

# 1 PETER

## INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 1 PETER

That Simon, called Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, was the writer of this epistle, is not questioned by any; nor was the genuineness and authenticity of it ever made a doubt of. Eusebius says <sup>f1</sup>, that it had been confessed by all, and received without controversy; and that the ancients, without any scruple, had made use of it in their writings. It is called his “general”, or catholic epistle, because it was not written to any particular person, or to any particular church, but in general, to a number of Christians dispersed in several places. The time when this epistle was written is not certain; some place it in the year of Christ 44 or 45, and so make it to be the most ancient of all the epistles, and which is the more commonly received opinion; but Dr. Lightfoot <sup>f2</sup> places it in the year 65, because in it the apostle speaks of the end of all things being at hand, and of the fiery trial just coming on them, and of judgment beginning at the house of God, (~~1~~1 Peter 4:7,12,17) all which he applies to the destruction of Jerusalem; though others fix it to 61, in the seventh year of Nero <sup>f3</sup>. The place from whence it seems to be written was Babylon, (~~1~~1 Peter 5:13) which is to be understood not figuratively, either of Rome or Jerusalem, but properly of Babylon, the metropolis of Chaldea, or Assyria. The persons to whom it is written were Jews, at least chiefly; for there might be some Gentiles among them, who may be taken notice of in some parts of the epistle; but the principal part were Jews, as appears from their being called the strangers of the dispersion, or, as James calls them, “the twelve tribes scattered abroad”; from the mention of the tradition of their fathers; from their having their conversation honest among the Gentiles, and their past life among them; from urging subjection to the civil magistrates among the Heathens, and the right use of their Christian liberty as to the ceremonies of the law; and from the near destruction of Jerusalem, which could only affect them; and from the use made of the writings of the Old Testament, and the authority of the prophets; (see ~~1~~1 Peter 1:1,18 2:12 4:3 2:13,16 4:7,12,17) as well as from the second epistle, which was written to the

same; (see ~~6019~~ 2 Peter 1:19 2:1 3:1,2,15) in which he seems to refer to the epistle to the Hebrews, written by Paul, as to these. And besides, Peter was the minister of the circumcision, or of the circumcised Jews, as Paul was of the Gentiles; and even those passages in this epistle, which seem most likely to concern the Gentiles, may be understood of the Jews, as which speak of their ignorance, idolatry, and having not been a people, (~~6014~~ 1 Peter 1:14 4:3 2:10) which were true of them before conversion, and as living among Gentiles. The occasion of writing it was this; Peter meeting with Sylvanus, a faithful brother, and who had been a companion of the Apostle Paul, he takes this opportunity of sending a letter by him to the converted Jews, dispersed among the Gentile countries, where he, with Paul, and others, travelled: the design of which is to testify of the true doctrine of grace, in which they were agreed; (see ~~6052~~ 1 Peter 5:12). And accordingly in it he does treat of the doctrine of electing grace, of redeeming grace, of regenerating and sanctifying grace, and of persevering grace; and exhorts believers to the exercise of grace, of faith, hope, and love, and to the discharge of such duties becoming their several stations, whereby they might evidence to others the truth of grace in themselves, and adorn the doctrine of the grace of God, and recommend it to others: and particularly he exhorts them patiently to bear all afflictions and persecutions they should meet with, for their profession of the true grace of God, in which he encourages them to stand steadfast: and this is the general scope and design of the epistle.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER 1

In this chapter, after the inscription and salutation, the apostle gives thanks to God for various blessings of grace bestowed, or to be bestowed upon the persons he writes to; and then, with the best of arguments and motives, urges them to the performance of several duties of religion. In the inscription, the person who is the writer of the epistle is described, both by his name, and by his office; and also the persons to whom it is sent, by their outward condition, strangers dispersed through several countries particularly mentioned, and by their spiritual estate, elect men; the source and spring of which election is the foreknowledge of God the Father; the means, the sanctification of the Spirit; and the end, obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ; and to these the apostle wishes a multiplication of grace and peace, ([1 Peter 1:1,2](#)) and then he gives thanks to God for the regeneration of them; the efficient cause of which is God the Father; the moving cause, his abundant mercy; the means, the resurrection of Christ from the dead; the end, a lively hope of a glorious inheritance, ([1 Peter 1:3,4](#)) and next follows a description of regenerate ones; they are such who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation; who rejoice in hope of that salvation, though now for a little while are sorrowful, by reason of afflictions, which are for the trial of their faith; they are believers in Christ, lovers of him, and rejoice in him, and shall at last receive the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls, ([1 Peter 1:5-9](#)) the excellency of which salvation is set forth from the concern the prophets had in it, the scrutiny they made into it, and the revelation of it made to them; from the concern the apostles had in it, and their report of it, and from the desire of angels to look into it, ([1 Peter 1:10-12](#)) upon which the apostle exhorts to the exercise of various graces and duties, to attention of mind, to sobriety, to a constant hope of eternal glory, and to holiness of life and conversation, ([1 Peter 1:13,14](#)) the arguments engaging to which are taken from the nature of God, who had called them by his grace, ([1 Peter 1:15,16](#)) from their concern with him, as a Father and a judge; from their state and condition, as sojourners in this world, and from their redemption by the blood of Christ from a vain conversation,

(~~¶17~~ 1 Peter 1:17-19) and of Christ, the Redeemer of them, many things are said, as that he was ordained before the foundation of the world to be the Redeemer; was manifested in human nature in these last days, for the sake of such that believe; was raised from the dead, and glorified, that there might be a sufficient foundation for the exercise of faith and hope in God, (~~¶20~~ 1 Peter 1:20,21) and next the apostle exhorts to brotherly love, in purity, and with fervency; from the consideration of the internal purification of them by the Spirit, through obedience to the truth; and from their regeneration, the cause of which was not corruptible, but incorruptible seed; and the means, the living and abiding word of God, (~~¶22~~ 1 Peter 1:22,23) which is illustrated by a passage out of (~~¶24~~ Isaiah 40:6-8) setting forth the frailty and mortality of men, and the transitoriness of all outward enjoyments; to which is opposed the duration of the everlasting Gospel, the means of regeneration, (~~¶25~~ 1 Peter 1:24,25).

**Ver. 1.** *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ*, etc.] The writer of this epistle describes himself first by his name, Peter, the same with Cephas, which signifies a rock, or stone; a name given him by Christ at his first conversion, and which respected his after firmness, solidity, resolution, and constancy; for his former name was Simeon, or Simon, as sometimes called; (see ~~¶18~~ Matthew 4:18 ~~¶19~~ John 1:42) and he further describes himself by his office, as

*an apostle of Jesus Christ*; being one of the twelve apostles, and the first of that number; who saw Christ in the flesh, was conversant with him, had his call and commission immediately from him, and was qualified by him to preach the Gospel; and was sent out first into Judea, and then into all the world to publish it, with a power of working miracles to confirm it; and this his character he makes mention of, in order to give the greater weight and authority to his epistle; and it is to be observed, that he does not style himself, as his pretended successor does, the head of the church, and Christ's vicar on earth; nor does he call himself the prince of the apostles, but only an apostle, as he was upon an equal foot with the rest. The persons he writes to are

*the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*: these Jews here intended are called strangers; not in a metaphorical sense, either because they were, as the wicked are, estranged from the womb, and alienated from the life of God, as all unconverted men are, and as they were before conversion; for now they were no more

strangers in this sense: or because of their unsettled state and condition in this life; having no continuing city, and seeking one to come, an heavenly country; and living as pilgrims and strangers, in which respect they are indeed so styled, (~~¶~~1 Peter 2:11) but in a civil sense, and not as the Gentiles were, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, for these were Jews; but on account of their not being in their own land, and in a foreign country, and therefore said to be “scattered”, or “the strangers of the dispersion”; either on account of the persecution at the death of Stephen, when multitudes of the converted Jews were scattered abroad, not only throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, but as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch; (see ~~¶~~Acts 8:1,4 11:19) and so it may be afterwards throughout the places here mentioned; or else these were some remains of the ten tribes carried captive by Shalmaneser, and of the two tribes by Nebuchadnezzar; or rather the dispersion of the Greeks, mentioned in (~~¶~~John 7:35) under the Macedonians, by Ptolemy Lagus: however, there were Jews of Pontus, who inhabited that place, and of such we read in (~~¶~~Acts 2:9) who came to worship at the feast of Pentecost, some of which were converted to the Christian faith, and being mentioned first, has occasioned this epistle to be called, both by Tertullian <sup>f4</sup>, and Cyprian <sup>f5</sup>, “the epistle to the Pontians”. Perhaps these Jews converted on the day of Pentecost, on their return hither, laid the first foundation of a Gospel church state in this country: it is a tradition of the ancients, mentioned by Eusebius <sup>f6</sup>, that Peter himself preached here, and so, very likely, formed the Christians he found, and those that were converted by him, into Gospel churches; and it appears by a letter of Dionysius, bishop of Corinth <sup>f7</sup>, that there were churches in Poutus in the “second” century, particularly at Amastris, the bishop of which was one Palma, whom he commends, and Focas is said to be bishop of Syncope, in the same age; and in the “third” century, Gregory and Athenodorus, disciples of Origen, were bishops in this country <sup>f8</sup>; the former was a very famous man, called Gregory Thaumaturgus, the wonder worker, and was bishop of Neocaesarea: in the “fourth” century there was a church in the same place, of which Longinus was bishop, as appears from the Nicene council, at which he and other bishops in Pontus were present; and in this age, in the times of Dioclesian, many in this country endured most shocking sufferings, related by Eusebius <sup>f9</sup>; and in the same century Helladius is said to govern the churches of Pontus; and in the “fifth” century we read of churches in Pontus, reformed by Chrysostom; in this age Theodorus was bishop of Heraclea, and Themistius of Amastris, both

in this province, and both these bishops were in the Chalcedon council; and in the “sixth” century there were churches in Pontus, whose bishops were in the fifth synod held at Rome and Constantinople; and so there were in the “seventh” and “eighth” centuries<sup>f10</sup>

*Galatia*, next mentioned, is that part of the lesser Asia, called Gallo Graecia, in which were several churches, to whom the Apostle Paul wrote his epistle, called the epistle to the Galatians; (see Gill on “~~4466~~Acts 16:6”) (see Gill on “~~8002~~Galatians 1:2”).

