

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 22

Ver. 1. *And Jesus answered and spake unto them again*, etc.] Not to the multitude only, but to the chief priests, elders, Scribes, and Pharisees: for though Mark seems to intimate, that upon the delivery of the last parable of the vineyard, they left him, and went their way; yet since he does not relate the following parable, they might not leave him until they had heard that, which is spoken with much the same design as the former, and might increase their resentment the more: or if the chief priests and elders did go away, the Pharisees remained behind, as is clear from (~~4025~~ Matthew 22:15) to whom he spake

by parables, similitudes, and comparisons, taken from earthly things, and against whom he directed the following one;

and said, as hereafter related.

Ver. 2. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king*, etc.] The Gospel dispensation which had now taken place, the methods of divine grace in it, and the behaviour of men under it, may be fitly illustrated by the following simile, or parable; the design of which is to express the great love of God the Father, who is represented by this

certain king, in espousing any of the children of men to his own son: as, that he a king, who is the King of kings, and Lord of Lords, should concern himself in this manner; and especially, that he should espouse such mean and unworthy creatures to his own, his only, and beloved son, his equal, and his heir: also, the view of it is to set forth the plenteous provisions of grace made under the Gospel dispensation in the word and ordinances; the great neglect and contempt of these by the Jews, who were externally called unto them; the wrath of God upon them for their abuse of them, and ill usage of his servants; the calling of the vilest among them, or of the Gentiles, and how far persons may go in a profession of religion without the wedding garment, and at last be lost:

which made a marriage for his son: which may be understood either of contracting and bringing him into a marriage relation, or of making a marriage feast on that account: in the former sense, the persons concerned are the Father, the bridegroom, and the bride: the parties contracted are the Son of God and sinful creatures. The bridegroom is no other than the only begotten of God the Father, his only Son and heir, the Maker and Governor of the universe, who has all the, perfections of the Deity, and fulness of the Godhead in him; and, as mediator, has all accomplishments and, excellencies; he has all the riches of grace and glory; all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; all loveliness, beauty, and amiableness in his person, and everything to recommend him as the chiefest among ten thousand: on the other hand, the bride is the church, which consists of a set of persons chosen by God, in Christ, before the foundation of the world; who were considered as sinless creatures, and viewed as such when first betrothed to Christ in the everlasting covenant: but for the further demonstration of his love to them, were suffered to fall in Adam, with the rest of mankind, and to be scattered abroad; when they lost the image of God, came short of his glory, passed under a sentence of condemnation, became liable to the curse of the law, and eternal death; were defiled and polluted in their nature, and in their estate became bankrupts and beggars; and yet this hindered not the consummation of the marriage between Christ and them. The person that contracted this relation between them, is the Father of Christ, who chose them for him to be his spouse and bride; brought and presented them to him, as he did Eve to Adam before the fall; and gave them to him, and made them one body and flesh with him, in the everlasting covenant; and draws them, and brings them to him by his powerful grace, in the effectual calling; there was a secret betrothing of all these persons to him in eternity, at his own request, and the full consent of his Father, who had the disposal of them; there is an open espousal of them, as particular persons, at conversion; and there will be a more public and general consummate marriage of them, at the last day, when they are all called by grace, and brought home: moreover, this may be understood of the marriage feast which the Father makes on this extraordinary account. So the Syriac version renders the word by **atytc̄m**, “a feast”; and in this sense is it used by the Septuagint in (⁴¹²²Genesis 29:22) by which is meant, not the latter day glory, or marriage feast of the Lamb, to which only saints will be invited, and partake of; nor the ultimate glory, when all the elect shall go with Christ into the marriage chamber, and spend an eternity in endless and unspeakable felicity with him; nor the

spiritual blessings of grace enjoyed by believers now; but the external ministry of the word and ordinances, which are a feast of fat things, a rich entertainment, the particulars of which are after given; which many are invited to, who never partake thereof, and others do, and yet destitute of the grace of God; for both good and bad were guests at this feast. The allusion is to the custom of the Jews, and of other nations, in making feasts and grand entertainments at such times. The Jews used to make feasts both at espousals, and at marriage: hence we ^{f1168} read of *ˆyswrya tdw[s*, “a feast of espousals”, and of *ˆyawçyn tdw[s*, “a marriage feast”: the reference here is to the latter; and which used to be made at the charge of the father: for so runs one of their canons ^{f1169}:

“a father marries his son, *htçm wl hç[w*, “and makes a feast for him”, and the expense is the father’s etc.”

Ver. 3. *And sent forth his servants*, etc.] The ministers of the Gospel, who are the servants of the most high God, of his choosing and ordaining, of his calling and sending, and of his qualifying and employing, and who voluntarily and cheerfully serve him; and may intend John the Baptist, and the twelve apostles of Christ, who were sent

to call them that were bidden to the wedding; *µyawrqh*, “those that were called”, as in (^{409B}1 Samuel 9:13,22) by whom are meant the Jews, who were the “bidden”, or “called ones”; called of God, and therefore styled “Israel my called” (^{248D}Isaiah 48:12) and by the Targum interpreted *ynmzm*, “my bidden”. They were called by the name of God, and called the people of God, and the children of God, and were the children of the kingdom; and were called to many valuable and external privileges; and had previous notice of the Gospel dispensation by the prophecies concerning Christ, and the blessings of his grace under the former dispensation; and by the ordinances and sacrifices of it, which in a very significant manner set him forth to that people; and now were called to embrace him, to receive his doctrines, and submit to his ordinances, by the ministry of John the Baptist, and the disciples of Christ. It seems, it was sometimes customary to give two invitations to a feast, or to send a second time to the persons bidden to the feast ^{f1170}; to which the allusion is here;

and they would not come: which shows the insolence and ingratitude of men, their natural aversion to the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; the depravity of the will of man, with respect to things spiritual and

evangelical; the insufficiency of outward means, to work with effect, upon the minds of men; and the necessity there is of efficacious and unfrustrable grace to bring men to believe in Christ, cordially to receive his truths, and be subject to his commands. There is a two fold call by the ministry the word; the one is internal, and that is, when the word comes not in word only, but in power; is the power of God unto salvation, and the savour of life unto life; for by the Gospel are the elect of God called to the obtaining of the glory of Christ; (⁵¹²⁴2 Thessalonians 2:14). This call is of grace; it springs from the free grace and favour of God, and it is effected by the mighty power of his grace; and it is to special blessings of grace; it is a fruit of God's everlasting love, and an evidence of it; and is according to the eternal purpose of God, which is never frustrated: it is a call to the enjoyment of spiritual blessings, as peace, pardon, righteousness, and everlasting happiness; by it men are called to light and liberty, to the grace of Christ, and communion with him; to all the privileges of God's house here, and eternal glory hereafter; to which he that calls them, gives them a right and meetness, and infallibly brings them to it: and therefore it is styled an heavenly calling, and the high calling of God in Christ; for this call is ever effectual, and the ends of it are always answered; it is unchangeable, irreversible, and never repented of. But besides this, there is a bare external call to the sons of men, through the preaching of the word; which is not to make their peace with God, a thing impossible to be done by them, and which is contrary to the Gospel, and reflects dishonour on Christ, the peacemaker; nor to get an interest in him, which, wherever possessed, is given, and not gotten; nor to regenerate themselves; this is the work of the Spirit of God, and in which men are as passive, as the infant in its natural generation, conception, and birth; nor to the exercise of evangelical grace, as faith, love, etc. which are not in them, and no man can exercise that which he has not, nor should he be called to it; nor to any spiritual vital act, since men are dead in trespasses and sins, and cannot put forth any: but this call in the word, is to the natural duties of religion, as to hear, read, and pray; to attend on the word, to wait at Wisdom's gates, and watch at the posts of her door, and so lie in the way of being effectually called by the grace of God; but this call may be where election does not go before, and where sanctification does not follow, and where there may be no salvation, (⁴¹⁰⁶Matthew 20:16) and is often slighted, neglected, and of no effect, which is the case here.

Ver. 4. *Again he sent forth other servants*, etc.] The seventy disciples, and other ministers of the Gospel, as Barnabas and Saul, and others that were joined to, and were helpers of the apostles, who were sent, and preached to the Jews, any time before the destruction of Jerusalem:

saying, tell them which are bidden; for these preachers of the word were first sent to the Jews, and preached unto them, until they by their carriage and conduct, showed themselves to be unworthy of the blessing. These men had notice of the Gospel feast by the prophets, and were invited to it, by the forerunner of Christ, by him, and his disciples, and again by them, and others; which strongly expresses the goodness, grace, and condescension of God to these people, and aggravates their stupidity, ingratitude, and wickedness:

behold, I have prepared my dinner. The ministry of the word and ordinances under the Gospel dispensation, is signified by a “dinner”; of God’s preparing and providing; which is a full meal at noon, and in it is plenty of food, and of that which is wholesome to the souls of men, sweet and savoury to a spiritual taste, and very nourishing and satisfying; and this dinner is a feast, a rich banquet, a grand entertainment; in which are a variety of provisions, suited to all sorts of persons, and plenty of the richest dainties, attended with the largest expressions of joy; and this feast is a marriage one, and that not for an ordinary person, but for the king’s son, the son of the King of kings; it is large, grand, and noble, rich and costly, and yet all free to the guests; it is kept in the king’s palace, the banqueting house, the church, is common to all, and of long continuance, it will last unto the end of the world. What privileges the patriarchs and prophets, and the people of the Jews enjoyed, in the morning of the world, before the coming of Christ, who made the bright and full day of the Gospel, were but as a “breakfast”, a short meal; the means of grace were not so rich and plentiful, and their knowledge of spiritual things not so large; they had but, as it were, a taste of what is plentifully bestowed under the Gospel dispensation, and therefore that is called a “dinner”; grace and truth in all their fulness, coming by Jesus, by whom God has delivered at once his whole mind and will; whereas, before, it was delivered piecemeal, at sundry times and divers manners; and this is distinguishable from the “supper” of the Lamb, in the evening of the world, in the latter day, when the Jews will be converted, and will not act the part they are represented to do in the parable; and the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in, and the Gospel will have a general spread all over the world. The dinner is the same with

the feast of fat things, which God is said to make for all people, Gentiles as well as Jews, in his holy mountain the church, (²³⁷⁶ Isaiah 25:6) and the table which wisdom has furnished, (²¹⁰² Proverbs 9:2) with all sorts of suitable food, proper to persons of every age: here's milk for babes, even the sincere milk of the word, that their souls may grow thereby, who are newborn babes, and have tasted of the grace of God; namely, the plainer and more easy truths of the Gospel, to be taken in, understood, fed upon, and digested; and meat for strong men, the more sublime doctrines of it, which such as are strong in faith, receive, relish, and live upon, and are greatly refreshed and edified with: here's the wine of God's everlasting love set forth, in the election, redemption, justification, pardon, adoption, regeneration, and salvation of his people; and fruits served up both new and old, for their comfort, delight, and pleasure; in the ordinances of the Gospel, are the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, and fatted calf, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed: here is everything for delight and nourishment, for faith to feed and live upon; and therefore may well be called a dinner, and what is worthy of him, who is the maker of it, and exceedingly well suited to the persons who are to partake of it.

