

The Death of Death in the Death of Christ

by

John Owen

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enabled me to perform therein must be left to the judgment of others. Altogether hopeless of success I am not; but fully resolved that I shall not live to see a solid answer given unto it. If any shall undertake to vellicate and pluck some of the branches, rent from the roots and principles of the whole discourse, I shall freely give them leave to enjoy their own wisdom and imaginary conquest. If any shall seriously undertake to debate the whole cause, if I live to see it effected, I shall engage myself, by the Lord's assistance, to be their humble convert or fair antagonist. In that which is already accomplished by the good hand of the Lord, I hope the learned may find something for their contentment, and the weak for their strengthening and satisfaction; that in all some glory may redound to Him whose it is, and whose truth is here unfolded by the unworthiest labourer in his vineyard,

J. O.

THE DEATH OF DEATH IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

A TREATISE OF THE REDEMPTION AND RECONCILIATION THAT IS IN THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, WITH THE MERIT THEREOF, AND SATISFACTION WROUGHT THEREBY.

Book I.

Chapter I.

In general of the end of the death of Christ, as it is in the Scripture proposed.

By the end of the death of Christ, we mean in general, both, — first, that which his Father and himself intended *in* it; and, secondly, that which was effectually fulfilled and accomplished *by* it. Concerning either we may take a brief view of the expressions used by the Holy Ghost:—

I. For the first. Will you know the *end* wherefore, and the intention wherewith, Christ came into the world? Let us ask himself (who knew his own mind, as also all the secrets of his Father's bosom), and he will tell us that the "Son of man came to save that which was lost," Matt. xviii. 11, — to recover and save poor lost sinners; that was his intent and design, as is again asserted, Luke xix. 10. Ask also his apostles, who know his mind, and they will tell you the same. So Paul, 1 Tim. i. 15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Now, if you will ask who these sinners are towards whom he hath this gracious intent and purpose, himself tells you, Matt. xx. 28, that he came to "give his life a ransom for *many*;" in other places called *us*, believers, distinguished from the world: for he "gave himself for *our* sins,

that he might deliver *us* from this present evil *world*, according to the will of God and our Father,” Gal. i. 4. That was the will and intention of God, that he should give himself for us, that we might be saved, being separated from the world. They are his *church*: Eph. v. 25–27, “He 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:” which last words express also the very aim and end of Christ in giving himself for any, even that they may be made *fit* for God, and brought nigh unto him; — the like whereof is also asserted, Tit. ii. 14, “He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Thus clear, then, and apparent, is the intention and design of Christ and his Father in this great work, even what it was, and towards whom, — namely, to save us, to deliver us from the evil world, to purge and wash us, to make us holy, zealous, fruitful in good works, to render us acceptable, and to bring us unto God; for through him “we have access into the grace wherein we stand” Rom. v. 2.

II. The effect, also, and actual product of the work itself, or what is accomplished and fulfilled by the death, blood-shedding, or oblation of Jesus Christ, is no less clearly manifested, but is as fully, and very often more distinctly, expressed; — as, first, *Reconciliation* with God, by removing and slaying the enmity that was between him and us; for “when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,” Rom. v. 10. “God was in him reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,” 2 Cor. v. 19; yea, he hath “reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ,” verse 18. And if you would know how this reconciliation was effected, the apostle will tell you that “he abolished in his flesh the enmity, the law of commandments consisting in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby,” Eph. ii. 15, 16: so that “he is our peace,” verse 14. Secondly, *Justification*, by taking away the guilt of sins, procuring remission and pardon of them, redeeming us from their power, with the curse and wrath due unto us for them; for “by his own blood he entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” Heb. ix. 12. “He redeemed us from the curse, being made a curse for us,” Gal. iii. 13; “his own self bearing our sins in his own body on the tree,” 1 Pet. ii. 24. We have “all sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” but are “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins” Rom. iii. 23–25: for “in him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins,” Col. i. 14. Thirdly, *Sanctification*, by the purging away of the uncleanness and pollution of our sins, renewing in us the image of God, and supplying us with the graces of the Spirit of holiness: for “the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself to God, purgeth our consciences from dead works that we may serve the living God,” Heb. ix. 14; yea, “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin,” 1 John i. 7. “By himself he purged our sins,” Heb. i. 3. To “sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gate,” chap. xiii. 12. “He gave himself for the church to sanctify and cleanse it, that it should be holy and without blemish,” Eph. v. 25–27. Peculiarly amongst the graces of the Spirit, “it is given to us,” ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, “for Christ’s sake, to believe on him,” Phil. i. 29; God “blessing us in him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places,” Eph. i. 3. Fourthly, *Adoption*, with that evangelical liberty and all those glorious privileges which appertain to the sons of God; for “God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might