*Cappadocia*, according to Ptolomy<sup>f11</sup>, was bounded on the west by Galatia, on the south by Cilicia, on the east by Armenia the great, on the north by part of the Euxine Pontus; it had many famous cities in it, as Solinus<sup>f12</sup> says; as Archelais, Neocaesarea, Melita, and Mazaca. The Jews oftentimes talk<sup>f13</sup> of going from Cappadocia to Lud, or Lydda; so that, according to them, it seems to be near to that place, or, at least, that there was a place near Lydda so called; of this (see Gill on “~~4409~~Acts 2:9”). From this country also there were Jews at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, some of whom were converted; and here likewise the Apostle Peter is said to preach, as before observed of Pontus, and who probably founded a church or churches here in the “first” century; and in the “second” century, according to Tertullian<sup>f14</sup>, there were believers in Christ dwelling in this country; and in the “third” century, Eusebius<sup>f15</sup> makes mention of Neon, bishop of Larandis, and Celsus, bishop of Iconium, both in Cappadocia; there was also Phedimus of Amasea, in the same country, in this age, and at Caesarea, in Cappadocia, several martyrs suffered under Decius; and in this century, Stephen, bishop of Rome, threatened to excommunicate some bishops in Cappadocia, because they had rebaptized some that had been heretics: in the “fourth” century there were churches in Cappadocia, of one of which, namely, at Sasimi, the famous Gregory Nazianzen was first bishop, and afterwards of Nazianzum, as was also the famous Basil of Caesarea, in the same country; hither the persecution under Dioclesian reached, and many had their thighs broken, as Eusebius relates<sup>f16</sup>; from hence were sent several bishops, who assisted at the council of Nice, under Constantine, and at another held at Jerusalem: in the “fifth” century there were churches in Cappadocia, in several places, the names of whose bishops are on record; as Firmus, Thalassius, Theodosins, Daniel, Aristomachus, Patricius, and others: in the “sixth” century there were many famous churches in this country, whose bishops were in the fifth synod held at Rome and Constantinople; and in the “seventh” century there were

several of them in the sixth synod of Constantinople; and in the “eighth” century mention is made of bishops of several churches in Cappadocia, in the second Nicene synod; and even in the “ninth” century there were Christians in these parts <sup>f17</sup>.

*Asia* here intends neither the lesser nor the greater Asia, but Asia, properly so called; and which, according to Solinus <sup>f18</sup>, Lycia and Phrygia bounded on the east, the Aegean shores on the west, the Egyptian sea on the south, and Paphlagonia on the north; the chief city in it was Ephesus, and so it is distinguished from Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia, and Bithynia, in (~~<4406>~~Acts 16:6,7) as here from Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia, and from Pontus and Cappadocia, in (~~<4409>~~Acts 2:9) though they were all in lesser Asia. Here also were Jews converted on the day of Pentecost; and here likewise Peter is said to preach; and by him, and by the Apostle John, who also lived and died in this country, churches were planted; and churches there were here, even in the “seventh” century, as distinct from the other Asia, greater or less; for out of it bishops were sent to, and were present at, the sixth council at Constantinople, whose names are recorded; yea, in the “eighth” century there were churches and bishops, one of which persuaded Leo to remove images from places of worship; and another was in the Nicene synod <sup>f19</sup>. The last place mentioned is

*Bithynia*, of which (see Gill on “~~<4407>~~Acts 16:7”). And though the Apostle Paul, and his compassions, were not suffered at a certain time to go into Bithynia, and preach the Gospel there, yet it is certain that it was afterwards carried thither; and as Peter is said to preach in Pontus, Asia, and Capadocia, so likewise in Bithynia; here, according to the Roman martyrology, Luke, the evangelist, died; and, according to tradition, Prochorus, one of the seven deacons in (~~<4405>~~Acts 6:5) was bishop of Nicomedia, in this country; and Tychicus, of whom the Apostle Paul makes frequent mention, was bishop of Chalcedon, another city in it; and who are both said to be of the seventy disciples; (see Gill on “~~<2001>~~Luke 10:1”), and it is certain, from the testimony of Pliny <sup>f20</sup>, an Heathen writer, in a letter of his to Trajan the emperor, written about the year 104, that there were then great numbers of Christians in Bithynia; not only the cities, but the towns and villages were full of them; and in the “third” century, the persecution under Dioclesian raged, particularly at Nicomedia, where Anthimus, the pastor of the church in that place, had his head cut off as Eusebius <sup>f21</sup> relates: in the beginning of the “fourth” century, Nice, in Bithynia, became famous for the council held there under Constantine, against Arius; and in

this century, bishops from Bithynia assisted at a synod held at Tyre, in Phoenicia; and in the “fifth” century was held a synod at Chalcedon, a city in this country, against the Nestorinn heresy; and the names of several bishops of Chalcedon, Nicomedia, and Nice, who lived, in this age, are on record; and in the “sixth” century there were bishops from these several places, and others, who were present in the fifth synod at Constantinople; as there were also in the “seventh” century, at the sixth synod held at the same place, whose names are particularly mentioned; and in the “eighth” century bishops from hence were in the Nicene synod; and even in the ninth century there were some that bore the Christian name in Bithynia <sup>f22</sup>. In these places however, it seems, dwelt many Jews, who were converted to Christ, to whom the apostle inscribes this epistle, and whom he further describes in the following verse.

**Ver. 2.** *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*, etc.] Not to any office, as to that of bishops or presbyters; for though the apostle writes to some of them under this character, (~~401B~~ 1 Peter 5:1) yet not all; nor were they so called, as a nation, for they were persons scattered about in several countries; nor as a church, for they are not wrote to as such; nor does this character merely design their effectual calling; though as that is a fruit and evidence of election, it is sometimes so styled, and the saints called by grace are said to be chosen; (~~405D~~ John 15:19 ~~402B~~ 1 Corinthians 1:26) but it intends the eternal election of those persons both to grace and glory; which the apostle knew of, not by divine revelation, or any particular discovery made to him; but he concluded it in a judgment of charity, they being all under a profession of faith in Christ, and he having reason to believe that the greater part of them were truly partakers of that faith which demonstrated them to be the elect of God: the cause, spring, and source of their election was, “the foreknowledge of God the Father”: to whom election is commonly ascribed, agreeably to the order of the divine Persons in the Trinity, and their distinct parts in the economy of salvation, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit: and by this his “foreknowledge” is meant, not his eternal, universal, and infallible knowledge, and which is infinite, and reaches to all things and persons, present, future, or possible, for this has for its objects persons whom God never predestinated and chose: though certain it is that he knows and foreknows all whom he does predestinate and choose; nor does it intend the mere decree of election, or God's eternal purpose and resolution to choose, but the spring and source of that act of his: and much less does it

mean a bare prescience of men, and choice of them, upon a foresight of faith, holiness, good works, and perseverance therein; for these are all, when genuine, the fruits and effects of election, which are included in it, and secured and brought about by it; but the sovereign grace, good will, and pleasure of God, or the everlasting love of God the Father, which is the cause of, and has given birth to the act of election, is meant by foreknowledge, joined with affection, delight, and approbation; knowledge, and foreknowledge, as ascribed to the divine Being, often signify such things; (see <sup><1006></sup>Psalm 1:6 <sup><519></sup>2 Timothy 2:19 <sup><819></sup>Romans 8:29,30) (<sup><510></sup>Romans 11:1,2) and such a knowledge God the Father had of the persons of the elect from all eternity; and which is the ground and foundation of his choosing them to grace and glory, and not anything in them, or done by them, or anything out of himself; no other reason can be given of it than his own grace, his pure love, and sovereign good will and pleasure: the means follow, through which they were chosen,

*through sanctification of the Spirit*; as in (<sup><513></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:13). (See Gill on "<sup><513></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:13"). The ends to which the saints are chosen are,

*unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*; by "obedience" is meant either the obedience of elect men to Christ, which lies in obeying the truth of the Gospel, called the obedience of faith; and so is the same with the "belief of the truth", which goes along in election with the sanctification of the Spirit, in (<sup><513></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:13) and in submission to Gospel ordinances, and doing all good works in the name, faith, and strength of Christ; and which also are fruits and effects, and so not causes of divine predestination; (see <sup><410></sup>Ephesians 2:10) and also follow upon the sanctification of the Spirit; or else the obedience of Christ is intended; and so the Arabic version renders it, "unto the obedience of Jesus Christ"; which lay in his performing the precepts of the law, and bearing the penalty of it, death; and by which the chosen seed are justified, or made righteous in the sight of God, and have a title to eternal life and glory, and are safe from wrath to come; and to the enjoyment of this grace, they are chosen of God the Father; and between these two, predestination and justification, there is a close and inseparable connection; so that they that are interested in the one, are in the other; (see <sup><610></sup>Romans 8:30), the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; does not denote a small quantity of it, for it was shed and poured out in great abundance; but is said in allusion to the sprinkling of the blood of the passover lamb. (<sup><422></sup>Exodus 12:22,23)

or to the sprinkling of the blood on the book of the covenant, and on the people at Mount Sinai, (<sup><1248></sup>Exodus 24:8) or to other sprinklings of blood in their legal sacrifices: the application of the blood of Christ to the heart, by the Spirit of God, for cleansing, pardon, and justification, is meant; which affords true, solid, conscience peace and joy now, and entitles to eternal happiness and glory; all which are secured by electing grace. The salutation of these persons follows:

*grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied*; which is much the same that is used by the Apostle Paul in all his epistles; (see Gill on “<sup><4007></sup>Romans 1:7”), only Peter adds the word “multiplied”; which makes it more express, and the sense more clear: he means an enlarged view of interest in the love of God, an increase of grace out of the fulness of it in Christ, and of Gospel light, and of the several gifts of the Spirit; and also of all prosperity outward and inward, of a conscience peace through the blood of Christ, which passeth all understanding, and a more established and well grounded hope of enjoying eternal peace hereafter. The phrase is Jewish, and is used in their salutations in this form, *ygsy ʾwkm̄l ʿ*, “let your peace be multiplied”<sup>f23</sup>.

