

## CHAPTER 11

**Ver. 1.** *A false balance [is] abomination to the Lord*, etc.] Under which are included all false weights and measures, and all fraudulent practices in commerce and dealing; which are forbidden by the Lord, and are abominable to him, as being injurious to the estates and properties of men: and more especially must be abominable in professors of religion, as being contrary to the grace of God; for though there may be common honesty where there is not the grace of God, yet there cannot be the true grace of God where there is not honesty; for the grace of God teaches to deny all such worldly lusts;

*but a just weight [is] his delight*; or a “perfect stone”<sup>f292</sup>; the ancient practice being to make use of stones for weights; Now to give just weight, and also just measure, and to do justly in all civil dealings with men, is what God requires, and is well pleasing in his sight<sup>f293</sup>; (see ~~<B>~~ Leviticus 19:35,36). This may be understood of balances and weights in religious affairs; the balance of the sanctuary is the word of God, with which all doctrines are to be weighed, and, if found wanting, they are to be rejected; this is agreeable to the will of God: false balances are abominable to him; such as carnal reason, vain philosophy, and the traditions of men, used by antichrist and his followers; the harlot, described in some preceding chapters, opposed to Wisdom or Christ, who directs to the search of the Scriptures, and the use of them to try doctrines by, (~~<B>~~ John 5:39); (see ~~<H>~~ Acts 17:11 ~~<G>~~ 1 John 4:1).

**Ver. 2.** *[When] pride cometh, then cometh shame*, etc.] The one follows the other, or rather keep pace together; as soon as one comes, the other comes; as in the case of the angels that sinned, Adam and Eve, Haman, Nebuchadnezzar, and others; and will be the case of the Romish antichrist, who, while vaunting and priding himself in his glory and grandeur, will fall into shame, disgrace, and destruction, (~~<B>~~ Revelation 18:7,8);

*but with the lowly [is] wisdom*; or wisdom shall come, as Jarchi: the consequence of which is honour and glory; as with Christ, who is meek and lowly, are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; so with his humble followers, who reckon themselves the least of saints, and chief of sinners, and own that it is by the grace of God they are what they are, is true

wisdom; they are wise unto salvation, and in the way to honour and glory; such humble souls shall be exalted, (<sup><0141></sup>Luke 14:11).

**Ver. 3.** *The integrity of the upright shall guide them*, etc.] The Spirit of God is the best guide of an upright man; he leads into all truth, and unto the land of uprightness, and continues to be a guide, even unto death; and it is right to walk after him, and not after the flesh: and besides him, the upright man has the word of God as a lamp to his feet, and a light to his paths, which he does well to take heed to; and next to that is the sincerity and uprightness of his heart, which will not suffer him, knowingly and willingly, to go aside into crooked paths, or to do amiss: integrity of heart and innocency of hand go together; such are the followers of the Lamb, as described, (<sup><0140></sup>Revelation 14:4,5); (see <sup><0251></sup>Psalms 25:21);

*but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them*; the perverse ways, words, and actions of such as transgress the law of God, deal treacherously with God and men, as the word <sup>f294</sup> signifies, shall be their ruin: the perverse doctrines and worship of the man of sin, and his followers, shall bring destruction upon them, (<sup><0104></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:4,8,12). The word for “perverseness” is only used here and in (<sup><0154></sup>Proverbs 15:4); and there plainly signifies the perverseness of the tongue or speech, and so may have respect to corrupt doctrine.

**Ver. 4.** *Riches profit not in the day of wrath*, etc.] When God takes away the soul, and summons to judgment, and brings to it; and as riches profited not Rome Pagan, in the day of the Lamb’s wrath upon it; so neither will they profit Rome Papal, when it will come in remembrance before God, to give it the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; (see <sup><0165></sup>Revelation 6:15-17 18:15-17);

*but righteousness delivereth from death*; from the curse of a corporeal death; from the power of a spiritual one; and from dying the second or an eternal one; (see Gill on <sup><0102></sup>Proverbs 10:2”); the Targum is,

“from an evil death.”

**Ver. 5.** *The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way*, etc.] Or “make [it] plain”<sup>f295</sup>; that is, the righteousness of those who are perfect in Christ, complete in him, perfectly justified by his righteousness; that righteousness makes their way plain; it is the direct way, the highway, the pathway to eternal life and happiness; see (<sup><0128></sup>Proverbs 12:28);

*but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness*; or, “in his wickedness”<sup>f296</sup>: in his own wicked way, which he has chosen and delights to walk in; he shall stumble therein, and fall into ruin and destruction, into hell and damnation: or by means or because of it he will fall; his wickedness will be the cause of his fall; as it will be the cause of the fall of Babylon, (~~f68D~~ Revelation 18:2,5).

