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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON
EPHESIANS

by Adam Clarke.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

HOLY BIBLE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING
OF THE SACRED WRITINGS

BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

IN many points of view the *Epistle to the Ephesians* presents a variety of *difficulties*. A learned man calls it “the most inartificial piece of composition in the universe:” this is not correct if it be intended to convey a censure on the composition itself; for the subject (which is a vindication of the providence and mercy of God, in admitting the Gentiles into his Church, and forming one flock of *them* and the converted Jews, giving them the same privileges which his peculiar people had enjoyed almost exclusively for 2000 years) has led the apostle to make such a variety of references to the *Mosaic economy* and its *peculiarities*, as, without this consideration, will make many parts of the epistle seem obscure to most readers; and this obscurity may be very improperly laid to the charge of inartificial composition: good judges, however, have allowed it to be one of the most sublime compositions of the kind that ever came from the pen of man. This was the opinion of *Grotius*.

The subject in this and the Epistle to the Colossians is certainly the same; and as it is supposed that they were written *about the same time*, it is natural to expect a similarity of expression. This subject, and others connected with these epistles, Dr. Paley has discussed with his usual sagacity; the substance of whose reasonings I beg leave to present to the reader.

SECTION 1.

This epistle and the Epistle to the Colossians appear to have been transmitted to their respective Churches by the same messenger: “But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things; whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts;” ~~4021~~ **Ephesians 6:21, 22**. This text, if it do not expressly declare, clearly (I think) intimates, that the letter was sent by Tychicus. The words made use of in the Epistle to the Colossians are very similar to these, and afford the same implication that Tychicus, in conjunction with Onesimus, was the bearer of the letter to that Church: “All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother,

and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord; whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here;” ^{<S10407>}**Colossians 4:7-9**. Both epistles represent the writer as under imprisonment for the Gospel, and both treat of the same general subject. The Epistle therefore to the Ephesians and the Epistle to the Colossians import to be two letters written by the same person, at or nearly at the same time, and upon the same subject, and to have been sent by the same messenger. Now, every thing in the sentiments, order, and diction of the two writings, corresponds with what might be expected from this circumstance of identity or cognation in their original. The leading doctrine of both epistles is the union of Jews and Gentiles under the Christian dispensation; and that doctrine in both is established by the same arguments, or, more properly speaking, illustrated by the same similitudes: “one head,” “one body,” “one new man,” “one temple,” are in both epistles the figures under which the society of believers in Christ, and their common relation to him as such, is represented. The ancient, and, as had been thought, the indelible distinction between Jew and Gentile, in both epistles, is declared to be “now abolished by his cross.” Beside this consent in the general tenor of the two epistles, and in the run also and warmth of thought with which they are composed, we may naturally expect, in letters produced under the circumstances in which these appear to have been written, a closer resemblance of style and diction than between other letters of the same person but of distant dates, or between letters adapted to different occasions. In particular, we may look for many of the same expressions, and sometimes for whole sentences being alike; since such expressions and sentences would be repeated in the second letter (whichever that was) as yet fresh in the author’s mind, from the writing of the first. This repetition occurs in the following examples:—

^{<S0107>}**Ephesians 1:7**: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

^{<S1014>}**Colossians 1:14**: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

Besides the sameness of the words, it is farther remarkable that the sentence is, in both places, preceded by the same introductory idea. In the Epistle to the Ephesians it is the “Beloved,” (**ἠγαπημένω**;) in that to the

Colossians it is “*his dear Son*,” (υιου της αγαπης αυτου, the Son of his love,) “in whom we have redemption.” The sentence appears to have been suggested to the mind of the writer, by the idea which had accompanied it before.

<9010> **Ephesians 1:10:** “All things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him.”

<51020> **Colossians 1:20:** “All things by him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

This quotation is the more observable, because the connecting of things in earth with things in heaven is a very singular sentiment, and found nowhere else but in these two epistles. The words also are introduced and followed by a train of thought nearly alike. They are introduced by describing the union which Christ had effected; and they are followed by telling the Gentile Churches that they were incorporated into it.

<90102> **Ephesians 3:2:** “The dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-ward.”

<51025> **Colossians 1:25:** “The dispensation of God, which is given to me for you.”

Of these sentences it may likewise be observed, that the accompanying ideas are similar. In both places they are immediately preceded by the mention of his present sufferings; in both places they are immediately followed by the mention of the mystery which was the great subject of his preaching.

<90519> **Ephesians 5:19:** “In psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

<510316> **Colossians 3:16:** “In psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

<90622> **Ephesians 6:22:** “Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.”

<51048> **Colossians 4:8:** “Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts.”

In these examples we do not perceive a cento of phrases gathered from one composition and strung together in the other; but the occasional

occurrence of the same expression to a mind a second time revolving the same ideas.

2. Whoever writes two letters, or two discourses, nearly upon the same subject, and at no great distance of time, but without any express recollection of what he had written before, will find himself repeating some sentences in the very order of the words in which he had already used them; but he will more frequently find himself employing some principal terms, with the order inadvertently changed, or with the order disturbed by the intermixture of other words and phrases expressive of ideas rising up at the time; or in many instances repeating not single words, nor yet whole sentences, but parts and fragments of sentences. Of all these varieties, the examination of these two epistles will furnish plain examples; and I should rely upon this class of instances more than upon the last; because, although an impostor might transcribe into a forgery entire sentences and phrases, yet the dislocation of words, the partial recollection of phrases and sentences, the intermixture of new terms and new ideas with terms and ideas before used, which will appear in the examples that follow, and which are the natural properties of writings produced under the circumstances in which these epistles are represented to have been composed, would not, I think, have occurred to the invention of a forger; nor, if they had occurred, would they have been so easily executed. This studied variation was a refinement in forgery which I believe did not exist; or if we can suppose it to have been practised in the instances adduced below, why, it may be asked, was not the same art exercised upon those which we have collected in the preceding class?

4019 Ephesians 1:19-2:5: “Towards us who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead; (and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet; and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all;) and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, (wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as

others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,) even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.”

<50212> **Colossians 2:12, 13:** “Through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead: and you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of the flesh, hath he quickened together with him.”

Out of the long quotation from the Ephesians, take away the parentheses, and you have left a sentence almost in terms the same as the short quotation from the Colossians. The resemblance is more visible in the original than in our translation; for what is rendered in one place “the working,” and in another “the operation,” is the same Greek term, **ενεργεια** in one place it is **τους πιστευοντας κατα την ενεργειαν** in the other **δια της πιστεως ενεργειας**. Here, therefore, we have the same sentiment, and nearly in the same words; but, in the Ephesians, twice broken or interrupted by incidental thoughts, which St. Paul, as his manner was enlarges upon by the way, and then returns to the thread of his discourse. It is interrupted the first time by a view which breaks in upon his mind of the exaltation of Christ, and the second time by a description of heathen depravity. I have only to remark, that Griesbach, in his very accurate edition, gives the parentheses very nearly in the same manner in which they are here placed; and that without any respect to the comparison which we are proposing.

<8042> **Ephesians 4:2-4:** “With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.”

<50212> **Colossians 3:12-15:** “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye: and, above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body.”

In these two quotations the words **ταπεινοφροσυνη, πραστης, μακροθυμια, ανεχομενοι αλληλων**, *lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another*, occur in exactly the same order:

αγαπη, *love*, is also found in both, but in a different connection; συνδεσμος της ειρηνης, the bond of peace, answers to συνδεσμος της τελειοτητος, the bond of perfectness; εκληθητε εν ενι σωματι, *called into one spirit*, to εν σωμα καθως και εκληθητε εν μια ελπιδι, *one body, even as ye are called into one hope*; yet is this similitude found in the midst of sentences otherwise very different.

<40416> **Ephesians 4:16**: “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body.”

<510219> **Colossians 2:19**: “From which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”

In these quotations are read εξ ου παν το σωμα συμβιβαζομενον, *from whom the whole body fitly joined together*, in both places; επιχορηγουμενον answering to επιχορηγιας διατων αφων to δια πασης αφης αυξει την αυξησιν to ποιειται την αυξησιν and yet the sentences are considerably diversified in other parts.

<40432> **Ephesians 4:32**: “And be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another; even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.”

<510313> **Colossians 3:13**: “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

Here we have “forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake (εν χριστω) hath forgiven you,” in the first quotation, substantially repeated in the second. But in the second the sentence is broken by the interposition of a new clause, “If any man have a quarrel against any;” and the latter part is a little varied; instead of “God in Christ,” it is “Christ hath forgiven you.”

<40422> **Ephesians 4:22-24**: “That ye put on, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

<51039, 10> **Colossians 3:9, 10**: “Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.”

In these quotations, “putting off the old man, and putting on the new,” appears in both. The idea is farther explained by calling it a renewal; in the one, “renewed in the spirit of your mind,” in the other, “renewed in knowledge.” In both, the new man is said to be formed according to the same model; in the one, he is “after God created in righteousness and true holiness;” in the other, “he is renewed after the image of him who created him.” In a word, it is the same person writing upon a kindred subject, with the terms and ideas which he had before employed still floating in his memory.

In these comparisons we often perceive the reason why the writer, though expressing the same idea, uses a different term; namely, because the term before used is employed in the sentence under a different form: thus, in the quotations under our eye, the new man is **καινος ανθρωπος** in the Ephesians, and **τον νεον** in the Colossians; but then it is because **τον καινον** is used in the next word, **ανακαινουμενον**, *being renewed*.

<4016> **Ephesians 5:6-8:** “*Because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience: be not ye therefore partakers with them; for ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord walk as children of light.*”

<51016> **Colossians 3:6-8:** “*For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience; in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these.*”

These verses afford a specimen of that *partial* resemblance which is only to be met with when no imitation is designed, when no studied recollection is employed; but when the mind, exercised upon the same subject, is left to the spontaneous return of such terms and phrases as, having been used before, may happen to present themselves again. The sentiment of both passages is throughout alike; half of that sentiment, the denunciation of God’s wrath, is expressed in identical words; the other half, viz. the admonition to quit their former conversation, in words entirely different.

<4015> **Ephesians 5:15, 16:** “*See then that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time.*”

<51016> **Colossians 4:5:** “*Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time.*”

This is another example of that mixture which we remarked of sameness and variety in the language of one writer. “Redeeming the time,” (εξαγοραζομενοι τον καιρον,) is a literal repetition. “Walk not as fools but as wise,” (περιπατετε μη ασοφοι, αλλ ως σοφοι,) answers exactly in sense, and nearly in terms, to “walk in wisdom,” (εν σοφια περιπατετε.) περιπατετε ακριβως is a very different phrase, but is intended to convey precisely the same idea as περιπατετε προς τους εξω. ακριβως is not well rendered “circumspectly.” It means what in modern speech we should call “correctly;” and when we advise a person to behave “correctly,” our advice is always given with a reference “to the opinion of others,” προς τους εξω. “Walk correctly, redeeming the time,” i.e. suiting yourselves to the difficulty and ticklishness of the times in which we live, “because the days are evil.”

<4069> **Ephesians 6:19, 20:** “And (praying) for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

<5104B> **Colossians 4:3, 4:** “Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds, that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak.”

In these quotations the phrase, “as I ought to speak,” (ως δει με λαλησαι,) the words “utterance,” (λογος,) a mystery,” (μυστηριος,) “open,” (ανοιξη and εν ανοιξει,) are the same. “To make known the mystery of the Gospel,” (γνωρισαι το μυστηριον,) answers to “make it manifest;” (ινα φανερωσω αυτο;); “for which I am an ambassador in bonds,” (επερ ου πρεσβευω εν αλυσει,) to “for which I am also in bonds,” (δι ο και δεδεμαι.)

<4072> **Ephesians 5:22:** “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church; and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as

their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself; for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband. *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.* Honour thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth. *And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.* And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; *knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.*”

Colossians 3:18: “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”

The passages marked by Italics in the quotation from the Ephesians bear a strict resemblance, not only in signification but in terms, to the quotation from the Colossians. Both the words and the order of the words are in many clauses a duplicate of one another. In the Epistle to the Colossians these passages are laid together; in that to the Ephesians, they are divided by intermediate matter, especially by a long digressive allusion to the

mysterious union between Christ and his Church; which possessing, as Mr. Locke hath well observed, the mind of the apostle, from being an incidental thought grows up into the principal subject. The affinity between, these two passages, in signification, in terms, and in the order of the words, is closer than can be pointed out between any parts of any two epistles in the volume.

If the reader, would see how the same subject is treated by a different hand, and how distinguishable it is from the production of the same pen, let him turn to the second and third chapters of the First Epistle of St. Peter. The duties of servants, of wives, and of husbands, are enlarged upon in that epistle, as they are in the Epistle to the Ephesians; but the subjects both occur in a different order, and the train of sentiment subjoined to each is totally unlike.

3. In two letters issuing from the same person, nearly at the same time, and upon the same general occasion, we may expect to trace the influence of association in the order in which the topics follow one another. Certain ideas universally or usually suggest others. Here the order is what we call natural, and from such an order nothing can be concluded. But when the order is arbitrary, yet alike, the concurrence indicates the effect of that principle, by which ideas, which have been once joined, commonly revisit the thoughts together. The epistles under consideration furnish the two following remarkable instances of this species of agreement.

~~4024~~ **Ephesians 4:24:** “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness: wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another.”

~~5109~~ **Colossians 3:9:** “Lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge.”

The vice of “lying,” or a correction of that vice, does not seem to bear any nearer relation to the “putting on the new man,” than a reformation in any other article of morals. Yet these two ideas we see stand in both epistles in immediate connection.

~~4024~~ **Ephesians 5:20-22:** “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one

to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”

<10B17> **Colossians 3:17:** “Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.”

In both these passages submission follows giving of thanks, without any similitude in the ideas which should account for the transition.

It is not necessary to pursue the comparison between the two epistles farther. The argument which results from it stands thus: No two other epistles contain a circumstance which indicates that they were written at the same, or nearly at the same, time. No two other epistles exhibit so many marks of correspondency and resemblance. If the original which we ascribe to these two epistles be the true one, that is, if they were both really written by St. Paul, and both sent to their respective destination by the same messenger, the similitude is, in all points, what should be expected to take place. If they were forgeries, then the mention of Tychicus in both epistles, and in a manner which shows that he either carried or accompanied both epistles, was inserted for the purpose of accounting for their similitude; or else, the structure of the epistles was designedly adapted to the circumstance: or lastly, the conformity between the contents of the forgeries, and what is thus directly intimated concerning their date, was only a happy accident. Not one of these three suppositions will gain credit with a reader who peruses the epistles with attention, and who reviews the several examples we have pointed out, and the observations with which they were accompanied.

SECTION 2.

There is such a thing as a peculiar word or phrase cleaving, as it were, to the memory of a writer or speaker, and presenting itself to his utterance at every turn. When we observe this we call it a *cant* word, or a *cant* phrase. It is a natural effect of habit, and would appear more frequently than it does, had not the rules of good writing taught the ear to be offended with the iteration of the same sound, and often-times caused us to reject, on that account, the word which offered itself first to our recollection. With a writer who, like St. Paul, either knew not these rules, or disregarded them, such words will not be avoided. The truth is, an example of this kind runs through several of his epistles, and in the epistle before us *abounds*; and

that is in the word *riches*, (*πλουτος*), used metaphorically as an augmentative of the idea to which it happens to be subjoined. Thus “the *riches* of his glory,” “his *riches* in glory,” “*riches* of the glory of his inheritance,” “*riches* of the glory of this mystery,” ^{<5023>}**Romans 9:23**; ^{<5016>}**Ephesians 3:16**; ^{<5018>}**Ephesians 1:18**; ^{<51027>}**Colossians 1:27**; “*riches* of his grace,” twice in the Ephesians, ^{<50107>}**Ephesians 1:7**; **2:7**; “*riches* of the full assurance of understanding,” ^{<51022>}**Colossians 2:2**; “*riches* of his goodness,” ^{<51004>}**Romans 2:4**; “*riches* of the wisdom of God,” ^{<51133>}**Romans 11:33**; “*riches* of Christ,” ^{<50088>}**Ephesians 3:8**. In a like sense the adjective, ^{<51012>}**Romans 10:12**, “*Rich* unto all that call upon him,” ^{<50004>}**Ephesians 2:4**, “*Rich* in mercy,” ^{<50618>}**1 Timothy 6:18**, “*Rich* in good works.” Also the adverb ^{<51016>}**Colossians 3:16**: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you *richly*.” This figurative use of the word, though so familiar to St. Paul, does not occur in any part of the New Testament, except once in the Epistle of St. James, ^{<50016>}**James 2:5** “Hath not God chosen the *poor* of this world *rich* in faith?” where it is manifestly suggested by the antithesis. I propose the frequent, yet seemingly unaffected, use of this phrase in the epistle before us, as one internal mark of its genuineness.

SECTION 3.

There is another singularity in St. Paul’s style which, wherever it is found, may be deemed a badge of authenticity; because, if it were noticed, it would not, I think, be imitated, inasmuch as it almost always produces embarrassment and interruption in the reasoning. This singularity is a species of digression which may probably, I think, be denominated *going off at a word*. It is turning aside from the subject upon the occurrence of some particular word, forsaking the train of thought then in hand, and entering upon a parenthetical sentence in which that word is the prevailing term. I shall lay before the reader some examples of this, collected from the other epistles, and then propose two examples of it which are found in the Epistle to the Ephesians. ^{<7024>}**2 Corinthians 2:14**, at the word *savour*: “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the *savour* of his knowledge by us in every place. (For we are unto God a sweet *savour* of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the *savour* of death unto death, and to the other the *savour* of life unto life; and who is sufficient for these things?) For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.” Again, ^{<7001>}**2 Corinthians 3:1**, at the word *epistle*: “Need we, as some others,

epistles of commendation to you, or of commendation from you? (Ye are our *epistle*, written in our hearts known and read of all men; forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the *epistle* of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.”) The position of the words in the original shows, more strongly than in the translation, that it was the occurrence of the word **επιστολη** which gave birth to the sentence as follows, ^{<ARB1>}**2 Corinthians 3:1**: **ει μη χρηζομεν, ως τινες, συστατικων επιστολων προς υμας, η εξ υμων συστατικων η επιστολη ημων υμεις εστε, εγγεγραμμενη εν ταις καρδιαις ημων, γινωσκομενη και αναγιγνωσκομενη υπο παντων ανθρωπων. φανερουμενοι οτι εστε επιστολη χριστου διακονηθεισα υφ ημων, εγγεγραμμενη ου μελανι, αλλα πνευματι θεου ζωντος, ουκ εν πλαξι λιθιναις, αλλ ες πλαξι καρδιας σαρκιναις.**

Again, ^{<ARB2>}**2 Corinthians 3:12**, &c., at the word *veil*: “Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, which put a *veil* over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same *veil* untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which *veil* is done away in Christ; but even unto this day, when Moses is read, the *veil* is upon their heart; nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the *veil* shall be taken away, (now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.) But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.”

Who sees not that this whole allegory of the *veil* arises entirely out of the occurrence of the word, in telling us that “Moses put a *veil* over his face,” and that it drew the apostle away from the proper subject of his discourse, the dignity of the office in which he was engaged? which subject he fetches up again almost in the words with which he had left it: “Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.” The sentence which he had before been going on with, and in which he had been interrupted by the *veil*, was, “Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.”

In the Epistle to the Ephesians the reader will remark two instances in which the same habit of composition obtains; he will recognize the same pen. One he will find, ^{<4008>}**Ephesians 4:8-11**, at the word *ascended*: “Wherefore he saith, When he *ascended* up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts into men. (Now that he *ascended*, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that *ascended* up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles,” &c.

The other appears, ^{<40512>}**Ephesians 5:12-15**, at the word *light*: “For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret: but all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the *light*; (for whatsoever doth make manifest, is *light*; wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee *light*;) see then that ye walk circumspectly:”

SECTION 4.

As our epistle purports to have been written during St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, which lies beyond the period to which the Acts of the Apostles brings up his history, and as we have seen and acknowledged that the epistle contains no reference to any transaction at Ephesus during the apostle's residence in that city, we cannot expect that it should supply many marks of agreement with the narrative. One coincidence, however, occurs, and a coincidence of that minute and less obvious kind, which, as hath been repeatedly observed, is of all others the most to be relied upon.

^{<40519>}**Ephesians 6:19, 20**, we read, “Praying for me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds.” “*In bonds*,” εν αλυσσει, in a *chain*. In the twenty-eighth chapter of the Acts we are informed that Paul, after his arrival at Rome, was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him. Dr. Lardner has shown that this mode of custody was in use amongst the Romans, and that whenever it was adopted, the prisoner was bound to the soldier by a single chain: in reference to which St. Paul, in the twentieth verse of this chapter, { ^{<40201>}**Acts 28:20** } tells the Jews, whom he had assembled, “For this cause, therefore, have I called for you, to see you and to speak with you, because that for the hope of Israel I am bound *with this chain*,” την υλυσιν ταυτην περικειμαι. It is in exact conformity, therefore, with the truth of St. Paul's situation at the time, that he declares of himself in the epistle, **πρεσβευω εν αλυσει**. And the exactness is the

more remarkable, as **αλυσις** (a chain) is nowhere used in the singular number to express any other kind of custody. When the prisoner's hands or feet were bound together, the word was **δεσμοι**, (bonds;) ^{<413>}**Acts 26:29**. When the prisoner was confined between two soldiers, as in the case of Peter, ^{<412>}**Acts 12:6**, two chains were employed; and it is said, upon his miraculous deliverance, that the "chains (**αλυσεις**, in the plural) fell from his hands."

If it can be suspected that the writer of the present epistle, who in no other particular appears to have availed himself of the information concerning St. Paul delivered in the Acts, had, in this verse, borrowed the word which he read in that book, and had adapted his expression to what he found there recorded of St. Paul's treatment at Rome; in short, that the coincidence here noted was effected by craft and design, I think it a strong reply, to remark that in the parallel passage of the Epistle to the Colossians the same allusion is not preserved; the words there are, "praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ, for which *I am also in bonds*," **δι' ο και δεδεμαι**. After what has been shown in a preceding section, there can be little doubt that these two epistles were written by the same person.

PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

EPHESUS was a city of *Ionia*, in *Asia Minor*, and once the metropolis of that part of the world. The ancient city was situated at the mouth of the river *Cayster*, on the shore of the *Ægean Sea*, about 50 miles south of *Smyrna*. The Ephesus in which St. Paul founded a Church, and which for a time flourished gloriously, was not the ancient Ephesus; for that was destroyed, and a new city of the same name was built by Lysimachus.

This most famous of all the Asiatic cities is now a miserable *village*, composed of mean huts formed out of the ruins of its once magnificent structures; and these huts are now the residence of about forty or fifty Turkish families, without a single *Christian* among them! For other particulars see the note on ^{<441819>}**Acts 18:19**.

It is, however, a doubt with many learned men, whether *this* epistle was sent to the Church at *Ephesus*. They think that the proper direction is, The Epistle of St. Paul to the *Laodiceans*; and suppose it to be the same which the apostle mentions, ^{<510416>}**Colossians 4:16**: “When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.” Dr. Paley’s arguments in the affirmative are entitled to much regard.

“Although it does not appear to have ever been disputed that the epistle before us was written by St. Paul, yet it is well known that a doubt has long been entertained concerning the persons to whom it was addressed. The question is founded partly in some ambiguity in the external evidence. Marcion, a heretic of the second century, as quoted by Tertullian, a father in the beginning of the third, calls it, The Epistle to the Laodiceans. From what we know of Marcion, his judgment is little to be relied upon; nor is it perfectly clear that Marcion was rightly understood by Tertullian. If, however, Marcion be brought to prove that some copies in his time gave **εν λαοδικεια** in the superscription, his testimony, if it be truly interpreted, is not diminished by his heresy; for, as Grotius observes, ‘*cur in ea re mentiretur nihil erat causæ.*’ The name **εν εφεσω**, in *Ephesus*, in the first verse, upon which word singly depends the proof that the epistle was written to the Ephesians, is not read in all the manuscripts now extant. I admit, however, that the external evidence preponderates with a manifest

excess on the side of the received reading. The objection therefore principally arises from the contents of the epistle itself, which, in many respects militate with the supposition that it was written to the Church of Ephesus. According to the history, St. Paul had passed two whole years at Ephesus, ^{<4190>}**Acts 19:10**. And in this point, viz. of St. Paul having preached for a considerable length of time at Ephesus, the history is confirmed by the two epistles to the Corinthians, and by the two epistles to Timothy: ‘I will tarry at *Ephesus* until pentecost;’ ^{<4668>}**1 Corinthians 16:8**. ‘We would not have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in *Asia*;’ ^{<4708>}**2 Corinthians 1:8**. ‘As I besought thee to abide still at *Ephesus*, when I went into Macedonia;’ ^{<5408>}**1 Timothy 1:3**. ‘And in how many things he ministered to me at *Ephesus* thou knowest well;’ ^{<5018>}**2 Timothy 1:18**. I adduce these testimonies because, had it been a competition of credit between the history and the epistle, I should have thought myself bound to have preferred the epistle. Now, every epistle which St. Paul wrote to Churches which he himself had founded, or which he had visited, abounds with references and appeals to what had passed during the time that he was present amongst them; whereas there is not a text in the Epistle to the Ephesians from which we can collect that he had ever been at Ephesus at all. The two epistles to the Corinthians, the Epistle to the Galatians, the Epistle to the Philippians, and the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, are of this class; and they are full of allusions to the apostle’s history, his reception, and his conduct whilst amongst them; the total want of which in the epistle before us is very difficult to account for, if it was in truth written to the Church of Ephesus, in which city he had resided for so long a time. This is the first and strongest objection. But farther, the Epistle to the Colossians was addressed to a Church in which St. Paul had never been, This we infer from the first verse of the second chapter: ‘For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh.’ There could be no propriety in thus joining the Colossians and Laodiceans with those ‘who had not seen his face in the flesh,’ if they did not also belong to the same description. Now, his address to the Colossians, whom he had not visited, is precisely the same as his address to the Christians to whom he wrote in the epistle which we are now considering: ‘We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, *since we heard of your faith* in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints;’ ^{<5108>}**Colossians 1:3**. Thus he speaks to the Christians, in the epistle before us, as follows: ‘Wherefore I also, *after I heard of your faith* in the Lord

Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you in my prayers; ^{<4015>}**Ephesians 1:15**. The terms of this address are observable. The words, ‘having *heard* of your faith and love,’ are the very words, we see, which he uses towards strangers; and it is not probable that he should employ the same in accosting a Church in which he had long exercised his ministry, and whose ‘faith and love’ he must have personally known. The Epistle to the Romans was written before St. Paul had been at Rome; and his address to them runs in the same strain with that just now quoted: ‘I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for you all, that your faith is *spoken* of throughout the whole world;’ ^{<4010>}**Romans 1:8**. Let us now see what was the form in which our apostle was accustomed to introduce his epistles, when he wrote to those with whom he was already acquainted. To the Corinthians it was this: ‘I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus;’ ^{<4010>}**1 Corinthians 1:4**. To the Philippians: ‘I thank my God upon every remembrance of you;’ ^{<4010>}**Philippians 1:3**. To the Thessalonians: ‘We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labour of love;’ ^{<4010>}**1 Thessalonians 1:3**. To Timothy: ‘I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;’ ^{<4010>}**2 Timothy 1:3**. In these quotations it is usually his *remembrance*, and never his *hearing* of them, which he makes the subject of his thankfulness to God.

As great difficulties stand in the way, supposing the epistle before us to have been written to the Church of Ephesus; so I think it probable that it is actually the epistle to the Laodiceans, referred to in the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians. The text which contains that reference is this: ‘When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea;’ ^{<1016>}**Colossians 4:16**. The epistle *from* Laodicea was an epistle sent by St. Paul to that Church, and by them transmitted to Colosse. The two Churches were mutually to communicate the epistles they had received. This is the way in which the direction is explained by the greater part of commentators, and is the most probable sense that can be given to it. It is also probable that the epistle alluded to was an epistle which had been received by the Church of Laodicea *lately*. It appears, then, with a considerable degree of evidence, that there existed an epistle of St. Paul nearly of the same date with the Epistle to the Colossians, and an epistle

directed to a Church (for such the Church of Laodicea was) in which St. Paul had never been. What has been observed concerning the epistle before us, shows that it answers perfectly to that character.