**Ver. 3.** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, etc.] The epistle begins here with thanksgiving to God, or an ascription of blessing, praise, and glory to him; for this does not mean an invoking or conferring a blessing on him; neither of which can be, for there is not a greater than he to be invoked, nor can anything be added to his blessedness: but God may be blessed by his creatures when they speak well of him, and his wonderful works of creation, providence, and grace; when they ascribe all their mercies, spiritual and temporal, to him; give him the glory of them, and express their thanks for them in heart, lip, and life; and such a blessing of God for a special and spiritual favour, the grace of regeneration, is intended here: by “God” is meant, not God essentially, but personally considered, even God the Father, as is clearly expressed: the words are rendered in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions without the copulative “and”, thus, “blessed be God the Father”; and if that is retained, they may be rendered thus, “blessed be God, even the Father”; as in (<sup><4008></sup>2 Corinthians 1:3) and so the latter be exegetical of the former; though both are true of Christ, in different senses; God is the God of Christ, as Christ is man; and he is the Father of Christ, as Christ is God; for, as man, he had no father, nor is he a son by office, but by nature; (see Gill on “<sup><4008></sup>Ephesians 1:3”).

*which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again:*

regeneration is the blessing thanks are given for; and if we are to be thankful to God, and bless his name, because he hath made us creatures, and hath given us a natural being; much more should we praise him for making us new creatures, and giving us a spiritual being. To be “begotten again”, and so to be born again, is opposed unto, and distinguished from our first birth, when we were conceived, and shapen in sin; and designs a birth, spiritual, holy, and heavenly; it is signified by a being quickened, or made alive; so as in a spiritual sense, to see, and hear, and breathe after divine things, and to live a life of faith and holiness; by Christ being formed in the heart; by a partaking of the divine nature, and by being made new men, or new creatures: God, and not man, is the efficient cause of this, which is sometimes ascribed to the Spirit, and sometimes to the Son, and here to the Father; and it is not men's works, but his own good will and pleasure, his great love and free favour, his rich grace and abundant mercy, are the impulsive, or moving cause of it; and abundance of grace and mercy indeed is displayed in the regeneration and conversion of sinners: what they are regenerated to is,

*unto a lively hope;* meaning either the grace of hope, which is implanted in regeneration, and not before; for then, and then only, is a good hope through grace given; and it may be said to be “lively”, or “living”, inasmuch as it is fixed, not on dead works, but on a living Christ, on his person, blood, and righteousness; and is not the hope of a dead sinner, of a lifeless hypocrite, and formal professor, that has a name to live, and is dead, but of a living believer, one made truly alive by the spirit of life, from Christ; and is what is sometimes, at least, in lively exercise, and makes the heart of a believer cheerful, brisk, and lively; and is what is lasting and durable, and will never be lost, but will be held fast unto the end: or else the thing hoped for is intended, the hope laid up in heaven; the blessed hope regenerate ones are born unto, and are looking for, even eternal life and happiness; and the Syriac version renders it, “unto hope of life”: that is, or eternal life; and so reads one of Stephens's copies. Saints are both begotten again to the grace of hope, and to the glory which that grace is waiting for: the means is,

*by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;* which may be connected either with the act of begetting again; for Christ's resurrection is the virtual cause of regeneration, or regeneration is in virtue of Christ's resurrection; had he not risen from the dead, none would have been quickened, or made

to live, or have been raised to newness of life: his resurrection is the exemplar of regeneration; there is a likeness between them; as his resurrection was a declaration of his sonship, so regeneration is a manifestation of adoption; and as Christ's resurrection was his first step to glory, so is regeneration to eternal life; and both are wrought by the same almighty power: or the clause may be connected with the foregoing, "unto a lively hope"; for the resurrection of Christ is what is the means of, and lays a solid foundation of hope, both of the saints' resurrection from the dead, of which Christ is the meritorious cause, pledge, and pattern, and of eternal glory and happiness, since he rose for our justification, with which glorification is inseparably connected.

**Ver. 4.** *To an inheritance incorruptible*, etc.] This is a further explanation of the "lively hope", or hope laid up in heaven, which regenerate ones are begotten to: it is an "inheritance"; a large estate, and rich possession, they are born heirs apparent to; what is not to be got by industry, or obtained by the works of the law; for they that are of the law are not heirs; but what is the pure bequest and free gift of God, as a Father to his children; for an inheritance is proper and peculiar to children, nor does it belong to any but them; and it comes to them through the death of the testator, Christ, and of it the Holy Spirit is the pledge and earnest: and here it is said to be

*incorruptible*; it is free from corruption in itself; nor can it be corrupted by others, by moth, or rust, or other things, as gold, silver, and garments may, which are a part of earthly inheritances; nor can it be enjoyed by corrupt persons, either corrupted with sin, or clothed with frailty and mortality; wherefore, in order to inherit it, corruption must put on incorruption, in every sense; other epithets and commendations of it follow:

*and undefiled*; it is in its own nature pure and holy, and free from any defilement of sin; nor are there any of those impurities in it which Jews and Mahometans dream of in their vainly expected earthly paradise; nor will it be possessed by any but undefiled persons, such as are made so through the blood and righteousness of Christ:

*and that fadeth not away*; as do world, and the glory of it, and all inheritances and possessions in it; here is no continuing city, but there is one to come; in this inheritance are durable riches, everlasting habitations, an house eternal in the heavens, glories in it that will never wither and die, and pleasures which will never end, and which will be enjoyed without decrease or loathing:

*reserved in heaven for you*; the Alexandrian copy reads, “for us”; and the Ethiopic version renders it, “for us and you”; for all the saints; for all who are the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, and who are begotten again to a lively hope; for these this inheritance is prepared, laid up, and secured in the hands or Christ their feoffee, who has it in trust for them, and with whom they are co-heirs; and it is safe for them “in heaven”; out of the reach of men and devils: this serves both to commend the inheritance, to set forth the excellency of it, lying in such a place as heaven; for the situation of an inheritance adds oftentimes to the valuableness of it; and also the safety and security of it; it is safe, being in heaven, and more so as it is in Christ's hands there. The Jews are wont to call the future state an inheritance of the land of the living: they say <sup>f24</sup>

“this is called **hl j n**, “an inheritance”; and add, but in this world a man has no inheritance, nor continuance;”

so they interpret that phrase, “by the God of thy father”, in (<sup>04925</sup>Genesis 49:25) thus <sup>f25</sup>

“this is **ansj a**, “the inheritance” of the superior place, which is called “heaven”;”

and sometimes they style it **hal [ atnsj a**, “the superior inheritance”, or “the inheritance above” <sup>f26</sup>; all which agrees with Peter's language.

**Ver. 5.** *Who are kept by the power of God*, etc.] This is a description of the persons for whom the inheritance is reserved in heaven; they are not only chosen to salvation, and begotten again to an inheritance, but they are preserved unto it; their happiness is very great; their inheritance is safe in heaven for them, and they are kept below, amidst a thousand snares and difficulties, till they safely arrive to the possession of that: they are kept, not in and by themselves, the way of man is not in himself; nor in the hands of angels, for no such trust does God put in them; but in the hands of Jesus Christ, where they are safe, and out of which none can pluck them; on him, as a foundation, and in him, as a strong hold; they are kept in the love of God, and on his heart, from whence they can never be separated, and in the covenant of grace, out of which they will never be put; and in a state of justification, and shall never enter into condemnation; and in the family of God, for, being sons, they are no more servants; and in a state of grace and holiness, in the fear of God, and faith of Christ, and love to both; and in the path of truth, from whence they can never finally and totally fall: for

though they are not kept from the being of sin, and the workings of it, and slips and falls into it, yet from being destroyed by it; and though not from Satan, and his temptations, yet from being overcome by them; and though not entirely from unbelief, doubts, and fears, yet from final unbelief; for Christ prays for them, that their faith fail not; and from a final and total falling away from grace into sin: and they are kept thus, not by their own power and might, or that of any mere creature, but “by the power of God”; meaning, not the Gospel, nor the Spirit of God, but the perfection of his power; by which they are kept, as with a guard, or in a garrison, as the word here used signifies; not only angels encamp about them, and salvation is for walls and bulwarks, all around them; but God himself, in the perfection of his power, is a wall of fire to them; he is round about them from henceforth and for ever; their place of defence is the munition of rocks; his name is a strong tower, where they run and are safe: it is added,

*through faith*; some versions read it, “and by faith”, as the Syriac and Ethiopic; by that faith which is of the operation of God, of which Christ is the author and finisher, and shall never fail, it being supported by the same power the saints are kept; through faith in the power and faithfulness of God; through faith looking to Christ, leaning on him, and living upon him; by faith getting the victory over the world, and every other enemy, and being more than conquerors, through Christ. That to which the saints are kept is, “unto salvation”; salvation is already obtained for them, by the obedience and sufferings of Christ, and is applied to them in conversion, by the Spirit of Christ; but the full enjoyment of it, which is here intended, is reserved for them in heaven; and to this they are kept, being heirs of it, and shall certainly possess it: and which

*is ready to be revealed in the last time*; it is “ready”, being a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, and a salvation obtained by the blood of Christ, and a mansion of glory made fit for them, through the presence and intercession of their Redeemer: and it is ready “to be revealed”; in a short time it will be made manifest; at present it is much out of sight; eye has not seen, nor ear heard the full glories of it; saints themselves as yet do not know what they shall be, and have: but “in the last time”, when Christ shall come a second time to judge the world, he will raise the dead bodies of his saints; and then this salvation shall be fully manifested to them; and they shall enjoy it both in soul and body to all eternity.

