

Hebrews 11

(Henry)

Verse 1

Henry says, “Faith and hope go together; and the same things that are the object of our hope are the object of our faith. It is firm persuasion and expectation that God will perform all that he has promised to us in Christ; and this persuasion is so strong that it gives the soul a kind of possession and present fruition of those things, gives them a subsistence in the soul, by the first fruits and foretastes of them: so that believers in the exercise of faith are filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory...

It is the evidence of things not seen. Faith demonstrates to the eye of the mind the reality of those things that cannot be discerned by the eye of the body. Faith is the firm assent of the soul to the divine revelation and every part of it, and sets its seal that God is true. It is a full approbation of all that God has revealed as holy, just, and good; it helps the soul to make application of all to itself with suitable affections and endeavours; and so it is designed to serve the believer instead of sight, and to be to the soul all that the senses are to the body.

Verse 2

True faith is an old grace, and has the best plea to antiquity: it is not a new invention, a modern fancy; it is a grace that has been planted in the soul of man ever since the covenant of grace was published in the world.

The grace of faith has a retrospect as well as prospect; it looks not only forward to the end of the world, but back to the beginning of the world. By faith we understand much more of the formation of the world than ever could be understood by the naked eye of natural reason. Faith is not a force upon the understanding, but a friend and help to it...., ‘Out of nothing nothing can be made,’ though true of created power, can have no place with God, who can call things that are not as if they were, and command them into being.”

(Henry)

The apostle lists examples of faithful people who obtained a good report and then some barely named whose exploits compel the reader to consider their works.

Adam and Eve are not mentioned among the faithful. Abel’s sacrifice was accepted (probably by divine fire which consumed the offering). Adam and Eve had been shown some indication that worship and sacrifice were a

path to reentering communion with God. It is a miracle that a way back was even provided. Enoch was a figure of those who shall be raptured at the Parousia. Noah had a warning of an event in the future for which he had to make preparations for his survival and that of the seed of Seth, “He was moved with fear. Faith first influences our affections, then our actions; and faith works upon those affections that are suitable to the matter revealed. If it be some good thing, faith stirs up love and desire; if some evil thing, faith stirs up fear. His faith influenced his practice. His fear, thus excited by God’s threatening, moved him to prepare an ark, in which no doubt he met with the scorns and reproaches of a wicked generation. He did dispute with God why he should make an ark, nor how it could be capable of containing what was to be lodged in it, nor how such a vessel could possibly weather out such a storm.

The call made to Abraham (Gen 12:1) was renewed after his father’s death in Charran. God must come to us before we come to Him. Abraham’s offspring were first children, then heirs of the appanage. All that are effectually called resign up their own will and wisdom to the will and wisdom of God, and it their wisdom to do so; though they know not always their way, yet know they their guide, and this satisfies them.” (Henry) Like the children of Israel, he sojourned in a strange country, only Abraham sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country. “He lived there in ambulatory moving condition, living in a daily readiness for his removal; and thus should we all live in this world....”

Verse 16

If he takes to himself the title of their God, he will fully answer it, and act up to it; and he has prepared that for them in heaven which will fully answer this character and relation, so that it shall never be said, to the reproach and dishonour of God, that he has adopted a people to be his own children and then taken no care to make a suitable provision for them. The consideration of this should inflame the affection, and large the desires, and excite the diligent endeavours of the people of God after this city that he has prepared for them....

Verse 17

God had before this tempted or tried the faith of Abraham, when he called him away from his country and father’s house,- when by a famine he

was forced out of Canaan into Egypt,- when he was obliged to fight with five kings to rescue Lot,- when Sarah was taken from him by Abimelech, and in many other instances. But this trial was greater than all; he was commanded to offer up his son Isaac.... 'Take thy son, not one of thy beasts or slaves, thy only son by Sarah, Isaac thy laughter, the child of thy joy, whom thou lovest as thy own soul; take him away to a distant place, three-days journey, the land of Moriah; do not only leave him there, but offer him for a burnt offering.' A greater trial was never put upon any creature. The apostle here mentions come things that very much added to the greatness of this trial. (1) He was put upon it after he had received the promises, that this Isaac should build up his family, that in him should his seed be called (v.18), and that he should be one of the progenitors of the Messiah, and all nations blessed in him; so that, in being called to offer up hi Isaac, he seemed to be called to destroy and cut of his own family, to cancel the promises of God, to prevent the coming of Christ, to destroy the whole world, to sacrifice his own soul and his hopes of salvation, and to cut off the church of God at one blow; a most terrible trial! (2) That this Isaac was his only-begotten son by his wife Sarah, the only one he was to have by her and the only one that was to be the child and heir of the promise. Ishmael was to be put off with earthly greatness. The promise of a posterity and of the Messiah, must either be fulfilled by means of this son or not at all; so that, besides his most tender affection to this his son, all his expectations were bound up in him, and, if he perished, must perish with him....

Verse 19

Observe the reward of his faith in this great trial (v.19): he received his son from the dead in a figure comma in a parable.... He had parted with him to God, and God him back again....

Verse 21

He blessed both the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh; he adopted them into the number of his own sons, and so into the congregation of Israel, though they were born in Egypt [Manasseh the elder of Ephraim got the greater blessing]... He did this leaning on the top of his staff; not as the papists dream, that he worshipped some image of God engraven on the head of the staff, but intimating to us his great natural weakness, that he was not able to support himself so far as to sit up in his bed without a staff, and yet

that he would not make this an excuse for neglecting the worshipping of God; he would do it as well he could with his body, as well as with his spirit, though he could not do it as well as he would.

Verse 22

Joseph was eminent for his faith, though he had not enjoyed the helps for it which the rest of his brethren had. He was sold into Egypt. He was tried by temptations, by sin, by persecution, for retaining his integrity. He was tried by preferment and power in the court of Pharaoh, and yet his faith held out and carried him through to the last. [Joseph] made mention by faith of the departing of the children of Israel, that the time should when they should be delivered out of Egypt; and he did this both that he might caution them against the thoughts of settling in Egypt, which was now a place of plenty and ease to them; and also that he might keep them from sinking under the calamities and distresses which he foresaw were coming upon them there; and he does it to comfort himself, that though he should not live to see their deliverance, yet he could die in the faith of it. Now Joseph gave this order [concerning his bones] not that he thought his being buried in Egypt would either prejudice his soul or prevent the resurrection of his body (as some of the rabbis fancied that all the Jews who were buried out of Canaan must be conveyed underground to Canaan before they could rise again), but to testify, (1). That though he had lived and died in Egypt, yet he did not live and die an Egyptian, but an Israelite. (2). That he preferred a significant burial in Canaan before a magnificent one in Egypt. (3). That he would go as far with his people as he could, though he could not go as far as he would. (4). That he believed the resurrection of the body, and the communion that his soul should presently have with departed saints, as his body had with their dead bodies. (5). To assure them that God would be with them in Egypt, and deliver them out of it in his own time and way.

[Bickersteth cites Pascal;

“Jesus Christ prefigured by Joseph the beloved of his father, and by him sent to visit his brethren, is the innocent person whom his brethren sold for twenty pieces of silver, and who by this means became their Lord, their Saviour, the Saviour of strangers, and of the whole world, which had not happened but for their plot of destroying him, making him an outcast, and selling him for a slave. Joseph was an innocent man in prison between two

criminals; Jesus on the cross between two thieves. Joseph foretells deliverance to one of his companions, and death to the other from the same tokens; Jesus Christ saves one and leaves the other, after the same crimes. Joseph could only foretell; Jesus Christ performed what he foretold. Joseph requests the person who should be delivered, to be mindful of him in his glory; the man saved by Jesus Christ intreats he will remember him when he comes into his kingdom.”]

Verse 24

Pharaoh’s daughter is said to have been his only child, and was herself childless; and having found Moses, and saved him as she did, she resolved to take him and bring him up as her son; and so he stood fair to be in time king of Egypt.” (Henry) He would rather be a child of Abraham than a son of Pharaoh: he abandoned his preferment and the fleshly sins of the court.

Verse 26

“Heaven is a great reward, surpassing not only all our deservings but all our conceptions. It is a reward suitable to the price paid for it – the blood of Christ; suitable to the perfections of God, and fully answering to all his promises. It is a recompense of reward, because given by a righteous Judge for the righteousness of Christ two righteous persons, according to the righteous rule of the covenant of grace.

Verse 30

[The collapse of Jericho] was a great trial of faith. The method prescribed seemed very improbable to answer such an end, and would doubtless expose them to the daily contempt of their enemies; the ark of God would seem to be in danger.... God was pleased in this extraordinary manner to slight and dismantle [the city], in order to magnify himself, to terrify the Canaanites, to strengthen the faith of the Israelites, and to exclude all boasting.” (Henry)

Verse 33

Joshua, the judges, and David subdued kingdoms.

Samson, David, and Daniel stopped the mouths of lions.

Verse 34

Moses (nu. 11:1) and the three children in Daniel quenched fire.

David escaped the sword of Goliath and the sword of Saul. Mordecai and the Jews escaped the sword of Haman.

Hezekiah was made strong out of weakness.

Joshua, the judges, and David waxed valiant in fight.

Women received their dead raised to life: the widow Zarepath (1ki. 17:23) and the Shunamite, 2ki. 4:36. Christ raised the widow of Main's son, Lk. 7:12.

David escaped the sword of Saul, Elijah the sword of Jezebel, and Jeremiah Jehoiakim (Cf. 1sam. 18:11; 19:10; 1ki. 19:1-3; Jer. 36:19,26).

-END HENRY-

“From the first the divine revelation has called out Faith. The elementary presuppositions of religion, the existence and moral attributes of God and the creation of the world rest on Faith. Hence it is to be expected that Faith should still find its appropriate trial.

The development of the work of Faith appears to follow an intelligible and natural plan. The writer first marks the characteristics of Faith generally (v.1) and its application to the elementary conceptions of religion (v.3; comp. v.6). He then shews that the spiritual history of the world is a history of the victories of Faith. This is indicated by the fragmentary records of the old world (4-7), and more particularly by the records of the growth of the Divine Society (ἡ ἐκκλησία). This was founded in the Faith of obedience and patience of the patriarchs (8-16); and built up in the Faith of sacrifice, sustained against natural judgment (17-22); and carried to victory by the Faith of conquest (23-31). The later action of Faith in the work of the people of God is indicated up to the last national conflict under the macabees (32-38); and it is then declared that all these preliminary victories of Faith await their consummation from the Faith of Christians (39-41).

Verse 1

ἔλειχος – “test, lit. conviction”; KJV: “evidence”. “Faith essentially deals with the future and with the unseen, the regions not entered by physical experience. The statement is perfectly general (‘things hoped for,’ ‘objects not seen’), and not specific in regard to the contents of the revelation given by God. Faith deals with everything which comes under these two categories. By Faith we attach the idea of permanence to the law which represents the results of past observation. By Faith we discern the love which is offered to our notice by outward signs.

In considering things ‘future’ and ‘unseen’ it will be felt that hope has a wider range than sight. Hope includes that which is internal as well as that which is external. Hence ἐλπίζόμενα is left indefinite, as extending to the whole field of mental and spiritual activity, while πράγματα οὐ βλεπόμενα suggest a definite order of objects and events outside the believer, which are conceived as realities which may fall under man’s senses. Under another aspect ‘things hoped for’ are more limited than ‘objects not seen,’ for the

latter embrace all that belongs to the requital and the purification of the guilty, and the present government of God.

As in Abel and Enoch there were revelations of death and life, so in Noah there was a revelation of judgment.

Verse 4

It has been reasonably suggested that the sacrifice of animals, which were not yet given for food, indicates a general sense that life was due to the Living One. δι' ἕς... δι' αὐτῆς: through which (sacrifice or faith?)... through it (faith or sacrifice?)... The reference of the pronouns is ambiguous. Each may refer either to 'faith' or to 'the sacrifice'; and every combination has found advocates. On the whole it appears to be most natural to see in the sacrifice the means through which the testimony was borne, and in the faith which prompted the sacrifice that whereby Abel still speaks.

Verse 5

[Enoch like Abel is taken before his time.] Faith was the ground of the translation because his pleasing God is specially mentioned before this took place; and such pleasing implies faith. Circumstances under which Enoch lived gave prominence to his Faith. In a corrupt age he is said to have maintained that fellowship with God which identical with pleasing Him.

Verse 6

The Faith which is thus declared to be necessary for everyone who approaches God as a worshipper includes two elements, the belief (α) that God is, and (β) that He is morally active; in other words it is a Faith in the existence and in the moral government of God. ἐκζητῖν 'diligently seek' is common in the LXX. Wherever it occurs in the N.T. in the sense of 'searching' suggests the notion of strenuous endeavor; Heb. 12:7; Acts 15:17 (LXX); Ron. 3:11 (LXX); 1pet. 1:10.

Verse 7

The Faith of Noah was directed to a special revelation which was made known to others also. In this respect it differed from the Faith of Abel and Enoch χρηματισθείς (Cf. 8:5-'was admonished'): lit. 'having been divinely instructed'; KJV: 'being warned'. τῶν μηδέπω βλεπτομένων: lit. 'the things not seen' (not indefinitely 'things'). The judgment which was to come upon

the world with all its attendant circumstances were the subject of the divine communication. [Noah's] Faith was visibly presented to the eyes of his contemporaries by the construction of the ark. Through this then he condemned the unbelieving world, as witnessing to the divine destruction which was to come upon man in just recompence for their deeds. [Noah is the first preacher; the times required as much, Cf. 2peter 2:5; Mt. 24:37,38.]

Both here and in verse four δὴ ἤξ may be referred to Faith but in both cases the form of the argument seems to require a reference to the outward expression of the Faith. The sacrifice of Abel and the ark of Noah were, so to speak, the Faith of each made visible. And so it can rightly be said that Noah through the ark – the embodiment of his Faith in deed – became heir of the righteousness according to Faith.

κατέκρινεν 'condemned': Though the form is ambiguous, it is probably an imperfect and describes the constant significance of his action.

δικαιοσύνης 'righteousness': Noah is the first man who receives the title of 'righteous' in the O.T. (Gen. 6:9 אֲבִי אֱדָן). [Jesus referred to 'righteous Abel' (Mt. 23:35) which coincides with a lineage of righteous men and women, all heirs of the righteousness which is by faith mentioned in this verse. Westcott observes that,] 'Faith' and 'righteousness' are placed in different connexions one with the other; Cf. Rom. 4:11,13; 9:30; 10:6; Phil. 3:9.

κληρονόμος: The righteousness was something that came to him as having its source without, and yet according to a certain law. It was his by unquestionable right: it corresponded with the position of a son; and this position Noah shewed by his conduct to be his.... The righteousness was not a hope for the future but a real position by the gift of God.

Verse 8 sqq

With the call of Abraham the records of Faith enter on a new phase. Faith is treated henceforth in relation to a society, a people of God, through whom the divine blessings were to be extended to mankind. Under this wider aspect Faith is regarded in two forms as shewn by the representative founders of the ancient people in (a) the Faith of patient Obedience which is the foundation of the Kingdom of God, and in (b) the Faith of Sacrifice which is the principle of its development.

The Faith of patient Obedience is traced mainly in the life of Abraham who impressed his own character upon his descendants (vs. 8-12). In him and

in them it was openly shewn that the societies of earth have a spiritual archetype which is the true object of human endeavor (13-16).

The Faith of the patriarchs, represented by the Faith of Abraham, is presented under three different aspects: (i) As Abraham trusted God wholly, going forth he knew not whither (v. 8) (the Faith of self surrender) (ii) As he waited on the scene of his hope looking for God's work (vv. 9f) (the Faith of patience) (iii) As he communicated his Faith to Sarah, so that through them ('one flesh') the innumerable offspring of Faith were born (vv. 11f) (the Faith of influence). In each case Abraham cast himself upon the unseen and realised the future. The promise was thus carried to its typical fulfilment (ch. 6:15).

The Faith of Abraham is no less conspicuous in later Jewish teaching than in Christian teaching.... In this place the Faith of Abraham is not connected directly with personal righteousness, as in Saint Paul's epistles, but is presented as the power through which the patriarch was enabled to work towards fulfilment of God's counsel for the nations by his trust in the unseen.

The Faith of self-surrender: The beginning Messianic nation was a call, a separation. The founder had a promise of an inheritance. This promise he could trust though he knew not how it would be fulfilled.

Verse 8

The present participle (καλούμενος not κληθείς) serves to emphasize the immediate of obedience (ὕπηκουσεν). He obeyed the call while (so to say) it was still sounding in his ears." (Westcott)

A variant reading adds ὁ the [one] Lachmann [Tregelles]. Says Westcott, "if the reading ὁ καλούμενος is adopted the sense will be: 'he that in a unique sense received the new name Abraham'.

In doing this [ἐξελθεῖν – "going forth"] He knew not what he was to receive. The future was safe in God's counsel. In this supreme act, by which he became 'the father of the faithful,' Abraham [unlike Moses] had no example to follow. He went forth to 'a place' (not 'the place') of which all that he knew was that in the end it should be his. It was not revealed to Abraham till he had left Haran what was to be his abode. ἔρχεται [lit. "is going"]: the use of ἔρχεται presents the patriarch as already on his journey [i.e. 8e "(whither) he went" is literally "where he is going"].

Verse 9

The Faith of self-surrender was submitted to a longer proof. When Abraham reached the land which was to be his, he occupied it only as a sojourn. He had to learn that the promise of God would not be fulfilled by any material possession.... The phrase γῆ τῆς ἐπαγγελίας [“promise”] occurs here only in the N.T. There is no corresponding Hebrew phrase in the O.T., nor is there any exact parallel. It describes the land which was attached to the promises; to which they pointed; which was assured to Abraham by God.

Abraham dwelt throughout the time of his sojourn (κατοικήσας) intense, so declaring that that which was to be permanent was not yet attained. And Isaac and Jacob, who shared his hope, shewed the same patience of faith. The premature settlement of Lot and its disastrous issue point the lesson of Abraham’s discipline. Isaac and Jacob are specially mentioned because these three, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, cover the whole period of disciplinary sojourning in Canaan; and to these three the foundation promise was repeated.

Verse 10

The ground of this patient waiting was the growing sense of the greatness of the divine purpose. Abraham felt, under the teaching of his pilgrim life, that no earthly resting-place could satisfy the wants and powers of which he was conscience. He looked beyond the first fulfilment of the promise which was only a step in the accomplishment of the purpose of God.

The object of his desire was social and personal only. ‘He looked for the city that hath the foundations’ – the divine ideal of which every earthly institutions is but a transitory image. Visible Jerusalem, visible Temple, were farther from this spiritual archetype than the tents of the patriarch and the Tabernacle of the wilderness. They were in large measure of human design and wholly of human construction. But God Himself frames and constructs the heavenly city (v. 16) no less than the heavenly sanctuary, Cf. Heb. 8:2.

Verses 11-12

The Faith of influence: Abraham had to sustain yet a third trial before the promise received and initial fulfilment. The son through whom the blessing was to come was not born while his birth was naturally to be expected and according to man’s reckoning possible. But Sarah, who was at first unbelieving, was at last inspired with her husband’s Faith by his example and influence; and the promise found amplest accomplishment.... Sarah is

evidently regarded in the closest union with Abraham (v. 12 ἀφ' ἐνόος) yet her act of Faith completing his Faith is made the reason of the fulfilment of the promise.

At first the promise is of an heir, and then of a countless progeny. The references in the O.T. to Abraham as 'the one' are significant: Isa. 51:1f; Ezek. 33:24. [Westcott cites Mal. 2:15 here as well].... The life of the patriarchs was a life of faith to the last, supported by trust in the invisible which they had realised, resting on complete surrender, directed beyond earth (v. 13). They shewed that the true satisfaction of human powers the 'city' which answers to man's social instincts, must be 'heavenly' (14-16)....

Verse 13 sqq

In life they had realised the promises which they had not outwardly received in a threefold order of growing power. They had seen them: they had welcomed them: they had acknowledged that earth could not fulfil them.... They died in faith, literally 'according to faith,' that is, under the influence and according to the spirit Faith, inspired, sustained, guided by Faith. Faith was the rule of their lives, the measure of their growth, even to the end. They faced death as men who retained their hold on the invisible, which was offered to them in the promises of God, though earth 'gave them no pledge'. So their departure was transformed into 'a going home'. For κατὰ πίστιν compare Mt. 9:29.... They died in faith inasmuch as they had not received the outward fulness of the promises – the possession of Canaan; the growth of the nation, universal blessing through their race – but had realised them while they were still unseen and future.

The three thoughts rise in a natural succession. They saw the promises in their actual fulfilment: they welcomed the vision with joy though it was far off: they confessed what must be the true end of God's counsel.

As strangers they acknowledged that they were in a foreign land: as 'sojourners' that they had no permanent possession, no rights of citizenship. At the same time they kept their trust in God. Their natural fatherland had lost its hold upon them. They waited for a 'city' of God's preparing.

Verse 14

The language of the patriarchs makes clear that they sought for a country, which should be naturally and essentially their own, not simply the fruit of gift, or conquest, but a true 'fatherland'. They had no fatherland on

earth. The word πατρίς, which is rare in the LXX (Jer. 46:16: ‘the land of our nativity’ מִלְּדֵת אֶרֶץ) is found only in the Epistles (Jn. 4:44: ‘in his own country’). [môledet < yālad, לָדָּ – to bear young > לָדָּ – boy, child, young man.]

Verse 15

They spoke of a home not yet reached; and in so speaking they could not have referred to that home which they had left in Mesopotamia, the seat of primitive civilisation; for return thither was easy. Nor again could Palestine, even when occupied at last, have satisfied their hopes; this remained the Lord’s land: Lev. 25:23.

μνημονέω has commonly in the N.T. as in this Epistle c. 13:7, the sense of ‘remember’; but in 11:22, and perhaps in 1Thess. 1:3, it has the second sense of ‘make mention’. [זָכַר – to remember, recall, call to mind, mention > Zechariah]

question: Verses 13-16 and verses 35-40 have been compared to a sabbath rest. This has been termed ‘explanation from context’. What does that mean?

