleep and rest; and was subject to infirmities, and to death itself, as our bodies be; but it is to be understood of it as raised from the dead, when it was made a spiritual body, for which reason it is called a “spirit”: not that it was changed into a spirit, for it still remained

flesh and blood; but because it was no more supported in an animal way; nor subject to those weaknesses that animal bodies are, but lives as spirits, or angels do; and a quickening one, not only because it has life itself, but because by virtue of the saints' union to it, as it subsists in the divine person of the Son of God, their bodies will be quickened at the last day, and made like unto it, spiritual bodies; also because he lives in his body as a spiritual one, they shall live in theirs as spiritual ones: and so the apostle shows, that there is a spiritual, as well as an animal body; that as the first man's body, even before the fall, was an animal or natural one; the last Adam's body upon his resurrection is a spiritual and life giving one, as the Syriac version renders it; so the Cabalistic writers<sup>f340</sup> speak of

“Adam; who is the holy and supreme, who rules over all, and gives spirit and life to all.”

**Ver. 46.** *Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual*, etc.] As the apostle before proves the distinction of a natural and spiritual body, and gives instances of both in the two principal men in the world, the first and the last; and points out the difference between them, the one being animated, and having life given unto it, the other animating, and giving life to others; proceeds to observe the order of these, how that one was before the other; the spiritual body, though the more perfect and most excellent, yet was not first in being:

*but that which is natural*; Adam's animal body was before Christ's spiritual body:

*and afterwards that which is spiritual*; yea, even Christ's animal, or natural body, was before his spiritual one; his body taken from the virgin, and formed in her womb, and in which he lived here on earth, was an animal body, as before observed; and upon his resurrection, it commenced a spiritual one; being the same in substance as the former, only different in qualities; and just so it is, and will be, with the bodies of the saints'; which is the apostle's design and view, in observing this order; the natural body is first, and then the spiritual; it is first a natural body, as generated and nourished, as weak and dying, and it is afterwards a spiritual one, when raised from the dead.

**Ver. 47.** *The first man is of the earth, earthy*, etc.] He was formed out of the earth, (<sup><0007></sup>Genesis 2:7) and the word there used signifies red earth. Josephus<sup>f341</sup> observes, that the first man was called Adam, which in the

Hebrew tongue signifies red, because he was made out of red earth; for such, adds he, is the true and virgin earth: Pausanias<sup>f342</sup> makes mention of a clay, which is not the colour of earth, but like the sand of brooks and rivers; and gives a smell very near to that of the skin, or body of men; and which is said to be the remains of that clay, out of which all mankind was made: but be that as it will, Adam was certainly made out of the earth, and had his habitation and abode assigned him in the garden of Eden, and was made to cultivate and till it; his lordship and dominion, at most and best, only extended to the terraqueous globe, and the creatures in it; and having sinned, he was not only thrust out of the garden to till the ground out of which he was taken, but doomed to return to the dust from whence he came; and whose sin and fall had such an influence on him and his posterity, as to make their souls sensual and earthly, to mind, affect, and cleave unto earthly things:

*the second man is the Lord from heaven*; as Adam was the first man, Christ is the second man; and these two are spoken of, as if they were the only two men in the world; because as the former was the head and representative of all his natural posterity, so the latter is the head and representative of all his spiritual offspring: and he is “the Lord from heaven”; in distinction from the first man, who was of the earth, and whose lordship reached only to the earth; whereas Christ is Lord of all, not only Lord of lords below, but Lord of angels and saints above; the whole family in heaven and in earth is named of him; and he has all power in heaven and in earth, and a name above every name in this world, and that to come, and is indeed higher than the heavens: this is not to be understood of his human nature, or of his human body, as if that came down from heaven, and passed through the virgin, as some heretics of old said, as water through a pipe; for though it was conceived and formed in a miraculous manner, under the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost from on high, yet was formed out of the matter and substance of the virgin, and so was of the earth; and was indeed an earthly body, supported by earthly means, and at last returned to the earth, and was interred in it: but it is to be understood either of Christ as a divine person, as the Son of God, as Lord of all, coming down from heaven at his incarnation; not by local motion, or change of place, but by assumption of the human nature into union with him, the Lord from heaven; or rather of him as he shall descend from heaven, as the Lord and Judge of all at the last day, when he will come in his glorious, spiritual, and heavenly body; and raise the righteous dead, and