My oxen and my fatlings are killed; in allusion to feasts and large entertainments, when oxen and fatted calves, and the best of the flock were killed and dressed; or to the sacrifices of oxen and other creatures, under the law, as typical of the sacrifice of Christ; and may here represent Christ as crucified and slain, held forth in the ministry of the word and ordinances; who as such, is suitable food for believers, is spiritual, solid, and substantial, and greatly to be desired; is nourishing and strengthening, comforting and quickening, delightful and satisfying:

and all things are ready; for upon the crucifixion and death of Christ, and after the renewed commission of Christ to his disciples, to preach the Gospel, beginning at Jerusalem, it might be justly represented in the ministry of the word, that all things were now ready. Redemption was obtained by Christ; an everlasting righteousness was wrought out and brought in; pardon of sin was procured; peace and reconciliation were made; the sacrifice of Christ was offered up, and full satisfaction given to law and justice; the covenant of grace, with all the blessings and promises of it, were ratified and confirmed; and all were ready in Christ's hands to distribute, to as many as came to him; in whom are life and salvation, and everything necessary for peace and comfort here, and eternal happiness

hereafter. This shows the completeness and perfection of the Gospel dispensation, this being that better thing, which God has provided for his people in the last times, that former saints might not be perfect without them, *See Gill* “^{SIM}*Hebrews 11:40*”. The law made nothing perfect; there was nothing got ready by that; the works, sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies of it, could not justify men’s persons, nor sanctify their hearts, nor purge the consciences of the worshippers, nor take away sin, nor pacify God, or give satisfaction to his justice, or procure peace, pardon and salvation; but now all these things are declared to be ready in the Gospel: but this is not owing to man, it is all of God; it is of his providing and preparing; and he is a rock, and his work is perfect; and nothing can be brought by the Creature to be added to it, nor does it need it; there is everything exhibited in the Gospel that a poor sinner stands in need of, or can desire, even that can make him comfortable here, and happy hereafter.

Come unto the marriage; the marriage feast; come into the Gospel dispensation, attend the word and ordinances: the invitation is pressing, the arguments are strong and moving, but the persons invited were averse, self-willed, stubborn, obstinate, and inflexible.

Ver. 5. *But they made light of it*, etc.] The invitation. They neglected the ministry of the Gospel; they did not care for it, nor showed any regard to it: and this is the ease, when either it is not attended on, though there is an opportunity, yet having no heart to embrace it, and no value for it, neglect attendance on it; and which often arises from loving of the world too much: or when it is attended on, but in a very negligent and careless manner; when men pull away the shoulder, or stop their ears; when they do not mind what they hear, let it slip and forget it; when they are unconcerned for it, and their thoughts are employed about other things: or when the Gospel and the ordinances of it are looked upon as things of no importance; not knowing the real worth and value of them; seeing no wisdom in them, having never tasted the sweetness, or felt the power of them, or seen the need of the things revealed by them: as also when there is an aversion to the Gospel, a loathing of it, as a novel, upstart doctrine, received but by a few, and these the meanest and most illiterate; as contrary to reason, and tending to licentiousness; and especially, when it is contradicted and blasphemed, as it was by the Jews, and its ministers despised: some men make light of it, because of the loss of time from worldly employments; because of the charge attending it; because it teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and because they

prefer their bodies to their souls, and things temporal, to things eternal. The aggravations of their sin, in slighting and neglecting the Gospel and Gospel ordinances, are, that this is a grand entertainment, a very expensive provision, as well as a very plentiful one; that it was a wedding dinner, a feast of love, they were invited to; that it was prepared by so great a person as a king, and who is the King of kings, and the only potentate; who provided this dinner of his own sovereign good will and pleasure, in the everlasting council and covenant of grace and peace: for the things of which it consists, there was a scheme so early contrived to bring them about; and that this was made on the account of the marriage of his Son, the Messiah, who had been so often spoken of by the prophets of the Old Testament, these men professed a value for; one so long expected by their forefathers, and is the messenger of the covenant, whose coming they themselves desired and sought for; and that they should be invited to it again and again, and one set of servants sent after another, and the most striking and moving arguments made use of; and yet they slighted and made light of all this, and were careless and unconcerned; to which may be added, that the things they were invited to, were such as concerned their immortal souls, and the spiritual and eternal welfare of them; in short, it was no other than the great salvation, wrought out by the great God, and our Saviour, for great sinners, at the expense of his blood and life, which they neglected; *See Gill* “~~See~~ *Hebrews 2:3*”.

And went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: they all turned their backs on the Gospel, and the ministration of it, and pursued their own worldly inclinations, ways, and methods of life: those that were brought up in a rural way, lived a country life, and were concerned in meaner employments, went everyone to their “village”, as the Vulgate Latin, and Munster’s Hebrew Gospel read it, and to their farms, there to manage their cattle, and till their ground; and others, that lived in larger towns and cities, and were concerned in greater business of life, betook themselves to trade at home, or traffic abroad; placing their happiness in the affluence of this life, which they preferred to the word and ordinances of Christ. Such a division of worldly employment is made by the Jews^{f1171};

“the way of that host is like to a king, who makes a grand entertainment, and says to the children of his palace, all the rest of the days ye shall be everyone in his house; this shall do his business, *hytrj sb l yza adw*, “and this shall go about his merchandise”,

hyl qj b l yza adw, “and this shall go to his field”, except on my day.”

Ver. 6. *And the remnant took his servants*, etc.] They that went to their several worldly callings and occupations of life, troubled themselves no further about the Messiah, his doctrines and ordinances; but others of them were more spiteful and injurious: they not only slighted the message, and took no notice of the invitation, but also abused the messengers; some of the servants they laid hold upon, and put them in the common prison, and detained them there a while; as they did the apostles quickly after our Lord’s ascension, particularly Peter and John:

and entreated them spitefully; gave them very hard words, and reproachful language; menacing and threatening them what they would do to them, if they did not forbear preaching in the name of Jesus; though they were not intimidated hereby, but rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame on such an account; and even their malice and wickedness proceeded so far, as to take away the lives of some of them:

and slew them: thus they stoned Stephen to death, the first martyr for Christ; and killed James, the brother of John, with the sword; which last, though he was put to death by Herod, yet with the consent and approval of the Jews.

Ver. 7. *But when the king heard thereof*, etc.] Of this maltreatment, and barbarous usage of his servants, their cries coming up into his ears, and their blood calling for vengeance at his hands; and he full well knowing what they did unto them, and upon what account, being the omniscient God; and observing their malignity and wickedness,

he was wroth: who, though slow to anger, bears much, and suffers long; yet was now highly incensed and provoked, and stirred up all his wrath, determining to take vengeance on such a vile generation of men. Christ, when he was here on earth, was sometimes provoked by the Jews, through their unbelief, their obstinacy, and the hardness of their hearts and was angry with them, being grieved for them, (☞ Mark 3:5), but then was not the proper time to execute his wrath; he then appeared as the Lamb of God, to take away the sin of the world; he came to save men, and not to destroy their lives, nor to condemn the world: when his martyr Stephen was suffering, he was seen by him standing at the right hand of God, being risen from his seat, as one incensed at the usage his servant met with from

the wicked Jews; but the time of his vengeance was not yet come, more patience and forbearance were to be exercised towards them: but now his kingdom came with power, and he appears as the Lion of the tribe of Judah; and pours out his wrath to the uttermost upon them, destroys their city and temple, and puts an end to their civil and ecclesiastical state, and cuts them off from being a nation; and now it was, that he ordered these his enemies, who would not have him to rule over them, brought before him, and slain in his presence; and in all this, he showed his kingly power and authority; and by removing the sceptre from them, and all show of dominion and government, made it fully appear that he, the Messiah, was come. Well had it been for them, had they taken the advice of the Psalmist, “Kiss the Son”, the Son of God, believe in him as such, embrace him as the Messiah, yield subjection and obedience to his word and ordinances, “lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little”, (~~9112~~ Psalm 2:12). But now his wrath was kindled very much, and was poured out like fire, and there was no standing before it; the day of the Lord burned like an oven, and destroyed the Jews root and branch: the manner and means, in and by which this utter ruin was brought about, are as follow:

and he sent forth his armies; not the angels, who are the armies and hosts of heaven; nor desolating judgments only, as pestilence and famine, though the latter was severely felt by the Jews, but chiefly the Roman armies are here meant; called “his”, because they came by the Lord’s appointment and permission; and were used by him, for the destruction of these people:

and destroyed those murderers; of Christ and his apostles, as their fathers had been of the prophets before them:

and burnt up their city; the city of Jerusalem, the metropolis of the Jews, and where the principal of these murderers dwelt; and which was burnt and destroyed by the Roman army, under Titus Vespasian. And a worse punishment than this, even the vengeance of eternal fire, may all the neglecters of the Gospel, and persecutors of the ministers of it expect, from him, whose vengeance is, and who will repay it; for if judgment began at the house of God, the people of the Jews who were so called, what will be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of Christ? How sore a punishment shall they be thought worthy of, who trample under foot the Son of God, count his blood a common thing, and do despite to the Spirit of grace? If the law, when transgressed; demanded a just recompense of

reward, or inflicted deserved punishment, how shall the neglecters of the great salvation revealed in the Gospel escape?