Verse 16

Though their expectation received no definite fulfilment, the desired remained still fresh; and all partial fulfilments led them to look forward, and to look beyond the transitory.... Because their thoughts were directed to spiritual realities, God, Who is spirit, acknowledged them as His own, revealing Himself as ‘the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ [This] is the characteristic name of God at the Exodus.

The proof of God’s acceptance of the patriarchs lies in what He did for them. Their faith truly corresponded with His purpose. They entered ‘into His design and He acknowledged their devotion and trust. He was pleased to establish a personal relation with them and to fulfil His spiritual promise; for ‘He prepared for them a city.’ He made provision for their abiding continuance with Him in the fullness of human life. The statement is made in the most absolute form without any definition of time (‘He had prepared,’ or ‘thereupon He prepared’). The fulfilment of the promise in its highest form is set before us as social and not simply as personal. God prepared for His chosen not a home but a ‘city,’ a Divine Commonwealth, Ps. 107:36.

From the general description of the life of faith and the patriarchs to whom the promise was first committed, the writer goes on to give special illustrations of the power of faith, as the promise was seen to advance towards fulfilment through trial. Thus he notices 1) The primary trial (vv. 17-19). That through which God works is first wholly surrendered to Him. 2) The patriarchal blessings. The natural order [in blessing the elder before the younger] reversed: Isaac, Jacob (vv. 20-21). 3) The world abandoned (v. 22). In the former paragraph the personal triumph of faith over death has been described: here faith is seen to look through death to the later issue for others.

Verses 17-22

The trial of Abraham was not so much in the conflict of his natural affection with his obedience to God, as in the apparent inconsistency of the revelations of the will of God which were made to him. Thus the greatness Abraham's Faith was shewn by the fact that he was ready to sacrifice his only son, though it had been before declared that the fulfilment of the promise which he had received was to come through him. His obedience therefore included the conviction of some signal and incomprehensible work of God whose promise could not fail. At the same time the nature of the trial left an opportunity for the right exercise of Faith. The specific command could be fulfilled only in one way: the promise might be fulfilled in more ways than one. So Faith triumphed.

Verse 17

The 'only son' is placed in significant parallelism with the 'promise.' In regard to the promise Isaac was 'the only son' of Abraham." (Westcott) Westcott translates ἀναδεχέσθαι as "gladly received": "the word is unusual. It occurs again in the N.T. only in Acts 28:7. The idea which it suggests seems to be that of welcoming and cherishing a divine charge which involved a noble responsibility. The word [in Classical Greek] is used frequently of undertaking that which calls out effort and endurance.

Verse 19

The obedience of Abraham rested on his faith in creative power of God. His conclusion was made at once and finally (λογισάμενος not λογίζόμενος) that God could raise from the dead. That this was his judgment follows of necessity from the fact that he was ready to surrender Isaac without giving up

his faith in the fulfilment of the divine promise.... The Faith of the patriarchs in looking towards the fulfilment of the promise was able to set aside the expectations which were based on the rules of human succession, whether, as in the case of Isaac, they accepted the divine will when it was contrary to their own purpose (v. 20), or, as in the case of Jacob, they interpreted it (v. 21). An element beyond human calculation entered into the gradual accomplishment of the promise as into its initial foundation.

Verse 20

The blessing of Isaac forms a crisis in the fulfilment in the divine counsel. A choice is made between those through whom the promise might equally have been fulfilled. The choice was not, as in the case of Ishmael and Isaac, between the son of the bondwoman and the son of the free, but between twin brothers. And the will of God inverted the purely human order. Both sons were blessed, but the younger had the precedence and became heir of the promise.... Isaac acknowledged the overruling of his own purpose (Gen. 27:33). Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau and that concerning things to come, concerning things to come as well as (ἡκαὶ) in regard to their immediate position. The blessing of Isaac reached beyond the immediate future which could be realised by his sons in their life-time. His words pointed onward to a distant order (μελλόντων [lit. "things coming"] not τῶν μελλόντων). [μελλόντων is the indefinite. Contrast τὰ ἐρχόμενα, Jn. 16:13: "things to come"] The faith of Isaac was shewn by his acceptance of the destination of his highest blessing, 'the blessing,' to the younger son which was against his own will; and by his later blessing of Esau. In itself the supreme value attached to 'the blessing' (12:17) with its unseen consequences was a sign of faith. Throughout the later history of the O.T. the fortunes of the children of Esau are in constant connexion and conflict.

Verse 21

The blessing of Jacob, like that of Isaac, marked a fresh stage in the fulfilment of the promise. The providential office was then entrusted not to one but to a whole family the members of which had separate parts to perform. But the writer of Epistle does not refer to the general foreshadowing of the future of the several patriarchs. He confines himself to the peculiar blessing given to Joseph through his sons, in whom the service of Egypt was, so to speak, received for divine use. Here again one point seems to be the

freedom of God's choice, in this case also, as in the case of Jacob, the younger is preferred to the elder. But at the same time the practical exaltation of Joseph to the privilege of the firstborn in the place of Reuben indicates the fulfilment of a righteous judgment in the providence of God. [Cf. Gen. 48:16; 49:25]

[Jacob's] blessing was exceptional. Joseph received in his two sons a double share of the divine inheritance, the privilege of the firstborn. And, as it was given, the younger was again preferred to the elder. But while Isaac would have followed, had he been able, the natural order of birth in assigning privilege, Jacob deliberately inverted the order. It was not however till a late date that the superiority of Ephraim was established (Nu. 26:34,37).” [Westcott cites Numbers Ch. 26, but without explaining how Ephraim eventually surpassed Manasseh. The allotment of land for Ephraim was the central hill area south of Shechem and extending into the coastal plain. Manasseh's allocation was a large area that stretched from the coastal plain across the central hill area round Shechem to the Jordan valley, with one subtribe east of the Jordan (Who's Who)]

Westcott continues, “A further point must also be noticed. In blessing the sons of Joseph, who were also the sons of Asenath, Jacob recognized that the gifts of Egypt, a fresh element, were consecrated to God. So Joseph became, as it were, head of a new line. Com. Ps. 77:15; 78:67. It would be interesting to inquire how far the failure of Ephraim answered to the misuse of powers corresponding to Egyptian parentage.

The death of Joseph marked a third stage in the history of promise. He made clear in the fullness of his prosperity that those whom he had invited to Egypt were not to find there an abiding home. Neither rest nor misery was to bring forgetfulness of their destiny.

Verse 22

The Faith of Joseph was national at once and personal. He looked forward to the independence of his kindred; and he claimed for himself a share in their future. His prosperity in Egypt had not led him to forget the promise to Abraham.

The Faith which has been hitherto regarded under the discipline of patience and sacrifice is now considered an action. Under this aspect it is traced both in the great leader Moses (23-28), and in the people whom he led (29-31).”

Verse 23

A distinction is made between (Kohath, 16th Cent.) and Amram (13th Cent.) ancestors of Moses. Kohath, the second son of Levi, went down to Egypt at the same time as his grandfather Jacob. Kohath was head of an important family of Levites which included Moses and Aaron, and which served in the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and later served in the Temple. According to Joshua 21:10-11, Hebron in the hill country of Judah, was given over as a Levitical city. Kirjath-arba was the domicile of Anak's father. Amram, a descendant of Levi, married Jochebed and sired Miriam, Aaron, and Moses. Here the word πατέρων is used for "parents"; elsewhere the same sense is given by οἱ γονεῖς (Eg. Lk. 2:27,41 ff; Jn. 9:2ff). Says Westcott, "In Exod. 2:2 the mother of Moses only is mentioned as concealing the child. There is no ground for supposing that (here in Hebrews 11:23) the reference is to Kohath and Amram to the exclusion of Jachebed. The general term marks, so to speak, the social character of the faith... Faith under two forms moved the parents of Moses to preserve him. Something of appearance kindled hope as to his destiny; and then looking to God for the fulfilment of his promise they had no fear of the king's orders. The word ἀστεῖος [here "proper", lit. "beautiful"] occurs in this connexion Ex. 2:2 [there "goodly", lit. כִּי טוֹב]; Acts 7:20 "exceeding fair". διάταγμα – "commandment" occurs here only in the N.T.

Verse 24

As an infant he had quickened faith; as a man he shewed it. υἱὸς θυγατρὸς φαραώ is anarthrous; "son of a royal princess, of one who was Pharaoh's daughter.

Verse 25

Moses was called to devote himself to his people. He knew the source of the call: to have disobeyed it therefore by seeking to retain his place in the Egyptian court would have been 'sin' though such disloyalty would have given him the opportunity for a transitory enjoyment of the resources of princely state. The word συνκακουχεῖσθαι is found here only in the N.T. Compare κακουχεῖσθαι [lit. 'being evil-treated']; 13:3. "The people of God" Cf. Heb. 4:9. Moses was able to recognise in a host of bondsmen a divine nation. By faith he saw what they were called to be.

Verse 26

The reproach of the Christ is the reproach which belongs to Him who is the appointed envoy of God to a rebellious world. This reproach which was endured in the highest degree by Christ Jesus (Rom. 15:3) was endured also by those who any degree prefigured or represented Him, those, that is in whom He partially manifested and manifests Himself, those who live in Him and whom He lives.

In this wider sense the people of Israel was ‘an anointed one,’ ‘a Christ’ even as Christians are ‘Christs’ (Comp. Ps. 105:15; 1Jn. 2:20). ‘The Christ is the support and the spring of all revelation to men, 1Cor. 10:4). For the general thought compare Ps. 89:50f; 69:9; 2Cor. 1:5; Col. 1:24; Heb. 13:13.

Moses continued to look away from the things of earth unto the (divine) recompense for suffering and reproach. The nature of this recompense, though it is definite, is left undefined (v. 6). It must not be limited to the future occupation of Canaan by the people. The fulfilment of God’s counsel includes blessings which man cannot anticipate: 1Cor. 2:9 (Isa. 64:4).

ἀποβλέπειν: ‘to have respect’ occurs here only in the N.T.

Verse 27

‘By faith he left Egypt...’: It is doubtful to what event reference is made. From the order in which the fact is mentioned, and from the manner in which it is described it has been concluded that the reference is to the flight of Moses to Midian, which could be rightly spoken of ‘leaving’ since it involved the temporary abandonment of the work to which Moses had felt himself called. Nor is it a fatal objection to this view that in the narrative of Exodus it is said that ‘Moses was afraid’ (Exod. 2:14), though the superficial contradiction has occasioned some difficulty.

If this interpretation be adopted the exact thought will be that Moses was not afraid of the anger of the king in itself. For the sake of his people he could have braved death: but, though he was so far fearless, yet the lack of faith in those whom he would have delivered (Acts 7:23ff.) forced him to retire: ‘He left Egypt though he feared not the wrath of the king.’ This he did ‘by faith,’ for even at the moment when he gave up his work he felt the divine presence with him. ‘He endured as seeing Him who is invisible.’

It is however more likely that the words refer to the Exodus. Moses, the leader of the people, left the safe though servile shelter and support of Egypt, casting himself on the protection of the unseen God against the certain vengeance of the king in the fulfilment of his arduous and self-sacrificing work.

‘As seeing him...’: The most characteristic trait in the life of Moses is that he spoke with God face to face, Ex. 33; Nom. 12:7,8. The ‘vision of God’ is that which distinguishes him from the other prophets.

The words ὡς ὁρῶν are in themselves ambiguous. They mean either ‘as though he saw,’ or ‘inasmuch as he saw.’ The peculiar gift of Moses determines that the latter is the sense here. The irregular position of the ὡς is due to the emphasis laid on τὸν ἄόρατον.

Verse 28

The first celebration of the Passover was not only a single act. The Passover then instituted and kept remained as a perpetual witness of the great deliverance. The sacrifice of the lamb and the open sprinkling of the blood was a signal act of faith challenging the superstition of the Egyptians. The special ceremony ‘the sprinkling of the blood’ (Ex. 12:7,22ff.) is mentioned as foreshadowing the deeper mystery involved in the deliverance from Egypt (Heb. 9:22). The word πρόσχυσις [lit. “affusion”] occurs here only in the N.T.

The great leader, like Abraham, communicated to others the Faith by which he was inspired. Just as the Faith of Abraham was united with that of his wife and of his children, so the Faith of Moses was bound up with that of Israel. By Faith they overcame difficulties of nature (29), and the force of enemies (30) and called out responsive Faith even in aliens, so that a remnant of them was saved (31).

Verse 29

The Faith of the people met the Faith of the leader.

Verse 30

The walls fell overthrown by faith which was shewn through a long trial by leader, priests and people. The fall of the walls Jericho is the symbol of the victory of the Church: Mt. 16:18.

Verse 31

The record of the separation of the people of God from Egypt is closed by the incorporation of a stranger. Rahab at once looked forward with confidence to the triumph of Israel. The addition of the title ἡ πόρνη places in a fuller light the triumph of Faith. The list of champions of Faith whose victories are specially noticed is closed by a woman and a gentile and an outcast. In this there is a significant foreshadowing of its essential universality.

Verses 32-38

Faith in national life; The entrance to Canaan and the representative victory at Jericho forms a close to a complete cycle of divine discipline. The history of Israel from the Call of Abraham to the occupation of the Promised Land offers a type of the religious history of man. So far then the writer of this Epistle has given examples of faith in detail. From this point he simply recites in a summary form the names and exploits of later heroes of Faith. In 32-35a, they wrought great things; in 35b-38, they suffered great things.

Verse 32

Representative heroes of the theocracy and kingdom: The sense seems to be ‘Why do I go on farther?’ ‘What can I say more?’. The persons are named first, and then types of achievement. The persons fall into two groups, the representatives of the theocracy and the representatives of the monarchy. [The first] are not given in the order of the Book of Judges, but apparently according to their popular fame. It may be noticed that they overcame different enemies, Midianites, Canaanites, Philistines, Ammonites; and in referring to them the writer passes no judgment on character.

The great king and the great statesman-prophet sum up all that was noblest in the second stage in the divine stage history of Israel. With them are joined the spiritual leaders of the people through whom the growing counsel of God was interpreted through apparent failure and loss. David and Samuel appear to be closely connected (τε, καί) and the prophets are added as a second element.

Verse 33

The first triplet describes the broad result that believers obtain;
 Material victory, moral success in government, spiritual reward.

The second triplet notices forms of personal deliverance from;
Wild beasts, physical forces, human tyranny.

The third triplet marks the attainment of personal gifts;
Strength, the exercise of strength, the triumph of strength (the
believer against the alien)... In each case with weaker forces than
their enemies.

Each partial fulfilment of a divine word is itself a prophecy. A promise gained is also a promise interpreted in a larger meaning. Here the truth is set out in its fulness. The many 'promises' successively realised in many parts and many fashions led up to the one 'promise' (v. 39) which is still held before the eye of faith.

Verse 34

'Waxed mighty in war': not only in the moment of battle, but in the whole conduct of the conflict.

Verse 35

The highest conquest of faith [is] 'women received from resurrection their dead.' In this case faith appears under a twofold aspect. There is a silent, waiting, passive faith of love, which works with the active faith. Women, in whom the instinct of natural affection is strongest, cooperated with the prophets through whom the restoration was effected. They received their dead. The word λαβεῖν occurs in the narrative of the Shunamite, 2Kings 4:36.

It cannot be without significance that the recorded raisings from the dead are predominantly for women: 1Ki. 17:17ff.; 2Ki. 4:17ff.; Lk. 7:11ff.; Jn. 11; Acts 9.... The record of the open triumphs of Faith is followed by the record of its inward victories in unconquered and outwardly unrewarded endurance.... The enumeration appears to consist of two great groups (35b, 36 and 37, 38) each consisting of two members, the first of suffering to death, the second sufferings short of death.

But others in a new class triumphed 'in that they seemed to fail.' The restoration from death, the highest victory from active faith is surpassed by a nobler triumph, the victory over death.

Verse 37

μηλοτή is used in the LXX for מִלְּבָשֵׁת, the characteristic prophet's dress: 1Ki. 19:13,19; 2Ki. 2:8,13,14. This was of sheep (or goat) skin

(compare **שֵׂעָר אֲדָרָת** Zech. 13:4; Gen. 25:25); and was afterwards adopted as a monastic dress.

Verse 38

They were men worth more than the whole world, and they lacked all. This appears to be the meaning, and not that ‘the world in all its beauty was not fit to be their home.’

Verse 40

The reason of this failure of the fathers to ‘receive the promise,’ which men might think strange, lay in the far-reaching Providence-Foresight of God. It was His purpose that the final consummation should be for all together, as indeed it is all, in Christ; so that no one part of the Body can, if we realise the meaning of the figure, gain it fulfilment independently. The consummation of all the Saints therefore followed upon the completion of Christ’s work, the accomplishment by Him of the destiny of man, though fallen. So far then God foresaw in the order of His great counsel in our case (**περὶ ἡμῶν**) something better than the fathers experienced: for we have actually seen in part that towards which they strained: Mt. 13:17; 1Pet. 1:12. The fathers with a true faith looked for a fulfilment of the promises which was not granted to them. To us the fulfilment has been granted, without the trial of deferred hope, if only we regard the essence of things. Christ has already opened the way to the Divine Presence on which we can enter, and He offers to us now a kingdom which cannot be shaken (12:28). At the same time there is the thought that God has looked further, even beyond our age of trial, to the end.

The perfection (**τελείωσις**) of the individual Christian must in its fullest sense involve the perfection of the Christian society. The ‘perfection’ which Christ has gained for humanity in His Person (2:10; 5:9; 7:28; 10:1,14) must be appropriated by every member of Christ. In part this end has been reached by the old saints in some degree, in virtue of Christ’s exaltation (Heb. 12:23), but in part it waits for the final triumph of the Saviour when all that we sum up in confessing the truth of ‘the resurrection of the body’ is fulfilled.”

-END WESTCOTT-

Alistair McGrath translates Heb. 11:1, “faith – being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”

Verse 40

Gertrude Hollis has written in The Great Intercession (1932): “The army of God’s people in Paradise, that watching cloud of witnesses served God truly in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life, and as the Scriptures teach and the Church believes, are still interested in those who are yet militant here in earth (Heb. 12:1). In revolt from unscriptural medieval teaching about the invocation of saints, the C. of E. at the Reformation lost to a great extent the belief in the intercession of saints and is only now slowly recovering it. That the Church Expectant has ceased to pray for the Church Militant is not a reasonable belief. Those in Paradise know that their own final perfection depends upon the triumph of those who are fighting on earth (Rev. 6:9-11), that apart from us they “cannot be made perfect” (Heb. 11:40).”

Hebrews 11

(Gouge)

The faithful are set out expressly by name in four ranks:

- 1) Such as lived before the flood (vs. 4-8)
- 2) Such as continued from the flood from the time of the law (vs. 8-30)
- 3) They that were in the church of Israel till the captivity (vs. 30-34)
- 4) They that remained from the captivity till Christ's coming (vs. 34-40)

Before the flood there are three mentioned:

- 1) Abel (v. 4). His faith was manifested by his sacrifice.
- 2) Enoch (vs. 5,6). His, by pleasing God.
- 3) Noah (v. 7). His, by building an ark.

Between the flood and the law are six mentioned and others unnamed:

- 1) Abraham: whose faith is manifested by four effects: a) His going whither God called him, v. 8. b) His sojourning in a strange country v. 9. This is amplified by that heavenly city which he looked for, v. 10. c) The numerous offspring that he had, v. 12. d) His offering up Isaac, vs. 17-19.
- 2) Sarah: whose faith is evidenced by bearing a child in her old age, v. 11.
- 3) Isaac: faithful in blessing his two sons (v. 20).
- 4) Jacob, who blessed Joseph's sons.
- 5) Joseph and his command concerning his bones.
- 6) Moses' parents.
- 7) Moses faithful five ways: a) refusing Egyptian honor. b) suffering affliction. c) highly esteeming the reproach of Christ. d) forsaking Egypt. e) keeping Passover.
- 8) Israelites who left Egypt and crossed the Red Sea.

Between the law and the captivity, seven named Et Al:

- 1) Joshua at Jericho (v. 30)
- 2) Rahab sheltering the spies
- 3) Gideon
- 4) Barak
- 5) Samson
- 6) Jephthah
- 7) David
- 8) Solomon

Between the captivity and Christ, none are named: "they obtained a good report," "they received not the promise". God reserved better things for our time.

Verse 1

William Gouge writes, “The syllogism may be thus framed: The just live by that which is the substance of things hoped for, etc. But faith is the substance of things hoped for: Therefore the just shall live by faith.” ὑπόστασις is “substance,” elsewhere “confidence”, Heb. 3:14; 2Cor. 9:4; 11:17. Gouge continues, “Q. How can faith give a being to things that are not? A. We speak not of a natural being in regard of the things themselves, as if faith did simply make that to be which is not: but of a being to the mind of the believer; which, if we may so speak, is a mental being; such a being as the believer is confident of, as if they had a natural present subsistence. This is not a mere imagination, but as true as anything can be, namely, God’s promise. What he promiseth shall without question be accomplished, and faith resteth upon it as accomplished.” Faith as the evidence of things not seen includes not just future hopes but past accomplishments: Christ’s birth, His miracles, resurrection are to us unseen. They are evangelical and celestial truths which are attested in the same manner as O.T. notables look forward to unseen future events with a desire for evangelical and celestial blessings. Things presently unseen include Jesus’ Session in heaven, the ministry of angels, and “the souls of just men in heaven.”

Verse 2

Elders here means those who lived in ancient times, Cf. Mt. 15:2. “Thus was witness given to Cornelius by those that lived with him, Acts 10:22; and David had honourable testimony given to him by those that lived in succeeding ages....

