

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS 10

In this chapter the apostle pursues his argument, showing the weakness and imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and the superior excellency of Christ's, which he closes with suitable exhortations to faith on Christ, as the alone high priest, and to a constant profession of him. The imperfection of the Levitical priesthood is proved, from the law by which it was established, being only a shadow of good things to come; from the insufficiency of annual sacrifices to perfect the comers to them, or to purge the consciences of the worshippers from sin; and from the non-cessation of these sacrifices which would have been, if the above ends could have been answered by them, (^{<3801>}Hebrews 10:1,2), but on the contrary, by the annual return of these sacrifices, sins are afresh remembered, and very good reason there is for it, since it is an impossible thing that the blood of slain beasts should take away sin, (^{<3805>}Hebrews 10:3,4) moreover, the apostle proves the insufficiency of such sacrifices, by a divine testimony, out of (^{<3406>}Psalms 40:6-8) by which it appears, that they are not agreeable to the will of God, and are rejected by him as useless, (^{<3805>}Hebrews 10:5-8) and this leads the apostle to discourse of the excellency of Christ's sacrifice above them; that they are taken away, and his is substituted in their room; that as they are not agreeable to the will of God, his is a fulfilment of it; that though they could not expiate sin, yet by the offering up of the body of Christ, once for all, his people are sanctified, or their sins are expiated, (^{<3809>}Hebrews 10:9,10) and this is further illustrated by a comparison between the priests under the law, and Christ; they were many, he but one; they daily offered the same sacrifices, he offered but one sacrifice; theirs could not take away sin, by his offering he has perfectly expiated the sins of his people; they stood daily ministering, their work being never at an end; he is set down at the right hand of God, expecting his enemies to be made his footstool, having done his work to perfection, (^{<38011>}Hebrews 10:11-14) and that legal sacrifices are ceased, and no more to be used, is proved by a testimony of the Holy Ghost, out of (^{<2813>}Jeremiah 31:33,34) relating to the covenant of grace, among the promises of which stands that of the forgiveness of sin; from whence the apostle justly concludes, that where

remission of sin is, there is, and there needs no more offering for it, (^{<S1015>}Hebrews 10:15-18) and from hence, the apostle passes to exhortations to the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, which he strongly urges from the consideration of Christ's priesthood, and the efficacy of it: and first, he presses them to the duty of prayer, to draw nigh to God to the throne of his grace. The manner in which he would have them approach to God, is in the sincerity of their hearts, in a plerophory of faith, an high and full exercise of it, and impurity of soul and body: the motives or encouragements to it are taken from their having boldness and liberty to enter by faith into heaven itself with their prayers, through the blood of Jesus; from there being a new and living way opened for them through, the flesh of Christ; and from their having such an high priest over the house of God as he is, (^{<S1019>}Hebrews 10:19-22), and next he exhorts them to a constant and steadfast profession of their faith, to which he animates them by the faithfulness of a promising God, who will never leave nor forsake his people, (^{<S1023>}Hebrews 10:23) and then to consider one another in their church relation, and to stir up one another to the exercise of the grace of love, and to the performance of good works, (^{<S1024>}Hebrews 10:24), and also not to forsake their public assemblies, as was the custom of some, but to exhort each other to greater diligence in attending there, especially since they might observe that a time of great tribulation was at hand, (^{<S1025>}Hebrews 10:25) and in order to deter from apostasy, which is expressed by a sinning wilfully, after a man has received and professed the knowledge of the truth, the apostle observes that the destruction of such is inevitable; since there never will be another propitiatory sacrifice offered up, and therefore there can be no other than a dreadful expectation of an awful judgment, and of the wrath of God, which, like a consuming fire, will destroy such adversaries of Christ, (^{<S1026>}Hebrews 10:26,27) the justice of which is argued from the less to the greater; that if the transgressors of the law of Moses had no mercy shown them, but died when there were proper and sufficient witnesses of their crimes, then such must be deserving of a far greater punishment, who treat with the greatest rudeness the person of the Son of God, and his precious blood, and with the greatest contempt the person and grace of the Holy Spirit, (^{<S1028>}Hebrews 10:28,29), and such persons have reason to expect the vengeance of God will fall on them, since it is threatened them in the word of God, (^{<B275>}Deuteronomy 32:35,36) and a dreadful thing it is to fall into his hands, (^{<S1031>}Hebrews 10:30,31). But in order to encourage these believing Hebrews to hold on and out unto the end, the apostle puts them in mind of their good

beginning, how well they set out, and how bravely they behaved, by bearing afflictions and reproaches themselves; by being the companions of those that were afflicted and reproached; by having compassion on the apostle when in bonds; and by cheerfully suffering the loss of their goods upon this consideration, that they had in heaven a better and a more enduring substance, (~~scribd~~ Hebrews 10:32-34) wherefore it would be exceeding wrong and very unbecoming, after all this, to drop their faith and a profession of it, which otherwise would issue in the enjoyment of the great recompense of reward, (~~scribd~~ Hebrews 10:35) and as patience is necessary, it is right to exercise it under sufferings for Christ's sake, partly because it is doing the will of God, and partly because that after that is done, such shall receive the promised happiness; and what may serve the more to engage to the exercise of it is, it is but a little while and Christ will come and put an end to all the sufferings of his people, (~~scribd~~ Hebrews 10:36,37) and that faith should be in exercise, is proved from a divine testimony, (~~scribd~~ Habakkuk 2:4) and so must be pleasing to God, when the contrary is highly resented by him, (~~scribd~~ Hebrews 10:38) and now, lest the believing Hebrews should conclude from all this that the apostle suspected them as going into apostasy, he declares his belief, that he and they were not in the number of apostates, but of believers, whose souls would be saved, (~~scribd~~ Hebrews 10:39)

Ver. 1. *For the law having a shadow of good things to come*, etc.] By which is meant not the moral law, for that is not a shadow of future blessings, but a system of precepts; the things it commands are not figuratively, but really good and honest; and are not obscure, but plain and easy to be understood; nor are they fleeting and passing away, as a shadow, but lasting and durable: but the ceremonial law is intended; this was a “shadow”, a figure, a representation of something true, real, and substantial; was dark and obscure, yet had in it, and gave, some glimmering light; and was like a shadow, fleeting and transitory: and it was a shadow of good things; of Christ himself, who is the body, the sum and substance of it, and of the good things to come by him; as the expiation of sin, peace and reconciliation, a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, and eternal life; these are said to be “to come”, as they were under the former dispensation, while the ceremonial law was in force, and that shadow was in being, and the substance not as yet.

And not the very image of the things; as it had not neither the things themselves, nor Christ, the substance of them, so it did not give a clear

revelation of them, as is made in the Gospel, nor exhibit a distinct delineation of them, such as an image expresses; it only gave some short and dark hints of future good things, but did not exactly describe them: and therefore

can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually: namely, the sacrifices of bullocks and goats, which were offered on the day of atonement, year after year, in successive generations, from the first appointment of that day, to the writing of this epistle: sacrifices of such a kind, and so often repeated, could never

make the comers thereunto perfect; either the people that came to the temple, and brought them to the priests to offer them for them, or the priests that offered them; so the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, “perfect them that offer”; and if not one, then not the other: legal sacrifices could not make perfect expiation of sin; there is no proportion between them and sin: nor did they extend to all sin, and at most only typically expiated; nor could they justify and cleanse from sin. Contrary to this, the Jews^{f206} say,

“when Israel was in the holy land, there was no iniquity found in them, for the sacrifices which they offered every day stoned for them;”

but spiritual sacrificers and worshippers were expiated, justified, and cleansed another way, even by the blood of Christ, slain from the foundation of the world in purpose, promise, and type, and to which their faith had respect in every sacrifice.

