

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO MARK 5

Ver. 1. *And they came over unto the other side of the sea,* etc..] Of Galilee, or Tiberias;

into the country of the Gadarenes: in the Evangelist Matthew it is called, “the country of the Gergesenes”, as it is here in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions. The Vulgate Latin reads, “of the Gerasenes”, and so some copies, from Gerasa, a place in the same country; but the Syriac and Persic versions read, “Gadarenes”, as do most copies; so called from Gadara, a city either adjacent to, or within the country of the Gergesenes; which was called by both names, from these different places. It was not far from Tiberias, the place from whence this sea has its name, over which Christ and his disciples passed, (~~John~~ John 6:1). Chammath was a mile from ^{f53} Tiberias, and this Chammath was so near to the country of Gadara, that it is often called, *rdgd tm*, “Chammath of Gadara” ^{f54}; unless it should be rather rendered, “the hot baths of Gadara”: for so it is ^{f55} said, that at Gadara are the hot baths of Syria; which may be the same with the hot baths of Tiberias, so often mentioned in the Jewish writings ^{f56}; hence the town of Chammath had its name, which was so near to Tiberias, that it is sometimes reckoned the same with it ^{f57}; Pliny ^{f58} places this Gadara in Decapolis, and Ptolemy ^{f59} in Coelo Syria; and Meleager, the collector of epigrams, who is called a Syrian, is said ^{f60} to be a Gadarene, a native of this Gadara. Mention is made of the whirlpool of Gadara ^{f61}, which remained ever since the flood. It appears to be an Heathen country, both from its situation, and the manners of the people.

Ver. 2. *And when he was come out of the ship,* etc..] As soon as he was landed,

immediately there met him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit. The Jews have a notion, that a man by dwelling among the tombs, becomes possessed with an unclean spirit: hence they say of one that seeks to the dead, or a necromancer ^{f62}, this is he that starves himself, and goes “and lodges in the tombs”; *hamwj wr wyl hrt ydk*, “that so an unclean spirit

may dwell upon him”: which notion may arise from unclean spirits hurrying persons possessed by them, unto such places; partly for the terror, both of themselves and others; and partly to possess the minds of men with a persuasion, that they have power over the dead, and which is very great in such places. This case is the same with that, which is mentioned in (~~4183~~ Matthew 8:28) as appears partly from its following the storm, from which the disciples had a remarkable deliverance; and partly from the country, in which this affair happened; for the country of the Gergesenes, and of the Gadarenes, is the same, as has been observed; only it is called by different names, from two principal places in it: as also from various circumstances in this relation; as the character of the possessed being exceeding fierce, dwelling among the tombs, and coming out from thence; the expostulation of the devil with Christ, and adjuration not to torment him; his entreaty to go into the herd of swine, and the leave he had; the destruction of the swine in the sea; the fear and flight of the swine herds; the report they made to their masters and others; and the request of the people in general to Christ, that he would depart out of their coasts. And though Matthew makes mention of two that were possessed, and Mark but of one, there is no contradiction in the one to the other; for Mark does not say there were no more than one; had he, it would have been a glaring contradiction to the other evangelist; but as he has put it, there is none, and it creates no difficulty: wherefore the Jew ^{f63} has no reason to object this as he does, as if the evangelists clashed with one another; and Mark may only take notice of this one, because he was the fiercest of the two, and had the most devils in him, having a legion of them; and because the conversation chiefly passed between Christ and him; and because the power of Christ was more manifestly seen in the dispossession of the devils out of him.

Ver. 3. *Who had his dwelling among the tombs*, etc..] Which is one of the characters of a madman among the Jews; who say it is ^{f64}

“the sign of a madman, that he goeth out in the night, **twrbqh tybb l hw**, “and lodges among the tombs”, and rends his garments, and loses what is given to him.”

The same they say, in the same place, of an hypochondriac, and melancholy man; and of Kordiacus, which they give out ^{f65} is a demon that possesses, and has power over some sort of persons:

and no man could bind him, no, not with chains; so as to hold him for any length of time: not only cords were insufficient to hold, but even chains of iron; so strong was he through the possession; for this could not be by his own natural strength.

Ver. 4. *Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains,* etc..] Trial had been made several times, to no purpose; his arms had been bound with chains, and his feet with fetters, which was very proper to prevent doing hurt to himself, and injury to others:

and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; as if they had been twine threads; such was his strength, through the force of madness, and the possession of Satan, and his diabolical influence:

neither could any man tame him; by any methods whatever; even such who undertook the cure of madness, or to exorcise those that were possessed: this man was so furious and outrageous, that he was not to be managed any way, either by art or force.

Ver. 5. *And always night and day, he was in the mountains,* etc..] And this being in an Heathen country, would have rendered him an unclean person, if he had not been possessed with an unclean spirit; for so runs one of the Jewish canons ^{f66}:

“he that walks in an Heathen land, on mountains and rocks, is unclean.”

And in the tombs: which very likely were on the mountains, and cut out of them, it being usual to cut their sepulchres out of rocks:

crying, and cutting himself with stones; with sharp pieces of stone, which he picked up among the broken tombstones, or from off the mountains, where he was night and day; and besides taking up stones with his hands, and cutting himself with them, he might cut his feet with the sharp stones of the mountains, in which he ran about; these mountains were those, that encompassed the sea of Tiberias; for of it is *htwa yyqm yrh*, “that the mountains surround it” ^{f67}: for the place where this man was, was near the sea of Tiberias, over which Christ was just now come; and soon as he arrived on shore, he met him, and found him in this condition. This man was a lively emblem of a man in a state of nature and unregeneracy: he had “an unclean spirit”, as every natural man has; his soul or spirit is defiled

with sin, particularly his mind and conscience: this pollution is natural to him; he brings it into the world with him; it is very universal, it has spread itself over all the powers and faculties of his soul, and is what he cannot cleanse himself from: “who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” (^{300B}Proverbs 20:9). Nothing that he can do, or can be done for him by a mere creature, can free him from it: nothing but the blood of Christ, and that cleanses from all sin: this man, through the possession of Satan, was a madman, and exceeding fierce and furious: there is a spirit of madness in all unregenerate men; they are exceeding mad against God, and Christ, and the saints, as Saul was before conversion, (^{400B}Acts 26:9-11). For who but madmen would stretch out their hands against God, strengthen themselves against the Almighty, run upon him, even on his neck, and upon the thick bosses of his bucklers? (^{405B}Job 15:25,26). Who but such would oppose themselves to the Son of God, or do despight to the Spirit of grace, who are equal in power and glory with God the Father? or kick against the pricks, by persecuting the members of Christ? Who but men out of their senses, would seek to ruin and destroy themselves, both soul and body? This man was altogether under the power and influence of Satan, and had a legion of devils within him. Satan is in every unconverted man, in every child of disobedience; and works effectually in him, and leads him captive at his will: and he has besides a swarm of fleshly lusts in him, which have the government over him. This man had his dwelling among the tombs, where the dead lay: so unregenerate men dwell among dead sinners, they have their conversation among the men of the world, who are dead in trespasses and sins, and according to the course of it: and as this man could not be bound with chains and fetters, but these were broke asunder by him; so wicked men are not to be bound, restrained, and governed, by the laws, commands, and ordinances of God; they despise them, break through them, and cannot be subject to them, their language is, “let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us”, (^{400B}Psalm 2:3). And as no man could tame this man, so it is not in the power of men, by the force of moral persuasion, by all the arguments, expostulations, exhortations, promises, or threatenings, they can make use of, to influence the carnal minds of men, or make any real change in them: or bring them into a subjection to the law of God, or Gospel of Christ, and remove from them the spirit of madness, and opposition to all that is good: and to say no more; as this man was mischievous to himself, and cut himself with stones, so carnal men are the worst enemies to themselves; they cut and wound themselves with their sins, though, like the madman, they are not sensible

of it; and if grace prevent not, will destroy themselves, both soul and body, with their transgressions.