Verse 3

God’s word is the manifestation of His will. It is metaphorically spoken of God, and that after the manner of men, who ordinarily manifest their mind and will by their word.... Things were not made because we believe them, but because we believe that they were made by God’s word, we understand, “that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear.”.... Though they were made, yet they were not made of anything that did or could appear. There was no pre-existent matter whereof they were made; so as this phrase directly implieth, that the worlds were made of nothing. The very first phrase in Scripture, ‘in the beginning,’ intended as much. For before the

beginning of things, there could be nothing, but the Creator who gave them a being. If there were anything before, that had not been the beginning.

Verse 4

Q. How doth he speak, being dead? Ans. 1. In that his faith, and the fruits thereof, are registered in the everlasting records of the Holy Scripture: and thereby he speaketh as evidently as if we heard his voice. Ans. 2. In that his innocent blood being wrongfully spilt, cried to God for vengeance, Gen. 4:10. Yea, still it remaineth crying against all such fratricides and homicides, as Cain was: in which respect Christ saith to the murdering Jews, that ‘upon them should come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel,’ Mt. 23:35. Ans. 3. In that his soul is among those souls which cry loud, saying, ‘How long, or Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?’ Rev. 6:9. Innocent crieth for vengeance after it is shed. This is one respect wherein Abel is said to speak being dead. In reference hereunto, the difference is made betwixt the blood of Christ and the blood of Abel, Heb. 12:24. [God had “respect” unto Abel, רָצַף; Noah found “grace” חָנָן; Abraham is third priest mentioned.]

Verse 5

Μετετέθη is applied sometimes to things translated from one kind or condition unto another, as where it is said ‘the priesthood was changed,’ Heb. 7:12. And the Galatians were removed from their former teacher, Gal. 1:6. Or from one place to another, as the patriarchs were carried out of Egypt into Sychem, Acts 7:16. Here it implieth both. For Enoch was translated from earth to heaven, and the mortality of his body was translated into immortality.” (Gouge) His translation and that of Elijah occurred before death, so that Christ’s ascension is more glorious.

“‘not see death’ is a Hebraism; death thereby is resembled to an enemy: not seeing, to an absolute freedom. He should be so far from being taken and seized upon by death, as he should not see death; death should not come near him. Thus it is said of those who have nothing to do with the kingdom of God, ‘they cannot see the kingdom of God,’ Jn. 3:3. To clear this a little further, Christ useth these two phrases, ‘shall never see death,’ ‘shall never taste of death,’ Jn. 8:51,52, at the same time, as setting forth one and the same thing, one expounding the other. Not to taste of a thing, is to have

nothing at all to do with it. To taste is the least degree of participation.” (Gouge) Better cross-references are found at Mt. 16:28; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27 where Jesus actually uses the words “taste of death” not before obscurantist listeners as in Jn. 8:52. That Enoch “was not” אֵלֹהִים (Gen. 5:24) is also true of Elijah, 2Ki. 2:17. Both were translated “from a mortal condition into an immortal, and from place to place, even from earth to heaven.” Enoch by faith in God was translated, and we by faith understand that he was translated. “walked before God” is in the Hithpael verb stem formation. Enoch lived the fewest years of all the patriarchs before the flood.

Verse 6

Εὐρεσθηκέναι: “please” as used in verse five. “Impossible” leads Gouge to write, “so corrupt is man in soul and body, in every power and part of either, and so polluted is everything that passeth, as it is not possible that he should of and by himself do anything that is acceptable unto God: but faith looketh upon Christ, applieth Christ and his righteousness, and doth all things wherein he hath to do with God, in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ. Thus man by faith pleaseth God. Out of Christ, which is without faith, it is impossible to please God.”

Pharaoh rewarded Joseph, Nebuchadnezzar Daniel Et Al; Darius Daniel, Ahasuerus Mordecai.

Verse 7

Noah – “rest” < נָח. “Thereby was afforded a lively type of Christ, who is the comfort and rest of man. By Noah was the seminary of the world and church preserved. This was a matter of great comfort and rest. By the sacrifice which he offered up, ‘God smelled a saviour of rest,’ Gen. 8:21. To him God renewed a covenant of rest and peace, no more to drown the world, Gen. 9:9,11.” (Gouge)

Noah response was to God’s will in that he gave warning. So it was with Abraham’s faithful response to His will, Gen. 15:6; the faith of the Israelites, Exod. 4:31; and of the Gentiles, Acts 15:7. μηδὲπω βλεπομένον, things not seen: “the negative carries some emphasis with it, and is oft translated ‘never before,’ Lk. 23:53 or ‘not yet,’ Jn. 7:39.” (Gouge) It was 120 years between the warning and the flood, Gen. 6:3. The ark was likely the first vessel to ever put to sea. “Compare it with Solomon’s temple, which

was a very fair and spacious building, 1Ki. 6:2, and you will find it far to exceed that. In height it was equal with the temple (30 cubits), in breadth two times and a half wider (50 cubits), in length five times longer (300 cubits or over an 1/8 mile). There is no mention made of masts, tacklings, rudder, oars, anchor, or other like things – it could not be moved or guided by the art of man, but only by divine providence. Baptism is styled in reference to the ark, ἀντίτυπος, ‘a like figure’, 1Pet. 3:21. When two types resembling one thing are compared together, they are set out by the Greek word, translated ‘a like figure.’

The saving of Noah and his family, giveth proof that the incredulity of the multitude is no prejudice to the faith of the saints. For though the whole world of the ungodly perished by the flood, yet Noah and his family were saved in the ark.... As the believer is not prejudiced by another’s unbelief, so neither shall the unbeliever be saved by another’s faith. ‘Two shall be in one bed, the one taken, the other left,’ Lk. 17:34. It may further from hence be inferred that there is no salvation out of the church, for there was no preservation out of the ark.” The ark was a visible prediction of the flood; Noah preached to the ungodly (2Pet. 2:5) – these two facts among others signify that Noah condemned the world.

Gouge observes, “thus we see that means given for preservation may prove means of destruction. As this proved true in Israel’s passing through the Red Sea, Exod. 14:16, and in their eating quails, Num. 11:33, and in sundry other temporal means; so also in spiritual means, as the word, 2Cor. 2:16; the sacrament, 1Cor. 11:29; yea, Christ himself, Isa. 8:14; 1Pet. 2:6,7; Lk. 2:34.” (Gouge)

Verse 8

“Abraham had to do what he did. Word for word καλούμενο means ‘being called’.... In the Greek the verb obeyed is put before the act of going out – thus ἀβραάμ ὑπηκούσεν ἐξελθεῖν, Abraham obeyed to go out into a place. By that placing of the Greek words it may be thought that Abraham’s going out hath reference to his obedience; but as our English have placed the words, that act of going out hath reference to God’s calling him. Both tend to the same end.” Terah took him out, Gen. 11:31, but God’s call was after that event (Gen. 12:1) i.e. God’s call was after Terah’s death, so it was after he had come out. Says Gouge, “Though mention be made of God’s call after Terah’s death, yet was it before. Our English translators have well turned the

word of calling into preterpluperfect tense, thus: ‘the Lord had said unto Abraham,’ Gen. 12:1, which well might be before Terah’s death. Hereupon Stephen thus expresseth it: ‘God appeared unto Abraham, when he was Mesopotamia, before he dwelt Charran, and said unto him, ‘Get thee out of thy country,’ Acts 7:2,3. Thus: 1) God speaks to Abraham to go out. 2) Abraham telleth his father [the instrumental means] thereof. 3) His father takes him with others to go out. 4) In their journey Terah resteth, and dieth at Charran. 5) Abraham goeth thence to Canaan.” Abraham like Noah did as he was told not really knowing the full outcome. Abraham’s faith was in a future state, looking forward to a time when he should after receive an inheritance. This promise would take 500 years; the virgin birth promised in Ahaz’ day took 700 years to come to pass. Gouge gives seven of our many hopes: 1) The recalling of the rejected Jews, Rom. 11:26. 2) The bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles, Rom. 11:25. 3) The destruction of Antichrist, 2Thess. 2:8. 4) The perfection of the church, Eph. 5:27. 5) The resurrection of the body, Jn. 5:29. 6) Mansion places provided by Christ, Jn. 14:3. 7) A kingdom, Lk. 12: 32.... ‘Though they tarry, wait,’ Hab. 2:3. ‘He that believeth shall not make haste,’ Isa. 28:16.” (Gouge)

Verse 9

Abraham did not think to return to Chaldea, as the Jews did to return to Egypt. He continued in a strange country all his days. “There is an emphasis in the Hebraism, γῆ ἐπαγγελίας, land of promise. It implieth more than if he had said, a promised land. For the phrase is exclusive, and implieth that of all the countries of the world, this especially was promised, and thereupon carrieth this title, ‘a land of promise,’ as ‘a man of war,’ ‘a man of might,’ men excellent and eminent therein.... The noun, country, is not in the Greek. For this adjective, strange, hath reference to the former substantive, land, and both these words, strange land, are joined together, Acts 7:9. The land or country here intended is called strange in a double respect. 1) In reference to the land of his nativity whence he came – for herein he had never been before; so as for the present it was strange to Abraham. 2) In reference to that possession which his posterity had thereof in and after Joshua’s time. Abraham himself, and his son and grandson abode therein, but not as in their own inheritance; for they sojourned among the people of the land, who then were the proper inhabitation thereof.

This particle, ὡς, as, doth much qualify that epithet, strange. He doth not simply say, A strange land, but As a strange land. Because he had promise of it, and his posterity had the actual possession of it, it was but ‘as a strange one.’ He had a true right unto, which was the gift of the great possessor of heaven and earth, who hath all lands to dispose as it pleaseth him. Thus are we that believe on Christ as strangers in this world, and the places of our abode are as a strange land to us; yet have we a good right to that which God by his providence bestows upon us.

Faith overcomes all difficulties; and the history giveth instance of many that he met withal, whereby he was forced twice, in a kind, to deny his wife, at least to dissemble her, both among the Egyptians, Gen. 12:14 etc., and also among the Philistines, Gen. 20:2, etc. He was also forced to arm all that were able in his house, and to get others to join with him, for rescuing of Lot. But in all these difficulties his eye was on God, that had promised that land, and so his faith remained invincible. Σκηναῖς: they had no present inheritance whereon to build houses. They had no assurance of long tarrying in one place. For Abraham first came out of Ur, in Chaldea, to Haran; from Haran he went to Canaan; from Canaan to Egypt; from Egypt to Canaan again; from Canaan to Gerar of the Philistines, and in Canaan he oft removed from place to place; as from Shechem to Bethel, thence to Mamre; after that to Beersheba, to Hebron, and to other places. In regard of the many and sundry places whither he removed, it is said that, ‘Abram journeyed in going and journeying,’ Gen. 12:9 [And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.]:

הַנֶּגֶב

the Negev

וַיִּסּוּעַ

and journeyed

הָלַךְ

walk

אַבְרָם

Abram

וַיִּסּוּעַ

journeyed

that is, he was ever and anon journeying from one place to another. The like might be instanced in the other patriarchs, in Moses, David, and sundry others. Cf. Philip. 4:12,13.

μετὰ, with, may have reference to the mind and disposition of Isaac and Jacob, in that they did as Abraham, their father. It is probable that, so long as Abraham lived, Isaac and Jacob were of his family.” (Gouge) They were co-heirs of the promise, τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῆς αὐτῆς, the same promise, or as the emphasis of the Greek articles imply, the very same promise.

Verse 10

There is a fit resemblance betwixt heaven and a city in these and other like respects – 1) A city is a place of safety. It useth to be compassed with walls and gates, Neh. 3:1, etc. In time of invasions by enemies, thither will subjects fly, as Jer. 35:11. No place more safe than heaven. 2) A city is compact of many habitations; so heaven, Jn. 14:2. 3) A city hath sundry degrees of persons appertaining unto it as magistrates, officers of sundry sorts, and commoners; so in heaven is God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, angels and saints. 4) In a city useth to be all manner of provision and other useful commodities; so in heaven, nothing is there wanting that is needful and useful. 5) A city hath statutes and orders for the better government thereof; so in heaven – the Lord’s will is perfectly done in heaven. 6) A city hath particular privileges and immunities. This is implied in this promise of Christ, ‘I will write upon him the name of the city of my God,’ Rev. 3:12. 7) None but freemen may trade and keep open a shop in a city: thus none shall have anything to do in heaven, but ‘they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life,’ Rev. 21:27. These are enrolled as freemen in the records of the heavenly city.” (Gouge)

τεμελίος – foundation: “Christ setteth forth a house that cannot be overthrown by winds, floods, or rain, to a house well founded, or set upon a good foundation. Those without house or home may consider such a city; they may even inquire into the statutes, orders, and ordinances of it. Here ‘foundation’ is in the plural for emphasis as in ‘multitude of tender mercies’, Ps. 51:1; ‘mercies of God,’ Rom. 12:1; ‘many mansions’ in heaven, Jn. 14:2 implying that none of them are without foundations. Tents and tabernacles have no foundations as they are movable. Heaven is firm, stable, everlasting.

God as builder and maker has excellent things in Canaan that are associated with His Name: ‘a prince of God,’ Gen. 23:6; ‘cedars of God,’ Ps. 80:10; ‘mountains of God,’ Ps. 36:6; and ‘an army of God,’ 1Chr. 12:22.

τεχνίτης, builder, one that doeth a thing according to art, or artificially < τέχνη – art.

δαιμόργος, means lit. a public workman, one that so openly sets out his work as he is not ashamed thereof < δήμιος ‘public’ + ἔργον ‘work’. Among the Peloponnesians, governors were called demiurges. The city of God is to a man made city as the heavenly tabernacle is to the earthly tabernacle.

Verse 11

The faith here attributed here to Sara is the same that was attributed to Abraham and to others before him; and therefore this copulative $\chi\kappa\alpha\iota$, also, is added; as if he had said, Sara also had such a faith, though she were a woman, as the other worthies which were man had. There is also pronoun of emphasis added, thus $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\eta$, herself. As if he had said, not her husband only, by whose faith she might receive the blessing, but herself also, even by her own faith, received strength, etc. (Gouge)

שָׂרַי , Sarai: The last letter of that name in Hebrew which is י (Jod) is a limitation, and restraineth the meaning of the name. The root שָׂרָה principatum obtinuit, vel exercuit, whence that name signifieth to obtain or exercise principality, Est. 1:22. [שָׂרָר – ‘bear rule’] > שָׂר , princeps., which signifieth a prince in the masc. gender and princess שָׂרָה [lit. princesses] in the fem. The name שָׂרַי , Sarai, signifieth my princess, whereby her dignity was restrained to a family that might so call her. Other worthy things are recorded of her: 1) She left all other her kindred to go with her husband, Gen. 11:31; 12:5; she did not look back, as Lot’s wife, Gen. 19:26. 2) After they were come into a strange land, she went from place to place with her husband, as she saw occasion, Gen. 12:1; 20:2; so as Abraham may be said to abide here and go thither with Sarah his wife. 3) She revered and obeyed her husband, 1Pet. 3:6. 4) She did not only conceive, bear, and bring forth her son, but gave him suck also, Gen. 21:7. 5) She would not suffer her maid to be imperious or impetuous, Gen. 16:4,5. 6) She accepted her maid upon humbling herself, Gen. 16:9,15. 7) She was jealous against the bondwoman and her son, which got approved, Gen. 21:10,12. 8) She in her place was diligent in entertaining the angels, Gen. 18:6. (Gouge)

Gouge continues: “1) Woman was created after the same image that man was, Gen. 1:27. 2) She is redeemed by the same price, Lk. 1:47. 3) She is sanctified by the same Spirit, 1Pet. 3:5. 4) She is co-heir with man of the grace of life, 1Pet. 3:7. 5) In all spiritual privileges she is all one as man, Gal. 3:28.

Most unjust, therefore and undue, are the invectives of many men against the female sex, as if they were the corruption of nature, as if they were without souls, as if they were an imperfect kind, and many the like more monstrous absurdities.

This ministereth much comfort against that blemish which the first woman brought upon that sex, 1Tim. 2:14; yea, and against the subjection and other consequences following upon the woman's sin, Gen. 3:16. There are two things from which women are barred wherein men have a liberty and power. One is authority over the husband; the other is to exercise a ministerial function, 1Tim. 2:12; 1Cor. 14:34. But instead of them he hath given two great prerogatives. One is an extraordinary spirit whereby they have been prophetesses, as Miriam, Exod. 15; Deborah, Judg. 4:4; Hannah, 1Sam. 2:1; Huldah, 2Ki. 22:14; and others. The other is a power and authority over nations and kingdoms; for it is prophesied that queens shall be nurses to the church, Isa. 49:23.

This affords an admonition to husbands and other men, to esteem women as having a right to all the spiritual privileges that they have, and as 'heirs together with them of the grace of life,' 1Pet. 3:7.

This ought to quicken up women to labour after knowledge, faith, love, and other graces, and to use all means for attaining the same." Gouge sees a like comparison in the woman with the issue of blood who received strength, even as Sarah at 90 years old did.

"Because she judged him faithful": ἠγήσατο, judged is often translated counted or accounted, Philip. 3:7,8. "It is implieth an assent of the mind to the truth of a thing; and here a full assent, without any doubting at all, as it is said of her husband, 'He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, etc., being fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able also to perform.' Rom. 4:20,21.

[As to her doubting,] we do not here, while we are in this world, attain to the full measure of faith, or of any other grace. We may not, therefore, give over the use of means, but continue to use them so long as we live.

Verse 12

The first illative particle διό, therefore, sheweth that this verse is inferred as a consequence following upon Sarah's faith, which consequence is the recompense therefore. . . . This implieth the continuance of God's blessing, that it was not only for one child, but for posterity, generation after generation, and also it giveth evidence that God can raise great matters out of small beginnings, as the waters that came from the sanctuary increased from ankle-deep to a river that could not be passed over, Ezek. 47:3,5. This God doth, 1. To manifest and magnify his divine power. 2. To make men more

thankful. Take instance hereof in Jacob, Gen. 32:10 [two ‘bands’ < מַחְסֵמֹת, sing. > מַחְסֵמֹתַי, dual.] A continual increase of a blessing causeth thanks to God to continued time after time. 3. To keep men from being too much puffed up with the blessing of God. For if they had the fulness of the blessing at first, they would boast too much therefore; but blessing increasing by degrees prevents high conceits. 4. Hereby God brings men to use warrantable means for the increase of his blessing, whenas they observe that blessing to increase more and more. As the widow by the increase of oil was moved to call for vessel after vessel, 2Ki. 4:5,6. This teacheth us to take heed of ‘despising the day of small things,’ Zech. 4:10. Men are too prone hereunto. This was it that made the Jews despise Christ. This is it that makes many to scorn the ministers of Christ and their ministry. They are ready to scoff at the power of God manifested in such as are wrought upon by the ministry, as Tobiah the Ammonite did at the Jews for rearing up the wall of the their city, Neh. 4:3.

καὶ, (emphatic), ‘even’. ἀφ’ ἑνός, ‘of one’ (masc.), supposed to intend Abraham. The next clause is also the masc. gender, καὶ νεκρωμένου, ‘and him as good as dead.’ This word is applied, even in this case, to the body of Abraham, Rom. 4:19. I take it that both of them are here meant, for husband and wife make but one person, according to the law of marriage, Gen. 2:24, and that the masc. gender is here used, because, according to the grammar rule, it is the worthier. Certainly this numerous issue was a recompense of the faith of them both, and inferred upon the commendation of Sarah’s faith, because Abraham had in this case believed in vain; if Sarah also had not believed. For the promise was appropriated to Sarah as well as to Abraham, thus, ‘I will give thee a son of Sarah,’ Gen. 17:6.

ἐγεννήθησαν < γεννάω ‘to procreate’ < γένος < γινομαι, ‘to cause to be’, (‘gen’ erate)

νεκρωμένου < νέκρος, ‘dead’

γένος > γενεά ‘a generation’ > γένεσις ‘nativity’ > παλιγγενεσία (spiritual) rebirth; ‘regeneration’ Cf. Mt. 19:28. [Resurrection makes Isaac’s sacrifice able to be endured.]

This proves that God can work not only by weak and unlikely means, or without means, but also by contrary means; for this resemblance sheweth that the living arose from the dead.

These two kinds, stars and sand, are innumerable to men (hereupon God, taking Abraham out in a starry night, bid him number the stars, if he were able, Gen. 15:5), but to God they are not, for God ‘tellethe the number of the stars,’ Ps. 147:4. [מְנַה – to weigh out, allot or constitute officially; also to innumerate or enroll.] מוֹנֵה מִסְפָּר לְכוֹכְבִּים ‘he tellethe a number to the stars’

As for the number of Abraham’s offspring, it is set forth by resemblance to the stars eleven times: thrice by way of promise, Gen. 15:5; 23:17; 26:4; twice by rehearsing that promise, Exod. 31:13; 1Chron. 27:23; six times by manifestation of the performance thereof, Deut. 1:10; 10:22; 28:62; Neh. 9:23; Jer. 33:22, and in this place.

It is also set forth by resemblance of sands nine times: thrice by promise, Gen. 22:17; 32:12; Hos. 1:10; thrice by performance, 1Ki. 4:20; Jer. 33:22; and in this place; thrice by supposition, Isa. 10:22; 48:19; Rom. 9:27.

Hyperbolic speeches are to move men not to believe untruths, but to make them the better to conceive the depth of truth in weighty matters.

ἀναρίθμητος, innumerable > arithmetic.

Verse 13

Their faith continued all the days of their life, so long as they had use thereof, even till death, when in soul they attained to the fruition of that which they believed. Objection. It is expressly said of Enoch, that he was ‘translated that he should not see death,’ Ver. 5. Answer. 1. This may be taken of all that died, as it is said that Jacob brought all his seed with him into Egypt (Gen. 46:7), namely, all that were with him; for Joseph was before him in Egypt. 2. The phrase may be taken synecdochically for the greatest part, only one accepted. Thus it is said that Athaliah destroyed ‘all the seed royal,’ yet Joash, the youngest of the king’s sons, was not destroyed, 2Ki. 11:1,2. 3. Though Enoch did not die as others, yet he was translated, and his mortality turned into immortality, which was a kind of death. 4) As long as he lived he continued to live by faith, which is the main thing here intended. 5) While he lived he had not the fruition of what he believed.