**Ver. 6.** *The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them*, etc.] From death, as in (~~211D~~ Proverbs 11:4); and from falling by sin, totally and finally; or into it, so as to perish eternally; as well as it shall deliver those out of Babylon, who are the Lord’s people, that will be found therein when that is about to fall; (see ~~f68D~~ Revelation 18:4);

*but transgressors shall be taken in [their own] naughtiness*; in the very act of sin, and be punished for it; taken in it as in a net, and which they have spread for others, or as in a pit, which they have dug for others; taken as wild beasts are taken, to be destroyed; and that in the very midst of their wickedness, when fighting against God and the Lamb, as the beast and false prophet will, (~~f68D~~ Revelation 19:20).

**Ver. 7.** *When a wicked man dieth, [his] expectation shall perish*, etc.] His expectation of a longer life, of getting more riches, attaining to more honour, enjoying more pleasure here, and of having happiness hereafter, and of being delivered from wrath to come; he will then find, when he comes to die, that his expectations in this world are vain, and those which respect happiness in another world are ill-grounded; or when he dies, the expectation of others that depended on him, trusted in him, and looked for great things from him, will then be at an end;

*and the hope of unjust [men] perisheth*; which is as the giving up of the ghost, and expires when a man does; it is only in this life, or however it ceases when that does; he has no hope in his death, as the righteous man has; if he does not live without hope in the world, he has none when he goes out of it, or that will be of any use unto him: moreover, the hope of “unjust” men to oppress and injure others ceases when they die, (~~1817~~ Job 3:17). The word rendered unjust men is by some<sup>f297</sup> understood of strength, substance, riches; and so the meaning may be, that such a hope that is placed in strength and riches perishes at death. Jarchi interprets it of children, which are a man’s substance; as if the sense was, that the hope of the children of such persons is then cut off.

**Ver. 8.** *The righteous is delivered out of trouble*, etc.] One after another he comes into, if not in this life, yet at death; which is to him a perfect deliverance out of all tribulation; (see <sup><6174></sup>Revelation 7:14); or when the wicked die, as in (<sup><2117></sup>Proverbs 11:7), then the righteous are delivered from the trouble they gave them, or designed to give them; though it seems rather to design deliverance from trouble in the first sense, since it follows,

*and the wicked cometh in his stead*; as Haman did in the room of Mordecai, and was hanged upon the gallows the other was delivered from, and he had prepared for him, (<sup><1710></sup>Esther 7:10); and as Daniel was delivered from the lion's den, and his enemies thrown into it, (<sup><2724></sup>Daniel 6:24); and as in the latter day the righteous will be delivered from all their persecutors, and antichrist will be destroyed with the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming; and then they that destroyed the earth shall be destroyed themselves, (<sup><6118></sup>Revelation 11:18).

**Ver. 9.** *An hypocrite with [his] mouth destroyeth his neighbour*, etc.] Deceives him with his flatteries and lies, and draws him into destructive schemes and practices; or "corrupts" him, as the word <sup>f298</sup> signifies, and as the Targum renders it, with false doctrines; so, with fair words and good speeches, such who lie in wait to deceive impose upon the simple and credulous; and false teachers, with their damnable heresies, bring swift destruction on men; and particularly antichrist and his emissaries, through speaking lies in hypocrisy, corrupt and destroy many, (<sup><501></sup>1 Timothy 4:1,2);

*but through knowledge shall the just be delivered*; from the hypocrite and deceitful worker, and from being corrupted and destroyed by the words of his mouth: Jarchi says, through the knowledge of the law, which warns against him; but rather through the knowledge of the Gospel, which the just man has; for as by this such escape the pollutions of the world, so likewise they are delivered, are kept and secured, from the error of the wicked: through a man's knowledge of himself, of his descent from Adam, of the corruption of his nature, of the plague of his heart, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin; of his lost and undone state; of his impotency to that which is good, of his incapacity to fulfil the law, and atone for sin; and of the insufficiency of his own righteousness to justify him before God; he is delivered and preserved from giving into the notions of the purity of human nature, the power of free will, and the doctrine of justification by works: through his knowledge of the person of Christ; of his offices and

relations; of him as a Saviour; of the efficacy of his blood, the excellency of his righteousness, and the completeness of his sacrifice; and through the knowledge of God in Christ, and of the Spirit and of his operations of grace, as well as of the sacred Scriptures in general; he is safe from being carried away with any errors concerning any of the divine Persons, particularly concerning the deity, sonship, and satisfaction of Christ; in short, as ignorance is the mother of devotion, superstition, and error, in the church of Rome, spiritual experimental knowledge of the above things is the best preservative from all errors and heresies which corrupt and destroy the souls of men, to be found in that apostate church, or elsewhere.

