

# CHAPTER 13

## INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 13

**Ver. 1.** *Now before the feast of the passover*, etc.] This feast was instituted as a memorial of the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and was an eminent type of Christ; and this passover was what Christ had greatly desired, it being his last, and when he was to express his great love to his people, mentioned here, by dying for them. It was two days before this feast, so the Persic version reads this text, at Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, that the things recorded in this chapter were transacted; (see <sup>48B2</sup>Matthew 26:2,6);

*when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world to the Father.* The death of Christ is here signified by a departing out of this world, a way of speaking frequently used by the Jews as expressive of death; (see Gill on “<sup>30E23</sup>Philippians 1:23”). Much such a phrase is made use of concerning Moses, of whom it is said <sup>f570</sup>, that the fourth song that was sung in the world, was sung by him

“when “his time was come”, *aml [ ^m rj pml* , “to depart out of the world”;

an easy and familiar form of speech to express death by, as if it was only a removing from one place to another. The place from whence Christ was about to remove is called “this world”: this present world, into which he was come to save sinners, and in which he then was, and where he had already met with very ill usage, and barbarous treatment, and was to meet with more: where he was going is said to be “to the Father”, in whose bosom he lay, by whom he was sent, from whom he came; to his God and Father, and the God and Father of all his people, to take his place in their nature at his right hand. A time or hour was fixed for this; for as there was a set time, called “the fulness of time”, agreed upon for his coming into the world, so there was for his going out of it: and now this “his hour was come”; the time was now up, or at least very near at hand; and he “knew” it, being God omniscient, which gave him no uneasiness: nor did it in the least alienate his affections from his people: for

*having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.*

The objects of his love are described by his property in them, “his own”; by whom are meant, not all mankind, who are his by creation; nor the Jews, who were his nation and countrymen according to the flesh; nor the twelve apostles only, whom he had chosen; but all the elect of God, who are his own, by his choice of them, by the Father’s gift of them to him, by the purchase he made of them with his blood, and by his effectual call of them by his grace: these are also described by their condition and situation, “which were in the world”; which is not said to distinguish them from the saints that were in heaven, or to express their former state of unregeneracy, but their present situation in this vain and evil world, which is no objection to Christ’s love to them; for though whilst in this world they carry about with them a body of sin and death, are liable to many snares and temptations, and are involved in the troubles, and exposed to the hatred of the world, yet are, and always will be, the objects of the love and care of Christ. The acts of his love to them are expressed both in time past, and to come: “having loved” them; so he did from everlasting, with a love of complacency and delight, which he showed as early by espousing their persons to himself, by undertaking their cause, by taking the charge of their persons, and the care of both their grace and glory, and in time by assuming their nature; and having done all this, “he loved them to the end”: and which he showed by dying for them; and continues to show by interceding for them in heaven, by supplying them with all grace, and by preserving them from a final and total falling away; and he will at last introduce them into his kingdom and glory, when they shall be for ever with him; and so that love to them continues not only to the end of his own life, nor barely to the end of theirs, but to the end of the world, and for ever; and so *εις τελος*, signifies, and is rendered “continually”, (<sup><2015></sup>Luke 18:5), and in the Septuagint on (<sup><2015></sup>Psalm 9:6,18 44:23) answers to *j xnl* , which signifies “for ever”; and is so translated here by the Ethiopic version.

**Ver. 2.** *And supper being ended*, etc.] Or rather “supper being”, or it “being supper time”, for it was not ended; not the paschal supper, nor the Lord’s supper, but the supper in Simon’s house at Bethany, two days before the passover. There is no mention made in this whole chapter of the passover supper, or of any of its rites: the washing of the disciples’ feet was a peculiar action of our Lord’s, and had no manner of regard to any usage among the Jews at such a time; nor was it ever usual with them, at the passover, to wash the feet of those that ate of it; there is not the least

trace of any such custom in any of their writings: besides, it is said in so many words, in (<sup><4830></sup>John 13:1), that this was “before the feast of the passover”; and by comparing it with (<sup><4812></sup>Matthew 26:2,6), it appears to be two days before it; and so much time seems necessary to be allowed, for Judas to do what he did after this supper, in which he was first instigated to it: and that the feast of the passover was yet to come, when this supper was ended, and Judas had taken the sop, and was bid to do quickly what he did, is manifest from the sense the disciples put upon those words of Christ, who thought he ordered him to get the necessaries for the feast, (<sup><4839></sup>John 13:29), which can be understood of no other than the feast of the passover, which was at hand, and for which many things were to be got ready; to which may be added, that Satan’s entering into Judas, and putting it into his heart to betray his master, and his covenanting with the high priests to do it for such a sum, were before the passover supper, as is clear from (<sup><4211></sup>Luke 22:1,3,4,7). Nor is it reasonable to suppose that Judas could meet that night, after the supper, with the chief priests, captains, and all the council, the great sanhedrim, who could not be together; since by the law of the passover, every head of a family was to be with his respective family: and if this could be supposed, yet there seems to be some time between this agreement, and the execution of it, in which he sought for a proper opportunity, (<sup><4136></sup>Matthew 26:16). Nor can it be thought there was time enough to do all he did, as to covenant with the chief priests, form his scheme for apprehending Christ, and get such a number of men together for that purpose, between the supper, and the time of night in which Christ was betrayed. Besides, certain it is, that Christ and his disciples arose from the place where he ate his supper, and went from thence elsewhere, (<sup><4848></sup>John 14:31), which cannot be understood very well of any other departure than his going from Bethany to Jerusalem, and not of his going from Jerusalem to the garden, which is afterwards spoken of as a distinct thing, (<sup><4802></sup>John 18:1). And to say no more, there is not in this chapter the least hint of the institution of the Lord’s supper, which all the other evangelists make mention of, when they relate the last passover of our Lord. The reader may be more fully satisfied of the truth of this by consulting Dr. Lightfoot on (<sup><4816></sup>Matthew 26:6).

