

AGAINST TITHING

JOHN OWEN

*Against Tithing excepted
from:*

AN EXPOSITION
OF THE
EPISTLE
TO THE HEBREWS

John Owen

Edited by W. H. Goold

VOLUME V

Hebrews 6:1—7:28

1855 edition

AN EXPOSITION
OF THE
EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

CHAPTER VI.

THIS whole chapter is a continuation of the digression which the apostle had occasionally entered into in the 11th verse of the preceding chapter. For upon the consideration of the greatness of the mystery and difficulty of the doctrine which he designed to instruct these Hebrews in, and his fear of their disability or unpreparedness (at least of some) to receive it in a due manner unto their edification, he engageth into a new discourse, filled up with reasons and arguments to excite them unto a diligent attendance. And this he so doth, as in the very last words of this chapter to return, by an artificial connection of his discourse, unto what he had asserted in the 10th verse of that foregoing.

There are four general parts of this chapter:—1. The *proposition* of what he intended to do, or discourse concerning; with an opposition thereunto of what was by him to be omitted, verses 1–3. 2. An *excitation* of the Hebrews unto singular diligence in attending unto the most perfect doctrines of Christianity, and making a progress in the knowledge of Christ. And this he doth from the consideration of the greatness of the sin and the inevitableness of the destruction of apostates. For this sort of persons do commonly arise from among such as, having received the truth, and made a profession thereof, do not diligently endeavour a progress towards perfection, according to their duty, verses 4–8. 3. A *lenifying of the severity of this commination* in respect of its application unto these Hebrews. For he expresseth his hope that it did not so belong unto them, or that the sin condemned should not be found in them, nor the punishment threatened fall on them. But the warning itself contained in the commination was, as he shows, good, wholesome, and seasonable. And of this his hope and judgment concerning the Hebrews he expresseth his grounds, taken from the righteous-

Reprinted 1980
from the Goold edition
published in 1855 by
Johnstone & Hunter, London

ISBN: 0-8010-6673-5

PHOTOLITHOPRINTED BY CUSHING - MALLOY, INC.
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

effectually bless them. This especial institution, I acknowledge, was after the days of Melchisedec, and the cessation of his office as to actual administration; but it is apparent, and may be proved, that many, if not the most, of those sacred institutions which were given in one system unto Moses, were singly and gradually given out by inspiration and prophecy unto the church before the giving of the law, only at Sinai their number was increased, and the severity of their sanction heightened. Thus this sacerdotal benediction was but a transcript from and expressive of that power and form of blessing which Melchisedec as a priest enjoyed and used before.

And from what hath been spoken we may gather the nature of this blessing of Melchisedec wherewith he blessed Abraham. For, (1.) It had the nature of a blessing in *general*, whereby any one man may bless another, in that it was euctical and eucharistical;—it included both prayer for him and thanksgiving on his account unto God. (2.) It was *authoritative* and sacerdotal. He was “the priest of the most high God,” and he “blessed Abraham;” that is, by virtue of his office. For so the nature of the office requireth, and so God had in particular appointed, that the priests should bless in his name. (3.) It was *prophetical*, proceeding from an immediate inspiration, whereby he declares the confirmation of the great blessing promised unto Abraham; “Blessed be Abram.” And we may see,—

Obs. XXI. That he who hath received the greatest mercies and privileges in this world may yet need their ministerial confirmation.—Abraham had before received the blessing from the mouth of God himself; and yet it was no doubt a great confirmation of his faith, to be now blessed again in the name of God by Melchisedec. And, indeed, such is the estate of all the faithful, the children of Abraham in this world, that, what through the weakness of their faith, what through the greatness of their temptations and trials, they stand in need of all ministerial renovations of the pledges of God’s goodwill towards them. We are apt to think that if God should speak once unto us, as he did to Abraham, and assure us of the blessing, we should never need further confirmation whilst we live; but the truth is, he doth so speak unto all that believe, in the word, and yet we find how much we want the ministerial renovation of it unto us. Bless God for the ministry, for the word and sacraments; ordinarily our faith would not be kept up without them.

Obs. XXII. In the blessing of Abraham by Melchisedec, all believers are virtually blessed by Jesus Christ.—Melchisedec was a type of Christ, and represented him in what he was and did, as our apostle declares. And Abraham in all these things bare the person of, or represented all his posterity according to the faith. Therefore doth our apostle, in the foregoing chapter, entitle all believers unto

the promises made unto him, and the inheritance of them. There is, therefore, more than a bare story in this matter. A blessing is in it conveyed unto all believers, in the way of an ordinance for ever.

Obs. XXIII. It is God’s institution that makes all our administrations effectual.—So did sacerdotal benedictions become authoritative and efficacious. Innumerable ways and means of blessing things and persons have been found out in the Papacy. They will bless bells, steeples, churches, and church-yards, utensils, fonts, candles, salt, and children by confirmation. There is, in truth, in them all a want of that wisdom, gravity, and reverence, which ought to accompany men in all religious services; but that which renders them all useless, and casts them out of the verge of religion, is, that they want a divine institution.

2. The second sacerdotal act, or exercise of priestly power ascribed unto Melchisedec, is that he received tithes of all: “To ^{ὅτι καὶ δεκάτην} whom also Abraham gave the tenth of all.” As Abra- ^{ἀπὸ πάντων ἱμῶν} ham gave them in a way of duty, so he received them ^{πίστιν} in a way of office. So the apostle expresseth it, verse 6, “He received tithes of Abraham,” or tithed him. And the word *πάντων*, “of all,” is limited unto the spoils which he took from the enemies, verse 4, “To whom Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.” This in the original history is so expressed as to leave it doubtful both to whom the tenths were given, and of what they were: Gen. xiv. 20, *וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ מֵכַלְכָּל מִלְּחָמָה*,—“And he gave him the tenth of all.” The words immediately preceding are the words of Melchisedec, and the story concerneth him; so that if the relative included in *לוֹ*, “he gave,” do answer unto the next antecedent, Melchisedec gave the tenth of all unto Abraham. Nor doth it appear what the *לָא* or “all” was that is intended; whether his own whole estate, or all the tithable things which he had then with him. But all this ambiguity is removed by our apostle, according to the mind of the Holy Ghost, and withal it is declared how great a mystery depended on the right understanding of those words. It was Abraham that gave the tenth of all to Melchisedec; whereby he acknowledged him to be the priest of the most high God, and the type of the Son of God as incarnate,—every way superior unto him, who had but newly received the promises. And the tenth which he gave was only of the spoils that he took from the enemies, as a token and pledge in particular that the victory and success which he had against the kings was from God.

This receiving of tithes by Melchisedec was a sacerdotal act. For, (1.) The tenth thus given was firstly given unto God; and he who received them, received them as God’s officer, in his name. Where there was none in office so to receive them, they were immediately to be offered unto God in sacrifice, according unto their capacity. So Jacob vowed the tenth unto God, Gen. xxviii. 22; which he was

himself to offer, there being no other priest to receive it at his hand; and no doubt but he did it accordingly, when God minded him to pay his vow at Bethel, Gen. xxxv. 1-6. And, (2.) The things that were fit of this sort were actually to be offered in sacrifice unto God. This Saul knew, when he made that his pretence of sparing and bringing away the fat cattle of the Amalekites, 1 Sam. xv. 15. And I no way doubt but that these teuths that Abraham gave, at least such of them as were meet for that service, although it be not expressed, were offered in sacrifice unto God by Melchisedec. For whereas he was a king, he stood in no need of any contribution from Abraham; nor was it honourable to receive any thing in way of compensation for his munificence in bringing forth bread and wine,—which were to sell his kindness and spoil his bounty; nor would Abraham have deprived the king of Sodom and others of any of their goods, to give them unto another. Wherefore he received them as a priest, to offer what was meet in sacrifice to God; whereon, no doubt, according to the custom of those times, there was a feast, wherein they ate bread together, and were mutually refreshed. (3.) This matter was afterwards precisely determined in the law, wherein all tithes were appropriated unto the priests. I observe these things, only to show that the apostle had just ground to infer from hence the sacerdotal power of Melchisedec, and his pre-eminence in that office above Abraham. For every thing in the Scripture is significant, and hath its especial design, the whole being inlaid with truth by infinite wisdom, whether we apprehend it or no. Without this light given by the Holy Spirit himself, how should we have conceived that this giving the tenth of the spoils to Melchisedec was designed to prove his greatness and dignity above Abraham and all the Levitical priests on that account, as the great type and representative of Jesus Christ? And indeed all the mysteries of sacred truth which are contained in the Old Testament, are seen clearly only in the light of the New; and the doctrine of the Gospel is the only rule and measure of the interpretation of the writings of the Old Testament. Wherefore, although the writings of both are equally the word of God, yet the revelation made immediately by Jesus Christ is that which ought to be our guide in the whole. And they do but deceive themselves and others, who, in the interpretation of mystical passages and prophecies of the Old Testament, do neglect the accomplishment of them and light given unto them in the New, taking up with Jewish traditions, or vain conjectures of their own;—such as the late writings of some highly pretending unto learning are stuffed withal. And we may see from hence, (1.) How necessary it is for us, according to the command of our Saviour, to “search the Scriptures,” John v. 39;—*ἐρευνᾶν*, to make a scrupulous inquiry, a diligent investigation, to find out things hidden, or parcels of gold ore. So are we directed

to “seek for wisdom as silver, and to search for her as for hid treasures,” Prov. ii. 4. There are precious, useful, significant truths in the Scripture, so disposed of, so laid up, as that if we accomplish not a diligent search we shall never set eye on them. The common course of reading the Scripture, and the common help of expositors,—who for the most part go in the same track, and scarce venture one step beyond those that are gone before them,—will not suffice, if we intend a discovery of these hid treasures. This diligent search was attended unto by the prophets themselves under the old testament, with respect unto their own prophecies, which they received by inspiration, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. God gave out those deep and sacred truths by them which they comprehended not, but made diligent inquiry into the mind of the Holy Ghost in the words which themselves had spoken. What belongs unto this diligent search shall be elsewhere declared. (2.) That the clear revelations of the New Testament ought to be our principal rule in the interpretation of difficult passages in the Old. What our apostles in these cases had by immediate inspiration and direction, that we must look for from what is recorded in their writings; which is sufficient for us, and will not fail us.

There is great inquiry usually made on this place, whether tithes be due by the light of nature, or at least by such a moral-positive command of God as should be perpetually obligatory unto all worshippers unto the end of the world. This many contend for, and the principal reasons which they plead from the Scripture are these: 1. That *tithes were paid before the law* as well as under the law; and what was so observed in the worship of God,—namely, that being in usage before the law, and confirmed by the law,—is originally of the law of nature, and could have no other fountain. 2. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, *speaking of tithing mint and cummin*, approveth of it, affirming that those things ought not to be omitted, though the most inferior instance that could be given of the duty. 3. He seems in like manner to have respect thereunto, when he commands to “give unto *Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s*, and unto God the things that are God’s,” which were the tithes; the law concerning them being thereby confirmed, which proves it not to be ceremonial. And this some men judge to be a certain argument of that which is moral and unalterable,—namely, the appointed usage of it before the law, under the law, and under the gospel after the expiration of the law of ceremonies, or “the law of commandments contained in ordinances.” And it seems so to be, if there be the same reason of the law or command in all these seasons; for otherwise it is not so. For instance, it is supposed that the eating of blood was forbidden before the law, and assuredly it was so under the law, and is so in the New Testament, Acts xv.: which yet proves

it not to be morally evil and perpetually forbidden; for it is not so upon the same grounds and reasons. For in that place of Gen. ix. 4, "But flesh with the life thereof, that is, the blood thereof, shall ye not eat," blood is not absolutely forbidden, but in some cases, and with respect unto a certain end. It was not to be eaten whilst it was yet hot and warm in the flesh; which prohibition God gave to prevent that savage custom which yet afterwards got ground among men, of eating flesh, like ravenous beasts, whilst the blood was yet warm in it. Under the law it was forbidden, because God had taken it to be the principal part of sacrifices, and far the most significant, Lev. xvii. 5, 6, 11, 14. And in the 15th of the Acts it is only occasionally forbidden for a season, to avoid scandal and offence. So that if it should be supposed that the matter of the prohibition before the law, under the law, and in that synod at Jerusalem, were the same, yet the reasons of it being various, it doth not prove a morality in the law, or such as should be everlastingly obligatory. But where not only the subject-matter, but the formal reason of the command is the same, there it is of natural equity, and unalterable; and so it is said to be in the case of tithes.

I shall not enter into any long digression about this controverted subject. It is such as wherein the various interests of men have engaged their utmost diligence, on the one hand and on the other. But this I am sure enough of, that unless they were paid by them that give them with more conscience and regard unto duty than generally they seem to be, not one in a thousand having respect in the payment of them to any thing but the civil law of the land; and unless they were turned unto a better account with them by whom they are received than generally they do; it is to no great purpose to dispute upon what grounds or by what right they are due unto any. And without solicitousness concerning offence, I shall take leave to say, that it is no safe plea for many to insist on, that tithes are due and divine, as they speak,—that is, by a binding law of God,—now under the gospel. For be the law and institution what it will, nothing is more certain than that there is nothing due under the gospel, by virtue of God's command or institution with respect unto his worship, unto any who do not wholly give up themselves unto the ministry, and "labour in the word and doctrine;" unless they be such as are disenabled by age and infirmities, who are not to be forsaken all the days of their lives. For men to live in pleasure and idleness, according to the pomp, vanities, and grandeur of the world, neither rising early, nor going to bed late, nor spending their time and strength in the service of the church, according to the duties required of all the ministers thereof in the gospel, to sing unto themselves that tithes are due to them by the appointment and law of God, is a fond imagination, a dream that will fill them with

perplexity when they shall awake. But as unto the question in hand, I shall briefly give my thoughts about it in the ensuing observations and propositions:—

By "tithes" is understood either the express *law of tithing*, or paying the tenth of all our substance and of the whole increase of the earth; or only the dedicating of a *certain portion* of what we have unto the uses of the worship and service of God. 1. If this latter be intended, it is with me past all doubt and question that a *bountiful part of our enjoyments* is to be separated unto the use and service of the worship of God, particularly unto the comfortable and honourable supportment of them that labour in the ministry. And it is no small part of that confusion which we suffer under, that Christians, being in all places compelled to pay the tenth by civil laws unto some or other, whether they will or no, are either discouraged, or disenabled, or think themselves discharged from doing that which God certainly requireth at their hands in a way of duty. However, this will be no excuse for any, for generally they have yet left unto them that whereby they may discharge their duty in an acceptable manner; and I cannot but wonder how some men can satisfy their consciences in this matter, in such circumstances as I shall not now name.

2. If the *strict legal course of tithing* be intended, it cannot be proved from this text, nor from any other instance before the law; for Abraham gave only the tenth of the spoils, which were not tithable by law. For if the places taken or destroyed in war were anathematized, as Jericho was, and also Amalek, no portion was to be reserved, under a pretence of sacrifice or any other sacred use; as Saul found to his cost. And if they were not anathematized, all the spoils were left entirely unto the people that went to war, without any sacred decimation. So the Reubenites and the Gadites, at their return over Jordan into their own land, carried all their rich spoils and cattle with them, no tithe being mentioned, Josh. xxii. 8;—although there is no question but many of them offered their free-will offerings at the tabernacle. And when God would have a sacred portion out of the spoils, as he would have in the wilderness, out of those that were taken from the Midianites, to manifest that they fell not under the law of tithes, he took not the tenth part, but one portion of five hundred from the soldiers, and one of fifty from the people, Numb. xxxi. 28-30. Wherefore the giving of the tenth of the spoils was not from the obligation of any law, but was an act of *free-will* and choice in the offerer. But yet there was so great an equity herein also,—namely, that God should have an acknowledgment in the fruits of those successes which he gave in war,—that out of the spoils of his and his people's enemies David made his provision for the building of the temple. And the captains of the host

that went against Midian, after a tribute was raised for the Lord out of the spoils according unto the proportions mentioned, when they found the goodness of God in the preservation of their soldiers, whereof there was not one lost, they made a new voluntary oblation unto God out of their spoils, Numb. xxxi. 48-50. And as for the instance of Jacob, who vowed unto God the tenth of all, it is so far from proving that the tenth was due by virtue of any law, that it proves the contrary. For had it been so, it could not have been the matter of an extraordinary vow, whereby he could express his obedience unto God.

3. The precise law of tithing is not confirmed in the gospel. For that saying of our Saviour's approving the tithing of mint and cummin, evidently respects that legal institution which was then in force, and could not be violated without sin. And by his approbation of that law, and of the duty in observance of it, he did no more confirm it, or ascribe an obligatory power unto it under the gospel, than he did so unto all those other ceremonial institutions which both he himself observed as a man made under the law, and enjoined others so to do. They all continued in full force "until the time of reformation," which gave them their bounds and limits, Heb. ix. 10, and ended with his resurrection. His other saying, of "giving unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," respects our whole moral obedience unto God, and not this or that particular institution. The meaning of it is, that we are to pay or perform unto God all whatever he requireth of us in a way of obedience; but what that is in particular, is not here determined. And other mention of tithes in the gospel there is none.

4. Whereas by the light of nature, all rules of reason and positive institutions, *a portion of what God is pleased to give unto every man is to be returned unto him, in the way of his worship and service*, wherein it may be used according unto his appointment; and whereas before the giving of the law sundry holy men fixed on the tenth part, as that which was meetest to be so dedicated unto God, and that, as is probable, not without some especial conduct of the Holy Spirit, if not upon express revelation; and whereas this was afterwards expressly confirmed under the law by positive institution, the equity whereof is urged in the gospel; it is the best direction that can be given unto any what proportion of their estate should be set apart unto this purpose. Herein, I confess, so many circumstances are in particular cases to be considered, as that it is impossible any one certain rule should be prescribed unto all persons. But whereas withal there is no need in the least to furnish men with pleas and excuses for the non-performance of their duty, at least as unto the necessary degrees of it, I shall not suggest any thing unto them which may be used to that purpose. I shall therefore

leave this rule in its full latitude, as the best direction of practice in this matter.

5. On these suppositions it is that the apostle, treating of this matter, makes no use of the right or law of tithing, though directly unto his purpose if it had not been abrogated. For intending to prove that the ministers of the gospel ought to be liberally supported in their work with the earthly things of them unto whom they do administer the things of God, he argueth from the light of nature, the general equity of other cases, the analogy of legal institutions, the rules of justice, with the especial institution of Christ in the gospel, but makes no mention of the natural or legal right of tithing, 1 Cor. ix. 7-14. And farther I shall not at present divert on this subject. And we may observe, that,—

Obs. XXIV. Whatsoever we receive signally from God in a way of mercy, we ought to return a portion of it unto him in a way of duty.—That this was the practice of the saints of old might easily be proved by an induction of instances, from this act of Abraham (yea, from the sacrifice of Abel) down to the vow of Jacob, the dedications of David, Solomon, and others, in their respective places and generations. The light of nature also counted it as a duty among all the civilized heathens. The offerings and sacred dedications of nations and private families are famous on this account. And it was laid as a lasting blemish on good Hezekiah, that he rendered not unto the Lord according to the mercy which he had received.

And we may do well to consider, 1. That no man hath any great or signal success in any affair or occasion, more than others, or more than at other times, but there will be in his mind an ascription of it unto one cause or another. This the nature of things makes necessary, nor can it be avoided, Hab. i. 11. 2. That whatever a man doth secretly ascribe such success unto, that he makes in some sense his god. "They sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous," Hab. i. 16. They ascribed their successes unto their own strength, endeavours, and means that they used. Hereby they deified themselves as far as in them lay; and therefore these thoughts are called sacrificing and burning incense, which were expressions of religious worship. And it is no better with us, when, in our successes in our trades and affairs, we secretly applaud our own endeavours and the means we have used as the only causes of them. 3. It is a great sign that a man hath not engaged God in the getting of any thing, when he will not entitle him unto any portion of what is gotten. There are two evils common in the world in this case. Some will make no acknowledgment unto God, in the especial consecration of any part of their substance unto him, where it is lawfully gotten; and some will make great dedications of

what hath been gotten by robbery, spoils, oppression, and violence. Many public works of munificence and charity, as they are called, have had no other original. This is but an endeavour to entitle God unto injustice, and draw him to a copartnership with them, by giving him a share in the advantage. God "hateth robbery for burnt-offering," Isa. lxi. 8; and "he smiteth his hand at men's dishonest gain," Ezek. xxii. 13. He will have nothing to do with such things, nor accept of any portion of them or from them, however he may overpower things in his providence unto his glory. Both these ways are full of evil, though the latter be the worst. 4. No man hath any ground to reckon that he can settle what he hath unto himself or his, where this chief rent unto God is left unpaid. He will at one time or other make a re-entry upon the whole, take the forfeiture of it, and turn the ungrateful tenant out of possession. And, among other things, this makes so many estates industriously gotten so speedily moulder away as we see they do in the world. 5. God hath always his receivers ready to accept of what is tendered, namely, his poor, and those that attend the ministry of his house.

Seventhly, The apostle pursues his design and argument from the name and title of the person spoken of, with their interpretation: "First being, by interpretation, King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, that is, King of peace." And we shall consider herein, 1. The names themselves, with their interpretation. 2. The grounds or reasons of the apostle's arguing from this interpretation. 3. What is intended in them, or what he would have us learn from them. 4. Their order, which he particularly observes.

1. He respecteth (1.) His *proper name*,—that is, Melchisedec; for the fancy of some, that Sedec was a place or city where first he reigned, as he did afterwards at Salem, is very fond. For then he must be utterly without a name belonging unto his person; which the apostle doth not observe, as he would have done one way or other, had any such unusual thing offered itself unto him. Besides, had it been so, he would not have been called Melchisedec, but rather Melec Sedec, as he is said to be Melec Salem. מלך is a "king;" and by the interposition of yod to smooth the composition, the former segol is turned into pathach, and the latter into shevah, whence Melchi ariseth. Some would have this yod to be a pronoun affix; and then the meaning of the word is, "my king;" and on this supposition, taking מלך for מלך, Sedek for Saddik, they would render it, "my righteous king." But there is nothing more ordinary, in the composition of names, than the interposition of yod paragogicum, to soften the sound and pronunciation of them. So is it in Adonizedek, Adonibezek, Abimelech, Abitub, Abishua, Abishag,

Abishalom, and sundry others. Wherefore Melchi is nothing but the name Melec, a "king," a little varied, to fit it unto the composition intended. מלך is "righteousness." And so the whole name is properly interpreted and rendered by our apostle βασιλεύς δικαιοσύνης, a "king of righteousness."

