

11–36 The Apostle all along must be considered, as speaking of a distinction, between *Israel* after the flesh, and the *Israel* of GOD by promise. The *Israel* after the flesh, had no privileges, but in the outward ministry of the word. The *Israel* of promise, though they stumbled in the *Adam*-fall in common with the rest, and for a while (as in the instance of those who crucified CHRIST, but afterwards were pricked to the heart and saved: [Acts 2:23, 37.](#)) were living without GOD and without CHRIST; yet being in the Covenant, were brought to the knowledge of the truth, and saved with an everlasting salvation. If the Reader, in going over those and the like passages of Scripture, had these things always in remembrance, it would serve, under GOD, to throw a great light upon the subject throughout.

The figure *Paul* useth, of the olive tree wild by nature, and grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, is beautifully chosen, to represent not only the Gentile Church incorporated into CHRIST in distinction to the Jewish Church; but also hath an allusion to both Jew and Gentile, yea the whole Church, in being taken from the old *Adam*-nature of the fall, and by sovereign grace, made a right noble plant in CHRIST JESUS. The Apostle's expression in allusion to CHRIST, is not only very blessed, in that it refers to the perfection of CHRIST, *for* his people, and *to* his people; but it runs it up to the first, original, and eternal cause, in the holiness of CHRIST'S nature, as the first fruit, and root of all. For CHRIST is the root, as well as the offspring of *David*. And, CHRIST was first chosen in the infinite mind of JEHOVAH, and then the Church in him, before the foundation of the world. [Ephesians 1:4.](#)

It would be well, if this grand and fundamental truth of our most holy faith, was fully

formed, and established in the mind, in order to help us to right apprehensions of what CHRIST is in himself, and what he is to his people. Every thing is in CHRIST *of* holiness. Every thing is of CHRIST *for* holiness. And he is made of GOD every thing to us *in* holiness, in being our *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that all our glorying may be in the LORD.* [1 Cor. 1:30, 31.](#) One or two words, on those great points, of CHRIST as he is in himself, and as he is to his people, will serve, under grace, to put this matter in a clear light; and, if the LORD be our teacher, we shall enter into a right apprehension of the Apostle's expression: *For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.*

Now *first*, in relation to that holy, spotless, portion of our nature, taken by the SON of GOD into union with himself, nothing can be more evident, than that it was wholly a right seed; for it was underived from the fallen stock, and not formed after the ordinary method of generation. So that CHRIST was *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.* [Heb. 7:26.](#) And, what is highly proper to be understood, but hath not been as generally considered as it ought, that when to the infinite mind, and fore-knowledge of JEHOVAH, this holy portion of our nature came up before him and before all worlds; all his seed were in him, beheld in him, and considered as part of himself: *chosen in him*, as Scripture expresseth it, *to be holy and without blame before him in love.* [Ephes. 1:4.](#) In this sense, the Apostle's words appear most blessed. The *first fruit* holy, the *lump* also holy. The *root* holy, and consequently the *branches*. In CHRIST his whole Church was contained. Just as the first root of any tree, planted in the earth, contained in it, all the after trees, and branches to come from

it. And, as *Levi* is said to *have been in the loins of his father Abraham, when Melchizedec met him and blessed him: (Heb. 7:10.)* So the Church, in all her Individual members, was in CHRIST the seed of CHRIST; and blessed in CHRIST, from, and to all eternity. Hence all these sweet promises of JEHOVAH to his SON: *I will pour my SPIRIT upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring. Isaiah 44:3.* Hence the same repeated: *My SPIRIT that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth, and for ever. Isaiah 59:21.* Reader! I beseech you, pause over the lovely view, for it is most lovely! Oh! what a thought for a child of GOD to cherish in his bosom, that not only *He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; Heb. 2:11* but every one of CHRIST'S seed, was in CHRIST, chosen in CHRIST, included in CHRIST, and (as the branch in the root) holy in CHRIST'S holiness, before GOD for ever!

