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THE WORKS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS VOLUME 4

A HISTORY

OF THE

WORK OF REDEMPTION.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

PERIOD 3

**FROM CHRIST'S RESURRECTION TO THE END OF THE
WORLD.**

IN discoursing on this subject, we have already shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the two first of the THREE PERIODS into which we divided the whole space of time from the fall to the end of the world.

We are now come to the third and last period, beginning with Christ's resurrection; and would show, that the space of time from the end of Christ's humiliation to the end of the world is all taken up in bringing about the great effect or success of Christ's purchase.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

PART 1

Scriptural representations of this period.

NOT but that there were great effects and glorious success of Christ's purchase of redemption before, even from the beginning of the generations of men. But all that success which; as before, was only preparatory by way of anticipation, as some few fruits are gathered before the harvest. There was no more success before Christ came, than God saw needful to prepare the way for his coming. The time of the successor effect of Christ's redemption is after the purchase has been made, as the proper time for the world to enjoy the light of the sun is the daytime, after die sun is risen, though we may have some small matter of it reflected from the moon and planets before. And even the success of Christ's redemption while he himself was on earth, was very small in comparison of what it was after.

But, Christ having finished that greatest and most difficult of all works, now is come the time for obtaining the end, the glorious effect of it. Having gone through the whole course of his sufferings and humiliation, Christ is never to suffer any more. But now is the time for him to obtain the joy that was set before him. Having made his soul an offering for sin, now is the time for him to see his seed to have a portion with the great, and to divide the spoil with the strong.

One design of Christ in what he did in his humiliation, was to lay a foundation for the overthrow of Satan's kingdom; and now is come the time to effect it, as Christ, a little before his crucifixion, said,

"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

(John 12:31)

Another design was, to gather together in one all things in Christ. Now is come the time for this also: John 12:32. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me;" which is agreeable to Jacob's prophecy of Christ, that "when Shiloh should come, to him should the gathering of the people be," Genesis 49:10. Another design is the salvation of the elect. Now when his sufferings are finished, and his humiliation perfected, the time is come for that also . Hebrews 5:8, 9. "Though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Another design was, to accomplish by these things great glory to the persons of the Trinity. John 17:1. "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." Another design was the glory of the saints. John 17:11. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." And all the dispensations of God's providence henceforward, even to the final consummation of all things, are to give Christ his reward, and fulfil his end in what he did and suffered upon earth, and to fulfil the joy that was set before him.

Before I enter on the consideration of any particular things accomplished in this period, I would briefly observe how the times of this period are represented in Scripture.

I. The times of this period, for the most part, are in the Old Testament called the latter days. We often, in the prophets of the Old Testament, read of things that should come to pass in the latter days, and sometimes in the last days, evidently referring to gospel times. They are called the latter days, and the last days; because this is the last period of the series of God's providences on earth, the last period of the great work of redemption; which is as it were the sum of God's works of providence; the last dispensation of the covenant of grace on earth.

II. The whole time of this period is sometimes in Scripture called the end of the world, 1 Corinthians 10:11. "Now all these things happened unto them for exsamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And the apostle, Hebrews 9:26. in this expression of the

end of the world, means the whole of the gospel-day, from the birth of Christ to the of judgment: "But now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

This space of time may well be called the end of the world; for this whole time is taken up in bringing things to their great end and issue. Before, things were in a kind of preparatory state; but now they are in a finishing state. An end is now brought to the former carnal state of things, which by degrees vanishes, and a spiritual state begins to be established more and more. Particularly, an end is brought to the former state of the church, which may be called its worldly state, in which it was subject to carnal ordinances, and the rudiments of the world. The end is brought to the Jewish commonwealth, in the destruction of their city and country. After that, an end is brought to the old heathen empire in Constantine's time. The next step is the finishing of Satan's visible kingdom in the world, upon the fall of Antichrist, and the calling of the Jews. And last will come the destruction of the outward frame of the world itself, at the conclusion of the day of judgment. Heaven and earth began to shake, in order to a dissolution, according to the prophecy of Haggai, before Christ came, that so only those things which cannot be shaken may remain, i.e. that those things which are to come to an end may terminate, and only those things may remain which are to remain eternally.

In the first place, the carnal ordinances of the Jewish worship came to an end, in order to make way for the establishment of that spiritual worship, which is to endure to all eternity:

"Jesus saith unto the woman, Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." (John 4:21)

Verse 23. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." This is one instance of the temporary world coming to an end, and the eternal world beginning. And then, the outward temple and the city Jerusalem came to an end, to give place to the setting up of the spiritual temple and city, which are to last for ever. Another instance of removing

those things which are ready to vanish away, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain, is the bringing to an end the old heathen empire, to make way for the empire of Christ, which shall last to all eternity. After that, upon the fall of Antichrist, an end is put to Satan's visible kingdom on earth, to establish Christ's kingdom, which is an eternal kingdom; as the prophet Daniel says, chapter 7:27. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him;" which is another instance of the ending of the temporary world, and the beginning of the eternal one. And then, lastly, the very frame of this corruptible world shall come to an end, to make way for the church to dwell in another dwelling-place, which shall last to eternity.

Because the world is thus coming to an end by various steps and degrees, the apostle perhaps uses this expression, that (not the end but) the ends of the world are come on us; as though the world has several endings one after another. The gospel-dispensation is a finishing state: it is all spent in finishing things off which before had been preparing, or abolishing things which before had stood.

It is all spent as it were in summing things and bringing them to their issues, and their proper fulfillment. Now all the old types are fulfilled, and the predictions of all the prophets from the beginning of the world shall be accomplished in this period.

III. That state of things which is attained in the events of this period is called a new heaven and a new earth: Isaiah 45:17, 18. "For behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy." And chapter 66:22. "For as the new heavens and the new earth which shall remain before me; so shall your seed and your name remain." See also chapter 51:16. As the former state of things, or the old world, by one step after another, is through this period coming to an end; so the new state of things, or the new world, which is a spiritual world, is beginning and setting up. In consequence of each of the old state of these finishings of the state of things, there is the beginning of a new and eternal state. So that which accompanied the

destruction of the literal Jerusalem, was an establishing of the spiritual. So with respect to the destruction of the old heathen empire, and all the other endings of the old state of things; till at length the very outward frame of the world itself shall come to an end; and the church shall dwell in heaven, which will be a new habitation. Then shall the utmost be accomplished that is meant by the new heavens and the new earth. (See Revelation 21:1.) The end of God's creating the world, was to prepare a kingdom for his Son, (for he is appointed heir of the world,) which should remain to all eternity. So far as the kingdom (if Christ is set up in the world, so far is the world brought to its end, and the eternal state of things set up-so far are all the great changes and revolutions of the world brought to their everlasting issue, and all things come to their ultimate period-so far are the waters of the long channel of divine providence, which has so many branches, and so many windings, emptied into their proper ocean, which they have been seeking from the beginning of their course, and so are come to their rest. So far as Christ's kingdom is established in the world, so far are things wound up and settled in their everlasting state, and a period put to the course of things in this changeable world; so far are the first heavens and the first earth come to an end; and the new heavens and the new earth, the everlasting heavens and earth, established in their room. This leads me to observe,

IV. That the state of things which is attained by the events of this period, is what is so often called the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God. We very often read in the New Testament of the kingdom of heaven. John the Baptist preached, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; and so did Christ and his disciples after him; referring to something that the Jews in those days expected, and called by that name. They seem to have taken their expectation and the name chiefly from that prophecy of Daniel in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Daniel 2:44. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom;" together with chapter 7:13, 14.

Now this kingdom of heaven is that evangelical state of things in the church, and in the world, wherein consists the success of Christ's redemption in this period. There had been often great kingdoms set up before; as the Babylonish, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman monarchies. But Christ came to set up the last, which is not an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly, John 18:36. "My kingdom is not of this world." This is the kingdom of which

Christ speaks, Luke 22:29. "My Father hath appointed to me a kingdom." This kingdom began soon after Christ's resurrection, and is accomplished in various steps from that time to the end of the world. Sometimes by the kingdom of heaven, is meant not only that spiritual state of the church which began soon after Christ resurrection; but also that more perfect state which shall obtain after the downfall of Antichrist; and sometimes that glorious and blessed state to which the church shall be received at the day of judgment. So 1 Corinthians 15:50. "This I say, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." – Under this head I would observe several things particularly, for the clearer understanding of what the Scripture says concerning this period.

1. The setting up of the kingdom of Christ is chiefly accomplished by four successive great events, each of which is in Scripture called Christ's coming in his kingdom. The first is Christ's appearing in those wonderful dispensations of providence in the apostles' days, in setting up his kingdom, and destroying its enemies, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. This is called Christ's coming in his kingdom,

"Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." (Matthew 16:28)

(And Matthew 24.) The second is that which was accomplished in Constantine's time, in the destruction of the heathen Roman empire. This is represented as Christ's coming, and is compared to his coming to judgment, (Revelation 6 at the latter end.) The third is that which is to be accomplished at the destruction of Antichrist. This also is represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom in the 7th and in other places. The fourth and last judgment, which is the event principally signified in scripture by Christ's coming in his kingdom.

2. Each of the three former is a lively image, or type, of the fourth and last, viz. Christ's coming to the final judgment, as the principal dispensations of providence before were types of his first coming. As Christ's last coming to judgment is the resurrection of the dead, so is each of the three forgoing with

a spiritual resurrection. That the coming of Christ which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem was preceded by a glorious spiritual resurrection of souls in the calling of the Gentiles through the preaching of the gospel. Christ's coming in Constantine's time, was accompanied with a glorious spiritual resurrection of the greater part of the known world in a restoration of it to a visible church state, from a state of heathenism. Christ's coming at the destruction of Antichrist, will be attended with a spiritual resurrection of the church after it had been long as it were dead, in the times of Antichrist. This is called the first resurrection in the 20th chapter of Revelation.

Again, as Christ in the last judgment will gloriously manifest himself coming in the glory of his Father, so in each of the three foregoing events Christ gloriously manifested himself in sending Judgments upon his enemies, and in showing favour to his church. As the last coming of Christ will be attended with a literal gathering together of the elect from the four winds of heaven, so were each of the preceding attended with a spiritual gathering in of the elect. As this gathering together of the elect will be effected by God's angels with a great sound of a trumpet; (Matthew 24:31.) so were each of the preceding spiritual ingatherings effected by the trumpet of the gospel, sounded by the ministers of Christ. As there shall precede the last appearance of Christ, a time of great degeneracy and wickedness, so this has been, or will be, the case with each of the other appearances. Before each of them is a time of great opposition to the church: Wore the first, by the Jews; before the second, in Constantine's time, by the heathen; Wore the third, by Antichrist; and before the last, by Gog and Magog, as described in the Revelation.

By each of these comings of Christ, God works a glorious deliverance for his church. The first, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, was attended with bringing advancement of the church in from persecution, the countenance of civil authority and her triumph over heathen persecutors. shall be at the downfall of Antichrist, will with an advancement of the church in glorious prevalence of truth, liberty, peace, and joy, which we so often read of in the prophetical parts of Scripture. The last will be attended with the advancement of the church to consummate glory in heaven.

Each of these comings of Christ is accompanied with a terrible destruction of the wicked, and the enemies of the church: the first, with the destruction of the persecuting Jews, which was amazingly terrible; the second, with

dreadful Judgments on the heathen persecutors of the church; the third, with the awful destruction of Antichrist, the most cruel and bitter enemy that ever the church had; the fourth, with divine wrath and vengeance on all the ungodly. – Further, there is in each of these comings of Christ an ending of the old, and a beginning of new, heavens and a new earth; or an end of a temporal state of things, and a heavens and a new earth; or an end of a temporal state of things, and a beginning of an eternal state.

3. I would observe, that each of those four great dispensations which are represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom, are but so many steps and degrees of the accomplishment of one event. They are not the setting up of so many distinct kingdoms of Christ; but only several degrees of the accomplishment of that one event prophesied of, Daniel 7:13,14. "And I saw in the night-visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And them was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." This is what the Jews expected, and called "the coming of the kingdom of heaven;" and what John the Baptist and Christ had respect to, when they said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." This great event is accomplished by several steps.

4. When Christ came with the preaching of the apostles, to set up his kingdom in the world, which dispensation ended With the destruction of Jerusalem, then it was accomplished in a glorious degree; when the heathen empire was destroy in Constantine's time, it was fulfilled in a farther degree; when Antichrist shall be destroyed, it will be accomplished in a yet higher degree; but when the end of the world is come, then will it be accomplished in its not perfect degree of all. And bemuse those four great events are but images one of another, and the three former but types of the last, and since they are all only several states of the accomplishment of the same thing; hence we had them all from time to time prophesied of under one, as in the prophecies of Daniel, and in the 24th chapter of Matthew, where some things seem more applicable to one of them, and others to another.

Thus it appears, that as there are several steps of the accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, so in each one of the event is accomplished in a further

degree than in the foregoing. That in the time of Constantine was a greater and further accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, than that which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem; that which shall be at the fall of Antichrist, Will be a further accomplishment of the same thing, than that which took place in the time of Constantine; and so on with regard to each; so that the kingdom of Christ is gradually prevailing and growing by these several great steps of its fulfilment, from the time of Christ's resurrection to the end of the world.

5. The great providences or God between these four events, are to make way for the kingdom and glory of Christ in the great event following. Those dispensations of providence towards the church and the world, before the destruction of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine, seem all to have been to make way for the glory of Christ, and the happiness of the church in that event. And so the great prove after that, till the destruction of Antichrist, and the beginning of the glorious times of the church which follow, seem all calculated to prepare the way for the greater glory of Christ and his church in that event; and the following ones to the end of the world seem to be for the greater manifestation of Christ's glory at the consummation of all things. – Thus I thought it needful to observe those things in general concerning this last period, before I take notice of particular providences by which the work of redemption is carried on through this period, in their order. Before I proceed, I will briefly answer an INQUIRY, viz. Why the setting up of Christ's kingdom after his humiliation, should be so gradual, since God could easily have finished it at once? – Though it would be presumption in us to pretend to declare all the ends of God in this, yet doubtless much of his wisdom may be seen in it; and particularly in these two things.

1. In this way the glory of God's wisdom is more visible to the observation of creatures. If it had been done at once, or in a very short time, there would not have been such opportunities for creatures to perceive and observe the particular steps of divine wisdom, as when the work is gradually accomplished, and one effect is held forth to observation after another. It is wisely determined of God, to accomplish his great design by a wonderful and long series of events, that the glory of his wisdom may be displayed, in the whole series, of events, that the glory of his perfection may be seen, in particular successive manifestations. If all that glory which appears in these

events had been manifested at once, it would have been too much for us; it would have overpowered our sight and capacities.

2. Satan is more gloriously triumphed over – God could easily by act of almighty power, at once have crushed, Satan. But by giving him time to use his utmost subtlety to hinder the success of what Christ had done and suffered, he is not defeated merely by surprise, but has large opportunity to ply his utmost power and subtlety again and again, to strengthen his own interest all that he can by the work of many ages. Thus God destroys and confounds him, and sets a Christ’s kingdom time after time, in spite of all his stable machination, and great works, and by every step advances it still higher and higher, till at length it is fully set up, and Satan perfectly and eternally vanquished. – I now proceed to take notice of the Particular events, whereby, from the end of Christ’s humiliation to the end of the world, the success of Christ’s purchase has been or shall be accomplished.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

PART 2

How Christ was capacitated for effecting his purpose.

As the incarnation of Christ was necessary in order to his being in a near capacity for the purchase of redemption; so his resurrection and ascension were requisite in order to the success of his purchase.

1. His resurrection. It was necessary in order to Christ's obtaining the end and effect of his purchase of redemption, that he should rise from the dead – For God the Father had committed the whole affair of redemption to his Son, that he should not only purchase it as priest, but actually bring it about as king; and that he should do this as Godlyman. God the Father would -have nothing to do with fallen man in a way of mercy but by a mediator. But in order that Christ might accomplish the success of his own purchase as God-man, it was necessary that he should rise from the dead. Therefore Christ, after he had finished this purchase by death, rises from the dead, to fulfil the end of his purchase. This matter God the Father had committed unto him, that he might, as Lord of all, manage all to his own purposes:

"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." (Romans 14:9.)

Indeed Christ's resurrection (and so his ascension) was part of the success of what Christ did and suffered in his humiliation. For though Christ did not properly purchase redemption for himself, yet he purchased, eternal and life and glory for himself as a reward of what he did and

suffered: Philippians 2:8, 9. "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him." And it may be looked upon as part of the success of Christ's purchase, since he did not rise as a private person, but as the head of the elect church; so that they did, as it were, all rise with him. Christ was justified in his resurrection, i.e. God acquitted and discharged him hereby, as having done and suffered enough for the sins of all the elect: Romans 4:25. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification." And God put him in possession of eternal life, as the head of the church, as a sure earnest that they should follow. For when Christ rose from the dead, that was the beginning of eternal life in him. His life before his death was a mortal life, a temporal life; but after his resurrection it was an eternal life: Romans 6:9. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." Revelation 1:18. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen." – But he was put in possession of this eternal life, as the head of the body; so that the whole church, as it were, rises in him. And now he who lately so much, is to suffer no more for ever but has entered into eternal glory.

This resurrection of Christ is the most joyful event that ever came to pass; because hereby Christ rested from the great and difficult work of purchasing redemption, and received God's testimony, that it was finished. The death of Christ was the greatest and most wonderful event that ever came to pass; but that has a great deal in it that is sorrowful. But the resurrection of Christ, that sorrow is turned into joy. The Head of the church, in that great ... *[rest is missing in Ages version]*

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

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PART 3

Established means of success.

CONSIDER those dispensations of Providence, by which the means of this success were established after Christ's resurrection.

I. The abolishing the Jewish dispensation. This indeed was gradually done, but it began from the time of Christ's resurrection, in which the abolition of it is founded. For the Jewish dispensation was not fitted for the practice of the world in general, or for a church of God dwelling in all parts of the world: nor would it have been practicable by them. It would have been impossible for men living in all parts of the world to go to Jerusalem three times a year, as was prescribed in that constitution. When therefore God had a design of enlarging his church, as he did after Christ's resurrection, it was necessary that this dispensation should be abolished. If it had been continued, it would have been a great block and hindrance to the enlargement of the church. Besides, their ceremonial law, by reason of its burdensomeness, and great peculiarity of some of its rites, was a wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles, and would have kept the Gentiles from complying with the true religion. This wall therefore was broken down to make way for the more extensive success of the gospel; as Ephesians 2:14, 15.

II. The next thing in order of time seems to be the appointment of the Christian sabbath. For though this was gradually established in the christian church, yet those things by which the revelation of God's mind and will was made, began on the day of Christ's resurrection his appearing then to his disciples, John 20:19. And afterwards, his appearing was from time to time on that day rather than any other, John 20:26. This appointment was confirmed by his sending down the Holy Spirit so remarkably on that day,

Acts 2:1. and afterwards by directing, that the public worship of Christians should be on that day, which may be concluded from. Acts 20:7. 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2. and Revelation 1:10. And so the day of the week appointed to be the day of the churches holy rejoicing to the end of the world, and the day of their stated public worship. And this is a very great and principal means of the success which the gospel has had in the world.

III. The next thing was Christ's appointment of the gospel-ministry, by commissioning and sending forth his apostles to teach and baptize all nations. Of these things we have an account in Matthew 28:19, 20. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." There were three things done by this one commission of Christ to his apostles, viz.

1. The appointment of the office of the gospel-ministry. – For this commission which Christ gives to his apostles, in the most essential parts of it, belongs to all ministers; and the apostles, by virtue of it, were ministers or elders of the church.

2. Something peculiar in this commission, viz. to go forth from one nation to (Another, preaching the gospel in all the world. The apostles had something above what belonged to their ordinary character as ministers; they had an extraordinary power of teaching and ruling, which extended to all the churches; and not only all the churches which then were, but all that should be to the end of the world by their ministry. And so the apostles were, in subordination to Christ, made foundations of the christian church. See Ephesians 2:20. and Revelation 21:14.

3. Here is an appointment of Christian baptism. This ordinance indeed had a beginning before; John the Baptist and Christ baptized. But now especially by this institution is it established as an ordinance to be upheld in the christian church to the end of the world.-The ordinance of the Lord's supper had been established before just before Christ's crucifixion.

IV. The next thing to be observed, is the enduing the apostles, and others, with extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; such as the gift of tongues, the gift of healing of prophecy, etc. The Spirit of God was poured

out in great abundance in this respect; so that not only ministers but very great part of the Christians through the world were both old and young; not only officers, and more honourable persons, but the meaner some of people, servants, and handmaids, agreeable to Joel's prophecy, Joel 2:28, 29. of which prophecy the apostle Peter takes notice, that it is accomplished in this dispensation, Acts 2:11. How wonderful a dispensation was this! Under the Old Testament but few had such honours put upon them, by God. Moses indeed wished that all the Lord's people were prophets, Numbers 11:29. whereas Joshua thought it much that Eldad and Medad prophesied. But now we find the wish of Moses fulfilled. And this continued in a very considerable degree to the end of the apostolic age, or the first hundred years after the birth of Christ, which is therefore called the age of miracles.

This was a great means of the success of the gospel, and of establishing the christian church, not only in that age, but in all ages to the end of the world. For Christianity being established through so great a part of the known world by miracles, it was after that more easily continued by tradition; and by means of these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, the apostles and others were enabled to write the New Testament, to be an infallible and perpetual rule of faith and manners to the church. And these miracles recorded in those writings are a standing proof of the truth of Christianity to all ages.

V. The next thing is the revealing of those glorious doctrines fully and plainly, which had under the Old Testament been obscurely revealed. The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction and righteousness, his ascension and glory, and the way of salvation, were under the Old Testament in a great measure hid under the vail of types and shadows, and more obscure revelations, as Moses put a vail on his face to hide the shining of it; but now the vail of the temple is rent from the top to the bottom. Christ, the antetype of Moses, shines; his face is without a vail; 2 Corinthians 3:12, 13, and 18. Now these glorious mysteries, which were in a great measure kept secret from the foundation of the world, are clearly revealed. Ephesians 3:35. Romans 16:25. "According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest;" and, Colossians 1:26. "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints."

Thus the Sun of righteousness, after it is risen, begins to shine forth clearly,

and not by a dim reflection as before. – Christ, before his death, revealed many things more clearly than ever they had been in the Old Testament: but the great mysteries of Christ's redemption, reconciliation by his death, and justification by his righteousness, were not so plainly revealed before Christ's resurrection. Christ gave this reason for it, that he would not put new wine into old bottles; and it was gradually done even after his resurrection. In all likelihood, Christ much more clearly instructed them personally after his resurrection, and before his ascension; as we read that he continued with them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom, Acts 1:3. and that "he opened their understandings, that they might understand the scriptures," Luke 24:45. But the clear revelation of these things was principally after the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, agreeable to Christ's promise, John 16:12, 13. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth. In this clear revelation of the mysteries of the gospel, as they are delivered, we have chiefly through the hands of the apostle Paul, by whose writings a child may come to know more of the doctrines of the gospel in many respects, than the greatest prophets knew under the darkness of the Old Testament.

Thus we see how the light of the gospel, which began after the fall, and gradually increased to dawn immediately at the close of the Old Testament, is now come to the light of perfect day, as the brightness of the sun shining forth in his unvailed glory.

VI. The next thing that I would observe, is the appointment of the office of deacons in the christian church, which we have an account of in the 6th chapter of the Acts to take care for the outward supply of the members of Christ's church, and the exercise of that great christian virtue charity.

VII. The calling, qualifying, and sending the apostle Paul. This was begun in his conversion as he was going to Damascus, and was one of the greatest means of the success of Christ's redemption that followed: for this success was more by the labours, preaching, and writings of this apostle, than all the other apostles put together. For, as he says, 1 Corinthians 15:10. he laboured more abundantly than they all. As he was the apostle of the Gentiles, so it was mainly by his ministry that the Gentiles were called and the gospel spread through the world. and the other nations of Europe, have the gospel

among them chiefly through his means; and he was more employed by the Holy Ghost in revealing the glorious doctrines of the gospel by his writings, for the use of the church in all ages, than all the other apostles taken together.

VIII. The next thing I would observe, is the institution of ecclesiastical councils, for deciding controversies, and ordering the affairs of the church of Christ, of which we have an account in the 15th chapter of Acts.

IX. The last thing I shall mention under this head, is the committing the New Testament to writing. Ibis was all written after the resurrection of Christ by the apostles themselves, except the gospels of Mark and Luke and the book of the Acts. he that wrote the gospel of Mark, is supposed to be the son of Mary, in whose house they were praying for Peter, when he, brought out of prison by the angel, came and knocked at the door; of which we read,

"And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together, praying." (Acts 12:12.)

He was the companion of the apostles Barnabas and Paul: Acts 15:37. 11 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark." – He was Barnabas's sister's son, and seems some time to have been a companion of the apostle Paul: Colossians 4:10. "Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas; touching whom ye received commandment: if he come unto you, receive him." The apostles seem to have made great account of him as appears by those places, and also by Acts 12:25. "And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark;" and Acts 13:5. "And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John to their minister;" and 2 Timothy 4:11. "Only Luke is with me; take Mark and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

He who wrote the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, was a great companion of the apostle Paul. Beside the last-mentioned place, he speaks of himself as accompanying Paul in his travels, and therefore speaks in the first

person plural; We went to such a place; We set sail, etc. He was greatly beloved by the apostle Paul: he is that beloved physician spoken of, Colossians 4:14. The apostle ranks Mark and Luke among his fellow-labourers, Philemon 24. "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-labourers."

The books of the New Testament are either historical, doctrinal, or prophetic. The historical books are the writings of the four evangelists, giving us the history of Christ, his purchase of redemption, his resurrection and ascension; and the Acts of the Apostles, giving an account of the things by which the christian church was first established and propagated. The doctrinal books are the epistles; most of which we have from the great apostle Paul. And we have one prophetic book, which takes place after the end of the history of the whole Bible, and gives an account of the great events which were to come to pass, by which the work of redemption was to be carried on to the end of the world.

All these books are supposed to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, excepting those which were written by the apostle John, who lived the longest of all the apostles and who wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem, as it is supposed. To this beloved disciple it was that Christ revealed those wonderful things which! were to come to pass in his church to the end of time; and he was the person who put the finishing hand to the canon of Scripture, and sealed the whole of it. So that now the canon of Scripture, that great and standing written rule, which was begun about Mose's time is completed and settled, and a curse denounced against him that adds any thing to it, or diminishes any thing from it. And so all the stated means of grace were finished in the apostolical age, or before the death of the apostle John, and are to remain unaltered to the day of judgment. Thus far we have considered those things by which the means of grace were given and established in the christian church.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

PART 4

How the success was carried on.