“Nor does the mistake seem very difficult to account for. Whoever inspects the map of Asia Minor will see, that a person proceeding from Rome to Laodicea would probably land at Ephesus, as the nearest frequented seaport in that direction. Might not Tychicus, then, in passing through Ephesus, communicate to the Christians of that place the letter with which he was charged? And might not copies of that letter be multiplied and preserved at Ephesus? Might not some of the copies drop the words of designation *εν τη λαοδικεια*, which it was of no consequence to an Ephesian to retain? Might not copies of the letter come out into the Christian Church at large from Ephesus; and might not this give occasion to a belief that the letter was written to that Church? And, lastly, might not this belief produce the error which we suppose to have crept into the inscription?

“And it is remarkable that there seem to have been some ancient copies without the words of designation, either the words *in Ephesus*, or the words *in Laodicea*. St. Basil, a writer of the fourth century, speaking of the present epistle, has this very singular passage: ‘And writing to the Ephesians, as truly united to him who is through knowledge, he (Paul) calleth them in a peculiar sense *such who are*; saying, *to the saints who are and (or even) the faithful in Christ Jesus*; for so those before us have transmitted it, and we have found it in ancient copies.’ Dr. Mill interprets (and, notwithstanding some objections that have been made to him, in my opinion, rightly interprets) these words of Basil, as declaring that this father had seen certain copies of the epistle in which the words ‘in Ephesus’ were wanting. And the passage, I think, must be considered as Basil’s fanciful way of explaining what was really a corrupt and defective reading; for I do not believe it possible that the author of the epistle could have originally written *αγιους τοις ουσιν*, without any name of place to follow it.”

It must be allowed that the arguments of Dr. Paley, the sum of which may be found in *Wetstein*, that this is the epistle to the *Laodiceans*, are both plausible and strong; and yet almost the whole of antiquity, with the exceptions which those learned men mention, is in favour of the epistle being sent originally to the Church at *Ephesus*. Puzzled with these two

considerations, some critics have pointed out a *middle* way. They suppose that several copies of this epistle were directed to no particular Church, but were intended for all the Churches in Asia Minor; and that different copies might have different directions, from this circumstance, that St. Paul, in writing the first verse **παυλος αποστολος ιησου χριστου-τοις αγιοις τοις ουσιν**, *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the saints which are*, left a blank after **ουσιν**, are, which was in some cases filled up with **εν εφεσω**, in *Ephesus*; in others, with **εν λαοδικεια**, in *Laodicea*; though there might be one copy expressly sent by him to the Church of the Laodiceans, while he wished that others should be directed to the different Churches through Asia Minor. That there were copies which had no *place* specified, we learn from St. Basil; and the arguments in favour of *Laodicea* are certainly the strongest; the circumstance, that the apostle salutes no person, agrees well with *Laodicea*, where *he had never been*, **<1001>Colossians 2:1**; but cannot agree with *Ephesus*, where he was well known, and where, in preaching the Gospel, he had spent *three years*. See **<401>Acts 20:31**.

As this point is very dubious, and men of great abilities and learning have espoused different sides of the question, I judge myself incompetent to determine any thing; but I felt it my duty to bring the arguments for *Laodicea* fairly before the reader; those in favour of *Ephesus* may be met with every where. The passages in the body of the epistle, alleged by critics who espouse opposite sides of this subject, I have seldom noticed in a controversial way; and the notes on those passages are constructed as though no controversy existed.

Many expositors, and particularly Drs. *Chandler* and *Macknight*, have thought that they have perceived a great number of references to the *temple of Diana* at Ephesus; to the *sacred mysteries* among the Greeks; to the *Hierophants*, *Mystagogues*, *Neocoroi*, &c., in the temple of the celebrated goddess. It may appear strange that, with these opinions before me, I have not referred to the same things; nor adduced them by way of illustration; the truth is, I have not been able to discover them, nor do I believe that any such allusions exist. I see many allusions to the *temple of God* at Jerusalem, but none to the *temple of Diana* at Ephesus. I find also many references to the sacred service and sacerdotal officers in the Jewish temple; but none to *Mystagogues*, &c., among the heathens. I find much said about, what is to be understood most literally, the *mystery* which had been hidden from all ages, viz. of uniting Jews and Gentiles in one Church,

but no reference to the *Eleusinian*, *Bacchic*, or other mysteries in the abominable worship of the Greeks, was suggesting to the mind of the apostle any parallel between *their mysteries* and those of the Almighty. My reasons for my dissent from these respectable authorities I have given in the notes.

June 20th, 1815.

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

Chronological Notes relative to this Epistle.

- Usherian year of the world, 4065.
- Alexandrian era of the world, 5563.
- Antiochian era of the world, 5553.
- Constantinopolitan era of the world, 5569.
- Year of the Eusebian epocha of the Creation, 4289.
- Year of the Julian period, 4771.
- Year of the minor Jewish era of the world, 3821.
- Year of the Greater Rabbinical era of the world, 4420.
- Year from the Flood, according to Archbishop Usher, and the English Bible, 2409.
- Year of the Cali yuga, or Indian era of the Deluge, 3163.
- Year of the era of Iphitus, or since the first commencement of the Olympic games, 1001.
- Year of the Nabonassarean era, 808.
- Year of the era of the Seleucidæ, 373.
- Year of the Spanish era, 99.
- Year of the Actiac or Actian era, 92.
- Year from the birth of Christ, 65.
- Year of the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 61.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Varro, 813.
- Year of the CCXth Olympiad, 1.
- Jesus, high priest of the Jews.
- Common Golden Number, 5.
- Jewish Golden Number, 2.
- Year of the Solar Cycle, 14.
- Dominical Letter, D.
- Jewish Passover, March 22d.
- Easter Sunday, March 29th.

- Ephact, or the moons age on the 22d of March, or the Xth of the Calends of April, 14.
- Year of the reign of Nero. Cæsar, the sixth emperor of the Romans, 8.
- In the first year of Porcius Festus, governor of the Jews.
- Year of Vologesus, king of the Parthians, 11.
- Year of Domitius Corbulo, governor of Syria, 2.
- Roman Consuls; C. Cæsonius Pætus, and C. Petronius Turpilianus.

CHAPTER 1.

The apostle's salutation to the Church, 1, 2. He blesses God for calling the Gentiles to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, by whose sacrificial death both they and the Jews find redemption, 3-7. He shows that it was through the great abundance of God's wisdom and goodness that the Gentiles were called into a state of salvation, and that they should receive the Holy Spirit as the earnest of their inheritance, 8-15. He praises God for their conversion, and prays that they may be farther enlightened, that they may see the glory of Christ, and partake of the blessings procured by his passion and exaltation, 16-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

Verse 1. To the saints which are at Ephesus] As some learned men think that this epistle was written to the Church of the *Laodiceans*, and that the words εν εφεσω, in *Ephesus*, were not originally in this epistle, the consideration of the subject has appeared to be more proper for the *preface*; and to that the reader is referred for a particular discussion of this opinion. By the term *saints* we are to understand those who in that place *professed* Christianity, and were members of the Christian Church. *Saint* properly signifies a *holy person*, and such the Gospel of Christ requires every man to be, and such every true believer *is*, both in heart and life; but *saint* appears to have been as ordinary a denomination of a believer in Christ in those primitive times, as the term *Christian* is now. Yet many had the *name* who had not the *thing*.

The faithful in Christ Jesus] πιστοις. the *believers*-the persons who received Christ as the promised Messiah, and the Saviour of the world, and continued in the grace which they had received.

Verse 2. Grace be to you] See Clarke's note on "~~εφοι~~Romans 1:7".

Verse 3. Blessed be the God] See Clarke's note on "~~εφοι~~2 Corinthians 1:3", where the same form is used.

With all spiritual blessings] With the pure *doctrines* of the Gospel, and the *abundant gifts* and *graces* of the Holy Ghost, justifying, sanctifying, and building us up on our most holy faith.

In heavenly places] εν τοις επουρανιοις. *In heavenly things*, such as those mentioned above; they were not yet in *heavenly places*, but they had abundance of *heavenly things* to prepare them for heavenly places. Some think the word should be understood as signifying *blessings* of the most *exalted* or *excellent* kind, such as are *spiritual* in opposition to those that are *earthly*, such as are *eternal* in opposition to those that are *temporal*; and all these *in, through* and *by* CHRIST. We have already seen, on ~~εφοι~~**Galatians 4:26**, that the *heavenly Jerusalem*, or *Jerusalem which is from above*, is used by the Jews to signify the days of the Messiah, and that state of grace and glory which should follow the Levitical worship and ceremonies; and it is possible that St. Paul may use the word επουρανια, *heavenly things*, in this sense: *God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, or in this heavenly state*, in which life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel. This is apparently the preferable sense.

Verse 4. According as he hath chosen us in him] As he has decreed from the beginning of the world, and has kept in view from the commencement of the *religious system of the Jews*, (which the phrase sometimes means,) to bring us Gentiles to the knowledge of this glorious state of salvation by Christ Jesus. The Jews considered themselves an *elect* or *chosen* people, and wished to monopolize the whole of the Divine love and beneficence. The apostle here shows that God had the Gentiles as much in the contemplation of his mercy and goodness as he had the Jews; and the blessings of the Gospel, now so freely dispensed to them, were the proof that God had *thus* chosen them, and that his end in giving them the Gospel was the same which he had in view by giving the law to the Jews, viz. that they might be holy and without blame before him. And as his

object was the same in respect to them *both*, they should consider that, as he loved *them*, so they should love *one another*: God having provided for each the same blessings, they should therefore be **αγιους**, *holy-fully separated* from *earth* and *sin*, and consecrated to God and **αμωμους**, *without blame*-having no *spot* nor imperfection, their inward *holiness* agreeing with their outward *consecration*. The words are a metaphor taken from the *perfect* and *immaculate* sacrifices which the law required the people to bring to the altar of God. But as *love* is the *fulfilling of the law*, and *love* the *fountain* whence their salvation flowed, therefore *love* must fill their hearts towards God and each other, and *love* must be the *motive* and *end* of all their *words* and *works*.

Verse 5. Having predestinated us] **προορισας**. As the doctrine of eternal *predestination* has produced much controversy in the Christian world, it may be necessary to examine the meaning of the term, that those who do use it may employ it according to the sense it has in the oracles of God. The verb **προοπιζω**, from **προ**, *before*, and **οπιζω**, *I define, finish, bound, or terminate*, whence **οπος**, *a boundary or limit*, signifies to *define beforehand*, and *circumscribe by certain bounds or limits*; and is originally a geographical term, but applied also to any thing concluded, or determined, or demonstrated. Here the word is used to point out God's fixed purpose or predetermination to bestow on the *Gentiles* the blessing of *the adoption of sons* by Jesus Christ, which adoption had been before granted to the *Jewish* people; and without *circumcision*, or any other Mosaic rite, to admit the *Gentiles* to all the privileges of his Church and people. And the apostle marks that all this was *fore-determined* by God, as he had fore-determined the bounds and precincts of the land which he gave them according to the promise made to their fathers; that the Jews had no reason to complain, for God had formed this purpose *before* he had given the *law*, or called them out of Egypt; (for it was *before the foundation of the world*, ~~☩~~ **Ephesians 1:4**;) and that, therefore, the conduct of God in calling the *Gentiles now*-bringing them into his Church, and conferring on them the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, was in pursuance of his *original design*; and, if he did not do so, his eternal purposes could not be fulfilled; and that, as the Jews were taken to be his *peculiar* people, not because they had any *goodness* or *merit* in themselves; so the *Gentiles* were *called*, not for any merit they had, *but according to the good pleasure of his will*; that is, according to his *eternal benevolence*, showing mercy and conferring privileges in this new creation, as he had done in the

original creation; for as, in creating man, he drew every consideration from his own innate eternal benevolence, so now, in redeeming man, and sending the glad tidings of salvation both to the Jews and the Gentiles, he acted on the same principles, deriving all the reasons of his conduct from his own infinite *goodness*.

This argument was exceedingly conclusive, and must silence the Jews on the ground of their *original, primitive, and exclusive* rights, which they were ever ready to plead against all pretensions of the Gentiles. If therefore God, *before the foundation of the Jewish economy*, had determined that the Gentiles, in the *fulness of time*, should be called to and admitted into all the privileges of the Messiah's kingdom, then the *exclusive* salvation of the Jews was chimerical; and what God was doing now, by the preaching of the apostles in the Gentile world, was in pursuance of his original design. This same argument St. Paul repeatedly produces in his Epistle to the Romans; and a proper consideration of it *unlocks* many difficulties in that epistle. See the notes on ^{<4029>}**Romans 8:29, 30**; and elsewhere, in the course of that epistle, where this subject is handled. But why is the word **προορισας**, *fore-determined, limited, or circumscribed*, used here? Merely in reference to the settlement of the Israelites in the promised land. God *assigned* to them the *portions* which they were to *inherit*; and these portions were *described*, and their *bearings, boundaries, vicinities* to other *portions, extent and length*, as *exactly ascertained* as they could be by the most correct *geographical* map. As God, therefore, had dealt with the Jews in making them his peculiar people, and when he divided the earth among the sons of Noah reserved to himself the *twelve portions* which he afterwards gave to the twelve tribes; (see Clarke on ^{<4018>}**Deuteronomy 32:8**"); and as his dealings with *them* were typical of what he intended to do in the calling and salvation of the Gentiles; so he uses the terms by which their allotment and settlement were pointed out to show that, what he had thus designed and typified, he had now fulfilled according to the original predetermination; the Gentiles having now the spiritual inheritance which God had pointed out by the grant *made* of the promised land to the children of Israel. This is the grand key by which this predestination business is unlocked. See Clarke on ^{<4011>}**Ephesians 1:11**".

Verse 6. To the praise of the glory of his grace] **δοξης της χαριτος αυτου**. *The glory of his grace*, for **χαρις ενδοξος**, *his glorious or illustrious grace*, according to the Hebrew idiom. But the grace or mercy of God is peculiarly illustrated and glorified in the plan of redemption by

Christ Jesus. By the giving of the LAW, God's *justice* and *holiness* were rendered most glorious; by the giving of the GOSPEL, his *grace* and *mercy* are made equally conspicuous.

Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved] This translation of *εν η εχαριτωσεν ημας εν τω ηγαπημενω*) is not clear; *with which he has graciously favoured us through the Beloved*, is at once more literal and more intelligible. *Whitby*, *Macknight*, and *Wakefield* translate the passage in nearly the same way.

In the Beloved must certainly mean **in Christ**, who is termed God's *beloved Son*, ^{<1017>}**Matthew 3:17**; but several excellent MSS., such as D*EFG, the later *Syriac*, the *Æthiopic*, *Vulgate*, *Itala*, with several of the *fathers*, add, *υιω αυτου*, *his beloved Son*. This is the *meaning*, whether the *reading* be received or rejected.

Verse 7. In whom we have redemption] God has glorified his grace by giving us redemption by the blood of his Son, and this redemption consists in forgiving and delivering us from our sins; so then Christ's blood was the *redemption price* paid down for our salvation: and this was according to the riches of his grace; as his grace is *rich* or *abundant* in *benevolence*, so it was manifested in *beneficence* to mankind, in their redemption by the sacrifice of Christ, the *measure* of redeeming grace being the measure of God's own eternal goodness.

It may not be useless to remark that, instead of *της χαριτος αυτου*, *his grace*, the *Codex Alexandrinus* and the *Coptic* version have *της χρηστοτητος*, *his goodness*.

Verse 8. Wherein he hath abounded] That is, in the dispensation of mercy and goodness by Christ Jesus.

In all wisdom and prudence] Giving us apostles the most complete instructions in heavenly things by the inspiration of his Spirit; and at the same time *prudence*, that we might know *when* and *where* to preach the Gospel so that it might be effectual to the salvation of those who heard it. Nothing less than the *Spirit of God* could teach the apostles that *wisdom* by which they were to instruct a dark and sinful world; and nothing less than the same Spirit could inspire them with that *prudence* which was necessary to be exercised in every step of their life and ministry. Every wise man is not a prudent man, and every prudent man is not a wise man. *Wisdom* and

prudence may be expected in an apostle who is constantly living under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. “*Wisdom*,” according to *Sir William Temple*, “is that which makes men judge what are the best ends, and what the best means to attain them; and gives a man advantage of counsel and direction.” “*Prudence* is wisdom applied to practice; or that discreet, apt suiting as well of actions as words, in their due place, time, and manner. Every minister of Christ needs these still; and if he abide not under the influence of both, not only his *prayers* but his *ministerial* labours will be all hindered,

Verse 9. Having made known unto us the mystery] That the Gentiles should ever be received into the Church of God, and have all the privileges of the Jews, without being obliged to submit to circumcision, and perform the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law was a *mystery*-a *hidden thing* which had never been published before; and *now* revealed only to the apostles. It was *God’s will* that it should be so, but that will he kept *hidden* to the present time. A *mystery* signifies something *hidden*, but it ceases to be a *mystery* as soon as it is *revealed*. **See Clarke’s note on “^{<40131>}Matthew 13:11”**; and particularly that on, **See Clarke “^{<45125>}Romans 11:25”**.

Good pleasure] *την ευδοκιαν*. *That benevolent design which he had purposed in himself*, not being induced by any consideration from *without*.

Verse 10. In the dispensation of the fulness of times] *εις οικονομιαν του πληρωματος των καιρων*. The word *οικονομια*, which is the same as our word *economy*, signifies, as Dr. Macknight has well observed, “the plan which the master of a family, or his steward, has established for the management of the family;” it signifies, also, a plan for the management of any sort of business: and here it means the dispensation of the Gospel, that *plan* by which God has provided salvation for a lost world; and according to which he intends to gather all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, into one Church under Jesus Christ, their head and governor. **See Clarke’s note on “^{<40445>}Matthew 24:45”**, where the *word* and the *office* are particularly explained.

The fulness of times-By this phrase we are to understand either the *Gospel dispensation*, which is the consummation of all preceding dispensations, and the last that shall be afforded to man; or that *advanced state* of the world which God saw to be the most proper for the full manifestation of

those benevolent purposes which he had formed in himself relative to the salvation of the world by Jesus Christ.

That he might gather together in one] ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, from ἀνα, *again*, and κεφαλαιώ, *to reduce to one sum; to add up; to bring different sums together*, and fractions of sums, so as to reduce them under *one denomination; to recapitulate the principal matters* contained in a *discourse*. Here it means the *gathering together* both Jews and Gentiles, who have believed in Christ, into one Church and flock. See the preceding note.

All things-which are in heaven, and which are on earth] This clause is variously understood: some think, by *things in heaven* the *Jewish state* is meant and by *things on earth* the *Christian*. The Jews had been long considered a *Divine* or *heavenly people*; their doctrine, their government, their constitution, both civil and ecclesiastical, were all *Divine* or *heavenly*: as the *powers of the heavens*, ~~ⲁⲓⲃⲉ~~ **Matthew 24:29**, ~~ⲁⲓⲃⲓⲃⲉ~~ **Luke 21:26**, mean the *Jewish rulers in Church and state*, it is very possible that *the things which are in heaven* mean this same state; and as the Gentiles were considered to have nothing *Divine* or *heavenly* among them, they may be here intended by the *earth*, out of the corruption of which they are to be gathered by the preaching of the Gospel. But there are others who imagine that the *things in heaven* mean the *angelical hosts*; and the *things on earth* believers of *all nations*, who shall all be joined together at last in one assembly to worship God throughout eternity. And some think that the *things in heaven* mean the *saints who died before Christ's advent*, and who are not to be made perfect till the resurrection, when the full power and efficacy of Christ shall be seen in raising the bodies of believers and uniting them with their holy souls, to reign in his presence for ever. And some think that, as the Hebrew phrase **xrahw** **μῦμν** *shamayim vahaarets*, the *heavens and the earth*, signifies *all creatures*, the words in the text are to be understood as signifying *all mankind*, without discrimination of peoples, kindreds, or tongues; Jews, Greeks, or barbarians. All that are saved of all nations, (being saved in the *same way*, viz. by *faith* in Christ Jesus, without any distinction of nation or previous condition,) and all gathered into *one Church* or *assembly*.

I believe that the forming one Church out of both Jews and Gentiles is that to which the apostle refers. This agrees with what is said, ~~ⲁⲓⲃⲓⲃⲉ~~ **Ephesians 2:14-17**.

Verse 11. In whom] Christ Jesus; *also we-believing Jews have obtained an inheritance*-what was promised to Abraham and his spiritual seed, viz. the *adoption of sons*, and the *kingdom of heaven*, signified by the privileges under the Mosaic dispensation, and the possession of the promised land, but all these privileges being forfeited by the rebellion and unbelief of the Jews, they are now about to be finally cut off, and the believing part to be re-elected, and put in possession of the blessings promised to Abraham and his spiritual seed, by faith; for without a re-election, they cannot get possession of these spiritual privileges.

Being predestinated] God having determined to bring both Jews and Gentiles to salvation, not by *works*, nor by any human *means* or *schemes*, but by Jesus Christ; that salvation being *defined* and *determined before* in the Divine mind, and the means by which it should be brought about all being according to his purpose, who consults not his creatures, but operates according to the *counsel of his own will*, that being ever wise, gracious, and good.

The original reference is still kept up here in the word **προορισθεντες**, *being predestinated*, as in the word **προορισας** ^{<40105>} **Ephesians 1:5**. And as the apostle speaks of *obtaining the inheritance*, he most evidently refers to that of which the *promised land* was the *type* and *pledge*. And as that land was *assigned* to the Israelites by *limit* and *lot*, both of which were *appointed* by God so the salvation now sent to the Gentiles was as expressly *their lot* or *portion*, as the *promised land* was *that* of the people of Israel. All this shows that the Israelites were a *typical people*; their *land*, the *manner* of possessing it, their *civil and religious code*, &c., &c., all typical; and that *in, by, and through* them, God had *fore-determined*, *fore-described*, and *fore-ascertained* a greater and more glorious people, among whom the deepest counsels of his wisdom should be manifested, and the most powerful works of his eternal mercy, grace, holiness, goodness, and truth, be fully exhibited. Thus there was nothing *fortuitous* in the Christian scheme; all was the result of infinite counsel and design.

See Clarke on “^{<40105>} Ephesians 1:5”.

Verse 12. That we] Jews, now apostles and messengers of God, to whom the first offers of salvation were made, and who were the *first* that *believed in Christ*.

Should be to the praise of his glory] By being the means of preaching Christ crucified to the *Gentiles*, and spreading the Gospel throughout the world.

Verse 13. In whom ye also trusted] Ye Gentiles, having heard from us the word, *τον λογον*, the doctrine, *of the truth*, which is the *Gospel*, or glad tidings, *of your salvation*, have believed, as we Jews have done, and received similar blessings to those with which God has favoured us.

In whom also, εν ω, through whom, Christ Jesus, *after that ye had believed*, viz. that he was the only Saviour, and that through his blood redemption might be obtained, *ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise*; that is, The Holy Spirit, which is promised to them who believe on Christ Jesus, was given to you, and thus you were *ascertained* to be the children of God, for God has no child who is not a partaker of the Holy Ghost, and he who has this Spirit has God's *seal* that he belongs to the heavenly family. It was customary among all nations, when a person purchased goods of any kind, to mark with his seal that which he had bought, in order that he might know it, and be able to claim it if mixed with the goods of others; to this custom the apostle may here allude but it was also customary to set a *seal* upon what was *dedicated to God*, or what was to be *offered to him in sacrifice*. See this proved in the note on "**Joh 6:27**". The Jews themselves speak of the *seal of God*, which they term *tma emeth*, truth, and which they consider as a representation of the unoriginated and endless perfections of God. As the apostle is here speaking of the *doctrine of truth*, which came by the Holy Spirit, and is *sealed* on the souls of believers by this Spirit, he may have in view the Jewish notion, which is at once both correct and elevated. This *Spirit of truth*, ^{<B14F>}**John 14:17**, *who leads into all truth*, ^{<B1G13>}**John 16:13**, and *teaches all things*, ^{<B14G>}**John 14:26**, makes the impression of his own eternal purity and truth in the souls of them who believe, and thus they bear the *seal of God Almighty*. And they who in the day of judgment are found to bear this *seal-TRUTH*; *truth* in the inward parts, having *truly* repented, *truly* believed, and having been in consequence *truly* justified, and *truly* sanctified; and having walked in *truth* and *sincerity* towards God and man; these are *sealed* to the day of redemption; for, having this *seal*, they are seen to have a right to eternal life.

Verse 14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance] This Holy Spirit, sealing the soul with truth and righteousness, is the *earnest*, *foretaste*, and

pledge of the heavenly inheritance. And he who can produce this *earnest*-this *witness of the Spirit*, in the day of judgment, shall have an abundant entrance into the holiest. On the **αρραβων**, or *earnest*, see **Clarke's notes on “⁶⁻⁰¹³¹³Genesis 38:13”**, &c., and see **Clarke on “⁶⁻⁴⁷⁰¹²²2 Corinthians 1:22”**.

The redemption of the purchased possession] That is, till the time when body and soul are redeemed from all their miseries, and glorified in the kingdom on heaven.

The redemption of the purchased possession-απολυτρωσις της περιποιησεως is variously understood; and indeed the original is variously translated. Dr. *Whitby* has observed that the verb **περιποιεις** signifies to *save alive*; and he refers the **περιποιησις**, here, to the redemption of the body from corruption, and to its final glorification with the soul.

All those who believe in Christ Jesus are considered as his peculiar people and property, and to them eternal glory is promised. The Spirit of promise, which is given them, is a pledge that they shall have a resurrection from the dead, and eternal blessedness; the *redemption*, or bringing to life of the body, cannot take place till the day of judgment, but the Holy Spirit promises this redemption, and is now in their hearts an *earnest* or *pledge* of this complete restoration at the great day, which will then be, in an especial manner, *to the praise of his glory*, viz. of Christ, who has bought them by his blood.

Verse 15. Faith in the Lord Jesus] Cordial reception of the Christian religion, amply proved by their *love to all the saints*-to all the *Christians*. Perhaps *love* here implies, not only the kind affection so called, but also all the fruits of love-benevolence, and kind offices of every description.

Verse 16. Cease not to give thanks] The apostle intimates, so fully satisfied was he of the genuineness of their conversion, and of their steadiness since their conversion, that it was to him a continual cause of *thanksgiving* to God, who had brought them into that state of salvation; and of *prayer*, that they might be preserved blameless to the end.

Making mention of you] While praying for the prosperity of the Christian cause generally, he was led, from his particular affection for them, to *mention them by name* before God.

Verse 17. That the God of our Lord Jesus] Jesus Christ, as *man* and *mediator*, has the *Father* for his God and Father: and it is in reference to this that he himself says: *I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God;* ~~εβρι7~~ **John 20:17.**

The Father of glory] The *author* and giver of that glory which you expect at the end of your Christian race. This may be a Hebraism for *glorious Father*, but the former appears to be the best sense.

The Spirit of wisdom and revelation] I pray that God may give you his Holy Spirit, by whom his will is *revealed* to men, that he may *teach* and make you *wise* unto salvation, that you may continue to *acknowledge* him, Christ Jesus, as your only Lord and Saviour.

Verse 18. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened] The *understanding* is that *power* or *faculty* in the soul by which *knowledge* or *information* is *received*, and the recipient power is here termed the EYES of the understanding; and we learn from this that **οπερ ο οφθαλμος εν τω σωματι, τουτο ο νους εν τη ψυχη**, as *Philo* expresses it: *What the eye is to the body, the understanding is to the soul*; and that as the eye is not light in itself, and can discern nothing but by the means of *light* shining, not only on the objects to be viewed, but into the eye itself; so the understanding of man can discern no sacred thing of or by itself, but sees by the influence of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation; for without the influence of God's *Holy Spirit* no man ever became wise unto salvation, no more than a man ever discerned an *object*, (no matter how perfect soever his eye might have been,) without the instrumentality of *light*.

Instead of **της διανοιας**, of your *understanding*, **της καρδιας**, of your *heart*, is the reading of ABDEFG, and several others; also both the *Syriac*, all the *Arabic*, the *Coptic*, the *Æthiopic*, *Armenian*, *Sahidic*, *Slavonian*, *Vulgate*, and *Itala*, besides several of the *fathers*. *The eyes of your HEART* is undoubtedly the true reading.

The hope of his calling] That you may clearly discern the glorious and important *objects* of your *hope*, to the enjoyment of which God has *called* or *invited* you.