receive the adoption of sons,” Gal. iv. 4, 5. Fifthly, Neither do the effects of the death of Christ rest here; they leave us not until we are settled in heaven, in glory and immortality for ever. Our inheritance is a “purchased possession,” Eph. i. 14: “And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance,” Heb. ix. 15. The sum of all is, — The death and blood-shedding of Jesus Christ hath wrought, and doth effectually procure, for all those that are concerned in it, eternal redemption, consisting in grace here and glory hereafter.

III. Thus full, clear, and evident are the expressions in the Scripture concerning the *ends* and *effects* of the death of Christ, that a man would think every one might run and read. But we must stay: among all things in Christian religion, there is scarce any thing more questioned than this, which seems to be a most fundamental principle. A spreading persuasion there is of a *general ransom* to be paid by Christ for all; that he died to redeem *all and every one*, — not only for *many*, his *church*, the *elect* of God, but for every one also of the posterity of Adam. Now, the masters of this opinion do see full well and easily, that if *that* be the *end* of the death of Christ which we have from the Scripture asserted, if those before recounted be the immediate *fruits* and *products* thereof, then one of these two things will necessarily follow:— that either, first, God and Christ failed of their end proposed, and did not accomplish that which they intended, the death of Christ being not a fitly-proportioned *means* for the attaining of that end (for any cause of failing cannot be assigned); which to assert seems to us blasphemously injurious to the wisdom, power, and perfection of God, as likewise derogatory to the worth and value of the death of Christ; — or else, that all men, all the posterity of Adam, must be saved, purged, sanctified, and glorified; which surely they will not maintain, at least the Scripture and the woeful experience of millions will not allow. Wherefore, to cast a tolerable colour upon their persuasion, they must and do deny that God or his Son had any such absolute aim or end in the death or blood-shedding of Jesus Christ, or that any such thing was immediately procured and purchased by it, as we before recounted; but that God intended nothing, neither was any thing effected by Christ, — that no benefit ariseth to any immediately by his death but what is common to all and every soul, though never so cursedly unbelieving here and eternally damned hereafter, until an act of some, not procured for them by Christ, (for if it were, why have they it not all alike?) to wit, faith, do distinguish them from others. Now, this seeming to me to enervate the virtue, value, fruits and effects of the satisfaction and death of Christ, — serving, besides, for a basis and foundation to a dangerous, uncomfortable, erroneous persuasion — I shall, by the Lord’s assistance, declare what the Scripture holds out in both these things, both that assertion which is intended to be proved, and that which is brought for the proof thereof; desiring the Lord by his Spirit to lead us into all truth, to give us understanding in all things, and if any one be otherwise minded, to reveal that also unto him.

Chapter II.

Of the nature of an end in general, and some distinctions about it.