*The devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him*; the person Satan influenced and acted upon, for his purpose, was Judas iscariot, Simon’s son: whether this was Simon the Pharisee, or Simon the leper, in whose house Christ and his disciples were, or who he

was, is not certain: was there any reason to think it might be Simon the tanner that was the father of Judas, or that either he or his father were tanners, I would venture to add one conjecture more to what has been made on (~~4006~~ Matthew 10:4 27:5), concerning Judas's surname, Iscariot, as that it may come from "Iscortia", which signifies a tanner's coat: for so it is said in the <sup>f571</sup> Talmud,

"what is **ayj rwqsya**, "Iscortia?" says Rabba bar Chanah, it is **al xd anwtyk**, "a tanner's coat":

a sort of a leathern garment, as the gloss says, which tanners put over their clothes. However, this man was an apostle of Christ's whom Satan tempted to betray him; so that we see that the highest office, and greatest gifts, cannot secure men from the temptations of Satan: the manner in which he tempted him was, he "put", or "cast [it] into his heart"; it was a dart, and a fiery one, he threw into him, into his very heart; which shows the access Satan has into, and the influence he has upon the minds of men: his end in this temptation was to work upon him "to betray" Christ, his Lord and master, who had chosen him to be an apostle of his, and had invested him with this high office, into the hands of his enemies, in order to be put to death. This was an affair determined by God, known by Christ, and which he foretold to his disciples; yet all this did not in the least excuse the malice of Satan, and the wickedness of Judas: it was an action devilish indeed, and which, one would think, could never have entered into his heart, had not the devil put it there; and this was at supper time, whilst they were at table together, that this thought was darted into his mind; which is mentioned to show, that no place and company can preserve persons from the evil suggestions of the devil, and to aggravate the sin of Judas, who when, and while he was eating bread with Christ, first thought of, and determined to lift up his heel against him: moreover, it was when the ointment was poured on the head of Christ, and whilst Judas was fretting at it, that Satan took the opportunity of his choler and wrath, to stir him up to so vile an action. This account is prefaced to Christ's washing the feet of his disciples, to show the great composure of mind Christ was in, though he knew what was doing; and his wonderful condescension in washing the feet of so vile a creature, into whose heart Satan had already put it to betray him; and also his care of, and love to the rest of the disciples, when Satan had got possession of one of them.

**Ver. 3.** *Jesus knowing that the Father*, etc.] These words express the sense Christ had of his own greatness and dignity as Mediator:

*had given all things into his hands*; all the persons of the elect, all blessings both of grace and glory for them, and power and authority over all other persons and things, to make them subservient to his purposes:

*and that he was come from God*; had his mission and commission, as man, from God; did not come of himself, but he sent him:

*and went to God*; or was going to him in a very little time, to sit at his right hand, to have a name above every name, and to have angels, authorities, and powers subject to him; which, as it shows his high esteem with his Father, and his exalted character as Mediator, so it greatly illustrates his wonderful humility, that in the view, and under a sense and consideration of all this, he should condescend to wash the feet of his disciples; of which an account is given in the following verses.

**Ver. 4.** *He riseth from supper*, etc.] In the midst of the entertainment, and which no doubt was considerable, his mind being intent on something else; and it being his meat and drink to do his Father's will, he rises and leaves his disciples sitting to finish their meal; and whilst they were murmuring at the waste of the ointment poured on his head, and were filled with indignation at it, as they all of them were, (see <sup><RB></sup>Matthew 26:8); he rises up to wash their feet; amazing patience and humility!

*And laid aside his garments*; not all his garments, only his upper ones, that he might better dispatch the business he was going about; and which was an emblem of his laying aside, as it were for a while, his glory and dignity as the Son of God, and of his appearing in the form of a servant.

*And took a towel*; or "linen cloth", *λεντιον*, the same with *tyj nwl* in the Jerusalem Talmud <sup>f572</sup>:

*and girded himself*; with the towel, or linen cloth, which served both for a girdle, and after he had washed his disciples' feet, to wipe them with. This was a servile habit; so servants used to stand at the feet of their masters, girt about with a linen cloth <sup>f573</sup>; and shows, that the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

**Ver. 5.** *After that he poureth water into a bason*, etc.] This also was a servile work, and what properly belonged to servants to do; (see <sup><RB></sup>John

2:5-7). The bason to wash the feet in, called by the Jews *μυλ gr tbyr* [ , was fixed by their doctors to hold, “from two logs to nine kabs”<sup>f574</sup>; not “from two logs to ten”, as Dr. Lightfoot has rendered the passage referred to. A “kab” held about a quart of our measure, and a “log” was the fourth part of a “kab”.

*And began to wash the disciples feet.* This custom of washing the feet was not used by the Jews at their passover, nor at their private entertainments, or common meals, but at the reception of strangers or travellers, which were just come off of a journey, whereby they had contracted dirt and filth, and was a servile work, never performed by superiors to their inferiors, but by inferiors to superiors; as by the wife to the husband, by the son to the father, and by the servant to his master; and was an instance of great humility in any others, as in Abigail, who said to David, “let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord”, (<sup><0254></sup>1 Samuel 25:41), upon which place some Jewish Rabbins<sup>f575</sup> have this note:

“this she said, *hwn*[ *h dx l* [ , “by way of humility”, to show, that it would have been sufficient to her, if she became a wife to one of the servants of David, and washed his feet, as was the custom of a wife to her husband.”

But what a surprising instance of humility and condescension is this, that Christ, the Lord and master, should wash the feet of his disciples, when it was their proper work and business to have washed his? Though Dr. Lightfoot says, he does not remember that this was expected from the disciple toward his master, unless included in that rule, “that the disciple is to honour his master, more than his father”; whereas it was a fixed point<sup>f576</sup> with the Jews,

“that all works which a servant does to his master, a disciple does to his master, except unloosing his shoe.”

Since therefore it was the work of a servant to wash his master’s feet, a disciple was obliged to do this to his master likewise:

*and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded;* as he began he went through with his work; and having washed their feet, he wipes them clean; which may design the purity of the lives and conversations of the saints in general, and of the ministers of the Gospel in particular, whose feet are beautiful when shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace,

and their conversations are as become the Gospel they preach; both which they have from Christ.

