

CHAPTER 26

This chapter is a solemn conclusion of the main body of the levitical law. The precepts that follow in this and the following book either relate to some particular matters or are repetitions and explications of the foregoing institutions. Now this chapter contains a general enforcement of all those laws by promises of reward in case of obedience on the one hand, and threatenings of punishment for disobedience on the other hand, the former to work upon hope, the latter on fear, those two handles of the soul, by which it is taken hold of and managed. Here is,

- I.** A repetition of two or three of the principal of the commandments (v. 1, 2).
- II.** An inviting promise of all good things, if they would but keep God's commandments (v. 3-13).
- III.** A terrible threatening of ruining judgments which would be brought upon them if they were refractory and disobedient (v. 14-39).
- IV.** A gracious promise of the return of mercy to those of them that would repent and reform (v. 40, etc.). Deuteronomy 28 is parallel to this.

◀~~26~~ LEVITICUS 26:1-13

PROMISES

Here is,

- I.** The inculcating of those precepts of the law which were of the greatest consequence, and by which were of the greatest consequence, and by which especially their obedience would be tried, v. 1, 2. They are the abstract of the second and fourth commandments, which, as they are by much the largest in the decalogue, so they are most frequently insisted on in other parts of the law. As, when a master has given many things in charge to his servant, he concludes with the repetition of those things which were of the greatest importance, and which the servant was most in

danger of neglecting, bidding him, whatever he did, be sure to remember those, so here God by Moses, after many precepts, closes all with a special charge to observe these two great commandments.

1. “Be sure you never worship images, nor ever make any sort of images or pictures for a religious use,” v. 1. No sin was more provoking to God than this, and yet there was none that they were more addicted to, and which afterwards proved of more pernicious consequence to them. Next to God’s being, unity, and universal influence, it is necessary that we know and believe that he is an infinite Spirit; and therefore to represent him by an image in the making of it, to confine him to an image in the consecrating of it, and to worship him by an image in bowing down to it, *changes his truth into a lie and his glory into shame*, as much as any thing.

2. “Be sure you keep up a great veneration for sabbaths and religious assemblies,” v. 2. As nothing tends more to corrupt religion than the use of images in devotion, so nothing contributes more to the support of it than *keeping the sabbaths and reverencing the sanctuary*. These make up very much of the instrumental part of religion, by which the essentials of it are kept up. Therefore we find in the prophets that, next to the sin of idolatry, there is no sin for which the Jews are more frequently reprov’d and threatened than the profanation of the sabbath day.

II. Great encouragements given them to live in constant obedience to all God’s commandments, largely and strongly assuring them that if they did so they should be a happy people, and should be blessed with all the good things they could desire. Human governments enforce their laws with penalties to be inflicted for the breach of them; but God will be known as *the rewarder of those that seek and serve him*. Let us take a view of these great and precious promises, which, though they relate chiefly to the life which now is, and to the public national concerns of that people, were typical of the spiritual blessings entailed by the covenant of grace upon all believers through Christ.

1. Plenty and abundance of the fruits of the earth. They should have seasonable rain, neither too little nor too much, but what was requisite for their land, which was watered with the dew of heaven (⁽⁵¹¹⁾Deuteronomy 11:10, 11), that it might *yield its increase*, v. 4. The dependence which the fruitfulness of the earth beneath has upon the influences of heaven above is a sensible intimation to us that every good and perfect gift must be

expected *from above*, from the *Father of lights*. It is promised that the earth should produce its fruits in such great abundance that they would be kept in full employment, during both the harvest and the vintage, to gather it in, v. 5. Before they had reaped their corn and threshed it, the vintage would be ready; and, before they had finished their vintage, it would be high time to begin their sowing. Long harvests are often with us the consequences of bad weather, but with them they should be the effects of a great increase. This signified the abundance of grace which should be poured out in gospel times, when the *ploughman should overtake the reaper* (³⁰¹³Amos 9:13), and a great harvest of souls should be gathered in to Christ. The plenty should be so great that they should *bring forth the old* to be given away to the poor *because of the new*, to make room for it in their barns, which yet they would not *pull down to build greater*, as that rich fool (⁴⁰²⁸Luke 12:18), for God gave them this abundance to be laid out, not be hoarded up from one year to another. *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him*, ⁴¹¹⁵Proverbs 11:26. That promise (⁴⁰⁸⁰Malachi 3:10), *I will pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it*, explains this, v. 10. And that which crowns this blessing of plenty is (v. 5), *You shall eat your bread to the full*, which intimates that they should have, not only abundance, but content and satisfaction in it. They should have enough, and should know when they had enough. Thus *the meek shall eat and be satisfied*, ⁴³²⁶Psalm 22:26.