**Ver. 10.** *When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth,* etc.] As it always does, even in the worst of times; in times of public calamity and distress, and when enemies rise up on all hands; it is well with them in life, in death, and to all eternity; (see <sup><2180></sup>Isaiah 3:10); but there are particular times when it goes well with them, which is matter of joy to others; when they prosper in the world, increase in riches and honour, and are advanced to places of authority and trust; just magistrates in a city or commonwealth are a blessing, and so cause joy; (see <sup><2180></sup>Proverbs 29:2); and when it goes well with them in spiritual things, they increase in gifts and grace, the humble hear of it and are glad; the city or church of God, the community of the saints, rejoice: and as it went well with them in Constantine's time, when Paganism was destroyed and persecution ceased; and at the time of the reformation, when the pure doctrines of the Gospel were revived, which were both times of joy to the city of God; so in the latter day, when the Lord's people will be righteous, the church will be the joy of many generations; and when the kingdom shall be given to the saints of the most High, and the kingdoms of the world become the Lord's and his Christ's, there will be great voices in heaven, rejoicings in the church, and a new song sung, (<sup><2180></sup>Isaiah 60:21,15 <sup><6115></sup>Revelation 11:15,17 14:3,4);

*and when the wicked perish, [there is] shouting;* as there will be great rejoicings, shoutings, and hallelujahs, when Babylon is fallen, (<sup><6180></sup>Revelation 18:20,21 19:1,2).

**Ver. 11.** *By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted,* etc.] That is, either by the blessings with which they are blessed; and these are either temporal or spiritual: when good men are blessed with temporal blessings, the place where they live is the better it; and especially the poor, for they do not eat their morsel alone; and where there are many of these, and in

prosperous circumstances, it is the exaltation and glory of a city taken in a literal sense; and which is the more blessed for their sakes, as well as they themselves are a blessing to it: and as the upright are blessed with spiritual blessings, with blessings indeed, with the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God; when they are fruitful and flourishing in grace, the city or church of God is in an exalted state: or rather this is to be understood of the blessings with which the upright bless others; and may be interpreted of the blessed deeds or good works which they do, and which are profitable to men; or of their blessed counsel and advice which they give on emergent occasions, and which proves salutary, and for the good of the city; or rather for their blessed prayers which they put up for the peace and prosperity of it, and which succeed. So by the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, or by the blessed doctrines of his apostles, those upright and sincere ministers of the word, the city of the living God was greatly exalted in their times; as it also was in the times of Constantine, and at the reformation; and this now is a reason why the city rejoices at its going well with the righteous, whether in temporals or spirituals. So Aben Ezra thinks the words have a connection with the former;

*but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked;* by the corrupt communication which proceeds out of their mouths; by their obscene and filthy talk the inhabitants of a place are corrupted; evil communications corrupt good manners; by their swearing and cursing, their oaths and imprecations, by their lying and perjury, they bring the judgments of God upon a city, to the overthrow of it. So by false doctrines, as the faith of particular persons is subverted, so whole cities, or visible congregated churches, have been corrupted and destroyed, as with the Arian heresy and others.

**Ver. 12.** *He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour,* etc.] Not only in his heart, but by giving him opprobrious language; he speaks contemptibly of him, either because he thinks he is wiser than his neighbour, and therefore calls him fool at every turn; as those who are most destitute of wisdom conceit they have the largest share of it, and despise others; or else because he is richer than his neighbour, as the poor is generally despised by the rich; or because he fancies he is holier than he, as the Pharisee who trusts in himself that he is righteous, and despises others: or a man “that wants a heart”,<sup>f299</sup> as it may be rendered; that wants a good one, or wants grace in his heart; he despises the counsel and advice,

the admonitions and instructions, which his neighbour gives him for his good;

*but a man of understanding holdeth his peace:* and will not despise his neighbour, or give him ill language, because he is not so wise, or so rich, or so righteous as he; if he cannot speak any good of him, he will not speak evil of him; or he holds his peace, is silent, and will not answer the man void of wisdom, that despises and reproaches him; he will not render railing for railing; when he is reviled he will revile not again; and by so doing he shows himself to be a man understanding, or of intellects; a wise and prudent.

**Ver. 13.** *A talebearer revealeth secrets,* etc.] The Arabic version adds, in the congregation, openly and publicly; that goes about with tales from place to place, who is like a walking merchant or peddler, as the word<sup>f300</sup> signifies; who takes up his wares at one place, and exposes them to sale, and vends them at another; so a talebearer, he goes from house to house, and picks up tales at one place and carries them to another and tells them; and as by his going about he gets into the secrets of persons and families, or is intrusted with them, his character not being known, he reveals them to others, and so breaks the trust committed to him (see <sup><5453></sup>1 Timothy 5:13). The Targum and Syriac version render it “an accuser”; and the same name is given to the devil in the New Testament, and indeed such a man is no better;

*but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter;* that is “faithful” to his friend, that trusts him with his secrets, of which there are but few; he “conceals the matter” he is entrusted with: “the things”, as the Septuagint version; the secrets which are imparted to him; or “the word”,<sup>f301</sup> that he has heard, and has been spoken to him in privacy, and in strict friendship: or he “covers the matter”<sup>f302</sup> or thing; he hides the infirmities of his friend and neighbour, and does not expose them as the talebearer does; (see <sup><608></sup>1 Peter 4:8).