Ver. 8. *Then saith he to his servants*, etc.] That were preserved from their rage and malice, and outlived their implacable enemies, and saw their utter ruin and destruction:

the wedding is ready; meaning not the marriage contract, which was secretly performed in eternity; or the calling of God's elect among the Jews, and their open espousal to Christ, which for the present was now over; but the marriage feast, or the Gospel dispensation, which was ushered in, and the ministry of it, to which nothing was wanting; all the promises, prophecies, types, and shadows, of the former dispensation, were now accomplished; the Lamb of God was slain, and all things to be done by him, were now finished; the ministers of the Gospel, the apostles, were called, their commission enlarged, and they qualified with a greater measure of the Spirit, and were sent to preach both to Jews and Gentiles:

but they which were bidden were not worthy; that is, the Jews, who had notice of this dispensation by the prophets, were told by John the Baptist, that it was at hand; were once, and again externally called unto it by the ministry of the apostles; but they were not only unworthy in themselves, as all men are, of such a blessing and privilege, but they behaved towards it in a very unworthy manner; they were so far from attending on it in a diligent and peaceable way, as becomes all such persons that are blessed with the external ministry of it; who when they do so, may be said to behave worthily, and, in some sense, to be worthy of such a privilege being continued with them; (see ~~<1003>~~ Matthew 10:13) compared with (~~<2006>~~ Luke 10:6) that they contradicted and blasphemed it, and by their own outrageous carriage, showed plainly that they were unworthy of it; and were so judged by Christ and his apostles, who ordered them to turn from them, and go to the Gentiles, and which may be intended in the following words.

Ver. 9. *Go ye therefore into the highways*, etc.] Either of the city, which were open and public, and where much people were passing to and fro; or of the fields, the high roads, where many passengers were travelling; and may design the Gentile world, and Gentile sinners, who, in respect of the Jews, were far off; were walking in their own ways, and in the high road to destruction; and may denote their being the vilest of sinners, and as having

nothing to recommend them to the divine favour, and to such privileges as this entertainment expresses:

and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage; to the marriage feast, not the marriage supper, but the dinner, (^{422B}Matthew 22:4), their orders were to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, Jew or Gentile, high or low, rich or poor, outwardly righteous, or openly profane, greater or lesser sinners, and exhort them to attend the Gospel ministry, and ordinances.

Ver. 10. *So these servants went out into the highways*, etc.] Turned from the Jews, and went among the Gentiles, preaching the Gospel to them; particularly the Apostle Paul, with Barnabas, and others:

and gathered together all, as many as they found, both good and bad: the Persic version reads it, “known or unknown”. The Gospel ministry is the means of gathering souls to Christ, and to attend his ordinances, and into his churches; and of these that are gathered by it into churches, and to an attendance on outward ordinances, some are good and some bad, as the fishes gathered in the net of the Gospel are said to be, in (^{403B}Matthew 13:47,48) which may either express the character of the Gentiles before conversion, some of them being outwardly good in their civil and moral character; closely adhering to the law and light of nature, doing the things of it, and others notoriously wicked; or rather, how they proved when gathered in, some being real believers, godly persons, whose conversations were as became the Gospel of Christ; others hypocrites, empty professors, having a form of godliness, and nothing of the power of it; destitute of grace in their hearts, and of holiness in their lives; and the whole sets forth the diligence of the servants, in executing their master’s orders, with so much readiness and exactness:

and the wedding was furnished with guests; that is, the wedding chamber, or the place where the wedding was kept, and the marriage dinner was prepared, and eat; so the Syriac renders it, *atyţm tyb*, “the house of the feast”, or where the feast was kept; and so the Ethiopic version: the Persic version reads it, “the house of the nuptial feast”: which designs the house and church of God, into which large numbers of the Gentiles were brought, by the ministry of the apostles; so that it was filled with persons that made a profession of Christ and his Gospel.

Ver. 11. *And when the king came in to see the guests,* etc.] Professors of religion, members of churches, whom God takes particular notice of; he is an omniscient being, and his eyes are upon all men and their actions, and especially on such as are called by his name: he takes notice how they behave in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and distinguishes hypocrites from real believers; the latter of which he has a special affection for, makes rich and large provisions for them, and protects and defends them; he knows them that are his, and gives them marks of respect; and he spies out such as are not, and will in his own time discover them, to their utter confusion and ruin. There are certain times and seasons, when God may be said to come in to see his guests; as sometimes in a way of gracious visits to his dear children, when he bids them welcome to the entertainment of his house, and invites them to eat and drink abundantly: and sometimes in a way of providence, against formal professors and hypocrites; and at the last judgment, when he will separate the sheep from the goats, and discern between the righteous and the wicked:

he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; by which is meant, not good works, or a holy life and conversation, nor any particular grace of the Spirit, as faith, or charity, or humility, or repentance, or any other, nor the whole work of sanctification, nor the Holy Ghost, but the righteousness of Christ: for though good works are the outward conversation garments of believers, and these greatly become them and adorn the doctrine of Christ, yet they are imperfect, and have their spots, and need washing in the blood of Christ, and cannot in themselves recommend them to God; and though the Holy Spirit and his graces, his work of holiness upon the heart, make the saints all glorious within, yet not these, but the garment of Christ's righteousness, is their clothing of wrought gold, and raiment of needlework, in which they are brought into the king's presence: this, like a garment, is without them, and put upon them; and which covers and protects them, and beautifies and adorns them; and which may be called a wedding garment, because it is that, in which the elect of God were betrothed to Christ; in which they are made ready and prepared for him, as a bride adorned for her husband: and in which they will be introduced into his presence, and be by him presented, first to himself, and then to his Father, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. This man had not on this garment, this robe of righteousness; it was not imputed to him; he had no knowledge of it; or if he had any, it was only a speculative one; he had no true faith in it; he had never put on Christ, as

the Lord his righteousness; he had got into a church state without it, though there is no entrance into the kingdom of heaven but by it.

Ver. 12. *And he saith unto him, friend,* etc.] Either in an ironical way, or because he professed to be a friend of God and Christ:

how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? Which way didst thou come in hither? since he did not come in by faith, in the righteousness of Christ; intimating, that he climbed up some other way, and was a thief and robber; or with what face, or how couldest thou have the assurance to come in hither in such a dress, having nothing but the filthy rags of thine own righteousness? How couldest thou expect to meet with acceptance with me, or to be suitable company for my people, not being arrayed with the garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness, as they are?

And he was speechless: or muzzled: his mouth was stopped, he had nothing to say for himself: not but that there will be pleas made use of by hypocrites, and formal professors, another day; who will plead either their preaching and prophesying in Christ's name; or their attendance on outward ordinances; or the works they have done, ordinary or extraordinary; but then these will all be superseded and silenced, their own consciences will condemn them, their mouths will be stopped, and they will have nothing to say in vindication of themselves; their righteousness will not answer for them in a time to come. The Jews have a tradition^{f1172}, that

“Esau the wicked, will veil himself with his garment, and sit among the righteous in paradise, in the world to come; and the holy blessed God will draw him, and bring him out from thence, which is the sense of those words, (Obidiah 1:4). “Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.””

Ver. 13. *Then said the king to his servants,* etc.] By whom are meant, either the ministers of the Gospel, and pastors of churches, who by the order of Christ, and in the name of the churches, cast out all such as appear, by their bad principles and evil practices, to be without the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ; or rather, the angels, who will bind up the tares in bundles, and burn them, and gather out of Christ's kingdom all that offend and do iniquity; and sever the wicked from the just, and use them in the manner here directed to:

bind him hand and foot; as malefactors used to be, to denote greatness of his crime, his unparalleled insolence, and the unavoidable nature of his punishment; such methods being taken, that there could be no escaping it:

and take him away; from hence, to prison; a dreadful thing, to go out of a church of Christ to hell. This clause is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Syriac and Arabic versions, nor in Munster's Hebrew Gospel, but is in all the ancient Greek copies;

and cast him into utter darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; See Gill “⁴¹⁸²Matthew 8:12”

Ver. 14. *For many are called, but few chosen.*] See Gill “⁴¹⁰⁶Matthew 20:16”

Ver. 15. *Then went the Pharisees,* etc.] After they had heard the parables of the two sons being bid to go into the vineyard, of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, and of the marriage feast; for it is clear from hence, that these stayed and heard the last of these parables, in all which they saw themselves designed; and though they were irritated and provoked to the last degree, they were obliged to hide their resentments, nor durst they use any violence for fear of the people; wherefore they retired to some convenient place, to the council chamber, or to the palace of the high priest, or where the chief priests were gone, who seem to have departed some time before them:

and took counsel; among themselves, and of others, their superiors; not how they should behave more agreeably for the future, and escape due punishment and wrath to the uttermost, which the King of kings would justly inflict on them, very plainly signified in the above parables; but

how they might entangle him in his talk, or “take hold of his words”, as in Luke; or “catch him in his words”, as in Mark: they consulted to draw him into a conversation, on a dangerous and ensnaring subject; when they hoped a word might drop unwarily from him, which they might catch at, lay hold on, and improve to his disadvantage; either with the common people, or the government, and especially the latter; as is to be learned from Luke, who expressly says their end was,

that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor; the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, should he say any thing against Caesar, which they endeavoured to ensnare him into; by which

means, they doubted not of setting the populace against him, and of screening themselves from their resentments; and of gaining their main point, the delivery of him up into the hands of the civil government, who, for treason and sedition, would put him to death.