**Ver. 6.** *Then cometh he to Simon Peter*, etc.] After having washed the feet of some of the disciples, as is thought by some interpreters, and particularly the feet of Judas, without any repulse; though others are of opinion that he began with Peter, who modestly, and out of reverence to him, refuses to be washed by him:

*and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet!* he speaks as one surprised and astonished that Christ should offer to do any such thing to him; that he, who was the Son of the living God, should wash the feet of such a sinful man as he was; that those hands, with which he had wrought such miracles, as the opening the eyes of the blind, cleansing lepers, and raising the dead, should be employed in washing his defiled feet, the meaner and inferior parts of his body; this he thought was greatly below his dignity and character, and too much to be done by him to such a worthless creature as he was.

**Ver. 7.** *Jesus answered and said unto him*, etc.] Christ replies,

*what I do, thou knowest not now*: Peter knew that he was about to wash his feet, and the rest of his disciples, but he did not know the meaning and mystery of it, what Christ designed by it, and what instruction they were to receive from it,

*but thou shalt know hereafter*; as he did, when he had performed this service, and explained it to him. This may teach us, under dark providences, the meaning of which is not yet known by us, to wait the Lord's own time, to make things clear and plain to us, and in the mean time patiently submit to the divine will.

**Ver. 8.** *Peter saith unto him, thou shall never wash my feet*, etc.] Before he had behaved with modesty, but now with obstinacy and perverseness; and though these expressions might arise from great reverence to Christ, yet they were wrong and rashly spoken. Peter ought to have been satisfied with Christ's reply, and have submitted, since though he then did not know the reason of such surprising conduct, he should hereafter. In order therefore to bring him to a compliance,

*Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me*; he does not say, if I wash not thy feet, but thee, meaning not with water, but with

his blood, and by his Spirit; for Christ uses the word wash here, not literally, but in a mystical and figurative sense, and takes an occasion, as he sometimes does, from things natural, to discourse of things spiritual: moreover, he does not say, thou hast no part “in” me, but thou hast no part “with” me, that is, no fellowship and communion with me; (see ~~4084~~2 Corinthians 6:14,15); and it is as if he should say, Peter, if I had not washed thee with the washing of regeneration by my Spirit, and if I should not shed my blood for thee, and wash thee in it from thy sins, sad would be thy case; thou couldest have no communion with me in this world, nor any part and portion with me in the heavenly inheritance hereafter. Hence it may be observed, that unless a man is washed by Christ, he can have no part with him in this, or the other world. God’s elect have a part, an interest in Christ through eternal, electing, and covenant grace, and in consequence of this are washed by Christ both with his blood, and with the washing of regeneration: and this is done in order that they may have a part with Christ, spiritual fellowship with him now, and possess with him the undefiled inheritance, when time shall be no more.

**Ver. 9.** *Simon Peter saith unto him*, etc.] Being convinced of his mistake in not submitting to Christ, fearing he should be deprived of communion with him, than which nothing was more desirable to him, or more highly esteemed of by him, says,

*Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head*; which shows the sense he had of the general pollution of his nature, and the need he stood in particularly of having his feet, hands, and head washed both as a minister, and a believer. By his “feet” may be meant, either the grace of faith, which is the foot of the soul, by which it goes to Christ, and walks on in him, and was not without its imperfections; or the affections of the mind, which are that to the soul, as feet are to the body; and when they move right, move heavenward, Godward, and Christward; but sometimes they are inordinate, and cleave to the things of this world: or the outward life and conversation is meant, which is attended with daily infirmities; and each of these need washing in the blood of Christ. His “hands” may design all his actions, works, services, duties, and performances, the hand being the instrument of action; and not only the hands of wicked men, but even of saints, need washing, their best righteousnesses being as filthy rags. By his “head” may be meant doctrines and principles imbibed in the mind, and expressed by the lips, which were not free from mistake and pollution, and needed purging and cleansing; for the disciples were not as yet clear from the



prejudices of the Jewish nation, especially relating to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom.

**Ver. 10.** *Jesus saith to him, he that is washed,* etc.] Not he that is baptized; for every such person is not wholly clean, but he who is regenerated by the Spirit of God, or rather, who is washed in the blood of Christ: such an one "is clean every whit"; is all over clean; not that he has no sin in him, nor commits any; but as he is washed in the blood of Christ, and justified by his righteousness, he is wholly and entirely clean in the sight of God; for he is justified from all things he could not be justified from by the law of Moses; all his sins are pardoned, and he is perfectly righteous before God; and so is perfectly clean through the word or sentence of justification and absolution pronounced on him, which must be understood in a forensic or law sense. And such an one

*needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit;* the feet of his life and conversation, which are continually gathering dirt, and need daily washing in the blood of Christ; and therefore recourse must be constantly had to that fountain to wash in, for sin and for uncleanness. The allusion is either to persons washed all over in a bath, who have no need to wash again, unless their feet, which may contract some soil in coming out of it; or to travellers, who have often need to wash their feet, though no other part, and such is the case of the children of God in this life; or rather to the priests, who having bathed themselves in the morning, needed not to wash again all the day, except their hands and feet, on certain occasions <sup>f577</sup>.

*And ye are clean, but not all;* which shows, that justifying and regenerating grace are common to all the true disciples of Christ; they are equally born again, alike justified, and are as clean one as an other in the sight of God; not only Peter, but all the apostles, were clean, excepting one; there was one of them, Judas, who was not clean; and therefore he says, but not all: whence it may be observed, that among the purest societies, there are some unclean persons; there was a Judas, an unclean person among the pure disciples of Christ; there are chaff and tares among his wheat, goats among his sheep, and foolish virgins along with the wise ones.

**Ver. 11.** *For he knew who should betray him,* etc.] That is, Jesus, as Beza's ancient copy, and the Syriac and Persic versions read. This he knew from the beginning; not only from the beginning of his ministry, when he chose his twelve apostles, but from the beginning of time, yea, from everlasting; this being fixed by the determinate counsel of God, which he,

as the omniscient God, was privy to: he knew what preparations were making, and how things were then working, in order to bring it about; he knew that Satan had already put it into Judas's heart, and that he had consented to it;

*therefore, said he, ye are not all clean:* he does not mention his name, though he could have done so, it not being as yet proper to make so full a discovery of him, before the matter was ripe for execution; and also to put all the disciples upon examination of themselves.