FROM Christ's resurrection till the fall of Antichrist, is the appointed day of Zion's troubles. During this space Of time, some part or other of the church is under persecution; and great pad of the time, the whole church, or at least the generality of God's people, have been persecuted. For the first three hundred years after Christ, the church was for the most part in a state of great affliction the object of reproach and persecution; first by the Jews, and then by the heathen. – After this, from the beginning of Constantine's time, the church had rest and prosperity for a little while; which is represented in Revelation 7 at the beginning, by the angel's holding the four winds for a little while. But presently after, the church again suffered persecution from the Arians. After that Antichrist rose, the church was driven away into the wilderness, was kept down in obscurity, contempt, and suffering, for a long time before the Reformation by Luther and others. And since the Reformation, the church's persecutions have been beyond all that ever were before. And though some of God's church sometimes have had rest, yet to this day, for, the most part, the true church is very much kept under by its enemies, and some parts of it under grievous persecution. And so we may expect it will continue till the fall of Antichrist. Then will come the appointed day of the church's prosperity on earth, the set time in which God will favour Zion, the time when the saints shall not be kept under by wicked men, but wherein they shall reign, as it is said, Revelation 5:10. "And the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most-High," Daniel 7:27.

The suffering state of the church is in Scripture represented as a state of the church's travail, (John 16:20,21. and Revelation 12:1, 2.) striving to bring

forth that glory and prosperity which shall be after the fall of Antichrist, and then shall she bring forth her child. This is a long time of the church's trouble and affliction, though it be but for a little season, in comparison of the eternal prosperity of the church. Hence under the long continuance of this affliction, she cries out, (Revelation 6:10.) "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And we are told, that 6. white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." So, Daniel 12:6. "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders."

It is to be observed, that during the time of these sufferings of the church, the main instrument of their sufferings has been the Roman government. Rome therefore in the New Testament is called Babylon; because, as of old the troubles of the city of Jerusalem were mainly from that adverse city Babylon, so the troubles of the christian church, the spiritual Jerusalem, during the long time of its tribulation, are mainly from Rome. Before the time of Constantine, the troubles of the christian church were from heathen Rome: since that time, its troubles have been mainly from antichristian Rome. And as of old, the captivity of the Jews ceased on the destruction of Babylon, so the time of the trouble of the christian church will cease with the destruction of the church of Rome, that spiritual Babylon.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 1

THE SUCCESS OF REDEMPTION FROM THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TO THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

I WOULD now show, how the success of Christ's purchase of redemption was carried on from Christ's resurrection to the destruction of Jerusalem. In speaking of this I would,

1. take notice of the success itself; and,
2. the opposition made against it by its enemies; and,
3. the terrible judgments of God on those enemies.

I. I would observe the success itself. Soon after Christ had entered into the holy of holies with his own blood, then began a glorious success of what he had done and suffered. – Having undermined the foundation of Satan's kingdom, it began to fall space. Swiftly did it hasten to ruin, which might well be compared to Satan's falling like lightning from heaven. Satan before had exalted his throne very high in this world, even to the very stars of heaven, reigning with great glory in his heathen Roman empire; but never before had he such a downfall as he had soon after Christ's ascension. He had, we may suppose, been very lately triumphing in a supposed victory having brought about the death of Christ, which he doubtless gloried in as the greatest feat that ever he did; and probably imagined he had totally defeated God's design by him. But he was quickly made sensible, that he had only

been ruining his own kingdom, when he saw it tumbling so fast so won after, as a consequence of the death of Christ. For Christ, having ascended, and received the Holy Spirit, poured it forth abundantly for the conversion of thousands and millions of souls.

Never had Christ's kingdom been so set up in the world. There probably were more souls converted in the age of the apostles, than had been before from the beginning of the world till that time. Thus God so soon begins gloriously. to accomplish his promise to his Son, wherein he had promised, That he should see his seed, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, if he would make his soul an offering for sin. And,

1. Here is to be observed the success which the gospel had among the Jews; for God first began with them. He being about to reject the main body of that people, first calls in his elect from among them. It was so in former great and dreadful judgments of God on that nation; the bulk of them were destroyed, and only a remnant saved, or reformed. The bulk of the ten tribes was rejected, when they left the true worship of God under Jeroboam, and afterwards more fully in Ahab's time; but yet there was a remnant of them reserved. Many left their possessions in these tribes, and settled in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. And afterwards there were seven thousand in Ahab's time, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. From the captivity into Babylon, only a remnant of them ever returned to their own land. So now the greater part of the people were rejected entirely, but some few were saved. And therefore this Holy Ghost compares this reservation of a number that were converted by the preaching of the apostles, to those former remnants: Romans 9:27. "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." – See Isaiah 10:22.

The glorious success of the gospel among the Jews after Christ's ascension, began by the pouring out of the Spirit upon the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2.) So wonderful was this effusion, and so remarkable and swift the effect of it, that we read of three thousand who were converted to the christian faith in one day, Acts 2:41. and probably the greater part of these were savingly converted. And after this, we read of God's adding to the church daily such as should be saved, (verse 47.) Soon after, we read that the number of them were about five thousand. Thus were not only a multitude converted, but the

church was then eminent in piety, as appears by Acts 2:46, 47, 4:32. Thus the christian church was first formed from the nation of Israel; and therefore, when the Gentiles were called, they were added to the christian church of Israel, as the proselytes of old were to the Mosaic church of Israel. They were only grafted on the stock of Abraham, and were not a distinct tree; for they were all still the seed of Abraham and Israel; as Ruth the Moabitess, and Uriah the Hittite and other proselytes of old, were the same people, and ranked as the seed of Israel.

The christian church began at Jerusalem, and from thence was propagated to all nations: so that this church of Jerusalem was the mother of all other churches in the World; agreeable to the prophecy, Isaiah 2:3, 4. "Out of so Zion go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem: and he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people." So that the whole church of God is still his spiritual Jerusalem.

After this, we read of many thousands of Jews in Jerusalem that believed, Acts 21:20. And we read of multitudes of Jews who were converted in other cities of Judea, and in other parts of the world. For it was the manner of the apostles to go first into the synagogues of the Jews, and preach the gospel to them, and many in one Place and another believed; as in Damascus, Antioch, and many other places.

In this pouring out of the Spirit, at the Pentecost, began that first great dispensation which is called Christ's coming in his kingdom. Christ's coming thus in a spiritual manner for the glorious erection of his kingdom in the world is represented as his coming down from heaven, whither, he had ascended, John 14:18. "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you." And verse 28. "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you." And thus the apostles began to see the kingdom of heaven come with power, as he promised them, Mark 9:1.

2. After the success of the gospel had been so gloriously begun among the Jews, the Spirit of God was next wonderfully poured out on the Samaritans; who were the posterity of those whom the king of Assyria, removed from different parts of his dominions, and settled in the land which had been inhabited by the ten tribes, whom he carried captive. These had received the five books of Moses, and practiced most of the Mosaic rites, and so were a

sort of mongrel Jews. We do not find them reckoned as Gentiles in the New Testament: for the calling of the Gentiles is spoken of as a new thing after this, beginning with the conversion of Cornelius. But yet it was an instance of making those a people who were no people: for they had corrupted the religion of Moses and did not go up to Jerusalem to worship. They had another temple of their own in mount Gerizim; which is the mountain of which the woman of Samaria speaks, when she says, Our fathers worshipped in this mountain. Christ there does not approve of their separation from the Jews; but says, that they worshipped they knew not what, and that salvation is of the Jews. But now salvation is brought from the Jews to them by the preaching of Philip, (excepting that before Christ had some success among them,) with whose preaching there was a glorious pouring of the Spirit of God in the city Samaria; where we are told, that "the people believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of Christ, and were baptized, both men and women; and that there was great joy in that city," Acts 8:8-12.

Thus Christ had a glorious harvest in Samaria; according to what he said to his disciples at Jacob's well, three or four years before, on occasion of the people of Samaria appearing at a distance in the fields coming to the place where he was. John 4:35, 36. The disposition which the people of Samaria showed towards Christ and his gospel, showed that they were ripe for the harvest; and now the harvest is come by Philip's preaching. There used to be a most bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans; but now, by their conversion, the christian Jews and Samaritans are all happily united for in Christ Jesus is neither Jew nor Samaritan, but Christ is all in all. This was a glorious instance of the wolf dwelling with the lamb, and the leopard lying down with the kid.

3. The next thing to be observed is the calling the Gentiles. This was a great and glorious dispensation, much Spoken of in the Old Testament, and by the apostles, as a most glorious event, This was begun in the conversion of Cornelius and his family greatly to the admiration of Peter, who was used as instrument of it, and of those who were with him, Acts 10:and 11:The next instance was the conversion of great numbers of Gentiles in Cyprus, Cyrene and Antioch, by the disciples who were scattered a by the persecution which arose about Stephen, Acts 11:19- 21. And presently upon this the disciples began to be called Christians first at Antioch, (Verse 26.)

After this vast multitudes of Gentiles were converted in different of the world, chiefly by the ministry of the apostle Paul, multitudes flocked into the church of Christ in a great number of cities where the apostle came. So the number of Gentile members of the christian church soon far exceeded that of its Jewish members; yea, in law than ten years time after Paul was sent forth from Antioch to preach to the Gentiles, it was said of him and his companions, that they had tamed the world upside down: Acts 17:6. "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." But the most remarkable instance, seems to be that in Ephesus, which was a very great city, Acts 19: There was also a very extraordinary ingathering of souls at Corinth, one of the greatest cities in all Greece. And after this many were converted in Rome, the chief city of all the world; and I the gospel was propagated into all parts of the Roman empire. Thus the gospel-sun which had lately risen on the Jews, now rose upon, and began to enlighten, the heathen world, after they had continued in gross heathenish darkness for so many ages.

This was a great and new thing, such as never had been before. All nations but the Jews, and a few who had occasionally joined them, had been rejected from about the time of Moses. The Gentile had been covered with the thick darkness of idolatry; but now at the joyful sound of the gospel, they began in all parts to forsake their idols, and to cast them to the moles and to the bats. They now learned to worship the true God, and to trust in his Son Jesus Christ. God owned them for his people; and those who had so long been afar off, were made nigh by the blood of Christ. Men, from being heathenish and brutish, became the children of God; were called out of Satan's kingdom of darkness, and brought into God's marvellous light. In almost all countries throughout the known world there were christian assemblies, and joyful praises were sung to the true God, and Jesus Christ the glorious Redeemer. Now that great building which God began soon after the fall of man, rises gloriously in a new manner now Daniel's prophecies concerning the last should succeed the four heathenish in be fulfilled; now the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, began to smite the image on its feet, and to it in pieces, and to make great advances towards filling earth; and now God gathers together his elect the four winds of heaven, by the preaching of the apostles and other ministers, (the angels of the christian church sent forth

with the great sound of the gospel-trumpet,) before the destruction of Jerusalem, agreeable to what Christ foretold, Matthew 24:31.

II. I would proceed now, in the second place, to take notice of the opposition which was made to this success of Christ's purchase by the enemies of it.- Satan, who lately was so ready to triumph and exult, as though he had gained the victory in putting Christ to death, now finding himself fallen into the pit which he had digged and finding his kingdom failing so fast, and seeing Christ's kingdom make such amazing progress, was filled with the greatest confusion and astonishment: and hell seemed to effectually be alarmed to make the most violent opposition against it. And, first, the devil stirred up the Jews, who had before crucified Christ, to persecute the church: for it is observable, that the persecution which the church suffered during this period, was mostly from the Jews. Thus we read in the Acts, when the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost, how the Jews mocked, and said, These men are full of new wine; and how the scribes and Pharisees, and the captain of the temple, were alarmed, and bestirred themselves to oppose and persecute the apostles. They first apprehended and threatened them, and afterwards imprisoned and beat diem; and breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, they stoned Stephen in a tumultuous rage; and were not content to persecute those that they could find in Judea, but sent abroad to Damascus and other places, to persecute all that they could find every where. Herod, who was chief among them, stretched forth his hands to vex the church, and killed James with the sword, and proceeded to take Peter also, and cast him into prison.

So in other countries we find, that almost wherever the apostles came, the Jews opposed the gospel in a most malignant manner contradicting and blaspheming. How many things did the blessed apostle Paul suffer at their hands! how violent and blood-thirsty did they show themselves towards him, when he came to bring alms to his nation! In this persecution and cruelty was fulfilled that saying of Christ,

"Behold, I send you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city." (Matthew 23:34.)

III. I proceed to take notice of the judgments which were executed on those enemies of Christ, the persecuting Jews.

1. The bulk of the people were given up to judicial blindness of mind and hardness of heart. Christ denounced such a woe upon them in the days of his flesh; Matthew 13:14, 15 – This curse was also denounced on them by the apostle Paul, Acts 28:25, 26, 27. and under this curse, this judicial blindness and hardness, they remain to this very day, having been subject to it for about seventeen hundred years, being the most awful instance of such a judgment, and monument of God's terrible vengeance, of any people. That they should continue from generation to generation so obstinately to reject Christ, so that it is a very rare thing that any one of them is converted to the christian faith – though their own Scriptures of the Old Testament, which they acknowledge, are so full of plain testimonies against them-is a remarkable evidence of their being dreadfully left of God.

2. They were rejected from being any longer God's visible people. They were broken on from the stock of Abraham, and since that have no more been reputed his seed, than the Ishmaelites or Edomites, who are as much his natural seed as they. The greater part of the two tribes were now cast off, as the ten tribes had been before, and another people were taken in their room, agreeable to the predictions of their own prophets; Deuteronomy 32:21.

"They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities; and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation;" and Isaiah 65:1. "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not." – They were visibly rejected by God's directing his apostles to turn away from them, and let them alone; Acts 13:46, 47. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from You, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles: for so hath the Lord commanded its." And so Acts 18:6. and 28:28.

Thus far we have had the scripture history to guide us: henceforward we shall have the guidance only of scripture prophecy, and human histories.

3. The third and last judgment of God on those enemies of the success of the

gospel which I shall mention, is the terrible destruction of their city and country by the Romans. – They had great warnings and many means used with them before this destruction. First, John the Baptist warned them, and told them, that the axe was laid at the root of the tree; and that every tree which should not bring forth good fruit, should be hewn down, and cast into the fire. Then Christ warned them very particularly, and told them of their approaching destruction, at the thoughts of which he wept over them. And then the apostles after Christ's ascension abundantly warned them. But they proved obstinate, and went on in their opposition to Christ and his church, and in their bitter persecuting practices. Their so persecuting the apostle Paul, of which we have an account towards the end of the Acts of the Apostles, is supposed to have been not more than seven or eight years before their destruction.

After this, God was pleased to give them one more very remarkable warning by the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, written, it is supposed, about four years before their destruction; wherein the plainest and clearest arguments are set before them from their own law, and from their prophets, for whom they professed such a regard, to prove that Christ Jesus must be the Son of God, that all their law: typified him, and that the Jewish dispensation must needs have ceased. For though the epistle was more immediately directed to the christian Hebrews, yet the matter of the epistle plainly shows that the apostle intended it for the use and conviction of the unbelieving Jews. And in this epistle he mentions particularly the approaching destruction, chapter 10:25. "So much the more, as ye see the day approaching;" and in verse 27. he speaks of the approaching judgment and fiery indignation which should devour the adversaries.

But the generality of them, refusing to receive conviction, God soon destroyed with such terrible circumstances, as the destruction of the country or city since the foundation of the world can parallel; agreeable to what Christ foretold,

"For then shall be tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."
(Matthew 24:21.)

The first destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians was very terrible, as it is in a most affecting manner described by the prophet Jeremiah, in his Lamentations; but that was nothing to the dreadful in and wrath which they suffered in this destruction. God as Christ foretold, brought on them all the righteous blood that had been shed from the foundation the world. Thus the enemies of Christ are made his footstool after his ascension, agreeable to God's promise in Psalm 110. and he rules them with a rod of iron. The briars and thorns set themselves against him in battle: but he went through them; he burned them together.

This destruction of Jerusalem was in all respects agreeable to what Christ had foretold of it, Matthew 24 as appears by the account which Josephus gives of it, who was then present, who had a share in the calamity, and who wrote the history of their destruction. Many circumstances resembled the destruction of the wicked at the day of judgment; by his account, it was accompanied with many fearful sights in the heavens, and with a separation of the righteous from the wicked. Their city and temple burnt, and razed to the ground; and the ground on which the city stood was ploughed, so that one stone was not left upon another, Matthew 24:2.

The people had ceased for the most part to be an independent government after the Babylonish captivity; but the sceptre entirely departed from Judah on the death of Archelaus, when Judea was made a Roman province. After this, they were cast off from being the people of God; but now their very city and land are utterly destroyed, and they carried away from it; and so have continued in their dispersions through the world for now above sixteen hundred years.

Thus there was a final end put to the Old Testament world: all was finished with a kind of day of judgment, in which the people of God were saved, and his enemies terribly destroyed. – Thus does he who was so lately mocked, who was so lately mocked, despised, and spit upon by these Jews, and whose followers they so malignantly persecuted, appear gloriously exalted over his enemies.

A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 2

THE SUCCESS OF REDEMPTION FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, TO THE TIME OF CONSTANTINE.

JERUSALEM was destroyed about the year of our Lord sixty-eight, and so before that generation passed away which was contemporary with Christ. The destruction of the heathen empire under Constantine, was about two hundred and sixty years after this. In showing how "success of the gospel was carried on through this time, I would,

1. Take notice of the opposition made against it by the Roman empire.
 2. How the work of the gospel went on notwithstanding all that opposition.
 3. The peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress that the church was in just before their deliverance by Constantine; and
 4. The great revolution in Constantine's time.
- I. I would briefly show what opposition was made against the gospel, and the kingdom of Christ, by the Roman empire. This opposition was mainly after the destruction of Jerusalem, though it began before; but that which was before the destruction of Jerusalem, was mainly by the Jews. When Jerusalem was destroyed, the Jews were much incapacitated for troubling the church; there, before the devil turns his hand elsewhere, and uses other instruments. The opposition which was made in the Roman empire against

the kingdom of Christ was chiefly of two kinds.

1. They employed all their learning, philosophy, by, and wit, in opposing it. Christ came into the world in an age wherein learning and philosophy were at their height in the Roman empire. The gospel, which held forth a crucified Saviour, was not at all agreeable to the notions of the philosophers. The christian scheme of trusting in such a crucified Redeemer, appeared foolish and ridiculous to them. Greece was a country the most famous for learning of any in the Roman empire; but the apostle observes, that the doctrine of crucified appeared foolishness to the Greeks, 1 Corinthians 1:23. and therefore the wise men and opposed the gospel with all the wit they had. We have a specimen of their manner of opposing, in their treatment of the apostle Paul at Athens, which was, and had been for man ages, the chief seat of philosophers in all the whole world. We read in Acts 12:18. that the philosophers the Epicureans and Stoics encountered philosophers saying, what will this, babble, say? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods." Thus they were wont to deride and ridicule Christianity; and after the destruction of Jerusalem, several philosophers published books against it. The chief of these were Celsus and Porphyry, who wrote with a great deal of virulence and contempt, much after the manner of the deists of die present age. As great enemies and despisers as they were of the Christian religion, they never denied the facts recorded of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, particularly the miracles which they wrought, but allowed them. They lived too near the times of these miracles to deny them; for they were so publicly done, and so lately, that neither Jews nor heathens in those days appeared to deny them; but they ascribed them to the power of magic.

2. The authority of the Roman empire employed all their strength, time after time, to persecute, and if possible to root out, Christianity. This they did in ten general successive persecutions. We have heretofore observed that Christ came into the world when the strength of heathen dominion and authority was the greatest under the Roman monarchy. All the strength of this monarchy was employed for a long time to oppose and persecute the christian church, and if possible to destroy it, in ten successive attempts, which are called the ten heathen persecutions.

The first of these, which was the persecution under Nero, was a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, in which the apostle Peter was crucified, and the

apostle Paul beheaded, soon after he wrote his second epistle to Timothy. When he wrote that epistle, he was a prisoner at Rome under Nero, and says, chapter 4:6, 7. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." There were many thousands of other Christians slain in that persecution. The other nine persecutions were all after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some of these were very terrible indeed, and far exceeded the first persecution under Nero. One emperor after another set himself with the utmost rage to root out the christian church from the earth, that there should not be so much as the name of Christian left in the world. Thousands, yea millions, were put to cruel deaths in them for they spared neither sex nor age.

In the second general persecution, (under Domitian,) that which was next after the destruction of Jerusalem, the apostle John was banished to the isle of Patmos, where he had those visions which he has recorded in the Revelation. Under that persecution it was reckoned, that about forty thousand suffered martyrdom; which yet wait nothing to what were put to dam under some succeeding persecutions. Ten thousand suffered that one kind of cruel death, crucifixion. in the third persecution under the emperor Adrian. Under the fourth penetration, which began about the year of Christ we hundred and sixty-two, many suffered martyrdom in England, the land of our fathers, where Christianity had been planted it is supposed, in the days of the apostles. And in the later persecutions, the Roman emperors being vexed at the frustration of their predecessors, who were not able to extirpate Christianity, or hinder its progress, were enraged to be the more violent in their attempts.

Thus a great pan of the first three hundred years after Christ was spent in violent and cruel persecutions of the church by the Roman powers. Satan was very unwilling to quit his hold of so great and distinguished a part of the world, as the countries contained in the Roman empire, of which he had had the quiet possession for so many ages: and therefore, when he saw it going so fast out of his he bestirred himself to his utmost. All hell was to oppose it with its utmost power.

Satan thus exerting himself by the power of the heathen Roman empire, is called the great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, fighting against the woman clothed with the sun. (Revelation 12.) And this terrible

conflict between the church of Christ, and the powers of the heathen empire before Constantine, is represented (verse 7) by the war between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels. "And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought, and the dragon fought and his angels."

II. I would take notice what success the gospel had in the world before the time of Constantine, notwithstanding all this opposition. – Though the learning and power of the Roman empire were so great and both were employed to the utmost against Christianity; yet all was in vain. They could neither root it out, nor stop its progress. In spite of all, the kingdom of Christ wonderfully prevailed, and Satan's heathen kingdom mouldered and consumed away before it, agreeable to the text, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool." And it was very observable that, for the most part, the more they persecuted the church, the more it increased; insomuch that it became a common saying, The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church-Herein the church of Christ proved to be like a palm-tree; of which it is remarked, that the greater weight is hung to its branches, the more it grows and flourishes. On this account probably the church is compared to a palm-tree, Cant. 7:7. "This thy statute is like to a palm-tree." Justin Martyr, an eminent father in the christian church, says, that in his days there was no part of mankind, whether Greeks or barbarians, or by what name soever they were called, even the most rude and unpolished nations, where prayers and Thanksgivings were not made to the great Creator of the world, through the name of the crucified Jesus. Terullian, another eminent father in the christian church, who lived in the beginning of the following age, testifies, that in his days the christian religion had extended itself to the utmost bounds of the then known world, in which he reckons Britain; and thence demonstrates, that the kingdom of Christ was then more extensive than any of the four great monarchies. He moreover says, that though the Christians were strangers of no long standing, yet they had filled all places of the Roman dominions, their cities, islands, castles, corporations, councils, armies, tribes, the palace, senate, and courts of judicature; only they had left to the heathen their temples. He adds, that if they should all agree to retire out of the Roman empire, the world would be amazed at the solitude and desolation that would ensue upon it, there would be so few left; and that the Christians were enough to be able easily to defend themselves, if they

were disposed to rise up in arms against the heathen magistrates. – And Pliny, a heathen who lived in those days, says, that multitudes, of each sex, of every age and quality, would become Christians. This superstition, says and overrun not the city only, but towns countries, the temples and sacrifices are generally desolate and forsaken.

And it was remarked -by both heathen and christian writers in those days, that the famous heathen oracles in their temples-where princes and others for many past ages had been wont to inquire and receive answers, answers with an audible voice from their gods, which were indeed answers from the devil – were now struck dumb, and gave no man answers: and particularly the oracle at Delphos the most famous in the whole world, which both Greeks and Romans used to consult, began to can to give any answers, even from the birth of Christ. The false deity who was worshipped, and who used to give answers from his oracle in that temple, being once inquired of, why he did not now give answers as he was want to do? made this reply, (as several heathen historians who lived about those times relate,) There is a Hebrew boy, who is king of the gods, who has commended me to leave this house, and began to hell, and therefore you are to expect no more answers. And many heathen writers who lived about that time, speak much of the oracles being silenced, at which they wondered, not knowing what the cause should be. Plutarch wrote a particular treatise about it, which is still extant. And Porphyry who opposed the christian religion, has these words, "Is no wonder if the city for these many years has been overrun with sickness; Esculapuis, and the rest of the gods having withdrawn their converse with men: for since Jesus began to be worshipped, no man has received any public help or benefit by the gods." "Thus did the kingdom of Satan."

III. I now proceed to take notice of the peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress just before Constantine the Great came to the throne. distress they suffered under the tenth heathen persecution, which, a it was the last, so it was by far the heaviest and most severe. The church before this after the ceasing of the ninth persecution, had enjoyed a time of quietness for about forty years together; but abusing their liberty, they began to grow cold and lifeless in religion, and contentions prevailed among them; by which they offended God to suffer this dreadful trial to come upon them. And Satan having lost ground so much, notwithstanding all his attempts, now seemed to

bestir himself with more than ordinary rage. Those who were then in authority set themselves with the utmost violence to root out Christianity, by burning all Bibles, and destroying all Christians; and therefore they did not stand to try or convict them in a formal process, but fell upon them wherever they could. Sometimes they set fire to houses where multitudes were assembled, burning them altogether; at other times they slaughtered such multitudes their persecutors were quite spent with the labour of killing and tormenting them; and in some populous places, so many were slain together, that the blood ran like torments. It is related, that seventeen thousand martyrs were slain in one month's time; and that during the continuance of this persecution in the province of Egypt alone, no less than one hundred and forty-four thousand Christians died by the violence of their persecutors, besides seven hundred thousand that died through the fatigues of banishment, or the public works to which they were condemned.