**Ver. 14.** *Where no counsel [is], the people fall,* etc.] Where there is no wise and prudent, sound and good counsel, as the word signifies; where that is not, there had as good be none, or better; a people, a kingdom, a commonwealth, nation, or city, fall into ruin and destruction, or into schemes which bring them to it; they are like a ship without a pilot, or without a helm, or one to steer it: the Targum, Syriac, and Vulgate Latin versions, render it,

“where there is no governor;”

and the Arabic version,

“they that have no providence (or forecast) fall as a leaf falls;”

and so the Septuagint version,

“they that have no government fall as leaves,”

as leaves fall in autumn; and the word signifies the helm of government<sup>f303</sup>, in allusion to a ship;

*but in the multitude of counsellors [there is] safety*; because what one may miss another may hit upon; and, if they agree in their advice, it may be the more depended upon; and, if not, yet their different sentiments being compared together, and the reasons of them, a person may the better judge which is best to follow, and what is fit to be done: it may be rendered, “in the greatness” or “largeness of a counsellor”<sup>f304</sup>, for the word is in the singular number; that is, in the large capacity or endowments of a counsellor; in one that is abundantly qualified for a counsellor; whose abilities are not to be questioned; in the advice of such an one a man may safely confide; and who that answers to this character as Jesus Christ, the wonderful Counsellor? in whose counsel we may rest with the greatest safety; and which may be found in his word, in the Scriptures, which David says should be the men of his counsel, (<sup><302></sup>Psalm 119:24); (see <sup><306></sup>Isaiah 9:6 28:29).

**Ver. 15.** *He that is surety for a stranger shall smart [for it]*, etc.] Or in “breaking shall be broken”<sup>f305</sup>, ruined and undone; he engaging or becoming a bondsman for one whose circumstances he knew not; and these being bad bring a load upon him, such an heavy debt as crushes him to pieces. Mr. Henry observes that our Lord Jesus Christ became a surety for us when we were strangers, and he smarted for it, he was bruised and wounded for our sins; but then he knew our circumstances, and what the consequence would be, and became a surety on purpose to pay the whole debt and set us free; which he was capable of doing: without being broken or becoming a bankrupt himself; for he was not broken, nor did he fail, (<sup><304></sup>Isaiah 42:4). Jarchi’s note is,

“the wicked shall be broken, to whose heart idolatry is sweet;”



*and he that hateth suretyship is sure*; or those “that strike”<sup>f306</sup>, that is, with the hand, used in suretyship; (see <sup>2168</sup>Proverbs 6:1); such an one is safe from coming into trouble by such means. The Targum is,

“and hates those that place their hope in God.”

**Ver. 16.** *A gracious woman retaineth honour*, etc.] Or “a woman of grace”<sup>f307</sup> one that has the grace of God in her heart, and is of a virtuous conversation, and by both amiable and lovely to others; as she receives honour or glory from them, which she deserves, so she retains the same. The Targum is,

“a gracious woman divides glory;”

that is, between herself and her husband; to which the Arabic version agrees, which renders it,

“a gracious woman raises up glory to her husband.”

Jarchi interprets it of the congregation of Israel; his note is,

“the congregation of Israel continually draws nigh to the glory of God and his law;”

and it may be applied to the true church of Christ, which seeks the glory of Christ, and retains the glory of Gospel doctrines, of Gospel ordinances, of Gospel discipline, and of Gospel conversation, when the harlot, the apostate church, has lost all honour of these things;

*and strong [men] retain riches*: some render it, “as strong men retain riches”<sup>f308</sup>; as they, when they have got them into their possession, keep them, it being in the power of their hands so to do, against all that would take them from them; so a gracious woman is as tenacious of her honour for chastity, modesty, wisdom, and conduct: or by those “strong men”, or “terrible [and] violent” ones, as the word<sup>f309</sup> signifies, may be meant the beast of Rome and his followers, cruel persecutors; whose principal care it is to amass the riches and wealth of others, which, when they have got, they hold fast.

**Ver. 17.** *The merciful man doeth good to his own soul*, etc.] Or “to himself”: a man of mercy or grace, a liberal bountiful man, he comfortably enjoys what God has given him, (<sup>2058</sup>Ecclesiastes 5:18); and he does good

to others with it, and thereby does good to himself also; as well as he is solicitous in a spiritual sense for the good and welfare of his immortal soul;

*but [he that is] cruel troubleth his own flesh*; a sordid avaricious man withholds from himself that which is meet, will not allow himself the necessaries of life, nor will he provide that which is fit and convenient for his family; he hides himself from his own flesh, and will not communicate to the wants of his nearest friends and relations, and shuts up his bowels of compassion against his own brother; all which may be called a troubling his own flesh; (see <sup><2383></sup>Isaiah 58:7). R. Levi Ben Gersom interprets this of such who place religion in afflicting and macerating the body by fasting, which the law does not require; and it may fitly be applied to the Papists, who do this by penances and fastings, and whippings and scourgings; and which the apostle calls a neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh, (<sup><5123></sup>Colossians 2:23).