**Ver. 12.** *So after he had washed their feet,* etc.] Not Peter's only, but the rest of the disciples also: some have thought, that he washed only the feet of some of them, and not all; but it seems, by this expression, that he performed this service to each of them: and when he had gone through it with everyone of them:

*and had taken his garments,* and put them on,

*and was sat down again;* at the table with his disciples, supper not being yet ended; when having done his work as a servant, he reassumes the air and authority of Lord and master, and begins to teach and instruct, into the design and use of what he had been doing, which he introduces by putting this question;

*he said unto them, know ye what I have done to you?* They knew the outward action he had done to them, that he had washed their feet; but, as yet, they did not know the mystery of it, Christ's design in it, and what he would have them learn from it.

**Ver. 13.** *Ye call me Master and Lord,* etc.] *ybr*, and *rm*, "Master" and "Lord", were dignified titles among the Jews, which they frequently<sup>1578</sup> gave to their doctors and men of learning, and are often to be met with in their writings: hence the disciples called Christ by these names, not out of flattery, but reverence of him, and esteem for him; nor are they blamed, but commended for it:

*and ye say well, for so I am;* though he had acted the part of a servant in such a surprising manner, by washing their feet; yet he had not dropped and lost, but still maintains his place and authority as a "Master" to teach and instruct them, and as a "Lord" to rule and govern them.

**Ver. 14.** *If I then your Lord and Master*, etc.] Christ argues from these titles and characters, which his disciples rightly gave him, and from what he had done to them, though he stood in such a superior relation to them, to their duty one towards another; that since, says he, I

*have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet*: by which he does not mean barely, that they should perform this single action; but as this was an instance of humility and condescension, and doing a good office to strangers and travellers, and was afterwards an expression of love to the saints, (see <sup><3450></sup>1 Timothy 5:10), so he would teach them hereby, to behave in a spirit of humility and condescension to one another, to do every kind and good office, and by love to serve one another in all things.

**Ver. 15.** *For I have given you an example*, etc.] Christ is an example to his people, in many things; not in his miraculous performances and mediatorial work, but in the exercise of grace, of meekness, humility, love, patience, and the like; and in the discharge of duty, in submission to ordinances, and in attending on them; and in the several duties, both to them that are without, and to them that are within; and also in his sufferings and death; not that he died merely as an example, but likewise in the room and stead of his people; but here he is spoken of, as an example, in a particular instance:

*that ye should do as I have done to you*; wash one another's feet, as he had washed theirs; which is not to be understood literally and singly of this action, as though this was an ordinance binding upon all persons, in all places, and to be attended to at certain stated times, as has been the practice of some: it was so understood by the church at Milain, and there practised; and this custom was continued and defended by St. Ambrose, even though not received by the church of Rome; in some places the bishop used to wash the feet of those that were baptized, which in process of time being thought sufficient, instead of baptism, was forbidden by the council at Eliberis. In imitation of this, the pope every year, on Thursday in the passion week, washes the feet of twelve men; and it is an anniversary ceremony performed by the kings of England and France, to wash the feet of twelve poor people, in commemoration of this action of Christ's: but our Lord is not to be understood literally, nor of anything that was to be done once a year, but of what was daily and constantly to be practised; and which was to be done not by one only, to all the rest, but what they were mutually to do; what they were to do to one another; for the thing

signified, reaches to, and is obligatory upon all Christians. Our Lord's meaning is, that as he had, by this action, given them an example of humility, condescension, and love; so they should exercise these graces, and perform such kind offices to one another, and to all their fellow Christians.

**Ver. 16.** *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] This is a strong way of asseveration, and is used when anything of moment and importance, and worthy of attention and observation is delivered.

*The servant is not greater than his Lord*; it is enough that he be as his Lord, which was a common phrase among the Jews; (see Gill on "~~400B~~ Matthew 10:24"), (see Gill on "~~400E~~ Matthew 10:25"); and as it is there made use of, to inform the disciples they must expect persecution, and to encourage them to bear it with patience; here it is designed to engage to humility; for if a master condescends to perform such an action, much more may a servant:

*neither he that is sent, is greater than he that sent him*. This is also a way of speaking in use among the Jews;

“R. Meir says, <sup>f579</sup> who is greatest, he that keeps, or he that is kept? from what is written in (~~4911~~ Psalm 91:11), he that is kept, is greater than he that keeps: says R. Judah, which is greatest, he that carries, or he that is carried? from what is written in (~~4912~~ Psalm 91:12), he that is carried, is greater than he that carries: says R. Simeon, from what is written, in (~~2308~~ Isaiah 6:8), *j l tçmh ^m l wdg j l çmh ywh*, “he that sends, is greater than he that is sent”.”

Which is the very phrase here used by Christ; and his meaning is this, that if it was not below him, who had chose and called, and sent them forth as his apostles, to wash their feet, they who were sent by him, should not disdain to wash one another's.

**Ver. 17.** *If ye know these things*, etc.] The duties they owed to him, and one another; those kind offices of love and respect to each other; the humility, condescension, and brotherly love, which ought to be in them, and of which he had given them an example:

*happy are ye if ye do them*; for the bare theory, or a mere speculative knowledge of these things, is not sufficient; not he that knows and does not, but he that knows and does his master's will, is blessed; he is blessed

with communion with his Lord, and shall hereafter enter into his joy, with “well done good and faithful servant”. There is an happiness “in” doing well, and which follows “on” it, though not “for” it, in a way of merit; on the other hand, persons who know and do not, are very unhappy; the Jews have a saying <sup>f580</sup>,

“**twç [I al ç dml hç**, “he that learns but not to do”, it would have been better for him, if he had never been created; and says R. Jochanan, he that learns but not to do, it would have been better for him if his secundine had been turned upon his face, and he had never come into the world.”