I. The *end* of any thing is that which the *agent* intendeth to accomplish in and by the operation which is proper unto its nature, and which it applieth itself unto, — that which any one aimeth at, and designeth in himself to attain, as a thing good and desirable unto him in the state and condition wherein he is. So the end which Noah proposed unto himself in the building of the ark was the preservation of himself and others. According to the will of God, he made an ark to preserve himself and his family from the flood: “According to all that God commanded him, so did he,” Gen. vi. 22. That which the agent doth, or whereto he applieth himself, for the compassing his proposed *end*, is called the *means*; which two do complete the whole reason of working in free *intellectual* agents, for I speak only of such as work according to choice or election. So Absalom intending a revolt from his father, to procure the crown and kingdom for himself, “he prepared him horses and chariots, and fifty men to run before him,” 2 Sam. xv. 1; and farther, by fair words, and glossing compliances, “he stole the hearts of the men of Israel” verse 6; then pretends a sacrifice at Hebron, where he makes a strong conspiracy, verse 12; — all which were the *means* he used for the attaining of his fore-proposed end.

II. Between both these, *end* and *means*, there is this relation, that (though in sundry kinds) they are mutually causes one of another. The end is the first, principal, *moving cause* of the whole. It is that for whose sake the whole work is. No agent applies itself to action but for an end; and were it not by that determined to some certain effect, thing, way, or manner of working, it would no more do one thing than another. The inhabitants of the old world desiring and intending unity and cohabitation, with perhaps some reserves to provide for their safety against a second storm, they cry, “Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth,” Gen. xi. 4. First, They lay down their *aim* and *design*, and then let out the *means* in their apprehension conducing thereunto. And manifest, then, it is, that the whole reason and method of affairs that a wise worker or agent, according to the counsel, proposeth to himself is taken from the *end* which he aims at; that is, in intention and contrivance, the beginning of all that order which is in working. Now, the *means* are all those things which are used for the attaining of the end proposed, — as meat for the preservation of life, sailing in a ship for him that would pass the sea, laws for the quiet continuance of human society; and they are the procuring cause of the end, in one kind or another. Their existence is for the ends sake, and the end hath its rise out of them, following them either *morally* as their desert, or *naturally* as their fruit and product. First, In a *moral* sense. When the action and the end are to be measured or considered in reference to a moral rule, or *law* prescribed to the agent, then the *means* are the deserving or meritorious cause of the end; as, if Adam had continued in his innocency, and done all things according to the law given unto him, the end procured thereby had been a blessed life to eternity; as now the end of any sinful act is death, the curse of the law. Secondly, When the means are considered only in their *natural* relation, then they are the instrumentally efficient cause of the end. So Joab intending the death of Abner, “he smote him with his spear under the fifth rib, that he died,” 2 Sam. iii. 27. And when Benaiah, by the command of Solomon, fell upon Shimei the wounds he gave him were the efficient of his death, 1 Kings ii. 46. In which regard there is no difference between the murdering of an innocent man and the executing of an offender; but as they are under a moral consideration, their ends follow their deservings, in respect of conformity to the rule, and so there is $\chi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\mu\alpha \mu\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\alpha$ between them.

III. The former consideration, by reason of the defect and perverseness of some agents (for otherwise these things are coincident), holds out a twofold end of things, — first, of the work, and,

secondly, of the workman; of the act and the agent: for when the means assigned for the attaining of any end are not proportioned unto it, nor, fitted for it, according to that rule which the agent is to work by, then it cannot be but that he must aim at one thing and another follow, in respect of the morality of the work. So Adam is enticed into a desire to be like God; this now he makes his aim, which to effect he eats the forbidden fruit, and that contracts a guilt which he aimed not at. But when the agent acts aright, and as it should do, — when it aims at an end that is proper to it, belonging to its proper perfection and condition, and worketh by such means as are fit and suitable to the end proposed, — the end of the work and the workman are one and the same; as when Abel intended the worship of the Lord, he offered a sacrifice through faith, acceptable unto him; or as a man, desiring salvation through Christ, applieth himself to get an interest in him. Now, the sole reason of this diversity is, that secondary agents, such as men are, have an end set and appointed to their actions by Him which giveth them an external rule or law to work by, which shall always attend them in their working, whether they will or no. God only, whose will and good pleasure is the sole rule of all those works which outwardly are of him, can never deviate in his actions, nor have any end attend or follow his acts not precisely by him intended.