fashion their bodies like his own; when what follows will have its full accomplishment. The Cabalistic doctors among the Jews often speak <sup>f343</sup> of  $\hat{w}yl [ \mu da$ , “the superior man”, and  $\hat{w}tj t \mu daw$ , “the inferior man”; and in their Cabalistic table <sup>f344</sup>, in the sixth “sephirah”, or number, they place the man from above, the heavenly Adam; and, in one of their writings <sup>f345</sup>, have these remarkable words,

“ $\text{anynt } \mu daw \text{ hal } [ \mu da \hat{a}m$ , “who is the supreme man and the second man”, but of whom it is said, (<sup>ABD</sup>Proverbs 30:4) “what is his name, and what is his son’s name?” what is his name? this is the supreme man; what is his son’s name? this is the inferior man; and both of them are intimated in that Scripture, (<sup>ABD</sup>Exodus 3:13) “and they shall say unto me, what is his name? what shall I say?””

Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; leave out the word “Lord”, and add the word “heavenly”, reading the clause thus, “the second man from heaven, heavenly”.

**Ver. 48.** *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy*, etc.] As was Adam’s body, so are the bodies of those that descend from him; they are houses of clay, earthly houses of this tabernacle, which rise out of the earth, are maintained by the things of it, and return to it again:

*and as is the heavenly, such are*, or will be

*they also that are heavenly*; as is the glorious and spiritual body of Christ, the Lord from heaven, as that now is in heaven, and will be when he descends from thence; so will be the bodies of them that are heavenly, that are heaven born souls now, are partakers of the heavenly calling, and whose conversation is in heaven; and who, in the resurrection morn, will have heavenly, spiritual, and glorious bodies, like unto Christ’s: so Philo <sup>f346</sup> the Jew on those words, “and man became a living soul”, has this note;

“there are two kinds of men, for the one is “the heavenly man”, and the other is “earthy”; the heavenly man is he, who is made after the image of God, incorruptible, and wholly devoid of earthy substance; the earthy is made of seminal matter, which is called the ground.”

**Ver. 49.** *And as we have borne the image of the earthy*, etc.] Which regards not so much the sinful image of the first man upon the soul, or the depravity of the powers and faculties of it, as his image of frailty and

mortality on the body, having like him a body subject to infirmities and death:

*we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*; which likewise regards not so much the spiritual image of Christ stamped on the soul in regeneration, when Christ is formed in the heart, and the new man is created after his likeness, and which more and more appears, through every transforming view of him, and will be complete in glory, as the image and likeness of Christ upon the bodies of the saints in the resurrection, when they shall be fashioned like unto his: some copies, as the Alexandrian and others, read the words as an exhortation, let us bear the image, etc. as if the words were an improvement of the apostle's reasoning on this subject, engaging saints to be more concerned for, and seeking after a greater likeness to Christ in righteousness and true holiness; but the other reading and sense are best.

**Ver. 50.** *Now this I say, brethren*, etc.] Upon the whole, I assert this, and observe it to you, out of a truly Christian respect for you, as brethren in the Lord, that

*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*: this shows the necessity there is of a difference between the body that now is, and that which shall be, which the apostle has so largely insisted on, and so clearly proved and explained, in the preceding verses; because the body, as it now is, is not capable of possessing the heavenly glory; was it to be introduced into heaven, in the condition it is now, it would break in pieces, and crumble into dust; it would not be able to bear the glory of that state and place: by flesh and blood is meant, not human nature as to the substance of it, or as consisting of flesh and blood, for that can and does inherit the kingdom of God; witness the human nature, or body of Christ, the bodies of the saints that rose after his resurrection, and those of Enoch and Elijah, who were translated body and soul to heaven; so that this passage makes nothing for those that deny the resurrection of the same body, and plead for a new and an aerial one: but the human nature, or body, so and so qualified, is here meant; either as corrupted with sin, for without holiness and righteousness no man shall see the Lord, or enter into and possess the kingdom of heaven; or flesh and blood, or an human body, as it is now supported in this animal life, with meat and drink, etc. and as it is frail and mortal, and subject to death, in which sense the phrase is used in Scripture; (see <sup><4167></sup>Matthew 16:17, <sup><8116></sup>Galatians 1:16, <sup><4162></sup>Ephesians 6:12) and often by the Jews; so Abraham is represented by them as saying <sup>f347</sup>,