Ver. 2. *For then would they not have ceased to be offered*, etc..] The Complutensian edition, and the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions, leave out the word “not”; and the sense requires it should be omitted, for the meaning is, that if perfection had been by the legal sacrifices, they would have ceased to have been offered; for if the former ones had made perfect, there would have been no need of others, or of the repetition of the same; but because they did not make perfect, therefore they were yearly renewed; unless the words are read with an interrogation, as they are in the Arabic version, “for then would they not have ceased to be offered?” yes, they would; they are indeed ceased now, but this is owing to Christ and his sacrifice, and not to the efficacy of these sacrifices; for yearly sacrifices

were offered for former sins, as well as for fresh ones, as appears from the following verse.

Because the worshippers, once purged, would have had no more conscience of sins; there are external and internal worshippers; the latter are such who worship God in Spirit and in truth: but here ceremonial worshippers are meant, who, if they had been really purged from sin by legal sacrifices, and purifications, would have had no more conscience of sins, and so have had no need to have repeated them; as such spiritual worshippers, who are once purged from sin by the blood and sacrifice of Christ; not that they have no sin, or no sense of sin, or that their consciences are seared, or that they never accuse for sin, or that they are to make no confession and acknowledgment of sin; but that they are discharged from the guilt of sin, and are not liable to condemnation for it; and through the application of the blood of Christ to them, have peace with God, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 3. *But in those sacrifices*, etc..] The Arabic version reads, “but in it”; that is, in the law; but the Syriac version reads, and supplies, as we do, *whb aj bdb*, “in those sacrifices”, which were offered every year on the day of atonement:

there is a remembrance of sins made again every year; of all the sins that were committed the year past, and even of those that were expiated typically by the daily sacrifice, and others that had been offered; which proves the imperfection and insufficiency of such sacrifices: there was a remembrance of sins by God, before whom the goats were presented, their blood was sprinkled, and the people cleansed, (^(B1617)Leviticus 16:7,14,15,30) and there was a remembrance of them by the people, who, on that day, afflicted their souls for them, (^(B1619)Leviticus 16:29,31) and there was a remembrance of them by the high priest, who confessed them over, and put them upon the head of the goat, (^(B1621)Leviticus 16:21) by which it was owned, that these sins were committed; that they deserved death, the curse of the law; that the expiation of them was undertaken by another, typified by the goat; that this was not yet done, and therefore there was no remission, but a typical one, by these sacrifices; but that sins remained, and required a more perfect sacrifice, which was yet to be offered up. Legal sacrifices were so far from inducing an oblivion of sins, that they themselves brought them to remembrance, and were so many acknowledgments of them. Though Philo the Jew thinks the contrary, and

gives this as a reason why the heart and brain were not offered in sacrifice, because

“it would be foolish, that the sacrifices should cause, not a forgetfulness of sins, but a remembrance of them ^{f207}.”

Ver. 4. *For it is not possible*, etc..] There is a necessity of sin being taken away, otherwise it will be remembered; and there will be a conscience of it, and it must be answered for, or it will remain marked, and the curse and penalty of the law must take place: but it is impossible

that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins; which was shed on the day of atonement: sin is a breach of the moral law, but these sacrifices belong to, the ceremonial law, which are less acceptable to God than moral duties; sin is committed against God, and has an objective infiniteness in it, and therefore can never be atoned for by the blood of such creatures; it leaves a stain on the mind and conscience, which this blood cannot reach; besides, this is not the same blood, nor of the same kind with the person that has sinned; yea, if this could take away sin, it would do more than the blood of the man himself could do; such blood shed can never answer the penalty of the law, satisfy divine justice, or secure the honour of divine holiness: but what the blood of these creatures could not do, the blood of Christ has done, and does: that takes away sin from the sight of justice, and from the consciences of the saints. Compare with this the Septuagint version of (^{<24115>}Jeremiah 11:15).

“what, has the beloved committed abomination in my house? shall prayers, and the holy flesh take away thy wickednesses from thee, or by these shall thou escape?”

Ver. 5. *Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith*, etc..] In (^{<3407>}Psalms 40:7,8). This was said by David, not of himself, and his own times, for sacrifice and offering were desired and required in his times; nor was he able to do the will of God; so as to fulfil the law, and make void legal sacrifices; nor did he engage as a surety to do this; nor was it written of him in the volume of the book that he should: besides, he speaks of one that was not yet come, though ready to come, when the fulness of time should be up; and who is here spoken of as coming into the world, and who is no other than Jesus Christ; and this is to be understood, not of his coming into Judea, or the temple at Jerusalem; or out of a private, into a public life; nor of his entrance into the world to come, into heaven, into life

eternal, as the Targum on (^{<39107>}Psalm 40:7) paraphrases it, after he had done his work on earth, for the other world is never expressed by the world only; nor did Christ go into that to do the will of God, but to sit down there, after he had done it; besides, Christ's entrance into heaven was a going out of the world, and not into it. To which may be added, that this phrase always signifies coming into this terrene world, and intends men's coming into it at their birth; (see Gill on “<34000>John 1:9”) and must be understood of Christ's incarnation, which was an instance of great love, condescension, and grace; and the, reason of it was to do what the law, and the blood of bulls and goats, could not do. For it follows,

sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; or didst not desire and delight in, as the word **bj**, used in (^{<39406>}Psalm 40:6) signifies; meaning not the sacrifices of wicked men, or such as were offered up without faith in Christ; but the ceremonial sacrifices God himself had instituted, and which were offered in the best manner; and that not merely in a comparative sense, as in (^{<38016>}Hosea 6:6 ^{<19152>}1 Samuel 15:22) but the meaning is, that God would not have these continue any longer, they being only imposed for a time, and this time being come; nor would he accept of them, as terms, conditions, and causes of righteousness, pardon, peace, and reconciliation; but he willed that his Son should offer himself an offering, and a sacrifice for a sweet smelting savour to him.

[But a] body hast thou prepared me; or “fitted for me”; a real natural body, which stands for the whole human nature; and is carefully expressed, to show that the human nature is not a person. This was prepared, in the book of God's purposes and decrees, and in the council and covenant of grace; and was curiously formed by the Holy Ghost in time, for the second Person, the Son of God, to clothe himself with, as the Syriac version renders it, “thou hast clothed me with a body”; and that he might dwell in, and in it do the will of God, and perform the work of man's redemption: in (^{<39406>}Psalm 40:6) it is, “mine ears thou hast opened”; digged or bored, the ear being put for the whole body; for if he had not had a body prepared, he could not have had ears opened: besides; the phrase is expressive of Christ's assuming the form of a servant, which was done by his being found in fashion as a man, (^{<31107>}Philippians 2:7) and of his being a voluntary servant, and of his cheerful obedience as such, the opening, or boring of the ear, was a sign, (^{<10216>}Exodus 21:5,6). And thus by having a true body prepared for him, and a willing mind to offer it up, he became fit for sacrifice.

Ver. 6. *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin*, etc..] Which were the principal kinds of offerings under the law:

thou hast had no pleasure; not only in comparison of moral duties, or spiritual sacrifices, such as those of praise and thanksgiving, (^{<9680>}Psalm 69:30,31) but so as to accept of the offerers for the sake of them, and smell a sweet savour in them; for these could not satisfy his justice, appease his anger, or expiate sin; and when they were in full force, and offered in the most agreeable manner, they were no otherwise well pleasing to God, than as they were types of, and had respect unto the sacrifice of his Son. In the Hebrew text it is, “thou didst not require, or ask for”; for them, when the time was up that Christ should come into the world.

Ver. 7. *Then said I, lo, I come*, etc..] Christ observing that legal sacrifices were not acceptable to God; that there was a body prepared for him; and that it was written of him in the book of God, that he should come; and the time being now come, with a note of attention and admiration, the matter being of great moment and concern, he cheerfully expresses his readiness to come, immediately, without any compulsion, even he himself, and not another.