Ver. 6. *But when he saw Jesus afar off*, etc..] For it seems the tombs among which this man dwelt, were at some distance from the sea shore: wherefore when it is said, (^{MARK}Mark 5:2), that this man met Jesus, as soon as he came out of the ship: the meaning that he then came forth to meet him, as he might do upon sight of persons landing afar off; though he might not know then, who Jesus was: but coming nearer, and perceiving who he was, such was the power of Christ over the devils in him, that though sore against their wills, they obliged him to move on speedily towards him; so that

he ran and worshipped him: he made all imaginable haste to him; and when he came up to him, fell down at his feet before him, acknowledging his superiority and power, whom no chains nor fetters could bind, nor any man tame; nor durst any man pass that way, for fear of him: and yet, upon sight of Christ, without a word spoken to him, he runs and prostrates himself before him. This is an instance of the superiority of Christ over the devils, who knowing who he is, are filled with horror at him, fall down before him, and in their way do homage to him; though it is impossible they should be spiritual worshippers of him: unless this is rather to be understood of the man himself, who, at the sight of Christ, might have his senses for the present restored, and a knowledge of Christ given: to whom he ran speedily, and threw himself at his feet, hoping for relief from him: however, it may be an emblem of a poor awakened sinner, having a distant sight of Christ, who, upon it, makes haste unto him, and prostrates itself before him, believing he is able, if willing, to save him from the power of Satan, the evil of sin, and from eternal ruin and damnation.

Ver. 7. *And cried with a loud voice*, etc..] The man possessed with the devil; or the devil in him, making use of his voice, expressing great fear, dread, and horror, at the appearance of Christ in these parts:

and said, what have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? The devils in the man, own the being of a God, and his supreme government over all, under the title of the Most High. The word here used, answers to the Hebrew word, *wyl* , “Elion”, a name of God known to the ancient Canaanites: hence Melchizedek, a Canaanitish king, is called the priest of the most high God, (^{GENESIS}Genesis 14:18). And among the

Phoenicians, he is called Elion, which a Phoenician writer^{f68} says, signifies “the Most High”; and hence in Plautus^{f69}, he goes by the name of Alon, which is the same word a little differently pronounced; and by the same name he might be known among other neighbouring nations of the Jews, and by the Gadarenes; and the devil now being in a Gadarene, makes use of, this name. Devils believe there is one God, and tremble at him; and they confess that Jesus of Nazareth, who was born of the virgin, according to the human nature, is the Son of God, according to his divine nature: and whereas they had no interest in him, as a Saviour, they desired they might have nothing to do with him as God; and since they had no share in the blessings of his grace, they beg they might not feel the power of his hand. Truly they choose not to have any thing to do with God himself; they have cast off allegiance to him, and rebelled against him; and have left their estate, and departed from him; and still less do they care to have any thing to do with his Son: and indeed it seems as if it was the decree and counsel of God, made known unto them, that the Son of God should assume human nature, and in it be the head over principalities and powers, as well as men, which gave umbrage to them: upon which they apostatized from God, being unwilling to be under subjection to the man Christ Jesus; though whether they will or not, they are obliged unto it: for though they desire to have nothing to do with Christ, yet Christ has something to do with them; he had when he was here on earth, and when he hung upon the cross, and will have when he comes again to judge both quick and dead: they might be glad, one would think, to have to do with him as a Redeemer; but this they are not, their sin being the same with that against the Holy Ghost: they are malicious, obstinate, and inflexible, they cannot repent; and there is no pardon, nor was there any provided for them; they were passed by in the counsel and purposes of God's grace, and were not taken notice of in the covenant of grace: Christ took not on him their nature, but the nature of men; yea he came to destroy them, and their works; so that indeed they had nothing to do with him as a Saviour, though he had something to do with them as a judge, and which they dreaded: however, they own, and acknowledge him to be the Son of the most high God; they know and confess as much of him, and more too, than some that call themselves Christians, and hope to be saved by Christ; and yet at the same time own, they had nothing to do with him. Men may know much of Christ notionally; may know, and confess him to be God, to be the Son of God, in the highest and true sense of the phrase; to be the Messiah, to have been incarnate, to have suffered, died, and risen again: to be ascended to

heaven, from whence he will come again; and yet have no more to do with him, or have no more interest in him, than the devils themselves; and will, at the last day, be bid to depart from him.

I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not: not that he required an oath of Christ, that he would swear to him by the living God, that he would not distress him; but he most earnestly and importunately entreated and beseeched him, in the name of God; (see ^{<4183>}Luke 8:28), that he would not dispossess him from the man, and send him out of that country, to his own place, to his chains and prison; but suffer him either to lodge in the man, or walk about seeking, as a roaring lion, his prey: for it is torment to a devil to be cast out of a man, or to have his power curtailed, or to be confined in the bottomless pit, from doing hurt to men: (see Gill on ^{<4182>}Matthew 8:29”).

Ver. 8. *For he said unto him,* etc..] Or he had said unto him, as soon as he came up to him, and fell before him; even before he had confessed, and adjured him; and which indeed drew out the confession from him, that he was superior to him, and therefore became his supplicant:

come out of the man, thou unclean spirit; which was said with so much authority and power, that there was no withstanding it: the devil knew he was not a match for him; that he must, at his command, quit his possession, and therefore fell to confession and entreaty. Christ will not dwell where Satan does; when therefore he is about to take up his residence in the hearts of any, he outs with Satan; he binds the strong man armed, and dispossesses him; he causes the spirit of uncleanness to depart; he sanctifies the heart by his grace and Spirit, and so makes it a proper habitation for him to dwell in by faith; and this is done by mighty power: a man cannot deliver himself out of the hands of Satan, or cause him to quit his hold of him, or the unclean spirit to depart; nor can he sanctify and cleanse himself, and make himself meet for the master's use: this is all owing to efficacious grace.

Ver. 9. *And he asked him, what is thy name?* etc..] Which question Christ put, not for his own sake; for he was not ignorant of his name, nor of the number of the unclean spirits which were in the man; but partly, that it might be known what a miserable condition this poor man was in, being infested, and vexed with such a large company of devils; and partly, that his own pity and power in delivering him, might be more manifest;

and he answered, saying, my name is Legion: the Syriac version renders it, “our name is Legion”; the reason of which name is given,

for we are many: as a Roman legion did consist of many, though its number was not always alike: in the time of Romulus, a legion consisted of three thousand foot, and three hundred horse; afterwards, when the city was, increased, of six thousand foot, and six hundred horse; sometimes it was six thousand and two hundred foot, and three hundred horse; sometimes four thousand foot, and three hundred horse; sometimes five thousand foot, and three hundred horse^{f70}. Some make a legion to consist of six thousand six hundred sixty six; and others make it much larger, even twelve thousand five hundred: however, the number in a legion was many; hence the word is retained among the Jews, and is used for a large number, either of persons or things; as, *ytyz l m da wygl*, “a legion of olives”^{f71}: that is, a large number of them; though sometimes it is used of a single person, who has others under him, as the general of an army: thus it is said^{f72} that one man should say to another,

“from whence art thou? he replies, from such a “legion” am I; — the man went to the legion — the legion heard, and was afraid — the man said, woe unto me! now will the legion slay me — the legion heard, etc..”

And again^{f73},

“a certain legion asked R. Abba, is it not written, etc..”

Once more^{f74},

“Lo! such a legion shall go with thee, to keep thee, etc..”

Upon which the gloss is, *abh r*, “the general of an army”; so called, because he had a legion, or a large number of soldiers under his command: and just so this unclean spirit is called by this name, because he had a great many more with him, and under him, in that man; sometimes it is only used of a single person himself, as of a king's servant sent into a foreign country, to collect his^{f75} tax: a legion was reckoned by the Jews unclean and defiled, whatsoever place they entered into^{f76}; how much more unclean must this man be, that had a legion of unclean spirits in him! From hence it appears, that the devils are very numerous; for if there was a legion of them in one man, how many must there be in all the children of disobedience, to maintain their ground, and support their interest among them? As there is

an innumerable company of holy angels to encamp about the saints, and do them all the service they can, and axe appointed to; so there is undoubtedly an innumerable company of devils, who do all the hurt they can, or are permitted to do, unto the sons of men: hence they are expressed by words, which signify number as well as power; as principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places, the power or posse of the air, the angels of Satan, the angels that sinned and left their habitations, etc.. As also that they are in a body, and in the form of an army; with a general at the head of them, the prince of devils, and king of the bottomless pit: there are whole squadrons and regiments of them, yea, even legions; which are formed in battle array, and make war against Christ, the seed of the woman; as they did when he was in the garden, and hung upon the cross, which was the hour and power of darkness; and against his members; as they did in Rome pagan against the Christian church, and in Rome papal, against the same, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 12:7,8,17), and what a mercy it is for the saints, that besides twelve legions of good angels and more, which are ready to assist and protect them, they have God on their side, and therefore it signifies not who is against them; and they have Christ with them, who has spoiled principalities and powers; and greater is the Holy Spirit that is in them, than he that is in the world.