Ver. 16. *And they sent out unto him their disciples,* etc.] Who were trained up in the same way of thinking with themselves, had imbibed the same tenets, and were strenuous defenders of them; and no doubt they selected the most crafty and artful among them; and who were the best versed in their principles and sophistic method of arguing: these they the rather sent, imagining they would not be known, as they themselves were: and from their age and air of simplicity, might be taken for innocent persons, who in great sincerity, came to be instructed by him,

with the Herodians: learned men are very much divided in their sentiments about these men; some think they were Gentiles under the government of Herod; but it is not likely that the Pharisees would join themselves with such, whose company they carefully shunned; others, that they were Gentile proselytes, as Herod was; but that on either of these accounts, they should be called by his name, there seems to be no reason: others say, they were Greeks, whom Herod brought out of a desert into his own country, and formed a sect, which from him were called Herodians: this way went Drusius, in which he was followed by several learned men, until the mistake was detected; who took it from a passage in the Hebrew Lexicon, called “Baal Aruch”, mistaking the word *μυνω*, for “Greeks”, which signifies “doves”: the Jewish writer referring to a passage in the Misna ^{f1173}, which speaks of *twaysdrj ynw*, “Herodian doves”; that is, tame ones, such as were brought up in houses: for that these are meant, is clear from the Misnic and Talmudic writers, and their commentators ^{f1174}; and were so called, because that Herod was the first that tamed wild doves, and brought up tame ones in his own palace; and so Josephus ^{f1175} says, that he had many towers stored with tame doves, which was a new thing in Judea. Others, that they were Sadducees, which carries some appearance of truth in it; since what is styled the leaven of the Sadducees, in (⁴⁰⁶⁶Matthew 16:6) is called the leaven of Herod, in (⁴⁰⁸⁵Mark 8:15) And very probable it is, that Herod was a Sadducee, and that his courtiers, at least many of them, were of the same sect; but yet it is certain, that the Sadducees are spoken of, as distinct from these Herodians, in (⁴⁰²³Matthew 22:23) of this chapter. Others, that they were a set of men, that formed a new scheme of

religion, consisting partly of Judaism, and partly of Gentilism, approved and espoused by Herod, and therefore called by his name; and others, that they were such as held, that Herod was the Messiah; but it is certain, that Herod did not think so himself, nor the people of the Jews in common; and whatever flatterers he might have in his life time, it can hardly be thought, that this notion should survive his death, who was odious to the Jewish nation: others think, that they were such, who were not for paying tribute to Caesar, but to Herod, and were encouraged and defended by him and his courtiers, as much as they could; since he and his family looked upon themselves to be injured by the Romans, and secretly grudged that tribute should be paid unto them: others, on the contrary, say, that these were such, who pleaded that tribute ought to be paid to Caesar, by whose means Herod enjoyed his government, and was supported in it; and were just the reverse of the Pharisees, with whom they are here joined, in their attempts on Christ. The Syriac version renders the word by **sdwrh tybd**, “those of the house”, or “family of Herod”, his courtiers and domestics: in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, they are called **swdwrh ydb** [, “the servants of Herod”; and certain it is, that Herod was at Jerusalem at this time, (^{<421>}Luke 23:7) We read ^{f1176} of Menahem, who was one while an associate of Hillel, who with eighty more clad in gold, went **Æl mh tdwb** [l , “into the service of the king”, that is, Herod, and hence might be called Herodians. Wherefore these seem rather to be the persons designed, whom the Pharisees chose to send with their disciples, though they were of Herod’s party, and were on the other side of the question from them; being for giving tribute to Caesar, by whom their master held his government; that should Christ be ensnared by them, as they hoped he would, into any seditious or treasonable expressions against Caesar, these might either accuse him to Herod, or immediately seize him, and have him before the Roman governor. Luke observes, that these men, the disciples of the Pharisees and the Herodians, were sent forth as “spies, which should feign themselves just men”; men of religion and holiness, and who were upright and sincere in their question, and who had strong inclinations to become his disciples: the Jews themselves own, that they sent such persons to Jesus, whom they mention by name, in such a disguised manner to deceive him: their words are these ^{f1177};

“They (the Sanhedrim) sent unto him Ananiah and Ahaziah, honourable men of the lesser sanhedrim, and when they came

before him they bowed down to him — and he thought that they believed in him, and he received them very courteously.”

Saying, master: as if they were his disciples, or at least were very willing to be so: however, they allow him to be a doctor or teacher, and a very considerable one:

we know that thou art true; a true and faithful minister, that teachest truth, and speakest uprightly; one of great integrity, and to be depended upon:

and teachest the way of God in truth; rightly opens the word of God, gives the true and genuine sense the law of God, faithfully instructs men in the worship of God; and with great sincerity, directs men to the way of coming to God, and enjoying eternal happiness with him; having no sinister ends, or worldly interest in view:

neither carest thou for any man; be he ever so great and honourable, in ever so high a station, be he Caesar himself; signifying, that he was a man of such openness and integrity, that he always freely spoke the real sentiments of his mind, whether men were pleased or displeased; being in no fear of man, nor in the least to be intimidated by frowns and menaces, or any danger from men: for thou regardest not the person of men; as he had not the persons of the high priests and elders, the grand sanhedrim of the nation, who had lately been examining him in the temple: and seeing therefore he made no difference among men, whether learned or unlearned, rich or poor, high or low; whether they were in exalted stations and high offices, or not he feared no man's face, and accepted no man's person, but gave his sense of things, without fear or flattery; they hoped he would give a direct answer to the following question, though Caesar himself was concerned in it.

Ver. 17. *Tell us therefore what thinkest thou,* etc.:] Since, as they suggested he was a person of great understanding and sincerity, they earnestly desire that he would be pleased, according to his usual frankness and openness, to give them his opinion; in which they intimate, they should sit down satisfied and contented:

whether is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? Meaning, according to the law of God: this was a question among the Jews: the Herodians were for it, the Pharisees were against it, at least secretly; and, indeed, this latter was the general sense of the nation, who looked upon themselves to be, or however ought to be, a free people, being the children

of God, and the seed of Abraham; and who urged, that according to their law, none but one of their own brethren, who was of their own nation and religion, was to be set as king over them; whereas Caesar, the Roman emperor, was a stranger, one of another nation, and an idolater; and some openly refused it, and made mutinies and insurrections on account of it, as Theudas, and Judas of Galilee: now by putting this question to Christ, in the presence of different parties, they hoped to get an advantage of him either way; for had he been silent, they would have reproached him, as not being the honest, faithful, frank, and open man, they pretended to take him to be; and if he had answered either in the affirmative or negative, they were prepared to make use of it to his injury; had he said that it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar, this being contrary to the general notions of the people, they would have improved it to draw them from him, and to set them against him; and had he affirmed it was not lawful to do it, they would then have accused him to the Roman governor, and delivered him up into his hands, to judge and condemn him, according to the Roman laws; which latter was what they were wishing for.

Ver. 18. *But Jesus perceived their wickedness*, etc.] Luke says, “their craftiness”; and Mark says, “knowing their hypocrisy”; for there was, a mixture of malice, hypocrisy, and artfulness, in the scheme they had formed; but Christ being the omniscient God, saw the wickedness of their hearts, knew their hypocritical designs, and was well acquainted with all their artifice: he judged not according to the outward appearance of their affection for him, and opinion of him, of religion, righteousness, and holiness in themselves, and of a sincere desire to have their conscience satisfied about this matter; the snare they laid was visible to him, the mask they put on could not screen them from him, nor impose upon him:

and said, why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? as he might well call them, who feigned themselves just persons, pretended a great deal of respect for him, call him master, compliment him with the characters of a faithful, sincere, and disinterested preacher; yet by putting the above question, designed no other than to ensnare him, and bring him into disgrace or trouble.

Ver. 19. *Shew me the tribute money*, etc.] Not any money, or any sort of coin that was current among them; but that in which the tribute was usually paid, which was Roman money: and they brought unto him a penny; not as, being what was the usual sum that was paid for tribute at one time, but as a

sample of what sort of money it was paid in, in Roman pence; one of which was seven pence halfpenny of our money.

Ver. 20. *And he saith unto them,* etc.] Having the penny in one hand, and pointing to it with the other,

whose is this image and superscription? or inscription? for the penny that was, brought him had an image upon it, the form of a man's head struck on it, and round about it an inscription, or writing, showing who it was the image of, and whose money it was, and when it was coined: this is enough to show, that this penny was not a Jewish, but a Roman one; for the Jews, though they put inscriptions, yet no images on their coin; and much less would they put Caesar's thereon, as was on this: it is asked ^{f1178},

“What is the coin of Jerusalem? The answer is, David and Solomon on one side, and Jerusalem the holy city off the other side, i.e. as the gloss observes, David and Solomon were “written” on one side, and on the other side were written Jerusalem the holy city.”

It follows,

“and what was the coin of Abraham our father? an old man and an old woman, (Abraham and Sarah,) on one side, and a young man and a young woman, (Isaac and Rebekah,) on the other side.”

The gloss on it is,

“not that there was on it the form of an old man and an old woman on one side, and of a young man and a young woman on the other, for it is forbidden to make the form of a man; but so it was written on one side, an old man and an old woman, and on the other side, a young man and a young woman.”

Ver. 21. *They say unto him, Caesar's,* etc.] Either Augustus Caesar's; for there was a coin of that emperor's, as Dr. Hammond reports, from Occo, which had his image or picture on it, and in it these words written, Augustus Caesar, such a year, “after the taking of Judaea”; which if this was the coin, was a standing testimony of the subjection of the Jews to the Romans; and this being current with them, was an acknowledgment of it by them, and carried in it an argument of their obligation to pay tribute to them; or it might be Tiberius Caesar's, the then reigning emperor, in the nineteenth year of whose reign, Christ was crucified; and seeing he had

reigned so long, it is reasonable to suppose, his money was very common, and most in use: we read in the Talmud^{f1179}, of **hnarsyq armyd**, “a Caesarean penny”, or “Caesar’s penny”, the same sort with this: now this penny having Caesar’s image and inscription on it, our Lord tacitly suggests, that they ought to pay tribute to him; since his money was allowed of as current among them, which was in effect owning him to be their king; and which perfectly agrees with a rule of their own, which runs thus^{f1180}:

“A king whose “coin” is “current” in any country, the inhabitants of that country agree about him, and it is their joint opinion, **μydb[wl μhw μhynwda awhç** “that he is their Lord, and they are his servants”.”