(2.) His *title* is, מלך שלם, "the king of Salem;" of which place we have spoken before. This is, by interpretation, saith our apostle, βασιλεύς εἰρήνης, the "king of peace." Some think that herein occurs a greater difficulty than did in the interpretation of his name. For מלך, "Salem," say they, doth not signify "peace," but שלום, "Shalom." Salem is only as much as "pacificus," peaceable; not "pax," or peace itself. But yet neither ought this to give us any trouble. For instances may be given in this language wherein the same word is used sometimes substantively, sometimes adjectively; as, for instance, ארץ, and ארץ, and בברך, arc. And upon the matter the signification is the same. "Rex pacificus" and "rex pacis" do both denote him that is the maker and author of peace. So God on that account is called the "God of peace," Rom. xv. 33, xvi. 20; 1 Thess. v. 23; 2 Thess. iii. 16; Heb. xiii. 20. Wherefore, as we ought to acquiesce in the authority of the apostle, who knew better than us all the signification of these names, so that he gives is proper, according unto our best conception of these things.

2. It may be inquired what ground the apostle had to argue from the *signification of those names*, which seems to be but a curious and infirm kind of argumentation; and we find by experience, that whilst some have followed and imitated, as they supposed, this example, they have fallen into woful mistakes.

Ans. (1.) The apostle takes it for granted in general, that every thing in the story of Melchisedec was mystical and figurative. This he did on good grounds, because the only reason of its introduction was to give a representation of the person and priesthood of Christ.

(2.) It was usual, under the old testament, to have names given unto children by a spirit of prophecy; as to Noah, Peleg, and others, yea, it may be most of the patriarchs. It was so also to have men's names changed upon some great and solemn occasions: as Abram was called Abraham; Sarai, Sarah; Jacob was called Israel; and Solomon, Jedidiah. And whereas this was sometimes done by divine authority, as in the instances mentioned, whence it was highly significant; so the people, in imitation thereof, did often give other names to themselves, or others, on some occasion wherewith they were affected. Hence it is that we find the same persons so frequently called by divers names; which gives no little difficulty in genealogies. But where this was done by divine warranty, it was doctrinal, and prophetically instructive. So was it in that great

name given unto our Lord Jesus Christ himself, namely, Immanuel; which the evangelist remembers, and gives us the interpretation thereof, Matt. i. 23. Now, whether this name was given to Melchisedec from his nativity by a spirit of prophecy, as is most probable, or whether his name was changed by God himself when he was publicly called unto his office, is uncertain, and no way needful to be inquired into; but certain it is, that this name was given him by divine direction, and that for the very end for which it is here used and applied by our apostle. And no countenance can hence be taken unto their curiosity who seek for mysteries out of names and their numbers, which, for aught they know, had a casual imposition, or that which respected some particular occasion whereof they are utterly ignorant.

(3.) As for the name of the place where he reigned, or Salem, it was also given unto it on the same ground, to be presignificative of the work that was to be effected by Him whom he typed out. Most probably at that time God first gave that name unto that place; for that it was not the Salem by Sychem we have before declared. And I am persuaded that God himself, by some providence of his, or other intimation of his mind, gave that name of Peace first unto that city, because there he designed not only to rest in his typical worship for a season, but also in the fulness of time there to accomplish the great work of peace-making between himself and mankind. Hence it was afterwards, by the same guidance, called Jerusalem, or a Vision of Peace, because of the many visions and prophecies concerning the spiritual and eternal peace which was to be wrought and published in that place; as also from all those holy institutions of his worship which there represented the means whereby that peace was to be wrought, namely, the sacrifice of Christ himself, the only real and proper priest of the church.

Wherefore our apostle doth justly argue from the signification of those names, which were given both to the person and place by divine authority and guidance, that they might teach and fore-signify the things whereunto by him they are applied.

3. The interpretation of the names being proper, and the argument from thence in this case useful, as to the *signification* of them, it must be inquired how this man was "king of righteousness and peace." Most suppose that no more is intended but that he was a righteous and peaceable king, one that ruled righteously and lived peaceably. And it is true that absolutely in himself, and as unto his own personal qualifications, he was so, and no more, nor could be more. But these names have respect to his relative state, and were given him as a type of Christ. He was a "king of righteousness and peace" as he was "without father and without mother;" that is, to represent Christ in his office. *Really*, he was a righteous and peace-

able king; *typically*, he was the "king of righteousness and peace." Now, "the king of righteousness" is him who is the author, cause, and dispenser of righteousness unto others; as God is said to be "The LORD our Righteousness." And so is "the king of peace" also; in which sense God is called "the God of peace." Thus was it with Melchisedec as he was the representative of Jesus Christ.

4. The last thing that the apostle observes from these names and titles, is their order, wherein it is natural that the name of a man should precede the title of his rule: "First, King of righteousness, and afterwards King of peace." Righteousness must go first, and then peace will follow after. So it is promised of Christ and his kingdom, that "in his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth," Ps. lxxii. 7. First they are made righteous, and then they have peace. And Isa. xxxii. 17, "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and peace for ever." This is the order of these things. There is no peace but what proceedeth from, and is the effect of righteousness. So these things with respect unto Christ are declared by the psalmist, Ps. lxxxv. 9-13. What we are taught hence is,—

Obs. XXV. That the Lord Jesus Christ is the only king of righteousness and peace unto the church. See Isa. xxxii. 1, 2, ix. 6.—He is not only a righteous and peaceable king, as were his types, Melchisedec and Solomon; but he is the author, cause, procurer, and dispenser of righteousness and peace to the church. So is it declared, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, "Behold the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The LORD our Righteousness." He is righteous, and reigneth righteously; but this is not all, he is "The LORD our Righteousness."

Eightly, The apostle proceeds yet unto other instances in the description of Melchisedec, wherein he was "made like unto the Son of God:" Verse 3, "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." The things here asserted, being at the first view strange and uncouth, would administer occasion unto large discourses, and accordingly have been the subject of many inquiries and conjectures; but it is no way unto the edification of those who are sober and godly, to engage into any long disputes about those things wherein all learned, sober expositors are come to an issue and agreement, as they are in general in this matter. For it is granted that Melchisedec was a man, really and truly so, and therefore of necessity must have had all these things; for the nature of man, after him who was first created, who

yet also had beginning of life and end of days, doth not exist without them. Wherefore these things are not denied of him absolutely, but in some sense, and with respect unto some especial end. Now this is with respect unto his office; therein, or as he bare that office, he was "without father, without mother," etc. And how doth it appear that so it was with him? It doth so because none of them is recorded or mentioned in the Scripture, which yet diligently recordeth them concerning other persons; and in particular, those who could not find and prove their genealogies were by no means to be admitted unto the priesthood, Ezra ii. 61-63. And we may therefore by this rule inquire into the particulars:—

1. It is said of him in the first place, that he was "without father, without mother," whercon part of the latter clause, ^{Ἀπάτωρ} ^{Ἀμήτωρ} namely, "without beginning of days," doth depend. But how could a mortal man come into the world without father or mother? "Man that is born of a woman," is the description of every man; what therefore can be intended? The next word declares he was ^{Ἀγενεαλόγητος} ^{γενεαλόγητος}—"without descent," say we. But *γενεαλογία* is a "generation, a descent, a pedigree," not absolutely, but "rehearsed, described, recorded." *Γενεαλόγητος* is he whose stock and descent is entered upon record. And so on the contrary, *ἀγενεαλόγητος* is not he who hath no descent, no genealogy, but he whose descent and pedigree is nowhere entered, recorded, reckoned up. Thus the apostle himself plainly expresseth this word, verse 6, *Ὁ μὴ γενεαλογούμενος ἐξ αὐτῶν*,—"whose descent is not counted;" that is, reckoned up in record. Thus was Melchisedec without father and mother, in that the Spirit of God, who so strictly and exactly recorded the genealogies of other patriarchs and types of Christ, and that for no less an end than to manifest the truth and faithfulness of God in his promises, speaks nothing unto this purpose concerning him. He is introduced as it were one falling from heaven, appearing on a sudden, reigning in Salem, and officiating the office of the priesthood unto the most high God.

2. On the same account is he said to be "without beginning of days and end of life." For as he was a mortal man he had both. ^{Μήτις ἄρ' ἡμερῶν} ^{μήτις ζωῆς τέλει} ^{ἔχων} He was assuredly born, and did no less certainly die, than other men; but neither of these is recorded concerning him. We have no more to do with him, to learn from him, nor are concerned in him, but only as he is described in the Scripture, and there is no mention therein of the beginning of his days, or the end of his life. Whatever, therefore, he might have in himself, he had none to us. Consider all the other patriarchs mentioned in the writings of Moses, and you shall find their descent recorded, who was their father, and so upwards unto the first man; and not only so, but the time of their birth and death,

the beginning of their days and the end of their lives, is exactly recorded. For it is constantly said of them, such a one lived so long, and begat such a son; which fixeth the time of birth. Then of him so begotten it is said he lived so many years; which determines the end of his days. These things are expressly recorded. But concerning Melchisedec none of these things are spoken. No mention is made of father or mother, no genealogy is recorded of what stock or progeny he was; nor is there any account of his birth or death. So that all these things are wanting unto him in this historical narration, wherein our faith and knowledge are alone concerned. Some few things may yet further be inquired into for the clearing of the sense of these words:—

(1.) Whereas the observation of the apostle is built upon the silence of Moses in the history,—which was sufficient for him, whatever was the cause and reason of that silence,—we may inquire whence it was. Whence was it, I say, that Moses should introduce so great and excellent a person as Melchisedec without any mention of his race or stock, of his parents or progenitors, of his rise and fall, contrary unto his own custom in other cases, and contrary unto all rules of useful history? For to introduce so great a person, in any story, and on so great an occasion, without giving any account of him, or of any of his circumstances, whereby his concernment in the matter related might be known, is utterly contrary unto all rules of serious history.

Ans. [1.] Some of the Jews absurdly imagine that it was because his parents were not only *obscure*, but that he was *born of fornication*, and so he had no right of genealogy. But this is both a foolish and wicked imagination. For it is not to be supposed God would have advanced a person known to be of such an extract and original unto the honour of the priesthood, and that of the most excellent kind that ever was under the old testament. For being low and mean in the world, it is neither disadvantage nor disparagement; the best of men were so, and all the chief patriarchs were but shepherds. But bastardy is a mark of infamy in the world, and God would not raise such an one to administer peculiarly unto him, and that as a type of his own Son, who was to be incarnate.

[2.] Some say that there is *no singular thing herein*, but that it is done according to the custom of Scripture, which relates only the *genealogies of the patriarchs* who were of that lineage from whence Christ did come; but when it makes mention of any others, though they be never so eminent, it reckoneth not up their genealogy. Thus it dealeth with Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses; and with Job, so great and holy a person, concerning whom it says no more but that "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job." And some things may be allowed herein; but the instances are no way

parallel. For Jethro, he was a stranger unto the church, and there is a full account concerning him, so far as it is either necessary or useful that we should in point of story know any thing of him. And the story of Job is a separate story, wherein himself only and family were concerned; and we have therein his country, the number and names of his children, with the years of his life, and time of his death. But as we have none of these things in the account of Melchisedec, so he is introduced as one in whom the church of God was publicly concerned. Wherefore,—

[3.] The true cause of the omission of all these things was the same with that of the institution of his priesthood, and the introduction of his person in the story. And this was, that he might be the more express and signal *representative of the Lord Christ* in his priesthood. For to this end it was not only needful that he should be declared to be a priest, as the Messiah was to be, but also in that declaration all those circumstances were to be observed wherein the nature of the priesthood of Christ might be any way prefigured. After this, the church being reduced into a standing order for succession, it was obliged necessarily for many generations unto a priesthood which depended solely on their genealogy and pedigree both by father and mother, Ezra x. 18, 19; Neh. vii. 63–65. Wherefore, whereas the priesthood of our Lord Christ was to depend on no such descent, (“for it is evident that our Lord sprang of Judah, whereof Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood,”) it was necessary that it should be originally represented by one who had no genealogy, seeing that, as unto his office, he himself was to have none. And therefore, when the church of Israel was in the highest enjoyment of the Levitical priesthood,—whose office depended wholly on their genealogy, yea, so far as that on a supposition of a defect or change thereof, not only the priesthood itself, but all the sacred worship also which it was designed to officiate, must utterly cease,—yet the Holy Ghost then thought meet to mind them that a priest was to come without respect unto any such descent or genealogy, in that he was to be “after the order of Melchisedec,” who had none, Ps. cx. 4. This is the true and only reason why, in the story of Melchisedec as the priest of the most high God, there is no mention made of father, mother, genealogy, beginning of life, or end of days.

And we may herein consider the sovereign wisdom of the Holy Ghost, in bringing forth truth unto light according as the state and condition of the church doth require. And first, he proposeth only a naked story of a person that was a *type of Christ*, and that obscurely and sparingly. Something the men of the age wherein he lived might learn by his ministrations, but not much. For that which was principally instructive in him for the use of the church was not of force until all his circumstances were forgotten; and the

church was now to be instructed, not so much by what he was, as by what was recorded of him: wherein the Scripture superseded all tradition that might be of him in the world; yea, the contrivance of any tradition concerning his parents, birth, and death, had been contrary to the mind of God, and what instruction he intended the church by him. Afterwards, when, it may be, all thoughts of any use or design of this story in Moses were lost, and the church was fully satisfied in a priesthood quite of another nature, the Holy Ghost, in one word of prophecy, instructs the church, not only that the things spoken concerning Melchisedec were not so recorded for his sake, or on his own account, but with respect unto another priest which was afterwards to arise, by him represented,—which gave a new consideration, sense, and design to the whole story,—but moreover gives it to know that the priesthood which it then enjoyed was not always to continue, but that another of another nature was to be introduced, as was signified long before the institution of that priesthood which they enjoyed, Ps. cx. 4. And though this was sufficient for the use and edification of the church in those days, yet it was left greatly in the dark as to the full design and meaning of these things. And therefore it is evident that at the coming of our Saviour, and the accomplishment of this type, the church of the Jews had utterly lost all knowledge and understanding of the mystery of it, and the promise renewed in the psalm. For they thought it strange that there should be a priest that had no genealogy, no solemn consecration nor investiture, with his office. Wherefore our apostle, entering upon the unfolding of this mystery, doth not only preface it with an assertion of its difficulty, or how hard it was to be understood aright, but also, by a long previous discourse, variously prepareth their minds unto a most diligent attention. And the reason of it was, not only because they had utterly lost the understanding that was given in these things formerly, but also because the true understanding of them would put an end at that time unto that priesthood and worship which they had adhered unto. Wherefore until this time the church was not able to bear the true understanding of this mystery, and now they could no longer be without it. Hence it is here so fully and particularly declared by our apostle. And we may observe,—

Obs. XXVI. That the church never did in any age, nor ever shall, want that instruction by divine revelation which is needful unto its edification in faith and obedience.—This it had in all ages, according unto that gradual progression which God gave unto light and truth in the explication of the great mystery of his grace, which was hid in him from the foundation of the world. An instance hereof we have in the things which concern this Melchisedec, as we have observed. The church had never need to look after the traditions

of their fathers, or to betake themselves unto their own inventions; their instruction by revelation was always sufficient for the state and condition wherein they were. Much more, therefore, is it so now, when the sum and perfection of all divine revelations is given in unto us by Jesus Christ.

Obs. XXVII. It is a great honour to serve in the church, by doing or suffering, for the use and service of future generations.—This was the honour of Melchisedec, that he was employed in a service the true use and advantage whereof was not given in unto the church until many generations after. And I add suffering unto doing, because it is well known what glories have sprung up in future ages, upon the past sufferings of others.

Obs. XXVIII. The Scripture is so absolutely the rule, measure, and boundary of our faith and knowledge in spiritual things, as that what it conceals is instructive, as well as what it expresseth.—This the apostle manifests in many of his observations concerning Melchisedec, and his inferences from thence. But I have, as I remember, discoursed somewhat hereof before.

(2.) Our next inquiry is, *wherein Melchisedec was typical of Christ*, or what of all this belongeth unto the following assertion that “he was made like unto the Son of God;” that is, so described as that he might have a great resemblance of him.

Ans. It is generally thought that he was so *in the whole*, and in every particular mentioned distinctly. Thus he is said to be “without father, and without mother” (no mention is made of them), because the Lord Christ was in some sense so also. He was without father on earth as to his human nature; with respect whereunto God says that he will “create a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man,” Jer. xxxi. 22,—or conceive a man without natural generation. And he was without mother as to his person or divine nature, being the “only begotten of the Father,” by an eternal generation of his own person. But yet it must not be denied but that, on the other side, he had both father and mother,—a father as to his divine, and a mother as to his human nature; but as to his whole person, he was without father and mother. Again, whereas he is said to be “without genealogy,” it is of somewhat a difficult application; for the genealogy of Christ was γενεαλογίαι, or ספר תולדות. The “roll of his pedigree” is declared by two of the evangelists, the one driving of it up to Abraham, the other unto Adam; as it was necessary, to manifest the truth of his human nature and the faithfulness of God in the accomplishment of his promises. It may be, therefore, respect is had unto these words of the prophet, Isa. liii. 8, מִי יְשׁוּעָה, “Who shall declare his generation?” there was somewhat in his age and generation, by reason of his divine pre-existence unto all, that was ineffable.

Again, he is said to be “without beginning of days and end of life.” And this also is spoken by our apostle with respect unto the narration of Moses, wherein mention is made neither of the one nor of the other. And it belongs unto his conformity unto the Son of God, or that wherein he represented him; for as unto his *divine person*, the Lord Christ had neither the one nor the other, as the apostle proves, Heb. i. 10-12, from Ps. cii. 25-27. But on the other side, as to his human nature he had both, he had both beginning of days and end of life; both which are upon solemn record. Wherefore it should seem that if there be a likeness in these things on the one account, there is none on the other, and so no advantage in the comparison.

Considering these difficulties in the application of these particulars, some do judge that these instances do not belong unto the analogy and resemblance between Christ and Melchisedec, but are introduced only in order unto what ensues, namely, he “abideth a priest for ever,” wherein alone the similitude between him and Christ doth consist. And so, they say, we find things quoted in the Scripture at large, when only some one passage in it may be used directly unto the business in hand. But although this will be difficultly proved,—namely, that any testimony is cited in the Scripture whereof any principal part of it belongs not unto the matter designed to be confirmed,—yet it may be granted that it is so sometimes, when the sense of the whole context is to be taken in. But there was no reason, on this ground, that the apostle should make so many observations on what was not spoken at all, which in an ordinary way ought to have been mentioned, if the whole of what he so observed was not at all to his purpose.

Wherefore it must be granted, as that which the plain design of the apostle exacteth of us, that Melchisedec even in these things in the story,—that he was “without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life,”—was a type and representative of Christ. But it is not of the person of Christ absolutely, nor of either of his natures distinctly, that our apostle treateth, but merely with respect unto his office of priesthood. And herein all the things mentioned do concur in him, and make a lively representation of him. It was utterly a new doctrine unto the Hebrews, that the Lord Christ was a priest, the only high priest of the church, so as that all other priesthood must cease. And their chief objection against it was, that it was contrary unto the law, and inconsistent with it; and this because he was not of the line of the priests, neither as to father, or mother, or genealogy, nor had any to succeed him. But in this type of his the apostle proves that all this was to be so. For, [1.] In this respect he had *neither father nor mother* from whom he might derive any right or title unto his office; and this was for ever sufficient to exclude him from any in-

terest in the priesthood as it was established by law. [2.] He had *no genealogy upon the priestly line*; and that which is recorded of him on other accounts is so far from having respect unto his right unto the priesthood of the law, that it directly proves and demonstrates that he had none. For his genealogy is evidently of the tribe of Judah, which was excluded legally from that office; as we have, besides the institution, an instance in king Uziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16-21, from Exod. xxx. 7, 8; Numb. xviii. 7. Hence our apostle concludes, that had he been on the earth,—that is, under the order of the law,—he could not have been a priest; there being others who, by virtue of their descent, had alone the right thereunto, Heb. viii. 3, 4. Wherefore God in these things instructed the church that he would erect a priesthood which should no way depend on natural generation, descent, or genealogy; whence it inevitably follows, that the state of the priesthood under the law was to cease, and to give place unto another,—which our apostle principally designs to prove. [3.] In this respect also the Lord Christ was “without beginning of days and end of life.” For although in his human nature he was both born and died, yet he had a priesthood which had no such beginning of days as that it should be traduced from any other to him, nor shall ever cease or be delivered over from him unto any other, but abides unto the consummation of all things.

In these things was Melchisedec made like unto Christ, whom the apostle here calls the Son of God; “made like unto the Son of God.” I have formerly observed, that in this epistle the apostle makes mention of the Lord Christ under various appellations, on various occasions, so that in one place or another he makes use of all the names whereby he is signified in the Scripture. Here he calls him “the Son of God;” and that, 1. To intimate that although Melchisedec was an excellent person, yet was he infinitely beneath him whom he represented, even the Son of God. He was not the Son of God, but he had the honour in so many things to be made like unto him. 2. To declare how all those things which were any way represented in Melchisedec, or couched in the story, or left unto inquiry by the veil of silence drawn over them, could be fulfilled in our high priest;—and it was from hence, namely, that he was the Son of God. By virtue hereof was he capable of an always living, abiding, uninterrupted priesthood, although as to his human nature he once died, in the discharge of that office.

This description being given of the person treated of, which makes up the subject of the proposition, it is affirmed concerning him that he “abideth a priest for ever.” For any thing we find in the story, of his death, or the resignation of his office, or the succession of any one unto him therein, “he

Ἀφωμοιωμέν-
ος τῷ Θεῷ.
τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Μένει ἱερεὺς
εἰς τὸ ἀκράντος.

abideth a priest for ever.” Some, I find, have been venturing at some obscure conjectures of the perpetuity of the priesthood of Melchisedec in heaven. But I cannot perceive that they well understood themselves what they intended. Nor did they consider that the real continuance of the priesthood for ever in the person of Melchisedec, is as inconsistent with the priesthood of Christ as the continuance of the same office in the line of Aaron. But things are so related concerning him in the Scripture, as that there is no mention of the ending of the priesthood of his order, nor of his own personal administration of his office, by death or otherwise. Hence is he said to “abide a priest for ever.” This was that which our apostle principally designed to confirm from hence, namely, that there was in the Scripture, before the institution of the Aaronical priesthood, a representation of an eternal, unchangeable priesthood, to be introduced in the church; which he demonstrates to be that of Jesus Christ.

It may not be amiss, in the close of this exposition of these verses, summarily to represent the several particulars wherein the apostle would have us to observe the likeness between Melchisedec and Christ; or rather, the especial excellencies and properties of Christ that were represented in the account given of the name, reign, person, and offices of Melchisedec; as,—

1. He was said to be, and he really was, and he only, first *the king of righteousness, and then the king of peace*; seeing he alone brought in everlasting righteousness and made peace with God for sinners. And in his kingdom alone are these things to be found.