The promises were many: 1) A numerous seed. 2) The land of Canaan. 3) Christ himself. 4) Heaven also. By this proof – not having received the promises – it is evident that faith resteth on that which it enjoyeth not. Though believers enjoy not what they do believe, yet by faith they see them;

it is the spiritual sight that is here meant, and that in both the former respects (the eye of the understand, Eph. 1:18; the eye of faith, Heb. 11:27); for they well understood what things were promised, and withal they believed that they should be accomplished; but with their bodily eyes they did not see them.

[‘Afar off’] doth much illustrate their faith, that a long date for accomplishing what was promised did not weaken it. ‘Persuaded’ implieth confidence in the accomplishment of what is promised, and assurance of enjoying the same. Faith worketh assurance. Full assurance is expressly attributed to faith, e.g. Heb. 10:22.

‘embraced’ here is ἀσπασάμενοι < ἀσπασμὸς, salutation. In salutations men used to embrace one another. Fitly and properly is it here translated embraced. The phrase implieth a thankful and joyful resting on a thing. In testimony hereof, God’s people, when a special promise was brought unto them, were wont to ‘bow down and worship,’ Exod. 4:31. Objection. They received not the promises; how could they then embrace them? Answer. 1. We must distinguish betwixt possession and expectation. In present possession they did not receive the promises, but in an assured expectation they did. For faith gives a being to things future, Heb. 11:1. 2. This here may be metaphorically taken, following the former metaphor of seeing things far off. For mariners, and others that sail to a country, so soon as they espy that country, though afar off, seem joyfully to embrace it.

This verifieth that faith gives an evidence to that which is not; for faith resteth on God’s word, which is as true as if it were a deed. What is promised is altogether as true as if it were accomplished.

ὁμολογήσαντες, ‘confession’ implieth a free and open profession of that condition wherein they were, and giveth evidence that believers are not ashamed of that condition wherein they are, though it be a mean and despicable condition. This may be exemplified in Abraham professing his present state; yea and Jacob too, Gen. 23:4; 47:9. Oft doth the apostle thus make profession of his imprisonment, and of his chain and bonds, Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20. Faith pierceth through the thick clouds of all meanness in this world, and beholdeth that glory which is prepared for believers: and in that respect makes the believer not ashamed of a present mean condition, but ready on all occasions to make profession thereof. Were we thoroughly acquainted with the invisible, spiritual, and celestial prerogatives that belong to believers, and did we believe them, we should not be ashamed of any mean

condition in this world, but as occasion requireth, be ready to make profession thereof. Ξένοι – strangers; παρεπίδημοι – pilgrims < δῆμος, people; thus ‘a going from people to people’; strangers and pilgrims Cf. 1Pet. 2:11. Strangers are so called in regard in their situation, which was out of their country; but pilgrims in regard of their condition, which was to travel towards their country. Saints are as strangers, Exod. 6:4; Gen. 15:13; Ps. 39:12; 1Pet. 2:11. The wicked are not strangers in their opinion, Ps. 49:7,9,11; Lk. 12:18. Saints are strangers here in reference to their proper country, which is heaven. In that respect wicked ones are not strangers.

The word affordeth many comforts to uphold our spirits in these conditions, as: 1) We have a city to come, Heb. 13:14. 2) Here we are freemen and citizens in reference to that city, Eph. 2:19. 3) We have an excellent God, Jesus Christ, Heb. 12:2. 4) We have a goodly company, Heb. 12:1. 5) We have a sufficient light, which is God’s word, Ps. 119:105. 6) We have excellent attendants, God’s angels, Ps. 34:7; 91:11. 7) We have sufficient provision. 8) God taketh a special care of strangers and pilgrims, Deut. 10:18. 9) This condition is not long. The days of our pilgrimage are but few, Gen. 47:9. 10) There is a rest to come, Heb. 9:9; Rev. 14:13.

Verse 14

‘Declare plainly’ (εμφανίζουσιν). It signifieth so conspicuously and clearly to set out a thing, as others may plainly discern it, so as no doubt can be made of it [> emphasis]. The word is used of those who came out the graves after Christ’s resurrection, Mt. 27:53. It is there translated appeared.

It is said they seek a country, πατρίδα ἐπιζητοῦσιν [own country they are seeking].

ἐπιζητοῦσι implieth an earnest seeking, and that with desire to obtain what they seek for. It is attributed to Haran’s seeking after Peter (when he had escaped out of his clutches), Acts 12:19. It setteth out a believer’s earnest seeking after that which he desireth. Such was his seeking who said ‘one thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after,’ Ps. 27:4. [בְּקִי, elsewhere for ἐπιζητέο: שׁוֹרֵךְ and פְּקֵךְ]. And again, ‘With my whole heart have I sought thee,’ Ps. 119:10: בְּכָל-לְבִי דָרַשְׁתִּיךָ Faith, as it works assurance of attaining that which it desires, so a persuasion also of the course that it taketh, and means which it useth for that end. And this puts life in

seeking after it. Faith hath a holy heat in it, and it adds fervour to other graces. This makes believers the more earnest in seeking till they find.

The condition of believers in this world is not that main end whereunto God hath ordained them. This world is Christ's school. It is the place and time of education, and for probation, that we may be fitted for the city, country, and kingdom here intended... This is a great encouragement against death, which is the very gate through which we go into this country.

Verse 15

Mèn truly, doth somewhat heighten the thing affirmed. The patriarchs may be said to have had opportunity of returning to their country in these respects; 1) There were many external allurements to move them to return. 2) There were no external impediments to hinder them. The Canaanites, among whom they dwelt, did not seek to hold them, as the Egyptians did the Israelites in Egypt; Nor did their countrymen use means to keep them out after they were gone. 3) They had no great external allurements to keep them where they were. 4) They were not held back by any external employments. 5) In that long time that lived as strangers, they might have taken some season or other – if not in cold of winter or in heat of summer, yet in spring or autumn, if not in times of scarcity, yet in time of plenty – to have return. 6) They had time and means to accommodate themselves with all things neatful, for all that belonged unto them, to help them in their journey.

Verse 16

The verb, ὀρέγονται, translated desire < ὀρέγω, to reach out. It is applied to stretching out of the hand with desire of having such and such a thing; and it implies an earnest desire – yea, it includes a care in using means for obtaining that desire. It is applied to the desire of a covetous man (1Tim. 6:10), which useth to be great. It is also applied to a desire of the ministerial function (1Tim. 3:1). A noun, ὄρεξις, libido, which signifieth lust, that is, an earnest desire is derived from this verb, Rom. 1:27.

The country here meant is styled better, in opposition to that earthly country which they left. It is thus indefinitely set down better, because the excellency of it cannot be expressed. Wherein any country hath an excellency, therein this is better. These Hebrews 'took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had a better (κρείττονα) substance,' Heb. 10:34. Martyrs accepted not deliverance, that they might obtain a better

(κρείττονος) resurrection, Heb. 11:35. The word ‘heavenly’ is a compound and emphatical. ἐπουρανίου may be translated supercelestial, above the heavenly, mainly, the visible heavens.

So well did God approve of the foresaid desire of the patriarchs, as he was moved thereby to give evidence of his special respect unto them. The negative expression, οὐκ ἐπαισχύνεται, is not a shamed, hath an emphasis, and implieth that their disposition was no matter of disgrace, to make God ashamed of them. The like is noted of Christ, that ‘he was not ashamed to call them brethren,’ Heb. 2:11. The evidence whereby it is manifested that God was not ashamed of them, was this: to be called their God. He hath special favours for those whose God in peculiar he is; as, 1) all spiritual blessing, Eph. 1:3. 2) Sundry particular graces: as Understand of God’s will; Col. 1:9; Justifying faith, Rom. 5:1; Saving hope, Rom. 8:24; Brotherly love, 1Jn. 4:18; Repentance, Acts 2:38; New obedience; Patience, Jas. 5:11. 3) The effects of these, as peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, comfort in spirit. And evidence that God was not shamed to be called the God of the patriarchs is thus expressed, for he hath prepared for them a city. He was careful to provide for them a place where they might ever be with him. A reward prepared and set before one much puts him on to do what he can for attaining thereunto. This encouraged Moses, Ver. 26, yea, and Christ himself, Ch. 12:2. These are they whom Christ calleth ‘a little flock,’ to whom ‘it is their father’s [good] pleasure to give them a kingdom,’ Lk. 12:32; and they whom Christ styleth, ‘the blessed of his Father.’ The usual notes of distinction betwixt persons give further proof hereof; as ‘elect,’ Col. 3:12; ‘heirs of salvation,’ Heb. 1:14; ‘heirs of the kingdom,’ Jas. 2:5; ‘heirs of the grace of life,’ 1Pet. 3:7; ‘children of the resurrection,’ Lk. 10:36; ‘children of the kingdom,’ Mt. 13:38.

Verse 17

Faith puts one on to any kind of obedience, even to do that which otherwise he would not. For faith persuades the soul of God’s sovereignty, wisdom, righteousness, faithfulness, power, truth, providence, and other excellencies. The idolater that will not leave his idols, or the swearer his oaths, or the voluptuous person his pleasures, or the lustful person his lusts, or the proud person his strange attire, or other sinners their sins, want faith. Herein appears the greatness of his faith, that he believed the promise of Isaac’s seed, and yet by faith is ready to null that promise by sacrificing Isaac

before he had any seed at all. πειραζόμενος, when he was tried: God enjoined him to offer up Isaac, not simply that he should do so, but to try whether he were willing upon God's command, to do so or no. Abraham then knew not that God commanded him to offer Isaac merely upon trial. God's will is not only the rule, but also the ground of goodness; whatsoever God willeth is, in that respect, good and just. A special charge of God doth dispense with a general law, and that in regard of particular and present circumstances. Witness the spoiling of the Egyptians, Exod. 12:35,36; and the wounding the of man of God, 1Ki. 20:35,36. God did not intend the taking away of Isaac's life; he meant to prevent Abraham therein.

Question. What need was there that God should try Abraham? Answer.
 1) For Abraham's own sake, that he might better know the power of that grace which God had conferred on him; for as God tries some to discover [uncover] their weakness unto themselves (so he tried Hezekiah, 2Cron. 32:31), so he tries others to manifest that grace that was in them, as he did the Canaanitish woman, Mt. 15:25. 2) For the sake of others, that Abraham might be an example to them. It pleased God to cull out Abraham to be a father of the faithful; therefore he would shew to all ages what grace he had conferred upon him – what a worthy father, and what a worthy pattern he was. By this it is manifest that God tries his best children. He began with Adam, and that in his innocency, and hath continued so to do in all ages. Among others, Abraham was oft tempted, as appears by these texts: Gen. 12:1,11; 13:7; 14:14; 15:13; 16:5; 17:24; 18:12,13; 19:24; 20:2; 21:11, but never so sorely as in this particular. Two special ends there be hereof: - one, to manifest the grace that is in his children, as in the case of Job; the other, to discover [uncover] inward corruptions, as in the case of Hezekiah. προσενήνοχε: offered is the same used for slaying and offering up sacrifices [“and offer him” – וְהֵעִילָהּ < עָלָה], Gen. 22:2. It is set down in the time past, as if he had actually offered him up, by reason of the truth of his intention; for Abraham did fully intend to offer him up, in that he knew no other concerning the purpose of God. So a true intent is, in God's account, as a real act. So was David's intent to build God's house; it was therefore commended, 1Ki. 8:18; and rewarded, 2Sam. 7:16. Hereupon the apostle saith that ‘if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not,’ 2Cor. 8:12. Witness the poor widow, Lk. 21:3. God searcheth the heart, Jer. 17:10. He desireth the heart, Deut. 5:29. He hath most and best respect to the heart, Ps. 51:6. This is a matter of great comfort

to honest hearts, Isa. 38:3. Though we be hindered from external acts, yet God accepts the inward intent. Give therefore to God that which he doth above all desire, Prov. 23:26. [Cf. Lk. 11:41: “give alms of such things as ye have...”]

Here under the word promises, are comprised, not only promises made to all believers – that God will be their God, and that God would bless them and provide for them (which were likewise in special made to Abraham, Gen. 12:7; 15:1; 17:7 – but also such particular promises as this act of offering Isaac seemed to cross, namely this, that God would establish his covenant with Isaac for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him, Gen. 17:19. Isaac was that seed which God intended, in whose posterity Canaan should be possessed, Gen. 17:7, and whose posterity should be for number as the stars, Gen. 15:5, and that seed with whom God would establish his covenant, and in whom all nations should be blessed, Gen. 17:7. The accomplishment of these and other like promises depended upon the preservation of Isaac’s life, at least till Isaac should have a child, in whom the hope of the said promises might be continued till they should be fully accomplished; for Abraham then, who in special received these promises, to offer up him by whom they should be accomplished, must needs be and evidence of more than ordinary faith; and this privilege of receiving the promises a great amplification hereof.

Isaac was a son, in general a son of man. To have sacrificed him had been murder. He was his son. Thus he had a special charge of him, in which respect this act might seem to be inhuman. He was his own son; begotten of him, not adopted as Eliezer was, Gen. 15:2. This makes it seem unnatural to offer him up. He was his only-begotten son; so there was no hope of another in that kind. This made it seem the more strange. In the history this clause is added, whom thou lovest, Gen. 22:2.

Abraham ‘rose up early in the morning;’ a note of his alacrity. The place where he was to offer up his son was three days’ journey from him; and evidence of his constancy. The wood wherewith Isaac should be burnt upon the altar was laid on Isaac’s shoulders. Isaac himself carried it. Abraham himself carried the fire to kindle it. The child in this journey asketh his father where the offering was; which question could not but pierce the bowels of a tender father. The father and child being both come to the top of the mount, the father erects an altar, layeth wood thereon, binds his son, layeth him on

the altar upon the wood, stretcheth forth his hand, and takes the knife to slay his son.

Verse 18

This hath express reference to God's promise concerning Isaac when Ishmael was to be cast out, Gen. 21:12. This promise was made to Abraham, to comfort against that grief which afflicted upon the thought of casting out Ishmael. It is as if God had said to Abraham, What needest thou be so perplexed for parting with Ishmael? Thou hast Isaac; Isaac shall abide with thee; Isaac, Isaac, I say, and none but Isaac, is that particular person who shall bring forth that seed, even that blessed seed, which I have promised thee, wherein all nations shall be blessed. If casting out Ishmael grieved Abraham, what did it to think of sacrificing Isaac?

In regard of the promise of a blessed seed annexed to Isaac's person, a greater trial could not have been than this. Job endured much; but he had expressed promises to support and comfort him. Abraham's fact was against the promises. To have offered up all his cattle, all his servants, the son of his concubine, yea, his dear wife, and his own self, had not been so great a trial – no, not to have offered up all the world, as to offer up Isaac; Isaac living, a blessed seed and offspring might have come from him, though Abraham himself and all others had been offered up; but Isaac being taken away without seed, nor Abraham, nor any in the world could be saved. The salvation of Abraham, of Isaac himself, and of all mankind, was put in hazard by this temptation. Thus this circumstance doth of all other most amplified the faith of Abraham, and giveth demonstration of the high pitch thereof. What now Abraham think? To sacrifice Isaac was to disannul [nullify?] God's promise. To refuse to sacrifice him was to disobey God's commandment. But Abraham was assured that the charge was divine, given by God himself. He resolves therefore to perform it. Yet he believes the promise. He knows not how it should be accomplished; but believes that it should be accomplished. Hereupon, in the height of his faith, he saith to his son, 'God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering,' Gen. 22:8. Oh, admirable, oh, incredible faith!

[Question. Was this an end of idolatry in that Isaac was not to be so cherished as God?]

Joseph and Benjamin were of all Jacob's children dearest to him; not only because they were the children of his choicest wife, but also of his old age, Gen. 37:3.

The instance of Job's blessing God when he took away his cattle, servants, children, and all cometh the nearest to this. Though they were taken away by other means, and not offered up by Job's own hands, yet Job's willing submitting of himself to the good guiding providence of God, was as much accepted of God as if he had offered all to God with his own hands; and thereupon, as God returned Isaac to Abraham, so he returned other children, servants, and goods to Job.

[Some say that Isaac was 37 years old in the year of Sarah's death,] for Sarah was ninety years old when Isaac was born and (127) when she died. This is certain: he was of a good growth and strength, in that he could carry up hill such a burden of wood as was enough to have burnt him to ashes.

Verse 19

Abraham seriously consulted with himself about the seeming difference betwixt God's promise and God's command; but holding this for a undoubted principle, that God's promise should be accomplished; and in his reasoning meditating on God's infallible truth, unsearchable wisdom, incomprehensible mercy, almighty power, and other divine properties, this cometh to his mind – if there be no other way for accomplishing God's promise but that which is extraordinary, he will work a miracle rather than fail of his promise; God will raise Isaac from the dead, for he is able so to do. . . . Abraham did not simply and absolutely believe that Isaac should be raised from the dead, for he had no promise so to believe; and the text saith not that he accounted that God would raise him, but that he was δυνατός, able so do to. [Gouge sees the "figure" as pertaining to the general resurrection and indicative of Abraham's belief in the resurrection.]

Verse 20

Much hath be spoken of Isaac, as he was son, in relation to his father Abraham. Here is to be considered as a father, in relation to his two sons. 1) Of the three patriarchs Isaac was the longest liver; for Abraham lived 175 years, Gen. 15:7; Jacob 147, Gen. 47:28; but Isaac 180, Gen 35:28. 2) He was, of the three patriarchs, the most continent. He never had but one wife, with her he long lived most comfortably. Isaac's sporting with Rebekah his

wife, Gen. 26:8, giveth instance of that matrimonial delight they took one in another. The ancient Liturgy hath fitly culled out this couple as a pattern for man and wife, in this phrase, ‘as Isaac and Rebekah lived faithfully together.’

3) It is probable that attained to more wealth than his father or son; for he ‘received a hundredfold of that which he sowed, and he waxed great, and he such possessions as the Philistines envied him,’ Gen. 26:12-14. 4) He lived more quietly, and had more rest than the other two patriarchs. He was not forced from place to place, as the others were. We read only of his being forced by famine to go to Gerar, Gen. 26:1. 5) Fewer failings are noted of Isaac than of either of the other two. We read only of the weakness of his faith in dissembling his wife, Gen. 26:7, and of his overmuch indulgency to his profane son Esau, Gen. 27:3.

Indeed his name, after his death, was least spoken of. I take the reason to be this, that he neither was the first root, as Abraham was, nor had immediately issued from him the heads of the twelve tribes, as Jacob had.” (Gouge) His faith took the form of believing that the spiritual and temporal blessings given would indeed come to pass.

Verse 21

Here Jacob blesses his grandchildren Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph may have had other children later, Gen. 48:6.

Joseph, some say, raised himself from his bedstead, his bolster or pillow. הַטָּף is “bed,” 2Ki. 4:10 and “staff,” Num. 17:2 which is $\text{הַטָּף} < \text{הַטָּף}$, to stretch. Says Gouge, “Both words, bed and staff, do fully set out the meaning of the Holy Ghost; and to the life due manifest the old man’s desire to testify the inward devotion of his soul by a reverent composing of his body to worship God; for rising up on his bed’s head; and that in bowing his body, he might be supported, he leaned upon his staff, and so worshipped.

Verse 22

The graces where with Joseph was endowing were: 1. Faith: this is here in special commended. 2. Fear of God: this he himself doth profess of himself, Gen. 42:18. 3. Faithfulness: this was manifested in all his relations, as – (1.) To God by declaring that by which God had made known to him in dreams, Gen. 37:5. (2.) To his father, by bringing to him the evil report of his brethren. (3.) To his master, who trusted him over all he had, Gen. 39:6. (4.) To his mistress, in dissuading from unfaithfulness, Gen. 39:8. (5.) To the

king, for what he did was to the king's emolument, Gen. 47:20. 4. Chastity, which was brought to a thorough proof, Gen., 39:10. 5. Sincerity: he could not in secret be brought to sin, Gen. 39:11. 6. Patience under his crosses, Ps. 105:18,19. 7. Bearing with wrongs, Gen. 50:21. 8. Forgiving injuries, Gen. 50:17,19. 9. Overcoming evil with goodness, Gen. 42:25; 50:21. 10. Wisdom in ordering his affairs. This was manifested – (1.) In his master's house, Gen. 39:4. (2.) In the prison, Gen. 39:22. (3.) In the kingdom, Gen. 41:39; 47:14. 11. Providence against future wants, Gen. 41:48. 12. Bowels of compassion, Gen. 42:24; 43:30. 13. Reverence to his father, and that when he was advanced to outward dignity above his father, Gen. 46:29; 48:12. 14. Obedience to his father, Gen. 37:14,15; 47:31. 15. Recompense to his father, and that – (1.) While his father lived, Gen. 47:12. (2.) When he was dead, Gen. 50:2. 16. Care of posterity, and that – (1.) In reference to his own children, Gen 48:1, etc. (2.) In reference to his brothers and their children, Gen. 50:24. Joseph may be a pattern for servants, children, brethren, subjects, governors, prisoners, exiles, such as are unduly slandered and wronged, yea, and for all saints.