2. Peace under the divine protection; “*You shall dwell in your land safely* (v. 5); both really save, and safe in your own apprehensions; you shall lie down to rest in the power and promise of God, and not only none shall hurt you, but none shall so much as *make you afraid*,” v. 6. See ⁴⁰⁰⁸Psalm 4:8. They should not be infested with wild beasts, these should be *rid out of the land*, or, as it is promised (⁴⁰²³Job 5:23), should *be at peace with them*. Nor should they be terrified with the alarms of war: *Neither shall the sword go through your land*. This holy security is promised to all the faithful, ⁴⁹¹¹Psalm 91:1, etc. Those must needs dwell in safety that *dwell in God*, ⁴⁸⁹⁸Job 9:18, 19.

3. Victory and success in their wars abroad, while they had peace and tranquility at home, v. 7, 8. They are assured that the hand of God should so signally appear with them in their conquests that no disproportion of numbers should make against them: *Five of you shall have courage to attack, and strength to chase and defeat, a hundred*, as Jonathan did (⁴⁰⁴²1

Samuel 14:12), experiencing the truth of his own maxim (v. 6), that it is all one with the Lord to *save by many or by few*.

4. The increase of their people: *I will make you fruitful and multiply you*, v. 9. Thus the promise made to Abraham must be fulfilled, that his seed should be *as the dust of the earth*; and much more numerous they would have been if they had by their sin cut themselves short. It is promised to the gospel church that it shall be fruitful, ^{<856>}John 15:16.

5. The favour of God, which is the fountain of all good: *I will have respect unto you*, v. 9. If the eye of our faith be unto God, the eye of his favour will be unto us. More is implied than is expressed in that promise, *My soul shall not abhor you* (v. 11), as there is in that threatening, *My soul shall have no pleasure in him*, ^{<808>}Hebrews 10:38. Though there was that among them which might justly have alienated him from them, yet, if they would closely adhere to his institutions, he would not abhor them.

6. Tokens of his presence in and by his ordinances: *I will set my tabernacle among you*, v. 11. It was their honour and advantage that God's tabernacle was lately erected among them; but here he lets them know that the continuance and establishment of it depended upon their good behaviour. The tabernacle that was now set should be settled if they would be obedient, else not. Note, The way to have God's ordinances fixed among us, as a nail in a sure place, is to cleave closely to the institution of them. It is added (v. 12), "*I will walk among you*, with delight and satisfaction, as a man in his garden; I will keep up communion with you as a man walking with his friend." This seems to be alluded to, ^{<811>}Revelation 2:1, where Christ is said to *walk in the midst of the golden candlesticks*.

7. The grace of the covenant, as the fountain and foundation, the sweetness and security, of all these blessings: *I will establish my covenant with you*, v. 9. Let them perform their part of the covenant, and God would not fail to perform his. All covenant-blessings are summed up in the covenant-relation (v. 12): *I will be your God, and you shall be my people*; and they are all grounded upon their redemption: *I am your God*, because *I brought you forth out of the land of Egypt*, v. 13. Having purchased them, he would own them, and never cast them off till they cast him off. He *broke their yoke*, and *made them go upright*, that is, their deliverance out of Egypt put them in a state both of ease and honour, that, being delivered out of the hands of their enemies, they might *serve God without fear*, each walking *in his uprightness*. When Israel rejected Christ, and was therefore

rejected by him, their back is said to be *bowed down* always under the burden of their guilt, which was heavier than that of their bondage in Egypt, ~~110~~Romans 11:10.