The riches of the glory of his inheritance] That you may understand what is the *glorious abundance* of the spiritual things to which you are entitled, in consequence of being made children of God; for if *children*,

then *heirs*, heirs of that glorious inheritance which God has provided for the *saints*-for all genuine Christians, whether formerly *Jews* or *Gentiles*. On the chief subject of this verse, see the notes on ^{<8046>}**Galatians 4:6, 7**.

Verse 19. The exceeding greatness of his power] As the apostle is here speaking of the glorious state of believers after death, *the exceeding greatness of his power*, or that power which surpasses all difficulties, being itself omnipotent, is to be understood of that *might* which is to be exerted in raising the body at the last day; as it will require the same power or energy which he wrought in Christ, when he raised *his* body from the grave, to raise up the bodies of all mankind; the resurrection of the human nature of Christ being a proof of the resurrection of mankind in general.

According to the working of his mighty power] **κατα την ενεργειαν του κρατους της ισχυος αυτου.** *According to the energy of the power of his might.* We may understand these words thus: MIGHT, **ισχυος**, is the *state* or simple *efficiency* of this attribute in God; POWER, **κρατος**, is this *might* or *efficiency in action*; ENERGY, **ενεργεια**, is the quantum of *force*, *momentum*, or *velocity*, with which the power is *applied*. Though they appear to be synonymous terms they may be thus understood: *passive power* is widely different from *power in action*; and power in action will be in its results according to the *energy* or *momentum* with which it is applied. The resurrection of the dead is a stupendous work of God; it requires his *might* in sovereign action; and when we consider that all mankind are to be raised and changed in a *moment*, in the *twinkling of an eye*, then the *momentum*, or *velocity*, with which the power is to be applied must be inconceivably great. All motion is in proportion to the *quantity of matter* in the *mover*, and the *velocity* with which it is applied. The *effect* here is in proportion to the *cause* and the *energy* he puts forth in order to produce it. But such is the nature of God's power in action, that it is perfectly inconceivable to us; and even these astonishingly *strong* words of the apostle are to be understood as used in condescension to human *weakness*.

Verse 20. Set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places] Gave him, as mediator between God and man, the highest honours and dignities, ^{<8049>}**Philippians 2:9**; in which state of exaltation he transacts all the affairs of his Church, and rules the universe. The *right hand* is the place of friendship, honour, confidence, and authority.

Verse 21. Far above all principality] The difficulty in this verse does not arise from the *words* themselves, the meaning of each being easily

understood, but from the *sense* in which the apostle uses them. Some think he has reference here to the different orders among good and evil angels; he is superior to all the *former*, and rules all the *latter*. Others think he refers to *earthly governments*; and as **αρχη**, *principality*, the first word, signifies the most sovereign and extensive kind of dominion; and **κυριοτης**, *lordship*, the last word, signifies the *lowest degree* of authority; hence we are to understand that to our Lord, in his human nature, are subjected the *highest*, the *intermediate*, and the *lowest* orders of beings in the universe.-*Chandler*. Others imagine that the apostle has in view, by whatsoever is *named in this world*, all the dignitaries of the *Jewish Church*; and by what is named *in the world to come*, all the dignities that should be found in the Christian Church.

Schoettgen supposes that the “apostle’s **αρχη** (for **αρχοντες**, the abstract for the concrete) means the same as the **μυαγcn** *Nesiim* among the Jews, whose chief business it was to clear and decide all contentions which arose concerning traditions and legal controversies.

“That **εξουσια**, *power*, is the same as **αβρωx** *tsorba*, he who possesses *authority* to propound, expound, persuade, convince, and refute.

“That **δυναμις**, *might*, answers to **twnbr** *rabbanoth*, signifying all the class of rabbins, whose office it was to expound the law, and teach the people generally.

“And that **κυριοτης**, *dominion*, answers to **rm** *mar*, which signifies a person above the lower orders of men. And he observes that Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, called fishermen, publicans, and men from the lowest orders of the people, to the work of the ministry; and made them instruments of confounding and overturning all the Jewish rulers, rabbins, and doctors. And that in *the world which is to come*-the successive ages of Christianity, he should ever be exalted above all those powers and authorities which Antichrist might bring into the Christian Church; such as popes, cardinals, wicked archbishops, bishops, deans, and canons; and all those who among the schoolmen were termed seraphic doctors, angelic doctors, most illuminated, most perfect, and irrefragable doctors. And although *Wiclif, Huss, Luther, Melancthon*, and the rest of the *reformers*, were men of little or no note when compared

with the rulers of the popish Church, so eminently did the power of Christ work in and by them, that the pope and all his adjutants were every where confounded, and their power and authority annihilated in several entire regions.”

It is certain that the apostle means that all created power, glory, and influence, are under Christ; and hence it is added:

Verse 22. And hath put all things under his feet] All beings and things are subject to him, whether they be *thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers*, ^{<B0116>}**Colossians 1:16-18; 2:10**; for he, God the Father, has *given him to be head-chief*, and supreme, over all, *to the Church*, the Church having no ruler but Jesus Christ; others may be *officers* in his Church, but he alone is *head and supreme*.

Verse 23. Which is his body] As he is *head over all things*, he is *head to the Church*; and this Church is considered as the *body* of which he is *especially* the head; and from him, as the head, the Church receives light, life, and intelligence.

And is the fulness of him] That in which he especially manifests his power, goodness, and truth; for though he *fills* all the world with his presence, yet he fills all the members of his mystical body with wisdom, goodness, truth, and holiness, in an especial manner. Some understand the *fulness* or *πληρωμα*, here, as signifying the *thing to be filled*; so the Christian Church is to be filled by him, whose fulness fills all his members, with all spiritual gifts and graces. And this corresponds with what St. John says, ^{<B0116>}**John 1:16**: *And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace*. And with what is said, ^{<B0110>}**Colossians 2:9,10**: *Ye are complete in him; και εστε εν αυτω πεπληρωμενοι*. *And ye are in him filled full*; i.e. with *gifts and grace*.

How, in any other sense, the Church can be said to be *the fulness of him who fills all in all*, is difficult to say. However, as Jesus Christ is represented to be the *head*, and the Church, the *body* under that head, the *individuals* being so many *members* in that *body*; and as it requires a *body* and *members* to make a *head* complete; so it requires a Church, or *general assembly* of believers, to make up the *body* of Christ. When, therefore, the *Jews and Gentiles* are brought into this Church, the *body* may be said to be complete; and thus Christ has his visible *fulness* upon earth, and the Church may be said to be the *fulness of him*, &c. See ^{<B0110>}**Ephesians 1:10**.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 2.

The character of the Ephesians previously to their conversion to Christianity, 1-3. By what virtue they were changed, and for what purpose, 4-7. They were saved by faith, 8, 9. And created unto good works, 10. The apostle enters into the particulars of their former miserable state, 11, 12. And those of their present happy state, 13. Christ has broken down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles, and proclaims reconciliation to both, 14-17. The glorious privileges of genuine believers, 18-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2.

Verse 1. And you hath he quickened] This chapter should not have been separated from the preceding, with which it is most intimately connected. As Christ fills the whole body of Christian believers with his fulness, (~~40123~~ **Ephesians 1:23**), so had he dealt with the converted Ephesians, who before were *dead in trespasses, and dead in sins*. DEATH is often used by all writers, and in all nations, to express a state of extreme misery. The Ephesians, by trespassing and sinning, had brought themselves into a state of deplorable wretchedness, as had all the heathen nations; and having thus sinned against God, they were condemned by him, and might be considered as *dead in law*-incapable of performing any legal act, and always liable to the punishment of death, which they had deserved, and which was ready to be inflicted upon them.

Trespasses, παραπτώμασι, may signify the *slightest deviation* from the line and rule of moral equity, as well as any *flagrant offence*; for these are equally *transgressions*, as long as the *sacred line* that separates between vice and virtue is *passed over*.

Sins, αμαρτιαις, may probably mean here habitual transgression; sinning *knowingly and daringly*.

Verse 2. Wherein in time past ye walked] There is much *force* in these expressions; the Ephesians had not sinned *casually*, or *now and then*, but *continually*; it was their continual employment; they *walked in trespasses and sins*: and this was not a *solitary case*, all the nations of the earth acted

in the same way; it was the *course of this world*, **κατα τον αιωνα του κοσμου τουτου**, *according to the life, mode of living, or successive ages of this world*. The word **αιων**, the literal meaning of which is *constant duration*, is often applied to things which have a *complete course*, as the Jewish dispensation, a particular government, and the *term of human life*; so, here, the *whole of life* is a tissue of sin, from the cradle to the grave; every human soul, unsaved by Jesus Christ, continues to transgress. And the *nominally* Christian world is in the same state to the present day. Age after age passes on in this way and the living lay it not to heart!

The prince of the power of the air] As the former clause may have particular respect to the *Jewish* people, who are frequently denominated **hzh μl w** [*olam hazzeh, this world*, this latter clause may especially refer to the *Gentiles*, who were most manifestly under the power of the devil, as almost every object of their worship was a *demon*, to whom the worst of passions and practices were attributed, and whose conduct his votaries took care to copy.

Satan is termed *prince of the power of the air*, because the *air* is supposed to be a region in which malicious spirits dwell, all of whom are under the direction and influence of Satan, their chief.

The spirit that now worketh] **του νυν ενεργουντος** The operations of the prince of the ærial powers are not confined to *that region*; he has *another* sphere of action, viz. the wicked heart of man, and *in* this he *works* with *energy*. He seldom inspires *indifference* to religion; the subjects *in* whom he works are either *determinate* opposers of true religion, or they are systematic and energetic transgressors of God's laws.

Children of disobedience] Perhaps a Hebraism for *disobedient children*; but, taken as it stands here, it is a strong expression, in which *disobedience*, **η απειθεια**, appears to be *personified*, and wicked men exhibited as her children; the *prince of the power of the air* being their *father*, while *disobedience* is their *mother*. Thus they are emphatically, what our Lord calls them, ^{<D133>}**Matthew 13:38**, *children of the wicked one*; for they show themselves to be of their *father the devil*, because they *will* do his *works*, ^{<B384>}**John 8:44**. Some think that by *children of disobedience* the apostle means particularly the disobedient, unbelieving, refractory, and persecuting *Jews*; but I rather think he speaks this *generally*, and refers to the Jews in the following verse.

Verse 3. Among whom also we all had our conversation] We JEWS, as well as you *Gentiles*, have lived in transgressions and sins; **ανεστραφημεν**, this was the *course* of our *life*; we lived in sin, walked in sin, it was woven through our whole constitution, it tinged every temper, polluted every faculty, and perverted every transaction of life. *The lusts*-the evil, irregular, and corrupt affections of the *heart*, showed themselves in the perversion of the *mind* as well as in our general conduct. The *mind* was *darkened* by the *lusts* of the *flesh*, and both conjoined to produce acts of unrighteousness. It was not the *will of God* that was done by us, but the *will of the flesh and of the mind*.

And were by nature the children of wrath] For the import of the phrase, *by nature*, **φυσει**, see Clarke's note on "**Galatians 2:15**", and see Clarke on "**Romans 2:14**". To what is said on those passages, I may add, from Dr. Macknight:-"*Nature* often signifies one's *birth* and *education*, **Galatians 2:15**: *We, who are Jews BY NATURE*. Also, men's *natural reason* and *conscience*, **Romans 2:14**: *The Gentiles who have not the law, do BY NATURE the things contained in the law, &c.* Also, the *general sense* and *practice* of mankind, **1 Corinthians 11:14**: *Doth not even NATURE itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, &c.* Also, the *original constitution* of any thing, **Galatians 4:8**: *Who are not gods BY NATURE*, Also, a *disposition* formed by *custom* and *habit*; thus Demetrius Phalereus said of the Lacedemonians: **φυσει εβραχυλογουν λακωνες**. The Lacedemonians had *naturally* a concise mode of speaking. Hence our word *laconic*; a short speech, or much sense conveyed in a few words." The words in the text have often been quoted to prove the doctrine of *original sin*, but, though that doctrine be an *awful truth*, it is not, in my opinion, intended here; it is rather found in the *preceding* words, *the lusts of the flesh*, and *the desires of the flesh and of the mind*. The apostle appears to speak of sinful *habits*; and as we say HABIT is a *second nature*, and as these persons acted from their *originally corrupt nature*-from the *lusts of the flesh* and *of the mind*, they thus became, by their vicious habits, or *second nature*, *children of wrath*-persons exposed to perdition, because of the impurity of their hearts and the wickedness of their lives. Here we see that the fallen, apostate nature produces the fruits of unrighteousness. The *bad tree* produces *bad fruit*.

Children of wrath is the same as *son of perdition*, *son of death*, &c.; i.e. persons exposed to God's displeasure, because of their sins.

Verse 4. But God, who is rich in mercy] As they were *corrupt* in their nature, and *sinful* in their practice, they could possess no *merit*, nor have any *claim* upon God; and it required much *mercy* to remove so much *misery*, and to pardon such transgressions.

His great love] God's infinite love is the groundwork of our salvation; in reference to *us* that love assumes the form of *mercy*, and that mercy provides the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore the apostle adds, ~~◀BIB~~ **Ephesians 2:5:** *By grace ye are saved*-it is by God's free mercy in Christ that ye are brought into this state of salvation. **See Clarke on** ~~◀BIB~~ **Ephesians 2:8**".

Verse 5. Even when we were dead in sins] Dead in our souls; dead towards God; dead in law; and exposed to death eternal,

Hath quickened us together with Christ] God has given us as complete a *resurrection* from the *death of sin* to a *life of righteousness*, as the body of Christ has had from the grave. And as this *quickening*, or *making alive*, was most gratuitous on God's part, the apostle, with great propriety, says; *By grace ye are saved*.

Verse 6. And hath raised us up together in Christ] Or rather, *by Christ*; his resurrection being the proof that he had made the full atonement, and that we might be justified by his blood. Believing, therefore, the record which God gave of his Son, we received this atonement, and were raised from a death of sin to a life of righteousness; and now we *sit in heavenly places*-we have a *right* to the kingdom of God, anticipate this glory, and are indescribably happy in the possession of this salvation, and in our fellowship with Christ Jesus.

Verse 7. That in the ages to come] God has produced us an *example*, and one which shall be on record through all generations, that he quickens dead souls; that he forgives the sins of the most sinful, when they repent and believe in Christ Jesus. So that what God has done for the sinners at *Ephesus* will serve as an encouragement to all ages of the world; and on this *evidence* every preacher of the Gospel may boldly proclaim that Christ saves unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him. And thus the *exceeding riches* of his grace will appear in the provision he has made for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles.

This observation of the apostle is of great use and importance; because we are authorized to state, in all the successive ages of the world, that he who saved the sinners at Ephesus is ever ready to save all who, like them, repent of their sins, and believe in Christ Jesus.

Verse 8. For by grace are ye saved, through faith] As ye are now brought into a state of salvation, your sins being all blotted out, and you made partakers of the Holy Spirit; and, having a hope full of immortality, you must not attribute this to any *works* or *merit* of yours; for when this Gospel reached you, you were all found *dead in trespasses and dead in sins*; therefore it was God's free mercy to you, manifested through Christ, in whom ye were commanded to believe; and, having believed by the power of the Holy Spirit, ye received, and were sealed by, the Holy Spirit of promise; so that this salvation is in no sense *of yourselves*, but is the *free gift of God*; and not of any kind of *works*; so that no man can *boast* as having *wrought out his own salvation*, or even contributed any thing towards it. *By grace are ye saved, through faith* in Christ. This is a true doctrine, and continues to be essential to the salvation of man to the end of the world.

But whether are we to understand, *faith* or *salvation* as being the *gift of God*? This question is answered by the Greek text: **τη γαρ χαριτι εστε σεσωσμενοι δια της πιστεως. και τουτο ουκ εξ υμων. θεου το δωρον, ουκ εξ εργαων. ινα μη τις καυχησηται.** "By this grace ye are saved through faith; and THIS (**τουτο**, *this salvation*) not of you; it is the gift of God, not of works: so that no one can boast." "The relative **τουτο**, *this*, which is in the *neuter gender*, cannot stand for **πιστις**, *faith*, which is the *feminine*; but it has the whole sentence that goes before for its antecedent." But it may be asked: Is not *faith* the *gift of God*? Yes, as to the *grace* by which it is produced; but the *grace* or *power* to believe, and the *act* of *believing*, are two different things. Without the *grace* or *power* to believe no man ever did or can believe; but with that *power* the act of *faith* is a man's own. God never believes *for* any man, no more than he *repents* for him: the penitent, through this grace enabling him, believes for himself: nor does he believe *necessarily*, or *impulsively* when he has that power; the power to believe may be present long before it is exercised, else, why the solemn warnings with which we meet every where in the word of God, and threatenings against those who do not believe? Is not this a proof that such persons have the *power* but do not *use* it? *They believe not*, and therefore *are not established*. This, therefore, is the true

state of the case: God gives the power, man uses the power thus given, and brings glory to God: without the power no man can believe; with it, any man may.

Verse 10. For we are his workmanship] So far is this salvation from being *our own work*, or granted for our own *works' sake*, that we are ourselves not only the *creatures* of God, but our *new creation* was produced by his power; for we are *created in Christ Jesus unto good works*. He has saved us that we may show forth the virtues of Him who called us from darkness into his marvellous light. For though we are not saved *for our good works*, yet we are saved that we *may perform good works*, to the glory of God and the benefit of man.

Which God hath before ordained] οἷς προητοιμασες. *For which God before prepared us, that we might walk in them.* For being saved from sin we are made partakers of the Spirit of holiness; and it is natural to that Spirit to lead to the *practice* of holiness; and he who is not holy in his life is not saved by the grace of Christ. The *before ordaining*, or rather *preparing*, must refer to the time when God began the new creation in their hearts; for from the first inspiration of God upon the soul it begins to love holiness; and obedience to the will of God is the very *element* in which a holy or regenerated soul lives.

Verse 11. Wherefore remember] That ye may ever see and feel your obligations to live a pure and holy life, and be unfeignedly *thankful* to God for your salvation, remember that ye *were once heathens* in the *flesh*-without the pure doctrine, and under the influence of your corrupt nature; such as by the Jew's (who gloried, in consequence of their *circumcision*, to be in covenant with God) were called *uncircumcision*; i.e. persons out of the Divine covenant, and having no right or title to any blessing of God.

Verse 12. That at that time ye were without Christ] Not only were not *Christians*, but had no knowledge of the *Christ* or *Messiah*, and no title to the blessings which were to proceed from him.

Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel] Ye were by your birth, idolatry, &c., *alienated* from the commonwealth of Israel-from the *civil* and *religious privileges* of the Jewish people.

Strangers from the covenants of promise] Having no part in the *promise* of the covenant made with Abraham, whether considered as relating to his *natural* or *spiritual* seed; and no part in that of the covenant made at Horeb with the Israelites, when a holy law was given them, and God condescended to dwell among them, and to lead them to the promised land.

Having no hope] Either of the *pardon* of *sin* or of the *resurrection* of the *body*, nor indeed of the *immortality* of the *soul*. Of all these things the Gentiles had no rational or well-grounded hope.

Without God in the world] They had gods many, and lords many; but in no Gentile nation was the true God known: nor indeed had they any correct notion of the Divine nature. Their idols were by *nature* no *gods*-they could neither do evil nor good, and therefore they were properly *without* God, having no true object of worship, and no source of comfort. He who has neither *God* nor *Christ* is in a most deplorable state; he has neither a God to worship, nor a Christ to justify him. And this is the state of every man who is living without the grace and *Spirit of Christ*. All such, whatever they may profess, are no better than practical atheists.

Verse 13. Ye who sometimes were far off] To be *far off*, and to be *near*, are sayings much in use among the Jews; and among them, to be *near* signifies, 1. To be in the *approbation* or *favour* of God; and to be *far off* signifies to be under his *displeasure*. So a *wicked* Jew might be said to be *far off* from God when he was exposed to his *displeasure*; and a *holy man*, or a genuine *penitent*, might be said to be *nigh to God*, because such persons are in his *favour*. 2. Every person who offered a *sacrifice* to God was considered as having *access* to him by the *blood* of that *sacrifice*: hence the priests, whose office it was to offer sacrifices, were considered as being *nigh to God*; and all who brought gifts to the altar were considered as *approaching* the Almighty. 3. Being *far off*, signified the state of the *Gentiles* as contradistinguished from the *Jews*, who were *nigh*. And these expressions were used in reference to the tabernacle, God's dwelling-place among the Israelites, and the sacrifices there offered. All those who had *access* to this *tabernacle*, or were *nigh to it* or encamped about it, were said to be *nigh to God*; those who had *no access* to it were said to be *far off*. Hence the latter phrase is used to distinguish the *Gentiles* from the *Jewish* people; and this appears to be the meaning of the prophet, ^{<25719>}**Isaiah 57:19:** *I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is*

far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; i.e. I give cause of praise and rejoicing to the Gentile as well as to the Jew. And to this scripture, and to this thing, the apostle seems here to allude. You Gentiles, who were unacquainted with God, and were even without God in the world, are brought to an acquaintance with him; and are now, through Christ Jesus, brought into the favour and fellowship of God. And as the Jews of old approached God by the blood of their sacrifices, so you approach him by the blood of Christ.

Verse 14. For he is our peace] Jesus Christ has died for both Jews and Gentiles, and has become a *peace-offering*, **שלום** *v shalom*, to reconcile both to God and to each other.

Who hath made both one] Formed one Church out of the believers of both people.

The middle wall of partition] By abolishing the law of Jewish ordinances, he has removed that which kept the two parties, not only in a state of *separation*, but also at *variance*.

This expression, the *middle wall*, can refer only to that most marked *distinction* which the Jewish laws and customs made between them and all other nations whatsoever.

Some think it refers to their ancient manner of living among the Gentiles, as they always endeavoured to live in some place *by themselves*, and to have a *river* or a *wall* between them and their heathen neighbours. Indeed, wherever they went, their own rites, ordinances, and customs were a sufficient separation between them and others; and as Jesus Christ abolished those customs, admitting all into his Church, both Jews and Gentiles, by *repentance* and *faith*, he may be said to have *broken down the middle wall of partition*. When, at the death of Christ, the *veil* of the temple was *rent* from the top to the bottom, it was an emblem that *the way to the holiest was laid open*, and that the people at large, both Jews and Gentiles, were to have *access* to the *holiest* by the *blood of Jesus*.

Some think there is an allusion here to the wall called *chel*, which separated the *court of Israel* from the *court of the Gentiles*; but this was not broken down till the temple itself was destroyed: and to this transaction the apostle cannot be supposed to allude, as it did not take place till long after the writing of this epistle.

Verse 15. Having abolished in his flesh] By his *incarnation* and *death* he not only made an atonement for sin, but he appointed the *doctrine of reconciliation* to God, and of *love to each other*, to be preached in all nations; and thus glory was brought to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and good will were diffused among men.

The *enmity* of which the apostle speaks was reciprocal among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. The *former* detested the *Gentiles*, and could hardly allow them the denomination of *men*; the *latter* had the *Jews* in the most sovereign contempt, because of the peculiarity of their religious rites and ceremonies, which were different from those of all the other nations of the earth.

The law of commandments] Contained in, or rather *concerning*, *ordinances*; which law was made merely for the purpose of keeping the *Jews* a *distinct* people, and pointing out the Son of God till he should come. When, therefore, the *end* of its institution was answered, it was no longer *necessary*; and Christ by his death abolished it.

To make in himself] To make one Church out of both people, which should be considered the *body* of which Jesus Christ is the *head*. Thus he makes *one new man*—one new Church; and thus he *makes* and establishes *peace*. I think the apostle still alludes to the *peace-offering*, ⲙⲓ ⲛ *shalom*, among the *Jews*. They have a saying, *Sephra*, fol. 121: *Whosoever offers a peace-offering sacrifice, brings peace to the world*. Such a peace-offering was the death of Christ, and by it *peace* is restored to the earth.

Verse 16. That he might reconcile both-in one body] That the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, believing on the Lord Jesus, might lay aside all their causes of contention, and become one spiritual *body*, or *society* of men, influenced by the *Spirit*, and acting according to the *precepts* of the *Gospel*.

Having slain the enmity thereby] Having, by his death upon the cross, made reconciliation between God and man, and by his Spirit in their hearts removed the *enmity* of their fallen, sinful nature. Dr. Macknight thinks that *abolishing the enmity* is spoken of the removal of the *hatred* which the *Jews* and *Gentiles* mutually bore to each other, because of the *difference* of their *respective religious worship*; and that *slaying the enmity* refers to the *removal* of evil *lusts* and *affections* from the heart of man, by the power of Divine grace. This is nearly the sense given above.

Verse 17. And came and preached peace] Proclaimed the readiness of God to forgive and save both Jews and Gentiles. See Clarke's note on "~~4013~~ Ephesians 2:13".

Verse 18. For through him] Christ Jesus, *we both*-Jews and Gentiles, *have access by one Spirit*-through the influence of the Holy Ghost, *unto the Father*-God Almighty. This text is a plain proof of the *holy Trinity*. Jews and Gentiles are to be presented unto *God the FATHER*; the *SPIRIT* of God works in their hearts, and prepares them for this presentation; and *JESUS CHRIST* himself *introduces* them. No soul can have access to God but by Jesus Christ, and he introduces none but such as receive his *Holy Spirit*. All who receive that Spirit are equally dear to him; and, whatever their names be among men, they are known in heaven as *children of God*, and *heirs of eternal glory*.

Verse 19. Ye are no more strangers] In this chapter the *Church* of God is compared to a *city*, which, has a variety of privileges, rights, &c., founded on regular *charters* and *grants*. The *Gentiles*, having believed in Christ, are all incorporated with the believing *Jews* in this holy city. Formerly, when any of them came to Jerusalem, being *ξένοι*, *strangers*, they had no kind of rights whatever; nor could they, as *mere heathens*, settle among them. Again, if any of them, convinced of the errors of the Gentiles, acknowledged the God of Israel, but did not receive *circumcision*, he might dwell in the land, but he had no right to the blessings of the covenant; such might be called *παροικοι*, *sojourners*-persons who have no property in the land, and may only rent a house for the time being.

Fellow citizens with the saints] Called to the enjoyment of *equal privileges* with the *Jews* themselves, who, by profession, were a *holy* people; who were bound to be *holy*, and therefore are often called *saints*, or *holy persons*, when both their hearts and conduct were far from being right in the sight of God. But the *saints* spoken of here are the *converted* or *Christianized Jews*.

Of the household of God] The *house of God* is the *temple*; the temple was a *type* of the Christian *Church*; this is now become God's house; all genuine believers are considered as being *οικετιοι*, *domestics*, of this house, the *children* and *servants* of God Almighty, having all equal rights, privileges, and advantages; as all, through one Spirit, by the sacred head of the family, had equal access to God, and each might receive as much grace and as much glory as his soul could possibly contain.

Verse 20. And are built upon the foundation] Following the same metaphor, comparing the Church of Christ to a *city*, and to the *temple*, the believing Ephesians are represented as *parts of that building*; the *living stones* out of which it is principally formed, ~~1~~ **1 Peter 2:4, 5**, having for *foundation*-the ground plan, specification, and principle on which it was builded, the *doctrine* taught by the *prophets* in the *Old Testament*, and the *apostles* in the *New*. Jesus Christ being that *corner stone*, or **ακρογωνιαίος**, the chief angle or foundation corner stone, the *connecting* medium by which both Jews and Gentiles were united in the same building. Elsewhere Jesus Christ is termed the *foundation stone*. *Behold I lay in Zion a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone*, ~~23~~ **Isaiah 28:16**; but the meaning is the *same* in all the places where these terms, *foundation* and *corner stone*, occur; for in laying the foundation of a building, a large stone is generally placed at one of the *angles* or *corners*, which serves to form a part of the two walls which meet in that angle. When, therefore, the apostle says that Jesus Christ is the *chief corner stone*, it means such a foundation stone as that above mentioned.

Verse 21. In whom] By which foundation corner stone, Christ Jesus, *all the building*, composed of converted Jews and Gentiles, *fitly framed together*, **συναρμολογουμένη**, *properly jointed and connected together*, *groweth unto a holy temple-is continually increasing*, as new converts from Judaism or heathenism flock into it. It is not a *finished* building, but will continue to *increase*, and be *more and more perfect*, till the day of judgment.