In the volume of the book it is written of me; in the book of the law, as the Targum and Kimchi on (^{<9407>}Psalm 40:7 *Heb. verse 8) interpret it; and which may design the Bible in general, the whole book of the Scriptures of the Old Testament: so **rps**, “the book”, is used for the whole Bible ^{f208}, and it is said ^{f209}, all the whole law, that is, all Scripture, is called **hl ygm**, “a volume”; accordingly there are things written of Christ in all the writings of the Old Testament, in the law, and in the prophets, and in the psalms. Jarchi interprets it of the law of Moses, and so it may design the pentateuch, or the five books of Moses; and there are several places therein, in which it is written of Christ, and particularly in Genesis, the first of these books, and in the head, the beginning, the frontal piece, the first part of that book; namely, (^{<0085>}Genesis 3:15) which may be principally designed. Books were formerly written in rolls of parchment, and hence called volumes; (see Gill on “^{<0017>}Luke 4:17”), (see Gill on “^{<0020>}Luke 4:20”). The end of his coming is next expressed by him,

to do thy will, O God; which, when he came, he set about with the utmost delight, diligence, and faithfulness, in preaching the Gospel, performing miracles, doing good to the bodies and souls of men, and in finishing the

great work of man's redemption, which was the main part of his Father's will he came to do; and which he did, by fulfilling the law in its precept and penalty; by offering himself a sacrifice to God; by suffering death, the death of the cross; by destroying all his and our enemies, and so working out everlasting salvation.

Ver. 8. *Above when he said*, etc..] In the afore cited place, (³⁹¹⁰Psalm 40:7,8)

Sacrifice and offering, and burnt offerings, and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; this is a recapitulation of what is before said; and all kind of sacrifices are mentioned, to show that they are all imperfect, and insufficient, and are abolished; and the abrogation of them is expressed in the strongest terms, as that God would not have them, and that he took no pleasure in them:

which are offered by the law; according as that directs and enjoins: this clause is added, to distinguish these sacrifices from spiritual ones, under the Gospel dispensation, and which are well pleasing to God; and to prevent an objection against the abolition of them, taken from hence, that they are according to the law; and yet, notwithstanding this, God will not have them, nor accept of them.

Ver. 9. *Then said he, [lo], I come to do thy will, O God*, etc..] (See Gill on ⁵⁸⁰⁷Hebrews 10:7")

he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second; the sense is, either that God has taken away, and abolished the law, that he might establish the Gospel; or he has caused the first covenant to vanish away, that place might be found for the second, or new covenant; or he has changed and abrogated the priesthood of Aaron, that he might confirm the unchangeable priesthood of Christ; or rather he has taken away that which was first spoken of in the above citation, namely, sacrifice, offering, burnt offerings, and sin offerings; these he has removed and rejected as insignificant and useless, that he might establish what is mentioned in the second place; namely, the will of God, which is no other than the sacrifice of Christ, offered up according to the will of God, and by which his will is done.

Ver. 10. *By the which will we are sanctified*, etc..] That is, by the sacrifice of Christ, which was willingly offered up by himself, and was according to the will of God; it was his will of purpose that Christ should be crucified

and slain; and it was his will of command, that he should lay down his life for his people; and it was grateful and well pleasing to him, that his soul should be made an offering for sin; and that for this reason, because hereby the people of God are sanctified, their sins are perfectly expiated, the full pardon of them is procured, their persons are completely justified from sin, and their consciences purged from it: even

through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all; this is said, not to the exclusion of his soul; it designs his whole human nature, and that as in union with his divine person; and is particularly mentioned, in allusion to the legal sacrifices, the bodies of slain beasts, which were types of him, and with a reference to his Father's preparation of a body for him, for this purpose, (^{<3015>}Hebrews 10:5). Moreover, his obedience to his Father's will was chiefly seen in his body; this was offered upon the cross; and his blood, which atones for sin, and cleanses from it, was shed out of it: and this oblation was “once for all”; which gives it the preference to Levitical sacrifices; destroys the Socinian notion of Christ's continual offering himself in heaven; and confutes the error of the Popish mass, or of the offering of Christ's body in it.

Ver. 11. *And every priest standeth daily ministering*, etc..] The Alexandrian copy, one of Stephens's, the Complutensian edition, the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read, “every high priest”; who might minister daily, if he would; but since the daily sacrifice was generally offered by the common priests, these are rather designed. The apostle passes from the anniversary sacrifices offered by the high priest on the day of atonement, having shown the insufficiency and imperfection of them, to the lambs of the daily sacrifice, which were offered morning and evening, and whatsoever else might be daily offered on other accounts; and which he also shows are equally ineffectual to take away sin; almost every word he uses shows the imperfection of the priesthood of Aaron, and serves to illustrate the priesthood of Christ. When he says “every priest”, it supposes there were more than one, as indeed there were many, not only in succession to one another, but together, having different parts of service to perform; and everyone of them “standeth” at the altar, showing that his work was not done; and the present tense is used, because sacrifice in fact had not ceased at the writing of this epistle, though of right it ought to have done; and he stood “daily ministering”; every day, and sometimes often in a day, and always morning and night, (^{<0238>}Exodus 29:38,39) The priest always stood to minister, (^{<5185>}Deuteronomy 18:5). Hence the Jews

say ^{f210}, there is no ministration or service, *dmw[m a l a*, “but standing”; and perhaps some reference may be had to *twdm[m*, the “stations” ^{f211}, or stationary men, who were always upon the spot at Jerusalem, to offer for such as were at a distance.

And offering oftentimes the same sacrifices; as a lamb in the morning, and another at evening; and if it was a burnt offering, or a sin offering, or an offering for the purification of a woman, or for the cleansing of the leper, they were always the same: and this frequent offering, and the offering of the same things, show that they were such

which can never take away sins; for notwithstanding these many and repeated offerings, even the sins of Old Testament saints remained to be atoned for by Christ; (see ^{<8125>}Romans 3:25 ^{<8015>}Hebrews 9:15).

Ver. 12. *But this man*, etc..] Jesus Christ, for he is a man, though not a mere man; or this great high priest, who came to do the will of God, and whose body was offered once for all:

after he had offered one sacrifice for sins; the sacrifice of himself, body and soul, and this but once:

for ever sat down on the right hand of God; as having done his work effectually, and that with acceptance; and therefore is placed as a token of honour at the right hand of God, where he sits enjoying rest, ease, and pleasure, and that for ever; all which is opposed to the priests under the law; they were many, he but one; they offered many sacrifices, he but one; they offered theirs often, every day, he but once; they stood ministering, he sat down; his sacrifice being effectual to take away sin, when theirs was not.

Ver. 13. *From henceforth expecting*, etc..] According to God's promise and declaration to him, (^{<8101>}Psalm 110:1).

Till his enemies be made his footstool, (See Gill on “^{<8013>}Hebrews 1:13”).

Ver. 14. *For by one offering*, etc..] The same as before; himself, body and soul; this is a reason why he is set down, and will continue so for ever, and why he expects his enemies to be made his footstool; because by one sacrifice for sin, which he has once offered,

he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified; that is, who are sanctified by God the Father, (^{<600>}Jude 1:1) or, who are set apart by him in eternal election, from the rest of the world, for his own use, service, and glory, to a state of grace and holiness here, and happiness hereafter; for this is not to be understood either of their being sanctified in Christ, though the Syriac version reads, “that are sanctified” in him, or by his Spirit, though both are true of the same persons; these Christ, by his sacrifice, has perfected, and has perfectly fulfilled the law for them; he has perfectly expiated their sins; he has obtained the full pardon of all their sins, and complete redemption; he has perfectly justified them from all things, and that for ever; which shows the continued virtue of Christ's sacrifice, in all generations, to all the elect of God, and the fulness and duration of their salvation; and so Christ by his one sacrifice did what the law, and all its sacrifices, could not do, (^{<800>}Hebrews 10:1).