**Ver. 6.** *Wherein ye greatly rejoice*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version reads, “in which ye shall rejoice”: and so the Syriac version, adding, “for ever”; and refer these words to the “last time”; or, times spoken of in the preceding verse; when the saints will greatly rejoice, being in full possession of eternal salvation; in distinction from the present time, in which they are in heaviness; but it is better to read the words in the present tense, and as expressive of the saints in this life, who are blessed with that fruit of the Spirit, joy, and have always reason to rejoice, and greatly rejoice. The connection is with the whole that goes before; and the sense is this, that regenerated persons rejoice, in that they are the elect of God, according to his everlasting love towards them, and free grace, and good will; in their regeneration, which is an evidence of their election of God; in the abundant mercy of God displayed in their regeneration; and in that lively hope of eternal life which is the effect of it; and in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which secures their justification of life, and their resurrection from the dead; and in the inheritance they are born heirs unto; and in their preservation to it by the power of God through faith; and in that complete salvation which is ready for them, and in a short time will be revealed, to which they are kept:

*though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations.* This seems to be a contrast, but is no real contradiction; for the character of the saints in this world is, that they are as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, (~~1~~ 2 Corinthians 6:10) rejoicing even in their tribulations and temptations; yea, for them, and on account of them, in some respects, which in others make them sorrowful, and heavy, or “heavy” with sorrow: the cause of this heaviness is not only indwelling corruptions, the hidings of God’s face, and the temptations of Satan, but afflictions and persecutions, which are here meant by “manifold temptations”; for not the temptations or to sin, are here intended, but the temptations with which God tempts and tries his people: so he sometimes does, by calling them to hard service, to do things difficult and disagreeable to flesh and blood, in which way he tempted Abraham; and by laying afflictions, or suffering afflictions to come upon them, by which he tried Job; and by permitting wicked men to reproach and persecute them, and to injure them in their characters, persons, and properties; and which was the case of the primitive Christians, and has been more or less the case of the saints ever since: now such exercises are called, from the quality of them, temptations, or trials; because they try the hearts, principles, and graces of them that believe, and

particularly their faith hereafter mentioned; and from the quantity of them, they are said to be various; they are of different sorts; as reproach, imprisonment, loss of goods, and death itself in divers shapes; and are more or less at different times and ages; and are exercised on various persons: and are sometimes very heavy, and grievous to be borne, and cause great heaviness and sorrow of heart; and yet there are things, and circumstances, and which are here hinted at, that greatly mitigate the heaviness occasioned by them; as, that these afflictions, and the heaviness that comes by them, are but little, and light, in comparison of the eternal weight of glory; though they are great tribulations in themselves, through and out of which the people of God come to the kingdom; and so the Syriac version renders it, “though at this time” **l y l q**, “ye are a little made sorrowful”; and then it is only “now”, for the present time, and but for a short time; for a little season, even for a moment, comparatively speaking; and also, “if need be”, which the Syriac version omits, though by all means to be retained: afflictive dispensations, in whatsoever form, are necessary, by the will of God, who has appointed them, and therefore must be, and ought to be, quietly submitted to, and patiently borne, on that consideration; and are also necessary, on account of Christ the head, to whom there must be a conformity of his members; and likewise on their own account; for the humbling of their souls; for the weaning of them from the things of this world; for the restraining, subduing, and keeping under the corruptions of their nature; and for the trial of grace: and it is only “if”, and when there is a necessity for them, that they are in heaviness by them; otherwise God does not delight to afflict and grieve the children of men, and much less his own; (see <sup>ⲮⲏⲔⲏⲛ</sup>Lamentations 3:33) so the Jews say <sup>f27</sup>, that **Ⲍⲣⲭⲱⲛⲏ**, “there was a necessity” of God's tempting Abraham as he did, to humble and purify him.

**Ver. 7.** *That the trial of your faith*, etc.] This is the principal end which God has in afflictive providences, to try the faith of his people; so the faith of Abraham, Job, Habakkuk, and others, have been tried:

*being much more precious than of gold that perisheth*: the grace of faith is much more precious than gold; since that perisheth by using, but faith does not; and since it is so valuable as not to be obtained by it; and since those that have it, though poor in this world, are rich, and heirs of a kingdom: but the trying of it is abundantly more precious than gold; for not only as gold being tried in the fire is purged from its dross, and is proved to be

genuine and shines the brighter, so faith, being tried in the fire of afflictions, is purged from unbelief; and the believer is purged from his dross and tin, and his iniquity is purged, and the fruit of all is to take away sin; and he is tried and proved to be a true believer, and his faith shines the more illustriously, as in the above instances; yea, the very trying of it has an influence on other graces, for great usefulness; for the trying of faith works patience, and that, experience, and that, hope:

*though it be tried with fire*: either though gold be tried with fire, and so is greatly refined, yet it is more precious than that; or though faith be tried with the fire of afflictions, yet it is precious, and more precious than gold: and it is tried for this purpose,

*that it might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*; who is now in the highest heavens, and out of sight, but will appear a second time without sin unto salvation, and every eye shall see him; and when the believer will be found in him, and his faith be found unto praise by him, he will have praise of him himself; it will be said unto him, "Well done, good and faithful servant"; his faith will be praised for its steadiness and constancy, notwithstanding all persecutions and tribulations; and his good works, the fruits of faith, will be taken notice of by him with commendation; he will be honoured, by being placed on the right hand of Christ, and by being set down with him in his throne, and having a crown of righteousness given to him; and he will be glorified both in soul and body; his body will be made like to Christ's glorious body, and his soul will have a glory revealed in it; and in his whole person he shall appear, when Christ does, with him in glory.

**Ver. 8.** *Whom having not seen, ye love*, etc.] That is, Jesus Christ, whom they had never seen with their bodily eyes, being Jews, who dwelt not in Judea, when Christ was upon earth, but were scattered about in several parts of the Gentile world; and yet Christ being made known to them, through the preaching of the Gospel, they received and embraced him, and their affections were strongly set upon him: they loved him because of his excellencies and perfections, because of the loveliness of his person, and because he first loved them; they loved him because of the fulness of grace that was in him, because of what he had done for them, and was unto them, and because of the offices he sustained on their account, and the relations he stood in to them; they loved him above all creatures and things, and all of him, and that belong unto him, his people, truths, ordinances, ways, and

worship; they loved him with all their hearts, and in the sincerity of their souls, though they had never seen his face in the flesh; whereas sight often begets and increases love: their love was not carnal, but spiritual; it was a fruit of the Spirit of God in their souls; was accompanied with faith in Christ, and proceeded upon the report the Gospel made of him:

*in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing*; the Arabic version adds, “in him”: that is, in Christ, who was then received up into heaven, and must be retained there until the time of the restitution of all things; and therefore not now to be beheld with corporeal sight: and yet these regenerate ones, and lovers of Christ, believed in him; (see ~~401B~~ John 20:29) not with a notional, historical, and temporary faith, believing not merely what he said, or did, or does, or will do; but looking on him, and to him, for life and salvation; going out of themselves to him, embracing of him, leaning upon him as their Saviour and Redeemer; venturing their souls upon him, committing their all unto him, expecting all from him, both grace and glory: and so

*rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*; with a joy in believing on him, which is better experienced than expressed; a joy that not only strangers intermeddle not with, know nothing of, which entirely passes their understanding, but is such as saints themselves cannot speak out, or give a full and distinct account of; they want words to express it, and convey proper ideas of it to others: and it is a joy that is glorious; there is a rejoicing that is evil and scandalous; but this is honourable, and of which none need be ashamed; it is solid and substantial, and the matter of it always abiding, when the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment; it is a joy on account of the glory of God, which the believer lives in the hope and faith of; and it is a beginning, a presage and pledge of it; it is a glory begun here; it is the firstfruits, and a part also of it; and by it saints may know a little what heaven itself will be.