The prerogatives wherewith Joseph was honoured and blessed were these: - 1. His comely feature, Gen. 39:6. 2. His father's love, Gen. 37:3. 3. His birthright, 1Chro. 5:1,2. 4. God's blessing on his affairs, Gen. 39:2,23. 5. The favour of all that were over him, Gen. 39:4,21; 41:38. 6. An extraordinary divine spirit, Gen. 37:6, etc.; 40:8; 41:25. 7. High honour even next to the king, Gen. 41:40. 8. Ability and opportunity of doing good, Gen. 41:57. 9. A reservation of his own and children's right to the church of God, though he lived most of his days in a strange land, where he was a prime governor, and where his children were born and brought up, Gen. 48:6. 10. A reputation to be as his father Jacob, and other his forefathers, a stock and head of the church, the members whereof are styled, 'the sons of Jacob and Joseph,' Ps. 77:15. 11. A numerous progeny, Gen. 49:22. Two tribes issued from him, and one of them, namely Ephraim, was more numerous than most of the other. 12. The many years that he lived, which were a hundred and ten, Gen. 50:22. 13. An honourable laying him in a coffin, wherein he continued hundreds of years, Gen. 50:26. 14. The carrying of his bones in the aforesaid coffin with the Israelites when they were delivered out of Egypt, Exod. 13:19. 15. His burial in that part of Canaan which by lot fell to Ephraim, and became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. In these prerogatives of Joseph, we

have an instance of the providence and bounty of God towards such as fear him.

Joseph believed that God would bring the children of Israel out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, promised to their fathers. To give them assurance of his faith therein, also to strengthen their faith, he giveth this charge.” Gouge reckons that Joseph’s bones remained in Egypt 140 more years, forty years more in the wilderness, and twenty before burial at Shechem. The 430 years of oppression must have begun shortly after Abraham was informed, and not after there arose another Pharaoh who knew not Joseph.

Verse 23

Not the faith, but of his parents, is here commended. They are *πατέρας*, fathers; parents. The mother is not here excluded. So she is part of this. “The history maketh express mention of her, and of her alone, for the mother was actor of all. All that the mother did was with the father’s consent.” He was Amram, “a numerous people”, she Jochebed, “glorious”. “They were both of the tribe of Levi, and of the same family. [They were] near of kin, for Jochebed was Amram’s father’s sister, so as Amram married his aunt, and of her had Aaron and Moses. But this was before the law of prohibiting degrees of marriage, and before the commonwealth of Israel was sufficiently peopled.

The reason why Moses’ parents hid him was a cruel edict of the king of Egypt, ‘That every son that was born of an Israelite should be cast into the river,’ Exod. 1:22. Thus Rebekah used means to conceal Jacob from the fury of his brother, Gen. 27:43; Rahab hid the spies, Josh. 2:4; and a woman hid Jonathan and Ahimaaz, 2Sam. 17:19. To omit other instances, it is said of God himself that he hid Jeremiah and Baruch, Jer. 36:26.

Cf. v. 31 The spies that searched Jericho were employed in a good cause, warranted by God, whereof Rahab was assured, partly by the common fame that God had devoted all Canaan to destruction, and partly by an inward inspiration of the Spirit. In this respect her act is imitable. It was extraordinary to hide spies that came to search her country. This she did by an extraordinary spirit. But to hide such as were in God’s work, and in a warranted course, was ordinary and imitable.

That act of Amram and Jochebed’s faith, in hiding their son, is amplified by the time, both when they began, and how long they continued. The apostle saith that they did it, *γεννηθεῖς*, when he was born. This was an

especial point of wisdom. An angel admonished Joseph to carry his reputed son Jesus out of Herod's [reach] before he could know that he was mocked of the wise men, Mk. 2:13.... It is noted that the man-child which the dragon sought to devour, as soon as it was born, was presently caught up unto God, Rev. 12:4,5.

These three months were as long a time as they could hide him. Some say that the Egyptians searched the Israelites' houses every three months. It appears that some discovery began to be made of their child; or, at least, that there was some suspicion of such a child; for the history saith, 'she could not longer hide him,' Exod. 2:3.

'He was a proper child': ἀστειός τῷ τεῷ in Acts 7:20 'beautiful to God'. There the word God is added to it; and the title God being added, it is translated very fair; for the addition of God to things in Canaan's language addeth an excellency unto them, as cedars of God, tall cedars; mount of God, a great mount; and so in other things. Or else this phrase, fair to God, may imply a divine stamp, whereby it was evident that God marked him for some great work. This might God set on him to move both his parents, and also Pharaoh's daughter, to respect him. In this respect it was not fondness in the parents, by reason of the prettiness, comeliness, and fairness of the child, that moved them to do what they did, but that divine stamp, and their faith thereupon.... The phrase (which is oft applied to the Virgin Mary) 'she laid up those things in her heart,' Lk. 2:19,51, hath reference to extraordinary evidences of divine glory in her son, and made her more careful over him."

They did not fear the commandment of Pharaoh perhaps because they recognized in the child a divine grace which God would use to His glory. Like Daniel and the 3 children, their faith displaced the fear of an evil king. Daniel's 3 companions yielded not to the idolatrous edict of Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel himself prayed against the edict of Darius the Persian. (Gouge)

Verse 24

Moses' life is here championed and with the use of πίστει in verses 27 and 28 an anaphora is formed describing the faith of the man himself. μέγας γενόμενος, when he was great refers either to his dignity or age. Says Gouge, "Moses was of mature judgment when he did what he did." ἠρνήσατο here "refused" is translated "denied" at Jn. 1:20 in which John the Baptist 'confessed and denied not.' "He went day after day out of the [Pharaoh's] court and conversed among the children of Israel which were in bondage, and

at length clean left court, land, and all.” His flight to Midian when he might have easily covered his “crime” demonstrates his refusal as a voluntary act. “Faith is of force to make believers slight the highest honours on earth. Joseph was in Egypt advanced next to the king; and his children might by his means have attained great and honourable places; but he rather chose to have them incorporated into society of God’s saints, than to have the highest honours in Egypt; therefore he brought them to his father to be blessed, Gen. 48:1. Daniel refused honours offered him by a great monarch, Dan. 5:17.... Ambitious persons have very little faith, if they have any at all. ‘How can ye believe,’ saith Christ, ‘which receive (or affect) honour one of another?’ Jn. 5:44.

They fail exceedingly, who think that that which is taken from them perforce is acceptable to God. Unless their mind be willing to yield to the divine providence, there can be no commendation of what they let go, nor comfort therein. That which is done as necessity is in itself no virtue; yet by a willing yielding to let go that which we cannot hold, a virtue may be made of necessity.

Verse 25

ἐλόμενος “choosing” implies a voluntary act upon a due consideration of the many ill consequences that might follow upon pleasures, and the many benefits and blessings that might be found among the people of God, he preferred to be in their case with them than to remain in Egypt with the fruition of pleasures.” (Gouge)

συγκακουχεῖσθαι < σύν with ἔχω, to have + κακός, evil. The passive voice (as used here) signifies to be ill-handed of, “tormented” of 11:37 and “suffering adversity” of 13:3.

“Advantages of society with God’s people are such as these:

1. Means of daily edification, 1Thess. 5:11.
2. Encouragement in good courses, Neh. 2:18.
3. Participation of mutual prayers, Jas. 5:16.
4. Benefits by the gifts of one another, Prov. 13:20, Isa. 50:4.
5. Divine blessings, 2Ki. 3:14; Gen. 39:5.
6. Avoiding judgments, Gen. 18:26, etc.”

Pleasures that Gouge allows as lawful are:

- 1) Shooting in the bow, 2Sam. 1:18.
- 2) Flinging and slinging stones, Judg. 20:16; 1Chron. 12:2.

- 3) Hunting, Gen. 27:3.
- 4) Music, and that vocal, Eccles. 2:8, and instrumental, 1Sam. 16:23; 2Ki. 3:15.
- 5) Feasting, Neh. 8:10.
- 6) Anointing one's self. 2Sam. 12:20.
- 7) Putting out riddles, Judg. 14:12.
- 8) Dancing, 2Sam. 6:16.

“To discover men's vanity in doting upon pleasures, the apostle addeth this epithet unto them, πρόσκαιρον, for a season, or temporary; for it is but one word in Greek, and translated ‘temporal’ and opposed to eternal, 2Cor. 4:18. It is applied to the corn sown in stony ground, which continueth but ‘a while,’ Mt. 13:21; Mk. 4:17. Wordly pleasures, therefore, are but momentary. The wise man compareth the laughter of fools to the crackling of thorns under a pot, Eccles. 7:6. Instance that delight which the fool took in his abundance; he thought he should enjoy them many years, but he did not enjoy them one night, Lk. 12:20. The wise man by experience found them to be vanity, Eccles. 2:1.” (Gouge)

Verse 26

This verse leads us from pleasures to riches. ἡγησάμενος, “esteeming” implieth that “Moses did not rashly what is here mentioned, but on mature consideration and good judgment.

Reproach is taken two ways: 1. For that disgrace which a man justifiably brings upon himself by his ill-behaviour, and so is a just punishment. This is intended by the apostle, where he sheweth that a bishop must have a good report, ;lest he fall into reproach,’ 1Tim. 3:7. 2. For that disgrace which is unjustly cast upon one for doing his duty, or for that which is good. In this sense reproach may be, and hath been, cast upon Christ Jesus, Rom. 15:3. In this sense it is here taken, and taken as a kind of persecution.

Question. Christ not then exhibited; how could then the reproach of Christ fall upon Moses? Answer. 1) Christ was promised anon after man's fall to Adam and his posterity, Gen. 3:15. On that ground he was known, and believed on. 2) Christ was many ways typified before he was exhibited: and thereby the faith of God's people was confirmed on him. 3) By Christ may be meant his mystified body, which compriseth under it the whole number of the elect, which were given to Christ by God's eternal counsel, Eph. 1:4. Thus is this title Christ used, Gal. 3:16; 1Cor. 12:12. In this respect, reproach of

Christ signifieth the reproach of the church of God: so as Moses was reproached for joining himself with the people of God.

The riches here mentioned were not small riches, as the riches of one tradesman may be greater than another, and yet those riches not very great; but the riches which are meant were greater than treasures, that is, more wealth, more highly to be prized. Treasures. $\delta\eta\sigma\alpha\upsilon\rho\tilde{\omega}\nu > \text{thesaurus}$ ” (Gouge)

The two instances mentioned (vs. 27, 29) of Moses forsaking (as an exile) the treasures of Egypt may connect with Pharaoh’s wrath. “At both times great faith was manifested – yea, and an undaunted spirit. At both times he did forsake Egypt. The wrath of the king was at both times incensed against him; for at first he sought to slay Moses, Ex. 2:15. At the second time, he charged Moses to see his face no more – threatening death if he saw him again, Ex. 10:29.

Verse 28

He kept the Passover: The word of obedience here used, $\pi\omicron\iota\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ signifieth to make [$>$ poetry], as if it had been thus translated, $\pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\iota\acute{\mu}\kappa\epsilon$, he made the Passover. He first made it known to the people, and in that respect, may be said to make it Moses both observant it in his own person, and also caused all the people to observe it. Thereupon our translators thus render it, he kept.” (Gouge)

Passover $< \pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\chi\epsilon\iota\nu < \Pi\tilde{\Omega}\tilde{\Phi}$, to pass over. The death of the first-born among the Egyptians requites Pharaoh’s decree (Ex. 1:16,22). The first-born to be drowned became Egypt’s armies in the Red Sea. “Nadab and Abihu offered incense with strange fire, and were themselves devoured with strange fire, Lev. 10:1,2. of Adonibezek in Judges 1:7. Eli’s sons profaned the holy things of God, and were destroyed in bearing the ark of the Lord, 1Sam. 4:11. Agag was thus dealt withal in his kind, 1Sam. 15:33. And David in sundry cases, as 2Sam. 12:11; and 24:1,15. [Children, though innocent, were punished for their parents’ crime (Exod. 20:5) and to an extent (Exod. 34:7)]. This may be exemplified in the children of Dathan and his accomplices, Num. 16:27,32, and in the children Jeroboam, 1Kings 15:29, and sundry others.... As God’s mercy, by the extent thereof to the seed and children of such as believe on him, is much amplified, Gen. 17:7; Prov. 20:7; Ps. 112:2, so is the judgment aggravated by this extent.

Objection. This may seem to be against justice, and against God’s express word, who hath said it, and sworn it, that ‘the child shall not die for

the sin of the father,' Ezek. 18:2,3, etc. Answer. The justice of God is manifested by the universal contagion and corruption of all children of men. Is it not just with men to destroy the young cubs of foxes, wolves, and other mischievous creatures by reason of their ravenous nature? Besides, children appertain to parents; they are theirs. In this respect it is not against justice to punish them in their parents' case. Children of traitors are deprived of their patrimony by reason of their parents' dement. As for God's avouching not to punish the child for the father, that is spoken of penitent children, and withal it is intended of the personal sins of parents, and the eternal punishment thereof: which punishment no child shall bear simply for his parents' personal sin.... This also gives occasion to children to be humbled, even for their parents' sin. This was it that much humbled good Josiah, 2Ki. 22:19, and it was acceptable in God's sight." (Gouge) The commentator implies that Moses' name signifies that he was drawn out from among men to be an example of one who held contempt for the world, was courageous, and was obedient. He observes, "Christ was reproached before was exhibited. In this respect this phrase the reproach of Christ is here used."

Verse 29

έρυθρὰ, "Red" > Rufus > ruddy "In Hebrew it is styled רִיטוֹן, the sea of reed, or a bulrush, by reason of reeds or rushes growing on the banks thereof, or of weeds growing in the bottom of it. These weeds, רִיטוֹן, which Jonah doth thus mention ('The weeds [hapax legomenon] were wrapt about my head,' Jon. 2:5), are expressed under this Hebrew word, which signifieth reed or rush.... The sea is called the Red Sea on these grounds – 1. The sand on the shores thereof were red. 2. The mountains bordering thereon were reddish. 3) By reason thereof there appeared a reddish lustre upon the waters." (Gouge)

[“Some of the Jewish rabbins, whom many Christian interpreters follow, say that they did only pass on one side of the sea from one place to another, in way of a half circle, to avoid the fury of Pharaoh's host, and to be a means of drowning them, as if one should go into the Thames at Westminster and come out at the Temple, not touching the other side of the Thames.

Their reasons for this assertion are these –

1. The Israelites had not enough time to pass from one side of the sea to the other. They were on foot, and had many children with them, so as they could not in one night pass over so broad a sea.

2. The place from whence they went before they passed over is called Etham, [אֶתְמָן – of Egyptian derivation], Exod. 13:20, and the place to which they came after they had ended their journey is also called Etham, Num. 33:8.

Answer. To the first. (1.) The sea in the place where they passed might be so narrow as in a night it might be passed over, especially by such as fled from their enemies.

(2.) It is nowhere said that they were but one night in passing it over. Indeed it is said, Exod. 14:24, that ‘in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, and troubled them.’ This might be about six in the morning; and God then began to trouble the Egyptian: but at that time might the Israelites be in the sea: and though God caused the waters behind them, where the Egyptians were, to fall down, yet he might uphold them before the Israelites as they passed on.

To the second – The same name might be given to two places, which is frequent in Scripture, and in all ages and places of the world, especially one being on one side, the other on the other side of the sea.

Near London there is on one side of the river of Lea a town called Stratford, and on the other side another town called Stratford, and these two distinct towns, in different parishes, and different counties. Besides the notation of the name אֶתְמָן, Etham, on the one and on the other side of the sea, may be given upon a like occasion; (a Etham signifieth their coming. It is derived from a verb, הִתְמַן, venit, that signifieth to come, and the last letter of Etham implieth a relative pronoun, their or them. Wherefore because out of Egypt they came to such a place, when they entered into the sea, it was called Etham; and having passed through the sea, the place whither they first came was also called Etham.)

That they clean crossed the Red Sea, from one side to another, appears by these reasons –

1. The word here used by the apostle διεβησαν, they passed through, intends as much.

2. It is three times noted in the history that they were ‘in the midst’ of the sea; Exod. 14:16,22,29.

3. As they passed through Jordan, so they passed through the Red Sea, Josh. 4:23.

4. Mount Sinai, whither the Israelites came after they had passed through the sea, Exod. 19:1, was on the other side of that sea, in the desert of Arabia, Gol. 4:24,25. So also were other places whither they came after they had passed through the Red Sea.

5. If they had come out on the same side of the sea on which they went into it, they might have lived in fear of the Egyptians to gather another army against them; but the Red Sea being betwixt them, they are freed from those fears.

6. Going in and coming out of the sea on the same side would open too wide a gap for Julianists, Porphyrians, and other like atheists, to elude this miraculous work by saying that Moses marked the low ebb of the sea, and so led the people along, and the Egyptians following when the tide began to arise, were drowned.

This miracle is amplified by this phrase following, ὡς διὰ ξηρᾶς, as by dry land. The word land is not in the Greek, but yet understood. When the word dry is applied to other things, that other thing useth to be expressed, as, χεῖρα ξηράν, a dry hand, Mt. 12:10, or a withered hand; ξυλόν ξηρόν, a dry tree, Lk. 23:31; but when it is attributed to the earth, the substantive useth to be left out, as Mt. 23:15, ‘ye compass sea and land.’ The word translated land is the word that is here used in the text, and signifieth dry.

This is here noted to give evidence of the divine providence, in making the bottom of the sea on which they went as fit to travel on as a hard, plain, beaten highway in dry weather. In the history it is said that the sea was made dry land, and that ‘they went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground,’ Exod. 14:21,22....” (Gouge)

The apostle maketh this passing of the Israelites through the Red Sea to be such a sacrament unto them as baptism is unto us, where he saith, ‘they were all baptized in the sea,’ 1Cor. 10:2.

[“Hereupon, having distinctly noted the main points of the history, I hold it meet to open the mystery, and for that end.

1. To shew what kind of sacrament their passing through the Red Sea was.

2. To manifest wherein that sacrament agreeth with baptism.

That sacrament may thus be described: it was one of the Jews' extraordinary sacraments, wherein by their safe passing through the sea, their preservation from the common destruction of mankind was represented and sealed up unto them.

1. That it was a sacrament is evident by this phrase, 'they were baptized in the sea,' 1Cor. 10:2, and in that it had the essential parts of a sacrament, as we will shew in comparing it with baptism.

2. It was a sacrament of the Jews, appertaining to that church alone. It was not for the Egyptians: they were drowned in the sea. Hereby it is distinguished from the ark, which was a general sacrament for the whole world; and also from Christian sacraments.

3. It was an extraordinary sacrament, in that it was but once for all used.

Hereby it was distinguished from the Jews' ordinary sacraments, which were circumcision and the Passover.

4. It is said to be one of their extraordinary sacraments, to shew that the Jews had more extraordinary sacraments than this. They had four. Two answered baptism, this and the cloud, 1Cor. 10:2. The two other answered the Lord's supper, which were manna, and the water that came out of the rock.

5. The outward sign of this sacrament was the Red Sea. They passed through it.

6. The thing signified was Christ's blood. Christ's blood is the sea that keeps us safe from that destruction that falls upon others.

7. The fit resemblance betwixt the sign and thing signified sheweth that this was represented by that – namely that our spiritual preservation was represented by the manner of that temporal preservation.

8. The adding of the means to the promise sheweth that this was a seal. The promise was first made to Abraham, Gen. 15:14; and confirmed, Exod. 3:8, 14:13; and, by this passing through the Red Sea, ratified. This was an essential means of strengthening their faith, Exod. 14:31.

See 172 Of the argument betwixt Israel's passing through the Red Sea and baptism.

1. The passing through the Red Sea, and baptism, had both the same outward signs, which was water, Mt. 3:6.

2. They had like rites, which were entering into the water, and coming out of it, Acts 8:38,39.

3. They both had the same inward substance, which was salvation by Christ, Rom. 6:3,4.

4. They both had the same ground, which was God's commandment and God's promise, Exod. 14:13,16; Mt. 28:19; Mk. 16:16.

5. They were both for the same people, which were God's confederates, Mt. 28:19.

6. Both were but once administered, Eph. 4:5; Jn. 13:10.

7. By both persons were incorporated into God's church. They who passed through the Red Sea were the only people of God; so they who are baptized.

8. Both sacraments are unprofitable to such as start from the covenant, 1Cor. 10:5; 2Pet. 2:20.

9. Both are sacraments to prepare people for further grace. Therefore they that passed through the Red Sea had manna, and the water coming out of the rock prepared for them; and such as are baptized have the Lord's supper, as a sacrament of spiritual nourishment.

10. In both there was a difference betwixt God's people and his enemies. Israelites were saved, but Egyptians drowned. So by baptism believers are saved, the flesh with the corrupt lusts thereof are destroyed.

11. As the Egyptians, being drowned, lay on the shore; so the old man, with his corrupt lusts, lies as drowned in believers.

12. As the Israelites passed through the sea by the wilderness into Canaan; so believers that are baptized pass by this world into heaven, Mk. 16:16." (Gouge)]

Verse 30

Says Gouge, "The twelfth instance for proof of the vigour of faith is of the Israelites, under the government and conduct of Joshua. This is the ninth instance from the flood, and the first after the law.

Verse 31

This is the last of the ἀναδορά ["a carrying back, reference, recourse, a means of repairing" Lid.-Scott Lex], which carrieth this word before it, by faith, as Rahab.

In setting down this instance, the method and order of the apostle in producing examples to commend unto us this precious gift of faith, is worthy to be observed.

1. He culls out eminent persons such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, etc. which are the more perfect patterns.

2. He inserts women, as Sarah, and the mother of Moses, to prove that even women may become worthier.

3. He produceth multitudes, as they who passed through the Red Sea, and marched about Jericho, to shew that faith is a common gift for all sorts of people.

4. He giveth instance of a notorious sinner, which was Rahab, to provoke the worst to repent and believe. This is a strong inducement thereunto: for if the faith of eminent persons, if the faith of weak women; if the multitudes work not upon us, let us be ashamed to come short of one that was a harlot....

Her name is here said to be רַחַב, which in Hebrew signifieth broad or large. [Strong gives “proud” < רַחַב breadth, broad, largeness, thickness, wideness < רַחַב to broaden, make large, make room, make wide] It litly answereth both to her former and later condition. To her former, in regard of her impudency – making herself as a broad stint for any to come into. To the later, in respect of the largeness of her heart and soul, in receiving a large apprehension of God’s works: and those both of his justice and mercy, Josh. 2:9, etc.