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us*, etc..] In (^{<200>}Jeremiah 31:33,34). This preface to the following citation shows that the books of the Old Testament are of divine original and authority; that the penmen of them were inspired by the Holy Ghost; that he existed in the times of the Old Testament; that he is truly and properly God, the Lord, or Jehovah, that speaks in the following verses; and that he is a distinct divine Person, and the author of the covenant of grace; and in what he says in that covenant, he bears testimony to the truths before delivered, concerning the insufficiency and abolition of legal sacrifices, and of full and perfect remission of sin, by the blood and sacrifice of Christ:

for after that he had said before; what is expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 16. *This is the covenant that I will make with them*, etc..] (See Gill on “^{<800>}Hebrews 8:10”).

Ver. 17. *And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*] (See Gill on “^{<800>}Hebrews 8:10”). The words are cited to a different purpose here than there; the principal thing for which they are cited here, is to observe God's promise of non-remembrance of sin; which is no other than remission of sin, and which is not consistent with legal sacrifices, in which there is a remembrance of sin every year, (^{<800>}Hebrews 10:3) and consequently, since this new covenant has taken place, legal sacrifices must be abolished, as the apostle argues in the next verse. In one of Beza's copies are inserted, at the, beginning of this verse, these words, “then he

said”, which seem necessary to answer to the last clause of (~~8015~~ Hebrews 10:15).

Ver. 18. *Now where remission of these is*, etc..] That is, of these sins; and that there is remission of them, is evident from this promise of the covenant, just now produced; from God's gracious proclamation of it; from the shedding of Christ's blood for it; from his exaltation at the Father's right hand to give it; from the Gospel declaration of it; and from the several instances of persons favoured with it:

there is no more offering for sin; there may be other offerings, as of praise and thanksgiving, but none for sin; “there is no need”, as the Syriac version; or there is not required, as the Arabic version; there is no need of the reiteration of Christ's sacrifice, nor will he be offered up any more, nor of the repetition of legal sacrifices, nor ought they to continue any longer. The Jews themselves say ^{f212}, that

“in the time to come (i.e. in the times of the Messiah) all offerings shall cease, but the sacrifice of praise.”

And one of their writers says ^{f213}, when

“the King Messiah, the son of David, shall reign, there will be no need of *hrpk*, “an atonement”, nor of deliverance, or prosperity, for all these things will be had;”

Ver. 19. *Having therefore, brethren*, etc..] As they were to the apostle, in a natural and civil sense, being Hebrews, as well as in a spiritual relation, being believers in Christ; which is observed, to testify his affection to them, and to engage their regard to the duties hereafter urged, particularly brotherly love, and to signify their common and equal right to the privilege next mentioned, which is

boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus: the place saints have boldness to enter into is heaven, called “the holiest”, in reference to the holy of holies, in the tabernacle; which was a type of it, for the sacredness and invisibility of it, and for what was in it, went into it, or was brought thither; as the Shechinah, or divine Majesty, which resided there; the high priest who went into it once a year; the blood of sacrifices which was carried into it; the sweet incense; the ark of the testimony, in which was the law; and the mercy seat; all which were typical of Christ, his person, blood, sacrifice, righteousness, intercession, and the grace and

mercy which come through him. Heaven was symbolically shut by the sin of man, when he was drove out of the garden of Eden; it was typically opened by the entrance of the high priest into the holy of holies, on the day of atonement; Christ has in person entered into it by his blood, and opened the way for his people; and believers in him may “enter” now, and they do, when they exercise grace on him, who is there, and when they come and present their prayers and praises to God by him; and they have now an actual right to enter into the place itself, and will hereafter enter in person: and the manner of their present entrance is, “with boldness”; which signifies their right unto it, the liberty granted them by God, and the liberty which they sometimes have in their own souls, and great courage and intrepidity of mind; which arises from a sense of remission of sins, as may be concluded from the connection of these words with the preceding; and is found to be true by experience; and such boldness is consistent with reverence, humility, and submission. The way of entrance is “by the blood of Jesus”; and which gives both entrance and boldness; for hereby sin is removed both from the sight of God, and the conscience of the believer; peace is made with God, and spoken to him; pardon is procured, law and justice satisfied, and neither to be feared, and the everlasting covenant confirmed.

Ver. 20. *By a new and living way*, etc..] Which is Christ, the God-man and Mediator; who is called the “new” way, not as to contrivance, revelation, or use; for it was contrived before the world was, and was revealed to our first parents, immediately after the fall, and was made use of by all the Old Testament saints; but in distinction to the old way of life, by the covenant of works; and because newly revealed with greater clearness and evidence; (see ³³⁰⁸Hebrews 10:8) and because it is always new, it never will be old, nor otherwise, there never will be another way: some render it, “a new slain way”; because Jesus was but newly slain, and his blood lately shed, by which the way is, and entrance is with boldness: and Christ is a “living way”; in opposition to the dead carcasses of slain beasts, and to the dead and killing letter of the law; Christ gives life to all his people; and all that walk in him, the way, live; and none in this way ever die; it leads to eternal life, and infallibly brings them thither:

which he hath consecrated for us; either God the Father, and so it intends the designation of Christ to be the way to life and happiness, and the qualification of him for it, by preparing a body, an human nature for him, and anointing it with the Holy Spirit, and the instalment of him into his

priestly office, called a consecration, (^{<3103>}Hebrews 10:28) or else Christ himself, and so designs his compliance with his Father's will, and his devoting of himself to this service; his preparation of himself to be the way, by the shedding of his blood, and by his entrance into heaven, and by giving a clearer discovery of this way in the Gospel, by which life and immortality are brought to light: and this is

done through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; the human nature of Christ, through which the way to heaven is opened, renewed, and consecrated, is compared to the vail of the tabernacle, (^{<1261>}Exodus 26:31-33) the matter of which that was made, was fine twined linen, which the Jews ^{f214} say was of thread six times doubled; which may denote the holiness of Christ's human nature; the strength, courage, and steadfastness of it, under all its sorrows and sufferings; and the purity and duration of his righteousness; the colours of it were blue, purple, and scarlet, which may signify the sufferings of the human nature; the preciousness of Christ's blood, and the dignity of his person, and his royalty; purple and scarlet being wore by kings: the vail was of cunning work, which may intend the curious workmanship of Christ's human nature, and the graces of the Spirit, with which it is adorned; and it was made with "cherubim", pointing to the ministration of angels, both to Christ, and to his people. The pillars of it may signify the deity of Christ, the support of his human nature, in which it has its personal subsistence; and being of Shittim wood, may denote his eternity: and being covered with gold, his glory: its hooks and sockets may be symbolical of the union of the two natures in him.

Ver. 21. *And [having an] high priest over the house of God.*] The church of God, over which Christ is as prophet, priest, and King, and as the Son and owner of it; (see Gill on "^{<3086>}Hebrews 3:6"); (see Gill on "^{<3044>}Hebrews 4:14"). In the Greek text it is, "a great priest"; so the Messiah is called by the Targum on (^{<3062>}Zechariah 6:12) *br`hk*, "a great priest", as he is; even a great high priest, as in (^{<3044>}Hebrews 4:14), and greater than Aaron, and any of his sons.

Ver. 22. *Let us draw near with a true heart*, etc..] Either to the holiest of all, into which the saints have boldness to enter; or to Christ the high priest, who is entered there; or to the house of God, over which he is an high priest; or rather to God himself, as on a throne of grace, on the mercy seat in heaven, the most holy place: to "draw near" to him is a sacerdotal act, common to all the saints, who are made priests to God; and includes

the whole of divine worship, but more especially designs prayer; to which believers are encouraged from the liberty and boldness they may have and use, of entering into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; from Christ's being the new and living way into it, and from his being an high priest over the house of God: the manner of drawing near is, "with a true heart"; not with the body only, but with the heart principally; with a renewed one, one that is right with God, and is single and sincere, is hearty in its desires, and upright in its ends.