Verse 22. In whom ye also are builded] The apostle now applies the *metaphor to the purpose for which he produced it*, retaining however some of the figurative expressions. As the stones in a temple are all properly placed so as to form a complete house, and be a habitation for the *Deity* that is worshipped there, so ye are all, both believing Jews and Gentiles, prepared by the doctrine of the prophets and apostles, under the influence of the Spirit of Christ, to become a habitation of God, a Church in which God shall be worthily worshipped, and in which he can continually dwell.

1. MANY suppose that the apostle in the preceding chapter alludes to the splendour of the *temple of Diana at Ephesus*, which was reputed one of the *wonders of the world*. But to me this opinion does not seem sufficiently founded. I believe he has the *Jewish temple* continually in view; for that temple, above all in the universe, could alone be said to be a *habitation of*

God. Both in the tabernacle and temple *God dwelt* between the cherubim; *there* was the *symbol* of his *presence*, and there was the *worship* performed which himself had prescribed. After the *model* of this was the spiritual temple, the Christian Church, constructed; and God was to *dwell* in the *one*, as he had dwelt in the *other*. This simile, drawn from the temple at Jerusalem, was alone worthy of the apostle's design; to have alluded to the temple of *Diana* would have disgraced his subject. And as many at Ephesus were *Jews*, and well acquainted with the temple at Jerusalem, they would both feel and venerate the apostle's simile, and be led to look for the *indwelling of God*; that which distinguished the Jewish temple from all others on the face of the earth.

2. The Church of God is very properly said to be a most noble and wonderful work, and truly worthy of GOD himself.

There is nothing, says one, so *august* as this Church, seeing it is the *temple of GOD*.

Nothing so worthy of *reverence*, seeing God *dwells* in it.

Nothing so *ancient*, since the *patriarchs* and *prophets* laboured in building it.

Nothing so *solid*, since *Jesus Christ* is the *foundation* of it.

Nothing more *closely united* and *indivisible*, since he is the *corner stone*.

Nothing so *lofty*, since it reaches as high as *heaven*, and to the *bosom of God* himself.

Nothing so *regular* and *well proportioned*, since the *Holy Spirit* is the *architect*.

Nothing more *beautiful*, or *adorned* with greater *variety*, since it consists of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, of every *age*, *country*, *sex*, and *condition*: the mightiest *potentates*, the most renowned *lawgivers*, the most profound *philosophers*, the most eminent *scholars*, besides all those of *whom the world was not worthy*, have formed a part of this building.

Nothing more *spacious*, since it is spread over the whole earth, and takes in all who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Nothing so *inviolable*, since it is consecrated to Jehovah.

Nothing so *Divine*, since it is a *living* building, *animated* and *inhabited* by the *Holy Ghost*.

Nothing so *beneficent*, seeing it gives *shelter* to the *poor*, the *wretched*, and *distressed*, of every nation, and kindred, and tongue.

It is the place in which God does his marvellous works; the *theatre* of his justice, mercy, goodness, and truth; where he is to be sought, where he is to be *found*, and in which alone he is to be *retained*.

As we have *one* only GOD, and *one* only *Saviour* and *Mediator* between God and man, and *one* only inspiring *Spirit*; so there is but *one Church*, in which this ineffable Jehovah performs his work of salvation. That Church, however scattered and divided throughout the world, is but *one building*, founded on the *Old* and *New Testaments*; having but one *sacrifice*, the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

3. Of this glorious Church every Christian soul is an *epitome*; for as God dwells in the Church at large, so he dwells in every believer in particular: each is a *habitation of God through the Spirit*. In vain are all pretensions among sects and parties to the privileges of the Church of Christ, if they have not the *doctrine* and *life* of Christ. *Traditions* and *legends* are not *apostolic doctrines*, and *showy ceremonies* are not the *life of God* in the soul of man.

4. *Religion* has no need of human ornaments or trappings; it shines by its own light, and is refulgent with its own glory. Where it is not in life and power, men have endeavoured to produce a *specious image*, dressed and ornamented with their own hands. Into this God never breathed, therefore it can do no good to man, and only imposes on the ignorant and credulous by a vain show of lifeless pomp and splendour. This phantom, called *true religion* and *the Church* by its votaries, is in heaven denominated *vain superstition*; the speechless symbol of departed piety.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 3.

Paul, a prisoner for the testimony of Jesus, declares his knowledge of what had been a mystery from all ages, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body with the Jews, 1-6. Which doctrine he was made a minister, that he might declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, and make known to principalities and powers this eternal purpose of God, 7-12. He desires them not to be discouraged on account of his tribulations, 13. His prayer that they might be filled with all the fulness of God, 14-19. His doxology, 20, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3.

Verse 1. For this cause] Because he maintained that the Gentiles were admitted to all the privileges of the Jews, and all the blessings of the new covenant, without being obliged to submit to circumcision, the Jews persecuted him, and caused him to be imprisoned, first at *Cæsarea*, where he was obliged to appeal to the Roman emperor, in consequence of which he was sent prisoner to Rome. See ^{<421>}Acts 21:21-28, &c.

The prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles] For preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, and showing that they were not bound by the law of Moses, and yet were called to be fellow citizens with the saints; for this very cause the Jews persecuted him unto bonds, and conspired his death.

Verse 2. If ye have heard of the dispensation] The compound particle *εἴτε*, which is commonly translated *if indeed*, in several places means *since indeed, seeing that*, and should be translated so in this verse, and in several other places of the New Testament. *Seeing ye have heard of the dispensation of God, which is given me to you-ward:* this they had amply learned from the apostle during his stay at Ephesus, for *he had not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God,* ^{<417>}Acts 20:27, and *kept nothing back that was profitable to them,* ^{<411>}Acts 20:20. And this was certainly among those things that were *most profitable*, and most necessary to be known.

By the *dispensation of the grace of God* we may understand, either the *apostolic office* and *gifts* granted to St. Paul, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel among the Gentiles, see ^{<45016>}**Romans 1:5**; or the *knowledge* which God gave him of that gracious and Divine *plan* which he had formed for the conversion of the Gentiles. For the meaning of the word *economy*, see Clarke's note on "^{<40110>}**Ephesians 1:10**".

Verse 3. By revelation he made known unto me] Instead of **εγνωρισε**, *he made known*, **εγνωρισθη**, *was made known*, is the reading of ABCD*FG, several others, both the *Syriac, Coptic, Slavonic, Vulgate, and Itala*, with *Clemens, Cyril, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Damascenus*, and others: it is doubtless the *true* reading.

The apostle wishes the Ephesians to understand that it was not an opinion of his own, or a doctrine which he was taught by others, or which he had gathered from the ancient prophets; but one that came to him by immediate revelation from God, as he had informed them before *in a few words*, referring to what he had said ^{<40100>}**Ephesians 1:9-12**.

Verse 4. Whereby, when ye read] When ye refer back to them.

Ye may understand my knowledge] Ye may see what God has given me to know concerning what has been hitherto a *mystery*-the calling of the Gentiles, and the breaking down the *middle wall* between them and the Jews, so as to make *both one spiritual body*, and on the same conditions.

Verse 5. Which in other ages was not made known] That the calling of the Gentiles was made known by the prophets in different ages of the Jewish Church is exceedingly clear; but it certainly was not made known in that *clear and precise manner* in which it was now revealed by the Spirit unto the ministers of the New Testament: nor was it made known unto them at all, that the Gentiles should find salvation *without coming under the yoke of the Mosaic law*, and that the *Jews* themselves should be *freed from that yoke of bondage*; these were *discoveries* totally *new*, and now revealed for the first time by the Spirit of God.

Verse 6. That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs] This is the *substance* of that mystery which had been hidden from all ages, and which was now made known to the New Testament apostles and prophets, and more particularly to St. Paul.

His promise in Christ] That the promise made to Abraham extended to the *Gentiles*, the apostle has largely proved in his Epistle to the Romans; and that it was to be fulfilled to them *by* and *through Christ*, he proves there also; and particularly in his Epistle to the Galatians, see

✠Galatians 3:14. And that these blessings were to be announced in the preaching of the Gospel, and received on believing it, he every where declares, but more especially in *this* epistle.

Verse 7. Whereof I was made a minister] δῆκονος. A *deacon*, a *servant* acting *under* and by the *direction* of the *great Master*, Jesus Christ; from whom, by an especial call and revelation, I received the apostolic gifts and office, and by τὴν ἐνεργεῖαν τῆς δυναμῆος αὐτοῦ, the *energy*, the *in-working of his power*, this Gospel which I preached was made effectual to the salvation of vast multitudes of Jews and Gentiles.

Verse 8. Less than the least of all saints] ἐλαχιστοτέρω πάντων ἁγίων. As the design of the apostle was to *magnify* the grace of Christ in the salvation of the world, he uses every precaution to prevent the eyes of the people from being turned to *any thing but Christ crucified*; and although he was obliged to speak of *himself* as the particular instrument which God had chosen to bring the Gentile world to the knowledge of the truth, yet he does it in such a manner as to show that the excellency of the power was of God, and not of him; and that, highly as he and his fellow apostles were honoured; they had the *heavenly treasure* in *earthen vessels*. To lay himself as *low* as possible, consistently with his being in the number of Divinely commissioned men, he calls himself *less than the least*; and is obliged to make a *new word*, by strangely forming a *comparative* degree, not from the *positive*, which would have been a regular grammatical procedure, but from the *superlative*. The adjective ἐλαχυσ signifies *little*, ἐλασσων or ἐλαττων, *less*, and ἐλαχιστος, *least*. On this latter, which is the *superlative* of ἐλαχυσ, *little*, St. Paul forms his *comparative*, ἐλαχιστοτέρος, *less than the least*, a word of which it would be vain to attempt a better translation than that given in our own version. It most strongly marks the unparalleled *humility* of the apostle; and the amazing condescension of God, in favouring him, who had been before a persecutor and blasphemer, with the knowledge of this glorious scheme of human redemption, and the power to preach it so successfully among the Gentiles.

The unsearchable riches of Christ] The word ἀνεξιχνίαστος, from ἀ, *privative*, and ἐξιχνιάζω, *to trace out*, from ἰχνος, a *step*, is exceedingly

well chosen here: it refers to the *footsteps* of God, the *plans* he had formed, the *dispensations* which he had published, and the innumerable *providences* which he had combined, to prepare, mature, and bring to full effect and view his gracious designs in the salvation of a ruined world, by the incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection of his Son. There were in these schemes and providences such *riches*-such an abundance, such a variety, as could not be comprehended even by the naturally vast, and, through the Divine inspiration, unparalleledly capacious mind of the apostle.

Yet he was to proclaim among the Gentiles these astonishing wonders and mysteries of grace; and as he proceeds in this great and glorious work, the Holy Spirit that dwelt in him opens to his mind more and more of those *riches*-leads him into those *footsteps* of the Almighty which could not be *investigated* by man nor angel, so that his preaching and epistles, taken all in their chronological order, will prove that his views brighten, and his discoveries become more numerous and more distinct in proportion as he advances. And had he lived, preached, and written to the present day, he had not *exhausted* the subject, nor fully declared to the Gentiles the *unsearchable riches of Christ*-the endless depths of wisdom and knowledge treasured up in him, and the infinity of saving acts and saving power displayed by him.

Verse 9. And to make all men see] **και φωτισαι παντας.** *And to illuminate all; to give information both to Jews and Gentiles; to afford them a sufficiency of light, so that they might be able distinctly to discern the great objects exhibited in this Gospel.*

What is the fellowship of the mystery] The word **κοινωνια**, which we properly translate *fellowship*, was used among the Greeks to signify their *religious communities*; here it may intimate the *association* of Jews and Gentiles in *one Church* or *body*, and their *agreement* in that glorious mystery which was now so fully opened relative to the salvation of both. But instead of **κοινωνια**, *fellowship*, **οικονομια**, *dispensation* or *economy*, is the reading of ABCDEFG, and more than fifty others; both the *Syriac*, *Coptic*, *Æthiopic*, *Armenian*, *Slavonian*, *Vulgate* and *Itala*, with the chief of the *Greek fathers*. Some of the best *printed editions* of the Greek text have the same reading, and that in our common text has very little authority to support it. *Dispensation* or *economy* is far more congenial to the scope of the apostle's declaration in this place; he wished

to show them the *economy* of that *mystery* of bringing Jews and Gentiles to salvation by faith in Christ Jesus, which God from the beginning of the world had kept hidden in his own infinite mind, and did not think proper to reveal even when he projected the creation of the world, which had respect to the economy of human redemption. And although the *world was made by Jesus Christ*, the great Redeemer, yet at that period this revelation of the *power* of God, the design of saving men, whose fall infinite wisdom had foreseen, was not then revealed. This reading *Griesbach* has received into the text.

Who created all things by Jesus Christ] Some very judicious critics are of opinion that this does not refer to the *material creation*; and that we should understand the whole as referring to the *formation of all God's dispensations of grace, mercy, and truth*, which have been *planned, managed, and executed* by Christ, from the foundation of the world to the present time. But the words **διὰ ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ**, *by Jesus Christ*, are wanting in ABCD*FG, and several others; also in the *Syriac, Arabic of Erpen, Coptic, Æthiopic, Vulgate, and Itala*; as also in several of the *fathers*. *Griesbach* has thrown the words out of the text; and *Professor White* says, "certissime delenda," *they are indisputably spurious*. The text, therefore, should be read: *which from the beginning of the world had been hidden in God who created all things*. No *inferiority* of Christ can be argued from a clause of whose spuriousness there is the strongest evidence.

Verse 10. That now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places] *Who* are these principalities and powers? Some think *evil angels* are intended, because they are thus denominated, ^{<40612>}**Ephesians 6:12**. Others think *good angels* are meant; for as these heavenly beings are curious to investigate the wondrous economy of the Gospel, though they are not its *immediate objects*, see ^{<40112>}**1 Peter 1:12**, it is quite consistent with the goodness of God to give them that satisfaction which they require. And in this discovery of the Gospel plan of salvation, which *reconciles things in heaven and things on earth*—both men and angels, these pure spirits are greatly interested, and their praises to the Divine Being rendered much more abundant. Others imagine the *Jewish rulers and rabbins* are intended, particularly those of them who were converted to Christianity, and who had now learned from the preaching of the Gospel what, as *Jews*, they could never have known. I have had several opportunities of showing that this sort of phraseology is frequent among the Jews, and indeed not

seldom used in the New Testament. Dr. Macknight, whose mode of arguing against this opinion is not well chosen, supposes that “the different orders of angels in heaven are intended, whose knowledge of God’s dispensations must be as gradual as the dispensations themselves; consequently their knowledge of the manifold wisdom of God must have been greatly increased by the constitution of the Christian Church.” Of this there can be no doubt, whether the terms in the text refer to them or not.

By the Church] That is, by the *Christians* and by the wonderful things done in the Church; and by the apostles, who were its pastors.

The manifold wisdom of God] *η πολυποικιλος σοφια*. *That multifarious and greatly diversified wisdom of God; laying great and infinite plans, and accomplishing them by endless means, through the whole lapse of ages; making every occurrence subservient to the purposes of his infinite mercy and goodness. God’s gracious design to save a lost world by Jesus Christ, could not be defeated by any cunning skill or malice of man or devils: whatever hinderances are thrown in the way, his wisdom and power can remove; and his infinite wisdom can never want ways or means to effect its gracious designs.*

Verse 11. According to the eternal purpose] *κατα προθεσιν των αιωνων*. *According to the purpose concerning the periods.* This seems to refer to the *complete round* of the *Jewish system*, and to that of the *Gospel*. I have often observed, that though the proper grammatical meaning of the word is *ever-during* or *endless duration*, yet it is often applied to those *systems, periods, governments, &c.*, which have a *complete duration*, taking in the whole of them, from their *commencement* to their *termination*, leaving nothing of their duration unembraced. So, here, God purposed that the Jewish dispensation should commence at such a time, and terminate at such a time; that the Gospel dispensation should commence when the Jewish ended, and terminate only with life itself; and that the *results* of both should be *endless*. This is probably what is meant by the above phrase.

Which he purposed in Christ Jesus] *ην εποησεν*. *Which he made or constituted in or for Christ Jesus.* The manifestation of Christ, and the glory which should follow, were the grand objects which God kept in view in all his dispensations.

Verse 12. In whom we have boldness] *By whom we, Gentiles, have την παρρησιαν, this liberty of speech; so that we may say any thing by prayer and supplication, and την προσαγωγην, this introduction, into the Divine presence by faith in Christ. It is only in his name we can pray to God, and it is only by him that we can come to God; none can give us an introduction but Christ Jesus, and it is only for his sake that God will either hear or save us. It is on the ground of such scriptures as these that we conclude all our prayers in the name, and for the sake, of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Verse 13. I desire that ye faint not] In those primitive times, when there was much persecution, people were in continual danger of falling away from the faith who were not well grounded in it. This the apostle deprecates, and advances a strong reason why they should be *firm*: “I suffer my present imprisonment on account of demonstrating your privileges, of which the Jews are envious: I bear my afflictions patiently, knowing that what I have advanced is of God, and thus I give ample proof of the sincerity of my own conviction. The sufferings, therefore, of your apostles are *honourable* to you and to your cause; and far from being any cause why you should *faint*, or *draw back* like *cowards*, in the day of distress, they should be an additional argument to induce you to persevere.”

Verse 14. For this cause I bow my knees] That you may not faint, but persevere, I frequently pray to God, who is our God and the Father of our Lord Jesus. Some very ancient and excellent MSS. and *versions* omit the words του κυριου ημων ιησου χριστου, *of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And in them the passage reads: *I bow my knees unto the Father*. The apostle prays to God the Father, that they may not *faint*; and he bows his knees in this praying. What can any man think of himself, who, in his addresses to God, can either *sit* on his seat or *stand* in the presence of the *Maker* and *Judge* of all men? Would they *sit* while addressing any person of ordinary respectability? If they did so they would be reckoned very *rude* indeed. Would they *sit* in the presence of the *king* of their own land? They would not be permitted so to do. Is God then to be treated with less respect than a *fellow mortal*? Paul kneeled in praying, ^{<4076>}Acts 20:36; 21:5. Stephen kneeled when he was stoned, ^{<4076>}Acts 7:60. And Peter kneeled when he raised Tabitha, ^{<4094>}Acts 9:40.

Many parts of this prayer bear a strict resemblance to that offered up by Solomon, ^{<4030>}**2 Chronicles 6:1**, &c., when dedicating the temple: *He kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands towards heaven;* ^{<40613>}**2 Chronicles 6:13**. The apostle was now dedicating the Christian Church, that then was and that ever should be, to God; and praying for those blessings which should ever rest on and distinguish it; and he kneels down after the example of Solomon, and invokes him to whom the first temple was dedicated, and who had made it a type of the Gospel Church.

Verse 15. Of whom the whole family] *Believers* in the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, the *spirits of just men made perfect* in a *separate state*, and all the holy *angels* in heaven, make but *one family*, of which God is the Father and Head. St. Paul does not say, of whom the *families*, as if each order formed a *distinct household*; but he says *family*, because they are all *one*, and of *one*. And all this family is *named*-derives its *origin* and *being*, from God, as children derive their name from him who is the father of the family: holy persons in heaven and earth derive their being and their holiness from God, and therefore his name is called upon them. *Christ* gives the name of *Christians* to all the real members of his Church upon earth; and to all the spirits of just men (saved since his advent, and through his blood) in heaven. They are all the *sons and daughters* of God Almighty.

Verse 16. That he would grant you] This prayer of the apostle is one of the most grand and sublime in the whole oracles of God. The riches of the grace of the Gospel, and the extent to which the soul of man may be saved here below, are most emphatically pointed out here. Every word seems to have come immediately from heaven; labouring to convey ideas of infinite importance to mankind. No paraphrase can do it justice, and few commentators seem to have entered into its spirit; perhaps deterred by its unparalleled sublimity. I shall only attempt a few observations upon the *terms*, to show their force and meaning; and leave all the rest to that Spirit by which these most important words were dictated. In the mean time referring the reader to the discourse lately published on this prayer of the apostle, entitled, *The Family of God and its Privileges*.

That he would grant you-You can expect nothing from him but as a *free gift* through Christ Jesus; let this be a ruling sentiment of your hearts when you pray to God.

According to the riches of his glory] According to the measure of his own eternal *fulness*; God's infinite mercy and goodness being the *measure* according to which we are to be saved. In giving alms it is a maxim that every one should act according to his *ability*. It would be a disgrace to a *king* or a *noble-man* to give no more than a *tradesman* or a *peasant*. God acts up to the dignity of his infinite perfections; he gives *according* to the *riches* of his *glory*.

To be strengthened with might] Ye have *many enemies*, cunning and *strong*; *many trials*, too great for your *natural strength*; *many temptations*, which no *human power* is able successfully to *resist*; *many duties to perform*, which cannot be accomplished by the *strength of man*; therefore you need *Divine strength*; ye must have might; and ye must be *strengthened every where*, and *every way fortified* by that might; *mightily* and most *effectually strengthened*.

By his Spirit] By the sovereign energy of the Holy Ghost. This fountain of spiritual *energy* can alone supply the *spiritual strength* which is necessary for this *spiritual work* and *conflict*.

In the inner man] In the *soul*. Every man is a *compound* being; he has a *body* and a *soul*. The *outward man* is that alone which is *seen* and *considered* by men; the *inward man* is that which stands particularly in reference to God and eternity. The outward man is strengthened by *earthly food*, &c.; the inward man, by *spiritual* and *heavenly influences*. Knowledge, love, peace, and holiness, are the food of the inward man; or rather Jesus Christ, that bread of life which came down from heaven: he that eateth this bread shall live and be strengthened by it. The soul must be as truly fed and nourished by Divine food as the body by natural food.

Verse 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith] In this as well as in many other passages, and particularly that in ^{<4021>}**Ephesians 2:21**, (where see the note,) the apostle compares the *body* or *Church* of true believers to a *temple*, which, like that of Solomon, is built up to be a *habitation of God* through the Spirit. Here, as Solomon did at the dedication of the temple at Jerusalem, ^{<4060>}**2 Chronicles 6:1**, &c., Paul, having considered the Church at Ephesus *completely formed*, as to every external thing, prays that God may come down and *dwell in it*. And as there could be no indwelling of God but by *Christ*, and no indwelling of Christ but by *faith*, he prays that they may have such *faith* in Christ, as shall keep them in constant possession of his love and presence. God, at

the beginning, formed man to be his *temple*, and while in a state of purity he inhabited this temple; when the temple became defiled, God left it. In the order of his eternal mercy, Christ, the repairer of the breach, comes to purify the temple, that it may again become a fit habitation for the blessed God. This is what the apostle points out to the believing Ephesians, in praying that Christ **κατοικησαι**, might *intensely* and *constantly dwell in their hearts by faith*: for the man's heart, which is not God's house, must be a hold of every foul and unclean spirit; as Satan and his angels will endeavour to *fill* what God does not.

That ye, being rooted and grounded in love] Here is a *double* metaphor; one taken from *agriculture*, the other, from *architecture*. As *trees*, they are to be *rooted in love*-this is the *soil* in which their souls are to *grow*; into the infinite love of God their souls by faith are to strike their *roots*, and from this love derive all that nourishment which is essential for their full growth, till they have the mind in them that was in Jesus, or, as it is afterwards said, till they are *filled with all the fulness of God*. As a *building*, their *foundation* is to be laid in *this love*. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.* Here is the *ground* on which alone the soul, and all its hopes and expectations, can be safely *founded*. This is a *foundation* that cannot be shaken; and it is from this alone that the doctrine of redemption flows to man, and from this alone has the soul its form and comeliness. IN this, as its proper *soil*, it *grows*. ON this, as its only *foundation*, it *rests*.

Verse 18. May be able to comprehend with all saints] **ἵνα εξισχυσητε καταλαβessθαι**. These words are so exceedingly nervous and full of meaning, that it is almost impossible to translate them. The first word, **εξισχυσητε**, from **εξ**, *intensive*, and **ισχυω**, *to be strong*, signifies that they might be *thoroughly able*, by having been *strengthened with might*, by God's *power*. The second word **καταλαβessθαι**, from **κατα**, *intensive*, and **λαμβανω**, *to take, catch, or seize on*, may be translated, *that ye may fully catch, take in, and comprehend this wonderful mystery of God*. The mind must be rendered apt, and the soul invigorated, to take in and *comprehend* these mysteries.

What is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height] Here the apostle still keeps up the metaphor, comparing the Church of God to a building; and as, in order to rear a proper building, formed on scientific principles, a *ground plan* and *specification* must be previously made,

according to which the building is to be constructed, the apostle refers to this; for this must be thoroughly understood, without which the building could not be formed. They were to be builded up a *heavenly house*, a *habitation of God through the Spirit*; and this must have its *latitude* or *breadth*, its *longitude* or *length*, its *altitude* or *height*, and its *profundity* or *depth*.

It is supposed by some that the apostle is here alluding to the famous *temple of Diana* at Ephesus, which, as I have already had occasion to remark, was reputed one of the *wonders of the world*, being in length 425 feet, in breadth 220; it was supported by 127 pillars, each 60 feet high; was builded at the expense of all Asia; and was 220 years in being completed. I cannot, however, allow of this allusion while the apostle had a *nobler model* at hand, and one every way more worthy of being brought into the comparison. The temple at Jerusalem was that alone which he had in view; that alone could be fitly compared here; for that was built to be a habitation of God; that was his house, and that the place of his rest: so the Christian temple, and the believing heart, are to be the constant, the endless residence of God; and how august must that edifice be in which the eternal Trinity dwells!

But what can the apostle mean by the *breadth*, *length*, *depth*, and *height*, of the *love of God*? Imagination can scarcely frame any satisfactory answer to this question. It takes in the *eternity* of God. GOD is LOVE; and in that, an infinity of *breadth*, *length*, *depth*, and *height*, is included; or rather all *breadth*, *length*, *depth*, and *height*, are lost in this *immensity*. It comprehends all that is *above*, all that is *below*, all that is *past*, and all that is to *come*. In reference to human beings, the love of God, in its BREADTH, is a girdle that encompasses the globe; its LENGTH reaches from the *eternal* purpose of the mission of Christ, to the *eternity* of blessedness which is to be spent in his ineffable glories; its DEPTH reaches to the *lowest fallen* of the sons of Adam, and to the *deepest* depravity of the human heart; and its HEIGHT to the infinite dignities of the throne of Christ. *He that overcometh will I give to sit down with me upon my throne, as I have overcome and sat down with the Father upon his throne*. Thus we see that the *Father*, the *Son*, and all true believers in him, are to be seated on the *same throne*! This is the *height* of the love of God, and the *height* to which that love raises the souls that believe in Christ Jesus!

Verse 19. To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge] It is only by the *love of Christ* that we can know the *love of God*: the love of God to man induced him to give Christ for his redemption; Christ's love to man induced him to give his life's blood for his salvation. The gift of Christ to man is the *measure* of God's love; the *death* of Christ for man is the *measure* of Christ's love. *God so loved the world, &c. Christ loved us, and gave himself for us.*

But how can the love of Christ, *which passeth knowledge*, be *known*? Many have laboured to *reconcile* this seeming *contradiction*. If we take the verb **γῶναι** in a sense in which it is frequently used in the New Testament, to *approve*, *acknowledge*, or *acknowledge with approbation*, and **γῶσις** to signify *comprehension*, then the difficulty will be partly removed: "That ye may *acknowledge*, *approve*, and *publicly acknowledge*, that love of God which surpasseth knowledge." We can *acknowledge* and *approve* of that which *surpasses* our *comprehension*. We cannot comprehend GOD; yet we can *know* that he is; *approve* of, *love*, *adore*, and *serve* him. In like manner, though we cannot *comprehend*, the immensity of the *love of Christ*, yet we *know* that he *has loved us, and washed us from our sins* in his own blood; and we *approve* of, and *acknowledge*, him as our only Lord and Saviour. In this sense we may be said to *know* the love of Christ that *passeth knowledge*.

But it is more likely that the word **γῶσις**, which we translate *knowledge*, signifies here *science* in general, and particularly that *science* of which the *rabbins* boasted, and that in which the Greeks greatly exulted. The former professed to have the *key of knowledge*; the *secret* of all Divine mysteries; the latter considered their *philosophers*, and their *systems of philosophy*, superior to every thing that had ever been known among men, and reputed on this account all other nations as *barbarians*. When the apostle prays that they *may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*, he may refer to all the boasted knowledge of the Jewish doctors, and to all the greatly extolled science of the Greek philosophers. To know the love of Christ, infinitely surpasseth all other science. This gives a clear and satisfactory sense.