There is mention made of Rahab Ps. 87:4; 89:10; Isa. 51:9.

רַחַב רַחַב רַחַב

But though in English the names of the same letters, yet in Hebrew they have different letters, and come from different roots: one, רַחַב signifieth broad, the other, רַחַב, proud, and is put for Egypt.

The fruits of her faith were such as there, manifested Josh. 2.

1. She entertaineth those that were of the true church, v. 1.
2. She hides them from danger, v. 4.
3. She refuseth to betray them, v. 4.
4. She beguiles those that sought to apprehend them, v. 5.
5. She acknowledgeth the true God, v. 11.
6. She confesseth that God had affrighted the nations, v. 9.
7. She ascribeth to God, and to his power, the great works which he had done, v. 10.
8. She is persuaded that what God had said should be, v. 9.

9. She adjures them by the true God, v. 12.
10. She desires mercy of God's people, when others stood out: wherein she looked further than others, and more profited by what she had heard, v. 12.
11. Her desire of mercy is extended to all hers, v. 13.
12. She keeps covenant, vs. 14,21.
13. She provides a means of escape of God's people, v. 15.
14. She incorporated herself into God's church forever, Josh. 6:25; Mt. 1:5.

The instance of Rahab giveth evidence that God had Gentiles among his people, and accounted members of the true church.” רָהַב proud, strength < רָהַב to urge severely, fig. to importune, embolden, capture, act insolently: - overcome, behave self proudly, make sure, strengthen.” (Strong)

“Some question is made by the Jewish Rabbins about the Hebrew word זֹנָה,” says Gouge. זָוַן – to be plump: to nourish, feed. And זָנָה “highly fed and therefore wanton; to commit adultery (usually of the female, and less often of simple fornication, rarely of involuntary ravishment) fig. to commit idolatry (the Jewish people being regarded as the spouse of Jehovah): - cause to commit fornication, x continually, x great harlot, whore, whoredom, זְנוּת infidelity > תְּזָנוּת, idolatry, fornication, whoredom. (Strong) Gouge continues, “[The rabbins] suppose it a matter improbable and dishonourable for Israelites coming among Gentiles to enter into the house of an harlot, not considering how God's glory was much more magnified by her conversion.” Josh. 2:1: “into a harlot's house” בֵּית-אִשָּׁה זֹנָה; Judg. 11:1 “son of an harlot” בְּנֵי-הָאִשָּׁה זֹנָה; 1Ki. 3:16. “two women that were harlots” וְתִזְנֶה; Joel 3:3 “a boy for an harlot” הַיָּלֵד בְּזֹנָה “She is called a harlot, not in reference to her present, but to her former past condition; as ‘Matthew the publican,’ Mt. 10:3. This may be explained by an infamous title given to a woman, but in reference to the time past; which is thus expressed, ‘a woman which was a sinner,’ Lk. 7:37. For God has punished her heart by faith, Acts 15:9.

They went not to her house because it was a public stews, but because it was a remote and secret place; first was upon the town-wall, Josh. 2:15.

For the point in hand, there are two roots from whence the Hebrew word may be derived, זָנַן and זָנָה which expressly signify to play the harlot, or to commit fornication.

There is also another Hebrew word, זון which signifieth meat; whence [the rabbins] would derive the word זונה, attributed to this woman, and expound it hostess, or victualler, that selleth meat: but they cannot give any express instance thereof. They produce some places where this word is used: but if the sense of place be well observed, it will appear, that in all those places the word may be fitly translated, harlot than hostess, as Judg. 11:1; 1Ki. 3:16; Joel 3:3.

This word in Hebrew is in other places put for a harlot by their own confession; nor can it be taken for a hostess or victualler, as Gen. 34:31; Lev. 21:7; Ezek. 16:41; Prov. 23:27.” (Gouge)

Gen. 34:31 “as with an harlot” הַכְּזוֹנָה

Lev. 21:7 “a whore” זָנָה

Ezek. 16:41 “from playing the harlot” מִזְּזוֹנָה

Prov. 23:27 “a whore” זָנָה

“Besides,” says Gouge, “the LXX who well understand the meaning of the Hebrew words, even translated with the word, πόρνη, with a word that properly signifieth a harlot. And two apostles expounded so – namely, this apostle here, and Jam. 2:25.

If notorious sinners after their conversion remain faithful, and give forth fruits meet for repentance, their former wicked course shall not be remembered to impair their heavenly glory, Ezek. 18:21....

The addition of this last phrase, with peace, added to Rahab’s act in receiving the spies, giveth a clear proof that they who are taken in into protection must, as far as may be, be dismissed in safety. Memorable in this respect is the example of Lot, in entertaining the two that he took into his house, Gen. 19:7, etc. The like is noted of the old man of Gibeah, Judg. 19:22, etc; and of the woman in Bahurim, 2Sam. 17:18,19, etc; and of Jonathan, 1Sam. 20:42; and of Obadiah, 1Ki. 18:13; and of Jehoshabeath, 2Chron. 22:11. We have for this the pattern of God himself, Jer. 36:26. And his expressed charge for ‘hiding the outcasts, not betraying him that wandereth,’ Isa. 16:3....

Equivocation, taken in the most ancient and custom sense, is an ambiguous signification of a word, or a doubtful disposition of a sentence. To equivocate, in general, is to use a word or sentence so ambiguously as it may be taken diversely, in this sense, or that sense. Thus saith Christ, ‘Lazarus

sleepeth,' Jn. 11:11. Christ meaneth the sleep of death; the disciples take it of the natural sleep of the body. Equivocation in a sentence, when a sentence is so composed as it may be diversely taken. Thus it is said 'Ahaziah was forty and two years old when he began to reign,' 2Chron. 22:2. This may be taken either of Ahaziah's own person, or otherwise of the stock whence he came by the mother's side, which had continued till that time, forty and two years. This kind of equivocation is a rhetorical figure, and intendeth the same that homonymy doth.

Verse 32

[the apostle] passeth from his distinct description of particulars to a brief enumeration of others, by a transition in these words, What more shall I say? the time would fail, etc. This transition consists of a rhetorical communication, wherein a question is propounded, and an answer may be by himself, which maketh it to be a rhetorical figure.

There are six set down whereof four were judges, one a king, one a judge and a prophet both, which is Samuel.

There were in all, betwixt Joshua, their general, and Saul, their first king, fifteen judges – 1. Othniel; 2. Ehud; 3. Shamgar; 4. Barak; 5. Gideon; 6. Abimelech; 7. Tola; 8. Jair; 9. Jephthah; 10. Ibzan; 11. Elon; 12. Abdon; 13. Samson; 14. Eli; 15. Samuel. Out of these only five are called; the rest were either not worthy to be named (as Abimelech, who usurped that dignity by fraud and blood), or had no memorable matter recorded of them in their histories, as Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. The others, as Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, and Eli, did no greater no matters than those which were done by those who were named; therefore there was no great need to mention them, especially in this place where the apostle labours to contract his discourse.

In the particulars which are set down, the precise order of the history is not observed; for Gideon, who is the first place, was after Barak; and Samson, the third, was after Jephthah; and David, the fifth, was after Samuel.

The four first were extraordinarily called of God to be judges or generals over his people. Three were judges – Gideon, Samson, and Jephthah. Barach was a general under Deborah; for she judged Israel, Judg. 4:4,6.

Gideon was called by an angel, Judg. 6:14; Barak by Deborah, a prophetess, Judg. 4:6; Samson by an angel at his first conception, Judg. 13:5; Jephthah by the choice of the people testified before the Lord, Judg. 11:11.

As for David, he was expressly anointed by God's commandment, 1 Sam. 16:12.

And Samuel was called of God, 1 Sam. 3:20,21. In like manner Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, and other judges, and the prophets, were extraordinarily gifted, because they were called to extraordinary functions.

Only Abimelech, who was not called of God, but treacherously trust in himself, Judg. 9:1,5, was not endued with any spiritual gift, but rather with a diabolical spirit of dissension.

Gideon is derived from a Hebrew word גִּדְעָה, that signifieth to cut down, so as Gideon, גִּדְעוֹן, importeth a destroyer. How fitly this name agreed to him, it is evident by that great destruction that he brought upon the enemies of God's church.

[His] other name was Jerub-baal. This is compounded of two Hebrew words. The former, Jerub, is derived from a verb רִיב vel רִיב, that signifieth to contend, or to plead against. The latter part baal is derived from a word בַּעַל, that signifieth husband or lord, and it was usually attributed to an idol. The meaning, then, of the whole name יֵרֻבְעֵל, is, a pleader against Baal. The reason of this name was given him from his act in throwing down the altar of Baal; and it was by way of derision, that no man might touch him for that act, Judg. 6:31,32.

Though Gideon were in many respects a worthy man, yet he had manifold infirmities, such as these:

1. Doubting of God's presence in his church, by reason of the affliction thereof, Judg. 6:13.
2. Opposing his meanness against God's express charge, Judg. 6:15.
3. Requiring a sign, after God's will was expressly manifested, Judg. 6:16,17.
4. Fearing death, because he had seen the face of an angel, Judg. 6:22,23.
5. Fearing to do in the day that which he was commanded by God to do, Judg. 6:15.
6. Not contenting himself with one sign, but asking sign upon sign, Judg. 6:7,37,39; 7:10.
7. Setting up a dangerous monument, which was an ephod, Judg. 8:27. An ephod was a holy vestment, and it being so costly a one as he made it, it could not be but very dangerous. People are prone to idolatry and superstition.

8. Polygamy, Judg. 8:30.

9. Taking a concubine to many wives, Judg. 8:31.

10. His dotage on his concubine, manifested by the name given to the child which he had by her, Judg. 8:31. The name was Abimdech, which signifieth father of a king, or a chief king. It was a common name of the king of the Philitines. It was in itself too high a name, and it might add somewhat to his son's ambition after the kingdom.

These infirmities in sich a man give instance that true justifying faith, yea, that a strong and great faith, may stand with many and great infirmities.

The excellencies of Gideon in his history are these:

1. His providence in time of extremity. When enemies in great troops invaded the land, and spoiled what they could come by, he got corn, and threshed it in a secret place, to keep it from the enemy, that so he might thereby sustain himself and his father's house, Judg. 6:16. This point of providence is commended in Joseph, Gen. 41:48, and pressed by the wise man, Prov. 6:8.

2. His valour, Judg. 6:12. Such as were set apart to a weighty employment are commanded to be valorous, Deut. 31:7; Josh. 1:6,9.

3. His acknowledgement of God to be the disposer of all, Judg. 6:13; for though he do somewhat too diffidently expostulate about Israel's present case, yet there is an apparent acknowledgement of God to be their former preserver and deliverer – yea, and to be he who brought them into trouble.

4. His humble lowly mind, Judg. 6:15. Though it were a weakness in him to oppose his mean estate against God's express word, yet his acknowledgement of his meanness argued a humble mind, which is in itself a principal grace, and addeth a grace to all other graces.

5. His desire to have his faith strengthened in God's promise, Judg. 6:17. It was a weakness to need strengthening; but his care to have that which was weak made strong was commendable.

6. His gratitude to him that brought him the glad tiding of his delivering Israel, Judg. 6:18. He took him to be a man of God, and answerably desired to give him such entertainment as he thought fit for him.

7. His liberal hospitality, Judg. 6:19.

8. His fear and trembling at God's present, Judg. 6:22. Indeed, there was too much excess therein. Yet take away the excess, and the affection is commendable.

9. His pity towards God, manifested both by his building an altar to God (which was in those days a solemn rite of worshipping God thereby), and also

by the name he gave to the altar, **יְהוָה שָׁלוֹם**, signifieth the Lord giving peace. Thus he caused a memorial of God's kindness to be continued to posterity, Judg. 6:24.

10. His obedience to God's charge, and that both in the general substance and particular circumstances thereof, Judg. 6:27,28. This is further manifested by his reducing his army to the number of three hundred.

11. His prudence, in making preparation for that work whereunto God had called him, Judg. 6:34,35.

12. His care to encourage others to that whereof himself was confident, Judg. 7:15. Cf. Acts 26:29

13. His care to raise up the hearts of his soldiers to God, Judg. 7:18. Though he would have them acknowledge himself (when God had deputed) for their general, yet would he have them rest on God, as the first mover, and chief author of that which they went about. Thus he makes God the principal, himself only the instrument; and so gives unto God that which is God's, and reserves to Caesar that which is Caesar's.

14. his meek spirit and soft answer, whereby he pacified the furious rage of the Ephraimites, Judg. 8:1-3. A blessed effect followed thereupon, contrary to that which is noted of Jephthah, Judg. 12:1, etc.

15. His constancy in pursuing a victory well begun, Judg. 8:4,11,12. Many failing herein lose the glory and benefit of their former good success, which the prophet implieth, 2Ki. 13:19.

16. His care to refresh his soldiers, weary with pursuing their enemies, Judg. 8:5,8. Jonathan doth set out the benefit hereof, 1Sam. 14:27.

17. His just revenge on the inhuman and scornful men of Succoth and Penuel, Judg. 8:15, etc. However he might seem therein cruel, yet it was both just and expedient.

18. His modesty, in refusing that honour which the people would have conferred upon him, Judg. 8:23.

19. His care to preserve peace, after he had got full conquest upon his enemies; for it is noted, that after that conquest the country was in quietness all his days, Judg. 18:28.

20. His contentedness with his own private means, Judg. 8:29. In which respect he is said to 'dwell in his own house.'

On Judges 7:20, Matthew Henry has written,

“This method here taken for defeating the Medianites may be alluded to (1.) As typifying the destruction of the devil’s kingdom in the world by the preaching of the everlasting gospel, the sound of that trumpet, and the holding forth of that light out of earthen vessels, for such the ministers of the gospel are, in whom that light is deposited, 2Cor. 4:6,7. Thus God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, a barley-cake to overthrow the tents of Midian, that the excellency of the power might be of God only; the gospel is a sword, not in the hand, but in the mouth, the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, of God and Jesus Christ, him that sits on the throne and the Lamb.

(2.) As representing the terrors of the great day. So the excellent bishop Hall applies it; if these pitchers, trumpets, and firebrands did so daunt and dismay the proud troops of Midian and Amalek, who shall be able to stand before the last terror, when the trumpet of the archangel shall sound, the elements shall be on a flame, the heavens pass away with a great noise, and the Lord himself shall descend with a shout.”

The second particular is [of] Barak, which, according to the notation of the Hebrew word בַּרְק, signifies lightning, Ezek. 1:13. He was a terrible lightning to Sisera and his host.

He was chosen general against the army of Jabin, king of Canaan, who had oppressed Israel twenty years, Judg. 4:2,3. One infirmity [of his was] that being called of God he refused to go, except Deborah would go with him, Judg. 4:8. This shewed both diffidence in God’s power and truth, and also disobedience to God’s charge. But it seemeth that these come rather from the weakness of his flesh, than from the obstinacy of his disposition; for he quickly recovered himself.

His virtues were these:

- 1) Prudence, in preparing an army out of these among whom he dwelt, and whom he might best command, and in whom he might best confide.
- 2) Obedience, in ordering matters according to the charge given unto him, Judg. 4:6,10.
- 3) Courage, in setting upon a huge host well prepared with so few as he did, Judg. 4:3,14.
- 4) Constancy, in pursuing the victory, Judg. 4:16.
- 5) Piety, in returning the praise to God, Judg. 5:1.

In Barak's example we have a proof that such as are weak in faith may become strong.

The third particular is of Samson. Some will have his name שמשון from a noun שמש, which signifieth the sun. The last letter save one of the same (ש affirium relativum) is relative, as intimating his sun, in reference to God. The last letter of all, ן, is the note of a noun. Thus it implieth two things.

1. That he was appointed of God.

2. That he was set amongst the people as the sun among the stars, more excellent than any of them: and that by reason of the power of God's Spirit on him.

One notorious fruit of the flesh is noted of him, which was his strange dotage on strange flesh. For once and again he went in to harlots, Judg. 16:1,4. Hereby he implunged himself into great dangers. Once by his great strength he escaped the danger; but afterwards by the impudent importunity of his cursed Delilah, whom he too much doted upon, he was brought to bewray wherein his great strength lay. Thus he fell into his enemies' hands. Hereby it is manifest that God will not suffer scandalous crimes to pass unpunished – no, not in his dearest children. 'I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes,' saith the Lord of his dear children, Ps. 89:32.

The thing which he accomplished were such as thereby nothing seemed too strong for him: he vanquished and removed whatsoever stood against him.

1. He tore a lion, Judg. 14:6.

2. He oft slew multitudes of men, and that by himself alone, Judg. 14:19; 15:8,15.

3. He carried away the gates and posts of a city. These were, questionless, very massy, and fast fixed in their places, Judg. 16:4.

4. He brake cords, wishes, and all other bonds whereby they sought to bind him, as flax burnt with fire.

5. He pulled down at once two strong pillars of a great house, the roof whereof could bear three thousand people, Judg. 16:29,30.

As Samson's excellency was manifested by the greatness of his strength, so also by the right use thereof. This was manifest two ways.

1. By using it against the enemies of God and his church. Though his own countrymen provoked him much, by coming to bind him, and to deliver him into the hands of his enemies, yet he was so far from taking revenge of them, as voluntarily he suffered them to bind him, and to deliver him up to his enemies, Judg. 15:3.
2. In all his conflicts with enemies he never put any to hazard but himself. Other judges, generals, and commanders, in war against their enemies, have put their soldiers upon the greatest dangers.

Concerning that which he himself saith, 'If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me,' Judg. 16:17; it is not to be taken as if his hair were a natural cause of his strength. Hair is no integral or essential part of the body: it is a mere excrement. It hath no stability in itself, as bones have, but is exceeding weak. Hair draweth strength out of a man's body, as weeds out of the ground. Therefore, they use to shave off the hair of weak ones, especially when they are much wasted with a consumption or other sickness.

[The Nazarite] rite implied comeliness. For the hair is an ornament by nature. Had not men sinned, his hair would have no need of polling. By sin it is that long hair becomes uncomely.

The keeping of the razor from the hair shewed that they were clean and need not to be shaven, as the leper that was unclean need, Lev. 14:8,9. Yea, if a Nazarite by any occasion became unclean, he was to shave his hair, Num. 6:9.

As the woman's hair is a token of her subjection, 1Cor. 11:10, so the Nazarite's hair of his special subjection to God, to which subjection he had by vow bound himself. This was sometimes by the vow of the parties themselves, Nu. 6:2; sometimes by the vow of their parents, 1Sam. 1:11; sometimes by God's own special appointment, Judg. 13:5.

Samson's hair being thus a sign of more than ordinary comeliness, purity, and subjection, so long as, in testimony of his inward piety, that external rite was observed, God's Spirit continued his assistance to him, and gave that evidence thereof, his extraordinary strength.

[His pulling down the house] was in itself, as he did it, lawful.

1. He did it with true devotion and invocation of God's name, Judg. 16:28.
2. He did it with a true and steadfast faith; for it was his last act, and he is here brought in as a pattern of faith.
3. He did it by virtue of his vocation and function, which was deputed to him from his mother's womb, Judg. 13:5, which was to deliver Israel out of the

hand of the Philistines. If a valiant soldier should cut asunder a post of a bridge whereon an army of enemies stand, though the bridge should fall upon himself, yet he did but what his calling required.

4. He did it with a well-composed mind – not in such passion or perplexity of mind as self-murderers do. It was a zeal of God’s glory, love of the church, of his, and of his own country, due and just revenge on the church’s enemies, and recompense of his former folly.

5. He did it with a special warrant, which was the immediate and extraordinary motion of God’s Spirit. He did it with such a spirit as Elijah did, when he called for fire upon the messengers that come to apprehend him, 2Ki. 1:10.

He did it as a type of Christ. Whether the like may be lawful in others, a negative answer must be given, unless they have such a spirit. This answer of Christ, ‘Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of,’ Lk. 9:55, is pertinent to the point in hand.

[Self-murder] is apparently against the very letter and sense of the law. It is against the rule of charity. For this phrase, ‘thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,’ Mt. 22:39, sheweth that a man’s self is the rule of loving another. For a man therefore to destroy himself, is to break the very rule of love.

Divine revenge is expressly threatened against it. For this distinction of God’s requiring blood ‘at the hand of man,’ and ‘at the hand of every man’s brother,’ Gen. 9:5, sheweth that God will require that blood which one man sheds of himself, as well as of his brother.

Self-murder is the highest pitch of tempting God. This was it which the devil essayed to bring Christ unto, Mt. 4:6,7. It prevoketh God to let the soul sink into hell, or in an unusual and strange manner to save it.

[Self-murder] is a presumptuous usurpation of God’s prerogative, unto whom ‘belong issues of death,’ Ps. 68:20. It is a preposterous prevention of God’s call, thrusting a man’s self out of that place wherein his Lord hath set him. It sets a damn against God’s mercy, for ‘who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?’ Jon. 3:9. But self-murderers give judgment against themselves, as if they knew that God would turn away from his anger.

It is a violent prurption of the place, time, and means of one’s own repentance. The place is a body animated by the soul; a dead carcass cannot repent. The time is this life, Heb. 3:13. The means are God’s word, Christian conference, invocation, and such like; whereof the self-murderer depriveth

himself. It is against the most principal principle of nature, which is to preserve its own being.

It is against that remainder of God's image which is reserved in man. Yet because the ways of the Lord are unsearchable, and the mercies of the Lord infinite, and the work of his Spirit unconceivable (for at the moment of death the Spirit can work faith and repentance), we cannot, we may not, pass a peremptory sentence of them.

SAMSON AS A TYPE OF CHRIST

Compare Judges 15:11-13 with the arrest in Gethsemane, and Judges 16:25 with Jesus before Herod (Lk. 23:8).