**Ver. 18.** *I speak not of you all.*] What he had before said on the one hand, “ye are not all clean”, (<sup><BIB1></sup>John 13:11), for one of them was not; and on the other hand, when he put an “if” upon, or seemed to doubt of their knowing and doing these things, (<sup><BIB7></sup>John 13:17); or what he was about to say concerning his being betrayed, this he did not speak of them all:

*I know whom I have chosen*; not to apostleship, for they were all chosen to that, Judas as well as the rest, but to grace and glory, to everlasting salvation and happiness; of these he was well assured, that they were all clean, pure, and spotless, in the sight of God; were truly regenerated by the Spirit of God, and had an experimental and practical knowledge of the things he recommended by his example, and would be the happy persons he spake of;

*but* he observes, so it is, and will come to pass, that there is one of you which will betray me:

*that the Scripture may be fulfilled*: (<sup><BIB9></sup>Psalm 41:9), as it literally <sup>f581</sup> was in Judas’s betraying Christ. The passage is by many interpreted either of Ahithophel, or of some other counsellor of Absalom’s, or of Absalom himself; and is applied to their conduct, with respect to David, at the time of their rebellion against him; and which is thought to be typical of the treatment Christ met with from an apostle of his: but we do not find that, at the time of that rebellion, David was sick, or had any disease upon him, from whence they might hope for his death; it does not seem, as though it could be literally understood of David at all, and of the behaviour of any of his servants; but most properly of David’s son, the Messiah, Jesus, with whom everything in the psalm agrees; and particularly this verse, which so plainly describes Judas, and expresses his base ingratitude, hypocrisy, and

malice: the former part of the text is not cited, “yea, mine own familiar friend”, or “the man of my peace, in whom I trusted”; though it fully agrees with him, he being admitted to great familiarity with Christ, and lived peaceably with him; and who was intrusted by him with the bag, into which the money was put, which was ministered, either for the sustenance of him and his apostles, or for the use of the poor: but our Lord thought fit to cite no more of it than what follows, that being sufficiently descriptive of him; and especially at this present time, when he was at table with his Lord.

*He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me*; he sat down with him at table frequently, and ate bread with him; and was doing so, when Satan put it into his heart to betray him; which is strongly expressed, by “lifting up” his “heel against him”; and sets forth the ingratitude, wickedness, and cruelty of him; who, like an unruly horse, that has thrown his rider, spurns at him, to destroy him; and also the insidious manner in which he did it; he supplanted, he tripped him, as wrestlers do, in order to cast him down to the ground, and then trample upon him, and triumph over him: he first **bram**, “laid snares for him”, as Jarchi explains the phrase used in the “psalm”, and then **I ydgh**, “he magnified his heel”, he behaved proudly and haughtily to him.

**Ver. 19.** *Now I tell you before it come*, etc.] That is, gave them notice of this before hand, that one of them should betray him:

*that when it is come to pass*; and they had seen it fulfilled exactly to a tittle, and according to this Scripture:

*ye may believe that I am he*: the Lord God omniscient, who knows and declares things before they come to pass, just as they do come to pass, which none but the eternal God can do; and that he was the Saviour and Redeemer, the Messiah spoken of and promised, the very person prophesied of, in Psalm 41. For that whole “psalm” is applicable to Jesus Christ, the true Messiah; in (<sup><3940b></sup>Psalm 41:1-3), the happiness of such is declared, who “consider the poor”; the Messiah, in his low estate of humiliation, who became poor for the sake of his people; in (<sup><3940c></sup>Psalm 41:5), his enemies are represented as wishing for his death; their hypocrisy, perfidy, and vile designs upon his life, are aptly described in (<sup><3940d></sup>Psalm 41:6,7), which they executed by suborning false witnesses, bringing a wrong charge, **I [yl b rbd]**, “a wicked accusation against him”, (<sup><3940e></sup>Psalm 41:8), which succeeded, to the taking away of his life; and then

they are introduced as triumphing over him, lying dead in the grave, whom they believed would never rise more; but in this they were mistaken, for he was raised up again; for which he prays, (~~1910~~ Psalm 41:10), that he might requite them, as he did, by destroying their city, temple, and nation; and the whole is concluded with thankfulness to God, for raising and exalting him, and setting him before his face for ever, (~~1911~~ Psalm 41:11-13). There is but one passage in it, which has any difficulty in applying it to Christ, and that is, (~~1910~~ Psalm 41:4), where he is spoken of as having sinned against the Lord; but the words may be rendered thus, “heal my soul”, i.e. deliver me out of my sorrows and afflictions, *Æl ytaj h yk*, “because I have made an offering for sin unto thee”; and well agrees with Christ, who was to make, and has made his soul an offering for sin.

**Ver. 20.** *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] You may assure yourselves of the truth of what I am going to say, and which I say for your comfort and encouragement:

*he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me*; I have sent you in my name to preach the Gospel; you are my ambassadors, and you will be honourably received by many; and which I shall regard and take notice of, and esteem, as though they had received me; even as my Father has sent me into this world, as a Saviour and Redeemer, a prophet, priest, and King; and as many as have received me, are looked upon by my Father, as having received him: in short, such as cordially receive and embrace the ministers of the Gospel, receive Christ, in whose name they come, and whom they preach; and such who receive Christ, as preached and held forth in the everlasting Gospel, receive the Father of Christ; and partake of his love, grace, and kindness, shown forth in the mission and gift of Christ to them: Christ, as Mediator, represented his Father that sent him; and the ministers of Christ represent him; so that what is done to them, either in a way of reception or rejection, he takes as done to himself: it is a common saying among the Jews <sup>f582</sup>, *wtwmk µda l ç wj wl çç*, “that the messenger of a man is as himself”.

**Ver. 21.** *When Jesus had thus said*, etc.] Having spoken of the mission of his disciples by him, of their reception among men, and the notice that would be taken of it by him:

*he was troubled in spirit*; in his soul, which shows him to be truly and really man, and to have an human soul, which some have denied; and that

to be of like passions with ours, only without sin: he was troubled, not at what he had said, but at what he was about to say concerning the betrayer; and that not so much on his own account, because of the danger, the sorrows, and sufferings he should be exposed to, as on account of the horrible blackness of the crime, and the vengeance that would fall upon the criminal; and being thus inwardly distressed at this affair,

*he testified and said*: he spake out openly and plainly, what he had before secretly intimated, and that with the greatest certainty:

*verily, verily, I say unto you*; it is truth, it may be believed, however unexpected and strange it may seem to be:

*that one of you shall betray me*; to the chief priests and elders, in order to be put to death.