“I am  $\mu\delta\omega$   $\rho\lambda\beta$ , “flesh and blood”, tomorrow I shall depart out of the world, or die:”

it would be endless to give the many instances that might be produced of this use of the phrase with them, and in which sense it is to be taken here: and the meaning is, that saints in their frail mortal bodies, such as they now are, are not capable of enjoying the heavenly glory; which is called “the kingdom”, because of its riches, glory, grandeur, and magnificence; and the kingdom “of God”, because it is of his preparing and giving; and what he calls his people to, and makes them meet for, and in which they will reign with him for evermore: heirs of it they may be, and are now whilst in this frail and mortal state; but inherit, possess, and enjoy it, they cannot, as not without holiness of soul, so not without immortality of body; and therefore it is necessary that the body should rise different in qualities from, though the same in substance with, the present body; that it should rise incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual; that it may be fitted for, and be able to bear the exceeding weight of glory in the other world:

*neither doth corruption inherit incorruption*: by corruption is not so much meant sin, or the corruption of nature, or man as corrupted by sin, though it is true of such an one, that he does not, and cannot inherit incorruption; the incorruptible crown, the crown of glory that fadeth not away, the incorruptible inheritance, reserved in the heavens, those riches which moth and rust corrupt not; but the body, as it is generated in corruption, is supported by corruptible things, and is subject to corruption and worms; in such a situation it is unfit for, and incapable of inheriting eternal glory; it must be different from what it is; it must put on immortality, and be clothed with incorruption: the word inherit in both clauses shows, that the heavenly glory is an inheritance, and belongs to children only; is their heavenly Father’s bequest unto them; is not bought or acquired by anything of theirs; and is what they enter into and upon, in virtue and consequence of the death of the testator, Christ.

**Ver. 51.** *Behold, I show you a mystery*, etc.] Or a secret, which could never have been discovered by reason, or the light of nature, and what is of pure revelation; and which perhaps the apostle became acquainted with, when he was caught up into the third heaven; and is what is never made mention of by any prophet, or apostle, but himself: he prefaces the account of it in this manner, partly to show the great respect he had for these

Corinthians, that he treated them as his bosom friends, to whom he communicated his secrets; and partly to excite their curiosity and attention:

*we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*; some copies read, “we shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed”, and so the Vulgate Latin version; according to which the sense is, all will rise again, both just and unjust, but all will not be changed into a state of glory; but the apostle is only speaking of the saints, of whom it is true, not only that they shall rise again, but shall be changed from corruption to incorruption; wherefore this cannot be a true reading: others read the words thus, “we shall all die, but we shall not all be changed”; and so the Ethiopic version and the Alexandrian copy seem to have read; which is just the reverse of the text, and arises from a wrong sense of (<sup><3007></sup>Hebrews 9:27) where it is not said, it is “appointed unto all men”, but “unto men once to die”; from which rule there has been some exceptions, as the instances of Enoch and Elijah show; and there will be more at the time of Christ’s coming, for all will not sleep in their graves, or die, for death is meant by sleeping; they will not die as men ordinarily do, and continue under the power of death, but they will be changed at once from corruption to incorruption, from dishonour to glory, from weakness to power, from being natural to be spiritual bodies; this change all the saints will undergo, whether dead or alive, at Christ’s coming; the dead by a resurrection from the dead, and the living by a secret and sudden power, which will at once render their bodies, without separating them from their souls, immortal and glorious: and this reading and sense are confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions.

**Ver. 52.** *In a moment*, etc.] Or point of time, which is very short indeed; what a moment is, according to the Jewish doctors, (see Gill on <sup><4048></sup>Matthew 4:8”).