1. The name Samson which is his sun. Christ is called, 'the Son of righteousness,' Mal. 4:2.
2. The prediction of his conception; compare Judg. 13:3, etc. with Lk. 1:31.
3. His sanctification in his mother's womb, compare Judg. 13:5 with Lk. 1:32.
4. His special separation to be a Nazarite – Judg. 13:5; Mt. 2:23.
5. Samson was born of a barren woman, Judg. 13:3; Christ was born of a virgin, Lk. 1:34,35.
6. His principal function to deliver God's people – Judg. 13:5; Mt. 1:21.
7. His growth to admiration – Judg. 13:24; Lk. 2:52.
8. His marriage to a Philistine, Judg. 14:1, etc; so Christ was espoused to the Gentiles.
9. His great strength, Judg. 13:25; Christ is said to 'travail in his strength,' Isa. 63:1.
10. The subject whereabout his strength was manifested, as a lion, Judg. 14:5,6, and the enemies of God's people, who were the Philistines, Judg. 14:4. So Christ exercised his strength upon the devil, who is a roaring lion, 1Pet. 5:7, and in rescuing God's people from their enemies, Lk. 1:71.
11. His manner of teaching by riddles, Judg. 14:12. So Christ by parables.
12. The honey that Samson took out of the lion whom he had slain, Judg. 13:8. Much sweetness comes from the destruction of the devil.
13. Samson's binding, Judg. 15:13; 16:8. So Christ was bound when they apprehended him, Jn. 18:12.
14. His breaking the bonds with which he was bound, Judg. 15:14. So Christ brake the bonds of death, Acts 2:24.
15. His thirst, Judg. 15:18; Jn. 19:28.

16. His subjection under his enemies for a time, Judg. 16:21. So was Christ for while under the power of his enemies, Mt. 27:2.
17. His being sold for a sum of money, Judg. 16:18; Mt. 26:15.
18. God's seeming to forsake him for a time, Judg. 16:20; Christ complained hereof, Mt. 27:46.
19. The scorn whereunto he was put by men, Judg. 16:25. So Christ was scorned of men, Mt. 27:39.
20. His victorious death, Judg. 16:30. Much more victorious was Christ's death, Col. 2:15." (Gouge)

יִפְתָּח a name derived from a Hebrew word פָּתַח meaning to open. "It is oft used of drawing a sword out of the scabbard, Ps. 37:14. The first letter, י, useth to be prefixed before nouns; according to the notation, Jephthah implieth one that openeth. It was a fit name, for in his time, the Israelites were so kept under by the Ammonites as there was none to open a way of liberty for them, none to draw a sword in their defence.

His birth was infamous, for he was basely born, Judg. 11:1,2. Bastardy hath in all ages been accounted a great infamy. God by his law barred them from public functions, even unto the tenth generation, Deut. 23:2. The number of years is the greatest that we read of any sort of people so barred.

No outward condition, be it never so base, is a hindrance to God's grace: witness Rahab, a harlot; Ruth, a Gentile; Judah and Tamar, adulterers; Phares, born in incest. All these reckoned up in the catalogue of Christ's progenitors, Mt. 1:3-5.

Of Jephthah's infirmities and rash vow; Some reckon up Jephthah's entertaining vain men, Judg. 11:3, to be one of his infirmities. But that rightly taken is rather to be reckoned among his excellencies, as we shall hear hereafter. There are two apparent infirmities registered of him: 1) His rash vow, Judg. 11:30,31. 2) His hasty and fierce revenge, Judg. 12:4,6.

[Consider] the express words 'whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering,' Judg. 11:31.

וְהָיָה הַיּוֹצֵא אֶשֶׁר יֵצֵא יִמְדֹּלֵת בֵּיתִי לְקִרְאָתִי
בְּשׂוֹבֵי בְּשָׁלוֹם מִבְּנֵי עַמּוֹן וְהָיָה לַיהוָה וְהָעֲלִיתָהּ
עוֹלָה:

“Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth [lit. ‘the forthcomer that comes forth’] of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children Ammon, shall surely the Lord’s, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.”

The copulative, ו, betwixt the two sentences of the vow, thus, ‘and I will,’ is oft used disjunctively. So it is used Exod. 21:17,

קִלְלוֹם אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ מוֹת יוּמָת: Exod. 21:17

“And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.”

and

translated or. The evangelist, Mt. 15:4, ‘Ο κακολογῶν πατέρα ἢ μητέρα, θανάτῳ τελευτάτω. “He who speaks evil of father or mother, by death let him die.”

quoting that text, plainly setteth down this disjunctive particle, or, ἢ, Greek. So it used, Lev. 10:3, when God thus saith, ‘I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, or before all people I will be glorified;’

וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁהֵמָּה אֶל-אַחֲרָיו הוּא אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר יְהוָה
לֵאמֹר נִקְרְבֵי נִקְרְבֵי אֶקְדֹּשׁ וְעַל-פְּנֵי כָל-הָעָם אֶכְבֹּד
וַיִּדְמֵם אַחֲרָיו:

“Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.”

And Genesis 26:11, in these words, ‘He that toucheth this man or his wife.’

וַיִּצַן אַבְמֶלֶךְ אֶת-כָּל-הָעָם לֵאמֹר הַנִּגַּע בְּאִישׁ
הַזֶּה וּבְאִשְׁתּוֹ מוֹת יוּמָת:

“And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

See also Ps. 89:8.

The daughters of Israel much lamented the daughter of Jephthah upon her father’s performing his vow upon her The Hebrew word translated lament, תַּנְהָה, is nowhere else in that sense used. There was great cause to

lament her, though she were not offered up a sacrifice; even because by her father's vow she was kept from marriage.

Arguments to prove that Jephthah did not offer up his daughter for a burnt offering are these: 1) Such an act had been against the light of nature.

2) It is expressly forbidden by God's word, Exod: 20:13.

Objection. Why then did God command Abraham to offer up Isaac?, Gen. 22:2.

Answer.

1) That was only for a trial of Abraham's obedience; God never intended that Abraham should so do.

2) God's expressed charge in a particular case giveth a dispensation against such laws.

3) Such an act is against the evidence of that faith which is here hinted of Jephthah.

4) Nor priests nor people would have suffered Jephthah to have committed such a fact. When Uzziah, a king, would have burnt incense upon the altar of incense, Azariah the priest and fourscore other priests, withstood the king, 2Chron. 16:16, etc; when Saul would have unjustly put his son Jonathan to death, the people kept him from it, 1Sam. 14:45.

5) It is said that Jephthah's daughter desired leave of her father to 'bewail her virginity,' Judg. 11:37. It would have been said, to bewail her death, if she had been to be offered up.

6) She is said to know no man, Judg. 11:39. What doth this imply, but by being dedicated to the Lord she continued a virgin all her days?

7) It is expressly said that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah, Judg. 11:40. Had she been sacrificed, they would rather have buried such a fact in perpetual oblivion, than have revived it by an annual memorial.

8) The word, לְתַנּוֹת, translated to lament, Judg. 11:40, is nowhere used in that sense throughout the whole Old Testament. It properly signifieth to declare or to rehearse, Judg. 5:11. It here signifieth to talk with; for the daughters of Israel went yearly to confer with the daughter of Jephthah, and to comfort her, in that she was kept from marriage. This affordeth a strong argument against sacrificing her.

9) Such a one as Jephthah could not be so far besotted as to vow that anything, whatsoever it was, that came forth of the doors of his house to meet him, should be offered up as a burnt-offering. What if one of the princes had

come out, or another man? What if a dog or a swine, which were unclean, had first come out, would he have offered up any of these? God expressly forbade the higher of a whore, or the price of a dog to be brought into his house, Deut. 23:18.

Question 1. If it be granted that he only dedicated his daughter to God, to live unmarried as a virgin all the days of her life, was that lawful?

Answer. No, for we do not read that to consecrate a female God is anywhere warranted. Neither is this answer here alleged to justify Jephthah's vow, but only to mitigate his fault, and to excuse him from such an abominable act as sacrificing his own child. Papists, therefore, can from this example have no warrant for a vow of perpetual virginity. Jephthah's vow, take it in the best sense that you can, was exceeding rash, and no good pattern.

Question 2. Was his vow, being rashly made, to be performed?

Answer. No, it failing in the matter of a vow, the performing of it proved a double iniquity; one in making it, another in performing it. When David was put in mind of a rash vow he forbore to perform it, yea, and blessed God for affording means to keep him from the performance thereof, 1Sam. 25:32.

Another infirmity of Jephthah's was his too great revenge of the Ephraimites' insolency, Judg. 12:4-6. True it is that the Ephraimites first provoked him, and in such a manner as they justly deserved that sore revenge.... But that Jephthah failed in the excess of his wrath is evident by Gideon's contrary carriage in a like case with the predecessors of these Ephraimites. Had Jephthah had dealt so mildly with the Ephraimites as Gideon did, he might had pacified them and saved the lives of forty and two thousand of the people of God. Wrath is like an unbridled sturdy horse that carrieth his rider wither it list, even to his own and his rider's destruction.

[Among his excellencies was] his care of others like himself. 'He went out with them that were gathered to him,' Judg. 11:3; and so dealt David with his, 1Sam. 22:1,2. [Consider also] his fair dealings with his enemies, Judg. 11:12,13, etc. He expostulates their wrongs, he adviseth them to desist; he manifesteth the equity and necessity of the engagements. All these he did to obtain peace without bloodshed.

The fifth particular instance of the apostle's general catalogue is David. His name, דָּוִד and דָּוִדָּ, 1Chron. 11:1, according to the notation of it,

importeth a lovely or friendly one. It is derived from a noun, דוֹד, amicus, dilectus, Cant. 5:9, that denoteth a friend; thence this name, David.

מה-דודך מִדוֹד הַיָּפֶה בְּנָשִׁים Cant. 5:9
מה-דודך מִדוֹד לְשִׁכְּחָהּ הַשְּׂבִיעָתָנוּ:

“What is they beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy beloved mere than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?”

The name implieth such a one as he was – amiable and lovely before God and man, and friendly to all God’s people. He was ‘a man after God’s own heart,’ 1Sam. 13:14; ‘all Israel and Judah loved him,’ 1Sam. 18:16; ‘in the saints was all his delight,’ Ps. 16:3.

His frailties were these:

- 1) His rash anger and too great desire of revenge, aggravated by an undue binding of himself thereto, even by an oath. Cf. 1Sam. 25:22,32,33.
- 2) His wavering in faith. Though God had endued him with a great measure of faith, yet manifold trials made him waver. Once in distrust, he said, ‘I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul,’ 1Sam. 27:1. This was spoken in diffidence: so also this, “I said in my heart, All men are liars.’
- 3) His polygamy or taking many wives and concubines together, 2Sam. 5:13. That this was ever a sin, Christ himself doth manifest, Mt. 19:4-6.
- 4) His undue removing of God’s ark. The law required that the ark should be carried on the priests’ shoulders, Exod. 25:14,15; Nu. 4:15; 7:9; Josh. 3:14. So as David herein consulted not with the law of God, but rather imitated the uncircumsized Philistines, 1Sam. 6:7 [Punishment caused David to be afraid of the Lord, 2Sam. 6:3,7,9.]
- 5) His adultery and murder.
- 6) His foolish indulgency to his children.
- 7) His sudden and undue sentence before both parties were heard, 2Sam. 16:4.
- 8) Pride in the multitude of his soldiers, 2Sam. 24:2. The issue sheweth how far was provoked therewith.

The graces which had immediate respect to God were these –

- 1) His care to be instructed in and directed by God’s word. 2. His faith. For David by faith,

- (1.) Subdued kingdoms. None more, after the Israelites were settled in Canaan, 2Sam. 8:12,14.
- (2.) Wrought righteousness – that is justly governed his people, doing right to all, 2Sam. 8:15; Ps. 78:72.
- (3.) Obtained promises – namely, of being king and having a wise son to build God’s temple, and the descending of the Messiah from him.
- (4.) Stopped the mouths of lions. David killed a lion indeed, and lion-like men.
- (5.) Quenched the violence of fire – that is, of fiery persecutors, or fiery slanderers, and of other fiery enemies; yea, he rescued Ziklag that was burnt with fire.
- (6.) Escaped the edge of the sword – namely, of Saul’s sword, or the swords of the Philistines, and others.
- (7.) Out of weakness was made strong. Being weakened by sickness, weakening by persecution, weakened by jealousy of enemies, by mutiny of his own soldiers, by insurrections and rebellions, he recovered strength.
- (8.) Waxed valiant in fight, against Goliath, against the Philistines, and others.
- (9.) Turned to flight the armies of the aliens, even to all that were round about Israel.” (Gouge)

The commentator lists David’s many spiritual graces and instances of valour. In a man of such great courage and talent, Gouge observes that after the incident at Perez-uzzak, David redressed that sin, Cf. 1Chron. 15:1,2,12,13, etc. Even David’s constancy in youth – “His father appointing him to keep his sheep, he did it diligently. Though there were a solemn meeting and a great sacrifice, whereat his father and all his brothers were, yet did not he stir from his charge till he was sent for, 1Sam. 16:11.

David in sundry excellencies was an especial type of Christ, as appeareth by the particulars following:

- 1) His name; for Christ is oft called by that name of David, Ezek. 34:23,24; 37:24,25. Besides, David’s name doth signify beloved, and Christ was the beloved of God, Mt. 3:17.
- 2) His particular calling. David was a shepherd; so Christ, Jn. 10:11.
- 3) His faithful keeping of his father’s sheep, 1Sam. 17:34. In this respect Christ is called ‘the good shepherd,’ Jn. 10:14.
- 4) His manifold crosses. Christ was envied, scorned, persecuted, and other ways afflicted, as David was.

- 5) His patient bearing of crosses. Of David's patience [Gouge has written]; but Christ's far surpassed David's.
- 6) His special function, royal and prophetic. Christ also was a king and a prophet.
- 7) His duel with Goliath. Christ in like manner did combat with, and overcame that great Goliath, the devil.
- 8) His victories over all his enemies. So Christ hath and will subdue all.

Δαβίδ και Σαμουηλ are joined by a double copulative. For besides that they lived together at the same time, they both sustained two great functions, - one civil, the supreme governor; the other ecclesiastical, an extraordinary prophet.

His name, שְׁמוּאֵל, Samuel, is compounded of three words, the first letter only of some of them being used. The Hebrew word signifieth thus much, שְׁאַלְתִּי אֶת־יְהוָה, I asked him of the Lord, for he was a child of prayers. This reason is rendered 1Sam. 1:20.

הָנָה וְתִלְדַּ בֶּן וְתִקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ
שְׁמוּאֵל כִּי מִיְהוָה שְׁאַלְתִּין

Samuel's birth was extraordinary, for it was out of a barren womb. So was Isaac's, Jacob's, Joseph's, Samson's, the Shunnamite's son, 2Ki. 4:14, [and] John Baptist's.

[God rewarded the piety of his parents] with sundry other children, and with extraordinary endowments on this Samuel, 1Sam. 2:21.

As a prophet, he was faithful, 1Sam. 3:20 – “And all Israel from Dan to Beesheba knew that Samuel was established [marg. “accredited” to be a prophet of the LORD.”

וַיֵּדַע כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִדָּן וְעַד-בְּאֵר
שָׁבַע כִּי נִאֲמָן שְׁמוּאֵל לְנָבִיא לַיהוָה

established – נִאֲמָן < אָמַן, to build up or support

[Consider] his diligence, that he stayed not at his own house for all the people to come thither for judgment: but he went from place to place. He had his yearly progress and circuit, not for his own pleasure, but for his people's ease and good. The places whether he went in his yearly circuit were Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpeh, 1Sam. 7:16, all of them in the utmost wastes of Israel.

His faithfulness was manifested two ways. 1) In declaring God's mind to the people. 2) In putting up the people's desire unto God, which was by prayer, wherein he was very powerful, Jer. 15:1; Ps. 99:6.

He took a right course to make his prayer available for the people, for, 1) He brought the people together to join with him in public prayer. 2) He fitted them to that public duty, by calling them to forsake their sins. 3) He caused them deeply to humble themselves, and to pour out their souls before God. In which respect they are said to 'draw water, and pair it out before the Lord.' 4) He brought them further to sanctify and enlarge their humiliation by fasting, 1Sam. 7:3,4, etc. 5) He promiseth to pray for the people himself, and acknowledge it a sin to omit that duty, 1Sam. 12:23. 6) His own prayer was so powerful, as thereby he did not obtain preservation from enemies, but also such extraordinary thunder as scattered the enemies, 1Sam. 7:10.

The blessings conferred on Samuel were many and great: as, 1) His extraordinary birth. He was a child of prayer: and after an especial manner given of God. 2) God's Son appearing unto him, even when he was a child. 3) His high advancement to be a prophet and a judge. 4) God's continual abode with him, and fulfilling his prophecy, 1Sam. 3:19. 5) God's hearing his prayers. 6) God's blessing his government with the conversion of his people, and confusion of his enemies, 1Sam. 7:3, etc. 7) God's associating himself with him when he was rejected, 1Sam. 8:7. 8) God's sealing up his integrity by a visible sign, whereby the people were brought to see their sin, 1Sam. 12:18,19. 9) The esteem wherein both king and people had him, even after Saul was made king, 1Sam. 11:7. 10) The fulness of days whereto he attained, 1Sam. 8:1; 27:14. 11) An honourable funeral, 1Sam. 25:1. 12) Resting after his death. This I do the rather note in opposition to that popish position of Samuel's being raised by a woman that had a familiar spirit, 1Sam. 28:11,12, etc. For quietly to rest after death is a common privilege.

True it is that the bodies of the best may be taken out of the grave, and may be hurried up and down: but the question here is, concerning the soul, which animated the body while it lived, and is severed from it by death,

whether it do, or can before the resurrection enter into that body again, and in that body perform any duty of a living man without a miracle, for papists teach that the soul of Samuel appeared unto Saul after he was dead. For this they render these reasons:

1) The Scripture expressly saith, that Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and that Samuel said to Saul, 1Sam. 28:14,15.

Answer. It is usual in Scripture to give the names of things to resemblances of them, even to such things as are like them. Besides, Saul might be deceived, and think that he perceived that to be Samuel which was not so.

2) He that is called Samuel foretold things to come, even such things as did answerably fall out, 1Sam. 28:19.

Answer. 1) There was probability of that which he that appeared to Saul did foretell, namely, that Israel should be delivered into the hands of the Philistines the next day, and that Saul and his sons should be dead. For the enemies were very strong, well prepared to battle, and resolved to put it to the trial the next day: withal he knew that God had forsaken Saul, and supposed that God would leave him in that strait, and thereupon conclude that he and his sons should be destroyed. 2) God might use evil spirits to declare some things to come, as well as evil men, Deut. 13:2. 3) What did the devil care, if that which he foretold had proved untrue? He is the father of lies, and cares not to be found a liar, so as he may work any mischief by his lie.” (Gouge)’

“That it was not the soul of Samuel, appears by these arguments:

1) The souls of those that depart in the Lord are so preserved by the Lord, as nor witches, nor sorcerers, nor the devil himself can disquiet them, and bring them to their bodies.

2) The uniting of body and soul again after they are separated by death, is a divine work, and cannot be done by a diabolical power. Elijah and Elisha were declared to be the prophets of God by a like work, 1Kings 17:22; 2Kings 4:35,36; 13:21. So Christ declared himself to be the Son of God by like acts, Mt. 9:25, Lk. 7:15; Jn. 11:44. And Peter hereby shewed himself to be an apostle of Christ, Acts 9:40, so did Paul, Acts 20:10.

3) Had he been Samuel indeed, he would not have suffered himself to be worshipped, as Saul worshipped that personage which appeared to him. An angel would not suffer divine worship to be done unto him, Rev. 19:10; nor Peter, Acts 10:25,26.

We may therefore well conclude that Samuel himself being dead, quietly rested, and could not be molested by the devil upon any one's motion, as is suggested." (William Gouge)

The commentator compares Samuel with Christ and finds he is a type in that he was rejected by his own people, "In that ingratitude of the people against him, notwithstanding his diligence in well governing them, and the great deliverances wrought by him, he was rejected, 1Sam. 8:5. So was Christ dealt withal, Lk. 19:14; Mt. 21:42.

Verse 33

We must distinguish betwixt times. The worthies mentioned ver. 17, lived long before those that are intended in this text. In the former place he speaketh of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and such as lived before Israel's entrance into Canaan; but here of the judges, kings, and prophets, that possessed that land. Thus the former received not the promises of driving out the Canaanites, inhabiting their land, and being a populous and settled politely.

Lions are of all living creatures the most fierce, cruel, and irresistible, Prov. 30:30. Their very roaring is terrible, Amos 3:8. They live upon other living creatures, sparing none, no, not men, Ezek. 19:3; Dan. 6:24. Their walking is to devour, 1Pet. 5:8. They devour with their mouths: therefore by stopping their mouths, they are kept from devouring, Dan. 6:22.

Objection. They can with their claws tear their prey all to pieces.

Answer. Synecdochically their most dangerous part is put for all other parts wherewith they do mischief. Therefore to stop their mouths extendeth to a restraining of them from doing hurt, yea, and to killing of them, as in some of the cases before propounded. [Samson, David, Benaiah] הַרְפָּה > 'רָפָה > "pierced", Ps. 22.

"out of weakness were made strong", Cf. Job, Hezekiah

"waxed valiant in fight" Gouge cites the phrase ἐν πολέμῳ, in fight; "The word translated fight is derived from a verb that signifieth to turn, overturn, destroy. It is ordinarily translated war. By it more than by anything else, men, cities, nations, have been overthrown. Others will have this word derived from a verb ὄλλυμι, that signifieth to destroy. Others will have it compounded of two words that signify much blood, πολὺ αἷμα, πολύιαμος." πολέμῳ > polemic

“turned to flight the armies of the aliens”. “Put to flight” - ἔκλιναν < κλίνω properly signifying “to lay, Lk. 9:58, and to bow down, Lk. 24:5, or to wear away, Lk. 9:12. It is here used after the manner of the last conjugation in Hebrew (Hithpael), to make one depart, and applied to soldiers in battle array, to make them give ground, or turn the back, which is to run or fly away. Thus the word is fitly translated, turned to flight.” (Gouge)

Verse 35

Only the women at Zarephath and Shunam fit this profile.