In full assurance of faith; in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; without faith, drawing near to God can neither be acceptable to him, nor of service to men; and a full assurance of faith, with respect to the object drawn nigh unto, and of the way unto him, and of acceptance with him through Christ, and of having the petitions put up to him granted, is very comfortable to believers, greatly becomes them, and is well pleasing to God:

having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience; which is blind, inactive, partial, stupid, or guilty; and it is the blood of Christ, which being sprinkled on it by the Spirit of God, purges it from dead works, cleanses it from all sin, and speaks peace and pardon to it; and such may draw near with freedom and boldness, with readiness and cheerfulness, and with reverence and godly fear:

and our bodies washed with pure water; not baptismal water, but the grace of the Spirit, which is often compared to water, in Scripture: the body, as well as soul, needs washing, and renewing; internal grace influences outward, actions, which adorn religion, and without which bodies cannot be presented holy to God. The allusion is to a custom of the Jews, who were obliged to wash their bodies, and make them clean, when they prayed. So Aben Ezra observes on (~~ORIG~~Genesis 35:2)

"that every Israelite, when he went to pray at a fixed place, was obliged to have *yqñ wpwg*, "his body pure", and his garments pure."

So a priest might not enter into the court for service, though clean, until he had washed himself all over ^{f215}; and it is to sacerdotal acts that the reference is here.

Ver. 23. *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering*, etc..] Either in the grace or doctrine of faith, or in the profession of both; (see Gill on "~~8044~~Hebrews 4:14").

For he [is] faithful that promised; that is God; and it is true of Father, Son, and Spirit; but God the Father may be more especially designed: he is a promising God, and is known to be so by his people; he is eminently and emphatically the Promiser; and all other promisers, and the promises made by them, signify little; but the promises of God are exceeding great and precious, very ancient, free, and unconditional, irrevocable and immutable, and are admirably suited to the cases of his people, and will be fulfilled everyone of them: they include in them things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; things temporal, as that his people shall not want, that their afflictions shall work for good, and that he will support them under all their troubles; things spiritual, as that he will be their God, which takes in his everlasting love to them, and his gracious presence with them, and his protection of them; and that all grace shall be wrought in them, and every blessing of grace bestowed on them: and things eternal; as everlasting glory and happiness; the promise of eternal life was in God's heart, made in the covenant, and put into Christ's hands before the world began, and is declared in the Gospel: now God is faithful to all his promises, nor can he fail, or deceive; he is all wise and foreknowing of everything that comes to pass; he never changes his mind, nor forgets his word; and he is able to perform, and is the God of truth, and cannot lie; nor has he ever failed in anyone of his promises, nor will he suffer his faithfulness to fail; and this is a strong argument to hold fast a profession of faith.

Ver. 24. *And let us consider one another,* etc..] Saints should consider one another as men, that they are but men, of like passions and infirmities; they should consider their different tempers, and make allowance for them, and their outward state and condition in the world: they should consider one another as saints, partakers of the same grace; as that they are all loved with the same love, all conceived and brought forth in the womb of God's eternal electing grace, interested in the same covenant, redeemed by the same blood, and have the same graces and privileges, and an equal right to glory; having one and the same Spirit, the same grace of faith, the same righteousness, the same fountain to wash in, the same fulness to partake of, the same throne of grace to go to, and the same inheritance to enjoy: they should consider one another as church members, the grace and gifts of the another, their different age and standing in the church, their relation to each other as brethren; they should consider them under suffering or sorrowful circumstances, under afflictions, temptations, desertions, declensions, and

as attended with infirmities and sins: and the end of such consideration should be,

to provoke unto love; to brotherly love, to stir it up, and stir up to it, which is apt to wax cold, that so it may be rekindled, and give a most vehement flame; for this is Christ's new commandment, the bond of perfection, the evidence of regeneration, that which makes the saints' communion comfortable and delightful, and without which a profession of religion is in vain.

And to good works; not for justification before God, and in order to procure salvation; but that God may be glorified, the Gospel adorned, the mouths of gainsayers stopped, faith evidenced to the world, and gratitude to God for his benefits shown, and for the profit and advantage of fellow creatures, and fellow Christians.

Ver. 25. *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*, etc..] Or the episynagogue of one another; which word is used to distinguish Christian assemblies from Jewish synagogues, and to denote the coalition of Jews and Gentiles in one church state, and to express the saints' gathering together to Christ; (see ~~2~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:1) and their act of meeting together in some one place to attend his worship, word, and ordinances. Now to “forsake” such assembling, signifies a great infrequency in attending with the saints, a rambling from place to place, and takes in an entire apostasy. It is the duty of saints to assemble together for public worship, on the account of God, who has appointed it, who approves of it, and whose glory is concerned in it; and on the account of the saints themselves, that they may be delighted, refreshed, comforted, instructed, edified, and perfected; and on account of others, that they may be convinced, converted, and brought to the knowledge and faith of Christ; and in imitation of the primitive saints. And an assembling together ought not to be forsaken; for it is a forsaking God, and their own mercies, and such are like to be forsaken of God; nor is it known what is lost hereby; and it is the first outward visible step to apostasy, and often issues in it.

As the manner of some is; or custom; and this prevailing custom among these Jews might arise from contempt of the Gentiles, or from fear of reproach and persecution: and in our day, this evil practice arises sometimes from a vain conceit of being in no need of ordinances, and from an over love of the world, and from a great declension in the exercise of grace; the consequence of it is very bad. The Jews ^{f216} reckon among those

that go down to hell, and perish, and have no part in the world to come, *rwbx ykrdm ꞡçrwph*, “who separate from the ways of the congregation”; that is, who do not do the duties thereof, attend with it, and fast when that does, and the like:

but exhorting one another; to prayer, to attend public worship, to regard all the duties of religion, to adhere to Christ, and a profession of him, and to consider him, and walk on in him: or “comforting one another”; by meeting privately together, and conferring about experience, and the doctrines of grace; and by observing to one another the promises of God, relating to public worship; and by putting each other in mind of the bright day of the Lord, that is coming on:

and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching; either of death, or the last judgment, or rather of Jerusalem's destruction; which at the writing of this epistle was near at hand; and was an affair that greatly concerned these Hebrews; and by various symptoms might be observed by them, as approaching; and which was no inconsiderable argument to engage them to a diligent discharge of their duty; unless the day of darkness, infidelity, and blasphemy in the last days of the world, should be intended, after which will succeed the latter day glory.

Ver. 26. *For if we sin wilfully*, etc..]] Which is not to be understood of a single act of sin, but rather of a course of sinning; nor of sins of infirmity through temptation, or even of grosser acts of sin, but of voluntary ones; and not of all voluntary ones, or in which the will is engaged and concerned, but of such which are done on set purpose, resolutely and obstinately; and not of immoral practices, but of corrupt principles, and acting according to them; it intends a total apostasy from the truth, against light and evidence, joined with obstinacy.