Ver. 10. *And he besought him much*, etc..] The devil that was at the head of this legion, who had the rest under his command, he, in their name, and on their behalf, entreated Jesus with great earnestness. This shows the authority Christ has over the devils, and their subjection to him; they are not only obliged to quit their former possession, when he gives orders, but they cannot go any where else, or where they would, without his leave: though the man they were in could not be bound and held with chains and fetters of iron, through the great strength they put forth in him; yet these themselves are bound and held in chains, and cannot move without Christ's permission, or as he is pleased to lengthen out the chain unto them: and though they are no humble supplicants to him for grace and mercy, yet they are, that they may continue where they are; or be suffered to be somewhere else, to do mischief to the souls and bodies of men: and though they are such proud spirits, they be, they are very willing to humble themselves and in the most submissive and pressing manner ask a favour, even of him whom they hate, when they have an end to answer by doing injury to others; and in this, as well as in many other things, they are imitated by

them who are truly called the children of the devil, and do the lusts of him their father.

That he would not send them away out of the country; that if he did think fit to dispossess them from that man, that however he would permit them to stay in that country, and not drive them wholly from thence; and which they might be the more desirous of, because it was an Heathen country, inhabited by the blind Gentiles, that knew not God, or apostate Jews, or both; among whom their power and authority were very great; and where they had long been, and had had a large experience of the tempers and dispositions of men, and knew how to bait their temptations with success.

Ver. 11. *Now there was there, nigh unto the mountains*, etc..] Where this man often was, (^{408B}Mark 5:5) according to Beza, the mountains of Galaad, which ran through that country, or the mountains that surrounded Tiberias. Some copies, as the Alexandrian copy and others, read “at”, or “about the mountain”, in the singular number. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, “about the mountain”. The Syriac and Ethiopic, “at the mountain”; so in (^{408B}Luke 8:32),

a great herd of swine feeding; on one side of the mountain, or mountains; it may be called a great one, for there were about two thousand hogs in it.

Ver. 12. *And all the devils besought him*, etc..] The whole legion of them, not only their chief, in the name of the rest, but all of them earnestly entreated him; they were all humble supplicants, not from love, but fear, and with a view to do mischief: though the word “all” is omitted in some copies, as it is in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions; neither has the Ethiopic the word devils, but both are retained in the Arabic version:

saying, send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. The Persic version renders it, “seeing thou drivest us from the man, give leave that we may enter into the swine”: which is rather a paraphrase than a version, and expresses the sense very well. They chose to be any where, rather than depart the country; and especially than to be sent into the deep, the abyss, or bottomless pit; and they chose to be sent into the swine, as being impure creatures like themselves; and no doubt with a view to destroy them, that they might satisfy themselves as much as they could with doing mischief; though not to that degree they would, nor to those persons they were desirous of; and so bring as much odium and reproach upon Christ as they could, who gave them leave. The devils are unwearied in doing mischief,

they cannot rest unless they are about it; and they choose to be concerned in doing it in a lesser way, if they are not allowed to do it as largely as they would; if they are not suffered to touch the lives of men, or ruin their souls, it, is some satisfaction to them to be suffered to hurt their bodies; and if that is no longer permitted, rather than be doing nothing, they are desirous of doing injury to irrational creatures, the property of men; all which shows the malice and wickedness of these evil spirits: (see Gill on “^{408b}Matthew 8:31”).

Ver. 13. *And forthwith Jesus gave them leave*, etc..] For the reason of this (see Gill on “^{408c}Matthew 8:32”).

and the unclean spirits went out; of the man, in whom they had for some time dwelt:

and entered into the herd of swine; according to the leave given them by Christ: this shows not only the existence of spirits, but their going from one to another shows that they are circumscribed by space; that they are here, and not there, or there, and not here: there is an “ubi”, a somewhere, where they are; and whilst there, are not elsewhere:

and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “the herd ran to the rock”, or “promontory”, and “fell into the sea”. The Ethiopic, the “herd grew mad, and was carried headlong into the sea”: the sense is, that the devils having entered into them, it had a like effect on them, as on the man possessed; they ran mad, and were hurried on by the devils, to the rocks on the sea shore; where, falling down the precipice, they were all lost; and a considerable loss it was to their owners; for

they were about two thousand; a very large herd, but there were devils enough in that one man, to possess all these, and run them into the sea:

and were choked in the sea; not suffocated by the devils, but drowned in the waters of the sea, or lake, as Luke calls it; the lake of Gennesareth, or sea of Tiberias and Galilee; which, as often observed, were the same. Though some think it was not this lake or sea, but some other place of water near Gadara. Strabo says ^{f77}, that in the country of Gadara, there was a very bad laky water, of which if cattle tasted, they cast their hair, hoofs, and horns; which perhaps may be the same with what the Talmudists call ^{f78}, *rdgd hwl b*, “the whirlpool of Gadara”; said to be from the time of the

deluge, and so called from its swallowing up every thing that came into it; but the sea of Tiberias seems rather to be the place, where this herd perished. The Jew^{f79} objects to the destroying this herd of swine as an unjust action, being a great injury to the owners; and seeks to blacken the character of Christ, as being concerned in it: but, as Bishop Kidder^{f80} well observes, it does not appear that Jesus destroyed it; it was the devils that did it: he suffered them indeed to go into it, nor did he restrain the natural power which they had; nor did he think fit to do it, nor was he obliged to it: but had he destroyed it himself, since he is Lord of all, the proprietor of all creatures, who has all under him, and at his disposal, can give and take away as he pleases, no charge of evil and injustice can be brought against him: and this should be satisfactory to a Christian, who believes him to be God over all blessed for ever; though it will not be to a Jew: let it therefore be further observed, that the owners of these swine were either Jews or Gentiles; if they were Jews, and they brought up these swine in order to eat them themselves, to destroy them was a just punishment, for their violation of the law of God, (^{f84B}Deuteronomy 14:8). And if they brought them up to sell to others, this was contrary to their own canons; (see Gill on ^{f88B}“Matthew 8:30”), to the rules and customs of their own country, which were made as a fence to keep off from breaking the above law; and such a practice could only proceed from an avaricious disposition, of which this was a proper rebuke: or if they were Gentiles that were the owners of them, these were idolatrous persons, worshippers of devils; and it was but a righteous thing, to suffer the devils, whom they worshipped, to do this mischief to their property, to whom they devoted themselves soul and body; and a Jew cannot well find fault with this, who believes that idolaters cannot be punished too severely: add to this, what the above learned prelate observes; this practice of the Gentiles in breeding hogs, was a temptation to the Jews to follow the same business, and even to taste of the forbidden flesh; so that to use his words, it was in truth an act of grace and favour to the Jews, to remove from them so dangerous a snare, and so bad an example: and it may be added, by suffering the devils to go into the swine, several valuable ends were answered, infinitely preferable to the herd of swine; such as evincing the truth of the dispossession; showing the greatness of the mercy to the dispossessed; the power of Christ over the devils; and making for the spread of the fame of this miracle the more; as well as giving further proof of the malignity and mischievous disposition and actions of these evil spirits; by which the inhabitants of the adjacent places might learn, how hurtful they were to them, and what a blessing it

was to be rid of them: and therefore ought to have been thankful to Christ for this dispossession, notwithstanding the loss of their swine; but such an effect it had not upon them, but the reverse, as the words following show.

Ver. 14. *And they that fed the swine*, etc..] Not the owners, but the keepers of them, the swine herds, “fled”; being astonished at the power of Christ, affrighted at the noise of the devils, and terrified at the sight and loss of the swine:

and told it in the city and country; or “in the fields”: they went into the city of Gadara, and told the story of the dispossession of the devils out of the man, that had been for some time troublesome in those parts; and of their entrance into the swine, and the destruction of them: and they went into the fields, or country adjacent; they went to the “villages” thereabout, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render the word; or to those houses that were in the fields, scattered about, here, and there one, and where perhaps the owners of the herd lived: and they not only hastened away to the owners of the swine, to acquaint them with what had happened, in order to remove all blame from themselves, and any suspicion of negligence in them; to make it appear that it was not their fault, or owing to any carelessness of theirs the swine perished; as that they suffered them to go too near the sea side, and did not keep a good lookout, and were not, as they should have been, between them and the sea, to have prevented such an accident: this they not only did, but the affair, in all its circumstances, being such an amazing one; as the dispossession of the devils out of the man; the health, the calmness, and happy condition the dispossessed was in; the entrance of the devils into the swine; their madness, and precipitant running into the sea, and suffocation there; that they told it to every body they met with, whether in the fields belonging to Gadara, or in the city itself; which drew out a large concourse of people to see what was done to the man that had been possessed, and to the swine, and also to see the person who had done all this; and which made the miracle the more notorious; city and country rung of it: so that, as Matthew says, “the whole city came out to meet Jesus”, (⁴⁰⁸⁴Matthew 8:34); and Luke observes, that “the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart”, etc.. (⁴⁰⁸⁷Luke 8:37). So we sometimes read, in the Jewish writings, of the men, or inhabitants of the field, as opposed to the men, or inhabitants of the city, who differed both in their clothes and diet.