“Though these were of the weaker sex, yet the evidence here given is the greatest of all. For death is the most irresistible and irrecoverable that can be. Lions, fire, sword, armies of enemies are nothing in comparison of death. That which makes those and other like terrible things formidable, is, that they are means to bring men to death. By strength, valour, agility, and quickness of body, or by wit, wariness, and such like properties of the mind, mouths of lions may be stopped, violence of fire may be quenched, the edge of the sword may be avoided, armies of men may be put to flight: but by no strength of wit of man can any be raised from the dead.

Objection. It was the faith of prophets who raised the dead children, rather than of the women, who received them being raised.

Answer. The women first desired the prophets to restore their children being dead, which argued their faith, 1Ki. 17:18; 2Ki. 4:30. Had not they believed and made known their desires to the prophets, the prophets would not have attempted to raise them.

Witness also the faith of another widow, Lk. 7:15, and the faith of Jairus and his wife, Mk. 5:40, and of Mary and Martha, Jn. 11:34, and of the widows that remained by Dorcas’ dead corpse, Acts 9:39.

In the two verses immediately before this, and former part of this verse the apostle hath noted ten distinct rare acts whereby the vigour of the faith of God’s ancient worthies was manifested. Here he beginneth to add great sufferings, whereby a like vigour is demonstrated; they are ten in number.

Question. How could the apostle come to the knowledge of them?

Answer. He might have them either out of human records, or from traditions conveyed from fathers to children, age after age. So had Paul the express names of Jannes and Jambres, 2Tim. 3:8; so had another apostle the striving of Michael with the devil about the body of Moses; and the prophecy of Enoch, Jude 9:14; and our apostle this of Moses, that he said, ‘I fear and

quake,' Heb. 12:21. [Heathen poets are quoted: Aratus, Acts 17:28, Menander, 1Cor. 15:33; Epimenides, Titus 1:12.] Instances of books of Scripture lost are "either of politic records and chronicles, as 1Ki. 19:19, or of philosophical discourses, 1Ki. 4:33, or of such books as are yet extant, but under other titles, as 1Chron. 29:29.

The Greek ἐτυμπανίσθησαν, translated, tortured, signifieth to stretch out, or to beat with bats. The root τύπτω, from whence it is derived, signifieth to beat, thence a noun, τύμπανον [< tympani], which signifieth a bat or a staff. It signifieth also a drum, the heads whereof being skins, are stretched out very hard and stiff, and used to be beaten upon with drum-sticks. In reference hereunto, a rack, whereon men's bodies use to be stretched, and whereon, being so stretched, they were wont to be beaten; such a rack, I say, or instrument or torture, was called by the same name that a drum is, and they who are so racked and beaten were said to be τυμπανίζομενοι, stretched and beaten as a drum, or to be drummed.

The Greek word translated resurrection, is a compound of a simple verb ἵστημι, that signifieth to settle or establish; from thence a compound, ἀνίστημι, with a preposition ἄνα, that in composition signifieth again. The compound verb is sometimes used neutrally, and signifieth to rise, Rom. 14:9, and sometimes transitively, to raise, Acts 2:24. Thence this word resurrection. It presupposeth a former life; so as such rise, or are raised again to a new life.

Verse 36

ἐμπαυγμων, mockings. The Greek word is a compound, derived from a noun παῖς, that signifieth a child: thence a verb, πάζω, or παιδίζω, which signifieth to play as a child, 1Cor. 10:7; and from thence a compound, ἀναπαίζω vel ἐμπαίζω, which signifieth to mock, Mk. 15:20,31; hence is derived the word used this place, ἐμπαυγμὸς, which signifieth mocking, and another noun of the same composition, ἐμπαίκτης, which signifieth mock, 2Pet. 3:3; Jude 18. To the word here used, our English add this epithet, cruel; which is not in the greek, yet may it well be added to the mockings of the enemies of the gospel, because they used to be with all the despite that may be.

A verb, μαστιγόω signifieth to scourge, Mt. 10:17; 20:19. The word of the text is also applied to painful and tormenting diseases, Mk. 3:10. This was a sore trial, very painful, and hard to be endured; especially as persecutors

used to scourge saints with scourges of whipcord, of wire, and other like things, that fetched blood, and tore the flesh of those who were scourged. In regard of this kind of punishment many a saint may say, ‘the ploughers ploughed upon my back, and made long their furrows,’ Ps. 129:3.

The fifth kind of persecution is said to be *δουλακῆ*, imprisonment. For men are cast into prison to be kept fast, that they should not flee away. The verb *δουλάττω*, that is of the same root, signifieth to keep [> phylactery]: yea, there is a verb of the same notation, *δουλακίζω*, which signifieth to cast into prison.

Verse 37

ἐλιθάθησαν, they were stoned.... These reasons may be given of this kind of death:

1) That all the people might testify their zeal and indignation against the crime so punished; for in throwing stones against a malefactor, they strived who should be the forwardest.

2) That the blame of condemning the malefactor might not lie wholly upon the judge; for all the people, executing the sentence of the judge, thereby gave approbation of it.

3) That there might be a more thorough expiation of the land from that crime for which the malefactor was stoned. As many men’s conspiracy in sin, and making themselves accessory thereto, doth defile a land the more, so the zeal of many in punishing a public sin doth more cleanse the land, Josh. 7:26. [Cf. Nu. 35:34, et alia]

The people were almost ready to stone Moses, Exod. 17:4; nay, they did stone Zechariah, 2Chron. 24:21.

We do not read in sacred Scriptures of any that were sawn asunder. But the Jews, among other their traditions, have this, that the prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder with a wooden saw in the time of king Manasseh. Epiphanius, in setting out Isaiah’s life, noteth as much; so doth Jerome, in the last close of the fifteenth book of his comment on Isa. 57. *ἐπειράσθησαν* – were tempted.... To take it, therefore, as it is in the text, were tempted, it may be inserted as a reason why they were put to such cruel deaths [Gouge is graphic in describing martyrdom], even because, being tempted, they remained resolute, and would not yield to their persecution.... It may be taken for long and grievous oppressions, either by enemies in a strange land, or by cruel governors in their own country, which by their long continuance, proved

great trials and temptations, even worse than death, and therefore here set among the kinds of death.

Yea, further, it may be taken for temptations on the right hand (as we speak), as riches, honours, promotions, immunities, pleasures, and other such like fair baits, and are here reckoned amongst the kinds of cruel death, because this kind of temptation was as dangerous as the cruelest death, if not more.

The ninth kind of persecution, and last of the three which was to death, is thus set down, were slain with the sword, or word for word, ἐν δόνω μαχαίρας ἀπέθανον, they died in the slaughter of the sword.

The word wander about, is taken both in a good and bad sense; in a bad sense, for a sin or judgment.

Wandering is taken for a judgment when it is inflicted as a punishment for sin. Thus the Israelites' wandering forty years in the wilderness was a judgment, Num. 32:13; Ps. 107:40. It is threatened as a judgment, Ps. 59:15.

Wandering is taken in the better part when men in God's cause, for maintaining his truth, keeping a good conscience, or for avoiding idolatry or any other evil, are forced to wander. Thus Abraham wandered, Gen. 20:13; and sundry Levites and others Jeroboam's time, 2Chron. 11:13, etc. In this sense it is here taken; so as believers may be wanderers; for this wandering is here brought in as an effect of saints' faith; besides the instances before noted, this is exemplified in Elijah, Ki. 19:3; yea, and David, Ps. 56:8. 'Sheep-skins, goat-skins': This implieth that saints may be brought to where the meanest apparel, even to clothe themselves with sheep-skins and goat-skins. This phrase, 'they caused the naked to lodge without clothing,' etc., Job 24:7, may somewhat tend thereunto. The opposition made betwixt Dives and Lazarus, that Dives was 'clothed in purple and fine linen,' but Lazarus as a beggar (Lk. 16:20,21), may intend as much.... This sheweth the vanity of over-brave and costly apparel. For if God's dear ones and worthies in the world were so meanly attired, as with sheep-skins and goat-skins, surely true glory and honour consisteth not in vain apparel. What the apostle saith of meat and drink, may fitly be applied to apparel, The kingdom of God is not therein, Rom. 14:17.

Question. Did not God say as much?

[Gouge has determined that 2Chron. 11:13 and 1Ki. 19:3 tell of religious men wandering, though the text does not expressly use the words for wandering: צָעָה הִלֵּךְ נִדָּד וְשָׁלָה נִוְעַ רְעָה תָעָה.]

κακουχούμενοι, tormented. Saints in their wanderings find ill-usage. As soon as Israel came into the wilderness, the Amalekites set upon them, Deut. 25:17,18; 1Sam. 15:2. Edom, in the day of Israel's affliction, ill-entreated them, Obad. 13,14; Amos 1:11. Jeremiah much complaineth hereof, Lam. 2:16. The apostles, wheresoever they came, were ill-entreated.

Verse 38

In the former verse, the apostle having set forth the wanderings of confessors in habitable places, in this verse he further setteth them out in places uninhabitable. But betwixt them, he rendereth a reason of their wanderings, in the one and other kind of places, in these words, - of whom the world was not worthy; which in many Greek copies and sundry translation are included in a parenthesis [The world is not worthy] by reason of that worth which is in saints. A true believer, by reason of his interest in Christ, and of the abode of the Spirit in sanctification in him, is more worth than millions of worlds; as a rich and precious jewel is more worth than many loads of mud. [The world is not worthy] By reason of that benefit which saints bring to the place where they are. The world, through ignorance, taketh no notice of that benefit, or, through obstinacy, scorneth it, or, through malice, persecute them who bring that benefit; and thus shew themselves like hogs and dogs, and so are not worthy the society of saints.

As Christ assumed man's nature in general, so he hath united in special their persons to that mystical body whereof he is the head; they are called 'Christ,' 1Cor. 12:12. In this respect they much needs be the most precious creatures of all.... The world is blind in spiritual matters, 1Cor. 2:14.

Here we have one special reason of saints' suffering what they do by the word. It is not God's displeasure against them; for in love to them, and for their present glory, are they here persecuted. It is for the punishment of the world, to deprive it of those that would be their greatest honour, comfort, and profit; if they were well entertained among them.

Herein appeareth the world's sottishness, in punishing themselves by their attempts to punish saints. They may spoil saints of earthly habitations and revenues; they may put them to bodily pains, and deprive them of life; but they spoil themselves of the means of spiritual grace, of peace of conscience, and comfort of soul, yea, and of eternal life, and implunge themselves into easeless and endless torments.

This sheweth whose case is the worst, whether theirs that are persecuted, or theirs who do persecute. Surely if all things be duly weighed, we shall easily discern persecutors' case is the worst. The persecuted, therefore, may say, 'weep not for us, but weep for yourselves,' Lk. 23:28. The persecuted are as the figs, the good figs which were very good; but persecutors like the evil figs, 'very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil,' Jer. 24:3.

This giveth occasion to such as are deprived of faithful ministers, and godly neighbours, to examine themselves, and consider whether their unworthiness hath not been caused thereof.

This exhorteth us to esteem ministers, saints, divine ordinances, and other holy things appertaining to the kingdom of God, so as God may account us worthy still to enjoy them, and not take them away by reason of our unworthiness." (Gouge)

Verse 39

"TO shew that all that are praiseworthy have their due, he premiseth this general partical, all. He that saith all, excepteth none at all. Take of you of the before-mentioned catalogue, and you will find this general exemplified in all sorts of particulars: as in kings, instance David; and in other governors, instance Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and others. In women, also, Sarah, Rahab, and others; in old men, as Noah; young men, as Isaac, when he suffered himself to be bound and laid on the altar; honourable men, as Joseph, the next indignity to king Pharaoh; mean men, basely esteemed, as they that wandered up and down; rich men, as Isaac, Gen. 26:13,19; poor men, as they who were 'destitute.' They can hardly be named any sort of believers that have not obtained a good report.

There is no respect of persons with God, Rom. 10:12; Eph. 6:9.

Here the word promise, being of the singular number, implieth some eminent, excellent thing promised, and this is Christ Jesus himself, who is elsewhere set forth under this word promise as Acts 2:39, and 26:6. Christ is said to be given according to the promise, Acts 23:23, and God's promise is said to be fulfilled in raising up Jesus, Acts 13:32.

Christ must needs be the prime promise, in that he is the first promise since Adam's fall, Gen. 3:15, and in that he is the complement, or accomplishment of all other promises, 2Cor. 1:20. This might be exemplified by sundry promises made in the Old Testament, and manifested to be

accomplished in the New, by this and such like phrases, ‘All this was done that it might be fulfilled,’ etc. Mt. 1:22.

1) This giveth evidence of the free grace, and rich mercy of God, in making and accomplishing such a promise. It must needs be free, in that there could be nothing in man to deserve such a promise. Glorious angels, glorified saints, man in his innocency, were not worthy of such a promise, much less may be sinners be thought worthy. If Jacob were ‘less than the least of God’s mercies,’ much more less is he than this, the greatest of all.

2) The greatness of the promise doth manifest and magnify the rich mercy of God. Mention is made of ‘great and precious promises’, 2Pet. 1:4, but in reference hereunto. Of all promises, this is the greatest and most precious. This is that treasure and pearl whereof Christ speaketh, Mt. 13:44,46.

3) This promise should make faithfully promise and vow ourselves, all that we have, and all that we can do, unto God.

4) This promise gives us good ground in all doubtings, when through weakness of the flesh we are brought to stagger, and to question the truth of any promise, to meditate thereon, and to reason with ourselves from the greater to the less – thus, God having made good this promise, will not fail of others; all depend on this, Rom. 8:32.

Of the believers before mentioned, and of others who lived before Christ was exhibited, it is said that they received not the promise – that is, saints under the Old Testament had not an actual exhibition of Christ. This was one of the promises, concerning which it was said of the patriarchs, ‘they received not the promises,’ Ver. 13. In this respect it is said that ‘many prophets and righteous men desired to see those things,’ Mt. 13:17, namely, Jesus Christ incarnate; living, preaching, working miracles, etc., and that ‘the prophets inquired and searched diligently about those things,’ 1Pet. 1:10. Therefore they did not enjoy them.

God was herein pleased to manifest his wisdom in reserving such a promise to a fulness of time, Gal. 4:4, and that –

1) That his goodness by degrees increase, as the sun doth, and so be the better discerned; for by degrees it was more clearly revealed.

2) That so great a blessing might be the more expected, inquired after, and longed for.

3) That the patience and other graces of saints might be the better exercised.

4) That Christ himself might be the more honoured, in that he was reserved to the latter age of the world, as being a blessing which surpassed all other blessings before it.

α) Hereby we have instruction in the nature of faith, which is to rest upon promises for things future, as if they were actually accomplished.

β) This doth much amplify the faith of former believers, in that they did and endured so great things for Christ before they enjoyed him.

γ) It checks our backwardness and dulness in believing, who live in the times wherein the promise may be and is received.

δ) This should stir us up to seek to excel them, in that we have received the promise, which they received not.” (Gouge)

Verse 40

“Foresight cannot properly be attributed to God, because all things past and future are present to him. But for teaching’s sake in relation to us, unto whom times are distinct, is it applied to God.

That which God is said to have provided for Christians is thus expressed, some better thing, that is, a better estate, or better means for the church’s good; or rather, Christ himself exhibited. He is that better thing that excels all other better things whatsoever.

This in general sheweth that God’s providence is still to the better. Hence is it that it is said of believers that they ‘desire a better country,’ Ver. 16; and that their hope is ‘a better hope,’ Ch. 7:19; and the covenant made to them a ‘better covenant,’ Ch. 8:8.

Question. Were not then believing Jews made perfect?

Answer. Yes. But by the means which were typified under their rites.

This gives a demonstration of their blindness and folly, who expected perfection from the observation of that law. Against such the prophets much inveighed, Isa. 1:11; Micah 6:6,7; and Christ in his time, Lk. 16:15; and the apostles in their time, Gal. 4:9. Great also is their folly, who wish the continuance of that external law, yet still; and also of them who think to be perfected by human inventions. If external divine ordinances could not make perfect, much less can human.” (Gouge)

Χωρίς ἡμῶν “apart from us” Gouge does not here treat of the word χωρίς meaning “without” (KJV) [and even “outside”?] is also translated “separate

from” (Manual). Rather, his emphasis is on the 3cp ἡμῶν (11:40); ἡμεῖς and ἡμῖν (12:1).

Sixty times in the Book of Hebrews, we find the word “by” which is not one isolated word in Greek, but is part of a verb form: Πίστει – “by faith” which might mean “in faith” or “through faith.” But “by” as a preposition meaning “near” or “alongside” may be found Jn. 20:7: “and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.” “By” meaning “at” may be found in Mt. 28:9f: “And they came and held him by the feet.” Consider also Mt. 28:13c, “His disciples came by night.” Still there is no solitary word for “by.” In John 13:35, we read, “By this [ἐν τούτῳ] shall all men know that ye are my disciples....” Cf. Jn. 16:30.

“BY”:

- διὰ John 1:3a: “All things were made by him [Πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο]” Cf. Jn. 6:57b; Lk. 5:19
3:34b “for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him
- ἐκ [οὐ γὰρ ἐκ μετρον δίδωσιν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα]” Cf. Lk. 6:44
5:2a “Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a
- ἐπι pool... [ἔστιν δὲ ἐν τοῖς Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐπὶ τῇ προβατικῇ κολυμβήθρα]”
8:9b “... being convicted by their own conscience [καὶ ὑπὸ
- κατὰ τῆς συνειδήσεως ἐλεγχόμενοι]” Cf. Jn. 19:7, Lk. 10:31
10:3c “... and he calleth his own sheep by name [καὶ τὰ ἴδια πρόβατα καλεῖ κατ’ ὄνομα]”
- ἐν 13:35 “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples”
[See above] Cf. Lk. 4:1.
- These five uses in John’s Gospel indicate a prepositional aspect; there are also adverbial aspects such as “standing by”, “passing by”, etc.
- εἰς Matthew 5:35c: “neither by Jerusalem [μήτε εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα]”
ἀπὸ 7:16a: “Ye shall know them by their fruits [ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιγνώσεσθε αὐτοὺς]”
- γὰρ 12:33e: “for the tree is known by his fruit [ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ καρποῦ τὸ δένδρον γινώσκεται]”
13:1b “... and sat by the sea side [ἐκάθητο παρὰ τὴν

- παρὰ θάλασσαν]” In Mt. 4:15, the phrase, “the land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of sea” contains no word for “by.” παρὰ here may mean “near” or “alongside”, but not “with.” The words “along” and “alongside” do not occur in the N.T. Cf. Mk. 1:16; 2:13; 4:1,4,15; 5:21; 10:46 “beside”, Gk.; Lk. 5:2; 9:47; 18:35
- ἀνὰ Mark 6:40b “by hundreds and by fifties [ἀνὰ ἑκατὸν καὶ ἀνὰ πενήκοντα.]” Cf. Lk. 9:14
- πρὸς Luke 22:56a “But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire [ἰδοῦσα δὲ αὐτὸν παιδίσκη τις καθήμενον πρὸς τὸ φῶς]”

Because the preposition “by” is assimilated into another noun or verb, it does not stand alone as in the eleven words cited above from the N.T. Gospels. The closest the word “by” comes to meaning “with” is in παρὰ, which is not used in this Heb. 11:40. The word “by” does not occur in this verse.

The apostle’s meaning is complex: Though the Old Testament saints did receive perfection [Moses and Elijah spoke with the Lord at the Mount of Transfiguration], the final resurrection is still the privilege of all believers solely through the work of Christ: “They without [“apart from”, Gk.] us should not be made perfect.”

Gouge continues, “To shew that God did not leave his people utterly destitute of all means of perfection, this phrase of limitation, without us, is inserted. Whereby we are given to understand that they had means to be made perfect; but such as belong to us Christians, and are expressly manifested in our days.

The foresaid limitation, without us, is the rather added to give evidence that God would have all believers in all ages perfected by the same means. In this respect, it is said that the ark and baptism are ‘like figures,’ 1Pet. 3:21, setting out one and the same thing; yet the ark was in the first age of the world, and baptism in the last. The like is noted of other sacraments in the ages betwixt these, 1Cor. 10:2-4. In this respect the gospel is said to be preached to the Jews.

[The gospel was comprised under the old covenant – not the old covenant of works made with Adam in his innocency, but that which was confirmed to Abraham by circumcision, and to the Israelites by sacrifices, and other legal rites.]

And we who live under the gospel are said to be saved, ‘even as they,’ Acts 15:11.

God hath so ordered:

1) To shew the all sufficiency of that one only means, which is Christ Jesus, who is able to save to the uttermost, Heb. 7:25, and that in regard of –

a) His sufficiency. He of himself, without any assistance from any other, can save.

b) The manifold miseries whereunto men are subject. He is able to save from all sins, and from all miseries that arise from their sins.

c) The several persons that stand in need of salvation. He is able to save all of all sorts, such as lived before him or with him, or shall live after him, Heb. 13:8.

2) To shew his impartial respect to all, Acts 15:9, Gal. 3:28. Though in wisdom God saw it meet that some should live in one age of the world and others in another, yet he prepared but one heaven for all, and one way for all to attain thereunto.

3) To give evidence of the union of all believers in one mystical body. Had believers that lived before Christ been perfected without us, or by any other mans than we are, they had been another body, and that body had been so perfected that no more members should have been added thereto; but as there is but one head, so there is but one body, Eph. 4:4. This is that catholic church which hath been from the beginning of the world, and shall continue to the end thereof.

This is a forcible motive to incite us to imitate them, and to walk in that way to perfection, which they did. If they walked in that way which was but obscurely revealed to them, yet it is clearly and fully made known to us, what a shame then would it be for us to come short of them! They are gone, we yet live; let us shew that their spirit lives in us.”

-END GOUGE ON HEBREWS 11-