IV. Again; the end of every free agent is either that which he effecteth, or that for whose sake he doth effect it. When a man builds a house to let to hire, that which he effecteth is the building of a house; that which moveth him to do it is love of gain. The physician cures the patient, and is moved to it by his reward. The end which Judas aimed at in his going to the priests, bargaining with them, conducting the soldiers to the garden, kissing Christ, was the betraying of his Master; but the end for whose sake the whole undertaking was set on foot was the obtaining of the thirty pieces of silver: “What will ye give me, and I will do it?” The end which God effected by the death of Christ was the satisfaction of his justice: the end for whose sake he did it was either supreme, or his own glory; or subordinate, ours with him.

V. Moreover, the *means* are of two sorts:— First, Such as have a true goodness in themselves without reference to any farther kind; though not so considered as we use them for means. No means, as a means is considered as good in itself, but only as conducive to a farther end; it is repugnant to the nature of means, as such, to be considered as good in themselves. Study is in itself the most noble employment of the soul; but, aiming at wisdom or knowledge, we consider it as good only inasmuch as it conducteth to that end, otherwise as “a weariness of the flesh,” Eccl. xii. 12. Secondly, Such as have no good at all in any kind, as in themselves considered, but merely as conducing to that end which they are fit to attain. They receive all their goodness (which is but relative) from that whereunto they are appointed, in themselves no way desirable; as the cutting off a leg or an arm for the preservation of life, taking a bitter potion for health’s sake, throwing corn and lading into the sea to prevent shipwreck. Of which nature is the death of Christ, as we shall afterward declare.

VI. These things being thus proposed in general, our next task must be to accommodate them to the present business in hand; which we shall do in order, by laying down the *agent* working, the *means* wrought and the *end* effected, in the great work of our redemption; for these three must be orderly considered and distinctly, that we may have a right apprehension of the whole: into the first whereof, σὺν Θεῷ, we make an entrance in [chapter third.]

Chapter III.

Of the agent or chief author of the work of our redemption, and of the first thing distinctly ascribed to the person of the Father.

I. The agent in, and chief author of, this great work of our redemption is the whole blessed Trinity; for all the works which outwardly are of the Deity are undivided and belong equally to each person, their distinct manner of subsistence and order being observed. It is true, there were sundry other instrumental causes in the oblation, or rather passion of Christ but the work cannot in any sense be ascribed unto them; — for in respect of God the Father, the issue of their endeavours was exceeding contrary to their own intentions, and in the close they did nothing but what the “hand and counsel of God had before determined should be done,” Acts iv. 28; and in respect of Christ they were no way able to accomplish what they aimed at, for he himself laid down his life, and none was able to take it from him, John x. 17, 18: so that they are to be excluded from this consideration. In the several persons of the holy Trinity, the joint author of the whole work, the Scripture proposeth distinct and sundry acts or operations peculiarly assigned unto them; which, according to our weak manner of apprehension, we are to consider severally and apart; which also we shall do, beginning with them that are ascribed to the Father.

II. Two peculiar acts there are in this work of our redemption by the blood of Jesus, which may be and are properly assigned to the person of the Father:— First, The sending of his Son into the world for this employment. Secondly, A laying the punishment due to our sin upon him.