After that we have received the knowledge of the truth; either of Jesus Christ, or of the Scriptures, or of the Gospel, or of some particular doctrine, especially the principal one, salvation by Christ; of which there may be a notional knowledge, when there is no experimental knowledge; and which is received not into the heart, but into the head: and whereas the apostle speaks in the first person plural, we, this is used not so much with regard to himself, but others; that so what he delivered might come with greater weight upon them, and be more readily received by them; when they observed he entertained no hard thoughts or jealousies of them, which

would greatly distress the minds of those that were truly gracious. Moreover, the apostles use this way of speaking, when they do not design themselves at all, but others, under the same visible profession of religion, and who belonged to the same community of believers; (see ^{<401B>}1 Peter 4:3 ^{<58B>}Titus 3:3 ^{<40B>}Ephesians 2:3) compared with (^{<42B>}Acts 22:3 26:5 ^{<58B>}Philippians 3:6). Besides, these words are only hypothetical, and do not prove that true believers could, or should, or do sin in this manner: to which may be added, that true believers are manifestly distinguished from these persons, (^{<58B>}Hebrews 10:38,39),

there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; meaning, not typical sacrifice; for though the daily sacrifice ought to have ceased at the death of Christ, yet it did not in fact until the destruction of Jerusalem; but the sacrifice of Christ, which will never be repeated; Christ will die no more; his blood will not be shed again, nor his sacrifice reiterated; nor will any other sacrifice be offered; there will be no other Saviour; there is no salvation in any other, nor any other name whereby we must be saved. These words have been wrongly made use of to prove that persons sinning after baptism are not to be restored to communion again upon repentance; and being understood of immoral actions wilfully committed, have given great distress to consciences burdened with the guilt of sin, committed after a profession of religion; but the true sense of the whole is this, that after men have embraced and professed the truths of the Gospel, and particularly this great truth of it, that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of men by his blood and sacrifice; and yet after this, against all evidence, all the light and convictions of their own consciences, they wilfully deny this truth, and obstinately persist in the denial of it; seeing there is no more, no other sacrifice for sin, no other Saviour, nor any salvation in any other way, the case of these men must be desperate; there is no help for them, nor hope of them; for by this their sin they shut up against themselves, in principle and practice, the way of salvation, as follows.

Ver. 27. *But a certain fearful looking for of judgment*, etc..] Either of some outward visible judgment in this life, which sometimes falls on such persons; or of the particular judgment which immediately follows after death; or of the universal judgment, after the resurrection, and the dreadful sentence of condemnation which will then pass, and be immediately executed; and which will be done by Christ, and according to truth, and in strict justice; it is certain, and there will be no escaping it, for it will be general. Now there is in this life an expectation in men of a future

judgment, and in wicked men it is a fearful one; it is dreaded by them, and more especially in such men before described, when their consciences are awakened; it is a very dreadful one, inexpressibly so:

and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries; which is to be understood, not of the fire of purgatory, for this is after judgment, that is pretended to be before it; this devours, that only purges, according to the Papists; this is for adversaries, that, as is supposed, is for friends: but perhaps some fiery judgment, expressive of the wrath and indignation of God, such as befell Sodom and Gomorrah, the two sons of Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the men that rose up with Korah against Moses and Aaron: or rather the fire of hell, which is not corporeal and material, but is the wrath of God let down into the conscience; which shows the vile nature of sin, the strictness of God's justice, and the intolerableness of future punishment: and this is said to “devour the adversaries”; not only open ones, but secret, underhanded enemies, as the word here signifies; as such apostates are, before described, to God, and Christ, and the Spirit; to the Gospel, its doctrine, discipline, and ordinances; and to the children of God, and to the power of godliness in them: and with the fire of God's wrath they shall be devoured; not so as to be annihilated, but shall be eternally destroyed, both soul and body; that is, everlastingly punished, or punished with everlasting destruction.

Ver. 28. *He that despised Moses' law*, etc..] By breaking it wilfully, and presumptuously, for which there was no sacrifice; meaning the law which Moses was the minister of not the author; and it respects the whole body of laws given by him, from God; and is instanced in for the sake of the comparison between him and Christ, and between the law and the Gospel, and for the illustration of the case in hand. Now one that transgressed that law, either in whole, or in part, by denying it entirely, or by breaking any particular precept of it presumptuously,

died without mercy; a corporeal death; there was no atonement nor sacrifice for him, nor pity to be shown him, (^{<513B>}Deuteronomy 13:8 19:13).

Under two or three witnesses; who “stood by”, or were present, as the Arabic version renders it, when the transgression was committed; or that “accused him”, as the Ethiopic version; that were witnesses against him, and plainly and fully proved the fact, (^{<517B>}Deuteronomy 17:6 19:15).

Ver. 29. *Of how much sorer punishment*, etc..] Than a mere corporeal death, which was the punishment inflicted on the transgressors of the law of Moses.

Suppose ye; the apostle appeals to the Hebrews themselves, and makes them judges of what punishment

shall he be thought worthy; who is described as follows:

who hath trodden under foot the Son of God: this seems to be a stronger expression than crucifying him again, (³⁰⁶Hebrews 6:6) and is to be understood, not of what was in fact committed, but in will by persons; who, could they have had their will of him, would have pulled him from his throne, and trampled upon him: it is a phrase expressive of the utmost scorn, contempt, and ill usage; and which such are guilty of, who deny his deity, and eternal sonship; who render him useless in his offices, undervalue his sacrifice, despise his righteousness, and strip him of the glory of his person, office, and grace. And this is aggravated by his being the Son of God who is thus used, who became the son of man for the sake of men, is superior to men, and equal with God:

and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing; or “common thing”; putting it upon a level with the blood of a bullock, or at most counting it *ܩܢܝ ܟܕ ܐܝܢܐ*, “as that of another man”; as the Syriac version renders it; yea, reckoning it as unclean and abominable, as the blood of a very wicked man: this is aggravated by its being “the blood of the covenant”; of the covenant of grace, because that is ratified and confirmed by it, and the blessings of it come through it; and from sanctification by it: either of the person, the apostate himself, who was sanctified or separated from others by a visible profession of religion; having given himself up to a church, to walk with it in the ordinances of the Gospel; and having submitted to baptism, and partook of the Lord's supper, and drank of the cup, “the blood of the New Testament”, or “covenant”: though he did not spiritually discern the body and blood of Christ in the ordinance, but counted the bread and wine, the symbols of them, as common things; or who professed himself, and was looked upon by others, to be truly sanctified by the Spirit, and to be justified by the blood of Christ, though he was not really so: or rather the Son of God himself is meant, who was sanctified, set apart, hallowed, and consecrated, as Aaron and his sons were sanctified by the sacrifices of slain beasts, to

minister in the priest's office: so Christ, when he had offered himself, and shed his precious blood, by which the covenant of grace was ratified, by the same blood he was brought again from the dead, and declared to be the Son of God with power; and being set down at God's right hand, he ever lives to make intercession, which is the other part of his priestly office he is sanctified by his own blood to accomplish. This clause, "wherewith he was sanctified", is left out in the Alexandrian copy:

and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace; by denying his being, deity, and personality; despising his powerful operations as enthusiasm; treating his extraordinary gifts as illusions; and ascribing his miracles to Satan, and representing the Gospel dictated by him as a fable, or a lie: and this is aggravated by his being "the spirit of grace"; the author, giver, and applier of all grace to the saints; and who therefore ought not to be in the least slighted, but highly esteemed and honoured; nor will such affronts go unpunished.

Ver. 30. *For we know him that hath said*, etc..] That is, God, whom the apostle and the Hebrews knew; not merely by the works of creation and providence, but by the Scriptures, which they were favoured with, and by which they were distinguished from the Gentiles, and by which they knew his being, nature, and perfections; particularly, that what he said he was able to perform, and that he was true and faithful to every word of his, and to what he has said, (~~1625~~ Deuteronomy 32:35)

vengeance [belongeth] unto me, I will recompence, saith the Lord.

Vengeance belongs to God, not as to the affection, as if there was any such passion in him; but as to the effect, there being that produced by him, which answers to the effect of such a passion among men, namely punishment: and punishment for sin belongs to God, against whom it is committed; and not to Heathen deities, one of which goes by the name of Vengeance, (~~4804~~ Acts 28:4) nor to Satan, and his spiteful angels; nor to men, to exercise it in a private and personal way; though civil magistrates, being in God's stead, are allowed to exercise it in a public way, according to the laws of God: and there is good reason to believe, that what the Lord here says, "I will recompence", or revenge sin, shall be done; which may be concluded from his hatred of sin; from his purity, holiness, and justice; from his faithfulness to his word; from his omnipotence; from the notice he takes of sin, in his own people, in a way of chastisement, and correction; and from the vengeance he has poured on his own Son, as their surety.