**Ver. 22.** *Then the disciples looked one to another*, etc.] As persons surprised and astonished, and as scarce crediting what was said; not having had the least suspicion of anyone among them, that could be guilty of such an action; and expressing by their looks their detestation of, and indignation at so horrible an iniquity; or they looked one to another, to observe if they could, whether the countenance of anyone would discover who the person was:

*doubting of whom he spake*; not being able to conceive and imagine, who the person was he had in view; from whence it appears, that Judas, to this time, had behaved outwardly as well as any of the other disciples; he had given no occasion, by his conduct, to suspect him more than any other: upon this broad intimation, or rather strong protestation which Christ made, that one of them should betray him, their eyes were not turned to him directly and particularly, but to one another.

**Ver. 23.** *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom*, etc.] Not pressing upon that part of Christ's body, which would have been irreverent in John, and troublesome to Christ; but leaning at table upon his bed or couch, on which he lay; and which was next to, and just before Christ; so that he was very near unto, and seemed to lie in the bosom of Christ; as such are said to do, who sit next at table to another. The posture of the Jews at table, was either "sitting" or "lying", and a difference they make between these two;



“if, say they <sup>f583</sup>, *ˆybçwy wyh*, “they sat” to eat everyone asked a blessing for himself; but if *wbysh*, “they lay down”, one asked a blessing for them all.”

This lying down was not on their backs, nor on their right side, but on their left; for they say <sup>f584</sup>, that

“lying down on the back, is not called *hbysh*, “lying down”; and lying on the right side, is not called lying down.”

And the reason given is <sup>f585</sup>, because they have need of the right hand to eat with; but as they elsewhere <sup>f586</sup> observe,

“they used to eat lying along, leaning on the left side, their feet to the ground, and every man on a single couch.”

Would you know the order in which they, lay, take the account as they have given it <sup>f587</sup>;

“when there were but two couches, the principal person lay first, and the second to him above him; and when there were three, the principal person lay in the middle, the second to him above him, and the third below him; and if he would talk with him, he raised himself upright, and sitting upright he talked with him; that is, as the gloss explains it, if the principal person was desirous to talk with him that was second to him, he must raise himself up from his lying down, and sit upright; for all the while he is leaning, he cannot talk with him, because he that is second to him, is behind the head of the principal person, and the face of the principal person is turned to the other side; and it is better for the second to sit below him, that he may hear his words, whilst he is leaning.”

The form in which Christ and his disciples sat or lay at table, we may conceive was this <sup>f588</sup>; a table was placed in the middle and as many beds or couches round it, as there were persons; Christ the principal and most worthy person lay first, with his head toward the table, his face somewhat turned from it, leaning on his left elbow upon the couch; in this posture lay Jesus, upon the first couch; in the same posture lay John, in the next to him, and just before him; the hinder part of his head being towards, and near the breast and bosom of Jesus; whence he is said to lean upon it: now to lie next to the principal person, was a very great honour, as well as a

mark of great affection; and for John to lie next to Jesus, and as it were to lean on his bosom, showed how much he was respected and honoured by him; and therefore John modestly conceals his name, and only says,

*one of his disciples whom Jesus loved*; Christ, as the Son of God, and surety of his people, loved his true disciples, as he does all his elect, alike; not one more than the other; but as man, he had a particular affection for this disciple, and therefore admitted him near his person, and was very familiar with him.

**Ver. 24.** *Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him*, etc.] Peter perhaps lay at a distance from Christ, or in some such position, that he could not whisper to him himself; and besides, knew that John might use more freedom, as he was admitted to more familiarity with him; and being at some distance also from him, he beckoned to him; which was usually done at meals, when they could not, by reason of their posture, discourse together: this being the case, gwj mb hyl ywj m, “they made signs”, by nodding to one another <sup>f589</sup>; that is, as the gloss explains it, they pointed with their hands and fingers, and by nodding or beckoning; such a method Peter took, signifying his desire,

*that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake*: which he did not out of mere curiosity, but from an honest intention and pure zeal, that he, with the rest, might show their abhorrence of such a person, and avoid him; and do all that lay in their power to hinder him from putting his designs into execution, and that the innocent might be free from all suspicion.

**Ver. 25.** *He then lying on Jesus’ breast*, etc.] Being on the couch just before Jesus, with his back to him, he bends backwards, and falling on Jesus’ breast, whispers in his ear:

*and saith unto him, Lord, who is it?* using his interest in Christ, and making thus free with him, in compliance with Peter’s request; and was no doubt desirous himself of knowing who the person was.

**Ver. 26.** *Jesus answered, he it is*, etc.] Jesus replied, by whispering; for had he spoken out, the rest could not have been so ignorant, as they still continued, after the sign was given: Christ, I say, whispered to John, and told him by what sign he might know the person, and that it was he,

*to whom*, says he,

*I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it.* This was not the passover sop, which was dipped into a sauce made of various things, called by the Jews **tswrj** ; for this was not the “paschal” supper, but a common supper at a private house, two days before the feast of the passover; but this sop, or rather crust of bread, which whether dipped into a liquid, or only a piece of dry bread, which Christ dipped his hand into the dish for, and took, as some think, is not very material, was a piece of common bread, which Christ took up, without regard to any custom, or ceremony used at any feasts, and gave it to the betrayer, as a sign by which John might know him:

*and when he, had dipped the sop;* either into some sort of broth, or any other liquid, or had dipped his hand into the dish for it:

*he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon;* so called, to distinguish him from another apostle, whose name was Judas, and was then present.

**Ver. 27.** *And after the sop, Satan entered into him,* etc.] After he had taken and eaten the sop, or crust of bread, by which he was pointed out to be the betrayer, “Satan entered into him”; possessed his body, and filled his mind, and stirred him up more eagerly to pursue with rigour his wicked design. The Jews have a saying <sup>f590</sup>, that

“no man commits a transgression, until **twj ç j wr wb snkn**, “a spirit of madness enters into him”.”