~~111~~LEVITICUS 26:14-39

THREATENINGS

After God had set the blessing before them (the life and good which would make them a happy people if they would be obedient), he here sets the curse before them, the death and evil which would make them as miserable if they were disobedient. Let them not think themselves so deeply rooted as that God's power could not ruin them, nor so highly favoured as that his justice would not ruin them if they revolted from him and rebelled against him; no *You only have I known, therefore I will punish you soonest and sorest.* ~~112~~Amos 3:2. Observe,

I. How their sin is described, which would bring all this misery upon them. Not sins of ignorance and infirmity; God had provided sacrifices for those. Not the sins they repented of and forsook; but the sins that were presumptuously committed, and obstinately persisted in. Two things would certainly bring this ruin upon them: —

1. A contempt of God's commandments (v. 14): "*If you will not hearken to me speaking to you by the law, nor do all these commandments, that is, desire and endeavour to do them, and, wherein you miss it, make use of the prescribed remedies.*" Thus their sin is supposed to begin in mere carelessness, and neglect, and omission. These are bad enough, but they make way for worse; for the people are brought in (v. 15) as,

(1.) *Despising God's statutes*, both the duties enjoined and the authority enjoining them, thinking meanly of the law and the Law-maker. Note, Those are hastening apace to their own ruin who begin to think it below them to be religious.

(2.) *Abhorring his judgments*, their very souls abhorring them. Note, Those that begin to despise religion will come by degrees to loathe it; and mean thoughts of it will ripen into ill thoughts of it; those that turn from it will turn against it, and their hearts will rise at it.

(3.) *Breaking his covenant.* Though every breach of the commandment does not amount to a breach of the covenant (we were undone if it did), yet, when men have come to such a pitch of impiety as to despise and abhor the commandment, the next step will be to disown God, and all relation to him. Those that reject the precept will come at last to renounce the covenant. Observe, It is God's covenant which they break: he made it, but they break it. Note, If a covenant be made and kept between God and man, God must have all the honour; but, if ever it be broken, man must bear all the blame: on him shall this breach be.

2. A contempt of his corrections. Even their disobedience would not have been their destruction if they had not been obstinate and impenitent in it, notwithstanding the methods God took to reclaim them. Their contempt of God's word would not have brought them to ruin, if they had not added to that a contempt of his rod, which should have brought them to repentance. Three ways this is expressed: —

(1.) *“If you will not for all this hearken to me, v. 18, 21, 27. If you will not learn obedience by the things which you suffer, but be as deaf to the loud alarms of God's judgments as you have been to the close reasonings of his word and the secret whispers of your own consciences, you are obstinate indeed.”*

(2.) *“If you walk contrary to me, v. 21, 23, 27. All sinners walk contrary to God, to his truths, laws, and counsels; but those especially that are incorrigible under his judgments. The design of the rod is to humble them, and soften them, and bring them to repentance; but, instead of this, their hearts are more hardened and exasperated against God, and in their distress they trespass yet more against him, ^{1822}2 Chronicles 28:22. This is walking contrary to God. Some read it, “If you walk at all adventures with me, carelessly and presumptuously, as if you heeded not either what you do, whether it be right or wrong, or what God does with you, whether it be for you or against you, blundering on in wilful ignorance.”*

(3.) *If you will not be reformed by these things.* God's design in punishing is to reform, by giving men sensible convictions of the evil of sin, and obliging them to seek unto him for relief: this is the primary intention; but those that will not be reformed by the judgments of God must expect to be ruined by them. Those have a great deal to answer for that have been long and often under God's correcting hand, and yet go on frowardly in a sinful way; sick and in pain, and yet not reformed; crossed and impoverished,

and yet not reformed; broken with breach upon breach, yet *not returning to the Lord*, ^{<3046>}Amos 4:6, etc.

II. How the misery is described which their sin would bring upon them, under two heads: —

1. God himself would be against them; and this is the root and cause of all their misery.

(1.) *I will set my face against you* (v. 17), that is, “I will set myself against you, set myself to ruin you.” These proud sinners God will resist, and face those down that confront his authority. Or the face is put for the anger: “I will show myself highly displeased at you.”

(2.) *I will walk contrary to you* (v. 24, 28); *with the forward he will wrestle*, ^{<388E>}Psalm 28:26 [margin]. When God in his providence thwarts the designs of a people, which they thought well laid, crosses their purposes, breaks their measures, blasts their endeavours, and disappoints their expectations, then he walks contrary to them. Note, There is nothing got by striving with God Almighty, for he will break either the heart or the neck of those that contend with him, will bring them either to repentance or ruin. “I will walk at all adventures with you,” so some read; “all covenant loving-kindness shall be forgotten, and I will leave you to common providence.” Note, Those that cast off God deserve that he should cast them off.