1. The Father loves the world, and sends his Son to die: He “sent his Son into the world that the world through him might be saved,” John iii. 16, 17. He “sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us,” Rom. viii. 3, 4. He “set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,” chap. iii. 25. For “when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,” Gal. iv. 4, 5. So more than twenty times in the Gospel of John there is mention of this sending; and our Saviour describes himself by this periphrasis, “Him whom the Father hath sent,” John x. 36; and the Father by this, “He who sent me,” chap. v. 37. So that this action of sending is appropriate to the Father, according to his promise that he would “send us a Saviour, a great one, to deliver us,” Isa. xix. 20; and to the profession of our Saviour, “I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me,” Isa. xlvi. 16. Hence the Father himself is sometimes called our Saviour: 1 Tim. i. 1, “According to the commandment Θεοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν,” — “of God our Saviour.” Some copies, indeed, read it, Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, — “of God and our Saviour;” but the interposition of that particle καὶ arose, doubtless, from a misprision that Christ alone is called Saviour. But directly this is the same with that parallel place of Tit. i. 3, Κατ’ ἐπιταγήν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ, — “According to the commandment of God our Saviour,” where no interposition of that conjunctive particle can have place; the same title being also in other places ascribed to him, as Luke i. 47, “My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.” As also 1 Tim. iv. 10, “We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe;” though in this last place it be not ascribed unto him with reference to his redeeming us by Christ, but his saving and preserving all by his providence. So also Tit. ii. 10, iii. 4; Deut. xxxii. 15; 1 Sam. x. 19; Ps. xxiv. 5, xxv. 5; Isa. xii. 2, xl. 10, xlv. 15;

impetration of good and application to us, ought not to be divided; and our arguments to confirm it are unshaken.

For a close of all; that which in this cause we affirm may be summed up in this: Christ did not die for any upon condition, *if they do believe*; but he died for all God's elect, *that they should believe*, and believing have eternal life. Faith itself is among the principal effects and fruits of the death of Christ; as shall be declared. It is nowhere said in Scripture, nor can it reasonably be affirmed, that if we believe, Christ died for us, as though our believing should make that to be which otherwise was not, — the act create the object; but Christ died for us that we might believe. Salvation, indeed, is bestowed conditionally; but faith, which is the condition, is absolutely procured. The question being thus stated, the difference laid open, and the thing in controversy made known, we proceed, in the next place, to draw forth some of those arguments, demonstrations, testimonies, and proofs, whereby the truth we maintain is established, in which it is contained, and upon which it is firmly founded: only desiring the reader to retain some notions in his mind of those fundamentals which in general we laid down before; they standing in such relation to the arguments which we shall use, that I am confident not one of them can be thoroughly answered before they be everted.

Book III.

Chapter I.

Arguments against the universality of redemption — The two first; from the nature of the new covenant, and the dispensation thereof.

Argument I. The first argument may be taken from the nature of the covenant of grace, which was established, ratified, and confirmed in and by the death of Christ; that was the testament whereof he was the testator, which was ratified in his death, and whence his blood is called “The blood of the new testament,” Matt. xxvi. 28. Neither can any effects thereof be extended beyond the compass of this covenant. But now this covenant was not made universally with all, but particularly only with some, and therefore those alone were intended in the benefits of the death of Christ.

The assumption appears from the nature of the covenant itself, described clearly, Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, “I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, though I was an husband to them, saith the Lord;” — and Heb. viii. 9–11, “Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.” Wherein, first, the condition of the covenant is not said to be required, but it is absolutely promised: “I will put my fear in their hearts.” And this

is the main difference between the old covenant of works and the new one of grace, that in that the Lord did only require the fulfilling of the condition prescribed, but in this he promiseth to effect it in them himself with whom the covenant is made. And without this spiritual efficacy, the truth is, the new covenant would be as weak and unprofitable, for the end of a covenant (the bringing, of us and binding of us to God), as the old. For in what consisted the weakness and unprofitableness of the old covenant, for which God in his mercy abolished it? Was it not in this, because, by reason of sin, we were no way able to fulfil the condition thereof, “Do this, and live?” Otherwise the connection is still true, that “he that doeth these things shall live.” And are we of ourselves any way more able to fulfil the condition of the new covenant? Is it not as easy for a man by his own strength to fulfil the whole law, as to repent and savingly believe the promise of the gospel? This, then, is one main difference of these two covenants, — that the Lord did in the old only require the condition; now, in the new, he will also effect it in all the federates, to whom this covenant is extended. And if the Lord should only exact the obedience required in the covenant of us, and not work and effect it also in us, the new covenant would be a show to increase our misery, and not a serious imparting and communicating of grace and mercy. If, then, this be the nature of the new testament, — as appears from the very words of it, and might abundantly be proved, — that the condition of the covenant should certainly, by free grace, be wrought and accomplished in all that are taken into covenant, then no more are in this covenant than in whom those conditions of it are effected.