**Ver. 9.** *Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.*] Which is a just and sufficient ground of joy and rejoicing. “Salvation” intends spiritual and eternal salvation; that which God appointed his people to from all eternity, which is obtained by Christ, applied by the Spirit, and will be fully enjoyed in heaven: this is the salvation “of souls”: which are of more worth than a world; and the redemption of which is precious, and requires a great price, and for which a great price is paid, as in (~~401B~~ 1 Peter 1:18,19). It is rightly supplied in our version by “your”, as in the Syriac,

Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; though the Vulgate Latin version only reads, “the salvation of souls”; and which is to be understood, not to the exclusion of bodies, for God has designed the salvation of them; and Christ has procured the redemption of them; and these will be preserved unto the coming of Christ, being united to him; and will be raised by him, and with their souls enjoy everlasting happiness with him; though, in the present state of things, salvation rather takes place in the soul than in the body, which is exposed to various labours, afflictions, and diseases; but the chief design of the phrase is, to distinguish this salvation from a corporeal and temporal one: and so the Jews use the phrase  $\text{צְפֻנַּת הַנְּשָׁמָה}$ , “the salvation of the soul”<sup>f28</sup>, in opposition to, and distinction from, a mere bodily one; and it intends a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, and its curses; from hell, the second death, and wrath to come, and every spiritual enemy: which is the end of faith; or, as the Syriac version renders it,  $\text{אַנְ[רְ]וּפ}$ , “the reward of faith”; not that faith is the cause of salvation, or meritorious of it; for that itself is the gift of God, and is rather a part of salvation, and, at most, but the means of perceiving an interest in it, and of enjoying the comfort of it; and is what will issue in it, and in the full enjoyment of it; when faith will both have its end and scope, and be at an end, being exchanged for fruition; just as a reward is given at the end of a man’s labours: hence it is called  $\text{תְּרֻמָּה}$ , “the end”, (<sup>אֵיפֶס</sup> Proverbs 23:18) and even now salvation is the end of faith, in like sense as Christ is the end of the law: as the law has its full accomplishment, and all its ends answered in Christ, so faith has its end, and all it looks for, desires, and wants, in salvation by Christ: and which is now “receiving”; for the saints not only shall receive, and enjoy the full possession of it hereafter, but they have it now; it is not only appointed to them, and wrought out for them, but is brought near, set before them, and applied to them, and put into the hands of faith by the Spirit of God; they have it in faith and hope, by which they are already saved; and in Christ their head and representative, in whom they are set down in heavenly places; and besides, they have the beginning, firstfruits, earnest, and pledge of it in their own hearts, as well as a right unto, and a meetness for the perfect possession of it hereafter; all which is matter of joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

**Ver. 10.** *Of which salvation the prophets have inquired*, etc.] They greatly desired the coming of the Saviour, and to see him; they longed after the salvation to be accomplished by him, and expressed their wishes for him, and that; and inquired into the nature of it, and gave an account thereof,

according to the measure of light and knowledge communicated to them; they pointed out Christ as a Redeemer of his people, and his salvation as spiritual and eternal:

*and searched diligently*; in the use of means; by prayer and supplication; by reading the prophecies that went before; by observing the types, shadows, and sacrifices of the law; and by waiting upon the Lord for the inspiration of his Spirit. This last clause is omitted in the Syriac version, but rightly retained in all others:

*who prophesied of the grace; [that should] come unto you*; Jews, and also the Gentiles. They prophesied both of Christ, who is the unspeakable gift of God's free grace, who is full of grace, and by whom it comes; and also of the several blessings of grace through Christ, as of redeeming grace from sin, Satan, death, and the grave; of justifying grace, through his righteousness, he being the Lord our righteousness, in whom all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and glory; for though his righteousness is revealed without the law, yet it is witnessed to by law and prophets; of pardoning grace, as with God, and as a blessing of the new covenant, and as received through faith in Christ, to which give all the prophets witness; of adopting grace, both to Jews and Gentiles, signifying, that where they were not called the people of God, they should be called the sons of God; of regenerating and sanctifying grace, in giving a new heart and Spirit, in sprinkling with clean water, in writing the laws of God in the inward parts, and pouring out the Spirit in a plenteous manner on all sorts of men; of persevering grace, intimating that they that fear the Lord shall not depart from him, and that his loving kindness shall never depart from them; and of eternal life and glory, as God's free gift, which is that everlasting salvation, they say, Israel shall be saved in the Lord with.

**Ver. 11.** *Searching what, or what manner of time*, etc.] The prophets made a very diligent inquiry into the exact time when Christ should come to work out the salvation of his people; to whom it was made known that his coming should be before the sceptre, or tribe of Judah, and all civil government in it, ceased; and before the second temple was destroyed, into which the Messiah, the messenger of the covenant, was to come, as the Lord and proprietor of it; and that it should be seventy weeks, or 490 years, from a date given in (2024-Daniel 9:24-26) as it was revealed to the Prophet Daniel; who particularly inquired, and diligently searched into this matter, and was eminently a man of desires this way, as he is styled,

(<sup>2192</sup>Daniel 9:23) and they not only searched into the exact time, but into the manner and quality of the time when the Saviour should come; and foretold that it would be, with respect to the nations of the world, a time of profound peace; with respect to the Jews, that it would be a time of great blindness, ignorance, unbelief, and hardness of heart; that such would be that generation, or age, for wickedness and barbarity, as could not be declared and expressed; and that few would believe the report of the Gospel; and that the Messiah would be rejected of men, and be wounded, bruised, and put to death; and with respect to the Gentiles, that the Gospel would be preached to them, and that they should seek to Christ, be gathered to him, and hope and trust in him; and that the followers of the Messiah should be persecuted, and greatly distressed, and yet comforted and sustained; and this should be the face of the times, and the state of things, when the salvation should be revealed: and all this, and much more,

*the Spirit of Christ in them did signify*; or “make manifest”: from whence it appears, that Christ then existed, as he did before there were any prophets, and even from everlasting, being the eternal God; and that the Spirit is from him, as well as from the Father; and as here, so he is often by the Jews <sup>f29</sup> called **aj yçm aj wr**, “the Spirit of the Messiah”, or “Christ”; and that the Spirit is truly God, since he could declare beforehand the exact time of Christ's coming, and the finality of the age in which he came, as well as bear a previous testimony to his sufferings and glory; as also, that he was in the prophets, and they were inspired by him, and spake as he moved and directed them:

*when, it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.* The “sufferings of Christ” are what the Jews call <sup>f30</sup> **j yçm yl bj**, “the sorrows of the Messiah”. These are particularly testified of in (<sup>4221</sup>Psalm 22:1-31 69:1-36 <sup>2511</sup>Isaiah 53:1-12 <sup>2092</sup>Daniel 9:26) (<sup>3120</sup>Zechariah 12:10). The glory, or “glories”, as it may be rendered, design his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to heaven, his session at the right hand of God, and having all power, authority, and judgment committed to him; and which are eminently and distinctly prophesied of in (<sup>4960</sup>Psalm 16:10 68:18 110:1 <sup>2073</sup>Daniel 7:13,14).

**Ver. 12.** *Unto whom it was revealed*, etc.] The salvation they searched and inquired into, and the grace of it; the time of its being wrought out, and what sort of times they would be when Christ should come, both to the church, and to the world, among Jews and Gentiles; as also what cruel

sufferings the Messiah should undergo, and what great glory should be put upon him afterwards:

*that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister.* The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read “unto you”; and so do some copies. Not that they were ignorant of the things they searched into, and were revealed unto them, and they prophesied of; as the Jews sometimes say<sup>f31</sup> of them,

“that they prophesied, and knew not what they prophesied of;”

though it is not to be supposed that they had such clear and distinct ideas of things as saints have now under the Gospel dispensation; yet they knew much of the grace of the Gospel, and had the comfort of it, and a view of interest in the great salvation, and saw the day of Christ afar off with pleasure: nor that they did not minister, and were not useful to the saints of the age in which they lived; for their prophecies concerning Christ, and salvation by him, were particularly calculated for their spiritual refreshment and comfort, and the support of their faith and hope under afflictive circumstances; but then they were not to have their accomplishment in their times; for though they sometimes speak of them, because of the certainty of them, as if they were already done, yet they knew they were not to be brought about until the last days; and therefore what was written by them, was written for our learning and instruction chiefly and principally, on whom the ends of the world are come; and though they were both profitable to themselves, and others that lived with them, yet they are more so to the saints under the Gospel dispensations, who are able to compare prophecies and facts together: even

*the things which are now reported unto you;* as accomplished facts; such as relate to the person and offices of Christ, and salvation wrought out by him; to his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension into heaven, and session at the right hand of God; of all which there is a true and faithful report made in the Gospel:

*by them that have preached the Gospel unto you;* meaning himself, and the rest of the apostles, who had been called, and qualified, and sent out by Christ to preach glad tidings, and publish peace, which they had done in the several parts of the world, both to Jew and Gentile:

*with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;* by Christ from the Father, particularly at the day of Pentecost, when the apostles had an extraordinary

and plentiful effusion of the Spirit, qualifying them to preach the Gospel to which they were called and sent: and thus, as the great salvation is commended, from the concern that the prophets of old had in it, so from the preaching of it by the apostles, who were influenced and guided by the same Spirit of Christ as they were, and in a far greater manner; and this salvation is still more commended from the great regard the blessed angels have unto it:

*which things the angels desire to look into.* The Vulgate Latin version reads, “into whom”; either into the Holy Spirit, and the things of the Spirit, which he testified in the prophets, and published by the apostles; or rather into Christ, his person, offices, and grace, the allusion being to the cherubim on the mercy seat, a type of Christ, which looked to one another, and to the mercy seat, (<sup><0250></sup>Exodus 25:20) and was true of them in the days of Christ's flesh, when they ascended and descended on the son of man, (<sup><0151></sup>John 1:51) and when he rose from the dead, and went to heaven; for then was he seen and gazed on by angels, as he now is, (<sup><0116></sup>1 Timothy 3:16) or “into which things”: so the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; namely, the sufferings of Christ, and the glories following; the great mystery of redemption and salvation by Christ; the several doctrines of the Gospel, in which the glory of the grace, wisdom, righteousness, truth, and power of God is displayed; things they are highly delighted with, take pleasure in the contemplation of, and desire to have a greater knowledge of, and acquaintance with: they sung glory to God in the highest at the incarnation of Christ; they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner; and disdain not to be ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation; and learn of the church the manifold wisdom of God; which may serve greatly to commend the excellency of Gospel truths, and engage us in the study of them.