“The garments, *azwm ynb*d, “of the children”, or “inhabitants of the city”, who live deliciously, and do no work, are broad, like women's; but the garments, *atyl q ynb*d, “of the children of the field”; such as do business in the field, are short ^{f81}:”

and so of their food, it is observed ^{f82}, that the bread, *yal qd*, “of the men of the field”, which the gloss explains by *rk ynb*, “the children”, or “inhabitants of a village”, is what they put much flour into; but the bread, *azwmd*, “of a city”, which the gloss interprets of *rk ynb*, “the children”, or “inhabitants of a walled town”, or “city”, is what they do not put much flour into.

And they went out to see what it was that was done: that is, the inhabitants of the city of Gadara, and those that dwelt in the villages, and in lone houses in the fields, went forth to the places where the possessed man used to be, and where Jesus and he now were, and where the swine used to feed, to see with their own eyes, and satisfy themselves of the truth of the narration the swineherds gave them.

Ver. 15. *And they come to Jesus*, etc..] Who had wrought this miracle, and of which, and whom, the keepers of the swine had given them some account:

and see him that was possessed of the devil, and had a legion. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the last clause, “and had a legion”, and so Beza's ancient copy; the Persic version renders it, “the legion being gone out of him”: they saw, along with Jesus, the man who had been possessed with a legion of devils, whom they knew very well to be the same man;

sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid; not of the man, as they were before, when he was possessed, not daring to come that way because of him; but of Christ, and his amazing power; who was able to dispossess a legion of devils, and restore a man to his perfect senses, to such composure and decency, who was before in such a dreadful condition, and so exceeding furious and outrageous: they saw the man was still and quiet, harmless and inoffensive; they had nothing to fear from him; but they knew not what to make of Christ: they might take him for an exorcist, or a magician, and fear that he would exercise his art to the ruin and destruction of them: they did not fear and reverence him as a divine person, but they

dreaded him, as one possessed of a power of doing hurt: they were conscious to themselves of their sins, and that they deserved the just judgments of God upon them; and they were afraid that Christ was sent to execute them upon them: and it is observable, that they say not one word to him, by way of complaint, for the loss of their swine; but thought themselves well off, could they but get rid of him. There was a strange change and alteration in the man; he, who before was running about among the tombs, and upon the mountains, and scarce ever sat still, but was always in motion, as persons distracted commonly are, was now sitting at the feet of Jesus, his kind benefactor, (~~4185~~ Luke 8:35), and he who before was naked, and whenever any clothes were put upon him, tore them off again, and to pieces, as madmen usually do, was now “clothed”; perhaps with some the swine herds had left behind them, in their fright, or the disciples had with them: and he who before was quite out of his senses, knew not what he said, or did, was now “in his right mind”; of a sound mind, of a good understanding, sober, modest, and knowing. This man, as whilst under the possession of Satan, was an emblem of a man in a natural estate; so, being now dispossessed, he very aptly represented a converted man; who, being brought out of a state of nature, out of an horrible pit, a pit wherein is no water, is “sitting” at the feet of Jesus; where he places himself, imploring his grace and mercy, entreating him to receive and save him, resolving, if he perishes, he will perish there; and where he is, as a scholar, at the feet of his master, hearing his words, and receiving instruction from him; and which also is expressive of his submission to his Gospel and ordinances, and of pleasure and continuance under them; as well as of that calmness and serenity of mind, which attends a sense of justification, pardon, reconciliation, and adoption, and hope of glory: and whereas, before he was naked, and without a righteousness, or, which was no better than filthy rags; he is now “clothed” with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, with fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints, with change of raiment, and clothing of wrought gold; the righteousness of Christ being not only imputed to him by the Father, but revealed in the Gospel, brought near by the Spirit, and put upon him, and received by faith; as well as having put on the new man, and being clothed with humility, and other graces of the Spirit, and with the garments of a holy conversation; and so will at last be clothed with the shining robes of immortality and glory. Such an one, who before was not himself, is now “in his right mind”; is come to himself like the prodigal; is become sensible of the evil of sin, and is brought to true

repentance for it; and of his lost state and condition, of his need of Christ, and salvation by him; has his spiritual senses exercised upon Christ; beholds the loveliness and suitableness of him as a Saviour, hears his voice, handles him, the word of life, tastes the sweetness there is in him, and in his Gospel, and savours the things of his Spirit; and whose senses also are exercised to discern between good and evil, and truth and error; who likewise has a new heart, and a right Spirit created in him; and has the same mind in him, as was in Jesus Christ, for humility and lowliness; and whose mind is stayed upon him, and trusts in him.

Ver. 16. *And they that saw it*, etc..] Not the keepers of the swine, for they were fled and gone; but others that were eyewitnesses of the whole affair, who lived in houses hard by, or were working in the fields; or the disciples of Christ:

told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil; gave a particular account, how, upon first sight of Christ, he ran to meet him, and fell down and worshipped him; how Christ ordered the unclean spirit to come out of him; and how he was dispossessed of a legion of devils by a word speaking:

and also concerning the swine; how, at the request of the devils, and by the leave of Christ, they entered into them; upon which they ran mad; and betaking themselves to the rocks by the sea side, fell down the precipice, and were suffocated in the sea.

Ver. 17. *And they began to pray him*, etc..] That is, the inhabitants of the city of Gadara, and of the villages round about, very earnestly importuned him

to depart out of their coasts; fearing, lest for their sins, some sorer judgment should fall upon them, than the loss of their swine; since they perceived he was a person of great power and authority; which shows great ignorance and worldly mindedness: they knew not how great a person they had among them; that he was the Son of God, and Saviour of the world: they might have known from the miracles wrought, that he was a very wonderful and extraordinary person; but then they considered him as one endued with great power, rather, to do them hurt than good; as one sent to scourge them for their sins, than to save them from them: such very contrary notions have carnal men of Christ; they are afraid of being sufferers, or losers by him: they do not care to part with their swinish lusts

for him; these they prefer to a Saviour, and love the world, and the things of it, more than he, and therefore are not worthy of him; (see Gill on “~~408~~ Matthew 8:34”).

Ver. 18. *And When he was come into the ship*, etc..] For at the request of these men, who were unworthy of his presence, and of any favour from him, either by his doctrine, or miracles, he turned back to the sea side again; and as he was about to take ship,

he that had been possessed with the devil, prayed him that he might be with him: for when Jesus turned his back upon the Gadarenes, and returned to the sea shore, this poor man, who had received so great a benefit by him, rose up and followed him; and when he perceived that he was entering on ship board, in order to go over into another country, earnestly entreated he might go over with him in the ship, and continue with him: which he did, partly to testify his great love to him, and the grateful sense he had of the mercy he had received from him; and partly, that he might enjoy his presence, and have his protection: for he might fear, that when he was gone, and should he remain in that country, the devils would repossess him with greater rage and fury. So gracious souls who know Christ, and have received out of his fulness, and grace for grace, earnestly desire to be with him, to enjoy communion with him, receive instruction from him, and be always under his care, influence, and protection. For to be with Christ, is to have his gracious presence; to have nearness to him, and fellowship with him; to have familiarity and acquaintance with him, yet more and more; to be guided with his counsel, and upheld with the right hand of his righteousness: than which, nothing can be more desirable to those that spiritually and savingly know him: for such desires arise from the knowledge they have of his personal glories and excellencies, as the Son of God; and as mediator? he has all power to protect them, all strength to support them, all grace to supply them, all wisdom to direct them, all provisions to feed them, and all blessings of grace and glory to bestow upon them; and from the gracious experience they have had of his favour and lovingkindness, which is better than life; and from the sense they have of their need of him; for without him they can do nothing; they cannot perform any duty aright, nor withstand any temptation, or bear up under any affliction: they are sensible of the blessed effects of his presence; they know it brings light to their souls in darkness; that it quickens them when dead and lifeless in their frames and duties, and enlivens their spirits when dull and heavy; that it comforts and rejoices their hearts, and puts more joy

and gladness into them, than any outward blessing whatever; that it removes their fears, and emboldens, them against their enemies, and is their safety and defence; that it makes ordinances pleasant and delightful, and gives contentment in the meanest state; there is nothing enjoyed by them in this life which gives them the pleasure and satisfaction that does: and hence it is that they often desire even to depart out of this world, that they may be with Christ, which is far better; and indeed, if the presence of Christ is so sweet and desirable now, what will the, everlasting, and uninterrupted enjoyment of his presence be in the world to come? for in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.