This persecution lasted for ten years together, and as it exceeded all the foregoing persecutions, in the number of martyrs, so it exceeded them in the and multitude of inventions of torture and cruelty. Some authors who lived at that time, say, they were innumerable, and exceed all account and expression. This persecution in particular was very severe in England, and is that which was foretold in Revelation 6:9, 10. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And at the end of the ten years, during which this persecution continued, the heathen persecutors thought they had finished their work, and boasted that they had utterly destroyed the name and superstition of the Christians. Thus it was just before the break of day. They were brought to greatest extremity before God appeared for their glorious deliverance, as the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt was the most severe and cruel just before their deliverance by the hand of Moses. Their enemies thought they had swallowed them up, and sealed their destruction, as Pharaoh and his host thought when they had hemmed in the children of Israel at the Red sea.

IV. I come now, in the fourth place, to the great revolution by Constantine, which was in many respects like Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven to

save his people, and judge the world. The people of Rome being weary the government of those tyrants to whom they had lately been subject, sent to Constantine, who was then in the city of New York in England, to come and take the throne. He was encouraged it is said, by a vision of a pillar of light in the heavens, in the form of a cross in the sight of his whole army, with this inscription. In this overcome; and the following by Christ's appearing to him in a dream with the cross in his hand, who directed him to make a cross like that to be his royal standard, that his army might fight under that banner and assured him that he should overcome. Accordingly he overcame his enemies, took possession of the imperial throne, embraced the christian religion, and was the first christian emperor that ever reigned. He came to the throne about three hundred and twenty years after Christ. There are several things which I would take notice of which attended at immediately followed, Constantine's coming to the throne.

1. The christian church was thereby wholly delivered from persecution. Now the day of her deliverance came after such a dark night of affliction: weeping had continued for a night, but now deliverance and joy came in the morning. Now God appeared to judge his people, and repented himself for his servants, when he saw their power was gone, and that there was none shut up or left. Christians had no persecutions now to fear. Their persecutors now were all put down, and their rulers were some of them Christians like themselves.

2. God now to execute terrible judgments on their enemies. Remarkable are the accounts which history gives of the fearful ends to which the heathen emperors, princes, generals, captains, and other great men were brought, who had exerted themselves in persecuting the Christian; dying miserably, one after another, under exquisite torments of body, and horrors of conscience, with a most visible hand of God upon them. So that what now came to pass might very greatly be compared to their hiding themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains.

3. Heathenism now was in a great measure abolished throughout the Roman empire. Images were now destroyed, and heathen temples pulled down. Images of gold and silver were melted down, and coined into money. Some of the chief of their idols, which were curiously wrought, were brought to Constantine, there drawn with ropes up and down the streets for the people to behold and laugh at. The heathen priests were dispersed and banished.

4. The christian church was brought into a state of great peace and prosperity. Now all heathen magistrates were put down, and only Christians were advanced to places of authority all over the empire. They had now christian presidents, christian governors, christian judges and officers, instead of their old heathenish ones. Constantine set himself to put honour upon christian bishops or ministers, and to build and adorn churches; and now large and beautiful christian churches were erected in all parts of the world, instead of the old heathen temples.

This revolution was the greatest change in the face of things that ever came to pass in the world since the flood. Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the heathen world, was cast out. The roaring lion was conquered by the Lamb of God, in the strongest dominion that he ever had. This was a remarkable accomplishment of Jeremiah 10:11. "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these chief part of the world was now brought utterly to cut off their gods and their old religion, to which they had been accustomed much longer than any of their histories give an account of. They had been accustomed to worship the gods so long, that they knew not any beginning of it. It was formerly spoken of as a thing unknown for a nation to change their gods, Jeremiah 2:10, 11. but now the greater pan of the nations of the known world were brought to cast off all their former gods. That multitude of gods which they worshipped, were all forsaken. Thousands of them were cast away for the worship of the true God, and Christ the only Saviour: and there was a most remarkable fulfilment of Isaiah 2:17, 18. "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish." And since that, those gods which were once so famous in do world, as Jupiter, and Saturn, and Minerva, and Juno, etc. am only heard of as things of old. They have had no temples, no altars, no worshippers, for many hundred years.

Now is come the end of the old heathen world in its principal part, the Roman empire. And this great revolution with that terrible destruction of the great men who had been persecutors, is compared. (Revelation vi.) to the end of the world, and Christ coming to judgment; and is most immediately signified under the sixth seal, which followed upon the souls under the altar crying,

How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? This vision of the sixth seal, by the general consent of expositors, has respect to this downfall of the heathen Roman empire; though it has a more remote respect to the day of judgment or which this was a type. The day of judgment cannot be what is immediately intended; use we have an account of many events which were to come to pass after those of the sixth seal.

What came to pass now is also represented by the devil's being cost out of heaven to the earth. In his great strength and glory, over that mighty Roman empire, he had exalted his throne up to heaven. But now he fell like lightning from heaven, and his kingdom was confined to the meaner and more barbarous nations, or to the lower parts of the world. This is the event foretold, Revelation 12:9, etc. "And the oat dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cut out with him," etc. Satan had formerly tempted Christ, and promised to give him the glory of the kingdoms of the world, but give it to him even against his fulfilment of that promise which

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; bemuse he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." (Isaiah 53:12.)

This was a great fulfilment of prophecies concerning the glorious time of the gospel and particularly those of Daniel. Now it pleased the Lord God of heaven to set up a kingdom on the ruins of Satan's kingdom; and such honour does the Father put upon Christ for the disgrace he suffered when on earth.

From what has been said of the success of the gospel from Christ's ascension to the time of Constantine, we may deduce a strong argument for the truth of the christian religion, and that the gospel of Jesus Christ is really from God. Particularly,

1. We may gather from what has been said, that it is the gospel, and that only,

which has actually been the means of bringing the world to the knowledge of the true God. That those are no gods whom the heathen worshipped, and that there is but one only God, is what, now since the gospel has so taught us, we can see to be truth by our own reason. It is plainly agreeable to the light of nature; and it can be easily shown by reason to be demonstrably true. The very deists themselves acknowledge, that it can be demonstrated, that there is one God, and but one, who has made and governs the world. But now it is evident that it is the gospel, and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing men to the knowledge of this truth. It was not the instructions of philosophers; they tried in vain: The world by wisdom knew not God. Till the gospel and the Holy Scriptures came abroad, all the world lay in God, and in the greatest darkness with embracing the absurdest opinions and all civilized nations now acknowledge light of nature, their own team, and all the wisdom of the learned man, signified nothing till the Scriptures came. But when these came abroad, they were successful to bring the world to an acknowledgment of the one only true God, and to worship and serve him.

And hence it is, that all that part of the world which now acknowledges one only true God-Christians, Jews, Mahometans, and even deists-originally came to own him. It is owing to this that they are not in general at this day left in heathenish darkness. They have it all, either immediately from the Scriptures, or by tradition from their fathers who had it first from the Scriptures. And doubtful thou who now despise the Scriptures, and boast of the strength of their own reason, as being sufficient to lead into the knowledge of the one true God, if the gospel had never come abroad in the world to enlighten their forefathers, would have been as sottish and brutish idolaters as the world in general was before the gospel came abroad. The Mahometans, who own but one true God, at first borrowed the notion from the Scriptures: for the first Mahometans had been educated in the christian religion, and apostatized from it. And this is evident, that the Scriptures were designed of God to be the proper means to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, rather than human reason, or any thing else. For it is unreasonable to suppose, that the gospel, and that only which God never designed as the proper mean for obtaining this effect, should actually obtain it; and that after human reason, which he designed as the proper mean, had been tried for a great many ages without any effect. If the Scriptures be not the word of God,

then they are nothing but darkness and delusion, yea, the greatest delusion that ever was.

Now, is it reasonable to suppose, that God in his providence would make use of falsehood and delusion, to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, and that no part of it should be brought to the knowledge of him any other way?

2. The gospel prevailing as it did against such powerful opposition, plainly shows the hand of God. The Roman government, that so violently set itself to hinder the success of the gospel, and to subdue the church of Christ, was the most powerful that ever wall in the world; and not only no, but they seemed to have the church in their hands. The Christians who were under their command, never took up arms to defend themselves; they armed themselves with nothing but patience, and such like spiritual weapons and yet this mighty power could not conquer but on the contrary Christianity conquered them. The Roman empire had subdued many mighty and potent kingdoms they subdued the Grecian monarchy, though it made the utmost resistance. and yet they could not conquer the church which was in their lands; but, an the contrary, were subdued and finally triumphed over by the church.

3. No other sufficient cause can possibly be assigned for, this propagation of the gospel, but only his own power. There was certainly some reason. Here was a great and wonderful effect; and this effect was not without some cause. – Now, what other cause can be devised but only the divine power! It was not the outward strength of the instruments which were employed in it. At first, the gospel was preached only by a few fishermen, who were Without power and worldly interest to support theta. It was not their craft and policy that produced this wonderful effect; for they were poor illiterate men. It was the notions and not the agreeableness of the story they had to tell to the notions and principles of mankind. We was no pleasant fable: a crucified God and Saviour was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. It was not the agreeableness of their doctrines to the dispositions of men: for nothing is more contrary to the corruption's of men than the pure doctrines of the gospel. This effect therefore can have proceeded from no other cause then the power and agency of God: and if the power of God was thus exercised to cause the gospel to prevail, then the gospel is his word; for surely God does not use his almighty power to promote a mere imposture and delusion.

4. This success is agreeable to what Christ and his apostles foretold. – Matthew 16:18. "Upon this rock will I build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." John 12:24. "Verily verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into ground, and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much much fruit." And verse 31, 32. "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 16:8. "When he (the Comforter) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, -because the prince of this world is judged."

So the apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians chapter 1:21-28. declares, how that after the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe; and that God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and weak things of the world, to confound the which are mighty; and ban things of the world, and things which am despised and thing which are not, to bring to are. – If any man foretells a thing, very come to pass, from causes which can be foreseen it is no great argument of a revelation from God: but when a thing is foretold which is very unlikely ever to come to pass, is entirely contrary to the common course of things, and yet it does come to pass just agreeable to the prediction, this is a strong argument that the prediction was from God. Thus the consideration of the manner of the propagation and success of the gospel during the time which has been spoken of, affords great evidence that the Scriptures are the word of God.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 3

THE SUCCESS OF REDEMPTION FROM THE TIME OF CONSTANTINE TO THE RISE OF ANTICHRIST.

I AM now to show how the success of Christ's redemption is carried on from the overthrow of the heathen Roman empire in the time of Constantine the Great, till the rise of Antichrist. And in order to a more clear view of the great works of God in accomplishing the success of Christ's redemption, and our seeing the glory of them, it will be necessary, as in the foregoing periods, to consider not only the success itself, but the opposition made to it.

I. The opposition. Satan, the great red dragon, after so sore a Michael and his angels for the greater part of three hundred years, was at last entirely routed and vanquished; so that he was cast down, as it were, from heaven to the earth. Yet he does not give over his opposition to the woman, the church of Christ, concerning which all this conflict had been; but is still in a rage, renews his attempts, and has recourse to new devices against the church. The serpent, after he is cast out of heaven to the earth, casts out of his mouth water as a food, to cause the woman to be carried away of the flood. The opposition that he made to the church of Christ before the rise of Antichrist, was principally of two sorts. It was either by corrupting the church of Christ with heresies, or by new endeavours to restore paganism.

1. After the destruction of the heathen Roman empire, Satan infested the

church with heresies. Though there had been so glorious a work of God in delivering the church from her heathen persecutors, and overthrowing the heathen empire; yet the days of the church's travail not being ended, and the set time of her prosperity not yet come, (as being what was to succeed the fall of Antichrist, therefore the peace and prosperity which the church enjoyed in Constantine's time, was but very short. It was a respite, which gave the church a time of peace and silence, as it were for half an hour, wherein the four angels held the four winds from blowing till the servants of God should be sealed in their foreheads. But the church soon began to be greatly infested with heresies; the two principal, and those which did most infest the church, were Arian and Pelagian.

The Arians began soon aft Constantine came to the throne. They denied the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and maintained, that they were but mere creatures. This heresy increased more and more in the church, and which threatened to overthrow all, and entirely to carry away the church, insomuch that before the close of the fourth century, the greater part of the christian church were become Arians. Some emperors, the successors of Constantine, were Arians; so that being the prevailing party, and having the civil authority on their side they raised a great persecution against the true church of Christ; so that this heresy might well become to a flood out of the mouth of the serpent, which threatened to overthrow all, and quite carry away the woman.

The Pelagian heresy arose in the beginning of the next century. It began by one Pelagius, who was born in Britain: his British name was Morgan. He denied original sin and the influence of the Spirit of God in conversion, and held the power of the will, and many other things of like tendency; and this heresy did for a while greatly infest the church. Pelagius's principal antagonist who wrote in defence of the orthodox faith, was St. Augustin.

2. The other kind of opposition which Satan made against the church, was in his endeavours to restore paganism. His first attempt was by Julian the apostate. Julian was nephew to Constantine the Great. When Constantine died and left his empire to three sons; and after their death, Julian the apostate reigned in their stead. He had been a professed Christian; but he fell from Christianity, and turned pagan; and therefore is called the apostate. When he came to the throne, he used his utmost endeavours to overthrow the

christian church, and set tip paganism again in the empire. He put down the christian magistrates, and set up heathens in their room. He rebuilt the heathen temples, set up the heathen worship, and became a most notorious persecutor of the Christians. He used to call Christ, by, way of reproach, the Galilean. He was killed with a lance in his wars with the Persians. When he saw that he was mortally wounded, he took a handful of his blood, and threw it towards heaven, crying out, "Thou hast overcome, O Galilean." He is commonly thought by divines to have committed the unpardonable sin.

Another way that Satan attempted to restore paganism in the Roman empire, was by the invasions and conquest of heathen nations. For in this space of time, the Goths and Vandals, and other barbarous nations from the north, invaded the empire, and obtained great conquests. They even overran the empire, and in the fifth century took the city of Rome, and finally conquered and took possession of the western half of the empire, and divided it amongst them. It was divided into ten kingdoms, with which began the ten horns of the beast; for we are told, that the ten horns are ten kings, who should rise in the latter part of the Roman empire: these are also represented, by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image. The invasion and conquests of these heathen nation! are supposed to be foretold in the 8th chapter of Revelation, in what came to pass under the sounding of the four first trumpets. Now by their means heathenism was again for a while restored after it had been rooted out. – So much for the opposition of Satan against the success of the gospel during this space before the rise of Antichrist. I proceed,

II. To show what success there was of the gospel in this space, notwithstanding this opposition.

1. I would observe, that the opposition of Satan in those things was baffled. Though the dragon cast out of his mouth such a flood after the woman to carry her away, yet he could not obtain his design; but the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. These heresies, which for a while so much prevailed, after a while dwindled away, and orthodoxy was again restored.

2. The gospel, during this space of time, was further propagated amongst many barbarous nations in the confines of the Roman empire. In the time of Constantine there was a considerable propagation of the gospel in the East

Indies, chiefly by the ministry of one Frumentius. Great numbers of the Liberians were converted to Christianity by a Christian woman of eminent piety, whom they had taken captive. And some account is given of several other barbarous nations who were not within the Roman empire, that great numbers of them were brought to receive the gospel by the teaching and example of captives whom they had and in war. About the year of Christ three hundred and seventy-two, the gospel was propagated among the barbarous inhabitants of Arabia; and among some of the northern nations; particularly, a prince of the Goths about this time became Christian, and a great number of his people with him. Towards the latter end of this century, the gospel was also further propagated among the Persians; and also the Scythians, a barbarous people, whom the apostle mentions, Colossians 3:11. "Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free."

And after this, about the year four hundred and thirty, there was a remarkable conversion of the Burgundians to the christian faith. Now the gospel began to be propagated in Ireland; and the Irish, who till now heathen, began to receive the Christian faith. About the same time it was further propagated among some barbarous people in Scotland, and in some other places. In the next century, Zathus, a heathen king, who ruled over the Colchians, was brought to renounce his heathenism, and to embrace the Christian religion. Several other barbarous nations are recorded to have renounced heathenism and embraced Christianity about this time, that I cannot stand to mention. – Thus I have briefly considered die principal events of Providence which concern the success of the gospel of Christ from Constantine to the rise of Antichrist.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 4

THE SUCCESS OF REDEMPTION FROM THE RISE OF ANTICHRIST TO THE REFORMATION.

I COME now to the darkest and most dismal day that ever the Christian church saw, and probably the darkest that ever it will see; from the rise of Antichrist till the Reformation by Luther and others. The true church in this space was for many hundred years in a state of great obscurity; like the woman in the wilderness, she was almost hid from sight and observation. In speaking of the events of this space of time, I would,

1. Take notice of the great machinations and works of Satan against the kingdom of Christ,

2. How the church of Christ was upheld during this time.

1. I would take notice of the great machinations and works of Satan against the kingdom of Christ during this time. Satan had done great things against the Christian church before, but had been baffled once and again. Michael and his angels had obtained a glorious victory flow terrible was his opposition during the continuance of he heathen empire, and how glorious was Christ's victory and triumph over him in the time of Constantine! It pleased God now to prepare the way for a Yet more glorious victory over him, he is suffered to renew his strength, and to do the utmost that his power and subtlety can effect. He has a long time to lay his schemes, to establish his

interest, and make his matters strong. God suffers him to carry his designs a great length indeed, almost to the swallowing up of his church, and to exercise a high, proud, and almost uncontrolled dominion in the world, a long time before Christ-finally conquers, and utterly ruins his visible kingdom. This he will do in the time of the destruction of Antichrist: thus gloriously triumphing over Satan, after he has done to the utmost of his power and subtlety; after he has lifted himself highest of all, and dealt most proudly.

The two great works of the devil, in this space of time, against the kingdom of Christ, are his creating his Anti-Christian and Mahometan kingdoms, which both together comprehend the ancient Roman empire, the kingdom of Antichrist the Western, and the Mahometan kingdom the Eastern, empire. As the Scriptures in the book of Revelation represent it, it is in the destruction of these that the glorious victory of Christ, at the introduction of the glorious times of the church, will mainly consist. And here let us briefly observe how Satan erects and maintains these two great kingdoms of his in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

1. With respect to the kingdom of Antichrist! This seems to be the masterpiece of all the contrivances of the devil against the kingdom of Christ, and is evidently so spoken of in Scripture. Antichrist is that man of sin, (2 Thessalonians 2:3.) emphatically, as though he were so eminently. He is called Antichrist, which signifies the opponent or adversary of Christ, not because he is the only opponent of Christ, for the apostle John observes, that in his days there were many Antichrists. But yet this is called the Antichrist, as though there were none but he, because he was so eminently, and above all others. So this contrivance of the devil; is called the mystery of iniquity, 2 Thessalonians 2:7. We find no enemy of Christ one half so much spoken of in the prophecies of Revelation as this, and the destruction of no enemy is spoken of as so glorious, and so happy for the church.

This is a contrivance to turn the ministry of the Christian church into a ministry of the devil, and the angels of the churches into fallen angels. In the tyranny, superstition, idolatry, and persecution, which he sets up; he contrives to make an image of ancient paganism, and more than to restore what was lost by the overthrow of Paganism in the time of Constantine. By these means, the head of the beast, which was wounded unto death in Constantine, has his deadly wound healed in Antichrist, Revelation 13:3. And the dragon,

that formerly reigned in the heathen Roman empire, being cast out thence, after the beast with seven heads and ten horns rises up out of the sea, gives him his power, and seat, and great authority; and all the world wonders after the beast.

I am far from pretending to determine the time when the reign of Antichrist began, which is a point that has been so much controverted among divines and expositors. It is certain that the twelve hundred and sixty days, or years, which are so often in Scripture mentioned as the time of the continuance of Antichrist's reign, did not commence before the year of Christ four hundred and seventy-nine; because if they did, they would have ended, and Antichrist would have Mien before now. The rise of Antichrist was gradual. The christian church corrupted itself in many things presently after Constantine's time; growing more and more superstitions in its worship, and by degrees bringing in many ceremonies into the worship of God, till at length they brought in the worship of saints, and set up images in their churches. The clergy in general, and especially the bishop of Rome, assumed more and more authority to himself. In the primitive times, he was only a minister of a congregation, then a standing moderator of a presbytery, then a diocesan bishop, then a metropolitan, which is equivalent to an archbishop, then a patriarch. Afterwards he claimed the power of universal bishop over the whole Christian church, wherein he was opposed for a while, but afterwards was confirmed in it by the civil power of the emperor in the year six hundred and six. After that he claimed the power of a temporal prince, and so was wont to carry two swords, to signify that both the temporal and spiritual sword was his. He claimed more and more authority, till at length, as Christ's vicegerent on earth, he claimed the very same power that Christ would have done, if he was present on earth reigning on his throne; or the same power that belongs to God, and was used to be called God on earth; to be submitted to by all the princes of Christendom. He claimed power to crown princes, and to degrade them at his pleasure, and this power was owned: yea, kings and emperors used to kiss his feet. The emperors received their crowns at his hands; and princes were wont to dread the displeasure of the pope, as they would dread a thunderbolt from heaven. If the pops was pleased to excommunicate a prince, all his subjects were at once freed from their allegiance to him, and obliged not to own him any more, on pain of

excommunication, and not only so, but any man might kill him wherever him. Further, the pope was believed to have power to damn men at pleasure, for whoever died under his excommunication, was looked upon as certainly damned. Several emperors were actually deposed, and ejected, and died miserably by his means, and if the people of any state or kingdom did not please him, he had power to lay that state or kingdom under an interdict which was a sentence pronounced by the pope against that state or kingdom, whereby all sacred administrations among them could have no validity. There could be no valid baptisms, or sacraments, or prayers, or preaching, or pardons, till that interdict was taken off, so that that people remained, in their apprehension, in a miserable, damnable state, and therefore dreaded it as they would a storm of fire and brimstone from heaven. And in order to execute his wrath on a prince or people with whom he was displeased, other princes must also be put to a great deal of trouble and expense.

And as the pope and his clergy robbed the people of their ecclesiastical and civil liberties and privileges, so they also robbed them of their estates, drained all christendom of their money. They engrossed most of their riches into their own coffers, by vast revenues, besides pay for pardons and indulgences, baptisms and extreme unctions, deliverance out of purgatory, and a hundred other things. – See how well this agrees with the prophecies, 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. Daniel 7:20, 21. Revelation 13:6, 7. and chapter 17:3,4.

During this time also superstition and ignorance more and more prevailed. The if Holy Scriptures by degrees were taken out of the hands of the laity, the better to promote the unscriptural and wicked designs of the pope and the clergy; and instead of promoting knowledge among the people, they industriously promoted ignorance. It was a received maxim among them, That ignorance is the mother of devotion: and so great was the darkness of those times, that learning. was almost extinct in the world. The very priests themselves, most of them, were barbarously ignorant as to any commendable reaming, or any other knowledge, than their hellish craft in oppressing and tyrannizing over the souls of the people. The superstition and wickedness of the church of Rome, kept growing worse and worse till the very time of the Reformation, and the whole Christianity world were led away into this great defection, excepting the remains of the Christian church in the Eastern empire that had not been utterly overthrown by the Turks. The Greek church,

and some others, were also sunk into great darkness and gross superstition, excepting also those few that were the people of God, who are represented by the woman in the wilderness, and God's two witnesses, of which more hereafter.-This is one of those two great kingdoms which the devil in this period erected in opposition to the kingdom of Christ, and was the greatest and chief.

2. The Mahometan kingdom is another of mighty power and vast extent, set up by Satan against the kingdom of Christ. He set this up in the Eastern empire, as he did that of Antichrist in the Western.

Mahomet was born in the year of Christ five hundred and seventy, in Arabia. When he was about forty years of age, he began to boast that he was the great prophet of God and proceeded to teach his new-invented religion, of which he was to be worshipped as the head next under God. He published his Alcoran, which he pretended he received from the angel Gabriel; and being a subtle crafty man, possessed of considerable wealth, and living among a people who were very ignorant, and greatly divided in their opinions on religious matters, he by subtlety and fair promises of a sensual paradise, gained a number to be his followers. He set up for their prince, and propagated his religion by the sword, and made it meritorious of paradise to fight for him. By such means his party grew, and went on fighting till they conquered and brought over the neighbouring countries, and so his party gradually increased till they overran a great part of the world. First, the Saracens were some of his followers, who were a people of Arabia, where Mahomet lived, and who about the year seven hundred, dreadfully wasted the Roman empire. – They overran a great many countries belonging to the empire. and continued their conquests a long time. These are supposed to be meant by the locusts mentioned in the 9th chapter of Revelation.

And then the Turks, who were originally different from the Saracens, became followers of Mahomet, and conquered all the Eastern empire. They began their empire about the year of Christ twelve hundred and ninety-six; began to invade Europe in the year thirteen hundred; took Constantinople, and so became masters of all the Eastern empire, in the year fourteen hundred and fifty-three. And thus all the cities and countries where stood those famous churches of which we read in the New Testament, as Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, etc. now became subject to the Turks. These are supposed

to be prophesied of by the horsemen in the 9th chapter of Revelation, beginning with the 15th verse. And the remains of the Christians in those parts of the world, who are mostly of the Greek church, are in miserable slavery under these Turks are treated with a great deal of barbarity and cruelty, and are become mostly very ignorant and superstitious.

Thus I have shown what great works of Satan were wrought during this space of time in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

II. I come now to show how the church of Christ was upheld through this dark time.

1. It is to be observed, that towards the former part of this space of time, some of the nations of Christendom held out a lone time before they complied with the corruption's and usurpations of the church of Rome. Though all the world wondered after the beast, yet all nations did not fall in at once. Many of the principal corruptions of the church of Rome were brought in with a great deal of struggle and opposition; and particularly, when the pope gave out, that he was universal bishop, many churches greatly opposed him in it; and it was a long time before they would yield to his exorbitant claims. And so, when the worship of images was first brought into the churches, there were many who greatly opposed it, and long held out against it. And so with respect to other corruptions of the church of Rome. Those who dwelt nearer to the city of Rome complied sooner; but some that were more remote, were a long time before they could be induced to put their necks under the yoke: and particularly a great part of the churches in England, Scotland, and France, retained the ancient purity of doctrine and worship much longer than many others who were nearer the chief seat of Antichrist.