That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.] Among all the great sayings in this prayer, this is the greatest. To be *FILLED with God* is a great thing; to be *filled with the FULNESS of God* is still greater; but to be *filled*

with ALL the fulness of God, *παν το πληρωμα του θεου*, utterly bewilders the sense and confounds the understanding.

Most people, in quoting these words, endeavour to *correct* or *explain* the apostle, by adding the word *communicable*; but this is as idle as it is useless and impertinent. The apostle *means what he says*, and would be *understood in his own meaning*. By the *fulness of God*, we are to understand all those gifts and graces which he has promised to bestow on man, and which he dispenses to the Church. To be *filled with all the fulness of God*, is to have the whole soul filled with meekness, gentleness, goodness, love, justice, holiness, mercy, and truth. And as what God *fills*, neither sin nor Satan can fill; consequently, it implies that the soul shall be emptied of sin, that sin shall neither have dominion *over* it, nor a being *in* it. It is impossible for us to understand these words in a *lower* sense than this. But *how much more* they imply, (for more they do imply,) I cannot tell. As there is no end to the merits of *Christ*, no bounds to the mercy and love of God, no limits to the improvability of the human soul, so there can be no bounds set to the saving influence which God will dispense to the heart of every believer. We may *ask*, and we shall *receive*, and our joy shall be *full*.

Verse 20. Now unto him] Having finished his short, but most wonderfully comprehensive and energetic *prayer*, the apostle brings in his *doxology*, giving praise to Him from whom all blessings come, and to whom all thanks are due.

That is able to do exceeding abundantly] It is impossible to express the full meaning of these words, God is *omnipotent*, therefore he is able to do all things, and able to do *υπερ εκ περισσου*, *superabundantly above the greatest abundance*. And who can doubt this, who has any rational or Scriptural views of his power or his love?

All that we ask or think] We can *ask* every good of which we have heard, every good which God has promised in his word; and we can *think* of, or *imagine*, goods and blessings beyond all that we have either *read* of or *seen*: yea, we can *imagine* good things to which it is impossible for us to give a *name*; we can go beyond the limits of all human descriptions; we can imagine more than even God has specified in his word; and can feel no *bounds* to our imagination of good, but *impossibility* and *eternity*: and after all, *God is able to do more for us than we can ask or think*; and his *ability* here is so necessarily connected with his *willingness*, that the one

indisputably implies the other; for, of what consequence would it be to tell the Church of God that he had *power to do* so and so, if there were not implied an assurance that he *will* do what his power *can*, and what the soul of man needs to have done?

According to the power that worketh in us] All that he can do, and all that he has promised to do, will be done *according* to what he has done, by that *power* of the holy Ghost **την ενεργουμενην**, *which worketh strongly in us*-acts with *energy* in our hearts, expelling evil, purifying and refining the affections and desires, and implanting good.

Verse 21. Unto him] Thus possessed of power and goodness, *be glory in the Church*-be unceasing praises ascribed in all the *assemblies* of the people of God, wherever these glad tidings are preached, and wherever this glorious doctrine shall be credited.

By Christ Jesus] Through whom, and *for* whom, all these miracles of mercy and power are wrought.

Throughout all ages] **εις πασας τας γενεας**. *Through all succeeding generations*-while the race of human beings continues to exist on the face of the earth.

World without end.] του αιωνος των αιωνων. *Throughout eternity*-in the *coming world* as well as in *this*. The song of praise, begun upon *earth*, and protracted through all the generations of men, shall be continued in *heaven*, by all that are redeemed from the earth, where eras, limits, and periods are no more for ever.

Amen.] So be it. So let it be! and so it will be; for all the counsels of God are faithfulness and truth; and not one jot or tittle of his promise has failed, from the foundation of the world to the present day; nor can fail, till mortality is swallowed up of life.

Therefore, to the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, be glory, dominion, power, and thanksgiving, now, henceforth, and for ever.-Amen and Amen.

1. FOR the great importance of the *matter* contained in this chapter, and the sublimity of the *language* and *conceptions*, there is no portion of the New Testament equal to this. The apostle was now shut up in prison, but the word of the Lord was not bound; and the kingdom of God seems to have been opened to him in a most astonishing manner. There seems to have

been exhibited to him a *plan of the Divine counsels and conduct* relative to the salvation of man, before and from the foundation of the world to the end of time; and while, with the eye of his mind, he contemplates this plan, he describes it in language at once the most elevated that can be conceived, and every where dignified and appropriate to the subject; so that he may with safety be compared with the finest of the Grecian writers. In the notes I have already observed how hard it is to give any literal translation of the many *compound epithets* which the apostle uses. Indeed his own nervous language seems to bend and tremble under the weight of the Divine ideas which it endeavours to express. This is most observable in the *prayer* and *doxology* which are contained in ~~4034~~ **Ephesians 3:14-21**. A passage in Thucydides, lib. vii. cap. lxxxvii, *in fine*, where he gives an account of the total overthrow of the Athenian general, Nicias, and his whole army, by the Sicilians, has been compared with this of the apostle; it is truly a grand piece, and no reader can be displeased with its introduction here: ξυνεβη τε εργον τουτο ἑλληνικον των καθα τον πολεμον τονδε μεγαιστον γενεσθαι-και τοις τε κρατησασι λαμπροτατον, και τοις διαφθαρεισι δυστυχεστατον. κατα παντα γαρ παντως νικηθεντες, και ουδεν ολιγον ες ουδεν κακοπαθησαντες, πανωλεθρια δη, το λεγομενον, και πεζος και νηες, και ουδεν ο, τι ουκ απωλετο. και ολιγοι απο πολλων ἐπ οικου απενοστησαν. “This was the greatest discomfiture which the Greeks sustained during the whole war, and was as brilliant to the conquerors as it was calamitous to the vanquished. In *every respect they were totally defeated*; and they *suffered no small evil* in every particular: the *destruction was universal*, both of army and navy; there was *nothing that did not perish*; and scarcely any, out of vast multitudes, returned to their own homes.

The learned may compare the two passages; and while due credit is given to the splendid Greek historian, no critic will deny the palm to the inspired writer.

2. With such portions of the word of God before us, how is it that we can he said conscientiously to credit the doctrines of Christianity, and live satisfied with such *slender attainments* in the divine life? Can any man that pleads for the *necessary* and *degrading continuance* of *indwelling sin*, believe what the apostle has written? Can we, who profess to believe it, be excusable, and live under the influence of any temper or passion that does not belong to the mind of Christ? Will it be said in answer, that “this is only a *prayer* of the apostle, and contains his *wish* from the overflowings of his

heart for the spiritual prosperity of the Ephesians?" Was the apostle *inspired* or *not* when he penned this prayer? If he were *not* inspired, the prayer makes no part of Divine *revelation*; if he *were* inspired, every *petition* is tantamount to a positive *promise*; for what God inspires the heart to pray for, that God purposes to bestow. Then it is his *will* that all these blessings should be enjoyed by his true followers, that Christ should inhabit their hearts, and that they should be filled with all the fulness of God; yea, and that God should do for them more abundantly than they can ask or think. This necessarily implies that they should be *saved from all sin, inward and outward, in this life*; that the thoughts of their hearts should be cleansed by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, that they might perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name.

As *sin* is the cause of the ruin of mankind, the Gospel system, which is its *cure*, is called *good news*, or *glad tidings*; and it is *good news* because it proclaims *him* who saves his people from their sins. It would be dishonourable to the *grace* of Christ to suppose that sin had made *wounds* which that could not heal.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 4.

The apostle exhorts them to walk worthy of their vocation, and to live in peace and unity, 1-6. Shows that God has distributed a variety of gifts, and instituted a variety of offices in his Church, for the building up and perfecting of the body of Christ, 7-13. Teaches them the necessity of being well instructed and steady in Divine things, 14. Teaches how the body or Church of Christ is constituted, 15, 16. Warns them against acting like the Gentiles, of whose conduct he gives a lamentable description, 17-19. Points out how they had been changed, in consequence of their conversion to Christianity, 20, 21. Gives various exhortations relative to the purification of their minds, their conduct to each other, and to the poor, 22-28. Shows them that their conversation should be chaste and holy, that they might not grieve the Spirit of God; that they should avoid all bad tempers, be kindly affectioned one to another, and be of a forgiving spirit, 29-32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4.

Verse 1. I therefore] Therefore, because God has provided for you such an abundant salvation, and ye have his testimonies among you, and have full liberty to use all the means of grace;

The prisoner of the Lord] Who am deprived of my liberty for the Lord's sake.

Beseech you that ye walk] Ye have your liberty, and may *walk*; I am deprived of mine, and *cannot*. This is a fine stroke, and wrought up into a strong argument. You who are at *large* can show forth the virtues of him who called you into his marvellous *light*; I am in *bondage*, and can only exhort others by my writing, and show my submission to God by my *patient suffering*.

The vocation wherewith ye are called] The *calling*, κλησις, is the free invitation they have had from God to receive the privileges of the Gospel, and become his sons and daughters, without being obliged to observe Jewish rites and ceremonies. Their vocation, or calling, took in their

Christian profession, with all the doctrines, precepts, privileges, duties, &c., of the Christian religion.

Among us, a man's *calling* signifies his *trade*, or *occupation* in life; that at which he *works*, and by which he *gets his bread*; and it is termed his *calling*, because it is supposed that God, in the course of his providence, calls the person to be thus employed, and thus to acquire his livelihood. Now, as it is a very poor *calling* by which a man *cannot live*, so it is a poor *religion* by which a man cannot get his soul *saved*. If, however, a man have an honest and useful trade, and employ himself diligently in labouring at it, he will surely be able to maintain himself by it; but without care, attention, and industry, he is not likely to get, even by this *providential calling*, the necessaries of life. In like manner, if a man do not walk worthy of his heavenly calling, i.e. suitable to its prescriptions, spirit, and design, he is not likely to get his soul saved unto eternal life. The best *trade*, unpractised, will not support any man; the most pure and holy religion of the Lord Jesus, unapplied, will save no soul. Many suppose, because they have a *sound faith*, that all is safe and well: as well might the mechanic, who knows he has a *good trade*, and that he understands the principles of it well, suppose it will maintain him, though he brings none of its principles into action by honest, assiduous, and well-directed labour.

Some suppose that the *calling* refers to the epithets usually given to the Christians; such as *children of Abraham*, *children of God*, *true Israel of God*, *heirs of God*, *saints*, *fellow citizens with the saints*, &c., &c.; and that these honourable appellations must be a strong excitement to the Ephesians to walk worthy of these exalted characters. But I do not find that the word *κλησις*, *calling*, is taken in this sense any where in the New Testament; but that it has the meaning which I have given it above is evident from ^{<417A>}**1 Corinthians 7:20**: *εκαστος εν τη κλησει η εκληθη, εν ταυτη μενετω*. *Let every man abide in the calling to which he hath been called*. The context shows that *condition*, *employment*, or *business of life*, is that to which the apostle refers.

Verse 2. With all lowliness] It is by acting as the apostle here directs that a man walks worthy of this high vocation; *ταπεινοφροσυνη* signifies *subjection* or *humility of mind*.

Meekness] The opposite to anger and irritability of disposition.

Long-suffering] μακροθυμια. *Long-mindedness*-never permitting a trial or provocation to get to the *end* of your patience.

Forbearing one another] ανεχομενοι αλληλων. *Sustaining one another*-helping to *support* each other in all the miseries and trials of life: or, if the word be taken in the sense of *bearing with each other*, it may mean that, through the love of God working in our hearts, we should bear with each other's infirmities, ignorance, &c., knowing how much others have been or are still obliged to bear with us.

Verse 3. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.] There can be no doubt that the Church at Ephesus was composed partly of converted *Jews*, as well as *Gentiles*. Now, from the different manner in which they had been brought up, there might be frequent causes of *altercation*. Indeed, the *Jews*, though converted, might be envious that the *Gentiles* were admitted to the same glorious privileges with themselves, without being initiated into them by bearing the *yoke* and *burden* of the Mosaic law. The apostle guards them against this, and shows them that they should *intensely labour* (for so the word σπουδαζειν implies) to promote and preserve *peace* and *unity*. By the *unity of the Spirit* we are to understand, not only a *spiritual* unity, but also a unity of sentiments, desires, and affections, such as is worthy of and springs from the Spirit of God. By the *bond of peace* we are to understand a peace or union, where the interests of all parties are concentrated, cemented, and sealed; the Spirit of God being the seal upon this knot.

Verse 4. There is **one body]** Viz. of Christ, which is his Church.

One Spirit] The Holy Ghost, who animates this body.

One hope] Of everlasting glory, to which glory ye have been called by the preaching of the Gospel; through which ye have become the body of Christ, instinct with the energy of the Holy Ghost.

Verse 5. One Lord] Jesus Christ, who is the governor of this Church.

One faith] One system of religion, proposing the same objects to the faith of all.

One baptism] Administered in the name of the holy Trinity; indicative of the influences, privileges, and effects of the Christian religion.

Verse 6. One God] The fountain of all being, self-existent and eternal; and *Father of all*, both Jews and Gentiles, because he is the Father of the spirits of all flesh.

Who is above all] ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων. *Who is over all*; as the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

And through all] Pervading every thing; being present with every thing; providing for all creatures; and by his energy supporting all things.

And in you all.] By the energy of his Spirit, enlightening, quickening, purifying, and comforting; in a word, making your hearts the temples of the Holy Ghost. Some think the mystery of the blessed Trinity is contained in this verse: God is over all, as *Father*; *through all*, by the *Logos* or *Word*; and *in all*, by the *Holy Spirit*.

Verse 7. Unto every one of us is given grace] *Grace* may here signify a particular *office*; as if the apostle had said: Though we are all *equal* in the respects already mentioned, yet we have all different offices and situations to fill up in the Church and in the world; and we receive a *free gift* from Christ, according to the nature of the *office*, that we may be able to discharge it according to his own mind. So the *free gift*, which we receive from Christ, is according to the office or function which he has given us to fulfil; and the *office* is according to that *free gift*, each suited to the other.

Verse 8. Wherefore he saith] The reference seems to be to ~~9818~~ **Psalm 68:18**, which, however it may speak of the removal of the tabernacle, appears to have been intended to point out the glorious ascension of Christ after his resurrection from the dead. The expositions of various commentators have made the place extremely difficult. I shall not trouble my reader with them; they may be seen in *Rosenmuller*.

When he ascended up on high] The whole of this verse, as it stands in the psalm, seems to refer to a military triumph. Take the following paraphrase: *Thou hast ascended on high*: the conqueror was placed in a very *elevated* chariot. *Thou hast led captivity captive*: the conquered kings and generals were usually bound behind the chariot of the conqueror, to grace the triumph. *Thou hast received gifts for (Paul, given gifts unto) men*: at such times the conqueror was wont to throw *money* among the crowd. *Even to the rebellious*: those who had fought against him now submit unto him, and share his munificence; for it is the property of a

heRomans to be generous. *That the Lord God might dwell among them:* the conqueror being now come to fix his abode in the conquered provinces, and subdue the people to his laws.

All this the apostle applies to the resurrection, ascension, and glory of Christ; though it has been doubted by some learned men whether the psalmist had this in view. I shall not dispute about this; it is enough for me that the apostle, under the inspiration of God, applied the verse in this way; and whatever David might intend, and of whatever event he might have written, we see plainly that the sense in which the apostle uses it was the sense of the Spirit of God; for the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments is the same. I may venture a short criticism on a few words in the original:

Thou hast received gifts for men, ׀dab twntm tj ql lakachta mattanoth baadam, thou hast taken gifts in man, in Adam. The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes *to man* he has received *in man*, in and by virtue of his *incarnation*; and it is in consequence of his being made man that it may be said, *The Lord God dwells among them*; for Jesus was called *Immanuel*, God with us, in consequence of his incarnation. This view of the subject is consistent with the whole economy of grace, and suits well with the apostle's application of the words of the psalmist in this place.

Verse 9. But that he also descended] The meaning of the apostle appears to be this: The person who *ascended* is the Messiah, and his *ascension* plainly intimates his *descension*; that is, his incarnation, humiliation, death, and resurrection.

Verse 10. He that descended] And he who descended *so low* is the same who has ascended *so high*. He came to the *lower parts of the earth*-the very deepest abasement; having emptied himself; taken upon him; the form of a servant, and humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross; now he is ascended *far above all heavens*-higher than all height; he has a name above every name. Here his descending into the *lower parts of the earth* is put in opposition to his ascending *far above all heavens*. His abasement was unparalleled; so also is his exaltation.

That he might fill all things.] That he might be the fountain whence all blessings might flow; dispensing all good things to all his creatures, according to their several capacities and necessities; and, particularly, fill both converted Jews and Gentiles with all the gifts and graces of his Holy Spirit. Hence it follows: { <4011> **Ephesians 4:11** }

Verse 11. He gave some, apostles] He established several *offices* in his Church; furnished these with the proper *officers*; and, to qualify them for their work, gave them the proper *gifts*. For a full illustration of this verse, the reader is requested to refer to the notes on ^{<46126>}**1 Corinthians 12:6-10, 28-30**; and to the concluding observations at the end of that chapter.

Verse 12. For the perfecting of the saints] For the complete instruction, purification, and union of all who have believed in Christ Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles. For the meaning of **καταρτισμος**, *perfecting*, see **Clarke's note on** ^{<47139>}**2 Corinthians 13:9**".

For the work of the ministry] All these various officers, and the gifts and graces conferred upon them, were judged necessary, by the great Head of the Church, for its full instruction in the important doctrines of Christianity. The same officers and gifts are still necessary, and God gives them; but they do not know their *places*. In most Christian Churches there appears to be but one office, that of *preacher*; and one gift, that by which he professes to preach. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, are all compounded in the class *preachers*; and many, to whom God has given nothing but the *gift of exhortation*, take texts to explain them; and thus lose their time, and mar their ministry.

Edifying of the body] The body of Christ is his Church, see ^{<48123>}**Ephesians 2:20**, &c.; and its edification consists in its thorough instruction in Divine things, and its being filled with faith and holiness.

Verse 13. In the unity of the faith] Jews and Gentiles being all converted according to the doctrines laid down in the *faith*-the Christian system.

The knowledge of the Son of God] A trite understanding of the mystery of the incarnation; why God was manifest in the flesh, and why this was necessary in order to human salvation.

Unto a perfect man] **εις ανδρα τελειον**. One thoroughly instructed; the whole body of the Church being fully taught, justified, sanctified, and sealed.

Measure of the stature] The full measure of knowledge, love, and holiness, which the Gospel of Christ requires. Many preachers, and multitudes of professing people, are studious to find out how many imperfections and infidelities, and how much inward sinfulness, is consistent with a *safe state* in religion but how few, very few, are bringing

out the fair Gospel standard to try the height of the members of the Church; whether they be fit for the heavenly army; whether their stature be such as qualifies them for the ranks of the Church militant! The *measure of the stature of the fulness* is seldom seen; the *measure of the stature of littleness, dwarfishness, and emptiness*, is often exhibited.

Verse 14. Be no more children] *Children*, here, are opposed to the *perfect man* in the preceding verse; and the state of both is well explained by the apostle's allusions. The man is grown up strong and healthy, and has attained such a measure or height as qualifies him for the most respectable place in the ranks of his country.

The child is ignorant, weak, and unsteady, tossed about in the nurse's arms, or whirled round in the giddy sports or mazes of youth; this seems to be the apostle's allusion. Being tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, refers to some kind of ancient play, but *what* I cannot absolutely determine; probably to something similar to a *top*, or to our paper *kite*.

By the sleight of men] The words *εν τη κυβεια* refer to the arts used by gamblers, who employ false *dice* that will always throw up one kind of number, which is that by which those who play with them cannot win.

Cunning craftiness] It is difficult to give a literal translation of the original words: *εν πανουργια προς την μεθοδειαν της πλανης*. "By cunning, for the purpose of using the various means of deception." *πανουργια* signifies *craft* and *subtlety* in general, *cheating* and *imposition*: *μεθοδεια*, from which we have our term *method*, signifies a *wile*, a *particular sleight, mode of tricking* and *deceiving*; it is applied to the *arts* which the devil uses to deceive and destroy souls; see ⁴⁰⁶¹ **Ephesians 6:11**, called there the *WILES of the devil*. From this it seems that various arts were used, both by the Greek sophists and the Judaizing teachers, to render the Gospel of none effect, or to adulterate and corrupt it.

Verse 15. But, speaking the truth in love] The *truth* recommended by the apostle is the whole system of Gospel doctrine; this they are to teach and preach, and this is opposed to the *deceit* mentioned above. This truth, as it is the doctrine of God's eternal love to mankind, must be preached in *love*. Scolding and abuse from the pulpit or press, in matters of religion, are truly *monstrous*. He who has the truth of God has no need of any

means to defend or propagate it, but those which love to God and man provides.

Grow up into him] This is a continuance of the metaphor taken from the members of a human body receiving nourishment equally and growing up, each in its due proportion to other parts, and to the body in general. The truth of God should be so preached to all the members of the Church of God, that they may all receive an increase of grace and life; so that each, in whatever state he may be, may get forward in the way of truth and holiness. In the Church of Christ there are persons in various states: the *careless*, the *penitent*, the *lukewarm*, the *tempted*, the *diffident*, the *little child*, the *young man*, and the *father*. He who has got a talent for the edification of only one of those classes should not stay long in a place, else the whole body cannot grow up in all things under *his* ministry.

Verse 16. From whom the whole body] Dr. Macknight has a just view of this passage, and I cannot express my own in more suitable terms: “The apostle’s meaning is, that, as the human body is formed by the union of all the members to each other, under the head, and by the fitness of each member for its own office and place in the body, so the Church is formed by the union of its members under Christ, the head. Farther, as the human body increases till it arrives at maturity by the energy of every part in performing its proper function, and by the sympathy of every part with the whole, so the body or Church of Christ grows to maturity by the proper exercise of the gifts and graces of individuals for the benefit of the whole.”

This verse is another proof of the wisdom and learning of the apostle. Not only the general ideas here are anatomical, but the whole phraseology is the same. The *articulation* of the *bones*, the *composition* and *action* of the *muscles*, the *circulation* of the *fluids*, carrying nourishment to every part, and depositing some in every place, the *energy* of the *system* in keeping up all the functions, being particularly introduced, and the whole terminating in the general process of *nutrition*, increasing the body, and supplying all the *waste* that had taken place in consequence of labour, &c. Let any medical man, who understands the apostle’s language, take up this verse, and he will be convinced that the apostle had all these things in view. I am surprised that some of those who have looked for the discoveries of the *moderns* among the *ancients*, have not brought in the apostle’s word *ἐπιχορηγία*, *supply*, from *ἐπιχορηγεω*, to *lead up*, *lead along*, *minister*,

supply, &c., as some proof that the *circulation of the blood* was not unknown to St. Paul!

Verse 17. Walk not as other Gentiles walk] Ye are called to holiness by the Gospel, the other Gentiles have no such calling; walk not as *they* walk. In this and the two following verses the apostle gives a most awful account of the conduct of the heathens who were without the knowledge of the true God. I shall note the particulars.

1. They walked *in the vanity of their mind*, **εν ματαιοτητι του νοου αυτων**. *In the foolishness of their mind*; want of *genuine wisdom* is that to which the apostle refers, and it was through this that the Gentiles became addicted to every species of *idolatry*; and they fondly imagined that they could obtain help from gods which were the work of their own hands! Here their foolishness was manifested.

Verse 18. 2. Having the understanding darkened] This is the *second* instance alleged by the apostle of the degradation of the Gentiles. Having no means of knowledge, the heart, naturally dark, became more and more so by means of habitual transgression; every thing in the Gentile system having an immediate tendency to blind the eyes and darken the whole soul.

3. **Being alienated from the life of God]** The original design of God was to *live in man*; and the life of God in the soul of man was that by which God intended to make man happy, and without which true happiness was never found by any human spirit: from this *through the ignorance that was in them*, **δια την αγνοιαν την ουσαν**, through the *substantial* or continually existing ignorance, which there was nothing to instruct, nothing to enlighten; for the most accurate writings of their best philosophers left them entirely ignorant of the real nature of God. And if they had no correct knowledge of the true God they could have no religion; and if no religion, no *morality*. Their moral state became so wretched that they are represented as *abhorring* every thing spiritual and pure, for this is the import of the word **απηλλοτριωμενοι** (which we translate *alienated*) in some of the best Greek writers. They *abhorred* every thing that had a tendency to lay any restraint on their vicious passions and inclinations.

4. **Blindness of their heart]** **δια την πορωσιν**. Because of the *callousness* of their hearts. *Callous* signifies a thickening of the outward skin of any particular part, especially on the hands and feet, by repeated exercise or use, through which such parts are rendered *insensible*. This

may be metaphorically applied to the conscience of a sinner, which is rendered stupid and insensible by repeated acts of iniquity.

Verse 19. 5. Who being past feeling] οιτινες απηληγκοτες. The verb *απαλγειν* signifies, 1. To throw off all *sense of shame*, and to be utterly *devoid of pain*, for committing unrighteous acts. 2. To be *desperate*, having neither *hope* nor *desire* of reformation; in a word, to be *without remorse*, and to be utterly regardless of conduct, character, or final blessedness. Instead of *απηληγκοτες*, several excellent MSS. and versions have *απηλπικοτες*, *being without hope*; that is, persons who, from their manner of life in this world, could not possibly hope for blessedness in the world to come, and who might feel it their interest to deny the *resurrection* of the body, and even the *immortality* of the soul.

6. Have given themselves over unto lasciviousness] *Lasciviousness*, *ασελγεια*, is here personified; and the Gentiles in question are represented as having delivered themselves over to her jurisdiction. This is a trite picture of the Gentile world: uncleanness, lechery, and debauchery of every kind, flourished among them without limit or restraint. Almost all their gods and goddesses were of this character.

7. To work all uncleanness with greediness.] This is a complete finish of the most abandoned character; to *do* an unclean act is *bad*, to *labour* in it is *worse*, to *labour in all uncleanness* is worse still; but to do all this in *every case* to the *utmost extent*, *εν πλεονεξια*, with a *desire exceeding* time, place, opportunity, and strength, is *worst of all*, and leaves nothing more profligate or more abandoned to be described or imagined; just as *Ovid* paints the drunken *Silenus*, whose wantonness survives his strength and keeps alive his desires, though old age has destroyed the power of gratification:—

*Te quoque, inextinctæ Silene libidinis, urunt:
Nequitia est, quæ te non sinit esse senem.
Fast., lib. i. v. 413.*

*Thee also, O Silenus, of inextinguishable lust, they inflame;
Thou art old in every thing except in lust*

Such was the state of the Gentiles before they were blessed with the light of the Gospel; and such is the state of those nations who have not yet received the Gospel; and such is the state of multitudes of those in *Christian countries* who refuse to receive the Gospel, endeavour to decry

it, and to take refuge in the *falsities* of infidelity against the testimony of eternal *truth*.

Verse 20. But ye have not so learned Christ] Ye have received the doctrines of Christianity, and therefore are taught differently; ye have received the Spirit of Christ, and therefore are saved from such dispositions. Some would point and translate the original thus: ὑμεῖς δε ουχ ουτως. εμαθετε τον χριστον. *But ye are not thus; ye have learned Christ.*

Verse 21. If so be that ye have heard him] ειπε, *Seeing that, since indeed, ye have heard us proclaim his eternal truth; we have delivered it to you as we received it from Jesus.*

Verse 22. That ye put off] And this has been one especial part of our teaching, that ye should abandon all these, and live a life totally opposite to what it was before.

The old man] See Clarke's note on "~~5006~~ Romans 6:6", and especially the notes on ~~5133~~ Romans 13:13, 14.

Which is corrupt] The whole of your former life was corrupt and abominable; ye lived in the pursuit of *pleasure* and *happiness*; ye sought this in the *gratification* of the *lusts* of the *flesh*; and were ever *deceived* by these lusts, and *disappointed* in your expectations.

Verse 23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind] Their *old mode* of living was to be abandoned; a *new* one to be assumed. The *mind* is to be renovated; and not only its *general* complexion, but the very *spirit* of it; all its faculties and powers must be thoroughly, completely, and universally renewed. Plautus uses a similar expression describing deep distress, and answerable to our phrase *innermost soul*:—

Paupertas, pavor territat mentem animi.