(3.) As they continued obstinate, the judgments should increase yet more upon them. If the first sensible tokens of God's displeasures do not attain their end, to humble and reform them, then (v. 18), *I will punish you seven times more*, and again (v. 21), *I will bring seven times more plagues*, and (v. 24), *I will punish you yet seven times*, and (v. 28), *I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins*. Note, If less judgments do not do their work, God will send greater; for, when he *judges, he will overcome*. If true repentance do not stay process, it will go on till execution be taken out. Those that are obstinate and incorrigible, when they have weathered one storm must expect another more violent; and, how severely soever they are punished, till they are in hell they must still say, “There is worse behind,” unless they repent. If the *fonder have hitherto melted in vain* (^{<2169>}Jeremiah 6:29), the furnace will be heated *seven times hotter* (a proverbial expression, used ^{<2169>}Daniel 3:19), and again and again *seven times hotter*; and who among us can dwell with such devouring fire? God

does not begin with the sorest judgments, to show that he is patient, and delights not in the death of sinners; but, if they repent not, he will proceed to the sorest, to show that he is righteous, and that he will not be mocked or set at defiance.

(4.) Their misery is completed in that threatening: *My soul shall abhor you*, v. 30. That man is as miserable as he can be whom God abhors; for his resentments are just and effective. Thus *if any man draw back*, as these are supposed to do, *God's soul shall have no pleasure in him* (³⁰⁸Hebrews 10:38), and he will *spue them out of his mouth*, (⁶⁸⁶Revelation 3:16. It is spoken of as strange, and yet too true, *Hath thy soul loathed Zion?* ²⁴⁴⁹Jeremiah 14:19.

2. The whole creation would be at war with them. All God's sore judgments would be sent against them; for he hath many arrows in his quiver. The threatenings here are very particular, because really they were prophecies, and he that foresaw all their rebellions knew they would prove so; see (⁶⁵¹⁶Deuteronomy 31:16, 29. This long roll of threatening shows that evil pursues sinners. We have here,

(1.) Temporal judgments threatened.

[1.] Diseases of body, which should be epidemical: *I will appoint over you*, as task-masters, to rule you with rigour, *terror, consumption, and the burning ague*, v. 16. What we translate *terror*, some think, signifies a particular disease, probably (says the learned bishop Patrick) the *falling sickness*, which is terror indeed: all chronical diseases are included in the consumption, and all acute diseases in the burning ague or fever. These consume the eyes, and cause sorrow both to those that are visited with them and to their friends and relations. Note, All diseases are God's servants; they do what he appoints them, and are often used as scourges wherewith he chastises a provoking people. The pestilence is threatened (v. 25) to meet them, when they are gathered together in their cities for fear of the sword. The greater the concourse of people is, the greater desolation does the pestilence make; and, when it gets among the soldiers that should defend a place, it is of most fatal consequence.

[2.] Famine and scarcity of bread, which should be brought upon them several ways; as, *First*, By plunder (v. 16): *Your enemies shall eat it up, and carry it off as the Midianites did*, (¹⁰⁶⁵Judges 6:5, 6. *Secondly*, By unseasonable weather, especially the want of rain (v. 19): *I will make your*

heaven as iron, letting fall no rain, but reflecting heat, and then the earth would of course be as dry and hard as brass, and their labour in ploughing and sowing would be in vain (v. 20); for the increase of the earth depends upon God's good providence more than upon man's good husbandry. This should be the breaking of the staff of bread (v. 26), which life leans upon, and is supported by, on which perhaps they had leaned more than upon God's blessing. There should be so great a dearth of corn that, whereas every family used to fill an oven of their own with household bread, now ten families should have to fill but one over, which would bring themselves and their children and servants to short allowance, so that they should eat and not be satisfied. The less they had the more craving should their appetites be. Thirdly, By the besieging of their cities, which would reduce them to such an extremity that they should eat the flesh of their sons and daughters, v. 29.

[3.] War, and the prevailing of their enemies over them: “You shall be slain before your enemies, v. 17. Your choice men shall die in battle, and those that hate you shall reign over you, and justly, since you are not willing that the God that loved you should reign over you;” ⁴¹¹⁸2 Chronicles 12:8. Miserable is that people whose enemies are their rulers and have got dominion over them, or whose rulers have become their enemies and under-hand seek the ruin of their interests. Thus God would break the pride of their power, v. 19. God had given them power over the nations; but when they, instead of being thankful for that power, and improving it for the service of God's kingdom, grew proud of it, and perverted the intentions of it, it was just with God to break it. Thus God would bring a sword upon them to avenge the quarrel of his covenant, v. 25. Note, God has a just quarrel with those that break covenant with him, for he will not be mocked by the treachery of perfidious men; and one way or other he will avenge this quarrel upon those that play at fast and loose with him.