And again, in (⁴⁵²⁶Deuteronomy 32:36) the Lord shall judge his people; such as are truly so, his chosen and covenant people, his redeemed and called ones; these he judges by chastising them in a fatherly way, that they may not be condemned with the world; and by governing and protecting them; and by vindicating and pleading their cause, and avenging them on their enemies: or else such as are only his people by profession; on these he will write a “Lo-ammi”; he distinguishes them from his own, and judges between them and his people, and will condemn them; nor will their profession screen them from his wrath and vengeance.

Ver. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*] For this is to be understood not in a good sense; so in general all mankind may be said to fall into, or be in the hands of God, as they are the work of his hands, the care of his providence, and are subject to his sovereignty; and in especial manner, believers, whose times and persons are in God's hand, which bespeaks his great affection for them, their nearness to him, the support they have by him, and protection from him; and they choose to fall into the hands of him as a chastising Father, rather than into the hands of men, and at death commend themselves into his hands: but here it is taken in a bad sense, and signifies to be arrested by justice as a criminal, and be brought to the bar of God, and receive the sentence of condemnation; when such will feel the weight of his hand, and the fierceness of his wrath; and this is “a fearful thing”: it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of men, injured and affronted, and that have power, and will show no mercy; it is very tremendous to fall into the hands of God, in the way of his judgments in this world; the apprehensions of a future judgment are terrible before hand; and the apparatus of the judgment, when it comes, will be very striking and surprising; but to stand before the Judge, charged with sin, naked, and without righteousness, speechless, and no one to speak in favour of them; to hear the dreadful sentence pronounced, and feel the wrath of God to the uttermost, how horrible must this be! the aggravations of this are, that it is into the hands “of God” that such fall, and not into the hands of men, or mere creatures; but of God, who is omniscient, and sees through all pretences; omnipotent, and none can rescue out of his hands by force; omnipresent, and so no escaping from him; just and faithful, and not to bribed, inexorable, immutable, and unalterable: and that he is “the living God”; in opposition to the lifeless deities of the Gentiles, and to mortal men; and is expressive of his eternity, and so of the duration of the sinner's punishment, that falls into his hands.

Ver. 32. *But call to remembrance the former days*, etc..] The words may be considered either as a declaration of what they had done, and be read, “but ye do call to remembrance”, etc.. or as an exhortation to remember the days of their espousals, the times of their first conversion: and the apostle’s design in this is, to mitigate the terror the preceding words might strike them with; and to aggravate the disgrace of turning back, when they had behaved so bravely in former times; and to encourage their faith and trust in God:

in which after ye were illuminated, by the Spirit of God, to see their impurity, impotence, and unrighteousness, and their lost and miserable state by nature; and to behold Christ and salvation by him; and to have some light into the doctrines of the Gospel; and some glimmering of the glories of another world. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it “baptized”; now such as are converted, and are brought to make a public profession of their faith, and submit to the ordinances of Christ, are, in common, immediately called to suffer reproach and persecution of one kind or another; so Christ, after his baptism, was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil: Satan is spiteful and malicious, and God suffers afflictions to befall his people to try their graces, and to inure them to troubles early, as follows;

ye endured a great fight of afflictions; meaning some violent persecution from their own countrymen, either at the death of Stephen, in which the apostle, being then unconverted; was concerned himself; or rather some other time of trouble, after the apostle was converted, to which he seems to have respect in (~~4014~~1 Thessalonians 2:14,15), these Hebrews, being enlisted as soldiers under Christ, the Captain of their salvation, were quickly engaged in a warfare, and were called forth to fight a fight of afflictions, and a very great one; and which they endured with patience, courage, and intrepidity.

Ver. 33. *Partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock*, etc..] Brought upon the stage or theatre, and made a spectacle to the world, angels, and men, (~~4019~~1 Corinthians 4:9)

both by reproaches and afflictions; suffering both in their characters and reputations, and in their persons and substance:

and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used; they maintained their communion with them, relieved them in distress, and sympathized with them.

Ver. 34. *For ye had compassion of me in my bonds*, etc..] When he was bound at Jerusalem, by the chief captain Lysias, with two chains, (⁴⁰³Acts 21:33) or when he was in bonds elsewhere; which they did by sympathizing with him in their hearts; by their prayers for him, and in their letters to him; and by sending presents to him for his relief and support. The Alexandrian copy, and two of Stephens's, the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, "had compassion on the prisoners"; or "them that were bound"; meaning prisoners in general, remembering them that were in bonds, as bound with them; or particularly such as were prisoners for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; and it may be some of them, which the apostle himself committed to prison, in his state of unregeneracy:

and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods; the furniture of their houses, their worldly substance, of which they were stripped by their persecutors; and this they took quietly and patiently, yea, joyfully; rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer the confiscation of their goods for the sake of Christ: the reason of which joy was,

knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance: that which is laid up for the saints in heaven is "substance"; it is signified by an house, a city, a kingdom; and so it is rendered here in the Ethiopic version; and by riches, true, glorious, and durable; and by a treasure and an inheritance: and this is "better" than anything in this world; as to the quality of it, it being celestial; and as to the quantity of it, it being all things; and as to the place where it is, "in heaven"; though this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and as to the company with whom it is enjoyed, saints in light; yea, God himself is the portion of his people: and this is an "enduring" substance; it cannot be wasted by the saints themselves; nor taken away from them by others; nor can it decay in its own nature; and the saints will always endure to enjoy it: and this they may be said to "have": it is promised to them, and prepared for them; they have a right unto it, and the earnest of it; and they have it already in Christ, their head and representative; so that it is, upon all accounts, sure unto them: and this they know in themselves; from what they find and feel in their own hearts; from

the sealing testimony and earnest of the Spirit, and from the promise of Christ, (^{<4150>}Matthew 5:10).

Ver. 35. *Cast not away therefore your confidence*, etc..] The same word is used here, as in (^{<5809>}Hebrews 10:19) where it is translated “boldness”; and may design here, as there, an holy boldness in prayer, free from a servile and bashful spirit; and which appears in a liberty of speaking to God, and in a confidence of being heard; prayer itself should not be left off, nor should freedom, boldness, and confidence in it be slackened, or laid aside: or else a profession of faith is intended, which ought to be free and open, bold and courageous, firm and constant; and which ought by no means to be let go and dropped: or the grace of faith in its full assurance, with respect to interest in God, as a covenant God and Father, and in his love; and with respect to interest in Christ, and in his grace, and a right to the glorious inheritance, the better and enduring substance: and this shield of faith is by no means to be cast away; it was reckoned infamous and scandalous in soldiers to lose or cast away their shield; with the Grecians it was a capital crime, and punished with death ^{f217}; to which the apostle may here allude. There are two sorts of believers, nominal and real; and there are two sorts of faith; an historical one, which may be in persons destitute of the grace of God, and is in devils; and a true and unfeigned one, which has salvation connected with it; the former may be cast away and lost; the latter, though it may be remiss and weak in its exercise, yet it cannot be wholly and finally lost; and this exhortation may be designed as a means of continuing it, and of perseverance in it: the reason urging it follows,

which hath great recompence of reward; freedom and boldness in prayer has its reward, for such that ask in faith shall have; and so has a firm and constant profession of religion, for he that endures to the end shall be saved; and so has a true and strong faith in Christ; everlasting salvation is connected with it; the reward of the inheritance follows upon it; and this reward is the recompense of God's own grace: and it is a very great one; it is the fruit of great love and grace; yea, it is no other than God himself, who is the exceeding great reward of his people; it is Christ and his glory, and the riches of it; it is a reward exceeding, and beyond all deserts of men, and beyond all thought and expression.