But thus, as is apparent, it is not with all; for “all men have not faith,” — it is “of the elect of God:” therefore, it is not made with all, nor is the compass thereof to be extended beyond the remnant that are according to election. Yea, every blessing of the new covenant being certainly common, and to be communicated to all the covenantees, either faith is none of them, or all must have it, if the covenant itself be general. But some may say that it is true God promiseth to write his law in our hearts, and put his fear in our inward parts; but it is upon condition. Give me that condition, and I will yield the cause. Is it if they do believe? Nothing else can be imagined. That is, if they have the law written in their hearts (as every one that believes hath), then God promiseth to write his law in their hearts! Is this probable, friends? is it likely? I cannot, then, be persuaded that God hath made a covenant of grace with all, especially those who never heard a word of covenant, grace, or condition of it, much less received grace for the fulfilling of the condition; without which the whole would be altogether unprofitable and useless. The covenant is made with Adam, and he is acquainted with it, Gen. iii. 15, — renewed with Noah, and not hidden from him, — again established with Abraham, accompanied with a full and rich declaration of the chief promises of it, Gen. xii.; which is most certain not to be effected towards all, as afterwards will appear. Yea, that first distinction, between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent is enough to overthrow the pretended universality of the covenant of grace; for who dares affirm that God entered into a covenant of grace with the seed of the serpent?

Most apparent, then, it is that the new covenant of grace, and the promises thereof, are all of them of distinguishing mercy, restrained to the people whom God did foreknow; and so not extended universally to all. Now, the blood of Jesus Christ being the blood of this covenant, and his oblation intended only for the procurement of the good things intended and promised thereby, — for he was the surety thereof, Heb. vii. 22, and of that only, — it cannot be conceived to have respect unto all, or any but only those that are intended in this covenant.

Arg. II. If the Lord intended that he should, and [he] by his death did, procure pardon of sin and reconciliation with God for all and every one, to be actually enjoyed upon condition that they do believe, then ought this good-will and intention of God, with this purchase in their behalf by Jesus Christ, to be made known to them by the word, that they might believe; “for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,” Rom. x. 17: for if these things be not made known and revealed to all and every one that is concerned in them, namely, to whom the Lord intends, and for whom he hath procured so great a good, then one of these things will follow; — either, first, That they may be saved without faith in, and the knowledge of, Christ (which they cannot have unless he be revealed to them), which is false, and proved so; or else, secondly, That this good-will of God, and this purchase made by Jesus Christ, is plainly in vain, and frustrate in respect of them, yea, a plain mocking of them, that will neither do them any good to help them out of misery, nor serve the justice of God to leave them inexcusable, for what blame can redound to them for not embracing and well using a benefit which they never heard of in their lives? Doth it become the wisdom of God to send Christ to die for men that they might be saved, and never cause these men to hear of any such thing; and yet to purpose and declare that unless they do hear of it and believe it, they shall never be saved? What wise man would pay a ransom for the delivery of those captives which he is sure shall never come to the knowledge of any such payment made, and so never be the better for it? Is it answerable to the goodness of God, to deal thus with his poor creatures? to hold out towards them all in pretence the most intense love imaginable, beyond all compare and illustration, — as his love in sending his Son is set forth to be, — and yet never let them know of any such thing, but in the end to damn them for not believing it? Is it answerable to the love and kindness of Christ to us, to assign unto him at his death such a resolution as this:— “I will now, by the oblation of myself, obtain for all and every one peace and reconciliation with God, redemption and everlasting salvation, eternal glory in the high heavens, even for all those poor, miserable, wretched worms, condemned caitiffs, that every hour ought to expect the sentence of condemnation; and all these shall truly and really be communicated to them if they will believe. But yet, withal, I will so order things that innumerable souls shall never hear one word of all this that I have done for them, never be persuaded to believe, nor have the object of faith that is to be believed proposed to them, whereby they might indeed possibly partake of these things?” Was this the mind and will, this the design and purpose, of our merciful high priest? God forbid. It is all one as if a prince should say and proclaim, that whereas there be a number of captives held in sore bondage in such a place, and he hath a full treasure, he is resolved to redeem them every one, so that every one of them shall come out of prison that will thank him for his good-will, and in the meantime never take care to let these poor captives know his mind and pleasure; and yet be fully assured that unless he effect it himself it will never be done. Would not this be conceived a vain and ostentatious flourish, without any good intent indeed towards the poor captives? Or as if a physician should say that he hath a medicine that will cure all diseases, and he intends to cure the diseases of all, but lets but very few know his mind, or any thing of his medicine; and yet is assured that without his relation and particular information it will be known to very few. And shall he be supposed to desire, intend, or aim at the recovery of all?