2. In every age of this dark time, there appeared particular persons in all parts of Christendom, who bore a testimony against the corruptions and tyranny of the church of Rome. There is no one age of Antichrist, even in the darkest times, but ecclesiastical historians mention many by name who manifested an abhorrence of the pope, and his idolatrous worship, and pleaded for the ancient purity of doctrine and worship. God was pleased to maintain an uninterrupted succession of many witnesses through the whole time, in Germany, France, Britain, and other countries; private persons and ministers,

some magistrates and persons of great distinction. – And there were numbers in every age who were persecuted and put to death for this testimony.

3. Besides these particular persons dispersed, there was a certain People called the Waldenses, who lived separate from all the rest of the world, and constantly bore a testimony against the church of Rome through all this dark time The place where they dwelt was the Vaudois, or the five valleys of Piedmont, a very mountainous country, between Italy and France; it was compassed about with those exceeding high mountains, the Alps, which were almost impassable, and therefore the valleys were almost inaccessible. There this people lived for many ages, in a state of a separation from all the world, having very little to do with any other people And there they served God in the ancient purity of his worship, and never submitted to the church of Rome. This probably was the place especially meant in the 12th chapter of Revelation, 6th verse, as prepared of God for the woman, that they should feed her there during the reign of Antichrist.

Some of the popish writers themselves own, that this people never submitted to the church of Rome. One of the popish writers, speaking of the Waldenses, says, The heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy in the world. It is supposed that they first betook themselves to this place among the mountains, to hide themselves from the severity of the heathen persecutions which existed before Constantine the Great. And thus the woman fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent, Revelation 12:6, 14. "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place: where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." The people being settled there, their posterity continued from age to age: and being, as it were, by natural walls, as well as by God's grace, separated horn the rest of the world, they never partook of the overflowing corruption.

These especially were those virgins who were not defiled, when other churches prostituted themselves; but they kept themselves pure for Christ alone. They followed the Lamb, their spiritual husband, whithersoever he went: they followed him into this hideous wilderness, Revelation 14:4, 5. – Their doctrine and worship appear to be the same with the Protestant doctrine and worship; and by the confession of popish writers, they were a people remarkable for the strictness of their lives, for charity and other christian

virtues. They lived in external poverty in this hideous country; but they chose this rather than comply with the great corruptions of the rest of the world.

Living in so secret a place, it was a long time before they were noticed. But at last, falling under observation, the Romanists went out in mighty armies against them, fell upon them with insatiable cruelty, barbarously massacring and putting to death men, women, and children, with all imaginable tortures. Their enemies continued persecuting them with but little intermission for several hundred years; by which means many were driven out of the valleys of Piedmont. These fled into all parts of Europe, carrying with them their doctrine, to which many were brought overse Their persecutors could not by all their cruelties extirpate the church of God; so fulfilling his word, "that the gates of hell should not prevail against it."

4. Towards the latter part of this dark time, several noted divines openly appeared to defend the truth, and bear testimony against the corruptions of the church of Rome. – The first and principal of these was a certain English divine, John Wickliff, who appeared about one hundred and forty years before the Reformation, he strenuously opposed the popish religion, taught the same doctrine that the Reformers afterwards did, and had many followers in England. He was hotly persecuted in his lifetime, yet died in peace, but after he was buried, his bones were dug up by his persecutors, and bums. His followers remained in considerable numbers in England till the Reformation; they were cruelly persecuted, and multitudes were put to death for their religion.

Wickliff had many disciples, not only in England, but in other parts of Europe, whither his books were carried and particularly in Bohemia, among whom were two eminent divines, John Huss and Jerom, a divine of Prague, the chief city of Bohemia. These strenuously Opposed the church of Rome, and had many who adhered to them. They were both burnt by the papists, for their doctrine and their followers in Bohemia were cruelly persecuted, but never extirpated all the Reformation.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 5

THE SUCCESS OF REDEMPTION FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

THUS having gone through the dark time of the church, I come now to consider that part which begins with the Reformation, and reaches to the present time. And here I would,

1. Speak of the Reformation itself;
2. The opposition which the devil has made to the Reformed church;
3. What success there has lately been of the gospel in one place and another;
4. What the state of things is now in the world with regard to the church of Christ, and the success of his purchase.

I. The first thing to be taken notice of is the Reformation itself: This was begun in Germany, about the Year fifteen hundred and fifteen, by the preaching of Martin Luther, who being stirred in his spirit to see the horrid practices of the popish clergy – and having set himself diligently to inquire after truth by the study of the Holy Scriptures, and the writings of the ancient father of the church – very openly and boldly decried the corruptions and usurpations of the Romish church in his preaching and writings. He had soon a great number who fell in with him; among whom was the Elector of Saxony, the sovereign prince of the country to which he belonged. This

greatly alarmed the church of Rome, it rallied all its force to oppose him and his doctrine, and fierce wars and persecutions were raised against it. But yet it went on by the labours of Luther and Mehus in Germany Zuinglius in Switzerland, and other eminent divines, who were contemporary with Luther; particularly Calvin, who appeared after the beginning of the Reformation, but was one of the most eminent reformers.

Many of the princes of Germany soon fell in with the Reformed religion, and many other states and kingdoms in Europe, as England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark Norway, great part of France, Poland, Lithuania, Switzerland, and the Low Countries. So that it is thought, that heretofore about half Christendom were of the Protestant religion, though since, the papists have gained ground: so that the Protestant's now have not so great a proportion.

Thus God began gloriously to revive his church again, and advance the kingdom of his Son, after such a dismal night of darkness from the rise of Antichrist to that time. There had been many endeavours used by the witnesses for the truth for a reformation before. But now, when God's appointed time was come, his work went on with a swift and wonderful progress; and Antichrist, who had been rising higher and higher from his beginning till that time, was swiftly and suddenly brought down; he fell half way towards utter ruin, and never has been able to rise again to his former height. A certain late expositor, (Mr. Lowman,) who explains the five first vials in the 16th chapter of Revelation with greater probability perhaps than any who went before him, explains the fifth vial, which was poured out on the seat of the beast, of what came to pass in the Reformation; having explained the four preceding vials of certain great judgments which God brought on the popish dominions before the Reformation. It is said, Revelation 16:10. that "the fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the beast;" in the original, it is the throne of the beast, "and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." He poured out his vial upon the throne of the beast, i.e. on the authority sold dominion of the pope: so the word throne is often used in Scripture; so 1 Kings 1:37. "As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my Lord King David," i.e. make his dominion and authority greater, and his

kingdom more glorious.

But now, in the Reformation, the vials of God's wrath were poured out on the throne of the beast, till it was terribly shaken and diminished. The pope's authority and dominion was so greatly diminished, both as to extent and degree, that he lost about half his dominions, besides that authority, even in popish dominions, which he had before He is not regarded, and his power is dreaded in no measure as it was wont to be. The powers of Europe have learned not to put their necks under He pope's feet. He is as a lion that has lost his teeth, in comparison of what he was once. And when the pope and his clergy, enraged to see their authority so diminished at the Reformation, laid their heads together, and joined their forces to destroy the Reformation; their policy, which was wont to serve them so well, failed. They found their kingdom full of darkness, so that they could do nothing, any more than the Egyptians, who rose not from their seats for three days. The Reformed church was defended as Lot and the angels were in Sodom, by smiting the Sodomites with darkness or blindness, so that they could not find the door. God then fulfilled that in Job 5:11, etc. "To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety. He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong. They meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the noon-day as in the night. But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty."-Those proud enemies of God's people being so disappointed, and finding themselves so unable to uphold their own dominion and authority, were made as it were to gnaw their tongues for pain, or to bite them for mere rage.

II. I proceed to show what opposition has been made by Satan and his adherents, to this success of Christ's purchase by the Reformation observing as we go along, how far they have been baffled, and how far they have been successful.

The opposition which Satan has made against the Reformed religion has been principally of the following kinds viz. that which was made, 1. by a general council of the church of Rome; 2. by secret plots and devices, 3. by open wars and invasions; 4. by cruel oppression and persecution, and, 5. by bringing in corrupt opinions.

1. The first opposition that I shall notice is that which was made by the clergy of the church of Rome in a general council. This was the famous council of Trent, which the pope called a little while after the Reformation. In that council, there met together six cardinals, thirty-two archbishops, two hundred and twenty-eight bishops, besides innumerable others of the Romish clergy. This council, in all their sittings, including the times of intermission, was held for twenty-five years together. Their main business all this while was to concert measures for establishing the church of Rome against the reformers and for destroying the Reformation. But it proved that they were not able to perform their enterprise. The Reformed church, notwithstanding their great council, remained, and still remains. So that the council of the froward is carried headlong: their kingdom is full of darkness, and they weary themselves to find the door.

Thus the church of Rome, instead of repenting of their deeds, when such clear light was held forth to them by Luther and other servants of God, persisted, by general agreement in council, in their vile corruptions and wickedness, and obstinate opposition to the kingdom of Christ. The doctrines and practices of the church of Rome, which were chiefly condemned by the Reformed, were confirmed by the decrees of their council; and the corruptions, in many respect, were carried higher than ever before. They uttered blasphemous reproaches and curses against the Reformed religion, and all the Reformed church was excommunicated and anathematized by them. According to the prophecy, they blasphemed God. Thus God hardened their hearts, [i. e: left them to do so,] intending to destroy them.

2. The papists have often endeavoured to overthrow the Reformation by secret plots and conspiracies. There were many plots against the life of Luther. The papists were contriving to dispatch him out of their way; and he, being a very bold man, often very much exposed himself in the cause of Christ: but yet they were wonderfully prevented from hurting him, and he at last died in his bed in peace. There have been innumerable schemes secretly laid for the overthrow of the Protestant religion; one of the most considerable, and which seemed to be the most likely to have taken effect, was that in the time of King James II. of England. There was at that time a strong conspiracy between the king of England and Lewis XIV: of France, who were both papists, to extirpate the Northern heresy, as they called the

Protestant religion, not only out of England, but out of all Europe; and they had laid their schemes so, that they seemed to be almost sure of their purpose. They looked upon it, that if the Reformed religion were suppressed in the British realms, and in the Netherlands which were the strongest and chief defence of the Protestant interest, they should have easy work with the rest. And just as their matters seemed to be come to a head, and their enterprise ripe for execution, God in his providence, suddenly dashed all their schemes in pieces by the Revolution, at the comma in of King William and Queen Mary, by which all their designs were at an end. Now the Protestant interest was more strongly established, by the crown of England being transferred to the Protestant house of Hanover, and a papist being, by the constitution of the nation, for ever rendered incapable of wearing the crown of England. Thus they groped in darkness at noon-day as in the night, and their hands could not perform their enterprise, and their kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.

After this, there was a deep design laid to bring the same thing to pass in the latter end of Queen Anne's reign, by the bringing in of the popish Pretender; which was no less suddenly and totally baffled by Divine Providence; as all the plots against the Reformation by bringing in the Pretender have been.

3. The Reformation has often been opposed by open wars and invasions. The emperor of Germany declared war with the duke of Saxony, and the principal men who favoured and received Luther's doctrine. But they could not obtain their end; they could not suppress the Reformation For the same end, some time after, the king of Spain maintained a long war with Holland and the Low Countries But those cruel wars issued greatly to the disadvantage of the Romish church, as they occasioned the setting up of one of the most powerful Protestant states in Europe. The design of the Spanish invasion of England in Queen Elizabeth's time, was to suppress and root out the Reformed religion; and therefore they brought in their fleet all manner of instruments of cruelty wherewith to torture the Protestant who would not renounce the Protestant religion. But their design was totally baffled, and their mighty fleet in a great measure ruined.

4. Satan has opposed the Reformation with cruel persreutions. The persecutions with which the protestants have been harassed by the church of

Rome, have in many respects been far beyond any of the heathen persecutions. So that Antichrist has proved the greatest and most cruel enemy to the church of Christ that ever was in the world, in this, as well as in all other respect; agreeable to the description given of the church of Rome,

"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." (Revelation 17:6)

And, chapter 18:24. "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all them that were slain upon the earth."

The heathen persecutions had been very dreadful: but now persecution by the church of Rome was improved, and studied, and cultivated, as an art or science. Such ways of afflicting and tormenting were found out, as are beyond the invention of ordinary men, or men unstudied in those things: and beyond the invention of all former age And that persecution might be managed the more effectually, there were certain societies of men established in various parts of the popish domimons, whose business it should be to study, and improve, and practice persecution in its highest perfection, viz. the courts of inquisition. The particular histories of the Romish persecution, and their courts of inquisition, will give that idea which a few words cannot express.

When the Reformation began, the beast with seven beats and ten horns began to rage in a dreadful manner. The church of Rome renewed its persecution of the poor Waldenses, and great multitudes of them were cruelly tortured and put to death. Soon after the Reformation, there were terrible persecutions in various parts of Germany, and especially in Bohemia, which lasted for thirty years together; in which so much blood was shed for the sake of religion, that a certain writer compares it to the plenty of waters of the great rivers of Germany. The countries of Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary, were in like manner deterred with Protestant blood.

By means of these and other cruel persecutions, the Protestant religion was in a great measure suppressed in Bohemia, the Palatinate, and Hungary, which before were Protestant countries. Thus was fulfilled what was fore told of the

little horn, Daniel 7:20, 21. "-and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke very great shins whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them." And what was foretold of the beast having seven heads and ten horns,

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to over come them; and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues, and nations." (Revelation 13:7)

Holland and the other Low Countries were for many years a scene of nothing but the most affecting and amazing cruelties, being deluged with the blood of Protestants. under the merciless hands of the Spaniards, to whom they were then in subjection. But in this persecution the devil in a great measure failed of his purpose, as it issued in a great part of the Netherlands casting off the Spanish yoke, and setting up a wealthy and powerful protestant state, to the great defence of the Protestant cause ever since.

France is also another country, which since the Reformation, in some respects, perhaps more than any other, has been a scene of dreadful cruelties suffered by the Protestant. After many cruelties had been exercised towards the Protestants in that kingdom, there was begun a persecution of them in the year fifteen hundred and seventy-one, in the reign of Charles IX. king of France. It began with a cruel massacre, wherein seventy thousand Protestants were slain in a few days, as the king boasted: and in all this persecution, he slew, as is supposed, three hundred thousand martyrs. And it is reckoned, that about this time, within thirty years, there were martyred in this kingdom, for the protestant religion, thirty-nine princes, one hundred and forty-eight counts, two hundred and thirty-four barons, one hundred and forty-seven thousand five hundred and eighteen gentlemen, and seven hundred and sixty thousand common people.

But all these persecutions were, for exquisite cruelty, far exceeded by those which followed in the reign of Lewis XIV. which indeed are supposed to exceed all others and being long continued, by reason of the long feign of

that king, they almost wholly extirpated the protestant religion out of that kingdom, where had flourished a multitude of famous protestant churches all over the kingdom. Thus it was given to the beast to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.

There was also a terrible persecution in England in Queen Mary's time, wherein great numbers in all parts of the kingdom were burnt alive. And after this, though the protestant religion has been for the most part established by law in England, yet there have been very severe persecutions by the high-churchmen, who symbolize in many things with the papists. Such was that which occasioned our forefathers to flee from their native country, and to come and settle in this land, which was then a hideous howling wilderness. And these persecutions were continued with little intermission till King William came to the throne.

Scotland has also been the scene, for many years together, of cruelties and blood by the hands of high-churchmen, such as came very little short of the popish persecution in Queen Mary's days, and in many things much exceeded it, which continued till they were delivered by King William.

Ireland also has been as it were overwhelmed with protestant blood. In the days of King Charles I. of England, above two hundred thousand Protestants were cruelly murdered in that kingdom in a few days, the papists, by a secret agreement, rising at an appointed time, intending to kill every protestant in the kingdom at once.

Besides these, there have been very cruel persecutions in Italy, and Spain, and other places, which I shall not stand to relate. – Thus did the devil, and his great minister Antichrist, rage with such violence and cruelty against the church of Christ I and thus did the whore of Babylon make herself drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus! By these persecutions the protestant church has been much diminished. have they not been able to prevail; but still the protestant church is upheld and Christ fulfils his promise, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

5. The last kind of opposition that Satan has made to the Reformation is by corrupt opinions. The first opposition of this kind was by the sect of the Anabaptists, which began about four or five years after the Reformation itself. This sect, as it first appeared in Germany, were vastly more

extravagant than the present Anabaptists are in England. They held a great many exceeding corrupt opinions. One tenet of theirs was, that there ought to be no civil authority, and that it was lawful to rebel against it. And on this principle, they refused to submit to magistrates, or any human laws, and gathered together in vast armies, to defend themselves against their civil rulers, and put all Germany into an uproar, and so kept it for some time.

The next opposition of this kind to the Reformation was that which was made by enthusiasts. Those are called enthusiasts who falsely pretend to be inspired by the Holy Ghost as the prophet' were. These began in Germany about ten years after Luther began the Reformation; and there arose various sects of them who were exceeding wild and extravagant. The followers of these are the Quakers in England, and other parts of the British dominions.

The next to these were the Socinians, who had their beginning chiefly in Poland, by the teaching of Lalius Socinus and Faustus Socinus. They held, that Christ was a mere man, and denied Christ's satisfaction and most of the fundamental doctrines of the christian religion. Their heresy has since been greatly propagated among protestants in Poland, Germany, Holland, England, and other places.

After these arose the Arminians. They take their name from a Dutchman, whose name was Jacobus Van Harmin, which, turned into Latin, is called Jacobus Arminius; and from his name the whole sect are called Arminians. This Jacobus Arminius was first a minister at Amsterdam, and then a professor of divinity in the university of Leyden. He had many followers in Holland. There was upon this a synod of all the reformed churches called together, who met at Dort in Holland. The synod of Dort condemned them; but yet they spread and prevailed. They began to prevail in England in the reign of Charles I. especially in the church of England. The church of England divines before that were almost universally Calvinists: but since that, Arminianism has gradually more and more prevailed, till they are become almost universally Arminians. And not only so, but Arminianism has greatly prevailed among the dissenters, and has spread greatly in New England, as well as Old.

Since this, Arianism has been revived. Arianism, a little after Constantine's time, almost swallowed up the Christian world, like a flood out of the mouth

of the serpent which threatened to swallow up the woman. And of late years, this heresy has been revived in England, and greatly prevails there, both in the church of England, and among dissenters. These hold, that Christ is but a mere creature, though they grant that he is the greatest of all creature."

Another thing which has of late exceedingly prevailed among Protestants, and especially in England, is deism. The deists wholly cast off the Christian religion, and are professed infidels. Indeed they own the being of God but deny any revealed religion, or any word of God at all; and say that God has given mankind no other light to walk by but their own reason. With these opinions our nation, which is the principal nation of the Reformation, is very much overrun, and they prevail more and more. Thus much concerning the opposition that Satan has made against the Reformation.

III. I proceed to show what face the gospel has had in these later times of the Reformed church. This success may be reduced to three heads: 1.

Reformation in doctrine and worship in countries called Christian; 2.

Propagation of the gospel among the heathen; 3. Revival of religion in the power and practice of it.

1. As to the first, viz. reformation in doctrine, the most considerable success of late has been in the empire of Muscovy, which is a country of vast extent. The people I of this country, so many of them as call themselves Christians, professed to be of the Greek church; but were barbarously ignorant, and very superstitious, till of late years. Their late emperor, Peter the Great, set himself to reform his dominions, took great pains to bring them out of their darkness, and to have them instructed in religion. To that end, he set up schools of learning, ordered the Bible to be printed in the language of the country, made a law that every family should keep the Holy Scriptures in their houses, that every person should be able to read the same, and that no person should be allowed to marry till they were able to read the Scriptures. He also reformed the churches of his country of many of their superstitions, whereby the religion professed and practiced in Muscovy is much nearer to that of the protestants than formerly it used to be. This emperor gave great encouragement to the exercise of the protestant religion in his dominions. And since that, Muscovy is become a land of light, in comparison of what it was fifty years past.

2. As to the second kind of success which the gospel has lately had, viz. its propagation among the heathen, I would take notice of three things.

(1.) The propagation of the gospel among the heathen here in America. This American continent, which is a very great part of the world, and, together with its neighbouring seas adjoining, takes up one side of the globe, was wholly unknown to all Christian nations till these latter times. It was not known that there was any such part of the world, though it was very full of people: and therefore the devil had this part of the world as it were secure to himself, out of the reach of the light of the gospel, and so out of the way of molestation in his dominion over them. Here the many nations of Indians worshipped him as God from age to Age, while the gospel was confined to the opposite side of the globe. It is probably supposed, from some remaining accounts, that the occasion of first peopling America was this; that the devil, being alarmed and surprised by the wonderful success of the gospel the first three hundred years after Christ, and by the downfall of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine-and seeing the gospel spread so fast, and fearing that his heathenish kingdom would be wholly overthrown through the world-led away a people from the other continent into America, that they might be quite out of the reach of the gospel, that here he might quietly possess them, and reign over them as their god.-Many writers intimate, that some of the Indian nations, when the Europeans first came into America, had a tradition among them, that their god first led them into this continent, and went before them in an ark.

However, it is certain that the devil did here quietly enjoy his dominion over the poor Indians for many ages. But in later times God has sent the gospel into these parts, and now the Christian church is set up here in New England, and in other parts of America, where before had been nothing but the grossest

heathenish darkness. Great part of America is now full of Bibles, and full of at least the form of the worship of the true God and Jesus Christ where the name of Christ before had not been heard of for many ages, if at all. And though there has been but a small propagation of the gospel among the heathen here in comparison of what were to be wished for; yet there has been something worthy of notice. – There was something remarkable in New England, both at first and of late, and in other parts of America among many Indians, of an inclination to be instructed in the Christian religion.

However small the propagation of the gospel among the heathen here in America has been hitherto; yet I think we may well look upon the discover of so great a part of the world, and bringing the gospel into it, as one thing by which Divine Providence is preparing the way for the future glorious times of the church, when Satan's kingdom shall be overthrown, throughout the whole habitable globe, on even side, and on all its continents. When those times come, then doubtless the gospel shall have glorious success, and all the inhabitants of this new-discovered world shall become subjects of the kingdom of Christ, as well as all the other ends of the earth. In all probability, Providence has so ordered it, that the mariner's compass (which is an invention of later times, men are enabled to sail over the widest ocean, when before they durst not venture far from land) should prove a preparation for what God intends to bring to pass in the glorious times of the church, viz. the sending forth the gospel wherever any of the children of men dwell, how far soever off, and however separated by wide oceans from those parts of the world which are already Christianized.

(2.) There has of late years been a very considerable propagation of the gospel among the heathen in the dominions of Muscovy. I have already observed the reformation which has lately been among those who are called Christian. there: but I now speak of the heathen. Great part of the vast dominions of the emperor of Muscovy are gross heathens. The greater part of Great Tartary, a heathen country, has in later times been brought under the Muscovite government; and there have been of late great numbers who have renounced their heathenism, and have embraced the Christian religion.

(3.) There has been lately a very considerable propagation of the Christian religion among the heathen in the East Indies, particularly, 243 many in Malabar have been brought over to the Christian protestant religion, chiefly

by the labours of certain missionaries sent thither to instruct them by the king of Denmark, who have brought over many heathens to the Christian faith, and have set up schools among them, and a printing-press to print Bibles and other books for their instruction, in their own language, with great success.

3. The last kind of success which I shall notice, is the revivals of the power and practice of religion. And here I shall take notice of but two instances.

(1.) There has been not long since a remarkable revival of the power and practice of religion in Germany, through the endeavours of an eminent divine there, Lust Herman Frank, professor of divinity at Halle in Saxony. Being a person of eminent charity, the great work that God wrought by him, began with his setting on foot a charitable design. It began only with his placing an almsbox at his study-door, into which some poor mites were thrown, whereby books were bought for the instruction of the poor. And God was pleased so wonderfully to smile on his design, and so to pour out a spirit of charity on that occasion, that he was enabled in a little time to erect public schools for the instruction of poor children, and an orphan-house for their supply and instruction. – At last, near five hundred children were maintained and instructed in learning and piety by the charity of others; and the number continued to increase more and more for many years. This was accompanied with a wonderful reformation and revival of religion, and a spirit of piety, in the city and university of Halle; and thus it continued. Which also had great influence in many other places in Germany. Their example seemed remarkably to stir up multitudes to their imitation.

(2.) Another thing, which it would be ungrateful in us not to notice, is that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God which has been of late in this part of New England, of which we, in this town, have had such a share. But it is needless for me particularly to describe it, seeing you have so lately been eye-witnesses of it, and I hope multitudes are sensible of the benefit. Thus I have mentioned the more remarkable instances of the success which the gospel has lately had in the world.

IV. I Proceed now to the last thing proposed to be considered, relating to the success of Christ's redemption during this space, viz. what is the present state of things now in the world, with regard to the church of Christ, and the success of his purchase. And this I would do, by showing how things are now

compared with the first times of the Reformation.-And,

1. I would show wherein the state of things is altered for the worse; and,

2. How it is altered for the better.

1. I would show wherein the state of things is altered from what it was in the beginning of the Reformation, for the worse; and it is so especially in these three respects.

(1.) The reformed church is much diminished. The Reformation, in former times, was supposed to take place through one half of Christendom, excepting the Greek church; or that there were as many Protestants as papists. But now it is not so, the protestant church is much diminished. Heretofore there have been multitudes of Protestants in France, many famous protestant churches were planted all over that country, who used to meet together in synods, and maintain a very regular discipline. The protestant church of France was a great part of the glory of the Reformation. But now it is far otherwise: this church is all broken and scattered, and there are now but very few protestant assemblies in all that kingdom. The protestant interest is also greatly diminished in Germany. There were formerly several sovereign protestant princes, whose successors are now papists, as, particularly the Elector Palatine, and the Elector of Saxony. The kingdom of Bohemia was formerly a protestant kingdom but is now in the hands of the papists. Hungary was formerly a protestant country, but the Protestants there have been greatly reduced, and in a great measure subdued, by persecutions. And the protestant interest has no way of late remarkably gained ground of the church of Rome.

(2.) Another thing wherein the state of things is altered for the worse compared with the former times of the Reformation, is the prevailing of licentiousness in principles and opinions. – There is not now that spirit of orthodoxy which then prevailed: there is very little appearance of zeal for the mysterious and spiritual doctrines of Christianity; and they never were so held in contempt, as they are in the present age; and especially in England, the principal kingdom of the Reformation. In this kingdom, those principles on which the power of godliness depends, are in a great measure exploded, and Arianism, Socinianism, Arminianism) and Deism, prevail, and carry almost all before them. History gives no account of any age wherein there

was so great an infidel apostacy of those who had been brought up under the light of the gospel; never was there such a disavowal of all revealed religion; never any age wherein there was so much scoffing at and ridiculing the gospel of Christ by those who have been brought up under the gospel-light.