**Ver. 13.** *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind,* etc.] With the girdle of truth; (see <sup><0114></sup>Ephesians 6:14) since angels desire to look into the mysteries of grace, do you apply your minds, and diligently attend unto them, in opposition to all loose and vagrant thoughts of the mind, about other things: give yourselves up wholly to them, meditate upon them, employ yourselves in them, and about them; seeing they are the study and inquiry of angels, and what the prophets have prophesied of, and searched into and ministered, and the apostles of Christ have preached; and besides, are things which relate to the person, office, sufferings, and glory of Christ, and the salvation of immortal souls. Though the phrase is sometimes used to denote preparation and readiness, and to be in a fit position to do

anything, as the Israelites were at the eating of the first passover, to march at the least notice out of Egypt; and so to go a journey, to run a race, to serve another, to wait on him, and for him, and also be prepared for battle; and is a metaphor taken from the custom of the eastern nations, who used to wear long garments, which they gathered up close to them, and girt about them, when they were about any of the above things, that they might be no hinderance to them, and that they might perform them with more expedition and dispatch; and so may be expressive of the readiness of believers, as pilgrims and travellers, for their journey towards the heavenly country, and to run the race set before them, and also to do every good work, according to the station they are placed in, to serve their Lord and master Jesus Christ in whatsoever he calls them to, and to wait for his coming; (see <sup><0125></sup>Luke 12:35-37) and also to fight his battles, to quit themselves like men, and be strong in defence of his Gospel, and against every enemy of his and theirs.

*Be sober*; which is not only opposed to intemperance in eating and drinking, which greatly disqualifies for the above readiness and attention, but also to a being inebriated with the cares of this life, which choke the word, and make it unfruitful, and lead men into temptation, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, and from the faith of Christ; and likewise to a being intoxicated with errors, and false doctrine, which lull men asleep, and render them incapable of serving Christ, and his church; and turn their heads from faith to fables, and are contrary to the words of truth and soberness; so that to be sober, is not only to be moderate in eating and drinking; but to be disengaged from the anxious cares of the world, and to be disentangled, recovered, or awaked from the error of the wicked:

*and hope to the end*; or “perfectly”, as the Greek word may be rendered, and as it is in the Syriac version, which joins it with the other phrase, and renders it, “be ye perfectly awaked”. The Arabic version renders it, “trusting with a perfect confidence”; so that it designs either the nature of that lively hope, to which they were begotten again, and are here exhorted to exercise, it being perfect, sincere, and without hypocrisy; not like the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish, and stand him in no stead, but an undissembled one; for as there is faith unfeigned, and love without dissimulation, so hope without hypocrisy; and also the full assurance of it, for as there is a plerophory of faith and love, and of understanding, so of hope; (see <sup><0161></sup>Hebrews 6:11) or it intends the duration of this grace, and the exercise of it: it is a grace that does, and will remain, and it ought to be

continually exercised, and the rejoicing of it to be kept firm, to the end; to the end of life, and until the saints come to the enjoyment of what they are hoping for; even

*for the grace that is to be brought unto you as the revelation of Jesus Christ*; and which may be rendered for the grace that is brought unto you, in or by the revelation of Jesus Christ: and the sense may be, that there is grace that is now brought to light by the Gospel, and that is brought home to the souls of God's people through it; as electing grace, redeeming grace, justifying grace, pardoning grace, adopting grace; and, in short, salvation, as all of grace; which Gospel is the revelation of Jesus Christ: it is a revelation that is made by him; and it is a revelation that is made of him; it is a revelation of the glory of his person and offices; herein is his righteousness revealed from faith to faith; and here the riches of his grace are made manifest, and laid to open view; life and immortality are brought to light by Christ in it; and the way to eternal life, glory, and salvation, as being by Christ, is pointed out by it; and all this grace that is brought, and set before the saints in the Gospel, they ought to hope for, and comfortably believe their interest in; and continue thus hoping, believing, and trusting to the end of their days: or if our version, and which is that of others also, be retained, the meaning is, that eternal glory and happiness, which is called “grace”, because it is the free gift of God through Christ, to his children and flock, and is the finishing of the grace that is bestowed on them, and wrought in them, and is future, “is to be brought”; is a glory that shall be revealed in them, and a salvation ready to be revealed to them; and which will be done when Christ shall be revealed from heaven, when he shall appear a second time, and in glory; and is, and ought to be, the object of their hope, for it is laid up, and reserved for them; and they have the earnest of it in them, as well as the promise of it to them. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions, instead of “grace”, read “joy”; and is the same with eternal glory, the joy of the Lord prepared for them, and which they shall enter into.

**Ver. 14.** *As obedient children*, etc.] Or “children of obedience”. This may be connected either with what goes before, that seeing they were children of God, by adopting grace, and in regeneration brought to the obedience of faith, to whom the inheritance belonged, therefore they ought to continue hoping for it; or with what follows, that since they were manifestly the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, being begotten again to a lively hope, they ought to be followers of him, and imitate him in holiness and

righteousness, and show themselves to be obedient ones to his Gospel and ordinances, as children ought to honour, and obey, and imitate their parents:

*not fashioning yourselves to the former lusts in your ignorance.* The phrase is much the same with that in (<sup>451B</sup>Romans 12:2) “be not conformed to this world”; for to be conformed, or fashioned to the world, is to be fashioned to the lusts of it; and to be fashioned to the lusts of it is to indulge them, to make provision for them, to obey them, to live and walk in them; which should not be done by the children of God, and who profess themselves to be obedient ones to the Gospel, which teaches otherwise; and that because they are lusts, foolish, hurtful, and deceitful ones, ungodly ones; the lusts of the devil, as well as of the world, and of the flesh, and which war against the soul; and because they are “former” ones, which they served in a time of unregeneracy, and were now convinced and ashamed of, and therefore should no longer live to them; the time past of life being sufficient to have walked in them: and because they were lusts in ignorance, which they had indulged in a state of ignorance; not of Gentilism, though this might be the case of some, but of Judaism; when they knew not God, especially in Christ, and were ignorant of his righteousness, and of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as committed against a law that was holy and spiritual; nor did they know Christ, and the way of salvation by him, but thought they ought to do many things contrary to his name; nor the work of the Spirit in regeneration, saying with Nicodemus, how can these things be? nor the true sense of the Scriptures, the sacred oracles, that were committed to them; much less the Gospel, which was hidden from them, and they were enemies to: but now it was otherwise with them; they were made light in the Lord, and had knowledge of all these things; and therefore, as their light increased, and the grace of God, bringing salvation, appeared unto them, and shone out on them, it became them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and not to walk as they had done before, since they had not so learned Christ.

**Ver. 15.** *But as he which hath called you is holy,* etc.] Which is a periphrasis of God the Father, who had called them, not merely in an external way, by the outward ministry of the word; but internally, powerfully, and efficaciously, by his Spirit and grace; and who had called them to holiness of life and conversation, as well as in calling had implanted principles of holiness in them, and therefore is said to call them with an holy calling; and who himself is holy, naturally, perfectly, and

originally, and in such sense as no creature is, angels or men; and is glorious in holiness, and is the source and fountain of holiness in others: therefore

*[so] be ye holy in all manner of conversation;* which respects not internal holiness, but supposes it; for that is God's work, and not the creature's act; it is the sanctification of the Spirit, of which he is the author; this they were chosen unto from the beginning, and made partakers of in regeneration; but external holiness, holiness of life and conversation, in all the parts and branches of it, both with respect to God and men, in matters both of religion and civil life: and to be holy in this sense is an imitating of God, a copying after him, though he is far from being equalled by a sinful creature, or even by an angel in heaven; however, the arguments to it, taken from the nature of God, and of his effectual calling to grace and holiness, are very strong and powerful; for it is walking worthy of him, who has called us to his kingdom and glory; and walking worthy of that calling wherein we are called; and a following of God, as dear and obedient children; and what is according to his will, and what he directs unto, and requires, as appears from what follows.

**Ver. 16.** *Because it is written,* etc.] In (<sup><8144></sup>Leviticus 11:44 19:2 20:7)

*be ye holy, for I am holy:* an argument the apostle knew must have weight with these persons, who were chiefly Jews, scattered abroad among the Gentiles, and had a value for the Scriptures of truth; and therefore, as the argument for holiness of life, from the nature and perfections of God, is strong, it must receive additional strength from this being the declared will of God, even their sanctification on this account; and though holiness, equal to God, is never to be attained to by a creature, yet so far as it is capable of it, it is desirable, because agreeable both to the nature and will of God, by all such who are truly his children, who love his name, adore his perfections, give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness, fear his goodness, and obey his will.

**Ver. 17.** *And if ye call on the Father,* etc.] Of Christ, and of all the saints; or “seeing” ye do. This is a fresh argument, engaging to holiness of life and conversation. Invocation of God includes the whole worship of him, the performance of every outward duty, and the exercise of every inward grace, particularly it designs prayer; and whoever are concerned in one, or the other, God will be sanctified by all them that draw nigh unto him: or the phrase may here intend an asserting God to be their Father, under the

influence of the spirit of adoption; and all such that do claim so near a relation to God ought to honour and obey him, and to be followers of him: whoever call God their Father, and themselves his children, ought to be careful that they do not blaspheme, or cause to be blasphemed, that worthy name by which they are called:

*who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work.*

This is another reason why men should be holy, taken from the general judgment; for this God that is a Father, is also a judge. There is a judgment after death, which is sure and certain, and reaches to all persons and things; and though the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son, yet he will judge everyone by that man Christ, whom he has ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead: before his judgment seat all must stand, where they will be impartially, and without respect of persons, tried; no account will be had of what nation and place they are, whether Jews or Gentiles, or of this, or the other country, unless to aggravate or lessen their condemnation; for it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for such who have been favoured with a Gospel revelation, and believe it not; nor from what parents they have descended, for the soul that sins, that shall die; nor of what age and sex they are, small and great shall stand before him; nor of what state and condition, rich or poor, high or low, bond or free; or of what religious sect and denomination, or whether they have conformed to some external things or not; no regard will be had to any outward appearance or profession. The Judge will not judge according to the sight of the eyes, and outward view of things; for he looks on the heart, and knows the secret springs of all actions; and according thereunto will he judge and pass the sentence; and therefore what manner of persons ought men to be, in all holy conversation and godliness? Hence it follows,