And *secondly*: from this holiness in CHRIST and from CHRIST, the holiness of the Church must be wholly formed and derive all her holiness. For, as all original sin is from Adam; so all original holiness is from CHRIST. So *Paul* speaks, when saying that, *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Rom. 5:19.* And the sanctification of the Church is wholly ascribed, to *the offering of the body of JESUS CHRIST once for all. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified. Heb. 10:10, 14.* So that the sanctification of the Church is not *in* them, but *for* them. Not in any act of *theirs*, but in the act of CHRIST. Not in any holiness wrought *within* them, but *without* them. The happy partakers of CHRIST'S

holiness do no more towards their sanctification, than towards their justification. So saith the Scriptures: and so their souls, when taught of GOD, bear testimony. For *Paul*, speaking to the Church at *Corinth*, when declaring the grace of GOD shewn them in their recovery from the Adam-nature of sin, saith: *And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD. 1 Cor. 6:11.* And all the sweet and gracious effects, which flow from the in-dwelling residence of GOD the HOLY GHOST in their bodies, which are his temple, and which manifest themselves in their life and conversation; are not their sanctification, but the result of their being sanctified. These are the *fruits*, not the *root*: the *effects*, not the *cause*. The one compleat source of the sanctification of the Church, as it appears before GOD, is *the offering of the body of JESUS CHRIST once for all.* And it is the testimony of GOD the HOLY GHOST concerning it, that *JESUS also that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Heb. 13:12.* And, it is as expressly said to be the will of GOD in this offering, and for this purpose: *By the which will we are sanctified. Heb. 10:10.* And when GOD the HOLY GHOST, by the sweet constraining influences of his grace, *worketh in us both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure*; opens to our view, the LORD CHRIST, in all his offices, characters, and relations; gives us to see CHRIST as made of GOD unto us all these, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*; and both teacheth, and enableth us, how to live upon CHRIST, in the enjoyment of all these: then, do we enter into the blessed apprehension of our union with CHRIST, and communion with CHRIST; and learn, by heart-felt experience, that as *the first fruit is holy, the lump is also holy: and as the root*

is holy, so are the branches.

I stay not to make observations upon what is so abundantly plain as to need no observation, that, what the Apostle hath said, respecting the rejection of the Jew, and the calling of the Gentile, refers to the several ministrations in the Church, in the different ages, and under the different dispensations of it. CHRIST'S Church is but one. And that Church hath been set up, with her glorious Head, and Husband, from everlasting. Their names all given, and numbered. And hence, all Israel that is, all the true Israel of GOD, given by the FATHER to the SON, and redeemed from the *Adam* nature of the fall by the SON, shall be saved; and in the effectual call of GOD the SPIRIT, shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth. And these blessed events are included in what is said, and as the Prophet foretold, of *the Deliverer coming out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Isaiah 59:20.*

Reader! I pray you to pause over the wonderful account, of what is related in this Chapter. And, if in the contemplation of the vast subject, the Apostle *Paul*, who had been caught up to the third heaven, and drank so deep into the mysteries of the Gospel, was constrained to cry out, as he hath here done: *Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of GOD! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* Think, with what veneration and awe, men of less knowledge in the divine science, ought to receive the sublime truths of GOD; referring all of the works and counsel of GOD into GOD'S own wise, and unerring will, and pleasure. Every thing in GOD, and from GOD, must necessarily be imperfectly understood by creatures, of the limited, and scanty apprehension of man. GOD in CHRIST, the SON of GOD tabernacling in our

nature, his Church one in him, falling into apostacy by sin, recovered by sovereign grace, the Church branching out into the double family of Jew and Gentile, the LORD'S ways in the call of the Gentile and the rejection of the Jew, together with all the wonderful events accomplished in bringing home the Church, through all the departments of nature, providence, grace, and glory: all these, and numberless other points connected with the vast subject, direct the mind into such a depth of mystery, that we are unavoidably led to the same view as the Apostle; convinced, that the ways and works of GOD, toward his Church and people, never could have been conceived, much less understood, had they not been graciously revealed by Him. Oh! wonderful Counsellor! Oh! gracious design of love and favor to the Church! What will be the wonders of eternity, when the whole shall come to be unfolded to the wondering world, of angels, and of men; and all will be found directed, to give *glory, and honor, and power, to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb that was slain, for ever, and ever, Amen.*

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, Reader! and, beholding the rejection of *Israel* as a nation, after all their high privileges; consider what may be, what will be, the rejection of any, and of every mere nominal Church, which hath the *form*, but is destitute of the *power*, of godliness! To this our guilty sinful land, and to every CHRIST-despising generation like the present, how awful that Scripture sounds, in trembling accents: *If GOD spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee!*

Almighty Sovereign, LORD of Heaven and earth! give thy redeemed grace to receive all

thy wise, and unerring appointments, with humble joy, and reverence. All must be right; because thou, LORD, hast done it. Let every one taught of GOD, enter into a full apprehension of that most precious truth: *Great and marvellous are thy works, LORD GOD Almighty. Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!*

And, amidst all the discouragements of the present day, though like the Prophet we find cause to mourn in secret, at the depressed state of Zion; yet let this always comfort: *even now at the present time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* Reader! forget not that it is grace, yea, all grace. May you and I have grace, to give our GOD all the glory!