(3.) Another thing wherein things are altered for the worse, is, that there is much less of the prevalence of the power of godliness, than there was at the beginning of the Reformation. A glorious out-pouring of the Spirit of God accompanied the first Reformation, not only to convert multitudes in so short a time from popery to the true religion, but to turn many to God and true godliness. But now there is an exceeding great decay of vital piety, Yea it seems to be despised, called enthusiasm, and fanaticism. These who are truly religious, are commonly looked upon to be beside their right mind, and vice and profaneness dreadfully prevail, like a flood which threatens to bear down all before it. – But I proceed now to show,

2. In what respects things are altered for the latter from what they were in the first Reformation.

(1.) The power and influence of the pope is much diminished. Although, since the former times of the Reformation, he has gained ground in extent of dominion; yet he has lost in degree of influence. The vial which in the beginning of the Reformation was poured out on the throne of the beast, to the great diminishing of his power and authority in the world, has continued running ever since. The pope, soon after the Reformation, became less regarded by the princes of Europe than he had been before; and so he has been since less and less. Many of the popish princes themselves seem now to regard him very little more than they think will serve their own designs; of which there have been several remarkable proofs and instances of late.

(2.) There is far less persecution now than there was in the first times of the Reformation. Some parts of the protestant church are at this day under persecution, and so probably will he till the day of the church's suffering and travail is at an end, which will not be till the fall of Antichrist. But it is now in no measure as it was heretofore. There does not seem to be the same Spirit of persecution prevailing, it is become more out of fashion even among the popish princes. The wickedness of the enemies of Christ, and the opposition against his cause, seem to run in another channel. The humour now is to

despise and laugh at all religion; and there seems to be a spirit of indifferency about it. However, so far the state of things is better than it has been, that there is so much less of persecution.

3. There is a great increase of learning. In the dark times of popery, before the Reformation, learning was so far decayed, that the world seemed to be overrun with barbarous ignorance. Their very priests were many of them grossly ignorant. Learning began to revive with the Reformation, owing very much to the art of printing which was invented a little before this period. Since then, learning has increased more and more, and at this day is undoubtedly raised to a vastly greater height than ever it was before: and though no good use is made of it by the greater part of learned men, yet the increase of learning in itself is a thing to be rejoiced in, because it is a good, and, if duly applied, an excellent handmaid to divinity. It is a talent which, if God gives men a heart, affords them great advantage to do great things for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and the good of the souls of men. That learning and knowledge should greatly increase before the glorious times seems to be foretold, Daniel 12:4. "But thou, O Daniel shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." And however little now learning is applied to the advancement of religion; yet we may hope that the days are approaching wherein God will make great use of it for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

God in his providence now seems to be acting over again the same part which he did a little before Christ came. When Christ came into the world, learning greatly prevailed, and yet wickedness never prevailed more than then. God was pleased to suffer human learning to come to such a height before he sent forth the gospel into the world, that the world might see the insufficiency of all their own wisdom for the obtaining the knowledge of God, without the gospel of Christ, and the teaching of his Spirit. When, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. And when the gospel came to prevail first without the help of man's wisdom, then God was pleased to make use of learning as a handmaid. So now, learning is at a great height in the world, far beyond what it was in the age when Christ appeared; and now the world, by their learning and wisdom, do not know God and they seem to wander in

darkness, are miserably deluded, stumble and fall in matters of religion, as in midnight darkness. Trusting to their learning, they grope in the day-time as in the night. Learned men are exceedingly divided in their opinions concerning the matters of religion, running into all manner of corrupt opinions, pernicious and foolish errors. They scorn to submit their reason to divine revelation, to believe any thing that is above their comprehension; and so being wise in their own eyes, they become fools, and even vain in their imaginations; they turn the truth of God into a lie, and their foolish hearts are darkened. See Romans 1:21, etc.

But yet when God has sufficiently shown men the insufficiency of human wisdom and learning for the purposes of religion, and when the appointed time comes for that glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God, when he will himself by his own immediate influence enlighten men's minds, then may we hope that God will make use of the great increase of learning as a handmaid of religion, as a means of the glorious advancement of the kingdom of his Son. Then shall human learning be subservient to the understanding of the Scriptures, and to a clear explanation and a glorious defense of the doctrines of Christianity. And there is no doubt, that God in his providence has of late given the world the art of printing, and such a great increase of learning, to prepare for what he designs to accomplish for his church in the approaching days of its prosperity. And thus the wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just, Proverbs 13:22.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 6

IMPROVEMENT OF PAST EVENTS.

HAVING now shown how the work of redemption has been carried on from the fall of man to the present time, before I proceed any further, I would make some APPLICATION.

I. From what has been said, we may see great evidence of the truth of the Christian religion, and that the Scriptures are the word of God. There are three arguments of this, which may be drawn from what has been said.

1. It may be argued from that violent and inveterate opposition there has always appeared of the wickedness of the world against this religion. The religion that the church of God has professed from the first, has always been the same. Though the dispensations have been altered, yet the religion which the church has professed has always, as to its essentials, been the same. The church of God, from the beginning, has been one society. The Christian church is manifestly the same society continued that was before Christ came; grafted on the same root, built on the same foundation. The revelation on which both have depended, is essentially the same: for as the Christian church is built on the Holy Scriptures, so was the Jewish church. Though now the Scriptures are enlarged by the addition of the New Testament, still it is essentially the same revelation with that which was given in the Old Testament. Only the subjects of divine revelation are now more clearly revealed in the New Testament than they were in the Old. The sum of both the Old Testament and New, is Christ and his redemption. The ground-work

of the religion of the church of God, both before and since Christ has appeared, is the same great scheme of redemption by the Son of God. The church that was before the Israelitish church, was still the same society, and it was essentially the same religion that was professed and practiced in it. Thus it was from Noah to Abraham, and thus it was before the flood, for this also was built on the foundation of those revelations of Christ which were given to Adam, and Enoch. So that the church of God has always been built on those divine revelations, and were always essentially the same, and they are summarily comprehended in the Holy Scriptures. Ever since Moses's time the church has been built on the Scriptures themselves.

So that the opposition which has been made to the church of God in all ages, has always been against the same religion, and the same revelation. Now therefore the violent and perpetual opposition that has ever been made by the corruption and wickedness of mankind against this church, is a strong argument of the truth of this religion, and this revelation, upon which this church has always been built. Contraries are well argued one from another. We may well and safely argue, that a thing is good, according to the degree of opposition in which it stands to evil, or the degree in which evil opposes it, and is an enemy to it. Now it is evident by the things which you have heard concerning the church of Christ, and that holy religion of Jesus Christ which it has professed, that the wickedness of the world has had a perpetual hatred to it, and has made most violent opposition against it.

That the church of God has always met with great opposition in the world, none can deny. This is plain by profane history as far as that reaches, and before that divine history gives us the same account. The church of God, its religion and worship, began to be opposed in the time of Cain and Abel, and was so when the earth was filled with violence in Noah's time. After this, how was the church opposed in Egypt! and how was Israel always hated by the nations round about, agreeable to Jeremiah 12:9.

"Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her."

And after the Babylonish captivity, how was this church persecuted by

Antiochus Epiphanes and others! How was Christ persecuted when he was on earth! and how were the apostles and other Christians persecuted by the Jews, before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans! How violent were that people against the church I and how dreadful was the opposition of the heathen world against the Christian church after this before Constantine! How great was their spite against the true religion I And since that, how yet more violent, and spiteful, and cruel, has been the opposition of Antichrist against the church!

There is no other such instance of opposition. History gives no account of any other body of men that have been so hated, and so maliciously and insatiably pursued and persecuted, nor any thing like it. No other religion ever was so maligned age after age. The nations of other professions have enjoyed their religions in peace and quietness, however they have differed from their neighbours. One nation has worshipped one sort of gods, and others another without molesting or disturbing one another about it. All the spite and opposition has been against this religion, which the church of Christ has professed. All other religions have seemed to show an implacable enmity to this; and men have seemed to have, from one age to another, such a spite against it, that they have seemed as though they could never satisfy their cruelty. They put their inventions upon the rack to find out torments that should be cruel enough; and Yet, after all, never seemed to be satisfied. Their thirst has never been satisfied with blood.

So that it is out of doubt, that this religion, and these Scriptures, have always been malignantly opposed in the world. The only question that remains is, what it is that has made this opposition? whether or not it has been good or bad? whether it be the wickedness and corruption of the world, or not, that has done this? But of this there can be no greater doubt than that of the other, if we consider how causeless this cruelty has always been, who the opposers have been, and the manner in which they have opposed. The opposition has chiefly been from heathenism and popery; which are the fruits of the blindness, corruption, and wickedness of men, as the very deists themselves confess. The light of nature shows, that the religion of heathens, consisting in the worship of idols and sacrificing their children to them, and in obscene and abominable rites and ceremonies, is wickedness. And the superstitions, idolatries, and usurpations of the church of Rome, are no less contrary to the

light of nature. By this appears, that this opposition which has been made against the church of God, has been made by wicked men. And with regard to the opposition of the Jews in Christ's and the apostles' time, it was in a most corrupt time of that nation, when the people were generally become exceeding wicked, as some of the Jewish writers themselves, Josephus and others, who lived about that time, expressly declare. And that it has been mere wickedness that has made this opposition, is manifest from the manner of opposition, the extreme violence, injustice, and cruelty, with which the church of God has been treated. It seems to show the hand of malignant infernal spirits.

Now what reason can be assigned, why the corruption and wickedness of the world should so implacably set itself against this religion of Jesus Christ, and against the Scriptures, but only that they are contrary to wickedness and consequently are good and holy? Why should the enemies of Christ, for so many thousand years together, manifest such a mortal hatred of this religion, but only that it is the cause of God? If the Scriptures be nor the word of God, and the religion of the church of Christ be not the true religion, then it must follow, that it is a most wicked religion, nothing but a pack of lies and abominable delusions, invented by the enemies of God. And if so, it is not likely that the enemies of God, and the wickedness of the world, would have maintained such a perpetual and implacable enmity against it.

2. It is a great argument that the Christian church and its religion is from God, that it has been upheld hitherto through all opposition and dangers. That the church of God and the true religion, which has been so continually and violently opposed, with so many endeavors to overthrow it – and which has so often been brought to the brink of ruin, through the greatest part of six thousand years- has yet been upheld, utmost remarkably shows the hand of God in favour of the church. If duly considered, it will appear one of the greatest wonders and miracles that ever came to pass. There is nothing like it upon the face of the earth. There is no other society of men that has stood as the church has. As to the old world before the flood, that was overthrown a deluge of waters; but yet the church of God was preserved. Satan's visible kingdom on earth was then once entirely overthrown, but the visible kingdom of Christ never has been overthrown. All those ancient human kingdoms and monarchies of which we read, are long since come to an end; the Moabites,

the Ammonites, the Edomites, etc. The great empire of proud Babylon was overthrown by the Persians; then the Persian empire was overthrown by the Greeks; after this the Grecian empire was overthrown by the Romans; and, finally the Roman empire fell a sacrifice to various barbarous nations. Here is a remarkable fulfilment of the text, "The moth has eaten them up like a garment, and the worm has eaten them like wool; but God's church remains."

Never were there so many and so potent endeavours to destroy any thing else, as there has been to destroy the church. Other kingdoms and societies of men, which have appeared to be ten times as strong as the church, have been destroyed with a hundredth part of the opposition which the church of God has met with: which shows, that it is God who has been its protector. For it is most plain, that it has not upheld itself by its own strength. For the most part, it has been a very weak society. The children of Israel were but a handful of people, in comparison of the many who often sought their overthrow. So in Christ's time, and in the beginning of the Christian church, they were but a remnant: whereas the whole multitude of the Jewish nation were against them. And so in the beginning of the Gentile church, they were but a small number in comparison with the heathen, who sought their overthrow. In the dark times of Antichrist, before the Reformation, they were but a handful; and yet their enemies could not overthrow them. And commonly, the enemies of the church have not only had the greatest member on their side, but they have had the strength in other respects. They have commonly had all the civil authority on their side. So in Egypt, the civil authority was for the Egyptians, and the church were only their slaves, and in their hands; and yet they could not overthrow them. And so it was in the time of Antiochus Euiphanes, and Julian the apostate, the authority was all on the side of the persecutors, and the church was under their dominion; yet all their cruelty could not extirpate it. And for a great many ages, the civil authority was all on the side of Antichrist, and the church seemed to be in their hands.

And not only has the strength of its enemies been greater than that of the church, but ordinarily the church has not used what strength they have had in their own defense, but have committed themselves wholly to God. In the time of the Jewish persecutions before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and of the heathen persecutions before Constantine, the Christians did not pretend to make any forcible resistance to their heathen persecutors.

So it has been for the most part under the popish persecutions; and yet they have never been able to overthrow the church of God; but it stands to this very day.

And this is still the more exceeding wonderful, if we consider how often the church has been brought to the brink of ruin, and the case seemed to be desperate. In the time of the old world when wickedness so prevailed as that but one family was left, yet God wonderfully appeared, and overthrew the wicked world with a flood, and preserved his church. At the Red sea, when Pharaoh and his host thought they were quite sure of their prey, God appeared, destroyed them, and delivered his church. Under the tenth and last heathen persecution, their persecutors boasted that now they had done the business for the Christians, and overthrown the Christian church, yet in the midst of their triumph, the Christian church rises out of the dust and prevails, and the heathen empire totally falls before it. So when the Christian church seemed ready to be swallowed up by the Arian heresy, when Antichrist rose and prevailed, and all the world wondered after the beast; when the church for many hundred years was reduced to a small number, and the power of the world was engaged to destroy those little remnants, yet they could never fully accomplish their design, and at last God wonderfully revived his church by the Reformation, made it to stand as it were on its feet in the sight of its enemies, and raised it out of their reach. And when the popish powers plotted the overthrow of the Reformed church, and seemed just about to bring their matters to a conclusion, then God wonderfully appeared for the deliverance of his church, as at the Revolution by King William. Presently after the darkest times, God has made his church most gloriously to flourish.

If such a preservation of the church of God, from the beginning of the world hitherto, attended with such circumstances, is not sufficient to show a divine hand in favour of it, what can be devised that would be sufficient? But if this be from the divine hand, then God owns the church, and owns that revelation and those Scriptures on which she is built, and so it will follow, that their religion is the true religion, or God's religion, and that the Scriptures, which they make their rule, are his word.

3. We may draw this further argument for the divine authority of the Scriptures from what has been said viz. that God has fulfilled those things which are foretold in the Scriptures – I have already observed in general, as I

went along, how the prophecies of Scripture were fulfilled: I shall now single out but two instances of the fulfilment of scripture prophecy.

(1.) One is in preserving his church from being ruined. I have just now shown what an evidence this is of the divine authority of the Scriptures in itself considered, I now speak of it as a fulfillment of scripture prophecy. This is abundantly foretold and promised in the Scriptures; particularly in the text. There it is foretold, that other things shall fail, other kingdoms and monarchies, which set themselves in opposition, should come to nothing: "The moth should eat them up like a garment, and the worm should eat them like wool." It is here foretold, that God's covenant mercy to his church should continue for ever, and so it hath hitherto proved, though the church has passed through so many dangers. The same is promised, Isaiah lvi. 17. "No weapon that is formed against thee, shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn." And again, Isaiah 49:14-16. "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me." The same is promised in Isaiah 59:21. 43:1, 2. and Zechariah 12:2, 3. So Christ promised the same, when he says, "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now if this be not from God, and the Scriptures be not the word of God, and the church of Christ built on the foundation of this word be not of God, how could the persons who foretold this, know it? for if the church were not of God, it was a very unlikely thing ever to come to pass. For they foretold great opposition and dangers, that other kingdoms should come to nought, and that the church should often be almost swallowed up, and yet that the church should remain. Now how could they foresee so unlikely a thing but by divine inspiration?

(2.) The other remarkable instance is, the fulfilment of scripture prophecy, concerning Antichrist. The way that this Antichrist should arise, is foretold, viz. by the falling away of the Christian church into a corrupt state: 2 Thessalonians 2:3. "For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." – And it is prophesied, that this man of sin should set himself up in the temple or visible

church of God, pretending to be vested with divine power, as head of the church, (verse 4.) And all this is exactly come to pass in the church of Rome.

Again, it is intimated, that the rise of Antichrist should be gradual, (verse 7.) "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way." This also came to pass—Again, it is prophesied of this mighty enemy of the Christian church, that he should be a great prince or monarch of the Roman empire: so he is represented in Daniel as a horn of the fourth beast, or fourth monarch, as the angel himself explains it, (Daniel 7.) This also came to pass. — Yea it is prophesied, that the seat of this pretended vicar of God, and head of the church, should be the city of Rome itself It is said expressly, that the spiritual whore, or false church, should have her seat on seven mountains or hills, Revelation 17:9. "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth:" and (verse 18.) "The woman which thou sawest, is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" which it is certain was at that time the city of Rome. This prophecy also has come to pass.

Further, it was prophesied, that this Antichrist should reign over peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, Revelation 17:15. and that all the world should wonder after the beast, Revelation 13:3. This also was verified in the church of Rome. It was foretold that this Antichrist should be remarkable for the sin of pride, pretending to great things, and assuming very much to himself; (2 Thessalonians 2:4.) "That he should exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." So Revelation 13:5. "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies." Daniel 7:8, 20. the little horn is said to have a mouth speaking great things and his look to be more stout than his fellows. This also was verified in the pope, and the church of Rome. — It was also prophesied, that Antichrist should be an exceeding cruel persecutor, Daniel 7:21. The same horn "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them:" Revelation 13:7. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." Revelation 17:6. "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." This also came to pass in the church of Rome. — It was foretold, that Antichrist should excel in craft and policy: Daniel 7:8. "In this born were eyes like the eyes of a man." And verse 20. "Even of that horn that had eyes." This also marks the church of Rome.—It was foretold, that

the kings of Christendom should be subject to antichrist: Revelation 17:12,13. "And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet, but received power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." This also came to pass with respect to the Romish church.-It was foretold, that he should perform pretended miracles and lying wonders: 2 Thessalonians 2:9. "Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and king wonders." Revelation 13:13, 14. "And he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." This also designates the church of Rome. Fire coming down from heaven, seems to have reference to their excommunications. which were dreaded like fire from heaven.-It was foretold that he should forbid to marry and to abstain from meats: 1 Timothy 4:3. "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving." This also is exactly fulfilled in the church of Rome. – It was foretold that he should be very rich, and arrive at a great degree of earthly splendour and glory: Revelation 17:4. "And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand." And so chapter 18:7,12,13, 16. What can more expressly describe the church of Rome?-It was foretold, that he should forbid any to buy or sell, but those that had his mark: Revelation 13:17. "And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." This also is fulfilled in the church of Rome-It was foretold that he should sell the souls of men, Revelation 18:13. where, in enumerating the articles of his merchandise, the soul of men are specifically mentioned as one. Is not this also exactly fulfilled in the same church? – It was foretold, that Antichrist would not suffer the bodies of God's people to be buried: Rev 11:8, 9. "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, and they-shall not suffer their dead bodies put in graves." flow literally has this come to pass with respect to the church of Rome!-I might mention many other things which were foretold of Antichrist, and show that they were fulfilled most exactly in the pope and the church of Rome. How strong an argument is this, that the Scriptures are the word of God!

II. From what has been said, we may learn what the spirit of true Christians is, viz. a spirit of suffering Seeing God has so ordered it in his providence, that his church should for so long a time be in a suffering state, yea, often in a state of extreme suffering, we may conclude, that the spirit of the true church is a suffering spirit, otherwise God never would have ordered for it so much suffering for doubtless God accommodates the state and circumstances of the church to the spirit that he has given her. No wonder therefore that Christ so much inculcated upon his disciples, that they must deny themselves and take up their cross, if they would follow him.

And what spirit has the church shown and exercised under her sufferings? She has actually, under those terrible persecutions through which she has passed, rather chosen to undergo those dreadful torments, and to sell all for the pearl of great price, to suffer all that her bitterest enemies could inflict, than to renounce Christ and his religion. History affords a great number of remarkable instances, sets in view a great cloud of witnesses. This abundantly confirms the necessity of possessing a spirit to sell all for Christ, to renounce our own ease, our own worldly profit, our honour, and our all, for him, and for the gospel.

Let us inquire whether we are of such a spirit. How does it prove upon trial? Does it prove in fact that we are willing to deny ourselves, and renounce our own worldly interest and to pass through the trials to which we are called in providence? Alas, how small are our trials, compared with those of many of our fellow – Christians in former ages I And I would on this occasion apply that in Jeremiah 12:5.

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?"

If you have not been able to endure the light trials to which you have been called, how would you be able to endure the far greater trials to which the church has been called in former ages? Every true Christian has the spirit of a martyr, and would suffer as a martyr, if he were called to it in providence.

III. Hence we learn what great reason we have assuredly to expect the fulfilment of what yet remains to be fulfilled of things foretold in Scripture.

The Scriptures foretell many great things yet to be fulfilled before the end of the world; but what great difficulties seem to be in the way! We seem at present to be very far from such a state as is foretold in the Scriptures, but yet we have abundant reason to expect, that these things, however seemingly difficult will be accomplished in their season. We see the faithfulness of God to his promises hitherto; how true he has been to his church, and how he has remembered his mercy from generation to generation. We may say concerning what God has done hitherto for his church, as Joshua said to the children of Israel,

"That not one thing hath failed of all that the Lord our God hath spoken concerning his church," (Joshua 23:14.)

but all things are hitherto come to pass agreeable to the divine prediction. This should strengthen our faith in those promises, and encourage us, and stir us up to earnest prayer to God for the accomplishment of the great and glorious things which yet remain to be fulfilled.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 7

THE SUCCESS OF REDEMPTION FROM THE PRESENT TIME TO THE FALL OF ANTICHRIST.

I COME now to show how the success of Christ's redemption will be carried on from the present time, till Antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is destroyed. – With respect to this space of time, we have nothing to guide us but the prophecies of Scripture.

Through most of the time from the fall of man to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, we had scripture history to guide us, and from thence to the present time we had prophecy, together with the accomplishment of it in providence, as related in human histories. But henceforward we have prophecy alone to guide us. And here I would pass by those things that are only conjectured, or that are surmised by some from those prophecies which are doubtful in their interpretation, and shall insist only on those things which are more evident.

We know not what particular events are to come to pass before that glorious work of God's Spirit begins, by which Satan's kingdom is to be overthrown. By the consent of most divines, there are but few things, if any at all, foretold to be accomplished before the beginning of that glorious work of God. But some think that the slaying of the witnesses, (Revelation 11:7, 8.) is not yet accomplished; and there is a difference of opinion with respect to the pouring

out of the seven vials, (Revelation 16) how many are already, or how many remain to be poured out. A late expositor, indeed, whom I have before mentioned, seems to make it evident, that all are already poured out but two, viz. the sixth on the river Euphrates, and the seventh into the air. I will not now stand to inquire, what is intended by the pouring out of the sixth vial on the river Euphrates that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared, but would only say that it seems to be something immediately preparatory to the destruction of spiritual Babylon, as the drying up of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of old Babylon, was what prepared the way of the kings of the Medes and Persians, (the kings of the east,) to come in under the vails, and destroy that city.

But whatever this be, it does not appear that it is anything which shall be accomplished before that work of God's Spirit is begun by which as it goes on, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be utterly overthrown. And therefore I would proceed directly to consider what the Scripture reveals concerning the work of God himself, by which he will bring about this great event, as being the next thing to be accomplished that we are certain of from the prophecies of Scripture.

I. I would observe some things in general concerning it.

1. We have all reason to conclude from the Scriptures, that just before this work of God begins, it will be a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion in his world. It has been so before preceding glorious revivals of religion: when Christ came, it was an exceeding degenerate time among the Jews; and so it was a very dark time before the Reformation. And not only so, but it seems to be foretold in Scripture, that it shall be a time of but little religion, when Christ shall come to set up his kingdom in the world. Thus when Christ spake of his coming, to encourage his elect, who cry to him day and night, in Luke 18:8. he adds, "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earthy?" Which seems to denote a great prevalence of infidelity just before Christ's coming to avenge his suffering church. Though Christ's coming at the last judgment is not here to be excluded, yet there seems to be a special respect to his coming to deliver his church from their long-continued suffering, persecuted state, which is accomplished only at his coming at the destruction of Antichrist. Then will be accomplished the following passages, Revelation 6:10. "How long, O

Lord, holy and true, cost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" and Revelation 18:20. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles, and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her."

It is now a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion, wherein there is but a little faith, and a great prevailing of infidelity on the earth. There is now a remarkable fulfilment of that in 2 Peter bit 3. "Knowing this, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." And so Jude 17, 18. "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." Whether the times shall be any darker still, or how much darker, before the beginning of this glorious work of God, we cannot tell.

2. There is no reason from the word of God to think any other, than that this great work of God will be wrought, though very swiftly, yet gradually. As the children of Israel were gradually brought out of the Babylonish captivity first one company, and then another, and Gradually rebuilt their city and temple; and as the heathen Roman empire was destroyed by a gradual, though a very swift, prevalency of the gospel; so, though there are many things which seem to hold forth that the work of God would be exceeding swift, – and many great and wonderful events should very suddenly be brought to pass, and some great parts of Satan's visible kingdom should have a very sudden fall, – yet all will not be accomplished at once, as by some great miracle, like the resurrection of the dead. But this work will be accomplished by means, by the preaching of the gospel, and the use of the ordinary means of grace, and so shall be gradually brought to pass. Some shall be converted, and be the means of others conversion. God's Spirit shall be poured out first to raise up instruments, and then those Instruments shall be used with success. And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted, and one false religion and false way of worship exploded, after another. By the representation in Daniel 2:3, 4. the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, gradually grows. So Christ teaches us, that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, Matthew 13:31, 32. and like leaven hid in three measures of meal, verse 33. The same representation we have in Mark 4:26, 27, 28. and in the vision of the waters of the sanctuary, Ezekiel 47:– The Scriptures hold forth, that there should be several successive great and

glorious events by which this glorious work should be accomplished. The angel speaking to the prophet Daniel of those glorious times, mentions two glorious periods, at the end of which glorious things shall be accomplished:

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" (Daniel 12:11.)