Such an evil spirit entered into Judas, which pushed him on to commit this horrid iniquity:

*then said Jesus to him, that thou doest, do quickly;* this he said, not as approving his wicked design, and exhorting him to it as a laudable action, but rather as deriding him, having nothing to care about, or fear from him; or as upbraiding him with his perfidy and wickedness, and signifying that he should take no methods to prevent him, though he fully knew what was in his heart to do; and it seems also to express the willingness of Christ, and his eager and hearty desire to suffer and die for his people, in order to obtain salvation for them.

**Ver. 28.** *Now no man at the table,* etc.] Not one of those who lay upon the couches at the table, excepting John, to whom the signal was given:

*knew for what intent he spake this unto him*; and perhaps he might not know the meaning of his last words, that he spoke concerning the act of betraying him; nor did not imagine that the thing was so near and so speedily to be done, as it was.

**Ver. 29.** *For some of them thought*, etc.] This was the thought of some of the disciples, it may be of all of them but John;

*because Judas had the bag*: which was for the common supply of Christ and his disciples, and for the relief of the poor; (see Gill on “~~4116~~ John 12:6”).

*That Jesus had said unto him, buy those things that we have need of against the feast*; the feast of the passover, which was to be two days after; and shows, that this was not the passover which Christ now ate with his disciples:

*or that he should give something to the poor*; for whom Christ cared, and had a hearty concern, and for whom Judas had very little, notwithstanding his high pretensions.

**Ver. 30.** *He then having, received the sop*, etc.] As soon as ever he received it, he

*went immediately out*; fearing lest an entire discovery should be made, and he be prevented accomplishing his design; or being more violently stirred up to it by, Satan, who after the sop entered into him, he directly went from Bethany to Jerusalem, to the chief priests, there, in order to consult and agree upon the delivery of him into their hands:

*and it was night*; this circumstance is added, to show how eagerly he was bent upon it; that though it was night, it did not hinder or discourage him from setting out on his journey to Jerusalem; and as this was a work of darkness, the night was the fittest time for it, and was a proper emblem of the blackness of the crime he was going to perpetrate.

**Ver. 31.** *Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said*, etc.] Christ and his true disciples being together alone, he used a greater freedom of conversation with them, and entered into some discourse about his sufferings and death; with a view to give them some instructions about their future conduct and behaviour, and in order to support them under the loss of his presence; and tells them in the first place, that

*now is the son of man glorified*: by “the son of man”, he means himself; a phrase he often uses, when speaking of himself; this was a title the Messiah went by in prophecy; was true in fact of Jesus, who was the son of Abraham, and the son of David, and expresses the truth of his humanity; and he the rather chooses to use it now, because he is speaking of a glorification, which he in his divine nature was incapable of, and which regards either time past, present, or to come: the meaning may be, either that he had been already glorified by his doctrines and miracles; or that he was now glorified, by discovering the traitor, before he made one single overt act towards betraying him; or that in a very short time he should be glorified, meaning at his death; (see <sup><4870></sup>John 17:1). But how was he then glorified, when it was an accursed one, and attended with so much ignominy and reproach? he was then glorified by his Father, who supported him in it, and carried him through it; so as that he conquered all his enemies, and obtained eternal salvation for his people: moreover, the death of Christ was not only his way to glory, but was attended with many wonderful and surprising events; as the darkness, the earthquake, the rending of the rocks, and vails of the temple, and the like; and it was also glorious in the eyes of his Father, because hereby his purposes were accomplished, his covenant transactions brought about, his law and justice were satisfied, and the salvation of his people finished:

*and God is glorified in him*. The glory of God was great, in the salvation of his elect by the death of Christ; for hereby his wisdom and power, his truth and faithfulness, his justice and holiness, as well as his love, grace, and mercy, were glorified.

**Ver. 32.** *If God be glorified in him*, etc.] Seeing this is a certain truth, is indisputably matter of fact, that all the perfections of God are glorified in Christ, by his sufferings and death:

*God shall also glorify him in himself*; either “with himself”; with his own glory, which was promised to Christ, and which he had before the world was, and for which he prays, (<sup><4875></sup>John 17:5), or by himself: by his own power, in raising him from the dead, setting him at his own right hand, and crowning him with glory and honour:

*and shall straightway glorify him*; this he will do very quickly, he will not leave him in the grave, nor suffer him to see corruption; he will raise him again the third day, and give him glory.

**Ver. 33.** *Little children, yet a little while I am with you*, etc.] Christ having removed the scandal of his death, by observing, that both he and his Father would be glorified by it, begins more freely to open his mind to his disciples, and acquaint them with it; whom he addresses in the most kind, tender, and affectionate manner, “little children”, expressing the relation which subsisted between them, of which he was not unmindful; his great affection for them, his consideration of their weakness, and sympathy with them on that account; who were very ill able to bear his departure, which he now thought high time to acquaint them with, that it would be very shortly: it was but a little while he was to be with them, a few days more; the time of his departure was at hand, his hour was as it were come, and the last sands were dropping:

*ye shall seek me*; as persons in distress, under great concern, not knowing what to do, or where to go:

*and as I said unto the Jews*, (<sup>4173</sup>John 7:33,34);

*whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say unto you*; but with this difference, whereas the unbelieving Jews, who died in their sins, could never come whither he went, these his disciples, though they could not come now, yet they should hereafter, all of them, as well as Peter, (<sup>4136</sup>John 13:36).