*Poverty and dread alarm my innermost soul.
Epid., l. 519.*

Verse 24. Put on the new man] Get a new nature; for in Christ Jesus—under the Christian dispensation, neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new *creation*. Therefore ye must be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

Which after God is created in righteousness] Here is certainly an allusion to the creation of man. Moses tells us, ^{<010127>}**Genesis 1:27**, that *God created man in his own image*; that is, God was the *model* according to which he was *formed* in the spirit of his mind. St. Paul says here that they *should put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*, or, **οσιοτητι της αληθειας**, in the holiness of truth. Both certainly refer to the same thing, and the one illustrates the other. From the apostle we learn what Moses meant by the *image of God*; it was *righteousness and the truth of holiness*. **See Clarke's note on ^{<010126>}Genesis 1:26**". It is not this or the other *degree* of moral good which the soul is to receive by Jesus Christ, it is the *whole image of God*; it is to be formed **κατα θεου**, *according to God*; the likeness of the Divine Being is to be traced upon his soul, and he is to bear that as fully as his first father Adam bore it in the beginning.

Verse 25. Wherefore putting away lying] All *falsity*, all *prevarication*, because this is opposite to the *truth* as it is in Jesus, ^{<0021>}**Ephesians 4:21**, and to the *holiness of truth*, ^{<0024>}**Ephesians 4:24**.

Speak every man truth with his neighbour] Truth was but of small account among many of even the best heathens, for they taught that on many occasions a *lie* was to be *preferred* to the *truth* itself. Dr. *Whitby* collects some of their maxims on this head.

κρειττον δε ελεσθαι ψευδος, η αληθες κακον. "A lie is better than a hurtful truth."-*Menander*.

το γαρ αγαθον κρειττον εστι της αληθειας. "Good is better than truth."-*Proclus*.

ενθα γαρ τι δει και ψευγδος λεγασθαι, λεγασθω. "When telling a lie will be profitable, let it be told."-*Darius* in *Herodotus*, lib. iii. p. 101.

"He may lie who knows how to do it **ες δεοντι καιρω**, in a suitable time."-*Plato* apud *Stob.*, ser. 12.

"There is nothing decorous in truth but when it is profitable; yea, sometimes **και ψευδος ωνησεν ανθρωπους, και τ' αληθες εβλαπεν**, truth is hurtful, and lying is profitable to men."-*Maximus Tyrius*, Diss. 3, p. 29.

Having been brought up in such a loose system of morality, these converted Gentiles had need of these apostolic directions; *Put away lying; speak the truth*: Let lying never come near you; let truth be ever present with you.

We are members one of another.] Consider yourselves as *one body*, of which Jesus Christ is the *head*; and as a man's right hand would not deceive or wrong his left hand, so deal honestly with each other; *for ye are members one of another*.

Verse 26. Be ye angry, and sin not] *οργιζεσθε*, here, is the same as *ει μιν οργιζεσθε*, IF YE *be angry, do not sin*. We can never suppose that the apostle delivers this as a *precept*, if we take the words as they stand in our version. Perhaps the sense is, *Take heed that ye be not angry, lest ye sin*; for it would be very difficult, even for an apostle himself, to be angry and *not sin*. If we consider anger as implying *displeasure* simply, then there are a multitude of cases in which a man may be *innocently*, yea, *laudably angry*; for he should be displeased with every thing which is not for the glory of God, and the good of mankind. But, in any other sense, I do not see how the words can be safely taken.

Let not the sun go down upon your wrath] That is: If you do get angry with any one, see that the fire be cast with the utmost speed out of your bosom. Do not go to sleep with any unkind or unbrotherly feeling; anger, continued in, may produce *malice* and *revenge*. No temper of this kind can consist with *peace of conscience*, and the *approbation* of God's Spirit in the soul.

Verse 27. Neither give place to the devil.] Your adversary will strive to influence your mind, and irritate your spirit; watch and pray that he may not get any place *in* you, or ascendancy *over* you.

As the word *διαβολος* is sometimes used to signify a *calumniator*, *tale-bearer*, *whisperer*, or *backbiter*; (see in the original, ^{<SAB1>} **1 Timothy 3:11**; ^{<SAB>} **2 Timothy 3:3**, and ^{<SAB>} **Titus 2:3**;) here it may have the same signification. Do not open your ear to the *tale-bearer*, to the *slanderer*, who comes to you with accusations against your brethren, or with surmisings and evil speakings. These are human devils; they may be the means of making you angry, even without any solid pretence; therefore give them no place, that you may not be angry at any time; but if, unhappily, you should be overtaken in this fault, let not the sun go down

upon your wrath; go to your brother, against whom you have found your spirit irritated; tell him what you have heard, and what you fear; let your ears be open to receive his own account; carefully listen to his own explanation; and, if possible, let the matter be finally settled, that Satan may not gain advantage over either.

Verse 28. Let him that stole steal no more] It is supposed that, among the rabbins, stealing was not entirely discountenanced, provided a portion was given to the poor. The apostle here teaches them a different doctrine: as they should speak truth every man with his neighbour, so they should in every respect act *honestly*, for nothing contrary to *truth* and *righteousness* could be tolerated under the Christian system. Let no man, under pretence of helping the poor, defraud another; but let him *labour, working with his hands* to provide that which is *good*, that he may have to give to him who is in necessity. *Stealing, overreaching, defrauding, purloining, &c.*, are consistent with no kind of religion that acknowledges the *true God*. If Christianity does not make men honest, it does nothing for them. Those who are not saved from dishonesty *fear not God*, though they may *dread man*.

Verse 29. Let no corrupt communication] *πασ λογος σαπρος*. Kypke observes that *λογος σαπρος* signifies a *useless, putrid, unsavoury, and obscene word or conversation*. 1. *Useless*, particularly that which has been rendered so by old age and corruption. 2. *Putrid, impure*; so Aristophanes in *Lysistrat.*, p. 859, calls a *bad woman σαπρα: εμοι συ λουτρον, ω σαπρα*. *Tune, Spurca! balneum mihi parabis?* 3. *Calumnious, or reproachful*; whatever has a tendency to *injure the name, fame, or interest* of another. In short, it appears to mean any word or thing *obscene*, any thing that *injures virtue, countenances vice, or scoffs at religion*. In the parallel place, ^{<51045>}**Colossians 4:6**, the apostle exhorts that our speech may be *seasoned with salt*, to preserve it from *putrefaction*. See Kypke and Macknight.

But that which is good to the use of edifying] To be *good for a thing* is a *Græcism*, as well as an *Anglicism*, for, to be *fit, proper, suitable, &c.*; so *Achilles Tatius*, lib. iv. p. 231: *α γαθον εις φιλιαν οιδα σε*. *I know thee to be good (formed) for friendship*. And *Appian*, de *Bell. Hisp.*, p. 439, terms both the Scipios, *ανδρας ες παντα αγαθους γενομενουχ*, *men who were good (suitable) for all things*. And also *Lucian*, in *Toxari*, p. 53:

ου μονον αρα τοξευειν αγαθοι ησαν σκυθαι. *The Scythians were not good (expert) in archery only.* See *Kypke*, from whom I quote.

That it may minister grace] ἵνα δω χαριν. This may be understood thus: 1. Let your conversation be pure, wise, and holy, that it may be the means of conveying grace, or Divine influences, to them that hear. 2. Let it be such as to be *grateful* or *acceptable to the hearers*. This is the meaning of ἵνα δω χαριν in some of the most correct Greek writers. Never wound modesty, truth, or religion with your discourse; endeavour to *edify* those with whom you converse; and if possible, speak so as to *please* them.

Verse 30. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God] By giving way to any wrong temper, unholy word, or unrighteous action. Even those who have already a measure of the light and life of God, both of which are not only brought in by the Holy Spirit, but maintained by his constant indwelling, may give way to sin, and so grieve this Holy Spirit that it shall *withdraw* both its *light* and *presence*; and, in proportion as it withdraws, then *hardness* and *darkness* take place; and, what is still worse, a state of *insensibility* is the consequence; for the *darkness* prevents the fallen state from being *seen*, and the *hardness* prevents it from being *felt*.

Whereby ye are sealed] The Holy Spirit in the soul of a believer is *God's seal*, set on his heart to testify that he is God's property, and that he should be wholly *employed* in God's *service*. It is very likely that the apostle had in view the words of the prophet, ^{<23610>} **Isaiah 63:10:** *But they rebelled, and vexed his HOLY SPIRIT; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them.* The psalmist refers to the same fact in nearly the same words, ^{<197840>} **Psalms 78:40:** *How oft did they PROVOKE him in the wilderness, and GRIEVE him in the desert!* Let every man, therefore, take heed that he grieve not the Spirit of God, lest God *turn to be his enemy*, and *fight against him*.

Verse 31. Let all bitterness] πασα πικρια. It is astonishing that any who profess the Christian name should indulge *bitterness* of spirit. Those who are *ensorious*, who are *unmerciful* to the *failings* of others, who have fixed a *certain standard* by which they measure all persons in all circumstances, and unchristian every one that does not come up to this standard, these have the *bitterness* against which the apostle speaks. In the last century there was a compound medicine, made up from a variety of drastic acrid drugs and ardent spirits, which was called *Hiera Picra*, ἱερα

πικρα, the *holy bitter*; this medicine was administered in a multitude of cases, where it did immense evil, and perhaps in scarcely any case did it do good. It has ever appeared to me to furnish a proper epithet for the disposition mentioned above, the *holy bitter*; for the religiously censorious act under the pretence of superior *sanctity*. I have known such persons do much evil in a Christian society, but never knew an instance of their doing any good.

And wrath] **θυμος** is more properly *anger*, which may be considered the *commencement* of the passion.

Anger] **οργη** is more properly *wrath*-the passion carried to its *highest pitch*, accompanied with *injurious words* and *outrageous acts*, some of which are immediately specified.

And clamour] **κραυγη** Loud and obstreperous speaking, brawling, railing, *boisterous* talk, often the offspring of *wrath*; all of which are highly unbecoming the *meek, loving, quiet, sedate* mind of Christ and his followers.

And evil speaking] **βλασφημια**. *Blasphemy*; that is, *injurious speaking*-words which tend to hurt those *of whom* or *against whom* they are spoken.

With all malice] **κακια**. *All malignity*; as *anger* produces *wrath*, and *wrath* *clamour*, so all together produce *malice*; that is, settled, sullen, fell *wrath*, which is always looking out for opportunities to revenge itself by the destruction of the object of its indignation. No state of society can be even *tolerable* where these prevail; and, if *eternity* were out of the question, it is of the utmost consequence to have these banished from *time*.

Verse 32. Be ye kind one to another] **γινεσθε-χρηστοι**. Be *kind* and *obliging* to each other; study *good breeding* and *gentleness of manners*. A Christian *cannot* be a *savage*, and he *need not* be a *boor*. Never put any person to needless pain.

Tender-hearted] **ευσπλαγχοι**. *Compassionate*; having the *bowels easily moved* (as the word implies) to commiserate the state of the wretched and distressed.

Forgiving one another] Should you receive any injury from a brother, or from any man, be as ready to forgive *him*, on his *repentance* and

acknowledgment, as God was, for Christ's sake, to forgive you when you repented of your sins, and took refuge in his mercy.

1. THE *exhortations* given in this chapter, if properly attended to, have the most direct tendency to secure the *peace* of the *individual*, the *comfort* of every *family*, and the *welfare* and *unity* of every *Christian society*. That God never *prohibits* any thing that is useful to us, is an unshaken truth. And that he never *commands* what has not the most pointed relation to our present and eternal welfare, is not less so. How is it, then, that we do not *glory* in his *commandments* and *rejoice* in his *prohibitions*? If the gratification of our fleshly propensities could do us good, that gratification had never been forbidden. God plants *thorns* in the way that would lead us to death and perdition.

2. From the provision which God has made for the soul's salvation, we may see the *nature*, and in some sense the *extent*, of the salvation provided. Much on this subject has been said in the preceding chapter, and the same subject is continued here. God requires that the Church shall be holy, so that it may be a proper habitation for himself; and he requires that *each* believer should be holy, and that he should, under the influences of his grace, arrive at the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ!

~~40413~~ **Ephesians 4:13**. This is astonishing; but God is able to make all grace abound towards us.

3. It is the will of God that Christians should be *well instructed*; that they should become *wise* and *intelligent*; and have their understandings well cultivated and improved. *Sound learning* is of great worth, even in religion; the wisest and best instructed Christians are the most *steady*, and may be the most useful. If a man be a *child* in *knowledge*, he is likely to be *tossed to and fro*, and *carried about with every wind of doctrine*; and often lies at the mercy of interested, designing men: the more knowledge he has, the more safe is his state. If our circumstances be such that we have few means of improvement, we should turn them to the best account. "Partial knowledge is better than total ignorance; he who cannot get all he may wish, must take heed to acquire all that he can." If total ignorance be a bad and dangerous thing, every degree of knowledge lessens both the *evil* and the *danger*. It must never be forgotten that the Holy Scriptures themselves are capable of making men wise unto salvation, if read and studied with *faith* in Christ.

4. *Union* among the followers of Christ is strongly recommended. How can spiritual brethren fall out by the way? Have they not all *one Father*, all *one Head*? Do they not form *one body*, and are they not all *members of each other*? Would it not be *monstrous* to see the *nails* pulling out the *eyes*, the *hands* tearing off the *flesh* from the body, the *teeth* biting out the *tongue*, &c., &c.? And is it less so to see the members of a Christian society bite and devour each other, till they are consumed one of another? Every member of the mystical body of Christ should labour for the comfort and edification of the *whole*, and the honour of the *Head*. He that would live a quiet life, and keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, must be as backward to *take* offence as to give it. Would all act on this plan (and surely it is as *rational* as it is *Christian*) we should soon have glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will among men.

5. A *roughness of manners* is to some unavoidable; it is partly owing to the peculiar texture of their mind, and partly to their education. But there are others who glory in, and endeavour to cultivate, this ungentle disposition; under this is often concealed a great degree of spiritual pride, and perhaps some malignity; for they think that this *roughness* gives them a right to say grating, harsh, and severe things. They should be taught another lesson; and if they will not demean themselves as they ought, they should be left to themselves, and no man should associate with them. They are not *Christians*, and they act beneath the character of *men*.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 5.

Christians should imitate their heavenly Father, and walk in love, after the example of Christ, 1, 2. They should avoid all uncleanness, impurity, covetousness, and foolish jesting, and idolatry, because these things exclude from the kingdom of God, 3-7. The Ephesians were once in darkness, but being now light in the Lord, they are exhorted to walk in that light, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit; and to have no fellowship with the workers of iniquity, whose evil deeds are manifested by the light, 8-13. All are exhorted to awake; to walk circumspectly; to redeem the time; and to learn what the will of the Lord is, 14-17. The apostle gives particular directions relative to avoiding excess of wine, 18. To singing and giving thanks, 19, 20. Submission to each other, 21. To husbands that they should love their wives, as Christ loved the Church; for by the marriage union, the union between Christ and the Church is pointed out; and wives are exhorted to reverence their husbands, 22-33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5.

Verse 1. Be ye therefore followers of God] The beginning of this chapter is properly a continuation of the preceding, which should have ended with the second verse of this. The word **μιμηται**, which we translate *followers*, signifies such as *personate others*, assuming their gait, mode of speech, accent, carriage, &c.; and it is from this Greek word that we have the word *mimic*. Though this term is often used in a ludicrous sense, yet here it is to be understood in a very solemn and proper sense. Let your whole conduct be like that of your Lord; *imitate* him in all your actions, words, spirit, and inclinations; imitate him as children do their beloved parents, and remember that you stand in the relation of *beloved children* to him. It is natural for children to imitate their parents; it is their constant aim to learn of them, and to copy them in all things; whatever they see the parent do, whatever they hear him speak, that they endeavour to copy and imitate; yea, they go farther, they insensibly copy the very *tempers* of their parents. If ye

therefore be children of God, show this love to your heavenly Father, and imitate all his moral perfections, and acquire the mind that was in Jesus.

Verse 2. And walk in love] Let every act of life be dictated by love to God and man.

As Christ-hath loved us] Laying down your lives for your brethren if necessary; counting nothing too difficult to be done in order to promote their eternal salvation.

Hath given himself for us] Christ hath died in our stead, and become thereby a sacrifice for our sins.

An offering] προσφορα. An oblation, an eucharistic offering; the same as **hj nm minchah**, ^{<A10>}**Leviticus 2:1**, &c., which is explained to be *an offering made unto the Lord, of fine flour, with oil and frankincense*. It means, any offering by which *gratitude* was expressed for temporal blessings received from the *bounty* of God.

A sacrifice] θυσια. A *sin-offering*, a *victim for sin*; the same as **j bz zebach**, which almost universally means that sacrificial act in which the blood of an *animal* was poured out as an atonement for sin. These terms may be justly considered as including every kind of *sacrifice*, *offering*, and *oblation* made to God on any account; and both these terms are with propriety used here, because the apostle's design was to represent the *sufficiency* of the offering made by Christ for the sin of the world. And the passage strongly intimates, that as man is bound to be *grateful* to God for the good things of *this life*, so he should testify that gratitude by *suitable offerings*; but having *sinned* against God, he has forfeited all *earthly* blessings as well as those that come from *heaven*; and that Jesus Christ gave himself **υπερ ημων**, *in our stead* and *on our account*, as the *gratitude-offering*, **προσφορα**, which we *owed* to our MAKER, and, without which a continuance of *temporal blessings* could not be expected; and also as a *sacrifice for sin*, **θυσια**, without which we could never approach God, and without which we must be punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of God and the glory of his power. Thus we find that even our *temporal* blessings come *from* and *by* Jesus Christ, as well as all our spiritual and eternal mercies.

For a sweet-smelling savour.] εις οσμην ευωδιας. The same as is expressed in ^{<D102>}**Genesis 8:21**; ^{<B10>}**Leviticus 1:9; 3:16**: **hwstyl j whyn**

j yr *reiach nichoach laihovah*, “a sweet savour unto the Lord;” i.e. an offering of his own prescription, and one with which he was well pleased; and by accepting of which he showed that he accepted the person who offered it. The *sweet-smelling savour* refers to the burnt-offerings, the fumes of which ascended from the fire in the act of *burning*; and as such odors are grateful to man, God represents himself as pleased with them, when offered by an upright worshipper according to his own appointment.

Verse 3. But fornication] It is probable that the *three* terms used here by the apostle refer to different species of the same thing. The word *fornication*, **πορνεία**, may imply not only *fornication* but *adultery* also, as it frequently does; *uncleanness*, **ακαθαρσία** may refer to all abominable and unnatural lusts-sodomy, bestiality, &c., and *covetousness*, **πλεονεξία**, to *excessive indulgence* in that which, moderately used, is lawful. As the covetous man never has enough of wealth, so the pleasure-taker and the libertine never have enough of the gratifications of sense, the appetite increasing in proportion to its indulgence. If, however, simple *covetousness*, i.e. the *love of gain*, be here intended, it shows from the connection in which it stands, (for it is linked with *fornication*, *adultery*, and *all uncleanness*,) how degrading it is to the soul of man, and how abominable it is in the eye of God. In other places it is ranked with *idolatry*, for the man who has an inordinate love of gain makes *money his god*.

Let it not be once named] Let no such things ever exist among you, for ye are called to be saints.

Verse 4. Neither filthiness] **αισχροτης**. Any thing base or vile in words or acts.

Foolish talking] **μωρολογία**. Scurrility, buffoonery, ridicule, or what tends to expose another to contempt.

Nor jesting] **ευτραπεία**. Artfully turned discourses or words, from **ευ**, *well* or *easily*, and **τρεπω**, *I turn*; words that can be easily turned to other meanings; double *entendres*; chaste words which, from their connection, and the manner in which they are used, convey an obscene or offensive meaning. It also means jests, puns, *witty sayings*, and *mountebank repartees* of all kinds.

Which are not convenient] οὐκ ἀνηκοντα. *They do not come up to the proper standard; they are utterly improper in themselves, and highly unbecoming in those who profess Christianity.*

But rather giving of thanks.] εὐχαριστια. *Decent and edifying discourse or thanksgiving to God. Prayer or praise is the most suitable language for man; and he who is of a trifling, light disposition, is ill fitted for either. How can a man, who has been talking foolishly or jestingly in company, go in private to magnify God for the use of his tongue which he has abused, or his rational faculties which he has degraded?*

Verse 5. For this ye know] Ye must be convinced of the dangerous and ruinous tendency of such a spirit and conduct, when ye know that persons of this character can never inherit the kingdom of God. **See Clarke on “~~ⲉⲩⲃⲏⲛ~~ Ephesians 5:3”**; and see the observations on the *Greek article* at the end of this epistle. **See Clarke “~~ⲉⲩⲃⲏⲛ~~ Ephesians 6:24”**.

Verse 6. Let no man deceive you] Suffer no man to persuade you that any of these things are innocent, or that they are unavoidable frailties of human nature; they are all *sins* and *abominations* in the sight of God; those who practise them are *children of disobedience*; and on account of such practices the *wrath of God*-Divine punishment, must come upon them.

Verse 7. Be not ye therefore partakers with them] Do not act as your fellow citizens do; nor suffer their philosophy, to it in *vain words*, κενοῖς λόγοις, with *empty* and *illusive doctrines*, to lead you astray from the path of truth.

That there was much need for such directions and cautions to the people of Ephesus has been often remarked. It appears, from Athenæus, that these people were addicted to *luxury, effeminacy &c.* He tells us that the famous *Aspasia*, who was herself of the *Socratic sect*, brought a vast number of beautiful women into Greece, and *by their means filled the country with prostitutes*, και ἐπληθυνεν ἀπο τῶν ταυτης εταριδων η ελλας, lib. xiii. cap. 25. Ibid. cap. 31, he observes that the Ephesians had dedicated temples εταιρα ἀφροδιτη, to the prostitute Venus; and again, cap. 32, he quotes from Demosthenes, in *Orat. contra Neeram*: τας μὲν εταιρας ἡδονης ἐνεκα ἐχομεν, τας δὲ παλλακας τῆς καθ ἡμεραν παλλακειας, τας δὲ γυναικας τοῦ παιδοποιεῖσθαι γνησιες, και τῶν ἐνδον φυλακα φιστην ἐχειν. “We have *whores* for our pleasure, *harlots* for daily use, and *wives* for the procreation of legitimate children,

and for the faithful preservation of our property.” Through the whole of this 13th book of Athenæus the reader will see the most melancholy proofs of the most abominable practices among the *Greeks*, and the high estimation in which public prostitutes were held; the greatest *lawgivers* and the wisest *philosophers* among the Greeks supported this system both by their authority and example. Is it not in reference to their *teaching* and *laws* that the apostle says: *Let no man deceive you with vain words?*

Verse 8. For ye were sometimes (ποτε, formerly) **darkness]** While ye lived in darkness, ye lived in these crimes.

But now are ye **light in the Lord]** When ye were in heathenish *darkness* ye served divers lusts and pleasures, but now ye have the *light*-the wisdom and teaching which come from God; therefore *walk as children of the light*-let the world see that ye are not slaves to the flesh, but free, willing, rational servants of the Most High; not brutish followers of devil gods.

Verse 9. For the fruit of the Spirit] Instead of *Spirit*, πνευματος, ABD*EFG, the *Syriac*, *Coptic*, *Sahidic*, *Æthiopic*, *Armenian*, *Vulgate*, and *Itala*, together with several of the *fathers*, read φωτος, *light*, which is supposed by most critics to be the *true* reading, because there is no mention made of the *Spirit* in any part of the context. As light, ~~4088~~ **Ephesians 5:8**, not only means the Divine influence upon the soul, but also the *Gospel*, with great propriety it may be said: *The fruit of the light*, i.e. of the *Gospel*, is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth. Goodness, αγαθωσυνη, in the principle and disposition; righteousness, δικαιοσυνη, the exercise of that goodness in the whole conduct of life; truth, αληθεια, the director of that principle, and its exercise, to the glorification of God and the good of mankind.

Verse 10. Proving what is acceptable] By walking in the light-under the influence of the Divine Spirit, according to the dictates of the Gospel, ye shall be able to try, and bring to full proof, that by which God is best pleased. Ye shall be able to please him well in all things.

Verse 11. Have no fellowship] Have no religious connection whatever with heathens or their worship.

Unfruitful works of darkness] Probably alluding to the *mysteries* among the heathens, and the different lustrations and rites through which the initiated went in the caves and dark recesses where these mysteries were

celebrated; all which he denominates *works of darkness*, because they were destitute of true *wisdom*; and *unfruitful works*, because they were of no use to mankind; the initiated being obliged, on pain of death, to keep secret what they had *seen, heard, and done*: hence they were called **απορρητα μυστηρια**, *unspeakable mysteries*-things that were *not to be divulged*. That the apostle may refer to magic and incantations is also probable, for to these the Ephesians were greatly addicted. **See the proofs in Clarke's notes on “^{<41919>}Acts 19:19”**.

Rather reprove them.] Bear a *testimony* against them; *convince* them that they are wrong; *confute* them in their vain reasons; *reprove* them for their vices, which are flagrant, while pretending to superior illumination. All these meanings has the Greek word **ελεγχω**, which we generally render to *convince* or *reprove*.

Verse 12. For it is a shame even to speak] This no doubt refers to the *Eleusinian* and *Bacchanalian* mysteries, which were performed in the night and darkness, and were known to be so impure and abominable, especially the *latter*, that the Roman senate banished them both from Rome and Italy. How the discovery of these depths of Satan was made, and the whole proceedings in that case, may be seen in Livy, Hist. lib. xxxix. cap. 8-19, where the reader will see the force of what the apostle says here: *It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret*; the abominations being of the most stupendous kind, and of the deepest dye.

Verse 13. But all things that are reprovèd] Dr. Macknight paraphrases this verse as follows: “*Now all these reprobable actions, ελεγχομενα, which are practised in celebrating these mysteries, are made manifest as sinful by the Gospel; and, seeing every thing which discovers the true nature of actions is light, the Gospel, which discovers the evil nature of the actions performed in these mysteries, is light.*”

The apostle speaks against these mysteries as he speaks against fornication, uncleanness, and covetousness; but by no means either borrows expression or similitude from them to illustrate Divine truths; for, as it would be a *shame even to speak of those things*, surely it would be an *abomination* to allude to them in the illustration of the doctrines of the Gospel.

Verse 14. Wherefore he saith] It is a matter of doubt and controversy whence this saying is derived. Some think it taken from ^{<23519>}**Isaiah 26:19:** *Thy dead men shall live; with my dead body shall they arise; Awake and*

sing, ye that dwell in the dust, &c. Others think that it is taken from ^{<380>}**Isaiah 60:1-3**: *Arise, shine; for thy light is come, &c.* But these passages neither give the words nor the meaning of the apostle. *Epiphanius* supposed them to be taken from an ancient prophecy of *Elijah*, long since lost: *Syncellus* and *Euthalius* think they were taken from an apocryphal work attributed to *Jeremiah* the prophet: others, that they made part of a *hymn* then used in the Christian Church; for that there were, in the apostle's time, hymns and spiritual songs, as well as psalms, we learn from himself, in ^{<4519>}**Ephesians 5:19**, and from ^{<50516>}**Colossians 3:16**. The hymn is supposed to have begun thus:-

εγειραι ο καθευδων,
και αναστα εκ των νεκρων,
επιφαισει σοι ο χριστος.

*Awake, O thou who sleepest,
And from the dead arise thou,
And Christ shall shine upon thee.*

See *Rosenmuller*, *Wolf*, and others. But it seems more natural to understand the words *he saith* as referring to the light, i.e. the *Gospel*, mentioned ^{<40513>}**Ephesians 5:13**. And the **διο λεγει** should be translated, *Wherefore IT saith, Awake thou, &c.* that is: This is the general, the strong, commanding voice of the Gospel in every part-Receive instruction; leave thy sins, which are leading thee to perdition; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will enlighten and save thee.

As a man *asleep* neither knows nor does any thing that can be called good or useful, so the Gentiles and all others, while without the knowledge of Christianity, had not only no proper knowledge of vice and virtue, but they had no correct notion of the true God.