But then he adds in the next verse, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days;" intimating, that something very glorious should be accomplished at the end of the former period, but something much more glorious at the end of the latter.

II. I now proceed to show how this glorious work shall be accomplished.

1. The Spirit of God shall be gloriously poured out for the wonderful revival and propagation of religion. This great work shall be accomplished, not by the authority of princes, nor by the wisdom of learned men, but by God's holy Spirit: Zechariah 4:6, 7. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." So the prophet Ezekiel, speaking of this great work of God, says, chapter 29:29. "Neither will I hide my face any more from them, for I have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." We know not where this pouring out of the Spirit shall begin, or whether in many places at once, or whether, what hath already taken place, be not some forerunner and beginning of this pouring out of the Spirit of God, when it is begun, shall soon bring great multitudes to forsake that vice and wickedness which now so generally prevails; and shall cause that vital religion, which is now so despised and laughed at in the world, to revive. The work of conversion shall break forth, and go on in such a manner as never has been hitherto; agreeable to Isaiah 44:3, 4, 5. – God, by pouring out his Holy Spirit, will furnish men to be glorious instruments of carrying on this work; will fill them with knowledge and wisdom, and fervent zeal for the promoting the kingdom of Christ, and the salvation of souls, and propagating

the gospel in the world. The gospel shall begin to be preached with abundantly greatness and power than had heretofore been. This great work of God shall be brought to pass by the preaching of the gospel, as is represented in Revelation 14:6, 7, 8. that before Babylon falls, gospel shall be powerfully preached and propagated in the world.

This was typified of old by the sounding of the silver trumpets in Israel in the beginning of their Jubilee: Leviticus 25:9. "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, on the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. The glorious times which are approaching, are the church's jubilee, which shall be introduced by the sounding of the silver trumpet of the gospel, as is foretold in Isaiah 27:13. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcaste of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." And there shall be a glorious pouring out of the Spirit with this clear and powerful preaching of the gospel, to make it successful for reviving those holy doctrines of religion which are now chiefly ridiculed in the world, and turning many from heresy, from popery, and from other false religions; and also for turning many from their vice and profaneness, and for bringing vast multitudes savingly home to Christ.

The work of conversion shall go on in a wonderful manner, and spread more and more. Many shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, one multitude after another continually, as in Isaiah 60:4, 5. "Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together." And so verse 8. "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" And as the gospel shall be preached to every tongue, and kindred, and nation, and people, before the kill of Antichrist, so we may suppose, that it will be gloriously successful to bring in multitudes from every nation: and shall spread more and more with wonderful swiftness. (See Isaiah 66:7-9.)

2. This pouring out of the Spirit of God will not affect the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom, till there has first been a violent and mighty opposition made. In this the Scripture is plain, that when Christ is thus

gloriously coming forth, when the destruction of Antichrist is ready at hand, and Satan's kingdom begins to totter, the powers of the kingdom of darkness will rise up, and mightily exert themselves. Thus after the pouring out of the sixth vial, which was to dry up the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for the destruction of spiritual Babylon, (Revelation 16) the powers of hell will be mightily alarmed, and will stir up themselves to oppose the kingdom of Christ, before the seventh vial shall be poured out, which shall Rive them a final and complete overthrow. The beloved disciple informs us (verse 13,14.) that "three unclean spirits like frogs shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God almighty." This seems to be the last and greatest effort of Satan to save his kingdom from being overthrown though perhaps he may make as great towards the end of the world to regain It.

When the Spirit begins to be so gloriously poured forth, when the devil sees such multitudes flocking to Christ in one nation and another, when the foundations and pillars of his kingdom are ready to come to swift and sudden destruction, all hell will be greatly alarmed. Satan has ever had a dread of having his kingdom overthrown, and has been doing great works to prevent it, especially since the day of Constantine the Great. To this end he set up those mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, and brought in all the heresies, superstitions, and corrupt opinions in the world. But when he sees all begin to fall, it will rouse him exceedingly. If Satan of old dreaded being cast out of the Roman empire, how much more does he dread being cast out of the whole world!

It seems, in his last great opposition, all the forces of Antichrist, and Mahometanism, and heathenism, will be united, all the forces of Satan's visible kingdom through the whole world of mankind. And therefore it is said, that "spirits of devils shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty." And these spirits are said to come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, out of the mouth of the false prophet; i.e. there shall be the spirit of Popery; the spirit of Mahometanism, and the spirit of heathenism all united. By the beast is meant Antichrist; by the dragon, in this book, is commonly meant the devil, as he reigns over his heather kingdom: by the false prophet, is sometimes meant the pope and his clergy;

but here an eye seems to be had to Mahomet, whom his followers call the great prophet of God. This will be as it were the dying struggles of the old serpent; a battle wherein he will fight as one that is almost desperate.

We know not particularly in what manner this opposition shall be made. It is represented as a battle; it is called the battle of the great day of God Almighty. There will be some way or other a mighty struggle between Satan's kingdom and the church, and probably in all ways of opposition that can be; and doubtless great opposition by external force. The princes of the world who are on lie devil's side shall join hand in hand; for it is said, "The kings of the earth are gathered together to battle," Revelation 19:19. And probably there will be great opposition by subtle disputers and carnal reasoning, persecution, virulent reproaches, craft, and subtlety. The devil now doubtless will ply his skill, as well as strength, to the utmost; and those who belong to his kingdom, will every where be stirred up, and engaged to make an united violent opposition against this holy religion, which they see prevailing so mightily in the world. – But,

3. Christ and his church shall in this battle obtain a complete and entire victory over their enemies. They shall be totally routed and overthrown in this their last effort. When the powers of hell and earth are thus gathered together against Christ, and his armies shall come forth against them by his word and Spirit, in how august and glorious a manner is this advance of Christ with his church described, Revelation 19:11, etc. And to represent how great the victory they should obtain, and how mighty the overthrow of their enemies, it is said, (verse 17, 18.) that "all the fowls of heaven are called together, to eat the great supper given them, of the flesh of kings, and captains, and mighty men," etc. and then, in the following verses, we have distinct account of the victory and overthrow.

In this victory, the seventh vial shall be poured out. It is said, Revelation 16:16. of the great army that should be gathered together against Christ: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon;" then it is said, "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." Now the business is done for Satan and his adherents. When this victory is obtained, all is in effect done. Satan's last and greatest opposition is conquered; all his measures are defeated; the pillars of

his kingdom broken asunder, and will fall of course. The devil is utterly baffled and confounded, and knows not what else to do. He now sees his antichristian, Mahometan, and heathenish kingdoms through the world, all tumbling down. He and his most powerful instruments are taken captive. Now that is in effect done, for which the church of God had been so long waiting and hoping, and so earnestly crying, to God, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true."

The angel who set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, lift up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever am! ever, etc. that when the seventh angel should come to sound, the time should be no longer.-And now the time is come; now the seventh trumpet sounds, and the seventh vial is poured out, both together; intimating, that now all is finished as to the overthrow of satan's visible kingdom on earth. This victory shall be by far the greatest that ever was obtained over Satan and his adherents. By this blow, with which the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall strike the image of gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, and clay, it shall all be broken to pieces. This will be a finishing blow to the image, so that it shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.

In this victory will be a most glorious display of divine power. Christ shall therein appear in the character of King of kings, and Lord of lords, as in Revelation 19:16. Now Christ shall dash his enemies, even the strongest and proudest of them, in pieces; as a potter's vessel shall they be broken to shivers. Then shall strength be shown out of weakness, and Christ shall cause his church to thresh the mountains, as in Isaiah 12:15. – "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing-instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." And then shall be fulfilled Isaiah 42:13-15.

III. Consequent on this victory, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be destroyed. When Satan is conquered in this last battle, the church of Christ will have easy work of it, as when Joshua and the children of Israel had obtained that great victory over the five kings of the Amorites. When God sent great hail-stones on their enemies, they had easy work of subduing the cities and country to which they belonged. So it was also after the other great battle that Joshua had with a great multitude at the waters of Merom. After this glorious victory of Christ and his church over their enemies, the chief

powers of Satan's kingdom. they shall destroy that kingdom in all those cities and countries to which they belonged. After this the word of God shall have a speedy and swift progress through the earth, as it is said, that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, "the cities of the nations fell, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found," Revelation 16:19, 20.-When once the stone cut out of the mountain without hands had broken the image in pieces, it was easy to abolish all the remains of it. The very wind will carry it away as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor. Because Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall now be destroyed, therefore it is said, that the seventh vial by which this shall be done. shall be poured out into the air; which is represented by Scripture as the special seat of his kingdom; for he is called "the prince of the power of the air," Ephesians 2:2. Now is come the time for punishing leviathan, that piercing serpent, of which we read in Isaiah 27:1.

"In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the Piercin serpent, even leviathan, that crooked serpent, and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

Concerning this overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, I would show wherein it will chiefly consist, with its extent and universality.

1. I would show wherein this over throw of Satan's kingdom will chiefly consist. I shall mention the particular shines in which it will consist, without pretending to determine in what order they shall come to pass, or which shall be accomplished first, or whether they shall be accomplished together.

(1.) Heresies, infidelity, and superstition, among those who have been brought up under the light of the gospel will then be abolished, and particularly deism, which is now so bold and confident in infidelity, shall be driven away, and vanish to nothing. All shall agree in the same great and important doctrines of the gospel,

"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." (Zechariah 14:9.)

Then shall he abolished all superstitions modes of worship, and all shall cordially agree in worshipping God in his own way: Jeremiah 32:39. "And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."

(2.) The kingdom of Antichrist shall be utterly overthrown. This dominion has been much brought down already by the vial poured out on his throne in the Reformation, hut then it shall be utterly destroyed. Then shall be proclaimed, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." When the seventh angel sounds, "the time, times, and half a time, shall be out, and the time shall be no longer." Then shall be accomplished concerning Antichrist the shines which are written (Revelation 18) of the spiritual Babylon, the idolatrous Roman government, that has for so many ages been the great enemy of the christian church, first under heathenism, then under popery.-That proud city which lifted herself up to heaven, in her pride and haughtiness; that cruel, bloody city, shall come down to the ground. Then shall that be fulfilled,

"For he bringeth down them that dwell on high, the lofty city he layeth it low, he layeth it low, even to the ground, he bringeth it even to the dust." (Isaiah 26:5)

She shall be thrown down with violence, like a great millstone cast into the sea, and shall be found no more at all, and shall become a habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Now shall she be stripped of all her glory, and riches, and ornaments, and shall be cast out as an abominable branch, and shall be trodden down as the mire of the streets. All her policy and craft, in which she so abounded, shall not save her All the strength and wisdom of this great whore shall fail her, and there shall be none to help her. The kings of the earth, who Wore gave their power and strength to the beast, shall now hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, Revelation 17:16.

(3.) Satan's Mahometan kingdom shall be utterly overthrown. The locusts and horsemen in the 9th of Revelation, have their appointed and limited time

set them there and the false prophet shall be taken and destroyed. And though Mahometanism has been so vastly propagated in the world, and is upheld by such a great empire -this smoke, which has ascended out of the bottomless pit, shall be utterly scattered before the light of that glorious day, and the Mahometan empire shall fall at the sound of the great trumpet which shall then be blown.

(4.) Jewish infidelity shall then be overthrown. However obstinate they have been now for above seventeen hundred years in their rejection of Christ, and however rare have been the instances of individual conversions, ever since the destruction of Jerusalem-but they have, against the plain teachings of their own prophets, continued to approve of the cruelty of their forefathers in crucifying Christ yet, when this day comes, the thick veil that blinds their eyes shall be removed, 2 Corinthians 3:16. and divine grace shall melt and renew their hard hearts, "and they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born" Zechariah 12:10, etc. And then shall the house of Israel be saved: the Jews in all their dispersions shall cast away their old infidelity and shall have their hearts wonderfully changed, and abhor themselves for their past unbelief and obstinacy. They shall flow together to the blessed Jesus, penitently, humbly, and joyfully owning him as their glorious King and only Saviour, and shall with all their hearts, as with one heart and voice, declare his praises unto other nations.

Nothing is more certainly foretold than this national conversion of the Jews, in Romans 11. There are also many passages of the Old Testament which cannot be interpreted in any other sense, which I cannot now stand to mention. Besides the prophecies of the calling of the Jews, we have a remarkable providential seal of the fulfilment of this great event, by a kind of continual miracle, viz. their being preserved a distinct nation in such a dispersed condition for above sixteen hundred years. The world affords nothing else like it. There is undoubtedly a remarkable hand of providence in it. When they shall be called, that ancient people, who alone were God's people for so lone a time, shall be his people again, never to be rejected more. They shall then be gathered into one fold together with the Gentiles; and so also shall the remains of the ten tribes, wherever they be, and though they

have been rejected much longer than the Jews, be brought in with their brethren. The prophecies of Hosea especially seem to hold this forth, that in the future glorious times of the church, both Judah and Ephraim, or Judah and the ten tribes, shall be brought in together, and shall be united as one people, as they formerly were under David and Solomon, (Hosea 1:11; etc. – Though we do not know the time in which this conversion of Israel will come to pass; yet thus much we may determine by Scripture, that it will be before the glory of the Gentile part of the church shall be fully accomplished; because it is said, that their coming in shall be life from the dead to the Gentiles, (Romans 11:12, 15.)

(5.) Then shall also Satan's heathenism kingdom be overthrown. Gross heathenism now possesses a great part of the earth, and there are supposed to be more heathens now in the world, than of all other professions taken together. But then the heathen nations shall be enlightened with the glories gospel. There will be a wonderful spirit of pity towards them, and zeal for their instruction and conversion put into multitudes, and many shall go forth and carry the gospel unto them. Then shall the joyful sound be heard among them, and the Sun of righteousness shall arise with his glorious light shining on those vast regions of the earth that have been covered with heathenish darkness for many thousand years. Many of them doubtless ever since the times of Moses and Abraham, have lain thus in a miserable condition, under the cruel tyranny of the devil, who has all this while blinded and befooled them, domineered over them, and made a prey of them. Now the glad tidings of the gospel shall sound there, and they shall be brought out of darkness into marvellous light.

It is promised, that heathenism shall thus be deathbed in many places. God has said, That the gods that have not made these heavens and this earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens, Jeremiah 10:11. and that he will utterly abolish idols, Isaiah 2:18. – Then shall the many nations of Africa, who now seem to be in a stale but little above the beasts, and in many respects much below them, be visited with glorious light, and delivered from all their darkness, and shall become a civil, christian understanding, and holy people.-Then shall the vast continent of America, which now in great part is covered with barbarous ignorance and cruelty, be every where covered with glorious gospel-light and christian love and instead of worshipping the devil

as now they do, they shall serve God, and. praises shall be sung every where to the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Saviour of the world. So we may expect it will be in that great and populous part of the world, the East Indies, which are now mostly inhabited by the worshippers of the devil. Then the kingdom of Christ will be established in those continents which have been more lately discovered towards the north and south poles, where men differ very little from the wild beasts, except in impiety. The same will be the case with respect to those countries which have never yet been discovered. Thus will be gloriously fulfilled Isaiah 35:1. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." (See also verse 6, 7.)

2. Having thus shown wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will consist, I come now to observe its universal extent. The visible kingdom of Satan shall be overthrown, and the kingdom of Christ set up on the ruins of it, every where throughout the whole habitable globe. Now shall the promise made to Abraham be fulfilled, That in him and art his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed and Christ now shall become the desire of all nations agreeable to Haggai 2:7. Now the kingdom of Christ shall in the most strict and literal sense be extended to all nations, and the whole earth. There are many passages of Scripture that can be understood in no other sense. What can be more universal than Isaiah 11:9. "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." As much as to say, As there is no part of the channel or cavity of the sea, but what is covered with water, so there shall be no part of the world of mankind but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God. So it is foretold in Isaiah 14:22. that all the ends of the earth shall look to Christ, and be saved. And to show that the words are to be understood in the most universal sense, it is said in the next verse, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."-So the most universal expression is used,

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high God." (Daniel 7:27.)

When the devil was cast out of the Roman empire because that was the highest and principal part of the world, and the other nations that were left were low and mean in comparison, it was represented as Satan's being cast out of heaven to the earth, Revelation 12:9., but it is represented that he shall be cast out of the earth too, and shut up in hell. Romans 20:1,2, 3. This is the greatest revolution by far that ever came to pass: therefore it is said in Revelation 16:17, 18. that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, "there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great." And this is the third great dispensation of Providence which is in Scripture compared to Christ's coming to judgment, Revelation 16:15. There, after the sixth vial and after the devil's armies were gathered together to their great battle, and just before Christ's glorious victory over them, it is said, "Behold I come quickly blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments." So it is called Christ's coming, 2 Thessalonians 2:8. Speaking of Antichrist it is said, "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." See also Daniel 7:13, 14. where Christ's coming to set up his kingdom on earth, and to destroy Antichrist, is called coming with clouds of heaven. And this is more like Christ's last coming to Judgment, than any of the preceding dispensations which are so called. The dispensation is so much greater and more universal, and so more like the day of judgment, which respects the whole world. The great spiritual resurrection of the church of God accompanying it, resembles the general resurrection at the end of the world more than any other. (See Revelation 20:4.)

Terrible judgments and fearful destruction shall now be executed on God's enemies. There will doubtless at the introducing of this dispensation be a visible and awful hand of God against blasphemers, deists, obstinate heretics, and other enemies of Christ, terribly destroying them, with remarkable tokens of wrath and vengeance. More especially will this dispensation be attended with terrible judgments on Antichrist; the cruel persecutors who belong to the church of Rome, shall in a most awful manner be destroyed; which is compares to a casting of Antichrist into the burning flame, Daniel 7:11. and to casting him alive into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, Revelation 19:20.

Then shall this cruel persecuting church suffer those judgments from God, which shall be far more dreadful than her persecutions of the saints, agreeable to Revelation 18:6, 7. – The judgments which God shall execute on the enemies of the church, are so great, that they are compared to God's sending great hail-stones from heaven upon them, every one of the weight of a talent, as it is said on the pouring out of the seventh vial, Revelation 16:21. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." And now shall he that treading of the wine-press spoken of, Revelation 14:19, 20.

This shall put an end to the church's suffering state, and shall be attended with their glorious and joyful praises. The church's afflicted state has been continued, excepting some short intermissions, from the resurrection of Christ to this time; but now shall a final end be put to her suffering state. Indeed after this, near the end of the world, the church shall be greatly threatened; but it is said, it shall be but for a little season, Revelation 20:3. for as the times of the church's rest have been but short, before the long day of her afflictions are at an end; so whatever affliction she may suffer after this, will be very short. In every other respect, the day of the church's afflictions and persecution shall now come to a final end. The Scriptures, in many places, speak of this time as the end of the suffering state of the church. So Isaiah 51:22. "Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury, thou shalt no more drink it again." Then shall be proclaimed to the church, Isaiah 40:1, 2. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her inquiry is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins", Also Isaiah 54:8, 9. and 60:20. belong to this time. "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." And so Zephaniah 3:15.

"The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more."

The time before this, had been the church's sowing-time, wherein she sowed

in tears and in blood, but now is her harvest, wherein she will come again rejoicing, bringing her sheaves with her. Now the time of travail of the woman clothed with the sun is at an end; now she hath brought forth her son: for this glorious setting up of the kingdom of Christ through the world, is what the church had been in travail for, with such terrible pangs, for so many ages: Isaiah 36:17. "Like as a woman with child that draweth new the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord." (See Isaiah 60:20. and 61:10, 11.) And now the church shall forget her sorrow, since a man-child is born into the world: now succeed her joyful praise and triumph. Her praises shall then go up to God from all parts of the earth; (as Isaiah 42:10-12.) and praise shall not only fill the earth, but also heaven. The church on earth, and the church hi heaven, shall both gloriously rejoice and praise God, as with one heart, on that occasion. Without doubt it will be a time of very distinguished joy and praise among the holy prophets and apostles, and the other saints in beaver:

Revelation 18:20. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." See how universal these praises will be in Isaiah 44:23.

"Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."

See what joyful praises are sung to God on this occasion by the universal church in heaven and earth, in the beginning of the I9th chapter of Revelation.

The dispensation is above all preceding ones like Christ's coming to Judgment, in that it so puts an end to the former state of the world, and introduces the everlasting kingdom of Christ. Now Satan's visible kingdom shall be overthrown, after it had stood ever since the building of Babel; the old heavens and the old earth shall in a greater measure pass away, and the new heavens and new earth be set up in a far more glorious manner, than ever before. – Thus I have shown how the success of Christ's purchase has been

carried on through the times of the afflicted state of the Christian church, from Christ's resurrection till Antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is overthrown.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 8

THE SUCCESS OF REDEMPTION THROUGH THAT SPACE WHEREIN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH SHALL, FOR THE MOST PART, BE IN A STATE OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY.

IN order to describe this part, I would speak, first, of the prosperous state of the church through the greatest part of this period; and, secondly, of the great apostasy there shall be towards the close of it.

I. I would speak of the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of this period. And in the general, I would observe two things,

1. That this is most properly the time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth. Though the kingdom of heaven was in a degree set up soon after Christ's resurrection, and in a further degree in the time of Constantine, and though the Christian church in all ages of it is called the kingdom of heaven; yet this is the principal time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, the time principally intended by the prophecies of Daniel whence the Jews took the name of the kingdom of heaven.

2. Now is the principal fulfillment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament which speak of the glorious times of the gospel in the latter days. Though there has been a glorious fulfillment of those prophecies already, in the times of the apostles, and of Constantine; yet the expressions are too high to suit

any other time entirely, but that which is to succeed the fall of Antichrist. This is most properly the glorious day of the gospel. Other times are only forerunners and preparatory to this: those were the seed-time, but this is the harvest. But more particularly,

(1.) It will be a time of great light and knowledge. The present, are days of darkness, in comparison of those days. – The light of that glorious time shall be so great, that it is represented as though there should then be no night, but only day; no evening nor darkness. So Zechariah 14:6, 7. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass, that at evening-time it shall be light." – It is further represented, as though God would then give such light to his church, that it should so much exceed the glory of the light of the sun and moon, that they should be ashamed:

"Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." (Isaiah 24:23.)

There is a kind of vail now cast over the greater part of the world, which keeps them in darkness; but then this vail shall be destroyed: Isaiah 25:7. "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations." Then all countries and nations, even those which are now most ignorant, shall be full of light and knowledge. Great knowledge shall prevail every where. It may be hoped, that then many of the Negroes and Indians will be divines, and that excellent books will be published in Africa, in Ethiopia, in Tartary, and other now the most barbarous countries, and not only learned men, but others of more ordinary education, shall then be very knowing in religion: Isaiah 32:3, 4. "The eyes of them that see, shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear, shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge." Knowledge then shall be very universal among all sorts of persons, Jeremiah 31:34. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the

least of them unto the greatest of them."

There shall then be a wonderful unravelling of the difficulties in the doctrines of religion, and clearing up of seeming inconsistencies: "So crooked things shall be made straight, and rough places shall be made plain, and darkness shall become light before God's people." Difficulties in Scripture shall then be cleared up, and wonderful things shall be discovered in the word of God, which were never discovered before. The great discovery of those things in religion which had been before kept hid seems to be compared to removing the vail, and discovering the ark of the testimony to the people, which before used to be kept in the secret part of the temple, and was never seen by them. Thus at the sounding of the seventh Angel, when it is proclaimed, "that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ," it is added, that "the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." So great shall be the increase of knowledge in this time, that heaven shall be as it were opened to the church of God on earth.

(2.) It shall be a time of great holiness. Now vital religion shall every where prevail and reign. Religion shall not be an empty profession, as it now mostly is, but holiness of heart and life shall abundantly prevail. Those times shall be an exception from what Christ says of the ordinary state of the church, that there shall be but Jew saved, for now holiness shall become general: Isaiah 60:21. "The people also shall be all righteous." Not that there will be none remaining in a Christless condition; but that visible wickedness shall be suppressed every where, and true holiness shall become general, though not universal. It shall be a wonderful time, not only for the multitude of godly men, but for eminency of grace: Isaiah lxxv.20. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the simmer being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." Zechariah 12:8. "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as God, hast the angel of the Lord before them." And holiness shall then be as it were inscribed on every thing, on all men's common business and employments, and the common utensils of life: all shall be dedicated to God, and applied to holy purposes: every thing shall then be done to the glory of God: Isaiah 23:18. "And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord." (And so

Zechariah 14:20, 21.) – And as God's people then shall be eminent in holiness of heart, so they shall be also in holiness of life and practice.

(3.) It shall be a time wherein religion shall in every respect be uppermost in the world. It shall be had in great esteem and honour. The saints have hitherto for the most part been kept under, and wicked men have governed. But now they until be uppermost The kingdom shall be given into the hands of the saints of the "most high God," Daniel 7:27. And "they shall reign on earth," Revelation 5:10. They shall live and "reign with Christ a thousand years," Revelation 20:4. In that day, such persons as are eminent for true piety and religion, shall be chiefly promoted to places of trust and authority. Vital religion shall then take possession of kings' palaces and thrones; and those who are in highest advancement shall be holy men: Isaiah 49:23. "And kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens thy nursing-mothers." Kings shall employ all their power, and glory, and riches, for the advancement of the honour and glory of Christ, and the good of his church: Isaiah 60:16. "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings." And the great men of the world, and the rich merchants, and others who have great wealth and influence, shall devote all to Christ and his church: Psalm 14:12. "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour."

(4.) Those will be times of great peace and love. There shall then be universal peace and a good understanding among the nations of the world, instead of confusion, wars, and bloodshed.

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:4)

It is represented as if all instrument of war should be destroyed, having become useless: Psalm 46:9. "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire." (See also Zechariah 9:10.) Then shall all nations dwell

quietly and safely, without fear of any enemy. Isaiah 32:18. "And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places." (Also Zechariah 8:10,11.)

Then shall malice, and envy, and wrath, and revenge, be suppressed every where; and peace and love shall prevail between one man and another; which is most elegantly set forth in Isaiah 11:6-10. Then shall there be peace and love between rulers and ruled. Rulers shall love their people, and with all their might seek their best good; and the people shall love their rulers, shall joyfully submit to them, and give them that honour which is their due. So shall there be happy love between ministers and their people: Mall 4:6. "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Then shall flourish in an eminent manner those christian virtues of meekness, forgiveness, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, and brotherly-kindness, those excellent fruits of the Spirit. Men, in their temper and disposition, shall then be like the Lamb of God, the lovely Jesus. The body shall be conformed to the head.