2. He was really and truly *the priest of the most high God*; and properly he was so alone. He offered that sacrifice, and made that atonement, which was signified by all the sacrifices offered by holy men from the foundation of the world.

3. He *blesseth all the faithful, as Abraham, the father of the faithful, was blessed by Melchisedec*. In him were they to be blessed, by him are they blessed,—through him delivered from the curse, and all the fruits of it; nor are they partakers of any blessing but from him.

4. He *receiveth all the homage of his people*, all their grateful acknowledgments of the love and favour of God in the conquest of their spiritual adversaries, and deliverance from them, as Melchisedec received the tenth of the spoils from Abraham.

5. He was really *without progenitors or predecessors* unto his office; nor would I exclude that mystical sense from the intention of the place, that he was without father as to his human nature, and without mother as to his divine.

6. He was a *priest without genealogy*, or derivation of his pedigree from the loins of Aaron, or any other that ever was a priest

in the world; and moreover, mysteriously, was of a generation which none can declare.

7. He had, in his divine person, as the high priest of the church, neither beginning of days nor end of life, as no such thing is reported of Melchisedec; for the death which he underwent, in the discharge of his office, being not the death of his whole person, but of his human nature only, no interruption of his endless office did ensue thereon. For although the person of the Son of God died, whence God is said to "redeem his church with his own blood," Acts xx. 28; yet he died not in his whole person: but as the Son of man was in heaven whilst he was speaking on the earth, John iii. 13,—namely, he was so in his divine nature; so whilst he was dead on the earth in his human nature, the same person was alive in his divine. Absolutely, therefore, nor in respect of his office, he had neither beginning of days nor end of life.

8. He was really the Son of God, as Melchisedec in many circumstances was made like to the Son of God.

9. He alone abideth a priest for ever; whereof we must particularly treat afterwards.

The doctrinal observations that may be taken from these verses are,—

Obs. XXIX. When any were of old designed to be types of Christ, there was a necessity that things more excellent and glorious should be spoken or intimated of them than did properly belong unto them.—So, many things are here observed of Melchisedec which were not properly and literally fulfilled in him. And so there are likewise of David and Solomon, in sundry places. And the reason is, because the things so spoken were never intended of them absolutely, but as they were designed to represent the Lord Christ, unto whom alone they did truly belong. And in the exposition of such typical prophecies, the utmost diligence is to be used in distinguishing aright what is absolutely spoken of the type only, and what is spoken of it merely as representing Christ himself.

Obs. XXX. All that might be spoken, so as to have any probable application in any sense unto things and persons typically, coming short of what was to be fulfilled in Christ, the Holy Ghost, in his infinite wisdom, supplied that defect, by ordering the account which he gives of them so as more might be apprehended and learned from them than could be expressed.—And where the glory of his person, as vested with his office, could not be represented by positive applications, it is done by a mystical silence, as in this story of Melchisedec. And the most eminent and glorious things assigned unto types, as such, have a more glorious signification in Christ than they have in them. See to this purpose our exposition on chap. i. 5.

Obs. XXXI. That Christ, abiding a priest for ever, hath no more a vicar, or successor, or substitute in his office, or any deriving a real priesthood from him, than had Melchisedec; whereof we shall speak afterwards.

Obs. XXXII. The whole mystery of divine wisdom, effecting all inconceivable perfections, centred in the person of Christ, to make him a meet, glorious, and most excellent priest unto God in the behalf of the church.—This it is the principal design of the whole gospel to demonstrate, namely, to declare that all the treasures of divine wisdom and knowledge are hid in Jesus Christ, Col. ii. 3. The constitution of his person was the greatest mystery that ever infinite wisdom effected, 1 Tim. iii. 16. And thereby did God gloriously represent himself and all his infinite perfections unto us, Heb. i. 3; Col. i. 14, 15; 2 Cor. iv. 6. Had he not had the divine nature, he could not have been the "express image" of God in himself; and had he not been man, he could not have represented him unto us. Nor can any thing be more mysteriously glorious than the furniture of his person as mediator, with all fulness of power, wisdom, and grace, for the accomplishment of his work, John i. 16; Col. i. 18, 19, ii. 9; Phil. ii. 5–11. The work that he wrought, in offering himself a sacrifice and making atonement for sin, hath the highest, inconceivable impression of divine wisdom upon it, 1 John iii. 16; Acts xx. 28; Rev. v. 9; Eph. v. 2;—and so also hath the grace that is from thence administered by him and from him, unto Jews and Gentiles, Eph. iii. 8–11. And instances of the like kind may be multiplied. And we may consider thence, first, into what condition of sin and misery we were fallen by our apostasy from God, whence nothing would or could recover us but this blessed work of the whole mystery of divine wisdom; and then the unspeakable riches and excellencies of that wisdom, love, and grace, which provided this way for our recovery.

VERSES 4, 5.

The proceed of these verses is unto the application of what was before discoursed. For having proved that Christ, the promised Messiah, was to be a "priest after the order of Melchisedec," from Ps. cx., and given a description both of the person and office of this Melchisedec, from the historical narration of them as laid down by Moses; he makes application of the whole unto his present purpose: and from the consideration of sundry particulars in his description, he confirms in general the argument which he had in hand. For that which principally he designeth to prove is, that a more excellent priesthood than that of Aaron being introduced, according to the purpose and promise of God, it followed necessarily that that priesthood, with all the worship, rites, and ceremonies

which belonged unto it, was to cease and be taken out of the way; for as this new, promised priesthood was inconsistent with it, and could not be established without the abolition of it, so it brought a far greater benefit and spiritual advantage unto the church than it before enjoyed. And we are not to wonder that the apostle insists so much hereon, and that with all sorts of arguments, especially such as the Old Testament furnished him withal; for this was the hinge on which the eternal salvation or destruction of that whole church and people at that time did turn. For if they would not forego their old priesthood and worship, their ruin was unavoidable;—Christ would either be rejected by them, or be of no profit unto them. Accordingly things fell out thus with the most of them;—they clave absolutely unto their old institutions, and, rejecting the Lord Christ, perished in their unbelief. Others contended for the continuance of their priesthood and worship, for which they supposed they had invincible reasons, although they admitted the profession of Christ and the gospel therewithal. But our apostle, knowing how inconsistent these things were, and how the retaining of that persuasion would keep them off at present from believing the necessity, usefulness, glory, and advantages, of the priesthood of Christ, and the spiritual worship of the gospel, as also dispose them unto apostasy for the future, laboureth by all means to eradicate this pernicious, fundamental error out of their minds. Unto this end doth he so diligently insist on all the instances, and particulars of them, whereby God of old did intimate unto their forefathers the introduction of this alteration, with the advantage of the church thereby. And I mention these things, that we may see the reason the apostle did so scrupulously, as it were, insist on all the ensuing particulars, which otherwise we may not so easily discern the necessity of; and withal to show, 1. How hard it is to dispossess the minds of men of inveterate persuasions in religion; 2. The great care and diligence they ought to use and exercise who have the care of the souls of men committed unto them, when they discern them in apparent danger of ruin.

That the old priesthood was to be removed, and the new one mentioned to be introduced, he proves in the first place by the *greatness of the person* who was first chosen of God to prefigure and represent the Lord Christ in his office of priesthood. For if he were so excellent in his person and office, as deservedly to be preferred above Aaron and all his successors, then he who was prefigured and represented by him must be so also; yea, be so much more, as that which is typed out and signified is, and always must be, more excellent than the type and sign, which are of no use but with respect thereunto.

In these verses he chooseth out his first instance, in what he had

observed before out of the narrative of Moses concerning the greatness and excellency of Melchisedec, in that he received tithes of Abraham. His design is to prove him more excellent and greater than all the Levitical priests. But herein he takes a step backward, and begins with Abraham himself, from whom both people and priests confessedly derived all their privileges. And he produceth his instance in the case of tithes, whereon, as it is known, the whole Levitical priesthood did depend. And this the apostle knew full well, that if once he proved him greater than Abraham, he should not need, with that people, to prove him above any of his posterity, but they would immediately give over the contest. So in their exceptions unto our Saviour's testimony concerning himself, they acknowledge they could proceed no higher. "Art thou," say they, "greater than our father Abraham? whom makest thou thyself to be?" John viii. 53. But yet our apostle, not content herewith, to obviate all pretences, proves distinctly afterwards that the whole order of the Levitical priests were inferior unto him.

Ver. 4, 5.—Θεωρεῖτε δὲ, πηλίκος οὗτος, ᾧ καὶ δεκάτην Ἀβραὰμ ἔδωκεν ἐκ τῶν ἀκροθίνων ὁ πατριάρχης. Καὶ οἱ μὲν ἐκ τῶν υἱῶν Λευὶ τὴν ἱερατείαν λαμβάνοντες ἐντολὴν ἔχουσιν ἀποδεκατοῦν τὴν λαὸν κατὰ τὸν νόμον, τοῦτ' ἔστι, τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς αὐτῶν, καίπερ ἐξελθούσας ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας Ἀβραὰμ.

Θεωρεῖτε δὲ, "considerate," "spectate." Syr., ܡܝܬܐ, "violet." Vulg. Lat., "intuemini." "Consider," "behold," "contemplate." Serious consideration with diligent intuition is intended. Πηλίκος οὗτος. "Quantus hic;" "sit," Vulg. Lat., "Fuerit" is supplied by others; as by us, "how great this man was." Syr., ܡܝܬܐ ܒܐ ܡܝܬܐ, "quam magnus hic." Δεκάτην ἐκ τῶν ἀκροθίνων. Beza, "decimas spoliiorum;" "decimas de spoliis hostium;" "de spoliis;" Vulg. Lat., "decimas de præcipuis;" of "the chiefest things." The Syriac makes a distinction: ܡܝܬܐ ܒܐ ܡܝܬܐ, "tithes and first-fruits."

Ver. 4.—Consider then how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

The duty of the Hebrews, upon the proposition of the state of Melchisedec, before insisted on, is here pressed on them. And the

EXPOSITION.—To meet the objection, that no stress can be laid on the circumstance that Melchisedec received tithes, inasmuch as the Levitical priests also received them, the apostle, according to Ebrard, argues, 1. From the fact that they received the priesthood in virtue of *descent*,—τὴν ἱερατείαν λαμβάνοντες: 2. From their right to tithes by *statute*, whereas Abraham gave tithes to Melchisedec *voluntarily*: 3. From the limitation of the Levitical right to the *λαός*, the chosen people, while that of Melchisedec stretched beyond his tribe, and was recognised by Abraham: and, 4. Descent from Abraham, while it secured tithes for the Levites, involved those who were not Levites in the burden of paying, "though they came out of the loins of Abraham." Ebrard sums the whole up in a mathematical formula: Melchisedec >> [Abraham > (Levites > not Levites)].—Ed.

words contain both a *respect* unto the preceding discourse, a *duty* prescribed, the *object* of that duty, and the reason of a *qualification* therein expressed, amplified by the title, state, and condition of one person concerned.

1. The note of respect unto the preceding discourse is in the particle *δέ*; which we render “now,” “consider now, then, or therefore.” “But do you consider. The things before laid down are, as of importance in themselves, so of your especial concernment.”

2. The especial duty which he prescribes unto them, with respect unto the things proposed by him concerning the excellency of Melchisedec and his office, is, that they would “consider” it.

He doth four times in this epistle call the Hebrews unto this especial duty of an intense consideration of the things proposed unto them, as we have translated his words, and that not unduly, chap. iii. 1, x. 24, xii. 3, and in this place. Chap. iii. 1, x. 24, we have the same word in the original, *κατανοήσατε*; whose importance hath been declared on chap. iii. 1. Chap. xii. 3, the word is *ἀναλογίσασθε*, which signifies “to call things unto a due reckoning and account,” so as to conform our minds unto them; which is our great duty with respect unto the patient sufferings of Christ, there intended. The word here used signifies “diligently to behold,” “contemplate on,” or “to look into” the things proposed unto us. He had before warned them that what he had to discourse on this subject was difficult and hard to be understood; but withal, such was its use and excellency, that neither would he refrain from declaring of them, nor ought they to spare any pains in a diligent inquiry into them. Having therefore laid down the matter of fact, and stated the whole subject which he designed to treat upon, he adds their duty with respect thereunto. And this, in the first place, is, that they would “heedfully and diligently look into them.”

Obs. I. It will be fruitless, and to no advantage, to propose or declare the most important truths of the gospel, if those unto whom they are proposed do not diligently inquire into them.—And here those unto whom the dispensation of the gospel is committed are pressed with no small difficulty, as our apostle professeth that he was in this very case. For whereas it is incumbent on them, in that declaration of the whole counsel of God which is enjoined them, to insist upon sundry things that are deep, mysterious, and hard to be understood; when their hearers, for want of a good foundation of knowledge in the principles of religion, or through carelessness in attending unto what is delivered, do not come unto a due perception and understanding of them, it is very grievous to see their own

labours and others' profit disappointed. Wherefore, if men think they have nothing to do but as it were to *give the hearing* unto such as endeavour to carry them on to perfection; they will lose all the advantage of their ministry. This duty, therefore, is here prescribed by the apostle with respect unto this truth, to obviate this slothful frame. And we may on this occasion briefly name the things that are required thereunto; as, 1. *Sense of a concernment in them.* Unless this be well fixed on the mind, men will never diligently attend unto them, nor duly consider them. If, upon the proposal of sacred truths that appear hard to be understood, they begin to think that this belongs not unto them, it is for others who are more exercised than they, it is not likely they would ever endeavour to apprehend them aright. And this very frame keeps many on a low form of knowledge all their days. Possibly, also, this neglect is increased in many by the spreading of a late foolish apprehension, that we are upon the matter to look after nothing but the *doctrines and precepts of morality* that are in the Scripture; but as for the more spiritual mysteries of grace, we are not concerned in them. Where this principle is once imbibed, men will rest and satisfy themselves in the most profound ignorance; and not only so, but despise all such as endeavour to be wiser than themselves. But, 2. *Unto a due apprehension of these things, there is not only required a sense of our concernment, but also a delight in them.* If the light be not pleasant unto us, as well as useful, we shall not value it nor seek after it. When such mysterious truths as that here insisted on by our apostle are proposed unto men, if they have no delight in such things, they will never be at the cost and pains of inquiring into them with necessary diligence. Curiosity, indeed, or a humour to pry into things we have not seen, and which we cannot see in a due manner, because not revealed, is everywhere condemned by our apostle, who warns us all to be “wise unto sobriety,” and not above what is written. But there is a secret delight and complacency of mind in every beam of spiritual light shining in its proper divine revelation, when the soul is disposed aright unto the reception of it. Without this in some measure, we shall not “follow on to know,” nor thrive in knowledge. 3. *Study, meditation, and prayer,* with the diligent use of all other means appointed for the search and investigation of the truth, do close this duty. Without these things in hearers, ministers lose all their labour in the declaration of the most important mysteries of the gospel. This the apostle, as to the present case, designs to obviate in the frequent prescription of this duty.

That which the apostle proposeth in the first place, and in general, as the object of this inquiry and consideration, *Πηλίκος ὅς τις* is *Πηλίκος ὁ ὅς τις*, “Quantus iste erat.” The word respects *greatness* and excellency in any kind: “Nunc quantus Achilles,”

"Quantus erat Julius Cæsar," and the like. And this greatness of Melchisedec respected neither the endowments of his person, nor the largeness of his dominion, nor his riches or wealth; in which sense some are said to be great in the Scripture, as Job, Barzillai, and others: but it regards alone his *dignity* with respect unto his office, and his *nearness* unto God on that account. That which these Hebrews insisted on, as their chief and fundamental privilege in Judaism, and which they were most unwilling to forego, was the greatness of their predecessors, with their nearness unto God in favour and office. In the first way, as to divine love and favour, they gloried in Abraham, and opposed the privilege of being his children on all occasions unto the person and doctrine of Christ, John viii. 33, 53. And in the latter, they thought Aaron and his successors to be preferred above all the world. And whilst they were under the power and influence of these apprehensions the gospel could not but be ungrateful unto them, as depriving them of their privileges, and rendering their condition worse than it was before. To undeceive them in this matter, and to demonstrate how unspeakably all those in whom they trusted came short of the true high priest of the church, he calls them to consider the greatness of him whose only eminence consisted in being a type or representative of him. Wherefore the greatness of Melchisedec, here proposed unto earnest consideration, is that which he had in representing Jesus Christ, and his nearness unto God on that account. And it were well that we were all really convinced that *all true greatness consists in the favour of God, and our nearness unto him, on the account of our relation unto Jesus Christ*. We neither deny nor undervalue any man's wealth or power hereby. Let those who are rich and wealthy in the world be accounted and called great, as the Scripture sometimes calls them so; and let those who are high in power and authority be so esteemed,—we would derogate nothing from them which is their due: but yet the greatness of them all is but particular, with respect unto some certain things, and therefore fading and perishing; but this greatness and honour, of the favour of God and nearness unto him, on the account of relation unto Jesus Christ, is general, abiding, yea, eternal.

The proof of the apostle's assertion, included in that *interrogation*, "How great this man was," follows in an instance of what he had before observed and proposed unto them, "Unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils,"—

ὅτι καὶ δι-
κάρτην. ὃ καὶ δεκάτην ἔδωκε: δεκάτην, that is *μερίδα*, "the tenth part." The conjunction *καὶ* is emphatical; and although

in the original it is joined with *δεκάτην*, yet in construction it is to be understood with "Abraham;"—not, "unto whom Abraham gave even the tenth;" but, "unto whom even Abraham gave the tenth," as it is in our translation.

The proof of the greatness of Melchisedec from hence consists in three things: 1. In the nomination of the person that was subject unto him, or "Abraham." 2. In the qualification of his person; he was "the patriarch." 3. In what he did; "he gave him the tenth part of the spoils."

1. As to the *person himself*, he was the stock and root of the whole people, their common father, in whom they were first separated from the other nations to be a people of themselves. ^{Ἀβραάμ.} And herein they had a singular reverence for him, as generally all nations have for the first founders of their political state; who among the idolatrous heathens were commonly deified, and made the objects of their religious adoration. But moreover, it was he who first received the promise and the covenant, with the token of it, and by whom alone they put in their claim unto all the privileges and advantages which they gloried in above all nations in the world. This Abraham, therefore, they esteemed next unto God himself. And their posterity do now place him in heaven above the angels, hardly allowing that the Messiah himself should be exalted above him, and tell a foolish story how he took it ill that the Messiah should be on the right hand, and he on the left hand of God. But it is sufficiently evident from the Gospel, how much in those days they boasted of him, and trusted in him. Hence it is that our apostle expresseth it so emphatically, "even Abraham."

2. The *qualification of his person*, and his title thereon, are added in like manner: he was *ὁ πατριάρχης*. A "patriarch" is a father; that is, a prince or ruler of a family,—a ruling ^{ὁ πατριάρχης.} father. And these patriarchs were of three sorts among the Jews. Of the first sort was he alone who was the first separated progenitor of the whole nation. He was their *אבי אבות*,—the *first father* of all that great family. Secondly, There were such as *succeeded him*, from whom the whole nation in like manner descended, as Isaac and Jacob; who were "heirs with him of the same promise," Heb. xi. 9. Thirdly, Such as were the first heads of their *twelve tribes*, into which the nation was divided; that is, the twelve sons of Jacob, who are called patriarchs, Acts vii. 8, 9. Others that followed them, as David (who is also called a patriarch, Acts ii. 29), were termed so in allusion unto them, and being signally the progenitors of a most eminent family among them. Now it is evident that the first of these on all accounts is the principal, and hath the pre-eminence over all the rest. And this was Abraham alone. Wherefore if any one were greater than Abraham, and that in his own time, it must be acknowledged it was upon the account of some privilege that was above all that ever that whole nation as descendants from Abraham were made partakers of. But that this was so, the apostle proves by the instance ensuing, namely, that he gave to Melchisedec, etc.

3. ἔδωκε, "he gave" them; yet not arbitrarily, but in the way of a necessary duty; not as an honorary respect, but as a religious office. And he gave thus δέκατον, — that is, *μερίδα*, or תְּשׁוּבָה, the "tithe portion;" delivering it up unto his use and disposal, as the priest of the most high God. And this tenth was τῶν ἀκροθίνων, as the apostle interprets the passage in Moses, — of the "spoils of war." Θῖν is "acervus," "a heap of corn," or any useful things; ἀκροθίνων is the "top of the heap," the best of it, from whence the first-fruits were taken for sacred services. And because it was the custom of all nations afterwards to dedicate or devote some portion of what they got in war unto religious services, the word itself came to signify "the spoils of war." At first it was the portion that was *taken out of the whole*; and afterwards *the whole itself* was signified by it. Now, although Abraham had reserved nothing unto himself of what belonged unto the king of Sodom and his companions, yet the army and kings which he had newly slain and destroyed having smitten sundry other nations, Gen. xiv. 5–7, and dealt with them as they did with Sodom and the other towns, — took all their goods and provision, verse 11, — and being now on their return home, and laden with prey, it fell all into the hand of the conqueror. "The tenth part of the spoils," in every kind, might probably be a very great offering, both for sacrifice and sacred dedication in the place where Melchisedec ministered in his office. What further concerns the greatness of this man, the apostle further declares in the ensuing verses, where it will fall under consideration. From this one instance, of Abraham's paying tithes unto him, it is in a great measure already evinced.

But how came Melchisedec to be thus great? Is it because he was originally in himself more wise and honourable than any of the sons of men? We read no such thing concerning him; which the apostle declares to be the rule and measure of all our conceptions in this matter. Is it that he attained this dignity and greatness by his own industry and endeavours? as the prophet says of some, that "their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves," Hab. i. 7. Neither do we find any thing of that nature ascribed unto him. The sole reason and cause hereof is, that God raised him up and disposed of him into that condition of his own good pleasure. And we may see in him, that, —

Obs. II. The sovereign will, pleasure, and grace of God, is that alone which puts a difference among men, especially in the church. — He makes men great or small, high or low, eminent or obscure, as it seemeth good unto him. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them,"

1 Sam. ii. 8; which is plentifully elsewhere testified unto. Whence was it that the twelve poor fishermen were made apostles, to "sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," and becoming princes in all nations? Who made the most glorious apostle of the first and fiercest persecutor? Was it not He who "hath mercy on whom he will have mercy," and is "gracious unto whom he will be gracious?" And it is laid down as a universal rule, that no man hath any thing in this kind but what he hath freely received; nor doth any man make himself to differ from others, 1 Cor. iv. 7. For, 1. God lays the foundation of all spiritual differences among men in his sovereign decree of eternal election, Rom. ix. 11–16; Eph. i. 4. And among them that are chosen, he calleth them when and how he pleaseth, both unto grace and employment or work. And, 2. As to grace, gifts, and spiritual endowments, the Holy Spirit "divideth unto every man as he will," 1 Cor. xii. 11. Let every one, then, be contented with his lot and condition; let every one endeavour to fill up the place and state whereto he is fixed, and as he is called to abide with God. Let God be owned in all his gifts and graces; and our souls be humbled in what we come short of others; and the sovereignty of grace admired, in all the different effects of it which we behold.