**Ver. 18.** *The wicked worketh a deceitful work*, etc.] Such a wicked man as before described; that neither enjoys the good things of life he has, nor suffers others to enjoy them; and all to accumulate riches, which are deceitful and perishing; and who abstains from meats, which God has created for use, under a pretence of religion, and so deceives his own soul; and indeed every sin which a wicked man commits is a deceitful work; it promises him that pleasure, or profit, or liberty, which it does not give him, and in the issue is the ruin of him; and so all false doctrines, propagated by deceitful workers, are deceitful works, by which they deceive the simple, and at last themselves; they “obtain a deceitful reward of [their] work”, as Gussetius<sup>f310</sup> renders it;

*but to him that soweth righteousness*; does acts of beneficence and liberality; (see <sup><4009></sup>2 Corinthians 9:9,10); and all other good works, or works of righteousness,

*[shall be] a sure reward*; according to what a man sows, and the manner in which he sows, so shall he reap, (<sup><4006></sup>2 Corinthians 9:6 <sup><8008></sup>Galatians 6:8); or, “a reward of truth”; instead of being given up to believe a lie, he shall receive the love of the truth, and abide in it, which will bring him to eternal glory and happiness; he being chosen to it through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, (<sup><5120></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:10-13); and, instead of a deceitful reward, shall have a true, real, solid, and substantial one.

**Ver. 19.** *As righteousness [tendeth] to life*, etc.] Or, is unto life: not mere outward acts of moral righteousness; these may be done where there is no principle of spiritual life, and are no other than dead works, and will never bring to everlasting life; indeed the best righteousness of man's is no justification of life, nor can it entitle to it, nor is meritorious of it. Godliness, or true holiness, has the promise of this life and that to come, (<sup><5048></sup>1 Timothy 4:8); and so here in the Hebrew text it is, “unto lives”,<sup>f311</sup> in the plural number. Internal grace, or powerful godliness, which is the new man that is created in righteousness, gives a meetness for everlasting life, and issues in it; particularly the righteousness of Christ, as that is a perfectly justifying one; it makes a man alive in a law sense, and gives a title and claim to eternal life;

*so he that pursueth evil [pursueth it] to his own death*; or, it is “to his own death”; it issues in that: not he that is overtaken in a fault, or falls into sin through the infirmity of the flesh and the force of temptation, but such who eagerly follow after it and overtake it; who give up themselves unto it, weary themselves in committing it, draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope; these often by their sins bring diseases upon them, which end in a corporeal death; or by means of which they come into the hand of the civil magistrate, and are capitally punished; and, however, die the second death, or an eternal one, the just wages of sin, (<sup><6163></sup>Romans 6:23).

**Ver. 20.** *They that are of a froward heart [are] abomination to the Lord*, etc.] Such as are men of perverse dispositions and principles; that are contrary to the light of nature, the law of God, and Gospel of Christ; who, like the Jews of old, please not God, and are contrary to all men, to all good men; as antichrist and his followers, these work abomination, and make a lie, and speak lies in hypocrisy; are double hearted men, hypocrites, that say one thing and mean another; and, under the pretence of religion, do the vilest things: such of all men are abominable in the sight of God, and will have their portion in the lake of fire, in the hottest place in hell, as hypocrites will, (<sup><6208></sup>Revelation 21:8,27 <sup><4251></sup>Matthew 24:51);

*but [such as are] upright in [their] way [are] his delight*; or, “in the way”; there being no need of a supplement: such as are in the way, Christ, and walk by faith in him, and in the paths of truth and holiness, in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless, who are the “undefiled in the way”, as in (<sup><4900></sup>Psalms 119:1), where the same words are

used as here: or, are “perfect” in Christ; though not in faith, nor in their walk and conversation; yet are sincere, Israelites indeed, and walk uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel. These the Lord takes delight and pleasure in; he is well pleased with their persons in Christ; and in their walk and works, as they flow from right principles, and are directed to right ends, and being upright in all; (see <sup><6841></sup>Psalm 84:11).

**Ver. 21.** [*Though hand [join] in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished*, etc.] Though they give the hand to one another, unite in their counsels, enter into combinations, confederacies, and strict alliances, and join all their force and strength together; or though with both hands, with all their might and main, endeavour to secure themselves, yet they shall not go unpunished. This may be exemplified in the kings of the earth, that will join each other, and gather their armies together, to make war against Christ; when they will be conquered, taken, and slain, (<sup><6699></sup>Revelation 19:19-21). Jarchi interprets it, “from hand to hand”, and explains it thus; from the hand of God into their hand shall come the reward of their work, and shall not go unpunished: to which may be added, even though there may be a succession of parents and children, and their substance may be handed down from the one to the other, yet at last just punishments will take place. To which is opposed,

*but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered*; these are the seed of the church in all successive ages; the seed that are accounted of by the Lord for a generation; particularly the remnant of the woman’s seed, that keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ; against whom the dragon, the old serpent the devil, was wroth, and went forth to make war, in order utterly to destroy them; but they escaped his hands, were delivered from him, and preserved by the power and grace of God, as a seed to serve him, (<sup><627></sup>Revelation 12:17).