*pass the time of your sojourning here in fear;* the people of God in this world are “sojourners”, as all their fathers were; they are not natives of the place in, which they are; though they are in the world, they are not of it; they were natives of it by their first birth, but by their second they are born again from above, and so, belong to another place; they are of another country, even an heavenly one; are citizens of another city, a city which, has foundations, whose builder and maker is God, their citizenship is in heaven; and there is their Father's house, which is not made with hands, and is eternal; and there lies their estate, their inheritance; and though they dwell here below, neither their settlement nor their satisfaction are here;

they reckon themselves not at home while they are on earth, and are strangers in it, to the men of the world, and they to them; with whom they have not, or at least ought not to have, any fellowship. It is indeed but for a “time”, that they are sojourners, not an eternity; which time is fixed, and is very short, and will be quickly gone; it is but a little while, and Christ will come and take them home to his Father's house, where they shall be for ever with him; for it is only here on earth that they are pilgrims and strangers: and while they are so they should spend their time “in fear”; not of men nor of devils, nor of death and judgment, hell and eternal damnation; for such a fear is not consistent with the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and is the effect of the law, and not encouraged by the Gospel; is in natural men, yea, in devils themselves; but in the fear of God, and which springs from the grace of God, and is increased by it; is consistent with the strongest acts of faith, and with the greatest expressions of spiritual joy; is opposite to pride and self-confidence, and includes the whole worship of God, external and internal, and a religious conversation, in humility and lowliness of mind.

**Ver. 18.** *Forasmuch as ye know*, etc.] From the Scriptures of truth, by the testimony of the Spirit, by his work upon the soul, and by the application of the benefits of redemption, such as justification, pardon, adoption, and sanctification; (see <sup><18925></sup>Job 19:25 <sup><8121></sup>Galatians 2:20),

*that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold.* The redemption of a soul, which is of more worth than a world, requires a greater price than gold and silver; and those who have the largest share thereof, can neither redeem their own souls with it, nor the souls of others. The soul is immortal and incorruptible, but these are corruptible things, which may be cankered, or wear away, and perish by using; and therefore, seeing redemption is not obtained by anything corruptible, nothing corrupt in principle, or practice should be indulged. The allusion is to the redemption of the people of Israel, and of the firstborn, by shekels, (<sup><12312></sup>Exodus 30:12,13 <sup><04346></sup>Numbers 3:46-48). Gold and silver do not mean pieces of gold and silver, but gold and silver coined; for only by such could redemption of anything be obtained <sup>f32</sup> but these are insufficient for the redemption of the soul; which is a deliverance from the slavery of sin, the bondage, curse, and condemnation of the law, the captivity of Satan, and from a state of poverty, having been deep in debt, and sold under sin. It here follows,

*from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers;* meaning not the corruption of nature, which is propagated from father to son by natural generation, and lies in the vanity of the mind, and is the spring and source of an evil conversation; though the saints, as they are redeemed from all sin, so from this, that it shall not be their condemnation; not Gentilism, which lay in vain philosophy, in idolatry and superstition, and in evil and wicked conversation, encouraged by the example of their ancestors; but Judaism, and either regards the ceremonial law, which was delivered by Moses to the Jewish fathers, and by them handed down to their posterity; and which was vain, as used and abused by them, and was unprofitable to obtain righteousness, life, and salvation by, and therefore was disannulled by Christ, who has redeemed and delivered his people from this yoke of bondage; or rather the traditions of the elders, which our Lord inveighs against, (<sup><418B></sup>Matthew 15:3) etc. and the Apostle Paul was brought up in, and zealous of, before conversion, (<sup><4014></sup>Galatians 1:14) as the Pharisees were. These were the inventions and decrees of them they called *twba*, “fathers”, to whose dogmas and decisions they paid the utmost respect. These made up their oral law, which the Jews say <sup>f33</sup> Moses received from Sinai, and delivered to Joshua; and Joshua to the elders; and the elders to the prophets; and the prophets to the men of the great synagogue, the last of which was Simeon the just; and from him it was delivered to another; and so from one to another to the times of Christ and his apostles and afterwards; and which consisted of many vain, useless, and unprofitable things; to walk according to which must be a vain conversation; and the saints now being redeemed by a greater price than that of silver and gold, and which is after mentioned, they ought not therefore to be the servants of men, no, not of these fathers, but of God and Christ.

**Ver. 19.** *But with the precious blood of Christ,* etc.] Christ was prophesied of as a Redeemer under the Old Testament, (<sup><285D></sup>Isaiah 59:20) and the Jews frequently ascribe redemption to the word of the Lord God <sup>f34</sup>; and which the apostle here attributes to the blood of Christ; whose blood is the same with ours, only not tainted with sin; the blood of an innocent person, and of one who is God, as well as man, and was freely shed in the room and stead of his people, and so a sufficient price for their redemption: and it may truly be said to be “precious”: as it is to God, to whom it is a sweet smelling sacrifice, and with which he is well pleased; not that he takes delight in the mere effusion of his blood, but as this is the ransom price,

and the atonement of his chosen ones; and so it is to all them that believe, since by it they are justified; through it they have the forgiveness of their sins; their peace and reconciliation with God is made by it; and by it they are sanctified, and have boldness to enter into the holiest of all: and this blood of Christ, by which they are redeemed, is

*as of a lamb without spot and blemish*; Christ is comparable to any lamb, for the innocence of his nature, the meekness of his disposition and deportment, and for his patience under sufferings and in death; and to the lambs of the daily sacrifice, which were typical of the continual and constant virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice to take away sin; and particularly to the paschal lamb, he being the true passover sacrificed for us; and which, as also the lambs of the daily sacrifice, and all others, were to be without spot and blemish: and in which they prefigured Christ, who is without the stain of original, and the spot and blemish of actual sin; and so was a very fit person to be a sacrifice for sin, and a Redeemer of his people. The Jews have a notion, that the redemption of the Israelites out of Egypt, when a lamb without blemish was taken, and sacrificed and eaten, had a respect to the future redemption by the Messiah; and which, they say <sup>f35</sup>, was to be in the same time of the year; that as they were redeemed in Nisan, the month in which the passover was kept, so they were to be redeemed in the same month: and indeed at that time, and in that month, was redemption obtained by the blood of Christ. Of the former, the Targumist in (~~CHR~~Hosea 3:2) says,

“I have redeemed them by my word, on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, and have given silver shekels, the atonement of their souls.”

It is observable that the Hebrew word **יָד** signifies both “blood” and “money”, or price; whether some reference may not be had to this here, since both are included here, may be considered.

**Ver. 20.** *Who verily was foreordained*, etc.] Or “foreknown”; that is, by God; and which intends, not barely his prescience of Christ, of what he should be, do, and suffer; but such a previous knowledge of him, which is joined with love and affection to him; not merely as his own Son, and the express image of his person, but as Mediator; and whom he loved before the world was, and with a love of complacency and delight, and which will last for ever. It includes the choice of him as the head of the election, and

the pre-ordination of his human nature, to the grace of union to his divine Person, and the pre-appointment of him to various things. The Syriac version adds, “to this”; that is, to be the lamb for a sacrifice, to be a propitiation for the sins of his people, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them by his precious blood. The allusion is to the taking of the passover lamb from the sheep, or from the goats, and keeping it separate, from the tenth to the fourteenth day of the month, before it was slain; so Christ, as man, was chosen out from among the people; and as Joseph's antitype was separated from his brethren, and that

*before the foundation of the world*; for all God's decrees and appointments, relating either to Christ, or his people, are eternal; no new thoughts, counsels, and resolutions, are taken up by him in time. The affair of redemption by Christ is no new thing; the scheme of it was drawn in eternity; the persons to be redeemed were fixed on; the Redeemer was appointed in the council and covenant of peace; and even the very Gospel which proclaims it was ordained before the world, for our glory. A Saviour was provided before sin was committed, and the method of man's recovery was settled before his ruin took place; and which was done without any regard to the works and merits of men, but is wholly owing to the free and sovereign grace of God, and to his everlasting love, both to the Redeemer and the redeemed. The Jews <sup>f36</sup> reckon the name of the Messiah among the seven things that were created before the world was; in proof of which they mention, (~~49717~~ Psalm 72:17) but was manifest in these last times for you; he was before, he existed from everlasting; he lay in the bosom of his Father from all eternity: and was veiled and hid under the shadows of the ceremonial law, during the legal dispensation; but in the fulness of time was manifest in the flesh, and more clearly revealed in the Gospel, and to the souls of men; his manifestation in human nature is principally intended, and which was in the last times of the legal dispensation, at the end of the Jewish world or state, when a new world, or the world to come, took place. It is a rule with the Jews <sup>f37</sup>, that whenever the last days or times are mentioned, the times of the Messiah are designed: and this manifestation of Christ was for the sake of some particular persons, even for all God's elect, whether among Jews or Gentiles, and who are described in the following verse. The Alexandrian copy reads, “for us”; and the Ethiopic version, “for him”.