Then shall all the world be united in one amiable society. All nations, in all parts of the world, on every side of the globe, shall then be knit together in sweet harmony. All parts of God's church shall assist and promote the spiritual good of one another. A communication shall then be upheld between all parts of the world to that end; and the art of navigation, which is now applied so much to favour men's covetousness and pride and is used so much by wicked debauched men, shall then be consecrated to God, and applied to holy uses. (See Isaiah 60:5-9.) And then men will be abundant in expressing their love one to another, not only in words, but in coeds of charity, Isaiah 32:5. "The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful," but (verse 8.) "the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand."

(5.) It will be a time of excellent order in the church of Christ. The true government and discipline of the church will then be settled and put into practice. All the world shall then be as one church, one orderly, regular, beautiful society. And as the body shall be one, so the members shall be in beautiful proportion to each other. Then shall that be verified in Psalm 122:3. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together."

(6.) The church of God shall then be beautiful and glorious on these accounts, yea, it will appear in the perfection of beauty: Isaiah 60:1. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isaiah 61:10. "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." On these accounts, the church will then be the greatest image of heaven itself.

(7.) That will be a time of the greatest temporal prosperity. Such a spiritual state as we have just described has a natural tendency to health and long life, and that this will actually be the case, is evident by Zechariah 13:4. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age." It has also a natural tendency to procure ease, quietness, pleasantness, and cheerfulness of mind, also wealth and a great increase of children, as is intimated in Zechariah 8:5. "And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." – But further, the temporal prosperity of the people of God will also be promoted by a remarkable blessing from heaven: Isaiah 65:21. "They shall build houses, and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." And in Micah 4:4. "But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid." Zechariah 7:12. "For the seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things." (See also Jeremiah 31:12, 13. and Amos 9:13.) Yea then they shall receive all manner of tokens of God's presence, acceptance, and favour: Jeremiah 33:9. "And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for an the prosperity that I procure unto it." Even the days of Solomon were but an image of those days, as to the temporal prosperity which shall be obtained in them.

(8.) It will also be a time of great rejoicing: Isaiah 35:10. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Chapter 55:12. "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you."

Chapter 66:11. "That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." Chapter 12:3.

"With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." That will be the church's glorious wedding-day with Christ upon earth: Revelation 19:7. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Verse 9. "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb."

The Scriptures every where represent this prosperity to be of long continuance. The former intervals of rest and prosperity, as we before observed, are represented to be but short; but the representations of this state are quite different:

"And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand year." (Revelation 20:4)

"Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." (Isaiah 60:15)

This may suffice as to the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of the period from the destruction of Satan's visible kingdom in the world to Christ's appearing in the cloud of heaven to judgment.

II. I now come to speak of the great apostasy there should be towards the close of this period, and how the church should, for a short time, be threatened by her enemies. And this I shall do under three particulars.

1. A little before the end of the world, a great part of the world shall fall away from Christ and his church. It is said, Revelation 20:3. that Satan should be cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up, and have a seal set upon him that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and that afterward he must be loosed out of his prison for a little season. Accordingly we are told, (verse 7, 8.) that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and go forth to deceive the

nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog. This intimates that the apostasy would be very general. The nations of the four quarters of the earth shall be deceived; and the number of those who shall now turn enemies to Christ shall be vastly great, as the army of Gog and Magog is represented in Ezekiel It is said, (Revelation 20:8.) that the number of them is as the sand of the sea, and that they went up on the breadth of the earth, as if they were an army large enough to reach from one side of the earth to the other.

Thus after a happy and glorious season, such a long day of light and holiness, of love and peace, and joy, it shall again be a dark time. Satan shall begin to set up his dominion again in the world; and this world shall again become a scene of darkness and wickedness. The bottomless pit shall be opened, and devils shall come up again out of it, and a dreadful smoke shall ascend to darken the world. And the church of Christ, instead of extending to the utmost bounds of the world, as it did Wore shall be reduced to narrow limits. The world of mankind being continued so long in a state of great prosperity shall now begin to abuse their prosperity, to serve their lust and corruption. This we learn from Luke 17:26, etc.

2. Those apostates shall make great opposition to the church of God. The church shall be threatened with a sudden and entire overthrow by them. It is said, Satan shall gather them together to battle, as the sand on the sea shore; and they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city. So that this beloved city shall seem just ready to be swallowed up by them: for her enemies shall not only threaten her, but shall actually have gathered together against her and not only so, but shall have besieged her, shall have compassed her about on every side.- However, there is nothing in the prophecy which seems to bold forth, that the church had actually fallen into their hands, as it had fallen into the hands of Antichrist, to whom it was given to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. God will never suffer this to take place after the kill d Antichrist, for then the day of her mourning shall be ended, alarmingly threatened with utter and sudden destruction.

3. Now the state of things will seem most remarkably to call for Christ's immediate appearance to judgment. For then the world shall be filled with the most aggravated wickedness. For much the greater part of the world shall

have become visibly wicked and open enemies to Christ, and their wickedness shall be dreadfully aggravated by their apostasy. Before the fall of Antichrist, most of the world was full of visibly wicked men. But the grease' part of these are poor heathens, who never enjoyed the light of the gospel; and others are those that have been bred up in the Mahometan or popish darkness. But these have apostatized from the christian church, the visible kingdom of Christ, in which they enjoyed the Heat light and privileges of glorious times, which shall be incomparably greater than the light and privileges which the church of God enjoys now. This apostasy will be most like the apostasy of the devils of any that ever had before been: for the devils apostatized, and turned enemies to Christ, though they the light of heaven; and these, will apostate, and turn enemies to him, though they have enjoyed the light and privileges of the glorious times of the church. That such should turn open and avowed enemies to Christ, and should seek the ruin of his church, will cry aloud for such immediate vengeance as was executed on the devils when they fell.

The wickedness of the world will remarkably call for Christ's immediate appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance on them, because of the way in which they shall manifest their wickedness. This will be by scoffing and blaspheming Christ and his holy religion; and particularly, they will scoff at the notion of Christ's coming to judgment, of which the church shall be in expectation. For now doubtless will be the greatest fulfillment of 2 Peter 3:3, 4. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." They shall be in no expectation of the coming of Christ to Judgment and shall laugh at the notion. They shall trample all such things under foot, and shall give up themselves to their lusts, or to eat and drink, and wallow in sensual delights, as though they were to be here for ever. They shall despise the warnings the church shall give them of the coming of Christ to judgment, as the people of the old world despised what Noah told them of the approaching flood, and as the people of Sodom did when Lot said to them, The Lord will destroy the city. Their wickedness on this account will cry aloud to heaven for Christ's appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance of his enemies; and because they shall exercise their

wickedness in a wicked design and violent attempt against the holy city of God, wherein, for so long a time, so much of the religion of Christ had been seen.

And the great number of the wicked is another thing which shall especially call for Christ's coming: for the world then will doubtless be exceeding full of people, having continued so long in so great a state of prosperity, without such terrible desolating extremities, as wars, pestilence's, and the like, to diminish them. And the major part of this world, which shall be so populous, will be wicked contemptuous apostates from God. Undoubtedly the world then will be by far fuller of wickedness than ever it was before from its foundation. And if the wickedness of the old world, when men began to multiply on the earth, called for the destruction of the world by a deluge of water, this wickedness will as much call for its destruction by a deluge of fire.

Again, the circumstances of the church at that day will also eminently call for the immediate appearing of Christ, as they will be compassed about by their blasphemous murderous enemies, Just ready to be swallowed up by them. And it will be a most distressing time with the church, excepting the comfort they will have in the hope of deliverance from God: for all other help will seem to fail. The case will be come to the last extremity, and there will be an immediate need that Christ should come to their deliverance. And though the church shall be so eminently threatened, yet so will Providence order it, that it shall be preserved till Christ shall appear in his immediate presence, coming in the glory of his Father with all his holy angels. And then will come the time when all The elect shall be gathered in. That work of conversion which has been carried on from the beginning of the church after the fall through all those ages, shall be carried on no more. There never shall another soul be converted. Every one of those many millions' whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world, shall be brought in; not one soul shall be lost. And the mystical body of Christ, which has been growing since it first began in the days of Adam, will be complete as to the number of parts, having every one of its members. In this respect, the work of redemption will now be finished. And now the end for which the means of grace have been instituted shall be obtained. – All that effect which was intended, shall now be accomplished.

A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 9

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

THUS I have shown how the success of Christ's redemption has been accomplished during the continuance of the Christian church under the means of grace. We have seen what great revolutions there have been, and are to be, during this space of time, how the great wheels of Providence have gone round for the accomplishment of that kind of success of Christ's purchase, which consists in the bestowment of grace on the elect. In the prosecution of the subject, we are come to the time when all the wheel; have gone round the course of things in this state of it is finished, and all things are ripe for Christ's coming to judgment.

The success of Christ's purchase is of two kinds, consisting either in grace or glory. The success consisting in the former of these, is to be seen in those works of God which are wrought during those ages that the church is continued under the means of grace; and the success, is consisting in the latter, will chiefly be accomplished at the day of judgment. – Having already shown how the former kind of success has been accomplished, I come now to the latter; viz. that kind of success which is accomplished in the bestowment of glory on the church at the day of judgment.-And here I would mention two or three things in general, concerning this kind of success of Christ's purchase.

1. How great the success of Christ's purchase is, appears chiefly in this very thing. The success of Christ's purchase summarily consists in the salvation of

the elect. But this bestowment of glory is eminently called their salvation: Hebrews 9:28. "to them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." So it is called redemption. being eminently that wherein the redemption of the church consists. So in Ephesians 4:30. "Sealed unto the day of redemption;" and Luke 21:28. and Ephesians 1:14. "Redemption of the purchased possession."

2. All that precedes this, while the church IS under the means of grace, is only to make way for the success which is to be accomplished in the bestowment of glory. The means of grace, and God's grace itself, is bestowed on the elect to make them meet for glory.

3. All those glorious things which were brought to pass for the church while under the means of grace, are but images and shadows of this. So were those glorious things which were accomplished for the church in the days of Constantine the Great, and so is all that glory which is to succeed the fall of Antichrist. However great, it is all but a shadow of what will be bestowed at the day of judgment. But I hasten more particularly to show how this kind of success will be accomplished.

I. Christ will appear in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels, coming in the clouds of heaven. When she world is thus revelling in their wickedness, and compassing the holy city, just ready to destroy it, then shall the glorious Redeemer make his appearance. He through whom this redemption has all along been carried on, shall appear in the sight of the world the light of his glory shall break forth, the whole world shall immediately have notice of it, and they shall lift up their eyes and behold this wonderful sight. Every eye shall see him, (Revelation 1:7.) Christ shall appear coming in his human nature, in that same body (now glorified) which was brought forth in a stable, and laid in a manger, which afterwards was so cruelly used and nailed to the cross.

Men shall now lift up their eyes, and see him coming in such majesty and glory as now is to us utterly inconceivable. The glory of the sun in a clear firmament, will he but darkness in comparison of it and all the glorious angels and archangels shall attend him: thousand thousands ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand round about him. – How different a person will he then appear from what he did at his first coming, when he was

as a root out of a dry ground, a poor, despised, afflicted man! How different now is his appearance, in the midst of those glorious angels, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places, attending him as his ordinary servants, from what it was when in the midst of a ring of soldiers, with his mock robe and his crown of thorns, buffeted and spit upon, or hanging on the cross between two thieves, with a multitude of his enemies triumphing over him!

This will be a most unexpected sight to the wicked world: it will come as a cry at midnight: they shall be taken in the midst of their wickedness, and it will give them a dreadful alarm. It will at once break up their revels, their eating, and drinking, and carousing. It will put in quick end to the design of the great army that will when be compassing the camp of the saints: it will make them let drop their weapons out of their hands. The world, which will then be very full of people, most of whom will be wicked men, will then be filled with glorious shrieking and crying; for all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him, (Revelation 1:7.) And where shall they hide themselves? How will the sight of that awful majesty terrify them when taken in the midst of their wickedness! Then they shall see who he is, what kind of a person he is, whom they have mocked and scoffed at, and whose church they have been endeavouring to overthrow. This sight will change their voice. The voice of their laughter and singing, while they are marrying and giving in marriage, and the voice of their scoffing, shall be changed into hideous, hellish yelling. Their countenances shall be changed from a show of carnal mirth, haughty pride, and contempt of God's people; they shall put on ghastly terror and amazement; and trembling and chattering of teeth shall seize upon them.

But with respect to the saints, it shall be a joyful and most glorious sight to them: for this sight will at once deliver them from all fear of their enemies, who were before compassing them about, just ready to swallow them up. Deliverance shall come in their extremity: the glorious captain of their salvation shall appear for them, at a time when no other help appeared. Then shall they lift up their heads, and their redemption shall be drawing nigh, (Luke 21:28.) Christ will appear with infinite majesty, yet at the same time they shall see infinite love in his countenance. And thus to see their Redeemer coming in the clouds of heaven, will fill their hearts full of gladness. Their countenances also shall be changed, not as the countenances

of the wicked, but from being sorrowful, to be exceedingly joyful and triumphant. And now the work of redemption will be finished in another sense, viz. that the whole church shall be completely and eternally freed from all persecution and molestation from wicked men and devils.

II. The last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and the living changed. God sent forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, to gather together his elect from the four corners of the earth in a mystical sense, before the destruction of Jerusalem; i.e. he sent forth the apostles, and others, to preach the gospel all over the world. And so in a mystical sense the great trumpet was blown at the beginning of the glorious times of the church. But now the great trumpet is blown in a more literal sense, with a mighty sound which shakes the earth. There will be a great signal given by a mighty sound made, which is called the voice of the archangel, as being the angel of greatest strength,

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

On the sound of the great trumpet, the dead shall be raised every where. Now the number of the dead is very great. How many has death cut down since the world has stood. But then the number will be much greater, the world shall have stood longer, and through most of the remaining time it will doubtless be much fuller of inhabitants than ever it has been. All these shall now rise from the dead. The graves shall be opened in all parts of the world, and the sea shall give up the innumerable dead that are in it, (Revelation 20:13.)

And now all the inhabitants that ever shall have been upon the face of the earth, shall all appear upon earth at once. Among these will be Adam and Eve, the first parents of mankind, Abel, and Seth, and Methuselah, and all the saints who were their contemporaries; Noah and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the prophets of Israel and holy confessors. Among them will appear all the holy apostles of Jesus Christ, and all the saints of their times; all the holy martyrs who fell under furious persecutions. There will be found all who belonged to the church in its wilderness-state, during the dark times of

Antichrist, and all who have suffered under his persecuting cruelty with all the saints of past and the present time, and that shall be to the end of the world. – Now also all the enemies of the church in all the ages shall appear again, and the wicked heathens, and Jews, and Mahometans, and papists. Sinners of all sorts, demure hypocrites, profane sensualists, heretics, deists, and all cruel persecutors, and all who shall have died in sin, shall come together.

And at the same time that the dead are raised, the living shall be changed. The bodies of the wicked who shall then be living, shall be so charred as to fit them for eternal torment, and the bodies of all the living saints shall be changed to be like unto Christ's glorious body 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52, 53.- The bodies of the saints shall be so changed as to render them for ever incapable of pain, or affliction or uneasiness, and all that dullness and heaviness and all that deformity, which their bodies had before, shall be put off, and they shall put on strength and beauty, activity and incorruptible unfading glory. And in such glory shall the bodies of all the risen saints appear.

And now the work of redemption shall be finished in another respect, viz. that all the elect shall now be actually redeemed troth in soul and body. Before this, the work of redemption, as to its actual success, was but incomplete; for only the souls of the redeemed were actually saved and glorified, excepting in some few instances: but now all the bodies of the saints shall be saved and glorified together; all the elect shall be glorified in the whole man, the soul and body in union.

III. Now shaft the saints be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and all wicked men and devils shall be arraigned before the judgment-seat. When the dead saints are raised, then the whole church, consisting of all the elect through all ages, will stand together on the earth, at least all excepting those few whose bodies were glorified before, and then they shall all mount up as with wings to meet Christ. It seems that Christ, when he comes to judgment, will not come quite to the ground, but his throne will be fixed in the airy region, whence he may be seen by all that vast multitude that shall be gathered before him. The saints therefore shall ascend up to their Saviour. Thus the apostle tells us, that when the dead in Christ are raised, and the living changed, then hose who are alive and remain, shall be caught up

together with them, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. What a wonderful sight will that be, when all the many millions of saints are thus mounting up.

Then shall the work of redemption be finished in another respect: then shall the whole church be perfectly and for ever delivered from this present evil world, shall take their everlasting leave of this earth, where they have been strangers, and which has been for the most part a scene of trouble and sorrow: where the devil has reigned as god, and has greatly molested them, and which has been such a scene of wickedness and abomination, where Christ their Lord has been cruelly used; and where they have been so hated, reproached, and persecuted. They shall leave it, and shall never set foot on it again. And there shall be an everlasting separation made between them and wicked men. Before, they were mixed together, and it was impossible in many instances to determine their characters; but now all shall become visible; both saints and sinners shall appear in their true characters and forms. – Then shall all the church be seen ascending to the right hand of Christ. Abut a mighty cloud of them will there be!

And then also the work of redemption will be finished in another respect, viz. that then the church shall all be withered together. They all belonged to one society before, but yet were greatly separated with respect to the place of their habitation. Some were in heaven, and some on earth, and those who were on earth were separated, many of them by wide oceans, and vast continents. But now they shall all be gathered together, never to be separated any more. And not only shall all the of the church now be gathered together, but all shall be gathered unto their Head, into his immediate glorious presence, never to be separated from him any more.

At the same time, all wicked men and devils shall be brought before the judgment seat of Christ. These shall be gathered to the left hand of Christ, and as it seems, will still remain upon the earth, and shall not be caught up into the air, as the saints shall be. The devil, that old serpent, shall now be dragged up out of hell. He, that first procured the fall and misery of mankind; and has so set himself against their redemption and has all along shown himself such an inveterate enemy to the Redeemer – shall never more have anything to do with the church of God, nor be suffered in the least to afflict or molest any member of it for ever. Instead of that, now he must be judged

and received of his deeds. Now is come the time which he has always dreaded, the time wherein he must be judged, and receive his full punishment. He who by his temptation maliciously procured Christ's crucifixion, and triumphed as though he had obtained the victory, even he shall see the consequences of that death which he procured. Now he must stand before that same Jesus, to be judged, condemned, and eternally destroyed by him. If Satan the prince of hell, trembles at the thought of it thousand of years beforehand, how much more will he tremble, proud and stubborn as he is, when he comes to stand at Christ's bar!

Then shall he also stand at the bar of the saints, whom he has so hated, afflicted, and molested: for the saints shall judge him with Christ: 1 Corinthians 6:3. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Now shall he be as it were subdued under the church's feet, agreeable to Romans 16:20.- Satan, when he first tempted our first parents to sin deceitfully and lyingly told them, that they should be as gods: but little did he think that they should indeed be so far as gods, as to be assessors with God to judge him. Much less did he think, that one of that nature which he then tempted, one of the posterity of those very persons whom he tempted should actually be united to God; that as God he should judge the world, and that he himself must stand trembling and astonished before his judgment-seat. But thus all the devils in hell, who have so opposed Christ and his kingdom, shall now at last stand in utmost amazement and horror before Christ and his church, who shall appear to condemn them.

Now also shall all Christ's other enemies be brought to appear before him. Now shall proud scribes and Pharisees, who had such a malignant hatred of Christ while in his state of humiliation, and who persecuted him to death, be made to come. Now those before whose judgment-seat Christ once stood, as a malefactor at their bar-and those who mocked him, buffeted him, and spit in his face-shall see Christ in his awful glory, as forewarned Matthew 26:64, 65. Then Christ was before their judgment-seat; but now it is their turn to stand before his judgment-seat with inconceivable horror and amazement, with ghastly countenances, quaking limbs, chattering teeth, and knees smiting one against another.

Now also all the cruel enemies and persecutors of the church that have been

in all ages, shall come in sight together. Pharaoh and the Egyptians, Antiochus, Epiphanes, the malignant scribes and Pharisees, the persecuting heathen emperors, Julian the apostate, the truer persecuting popes and papists, Gog and Magog, shall all appear at once before the judgment-seat of Christ. They and the saints who have in every age been persecuted by them shall come in sight, and must now confront one another before the great Judge. And now shall the saints on their glorious thrones be made the judges of those unjust kings and rulers who before judged and condemned them, and put them to cruel death. Now shall those persecutors behold the glory to which they are arrived, whom they before so cruelly despised, and so cruelly treated. Thus wonderfully will the face of things be altered; now will all things be coming to rights.

IV. The righteousness of the church shall be manifested, and all the wickedness of their enemies shall be brought to light. Those saints who had been the objects of hatred, reproach, and contempt in the world; reviled and condemned by their persecutors without a cause, shall now be fully vindicated. They shall now appear clothed with the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness. It shall be most manifest before the world, that Christ's righteousness is theirs, and they shall gloriously shine forth in it. Then shall their inherent holiness be made manifest, and all their good works be brought to light. The good things which they did in secret shall now be manifested openly. Those holy ones of God, who had been treated as the filth and offscouring of the earth, as if not fit to live, as worse than beasts or devils, shall now appear to have been the excellent of the earth. Now God will bring forth their righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noon-day. And now it shall appear who indeed were those wicked persons that were not fit to live, when all the wickedness of the enemies of Christ and his church, their pride, their malice, their cruelty, their hatred of true religion, shall be set forth in all its horrid acts, in its proper colours.

And now the righteous may be heard before this great Judge, who could not be heard before those unjust judges. Now they shall declare their cause, and rise up in judgment against their persecutors and shall declare how they had been treated by them. And now all the wickedness of the wicked shall be brought to light, even all their wickedness, and their very hearts shall be opened to view, and as it were fumed inside out, before the bright light of

that great day. Things which have been spoken in the ear, in the closet, and done in the dark, shall be manifested in the light, and proclaimed before angels and men.

V. The sentence shall be pronounced on the righteous and the wicked. Christ, the glorious Judge, shall pass that blessed sentence on the church at his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This sentence shall be pronounced with infinite love, and the voice will cause every heart to flow with joy. Thus Christ shall pronounce a sentence of justification on millions, who before had a sentence of condemnation passed upon them by their persecuting rulers. He will thus put honour upon those who have been before despised: he will own them for his, and will put a crown of glory upon their heads before the world, and then shall they shine forth as the sun with Jesus Christ in glory and joy, in the sight of all their enemies.

And then shall the sentence of condemnation be passed on the wicked, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Thus shall the church's enemies be condemned, in which sentence of condemnation, the holy martyrs, who have suffered from them, shall concur. When the words of this sentence are pronounced they will strike every heart of those at the left hand with inconceivable horror and amazement. Every syllable of it will be more terrible than a stream of lightning through their hearts. What horrible shrieking, queering, gnashing of teeth, distortions of countenance, hideous looks, hideous actions, and hideous voices, will be seen through all that vast throne!

VI. Upon this, Christ and all his saints, and all the holy angels ministering to them, shall leave this lower world, and ascend towards the highest heavens. Christ shall ascend in as great glory as he descended, and in some respects greater: for now he shall ascend with his elect church with him, glorified in body and soul. Christ's first ascension to heaven soon after his own resurrection was very glorious. But this his second ascension, with his mystical body, his whole church, shall be far more glorious. The redeemed church shall all ascend with him in a most joyful and triumphant manner: and all their enemies and persecutors, who shall be left behind to be consumed, shall see the sight, and hear their songs. – And thus Christ's church shall for ever leave this accursed world, to go into the highest heavens, the paradise of

God, the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

VII. When they are gone, this world shall be set on fire, and be turned into a great furnace wherein all the enemies of Christ and his church shall be tormented for ever and ever. This is manifest by 2 Peter 3:7.

"But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men."

When Christ and his church are ascended to a distance from this world-that miserable company of the wicked being left behind, m have their sentence executed upon them here- then, this whole lower world shall be set on fire, either from heaven, or by fire breaking out of the bowels of the earth, or both, as It was with the water in the time of the deluge. However, this lower world shall be set all on fire. How will it strike the wicked with horror, when the fire begins to lay hold upon them, and they find no way to escape from it! W hat shrieking and crying will there be among those many millions, when they begin to enter into this great furnace, when the whole world shall be a furnace of the fiercest and most raging heat! insomuch that the apostle Peter says, (2 Peter 3:10,12.) that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up; and the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shalt men with fervent heat." And so fierce shall be its heat, that it shall burn the earth into its very centre; which seems to be what is meant,

"For a fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."
(Deuteronomy 32:22.)

And here shall all the persecutors of the church of God burn in everlasting fire, who had before burnt the saints at the stake; and shall suffer torments far beyond all that their utmost wit and malice could inflict on the saints. And

here the bodies of all the wicked shall burn, and be tormented to all eternity, and never be consumed; and the wrath of God shall be poured out on their souls. Though the souls of the wicked in hell do now suffer dreadful punishment, yet their punishment will be so increased at the day of Judgment, that what they suffered before, is, in comparison of it, as an imprisonment to the execution which follows it. And now the devil, that old serpent, shall receive his full punishment; now that for fear of which he before trembled, shall fully come upon him. This world, which formerly used to be the place of his kingdom, where he set up himself as God, shall now be the place of his complete punishment, of full and everlasting torment.-And in this, one design of the work of redemption, viz. putting Christ's enemies under his feet, shall be perfectly accomplished. His enemies shall now be made his footstool, in the fullest degree. Now shall be the most perfect fulfillment of Genesis 3:15. "It shall bruise thy head."

VIII. At the same time, all the church shall enter with Christ, their glorious Lord, into the highest heavens, and there shall enter on the state of their highest and eternal blessedness and glory. While the lower world, which they have left under their feet, is seized with the fire of God's vengeance, and flames are kindling upon it, and the wicked are entering into everlasting fire, the whole church shall enter, with their glorious Head, and all the holy angels attending, in a joyful manner, into the eternal paradise of God, the palace of the great Jehovah, their heavenly Father. The gates shall open wide for them to enter, and there Christ will bring them into his chambers in the highest sense. Here Christ will bring them, and present them in glory to his Father, saying, "Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me;" as much as to say, Here am I, with every one of those whom thou gavest me from eternity to take the care of, that they might be redeemed and glorified' end to redeem whom I have done and suffered so much, and to make way for whose redemption I have for so many ages been accomplishing such great changes. Here they are now perfectly redeemed in body and soul; I have delivered them from all the ill fruits of the fall, and freed them from all their enemies; I have brought them all together into one glorious society, and united them all in myself; I have openly justified them before all angels and men, and here I have brought them all away from that accursed world where they have suffered so much and have brought them before thy throne: I have done all

that for them which thou hast appointed me: I have perfectly cleansed them in my blood, and here they are in perfect holiness, shining with thy perfect image.