[4.] Wild beasts, lions, bears, and wolves, which should increase upon them, and tear in pieces all that come in their way (v. 22), as we read of two bears that in an instant killed forty-two children, ¹¹²⁴2 Kings 2:24. This is one of the four sore judgments threatened ³⁴⁰Ezekiel 14:21, which plainly refers to this chapter. Man was made to have dominion over the creatures, and, though many of them are stronger than he, yet none of them could have hurt him, nay, all of them would have served him, if he had not first shaken off God's dominion, and so lost his own; and now the

creatures are in rebellion against him that is in rebellion against his Maker, and, when the Lord of those hosts pleases, they are the executioners of his wrath and the ministers of his justice.

[5.] Captivity, or dispersion: *I will scatter you among the heathen* (v. 33), *in your enemies' land*, v. 34. Never were any people so incorporated and united among themselves as they were; but for their sin God would scatter them, so that they should be lost among the heathen, from whom God had graciously distinguished them, but with whom they had wickedly mingled themselves. Yet, when they were scattered, divine justice had not done with them, but would draw out a sword after them, which would find them out, and follow them wherever they were. God's judgments, as they cannot be outfaced, so they cannot be outrun.

[6.] The utter ruin and desolation of their land, which should be so remarkable that their very enemies themselves, who had helped it forward, should in the review be astonished at it, v. 32. *First*, Their cities should be waste, forsaken, uninhabited, and all the buildings destroyed; those that escaped the desolations of war should fall to decay of themselves. *Secondly*, Their sanctuaries should be a desolation, that is, their synagogues where they met for religious worship every sabbath, as well as their tabernacle where they met thrice a year. *Thirdly*, The country itself should be desolate, not tilled or husbanded (v. 34, 35); then the land should enjoy its sabbaths, because they had not religiously observed the sabbatical years which God appointed them. They tilled their ground when God would have them let it rest; justly therefore were they driven out of it; and the expression intimates that the ground itself was pleased and easy when it was rid of the burden of such sinners, under which it had groaned, ^{<480>}Romans 8:20, etc. The captivity in Babylon lasted seventy years, and so long the land *enjoyed her sabbaths*, as is said (^{<482>}2 Chronicles 36:21) with reference to this.

[7.] The destruction of their idols, though rather a mercy than a judgment, yet, being a necessary piece of justice, is here mentioned, to show what would be the sin that would bring all these miseries upon them: *I will destroy your high places*, v. 30. Those that will not be parted from their sins by the commands of God shall be parted from them by his judgments; since they would not destroy their high places, God would. And, to upbraid them with the unreasonable fondness they had shown for their idols, it is foretold that their *carcasses should be cast upon the carcasses of*

their idols. Those that are wedded to their lusts will sooner or later have enough of them. Their idols would not be able to help either themselves or their worshippers; but, those that made them being like them, they should both perish alike, and fall together as blind into the ditch.

(2.) Spiritual judgments are here threatened. These should seize the mind; for he that made the mind can, when he pleases, make his sword approach to it. It is here threatened,

[1.] That they should find no acceptance with God: *I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours*, v. 31. Though the judgments of God upon them did not separate them and their sins, yet they extorted incense from them; but in vain — even their incense was an abomination, ^{<211B>}Isaiah 1:13.

[2.] That they should have no courage in their wars, but should be quite dispirited and disheartened. They should not only fear and flee (v. 17), but fear and *fall, when none pursued*, v. 36. A guilty conscience would be their continual terror, so that not only the sound of a trumpet, but the very *sound of a leaf, should chase them*. Note, Those that cast off the fear of God expose themselves to the fear of every thing else, ^{<181>}Proverbs 28:1. Their very fears should dash them *one against another*, v. 37, 38. And those that had increased one another's guilt would now increase one another's fears.

[3.] That they should have no hope of the forgiveness of their sins (v. 39): *They shall pine away in their iniquity, and how should they then live?* ^{<530>}Ezekiel 33:10. Note, It is a righteous thing with God to leave those to despair of pardon that have presumed to sin; and it is owing to free grace if we are not abandoned to pine away in the iniquity we were born in and have lived in.