This being the case now with the Jews, Christ’s advice is,

render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God, the things that are God’s: give Caesar the tribute and custom, and fear, and honour, and obedience, which are due to him; which may be done without interfering with the honour of God, and prejudicing his interest and glory, when care is taken, that all the worship and obedience due to God are given to him: subjection to civil magistrates is not inconsistent with the reverence and fear of God; all are to have their dues rendered unto them, without entrenching upon one another. And the Jews themselves allow, that a king ought to have his dues, whether he be a king of Israel, or of the Gentiles:

“a publican, or tax gatherer, (they say^{f1181}), that is appointed by the king, whether a king of Israel, or of the Gentiles, and takes what is fixed by the order of the government; it is forbidden to refuse payment of the tax to him, for **anyd twkl md anyd**, “the right of a king is right”.”

Just and equitable, and he ought to have his right.

Ver. 22. *When they had heard these words*, etc.] This answer returned unto them, this advice which was given them, which they could not gainsay or deny to be good,

they marvelled: were amazed and astonished, at his prudence and wisdom, in answering them, in such an unexpected and cautious manner:

they left him: being silenced, confounded, and disappointed:

and went their way: not being able to get any advantage against him, neither to bring him into contempt with the people, and alienate their affections from him; nor to charge him with sedition or treason to the Roman governor; and so had but a very indifferent account of their success, to report to them that sent them.

Ver. 23. *The same day came to him the Sadducees,* &] Quickly after the Pharisees and Herodians had left him; and which shows, that the Herodians and Sadducees were not the same; but that the Sadducees were a distinct sect, both from the Pharisees and the Herodians. These understanding that the former had not succeeded, came with a knotty question, with which they had often puzzled the Pharisees, and hoped they should nonplus Christ with it, showing the absurdity of the doctrine of the resurrection, an article which they denied; as it follows,

which say, that there is no resurrection of the dead: they denied that there were angels and spirits, and the immortality of the soul; they affirmed, that the soul died with the body, and that there was no future state: the rise of this sect, and of these notions of their's, was this, as the Jews relate ^{f1182}.

“Antigonus, a man of Socho, used to say, be not as servants, that serve their master on account of receiving a reward, but be as servants that serve their master, not on account of receiving a reward; and let the fear of heaven (God) be upon you, so that your reward may be double in the world to come: this man had two disciples, who altered his words, and taught the disciples, and the disciples their disciples, and they stood and narrowly examined them, and said, what did our fathers see, to say this thing? Is it possible, that a labourer should work all day, and not take his reward at evening? But if our fathers had known that there is another world, and that there is *pytmh tyght*, “a resurrection of the dead”, they would not have said thus: they stood and separated from the law, and of them there were two parties, the Sadducees and Baithusites; the Sadducees on account of Sadoc, and the Baithusites on account of Baithus.”

The Syriac version reads, “and they said” and the Ethiopic version also, “saying, there is no resurrection of the dead”; taking the sense to be, that they at this time declared their sense of this doctrine, and according to a

settled notion of their's, affirmed before Christ, that there was no such thing; that never any was raised from the dead, nor never will; and they were desirous of entering into a controversy with him about it:

and asked him; put the following question to him, in order to expose the weakness and absurdity of such a doctrine.

Ver. 24. *Saying, master*, etc.] Rabbi, or doctor, as he was usually called; *Moses said*, in (⁴⁰²⁵Deuteronomy 25:5)

if a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother; which, though not expressed in the self same words, yet is the sense of the passage referred to, and was a practice in use before the times of Moses, as appears from the case of Er and Onan; the design of which was, to preserve families, and keep their inheritances distinct and entire. This law only took place, when a man died without children; for if he left any children, there was no need for his brother to marry his wife; yea, as a Jewish writer observes^{f1183}, she was forbidden, it was not lawful for him to marry her, and was the case if he had children of either sex, or even grandchildren: for as another of their commentators notes^{f1184}, his having no child, regards a son or a daughter, or a son's son, or a daughter's son, or a daughter's daughter; and it was the eldest of the brethren, or he that was next in years to the deceased, that was obliged by this law^{f1185}, though not if he had a wife of his own; and accordingly in the following case proposed, each of the brethren married the eldest brother's wife in their turn, according to the course of seniority; and by this law, the first child that was born after such marriage, was reckoned the seed of the deceased, and was heir to his inheritance. The Jews in their Misna, or oral law, have a whole tract on this subject, called Yebamot, which contains various rules and directions, for the right observance of this law.

Ver. 25. *Now there were with us seven brethren*, etc.] That is, there was in the city, town or neighbourhood, where these Sadducees dwelt, probably at Jerusalem, a family, in which were seven sons, all brethren by the father's side; for brethren by the mother's side were not counted brethren, nor obliged by this law^{f1186}; whether this was a reigned case which is here and in the following verses put, or whether it was real fact, which is possible, it matters not: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: the eldest of these seven brethren married a wife, and after some time died, having no

children, son or daughter, by his wife; and therefore, according to the above law, leaves her to his next brother to marry her, and raise up seed unto him; which, according to the Jewish canons^{f1187}, could not be done before ninety days, or three months after the decease of his brother; for so long they were to wait and see, whether she was with child by his brother or not; for if she was, it was not necessary, yea, it was unlawful for him to marry her.

Ver. 26. *Likewise the second also*, etc.] The eldest of the surviving brethren, having married his brother's wife, after sometime died also without children, and left her to his next brother to marry her; and the third brother accordingly did marry her, and in process of time died likewise, leaving no issue behind him; and thus they went on in course, unto the seventh: the fourth, fifth, and sixth, married her in turn, and so did the seventh; and all died in the same circumstances, having no children by her.

Ver. 27. *And last of all the woman died also.*] A widow and childless, having never married another person but these seven brethren; and the case with them being alike, no one having any child by her, upon which any peculiar claim to her could be formed, the following question is put.

Ver. 28. *Therefore in the resurrection*, etc.] As asserted by the Pharisees and by Christ, supposing that there will be such a thing, though not granting it; for these men denied it, wherefore the Ethiopic version reads it hypothetically, "if therefore the dead will be raised"; upon such a supposition,

whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her, or were married to her. By putting this question, they thought to have got some advantage against Christ, and in favour of their notion; they hoped, either that he would give into their way of thinking, and relinquish the doctrine of the resurrection upon this, and join with them against the Pharisees, and so there would be no need of an answer to the question; or they judged, that if he returned an answer, it would be either that he did not know whose wife she should be, and then they would traduce him among the common people, as weak and ignorant; or should he say, that she would be the wife of one of them only, naming which of them, or of them all, or of none of them, they fancied that such absurd consequences would follow on each of these, as would expose the doctrine of the resurrection to ridicule and contempt; but they missed their aim, and were sadly disappointed by Christ's answer and reasonings which follow.

Ver. 29. *Jesus answered and said unto them,* etc.] The Sadducees: as idle and impertinent as the case they put may seem to be and really was, our Lord thought fit to return an answer to them, thereby to expose their ignorance, and put them to silence and confusion: ye do err; not only in that they denied the immortality of the soul and the resurrection, but that supposing that there would be a resurrection, things in that state would be just they were in this; as particularly for instance, that there would be the same natural relation of husband and wife, which their question supposes. Mark reads these words by way of interrogation,

do ye not therefore err, because? etc.] And by Luke they are wholly omitted, as also what follows,

not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. These two things were the spring and source of their errors: they had not a true knowledge, and right understanding of the Scriptures; which if they had had, it must have appeared to them, from many places in the Old Testament, that the soul remains after death, and that the body will be raised from the dead: they owned the authority of the Scriptures, and allowed of all the writings of the Old Testament; for it seems to be a mistake of some learned men, who think that they only received the five books of Moses, and that therefore Christ takes his proof of his doctrine from thence; but though they had the greater esteem for the law, and would admit of nothing that was not clearly proved from that; yet they did not reject the other writings, as what might serve to confirm and illustrate what was taught in the law; but then, though they approved of the Scriptures and read them, yet they did not understand them, and so fell into those gross errors and sad mistakes; nor did they attend to the power of God, which, as it was able to make men out of the dust of the earth, was able to raise them again, when crumbled into dust; but this was looked upon by them, as a thing impossible, and so incredible; (see ~~408~~ Acts 26:8).

Ver. 30. *For in the resurrection,* etc.] At the time of the resurrection, and in that state; when the bodies and souls of men shall be reunited,

they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither the men marry wives, nor are the women given in marriage to men, which is done by their parents here, generally speaking, they having the right of disposing of children in marriage: but, as Luke says, “they which shall be accounted worthy”; not through their own works of righteousness, but through the grace of God and righteousness of Christ, “to obtain the world”, the world

to come, a future state of happiness, “and the resurrection of the dead”, that which will be unto everlasting life and glory, “neither marry nor are given in marriage”; shall not enter into any such natural and carnal relation: and this agrees with the notion of the other Jews, who say^{f1188}; that

“In “the world to come”, there is neither eating nor drinking, **hybrw hyrp al w**, “nor fructification, nor increase” (of children), no receiving and giving, (no commerce), nor envy, nor hatred, nor contention.”