*In the twinkling of an eye*; these two the Jews not only put together as here, but make one to be as the other; so they say <sup>f348</sup>, ךַּי [Prhk [grh, “a moment is as the twinkling of an eye”. This phrase, as the twinkling of an eye, is frequently <sup>f349</sup> used in Jewish writings, to signify how speedily and suddenly anything is done, and which is the design of it here; and the apostle’s meaning is, that the change upon the bodies of living saints will be so quick, that it will be done in a trice, before a man can shut his eyes and open them again; so that it will be as it were imperceptible, and without the least sensation of pain; this may also be referred to the resurrection, which will be quick, and done at once; though it seems rather,



and chiefly, to respect the change of the living; what follows, indeed, favours the other sense also; for all will be quick and sudden, the coming of Christ, the raising of the dead, and the change of the living:

*at the last trumpet, for the trumpet shall sound*; or “by the last trumpet”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, by means of it, through the sounding of that:

*and the dead shall be raised incorruptible*; free from all frailty, mortality, and corruption, when the trumpet shall sound:

*and* at the same time also,

*we shall be changed*; the saints that will be found alive; the apostle speaks in the first person, because of the uncertainty of Christ’s coming, and of the blowing of the last trumpet, he not knowing but it might be in his time; what this last trumpet will be, is not easy to say; it can hardly be thought to be a material one: the Jews <sup>f350</sup> have a notion, that a trumpet will be blown at the time of the resurrection of the dead, as at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; which will quicken the dead, as they say it then did; and that this will be blown by Michael the archangel <sup>f351</sup>: it seems very likely to be the same with the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God, (<sup><sup>3446</sup>1 Thessalonians 4:16) all which may be no other than the voice of Christ; at the hearing of which, the dead will rise; but whether this will be an articulate one, as at the raising of Lazarus, or is only expressive of his power, which will then be put forth, is not material, nor a point to be determined: and what if by all this should be meant some violent claps of thunder, as at Mount Sinai, which will shake the whole earth; and when almighty power will be put forth to raise the dead: since such are by the Jews <sup>f352</sup> called the voices of the son of David, and are expected by them, a little before his coming? This is called the “last” trumpet, not so much with respect to those that go before, much less to the seven trumpets in the Revelations, of which as yet there was no revelation made, but because there will be none after it; see:</sup>

“And the trumpet shall give a sound, which when every man heareth, they shall be suddenly afraid.” (2 Esdras 6:23)

**Ver. 53.** *For this corruptible must put on incorruption*, etc.] The apostle returns to what he had before asserted, concerning the necessity of an alteration in the qualities of bodies, in order to the enjoyment of the heavenly state; showing, that the selfsame body the saints now have, for he

seems to point with his finger to his own, and which are incorruptible ones, shall and must be clothed with incorruption:

*and this mortal must put on immortality*; the body that now is mortal, must become immortal; it must put off its rags of mortality, and be clothed with the shining robes of immortality; and which must be done, either by first dying, and then rising from the dead; or by undergoing alive a quick and sudden change, which will at once remove all corruption and mortality; see:

“He answered and said unto me, These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God: now are they crowned, and receive palms.” (2 Esdras 2:45)

**Ver. 54.** *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption*, etc.] As at the coming of Christ, both the bodies of living saints, and of dead ones being raised, will: and this

*mortal shall have put on immortality*; which will be the case, in the resurrection morn:

*then shall be brought to pass that saying that is written*; then that passage will have its full accomplishment, which stands in (~~2308~~ Isaiah 25:8) where it is read,

*he will swallow up death in victory*, or “for ever”. That is, the Messiah shall by his death, and resurrection from the dead, obtain such an entire victory over death, not only for himself, but for all his people, that in the resurrection morn, when they will be all raised from the dead, death will be so swallowed up, that it will be no more: the Jews acknowledge that this prophecy belongs to the times of the Messiah; so they say <sup>f353</sup>, that