Ver. 19. *Howbeit Jesus suffered him not*, etc..] He being as able to preserve him from those evil spirits, when absent, as present; and besides, to take him along with him, would look like ostentation and boasting, which Christ was averse unto; and more especially, as is clear from what follows, he chose he should stay behind, because he had work for him to do in those parts, which would be for the glory of God, the spread of the knowledge of himself, and his Gospel, among his friends, relations, and countrymen: wherefore it follows,

but saith unto him, go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee: he bids him go to his “own house”, as it is in Luke, (⁴¹⁸⁹Luke 8:39) to the place of his former abode; to the town, or city, where he before dwelt, and where his father and mother, brethren and sisters, wife and children might live; and there relate to them what great things the Lord, or God, as the Ethiopic version reads, had done for him; by casting out a legion of devils from him, and had restored him to his perfect senses and health, and had had compassion on him, both as of his soul and body, and had wrought a great salvation for him. So such as are called by grace, and are turned from darkness to light; and from the power of Satan unto God, ought to go, to their Christian friends, and to the church of God, and declare in Zion the great things which God has done for their souls; in enlightening, quickening, converting, and comforting them, to the glory of his rich mercy, and abundant grace. They are “great things” indeed which the Lord has done for his people: he has done great things for them in eternity; he has loved them with an everlasting love; he has chosen them in his Son to holiness and happiness; he has made a covenant with him, for them, full of spiritual blessings and promises; he has provided him, as a Saviour, for them, and has appointed, and called him to that work; all which is more or

less made known to them in the effectual calling, when they receive the Spirit of God, that they may know the things which are freely given to them of God. The Lord Jesus Christ has done great things for them, as before time, by engaging for them as their surety; so, in time, by taking upon him their nature, by bearing their sins, and suffering in their room and stead, thereby working out a great salvation, which, in conversion, is brought near, and applied unto them. And the Lord, the Spirit, does great things for them, when he calls them by his grace, and afterwards; in opening their eyes who were born blind, and who otherwise must have lift them up in hell; and in bringing them into the marvellous light of, the Gospel; in quickening them, when dead in trespasses and sins, who otherwise must have died the second death; in causing them, to hear the voice of Christ in the joyful sound of the word, who otherwise must have heard the curses of a righteous law; in taking away their stony hearts, and giving them hearts, of flesh; in rescuing them out of Satan's hands; in leading them to Christ for righteousness, life, and salvation; in discovering pardoning grace and mercy to them, through the blood of Christ; in delivering out of many and great temptations; in applying great and precious promises, suitably and seasonably; and in restoring them when backslidden, and speaking comfortably to them; in witnessing to their spirits, their adoption; and in sealing them up to the day of redemption; and all this flows from divine "compassion", and not from any motive and merit in the creature. It was sovereign pity and compassion; the Lord "has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and has compassion on whom he will have compassion", (◀ Romans 9:15). It was discriminating mercy: this man was not only dispossessed of Satan, but possessed of special grace, which caused him to desire to be with Christ, when his countrymen desired him to depart from them; it was shown him, when he had no pity on himself, when he cut and wounded himself; and it was bestowed upon him, when he could, not help himself, when he had a legion of devils within him: and now these great things, which spring from great love and mercy, should be told to others, especially to them that fear the Lord, to the churches of Christ: this is the will of God, and has been the practice of the saints in former ages; it rejoices the hearts of God's: people to hear of these things, and enhances the glory of the grace of God: and what may serve to encourage souls, to such a work is, that it is to their "friends" they are to declare these things; who are well disposed to: them, rejoice at their conversion, sympathize with them in their troubles, know what the things they speak of mean, and gladly receive them into their affections and fellowship.

Ver. 20. *And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis, etc..]* He submitted to the will of Christ, though he could gladly have gone with him; he hearkened to his instructions, took his advice, and obeyed his commands, as every one that has received favours from him ought to do and he went not only to his own, or his father's house, and acquainted his nearest friends and relations with what had befallen him, but he published the account, as Luke says, (^{<089>}Luke 8:39), throughout the whole city, very likely of Gadara, where he might be a native; and which, as Pliny^{f83} relates, was in Decapolis, and agrees with the accounts of both the evangelists: here he published, as Christ had ordered him,

how great things Jesus had done for him: only instead of saying the Lord had done them, for him, he attributed them to Jesus, who: is Lord and God; and by that miracle, as by many others, gave full proof of his deity, as well, as Messiahship. This is an instance of the obedience of faith, and is a considerable branch of it; for, as with the heart, men believe in Christ unto righteousness, so, with the mouth, confession must be made to the glory of that salvation which Christ has wrought out: many are backward to this part of the service of faith, through fears, through unbelief, and Satan's temptations; but this man, though to have continued with Christ was greatly desirable by him, yet he submits to his will and pleasure, and is obedient to his orders; and that at once, immediately dropping his suit: unto him, no longer insisting on his being with him; for he was sensible of the great obligations he was laid under to him, and saw it to be his duty to observe whatever he commanded him: and this was indeed but a reasonable, piece of service, and what if he had not been ordered to do, one would think he could not have done otherwise; at least, had he not, he would not have acted the grateful and generous part: and indeed, if such for whom the Lord has done great things as these, should hold their peace, the stones would even cry out.

And all men did marvel; at the power of Jesus, at the miracle wrought by him, and the benefit the man had received, who they all knew had been in so deplorable a condition. It is not only marvellous to the persons themselves, for whom great things are done by the Lord; but it is amazing to others, to angels and men, when it is considered who they are, on whose account they are wrought; great sinners, very unworthy of such high favours, yea, deserving of the wrath of God, and of eternal damnation; and likewise, who it is that has done these things for them, the Lord of heaven and earth; he against whom they have sinned, and is able both to save, and

to destroy; he who is the great God, is their Saviour; to which may be added, the consequence of these things, they issue in everlasting glory and happiness.

Ver. 21. *And when Jesus was passed over again*, etc..] Over the sea of Tiberias, that part of it which was necessary to go over from the country of Gadara, to Capernaum,

by ship, or “boat”,

unto the other side. This may seem to some unnecessary to be added; and it may be asked, what way but by ship, or boat, could he have gone over to the other side of the sea of Galilee? To which it may be replied, there was a bridge at Chammath of Gadara^{f84}, over an arm of this sea, over which Christ and his disciples might have passed, and have gone by land to Capernaum; so that this phrase is very necessarily and significantly used:

much people gathered unto him; who had before attended on his ministry in these parts, and had seen his miracles; as the casting out of an unclean spirit from a man, healing the centurion's servant, curing the man sick of the palsy, and Simon's wife's mother of a fever, and a man that had a withered hand:

and he was nigh unto the sea; he seems to have been at Capernaum, which was nigh unto the sea, and in the house of Matthew or Levi, whom he had called at the sea side from the receipt of custom; (see ~~<400>~~Matthew 9:9,10,18).

Ver. 22. *And behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue*, etc..] Having heard of his return, and where he was; (see Gill on ~~<400>~~Matthew 9:18”).

Jairus by name; in Hebrew *ryay*, “Jair”: and Jerom says^{f85}, it signifies “enlightening”, or “enlightened”: deriving it from *rwa*, “to be light”: and it is no doubt a Jewish name, since he was a ruler of the synagogue; and besides, it is often mentioned in the Old Testament, and particularly in (~~<400>~~Esther 2:5), where, in the Septuagint, it is read, *Ιαϊρος*, Jairus. Matthew makes no mention of his name; but both Mark and Luke do, (~~<400>~~Mark 5:22 ~~<400>~~Luke 8:41).

And when he saw him, he fell at his feet: as soon as he came into his presence; though he was a person of such authority; yet having heard much

of the doctrine and miracles of Christ, and believing him to be a great prophet, and man of God; though he might not know that he was the Messiah, and truly God, threw himself at his feet; and, as Matthew says, “worshipped him”, (~~4098~~ Matthew 9:18); showed great reverence and respect unto him, gave him homage, at least in a civil way, though he might not adore him as God.

Ver. 23. *And besought him greatly*, etc..] Used much importunity with him, and was very urgent in his requests:

saying, my little daughter lieth at the point of death, or “is in the last extremity”; just breathing out her last; for she was not actually dead when he left her, though she was before he returned, and was at this time, as he might expect, expiring, or really gone; (see Gill on “~~4098~~ Matthew 9:18”).