But are as the angels of God in heaven; or, as in Luke, “are equal unto the angels”; and which he explains their immortality: “neither can they die any more”; no more than the angels can: for this must not be extended to everything; not in everything will the saints be like, or equal to the angels; they will not be incorporeal, as the angels are, but then, even their bodies will be spiritual, and in some respects, like spirits; they will not stand in any need of sustenance, by eating and drinking, any more than the angels; nor will there be any such things as marriage, and procreation of children among them, any more than among angels; for they “are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection”: they will then appear to be the children of God by adopting grace, through their enjoying the adoption, even the redemption of their bodies; and possessing, in soul and body, the heavenly inheritance they are heirs of: indeed, the souls of the saints before the resurrection, during their separate state, are in some sense like the angels, to which may be applied those words of Maimonides^{f1189}.

“In the world to come, there is no body, but the souls of the righteous only, without a body, **trçh ykal mk** “as the ministering angels”; and seeing there is no body, there is no eating nor drinking in it, nor any of all the things which the bodies of the children of men stand in need of in this world; nor does anything befall which happens to bodies in this world, as sitting or standing, or sleep or “death”, or grief, or laughter, or the like.”

And according to the sense of the Jews, they will be like to the angels after the resurrection: so God is by them introduced speaking^{f1190};

“At the appointed time known by me, to quicken the dead, I will return to thee that body which is holy and renewed, as at the first, to be **μϋϘωdq μykal mk**, “as the holy angels”.”

This was an usual way of speaking with them, to compare saints in a state of immortality, to angels ^{f1191}. Christ, by making mention of angels, strikes at another notion of the Sadducees, that there were no angels, (^{<4218>}Acts 23:8).

Ver. 31. *But as touching the resurrection of the dead*, etc.] In proof of that doctrine, and which will greatly serve to confirm and establish it, and that it may appear that the dead are, or will be raised, and to put it out of all doubt,

have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, as Mark adds, “in the book of Moses”; which was written by him, the book of (^{<1116>}Exodus 3:6) and though the words were spoke to Moses, yet were designed for the use, instruction, and comfort of the Israelites; not only at that time, but in succeeding ages, they being the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; whose God the Lord there declares himself to be. Moreover, whereas these words were spoken by God to Moses, there is some little difficulty occasioned, by Luke’s representing them to be the words of Moses; for he says, “Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham”, etc. which may be removed by observing, that the sense is, that when Moses showed to the children of Israel, what he heard and saw at the bush on Mount Sinai, he called the Lord by these names, in which he spoke of himself to him; he recited to them what the Lord said to him; and indeed he was bid to say to them these words; (see ^{<1114>}Exodus 3:14-16)

saying, as follows,

Ver. 32. *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, etc.] The Sadducees expressly denied, that the resurrection could be proved out of the law.

“Says R. Eliezer, with R. Jose ^{f1192}, I have found the books of the Sadducees to be corrupt; for they say that the resurrection of the dead is not to be proved out of the law: I said unto them, you have corrupted your law, and ye have not caused anything to come up into your hands, for ye say the resurrection of the dead is not to be proved out of the law; lo! he saith, (^{<1151>}Numbers 15:31) “That soul shall be utterly cut off, his iniquity shall be upon him; he shall be utterly cut off” in this world; “his iniquity shall be upon him”, is not this said with respect to the world to come?.”

Hence, in opposition to this notion of the Sadducees, the other Jews say ^{f1193}, that

“Though a man confesses and believes that the dead will be raised, yet that it is not intimated in the law, he is an heretic; since it is a fundamental point, that the resurrection of the dead is of the law.”

Hence they set themselves, with all their might and main, to prove this doctrine from thence, of which take the following instances ^{f1194}.

“Says R. Simai, from whence is the resurrection of the dead to be proved out of the law? From (~~Exod~~ Exodus 6:4) as it is said, “I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan: to you” it is not said, but “to them”; from hence then, the resurrection of the dead may be proved out of the law.”

The gloss upon it is,

“the sense is, that the holy blessed God, promised to our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that he would give to them the land of Israel; and because he gave it to them, has he not given it to their children? But we learn from hence, that they shall be raised, and that God will hereafter give them the land of Israel.”

And which the learned Mr. Mede takes to be the sense of the words of this text, cited by our Lord; and this the force of his reasoning, by which he proves the resurrection of the dead. Again,

“the Sadducees asked Rabban Gamaliel, from whence does it appear that the holy blessed God will quicken the dead? He said unto them, out of the law, and out of the prophets, and out of the Hagiographa; but they did not receive of him (or regard him): out of the law, as it is written, “Thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, and rise up”, (~~Deut~~ Deuteronomy 31:16) And there are that say from this Scripture, (~~Deut~~ Deuteronomy 4:4). “But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God, are alive every one of you this day”: as this day all of you stand, so in the world to come, all of you shall stand.”

Thus our Lord having to do with the same sort of persons, fetches his proof of the doctrine of the resurrection out of the law, and from a passage which respects the covenant relation God stands in to his people, particularly Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and which respects not their souls

only, but their bodies also, even their whole persons, body and soul; for God is the God of the whole: and therefore as their souls now live with God, their bodies also will be raised from the dead, that they, with their souls, may enjoy everlasting glory and happiness; which is the grand promise, and great blessing of the covenant of grace.

God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; as all the saints are; for though their bodies are dead, their souls are alive, and their bodies will be raised in consequence of their covenant interest in God, to enjoy an immortal life with him: so the Jews are wont to say, that the righteous, even in their death, are called living^{f1195}:

“from whence is it proved, (say they,) that the righteous, even in their death, $\mu\upsilon\upsilon\acute{\jmath} \ \acute{\gamma}\omega\omega\rho\acute{\alpha}$, “are called living?””

from (^{f1194}Deuteronomy 34:4) as it is written, “and he said unto him, this is the land which I have sworn to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying.” Menasseh ben Israel, a learned Jew, of the last century, has produced^{f1196} this same passage of Scripture, Christ here does in proof of the immortality of the soul, and argues from it in much the same manner: having mentioned the words, he adds,

“for God is not the God of the dead, for the dead are not; but of the living, for the living exist; therefore also the patriarchs, in respect of the soul, may rightly be inferred from hence to live.”

Ver. 33. *And when the multitude heard this*, etc.] This wise and full answer of Christ to the posing question of the Sadducees, with which perhaps they had puzzled many, and never had met with their match before:

they were astonished at his doctrine; concerning the pure, perfect, and angelic state of the righteous in the world to come; and how strongly and nervously he proved the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the dead, which were both denied by the Sadducees; and who were so confounded with his answer, proof, and reasonings, that Luke says, “after that they durst not ask him any question at all”: and the Scribes were so pleased therewith, that certain of them applauded him, saying, “master, thou hast well said”.

Ver. 34. *But when the Pharisees had heard*, etc.] Either with their own ears, they being some of them present: or rather from the relation of others,

from the Scribes, who expressed their approbation of Christ's answer to the Sadducees; for the Pharisees, with the Herodians, in a body, had left him, and were gone to their respective places of abode; or to them that sent them, being baffled and confounded by him: but now hearing

that he had put the Sadducees to silence, or stopped their mouths, having nothing to reply, which itself, was not disagreeable; for they were as opposite as could be to them in the doctrine of the resurrection, and in other things, and were their sworn and avowed enemies: and yet it sadly gruelled them, that Christ should be too hard for, and get the victory over all sects among them. Wherefore, considering that should he go on with success in this manner, his credit with the people would increase yet more and more; and therefore, though they had been so shamefully defeated in two late attempts, yet

they were gathered together in great hurry upon this occasion. The Ethiopic version reads it, "they were gathered to him", that is, to Christ; and so reads the copy that Beza gave to the university of Cambridge: but the other reading, as it is general, so more suitable to the place: they gathered together at some certain house, where they consulted what to do, what methods to take, to put a stop to his growing interest with the people, and how they might bring him into disgrace with them; and they seemed to have fixed on this method, that one among them, who was the ablest doctor, and best skilled in the law, should put a question to him relating to the law, which was then agitated among them, the solution of which was very difficult; and they the rather chose to take this course by setting a single person upon him, that should he succeed, the victory would be the greater, and the whole sect would share in the honour of it; and should he be silenced, the public disgrace and confusion would only fall on himself, and not the whole body, as in the former instances. This being agreed to, they went unto him.

Ver. 35. *Then one of them, which was a lawyer*, etc.] Or that was "learned", or "skilful in the law", as the Syriac and Persic versions, and Munster's Hebrew Gospel read. The Ethiopic version calls him, "a Scribe of the city", of the city of Jerusalem; but I do not meet with any such particular officer, or any such office peculiar to a single man any where: mention is made of "the Scribes of the people" in (~~and~~ Matthew 2:4) and this man was one of them, one that interpreted the law to the people, either in the schools, or in the synagogues, or both; and Mark expressly calls him

a “Scribe”: and so the Arabic version renders the word here; and from hence it may be concluded that the lawyers and Scribes were the same sort of persons. This man was by sect a Pharisee, and by his office a Scribe; or interpreter of the law, and suitable to his office and character,

asked him a question, tempting him, and saying: he put a difficult and knotty question to him, and thereby making a trial of his knowledge and understanding of the law; and laying a snare for him, to entrap him if he could, and expose him to the people, as a very ignorant man: and delivered it in the following form.

Ver. 36. *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?*] He calls him “master, Rabbi, or doctor”, as the Sadducees had in (^{4123b}Matthew 22:24) either because he was usually so called by his disciples, and by the generality of the people; or merely in complaisance to engage his attention to him, and his question: and might hereby suggest, that should he return a proper and satisfactory answer to it he should be his master. The question is not which of the laws was the greatest, the oral, or the written law: the Jews give the preference to the law delivered by word of mouth; they prefer the traditions of the elders before the written law of Moses; (See Gill on “^{4151b}Matthew 15:2”); but the question was about the written law of Moses; and not merely about the decalogue, or whether the commands of the first table were greater than those of the second, as was generally thought; or whether the affirmative precepts were not more to be regarded than negative ones, which was their commonly received opinion; but about the whole body of the law, moral and ceremonial, delivered by Moses: and not whether the ceremonial law was to be preferred to the moral, which they usually did; but what particular command there was in the whole law, which was greater than the rest: for as there were some commands that were light, and others that were weighty, a distinction often used by them ^{f1197}, and to which Christ alludes in (^{4123b}Matthew 23:23). It was moved that it might be said which was the greatest and weightiest of them all. Some thought the commandment of the sabbath was the greatest: hence they say ^{f1198}, that he that keeps the sabbath is as if he kept the whole law: yea, they make the observance of the three meals, or feasts, which, according to the traditions of the elders, they were obliged to eat on the sabbath, to be at least one of the greatest of them.