“the Messiah shall descend from Pharez, and in his day the holy blessed God will cause death to be swallowed up, as it is said, (~~2308~~ Isaiah 25:8) “he shall swallow up death in victory:”

and again <sup>f354</sup>,

“when the King Messiah comes, the holy blessed God will raise up those that sleep in the dust, as it is written, he shall swallow up death in victory:”

they also say <sup>f355</sup>, that this passage refers to future time, and to the world to come. The prophet expresses it actively, it being a prediction of what was to be done by the Messiah; the apostle cites it passively, as being accomplished by him after the resurrection, and considered as a part of the song sung by the risen saints; to which is added,

**Ver. 55.** *O death, where is thy sting?* etc.] These words, with the following clause, are taken out of (<sup><2834></sup>Hosea 13:14) and that they belong to the times of the Messiah, the ancient Jews acknowledge; and the Chaldee paraphrase interprets them of the Logos, or Word of God, rendering them thus,

“my Word shall be among them to kill, and my Word to destroy;”

wherefore the apostle is not to be charged with a misapplication of them, nor with a perversion of them, as he is by the Jew <sup>f356</sup>: in the prophet they are thus read, “O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destruction”; between which, and the apostle’s citation of them, there is some difference; the word *yha*, which we render in both clauses, “I will be”, the apostle translates “where”, and that very rightly, and so it should be rendered there; and so it is by the Septuagint interpreters, who render the whole as he, with a little variation, “where is thy revenge, O death? where is thy sting, O grave?” and so the Arabic version of Hosea still nearer the apostle, “where is now thy victory, O death?” or “where is thy sting, O grave?” and even the Chaldee paraphrase on (<sup><2834></sup>Hosea 13:14) renders the same word “where”; for instead of, “I will be thy king”, the Targum reads, *^a Ækl m*, “where is thy king?” and Aben Ezra, a Jewish writer of great note, on (<sup><2834></sup>Hosea 13:14) observes, that there are some that say the word is to be inverted as if it was *j ya*, “where”, and he adds, and it is right; a like observation he makes on those words in (<sup><4154></sup>1 Corinthians 15:14) and that that is the true sense of the word in both verses, is attested by Ebn Jannahius Tanchuma <sup>f357</sup>; so that the apostle is thus far to be justified, in his citation of this passage: it is further to be observed, that instead of “thy plagues”, he reads, “thy sting”; and I doubt not, but that among the many things which *rbd* signifies, as it must be owned it does signify the plague, or pestilence, (see <sup><4906></sup>Psalms 90:6) and which perhaps is so called, from the venomous nature of it, and the poisonous sting that is in it, so likewise a sting, though there is no instance of it; certain it is, that bees are called *pyrbd*, and as Cocceius <sup>f358</sup> observes, from their sting; and so in the Chaldee and Arabic languages, a

bee, or a wasp, is called *arbd*; and it is to such sort of creatures, that the allusion is here made; who having lost their stings, can do no hurt; and which will be the case of death in the resurrection morn, when risen saints will insult over it in this triumphant manner; having nothing more to fear from it, any more than a man has to be afraid of any animal whatever, that has lost its sting: and in the following clause,

*O grave, where is thy victory?* instead of “destruction”, as it must be allowed the word *bj q* signifies, (see <sup>1906</sup>Psalm 90:6) the apostle reads victory; but then there is no difference in the sense; for the grave gets its victory over its thousands, and ten thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousands, and millions of millions, by the destruction of them, which now it glories in, and boasts of; but in the resurrection morn, when its destruction will be at an end, the triumphant saints may reasonably ask, where is its boasted victory, since it can destroy no longer.

**Ver. 56.** *The sting of death is sin*, etc.] Death has a sting, and which was originally in it, and that is sin; sin is the cause of death, it is what has given rise and being to it; it entered into the world by it, and is supported in its empire through it; it gives it its resistless power, which reaches to all sorts of persons, young and old, rich and poor, high and low, bond and free; it gives it all its bitterness, agonies, and miseries; and it is by that it does all the hurt and mischief it does; and it may fitly be compared to a sting, for its poisonous and venomous nature:

*and the strength of sin is the law*; not that the law of God is sinful, or encourages sin: it forbids it under the severest penalty; but was there no law there would be no sin, nor imputation of it; sin is a transgression of the law: moreover, the strength of sin, its evil nature, and all the dreadful aggravations of it, and sad consequences upon it, are discovered and made known by the law; and also the strength of it is drawn out by it, through the corruption of human nature; which is irritated and provoked the more to sin, through the law’s prohibition of it; and this is not the fault of the law, but is owing to the vitiosity of nature; which the more it is forbidden anything, the more desirous it is of it; to which may be added, that sin is the more exceeding sinful, being committed against a known law, and that of the great lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; whose legislative power and authority are slighted and trampled upon by it, which makes the transgression the more heinous; it is the law which binds sin upon a man’s

conscience, accuses him of it, pronounces him guilty, curses, condemns, and adjudges him to death for it.

**Ver. 57.** *But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory*, etc.] Over sin the sting of death, over the law the strength of sin, and over death and the grave; and which will be the ground and foundation of the above triumphant song in the resurrection morn, as it is now at this present time of praise and thankfulness to God: and it is all

*through our Lord Jesus*; he has got the victory over sin; he has put it away by the sacrifice of himself; he has finished and made an end of it; for though it reigns over his people before conversion, and dwells in them after it, yet in consequence of his atonement for it, it loses its governing power through the Spirit and grace of God in regeneration, and entirely its damning power over them, and in the resurrection morn will not be so much as in being in them; the view of which now fills them with joy, thanksgiving, and triumph. Christ has obtained a victory over the law; he has stopped its mouth, and answered all its demands; he has been made under, and subject to it; he has obeyed its precepts, and bore its penalty, and has delivered his from the curse and condemnation of it, so that they have nothing to fear from it; it is dead to them, and they to that: he has also abolished death by dying and rising again, so as that it shall have no more dominion over him; and he has abolished it as a penal evil to his saints; and though they die, they shall not always remain under the power of death, they shall live again, and with him for ever: he has conquered the grave by rising out of it himself, and living for evermore, having the keys of the grave in his hands; and will at the last day oblige it to give up its dead, when his victory over this, with respect to his people, will be abundantly manifest: now this victory, in all its branches, is given by God to believers; they are made to share in all the victories of Christ their head, and are more than conquerors through him; but this is not by merit, but by gift, the gift of God the Father, who gives his Son, and all things with him that are his; and this gift is a distinguishing one; it is given to us, and not to others; and which therefore calls aloud for praise and thankfulness. The title of the “ninth” psalm may be rendered, “to the conqueror over death”, or “that is the author of victory over death, even to the Son, a psalm of David”, (~~3900~~ Psalm 9:1).

**Ver. 58.** *Therefore my beloved brethren*, etc.] This is the conclusion of the whole, and contains the use the apostle makes of the above doctrine,

addressing the saints at Corinth in the most tender and affectionate manner; owning the spiritual relation they stood in to him, and expressing the great love he had for them, which filled him with a concern for them, that they might be both sound in principle, and right in practice, and continue so:

*be ye steadfast, unmoveable*; in all the doctrines of the Gospel, and particularly in this of the resurrection of the dead, which he had been labouring throughout the whole chapter:

*always abounding in the work of the Lord*; going on in it, being more and more in the practice of it; either in the work of the ministry, which some of them were in, to which the Lord had called them, and for which he had fitted and qualified them, and in which his glory was greatly concerned, and therefore called his work; or any other work, even all good works, which the Lord commands, requires, calls his people to, and strengthens them to perform: which when they do they may be said to abound, and to be fruitful in every good work: and for their encouragement it is added,

*forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*; the labour of such who were in the ministry was not in vain, but was by the Lord made useful for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints, who would be their joy, and crown of rejoicing another day; and which must be no small encouragement to labour; and labour in any kind of good work has here its usefulness: it is profitable unto men, and though not meritorious of eternal life, yet the good works of the saints will follow them; Christ will not forget their work and labour of love which they have shown to his name and people, but will take notice of them as fruits of his own grace, and bestow his rewards upon them, though not in a way of debt, but of grace; which the doctrine of the resurrection assures of, and encourages to hope for; and so must he a friend to the practice of good works, as the contrary doctrine must be an obstruction to them.