As the *dead* can perform no function of life, so the Gentiles and the unconverted were incapable of performing any thing worthy either of *life* or *being*. But though they were asleep-in a state of complete spiritual torpor, yet they might be awoke by the voice of the Gospel; and though *dead* to all goodness, and to every function of the spiritual life, yet, as their *animal life* was whole in them, and *perception* and *reason* were still left, they were capable of hearing the Gospel, and under that influence which always accompanies it when faithfully preached, they could discern its excellency, and find it to be the power of God to their salvation. And they

are addressed by the apostle as possessing this capacity; and, on their using it properly, have the promise that Christ shall enlighten them.

Verse 15. Walk circumspectly] Our word *circumspect*, from the Latin *circumspicio*, signifies to look round about on all hands; to be every way watchful, wary, and cautious, in order to avoid danger, discern enemies before they come too nigh, and secure a man's interest by every possible and lawful means. But the original word **ακριβως** signifies *correctly, accurately, consistently, or perfectly*. Be ye, who have received the truth, careful of your conduct; walk by the rule which God has given you; do this as well in little as in great matters; exemplify your principles, which are holy and good, by a corresponding conduct; do not only profess, but *live* the Gospel. As you embrace all its *promises*, be careful also to embrace all its *precepts*; and behave yourselves so, that your enemies may never be able to say that ye are *holy* in your *doctrines* and *profession*, but *irregular* in your *lives*.

Not as fools, but as wise] **μη ως ασοφοι, αλλ ως σοφοι**. The heathens affected to be called **σοφοι**, or *wise men*. Pythagoras was perhaps the first who corrected this vanity, by assuming the title of **φιλοσοφος**, *a lover of wisdom*; hence our term *philosopher*, used now in a much *prouder* sense than that in which the great Pythagoras wished it to be applied. The apostle here takes the term **σοφος**, and applies it to the *Christian*; and, instead of it, gives the empty Gentile philosopher the title of **ασοφος**, *without wisdom, fool*.

Verse 16. Redeeming the time] **εξαγοραζομενοι τον καιρον**. Buying up those moments which others seem to throw away; steadily improving every present moment, that ye may, in some measure, *regain* the time ye have *lost*. Let *time* be your chief commodity; deal in that alone; buy it all up, and use every portion of it yourselves. *Time* is that on which *eternity depends*; in *time* ye are to get a preparation for the kingdom of God; if you get not this *in time*, your ruin is inevitable; therefore, buy up the time.

Some think there is an allusion here to the case of *debtors*, who, by giving some valuable consideration to their creditors, obtain farther time for paying their debts. And this appears to be the sense in which it is used by the Septuagint, ^{<70>}**Daniel 2:8: επ αληθειας οίδα εγω, οτι καιρον υμεις εξαγοραζετε**. *I know certainly that ye would gain or buy time-ye wish to have the time prolonged, that ye may seek out for some plausible*

explanation of the dream. Perhaps the apostle means in general, *embrace every opportunity* to glorify God, save your own souls, and do good to men.

Because the days are evil.] The present times are dangerous, they are full of trouble and temptations, and only the watchful and diligent have any reason to expect that they shall keep their garments unspotted.

Verse 17. Wherefore be ye not unwise] μη γινεσθε αφρονες. *Do not become madmen.* Here is a most evident allusion to the *orgies of Bacchus*, in which his votaries acted like madmen; running about, tossing their heads from shoulder to shoulder, appearing to be in every sense completely frantic. See the whole of the passage in *Livy*, to which I have referred on ~~40512~~ **Ephesians 5:12.**

But understanding what the will of the Lord is.] It is the will of God that ye should be *sober, chaste, holy, and pure*. Get a thorough understanding of this; acquaint yourselves with God's will, that ye may know how to glorify him.

Verse 18. Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess] This is a farther allusion to the *Bacchanalian mysteries*; in them his votaries got drunk, and ran into all manner of excesses. *Plato*, though he forbade *drunkenness* in general, yet allowed that the people should get drunk in the solemnities of that god who invented wine. And indeed this was their common custom; when they had offered their sacrifices they indulged themselves in drunkenness, and *ran* into all kinds of extravagance. Hence it is probable that μεθυσω, *to get drunk*, is derived from μετα, *after*, and θυω, *to sacrifice*; for, having *completed* their *sacrifices*, they indulged themselves in *wine*. The word ασωτια, which we translate *excess*, means profligacy and debauchery of every kind; such as are the general concomitants of drunkenness, and especially among the votaries of Bacchus in Greece and Italy.

But be filled with the Spirit] The heathen priests pretended to be filled with the influence of the god they worshipped; and it was in these circumstances that they gave out their oracles. See a remarkable instance of this quoted in the note on “~~41039~~ **Luke 9:39**”, where the case of a *Bacchanalian* is described. The apostle exhorts the Ephesians not to resemble these, but, instead of being filled with wine, to be filled with the Spirit of God; in consequence of which, instead of those *discoveries* of the

Divine will to which in their drunken worship the votaries of Bacchus pretended, they should be wise indeed, and should understand what the will of the Lord is.

Verse 19. Speaking to yourselves in psalms] We can scarcely say what is the exact difference between these three expressions. *Psalms*, ψαλμοι, may probably mean those of David.

Hymns] ὕμνοις. Extemporaneous effusions in praise of God, uttered under the influence of the Divine Spirit, or a sense of his especial goodness. See ^{<416>}Acts 16:25.

Songs] ωιδαις. *Odes*; premeditated and regular poetic compositions; but, in whatever form they were composed, we learn that they were all πνευματικα, *spiritual*-tending to magnify God and edify men.

Singing and making melody in your heart] The *heart* always going with the *lips*. It is a shocking profanation of Divine worship to draw nigh to God with the *lips*, while the *heart* is far from him. It is too often the case that, in public worship, men are carried off from the *sense* of the words by the *sounds* that are put to them. And how few choirs of singers are there in the universe whose *hearts* ever accompany them in what *they* call *singing the praises of God!*

Verse 20. Giving thanks always] God is continually loading you with his benefits; you *deserve* nothing of his kindness; therefore give him thanks for his unmerited bounties.

God and the Father] That is: God, who is your Father, and the Father of mercies. See the observations on the *Greek article* at the end of this epistle. “^{<402>}Ephesians 6:24”

In the name of our Lord Jesus] He is the only *mediator*; and through him alone can ye approach to God; and it is for his sake only that God will hear your *prayers* or receive your *praises*.

Verse 21. Submitting-one to another] Let no man be so tenacious of his own will or his opinion in matters indifferent, as to disturb the peace of the Church; in all such matters *give way* to each other, and let *love* rule.

In the fear of God.] Setting him always before your eyes, and considering that he has commanded you to *love one another*, and to *bear each other's burdens*; and that what you do in this or any other commanded case, you

do as unto the Lord. Instead of *εν φοβω θεου*, *in the fear of GOD*, *εν φοβω χριστου*, *in the fear of CHRIST*, is the reading of ABDEFG, with all others of most value; besides the *Syriac*, *Coptic*, *Sahidic*, *Æthiopic*, *Armenian*, *Vulgate*, and *Itala*; *Basil the Great*, and *Chrysostom*. Neither reading makes any difference in the *sense*.

Verse 22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands] As the *Lord*, viz. *Christ*, is the *head* or governor of the *Church*, and the head of the man, so is the man the *head* or *governor* of the *woman*. This is God's ordinance, and should not be transgressed. The husband should not be a *tyrant*, and the wife should not be the *governor*. Old *Francis Quarles*, in his homely rhymes, alluding to the superstitious notion, that the *crowing* of a *hen* bodes ill luck to the family, has said:—

*“Ill thrives the hapless family that shows
A cock that’s silent, and a hen that crows:
I know not which live most unnatural lives,
Obeying husbands or commanding wives.”*

As unto the Lord.] The word *Church* seems to be necessarily understood here; that is: Act under the authority of your husbands, as the *Church* acts under the authority of *Christ*. As the *Church* submits to the *Lord*, so let wives submit to their husbands.

Verse 23. For the husband is the head of the wife] This is the reason which the apostle gives for his injunctions. See above.

He is the Saviour of the body.] As *Christ* exercises authority over the *Church* so as to *save* and *protect* it, so let the husband exercise authority over his wife by *protecting*, *comforting*, and *providing* her with every *necessary* and *comfort* of life, according to his power.

Verse 24. In every thing.] That is, every *lawful thing*; for it is not intimated that they should obey their husbands in any thing *criminal*, or in any thing detrimental to the *interests of their souls*. The husband may be profligate, and may wish his wife to become such also; he may be an enemy to true religion, and use his authority to prevent his wife from those means of grace which she finds salutary to her soul; in *none* of *these things* should she obey him.

Verse 25. Husbands, love your wives] Here is a grand rule, according to which every husband is called to act: *Love your wife as Christ loved the*

Church. But *how* did Christ love the Church? *He gave himself for it*-he laid down his life for it. So then husbands should, if necessary, lay down their lives for their wives: and there is more implied in the words than mere protection and support; for, as Christ gave himself for the Church to *save* it, so husbands should, by all means in their power, labour to promote the salvation of their wives, and their constant edification in righteousness. Thus we find that the authority of the man over the woman is founded on his *love* to her, and this love must be such as to lead him to risk his life for her. As the care of the family devolves on the wife, and the children must owe the chief direction of their minds and formation of their manners to the mother, she has need of all the assistance and support which her husband can give her; and, if she performs her duty well, she deserves the utmost of his love and affection.

Verse 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it] The Church is represented as the *spouse of Christ*, as the woman is the *spouse* of the man; and, to prepare this Church for himself, he *washes, cleanses, and sanctifies* it. There is certainly an allusion here to the ancient method of *purifying women*, who were appointed to be consorts to kings; *twelve months*, it appears, were in some instances spent in this purification: *Six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours and with other things, for the purifying of women.* See the case of Esther, ^{<17012>} **Esther 2:12**; see also ^{<194513>} **Psalms 45:13, 14**; ^{<261617>} **Ezekiel 16:7-14**.

With the washing of water] Baptism, accompanied by the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit.

By the word] The *doctrine* of Christ crucified, through which baptism is administered, sin cancelled, and the soul purified from all unrighteousness; the *death of Christ* giving efficacy to all.

Verse 27. That he might present it to himself] It was usual to bring the royal bride to the king in the most *sumptuous apparel*; and is there not here an allusion to ^{<194513>} **Psalms 45:13, 14**: *The king's daughter (Pharaoh's) is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold; she shall be brought unto the king (Solomon) in raiment of needlework?* This *presentation* here spoken of by the apostle will take place on the last day. **See Clarke's note on** ^{<471102>} **2 Corinthians 11:2**.

A glorious Church] Every way splendid and honourable, because pure and holy.

Not having spot] **σπιλος**. No *blemish* on the *face*; no spots upon the *garment*; the *heart* and *life* both holy.

Wrinkle] **ρυτιδα**. No mark of *superannuation* or *decay*. The word is commonly applied to *wrinkles on the face*, indicative of *sickness* or *decrepitude*.

Holy and without blemish.] In every sense holy, pure, and perfect. Now it was for this purpose that *Christ gave himself for the Church*; and for this purpose he continues the different ordinances which he has appointed; and, particularly, the preaching of the *word*-the doctrine of reconciliation through faith in his blood. And it is in *this life* that all this purification is to take place; for none shall be *presented* at the day of judgment to him who has not here been *sanctified, cleansed, washed, made glorious*, having neither *spot, wrinkle, blemish, nor any such thing*. How vain is the pretension of multitudes to be members of the true Church while full of *spots, wrinkles, blemishes, and MANY such things*; fondly supposing that their holiness is in their surety, because not in themselves! Reader, lay thy hand on thy conscience and say, Dost thou believe that this is St. Paul's meaning? See Clarke's notes on "~~4014~~ Ephesians 3:14", &c.

Verse 28. As their own bodies] For the woman is, properly speaking, a *part* of the man; for God made man *male and female*, and the woman was taken out of his side; therefore is she *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*; and therefore, he that loveth his wife loveth himself, for they two are one flesh. The apostle, in all these verses, refers to the creation and original *state* of the first human pair.

Verse 29. No man ever yet hated his own flesh] And this is a natural reason why he should love his wife, and nourish and cherish her.

Verse 30. We are members of his body] He has partaken of *our* nature, as we have partaken of the nature of *Adam*. And as he is the head of the Church and the Saviour of this *body*; so we, being members of the Church, are members of his mystical body. That is, we are united to him by one Spirit in the closest intimacy, even similar to that which the members have with the body.

Verse 31. Shall be joined unto his wife] **προσκολληθησεται**. He shall be *glued* or *cemented* to her; and, as a *well-glued* board will sooner *break* in the *whole wood* than in the *glued joint*, so death alone can *part* the

husband and wife; and nothing but *death* should dissolve their *affection*. See Clarke's notes on ^{<0021>}**Genesis 2:21-24**.

Verse 32. This is a great mystery] **το μυστηριον τουτο μεγα εστιν.** *This mystery is great. Sacramentum hoc magnum est; this sacrament is great.*-VULGATE. And on the evidence of this version the Church of Rome has made matrimony a sacrament, which, as they use it, is no meaning of the original. By *mystery*, here, we may understand a natural thing by which some *spiritual* matter is signified, which signification the Spirit of God alone can give. So, here, the creation and union of Adam and Eve, were intended, in the design of God, to point out the union of Christ and the Church: a union the most important that can be conceived; and therefore the apostle calls it a *great mystery*. See the observations at the end of this chapter.

Verse 33. Nevertheless] **πλην.** *Moreover, or therefore,* on the consideration of God's design in the institution of marriage, let every one of you love his wife as himself, because she is both *naturally* and by a *Divine ordinance* a part of himself.

That she reverence her husband.] Let the wife ever consider the husband as her head, and this he is, not only by nature, but also by the ordinance of God. These are very important matters, and on them the apostle lays great stress. See the following *observations*.

THERE is one subject in the preceding verse on which I could not enlarge sufficiently in the notes, and which I have reserved for this place; viz. what the apostle says concerning the *mystery of marriage*, which certainly has a deeper meaning than what is generally apprehended. Dr. Macknight has some good observations on this part of the subject, which I shall beg leave to lay before my readers.

1. "The apostle calls the formation of Eve from Adam's body, his marriage with her; and the intimate union established between them by that marriage, *a great mystery*, because it contained an important emblematical meaning concerning the regeneration of believers, and their union with Christ, which hitherto had been kept secret, but which he had discovered in the 30th verse. {^{<0030>}**Ephesians 5:30**} For there, in allusion to what Adam said concerning Eve, 'This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,' the apostle says, concerning Christ and believers: We are bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh: that is, we are parts of his body, the Church. And by

this application of Adam's words concerning Eve to Christ and to his Church, he intimates, First, That the formation of Eve of a rib taken out of Adam's body was a figure of the regeneration of believers by the breaking of Christ's body, mentioned ~~4125~~ **Ephesians 5:25**. Secondly, That Adam's love to Eve, on account of her being formed of his body, was a figure of Christ's love to believers because they are become his body, ~~4131~~ **Ephesians 5:30**. Thirdly, That Adam's marriage with Eve was a figure of the eternal union of Christ with believers in heaven, mentioned ~~4137~~ **Ephesians 5:27**. For he left his Father to be united to his Church.

2. "In giving this emblematical representation of these ancient facts, the apostle has not exceeded the bounds of probability. In the first age, neither the art of writing, nor any permanent method of conveying instruction, being invented, it was necessary to make such striking actions and events as could not easily be forgotten emblems of the instruction meant to be perpetuated. On this supposition, Adam, in whom the human race began, was a natural image of Christ, in whom the human race was to be restored; and his deep sleep, the opening of his side, and the formation of Eve of a rib taken out of his side, were fit emblems of Christ's death, of the opening of his side on the cross, and of the regeneration of believers by his death. The love which Adam expressed towards Eve, and his union with her by marriage, were lively images of Christ's love to believers, and of his eternal union with them in one society after their resurrection; and Eve herself, who was formed of a rib taken from Adam's side, was a natural image of believers, who are regenerated, both in their body and in their mind, by the breaking of Christ's side on the cross. Thus, the circumstances which accompanied the formation of Eve being fit emblems of the formation of the Church, we may suppose they were brought to pass to prefigure that great event; and, by prefiguring it, to show that it was decreed of God from the very beginning.

3. "The aptness, however, of these images is not the only reason for supposing that the formation of Eve, and her marriage with Adam in paradise, were emblems of the regeneration of believers by the death of Christ, and of their eternal union with him in heaven. The singular manner in which Eve was formed, and the declaration at her marriage with Adam, 'Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh,' strongly lead to that conclusion. Eve was not formed of the dust of the earth, as all other living things were made, (not excepting Adam himself,) but of a rib taken from Adam's side while

he was in a deep sleep. Now, for this diversity, what reason can be assigned, if that which the apostle hath suggested is not admitted? Farther: unless some deep instruction were couched under the formation of Eve, what occasion was there for Adam, at his marriage with her, to declare, ‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man: therefore shall a man leave,’ &c.? For although the taking of Eve out of Adam might be a reason for Adam’s affection towards her, it was no reason for the affection of his posterity towards their wives, who were not so formed. The reason of their love to their wives is their being creatures of the same species with themselves. This Eve might have been, though, like Adam, she had been formed of the dust of the earth. Wherefore Adam’s declaration concerning Eve being taken out of his body, and concerning his love to her on that account, was intended for some purpose peculiar to himself; namely, as he was a type of Him who was to restore the human race by the breaking of his body on the cross, and who on that account loves them, and will unite them to himself for ever. Upon the whole, the formation of Eve and her marriage with Adam, and his love to and union with her because she was taken out of his side, and the declaration that, on that account, all his posterity should love their wives, and continue united to them through life, (a union which does not subsist among other animals,) are events so singular, that I do not see what account can be given of them, unless, with the Apostle Paul, we suppose that, agreeably to the most ancient method of instruction, God intended these things as figurative representations of the regeneration of believers by the death of Christ, and of his eternal union with them in heaven; and that Adam and Eve were taught by God himself to consider them as such.

4. “It is no small confirmation of the apostle’s emblematical interpretation of the formation and marriage of Eve, that in Scripture we find a variety of images and expressions founded on that interpretation. For example, ^{<6154>}**Romans 5:14**, Adam is expressly called *a type of him who was to come*, on which account, ^{<6155>}**1 Corinthians 15:45**, Christ is called *the last Adam*. Next, the catholic Church, consisting of believers of all nations, is called *the body of Christ*, and the members thereof are said to be *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*; in allusion to the formation of Eve, the emblem of the Church. For, as Eve was formed of a rib taken out of Adam’s body during his deep sleep, so believers are regenerated both in mind and body, and formed into one great society, and united to Christ as

their head and governor, by the breaking of his body on the cross. Thirdly, to this emblematical meaning of the formation of Eve, our Lord, I think, alluded when he instituted his supper. For instead of appointing one symbol only of his death, he appointed two; and, in explaining the first of them, he expressed himself in such a manner as to show that he had his eye on what happened to Adam when Eve was formed: *This is my body which is broken for you*-for your regeneration. Fourthly, the eternal union of the regenerated with Christ after the resurrection is called a marriage, ^{<6197>}**Revelation 19:7**; and the *new Jerusalem*, that is, the *inhabitants* of the new Jerusalem, the society of the redeemed, is termed *the bride, the Lamb's wife*; and the preparing of men for that happy union, by introducing them into the Church upon earth through faith, and by sanctifying them through the word, is called, ^{<7102>}**2 Corinthians 11:2**, *A fitting them for one husband*, that at the resurrection *they may be presented a chaste virgin to Christ*; in allusion, I suppose, to the presenting of Eve to Adam, in order to her marriage with him; and to show that, in this expression, the apostle had the figurative meaning of Eve's marriage in his mind, he mentions, ^{<7103>}**2 Corinthians 11:3**, the subtlety of the devil in deceiving Eve. Finally, the union of the Jewish Church with God, as the figure of the catholic Church, consisting of the regenerated of all nations, is by God himself termed *a marriage*, ^{<2484>}**Jeremiah 3:14**; ^{<2618>}**Ezekiel 16:8-32**; and God is called the *husband* of that people, ^{<2548>}**Isaiah 54:5**; and their union to him by the law of Moses is termed, *The day of their espousals*, ^{<4002>}**Jeremiah 2:2**."

1. A truly Christian marriage has an excellence, holiness, and unity in it, that cannot be easily described; and let it be observed that, while it prefigures the union of Christ with his Church, it is one means of giving children to the Church, and members to the mystical body of Christ. It is an ordinance of God, and, cannot be too highly honoured; endless volumes might be written on its utility to man: without marriage, by which every man is assigned *his own wife*, and every woman *her own husband*, even the multitude of spurious births which would take place would fail to keep up the population of the earth; and natural, moral, and political wretchedness would be the consequence of promiscuous, fortuitous, and transitory connections. For without that ascertainment of peculiar property which marriage gives to every man in his wife, and to every woman in her husband, the human progeny would be unnoticed, unclaimed, uneducated, and totally neglected. This would continually increase the wretchedness, and in process of time bring about the total depopulation of the world.

2. The husband is to love his wife, the wife to obey and venerate her husband; love and protection on the one hand, affectionate subjection and fidelity on the other. The husband should provide for his wife without encouraging profuseness; watch over her conduct without giving her vexation; keep her in subjection without making her a slave; love her without jealousy; oblige her without flattery; honour her without making her proud; and be hers entirely, without becoming either her footman or her slave. In short, they have equal rights and equal claims; but superior strength gives the man dominion, affection and subjection entitle the woman to love and protection. Without the woman, man is but half a human being; in union with the man, the woman finds her safety and perfection.

In the above remarks there are many things *solid* and *useful*; there are others which rest more on *fancy* than *judgment*.

3. Of marriage the Church of Rome has made a *sacrament*, and it is one of the *seven* which that Church acknowledges. That it is an *ordinance* of *God* is sufficiently evident; that *he* has *not* made it a *sacrament* is not less so. Though the *minister* of *religion* celebrates it, yet the regulation of it, in reference to inheritance, &c., is assumed by the *state*. This is of great moment, as by it many evils are prevented, and many political and domestic advantages secured. If a man enter hastily into this state it is at his own risk; after he has once entered it, the seal of the legislature is imposed upon it, and with his engagements, he cannot trifle. A consideration of this has prevented many hasty and disproportionate alliances. Though they might hope to trifle with the *Church*, they dare not do it with the *state*.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 6.

Children should obey their parents, that they may live long and be happy, 1-3. Parents should be tender towards their children, 4. Servants should show all obedience and fidelity to their masters, 5-8. And masters should treat their servants with humanity, 9. All should be strong in the Lord, and be armed with his armour, because of their wily, powerful, and numerous foes, 10-13. The different parts of the Christian armour enumerated, 14-17. The necessity of all kinds of prayer and watchfulness, 18-20. Tychicus is commissioned to inform the Ephesians of the apostle's affairs, 21, 22. The apostolic benediction and farewell, 23, 24.

NOTES ON CHAP 6.

Verse 1. Children, obey your parents] This is a duty with which God will never dispense; he commands it, and one might think that gratitude, from a sense of the highest obligations, would most strongly enforce the command.

In the Lord] This clause is wanting in several reputable MSS., and in some *versions*. *In the Lord* may mean, on account of the commandment of the Lord; or, as far as the parents commands are according to the will and word of God. For surely no child is called to obey any parent if he give unreasonable or unscriptural commands.

Verse 2. Honour thy father] See Clarke's notes on "⁽¹²³¹²⁾Exodus 20:12", &c., where this subject, together with the *promises* and *threatenings* connected with it, is particularly considered, and the *reasons* of the duty laid down at large.

Verse 4. Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath] Avoid all *severity*; this will hurt your own souls, and do them no good; on the contrary, if punished with *severity* or *cruelty*, they will be only hardened and made desperate in their sins. *Cruel parents* generally have *bad children*. He who corrects his children according to God and reason will feel every blow on his own heart more sensibly than his child feels it on his body. Parents are called to *correct*; not to *punish*, their children. Those

who *punish* them do it from a principle of *revenge*; those who *correct* them do it from a principle of *affectionate concern*.

Bring them up, &c.] **ΕΚΤΡΕΦΕΤΕ ΑΥΤΑ ΕΝ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΝΟΥΘΕΣΙΑ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ.** literally, *Nourish them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*. The *mind* is to be nourished with wholesome discipline and instruction, as the body is with proper food. **ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑ**, *discipline*, may refer to all that knowledge which is proper for children, including elementary principles and rules for behaviour, &c. **ΝΟΥΘΕΣΙΑ**, *instruction*, may imply whatever is necessary to form the mind; to touch, regulate, and purify the passions; and necessarily includes the whole of religion. Both these should be administered *in the Lord*-according to his will and word, and in reference to his eternal glory. All the important lessons and doctrines being derived from his revelation, therefore they are called *the discipline and instruction of the Lord*.

Verse 5. Servants, be obedient] Though **δουλος** frequently signifies a *slave* or *bondman*, yet it often implies a *servant* in general, or any one bound to another, either for a limited time, or for life. Even a *slave*, if a Christian, was bound to serve him faithfully by whose money he was bought, howsoever illegal that traffic may be considered. In heathen countries slavery was in some sort excusable; among Christians it is an enormity and a crime for which perdition has scarcely an adequate state of punishment.

According to the flesh] Your masters in secular things; for they have no authority over your religion, nor over your souls.

With fear and trembling] Because the law gives them a power to punish you for every act of disobedience.

In singleness of your heart] Not merely through fear of punishment, but from a principle of uprightness, serving them as you would serve Christ.

Verse 6. Not with eye-service] Not merely in their presence, when their eye is upon you, as unfaithful and hypocritical servants do, without consulting conscience in any part of their work.

Doing the will of God] Seeing that you are in the state of servitude, it is the will of God that you should act conscientiously in it.

Verse 7. With good will] μετ̄ εὐνοίας. With *cheerfulness*; do not take up your service as a cross, or bear it as a burden; but take it as coming in the order of God's providence, and a thing that is pleasing to him.

Verse 8. Whatsoever good thing any man doeth] Though your masters should fail to give you the due reward of your fidelity and labour, yet, as ye have done your work as unto the Lord, he will take care to give you the proper recompense.

Whether he be bond] A *slave*, bought with money;

Or free.] A person who has *hired* himself of his own free accord.

Verse 9. Ye masters, do the same things unto them] Act in the same affectionate, conscientious manner towards your slaves and servants, as they do towards you.

Forbearing threatening] If they should transgress at any time, lean more to the side of *mercy* than *justice*; and when ye are obliged to punish, let it be as light and as moderate as possible; and let *revenge* have no part in the chastisement, for that is of the devil, and not of God.

The words, *forbearing threatening*; ἀνιεντες την απειλην, signify to mitigate, relax, or not exact threatening; that is, the *threatened punishment*. The sense is given above.

In *Shemoth Rabba*, sect. 21, fol. 120, there is a good saying concerning *respect of persons*: "If a poor man comes to a rich man to converse with him, he will not regard him; but if a rich man comes he will hear and rehear him. The holy and blessed God acts not thus; for all are alike before him, women, slaves, the poor, and the rich."

Knowing that your Master also is in heaven] *You* are *their* masters, GOD is *yours*. As *you* deal with *them*, so GOD will deal with *you*; for do not suppose, because their condition on earth is inferior to yours, that God considers them to be less worthy of his regard than you are; this is not so, for *there is no respect of persons with Him*.

Verse 10. Finally] Having laid before you, your great and high calling, and all the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, it is necessary that I should show you the enemies that will oppose you, and the strength which is requisite to enable you to repel them.

Be strong in the Lord] You must have strength, and strength of a *spiritual* kind, and such strength too as the *Lord* himself can furnish; and you must have this strength through an *indwelling God, the power of his might* working in you.

Verse 11. Put on the whole armour of God] ενδυσασθε την πανοπλιαν του θεου. The apostle considers every Christian as having a warfare to maintain against numerous, powerful, and subtle foes; and that therefore they would need much strength, much courage, complete armour, and skill to use it. The *panoply* which is mentioned here refers to the armour of the *heavy troops* among the Greeks; those who were to sustain the rudest attacks, who were to sap the foundations of walls, storm cities, &c. Their ordinary armour was the *shield*, the *helmet*, the *sword*, and the *greaves* or *brazen boots*. To all these the apostle refers below. See Clarke on “^{<40613>}Ephesians 6:13”.

The wiles of the devil.] τας μεθοδειας του διαβολου. *The methods of the devil*; the different *means, plans, schemes, and machinations* which he uses to deceive, entrap, enslave, and ruin the souls of men. A *man's method* of sinning is *Satan's method* of ruining his soul. See Clarke on “^{<40414>}Ephesians 4:14”.