[I pray thee] come and lay thine hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live; expressing faith in the power of Christ to restore his daughter, though in the utmost extremity; yet seemed to think his presence, and the imposition of his hands were necessary to it.

Ver. 24. *And Jesus went with him*, etc..] Immediately without objecting to the weakness of his faith:

and much people followed him; to see the miracle performed, which they were exceedingly fond of:

and thronged him; so that it was with some difficulty and trouble that he passed along the streets to: the ruler's house.

Ver. 25. *And a certain woman which had an issue of blood twelve years.*] (See Gill on “~~4099~~ Matthew 9:20”). This woman was in the crowd that thronged Jesus, as he passed through the streets of Capernaum. Eusebius relates ^{f86}, that it was reported, that this woman was of Caesarea Philippi, where her house was to be seen; where were extant some wonderful monuments of the benefits conferred upon her by Christ; as that at the door of her house was an effigy of a woman in brass, set upon an high stone on her bended knees, and arms stretched out like a supplicant; and opposite to her, another effigy of a man, of the same metal, standing, and decently clothed in a tunic, and his hand stretched out to the woman; at whose feet, upon the pillar, a strange form of a plant arose, reaching up to the border of the brazen tunic, which is a remedy against all diseases; and he says it remained to his times, and was then to be seen: and Theophylact ^{f87} says, in

the times of Julian the apostate it was broke to pieces. But this woman rather seems to be an inhabitant of Capernaum, in the streets of which the after cure was wrought; and therefore what credit is to be given to the above accounts I leave to be judged of. It may be more useful to observe, that this profluous woman is an emblem of a sinner in a state of nature: as her disease was in itself an uncleanness, and rendered her unclean by the law, whereby she was unfit for the company and society of others; so the disease of sin, with which all are infected, is a pollution itself, and of a defiling nature; all the members of the body, and all the powers and faculties of the soul are polluted with it, and the whole man is filthy in the sight of God, and is pronounced unclean by the law of God; and such persons are very unfit for the society of saints on earth, and much less to be with those in heaven, nor even to be with moralized persons; for evil communications corrupt good manners: openly profane and impure sinners are infectious, and to be avoided. Likewise, as this woman's disease was of long standing, she had it twelve years, and it was become inveterate and stubborn, and not easy to be removed; so such is the disease of sin, and indeed it is much worse; it is what is brought into the world with men, and is as old as themselves; is natural to them, and cannot be removed by any ordinary and natural methods, but requires supernatural power and grace; and it is in such a like case and condition, that the Spirit of God finds his people, when he quickens, sanctifies, and cleanses them: “and when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live”, (²³⁴⁶Ezekiel 16:6).

Ver. 26. *And had suffered many things of many physicians*, etc..] She took many a nauseous medicine, and had gone through courses of physic with different physicians; for there were many among the Jews that pretended to the cure of fluxes; and various are the prescriptions the Jewish doctors give for such a disorder, as may be seen in their Talmud^{f88}; and many of which Dr. Lightfoot^{f89} has transcribed: and among the rest, they direct to the use of gum of Alexandria, alum, saffron, Persian onions, cummin, and “faenum graecum”, put into wine and drank.

And had spent all that she had; had wasted her substance, and brought herself to poverty, by pursuing the directions given her; so that she was not in circumstances now to employ a physician;

and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse: the several medicines she had taken had done her no good, had not, in the least, restrained and

checked the disorder, but it was rather increased thereby. This is often the case of persons who are, in some measure, sensible of the disease of sin, but are ignorant of the proper methods to be taken for the cure of it. They apply to their own works of righteousness, moral and civil, to the duties of religion, private and public, to a legal repentance, external humiliation and tears, and an outward reformation of life, hoping hereby, in process of time, to be rid of their disorder, and be in good health; whereas these are physicians of no value, and of no real service in their case: they are so far from being the better, that they are rather worse and worse, there being so much impurity, imperfection, and sin, in all these things, and which is increased by a dependence on them; that their iniquities grow upon them, and the score of their transgressions is become greater, and their distemper the more inveterate, and less easy to be cured; yea, not only they spend their money for that which does not bring them a cure, and exhaust all the stock of nature's power to no purpose, but they also suffer much hereby. For such a course of action, such conduct and methods as these bring them into a spirit of bondage; for when they fail in their duties, do not come up to the rules prescribed them, what terror of mind possesses them! what horror and wrath does the law work in their consciences! what a fearful looking for is there of fiery indignation, to consume them! It cannot be expressed what some have suffered by following such prescriptions.

Ver. 27. *When she had heard of Jesus*, etc..] Of the many miracles he had wrought, and cures he had performed, in cases as difficult and desperate as hers, or more so; and that he was now passing along the streets,

came in the press behind; though she was so weak, and much enfeebled, as she must needs be, by such, and so long a disorder; yet she ventures into the crowd, which were pushing and pressing after Christ; and got up to him, behind him, being ashamed to tell her case, and desire a cure:

and touched his garment; the hem or border of it, with her hand, very softly, and in a private manner, so as not to be observed by any. Christ is the sinner's last shift; he tries every one first before he comes to him; he spends all his money, strength, and time, with others, to no purpose; and finding them all to be useless and unserviceable, he applies to him, who is the only physician that can give relief in this case: like this woman, having heard of his ability to save to the uttermost those that come to him; and being encouraged by the many cures of the worst of sinners, of such who were in the most desperate condition, presses in the throng, through a

great many temptations, difficulties, and discouragements thrown in the way by Satan, and its own evil heart of unbelief, and which arise from a sense of vileness and unworthiness; and in a modest and bashful manner, fearing it should be thought presumption in him, and yet persuaded it is the only way for a cure, and that it is to be had in this way, lays hold on the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the garments of his salvation; or, in other words, thus reasons with himself: though I am such a vile, sinful, unrighteous, and impotent creature, yet surely in the Lord there is righteousness and strength, if I can but by faith lay hold thereon; though it be but in a weak way, only by a touch, and in a trembling manner; I shall be justified from all things, I could not be justified by all the works of righteousness I have been doing, and that evidentially and comfortably; and therefore I will venture and draw nigh unto him, and though he slay me I will trust in him; I will throw off my own filthy rags of righteousness; I will make mention of, and lay hold on his righteousness, and that only; he shall be my salvation. And such an one finds, as this woman afterwards did, a perfect cure, cleansing from all sin, a free and full forgiveness of it, and complete justification from it.

Ver. 28. *For she said*, etc..] Within herself, such were her thoughts, and so great her faith:

if I may touch but his clothes I shall be whole; (see Gill on “⁴⁰²Matthew 9:21”).

Ver. 29. *And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up*, etc..] It was usual with the Jews to call the womb, in which the child is formed, **rwqm**, “a fountain”^{f90}; and because, from hence, issued the blood in a menstruous and profluvius person, they called it, as here, **hymd rwqm**, “the fountain of her blood”^{f91}; and sometimes use the same phrase of the drying up of it, as in this place: they say^{f92}, when a woman is searched and found to be pure, she is forbidden her house, **hnyym bgnty d**, “until her fountain be dried up”; so that as no blood issued from it, there was none in it, and which was now this woman's case, as she found;

and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague: she not only found by that quick alteration there was in her animal spirits, which were now free and vigorous; but she perceived, in that part of her body, from whence the issue sprung, that she was perfectly well, and that the disorder was entirely gone, which had been for so many years a sore affliction to

her, and a severe correction and chastisement of her, as the word used implies. It properly signifies a “scourge”, as every affliction is, a scourge for sin; and very likely this woman's disease was on the same account: sometimes afflictions are God's scourges in a way of wrath, and sometimes in a fatherly way, in love: “for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth”, (⁵⁸¹⁷⁶Hebrews 12:6), and who, as he wounds, he heals, and which is sensibly perceived by his people. The word “plague” carries in it something more dreadful, and fitly enough expresses the nature of sin, which is a pestilential disease; the corruption of nature, indwelling sin is called the “plague of the heart”, (¹⁰³⁸1 Kings 8:38). It is a loathsome disease, and without the grace of God, a mortal one; the body of sin, is a body of death; and all sin is of the same nature and kind; the end of it is destruction and death: the healing of it is the forgiveness of sin, which is through the blood of Christ, and the application of it to the soul; which, when made, is sensibly felt, for it immediately produces spiritual joy, peace, and comfort: this makes the bones, which were broken, to rejoice; this bids every son and daughter of the Lord God Almighty to be of good cheer; it causes the inhabitants of Zion to hold their peace, and no more say they are sick, because their sins are forgiven them. And a man may as easily perceive when his spiritual maladies are healed in this way, as when he is cured of any bodily disorder.