Obs. III. Whereas even Abraham himself gave the tenth of all to Melchisedec, we may observe, that the highest privilege exempts not any from the obligation unto and performance of the meanest duty. — Notwithstanding all those advantages and privileges which Abraham was possessed of, on the account whereof he was mighty in his own days, and almost adored by his posterity, yet when the meanest duty was presented unto him, he readily complied with it. Nor ought it to be otherwise with any. For, 1. *Privilege is less than duty.* A man may have the greatest privileges and yet be rejected; but the least sincere duty shall not be unrewarded: for duty indeed is our chiefest honour and advantage. And for men to pretend to such advancements in the church of God, as that they should be exempted thereby from the ordinary labour of the ministry, is horrid pride and ingratitude. But when spiritual or ecclesiastical privileges are pretended to countenance men in a life or course of idleness, sloth, pleasure, sensuality, or worldliness in any kind, it is a crime that, it may be, we as yet want a name to express. Wherefore, 2. Whatever is pretended, that is no privilege which either exempts a man from or hinders him in and unto the performance of any duty whatever. It is such a privilege as, being well improved, will send men to hell. It will prove no otherwise, let the pretence be what it will. For, 3. There are indeed but two ends of any privileges whereof in this world we may be made partakers; whereof the first is to *enable us unto duty*, and the other is to *encourage us there-*

unto. Hereunto we may add, that when any are highly exalted in privileges, so that they have an advantage thereby to give an eminent example unto others in the performance of their duties, when these ends are not pursued, all privileges, promotions, dignities, exaltations, are snares, and tend unto the ruin of men's souls. There are things still of this nature, both as unto whole churches and as unto particular persons. Some churches are like Capernaum as to the outward means of grace,—as it were lifted up to heaven. Let them take heed of Capernaum's judgment, in being brought down as low as hell for their abuse of them, or negligence in their improvement. Some persons have eminent endowments; and if they are not eminent in service, they will prove to their disadvantage: yea, *the highest privileges* should make men ready to condescend unto the *meanest duties*. This is that which our Lord Jesus Christ so signally instructed his disciples in, 'when he himself washed their feet, and taught them the same duty towards the meanest of his disciples, John xiii. 11–17.

Obs. IV. Opportunities for duty, which render it beautiful, ought diligently to be embraced.—So did Abraham as unto this duty, upon his meeting of Melchisedec. Hence the performance of this duty became so renowned, and was of the use whereunto it is here applied by our apostle. It is season that gives every thing its beauty. And omission of seasons, or tergiversations under them, are evidences of a heart much under the power of corrupt lusts or unbelief.

Obs. V. When the instituted use of consecrated things ceaseth, the things themselves cease to be sacred or of esteem.—For what became of all these dedicated things after the death of Melchisedec? They were no more sacred, the actual administration of his typical priesthood ceasing. Of what use was the brazen serpent, after it was taken from the pole whereon it was lifted up by God's appointment? or of what use would the lifting of it up be, when it was not under an express command? We know it proved a snare, a means of idolatry, and that was all. God's institution is the foundation and warranty of all consecration. All the men in the world cannot really consecrate or dedicate any thing, but by virtue of divine appointment. And this appointment of God respected always a limited use, beyond which nothing was sacred. And every thing kept beyond its appointment is like manna so kept; "it breeds worms and stinketh." These things are manifest, from the consideration of all things that God ever accepted or dedicated in the church. But ignorance of them is that which hath filled the world with horrid superstition. How many things have we had made sacred which never had warranty from any institution of God!—monasteries, abbeys, persons, and lands, altars, bells, utensils, with other things of the like nature very many; which, whatever use they are of, yet all the men in the world cannot make

them sacred. And the extending of the sacredness of dedicated things beyond their use hath had a no less pernicious event. Hence was the useless reservation of the consecrated bread after the sacrament, and afterwards the idolatrous worship of it. But these things are here occasionally only mentioned. The apostle adds, in the confirmation of his argument,—

Ver. 5.—And verily they that are the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham.

There is in these words an illustration and confirmation of the present argument, proving the preference of Melchisedec above Abraham, from his giving the tithe or tenth of all unto him, and consequently receiving the blessing from him. And this is taken from what was determined in the law and acknowledged among the Hebrews; with which kind of arguments the apostle doth principally press them in the whole epistle, as we have showed on many occasions. Now this is, that the priests, who received tithes by the law, were superior in dignity and honour unto the people from whom they did receive them. And this was only declared in the law, for the foundation of it was in the light of nature, as the apostle expressly intimates in the instance of benediction afterwards.

There are considerable in the words, 1. The *introduction* of this new confirmation of his foregoing argument. 2. A *description* of the persons in whom he instanceth. 3. The *action* ascribed unto them, with its limitation. And, 4. The *qualification* of the persons on whom their power was exercised:—

First, The *introduction* of his reasoning herein is in these words, *Kai oi mén*. The connection in the conjunction is plain; yet not a reason is given of what was spoken before, but a *Kai oi mén*. continuation of the same argument with further proof is intended. And he adds the note of observation, *μέν*, "verily;" as if he had said, 'As to this matter of tithing, and what may thence justly be inferred as to dignity and pre-eminence, you may consider how it was under the law; and what I propose unto you, you will there find directly confirmed.' It is a great advantage, to press them with whom we have to do from their own principles.

Secondly, The *description* of the persons in whom he instanceth is in these words, "The sons of Levi, who receive the *οἱ ἱερεῖς τῶν υἱῶν* office of the priesthood." It was the priests directly *λεβὶ, ἱερατείας* whom he intended, or the sons of Aaron; and he might *λαμβάνοντες*. have so expressed it, 'the priests according to the law.' But he varieth his expression for sundry reasons that appear in the context:—

1. Because *all the Levites* did receive tithes by the law, yea, tithes in the first place were paid unto them in common. But because their dignity among the people was less conspicuous than that of the priests, and the design of the apostle is not merely to argue from the *giving of tithes* unto any, but the giving of them unto them as *priests*, as Abraham gave tithes of all unto Melchisedec as priest of the most high God, he thus expresseth it, "The sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood." For though all the sons of Levi received tithes, yet all of them did not receive the priesthood; with which sort of persons alone he was concerned.

2. He doth thus express it to introduce the mention of Levi, whom he was afterwards to mention on the same occasion, and to lay the weight of him and the whole tribe under the same argument.

3. He minds them, by the way, of *another dignity* of the priesthood, in that not all the posterity of Abraham, *no*, nor yet of Levi, were partakers thereof, but it was a privilege granted only to one part of them, even the family of Aaron. And these are the persons in whom he makes his instance. Thus God distributes dignity and pre-eminence in the church as he pleaseth. Not all the posterity of Abraham, but only those of Levi, were set apart to receive tithes; and not all the posterity of Levi, but only the family of Aaron, did receive the priesthood. And this order of his sovereign pleasure God required of them all to submit unto and acquiesce in, Numb. xvi. 9, 10. And it is a dangerous thing, out of envy, pride, or emulation, to transgress the *bounds of dignity and office* that God hath prescribed; as we may see in the instance of Korah. For every man to be contented with the station which God hath fixed him unto by rule and providence, is his safety and honour. What God call-eth and disposeth men unto, therein are they to abide, and to that are they to attend. It was new to the people, to set the whole tribe of Levi, taken into a particular sacred condition, to attend for ever on the worship of God; yet therein they acquiesced. But when the priests were taken out of the Levites, and exalted above them, some of them murmured at it, and stirred up the congregation against Aaron, as though he took too much upon him, and deprived the congregation of their liberty, which yet was all holy. The end of this sedition was known, notwithstanding the specious pretence of it.

Thirdly, What is *ascribed* unto these persons ensues in the words,

Ἐντολὴν ἔχου-
σιν ἀποδιδ-
εῖν τὸν λαόν,
κατὰ τὸν νό-
μον.

"Have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law." They had "a command to take tithes;" and they were to do it "according to the law:" the one was their *warranty*, and the other their *rule*; for so are the "commandment" and the "law" here to be distinguished.

1. They had a "commandment to take tithes;"—that is, there was a command or institution enabling them so to do; for the command in the first place respected the people, making it their duty to pay all their tithes unto the Levites. God did first take the tithe to be his peculiar portion; and thereby alienated it from the people, that they had no propriety in it. "And all the tithe of the land," saith he, "is the LORD'S," Lev. xxvii. 30. Hence those that withheld their tithes are said to "rob God," Mal. iii. 8. And wherever it can be manifested that God hath, by an institution of his own, taken the whole tithes of any place into his own possession, there for any to detain them for their own use, it is sacrilege, and not else. But God having thus in the land of Canaan taken them into his own propriety, he commanded the people to pay them to the priests. This command given unto the people to pay them, was a command to the priests to receive them; for what men have a *right* to do in the church, by God's institution, that they have a *command* to do. The right of the priests unto tithing was such, as that it was not at all their liberty to forego it at their pleasure; yea, it was their sin so to have done. The command which obliged others to pay them, obliged them to receive them. And they who on slight pretences do forego what is due to them with respect unto their office, will on as slight, when occasion serves, neglect what is due from them on the same account. And this fell out frequently with the priests of old; they neglected their wages, that they might have countenance in the neglect of their work. And we may hence observe, that,—

Obs. VI. Rule, institution, and command, without regard unto unrequired humility, or pleas of greater zeal and self-denial, unless in evident and cogent circumstances, are the best preservatives of order and duty in the church.—They are so in every kind, especially in the disposal of earthly things, such as the maintenance of the officers of the church doth consist in. Neither the people's pretence of poverty, nor the ministers' pretence of humility, will regulate this matter as it ought to be. But as it is the people's duty to provide for them, wherein they exercise grace and obedience towards Jesus Christ; so it is the ministers' duty cheerfully to receive what is their due by the appointment of Christ, for they have a command so to do. But whereas they are not many who are apt to transgress on this hand, we shall not need further to press this consideration. But we may add,—

Obs. VII. As it is the duty of those who are employed in sacred ministrations to receive what the Lord Christ hath appointed for their supportment, and in the way of his appointment, so it is likewise, without trouble, solicitousness, or complaint, to acquiesce therein.—So was it with the priests of old, they were to receive their portion, and to acquiesce in their portion; the neglect of which duty

was the sin of the sons of Eli. We take it for granted that the way of maintenance is changed as to the ministers of holy things under the new testament. That the law of maintenance is taken away is the highest folly to imagine, it being so expressly asserted by our Saviour himself and his apostle, Luke x. 7; 1 Cor. ix. But here it is thought lies the disadvantage, that whereas the priests under the old testament had a certain portion which was *legally* due unto them, and they might demand it as their own, it is now referred unto the *voluntary contribution* of them that have the benefit and advantage of their labour. Now whereas they oftentimes, yea, for the most part, are negligent in their duty, and, through love of the present world, very scanty and backward in their contributions, ministers cannot be supported in their work in any measure proportionable unto what the priests were of old. Besides, it should seem unworthy a minister of the gospel, who ought to be had in esteem, and is declared by the apostle to be "worthy of double honour," to depend on the will, and as it were charity of the people, many of them, it may be, poor and low themselves. And these things have taken such impression on the minds of the most of them that are called ministers, as that, with the help of the secular power, they have wisely provided a new way and law of legal tithing for their subsistence, with a notable overplus of other good ecclesiastical lands and revenues: which practice I shall neither justify nor condemn, let the effects of it and the day declare it. Only I say, that the institution of Christ before mentioned stands in no need of this invention or supply to safeguard it from these objections. For,—

(1.) The *change made in the way of maintenance*, pretended so disadvantageous unto ministers of the gospel, is no other but a part of that *universal alteration*, wherein carnal things are turned into those that are more spiritual, which was made by the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ. And if ministers may complain that they have by the gospel lost the former allotment of sacred officers in tithes, the people may as well complain that they have no inheritances in the land of Canaan. But he is unworthy the name of a minister of the gospel, who is not satisfied with what our Lord hath ordained in every kind. And as for those who indeed think better of what was of use in Judaism or heathenism than what is warranted by the gospel, I shall not debate the matter with them. Wherefore as yet I judge, that the taking of the maintenance of sacred ministers from the law of a carnal commandment enforcing of it, and charging it on the grace and duty of the church, is a perfective alteration, becoming the spirituality and glory of the kingdom of Christ. For,—

(2.) This way is the most *honourable way*, and that which casts the greatest respect upon them. Even the princes and rulers of the

world have their revenue and supportment from the substance of the people. Now I would only ask, whether it would not be more honourable that the people should willingly and of their own accord bring in their contribution, than merely pay it under the compulsion of a law? For in this latter way, no man knoweth whether they have the least true honour for their ruler or regard unto his office; but if it might be done in the former, all the world must take notice what reverence, regard, and honour they have for the person and dignity of their prince. It is true, generally the men of the world are such lovers of themselves, and so little concerned in public good, that if they were left absolutely at liberty in this matter, their governors might be defrauded of their right, and the ends of government be disappointed; wherefore, in all countries provision is made by law for the payment of that tribute which yet without law is due. But whether it be meet to bring this order into the church or no, I much question. If it be so, possibly it may secure the revenue of ministers, but it will not increase their honour. For however men may please themselves with outward appearances of things, true honour consists in that respect and reverence which others pay them in their minds and hearts. Now when this is such, and that on the account of duty, that men will freely contribute unto our supportment, I know no more honourable subsistence in the world. 'What!' will some say, 'to depend on the will and love of the people?—there is nothing more base and unworthy!' Yea, but what if all the honour that Jesus Christ himself hath, or accepts from his people, proceeds from their wills and affections? Mohammed, indeed, who knew well enough that neither honour, respect, nor obedience was due unto him, and that he could no way recompense what should be done towards him in that kind, provided that men should be brought in subjection unto his name by fire and sword. But our Lord Jesus Christ despiseth all honour, all obedience and respect, that are not voluntary and free, and which do not proceed from the wills of men. And shall his servants in the work of the gospel suppose themselves debased, to receive respect and honour from the same principle? Well, therefore, because our apostle tells us that "our Lord hath ordained that those who preach the gospel shall live on the gospel," and all obedience unto his ordinances and institutions must be voluntary, if ministers are ashamed, and esteem it unworthy of them, to receive what is so contributed in a way of voluntary obedience, let them try if they can prevail with themselves to receive it so for Him, and in his name, who is not ashamed to receive it, no, if it be only a cup of cold water, so it come from a free and willing mind, when he despiseth the revenue of the whole world upon compulsion. If they will not do so, their best way is to leave his service, and take up with that which is more

honourable. For my part, I do judge that the way of maintenance of ministers by voluntary benevolence, in a way of duty and obedience unto Christ, though it be not likely the most plentiful, is yet the most honourable of all others. And of this judgment I shall be, until I am convinced of two things: [1.] That *true honour* doth not consist in the respect and regard of the minds of men unto the real worth and usefulness of those who are honoured, but in outward ceremonies and forced works of regard. [2.] That it is not the *duty which every church owes to Jesus Christ*, to maintain those who labour in the word and doctrine, according to their ability; or that it is any gospel-duty which is influenced by force or compulsion.

(3.) It must be acknowledged, that this way of voluntary contribution is not like to afford matter for that grandeur and secular greatness, those ample revenues, those provisions for ease, wealth, and worldly honour, which some think necessary in this case. But yet, however, it must be granted, that all those large possessions and dominions which some now enjoy under the name of church-revenues, were originally voluntary grants and contributions. For it will not be said that the clergy got them by force of arms, or by fraud, nor were they their patrimonial inheritance. But yet I fear there were some undue artifices used to induce men unto such donations and ecclesiastical endowments, and somewhat more of merit fixed thereon than truth will allow, besides a compensation therein for what might be undergone in purgatory, when men were gone out of the world. However, the thing itself in its whole kind, that men out of their substance and revenue should design a portion unto the service of the church, is not to be condemned. But it proved mischievous and fatal, when those who received what was so given, being unmeasurably covetous and worldly, fixed no bounds unto the charity or superstition of men in this kind, until they had overrun the world with their gains. And not only so, but whereas there was no pretence of use of such great revenues, in any way pretended to be of *divine appointment*, they were forced to invent and find out ways innumerable, in abbeyes, monasteries, cloisters, to be repositories of their overflowing treasure and revenues. But when God had appointed to build his tabernacle of the free-will offerings of the people (a type of the gospel-church), when there was provision enough of materials brought in, the liberality of the people was restrained by proclamation, and some perhaps grieved that their offerings were not received, Exod. xxxvi. 5, 6. Through want of this care to put a stop unto the devotions of men in these donations, according unto a just measure of the church's necessary use, the bounds whereof were broken up and left invisible, by the pride, ambition, covetousness, and craft of the clergy, the whole world ran

into superstition and confusion. At present, I grant that the way which the gospel appoints is not likely to make provision for pomp, grandeur, wealth, revenues, and inheritances, unto them that rely upon it. Nor do I think that if the present establishment of a superfluous revenue unto the clergy were removed, the world itself would in haste run into the same state again. Wherefore, those who judge these things necessary and desirable, must be permitted, as far as I know, to betake themselves unto the advantage the world will afford; it is acknowledged that the gospel hath made no provision of them.

(4.) It is indeed supposed, unto the disadvantage of this way, that by means thereof ministers do become obnoxious unto the people, do depend upon them, and so cannot *deal so uprightly and sincerely with their consciences as they ought to do*, lest they incur their displeasure, wherein they are too much concerned. It were easy to manifest with how many more and greater inconveniencies the other way is attended, were we now comparing of them. And in truth it is a vain thing to look for or expect any such order and disposal of these things, as should administer no occasion for the wisdom and graces of those concerned; nor would such a way be at all useful. I say, therefore, that God hath established *mutual duty* to be the rule and measure of all things between ministers and people. Hereunto it is their wisdom and grace to attend, leaving the success unto God. And a minister may easily conclude, that seeing his whole supportment in earthly things, with respect unto his ministry, depends on the command of God on the account of the discharge of his duty, if he have respect thereunto in his work, or so far as it is lawful for him to have, that the more sincere and upright he is therein, the more assured will his supportment be. And he who is enabled to give up himself unto the work of the ministry in a due manner, considering the nature of that work, and what he shall assuredly meet withal in its discharge, is not in much danger of being greatly moved with this pitiful consideration of displeasing this or that man in the discharge of his duty.

(5.) It is further pleaded, that these things were tolerable at the first entrance and beginning of Christianity, when the zeal, love, and liberality of its professors, did sufficiently stir them up unto an abundant discharge of their duty; but now the whole body of them is degenerate from their pristine faith and love: coldness and indifferency in the things of their eternal concernment, with love of self and this present evil world, do so prevail in them all, as that, if things were left unto their wills and senso of duty, there would quickly be an end of all ministry, for want of maintenance. This is of all others the most cogent argument in this case, and that which prevails with many good and sober men utterly to decry the way of

ministers' maintenance by a voluntary contribution. I shall briefly give my thoughts concerning it, and so return from this digression. And I say,—

[1.] I do not condemn any provision that is made by good, wholesome, and righteous laws among men, for this end and purpose, provided it be such as is accommodated unto the furtherance of the work itself. Such provision as in its own nature is a snare and temptation, inclining men unto pride, ambition, luxury, distance from, and elevation above the meanest of the sheep or lambs of Christ, or as it were requiring a worldly grandeur and secular pomp in their course of life, must plead for itself as it is able. But such as may comfortably support, encourage, and help men in this work and discharge of their duty, being made without the wrong of others, is doubtless to be approved. Yea, if, in this degeneracy of Christianity under which we suffer, any shall, out of love and obedience unto the gospel, set apart any portion of their estates, and settle it unto the service of the church in the maintenance of the ministry, it is a good work, which, if done in faith, will be accepted.

[2.] Let those who are true disciples indeed know, that it is greatly incumbent on them to roll away that reproach which is cast upon the institutions of Christ by the miscarriages of the generality of Christians. He hath "ordained that those who preach the gospel shall live on the gospel." And the way whereby he hath prescribed this to be effected is, that those who are his disciples should, in obedience unto his command, supply them with temporals by whom spirituals are dispensed unto them. If this be not done, a reproach is cast upon his institutions, as insufficient unto the end for which they were designed. It is therefore incumbent on all who have any true zeal for the glory and honour of Christ, to manifest their exemplary obedience and fruitfulness in this matter; whereby it may appear that it is not any defect in the appointment of Christ, but the stubborn disobedience and unbelief of men, that is the cause of any disorder.

[3.] Seeing there is such a degeneracy among Christians, as that they will not be wrought upon unto a voluntary discharge of their duty in this matter, it may be inquired what hath been the cause, or at least the principal occasion thereof. Now if this should be found and appear to be, the coldness, remissness, neglect, ignorance, sloth, ambition, and worldliness, of those who have been their guides and leaders, their officers and ministers, in most ages, it will evince how little reason some have to complain that the people are backward and negligent in the discharge of their duty. And if it be true, as indeed it is, that the care of religion, that it be preserved, thrive, and flourish, not only in themselves but in the whole church, has been committed unto those persons, there can be no such apostasy

as is complained of among the people, but that the guilt of it will lie at their doors. And if it be so, it is to be inquired whether it be the duty of ministers absolutely to comply with them in their degeneration, and suffer them to live in the neglect of their duty in this matter, only providing for themselves some other way; or whether they ought not rather by all ways and means to endeavour their recovery into their pristine condition. If it be said, that whatever men pretend, yet it is a thing impossible, to work the people into a due discharge of their duty in this matter,—I grant it is, whilst that is only or principally intended. But if men would not consider themselves or their interest in the first place, but really endeavour their recovery unto faith, love, obedience, and holiness, and that by their own example as well as teaching, it may well be hoped that this duty would revive again in the company of others; for it is certain it will never stand alone by itself. But we must proceed with our apostle.

2. Those sons of Levi who obtained the priesthood "received tithes according to the law;" that is, as the matter or manner of tithing was determined by the law. For by ^{Karà tòv νόμον.} "tithes" I understand that whole portion which, by God's order and command, belonged unto the priests; and this in all the concerns of it was determined by the law. What, when, how, of whom, all was expressly established by law. So they received tithes according to the law,—in the order, way and manner therein determined; for it is God's law and appointment that gives boundaries and measures unto all duties. What is done according unto them is straight, right, and acceptable; whatever is otherwise, however it may please our own wisdom or reason, is crooked, forward, perverse, and rejected of God.