Now, it is most clear, from the Scripture and experience of all ages, both under the old dispensation of the covenant and the new, that innumerable men, whole nations, for a long season, are passed by in the declaration of this mystery. The Lord doth not procure that it shall, by any means, in the least measure be made out to all; they hear not so much as a rumour or report of any

such thing. Under the Old Testament, “In Judah was God known, and his name was great in Israel; in Salem was his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion,” Ps. lxxvi. 1, 2. “He showed his word unto Jacob, and his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them,” Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. Whence those appellations of the heathen, and imprecations also: as Jer. x. 25, “Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name;” of whom you have a full description, Eph. ii. 12, “Without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” And under the New Testament, though the church have “lengthened her cords, and strengthened her stakes,” and “many nations are come up to the mountain of the Lord,” — so many as to be called “all people,” “all nations,” yea, the “world,” the “whole world,” in comparison of the small precinct of the church of the Jews, — yet now also Scripture and experience do make it clear that many are passed by, yea, millions of souls, that never hear a word of Christ, nor of reconciliation by him; of which we can give no other reason, but, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight,” Matt. xi. 26. For the Scripture, ye have the Holy Ghost expressly forbidding the apostles to go to sundry places with the word, but sending them another way, Acts xvi. 6, 7, 9, 10; answerable to the former dispensation in some particulars, wherein “he suffered all nations to walk in their own ways,” chap. xiv. 16. And for experience, not to multiply particulars, do but ask any of our brethren who have been but any time in the Indies, and they will easily resolve you in the truth thereof.

The exceptions against this argument are poor and frivolous, which we reserve for reply. In brief; how is it revealed to those thousands of the offspring of infidels, whom the Lord cuts off in their infancy, that they may not pester the world, persecute his church, nor disturb human society? how to their parents, of whom Paul affirms, that by the works of God they might be led to the knowledge of his eternal power and Godhead, but that they should know any thing of redemption or a Redeemer was utterly impossible?

Chapter II.

Containing three other arguments.

Arg. III. If Jesus Christ died for all men, — that is, purchased and procured for them, according to the mind and will of God, all those things which we recounted, and the Scripture setteth forth, to be the effects and fruits of his death, which may be summed up in this one phrase, “*eternal redemption*,” — then he did this, and that according to the purpose of God, either *absolutely* or upon some *condition* by them to be fulfilled. If *absolutely*, then ought all and every one, absolutely and infallibly, to be made actual partakers of that eternal redemption so purchased; for what, I pray, should hinder the enjoyment of that to any which God absolutely intended, and Christ absolutely purchased for them? If upon *condition*, then he did either procure this condition for them, or he did not? If he did procure this condition for them, — that is, that it should be bestowed on them and wrought within them, — then he did it either absolutely again, or upon a condition. If *absolutely*,