“These three meals (says one of their writers ^{f1199}) are a great matter, for it is one *hrwtbç twl wdgh twxmh*,” “of the great commandments in the law.”

Which is the very phraseology used in this question. Others give the preference to circumcision, on which they bestow the greatest encomiums, and, among the rest ^{f1200}, say, it drives away the sabbath, or that is obliged to give place unto it. Others ^{f1201} say of the “phylacteries”, that the holiness of them is the greatest of all, and the command to be arrayed with them all the day, is more excellent than all others; and even of the fringe upon the borders of their garments, others observe ^{f1202}, that a man that is guilty of that command, is guilty of all others, and that single precept is equal to all the rest. In this multiplicity of opinions, Christ’s is desired on this subject, though with no good intention.

Ver. 37. *Jesus said unto him*, etc.] Directly, without taking time to think of it; and though he knew with what design it was put to him, yet, as an answer to it might be useful and instructive to the people, as well as silence and confound his adversaries, he thought fit to give one; and is as follows, being what is expressed in (^{<HB>}Deuteronomy 6:5).

thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; that is, with all the powers and faculties of the soul, the will, the understanding, and the affections; in the most sincere, upright, and perfect manner, without any dissimulation and hypocrisy, and above all objects whatever, for this the law requires; and which man, in his state of innocence, was capable of, though now fallen, he is utterly unable to perform; so far from it, that without the grace of God, he has no true love at all to God, in his heart, soul and mind, but all the reverse; his carnal mind is enmity against God, and everything that is divine and good, or that belongs unto him: and though this is now the case of man, yet his obligation to love the Lord in this manner is still the same; and when the Spirit of God does produce the grace and fruit of love in his soul, he does love the Lord sincerely; because of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands, and because of the blessings of grace bestowed, and especially for Christ, the unspeakable gift of his love; and most affectionately does he love him, when he is most sensible of his everlasting and unchangeable love to him, and when that is shed abroad by the Spirit; “for we love him, because he first loved us”, (^{<HB>}1 John 4:19) instead of, “with all thy mind”, as here, in (^{<HB>}Deuteronomy 6:5) it is read, “with all

thy might"; and which clause is here added by the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, as it is in (^{f1203}Mark 12:30). The Hebrew phrase seems to denote the vehemency of affections, with which God is to be beloved. Though the Jewish writers ^{f1203} paraphrase and interpret it, "with all thy substance", or "money"; and in the Misna ^{f1204}, the following interpretation is given of the whole;

““with all thy heart”, with thy imaginations, with the good imagination, and with the evil imagination; and “with all thy soul”, even if he should take away thy soul; and “with all thy strength”, with all thy “mammon”, or riches; or otherwise, “with all thy might”, with every measure he measures unto thee, do thou measure unto him;”

that is, as one of the commentators says ^{f1205}, whether it be good or evil; or, as another ^{f1206}, in every case that happens give thanks to God, and praise him. And certain it is, that as God is to be loved in the strongest manner we are capable of, and with all we have, and are; so always, at all times, under all dispensations of his providence, and upon all accounts, and for all he does towards, in, upon, and for us.

Ver. 38. *This is the first and great commandment.*] Whether the object of it is considered, who is the first and chief good; or the manner in which it is to be observed, which requires and engrosses the whole heart, soul, and mind, and all the strength and power of man; or its being the principle from whence all the duties, and actions of men should flow, and the end to which all are to be referred; and is not only a compendium of the duties of the first table of the decalogue, but of all others that can be thought to, and do, belong to God. This is the first command in order of nature, time, dignity, and causality; God being the first cause of all things, infinitely above all creatures, and love to him being the source, spring and cause of love to the neighbour; and it is the greatest in its object, nature, manner, and end. That this command, and these words our Lord cites, are so full and comprehensive, the Jews themselves cannot deny. A noted writer of their's ^{f1207} says,

“the root of “all the commandments” is, when a man loves God with all his soul, and cleaves unto him.”

And, says ^{f1208} another, “in this verse only, “thou shalt love the Lord thy God”, etc. *twrbdh trç[µyl wl k*, “the ten words, or decalogue, are comprehended”.”

Ver. 39. *And the second is like unto it*, etc.] For there is but a second, not a third: this is suggested in opposition to the numerous commandments in the law, according to the opinion of the Jews, who reckon them in all to be “six hundred and thirteen”: of which there are “three hundred and sixty five” negative ones, according to the number of the days of the year; and “two hundred and forty eight” affirmative ones, according to the members of a man’s body ^{f1209}. Christ reduces all to two, love to God, and love to the neighbour; and the latter is the second in order of nature, time, dignity, and causality; the object of it being a creature; and the act itself being the effect of the former, yet like unto it: for though the object is different, yet this commandment regards love as the former, and requires that it be as that, true, hearty, sincere, and perfect; that it be with singleness of heart, always, and to all men; and that it spring from love to God, and be performed to his glory: and which is expressed in the words written in (^{<OR>}Leviticus 19:18) “thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”; as heartily and sincerely, and as a man would desire to be loved by his neighbour; and do all the good offices to him he would choose to have done to himself by him. This law supposes, that men should love themselves, or otherwise they cannot love their neighbour; not in a sinful way, by indulging themselves in carnal lusts and pleasures; some are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; but in a natural way, so as to be careful of their bodies, families, and estates; and in a spiritual way, so as to be concerned for their souls, and the everlasting happiness of them: and in like manner should men love their neighbours, in things temporal do them all the good they can, and do no injury to their persons or property; and in things spiritual pray for them, instruct them, and advise as they would their own souls, or their nearest and dearest relations. And this is to be extended to every man; though the Jews restrain it to their friend and companion, and one of their own religion.

““Thy neighbour”; that is, (say they ^{f1210}), thy friend in the law; and “this is the great comprehensive rule in the law”, to show that it is not fit there should be any division, or separation, between a man and his companion, but one should judge every man in the balance of equity: wherefore, near unto it is, “I am the Lord”: for as I the Lord am one, so it is fit for you that ye should be one nation

without division; but a wicked man, and one that does not receive reproof, it is commanded to hate him; as it is said, “do not I hate them that hate me?””

But our Lord intends by it to include, that love, benevolence, and good will, which are due to every man; and suggests, that this comprehends not only all that contained in the second table of the decalogue, but all duties that are reducible thereunto, and are obligatory on men one towards another whatever; all which should spring from love, and be done heartily and sincerely, with a view to the neighbour’s good, and God’s glory: and with this Maimonides agrees, saying ^{f1211}, that

“all the commands, or duties, respecting a man, and his neighbour,
 ןמדסג תול ןמגב תוסנכ, “are comprehended in beneficence.””

Ver. 40. *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*] Not that all that is contained in the five books of Moses, and in the books of the prophets, and other writings of the Old Testament, is comprehended in, and is reducible to these two precepts; for there are many things delivered by way of promise, written by way of history, etc. which cannot, by any means, be brought into these two general heads: but that everything respecting duty that is suggested in the law, or is more largely explained and pressed in any of the writings of the prophets, is summarily comprehended in these two sayings: hence love is the fulfilling of the law; (see ^{<813>}Romans 13:8,9, ^{<814>}Galatians 5:14). The substance of the law is love; and the writings of the prophets, as to the preceptive part of them, are an explanation of the law, and an enlargement upon it: hence the Jews have a saying ^{f1212}, that “all the prophets stood on Mount Sinai”, and received their prophecies there, because the sum of them, as to the duty part, was then delivered. Beza thinks, that here is an allusion to the “phylacteries”, or frontlets, which hung upon their foreheads and hands, as a memorial of the law. And certain it is, that the first of these commands, and which is said to be the greatest, was written in these phylacteries. Some take the phrase, “on these hang all the law and the prophets”, to be a mere Latinism, but it is really an Hebraism, and often to be met with in the Jewish writings: so Maimonides says ^{f1213},

“the knowledge of this matter is an affirmative precept, as it is said, “I am the Lord thy God”; and he that imagines there is another God besides this, transgresses a negative, as it is said, “thou shalt have

no other Gods before me”; and he denies the fundamental point, for this is the great foundation, *wb ywl t l khç*, “on which all hang”:

and so the word is used in many other places ^{f1214}. The sense is plainly this, that all that are in the law and prophets are consistent with, and dependent on these things; and are, as the Persic version renders the word, “comprehended” in them, and cannot be separated from them.

Ver. 41. *While the Pharisees were gathered together*, etc.] Or rather, “when” they were gathered together, and while they continued so, before they left him: for this is to be understood not of their gathering together, to consult privately about him; this is expressed before in (^{<1234}Matthew 22:34) but of their gathering together about Christ, to hear what answer he would return to the question their learned doctor would put to him: and he having given an answer to that, which the Scribe was obliged to allow was a good one; and he having no more to say, Christ directs his discourse not to him individually, but to all the Pharisees before he parted with them, and puts a question to them, in his turn; and which would lead on to another they could not answer, and they must therefore leave him once more with great shame and confusion.

Jesus asked them: as the lawyer put a question to him suitable to his office and character, Christ puts another to the Pharisees suitable to his office and character, as a Gospel preacher; suggesting by it, that salvation was not by the law, and the works of it, which they set up for doctors and interpreters of, and advocates for, but by the Messiah, who was promised to their fathers, and they expected.