But there is an objection that this assertion of the apostle seems liable unto, which we must take notice of in our passage. For whereas he affirms that "the Levites who received the office of the priesthood took tithes of their brethren," it is evident, from the first grant and institution of tithing, that the Levites who were not priests were the first who immediately received them of the people. See Num. xviii. 21–24.

Ans. (1.) By "tithes" the whole consecrated portion according unto the law is intended, as we said before. Hereof the portion allotted unto the priests out of various offerings or sacrifices was no small part, wherein the Levites had no interest, but they belonged and were delivered immediately unto the priests. (2.) The Levites themselves were given unto the priests, for their service in and about holy things, Num. iii. 9. Whatever afterwards was given unto the Levites, it was so with reference unto the supportment of the priesthood in due order. The tithes, therefore, that were paid to the

Levites were in the original grant of all to the priests. (3.) The priests tithed the whole people in that tenth of all which they received of the Levites; and that being given unto them, what remained in the possession of the Levites themselves came, as all other clean things, to be used promiscuously, Num. xviii. 26-32.

Fourthly, The privilege of the priests in taking the tenth of all Τούτ' ἔστι τοὺς ἀδελφούς αὐτῶν. is amplified by the consideration of the persons from whom they took them. Now these were not strangers or foreigners, but their *own brethren*. And these also were so their brethren as that they had a right unto, and were partakers of the same original privileges with themselves; which did not exempt them from the duty of paying tithes of all unto them: "Took tithes of their brethren, though they came out of the loins of Abraham." Abraham first received the promises, and was an equal common spring of privileges to his whole posterity. The priests were not more children of Abraham than the people were. The whole people, therefore, being so, and thereby equally interested in all the privileges of Abraham, or the church of believers, it is manifest how great the honour and pre-eminence of the priests were, in that they took tithes of them all. And this the apostle declares, to strengthen his argument for the greatness and excellency of Melchisedec, in that he received tithes of Abraham himself. And we may learn,—

Obs. VIII. That it is God's prerogative to give dignity and pre-eminence in the church among them which are otherwise equal; which is to be acquiesced in.—Our common vocation by the word states us all equally in the same privilege, as all the children of Abraham were in that respect in the same condition; but in this common state God makes, by his prerogative, a threefold difference among believers; as to *grace*, as to *gifts*, as to *office*. For,—

1. Although all true believers have the same grace in the kind thereof, yet some much excel others in the degrees and exercise of it. As one star differeth from another, that is, excelleth another, in glory, so here one saint excelleth another in grace. This, both the examples of the Scripture and the experience of all ages of the church do testify. And this dependeth on the sovereign pleasure of God. As he is "gracious unto whom he will be gracious," so when, and how, and in what measure he pleaseth. Some shall have grace sooner than others, and some that which is more eminent than others have: only, he that hath least shall have no lack, as to making of him meet for the inheritance of the saints in light; and he that hath most hath no more than he shall find need of and exercise for. But so it is, some God will have as *pillars* in his house, and some are but as *bruised reeds*. And every one's duty it is for himself, in his place and condition, to comply with the will

of God herein. (1.) Let not the *weak*, the feeble of the flock, those who either really are so or in their own apprehensions, complain or faint. For, [1.] There is no man in the world that hath so little grace, who hath any, but he hath more than he ever deserved; as none hath so much, as that any dram of it is of his own earning. And as he who hath nothing but what he hath freely received, hath nothing to boast of; so he who hath that which he never deserved, hath no reason to complain. [2.] It is the pleasure of God it should be so. If it be his will to keep us spiritually poor, so we are thereby kept humble, we shall be no losers. I say not this, as though any one who hath but a little grace, or apprehends himself to have so, should, on the pretence that such is the will of God concerning him and his condition, neglect the most earnest endeavour after more,—which would be a shrewd evidence that he hath none at all; but that those who, in a diligent use of means for growth and improvement, cannot yet arrive unto such an increase, such an addition of one grace unto another, as that their profiting may be manifest (which falls out on several occasions), may find relief in the sovereign pleasure of God to keep them in their low condition. [3.] They may do well to consider, that indeed there is a great deal of glory in the least of true grace. Though there be not so much as in more grace, yet there is more than in all things under the sun besides. No man hath so little grace, who hath any, as that he is ever able to set a sufficient price upon it, or to be thankful enough for it. [4.] There is, indeed, so much spoken in the Scripture concerning the love, care, compassion, and tenderness of our Lord Jesus Christ, towards the weak, the sick, the diseased of his flock, that on some accounts the state of those humble souls who have yet received but little grace seems to be most safe and desirable, Isa. xl. 11. Let not such, therefore, complain; it is God alone who is the author of this difference between them and others. And on the same grounds, (2.) Those who are *strong*, who have much grace, ought not, [1.] To boast or be lifted up; for, as we observed before, they have nothing but what they have freely received. Yea, it is very suspicious that what any one boasteth of is not grace; for it is the nature of all true grace to exclude all boasting. He that, by comparing himself with others, finds any other issue in his thoughts, but either to admire sovereign grace or to judge himself beneath them, is in an ill condition, or at least in an ill frame. [2.] Nor to trust unto what they have received. There is none hath so much grace as not every moment to need supplies of more. And he who, like Peter, trusteth unto that wherein he is above others, will one way or other be brought down beneath them all. [3.] Let such be greatly fruitful, or this appearance of much grace will issue in much darkness.

2. God dealeth thus with men as to *spiritual gifts*. Among those

who are called, the Spirit divideth unto every one even as he will. Unto one he giveth five talents, unto another two, and to a third but one. And this diversity, depending merely on God's sovereignty, is visible in all churches. And as this tends in itself unto their beauty and edification, so there may be an abuse of it unto their disadvantage; for besides those disorders which the apostle declares to have ensued, particularly in the church of Corinth, upon the undue use and exercise of spiritual gifts, there are sundry evils which may befall particular persons by reason of them, if their original and end be not duly attended unto. For, (1.) Those who have received these spiritual gifts in any eminent manner may be apt to be lifted up with good conceits of themselves, and even to despise their brethren who come behind them therein. This evil was openly prevalent in the church of Corinth. (2.) Among those who have received them in some equality, or would be thought so to have done, emulations, and perhaps strifes thereon, are apt to ensue. One cannot well bear that the gift of another should find more acceptance, or be better esteemed than his own; and another may be apt to extend himself beyond his due line and measure, because of them. And, (3.) Those who have received them in the lowest degree may be apt to despond, and refuse to trade with what they have, because their stock is inferior unto their neighbours.' But what is all this to us? May not God do what he will with his own? If God will have some of the sons of Abraham to pay tithes, and some to receive them, is there any ground of complaint? Unto him that hath the most eminent gifts, God hath given of his own, and not of ours; he hath taken nothing from us to endue him withal, but supplied him out of his own stores. Whoever, therefore, is unduly exalted with them, or envies because of them, he despiseth the prerogative of God, and contends with him that is mighty.

3. God distinguisheth persons with respect unto *office*. He makes, and so accounts, whom he will faithful, and puts them into the ministry. This of old Korah repined against. And there are not a few who free themselves from envy at the ministry, by endeavouring to bring it down into contempt. But the office is honourable; and so are they by whom it is discharged in a due manner. And it is the prerogative of God to call whom he pleaseth thereunto. And there is no greater usurpation therein than the constitution of ministers by the laws, rules, and authority of men. For any to set up such in office as he hath not gifted for it, nor called unto it, is to sit in the temple of God, and to show themselves to be God. Wo may also hence observe, that,—

Obs. IX. No privilege can exempt persons from subjection unto any of God's institutions, though they were of the loins of Abraham. Yet,—

VERSES 6-10.

In the five following verses the apostle pursues and concludes that part of his argument, from the consideration of Melchisedec, which concerned the greatness and glory of Him who was represented by him, and his pre-eminence above the Levitical priests. For if Melchisedec, who was but a type of him, was in his own person in so many instances more excellent than they, how much more must He be esteemed to be above them who was represented by him? for he whom another is appointed to represent, must be more glorious than he by whom he is represented. This part of his argument the apostle concludes in these verses, and thence proceeds unto another great inference and deduction from what he had taught concerning this Melchisedec. And this was that which struck into the heart of that controversy which he had in hand, namely, that the Levitical priesthood must necessarily cease upon the introduction of that better priesthood which was fore-signified by that of Melchisedec. And these things, whatsoever sense we now have of them, were those on which the salvation or damnation of these Hebrews did absolutely depend. For unless they were prevailed on to forego that priesthood which was now abolished, and to betake themselves alone unto that more excellent one which was then introduced, they must unavoidably perish; as, accordingly, on this very account it fell out with the generality of that people, their posterity persisting in the same unbelief unto this day. And that which God made the crisis of the life or death of that church and people, ought to be diligently weighed and considered by us. It may be, some find not themselves much concerned in this laborious, accurate dispute of the apostle, wherein so much occurs about pedigrees, priests, and tithes, which they think belongs not unto them. But let them remember, that in that great day of taking down the whole fabric of Mosaical worship, and the abolition of the covenant of Sinai, the life or death of that ancient church, the posterity of Abraham, the friend of God, to whom until this season an enclosure was made of all spiritual privileges, Rom. ix. 4, depended upon their receiving or rejecting of the truth here contended for. And God in like manner doth oftentimes single out especial truths for the trial of the faith and obedience of the church in especial seasons. And when he doth so, there is ever after an especial veneration due unto them. But to return:—

Upon the supposition that the Levitical priests did receive tithes as well as Melchisedec, wherein, they were equal; and that they received tithes of their brethren, the posterity of Abraham, which was their especial prerogative and dignity; he yet proveth, by four arguments, that the greatness he had assigned unto Melchisedec,

and his pre-eminence above them, was no more than was due unto him. And the first of these is taken from the consideration of *his person from whom he received tithes*, verse 6; the second, from the action of *benediction* which accompanied his receiving of tithes, verse 7; the third, from the condition and state of his *own person, compared with all those who received tithes* according to the law, verse 8; and the fourth, from that which determines the whole question, namely, that Levi himself, and so, consequently, all the whole *race of priests* that sprang from his loins, *did thus pay tithes unto him*, verses 9, 10.

VERSE 6.

Ὁ δὲ μὴ γενεαλογούμενος ἐξ αὐτῶν δεδεδόκατο τὸν Ἀβραάμ, καὶ τὸν ἔχοντα τὰς ἐπαγγελίας εὐλόγηκε.

The Ethiopic translation omits these words, Ὁ δὲ μὴ γενεαλογούμενος ἐξ αὐτῶν δεδεδόκατο τὸν Ἀβραάμ. He takes up the name "Abraham" in the foregoing verse, "who came forth out of the loins of Abraham;" and adds unto them what follows in this, "who received the promises;" possibly deceived by a maimed transcript of the original.

Μὴ γενεαλογούμενος. Syr. ܡܢ ܕܠܐ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ "he who is not written in the genealogies:" properly enough; for the apostle speaks of the genealogies that were written and on record in the book of Genesis, wherein there is none of Melchisedec; and it is the writing by divine inspiration that his argument is founded on. Answ. "Genealogisatus," "genealogized." "Is ejus genus non recensetur ex illis," "whose stock is not reckoned from them;" or as Beza, "ad illos non refertur." Vulg. Lat., "cujus generatio non annumeratur in eis;" that is, as the Rhemists, "he whose generation is not numbered among them." Ours, "whose descent is not counted from them;" putting "pedigree" in the margin. Γενεαλογούμενος is, "is ejus ortus," "generatio," "nativitas recensetur;" whose "original," "nativity," "stock," "race, is reckoned up," or "recorded."

Ἐξ αὐτῶν, "from them," "from among them." Vulg. Lat., "in eis," for "inter eos," "among them;" "whose generation is not numbered among them." The meaning is, he was not of their stock or race; he sprang not of them, nor arose from among them.

Δεδεδόκατο, "decimas tulit," "sumpsit," "exegit," "accepit," "decimavit." Δεκατὴν is "decimo," or "decimam partem excerpo;" "to take out the tenth part:" τὰ τῶν πολεμίων δεκατὴν εὐξάμενος τότε, Plut. in Camillo; "ex spoliis hostium decimas excerpere." Δεκατὴν, with an accusative case, as here, is "to receive tithes of any;" and ἀποδεκατὴν, in the same construction, is of the same signification: verse 5, Ἀποδεκατοῦν τὸν λαόν. But absolutely it signifies "to pay tithes," or, "to give tithes," not to receive them: Luke xviii. 12, Ἀποδεκατὴν πάντα ὅσα κτῶμαι—"I tithe all that I possess;" that is, give tithe out of it.

Ver. 6.—But he whose descent is not reckoned from them, received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

A description there is in these words of Melchisedec, by a negation of a certain respect, useful to be observed unto the design of the apostle; and then an assertion upon a supposition thereof.

1. He was a person whose *descent, pedigree, nativity, tradition of stock and lineage, was not reckoned from among them.* Μὴ γενεα-
He had before observed absolutely, that he was not λογούμενος ἐξ
at all genealogized: verse 3, ἀγενεαλόγητος,—αὐτῶν.—"without
descent." And how this was necessary, to shadow out the eternity of the priesthood of Christ, we have declared. For if he had had any genealogy, or had stood in need thereof, it had been to show from whom he derived his priesthood, and unto whom it was transmitted; whereas he had no such circumstances, nor was to have, as to the end of his call and office. Hence it follows, in particular, that he could not derive his descent from Levi. *Morally* he could not, because so he had none at all; and *naturally* he could not, for in his days Levi was only yet in the loins of Abraham: so that in no respect he could descend from him. But the apostle hath a peculiar intention in this verse; for whereas he designed to prove the greatness of Melchisedec from his receiving tithes, he intends here to declare on what *right and title* he did so. For there were but two ways whereby any one did or might take tithes of any: (1.) By virtue of the law, or institution of God in the law. This way none could do so but he who legally derived his descent from Levi. (2.) By virtue of some especial grant or personal privilege, either before or above the law. Whereas, therefore, Melchisedec, as is here declared, had no interest in the former, it must be with respect unto the latter that he had this right; which argues his dignity. So God may, and doth sometimes, communicate of his favour and privileges thereby, by *especial exemption*, and not by an *ordinary rule* or constitution. I do not at all know, nor can it be proved, that God is now, by his word, or law, or constitution, obliged to give no ministry unto the church but by virtue of an orderly outward call according to the rule. It is true, we are obliged to keep ourselves unto the rule and law in the call of ministers, so far as we are able; but whether God hath bound himself unto that order, I very much question. Yea, when there is any great and signal work to be done in the church,—it may be, such as the church cannot or will not call any unto, even such a *reformation of persons* as may prove a dissolution of its constitution,—if God raise, gift, and providentially call, any unto that work, assisting them in it, I should not doubt of the lawfulness of their ministry, as granted unto them by *especial privilege*, though not communicated by external rule and order. It is good, ordinarily, to be genealogized into the ministry by established rule; but God can, by virtue of his own sovereignty, grant this privilege unto whom he pleaseth. And let not any imagine that such a supposition must needs immediately open a door unto confusion; for there are invariable rules to try men and their ministry by at all times, whether they are sent of God or no.

The doctrine which they teach, the ends which they promote, the lives which they lead, the circumstances of the seasons wherein they appear, will sufficiently manifest whence such teachers are.

2. Having thus described Melchisedec, and manifested on what account the things mentioned were ascribed or did belong unto him, he mentions the things themselves, which were two: (1.) That he "received tithes of Abraham." (2.) That "he blessed him." In both which he demonstrates his greatness and dignity: (1.) By the consideration of the person of whom he received tithes; it was Abraham himself. (2.) By an especial circumstance of Abraham; it was "he who had received the promises," from whence the whole church of Israel claimed their privileges:—

(1.) He "received tithes of Abraham." The Levitical priests received tithes of those who came out of the loins of Abraham; which was an evidence of their dignity by God's appointment: but he received them of Abraham himself; which evidently declares his superiority above them, as also herein above Abraham himself. And the apostle, by insisting on these things so particularly, shows, [1.] How difficult a matter it is to dispossess the minds of men of those things which they have long trusted unto, and boasted of. It is plain, from the Gospel throughout, that all the Jews looked on this as their great privilege and advantage, that they were the posterity of Abraham: whom they conceived on all accounts the greatest and most honourable person that ever was in the world. Now, although there was much herein, yet when they began to abuse it, and trust unto it, it was necessary that their confidence should be abated and taken down. But so difficult a matter was this to effect, as that the apostle applies every argument unto it that hath a real force and evidence in it, especially such things as they had not before considered; as it is plain they were utterly ignorant in the instructive part of this story of Melchisedec. And we see, in like manner, when men are possessed with an inveterate conceit of their being "the church," and having all the privileges of it enclosed unto them, although they have long since forfeited openly all right thereunto, how difficult a thing it is to dispossess their minds of that pleasing presumption. [2.] That every particle of divine truth is instructive and argumentative, when it is rightly used and improved. Hence the apostle presseth all the circumstances of this story, from every one of them giving light and evidence unto the great truth which he sought to confirm.

(2.) That it might yet further appear how great Melchisedec was, who received tithes of Abraham, he declares who Abraham was, in an instance of his great and especial privilege. It was he who "had the promises." This he singles out as the greatest privilege and honour of Abraham, as

Διδιχάτωται
τὸν Ἀβραάμ.

τὸν ἔχοντα τὰς
ἐπαγγελίας.

it was indeed the foundation of all the other mercies which he enjoyed, or advantages that he was intrusted withal. The nature of this promise, with the solemn manner of its giving unto Abraham, and the benefits included in it, he had at large declared, chap. vi. 13–16. Hereby Abraham became "the father of the faithful," "the heir of the world," and "the friend of God;" so that it exceedingly illustrates the greatness of Melchisedec, in that this Abraham paid tithes unto him.

The medium of the argument in this instance is liable only unto one exception, namely, 'That Abraham was not the *first that received the promises*; so that although he was not, yet there might be *others greater than Melchisedec*, who never made any acknowledgment of his pre-eminence. For the promise was given unto Adam himself, immediately after the fall; as also unto Noah, in the covenant made with him; and to others also, who, before Abraham, died in the faith.' *Ans.* It is true, they had the promise and the benefit of it; but yet so as in sundry things Abraham was preferred above them all. For, [1.] He had the promise *more plainly and clearly given unto him*, than any of his predecessors in the faith. Hence he was the first of whom it is said, that "he saw the day of Christ, and rejoiced;" as having a clearer view of his coming, and of salvation by him, than any that went before him. [2.] The promise was confirmed unto him by an *oath*, which it had not been unto any before. [3.] The *promised Seed* was in it peculiarly confined unto his family or posterity. See Heb. ii. 16. [4.] His receiving of the promise was that which was the foundation of the church in his posterity, which he had peculiarly to deal withal. He had, therefore, the pre-eminence above all others in this matter of receiving the promises.

But it may yet be said, 'That Abraham had not received the promises then, when he was blessed of Melchisedec, so that it was no argument of his pre-eminence at that time.' But, [1.] He had before received the same promise, for the substance of it, which was afterwards more solemnly confirmed unto him, on the trial of his faith in offering his only son, Gen. xii. 2, 3, xiii. 15, 16. [2.] He was then actually instated in a right unto all that further confirmation of the promises which he received on various occasions; and what followed added not unto the dignity of his person, but served only unto the confirmation of his faith. So "Melchisedec blessed him who had the promises." And we may observe,—

Obs. I. We can be made partakers of no such grace, mercy, or privilege in this world, but that God can, when he pleaseth, make an addition thereunto. "He who had received the promises" was afterwards "blessed."—We depend upon an infinite Fountain of grace and mercy, from whence it is made out unto us by various de-

(1.) There is *benedictio potestativa*; that is, such a blessing as consists in an actual *efficacious collation* on, or communication of the matter of the blessing unto, the person blessed. Thus God alone can bless absolutely. He is the only fountain of all goodness, spiritual, temporal, eternal, and so of the whole entire matter of blessing, containing it all eminently and virtually in himself. And he alone can efficiently communicate it unto, or collate it on any others; which he doth as seemeth good unto him, "according to the counsel of his own will." All will grant, that with respect hereunto the apostle's maxim is unquestionable;—God is greater than man. Yea, this kind of blessing ariseth from, or dependeth solely on, that infinite distance that is between the being or nature of God and the being of all creatures. This is God's blessing, טובה חוספה,—an "addition of good," as the Jews call it; a real communication of grace, mercy, privileges, or whatever the matter of the blessing be.

(2.) There is *benedictio authoritativa*. This is when men, in the name, that is, by the appointment and warranty, of God, do declare any to be blessed, pronouncing the blessings unto them whereof they shall be made partakers. And this kind of blessing was of old of two sorts: [1.] *Extraordinary*, by virtue of especial immediate inspiration, or a spirit of prophecy. [2.] *Ordinary*, by virtue of office and institution. In the first way Jacob blessed his sons; which he calls a declaration of "what should befall them in the last days," Gen. xlix. 1. And such were all the solemn patriarchal benedictions; as that of Isaac, when he had infallible direction as to the blessing, but not in his own mind as to the person to be blessed, Gen. xxvii. 27–29. So Moses blessed the children of Israel in their respective tribes, Deut. xxxiii. 1. In the latter, the priests, by virtue of God's ordinance, were to bless the people with this authoritative blessing: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee; the LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them," Num. vi. 22–27. The whole nature of this kind of blessing is here exemplified. It is founded in God's express institution and command. And the nature of it consists in "putting the name of God upon the people;" that is, declaring blessings unto them in the name of God, praying blessings for them on his command. Wherefore the word "bless" is used in a twofold sense in this institution: Verse 23, "Ye shall bless the children of Israel," is spoken of the priests; verse 27, "I will bless them," is spoken of God. The blessing is the same,—declared by the priests, and effected by God. They blessed *declaratively*, he *effi-*

ciently. And the blessing of Melchisedec in this place seems to have a mixture in it of both these. For as it is plain that he blessed Abraham by virtue of his sacerdotal office,—which our apostle principally considereth,—so I make no question but he was peculiarly acted by immediate inspiration from God in what he did. And in this sort of blessing the apostolical maxim maintains its evidence in the light of nature.

(3.) There is *benedictio charitativa*. This is, when one is said to bless another by praying for a blessing on him, or using the means whereby he may obtain a blessing. This may be done by superiors, equals, inferiors, any or all persons mutually towards one another. See 1 Kings viii. 14, 55, 56; 2 Chron. vi. 3; Prov. xxx. 11. This kind of blessing, it being only improperly so, wherein the act or duty is demonstrated by its object, doth not belong unto this rule of the apostle.