**Ver. 34.** *A new commandment I give unto you*, etc.] As parents, when they take their leave of their children, in their dying moments, give them proper instructions and orders, and lay their dying injunctions on them, so Christ taking his leave of his disciples, gives them his; which were, that they

*love one another*: as brethren in the same family, children of the same Father, and fellow disciples with each other; by keeping and agreeing together, praying one for another, bearing one another’s burdens, forbearing and forgiving one another, admonishing each other, and building up one another in faith and holiness: and this he calls “a new commandment”; that is, a very excellent one; as a “new name”, and a “new song”, denote excellent ones; or it is so called, because it is set forth by Christ, in a new edition of it, and newly and more clearly explained, than before; and being enforced with a new argument and pattern, never used before,

*as I have loved you*; and to be observed in a new manner, not “in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit”: besides, though this

commandment, as to the matter of it, is the same with that of Moses, (<sup><BIB></sup>Leviticus 19:18); yet it takes in more, and “new” objects; since by “neighbour” there, seems to be meant “the children of their people”, the Jews; and so they understood it only of their countrymen, and of proselytes at furthest, whereas this reaches to any “other” person; (see <sup><BIB></sup>Romans 13:8); and as the measure, as well as the motive is new, for it is not now “as thy self”, but “as I have loved you”, the Jew has no reason to object as he does <sup>f591</sup>, to its being called a “new commandment”: and its being “new”, carries in it a reason or argument, why it should be observed, as does also the following clause;

*as I have loved you, that ye also love one another*; than which, nothing can, or should, more strongly engage to it: as Christ has loved his people freely, notwithstanding all their unworthiness and ungratefulness, so should they love one another, though there may be many things in them observable, which are disagreeable; as Christ loves all his children without any distinction, so should they love one another, whether poor or rich, weaker or stronger, lesser or greater believers; and as Christ loves them not in word only, but in deed and in truth, so should they love one another with a pure heart fervently, and by love serve one another.

**Ver. 35.** *By this shall all men know*, etc.] Not only by this you yourselves will know that ye have passed from death to life, that the true work of grace is begun upon your hearts; nor only by this will you know one another to be Christians; but by this all men, even the men of the world will know,

*that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*: and own and acknowledge it, as Tertullian <sup>f592</sup> says the very Heathens did in his time; who would say, when they saw the Christians pass along the streets, and meet and express their affection to each other, “see how they love one another”: would to God the same was as observable now. The distinguishing badge and character of a disciple of Christ, is not any outward garb, or any austerities of life, by which the disciples of John and of the Pharisees were known; nor were the ordinary nor extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, bestowed upon the disciples of Christ, what distinguished them as such; since those who were not truly his disciples, had these bestowed on them; but love to one another, brotherly love was the distinguishing character, and this is another reason or argument enforcing a regard unto it.

**Ver. 36.** *Simon Peter said unto him*, etc.] One might have expected that Peter would have taken some notice of what Christ said last, about love to one another; but he passes over it, and takes no manner of notice of it; which did not arise from inattention to it, or from any dislike of it, or disaffection to it; for it appears from his whole conduct and writings, that he had the utmost regard for it; he very frequently presses it, and most fervently practised it; but having observed some words which dropped from Christ's lips, "whither I go ye cannot come", (~~4133~~ John 13:33); his mind was intent upon them, was uneasy about them, and very much wanted to know the meaning of them; and as soon as Christ had done speaking, took the opportunity to put the question:

*Lord, whither goest thou?* imagining he was going to some distant place in the country, and which was difficult of access; whereby he betrayed his weakness and ignorance, as the Jews did, (~~4165~~ John 6:25).

*Jesus answered him, whither I go thou canst not follow me now;* which words imply, that Christ was going somewhere in a little time; he was going to the garden to surrender himself up into the hands of his enemies, and hither Peter could, and did follow him, and therefore is not here meant; he was going to die for his people, in order to take away the sting of death and the curse of the law, and work out salvation for them; he was going to his Father in heaven, to receive gifts for men, and to send the Comforter; to open the way to heaven, take possession of it, and prepare it for his saints; to plead the cause, and transact the business of his dear children; and to receive a kingdom for himself, and return: now hither, as yet, Peter could not follow him; for his time of suffering death was not yet come; Christ had some other work for him to do first; he must open the door of faith to the Gentiles, and preach the Gospel to them:

*but thou shall follow me afterwards;* when thy time is come, and thou hast done the work allotted for thee, thou shalt follow me by dying for me; and thou shall follow me into my kingdom and glory, and be for ever with me: all the saints shall follow Christ to heaven, who is their forerunner for them entered; and as sure as he is there, so sure shall they be also; the counsels of God are unalterable, the covenant of grace is firm and sure, the blood of Christ can never be spilled in vain, his prayers and preparations cannot be fruitless, nor the work of the Spirit be ever lost; wherefore not one of those who are given to Christ, and come to him, and follow him here, but shall follow him hereafter.



**Ver. 37.** *Peter said unto him*, etc.] Not understanding Christ's answer, and being dissatisfied with it, inquires:

*Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?* is the place inaccessible? are the difficulties in the way to it insuperable? the roughness of the road, or the dangers of it, will not discourage me; I am ready to go through the greatest dangers and difficulties, to follow thee: yea,

*I will lay down my life for thy sake;* whatever enemies I should meet with in, following thee, would not dismay me; I would readily hazard my life, and cheerfully lay it down in defence of thee.

**Ver. 38.** *Jesus answered him, wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake*, etc.] Christ speaks these words as questioning, not Peter's sincerity, but his strength; or as deriding him, or rather pitying him; as if he should say, thou poor vain self-sufficient man, thou dost not know what thou talkest of:

*verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice;* not that Peter should deny him three times, before the cock crowed once; for certain it is, that Peter denied Christ but once, before the cock crew, (<sup>4148</sup>Mark 14:68); but the meaning is, that before the cock had, lone crowing, or within the time of cock crowing, he should deny him thrice: whence it follows, that there is no necessity of concluding from hence, that this night was the passover night, and the night in which Judas betrayed Christ, and Peter denied him, but was two nights before; and therefore it is not said here, as by the other evangelists, "this day", or "this night", or "this day, even this night thou shalt deny me"; only in general before the cock crow, or within the time of cock crowing: so that it appears, that Peter twice expressed his confidence, in laying down his life for Christ; once at the supper in Simon's house at Bethany, two days before the "passover", and again at the passover supper in Jerusalem; and as often Christ rebuked his confidence by this expression, only varying it as the different times required, and therein gave a full proof of his omniscience.