And then the Father will accept of them, own them all for his children, and welcome them to the eternal and perfect inheritance and glory of his house, and will on this occasion give more glorious manifestations of his love than ever before, and will admit them to a more full and perfect enjoyment of himself.

Now shall be the marriage of the Lamb in the most perfect sense. The commencement of the glorious times of the church on earth, after the fall of Antichrist, is represented as the marriage of the Lamb; but after this we read of another marriage of the Lamb, at the close of the day of judgment. – After the beloved disciple had given an account of the day of judgment, (Revelation 20:21) he gives an account, that he saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Christ shall bring his church into his Father's house in heaven, as his bride, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

The bridegroom and the bride shall then enter into heaven, both having only their wedding-robcs, attended with all the glorious angels. And there they enter on the feast and joys of their marriage before the Father, they shall then begin an everlasting wedding-day. This shall be the day of the gladness of Christ's heart, wherein he will greatly rejoice, and all the saints shall rejoice with him. Christ shall rejoice over his bride, and the bride shall rejoice in her husband, in the state of her consummate and everlasting blessedness, of which we have a particular description in the 21st and 22d chapters of Revelation.

And now the whole work of redemption is finished. Now the top-stone of the building is laid. In the progress of our discourse, we have followed the church of God in all her great changes, all her tossings to and fro, all her storms and tempests through the many ages of the world. We have seen her enter the harbour, and landed in the highest heavens, in complete and eternal glory. We have gone through the several ages of time, as the providence and word of God have led us. We have seen all the church's enemies fixed in endless misery, and have seen the church presented in her perfect redemption

before her Father in heaven, there to enjoy this most unspeakable and inconceivable glory and blessedness, and there we leave her to enjoy this glory throughout the never-ending ages of eternity.

Now all Christ's enemies will be perfectly put under his feet, and he shall have his most perfect triumph over sin and Satan, and all his instruments, and death, and hell. Now shall all the promises made to Christ by God the Father before the foundation of the world, the promises of the covenant of redemption, be fully accomplished. Christ shall now perfectly have obtained the joy set before him, for which he undertook those great sufferings in his state of humiliation. Now shall all the hopes and expectations of the saints be fulfilled. The state of the church before, was progressive and preparatory: but now she is arrived to her most perfect state of glory. All the glory of the church on earth, is but a faint shadow of this her consummate glory in heaven.

Now Christ the great Redeemer shall be most perfectly glorified, God the Father shall be glorified in him, and the Holy Ghost shall be most fully glorified in the perfection of his work on the hearts of all the church. – And now shall that new heaven and new earth, or the renewed state of things, be completely finished, after the material frame of the old heavens and old earth is destroyed:

"And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." (Revelation 21:1)

– And now will the great Redeemer have perfected every thing that appertains to the work of redemption, which he began so soon after the fall of man. And who can conceive of the triumph of those praises which shall be sung in heaven on this great occasion, so much greater than that on the fall of Antichrist. The beloved disciple John (Revelation 19) seems to want expressions to describe those praises, and says, "It was as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." But much more inexpressible will those praises be, which will be sung in heaven after the final consummation of all things.

How shall the praises of that vast and glorious multitude be as mighty thunderings indeed!

How are all the former things passed away, and what a glorious state are things fixed in to remain to all eternity! – And as Christ, when he first entered upon the work of redemption, had the kingdom committed to him of the Father, and as he took on himself the administration of the affairs of the universe, to manage all so as to subserve the purposes of this affair; so now, the work being finished, he will deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, 1 Corinthians 15:24. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." Not that Christ shall cease to reign after this; for It is said, Luke 1:33. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end;" and Daniel 7:14. "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." But the meaning is, that Christ shall deliver up that kingdom or dominion which he has over the world, as the Father's delegate or vicegerent, which the Father committed to him, to be managed in subserviency to this great design of redemption. The end of this commission, or delegation, which he had from the Father, seems to be to subserve this particular design of redemption; and therefore, when that design is fully accomplished, the commission will cease, and Christ will deliver it up to the Father, from whom he received it.

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A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

by Jonathan Edwards

SECTION 4

PART 10

IMPROVEMENT OF THE WHOLE.

I PROCEED now to enter upon some improvement of the whole that has been said from this doctrine.

I. Hence we may learn how great a work is this of redemption. We have now had it, though in a very imperfect manner, set forth, in its whole progress, from its first beginning after the fall, to its consummation. We have seen how God has carried on this building, by a long succession of wonderful works, advancing it higher and higher from one age to another, till the top-stone is laid. And now let us consider how great a work this is. Do men, when they behold some great edifices, admire their magnificence, how well may we admire the greatness of this building of God, which he builds up age after age! There are three things exhibited to us in what has been said, which especially show the greatness of the work of redemption.

1. The greatness of those particular evens, and dispensations of providence, by which it is accomplished. How great are those things which God has done, which are but so many parts of this great work! What great things were done in the world to prepare the way for Christ's coming to purchase, and what great things were done in the actual purchase of redemption! What a wonderful thing was accomplished to put Christ in an immediate capacity for this purchase, viz. his incarnation, that God should become man! And what great things were done in that purchase, that a person, who is the eternal Jehovah, should live upon earth for four or five and thirty years together, in a mean, despised condition, that he should spend his life in such labours and

sufferings, and that at last he should die upon the cross! And what great things have been done to accomplish the success of Christ's redemption! what great things to put him into a capacity to accomplish this success! For this purpose he rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and all things were made subject to him. How many miracles have been wrought, what mighty revolutions have been brought to pass in the world already, and how much greater shall be brought to pass, in order to it!

2. The number of those great events by which God carries on this work, shows the greatness of the work. Those mighty revolutions are so many as to fill up many ages. The particular wonderful events by which the work of creation was carried on filled up six days, but the great dispensations by which the work of redemption is carried on, are so many, that they fill up six or seven thousand years at least, as we have reason to conclude from the word of God. – There were great things wrought in this affair before the flood, and in the flood the world was once destroyed by water, and God's church was so wonderfully preserved from it in order to carry on this work. And after the flood, what great things did God work relating to the resettling of the world, to the building of Babel, the dispensing of the nations, the shortening at the days of man's life, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and that long series of wonderful providence's relating, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph; and those wonders in Egypt, and at the Red sea. in the wilderness, and in Canaan in Joshua's time, and by a long succession of wonderful providence's from age to age towards the nation of the Jews.

What great things were wrought by God, in so open overturning the world before Christ came, to make way for his coming! What great things were done also in Christ's time, and after that, in overturning Satan's kingdom in the heathen empire, and in so preserving his church in the dark times of popery, and in bringing about the Reformation! – How many great and wonderful things will be effected in accomplishing the glorious times of the church, and at Christ's last coming on the day of judgment, in the destruction of the world, and in carrying the whole church into heaven!

3. The glorious issue of this whole affair. in the perfect and eternal destruction of the wicked, and in the consummate glory of the righteous. And now let us once more take a view of this building, now all is finished and the

top-stone laid. It appeared in a glorious height in the apostle's time, and much more glorious in the time of Constantine, and will appear much more glorious still after the fall of Antichrist; but at the consummation of all things, it appears in an immensely more glorious height than ever before. Now it appears in its greatest magnificence, as a complete lofty structure, whose top reaches to the heaven of heavens; a building worthy of the great God, the King of kings.

And from what has been said, one may argue, that the work of redemption is the greatest of all God's works of which we have any notice, and it is the end of all his other works. – It appears plainly from what has been said, that tints is the principal of all God's works of providence, and that all are subordinate to the great affair of redemption. We see that all the revolutions in the world are to subserve this grand design. This shows how much greater the work of redemption is, than the work of creation: because it is the end of it; as the use of a house is the end of the building it. But the work of redemption, is the sum of all God's works of providence; all are subordinate to it: so the work of the new creation is more excellent than the old. So it ever is, that when one thing is removed by God to make way for another. the new one excels the old. Thus the temple excelled the tabernacle; the new covenant the old: the new dispensation of the gospel the dispensation of Moses; the throne of David the throne of Saul, the priesthood of Christ the priesthood of Aaron; the new Jerusalem the old; and so the new creation far excels the old.

God has used the creation for no other purpose, but to subserve the designs of this affair. To answer this end, he hath created and disposed of mankind, to this the angels, to this the earth. to this the highest heavens. God created the world to provide a spouse and a kingdom for his Son: and the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, and the spiritual marriage of the spouse to him, is what the whole creation labours and travails in pain to bring to pass. This work of redemption is so much the greatest of all the works of God, that all other works are to be looked upon either as parts of it, or appendages to it, or are some way reducible to it; and so all the decrees of God some way or other belong to that eternal covenant of redemption which was between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world. Every decree of God is some way or other reducible to that covenant. And seeing this work of redemption is so great, we need not wonder that the angels desire to look into it. And we

need not wonder that so much is made of it in Scripture, that it is so much insisted on in the histories and prophecies, and songs of the Bible; for the work of Redemption is the great subject of the whole, its doctrines, its promises, its types, its songs, in histories, and its prophecies.

II. Hence we may learn how God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending of all things. Such are the characters and titles we find often ascribed to him in Scripture. Isaiah 12:4. "Who hath wrought and none it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last, I am he." And particularly does the Scripture ascribe such titles to God, where it speaks of providence, as it relates to, and is summed up in the great work of redemption; (as Isaiah 44:6, 7. and 48:11-12.) Therefore, when Christ reveals the future great events of providence relating to his church and people, to his disciple John, he often reveals himself under this character. Revelation 1:8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." So again, verse 10,11. "I heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Alpha and Omega being the names of the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet, it signifies the same as his being the first and the last, and the beginning and the ending: as Revelation 21:6. "And he said unto me, it is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." And so chapter 22:12, 13. "And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every, man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

We have seen on what design ('oaf began the course of his providence in the beginning of the generations of men and how he has all along carried things on agreeably to the same design without ever failing, and how at last the conclusion and final issue of things are to God, and therefore may well now cry out with the apostle, Romans 11:33. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" and verse 36. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

We have seen how other things came to an end one after another; how states, and kingdoms, and empires, fell, and came to nothing, even the greatest and strongest of them; we have seen how the world has been often overturned, and will be more remarkable yet, we have seen how it was first destroyed by

water, and how at fact it shall be utterly destroyed by fire: but yet God remains the same through all ages. He was before the beginning of this course of things, and he will be after the end of them (Psalm 112:25, 26.) Thus God is he who is, and who was, and who is to come.

We have seen, in a variety of instances, how all other gods perish. Those in the nations about Cannan, and throughout the Roman empire, are all destroyed and their worship long since overthrown. We have heard how Antichrist, who has called himself a god on earth, how Mahomet, who claims religious honours; how all the gods of the heathen through the world, will come to an end, and how Satan, the great dragon, that old serpent, who has set up himself as god of this world, will be cast into the lake of fire, there to suffer his complete punishment: but Jehovah remained his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and of his dominion there is no end. We have seen what mighty changes there have been in the world, but God is unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

We began at the head of the stream of divine providence, and have traced it through its various windings, till we are come to the end where it issues. As it began in God, so it ends in him. God is the infinite ocean into which it emptied itself.-Providence is like a mighty wheel, whose circumference is so high that it is dreadful; with the glory of the God of Israel above upon it, as it is represented in Ezekiel's vision. We have seen the revolution of this wheel, and how as it was from God, its return has been to God again. All the events of divine providence are like the links of a chain; the first link is from God, and the last is to him.

III. We may see by what has been said, how Christ has in all things the pre-eminence. For he is the great Redeemer, and therefore the work of redemption being the sum of God's works of providence, shows the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as being above all, and through all, and in all. That God intended the world for his Son's use in the affair of redemption is one reason why he created the world by him, Ephesians 3:9-12. What has been said, shows how all the purposes of God are purposed in Christ; and how he is before all, and above all. All things consist in him, are governed by him and are for him, Colos. 1:15-18. God makes him his first-loom, higher than the kings of the earth, and sets his throne above their thrones. God has always upheld his kingdom, when others have come to an end; that appears at last

above all, however greatly opposed for so many ages. All other kingdoms fall, but his kingdom is the last, and never gives place to any other.

We see, that whatever changes there are, and however highly Christ's enemies exalt themselves, yet he reigns in uncontrolled power and immense glory: in the end, his people are all perfectly saved and made happy, and all his enemies become his footstool. – And thus God gives the world to his Son for his inheritance.

IV. The consideration of what has been said, may greatly serve to show us the consistency, order, and beauty, of God's works of providence. If we behold events in any other view, all will look like confusion, like the tossing of waves, things will look as though one confused revolution came to pass after another, merely by blind chance, without any regular or certain end. But if we consider the events of providence in the light in which they have been set before us, and in which the Scriptures set them before us, they appear an orderly series of events, all wisely directed in excellent harmony and consistence, tending all to one end. The wheels of providence are not turned round by blind chance, but are full of eyes round about, (as Ezekiel represents them,) and are guided by the Spirit of God: where the Spirit goes, they go. All God's works of providence, through all ages, meet at last, as so many lines meeting in one centre.

God's work of providence, like that of creation, is but one. The events of providence are not so many distinct, independent works but rather so many different parts of one work, one regular scheme. They are all united, just as the several parts of one building: there are many stones, many pieces of timber, but all are so joined, and fitly formed together, that they make but one building, they have all but one foundation, and are united at last in one top-stone.

God's providence may not unfitly be compared to a large and long river, having innumerable branches, beginning in different regions, and at a great distance one from another, and all conspiring to one common issue. After their very diverse and apparent contrary courses, they all collect together, the nearer they come to their common end, and at length discharge themselves at one mouth into the same ocean. The different streams of this river are apt to appear like mere confusion to us, because of our limited sight, whereby we

cannot see the whole at once. A man who sees but one or two streams at a time cannot tell what their course tends to. Their course seems very crooked, and different streams seem to run for a while different and contrary ways: and if we view things at a distance, there seem to be innumerable obstacles and impediments in the way as rocks and mountains, and the like to hinder their ever uniting, and coming to the ocean; but yet if we trace them, they all unite at last, all come to the same issue. disgorging themselves in one into the same great ocean. Not one of all the streams fail.

V. From the whole that has been said, we may strongly argue, that the Scriptures are the word of God, because they alone inform us what God aims at, in his works. God doubtless is pursuing some design, and carrying on some scheme, in the various changes and revolutions which from age to age came to pass in the world. It is most reasonable to suppose, that there is some certain great design to which Providence subordinates all great successive changes in affairs. It is reasonable to suppose, that all revolutions, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, are but the various parts of the same scheme, all conspiring to bring to pass that great event which the great Creator and Governor of the world has ultimately in view; and that the scheme will not be finished, nor the design fully accomplished, and the great and ultimate event fully brought to pass, till the end of the world, and the last revolution is brought about.

Now there is nothing else that informs us what this scheme and design of God in his works is, but the Holy Scriptures. – Nothing else pretends to set in view the whole series of God’s works of providence from beginning to end, and to inform at how all things were from God at first, for what end they are, how they were ordered from the beginning, how they will proceed to the end of the world, what they will come to at last, and how then all things shall be to God. Nothing else but the Scriptures has any presence for showing any manner of regular scheme or drift in those revolutions which God orders from age to age. Nothing else pretends to show what God would effect by the things which he has done, is doing, and will do; what he seeks and intends by them. Nothing else pretends to show, with any distinctness or certainty, how the world began, or to tell us the true original of things. Nothing but the Scriptures set forth how God governed the world from the beginning of the generations of men upon the earth, in an orderly history; and nothing else sets

before us how he will govern it to the end, by an orderly prophecy of future events, agreeable to the challenge which God makes to the gods, and prophets, and teachers of the heathen, in Isaiah 12:22, 23, "Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods."

Reason shows, that it is fit and requisite, that the intelligent and rational beings of the world should know something of God's scheme and design in his works: for they doubtless are principally concerned. God's great design in his works, is doubtless concerning his reasonable creatures, rather than brute beasts and lifeless things. The revolutions by which God's great design is brought to pass, are doubtless chiefly among them, and concern their state, and not the state of things without life or reason. And therefore surely it is requisite, that they should know something of it, especially since reason teaches, that God has given his rational creatures a capacity of seeing him in his works; for this end, that they may see God's glory in them, and give him that glory. But how can they see God's glory in his works, if they do not know what his design in them is, and what he aims at by what he is doing in the world?

Further, it is fit that mankind should be somewhat informed of God's design in the government of the world, because they are made capable of actively falling in with that design, of promoting it, and acting herein as his friends and subjects. It is therefore reasonable to suppose, that God has given mankind some revelation to inform them of this: but there is nothing else that does it but the Bible. In the Bible this is done. Here we may learn the first original of things, and have an orderly account of the scheme of God's works from the beginning, through those ages that are beyond the reach of all other histories. Here we are told what God aims at in the whole, what is the great end how he has contrived the grand design, and the great things he would accomplish. – Here we have a most rational excellent account of this matter, worthy of God, and exceedingly showing forth the glory of his perfection's, his majesty, his wisdom, his glorious holiness, grace, and love, and his exaltation above all as the first and the last.

Here are shown the various parts of the work of providence and how all are

connected together in a regular, beautiful, and glorious frame. In the Bible we have an account of the whole scheme of providence from the beginning of the world to the end of it, either in history or prophecy, and are told what will become of things at last, how they will issue in the subduing of God's enemies, and in the salvation and glory of his church, and setting up of the everlasting kingdom of his Son.

How rational, worthy, and excellent a revelation is this! and how excellent a book is the Bible, which contains so much beyond all other books in the world and what characters are here of its being indeed a divine book; a book that the great Jehovah has given to mankind for their instruction, without which we should be left in miserable darkness and confusion.

VI. From what has been said, we may see the glorious majesty and power of God in this affair of redemption. His glorious power appears in upholding his church for so long a time, and carrying on this work, upholding it oftentimes when it was but as a lime spark, or as smoking flax, in which the fire was almost extinct, and the powers of earth and hell combined to destroy it. Yet God has never suffered them to quench it, and finally will bring forth judgment unto victory. God glorifies his strength in his church's weakness, in causing his people, who are like a number of little infants, finally to triumph over all earth and hell; so that they shall tread on the lion and adder; the young lion and dragon shall they trample under foot. The glorious power of God appears in conquering his many and mighty enemies by that person who was once an infant in a manger, and appeared as a poor, weak, despised man. He conquers them, and triumphs over them in their own weapon, the cross.

The glorious majesty of God appears in conquering all those mighty enemies of the church one age after another in conquering Satan, that proud and strong spirit, and all his hellish host, in bringing him down under foot, long after he had vaunted himself as god of this world, and when he did his utmost to support himself in his kingdom. Christ, our Michael, has overcome him, the devil was cast out, and there was found no more place for him in heaven; but he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. – He is conquered in that kingdom wherein his pride, and subtlety, and cruelty above all appears, viz. the kingdom of Antichrist. And the glorious power of God appears in thus conquering the devil, and bringing him under foot, after long time given him to strengthen himself to his utmost. He was once

overthrown in his heathen Roman empire, after he had been making himself strong in those parts of the world, ever since the building of Babel. It appears also in overthrowing his kingdom more fatally and universally all over the world, after he had another opportunity to strengthen himself to his utmost for many ages, by setting up those two great kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, and to establish his interest in the heathen world. We have seen how these kingdoms of God's enemies look strong, as though it was impossible to overthrow them, yet, when God appears, they seem to melt away, as the fat of lambs before the fire, and are driven away as the chaff before the whirlwind.

Those mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, which have made such a figure for so many ages, and have trampled the world under foot, when God comes to appear, will vanish away like a shadow, and will disappear of themselves, as the darkness in a room does, when the light is brought in. What are God's enemies in his hands? How is their greatest strength weakness when he rises up! and how weak will they all appear together at the day of judgment! Thus we may apply those words in the song of Moses,

"Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy."
(Exodus 15:6)

And how great doth the majesty of God appear in overturning the world from time to time, to accomplish his designs, and at last in causing the earth and heavens to flee away, for the advancement of the glory of his kingdom!

VII. From what has been said, we may see the glorious wisdom of God. It shows the wisdom of God in creating the world, in that he has created it for such an excellent use, to accomplish in it so glorious a work. And it shows the wisdom of Divine Providence, that he brings such great good out of such great evil, in making the fall and ruin of mankind, which in itself is so sorrowful and deplorable, an occasion of accomplishing such a glorious work as redemption, and of erecting such a glorious building, whose top should reach unto heaven and of bringing his elect to a state of such unspeakable happiness. And how glorious doth the wisdom of God appear in that long

course and series of great changes in the world, in bringing such order out of confusion, in so frustrating the most subtle machinations, and in causing the greatest works of Satan, those in which he has most glorified himself, to be wholly turned into occasions of so much the more glorious triumph of his Son Jesus Christ! And how wonderful is the wisdom of God, in bringing all such manifold and various changes and overturnings in the world to such a glorious and in so directing all to such a glorious period at last, one of them conspires, as the manifold wheels of a most curious machine, at last to strike out such an excellent issue, such a manifestation of the divine glory, such happiness to his people, and such a glorious and everlasting kingdom to his Son!

VIII. From what has been said, we may see the stability of God's mercy and faithfulness to his people, how he never forsakes his inheritance, and remembers his see what reason there was for the words of the text, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall endure for ever and ever, and my Salvation from generation to generation." And now we may see abundant reason for that name of God which he reveals to Moses, Exodus 3:14. "And God said unto Moses, I am that I am:" i.e. I am the same that I was when I entered into covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and ever shall be the same: I shall keep covenant for ever: I am self-sufficient, all sufficient, and immutable.

And now we may see the truth of Psalm 36:5, 6. "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep." And if we consider what has been said, we need not wonder that the psalmist, in the 136th Psalm, so often repeats this, "For his mercy endureth for ever," as if he were in an ecstasy at the consideration of the perpetuity of God's mercy to his church, delighted to think of it, and knew not how but continually to express it. Let us with like pleasure and joy celebrate the everlasting duration of God's mercy and faithfulness to his church and people, and let us be comforted by it under all the dark circumstances of the church of God, and all the uproar and confusions that are in the world, and all the threatenings of the church's enemies. And let us take encouragement earnestly to pray for those glorious things which God has promised to accomplish for his church.

IX. Hence we may learn how happy a society the church of Christ is. For all

this great work is for them. Christ undertook it for their sakes, and for their sakes he carries it on; it is because he has loved them with an everlasting love. For their sakes he overturns states and kingdoms. For their sakes he shakes heaven and earth. He elves men for them, and people for their life. Since they have been precious in God's sight, they have been honourable; and therefore he first gives the blood of his own Son, and then Rives the blood of all their enemies, many thousands and millions, all nations that stand in their way, as a sacrifice to their good.

For their sakes he made the world, and for their sakes he will destroy it, for their sakes he built beaver, and for their sakes he makes his angels ministering spirits. Therefore the apostle says, 1 Corinthians 3:21, etc. "All things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours." How biased is this people who are redeemed from among men, and are the first-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb; who have God in all ages for their protection and help!

"Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency I and shine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt trend upon their high places."
(Deuteronomy 33:29)

Let who will prevail now, let the enemies of the church exalt themselves as much as they will, these are the people last kingdom shall finally be theirs; the kingdom shall finally be given into their hands, and shall not be left to other people. We have seen to what a blessed issue things shall finally be brought, and what glory they shall arrive at, and remain in possession of, for ever and ever; after all the kingdoms of the world are come to an end, and the earth is removed, and mountains are carried into the depth of the sea, or where the sea was, and this lower earth shall all be dissolved. O happy I people, and blessed society I Well may they spend an eternity in praises and hallelujahs to him who hath loved them, and will love them to eternity.

X. And, lastly, hence all wicked men; all that are in a Christless condition, may see their exceeding marry. You that are such, whoever you are, shall

have no part or lot in this matter. You are never the better for any of these things: yea, your guilt is but so much the greater, and the misery you are exposed to so much the more dreadful. You are some of those against whom God in the progress of the work, exercises so much manifest wrath, some of those enemies who are liable to be made Christ's footstool, to be ruled with a rod of iron, and to be dashed in pieces. You are some of the seed of the serpent, to bruise the head of which is one great design of all this work. Whatever glorious things God accomplishes for his church, they will not be glorious to you. The most glorious times of the church are always the most dismal to the wicked and impenitent. (Isaiah 66:14. – And so we find, wherever glorious things are foretold concerning the church, there terrible things are foretold concerning the wicked, its enemies. So it ever has been in remarkable deliverance's wrought for the church, there has been also a remarkable execution of wrath on its enemies. When God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt; at the same time he remarkably poured out his wrath on Pharaoh and the Egyptians. When he brought them into Canaan by Joshua, and gave them that good land, he remarkably executed wrath upon the Canaanites. When they were delivered out of their Babyionish captivity, signal vengeance was inflicted on the Babylonians. When the Gentiles were called, and the elect of God were saved by the preaching of the apostles, Jerusalem and the; persecuting Jews were destroyed in a most awful manner.

I might observe the same concerning the glory accomplished to the church in the days of Constantine, at the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom in the downfall of Antichrist, and at the day judgment. In all these instances, and especially in the last, there have been, or will be, exhibited most awful tokens of the divine wrath against the wicked.

God will indeed make use of you in this affair: but it will be for the glory of his justice, and not of his mercy. The enemies of God are reserved for the triumph of Christ's glorious power in overcoming and punishing them. You are some of those who shall be consumed with this accursed world after the day of judgment, when Christ and his church shall triumphantly and gloriously ascend to heaven.-Therefore let all who are in a Christless condition seriously consider these things, and not be like the foolish people of the old world, who would not take warning, when Noah told them, that the Lord was about to bring a flood of waters upon the earth; or like the people of

Sodom, who would not regard, when Lot told them, that God would destroy that city, and would not flee from the wrath to come, and so were consumed in that terrible destruction.

And now I would say, to conclude my whole discourse on this subject, "These sayings are faithful and true, and blessed is he that keepeth these sayings. Behold Christ cometh quickly, and his reward is with him, to render to every man according as his work shall be. And he that is unjust, shall be unjust still; and he that is filthy, shall be filthy still; and he that is holy, shall be holy still. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly. – Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus."

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