(4.) There is *benedictio reverentialis*. Hereof God is the object. So men are said often to "bless God," and to "bless his holy name:" which is mentioned in the Scripture as a signal duty of all that fear and love the Lord. Now this blessing of God is a declaration of his praises, with a holy, reverential, thankful admiration of his excellencies. But this belongs not at all unto the design of the apostle, nor is regulated by this general maxim, but is a particular instance of the direct contrary, wherein, without controversy, the greater is blessed of the less. It is the second sort of blessings that is alone here intended; and that is mentioned as an evident demonstration of the dignity of Melchisedec, and his pre-eminence above Abraham.

Obs. IV It is a great mercy and privilege, when God will make use of any in the blessing of others with spiritual mercies.—It is God alone who originally and efficiently can do so, who can actually and infallibly collate a blessing on any one. Therefore is he said to "bless us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things," Eph. i. 3. There is no one blessing but he is the sole author and worker of it. But yet, also, he maketh use of others, severally, in various degrees of usefulness, for their communication. And this he doth, both to fill up that order of all things in dependence on himself, wherein he will be glorified; and also to make some partakers in his especial grace and favour, by using them in the collation of good things, yea, the best things, on others. For what greater privilege can any one be made partaker of, than to be an instrument in the hand of God in the communication of his grace and goodness? And a privilege it is whose exercise and improvement must be accounted for. I speak not, therefore, of them whose benedictions are euetical and charitative only, in their mutual prayers; but of such as are in some sense authoritative. Now, a man blesseth by the way of

authority, when he doth it as an *especial ordinance*, as he is called and appointed of God thereunto. Peculiar institution gives peculiar authority. So parents bless their children and households, and ministers the church:—

1. Parents bless their children in the name of the Lord several ways: (1.) By *instruction*; the discharge whereof was the glory and honour of Abraham in the sight of God himself, Gen. xviii. 17-19. For whereas the knowledge and fear of God are the greatest blessing that any one in this world can be made partaker of, he hath ordained that parents shall be instrumental in the communication of them unto their children; suitably unto that general law of nature whereby they are obliged in all things to seek their good. This being the end of the instruction which God hath appointed them to attend unto, they do therein bless them in the name of the Lord. And if parents did truly consider how they stand in the stead of God in this matter, how what they do is peculiarly in his name and by his authority, they would, it may be, be more diligent and conscientious in the discharge of their duty than they are. And if children could but understand that parental instruction is an instituted means of God's blessing them with the principal blessing, and that whereon all others, as unto them, do much depend,—whereunto the fifth commandment is express,—they would with more diligence and reverence apply themselves unto the reception of it than is usual among them. (2.) They do it by their *example*. The conversation and holy walking of parents is God's ordinance whereby he blesseth their children. This is the second way of instruction, without which the former will be insufficient, yea, insignificant. Let parents take what pains they please in the teaching and instructing of their families, unless their personal walk be holy, and their lives fruitful, they will do more for their destruction than their edification. The least disorder of life persisted in, is of more prevalency to turn aside children from the ways of God, from the liking and practice of them, than a multitude of instructions are to persuade to their embracement. For, besides that we are all naturally more prone to evil than good, and a far less occasion or means will hasten us down a precipice than raise us and bear us up in the difficult course of holy obedience, instances of a life inconsistent with instructions, or not answering them, beget secret thoughts in the minds of them who are instructed that all the pains taken therein are hypocritical; than which apprehension nothing is more effectual to alienate the minds of any from the ways of God. But when men's teachings of their families are exemplified by the holiness and fruitfulness of their own lives, then are they an ordinance of God for the blessing of them. To pray, to read, to catechise, to instruct, and then to lead a life of frowardness, passion, worldly-mindedness,

vain communication, and the like, is to pull down with one hand what we set up with the other; or rather, with both our hands to pull down our own houses. (3.) By *prayer* for them. So David blessed his household, 2 Sam. vi. 20. For besides the duty of prayer absolutely considered, there is in those prayers, by the appointment of God, an especial plea for and application of the promises of the covenant unto them which we ourselves have received. So it is expressed in the prayer of David, 2 Sam. vii. 29: "Therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever." And I do not understand how those who do not believe in the especial interest of their children in the covenant of grace, can bless them in the name of the Lord in a due manner. These are some few heads of parental benediction; which whether the duty thereof be answered in that common custom which some even confine all parental blessings unto, in an open neglect of all the duties mentioned, and others of an alike nature, is not hard to determine.

2. Ministers bless the church. It is part of their ministerial duty, and it belongs unto their office so to do: (1.) They do it by *putting the name of God upon the church*. This was the way whereby the priests blessed the people of old, Num. vi. 27. And this putting the name of God upon the church, is by the right and orderly celebration of all the holy ordinances of worship of his appointment. For the name of God and of Christ is upon them all; wherefore, in the orderly celebration of them the name of God is put upon the church, and it is brought under the promise of the meeting and blessing of God; as he hath spoken concerning every thing whereon he hath placed his name. This is an especial way of authoritative blessing, which can no way be discharged but by virtue of ministerial office. Only, let ministers take heed that they put not the name of a false god upon the church, by the introduction of any thing in religious worship which is not of God's appointment. (2.) They bless the church, in the *dispensation and preaching of the word* unto the conversion and edification of the souls of men. So speak the apostles concerning their preaching of the word, Acts iii. 26, "Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." This sending of Christ after his resurrection, was the sending of him in the ministry of the apostles and others, by the preaching of the gospel. And the end hereof is, to bless them unto whom it is preached. And it is known that all the principal spiritual blessings of God in this world are communicated unto the souls of men by the ministry of the word, and ministerial administration of the sacraments, as the only outward causes and means thereof. Herein

do ministers bless the people in the name and authority of God. (3.) They do it by the *particular ministerial applications* of the word unto the souls and consciences of men. This authority bath Christ given unto them. Saith he, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," John xx. 23. I know what use hath been made of these words; that is, how they have been abused to give countenance unto the necessity of private confession of all sins unto the priests, and of their power of absolution or remission thereon. But yet the real intention of the words, and the truth that is in them, must not be waived or overlooked. It is not, therefore, the mere preaching of the word, and therein a doctrinal declaration of whose sins are remitted and whose sins are retained, according to the gospel, which men are respectively interested in by their faith or unbelief, that is here intended (the commission giving power whereunto is of a more general nature): but an especial application of the word unto the consciences of men with respect unto their sins is included therein. And this is done two ways: [1.] With respect unto the *judgment of the church*; [2.] With respect unto the *judgment of God*. The first is that binding or loosing which the Lord Christ hath given power for unto the ministers and guides of the church, as to the communion thereof, Matt. xviii. 18. For by the ministerial application of the word unto the souls and consciences of men, are they to be continued in or excluded from the communion of the church; which is called the binding or loosing of them. Tho other respects God himself, and the sense which the conscience of a sinner hath of the guilt of sin before him. In this case the ministers of the gospel are authorized, in the name of Christ, to remit their sins; that is, so to apply the promises of mercy and grace unto their souls and consciences, as that, being received by faith, they may have peace with God. So are they authorized to remit or retain sins, according to the tenor and terms of the gospel. Not that the remission of sins absolutely doth depend on an act of office, but the release of the conscience of a sinner from the sense of guilt doth sometimes much depend upon it, rightly performed; that is, by due application of the promises of the gospel unto such as believe and repent. (4.) How they bless the church by *prayer and example*, may be understood from what hath been spoken concerning those things with respect unto parents. The authority that is in them depends on God's especial institution, which exempts them from and exalts them above the common order of mutual charitative benedictions. (5.) They bless the people *declaratively*; as a pledge whereof it hath been always of use in the church, at the close of the solemn duties of its assemblies, wherein the name of God is put upon it, to bless the people by express mention of the blessing

of God, which they pray for upon them. But yet, because the same thing is done in the administration of all other ordinances, and this benediction is only euctical, or by the way of prayer, I shall not plead for the necessity of it. And we may yet infer two things from hence:—

Obs. V. That those who are thus appointed to bless others in the name of God, and thereby exalted unto a pre-eminence above those that are blessed by his appointment, ought to be accordingly regarded by all that are so blessed by them.—It is well if Christians do rightly consider what their duty is unto them who are appointed as a means to communicate all spiritual blessings unto them. And,—

Obs. VI. Let those who are so appointed take heed lest, by their miscarriage, they prove a curse unto them whom they ought to bless.—For if they are negligent in the performance of their duties in the things mentioned, much more if therewithal they put the name of any false god upon them, they are no otherwise.

VERSE 8.

The eighth verse carrieth on the same argument, by a particular application unto the matter in hand of the things which he had in general observed before in Melchisedec; for whereas the apostle had before declared, that he was "without father, without mother, without beginning of days or end of life," he now shows how all this conduced unto his purpose.

Ver. 8.—Καὶ ὧδε μὲν δεκάτας ἀποθνῄσκοντες ἄνθρωποι λαμβάνουσιν, ἐκείνῳ, μαρτυρούμενος ὅτι ζῇ.

"Ἄνθρωποι. Syr., by a usual idiotism of that language, "the sons of man." 'Αποθνῄσκοντες, "qui moriuntur," "who die." Vulg. Lat., "homines morientes," "dying men;" of which difference we must speak afterwards. Μαρτυρούμενος ὅτι ζῇ, generally, "de quo testatum est, quod vivat." Vulg. Lat., "ibi autem contestatur quia vivit;" which the Rhemists render, "but there he hath witness that he liveth:" both obscurely. Arias, "testatione dictus quia vivit;" to no advantage. Μαρτυρούμενος is properly, "is de quo testatur;" as Erasmus, Beza, Castalio, Schmidt, render it. The Arabic concurs with the Vulgar. The Syriac, by way of paraphrase, "he of whom the Scripture witnesseth that he liveth."¹

Ver. 8.—And here men verily that die receive tithes; but there he of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

There is in the words a comparison and opposition between the Levitical priests and Melchisedec, in this matter of receiving tithes, which in general was common to them both. And we may con-

¹ EXPOSITION.—Μαρτ. ὅτι ζῇ, can be nothing else than a concise representation of the idea, Μῆτε ἀρχὴν ἡμερῶν, μῆτε ζωῆς τέλος ἔχων: and is therefore to be explained thus:—"Of whom only his life is recorded, not his death" (*Bleek*); or, in other words, it is not the individual Melchisedec who has the testimony *that he liveth*, but it is again the typical figure of him, as it appeared to the eye of the psalmist [Ps. cx.] in the framework of Gen. xiv.—*Ebrard*.—Ed.

sider in them, 1. The *circumstances of the comparison*. 2. The *general agreement of both sorts*, which is the ground of the comparison. 3. The parts of the *antithesis*, or opposition, or dissimilitude between them:—

1. The circumstances of the comparison are two: (1.) The *manner* ^{μίμ.} *of its introduction*, or the earnestness of the assertion, in the particle *μίμ*. It is as much as “quidem” or “equidem,” “truly,” “verily;” which is omitted in our translation, though elsewhere the same particle is so rendered. ‘This, moreover, is the state of the case in this matter.’ And the insertion of it is proper unto an affirmation upon a concession, as this here is. (2.) The *determination of the time, or place, or manner* of the opposition, in these adverbs *ᾧδε* and *ἐκεῖ*, “here” and “there.” ^{ὧδε, ἐκεῖ.} *ᾧδε* usually refers unto *place*; and some think that the apostle hath respect unto Jerusalem, the seat of the Levitical priesthood, and the land of Canaan, which alone was tithable according to the law; for the Jews do judge, and that rightly, that the law of legal tithing extended not itself beyond the bounds of the land of Canaan,—a sufficient evidence that it was positive and ceremonial. In opposition hereunto, *ἐκεῖ*, “there,” must signify some other place, or any place where the priesthood of Melchisedec hath its signification; that is, in Christian religion. But the truth is, if *ᾧδε*, “here,” signifies a certain and determinate place, that opposed in *ἐκεῖ*, “there,” must be Salem, where Melchisedec dwelt; which was not only afterwards tithable, as within the bounds of Canaan, but most probably was Jerusalem itself, as we have declared. This conjecture, therefore, is too curious; nor do we need to tie up ourselves unto the precise signification of the word *ᾧδε*, although that also be sometimes used with respect unto time as well as place. Wherefore these words, “here” and “there,” do express the several different states under consideration. “Here,” is in the case of the Levitical priesthood; and “there” respects the case of Melchisedec, as stated, Gen. xiv.

2. The foundation of the comparison, that wherein both agreed, is in this, that *they received tithes*. It is expressed of the one sort only, namely, the Levitical priests,—they received tithes; but it is understood of the other also, whereon the word is repeated and inserted in our translation, “But there he receiveth them.” ^{Διὰ τὰς λαμβάνουσι.} *Δεκάτας λαμβάνουσι*, “They do receive tithes,” in the present tense. But it may be said, there was none that then did so, or at least “de jure” could do so, seeing the law of tithing was abolished. Wherefore an enallage may be allowed here of the present time for that which was past; “they do,” that is, “they did so” whilst the law was in force. But neither is this necessary; for, as I have before observed, the apostle admits, or takes it for granted,

that the Mosaical system of worship was yet continued, and argueth on that concession unto the necessity of its approaching abolition. And yet we need not here the use of this supposition; for the words determine neither time nor place, but the state of religion under the law. According unto the law are tithes to be paid unto, and received by such persons. This, therefore, is agreed, that both the Levitical priests and Melchisedec received tithes.

3. The opposition and difference lies in the qualification and properties of them by whom they are received. For, (1.) Those on the one side, that is, of the Levitical priesthood, were ἀποθνήσκοντες ἄνθρωποι, “homines qui moriuntur,” or “homines morientes,”—“men that die,” “dying men;” that is, men subject unto death, mortal men, who lived and died in the discharge of their office, according unto the common laws of mortality. And the observation of Schlichtingius on these words is, as far as I can understand, useless unto his own design, much more to the apostle’s: “Notandum vero quod non mortalibus hominibus, sed morientibus tantum Melchisedecum auctor opponat, nec immortalem cum esse, sed vivere dicit; vita autem non mortalitati sed morti proprie opponitur.” Something is aimed at in way of security unto another opinion, namely, that all men were created in a state of mortality, without respect unto sin. But nothing is gotten by this subtilty. For by *dying men* the apostle intends not men that were *actually dying*, as it were at the point of death; for in that condition the priests could neither execute their office nor receive tithes of the people. Only he describes such persons as in the whole course of their ministry were liable unto death from the common condition of mortality, and in their several seasons died accordingly. Wherefore “dying men,” or men subject to death, and “mortal men,” are in this case the same. And although life as to the principle of it be opposed unto death, yet as unto a continual duration, the thing here intended by the apostle, it is opposed unto mortality, or an obnoxiousness unto death. For a representation is designed of him who was made a priest, “not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.” Wherefore, saith the apostle, ‘those who received tithes after the law were all of them mortal men, that had both beginning of days and end of life.’ So the death of Aaron, the first of them, and in him of all his successors, is recorded in the Scripture.

(2.) In opposition unto this state of the Levitical priests, it is affirmed that *ἐκεῖ*, in the case of Melchisedec, μαρτυρούμενος ὅτι ζῇ, —“it is witnessed that he liveth.” How “he liveth,” and how it is “witnessed unto that he liveth,” we must inquire. For it is apparently Melchisedec of whom in the first place, as the type, these things are spoken; and yet we know that

really and in his own person he was dead long before. But there are several things on the account whereof it is said that "it is witnessed that he liveth." For, [1.] Whatever the Scripture is silent in as to Melchisedec, which it usually relates of others in the like state, our apostle takes for a *contrary testimony* unto him. For he lays down this general principle, that what the Scripture conceals of Melchisedec, it doth it to instruct us in the mystery of his person and ministry, as types of Christ and his. Hence the silence of the Scripture, in what it useth to express, must in this case be interpreted as a testimony unto the contrary. So it witnesseth of him that "he was without father, without mother, without descent," in that it mentioneth none of them. And whereas he hath "neither beginning of days nor end of life" recorded in the Scripture, it is thereby "witnessed that," not absolutely, but as to his typical consideration, "he liveth." For there are no bounds nor periods fixed unto his priesthood, nor did it expire by the bringing in that of Levi, as that did by the introduction of Christ's. [2.] He did actually *continue his office* unto the end of that dispensation of God and his worship wherein he was employed: and this witnesseth the perpetuity of his life, in opposition unto the Levitical priests; for these two states are compared by the apostle, that of Melchisedec and that of Levi. There was a time limited unto this priesthood in the house of Aaron; and during that time one priest died and another succeeded in several generations, until they were greatly multiplied, as the apostle observeth, verse 23. But during the whole dispensation of things with respect unto Melchisedec, he continued in his own person to execute his office, from first to last, without being subject unto death; wherein "it is witnessed that he liveth." [3.] He is said to "live," that is, always to do so, because *his office continueth for ever*, and yet no mere mortal man succeeded him therein. [4.] In this whole matter he is considered not absolutely and personally, but *typically*, and as a representation of somewhat else; and what is represented in the type, but is really, subjectively, and properly found only in the antitype, may be affirmed of the type as such. So it is in all sacramental institutions; as the paschal lamb was called expressly "the LORD'S passover," Exod. xii. 11, when it was only a pledge and token thereof; as, under the new testament, the bread and wine in the sacred supper are called "the body and blood of Christ," which they do represent. Thus it is true really and absolutely of the Lord Jesus Christ, that he liveth for ever, that he is a priest for ever; which the apostle much insisteth on and urgeth unto his purpose afterwards. This eternity, or ever-living of Jesus Christ, was represented in Melchisedec, in that it is not said anywhere in the Scripture that he died: "it is witnessed," therefore, "that he liveth," because he whom he represents doth really do so, and his own death

is not mentioned, on purpose that he might so represent him. And the apostle's argument unto the dignity and pre-eminence of Melchisedec above the Levitical priests in this instance is of an unquestionable evidence: for consider Melchisedec, not in his *natural being and existence*, which belongs not unto this mystery, but in his *Scripture being and existence*, and he is immortal, always living; wherein he is more excellent than those who were always obnoxious unto death in the exercise of their office. And from the branches of this comparison we may take two observations:—

Obs. I. In the outward administration of his worship, God is pleased to make use of poor, frail, mortal, dying men.—So he did of old, and so he continues still to do. "Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" Zech. i. 5. The prophets of old, the most eminent administrators under the old testament, they were all mortal, dying men; and whilst they lived in this world they were subject unto like passions with other men, James v. 17. And the same account the apostle giveth us of the principal administrators of the new testament, 2 Cor. iv. 8–12, vi. 8–10. And we know it is so with all those into whose hands the same work is transmitted. Yea, oftentimes, as to the infirmities of body and outward condition, their weakness and frailty are signalized above others. Nor doth any advantage accrue to the gospel by the secular exaltation of such as pretend unto the same employment; wherein, without other qualifications, they do little resemble the ministry of Christ himself. Such, I say, doth God please to make use of; persons obnoxious unto all infirmities and temptations with all other believers, and equally with them falling under the stroke of mortality. He could have accomplished his whole design immediately by his grace and Spirit, without the institution of any administrators; he could have employed his holy angels in the declaration and dispensation of the gospel; or he could have raised up men so signalized with wisdom, and all endowments of mind and body, as should have eminently distinguished them from the whole race of mankind besides: but waiving these, and all other ways possible and easy unto his infinite wisdom and power, he hath chosen to make use, in this great occasion, of poor, infirm, frail, tempted, sinning, dying men. And sundry reasons of this his holy counsel are expressed in the Scripture:—

1. He doth it to make it evident that it is his *own power*, and nothing else, which gives efficacy and success unto all gospel administrations: 2 Cor. iv. 7, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." There is an "excellency of power" accompanying the dispensation of the word. Mighty spiritual effects are produced by it, such as wherein the glory of God doth consist, and whereon the eternal

welfare of the souls of men doth depend. This glory, in subduing the adverse power of sin, Satan, and the world; in the quickening, sanctifying, saving the souls of the elect; God will be seen and owned in,—he will not give it unto another. Whereas, therefore, those by whom these treasures are communicated unto others, are frail, perishing, “earthen vessels,”—or those by whom the gospel is dispensed are poor, frail, weak men, seen and known so to be,—there is no veil by their ministry cast over the glory of God. There is not a soul convinced, converted, or comforted by their word, but they may truly say of it as the apostles did of the miracle which they wrought, Acts iii. 12, “Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power and holiness we had made this man to walk,” this blind man to see, this dead man to live? By the consideration of our meanness all may discern that the excellency of this power is of God, and not of us.’ Yea, for this very end our apostle refused to make use of such a persuasiveness of words and exercise of wisdom as might give any appearance or countenance unto such an apprehension as though by them this effect were produced: 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5, “My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.” And herein ought he to be an example unto us all. But it is come to that with many, that being destitute utterly of what he had,—namely, an ability to dispense the word in the “demonstration of the Spirit and of power,”—they do wholly betake themselves unto what he refused, or the “enticing words of man’s wisdom,” according to their ability. But what the Jews spoke blasphemously of Christ, upon his opening the eyes of him who was born blind, may in a sense be truly spoken of any of us upon the opening of the eyes of them that were spiritually blind, “Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner,” John ix. 24.

2. God hath so ordered things, in wisdom and grace, that the administrators of holy things unto others *might have experience in themselves of their state and condition, so as to be moved with compassion towards them, care about them, and zeal for them.* Without these graces, and their constant exercise, men will be but very useless instruments in this work. And they will not grow anywhere but in men’s own experience. For how shall he be tender, compassionate, careful towards the souls of others, who knows no reason why he should be so towards his own? The high priest of old was such an one as “could have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that were out of the way; for that he himself also was compassed with infirmity,” Heb. v. 2. And therein was he a type of Christ, who “was in all points tempted like as we are,” that he might be ready “to succour them that are tempted.” This gave

him the experience of compassion in the exercise of it. Wherefore, when a minister of the gospel knows his own weakness, infirmities, and temptations, his need of mercy and grace, the way of his obtaining supplies of them, the danger of the snares which he is exposed unto, the value of his own soul, the preciousness of the blood of Christ, and excellency of the eternal reward, he cannot, considering the charge committed unto him, and the duty required of him, but be moved with pity, compassion, tenderness, love, and zeal, towards those unto whom he doth administer; especially considering how greatly their eternal welfare depends on his ability, diligence, and faithfulness in the discharge of his duty. And this proves, on sundry accounts, greatly to the advantage of the poor tempted disciples of Christ; for it makes a representation unto them of his own compassion and love, as the great shepherd of the sheep, Isa. xl. 11; and causeth a needful supply of spiritual provision to be always in readiness for them, and that to be administered unto them with experience of its efficacy and success.