**Ver. 22.** [*As a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout*, etc.] The allusion seems to be to the ringing of swine, to prevent their rooting up the earth; which is usually done by putting an iron ring into their snout; which is much more proper and suitable than a gold ring, or a jewel set in gold, which is very unbecoming such a creature; and is soon had to the dunghill, or to some miry place, and there defiled;

*[so is] a fair woman which is without discretion*; or, “has departed from taste”<sup><312></sup>; from a taste of virtue and honour; lost all sense of modesty and chastity; forsaken her husband, and given up herself to the embraces of

others. As her beauty is fitly expressed by a “jewel of gold”, which is valuable and desirable, and, rightly placed and used, is ornamental; so she is properly represented by a swine, wallowing in the impurities of lust; to which her beauty was the snare, and whereby it is quickly sullied and lost. Jarchi applies this to a disciple of a wise man, or a scholar that departs from the good way, or from the law; which he explains by taste or sense: but it may be better applied to the scarlet whore, or apostate church of Rome; which has departed from Christ, once her professed husband; from the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; from all taste and savour of true religion; and even from common sense and right reason, as in the affair of transubstantiation, and other things; and may be fitly compared to a swine with a jewel of gold in its snout, being “decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls”; and yet “drunk with the blood of the saints”, and “martyrs of Jesus”; and wallowing in all the faith of fornication, of idolatry, and superstition; as well as in all manner of other sins and iniquities, (<sup>66704</sup>Revelation 17:4-6).

**Ver. 23.** *The desire of the righteous [is] only good*, etc.] Or, “what is good”<sup>f313</sup>; only good is the object of it. His desire is to do good, and that only; though he does not always do what he would do: as he delights in the law of God, after the inward man; as he is a righteous, holy, and good man, and would be conformable thereunto, and serves it with his mind, will, and affections; his desires are to the Lord, and to the remembrance of his name; he desires his favour, the discoveries of his love, communion with him, and communications of grace from him; he desires all spiritual good things, and everything that is good, for himself and others, and which he desires in submission to the will of God; and all things do work for and issue in his good. Good is what he is continually desirous of, wishing and praying for; and good is what he has eventually here and hereafter: though there may be many irregular and unlawful desires in him at times, and all things he has may not seem good; yet acting as a good man, his desires are only good, and there is nothing attends him but what is for his good;

*[but] the expectation of the wicked [is] wrath*; what he is desirous of, wishing, and looking for, is wrath and vengeance upon all that displease him, and he is angry with; he desires no good to them, but evil; he desires and hopes for nothing but what is offensive to God, and will bring upon him his fierce wrath and sore displeasure; so that eventually nothing else will be the fruit and consequence of his expectation and hope; and some are so shockingly profane, and so dreadfully hardened, that they wait for

hell, as Jarchi on the place observes; they look for damnation and expect it, and are easy about it.

**Ver. 24.** *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth*, etc.] That scattereth “his own”, as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions add: that disperses his money here and there, among many poor objects, plentifully and liberally; and his substance is so far from being lessened by such a conduct, that, by the blessing of God, it is increased more and more; or “become richer”, as the Vulgate Latin; (see <sup><f313></sup>Psalm 112:9). So he that disperses and dispenses the word of God, and spreads the truths of the Gospel, and freely and fully preaches them, increases himself in spiritual knowledge and understanding;

*and [there is] that withholdeth more than is meet*; or, “right” or “just”<sup>f314</sup>, by the, laws of God and men; from himself, from his family, from his friends and relations, and from the poor of the church and of the world; and from the cause and interest of Christ, and what is necessary to support that, according to his ability;

*but [it tendeth] to poverty*, or “want”<sup>f315</sup>: such a man is often brought to beggary; there is a moth and rottenness sent into his substance, which secretly consume it: so he that withholds any truth or doctrine, that keeps back anything that may be profitable to the saints; this tends to the impoverishing: of his soul, and the souls of them that attend on his ministry.

**Ver. 25.** *The liberal soul shall be made fat*, etc.] Or, “the soul of blessing”<sup>f316</sup>: that is, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “the soul which blesseth”; not that merely prays for a blessing upon others, and wishes them well, and gives them good words; but bestows blessings on them, gives good things unto them liberally, cheerfully, and plentifully; and so is a blessing to the poor, and receives a blessing from them again; as such also do from the Lord, by whom they are “made fat”; or are blessed with temporal and spiritual blessings; and are in thriving and flourishing circumstances, both in soul and body. So he that comes full fraught with the blessing of the Gospel of Christ to others is enriched with it himself, and becomes more and more flourishing in gifts and grace;

*and he that watereth shall be watered also himself*; he that largely shares with others, like a flowing fountain of water, shall have an abundance communicated to him again from God, the inexhaustible fountain of

mercies. Watering the plants in Christ's vineyard is one part of the work of a Gospel minister; "I have planted, Apollos watered", etc. (~~4886~~1 Corinthians 3:6-8); and such who do their work well are watered, rewarded, refreshed, and comforted of God, being largely taught and richly furnished for such service by him; so the Targum,

"and he that teacheth, also he himself shall learn."