**Ver. 21.** *Who by him do believe in God*, etc.] Christ, as God, is the object of faith; as Mediator, he is the way to the Father, by which men come to

him, believe in him and lay hold upon him, as their covenant God and Father; and is also the author of that faith by which they believe in him; and all their encouragement to believe is taken from him; and such who do come to God by Christ, and stay themselves upon him, trusting in him, may know, and comfortably conclude, that Christ, who was foreordained from all eternity to be the Redeemer of his people, was manifest in the flesh for their sakes, and to obtain eternal redemption for them, which he was sent to do, by him

*that raised him up from the dead:* mention being made of his blood, as the price of redemption, (<sup>4019</sup>1 Peter 1:19), supposes that he died; and lest it should be thought that he was held by the pains of death, and under the power of it, which it was impossible he should, considering the dignity of his person, as the Son of God, and the fulfilment of his engagements, as the surety of his people; his resurrection from the dead is asserted, which was not only foretold by himself, but predicted by the prophets, and was punctually accomplished; and which, as here, is usually ascribed to God the Father, though not to the exclusion of Christ himself, who had power to lay down his life, and take it up again; and which is a very great encouragement to faith in God, both with respect to justification in his sight, and acceptance with him, since Christ rose again for our justification, and with regard to a future resurrection:

*and gave him glory;* by raising him from the dead, when his body became a glorious one, being raised, spiritual, powerful, and incorruptible; and by his ascension to heaven, being received up in a cloud, attended by thousands of angels, and triumphing over the powers of darkness; and by placing him at his own right hand, which is an honour never bestowed on any mere creature; and by possessing him with the gifts of the Spirit for men, and giving him all power in heaven and in earth, and authority to exercise judgment on all, and a name above every name in this, or the world to come:

*that your faith and hope might be in God;* which are graces that go together, and much resemble and assist, each other; they are both the gifts of God, and have him for their object, and meet in the same persons; and are greatly encouraged by the resurrection of Christ, and the glory he now enjoys, since because he lives, those that believe in him shall live also, and appear with him in glory.

**Ver. 22.** *Seeing ye have purified your souls*, etc.] The apostle passes to another exhortation, namely, to brotherly love; the ground of which he makes to be, the purification of their souls; and which supposes that they had been impure; and indeed, their whole persons, souls and bodies, were so by nature; even all the members of their bodies, and all the powers and faculties of their souls: it is internal purity, purity of the heart, that is here particularly respected; though not to the exclusion of outward purity, for where there is the former, there will be the latter; but there may be an external purity, where there is not the inward one: this the apostle ascribes to the saints themselves, but not without the grace of God, the blood of Christ, and the operations of his Spirit; as appears by a following clause; but they are said to purify themselves, inasmuch as having the grace of faith bestowed on them, they were enabled, under the influences of the Spirit of God, to exercise it on the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin:

*in obeying the truth*; of the Gospel, by receiving, believing, and embracing it in the love of it; which teaches outward purity, and is a means in the hand of the spirit of inward purity, and of directing to the purifying blood of Jesus, who sanctifies and cleanses by the word:

*through the Spirit*; this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, but is in the Arabic version, and ought to be retained; for, as Christ died to purify to himself a peculiar people, the Spirit of Christ does from him purify the heart by faith in his blood; by sprinkling that on the conscience, and by leading the faith of God's people to the fountain of it, to wash it for sin, and for uncleanness; even both their consciences and their conversation, garments; whereby they obtain inward and outward purity:

*unto unfeigned love of the brethren*; which is the end of sanctification, and an evidence of it; when the saints are loved as brethren, and because such; and with a love without dissimulation, not in word and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth: this being the case, the exhortation follows:

*[see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently*: this is Christ's new commandment, and the evidence of regeneration; a distinguishing badge of Christianity, and without which all profession of religion is a vain and empty thing: this should be mutual and cordial; should proceed from the heart, and from an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience; and should be with warmth and fervency, and not with coldness and indifference;

though the word here used, **εκτενωσ**, may not only design the intensesness of it, but the extensiveness of it also; as that it should reach to all the saints, the poor as well as the rich, and the lesser as well as the greater and more knowing believers; and likewise may denote the continuance of it; it ought to be continually exercised, and to last always; and so the Arabic version renders it, “with a perpetual love”.

**Ver. 23.** *Being born again*, etc.] As they were of God, according to his abundant mercy, by the resurrection of Christ, to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance; as in (<sup><A01B></sup>1 Peter 1:3) and therefore seeing they were brethren in a spiritual relation, they ought to love as brethren; being children of the same Father, belonging to the same family and household, having the same spirit, and the same nature and disposition, and being members one of another, and heirs of the same grace and glory; and not only so, but were taught of God their Father, in regeneration, to love one another: it became them highly, therefore, to exercise that grace, and particularly since they were born,

*not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible*; referring not to seed cast into the earth, which first corrupts and dies, and then is quickened, and rises, and brings forth fruit; but to human seed, and which the Jews call **hj wrs hpj**, “the filthy drop”<sup>f38</sup>; which is in itself corrupt, and is corrupted, and whereby the corruption of human nature is propagated; for whatsoever is born of the flesh is carnal and corrupt; and so the apostle has reference to the first birth, or natural generation of men, in which they are polluted and depraved, and confirms what the evangelist says, (<sup><A01B></sup>John 1:13) that regenerate persons are not “born of blood”; or become new creatures, and holy men, by their natural descent, or first birth, be it from whom it will; for all men are of one blood originally, and that is tainted with sin; nor by the will of fallen creatures, of corruptible men, themselves or others; but of water, and of the Spirit, of the grace of the Spirit of God, which is seed pure and incorruptible, having no mixture or taint of sin, nor any degree of pollution in it, and which remains so; nor can it be corrupted by all the wickedness there is in man's heart; nor by all the pollutions of the world, or temptations of Satan; and this seed is conveyed into the heart by the Spirit of God, in regeneration, and it contains all grace in it;

*by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever*; for the incorruptible seed, and the ever living and abiding word, are two distinct things; though interpreters generally confound them: and by “the word of

God” is either meant the essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; who is concerned in regeneration as well as the Father and the Spirit; by whose resurrection, and in consequence of it, the elect of God are begotten again; and who, as the Word, is able to build up all the sanctified ones, and give them the inheritance they are born heirs unto: or the Gospel, the word of truth, which is made use of as a means of begetting souls again; and the rather, since it seems to be so interpreted, (~~4025~~ 1 Peter 1:25) the phrases, “which liveth and abideth forever”, may be either read in connection only with “God”, and as descriptive of him, who is the living God, is from everlasting to everlasting, in distinction from idols; and here added, to show that he can give power and efficacy to his word, to regenerate and quicken, and will continue to preserve and make it useful to all his saving purposes; so Jarchi explains the passage in (~~2408~~ Isaiah 40:8) after referred to, “the word of our God shall stand for ever”;

“because he lives and abides, and it is in his power to confirm it therefore it follows, “O Zion, that bringeth good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain”; for because he lives forever, this promise is published.”

Or else with the word of God, and is true both of Christ, and of the Gospel. Christ is the Word which lives; in him, as such, is life; he has life in himself as God, as man, and as Mediator; and is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and, eternal; and abides for ever in his person, without any change; and in his offices and grace, and righteousness; he abides a priest continually, has an unchangeable priesthood, and ever lives to make intercession, and of his kingdom there is no end: the same is said of the “Memra”, or Word of God, in the Chaldee paraphrase on (~~2810~~ Hosea 11:9) “I am God”, *yr̄mym*, “my word abideth for ever”: compare (~~4124~~ John 12:34). The Gospel also may be said to live, in opposition to the law, which is the killing letter; and because it points out the way of life and salvation to sinners; and is a means of quickening dead sinners, and of ingenerating that faith by which men live on Christ; and of revealing to them that righteousness which is unto justification of life; and of supporting and maintaining spiritual life in them; and of reviving drooping saints; the Syriac version renders it, “the living Word of God”: and it remains, and will abide; all its promises, blessings, doctrines, and ordinances, are lasting; it will continue in the world until all the elect of God are gathered in, until the second coming of Christ, and to the end of the world; notwithstanding all the persecutions of men, and cunning, craft of false teachers, and all the

ridicule and contempt it is treated with by mockers and scoffers: and will abide in the effects of it, in the hearts of the saints, to all eternity.

**Ver. 24.** *For all flesh is as grass,* etc.] All men, as born of corruptible seed, are frail, mortal, and perishing; they spring up like grass, and look beautiful for a while, but are very weak and tender, and in a little time they are cut down by death, and wither away; and while they live, are, in a good measure, nothing but grass in another form; the substance of their life is greatly by it; what is the flesh they eat, but grass turned into it? and this mortality is not only the case of wicked men, as the Jews <sup>f39</sup> interpret the word, but of good men; even of the prophets, and preachers of the Gospel; and yet the word of God spoken by them continues for ever: the passage referred to is in (<sup>2316</sup>Isaiah 40:6-8)

*and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass;* all outward things which are in esteem with men, and render them glorious to one another, as riches, honour, wisdom, strength, external righteousness, holiness, and goodness; all which are fading and transitory, like the flower of the field; but the Gospel continues, and reveals durable riches, and honour with Christ; and true wisdom and strength with him, and spiritual knowledge, in comparison of which, all things are dross and dung; and an everlasting righteousness; and true holiness in him: some have thought respect may be had to the legal dispensation, and to all the glory and stateliness and goodness of the worship and ordinances of it, which were to endure but for a time, and are now removed; and the Gospel dispensation has taken place of them, which will continue to the end of the world:

*the grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away;* and so fading are all the above things.

**Ver. 25.** *But the word of the Lord endureth for ever,* etc.] Though men die, and ministers of the word too, and everything in the world is uncertain, unstable, fleeting, and passing away, and whatever change has been in the ordinances of divine service; yet the word of the Lord, the Gospel of Christ, is settled for ever, and will never pass away:

*and this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you;* this is the apostle's application of the passage in Isaiah, showing that the word of the Lord there is the same with the Gospel preached by him, and the other apostles, at that present time; and is no other than that good tidings Zion is said to bring; (see <sup>2319</sup>Isaiah 40:9) the selfsame Gospel the Prophet Isaiah

preached the apostles did, though with greater clearness, and more success; (see ~~6108~~ Romans 10:8,16).