Verse 12. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood] ουκ εστιν ημιν η παλη προς αιμα και σαρκα. Our *wrestling* or *contention* is not with *men* like ourselves: *flesh and blood* is a Hebraism for *men, or human beings*. See Clarke's note on “^{<40116>}Galatians 1:16”.

The word *παλη* implies the athletic exercises in the Olympic and other national games; and *παλαιστρα* was the **place** in which the contenders exercised. Here it signifies warfare in general.

Against principalities] αρχας. *Chief rulers*; beings of the first rank and order in their own kingdom.

Powers] εξουσιας, *Authorities*, derived from, and constituted by the above.

The rulers of the darkness of this world] τους κοσμοκρατορας του σκοτους του αιωνος τουτου. *The rulers of the world*; the *emperors of the darkness of this state of things*.

Spiritual wickedness] τα πνευματικά της πονηρίας. *The spiritual things of wickedness; or, the spiritualities of wickedness; highly refined and sublimed evil; disguised falsehood in the garb of truth; Antinomianism in the guise of religion.*

In high places.] ες τοις επουρανιοις. *In the most sublime stations. But who are these of whom the apostle speaks? Schoettgen contends that the rabbins and Jewish rulers are intended. This he thinks proved by the words του αιωνος τουτου, of this world, which are often used to designate the Old Testament, and the Jewish system; and the words εν τοις επουρανιοις, in heavenly places, which are not unfrequently used to signify the time of the NEW TESTAMENT, and the Gospel system.*

By the spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, he thinks false teachers, who endeavoured to corrupt Christianity, are meant; such as those mentioned by St. John, ^{<61219>}**1 John 2:19:** *They went out from us, but they were not of us, &c.* And he thinks the meaning may be extended to all corrupters of Christianity in all succeeding ages. He shows also that the Jews called their own city **μὴ ἢ ἰβ ρ σ** *sar shel olam, κοσμοκράτωρ, the ruler of the world;* and proves that David's words, ^{<19112>}**Psalm 2:2,** *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,* are applied by the apostles, ^{<4026>}**Acts 4:26,** to the Jewish rulers, **αρχοντες,** who persecuted Peter and John for preaching Christ crucified. But commentators in general are not of this mind, but think that by *principalities, &c.*, we are to understand different orders of evil spirits, who are all employed under the devil, their great head, to prevent the spread of the Gospel in the world, and to destroy the souls of mankind.

The *spiritual wickedness* are supposed to be the *angels* which kept not their first estate; who fell from the *heavenly places* but are ever longing after and striving to regain them; and which have their station in the *regions of the air*. "Perhaps," says Mr. Wesley, "the *principalities and powers* remain mostly in the citadel of their kingdom of *darkness*; but there are other spirits which range abroad, to whom the provinces of the *world* are committed; the *darkness* is chiefly *spiritual* darkness which prevails during the present state of things, and the *wicked spirits* are those which continually oppose faith, love, and holiness, either by force or fraud; and labour to infuse unbelief, pride, idolatry, malice, envy, anger, and hatred." Some translate the words **εν τοις επουρανιοις,** *about heavenly things;* that is: We contend with these fallen spirits for the heavenly things which

are promised to us; and we strive against them, that we may not be deprived of those we have.

Verse 13. Wherefore] Because ye have such enemies to contend with, *take unto you*-assume, as provided and prepared for you, *the whole armour of God*; which armour if you put on and use, you shall be both invulnerable and immortal. The ancient heroes are fabled to have had armour sent to them by the *gods*; and even the great armour-maker, *Vulcan*, was reputed to be a *god* himself. This was *fable*: What Paul speaks of is *reality*. See Clarke before on “~~4061~~ Ephesians 6:11”.

That ye may be able to withstand] That ye may not only stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, but also discomfit all your spiritual foes; and continuing in your ranks, maintain your ground against them, never putting off your armour, but standing always ready prepared to repel any new attack.

And having done all, to stand.] και απαντα κατεργασαμενοι στηναι. rather, *And having conquered all, stand*: this is a military phrase, and is repeatedly used in this sense by the best Greek writers. So *Dionys. Hal. Ant.*, lib. vi., page 400: και παντα πολεμια εν ολιγω κατεργασαμενοι χρονω. “Having in a short time *discomfited* all our enemies, we returned with numerous captives and much spoil.” See many examples in *Kypke*. By *evil day* we may understand any time of trouble, affliction, and sore temptation.

As there is here allusion to some of the most important parts of the Grecian armour, I shall give a short account of the whole. It consisted properly of two sorts: 1. Defensive armour, or that which protected themselves. 2. Offensive armour, or that by which they injured their enemies. The apostle refers to both.

I. *Defensive armour*:

περικεφαλαια, the HELMET; this was the armour for the head, and was of various forms, and embossed with a great variety of figures. Connected with the helmet was the *crest* or *ridge* on the top of the helmet, adorned with several emblematic figures; some for *ornament*, some to strike *terror*. For crests on ancient helmets we often see the winged lion, the griffin, chimera, &c. St. Paul seems to refer to one which had an emblematical representation of *hope*.

ζωμα, the GIRDLE; this went about the loins, and served to brace the armour tight to the body, and to support daggers, short swords, and such like weapons, which were frequently stuck in it. This kind of girdle is in general use among the Asiatic nations to the present day.

θωραξ, the BREAST-PLATE; this consisted of two parts, called **πτερυγες** or *wings*: one covered the whole region of the thorax or *breast*, in which the principal viscera of life are contained; and the other covered the back, as far down as the front part extended.

κνημιδες, GREAVES or *brazen boots*, which covered the shin or front of the leg; a kind of *solea* was often used, which covered the sole, and laced about the instep, and prevented the foot from being wounded by rugged ways, thorns, stones, &c.

χειριδες, GAUNTLETS; a kind of *gloves* that served to defend the hands, and the arm up to the elbow.

ασπις, the *clypeus* or SHIELD; it was perfectly round, and sometimes made of *wood*, covered with bullocks' hides; but often made of *metal*. The *aspis* or *shield* of Achilles, made by Vulcan, was composed of *five* plates, two of *brass*, two of *tin*, and one of *gold*; so Homer, II. Y. v. 270:—

----- επει πεντε πτυχας ηλασε κυλλοποδιων,
 τας δυο χαλκειας, δυο δ ενδοθι κασσιτεροιο,
 την δε μιαν ξρυσην.

*Five plates of various metal, various mould,
 Composed the shield; of brass each outward fold,
 Of tin each inward, and the middle gold.
 Of shields there were several sorts:*

γερρων or **γερρα**, the *gerron*; a small *square* shield, used first by the *Persians*.

λαισηιον, LAISEION; a sort of *oblong* shield, covered with rough hides, or skins with the hair on.

πελτη, the PELTA; a small *light shield*, nearly in the form of a demicrescent, with a small ornament, similar to the recurved leaves of a flower *de luce*, on the centre of a diagonal edge or straight line; this was the *Amazonian* shield.

θυρεος, the *scutum* or OBLONG SHIELD; this was always made of *wood*, and covered with hides. It was exactly in the shape of the *laiseion*, but differed in *size*, being much larger, and being covered with hides from which the hair had been taken off. It was called **θυρεος** from **θυρα**, a *door*, which it resembled in its oblong shape; but it was made curved, so as to embrace the whole forepart of the body. The *aspis* and the *thureos* were the shields principally in use; the former for light, the latter for *heavy* armed troops.

II. *Offensive armour*, or weapons; the following were chief:

εγχος, *enchos*, the SPEAR; which was generally a head of brass or iron, with a long shaft of *ash*.

δορυ, the LANCE; differing perhaps little from the former, but in its size and lightness; being a missile used, both by infantry and cavalry, for the purpose of annoying the enemy at a *distance*.

ξιφος, the SWORD; these were of various sizes, and in the beginning all of *brass*. The swords of Homer's heroes are all of this metal.

μαχαира, called also a *sword*, sometimes a *knife*; it was a *short sword*, used more frequently by gladiators, or in single combat. What other difference it had from the *xiphos* I cannot tell.

αξινη, from which our word AXE; the common *battle-axe*.

πελεκυς, the **BIPEN**; a sort of *battle-axe*, with double face, one opposite to the other.

κορυνη, an *iron club* or *mace*, much used both among the ancient Greeks and Persians.

τοξον, the BOW; with its *pharetra* or *quiver*, and its stock or sheaf of *arrows*.

σφενδονη, the SLING; an instrument in the use of which most ancient nations were very expert, particularly the Hebrews and ancient Greeks.

The arms and armour mentioned above were not always in use; they were found out and improved by degrees. The account given by *Lucretius* of the arms of the first inhabitants of the earth is doubtless as correct as it is natural.

*Arma antiqua manus, ungues, dentesque fuere,
 Et lapides, et item silvarum fragmina rami,
 Et flammæ, atque ignes postquam sunt cognita primum:
 Posterius ferri vis est, ærisque reperta:
 Sed prius æris erat quam ferri cognitus usus:
 Quo facilis magis est natura, et copia major.
 Deuteronomy Rerum Nat., lib. v. ver. 1282.*

*Whilst cruelty was not improved by art,
 And rage not furnished yet with sword or dart;
 With fists, or boughs, or stones, the warriors fought;
 These were the only weapons Nature taught:
 But when flames burnt the trees and scorched the ground,
 Then brass appeared, and iron fit to wound.
 Brass first was used, because the softer ore,
 And earth's cold veins contained a greater store.
 CREECH.*

I have only to observe farther on this head, 1. That the ancient Greeks and Romans went *constantly armed*; 2. That before they engaged they always *ate together*; and 3. That they commenced every attack with prayer to the gods for success.

Verse 14. Stand therefore] Prepare yourselves for combat, *having your loins girt about with truth*. He had told them before *to take the whole armour of God*, ^{<40613>}**Ephesians 6:13**, and to *put on this whole armour*. Having got all the pieces of it *together*, and the defensive parts *put on*, they were then to gird them close to their bodies with the ζῶμα or *girdle*, and instead of a fine ornamented *belt*, such as the ancient warriors used, they were to have *truth*. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the *truth of God*; unless this be *known* and *conscientiously believed* no man can enter the spiritual warfare with any advantage or prospect of success. By this alone we discover who our enemies are, and how they come on to attack us; and by this we know where our strength lies; and, as the truth is great, and must prevail, we are to gird ourselves with this against all false religion, and the various winds of doctrine by which cunning men and insidious devils lie in wait to deceive. Truth may be taken here for *sincerity*; for if a man be not conscious to himself that his *heart is right* before God, and that he makes no false pretences to religion, in vain does he enter the spiritual lists. This alone can give him confidence:—

————— *Hic murus aheneus esto,*
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.

Let this be my brazen wall; that no man can reproach me with a crime, and that I am conscious of my own integrity.

The breast-plate of righteousness] What the **θωραξ** or *breast-plate* was, see before. The word *righteousness*, **δικαιοσύνη**, we have often had occasion to note, is a word of very extensive import: it signifies the *principle* of *righteousness*; it signifies the *practice* of *righteousness*, or living a *holy* life; it signifies *God's method* of *justifying sinners*; and it signifies *justification* itself. Here it may imply a consciousness of justification through the blood of the cross; the principle of righteousness or true holiness implanted in the heart; and a holy life, a life regulated according to the testimonies of God. As the *breast-plate* defends the heart and lungs, and all those vital functionaries that are contained in what is called the *region of the thorax*; so this righteousness, this life of God in the soul of man, defends every thing on which the man's spiritual existence depends. While he possesses this principle, and acts from it, his spiritual and eternal life is secure.

Verse 15. Your feet shod] The **κνημίδες**, or *greaves*, have been already described; they were deemed of essential importance in the ancient armour; if the feet or legs are materially wounded, a man can neither stand to resist his foe, pursue him if vanquished, nor flee from him should he have the worst of the fight.

That the apostle has *obedience to the Gospel* in general in view, there can be no doubt; but he appears to have more than this, a *readiness to publish* the Gospel: for, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth PEACE; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*
<2537> **Isaiah 52:7;** <451015> **Romans 10:15.**

The Israelites were commanded to eat the passover with their *feet shod*, to show that they were *ready* for their journey. And our Lord commands his disciples to be *shod with sandals*, that they might be ready to go and publish the Gospel, as the Israelites were to go to possess the promised land. Every Christian should consider himself on his journey from a strange land to his own country, and not only stand every moment prepared to proceed, but be every moment in actual progress towards his home.

The preparation of the Gospel] The word **ετοιμασια** which we translate *preparation*, is variously understood: some think it means an *habitual readiness* in walking in the way prescribed by the Gospel; others that *firmness* and *solidity* which the Gospel gives to them who conscientiously believe its doctrines; others, those *virtues* and *graces* which in the *first planting* of Christianity were indispensably necessary to those who published it.

Should we take the word *preparation* in its common acceptance, it may imply that, by a conscientious belief of the Gospel, receiving the salvation provided by its author, and walking in the way of obedience which is pointed out by it, the soul is *prepared* for the kingdom of heaven.

The Gospel is termed the *Gospel of peace*, because it establishes peace between God and man, and proclaims peace and good will to the universe. Contentions, strife, quarrels, and all wars, being as alien from its nature and design, as they are opposed to the nature of Him who is love and compassion to man.

Verse 16. Above all, (επι πασιν, over all the rest of the armour,) taking the shield of faith] In the word **θυρεος**, *thureos*, the apostle alludes to the great *oblong shield*, or *scutum*, which covers the whole body. See its description before. And as *faith* is the grace by which all others are preserved and rendered active, so it is properly represented here under the notion of a *shield*, by which the whole body is covered and protected. Faith, in this place, must mean that evidence of things unseen which every genuine believer has, that God, for Christ's sake, has blotted out his sins, and by which he is enabled to call God his Father, and feel him to be his portion. It is such an *appropriating* faith as this which can quench any dart of the devil.

The fiery darts of the wicked.] βελος, *a dart*, signifies any kind of *missile weapon*; every thing that is projected to a distance by the hand, as a *javelin*, or short spear; or by a *bow*, as an *arrow*; or a stone by a *sling*.

The fiery darts-τα βελη τα πεπυρωμενα. It is probable that the apostle alludes to the darts called *falarica*, which were headed with lead, in or about which some combustible stuff was placed that took fire in the passage of the arrow through the air, and often burnt up the enemy's engines, ships, &c.; they were calculated also to stick in the shields and set them on fire. Some think that *poisoned arrows* may be intended, which are

called *fiery* from the burning heat produced in the bodies of those who were wounded by them. To quench or extinguish such fiery darts the shields were ordinarily covered with metal on the outside, and thus the fire was prevented from catching hold of the shield. When they stuck on a shield of another kind and set it on fire, the soldier was obliged to cast it away, and thus became defenceless.

The fiery darts of the *wicked*, *του πονηρου*, or *devil*, are evil thoughts, and strong *injections*, as they are termed, which in the unregenerate inflame the passions, and excite the soul to acts of transgression. While the *faith* is strong in Christ it acts as a shield to quench these. He who walks so as to feel the witness of God's Spirit that he is his child, has all evil thoughts in abhorrence; and, though they pass through his mind, they never fix in his passions. They are caught on this shield, blunted, and extinguished.

Verse 17. Take the helmet of salvation] Or, as it is expressed, ~~cor~~¹ **Thessalonians 5:8**, *And for a helmet, the hope of salvation*. It has already been observed, in the description of the Grecian armour, that on the crest and other parts of the helmet were a great variety of emblematical figures, and that it is very likely the apostle refers to helmets which had on them an emblematical representation of *hope*; viz. that the person should be *safe* who wore it, that he should be prosperous in all his engagements, and ever escape safe from battle. So the *hope* of conquering every adversary and surmounting every difficulty, through the blood of the Lamb, is as a helmet that protects the head; an impenetrable one, that the blow of the battle-axe cannot cleave. The *hope* of continual safety and protection, built on the promises of God, to which the upright follower of Christ feels he has a Divine right, protects the *understanding* from being darkened, and the judgment from being confused by any temptations of Satan, or subtle arguments of the sophistical ungodly. He who carries Christ in his heart cannot be cheated out of the hope of his heaven,

The sword of the Spirit] See what is said before on *ξίφος* and *μαχαίρα*, in the account of the Greek armour. The *sword* of which St. Paul speaks is, as he explains it, *the word of God*; that is, the revelation which God has given of himself, or what we call the *Holy Scriptures*. This is called *the sword of the Spirit*, because it comes from the Holy Spirit, and receives its fulfilment in the soul through the operation of the Holy Spirit. An ability to quote this on proper occasions, and especially in times of temptation and

trial, has a wonderful tendency to cut in pieces the snares of the adversary. In God's word a genuine Christian may have unlimited confidence, and to every purpose to which it is applicable it may be brought with the greatest effect. The *shield*, *faith*, and the *sword*-the *word of God*, or faith in God's unchangeable word, are the principal armour of the soul. He in whom the word of God dwells richly, and who has that faith by which he knows that he has redemption, even the forgiveness of sins, need not fear the power of any adversary. He stands fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free. Some suppose that **του πνευματος**, *of the Spirit*, should be understood of our *own spirit* or *soul*; the word of God being the proper sword of the soul, or that offensive weapon the only one which the soul uses. But though it is true that every Christian soul has this for its sword, yet the first meaning is the most likely.

Verse 18. Praying always] The apostle does not put praying among the armour; had he done so he would have referred it, as he has done all the rest, to some of the Grecian armour; but as he does not do this, therefore we conclude that his account of the armour is ended, and that now, having equipped his spiritual soldier, he shows him the necessity of *praying*, that he may successfully resist those principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and the spiritual wickednesses in heavenly places, with whom he has to contend. The *panoply*, or *whole armour* of God, consists in, 1. the *girdle*; 2. the *breast-plate*; 3. the *greaves*; 4. the *shield*; 5. the *helmet*; and 6. the *sword*. He who had these was completely armed. And as it was the custom of the Grecian armies, before they engaged, to *offer prayers* to the gods for their success, the apostle shows that these spiritual warriors must depend on the Captain of their salvation, and pray with all prayer, i.e. incessantly, being always in the spirit of prayer, so that they should be ever ready for public, private, mental, or ejaculatory prayer, always depending on HIM who can alone *save*, and who alone can *destroy*.

When the apostle exhorts Christians to *pray with all prayer*, we may at once see that he neither means *spiritual* nor *formal* prayer, in exclusion of the other. *Praying*, **προσευχόμενοι**, refers to the *state* of the *spirit* as well as to the *act*.

With all prayer] Refers to the different *kinds* of prayer that is performed in *public*, in the *family*, in the *closet*, in *business*, on the *way*, in the *heart* without a *voice*, and *with* the *voice* from the heart. All those are necessary to the genuine Christian; and he whose heart is right with God will be

frequent in the whole. “Some there are,” says a very pious and learned writer, who use only *mental* prayer or ejaculations, and think they are in a state of grace, and use a way of worship far superior to any other; but such only fancy themselves to be *above* what is really above *them*; it requiring far more grace to be enabled to pour out a fervent and continued prayer, than to offer up mental aspirations.” Rev. J. Wesley.

And supplication] There is a difference between **προσευχη**, *prayer*, and **δεησις**, *supplication*. Some think the former means prayer for the *attainment of good*; the latter, prayer for *averting evil*. Supplication however seems to mean *prayer continued in*, strong and *incessant pleadings*, till the *evil is averted*, or the *good communicated*. There are two things that must be attended to in prayer. 1. That it be **εν παντι καιρω**, in every *time, season, or opportunity*; 2. That it should be **εν πνευματι**, in or *through the Spirit*-that the *heart* should be engaged in it, and that its infirmities should be helped by the Holy Ghost,

Watching thereunto] Being always on your *guard* lest your enemies should surprise you. Watch, not only against evil, but also for opportunities to do good, and for opportunities to receive good. Without watchfulness, prayer and all the spiritual armour will be ineffectual.

With all perseverance] Being always intent on your object, and never losing sight of your *danger*, or of your *interest*. The word implies *stretching out the neck*, and *looking about*, in order to discern an enemy at a distance.

For all saints] For all *Christians*; for this was the character by which they were generally distinguished.

Verse 19. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me] **ἵνα μοι δοθειη λογος**. Kypke has proved by many examples that **λογος διδοναι** signifies permission and power to defend one's self in a court of justice; and this sense of the phrase is perfectly applicable to the case of St. Paul, who was an ambassador in bonds, (^{<403A>}**Ephesians 6:20**.) and expected to be called to a public hearing, in which he was not only to *defend himself*, but to prove the *truth* and *excellency* of the *Christian religion*. And we learn, from ^{<30112>}**Philippians 1:12-14**, that he had his desire in this respect; *for the things which happened to him fell out to the furtherance of the Gospel, so that his bonds in Christ were manifest in all the palace, and in*

all other places. Thus God had enabled him to make a most noble defence, by which the Gospel acquired great credit.

The mystery of the Gospel] The whole *doctrine* of Christ, not fully revealed previously to that time.

Verse 20. An ambassador in bonds] An ambassador being the representative of his king, his person was in all civilized countries held sacred. Contrary to the rights of nations, this ambassador of the King of heaven was put in chains! He had however the opportunity of defending himself, and of vindicating the honour of his Master. See above.

As I ought to speak.] As *becomes* the dignity and the importance of the subject.

Verse 21. That ye also] As well as other Churches to whom I have communicated the dealings both of God and man to me.

May know my affairs] May be acquainted with my situation and circumstances.

And how I do] How I employ my time, and what fruit there is of my apostolical labours.

Tychicus, a beloved brother] We learn, from ^{<400>}Acts 20:4, that Tychicus was of Asia, and that he was a useful companion of St. Paul. See the note on the above place.

This same person, and with the same character and commendation, is mentioned in the Epistle to the Colossians, ^{<500>}Colossians 4:7. He is mentioned also in ^{<600>}Titus 3:12, and in ^{<500>}2 Timothy 4:12; from all these places it is evident that he was a person in whom the apostle had the highest confidence, and that he was a very eminent minister of Christ.

Verse 22. Whom I have sent-for the same purpose] Namely, that the Ephesians might know his affairs, and those of the Church at Rome: messengers of this kind frequently passed between the Churches in those ancient times.

Comfort your hearts.] By showing you how powerfully he was upheld in all his tribulations, and how God turned his bonds to the furtherance of the Gospel. This must have been great consolation to all the followers of God; and particularly to those in *Ephesus* or *Laodicea*, or to whomsoever the

epistle was directed. The question, To whom was it sent? is divided between the *Ephesians* and the *Laodiceans*. Dr. Lardner has argued strongly in favour of the *former*; Dr. Paley not less so in favour of the *latter*.

Verse 23. Peace be to the brethren] If the epistle were really sent to the *Ephesians*, a people with whom the apostle was so intimately acquainted, it is strange that he mentions no person by name. This objection, on which Dr. Paley lays great stress, (see the preface to this epistle,) has not been successfully answered.

Peace] All *prosperity*, and continual union with God and among yourselves; *and love* to God and man, the principle of all obedience and union; *with faith*, continually increasing, and growing stronger and stronger, *from God the Father*, as the fountain of all our mercies, *and the Lord Jesus Christ*, through whose sacrifice and mediation they all come.

Verse 24. Grace be with all them] May the Divine *favour*, and all the benedictions flowing from it, be with all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ, who has so loved us as to give his life to redeem ours, and to save us unto life eternal.

In sincerity.] *εν αφθαρσια*. In *incorruptibility*. Those who show the genuineness of their love, by walking before him in holiness of life. Many profess to love our Lord Jesus who are corrupt in all their ways; on these the *grace* or *favour* of God cannot rest; they profess to know him, but in works deny him. Such can neither expect favour *here*, nor hereafter.

Amen.] This is wanting in ABFG, and some others. It is, however, more likely to be a *genuine subscription* here than most others of its kind. The apostle might have sealed his most earnest wish by this *word*, which means not so much, *so be it!* or *may it be so!* but rather implies the *faithfulness* of him who had given the promises, and whose prerogative it was to give effect to the prayers which his own Spirit had inspired.

The principal *subscriptions* to this epistle are the following: *To the Ephesians. The Epistle to the Ephesians is finished. To the Ephesians, written from Rome. To the Ephesians, written from Rome by Tychicus.* (This is the subscription which we have followed; and it is that of the larger number of modern MSS. and *editions*.) *The Epistle to the Ephesians, written from Rome, and sent by Tychicus-SYRIAC. To the*

Ephesians.-ÆTHIOPIC. VULGATE, no subscription. *The end of this epistle, which was written from Rome by Tychicus.* Praise be to God for ever. Amen.-ARABIC. *Written at Rome, and sent by Tychicus.*-COPTIC. The SAHIDIC is defective. *The Epistle to the Ephesians is ended, which was written at Rome by Tychicus.*-Philoxenian SYRIAC.

We have had already occasion to observe that the *subscriptions* to the sacred books were not written by the authors themselves, but were added in a much later age, and generally by unskilful hands. They are consequently not much to be depended on, and never should be quoted as a part of the Divine oracles.

1. IT may be supposed that on the principal subject of this concluding chapter, the *armour of God*, I should have been much more diffuse. I answer, my constant aim is just to say *enough*, and no more, on any point. Whether I attain this, in general, or not, I can still say it is what I have desired. As to the *Christian armour*, it does not appear to me that the apostle has couched such a profusion of mystical meaning in it as to require a huge volume to explain. I believe the Ephesians did not understand it so; nor did the primitive Church of God. Men of rich imaginations may write large volumes on such subjects; but when they come to be fairly examined, they will be found not to be explanations of the text, on which they professedly treat, but immense *bodies of divinity*, in which the peculiar creed of the writer, both with respect to doctrine and discipline, is amply set forth. *Mr. Gurnal's Christian Armour* contains a great many excellences; but surely it does not require such a volume to explain the *five* verses of this chapter, in which the apostle speaks of the spiritual armour. The grand design of the apostle was to show that *truth, righteousness, obedience to the Gospel, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, a well grounded hope of salvation, a thorough knowledge of the word of God, and a continual dependence on and application to him by prayer*, were essentially necessary to every soul who desired to walk uprightly in this life, and finally to attain everlasting blessedness. This is the obvious meaning of the apostle; in this sense it was understood by the Ephesians, and by the primitive Church; *we* may amplify it as we please.

2. In two or three places, in the preceding notes, I have referred to a piece on a very remarkable rule relative to the *Greek article*, to be introduced at the end. From the labours of several learned men this subject has acquired considerable importance, and has excited no small interest among Biblical

critics. The late benevolent, learned, and excellent Mr. *Granville Sharp* was, I believe, the first who brought this subject fairly before the public; he was followed by the Rev. Dr. *Wordsworth*, a learned and intelligent clergyman of the Established Church.

The Rev. Dr. Middleton, late bishop of *Calcutta*, has presented the subject in all its force and excellence, fortified by innumerable proofs, and a great variety of critical disquisition. The principal design of these writers was to exhibit a new and substantial mode of proving the *Divinity of our Lord and Saviour*. Their works are before the public, and within the reach of all who are capable of judging of this mode of proof.

The piece which I now subjoin is the result of the researches of one of my literary friends, H. S. Boyd, Esq., author of *Translations from Chrysostom, &c.*, who has read the Greek writers, both sacred and profane, with peculiar attention; and has collected a vast number of additional examples, both from prose and poetic writers, for the confirmation and illustration of the rule in question, and in support of the great doctrine of the *Godhead of Christ*.

The critical reader, who has entered into this subject, will be glad to see such a number of pointed examples brought within his reach, which at once serve the purpose both of *philology* and *divinity*. The learned author has transmitted them to me for the purpose of insertion in this place; but want of room has obliged me to omit several of his quotations.*

* Since Dr. Clarke wrote this paragraph, the Essay on the Greek Article has undergone a careful revision by the author, and several additions have been made to it, which will, it is hoped, be valuable to the critical reader. It is now introduced in a separate form from the Commentary.-THE PUBLISHERS.

See Ancillary Writings for “An Essay On The Greek Article.”

I would not wish the reader to suppose that these are the only proofs of the grand doctrine of the Godhead of Christ; they are not: the Holy Scripture, in its plain, obvious meaning, independently of such criticism, affords the most luminous and convincing proofs of the doctrine in question; but this is no sufficient reason that we should reject any additional light which may come to us in the way of Divine Providence.

Finished the correction for a new edition, Dec. 15th, 1831.