**Ver. 26.** *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him*, etc.] That hoards it up for a better price, in hopes of a better market; and does not bring it out, and expose it to sale, when there is a scarcity of it; so the Targum adds, "in famine"; or, "in straits", as the Syriac version; in a time of distress through, famine: this will bring the curse of the poor upon him, who will imprecate the most dreadful things on him and his family. Jarchi interprets it of the law, and of withholding the teaching of it; but it may be better applied to the Gospel, and the withholding the ministration of that, and so causing a famine, not of bread and of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord; which is done by the Papists, by prohibiting Gospel ministers preaching the word; forbidding the people to read it in their own language; locking it up from them in a language they understand not; and so starve the souls of men, which brings upon them a curse;

*but blessing [shall be] upon the head of him that selleth [it]*; at a moderate price, so that the poor may be able to come at it; such will have their blessing; they will wish all happiness to them and their families, here and hereafter. Or, "that breaks"<sup>f317</sup> it; separates it from the heap, breaks and grinds it into flour, and then sells it: or imparts it freely; so the Septuagint version, "that communicates": and the Arabic version, "that gives"; and may be fitly applied to a faithful minister of the Gospel, who breaks the bread of life, and freely and plentifully imparts it to the souls of men; and who has the hearty prayers and good wishes of the people to whom he ministers. The master of a family used to break the bread, as Christ often did.

**Ver. 27.** *He that diligently seeketh good*, etc.] Or "early"; who rises early in the morning, as the word<sup>f318</sup> signifies, and seeks both to do good, and to enjoy it all the day; who, in the first place, seeks the kingdom of God and his righteousness; who, in the morning of his youth, inquires after the best things; and diligently pursues what is for his own good and welfare, and that of others, and for the glory of God:



*procureth favour*, both of God and men: or, “seeketh favour”<sup>f319</sup>; or that which is acceptable and well-pleasing unto God;

*but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him*; that seeks to do hurt to others; that which he seeks to do to them shall come upon himself; (see <sup>4995</sup>Psalm 9:15); so antichrist, that leads into captivity, shall go into captivity; and that kills with the sword, shall be killed by it, (<sup>6630</sup>Revelation 13:10).

**Ver. 28.** *He that trusteth in his riches shall fall*, etc.] As leaves in autumn, which are withered and dry. To trust in riches is to trust in uncertain things; things not to be depended on, being here today and gone tomorrow; it is like leaning upon a broken staff, which giving way, the person falls: and so the fall of Babylon will be, while she is trusting in and boasting of her riches and grandeur, (<sup>6607</sup>Revelation 18:7,8);

*but the righteous shall flourish as a branch*; that abides in the tree, is alive and green, full of leaves, and laden with fruit: so the righteous are as branches in Christ, and receive life and nourishment from him, and abide in him; and bring forth fruit and flourish, like palm trees and cedars, in the house of the Lord, and grow in every grace, and in the knowledge of Christ; (see <sup>24707</sup>Jeremiah 17:7,8).

**Ver. 29.** *He that troubleth his own house*, etc.] His family, his wife, and children, and servants; by being bitter to the one, and by provoking the others to wrath, and continually giving out menacing words to the rest; or through idleness, not providing for his family; or through an over worldly spirit, pushing on business, and hurrying it on beyond measure; or through a niggardly and avaricious temper, withholding meat and drink, and clothes convenient for them; see (<sup>3157</sup>Proverbs 15:27); or through profuseness and prodigality. Such an one

*shall inherit the wind*; nothing but vanity and emptiness; he shall come to nothing, and get nothing; and what he does, he shall not keep, and on which he cannot live;

*and the fool [shall be] servant to the wise of heart*; he who has both got and lost his substance in a foolish way shall be so reduced as to become a servant to him who has pursued wise measures, both in getting and keeping what he has; and to whom perhaps the fool formerly stood in the relation of a master. Such a change will be with respect to antichrist and the saints, (<sup>2025</sup>Daniel 7:25-27).



**Ver. 30.** *The fruit of the righteous [is] a tree of life*, etc.] Either the fruit which grows upon Christ, the tree of life, and which they receive from him; even all the blessings of grace, peace, pardon, righteousness, and life, (<sup><4017></sup>Revelation 2:7); or the fruits which the righteous bring forth under the influence of divine grace; they are trees of righteousness, and are filled with the fruits of righteousness by Christ, and have their fruit unto holiness, and their end everlasting life. Aben Ezra interprets it,

“the fruit of the righteous is as the fruit of the tree of life;”

that is, lovely, beautiful, desirable, salutary, and issues in life;