3. That the power of gospel grace and truth may be exemplified unto the eyes of them unto whom they are dispensed, in the persons of them by whom they are administered, according unto God’s appointment. It is known unto all who know aught in this matter, what temptations and objections will arise in the minds of poor sinners against their obtaining any interest in the grace and mercy that is dispensed in the gospel. Some, they judge, may be made partakers of them; but for them, and such as they are, there seems to be no relief provided. But is it no encouragement unto them, to see that, by God’s appointment, the tenders of his grace and mercy are made unto their souls by men subject unto like passions with themselves; and who, if they had not freely obtained grace, would have been as vile and unworthy as themselves? For as the Lord called the apostle Paul to the ministry, who had been “a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious,” that he might “in him show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting,”—that is, for the encouragement even of such high criminal offenders to believe, 1 Tim. i. 13, 16; so in more ordinary cases, the mercy and grace which the ministers of the gospel did equally stand in need of with those unto whom they dispense it, and who have received it, is for a pattern, example, and encouragement of them to believe after their example.

4. In particular, God maketh use of persons that die in this matter, that their testimony unto the truth of gospel grace and mercy may be complete and unquestionable. Death is the great touchstone and trial of all things of this nature, as to their efficacy and sincerity. Many things will yield relief in life, and various refreshments, which upon the approach of death vanish into nothing.

So it is with all the comforts of this world, and with all things that have not an eternal truth and substance in them. Had not those, therefore, who dispense sacred things, been designed themselves to come unto this touchstone of their own faith, profession, and preaching, those who must die, and know always that they must do so, would have been unsatisfied what might have been the condition with them, had they been brought unto it; and so have ground to fear in themselves what will become of that faith wherein they have been instructed, in the warfare of death, when it shall approach. To obviate this fear and objection, God hath ordained that all those who administer the gospel shall all of them bring their own faith unto that last trial; that so, giving a testimony unto the sincerity and efficacy of the things which they have preached, in that they commit the eternal salvation of their souls unto them (and higher testimony none can give), they may be encouragements unto others to follow their example, to imitate their faith, and pursue their course unto the end. And for this cause also doth God oftentimes call them forth unto peculiar trials, exercises, afflictions, and death itself in martyrdom, that they may be an example and encouragement unto the whole church.

I cannot but observe, for a close of this discourse, that as the unavoidable infirmities of the ministers of the gospel, managed and passed through in a course of faith, holiness, and sincere obedience, are on many accounts of singular use and advantage unto the edification and consolation of the church; so the evil examples of any of them, in life and death, with the want of those graces which should be excited unto exercise by their infirmities, are pernicious thereunto.

Obs. II. The life of the church depends on the everlasting life of Jesus Christ.—It is said of Melchisedec, as he was a type of him, "It is witnessed that he liveth." Christ doth so, and that for ever; and hercon, under the failings, infirmities, and death of all other administrators, depend the preservation, life, continuance, and salvation of the church. But this must be spoken to peculiarly on verse 25, whither it is remitted.

VERSES 9, 10.

It may be objected unto the whole precedent argument of the apostle, 'That although Abraham himself paid tithes unto Melchisedec, yet it followeth not that Melchisedec was superior unto the Levitical priests, concerning whom alone the question was between him and the Jews. For although Abraham might be a priest in some sense also, by virtue of common right, as were all the patriarchs, yet was he not so by virtue of any especial office, instituted of God to abide in the church. But when God afterwards, by peculiar law and ordi-

nance, erected an order and office of priesthood in the family of Levi, it might be superior unto, or exalted above that of Melchisedec, although Abraham paid tithes unto him.' This objection, therefore, the apostle obviates in these verses; and therewithal, giving his former argument a further improvement, he makes a transition, according unto his usual custom (as it hath been often observed that it is his method to do), unto his especial design, in proving the excellency of the priesthood of Christ above that of the law, which is the main scope of this whole discourse.

Ver. 9, 10.—*Kai, ὡς ἔπος εἰπὲν, διὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Λευὶ ὁ δεκάτας λαμβάνων δεδεκάτωται ἔτι γὰρ ἐν τῇ ἀσφύϊ τοῦ πατρὸς ἦν, ὅτε συνήνησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Μελχισεδέκ.*

Ὡς ἔπος εἰπὲν, "ut verbum dicere," "as to speak a word." Vulg. Lat., "ut ita dictum sit," "be it so said." Syr., "as any one may say." Arab., "and it is said that this discourse" (or "reason") "may be some way ended." "Ut ita loquar," "as I may so speak." In the rest of the words there is neither difficulty nor difference among translators.

Ver. 9, 10.—And, as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him.

There are three things observable in these words: 1. The *manner* of the introduction of the apostle's new assertion. 2. The *assertion* itself, which hath the force of a *new argument* unto his purpose, verse 9. And, 3. The *proof* of his assertion, in verse 10.

1. The manner of the introduction of his assertion is in these words, "As I may so say." This qualification of the assertion makes an abatement of it, one way or other. *Ὡς ἔπος εἰπὲν*. Now this is not as to the truth of the proposition, but as to the propriety of the expression. The words are as if that which is expressed were *actually* so, namely, that Levi himself paid tithes, whereas it was so only *virtually*. The thing itself intended was, with respect unto the apostle's purpose, as if it had been so indeed; though, Levi not being then actually existent, he could not be tithed in his own person. Nor is the apostle dubious of the truth of the consequent which he urgeth from this observation, as if he had said "prope dixerim;" which is supposed as one signification of this phrase. Only, the instance being new, and he arguing from what was virtual only as if it had been actual, he gave his assertion this qualification. This is spoken upon an allowance of the common acceptance of the sense of these words among interpreters. For my part, I rather incline to judge that he useth this phrase for as much as "ut verbo dicam,"—"To sum up the whole in a word, to put an

issue unto this dispute between the Levitical priesthood and that of Melchisedec, I say, that not only Abraham, but even Levi himself was tithed by him.'

2. His assertion is, that "Levi, who received tithes, was tithed in

Καὶ Αβρ. Abraham," namely, when Abraham gave the tithes of all to Melchisedec. By "Levi" he intendeth not the

person of Levi absolutely, the third son of Jacob, but his posterity, or the whole tribe proceeding from him, so far as they were interested in the priesthood; for Levi himself never received tithes of any, the priesthood being erected in his family long after his death, in the person of his great-grandchild, Aaron. So, then, Levi who received tithes is the same with the sons of Levi who received the priesthood, verse 5, namely, in their several generations unto that day.

Of this Levi it is affirmed that *δεδικάτωται διὰ Ἀβραάμ*, "he was tithed" or "paid tithes in Abraham," or through him and by him, as the word is. When Abraham himself *Διδικάτωται διὰ Ἀβραάμ.* gave tithes to Melchisedec, he did it not in his own name only, but in the name of himself and his whole posterity. And this, upon the principles before laid down and vindicated, proves the pre-eminence of the priesthood of Melchisedec above that of the house and family of Levi. All the difficulty of the argument lies in the proof of the assertion, namely, that Levi did indeed so pay tithes in Abraham. This the apostle therefore proves by the observation which he lays down, verse 10, "For he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him."

3. The force of this proof seems to depend on a double principle:

Ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς. (1.) That children, the whole posterity of any one, are in his loins before they are born. And this principle is sure in the light of nature and common reason; they are

in them as the effect in its cause, nor have they any future existence but with relation unto their progenitors, even the remotest of them.

(2.) That what any one doth, that all his posterity are esteemed to do in and by him. But it is certain that this rule will not generally hold, nor indeed will it ever do so absolutely, without some other cogent circumstances. By human laws, the crimes of men reflect dishonour in some cases on their families; and on the other side, they entail the honour which by their worth they have acquired on their posterities. What a man also gives away of his estate unto public uses, as in the foundation of schools or hospitals, his children may be said to do it in him, because so much is decreased from their inheritance;—as here, what Abraham gave to Melchisedec, it was alienated from his posterity, Levi among the rest. But none of these things reach the case in hand, or are sufficient to give force or evidence unto the reasoning of the apostle. Wherefore, to find them

out, sundry things must be observed which are manifest truths in themselves, and on the supposition whereof the apostle's argument stands firm:—

(1.) That Abraham was now called of God, and separated unto his service, so as to be *the foundation of a new church* in the world. And there is a relation unto such an original stock in all the branches, beyond what they have unto any other intermediate progenitors. Hence all the idolatrous nations in the world constantly made the first persons from whom they derived their original, or whose offspring they would be accounted, their gods whom they worshipped. These were their "Joves indigites," their home-born deities, whom they honoured, and whose honours they thought descended unto them by inheritance.

(2.) He had *now received the promise* that God would be a God unto him and his seed after him,—whereby all his posterity were taken into covenant with him; and hereon Abraham covenanted with God in the name of, and as the great representative of all his seed. And such covenants are the foundation of all order and rule in this world. For after persons, or a people, have covenanted into such agreements in government, and as to the administration of common right among themselves,—provided the terms whereon they have agreed be good and suitable unto the light of nature,—their posterity are not at liberty to alter and change them at their pleasure; for whereas they derive all their rights and inheritances from their progenitors, they are supposed in them to have consented unto all that was done by them.

(3.) Hereon what God said and did unto Abraham, he said it and did it unto *all his seed in him*. The promises were theirs, and the inheritance was theirs; yea, what God is said to give unto Abraham so often, namely, the whole land of Canaan, was never actually made good unto him in his own person, no, not a foot's breadth: but he received the grant of it as the representative of his posterity, who, four hundred years after, had the actual possession of it.

(4.) What Abraham did solemnly in obedience unto God, by virtue of the covenant, as a public condition thereof, he did undertake in it *for his posterity*, and performed it in their name; and therefore God enjoined him to bring all his posterity under the token of that engagement, in circumcision, so soon as they were capable thereof. And on the other hand, God continually affirms that he would do them good, because of his oath and engagement unto Abraham, seeing they were intended therein. Wherefore,—

(5.) Abraham, in this solemn address unto God by Melchisedec, the type of Christ, wherein he expressed his covenant-obedience unto him, was the *representative of all his posterity*, and in parti-

cular of Levi and all the priests that descended from him. And having now received the whole land, by virtue of a covenant, in the behalf of his posterity, that it should be theirs, though he himself had never possession of it, nor in it, he doth in the name of his posterity, and as their representative, give the tenths unto God by Melchisedec, as that chief rent which God for ever reserved unto himself, upon his grant. When the people came actually to possess the land, they held it always on this condition, that the tenths of all should be given unto God. And this Abraham, in his taking seisin of it for them, paid in their name. So truly and virtually was Levi himself tithed in the loins of Abraham, when Melchisedec met him. Wherefore it was not merely Levi being in the loins of Abraham with respect unto natural generation, whence he is said to be tithed in him, but his being in him with respect unto the covenant which Abraham entered into with God in the name of his whole posterity.

This reasoning of the apostle's, I confess, at first view seemeth intricate, and more remote from cogency than any elsewhere used by him. And therefore by some profane persons hath it been cavilled at. But all things of that nature arise merely from want of a due reverence unto the word of God. When we come unto it with those satisfactions in our minds, that there is truth and divine wisdom in every expression of it, that all its reasonings are cogent and effectual, though we understand them not, we shall not fail, upon a humble inquiry, to attain what we may safely embrace, or see what we ought to admire. And so this place, which at first sight seems to present us with a reasoning on a very uncertain foundation, being duly inquired into, we find it resolved into the firm principles of reason and religion.

And the foregoing observation will expedite two difficult questions which expositors raise unto themselves on this verse. The first whereof is, Whether Christ himself may not, as well as Levi, be said to pay tithes in Abraham, as being in his loins? which would utterly frustrate the design of the apostle. The second is, How or in what sense one may be said to do any thing in another, which may be reckoned or imputed unto him?

For the first of these, Austin and others have well laboured in the solution of it. The sum of what they say is, that the Lord Christ was not in Abraham as Levi was, not in his nature as it was corrupted; nor did he educe or derive his nature from him by carnal generation, or the common way of the propagation of mankind. And these things do constitute a sufficient difference and distance between them in this matter. But yet with these considerations, and on the supposition of them, there is another which contains the true and proper reason of this difference. And that is, that the

Lord Christ was never in Abraham as a federate, as one taken into covenant with him, and so represented by him, as Levi was. Abraham was taken into covenant with Christ, as the head, sponsor, surety, and mediator of the new covenant; with respect whereunto he says of himself and the elect, "Behold I and the children which the Lord hath given me." Hereon he was the representative of Abraham and all that believe, and what he did is imputed unto them. But he was never taken into covenant with Abraham, nor was capable of so being, seeing unto him it was a covenant of pardon and justification by faith, which He was no way concerned in but as the procurer of them for others. Wherefore what Abraham did cannot be imputed unto him, so as he should be esteemed to have done them in him.

And this makes way for the solution of the general question, How one may be said to do any thing in another which shall be reckoned unto him as his own act? And this may be by virtue of a covenant, and no otherwise. Hence divines do usually illustrate the imputation of the sin of Adam unto his posterity by this example of Levi; though I have not met with any who truly understand the ground of the comparison, which is Abraham acting as a *covenanter* in the name of his posterity. But whereas this is opposed with some vehemency by Schlichtingius in his comment on this place, I shall transcribe his words, and consider his discourse: "*Hæc sententia non ad omnes actiones transferenda est; sed ad eas tantum, quæ propriè versantur vel in auctione vel in diminutione rerum quæ à parentibus in liberos devolvi et hæreditario jure transferri solent, qualis actio est decimarum solutio. Persolvuntur enim de bonis et facultatibus, quæ hactenus cum sunt liberorum, quatenus jus hæreditatis ad eos spectat, præsertim si certum sit, fore liberos, qui in bona succedant, quemadmodum Abrahamo contigit, cui certa fuit à Deo promissa posteritas. Quemadmodum enim hæredes personam patris post mortem ratione possessionis bonorum veluti representant, ita antequam hæredes à patre separentur et de bonis paternis statuendi arbitrium habeant, pater omnium liberorum suorum personam quadam ratione refert, et quicquid de illis statuerit aut fecerit id hæredes quodammodo fecisse censentur. Dico, quodammodo, quia propriè id dici non potest; nec auctor hic D. id propriè factum esse asserit, sed impropriè verbis suis subesse ipsemet profitetur, ut antea vidimus. Ex dictis autem facillè intelligitur, id quod nos unà cum auctore D. statuimus, ad eos tantum successores seu posteros esse extendendum ad quos vel certò, ut Abrahami posteris contigit, vel saltem verisimiliter perventura sit hæreditas parentis, et notabilis aliqua bonorum ab eo profectorum portio. Alioquin vis illa hæreditatis de qua diximus, expirabit, nec posteris tribui poterit id quod majorum aliquis circa bona sua*

fecerit. Quibus ita explicatis, facile jam apparet falli eos qui ex hoc loco colligunt omnem Adami posteritatem in ipso Adamo parente suo peccasse, et mortis supplicium verè fuisse commeritum. Nam vel de eo nunc quidquam dicam ipsum auctorem impropriatatem in hac loquendi forma agnoscere, nequaquam id extendendum est ad parentum majorumve peccata ac merita. Etenim peccata ac merita qua talia mere sunt personalia, seu personam ejus qui peccat non egrediuntur, nec eatenus parentes posteritatem suam repræsentant; licet fieri queat ut ex eorum delicto damnum aliquod nec exiguum ad liberos redundet, quemadmodum quidem in Adami delicto contigit; ipsum tamen peccatum ac meritum Adami revera non communicatur cum ejus posteritate, ac proinde posteri Adami ob parentis sui noxam revera non puniuntur, nisi et ipsi parentem fuerint imitati."

I have transcribed these words at large, because their design is to defeat that article of our faith concerning the imputation of the sin of Adam unto all his posterity; which there is no doubt but they will make use of who are gone over among ourselves unto the negative of it: and that it might appear whose heifer they plough withal who deny the imputation of the righteousness of Christ unto justification, because "those things that are personal and inherent in one cannot be communicated unto another." I say, therefore,—

1. That this assertion, "One being accounted unto another in what he doth, holds only in those things which belong unto the increase or diminution of an inheritance which descends from parents unto children, and not otherwise," is "*gratis dictum*," without pretence or confirmation. Even in things moral, God threatens to "visit the iniquities of the fathers on the children." So the Israelites wandered penally in the wilderness forty years, and bare the iniquity of their parents. The infants that perished in the flood, and at the conflagration of Sodom, died penally under the judgment that came for the sin of their parents. Wherefore the general foundation of his whole discourse is unproved and false, and the application of it unto the present case, as we shall see, weak and impertinent. For,—

2. This renders the argument of the apostle as weak and impertinent as any thing can be imagined. For it allows Levi to be no otherwise tithed in Abraham, but as part of the goods which Abraham gave in tithe to Melchisedec would have descended unto him; for he was but one of the twelve sons of Jacob, the grandchild of Abraham, whose share in those tithes cannot be computed to be worth mentioning, much less to bear the weight of an argument in so great a cause. Besides, it is not the *person of Levi*, but his posterity in the family of Aaron, that is intended; and such movables as were tithed by Abraham do seldom descend through so many

generations. It is therefore ridiculous to impose such a kind of argumentation on the holy apostle.

3. Yea, this interpretation is directly contrary unto what the apostle designed to confirm by the instance he gives. For that which he aimed at, was to prove Levi inferior to Melchisedec, by his paying of tithes in the loins of Abraham; but if he did this no otherwise but that some goods that should have descended unto him were given unto Melchisedec, it argues him rather superior unto him; for absolutely he that *gives* is superior to him that *receives*, as it is in general a more blessed thing to give than to receive.

4. That which he proceeds upon is a general rule of his own framing, which is no way applicable unto this particular case, as it is a particular case. It is this, "That, as children succeed into the room of their parents as to their goods, and after a sort represent them; so parents, before their children come to inherit, do represent their children, so as that they may be said in some sense to do what is done by their parents." But this is a rule made without any colour of reason. For, (1.) I would know when this representation and concernment should expire, or whether it holds unto all generations. If it hold for ever, then may we all be said in some sort to do what Adam did with his goods and lands before he died, and so of all our intervenient progenitors. If it do expire, and this relation abideth only for a season, I desire to know the bounds of that season. Aaron was the first of the house of Levi who is intended in these words, and he was the seventh generation from Abraham; in which time it is probable, if ever, this right of inheritance would expire. (2.) It is not true in any sense, in the very next parents in most cases. For suppose a parent be wicked and flagitious, and shall waste his substance and goods in riotous living, in what sense shall his son, suppose him a person fearing God, be said so to have disposed of his goods in him? (3.) The truth is, unless it be by a subsequent approbation of what our progenitors have done, or by virtue of a covenant whereby they and their posterity were obliged (which is the case in hand), children can in no sense be said to do what their progenitors have done in the disposal of their goods and inheritances. Neither, indeed, will a subsequent approbation give any tolerable sense unto this assertion, unless there be a power of an effectual dissent in the children also. If a man give a part of his estate to found an hospital, and leave the care of it unto his posterity, with this proviso, that if any of them saw just cause for it, they should resume the estate into their own possession; in case they do not so, they may in some sense be said to do what indeed their father did. But if this be not in their power, though they approve of what he did, they cannot be said to have done it. But in covenants the case is plain. Men may enter into a mutual covenant for the erection

of a government among them, which proving a foundation of all their civil rights for the future, their posterity may be said to have made that covenant, and to be obliged thereby, as it was in this case.

5. Neither will it advantage his pretence, with a seeming acknowledgment of some impropriety in the assertion, in these words, *ὡς ἐπος εἶπα*, "as I may so say." For although it should be granted that he intends some impropriety in the expression, yet there must be truth in his assertion, which this interpretation will not allow; for if it be true only in the sense he contends for, it is true in none at all, for that is not any. But the meaning of these words is, "ut verbo dicam,"—"That I may give you a summary of the whole, that which my argument riseth up unto."

6. Having given us this crooked rule, he adds a limitation unto it, whereby he hopes to reduce the whole to his purpose. For saith he, "This rule is not to be extended unto the merits or sins of parents and ancestors, though some loss may accrue unto the children thereby;"—for thence he infers, that though we may suffer some loss by the sin of Adam, yet his sin is not imputed unto us. But, (1.) How far the children of flagitious parents may not only suffer loss, but undergo temporal punishment also, for the sins of their parents, was showed before in the instances of those who perished in their infancy, both by the flood and in the conflagration of Sodom. (2.) The case between any other parent and his posterity is not the same as it was between Adam and us all; so that these things are sophistically jumbled together. There is, indeed, an analogy between Adam and his posterity on the one hand, and Christ with believers on the other; and never was there, nor shall there ever be, the like relation between any else: for these two individual persons were appointed of God to be the heads of the two covenants, and representatives of the federates, as unto the ends of the covenants. Hence the whole evil of the one and the good of the other, as they were, and as far as they were, heads of the covenants, are imputed unto them who derive from them in their respective covenants. But after the first sin Adam ceased to be a head unto his posterity, as to the good or evil of that covenant, which was now broken and disannulled. Neither was he nor any of his posterity ever after restored or assumed into the same state and condition. It is therefore highly vain to confound the consideration of our concernment in what Adam did as he was the head of the covenant, with what he afterwards did, and other intervenient progenitors might do. All this our apostle confirms at large, Rom. v.