Ver. 36. *For ye have need of patience*, etc..] Not that they were destitute of the grace of patience; for where God is the God of all grace, he is the God of patience; and such, who are called by grace, are conformed to the

image of Christ, and, among other things, are like him in this; and those who are born of the Spirit, have the fruits of the Spirit, and this, among the rest; to whom the word of God is effectual, this fruit is produced in them, that being the word of patience; and such who are brought into the kingdom of Christ, are also in the patience of Jesus; where there is one grace, there is every grace; saints are immediately called to sufferings and trials, which require patience; and, without this, there can be no enjoyment of a man's self: but the meaning is, that they needed the continuance, exercise, and increase of it; in general, to run the race set before them; to bear afflictions from the hand of God, and reproaches and persecutions from men; to wait for God, when he hides his face, and for answers of prayer, when they are deferred; and to bear up, and not to sink under temptations; and to live in the constant expectation of heaven and happiness: and, in particular, it is necessary for the following,

that after ye have done the will of God: there is the purposing will of God, which is done by himself; and there is his revealed will, touching the salvation of men, which is done by his Son; and there is his will of precept to be done by men; and which, when done aright, is done according to the rule of his word, in faith, from love, through the strength of Christ, and by the assistance of his Spirit and grace, with a view to his glory, and without any dependence on what is done: and the will of God regards suffering, as well as doing; for to that the saints are also called, to which patience is necessary:

ye might receive the promise; that is, of eternal life; not the promise itself, which they had received already, but the thing promised; which is the sense, in which this word is often used in this book, (^{<SMB>}Hebrews 6:12,17 11:13,39) which is so called, to show that it is not of works, for promise and merit do not agree together; but that it is of grace, and will certainly be enjoyed, but must be patiently waited for.

Ver. 37. *For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come,* etc..] That the person spoken of is the Lord Jesus Christ, is evident from the prophecy in (^{<SMB>}Habakkuk 2:3) here referred to, and from the character of him that is to come, (^{<DIB>}Matthew 11:3) and from parallel places, (^{<SMB>}James 5:7-9) and this is to be understood, not of his coming in the flesh, for he was come in the flesh already; though Habakkuk indeed refers to his first coming, yet not to that only, but including his second coming also; but of his coming in his kingdom and power to destroy Jerusalem, and

take vengeance on the Jews, for their rejection of him: the kingdom of Christ was at hand, when he began to preach; upon his ascension to heaven, it began to appear more visible; but still the temple was standing, and that worship continued, which stood in the way of the glory of his kingdom; during which time the saints suffered much: but in a little while from the writing of this epistle, he, who was to come, did come, even within about ten years after this, and showed his power and his glory, in delivering his people, and destroying his enemies; (see ~~1068~~ Matthew 16:28 ~~1001~~ Mark 9:1). It may be applied to his coming to help his people in time of need; the afflictions of the saints are many; they are all for an appointed time, and but for a while; and Christ has promised to come, and visit them; and which he does often, and speedily, and seasonably: it may also be accommodated to Christ coming to take his people to himself by death; Christ may be said to come in this sense, and he will certainly come; and this will be in a little while; man is but of few days; death is certain, and should be patiently expected: and it may likewise be suitably improved, with respect to Christ's coming to judgment; that he will come is certain, from prophecies, particularly from the prophecy of Enoch, from his own words, from the testimony of angels, from the institution of the Lord's supper, till he comes, and from the general expectation of the saints; and this coming of his is desirable, because it will be the marriage of the Lamb, and the redemption of the saints, and because of the grace and glory that will be brought unto them, and because they shall then be for ever with him; and this will be quickly, in a little time, in comparison of the time that went before his first coming, and of the eternity that will follow after this; and though it may seem long, yet with God it is but a little while, with whom a thousand years are as one day; and however, since it is certain that he will come,

and will not tarry, beyond the appointed time, patience should be exercised.

Ver. 38. *Now the just shall live by faith*, etc..] The “just” man is one not in appearance only, but in reality; not by his obedience to the law, but by the obedience of Christ; and he is evidently so by the Spirit, and by faith: and he is one, who lives soberly and righteously; and the life he lives, and shall live, at present, is, not eternal life; for though he shall live that life, yet this is not intended; for it is a living by faith that is spoken of, and as antecedent to the coming of Christ; but a spiritual life is meant, a life of justification in Christ, a life of communion with Christ, and a life of holiness from Christ,

with peace, joy, and comfort through him: and the manner of this just man's living is "by faith"; not upon his faith, but upon Christ, the object of it; and by "his faith", as in (^{<3804>}Habakkuk 2:4) his own, and not another's; or by the faith of Christ: the Syriac version here renders it, "by the faith of myself"; that is, by the faith of Christ, who speaks, and who is the author and object of faith: the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, "my just man shall live by faith"; and this life is to be now, in the mean while, until Christ comes, and because he will certainly come:

but if [any man] draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. The Hebrew word **hl p[**, used in (^{<3804>}Habakkuk 2:4) and which, by the Septuagint there, and by the apostle here, is translated by **υποστειληται**, and rendered "draw back", according to R. David Kimchi ^{f218} signifies, pride and haughtiness of heart; and, according to R. Sol. Jarchi ^{f219} it signifies impudence; R. Moses Kimchi ^{f220} takes it to be the same with **l p[**, which is used for a tower, or fortified place; and thinks it designs one who betakes himself to such a place for safety from the enemy, and seeks not to God for deliverance: so that such a person seems to be designed, who swells with pride and confidence in his own righteousness; who betakes himself to some fortress of his own for safety; who withdraws from the assembly of the saints, through fear of reproach and persecution; who withholds the truth, shuns to declare it, or maintain a profession of it; plays the hypocrite, and deals deceitfully in religious things; and, in short, it may intend one, who finally and totally apostatizes from the doctrine of faith, and the profession of it: and in such persons God has no pleasure, never had, nor never will have; but, on the contrary, they are abominable to him, and will lie under his sore displeasure, and feel the keen resentments of it; such stand opposed to the just man, that lives by faith, walks humbly with God, in a dependence, not on his own righteousness, but on the righteousness of Christ, in which he is safe from condemnation, and secure of the divine favour; for drawing back is not supposed of the just man, but of any man, as we, with the Ethiopic version, rightly supply; and is to be understood of anyone of the external professors of religion, who forsake the assembling of the saints, (^{<5805>}Hebrews 10:25) and is denied of the truly righteous in the following words.

Ver. 39. *But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, etc..]*

There is a drawing back which is not unto perdition; persons may be attended with much unbelief, may be very cold and indifferent to Gospel

ordinances, may fall into great sins, and may greatly backslide, and yet be recovered, as David, Peter, and others: and there is a drawing back to perdition; when Christ is rejected as the alone Saviour; when he is not held to as the head; when false doctrines and damnable heresies are given into; and when men draw back, and never return, nor are they, nor can they be returned, and their apostasy is total, and final: but true believers do not, and cannot draw back in this sense; because they are held fast in the arms, and with the cords of everlasting love, are chosen of God unto salvation, are given unto Christ, and secured in him; they are redeemed and purchased by him; they are united to him, and built upon him; they are interested in his prayers and preparations, and are his jewels, and his portion; they are regenerated, sanctified, inhabited, and sealed by the Spirit of God, and have the promises and power of God, on their side.

But of them that believe to the saving of the soul; or “of faith, to the salvation of the soul”; not of faith of miracles, nor of an historical faith; but of that faith, which is the faith of God's elect, is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; by which a soul sees Christ, goes to him, lays holds on him, commits all to him, and expects all from him: this stands opposed to drawing back; for by faith a man lives, walks, and stands; and with this is connected the salvation of the soul, as opposed to perdition; not as though it is a cause of salvation, but as a means of God's appointing to receive the blessings of salvation, and which is entirely consistent with the grace of God; and since salvation and faith are inseparably connected together, so that he that has the one shall have the other, it follows, that true believers can never perish. The nature and excellency of this grace is largely treated of in the following chapter.