Ver. 30. *And Jesus immediately knowing in himself*, etc..] As soon as ever the woman had touched his garments, and had a cure, Christ, who knew all things in his Spirit, or divine nature, that dwelt in him, knew what was done, that the woman had touched him, and was healed thereby; though, as not without his knowledge, so neither without his will, and entirely by his power:

that virtue was gone out of him; to the healing of some person, though not at all to the diminution of that virtue, which remained as powerful and effective in him as ever. This shows that there was an internal essential virtue in Christ to cure diseases: it was not what he derived from another, or exercised under another's influence; but what was his own, and which he put forth as the Lord God omnipotent. The apostles of Christ cured diseases, but not by their own power and holiness, by any innate virtue in them; but in the name of Christ, and by power derived and received from him: but Christ, being God, had infinite virtue within himself, which went forth from him when he pleased, to the curing of whatsoever disease he thought fit; and which was no ways lessened by the frequent exertions of it;

no more than the light and heat of the sun by the continual emanations of them; only there is this difference between the emission of light and heat from the sun, and the sending forth virtue from Christ, that the one is by the necessity of nature, without knowledge, or will, but the other voluntarily, and when, and as he pleases, The same holds good with respect to healing spiritual diseases: Christ has a power within him to forgive all trespasses; and virtue may be said to go out of him to this purpose, when it is his will to make application of pardoning mercy to his people; which requires an exertion of power, as well as a display of grace.

Turned him about in the press, and said, who touched my clothes? that is, turned himself towards the woman behind him, though the press was so large about him, and asked who touched his clothes; not for his own sake, who knew very well who had done it; but that the cure might be known to others: not for the sake of ostentation and popular applause, but for the manifestation of his glory, and for the glory of God, and for the strengthening the faith of Jairus, who was with him, and with whom he was going to raise his daughter to life; and also that he might have an opportunity of showing forth, and commending this poor woman's faith, and of confirming the cure wrought, and of dismissing her with the utmost pleasure and joy.

Ver. 31. *And his disciples said unto him,* etc..] Peter, and they that were with him; after the crowd that were about him denied that any of them had touched him; (see ⁴¹⁸⁵Luke 8:45),

thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou who touched me? They seem astonished at his question, and answer with some degree of warmth, and almost ready to charge it as weak: and impertinent; since, as there was such a crowd about him, pressing him on every side, he could not but be touched by many; and therefore to ask who touched him, when this was the case, they thought was a very strange and unnecessary question.

Ver. 32. *And he looked round about,* etc..] The press and throng of people, on every side of him; though he knew very well where she stood, who had done the thing, and had received the cure:

to see her that had done this thing; how she looked, and whether her countenance, and the confusion she was thrown into by the question, would not betray her; though he himself wanted no such signs, by which to

discover her. Christ, as God, being omniscient, knew who she was, and where she was; and, as man, did not want to see her to gratify his curiosity: nor was his view to chide her for what she had done, but to express his well pleasedness in her faith and actions, and to observe it to others, and the cure she had; not in an ostentatious way, to gain glory to himself, but to commend her faith, and encourage others in the exercise of it on him; and especially Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, who was with him, and in great distress, on account of his daughter, whom Christ was going to raise from the dead.

Ver. 33. *But the woman fearing and trembling*, etc.] Lest she should be reproved, and suffer the penalties of the law, for appearing in public during the time of her uncleanness, (^{<CRISIS>}Leviticus 15:25), or that Christ was displeased with her, for her taking an improper method to obtain her cure; or lest he should recall it, or was angry with her for concealing it, and attempting to go away undiscovered, and without so much as thanking him for it. After conversion, after souls have laid hold on Christ for righteousness and life; after they have had the pardon of their sins, and are cured of their diseases, they are not without their fears and tremblings, though there is no just reason for them: they fear where no fear is; that is, where there is no true cause of fear; which was this woman's ease: they are sometimes afraid they have no interest in Christ, and in his love; that they are hypocrites; that the truth of grace is not in them; that they shall never hold out to the end; that they shall perish, and come short of eternal glory, notwithstanding they know, as this woman did, what has been done in them, and done for them.

Knowing what was done in her, and by her; being conscious to herself that she was the person that had touched him, and that upon it the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she was thoroughly healed of her disease:

Came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. Christ did not point her out, though he knew her; or call her by her name, though he could have done it, and have ordered her to come to him, and account for her conduct: he had said enough to work upon her, and engage her to come; who came of herself, and with the greatest reverence to his person, and sense of her own unworthiness, threw herself at his feet, and gave him a relation of the whole matter, with the utmost truth and, exactness; what had been her case, what was her faith, and what she had done, and what a cure she had received; and which she acknowledged with the greatest

thankfulness. In some copies it is added, “before all”; before Christ and his disciples, and the throng of people that were along with him: she that came behind Christ, and privately took hold of the hem of his garment, her faith secretly going out unto him; now appears openly before him, not being able to hide herself any longer. Nor is she ashamed to tell what she had done, and had been done in her: truth is to be spoken, even all the truth; no one has reason to be ashamed of that, and especially of the truth of grace, truth in the inward parts; this is what God requires, and gives, and delights in. The secret experiences of grace in our souls we should not be ashamed to relate to others; this makes for the glory of divine grace, and the good of others. In some copies it is read, “and told him all her cause before all”: her whole affair, how it had been with her, and now was, and what was the cause of her taking such a method she did.

Ver. 34. *And he said unto her, daughter,* etc.] Instead of reproving her, or showing any anger, or resentment at her, as she feared, he speaks to her in a very soft, kind, and tender manner, and called her “daughter”, which was not only an expression of affection and civility, this being an affable, courteous way of speaking used by the Jews; but might signify her spiritual relation through him, being a child of God by adopting grace. She was a daughter of Abraham by natural descent, as was the woman bound by Satan eighteen years, (^{<B316>}Luke 13:16) and so she was likewise in a spiritual sense, being one that walked in the steps of his faith, believing in hope against hope; and she was also a daughter of the Lord God Almighty, as her faith showed her to be, (^{<B36>}Galatians 3:26), and to this our Lord may chiefly refer; she was one of those that were predestinated to the adoption of children, and were given to Christ as such; and who are evidentially the children of God by faith in him: and to have a testimony of adoption from the Spirit of God, and from the mouth of Christ himself, as this woman had; how great a blessing is it!

thy faith hath made thee whole: through faith in Christ she received the cure from him; for it was not her act of faith that either merited, or procured it, but his power, and he himself the object of her faith that effected it: though he is pleased to take no further notice of the virtue that went out from him; but commends her faith, for her further and future encouragement in the exercise of it, and for the encouragement of others to believe in him. In the Greek text it is, “thy faith hath saved thee”; both from her bodily disease, and from her sins: not that there is such an intrinsic virtue in faith as to deliver from either; for certain it is, that it was not

virtue that went out of her faith, but virtue which went out from Christ, that cured her of her issue; though faith was the means of drawing it out; or it was that, through which, virtue from Christ exerted itself, and produced such an effect: and it is as certain, that not faith, but Christ, is the author and cause of spiritual salvation: faith looks to Christ for salvation, and receives every blessing of it from him, as righteousness, peace, pardon, adoption, and eternal life; so that believers are saved by grace, through faith; through the exercise of that grace they have the joy, and comfort Of salvation now; and through it they are kept, by the power of God, unto the full possession of it hereafter.

Go in peace; to thine house; all health and happiness attend thee; let no uneasy thought, about what has passed, dwell on thy mind; be joyful and thankful for the mercy received, and never fear, or dread, a return of the disorder. Peace is the effect of faith in Christ, of pardon through his blood, and salvation in him; true, spiritual, solid peace is enjoyed in a way of believing; it is the fruit of a view of interest in justification by faith in Christ's righteousness; and nothing more effectually produces and secures it than a sense of, all spiritual diseases being healed, or an application of pardoning grace and mercy, through the blood of Christ; which itself speaks better things than that of Abel, even pardon, and so peace: such who are blessed in this manner, and walk under a view and sense of these things, go in peace all their days, and at last enter into peace, even into the joy of their Lord.

And be whole of thy plague: she was so already; but this was a confirmation of it, and what might assure her, that she should remain so, and no more be afflicted with that chastisement. Sin pardoned, though sought for, shall not be found; nor condemnation come upon the pardoned sinner; he is whole and sound, and shall be no more sick, and much less die the second death.