*and he that winneth souls [is] wise*; antichrist trades in the souls of men, that is one part of his wares, (<sup><4013></sup>Revelation 18:13); but his negotiations about them are to the loss, and not to the saving of them: whereas wise and faithful ministers of the word, such as are here described, use all prudent methods to gain and save the souls of men, (<sup><4019></sup>1 Corinthians 9:19-22); even their precious immortal souls, which are of more worth than a world, are the immediate production of God, made after his image, which by sin they come short of; and having sinned, are liable to eternal death; the redemption of which is precious; the charge of which Christ has taken, and therefore is called the Shepherd and Bishop of souls; and which he commits to the care of his under shepherds, who watch for them, as they that must give an account. To “win” them is to teach them, for the word<sup>f320</sup> has the signification of teaching or doctrine; (see <sup><4042></sup>Proverbs 4:2); the ministers of Christ are teachers, qualified and sent by him as such; and their business is to teach men their state by nature, how sinful, miserable, and helpless they are; and also Christ, and the way of life by him; that salvation is in him, and in no other; that justification is only by his righteousness, peace and pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice: they also teach various other things; as the fear of God, faith in Christ, love to him, and obedience to all his commands. To win souls is to proselyte them and convert them to the true religion; to bring them into a love and liking of it, and to embrace it: the souls that Abraham got or made in Haran are supposed to be such; and the same with those trained or instructed in his house, whom he armed for the rescue of Lot, (<sup><4125></sup>Genesis 12:5 14:14); the former of which texts Jarchi compares with this, as explanative of it. The phrases of “turning many to righteousness”, done by the “wise”: and of “converting a sinner from the error of his way”, whereby a “soul is saved from death”, (<sup><2712></sup>Daniel 12:3 <sup><3021></sup>James 5:20), are a proper comment on

these words: which, moreover, may be rendered, “he that taketh souls”<sup>f321</sup>; as a fort or castle is taken, and which is sometimes expressed by “winning”; (see <sup><430></sup>2 Chronicles 32:1 <sup><4080></sup>Proverbs 18:9). The soul of man is a hold, and a strong hold, of foul spirits; it is Satan’s palace or castle, which he keeps and holds against Christ, but is won and taken by him; which is usually done by means of the word, and the ministry of it, which are made effectual to the pulling down of strong holds, (<sup><4704></sup>2 Corinthians 10:4,5). Or the allusion is to the taking or catching of birds in a snare, or fishes in a net. The souls of men are got into the snare of the devil, and they are taken out from hence by breaking this snare; by which means they escape the hands of the fowler, Satan, and come into better hands: the old serpent laid a bait for our first parents, by which he gained his point, and that was the fruit of the forbidden tree; but the bait which wise men lay to catch souls is the fruit of the tree of life, mentioned in the former clause, the blessings of grace in Christ. Again, Christ’s ministers are called “fishers” of men, and are said to “catch” men, (<sup><4089></sup>Matthew 4:19 <sup><4510></sup>Luke 5:10); which they do by casting and spreading the net of the Gospel; the Gospel is the net; the world is the sea into which it is cast; where natural men are in their element, as fishes in the sea: the casting of the net is the preaching of the Gospel; and by means of this souls are caught and gathered in to Christ and his churches, (<sup><4037></sup>Matthew 13:47,48). Once more, the words are by some rendered, “he that allures souls”<sup>f322</sup>; which is done, not by the terrors of the law, but by the charming voice of the Gospel; by which souls are drawn to God and Christ, and brought among his people: and one that is an instrument of all this had need be “wise”, and so he appears to be; he that teacheth men the knowledge of divine and spiritual things had need to be as he is, as a scribe well instructed in the kingdom of God; he who is to be the instrument of converting sinners must have a mouth and wisdom to address them in a proper manner; as he that wills a castle, or takes a fort, ought to have military skill as well as courage; and to cast a net well requires art as well as strength.

**Ver. 31.** *Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth*, etc.] Which Aben Ezra understands of the recompence of their good works. There is a reward for the righteous, and which they have now in keeping, though not “for” keeping, the commandments of God; they have the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come, and which is made good to them; they have every good thing now which is proper and convenient for them; and they shall be recompensed in the new earth, in

which only righteous persons will dwell. But it seems better, with Jarchi, to interpret it of the recompence of their sins and transgressions; that is, of their chastisements and afflictions, with which they are chastised by their heavenly Father, when they sin against him; which are all in love and for their good; and which they have only here on earth, while they are in this world; they will be all over in another, when there will be no more sin, and no more chastisement for it, much less condemnation; (see <sup><4113></sup>1 Corinthians 11:32);

*much more the wicked and the sinner*; who shall not only be punished on earth as they often are, but in hell to all eternity. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render the whole thus; “if the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” Which words are used by the Apostle Peter, to show, that if judgment or chastisement begin at the house of God, or with the righteous, that the end of the wicked must be very bad; which entirely agrees with the sense of this passage; (see <sup><4117></sup>1 Peter 4:17,18); a “behold” is prefixed to the whole, as a note, either of admiration, or rather of attention to what is sure and certain, and worthy of regard and consideration. The Targum is,

“behold, the righteous are strengthened in the earth; but the wicked and the sinners shall be consumed out of the earth;”

which seems to agree with Aben Ezra’s sense of the words; see (<sup><4115></sup>Psalm 104:35).