7 Abraham was taken into a new administration of the covenant, with new promises and seals; but he neither was nor could be made the head and representative of that covenant whereinto he was

taken, otherwise than typically. Hence his moral good or evil could not be reckoned unto his posterity in covenant. But yet he was made the head and spring of the administration of its outward privileges; and this, so far as his trust extended, was imputed unto his posterity, as in the case of circumcision. Wherefore, seeing what he did unto Melchisedec belonged unto the administration of the covenant committed unto him, Levi is rightly said to have done it in him also. And so these things do mutually illustrate one another. But to deny that we were all in Adam, as the head of the first covenant, that we sinned in him, that the sin which we in any sense have sinned in him is imputed unto us, is not to dispute with us, but expressly to contradict the Holy Ghost

But we may take some observations from these words; as,—

Obs. I. They who receive titles of others, for their work in noly administrations, are thereby proved to be superior unto them of whom they do receive them.—They are given unto them, among other ends, as an acknowledgment of their *dignity*. So it was when they were paid of old by God's institution; and so it would be still, if they might be paid or received in a due manner, with respect unto the labour of any in gospel administrations. But whereas not one among thousands doth give or pay them on any other ground but because they must do so whether they will or no; nor would do so any more, were it not for the coercive, enforcing power of human laws; if they on the other side that do receive them, do look on them, not as a free pledge of the people's respect and the honour that they bear unto them, but as their own right and due by law, they are a testimony neither of the people's obedience nor of the ministers' dignity, but only of the extreme disorder of all things in religion

Obs. II. It is of great concernment unto us what covenant we do belong unto, as being esteemed to do therein what is done by our representative in our name.—There were never absolutely any more than two covenants; wherein all persons indefinitely are concerned. The first was the covenant of works, made with Adam, and with all in him. And what he did as the head of that covenant, as our representative therein, is imputed unto us, as if we had done it, Rom. v. 12. The other is that of grace, made originally with Christ, and through him with all the elect. And here lie the life and hope of our souls,—that what Christ did as the head of that covenant, as our representative, is all imputed unto us for righteousness and salvation. And certainly there is nothing of more importance unto us, than to know whether of these covenants we belong unto. We are also some way concerned in them by whom the one or the other of these covenant-states is conveyed unto us; for before we make our own personal, voluntary choice, we are by the law of our

nature, and of the covenant itself, enclosed in the same condition with our progenitors as to their covenant-state. And thence it is, that in the severest temporal judgments, children not guilty of the actual transgression of their parents, not having sinned after the similitude of them, by imitation, do yet oftentimes partake of the punishment they have deserved; being esteemed in some manner to have done what they did, so far as they were included in the same covenant with them. And many blessings, on the other hand, are they partakers of who are included in the covenant of those parents who are interested in the covenant of grace; for such parents succeed in the room of Abraham, every one of them. And what Abraham did, as to the administration of the covenant intrusted with him, his posterity, whose representative he was therein, are said to have done in him, as Levi is in this place; and therefore they had the seal of the covenant given unto them in their infancy. And an alteration in this dispensation of grace hath not yet been proved by any, or scarce attempted so to be.

VERSE 11.

In this verse, after so long a preparation and introduction, whereby he cleared his way from objections and secured his future building, the apostle enters on his principal argument concerning the *priesthood of Christ*, and all the consequences of it, with respect unto righteousness, salvation, and the worship of God, which depend thereon. This being his main design, he would not engage into it before he had in every respect declared and vindicated the dignity and glory of the *person of Christ* as vested with his blessed offices. And from hence unto the didactical part of the epistle, he proceeds in a retrograde order unto what he had before insisted on. For whereas he had first declared the glory of the person of Christ in his kingly office, chap. i.; then in his prophetic, chap. ii., iii.; having now entered on his sacerdotal, he goes on to enlarge upon this last function, then he returns unto his prophetic, and shuts up the whole with a renewed mention of his kingly power, as we shall see in their order and proper places.

Ver. 11.—Εἰ μὲν οὖν τελείωσις διὰ τῆς Λευϊτικῆς ἱερωσύνης ἦν (ὁ λαὸς γὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῇ νομοθέτητο) τίς ἔτι χρεία, κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδέκ ἱεραυνοῦν ἀνίστασθαι ἱερέα, καὶ οὐ κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Ἀαρὼν λέγεσθαι;

Τελείωσις. Syr., ܠܗܝܬܝܬܐ, "consummatio," "perfectio;" a sacred "perfection," or completeness of state and condition.

Διὰ τῆς Λευϊτικῆς ἱερωσύνης. Syr., ܕܠܝܘܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܝܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܝܬܐ, "by the hand of the priesthood of Levi himself;" because Levi himself received not the priesthood in his own person, but his posterity. Tremellius renders it "Levitarum," the "priesthood of Levites." The original leaves no scruple, "by the Levitical priesthood,"—the priesthood that was confined to the house, family, tribe, and posterity of Levi.

Ὁ λαὸς γὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῇ νομοθέτητο (MS., ἐνομοθέτητο, corruptly). "Nam sub hoc populo sancita est lex," Beza; "for under it the law was established to the people." "Sub ipso populus legem accepit," "acceperat." Syr., ܕܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܝܬܐ, "by whom" (or "whereby") "the law was imposed upon the people." If ܕܝܬܐ, "by whom," relate unto Levi, the sense is mistaken; and much more by the Arabic, which takes "the law" only for the law of the sacerdotal office, from which it is plainly distinguished. The Ethiopie reads the whole verse to this purpose, "And the people did according to the law of the priesthood which was appointed; what need was there, therefore, that he should give another priest, whose appointment one should say was according to Melchisedec?" which argues the great unskillfulness of that interpreter.

Τίς ἔτι χρεία, "quid adhuc," "quid amplius opus erat," "esset;" "necessarium fuit;" "what need was there yet," or "moreover." Syr., ܕܝܬܐ, "wherefore;" "ad quid," "to what purpose."

Ἀνίστασθαι, "oriri;" Beza, "exoriri;" Vulg. Lat., "surgere." Syr., ܕܝܬܐ, "should arise." "Oriri," properly. Κατὰ τὴν τάξιν. Syr., ܕܝܬܐ, "in" or "after the likeness of Melchisedec;" "secundum ordinem."

Καὶ οὐ κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Ἀαρὼν λέγεσθαι, "et non secundum ordinem Aaron dici." Syr., ܕܝܬܐ, which is rendered in the translation in the Polyglot, "sed dixit," "but he said, it shall be" (or "he shall be") "in the likeness of Aaron;" "Dixisset autem," which, regulated by the precedent interrogation, gives us the true sense of the place: "Suppose there must another priest arise, yet if perfection had been by the Levitical priesthood, he would have said that he should be of the order of Aaron."¹

Ver. 11.—If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

The first thing in the words is the introduction of the ensuing discourse and argument in these particles of inference, *εἰ μὲν οὖν*, "if therefore;" "if things be as we have declared." He had a peculiar scope and design in all those things. These he is now introducing. The improvement of his whole preceding discourse, and the whole mystery of the priesthood of Mel-

VARIOUS READING.—Lachmann and Tischendorf adopt as the text, αὐτῆς νομοθέτηται, on the authority of such manuscripts as A D C D.

TRANSLATION.—'Επ' αὐτῇ. "Under it;" the rendering of our version would convey the impression that the law was prescribed during the time of the priesthood, whereas part of the law was in existence antecedently to the institution of the priesthood; and if αὐτῆς be the preferable reading, such a translation would be untenable for grammatical reasons. It is accordingly differently rendered by various critics;—by Craik, "In dependence upon it;" by Ebrard, "Upon the basis of it;" and by Turner, "In connection with it." The last remarks, "Inasmuch as the author proceeds to show that the predicted abrogation of the priesthood, in the announcement of another like Melchisedec's, implied also an intended abrogation of the law, it was directly to the purpose to intimate the close connection of the two." Stuart gives the same view: "The meaning is, that the priesthood and the law are inseparably linked together, so that if the one be changed, the other must of necessity be."—Ed.

OCR-BASED INDEX
 Listings May Include Partial Matches
 Page Numbers Refer to PDF Page Numbers

1 john, P[14].
 1 kings, P[29].
 abraham, P[4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40].
 adam, P[12, 27, 37, 38, 39].
 administration of the sacraments, P[30].
 affliction, P[35].
 altar, P[19].
 america, P[3].
 analogy, P[7, 12, 39].
 angel, P[9, 12, 17, 33].
 antithesis, P[32].
 apostasy, P[14, 15, 23].
 apostate, P[3].
 apostle paul, P[34].
 apostolic, P[29].
 army, P[18].
 athen, P[7, 17].
 atonement, P[13, 14].
 attained, P[18].
 authority, P[8, 9, 17, 25, 30, 31, 40].
 beast, P[6].
 begg, P[18].
 belief, P[15, 19, 23, 25, 31].
 believe, P[4, 24, 30, 33, 34, 37, 39].
 beza, P[15, 26, 31, 40].
 blessing, P[4, 13, 19, 28, 29, 30, 31, 40].
 blood, P[5, 6, 14, 33, 34].
 blood of christ, P[33, 34].
 brethren, P[19, 23, 24, 25].
 broken, P[22, 39].
 business, P[12].
 candles, P[4].
 catechise, P[30].
 ceremonial, P[5, 7, 32].
 ceremonies, P[5, 14, 22].
 charity, P[8, 21, 22].

children, P[4, 8, 11, 17, 24, 29, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40].
 christ, P[3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40].
 christian, P[3, 6, 22, 23, 31, 32].
 christianity, P[3, 22, 23].
 church, P[4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 35, 36].
 church of god, P[11, 18].
 circumcision, P[36, 39].
 circumstance, P[6, 10, 11, 20, 26, 27, 32, 36].
 circumstances, P[6, 10, 11, 20, 26, 27, 32, 36].
 commandment, P[20, 21, 30].
 communion, P[31].
 conception, P[8, 18].
 confession, P[31].
 confirmation, P[4, 19, 27, 28, 38].
 conformity, P[12].
 congregation, P[20].
 conscience, P[6, 22, 31].
 constitution, P[14, 25, 26].
 consummation, P[13].
 controversy, P[25, 29].
 conversion, P[30].
 convert, P[34].
 converted, P[34].
 courage, P[6, 18, 23, 34, 35].
 covenant, P[17, 25, 27, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40].
 covenant of grace, P[30, 40].

covenant of works, P[39].
 covenanted, P[36].
 covenanting, P[37].
 covet, P[22].
 covetousness, P[22].
 crc, P[15].
 criminal, P[34].
 curse, P[13, 28, 31].
 damnation, P[25].
 darkness, P[24, 28].
 david, P[6, 7, 9, 14, 17, 30].
 death, P[10, 11, 13, 14, 19, 25, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36].
 debate, P[21].
 declaration, P[11, 16, 29, 31].
 decree, P[18].
 devotion, P[22].
 disciple, P[19, 23].
 disease, P[24].
 dispensation, P[16, 30, 33, 40].
 divine, P[4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 22, 26, 27, 28, 37].
 doctrinal, P[8, 14, 31].
 doctrine, P[3, 5, 6, 12, 16, 17, 22, 27].
 dominion, P[17, 22].
 doubt, P[4, 5, 6, 23, 26, 38].
 ecclesiastical, P[18, 21, 22].
 efficacious, P[4, 29].
 election, P[18].
 engagement, P[36].
 envy, P[20, 25].
 erasmus, P[31].
 establishment, P[22].
 eternal generation, P[12].
 eternity, P[26, 33].
 eucharist, P[4].
 evidence, P[19, 24, 27, 28, 32, 33, 36].
 expositors, P[5, 28, 37].
 extraordinary, P[7, 29].

OCR-BASED INDEX
Listings May Include Partial Matches
Page Numbers Refer to PDF Page Numbers

eyes, P[34].
ezra, P[10, 11].
faith, P[4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 22, 23, 25, 27, 31, 34, 35, 37, 38].
faithfulness, P[10, 12, 34].
fallible, P[29].
family, P[11, 17, 20, 27, 35, 36, 38, 40].
father, P[9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 27, 31, 33, 35, 36, 38].
fear, P[3, 22, 29, 30, 35, 38].
fear of god, P[30].
feast, P[5].
fifth commandment, P[30].
fisher, P[18].
flesh, P[6].
flood, P[38, 39].
fool, P[10, 16, 17].
forefather, P[15].
foundation, P[11, 13, 16, 18, 19, 27, 28, 32, 36, 37, 39].
frame, P[16, 24, 31].
free will, P[6].
free-will, P[6, 22].
fundamental, P[15, 17].
generation, P[7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, 26, 33, 36, 37, 38].
genesis, P[26].
gentile, P[14].
gift, P[18, 24, 25, 26].
glorified, P[29].
glory, P[8, 14, 15, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 30, 33, 34, 40].
glory of god, P[33, 34].
god's law, P[23].
god's sovereignty, P[25].
goodness, P[7, 29].
goodness of god, P[7].
goold, P[2, 3].
gospel, P[5, 6, 7, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23,

27, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 39].
government, P[36, 39].
grace, P[11, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 39, 40].
grace of god, P[18].
guilt, P[23, 31, 40].
heart, P[19, 21, 25].
heathen, P[7, 17, 21].
heathenism, P[21].
heaven, P[10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 29].
heavenly, P[29].
hebrew, P[2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40].
hebrews, P[2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40].
hell, P[18, 19].
hezekiah, P[7].
historical, P[10, 14].
history, P[4, 10].
holiness, P[23, 30, 34, 35].
holy, P[4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, 23, 29, 30, 33, 34, 38, 39].
holy ghost, P[4, 5, 11, 14, 39].
holy spirit, P[5, 7, 18].
home, P[18, 36].
hope, P[3, 23, 39].
hort, P[14, 17, 18].
house, P[8, 24, 30, 33, 36, 38, 40].
human law, P[36, 39].
human nature, P[12, 13, 14].

humility, P[20].
hunt, P[3].
idol, P[17, 19, 36].
idolatrous, P[17, 19, 36].
idolatrous worship, P[19].
ignorance, P[16, 19, 23].
image, P[14].
imputation, P[37, 38].
in the wilderness, P[6, 38].
incense, P[7].
infallible, P[29].
infinite, P[5, 13, 14, 27, 29, 33].
inspiration, P[4, 5, 26, 29].
instrument, P[29, 30, 34].
instrumental, P[30].
interpretation, P[5, 8, 9, 38, 39].
invention, P[12, 21].
israel, P[8, 9, 11, 18, 27, 29].
jacob, P[4, 7, 8, 17, 29, 36, 38].
james, P[33].
jerusalem, P[6, 9, 32].
jesus, P[4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 30, 33, 35].
jesus christ, P[4, 5, 9, 12, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 33, 35].
jew, P[5, 10, 11, 14, 17, 27, 29, 32, 34, 35].
jewish, P[5].
job, P[10, 11, 17].
john owen, P[1, 2].
johnston, P[3].
jordan, P[6].
joy, P[4, 6, 11, 15, 22, 27, 28].
judaism, P[17, 21].
judgment, P[3, 9, 18, 19, 22, 31, 38, 40].
justice, P[7, 8, 9].

OCR-BASED INDEX
 Listings May Include Partial Matches
 Page Numbers Refer to PDF Page Numbers

justification, P[37, 38].
 justification by faith, P[37].
 kingdom, P[9, 13, 21].
 kings, P[4, 18, 29].
 knowledge, P[3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 30].
 korah, P[20, 25].
 language, P[8, 31].
 last day, P[29].
 laud, P[7].
 law of god, P[6].
 law of nature, P[5, 30].
 lawful, P[7, 22, 26].
 lawfulness, P[26].
 lds, P[30, 38].
 leader, P[23].
 levites, P[15, 20, 23, 24, 40].
 liberal, P[7, 22].
 liberty, P[20, 21, 36].
 light, P[5, 7, 11, 16, 19, 20, 24, 27, 28, 29, 36].
 light of nature, P[5, 7, 19, 28, 29, 36].
 lining, P[23].
 lord jesus, P[5, 9, 19, 21, 24, 33].
 lord jesus christ, P[5, 9, 19, 21, 24, 33].
 love, P[13, 14, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29, 34].
 lust, P[19, 27, 28, 37, 39].
 manuscript, P[40].
 martyr, P[35].
 martyrdom, P[35].
 masculine, P[28].
 meaning, P[7, 8, 11, 26, 39, 40].
 means of grace, P[19].
 media, P[4, 5, 14, 15, 23, 26, 27, 29, 36].
 mediator, P[14].
 mercy, P[7, 18, 27, 29, 31, 34].
 merit, P[22, 38, 39].
 messiah, P[11, 14, 17].

mind, P[4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34, 37].
 minds of men, P[15, 22, 27, 28].
 minister, P[4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 30, 31, 34, 35, 39].
 ministry, P[4, 6, 8, 16, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26, 30, 32, 33, 34].
 miracle, P[34].
 misery, P[14].
 mission, P[11, 19, 31].
 morality, P[6, 16].
 moses, P[4, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 29].
 mother, P[9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 31, 33].
 mystery, P[3, 4, 11, 14, 33, 40].
 mystical, P[5, 8, 13, 14].
 naked, P[11].
 name of god, P[4, 29, 30, 31].
 nations, P[7, 17, 18, 22, 36].
 nativity, P[9, 26].
 necessary, P[5, 7, 11, 12, 16, 22, 26, 27, 32].
 new testament, P[5, 21, 33].
 noah, P[8, 27].
 npp, P[5].
 numbers, P[9].
 oath, P[27, 36].
 obedience, P[7, 11, 20, 21, 23, 25, 30, 35, 36, 39].
 office, P[4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 40].
 old testament, P[5, 8, 10, 15, 21].
 oppression, P[8].

ordained, P[21, 23, 30, 35].
 ordinance, P[4, 5, 29, 30, 31].
 ordinance of god, P[30].
 owen, P[1, 2].
 pain, P[16, 30].
 papacy, P[4].
 paraphrase, P[31].
 parent, P[4, 10, 11, 15, 30, 31, 32, 37, 38, 39, 40].
 passion, P[24, 30, 33, 34].
 passover, P[33].
 paul, P[34].
 peace, P[8, 9, 13, 29, 31].
 perfection, P[3, 12, 14, 16, 40].
 perish, P[15, 17, 25, 38, 39].
 persecutor, P[18, 34].
 pleasure, P[6, 18, 20, 22, 24, 28, 36].
 polyglot, P[40].
 poor, P[8, 18, 21, 24, 33, 34].
 possession, P[20, 22, 24, 36, 37, 38].
 posterity, P[4, 15, 17, 18, 20, 24, 25, 27, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40].
 poverty, P[20].
 power, P[4, 5, 7, 8, 14, 17, 19, 21, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 40].
 power of god, P[34].
 praise, P[29, 34].
 pray, P[4, 16, 29, 30, 31].
 prayer, P[4, 16, 29, 30, 31].
 prc, P[15].
 preach, P[21, 23, 30, 31, 34, 35].
 preaching, P[30, 31, 34].
 pressly, P[7, 10, 19, 21, 23, 33, 39].

OCR-BASED INDEX
Listings May Include Partial Matches
Page Numbers Refer to PDF Page Numbers

pretended, P[18, 21, 22].
priest, P[4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40].
priesthood, P[8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 23, 25, 26, 32, 33, 35, 36, 40].
principles, P[16, 19, 28, 36, 37].
professor, P[22].
progression, P[11].
prophecies, P[5, 9, 14].
prophecy, P[4, 8, 9, 11, 29].
prophet, P[4, 5, 8, 12, 18, 33, 40].
prophetic, P[4, 8, 40].
providence, P[8, 9, 20].
psalm, P[9, 11, 31].
psalmist, P[9, 31].
punishment, P[3, 40].
purgatory, P[22].
quote, P[12].
reading, P[5, 16, 40].
reason, P[3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 28, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40].
reference, P[19, 23].
reform, P[7, 26].
rejoice, P[27].
religion, P[4, 15, 16, 23, 32, 37, 39].
religious worship, P[7, 30].
repent, P[31].
resurrection, P[7, 30].
revelation, P[5, 7, 11, 12, 16, 28].
reward, P[18, 34].
rex, P[8].
rich, P[6, 14, 17].
riches, P[14, 17].

righteousness, P[8, 9, 13, 38, 39, 40].
rites, P[14].
ritual, P[9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34].
sacerdotal, P[4, 5, 28, 29, 40].
sacrament, P[4, 30, 33].
sacramental, P[33].
sacraments, P[4, 30].
sacrifice, P[4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 18, 23].
sacrifice of christ, P[9].
salvation, P[15, 25, 27, 35, 39, 40].
sanction, P[4].
satan, P[34].
saul, P[5, 6].
saviour, P[5, 7, 11, 15, 21].
scandal, P[6].
school, P[36].
scripture, P[5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 24, 29, 31, 32, 33].
seals, P[39].
secular, P[21, 22, 23, 33].
sedition, P[20].
self-denial, P[20].
sense, P[7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 25, 28, 29, 31, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40].
sensuality, P[18].
separated, P[6, 17, 36].
session, P[20, 22, 24, 36, 37, 38].
shadow, P[26].
shame, P[21].
shepherd, P[34].
sick, P[24].
sin of adam, P[37, 38, 39].
sinai, P[4, 25].
single, P[25, 27].
sinner, P[13, 31, 34].
sins, P[31, 39].

sodom, P[5, 18, 38, 39].
soldier, P[6, 7].
solemn, P[8, 11, 12, 27, 29, 31, 36].
solomon, P[7, 8, 9, 14].
son of god, P[4, 9, 12, 13, 14].
son of man, P[14].
soul, P[15, 16, 18, 19, 24, 28, 30, 31, 34, 35, 39].
sovereign, P[11, 18, 20, 24, 25, 26, 28].
sovereign decree, P[18].
sovereign grace, P[24, 28].
sovereign will, P[18].
sovereignty, P[25, 26].
speak, P[4, 5, 6, 10, 14, 17, 26, 29, 30, 31, 35].
speech, P[34].
spirit, P[5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34].
spirit of god, P[10].
spiritual, P[9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34].
spiritual gift, P[24, 25].
spiritual worship, P[15].
spring, P[24, 36, 39].
stress, P[15].
strife, P[25].
stuart, P[40].
study, P[16].
success, P[4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 22, 33, 34, 37].
succession, P[11, 13].
suffering, P[12, 16, 34].
superiors, P[29].
supernatural, P[28].
superstition, P[19, 22].
synod, P[6].
tabernacle, P[6, 22].
teachers, P[27].

OCR-BASED INDEX
Listings May Include Partial Matches
Page Numbers Refer to PDF Page Numbers

teaching, P[23, 28, 30].
temple, P[6, 25].
temptation, P[4, 23, 33, 34].
testimony, P[12, 15, 31, 33, 34, 35, 39].
tithing, P[1, 5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21, 23, 32].
tradition, P[11].
translation, P[17, 26, 28, 32, 40].
translator, P[35].
trial, P[4, 25, 27, 34, 35].
trust, P[17, 24, 27, 39, 40].
truth, P[3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 16, 22, 25, 27, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39].
unchangeable, P[13].
united states, P[3].
usa, P[5, 6, 9, 26, 32, 39].
victory, P[4].
visions, P[9, 22].
vocation, P[24].
vote, P[18].
vow, P[4, 5, 7].
w. h. goold, P[2].
warfare, P[35].
warne, P[16].
warning, P[3].
wine, P[5, 33].
wisdom, P[4, 5, 11, 14, 22, 23, 33, 34].
witness, P[31, 32, 33, 35].
word of god, P[5, 37].
work, P[7, 8, 9, 14, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 29, 31, 33, 34, 39].
world, P[4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36].
worldliness, P[23].
worldly, P[22, 23, 30].

worship, P[5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 19, 20, 25, 30, 32, 33, 36, 40].
worship of god, P[5, 6, 20, 40].
zeal, P[20, 22, 23, 34].