Ver. 42. *Saying, what think ye of Christ*, etc.] Or the Messiah; he does not ask them whether there was, or would be such a person in the world. He knew, that he was so plainly spoken of in the writings of the Old Testament, which they had in their hands, that they could not be ignorant, that such a person was prophesied of: he knew that they believed that he would come, and that they were in continual expectation of his coming; wherefore he asks them what they thought of him, what were their sentiments and opinions concerning him; as about his person, whether they thought him to be divine, or human, a mere man, or God, as well as man; what they thought of his work and office he came to perform, whether it was a spiritual, or temporal salvation, they expected he should be the author of; and so of his kingdom, whether it would be of this world or not;

and particularly, what thoughts they had of his sonship, and who was his father;

whose son is he? and which the Pharisees understanding only as respecting his lineage and descent as man, as, of what family he was? who were his ancestors and progenitors?

they say unto him, the son of David. This they said directly, without any hesitation, it being a generally received notion of their's, and was very right, that the Messiah should be of the seed and family of David: and hence he is frequently, in their writings, called by no other name, than the son of David; (see Gill on "~~4006~~ Matthew 1:1"). If this question was put to some persons, it would appear, that they have no thoughts of Christ at all. The atheist has none; as God is not in all his thoughts, nor in any of them, for all his thoughts are, that there is no God; so neither is Christ the Son of God. The deist thinks thing of him, for he does not believe the revelation concerning him. The epicure, or voluptuous man, he thinks only of his carnal lusts and pleasures: and the worldling, or covetous man, thinks nothing but of his worldly substance, and of the much good things he has laid up for many years: to say nothing of the Heathens, who have never heard of him; others, and such as bear the Christian name, have very wrong thoughts of Christ, mean, and undervaluing. The Arrian thinks he is a created God, of a like, but not or the same nature with the Father. The Socinian thinks he is a God by office, and did not exist until he was born of the Virgin Mary; and has no notion of his sacrifice, and satisfaction for the sins of men. The Arminian thinks meanly of his righteousness, and denies the imputation of it to them that believe. And indeed, all such think wrongly of Christ, who divide their salvation between their works and him, and make them their Christ, or their frames their Christ, or their graces, and particularly their believing in him; that is, that ascribe that to them, which properly belongs to him. And as for those who do not bear the name Christians, it is no wonder that they entertain wrong and low thoughts of Christ. The Jews thought him to be a mere man, and the carpenter's son. The Pharisees thought that he was an Antinomian, a libertine, a loose, and licentious person, that had no regard to the law, and good works: hence those words of his, "think not that I am come to destroy the law" (~~4057~~ Matthew 5:17). Yea, they thought him to be a Samaritan, and to have a devil, and to cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. The Mahometans, though they allow him to be a prophet, yet think that he is inferior to Mahomet their prophet. There are others that think well of

Christ, admire the loveliness of his person, and the fulness of his grace, but are afraid Christ does not think well of them: they think well of the suitableness there is in Christ, of his righteousness to justify, of his blood to cleanse and pardon, and of the fulness of his grace to supply all wants, but think these are not for them: they often revolve in their minds his ability to save, and firmly believe it, but question his willingness to save them: they often think of Christ, what he is to others, but cannot think of him for themselves; only believers in Christ have a good thought of him, to their own joy and comfort: faith is a good thought of Christ; to them that believe, he is precious; and such, through believing in him, are filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; such think often, and well, of the dignity of Christ's person, of the excellency and usefulness of his offices, of the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and of the sufficiency of his grace for them: they think well of what he did for them in eternity, as their surety, in the council and covenant of peace; and of what he has done for them in time, by suffering and dying for them in their room and stead; and of what he is now doing for them in heaven, as their advocate and intercessor.

Ver. 43. *He saith unto them*, etc.] Not denying it to be a truth they affirmed; but rather granting and allowing it: he argues upon it, though he tacitly refuses their sense and meaning of the phrase, thus,

how then doth David in spirit call him Lord? that is, if he is a mere man, if he is only the son of David, according to the flesh, if he has no other, or higher descent than from him, how comes it to pass, that David, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, by which he wrote his book of Psalms, (see ^{<BIB>}2 Samuel 23:1,2) where the passage, after cited, stands, to call him Lord; which supposes him to be more than barely his son, and to be a greater person than himself, one superior in nature and dignity to him? for the phrase "in spirit", is not to be connected with the word Lord; as if the design of it was to show, that the Messiah was Lord, or God, in spirit, or with respect to his divine nature, but, with the word "call", expressing the influence of the Spirit of God, under which David wrote; otherwise the Pharisees would have had a direction how to have answered the question, which much puzzled them:

saying, as in (^{<BIB>}Psalm 110:1).

Ver. 44. *The Lord said unto my Lord*, etc.] By the Lord that said, is meant "Jehovah" the Father, who said the following words at the time of Christ's

ascension, and entrance into heaven, after he had finished the great work of man's salvation; prophetically delivered by the Psalmist, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, being what was before purposed and promised: by "my Lord", the person spoken to, the Messiah is designed, who was David's "Adon", or Lord, by right both of creation and redemption: as God, he made him: and as the Messiah and Saviour, redeemed him; and on both accounts had a right to rule over him. The words said unto him are,

sit thou on my right hand; which is a figurative phrase, and expressive of the exaltation, dignity, power, and authority of the Messiah; and of an honour done to him, which was never granted to the angels, nor to any mere man:

till I make thine enemies thy footstool; till all the enemies of him, and his people, are subdued under him; carnal professors, as the Pharisees, and profane sinners, who neither of them would have him to rule over them; the world, the devil, antichrist, and all the powers of darkness, and the last enemy, death itself. That these words were spoken of the Messiah, and therefore pertinently cited, and properly applied to him, by Jesus, is evident from the silence of the Pharisees; for had it not been the generally received sense of the Jewish church, they would, at once, have objected it to him; which might, in some measure, have relieved them under that distress, into which they were brought by this passage proposed unto them: but by their silence they acknowledged, that the Psalm was wrote by David; that it was wrote by him under the inspiration of the Spirit of God; and that the Messiah was the subject of it. And the same is owned by some of their doctors, ancient, and modern.

"Says R. Joden, in the name of R. Chijah, in time to come the holy blessed God will cause the king Messiah to sit at his right hand; as it is said, "the Lord said unto my Lord", etc. ^{f1215}."

And the same says, R. Berachiah, in the name of R. Levi, elsewhere ^{f1216}.
And, says, another of their writers ^{f1217},

"we do not find any man, or prophet, whose birth was prophesied of before the birth of his father and mother, but Messiah our righteousness; and of him it is intimated, "from the womb of the morning", etc. i.e. before the womb of her that bore thee was created, thy birth was prophesied of: and this these words respect,

“before the sun, his name is Yinnon”, (^{f1217}Psalm 72:17) i, e. before the creation of the sun, the name of our Messiah was strong and firm, and he shall sit at the right hand of God; and this is what is said, “sit at my right hand”.”

In some writings of the Jews, esteemed by them, very ancient ^{f1218}, the “Adon” or Lord, to whom these words are spoken, is interpreted of Messiah ben Joseph, whom they make to sit at the right hand of Abraham; which, though a false interpretation of the words, carries in it some marks and traces of the ancient sense of them: yea, even some of the more modern Jews ^{f1219} have owned, that they belong to the Messiah, and apply them to him. Though others, observing what confusion their forefathers were thrown into by Jesus, and what improvement his followers have made of this sense of the words since, have quitted it, and introduced strange and foreign ones. Some ^{f1220} of them would have Abraham the patriarch to be the subject of this Psalm; and that it was composed either by Melchizedek or by Eliezer, the servant of Abraham; or by David, on account of the victory Abraham obtained over the four kings, in rescuing his kinsman Lot: but Melchizedek could not be the author of it, because he was a far greater person than Abraham; he blessed him, and took tithes of him, and therefore would not call him Lord. Eliezer might indeed, as being his servant; but then he could not assign to him a seat at the right hand of God, or say of him, that he had an everlasting priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek: and though the Psalm was composed by David, yet not on the above account, for the same reasons. Nor is David the subject of it, as others ^{f1221} have affirmed; for it cannot be thought that David would say this of himself, or call himself his Lord, which this sense of the words makes him to do: and whereas others of them say, that it was wrote by one of the singers concerning him; it may be replied, that the title declares the contrary: besides, David is not ascended into heaven, nor is he set down at the right hand of God, nor had he any thing to do with the priesthood, much less was he a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and that for ever: but all is true of the Messiah Jesus, of whose kingdom and priesthood, sufferings, and exaltation, conquest of his enemies, and success of his Gospel, this whole Psalm is a very plain and manifest prophecy

Ver. 45. *If David then call him Lord*, etc.] That is, the Messiah, which is taken for granted, nor could the Pharisees deny it,

how is he his son? The question is to be answered upon true and just notions of the Messiah, but unanswerable upon the principles of the Pharisees; who expected the Messiah only as a mere man, that should be of the seed of David, and so his son; and should sit upon his throne, and be a prosperous and victorious prince, and deliver them out of the hands of their temporal enemies: they were able to make answer to the question, separately considered, as that he should be of the lineage and house of David; should lineally descend from him, be of his family, one of his offspring and posterity, and so be properly and naturally his son; but how he could be so, consistent with his being David's Lord, puzzled them. Had they understood and owned the proper divinity of the Messiah, they might have answered, that as he was God, he was David's Lord, his maker, and his king; and, as man, was David's son, and so both his root and offspring; and this our Lord meant to bring them to a confession of, or put them to confusion and silence, which was the consequence.

Ver. 46. *And no man was able to answer him a word*, etc.] They saw the dilemma they were reduced to, either to acknowledge the deity of the Messiah, or confess their ignorance; and neither of them they cared to do, and therefore judged it to be the wisest part to be silent.

Neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions: neither Pharisees nor Sadducees, for the same is observed by (²⁰⁰Luke 20:40) of the Sadducees particularly, and was true of all sorts, and every sect, of men among them: and thus our Lord was freed from a cavilling, captious, and troublesome generation of men, from this time forward, to the time of his sufferings, which was not very long after; for this was the third day before the passover, as appears from (¹⁰¹Matthew 26:1,2).