^{<0340>}LEVITICUS 26:40-46

THREATENINGS AND PROMISES

Here the chapter concludes with gracious promises of the return of God's favour to them upon their repentance, that they might not (unless it were their own fault) *pine away in their iniquity*. Behold, with wonder, the riches of God's mercy to a people that had obstinately stood it out against

the judgments of God, and would never think of surrendering till they were reduced to the last extremity. Yet *turn to strong-hold, you prisoners of hope*, ^{389D}Zechariah 9:12. As bad as things are, they may be mended. *Yet there is hope in Israel*. Observe,

I. How the repentance which would qualify them for this mercy is described, v. 40, 41. The instances of it are three: —

1. Confession, by which they must give glory to God, and take shame to themselves. There must be a confession of sin, their own and their fathers', which they must lament the guilt of because they feel the smart of it; that thus they may cut off the entail of wrath. They must in their confession put sin under its worst character, as *walking contrary to God*; this is the sinfulness of sin, the worst thing in it, and which in our repentance we should especially bewail. There must also be a confession of wrath; they must overlook the instruments of their trouble and the second causes, and confess that God has *walked contrary to them*, and so *dealt with them according to their sins*. Such a confession as this we find made by Daniel just before the dawning of the day of their deliverance (Leviticus 9), and the like, Ezra 9 and ^{389D}Nehemiah 9:2. Remorse and godly sorrow for sin: *If their uncircumcised heart be humbled*. An impenitent, unbelieving, unhumbled heart, is called an *uncircumcised* heart, the heart of a Gentile that is a stranger to God, rather than the heart of an Israelite in covenant with him. True circumcision is *of the heart* (^{389D}Romans 2:29), without which the circumcision of the flesh avails nothing, ^{389D}Jeremiah 9:26. Now in repentance this uncircumcised heart was humbled, that is, it was truly broken and contrite for sin. Note, A humble heart under humbling providences prepares for deliverance and true comfort.

2. Submission to the justice of God in all his dealings; if they then *accept of the punishment of their iniquity* (v. 41 and again 5:43), that is, if they justify God and condemn themselves, patiently bear the punishment as that which they have well deserved, and carefully answer the ends of it as that which God has well designed, accept it as a kindness, take it as physic, and improve it, then they are penitents indeed.

II. How the mercy which they should obtain upon their repentance is described.

1. They should not be abandoned: *Though they have despised my judgments, yet, for all that, I will not cast them away*, v. 43, 44. He speaks

as a tender Father that cannot find in his heart to disinherit a son that has been very provoking. *How shall I do it?* ^{<318>}Hosea 11:8, 9. Till he had laid the foundations of a church for himself in the Gentile world, the Jewish church was not quite forsaken, nor cast away.

2. They should be remembered: *I will remember the land* with favour, which is grounded upon the promise before, *I will remember my covenant* (v. 42), which is repeated, v. 45. God is said *to remember the covenant* when he performs the promises of it, purely for his faithfulness' sake; not because there is any thing in us to recommend us to his favour, but because he will be as good as his word. This is the church's plea. ^{<170>}Psalm 74:20, *Have respect unto the covenant*. He will remember the constitution of the covenant, which is such as leaves room for repentance, and promises pardon upon repentance; and the Mediator of the covenant, who was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and was sent, when the fulness of time came, in remembrance of that holy covenant. The word covenant is thrice repeated, to intimate that God is ever mindful of it and would have us to be so. The persons also with whom the covenant was made are mentioned in an unusual manner, *per modum ascensus* — *in the ascending line*, beginning with Jacob, to lead them gradually to the most ancient promise, which was made to the father of the faithful: thus (^{<302>}Micah 7:20) he is said to perform the *truth to Jacob*, and the *mercy to Abraham*. He will for their sakes (v. 45), not their merit's sake, but their benefit's sake, remember the covenant of their ancestors, and upon that score show kindness to them, though most unworthy; they are therefore said to be, *as touching the election, beloved for the fathers' sake*, ^{<512>}Romans 11:28. Note, When those that have walked contrary to God in a way of sin return to him by sincere repentance, though he has walked contrary to them in a way of judgment he will return to them in a way of special mercy, pursuant to the covenant of redemption and grace. None are so ready to repent as God is to forgive upon repentance, through Christ, who is given for a covenant.

Lastly, These are said to be *the laws which the Lord made between him and the children of Israel*, v. 46. His communion with his church is kept up by his law. He manifests not only his dominion over them, but his favour to them, by giving them his law; and they manifest not only their holy fear, but their holy love, by the observance of it; and thus it is made between them, rather as a covenant than a law; for he draws with the cords of a man.