Ver. 35. *While he yet spake*, etc..] The above things to the poor woman, in commendation of her faith, and for her future encouragement, peace, and comfort in soul and body:

there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain that said. The Vulgate Latin renders it, “from the ruler of the synagogue”, and which is indeed the literal version of the phrase; but they could not come from him in person, for he was with Jesus: hence some versions, as the Arabic and Ethiopic, read, “there came to the ruler of the synagogue”; but the sense is

easy, by supplying the word house, as we do, and as the Syriac and Persic versions also do. Luke speaks but of “one” that came, (~~418D~~ Luke 8:49) whereas this evangelist suggests there were more, which is no contradiction; for Luke does not say there was but one; there might be more that came with the news, though but one related it as the mouth of the rest; or they might come one after another with it.

Which said, thy daughter is dead, why troublest thou the master any further? these brought him the account that his daughter was actually dead, which he himself feared before; and therefore they thought it was in vain to give Christ any further trouble to drag along through a crowd of people pressing him; whom they looked upon as a very worthy person, an eminent doctor and prophet, a master in Israel, and one that had done great cures on living persons in distress; yet imagined it was wholly out of his power to raise one from the dead, of which, as yet, they had had no instance, unless the raising of the widow of Nain's son was before this, as indeed it seems to be; but perhaps persons, who were some of the relations, or domestics of the ruler, had heard nothing of it; for if they had, they might have hoped he would have exerted his power in raising the ruler's daughter, as well as the widow's son.

Ver. 36. *As soon as Jesus had heard the word that was spoken*, etc..] By those that came from the ruler's house; as that his daughter was dead, and it was to no purpose to give him any further trouble, since all hope of recovery was now gone:

he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue; who was overwhelmed with trouble, and quite dispirited, and ready to swoon and die away;

be not afraid, only believe: do not be discouraged at these tidings, or distrust my power to help thee, only believe that I am able to raise her, even from the dead; and fear not, but it will be done. If a man can but believe, he has no reason to fear; for what is it that almighty power cannot do? it can raise the dead; there is nothing can stand in its way, or stop its course; and faith in it surmounts difficulties which are insuperable to carnal sense and reason: this was the support and foundation of Abraham's faith; hence he was strong in the exercise of it, and believed in hope against hope, because he was fully persuaded that God was able to perform what he had promised, (~~418D~~ Romans 4:18,20,21). And whereas the ruler had expressed some faith in Christ, that his daughter, though at the point of death, would be, healed by him and live, provided he would but come and

lay his hands on her; and Christ had assented to go along with him, and had given him an intimation that he would restore her; he had nothing to do but to believe in him, that even though she was dead, he was able to raise her from the dead, as well as to recover her at the point of death, and that he would do it, but, oh! this thing, “only believe”, how hard a matter is it, though there is so much encouragement to it both in the power and will of Christ! Faith is not of a man's self at first; it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; and the lively and comfortable exercise of it is owing to the influence of efficacious grace: but if Christ, who is the author and finisher of faith, says “believe”, or “only believe”; such power goes along with his words, as doubtless did at this time, as causes souls to exercise faith in him; and the more faith, the less fear; and such walk most comfortably in themselves, and most to the glory of Christ, who walk by faith on him. This word “only” does not exclude the exercise of other graces, but rather implies it, for where this grace is in exercise, generally speaking, others are; nor the performance of good works, which are the fruits and effects of true faith, and without which faith is dead; but it stands opposed to fears and doubting, and to all carnal reasonings, as well as to all trust and confidence in other objects besides Christ.

Ver. 37. *And he suffered no man to follow him*, etc..] To the house of the ruler, but dismissed the multitude, being not desirous of the honour and applause of men: probably what he said to the ruler, was privately, and with a low voice, so that the multitude did not hear him; and understanding by the messengers that the child was dead, were the more easily prevailed upon to depart, since they might conclude there was nothing now to be done;

save Peter, and James, and John, the brother of James: three favourite disciples, who were a sufficient number of witnesses; and who were taken alone along with Christ on some other occasions, as at his transfiguration, and when in the garden.

Ver. 38. *And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue*, etc..] Along with him, and the three disciples above mentioned; and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, “and they came”, the above persons:

and seeing the tumult; the throng and crowd of people, of relations, friends, neighbours, and acquaintance, on this occasion, all in a hurry, and in one motion or another, expressing their concern by words and gestures.

And them that wept and wailed bitterly; the mourning women, the same with the “*preficae*” of the Romans, who sung mournful songs, and made hideous noises, being hired for this purpose; as also those who played doleful tunes on musical instruments; (see Gill on “~~4023~~ Matthew 9:23”).

Ver. 39. *And when he was come in*, etc..] Into the house, within doors, into one of the apartments, and where the company of mourners, and the pipers, and mourning women were, singing and saying their doleful ditties:

he saith unto them, why make ye this ado and weep? why all this tumult and noise? this grief and mourning, whether real or artificial?

the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth: not but that she was truly dead, but not so as to remain under the power of death: she was like a person in a sleep, who would in a little time be awaked out of it: and which was as easily performed by Christ, as if she had been only in a natural sleep; (see Gill on “~~4024~~ Matthew 9:24”).

Ver. 40. *And they laughed him to scorn*, etc..] The servants of the house that had laid her out; and the neighbours and relations that were come in on this occasion, and had satisfied themselves that she was dead; and the players on the pipe and flute, with the mourning women, who got their livelihood this way; (see Gill on “~~4024~~ Matthew 9:24”);

but when he had put them all out: of the house, or that part of it where he was; that is, ordered them to depart, with the leave and consent of the master of the house:

he taketh the father, and the mother, of the damsel, and them that were with him: either with Jairus, who had accompanied him to Christ, and returned with him; the Ethiopic version reads it, “with them”, who were with the father and the mother of the damsel, their near relations, and intimate friends; or rather with Christ, namely, the three disciples, Peter, James, and John;

and entereth in where the damsel was lying; into an inner room, where the child was laid out on a bed.

Ver. 41. *And he took the damsel by the hand*, etc..] (See Gill on “~~4025~~ Matthew 9:25”).

And said unto her; in the Syriac language, which was then commonly spoken by the Jews, and well understood: hence the Syriac version expresses the following words without an interpretation,

Talitha Cumi. The Ethiopic version reads it, “Tabitha Cumi”; and so do some Greek copies, and Latin versions, taking it to be the same word as in (⁴⁰⁸Acts 9:36) whereas that signifies “Dorcas, a roe”; but this word is of another signification, as here explained,

which is, being interpreted, damsel (I say unto thee) arise. The phrase, “I say unto thee”, is no part of the interpretation of the above Syriac words; but is added, by the evangelist, as being what was expressed by Christ at the same time, signifying his authority and power over death; only “damsel arise”, is the interpretation of them, *yl j*, “Tali”, signifies a “boy”, and *atyl j*, “Talitha”, a “girl”; and so they are often used in the Targums ^{f93}, and in the Talmud: the one is used for a boy of seventeen years of age ^{f94}, and the other for a girl of sixteen or seventeen years of age ^{f95}; so that this child might well be called by this name, since she was but twelve years of age; and *ymwq*, “Cumi”, is the imperative *wq*, “to arise”.

Ver. 42. *And straightway the damsel arose, and walked*, etc..] As soon as ever the above words were pronounced by Christ, such divine power went along with them, that the child returned to life; and raised herself up from the bed, got off of it, and walked about the room in perfect health and strength:

for she was of the age of twelve years; and so, when alive and well, was able to walk; though one of this age was called a little one, as this is by another evangelist; (see Gill on ⁴⁰⁸Matthew 9:18”),

and they were astonished with a great astonishment; they were exceedingly amazed at such a signal instance of the power of our Lord, even both the parents of the child, and the disciples of Christ.

Ver. 43. *And he charged them straitly that no man should know it*, etc..] From them, immediately, and whilst he was upon the spot; for that the thing could be long concealed, it was not reasonable to suppose: this charge he gave, to show his dislike of ostentation and popular applause, and to avoid the envy of the Scribes and Pharisees, and prevent the people from making any attempts to proclaim him king; his time not being yet come to die, he having some other work to do; and a more full

manifestation of him being reserved for another time, and to be done in another way.

And commanded that something should be given her to eat; which would be an evidence not only that she was really alive, but that she was restored to perfect health: she was both raised from the dead, and entirely freed from the distemper she laboured under before her death; death had cured her of that, as it does of all distempers: she did not rise with it, but was free from it; and was now like one that had been asleep for a while, and was hungry upon it; as children of such an age generally are upon rising from sleep.